

TOWA

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

TOWA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Hot Summer Temperatures Fire up TOWA Business Activity

By *Larry J. LeBlanc*

Here it is July and I do not know of anyone in the state that is not crying for rain, but that's Texas. The 100 degree plus temperatures have done a great deal in motivating me to stay inside and work on TOWA business.

The board of directors decided at the last meeting that they would assist me in getting our member information more up to date, and they have done great job. Our on line directory is soon to be up to date and accurate as well as the information I keep on the members paid up to date. Noncurrent members will be dropped from the roster.

Chad Gay, supporting member liaison, and I have been working with the supporting members to get them all current and Chad is doing a great job.

In case anyone has forgotten, if member dues were not paid by March 1, 2011, a member cannot enter the EIC competition for 2012. I will soon send that list off to Kendal Hemphill so he will know who is eligible to enter.

I would also like to remind members that we are taking MasterCard, Visa, and Discover cards for you to pay your dues, conference registration and EIC entries.

I would also like to take this time to remind all members that our supporting members are a wealth of information for stories and they are more than happy to share that information with us. Remember also to send them a tear sheet

when you write about them; that justifies them being supporting members in this time of tight money.

I personally am looking forward to our upcoming conference in New Braunfels this year. We will be right on the Guadalupe River and only about 15 minutes from the shooting range. New Braunfels is about as central in the state as we can get for all members, so let me encourage everyone to plan to attend this year.

The programs that have been put

together by David Sikes and T. J. Greaney for the past couple years have just been getting better each year, so this year the conference should be great. From the response I have received from the supporting members I have spoken with, I believe we will also have a good turnout of supporting members this year.

So, friends and fellow communicators, I would like to thank you for all of your help in getting our records up-to-date and look forward to seeing you at the 2012 conference.



Enjoying a cold drink to tone down the warm temperatures while discussing the business of TOWA, Executive Director Larry LeBlanc, right, listens to some ideas about the TOWA website from Board Member Cody Greaney who is handling some of the more technical aspects of upgrading the site. Photo by Ralph Wingham

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 cell (936) 524-0761
Willis, TX 77378 fax (936) 856-6788
towa@suddenlink.net

BOARD MEMBERS

BOARD CHAIRMAN

John Goodspeed (210) 573-7460
john@johngoodspeed.com

Susan Ebert (2013) (512) 431-2013
susanebertink@gmail.com

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

Cody Greaney (2014) (512) 576-2200
cody@texasoutdoorzone.com

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

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

Ralph Winingham (2014) (210) 240-6149
rwiningham@att.net

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, Marriane 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, SusanEbertink@gmail.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.



NATIONAL OUTDOOR NEWS

Smith & Wesson Joins Sponsors of National Hunting & Fishing Day

SPRINGFIELD, MO – Legendary firearms maker Smith & Wesson has renewed its major sponsorship of National Hunting and Fishing Day. With the renewed sponsorship NHF Day continues to grow and promote conservation throughout the nation.

The event promotes conservation efforts by outdoorsman, and each year takes place on the fourth Saturday in September. This year's event will be on Sept. 24.

Smith & Wesson's sponsorship supports Wonders of Wildlife museum-the official home of National Hunting and Fishing Day. The Springfield facility oversees educational initiatives to help the American public understand the indelible relationship between hunting, angling, healthy habitat, and wildlife and fisheries conservation.

This year noted businessman, outdoorsman and philanthropist T. Boone Pickens serves as the honorary chairman for NHF Day. Widely known as one of America's most prominent and influential businessmen in history, Pickens remains a strong advocate for conserving a heritage that was instilled in him at a very young age.

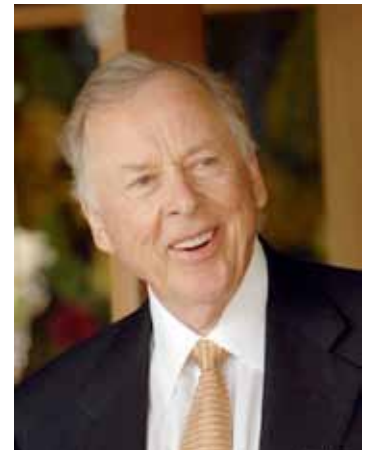
His renowned "Pickens Plan" is designed to decrease dependency on foreign oil while harnessing domestic energy alternatives such as wind power. Pickens also is a prominent philanthropist with contributions to charitable causes exceeding \$700 million.

"National Hunting and Fishing Day brings focus to the beauty, joy and resources that the great outdoors can provide to those that are passionate about it and to the many that have not yet experienced it," said Paul Pluff, director of marketing for Smith & Wesson. "This is a huge opportunity for outdoorsman to promote conservation efforts others may not recognize."

"National Hunting and Fishing Day represents more than conserving our natural resources," said Misty Mitchell, director of Conservation Programs, Wonders of Wildlife. "It is an opportunity to educate others about the many valuable contributions that hunters and fisherman make to preserve the dwindling resources that we as outdoorsman face. With the continued sponsorship of Smith & Wesson, NHF Day continues to grow the strong legacy that began in 1972."

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, Academy Sports & Outdoors and the Pope and Young Club.

For more information about the event, visit www.nhfd.org.



T. Boone Pickens is this year's honorary chair for National Hunting and Fishing Day 2011. Photo Courtesy of NHFD.

Dallas Safari Club Expands 2012 Expo with Quail Coalition Partnership

DALLAS – Kudus, cougars and, now, quail.

Long known as a premier annual event for big-game hunters at home and abroad, the Dallas Safari Club convention and expo will expand in 2012 to include attractions focused on quail and other upland birds.

The expansion is part of a new partnership between DSC and Quail Coalition, a Texas-based organization focused on upland bird conservation.

Continued on Page 2

Continued from Page 3

Slated for Jan. 5-8 at the Dallas Convention Center, the 2012 DSC convention and expo will feature a section called "Upland Country" sponsored by Quail Coalition. Planned highlights include exhibits, dog-training demonstrations, conservation seminars by Dr. Dale Rollins, and even special appearances by noted quail enthusiast and National Hunting and Fishing Day honorary chairman T. Boone Pickens.

"Over time, we hope this show will become the premier annual gathering place for the upland-bird hunting nation," said Jay Stine of Quail Coalition.

Quail Coalition is a volunteer organization with no paid staff. All dollars raised are devoted to upland bird research, habitat improvement and public education. Local chapters control funds, projects and activities. More information is available at www.quailcoalition.org.

The DSC's new venture with Quail Coalition is the second major announcement this year affecting growth for future DSC conventions and expos. In May, the American Custom Gunmakers Guild announced it is relocating its annual exhibition to be held in conjunction with the DSC event beginning in 2013. The move will bring to Dallas the nation's largest annual assembly of fine custom gun makers and engravers.

"We're dedicated to making our show the very best," said Ben Carter, DSC executive director.

In 2011, the DSC convention and expo broke records with 338,000 square feet of exhibit space and more than 32,000 attendees. Proceeds generated record funding for the DSC mission. Over the past five years, the organization has awarded more than \$2 million for conservation, education and hunter advocacy programs worldwide.

An independent 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.

Further information is available at www.biggame.org.



POMA Offers to Pay Fees for 15 College Students Attending Conference

The Professional Outdoor Media Association is offering 15 college students the opportunity to explore outdoor industry communications careers and rub elbows with top industry communicators and business professionals during POMA's four-day annual business conference Aug. 10-13 at Ogden, UT.

The students will be given the opportunity to spend time with and learn from the editor of *Field & Stream*; the host of the Sportsman Channel's most popular television show; the most successful freelance outdoor content providers in the nation; veteran columnists/bloggers; and award-winning photographers/videographers.

"I attended the POMA conference last year and it changed my life," said DePauw University student Mitch Strobl. "I made incredible contacts, have been offered internships and jobs, have been invited on trips as a videographer and so much more. The POMA conference is an amazing opportunity and investment in the future. I'm attending again this year."

Registered college students attend the POMA<35 program, developed specifically for them, enjoy dozens of educational sessions, interact with industry professionals, test outdoor equipment from the industry's leading manufacturers during a day-long interactive event and much more.

POMA pays the \$230 guest registration fee for the first 15 students who register. Registration entitles students to attend all conference functions including meals. Students also are welcome to book rooms at the Marriott Ogden at the POMA discount rate (at their own expense) or may make other arrangements.

To register, simply fill out the online registration form and pay a \$50 refundable deposit to hold a spot. Deposits are refunded at the conference.

Visit the POMA website for complete details on the conference at <http://tinyurl.com/3v6c3pa>, or contact POMA Executive Director Laurie Lee Dovey at lldovey@professionaloutdoormedia.org or by calling (814) 525-6989.

OJEFA To Sponsor Young Writer/ Photographer at SEOPA Conference



In honor of the late Lindsay Sale-Tinney, the Outdoor Journalist Education Foundation of America will sponsor one aspiring young writer or photographer to attend the 2011 Southeastern Outdoor Press Association conference to be held Oct. 5-8 at Branson, MO. The scholarship includes one free conference registration, four free nights lodging at the beautiful Chateau on the Lake Resort, and up to \$500 toward travel expenses.

Entries must be received by Aug. 1 and the winner will be selected by Aug. 12. The official scholarship application and checklist is available at www.seopa.org and by clicking on "OJEFA." Further information is available by contacting Lisa Snuggs at the SEOPA-OJEFA at lisa@seopa.org or by calling (704) 984-4700.

"The monetary value of this scholarship totals more than \$1,000," said Jill Easton, 2011 conference chair and SEOPA first vice president, "but the value

Continued on Page 4

NATIONAL OUTDOOR NEWS

Continued from Page 3

of meeting and learning from some of the most talented and prolific outdoor communicators in the country is priceless.”

SEOPA President Glenn Wheeler led an ad hoc committee to determine criteria for the contest. He and his team set the age of applicants at 12-25.

Stu Tinney asked SEOPA to honor his late wife Lindsay Sale-Tinney by helping a young person further explore outdoor writing and photography. He has pledged \$500 per year perpetually for this purpose,

“Lindsay loved helping young people and so do SEOPA members,” said Tinney. “Their conference provides a super venue for networking, learning and enjoying fellowship with like-minded individuals. I can’t imagine a more fitting tribute to Lindsay than to send young outdoor communicators to a SEOPA conference.”

Additional fees and expenses for scholarship awardees will be considered on a year-to-year basis and absorbed by SEOPA or OJEFA when possible. OJEFA, the educational arm of SEOPA, is a non-profit organization established in 2004 and dedicated to the education and support of outdoor journalists and their efforts to promote the wise and ethical use of our wildlife and natural resources.

TOWA Supporting Member Howard Communications Updates Free Photo Library

HOWARD COMMUNICATIONS, INC. has recently added more than 195 new images to the company’s Photo Library as a free service for the media to use as support for their articles.

Images include deer, elk, turkey, waterfowl, upland game and predator hunting, as well as optics, working dogs, shooting sports and scent elimination. Hunting tips on the subjects of deer, elk, predator, turkey and waterfowl are in the story ideas section to provide story material for the media.

The tips are written by the Mossy Oak Pro Staff; recognized experts in their fields. In addition, interviews with the pro staff can be arranged by contacting Kevin Howard at Howard Communications.

For more information visit the online pressroom at www.howardcommunications.com. New images and story ideas are being added throughout the year.

Howard Communications’ clients include Birchwood Casey, Browning, Winchester Firearms, D.T. Systems, Hunter’s Specialties, Mossy Oak and Mossy Oak Licensees, Nestlé Purina PetCare, Pursuit Channel, and Bushnell Outdoor Products who sells its products worldwide under the Bushnell, Tasco, Uncle Mike’s Law Enforcement, Stoney Point, Hoppe’s, Butler Creek, Uncle Mike’s, Final Approach, Simmons, Bollé, Cébé and Millett brand names.

TEXAS OUTDOOR NEWS

TTHA License Plates To Help Fund Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation

The Texas Trophy Hunters Association, a TOWA supporting member, will be donating half of all proceeds from the sale of official State of Texas TTHA license plates to support the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and public hunting opportunities in Texas.

“Our association is proud to offer TTHA specialty plates to our members and hunters across Texas,” said TTHA President Joe Betar.

“TTHA will be donating 100 percent of license plate sales to worthy causes, with half of these funds going to assist with public hunting opportunities supported by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation. The remaining 50 percent of the revenue will be used to support youth and outdoor education, including youth hunts, military hunts and other worthy causes. The more of these TTHA plates people buy, the more we can fulfill our mission to support and protect our hunting heritage.”

The new TTHA plates, created by Texas-based MyPlates, are official Texas specialty license plates approved by the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles. Plate prices range from \$55 to \$195 a year, but the per-year price goes down if you purchase a five-year or 10-year plate.

“We are delighted at this news,” said Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Executive Director Carter Smith. “In this time of budgetary constraints, TTHA’s generous contribution to the TPW Foundation will be particularly helpful. We appreciate this, and I know that the people of Texas will be appreciative as well, since they ultimately benefit from many of the efforts of the foundation.”



Since 1991, the foundation has served as the official non-profit funding partner for TP&W. Its mission is to provide private support for TP&W in carrying out its mission of managing and conserving the natural and cultural resources of Texas while providing hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

By bringing together companies, corporations, communities and individuals, the foundation has successfully raised more than \$70 million for a wide variety of projects.

The foundation plays an essential role in conservation education, with scholarship opportunities, internships, and outdoor activities for children. Some of the foundation’s projects include enhancing public hunting programs through leases and activities that promote youth hunting, mentored hunting, the Big Time Texas Hunt Program, and other public hunting programs. The foundation also helps preserve Texas treasures like the Chinati Mountains and the Panhandle’s playa lakes. Facilities such as the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens and the Texas Game Warden Training Academy in Hamilton County also have benefited greatly from foundation support.

“A TTHA license plate looks great on any vehicle and makes the perfect gift for any hunter,” Betar said. “On top of that, TTHA license plates support hunting in Texas.”

To order a TTHA license plate or for additional information about MyPlates, go online to www.MyPlates.com or call (888) 7MY-PLATES.

Battered Champ Needs Helping Hand

By Ted Venker

At the time, it didn't seem that anything worse than the summer of 2005 could come along for the State of Louisiana. That year saw Hurricane Katrina maul the eastern half of the state as one of the strongest, deadliest and costliest storms in U.S. history. Barely a month later, Hurricane Rita rolled ashore in the western half of the state as a category three storm after entering the record books earlier that summer as the most intense hurricane ever recorded in the Gulf of Mexico.

The one-two punch to the jaw of the Louisiana was devastating, leaving large sections of coastline flattened, cities staggered and tens of thousands of acres of precious marine habitat knocked out. Survivors returned to the blasted coast feeling overwhelmed, defeated, and unsure how to even begin putting their lives back together.

From a roadside seat over in Houston, it seemed that the state would need a miracle to get back on its feet. I remember the drive to visit Jeff and Mary Poe on Lake Calcasieu months after the storms was like driving through a war zone. But sitting on a quiet boat in that trophy trout Mecca, you could sense that a miracle was indeed going to happen.

From every direction through the fog was the sound of constant hammering

and sawing as the people of Louisiana got themselves off the ropes, brushed off the dust and blood, and climbed back into the ring.

"This area won't be the same for a long time," Mary said at the time. "But the fish are still here and that will be enough." She was right.

Flash forward five years to the cusp of another hurricane season, and you find that it's a different kind of disaster that is weighing heavily on the minds of Gulf Coast residents. The tragic explosion and sinking of the Deepwater Horizon rig has shaken our rock-solid belief that as long as the fish are here, everything will be OK.

As a result of the worst oil spill in U.S. history, the fear is that many of the fish may not be here anymore, and things are definitely not OK.

On a tour of the areas in and around Venice, Louisiana, in late May, Jeff Angers, president of the Center for Coastal Conservation, and David Cresson, executive director of CCA Louisiana showed officials from the Obama Administration the unique ecosystem that is at stake. As they stopped along the way to talk to locals, Angers reports that even the toughest men in the back country of Louisiana were reduced to tears at the sight of oil in the marsh.

"Heartbreaking' was the word we

heard people use, over and over and over to describe the situation," said Angers. "That's not the word you expect to hear from these guys, but they are crushed by what is happening. The marsh is the heart and soul of Louisiana, and it is the one thing we could always count on. People here are scared in a way they have never been scared before."

The fear, anger and apprehension is different than in 2005, when there was a certain degree of resignation and understanding that hurricanes, however terrible, are part of living on the coast. Natural disasters are, after all, natural. An unstoppable oil spill is something else entirely.

As this issue of TIDE goes to press, the number of failed schemes to stop the leak and the number of gallons spewing into the Gulf are growing at nauseating rates. A flood of legislation is emerging, some of it to set things right in the Gulf, some of it to punish BP, some of it to reform the agencies with oversight of offshore drilling, some of it to compensate businesses associated with commercial and recreational fishing. The leading edge of 40-plus days of gushing oil has slid into the marshes of Louisiana and onto the beaches of Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, offering a terrible glimpse of what may lie ahead.

Continued on Page 6

Highlighting Louisiana's Resilience Earns EIC Opinion First Place Award

A call for the people of Louisiana to demonstrate their ability to rebound from natural and man-made disasters earned TOWA Member Ted Venker an Excellence in Craft first place award and a \$200 prize for his "Battered champ needs a helping hand" opinion piece in TIDE Magazine.

The column, reprinted as a service to TOWA members interested in entering their works in the EIC contest, was published in the July/August 2010 edition of the magazine and won top honors in Category 10: Outdoor Column/Opinion Writing. Congratulations to Venker for his award-winning effort and we encourage all our members to start gathering their entries for the 2012 EIC competition.

Continued from Page 5

However, as Dr. Larry McKinney reports in his article on page 8, the Gulf is a resilient piece of water, unlike the relatively enclosed and placid waters of Prince William Sound, the previous poster child for a disastrous oil spill. That is one of two reasons he believes the Gulf is not doomed, as countless talking heads from other parts of the country and around the world have clucked on evening newscasts. The other reason he is betting on a future for the Gulf is the millions and millions of people living around it who care about it and will move heaven and earth to put it right.

Just as Mary Poe put her faith in the fish five years ago, the Gulf of Mexico needs to put its faith in the people who live around her now.

There is mounting frustration at the lack of opportunity for regular citizens to participate somehow in the clean-up. Federal and state agencies have an unlimited supply of volunteers ready to do anything they can to help, but the problem is finding some way they can do it safely. This is, after all, a toxic substance, although that doesn't seem to be much of a deterrent to many people. Judging from the outpouring of emotion to CCA offices, I suspect we have enough people willing to build Bobby Jindal's sand berm by hand if called upon.

We are going to have to stand ready, not just to scrape oil off a beach today, but to replant marsh, put in new reefs and rebuild fish stocks tomorrow. In the dark days ahead, ordinary people are going to have to do extraordinary things, big and small, to set things right. The first hammers and saws after the 2005 hurricane season in Louisiana sounded like sad, solitary notes in the wilderness until they grew into a deafening chorus. It will have to be the same here. It will be up to the people who remember how it was to put it back together. As Dr. McKinney says, it is up to us to make sure a healthy Gulf of Mexico is a priority for our country long after the well is plugged and the last camera is turned off.

We are still here, and that will be enough.

TOWA 2011 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS CATCHING 'GATORS AND TEACHING KIDS

**By Marianne Odom & Judy Mills
Scholarship Committee Co-Chairwomen**

Matthew Abernathy and Joe Lewis, the 2011 TOWA Dan Klepper Memorial Scholarship winners, have big plans for this summer. They will be catching alligators and teaching kids about the outdoors in a Summer Nature Camp.

Matthew will continue working full-time at the Jesse H. Jones Park and Nature Center in Humble, Texas. The 300-acre park on the banks of Spring Creek features a variety of microhabitats. The lifestyles of Native Americans and pioneers in the late 1700's are preserved and on display. Summer Nature Camp is an eight-week, nature-oriented day camp for children ages 5-12. He is an instructor and guide for the campers.

"I'm living the dream," says Joe, "outside everyday and catching alligators." Joe works at his study site during the summer conducting field research on the alligator population in Dallas-Fort Worth area. "I have been talking with a reporter from Channel 8 News here in the DFW about the possibility of another story on my research this summer," he said. "I'll forward some pictures later." Joe presented his research to the Texas Wildlife Society state convention last year. In May 2011, he again presented his report at the International Urban Wildlife Conference in Austin.

Matthew added curriculum writing to his already busy summer schedule. He is working with a professor from Texas A&M – Galveston to develop a distance education course on Wildlife Law & Ethics. The class will be offered this fall to students at the Galveston university. For his work, he will receive three elective credit hours.

During the spring semester, Matthew took classes in Environmental Management Strategies and Natural Resource Economics. Despite working full time and commuting from Kingwood to Galveston, he earned A's in both courses.

"I never imagined I would become interested in environmental law, but Environmental Management Strategies was my third law and policy course and I am really enjoying them," he said.

This fall he will take Wildlife Law and Ethics, serve as a teaching assistant for the course, and develop a research presentation on a topic pertaining to wildlife law.

"I will also be taking Integrative Analysis in Marine Resources as my capstone course," he added. "I will choose a research topic and write a research paper and develop a presentation based on my research. I am hoping to focus on conservation land management for a proposed site in Galveston."

Matthew reports that he had an editorial published in the Galveston Daily News and was quoted in another editorial for the same paper. "I am hoping to get another piece or two published later this year," he added.

Joe filled his spring semester with classes both as a student and an instructor. "All of my classes went really well," he said. In the fall semester, he will enroll in Bio Statistics and Evolutionary Biology. In the spring, he will research and write his thesis. "I plan to write for a few publications using the research I have done," he added. Joe plans to graduate in the spring of 2012.

Both of TOWA scholarship winners have expressed their appreciation of being selected as scholarship recipients and of the support given to them by the members of TOWA. Depending on work and school commitments, both Joe and Matthew said they would like to attend the 2012 TOWA Conference in New Braunfels.

Taking a Trip Back to Quality Writing of a Long Past Era

About once a year I like to spend a little quiet time re-reading "The 13th Month: An Outdoorsman's Notebook" by the late Dan Klepper.

The long-time *San Antonio Express-News* outdoor writer and one of the founders of the TOWA not only knew his way around the outdoors, he could tell a tale in a manner that was a pleasure to read. Klepper was a true wordsmith and until his death in 1993 was one of the best writers to earn his pay at the newspaper.

I have found that going over his prose in the book released in 1973 is a good way to refresh my writing batteries, plus I always finish my reading session with a lighter heart and better attitude.

To offer our members a little slice of Klepper's insightful outdoor observations, the following is a reprint of one of his offerings that was included in the July section of "The 13th Month." Enjoy.

— Ralph Winingham, TOWA Newsletter Editor



A Scientific Study of Seasickness

By Dan Klepper

Some folks will tell you that seasickness is all in your head, but the seasick person will disagree, for he knows the seasickness is in his stomach.

Some folks also will argue that the subject of seasickness has no place in a nice book. For that reason I intend to treat the subject in depth (that ought to gag you) one time and one time only. Therefore, if you get through this chapter, you've got it made.

Actually, the subject really does belong in a book on the outdoors, because a lot of people who get seasick do so as they go in search of a fish.

I find it difficult to sympathize with a seasick person, because I have never been seasick. I've been close, but I've never quite gotten there, and most of my close calls have been the result of a tough night before, more commonly called a hangover.

Fishing boats do not return to port because passengers get seasick. It's an iron-clad rule of the sea . . . if I've got anything to say about it anyway. Just to prove to you that I am not heartless only toward seasick friends and casual acquaintances, I wish you could have seen the look on my wife's green face as she lay flat on her back on the rolling deck the time I told her we wouldn't return to port for at least three hours.

Fortunately, the person afflicted with seasickness recuperates rapidly as soon as his or her feet are planted firmly on steady ground. Otherwise, the wife might have done me in when we hit the beach. She was too sick to do it at sea.

Weak stomachs can be a boon to those fortunate individuals with cast-iron guts. I remember a trip a group of outdoor writers made into the Gulf of Mexico one stormy summer out of Freeport aboard a converted World War II subchaser. It was a fine boat, but dining facilities were on the skimpy side. There was room for only eight to be seated at a time. I was as hungry as a peach orchard borer, and the cook had done right by some thick sirloins.

I was standing on deck watching the bow crash into 12-foot swells and grumbling about no place to sit when the mate offered to help. He took a large, raw squid out of the bait box, slapped it between two slices of bread, wandered into the small mess area and, while chewing vigorously on a portion of the squid that dangled out of his "sandwich," said "I wish some of you guys would hurry up, I'm hungry!" Four of the eight got up in a hurry and left.

There is such a thing as chronic seasickness. I served aboard an auxiliary minesweeper, a 180-foot wooden bucket that bobbed like a cork on a light swell, part of the time I was in the Navy. One of the crewmen aboard had chronic seasickness. As long as the ship was at the pier, he felt fine, but as soon as the first mooring line was taken aboard, he became ill. He was no slacker; he really became ill.

His shipmates were careful to watch where he went to get seasick, because he invariably stood facing the wind. It was dangerous to be behind or below him. The Navy finally transferred the poor fellow to a shore-based assignment.

It is interesting to watch a group of fishermen on a boat in rough water, because there are many types of seasickness, including chronic, and a student of the illness can make first-hand observations of several different kinds when a couple of dozen anglers, many of them making their first trip out of sight of land, go to sea.

A snapper trip into the Gulf aboard the *Janice* out of Port Aransas afforded me such an opportunity one time. I didn't really want to study seasickness, but the seasick passengers wouldn't let me sleep, and I figured I might as well do something constructive.

The *Janice*, a 65-foot craft with bunks below decks, left port around midnight. We would arrive on the fishing grounds about daylight. I hit the sack as soon as we got underway. I had just dropped off to sleep when I was awakened by the raucous sound of gagging. A woman in a nearby bunk was seasick. She grabbed a bucket by her bunk and threw up.

"Oh God! Somebody help me!" she moaned.

What can you do for a seasick person? She had a bucket. What more did she need besides sympathy and dry land? The woman grabbed her bucket and had another go at it. Again she moaned, this time a little louder. Her husband finally crawled out of his bunk, stumbled to her side, took the bucket away from her and used it himself.

I diagnosed the woman's illness as the noisy type of seasickness, slipped on my shoes and went topside. The *Janice* was bucking some tall swells. The seas were running heavier than the wind velocity warranted, and I staggered into the wheelhouse where the late Johnny Moore was busy keeping the *Janice* clear of a fleet of

Continued on Page 8

Continued from Page 7

shrimp boats.

"Is the barometer falling?" I asked, letting Johnny know I was an old hand at sea.

"It better not," he answered, "I've got it nailed to the wall pretty good."

Back on the fantail, which is the back part of the deck, a boy in his teens lay wrapped in a blanket. He had the quiet type of seasickness. This type immobilizes the victim for as long as the boat is at sea. Since the rail around the deck of the Janice was substantial and there was no danger of the lad rolling over the side, I turned to enter the air-conditioned lounge but was distracted by a fellow in overalls bending over the rail.

He was in his late 60s or early 70s, and he was being violently sick, time after time. Suddenly, after a particularly intense seizure, he straightened up and exclaimed, "Hot damn it! I juf frew up my falf teef!"

I call that careless seasickness.

I don't think I had been asleep on a padded bench in the lounge for more than an hour when the rattling of the anchor chain awoke me. We were over a reef called Baker, 50 miles from port. It was daylight, and we could watch the tall swells rolling across the Gulf.

Rain squalls darkened the horizon on all points of the compass, and we learned via the radio there were two disturbances in the Gulf, one to the east, the other to the west. But they were a long way off. We had plenty of time to catch fish.

I catalogued still another type of seasickness during the morning. A cute young thing in tight slacks worked furiously to land a good snapper, then, as soon as her fish was boated, she leaned over the rail and became sick. Without batting an eye, she resumed fishing.

The fisherman standing next to the young lady suddenly came down with the plague and heaved ho over the rail. Then the fellow next to him gave it the All-American try. The disease continued around the rail until nearly everybody got into the act. Unlike the chronic, noisy, quiet or careless type of seasickness, this kind, the contagious, permits the fisherman to keep on fishing.

And if you insist on getting it, that's the best kind of seasickness to have.

TOWA Member Suffers Unpleasant & Unexpected Slip in Alaska

By Bill Crumrine

WELL YOU CAN NOW HAVE THE LAST LAUGH as I write, "Eat your hearts out Texans," when you are suffering from the Texas drought and heat-ridden summer days, while I am enjoying the cool, sometimes cold days here in Alaska.

My son, Tim, and I, along with one of Tim's co-workers, Robert Cook, went to the Kenai River on Sunday (June 27). Shortly after arriving, Tim discovered he had forgotten to bring the drift boat's two drain plugs, so he and Robert went to the Kenai Cache a sportsman's gift and fishing tackle convenience store to buy the two, very much needed plugs.

While gone, I would finish getting the boat ready and put on my chest waders, which were in the bed of Tim's Chevrolet, twin cab, Z-28 pick-up truck. The tail gate was down, I moved everything as needed, went to get down and somehow my right foot slipped on the tailgate's edge and I fell, with my left arm and hand breaking the fall.

However, an extremely sharp, excruciating pain was shooting up and down the left arm and hand. I lay on the asphalt for a few minutes, unable to move my arm. Fortunately, I had the good sense to remove my watch and wedding band, right prior to the swelling increasing by the second, but still unable to move my left arm.

Fortunately, Tim and Robert returned between five to ten minutes later. The park and launch personnel had contacted them at the Kenai Cache, so there was several people helping me by wrapping a make-shift sling - two engineers and two fisheries biologists practicing Ethiopian contrived engineering.

After a 2 1/2 hour drive, Jeanine, Kathy, and the baby met us at the Providence Catholic Hospital's emergency room. There, I was taken to Room 19, where one of the emergency room doctors and several nurses put me on an anti-nausea I.V.

Preliminary diagnosis was the upper arm, wrist, and shoulder were either broken or dislocated. The X-rays showed neither, but I severely pulled much of the left arm's muscles from the shoulder and the wrist, which didn't help the middle left hand's trigger finger. My

left hand is swollen twice its normal size.

Needless to say the doctor and that nurse wife did say, the excruciating pain will be fading hopefully within the next three days and should I have continuing trouble after 10 days, he recommended an orthopedic specialist, who may have to do an MRI scan. Hopefully not, however.

Robert came to the hospital, as he followed us down to the Kenai and then the hospital. It's good he did, as the joking and laughing helps in situations as this.

He said, "Bill, you traded your waders for a hospital gown," as he took Tim's and my picture.

I am writing this e-mail with my right hand index finger pecking away at the computer keyboard.

Bass Wishes, and Good Hunting/Shooting.

CALENDAR

July 7-10 – Texas Wildlife Association annual convention at the JW Marriott Hill Country Resort and Spa in San Antonio featuring seminars, exhibits and auctions. Details available at www.texas-wildlife.org.

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.

July 15-17 – Texas Trophy Hunters Association Hunters' Extravaganza at the San Antonio Alamodome. Details available at www.ttha.com/HuntersExtravaganza.

Aug. 5-7 – Texas Trophy Hunters Association Hunters' Extravaganza at the Reliant Center in Houston. Details available at www.ttha.com/HuntersExtravaganza.

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

Aug. 19-21 – Texas Trophy Hunters Association Hunters' Extravaganza at the Fort Worth Will Rogers Center. Details available at www.ttha.com/HuntersExtravaganza.