

# The Balance Wheel

Newsletter of the Association of Conservation Information

Fall 2006

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## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

By Marianne Burke, Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries  
[mburke@wf.louisiana.gov](mailto:mburke@wf.louisiana.gov)

Greetings ACI members,

I am excited about serving as your new president for the next two years. If plans go accordingly, you will hear from me regularly during my term. The 2006 conference in Orlando, FL was a success and I want to extend a great big "thank you" to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for organizing and executing a first class professional conference. If you did not have the opportunity to attend, you will find a recap of the conference workshops in this issue of *The Balance Wheel*. I hope you will take time to read the abstracts and contact the speakers if you have questions.

A popular agenda track at this year's conference was Tuesday's marketing workshops. The topics discussed at the workshops included programs for increased license sales, RBFF's marketing partnerships and a "show-and-tell" session highlighting success stories from several agencies. This track was so well received by ACI members that many asked to continue the marketing workshops at next year's conference. I am happy to report that our 2007 conference host, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, has agreed to offer a full day of marketing training. The planning is in its infant stages but we will keep you posted as the conference agenda develops.

Also, congratulations are in order for our new officers and board members elected at the conference. The new officers are Nels Rodefeld (OK) as vice-president and Lydia Saldaña (TX) as secretary. Bob Wines has agreed to remain as treasurer. Our newest board members include Thomas Gresham (LA), Craig Reiben, (USFWS) and Jon Charpentier (NH). Please feel free to contact any officer or board member if you have questions or suggestions for our great association.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *The Balance Wheel* and I look forward to working with all of you in the coming year.

Marianne Burke, President  
Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries

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## **PROCEEDINGS FROM THE 2006 ACI CONFERENCE**

**The Legacy and the Challenge**

**July 16-20, 2006**

**Sheraton Safari Hotel**

**Orlando, Florida**

*Following is a collection of presentation abstracts from the ACI Conference. The abstracts are meant to provide an overview of the subject matter covered during the presentation. For those who attended to conference, these abstracts will help jog your memory about that great new program you were planning to implement! For those who were unable to attend, perhaps these presentation abstracts will be useful examples of the high-quality programming at all ACI Conferences and will be helpful for securing travel funding for the 2007 ACI Conference at the Eastover Resort in Lenox, Mass.*

Scott Ball reports that you will soon be able to view a photo gallery from ACI's Orlando Conference on the conference website: <http://www.aci-2006.com/>. When the photos are available, he will post a message on ACI listserv. Be sure to check them out!



**Monday, July 17**

**“Last Child Left in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder”**

Presenter: Richard Louv

Abstract Prepared by: Dottie Head

We are all concerned about endangered species. What is the leading endangered species? I think it is the human child in nature. We are seeing an enormous break between children and nature. In all of history, children went outside to play in nature. In the past few decades, that has changed.

There is lots of anecdotal evidence that something profound has changed in the relationship between children and nature. Children spend 44 hours a week plugged into some type of electronic medium. They spend more time in highly structured activities, longer hours in school and they bring home more homework. At the end of the day, there is not a lot of time left for them to go outside to play. This trend has had profound affect on our children's mental, physical and spiritual health.

Schools and the news media do too good of a job teaching children about the Amazon Rain Forest. Most kids can tell you all about the rain forest, but they can't tell you about the last time they went outside and found a snake or watched the leaves fall or listened to the wind blow. They know more about the rain forests than they do about their own woods.

This problem is a 'doorway issue.' It will get people who do not agree about very much to go through the same door and come to the same table. Nature has a tendency to increase the sense of wonder. It gives children a chance to see something larger than themselves. What happens when our sense of ownership of nature gets taken away? Who will be the future stewards of the earth?

But, why has the break happened? It's easy to blame video games, but I don't think that's the issue. Children are doing exactly what we are telling them to do. We tell them that the 'bogyman lives in the woods,' that the future is in electronics. Schools tell us that only that which can be measured counts. Television tells us about child abduction. Parents are scared and that is the number one reason why kids don't go outside.

This phenomenon plays itself out in a number of ways. There has been a huge increase in covenant restrictions for housing that dictate what color you can paint your house, whether or not you can plant a vegetable garden, build a tree house or put up a basketball hoop. There are laws that prohibit touching wildlife. At what point did we go insane? We are restricting kids from getting in nature!

The good news is that the experts are beginning to look at how nature affects child development. We are still hunters and gatherers biologically speaking. When we don't get our hands dirty, we're not well off. Research has shown that attention deficit disorder symptoms get much better when kids have some exposure to nature. Some have suggested that nature be added to of therapies instead of behavior modification and Ritalin. Could it be that some of the reason prescription for add drugs and depression is because we took away nature?

So how do we turn things around? How do we market it and sell it? The term 'nature deficit disorder' has attracted a lot of interest, but what is the phrase that puts a positive spin on it? The response to the book has been significant. I did not expect that. I learned that this is an intrinsically hopeful issue. We are in a cultural depression because there are so many issue that we can do nothing about. We can go out and do something about this.

As communicators, we need to market what nature can do for kids, how it helps their grades and changes their lives for the better. Environmental education is good for your child whether you care about nature or not. Don't just give the bad news. Parents are interested in what nature can do for their kids. No child in America should go without that small miracle that nature can provide.



### **Teaming with Wildlife Communication Strategies**

*Presenters: Rachel Brittin, Naomi Edelson, Sarah Flowers, Martin Hamburger, Dave Metz, Lori Weigel*

*Abstract Prepared by: Rachel Brittin, [rbrittin@iafwa.org](mailto:rbrittin@iafwa.org)*

Teaming with Wildlife returned to ACI this year with a new installment of media training on the state wildlife action plans and need for new and greater funding for wildlife. Naomi Edelson, Teaming with Wildlife Director for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies opened the workshop with an update on the Teaming with Wildlife Coalition, which is presently growing by leaps and bounds to include new organizations and businesses that support preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. The coalition's growth is a response to the recent completion of the state wildlife action plans, and is the first taste of a growing interest from conservation partners and the public.

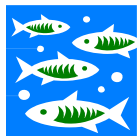
The past year has seen some truly incredible outreach work on the state wildlife action plans. Participants saw a video showcasing news clips, magazine articles and videos that communicators from around the country have developed for their state's wildlife action plan. New polling information on the opinions of wildlife advocates was

presented by the communications firm Laguens Hamburger Kully & Klose (LHKK). This polling shows interesting differences in which messages to use with people who are members of conservation or sportsmen's organizations when talking about the state wildlife action plans. Sarah Flowers, Vice President of LHKK, characterized this difference by calling the general public the mini vans of the communications world, where you need to be safe and disciplined in your message use, while the wildlife advocates are Mercedes, sleek and specialized vehicles who are designed to drive your outreach forward. More about these findings can be found at [www.teaming.com](http://www.teaming.com).

National and state press plans to help with strategic communications decisions for their wildlife action plan was presented by Rachel Brittin, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' Public Affairs Director, who commented that "The wildlife action plans carry enormous potential for positive media coverage. Rather than constantly responding to negative stories, we should seize this opportunity to tell the public about the good work our agencies do." Meanwhile, the state-specific press plans were discussed by Rebecca Brooke, Teaming with Wildlife Communications and Outreach Assistant. She discussed the importance to using natural wildlife happenings to gain media coverage, and working with state coalition organizations to hold events, press conferences, and coordinated stories regarding their state's wildlife action plan. Both state and national versions of the press plans outline target audiences and strategies and actions to reach them. These documents, along with state-by-state fact sheets and other outreach resources are available at [www.teaming.com/communications.htm](http://www.teaming.com/communications.htm)

The workshop wrapped up a roll playing exercise, with attendees responding to reporter's questions about their state wildlife action plan. Each attendee was provided with the role of reporter or interviewee by LHKK's Sarah Flowers. The assigned reporters had to ask the right questions, while the state interviewees had to be prepared to answer some tough questions. The point was to show each of the communications professionals attending that the action plan messages are easy to remember, but making sure they're incorporated makes a big impact with the media.

For more information, visit [www.teaming.com](http://www.teaming.com).



### **Involving Volunteers in Delivering Your Message**

*Presenter: Geoff Brown, Nancy Herron, Melissa Tyrone, Lynda White*

*Abstract Prepared by: Andi Blount*

*ACI attendees had lots of questions for five panelists who offered up examples of what works well for their agencies. Moderator Geoff Brown asked the audience to suggest topics for the panelists, which included specific concerns about recruitment and retention, professional training, recognition programs, etc. Although each panelist only had a short time designated, they managed to touch on these and other concerns.*

#### Lynn Hawk, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Office of Recreational Services

Lynn has served as volunteer coordinator for 22 years. During her first 10 years as coordinator for over 100 volunteer hunter education instructors she operated the program without giving out incentives, relying on those who "really wanted" to be part of the program. Gradually they tried using little tokens of appreciation, then a points system, and later offered a catalog for instructors to select their own award. Although it would be nice to get back to the "no rewards" policy, gift cards to stores like Bass Pro Shops are a good workable solution that does away with ordering inventory of a variety of different items and dealing with purchase orders. Although some volunteers won't even ask for the minimum travel stipend, others will nit-pick about the record keeping of points, which determines the dollar amount of the gift card.

#### Suggestions:

- Volunteers enjoy exchanging ideas at a weekend, statewide gathering where staff members discuss training techniques. They also like potluck dinner gatherings for one-day training sessions;
- Recognize that good volunteers attract more good volunteers, but don't be fooled into thinking you need everyone.

#### Nancy Heron, Texas Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Learning Programs

Texas simply could not run its educational programs without volunteers. She documented about 635,000 volunteer hours a year, which equates to 305 FTEs at a cost saving to the agency of \$5.3 million yearly. Texas uses volunteers primarily for special events and at several sites, such as Sea Center (where 15,000 hours/year is typical). The successful Master Naturalist program is a new effort coordinating with the county extension service, saving TPW \$2.3 million yearly. This program is based on a 40-hour instructional program, with certification and advance training. Volunteers must be active in the program and can assist in several service projects such as working on nature trails, helping at youth camps, clearing exotic plants, etc. Texas is also trying to match ethnic diversity to reflect the community needs and is starting up a pilot program in Houston.

#### Tips for a successful volunteer program:

- Establish a well-defined mission with well-defined goals;
- Use clear methods of communication for better training;
- Keep their enthusiasm up, especially during the first few months, when about one-third tend to drop out;
- Motivation is based on one of three concepts: achievement, affiliation, or relationships-- determining which is the most important to an individual is key in keeping the person active and productive;
- It is worth time spent in matching the correct person to the correct job;
- When trying to recruit certain ethnic groups, look at the Bureau of Labor Statistics website or check corporate models such as National Corporation for Community Service;
- Good Web sites include: [www.casenet.org](http://www.casenet.org), [www.charitychannel.org](http://www.charitychannel.org), or [www.independentsector.org](http://www.independentsector.org).

#### Laurel Remus, New York Department of Environmental Conservation, Director of Public Affairs and Education

New York is set up differently from most natural resource programs in that all components of environmental quality come under their guidance. New York runs 27,000 visitors a day through four education centers, which are largely staffed by volunteers. The centers are week-long camps for 12-14 year olds. The agency uses a corporate model, using a formal memorandum of understanding, background checks, etc. They treat volunteers more like staff, conduct extensive training, followed by testing and practice teaching sessions that are supervised by paid staff.

In addition, New York works with AmeriCorps to provide some paid internships under a contractual arrangement that includes a stipend for housing. Addressing an audience question about how to keep volunteers from taking over projects, she gave an example of an unsafe practice which volunteers wouldn't stop doing (taking children through a storm drainage pipe). When no satisfactory arrangement could be made, they "fired" the volunteers and started a new group.

#### Tips:

- Learn barriers to your success (in NY it was transportation for volunteers);
- Recruit through the web site, newsletter and word of mouth;
- Ongoing evaluations and monitoring are critical to keep quality volunteers;
- Best rewards-- food of any type: picnics are a favorite, especially when combined with educational behind-the-scenes training ( ex. going where the public can't at a park;)
- The favorite perk for volunteers is when the agency sends out a picture and press release about volunteer accomplishments;
- Partner with organizations already established in a community;
- Let the needs of a community help determine what the volunteers do (ex. plant trees in parks and areas where their ethnic groups go; won't help in places they don't use.)

#### Melissa Tyrone, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Melissa oversees about 6,000 volunteers who work in 27 central and east Florida parks. Having grown up as a park volunteer, she relates to the importance of the role and strives for quality control. She recruits at RV shows and at civic meetings and strives to develop individual relationships with the volunteers. One of the important roles is the "campground host" who helps open up parks that are closed seasonally. The host receives a free campsite for helping greet visitors, keeping the bathrooms clean, etc. Many of these volunteers have been active 15-20 years. Incentives are based around a 100-hour pin; 500-hour volunteers receive a complimentary state park pass. She tries to bring the volunteers to the same level of understanding the message at orientation, but acknowledges that there is not enough training. One recent success was in bringing first-year college biology students to work with volunteers and biologists.

#### Tips:

- Modify training guides such as an on-line guide developed by the National Park Service (Managing Our Volunteers Education);
- Consider online management of hours worked to simplify record keeping;
- Look for info/education guides online to affect change: one is a community based social marketing company— [www.cbsm.com](http://www.cbsm.com); another good site is [www.causecommunications.org](http://www.causecommunications.org);
- A "cost of a volunteer" study is available through the Kellogg Foundation.

#### Lynda White, Audubon Society, Eagle Watch Coordinator

Because of the small paid staff, the “citizen scientists” who monitor eagle nests provide an essential service in Florida. The 250 volunteers have helped document 11,050 nesting pairs in half of the state, providing valuable data. Volunteers who monitor nests vary from home-schooled children to retired professors.

A training manual with slides was developed to help volunteers differentiate maturation of the birds. Volunteers keep in touch through e-mailed reports and perform a variety of tasks that are mostly centered around monitoring during the nesting season (Oct. 1 through May 15). Since the Bird of Prey center has only five FTE and three part-time staff, volunteers are invaluable in answering phones, cleaning cages on-site and for data collection in the field. The center receives a major part of their funding through a grant from Disney and there is no extra money for freebies for the dedicated volunteers.



## Evaluating Education Programs

Presenter: Georgia Jeppesen, National Conservation Training Center, [Georgia\\_Jeppesen@fws.gov](mailto:Georgia_Jeppesen@fws.gov)  
Abstract prepared by: Dottie Head

What is program evaluation? It is the systematic collection of information about the merit or worth of the activities, characteristics, or outcomes of a program. There are many reasons to evaluate your educational programs. We need evaluations to:

- Develop a program based on community needs and assets;
- Develop a program that supports agency mission or goals;
- Determine if a program is being implemented as planned;
- Improve program funding;
- Verify outcome or impact;
- Promote public relations and other services;
- Be accountable;
- Be legal!

When there is not enough time or money to do everything, then evaluation helps to decide what needs doing most! There are formal and informal types of evaluations. Information evaluations are usually based on observations of body language, behavior, etc.

An evaluation does NOT:

- Tell you where to save money;
- Tell you the cause;
- Resolve the conflict;
- Make decisions.

However, an evaluation can tell you:

- The number of participants;
- The number of repeat visitors/participants;
- Awareness or knowledge of the site/program;
- Attitude toward site/program;
- Skill Level;
- Wildlife population increase;
- Acres of shore or wetland restored;
- Age appropriateness.

When developing an evaluation plan, you will need to include 1) a description of the program to be evaluated; 2) the purpose for evaluation, including type (needs assessment, formative or summative); 3) stakeholders, including potential stakeholders and key stakeholders and decision makers; and 4) logistical considerations, e.g. when is the information needed and what resources are available to conduct the evaluation.

There are several tools for collecting evaluation information:

Questionnaires and Surveys: These can be used to quickly and/or easily get lost of information from people. Advantage: anonymous; inexpensive; easy to compare and analyze; can administer to many people; many already exist. Challenges: Might not get careful feedback; wording can bias responses; may need sampling expert; and doesn't get full story.

Interviews: Use interviews when you want to fully understand someone's impressions or experiences, or learn more about their answers to questionnaires. Advantage: provides in-depth of information; allows probing; reveals

individual perceptions; and allows for open-ended questions and responses. Challenges: time consuming; can be hard to analyze and compare; can be costly; interviewer can bias participants' responses.

Documentation Review: Good for when you want an impression of how the program operates without interrupting the program. Advantages: get comprehensive and historical information; unobtrusive; information already exists; few biases about information. Challenges: often takes much time; information may be incomplete, unorganized or unavailable; not a flexible means to get data because the data is restricted to what already exists.

Observation: Used to gather accurate information about how a program actually operates, particularly about processes. Advantages: can observe events first-hand; can adapt to events as they occur; effective way to measure behavior changes. Challenges: observers can change the environment; can be difficult to interpret seen behaviors; inter- and intra-observer reliability can be difficult.

Focus Groups: Used to explore a topic in depth through group discussion. Very useful in evaluation and marketing or when you want to know "why?" Advantages: socially oriented; allows moderator to probe; can be efficient way to get in-depth information in a short time; can convey key information about programs. Challenges: can be hard to analyze and respond; needs good facilitator; difficult to schedule six to eight people together; less controlled than individual interview.

Case Studies: Used to fully understand or depict participants' experiences in a program, and to conduct comprehensive examination through cross comparison of cases. Advantages: provides in-depth understanding of situation; powerful means to portray program to outsiders. Challenges: time consuming to collect, organize and describe; represents depth of information rather than breadth; can't generalize results.



**Tuesday, July 18**

### **RBFF Marketing Partnerships**

*Panelists: Stephanie Hussey, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation; Lydia Saldaña, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; Kent Whittington, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission*  
*Abstract prepared by: Stephanie Hussey, RBFF, [shussey@rbff.org](mailto:shussey@rbff.org)*

In order to address and identify strategies to reverse declining license sales, RBFF partnered with state fish and wildlife agencies in Iowa, Idaho, Texas, and Florida to develop and implement integrated marketing and grassroots education pilot programs aimed at increasing fishing participation. Each state has utilized a planning team, comprised of fisheries, information and education, and outreach staff, to develop strategic plans and implement pilot programs. Built upon the Take Me Fishing™ campaign, these programs include multiple outreach strategies, such as website enhancements; direct mail; radio and television advertising; and media coverage and promotion of fishing events. These programs have found success through utilizing an integrated, best practices approach including: involving a team in program planning, implementation and evaluation; building on past experiences; exploring new opportunities; and utilizing numerous communications channels.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) involved fisheries, communications, licensing, and regional staff on a planning team to develop a program with the goal to increase the percentage of fishing license sales per capita to 1999 levels in the Southwest and Panhandle regions and decrease the annual license sales drop-out rates within five years. IDFG implemented a pilot program during April-July 2005 designed to increase license sales among lapsed anglers. Strategies included direct mail postcards supported with newspaper advertisements and broadcast media, radio and cable television spots, and website enhancements. License sales increased by two percent in the Southwest region and five percent in the Panhandle region during 2005 compared to 2004. Renewal rates for the target group were an average of seven percentage points greater than the control group. Based on an average license costing \$22, an additional \$57,174 was generated in license and Federal Aid revenue with efforts costing less than \$20,000. The pilot program is currently being replicated in 2006 with lapsed anglers in both regions as well as two additional regions. Also, IDFG is implementing strategies aimed at retaining new anglers from 2005.

The goal of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' (IDNR) pilot program was to reverse the recent trend of three percent annual decrease in fishing license sales by selling the same amount of licenses in the target area as in 2004 during 2005. And using lessons learned, increase fishing license sales to 2002 levels over a three-year period. With a planning team of fisheries, information and education, and outreach staff, the IDNR piloted a program targeting lapsed anglers in the Iowa City/Cedar Rapids area during May-June 2005. Strategies included direct mailing a family

fishing guide and postcard reminder, movie theater and radio ads, media coverage and promotion of fishing events, supplemented with an enhanced website. Sales in the targeted region increased by three percent during 2005 compared to 2004. Both control and target counties experienced an increase in license sales during May-June 2005 compared to May-June 2004, however target counties experienced growth that was 9 percentage points higher than control counties. Building on this pilot, IDNR conducted focus groups in March 2006 with lapsed anglers to better understand barriers to participation and what the IDNR can do. The pilot program is currently being replicated with fine-tuned strategies targeting lapsed anglers in the same region, as well as strategies directed at retaining new anglers from 2005.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) program mission is to promote and enhance quality recreational fishing and boating in Florida in a safe, sustainable manner that recognizes the need to appropriately channel pressure. Piloted in Duval and Lee counties, the program aims to increase funding, increase customer satisfaction, increase safe participation in recreational fishing and boating, and increase ethical and conservation-oriented angling and boating practices. The program promotes fishing as a fun, family-oriented activity, and includes voluntary license program promotion and vehicle tags as another way to pay for conservation. FWC kicked-off their program with an event at the I-95 Welcome Center in the spring and, in partnership with the Jacksonville Convention and Visitor's Bureau, promotional materials are being distributed throughout the summer. Promotional materials include direct mail, fishing brochures, counter cards, and radio and video PSAs, supported with website integration. The program will be followed by a post-campaign survey this fall.

Recognizing the growing Hispanic population, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) pilot program is aimed at increasing participation in fishing and aquatic stewardship among Hispanic families in Houston. This multi-year effort is being developed, implemented, and evaluated by a team of TPWD staff from many divisions. Branded "Take Me Fishing Houston!", the program currently has 11 community partners and is in full swing with school events wrapping up and community organizations holding events through summer. TPWD is applying best practices with special emphasis on adoption, whereby community partners are taking ownership of the program and encouraging families to participate in opportunities beyond events. Program effectiveness is being evaluated with participating families, community partners, and staff.

Results of the 2006 state pilot programs will be available later this fall. Reports are currently available for Idaho and Iowa's 2005 pilot programs.



### **Dealing with the News Media**

*Presenter: Clarence and Ellen Jaffe Jones, [cjones@winning-newsmedia.com](mailto:cjones@winning-newsmedia.com)*

#### The Media Hold These Truths to be Self-Evident:

People who work in government are:

- Lazy
- Stupid
- Wasteful
- Greedy
- Incompetent
- Turf-Protective
- They can't be trusted
- They Lie.

#### ACI has an Achilles heel in dealing with the news media:

- Most of your work is with reporters and editors who are already on your side. It is easy to preach to the choir.
- General media reporters and editors may not share your point of view. With them, you will often be swimming upstream.

#### The news media are changing:

- Newspapers are dying
- TV networks are desperately trying to hold their audiences
- Since 1970, the number of U.S. households has increased 90 percent
- In that same period, newspaper circulation has dropped 12 percent

- Most media outlets today are owned by large corporations
- Chains now own 82 percent of all daily newspapers, 87percent of Sunday papers
- Only about a dozen cities have truly competitive newspapers
- Five corporations now own a majority of ALL American media
- Decision-making in newsrooms is similar to those in medicine
  - An accountant at your insurance company makes basic decisions, not your doctor

Written news media policies should include these points:

- We need to tell the public who we are and what we do
- Public knowledge of our organization is vital to our success
- Reporters and photographers should be treated courteously and diplomatically
- If you don't have personal knowledge, help the reporter reach someone who does
- If you would give an ordinary citizen information the reporter is asking for, give it to the reporter
- Let a designated executive know as soon as possible after any contact with the media
- Refer media questions about policy to the PIO or a designated executive
- Return all reporters' calls within 15 minutes
- Every story about this organization should include our point of view
- Never say "no comment"
- Certain kinds of issues should not be discussed with reporters (list)
- The news media have a legal right to observe, photograph and record any event or person in a public place

How the Media Will Judge You:

- Eight personality traits they use to decide whether you will be the "good guy" or "bad guy" in their story

Complaining is Important:

- When to complain
- To whom you should take your complaint
- The management hierarch at newspapers and broadcast stations
- If they brush you off, embarrassing them is often your only weapon

TV & the web have changed the American brain:

- If you're not using the techniques they've developed, your audience will not:
  - Pay attention
  - Remember what you said
  - Buy your point of view
- How TV Commercials Succeed
  - Grab their attention
  - Say it quickly
  - Say it with Visuals
  - Use humor
  - Embed a powerful emotional hook

Gadgets for better presentations and interviews:

- Wireless mike
- Custom earpiece
- Rehearse on videotape

Crisis management and the media:

- Deciding to ring the alarm bell is often the most difficult decision
- Every organization should have a written crisis plan that:
  - Defines a crisis
  - Establishes who will invoke the plan and who be in charge
  - Is revised and rehearsed regularly
- Monitor your staff carefully
  - In crisis mode, people do not think well
  - A written, rehearsed plan will make their decisions almost reflexive
  - Some media will try to bribe them for leaks
  - Some staff will like being in the spotlight too much
  - Sleep deprivation and hunger can seriously affect their ability to do a good job
- Never under-estimate the crisis

- If it turns out to be worse than you said, the media will think you are a liar or an incompetent manager
- If it's not as bad as you estimated, and is solved quickly, the media will think you are a brilliant manager
- Bring the media inside
  - Let them watch the decision-making process
  - They will identify with you, not your critics
- Make plans for:
  - Interview and briefing areas
  - Parking satellite trucks
  - Issuing media credentials
  - Automated briefing systems

Most news stories follow a simple formula:

- The inverted pyramid was invented for newspapers in the 1800s
- TV reworked it to create the Sony Sandwich formula
  - The Sony Sandwich was designed to make the interview the meat of the story
  - It works so well, most other media now use it, too

Rules for Interviews:

- If the reporter's first contact scares you, buy some time to prepare
- Decide one point you want to get across in the interview
- Decide what to wear and where you'd like to be interviewed
- Design a quote/sound bite using the FACE Formula
- Make a cheat sheet
- If it's a telephone interview, stand up

The pre-interview interview:

- You need to interview the reporter before notes begin or tape rolls
- Find out as much as you can about the reporter's assignment
- Ask what else he/she has done to research the story

The FACE interview formula:

- F – How do you feel about ... and why
- A – If you analyze, you MUST put all numbers in perspective
- C – Try to include at least one of the compelling C's of news
- E – If it's television, you'll need to invest more energy



**Marketing to Increase License Sales**

*Presenter: Kent Whittington, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission,  
[Kent\\_Whittington@MyFWC.com](mailto:Kent_Whittington@MyFWC.com)*

In general, marketing for sales can be segmented into three development phases: Product – Message – Media. At each of these stages, it's important to stay focused on what you're trying to accomplish – sales – while maintaining the best possible Return on Investment (ROI).

Taking a look at Florida, there are a number of products – special-opportunity deer and hog hunts, Dove Club (special-opportunity dove hunts), Osceola turkey and Alligator. All of these hunts are limited entry, but each has its own dynamics that must be accounted for in trying to increase sales. Factors such as availability, inventory, location, price and demand all affect the marketing methods you should choose.

Comparing the deer and hog hunts with the Dove Club is an interesting example. For the last eight years, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has conducted a promotional campaign (tactical marketing plan) for special-opportunity deer and hog hunts. In each of the years, the FWC has learned a great deal about what promotional methods offer the greatest return. For instance, before an automated license system, we coded each of the applications – providing a different code for magazine advertisements, Web site, In-store and direct mail. We found the highest rate of return could be found using direct mail. We also found the advertisements helped create a demand for the product. The product and campaign continues to provide good return, to the point that we have significantly increased the direct mail distribution each of the last three years. As the product matures, we'll continue

to increase this direct mail and assess whether there is positive return on investment. We are ultimately trying to reach the phase just before diminishing return.

The Dove Club is different in that we have found it requires minimal promotion. Initially, we were selling about half of the available permits. With full promotion such as magazine advertisements, Point-of-Purchase, Web advertising, news releases and direct mail, we began to sell all of the available permits each year. We quickly realized the product had become popular and was mature enough that it did not need full support. We were able to rely on the Web site and news releases to sell all the permits. Obviously, cutting the cost of other promotional elements drastically increased our ROI. The keys to both of these examples are to monitor your promotions and adjust for maximum return.

In the message development stage, it's important to remain focused on what hunters and anglers are looking for – information. So many first-time promoters worry about coming up with the best slogan or brand, when it's more important that you keep the message simple. With limited budgets, focus your efforts on the opportunity and what makes it better than the competition. Simple phrases like "Specially managed lands", "Bigger game", "Get free stuff", "Get a discount", "Convenience" and "Support conservation" aren't very sexy, but they work. Real words are the key like the following example "Your Chance to bag an Osceola Turkey, the Crown Jewel of the Turkey Grad Slam" tells your potential buyer what "they'll find inside." To be even more authentic, testimonials are another effective way of keeping the promotion simple. This is another freebie that can be gleaned from exit surveys of the prior year's hunts. Including testimonials personalizes the product for your potential customers and helps paint the picture of the experience – not the offer.

The last development stage of marketing for license sales is the media – or vehicles you will use to promote the product. It's easy to visualize this step as a recipe. Potential ingredients used are direct mail, news releases, POS/POP, Web site and advertising: magazines, radio, TV, etc... Each "cook" must adjust these ingredients, and maybe even leave some out (or add something else), to make the best meal. Obviously, we're saying the media should be adjusted to provide the greatest reach among the most targeted audience possible. The preceding presentation was followed by an overview of Kentucky's Elk Hunts. This overview and Q and A notes will be posted on the ACI's conference Web site along with illustrations at [www.aci-2006.com/marketing](http://www.aci-2006.com/marketing)



### **Roundtable: Magazines**

*Abstract prepared by: Kim Nix, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources*

The Magazine Roundtable session was led by Kelly Broderick, editor, *Florida Wildlife* magazine. During the session, the following states with magazines participated in the discussion: Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia (two different publications) and Wyoming. Georgia, who does not have a magazine, and several federal agencies were also in attendance.

To begin, each magazine's representative gave some statistical information about their publication, such as paid circulation, advertising, complimentary subscriptions, and the number of people on staff. The circulations varied tremendously, from 3,000 to more than 400,000. Most of the magazines are by paid subscription, but a few are distributed free of charge. Most of the magazines use some freelance writers and photographers, but the amount used varied by publication. The goal of the magazines also varied, with some only covering game and fish, while others incorporate forestry, environmental issues, state parks and tourism.

The pros and cons of advertising was a large topic of discussion. Some state magazines have sponsorships instead of ads. Randy Brudnicki of Texas passed out a draft of an advertising sales consortium proposal. He is working to get an agreement between states for national advertising. Each state would get a percentage of the proceeds depending on the size of the ad and their circulation. Anyone not at the meeting who would like a copy should contact Randy at [randy.brudnicki@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:randy.brudnicki@tpwd.state.tx.us).

Several magazines have done reader surveys, which reinforced that their publications are very popular. These surveys ranged from printed pieces in the magazine to online web surveys.

Some states shared some success stories that have either gained new subscribers or resulted in a positive image for the magazine. They include the following:

**Missouri:** Special insert for kids

**New Hampshire:** Warden's Watch column

**Delaware:** Tie-in featuring an artist in the magazine and new contacts made at a gallery showing of the artist's work

**Alabama:** Annual photo contest

**Texas:** Offering free subscription to State Parks Season Pass owners

**Ohio:** High response rate to online reader survey by offering free keychain for completing survey

**South Carolina:** Special inserts paid through grant money

Although the magazine roundtable took up two sessions, the discussion could have been even longer. There is lots of enthusiasm among those involved with state magazines and all felt that sharing information is extremely beneficial. Several of those involved would like the roundtable to be a permanent part of future ACI meetings.



### **Public/Private Outreach Partnerships**

*Presenters: Jim Sweatman, John Eversten, Greg Finenco, Brent Benson*

*Abstract prepared by: Jim Sweatman, [jsweatman@highstream.net](mailto:jsweatman@highstream.net)*

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC's) Fish Orlando! Program is an urban fishing program with the motto "Bringing Quality Fishing to Families." Its mission statement is to "Provide and Promote Convenient Quality Fishing Opportunities in the Greater Orlando Area."

One part of the Fish Orlando! Program is the management of five water bodies (collectively known as the FAB FIVE) for specific species of fish and user groups. Turkey Lake is a Fish Orlando! FAB FIVE features a Boat Loaner Program. Thanks to the collective partnership between Bass Pro Shops Orlando, Tracker Boats and the City of Orlando, constituents from all over the state, country and the world are able to rent a Tracker Boat for \$15 per boat, per day at one of the state's hot spots for largemouth bass and black crappie. Available by reservation through the City of Orlando's Bill Frederick Park, the four boats are purposely only rented Thursday - Sunday from 7 a.m. - 11 a.m. in order to limit fishing pressure and maintain quality fishing. Reservations and the money are handled by Bill Frederick Park personnel. The money is used by the City to offset the cost to pay a concessionaire. The concessionaire fits users for life jackets and gets them out on the water. Those using the boats are required to measure and record every fish caught. Driver's licenses are kept while the participants are out on the water and not returned until the data sheets are filled out.

Featured in Bassmaster Magazine, Florida Sportsman, ESPN and numerous local media spots, the Fish Orlando! Turkey Lake Boat Loaner Program is a good example of how to build Public/Private Outreach Partnerships. Steps taken to ensure success were (1) Identifying the key players; (2) Developing a plan; (3) Obtaining support from the top; (4) Constructing written agreements; (5) Celebrating the agreements through kick off events such as Bass Pro Grand Opening, Bass Pro Legends Tournament and Media/VIP tournament; (6) Developing infrastructure such as docks, concession stand, boats, kiosks, creel sheets, etc.; (7) Enhancing fisheries habitat; (8) Constructing appropriate regulations; (9) Promoting the product; and (10) Maintaining the product.

For more information on the Fish Orlando! Program, visit [Myfwc.com/fishing/fishorlando](http://Myfwc.com/fishing/fishorlando) or call the Fish Orlando! Office at 407-846-5300.



### **Duct Tape Marketing**

*Presenter: Kent Whittington, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission,*

*[Kent.Whittington@MyFWC.com](mailto:Kent.Whittington@MyFWC.com)*

The term Guerilla Marketing was coined by Jay Conrad Levinson and was popularized in the first printing of his book on the topic in the 1980s. Guerrilla marketing has been described as an unconventional way of performing promotional activities on a very low budget. Such promotions are sometimes designed so that the target audience is left unaware they have been marketed to. The basics here are guerilla marketers use their small size as an advantage, to be more agile and cunning than big business. Lack of budget is compensated for by increased effort and creativity. The basics and tactics of guerilla marketing are still employed today, however the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has morphed this style of marketing (and related undercover and stealth marketing) into a leaner version known as Duct Tape Marketing.

Why Duct Tape Marketing? If you had what you needed or wanted in the way of money, people, time, etc... you may do it differently—but reality is we use what we have. To use a real world analogy - when you need a mechanic, a part or you're in a hurry, many people resort to duct tape. It's quick – not pretty, but it does get the job done until more time or money is available. It may sound like “Survivor” but this is the premise for success with duct tape marketing—use your ingenuity rather than your money (Outwit vs. outspend). The big guys can get fat and lazy by throwing money at all their problems and their advertising agencies, but fish and wildlife agencies don't have that luxury. Today's market is so fluid and things happen so quickly that we must be able to react and respond.

The foundation for Duct Tape Marketing has basic elements: Research, Focus and Think Sales. You need facts or research to target your efforts. Research is broken into two categories; primary (you pay) and secondary (they pay). Secondary research directs you to the primary research needed. Associations, tourism, other government and universities and schools are all good sources of secondary research. Primary research should be used to evaluate what is needed, what is working and other behavior (not opinion). Research is the stepping stone for you to focus efforts. With little money or time, you have to be diligent at focusing your efforts and narrowing the target audience as much as possible. The third element to which we have built is thinking sales, not marketing. A sale equals action. With limited budgets, the focus should be on sales, not brand. The brand should be supported as much as possible, but you are trying to move the needle with dollars. Millions of dollars are spent on brand awareness for the Nike “swoosh”. Smart, smaller companies spend small dollars on promoting the sale of a shoe, but the brand is still supported.

The key here is to have something to sale and identify high potential opportunities. Tactically, this process is broken into three sequential development stages – Product – Message – Media. Develop the product first, create the message and adjust for the selected media.

The other elements of Duct Tape Marketing involve time and money: Watch your money (Don't spend any money, Spend THEIR money, Share the Costs), Let someone else do the work and **don't limit your creativity to the message**. This is the most tactical element of Duct Tape Marketing. Most marketers put so much effort into the creative that the media or distribution falls short. The preceding presentation was followed by a list of strategies and tactics that are real examples of Duct Tape Marketing in action. These will be posted on the ACI's conference Web site along with illustrations at [www.aci-2006.com/marketing](http://www.aci-2006.com/marketing)



### **Backcountry Feng Shui**

*Presenters: Liz Sparks, Dave Godwin, P.J. Jones, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Abstract prepared by: Dottie Head*

The term “Feng Shui” describes a relationship between nature and ourselves. Florida has five million acres of public land. Florida wants visitors to be able to use this land, but to leave a small impact when they go into an area. This is referred to as “thoughtful design.” We would like for visitors to feel welcome and to leave with a deep appreciation of the resources. Like most states, we find that fishing is a popular activity, hunting is declining, and we are working to reach out to non-traditional users, e.g. kayakers and geocachers. Each year, more than 17 million visitors and residents share Florida's public land and water.

#### Interpretive Programs : Essential Elements:

- Every person who comes to a natural area is a customer of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC);
- Interpretation is translating natural and cultural events into language people understand;
- Interpretation aims to carry specific messages;
- Audience learns through first-hand, on-site experience;
- Audience is “non-captive” and has vacation mindset (meaning they are not looking to learn.)

#### Interpretation Essentials:

- Strategic – plan, implement, evaluate and continually revise;
- Entertaining – attract and hold audience interest;
- Relevant – relate to the individual;
- Thematic – support themes with interesting facts and examples. Make message easy to understand and remember.

#### Interpretation Purpose:

- Foster understanding and appreciation;
- Clarify mission;
- Welcome and orient;
- Promote safe behavior;
- Protect resources from misuse;
- Develop recreation skills;
- Provide discourse with public.

#### Interpretive Approaches: (use a variety to attract different users)

- Print Media – signs, exhibits, self-guided tours;
- Mass Media – Web sites, audio-video exhibits, films;
- Personal Approaches – talks, guided hikes;
- Public Participation – school and volunteer programs.

#### What determines the degree to which interpretive messages are received, understood and retained?

- Thoughtfully designed message content;
- Thoughtfully designed format materials;
- Thoughtfully designed presentations of materials.

#### Design and Format of Printed Materials:

- Attractiveness – catchy titles, subtitles, headings;
- Readability – simple font style that is adequately sized;
- Writing Style – 6 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level; active voice and personal pronouns.

#### Design and Format of Interpretive Design:

- Interpretive trails -- your tool for showing visitors what you want them to see; use loop trails; less than two miles long with meandering paths; well marked;
- Signs – Keep them level; ensure adequate lighting in kiosk; orient your sign towards the pathway; use recycle materials; repair vandalism/damage promptly; install signs at eye level; anchor the sign with trees, rocks, fallen limbs, etc.;
- Structures – (observation decks, viewing blinds, bridges and kiosks) choose muted colors; placement should allow wildlife viewing while minimizing impact to wildlife.

#### Steps in the Planning Process:

1. Initial survey and assessment;
2. Draft Recreation Master Plan (RMP;)
3. Biologist review period;
4. Stakeholder review;
5. Finalize RMP.

The RMP serves as a guide for the types of recreation and interpretive program available. It is an appendix to the Conservation Master Plan (CMP) for the property.

#### Interpretive Themes:

- Primary – things you want the visitor to leave with;
- Secondary – things it would be nice for the visitor to know but not crucial!



**Thursday, July 20, 2006**

#### **Re-Tooling Agency Websites**

*Presenter: Loyse Hinkle, Colorado Division of Wildlife, [Loyse.Hinkle@state.co.us](mailto:Loyse.Hinkle@state.co.us); Marianne Burke, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, [mburke@wlf.louisiana.gov](mailto:mburke@wlf.louisiana.gov); Scott Ball, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, [scott.ball@MyFWC.com](mailto:scott.ball@MyFWC.com).*

Web Site Redesign – Florida's Story

Scott Ball, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is currently redesigning its Web site – MyFWC.com. We have defined four goals for this project.

1. Improve the organization of the Web site's content – creating a more intuitive navigation structure (site architecture);
2. Establish a consistent look and feel across all pages of the Web site;
3. Bring the site up to date to reflect the current agency structure;
4. Make it easier to place, update information on our Web site.

There are several reasons for undertaking this project. The agency now known as the FWC was created in 1999 – the result of a merger of all or parts of several different natural resource agencies. Each had a presence on the Web, and these pages moved to a new site without a concrete vision for a consistent look and feel. The Web site had numerous authors, and there was no system in place to prevent authors from altering design templates. Internal issues limited the Webmaster's authority to enforce design standards.

To take on this challenge, the FWC established a Web Editorial Board (WEB) and authorized it to set/enforce policies and standards governing the Web site. It also is charged with reorganizing the site architecture, weeding out dated and redundant content and determining or assigning responsibility for all pages of the site.

We also have purchased content management system software (RedDot) and are about to begin working with the vendor to implement it. The system will allow us to build rigid templates, locking out unauthorized alterations. Subject matter experts will be able to publish their content without Web design experience and reduce the burden on IT staff.

Among the challenges we've faced along the way:

- Achieving consensus among the WEB members at many decision points;
- Performing an extremely large and complicated task in addition to "regular" duties;
- A contracted Web designer (to create a new look and feel) who became overbooked, delaying completion of important tasks;
- Leadership turnover in two key areas (IT and Community Relations) and bringing replacements up to speed.

Among the lessons learned or recommendations to others embarking on a similar project:

- Temporarily relieve key players of other duties so they can focus better on the project;
- Budget twice the time you would expect – allowing for ample planning, working through issues and dealing with brush fires;
- Seek vocal, emphatic and hands-off support from agency leadership and the supervisors of team members;
- If your project includes reorganizing your site architecture **and** implementing a content management system, complete the reorganization before implementing content management.

#### The Process of Redesigning Colorado's Public Web Presence

*Loyse Hinkle, Colorado Division of Wildlife*

Colorado Division of Wildlife (DOW) recently finished a two and a half year Web site redesign. By sharing the steps taken, and strategies and resources used, the hope was that similar organizations could use this information to help in their future redesign projects.

First, the redesign team put the Web site in context with the history of the organization's efforts to communicate with the public.

Second, a core process involving a phased approach was used. Phase I, Defining the Project, included discovery, clarification and planning.

An internal kick-off meeting, surveys and focus groups, solidified support and buy-in throughout the organization.

Statistics comparing large numbers of major public outreach areas used by the Division of Wildlife, demonstrated that the Web site was a powerful communication tool, with as much or more potential for outreach than anything else the Division does.

The fact that the Web site is a maturing technology – a process of evolution – ever-growing and changing, was stressed to our internal users.

They were also informed that the rush for companies to get on the Web has passed. Focus now is on refining and expanding an existing Web presence and figuring out how to utilize Web technologies effectively to fulfill mission-critical objectives.

During phase II, site structure was developed using site maps. Internal focus groups provided feedback.

Phase III, Building Visual Design and Infrastructure, entailed hiring two outside development companies. One designed the look and feel of the site, while the other implemented Microsoft Content Management System. The benefits of a content management system were discussed. After the infrastructure was prepared, migration of content took place.

Finally, Testing and Implementation were performed. As part of this last phase, a Roll Out group was formed and public usability testing was conducted.

A month before cutover to the new site, the public was allowed a “sneak peak” from a link off the current site’s home page. In addition to being able to use the new site, they also had the opportunity to provide feedback through an online form. Two identical content sites were managed during this time. This helped reduce any confusion or unfamiliarity with the new site.

A “How to Use the New Web Site” Adobe Flash video also assisted the public during transition into the new site. In conclusion, obstacles, successes and tips discovered during the DOW redesign project were shared.

Although launching a redesigned site is a major milestone, it is only a step in an evolving process, according to the book *Web Redesign: Workflow That Works*.

#### Web Site Reviews—Louisiana’s Story:

*Marianne Burke, Public Information Director, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries*

The need for easy access to government information and user-friendly tools is crucial to a successful Information and Education Program. Keeping those tools updated is equally important. Web sites are the most utilized source of information, but maintaining a Web site is a task many state agencies have found difficult and time consuming, requiring dedicated manpower. However, to stay in touch with our ever-changing world is a task that cannot be ignored without suffering consequences. Louisiana discovered this truth through trial and error.

Maintaining a Web site and staying in touch with public needs is a full time job. In early 2004, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) embarked on a new venture to overhaul its Web site. The current site, developed in 1996, had received little attention to information and technology updates. The site’s navigation was developed from the employees’ internal knowledge of the agency’s structure, which later proved nearly impossible for the average person to utilize. A user had to navigate through several pages of information before reaching the desired topic. Web master duties fell to various employees who completed the tasks as time allowed, resulting in varying degrees of updates and accuracy. By 2000, the site showed a severe lack of attention regarding informational updates and technological advances. By 2003, the site was obsolete and unusable by both LDWF employees and the public, creating an image of “behind the times.”

With the help of an outside contractor and the addition of a fulltime Web master, LDWF began the long process. A review committee was developed within the agency containing key personnel from each division. Their purpose was to review the contractor’s work, make design choices, and assist the Web master with new navigational plans. The final outcome produced a site designed and developed for the novice outdoorsman with little or no knowledge of the agency. Navigation was developed from a logical viewpoint and popular topics were highlighted and easily accessed from the homepage. The homepage design included representative colors of Louisiana’s more common habitats, easy to read sans serif fonts, simple clickable icons, and rotating photographs, maps, and WMA information. Simple concepts not included in the first site were added to the homepage, such as drop down menus, direct links to popular topics, recent news releases, and a calendar of upcoming events and seasons. The site’s internal pages followed suit from the homepage design.

The most unique feature added to the new site was the “License Wizard” created by LDWF’s new Web master. This new licensing tool assists users in determining which licenses are necessary to legally participate in recreational fishing and hunting activities. Through a short series of questions and answers, the user can walk away with a list of licenses needed, and the total cost, as a guide when purchasing licenses.

The new LDWF Web site launched in April 2006 and continues to receive positive reviews from outside users as well as employees. It is maintained on regular basis, constantly adding, and changing information. It was a venture that

required dedication, additional manpower and much hard work, but it has proved an extremely valuable instrument for distributing information and maintaining public contact. LDWF will continue to keep this project on its priority list.  
[www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov)



### **Ivory-billed Woodpecker: A Successful Communications Partnership**

*Presenter: Keith Stephens, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission; Jeff Fleming, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

*Abstract prepared by: Keith Stephens, [kastephens@agfc.state.ar.us](mailto:kastephens@agfc.state.ar.us)*

This report is a summary of a two year odyssey all brought on by a once-believed to be extinct bird called the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Our journey begins on Feb. 11, 2004, while kayaking through the Cache River National Wildlife Refuge, Gene Sparling of Hot Springs spots what he believes is an ivory-billed woodpecker. That sighting is followed by the famous video shot on April 25, 2004. David Luneau, of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, captures on video what he and other experts now believe to be an ivory-billed woodpecker.

After the video is analyzed, Dr. John Fitzpatrick of Cornell University's Laboratory of Ornithology stated, "The bird captured on this video can be nothing other than an ivory-billed woodpecker."

Have you ever heard people complain about being in the eye of a hurricane? The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with its partners, are keenly aware of the meaning of this saying. A partnership was formed between the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, along with several other organizations. That group is called the Big Woods Conservation Partnership. It is named after the area where the bird was rediscovered.

Needless to say, our group didn't have any prepared information ready for the onslaught of media inquiries that bombarded us and other conservation agencies involved in this issue. It's tough to prepare for something that was thought to be extinct and was last seen 60 years ago. Fortunately, we are lucky to have a number of talented people in these agencies who stepped up to the challenge.

Our first response, after the big announcement in Washington D.C., was to set up a press conference close to the area where the bird was first sighted. We felt that we could gather experts from each of the agencies and organizations with one thing in mind: getting maximum media exposure for each group. We packaged our press conference in a way that positioned our message for optimum media interest by crafting the appropriate media news release, building a targeted media contact list, posting the information on various websites for media access and hyper linking, pitching the appropriate beat reporters and editors and monitoring our exposures. From time to time we have also brought in media to view the area. We have always been as accommodating as possible with the media while at the same time allowing the researchers room to do their job.

We tried to be prepared for what we hoped would be the discovery of roost hole, but obviously that hasn't happened as of this date. But we are still prepared for what we hope is that eventuality. Our plan covers key components such as the strategy and objective, background, fast facts, talking points, communications goals, key audience(s), key messages and how we'll deliver them to the target audience, spokesperson(s) (For a variety of reasons the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission is projected to be the lead media contacts for the discovery of an active cavity or related developments such as photographic evidence, etc.)

Here's a few of the issues that we may face should we find the bird again along with its roost hole:

- I. Defining a "discovery"
  - A. Irrefutable evidence
    1. Clear photo
    2. Active roost hole, nesting cavity
  - B. What is not irrefutable?
    1. More sightings
    2. Do we announce more sightings or lesser evidence other than a discovery? How?
- II. Press announcement of the discovery
  - A. Press Conference?
    1. Where (Arkansas, Washington DC, other?)
    2. Who (there are many partners)
  - B. Press release?
    1. Is there a group press release (Recovery Team, Big Woods Partnership, other?)

- 2. Does each group involved do their own press release?
- C. Coordination among partners for contacting reporters about the announcement.
- D. Web pages
  - 1. Coordination between partners on web content?
  - 2. Links to partner website?

### III. Timing of Announcement

- A. Must coordinate with scientists on announcement
  - 1. How much time is needed to "secure" area around active roost hole before we can go public with the discovery?
  - 2. How will we discuss access to area? What steps are being taken to provide access?
  - 3. How much time is needed to implement conservation plans before going public with discovery?
- B. If we want to do a press conference, how much time is needed to set it up?

### IV. Partners

- A. How do we ensure that all partners are informed about the discovery?
- B. How do we coordinate with all partners in making the announcement?

### V. Crisis communications

- A. How do we deal with leaks of a discovery?
- B. Developing messages to answer negative press questions.

As we all know, we haven't had the opportunity to put this plan into action. But, should something exciting happen we are prepared.



### **10 Steps to a More Dynamic Voice/At Least 10 Steps to Better Presentations**

*Presenter: Karen Schadow, The Voice of Success, [Karen@thevoiceofsuccess.com](mailto:Karen@thevoiceofsuccess.com)*

Karen Schadow, president of The Voice of Success, and a renowned voice and presentation skills coach and media trainer, led two "dynamic sessions" on the last day of the 2006 ACI Conference. Entitled "Ten Steps to a More Dynamic Voice" and "At Least Ten Steps to Better Presentations,"

Karen's seminars were great fun and packed with information. Everyone who speaks to groups or on camera on conservation issues could benefit from her sessions.

Beginning with Becoming Aware of our own Voices, the most important step in attaining a more dynamic voice involves doing what we do every moment of the day: Breathing!

But, "Breathing for Effective Speech" is the opposite of "Breathing for Living." Our normal breathing uses a slow inhalation followed by a quick exhalation. But for an effective, energetic voice, it is important to use a quick inhalation followed by a slow controlled exhalation. By supporting the voices with breath, it is possible to speak to groups all day, keep your vocal energy up, and not strain your voice.

Karen covered pitch placement, enunciation and articulation, vocal resonance, and energy vs. monotony in the voice. For example, have you ever noticed yourself trying to be low-key in meetings, but you end up mumbling? Try to really Open Your Mouth and increase the Resonance of your voice. To do this, try imagining the higher sound of the violin vs. the deeper sound of the cello: It all has to do with the volume of the container. If you open your mouth more fully, you will gain a more resonant sound from the greater volume.

It is also important to "Eliminate Lazy Tongue," by pronouncing all beginning and ending sounds of words and articulating each sound. Doing this will make it much easier for your audience to understand what you are saying! For those who feel that the pitch of their voice is too high, she suggested repeating the following simple sentence over and over. Repeat "This is the WAY home." Remember to elongate the word "way," The word "way" indicates the middle of your pitch range and practicing this sentence over and over will help you gauge a fuller range in your voice.

Perhaps the most deadly voice characteristic is Monotony. It is important to keep you energy up and to use "vocal variety" in your speech. In addition, smiling and remembering that "nobody knows that you are nervous....but you" will contribute to a polished presentation.

During the second session, on Presentation Skills, Karen had each member of our large group give a 30-second "Elevator Speech," that professional communicators should always have at the ready. Think about the top topics in

your office and come up with a pre-rehearsed 30- to 60-second presentation on the topic. This will make last-minutes, on-camera interviews sound polished and confident.

"Less is More" when it comes to presentations. Professional communicators need to edit their speeches often. The five components to keep in mind when preparing a speech are: 1) Attention; 2) Need; 3) Satisfaction; 4) Visualization; and 5) Action.

For more on Karen's seminars in voice and presentation skills and media training, please visit her website, [www.thevoiceofsuccess.com](http://www.thevoiceofsuccess.com).



### **Roundtable: Regulatory Publications**

*Abstract prepared by: Drew Kelly, J.F. Griffin Publishing, [drew@ifgriffin.com](mailto:drew@ifgriffin.com)*

Moderator: Kent Whittington provided introductions and talked about the importance of regulation guides and the importance of sharing information on ways to improve the guides to provide quality regulations.

1<sup>st</sup> Panelist: Mark Oldham presented

2<sup>nd</sup> Panelist: Drew Kelly presented on the full service approach by J.F.Griffin Publishing, LLC ([www.ifgriffin.com](http://www.ifgriffin.com)) and the process and approach taken by Griffin design staff when working with states to improve regulation guides.

Before presenting on the process of improving a regulation guide, a background in the reasons why fish and wildlife agencies are focusing on this area was discussed. The opportunity to add value to the license purchase and to leverage the strong public relations channel through articles are some of the leading reasons, as well as the opportunity to reflect positively on the agency through the quality of the publication.

With the improvements introduced in New Jersey in 2005 and Florida in 2006, testimonials from sportsmen and agency staff were shared on the statewide impact of making these improvements.

Drew reviewed the process of creating a visually striking, easily readable and navigable, professionally designed publication. An overview of a collaborative approach whereby Griffin staff works with fish and wildlife staff was discussed. Steps discussed included the process of dissecting the document, analyzing component parts for improvement, and tips about changing the look and feel to invite readers into the content. Examples were shared of improvements to page templates, tables and charts.

In addition to discussing the process of improving the design of the publication, some time was spent discussing paper stock and printing. J.F.Griffin Publishing publishes regulations exclusively on glossy magazine stock, using the same printing process as is used for newsstand magazines. The impact this has on the publication, coupled with the cost savings that can be offered in the process, create a complete system for improving look and feel.

Discussion continued with a focus on the cost savings that can be introduced while simultaneously improving the stock.



### **Avian Influenza Communications**

*Presenters: Nicholas Throckmorton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, [Nicholas\\_throckmorton@fws.gov](mailto:Nicholas_throckmorton@fws.gov); Catherine Puckett, U.S. Geologic Survey, [Catherine\\_puckett@usgs.gov](mailto:Catherine_puckett@usgs.gov); Mark Cunningham, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, [Mark\\_Cunningham@MyFWC.com](mailto:Mark_Cunningham@MyFWC.com)  
Abstract Prepared by: Dottie Head*

Avian flu is a zoonotic disease, meaning that it can pass between domestic animals, wild animals and humans. For now, it is primarily a bird disease. There are three types "A, B and C." Wild birds are reservoirs of type A. The only known human cases were also type A. Avian flu seems to affect some wild birds more than others, but this virus is dynamic and it evolved quickly.

The highly pathenogenic H5, N1 virus is the one that we are most concerned about:

- To date, 230 people have been infected and 132 have died;
- So far, the virus has not replicated itself well in humans;
- Every year in the U.S., 360,000 people die of the regular flu.

The role that migratory birds play in spreading H5N1 is poorly documented. There is not enough information on how prevalent it is in wild birds or on how rapidly it spreads.

The potential routes of introduction of the highly pathogenic H5, N1 are:

- Poultry and poultry products;
- Smuggling;
- Pet/wildlife trade;
- Contaminated inanimate objects;
- International travel by infected people.

Surveillance and detection efforts to date have focused on:

- Testing of sick or dead wild birds – This offers the highest and earliest probability of detecting the H5N1 strain, should it be introduced into the United States by migratory birds. This strategy expands existing programs, conducted by the Department of the Interior and its partners, to investigate disease outbreaks.
- Testing of live, apparently healthy wild birds -- The targets of these tests are species that represent the highest risk of being exposed to, or infected with, high path H5N1 influenza, because of their migratory patterns. This strategy employs capture and sampling to detect the presence of the H5N1 virus.
- Targeting Sampling of hunter-killed birds at check stations operated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state natural resources agencies supplements the samples from live wild birds. Samples from these species are collected at hunter check stations in the lower 48 states, as well as Alaska, during hunting seasons in areas where these birds gather during migration or over-wintering.
- Monitoring and testing of sentinel animals. Poultry flocks reared in backyards can be monitored for the diseases of interest to nearby commercial poultry operators as a surveillance method. Also, waterfowl flocks can be placed in wetland environments where they may commingle with wild birds.
- Environmental sampling monitors water and/or fecal samples from waterfowl habitats. It can provide evidence of avian influenza circulating in wild bird populations.

Management of the testing is taking place through the Fly-way Councils. To date, about 5,500 samples from wild birds in Alaska have been sent to the laboratory at the National Wildlife Health Center (NWHC.) They hope to surpass the sampling goal of 20,000 to 30,000 samples.

There are two testing methods that NWHC uses:

- 1) Molecular detection – this method is fast, automated. It shows negatives but it doesn't give much other information;
- 2) Viral Isolation – this is the "gold standard" of detection. It is labor intensive and slow, but the results are definitive. The "isolates" are available for further study and "path testing."

The Department of the Interior has developed a 36-hour plan in the event that H5N1 is found in the states. The overall objective is to minimize public fear and panic by distributing information. A national response plan has also been developed in the event that human-to-human transmission becomes sustained. This plan is available on line at [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov).



### Show & Tell

*A new feature at this year's ACI Conference, the Show & Tell session featured 15 minutes presentations followed by short Q&A sessions on a number of different topics. It was a more formal way to share experiences, new techniques and success stories with other agencies.*

#### Update on Conservation Education Strategy

Nancy Herron, Texas Parks and Wildlife, [nancy.herron@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:nancy.herron@tpwd.state.tx.us) ; Rachel Brittin, Association for Fish and Wildlife Agencies, [rbrittin@iafwa.org](mailto:rbrittin@iafwa.org)

A working group was recently developed within the Association for Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) to look take a look at the role that Information and Education plays in each state wildlife agency and to answer the question "Why is it that I&E programs are always the first cut?" AFWA's North American Education Strategy was the result of this effort. The Conservation Education Strategies include a vision and goals.

Since it came out, each goal has been assigned to a committee. The committees are in the process of refining the messages and core concepts. In addition, they are working with state agencies to market these issues and measure the outcomes.

There is a lot of commitment and excitement from AFWA and participating agencies. AFWA has hired Sharon Rushton as Conservation Education Coordinator. Please visit the AFWA website for more information.

#### Reaching Diverse Audiences

*Lauren Remus, New York Department of Environmental Conservation,*

The agency set a goal of reaching out to new and diverse audiences. The goal was to have diversity in age, geographic and ethnicity.

Some of the things they have done include:

- Branding state symbols;
- Creating nature recreation programs for campers and hikers;
- Running articles in the *Conservationist* magazine;
- Conducting education programs at the four education centers in the state, including creating two new facilities on Long Island;
- Providing transportation (a big barrier for some groups) to programs and events;
- Creating an after-school conservation club in New York City. This program was funded by a grant and they have a group of children who are there every day. The trainers are provided with packaged curriculum and intensive teacher training is given to care providers.
- Youth Camps have also been created. The goal is to make the population of the camps represent the population of New York (ethnically speaking.) They have developed kid-friendly program, implemented a Counselor in Training Program, role modeling and optional hunter safety training. There is also an active mentoring program once they leave.

#### Syndicated Columns

*Harry Cabbage, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, [Henry\\_Cabbage@MyFWC.com](mailto:Henry_Cabbage@MyFWC.com)*

A few years ago, Tony Hogan, a FWC employee, began writing a monthly column called "From the Desk of FWC." It worked so well that editors of other publications began asking for columns as well. So, the redesigned to column to newspaper length, changed the name to "Out of the Woods," and syndicated it. The column works around the author's personality. He generally starts off talking about hunting and then weaves in a conservation message. The small daily papers and weeklies are "eating it up."

The Fisheries Department has also gotten involved and they now have a column as well. The columns are provided monthly and the same thing is provided to newspapers and magazines.

#### The Great Arkansas Media Outing

*Steve "Wildman" Wilson, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, [srwilson@agfc.state.ar.us](mailto:srwilson@agfc.state.ar.us)*

A few years ago, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission began sponsoring "Media Outings" to show off some of its programs. To date, media outings have been conducted for bear, eagles, elk, trout and mussels. The usually host four per year and each outing costs the division about \$1000.

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission mails out a registration brochure about one month before the event. Staff follow up with phone calls to those who received the brochure. Meals and lodging are provided at the event. Many times, Arkansas is able to get co-sponsors to help cover food and lodging costs.

It is important to visit the site personally prior to taking the media out. Be sure you know how to get there and that the animal you are featuring is actually there! Have a set schedule, but be flexible.

Arkansas hands out press packets with local media contacts and offers a variety of interviews and story angles. This is a great chance to show off agency facilities and land. Try to feature "field folks" only. The I&E staff can set up the event, but let the field staff be the ones in front of the camera.

This is a good way to promote cooperative efforts between divisions. It is also a good opportunity to present ideas for other segments or stories in the future. One of the biggest benefits is that it develops "trust" with the media.

It is a good way to generate state-wide coverage for a relatively small investment.

#### Podcasts in Minnesota

Scott Pengelly, Minnesota Division Department of Natural Resources, [scott.pengelly@dnr.state.mn.us](mailto:scott.pengelly@dnr.state.mn.us)

Pod casts are a method of distributing .mp3 files over the internet for downloading. Minnesota got into the pod casting business last year. It is an in-house production and no money changes hands in the production process. Basically, it's a new tool in the tool box. The advantages are that it reaches a new audience and has a high "techy" appeal. The pod casts are portable and people can listen to them in their boat, SUV or ice house. The disadvantages are that they only reach a limited audience, it's an unproven communication tool and it's hard to track how many people listen to them.

The pod casts feature a DNR host with scripted questions and two guests, a DNR expert and an outside expert. There are key messages immersed within the script, but the broadcast is real-time, conversational and "folksy." It has the feel of live radio.

Statistics from Minnesota's pod casts:

- Produce one pod cast each month
- 30 minute shows (works for radio)
- Pod casts have received extensive media coverage
- 8,500 downloads in a six month period
- MN sends out a news brief when a new one is posted on the agency website
- Pod casts have received positive feedback from the media and users
- Pod casts are posted on the agency website

#### Puffer Fish Alert Team

Joy Hill, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, [Joy\\_Hill@MyFWC.com](mailto:Joy_Hill@MyFWC.com)

Recently, puffer fish in the Indian River Lagoon were found to contain a toxin that was making people who ate the fish very ill. A total of 28 individuals were treated for poisoning after eating the puffer fish.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission passed an agency rule prohibiting eating puffer fish from the Indian River Lagoon while they study how the fish are getting the toxin. Florida had to conduct a local awareness campaign to educate people about the problem.

Initially, FWC, the Florida Department of Health and the Brevard County Health Department were all involved by they were not working together. Finally, Joy Hill called the Health Department and they met to decide how to handle the situation. They decided to run a TV show segment on the issue.

For the 30-minute TV show:

- Everyone wrote their own script
- Brevard County Government helped produce the show
- Video was created of some of the signs and research being conducted
- A hospital re-enactment scene was included
- The show included interviews with some of the poisoning victims

The video aired on all Brevard County government channels and some hotel channels. It was very effective and there have been no more cases in Brevard County. Following the TV production, the Brevard County Government received a State Productivity Award. The video also received recognition in state and national competitions.

#### Passport to Fishing Program

Mark Sommer, Ohio Division of Wildlife, [Marc\\_Sommer@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:Marc_Sommer@dnr.state.oh.us)

The Ohio Division of Wildlife recently worked with the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) to update the "Passport to Fishing Program." They set up four workshops and invited instructors, including anglers and non-anglers, to come.

Ohio decided to offer rods and reels to kids who completed the program. They also collect information on the students so they can conduct surveys down the road.

Some of the problems they encountered included issue receiving 9,000 rods and reels on time, accounting issues, and a huge mass of customers who wanted the free rods and reels.

Anyone aged 17 or younger can participate in the program. The program is three years old and they expect to have good feedback within the next two years. For other states who are interested, the program curriculum is available free of charge on the RBFF website. A kit, poster and other items are also available.



### UPCOMING EVENTS & DEADLINES

**Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting**, Sept. 17 – 22, Snowmass Resort, Aspen, Colorado.

**National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) Conference**, Sept. 22-27, Louisville, Kentucky, [www.nasbla.org/conference06.php](http://www.nasbla.org/conference06.php).

**Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) Annual Meeting**, Nov. 5-8, Norfolk, Virginia.

**Bird Education Conference**, February 6-10, 2007, Austin, Texas.

**International Boating and Water Safety Summit**, March 4 – 7, 2007, San Antonio, Texas.

**2007 ACI Conference**, July 16 – 20, Eastover Resort, Massachusetts.



### MEMBER NEWS

#### **ACI Mourns Death of Geoffrey Schneider**

The thoughts and prayers of ACI members were with Geoff Schneider and his family last month. ACI lost a good friend and long-time member of ACI on July 13 when Geoffrey Guy Schneider, 54, of Las Vegas, lost a four-year battle with kidney cancer. He was Southern Region Conservation Education supervisor for the Nevada Department of Wildlife since 1987, and was recognized in a proclamation by Gov. Kenny C. Guinn for his 19 years of loyal, dedicated, and outstanding contributions to inform and educate the people about Nevada's wildlife and natural resources. Guinn proclaimed July 14, 2006, as a day of honor for Geoffrey Guy Schneider.

Geoff was born July 29, 1951, in McCook, NE., moved to Las Vegas as a young boy where he graduated from

Bishop Gorman High School in 1970, and attended the University of Nevada, Las Vegas with studies in hotel administration and journalism. He served in the public relations field as a sales agent with Jack Matthews and Company, the Del Webb Corporation in Las Vegas and the Reno/Tahoe areas, worked as a writer and editor at the *Las Vegas Sun*, the *Valley Times*, and the Las Vegas News Bureau before going to work for the Nevada Department of Wildlife as a Conservation Educator in 1987.

In his service to the Nevada Department of Wildlife, he wrote thousands of news releases and stories for newspaper distribution, directed the public affairs activities for the Department for southern Nevada, prepared radio and television broadcasts, conducted live and pre-recorded interviews for wildlife issues and programs, hunter and boating safety, aquatic and environmental education programs. He received outstanding recognition and accommodation for his media coverage in bighorn sheep capture and release programs, the Pahrangat Range water development project, his efforts with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Resource Fair in "Expanding Your Horizons", the extra-mile accolades from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies for his participation in the American Fishing and Tackle Manufacturers Association conference, contributions of numerous articles to the *Nevada Magazine* such as "Hooked on the Fall" and by the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* for his contribution toward creation of "Our Living Desert" to educate and enlighten our youth about the wildlife resources in southern Nevada, and for several years served on the executive committee of the Association of Conservation Information, a national organization of the natural resource conservation communicators.

Geoff, an avid sportsman who enjoyed hunting and fishing with family and friends throughout Nevada and other western states, was preceded in death by his sister, Barbara Oldre of Scottsdale, AZ; and his parents, Oliver and Reba Schneider of Las Vegas. He is survived by his wife, of 27 years, Jody St. Hilaire, a reading specialist with the Clark County School District; his son, Scott, a tennis professional at the Canyon Gate Country Club; and his three brothers, Stephen Schneider of Las Vegas, Sen. Mike Schneider of Las Vegas, and Peter Schneider of Strafford, MO.

For those interested in making a contribution, Geoff's family has requested that be made to the Nevada Cancer Institute, 10000 W. Charleston Blvd., Suite 140, Las Vegas, NV 89135 (702) 821-0003 or at [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov).

Geoff was serving as ACI secretary at the time of his death. ACI is considering several opportunities to honor Geoff's service to ACI. Look for more information in a future issue of *The Balance Wheel*.

## Update on Old Friends

Gary Thomas sends the following news and photo: I retired from Illinois Department of Natural Resources four years ago, so I'm no longer active in ACI.

The photo shows myself and four other members of ACI, all of whom have retired. We ran around with each other for years when we attended ACI functions and now gather together once or twice a year to discuss things of great importance (best beers, new maladies, family and friends)

Those pictured in the photo from left to right:

Rod Green, Missouri Department of Conservation; Dave Rice, Nevada Division of Wildlife; Bob Campbell, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources; Mike Smith, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Gary Thomas, Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Between us, we served eight years as ACI president, three of us are life members, and four of us are "Spirit of ACI" recipients. I guess there also are dozens of years of holding other officer positions in the organization, as well as numerous years on the Board of Directors.

The photo was taken in Bob Campbell's front yard at James Island (Charleston), South Carolina, in June.



## Retirements and Promotions in Oklahoma

ACI past-president David Warren retired this July after 32 years of service with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. Nels Rodefelf, who was elected ACI vice president at this year's conference, was promoted to Chief of the Information and Education Division in Oklahoma.



## SPECIAL SECTION

### Meeting Minutes for ACI Business Meeting, Sheraton Safari Hotel, Orlando, Florida

*These are the minutes from the Spring ACI Business Meeting. Please note that these minutes are still in draft form and will be approved at the next Business Meeting. If you have changes to these minutes, please submit them to Lydia Saldaña at [Lydia.Saldana@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:Lydia.Saldana@tpwd.state.tx.us)*

Thursday, July 20, 2006

Dave Chanda called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

Bob Wines conducted role call.

In attendance:

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission  
Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Controls  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
National Park Service  
New Hampshire Fish and Game Department  
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
New York Department of Environmental Conservation  
Ohio Division of Wildlife  
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation  
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources  
South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks  
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
West Virginia Division of Natural Resources  
Wyoming Game and Fish Department

The minutes from last year's business meeting in Ogden were published in *The Balance Wheel* and posted on the website. Chuck Schlueter made a motion to approve the minutes. Melinda Carl seconded. **The motion was approved.**

#### President's Report (Dave Chanda)

Dave Chanda reported that it's been a great two years serving as ACI president. He appreciates the support of the ACI officers and board members who make the organization run like a well-oiled machine.

In recent years, ACI has begun conducting board conference calls which has helped us take another step forward as an association. The budget is in great shape which gives us a lot of flexibility to bring in additional speakers and do other things for the organization.

He looks forward to seeing ACI members at other conferences down the road.

Marianne Burke reported that we have vacancies for secretary and vice-president. Geoff Schneider passed away last week and his funeral is this evening in Nevada. ACI is sending flowers and Marianne asked that people please sign the card. The family is asking that personal donations be made to the Cancer Institute in Nevada. Bob Wines is collecting donations and will make a donation on behalf of ACI. If you'd like to contribute, please see Bob.

#### Treasurer's Report

Bob Wines handed out copies of the treasurer's report, including a list of all checks and deposits made in the past year. There is one question about possible duplication of a check for awards that was sent to Dave Chanda. They will do more research on this when they get home and resolve the issue.

It was a very good year for ACI. Expenditures were under budget by \$6000. A copy of the proposed budget was distributed. The budget has already been approved by the board. One correction was made. The ClubRunner contract is something the board is pursuing. Web hosting will be included in the contract. We have deleted the Web hosting cost of \$300 and will move that money to the awards category since we have come close to exceeding that category in recent years. So, the award category increases to \$2300 and the \$300 web hosting software is deleted.

Nancy Herron clarified that ClubRunner is a service contract, not a product.

Scott Ball made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Don King seconded. **The motion was approved.**

#### Committee Reports

##### **1. Travel Committee (Jim Sciascia)**

Dave Chanda reported on behalf of Jim Sciascia. Thanks to generosity of D.J. Case and Associates and The Outdoor Channel, they were successfully able to get four people to the conference that would not otherwise have been able to attend. We were technically able to get five people here since New York came up with funding for one of their people at the last minute.

In the future, ACI would like to set up the travel fund in our By Laws or Articles of Incorporation. Right now, DJ Case and The Outdoor Channel are sending a check directly to recipients. Marianne Burke will be working on this as president. Thanks to the scholarship committee for doing a great job.

##### **2. Awards (Chuck Schlueter)**

The ACI awards continue to be one of the association's biggest fundraisers. We set a goal of reaching 361 records which we met. We are up 24 entries from last year. The Awards Committee met on Sunday and we've tweaked some of the categories to make them more palatable. A category has also been added for exhibits and dioramas.

It was a challenging year with lost entries and other problems. The Awards Committee needs another dozen category chairs. If you are interested in helping out, please see Chuck Schlueter.

Thanks to this year's category chairs. If you need more of the appreciation journals we give to judges, please let him know.

Joan Guillfoyle asked if there were awards for category chairs. Chuck was also asked to put the list of category chairs needed outside on the bulletin board.

##### **3. Ways and Means (Nels Rodefald)**

ACI has met requirements for non-profit status and filed articles of incorporation in the state of Wyoming. The next big step is getting a lawyer. Judith Hosafra is working on finding an attorney.

##### **4. Membership (Bob Wines)**

The board amended the bylaws to align the fiscal years to July 1 – June 30. The board modified the bylaws to accurately reflect the fiscal year in ACI's "Articles of Incorporation."

It's been a great year for ACI membership. We have added eight new agency members, seven individual members, and one sponsoring member. Technically we have not lost any members in the past fiscal year, but the Pennsylvania Game Commission has let us know that because of budget issue they will not renew membership until 2008.

Bob and his staff made calls to solicit new agency members. Alaska is not able to come on board as agency member but Nancy Long has come on as an individual member. The same thing happened with Wisconsin, and Greg Long joined as a new member. This gives us 10 new agencies or states represented. Bob encouraged everyone to contact their neighboring states and encourage them to join ACI if they have not already done so.

We have a brand new brochure with updated membership fees and contact information. There is a stack out on the registration table. Please take a few back and hand them out to friends from neighboring states.

There is also a new membership directory. Each agency member received 3 – 5 copies. Please take some back for your employees to use and to pass around to neighboring states.

Dave Chanda suggested that folks call neighboring states and find out why they're not members.

#### **5. Auction (Steve "Wildman" Wilson)**

We had fun and made money at the auction! A special thanks to Karen Parker from Florida for her assistance. The auction earned \$5012 for ACI. The auction committee, consisting of Steve "Wildman" Wilson, Micah Holmes and Lydia Saldana, has already met to set goals and generate ideas for next year. We'd like to get more trips donated. This year, a total of 15 trips were donated, which is the most trips yet. Steve reported that they also distributed information on the trips in advance so people could plan. Next year, they plan to a better job of getting trips into *The Balance Wheel* so people can plan.

We were down a little bit on items. We're getting more trips but we have fewer items coming in. We looked at assigning someone to work on a camping package or a knife package. If you have a contact with a manufacturer, please work on getting a good package to help us get our number of items up.

Thanks to everyone for bringing stuff and for spending your money!

#### **5. The Balance Wheel (Dottie Head)**

ACI published four issues of *The Balance Wheel* on-line in the past year, including the first ever proceedings issue. We'll be repeating the proceedings issue again this year. Please let her know if you have story ideas. If you'd like to receive notification that *The Balance Wheel* is online, please subscribe to the list serve.

Dave mentioned that if you were interested in serving on *The Balance Wheel* committee please let Dottie know. There are three committee meetings a year and they rarely run more than 45 minutes.

A discussion ensued about whether people miss having a printed copy of *The Balance Wheel*. Joan Guillfoyle asked if a survey has been conducted to see if people were using the online version. This needs to be something the Board keeps up with in the future. Joan suggested we continue to evaluate this over the next few years.

Nancy Herron suggested that we could do an online survey, she would be happy to help. Marianne Burke asked if we put a counter on the page to see how many hits it gets online. One of the reasons we went to an online version was for budget reasons and to streamline. Dave Chanda stated that we can probably now afford to have a printed copy if needed. That needs to be something that is taken up by the next board.

Dave Chanda stated that some people don't want to be part of list serve because of the amount of email traffic. He asked if there was another method for alerting members that an issue is on-line.

#### **6. Conference Sites (Kay Ellerhoff)**

Judy Stokes reported on behalf of Kay Ellerhoff on future conference sites. Future sites are:

2006 – Orlando, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

2007 – Massachusetts, Lenox – July 8 – 13 at the Eastover Resort. Judy Stokes reported that New Hampshire will help Ellie from MA put the conference together. Joan Guillfoyle has been to resort and reports that it's a charming town in the Berkshires. We will need to fly in the Albany, New York or Hartford, CT. Eastover Resort is an old-fashioned beautiful resort in the country with lots of amenities, including an outdoor and indoor pool. It's a big, old rambling place with lots of atmosphere. It's a great location. We'll have an all-inclusive rate which will include meals.

2008 – Tennessee

2009 – Louisiana

2010 – Nevada

2011 – Ohio

There are five to six others waiting in the wings, including Virginia, South Dakota, Minnesota, NCTC in WV, Granite Ranch in Jackson WY, and Saskatchewan Environmental Agency.

Please make notes on your evaluation form about what you want to see in Massachusetts so that they can put together a program that features things you want to see.

#### **7. Web Master (Nancy Herron)**

Florida created a great website for the conference. We will be switching our site over to Club Runner. The new system will allow members to update their own directory listing which will allow us to have an accurate up to date membership list. We'll need a contact from each state to be in charge of keeping their state listing updated. It will probably be a couple of months before it comes on line so we'll send out more information when we are ready to go live.

#### **8. Conference Report (Scott Ball)**

Planning the conference has been a lot of work and a lot of fun. Florida expects to be able to return the full advance to ACI. Scott suggests waiting until the business meeting to hand out drink tickets for the banquet as a means of increasing participating in the business meeting. Tropical dressy is the dress-code for the banquet. No ties allowed.

He reminds presenters to get abstracts to Scott or to Dottie so they can pull the proceedings together. Also, please fill out evaluation cards and put them in boxes. Tell us what worked and what didn't work. We did not send out any written materials in advance. We used the list serv to circulate information and we'd like to know if that worked. The information we get is very helpful in planning the next conference.

After the conference, they will be posting group photo and other photos from the conference will be posted on line for your viewing pleasure!

A participation list will also be put together and posted on line.

Dave Chanda reinforced that people need to send abstracts to Dottie or Scott. He'd like to see us move towards a more formal transaction so that an I&E director can put it in front of a director's face and hopefully get funding to attend the next year's conference. Our conferences present awesome material and it should be put down in some sort of formal way.

#### **Liaison Reports**

##### AFWA

Nancy Herron is Vice Chair of Outreach and Education Committee and she reported that the conservation education strategies are among the biggest priorities. They're interested in increasing participation in Education and Outreach committee. They're sending out a survey to determine why some states aren't attending and what issues they should be addressing. There is a concern about attendance at the conferences and AFWA is wondering if ACI might take a stronger role in education tracts at their conferences. More discussions will be forthcoming. AFWA recognizes ACI as a strong potential partner in this arena.

Avian flu and human wildlife conflicts were of big interest as were global warming and recruitment.

##### OWAA

Judy Stokes presented news from Kay Ellerhoff on OWAA. Kay reports that OWAA is not dead. It remains the largest outdoor communicators group in the nation by nearly three times. Membership continues to be an issue, including the imminent retirement of many members and the need to recruit new members. There is an agency membership category that is \$100. Jim Lowe is the newly elected president and they've revitalized committees and charges. Headquarters continues to offer more than 20 publications a year. Executive Director Kevin Rhodes is working on a new outreach program that will include a PowerPoint presentation. Membership recruitment campaigns will also be conducted at other writers' conference. The next meeting is June 16 – 19 in Roanoke, VA.

##### State/federal

Craig Rieben reports that they are taking a look at trying to increase communication between federal and state agencies. They are looking at using the new ClubRunner survey as a tool for this. Craig will be working with Nancy to try and revamp that.

Craig has been trying to increase membership in Washington D.C. without much luck. He suggests that state contacts will have more success working with BLM and other contacts that they have at the state level.

There's a lot of hysteria going around about Avian Flu. Communication is going to be the key. We need to take a real hard look at how we can really get some kind of quick communication link in the event of an emergency. This has not been an easy issue.

#### Northeast

Judy Stokes reported that they do have an active group. They've been working to create a regional CWD communication plan and would probably follow suit with Avian Influenza or other issues. They plan to follow up on a survey they conducted about agency credibility and to evaluate the work to see if it has any effect.

#### Southeast

Marianne Burke reported that SEAFWA is reorganizing itself. They've started a new Web site and "blog." She encourages people from SEAFWA to log onto new Web page to see what's going on.

#### West

Judy Stokes reported that the West's conference will take place when she gets back from ACI. She's got to seek another means of contact to get information from that conference.

#### Mid-West

Scott Pengelly reported that the conference was just held in South Dakota. He tried, unsuccessfully, to get information on conference.

#### **Old Business:**

Bob Wines reports that they're working to update lifetime membership list in directory. He's contacted some other folks who were really active in ACI to try to get some updated information on lifetime members. Several entries were updated. We tried to send directories to lifetime members and probably received eight of them back. If you have a personal friendship with any of these folks, please get the information to Bob.

There's also a copy of the audit report up front if anyone wants a copy of the CPA report from the last fiscal year.

#### **New Business:**

##### Finance Committee

Melinda Carl and Don King were appointed to look at the financial report that Bob Wines had prepared. Melinda reported that they reviewed the records with Bob Wines and he answered all their questions. Everything was well documented and Bob is going to research the possibility of a duplicate check. Don reinforced that Bob did a great job.

Judith Hosafros made a motion to accept the report. Judy Stokes seconded the motion. **The motion was approved.**

##### Nominating Committee Report

Hoy Murphy, Chair and Micah Holmes and Judy Stokes were appointed to the nominating committee. They have good candidates for every office plus candidates for the three open board positions.

##### Proposed Officers and Board members

President – Marianne Marsh – Burke (Louisiana)  
VP – Nels Rodefeld (Oklahoma)  
Secretary – Lydia Saldaña (Texas)  
Treasurer – Bob Wines (West Virginia)  
Immediate Past President – Dave Chanda

##### Board of Directors:

Jon Charpentier (New Hampshire)  
Thomas Gresham (Louisiana)  
Craig Rieben (USFWS)

These three will replace Jenn Levin, Chuck Schlueter, Jim Sciascia.

Board members who still have a term include Micah Holmes, Hoy Murphy and Liza Pointer. (2007)

Melinda Carl, Don King and Scott Ball are serving terms that expire in 2008.

Chuck Schlueter made a motion to pass a unanimous ballot to approve the officers. Melinda Carl seconded the motion. **The motion was approved.**

Scott Ball made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 a.m. Micah Holmes seconded. **The motion was approved.**

*Submitted by Dottie Head*

**-END Fall 2006 TBW ISSUE-**