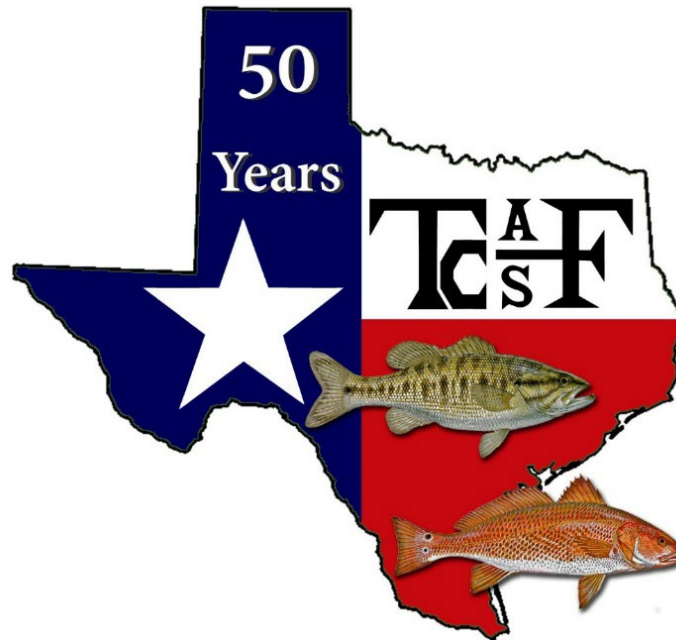


Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society 50 Year Historical Highlights 1975-2026

By Raymond Mathews, Archivist/Historian



1975

The Texas Chapter journey started on November 5th at Rudder Tower on the campus of Texas A&M University (TAMU) in College Station, Texas. There had been interest in forming a Texas Chapter for many years. The President of the Texas A&M Chapter, Mike Van Den Avyle provided a meeting place where more than 100 fisheries workers from across the state met to form the new statewide chapter.

Ed Bonn, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), was elected **first Chapter President**; **Jim Davis**, TAMU Extension Service, President-elect; **Robert Stevens**, TPWD Coastal Fisheries Division, Secretary-Treasurer; and **Rich Noble**, TAMU, Chairman of the Membership Committee. Dues were set at \$3 for senior members and \$2 for student members.

The **objectives of the American Fisheries Society** are defined in Article 1 of the Constitution of the organization, which include the conservation, development, and wise utilization of recreational and commercial fisheries, promotion of all branches of fisheries science and practice,

and exchange and dissemination of knowledge about fish, fisheries, and related subjects. The founders of the Texas Chapter added a new one- “to encourage the exchange of information by fishery workers within Texas.”

Although the official Chapter Charter could not be approved by the parent society until their annual meeting in September 1976, for all practical purposes the **Texas Chapter began on November 5th at Texas A&M University.**

1976

The newly received **Chapter Charter** was presented by AFS Secretary-Treasurer, Robert E. Stevens, to Chapter President Ed Bonn. Mr. Bonn stated that the Charter should be held by the incumbent Chapter President for his term in office, so he passed it on to newly installed Chapter President, Jim Davis. This tradition of passing the Chapter Charter on to the incumbent President has continued for 50 years-sort of like the passing of the eternal torch.

Membership increased to 133 members by the end of the year, but less than 50 people attended the second annual meeting at Lake Brownwood. Lodging was made available at the Texas Extension Service 4-H Center for \$15 per day, including meals.

The early days of the Chapter were not very organized, and committee assignments were not very productive. The committees were plagued by attrition and inactivity, as exemplified by the Awards Committee, which provided no awards because nobody was nominated.

The **first newsletter** was published in March 1976. It was a two-page (two sided) flier which reported on the formation of the new chapter, elected officers, and some committee work in progress.

1977

The third annual meeting on October 9, 1977, was held in conjunction with the larger Southern Division AFS 31st annual meeting in San Antonio. This was the **first year that the Texas Chapter awards were given.** Dr. Bobby Whiteside (SWTSU, now Texas State University) was Chairman of the Awards Committee.

Ed Bonn, the Chapter's first President, retired from the TPWD after 35 years of service in 1977.

Carl R. Sullivan, AFS Executive Director, was visiting dignitary to the 1977 joint Southern Division-AFS Chapter annual meeting. He discussed several facts of interest, including the fact that the Southern Division AFS is the second largest of its kind in the U.S., exceeded only by the Western Division. The AFS membership is rapidly approaching 7,000 members.

This was the **first year that the official approved annual meeting minutes were published in the 1977 Chapter Newsletter** to let all members know what actions were taken on their behalf.

The Texas Chapter treasury contained about \$529 at the end of 1977.

1978

The Texas Chapter **published its first annual Proceedings in 1978**, containing six peer-reviewed papers, an accomplishment which has been perpetuated and improved upon every year since then. Dr. Bobby Whiteside (SWTSU, now TSU) prepared “**Guidelines for Authors Contributing to the Fisheries Sessions of the Annual Meeting, Texas Chapter.**”

This was the **first year, 1978, that a Membership Directory was published** by the Chapter and distributed to all members to improve communication among fisheries workers.

1979

A **fish fry social** was provided by the Texas A&M Chapter after the 1979 meeting. This was the **first of many** fish fry socials. The **Farm Pond Management Committee was formed** to provide better information about raising fish in farm ponds.

The Chapter membership had climbed to 243, and the treasury had \$382.22 in 1979.

1980

The Farm Pond Management Committee completed and approved new guidelines in 1980, leading to its first publication “**Stocking and Management Recommendations for Texas Farm Ponds.**” Many thousands of copies of this document have been handed out over the years, and it is still in great demand today.

The AFS published the 1980 version of “**Common and Scientific Names of Fishes,**” which was probably the most used document in the field, at least until it was updated in 1991.

The Warmwater Streams Committee, Southern Division AFS, held their **first Warmwater Streams Symposium** on March 9-11, 1980 at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville). Several Texas Chapter members participated in it.

1981

The **Dingell-Johnson (D-J) Federal Aid to Fish Restoration Bill**, Senate Bill 1631 and House Bill 6074 were introduced on the floor of Congress this year (1981) and was easily the **most important recreational fisheries legislation ever introduced**.

Twenty scientific papers were presented at the seventh annual meeting in 1981 held at TPWD headquarters in Austin. The meeting was extraordinarily successful in that it was attended by 85 members from 15 state and federal agencies, corporations, and universities. This represented the most broadly based attendance that the Chapter had seen at their annual meetings. Charles Travis (TPWD Executive Director) gave the welcoming address.

The 1981 **Chapter officers realized there was a need to increase the funds** in the treasury to pay for work that Chapter members were recommending. This was the first year that dues collection became a real priority. An **Advertisement Committee** was formed and chaired by Allen Forshage (TPWD) with a goal of raising \$750 for that year.

This was the **first year (1981) that papers submitted for publication** in the Chapter's Proceedings had to conform to the "**Instructions for Manuscript Preparation**," which was attached to the May Newsletter (#20).

A new **Resolutions Committee** was established in 1981, and their first order was to inform members about critical issues affecting fisheries, to make recommendations for Chapter positions on issues of importance to fisheries, and to provide facts and information on such matters. The Texas grass carp issue was the first topic the committee dealt with, at the request of Ralph Manns, Chapter President.

The AFS provided an **acid rain resolution** to the EPA expressing concern about the potential impacts to fish populations in 1981. This led to congressional hearings and the finding that acid rain does impact fishery resources, which resulted in various mitigating measures, such as low sulfur coal and scrubbers on coal fired power plants.

Changes were made to the usual annual meeting program this year. Beginning in 1981, every annual meeting contained three elements: a business meeting, technical paper presentations, and a social (usually a fish fry). This year a **panel discussion** was added, and the meeting was extended into a **two-day event**. The panel discussion was entitled "Using Exotic Species of Fish in Texas." Because of the interest and success of the panel discussion, it has been a feature of many of the subsequent annual meetings.

Gary Valentine, Chapter President, gave the 1981 President's Address (a tradition that apparently started with the second annual meeting of the Chapter) in the Sunday House, Kerrville, Texas.

Chapter awards were given to Roger McCabe (TPWD) in 1981 for work with striped bass **culture and management**, Clell Guest (TPWD) for diverse **research** projects that were the first ever at the new Heart-of-the-Hills Research Station, and Bob Hofstetter (TPWD) for 30 years of **research and management** of oysters.

Gary Matlock (TPWD) addressed the Chapter members at the 1981 annual meeting on the benefits of the **Fishery Scientist Certification** offered by the AFS parent society. The program is meant to serve as a means of upgrading the professional image and as a mark of accomplishment. Many Chapter members have since been certified by the AFS.

The Chapter sent letters of support to Texas Congressmen for the proposed **Dingell-Johnson Expansion Bill in 1981**. The AFS Diary (Volume 8, Number 20) reported on the Dingell-Johnson Expansion Bill, including credit to the Texas Chapter AFS for writing letters to try to “shore up soft spots” in the legislation. The bill passed, adding a 3% tax on the sale of new boats and motors. **Those funds are used for federal support of fish management and research.**

A **new milestone** for the Chapter was reached in 1981 when the **5,000th copy of its publication “Stocking and Management Recommendations for Texas Farm Ponds”** was printed and mailed out. This publication is distributed by the TPWD, TAES, and SCS. The Texas Chapter’s stocking guide received a genuinely nice mention in the AFS Fisheries Management Section Newsletter. An estimated 10,000 copies of this publication were printed and distributed over the years, making it the **most sought-after fisheries publication in the state.**

1982

A glossary of **“Fish Health Terms”** was published in 1982 by the Fish Health Section of the AFS parent society.

This was the **first year (1982) that the Chapter contributed funds (\$25) in support of the AFS Working Capital Fund** Committee’s raffle prizes, to for use at the national AFS meeting for helping the Society increase its operating funds. The Chapter officers discussed the prospect of having their own raffle at future meetings, which was initiated at the 1984 meeting.

The Chapter had to deal with several **organizational problems** this year (1982). According to Article VII of the AFS Constitution Bylaws and Standing Rules, only a member of the Society in good standing may be a voting member of a subdivision of the Society. Texas Chapter Bylaws were not consistent with those of the Society. Thus, **changes were made in the Chapter Bylaws** to be consistent with those of the parent Society. As it stands now, a person can be a member of the Texas Chapter without being a member of the parent Society, but they cannot hold office.

1983

The Texas Chapter held its ninth **Annual Meeting (1983) jointly with the Oklahoma Chapter at University of Oklahoma's Biological Station on Lake Texoma. This was the Chapter's first meeting involving a chapter outside of Texas.** The meeting was very successful in terms of information exchange.

This was the **first year (1983) that the Chapter paid for an invited speaker**, Dr. Tom McIlwain, to speak at the annual meeting, as a means of drawing attendance to the meeting to hear a nationally recognized fishery expert presentation.

Dr. Bobby Whiteside (SWTSU) organized a **Fishery Biology Symposium** for the Texas Academy of Science 1983 annual meeting on behalf of the Texas Chapter.

The USFWS announced plans to terminate the personnel of the Cooperative Fishery Research Units at universities in 1983. The AFS urged members of the Texas House Appropriations Committee to seek funding for the Coop Units, and apparently it helped since Coop Units are still an important part of many university programs.

1984

The **first annual meeting (1984) to be held at a coastal site, Port Aransas**, occurred this year. This was done as an attempt to increase the membership of coastal fisheries workers, who had not been a significant part of the Chapter to date. Chapter President Gary Matlock organized the successful effort which helped bring more coastal members into the Chapter. A very successful shrimp boil was donated by the Texas Shrimp Association.

This was the **biggest year (1984) to date for revenue generation**, largely due to Ed Hegen's aggressive work as Chair of the Exhibits and Advertising Committee which established a precedent by which to increase funds in the treasury. This committee laid the groundwork for seeking raffle and door prizes for the annual meetings by contacting a wide group of organizations and businesses for donations. The **now famous Texas Chapter fundraising activities at the social** were initiated this year. Bruce Hysmith's (TPWD) skill as an auctioneer of donated fishing equipment and outdoor gear to raise funds for the Chapter was realized. He developed such classics as "Bait-a-Hole" which raised a lot of money for the Chapter and proved to be a lot of fun for all.

1985

Gary Valentine (SCS) moderated a panel discussion (1985) on **“The Pros and Woes of Aquatic Weeds and their Control.”** Gary Valentine pointed out that the issue of aquatic vegetation is two-sided. Sometimes it is a nuisance and sometimes it is beneficial. The discussion covered the positive attributes of aquatic vegetation for sport fishery and waterfowl habitat but most of the attention focused on the problems that nuisance aquatic vegetation poses for power generation lakes, small ponds, urban impoundments, and recreational users of lakes. **Hydrilla was equated with Godzilla** to illustrate the damage that exotic weed causes to aquatic systems.

The Urban Committee, chaired by Phil Durocher (TPWD) with help from Frank Schlicht (Houston Power & Light Company), conducted its **first ever “Kids Fishing Day”** (1985) in the cooling water reservoir at the Baytown Plant. The spring event was so successful that another one (co-sponsored by the Texas Outdoor Writers Association) was held in Austin during the summer.

The **first woman President**, Maury Ferguson, was elected this year (1985). Since then, the Chapter has elected five other women as Chapter President. Maury Ferguson initiated the Chapter’s **first ever support of a foreign fishery student from Mexico**. Texas was the first Chapter in the nation to go international in its outreach program for improving educational opportunities for fishery biologist students.

1986

The Chapter undertook the task of elevating the Chapter Proceedings from **“gray literature”** (which was uncitable in AFS Journals) to peer reviewed literature in 1986. Gary Carmichael and Dick Luebke (TPWD) worked long and hard in coordination with Dr. Bob Kendall, AFS Editor-in-Chief, to bring the standards of the Chapter Proceedings up to the standards that meet with AFS requirements for published material. **Because of their efforts, the Chapter has a publication quality proceeding that many chapters in the nation do not.** Efforts begun in 1986 to get the **Chapter Proceedings sanctioned by the parent society** as published and citable literature cleared their last hurdle in 1990. The 1991 Proceedings became the first one no longer considered “gray literature.”

This was the **first year (1986) in which representatives from the parent society attended the Chapter’s annual meeting** (recognition that the Texas Chapter was doing well and being noticed).

1987

The **Texas Chapter Scholarship Fund** was established in 1987 with the growing treasury funds, and since that time many fishery students have benefited from the generosity of the Chapter.

An **award for Special Recognition in Fisheries Work** (1987) was given to The Sportsmen's Club of Texas (SCOT) for its aggressive educational and conservation-oriented efforts promoting an appreciation of fishing and fisheries resources and habitat. Alan Allen, SCOT's Executive Director, accepted the award on behalf of the organization.

This was the **first year (1987) that the Chapter presented an award for "Outstanding Presentation."** It was presented to Kerry Graves, who also received the Outstanding Fisheries Worker of the Year award, for his paper "A Method for Harvesting Large Quantities of Zooplankton from Hatchery Ponds" which he co-authored with Jacob Morrow (USFWS San Marcos National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center).

1988

Panel Discussion)1988) on "**Water Use in the 90's – An Impact on Fisheries**" included Dave Buzan (Texas Water Commission - TWC), Sam Chapman (EPA), Robin Riechers (TPWD), John Sweeten (TAES), and Hal Schramm, Jr. (TTU) as moderator. The panel discussion and questions showed an increasing concern about the water quality impacts on fisheries, and a new concern about the instream flow needs of riverine fishes.

The opening address at the 1988 annual meeting was given by Dr. Larry McKinney and Susan Rieff (both with TPWD) on "**Future Water Development and Wildlife in Texas.**" They spoke about **new legislation** amending both the TPWD Code and the Texas Water Code, affecting both the TWDB and the TWC. These changes enhanced the consideration of fish and wildlife resources during the State water permitting process. TPWD's Resource Protection Division was put in a better position to protect natural resources through interaction with project sponsors and the Texas Water Commission (TWC), which has had several transitions over time. The TWC and the Texas Air Quality Control Board were combined into the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC) and later renamed the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Terrestrial and aquatic mitigative action was made a consideration of permit hearings, which has been to the benefit of bottomland hardwood habitats and other important yet dwindling natural resources.

1989

A **Panel Discussion in 1989** on "**The Use of Regulations in Fisheries Management**" included six papers followed by a question-and-answer session. The discussion included

regulation issues and the role of the GCCA, Texas Black Bass Unlimited, Outdoor Writers', and TPWD's Law Enforcement in Texas fishery management.

1990

The 1990's was when the Texas Chapter really became a professional organization that had a lot of impact on fisheries resources in the state. The Chapter had enough members and financial resources to be highly recognized and respected for the work and issues it became involved with.

The **first two college scholarships** were awarded in 1990 for \$150 each. The recipients were Tommy Michael Bates (TAMU) and Michael W. Brice (TTU). By comparison, in 2000 the Chapter gave four scholarships for \$700 each. Since 1990, the Chapter has given 34 undergraduate and graduate scholarships. The Chapter considers the money well spent, representing an investment in the future of Texas fisheries.

The 1990 annual meeting was held at Lake Texoma. A Panel Discussion on **"Interjurisdictional Fisheries Management"** included representatives from five different states, including Kansas, Missouri, Louisiana Oklahoma, and Arkansas in addition to Texas.). This was the Chapter's **first multi-state fisheries program**. It generated a lot of regional interest in fisheries issues, which is one of the goals of Society and the AFS chapters. Although this was the 2nd Joint Annual Meeting, it was the **first time that fisheries issues from the five neighboring states were made a part of the program**.

1991

The Chapter joined forces in 1991 with the TPWD to **host the 121st annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society in San Antonio**. The meeting was a raving success and gained considerable respect nationwide for the Texas Chapter.

1992

The Chapter joined forces with the TPWD again in 1992 to **host the 46th annual meeting of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies** in Corpus Christi. This joint effort was also a great success, adding additional prestige and professional respect for the Chapter.

1993

The Chapter's Urban Fishing Committee completed in 1993 and distributed the publication **"Guide to Urban Fishing Programs."**

1994

The twentieth annual meeting (1994) was held at the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) conference facility next to Lake Travis. A Panel Discussion on “**Clean Water for Texas**” was moderated by Dick Luebke (TPWD). Each member of the panel had a special issue presentation involving clean water. In 1994 and 1996, revisions to the Texas Fishery Workers Directory were printed and distributed to Chapter members.

1995

Three \$500.00 scholarships were funded through the **TCAFS Scholarship Endowment Fund in 1995**.

The **Texas Chapter was awarded the Outstanding Chapter in the Southern Division AFS for the first time in its history** at the Southern Division’s annual business meeting in Nashville, Tennessee on September, 1995. This meeting was held concurrently with the annual meeting of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

The Texas Chapter was involved in the **Striped Bass Symposium** in 1995 at the Southern Division AFS Midyear meeting in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Roger McCabe (TPWD) organized and moderated the symposium.

As of July 1995, membership stood at 287 and assets exceeded \$28,000.

The year 1995 saw a **Record World Fish Production** of 112.3 metric tons, based on a report by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. Fish farming contributed to most of the recent growth, but fish stocks were also reportedly being overexploited and could result in the crash of some fishery populations.

This was the **first time the Chapter put so much effort into workshops**, with a total of four being held at the annual meeting. The first workshop focused on **aquatic vegetation identification and control in a farm pond and aquaculture setting**. This workshop was led by Marley Beem, Aquaculture Extension Specialist with Oklahoma State University (OSU). The second workshop/panel discussion focused on **aquatic habitat restoration** and included speakers from the USCOE, Tennessee Valley Authority, Missouri Department of Conservation, and the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission. A **continuing education workshop on the Internet** was presented by Chris Cummings (TPWD). A **“fishery habitat improvement”** continuing education workshop was organized by Gene Gilliland and Mike Reed (TPWD).

The Texas Chapter received the **award for Best Chapter in the Southern Division AFS** for the last two years, which Chapter President Kathy Ramos took great pride in. She said it reflected well on the involvement of not only the officers and committee chairs but the membership at large. She said in her “President’s Message” published in the newsletter (Volume 22, Number1) that “we are being held up as an example to others because of the strides that we have made in fiscal responsibility and professional development.

1996

This was the first year (1996) that the Chapter went online with its own website

<http://www.sdafs.org/tcafs> as Fred Janssen (TPWD) got our Chapter home page running on the internet. From this point on, much of the Chapter history was electronically preserved on the TCAFS website, now [Texas Chapter - American Fisheries Society](#), with postings of all the Chapter’s Newsletters, issue statements, meeting announcements, links to other sites, TCAFS History by Ray Mathews, and a host of other information.

We won an award from the Southern Division as the Outstanding State Chapter in 1996. The Chapter began a proactive initiative with position statements in 1996 on environmental conservation issues affecting fisheries. This effort was spear-headed by Mike Reed (TPWD).

Our Urban Fishing Committee completed and distributed a publication entitled “Guide to Developing Community Fisheries” (<http://sdafs.org/tcafs/tc-manuals/>).

Total assets of the Chapter in 1996 were \$31,806. **The Chapter raised \$2,400 during the raffle/auction** at the annual meeting, which exceeded last year’s earnings of \$1,800. Friendly competition between chapters kept the bidding on auction items fresh. This **money was used to finance the Chapter’s student scholarship fund**. Once again, the Texas Chapter found **Bruce Hysmith’s (TPWD) role as Ringleader** for the auction and raffle to be one of the major reasons for the Chapter’s financial success. He earned his name in history as quite a “sporting character.” Dr. Clark Hubbs bought every hat at the auction, proving that he is truly a man of many hats. Additionally, since the assets of the Chapter were becoming very significant, Dr. Fran Gelwick (TAMU) solicited financial support to assist students who give presentations at AFS meetings.

The **Fisheries Action Network** was developed in 1996 by the AFS to provide information transfer between the states. Each chapter provided a contact person. Mike Reed (TPWD) was the contact for the Texas Chapter.

A survey conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Census for the USFWS showed there were **35.2 million anglers** in 1996 whose **total expenditures rose 69%** between 1991 and 1996 to \$67.9 billion. All **outdoor recreation activities**, including fishing, hunting, birdwatching, and wildlife viewing, resulted in the spending of \$96.9 billion during that same time, indicating a 59% increase in spending on these activities. Put another way, that represents

1.9% of the gross national product, which confirms that **Americans have a national love affair with fishing** and other forms of outdoor recreation.

1997

No annual Chapter meeting was held in 1997, as the Chapter decided to change its meeting time from the fall to winter to accommodate the coastal fisheries group. The Chapter did not sit on its haunches though as it teamed up once again with the Oklahoma Chapter to host the Southern Division AFS Midyear meeting in San Antonio, February 13-16, 1997. The meeting included a **GIS and Instream Workshop**, and several symposia: Instream Flow, Human Dimensions of Fisheries, Morone Biology and Management, Fish Assemblages, Intensive Management of Small Impoundments, Reservoir Fishes Biology and Management, Marine Scianenid Biology and Management, Instream Sand and Gravel Mining, Catfish Biology and Management, Pollution Management, and Atchafalaya River Basin Ecology. A **Student Career Development Workshop** was very useful to students trying to gain an understanding of the job market and the diverse professional careers in fisheries. Once again, the joint session effort was very successful and added substantial monetary profits to the Chapter's treasury.

The Chapter added as a regular feature to our annual meetings Continuing Education and Special Workshops.

Tom Brandt of the National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center in San Marcos discovered in 1997 that an **introduced snail, red-rimmed melania, *Melanoides tuberculata***, and its introduced trematode may be **affecting the survival of the federally endangered fountain darter, *Etheostoma fonticola***. At least three populations of this snail and trematode are known in Central Texas. One green-throat darter, *Etheostoma lepidum*, collected from the San Marcos River was found with 160 cysts on a single gill arch.

The **Magnuson-Stevens Act** was passed in 1997 to ensure **sustainable fisheries are maintained in the 21st Century**. Critical issues of law include overfishing, essential fish habitat, bycatch, and international management. Six-month and one-year internships were offered through the AFS to assist the NMFS implement the habitat requirements of the Act.

The **International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies**, with support from a growing number of outdoor organizations, businesses, and natural resource agencies, solicited Congress in 1997 to pass legislation to provide a fee from non-consumptive wildlife-related outdoor activities. The initiative, known as **Teaming With Wildlife**, passed and added a dedicated excise tax on camping and boating items, binoculars, cameras, etc. In doing so the program generates about \$350 million for state non-game and fish programs. The fund has helped conserve and enhance more than 1,800 wildlife and fish species. Funds are allocated to each state based on population and land area. **Texas receives up to \$17 million annually** for projects involving land acquisition, education, restoration, research, and planning. It has created constituents of all who enjoy natural resources while allowing resource agencies to better address the challenges of environmental management. The Texas Chapter's Issues Committee supported the legislation by providing letters of support to State Congressional representatives and our Governor.

U.S. District Judge Lucius Bunton ruled on March 26, 1997, that Interior Secretary Babbitt violated the Endangered Species Act in 1996 when he withdrew the proposed listing of the Texas' **Barton Springs salamander** after state agencies agreed with the USFWS on a cooperative conservation plan for the species. Thus, the salamander was returned to the Endangered Species List, and a conservation plan was approved between the City of Austin and USFWS.

The Humane Society reported in 1997 that an undercover survey of shrimp trawlers in ports along the Texas coast found 41% of them operated with their TEDs (**Turtle Excluder Devices**) tied shut, thereby causing serious **stranding mortality in populations of the endangered Kemp's Ridley sea turtles and marine fisheries.**

1998

The first annual meeting held in the winter was held at the Cain Center in Athens in 1998, followed by a tour of the wonderful aquarium and hatchery complex at TPWD's **Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center.**

Continuing Education and Special Workshops were added to the annual meeting agendas as a regular feature in 1998. Dr. Fran Gelwick (TAMU) put together the **first Career Development Workshop** and Richard Ott (TPWD) organized the Trade Show in that same year.

Members of the **Texas Aquatic Plant Management Society** participated in the 1998 annual meeting due to their interest in the Texas Chapter's technical program and panel discussion.

A first ever **Fishery Knowledge Bowl** was held in 1998, with questions in all categories of fishery science being asked of our officers.

A new angler organization known as "**F.I.S.H.**" was formed in 1998, which stands for **Fishermen Involved in Saving Habitat.** This group is concerned with the management of aquatic habitat in Texas's public waters. Their web site address is <http://www.honeyholemagazine.com/h14001.htm>.

President Clinton announced on June 12, 1998, a **Sustainable Fisheries Initiative** in which he proposed an additional \$194 million over five years to reduce over-fishing and protect essential fish habitat. The funding bill was approved by Congress and provides state-of-the-art fishery research vessels and increased research and promotion of public-private partnerships to develop aquaculture to meet its goal of helping to restore depleted fish stocks within 10 years.

A **Procedural Manual for TCAFS Endowments** was developed in 1998 by John Prentice (TPWD) and other members of the EXCOM to establish a high-interest-bearing account to be used for student scholarships.

New voting procedures to elect Chapter officers were developed and approved by the EXCOM in 1998 to increase member participation in the elections. Mail-in ballots were initiated, as opposed to voting at annual meetings, where only 25-30% of the members attend and vote. The mail-in procedure worked well and has been used ever since it was adopted this year.

The **Chapter's total assets** in 1998 were \$40,546, with major sources of income originating from capital gains and interest made on investments, membership dues, revenue from the annual meeting, revenue from the Southern Division Meeting, T-shirt and hat sales, and donations. **Major expenses** were newsletters, postage, awards, scholarships, publications, advertisements, and fees.

1999

This year's annual meeting was held at the Omni Bayfront Hotel in Corpus Christi in 1999. The Panel Discussion was "**Water Use Issues In Texas-A 21st Century Challenge For Fisheries Managers.**" Cindy Loeffler (TPWD) opened the panel presentation with an overview of **Senate Bill 1**, the landmark Texas water legislation passed by the 75th Legislature and signed into law by then Governor Bush. Texas is expected to double in population by the year 2050, with urban areas growing fast. To ensure the State's natural resources, especially its lakes, rivers, wetlands, and estuaries, are not short-changed, the TPWD took an active role in implementing parts of the new law. Dr. Larry McKinney (TPWD) spoke about the politics of water. Other presentations were made about reservoir fisheries, instream flows, freshwater inflows to bays and estuaries, and wetlands. Twenty technical presentations and three posters were presented. A guided tour and social at the Texas State Aquarium was very interesting to all that attended.

This was the first year that a "**Texas Chapter AFS Membership Survey**" was conducted in 1999. Seven questions were asked of members dealing with meeting time, activities/events at the annual meeting, continuing education workshops, important fishery issues, web site use, and interest in mentoring or continuing education. This survey was useful to the Chapter officers in continuing to meet the needs and interests of its members.

NMFS officials informed the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council in 1999 that **bycatch reduction devices (BRDs)** required in shrimp trawls to reduce red snapper bycatch appeared to be working well. Only eight of 100 shrimp trawlers inspected by the Coast Guard have been cited for not using BRDs.

In 1999, U.S. recreational fishermen spent almost \$9 billion, which translates into more than \$25 billion to the U.S. economy (\$5 billion in Texas) according to the NMFS.

2000

ArkLaTex 2000, a joint chapter meeting with the Arkansas and Louisiana chapters, was held in Bossier City, Louisiana for a **first ever 3-chapter joint meeting**. It was a

considerable success by all accounts. The panel discussion for the annual meeting addressed the topic **“Vegetation Control and Fisheries Management.”** The 2000 annual meeting included the **most papers (46) ever presented** at the Chapter’s annual meetings.

Amendments to the Bylaws were adopted officially in 2000 by the Chapter at the annual meeting, and those are included in the Appendix. The major changes were in sections 6, 9, and 11. The membership was trying to add a student subunit (**Texas Tech – added as subunit in 2000**), and the Texas Chapter needed to modify our Bylaws to allow a subunit. The Texas Tech Student Subunit operates under the auspices of the Texas Chapter. In addition, the **AFS constitutional consultant**, Joe Margraf, reviewed the Chapter’s old Bylaws and suggested changes to bring it more in line with the AFS Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules.

2001

The **Silver Anniversary Meeting** was held in San Marcos at the San Marcos Activity Center in 2001. This year the Texas Chapter Charter was officially twenty-five years old. Ray Mathews received the Special Recognition in Fisheries Work Award for Preserving the History of the TCAFS in 2002. The 25-Year History of the TCAFS document was posted on the Chapter website. The Charter members received complimentary registration and were specially recognized with a certificate during the banquet. Keynote speakers were Ed Bonn (first Chapter President) and Dick Luebke (TPWD and past Chapter President). **Chapter awards were presented during the banquet for the first time this year, instead of during the business meeting.** The continuing education workshops and mixer (complete with glass bottom boat rides) were conducted at Aquarena Springs.

At the annual business meeting of the Southern Division, American Fisheries Society, held in Louisville, Kentucky on October 16, 2001, the **Texas Chapter won the Outstanding Chapter Award for 2001.** The Texas Chapter is no stranger to this award, having previously won it in 1995 and again in 1996. In his summary of achievements that earned the chapter this prestigious award, Awards Committee Chair Gene Gilliland listed the following: largest membership of any Southern Division chapter (over 200), 25th anniversary celebration, publication of four newsletters per year as well as an excellent website, assistance with formation of a student subunit, giving four \$500 scholarships with funds from a special endowment fund, revision of Farm Pond Stocking Assessment and Management Recommendations (including making it web-based), recognition of outstanding achievements of chapter members, and particularly active Issues Committee. By winning the award, the Texas Chapter is automatically considered, along with the winners from the other parent Society divisions, for the Best Chapter Award at the society level. Congratulations to the Texas Chapter for another job well done!

American Rivers, a conservation organization, has listed the Red River upstream from Lake Texoma as one of America's 20 most threatened rivers due to salt removal projects in 2001.

Chapter President Gordon Linam created an **Archives Ad Hoc Committee** and asked Ray Mathews to chair the committee in 2001. Ray had recently completed organizing the files and writing the history of the Texas Organization for Endangered Species (TOES). The charge given to this committee was to organize and maintain the Chapter’s files, assimilate historical

information about the Texas Chapter, and document the history of the organization going forward through the years, culminating in the 50-Year Anniversary History document.

2002

Ray Mathews, Archives Committee Chair, presented the “History of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society-Silver Anniversary” poster at the Southern Division AFS 2002 Midyear Meeting and Southeastern Fishes Council Annual Meeting hosted by the Arkansas Chapter of the AFS in Little Rock, Arkansas. Gordon Linam (left), TCAFS President presented Ray Mathews, Jr. (TWDB, Archives Committee), with an award for Special Recognition at the TCAFS 2002 annual meeting in Junction.

2003

The 2003 annual meeting was held in Galveston at Moody Gardens. Spencer Dumont, chair of the Continuing Education committee coordinated the training on Aquatic Nuisance Species-Hazard Assessment Critical Control Point (ANS- HACCP). The workshop presented an approach to evaluate risks of spreading nuisance species and to identify areas where the risk can be minimized or eliminated. With Texas’ history of nuisance species, this workshop was very beneficial and informative to both students and professionals.

History is an important part of who we are and what we stand for, as well as what we accomplish. This was a banner year for several of our members in making new history with their accomplishments. Dr. Tim Bonner, Texas State University, received the Educator of the Year Award at the 2004 Annual Meeting. Tim follows in the footsteps of another highly recognized educator, Dr. Bobby Whiteside, who recently retired; his faculty position being filled by Dr. Bonner.

NEW FISH SPECIES DISCOVERED IN VENEZUELA. Two TCAFS members had newly described fish species named after them: Drs. Kirk Winemiller and Clark Hubbs. Two of Dr. Winemiller’s students described three new species of *Geophagus* during their exciting research in the Orinoco and Casiquiare drainages of Venezuela. One of them was named *G. winemilleri* in honor of their distinguished professor at Texas A&M University and published it in *Zootaxa* 439: 1-23 (2004).

Dr. Kirk Winemiller’s student, Hernán López-Fernández, described a new cichlid fish species. Hernán is a Venezuelan PhD student studying under Kirk’s direction at Texas A&M University at College Station.

Dr. Clark Hubbs received a TCAFS Plaque recognizing his contributions to the Chapter and creation of the Clark Hubbs Student Research Award, founded by Ray Mathews, Historian/Archivist.

BIOGRAPHY OF A FISHERY BIOLOGIST EMERITUS DR. BOBBY WHITESIDE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY by Ray Mathews. Dr. Bobby Gene Whiteside is a Distinguished

Professor Emeritus at Texas State University, formerly Southwest Texas State University, in San Marcos, Texas. The Biography describes his career and many accomplishments he made to fisheries biology in his research and students he taught.

2004

The TCAFS Scholarship Program made major growth according to TCAFS President, Dave Terre. The Patsy B. Hollandsworth Family Foundation and the Texas B.A.S.S Federation made significant contributions in 2004 to the TCAFS Student Scholarship Endowment Program. Dave Terre thanked and recognized both organizations for their contributions to the TCAFS at our annual meeting in Grapevine, Texas in 2004. Contributions made by the Patsy B. Hollandsworth Family Foundation totaled \$5,000, making it possible for the TCAFS to award four student scholarships (2 graduate and 2 undergraduate) of \$1,250 each, at our meeting. Jimmie and Kirk Green were present at the meeting to accept a “Special Recognition in Fisheries Work” award on behalf of the foundation. Dave Terre presented the award saying: “This award is in recognition for a generous contribution made to the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society Student Scholarship Program.

In a surprise announcement at our 2004 annual meeting banquet in Grapevine, Tim Cook, Conservation Director of the Texas B.A.S.S. Federation, presented checks to the chapter totaling \$1,000 dollars toward our student scholarship program.

2005

The Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society was named the “2005 Outstanding Chapter” by our parent society in Bethesda, Maryland. The fact that the TCAFS is now receiving NATIONAL RECOGNITION for their hard work. The lists of accomplishments have been many, and Dave Terre thanked all our members for their personal dedication to our organization, its mission, and the fisheries of Texas. I also want to extend my personal thanks to Ray Mathews and Fran Gelwick who did an awesome job putting together our nomination document. In addition, Dave thanked all the people who played leadership roles on the key projects that made us deserving of this recognition. Dave Terre was asked to attend the 2005 AFS Annual Meeting and accept this award on the Chapter’s behalf on September 12, 2005, which he did.

2006

History Making Events in 2006 – Presented at annual meeting by Ray Mathews, Historian:

- Texas Chapter AFS Welcomes Its Youngest Member. Heather Kuler, 15, from Tyler, Texas came to the TCAFS annual meeting in Grapevine, Texas last January. She was sponsored by Debbie Wade, TCAFS incoming President, and both had a grand time.
- History of the TCAFS Skeg, and other Memorable Historical Items. The history of the now famous Chapter Skeg began in 1990 when Bobby Farquhar, then TCAFS President, won it in a raffle at the annual meeting held next to Lake Texoma, and used it the next morning to bring the business meeting to order as a sort of gavel.

From that moment on it was passed down from Chapter President to President at the business meeting; a tradition that has continued for 15 years.

- Randy Rushin – Water Monitoring Solutions, Inc., Longest TCAFS Exhibitor and Sponsor. Randy Rushin, President of Water Monitoring Solutions, Inc. has been a TCAFS meeting exhibitor and sponsor since the 1998 annual meeting in Athens, Texas at the TFFC Facility. After almost a decade of experience with the Texas Chapter, he is still strong, and now holds the record for our longest continuously active exhibitor and sponsor
- The Patsy B. Hollandsworth family foundation made the largest contribution ever to the Texas Chapter for student scholarships. Thanks to the work of Dave Terre and other EXCOM members, the Hollandsworth family contribution of \$10,000 made the TCAFS history book the largest contribution ever received. The Chapter has made a total of 54 student scholarships, and thanks to contributions like these, the future looks good for continuing to award these scholarships.
- The Texas Chapter was selected as the 2005 Outstanding Chapter Award recipient, and Dave Terre received the award at the 2005 AFS Annual Meeting in Anchorage, Alaska. According to the outstanding letter signed by Barbara A. Knuth, President of the American Fisheries Society, the Texas Chapter was selected in recognition of its accomplishments in the areas of Aquatic Stewardship, Information Transfer and Outreach, and Member Services. The Outstanding Chapter Award Application was filled out and documented by Ray Mathews and Fran Gelwick from the TCAFS archives and history documentation.
- The archives of the TCAFS are as up to date according to Ray Mathews, Historian. The old members him all the pictures and documents after several years of gathering such information and putting it into the Chapter's archives. Much of it is in digital format now, so future members can access that information for whatever use they may have.
- The EXCOM prepared for the next Annual Meeting on February 9-11, 2007, at the Cherotel in Lake Jackson, Texas. This meeting was a first – TCAFS had an entire hotel for the 2007 Annual Meeting. That is another event that will make new history for us.

Internet Re-Design by Fred Janssen, Chair of the TCAFS Website, initiated a re-design of the entire TCAFS web site in 2006. Implemented new systems for submitting scholarship applications and award nominations. Conducted another successful year of online voting.

2007

Katrina Cohen was awarded the first Clark Hubbs Student Research Award, which included a \$500 check to help with her thesis research at Texas State University on the “Food habits of the suckermouth catfish *Hypostomus* in the San Marcos River (Hayes County).” Dr. Tim Bonner was her committee supervisor and nominated her for the award.

One of our members received an Outstanding Fisheries Worker award for the 3rd time. Dr. Gary Garrett received the Outstanding Fisheries Worker award for Fish Culture this year. In previous years, he received the award for Research and Management. This is a historical milestone for Gary because it is the first time that a Chapter member has been awarded the Outstanding Fisheries Worker in three categories.

Randy Rushin, President of Water Monitoring Solutions, Inc. has been a TCAFS meeting exhibitor and sponsor for 10 years, which is a record for any of our sponsors. At this year’s raffle, he won the bid on a guided fishing trip, and then gave it to Mandy Scott, who had been bidding for it also. Randy just wanted to give some more money to the Chapter scholarship fund and put a smile on Mandy’s face. He succeeded, and proved he is a good friend of the Chapter.

2008

According to Dr. Timothy Bonner, TCAFS President-elect, the Guadalupe River has a high density of Guadalupe Bass, the State Fish, and field ecology training was a part of the continuing education kayaking tour available as part of the annual meeting.

It's with great sadness that Ray Mathews, TCAFS Archivist and Historian, shared the news that Dr. Clark Hubbs passed away Sunday, February 3rd, 2008. He died at the age of 86, after a battle with cancer, at home in the care of his wife, Cathy, and three children. The Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society offered our condolences to Cathy and their whole family, who have been such wonderful friends and colleagues to the Chapter.

During Dr. Clark Hubbs long career, he published more than 300 articles. He was still collecting field data for his studies in January 2008. He was editor of *Copeia*, the journal of the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists for more than a decade, and a former president of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, the American Institute of Fisheries Research Biologists, the Southwestern Association of Naturalists, Texas Organization for Endangered Species, and the Texas Academy of Science. He was Chair Emeritus Science Committee Hubbs-Sea World Research Institute. He was a tireless supporter of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, Edwards Aquifer, and protection of endangered species. Four different species were named after him.

Ray Mathews, TCAFS Historian/Archivist, reported at the TCAFS 2008 annual meeting had some noteworthy historical issues associated with it. The most important achievement that needed high recognition is that Bruce Hysmith marked his 20th anniversary as the auctioneer for the annual Auction and Raffle. His first time as auctioneer for the annual meeting was at the Kerrville meeting in 1988. Two decades of service to the TCAFS is more than any one person has contributed to any position in the 33 years of this organization. That milestone for an auctioneer stands for the current 50 years of this organization.

The history of the TCAFS has spanned over 33 years, and as a tribute to the Chapter's achievement Ray Mathews prepared a Windows Movie Maker Project entitled "A trail of memories through the history of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society." It incorporates digital images from the early years of our organization through the present with his narration about the history and set to music in the <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TnLFmX9EyDk> for those interested in viewing and listening to it.

In the President's Message, Tim Bonner reported that the 2008 Hurricane Season will be remembered for a long time in Texas. The one-two punch of Hurricane Dolly and Hurricane Ike on the Texas coast disrupted the lives and livelihoods of most coastal residents. Updates on the death toll, number of missing persons, and destroyed homes from Hurricane Ike are appalling and tragic. Governmental services, universities, industries, and local businesses sustained substantial infrastructure damage and must be renovated or rebuilt before employees or students can return to a normal routine. In the meantime, many coastal residents have temporarily relocated and adjusted to losses in income. This was a disruption to the TCAFS as well.

2009

The TX Chapter of AFS donated \$300 towards Bass Brigade in 2008 and 2009 and pledged another \$300 for the 2010 camp. Mandy Scott recommended checking out the [new Brigades website at https://www.texasbrigades.org/](https://www.texasbrigades.org/) The Bass Brigade was held July 12-16, 2010, at a new location—Warren Ranch Lodge near Coleman, TX.

Announcement: Texas Chapter has a new Historian/Archivist – Michele Nations. Ray Mathews, Former Archivist/Historian, TCAFS, reported at the annual meeting that he is pleased to announce his replacement for the position of Archivist/Historian for the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. After serving in that position for 10 years, he decided to step down and give someone else the opportunity to contribute to this position. He said that he met Michele Nations at the TCAFS annual meeting held January 2009 in Fort Worth which included the Golden Alga Symposium, where she was taking pictures of the meeting highlights, award recipients, and opportunities of interest. Since he was doing that for the Chapter as a photo-documentation function, he was delighted to find someone else who had that interest. After getting to know about Michele's advanced photographic skills and her interest in documenting the various aspects of the meeting, he started thinking about her as being a good candidate for the position that he would step down from. He then learned that she is also the Editor of "Hatchery Happenings" for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and furthermore that she worked with her local library to help set up pictures for the "Portal to Texas History." Based on her interest and background, Ray recommended Michele as his replacement. Ray said that he was excited that Michele accepted the position with enthusiasm, and has the background, interest, and talents to add a new dimension to the functions of Archivist/Historian of the Chapter. He felt confident that our membership would be pleased with her contributions.

Michele has served more as Archivist/Photographer since 2009 to the present. Ray Mathews volunteered in 2023 to serve more of the Historian role for writing the TCAFS 50 Year History using much of Michele's Chapter archives since 2009.

"Today is Tomorrow's Yesterday," by Michele Nations Archivist/Historian. Michele reported after accepting her new position that Ray Mathews did such a wonderful job that she hoped she would be able to continue in his footsteps! In fact, Ray made his contribution to our history. He was granted a 25-year membership pin from the American Fisheries Society in appreciation for the many years he had been a member. Although he joined the AFS in 1973 and became a Certified Fisheries Scientist in 1979, his continuous membership started in 1983 with the TCAFS. Brian Van Zee received the award for Ray at the annual meeting in Nashville in August since Ray was not able to receive the award in person. He has been a member for a quarter of a century! "Today is tomorrow's yesterday." That's Michele's favorite saying since becoming historian/archivist, so Janet Wisian of Texas State University put the saying near the top of the History web page. So, what does "Today is tomorrow's yesterday" have to do with being a historian? It means that we need to collect the news from today so that people tomorrow will have it for their history.

In Memoriam: Ed W. Bonn by John Moczygemba. The first president of the Texas Chapter of the AFS passed away on October 5, 2009. On November 5, 1975, at a combined Inland Fisheries and Coastal Fisheries Staff Meeting in the Earl Rudder Building on the Texas A & M University campus in College Station, the Texas Chapter had its beginnings. Ed was elected the first president and planned the next meeting in the fall of 1976 at the 4-H Center on Lake Brownwood. In 1946, Ed began his fisheries career with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department with a short stint in Austin and two years in Wichita Falls before settling down in Denison to manage the fisheries of North Texas until his retirement in August 1977. The district office moved around the Denison area several times before it finally ended up on the present property on the shores of Lake Texoma and became known as the Lake Texoma Fisheries Station.

Michele Nations reported that it has been a busy year for Ray Mathews. In July 2009, he accepted a new job with the Texas Department of Rural Affairs in Austin. Here is what he has to say about his new position: As the Environmental Regulatory Officer for the Texas Department of Rural Affairs (TDRA), Ray performed advanced environmental compliance and monitoring for environmental assessments that are part of the federal funding requirements of the Disaster Recovery Act of 2008. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) selected TDRA as the state agency in Texas to administer the funds for infrastructure recovery projects resulting from impacts by hurricanes Rita, Ike, and Dolly. Ray said he considered the work very satisfying, because it helps the many people who were devastated by the series of hurricanes that impacted the Gulf Coast and Rio Grande Valley; challenging because of the immense range and diversity of recovery projects that must be tracked and monitored; and ecologically important to minimize or avoid environmental impacts (including those to fisheries). With a funding level of \$3 billion, it is the largest public works project in the history of the State of Texas. It will provide several safety features to reduce future hurricane impacts, such as backup generators to power water and wastewater facilities, hospitals, and fire and police stations; as well as improve evacuation routes for coastal areas. Although Ray Mathews stepped down from being the Archivist/Historian, he is still very active in the Chapter and continues to chair the Clark Hubb Student Research Award Committee.

2010

TCAFS President Ken Kurzawski reported that not surprisingly, Texas bucked the recent trend of lowered attendance that has recently plagued many professional meetings. Our turnout was great with 147 people registered.

The Hart-Morris Conservation Center at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center was a great venue for our meeting. Representation at the meeting from the various sectors of the fisheries profession in Texas was the most diverse that Ken could recall for a stand-alone chapter meeting.

Michele Nations, Historian/Archivist, reported that she has been working on a database that I hope will help me get an idea of the different affiliations represented in our membership. She tried to break the affiliations down to different types. Here's an example of what is on the list so far: • Environmental research companies (Bio-West, Inc., Hach, Horizon Environmental Services, Inc., Eureka Environmental, and SWCA Environmental) • Pond and lake management services (Magnolia Fisheries and Total Lake Management) • Non-profit organizations (Galveston Bay Foundation, PAL Services, Wetland Habitat Alliance of Texas, Welder Wildlife Foundation, and Sportsmen's Club of Texas) • Texas universities (SFASU, SHSU, TAMU, TCU, TSU, TTU, UH, UNT, UTA, UTMSI, UTPA, UTSA, UTT, and WTAMU).

Dave Terre, Endowment Chair, reported that the TCAFS established a new relationship with the Sportsmen's Club of Fort Worth to deliver scholarships to deserving Texas fisheries students. They donated \$2,000 to the Endowment Fund for the 2010 annual meeting scholarships. They also donated two \$1,500 scholarships for the 2011 annual meeting, to honor the legacy of Harvey Tennison: one of the co-founders of their club.

The Sportsmen's Club of Fort Worth also made a generous \$2,000 donation to the TCAFS Student Scholarship Endowment Fund as a contribution to the three scholarships that were awarded at the 2010 annual meeting held in Athens Texas.

2011

Congratulations to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Redfish Bay State Scientific Area Seagrass Team who received an Outstanding Team Award at the agency's upcoming Employee Recognition Awards on August 23, 2011. Of the 10 members on this team, 5 are members of the Texas Chapter AFS. Congratulations to: • Willy Cupit • Faye Grubbs • Ed Hegen • Jeremy Leitz • Perry Trial.

Invasive aquatic vegetation such as giant salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) is one of the greatest threats to the aquatic resources of Texas. Salvinia was most likely transported from South America to the U.S. through the aquatic garden or aquarium trade. It was first discovered in the Houston area in 1998 and is now reported on 17 Texas reservoirs. Given ideal growing conditions, giant salvinia can double the area it covers in 7-10 days forming thick mats that disrupt water chemistry, render aquatic habitat unsuitable for native species and interfere with boating access. The only proven biological control agent for giant salvinia is the giant salvinia weevil (*Cyrtobagous salviniae*).

According to the April EXCOM and meeting report the TCAFS was being solicited by the parent society and the southern division to make donations to help defray the costs of their meetings. Members at the meeting stated their belief that it would better serve the Texas chapter membership not to give donations directly for the cost of the meeting but look at a case-by-case basis of supporting individual travel to these meetings. This began a series of considerations for such donations by the Chapter requested by the Southern Division and their Chapters, which is a result of the TCAFS excellent fundraising over the last several years.

Michele Nations, Historian, made one of her first Newsletter articles. She reported that a lot of things go into making history. You've heard of time capsules? She asked us to look at what was going on thirty-five years ago in 1975 and 1976. As Michele reported, she had to remember that many of the people reading this article may not have been born yet. She posted one of the first photos from the beginning of the Texas Chapter that Ray Mathews obtained while going through files at the TPWD Headquarters. Michele reported that TCAFS members may recognize some of the names, such as Allen Forshage and John Moczygemba. Michele also reported that she did some fine tuning the past photo below with some previously unidentified TPWD staff. Furthermore, she got help in identifying those staff with the help of several other TPWD staff. Their names are now complete in the caption. She thanked all of those who sent in their comments and names.

While the country was celebrating a Bi-Centennial year on July 4, 1976, the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society was in its first year. The chapter president was Ed Bonn, who we lost just last year. The TCAFS newsletter was first published in March of 1976. Keep in mind that these were the "good ole' days." The newsletter was typed on a typewriter, copied . . . two pages (printed on both sides) . . . and then mailed (postage \$0.13) to the members. It contained such things as how the chapter had its beginnings, who the elected officers were, and what was happening in the Awards Committee, which consisted of Dr. Joe Lock of Baylor University, Dr. Bobby Whiteside of Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University), and Bob Bounds of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Ray Mathews did a wonderful job of gathering early photos.

Kevin Mayes, Special Recognition Award. Kevin Mayes had at this time devoted more than 20 years to advancing the science of instream flows as a biologist for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. In the face of increasing water demand, he has been well positioned and his work has been critical to ensuring flow protection in streams and rivers through dedication and the application of science. Mr. Mayes has acted as the lead TPWD instream flow biologist for the past decade and has represented the Department on many governmental and peer panels related to flow issues.

2012

George Guillen, Chapter President, said it was great to see our many talented student members receive generous scholarships from our various programs. This would not be possible without the ongoing work of Dave Terre, Mike Morgan, and Ray Mathews who have done a phenomenal job administering student scholarships and soliciting funding support this last year. Speaking of funding, we want to give special recognition to our meeting sponsors (Silver-Level Sponsor: Sea Grant Texas; Bronze Level Sponsors: Water Monitoring Solutions, and HACH).

Furthermore, George Guillen stated that special recognition goes out to Randy Rushin and Water Monitoring Solutions who celebrated their 10-year anniversary by matching donations during the Friday night auction. Finally, he thanked our Student Scholarship sponsors, including the Patsy B. Hollandsworth Family Foundation, Sportsmen Club of Fort Worth, and Water Monitoring Solutions – Randy Rushin. Since our meeting, important changes have occurred in the leadership of one of our key subcommittees. After numerous years of dedicated service to the Clark Hubbs Student Research Scholarship Sub-Committee, Mr. Ray Mathews has stepped down as Chairman. Ray along with the other sub-committee members were instrumental in building the scholarship fund to the point it is today. However, we are excited to welcome Mr. Kevin Mayes who has agreed to serve as the new Chair of this important sub-committee.

Richard Ott, President-elect, pointed out that the age of instant electronic communication includes stakeholders that previously had little interest in fish or fisheries in topics that influence fish habitat management. The inclusion of these additional stakeholders was an important step in communication and fundraising improvements for the Chapter.

George Guillen reported in the TCAFS summer newsletter that some of us were involved with recent attempts to develop environmental flow standards for freshwater and marine ecosystems in Texas through the Senate Bill 3 process. This program had a very ambitious timeline and required making some very important recommendations with sometimes next to nothing in terms of data. Like many others who survived this process and participated in this effort, we as fisheries biologists and managers quickly realize that we are but part of a much larger administrative and legal network of professionals who are also working on the project and dealing with uncertainty (e.g., hydrologists, engineers etc.). I have found out that not having enough data is often not the major problem, but rather navigating the different value that are placed on various forms scientific evidence (e.g., best available science) and comfort level that various professions have and exhibit in the face of uncertainty and lack of data. These “human factors” that are often overlooked when planning new programs, is often the primary obstacle to reaching consensus and informed decision making. Individual and collective differences in perceptions of acceptable risk and scientific evidence are often the greatest obstacle to decision making. We as fisheries biologists must recognize these differences to effectively work on multidisciplinary teams tasked with addressing critical conservation issues.

Michele Nations reported that Lunker David Campbell has retired from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department after 46 years. David was hired as a fish hatchery assistant back in 1965 and then became the hatchery manager at the Tyler Fish Hatchery in 1973. In 1975, he signed up as one of the first members of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. David worked toward increasing the size of trophy bass throughout Texas. Little did he know that his real success would come in the form of a fish named “Ethel.” In November 1986, Ethel was pulled out of Lake Fork by Mark Stevenson. She weighed a whopping 17.67 pounds. The ShareLunker program was born. The ShareLunker program brought nationwide attention to Texas and its big bass when Ethel was put on display at Bass Pro Shops in Springfield, Missouri. David Campbell was Inducted into the Texas Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame in 2011.

History – (Michele Nations) - Michele reported that she has submitted information to Portal to Texas History at the University of North Texas. Michele reported that efforts to redesign the History web

page on the TCAFS website are near completion, and that Ray Mathews is working on a history document. Michele also reported that the TCAFS Facebook page was being updated with photos and scholarship information.

The scholarship program of the TCAFS is of immense importances, and the endowments made them happen. The scholarships mean more than money to the students who receive them, as Michele Nations reported in her now famous “Today is Tomorrow’s Yesterday.” She reported on the Past Scholarship Recipients in the Present, and Where are They Now? Scholarships have been awarded by the TCAFS since 1989 with the goal of providing scholarships being to recognize academic and professional excellence and to help deserving students attain their educational and career goals in the fisheries-related sciences, and thereby promote good stewardship of the aquatic resources throughout the state. Winners are selected annually by the Scholarship Committee from applications submitted by undergraduate and graduate (M.S. and Ph. D.) students from across the state. The selection of the winners is based on 1) academic excellence, 2) professional activities, and the 3) promise of future professional involvement. As example, John Findeisen, one of the 1995 winners. The scholarship paid for his last semester (Spring 1996) of graduate school at Southwest Texas State University. In June 1996 he accepted a Fish and Wildlife Technician position with the Inland Fisheries Division of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and was stationed in Wichita Falls, Texas. There are many other successful stories that resulted from the scholarship program.

2013

The Portal to Texas History was created and is maintained by the University of North Texas Libraries' Digital Projects Unit. They provide their digital content to a worldwide audience. Each month the Portal averages about 150,000 visits. Most of these come from people in the United States, but the rest are from every corner of the world. Visitors from Canada and the United Kingdom are the second and third highest in use. The source for most of the traffic to The Portal to Texas History is from search engines like Google, Yahoo, and Bing along with the social networking sites like Facebook. In 2002, when the UNT Libraries began planning The Portal to Texas History, their goal was to ensure long-term sustainability. In other words, they wanted to create a digital gateway to collect, archive, and display items of historical value in ways that would allow future generations to access what was collected.

2014

Michele Nations started a Twitter account for the Chapter – @TCAFS. She entered metadata for the photos and newsletters that she submitted to UNT Portal to Texas History (into the Portal site and in her photo and membership Access databases). She has continued collecting professional and biographical information from TCAFS members and will be sending a request for a curriculum vitae (CV) from members to update her library. She used this information to pay tribute to members who passed away in 2013, including a poster for Gary Powell, and Newsletter tribute to Dennis Smith; as well as Robert Paul Schmidt II in 2014.

2015

Brian Van Zee of Waco was named fisheries biologist of the year by the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA). Van Zee is a fisheries biologist for the Inland Fisheries Division of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and is headquartered in Waco.

Michele Nations, Archivist/Historian, stated that being the archivist/historian for the Texas Chapter has been an honor. She got the opportunity to look back and see how the Chapter has grown into the impressive organization that it has become and how people have been following in the footsteps of those who have come before. For me, those footsteps were those of Ray Mathews. Such big shoes to fill! Even as I work on preparing the footsteps in time for the TCAFS Newsletters, I am so grateful for all of the work that Ray Mathews did for TCAFS's 25th anniversary. Michele Nations summarized the importance of documenting our history, in another one of her "Today is Tomorrow's Yesterday! Capturing Today for those who Come Tomorrow!". Even from our very beginning on the TAMU campus, students have played a big part of our history. The TCAFS leadership has placed an emphasis on encouraging student participation through scholarships (first given in 1989 to Tommy Bates, TAMU), best student presentation awards (first given in 1996 to Craig Paukert, OSU), and best student poster awards (first given in 2002 to James Turner, TAMUG). It seems like every committee, and especially the student outreach committee, is devoted to helping Chapter professional members interact with students.



Members of college and university fisheries/biology faculties have been and are preparing students for tomorrow. Looking over past awards, Tim Bonner's name has popped up a few times. As a student from Texas Tech, he won the award for best presentation in 1998. Tim's name appeared again in 2001 when he received the Outstanding Fisheries Student award. Gene Wilde was his PhD advisor. In 2004, his dedication to and love for his students and fisheries were made evident when he received the award for Outstanding Fisheries Worker of the Year in Fisheries Education as the youngest person to receive the award in TCAFS history. Tim is following in the footsteps of such renowned education award winners as Clark Hubbs (UT, 1978), Richard Noble (TAMU, 1979), and his predecessor, Bobby Whiteside (SWTSU/TX State, 1981).

According to Ray Mathews, TCAFS Historian/Archivist, the history of the TCAFS Skeg is our longest lasting permanent memorial item. The history of the now-famous Chapter Skeg began in 1990 when Bobby Farquhar, then TCAFS President, won it in a raffle at the annual meeting held next to Lake Texoma and used it the next morning to bring the business meeting to order as a sort of gavel. From that moment on it was passed down from Chapter President to President at the business meeting—a tradition that has continued for 15 years. Gene McCarty was the recipient of the skeg from Bobby and so on down the line of presidents over the years. According to Bobby, back in those days the raffle was a "junk raffle" and any little item, like the skeg or some fishing hooks, sinkers, box of earth worms, etc., were what you got. The Chapter has certainly come a long way since then. The present skeg has had 25 years of being passed down from TCAFS President to President.

2016

A Certificate of Appreciation was awarded to Michele Nations, an active member of TCAFS who chaired the Awards Committee after having served as a member of that committee for several years. If that were not enough, she also chairs the History Committee, a position she assumed in 2009 when veteran historian Ray Mathews retired after 10 years of service. She instituted and maintained the Chapter Facebook page where she is a prolific poster on topics related to fisheries. For years she has also donated her photographic skills in service of the Chapter by documenting its activities. She has been employed with TPWD for almost 29 years and she started her employment with the agency as a F&W Technician at the Dundee State Fish Hatchery in March 1987. Soon afterwards she transitioned into the administrative and staff support role in the hatchery regional office. In that capacity Michele has seen them come and go. During her tenure in the regional office, she has relocated eastward from the Dundee State Fish Hatchery in Electra to the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens and finally back west again to the Possum Kingdom State Fish Hatchery.

At the Corpus Christi meeting, the Panel Discussion was “Water Use Issues in Texas - A 21st Century Challenge for Fisheries Managers.” Cindy Loeffler opened the panel presentation with an overview of the recently signed Senate Bill 1. The panel discussed concerns about the rapid growth of Texas’ population, especially in urban areas, and its effect on our State’s natural resources, especially its lakes, rivers, wetlands, and estuaries. Dr. Larry McKinney spoke about the politics of water. Other presentations were made about reservoir fisheries, instream flows, freshwater inflows to bays and estuaries, and wetlands. Although the last Corpus meeting was held nearly 2 decades ago, the issues surrounding our water resources have not changed, but instead, have become even more complex. Our focus at the next TCAFS conference will be to continue this discussion about how we will meet the future water demands of our population, agriculture, and industry without negatively impacting the ecology of our water bodies.

As TCAFS Co-Historian with Ray Mathews, Michele reported that we keep track of all the happenings within the Texas Chapter. As a TPWD retiree, Michele stated that she thoroughly enjoyed the camaraderie throughout the years and hope to continue for many years to come with the TCAFS. She reflected on having watched people retire this year; people like Aaron Barkoh, Dale Lyon, John Moczygemba, and John Dennis. Michele stated that John Moczygemba stood out from among the rest for his participation in the formation of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. He was there on the Texas A & M College Station campus, November 1975, where more than 100 fisheries workers from across the state met to form the new statewide Chapter based on Ray Mathews TCAFS 25 Year Silver Anniversary History 1975-2001 document.

John was involved in fisheries management years before that date. After graduating from Texas A&M University in May 1969, John began working for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as a summer intern for Bob Kemp at the Inland Fisheries District Office in San Antonio studying the life history of flathead catfish in the Medina and Rio Grande Rivers. After a tour in the Army, John returned to TPWD in November 1971 and was stationed at the Lake Texoma Fisheries Station under Ed Bonn and later Bruce Hysmith where he continued until retirement in 2016. The biggest project

was striped bass introduction into Texas from 1971 to 1976. John was involved November 1975, the formation of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society at the Texas A & M University, College Station Campus.

2017

Randy Rushin listed some high points from the 2017 annual meeting in Corpus Christi: • 77 presentations; 43 by students • 40 Posters – (double our normal); 20 by students • 46 students paired with mentors for the luncheon • 10 scholarships at \$1,500 awarded (4 more than usual) plus Clark Hubbs Award of \$500 • New RECORD fundraising – beat the record from last year by 40%! • New RECORD attendance – 292 attended the banquet.

The Sportsman's Club of Fort Worth has funded two fisheries student scholarships each year, from 2011 through 2016, in honor of Harry Tennison; one of their founding club members. These 12 scholarships, totaling \$18,000, have been paid directly to the student's university to help fund costs for attending college, thereby helping them attain their educational and career goals in fisheries.

2018

Mike Homer, Jr., President, TCAFS, stated that our meeting at the Hilton College Station, we had 210 members register and 232 attend our banquet, which is the second highest attendance for a non-joint meeting since 2008. Attributed to the generosity of our membership and because of the efforts of our Publicity and Exhibits Committee, the auctions and raffles raised about \$10,595 that help's support the chapter's endowment for student scholarships – this is the second highest amount raised!

The Special Recognition in Fisheries Work was awarded to Mike Morgan, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. Mike is a long-time member of TCAFS. For the past decade, he has served as Chair of the Scholarship Committee. During this time, he reviewed hundreds of applications to select deserving candidates to receive TCAFS scholarships. Interestingly, Mike was a recipient of a TCAFS scholarship at our meeting in 1999 and again in 2002. Mike Morgan is a coastal ecologist with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Coastal Fisheries Division in Dickinson. He conducts habitat assessments on proposed impacts to freshwater and estuarine habitats – including streams, wetlands, oysters, and seagrass – on the upper Texas coastal plain and provides recommendations to minimize habitat impacts. Mike received degrees in fisheries from Michigan State University (B.S.) and Texas A&M University (M.S.). He has been an active AFS member for 27 years including the Texas Chapter since 1998.

Special Recognition in Fisheries Work - Paul Fleming, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. For a number of years now, Paul has graciously volunteered his professional services as the TCAFS auctioneer during the annual meeting banquet, making it a point to attend - even in years when he has been unable to attend the rest of the meeting. Paul's enthusiasm and engaging style have been

extremely entertaining, drawing larger and larger crowds each year. His efforts have greatly impacted the success of the auctions, in turn benefitting the fundraising efforts in support of the student scholarship programs. We hope this award can serve as a token of the Chapter's appreciation of Paul's skills, efforts, and dedication.

2019

Dan Daugherty, Chapter President, stated that the proverbial dust has finally settled on the over two-year planning effort we started back in the fall of 2016 to host the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society's annual meeting in conjunction with our Texas chapter meeting this past January. Despite the untimely issues with the Federal shutdown, we recorded the third highest attendance in the history of the SDAFS, with over 550 attendees taking part in seven technical committee meetings, 14 continuing education workshops, and almost 300 technical presentations.

The chapter decided to start a new series titled "Where Are They Now?" In this series the chapter attempted to find past TCAFS award recipients, particularly past student members, and see where their professional career has gone since their time with the Texas Chapter. The chapter found Rob Weller who won best student presentation in 1996 to start with.

Freshwater fishes are the most at-risk group of vertebrates on the planet. Currently, they are experiencing extinction rates two orders of magnitude greater than the background extinction rate. Texas freshwater fishes are equally threatened. In order to begin conservation efforts, a species needs to be formally recognized as such. Coordinated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Inland Fisheries Division, a group of freshwater fish experts gathered in May 2019 in San Marcos to assess the status of Texas freshwater fishes and assemble recommendations on those in need of the added protections offered through listing as State Threatened or Endangered. Experts completed a tiered assessment process to update the state-level conservation status rankings for 91 of the 191 native freshwater fishes known to occur in Texas.

The first Women's Leadership Group met at the 2019 Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society. Even with the huge turnout, they were able to introduce everyone and facilitate a lively and organic round-table discussion. Attendees shared stories of their career paths and planned academic studies; their personal challenges and triumphs; and issues that face women in fisheries and possible solutions to overcome them. A primary action item that came from the meeting was to set up channels of communication to support networking and mentoring and to start to tackle some of the issues that people were passionate about, so we established a Listserv and Slack group. Slack is an online tool where users can participate with channels, each housing conversations they are interested in.

The Texas Chapter was selected to receive the American Fisheries Society's Outstanding Large Chapter Award for 2019, which was presented at the first ever joint annual meeting of the American Fisheries Society and The Wildlife Society in Reno, Nevada. The award recognizes outstanding professionalism, active resource protection, and enhancement programs, as well as a strong commitment to the mission of the Society. One award is given to small chapters (less than 100

members) and large chapters (100 or more members), annually. Immediate past-president, Michael Homer, president-elect Dr. Kirk Winemiller, and Dan Daugherty accepted the award at the AFS business meeting on behalf of the chapter. Dan congratulated membership on this award. He said that It is certainly a testament to the long history of engagement and activity of our chapter, and an honor to receive.

2020

The COVID -19 pandemic disrupted our rhythm and altered many areas of our lives, both personally and professionally. Ordinarily we would be busy with research, monitoring, sampling, and fisheries administration related travel. The world looks much different now. The level of uncertainty associated with the global pandemic is high and only time will tell how society manages and recovers from all of this. The annual meeting was still held in Waco this year despite the pandemic.

2021

Michelle Nations described her experiences in preserving TCAFS history. How do we know about our TCAFS history? Thanks to Ray Mathews, we know quite a bit. He was the archivist/historian from 1999 to 2009, and he was amazing in his compilation of documents and files, plus preparing the Texas Chapter American Fisheries Society History & Chronology, Silver Anniversary Edition Celebrating 25 Years of Fisheries History (September 2001), which was posted on the History page of the TCAFS web page ([https:// units.fisheries.org/tx/tc-history/](https://units.fisheries.org/tx/tc-history/)). A poster that shows the TCAFS history from 1975 to 2005, was posted to the website.

As the new Archivist/Historian in 2009, I began working on an update to his work. Then in 2015, I was asked to chair the Awards Committee. Those who know me will understand that I jumped at the chance to help the Chapter in this capacity – not only would I be able to highlight people doing great things, but I would also be able to use my database skills to track judges and presentations, figuring that I could also use the information in my efforts to keep track of our It has been said that, at its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future.

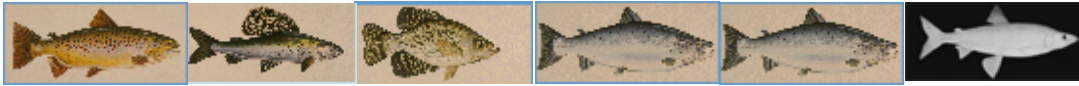
The past is a source of knowledge, and the future is a source of hope. Love of the past implies faith in the future - Stephen E. Ambrose. That kept me busy until 2020 when I stepped down from being the Awards committee chair and Brittany Chesser took over that position. Now being retired, I'm enjoying history more fully again. All those paper documents that Ray began with (e.g., proceedings, newsletters, and letters) are being scanned in as digital files, if they have not already been done so. I'm also getting back to the database I started to track members and, with it, also capturing members' photos. I was able to complete two posters with the help of Ray and Stephen Curtis for the TCAFS exhibit at the AFS meeting in Baltimore, which is also posted on the TCAFS website, History page, now.

2022

Tim Birdsong, President TCAFS, reported that the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R. 2773) passed both chambers of U.S. Congress. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act will result in an

unprecedented level of financial investment nationally in the conservation of species of greatest conservation need (SGCN), a status generally afforded to at-risk species in need of conservation intervention. Congress currently requires each U.S. state and territory to assemble and routinely update State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs), which emphasize actions necessary to conserve SGCN and prevent the need for their listing as threatened or endangered under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

The History of the Clark Hubbs Student Scholarship Award



The Scholarship Committee oversees and conducts the Texas Chapter's Student Scholarship program. Scholarship awards are provided on an annual basis to help deserving students attain their educational and career goals in the fisheries-related sciences, and to promote good stewardship of aquatic resources in the state.

The TCAFS endowment fund was established in a high-interest-bearing account to be administered by the Executive Committee (EXCOM) of the Chapter with guidance from the Endowments Committee (EC). Additional funds are deposited by the Secretary/Treasurer at the direction of the Chapter EXCOM at any time.

The Clark Hubbs Research Award was established to be consistent with the fisheries research legacy established by Dr. Clark Hubbs, Professor Emeritus, The University of Texas. Research proposals and students considered for this award targeted freshwater, marine, or estuarine fishes. Evaluation criteria are based on research proposals that the committee determines should be funded. These include the following:

- Research involved with the ecology, biology, taxonomy, and life history of Texas fishes.
- Research aimed at restoration or preservation of fish species and their habitats.
- Relevance of research to conservation and preservation of fishes and their habitats.
- Feasibility of the research in meeting current needs of the science.
- Scientific merit involved in development of the experimental design.
- Research involved with rare, threatened and endangered fish species, and their critical habitat needs.

Clark Hubbs with his wife, Cathy, at the 2003 annual meeting of the TCAFS. Clark received a plaque recognizing his contributions to the Chapter and creation of the Clark Hubbs Student Research Award.



The very first Clark Hubbs Research Award was given to a deserving student in 2005, including a certificate and \$250. Raising funds for the Clark Hubbs Research Award was new and did not bring in the funds needed or that we felt appropriate for this prestigious award, and the last \$250 award was presented in 2011. Beginning in 2012, the TCAFS began funding the Clark Hubbs Research Award using funds raised during the auction and raffle held at the Annual TCAFS meeting. By doing so, we were able to raise enough funds to increase the award from \$250 to \$500 until 2022. The TCAFS approved using Endowment Funds for the Clark Hubbs award in 2021, which only provided for Scholarship Awards, so the name of the Clark Hubbs Research Award was changed to reflect that requirement and became known as the Clark Hubbs Student Scholarship. The first time Endowment Funds were used to fund this Scholarship Award was in 2022 in the amount of \$1,500 and since that time the Clark Hubbs Student Scholarship has been tied to and funded at the same levels as other TCAFS Scholarships. Thanks to the TCAFS EXCOM and Endowment Committee, the Clark Hubbs Scholarship will continue into the future. Beginning with the 2025 TCAFS Annual meeting, the Clark Hubbs Scholarship and all TCAFS Scholarships will be increased to \$2,000 each and it is hoped that those scholarship amounts will continue to increase in the future. Brian VanZee, Chair, Endowment Committee, provided information about scholarship funds.

2023

Dave Terre has a special place in the history of the TCAFS, which began in 1982, when he enrolled in Texas Tech University and his professor suggested giving a presentation at an annual meeting. In 1985, his career with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department began when he was hired as a Fisheries Technician, and he excelled in his career from Abilene to District Supervisor in San Marcos, Regional Fisheries Director in Tyler, and finally to the Chief of the Management and Research Branch in Austin from 2007 until his retirement in 2020. He received 13 significant professional honors and recognitions, including TCAFS Outstanding Fisheries Worker of the Year

three times; 2004, 2006, and 2014. He chaired multiple committees, including Endowments where he grew the principle balance for student scholarships to over \$450,000. Craig Bond, Inland Fisheries Division Director, said when Dave retired, “Dave’s fingerprints have left an indelible and enduring mark upon TCAFS and TPWD Inland Fisheries and also to the quality of and diversity of fishing opportunities in Texas. Michelle would call those Dave’s footprints in time, rather than fingerprints, but however you describe Dave, he has been a very special guy in the Chapter history.

Michele Nations and Ray Mathews worked together as Co-Chairs of the History Committee beginning this year, as Michele reported on the current status of TCAFS history updates. Her favorite saying is “Today is tomorrow’s yesterday.” What is happening today is history tomorrow. She also says the we need to capture today so that those that come after us will see our footsteps, our photos, our research, our passion for what we believe in and fight for.

Dr. Chris Mace, Chapter President, encouraged TCAFS members to read and understand the multiple interpretations of the proposed amendment that occur on the “The constitutional amendment protecting the right to engage in farming, ranching, timber production, horticulture, and wildlife management.” Proposition 5 - HJR 3 proposes a constitutional amendment to redesignate the national research university fund as the Texas University Fund (TUF), and to appropriate funds from the economic stabilization fund to the TUF.

Ray Mathews, TCAFS History Committee Co-Chair, first reported on his interest to write the 50 Year History of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, to follow the 25 Year History he wrote previously, at the 2023 Executive Committee meetings Chaired by Dr. Chris Mace. The offer was accepted by the Committee, and Ray kept the EXCOM updated with his progress, and made announcements of his progress on the TCAFS History at the Business Meeting following the 2024 annual meeting.

The 50th anniversary meeting will be held in January 2025 dating back to November 1975, when a group of men and women joined together to form the Texas Chapter. However, we did not receive our AFS Certification until 2026, so that date is our official Chapter 50th anniversary. Ray Mathews is preparing the TCAFS 50-Year History, which will include highlights of the many activities which have contributed to the tremendous growth of the Chapter, an annual chronology of events and photos, and other issues that eventful in our Chapter’s history. Photos of the Award Ceremonies, collecting samples, electrofishing, planting to restore waterways, articles, will continue to be archived for our Chapter’s history by Ray and Michelle.

2024

Steven Bardin, TCAFS President, commented on the history of Nacogdoches, where the annual meeting was held this year. Nacogdoches is the oldest town in Texas. As many of you may know, I live on the edge of west Texas, just outside of Abilene in Comanche. Being so far west it feels ironic to be planning a meeting in Nacogdoches. It will be the furthest east the chapter has ever held a solo meeting and our first visit to east Texas since 2015.

Nacogdoches has a storied past beginning with Caddo native American settlements that included a large village, maize agriculture, and a ceremonial center (now known as Washington Square). The Nacogdoche tribe word for friend was “tejas”, so many attribute them to not only naming

Nacogdoches but also Texas itself. The Spanish arrived in Nacogdoches by at least 1542 and set up a mission, Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de los Nacogdoches in 1716. In 1779 Don Antonio Gil Y'Barbo wrote the first civil laws, established streets, and built "the Old Stone House", officially creating the first Texas town, Nacogdoches. Over the decades the Spanish, French, and eventually Texans disputed over the area. The city has flown nine flags: Spanish, French, Mexican, Magee-Gutierrez Republic, Long Republic, Fredonia Republic, Texas, Confederate States, and United States.

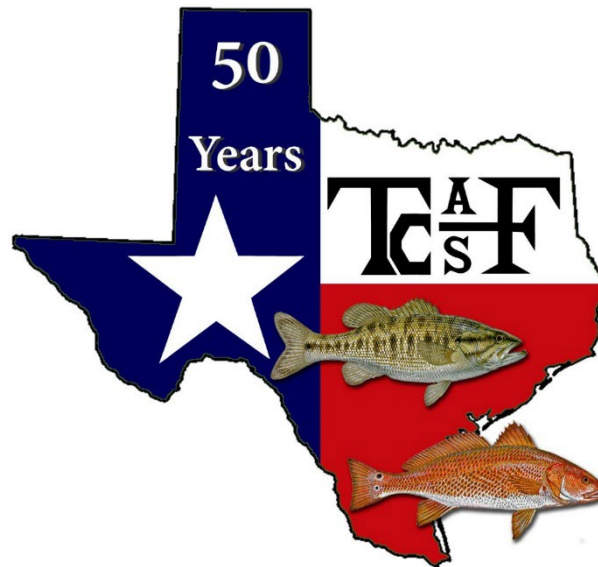
Continuing on, Steven Bardin noted that another striking feature of the town is the abundance of water. In the center of Nacogdoches is Bonita Creek which winds through town eventually merging into Bayou La Nana, which feeds Kurth Lake and eventually Sam Rayburn Reservoir. To the west of Nacogdoches lies the 2200-acre impoundment, Nacogdoches Lake, which is fed by Bayou Loco, Caney Creek, Yellow Bank Creek and others. To the east of town lies the Bayou Carrizo, Naconiche Creek, and the Attoyac River. The area reservoirs are managed by the TPWD Inland Fisheries Jasper District headquartered nearby at the Sam Rayburn dam in Brookeland. In that same location is the newest Inland Fisheries hatchery, the John D. Parker East Texas Fish Hatchery.

While in Nacogdoches, Steven stated that it would be remiss not to mention Stephen F. Austin State University. As a hub of education and innovation, this university has been the cornerstone of higher education in East Texas since 1923 and an extraordinary source of student and faculty contributions to the TCAFS. We look forward to the opportunity to explore their community and campus during our time in Nacogdoches.

During the annual meeting, 43 meeting attendees participated in the clean-up of La Nana Bayou near Nacogdoches. Montana Aquatic Ecology Lab organized this event. Members contributed 45 oral and 42 poster presentations, as well as two continuing education workshops.

Steven Bardin reported that our society members have been involved in planning the 2025 AFS meeting in San Antonio and the coinciding Black Bass Summit. These two events, across the river from each other, have the potential to create a powerhouse of knowledge and networking. It's an opportunity for us to showcase our expertise and passion for fisheries science. In addition, he said we support another College Station meeting, as it is appropriate leading to the 50-year TCAFS official anniversary in 2026. The TCAFS first founding meeting was in 1975 at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. The Chapter received its AFS Certification in 1976, so that makes 2026 our official anniversary. Steve said If you want to know why the College Station meeting is going to be important, contact Ray Mathews so he can explain how College Station has a historical meaning to establishing our chapter.

2025



The 2025 Texas Chapter AFS Annual Meeting was held at the Hilton College Station & Conference Center from **January 16-18, 2025**. **This meeting will be in addition to the AFS meeting in San Antonio later in August.**

The is the 50-Year Anniversary of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, based on the first organizational meeting in 1975. The TCAFS received its Charter from the American Fisheries Society in 1976, which makes 2026 our official 50-Year Anniversary.

2026

The 2026 Texas Chapter AFS Annual Meeting is yet to be organized, but the Chapter will celebrate the official 50-Year Anniversary, based on the AFS Certification being received by the Chapter in November 1976.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not have been possible without the careful annual records of those who served the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society for a half of a century. Fisheries biology is more than just a career, it is a passion. The men and women who work in this field do so not for monetary reward, but to be a part of the fisheries profession and this is their history in Texas.

The author would like to thank the numerous Texas Chapter AFS members who contributed information, records, Proceedings, Newsletters, and pictures.

25-Year History: Dick Luebke, Charles Munger, John Prentice, Ed Bonn, Bruce Hysmith, Allen Forshage, Kevin Storey, Roger McCabe, Danny Lewis, Fred Janssen, Bobby Miller, Paul Hammerschmidt, Gary Powell, Beth Tyler, and John Moczygemba were especially helpful with their time and contributions. I am also indebted to the reviews provided by Dick Luebke, Charles Munger, and Gordon Linam. I would also like to thank Gordon Linam for having the confidence in my historical skills to ask me to write the 25 Year History of the TCAFS document.

50-Year History: Michelle Nations, Brian VanZee, Dave Terre, Chris Mace, Stephen Bardin, Stephen Curtis, Ryan Seymour. The 50 Year History has been a challenge to compile and document in three separate documents by Historical Sketch, Historical Highlights, and Annual Chronology. I would like to thank my wife, Mela Mathews, for putting up with me during this time demanding mission and providing reviews.

Raymond Mathews

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Certified Fisheries Scientist # 1,301 (1979), AFS Member 1973-2025
AFS Golden Member Award for 50 Years of Service 1973-2023