

Fin Petrie of Opal Wyoming Is Named Prize Rural Reporter

Finlay Petrie, who for the past quarter century has worked in the general store at Opal, Wyo., a town of fifty inhabitants, has been judged the best country newspaper correspondent of 1937, it was announced today by Wheeler McMillen, editor of the Country Home Magazine, which sponsors the annual award to crossroads writers.

"Fin" Petrie, who writes a weekly column of Opal news for the Gazette in nearby Kemmerer, has built up a large and loyal following of readers. Guido Bott, news editor of the Gazette, says that "our paper could hardly do without his weekly correspondence. From a little wool-gathering center he writes live news shrewdly interspersed with criticisms that have point, leave no sting, and carry the flavor of the place."

Petrie is the first man to win the annual award, which consists of \$200 in cash and a trip to New York and Washington. Previous winners were Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Mahoney, of Oasie, Mo., and Mrs. Susan E. ... The award is equivalent, in rural journalism, to the Pulitzer Prize in the metropolitan press.

The winning work was chosen from more than 3,500 clippings from country newspapers, submitted by the editors as the writing of their best correspondents. The judges, in addition to Mr. McMillen, included Miss Gertrude B. Lane, editor of the Woman's Home Companion; William L. Chenery, editor of Collier's, and Sumner Blossom, editor of the American Magazine.

The award was inaugurated by the County Home Magazine, a national farm publication, in an effort to give recognition to what the editors believe is a most important phase of American journalism. The quality of writing submitted, according to Mr. McMillen, has been consistently good; simple and straightforward.

The second largest prize, \$100, goes this year to another man, Andrew Peeples of Bluffton, S.C., for his writing in the Bamberg, S.C., Herald. Other cash awards were won by Mrs. Ezra Winter, Wayland correspondent for the Evening Journal, Washington, Iowa; Albert Billings, Perkinsville correspondent for the Woodstock, Vt., Standard; Mrs. John Busche, of the Kingfisher, Okla. Times; W. P. Wilson of the Middleton, Del., Transcript; Mrs. Mrs. Ralph Shubert of the Seneca, Kan., Times; Mrs. Della Loui of

the Platteville, Wis., Journal; Ray Kellenbarger of the Anselmo, Neb., Enterprise; Mrs. Edna Eaton Wilson of the Stillwater, Okla., Gazette; Mrs. A. V. Yeager of the Brady, Tex., Standard, and Mrs. E. A. Phillips of the Idaho Falls, Idaho, Post Register.

In addition, the judges cited 50 other contents as worthy of special mention.

The home town of this year's winner of the major award, Opal, is a tiny desert watering and trading point on the Union Pacific, yet Petrie is able to get a column or two of interesting reporting and comment out of it each week. Typical paragraphs from his reports during the past year, which accurately reflect the life of his small community, follow:

"Vego Miller of Daniel brought to town one of the finest catches of mountain trout ever seen in this neighborhood. When rain hit him at 2 o'clock in his hay field, he replaced his hay fork with a fish pole, using worms. He caught the limit and arrived in Opal at 5 o'clock. His friends hope it rains again ..."

"If anyone tells you he can hold a car on these icy roads when it begins to skid, tell him to neel a cranberry; it can't be done ..."

"Judge Roy Mason and wife were visitors. There are plenty of judges in his township, but a deplorable absence of customers ..."

"Special Opal Note: We still sauces our coffee dunk our toast, hang the bathtub on a nail, take a shower in the rain; but there is no one on the dole and the health of the inhabitants is 100 per cent ..."

"Cowboy Slim Dyer, who was assigned the job of bringing in a heard of sheep, couldn't sleep nights on the trail. The bleating of the sheep had him believing they were all sick ..."

"Two kids, young Pratt and Lewis of Kemmerer, breezed in looking for a car to pull them out of a snow-drift east of Opal. They had spent five hours trying to get out, but they had smiles all over their pans, cheerful as though they had just got up from the breakfast table. Never a whine or a cuss. As long as this country raises kids like these two it won't go to hell, whether it has ten judges or a hundred ..."

"Fin" Petrie will travel east to New York and Washington the middle of August as the guest of the Country Home Magazine, and will speak on a coast-to-coast NBC network during his visit. But he says he is going to leave his usual ten gallon hat at home, because "there are plenty of hicks in all towns, and I'm not drawing any flies with a teepee tent."

\$500 Fish Caught At Fox Lake July 24

"Oscar" is caught! For the past six weeks, or, to be exact, since June 13, the waters of the Fox Lake region have been the mecca of fisherman from all over the region, not only because of real love of fishing, but because each and everyone, whether willing to admit it or not, has had high hopes of being the one to land the famous "Oscar," the fish with the \$500 tag attached.

Oscar, who was a 7 1/2 pound pickerel, was released in the waters of Fox Lake by Mayor Arthur Amundsen, on June 13. Attached to the fish was a tag, bearing the number 500 on one side, and C. E. A., No. 1, on the opposite side. The five hundred dollars was given by the Chicago Evening American. In addition to that amount, other prizes which were offered by Fox Lake officials, merchants and organizations, brought the figure up to \$1,330.90, which is a tidy little sum to have handed to one.

The lucky fisherman was John D. Mueller of 1837 W. 105th street, Chicago, who spends his week ends at his cottage on Pinckney Lake. He caught the fish with several others, Saturday evening, July 24, and it was not until about 2:00 o'clock Sunday afternoon that Mr. Mueller's brother, Charles, discovered just what had happened. Charles, who was about to clean the fish that had been caught during the week-end, took "Oscar" from the live box, only to have the fish squirm out of his hands and flop into the lake. As this was the only pickerel that had been caught, Charles was determined not to lose it, and fortunately, managed to re-capture the prize. It was not until he had the fish on short the second time that he noticed the tag, and realized the importance of the affair. Mayor Amundsen was called to identify the fish, and the next, and best, step was the collection of the awards.

"Elmer" To Be Released When the proposed lotus festival opens at Fox Lake, August 7, there will be bathing beauties and other attractions, but to many "Elmer," the \$500 prize fish, which will be released in Fox Lake, will be the main feature.

The newly organized Fox Lake Lions club, which is promoting the lotus festival, will launch the prize fish at Grass Lake, Aug. 7. There will be a tag on the tail of the fish, and the lucky angler who lands him will receive a check for \$500, when the tag is presented to Bill Kitzman, president of the Lions club.

Waukegan College Undergoes Extensive Building Program

The students of the Lake College of Commerce in Waukegan are becoming accustomed to typing in rhythm with the low roar of a steam shovel and the rat-a-tat-tat of pounding nails as the extensive remodeling and building program of their school goes into full swing.

During the past ten years the name of the Lake College of Commerce has become synonymous with the highest standards in specialized business training, coupled with the most modern equipment and best professional advice. Last fall the enrollment reached a peak almost twice as high as the number of students that could normally be accommodated, thus presenting a problem that the school management has been able to solve only by the addition of still more space to their present quarters.

Two new classrooms are being built at the rear of the building, covering the area that was once an outside storeroom as well as additional ground in the courtyard. The rooms in front of the building will be enlarged and locker and cloak rooms added.

It is clearly evidenced by the interest in registration for the new fall term that Lake County is well aware of this progressive institution. In the Fifth International Commercial contest held in Chicago, five students placed high in their various events with Elmer Adams winning a first place in typing and Regina Tyrrell placing second in shorthand.

The employers of Lake County have also realized the benefits of a business school, and their constant demand for help has necessitated the continuance of school during the

reconstruction period. Employment calls have averaged four placements a week for the past year. Various departmental heads of the school will be present in the afternoons to take care of enrollments and inquiries for the new fall term.

FASHION NOTE

"Profile hats" and ostrich plumes kill conspire to dramatize milady this fall. Other predictions include high laced boots, dance frocks three inches off the floor with ribbon bindings, and three-quarter length coats heavily furred and with ripple hems on dress-maker suits.

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Publish New Map Of Lake County

M. B. Schaeffer & Co., Chicago, has just published a new map of the west part of Lake county showing acres and acreage owners, extending from Milburn, Mundelein, and the Kildeer Country club on the east to the McHenry county line on the west and from the Wisconsin state line on the north to a point five miles south of the Lake-Cook county line.

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