

MUIR LAKE

Alberta Angler Walk of Fame

Don Andersen

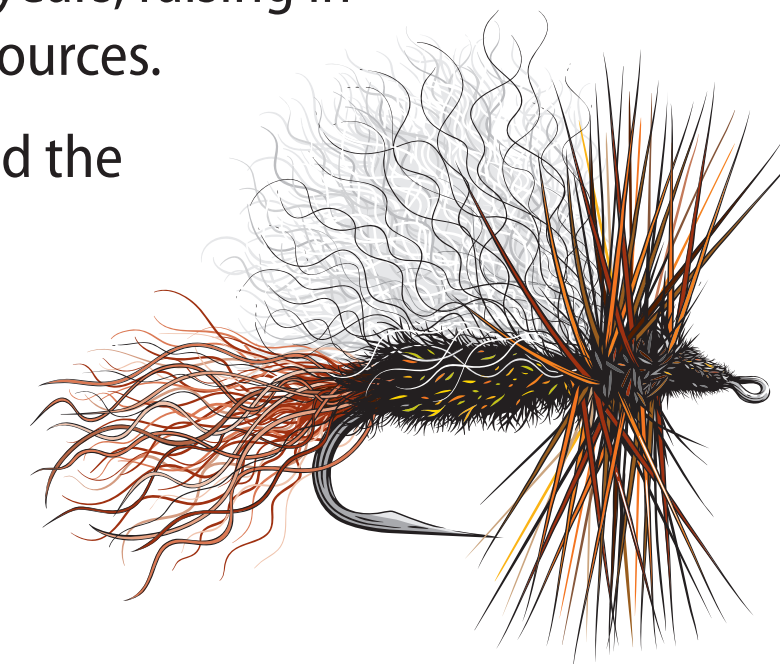
Don Andersen (1945-) is a passionate advocate for Alberta fisheries, an internationally recognized bamboo rod maker, and an angler who spends 100 > 120 days on the water each year.

His accomplishments are many: in his time with Alberta Fish and Game Association Don was responsible for advocating for catch and release regulations on the North Ram River (the first stream so designated in Alberta in 1983); he led the construction of the Children's Pond in his home town of Rocky Mountain House; on Elk Creek he advocated for fencing to keep cattle out of the stream, and installed structure in Elk Creek Pond. Working with fisheries biologist, Mel Kraft, Don branded trout to experiment with survival rates for caged vs non-caged stocking of trout in Twin Lakes. Together they also worked to plant brown trout from the North Raven River into Cow Creek and did the first experiments in Alberta with Vibert boxes for spawning trout. Another of Don's innovative experiments was to fertilize the trout ponds around Nordegg with milled barley to encourage growth. Don fought for in-stream rehabilitation work on Prairie Creek and planting of willows after the government initially refused to allow the work and eventually relented.

As a founding member of the Central Alberta chapter of Trout Unlimited Canada, and co-chairman of their Habitat Committee, Don has spent thousands of hours planning and executing volunteer-driven work on stream rehabilitation on the North Raven River (Stauffer Creek) and Clear Creek. On his own he has advocated for Quality Stocked Fisheries in Alberta and was the driving force behind establishing Ironside Pond as the first Catch and Release lake in Alberta.

As a pay-back for the wonderful fishing that he has experienced Don has donated bamboo fly rods to Trout Unlimited Canada for 35 plus years, raising in excess of \$40,000 for trout resources.

In 2004 Don Andersen received the Order of the Bighorn which recognizes the "voluntary contributions of Albertans to the conservation of our province's fish, wildlife and natural spaces."



Don's "CFF" the hundred fish fly



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Lloyd Shea

Lloyd was an ardent fly fisherman, hunter, and advocate for conservation.

Lloyd worked through organizations like the Alberta Fish and Game Association, Alberta Fly Fishers, Edmonton Trout Fishing Club, and Trout Unlimited Canada to improve fisheries in Alberta. He was always ready to go to meetings, sit on committees and speak up whenever fisheries or conservation issues were involved.

Lloyd's vision led to the formation of the Buck For Wildlife program, the predecessor of the Alberta Conservation Association, in which Alberta hunters and anglers gave an extra "buck" with their license fees to improve fishing and hunting habitat. He served for many years on its advisory committee.

As Chairman of the Fisheries Committee of the Alberta Fish and Game Association Lloyd Shea started the stream bank restoration projects on the North Raven River (Stauffer Creek), even when that meant attracting attention to one of his favourite streams. As a member of Alberta Fly Fishers he convinced Peter Lougheed, then Premier of Alberta, to direct the establishment of stream bank fencing on Central Alberta streams. This had the dual benefit of establishing public access on many streams and creating a buffer zone to repair damage to riparian habitat from livestock grazing.

Lloyd Shea taught flyfishing through the Edmonton Trout Fishing Club of which he was twice president, promoting fishing, and in particular flyfishing. As a founding member of the Edmonton Chapter of Trout Unlimited Canada Lloyd could always be counted on to represent the organization on committees and task forces. Lloyd also served as a member of the Department of Fisheries and Ocean National Recreational Fisheries Award to recognize accomplishments in fisheries conservation.

Lloyd Shea worked tirelessly to protect and enhance Alberta's fisheries resources. He would go through the halls of government to corner politicians and bureaucrats and tell them exactly what they were doing wrong. He spoke up whenever the resource was threatened by habitat loss, over-exploitation, or government mismanagement and for his efforts was presented with Alberta's highest honour for conservation, the Order of the Bighorn, in 1985. Lloyd Shea's voice is missed by everyone who cares about fisheries habitat.



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The Mitchell Family

For more than 50 years, until their untimely deaths in August 2000, **George and Joan Mitchell** were perhaps Alberta's best known and loved anglers. Together with his son Barry, George founded the *Alberta Fishing Guide* magazine in 1971. Through his many years of writing magazine articles, George taught the art and science of angling to thousands of Albertans. He popularized the use of jigs for both walleye and lake whitefish when no one thought whitefish could be caught that way. Joan's "Mitchell Special" became one of the most popular flies for catching trout in Alberta's pothole lakes. They were active in many Edmonton-area fishing clubs and widely known for sharing their expertise and knowledge, along with a few of their flies or jigs.

In 1983, George was awarded the prestigious Order of the Bighorn by the Government of Alberta for his fisheries and conservation work. George and Joan were inseparable when fishing and hunting. Each will be remembered for their dedication, their generosity, their sense of humour, and their love of fishing.

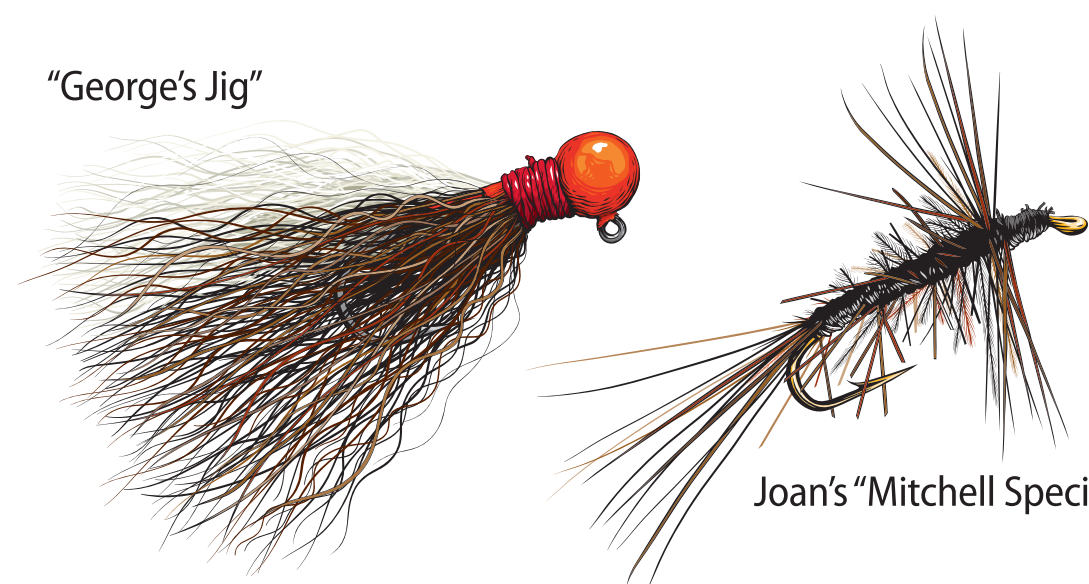
Those values were shared by their son, **Barry Mitchell** (1947-2015), a passionate and respected conservationist in his own right. Barry and his wife Ann took sole ownership of the *Alberta Fishing Guide* in 1980 and published it until 2013. Barry's book, *Alberta's Trout Highway: Fishing the Forestry Trunk Road*, is a highly-valued distillation of his experiences fishing waters from south of the Crowsnest Pass to the tributaries of the Smoky River. It is an essential primer on trout biology, habitat, conservation, and fly fishing.

As a volunteer, Barry devoted countless hours to fisheries conservation and habitat reclamation. He helped found the Central Alberta Chapter of Trout Unlimited and led efforts to rehabilitate the North Raven River, and other rivers like the MacLeod, Cardinal, Blackstone, and North Ram.

His desire to protect and enhance trout fishing along the Eastern Slopes of Alberta's Rocky Mountains, and his well-reasoned arguments, resulted in changes to fisheries regulations that still stand today. Barry further earned the respect of fisheries biologists and conservationists by starting the Alberta Stream Watch Coalition, which hired summer students to help conservation officers enforce fishing regulations on the Blackstone and North Ram rivers. Like his father, Barry was also awarded the Order of the Bighorn in 1998, making them the first father/son duo to win the award. Alberta anglers owe much to the Mitchell family.

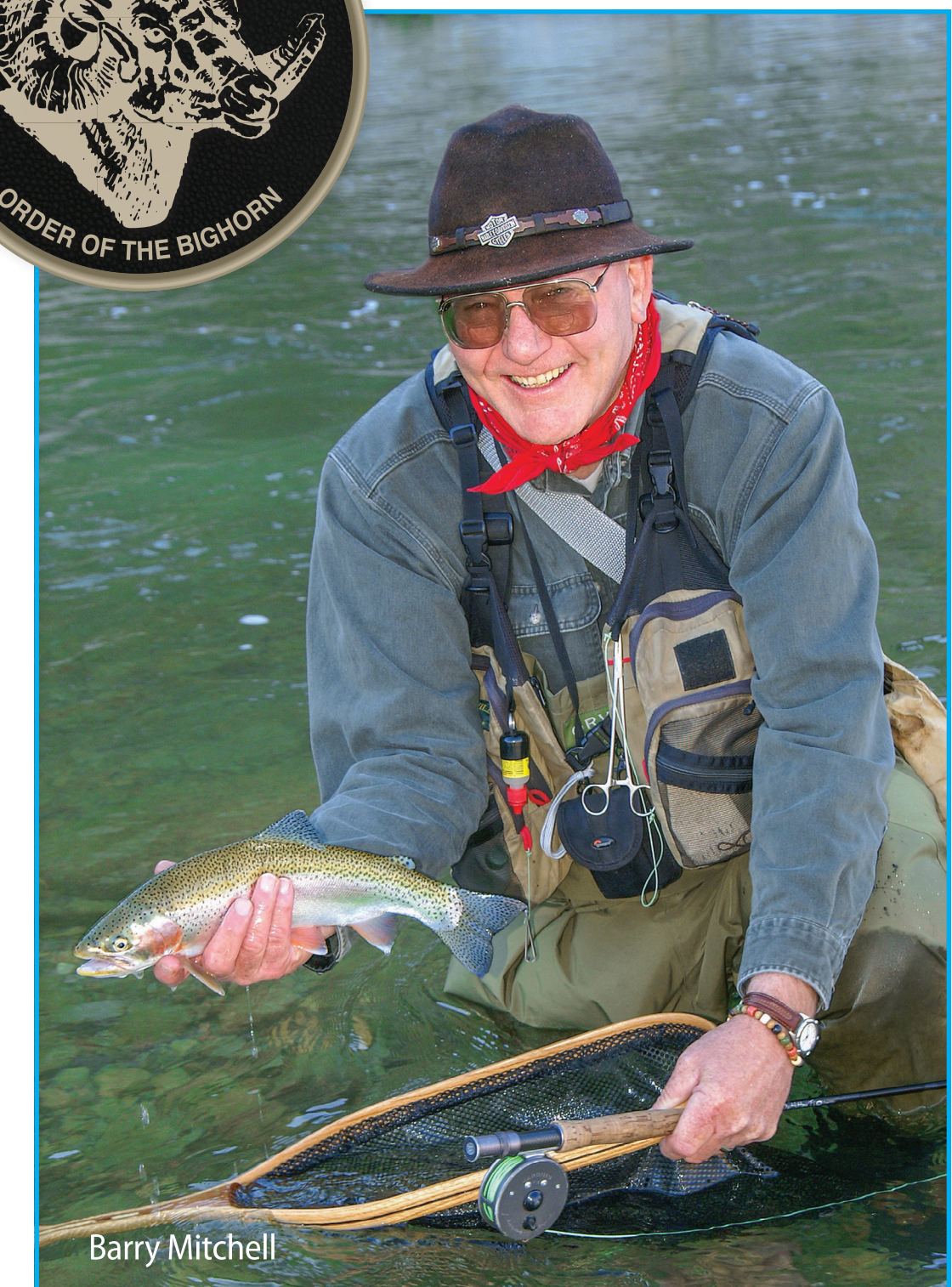


George and Joan Mitchell



"George's Jig"

Joan's "Mitchell Special"



Barry Mitchell

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Reginald Denny

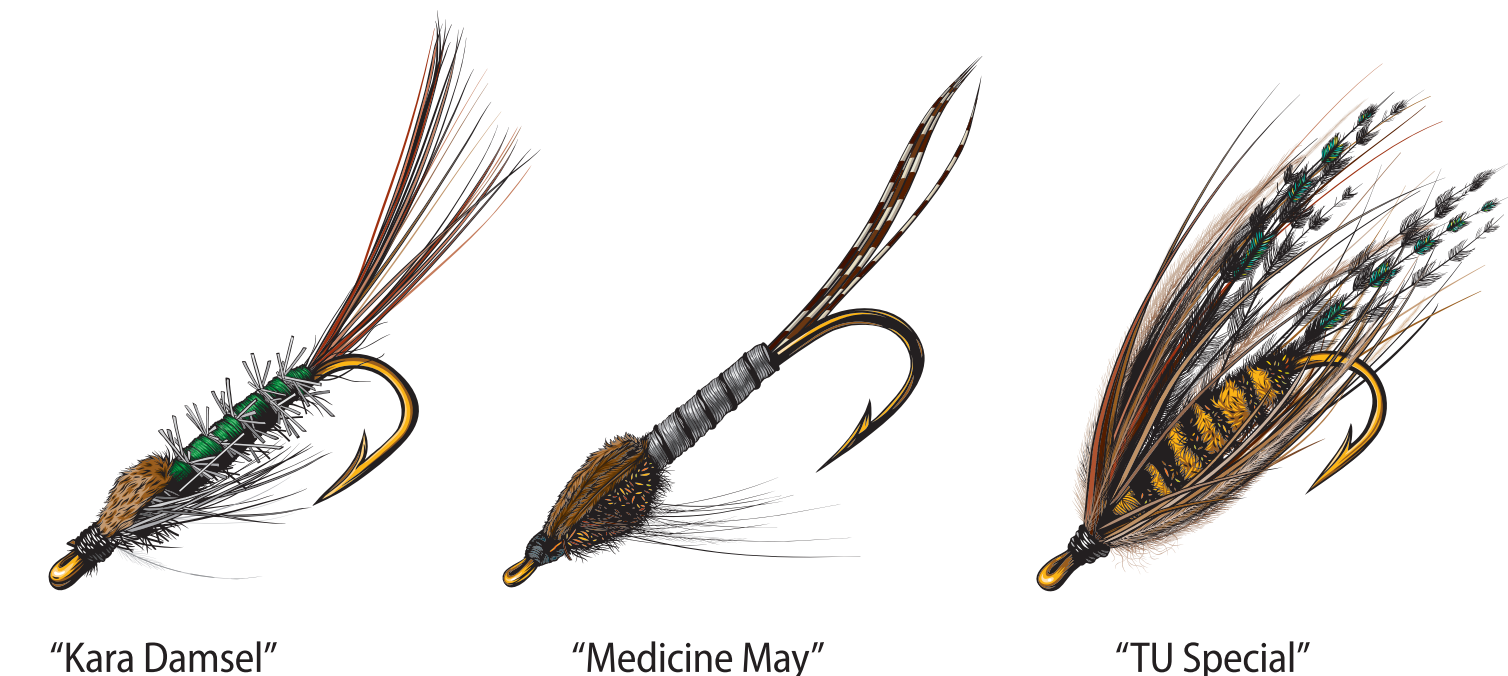
Born in Grand Falls, Newfoundland in 1929 Reginald Denny moved to Edmonton in 1954 with his wife, Bernice. He had become an avid angler early in his youth, starting with a worm for brook trout and eventually progressing to fly fishing for all species of fish. He frequented the lakes, rivers, and streams of Alberta, British Columbia, and Montana and was also known to present a buck-tail streamer to Coho or King salmon in the Pacific Ocean with devastating results.

In 1964, in partnership with Bernice, Reg founded Denny's Fly Tying Specialties, a retail outlet located in Edmonton, Alberta which specialized in fly-tying and fly-fishing supplies. It began in their basement but soon moved to a retail premises because of the volume of customers. The company's objective was to supply the needs of fly tyers and to promote flies tied by local tyers. Many eager teenage Alberta fly tyers received their fly tying start from Denny's. Customers came from Canada, United States and Europe. It was family operated until June 2001.

For close to 50 years, until his death on November 22, 2008, Reg designed over 100 fly patterns. Many of which were published. He wrote many fly-tying articles, primarily for the Alberta Fishing Guide and co-authored the book, *Flies for Alberta*, featuring 105 fly patterns (many designed by him and produced commercially) and fishing tips for the region. Many of Reg's patterns were published in the *Federation of Fly Fishers Fly Pattern Encyclopedia*, and several others were featured in *Patterns of the Masters*.

Reg taught fly tying for 42 years. All courses were taught for free with the cost of materials and tools paid by the student. Reg also taught a 4-hour basic fly-casting class throughout the seventies and gave countless presentations. He also demonstrated and presented internationally and was the first non-American to be awarded the International Federation of Fly Fishers' Buz Buszek Fly Tying Memorial Award in 2005. Never wanting to tie professionally, Reg was content with fostering experimentation and development. His most well-known creations include Denny's Black Stone, T. U. Special, Medicine May Nymph, Blue Carey, Dutch Creek Nymph, Yellow May, Western March Brown, Charlotte, and The Sword. A favourite was the Kara Damsel, named after his daughter.

Reg Denny had a significant impact on fly tying and fly fishing in Alberta. This sign serves as a tribute to his legacy.



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Dr. Martin Paetz

Dr. Martin Paetz was the dean of fisheries management in Alberta. He joined the Fish and Wildlife Division of the Department of Lands and Forests as Alberta's first fishery biologist in 1952, was named Superintendent of Fisheries in 1959, and Chief Fishery Biologist in 1961, a position he held until he retired as the Director of Fisheries on March 31, 1983.

During his employment he traveled the length and breadth of the province and had the opportunity to make numerous collections of fish and record observations on their distributions. He used this information as a nucleus of *The Fishes of Alberta* which he co-authored with Dr. Joe Nelson. This book, the first of its kind for Alberta, represented a major fisheries educational landmark and sets forth the species, their biology, taxonomy, and distribution. The book is widely used by biologists, academics, anglers, naturalists, and schools and is in its second edition which attests to its importance and readership.

Dr. Paetz developed Alberta's pothole trout stocking program which has served as a model for stocking some two million trout annually in approximately 200 water bodies throughout the province. He initiated Alberta's walleye enhancement program which was instrumental in establishing walleye spawn camps for the first time in Alberta, and the eventual stocking of up to some 40 million walleye per year in over 3 dozen water bodies. We are now seeing the results of this enhancement program in the creation of new, self-sustaining walleye fisheries. He provided the leadership and vision which was instrumental in developing Alberta's modern,

integrated fish hatcheries and brood stations which will provide long-lasting benefits to all Albertans.

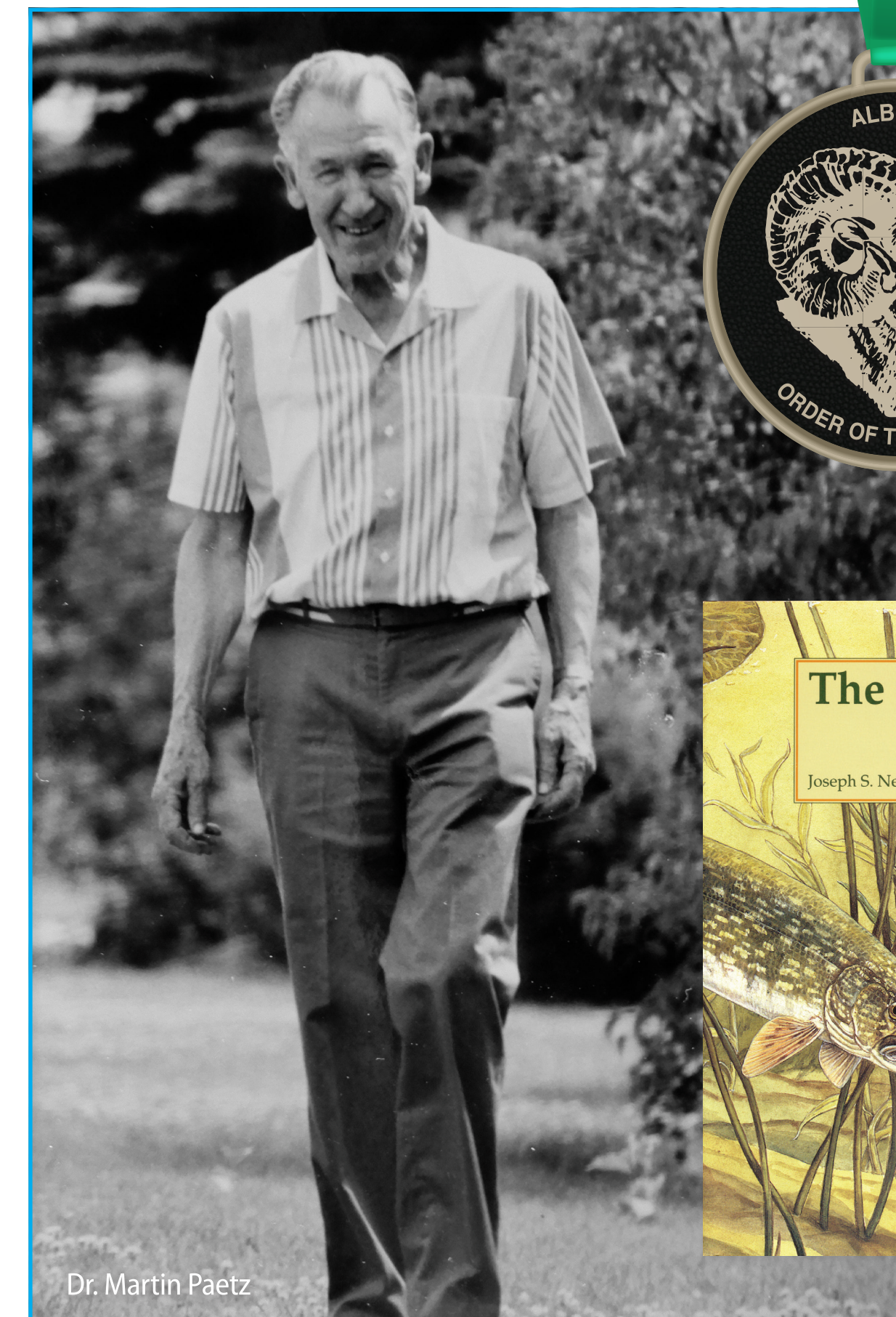
Dr. Paetz was at the forefront in starting Alberta's successful fisheries 'Buck for Wildlife' program, now delivered by the Alberta Conservation Association, to protect and enhance fish habitat. As a result, dozens of streams have benefited from stream bank restoration and protection, as well as numerous lakes from lake stabilization and aeration projects.

He was awarded Alberta's Officer of the Year by the Shikar Safari International organization and an honorary Fish and Wildlife Officer Award in Alberta in 1983. In 1998, he was furthered honoured by being awarded an Alberta Order of the Bighorn Award, Alberta's highest honour for fish and wildlife conservation.

At the time of his passing on July 26, 2002 he was a member of the Knights of Columbus, the Edmonton Trout Fishing Club, the Edmonton Oldtimers' Fishing Club and Trout Unlimited Canada. He was an avid fisherman, hunter, and conservationist. Dr. Paetz will be remembered as a fine person, a mentor, and a gentleman. His record speaks for itself in terms of being innovative, effective, transferable, and comprehensive and most of all standing the test of time.



"Doc Spratley"



Dr. Martin Paetz

