

My Take: Gone Fishing

Written by Jane Alexander, Editor-In-Chief
Wednesday, 12 May 2010 11:29



I love to fish. Show me an open body of water and I'm in—*with a line, that is.* For me, there's nothing like coming home after a hectic day, grabbing my trusty Zebco 33, along with a few night crawlers (both live and Gulp) and wandering out to the lake behind our place to relax and indulge.

As I write this column, it's still too chilly for our bass to be spawning, and, sadly, for me to be hauling them in. (For the record, I am a great bass fisher. And, yes, I bait my own hook.) Right now, we're after whatever will bite, "we" being the wonderful gentleman with whom I share my life and several old neighborhood geezers. Some evenings, I outlast all of these guys, continuing on my quest long after they've "headed to the house."

Except for the rattling of my little red, battery-lit bobber, things get pretty quiet along our shoreline after the sun goes down. The evening hours I spend there are ideal for contemplation—*often of matters totally unrelated to Bill Dance's latest tips on drag ratios, past and future BassPro seminars, what color Chatterstick works best when, etc.*

Lately, I've found myself thinking about last January's Viewpoint column by MT publisher Bill Kiesel, entitled "[Sailing Into 2010 & Beyond.](#)" In it, Bill compared sailing—*for which he clearly has a passion*—to the business of publishing magazines. Neither pursuit is as easy to master as it might seem. Both, however, can be extremely exhilarating at times. Much like fishing and editing...

I came out of industry, into this line of work by sheer accident. I desperately needed a job; someone desperately needed an editor for a newly acquired engineering-based publication. Early on, my first publisher ordered me never to waste time fretting over my lack of editorial credentials. Instead, I was told to simply "find a successful parade and put us in front of it." I've tried to do so ever since.

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As an editor, I'm constantly trolling for new ideas and content to build magazines around. Yet, despite the phase of the moon, my lure of choice and the utterly perfect spot from which I cast, there's no guarantee I'll bring in the types of things that match up with your interests and help you solve problems. No matter how hard I "fish," I never know what I'll pull out—*or if there is anything to pull out at all.*

That's because, just like in sailing and angling, conditions can change quickly and dramatically when you're editing/growing magazines.

I'm lucky, though. Some of you take the time to tell us what you think of our editorial products. A real measure of success for me is in your anecdotal accounts of how and where our publications show up—*in pages of selected articles posted on bulletin boards in plants; in shiny magazines seen on airplanes; in dog-eared copies strewn about break shacks and passed around in meetings.* Those are my "trophies," and I thank you and our many contributors for helping us reel them in.

So, please stay in touch. I'll always look forward to comparing notes on how we can best serve your information needs and, if you care to talk about them, "the big ones" that got away! **MT**

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