President’s Corner

Howdy all,

As the incoming president of the Texas Aquaculture Association, I would like to introduce myself. Many of you only know me as the bald guy with a beard, so a little history might be in order. I was born in Phoenix, AZ but have lived in CA, OK, MO, NY, and all sides of Texas since then. Ever since I was old enough to lie about the size of fish I caught, I have loved working with fish and fishing whether it be for trout in a mountain stream or catfish in a farm pond. In high school I fancied myself quite the angler (best I knew) and I thought after a couple years of fisheries management at TAMU, I would go pro. I found out quickly the best fisherman in Lubbock does not mean much when competing with East Texas anglers. While in an intro to wildlife and fisheries class at Texas A&M, I picked up what the term, fisheries management encompassed and decided it was for me. Fast forward a few years and now I own a private lake management company (Lochow Ranch Pond and Lake Management/http://www.lochowranch.com/) and am privileged to help young people get started in the same career I chose, while helping to improve ponds and lakes around the country.

I find myself at the helm of TAA at a time of change. The global aquaculture market is growing faster than traditional agriculture. But here in the states, cheap imported fish, rampant inflation, a lackluster economy, and many other factors have converged to make fish farming unattractive to the average Joe. Additionally, there has not been an industry wide crisis prominent enough to bring together competitors for the common good of the industry. The only people benefiting from the current status of Texas aquaculture are those individuals who have paid their dues and possess the skills to adapt to the current market by utilizing niche services to consumers, offer value added products and continue to redefine the definition, efficient production techniques.

During my tenure, I would like to see TAA continue to focus on keeping its current membership well informed of today’s issues, and look for ways to reach more individuals during this lull, by identifying sister industries that continue to grow in the current economic climate. Some of these include aquaponics, mini farms, organic operations, live fish markets, cage culture, ornamental fish, etc. I fully expect that in the near future, there will be an opportunity for the everyday farmer to produce an aquatic product for a profit, and when that day comes, I fully expect TAA to be prepared to jump start the industry. Let’s not forget that Texas is blessed with an excellent research staff, abundant low lying shorelines, great growing seasons, a large seafood-eating consumer base, but best of all, a bunch of hardworking Texans that are stubborn enough to farm fish when there is no water to be had.

I challenge each of you to continue to push yourselves and your fellow aquaculturists to ensure that Texas aquaculture produces more than its share of the estimated 30 billion pounds of seafood that will be consumed yearly by Americans by 2025.

Tight lines and heavy stringers.

John Jones
President
Happenings at Texas Parks and Wildlife:
Inland Fisheries
By: Rob Schmid

I was reviewing the first quarter 2012 TPWD Happenings article in AquaNotes, and noticed that what I was about to report, first quarter 2013, was almost exactly the same information I’d written last year. I could change a few dates, adjust a few numbers and it would be ready for press. We pretty much do the same things, year in year out (Rainbow trout, Guadalupe bass, koi, FLMB, CCF …). To change things a little, I’ll report on TPWD’s Sunshine bass production efforts this spring. Everybody who knows anything about the US aquaculture industry knows that Keo Farms/Mike Freeze and company are the major producers of Sunshine bass fry and fingerlings in the country. If you need Sunshine bass, just call Keo, place your order and, presto, Bob’s your uncle, you’ll have fry or fingerlings at your doorstep. At TPWD, we wanted to know how to produce these fish ourselves, not to be dependent on anyone else for our production successes or failures. Besides, the manual, The Culture and Propagation of Striped Bass and Hybrids, the “cook book” for STB/HSB culture was written 30-40 years ago and people all over the world have been using the techniques to culture these fish. Easy as pie, right? Not exactly! Sunshine bass (WB female X STB male) versus Palmetto bass (STB female X WB male) are the more difficult hybrid to produce, due to the tiny eggs WB produce and their sticky nature. Gravid WB females are easier to find (most of the time), as they inhabit nearly every river and stream across the country, from the East Coast to the Rocky Mountains and from South Texas all the way into Canada. The species has been widely introduced outside its native range as well. Gravid STB females on the other hand, are typically only found in rivers connected directly to the ocean (there are exceptions like, Lake Texoma and Lake Livingston where STB have been introduced), and are only available for a short time in the spring, and highly dependent on water temperature and river flow. WB tend to spawn at lower water temperatures, in the low 60’s, and provide an opportunity to spawn earlier in the season and possibly more than once if needed, without interfering with other production priorities, like Guadalupe bass, FLMB and the like.

AE Wood and the new John D. Parker East Texas Fish hatchery were given the assignment to produce Sunshine bass. It was difficult to find WB females. With the lack of rain, and low flow from the rivers into the major reservoirs around the state, the WB were not collecting up in easy to locate spots. Lake Palestine turned out to be the winner. In two days of collecting, each hatchery was able to collect about 180 WB females. The STB males were collected last fall and held at each hatchery in ponds through the winter. In mid-February both hatcheries started staging female and spawning. It took a few spawns at each hatchery to calculate the right dose rates to de-adhere the eggs using tannic acid. Once that was worked out, spawning went heavy and steady from about 10:00AM till the following morning around 4:30AM. After nursing the eggs along and then the fry for a few days, the two hatcheries stocked a combined total of about 1.4 million fry into ponds.

As of this writing, early March, it’s a waiting game. We’re watching the ponds, going out at night looking for fry, we’ve started artificial feeds, and now, we hope for the best. In another two-three weeks, we’ll know whether all the effort put into Sunshine bass production was worth it or not. In the mean time, we’re gearing up for the next round, STB and Palmettos, around the first week in April!
TAA 43$^{rd}$ Annual Conference & Trade Show
“Fishing for ComplEments”

The TAA’s 43$^{rd}$ Annual Conference and Tradeshow lived up to its reputation for delivering a well rounded and varied array of presentation topics, good food and drink, plenty of both and its renowned hospitality. The aquaponics workshop, sponsored and presented by Aquatic Eco-Systems (now Pentair) was well attended. The trade show, though smaller this year, provided attendees with a wide variety of quality products and services. Thank you to the exhibitors for your attendance and contributions. Sponsors, we certainly couldn’t make this conference happen without you. Thank you for supporting Texas aquaculture and the Texas Aquaculture Association. We appreciate your support. The TAA aquaculture banquet, raffle and silent auction were good fun, offered good food, good value, and provided good entertainment as the night wore on. Some folks thought the “Fish Jokes” were the highlight of the evening!

Joan Holt Awarded
TAA Lifetime Achievement Award

Dr. Joan Holt was presented the Texas Aquaculture Association (TAA) Lifetime Achievement Award. The presentation was made at the TAA’s 43$^{rd}$ Annual Conference & Trade Show in Bay City Jan. 23-25. The only other time it has been presented was in 1999, when it went to Dr. Connie Arnold, now retired from The University of Texas Marine Science Institute Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory (FAML). Holt eventually succeeded Arnold at FAML, and is now interim director at UTMSI. The award has now only been presented twice in a 40-year period.

“It’s a rare thing that Joan received, since it has not been presented (since 1999) and it is well-deserved. The TAA awards and scholarship committee wanted to do something special to recognize Joan’s service to the aquaculture industry and since she is getting ready to retire, what greater honor could they have bestowed upon her?” said Granvil Treece, aquaculture specialist at Texas A&M University’s Sea Grant.

“During Joan’s long career as a researcher, she has benefitted marine biology and marine aquaculture more than anybody else I can think of. She is not just a brilliant scientist, but she accomplishes the work of three or four brilliant scientists. Her dedication and accomplishments are legendary. The Texas Aquaculture Association is some 40 years old. It is our second lifetime achievement award in that time,” said Malcolm Johnson III, chairman of the TAA awards committee.

Treece said that Holt “carries the banner high for the University of Texas Marine Science Institute and the Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory, as do the entire staff at FAML. She has been one of the better researchers through the years (who has) received funding from the Texas Sea Grant Program at Texas A&M University, doing cutting edge research on larval fish nutrition and tropical/ornamental fish, he added. Treece said Holt is widely recognized and published in the world aquaculture arena.

“I was completely caught off guard and knew nothing of the award. I was proud and pleased to receive this award and to share it with Connie as the only other person to have received a lifetime Achievement Award. I miss doing fisheries and aquaculture research, but hope my work will be beneficial to the Texas Aquaculture Industry and to future research activities,” Holt said.
Granvil Treece, Outstanding Service Award Recipient

Granvil Treece was honored this year at the Texas Aquaculture Association’s 43rd Annual Conference & Trade Show with their Outstanding Service Award. Granvil has served and supported the aquaculture industry throughout his career.

Granvil has been an Aquaculture Specialist with the Sea Grant College Program since 1983. During this time he has been a constant source of information for a wide range of interested parties with diverse needs for information concerning not only his areas of expertise in shrimp and fish farming, but many other aquaculture related areas. Aquaculture businesses have benefitted in many ways from information disseminated by Granvil concerning production technologies in hatcheries and ponds, U.S. and Texas regulatory compliance and research findings relevant to increasing production or to address problem areas. Granvil has been an advocate and champion for the aquaculture business in Texas as well as other States and helped with communications and responses for information to environmental organizations, State and Federal regulators and the press. Granvil has given many presentations at conferences and meetings and authored several articles, chapters and books concerning domestic and Texas aquaculture activities and statistics.

Granvil has been conducting a shrimp farming short course annually since 1986. This short course has been an excellent source of a great deal of relevant information about shrimp aquaculture in general and especially so in the U.S. for a wide range of individuals with varying degrees of experience in aquaculture. Especially in the years when shrimp commodity prices were more favorable and farming in the U.S. was more profitable and viable, this short course provided an excellent starting point for prospective investors, interested parties, shrimp farm employees and even regulators to source information about shrimp farms in Texas. The addition of finfish to the curriculum expanded the benefit to a wider base of people with interest in aquaculture.

Granvil became a certifying specialist for the Aquaculture Certification Council (ACC) to inspect and assure compliance to sustainable and responsible production practices by aquaculture facilities. Granvil also became an instructor to lead seminars which helped aquaculture facilities to seek and receive Trade Adjustment Assistance benefits for their businesses.

Even his volunteer time is spent with aquaculture. Granvil has been an active board member for the Texas Aquaculture Association since 1984 and provided countless hours helping to organize the conferences through setting up the educational sessions, finding speakers and moderating presentations. He has, and continues to serve on several committees with TAA, including: Awards/Scholarships; Conference; Youth, Education, & Extension; Publications; and Executive Committee. Granvil and his wife Gail have spent numerous hours in setting up and maintaining a professional and informative TAA website. TAA was proud to present Granvil with his much earned “TAA Outstanding Service Award”.

### Texas Aquaculture Association

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<th>BOARD MEMBERS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Brawner</td>
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<td>John Jones, President</td>
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<td>Charlie Chan</td>
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<td>Jeff Kaiser</td>
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<td>Jim Ekstrom</td>
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<td>David Maus, Secretary</td>
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<td>Jon Herrmann, Treasurer</td>
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<td>Malcolm Johnson III</td>
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<td>Peter Woods</td>
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Looking Forward to Our 44th Annual Conference & Trade Show

Our Conference Committee has already been working diligently to find our next conference venue. They have made plans for us in Fredericksburg, TX, January 29-31, 2014. It sounds like a long way off, but mark your calendars now and make plans to join us.

We will have a program you will benefit from, catch up with other TAA members and have a great time in the beautiful surroundings at the Inn on Baron’s Creek (www.innonbaronscreek.com) with our infamous aquaculture banquet at the Nimitz Museum (www.nimitz-museum.org).

We will keep you updated on our schedule and program as we make further preparations. Don’t miss out!

Alejandro Herrera’s El Terco Seafood Shrimp Harvest for 2012
By Granvil Treece, Aquaculture Specialist
Texas A&M Sea Grant College Program

El Terco Seafood did it again in 2012. As they did in 2011, they again produced more shrimp pounds per acre than any farm in the US and probably out-produced most farms in Mexico on a pounds per acre comparison. Mr. Herrera lives in McAllen and has a 21-acre shrimp farm across the border on his 1200 acre family farm and is building another farm on the Texas side, near Lasara, not far from Raymondville. His biologist, Francisco Fierro, was kind enough to share the harvest results again this year and can be seen below:

Pond # 1 3 hectares 1,575,000 pls (52/m) 75% surv. 28,084 kg harvested 9,361 kg/ha Aver. size 31 gms FCR 1.64 (7 acres 61,914 lbs 8,844 lbs/acre)

Pond # 2 3 hectares 1,890,000 pls (63/m) 75% surv. 32,450 kg harvested 10,817 kg/ha Aver. size 33 gms FCR 1.51 (7 acres 64,447 lbs 9,206 lbs/acre)

Total shrimp harvested 197,000 pounds or average of 9,380 lbs/acre. for the 21-acre farm. 73.66% average survival on the farm. 187-190 days in the ponds or 27 weeks. Total feed used 313,053 pounds (Vimifos 35%) /FCR 1:1.59. Postlarvae from Aquapacific (Mazatlan Mexico). The farm in Lasara, Texas should be ready to stock in 2013.
Michael Masser Named Fellow of World Aquaculture Society

Texas’ own Dr. Michael Masser was named a Fellow of the World Aquaculture Society at the annual WAS conference in Nashville, February 21-25, 2013. The following explanation of what it means to be named a Fellow of World Aquaculture Society was copied from the WAS website.

A Fellow of the World Aquaculture Society is defined as "a member who has made outstanding achievements in aquaculture science, industry, outreach or extension as recognized by his/her peers." Examples of outstanding advancement can be in research, education, technology, service to professional societies, administration in academia, industry or government, or on abilities in communicating and interpreting aquaculture science to the public.

Election as a Fellow of the World Aquaculture Society is an honor bestowed upon members of the World Aquaculture Society by their peers on behalf of their meritorious efforts to advance aquaculture. Congratulations Michael, we’re proud of your accomplishment!

Texas Sea Grant team aids shrimp fishermen and aquaculture, earns 2012 Superior Service Award

COLLEGE STATION, Texas — Ten Texas Sea Grant College Program outreach professionals who joined forces to help commercial fishermen and aquaculturists cope with competition from imported seafood have received the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service’s 2012 Superior Service Award in the team category. The annual Superior Service Awards recognize AgriLife Extension faculty and staff members who provide outstanding performance in Extension education or in service to the organization. Texas Sea Grant’s Extension Program is operated jointly with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

The team has helped Texas commercial shrimp fishermen and aquaculturists who raise catfish and shrimp earn about $10 million through the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (TAA). TAA provides money to participants in industries that can document that they have been injured by imports. The amount of money per person is relatively small, up to $12,000, but the program requires that participants receive training that teaches them how to make their operations run more efficiently.

“For shrimp fishermen reeling from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, high fuel prices, and increased competition from imports,
TAA cash benefits have been a godsend,” said Logan Respess, Texas Sea Grant’s Extension Program Leader. “At best, this ‘found money’ provided a modest, short-term boost to their businesses, but the intensive training they received as part of TAA will ensure the future success of the wild-shrimp fishery.”

The team comprises Seafood Specialist Michael G. Haby, Marine Fisheries Specialist Gary Graham, Environmental Quality Specialist Dr. Russ Miget and Aquaculture Specialist Granvil Treece; and County Coastal and Marine Resource Agents Terrie Looney (Chambers/Jefferson counties), Julie K. Massey (Galveston County), John P. O’Connell (Brazoria County), Rhonda D. Cummins (Calhoun County) and Tony Reisinger (Cameron County); and Aransas County Extension Agent Ginger Easton Smith.

Haby developed the original document that allowed commercial shrimp fishermen and aquaculturists from the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic to apply for TAA assistance. Haby and most of the rest of the team provided training and other activities the fishermen needed to meet TAA requirements. The team’s effort with commercial fishermen was adopted as a regional project by the Gulf of Mexico Sea Grant Region, which includes the Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi-Alabama and Florida Sea Grant Programs.

Treece worked exclusively with 60 aquaculture operations, most of them small family-run enterprises. He provided required training and helped them develop business plans focused on improving operating efficiency.

“There is no other group that could have achieved the extraordinary level of success that Sea Grant has generated for the shrimp industry,” said John Williams, Executive Director of the Southern Shrimp Alliance, an industry group representing commercial shrimp fishermen in coastal states from North Carolina to Texas. “I believe TAA for the shrimp industry was destined for success because of the strong commitment the Gulf of Mexico Sea Grant programs have to the seafood industry. This group exemplifies the ‘can do’ spirit the industry I represent has come to expect and appreciate.”

The regional Sea Grant effort helped Gulf and South Atlantic shrimp fishermen receive $46 million in TAA payments and earned the Gulf of Mexico Sea Grant Region’s Superior Outreach Programming Award for 2010-2012.

### 2013-14 Calendar

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>July 14-17, 2013</td>
<td>TAPMS Annual Conference in combination with APMS</td>
<td>San Antonio, TX</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tapms.org">www.tapms.org</a></td>
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<td>January 29-31, 2014</td>
<td>TAA Annual Conference &amp; Trade Show</td>
<td>Fredericksburg, TX</td>
<td><a href="http://www.texasaquaculture.org">www.texasaquaculture.org</a></td>
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<td>February 9-12, 2014</td>
<td>WAS-Aquaculture America</td>
<td>Seattle, WA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.was.org">www.was.org</a></td>
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The following sign was found at the San Antonio Zoo. It was posted by the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch. This sign does not distinguish between foreign raised shrimp and Texas raised shrimp. If you have a response to this type of negative publicity for Texas farm raised shrimp, please contact: Brian Albaum at balbaum@mbayaq.org