

TOWA

The Official Publication of the **Texas Outdoor Writers Association**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

CALENDAR

TOWA Diversity Offers Opportunity to Move Forward

Greetings, TOWA members!
Summer is on the horizon and with it comes a variety of outdoor activities as diverse as our membership.

As I think about how to lead this organization, I keep coming to one simple conclusion. Our group of communicators is as different as the seasons. We have newspaper and magazine people; radio, television and Web people; freelancers, full-timers and part-timers: a variety of talented people with a common mission.

I see opportunity.

All around us, we hear and read the word about how lousy the economy is. Jobs continue to disappear.

That doesn't mean that our readers, listeners and viewers are disappearing.

It's incumbent upon us to adjust and think through these temporary dilemmas.

The TOWA can be a vehicle to embrace imminent change.

Your board of directors is aware and continues to act on your behalf. Our latest board meeting, in Rockport last April, was highlighted by completion of our business plan for 2010 and discussion about next year's conference in Lake Jackson.

This board meeting started with an interesting twist. Member Alan Warren had contacted me about having an audience with the board to make sure we are aware of his efforts in outdoor education in Texas high schools. As we talked, Alan offered to invite several of his teachers to prepare a Dutch oven lunch for the board, which they did.

Before the meeting, we gathered in the courtyard of the hotel, broke bread and listened to teachers tell us of their dilemma trying to make their administrations



TOWA President Bob Lusk

Continued on Page 2

June 12 – Kickapoo Caverns State Park will host an all-day grand opening event free to the public commemorating the park's official opening of its doors on a daily basis. For more information, contact the state parks Customer Service Center at (512) 389-8900, or Kickapoo Cavern State Park at (830) 563-2342, or visit the park's Web site at www.texasstateparks.org.

June 27-July 3 – A Kids Outdoor Zone hunting camp for boys will be conducted in the Fowlerton area featuring South Texas hog and predator hunting. TOWA members interested in participating or assisting in the event may contact Board Member TJ Greaney at tj@countrylinemagazine.com for further information.

July 11-16 – A Kids Outdoor Zone fishing camp for boys will be conducted at Lake Buchanan. TOWA members interested in participating or assisting in the event may contact Board Member TJ Greaney at tj@countrylinemagazine.com for further information.

July 17 – The public portion of the 2010 Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Expo will be held July 17, featuring fishing, instructional seminars and demonstrations and a display of all the state and national contest winners, at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens. Details are available at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/tffc.

July 18-22 – A Kids Outdoor Zone Pink Girls Fishing Camp will be conducted at Saddle. TOWA members interested in volunteering their time and services may contact TJ Greaney at tj@countrylinemagazine.com for further information.

TOWA OFFICERS, BOARD

PRESIDENT

Bob Lusk (903) 564-5372
pondboss@texoma.net

PRESIDENT-ELECT

David Sikes (361) 886-3616
sikesd@caller.com

TREASURER

Bill E. Mills (281) 448-5811
offtheroad.mills@earthlink.net

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Larry J. LeBlanc (936) 856-6788
904 W. Montgomery, Ste. 4
Willis, TX 77378
towa@suddenlink.net cell (936) 524-0761
fax (936) 856-6788

BOARD MEMBERS

BOARD CHAIRMAN

John Goodspeed (210) 250-3417
john@johngoodspeed.com

T.J. Greaney (2013) (512) 789-3838
tj@countrylinemagazine.com

Mike Price (2011) (281) 431-0085
bymikeprice@comcast.net

Kendal Hemphill (2013) (325) 347-6440
jeep@verizon.net

Peggy York (2012) (210) 647-7053
peggy.york@sbcglobal.net

Steve LaMascus (2012) (830) 563-2656
slamascus@sbcglobal.net

Susan Ebert (2013) (512) 919-4248
sebert@austin.rr.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN

David Sikes (361) 886-3616
sikesd@caller.com

CONFERENCE PROGRAM CO-CHAIRS

T.J. Greaney (512) 789-3838
tj@countrylinemagazine.com

David Sikes (361) 886-3616
sikesd@caller.com

SCHOLARSHIP

Judy Mills, Marrienne Odom (281) 448-5811
offtheroad.mills@earthlink.net

MEMBERSHIP

David Sikes (361) 886-3616
sikesd@caller.com

SITE SELECTION

Jonette Childs (361) 729-0239
saltex@pyramid3.net

AUCTIONS

T.J. Greaney (512) 789-3838
tj@countrylinemagazine.com

EIC AWARDS

Kendal Hemphill (325) 347-6440
jeep@verizon.net

TOWA PHOTOGRAPHERS

Gerald Burleigh and David Redwine

TOWA HISTORIAN

John Thompson

TOWA News is published monthly for the Texas Outdoor Writers Association by Ralph Winingham. Layout by SusanEbertink, sebert@austin.rr.com. Contributors are urged to submit material by the 15th of each month. For advertising information, contact Ralph Winingham at (210) 764-2450 or rwiningham@att.net. TOWA News is emailed to members and mailed first class from San Antonio.

TOWA was formed in 1958 as a professional/social organization for those who communicate about hunting, fishing and other outdoor pursuits, as well as those in business and industry connected with the outdoors.



The TOWA Newsletter is proudly sponsored by Gulf States Toyota. For information, go to www.buyatoyota.com.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Continued from Page 1

understand the value of teaching kids about the outdoors. Then, there are the proverbial budget issues. They get no money unless they hustle it.

Folks, we need to be recruiting the X-box generation into our world.

Part of our business plan includes outreach to youth.

Please become more involved.

We are focusing on craft improvement for membership. The last conference boasted several outstanding seminars to help each of us. The business plan includes networking among ourselves as well as having the opportunity to meet other pros with different ideas to help stimulate synergy in our organization. We are looking for outreach opportunities for our members. You can help.

Let us know of opportunities you see. Better yet, volunteer to help. Next year's conference isn't that far away.

Drop me an e-mail or call with your ideas. Our business plan is simple. Build the TOWA by focusing on what the members want. Your board of directors hears this: You want

education at the conference (and beyond the conference); you want craft improvement, ideas how to market your work, some recognition through the EIC; better interaction between supporting members and communicators; and chances to socialize with our buddies and outreach.

We are working on that.

Now, as president, here's what I expect you to do: Volunteer.

This organization has a nucleus of volunteers who do the majority of the work. We can always count on Jonette to take care of the site. She's good at it; no, she's GREAT at it. Ralph Winingham, John Goodspeed, Bill Mills, TJ Greaney, David Sikes...the list contains probably 15 people who are the nucleus of the workers who make things happen.

That nucleus needs to expand.

Every one of our members is talented. And, busy.

Give us 10 hours a year. If 50 more people will give 10 hours, our success rate will climb. As we become successful, we can become even more significant. As we become significant, we change lives: of our members and

the next generation of outdoor communicators.

Let any member of the board know what you can do and what you want to do. We'll put you in the best place.

Do you want to educate? Help with craft improvement? Maybe put together a social event at the conference? Do you know someone in your network of contacts who would be a great speaker? Let us know.

Last, but not least, at the board meeting, Larry LeBlanc passed out a list of members who haven't paid their dues. I just read it, shook my head in disbelief, and put it in my briefcase.

If you haven't paid your dues, send a check.

In the meantime, your board continues to stay in touch via e-mail and phone, working to direct your TOWA.

Have a great June! — Bob Lusk

*The TOWA
business plan
includes networking
among ourselves
as well as having
the opportunity
to meet other pros
with different ideas
to help stimulate
synergy in our
organization.*

A Formula for Success

Expertise, hard work pay off for inventor of DOA Lures

By David Sikes

JENSEN BEACH, FL – Mark Nichols might have followed the ancient path of Antonio Stradivari if Santa hadn't given his sister a Creepy Crawlers Thing Maker for Christmas.

Actually the fate of Nichols, creator and owner of DOA Lures, probably had been determined some time before a craftsman friend gave him a piece of 100-year-old European spruce and encouraged him to carve and polish it into a violin.

The father of this Texas son owned a bait-shrimp trawler, which he kept in Kemah. Every summer and many weekends during the 1960s a young Mark Nichols would visit his father's canal home on Bolivar Peninsula. When he wasn't a nighttime deckhand on the 30-foot trawler or helping a friend run crab traps, Nichols was putting around the bay in Dad's jonboat, fishing.

"I thought shrimping was pretty cool back then," Nichols said. "Even if we had a bad night at least we had enough shrimp for dinner. And we always had bait."

Nichols got to know shrimp intimately. But he was a lure angler early on. A

family friend on Bolivar made lures in his garage. And Dad, who owned a 27-foot Higgins, showed his son how to catch fish with homemade baits.

Mattel toy makers probably would have done well to market their Creepy Crawlers machine to wannabe lure makers. Surely Nichols was not the only budding angler who slid a hook into a Creepy Crawler to catch fish. Did you know that a five-pound bass will eat a plastic butterfly?

Nichols discovered this at Lake Austin and nearby creeks after moving to the capital city from Houston, where he had played first base and outfield for the Waltrip High School Rams.

It was during the early 1970s at Austin's Town Lake where Nichols' lure-making urge intensified. He began buying liquid plastic by the quart from MF Plastics in Fort Worth.

A friend worked at a tackle shop near the original Schlotzsky's on Congress Street, where Nichols got into fly fishing. He would buy cheap poppers to catch small bass and bluegill in Town Lake. But when he rigged a three-inch worm with two No. 6 hooks this dou-

bled the size of his fish. Nichols seriously began thinking he could make a better lure around this time. But could he make a living at it?

While attending the University of Texas, Nichols developed woodworking skills remodeling high-end homes in the hills of Austin. It was during this time that he began carving more. In addition to crafting a violin from that piece of European spruce, he also whittled waterfowl from scrap lumber, resurrecting skills he'd learned from his father and grandfather. But ironically it wasn't until he moved to the mountains of Durango, CO, that he carved his first life-sized shrimp. Perhaps this was his way of staying connected to the coast. This original realistic model eventually led to the popular DOA shrimp imitation lure, sold throughout the United States and other parts of the world, including Australia, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago.

Stream fishing in Colorado also is where Nichols became schooled in fish behavior and fishing finesse. Nichols believes that a better understanding of fish and their prey produces a better fishing lure.

Continued on Page 4

TOWA 2010 Excellence in Craft Winners Receive Recognition

As an effort to highlight the achievements of our members and to present some of our best works of the past year for our members' entertainment, the following is one of a series of TOWA Excellence in Craft contest first place winners that will be published in the newsletter.

This piece by TOWA President-Elect David Sikes was selected as the winner of Category 13, Newspaper Feature – Over 25,000.

The judges had these comments about "A Formula for Success," published in the Aug. 30, 2009, edition of the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*:

"David Sikes brings Mark Nichols to life in his enduring feature on how expertise and hard work paid off for the inventor of DOA rules. It is a well-researched story and with much personal intrigue and character. It's very well done."

We congratulate him on the award and encourage all our members to consider entering the EIC competition next year.

Continued from Page 3

He is a no-nonsense lure maker who has never subscribed to the notion that lures should be designed to catch anglers rather than fish.

He brought this expertise and attitude back to the coast to Stuart, FL, which became his testing waters. Nichols was a partner in a woodworking shop there in the early 1980s, which allowed him to tinker with the passion that would become his profession. He lived at this shop in the woods for more than a year before upgrading to a travel trailer. Times were hard but he barely noticed.

His days were spent inside some of Florida's finest homes, doing finishing work. At night Nichols carved and created what he believed would become a better fishing lure. In between these tasks, Nichols would scour the streets and shoulders of Stuart for scrap lead that had come off the wheels of cars and trucks. He would melt and mold the lead for his lures.

Bondo provided the material for his early shrimp molds. He used the hollow plastic shafts of Q-Tips to create a channel through the lure for the line and hook. At first he glued the eight tiny shrimp legs individually onto each lure. And he used 300-pound monofilament, melted at the ends with a butane lighter, to create realistic shrimp eyeballs.

"I think I was making about 15 cents an hour back then," Nichols said about his midnight tackle operation. "I could only make like 50 a night because it took hours for the silicone to cure. Later on I figured out that a couple drops of water cut the curing time to about an hour."

Marketing at the time consisted of schlepping a 30-gallon aquarium to venues such as the Martin County Fair, where Nichols would rent a booth. The aquarium served as his demonstration pond.

Nichols sold 500 imitation shrimp

lures from that booth. At \$3 each he was in business.

"I was sure I'd hit the big time," he said this past week. "And then I learned about the excise tax."

Today Nichols is part owner in a small Jacksonville, FL, manufacturing plant where about 95 percent of his lures are made. For the most part he's resisted the urge to set up shop in China, despite profit-sucking excise taxes imposed on goods made in the USA.

DOA headquarters remain in Stuart.

He employs nine folks there and the Jacksonville staff fluctuates between four and seven, depending on production. The staff in Stuart has Fridays off. It should come as no surprise that Nichols doesn't go to the office every day. He averages four days on the water each week in summer and three in winter. Personal research and development is his therapy as well as his business edge.

Anahuac Waterborne Education Center Offers Nature Tours

My wife Linda and I were privileged to host as moderators of a wonderful trip into the estuaries of Trinity Bay where the Trinity River meets the bay.

We were aboard a 45-foot U. S Coast Guard buoy tender (now retired) to carry kids and adults into the mysteries of the marsh lands and estuaries as an activity sponsored by the Waterborne Education Center at Anahuac.

The non-profit group suffered heavy damage from Hurricane Ike, but emerged into a great organization to introduce young people to nature. Some of these kids have never seen a wild alligator in their lives, but they did on this trip and many others.

The center conducts several trips a year called "public days". Hundreds of visitors, schools, boy scouts and the like have had great fun in their first-hand discovery of nature.

Though this public is trip is free, center officials emphasize the importance of including kids, adults and, of course, interested persons and businesses that could contribute funds as WEC operates from grants and donations.

The Web site at www.txwaterborne.org describes the public days and dates available for tours of the marsh, including the excellent facility of the U. S. Corps of Engineers salt water barrier locks at Wallisville.

Public days are free to the public on a first-come first-serve basis. Furthermore, the Corps of Engineers facility has excellent free launching ramps, rest rooms and fish cleaning facilities. This is a fine group of volunteers that promotes outdoor education of our youth.

— By Bob Jamison

TOWA Board Covers Multiple Issues at Rockport Meeting

In accordance with the TOWA bylaws, this report on the April 18 TOWA board meeting recorded by TOWA Secretary Peggy York is presented for our members' information. The meeting was held as part of the Rockport-Fulton Spring Fling. The minutes will be reviewed and entered into the official record of the organization at the next meeting of the board.

TEXAS OUTDOOR WRITERS ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING Best Western Inn By The Bay Rockport, Texas

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:00 P.M. by John Goodspeed, board chairman. President Bob Lusk opened the meeting with a prayer. The following officers, board members and committee chairs were present:

David Sikes, President-Elect
Larry LeBlanc, Executive Director
Peggy York, (2012) Recording Secretary
Mike Price (2011)
T.J. Greaney (2013)
Kendal Hemphill (2013)
Susan Ebert (2013)
Ralph Winingham, Newsletter
Jonette Childs, Conference Location
Pam LeBlanc

Officers, board members, and committee chairs absent:

Bill Mills, Treasurer
Steve Lamascus (2012)
Cody Greaney, Media
Tom Hewitt, Supporting Member
Judy Mills, Scholarship Committee
Marianne Odom, Scholarship Committee

2. Alan Warren brought a team of school teachers to provide a Dutch oven lunch for the board members. He later presented a program requesting support for Outdoor Education, an outreach approach to be included in the public schools. This program is being met with school board opposition and he is requesting the outdoor media help to promote and educate the public.

3. Minutes of the February 27, 2010 board meeting were dispensed by a motion from Larry LeBlanc and second by Kendal Hemphill. Motion carried.

4. Executive Directors Report:

a. Larry LeBlanc reported Bill Mills was in the hospital again. His report will include the Treasurers report. Larry provided Presi-



Jim Darnell holds up a nice keeper black drum he brought to the boat during a guided trip with Capt. Ed Zielinski of doctorsorders@pyramid3.net that was part of the 25th annual Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce Spring Fling on April 18-19. In addition to playing host to the TOWA Board meeting, the Chamber at www.1rockport.org arranged for a fresh seafood dinner at the Rockport Country Club; breakfast at Charlotte Plummer's Seafarer Restaurant and a farewell dinner at the Boiling Pot. — Photo by Ralph Winingham

dent Bob Lusk and Board Chairman John Goodspeed a CD of the transactions that transpired since our last meeting. Our account has earned us 91 cents. The scholarship fund has been held in hopes the market will return. The board has directed Larry to place the funds in a six-month certificate of deposit for further security. Larry reported Kevin Howard returned a check for \$200 to be donated back to the organization.

- b. A member list was distributed to the board of those delinquent in paying their dues. The list was to be further researched to be sure the file was accurate before taking further action. After much discussion, a motion was made by David Sikes and second by Peggy York to deem member dues not paid by the end of the annual conference delinquent and ineligible for participation in the EIC for the current year. Motion carried.
- c. Larry reported that he has contacted the Supporting Members both current and delinquent. Thank You cards have been sent to those that attended the conference.

d. The Honesty Bond will not be issued without two different signatures. The same person cannot be covered that signs the checks. Decision was made to change the bank signature card to remove Larry from signing, keep Bill Mills, Treasurer; John Goodspeed, board chairman, and add President Bob Lusk. Larry will continue his duties as Executive Director and forward the checks to John Goodspeed for validation and signature. John will then mail the checks.

e. There were 200 member directories ordered this year. It was decided that only 100 will be ordered next year.

5. Presidents Report: Bob Lusk distributed the TOWA Master Plan (Draft) for discussion. Plan will be made available after the changes have been accomplished.

6. Committee Reports:

a. Jonette Childs reported Lake Jackson is looking forward to being the site location for next year's conference. Plans are being completed and will be reviewed at the fall board meeting.

b. Kendal reported the changes to the EIC. The number of contest categories is being reduced from 24 to 17 due to fewer entries in like categories.

c. Scholarship report not available.

d. Media report not available.

f. David Sikes reported receiving six applications for membership. Each has been reviewed and accepted.

7. Old Business:

a. The TOWA Mission Statement was previously decided.

b. T.J. Greaney reported no news regarding the TOWA Logo. The star currently being used is temporarily until further suggestions received.

8. New Business: Mike Price suggested conference prices be increased to cover the costs. After much discussion, Bob Lusk made a motion to raise the conference fee to \$150 per member and \$100 for the spouse, second by David Sikes. Additional guests for the awards banquet fees will be determined by the meal cost. Motion carried. Supporting member fees will be increased as predetermined.

9. Kendal Hemphill made a motion and second by David Sikes to adjourn the meeting. The meeting closed at 3:50 pm.

Go Fish! Events Scheduled Throughout the Summer

AUSTIN — THE TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT WANTS TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR TEXANS to go fishing and this year has renamed and expanded its learn-to-fish initiative to include dozens of special events being held at 13 state parks throughout Texas.

“Go Fish! Learn-to Fish Events at Texas State Parks” events are designed to help families learn how to fish together, according to Ann Miller, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s Aquatic Resources coordinator. National research studies have shown that fishing is one of the key gateways to involving people in a lifetime of outdoor enjoyment.

“We’ve been getting more and more requests for how-to-fish classes from young parents who want to take their children fishing, but don’t feel comfortable doing so,” Miller said. “These events fulfill that need and in many cases introduce families to Texas state parks that are the ideal place for fishing since adults don’t have to have a fishing license to fish inside a state park.”

The seven-year-old state park fishing events are more numerous this year and now are benefiting from the support of Wal-Mart which has come on board as this year’s Go Fish! sponsor. Event coordinators received gift cards from the retail chain to purchase rods and reels, fishing tackle and other outdoor equipment and products for use by participants and for prizes for young anglers.

Last year, hundreds of adults and more than 2,000 children – 200 of whom caught their first fish – attended the learn-to-fish events, formerly known as the Family Fishing Celebration. At Huntsville State Park, one ecstatic grandmother even landed her first fish.

Bill Brooks, a retired herpetologist and Texas Master Naturalist, has been involved from the onset in putting on the fishing events at Bastrop and Buescher state parks in central Texas. He finds the experience of helping youngsters and their parents and grandparents rewarding.

“I have some kids come back year after year, not only to fish but to go through the learning stations,” Brooks said. “Lots of parents come up and shake my hand afterwards and thank us for putting on the program. Some of them have never been to the park and realize what a nice place it is and that you don’t even have to have a fishing license to fish there.”

Before youngsters attending a Go Fish! event can try their luck at hooking a fish; they must first visit a handful of learning stations. TP&W staff and volunteers teach the young anglers such skills as knot-tying, how to cast, fish ecology, water safety and state fishing rules and regulations.

At Brooks’ events, as with most Go Fish! outings, participants check in at 9 a.m., get a bag of informational brochures and begin making the rounds of the learning stations.

When they’ve finished visiting the booths, they receive a sticker and pin, and a Junior Angler certificate. Then an instructor takes them to the pond to try to hook a fish. Children can win prizes for catching the first fish, the biggest fish and other noteworthy achievements. At noon, there are snacks and raffles for tackle boxes and other fishing equipment and products.

Special events aside, any time is a great time to visit a Texas state park to enjoy recreational fishing without breaking the bank. However, keep in mind that license-free angling applies only to fishing inside a state park from the bank, a pier or from a boat if done in a body of water totally contained within the boundaries of a state park, such as Huntsville State Park’s Lake Raven. State parks along the coast also participate to encourage fishing from the beach and wade-fishing. State park entry fees, however, still apply. All state fishing regulations, except the license and stamp requirements, remain in effect.

For more information and list of events, call (512) 389-4732 or visit the TPWD Web site at www.tpwd.state.tx.us.

WILDLIFE FOREVER STATE-FISH ART CONTEST HONORS YOUNG ARTISTS

ATHENS — Officials at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens have announced the winners in the Texas division of the 2010 Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest.

First, second and third-place winners and honorable mentions are awarded in three grade-level divisions: grades 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12.

The Toyota Texas Bass Classic funds cash prizes for Texas winners: \$1,000 for first place, \$750 for second place and \$500 for third place in the 10-12 division. Prizes in the 4-6 and 7-9 grade levels are \$100 for first; \$75 for second; \$50 for third. First-place winners also receive a travel allowance for themselves and their family to attend the national contest and exposition, which will take place at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens July 16-17.

Public admission to the expo and related activities will be included with paid admission to center.

One outstanding piece of artwork each year is selected for the Art of Conservation Award, and a commemorative stamp featuring the artwork is produced for sale. Proceeds from sales of the stamp are used to fund conservation projects. The 2010 winner will be unveiled at the expo.

The expo will include an outdoor fair with food and activities. Artists will demonstrate their craft; some will have their artwork available for purchase.

Texas State Artist and veteran TOWA Member Sam Caldwell will display and sell his work and will also create an original watercolor with student assistance during the day.

The State-Fish Art Contest is a project of Wildlife Forever, a non-profit multi-species conservation organization dedicated to conserving America's wildlife heritage.

For more information on the State-Fish Art expo, visit www.tpwd.state.tx.us/tffc.

NATIONAL OUTDOOR NEWS

NSSF DEVELOPS FREE OUTDOOR EDUCATION VIDEOS FOR TEACHERS & SCHOOLS

NEWTOWN, CT – The National Shooting Sports Foundation has launched an online campaign offering free educational videos about firearm safety and wildlife conservation to teachers and school administrators across the country. "We believe teachers and school administrators should teach students how to correctly respond if they encounter an unattended firearm. Students who understand what to do in such situations can potentially save lives," said Steve Sanetti, president of the NSSF, a trade association for the firearms industry. "Thankfully, accidental firearms fatalities have dramatically declined to historic lows due to efforts like NSSF's firearm safety education programs."

Regarding conservation education, Sanetti said, "We have a generation of children who spend less time outdoors and who see more wildlife on television than in the wild. It's important that students today understand how once-endangered species such as white-tailed deer and wild turkey have been brought back to abundance through efforts funded by hunters."

The Firearm Safety DVD contains three videos, two designed for viewing by students in various grade levels and one for a general audience. The school videos show students how to make correct decisions when encountering a firearm in an unsupervised situation at school, at home or at a friend's home.

"McGruff the Crime Dog on Gun Safety" is designed for viewing by students in grades K through 6. "It's Your Call: Playing It Safe Around Guns" is for students in grades 6 through 9. "Firearms Safety Depends on You" is for general audiences. Educators can watch the firearm safety videos online.

The Wildlife Conservation DVD features three videos that teach students about America's lauded wildlife management system and how hunters contribute the majority of funding to conservation. "Wildlife for Tomorrow" is for students in grades 4 to 7. "Un-endangered Species" is for grades 7 to 12. "What They Say About Hunting," a mock debate of pro- and anti-hunting viewpoints, is for students in grades 7 to 12. Educators can view the conservation videos online.

In addition to the videos, which were updated several years ago, each DVD contains guides and activity masters to assist teachers in fostering classroom discussions.

More than 100,000 schools across the country have received NSSF's educational videos. "Teachers using the videos have told us they deliver a valuable message for today's students," said Bill Brassard Jr., who oversees the video campaign as NSSF's director of communications.

More information is available at <http://www.nssf.org/education/video.cfm> and Brassard can be reached by calling (203) 426-1320 or by e-mail at bbrassard@nssf.org.

POMA OFFERS COLLEGE STUDENTS FREE PASS TO AUGUST CONFERENCE

College students, if you've ever flipped through the pages of *Field and Stream* magazine and wondered how in the world someone could get paid to go fishing, or sat in front of the television dreaming of one day seeing your own face on the Sportsman Channel, then the Professional Outdoor Media Association has a deal for you.

From August 11-14, some of the biggest names in the outdoor industry will converge on LaPorte, IN, for POMA's annual conference, and college students are invited.

POMA understands the importance of investing in the next generation of outdoor industry leaders. That's why the organization is waiving all conference attendance fees, including meals, for the first 25 college students who register. Student attendees are responsible for their own lodging and transportation expenses.

If you have ever considered a career in the outdoor industry, you may never get a

Continued on Page 8

Continued from Page 7

networking opportunity like this again. Come to POMA and rub elbows with some of the top editors, communication experts, public relations gurus and business owners in the industry. POMA members, like Michael Waddell, Jim Zumbo, Tom Gresham, Kelly Gotch, Tony Hansen, Brandon Butler, Tom Opre and so many more are willing and excited to help guide your career aspirations.

Students must be enrolled in an accredited college full time; be at least 18 years of age; and be studying communications, journalism or program focused on wildlife management or conservation.

POMA is supported by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, Archery Trade Association, American Sportfishing Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, National Rifle Association and other industry corporations.

For further information, visit the POMA Web site at www.professionalooutdoormedia.org.

To register, fill out the registration form on the POMA Web site or contact Brandon Butler at (812) 322-9851 or at bbutler@driftwoodoutdoors.com.

TOWA Welcomes New Active, Supporting and Student Members

TOWA PRESIDENT-ELECT AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DAVID SIKES has provided the following list of new members to our organization as TOWA continues its effort to represent a wide range of outdoor journalists and industries.

We welcome these members aboard and look forward to working with them as part of our mission to foster fellowship among members and enlighten audiences on the importance of our natural heritage while promoting its appreciation, enjoyment and conservation.

ACTIVE MEMBERS

Kim Rothe, Editor
Texas Wildlife Magazine – TWA
(830) 363-3121
Krothe@swtexas.net

Tom Linton
Houston freelancer and area
newspaper contributor
(409) 939-3800
sapeloga@msn.com

SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Evolved Angler (Fishouflage Apparel)
John Marquez
(877) 386-5833
Jtm@evolvedangler.com

Trijicon Inc
Eddie Stevenson, Driftwood Media
(512) 858-0730
Eddie@driftwoodmediacom.com

Steyr Arms
Mike Nischalke & Karen Lutto
(205) 467-6544
www.steyrarms.com

Tactical Solutions
Rimfire accessories & suppressors
Gabe Lang
(208) 333-9901
gabe@tacticalsol.com

STUDENT/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Nathan Skinner
Texas City – Texas A&M student
(409) 771-7971
Nateskin10@yahoo.com



A rapid rabbit target is no match for the shooting skills of TOWA Board Chairman John Goodspeed as he participates as a member of the TOWA Media Team at the April 23 Operation Game Thief benefit held in Buda. The other TOWA team members, who once again dominated the media competition, included Peggy York, Sam Caldwell, Ron Strait and Ralph Winingham. The event attracted about 450 shooters and helped raise about \$100,000 for the OGT program.

— Photo by Ralph Winingham