

Twelfth Annual TBLA Bass Unlimited Banquet and Auction a GRAND Success!

Beautiful Cypress Bend Park Pavilion on Toledo Bend Lake was the setting for the twelfth annual TBLA Bass Unlimited Banquet and Auction on May 30, 2014. The event, coordinated by Ned Goodeaux, marked the culmination of Toledo Bend Lake Association's (TBLA's) major fundraiser for projects to improve the Lake and benefit the surrounding community.



Caption: Attendees at the 2014 TBLA Bass Unlimited Banquet enjoyed a delicious steak dinner prepared by the staff at Cypress Bend Resort. (Photo by John Toliver)

More than 650 spirited TBLA members and lake supporters gathered to enjoy the breezy, warm weather, the traditional steak dinner, visit with friends, and bid on both silent and live auction items. The Banquet is a much-anticipated annual event where good friends, families, and lake supporters gather to contribute to TBLA's mission by purchasing banquet tickets, raffle tickets, prize tickets for drop boxes, and TBLA memorabilia. The crowd was welcomed by Mike Randolph, Emcee for the evening, and Ted Dove, TBLA President, who led the group in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Caption: *Living the Good Life* quilt, built by the 'Round-the-Bend Quilters from the Sabine Council on Aging—Toledo Center, was won by Rhonda Dean who held the lucky 7 of Hearts in the card draw. Bass Unlimited Coordinator Ned Goodeaux (left) and one of the Bassettes holds the quilt as the cards are sold. (Photo by John Toliver)



During the evening, door prizes were given away, bids were taken for silent auction items, a live auction was conducted, and everyone waited anxiously to see if their ticket was drawn for drop-box items and the major prizes.

Emcee Randolph introduced Kevin McDonald, master auctioneer, who conducted the live auction for his 10th year. Ricky Yeldell, Jarrett Thaxton, Sean Kinney, and Villis Dowden, all of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, served as spotters to identify bidders. Items sold during the live auction brought in an estimated \$20,000. The silent auction garnered more than \$3,000. The grand prize raffle for a 2014 Polaris Ranger 800 ATV Side by Side was won by Torphy Avant of Hemphill, Texas.



Caption: Auctioneer Kevin McDonald and the Bassettes kept the crowd excited and bidding throughout the evening. Two original wood carvings were sold during the evening—one bass and one pelican. This bass generated quite a lot of excitement—it is about 4' tall. (Photo by John Toliver)

TBLA thanks our 2014 major sponsors and supporters who graciously donated their money, time, and talents toward making this event a success:

- Toledo Town and Tackle for funding the TBLA caps
- Nichols for funding the TBLA caps and for decorating the stage
- First Choice Real Estate Services and Living the Dream Guide Service for funding the visors
- Sabine State Bank for donating the TBLA T-shirts
- Shelby Savings Bank of Hemphill and A/Real Estate Connection for the TBLA towels
- Toledo Bend Lakeside Realty for the drink cups
- Coca-Cola for supplying soft drinks and Original Water & Air, LLC, for bottled water
- More than 50 businesses and individuals who sponsored tables
- The gracious individuals, organizations, and businesses that donated items for door prizes, drop boxes, and the silent and live auctions

Without the support of all those who contributed to the event—whether through contributions of money or donations of goods, services, or time—we thank you.

For over twelve years, TBLA funds raised through this annual banquet have helped support the Sabine River Authority, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and various organizations in communities surrounding the lake. TBLA has contributed more than \$650,000 to numerous projects such as the following:

- Co-sponsored construction of public piers, boat launches, and boat lane markers in and around the lake
- Supported numerous youth endeavors to promote art, golf and fishing, including the Annual Sabine Parish Fifth Grade Fishing Clinic.
- Sponsored improvements to community buildings and structures
- Sponsored, funded, and administered the Toledo Bend Lunker Bass catch and release fish replica program
- Purchased Wood Duck boxes to promote wildlife habitat and enhancement
- Provided funds to SRA-LA and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries toward purchase of barges and boats to service and manage the lake and assisted SRA in the purchase of channel markers

Caption: Shreveport artist Don Edwards continues to thrill the crowd with his paintings. Edwards was the artist for the 2011 Bass Unlimited Poster and has been a faithful supporter ever since. His original Giclee “*Concealed Carry*” was auctioned off during the evening. (Photo by John Toliver)



TBLA is dedicated to improving the quality of Toledo Bend Lake and the amenities surrounding it. Our mission is to provide financial and/or volunteer assistance to promote stewarding the environment and aquatic integrity of the Lake to perpetuate it as a world class fishery and recreational resource area. See our web site at www.toledobendlakeassociation.com for more information on our projects and to join TBLA.