

# The Herald and News

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### Shrink

By BILL JENKINS  
It looks like the human figures are going to shrink again. At least if interest trends have anything to do with it they surely are.

In the mail this week is a questionnaire from Bill Rae, editor of Outdoor Life, one of the nation's larger hunting and fishing periodicals.

It contains the usual queries as to what, when and how you read previous issues, what you like and all that sort of run-of-the-mill stuff. But back on the second page are three loaded questions:

(1) "When hunting, fishing, camping or boating do you sometimes wish you had a two-way radio to keep in touch with your family, business or other sportsmen, or to learn of emergencies at home or in your immediate sporting area?"

(2) "Would you like to have a two-way radio with which you could contact people through a tie-in with their own telephones?"

(3) "If you would like two-way radio how much would you be willing to pay for it? Up to \$100? Up to \$200? Up to \$300? Over \$300?"

Response to these questions could well mean the end of the great American outdoors if they are in the affirmative. They could spell the difference between the world of hunting and fishing as an individual enterprise or a well-regulated community enterprise.

Of course there is a certain percentage of the hunting and fishing fraternity who will answer, and vigorously, in the affirmative. These are the part timers who stay close to the blacktop, never go out in rough water and spend more time around the hot stoves and dockside bars than they do in the open. They are the timid of soul who will never know the taste of adventure nor the awesome tang of emergence.

But I hope there will prove to be at least a militant minority, if not a majority, who would like to keep the woods and waters of the greater outdoors as a place of peace and contentment where relaxation from the worries of this weary old world can be at least temporarily achieved.

Personally I can't imagine anything worse than having a two-way radio in camp. It would end the tranquility forever if you were instantly available at all times. Imagine yourself hooked on to a big one, the rod bending in exhilarating arc, your reel singing—and then the buzzer on your two-way, transistorized, pocket sized communications pack sounds and you interrupt the battle—losing the fish in the process—while your broker tells you that Amalgamated Everything has hit the skids and you are wiped out financially.

Or your wife calls up to remind you that today is Friday and on Saturday you promised to take her to the opera and you hadn't forgotten, had you? All this despite the fact that you are seven hundred miles from home on an elk hunting trip in the High Rockies.

The whole picture is pretty depressing. And handy little two-way radio sets for sportsmen are just the beginning. It would be only a short while until the woods and streams of yore were turned into public parks filled with hot dog stands, poolside on leashes, magazine vendors, al fresco restaurants and peep show shooting galleries.

Trains, planes and buses would run on regular schedule and special ten day excursion trips would be tried on every side.

What with science being what it is—if the H-bomb addicts don't put the final period to the world first—the handy two-way radio is only the forerunner of the Handy-Dandy pocket size portable power plant that will give you a choice of accessories to light your camp with electricity, provide an air compressor to blow up your bed, an electric stove to fry your fish on and a collapsible 20-inch-screen television set so you can keep up to date with the world of slantstick.

In short, all the comforts that you can find in any reasonably good motel if you must travel or at home if you are the spineless type who dislikes travel.

After all if you can have all that outdoors wouldn't it be easier to just stay home and look at outdoor movies?

If mankind goes on trying to expand his economic horizons and at the same time keeps constructing his material and esthetic horizons someone is going to be caught in the pinch.  
And it might be you.  
Outdoor Life is a fine magazine and its gun editor, ex-journalist teacher Jack Conner is a dandy. But I can answer these questions very briefly. 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