

# **LOUISIANA OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION AS AMENDED AUGUST 20, 2005**

## **ARTICLE I NAME**

The name of this organization shall be Louisiana Outdoor Writers Association.

## **ARTICLE II DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES**

This association stands for the betterment of Louisiana outdoor writers, photographers and those engaged in electronic journalism, and the promotion and practice of good sportsmanship in all out-of-doors recreation ventures through our work as outdoor communicators.

## **ARTICLE III PURPOSE OF PRINCIPLES**

This association, through its membership, pledges to carry forward in every way at its command, a campaign to improve the professionalism of its members. Additionally, the association pledges to work towards improved education of the citizens of Louisiana in the areas of conservation and preservation of the natural resources of Louisiana and the practice of good sportsmanship and the ethical use of our outdoor resources in all out-of-door ventures.

## **ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP Active Membership**

Individuals shall be eligible to apply for active membership after they have obtained a minimum of 100 points by any combination in every calendar year for which they are members. The board of directors may direct that membership audits be conducted to determine if active members still meet minimum criteria. Points are awarded as follows:

- A. OUTDOORS EDITOR--A paid outdoors editor for a daily or weekly public newspaper or magazine with a minimum of 2,000 subscribers - 100 points.
- B. SYNDICATED NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST--Syndicated newspaper writer or paid columnist - 20 points for each newspaper that buys the column and publishes it a minimum of twice each month.

- C. WILDLIFE ARTIST--Cartoonist, illustrator or artist of original artwork of an outdoor nature - 10 points for each paid published or commercially sold piece.
- D. RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTER--Primary host or co-host of a radio show or television program focusing on the outdoors - 5 points per paid broadcast of 5 minutes duration or less, 10 points per paid broadcast of 5.01 to 10 minutes duration, 20 points per paid broadcast of 10.01 minutes or greater duration.
- E. PHOTOGRAPHER--Freelance photographer for newspapers or magazines. Photographs must be of an outdoors nature - 10 points for each paid outdoor photograph.
- F. PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST--Public relations manager for a government or private organization in which 50 percent or more of time is directed towards outdoors communication. Duties must include such activities as news release writing, public speaking, newsletter publishing photography, speech writing or other communications endeavors -100 points.
- G. MAGAZINE STAFF--Publisher, editor, paid staff writer, and/or staff photographer for a recognized outdoors magazine or other similar print publication with a minimum of 2,000 subscribers - 100 points.
- H. FREELANCE MAGAZINE WRITER--Freelance outdoors magazine writer or columnist - 25 points for each freelance article sold to a magazine for which the writer is not a staff number.
- I. NEWSPAPER COLUMNIST--Outdoor newspaper columnist, feature writer, or freelance writer not considered a staff writer or edition for the weekly or daily newspaper in which it appears -10 points for each paid published piece.
- J. BOOK AUTHOR --Author of an outdoors book published and sold commercially - 100 points. The full 100 points carry over for five years after the initial publication date.
- K. MOVIE PRODUCER OR VIDEOGRAPHER --Producer, writer or videographer of outdoors movies or videos sold commercially - 90 points for each paid or sold video of 30 minutes duration or longer. Points awarded only for the year in which the movie or video was first marketed.
- L. INTERNET JOURNALIST -- Publisher, editor, paid staff writer/photographer or freelance writer/photographer for a commercial, for-profit Web site with a minimum of 500,000 hits and 50,000 user sessions per month, in which the majority of the content is devoted to outdoors, activities such as fishing, hunting, boating or camping. The statistics must be published daily to the Web site by a

recognized professional traffic-analysis package. The Web site must contain traditional articles (no fishing reports), photos, news or other information normally associated with print newspapers or magazines, and must be available to the general public. The prospective member must be responsible for editing or writing articles or taking or publishing of photos. Advertising sales efforts shall not count toward LOWA eligibility. The posting of fishing reports alone shall not be counted towards LOWA eligibility. Publishers, editors and paid staff reporters – 100 points. Freelance writer – 25 points for each article sold to a Web site for which the prospective member is not a staff member. Freelance photographer – 10 points for each photo sold to a Web site for which the prospective member is not a staff member.

- M. LECTURER--A speaker who provides an oral presentations/lectures on outdoors related activities (i.e. hunting, fishing, decoy carving, boating safety, etc.) for payment or who conducts the presentation before a LOWA recognized organization (Rotary Club, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, educational group, etc) - 20 points for each presentation lasting a minimum of 30 minutes. The LOWA reserves the right to make the determination of whether the organization is recognized by the LOWA or not. Questions about whether an organization is recognized by the LOWA should be referred to the Executive Director.
- N. PAID LOWA WORK--An individual who is paid by LOWA for services (i.e. Executive Director/Secretary and Fish Records Committee Chair) and lectures or writes about those functions - 5 points for each lecture, media appearance or written piece, for a maximum of 45 points per year.

Payment for accepted work may come in the form of cash, check, direct deposit into a bank account, or barter in lieu of cash for merchandise or services of comparable value to the cash value normally paid for the work provided.

Persons who fulfill the point requirements for active membership may complete an application for such membership and must be sponsored by an active member in good standing. With the application, applicants must present proof of qualifications and payment in the form of mastheads, clippings, tapes, employment contracts, or other acceptable means.

### **Apprentice Membership**

The membership committee may accept apprentice members who shall have all rights to active membership except the right to make motions, vote or hold office. An apprentice member is a member who supports the principles and purposes of this organization but has not fully qualified under the criteria for active membership. Applicants must qualify for apprentice membership by obtaining a minimum of 50 points by any combination under the point system established for active membership. Persons who fulfill the point requirements for apprentice membership may complete an application for such membership and must be sponsored by an active member in good

standing. With the application, applicants must present proof of qualifications and payment in the form of mastheads, clippings, tapes, employment contracts, or other acceptable means.

Apprentice members must provide annual proof of their qualifications to the membership committee who will determine if the apprentice member continues to meet membership\_criteria. Apprentice members may apply for active membership at any time that they can present proof that they have obtained the required 100 points.

Apprentice members may remain apprentice members for up to 24 months. At that point they may be terminated as apprentice members if they have not qualified for active membership or they may request a 12 month extension. Apprentice members requesting an extension must provide evidence to the membership committee that they intend to or will likely qualify as active members within the extension period. Apprentice members who have had their memberships terminated must wait 12 months before reapplying.

### **Active-Retired Membership**

A member classified as an active member of LOWA for 20 years or more may be granted active-retired membership upon request, which shall entitle the individual to the continued privileges of active membership upon payment of annual dues. Active members who do not meet the foregoing qualifications, but have special circumstances may request active-retired membership through the membership committee. Active-retired members are exempt from membership criteria audits.

### **Supporting Membership**

A supporting member may be a person, corporation or other organization that supports the principles and purposes of this organization. The board of directors shall establish requirements for such membership. The executive secretary/director and the president shall review supporting membership applications and make a determination whether to accept or decline the application.

### **Sustaining Membership**

A sustaining member may be a person, corporation or other organization that supports the principles and purposes of this organization and wishes to more actively fund the activities of the organization. The board of directors shall establish requirements for such membership, which shall be greater than those for a Supporting Membership. The executive secretary/director and the president shall review supporting membership applications and make a determination whether to accept or decline the application.

## **Life Membership**

Life membership, for long, loyal and distinguished service to the Louisiana Outdoor Writers Association, may be conferred upon any active, active-retired, or supporting member by a unanimous vote of the board of directors present at any regularly called meeting. Recipients of the Charles "Chuck" Buckley Award will also become life members of the organization. Life members shall retain all their rights and privileges, but shall be exempt from payment of dues and membership criteria audits.

## **Membership Process**

The membership committee shall review all applications, for active and apprentice memberships determine if the applicant meets the criteria for membership, and forward their decision to the executive secretary/director for processing. A member's status may be changed from active to active-retired, apprentice to active, active to apprentice, or have his or her membership terminated under the rules herein and in the bylaws.

## **ARTICLE V GOVERNMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The association shall be governed by a president, a vice-president, a recording secretary, a board of directors, and an executive secretary/director. Election of all officers and regular board members shall be held at the annual meeting. The term of office for elected officers will be for two years.

The board of directors shall be composed of the immediate past president, who shall serve as chairman of the board, the president, vice-president, recording secretary, parliamentarian, five elected board members, chairmen of all standing committees and a supporting member liaison selected by the president. Efforts should be made to select directors who will give the full board geographic representation of the state. The supporting member liaison shall have a vote on the board of directors but shall not have office-holding privileges.

If at anytime the position of "Chairman of the Board" should become vacant, the position shall be filled by a currently sitting board member elected by other members of the board of director. If, at anytime, a board member should resign his/her seat on the board, that vacancy may be filled by an active member appointed by the president.

## **Board of Directors**

The board shall meet at the call of the president, or on the written request of any four board members. The board shall have full authority to act for the organization and its chairman shall preside over board meetings. Board members may issue written proxies to other active members in good standing.

### **Executive Committee**

The executive committee shall be composed of the executive secretary/director, chairman of the board, president, vice-president and recording secretary. Official actions of the executive committee must be ratified by the board of directors. The executive committee shall fill vacancies in office and on the board of directors, with such actions ratified by the board of directors.

### **Executive Secretary/Director**

The position of executive secretary/director shall be a compensated position filled by the board of directors.

### **Special (Ad Hoc) Committees**

The president of the association shall appoint committee chairmen as needed. Each committee chairman may then select other members to serve on the committee and forward those names to the board of directors. Committees in charge of award programs and contests will be responsible for how those programs and contests are conducted, including the writing of all rules pertaining to the event and the forwarding of those rules to the board of directors for review and approval. Any proposed changes to the committee rules from the general membership must be made in writing to the committee chairman who is then charged with reviewing the proposed changes and determining whether they should be adopted.

## **Article VI ELECTIONS**

Officers and elected directors shall be elected by the membership at its annual meeting held on even-numbered years and serve for two years. Election shall be by written ballot for any contested position. Those who become directors because they are chairmen of standing committees will be appointed by the president at the annual meeting and shall serve until the next annual meeting or as long as the president deems appropriate or until an incoming president makes a new appointment.

Only active, active-retired and life members in good standing are eligible to serve as an officer or member of the board of directors. However, one supporting member liaison, appointed by the president upon the advice of other supporting members may serve as a voting member of the board of directors.

## **Article VII FISCAL YEAR, DUES**

The fiscal year of the association will conclude at the annual meeting each year.

Renewable notices shall be sent to the membership by December 1. Dues are payable by January 1. A delinquent fee shall be assessed for membership renewals after January 1. Members whose renewals are not received by March 31 shall have their membership terminated. Termination may be waived by the executive committee, for good cause. Annual dues for all members shall be set by the general membership at its annual meeting, or retained if there is no approved motion to change current dues.

## **Article VIII DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY/DIRECTOR**

The president shall preside over the annual meeting and executive committee meetings, appoint committee chairmen, a parliamentarian, and the supporting member liaison, serve as an ex-officio member of all committees and shall perform other such duties as usually fall upon the incumbent of such offices

The vice-president shall preside at meetings in the absence of the president, assume the duties of the presidency if the office is vacated, or assume the duties of the secretary if the secretary is absent or if the office is vacated. The vice-president shall serve as the craft improvement committee chairman in planning craft improvement activities at the annual meeting.

The recording secretary shall accurately record and compile all minutes of official meetings of the board of directors, executive committee and general membership and send them to the executive secretary/director within 30 days for publication in the next issue of the newsletter.

The executive secretary/director shall collect all monies due the association, holding and distributing such funds as authorized by the president or the board of directors. The executive secretary/director shall, with the assistance of the president, plan the annual meeting, prepare the membership directory, recommend supporting members, and perform other such duties as usually fall upon the holder of such position. The executive secretary/director's financial report shall be delivered at the annual meeting, and as requested by the board of directors. Compensation for the executive secretary/director shall be reviewed annually at the board of directors meeting prior to the annual meeting

## **Article IX QUORUMS**

**Board of Directors.** A quorum at board of directors meetings where ten (10) days written notice has been furnished to all board members and where the purpose of the call is specified in the written notice, shall be a majority of the board members present.

**Executive Committee.** A quorum at any executive committee meeting shall be a majority of the members of that committee.

**Other Committees.** A quorum at any standing or special (ad hoc) committee meeting shall be a majority of the members of that committee.

**General Membership.** General members shall be provided with ten (10) days written notice, with the purpose of the call being specified, for the annual meeting or any other general membership meeting. For such meetings a quorum shall not be necessary to conduct business.

## **Article X IRREGULAR MEETINGS**

Special circumstances may require action without sufficient time to physically convene members of the board, or a matter of such a routine nature may present itself that would not warrant convening a special board meeting. Such matters which would normally require a vote of the board of directors, may be discussed and the vote conducted by written or telephone ballots -- provided that each member of the board is notified of the proposed action and that no member of the body objects to the poll being conducted in that fashion.

## **Article XI AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to the constitution may be made at the annual meeting of the association, but only after notice of the proposed amendment has been sent to the entire membership thirty (30) days prior to the date of the meeting. To facilitate this, proposed constitutional amendments must be forwarded to a special (ad hoc) constitution and bylaws committee at least 60 days prior to the annual meeting. This committee shall be responsible that all proposed amendments are properly drafted and published, and that all proposed amendments are available for review at the annual meeting. Amendments to the constitution must be approved by two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the members present at a duly called annual meeting. Amendments to the bylaws must be approved by a simple majority of the members present at a duly called annual meeting. Bylaws may be amended by the board of directors, subject to ratification by the general membership at the next annual meeting.