



OWAC Newsletter September 2017

President's Message:

Become an Outdoor Leader by Joining OWAC's Board and serving on
OWAC Committees

BY TOM MARTENS, President

Here's your chance to make California's great outdoors even greater. You can do that by joining the Board of Directors of OWAC, the Outdoor Writers Association of California.

Our state has unparalleled outdoor activities – fishing, hunting, hiking, biking, mountain climbing, camping, boating, surfing and many more located in areas of breath taking natural beauty. It's the job of outdoor writers to heighten the awareness of these activities, particularly among youngsters who may favor surfing the net to surfing a wave in the Pacific. [read more](#)

IHEA-USA Presents Alpen Optics with Industry Award

OWAC would like to congratulate Vickie Gardner, Vice President, Alpen Optics upon receiving the International Hunter Education Association (IHEA)-USA 2017 Industry Award.

This award is presented to any member of the industry that exhibits outstanding support of the IHEA-USA and its mission. IHEA-USA is the professional hunter education association affiliated with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the 50 state hunter education programs. The award recipient has been active and innovative in fostering new ideas in hunter education and helping the hunter education movement through personal staff efforts, professional advice or financial assistance. [read more](#)



Vicki receiving IHEA-USA
award

OWAC Members Recognized at OWAA's 90th Annual Conference

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"IHEA-USA is very proud to have

Alpen Optics as our Industry Award winner for 2017," Brad Heidel, IHEA-USA executive director, said. "Alpen Optics has been a supporter of hunter education for many years. It is the support of shooting industry companies like Alpen and others that will ensure the future of our hunting heritage well into the future."

Alpen Optics was established in 1997 and offers a line of binoculars, spotting scopes, rifle scopes and accessories that provide the best value in the industry today. Products range from the entry-level Sport Series to the world-class Rainier top-of-the-line family of binoculars and spotting scopes. Alpen Optics is determined and committed to providing customer service that is second to no one. Alpen Optics and Vickie Gardner have been Corporate Members of OWAC for many years.



From the desk of OWAC Executive Director (acting)

Bob Semerau

Fall Cancelled, Spring to be in full swing

As fall approaches we all have a bit more time to pause and reflect on the many blessings we share here in the California outdoors. And we, as members of the outdoor media, are perhaps most fortunate because we go out into the wilds of this great state, share our stories, and get paid to do so.

This year, due to problems related to fires and rains across the state earlier in the year, Outdoor Writers Association of California will not be holding a fall general membership conference. Regrettably, the venues in discussion with OWAC will not be suitable for our purposes in time for the scheduled meetings.

While plans for the upcoming meeting have fallen by the wayside, we can all look forward to a bright and beautiful springtime meeting, with your help.

The location for the spring general membership conference has yet to be determined, and here is where you come in. We are seeking a new and exciting spot, or possibly revisiting one of the captivating locales from past meetings, that would be interested in working with OWAC for the spring 2018 meeting.

Finding just the right place, with Chamber of Commerce or other personnel interested in promoting their slice of heaven in California, can be a challenge for your all-volunteer OWAC Board of Directors.

If you know of any location that fits the bill, especially if you know of an individual or an organization involved in promoting the area, please send that contact info along to me for follow-up by the board. The board will contact them and send a package with all the details to begin the process.

With your help and involvement, OWAC can continue to grow and thrive in this beautiful country of ours. Please, reach out to your personal contacts and bring OWAC home to a venue of your choice.



Passing of a Legend - Mike Ritz

Mike "The Griz" Ritz was a classic. His love of fishing began when he was four years old fishing with his father in Montana. He continued that tradition fishing with his son Charles since Charles was two years old.

Mike's legendary guide skills began at the age of 16 when he was a hunting guide in Montana. He was a fishing guide in Wyoming, Utah, Montana, Alaska and all around Mexico. He hunted and fished around the world twice and held many world records.

Mike had been in Mexico since 1985 and was an adviser to the Mexican Government. While living in Mexico Mike established deep roots within the community and the culture. He was highly respected both locally and at higher levels of government, and was sought after by those wishing to develop projects in the region. His three television shows Adventures South of the Border, Chef on the Water and Discovering Mexico are broadcast on MegaCable in Mexico, Alive TV Outdoors and WCTV in the USA and across 43 countries around the world on Mexico Travel Channel. Mike was also co-host alongside OWAC Member and past-president, John Henigin, on Fish Talk Radio, contributed to five magazine publications and has received numerous awards for his work in print, TV and radio.

As a long-standing member of Outdoor Writers Association of California, Mike received many first-place awards for his film work submitted in the annual OWAC Craft Achievement Awards competition.

Mike was a great lover of the sea and wild life. He unexpectedly passed away August 2, 2017 surrounded by family and friends, at his residence in La Paz, Baja Sur, Mexico.

Cerro Gordo and Owens Valley History

Meade Fischer

Recently published in California Explorer



Robert Desmarais is no ordinary caretaker, living as he does in a ghost town 8200 feet above sea level. He is also an historian, story teller, geologist, chemist and licensed blaster. He speaks of the people who inhabited this place as if he'd known them all personally, which due to the eerie nature of this town, he might well have. Robert is in the process of putting together a book on the history of the town. Hopefully it will be available before long, as just the few stories he told us made me want to learn more.

On a late April day, snow still thick on the high peaks, I joined the Eastern Sierra 4X4 Club for a trip up the rugged, steep dirt road to Cerro Gordo. We drove south out of Bishop, known as the "Little Town with a Big Back Yard," and headed south to Lone Pine, where we picked up the 136, the road over to Death Valley. Just past the fading town of Keeler, we turned left and abandoned the highway for a dirt road that wound up eight miles to this historic mining town. Bishop indeed has a very big back yard. [read more](#)

California Rambling: Worth of Water: The Benefits

by John Poimiroo

“Thousands have lived without love, not one without water.”

-- W. H. Auden

Californians invest a lot more time and money pursuing love, than we do water.

As the first two installments in this series have explained, the Sierra Nevada watershed is threatened. It supplies 60% of the water used in California, yet a century of wildfire and forest management practices have created a forest that is overcrowded with trees.

Those densely populated forests drink more water than a naturally populated forest would, and their tightly bunched canopies prevent snow from falling to the ground to become part of our watershed's vital snowpack. Instead, much of the snow collects atop the trees to be evaporated or blown away. [read more](#)

Five Distinctive South Coast Adventures along the CA Highway 1 Discovery Route

Fly in a WWII Bi-Plane, Marvel at Migrating Monarch Butterflies, Enjoy Pony and Hay Rides on a Working Farm, and Explore Oso Flaco Lake and the Guadalupe Dunes and Rediscover a Hollywood Secret!

San Luis Obispo County, CA, August 22, 2017 - The South Coast of the CA

Highway 1 Discovery Route is teeming with distinctive adventures unique to Avila Beach & Valley, Oceano and Nipomoall located in beautiful San Luis Obispo County (SLO CAL). It's difficult to know where to start! Here's a list of five amazing experiences you won't want to miss this fall: [read more](#)

OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION of CALIFORNIA

Board of Directors, TELECONFERENCE CALL MINUTES, MONDAY, AUGUST 14, 2017

7:05 p.m. Call to order- Tom Martens, President, Board of Directors

1. Roll Call- Carol - Present: Bob Semerau, Tom Martens, Barbara Steinberg, Peter Schroeder, Carrie Wilson, Steven Callan and Carol Martens. Absent: Meade Fischer and Tom Wilmer
2. Review and Approval of May 8, 2017 minutes-Tom and Carol: Bob Semerau moved to approve and Steve Callan seconded it. Minutes approved.
3. Financial Report- Bob: \$7,798.84 is our current checking account balance. All bills have been paid.
4. OWAC Endowment E-Trade account-Peter: On May 20²⁰¹⁷ \$5,000 was invested in 5 different stocks with E-Trade and are already showing dividends. [read more](#)



This message was sent to chris@adventurearchitects.com from alexiaretallack@gmail.com

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Alexia Retallack <alexiaretallack@gmail.com>
To: Chris Collard <chris@adventurearchitects.com>

Fri, Sep 1, 2017 at 10:32 PM

Please make sure that Bob knows.
He sends me everything - I drop it in.

I'll remind him to get that information.

[Quoted text hidden]