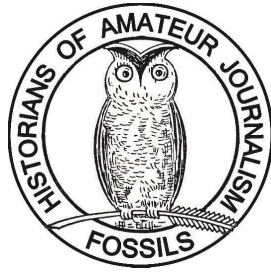


# The



# Fossil

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## Gary Bossler Replaces Jack Swenson as President

by David M. Tribby

ON NOVEMBER 22, Jack Swenson announced his decision to resign both as president of *The Fossils* and as member of the board of trustees. "This has been delayed while I debated doing what I now know I must. I have been ineffective as president for several months. My wife's fall a year ago has resulted in my being her primary caregiver, complicated by my own surgery scheduled for early December."

The remaining two trustees, Gary Bossler and Dave Tribby, agreed that Gary, the senior member of the board, would replace Jack as president. They filled the trustee vacancy by appointing John Horn.

Jack Swenson joined the American Amateur Press Association in December 1982 and soon began publishing *The Peripatetic Press* (1983-85), *The New Ephemera* (1988-89) and *Ephemera* (1997 and later). He won prose non-fiction laureate awards in 1985 and 1990, and a prose fiction laureate in 2010. Jack served in a number of AAPA offices, being appointed printing & publishing manager for two years in 1989 and elected as president for a two-year term in 1999. Jack and his wife, Mavis, hosted the 1996 convention in Rapid City, South Dakota. In 2003 they filled out a term as mailers, and were elected co-mailers later in the year. (They resigned in late 2005, two months short of completing the term.)

Jack, who celebrated his 86th birthday in November, joined *The Fossils* in 1984. He was elected president in 1996, and re-elected in 1997. Jack served on the board of trustees from 2000 until his resignation. He became president again in 2012 upon the death of Guy Miller.

Jack grew up in northern Minnesota and met Mavis while attending Blackduck High School. He worked at the *Blackduck American* as a printer's helper and high school reporter. Later he was a copy boy for the *Minneapolis Star-Journal*. Following a stint in the U. S. Navy, he worked in radio and television broadcasting as a reporter, editor, and talk show host in Fargo and Bismark, North Dakota. During this time he purchased a 3x5 Kelsey press and "just enough type to get me hooked" on letterpress printing. In 1975 he acquired an 8x12 C&P and 200 cases of type.

Fall of 1963 brought a career change as Jack became executive director of the North Dakota Petroleum Coun-

cil. A promotion in 1972 to central region director for the American Petroleum Institute required a move to Chicago. He became executive vice president of the Rocky Mountain Oil & Gas Association in Denver in 1975, a position he held until retirement in 1987. The next year he and Mavis moved to Rapid City. A move back to Hines, Minnesota, in September 2001 required significant downsizing of his print shop. Following Jack's stroke in early 2012, they moved to Bismark in order to live closer to their son. (The couple have moved 23 times during nearly seventy years of marriage.)

This is Gary Bossler's second stint as president of *The Fossils*, having first been elected in 1995. He also served five years as secretary-treasurer. He was appointed to the board of trustees in 2012 to fill out the term of Guy Miller.

Gary joined the National Amateur Press Association in 1972 and the AAPA a year later. He was elected NAPA official editor in 1992, 2003, 2004, 2009 and 2010, and as president in 1993. He also served as mailer in 1989 and 1990. Gary joined *The Fossils* briefly in the mid-1980s, then reinstated in 1994. *Short Shots*, *Ohio Views*, *Mail Call*, and *Ohio Connection* are some of the titles he has published for NAPA and AAPA. Although primarily active in the National, he served as AAPA convention chairman in 2001 and 2012. He received the Russell L. Paxton Award for Service to Amateur Journalism in 2006.

A native of Altoona, Pennsylvania, Gary has lived in the Canton, Ohio, area since 1955, except for two years in the U. S. Army. A 1960 Kelsey advertisement sparked an interest in letterpress printing, and he eventually acquired a 7x11 Gordon, a 12x18 C&P, and a 10x15 Heidelberg press. He later used computers to publish amateur papers.

The newest trustee, John Horn of Little Rock, Arkansas, joined *The Fossils* in late 1986 – about the time he established the Russell L. Paxton Award. He joined AAPA in August 1984 and was soon winning laureate awards for his impeccably printed *The Leadstacker*. Later, he printed *The Writer's Voice*, a literary journal focused on publishing material from non-publishing writers. He joined NAPA in early 1986 and circulated journals to both organizations. John hosted the 1999 AAPA convention, where members were awestruck at the amount of letterpress printing

equipment available at his Shooting Star Press.

The third trustee, Dave Tribby, has been a Fossil since 1977. He has served as webmaster since The Fossils' website was brought on-line in 2005. He was appointed a trustee in 2012 to replace Barry Schrader. Dave joined AAPA in 1970 and began publishing *The Handset Journal* and *The Tribby Tribune*. He joined NAPA in 1973 and bought a life membership ten years later. A native of Florida, Dave

has lived in the Silicon Valley area of California since 1973. Dave received The Fossils' Gold Composing Stick award in 2007.

The Fossils finds itself in the unusual position of having all three of its elective positions, the board of trustees, filled by appointees. Gary Bossler replaced Guy Miller, Dave Tribby replaced Barry Schrader, and now John Horn has replaced Jack Swenson. ❖

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## NAPA Laureates and THE FOSSIL

by David M. Tribby

IN OCTOBER, I asked the NAPA recorder and executive judges whether an article in THE FOSSIL could be entered for the History of Amateur Journalism laureate category. The mailing list for that issue included a number of NAPA members, plus I printed an amateur journal in the August bundle describing how all members could read it online.

I didn't know how many members needed to receive the publication. The current NAPA bylaws Article D says entries "...must have met the distribution standards established in Art. VI." Yet the brief Article VI only says: "To be entitled to vote or to hold office, a member shall have paid his dues so as to be in good standing."

When I asked, I didn't realize my question had been a hot button issue in NAPA for nearly a quarter of the twentieth century.

I got the first glimmer of controversy from an article by Verle Heljeson in the October 1970 *Campane* that described a 1963 request for judgment: "Roy Lindberg asked [the judges] to rule on the eligibility for National laureates of material published in THE FOSSIL. ... Again, strictly interpreting the constitution, the judges ruled that FOSSIL material was not eligible since THE FOSSIL itself was not an amateur journal as then defined. ... It is significant that in a subsequent overhaul of the constitution ... entry of FOSSIL material in National laureates was specifically legalized."

Verle's article stirred my interest, so I plowed through old *National Amateurs*. The June 1963 issue printed an April report by Judges Heljeson, Louise Lincoln, and Robert Dunlap. Lindberg felt THE FOSSIL, as an official organ of a different organization, and sold for paid subscription, should not be considered an NAPA amateur journal. The judges traced the issue back to the 1953 convention when Dora Moitoret, who had ruled during the year that THE FOSSIL was not an amateur paper, moved the convention sustain her ruling. Instead, she was overruled. The 1954 laureates included an award to a FOSSIL article. A motion to exclude THE FOSSIL was defeated at the 1961 convention, and the 1962 laureates again included a FOSSIL article. The judges asserted the conventions were guided by the requirement that qualifying publications must be

distributed to at least 100 NAPA members; yet in 1963 there were only 75 NAPA members who belonged to The Fossils (or who subscribed). Because of the limited distribution, and the possibility that an editor of THE FOSSIL might not be an NAPA member, the judges ruled that it was not an NAPA amateur journal.

President J. Rolfe Castleman didn't like the ruling, so he removed Judges Heljeson and Dunlap and Recruiting Chairman Lindberg from office retroactively to April 1 for failure to meet officer activity requirements. The fired judges refused to recognize their removal.

The 1963 convention decided the judges were legally removed, but as of May 16 – and so the decision stood. Later, a motion excluding any official organ (including *National Amateur*) from laureate consideration narrowly passed. The proponent, Ed Cole, wanted to show the judges' decision was unfair. The new president, Milt Grady, appointed a committee to amend the constitution, "in particular, that article defining an amateur journal."

One amendment presented in 1964 allowed consideration of matter published in THE FOSSIL, mentioning the publication by name. When the amendment passed in 1965, essays, poetry, fiction, and art created by members and published in THE FOSSIL could be entered for laureate awards, but did not count toward the voting activity requirement.

NAPA's 1976 centennial convention moved laureate procedures from the constitution to the bylaws, and made distribution standards the same as the activity requirement: "distributed ... to at least 100 members including the officers" – with no mention of THE FOSSIL.

The activity requirement in the 2008 NAPA constitution and bylaws mandated distribution "to the entire membership through the mailing bureau or in *The National Amateur* or ... presented on an official NAPA World Wide Web site." The 2010 convention approved an amendment to remove the activity requirement for voting; laureate implications apparently were not considered.

The current NAPA judges have decided that, because the article in question was to be reprinted in the December 2013 *National Amateur*, the question is moot. According to Dave Warner, "The bylaws will most likely be modified at the convention clearing up the ambiguity left by previous changes." ❖

## Time to Stand Up

by Gary Bossler

I WAS PRESIDENT of The Fossils once before, in 1995-96, but have little recollection of that term except that I'm sure Guy Miller was leading me by the hand.



We are happy that John Horn, Fossil member in Little Rock, Arkansas, has accepted appointment to fill the position of trustee and agreed to stand for election for the coming two year term. Any member in good standing, wishing to be a trustee should communicate your desire to the Secretary-Treasurer before June 30 and your name will be placed on the ballot.

I recently sent a list of our mailing labels to our officers to check over and John Horn informed us that Robert L. Halbert of Tyler, Texas, passed away in 2011 at the age of 83. Our thoughts and prayers are with Robert's family.

We are presently trying to establish a clean true and correct membership list.

Through attrition our membership, by my count, has been reduced to a mere 35 people and that includes three family members. That's not a very big pool of people from which to find new appointees.

We are in need of someone to take on the office of official editor. Trustee Dave Tribby has agreed to continue editing the current volume. I have agreed to take care of the printing and mailing of THE FOSSIL. That means Dave will put out this issue (January), as well as April and July issues of Volume No. 110. We hope that someone will step forward and take on the job of official editor for at least the next two volumes.

With this issue of THE FOSSIL you will find a date on the mailing label that tells you when your membership or subscription expires. There will also be a flier in the envelope asking you to renew your membership. If we are to fulfill our mission to be the "Historians of Amateur Journalism," we need some people to stand up.

These are certainly trying times for amateur journalism. There are so many ways a person can spend leisure time in our world today and that is our concern. We need to convey to people what amateur journalism is about. Hopefully we can locate some people in the small segment of the population that finds our pursuits and interests inviting.

There are voices out there that say there is no longer an interest or a need for our organization. If we are to continue, we need to make some decisions. We need your input. I for one, would like to see the Fossils continue for the foreseeable future. ❖

## FAPA in its 75th Year

by Robert Lichtman

FOUNDED IN 1937, the Fantasy Amateur Press Association celebrated its 75th anniversary in August 2012 with a 433-page 300th mailing. As I read in the October 2013 issue of THE FOSSIL, both the NAPA and AAPA have seen reduced numbers in their ranks in recent times, even to the point that at the 2013 NAPA convention a motion was floated to disband the organization. Happily, it was defeated. FAPA has seen similar reductions in its ranks, especially in recent years, and for the least desirable of reasons—the deaths of long-time members including one of its founders, Jack Speer, the only member who maintained a continuous membership dating back to the beginning (but who passed away in 2008). With 34 members out of a possible 65, the size of the 300th mailing was all the more remarkable.

The following mailing was 359 pages, but nearly half of that was a "franked" copy of the program book of the 2012 World Science Fiction Convention. The inclusion of these in the distributions is one of the perks of FAPA membership, as otherwise one must at minimum take out a supporting membership in the convention at a cost of more than twice FAPA's current annual dues. The next four mailings returned to more typical page counts for FAPA at 148, 174, 188 and 140 pages, and there is now one less member.

I have been FAPA's secretary-treasurer continuously since accepting the position in 1986, and I've overseen a number of clarifications, modifications, and simplifications in the way the organization operates. The FAPA constitution had stipulated that while the organization's secretary-treasurer and official editor could serve unlimited terms, the offices of president and vice-president had to be turned over every two years. Volunteers for these posts, which had only limited duties, were not forthcoming, leaving it to me to beat the bushes. Tiring of this, I conducted a successful referendum to abolish those posts and fold their functions into the remaining officers. The constitution also has mechanisms for dealing with various membership issues, which were traditionally done via the mails. Having obtained e-mail addresses of all members, I began holding these votes electronically—the result being that what used to take a minimum of three months now happens virtually overnight.

Although FAPA's long term future is far from assured—there are simply not large numbers of potential members lurking over the horizon waiting to sign on (there hasn't been a waiting list since the mid-1990s)—it seems that for now some reasonable stability is happening and the organization will continue as it has for so many decades. For more about FAPA, please visit

[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fantasy\\_Amateur\\_Press\\_Association](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fantasy_Amateur_Press_Association)  
on the Web. ❖

# Secretary-Treasurer Report

by Tom Parson

SINCE THE LAST REPORT in June, donations and member renewals have been infrequent, with one new member – welcome Frederick Moe!

Bank account as of June 1, 2013	\$6,550.70
Payment: printing, mailing The Fossil, 10/20/2013	-\$37.80
Deposit: donation & member payments*, 1/3/2014	+\$201.00
Bank account as of January 12, 2014	\$6,713.90

\*The \$201 deposit on 1/3/14 included new membership payment of \$15 from Frederick Moe, 8/29/13; several donations totaling \$41 from Kent Chamberlain; renewal of \$15 from Martha Shivvers, 9/15/13; a membership donation of \$100 from W Hal Shepherd; and renewal of \$30 from Tom Parson.

For the new year, 2014: I resolve to deposit member donation payments promptly. ❖

## Schrader's LAJ Visit

THE PREVIOUS ISSUE of THE FOSSIL included an article by Barry Schrader describing his visit to the Library of Amateur Journalism at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Unfortunately, there was not enough space in that issue to run the following picture:



University of Wisconsin Special Collections librarian Susan Stravinski shows Fossil Barry Schrader some of the 19th Century bound volumes of amateur press materials in the LAJ collection during his brief visit there in spring of 2013. ❖

# Robert Lee Halbert

November 13, 1927 – August 31, 2011

by David M. Tribby

ROBERT HALBERT, A member of The Fossils since 1979, died in August 2011 at his home in Tyler, Texas, at age 83. He was survived by a son and two daughters. Beginning in the 1940s he worked at small country and large metro print shops, although by the 1970s printing was a hobby and real estate his occupation. He also owned and operated Tyler Laundry for many years.

Robert joined NAPA in 1977, AAPA in 1978, and was member 509 of the Amalgamated Printers' Association. Robert was elected NAPA vice president in 1981. From 1978 to 1983 he published *The Herald & Democrat* for all three groups using a Model 29 Linotype and an Old Style 10x15 C&P press. He also used a Super Caster to create small fonts of dingbats, borders, and initials for sale to other printers. An avid acquirer of printing equipment, he bought out many print and typography shops. He collected other items, including the Pullman railroad car that Teddy Roosevelt used when he was president and Al Capone's limousine. ❖

## The Fossil

THIS IS THE Official Publication of The Fossils, a non-profit organization of those 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, visit our website:

[www.thefossils.org](http://www.thefossils.org)

Gathering of articles, editing, and page layout were done by Dave Tribby in California; production and mailing were handled by Gary Bossler in Ohio.

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