

# FIELD & STREAM®

Field & Stream  
Two Park Avenue  
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(212) 779-5285

Duncan Barnes  
Editor

December 1, 1992

Datus Proper  
1085 Hamilton Road  
Belgrade, MT 59714

Dear Datus:

Field & Stream is canvassing the staff -- very confidentially -- for leads on people whose careers and/or leisure time are deeply intertwined with hunting and fishing. Their involvement might be active and constant or it might be at somewhat of a remove and sporadic, but it should be a strong element in their lives.

We are looking for leads on active outfitters and boat livery operators, gunsmiths, fly tiers, photographers, fishing guides, et al., as well as cafe or restaurant owners, sporting goods store owners, motel operators, et al., as well as folks who work at non-outdoor related jobs but who pursue fish and game seriously in their spare time.

The thread that weaves them into the same fabric is that they all rely in one way or another on hunting and fishing to earn a significant portion of their living or to determine their lifestyle. When taken together, these people are a major force in the U.S. economy -- and that is at the heart of our survey and the major series that will eventually appear in Field & Stream.

What we hope to receive from this query are good leads with a wide geographic and demographic distribution, so let your thoughts range beyond your own backyard. The criterion is not so much an individual's success or renown as it is the situation in which he or she chooses to exist.

Certainly, success stories are welcome, but not every lead should uncover another Ray Scott. The outfitter who stays in business through good and bad economic times, the factory worker who puts in 49 weeks a year so he can spend 17 days chasing elk in Wyoming, the super tackle salesman who could double his income selling paper or soap or chemicals but who just wants to be "in the fishing business" are the folks we're looking for.



Roberson  
Dunbar  
beard & other  
beeper make  
Trailer wash  
Don't knicker  
Hendy?

Grant  
Matthews? Richard Parks?  
Restaurants in Ennis?  
Mazorski  
Gen Williams

In a nutshell, we are looking for human interest vignettes on people who represent the tremendous variety of ways hunting and fishing affect the lives of millions of Americans and the U.S. economy.

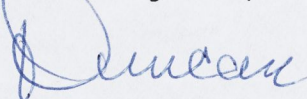
The stories about the people you choose should be so compelling that you can highlight them in a short, one-paragraph suggestion. There's no limit to the number of suggestions you can provide. It would be helpful if you could indicate how we can contact the individual(s) in question.

Please send your suggestions to Barbara Rosenblum and write the word "survey" on the envelope. The deadline is January 29.

For every "list" we receive, we'll pay a \$500 finder's fee. And for every suggestion we decide to follow up on, we'll pay an additional fee.

Please treat this project with the utmost confidence, and do not discuss it even with your F&S colleagues. Competition has never been stiffer in our business, and the impact of this project will be considerably lessened if the competition gets wind of it.

Best regards,



Duncan Barnes

Call Bob Berl in  
Someone in Shenandoah Park  
near  
ask John Baden?



# FIELD & STREAM<sup>®</sup>

Field & Stream  
Two Park Avenue  
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David E. Petzal  
Executive Editor

March 29, 1993

Datus Proper  
1085 Hamilton Road  
Belgrade, MT 59714

Dear Datus:

On December first of last year, we wrote you and a number of other Field & Stream contributors asking for brief sketches of people whose lives are intertwined with hunting and fishing.

The response exceeded anything we could have hoped for. Now, we'd like to ask for the second and final installment. This time, instead of people, we'd like sketches of business enterprises that are either entirely devoted to hunters and fishermen, or are very strongly influenced by the sports.

No Some examples might be: The Sacajawea Hotel in Three Forks, Montana, which caters entirely to fly fishermen, and which supplies the little town with a major piece of its total income; Mesa Airlines, based in Denver, which carries thousands and thousands of hunters each fall; Schnee's in Bozeman, Montana, which went from a small boot-repair operation to a manufacturer of its own pacs, which are now sold to hunters and fishermen all over the U.S.; Nosler Bullets, in Bend, Oregon, which started as a hobby nearly forty years ago and is now a multi-million-dollar business.

We don't expect that you'll be able to come up with as many businesses as you did people; if you can provide three or four that will be fine. As before, we'll pay \$500 for each list and an additional fee for each suggestion we follow up on. (Those first checks, by the way, are on their way to you.)

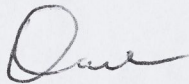


Also, we must insist that you do not discuss this project at all, even with your Field & Stream colleagues, even at the Seminar in May.

Please send your suggestions to Barbara Rosenblum and write "Survey II" on the envelope. We need them by June 1.

Thanks, and if you can do as well this time as you did the first, you will have done very well indeed.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Dave", written in dark ink.

David E. Petzal



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## SURVEY II: BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

All of the enterprises in this list owe their success to hunting and fishing. In each story near the top of the list, moreover, there is a second angle -- a sort of added inducement to readers who might otherwise lose interest.

Only one business of each kind is listed -- a sampler.

Note: There are more proposals below than you wanted, but the first two were in the earlier Survey as well. I have added some information on them for this exercise.

### 1. Stream Restoration: Inter-Fluve Inc., Bozeman

God is not making any more trout streams but man is bringing dead ones back to life. I've spent time in the water with a team from Inter-Fluve, which seems to be the world leader in stream restoration. Few anglers are aware of how much can be done. Overgrazed creeks can be deepened and narrowed; damaged banks can be rebuilt; shelter can be provided. Trout respond quickly. Before-and-after photos should convince readers.



We could make stream restoration a full-length story or photo-essay. The two angles: doing the right thing by nature and, in the process, building a successful economic activity. Some people in the extractive industries claim that protection of the environment costs jobs, but the opposite has been true in this case.

2. Fly Rods: Winston Rod Company, Twin Bridges, Montana

There are lots of other rod companies and I love them all, but Winston offers a special angle. Tom Morgan -- who moved the firm to Montana and built it to its present size -- is articulate on the qualities of a good fly rod. His ideas would make good reading even without the economic story. Tom builds his rods for fishing, not distance-casting. He explains how to choose for different characteristics: length, action, line weight, and rod materials. This is original stuff -- better than anything I have seen published on rod design, even in more specialized magazines. Among other things, Tom's rods help fishermen to avoid tennis elbow. Anglers must be believers, because Winstons retain more of their value than most second-hand rods.

We would need a full-length story to cover both angles.

3. Mail Order Books: Wilderness Adventures, Bozeman

This is an American success story: entrepreneur spots an opportunity, seizes it, and prospers. The opportunity was created when most conventional outlets stopped carrying good selections



of hunting books. Chuck and Blanche Johnson set up a mail-order outlet in Ohio. At first, this was a sideline to their regular business (an insurance agency). When book sales took off, the Johnsons sold the insurance business, moved to Montana, and put all their energy into the new enterprise. Reasons for the move are both personal (hunting, fishing, quality of life) and business-related (good employees at reasonable wages). The owners have hired two local employees and are looking for eight more.

The unusual angle here may be customer starvation. The Johnsons get letters from people who were hungry for good hunting books and could not find a source.

There is a self-interest that should be identified: Wilderness Adventures is selling my books and those of at least eight other Field & Stream writers. I think that I could do the story anyhow, but another option would be to assign Keith McCafferty before he gets a book of his own on the market. (I have not discussed this with Keith.) We could also add a list of other mail-order outlets.

#### 4. Conservation Easements: Montana Land Reliance, Helena

This non-profit organization does work similar to that of the Nature Conservancy, but in only one state. The Montana Land Reliance has become the leading regional land trust in America. Through conservation easements, MLR has protected -- permanently -- more than 100,000 acres of private land and 185 miles of trout streams. Some of the fish-and-game habitat is of great value.



Example: the stream on which Nick Lyons based his book Spring Creek. The government is not involved -- an appealing angle. A private group just works quietly with farmers and ranchers who love their wildlife and want to save it for future generations.

5. Gun Accessories: Butler Creek, Belgrade, Montana

Makes mostly injection-moldings -- flip-open 'scope covers, synthetic stocks, a rifle sling system, Ruger accessories, and various doodads for muzzle-loaders. The management moved its headquarters here to take advantage of the good workers -- and has hired 65 of them. This seems to be a clean industry, so everybody is happy. Angle: the contribution of hunters to a regional economy.

6. Art: Jim Dolan, Belgrade

He welds metal sculptures -- the real thing, not schlock. The geese in the Bozeman airport are Jim's, and so are those Quixotic elk in front of the bank on Main Street. He did ten pelicans that now hang in the corporate headquarters of the Japanese equivalent of A.T.&T. No real artist is a business enterprise in the ordinary sense -- but this one is certainly successful. With the right photos, Jim's sculptures would make a beautiful feature in the magazine.

7. Decoys & Such: Big Sky Carvers, Manhattan, Montana

You think of a carver as a little old man whittling



Pinocchio, or perhaps a duck decoy for exhibition. Big Sky Carvers (Eric and Nancy Pierce) have a real business with employees, elaborate machinery, and a warehouse. They turn out decorative items -- ducks, of course, but also upland birds, trout, and so on. The core business comes from hunters and fishermen but there is a broader market. Demand seems to be high.

8. Boats: Yellowstone Drifter Boat Co., Bozeman

There are two drift-boat entrepreneurs in my valley -- the above and Mountain Man Products in Belgrade. I could talk to either or both. The interesting angle may be the newness of drift-fishing for trout. It was unknown, when I grew up out here, and has become an industry of regional significance, supporting not only the boat-makers but lots of outfitters. Couples who would not (and perhaps could not) fish on their own now hire guides and spend their vacations on the rivers. This may also be the world's most photogenic sport.

9. Half-baked ideas

There are stories in the following, but you probably have too many nominees from Montana already.

A. Landing Nets: Chris Brodin, Bozeman. Makes high-quality wooden nets that appear in many catalogs and magazine photos, including mine.

B. Dogs: Diamond R Kennels, Belgrade. Breeds Labradors and sells them around the country. Some field-trial winners.



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There are stories in all of the following, but you probably have too many nominees from Montana already.

A. Landing Nets: Chris Brodin, Bozeman. Makes high-quality wooden nets that appear in many catalogs and magazine photos, including mine.

B. Travel: <sup>Ogden</sup> Livery Travel, Helena. Gets anglers together with guides and arranges airfare discounts.

C. Dogs: Diamond R Kennels, Belgrade. Breeds Labradors and sells them around the country. Some field-trial winners.

E. Outfitters, Guides, Dude Ranches



The problem is not in finding stories but in narrowing the choices to a few of the best. In the new economy, entrepreneurs can live where they want and still compete nationally, even globally. It just happens that my part of Montana is a destination of choice for people who have a business related to hunting and fishing.



About 1400 words

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### HUMAN INTEREST LEADS

Thirteen leads follow. A few would require travel, but I am not confined to local characters even in the Gallatin Valley. This state seems to be the destination of choice for trout and big-game enthusiasts, with bird hunters not far behind. Eco-migrants have made the economy of western Montana one of the fastest-growing in America.

With some of these people, there are economic angles -- niche markets, incentives vs. regulations, and so on. These interest me. (I have been working with a think-tank that looks for free-market solutions to environmental problems.)

There is probably a story in all of the following. I do not expect to know the best angle, however, till we sit down for a talk. Would like to keep my mind open for the unexpected.



A. Elsewhere in the Country

1. Wendy Parker Schweizer, 2325 King. St., Bellingham WA 98225. Young (29), a biologist (ornithologist), and a hunter of unsurpassed zeal. Shoots an old 16-gauge Parker over her own pointing dog. Wrote me the following about Pheasants of the Mind: "Thank you for approaching the subject matter without degrading women who do not hunt or who do not know what it means to hunt or who do not know the secrets of preparing wild game .... I so tire of that nonsense."

I'd like to go hunting with this woman next fall, though it would take a longish drive. (Furthermore, I'd like to nominate her for Secretary of Interior.)

2. Henry Lovett, Lovett's Electronics, 840 E. Pinckley St., Brazil, Indiana 47834; (812) 446-1093. Has a top-quality beeper-collar on the market at a good price. Believe he made beepers for one of the big catalog-sales firms before launching his own mail-order business. Knows his electronics. Makes a living (I hope) from one of the many niche markets that have sprung up around field and stream. Interesting angle: this business sprang up in a state where galliforms are thin on the ground.

I could try to do this over the 'phone. If we have anyone near Indiana who is familiar with dogs and beepers, however, a personal interview would be best.



3. Dave Lunn, Tracker Electronics, 24350 Falcon Ave., Forest Lake, MN 55025. (612) 464-6220. Small-town entrepreneur who sells nationwide. Invented the first beeper-collar for pointing dogs. (I'd want to confirm that.) Still has a patent on the mercury switch that gives the beeper a bell-like cadence. On the 'phone, sounds like a crusty old grouse hunter.

I might be able to join Lunn for a few days of woodcock hunting but would be glad to yield to someone living closer.



B. Old-Timers

If the following people are of interest, I should talk to them soon. The clock is ticking.

1. Herbert Wellington, Jr. Should be approached only by Nick Lyons or me. (Is in the New York 'phone book but is a very private person.) Herb owns what is, in my experience, the best trout stream in the world. (Produces 30" brown trout to little imitative dry flies, with no artificial feeding or tricks.) He does not want the stream's name to appear in print. It is in Montana, however, and is the subject of Nick's new book titled Spring Creek. Fishing has accounted for the restoration of this stream, its preservation in perpetuity, and the preservation of much surrounding land -- via conservation easements. The story ought to be told, if he will consent.

2. Pat Barnes. (406) 442-3735. Helena, Montana.

I've seen nothing written on him, though he brought the first drift-boat into Montana. Articulate without being a hypester. The guide that launched an industry. Was still rowing till recently. Opened the rivers to people who could not have managed otherwise -- beginners, the weak of leg, and those to whom fishing is an excuse for doing very little in a nice place.

I would try to get out fishing with Pat and see how his story develops.



3. George F. Grant. Now in Butte, MT, at (406) 723-5952. (I have not called to confirm the number.) Began tying flies professionally in 1931 and has written at least three books on western flies. Believe he also started a foundation to protect the Bighole River, which may be the last refuge of riverine grayling in the lower 48. I'd like to ask him how the environment has changed since A River Ran Through It.

4. Charley Waterman of Kansas, Montana, Florida, and everywhere else. One of the great story-tellers, with humility and honesty. If he were one of the Old People, young braves would vie for a place by his fire. Was a semi-pro wrestler once, among other things. I'd like to ask for his advice to outdoor writers, though that might not be the story angle.

5. Bud Lilly of 2007 Sourdough Road, Bozeman. (406) 586-5140. Last I heard, he was still guiding and coaching anglers. Owned a fly-shop for years. Bud's wife is a realtor who has brought people to my house once or twice. (I'm not selling; they just wanted to talk about the spring creeks.) Bud should have something to say on the link between fishing and economics. Paul Schullery wrote a book with and about Bud; I've not read it yet.



C. Other Local (sort of) Characters

1. Ted Turner of CNN. Owns the Flying D -- one of the biggest and prettiest ranches in the west. There are National Parks with less to offer and worse management. Turner has good trout water, on which he has granted conservation easements; big bull elk, which are being managed profitably; bird cover with a biologist in charge; and a herd of buffalo which are being raised for the market. (Some Montana residents are upset about the buffalo going through fences.) Turner has also bought a ranch in New Mexico and one or two elsewhere in the country. He is preserving beautiful pieces of nature at a time when taxpayers cannot afford to acquire them.

I know the Montana ranch (Flying D) and could get to the one in New Mexico, but do not know Turner personally. Might be best to approach him via CNN in New York. Maybe Duncan or Dave could drag themselves away from Gotham long enough to investigate this one. I'd be happy to help out with the grunt work, mind you.

2. Bob O'Brien of Inter-Fluve. (Bozeman office at 406-586-6926.) This seems to be the leading stream-restoration firm, sending experts flying around the world to supervise projects. I've worked with one of their guys on a job. It's a new discipline, more cut-and-try than scientific, but there are also biologists in the field and I know a couple of them. Turns out that a good back-hoe operator can help nature in a dramatic way. The story seems like a natural for us.



O'Brien is in his late 30s. By academic training, he is a fluvial geomorphologist, which uses up half of my allotted space in two words. Lives in Glenwood, Colorado, but I could catch him in Bozeman.

3. Jay Bentley of the Continental Divide restaurant in Ennis, Montana. (Closed in winter, but I could catch him next spring or summer.) This was a favorite eatery of Al McClane's, who used some of Bentley's recipes in his book on game cookery. Bentley knows how to cook, unlike most of the chefs in my state. He is interesting personally, and there is an economic angle. The restaurant -- and for that matter the town in its current form -- are creations of the Madison River fishery. One of you soft-living New Yorkers might want to elbow me out of this assignment.

4. Ben Williams. (406) 222-1270. Lives near Livingston, Montana, with cameras and Brittany spaniels. Takes the most spectacular dog pictures I have ever seen -- 5 dogs on point simultaneously, with the Crazy Mountains in the background. In some shots I am in the foreground, spoiling the scenery. Larry Aiuppy could also be the subject of a story on outdoor photography, but Ben may do more hunting and fishing. The angle, I suppose, is that our sport provides a living for many artists and photographers.



5. Tom Morgan. Winston Rod Company, Twin Bridges, Montana. (406) 587-2116. Brought the company here from San Francisco and made a success of it. They sell rods as fast as they can make them, these days, and get premium prices from experienced anglers. Twin Bridges is small, even for Montana -- two hours from the bright lights of Bozeman. The rod company helps to keep the town on the map.