



TBLA Hosts Bass Unlimited

Poster Unveiling Gala

By Ramona Moore

The renowned artist Don Edwards presented his painting at the TBLA Poster Unveiling and Auction held on March 2, at Cypress Bend Resort. The Unveiling signals the start of TBLA's 15th Annual Fundraiser that will culminate with the Bass Unlimited – Back A Great Fighter Banquet on Friday, April 21, at Cypress Bend Pavilion.

The crowd gathered in the Grand Ballroom, which was exquisitely decorated by the talented staff of Nichols. Rhonda Dean welcomed the guests, and Calley Gentry sang the national anthem.

Mrs. Dean introduced Don Edwards, along with poster sponsors, Rick and Sabina Rowe of Toledo Town Hardware and Supply. Mr. Edwards and Mr. and Mrs. Rowe dropped the veils to reveal the original painting and signed poster #1.

In honor of Toledo Bend being named #1 Bass Fishing Lake in the nation for the last two years, Don Edwards named his original art work "Toledo Bend #1", which depicts a "lunker" bass hooked on a lure. Cypress Bend Pavilion, where many bass tournaments are held each year, is shown in the background. An outline of the lake and Edwards' signature "redheaded woodpecker" are cleverly hidden in the painting.

Mrs. Dean thanked Mr. and Mrs. Rowe of Toledo Town Hardware and presented them with signed poster #2. Mr. Rowe expressed appreciation for the poster and his excitement over their sponsorship. He then presented artist Don Edwards with a plaque of appreciation.

In addition to the poster sponsor, many organizations and people were instrumental in making the Gala a huge success. Mrs. Dean recognized these sponsors:

- Gold Sponsors – Cypress Bend Resort; Nichols, Inc.; Toledo Town Realty; Town of Many
- Silver Sponsors – Judge Stephen Beasley; Leah V. Byles, DDS; Buddy Wood, State Farm Insurance; Warren Meadows Funeral Home
- Bronze Sponsors – Toledo Town Inn; Tim and Rhonda Dean; Randy and Deb Pennington; Sheriff Ronny Richardson; Ben and Myra Smith

Mrs. Dean introduced the auctioneer, Kevin McDonald, who took the podium and began the auction. Mr. McDonald energized the crowd, prompting the highest bids possible for all four pieces.

The first piece to be auctioned was the signed and framed poster #1. Bidding closed at \$350 with Ben Smith placing the winning bid.



Poster Sponsors Sabina and Rick Rowe are shown with artist Don Edwards, and Ben and Myra Smith, Auction winners of the 2017 TBLA Bass Unlimited signed poster #1 titled "Toledo Bend #1" (Photo by Calley Gentry)

Next, the bidding began for the original oil painting from which the 2017 Poster was printed. The winning bid went to Gerald Mitchell for \$3,800.



Poster Sponsors Rick and Sabina Rowe, and artist Don Edwards are shown with Gerald and Vicki Mitchell who placed the winning bid of \$3800 for the original painting titled "Toledo Bend #1". (Photo by Calley Gentry)

Then two original paintings provided by former poster artists Eddie Pastureau (2016) and Noah Bounds (2015) were auctioned. Eddie Pastureau's original was titled "Point of Interest." Rhonda Dean placed the winning bid of \$375.



Artist Eddie Pastureau pictured with Tim and Rhonda Dean holding the original artwork "Point of Interest" that they won for \$375 during the auction bidding. (Photo by Calley Gentry)

Noah Bounds' painting titled "The Speckled Tipper" sold to Carolyn Dove for \$300.

Carolyn and Ted Dove hold the original water color "The Speckled Tipper" by poster artist, Noah Bounds (2015), after placing the winning bid of \$300 during the auction. (Photo by Calley Gentry)



The 2017 Poster Sale began, and artist Don Edwards was present to sign and personalize posters. The posters will be available for purchase at the Nichols store in Many and Mitchell's Barber Shop in Zwolle.

It is not too late to reserve your spot at the upcoming Bass Unlimited Banquet and Auction on April 21. Contact Gaynell Goodeaux at 318-256-0501 for tickets. Tickets for the 52-Gun Raffle can be purchased by contacting Bruce Rogers at 281-543-0184.