

Call Duncan Barnes + Silvia Joshlin

FIELD & STREAM®

Field & Stream Magazine
187 Great Road #C-5
Acton, MA 01720
(508) 635-0857

William G. Tapply
Contributing Editor

April 4, 1991

Datus Proper
1085 Hamilton Rd.
Belgrade, Montana 59714

Dear Datus:

We just got off the phone a few minutes ago. I've learned that if I don't do things when I think of them they find their way to the bottom of my bottomless pile.

Anyway, here's what I wrote. Far as I'm concerned it can be used any way that might do some good.

I certainly hope we'll be able to lure you away for a day of fishing in August. We'll be flying into Bozeman the evening of August 2 (Friday) and will be in the area through Tuesday the 6th. Andy, Elliot and I love spring creeks, and we'd love to see yours. But mainly we'd like to fish with you. If the gulpers don't work on Hebgen (it would be aa tragedy), we know some ponds in the Centennial Valley that offer similar fishing. Or the Park. Or anything. I expect we'll be talking some between then and now, but as soon as you see your schedule for those days let's try to pin down a date. We can decide what to do any time. But the sooner we can decide to do it the better.

Keep me posted on the hunting-book cause. Nick has discouraged me from trying to write one of my own. Stick to fishing, he's said.

It's in the 60's here today. I'm going fishing.

Best,

Bill

Michael Levy

73 Fairlawn Drive, East Aurora, New York 14052 • (716) 652-1914

1/23/92 - Talked on phone +
send copy of Barnes. 9/12

Jan. 18, 1992

Dear Datus,

Thanks for the nice words about my little story on the "antis" in the newsroom.

I had suspected that there might be a sort of namby-pamby knuckling under to the Bambists by booksellers since whenever I go into B. Dalton or Waldenbooks I seldom see any huntin' and few fishin' titles on the shelves.

If you want a book that is in print they WILL order it, as will the independent booksellers I prefer; but I seldom order hook-and-bullet books (even though this would help put ideas in the local bookseller's head) because I can barely read the ones that come in for review as it is. Of course, with some notable exceptions (mostly the titles from Nick Lyons), most of these "books" are not worth a lot of time -- Expert tips on landing lunkerz is not my idea of a good read when I have so much Vargas Llosa left, to say nothing of Verlyn Klinkenborg or whatisname? the guy who wrote Jitterbug Perfume or even Larry McMurtry...

Your information should be shared, however and I would urge you to send a copy of that letter to Carol Kersavage at HQ with the note that she might run it. It is time that our members (book readers and book writers alike) understood this new form of censorship. It is a logical outgrowth of the crypto-terrorist tactics of PETA et al. Not that they SAY anything, but they do get the spineless merchant who wants to avoid conflict to self-censor. And their crackpot ideas may have, indeed, affected the buyers at book chains the same way the clothing buyers for Sears bought kiddy clothes with anti-hunting labels attached a year ago...

Finally it would be nice to document this bias and learn if it is cultural or economic: If hunting titles don't sell, why should they carry them? If they do sell, but the dealers won't carry them for fear of anti-hunting outrages at their stores, we should bring this to light. Maybe, as an organization, we should lobby booksellers to show a little courage. If it was something really dirty they'd sell it; and I noticed that Salman Rushdie's works went on sale despite threats of bombings.

I guess the Bambists are more frightening to B. Dalton than are the religious ayatullahs.

Mike



Call

FIELD & STREAM®

Field & Stream Magazine
187 Great Road #C-5
Acton, MA 01720
(508) 635-0857

William G. Tapply
Contributing Editor

March 24

Dear Datus:

Enjoyed your "guest shot" in April F&S. I thought the photo of the monster brookie was singularly incompatible with the spirit of the piece, but there you go.

They printed a grouse thing of yours a while back that I liked a lot, too. Good writing seems harder and harder to find in the magazines. You're a good writer.

I'd be curious to know how, after a year, sales have gone on Pheasants. I still want to write about hunting books -- the unavailability thereof -- for somebody somewhere. The more I think about it, the more it strikes me as incredibly ironic that F&S refused to print my piece on the subject.

I'd also like to write a hunting book, but Nick says don't bother.

Still not sure if/when I'll be in Montana this summer. If so, I'd enjoy wetting a line with you.

Very best to you and yours,

Bill

Not Sent

Datus C. Proper
1085 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, MT 59714
(406) 388-3345

March 28, 1992

Mr. William G. Tapply
187 Great Road #C-5
Acton, MA 01720

Dear Bill,

Good to hear from you.

The short story, I think, is the one you've already heard:
If you want to sell books, don't make them about hunting.

Sales of Pheasants have been modest, though I have not figured out the exact figures. Simon & Schuster must originally have intended to do some serious marketing, because they paid me a sizable advance. They appear to have lost interest in a hurry after discovering, to their surprise (and mine and my agent's), that many bookstores won't handle hunting books. I made marketing suggestions that appear not to have been followed up. The book was not advertised in Pheasants Forever magazine, for example. (It's a good publication of its kind.) Nothing seems to have been done in Gun Dog magazine or in the catalogs that cater to upland hunters. Maybe this was to be expected of a giant conglomerate that sells books like commodities. My editor treated me well, but I doubt that he and the marketing people are talking to each other. In short: (a) the general market is not open to books on hunting; and (b) the niche markets have not been approached. Most potential customers could not have heard about the book except by word of mouth.

I'm trying to get back rights on the book. Am working with a

specialized bookseller who does advertise and attend shows. He says that Pheasants sells well when people are exposed to it. And I get lots of nice letters from readers. My hope is that we can keep the book going for twenty years, with more editions, but who knows? Nick Lyons was right. There's no mass market for hunting books, even though there's a mass of hunters out there. The sport is neither politically correct nor so scandalous as to enjoy the Rushdie effect.

What you need for a story, however, is not impressions but evidence -- a smoking gun, someone who tells you flat-out that s/he won't handle hunting books. Most sellers will probably avoid that, for obvious reasons. But I'll bet you could come up with something if you could visit enough shops in enough places. Have heard that Larry McMurtry has a non-hunting-book policy in his out-of-print bookshop in Georgetown, D.C. You might try it if you're ever there.

I'm keeping my ears open, but I have a conflict of interest.

(not sent)

Datus C. Proper
1085 Hamilton Road
Belgrade, MT 59714
(406) 388-3345

Jan. 6, 1992

Mr. Michael Levy
The Buffalo News
One News Plaza, Box 100
Buffalo, NY 14240

Dear Michael:

Just read your piece on hunting and the First Amendment in the OWAA magazine. Good work. You got it right.

I learned that many bookstores in America don't carry hunting books. Actually, my publisher, my agent, and I all learned at about the same time. It was after Pheasants of the Mind was already in print, thank goodness.

Nick Lyons brought me up to speed. Hunting books are very tough to market in normal channels, he said. A few stores are becoming reluctant to carry even fishing books. Of course, few people in the trade are rash enough to advocate censorship publicly, as your colleagues on the newspaper did.

Maybe we hunters make it easy. I wonder how many of us walk into bookstores and ask to see the selection of hunting books? (If you try it in Buffalo, let me know what you find.) Maybe we slip into an us-vs.-them mentality. Maybe we feel safer in our niche, talking to ourselves, watching the world drift away.

I got a break. My book gets distribution through normal channels at least in a few states like Montana, which are known to be pro-hunting. I'm moving to the specialized channels now. But I don't expect to see many more hunting books by major publishers.

Keep up the fight.

Yours,

Sent copy of, Barnes. 9/12 later



"Siberian Summer" (Siberian tigers) ©Guy Coheleach.

Colleague's petition to block hunting news elicits response

By Michael Levy

The petition (reprinted below) surfaced at my newspaper the other day, when I ran the first "dead deer" picture of the season to go with a column about bowhunting.

Frankly, I run the dead meat pix pretty sparingly—and then only if they meet a certain delicate standard. This buck did not have a gaping body cavity, nor was its tongue hanging out nor was it posed in the back of a pickup on a bloody driveway.

Nonetheless, the relatively innocuous photo drew this passionate petition:

"We, the undersigned, urge *The Buffalo News* to stop glamorizing the slaughter and terrorism of wildlife as part of its routine sports reporting. The brutal, ugly sport of hunting, which *The News* perpetuates with unchallenged acceptance, is an activity that more and more Americans—and *News* employees—find utterly contemptible.

"The typical hunting photograph published in sports pages of *The News* of armed men, dressed to kill in their camouflage outfits, gloating over the body of a deer,

black bear, mountain goat, waterfowl or other animals, is a credit neither to the killers nor to the paper that champions this war on wildlife. It is a sickening display of cruelty.

"In an age when society is becoming increasingly violent and insensitive, and wildlife increasingly threatened, we find traditional sports-page stories celebrating trophy hunting personally offensive and no more deserving of newspaper space than cock-fighting, bear-baiting or bullfighting.

"We ask *The News* to recognize hunting and its barbaric, bloodthirsty sister sport of trapping for what they really are: the mindless, unnecessary destruction of wildlife. And we ask *The News* immediately to stop running photos of hunters displaying their animal victims and phase out routine hunting coverage altogether."

Nothing wrong with the petition, per se—everybody is entitled to an opinion—but all 12 of the signatories were fellow employees at *The Buffalo News*! One reporter has covered in some depth the machinations of the

Sponsor a new member

Active members are encouraged to sponsor new members. Your *Directory* has an application blank in the back or you can contact us at Headquarters. We send prospective members an application blank plus a brochure outlining membership benefits.

The sponsor is the first screener for prospective members. There are a number of items the sponsor should check before signing and forwarding the completed application to Headquarters:

- Is check enclosed?
- Is application signed by applicant?
- Is applicant paid for communications work?
- Is required proof of publication enclosed and are all credits within previous 12-month period?

**Pay dues
with
MasterCard or VISA**

various animal rights groups here so that name was expected; but some of the other signers, including local columnists and our editorial cartoonist, perturbed me enough to post a note on the bulletin board next to the petition.

I don't know if my note changed many minds, but I did get a pretty strong response from our anti-gun, not-so-pro-hunting management who took my point; and even got an apology from the political cartoonist, who said he doesn't like any dead animal pictures and hates the ones where the darn deer looks so happy about becoming a wall-mount.

He had never considered the danger such a move posed to his work.

So, if your newsroom colleagues decide to erupt into more than just casual verbal sniping about hunters, you might ask them to consider the following, for what it's worth.

Response

"I would like to formally protest the mindless erosion of First Amendment rights sought by my colleagues at this newspaper.

"Hunting and trapping are not needlessly destroying wildlife; indeed, there is some argument these are reasonable activities in terms of keeping ecological balance.

"That is a debatable issue.

"What is not debatable is the belief that, if enough people petition against an activity, it will no longer be reported in a newspaper.

What is not debatable is the idea that, if one side gets enough votes, the 'majority' will impose its will on the rest of society.

"That is a pretty chilling thought in this increasingly Fundamentalist world of ours.

"My family left Europe in the hope of living where minorities still had a few rights; and statistically, at least, hunters are definitely a minority. Those who advocate 'animal rights' seem to forget that in their passion.

"Think about this:

"I don't like the Schencks (a local news reference) and what they stand for. Does that mean I will refuse to report or edit news as fairly as I can?

"I think boxing matches and racing—e.g., the 'gambling news'—have no place in a civilized newspaper. But I won't ask the newspaper I work for not to report these things.

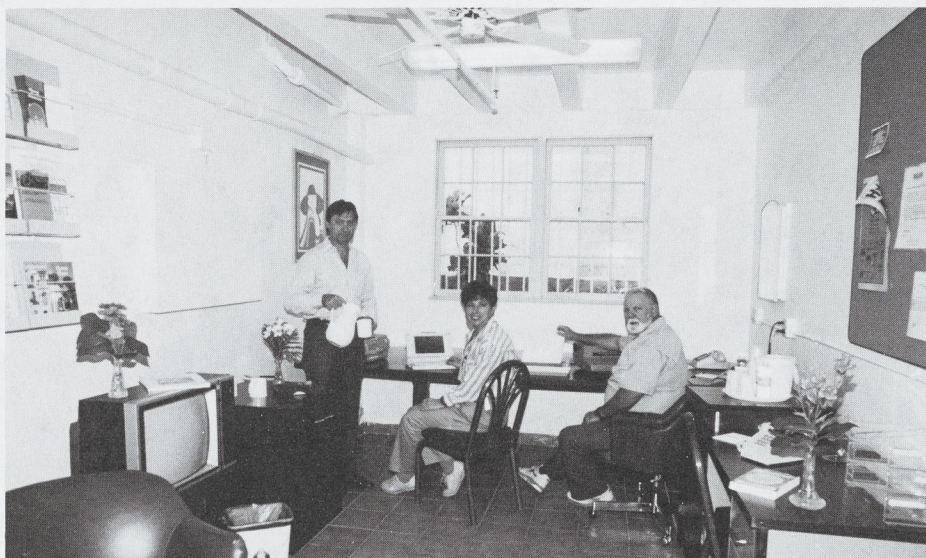
"I don't give a damn if you never eat flesh or if you hate me for shooting critters and eating them.

"But I do care about your Ayatollah complex. It says volumes about your objectivity."

Write

Sincerely,
your hunting writer,
Michael Levy

Levy is OWAA's second vice-president. He is outdoor editor of *The Buffalo News*.



Gilles Arditi, left, of the Art Deco Hotels, Ltd., welcomes Gini and Dan McKain to Miami's International Press Center. Located in the Cavalier Hotel, Miami Beach, Fla., in the center of the Art Deco Historic District, the Center is open to journalists with assignments.

Florida's International Press Center open to journalists

During November Gini and Dan McKain were asked to participate in the opening of the new International Press Center in the Cavalier Hotel in Miami Beach, Florida's Art Deco Historic District.

The center is provided for working journalists by the Art Deco Hotels, Ltd. It includes computers, printers, fax machines, telephones and other communication tools. The room is dedicated to the memory of the late Ralph Renick, a long-time and highly respected Miami TV newsmen.

The McKains were on special assignment in Miami Beach to do an environmental impact story on the resurgence of the Art Deco District, its newly renovated hotels,

trendy restaurants and intimate sidewalk cafes.

Gilles Arditi of the Art Deco Hotels, Ltd., which includes the Cavalier, Cardozo, Carlyle and Leslie Hotels, welcomed the correspondents and informed them they were the first journalists to use the new facility.

In keeping with the thrust of the Center being a work area, the inauguration was held with coffee being the dedication medium rather than the traditional champagne. Complimentary coffee, tea, bottled mineral waters and other light refreshments are available at the International Press Center, which is open to writers with assignments 24 hours a day.

Responsive management training workshops set

Four Responsive Management Training workshops will be conducted in Orlando, Fla., Feb. 24-29. A workshop in public opinion and attitude polling for natural resource managers will be held Feb. 24-26.

Workshops in Communication and Dispute Resolution, Marketing in a Fisheries and Wildlife Organization, and Responding to Change for Natural Resource Managers will be conducted Feb. 26-29.

For more information and to register, write Responsive Management, 3375-F Capital Circle NE, Ste. 205, Tallahassee, FL 32308-3736; FAX (904) 385-3927.

International Congress of Journalists to meet in U.S.

Increasing worldwide interest and the continued fracturing of Eastern bloc countries are building attendance among journalists attending the 38th annual ICJ (International Congress of Journalists) conference hosted by Ski The Summit, April 1-7, 1992.

An additional 10 countries are sending delegates, bringing the total attendance to 300 media, representing 47 countries. This Congress will be split between the three Summit County, Colo., resorts.

ICJ, also known as The Ski Club of International Journalists (SCIJ), first adopted

skiing as an integral part of their annual journalism meeting to provide a neutral bridge of shared interest, minimizing any political overtones. The majority of the 1,800 ICJ membership consists of reporters covering economics, business, politics, science and technology, travel and entertainment. Although many share a love for skiing, less than 20 percent cover tourism as their regular beat.

For more information on the Congress, contact David Peri at Ski The Summit (303) 468-6607.