

# TOWA

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

## UPDATE ON 2011 TOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

# Happy New Year to All!

*TOWA Conference To Provide Member Access to New Horizons*

*By David Sikes, Conference Co-Chairman*

I love a good quote. One that I read not long ago came from author Wilfred Peterson. He said: "A man practices the art of adventure when he breaks the chain of routine and renews his life through reading new books, traveling to new places, making new friends, taking up new hobbies and adopting new viewpoints."

This year the TOWA Conference is aptly titled: "Reaching New Horizons: The Industry of the Outdoors." Our objective is to broaden the knowledge and opportunities of our members and to introduce them to ideas and revenue streams they may have overlooked.

This year the list of prestigious speakers, guests and events is first class. Below is a partial lineup:

★ **Ben Carter, executive director of the Dallas Safari Club:** "The history of Dallas Safari Club and the future of the industry as seen from DSC." (One hour speaker)

★ **Tweed Scott and Gail Woerner:** "Self publishing and promoting your book." (One hour panel series)

★ **Dave Garlock, senior lecturer in Journalism and Magazine Sequence Chairman, University of Texas:** "Why Magazines Will Not Die and Why the Best Writing is not Found Online, and Won't be for a Long Time." (One hour

speaker)

★ **Jennifer Mull, chief executive officer of Backwoods Inc.:** This cool high-end retailer tells us about adventures in the outdoors and the trends she sees coming. (Keynote Friday Night).

★ **RoShelle Gaskins: Galveston Island Convention and Visitors Bureau:** "Introducing the island paradise of Galveston." (Lunch speaker on Friday)

★ **Ricky Linex, Zone Wildlife Biologist, U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service & Andy Samson of Texas State University:** "Texas Water – What and How. Write about the biggest eco topic since oil." (One hour panel series)

**Marika Flatt, PR by the Book:** "Publicizing Myself in Today's World, Social Media and Traditional Media to Build Your Platform." (One hour speaker)

★ **K.J. Bothum, Central Texas Wine Tour:** Texas Wine and Wine Tasting (Saturday 6-7p.m.)

★ **Mayor Alan McGraw of Round Rock – second fastest growing city in the country:** "Urban Environments and the outdoors. How this creative city is planning experiences and education on the outdoors." (One hour

speaker)

★ **Special Event Wine Tasting: Saturday night before the awards and dinner:** Katy Jane Bothum, executive director of Texas Hill Country Wineries – the No. 1 Hidden Gem Wine Region and No. 2 fastest growing wine destination in the nation. Learn more about this top Texas industry and opportunities to write and enjoy some of the best wines in the nation.

Tentatively we're planning a Thursday evening reception at the Port Aransas Museum and working on having the Port Aransas Boatmen provide a fish fry and presentation on their efforts to improve offshore fishing opportunities, boost the rigs to reef program and promote their annual Deep Sea Roundup scholarship fundraiser.

There are more special guests and speakers to be announced. Don't miss this chance to learn more about the changing industry of outdoor writing and how you can create new profit opportunities, promote yourself and help our profession crest new horizons at the 2011 TOWA Conference.

If you have program suggestions, please contact TJ Greaney at [tjgreaney1@gmail.com](mailto:tjgreaney1@gmail.com) or David Sikes at [sikesd@caller.com](mailto:sikesd@caller.com).

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*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.buytoyota.com](http://www.buytoyota.com).



## 2011 TOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

# TOWA EIC Entries in the Hands of FOWA Judging Panel

The members of the Florida Outdoor Writers Association have received all 184 entries in the TOWA Excellence in Craft contest and EIC Chairman Kendal Hemphill is anxiously awaiting the word on who will be the best of the best.

Winners of the annual competition will be announced at the Feb. 26 conference awards banquet at the Port Royal Resort and Conference Center in Port Aransas.

"I think the fewer categories may have pared the number of entries down some," Hemphill said. "I know I was able to enter fewer columns this year because of that. But I think we've got a pretty good balance now, even though we've kind of made things a little smaller."

He added that the EIC process appears to be running smoothly.

Winners in the contest will receive \$200 for a first place award; \$50 for a second place award; and \$25 for third place courtesy of Craig Epling with Chevrolet (GMC) Inc., with certificates to

be presented to all honorees.

This year's hottest competition was the same as last year, with Category 10 (Outdoor Column) drawing in 24 submissions. Coming in second with the number of entries was a new category this year, Category 13 (Outdoor Feature, Open) with 19 pieces submitted for the judges.

Other popular categories were: Category 18 (Magazine Feature) with 18 entries; Category 11 (Newspaper Feature), with 16 entries; Category 14 (Outdoor News Reporting) with 15 entries; Category 1 (Outdoor Photography, People) with 13 entries; and Category 9 (Outdoor Fiction/Humor) with 12 entries.

This is the first year of the contest where members could enter a written piece or photo in more than one category and the second year where as many as two entries could be submitted in each category.

If any members have any questions or comments about the contest, they may contact Hemphill at (325) 347-6440 or by email at [jeep@verizon.net](mailto:jeep@verizon.net).

## Dirty Dozen & Silent Auction Items Sought to Support TOWA Youth Scholarship

**THERE IS STILL TIME FOR MEMBERS, SUPPORTING MEMBERS, friends and strangers to contribute to the annual TOWA Dan Klepper Memorial Youth Scholarship and Outdoor Education Fund through donations to the TOWA Dirty Dozen and Silent auctions.**

The events are among the highlights of the TOWA conference each year and will be featured activities during this year's extravaganza Feb. 24-26 at the Port Royal Resort and Conference Center at Port Aransas.

Any item, large or small, will help provide funds for a \$1,500 scholarship to a youngster pursuing an education in an outdoor related field and also supports various other outdoor youth projects. The fund was established in honor of Klepper, a former TOWA president and long-time San Antonio Express-News Outdoor Editor, to encourage youngsters to enjoy the outdoors and help promote our industry.

Auction Meister T.J. Greaney is coordinating the auctions and is welcoming any contributions. Donations are tax-deductible as TOWA is a 501-(c)(3) organization. For more information on how to donate items, contact Greaney at [tj@countrylinemagazine.com](mailto:tj@countrylinemagazine.com).



# *TOWA 2011 Conference*

*Feb. 24, 25 & 26, 2011 – Port Royal Ocean Resort & Conference Center – Port Aransas, Texas  
Hotel Address: 6317 State Hwy 361, Port Aransas, Texas 78373*

## **PAYMENT INFORMATION**

**CHECK:** If paying by check, please make check payable to TOWA. Enter check number here: \_\_\_\_\_

**CREDIT CARD:** If paying by credit card, enter Mastercard, VISA, Discover, Credit or Debit Card Information Below

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Customer Name \_\_\_\_\_

### **BILLING INFORMATION:**

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

## **MEAL INFORMATION FOR THE 53RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

MEAL INFORMATION: ( # of persons )

Thursday Reception (free) \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Lunch \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Dinner \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Lunch \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Awards Banquet \_\_\_\_\_

*Guest meal fee for other than a spouse is \$15.00 for breakfast, \$20.00 for lunch and \$30.00 per dinner for each additional person, payable at registration.*

**TOTAL MEALS** \_\_\_\_\_

## **RETURN THIS FORM ALONG WITH YOUR PAYMENT TO:**

**Executive Director Larry J. LeBlanc, 904 W. Montgomery, Ste. 4, #363, Willis, TX 77378.  
For more information, Office (936) 445-9348 (Cell) (936) 524-0761 or email [towa@suddenlink.net](mailto:towa@suddenlink.net).**

# NSSF Bumps Membership by 1,000 to Reach 6,000 Member Milestone

NEWTOWN, CT – Membership certainly has its benefits, and 6,000 companies and individuals associated with the firearms industry have chosen the National Shooting Sports Foundation to be the ideal trade association to deliver those benefits.

In less than a year's time, NSSF has added more than a thousand members to surpass the 6,000 milestone, a notable achievement considering that number was reached in advance of the NSSF-owned Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade Show, where typically many new members choose to join.

"We take this membership increase as a vote of confidence that NSSF is providing the right programs and services on behalf of the firearms industry," said Chris Dolnack, NSSF senior vice president and chief marketing officer. "This widespread support from major manufacturers to small business owners is not lost on federal and state legislators when NSSF engages with them on issues important to our industry."

NSSF's membership is broad based, and the organization has become a recognized voice in Washington, D.C., and in state capitals thanks to its growing ranks.

Voting members provide the highest level of support to NSSF. Twelve new voting members signed on in 2010, one of the highest

gains in one year.

Firearms retailers continue to bolster NSSF's membership ranks and make up the largest category.

"We continue to renew and add retailer members because we're providing useful tools to help them run and grow their businesses," said Bettyjane Swann, director of member services. "Retailers who belong to NSSF have a decided business advantage because of the resources we provide."

NSSF has also seen a significant rise in shooting range memberships. NSSF provides research and resources to assist individuals in meeting the challenges associated with range operation and development.

Though a trade association, NSSF accepts memberships from individuals who want to show their support for the organization's programs. This includes members of the outdoor media.

Any company or individual interested in becoming a member of NSSF is invited to review the member-benefit section of the website.

The NSSF was formed in 1961 as a trade association for the firearms industry.

For more information, log on to [www.nssf.org](http://www.nssf.org) or contact Bill Brassard at (203) 426-1320 or at [bbrassard@nssf.org](mailto:bbrassard@nssf.org).

## TOWA MEMBER NEWS

### Keith Warren Announces BSA Optics as Returning Sponsor

NEW BRAUNFELS – "The High Road" with Keith Warren has announced the return of BSA Optics as a featured sponsor on the show. BSA Optics is a world-renowned manufacturer of high-quality scopes, sights, binoculars, lasers and other advanced optics.

"We're very excited to welcome BSA Optics as a returning sponsor to "The High Road," said Warren, the award-winning host and producer of "The High Road."

"Today, more than ever, sportsmen are looking for value and performance from their equipment. You get both with BSA optics, he said."

BSA Optics offers a complete range of optical products to ensure that sportsmen enjoy the ultimate outdoor hunting and sport shooting experience. All scopes manufactured by BSA Optics feature advanced technology that provides the maximum brightness, performance, and accuracy.

"Whether I'm shooting in low light or long range, for varmints or big game," Warren said. "I trust BSA Optics to put me spot on."

Warren has more than 25 years experience in outdoor programming and he speaks passionately about the critical need to preserve our outdoor lifestyle. On "The High Road," he often urges sportsmen to "take the high road" in the industry and in their everyday lives with a positive message that focuses on the privileges that Americans enjoy because of those that blazed the trail of freedom.

Warren was selected as the winner of the 2009 Sportsman Choice Award at the Sportsman Channel's annual awards ceremony during the 2010 Shooting, Hunting, and Outdoor Trade Show held in Las Vegas.

The High Road airs three times a week on The Pursuit Channel at 12 a.m. (EST) Friday and at 11 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. on Sunday. Warren's other program; "Deer & Wildlife Stories" also airs three times a week on the Pursuit Channel, showing on at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, 6 p.m. Friday and 12 a.m. Sunday.

For more information visit [www.keithwarren.net](http://www.keithwarren.net).

# World Fishing Network Seeks Funny, Shocking & Amazing Fishing Videos

DENVER, CO – The next time you hit the water to fish, be sure to pack your video camera along with your rod, lures and lucky fishing hat. World Fishing Network's Most Amazing Fishing Videos Contest is offering anglers the chance to have their spectacular, funny, cute, shocking or just plain entertaining fishing videos featured on WFN.

"We've all experienced those 'memorable moments' when fishing, and if lucky, they were caught on video. No matter how funny or unbelievable, they all share one thing in common - they make for a good story," said Shauna Gosevitz, senior director of Marketing for WFN. "WFN's Most Amazing Fishing Videos Contest invites people to share their moments with

their fellow anglers online and have a chance to share their moments with the millions of viewers watching WFN."

To participate in WFN's Most Amazing Fishing Videos Contest anglers should visit [www.wfn.tv/maf](http://www.wfn.tv/maf) to upload a fishing video. Videos can also be submitted via mail. Prizes will be awarded monthly. Users who don't have videos to share are still able to watch and vote for their favorite fishing videos anytime on the website.

After being submitted, videos will be posted on the website for public voting. At the end of each month, the video that received the most votes will win a video camera in addition to a prize package and will be featured on a WFN's Most Amazing Fishing Videos on-air vignette airing on WFN, WFN HD and online. Every video entered will be entered into monthly random draws for additional prizes. Entrants can share their videos and encourage voting from friends, family and fishing buddies via a variety of social media tools such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

The contest is complimented by an on-air campaign airing on WFN and WFN HD consisting of 15-second and 30-second promos, online banners running on a variety of targeted websites and SEM/SEO marketing tactics including social networking tools and additional online videos.

WFN is the only 24/7 television network dedicated to all segments of fishing with programming that covers instruction, tips, tournaments, travel, food, boating, outdoor lifestyle and more. The wide-ranging programming lineup includes primetime theme nights, regional bureaus from across the nation, a selection of the best international series and the most diverse species coverage of any TV channel.

Featuring popular programs hosted by the world's top anglers, the network also delivers a weekly news program, WFN News, and the schedule includes a variety of exclusive lifestyle shows including: "Hookin' Up" with Mariko Izumi and "Reel Fishy Jobs" and "Getting School'd" with JP DeRose.

Like millions of anglers across the continent, WFN is committed to supporting important conservation issues and groups that are fighting to preserve North America's waterways and fisheries. WFN is also dedicated to using its resources and powerful media platform to help grow the sport by promoting and championing groups and organizations that are helping to inspire a new generation of anglers to appreciate and respect the world's natural wonders.

Originally launched in Dec. 2005, WFN and WFN HD are available in more than 20 million households through North American cable, satellite and telecommunications distributors.

For more information, visit [www.wfn.tv](http://www.wfn.tv) or contact Doug Drotman at (631) 462-1198 or [doug@drotmanpr.com](mailto:doug@drotmanpr.com).



Capturing TOWA Board Member John Goodspeed on film as he attempts to dine on an undersized channel catfish — *it's catch and release John, not catch and crunch* — might be just the kind of video moment the World Fishing Network is looking for from anglers interested in earning prizes for their outdoor memories. Photo by Ralph Winingham

## B&C Offers Five Reasons for Entering Your Trophy into the Records

**MISSOULA, MT – CONGRATULATIONS!** You finally killed that trophy specimen that eluded you for many seasons and countless hunts. You made celebratory stops at your buddy's house and then the local meat processor. The taxidermist is next. But, unlike your previous hunts, this time there's another consideration – entering your trophy into the Boone and Crockett Club's records book.

The Boone and Crockett Club records program is the only North American harvest data system that collects information on all species of free-ranging native North American big game taken in fair chase.

Getting listed in the world's most distinguished hunting-records book involves official measuring, paperwork and a \$40 processing fee, all detailed at [www.boone-crockett.org](http://www.boone-crockett.org), but the rewards are considerable for you personally as well as for hunting overall and the future of conservation.

Here are five reasons to enter your trophy in Boone and Crockett records:

**1. Archiving Conservation History:** Under the leadership of Boone and Crockett Club founder Theodore Roosevelt, the club's system of scoring big-game trophies originated in 1906 (official records date back to 1830) as a means of recording details on species thought to be disappearing due to rampant habitat loss and unregulated hunting. Science-based conservation efforts, led and funded by license-buying hunters, brought those species from vanishing to flourishing. Today, a Boone and Crockett trophy is a classic gauge of modern conservation success-and an important reminder of the ongoing need for habitat and wildlife stewardship.

**2. Improving Future Management:** Because they represent fully mature specimens, Boone and Crockett records are an important indicator of the age structure and breeding fitness of a herd, as well as an indicator of habitat quality. For biologists and professional wildlife managers, the presence and production of trophy animals suggests optimum overall herd health; their absence may suggest that refined management strategies are warranted. Records build a timeline of both

positive and negative trends in conservation practices and are used to chart future actions.

**3. Honoring the Animal:** Outstanding trophies produced naturally deserve to be recorded and respected in the most prestigious annals of big game hunting. Any true hunter's sense of pride and satisfaction will be even more fulfilling and longer lasting if his or her quarry and the place where it lived are appropriately recognized, too.

**4. Discrediting Hunting's Critics:** Those who oppose hunting often claim that hunting reverses natural selection, because unlike wild predators, human hunters often seek out the largest specimens. This, according to erroneous rhetoric, will artificially stunt game populations. However, the facts speak differently. Boone and Crockett Club trophy entries have increased 400 percent over the past 30 years, which means trophy-class animals actually are more plentiful now than ever before. This single statistic is an ongoing tribute to the professionals who manage wildlife and the hunters who participate in that management. Even more important, by being the only published reference of trophies taken in fair chase, such data counters other rhetoric being spun by anti-hunters to an uninformed public that sportsmen have become just a lawless bunch of wildlife killers.

**5. Establishing Official Bragging Rights:** Less than 1 percent of all sportsmen will take a Boone and Crockett-qualifying trophy in their lifetime. An accepted entry absolutely signifies the highest accomplishment in big game hunting-the legal, ethical, fair-chase harvest of a free ranging specimen that stands as an ultimate representation of its species. World-class trophy mounts are celebrated and passed down from one generation to the next. However, always remember that, over time, the more enduring story will be less about how you harvested your trophy, and more about how that remarkable animal got there in the first place: through the efforts of sportsmen!

The media contact for the Boone and Crockett Club is Steve Wagner of Blue Heron Communications who can be reached at (800) 654-3766 or at [steve@blueheroncomm.com](mailto:steve@blueheroncomm.com).

## 2011 NWTF Convention Already Setting Records

EDGEFIELD, S.C. — Booth space on the exhibit hall floor for the National Wild Turkey Federation's 35th annual National Convention and Sport Show is completely sold out, making the upcoming convention an already record-setting event.

All 625 booth spaces on the convention's largest-ever exhibit floor sold out by Dec. 1 for the show that will take place Feb. 17-20 at the Gaylord Opryland Resort in Nashville, Tenn. The exhibit hall will be open Feb. 18-20. The NWTF is still adding vendors to a waiting list in case of cancellations.

A record number of more than 44,000 outdoor enthusiasts attended convention in 2010. The NWTF is expecting another strong turnout at the 2011 show, which will be the first major convention at Opryland after a devastating flood in May.

"The new Opryland looks tremendous," said Burt Carey, who is leading the NWTF convention planning and visited the hotel when it reopened in November. "Impressive changes have made an already terrific venue even better," he adds.

The NWTF is adding several twists to the convention this year.



One of the biggest changes is that NWTF members and active duty military personnel will get free admission to the exhibit hall, calling contests and seminars Feb. 18-20.

Attendees should bring their NWTF membership card or military ID for quick admission to the exhibit hall and to be eligible to win prizes during the convention. Non-members can purchase daily passes at the registration center.

Legendary entertainer Trace Adkins, The Band Perry and other performers will entertain during nightly events. Attendees also can participate in amazing auctions for African safaris, hunting trips all over North America, rare firearms and other great items.

Kids can try their hand at archery, air guns, casting and fishing, and learn about conservation adventures to earn a collectible patch in "The Roost," an area of the exhibit hall designed especially for children.

For more information about the convention or to inquire about the waiting list for booth space, visit [www.nwtf.org/special\\_events/convention.html](http://www.nwtf.org/special_events/convention.html). The media contact is Brent Lawrence at (803) 637-7682.

# Dallas Safari Club Tops \$750,000 for Texas Projects Since 2006

DALLAS — Since 2006, the Dallas Safari Club has granted more than \$750,000 in funding for wildlife and habitat conservation, youth and public education, and hunter advocacy programs within the state of Texas.

The five-year milestone was reached in November, with Texas representing 36 percent of all DSC grants issued worldwide since 2006.

DSC-funded projects in Texas have included desert bighorn sheep restoration, several university research projects, firearm safety instruction, public lectures, introducing youths to traditional outdoor recreation and conservation, providing venison for needy families and more.

The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department has received a number of DSC grants in recent years which helped fund the state's National Archery in the Schools Program, desert bighorn project, fisheries projects, life insurance for game wardens, Operation Game Thief, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Expo and symposiums.

"The generosity of Dallas Safari Club towards these important wildlife conservation and sporting programs has simply been unending," said Carter Smith, executive director of TP&W.

"Over the years, DSC has been one of our closest and most longstanding partners. We appreciate all they do to foster a strong conservation ethic among Texas sportsmen and to promote our great outdoor traditions to new generations of hunters and anglers. Rest assured, we could not do our work at Texas Parks and Wildlife without them."

DSC grant recipients in Texas include:

*Armed Forces Foundation*  
*Big Brothers, Big Sisters*  
*City of Dallas, Trinity Strand Project*  
*Conservation Fund of Texas*  
*Dallas Ecological Foundation*  
*Dallas Museum of Nature and History*  
*Dallas Pistol Club*  
*Delta Waterfowl*  
*Hunters for the Hungry*  
*Park Cities Quail*  
*Dr. Randall Eaton*  
*Tarleton State University*  
*Texas A&M University*  
*Texas Bighorn Society*  
*Texas Conservation Alliance*  
*Texas Outdoor Partners*  
*Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.*  
*Texas Parks & Wildlife Foundation*  
*Texas State University*

An independent nonprofit organization since 1982, DSC has become an international leader in conserving wildlife and wilderness lands, educating youth and the general public, and promoting and protecting the rights and interests of hunters worldwide.

"Dallas Safari Club has become an international force in conservation but we like to help with worthy projects here at home, too," said Ben Carter, DSC executive director. "The fact is, we're granting more money today than any time in our history and we're positioned to do that because of the quality and growth of our main annual fundraiser—our convention and expo."

The DSC annual convention and expo will be held Jan. 6-9 at the Dallas Convention Center, featuring more than 1,171 booths, 740 exhibitors and 338,000 square feet of exhibit space. Exhibitors include outfitters and professional hunters from around the world, along with gun makers, optics and gear companies, artists, jewelers, clothiers, furriers and more.

A record crowd of some 32,000 attendees is expected. Daily admission is \$20 per person.

For more information, visit [www.biggame.org](http://www.biggame.org).

## CALENDAR

**Jan. 6-9** – Annual Dallas Safari Club Convention and Sporting Expo to be held at the Dallas Convention Center. Further information is available at [www.biggame.org](http://www.biggame.org).

**Jan. 15** – Deadline for being eligible for the "Pick of the Litter" drawing during the Saturday night silent auction by paying your annual TOWA dues and conference registration fee for the Port Aransas conference. Drawing winner will be permitted to pick any silent auction item as their prize before the bidding process begins.

**Jan. 18-21** – The annual Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade Show and Conference will be held in Las Vegas, featuring the world's premier exposition of combined firearms, ammunition, archery, cutlery, outdoor apparel, optics, camping and related products and services. Further information is available <http://shotshow.org>.

**Jan. 25** – Cutoff date for receiving TOWA rate of \$90 plus tax for a room to attend the Port Aransas conference. Contact Stacy Trevino, Sales Manager at (800) 242-1034 or [stacy@port-royal.com](mailto:stacy@port-royal.com) for reservations. The main web site is [www.portroyal.com](http://www.portroyal.com).

**Feb. 24-26** – The 53rd annual TOWA conference will be held at the Port Royal Ocean Resort and Conference Center in Port Aransas, the site of the 2009 conference. Hotel information is available at (800) 242-1034 or at [www.port-royal.com](http://www.port-royal.com).