

TOWA

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

TOWA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It's Time to Put the "Active" Back in TOWA Active Member

TOWA Needs Member Participation for Committees, Conference Auctions

David J. Sikes, President

I am pleased to report that in the past few months, the TOWA Board has made several major strides toward improving TOWA's image and out operation as a professional organization.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROLE

First, the board has hired the Professional Association Management Services (PAMS) team of Burney and Valerie Brown to handle the business-side of the executive director function, including managing our member database, finances, taxes and many of TOWA's day-to-day organizational duties. This had to be done. TOWA has turned a corner in many ways, not the least of which is becoming a nonprofit organization.

Maintaining our status as a 501(c)6 involves more expertise and legal knowledge than we previously thought: Our choice was deliberate and well-thought out. PAMS will be paid the current monthly fee is \$1250, the same as was being paid to Lorraine Lawrence, along with an additional \$250 per month for bookkeeping and accounting services. The board is confident that for PAMS' overall monthly fee of \$1,500 we are establishing a permanent presence for TOWA. No more changing phone numbers and mailing addresses. No more revolving doors. And

no more worrying about government compliance.

We do not view the additional fee for managing TOWA as a major burden at this time. But there may be additional cost as we grow. Fortunately, TOWA still maintains reserves of about \$50,000.

Burney Brown has 30 years of experience helping other nonprofits maintain and grow. His contact information, and the new address, phone number and email address for the TOWA office he will maintain is listed on Page Two of this newsletter. Call him. Ask him questions. He is our advocate and he's dedicated to our growth.

We still are considering assigning a member who can serve as spokesperson for the organization: For now, I'm that person. The president can and should be the face of TOWA, as an outdoors professional who speaks the language and knows the business.

If the responsibility gets too great, I'm sure the board will figure out another route.

CONTRIBUTE TO SILENT & LIVE AUCTIONS TO HELP FUND TOWA

In addition to this, the membership of TOWA should and must be more engaged. This will be a recurring theme throughout my tenure and beyond.

As a nonprofit, our revenue comes mainly from the annual auctions, sponsorships and dues.

In recent years, auction revenue has been impressive. And thanks to TJ Greaney, meal sponsorships have helped offset conference cost considerably.

Our conferences are expensive; the 2013 conference cost TOWA \$22,354.30 — about what TOWA pays each year, on average. And each year, we award one of two \$1,500 scholarships.

Let's get back to the auctions. In years past, we had broad support from members. But in recent years the responsibility has fallen on Ralph Winingham, TJ Greaney, Sam Caldwell and me (sorry if I left out someone). And we've done pretty well, often garnering \$2,000 to \$3,000 from silent and live auctions.

Still, I know nearly every member has more to give: Fishing rods, free tackle, maybe a discounted firearm or scope, and other outdoor gear that is most likely cluttering your garages can help fund TOWA's operation. We need you now more than ever.

This should not be an organization run by a few so that many can enjoy it. Our active members must live up to the

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TOWA OFFICERS, BOARD

PRESIDENT

David Sikes (2014) (361) 886-3616
sikesd@caller.com

PRESIDENT-ELECT

TJ Greaney (2014) (512) 789-3838
tj@countrylinemagazine.com

TREASURER (2016)

Shane Townsend (512) 994-5481
shane.townsend@gmail.com

INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jonette Childs (361) 727-0239
saltex@pyramid3.net

BOARD MEMBERS

BOARD CHAIRMAN

John Goodspeed (2014) (210) 573-7460
john@johngoodspeed.com

Lefty Ray Chapa (2016) (201) 260-6154
leftyray@leftyray.com

Susan L. Ebert (2016) (512) 431-2013
susanebertinkl@gmail.com

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

Kendal Hemphill (2014) (325) 347-4051
jeep@verizon.net

Bob Hood (2015) (817) 228-5952
bobhoodoutdoors@yahoo.com

Peggy York (2015) (210) 647-7053
peggy.york@sbcglobal.net

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN

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

CONFERENCE PROGRAM CO-CHAIRMAN

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

SCHOLARSHIP

Judy Mills, Marianne Odom (281) 448-5811
offtheroad.mills@earthlink.net;
marianneodom27@hotmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

Bob Hood (817) 228-5952
bobhoodoutdoors@yahoo.com

SITE SELECTION

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

AUCTIONS

TJ 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 by the Texas Outdoor Writers Association and edited by Susan L. Ebert. Layout by SusanEbertInk, SusanEbertInk@gmail.com. Contributors are urged to submit material by the 15th of each month. For advertising information, contact Susan L. Ebert at (512) 431-2013 or SusanEbertInk@gmail.com. TOWA News is emailed to members and mailed first class, if requested, from Porter, Texas.

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.

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word "active." We cannot survive with a membership that simply attends the annual conferences to pick up their awards and to socialize. We welcome everyone, but we depend on your activism as the lifeblood of TOWA.

STAFFING COMMITTEES IN ACCORDANCE WITH BYLAWS

Which brings me to my next subject: One way to contribute painlessly is to volunteer for a committee. Please review Article IX — Committees and Functions, on pages 54 – 56 of the 2013 Annual Directory. For a brief overview:

- a) **Annual Meeting Committee:** The bylaws state that president serves as chair; other members invited to serve on committee.
- b) **Meeting Sites Committee:** Jonette Childs serves as chair; other members invited to serve on committee.
- c) **Conference Program:** David Sikes and TJ Greaney serve as co-chairs; other members invited to serve on committee.
- d) **Annual Awards:** Seeking a chairperson for this committee.
- e) **Applicant Screening:** Bob Hood serves as chair; other members invited to serve on committee.
- f) **Membership Audit:** The bylaws state that the chairman of the board serves as chair; other members invited to serve on committee.
- g) **Ethics Committee:** The bylaws state that the board serves as the ethics committee.
- h) **Nominating Committee:** This committee is currently unstaffed, and must be staffed no later than Oct. 1, 2013 to begin developing a roster of candidates for the elections at the 2014 Conference. Current officers may not serve as committee chair, unless they will not be seeking re-election. The committee shall volunteer nominations on its own and shall also seek nominees from the membership through the newsletter. Nominations shall also be taken from the floor during the annual business meeting of the membership. All nominees must be active members, in good standing, of the association and must agree to fulfill the duties of office.

PLEASE NOTE TOWA'S NEW CONTACT INFORMATION

We're please to welcome the services of Burney and Valerie Brown of Professional Association Management Services (PAMS) to serve as TOWA Executive Director. Burney welcomes calls and emails from members, so we encourage you to do so.

The primary contact information for TOWA is:

**TEXAS OUTDOOR WRITERS
ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 151293
AUSTIN, TX 78715-1293
PHONE: (512) 358-8000
FAX: (512) 358-8010
EMAIL: TOWA@TOWA.org**

Those so nominated must also agree to uphold all provisions of the constitution and bylaws. Officers and board members shall take office at the annual business meeting as set forth in the order of business in these bylaws. No members shall hold more than one office at a time.

- i) **Promotions Committee:** Seeking a chairperson for this committee.
- j) **Scholarship Committee:** Judy Mills and Marianne Odom are co-chairs.
- k) **Finance Committee:** The bylaws state that the treasurer serves as chair; other members invited to serve on committee.
- l) **Communications Committee:** Seeking a chairperson for this committee; Cody Greeney and JP Greeson are co-chairs of New Media Committee, a subset of communications.

The bylaws demand that we nominate a slate of officers every year, and that two of the six board member positions be refilled, according to the expiration date of their three-year term.

Both my term as president and TJ Greaney's term as president-elect expire

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

this year, as do the terms of board members Kendal Hemphill and Cody Greaney. The nominating committee will need time to do their due process to present us with the best possible slate of candidates at the conference.

We also must staff certain committees. That's my job. But you can make my job much easier if you let me know which committees might interest you. Or simply say yes when asked. Please take the time and initiative to review the bylaws in your directory to see whether you'd be willing to fill one or more of the positions that fit your expertise or personality.

TOWA WEBSITE UPGRADE

We are about to award a contract to a new TOWA web designer, thanks to a generous donation from Ducks Unlimited. But a website is only as good as its content. And TOWA has never had a dynamic web presence because we have never had regular contributions from members. Cody Greaney and JP Greeson have volunteered to oversee this process, and to coordinate with the new website developer, once the contract is awarded.

TOWA MEMBERS CAN ATTEND SEOPA CONFERENCE AT REDUCED RATE

The Southeastern Outdoor Press Association is cordially inviting members of TOWA to attend the 2013 SEOPA Fall Conference in Lake Charles, La., Oct. 9-12, at the member rate of just \$80 per person until August 1. Rates increase to \$100 until Sept. 10 and \$125 thereafter.

Registration includes all meals from Wednesday afternoon through Saturday night and a full agenda of seminars, Breakout Day, a top-notch auction, a movie screening, Shooting Day and other special events. If registering online, simply follow the prompts for registering as



TOWA ACTIVE MEMBER AUDIENCE & REACH SURVEY

Now I must address the issue of apathy on another level. Recently I sent emails to each member asking them to complete a Survey Monkey questionnaire. This survey will help determine TOWA's future by assessing the reach of its members and the vitality of our organization as a whole. We will use this information to market TOWA to supporting members who help bear the costs of our organization, and to recruit new active members.

In practical terms, the results of this survey will tell the outdoor community that we are relevant. And I believe you will agree that we are when you see the complete survey results. This data will not only bolster TOWA's status but potentially boost your income.

To date, we have received only 38 responses. C'mon, people ... I expect better from an organization of more than 100 active members. If you have not yet filled out the brief survey, please do so today — it's time we put the "active" back in active member.

— David Sikes, President

a member. Please put "TOWA Member" in the notes at the bottom. Visit <http://seopa.org/annual-conference/> for details and an agenda. A .pdf registration form is also available if you prefer to register by mail.

Conference guest attendees who like what they see may join SEOPA for one year at half price. That offer is good through December 31.

Please visit www.seopa.org to learn more about SEOPA or contact Executive Director Lisa Snuggs for more information: lisa@seopa.org or (704) 984-4700.



Teal Bag Increase, Expanded White-winged Dove Zone Approved for 2013

AUSTIN – Texas bird hunters might consider investing in an extra box or two of shells this year to take advantage of increased bag and possession limits and expanded opportunities.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has approved for Texas this year an expanded Special White-wing Dove Area (SWWDA), a six bird daily bag during the September teal season and increased possession limits for all migratory game birds.

The SWWDA will now extend eastward along its current boundary and continue south along Interstate 37 from San Antonio to Corpus Christi, effectively doubling its current size.

"For the last two decades, white-winged dove populations have steadily expanded both their numbers and their geographical extent," said Dave Morrison, Small Game Program Director with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. "We believe, and the Service agrees, an expansion is appropriate to take advantage of additional hunting opportunities."

To take advantage of the earliest possible opening dates for the special area, the season will run Sunday, Sept. 1 through Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 2, and then reopen Saturday, Sept. 7 and Sunday, Sept. 8. The bag limit during the four-day season is 15 doves in the aggregate to include no more than two mourning doves and two white-tipped doves and hunting is permitted only from noon to sunset.

Dove season in the North and Central zones will run concurrent from Sept. 1-Oct. 23 and Dec. 20-Jan. 5. The South Zone dove season is set for Sept. 20-Oct. 27 and Dec. 20-Jan. 20, with the season in the SWWDA Sept. 20-Oct. 23 and Dec. 20-Jan. 20.

Also new this year, teal hunters will be able to take up to six teal daily during the statewide September teal-only season, set to run Sept. 14-29. The early Canada goose season will also run Sept. 14-29 in the Eastern Goose Zone with a daily bag limit of three Canada geese.

Under new rules, the possession limit for all migratory game birds is three times the daily bag.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council to Meet in San Antonio, Texas

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will meet August 26 - 29, 2013, at the Hilton Palacio del Rio, 200 South Alamo Street in San Antonio, Texas. Council Committees will convene Monday morning beginning at 11:00 a.m.

The full Council will convene Wednesday morning at 10:00 a.m. and is expected to adjourn by 4:00 p.m. Thursday. Agenda highlights are summarized below.

Committee meetings will open Monday with a summary report to the Sustainable Fisheries/Ecosystem Management Committee about the South Florida Management workshops being held this week. The Red Drum Management Committee will then receive an update on Gulf of Mexico red drum data collection. The Mackerel Management Committee will then meet to:

- Review SEDAR 28 Gulf of Mexico Spanish Mackerel Stock Assessment;
- Review public hearing comments and actions for Amendments 19 & 20 to the Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plan;
- Discuss schedule for Amendment 22 - Recreational and Commercial Allocation of King Mackerel.

The Ad Hoc Restoration Committee is also meeting to receive:

- An update on the development plan for RESTORE's Marine Science Fund;
- A summary of NOAA RESTORE Act Science Program Public Engagement Session.

The Administrative Policy Committee will discuss the Administrative Handbook and SOPPs, and the day will end with a closed session of the Advisory Panel Selection Committee, which is meeting to review applicants and appoint members to the Ad Hoc Red Snapper Individual Fishing Quota Advisory Panel.

Beginning Tuesday at 8:30 a.m. the Reef Fish Management Committee will meet to review and discuss:

- Summary report from the August 2013 Reef Fish SSC Meeting;
- Spawning Potential Ratio Target Options;
- Final Action on Individual Fishing Quotas Administrative Rule Changes;
- Amendment 28 - Red Snapper Allocation Options Paper;
- Passengers on Dual-permitted Commercial Fishing Vessels;
- Update on Red Snapper Recreational Landings and Supplemental Fall Season;
- 2014 Red Snapper Update Assessment and possible management actions;
- Exempted Fishing Permits related to Reef Fish (if any).

Immediately following the Committee recess Tuesday, the Council and NOAA Fisheries will hold an informal Question and Answer session on general fishery management issues.

The Data Collection Committee will convene Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. to receive a status update on modifications to the Federally-

Permitted Seafood Dealer Reporting requirements; and to receive an update on the results of the Peer Reviewed Data Collection Management Programs for the Magnuson-Stevens Managed Stocks.

Finally, the Joint Artificial Reef/Habitat Protection Committees will receive a summary from the May 2013 Coral Workshop in Interrelationships between Corals and Fisheries.

The full Council will convene Wednesday at 10:00 a.m. A swearing-in ceremony for new Council members will take place before the Council receives a "Budget 101" overview. From 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. the Council will take public comment on the following:

- Final Action on IFQ Administrative Rule Changes
- Mackerel Amendments 19 & 20
- Reef Fish Amendment 39 - Regional Management of Recreational Red Snapper
- Exempted Fishing Permits (if any)

The Council will also hold an open public comment session to give members of the public an opportunity to address the Council on fishery issues that may not be on the agenda. Open public comment will be taken immediately following public testimony until 4:00 pm. Anyone wishing to speak must sign up prior to the comment period.

Beginning Thursday at 8:30 am, the Council will deliberate and take action on the committee recommendations made earlier in the week.

For a copy of the detailed agenda, or to watch the meeting live, please visit http://gulfcouncil.org/council_meetings/index.php or call 888-833-1844. Briefing book materials can be downloaded from the Council FTP site at <http://ftp.gulfcouncil.org/?user=anonymous>.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before the Council and Committees for discussion, in accordance with the M-SFCMA, those issues may not be the subjects of formal action. Actions of the Council and Committees will be restricted to issues specifically identified in the agendas and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under Section 305(c) of the M-SFCMA, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take action to address the emergency.

The established times for addressing items on the agenda may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the timely completion of discussion relevant to the agenda items. In order to allow for such adjustments and completion of all items on the agenda, the meeting may be extended from, or completed prior to, the date established in this notice. Meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kathy Pereira at the Council office at least five days prior to the meeting.

About Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional Fishery Management Councils established by the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Council prepares fishery management plans, which are designed to manage fishery resources within the 200-mile limit of the Gulf of Mexico.

Crawford, McDevitt Hired at Castaway Rods

CastAway Graphite Rods has announced the recent addition of two prominent tackle industry veterans to its management team. Both Brett Crawford and Michael McDevitt bring a track record of fishing rod innovation and sales success to their new positions at CastAway, where their talents will be used to take this Montgomery, Texas-based graphite rod manufacturer to new levels of success.

"With these new team members in place, we are locked, loaded and ready to take the fishing industry by storm," said CastAway's Adam Murray. "We've been working on this for some time, to assemble an ultimate 'dream team' of proven fishing industry performers. When you combine Brett and Michael's experience and industry contacts with our growing line of premium quality graphite rods, you have an exciting recipe for future success," Murray added.

Brett Crawford joins CastAway as Head of Operations. Among his many accomplishments was taking All Star Rods from a virtual unknown to a highly popular and respected manufacturer. So much so that All Star was eventually purchased by fishing tackle powerhouse Shakespeare. Crawford maintains the designs and materials used to create All Star Rods' innovative actions, and plans to incorporate these rod blanks into the CastAway Graphite Rods family of products.

Michael McDevitt will take over as CastAway Vice President of Sales. Previously, McDevitt was with award-winning rod manufacturer Carrot Stix, where he was the driving force behind this company's meteoric rise to success and industry prominence. McDevitt brings to his new position at CastAway a wealth of industry relationships and contacts, along with the well earned respect of buyers, distributors and dealers across the nation.

CastAway Graphite Rods opened its doors in 1986. With over two decades of experience and a highly positive reputation in the industry, CastAway has always been on the cutting edge with new fishing rod technology that is lighter, more sensitive, and more durable while still maintaining a good value for anglers. CastAway rods are built using specially balanced, action-specific blanks finished with the finest components. Each rod is crafted with the utmost attention to detail normally reserved for expensive custom rods but priced to put professional quality, feel and performance in reach of anglers everywhere.

For more information about CastAway's full line of premium quality graphite rods for fresh and saltwater fishing — please contact Castaway Graphite Rods at (936) 582-1677 or visit CastAwayRods.com.



DSC TOPS \$2 MILLION IN GRANTS FOR 2012-13

DALLAS —For the second straight year, Dallas Safari Club (DSC) in 2013 will grant more than a million dollars for conservation, education and hunter advocacy efforts worldwide.

DSC's total funding commitment for 2013 is \$1,010,000—a record for the organization.

The allocation follows major growth in the DSC annual convention and expo. Held early each January at the Dallas Convention Center, the event has been steadily growing in size, attendance and total fundraising.

Ben Carter, DSC executive director, said, "As gratifying as it's been to see our annual convention grow, it's even more rewarding to see the money from our supporters go for conserving wildlife, protecting wild places, educating youth and the general public, and defending hunters' rights around the world."

Carter thanked convention exhibitors, attendees and volunteers, along with DSC members, for their passion and continuing support of the DSC mission.

Projects to receive DSC funding this year include anti-poaching efforts in Africa, forest restoration in New Mexico, genetic and lion research in Africa, pronghorn and desert bighorn sheep restoration initiatives in Texas, mule deer and elk research in Nevada, habitat improvements in Africa, several youth and veteran hunts, numerous conservation education events and other worthy initiatives.

DSC also is continuing its annual purchase of life insurance policies for all game wardens in Texas.

Finally, funding also will support DSC's own mission delivery programs, such as the Dallas Ecological Foundation's popular Outdoor Adventures program, which is expanding conservation curriculum in Texas schools.

About Dallas Safari Club (DSC)

Desert bighorns on an unbroken landscape, stalking Cape buffalo in heavy brush, students discovering conservation. DSC works to guarantee a future for all these and much more. 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. Get involved at www.biggame.org.

Click on the link below for an informative documentary on Rigs to Reefs by Quenton Dokken of the Gulf of Mexico Foundation.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsjSc_XX59M

Hunter's Specialties® Scent-A-Way® Wins First-Place Rating

Hunter's Specialties® Scent-A-Way® products were given a gold first-place rating in the annual Predator Xtreme Reader's Choice Awards. Each year readers are asked to vote for the products they feel are the best performers in categories ranging from ammunition, optics, guns and scent elimination to name a few. This year Scent-A-Way received top billing in the scent elimination category.

Scent-A-Way spray combines four key elements to help prevent and control human scent: molecular conversion, oxidizing, bonding and neutralizing in a laboratory tested formula that has been proven highly effective in the field. It is available in original odorless formula as well as earth scent and acorn in sizes ranging from 12 – 64 ounces.

For more information about other Hunter's Specialties products, TOWA members can contact Mike Capps at mcapps@howardcommunications.com or call him at (573) 898-3422.

Visit the Hunter's Specialties website at www.hunterspec.com, or call a Consumer Service Specialist at (319) 395-0321.



CALENDAR

July 31 - Aug. 3: Outdoor Retailer Summer Market Show, Salt Lake City, Utah; visit outdoorretailer.com for details.

Aug. 21: Texas Parks and Wildlife Annual Public Meeting, 2 p.m., TPWD Headquarters, 4200 Smith School Rd., Austin. For more information, visit tpwd.state.tx.us.

Sept. 14 - 16: OWAA Annual Conference, Lake Placid, N.Y. For more information, visit owaa.org.

Texas Wildlife Association Honors Langford, Simons and Wilkins at WildLife 2013 Convention



Langford, right, receives TWA Ray Murski Friend of Wildlife Award

David K. Langford of Comfort, a longtime Texas Wildlife Association and natural resource conservation leader and proponent of private lands stewardship, was honored by the Texas Wildlife Association on July 13 with the TWA Ray Murski Friend of Wildlife Award.

The TWA Ray Murski Friend of Wildlife Award recognizes a member of the Texas Wildlife Association (TWA) that has made outstanding contributions to the Association and to wildlife habitat conservation. Langford received the Award at WildLife 2013, TWA's annual convention, in San Antonio.

"David K. Langford has been a cornerstone in the natural resource conservation arena for almost three decades in Texas. He has given tirelessly to TWA in many ways, both while serving as a TWA Executive Vice President and as a contractee, as well as serving as a valued TWA volunteer," said TWA Vice President Marcus T. Barrett IV, in presenting the Award to Langford. "He uniquely understands some of the finer, more esoteric aspects of private lands stewardship, not only from a practitioner's standpoint, but from a public policy standpoint, as well. He is a great advocate for the important cultures that relate to Texas, Texas landowners, and Texas citizenry. TWA would most assuredly not be as strong of an organization today if it were not for David K. Langford."

Langford's efforts contributed to promotion of the recognition of the stewardship role landowners take on, resulting in implementation of strong Conservation Legacy and Hunting Heritage programs within TWA and the development of essential staff to meet these needs.

Langford is owner of Western Photography Company. His award-winning photographs have appeared in *Texas Parks & Wildlife*, *Western Horseman*, *Outdoor Life*, *Field & Stream*, *Texas Highways*, *The Cattleman*, *American West*, *Texas Monthly*, and other magazines.

The Texas Wildlife Association welcomed **Greg Simons** of San Angelo as the organization's 15th President, as well as three other Officers and 67 new Board members, following elections on July 12 at WildLife 2013 in San Antonio, the organization's annual convention.

Simons owns and operates Wildlife Systems, Inc., a company he formed in 1987. Wildlife Systems, Inc., based out of San Angelo, operates hunting and wildlife programs on approximately 800,000 acres of private land in Texas. The company has been involved with hunting programs in several other states and foreign countries, as well. Simons is a Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences degree graduate of Texas A&M University.

Simons previously served the Texas Wildlife Association as Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. He succeeds Glen Webb of Abilene as President, following Webb's completion of his second one-year term as President.

"I am so incredibly humbled to stand here before you right now, and I feel so incredibly honored to serve this organization and its members in this capacity," said Simons during his Presidential Address to convention attendees. "We will continue to be a good steward of our mission. We will continue to be a good steward of our values. And we will continue to fight a good fight, whenever it is necessary. And we will not, let me repeat, we will not back down from, waiver from, or compromise these three principles. That, I assure you!"

Other Officers elected to serve the 6500-member statewide organization for a one-year term were Marcus T. Barrett IV of San Antonio – Vice President, Dr. Louis Harveson of Alpine – Second Vice President for Programs, and J. David Anderson of Houston – Treasurer.

In addition, 67 individuals were elected to a three-year term on the Texas Wildlife Association Board of Directors.



TWA officers are Greg Simons, president; Marcus T. Barrett IV, vice president; Louis Harveson, second vice president for programs; and J. David Anderson, treasurer.



Wilkins, right, receives Sam Beasom Conservation Leader Award.

Neal Wilkins, Ph.D., of San Antonio, a respected wildlife biologist and wildlife conservation professional, was honored by the Texas Wildlife Association on July 13 with the TWA Sam Beasom Conservation Leader Award.

The TWA Sam Beasom Conservation Leader Award recognizes a member of the professional conservation community that has made and outstanding contribution to the conservation of Texas wildlife and shares the philosophies of TWA. Wilkins received the Award at WildLife 2013, TWA's annual convention, in San Antonio.

"Dr. Neal Wilkins is one of the rare wildlifers who has been able to bridge a wildlife academia career with that which transcends boundaries into the private sector and onto the private landscape. He not only understands principles of natural resource conservation and private lands stewardship from a conceptual standpoint, but he understands how to deploy these disciplines," said TWA Vice President Marcus T. Barrett IV, in presenting the Award to Wilkins. "He has served TWA as a dedicated volunteer for many years, including as TWA's Vice President from 2004 thru 2012."

Before becoming President and CEO of the East Wildlife Foundation in 2012, Wilkins was a Professor of Wildlife Science and served as the Director of the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources and the Texas Water Resources Institute, where he coordinated the programs of more than 45 scientists and professional staff.

Wilkins has over 25 years of experience leading research and conservation efforts across private lands in Texas, Tennessee, Florida, Washington, and Oregon. His primary focus has been habitat management and conservation of land, water, and wildlife resources on private lands. Much of his work integrated science, policy and economics for developing wildlife conservation programs.

MUY GRANDE HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES 2013

On its 48th Anniversary, the Muy Grande Deer Contest inducts three passionate outdoorsmen into the Muy Grande Hall of Fame

In June 2013, Leonel “MUY” Garza, founder of the Muy Grande Deer Contest, inducted three outdoorsmen into the prestigious and exclusive Muy Grande Hall of Fame. The inductees for 2013 are: Mark Herfort of Richmond, Texas, David Sikes of Corpus Christi, Tx, and Bob Hood of Possum Kingdom Lake.

Mark Herfort has been an avid whitetail deer hunter for more than 35 years and has hunted more than 129 different species in 14 different countries on five different continents. He is a long-time Muy Grande Sponsor and being a jeweler, for 10 years consecutively, he donated a Smith & Wesson pistol with a buttplate in gold and sterling silver that features an outline of Texas with a cut diamond located over the Freer, Tx. area. He is a lifetime member of the Safari Club International and the Houston Safari Club where he has served as a director, officer, and president. He is also a lifetime member with the National Rifle Association, the Texas Big Members Society, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. He was the first Platinum Life Member with the Texas Trophy Hunter’s Association magazine where his picture can be seen on the back page of every issue. In January of 2009, Mark was a recipient of the Houston Safari Club Outstanding Hunter Award for his international hunts.

David Sikes has been the outdoors columnist for the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* since 1998. He covers hunting, fishing, paddling, outdoor photography, state and federal fish and wildlife regulations and legislative issues involving the same. David has written countless articles covering the Muy Grande Deer Contest entries over the years. He’s written about hunting or fishing in Alaska, Colorado, South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, New Mexico, Louisiana, Arkansas, Idaho, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua, in addition to Texas. He is president of the Texas Outdoor Writers Association and has served on the Texas Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame Selection Committee. He received the Ducks Unlimited Wetland Conservation Achievement Award for 2012 in the communications category, the Charley McTee Media Award from the Texas Wildlife Association and the Harvey Weil Foundation named him its 2012 Professional Conservationist of the year.

Bob Hood is a Fort Worth native who worked for the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* for 53 years starting at age 11 as a paper boy. He worked for 46 years in the sports department covering high school sports, rodeos, Golden Gloves and all other sports before getting the *Outdoors Beat* in 1968. He was the *Star-Telegram’s* outdoor writer for the next 40 years before retiring in 2008. He is currently now contracted back by the *Star-Telegram* to continue writing outdoors articles, he is the hunting editor for the *Texas Fish and Game Magazine* and is a contributing writer for *Texas Sportsman*, *Texas Sporting Journal*, *Lone Star Outdoor News* and others. He has won the Texas State Bass Fishing Tournament three times. Bob was inducted into the Texas State Bass Tournament Hall

of Fame and Falcon Lake Hall of Fame. He was named Fort Worth Ducks Unlimited Sportsman of the Year in 2000 and Sportsman of the Decade for the 1990s. He has won several writing awards; past president of Texas Outdoor Writers Association, and now a lifetime member of TOWA and is currently on the TOWA board of directors. He was awarded the Texas Outdoor Writers Association’s Diawa Award for “lifetime achievements.” The Muy Grande Deer Contest was the first deer contest that Bob Hood ever learned about, and he has followed its entries and activities since its inception.



FREELANCE OPPORTUNITY FOR TOWA MEMBERS

Renewing member Steven Bridges, owner/publisher of the *Goldthwaite Eagle*, publishes a tabloid publication in his newspaper and also distribute free well more than 10,000 copies of The Mills County Hunting Guide.

This year’s publication date is August 28th. He is accepting articles and photos of Central Texas hunting, fishing, trapping and recreation — deer, dove, turkey, hogs and predators, etc. Bridges does not require the article be a “first run.”

Sizes that work best are either 500 words and a photo, or 1000 words and two photos. Pay rates are \$50 for 500 words and a photo, and \$75 for 1000 words with two photos.

Bridges seeks five to 10 articles for the guide, and plans to write the rest himself.

NOTE: Bridges also runs a page of outdoor news each week of hunting season here in Mills County. In addition to the Hunting Guide, he is accepting outdoor column submissions for publication each week of hunting season in his weekly newspaper.

CONTACT:

Steven Bridges, Owner/Publisher
The Goldthwaite Eagle
 1002 Fisher Street
 PO Box 249
 Goldthwaite, Texas 76844
 goldnews@centex.net
 GoldthwaiteEagle.com

Office 325-648-2244
 Fax 325-648-2024
 Cell 512-934-1911

Nation Mourns Loss of Beloved Texas Writer



John Graves in his canoe on the Brazos with his six-month old dachshund Watty, a.k.a. "The Passenger," on the Brazos River in 1957. Photo courtesy Jane Graves.

Across the nation, from the *New York Times* to the *Los Angeles Times* and with a legion of newspapers, magazines, blogs and Facebook posts in harmonic chorus in-between, the nation joins with Texas in an outpouring of grief and appreciation following the death of Lone Star luminary John Graves who died at his beloved Hard Scrabble home during the night of July 30, 2013. John was 92.

A hunter ... An angler ... An outdoorsman in every sense ... Although not an "outdoor writer" *per se*, John's writings were cherished by every Texas outdoor writer I've ever come across. Make that damn near every *writer*, period.

Much has been written about John's legacy, and I'm not worthy to add to that; I will leave that to others far more gifted — talents such as Rick Bass, Bill Broyles, Gary Cartwright, Stephen Harrigan, Billy Wittliff and so many others who are literary giants in their own rights. I was, however, blessed by an astounding friendship with this great man, which commenced when I served as the publisher and editor of *Texas Rivers*, published in 2002 by Texas Parks & Wildlife Press. Through John, I also became fast friends with his wife, Jane Cole Graves, a longtime designer for Neiman-Marcus and a formidable creative talent in her own right. They welcomed me into their home at Hard Scrabble on countless weekends, where the conversations flowed as richly as the Brazos itself — whether it was just John and Jane, or included other entrancing houseguests, such as Billy Wittliff or Elmer and Ana Kelton.

We will always have John's writings — in honored places on our bookshelves and etched forever into our hearts — but please hold his dear wife Jane and their daughters Helen and Sally in your hearts as well, for their loss of a beloved husband and devoted father can never be restored. We are thankful, indeed, that they shared him with us, and with the world.

— Susan L. Ebert

Although many of these tributes are behind paywalls, we offer our heartfelt thanks that *Texas Monthly* chose not to do so with the eloquent and heartfelt pieces by Stephen Harrigan and Bill Broyles. The *Garden & Gun* link is to a 2011 piece by native son Rick Bass. Some of the other tributes to Mr. Graves can be found at the links below. We also appreciate that the *Austin American-Statesman* had the grace to run Patrick Beach's and Charles Ealy's excellent behind-the-paywall essay in its entirety as a blog post for all to enjoy.

Those of you who have paid subscriptions to the *Houston Chronicle*, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* or the *Dallas Morning News* can read other tributes to him on their premium content sites.

<http://www.texasmonthly.com/story/goodbye-writer>

<http://www.texasmonthly.com/story/john-graves-appreciation>

<http://gardenandgun.com/article/writing-stone>

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/02/books/john-graves-lauded-author-in-texas-dies-at-92.html?_r=0

<http://www.latimes.com/news/obituaries/la-me-john-graves-20130802,0,7514878.story>

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/07/31/207309842/texas-author-john-graves-dies-at-92-wrote-goodbye-to-a-river>

<http://www.star-telegram.com/2013/08/01/5050127/how-writer-john-graves-helped.html>

<http://www.statesman.com/weblogs/the-reader/2013/jul/31/texas-literary-legend-john-graves-dies/>

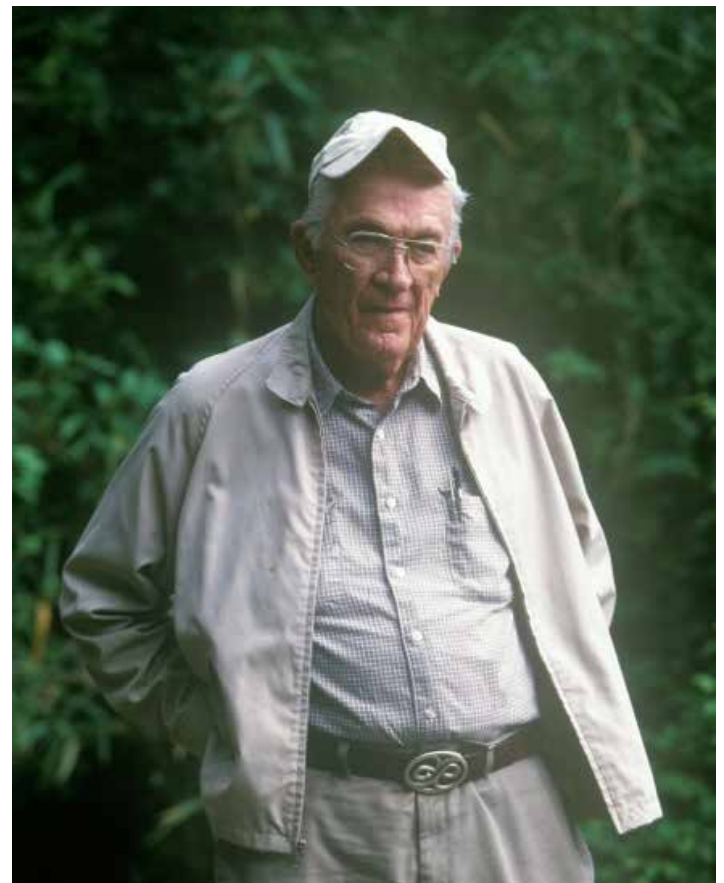


Photo courtesy Wyman Meinzer.