

TOWA

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

2011 TOWA SPRING BOARD MEETING UPDATE

TOWA Board Tackles Membership Issues at Rockport Spring Fling

By Ralph Winingham, TOWA Newsletter Editor

Mingled among some fine seafood meals and comfortable accommodations courtesy of the Rockport/Fulton community as part of the 26th annual Spring Fling, members of the TOWA board has started action on some significant issues involving membership.

During the fast-paced board meeting April 18 conducted by Vice President David Sikes in the absence of President Bob Lusk, one of the major actions was a decision to start the process of streamlining active membership requirements.

“We should look at the changing

times and the economy and consider loosening up some of the guidelines,” said Board Member Susan Ebert as she presented her ideas for a new set of requirements.

She added that with the shrinking venues for outdoor works, some of the requirements for maintaining active status are unrealistic.

Her proposals on the criteria include the following:

1. Requiring 36 published newspaper pieces per year is rather rough in these times when there are only five or six full-time outdoor newspaper writers left standing statewide. Suggest reducing the required number of newspaper pieces to 12 per year.
2. No change.
3. Suggest reducing the number of 30-minute radio or television shows from 13 down to eight.
4. Suggest reducing the number of published photos from 43 down to 12 per year, which is the same requirement for cartoonists, illustrators or artists.
5. Rather than the requirement of 10 published pieces for freelancers, suggest reducing the number to six published pieces during the past 12 months and eliminate the circulation restriction.
6. No change.
7. No change.
8. No change.

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Karen Lutto of Hunter Outdoor Communications, LLC, center, talks with TOWA members and others about the Steiner and Burris optics, Hi Mountain Seasonings and Sea Life Cameras she had on display at the Rockport/Fulton Spring Fling dinner held at the Paws and Taws Convention Center. The TOWA board conducted a meeting as part of the event and also enjoyed some fine dining at Charlotte Plummer's and the Boiling Pot in addition to comfortable accommodations at area hotels and motels. Photo by Ralph Winingham

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9. Suggest reducing the requirement of 36 published, paid articles or 43 published, paid photographs to include internet articles of any length and/or web photos to make a total of 24 combined, with proof of compensation still required.

10. No change.

The board discussed the recommendations and tentatively approved the changes pending a vote of the general membership at the New Braunfels conference in February 2012. Any changes to the bylaws must be approved by the general membership and would not be implemented until after a vote of approval.

Any members with comments or recommendations about the proposed changes are being asked to contact any board member to discuss the issue.

"If we truly want to grow membership in these times, I think considering this has merit," Ebert said.



TOWA Life Member Julius Knebel shows off a nice 16-inch speckled trout he caught with the assistance of Capt. Jerry Lindsey of Hook, Line & Sinker Charters during a morning fishing trip that was part of the 26th annual Rockport/Fulton Spring Fling activities for outdoor media members. Photo by Ralph Winingham

In a related matter, Executive Director Larry LeBlanc said that the current membership of TOWA is 84 active members and 41 supporting members. These figures do not include 21 active and 64 supporting members who had not paid their annual dues as of April 18. Each of those members will be contacted in an effort to obtain the delinquent dues or to determine if they have decided to leave the organization.

Members are reminded that in order to be eligible to submit entries in the 2012 Excellence in Craft competition, they must have paid their dues by March 1.

The board also agreed to take steps to update the TOWA website with current contact information on members listed in the website directory. Board members will be contacting all members by telephone or by email to update and upgrade the directory information, with Board Member Cody Greaney tasked with working out details with the website designer.

To spread out the workload, board members were assigned members by the letters of the alphabet. Based on the first letter of your last name, these board members should be contacted or will be contacting you for the updated information:

Cody Greaney — A, B, C.

Susan Ebert — D, E, F.

John Goodspeed — G, H, I, J.

Kendal Hemphill — K, L, M.

David Sikes — N, O, P.

TJ Greaney — R, S.

Ralph Winingham — T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z.

The supporting members and life members will be contacted by the executive director. All of the updated information should be compiled by May 30 and will be transferred to a PDF file for easy access.

For those members who are not checking out the website on a regular basis (note that press releases from supporting members are posted on nearly a daily basis) or who have misplaced their password, contact LeBlanc for access information.

NSSF Celebrates 50th Year with Sponsorship of National Hunting/Fishing Day

SPRINGFIELD, MO – The National Shooting Sports Foundation will once again renew its major sponsorship of National Hunting and Fishing Day, the official federal commemoration of hunters, anglers and conservation. NSSF is celebrating its 50th anniversary and has been involved with National Hunting and Fishing Day for 40 years.

The event, to be held Sept. 24, continues to grow and reach new outdoorsmen and outdoorswomen each year with the continued support of generous sponsors. Through licenses, permits and special taxes, hunters and anglers generate \$100,000 every 30 minutes – totaling more than \$1.75 billion per year – for fish, wildlife and habitat. No one contributes more for conservation.

The sponsorship by NSSF supports the Wonders of Wildlife museum, which is the official home of National Hunting and Fishing Day. The Springfield, MO, facility oversees educational initiatives to help the American public understand the indelible relationship between hunting, angling, healthy habitat, and wildlife and fisheries conservation.

Each year National Hunting and Fishing Day selects an honorary chairperson, and this year T. Boone Pickens is serving in that capacity.

Pickens is one of America's most prominent and influential businessmen. He is a top authority on world energy issues, president and chief executive officer of the investment firm BP Capital Management and founder of Mesa Petroleum. He is quoted often in the media and has testified many times before Congress.

A strong advocate for alternative energy in the United States, his renowned "Pickens Plan" is designed to decrease dependency on foreign oil while harnessing domestic energy alternatives such as wind power.

He is the author of "The First Billion is the Hardest" and "Boone Pickens: The Luckiest Guy in the World." Pickens also is a noted philanthropist, his gifts to charitable causes exceeding \$700 million.

"Sportsmen do the most for wildlife conservation. That message is at the heart of National Hunting and Fishing Day as much today as it was forty years ago," said Steve Sanetti, president and chief executive officer of NSSF. "We must constantly remind all sportsmen and the public of this extraordinary support, a task NHF Day accomplishes each year better than any other single program.

"The National Shooting Sports Foundation is a great partner," said Misty Mitchell, director of Wonders of Wildlife. "It is through NSSF's sponsorship that National Hunting and Fishing day will continue to grow and reach the future generations of hunters and fishermen."

In 1972, Congress formalized NHF Day to remind the public that conservation depends on funding and leadership from hunters and anglers. Every president from Richard Nixon through Barack Obama has issued official proclamations of support for the annual commemoration, now recognized as one of the most effective grassroots campaigns ever undertaken to promote traditional outdoor sports.

The growing list of sponsors for NHF Day 2011 includes Wonders of Wildlife, NSSF, Bass Pro Shops, Smith & Wesson, Sportsman's Channel, Realtree, Cabela's, GunBroker.com, Yamaha, and Pope and Young Club.

For more information about NHF Day, visit www.nhfday.org.

The media contact for NSSF is Kevin Jarnagin with Blue Heron Communications at (800) 654-3766 or Kevin@blueheroncomm.com.

NSSF Celebrates 50 Years of Achievement on Behalf of Its Members

NEWTOWN, CT – In 1961 when John F. Kennedy was president, Roger Maris and Mickey Mantle chased Babe Ruth's home run record and digital music meant tapping a rhythm with your fingers, the leaders of America's firearms industry boldly acted to form a new organization to meet the era's growing challenges to hunting and the shooting sports. The National Shooting Sports Foundation was born.

The year 2011 will mark the 50th anniversary of NSSF, the trade association for the firearms, ammunition, hunting and shooting sports industry and a new supporting member of TOWA.

NSSF kicked off the celebration at the SHOT Show – the industry's annual trade show and one of NSSF's great success stories – by recognizing past and current presidents of the organization and chairmen of its Board of Governors. NSSF chronicled its wide-ranging achievements in a history publication and a video shown at NSSF's State of the Industry Dinner at the SHOT Show Jan. 18-21 in Las Vegas. The publication and video will help NSSF recruit new members and educate various audiences about the industry, NSSF's government relations efforts and the purpose, programs and goals of the Foundation. A special notation that highlights "50 Years" has been added to the NSSF logo for use during the anniversary year.

"Our goal in celebrating this milestone is to remind our more than 6,000-member companies how much NSSF has done over the past 50 years to help their businesses thrive and to protect our great American pastimes of hunting and shooting," said Steve Sanetti, NSSF's president and chief executive officer. "We're proud to share our history, our accomplishments and our story with all those who support what NSSF stands for – to promote, protect and preserve hunting and the shooting sports."

As recounted in "The National Shooting Sports Foundation: A History 1961 to 2011," written by former NSSF President and CEO Doug Painter, NSSF's story begins when Field and Stream magazine, encouraged by longtime shooting editor Warren Page, organized the First National Conference on the Shooting Sports in 1960 in New York City.

From this gathering, a recommendation was made the following year to start a new industry organization – NSSF – which was chartered with 30 founding members. Research uncovered a fascinating Guns & Ammo magazine article that covered the Second National Conference on the Shooting Sports, helping to shed light on the formation of NSSF and providing photographs of the historic meeting.

Some of industry's most well-known and colorful figures were part of NSSF's early years. With the publication and video, NSSF will introduce these individuals to a new generation of firearms industry workers.

"We'd like to foster an awareness and appreciation for the men and women who stepped up and took action at this critical period to help preserve our hunting and shooting traditions," said Painter.

In addition to Page, early NSSF Executive Directors Charlie Dickey and Arnold H. "Rock" Rohlfing helped establish the Foundation. Others included Bill Talley of Winchester and chairman of the NSSF Board of Governors from 1972 to 1981, who summed up NSSF's inclusiveness as a trade association by stating: "The entire shooting-associated industry, from gun maker to boot maker, should speak with one voice."

Such unity is a hallmark of present-day NSSF.

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NSSF's story began when *Field & Stream* magazine, encouraged by longtime shooting editor Warren Page (pictured to the right), organized the First National Conference on the Shooting Sports in 1960 in New York City. From this gathering, a recommendation was made the following year to start a new industry organization — NSSF — which was chartered with 30 founding members.

Some NSSF history highlights through the decades are:

The 1960s — With an early mission “to create a better understanding of and a more active participation in the shooting sports,” NSSF began to tell the story of the hunter’s role in conservation and to bring out the facts about the safe and responsible use of firearms through Hollywood spokespersons such as Bing Crosby, Roy Rogers and Slim Pickens. Early safety promotions included encouraging hunters to adopt the use of “hunter orange” clothing.

The 1970s — NSSF achieved prominence on the national scene in 1972 with National Hunting and Fishing Day, one of the most effective grassroots efforts undertaken to promote traditional outdoor sports and conservation. President Nixon signed the first NHF Day proclamation, a tradition followed by nearly every other president.

SHOT Show, 1979 — A turning point in the Foundation’s history came with the creation of the Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade Show—widely known as the SHOT Show. One of the great success stories in trade show history, the SHOT Show began with 290 exhibiting companies; today, more than 1,600 exhibitors attend this international trade show. Though “SHOT” would become the economic engine that powers NSSF’s many programs and services, early champions of the show knew they were taking a big chance in breaking away from the National Sporting Goods Association trade show to start industry’s own. As Rohlfing remarked the night before the first show SHOT Show in St. Louis, “Boys, I sure as hell hope someone shows up tomorrow.”

The 1980s — NSSF launched a national advertising campaign to promote good sportsmanship in response to a study that showed the public did not have a problem with hunting so much as with hunters who behaved poorly. Educational initiatives continue to be a mainstay of NSSF’s outreach efforts and include brochures, websites and videos on firearm safety, hunter ethics and wildlife conservation, the latter notably promoted in the landmark “Un-endangered Species” video for schools.

Though commonplace today, television shows covering the shooting sports and hunting were anything but common decades ago. NSSF set out to change that in order to attract a new generation of participants. Among the shows NSSF helped bring to the small screen was the SPORTSMAN’S TEAM CHALLENGE, a rifle-shotgun-handgun event with unique courses of fire. This show became part of the first major shooting sports programming on ESPN — NSSF’s Chevy Trucks Shooting Sports America — that for 10 years brought the world of shooting into millions of American homes on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

The 1990s — NSSF established the Women’s Shooting Sports Foundation, providing women the opportunity to try shooting at chapters across the country. As adept in conference rooms as at shooting ranges, NSSF began the Shooting Sports Summits that brought industry



and conservation leaders together to assess challenges and develop new strategies to promote hunting and shooting. Many of NSSF’s most successful programs, such as STEP OUTSIDE, originated at Summit meetings, which continue today.

The 2000s — As anti-gun forces grew, NSSF helped fight off challenges to industry, none greater than the 23 politically motivated municipal lawsuits filed in attempt to hold manufacturers financially responsible for the criminal misuse of their lawfully manufactured and sold products. In its

finest hour, industry rallied to its own defense and, with help from the National Rifle Association, ultimately won passage in Congress of the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act in 2005, prohibiting any new lawsuits based on this failed legal theory.

The turn of the century also brought two big nationwide programs — Project ChildSafe and Don’t Lie for the Other Guy — that were supported by federal grants in addition to funding from the firearms industry. A gun lock and safety information distribution program, formerly known as Project HomeSafe, Project ChildSafe was given its name by President George W. Bush in 2001 and became the firearm safety initiative of his administration. Through 2010, the program has distributed more than 35 million gun lock safety kits.

Don’t Lie for the Other Guy is a partnership effort with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives designed to help firearms retailers better detect and prevent illegal purchases and to warn the public that such purposes carry stiff penalties. The program’s slogan, “Buy a gun for someone who can’t, buy yourself 10 years in jail,” says it all.

Building participation has always been a priority for NSSF. Early programs ranged from encouraging millions of Boy Scouts to hone their marksmanship skills to promoting the introduction of sporting clays. In the 2000 decade, efforts such as the Scholastic Clay Target Program and First Shots carried on that tradition. With hunting facing cultural and access challenges, NSSF and industry answered with the Hunting Heritage Partnership program to provide millions in funding to state wildlife agencies for programs that encourage hunting. This effort is complemented by Families Afield, NSSF’s excellent partnership effort with the U.S. Sportsmen’s Alliance and National Wild Turkey Federation that has lowered barriers to youth hunting in 30 states.

As the decade came to close, NSSF launched an education program to dispel misconceptions about AR-style rifles, noting that these modern sporting rifles are commonly owned and widely used for target shooting and hunting, and that they are definitely not “assault weapons.”

“We would like to think that the founders of NSSF, most of whom have passed on, would be proud of the work that the organization they formed in New York City in 1961 has accomplished,” concludes the publication’s foreword. “If those founding individuals were here, they would be able to enjoy hunting and target shooting today much as they were able to fifty years ago. That surely would be one measure of success of their vision and effort in creating the National Shooting Sports Foundation.”

For more information about the NSSF, log on to www.nssf.org or contact Bill Brassard Jr., director of Communications at (203) 426-1320, extension 212, or at bbrassard@nssf.org.

Nutty Professor

The eccentric Henry Hildebrand inspired many budding scientists

By John Goodspeed

Never one to bother with fashion, Dr. Henry Hildebrand would wander the halls of the University of Corpus Christi (now Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi) in the same checkered shirt and striped pants, partially unzipped, that he'd worn three decades before. His belt often was twisted and not fully buckled. His socks didn't match. His hair was mussed. His glasses were dirty. Sometimes he wasn't sure what day it was.

Based on appearance alone, it would have been hard to believe that Hildebrand was the pioneering biologist who founded the university's marine science program in 1957 and discovered the nesting grounds of Kemp's ridley sea turtles, helping to save them from extinction. More frequently found in the company of beer-drinking, hell-raising commercial fisherman and shrimpers — gaining insight into the fisheries, of course — than in an intellectual tête-à-tête with his fellow academics, Hildebrand was a long step outside of the mold.

In the 1960s, Hildebrand was among the first to teach students that while books are important, the best learning experience is to work hands-on in nature. His students pulled nets and learned to identify fish, sample water, and process the collected data. He also

taught students that to learn about a species, one must study its entire ecosystem, including human impact. To protect the species, one must influence public policy, he believed.

"He had a reputation of showing up anywhere that had something to do with the marine environment, and it was like, 'Uh, oh — here's Dr. Hildebrand,'" says Dr. Wes Tunnell, founder of the university's Center for Coastal Studies and associate director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies. Tunnell replaced Hildebrand when he left the university in 1973.

"He knew how to ask the pointed questions, whether it was at a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department hearing or a Corpus Christi City Council meeting," Tunnell says. "He usually took students with him. He told them that an important part of being a scientist was being engaged. He really made an impact in that way."

Tunnell recalls that Hildebrand, who died in 2003 five days shy of his 81st birthday, always appeared calm, almost meek, and his ramshackle appearance lulled people into believing he was a pushover — that is, until a discussion turned to one of his passions or he disagreed with something being said.

"Then you could see his eyes spark and he was ready to get into it," Tunnell says. "Sometimes his lip would quiv-

er as he would start into his diatribe about how wrong they were and how they didn't have the data to support the statements they were making." While never Hildebrand's student, Tunnell attended his seminars in the late 1960s and accompanied him on field trips, including one when a norther blew in on a rising tide and they almost had to abandon Hildebrand's truck when it got stuck in a pass.

"I'd already put him on a pedestal as the kind of marine scientist I'd like to be like some day because I'd heard so many good things about his field trips and his publications," Tunnell says.

Hildebrand was born in 1922 in Fowler, Kansas. Both his parents were teachers, but his interest in marine biology was sparked by his uncle, Samuel Hildebrand, a distinguished ichthyologist. Henry Hildebrand began teaching at the University of Corpus Christi in 1957. In 1973, he left to teach at Texas A&I (now A&M) University in Kingsville, and in 1979, he entered the private sector as a commercial fishing consultant. Hildebrand officially retired in 1985, though he remained very active in marine science.

Throughout his career, Hildebrand conducted groundbreaking research on many marine subjects, but is perhaps best known for discovering the nesting grounds of the Kemp's ridley sea

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"Nutty Professor" Earns First Place in TOWA EIC Magazine Feature Category

As a way of recognizing the best works of our members, this is a reprint of the 2011 Excellence in Craft Category 12 (Magazine Feature). Finding a way to turn nuts to bucks, TOWA Board Chairman John Goodspeed earned a first place award and \$200 for his piece called "Nutty Professor" published in *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine.

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turtle, which had been a mystery until 1960. His careful investigation showed that the turtles nested on the beaches of Tamaulipas, Mexico — residents told him of large numbers along the shore. With the help of an amateur film taken in 1947 showing thousands of turtles, Hildebrand pinpointed the nesting site near Rancho Nuevo, a small ranching community. In 1966, conservation efforts began, and in 1978, the United States joined Mexico in an effort to save the turtle from extinction, establishing nesting beaches along the Texas coast on Padre Island.

In his field work and his teaching, Hildebrand left behind an important and continuing legacy.

“Many of Henry’s students, like many of ours now, are in all the state and federal natural resource agencies around Texas, the United States and Mexico,” says Tunnell. “Many are professors, carrying on the legacy of getting out in the field with hands-on study, research and teaching.”

After Hildebrand died, Tunnell inherited his home library, which filled four bedrooms and five closets. The books were brought to the university, where it took several years to fully review the collection. Included was an unfinished manuscript called *Fishes of the Texas Coast*. Tunnell shared it with his colleague, Dr. David McKee, professor of biology and coordinator of the mariculture degree program at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. McKee expanded on Hildebrand’s work, while also narrowing its focus, to write *Fishes of the Texas Laguna Madre*, published in 2008. While Hildebrand’s approach was scientific, McKee’s intent was to reach a broader range of readers, including fishermen. In his book, McKee included the rich illustrations by Hildebrand’s friend, the late Henry Compton, from the original manuscript.

“[Hildebrand] was a real hero of mine, and I just loved the old guy,” says McKee, who took a fisheries biology class with him in the 1970s. “He was a remarkable, brilliant scientist. But he wasn’t Mr. Personality. If you wanted to talk to him and it didn’t pertain to science, he’d just turn around and

walk off. He wasn’t necessarily being rude, but if he wasn’t interested in something he’d just walk away. But he was a real sweetheart of a guy.”

Some students called Hildebrand the “old walrus” because in his later years his teeth had worn down to the gum line. He spoke in short, choppy sentences that forced people to listen closely — and everyone did, from scientists to shrimpers. As with his students, Hildebrand had become a hero to commercial fisherman, a frequent presence on the docks who championed the fishermen’s way of life against restrictive regulations he believed were not based in science.

Even after he retired, Hildebrand always had a cause. He would visit the university and go from office to office — “Running his traps, as we called it,” McKee says — to discuss the scientific topic at hand. Often he would walk in on a professor’s closed-door meeting without knocking, sit down and wait until it was over to talk about what was bothering him that day.

McKee says Hildebrand was so influential on his life that, without him, he would not be doing what he is today. But he never told Hildebrand that. “He would have turned away, pretended not to hear it or say it was nonsense,” McKee says.

On the water or in the classroom, McKee often thinks of Hildebrand, whether reminiscing about studying freeze kills, counting fish on Baffin Bay or lecturing.

“In terms of how I do things and the way I think, I’m a whole lot like that old guy,” McKee says. “A lot of us tried to model ourselves after him, changing some traits but holding on to the best stuff. I’ll say this is the way the book says it is, but I’ve had personal experience and this is my side of the story. Then I realize, golly, this is probably the way Dr. Hildebrand would have addressed the topic. A lot of his philosophy was to work hard and have fun at what you really want to do.

“But I do try to zip my pants up and keep my hair combed,” McKee laughs.

TOWA MEMBER NEWS

Outdoor Instructors Sought by Kids Outdoor Zone Youth Outdoor Adventure

By TJ Greaney, TOWA Board Member

We are in full swing with the “Man vs. Wild” outdoor program in Austin Independent School Districts Parades Middle School in South Austin. Every Wednesday from 3:30 to 5 p.m. we teach hunting, fishing and outdoor adventure skills to the kids at the school.

We would like to have you or your organization come and introduce your specialty to the kids. Email me here to pick a date and we will set it up.

This is a great group of kids who absolutely love being introduced to so many new things. If you came and taught last year you know how much they appreciated you and I can tell you that this program changes lives, amazing!

We all know it is imperative to train the kids in outdoor skills – so here is your chance!

For further information, visit kidsoutdoorzone.com or contact TJ Greaney at tj@kidsoutdoorzone.com.



CCA Texas to Drop 4,000 Concrete Culverts at Port Mansfield Reef

THE CCA TEXAS HABITAT TODAY FOR FISH TOMORROW PROGRAM continues to pursue its aggressive goal to develop reefing projects in state waters all along the coast and has announced plans to drop 4,000 concrete culverts in a designated 160-acre reefing site off Port Mansfield this summer.

This latest habitat project, set to begin in June 2011, has been funded with \$50,000 from the CCA Texas HTFT program and is being done in partnership with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Artificial Reef Program and Alamo Concrete.

"Port Mansfield is an attractive place to fish for Texas anglers as well as the thousands of tourists who travel from other states to spend a few days fishing and taking advantage of our tropical winter weather," said Robby Byers, executive director of CCA Texas. "This new reef will give anglers another place to fish and help make the Port Mansfield area an even more attractive destination for anglers."

CCA Texas's announcement of a new reef along the lower Texas coast is the latest project for the chapter's habitat program and follows the completion of the Vancouver Reef expansion on the upper coast in the summer of 2010 and the announcement of a \$100,000 mid-coast reefing project off Matagorda scheduled for completion in the spring of 2012.

"These kinds of close-to-shore reefs are very popular with many anglers who can now find good fishing opportunities without having to travel far offshore," said John Blaha, director of CCA Texas's HTFT program. "It's a win-win for marine resources and for Texas anglers. With the great partnerships we are developing with TPWD and with good corporate citizens like Alamo Concrete, the CCA habitat program is in great shape to keep the underwater building boom going strong."

The CCA Texas habitat initiative was launched in 2008 and has already set in motion a number of habitat projects important to Texas recreational anglers. In addition to the nearshore reefs, CCA Texas has also been a part of several marsh restoration projects, including those at Goose Island, Nueces Bay and Snake Island. In its commitment to restore and enhance marine and coastal habitats, CCA Texas has funded more than \$350,000 for these and other projects.

CCA is the largest marine resource conservation group of its kind in the nation. With about 100,000 members in 17 state chapters, CCA has been active in state, national and international fisheries management issues since 1977.

To find out more about the program, visit the CCA Newsroom at www.JoinCCA.org.

Texas Trophy Hunters to Conduct Bucks & BBQ Cook-off/Food Drive on June 3-4

The Texas Trophy Hunters Association will be conducting its first annual "TTHA's Bucks and BBQ State Championship BBQ Cook-off and food drive to be held June 3-4 at the Shrine Auditorium in San Antonio. The title sponsor will be presented by Western Premium BBQ Products.

As part of the event, TTHA has teamed up with the San Antonio Food Bank to raise awareness and to help boost the community pantry. The mission of the San Antonio Food Bank is to fight hunger in Southwest Texas through food distribution, programs, education and advocacy. All teams and attendees are being asked to bring canned goods, other non-perishable food items or monetary donations to the BBQ cook-off event. Collection bins will be on site for donations. Barbecue teams from across Texas and other states will compete for cash and prizes at the event sanctioned by the International Barbeque Cookers Association.

In addition to the cook-off, there will also be a gun show taking place on the grounds of the Shrine Auditorium. While the gun show is not a TTHA event, Texas Gun Shows will be sharing the grounds with the barbeque teams. The Shrine Auditorium is located at 901 North Loop 1604 West on the north access road of Loop 1604 between Stone Oak Parkway and Blanco Road on the north side of San Antonio.

The Grand Champion will qualify for the American Royal in Kansas City and Lottery for Jack Daniels and will also pick up a one-year team sponsorship from Western Premium BBQ Products.

In addition, each member of every team (up to five people per team) signed up in the cook-off will receive a one-year membership to TTHA (a \$174.75 value.) Categories for competition include brisket, pork spare ribs, chicken, beans and wild game. In addition to the food categories, there will also be a showmanship award given to the team with the "best set up" in their team space. More than \$4,000 in cash and other prizes will be given away during the event with payouts for first through sixth places in brisket, pork spare ribs and chicken. The deadline for team entries is May 31.

For additional information or to see the complete rules and regulations, the cook-off entry form go online to TTHA.com; call (800) 800-3207 or email TTHAnews@ttha.com.



TOWA members will have the chance to get out on the water for a story or photos of the outdoor world available to kayakers with a special spring and summer offer by Hobie Cat. Photo courtesy of Hobie Cat.

Hobie Cat Offers TOWA Members Some Spring/Summer Water Time

Hobie Cat is offering TOWA members an opportunity to get on the water for a test drive with their MirageDrive kayaks this spring or summer courtesy of their Texas retailers with demonstration centers.

The offer is in conjunction with the release of their collection of patented MirageDrive pedal kayaks including the new Hobie Mirage Oasis tandem model. MirageDrive technology eliminates the stroke and introduces the step – no gas is necessary.

Kayakers can pedal, leaving hands virtually free to do other activities like fishing, bird watching, taking photos, kayak sailing or just plain having fun. Each model can also be sailed, pedaled and/or paddled. All these Hobie kayaks are made in the U.S.A.

The defining feature is Hobie's patented MirageDrive. Two self-centering padded pedals are connected to underwater flippers, much like penguin wings; and are locked and unlocked from the kayak with the Click and Go system.

Kayakers can propel themselves faster using the pedals rather than a traditional paddle. Steering is controlled via new oversized fingertip steering handles on the left side. (The Mirage Oasis and Outfitter's come with dual control MirageDrive steering systems from both seat positions for increased speed and fun.)

The rudder can be rotated out of the way in very shallow water and for transport or storage.

The combination of the MirageDrive rudder system and the hull design ensures a stable ride and enables pedalers to cover long distances with little or no fatigue, even against the current or in windy conditions.

The contact for further information is Ingrid Niehaus at ingridn2@mindspring.com or by calling (949) 499-2225.

Wortham to Release Red River Series Novel "The Rock Hole" in June

Veteran TOWA member and past President Reavis Z. Wortham is preparing to release the first novel in his Red River mystery series, "The Rock Hole," that will be available on June 7.

The novel is based in rural northeast Texas in 1964 and outdoors, hunting, humor, mystery and murder are all part of the prose.

According to his website at www.reaviszwortham.com:

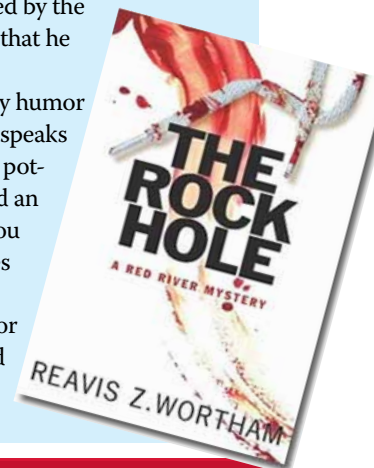
"In 1964, farmer and part-time Constable Ned Parker combines forces with John Washington, the almost mythical black deputy sheriff from nearby Paris, to track down a disturbed individual who is rapidly becoming a threat to the entire small Texas community of Center Springs.

"When Ned is summoned to a hot cornfield one morning to examine the remains of a tortured bird dog, he finds a dark presence in their quiet community. A farmer by trade, Ned is usually confident when it comes to handling moonshiners, drunks and domestic disputes. But the animal atrocities turn to murder, and the investigation spins beyond his abilities.

"After a dizzying series of twists, eccentric characters and dead-ends, the body count rises as Ned's friend, cranky Judge O.C. Rains, is forced to contact the FBI. Worse, sinister warnings that his family has been targeted by the killer lead Ned to the startling discovery that he knows the murderer very well.

"With a heart-pounding pace, country humor and a stunning climax, "The Rock Hole" speaks to the darkness in us all. In bald-headed pot-bellied Ned Parker, Wortham has created an authentic American hero who will put you in mind of the best heroes and antiheroes you've ever experienced."

For further information on the book or to contact Wortham about his scheduled retirement in May, email him at reavis.wortham@gmail.com.



CALENDAR

May 6 – Operation Game Thief benefit sporting clays competition at the Texas Disposal System Ranch near Buda with a TOWA group of John Goodspeed, Kendal Hemphill, James Stewart, Sam Caldwell and Ralph Winingham to represent the organization as a media team. Further information on the event is available from Gina Nesloney at gnevents@austin.rr.com.

June 3-4 – Texas Trophy Hunters Bucks and BBQ State Championship BBQ Cook-off and food drive to be held at the Shrine Auditorium in San Antonio. Details available at TTHAnews@ttha.com.

July 9-11 – The 84th annual Outdoor Writers Association of America will be held at the Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort, Salt Lake City, UT. Details available at www.owaa.org.

Aug. 10-13 – The Professional Outdoor Media Association business conference will be held at Ogden, UT. Details available at www.professionalooutdoormedia.org.