

# CURRENTS

April / May 2017



*Restoring and protecting Texas bays:  
a forty year journey continues*





# Abandoned Crab Traps: 15 years of CCA Successes

*From the March 26 Houston Chronicle  
feature by Shannon Tompkins*

**Ronnie Luster:**  
*"I just kicked the rock,"  
Luster modestly said of the  
move to address the  
derelict crab issue. CCA  
picked it up and  
ran with it."*

33,000 traps later ...

**T**his annual exercise in environmental improvement began in 2002 and is aimed at extracting some of the thousands of wire-mesh crab traps abandoned or lost and left littering Texas bays. The program has proven to be a heartening success, getting at least 33,000 derelict traps out of the water, preventing the wasteful loss of as many as one million blue crabs as well as untold numbers of fish and other marine life that would have fallen prey to these fatal attractions.

In the bargain, the effort has made Texas bays safer for all human users by stripping the water of these slime-coated, often rusty mesh-wire boxes that tangle and foul boat propellers and cause serious punctures and cuts when stumbled into by wadefishers and others.

"Getting out there and pulling abandoned crab traps is one of those rare instances where you can see you've had an immediate positive impact on the bays," Ronnie Luster said. "The volunteers get a real sense of satisfaction out of that. They make a difference."

**L**uster would know about the crab-trap removal program and making a difference. The 74-year-old Houston businessman and lifelong coastal angler and waterfowler participated in the first 14 consecutive crab-trap removal programs, missing the 2016 cleanup effort only because of knee-replacement surgery.

But his involvement with the crab-trap cleanup effort goes much deeper. A sev-

en-mile run Luster took in his airboat near Port O'Connor 17 years ago played a seminal role in Texas creating the crab-trap removal program - an enterprise so successful it has been copied in other coastal states.

**W**hen Luster began fishing out of Port O'Connor in 1961, the shallow waters of Shoalwater Bay in which he regularly wade-fished held an abundance of redfish and speckled trout and not a single crab trap.

But by the 1980s, the bays had seen an explosion in the number of commercial crabbers, many of whom set as many as 300 or more traps.



*Ronnie Luster Sr. was named a Hero of Conservation by Field & Stream Magazine in 2006.*

Crab traps were regularly lost - some to storms that swept the wire cages far afield, some because the line and float came loose or were cut, and others simply were abandoned. A 1997 Texas study indicated the average commercial crabber annually lost about 100 traps. And there were well over 300 commercial crabbers working the bays.

**T**hose crab traps may be lost to their owners, but they do not lose their effectiveness. Crabs

*"There were people who would gladly volunteer to help remove the traps, but the law wouldn't let them just do it," Luster said. "Something had to change."*

and other marine life continue entering a trap's funnel-like opening and can't find their way out. Eventually, they die, becom-

ing bait that draws other crabs and fish into the trap. This "ghost fishing" continues until the trap eventually deteriorates, something that can take years.

The toll is tremendous. Research indicates a functioning derelict crab trap annually catches (and kills) 20 to 60 blue crabs. And the traps don't attract only crabs. Sheepshead, speckled trout, redfish, drum and other fish enter the derelict traps and their cycle of death. More than 40 species of marine life have been documented in abandoned crab traps, including diamondback terrapins, a relatively rare coastal species. As many as 50 fish have been found in a single derelict trap. Even otters, raccoons and other terrestrial life have been found in the traps.

**B**y 2000, Texas bays were littered with tens of thousands of abandoned crab traps. "There just got to be more and more of them," Luster said, adding that the traps became so numerous they became a significant hazard to anglers, boaters and even retrievers used by duck hunters.

## State law was a problem

Luster, like many who fished, hunted and boated on Texas bays, became increasingly frustrated with the flood of derelict traps and the toll they took on marine life. One winter day in 2000, he decided to see just how many traps were out there.

"My wife and I were in my airboat, and we made a seven-mile run down Shoalwater Bay," he said. "We counted 1,800 crab traps. I knew something had to be done."

But his frustration concerning derelict traps was amplified by the roadblocks preventing Texans from doing anything about it. Under Texas law, all crab traps, even obviously derelict traps that had been sitting for years, were considered private property.

Only their owners or law enforcement officers could legally touch them.

**T**exas game wardens were allowed to collect abandoned crab traps but

had to store the traps and post notices in local courthouses soliciting owners to claim the traps. If the traps were not claimed, and they never were, wardens had

*An early crab trap removal site: hundreds of abandoned traps were collected and destroyed.*



*On cover: An abandoned crab trap is in the sights of Ronnie Luster.  
Photo by Sam Caldwell*



to get a court order to destroy them. Texas wardens occasionally made sweeps to collect derelict traps, but, with only a limited number of wardens, they made little dent in the problem. Luster figured out a way to address the



*Liz Hewitt and Lorraine Lawrence were crab trap removal champs in Port O'Connor's 2014 cleanup.*

problem he saw in Shoalwater Bay. He worked with Texas game warden Capt. Rex Mayes to coordinate a cooperative effort to remove any traps that did not have the annual state-issued tag required to be attached to the trap. Mayes provided a number of Texas wardens.

Luster, who was an active member of the Coastal Conservation Association, got the organization involved, and dozens of CCA members volunteered to help wardens remove derelict traps from the waters around Port O'Connor on a winter weekend.

"We had close to 20 boats involved," Luster recalled. "We picked up 800 traps. A few weeks later, we did it again, and picked up another 750. There was not a single legal trap among them."

The effort illustrated the severity of the problem and suggested a solution. "There were people who would gladly volunteer to help remove the traps, but the law wouldn't let them just do it," Luster said. "Something had to change."

It did. "I just kicked the rock," Luster modestly said of the move to address the derelict crab issue. "CCA picked it up and ran with it."

The Houston-based conservation organization whose membership is almost exclusively made up of coastal anglers pushed for changes in the law that prevented private citizens from removing derelict crab traps. In the 2001 session of the Texas Legislature, a bill by State Sen. Buster Brown, R-Lake Jackson, did just that. The bill authorized Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to set a short closure of all Texas bays to crab traps and designated any traps in the water during the closure as "litter" that could be removed by anyone.

The first closure and cleanup effort came in February 2002, with timing set to coincide with the slow season for commercial crab-

bing and when winter's northerly winds often shove tides lower than normal, exposing many derelict traps. The effort, coordinated by TPWD's coastal fisheries division and supported by

CCA and other sponsors, was a stunning success. Almost 600 volunteers fanned out in Texas bays, removing 8,000 derelict traps.

The program has continued each year since, with the main volunteer effort traditionally set on the first Saturday of the 10-day closure. This year's closure of Texas bays to crab traps was set for Feb. 17-26. The main volunteer effort to remove traps was Saturday.

TPWD designated locations in each major bay system as drop-off sites for collected traps, with many of those sites serving as gathering spots for volunteers, said Zack Thomas, crab-trap cleanup coordinator for TPWD's coastal fisheries division. The Coastal Conservation Association, Galveston Bay Foundation, Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program, San Antonio Bay Foundation and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are providing volunteers and support for the effort. "If it wasn't for the volunteers, this program wouldn't be the success it's been," Zack Thomas said. Without Luster

and a handful of other determined coastal anglers, it might never have happened at all."



*Joe Terry and sons continue the CCA conservation tradition.*



*Ron Luster Jr. and Ronnie Sr. have a high-five moment after the 2014 trap removal.*



The crab trap cleanup is one of those great stories of a CCA member recognizing a problem in our bays, then getting the help behind him to do something about it.

Due to Ronnie Luster's passion for our Texas coastal fishery, he was able to start one of the most successful and beneficial programs our Texas bays have seen.

This cleanup up initiative has not only removed thousands of derelict crab traps, but has also saved a tremendous amount of marine life.

CCA is fortunate to have so many members like Ronnie, who care enough about our coastal resources to help make a difference.

—Robby Byers CCA Texas Executive Director







## 28th Annual CCA State of Texas Anglers' Rodeo

What's cooler than  
having your own STAR  
on Hollywood Blvd?

**Becoming a star in the  
CCA STAR tournament!**

Let's face it, you can't fish out of a Hollywood star on Hollywood Blvd as you could in one of our many prize boats in the hottest fishery in the country!

This could be your year to BE A STAR! So DUST OFF THOSE REELS and get registered for CCA TEXAS STAR 2017, sponsored by Texas Ford Dealers, Tilson Home Corporation, and Capital Farm Credit, ASAP!!!

Not only do you have peace of mind by registering early, if you register by April 28, you are automatically entered in our CCA Texas STAR "Early Bird" Promotion to win a BRAND NEW Dargel 210 Skout complete with a Mercury 150 Pro XS Optimax and McClain trailer, valued around \$40,000!!

On top of the "Early Bird" Prize Package, we will once again be giving away over \$1,000,000 in PRIZES and SCHOLARSHIPS to 122 lucky ANGLERS. If you miss early registration, DON'T FRET! You can register any time until the end of the tournament. One fishing trip and one fish could change you or your child's life forever!

Whether it be in the form of a brand new Ford truck and Haynie boat package, or a \$50,000 scholarship, STAR entry is cheap insurance that you won't miss out on the chance of a lifetime! So get registered and be on a sharp lookout for one of those lucky tagged redfish or any other winning fish starting at sunrise on May 27 until 5:00 p.m. through Labor Day on September 4! If you don't believe it, here is further proof of how a simple CCA STAR entry could change your life: Dylan Ybarra's Story: 2004 Starkid Flounder (\$50,000 Scholarship Winner)

Growing up in Galveston, Texas, fishing isn't just a hobby, it is a way of life for many people, including my family. As long as I can remember, my dad would make sure to sign us up for the CCA STAR tournament every year in hopes that it would pay off one day. Fortunately for me and my future, it did.

In 2004, like every other morning of fishing, we gathered our gear and set out before the sun was up. Later, I got a bite that seemed to be a fairly large flounder. Unaware of all of the rules of the tournament, my dad hands me the net and says "You're going to have to net this one yourself." I set the hook and landed the biggest flounder of my life at that time.

As a nine-year-old kid I was ecstatic, but was clueless to what this flounder would do for my future. The fish I caught won the Starkids Scholarship Division, and I was awarded a \$50,000 scholarship.

After high school, I decided to continue my education and attend Texas State University. My love for the outdoors and conservation led me to pursue a degree in Resource and Environmental Studies with a minor in Geology. I graduated in December



Dylan Ybarra, the fisherman and  
Dylan Ybarra, the Graduate



**STAR has reached \$5,850,000 in scholarships awarded to children 6-17 years of age. Many thanks to our sponsors for making this happen. Without them, it would not be possible.**

2016, and I'm currently searching for opportunities to work with the environment.

Thank you CCA Texas and the STAR tournament for providing the opportunity to advance my education and set a strong foundation for me, as well as other CCA members. —Dylan Ybarra, Texas State University, 2016

Remember, YOUNG ANGLERS ages 6-17, just like Dylan, FISH FOR FREE with a CCA Youth (\$10) membership!! A \$10 CCA Youth membership and free CCA STAR registration for a chance to win one of many \$25,000 or \$50,000 chunks of free college is a great deal. We could not offer this without the



Nick Elliott with his STAR  
tagged redfish

story speak for itself!

On the morning of June 13, 2015 Nick decided to run out and fish the Port O'Connor jetties. After putting a red in the box and fishing a little while longer, Nick decided they better count to make sure that they were not over their limit. As Nick picked up his last fish he saw what thousands of anglers hunt for...a small tag that simply said 2015 CCA Texas STAR TAG #TA694! The extreme joy of this discovery soon turned into manic depression. Nick's usual launch spot offered instant STAR registration, but not seeing their live shrimp flag flying Nick decided to use a different launch and did not get to register. This was probably the biggest mistake of the weekend and everyone at the cleaning table let Nick know it. Even the game warden felt his pain.

Sadly, Nick did not get to pick up a new F-150 "Texas Edition" XLT SuperCab towing a new 23' Haynie Big Foot with a Mercury 150L Pro XS Optimax and Coastline trailer prize package. Remember, you have to be IN IT TO WIN IT!!

To be eligible to WIN one of \$1,000,000 in prizes being offered in Texas' largest, richest, summer-long fishing event, you must be a CURRENT member of CCA, in addition to being registered in the 2017 TEXAS STAR tournament. CCA membership is \$30 annually and the 2017 STAR Tournament fee is \$25, for a total of only \$55. Remember though, YOUNG ANGLERS FISH STAR FOR FREE.

Anglers between the ages of 6-17 can register for STAR for free with a \$10 CCA "Youth" annual membership. We want to help get all young people out on the water and we wouldn't be able to offer our CCA "Youth" members the chance to win one of a \$1,000,000 in prizes for FREE if it wasn't for our great sponsors. To be eligible to fish STAR for free, "Youth" members MUST BE at least 6 years of age in 2017 and under age 18. It is the "Youth" member's responsibility to make sure their CCA membership is current and that they are registered for the current year STAR tournament.

As you make your plans to head off to stock up on gear and register for STAR if you haven't already, be sure to be on the lookout for a very special bonus from our great sponsor Academy Sports + Outdoors, where you can find any gear you might need and register in person in one quick stop.

help of our many great sponsors that we hope you will continue to support so that we can continue to "Get Kids Off the X-Box, and In the Tackle Box!"

Just like putting off your 'honey-do' list, putting off your STAR registration can come back to bite you. Let Nick Elliott's



**BEST IN TEXAS**

**2017 Early Bird Drawings!**  
Remember, if you sign up by April 28<sup>th</sup> at midnight you are automatically entered into our "Early Bird" prize drawings. We are again offering the awesome GRAND PRIZE of a Dargel



# COLLECT THE 2017 STAR PLATINUM PRINTS



"IT'S ON"  
© David Drinkard



**TWO CHOICES...**  
*one great cause!*

*Proceeds from the sale of these limited-edition packages will help us continue to fund the STAR scholarships.*



"SCHOLARSHIP ON THE LINE"  
© Sam Caldwell

Act now to own ONE of these signed, limited-edition prints! Renowned artists Sam Caldwell and David Drinkard showcase their unique styles exclusively for CCA Texas STAR 2017. Pick your favorite or **BUY BOTH!**

CCA Membership and STAR registration included with your purchase ★ [ccatexas.org](http://ccatexas.org) ★ [startournament.org](http://startournament.org) ★ (713) 626-4222

2017 STAR early bird drawing deadline to enter is April 28<sup>th</sup>

**\*\*Grand Prize\*\***

*Dargel 210 Skout, Mercury 150 hp ProXS OptiMax, and McClain Trailer (must be 21 or over to win boat package)*

**\*\*20 More Great Prizes\*\***

9.9 hp Mercury Kicker Motor  
Three (3) rod and reel combos  
Thermo-Electric Travel Cooler & Warmer  
Fifteen (15) CCA Special Edition Posters)

210 Skout with a Mercury 150 ProXS OptiMax and a McClain trailer. See a list of some of the other great "Early Bird" prizes that we are offering below!

**CCA TEXAS MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS-** On top of helping to make this event what it is, our amazing sponsors continue to add value to your CCA Texas Membership. Remember to take advantage of the following benefits our sponsors provide through your CCA membership!

- 🔥 **Ford X-Plan Pricing** (see details below)
- 🔥 **\$10 gift card** courtesy of Academy Sports + Outdoors (see details below)
- 🔥 **Texas Fish & Game Magazine** online subscription (see details below)
- 🔥 **\$1,000 worth of free upgrades** with your purchase of a new Tilson home (see details below)
- 🔥 **Whataburger coupons** in the June/July issue of Currents

**Ford X-Plan Pricing-** CCA Texas members will again have the great honor from Texas Ford Dealers of using X-Plan pricing. For just a \$30 membership any CCA member can purchase (or lease) a Ford vehicle at Ford employee pricing!!! Our Ford Partner Code # is CCA 61; go to [www.fordpartner.com](http://www.fordpartner.com), if you are considering a purchase.

**SIGN-UP EARLY AND RECEIVE A SPECIAL BONUS FROM ACADEMY SPORTS + OUTDOORS-** Just one of many great reasons

to register for STAR is that Academy Sports + Outdoors will be mailing a \$10 gift card in May just in time for fishing season!! Thanks again to Academy Sports + Outdoors for this great benefit...and sponsoring **THREE \$25,000 SCHOLARSHIPS!!**



**TEXAS FISH & GAME MAGAZINE "BONUS ONLINE SUBSCRIPTION!"** Texas Fish & Game Magazine is back again this year offering a FREE one-year (12 issues) online subscription to all 2017 CCA Texas STAR participants. This subscription gives you access to the latest and most in-depth outdoors information anywhere. Whether you are lying in bed or sitting in the office, you will always have access. Include your email address on your registration form to receive your free subscription! If you prefer the print version don't worry! You can still receive a print version, while still having online access, for only \$8 a year (vs. \$17.99). Be on the lookout in your email or mailbox for details on how to activate this offer! If you have any questions regarding your past or current subscriptions, please call (800) 725-1134 or email [subscriptions@fishgame.com](mailto:subscriptions@fishgame.com).



**TILSON HOMES \$1,000 in FREE UPGRADES!** Every CCA Texas member who purchases a Tilson Home is eligible for \$1,000 in free upgrades such as ceramic tile, hardwood floors, cabinets and more. See their ad in the CCA Texas Currents newsletter for more details or call 1 (888) 540-6705.



**CCA Texas is pleased to announce Mustang® Cat has joined our family of sponsors.**

As the authorized dealer for Caterpillar, Mustang Cat is a Houston-based, family-owned business that has been active in the community since 1952. The company has recently invested in the region to upgrade its footprint.



These enhancements include Mustang's headquarters on U.S. 290 and a facility expansion in El Campo that will serve the company's customers for years to come. As lifelong Texans, they also recognize the value of investment in the great outdoors of the region they are proud to call home. CCA Texas is grateful to welcome Mustang Cat as a partner in our mission to ensure our marine resources are available for the enjoyment of future generations to come.

**CCA Texas STAR Platinum Print Membership Package, Series VII-** We're pleased to announce the new prints being offered for the 2017 CCA Texas STAR Platinum package are *It's On* and *Scholarship on the Line*, created by renowned artists **David Drinkard** and **Sam Caldwell**. We hope you love these prints as much as we do!

Your CCA Texas Platinum package includes your CCA membership (new or renewal), your 2017 CCA Texas STAR entry, plus one signed, limited-edition print of your choice created exclusively for STAR, all for only \$125!! These are one-of-a-kind prints worth this price alone. If you are considering one, or several, of these limited edition packages, go to: [www.startournament.org](http://www.startournament.org) for more details or to place your order with the STAR Department, call 713-626-4222.

**See above for images of both great art prints and full details.**

**2017 Prize Line-Up-** Our goal has always been to keep STAR fees as reasonable as possible. We would not be able to do this without our great sponsors! In 2002, we were able to begin offering youth (ages 6-17) the opportunity to fish the tournament for **FREE!** We have been blessed for 28 years to offer members of all ages amazing prize packages and college scholarships. This year's tournament will be

*STAR continues on page 6*

no different as we will be offering another spectacular prize line-up! This includes over 100 prizes including trucks, boats, motors, trailers and \$325,000 in college scholarships in the following categories:

**Texas Ford Dealers Redfish Division-** Texas Ford Dealers continue to make this division the "Best in Texas"! The first five registered STAR participants who catch a tagged redfish will receive a tough **2017 Ford F-150 Texas Edition** truck to tow their awesome **Haynie 23 Bigfoot**, rigged with a **Mercury ProXS OptiMax** sitting on a **Coastline trailer**. The next five anglers will receive the same boat, motor, and trailer package. Registered young anglers not of legal driving age who land a STAR tagged redfish, will receive the boat package plus a \$25,000 college scholarship, in lieu of the truck.



*Trout Division Prize: Mowdy 22' V boat with a 150 HP motor and Coastline trailer.*

**Trout Division-** Again this year, upper, middle, and lower coast region winners will each drive home with an awesome **Mowdy 22' V boat**, 150 HP motor and **Coastline trailer**. (Eight pound minimum weight, please release all fish under 27")

**Offshore Division-** Hoffpauir Auto & Outdoor Store is back again providing anglers who land the heaviest Kingfish, Dorado and Ling an awesome **Polaris Ranger Crew 570 EPS UV** in **Polaris Pursuit Camo** on top of a **Big Tex 35sa trailer** to cruise around in when you're back on shore!

**Inshore Division-** Registered anglers who turn in the heaviest flounder, gafftop and sheephead will get to drive off into the sunset pulling a new **Shoalwater 19' Cat** boat with a 115 HP motor, all on top of a **McClain trailer**.

**StarKid Division (ages 6-10, \$150,000 Total)**

**Flounder Division-** \$50,000 scholarship for heaviest flounder!!

**Gafftop Division-** \$50,000 scholarship for heaviest gafftop!!

**Sheepshead Division-** \$50,000 scholarship for heaviest sheepshead!!

**StarTeen Division (ages 11-17, \$175,000 Total):**

**Academy Sports + Outdoors Trout Division-** \$25,000 scholarship for heaviest trout in upper, middle and lower coast divisions!! (Minimum weight requirement of six pounds for entry)

**Gafftop, flounder and sheepshead-** Anglers with heaviest fish in each category will receive a \$25,000 college scholarship!!

**THE PRIZES DON'T END THERE!**

First through fourth runners-up in all divisions will receive various gift cards from our longtime partner **ACADEMY SPORTS + OUTDOORS!!**

**Youth Member Drawing-** All youth STAR participants (age 6-17) are eligible for a bonus drawing for a \$25,000 college scholarship, even without wetting a line!!

**Member Bonus Drawing-** One lucky STAR entrant will also take home a brand new **Dargel 210 Skout**, 150 HP motor, and **McClain trailer** simply for registering!



*Inshore Division - Shoalwater 19' Cat boat with a 150 HP motor and McClain trailer*



*Polaris Ranger Crew, the STAR Offshore Division first prize.*

Major sponsors for the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual CCA Texas STAR Tournament include:

Texas Ford Dealers, Tilson Home Corporation, Capital Farm Credit, Mercury Marine, Academy Sports + Outdoors, Whataburger, LP Building Products, Hoffpauir Polaris, Shiner Beer,

KTRK-abc13, Haynie Boats, Mowdy Boats of Texas, Shoalwater Boats, Dargel Boats, Texas Fish & Game Magazine, Coastline Trailers, McClain Trailers, Chris's Marine, Mt. Houston Marine

For more information, go to [www.startournament.org](http://www.startournament.org).

Thanks for supporting CCA Texas and the STAR Tournament!!



**FRIENDLY REMINDER...** If you're unsure a trout is large enough to qualify, consider this "easy rule-of-thumb" - If length is less than 27 inches, chances are it won't meet the eight pound minimum weight requirement for the Trout Division. Unless you intend to mount your fish as a personal best, why not think about releasing anything that might not make the cut so she can re-seed the bays.





# Habitat Today for Fish Tomorrow

## BUILDING A FUTURE FOR TEXAS MARINE HABITAT

### CCA Texas and BCT to invest \$530,000 towards habitat in 2017

By Kim Ogonosky  
Director of Communications  
and Media-CCA Texas

**Partnership with several conservation groups will benefit over \$4 Million in coastal habitat**

Coastal Conservation Association Texas (CCA Texas) and Building Conservation Trust (BCT), the national habitat program of CCA, have committed to an investment of \$530,000 towards marine habitat work along the Texas coast. Through several dedicated partnerships, this will equate to \$4.28 million in coastal habitat.

"It has been exciting to watch the natural partnership between CCA Texas and BCT grow," said John Blaha, director of CCA Texas's habitat program, Habitat Today for Fish Tomorrow (HTFT). "We are accomplishing so much in 2017 by working together, and this relationship will continue to produce great work."

BCT and CCA Texas are providing \$70,000 in funding towards the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program Egery Island Project. The funds for the \$1.2 million permitted project will enable up to seven acres of marsh to be planted off of Copano Bay.

Since inception, CCA Texas and BCT have supported the Rio Grande Valley Reef (RGV Reef) just north of the Brownsville Jetties. This project is led by the Friends of RGV Reef and will cover 1,650 acres, making it the largest permitted nearshore site in Texas. BCT and CCA Texas have previously invested \$200,000 into the RGV Reef, and have contributed an additional \$55,000 in 2017.

The Harte Research Institute (HRI), a longtime partner of CCA Texas and BCT, is conducting two scientific studies this year that the pair is supporting. The first is a study on the Port O'Connor "Keeping it Wild" Reef, which will provide an opportunity to substantially advance the science of artificial reef creation and show the value of this type of restoration work. The second is an Oyster Restoration Site Locator and Identification Mapping study, which will create a restoration tool for identifying suitable sites for restoration efforts. CCA Texas and BCT have invested \$50,000 and \$120,000 in these studies, respectively, in 2017.



*The Building Conservation Trust has a target of investing over \$3.5 million towards Texas marine habitat projects by the year 2021, equating to \$10 million in projects with similar partner organizations.*

planting event at Bird Island Cove. BCT and CCA Texas have provided previous support to the Bird Island Cove Marsh Restoration project, which will directly benefit approximately 114 acres of existing coastal wetlands in the Bird Island Cove area.

In 2017, Galveston Bay Foundation is receiving \$150,000 from CCA Texas and BCT towards the Moses Lake Shoreline Protection project, which will provide shoreline erosion protection for 1.3 miles of shoreline and restore up to 10 acres of intertidal marsh complex within Moses Lake.

"The projects receiving our investments in 2017 reflect BCT and CCA Texas's shared mission, cover a diversity of marine conservation goals and are spread along the state coast," said Sean Stone, executive director of BCT. "They will restore degraded habitats, create new habitats, advance the science of habitat restoration and conserva-



Photos by Lisa Laskowski

tion, and educate coastal communities on the value of conservation."

Through a highly successful matching funds program, BCT has garnered over \$9 million towards more than 37 coastal projects in the United States. In 2016, CCA Texas provided funds of \$1.8 million to BCT, which they are leveraging to bring in more funds. The Building Conservation Trust has a target of investing over \$3.5 million towards Texas marine habitat projects by the year 2021, equating to \$10 million in projects with similar partner organizations.

"CCA Texas and BCT are providing support to projects all along the Texas Gulf Coast," said Robby Byers, executive director of CCA Texas. "We are proud to partner with all of these like-minded marine conservation organizations, continue to build upon valuable relationships and be a part of the important habitat work they do."

The Building Conservation Trust (BCT) was founded in 2013 as the national marine habitat program of Coastal Conservation Association. BCT is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization exclusively dedicated to providing funding for local, state and national fisheries, habitat conservation and restoration projects. BCT has created a model for the successful collaboration of business, non-profit organizations and government agencies to revitalize critical habitat and establish a vibrant foundation for the marine ecosystem.





# CCA Texas Advocacy

By Shane Bonnot  
Advocacy Director – CCA Texas

**T**he Eastern Oyster is perhaps one of our most valuable coastal resources, providing critical habitat for fish and invertebrate species, shoreline stabilization, water quality enhancements and numerous other ecological functions. Sadly, oysters on Texas public reefs are under enormous pressure from commercial interests. Make no mistake, the commercial oyster industry is a big business, and historically oysters rank just behind shrimp as our most valuable commercial seafood product.

**T**he public oyster season is open from November 1 – April 30 of each year with harvest hours set from sunrise to 3:30 pm, coast-wide. There are a total of 35 public oyster harvest areas dually managed by Texas Health and Human Services (THHS) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD).

THHS can close a harvest area if there are any public health concerns, and typically you will see an approved area closed as a result of high rainfall, excessive runoff and/or harmful algae blooms. TPWD, on the other hand, manages the resource based upon abundance and can close an area if there are resource concerns or enforcement issues.

We are seeing a shift in the way the commercial oyster industry is conducting its fishing operations. Many of the vessels utilized nowadays are small, draft little water and are very mobile. They are pushing further back into secondary bay systems (i.e. St. Charles Bay, Carancahua Bay and Christmas Bay) that historically have not been fished, harvesting adjacent to home owners' fishing piers and getting out of boats to hand pick oysters from shallow waters.

**T**he simple truth is that there are not enough oysters remaining in Texas to fill our nation's demand

for this delicacy. TPWD routinely samples oyster reefs and will close a public harvest area if more than 65% of the sampled oysters are



smaller than the legal size, which is currently set at three inches.

At the time of this article submission, 23 of the 35 public harvest areas have been closed by TPWD. So let's look at it another way: Currently in the large ma-

jority of public harvest areas, less than 35% of our oysters measure greater than three inches. That statistic should alarm us all and certainly begs the question: Is there more that we could be doing to manage the oyster fishery?

CCA Texas is concerned about the status of the oyster fishery and is working with TPWD to develop solutions to this critical problem.

**I**n the meantime, if you have any concerns about a commercial oyster boat engaging in any illegal activity, such as harvesting in a closed area or keeping undersized oysters, please call Operation Game Thief at (800) 792-GAME (4263). If you would like to check on the status of a public harvest area, call the THHS hotline at (800) 685-0361.



Oyster boat photos by Rick Melcher  
Carancahua Bay Reef photo by Friends of RGV Reef  
Painting for Dallas 2017 banquet by Sam Caldwell







## Upper Coast

By Capt. Ruben Garza

### *More wind, more crowds, more catches*

Upper Galveston Bay in April/May means warmer weather, more wind, more crowds, and more catches—if mother nature is on your side.

I will start in April on the south shoreline on West Galveston bay near San Luis Pass and on certain days work up to the North shoreline of Alligator Point depending on the wind. I prefer to start wade fishing with top water lures (bone) and if nothing is chasing or blows up, then I go to Down South Lures (Chicken on the Chain). We will key in on bait, slicks or birds, fishing guts, drains or shell. If no luck, then we get back in the boat and move to Confederate or run to Campbells.

As we get into May we will be moving into East Galveston Bay checking Mosquito island, Half Moon reef and moving toward deeper shell along the south shoreline. We will be fishing deeper reefs so I prefer heavier jig heads (Down South Lures), but live shrimp under popping cork is going to be hard to beat this time of year. We will try some of the more popular reefs early like Peppers, Hannas or Deep and see if we can get a bite going. If we start getting bites then I will let some anchor rope out and fish it for a good while before moving again. Now these areas I mentioned are perfect for speckled trout, redfish and flounder.

But if that doesn't excite you and you want a little more thrill with a variety of fish, then you might want to try the Galveston jetties. This place can hold monster redfish, jacks, specks, sheepshead and so on. We offer a diverse fishery here in Galveston so come on down and see us. Eat what you need and release the rest for another fight! —**Capt. Vincent Garza** (832) 221-0889

[Npursuittx@gmail.com](mailto:Npursuittx@gmail.com), [NPursuitGuideService.com](http://NPursuitGuideService.com)

## Middle Coast

By Capt. Tommy Countz

### *Bruiser redfish and feisty specks, oh my!*

Get your hooks sharpened and get all your "honey do's" done, because West Matagorda Bay is notorious for giving up big bruiser redfish and feisty specks in April and May. Running across that south shore as the sun breaks over the horizon is a religious experience.

Early on, wet wading and topwaters are going to be the ticket. In West Bay I like to cruise near the shore, scanning the water for tell tale signs, then mount an attack. Work near shore with a pink Skitterwalk keying on active bait fish and slicks. Later, tie on a 1/16 or 1/8 ounce leadhead rigged with a Morning Glory (black) Mirrolure Marsh Minnow and start working the grass beds.

West Bay is my go-to bay for wading, but for drifting I usually opt for East Bay. Last year East Bay yielded some major league trout drifting in 5 to 6 feet of water, throwing live shrimp under a Mid-Coast popping cork using a 3-foot leader or tossing a 1/4 ounce lead head rigged with a Chicken on a Chain paddle tail. Areas to try are the scattered shell on the west end in the Raymond's Shoal reefs or the big mud flats south of Bird Island on the east end.

By May, start taking a hard look at the surf any time it gets flat and green. In Matagorda we have access to the beach front for 21 miles to the east and 25 miles to the west.

Tripletail! I'll be looking for them starting around the first of May in West Matagorda. The best way to get one on your line is to be standing in my boat with your check in my pocket.

April and May are magical months on the Texas coast and if you aren't a part of it then you just don't have your priorities in order. —**Capt. Tommy Countz** (281) 450-4037 [tcountz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tcountz@sbcglobal.net)

## Lower Coast

By Capt. Rene Hinajosa

### *Shedding of the waders and sightcasting*

Although some areas along the Texas coast didn't get that cold, shedding those heavy waders for the upcoming months will really feel great. Spring is upon us and the warmer weather will make for some great fishing as the water clears and the big girls start chasing baitfish. Clear April skies are beneficial for sight casting those elusive leftover monster fall trout looking to start sunbathing, but there will surely be some aggressive reds sunning as well.

The shallows will be the place to hunt down those bay predators. Norton sand eels and bull minnows of your choice and color combined with your precise casts and stealth moves will bring on that tight line and bent rod bend. Be sure and give your favorite topwater a try early in the morning.

May is usually a hot month, both in weather and trout numbers. Trout start to look for deeper grass beds, drop offs, and any kind of egg-laying areas to bed down for their first spawn of the season. When you also find those areas and fish properly, your numbers and quality of trout will be satisfying. Please remember to fish conservatively in these situations because the ladies and their gentlemen friends are spawning. Take care of our precious resource.

Whatever April or May brings in fishing or weather, remember to be safe, conservative, and respectful of our bay systems. Be vigilant in the water and respect your surroundings; the great outdoors belongs to all of us.

Thanks to all of those fine folks who have just done a great job helping Miller and Kathie Bassler clean that plastic-strewn beach. Tight lines to all, and have a great spring on and kin the the water, with or without those heavy waders. —**Captain Rene Hinojosa, Jr.** (956) 966-0719

*Kenneth Ryman sent this daybreak shot of nine-year old twins Hunter and Nicole. Look close and you'll find the spot on the red's tail. The fish went back for further duty.*





# CCA Texas Social Happenings

2017 has been exciting so far – from a busy spring banquet season, to the announcement of the \$530,000 habitat investment by the CCA Texas/ Building Conservation Trust (CCA's National Habitat Program) partnership!

Follow along on all of our social media platforms, listen to our podcast and subscribe to our YouTube channel, which features our award-winning habitat videos, to stay updated on the latest conservation coverage!

In each issue of *Currents*, CCA Texas will feature a recent Facebook photo, Twitter Tweet, and Instagram photo. Please "Like" our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter, Instagram and YouTube to get the latest updates from CCA Texas and become a part of the conversation! Want to submit a photo of a great catch or fun times at a CCA Texas event to be featured on one of our social media platforms? Email it to [kogonosky@ccatexas.org](mailto:kogonosky@ccatexas.org) for consideration!



## Facebook:

CCA Texas is proud to have partnered on Galveston Bay Foundation's Oyster Lake Shoreline Stabilization Project, with many other great organizations. It was an honor to be included in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southwest Region Annual "Partnership of the Year" Award for 2016, which was presented last week.

Thank you to our wonderful partners and dedicated members who make important projects like this possible!  
Photo: Galveston Bay Foundation

## Twitter:

@TexasGameWarden: Cameron County Game Warden Colby Hensz received Coastal Conservation Game Warden of the Year at the Corpus Christi @CCA\_Texas

## Instagram:

@shanebonnot: Really enjoyed talking with Dr. Lee Fuiman and Jeff Kaiser @utmsi in beautiful @portaransas about all things #fisheries #aquaculture #snook #redfish #trout #marine-science #portaransas #baitfish and #spawning fish. Link to @cca\_texas podcast is in bio.



**Facebook:** [facebook.com/CCATexas](https://facebook.com/CCATexas)  
**Twitter:** [twitter.com/CCA\\_Texas](https://twitter.com/CCA_Texas)  
**Instagram:** [instagram.com/ccatexas](https://instagram.com/ccatexas)  
**YouTube:** [youtube.com/ccatexasprojects](https://youtube.com/ccatexasprojects)  
**CCA Texas blog:** [ccatexas.org/blog](https://ccatexas.org/blog)



## CCA Communicators Dominate Top State Awards—Again

**La Toretta Lake Resort on Lake Conroe—The Texas Outdoor Writers Association (TOWA) presented awards for excellence in communications.**

**Kim Ogonosky, Heather Peterek and Pat Murray took great wins against tough competition.**

### Outdoor Television Video

1. Kim Ogonosky, "Oyster Lake Recreation Project," Jan. 25, 2016
2. Kim Ogonosky, "Dickinson Bayou Marsh," Sept. 1, 2016

**Judge's Comments:** It's not always easy to shoot a commercial video or short documentary but Kim Ogonosky seems to have found the formula. Her two videos are very good. There is an attempt at creativity, which is not easy, and the interviews are excellent. The angles for the shots,





both on people and landscape, are also excellent. Sound did not seem to be a problem, even shooting outdoors. Quality work for sure.

#### Outdoor Illustration/Graphic

1. Heather Peterek, "Anglers PhD," TIDE Magazine, May/June 2016.

**Judges' Comment:** Excellent!

#### Outdoor Publication – Under 25,000

1. "Rising Tide," Heather Peterek, Winter 2016

**Judges' Comments:** "Rising Tide" is the perfect magazine for young outdoors enthusiasts. It has everything from how to dress to what to do in a science class.

#### Outdoor Publication – Over 25,000

1. "TIDE" – September 2016, Pat Murray, Publisher.

**Judges' Comments:** It was an honor to judge these magnificent publications. TIDE is as good as they come – fantastic photography, excellent and pertinent articles and an up-to-date review of what is happening in the outdoors scenario.

#### Outdoor Column/Opinion Writing

2. Pat Murray, "Don't Miss the Flowers for the Weeds," TIDE Magazine, September 2016

#### Outdoor Webpage

3. Heather Peterek

"buildingconservation.org."

#### Special Projects - Conservation

1. Heather Peterek, "Raising White Sea Bass in Science Class," Rising TIDE Magazine, Summer 2016.

**Judges' Comments:** Heather Peterek's spread on raising white sea bass in the classroom is simply excellent."

The TOWA Keynote Spokesman, TPWD Warden **Grahame Jones**, talked about the challenges wardens face on coastal waters, and expressed his gratitude for all that CCA does to make the Texas outdoors a better place.

The TOWA Scholarship Committee said that one person stood out for her ability to communicate, exemplifying the qualities that the Dan Klepper Memorial Scholarship seeks to reward. **Jessie D. Story** of El Paso was the winner of the scholarship for the second consecutive year.

**David Sikes** of the Corpus Christi Caller Times and **Shannon Tompkins** of the Houston Chronicle, both contributors to CCA, won top awards. Both are past recipients of the L.A. Wilke Award, TOWA's highest honor for service to the Texas outdoors. This year's recipient was the Laredo CCA Chapter's **Marty Malin**. —Sam Caldwell



**Above: CCA communication rock stars Kim Ogonosky and Heather Peterek.**

**Below: David Sikes, Pat Murray and Ted Venker consider a Wyoming mule pack flyfishing trip offered as part of the TOWA Scholarship Committee Live Auction, benefitting Student Scholarships. The new TOWA Student member holding the sign is Louisa Torrance of Corpus Christi.**

**Right, TPWD Warden Grahame Jones provided an overview of the upcoming Texas legislature at a CCA Board Meeting, and also as Keynote Speaker at the TOWA conference in La Toretta.**

**Lower left, coastal writers David Sikes and Shannon Tompkins won primary awards.**

**President "Lefty" Chapa and Judy Mills present the Dan Klepper Scholarship Award to Jessie Story of El Paso. See page two of this Currents for Tompkins' feature article about CCA Crab Trap successes. And finally, one of the true greats of outdoor communications, Marty Malin of Laredo CCA, was presented the L. A. Wilke Award, TOWA's highest honor.**





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Editor, Sam Caldwell  
sam@samcaldwell.com  
This is the issue of April / May 2017  
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## Chapter Updates

**If you submitted images and they're not all published, you may find them on your chapter's web page, and your chapter's area in the CCA website: [www.ccatexas.org/chapters](http://www.ccatexas.org/chapters)**

### Alvin-Pearland

#### Emery Sadler 713-501-2778

Please join us for the 2017 Alvin/Pearland Chapter Annual Banquet on June 15! Our monthly General Meetings (Anglers' Night Out) are held at 7:00 pm on the first Tuesday of the month at Spring Creek BBQ, located at 9005 Broadway, Pearland, TX 77584. Check out our webpage for more info: [www.ccatexas.org/alvin-pearland](http://www.ccatexas.org/alvin-pearland). We will have a raffle at each meeting!

#### 2017 Chapter Meeting schedule:

April 4 – Speaker: Capt. Billy Penick, Gypsy Guide Service / May 2 – Speaker: Capt. Caleb Harp, Harp's Guide Service / June 6 – Speaker: TBD / September 5 – Speaker: TBD / October 3 – Speaker: TBD

We welcome new board members who would like to get plugged in. Our monthly chapter meetings have a great speaker lineup and fun raffles. Bring a friend, a kid and get plugged in! – Emery Sadler 713-501-2778

### Aransas Bay Bud Kittle 210-279-7309

[ernestkittle@gmail.com](mailto:ernestkittle@gmail.com)

**Registration for Babes on the Bay is up and running smoothly!** Online registration is used exclusively for this tournament. Remember, one person registers the entire team. Make sure everyone's correct information is provided. The last day for regular registration is April 15, 2017. All registrations received after this date and prior to the April 30, 2017 cutoff date will pay a late registration fee, so get 'er done soon at [www.babesonthebay.com](http://www.babesonthebay.com)! If you have any questions, email Karol at [CCABabes@gmail.com](mailto:CCABabes@gmail.com). This year's Babes on the Bay Tournament is May 19-20 at Fulton Harbor.

Also mark, your calendars for the 2017 Aransas Bay Chapter Annual Banquet August 12! Catch 'em up – Bud Kittle

### Austin

#### Josh Cook 512-656-2964

Fellow CCA Members – Your wait is nearly over! The 2017 Austin Chapter Annual Banquet, presented by Covert Chevrolet and Independence Title, is just around the corner. Mark your calendar, purchase your table, and plan to rally for your organization on May 11. It was through your support that the Austin Chapter was able to break the \$1M revenue mark again in 2016. There will be top-notch food, drinks for all and Charlie Robison on stage. Up for grabs will be exotic trips, tons of guns and fishing gear, Yetis, boats, trucks and over \$100,000 worth of raffle items! With all that on the agenda the evening will prove to be exciting. Go to [www.ccaustin.org](http://www.ccaustin.org) for table and ticket sales as well as any additional info. Seating for this banquet is sure to sell out, so don't delay in purchasing your spot!

A special thanks goes out to all of our gener-



Austin's 2017 Shallow Sport Classic, with an Evinrude E-TEC G-2 175HP outboard.

ous sponsors. It's through their commitment to CCA that the Austin Banquet shines like no other. Space constraints don't allow us to acknowledge all of our sponsors in this newsletter. Please take a minute and check out the complete list of sponsors on [www.ccaustin.org](http://www.ccaustin.org). These folks support the mission of CCA and, as members of CCA, we should all support their businesses as often as possible.

Shallow Sport has done us proud once again. Our banquet raffle boat – a 20-foot Shallow Sport Classic, is equipped with an Evinrude E-TEC G-2 175HP outboard and has custom casting platforms with tons of aluminum. She has about every option imaginable. Sitting on a McClain Custom trailer, it's a stunningly beautiful rig ready to explore any water of your choosing. Go to [www.ccaustin.org](http://www.ccaustin.org), buy a ticket and she may be yours on May 11! Or if you find yourself in Buda, visit Cabela's and get a first-hand look – she's sitting out front. There are limited tickets for a chance to win this beauty. So, once again, I suggest you don't delay! One final word – be sure to "Like" CCA Austin on Facebook, and spread the word. See you on May 11! – Josh Cook

### Bay Area

#### Curtis Anderson 832-435-0257

### Brazoria County

#### Wes Dingee 979-299-8245

It is with a heavy heart that I announce the Brazoria County Chapter has lost one of its founding members. Lloyd W. Pepper has passed at the age of 86. Lloyd and his surviving wife Cookie have been

## Caught Redhanded!

### Reports from TP&W Game Wardens

After hearing rumors of flounder being caught over the bag limit, Calhoun County Wardens Robert Dominguez and Ben Bailey began an investigation. After several hours of patient waiting they made

contact with two local men.

The men were in possession of 32 Flounder over the bag limit. The men were also in possession of three undersized flounder. Multiple cases were filed and bids were taken for the over bag limit fish.



Texas Game Wardens serving Texans  
since 1895 Law Enforcement  
Off the Pavement



## Here's to two new CCA-Texas supporters



### CCA Board of Director's Meeting,

Houston, Feb. 21 – Exec. Dir. Robby Byers said, "We are extremely excited to have PAPA'S Pilar and Dripping Springs come on board as sponsors this year. They will be attending many of our upcoming banquets offering sample tastings, so please let them know how much we appreciate their support." Ryan Forsyth, left, and John Lamey hosted a short Happy Hour after the meeting.

Forsyth offered samples of the various types of rum from Key West, Florida, named in honor of Ernest Hemingway. He said PAPA'S PILAR® is proud to welcome CCA members to the new Key West Distillery and Brand Center. Take a visit to their website: <http://papas pilar.com/admin/distillery/>

Lamey noted that Dripping Springs Vodka won Gold Best in Class and the Vodka Purity Trophy at the International Wine & Spirit Competition in 2008, the ONLY American Vodka to have won the Vodka Purity Trophy in 47 years of the IWSC. He suggested CCA members visit San Luis Spirits at the Dripping Springs website: [www.drippingspringsvodka.com/](http://www.drippingspringsvodka.com/)







*This is what a full house looked like at the Corpus Christi banquet, March 9, 2017. Photo by John Blaha.*

board members for over 30 years. Lloyd was best known for his custom-made fishing rods "Rods by Pepper". Since 1962, Lloyd has made over 6,000 of these beauties, and I'm proud to say I have worn out many fish with them.

He and his wife have also both logged thousands of volunteer hours at Sea Center Texas hosting kid fishing events. Up until his passing you could find him in the surf at the ripe age of 85 – if we all could only be so lucky. I hope there are big fish and no backlashes in heaven, Lloyd, and save one for us. You will not be forgotten. – Kyle Harris

### Brazos Valley

**John Ben Strother 979-220-1738**

[jbsunlimited@yahoo.com](mailto:jbsunlimited@yahoo.com)

I am happy to report that the Matagorda Bay Chapter is in full swing for the year! We have finalized a raffle boat and will be printing tickets soon. This year's boat will be a fully rigged 25' Dargel Kuda powered by a 250 Yamaha SHO. The boat sits on a double axel Coastal Trailer.

Cleve Ford and the guys at Dargel did a great job rigging the boat. Polasek Construction has once again stepped up to be a Boat Sponsor – They have been on each of our chapter boats since we started the Boat Sponsor option a few years back. Be on the lookout for the boat around the area and a chance to buy a ticket. If you are not in the area to buy a boat ticket, call Wesley Smolik at (979) 543-2753. Be sure to mark your calendars for our 2017 Matagorda Bay Chapter Annual Banquet on June 29 at the El Campo Civic Center!

The chapter's 12th Annual Lil' Salties Fishing Blowout is scheduled for May 14, 2017 at the Matagorda Harbor. Chapter members should receive entry forms in the mail. Parents, be sure to get them filled out and mailed back ASAP so we can plan another great tournament! Last year we had a great year with 225 kids coming out for a day of fun. Every entry receives a prize bag, trophy and t-shirt. If you are interested in donating to this great event, or have any questions, contact Lynn Staff ([ltstaff@yahoo.com](mailto:ltstaff@yahoo.com)) or Thomas Gold ([tagold@elc.net](mailto:tagold@elc.net)). Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the chapter. – Chad Hensley (979) 543-2734

### Brenham

**Brandon Marth 979-277-0151**

Our monthly meetings will be held on the last

Thursday of the month at Mike Hopkins Distributing. **The 2017 Brenham Chapter Annual Banquet will be held at Silver Wings Ballroom on April 27.** Thanks, – Brandon Marth

### Brush Country

**Brenda Ballard 361-296-4037**

Once again the Brush Country chapter of CCA Texas will be hosting our Annual Dean Ash Memorial Baffin Bay Shoot-Out on May 27, 2017. The tournament entry fee is \$20, and you must be a CCA member. No entry fee is required for New Tide members. This is a great way to start the STAR Tournament! For more information please contact Brenda at [brushcountrycca@gmail.com](mailto:brushcountrycca@gmail.com). – Brenda Ballard

### Centex

**Wayne Webb 254-405-1300**

[sheyhunt@aol.com](mailto:sheyhunt@aol.com)

### Central Houston

**Todd Buster**

**713-545-1897**

**The 41st Annual Central Houston Chapter Banquet will be held on Thursday, April 27, 2017 at the Bayou City Event Center, located at 9401 Knight Road, Houston, Texas.** Thanks to a very generous member, this year we will be raffling off a 2011 18' Hell's Bay Waterman powered by a 2011 Yamaha 70 hp outboard. If you are interested in purchasing a table for the banquet, a raffle ticket for the boat or becoming involved in the Central Houston Chapter,

please contact Todd Buster at [tbuster@busterandcogdellbuilders.com](mailto:tbuster@busterandcogdellbuilders.com) or Ian Beliveaux at [ibeliveaux@donatominxbrown.com](mailto:ibeliveaux@donatominxbrown.com). – Ian Beliveaux

### Colorado Valley

**Eugene Ulrich 979-249-7425**

Greetings from the Colorado Valley! Our chapter has been working very hard and having a lot of fun doing it. Recently we put on two of the "Fish Fries for 20 People" we sold at last year's banquet.

Our first fry was January 21 in Flatonia, which was purchased for the second year in a row by Cecil Delgado with Masonry Works. A truly enjoyable evening was had by all. Those chapter members in attendance were Stephen, Matthew and Kenneth LeFrance; Rusty Kubena; Danny Olenick; Gary Janda; and Verlene and Eugene Ulrich.

Our second fish fry was held a week later on January 29 in Winchester and was purchased by Murphy's Steakhouse in Winchester, also for the second year in a row. Richard and Georgianna Orona, owners of Murphy's Steakhouse, are longtime

supporters of our chapter. The chapter members who participated in this Fry were Bo and Laurie Janda; Rusty and Trish Kubena; Verlene and Eugene Ulrich; and Gary Janda. It was held at the residence of Mr. Corky Palmer, and what wonderful hosts he and Monterrey Grant were! Everyone truly enjoyed the evening. We encourage anyone who attends our banquet to bid it up, and maybe they too can enjoy one of these great events!

Our chapter is also very busy planning and getting ready for our 2017 Annual Chapter Banquet on March 30, which will be held before this update is published.

I recently had the wonderful opportunity to fish with some of my best friends down in the Laguna Madre out of Corpus Christi. We had a great day fishing while fighting the wind and waves, and we really made the fish cleaning guy back at the dock work pretty hard. Wishing tight lines and bent rods to all! – Eugene Ulrich 979-249-7425

### Corpus Christi

**Jake Herring 361-244-0258**

[jakecherring@hotmail.com](mailto:jakecherring@hotmail.com)

Happy Spring Fellow Conservationists. Our chapter is breathing a sigh of relief and also celebrating that our 39th Annual Fundraising Banquet is now behind us. I want to start off by thanking the dedication and commitment of our local board to make our 39th banquet a huge success. The list is too long to name each one of you but I sincerely appreciate all you do for the Corpus Christi Chapter.

We could not celebrate our successes without the steadfast support from our sponsors. The Corpus Christi Chapter would like to give a big thanks to all of our sponsors. No matter how big or how small, each one of you has a part in helping Coastal Conservation Association be the success that it has become.

The organization that was founded some 40 years ago has the same core values today as it did in 1977. I would like to think that those men who set out to 'Save the Redfish' would all be proud of what we have accomplished in their wakes. Whether you donated raffle item or sponsored a trip it all helps toward our end goal of conserving, promoting and enhancing marine resources for the benefit and enjoyment of the public.

A special thanks goes out to our Gold, Silver, and Bronze Level sponsors. Gold Level: AutoNation Chevrolet Cadillac South Corpus Christi, Academy Sports + Outdoors, Andrews Distributing Company, Flint Hills Resources, and L&F Distributors.

Silver Level: Corpus Christi Cycle Plaza, Corpus Christi Caller Times, Majek Boats, and Premier Yamaha Boating Center.

Bronze Level: Access Storage, Augs Services, Berkeley Eye Center-Corpus Christi, Borden Insurance, C&S Plating & Bumper Recycling, Center for Sportfish Science and Conservation, Cooper Outdoor Advertising, Davidson Capital Management, Grunwald Printing, HRI for Gulf of Mexico



**Studies, Lamar Advertising, Marker 37, Physicians Premier Emergency Room, Pipe Pros, Ron Hoover Marine, Sentinel Integrity Solutions, The Boat Stop, Total Oilfield, and UTMSI.**

The Corpus Christi chapter was also honored to present two awards at the recent banquet. **Jace Tunnell** received our Conservationist of the Year award and his father **Dr. Wes Tunnell** received a Life Time Achievement award. Their work spans from ground-up involvement in local volunteer based conservation projects (Jace) all the way to researching Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean coral reef communities (Wes).

Not too often is our chapter given the opportunity to acknowledge a great pair of stewards of our marine resources.

We look forward to seeing everyone soon. Remember as summer approaches and everyone heads out to hit the water... boat safe, be respectful on the water, and take a kid fishing. Yours in Conservation, —**Jake Herring**

**Dallas / North Texas**  
**Bill Graswich 214-226-2118**  
[wbgaswich11@gmail.com](mailto:wbgaswich11@gmail.com)

Hello CCA Dallas Area Members, and welcome to Spring 2017! I hope you've had a chance to get "south" for a little inshore or offshore fishing already. If you are of that certain age with school aged kids or grandkids, "Spring Break" was a great time to drive down – maybe with a couple stops along the way to photograph some bluebonnets or paint brushes in bloom. Some of my best memories of family are trips to the Texas Gulf Coast – as I suspect, so are yours. A favorite beach, a favorite pier you fished on with your parents or brother or sister. Going crabbing. How were your sand castle building skills? Feeding those loud laughing sea gulls – it was like a scene out of a Hitchcock movie! It is a connection with nature and family, of sights, sounds, even smells. A sunrise walk on the shoreline – wondering what treasure from Jean Laffite's pirate ship might have washed ashore during the night. Being There. That is why many of us put so much into supporting CCA Texas and our mission to preserve and keep these "special places" special.

This spring and summer I hope you'll also be able to come out to some CCA Dallas functions we're putting together. If you were able to attend the March 11-12 Fly Fishing and Craft Beer Festival in Plano – you hopefully came by the CCA Dallas booth and said hello.

**On Thursday, April 20 – we have the 36th (Thirty-Sixth - wow!) Annual Dallas Chapter Banquet at Frontiers of Flight Museum (over near Love Field).** Having been to a few of these over the years, I can say that the lineup for this year's event is even better. The quality of the donations we've been receiving, the trips and live auction items, and the food and beverage selection are all just wonderful.

**And this year's Banquet Honoree is Mr. Rick Pope of TFO Rods – a great friend of CCA Texas and manufacturer of some of the best casting, spinning and fly rods made today.** Thank you to Rick and his staff at TFO for all they do for CCA!

If you guys aren't on summer vacation and out of town, **on Thursday, June 22 the second annual "Hooked on Clays" Sporting Clays Shoot will be at the Dallas Gun Club (near Lewisville).** If you were there last year you know this is a top of the line shooting facility. We had great food and very cool prizes for the best shooters and teams (and worst shooter), and simply an enjoyable day busting little clay pigeons going high speed in wild directions. Way cool! Please get with three of your friends (four person teams) and join us this year. If you don't have three other buddies, we can help you put together a foursome.

**Check us out online on our Facebook page, Dallas CCA, as well as the CCA Texas Dallas Chapter Page: [www.ccatexas.org/dallas](http://www.ccatexas.org/dallas), for information regarding events, dates, ticket prices, the**

latest updates on how you can participate and news about what CCA Texas is doing throughout the state.

Go share the Texas Gulf Coast with your family and friends this spring and summer. And when you can't get those few days off to go south, then come join your Dallas CCA chapter for some fun events which is sort of like...Being There. Best Regards, Amigos – **Bill Graswich** [wbgaswich11@gmail.com](mailto:wbgaswich11@gmail.com)

**East Texas**  
**Brent Rogers 936-554-4866**  
[brent.rogers@merck.com](mailto:brent.rogers@merck.com)

**Fort Bend**  
**Welcome new president**  
**Donnie Powers 281-850-9023**

Fort Bend is already off to a busy start for 2017! We only made one change during our election of officers during our January meeting. **Blake Tumlinson will continue to serve as our Vice president, Robert Oliver as Treasurer and Jim Black as Secretary.** Robb Gaston has moved into a supporting role. **I, Donnie Powers, will be serving as President.** I want to thank everyone for having faith in me (I think – ha ha...).

**In February, we held our first General Membership Meeting** in quite some time. We would like to thank **Steve Onstead and The Swinging Door** for hosting the meeting, as well as providing beverages and some very tasty sandwiches for us to munch on. We would also like to thank **CCA National President Pat Murray** for coming out to speak on the general state of the Organization.

Now we are in the process of finalizing all the details for our **2017 Annual Fort Bend Chapter Banquet coming up on April 20 at the Fort Bend County Fairgrounds.**

For our raffle this year, we will be giving away a 2017 Polaris Ranger 570 Crew w/ a 14' Big Tex trailer, a Kimber Ultra Carry two-tone .45 ACP, a Beretta A300 Outlander Camo 12 ga., a S&W AR-15 M&P Sport II, an Engel 123qt Cooler, an Engel 80qt Cooler, an Engel 65qt Cooler, a WaterLoo Baitcast Rod & Concept Reel, a WaterLoo Spinning Rod & Shimano Reel and a WaterLoo Ladies Baitcast Rod & Concept Reel. Tickets are \$20.00 each and can be purchased from any Fort Bend Board Member or by contacting me at (281) 850-9023, Robb Gaston at (281) 239-9755 or Blake Tumlinson at (979) 332-2236. For pre-sale Banquet tickets, contact **Kyle Johnson** at (713) 545-1147. We are looking forward to having another great turnout!!!

We are also starting to make plans for our **Annual Kid Fish Tournament** as well as **Lingerie on the Bay.** We will announce dates, times, etc. as plans are finalized.

**The Fort Bend Chapter meets on the second Thursday of the month at The Swinging Door in Richmond.** We welcome all interested in attending. For details, feel free to contact me via call or text at (281) 850-9023 or email at [dpowers11450@gmail.com](mailto:dpowers11450@gmail.com). — **Donnie Powers**

**Fort Worth**  
**Hunter Baird 817-437-8351**  
Thursday, March 23 is our next General Membership Meeting at Wild Acre Brewing at 6:00 pm. Your local board will be providing food and beverages. We will have some raffle prizes to go around as well, if you are interested in purchasing a raffle ticket or two. The Brewery is located at 1734 E. El Paso St. #190, Fort Worth, TX 76102 in the old Ranch Style Beans factory. It is between

I-35W and 287 set back off of Lancaster Ave. behind the T. You will go south on Pine St., then east on E. El Paso and come into the brick wall entrance. Wild Acre will be on your right. We use this meeting to meet new friends, say thank you to all of our supporters and encourage folks to get involved.

Shortly after our General Membership Meeting we will have our **2017 Fort Worth Chapter Annual banquet on May 11 at the historic and beautiful Joe T. Garcia's beginning at 6:00 pm.** Be on the lookout for table sponsor opportunities as well as individual tickets. Feel free to contact **Hunter Baird** at [bairdhunter@gmail.com](mailto:bairdhunter@gmail.com), or **Taylor Rieck** at [treick@cctexas.org](mailto:treick@cctexas.org) if you are interested in attending or being a sponsor. We have some tremendous benefits for our sponsors, and it's a great evening for all who can attend. Each year is always one for the record books, with a bountiful live auction and quite the catch for our raffle and silent auctions as well. You don't want to miss this! — **John Black**

**Galveston**  
**Dr. Ken Ellis 713-962-7731**

Hello all anglers! Spring has come to the Texas coast very early this year, which means the birds are already working in the east and west bays of Galveston, so get out when you can.

**We will be having a General Meeting on April 13 at Beerfoot Brewery, located at 2816 Avenue R 1/2 just off the Seawall at 6:30 pm.** Please come out for this meeting – We will have different speakers, and it will be very interesting to hear what they have to say.

**Mark your calendars for our 2017 Galveston Chapter Annual Banquet, which will be held on July 29 at Moody Gardens!** Tickets will be available soon for tables as well as individuals. We also have tickets for our 23' Haynie Big Foot boat that will be given away the night of our banquet. Only 500 tickets for the boat will be sold. If you're in need of a ticket, please call!

Hope to see you all on the water in my orange Transport that turned 16 years old this year! Please only keep the fish you plan to eat, clean up after yourself and be courteous to other boaters and waders. Tight Lines!

Hook'em – **Ken**

**Golden Triangle**  
**Jason Kuchera 903-780-8618**  
[jlkuchera@yahoo.com](mailto:jlkuchera@yahoo.com)

Spring is here on the Upper Coast! Numbers of fish should start to increase, but with that comes more boat traffic on the water. Make sure that we always remember to stay courteous while out there in search of the BIG ONE!

**The 2nd Annual Anglers Night** out was a great catch (pun intended)! Our very own National President **Pat Murray** spoke, talk about an honor and a privilege to have him there. If you have not heard his message or felt the excitement he portrays about CCA I highly recommend you do so if given the opportunity.

President Murray spoke about the 40 Years of CCA and it will light or re-light that fire of wanting to be a part of this great organization, that is CCA. **Save the date, May 25th is just around the corner so get ready for the Golden Triangle CCA Banquet that will be held at the Beaumont Civic Center. Get your table now!!**

Want a chance of winning this years "BIG TICKET RAFFLE ITEM"? The Golden Triangle Chapter is raffling off a **Haynie 23' Bigfoot Boat** at this year's banquet (need not be present to win). Contact any chapter board member or **Drew Adams** ([dadams@cctexas.org](mailto:dadams@cctexas.org)) for information on how to obtain raffle tickets. Want to become more active or join CCA for the first time? Don't hesitate to call, we are currently recruiting new Board Members! — **CPT Jason Kuchera**

**Greater Sugar Land**  
**Robert Bailey 713-819-5534**  
[rbailey@robertbaileypc.com](mailto:rbailey@robertbaileypc.com)

**The Greater Sugar Land Chapter is on the home stretch of preparations for our 2017 Annual Banquet on April 6 at the Stafford Centre!** Please join us for dinner (crawfish or catfish) and a fun evening raising money for CCA – We'd love to have you! **The bar (wine and beer) opens at 5:00,**





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and dinner is served from 6:00 to 7:30, followed by our live auction and raffle. We've got a few surprises in store as well!

I am sorry to report the death of our dear friend and member, **David Kveton**, on February 2. David was a past Chapter President and an active board member for years. And he was crazy about fishing. He and his wife, Judy, worked hard to make our Kids Fish program a success, most notably by bringing the Kids Fish trailer to fruition last year. David, you will be sorely missed.

We've settled into our new venue for our general meetings: **Otto's Barbeque, 11222 Fountain Lake Dr, in Stafford**. The 'Q' is good, and they've been very accommodating. Our February speaker was **Capt. Ralph Frazier**, who concentrates on guiding in Galveston Bay. He's been guiding since 1973 and shared a lifetime's worth of valuable tips. **Joe Moughon, aka Chickenboy**, will regale us at our March 1 meeting with his fishing tips and tall tales. He's also going to introduce three new lures which will be seen for the first time by the public at our meeting! **It's all good!** —Bob Bailey

### Greater Woodlands

**Charlotte O'Dell 832-368-8263**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater Woodlands Chapter Banquet will be held on Thursday, May 18, 2017 at The Grand Palace, located at 314A Pruitt Road in Spring (Behind Papa's Ice House). Doors open at 6:00 pm, so come on out and join us for a REEL fun night of dinner, drinks, auctions, raffles and good old fundraising fun!

There's still time left to get your individual tickets or sponsor a table. Contact Drew Adams at [dadams@ccatexas.org](mailto:dadams@ccatexas.org) or (713) 626-4222. We'll have a REEL good time! —Charlotte O'Dell

### Guadalupe Valley

**Chuck Howard 361-275-9464**

[chuck.howard@att.net](mailto:chuck.howard@att.net)

Yoakum, Texas was the site of the first quarterly chapter meeting that featured an awesome fish fry. Chapter members donated fresh fillets, sides, desserts and drinks. Frying all of this fish for 45 people is no easy task, but members stepped up, got the grease hot and fried 'em. As usual, there was more food than 45 members could consume, so many people left with plenty of fried fish to munch at a later date!

**Michael Okruhlik, founder of My Coast Outdoors**, brought his Controlled Descent Lure presentation and if you haven't had a chance to see or use a Controlled Descent lure, do so. The lure is a perfect choice for our coastal area, allowing you to fish over grass in the water column where the fish are - not in the grass. It was a perfect lure presentation for an excellent event! Check it out.

Thursday, April 20 at the Anna Koch Pavilion in Cuero will be the site for the second quarterly chapter meeting at 6:00 pm. We are going to have a massive crawfish boil with all of the trimmings, general meeting and hopefully a drawing for gear. It's a BYOB event so make plans now to RSVP so we can get a good head count. You need to have a number issued from your RSVP to be able to eat, so RSVP today!

On June 10, 2017 the Guadalupe Valley Chapter will defend the back-to-back CCA/ICC championships against the rest of Texas. We are all excited about trying to "Threepeat" the effort, so we know it will be a hot topic at the general meeting in April. Take a kid fishing and change their life showing them the wonders of nature and stewardship of the resource - and have fun! —Chuck Howard

### Hays County

**Tim Young 512-573-7939**

[hayscountyycca@gmail.com](mailto:hayscountyycca@gmail.com)

**Heart of the Hills**  
**Kelly Parks 210-669-3732**  
[bucksdelucks@yahoo.com](mailto:bucksdelucks@yahoo.com)

**Hill Country**  
**Miles Engelke 210-260-8968**

I met with our Executive Board members on March 2 at Blake's Restaurant to plan out our 2017 chapter events. They are outlined below:

April 2 will be our 5th Annual Social at the Red Barn in Seguin.

May 12 we will be hosting the crawfish boil that was purchased at last year's live auction by Todd Hoffman.

May 16 will be our first General Meeting. Our speaker will be Captain Nathan Beabout (N&M Sportsman's Adventures). Nathan has guided fishing trips and duck hunting trips on the Middle Texas Coast in Seadrift, Texas since 2007. He's fished from San Antonio Bay to Cedar Bayou and Port Mansfield. His preferred method of fishing is to wade fish artificial. Make plans to attend.

June 3 will be our chapter fishing tournament for HCCA members only. For more information contact Darlene Cook at (830) 214-3067. / July 18 will be our second General Meeting (Program TBD).

August 24 will be our 2017 Hill Country Chapter Annual Banquet at the Civic Center in New Braunfels Texas, so mark your calendars! For ticket information call Todd Thetford at (830) 660-8825. October 24 will be our third General Meeting (Program TBD).

Our tournament and meeting sponsors this year are CEMEX, Creative Eyewear, FAPCO, Fishers of Men RV, KGNB/KNBT, Power Engineering Services, Redfish Bay Boathouse Redfish Willies, Reel Um Inn On The Bay, Sandollar Resort, Stay Tuff, Whitaker Insurance Associates, Kontiki Resort and 1st Source Digital.

All General Meetings will be held at Elks Lodge in New Braunfels, Texas. Looking forward to an exciting 2017! Come join the fun. Cast me a call if you would like to get involved with our chapter. **Treasure the Trips —Miles Engelke**

### Houston Homebuilders

**Mack Davis 832-381-6130**

Mark your calendars for the 3rd Annual Houston Homebuilding Chapter Banquet on Thursday, April 6, 2017! It will be held at the Norris Center located at City Centre at I-10 and the Beltway.

There will be plenty of live and silent auction items, great food and builders and vendors from the Houston homebuilding industry. For ticket or table purchase information, call Mack at (832) 381-6130.

I'd also like to welcome our new Chapter President, Jimmy Reid of Newmark Homes, who will be taking over chapter responsibilities after our April banquet. Jimmy has been serving as a founding board member since we began the chapter in 2014, and I look forward to working with him in his new role. —Mack Davis

### Houston Real Estate

**Dale Couch**

**281-953-2510**

**Katy**

**Gary Mancinich**

**281-850-2212**

[gman091753@aol.com](mailto:gman091753@aol.com)

**Laredo**

**Javier C. Villarreal 956-206-7953**

[jcvillarreal13@gmail.com](mailto:jcvillarreal13@gmail.com)

**Lee County**  
**Jake Horne 979-540-6117**

**Live Oak**  
**T.J. Harkness 832-723-6723**  
[tandmenenergy@gmail.com](mailto:tandmenenergy@gmail.com)

It's been a great start to spring with the fishing on the coast being perfect. So get out there and take advantage of the perfect weather to catch that trophy fish.

**The date has been set for the Live Oak Chapter annual banquet: June 1st, we open the doors at 6:00 PM. Come join us for food fun and awesome prizes.** The live auction will have something for everyone from Costa Rica fishing trips to deer hunting in south Texas. We will still have the same great food lineup as past years, with stuffed flounder, southwest chicken and all the fixins. Tables are still available for purchase and tickets at the door.

Take a chance at the Sportsman's Raffle with lots of great prizes. To get more information on tables or to buy raffle tickets contact one of our board members or my self. Look forward to seeing you there. Tight lines!!! —T.J. Harkness  
[tandmenenergy@gmail.com](mailto:tandmenenergy@gmail.com) (832) 723-6723

**Lower Colorado Stephen Zapalac**  
**972-244-6633**

[stephen.zapalac@capitolfarmcredit.com](mailto:stephen.zapalac@capitolfarmcredit.com)

### Mainland

**Eric Minor 409-370-7379**

### Matagorda Bays

**Chad Hensley 979-541-3239**

I am happy to report that the Matagorda Bay Chapter is in full swing for the year! We have finalized a raffle boat and will be printing tickets soon. This year's boat will be a fully rigged 25' Dagrel Kuda powered by a 250 Yamaha SHO. The boat sits on a double axel Coastal Trailer.

Cleve Ford and the guys at Dargel did a great job rigging the boat. Polasek Construction has once again stepped up to be a Boat Sponsor - They have been on each of our chapter boats since we started the Boat Sponsor option a few years back. Be on the lookout for the boat around the area and a chance to buy a ticket. If you are not in the area to buy a boat ticket, call Wesley Smolik at (979) 543-2753. **Be sure to mark your calendars for our 2017 Matagorda Bay Chapter Annual Banquet on June 29 at the El Campo Civic Center!**

The chapter's 12th Annual Lil' Salties Fishing Blowout is scheduled for May 14, 2017 at the Matagorda Harbor. Chapter members should receive entry forms in the mail. Parents, be sure to



Matagorda Bays' 25' Dagrel Kuda powered by a 250 Yamaha SHO.

get them filled out and mailed back ASAP so we can plan another great tournament! Last year we had a great year with 225 kids coming out for a day of fun. Every entry receives a prize bag, trophy and t-shirt. If you are interested in donating to this great event, or have any questions, contact Lynn Staff



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MidCoast's 22'-6" Mowdy with a 175 Horsepower Suzuki and dual axle coastline trailer.

([ltstaff@yahoo.com](mailto:ltstaff@yahoo.com)) or Thomas Gold ([tagold@elc.net](mailto:tagold@elc.net)). Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the chapter. —Chad Hensley (979) 543-2734

**MidCoast**  
**Danny Goyen 361-564-7471**  
[goyenfishing@yahoo.com](mailto:goyenfishing@yahoo.com)

Welcome, Midcoast Chapter CCA members and board members! A big thanks goes to the current Midcoast board members who have already put it in overdrive to make our big **2017 Annual Chapter Banquet on April 28** a guaranteed success. Another big thanks goes to Dr. Burns for putting together a sold out General Meeting on March 2 with speakers Dr. John McNeill and Capt. Danny Goyen at Frances Maries Restaurant. We have two of these events a year to attract and encourage new men and women to get involved and see what CCA is all about.

We are still selling tickets for our awesome 22'-6" Mowdy, and they are going fast. We are only selling 700 tickets at \$100 each. If you would like to purchase one, call David Jenkins at (361) 648-9185

or Danny Goyen at (361) 564-7471. Feel free to contact me for more details about the boat or our banquet on April 28. — Thanks, Capt. Danny Goyen

**Northeast Houston**  
**Jason Law**  
**713-898-8594**

[jlaw1899@yahoo.com](mailto:jlaw1899@yahoo.com)  
**Save The Date for the 2017 Northeast Houston Chapter Annual Banquet on Saturday, April 8 at 6:00 pm!**  
Join us for a night of crawfish dinner, drinks, auctions, raffles and good old fundraising fun! Purchase your tickets online at [www.ccatexas.org/2017-northeast-houston-banquet](http://www.ccatexas.org/2017-northeast-houston-banquet) to guarantee your seat. **For more information, contact Brian Weaver at (713) 626-4222.** Keep an eye on your inboxes and the Northeast Houston Chapter webpage for updates! — Jason Law

**Northwest Houston**  
**Alan Massey 281-414-6341**  
**Our next General Membership Meeting is our Annual Member Appreciation Fish Fry on April 4** with all the fixin's, so everyone come hungry! Our guest speaker is none other than **Chicken Boy with Chicken Boy Lures**. Do yourself a favor and come and enjoy a very lively and entertaining evening with this speaker. It will be held as usual at **Houston Distributing, 7100 High Life Drive off Cutten Road in the Stein Room** starting at 7:00 pm.

We want to thank **Heather Schiappa** from **Galveston Bay Foundation** who explained the Galveston Bay Report Card and what factors can impact the health of our bay. Everyone should do their part in maintaining the health of Galveston Bay. They need your input to improve and expand the 2017 Report Card at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/17GBRC](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/17GBRC).

**Due to a scheduling conflict at Sylvan Beach Park, our 2017 Annual Kid Fish Event is cancelled this year.** We will strive to have a bigger and better one next year. But we are always happy to accept donations for our Kid Fish Program. Please let us know of your desire to donate anytime by contacting a director. If you wish to help with our Kid Fish, Fish Fry or Annual Fundraising Banquet, then become a director and join us for **every first Tuesday of an ODD month. Our next BOD meeting is May 2nd, 2017 at 7:00 pm.**

**Our June 6 General Meeting will feature Guest Speaker Bryan Slaven, "The Texas Gourmet".** And he will be serving and demonstrating by video how to make a seafood gumbo, so everyone come and join us for a taste of this great dish!!! — Alan Massey

**Orange County**  
**Scott Bandy 409-988-3667**  
[scottbandy77@yahoo.com](mailto:scottbandy77@yahoo.com)

**The 2017 Orange County Chapter Annual Banquet date has been set for August 10 at the Orange County Convention and Expo Center off Hwy 1442 in Orange, Texas!** — Scott Bandy

**Port O'Connor**  
**Bill Moore 361-983-4690**

**The 2017 Crab Trap event is now history, and it doesn't seem like this was the 16th year!** **The POC Chapter** was on hand at the Texas Park and Wildlife Docks to assist on Saturday, February 18.



It was Chamber of Commerce weather – Weather was beautiful, and it was a good day just to be on the water.

The chapter provided lunch for all who showed up. Thanks to all who participated both at the docks and on the water. The number of participants on the water was up this year. Also, special thanks to **Norman Boyd** of TPWD for the use of their facilities and for his assistance.

We will be scheduling meetings in preparation for the 18th Annual POC Chapter Banquet, with the first meeting on July 20. **Be sure to pencil in Saturday, October 21 on your calendar for our 2017 Annual Banquet.**

As the weather warms, and the north winds come see us, if you want to get involved with the chapter and/or banquet, contact us in POC, "Where it all began" – **Bill Moore**

### Prairie

**Sharon Goebel 979-877-4103**

On February 24 we had our Annual Chili Appreciation Dinner at the Cat Spring Tin Hall. We had a great turn out, and the evening was a success with our homemade chili that was made from scratch by **Kirk Hoppe** and the board members.

We would like to thank **Brian Weaver** who made it possible to have **Shane Bonnot**, CCA Texas Advocacy Director, as our speaker for the evening. His speech was very important for all who fish the bays – He talked about red fish, trout and flounder, and about the hatchery where it all happens.

By the time this article comes out we will be close to having our **20th Annual Prairie Chapter Banquet, Thursday April 6 at the Cat Spring Hall.** We will have a dinner of prime rib and shrimp catered by **Mikeskas BBQ**. We are expecting sellout attendance this year, so get your tables/tickets before they run out!

We will have some new games and raffles to celebrate our 20th anniversary. Raffle tickets will be available for purchase for the **Polaris 4-wheeler**, plus there will be the \$5 raffle, silent auction and

live auction with some great items. The auctioneer will be the famous **Mark Switzer** from **Switzer Auction Services** in Sealy, Texas. Have a great year of fishing! Thanks – **Ron Chess** (979) 525-9254

### Redfish Bay Norman Oates 361-758-0266

The 2017 CCA Texas Redfish Bay Chapter Annual Banquet is set for April 29! As always, it will be a family event with a sit-down meal, beer, wine, cokes and water. The meal will include salad, entree and dessert. We will have raffle, silent auction and live auction items, and our board members are working hard to have a variety of items to fit all tastes. The local merchants provide items of interest for everyone – about 40 percent of our attendees are women, so, in addition to fishing and outdoor equipment, we will have artwork, jewelry and home decorations as well.

We are holding our Take-a-Kid-Fishing event at Woody's Sports Center the first week-end of June. This is a great event for young fish-erspersons! There will be a shrimp boil on Friday night with fishing Saturday morning. Weigh-in starts at 11:30 am, and the awards ceremony starts around noon. Each kid gets a rod and reel, and a trophy. – **Norman Oates** (361) 790-2748

### Rio Grande Valley Louis Zimerer 956-373-0799 Lmz01@yahoo.com

Thank you **Ron Hoover RV & Marine**, **Majek Boats**, **L&F Distributors** and the chapter for making this year's **Rio Grande Valley Chapter Boat Raffle** possible! Only 500 tickets are being sold for \$100 each and are available at **Glick Twins** in **Pharr** and **Johnny's True Value Hardware** in



RGV's Majek boat from Ron Hoover RV & Marine

Harlingen. For more information contact me at (956) 373-0799. – **Louis Zimerer**

### Sabine-Neches Darin Johnson 409-790-9855

A very big thank you to everyone who attended the 2017 Sabine-Neches Chapter Annual Banquet on March 2! Thank You, Thank You, Thank You! This was a good old fashioned crawfish boil, and we raised a little bit for CCA while we were at it!

The fantastic event was made possible by some of our generous sponsors: **Classic of Southeast Texas**, **Pete Jorgensen Marine**, **Evinrude Outboards**, **Del Papa (Bud Guys)**, **Giglio (Miller/Coors)** **Shane Cheson** and **Pure Cajun** for the awesome crawfish!

Thank you to **American Airboat**, **Texas Marine**, **Premier Yamaha** and **Pete Jorgensen Marine** for putting the boats on display! This was truly an event that you had to see to believe! We aren't done yet, **KID FISH 2017** coming soon! Until then, tight lines! – **Darin Johnson**

### Sam Houston Brandon Kolaja 281-797-6908

Well, the light winter we've had has passed. With warmer temperatures approaching, I personally cannot wait to get on the water. From seasoned fishermen to the ones who just like to be outside, make the time to get out there on the water. Also, please look for

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chapter updates as we are trying to plan an outing this summer.

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## San Antonio Mike Sarosdy 210-863-7288

[uorodoc@satx.rr.com](mailto:uorodoc@satx.rr.com)

If you missed the great General Membership Meeting on March 1 with CCA Advocacy Director Shane Bonnot and Capt. Joe Farah, or the 4th Annual Hooked on Clays shoot on March 24, we have more in store for you!

Get your tickets and tables now for the San Antonio Chapter 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Banquet on Thursday, May 4 at the AT&T Exhibit Hall. Early Bird Table buyers who buy on or before April 14 will receive one entry PER TABLE for a Smith and Wesson M+P Sport II AR-15. If you and your fishing buds buy individual tickets, group up to buy a table, as only table buyers will be entered in this Early Bird contest. Banquet Chair Rick Neitzel and his committee are putting together another GREAT banquet.

The boat will be a Haynie 21' Super Cat with Merc motor and Coastline Tandem Aluminum Trailer, thank you Chris' Marine. This year's vehicle will be a low-mileage Certified Preowned Ford F150 Crew Cab XLT with nationwide 100,000 mile warranty, for which only 500 tickets will be sold at \$100 each. If that's not enough, the winner can trade this truck for something else at Jordan Ford. You need not be present to win either the boat or truck. If you can't make the banquet but want tickets for either, contact Bob Brumby at (210) 862-2421 for

boat tickets, or Byron Buzzini at (210) 602-0251 for truck tickets. Thanks to Jordan Ford Fleet Manager and committee member Mike Davis. And thanks to all of our sponsors, friends and volunteers who help make this banquet the best outdoors and conservation event in San Antonio.

For tables and tickets, contact Joe Eaton ([jeaton@eatoncontracting.com](mailto:jeaton@eatoncontracting.com)).

Finally, we are going to start a summer monthly CCA Happy Hour/Liars Club to just visit and hang out the second Tuesdays of June, July and August at the Barn Door at 6:00 pm. As a bonus, email your best recent pics of you and your catch, your kid's catch or your spouse's bigger catch to Liz Hewitt ([lizhewitt@qb3mfg.com](mailto:lizhewitt@qb3mfg.com)) by Saturday prior to each Happy Hour, and we will spool those and similar photo-shopped fish pics on the overhead screens.

Thanks to CCA sponsor and friend Randy Stokes, who not only facilitates our meetings at the Barn Door, but has graciously extended his Happy Hour prices from 6:30 to 7:30 for our CCA socials. The first one will be on Tuesday, June 13.

Thanks to all of you who actively volunteer or otherwise support the mission of CCA. And, remember to take a kid fishing. —Mike Sarosdy

## San Bernard Ross Kutach 281-330-0135

[rosskutach@yahoo.com](mailto:rosskutach@yahoo.com)

The San Bernard Chapter held our 10th Annual Fundraising Banquet and Dinner on February 23, 2017 at Riverside Hall in East Bernard, Texas. The event was a success with a great turnout by our community and surrounding neighbors. Thanks to all who participated through donations and in person at the event!

The grand prize Polarizer Ranger Crew 570 went

to Darrell Palmer originally of Wallis and currently residing in League City. The second major prize of the night which was a custom golf cart went to local East Bernard resident Chris Prazak. Winning tickets were sold by Dylan Macha and Brian "possum" Domet, respectively.

Rounding out the Pre-Sale Raffle in the winners' circle were Josh Mangum, Jeff Cook, Charles Toman, Kenneth Schatz and JP Pope. A lot of preparation and hard work went into everything the day and night of the event by the San Bernard CCA members. Without your help, this event would not continue. Thanks to Team Burnside and Todd for their help the night of the event.

Thanks to our sponsors Johnny's Sport Shop, Hoffpaur Polaris, Fairway Golf Carts, Academy Sports + Outdoors and Riverside Hall for their support of the San Bernard Chapter. Thank you to Slade Story of El Campo for another great job on the rib eye dinner. A big thanks to everyone else who contributed to making the event successful.

It has been a rollercoaster this winter/spring with the weather. With extremes in temperature and pressure, the fish have been especially active. This has been one of the best beginnings of the year and without a doubt the best top water bite I have ever been a part of. Chartreuse paddle tails have also been proven winners over deep scattered shell.

I hope to see everyone on the water! Be sure to "Like" us on Facebook, and share your pictures and fishing experiences with us. Put a rod in a kid's hand and teach them to love our passion —Ross Kutach

## San Gabriel

John Melnar 512-497-8284

San Gabriel is now in the planning stages for our 15th (yes, 15th!) Annual Banquet that will be held on August 3, 2017 at the new Sheraton Conference Center in Georgetown, Texas. This will be a FUN-filled event, with significant opportunities to mingle and network with donors and attendees who share

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San Gabriel would like to thank our 2016 Donors: Don Hewlett Chevrolet, Morris Glass, PMB Helin Donovan, NAVCON, Aday & Assoc., R Bank, RDO Equipment, Gibson Concrete, Independence Title, First State Bank, CHASCO, Utz Environmental, Tony Bagliore Concrete, Cornerstone Site Services and Allied Electric. They consistently and generously step up efforts each year to support our event. Without our donors, our event would not be possible, so we say THANK YOU!

To make our 2017 banquet even better, we are looking for some help. Whether you would like to join our list of generous sponsors, purchase a reserved table with a group of your fishing buddies or simply buy a single ticket at the door, the most important thing you can do to help support our chapter is attend this event and help spread the word. We are always looking for new banquet committee members, so get in touch with our chapter officers if you are interested! – Darryl Hanson [Darhans@aol.com](mailto:Darhans@aol.com)

#### San Jacinto

Jim Wilson 713-828-7639

#### Southwestern

Veronica Oliver 830-765-6228

#### TAMU

Ian Kocher Mays Business School  
512-632-9222 [ikocher12@gmail.com](mailto:ikocher12@gmail.com)

#### Texas State University

Alex Limon 817-880-4044  
[arlimon26@gmail.com](mailto:arlimon26@gmail.com)

#### Tomball/Magnolia

Matt Maddox 832-571-7638

#### Tri-County

Christian Hildebrand 830-534-2730

#### Trinity Bay

Gerald Payne 281-728-6278

The Trinity Bay Chapter held our first meeting of 2017 in February, and wow, what a turnout! All of our dedicated board members were in attendance, along with a few folks who have been with us for only a short time. Nevertheless, there was an abundance of energy in the room as we looked back and evaluated the previous year, which included the amazing results from our 2016 Annual Chapter Banquet. The first order of business entailed the election of a 2017 board. **We confirmed Friday, August 25, 2017 as our banquet date.** Based on the last 2 years of overwhelming attendance, we will again host the event at **Nuevo Leon Social Events, 1000 Park Street, Baytown, Texas 77520.**

**Spring Cleaning** It has become a CCA family tradition: the annual Capt. Billy Sandifer Big Shell Beach Cleanup out of Corpus Christi, and Miller and Kathy Bassler's East Cut Beach Cleanup based in Port Mansfield. Sandifer and the Basslers have both received national honors as Field & Stream Heroes Of Conservation.

Photos by Johnny Rayburg, San Antonio CCA. An eight year veteran of the Big Shell Beach Cleanup, with son from 2009, and daughter from the 2017 cleanup.

Great Foods Recipes sponsored by Costa Del Mar  
Liz Hewitt, Editor

## Classic Spicy Shrimp Cocktail



6-8 fresh, large boiled shrimp  
1 ripe avocado  
1 c chili sauce  
½ c ketchup  
1 tbsp chopped cilantro  
2 tbsp diced white onion  
1 tbsp minced garlic  
2 tbsp fresh lime juice  
1 tbsp diced Jalapeno  
Tortilla chips for dipping

Scoop out avocado and dice into fairly large pieces. Mix all ingredients. Cover and let sit for 1 hour.

Spoon mixture into martini or similar glass, taking care with the avocado pieces.

Place the shrimp around the rim of the glass and garnish with a slice of lime.

*Serve with extra tortilla chips, and expect a second order.*



Courtesy of Hooper's Bar & Grille  
On the Intracoastal Waterway, Port O'Connor, Texas

In addition, projects such as a barbecue and crawfish boils for our dedicated sponsors were planned. Other activities include some future inter-chapter fishing days and what has become our Annual Spring "Family" Crawfish Boil.

Everyone is excited about the upcoming year, and we are always looking for new members and sponsors. **The Trinity Bay Chapter meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm.** If you would like further details on participating or would like to attend a meeting, please contact us or visit our chapter page, [www.ccatexas.org/chapters/trinity-bay](http://www.ccatexas.org/chapters/trinity-bay) – We'd be glad to see you. — Gerald Payne

Trinity Valley  
John Hebert Jr 936-334-2528

West Houston  
Ruben Delgadillo 281-808-1434

West Texas  
Craig McDonnold 432-682-3499







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# Coastal Conservation Association

6919 Portwest Suite 100 / Houston, TX 77024

## CURRENTS NEWSLETTER

April / May 2017

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## Protecting Texas Bays: a forty year journey continues



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Corpus Christi / Marine Safety Office:  
boating emergencies, chemical and  
oil spills: 361-888-3162  
Port Aransas: 361-749-5217  
Port O'Connor: 361-983-2616  
Freeport: 979-233-3801  
Houston, Galveston: 409-766-5620  
Sabine: 409-971-2195

The Texas Parks & Wildlife website is  
your starting point for almost anything  
you need to know about outdoor Texas,  
including links to many areas. Visit  
[www.tpwd.texas.gov](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov)

To focus on fishing and boating, visit  
[www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/fish)  
[www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/boat](http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/boat)



Current size, bag and possession limits  
are now available through the Texas Parks  
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