



New York Outdoors

The Official Newsletter of the
New York State Outdoor Writers Association

Winter 2026

nysowa.org



This handful of NYSOWA members gathered last winter for a weekend ice fishing gathering. Conditions this year have been excellent for hard water action. L-R are Capt. Steve George, Charles Witek III, Alex Martin, Jerrod Vila, Chris Paparo and Dan Ladd

Inside: Last call for EIC/Photo Contests, nominations for annual Pass it On and M. Paul Keesler NY Outdoor Citizen Awards

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We are always looking for members to work with our Conference Committee and assist in hosting Safaris and Conferences in their region. Please email buck@adkhunter if interested.

Calendar

May 7-10, 2026

Spring Conference
Columbia & Greene Counties
Fall 2026

Oct. 1-4

Fall Safari - Oneida Lake
Renew your membership here:
<https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa>

NYSOWA President Debbie Brosen



I hope everyone's 2026 is off to a good start. For those of you who enjoy the cold or snow sports, this has been a good winter for those activities!

The conference planning committee and I have been actively working on putting final details together for our spring conference. This year's conference will be held May 7th through 10th at the Glen Falls House in Round Top (Greene County). Take a peak at the website: <http://www.glenfallshouse.com>

We will also spend one day visiting Columbia County on Friday, May 8th. We are diligently working to finalize costs and outings so we can send out reservation information. The grounds are lovely and the host is looking forward to meeting our members.



He recently joined a sportsman club in Greene County and is quite excited about it! As you may have seen from my recent email, we have some exciting things planned, including a chicken BBQ for Friday's dinner, a longer breakout session for members to share information about their business, product or service, and a couple of craft improvement sessions. I hope you will be able to join us!

A reminder that our EIC competition deadline was extended to February 15th. Dues must be paid to date to enter. Also, if you haven't been featured in one of our spotlights, please take advantage of this and send me some information to share. I continue to receive feedback on how much our members enjoy reading them, and I personally have loved getting to know more about our members from these spotlights.



Northern Region VP Dan Ladd



Greetings NYSOWA members and welcome to a winter that actually feels like, well, winter. After a warm October, it's pretty much been cold in the North Country since early November, which helped make the later part of deer season quite chilly, and with plenty of snow. Perhaps a little too much. Adirondack deer hunters crave the white stuff in moderate amounts, but once you get 6 or 8 inches it can slow you down in the woods. That's what we had in most of the Adirondacks for the later part of the season, into the late muzzleloading season (where allowed). Even the holiday-week muzzleloading hunt in the Southern Zone was inhibited by snow.

Then came the early January rains, and with it, ice. But the "January thaw" didn't last long and since the middle part of the month it's been a true North Country winter with mostly sub-freezing and often sub-zero temperatures. That's been good news for ice anglers (sadly, with an exception below) as most of the North Country lakes have buttoned up and I've gotten reports of anywhere from 12-24 inches of ice. Basically, the further north and higher in elevation you go, the thicker the ice. Therefore, barring a serious heat-wave, ice fishing action should last well into the later part of March this year.

It's the same with the snow, which is a bit more localized based on storm locations and elevation. Some parts of the interior of the Adirondacks have 40 inches, or more, of snow. Here in Lake George region, we have anywhere from 12-16 inches in the woods. Thus, it's been a good winter for skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling.

Ice Anglers Parish in Northern Adirondacks

On January 18, 2026, at approximately 7:40 p.m., New York State Police responded to County Route 60 in the town of Clifton for a report of individuals riding a snowmobile that had gone through the ice.

An investigation determined that three individuals were ice fishing on Chaumont Pond, which is connected to the Oswegatchie River, in the town of Clifton. That evening, after being informed the three had not returned from fishing, Patrick R. LaPlante, age 51, of Newton Falls, went to the area to check on the individuals, who were identified as Bryan P. LaPlante, age 33, of Newton Falls; Michael J. Booth, age 48, of Oswegatchie; and a 6-year-old male of Newton Falls.

While searching along the shoreline of the river, Patrick LaPlante located Bryan LaPlante, who had fallen through the ice. Patrick crawled toward him to assist, but subsequently fell through the ice himself. Patrick was able to remove himself from the water, but he was unable to locate the two remaining individuals.

Patrick LaPlante reported the incident and returned to his residence to warm up. The 6-year-old male arrived at the residence shortly thereafter, having walked there from the scene. Both were transported to Clifton-Fine Hospital for treatment of hypothermia.

Law enforcement, fire, and rescue personnel were notified and responded to the scene. Rescue crews later located Bryan LaPlante and Michael Booth, unresponsive in the water, accounting for all the individuals. Rescue crews removed them from the water and transported them to Gouverneur Hospital with CPR in progress. Bryan P. LaPlante and Michael J. Booth were later pronounced deceased at the hospital.

The New York State Police were assisted by multiple local fire and rescue departments and the St. Lawrence County Sheriff's Department.

- NYS Police

Showtime

Winter is always an active time in New York for sport shows, banquets and such. And the northern region is no exception. Here's a few on the radar up this way:

- **Adirondack Outdoorsman Show**, Feb. 21-22, Johnstown, NY Supporting member Mike Hauser's signature show at the Johnstown Moose Lodge. One of the featured guests this year is our own Mike Joyner. Info: www.adkshow.com.

- **Adirondack Bible Chapel Sportsman's Dinner**, March 7, Wells, NY. My buddy Randy Flanery, a Maine Master Guide and well-known white-tail tracker/stalker is the main speaker and I'll be doing a seminar called Deer Hunting for Beginners. Info: <https://adirondackbiblechapel.org/sportsmans-dinner/>

- **Sportsman's Flea Market**, March 28, Dunhams Bay Fish & Game Club, Queensbury, N.Y. A fun event sponsored by my own gun club and the Warren County Conservation Council. Info: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064751917312>

Meanwhile, I've made it to some shows myself. In mid-January I joined a few of my Iron Sight Gang buddies for a trip to the Burlington region of Vermont and the Yankee Sportsman Classic. There, we sat in on some great big woods deer hunting seminars with Lanny Benoit and Rick Labbe (of Maine), as well as our own Adirondack renown trackers Jim Massett and Joe DiNitto. It's always a pleasure to see these guys, especially Jim. We also bumped into fellow NYSOWA member Steve Piatt, who was in town for the show's turkey calling competition. The following weekend we took drive to the south-central Adirondacks in Wells for a sportsman's swap meet, and then a trip to Fulton County to visit some local gun shops. Both were enjoyable trips.



Dan Ladd's hunting crew, the Iron Sight Gang, bumped into Jim Massett (center) at the Yankee Sportsman's Classic in Vermont where NYSOWA member Steve Piatt (right) was also in town.

West/Central Region VP David Figura

Colds weather bolsters ice fishing scene

I was down south visiting my daughter and her family through most of December and was captivated by all the Facebook posts of anglers in CNY and WNY posting ice fishing photos while I was away.

Oneida Lake, a well-known hotspot each year for ice fishing in CNY, froze over early this year (Dec. 15). It opened up again following a warm stretch, but refroze on Dec. 26, according to Lars Rudstam, a Cornell professor in fisheries and aquatic sciences and the director of the Cornell Biological Field Station, in Constantia.

"Both dates are early for this century," Rustam said. "Dec. 15 is the third earliest freeze day since 2000. The lake has stayed frozen since Dec. 26 and I expect it will stay frozen to the middle of March, maybe even into early April, but who knows. Better be careful out there. We'll get some swings between warm and cold spells."

Meanwhile, area bait shops are striving to be fully stocked on the usual spread of fatheads, buckeyes, shiners, grubs, wax worms, and spikes, according to Steve Featherstone, outdoors writer for The Post-Standard.

With more anglers fishing for longer stretches of time, it's a good idea to check in regularly with your favorite bait shop to ensure they've got what you need.

In past years, wholesale distributors cut back on carrying a lot of tackle because they were getting stuck with it due to sub-par ice fishing seasons. Not so this winter. Tackle is being bought at a much faster rate, Featherstone said.

Recently, Oneida Lake was named the second-best ice fishing destination in America by FishingBooker, an online travel agency that connects anglers with fishing guides and charter boats. Only one spot bested Oneida Lake in the 2026 ranking of prime ice fishing spots: Brainerd, Minn., a community surrounded by lakes.

Meanwhile, in Western NY.: "The fishing should be excellent as soon as we can catch a break from the brutal winter weather. It's the most ice on local waterways I can remember in a long



time," said Capt. Frank Campbell, veteran charter boat captain and outdoors promotions director for Niagara Falls USA.

"There has not been a lot of fishing activity but that just means undisturbed fish that are going to be easy to fool due to lack of fishing pressure," he said. "The local winter fishing opportunities are going to explode. The Lower Niagara River is going to be the place to be real soon."

2026 NYS Winter Classic

This state-wide, winter fishing tournament, which includes all waterways in the state (ice, open water, stream and rivers), kicked off Jan. 1 and ends Feb. 28.



Ice anglers continue to dominate the leaderboards this year as cold air keeps most waterways locked up across the state, said Tim Thomas, the tournament director.

The tournament features weekly prizes and seven fish categories (northern pike, walleye, pickerel, trout, crappie, yellow perch, panfish) and is hosted on the Fish Donkey online platform. The entry fee is \$25, youth included.

The awards ceremony is set for March 14 at the Batavia Downs Casino Resort in Genesee County and includes door prizes, raffles and other giveaways.

For more information, contact tournament director Tim Thomas at 585-330-0494, info@fk-sportfishing.com or on Facebook (FindersKeepers22).

The Greater Niagara Fishing Expo & Catching Dreams Charters

This winter outdoors show, which ranks as one of the best in the state each winter, is returning to the Niagara Falls Convention Center from Feb. 19–22.

This year's show will have a meaningful partnership with Catching Dreams Charters, a non-profit organization dedicated to giving children battling pediatric cancer and their families the opportunity to escape the challenges of treatment and enjoy a therapeutic day on the water.

"Through the "Fishing Fights Pediatric Cancer" fundraising campaign, Expo attendees, vendors, and participants will have the opportunity to support this lifechanging cause," said Capt. Frank Campbell.

Money will be raised through vendor raffles, raffles held during educational classes, and direct donations throughout the four-day event. Every dollar raised will go directly toward providing cost-free charter fishing experiences for families affected by pediatric cancer, Campbell said.

"Our hope is to fund more than 50 charter trips through the Greater Niagara Fishing Expo alone this year," said Ned Librock, Founder of Catching Dreams Charters.

Since its inception, Catching Dreams Charters has grown from just three families participating in its first year to connecting with more than 125 families in 2025.

Working closely with hospitals in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Albany—and with plans to expand to Long Island—the organization continues to make a profound difference for children and families across New York State, Librock said.

To learn more about Catching Dreams Charters or to make a contribution, visit catching-dreamscharters.org.

The Greater Niagara Fishing Expo, often referred to as the "Teaching Fishing Show," brings together anglers, educators, and industry professionals from across the region for four days of learning, networking, and community engagement.

For more information about the Expo, including schedules and ticket purchases, visit niagara-fishingexpo.com.

Fur trappers auction

Want to get in touch with the CNY/WNY fur trapping scene? Wondering how much a beaver, coyote, mink, fisher or even a skunk pelt is worth these days?

Try attending a local fur auction. If nothing else, it makes for a great story and great contacts. Upcoming fur auctions include:

- Feb. 8: Genesee Valley Trapper's Association Fur Auction, Honeoye. See www.gvtrappers.com
- March 7: Independent Fur Harvesters of CNY Fur Auction, Pompey Rod and Gun Club, Fabius. See <https://pompeyrodandgun.com>
- March 14: Cattaraugus County Trappers Association, Hinsdale, NY. Call 716-474-7251

Upcoming NYSOWA Fall Safari on Oneida Lake: Clarence ("Peanut") Chamberlain and myself are putting together this year's fall safari, which will held Oct. 1-4 at Three Pines Lodging and Marina on the northeastern shore of Oneida Lake in Oneida County.

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more details.



Southeast Region VP Tom Schlichter

For those of you who have listened to me whine about the winters in the southeast region of New York State being too mild over the past several years, I apologize for late December, the entire month of January, and for whatever is still to come this February. I plan to file the entire experience under the heading “Be careful what you wish for,” as we have certainly had plenty of cold and snow to kick off the new year. Ah, yes, the good old days...I had forgotten how terribly cold they actually were until these recent reminders.

Of course, that cold has had some benefits from a sporting perspective. Ice anglers, in particular, rushed to their favorite hardwater spots once local ponds and reservoirs iced-over this winter to take full advantage of some hard-water sport with good results - especially in late January and early February. In Putnam County, for example, Pete Lines, at Fish On Bait and Tackle in Mahopac, NY, said anglers were hitting all the local lakes and having fun with bass and panfish. Still, the chance to tangle with big brown trout through the ice was drawing an even larger crowd to West Branch Reservoir. There, several browns in the 15-pound-class have already been caught this winter. Croton Falls and Diverting Reservoir were also seeing plenty of action with bass and panfish. “With so much ice, this has clearly been the best ice-fishing season around here in a long time,” continued Lines. “Some of these lakes have had upwards of 30 ice-fishermen on them on Saturdays and Sundays..”

It may have taken a little longer for safe ice to form on Long Island’s lakes and ponds, but by mid-January anglers were finding enough ice on smaller, well-protected waters to get out and have some fun. The late January freeze that spread into February, however, put a hard surface on parts of Lake Ronkonkoma, where Pablo Salinas at J & J Sports in Patchogue said walleye have been the prime target and plenty of fish in the 16 – to 17-inch class are were being caught and released. Some quality largemouths weighing up to 4 pounds have also mixed in with the ‘eyes. Other anglers, noted Salinas, found success on quick trips to more intimate waters like West Lake in Patchogue and Upper Yaphank Lake. There, a nice mix of bass, sunfish and yellow perch have rewarded those who get out early in the morning for fish an hour or two before dark. Salinas also suspected a few tight-lipped anglers have been heading out to Montauk’s Fort Pond in search of walleye, smallmouth bass, white perch and bigmouths - although no official reports of such action have actually made it back to the shop.

In our last newsletter, I noted that although the numbers of white-tailed deer taken across the southeastern region of the state seemed to be satisfactory, it had been hard to come across any truly notable bucks this season. Of course, right after I sent my fall report to Dan Ladd to publish, I got word of two serious

deer taken by NYSOWA members. Sorry that I had to hold your reports until this edition, fellas.

Glenn Sapir was first to drop me a line after taking a true heavyweight buck. “It was a wide- and heavy-racked six pointer (lacked brow tines) taken in my backwoods on the first Thursday of the season,” revealed Glenn, who dropped it with a 12-gauge slug gun. The buck weighed 185 pounds field dressed. “It’s estimated live weight on the butcher’s conversion scale was 222 pounds!”

Chris Paparo was up next, reporting on an amazing hat trick. First, he took a 9-point, 192-pound beast of a buck on a property he hunts in Maine. He followed that one with a solid 8-pointer taken on a family farm in Connecticut. Then, to top things off, he scored with a nice 5-point Long Island buck for his first deer with a crossbow. That’s one heck of a deer season.



(Left) NYSOWA member Chris Paparo drilled this 192-pound,9-point beast on a Maine hunt, one of three bucks he shot this past fall, while NYSOWA member Glenn Sapir dropped this massive buck (right) last fall just 125 yards from his back porch. (Photos by Chris Paparo and Glenn Sapir)

NYSOWA Membership News

Entry Deadline Extended Through Feb. 15

YOU MUST RENEW MEMBERSHIP TO ENTER

NYSOWA Excellence in Craft Writing, Janice M. Keesler Memorial Photo Award Guidelines & Rules

We are making entry to the awards program easier than ever. At least, we hope you will find that to be the case as we have now converted the entry process exclusively to a digital format. No more dealing with snail mail and the costs and time that entails. No more entry forms for each entry; instead, you'll list your entries on one form. As for your entry fee of \$25, (covers all EIC entries; a separate \$25 fee covers all photo award entries), you can still send in a check or money order, or you can go to <https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa/g349rGbhYT2M4dERX> and pay by credit card.

So, if you've never entered your work in our awards program, this is the year to start. Review your work from 2025 (2024 and 2025 for the Book category) and begin to prepare entries for the writing and photo awards recognition program. Of course, photos could have been taken at any time, not just in 2025.

All you need for each entry is a file of the original article as a PDF or JPG and a file of that article that deletes or blocks out your byline, the name of the publication and any other identifying information, including photos with your image. The entry form below requires a listing of all of your entries

Because the awards presentation will take place at our banquet scheduled for the spring, **entries must be received by the administrators of the writing and photo recognition programs by Jan. 15, 2026**

Deb Brosen is chair of the Janice M. Keesler Memorial photo awards. I co-administer the Excellence in Craft writing awards program with Chris Paparo, and he looks forward to processing your submissions.

—Glenn Sapir

Deadline for receipt of entries for both writing and photo award entries is **Jan. 15, 2026**.

EIC & Photo Contest Rules & Entry Form

EIC CATEGORIES

The categories for 2025 work are: Magazine Column, Magazine Feature, Newspaper Column, Newspaper Feature and Online Publication; and Book (published in 2024 and 2025). Those categories are defined as such:

Newspaper Column: A regularly appearing article, typically shorter than a feature, that has a reappearing name, slug, etc., such as "On the Trail," "Fishing," "Hunting," etc.

Newspaper Feature: A newspaper feature does not regularly appear with a slug or name, is typically longer than a column, usually includes graphics and may have a sidebar(s).

Magazine Column: A regularly appearing article, typically shorter than a feature, that has a reappearing name, slug, etc., such as "On the Trail," "Fishing," "Hunting," etc.

Magazine Feature: A magazine feature does not regularly appear with a slug or name, is typically longer than a column, usually includes graphics and may have a sidebar(s).

Online Publication: Online publication may be a feature, column, blog post or other electronic communication that was paid for—and was first posted online before it might have otherwise been published.

Book: Books or E-books with outdoor-related topics/formats, including but not limited to contract/self-published, hard-cover/soft-cover, printed/E-book, photo/fiction/nonfiction/cookbook.

SUBMISSIONS

All entries should be sent to nysowaEIC@gmail.com. Chris Paparo will review your entry to be sure you've met all of the requirements and will acknowledge your entry. **You may submit entries in different emails and on different dates without having to pay an additional entry fee. Of course, you must be a member in good standing, that is, your dues for 2026 must have been paid for your entries to be eligible.**

Each submission should include:

–one file of the work as published

–one file of the same article, with the name and date of publication and any mentions of the author's name, in the byline, photo credits, captions and body text, as well as any images of the author, blocked out or deleted

–a single, all-inclusive completed entry form for all EIC submissions.

–Proof of payment of \$25

–**Note: Book entries require an additional \$10 fee for each title, in addition to the all-inclusive one-time \$25 entry fee for all writing (not photo) entries. Authors must submit two copies of their book, unmarked. These will not be returned to the author. Book entries should be submitted to Chris Paparo, NYSOWA EIC, 153 South River Rd., Calverton, NY 11933.**

You may make payment here:

<https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa/g349rGbhYT2M4dERX>

EIC entries should be sent to nysowaaic@gmail.com. Checks or money orders sent for entry fees should be payable to NYSOWA and sent to Chris Paparo, NYSOWA EIC, 153 South River Rd., Calverton, NY 11933. All entries must be received by Chris by Jan. 15, 2026, to be eligible for entry in the EIC Awards Program. Pay your entry fees online at <https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa/g349rGbhYT2M4dERX>

Important Information:

–Writers may submit a maximum of two entries in each category.

–The author must have been paid for the work entered.

–Work must have been published between Jan. 1, 2025, and Dec. 31, 2025 (Book, must have been published in 2024 or 2025).

–All entries must be the author's original work.

–THIS IS BEING HIGHLIGHTED FOR EMPHASIS: Each entry must have an original version of the work and one redacted as described above. Each file should be labeled as:

(Last name)_category_(original or redacted)_(and if entering more than one in this category, number it). For example, if entering TWO entries in the magazine feature category, label the files as:

**Your last name_magazine feature_original_1
Your last name_magazine feature_redacted_1**

**Your last name_magazine feature_original_2
Your last name_magazine feature_redacted_2**

–Submission in the Book category must be of two copies of the book, which will not be returned to the author.

–Awards will not be given in any category that receives entries from less than three members.

–If entries are from fewer than three members in either the Magazine Column or Newspaper Column category, the entries for those two categories will be combined into a Column category.

-If entries are from fewer than three members in either the Magazine Feature or Newspaper Feature category, the entries for those two categories will be combined into a Feature category.

-Members entering must be in good standing, that is, have paid their dues for 2026.

-Failure to follow the guidelines and rules above can lead to disqualification of entries. This is left to the discretion of the EIC chairman.

-By entering your submission, you are allowing NYSOWA to reprint your entry for promotional purposes.

Excellence in Craft Entry Form

NOTE: THIS FORM MUST ACCOMPANY YOUR SUBMISSION

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____ Phone Number _____

Email Address

EIC Category

Title or Headline of Entry (and URL for online publication entries)

Publication Name and Date.

EIC Category

Title or Headline of Entry (and URL for online publication entries)

Publication Name and Date.

EIC Category

Title or Headline of Entry (and URL for online publication entries)

Publication Name and Date.

EIC Category

Title or Headline of Entry (and URL for online publication entries)

Publication Name and Date

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Title or Headline of Entry (and URL for online publication entries)

Publication Name and Date.

EIC Category

Title or Headline of Entry (and URL for online publication entries)

Publication Name and Date.

EIC Category

Title or Headline of Entry (and URL for online publication entries)

Publication Name and Date.

All entries and payment must be received by Jan. 15, 2026. Send entries to nysowaeic.com.

DON'T FORGET:

A \$25 fee must be paid at the time of submission. One \$25 fee covers all EIC writing contest submissions. Book entries require an additional \$10 per entry.

Janice M. Keesler Memorial Photo Awards Program Rules

Prints are no longer accepted as entries.

NOTE: YOU MUST LABEL DIGITAL PHOTO ENTRIES WITH YOUR NAME, CATEGORY AND, IF ENTERING TWO IN THE SAME CATEGORY, WITH "1" FOR THE FIRST AND "2" FOR THE SECOND. E.G., JOHNDOE HUNTINGFISHING1. ENTRIES NOT PROPERLY LABELED WILL BE RETURNED FOR PROPER LABELING BY THE PHOTO AWARDS ADMINISTRATOR!

ENTRIES NOT PROPERLY LABELED WILL BE RETURNED FOR PROPER LABELING. ALSO, NOTE THE NEW EMAIL FOR SUBMITTING ENTRIES IS eicphotoentries@gmail.com.

- 1. Only members in good standing (dues paid for 2026) are eligible.**
2. A maximum of two photos per category may be entered. Submissions must be received by Jan. 15, 2026. A one-time submission fee of \$25 must be paid at time of submission. Late entries will be disqualified. No title or caption should be provided. Chairperson will assign a number to each photo and keep a record of photographer and photo number separate from the photos.

3. Each photo can only be submitted to one category. Photos from previous contests may be resubmitted if they did not place (1st, 2nd or 3rd).

4. All categories will be judged prior to the Annual Conference, and awards will be made at the Conference.

5. The following are the categories for the contest:

a. **Hunting/Fishing**—Hunting/fishing photographs, including hero shots, action, hunting or fishing equipment.

b. **Outdoor Action**—Outdoor-oriented action photographs, **excluding hunting and fishing** but including boating, camping, RVs, shooting sports, hiking, skiing, windsurfing, etc.

c. **Outdoor Scenic**—Scenic photographs of either flora or fauna, landscapes, close-ups, panoramic. These may include people, though the people should be part of the scene, not the subject of the photo.

d. **Wildlife**—Though the judges may take into consideration unusual aspects of the wildlife subject, such as size of antlers, length of beard and length and girth of fish, primary consideration should be given to the technical photographic aspects and general appeal of the image.

e. **People**—As the category suggests, the focus is on "people" in the outdoors.

6. Categories "A" through "E" do not exclude photos taken in black-and-white.

7. Photo enhancement is limited to standard editing, such as: color correction, contrast control, filter use and image cropping. Digitally produced photos should not be substantially manipulated. Photos may not be manipulated with the use of AI.

8. All entries must be the member's original work. If a dispute leads to a challenge, the member must defend that image and prove it is original work. Use of royalty-free photo images of clipart is prohibited. Their use is subject to disciplinary action by the NYSOWA Board of Directors.

9. Judges shall be recruited who preferably are associated with the outdoor industry and have a professional appreciation of the specific challenges of outdoor and wildlife photography. In the absence of judges meeting the criterion, judges with an expertise as photographers or photo editors will be recruited. At least two people must participate as judges, and three is preferable to minimize the possibility of ties. No minimum number of entries must be submitted in a category to validate the judging of that category. First, second and third place prizes must be awarded if at least three entries have been submitted. No honorable mentions will be made.

10. By entering photographs in the competition, the owners agree that NYSOWA has the right to print and publish any award-winning image in New York Outdoors, or an

NYSOWA awards publication or other form of promotion unless the member objects in writing when submitting the entries. Unless the copyright owner of a photograph specifically objects in writing, NYSOWA has the right to reproduce winning images for display purposes, including display at venues selected by contest sponsor(s), subject to the approval of the NYSOWA board of directors.

11. Entries should be submitted to Deb Brosen at eicphotoentries@gmail.com.

Janice M. Keesler Memorial Photo Awards Entry Form

NOTE: THIS ALL-INCLUSIVE FORM MUST ACCOMPANY THE PHOTO SUBMISSION

Name: _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____ Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Photo Category _____

Photo Identification: _____

Submit entries to Deb Brosen: eicphotoentries@gmail.com

DON'T FORGET:

Proof of payment of your **\$25 entry fee** must be submitted to Deb at the time of submission.

Here is the link for the fee: <https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa/As8opGkcMZccyykYK>

Submissions for both the Janice M. Keesler Memorial Photo Contest and the Excellence in Crafts Awards for writing must be received by the awards administrators **by Jan. 15, 2026.**

###

NYSOWA Seeks Nominations for 2026 Pass It On Award

The New York State Outdoor Writers Association reminds members that nominations are now open for the 2026 Pass It On Award. Initiated by Bass Pro Shops, this annual award honors the person who has done the most to “pass on” our outdoor heritage. This award is given to Active Members of NYSOWA. The writer or media person is honored with a plaque at the Annual Conference and his or her name is recorded in the Annual Directory along with previous winners. Both Bass Pro Shops and NYSOWA have recognized the fact that it is vital to pass on our outdoor heritage, including understanding the role of conservation and promoting an interest in our outdoor sports. This can be done in several ways such as creating awareness through writing, helping organizations that promote these activities, or being directly involved in mentoring and educating.

Nominees must be Active Members of NYSOWA. Any member of NYSOWA may nominate a person they consider deserving of this award by giving a written description of the activities or accomplishments that this person has performed to pass on the heritage of outdoor sports and conservation.

Nominations should be sent to Bill Hilts, Jr. at 6409 Sherman Drive, Lockport, NY 14094 or by e-mail to billhiltsjr@gmail.com. **Deadline for nominations is April 1, 2026.** Take note of the early deadline due to the shift of the annual conference. The winner will be honored at the NYSOWA Spring Conference in Greene and Columbia counties May 7-10, 2026.

NYSOWA Opens Nominations for New York M. Paul Keesler Outdoor Citizen Award

The 2026 NYSOWA M. Paul Keesler New York Outdoor Citizen Award will be presented to an individual or organization that has effectively raised the public’s awareness of outdoor recreational opportunities and conservation issues in New York State. The award recipient will be officially announced at the annual conference of the New York State Outdoor Writers Association (NYSOWA) in Greene and Columbia counties May 7-10, 2026.

The award was created to honor worthy individuals and organizations, at the same time perpetuating the name of one of NYSOWA’s dearest members. The late M. Paul Keesler spent nearly five decades promoting and conserving the outdoor wonders and recreational opportunities within New York State. Beginning with outdoor columns for the Utica Observer Dispatch and progressing to the popular New York Sportsman magazine, Keesler, and his magazine’s contributors, enlightened, and educated readers statewide and beyond to the wild outdoor treasures of the Empire State. Keesler also wrote books on canoe fishing in New York waterways, including on his beloved West Canada Creek and Mohawk Valley.

Anyone may submit a nomination of 350 words or less and have it endorsed by an active member of NYSOWA. You can nominate a member of NYSOWA (active or supporting) or a member/group outside the organization. To review award criteria and the nominating process, visit www.nysowa.org. To find out of a NYSOWA member in a nominator’s area who might endorse such a nomination, contact Bill Hilts, Jr. at (716) 622-6168, or check the website www.nysowa.org.

Nominations must be received by April 1, 2026. The NYSOWA Conference will again be held in the spring in 2026. Get your nominations submitted early.

Send nominations to Bill Hilts, Jr., 6409 Sherman Drive, Lockport, NY 14094, or email at billhiltsjr@gmail.com

Writing Opportunities

Courtesy of Steve Piatt

Dark Skies Fly Fishing '23 is a digital regional fly-fishing magazine featuring how-to, personal experience, product reviews, and destination pieces featuring rivers, lakes, and streams in Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, and New York. They are looking for content regarding all species that can be caught with fly rod and reel in both popular and lesser-known waters in this region.

Their goal is to provide readers a complete resource for traveling to specific destinations and for improving their fishing skills.

Feature destination articles should:

- Describe useful techniques, tackle, flies, and a local perspective.
- Thorough and specific in regards to access points, hatch charts, and other important information for destination topics.

- Include important historical information, angling history, conservation issues, etc.

- Include high-quality photography.

- Maps of the area that our artist can

use for reference to illustrate certain destinations mentioned in the work. Types of articles they prefer:

- Personal experience/adventure stories.

- How-to pieces that are unique and

offer fresh perspectives.

- Destination-type articles for waters within our coverage area.

- Photo essays featuring known and

lesser-known waters within our coverage area or aspects of fly fishing of interest to readers in this region.

- Profiles of famous anglers, fly tyers, or conservationists from this region.

- Conservation issues of interest to fly fishers in this region.

- Conservation projects that include reclamation projects for waters throughout the region.

- Fly tying articles and videos featuring local fly patterns and techniques.

- Product reviews that are fair and relay both the pros and cons of the products and are not just fluff pieces used as payback for free products received from the company.

Photography requirements: Article submissions accompanied with high quality photography will receive priority and maximum payment. We prefer images submitted in JPEG, PNG, or RAW format. Email queries are preferred. Please send to ralphscherder@gmail.com.

Pennsylvania Outdoor News – Editor Jeff Mulhollem will consider any Pennsylvania-specific story, and especially news stories. PON is not accepting first-person tales or anything related to businesses such as call-makers, guides or events such as outdoor shows or youth field days. Please send queries and not finished stories.

Fly Fusion is designed to be an aid to enhancing the reader's angling skills rather than a map of how to get to the waters they fish. The primary focus is educating readers through instructional based articles. Authors are encouraged to think outside the box and come up with articles that both entertain and educate. Creativity is encouraged. Make sure to balance information with properly timed examples and anecdotes. Feature articles should focus on a very specific topic be instructional in nature. Topics can include, but are not limited to, any one of (or combination of) the following broad topics: Fish species, fly patterns, tying techniques/equipment, casting techniques, presentation, entomology, equipment or safety. Avoid writing articles that are strictly narrative. Feature editori-

al articles should be a minimum of 3,000 words (not to exceed 3,500 words).

Strung Magazine is a quarterly print magazine with international distribution throughout North America and beyond. Strung is dedicated to mindful outdoor living with a focus on responsible fly fishing, hunting, adventure sports, yoga, conservation and food/drink. While the majority of the content comes from established, experienced writers and photographers, submissions from all interested parties is welcome. Submissions for both print features and online-only blog/social media content are acceptable. All submissions should be sent to editor@StrungMag.com; Dr. Joseph Ballarini, publisher, Strung Magazine, www.strungmag.com.

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation – Bugle magazine, the flagship publication of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is calling for stories on elk and elk hunting. To learn more about RMEF, submission guidelines and writing tips for Bugle, visit the RMEF website, www.rmef.org and click on Bugle Magazine under the Our World tab. Unless otherwise noted, word counts range from 1,000 to 3,000 words. Deadlines are rolling unless specified.

The National Wild Turkey Federation is a nonprofit conservation/education organization dedicated to the conservation of the North American wild turkey and the preservation of the hunting heritage. They publish two magazines, Turkey Call and JAKES Country: JAKES Country is a bimonthly magazine for NWTF members — hunters, conservationists and everyone who cares about the outdoors lifestyle. It is an educational publication, dedicated to news and information of interest to young people with a goal is to involve young people in preserving and transmitting the North American hunting tradition, to learn hunting tactics, tips for safe shooting and the character needed to be true outdoor sports fans. Turkey Call is dedicated to everything from features and field research to updates on the latest products tailored to the turkey hunting enthusiast and conservationist. Turkey Call articles focus on the biology, distribution, history and hunting of wild turkeys. Articles range from 1,000 to 1,200 words (features), and 500-1,000 words (departments). Contact: turkeycountry@nwtf.net.

Trapper & Predator Caller accepts stories focused on method and equipment used in trapping, calling or hunting. Highest consideration will be given to stories focused on methods and equipment used in trapping, calling or hunting. Historical pieces, personality profiles and unusual experience stories are also accepted. Feature stories should be between 1,500 and 2,500 words. Pays up to \$250 for assigned articles. Payment is made within 45 days of publication. The amount is based on the quality of writing and photography as a package. Learn more at www.trappermag.com/writers-guidelines.

Reminder: Good Deals at ExpertVoice

Just a reminder to our members: NYSOWA is proudly affiliated with ExpertVoice (<https://www.expertvoice.com>), a platform that provides industry professionals, trusted influencers, and sales associates with exclusive discounts on top outdoor brands—up to 60% off MSRP. Members can access premium gear from leading names like Garmin, Nikon, Vortex, Carhartt, Merrell, Keen, and many more. Don't miss out on these incredible savings!

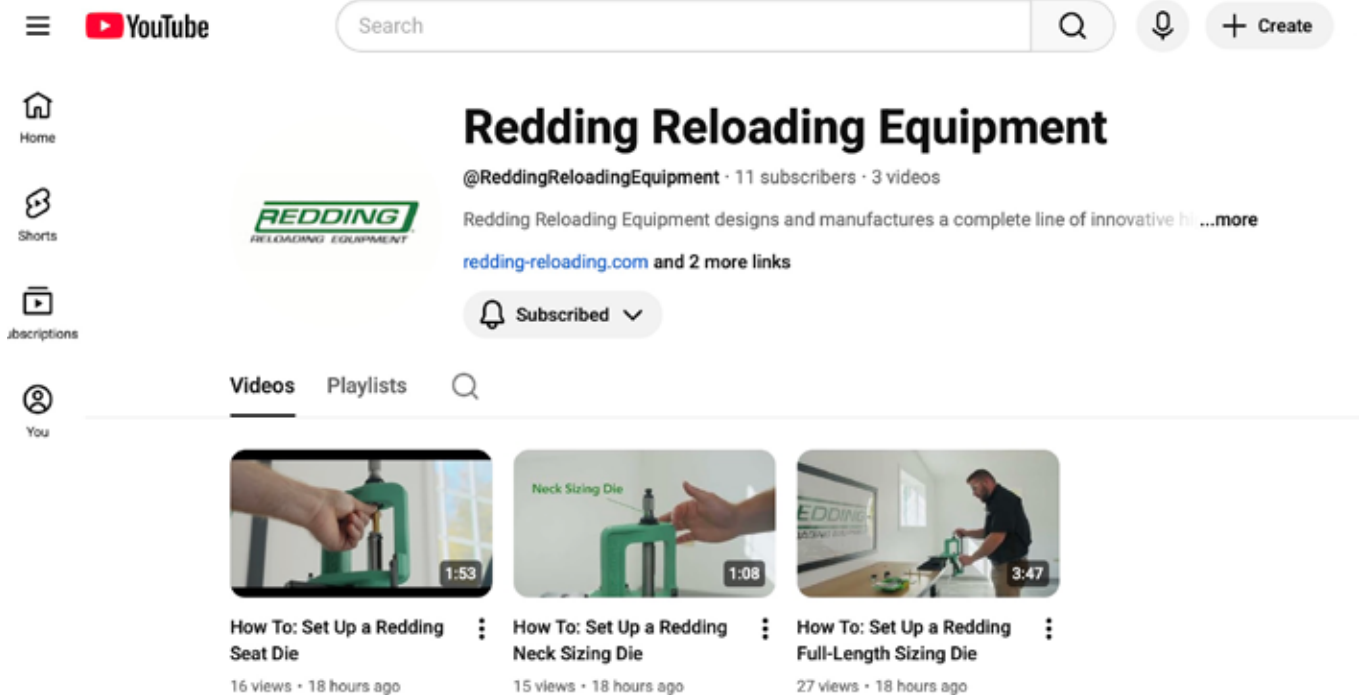
To enroll, go to ExpertVoice.com and click join now. When it asks for your affiliation, **enter NYS Outdoor Writers Association**, not NYSOWA. Once your application is approved, you will be all set to start shopping.

I've been using ExpertVoice for several years and have scored fantastic deals on rifle scopes, footwear, sunglasses, fishing gear, and dog training equipment. To access these exclusive discounts, you'll first watch a few short videos about the product you're interested in and complete a brief quiz. Once you pass, the discounts for that brand are unlocked. It's a great opportunity to save on top-quality gear—I highly encourage you to take advantage of it!

-Chris Paparo

NYSOWA Supporting Member News

Check out Redding Reloading's new YouTube Channel!!!!



The screenshot shows the YouTube channel for Redding Reloading Equipment. The channel has 11 subscribers and 3 videos. The videos are:

- How To: Set Up a Redding Seat Die (1:53, 16 views, 18 hours ago)
- How To: Set Up a Redding Neck Sizing Die (1:08, 15 views, 18 hours ago)
- How To: Set Up a Redding Full-Length Sizing Die (3:47, 27 views, 18 hours ago)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCM9HEU61r4qmq6SVTBNQ3Vw>

New York State Outdoor Guides Association Winter Rendezvous Is March 26-29

ALTMAR, NY — Outdoor professional and aspiring guides from across New York State will gather at Tailwater Lodge and Conference Center March 26-29 for the New York State Outdoor Guides Association's 43rd Annual Winter Rendezvous, where participants can earn guide certification, take the NYSDEC licensed guide exam, and access professional development resources in one four-day program.

Workshops will include ...

- Get Licensed — Attendees can take exam certification classes in First Aid, CPR and Water Safety for Guides, as well as and participate in the NYSDEC Licensed Guide Exam.
- Grow Your Business — Topics will cover many areas to help you establish and grow your guide business.
- Expand Your Guiding Expertise — Attendees will have opportunities to connect with seasoned professional guides from across the state to share best practices and explore emerging trends in guiding.
- Network with New York's Guide Community — Evening gatherings, meals, and informal social time will allow all participants to build lasting relationships within the New York's outdoor guiding community.

About NYSOGA

Founded in 1891 and reorganized in 1981, the New York State Outdoor Guides Association is the oldest professional guiding association in the state. It represents licensed outdoor guides from every region of the state that support professionalism, safety, and ethical guiding practices.

Registration is now open at <https://nysoga.org/2026-winter-rendezvous>

Media Contact: Mark Waterman 315-351-9530 Craig Tryon 315-427-8984

Redding Reloading Equipment Proudly Announces New Master Hunter and Master Hunter Deluxe Die Sets



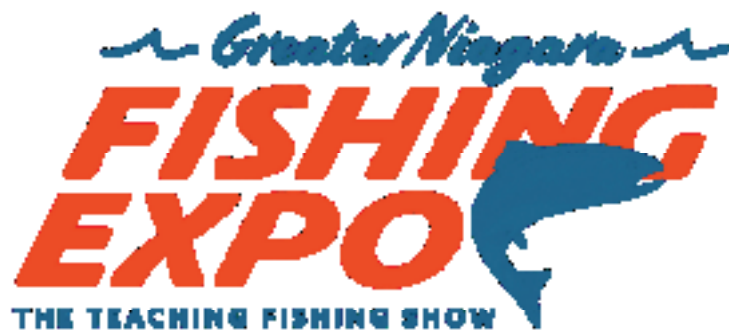
Redding Reloading Equipment introduces a significant expansion to the Master Hunter Die Set and Master Hunter Deluxe Die Set product lines for (45) of the most popular cartridges in the industry today. Branded as Master Hunter Die Sets, these offerings include a carbide expander button as well as the patented Redding Competition Seat Die.

At Redding, we listen to our customers who continue to demand improved accuracy, performance, ease of handloading and increased flexibility at their reloading bench. The addition of a carbide expander button to the sizing die makes inside neck sizing smoother and easier without lubrication. The button also free floats on the decapping rod allowing for self-centering in the case neck improved concentricity.

The micrometer equipped Competition Seating Die allows for precise bullet seating depth to 1/0.001". Alignment is enhanced by the cartridge case and bullet being completely supported and aligned in a precision ground sleeve before the bullet seating begins. This offers handloaders around the world the ability to load with high degree of precision and the convenience of fast and accurate changes in bullet seating depth, making it easier than ever to fine-tune your favorite loads.

The two die Master Hunter Die Set are offered with a full-length sizing die with carbide button and the micrometer equipped Redding Competition Seating Die. The Redding Master Hunter Deluxe three-die set adds a neck die to the two-die set for those handloaders who require the flexibility to neck size only. Redding continues to provide the needed capability to produce high quality loadings for all requirements in preparation for a competition or trip to the field.

About Redding Reloading Equipment: For the past 80 years, Redding Reloading has continued to pace the handloading market by holding firm to beliefs that quality, innovation and excellent customer service are the keys to success. To learn more about our American-made products, our ongoing commitment to the precision handloader and to request a Redding Reloading Dealer Package or Catalog, please visit us online at www.redding-reloading.com.



Greater Niagara Fishing Expo

February 19-22, 2026 | Niagara Falls, NY



The Premier Fishing Show on the Great Lakes

- The Greater Niagara Fishing Expo offers attendees the opportunity to improve their angling skills by selecting from a comprehensive curriculum that includes hundreds of hours of fishing education.
- Over 170 exhibitor booths fill the Niagara Falls Convention Center, offering anglers the chance to connect with leading Great Lakes fishing and marine electronics manufacturers and retailers.
- Additional show highlights include the LOTSA Salmon School, the Lake Erie Walleye School, a Super Kids Fishing Clinic, Super Steelhead Clinic, fishing boats, kayaks, a Hawg Trough, and more!

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit niagarafishingexpo.com or scan the QR code.



Adirondack Outdoorsman Show is Feb. 21-22 in Johnstown



NYSOWA's Mike Joyner to be Featured Guest

The 2026 Adirondack Outdoorsman Show will take place at the Johnstown Moose Club (109 South Comrie Ave/Rte 30A Johnstown) on Saturday February 21st (10am-6pm) & Sunday February 22nd (10am-5pm).

The show will be geared towards the tastes of Hunters, Fishermen and Outdoors Enthusiasts, with exhibits containing items for sale pertaining to: hunting & fishing gear/supplies, guns, archery, trapping, camping, hiking, snow shoeing, guides & charter services, taxidermy,

custom ADK clothing designs and antique hunting & fishing gear.

"Featured Guests" will include outdoor survivalist Melanie Sawyer, deer hunting expert/author Mike Joyner, and VP of Major League Fishing Michael Mulone.

Melanie Sawyer is an outdoor skills instructor, historical forager, fisherman and hunter. She was a participant of the premier survival show created by the History Channel, ALONE. Sawyer will be on hand at the show teaching about life off the grid and survival & foraging skills.

Mike Joyner is a dedicated turkey hunter who's obsession has led to him publishing four books on the subject; "Hills of Truxton: Stories and Travels of a Turkey Hunter", "Tales from the Turkey Woods: Mornings of My Better Days", "Grand Days in the Turkey Woods", and "A Walk In the Turkey Woods: Wandering Thoughts and Revelations". Joyner will be on hand at the show to discuss Turkey hunting strategies and will have copies of all his works for sale/signing.

Michael Mulone is a seasoned executive of the fishing and outdoor industry. A native of Gloversville New York, Mulone is currently the Vice President, Sponsorship & Business Development for Major League Fishing. Mulone returns to the area to participate in the show and discuss Major Leagues 2026 events in the Northeast and nationwide.



Door prizes of gear and equipment will be given away throughout the weekend. Admission to the event is \$5 for adults and \$1 for Children (under 16). For more information on the event & featured guests biographies, go to www.adkshow.com or contact Mike Hauser at 518-725-5565; mhauser@frontiernet.net.

48th SHOT Show Closes With Big Crowds, Big Deals, Big Innovation

LAS VEGAS – The 48th annual SHOT Show®, owned and operated by NSSF®, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, concluded today after an action-packed week that energized more than 53,000 industry professionals. Held across The Venetian Expo and Caesars Forum, this year's SHOT Show saw attendees from all 50 states and 126

NSSF[®]
*The Firearm Industry
Trade Association*



countries, reaffirming its role as the industry's global epicenter for innovation and commerce.

With 2,744 exhibitors spanning 834,500-plus net square feet — including the full spectrum of target shooting, hunting, outdoor recreation, personal defense and law enforcement sectors — the 2026 SHOT Show demonstrated the strength of the firearm industry at every turn.

“This was a SHOT Show for the ages,” said Chris Dolnack, NSSF Senior Vice President and Chief Customer Officer. “It was a week of nonstop movement, meetings and momentum. Every aisle was packed, every booth was buzzing and every conversation felt important. This is where business gets done, where ideas launch and where the industry shows just how strong — and united — it really is.”

Beyond the show floor, the SHOT Show generates a lasting impact. As a trade-only event, it fuels NSSF's purpose to advocate, educate and communicate on behalf of the industry. Revenue from the show helps fund NSSF's hallmark initiatives — from Project ChildSafe® and Operation Secure Store® to its suicide prevention program “Have a Brave Conversation,” FixNICS® and Don't Lie for the Other Guy™ — all parts of Real Solutions. Safer Communities.®

“Each person who attends or exhibits at the SHOT Show plays a vital role in shaping the future of our industry,” said NSSF President and CEO Joe Bartozzi. “Their presence here supports the critical work we do year-round to advocate on behalf of our industry, grow participation and make our communities safer. We thank everyone in attendance for helping to fuel our mission.”

Sentiments from the Show Floor

“The firearm industry is evolving now more than ever,” said Adam Ruonala, VP of Sales and Marketing at Canik. “The tides are shifting and there always needs to be a center point to help companies stay focused. The SHOT Show is that lighthouse and in 2026 it is shining bright.”

“SHOT Show is the heartbeat of the firearms industry. It's where we get to connect face-to-face with the manufacturers and dealers who actually move this industry forward,” said Elliot Aquila, CMO of Silencer Shop. “We're proud to be here building the relationships that make Silencer Shop what it is.”

“The quality of connections, customer interactions and collaborative opportunities we gain at SHOT Show surpass every other event we attend,” said Buck Holly Founder and CEO of C&H Precision. “If you are serious about operating in this industry, this is not an optional event. You need to be here.”

“The SHOT Show is the center of gravity for our strategy and helps guide how we execute it throughout the year. What we hear and learn here plays a direct role in how we move forward,” said Rick Elder, CEO of HUXWRX Safety Co.

“The SHOT Show is truly the highest concentration of resources in the industry, and it serves as an invaluable asset to our company,” said Jim West, Co-founder and CEO of Lake Erie Arms. “I look forward to taking the ideas and information back to the rest of my team to implement new strategies, helping us continue to grow our business and improve efficiency.”

“Being a first-time exhibitor here at the SHOT Show has been phenomenal for us. The new friendships and relationships we've made so far will accelerate our brand's growth,” said Thunlwyn Garcia of Elos Thermal. “It's been super informative and we're definitely going to come back next year.”

Leadership, Education and Collaboration

This year's SHOT Show again brought together state and national leaders for high-level discussions on policy and progress. The Fifth Annual Governors' Forum hosted seven U.S. governors, who shared strategies to attract and retain firearm businesses in their states. The Third Annual Attorneys General Forum fostered legal dialogue around preserving Second Amendment rights.

In addition to state leadership, SHOT Show 2026 welcomed senior federal officials, underscoring the event's importance as a forum for direct engagement between industry leaders and policymakers. Attendees included U.S. Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche, White House Counsel David Warrington, and U.S. Assistant AG for Civil Rights Harmeet Dhillon, who met with industry stakeholders and observed firsthand the scale, professionalism and economic impact of the firearm, hunting and outdoor sectors.

Retailers, range operators and law enforcement professionals attended dozens of training sessions through SHOT University™, the Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) and export and compliance courses — gaining actionable knowledge to drive success and ensure compliance in a dynamic market.

A new highlight this year was the Suicide Prevention Town Hall, a powerful addition to NSSF's ongoing efforts in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the suicide prevention community. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Doug Collins delivered opening remarks at the event, which was followed by a panel of suicide prevention experts and firearm industry representatives who shared how the industry and the firearm-owning community can make a difference and save lives.

"Suicide is preventable. We have materials, we have resources. I want the industry to know, there is something we can do," Bartozzi said. "No one can do everything, but everyone can do something."

SHOT Week Highlights

Events held throughout SHOT Week® added even more momentum. The NSSF/HAVA Golf Classic raised funds for Honored American Veterans Afield, while Industry Day at the Range™ gave media and buyers hands-on access to the newest firearms and gear.

The Supplier Showcase returned stronger than ever, connecting more than 600 OEM third-party suppliers with manufacturers to streamline the supply chain and spark product development.

This year's SHOT Show opened with a powerful nod to America's 250th anniversary. An unforgettable "Celebration of Freedom" drone show lit up the Las Vegas sky on opening night, honoring America's heritage and symbolizing the industry's enduring commitment to preserving constitutional rights and outdoor traditions for future generations.

The New Product Center once again proved to be a magnet for attendees, offering a first look at hundreds of the latest innovations across every category. From cutting-edge optics to next-gen accessories, it served as a launchpad for what's new and what's next in the industry.

Kim Rhode, one of the most decorated U.S. Olympic athletes and a lifelong ambassador for the shooting sports was awarded the NSSF Ken Sedlecky Lifetime Achievement Award.

Also returning was the Archery Business + Hunting Retailer Pavilion, featuring the latest crossbow and archery innovations for a fast-growing segment of the industry.

Thank You to Our Sponsors

NSSF extends its deepest appreciation to all this year's sponsors. Their support enhances every aspect of the SHOT Show, from networking events to on-site resources, and plays a vital role in the show's success.

Save the Date

Plans are already underway for the 49th SHOT Show, returning to Las Vegas January 19–22, 2027. For updates and exhibitor information, visit [SHOTShow.org](https://www.nssf.org).

BoatUS and Savvy Navvy collaborate to improve boat safety across the USA

With grounding incidents among the leading causes of on-water assistance calls in the United States, BoatUS and navigation technology company Savvy Navvy are thrilled to announce a partnership for recreational boaters to navigate more safely and confidently.



The partnership aims to address critical skills gaps, particularly among newer boaters who may lack experience with chart reading, tidal patterns, and route planning. Savvy Navvy – of-

ten referred to as “Google Maps for boats” – delivers an intuitive, all-in-one app that helps boaters plan safer routes with ease. Earlier this year, Savvy Navvy launched new features including NMEA Connect, which seamlessly integrates NMEA-enabled boat instruments with the app, providing real-time data and enhanced AIS visibility.

BoatUS, the Boat Owners Association of The United States, is the nation's leading advocacy, services and safety group for recreational boaters. Providing on-water towing assistance to its members, this new partnership will enable its 740,000 members with a discount on a Savvy Navvy Premium account, providing enhanced access and functionalities for safer navigation.

“BoatUS does great work for its members, and its mission to eliminate preventable recreational boating accidents aligns perfectly with why we founded Savvy Navvy. As a leader in digital navigation, we firmly believe in formal training, understanding navigation, and knowing what’s going on in the background while the app is doing the heavy lifting. With human error and inexperience behind so many on-water incidents, this partnership enables more boaters to access Savvy Navvy, enhancing safety and peace of mind whilst out on the water,” says David Cusworth, Head of Partnership and Innovation at Savvy Navvy.

“We’re excited to partner with Savvy Navvy and offer our members a discounted rate to access the Savvy Navvy navigational app,” said Elio Betty, Director of Partnerships at BoatUS. “Our hope is to connect our members with a seamless navigational experience when on the water and ensure our members reach their destination safely.”

To become a member of BoatUS for only \$25 annually and enjoy benefits such as the Savvy Navvy Premium Account, a subscription to BoatUS Magazine, complimentary DSC-VHF radio registration, discounts on marina fuel, transient slips, repairs and more, visit BoatUS.com/Membership.

Unlike other navigation solutions, Savvy Navvy provides smart routing, giving users the optimal route and dynamic ETAs based on real-time data: departure time, chart information, weather conditions, tide, boat specifications, and local regulations. With more than 3 million downloads worldwide, the United States continues to be one of Savvy Navvy’s fastest growing markets. For more information, visit www.savvy-navvy.com.



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THE CAA & OLD FORGE PRESENT

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VENDORS
TRAILER RAFFLE
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BEVERAGES
DEMO RIDES
(WEATHER
PERMITTING)

MARCH 6TH & 7TH

FRIDAY 11AM - 6PM
SATURDAY 9AM - 6PM



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Otis Announces 2025 Sales Representative and Agency Awards



Otis Technology presented their 2025 Sporting Goods Sales Awards in their booth at the Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show.

Every year Otis Technology presents awards to the sales representative and sales agency which have shown initiative, sales growth, outstanding effort and customer service over the course of the last year. Otis Technology has recognized Riley Durose, of Jeff Robles & Associates, as the 2025 Sales Representative of the Year and Simpson Sales Company as the 2025 Sales Agency of the Year.

"This highly coveted honor reflects the friendly competition among our many outstanding representatives and recognizes Riley's exceptional performance and dedication. Riley excelled in driving success through our private label program and worked tirelessly to ensure every dealer in his territory was fully supported and set up for success," stated Kenda Campbell, Vice President of Sales for Otis Technology. She continued, "watching Riley's growth from the very beginning of his career in this industry has been a real joy and we are thrilled to celebrate his achievements in 2025."

"The Simpson Sales Team is a natural extension of our internal sales team," remarked Campbell. She commented further, "their deep industry knowledge and proactive approach consistently generate new and exciting business opportunities. Beyond driving growth, they strengthen relationships with our customers and help us stay ahead in a competitive market. Their ability to align with our goals and deliver measurable results makes them an invaluable partner, and we're fortunate to have them as part of our team."

Otis Technology is known for manufacturing the most advanced gun cleaning systems and accessories available. The superior Breech-to-Muzzle® design combined with unmatched quality has positioned Otis as the gun care system of choice with the US Military. Otis Technology is *AMERICA'S GUN CARE*.

Otis Technology Promotes Brad McIntyre to Chief Executive Officer

Lyons Falls, NY: Otis Technology, a leader in firearm maintenance, is proud to announce the promotion of Brad McIntyre to Chief Executive Officer, effective January 1, 2026. McIntyre currently serves as Executive Vice President and has been a dedicated member of the Otis team for over 25 years.

Throughout his tenure, McIntyre has been instrumental in developing and strengthening Otis Technology's relationships with government/military and international partners. His deep understanding of these markets and his strategic leadership have helped position Otis as a trusted provider of mission-critical solutions across the globe.

"Brad's promotion is a natural evolution for Otis," said Bill Kleftis, current CEO of Otis Technology. He continues, "he's not a newcomer; we've grown together, and he's helped shape the company into what it is today. His ability to inspire teams and execute strategy has been instrumental in our success. I am confident that under Brad's leadership, Otis will continue to thrive and evolve while staying true to our roots."

Doreen Williams, Otis Technology's founder and Chairwoman of the Board, added, "When I hear the word Otis, I feel family. Brad has been part of the Otis family for many years, and his promotion is not just a milestone for the company, but a reflection of the culture we've nurtured since day one. His leadership is grounded in integrity, mutual respect, and a deep commitment to our employees, customers, and the communities we serve. His leadership will carry Otis forward with strength and purpose."

McIntyre will succeed Bill Kleftis, who has served as CEO since 2022. Kleftis will remain with the company in an advisory capacity through Q1 2026 to ensure a seamless transition.

For more information, visit otistec.com and shooters-choice.com.

About Otis Technology

Otis Technology is known for manufacturing the most advanced gun cleaning systems and accessories available. The superior Breech-to-Muzzle® design combined with unmatched quality has positioned Otis as the gun care system of choice with the U.S. Military. Since 1985, Otis Technology is **SMART GUN CARE**.

Shooter's Choice, acquired by Otis in 2018, brings over 40 years of expertise in premium firearm care. Its trusted line of cleaners, lubricants, and protectants is used by

professionals and enthusiasts alike – from target shooters to hunters, law enforcement, and military personnel. Shooter's Choice. **The Gun Care Professionals.**

Media Contact:

Jared Sturtevant
Brand Marketing Manager
jsturtevant@otistec.com
(315) 348-2412



Help cast a legacy for tomorrow's hunters and anglers

The outdoors community faces a critical challenge. As demographics shift, fewer people are buying hunting and fishing licenses. This decline threatens the funding vital for managing our natural resources and preserving wildlife habitats. But, there's hope. The Outdoor News Foundation is taking action.

Our mission? To cultivate the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts and conservation leaders. Your generous donations power our impact, directly benefiting young people through essential education and resources at environmental learning camps, environmental scholarships for future outdoors journalists, fish and wildlife biologists, and other stewards of our natural world, and free access to Outdoor News.

Join us in turning the tide. A single donation of \$25 helps fund a child for a year, and ensures a vibrant future for our sporting heritage. Together, we can share the wonder of the wild with the next generation of sportsmen and women.

Make your mark. Donate now and help us forge a lasting legacy for the outdoors community.

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

Visit us online at OutdoorNews.com/Foundation-Home or snap the QR code!



APPLICATION FOR NYSOWA MEMBERSHIP



Name: _____
 Address: _____

 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 E-Mail: _____
 Website: _____
 Do you receive payment for your services? _____
 Other Writer Affiliations: _____

CATEGORIES (Note: fillers are not considered to be articles in applying for Writer status)

A. Newspaper _____ Attach 12 tear sheets

City: _____

Circulation: _____ Column Name: _____

Published: ___ Daily ___ Weekly ___ Monthly ___ Periodics

B. Magazine _____

Staff position: _____ Freelance: _____

___ National: Attach two tear sheets. ___ Regional: Attach four tear sheets.

C. Lecturer – Attach copies of a published schedule or six paid presentations.

Staff position: _____ Freelance: _____

D. Photographer ___ Illustrator ___ Artist - Attach proof of publications of film/video, 8 stills, or prints.

Staff position: _____ Freelance: _____

E. Book Author – attach a copy of the Publishing House Catalog listing the book.

Name of Book: _____ Publisher: _____

F. Editor/Publisher – Attach a copy of a current issue of magazine/newspaper.

Name of Publication: _____

G. Radio/Television – Attach audio/video tape documenting (4) 30 minute or (8) 15 minute programs. Station:

_____ City: _____

H. Public Relations Agency – Attach copies of (6) news releases.

Staff position or occupation: _____

I. Electronic Publishing – Attach 8 published outdoor columns or articles in last 12 mos. Electronic

Publication: _____ web address: _____

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____ Active

Specialties

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> b. Firearms/Shooting | <input type="checkbox"/> c. Archery/Bowhunting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Freshwater fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> e. Saltwater Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Flyfishing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> g. Boating | <input type="checkbox"/> h. Camping/Backpacking | <input type="checkbox"/> i. Wilderness Survival |
| <input type="checkbox"/> j. Trapping | <input type="checkbox"/> k. Outdoor Travel | <input type="checkbox"/> l. Outdoor Politics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> m. Nature | <input type="checkbox"/> n. Environmental Affairs | <input type="checkbox"/> o. Natural Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> p. Water Sports | <input type="checkbox"/> q. Cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> r. Nature |

Areas of Expertise

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. Book Author | <input type="checkbox"/> B. Magazine Editor | <input type="checkbox"/> C. Newspaper Editor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> D. Public Relations | <input type="checkbox"/> E. Television | <input type="checkbox"/> F. Electronic Media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> G. Magazine Columnist | <input type="checkbox"/> H. Newspaper Columnist | <input type="checkbox"/> I. Freelance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> J. Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> K. Illustrator | <input type="checkbox"/> L. Lecturer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M. Photographer | | |

Sponsor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Active Sponsor: _____

Please enclose a check, made payable to NYSOWA, with this application and mail to:

Charles Wittek III, 1075 Tooker Ave., West Babylon, N.Y. 11704

631-827-8664 - charleswittek@gmail.com

Join online at <https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa/members>



APPLICATION FOR NEW YORK STATE OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSN. SUPPORTING MEMBERSHIP

Supporting Membership Does: \$60.00 per year.

Our company or organization, wishing to support the New York State Outdoor Writers Association (NYSOWA) in its program to further the causes of conservation and wise use of our natural resources, and to promote outdoor recreation activities, hereby applies for Supporting Membership.

Name: _____
Position: _____
Company: _____
Address: _____

City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Fax: _____
E-Mail: _____
Website: _____
Contact: _____

Please outline your organization's interests and activities in the outdoor field:

Applicant Signature: _____
Active Sponsor: _____

Please enclose a check, made payable to NYSOWA, with this application and mail to:

Charles Witek III, 1075 Tooker Ave., West Babylon, N.Y. 11704
631-827-8664 • charleswitek@gmail.com

Join online at <https://app.joinit.com/o/nysowa/members>