MESSAGE FROM THE STATE CHAIRMAN
Mark Low

Hello DU Members and Volunteers,

To kick off the new year, I want to wish each of you a 2014 filled with good health, happiness, peace, prosperity and unlimited reasons to smile. I’m sure smiling! California DU had a great fall banquet season and we expect the same for the winter and spring seasons ahead. I am pleased to report that California is up in dollars raised – more than $120,000, or 18 percent – and the same events this year are up more than $60,000, or 8 percent, over last year. Volunteer and membership numbers are also up. Considering this is the third year of major growth in the state’s grassroots fundraising, these results are nothing short of phenomenal. A huge thanks goes to everyone who helped make this happen – from the Area Chairmen and local committees busting their buns to fill the halls and secure donations, the District Chairmen who are the road warriors setting up new events and running up and down the state attending events; to the state volunteers who put in countless hours and resources attending meetings, participating in conference calls, putting together volunteer programs, recruiting, training, communicating, etc. Thank you all for your contributions!

During my tenure as the California State Chairman, I have witnessed many fundraising success stories and well-managed events. I have also listened to a variety of issues and problems that come up from time to time when DU supporters don’t agree with DU policy or practices, where conservation dollars should be spent in California and/or the direction a chapter may take with its annual fundraising banquet. We definitely all have our own perspectives, but it is important to keep in mind that we don’t all do things the same way– in other words, there is usually more than one way to skin a duck and we should never take things personally. We should also ask ourselves, “What can I do in 2014 to make this world a better place?” Working together, we can make great things happen for future generations!

DU has restored more acres of wetlands than any other organization and the record numbers of birds migrating annually is proof of that accomplishment. In California, we spend more money than we raise saving habitat, and we help keep the waterfowling tradition alive. DU has always been the leader when it comes to conservation and that hasn’t changed. With our conservation staff actively assisting in policy areas involving the Boreal Forest, hopefully we can soon boast billions – not millions – of acres conserved.

Please feel free to contact me anytime at (530) 249-3286 or lowdownm@msn.com. I welcome your input and feedback.

Thank you for your continued support. Happy hunting and remember to take a kid out to the marsh!
The new season of Ducks Unlimited TV begins in July 2014 with more of the best waterfowling action, tips, tactics and conservation news. This year, DU TV is moving to the Pursuit Channel and each new episode will also be available online through the Pursuit Channel's online affiliate (Filmon.tv) and on the DU website. Host Field Hudnall returns this season, joined by the legendary Wade Bourne and newcomers Zach Pederson and Ainsley Beeman. The 2014 season brings viewers a new, fast-paced format featuring waterfowling from across North America as well as exclusive website-only content. Stay tuned to the DU website and DU's social media outlets for updates and air times.

In addition to great hunting action each week, pick up useful tips on shooting and hunting from expert Wade Bourne while you learn more about waterfowl, waterfowl habitat and conservation. Don't miss a single episode! Show descriptions coming soon.

For more information about your hosts, visit the DU website.
It’s 5 a.m. I wake to snoring, and then the blare of the alarm. I’m dressed by 5:30, and we’re in the boat by 6. It’s dark, even though there’s a full moon. I can barely see the water around the blind as the boat pulls up. We get to the blind and take the decoys out of the bags. I can hear the other boats and the sounds of the other groups setting up their decoys.

We set the decoys up in a V, with the blind being the point where the V connects. I climb into the blind and get my gun. The sky turns pink, red and purple as the sun rises behind us, and the ducks start flying. The only noise now is my breathing. I put one round in my gun and wait. We call the ducks closer and I shoot. The duck keeps flying. I sit back down and put three rounds in my gun. There is no place better to be on opening day than at Suisun Marsh.

I am a 14th generation hunter. Hunting isn’t simply a hobby or a sport to me. Hunting is a way of life. My father used to go to Maine with his family every fall. “Our whole family and extended family would go,” he told me. “We would hunt and bring back the food. I thought that’s what everybody did. When I got older, I realized what we did was special.”

In a relay race, the runner passes the baton. In our family, that baton is hunting. As soon as I was old enough, my dad began to explain where food came from. I was never one of those kids who thought meat came from the grocery store. He discussed gun safety with me, took me trap shooting and signed me up for hunter education courses. He brought me to Grizzly Ranch for a youth hunt and took me out on Tomales Bay to shoot waterfowl.

There’s a lot of quacking in our house. My younger brother is an expert at the hen mallard call, but he likes the goose call best.

Last year, there was a movement to close hunting in our area. I went to address the California Fish and Game Commission. I’m a teenage female hunter, and I stood up and spoke out for my right to continue to hunt in the beautiful Tomales Bay Ecological Reserve, a place where hunting has existed for over 100 years.

My dad has taught me that you can’t just go and shoot the ducks. You have to make a place for the ducks to live and thrive during off season. You have to ensure that the ducks and geese are healthy and they have a place to nest and breed. Hunters take care of the wildfowl. I am proud of this part of my job as a hunter.

Footnote: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife and California Game Wardens Foundation teamed up in fall 2013 to offer a youth essay contest to recognize one of the 21,000 students who pass through their programs each year. Devon won the contest with the above essay and was awarded a lifetime California hunting license, valued at more than $600. Congratulations Devon!
Ducks Unlimited and Sonoma Land Trust (SLT) now have the next key piece to a North San Francisco Bay wetlands restoration project after being awarded $538,000 by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Association (NOAA). The funding is part of a total $1.5 million request for the multi-phase Sears Point Restoration Project, which will enhance and restore tidal marsh habitat and seasonal wetlands and grasslands in the San Francisco Estuary.

"It's incredibly exciting to break ground on a site that hasn't been touched by tidal waters for more than 100 years," said Renee Spenst, regional biologist for DU. "Within three years, we will see a dramatically different landscape from the vantage point of the Baylands Center next to San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge headquarters, as bay-front levees are lowered and breached in two locations.

"Sears Point is a nearly-1,000-acre project. The impressive coalition of partners, combined with the measurable habitat improvements, will be a model for future large-scale projects, so funding these ongoing efforts is critical. We're thrilled NOAA is supporting us and we will continue to seek additional funding from other sources as well."

This is the first year of an anticipated three years of funding from NOAA. In addition to DU and SLT, partners on this restoration project include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Conservation Board, California Coastal Conservancy, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Integrated Regional Water Management Plan through the California Department of Water Resources and many others.

Following construction, the Sears Point tidal habitat restoration will benefit canvasbacks, scaup, mallards, northern pintails and 22 fish species, including Chinook salmon. As the marsh continues to develop, it will also support clapper rail and salt marsh harvest mice. The public will also benefit, as the project will add 2.2 miles to the San Francisco Bay Trail.

Sonoma Land Trust purchased the Sears Point property nearly a decade ago and has been planning for its restoration ever since. "It's taken the hard work of so many individuals to get to this point," said Julian Meisler, baylands program manager for SLT. "We are exceedingly grateful to Ducks Unlimited, NOAA and all of our partners for helping to bring the financial and technical expertise that will make the restoration a success."

Restoring fish habitat in the San Francisco Estuary is vital to recovering threatened and endangered species such as Sacramento River Chinook, Central Valley Chinook, steelhead and green sturgeon. It will also help recover their habitats, benefit other commercially important fisheries and maintain or improve the economies of surrounding communities.

"Roughly 90 percent of San Francisco Bay’s wetlands have been lost to development and other causes," said Christopher Yates, assistant regional administrator for protected resources at NOAA. "This project will be a big step in returning land back to tidal marsh—important habitat for threatened and endangered fish like Chinook salmon and steelhead."
The Sears Point project is part of a larger $50 million effort to restore Napa-Sonoma marshes from the Napa River to the Petaluma River along the northern edge of the San Francisco Estuary. The San Francisco Bay and Estuary were designated a RAMSAR Wetland of International Importance in January 2013.

**North Grasslands Wildlife Area, Gadwall Unit: Widell/Ramacciotti Wetland Restoration**  
By Chris Hildebrandt, DU Regional Biologist

California hunters and conservationists welcome the newest addition to the North Grasslands Wildlife Area, restored by DU and its partners to be managed as prime waterfowl habitat by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Gadwall Unit of North Grasslands lies just east of Los Banos in the heart of the Central Valley, and provides important wetlands and associated habitats in the Grasslands Ecological Area, the largest wetland complex in the state.

This conservation opportunity was made possible by the late David L. Widell, former Director of Public Policy for DU's Western Region and Grassland Water District General Manager. A fierce wetland supporter, Dave worked fervently with his friend and landowner, Ramona Ramacciotti, to ensure that the property would receive the same care and land management stewardship as her family had provided.

Ducks Unlimited restored the 154-acre property that formerly produced winter oats to wetlands, riparian habitat and associated grass and shrublands to provide a diverse habitat complex that will support a myriad of wildlife species. With the help of grant funds provided by the California Wildlife Conservation Board, DU engineering staff oversaw restoration involving earthmoving activities to rebuild wetland basins and installation of water control structures to manage water depths and supply water to the site from nearby canals. Grant funds also paid for hunting blinds and amenities to provide public hunters an excellent experience in the marsh. Native vegetation will be planted during spring 2014 to restore riparian and upland communities to complement the newly restored wetlands by providing erosion protection and wildlife habitat. This project utilizes cutting-edge water conservation strategies including a low-lift pump to allow water reuse on the property for efficient and enhanced habitat management.
**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY – FEBRUARY 8, 2014**

As part of the riparian and upland restoration activities on the Gadwall Unit near Los Banos, DU is organizing a vegetation planting day for DU volunteers. The planting will occur on February 8, and will most likely be 4-6 hours of work. We will start at 8:00 a.m. and provide donuts in the morning, plenty of drinking water and sandwiches for lunch. Ducks Unlimited biologists and California Department of Fish and Wildlife staff will demonstrate planting techniques to the volunteers prior to commencing with planting. Items to bring: rubber boots or waders for muddy or wet conditions, protective gloves and if possible, loppers, pruning shears and spade-style shovels. We are looking for a total of 25 volunteers, so please contact Derek Mynear at 209-761-8401 or dmynear@ducks.org to sign up. Directions to site: Approximately 1.5 miles east of Los Banos, from Hwy 152, turn south on Santa Fe Grade, travel approximately 0.5 miles to Gadwall Unit parking lot on right.

**WATERFOWL HUNTING CLINIC – AUGUST 16, 2014**

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Advanced Hunter Education Program, cosponsored by the California Waterfowl Association and Pacific Coast Hunter Education Association, is offering a waterfowl hunting clinic at Grizzly Island near Suisun. The clinic is designed for all skill levels. Topics to be covered are concepts of decoy placement, blind design, ballistics, calling, duck ID and safety. Other topics will include hunting on state and federal waterfowl management areas and game care.

Space is limited to 25 people, so please register early. Cost is $45. Children 16 years and younger are free but must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Click to download the [registration form](#).  
Contact for more information: [Lieutenant Dan Lehman](mailto:lieutenantdanlehman@gmail.com)  
For additional waterfowl information and hunting opportunities, visit [www.wildlife.ca.gov/wmd/waterfowlprogram.html](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/wmd/waterfowlprogram.html) [www.calwaterfowl.org](http://www.calwaterfowl.org)
MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS UPDATE
By John Faires Jr., State Marketing and Promotions Chairman

The 2013 California Swan Festival was a huge success. Hundreds flocked to the Marysville area on November 9 and 10 to view a bounty of area wildlife during nature tours that exceeded organizers’ expectations. The Yellow-rumped Warbler, Great Egret, Double-crested Cormorant and Great Blue Heron were some of the bird species that a group of children and adults saw on one of the sunny morning walking tours.

There were plenty of tours for folks to enjoy! The swan tour offered participants a spectacular opportunity to encounter these stately, elegant birds, which weigh more than 20 pounds and boast a wingspan of more than five and a half feet. The tour explored a 23,000-acre expanse of privately owned rice fields and restored habitat. The area holds one of the largest seasonal concentrations of tundra swans in the Central Valley, as well as a wide variety of other birds, including ducks, geese, shorebirds, herons, egrets and raptors. Each tour lasted about two hours and was led by naturalists who shared their knowledge and enthusiasm for nature.

More than 30 tours took place on private farms and national wildlife refuges, and there were hikes in the Sutter Buttes and Sierra foothills. Visitors toured imposing area water facilities, including Oroville and New Bullards Bar dams.

Other unusual venues included Beale Air Force Base and the Marysville Wastewater Treatment Plant, each a special bird-watching venue of a different sort.

The Swan Central festival headquarters hosted informational booths, activities for children and nature presentations from photography techniques to discussions of rare species such as ringtail cats and California’s first reported wild wolf in 90 years.

California DU was a major festival sponsor of this year’s event. We hosted a special cocktail hour to meet and greet people interested in learning more about DU, and we distributed a special DU gift to all who visited us. Plans are underway now to enhance our presence at next year’s festival. Mark your calendar to visit the cities of Marysville and Yuba City in November as they honor the majestic snow-white bird with their annual festival. This is a great event you should not miss.

To quote one of the attendees, “If we want our children to grow up to be good stewards of the earth, we have to get them out in the marsh early; what better way for them to learn about the resources and the wildlife that depend upon them.”

If you have any ideas to help boost California’s fundraising effectiveness and DU’s image, please email me at JohnD Uducks@yahoo.com.
MILITARY PERSONNEL HUNT LOCAL DUCK CLUBS

DU Volunteers Host Freedom Fighters at Bird Haven Ranch
By John Faires Jr., State Marketing and Promotions Chairman

Supporting our nation’s wounded warriors comes naturally to DU supporters, who pair up every duck season with wounded military members in the spirit of service. Their generosity highlights only a fraction of their profound respect and gratitude for the sacrifices made by the brave men and women who protect our nation and preserve our liberty and freedom.

The weekend of November 22-24, 2013, was very special for one small group of military personnel and DU volunteers. Saluting the noble work of our courageous men and women of the Armed Forces is the mission of the Freedom Hunters, who worked with Paul Bonderson, owner of Bird Haven Ranch and DU’s First Vice President, to organize the weekend’s activities. Paul generously extended the invitation after learning about this remarkable nonprofit with the mission of honoring active-duty service members and combat veterans by taking them on outdoor hunting adventures. Chris Parkhurst, West Coast coordinator for Freedom Hunters, spoke with Paul to arrange for the service members and a few of their family members to enjoy the two days of guided hunting at Paul’s ranch.

"These men and women sacrifice so much, at great peril to themselves, to ensure our freedom," Paul said. "Offering them the opportunity to enjoy waterfowl hunting, whether they're experts or novices, is a great way to thank them for serving our country."

In addition to taking active-duty and combat veterans on outdoor adventures, Freedom Hunters host special retreats and individual opportunities for the families that know the full price of freedom to remember their brave who have fallen. For more information on Freedom Hunters, visit www.freedomhunters.org.

Everyone showed up for November’s hunt late Friday afternoon for a meet-and-greet social, lodge tour and dinner. Five veterans had attended previous hunts at the club and five were first-time attendees and first-time duck hunters. The group of military men came from all over California and western Nevada.

After a quick breakfast Saturday morning, everyone headed out to the duck blinds. Two warriors were paired with each volunteer. The afternoon was filled with a brunch, continued social, trapshooting and rest. To ensure everyone came away with his limit of birds, the servicemen and volunteers formed new pairs for an evening shoot. The evening ended with a delicious dinner back at the lodge.
On Sunday morning, everyone was up early once again for another great day of duck hunting. The warriors paired off differently yet again so they would get a variety of calling and shooting experience, see multiple locations and work with different retrievers. A hearty dinner and cocktails, followed by a good night’s rest, prepared the servicemen for their journey home on Monday morning.

Following the event, Michael W. Bente said, “I would like to thank Paul Bonderson, John Faires and all the volunteers that put in their time and knowledge to help wounded war-fighters like me. It means so much to me to see that when we come home we have something like this to help in the rehabilitation of our injuries. As war-fighters, we have become comfortable with our weapons; it’s nice to be able to hunt for sport versus having to use them as a way of life. We all have different injuries and symptoms of our involvement in the various wars. Ducks Unlimited has a commitment to the warfighters, and for that, words cannot fully express my thanks. It has shown me that there is still something out there that I can look forward to and work to become a better person and hunter. I have made wonderful lifelong friends from the different DU hunts I have been on, and I look forward to future events to bring in new warfighters so they too can experience the kindness, compassion and friendship I have found. It has changed my life.”

"This experience was so much more than I expected," Captain Robert Miller said. "My family and I had such an incredible time. We learned so much about DU and its conservation efforts that my wife and I decided to become DU supporters for life. Plus, my wife now wants to learn to hunt, and both of my children are dying to go with us again! It’s amazing that this one experience has become something my whole family is excited to do together."

It was an honor to have the warriors with us for the weekend hunt. For me personally, I made some new friends and reconnected with a few warriors that I have hunted with over the past two years.

**Wounded Warriors Hunt the Hollister Duck Club**  
*By Rich Dengler, Newsletter Editor and State Webmaster*

Five members of the Hollister Duck Club in Gustine provided a place to bunk and a guided duck hunt for five wounded warriors on Saturday, January 4, with the assistance of the California Waterfowl Association. The Marines present were Sgt. William Bennett of Roseville, GySgt. Dan Knouse of Fallbrook, Sgt. Kyle Odle of Murrieta and SSgt. William Pierson of Oceanside. Representing the Army was SSgt. Bryan Rodriguez of Hollister. The club members who hosted the hunts were John Jones Jr., Paul Guidotti, John Hesse, Mark Morton and Bill Lafayette. In addition, Bart Baites coordinated the festivities and hosted cocktails and meals.

More than 30 duck club members and their spouses came together on Friday evening for cocktails and dinner and to meet the military personnel. It was nice to get to know them and learn about their military background and experiences.
Around 9:30 on Friday evening, strains of Tattoo, followed by Taps, faintly played throughout the club. For those of you unfamiliar with Tattoo and/or Taps, the following is a bit of history.

The 24 notes we know as Taps have been in use in the U.S. military since its origin in 1862. Taps has undergone slight modifications over the years, but it has remained essentially the same. To provide background to the music of Taps, an evolution of the “Call Tattoo” is presented. During the American Civil War, the “call” was used as the final call of the day, and as the name implies, it was a signal to extinguish all fires and lights. Following the call, three single drum strokes were sounded at four-count intervals. These are known as “The Taps.” In the cavalry and artillery, this tune, played as a trio, was the signal for evening roll call (The Tattoo). As a solo call in the infantry, it meant lights out.

Warriors and their hosts were up early on Saturday to dress in camo, grab their gear, get a bite to eat and head out to the blinds. Hunting was eventful in spite of the warm weather and few ducks in flight. Hosts and veterans alike were successful in harvesting limits to be enjoyed on someone’s table.
CHAPTER SPOTLIGHT

Los Banos 43RD Annual Banquet
By Derek Mynear, Los Banos Area Chairman

Los Banos Ducks Unlimited celebrated its 43rd year of raising money for the ducks on December 6, 2013. The dinner was held at the local community center and was attended by more than 200 members, 20 Greenwings and 8 sponsors, who spent the evening enjoying good food and company.

The town of Los Banos is steeped in waterfowling tradition, and with more than 160 duck clubs in the surrounding area, it serves as a perfect backdrop for hosting a DU fundraising dinner. With strong community support and an army of tireless volunteers, the dinner went off without a hitch. This year’s Los Banos fundraising dinner was a huge success, and this can be attributed to the high-caliber volunteers on the committee. I have never seen a more dedicated group of people so willing to work tirelessly to help raise money for wetlands conservation.

Dinner was catered by Espana’s Restaurant, a local business that has supported DU for many years. The meal included hors d’oeuvres and a main course of Angus New York strip steak with all the fixings. There was also a hosted bar and lots of cool games and prizes, including a Buck Gardner duck call raffle for a gun, Great Gun Giveaway card cuts, a Greenwing table and ducky dice. Also auctioned off were several local duck hunts donated by the Bee Ess Land and Cattle Company and the Johnny Cook Club, as well as a 20-person chartered fishing trip donated by Randy’s Fishing Trips in Monterey.

Betzy Nino and Jannett Poveda

Stewart McCullough and friends
The evening’s live auction included items ranging from prints, guns, several duck hunts, decoys and specialty items such as a two-person duck and goose hunt in Saskatoon donated by Smoke’m Outfitters. A silent auction and Greenwing table were loaded with lots of prizes tailored to the younger hunter, including a gun donated by Grissom Family Land and Cattle, which also sponsored the dinner hats and several other items.

Without such strong community support and help from local vendors, the dinner simply would not have been possible. I’d like to thank all of the local businesses and everyone who donated to the dinner. With such a strong showing this year, Los Banos DU looks forward to next year’s dinner.

Regional Director Martin Anderson said, “The Los Banos Ducks Unlimited Committee is a pleasure to work with; they really work well as a team. I am very proud of them and what they have accomplished year after year. It takes teamwork to have a successful DU banquet, and they understand that. The committee does a great job bringing the community together, and that’s what makes this banquet successful.”

**VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT – WAYNE AND PATTI NYGAARD**

By Rich Dengler, Newsletter Editor and State Webmaster

Lancaster residents Wayne and Patti Nygaard are active DU supporters and have been volunteers for a number of years – Wayne for 36 and Patti for 15. Wayne is an avid duck hunter, gardener and fisherman. Patti enjoys scrapbooking. They both hunt deer and are active in their local community, supporting not only DU but the local seniors at their church. They belong to the Iris Society and have more than 60 different irises in their garden.

Wayne began his DU volunteer work in 1977 when he was asked by a friend to join the Antelope Valley committee. He is passionate about raising funds for DU’s mission to ensure hunting is available for future generations. According to Wayne, “Hunting is my passion and I get out into the marsh as often as I can. I value the work DU is doing because I know that many precious wetland areas are being lost at an alarming rate. DU’s conservation efforts in North America help save these great natural resources of ours. It is so rewarding to see some of the funds spent locally at one of the major migration stopovers, Plute Ponds on Edwards Air Force Base, near my home.”

Currently Wayne is membership chairman for the Antelope Valley chapter. He is involved with the planning, gun buying and setup. He also makes sure everything gets to the facility the day of the event.
Patti began her volunteer work as the Greenwing chairman of the Antelope Valley chapter 15 years ago, working alongside her husband. She became the assistant to the area chairman in 2004, contributing in many different capacities, and for the past five years has been the chapter’s area chairman. Patti said, “I come back year after year because I want to do things more efficiently. It is a challenge in today’s economy, but it is well worth the effort when we see growth in attendance and dollars raised for the ducks. I am very proud of the fact that our chapter has been one of the top chapters in the state for the past few years.”

Patti’s passion comes from her belief that what we do today will ensure many years of duck hunting for our youth. According to Patti, “It takes a lot of work and months of planning for an event, but it is well worth it when everything comes together and you see the smiles on attendees’ faces when they win a raffle item or score in an auction. I especially enjoy seeing the kids jump for joy when they win a gun or raffle item. It keeps me coming back!”

Last year the Antelope Valley chapter honored wounded warriors through the support of the Fregoso Outdoor Foundation. They had five of these fine gentlemen and their spouses in attendance. The Fregoso Outdoor Foundation offers diversified activities that help our warriors gain self-confidence and self-esteem, re-enforce active lifestyles, increase self-reliance and give them the skills to adopt a constructive new hobby. They partner with professional outfitters and organizations like DU to provide the knowledge and skills so all their participants receive the best possible experience. Their goal as a foundation is to offer programs where our veterans, military members and their families can learn and/or find an activity that will get them outdoors.

When asked what she has learned from volunteering with DU, Patti replied, “People do not realize how much time goes into planning and executing an event. It is a lot of work and the work is not done once an event is over and people go home. There is lots of paperwork that needs to be completed after a banquet to account for the dollars raised and money spent in support of the event. The accounting paperwork has to balance just like a balance sheet for a business, and it has to be sent to national headquarters. Having said this, I still feel it is rewarding to see the results in the end.”

Patti and Wayne’s advice for those who relish volunteering is to simply get involved. A significant part of a volunteer’s role within DU is to raise the grassroots money that is needed to provide for on-the-ground conservation. Typically, the money raised through the fundraising event system is leveraged by using matching grants and federal dollars. Volunteers are always needed to move things forward and help DU do what they do best – wetlands conservation.

Congratulations, Wayne and Patti, for being in our spotlight and thank you for all you do for the ducks!
JOIN THE TEAM: VOLUNTEER FOR DU!

IN MEMORY OF NICK SALAMIDA
By John Baker, San Jose Chapter Sponsor Chairman

Following the holiday season and having wrapped up the year, I was at home reflecting on what a wild ride 2013 was. One of the defining moments of the year was the passing of a friend of mine and certainly a friend of Ducks Unlimited, Nick Salamida. Many of you met Nick, and some of you had the privilege of personally knowing the man. When I first had the opportunity to meet Nick, I immediately liked him and recognized him as a man who cared about people and was a man of his word. No matter how the conversation started, somehow he always worked “What do you need?” or “What can I do for you?” into the conversation, and he was always there when you needed a hand. Some of you might have had an opportunity to take your children to see Santa – literally “Saint Nick” – when the Salamida family opened their home to have friends and neighbors over to kick off the holiday season.

One day after Nick and his wife, Nadine, completed the construction of their new home, Nick and I were talking and, as usual, he asked, “What do you need?” My answer was, “A place to hold a DU event.” After consulting with Nadine, we planned a sponsor event at their home for 100 DU supporters. If you can imagine agreeing to have a hundred or so duck hunters over for the evening, what could have happened and what did happen were quite different. Nick’s entire family pitched in; Nick cooked a gourmet meal and Nadine and their daughters and granddaughters served meals and sold raffle tickets. The event was a home run and has been sold out every year.

When Nick fell ill to Guillain-Barre’ Syndrome, we took a brief sabbatical from the Salamida estate and moved the San Jose DU Sponsor event to a different venue, but as soon as Nick was back in the game, he insisted we move the dinner back to his home.

For those of you that knew Nick, you know he was not a big duck hunter, though he enjoyed the occasional goose hunt. But Nick had a great love of the outdoors and always supported Ducks Unlimited in
a way many of us will never be able to. Through the generosity of Nick, Nadine and the entire Salamida family, who opened their home and invited us into their lives, we have been able to raise well over $100,000 for waterfowl and wetlands conservation. We want to say thank you and God bless you to the Salamida family. Nick, we will miss you!

**CALIFORNIA 2014 STATE CALENDAR GUN RAFFLE IS UNDERWAY**

California DU introduced a statewide calendar gun raffle in the summer of 2013. Calendars were sold during the months of October, November and December 2013. The cost was $50 per calendar and included one DU membership. The raffle giveaway started January 1, 2014, when CA DU began giving away **TWO GUNS EACH WEEK** during the calendar year. There is an A & B numbered calendar.

Winners will be notified by email and names will be posted on the [DU California website](http://www.duckunlimited.com) and our state [Facebook page](http://www.facebook.com/ducalifornia). Winners will follow standard FFL processing and delivery.

If you purchased a calendar, you have an opportunity to win 52 guns throughout the year. **ONE TICKET = 52 CHANCES.** Good luck!

Here are winners as of this publication:

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UPCOMING WINTER EVENTS

Attend a local event in your area and take part in the fun while supporting the mission of Ducks Unlimited. Traveling or vacationing? You can find an event on the California Ducks Unlimited website. Traveling out of state? Simply select the state you will be visiting in the dropdown menu at the top of the California DU webpage and that state’s upcoming events will be listed for you to browse. Don’t miss an opportunity to show your support and have fun at the same time!

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<td>Snow Goose Festival, Chico</td>
<td>Jan. 25</td>
<td>Jim Giampaolo @ (530) 510-3651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalinga</td>
<td>Feb. 7</td>
<td>Bob Oliveria @ (559) 967-5216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento Valley Crab Feed</td>
<td>Feb. 8</td>
<td>Colby Craig @ (916) 205-3987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan Hill</td>
<td>Feb. 13</td>
<td>Larry Lundberg @ (408) 295-5286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>Feb. 15</td>
<td>Gian Marcucci @ (916) 640-0733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amador County</td>
<td>Mar. 1</td>
<td>Mark Bentley @ (209) 304-2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wine Country</td>
<td>Mar. 8</td>
<td>Rick McGlone @ 707-829-8486</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chico</td>
<td>Mar. 8</td>
<td>Kera Giampaolo @ (707) 845-8529</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blackhawk</td>
<td>Mar. 14</td>
<td>John Faires Jr. @ (510) 331-8971</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honey Lake</td>
<td>Mar. 15</td>
<td>Loyal Taylor @ (530) 310-1796</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milpitas</td>
<td>Mar. 27</td>
<td>Steve Rodgers @ (408) 649-0795</td>
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<td>Vacaville</td>
<td>Apr. 4</td>
<td>Rick Saenz @ (707) 631-9242</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greater Redding</td>
<td>Apr. 4</td>
<td>Bob Richardson @ (530) 945-7969</td>
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<tr>
<td>Del Cur (Crescent City)</td>
<td>Apr. 5</td>
<td>Sara Allard @ (707) 218-7552</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santa Cruz</td>
<td>Apr. 5</td>
<td>Claudia Caudle @ (831) 212-4264</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antelope Valley</td>
<td>Apr. 7</td>
<td>Patti Nygaard @ (661) 943-5456</td>
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<td>Riverside</td>
<td>Apr. 8</td>
<td>Gabby Musil @ (915) 691-8985</td>
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<td>Simi Valley</td>
<td>Apr. 8</td>
<td>Tim Falsken @ (805 796-1117</td>
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<td>Oroville</td>
<td>Apr. 11</td>
<td>Greg Kostick @ (530) 515-2345</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gilroy</td>
<td>Apr. 26</td>
<td>Jorge Paiva @ (408) 438-0519</td>
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EDITOR’S NOTE

Whether you are a longtime DU supporter, or a first-time member, *News from the Nest* is YOUR California DU newsletter. For any aspiring writers and photographers, what makes *News from the Nest* truly ours are stories and photos by California DU members. Please take the time to send me a story or photos of your events, members, conservation projects, Greenwing activities, trips, or whatever you feel is important to share.

It is my goal to provide articles relating to national and local conservation news, events, outdoor adventures, hunting, regulations, and much more. With your help, we can make *News from the Nest* a publication that we all look forward to reading.

Rich Dengler, California Ducks Unlimited Newsletter Editor
rich.dengler@sbcglobal.net