



The Game Bag

Award Winning Publication of Austin Woods and Waters Club

February 2020

## A Historical (or Hysterical) Look Back at AWWC

The next AWWC speaker - at the Installation Banquet at the County Line on the Lake on Wednesday evening, February 5 -- is Marty Malin, a veteran AWWC member and an outdoor writer. We've ridden down a lot of dusty trails together in the past. I could fill this issue with some intriguing tales, but the mere suggestion of that might make him nervous - as if anything could. Thankfully, space prohibits such.

He's probably best known for his "Wildlife Report," a monthly audio cassette and CD magazine covering many facets of the outdoors. He narrated it in a sound studio but made you feel as if you were sitting around a campfire by the creek listening to a mountain man telling about his adventures in the wilderness. It was good.

On the Wildlife Report, he referred to himself as "The Old Field & Streamer, a lifelong hunter & angler". That fit. Malin's also past president of the Texas Outdoor Writers Assn., recipient of the association's highest award - the L.A. Wilke Award -- and past president of the Outdoor Writers Association of America.

Oh, he's also an NRA Life Member and is US Concealed Carry Assn. certified. Marty's a



Marty Malin

### AWWC Officer and Director Installation Banquet

County Line on the Lake  
(Old Bull Creek Lodge)

Socializin': 6:30 p.m.

Dinner: 7:00

Installation: 7:40

Speaker: Marty Malin --  
AWWC History and Hysteries

Photo of Officers and Directors: Upon  
adjournment (by creek)

Reservations required on website:  
AUSTINWOODSANDWATERS.COM

conservationist, U.S. Army Veteran and a seasoned conservative. Some of you met him at the McBride Foundation benefit last October.

He was active in all AWWC events when he lived in Austin during the Club's years of high membership and notable prominence. Incoming President Spence Collins invited him to speak on those times to acquaint new members with AWWC's heritage. His entertaining delivery will be a treat.

# President's Message



Where does the time go? It seems like last month that I was fortunate to be chosen as your president. I want to thank each one of you for all you have done for our Club and for making our lives better. We have a good community and we are all better for being in this Club.

Working (and playing) together our lives are better.

Several of us were huntmasters at the annual Super Hunt at Cave Creek Schoolhouse outside of Stonewall last month. We hosted 67 young hunters and their parents/grandparents. This was the largest turnout in the 17 years that your Club and its members have been supporting this activity. You have never heard as many "yes sirs" and "no sirs", "yes ma'ams" and "no ma'ams"! I encourage you to get involved in this most worthwhile endeavor. Our Club is "all in" for this effort and the McBride Conservation Foundation is a long-time supporter of Youth Hunts (thanks to all of you!). If you are interested in getting more information, Doug Dubois, me or any of our officers-I promise you will get back much, much more than you give for this program.

We have a strong leadership in place for 2020. I know Spence Collins, Joe Hello, and the other officers and directors will do a truly first-class job with our Club. If you have specific suggestions or ideas, please share them with Spence, Joe, and crew. I will still be around and ready to help whenever I can. But this is now a new chapter for all of us.

It has been a good ride. Thank you for the support and the opportunity each of you and this Club has given me.

Steven Fenoglio  
AWWC President 2018-2019  
jsfenoglio@fenogiolaw.com  
(512) 347-9944



Super Hunt 2020; Largest ever



## The Game Bag AWWC Monthly Newsletter

### Executive Committee

President ..... Steve Fenoglio  
Executive VP..... Spence Collins  
Social VP..... Joe Hello  
Secretary ..... Steele Zinser  
Treasurer..... Tommy Ward  
Chief Warden Hunting.....Larry Najvar  
Chief Warden Fishing.....Kevin McConnell  
Chief Huntmaster..... Doug DuBois, Jr  
Editor..... John Jefferson  
Exec. Admin. .... Mary Anne Hartman  
Past President..... Tallon Martin  
Past President..... Jimmy Cain

### Board of Directors

Term Expires 2020  
Byron Kibby, Tommy Ward, Rick Prekup  
Term Expires 2021  
Terry Rheinlander, Larry Najvar, Don Riggins, Steele Zinser, Steve Fenoglio  
Term Expires 2022  
Al Lagenour, Rhett Stone, Richard Hallum, David Michael

Meeting 11:30 am, first Wednesday of each month unless otherwise notified.

## Game Bag Submissions

Members' photos, hunting and fishing stories, activity announcements, ads, and calendar items should be in the editor's hands by the 15th of each month prior to the month of publication. Send your material to: jj@johnjefferson.com or call (512) 219-1199.

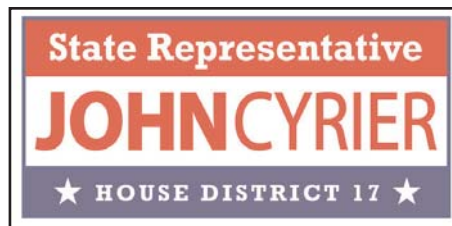
## MLDP Fees Established

The TPW Commission has approved changes to the Managed Lands Deer Program (MLDP), which provides landowners and managers additional flexibility to manage deer populations, improve habitats, and provide greater hunting opportunities. The approved changes also set fees for participation in the growing program.

During the last 20 years the MLDP has expanded from 800 tracts of land on 3 million acres to more than 12,000 tracts on 28 million acres, but funding for new staff to address that growth was unavailable, thus necessitating fees.

Established fees are \$30 for each management unit within a property enrolled in the Harvest Option (HO), provided the property isn't part of an aggregate acreage enrolled in the MLDP; a \$30 fee for each aggregate acreage enrolled in the HO; a \$300 fee for the first management unit of each property enrolled in the Conservation Option (CO) plus a \$30 fee for each additional management unit of property enrolled in the CO; a \$300 fee for each aggregate acreage enrolled in the CO; and a \$30 fee for each management unit of a wildlife management association or co-op enrolled in the CO.

### Austin Woods and Waters Club Thanks to the following Sponsors for their Support of the 2019 Banquet



## Hunt Possibilities

AWWC members: Let me know which hunts you are interested in. If we have enough hunters, I will line up dates, prices and deposit info. Most of these hunts run about \$275 per day with some \$250 and \$300 per day quotes, depending on the outfitter.

**Snow goose conservation hunt** around Port Lavaca around February 1.  
Bag limit is 20/ day, with unlimited possession limit!



**Hidden lakes European style pheasant hunt.** They release 500 birds, one at a time. You shoot from one station and rotate after each 50 birds. I shot 6 boxes of shells last hunt. The birds are high, fast, very challenging. Price is \$540 (including tip). Last hunt of the season is Saturday, March 16. Let me know if you are interested as they tend to book up quickly.



**Fishing Trip.** Rick Prekup is leading a white bass fishing trip at a date to be determined. If interested, contact Rick at (512) 663-5791 or [rickp@londsn.com](mailto:rickp@londsn.com).

Any suggestions for hunts or outfitters that you would like to investigate?? We want to do this early, so we get the best availability. Also, do you want to hunt only on weekends or are you available during the week?  
[larry.najvar@gmail.com](mailto:larry.najvar@gmail.com) office 512-241-0049  
cell 512 699-3093

Larry Najvar, Chief Warden for Hunting

## Spence Collins Elected AWWC Prez

Spence Collins grew up in Houston. Fishing in Galveston Bay became his first love in the outdoors, followed by offshore fishing. Later, wing shooting entered his life. Nowadays, his daughter's interest in the outdoors has led him to deer hunting.

Collins graduated from U.T. in 1986 and began a commercial real estate career in Austin. He does mostly commercial brokerage with some investment, development, and management tossed in. Spence, his wife, Laura and daughter Stephanie reside in western Travis County. They have a shoreline house four-hours away near Corpus Christi on the Upper Laguna Madre that allows regular escapes from Austin traffic and growth problems. Whether sticking big redfish with only a jalapeno as bait or sitting on the front porch of their bay house soaking in the bay breeze, it's a pleasant refuge.

Spence has been an AWWC and serving on the board and in other positions, including as executive vice president and chairman of the very successful McBride Foundation benefit banquet last fall.

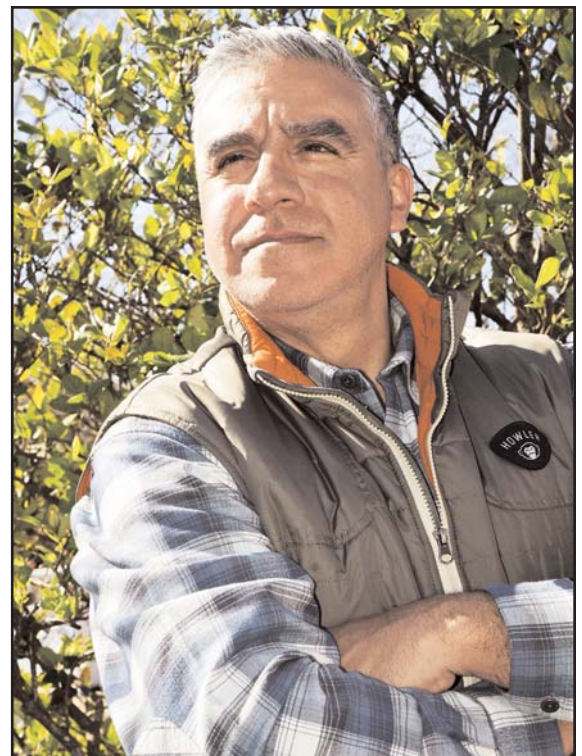


*Incoming AWWC President Spence, his daughter Stephanie and Big Red. Contributed photo.*

## Joe Hello Elected Executive VP

Joe Hello has lived in Austin his entire life and works for a family owned business that's been in the family longer than he has. He is now one of the owners of Austin Amusements which supplies equipment for bars and restaurants. When he isn't at work, he's usually hunting, fishing, shooting ... or talking about it.

He has been in AWWC a few years but has been busy enough to have done a life's amount of work, having honchoed a Club skeet shoot at Capital Clays, served as AWWC social V.P., arranged a Club social event at Sportsmen's Finest, has picked up the *Game Bag* from the printer each month and distributed in to six locations including the luncheon site and assisted at the McBride Foundation Benefit Banquet. As executive vice-president, next in line for the presidency, Joe will be the 2020 McBride Banquet chairman and will be calling on members to volunteer to help.



*Incoming AWWC Executive Vice-President Joe Hello. Photo by John Jefferson.*

# When Did You Build Your Last Fort?

By Jimmy Cain



*Lake Stamford, north of Abilene, is not known statewide as a duck hunting Mecca, but Jimmy Cain's article might just put it on duck hunters' map. Photo by Jimmy Cain.*

Club Member Corey Gaskill called me knowing I am a duck hunter and asked if I wanted to make a weekend trip with him to hunt. Having left that in Louisiana, I jumped at the chance to go. Additionally, Corey said we would hunt on public lands, something I have never done. I guess in my youth I was lucky to have belonged to a Club or had friends with leases to hunt on. Corey's choice was Lake Stamford, a lake he had hunted in his youth with his father. Lake Stamford is 270 odd miles northwest of Austin.

We arrived at the "Anchor," a little weekend community with a public boat launch. With about 45 minutes of sunlight, we let Tango, Corey's Lab, run around for a bit and made a repair or two to the boat's railings that the grass mats hang on. We noted that the reeds had grown up quite high and felt sure that we could blend very easily with this plentiful cover. So, we headed back to town and checked into the Deluxe Inn. And yes, it was! We found a nice restaurant called the Blue Jean Café and sat next to a table of 5 deer hunters all bragging about the bucks their trail cameras captured. We must be in the right spot. Returning to the Deluxe Inn, our neighbor informed us we had just missed a team of wild pigs running down the middle of the street! This place must be a hunting paradise - I hoped.

Corey has some great rules to follow when setting up for ducks when you don't have a permanent blind to hunt. First, have the sun coming up over your back so as not to illuminate you right off the bat. Second, position the breeze to come over your backs as well to have the ducks cupping right in front of your blind. If you can get the two to line up - you are golden! Following these truths, we were in position with our railings up, grass mats deployed, decoys out and Tango ready as it started

to get light. We had probably 30 minutes before shooting time, so we settled in to talk some smack. In the darkness we would see birds passing outside our decoys in singles and doubles but nothing showing interest in our spread yet. Once the sun was up things slowed down further but we could still see birds dropping into the reed forest to our right. After watching this for an hour and not really having any activity in our pond we decided to go find where these ducks were going.

We discovered a pond that had obviously been hunted recently where a couple of ducks jumped as we approached. We also found a discarded Canvasback drake floating in the open pond. Guys, please keep track of your birds, that was a beautiful duck that someone just tossed out, wasted (Limit 2). We scouted the next large cove and wound our way back into a beautiful pond and had 20 ducks jump as we entered. Anticipating their return, we set the boat into a high reed clump that totally shaded the boat. We put out a few decoys and the Robo Duck and waited. Soon a single gray duck landed on the far side of pond. We later had a flock of four grays come over high, so we dropped one for Tango to go find. It would have been the right place to be earlier in the day and we put that pond in our pockets for day two.

With the duck spigot turned off, Corey thought we might want to reconnoiter the rest of the lake to look for ducks. We exited our inlet and turned right to follow the shore around the lake. We turned into an inlet to the South and found 30 ducks rafted up near the shore. There was one sparse clump of reeds along that whole shoreline. We called it, "Clump #1" and thought it would be hard to find it in the dark, so Corey pulled out his GPS (yes GPS not his phone) and entered it into memory. From here we motored into the inlet east of the power plant to see what it may hold.

Pay dirt! We found perhaps 100 -150 ducks rafted up near the north end. As we looked around for a place to setup, we were stymied that there were no reeds at all in this whole inlet. There was no vegetation of any kind growing out of the Lake. Further we pulled up to the shore and noted that it was devoid of cover as well. The grass was like grass at a golf course but trampled by cows. We stepped off 37-40 yards from the shoreline to the tree line with nothing in between. The tallest things on that stretch were cow pies! That would make our shots 60+ yards - if we were lucky? Then we had a brain blast - let's build a fort out of limbs and cut the distance to the shore! We choose the shoreline that would put the sun at our backs and started looking for suitable fort-building materials. Soon we had constructed a "U" that we hoped would be sturdy enough to hang the grass mats on. We noted the location of "Fort Stamford" in the GPS and headed back to town where we joined the small community of Stamford for a patriotic showing of "Midway" at the theater on the main square. Good times.



*Jimmy Cain called this a fort and perhaps it is in the war against ducks, but most would call it an improvised ground blind. Pictured is the frame of the blind with Jimmy Cain in it with Corey Gaskill's Lab, Tango. Photo by Corey Gaskill.*



*After hanging the grass mats on the driftwood frame, it does resemble some of the forts a lot of us made when we were kids, except better. This one, though, brought the two hunters closer to the water than back in the natural brush line and concealed them very well. And it fooled the ducks! That's Corey in it. Photo by Jimmy Cain.*

The next morning, we motored past the Power Plant and right up to Fort Stamford. We set the gear on the shore and while Corey started setting out decoys right against the shoreline, I moved the boat to the next cove to the North. While I was pushing it up to the top of the cove, my headlamp eliminated two very large eyes just feet away that scared the Bejesus out of me - Tango had followed me quietly over land. My heart was already pumping from pushing the boat.

The grass mats hung perfectly, and we placed the Robo duck between our two spreads and set up to shoot. We put strings of small decoys in next to the shore and a small string of larger decoys outside of those. The breeze had also shifted more to the north but gave our shore decoys a nice look as the bobbed in the pattern. It was not long before groups of teal started winging down the shoreline from our left with many coming right into the decoys. We had a couple of gray ducks land as well. We also had a bufflehead drake land next to Robo. I don't think I have ever seen this duck; he was beautiful.

The fort worked perfectly as we had only one pair of ducks flare on approach out of all the birds we saw. Unfortunately, the mass of ducks we saw the day before had moved on but those that stayed treated us to a visit or two. We had a limit between us, but it was a great hunt that we orchestrated by thinking of a way to handle that desolate inlet.

This was hunting at its best. We were able to move to find where ducks were going when not coming to us. We scouted and found where the sweet spot was. We had a problem and created a very successful solution- that even was fun to make! Many thanks to Corey and Tango for the invitation and a great hunt!

## Kibby Kids Collect

AWWC board member, Byron Kibby, and his grandkids had a great Christmas month, as these pictures indicate. Kate Kibby doesn't mind the snow as she sits with her Montana mule deer shot on the Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch (Boone & Crockett Ranch) in November. Clark Kibby is equally proud of with his whitetail deer shot in Bastrop county in December. Nice trophies ... and lifelong memories.



*Clark Kibby.*



*Kate Kibby.*

## Smells Like More!

Luke Graves and his friend, Bland Lucas, tutored Luke's 12-year old grandson, Rowan Graves on his first attempt at the fine art of shooting moving targets. They must have been good tutors, since it's reported that Rowan did very well! They shot at Eagle Peak shooting range near Jonestown. But better than his shooting, Rowan said that he liked the smell of cordite! Smelling that the first time is a favorite recollection to a many. It stays with the lucky ones of us for a lifetime.



*Luke Graves and grandson Rowan.*



*Luke Graves supervising.*

## WHAT WHITE BASS DO

By John Jefferson

At the January luncheon, Rick Prekup suggested forming a group to fish for whites. It sounded like he had enough people for a late January or February trip. If you're interested, call Rick (512-663-5791) in case he's had a cancellation.

But white bass season is just beginning. Several of my best stringers were caught in February and March. One trip was on a chilly, sunlit day - way too cold to wade without waders and then walk a half-mile back to the truck after dark, shivering.

Late that afternoon, I jumped out onto a big rock close to shore because overhanging brush made casting from the bank treacherous. It was my first white bass foray of the year. And I hadn't had a bite. As twilight turned into dusk, I was about to call it a night. Then, I felt a bump.

I cast back to the same spot in the current and this time it wasn't just a bump. FISH ON! My heart raced as I pulled the white bass out of the stream. It looked to be 12 to 13-inches long, plenty enough to satisfy the statewide ten-inch minimum length limit. I strung it and tied the stringer to a belt loop on my Levi's and cast my chartreuse jig again, knowing that white bass move upstream in schools to spawn.

Roughly thirty minutes later, I counted my catch. It was several bass shy of the 25 white bass statewide limit - and I was getting cold. It took a few minutes longer to land the last few of the limit. I counted again and had exactly 25. Then I realized I had a problem.

In the dimness, the bank looked farther away than when I jumped out onto that rock earlier. Maybe the creek had risen. Maybe I was stiff from standing on one rock so long - and now had 25 fish on a stringer to jump with. I could have waded ashore, but it was now much chillier than before sundown. I tied a knot in the open end of the stringer and balanced on the rock swinging the stringer back and forth until I had enough momentum to fling it to the bank. It barely cleared the water. Then I jumped across, also barely staying dry.

That was on a narrow tributary to Lake Travis - Sandy Creek, near Jonestown - a good three-to-five miles from the main lake. But that's what white bass do in early spring. They migrate from the deep lakes and move upstream into creeks and river channels to spawn.

And that's why experienced white bass fishermen fish upstream. Whites stage in deep holes waiting for the right time and then dash through running water to deposit their eggs for males to fertilize. The Pedernales River near the Reimers Ranch is a traditional hotspot, as are the Llano River above Kingsland and Colorado Bend State Park above Lake Buchanan.



*A stringer of white bass caught in less than an hour on a Lake Travis tributary. Photo by John Jefferson.*

### Member-to-Member

Telephoto Lenses for Sale. 500 mm Nikkor ED manual focus lens. \$900.

A Sigma 120-400 mm auto-focus zoom lens (Nikon mount). \$375. Both have carrying cases and in very good condition. I'm upgrading. John Jefferson (512) 219-1199. jj@johnjefferson.com.

**Thank you to AWWC for your support of Kids Outdoor Zone!**



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## Parting Shot



At the January TPW Commission meeting, two K-9 Game wardens received their badges. Pictured is Warden Ruger, who lives with his handler, Captain Christy Vales, in Austin. As the Game Bag editor approached to take the above picture, Ruger recognized him as a dog man and acknowledged his presence. Commission Chairman S. Reed Morian is on the left end and TPW E.D. Carter Smith is on the right end. The other K-9 warden, Bosch, also received his badge. Photo by John Jefferson.

## AWWC CALENDAR

- Feb. 5 Evening meeting to install officers, announce Volunteer of the Year. County Line on the Lake - 6:30 p.m. Must register online Speaker: Marty Malin on earlier AWWC history and hysterics.
- Feb 21-23 TroutFest 2020  
Lazy L&L Campground, 11699 River Rd  
New Braunfels, TX (near Canyon City)
- Mar. 4 AWWC luncheon. 11:30 a.m.  
Ben Hur Shrine Center 7811 Rockwood  
Speaker: TBA
- Mar. 21 Rio Grande turkey season opens in South Zone.  
Closes on May 3.
- Apr. 4 North Zone (Hill Country) Rio Grande turkey season opens.  
Closes May 17.