



The Fossil

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Writing About Life

by Don Peyer

Life is too short; death is too long

*At death all your accumulated knowledge is lost
except what is left by your legacy*

MY INTRODUCTION TO amateur journalism did not occur until later in life. Actually, I didn't know much about amateur journalism until June 1989 when I was invited to join UAPAA by Rosalind Gill, who published *Amateur Writers Journal* and had published my poetry and short stories. My first paper that June with the heading *Don's Desk*, was an introduction and included my thoughts about various subjects including nature, the environment, and what I stood for in life. On page two was part one of my series, "THE SUMMIT OF 2910." This was the beginning of seventeen years of writing for UAPAA.

I was born May 2, 1922 in a farmhouse on the prairie in North Dakota, moved to a farm in northern Minnesota when I was two, and to Montgomery, a small town in southern Minnesota, when I was four. There I attended kindergarten, grade school and high school. It was during the depression years and times were hard. I studied accounting at the Minnesota School of Business in Minneapolis and went on work in the business world.

In 1945 I married Jocquilyn (Jokki) Beach in St. Paul. I had a good job as claim agent and my own private secretary with Dakota Transfer and Storage, who shipped from Montana to New York. I dictated my letters with a hand held microphone onto a wax roll and my secretary used ear phones to type it on letterhead paper. I think it was called an Ediphone. We moved to the Los Angeles area with our four children in 1954 where our fifth child was born. My last job was in management with American Bakeries Company, Langerdorf Division, from which I retired at age 62 in 1984. My wife, Jocquilyn, was a teacher and while she went off to work, I wrote in earnest. Short stories and



Don Peyer

poetry had been my main interest up to then with limited success and plenty of rejections. Writing for UAPAA gave me the privilege and freedom to do my own publishing and to put forth my own ideas and opinions on any subjects. I filled my paper with short and long items about wildlife, travelogues, poetry, vignettes, comments on the news and just about every subject that came to my mind. It was probably my most enjoyable writing assignments as I plotted the contents of my next paper.

There was a period when I also contributed my paper to UAP which was split off from UAPAA over some dispute which I didn't understand and didn't want to get into. After I had typed and pasted my paper I went to the local print shop to make my copies for mailing. They had a large copy machine that copied both sides of my paper at once and in minutes, enough for both organizations, for about twenty-eight dollars.

I first started writing in grade school and even had some poems published. It was then that I got my first rejection. My teacher gave us an assignment to write a short story. As usual, I waited until the last minute to do the assignment. Dad liked to read Westerns (pulp fiction) and had friends with a library on their property and kept him supplied. I had read some of the stories and found them exciting so I stole the plot from one of the stories and wrote my own very short Western. When I got the paper back the teacher noted on it that the real author got an "A" but I got an "F." At the time the word "plagiarism" wasn't yet in my vocabulary.

I was never a printer, but started my writing in earnest on a typewriter. After I left college I could type 60 words per minute. My best friend could do 140 and was hired by Royal Typewriter Company. Later I acquired a portable typewriter in a case for home use and used a full sized Underwood typewriter in my office at my job to dash off short memos to other department

Don's Desk

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Don Peyer
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Carson Ca 90745
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Don's Desk

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ESSAYS STORIES POETRY ESSAYS STORIES POETRY ESSAYS STORIES POETRY ESSAYS

WHAT IS IT???????

This first paper will be an introduction of sorts. I will try to be a good writer and keep it short, or at least interesting. I am a sixty-seven year old who retired at sixty-two and feels like forty who has written off and on most of his life but with much more drive during the last three years. My short stories, most too long for this paper, deal with a variety of subjects including: the environment, people, love, politicians, both sides of controversial subjects and anything else that pops into my mind. (In one of my poems I claim that the earth is flat.) Most of my poetry rhymes, is traditional and understandable and because I believe that is what most people in the world understand and appreciate. The difficult and hard to understand I will leave to the highbrows and elite of the world who wish to puzzle over their meanings.

What do I stand for? I am an environmentalist, but not to a fault. My opinions reflect a need to preserve the earth for our children. This doesn't mean I'm against every use of our resources. If you own a forest, I believe in good management with an eye to the future, not clear cutting which only causes erosion and a loss forever of the resource. I believe the California sequoia and redwoods need replanting in our lifetimes or that of our children and grandchildren. Even the woodman will be out of a job when they are all gone. Nevertheless, we all use some wood in our daily lives. In our houses or otherwise, so we need to guard against being hypocritical. I feel not only animals and the large mammals of the sea need our protection, not only from direct assault but the effects of our pollution and poisons. If we fish, we need to do it with an eye to the future. Observe the limit. Total elimination will not profit us in the long run. Some of my writing reflects this and other strong feelings that I have about right and wrong and hopefully not in a strident or offensive way. My small postage size lot reflects my feelings about trees and nature and is graced with fruit trees (lemon, lime, orange, tangerine, apple, fig, guava) plus evergreens, palm, yuccas, bottle brush trees and other semitropical plants and cacti. Blue jays peck on my glass door when they want the unsalted peanuts I provide for them. Mockingbirds flutter and sing in tops of the trees and raucous crows cavort in the highest branches. Northern birds winter here.

The above capsule hardly tells everything about a person, as we are all multifaceted, with no two alike. I have four talented children who all live in the Los Angeles area and visit Jocquilyn and me often. Jocquilyn, my wife of forty-three years, is a kindergarten teacher. I have much to be thankful for.

I observed my birthday at the beginning of May. Because I am a poet, people love to send me cards with their own poetry enclosed. My daughter, Nicole, who is a professional artist, drew the small and wrote the ditty at the right. Turn to page two for the first and only science fiction story written by me.



BIRD BLURB

In October I wrote about the solitary Scrub Jay, Scruffy, who came for peanuts every day. It seems that Scruffy has disappeared after altercations with other jays. Now there are four Jays fighting for this territory - but no Scruffy. Today they were clashing and diving at each other and creating an awful racket. As I have said, they are territorial - two to a territory. I don't know how this is going to turn out. ■

FACT - Lifted from RANDOM FACTS By Erin Barrett and Jack Mingo

Los Angeles County has more people than Maine, New Hampshire, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Montana, Delaware, South Dakota, Alaska, Vermont and Wyoming - COMBINED. If Los Angeles County became its own state, it would be No. 9 in population, right below Michigan. And even without it, CALIFORNIA would still be No. 1 in population. (With 2 senators allotted to the whole state of California, you might wonder if there is equal representation in this country.) (my comment) DP

CURIOS FACT by DP

I once owned a 48 English Ford called the Anglia, built in East Anglia, Britain. It was a quaint car with some even more quaint appointments. To turn left or right you pushed a lever causing an illuminated arrow to spring out either side to signal others you were making a turn. This forerunner of the turn-signal was called a trafficator. The dash did not have glove box but an open shelf beneath the dash running the width of the car and where you could store small packages, sun glasses, tools or other untold items. The hood was called a bonnet and the windshield was a windscreen. The tank held petrol. The trunk lid let down and was supported by straps that made it possible to use as a very small truck. Mileage was high - up to 50 miles to the gallon on the road but not against a strong wind which I found out while crossing Nebraska. It had two doors and leather upholstery. The four door model was called the Prefect. I had it overhauled once for an unbelievably

The first (June 1989) and last (No. 166 for November 2006) issues of Don's Desk.

heads. When I retired in 1984 the company had it completely overhauled and gave it to me at my retirement party. Later, I donated it to the International Printing Museum here in Carson.

My only experience with printing came from visits to this huge museum where there are working printing presses dating way back, including typesetting machines and a working replica of the Gutenberg press. There are days they travel to other cities in California to visit schools and put on a live show. On special holidays they produce live shows in the museum theater with characters playing the founders of our country, including Ben Franklin, in full costume. They hold many special events at which Linotype machines and the methods of type casting and printing are demonstrated by docents. My wife, Jokki, was a volunteer at the museum for many years, making costumes, including a complete suit for Ben Franklin.

My first *Don's Desk* was printed on an Amstrad PCW 8256 computer connected to a little printer with some weird print. When the printer broke I bought a Brother Ink Jet word processor that printed from double-density double-sided discs. It was a wonderful machine and did an exceptional job. It still worked when I turned it in to the local office supply store for recycling.

I made many friends during the seventeen years while writing *Don's Desk* and accumulated a file case of correspondence. One of these friends recommended me to Mary Ports, a member of NWALA (National Writers

Association Los Angeles), headed by LaVonne Taylor. I was invited to join. We met once a month in Culver City, California where I contributed to their monthly publication, *Views*. Most were authors and we exchanged books and engaged speakers on writing and publishing for our monthly meetings.

I have had an interesting life. Not to sit still, I found myself getting into many sidelines including a period as a silversmith, also lapidary and working with semiprecious stones, ten years as a water color artist, a plant collector and gardener, a free lance writer and author of three

short story anthologies, many more stories printed in small magazines, four books of poetry, a book of haiku, senryu, and musings, also a book I called *Maunderings*, my own mutterings, grumblings, babblings, and observations "accumulated in ninety years of life while traveling on this blue planet through space." I traveled the seven continents including an exploration of the Arctic as well as the continent of Antarctica. I still work in my garden with my many plants and a few fruit trees with the help of a gardener.

I had the high honor of being editor of *THE FOSSIL* in 1996 and 1997. Fossil Past President Guy Miller and Secretary Joseph A. Diachenko called several times, convincing me to take on the job in spite of the fact I was a bit overwhelmed with my other projects. It was an interesting experience and my first experience with editing. I was the next to the last president for UAPAA before it folded in 2006.

I finally broke down and bought a Hewlett-Packard computer after UAPAA disbanded. My kids gave me an Apple iPad which I use for most of my messages. It was getting hard to do anything without being on the internet. It was then that I started writing "My Turn" columns for the *Daily Breeze*, a local newspaper that serves thirteen or more South Bay suburbs of Los Angeles. I have been doing this for the last eleven years. But all good things must eventually come to an end. At 95 I am almost ready to call it quits and take a rest. ◆

Gordon K. Rouze

August 25, 1927 – July 27, 2017

by Dave Tribby

GORDON KEITH ROUZE was born in Imperial, Nebraska, the son of Helen Cottrell and E. Marsh Rouze. In an article he wrote for the April 2017 issue of *THE FOSSIL*, Gordon described how he began publishing *The Imperial Times* at age 12 using a hectograph in the town of about 1,000 in southwest Nebraska. In late 1940 he discovered the American Amateur Press Association and was soon circulating *The Chimes* in the bundles of the four year old organization. He was elected manuscript manager in 1943 and mailer the following year. He joined the National APA in 1942, printing several issues of *The Prairie Pressman* for that organization, before dropping out in 1945. (He reinstated from 1996 to 2001.) He also published *Xeon* for the Fantasy APA in the 1940s.

Service in the U. S. Marines at the end of World War II and earning a B. S. degree at the University of Nebraska reduced his amateur journalism activity. He also earned a degree from South Texas College of Law.

Gordon maintain his membership in AAPA with several gaps, serving as treasurer and first vice president in the 1950s. He served two terms as secretary-treasurer beginning in 1992, and two years as laureate judge starting in 2005. He was appointed laureate judge again last year, but had to resign this year due to illness.

He belonged to The Fossils for most of the 1990s, but only recently reinstated his membership.

Gordon was employed for more than thirty years by National Steel Products Company. He held a variety of positions within the company, including vice president and corporate counsel. The corporate life took him and his family to a variety of locations, including Des Moines, Iowa; Trenton, Michigan; and Terre Haute, Indiana.

In the mid-1960s, they moved to Houston, Texas. In 1970 Les Boyer – whom Gordon had recruited into AAPA in 1943 – also moved there. With several other

members located in the area, Houston became a hotbed of activity and hosted AAPA conventions in 1977 and 1994. Gordon was a member of the Houston Museum of Printing History Printers Guild.

Gordon published a number of AAPA titles. *Dry Run* was his most recent letterpress title, and it won Letterpress laureate awards in 1989-90, 1991-92, 1992-93, 1996-97, 1998-99, and 1997-98. He also received Non-Fiction laureate awards in 1998-99 and 1999-2000.

He published *Dry Run* number 100 in February 2001, with a humorous explanation to those who doubted:

You guessed I was around number 40 or so, and that would have been right had I stuck to the old fashioned way of numbering issues. But I have changed the rules.

I am sick and tired of seeing all those prolific publishers become Centurions. I want to be one too, but at the rate I'm going I'll never make it.

Gordon participated in AAPA's cooperative annual publication, *Ink Cahoots*, contributing seven pages between 1991 and 1997, plus the covers in 1999.

After entrusting his print shop to his apprentice, he used a computer to produce his most recent AAPA journal, *Verbatim*.

Gordon's connections to AAPA's earliest days were highlighted in 2011 by his gift to the convention auction. He donated the actual engraving used on the cover of the first two issues of *American Amateur Journalist*, dated February and June 1937. He had used it to recreate those covers for the March 1958 AAJ.

Gordon was ill for about three months before his death. He is survived by his wife of 69 years, Gloria Way Rouze; four children, Sharon, Caryn, Scott, and Jeffery; seven grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

One of the last conversations he had with son Scott was about the joy that hobby printing and AAPA brought to him. ♦



Gordon Rouze checks out John Horn's Albion press at the 1999 AAPA convention.

Weathering Harvey

by Dave Tribby

WHEN HURRICANE HARVEY headed toward Texas in August, Elaine Boyer, widow of long-time Fossil Les Boyer, believed she would be safe in her Houston home of 47 years. She had seen a number of significant storms in that time and the neighborhood had never come close to flooding.

Harvey made landfall on the evening of Friday, August 25, about 200 miles southwest of Houston with sustained winds of 130 mph. While over land, the winds quickly weakened, but Harvey dumped large amounts of rain as it moved slowly eastward. On Sunday morning, Elaine reported on Facebook that things were going well for her – several inches of rain had fallen at her home on Kickerillo Drive, but power and communications were still working. Son Brian, who lives about four miles south, had made it safely back home from a trip to San Francisco.

By Sunday afternoon, the situation had worsened. In addition to rain, the storm surge affected the area, causing flooding throughout the Houston area and much of coastal Texas. As heavy rains continued from the stalled storm, officials released water from reservoirs in order to avoid failures of dams. Elaine posted a picture of an air boat in front of her house evacuating people who lived near a bayou. “Water has never been this far up the street. My house is unloading zone for families being rescued.”

In a post on Monday, one of Elaine’s neighbors, Vonda Castro, described what was happening. “When parts of Nottingham Forest woke up to devastation and rising water, friends and neighbors took action. Anyone with a canoe, kayak, boat, even an air boat, began rescuing and evacuating those who needed it. They walked through murky, dirty, dangerous bayou flood water to help each other. All day. Many not even stop-

ping for food or rest. Someone put out a call to bring any meat they could spare or might be spoiling due to power outages to their home so they could establish a food command center. I don’t know how much food they cooked, but they wrapped it in to-go plates and containers and boats then delivered it to those still trapped in their homes or to dry homes who were now hosting neighborhood evacuees. Friends hosted friends. Strangers hosted strangers. Even those who had evacuated days before offered their dry and empty homes to those who needed it. And once these friends made it to dry land, someone was there to give them food, water, a towel, comfort, a ride to someplace safe. And they are all doing it again today as the water continues to rise. As the rains continue to fall and the dams are beginning to release water downstream towards us.”

Elaine had to evacuate on Tuesday (August 29). She stayed with friends from church overnight. “Brian and Guada were able to find a circuitous route over the bayou to pick up me and my faithful kitty Wednesday a.m.”

It would be two weeks before she could see her home again. When they returned in mid-September, son Craig noted there were “LOTS of people helping here in Houston. People we don’t even know stopping by to help. One lady even driving by offering sandwiches and water. Houston Strong!” It was a huge job to move the household items out to the front yard. Elaine noted, “The water had been about twenty inches deep, with stuff marinating in the filthy water.”

Once the house was emptied, “Wonderful people from my church and another came in and cleaned and mold treated the house so well it impressed the FEMA inspector. The printshop suffered as well, but has also been opened and sprayed. All cabinetry, bath fixtures, etc., have been ripped out to reach and tear out the wallboard. It’s quite a sight.” As of September 26, some had been hauled away. “My lawn still has a lot, but some has been cleared. At least they are working on it. Will help everyone’s morale not to see belongings rotting out there.”

Elaine plans to put the house up for sale “as is” and build a new house closer to the Kernville part of the family. Until the new house is ready next spring, she will be living with Brian and Guada. ♦



Household items removed from Boyer residence

The Murder That Touched My Life

by Ken Faig, Jr.

In Memory of Patty Rebholz

THE AMATEUR JOURNALISM HOBBY over the decades has been small in numbers. So, acts of violence have only occasionally touched its members. Guy Miller told me that amateur historian Almon Horton was killed by a young man whom he had befriended. Earl C. Kelley, NAPA's 1931-32 president and the host of its 1932 convention in Montpelier Vermont, killed himself shortly after the convention. Lovecraft's protégé Robert H. Barlow, who had been active in the hobby in 1934-36, killed himself in Mexico City in 1951. Motor vehicle accidents have also taken a few of our members; for example, Martin and Willametta Keffer were tragically killed in a collision with a truck in 1989.

My own scrape with a murder case occurred many years ago, between

freshman and sophomore years of high school in the summer of 1963. Attending my fiftieth high school reunion in 2016 reminded me of the tragic events and prompted me to retell them here.

One of my classmates, Patricia Ann "Patty" Rebholz, the daughter of Melvin J. Rebholz (1920-1990) and Betty Jane (Kietzmann) Rebholz (1923-1989), was brutally bludgeoned to death after attending a Wednesday evening dance at the American Legion Hall in Greenhills, Ohio, on August 8, 1963. Before leaving the dance, she used a pay telephone to call the home of her boyfriend, Michael Wehrung, to tell him she was going to stop by his house. She reached his sister Cheryl who then relayed the intelligence to Michael, who was busy playing ping-pong with friends in the basement rec room of their home. Patty left the dance about 9:30 p.m. and it was about a fifteen-minute walk to Michael's home on Illona Drive. But Patty never made it to Michael's home.

About 10 p.m., a passing pedestrian, Craig Smith, saw two figures in the lot across from Michael's home. One figure lay prone; the other was kneeling above her. Smith assumed that the figures, whom he did not recognize, were just two teens making out. A passing motorist saw both Smith and the two figures, reached the same conclusion, and drove on. At about the same time, the teens playing ping-pong in the rec room of the Wehrung home emerged to drive to the Henry's in Finneytown to buy hamburgers. Thirty-eight years later, when Michael Wehrung was finally being tried for the murder of Patty Rebholz, one of these teens, Steve Tillett, testified that Michael was in the Wehrung home when they left, and that he saw witness Craig Smith when they emerged. Tillett's testimony was crucial for the jury which eventually acquitted Michael of second-degree murder after fourteen hours of deliberations. If Michael had been in the Wehrung house

when Tillett emerged and saw witness Craig Smith, he could not have been the figure kneeling over the victim seen by Smith.

Our classmate fifteen-year-old Patty Rebholz, a popular blonde cheerleader, was brutally killed. She was apparently strangled into unconsciousness, then dragged by her heels to a more protected area near a fence line a few feet away. The attacker used a piece of fence post to bludgeon her to death, mostly with powerful blows to the head, although according to some accounts she also sustained fractured ribs. Alphonse Udry of 1 Illona Drive, in whose side yard the murder occurred, said the piece of fence post had been leaning against a tree in his yard for several years. The Udry's did not hear anything the night of the murder, although their neighbor across the fence line heard and disregarded "thuds."

Although her brother Mel Rebholz, Jr. searched for her most of the night, Patty's body was not discovered by police until dawn, shortly after 5 a.m. The body was by then cold and stiff; no one had disturbed the morning dew before the police officer made the grisly discovery. Brought by the police to identify his daughter, Patty's father banged the hood of a police car in frustration after making the identification. When awakened about 5:30 a.m. to be informed of his girlfriend's murder, Michael, who had joined Mel Rebholz, Jr. to help search for Patty for about thirty minutes the night before, did not want to go outside to view the body and went back to sleep.

From the first, Michael was the primary suspect in Patty's murder. She had told friends including classmate Diane (Fischer) Blackburn that she intended to break up with Michael, who could be bullying and temperamental. In fact, Patty intended to tell Michael of her intentions in person and to return the family ring he had given to her, the very night of the murder. In addition to motive and opportunity, other circum-

Ohio Girl, 15, Found Dead From Beating

CINCINNATI (AP)—Patricia Ann Rebholz, 15, a pretty blond high school cheerleader, was found beaten to death yesterday in a yard in suburban Greenhills. Police and county investigators apparently had no clues to the slayer.

Police said the girl was fully clothed. Near her body they found a piece of wood, about two feet long and as thick as an arm. The wood was identified as the weapon.



Patricia Ann Rebholz

AP Wirephoto

THE GIRL had been missing since she left a teen-age dance about 9:30 Thursday night to go to the home of her boyfriend, Michael Wehrung, 15, four blocks away.

Police could not determine the motive. The girl's purse was found nearby and she apparently had not been sexually attacked, police said.

The dance was held in the American Legion Hall, only one building away from the municipal building where Pat's father, Mel Rebholz Sr., publicity director for the Hamilton County Parks District, was attending a meeting.

YOUNG WEHRUNG said Pat called him about 6 p.m.

and told him she was going to the dance with some other girls. His sister, Cheryl, said Pat called about 9:30 p.m. and said she was coming over.

She never arrived. Wehrung said he thought the girl's brother, Mel Jr., had picked her up and taken her home. He said, though, he went out to look for her at one time and called her parents.

The body was found at 5 a.m. by a Greenhills patrolman.

Cleveland Plain Dealer, August 10, 1963, p. 28

stantial evidence also pointed toward Michael's guilt. Patty's blood type was found on a pair of his trousers, a fact which he explained by stating that his girlfriend had sat on his knees, dressed in a bathing suit, during her period. In addition, witnesses reported seeing a fresh cut on Michael's wrist the night of the murder. Despite the fact that he was only fifteen years old (born September 17, 1947), Michael underwent marathon questioning sessions by the police, some as long as nine hours. In testimony later disbarred at his trial, Michael allegedly admitted going out to meet Patty and knocking her to the ground. He allegedly told investigators that his "other self" might have committed the murder. The police investigation quickly became a three-ring circus reported on the front pages of the local newspapers.

Michael's family—especially his mother Dawn and his sister Cheryl—stood by him during the investigation. Dawn, born October 4, 1922, was the daughter of Cincinnati funeral director Charles E. Meyer. She must have insisted that Michael attend Patty's wake, to which he sent red roses. While over 1500 teenage girls attended the wake, Michael stood alone, evincing no emotion, by Patty's casket.

An oft-reprinted photograph showed Michael and his sister Cheryl (born September 22, 1946) viewing the crime scene with neighborhood boys. Michael, dressed in a T-shirt, looked prepossessing compared with the other neighborhood boys. Another photograph taken during the investigation showed Dawn and Cheryl scanning the newspaper on the front porch of their home. Michael's father, Arthur Wesley Wehrung, stood on the opposite side of the small porch, facing away from them, smoking a cigarette. If mother and sister were absorbed in following the investigation, Michael's father apparently needed to get away from it all. Another famous photograph showed Michael, his mother, and his sister, flanked by two detectives, walking to another interrogation session. Mrs. Wehrung wore dark glasses. Another newspaper photograph showed Mrs. Wehrung comforting her son with a kiss after a grueling interrogation session.

The investigation continued to capture the front page of the local newspapers for weeks on end. We began school that year with the dark cloud of Patty's brutal murder hanging over our heads. But Michael was not among us. On September 1, 1963, Michael's parents voluntarily relinquished custody of Michael to the state before juvenile court judge Benjamin Schwartz. By mid-September, Michael had been packed off to a military school in Georgia, where he was to remain at his family's expense for more than two years. The police investigation, without further leads, basically ground to a halt. Michael was not to be charged with Patty's murder for nearly thirty-seven years. Unexpectedly, Michael's father

died at age 41 of pneumonia after two days in a local hospital, on October 6, 1963. I don't know whether Michael returned to Cincinnati for his father's private funeral services. I am sure that my mother was one of many Greenhills school district parents who told their children that, whatever his diagnosis, Arthur Wehrung had actually died of a broken heart.

Mrs. Wehrung's father, Charles E. Meyer, died at his home on April 10, 1965, age 83. Mrs. Wehrung was still of Greenhills at the time of her father's death. In fact, all of Michael's grandparents lived through the tragedy: Arthur H. Wehrung (1902-1969) and his wife Irene C. (Schutte) Wehrung (1903-1981) and Charles E. Meyer (1881-1965)



Photos from Cincinnati Post. Left: Teens gather at crime scene; Michael at center and Cheryl at right, in rollers. Right: Art, Dawn, and Cheryl Wehrung on their porch.



Two detectives flank Michael, Dawn, and Cheryl Wehrung as they enter the Norwood Police station.

and his wife Louise (Ruehlmann) Meyer (1884-1969). Michael had German ancestry on both sides of the family. Charles Meyer's father George Meyer (1855-1935) married Lucy Koring (1854-1934) in 1873 and founded the family undertaking business. Louise (Ruehlmann) Meyer's father Michael Ruehlmann (1854-1908) was a prosperous brewery agent whose Spring Grove Cemetery monument is topped by his bust.

Three generations of the Wehrung family were in the hospitality and food business. Michael's great-great grandparents, Jacob Wehrung (1816-1876) and Marguerite (Schmitt) Wehrung (1818-1890), emigrated from Alsace-Lorraine with two small daughters in 1848. Jacob's parents were Johann Adam Wehrung (b. 1785) and Marguerite Christina (Bieber) Wehrung (b. 1788). In 1860, Jacob was operating a coffee house in Millcreek Township, Hamilton County, Ohio. Jacob's and Marguerite's son Adam Wehrung (1858-1928) married Mary Bunz (1860-1933) in 1881 and later operated a grocery store. Adam's and Mary's son Arthur H. Wehrung (Michael's grandfather) married Irene C. Schutte in 1921 and worked as a baker and a restaurant owner.

Arthur H. Wehrung and his wife Irene C. (Schutte) Wehrung had three children: Arthur Wesley Wehrung (1921-1963), Thomas Wehrung (1924-1972) and Jean E. Wehrung (1927-1994). Arthur married Dawn Meyer, Thomas married Ruth M. Nagel (1926-2006), and Jean married Arthur Joseph Kasten (1922-1992). Arthur Wesley Wehrung married Dawn Meyer before he enlisted in the Army on October 6, 1943. In the 1953 Cincinnati Directory, Arthur and Dawn were still living in her parents' home. Arthur was then working as an operative at Procter & Gamble. His brother Thomas was working as a bartender. Both Arthur and his brother Thomas died in their forties.

Murder victim Patricia Ann Rebholz also had German ancestry on both sides of her family. Her father, Melvin Joseph Rebholz, was the son of Joseph Frederick Rebholz (1890-1953) and Bessie Mae (Noland) Rebholz (1896-1962) and the grandson of Frederick Rebholz (1865-1935) and Mary (Wahl) Rebholz (1867-



Jacob Wehrung (1816 - 1876) and Marguerite (Schmitt) Wehrung (1818-1890), great-grandparents of Michael Wehrung, emigrated from Alsace-Lorraine in 1848.

1938). Melvin J. Rebholz's great-grandfather Gregor Rebholz (1828-1903) and his wife Engelbertha (---) Rebholz (1827-1877) emigrated from Germany to America in 1853. Gregor served as a sergeant in Company C of the 183rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War, and by 1871 was operating a saloon in the "Over the Rhine" section of Cincinnati. From 1873 through at least 1895, he operated saloons in various locations in downtown Cincinnati. By 1900, he was living in the household of his son Frederick Rebholz in Elmwood Place village of Millcreek township.

Patty's mother was the daughter of Emil J. Kietzmann (1900-1975), the son of German-born parents, and Henrietta [Etta] (Finkelday) Kietzmann (1898-1990), born in Kentucky of a German-born father and a Kentucky-born mother. Like Michael's grandparents, Patty's maternal grandparents were still living when their granddaughter was murdered. Patty's parents divorced in 1974; a year later, her father took Anna B. (Ross) Moreland (b. 1937) as his second wife.

The widowed Dawn (Meyer) Wehrung was still living in Greenhills when her son Michael returned to the Cincinnati area from the Georgia military school in early 1966. The *Cincinnati Enquirer* for February 1, 1966, reported that Greenhills mayor Ted Lindner was trying to induce Michael not to re-enroll in Greenhills High School, but that Michael wished to return to his former school. I have no recollection of Michael's being in classes during our senior year nor is he depicted in any class in our 1966 yearbook. So many

students and parents were convinced of Michael's guilt in the murder that I suspect turmoil would have broken out had Michael actually returned to Greenhills High School. Perhaps the school district arranged for him to attend classes in another district or to be privately instructed.

In adult life, Michael was employed as a roofer by his boyhood friend Raymond St. Clair, who had been among the teens in the Wehrung home on the night of the murder. Ray St. Clair married Michael's sister Cheryl (a member of the Greenhills High School class of 1964), so Michael was both his employee and his brother-in-law. Michael had a successful career and rose to be a vice president of the St. Clair roofing firm. He married, had two children, and eventually four grandchildren. By 2016, he was a widower, retired from the St. Clair roofing firm. He evinced visible relief—and members of his family cheered—when he was acquitted of Patty's murder after trial as an adult in 2001. Patty's brother Melvin C. Rebholz (1945-2003), who returned to Cincinnati for Michael's trial, slumped in his seat when the verdict was announced. So, Michael has led the full life which his girlfriend Patty Rebholz never had the chance to live. Michael's mother Dawn never remarried. She eventually removed from Greenhills to Reading, Ohio, where she died, age 62, on April 3, 1985.

No credible suspects in the murder, other than Michael, ever emerged. Some reports said that an unusual number of out-of-village youths had attended the Wednesday evening

dance at the American Legion Hall. Some unlikely suspects—including a reclusive handyman who gave out pencils for Halloween and a boy who liked to sneak up on others from behind—were suggested over the years. It is certainly not beyond the realm of possibility that Patty was followed from the Legion Hall and attacked. She had nearly reached Michael's home when it happened. The attacker must have throttled her from behind with great force for her to be unable even to scream before she was rendered unconscious. One neighbor apparently heard the thuds from the blows of Patty's attacker. Both pedestrian Craig Smith and a passing motorist apparently saw the attacker kneeling over his victim. Whether Patty had already been bludgeoned to death or was still living but unconscious when these witnesses saw her and her presumed attacker is not known.

Had the kneeling figure been wielding a weapon, one hopes that either Smith or the motorist might have stopped and called for help. The night of the murder was very warm and humid and windows were open around the neighborhood. The murderer probably came close to being discovered *in flagrante delictu*. Had Michael been the murderer, he would have faced a split-second decision whether to stay put and cry out "My girlfriend's been murdered!" or to flee the scene. If he had remained on the scene, he would have had no chance to clean up or to change his clothing. On the other hand, if he had fled, he would have risked capture if pursued or have been forced to account for his whereabouts when he did return to his home. In the last analysis, Michael's lack of an alibi for the probable time of the murder (9:30 p.m. to 10:15 p.m., August 8, 1963), combined with the apparent motive of jealousy, focused suspicion on him from the start. The testimony of Steve Tillett, placing Michael in the Wehrung home when the teens leaving for hamburgers saw Craig Smith on the sidewalk, emerged only years later at Michael's trial.

Patty's floral print skirt was hiked above her waist, but there was no evidence of any sexual assault. Investigators theorized that Patty's skirt was

pulled up when she was dragged by her heels to the fence line to receive the blows from the fence post that drove her head into the ground, crushed her skull in several places, and ultimately killed her. Images of Patty's bright floral pattern skirt, her shoes, and her stained and torn blouse can be found on the internet. I remember the bright print skirts which were so popular with girls at the time of Patty's murder. J. T. Townsend's work *Gothic Cincinnati* has grainy reproductions of two police photographs of Patty's body as discovered at dawn on August 9, 1963, but fortunately the graphic photographs of her battered head shown to the jury in 2001 are not online.

Perhaps the brutal murder of Patty Rebholz—with another one of our classmates as the principal suspect—represented a loss of innocence for the members of our 1962-63 freshman high school class. Some thirty-five members of our class had died by the time of our fiftieth reunion—some twenty-four men and eleven women. One died in a car wreck only a few years after graduation. Another took his own life in his mid-twenties. Another died in Vietnam. But no member of the class of 1966 died as tragically as our classmate Patty Rebholz. Like the 1888 London murders by "Jack the Ripper," it seems unlikely that the murder of Patty Rebholz will ever be solved. Some of the physical evidence was apparently contaminated or lost before Michael Wehrung was brought to trial in 2001. No trace of Patty's blood could be found on the surviving parts of Michael's trousers. DNA evidence promised in the prosecutor's opening statement was never presented to the jury.

Michael projected a tough exterior but there is no question that he was frightened and confused during his marathon questioning in the wake of Patty's murder in 1963. Some of the statements he made at the time—such as his assertion that his "other self" might have committed the crime—were disbarred at his 2001 trial. Had Michael been charged and tried soon after the Rebholz murder, he would of course have had to be tried as a juvenile, since he was only fifteen when the crime was committed. So, Michael's own life was

apparently never at stake. Any kind of acknowledgment of guilt from him seems very unlikely—he has consistently maintained his innocence since returning to the Cincinnati area in 1966. Taking the 2001 testimony of Michael's friend Steve Tillett into account, the possibility must be acknowledged that the real killer remains undetected and uncharged.

I think the tragic story of the murder of Patty Rebholz touched the lives of all her classmates, even those like me who knew her and her boyfriend Michael Wehrung only slightly. Michael was a strikingly handsome football player—just the kind of boy a popular cheerleader like Patty would have been proud to have as boyfriend. Michael was a large boy among his classmates, having celebrated his fifteenth birthday just after he began his freshman year in September 1962. Michael's sister Cheryl, with a birthday five days later than her brother's, was not yet fourteen when she started her freshman year in September 1960. (The Wehrungs were still in Cincinnati when Cheryl began kindergarten in September 1951, while they might have already been in Greenhills, and subject to different rules, when Michael began kindergarten in September 1953. Perhaps Michael's parents optionally elected to keep their son back a year.) Much as Patty admired Michael's size and prowess, she was upset with his poor academic performance; he was apparently going to have to repeat his freshman year. His eligibility to play football the next year may have been in question.

Patty died with the opal ring Michael had given to her in her purse. It had belonged to one of Michael's grandmothers. Michael had apparently intended the gift as a sign that he was "going steady" with Patty, and he reportedly objected to her attending the American Legion dance, where she apparently took off the opal ring and put it in her purse. Did a breakup which should have resolved itself with a few harsh words somehow escalate into a brutal killing? (Michael was reportedly drinking beer the night of the killing.) Or did a mysterious killer waylay Patty before she could even meet with her boyfriend to breakup? Certainly, many

unanswered questions remain. For example, none of the accounts read by me purports to give the complete roster of the teens present in the Wehrung home the night of the murder. Michael, Cheryl, Ray St. Clair and Steve Tillett are the only names we have. Perhaps Arthur Wehrung, with work the next day, went to bed early. Some accounts state that Dawn Wehrung played cards until late with her son. In fact, Michael told Mel Rebholz, Jr. that his mother wanted him home after assisting with the search for Patty for only about thirty minutes.

Thirty-eight years after the event, a jury of Michael's peers found him innocent of Patty's murder, which to this day remains unsolved. The brutal killing of Patty Rebholz will never pass from the collective memory of the quiet

village where she met her death on that sweltering summer night. Certainly, Patty's classmates will never forget the tragic events of that night. I hope my own life will never again be touched so closely by a murder. Attending my fiftieth high school reunion, I couldn't help but think of the classmate who ought to have been with us for the celebration but wasn't. She only got to taste the first joys of being a young woman before her life was so tragically taken. Her own family was devastated by their loss. Of course, so was the Wehrung family, by the accusations against their son. The blood from Patty's poor battered skull flowed down into the ground where she lay as she was bludgeoned to death. But the dark shadow cast by the brutal crime darkened the lives of many thousands

of persons—not only the victim's loved ones, but also her classmates and many others.

Sources

Most of the images used for this article were taken from the website

www.codex99.com/unclassified/patty-and-michael.html

A very moving account by one of the members of the jury at the Rebholz murder trial in 2001 can be found at

fiercefamil.com/2012/01/17/jury-duty-terrifies-me/

Images of the clothing which Patty was wearing when she was murdered can also be found there. The images of Jacob Wehrung (1816-1876) and Marguerite (Schmitt) Wehrung (1818-1890) come from an Ancestry family tree. ♦



AAPA Selects New Officers

by Dave Tribby

THE AMERICAN AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION started its new fiscal year on October 1 with new officers in three of five elected positions. Taking over from President Peter Schaub is Frederick Moe, who served as official mailer in 2014 and 2015. (Both Peter and Fred are Fossils.) Tommy L. White becomes Vice President, a position that had been vacant for several months. John Carvalho replaces Ivan Snyder, who had served ten years as secretary-treasurer. Heather Lane will continue as official mailer.

These four were the only ones to file as candidates, so in July the incumbent official board declared them as being elected to their respective offices without the need to mail ballots and conduct an election. The term lasts two years beginning on October 1, 2017, except for the official mailer, whose two-year term begins January 1, 2018.

No candidate filed for official editor. Clarence Wolfshohl, the incumbent, consented to continue in office until a replacement can be found.

In a front page editorial in the September *American Amateur Journalist*, Editor Wolfshohl noted the progress made under the two terms (four years) of President Schaub. He took on the office at a low point, when bundles seemed to be dwindling and some prominent members suggested it was time to close up shop. "Peter Schaub instituted a monthly conference call for the of-

ficers to conduct the business of AAPA and brainstorm about ways to improve it. Peter has been energetic in promoting a camaraderie in the whole organization in finding ways to keep it not only alive but progressing." Specific initiatives include a redesigned website, promotion of regional meetings, and monetary "scholarship" awards to encourage publishing for the bundles. In his editorial, Clarence also celebrated the accomplishments of each officer—both elected and appointed—in making the organization stronger. "Four years ago at that low time in the organization's history, we resuscitated ourselves."

In the same issue, incoming president Fred Moe shared his thoughts on AAPA's future: "My vision for the AAPA is simple—expand our horizons for the new(ish) century while honoring what has gone before us. ... We need to think outside of the box to remain vital in the digital (and some would say post-everything) culture. That means: not migrating to the digital world but being open to new ideas and ways of inviting people to enjoy and practice amateur journalism. Let's bring new energy and projects into the tent."

The September 30 AAPA secretary-treasurer report shows a total of 151 members (131 regular plus 20 same-household) and a treasury balance of \$6,549. Compared to a year earlier, membership increased by 7 and the treasury was up by \$572. ♦

Preserve Your Memories

by Dave Tribby

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF Sheldon Wesson published in the last issue of THE FOSSIL brought several messages of appreciation. Readers seemed to easily connect with the sharing of a personal experience. If you have memories related to amateur journalism, I would like you to share them in THE FOSSIL. You could describe your

- interactions with a memorable personality
- attendance at an ajay gathering
- early years of ajay activity

or anything else that comes to mind.

Even better would be a longer article giving readers an understanding of your background (personal, hobby, and professional) and experiences. I was pleased when Don Peyer agreed to write a brief profile of himself for this month's cover story. We usually print an introduction for new or reinstated members, but many of us would like to know a little more about our longer-term members. It's not only important to share with other Fossils, but also for future amateur journalism researchers who want to understand the early twenty-first century.

If we don't preserve our own history it will be lost. To quote the ending of the Simon & Garfunkel song "Bookends,"

*Preserve your memories
They're all that's left you.*

—■—

I believe it was the second day of this year's NAPA convention when, during roll call, we were asked to give our name and the name of our publications. Since the previous day I had already mentioned the papers I circulate in the NAPA bundle, *The Tribby Tribune* and *TRIBulations*, I decided to mention THE FOSSIL as an "E-Journal I publish online." This caused a bit of confusion, and the others at the table asked if we had ceased printing the paper copy. No, the paper version is still sent to Fossils and subscribers—but any NAPA member (and anyone else) can access the online version for free at our website. Sometimes my droll sense of humor confuses people.

—■—

The Fossils' Internet Service Provider updated its software and moved us to a new server over the summer. The transition was relatively smooth, although one thing lost was the mailing list I use to send a notification when a new issue becomes available online.

When I recreated the mailing list on October 2, I didn't realize the new system would send a cryptic welcome message to everyone on the new list. Apologies to anyone who was confused.

I am always happy to add anyone (member or non-member) to that notification list. Simply send me a request at editor@thefossils.org.

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The previous volume of THE FOSSIL (issues 369 through 372) cost a grand total of \$186.14, split almost evenly between printing (\$88.80) and postage (\$97.34). Each issue was twelve pages, for a total of 48.

—■—

Since this is the beginning of Volume 114, I have introduced a few minor typographic changes. For example, those who read the online version will notice a changed color for headings. The body type on two-column pages is still 10.5 point Book Antiqua (nearly identical to the typeface Palatino), but the inter-line spacing is slightly expanded. I'm trying the three-column format for a second time, but this time using 9.8 point Book Antiqua. (Due to a production glitch, the first time I tried three columns, in no. 370, the entire printed issue was reduced in size by 5%, making the 9.5 point Book Antiqua harder to read.) Let me know how you like the new, slightly larger, three-column look.

—■—

Issues of THE FOSSIL are put together using the free, open source desktop publishing program Scribus. I have created an online tutorial for the American Amateur Press Association website on how to create an amateur journal using Scribus. You can find it at

<https://aapainfo.org/scribus.html>

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As reported elsewhere in this issue, both NAPA and AAPA are having trouble finding official editors. The late Fred Liddle said many times that official editor may be the best office in an amateur journalism group. You get to practice your hobby of publishing an amateur journal, but the association picks up the tab to have it printed and mailed. As an interesting side-benefit, both associations provide their editor with bound volumes of their official organ's past issues. If you have ever published your own paper, you should consider volunteering for the editor's job. ♦

AAS Seeks Amateur Papers

by Ken Faig, Jr.

THE AMERICAN ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY (185 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA 01609) is seeking donations of amateur journals published before January 1, 1901, for its collection of amateur papers. According to Vincent L. Golden, Curator of Newspapers and Periodicals, "We are going to soon be starting a project where we hope to enter all of our issues into a searchable database. If anyone was thinking about the disposition of their collection, we would then be able to wrap it into this project at the same time."

A description of the Society's Amateur Newspapers collection, including a link to a list of holdings, is available on their website at

<http://www.americanantiquarian.org/amateurnews.htm>

In recent months, AAS sorted out duplicate papers and was able to place them with twenty other institutional libraries. "Some of the curators had no idea what amateur newspapers were so it was nice to educate them. It was also nice to spread them out among a number of collections where they had few or no issues."

Send inquiries to vgolden@mwa.org or call Vincent L. Golden at (508) 471-2148. ♦

Kay Schrader Improving

by Dave Tribby

KAY SCHRADER, wife of Fossil Barry Schrader, has seen improvements as she recovers from the April 14 stroke reported in the last issue. After receiving speech and physical therapies, and also working with Aphasia and Apraxia specialists from Northern Illinois University, she is slowly regaining her ability to speak. Barry spent nearly all of his time for almost six months assisting with her care, but by early September she had progressed to the point where he had the time to resume his weekly "DeKalb County Life" column in the *DeKalb Daily Chronicle*.



Kay Schrader

Barry hopes that Kay will be released from the Oak Crest Health Center by the end of the year, although that could mean they would need to move from their current home to the assisted living section of Oak Crest. In preparation for the potential move, Barry recently sold his table-top printing press, a 6 by 9 inch Golding Official, to an instructor in the Art department at nearby Northern Illinois University. Barry will assist in setting up a small letterpress shop at NIU. ♦

FAPA in its 80th Year

by Robert Lichtman

IN THE JANUARY 2014 issue of THE FOSSIL, I offered a short article, "FAPA in its 75th Year," reporting that the 300th quarterly mailing of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association in August 2012 had been 433 pages and that there were 34 members out of a possible 65 on board for the occasion.

The passage of time has not been kind to FAPA. The 80th anniversary mailing went out in August 2017, and was only 133 pages produced by fourteen of the current membership of nineteen. That was the first mailing in two years to hit triple digits.

FAPA is science-fiction fandom's oldest organized group – the next oldest was founded four years later – and its *Fantasy Amateur* is the longest-running fanzine.

I continue to serve as FAPA's secretary-treasurer, a position I've held since 1986 through half a dozen different official editors. I remain optimistic that the organization will survive, but wonder in what form. Some have suggested going electronic, gathering contributions into a single PDF file and distributing that to the members. There isn't widespread support for this concept, and I'm adamantly opposed to it – so as long as I'm its primary official it won't happen. ♦

Secretary-Treasurer Report

by Tom Parson

NO NEW CONTRIBUTIONS or membership renewals have been received since publication of the July issue of THE FOSSIL (no. 372). Our membership records are being kept up to date and indicate 4 members, 2 subscribers, and 5 former members whose renewals are past-due.

Summary of 2017 Deposits and Expenses

Starting balance, January 1, 2017: \$3,695.39

Deposits:

Membership dues and subscriptions: \$295.00

Expenses:

Website and Domain: \$35.16

Printing & Mailing of The Fossil: \$141.08

Issue 370: \$47.00

Issue 371: \$48.58

Issue 372: \$45.50

Bank service fees: \$30.00

\$2/month + \$12 bounced deposit

Total 2017 Expenses through October 8: \$206.24

Current balance, October 8, 2017: \$3,784.15

I continue to get printed bank statements each month because it is easier for me to keep track on paper than to remember to go online each month. ♦



NAPA Convention Number 142

by Dave Tribby

THE NATIONAL AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATION'S 142nd annual convention, held at the International Printing Museum in Carson, California, drew eight members plus four spouses: Mark & Lori Barbour, Bill & Ruth Boys, Arie Koelewyn & Kate Corby, Michelle Kloisterman, Jack Oliver, Hal Shive, Dave & Liz Tribby, and Leland Whitson.

The opening event of the convention was dinner at the Carson DoubleTree Hotel on the evening of Wednesday, July 26. Official business began the following morning as delegates met at the museum. Officer reports showed a decline in membership over the year, with a total of 90 currently on the rolls; only 59 of those pay the full annual dues, with the rest being life, family, or trial members. Annual net income was \$1,240.40 more than ongoing expenses (excluding a special \$5,000 gift to support the Library of Amateur Journalism). President Michelle Kloisterman and Vice President Hedges were re-elected. Arie Koelewyn was elected recorder and Jack Oliver executive judge. There was no candidate for official editor, so President Kloisterman will try to find a volunteer. Several elected officers will continue in multi-year terms: Secretary-Treasurer Bill Boys and Judges George Hamilton and Lisa Brandstetter-Holt.

Convention activities included field trips to Kater-Crafts Bookbinders and the Getty Center, plus a number of presentations at the museum itself. The banquet was held at Alpine Village in Carson. The closing event was Sunday morning brunch at the Barbours' home in Orange.

Update on Jake Warner

For the second consecutive year, no member of the Warner family was in attendance at the convention. Jake Warner had attended every convention from 1971 to 2015. An inquiry about Jake's health to Mark Brosey (Jake's grandson-in-law) brought the following reply in mid-July:

After Jake was released from the hospital to be handed over to hospice care at his home and Alice went up to Maryland to take over his care, he got especially put out that the hospice workers wouldn't let him have any martinis. They made a deal with him that if he met his calorie intake and physical therapy goals for the day, he would earn himself a martini. One day led to another where he kept earning his martinis. He is doing much better now. He has been losing his balance and falling a lot, but Dave and Melody have been with him making sure he's continuing to heal. He wanted to drive to the NAPA convention this year, but they decided that was

a little too much work for everyone involved. I went up with the family about three weeks ago and saw he was in great spirits. He even participated in a water gun fight with my son Elijah. I wanted to give you that little tidbit of good news since it sounds like an update hasn't made it out in awhile

NAPA is scheduled to meet again next July in Ashtabula, Ohio. ♦

Remember to Renew!

Your membership renewal date is printed on your mailing label. If you come due before January 1, please send a check to Secretary-Treasurer Tom Parson (address below).

The Fossil

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION of The Fossils, a non-profit organization for anyone interested in the history of amateur journalism. Individuals or institutions allied with our goals are invited to join. Dues are \$15 annually, or \$20 for joint membership of husband and wife. Annual subscription to THE FOSSIL without privileges of membership, is \$10. For further information, contact the secretary-treasurer or visit our website:

www.thefossils.org

Gathering of articles, editing, and layout were completed by the official editor in California; production and mailing were handled by Gary Bossler in Ohio.

Fossil Board: 2016 - 2018

Ken Faig, Jr., PRESIDENT, 2020 Chestnut Ave. Apt. 405, Glenview, IL 60025; president@thefossils.org

Gary Bossler, 145 Genoa Avenue S.W., Massillon, OH 44646; gbossler@thefossils.org

John Horn, 24300 Chenal Parkway, #71, Little Rock, AR 72223; jhorn@thefossils.org

Appointed Officers

Official Editor: Dave Tribby, 1529 Fantail Court, Sunnyvale, CA 94087; editor@thefossils.org

Secretary-Treasurer: Tom Parson, 157 South Logan Street, Denver, CO 80209; s-t@thefossils.org

Librarian: Mike Horvat, 22275 SW 102nd Place, Tualatin, OR 97062; librarian@thefossils.org

Webmaster: Dave Tribby (contact information above)