

2014 Honorary Lifetime Member Award

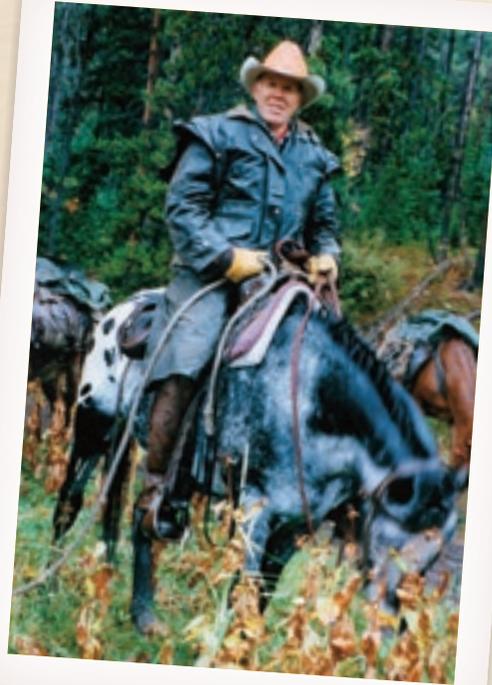
Harold Turner Sponsored by  **SCI**
FIRST FOR HUNTERS

I must say that I have lived an exceptional life. I have had the opportunity to help raise my family, while hunting and fishing the same areas all of my life and I consider that an honor and a privilege that not many have experienced. Then to top it off, I am selected to be recognized by some of my peers for such an honor as this, my life has definitely been blessed! However, it is somewhat bitter sweet to realize ones active life in the outfitters industry is somewhat coming to an end.

My first three years of schooling were held part of the time in a small cabin here on the ranch that held a total of 2 students and at the Elk School which was at the Moosehead ranch. We would ride our horses bareback to the Elk School until the snow would fly and then we would have a state appointed teacher come to the ranch during the winter months. Eventually my parents bought a house in Jackson and I attended school in town from 4th grade until I was a freshman. From there I moved to Salt Lake City, Utah where I graduated from a parochial high school. I went to Colorado after graduating high school and attended Colorado State University on a ski scholarship. I graduated in 1959 as an Army officer and spent 8 months on active duty. Being interested in our education system, I spent 20 years on Teton County School boards.

After dad died in 1960 I was thrown into running our wilderness operation and guided from then until 2006. Among these dates I married Berniece Jensen of Salt Lake City, Utah and we had three sons, John, Matt and Robert, all of them have been very active in the outfitting business and now my grandchildren are starting to become involved. Around 2006, my son Robert took over the day to day operations of running the outfitter business. Last winter the outfitting license and all permits were transferred over to him which makes him the fourth generation working the same areas from the same camps as did three generations before him.

My first Wyoming Outfitters meeting was in 1960 in Dubois and I was active in the Association and the Outfitters Industry for the next 30 years. I served on the board as an officer and a president for the next 20 plus years. During this same time period, I was also on the board of the Jackson Hole Outfitters and Guide Association serving as an officer and President. This was all done without having an Outfitter License which was still under my mother's name under the old "family member" clause. While being involved as a member on both of these boards, it didn't take me long to realize that the political side of the outfitting industry was almost as important as the business side of it which directed me to become more and more involved in it.



In the 1960's, Fred Abercrombie, Bud Sailors, Myself and Rip Van Winkle (the Teton Forest Supervisor at the time) sat down one morning and wrote the first "Outfitters Operating Plan" for the Teton Forest which was a whole page and a half. We definitely caught hell from some of the outfitters for putting so many regulations and restrictions on them. But as I remember, some of the document was only defining terms.

Over the years I have spent a considerable amount of time lobbying in Cheyenne and Washington D.C. When the Wyoming State Legislature interim committee recodified the Wyoming Game and Fish statutes, I was the outfitter/hunting advisor for the group. We successfully got an outfitter set aside for non-resident elk licenses passed through the legislature only to have Governor Herschler veto the bill. When the Forest Service decided to go to the "bid and prospectus" system for issuing permits I was one of the Wyoming delegation that went to D.C., along with other state's outfitters, to fight it. We won the issue and was selected to the committee to come up with an alternative, which we did. It was accepted by the NFS and was successfully used for many years.

As president of the Dude Ranchers Association during the years of 1992-1994 I realized we had to have Washington representation and so we joined American Outdoor, which is a national outfitter organization. As an affiliate and with our joining the organization, it made it so that American Outdoor was both a water and a land based organization. I became the first land based board member and eventually the first land based officer.

At that time, being primarily a political action organization, we spent a lot of time in D.C. representing the organization and outfitters we were involved in a lot of political issues. I was appointed to several Forest and National Park Outfitting committees to help in finding common ground on different issues. We won some, we lost some and we tied a lot, which was probably a plus for both sides.

Over the years WYOGA has served the Wyoming Outfitters Industry very well and I am sure it will continue to do so. But it takes involvement from all of its members, not just the same few. As all have a dog in the fight. It has been a great ride and I am delighted that I wasn't smart enough to do something else!

As Glen Fales would say...Happy Trails! 🐾

