

Billie Jean Osborne's Kentucky Opry to perform at 2018 SOAR Summit reception

PIKEVILLE, Ky. – Billie Jean Osborne's Kentucky Opry will perform at the 2018 SOAR Summit reception on Thursday, August 30 at the East Kentucky Expo Center.

The Opry, a production of the Prestonsburg, Ky.-based Mountain Arts Center, has been one of Kentucky's most popular music and entertainment shows for more than two decades.

"We are excited to bring the Kentucky Opry to the SOAR Summit," said Clayton Case, executive director of the Mountain Arts Center. "The Kentucky Opry is unique because everything about it, from the vocalists, musicians, and even our audio, sound and light technicians are all from eastern Kentucky. We take great pride that our show represents the best and brightest that the region has to offer."

The Kentucky Opry show features a wide variety of music genres, including country, bluegrass, gospel, and classic rock. A crowd favorite is the show's comedian Munroe.

Jared Arnett, executive director of Shaping Our Appalachian Region, Inc. (SOAR), said the SOAR Summit reception is a time for people to network and share ideas. This year, reception attendees will also have the opportunity to visit individuals, businesses, and organizations selected to showcase during this year's Summit.

"The reception is a great way to connect with others who share the vision of a 21st Century Appalachia we envision," said Arnett. "We are very excited to incorporate those showcasing solutions and ideas at the reception, and we are honored to have the Kentucky Opry provide the entertainment."

The reception will run from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the East Kentucky Expo Center. Tickets are \$15, and the event is open to the public. Admission includes refreshments and hors d'oeuvres. Those wishing to attend this year's Summit can choose to register for the reception, a pre-Summit leadership session (on August 30), and/or the Summit main session on August 31. To register for any or all of the events, visit www.thereisafuture.org. For more information, call (606) 766-1160 or email info@soar-ky.org.



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Kentucky Afield Outdoors: Stick It to Dangerous Currents With a Wading Staff

FRANKFORT, Ky. (July 19, 2018) – Those of us who wade rocky streams for smallmouth or tailwaters for trout sometimes bite off more than we can chew.

An eddy on the other side of the stream looks inviting and the more you stare at it, the more you want to cast there. The only problem is a waist-deep run with strong current lies between you and the enticing water.

You begin crossing the stream, but about half way, the current begins to push hard against your legs. You barely lift your foot and the current pushes it out from your body, nearly causing a fall. You look back and realize it will be just as hard to get back to where you started, as it will be to get to the other side of the stream.

You are stuck.

A wading staff will save your bacon in this situation. Made from aluminum, carbon fiber, crafted wood or a hickory stick, a wading staff gives anglers an extra balance point that can prevent a fall in sticky situations.

"I use my wading staff for balance whenever I wade," said Dr. Larry Kelley of Richmond, retired assistant chair of nursing at Eastern Kentucky University. "It's kept me from falling many times."

Kelley also uses his wading staff, made from a cedar branch, to probe the water in front of him for depth. Clear water often looks shallower than it actually is and misjudgment can lead to a hat-floating, wader-filling mishap.

"This is another area where my wading staff is invaluable," Kelley said. "It keeps me from making mistakes concerning the depth of a hole."

This safety feature proves handy when wading cold tailwaters, like the Cumberland River below Wolf Creek Dam. The water temperatures in the Lake Cumberland tailwater run cold enough to induce hypothermia. Stepping off a shelf into water over your head quickly fills a set of waders. Waders filled with water become a dangerous weight in moving, cold water.

This is the reason wading anglers must always use a snug wading belt when wearing waders. The belt prevents the legs of the waders from quickly filling with water in the event of a fall.

You can use a wading staff to test the bottom composition before venturing into a hole. Muddy areas of the stream bottom often look like hard-packed sand, but are actually a gooey muck that can pull off your wading boots. Wading staffs are also invaluable in negotiating steep stream banks.

Some debate exists on whether wood, carbon fiber or aluminum make the best wading staff.

"I prefer a wooden staff because it floats behind me and out of the way when fishing," Kelley said. "I can also quickly get the staff in my hand when I need it."

You can make a wooden wading staff cheaply by finding a dense hickory or cedar branch stick about shoulder height. Rub in several coats of tung oil and let it cure.

Slide a piece of hypalon foam replacement handle for walking canes over the thickest end of the stick and glue if necessary. Drill a hole through the stick just above the handle. Work a large key ring through the hole to attach a lanyard system. Kelley uses a magnetic net release used by fly anglers to attach his wading staff to his vest via a carabiner.

Epoxy a rubber cane tip on the other end and you are in business. Some anglers epoxy a wrap of lead tape used on golf clubs just above the rubber protector to help weigh down the wooden staff in current.

Wood does not make fish spooking noises when contacting the stream bottom and possesses character that manufactured wading staffs lack.

However, a wooden staff does not collapse. Some anglers use collapsible ski poles or hiking staffs for wading staffs, but their thin bottom ends vibrate wildly in current.

The collapsible hiking staffs that use a twisting lock mechanism often freeze up after getting wet several times. The parts inside these staffs oxidize and all the king's money and all the king's men can't get it separated again. This is incredibly frustrating if they lock up during a wading trip.

If you decide to use one of these for a wading staff, find one with a lever to lock and unlock the collapsible parts.

Some wading staffs use a piece of elastic cord in the middle to hold the pieces together, similar to a collapsible tent pole. These staffs fold up into a sheath for convenience. If these staffs get stuck in rocks on the bottom, they separate when pulled on, rendering them useless.

Higher-end trekking poles used for hiking have the elastic cord, but also a locking mechanism to keep them together during use. These make good wading staffs, but start at about \$100.

Predictable water levels and hungry fish make late summer through late fall the best time to wade a stream. A wading staff makes wade fishing safer and more efficient.

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KBC celebrates 50 years of saving lives

Blood donors save local lives, get entered to win new car

Kentucky Blood Center (KBC) is celebrating 50 years of saving Kentucky lives and to commemorate that special anniversary, the blood center is giving away a 2018 Toyota 4Runner to one lucky blood donor this summer.

KBC, which began in 1968 in Lexington to centralize the area's blood-banking efforts, now provides services in 90 Kentucky counties from Pikeville to Paducah.

Kentuckians can save a local patient's life at the following blood drive and will also be automatically entered to win the Toyota 4Runner.

Jackson County Community
Fri., Aug. 10 from 11 am - 4 pm
at Courthouse Square on the KBC Bloodmobile
at 100 Main Street in McKee.

To schedule a donation, visit kybloodcenter.org or call 800.775.2522. Walk-ins are also welcome.

Blood donors must be at least 17-years-old (16 with parental consent), weigh at least 110 pounds, be in general good health, show a photo I.D. and meet additional requirements. Sixteen-year-old donors must have a signed parental permission slip, which can be found at kybloodcenter.org.