

Then there's Shirley Linde, editor of www.SmallShipCruises.com, experiencing an on-board ship fire where five crewmen died.

It seems that family catastrophes always occur when a writer is on the road, including parent deaths and spouse sicknesses. And you need to get home fast.

Despite the bugs inherent in international travel writing, the rush, the adventure, and the thrill of chasing the story keep us all coming back. Sure, this line of work has its rewards. Making friends around the world is probably the most important, because the

writer is out there interviewing really interesting people. In addition, travel writing is truly creatively multi-faceted, a genre that includes writing about the arts, business, environmental issues and politics.

Now get busy.

Martin Hintz, president-elect of the Society of American Travel Writers, is a three-decade-plus member of the Society of Professional Journalists and past chairman of SPJ's Milwaukee Pro Chapter. He has written more than 70 books and hundreds of articles.

Thinking about a travel-writing career?

Get a head start with some veteran advice.

- **Think of this as a profession**, one that takes guts and grit to produce a readable, sellable story.
- **Multiple sells pay off in clips and cash, so try to go abroad with assignments.** Yes, National Geographic is great, but there are dozens of other editorial outlets: from the Net to specialty publications that do not use the word "travel" in their mastheads. Expand your basic story-gathering skills to get outside the box. The more notes you take, the better off you'll be back at the office.
- **Be organized:** whether in planning an expedition, doing the research or filing your material so you can find it again months later.
- **Write catchy cover letters** to convince an editor you have exactly what he/she needs.
- **Develop sources in the travel professional industry.** Don't be afraid to ask for help because that saves time and money – both are a premium in this business. Travel pros who work at tourism and trade associations can open doors, provide leads and offer suggestions.
- **Be inquisitive.** Look beneath the surface of a story, seeking some quirky aspect of a destination that a travel editor would find different enough to publish. Get out of your hotel room and poke around.
- **Double check everything.** Even last year's best-hyped restaurant in Oslo might become today's dry cleaner's shop.
- **Travel within your physical skill level.** It's not wise to parasail over the Red Sea if you are afraid of heights. Purchase travel insurance that covers accidents and body bags. Be prepared.
- **Make sure your inoculations are up to date and always carry extra eyeglasses if you use them.** There are few pharmacies in the outback.
- **And speaking of extras: pencils/pens and notebooks often work best when in the field.** Recorder batteries die and tapes do jam.
- **Travel light and keep track of your own luggage.** Always make sure it gets on the bus.
- **Be ready to change plans fast if necessary.** Judge how far you are from the rioters, the water cannon, the organ grinders and mimes. Keep out of their way.
- **Be respectful of other cultures.** Raw sheep eyeballs may taste better than you think.
- **Watch your back.** Dark alleys are the same elsewhere as at home.
- **Remember to say "thank you" and "please" (it helps if you can articulate something in the local language).** Once out of your front door, you are a guest wherever you are.
- **Don't demand anything because you are a writer.** Pay for flight upgrades and beds with mattresses.
- **Never kowtow to any publisher demanding "universal rights for all eternity in any form of communication now or ever to be developed."** And some do.
- **Always negotiate for higher pay.** You won't get – if you don't ask.
- **Have a grand time.**

– Martin Hintz

IN BRIEF

AP TELEVISION PRODUCER KILLED ON KOSOVO BORDER

An Associated Press Television News producer was killed in late March near the Kosovo-Macedonia border as he arrived to cover the deployment of NATO-led peacekeepers monitoring fighting between Macedonian troops and ethnic Albanian rebels.

Kerem Lawton, a 30-year-old British national, broke away from other journalists on March 29 to move closer to the village of Krivenik, where NATO forces were spreading out. The peacekeepers have been working to keep rebels from escaping across the border into Macedonia.

Lawton was a mile inside of Kosovo when a mortar shell landed near his car, spraying shrapnel into his head and side. At least two other civilians were killed and 20 others wounded in the assault.

On April 3, Macedonia's army said an internal investigation conducted by a commission of military experts concluded that its artillery gunners were out of the village's range. The army said its forces had not been ordered to fire into Kosovo and had been cooperating with NATO-led peacekeepers in the area.

The army called the shelling a "vicious setup" by ethnic Albanian rebels, to make it look like Macedonian troops were at fault. NATO is conducting its own investigation of the incident.

Dozens of friends, colleagues, peacekeepers and U.N. workers attended a memorial service for Lawton in an auditorium in Pristina April 12.

BRITISH EDITOR QUILTS AFTER STORY CAUSES MISTRIAL

The editor of a British newspaper that published an article that led to the collapse of a \$12 million trial of two prominent football players resigned in mid-April.

The story was published in the London-based Sunday Mirror while the jury was still reaching a verdict in the eight-week trial of Jonathan Woodgate and Lee Bowyer, both accused of participating in an attack on a student.

The trial's judge ruled that the story, an interview with the student's father, was biased. The jury was dismissed and a re-trial ordered.

The editor, Colin Myler, stood down after the company described the story's publication as a serious error of judgment.