MESSAGE FROM THE STATE CHAIRMAN
Eric Rudgers

Greetings and Happy New Year!

California DU is blessed with more than 31,500 members in this beautiful, sunny state. They raised more than $1.5 million and conserved more than 703,000 total acres this past year. Sadly, only a small fraction of these 31,500 members step up to the next level and become committee members.

There are many factors that prevent people from becoming committee members: work, continuing education, family, children, lack of free time and/or fear of the unknown. Have you ever wondered what the job of a committee is and what they do?

California DU is currently comprised of 155 chapters stretching from the southern part of the state way up to the Oregon boarder. These chapters put on more than 255 events each year. The job of the committees is to inform the public about DU, put on events such as banquets, shoots, golf tournaments, wine tastings, and so forth, and even youth-oriented events to raise dollars that ensure the work of DU gets done in California and throughout North America. Holding events and raising funds for a noble cause can also be loads of fun. The greatest benefit of being a committee member, in my humble opinion, is the people you meet. The people involved with DU committees are the kinds of people you want as friends – friends that you can share a laugh, a drink, a meal or a good time with. They truly become your friends!

If you would like to get involved in making a difference for California’s waterfowl and help to provide a place for wild things to thrive, DU can use your help.

If it’s been a while since you attended a DU event or if you’ve never attended one, take the time and attend one this year. If you’ve ever wondered what goes on at a committee meeting and want to increase your circle of friends, contact a local committee and attend a meeting. There is a list of upcoming winter events in this newsletter - look for it below. If you enjoy great people, fun times and raising money for the environment, join a DU committee - California DU is always looking to add some ducks to the flock!

If you have any feedback or thoughts to share, please contact me at drudgers@frontiernet.net. Thank you again for your DU membership and all you do for the ducks!
YOUNG CALIFORNIA HUNTERS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN YOUTH WATERFOWL HUNT FEB. 5-6

One of the best youth hunting opportunities in California is coming up the weekend of Feb 5-6. For two days, young hunters will be able to hunt waterfowl with no competition from adults. These two days of waterfowl season are only for youth hunters age 15 years old or younger with a junior hunting license.

“The youth waterfowl hunt is about providing an opportunity for kids to develop a passion for hunting,” said Nancy Foley, chief of DFG’s Law Enforcement Division.

Waterfowl season closes Jan. 30 for the majority of the state. For the weekend of Feb. 5-6, it will re-open statewide for youth hunters who are accompanied by a non-hunting adult. All usual waterfowl hunting regulations apply.

DFG’s wildlife areas throughout the state provide ample opportunity for the hunt. The hunting is usually excellent on the youth hunt weekend and most areas are vastly underutilized.

The application deadline for the Feb. 5 hunt is Jan. 19, while the deadline for the Feb. 6 hunt is Jan. 20. Click here to learn how to apply.

Youth hunters do not need a reservation if they have legal access to other waterfowl hunting areas such as a private duck club or other areas accessible to the public.

"Hunters are a critical component in the future of wildlife conservation,” added Chief Foley. “And these kids are the future of hunting.”
Ducks Unlimited CEO Dale Hall, Western Regional Office Director Dr. Mark Biddlecomb and volunteer leadership recently met with new California Waterfowl Association President John Carlson Jr. and other CWA leaders to discuss how both organizations can work together to tackle the myriad challenges facing California’s waterfowl and waterfowl hunters. The two groups have cooperated on many projects in the past, most recently on Butte Creek to increase water supplies for duck clubs and aid the recovery of the salmon fishery.

“I don’t know of any part of the country where the challenges are greater, but I also don’t know of a more dedicated constituency for waterfowl and their habitats than in California,” Hall said. “By pooling our resources and working toward common goals, I’m confident that we can achieve great things for this state’s wetlands, waterfowl and people.”

Waterfowl habitat and hunters in California are under threat from a seemingly endless number of issues, many of which are related to land use and water availability in this densely populated state. Most recently, DU and CWA joined other partners to voice strong concern about a land use ordinance that would have halted wetland restoration projects in a critical waterfowl area in the Central Valley. DU and CWA worked together with local stakeholders and administrators to adapt policy language in a manner that ensured continued conservation progress in this area.

“There are many ways that DU and CWA can strengthen their partnership going forward,” Biddlecomb said. “Youth education and retention of young hunters are of key importance to the future of California’s wetlands and waterfowl. And there are many other policy issues to address, including securing water for Klamath Basin wetlands, conserving Suisun Marsh habitats and restoring the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. These are difficult issues that will require the combined resources of DU CWA, and other conservation groups to address. Doing anything less would be a disservice to both organizations, and the waterfowl and wetland resources we work to protect.”
CHAPTER SPOTLIGHTS

Lake Almanor Chapter – September 18
By Ann Bakey, Volunteer and Ladies State Chairman

The Lake Almanor dinner was held Sept. 18 at the beautiful Lake Almanor Country Club in Northern California. I had the pleasure again this year of working on this committee. Dinner Chairman Antoinette Pleau and Co-chairman Julie Chavez helped make this event planning loads of fun while staying focused on the task at hand – ensuring a successful DU event.

Chapters normally start their planning eight to 10 weeks prior to their events, but not this chapter. Lake Almanor started their planning five months in advance! I honestly believe it is because they value the friendships that have been made over the years, enjoy each other’s company and like to have a good time.

Every meeting was a fun social event with pot-luck dishes for everyone to share and enjoy. Every committee member did their part to ensure that attendees had a good time while raising money for DU. Donations from local businesses, Lake Almanor residents and committee members were secured and attractively displayed the night of the event. Care was given to the prizes the Greenwings would win and all were given special treatment. Face-to-face ticket sales ensured a full house of enthusiastic DU supporters. Diana’s Restaurant at the Country Club served a delicious prime rib dinner.

Pictured here on the Lake Almanor’s Country Club golf course are a few of the committee members taking a short break before the banquet doors opened.

The Greenwings had their own raffle, and all went home with a prize or two.

Antoinette’s son, Jason Pleau, generously donated his time and talent to make cribbage boards for the event. The boards were placed on each banquet table along with a silent auction bid. This unselfish labor of love generated $440 for the ducks.

When Jason is not helping out with the Lake Almanor Chapter’s banquet, he is off fighting forest fires in Northern California.

Thank you Jason for all you do to save our forests and for all you do for the ducks!
Ed and Laura Brown from Chico donated two labs for the live auction. They were adorable! The Browns are dedicated DU supporters and give generously to their local DU events. Thank you, Ed and Laura, for all you do for the ducks!

Dinner Chairman Antoinette Pleau fell in love with one of the puppies. This love-at-first-sight prompted her husband, Jim, to purchase the puppy for her in the live auction.

Committee members Richard and Karen Ghering completed their Life Sponsor commitment and were presented with their Life Sponsor plaque.

A Life Sponsor is a $10,000 commitment to Ducks Unlimited payable over five years. At an average cost of $250 to conserve one acre of habitat (thanks to DU’s leveraging and matching programs), that means that a Life Sponsor is responsible for conserving 40 acres of habitat through DU.

Thank you Richard and Karen!

The event was very family oriented and, from my perspective, everyone had a good time. When the evening’s festivities were officially over, it was hard to clear out the room to start the clean-up because attendees wanted to stay around and continue socializing. I guess this is because when you are with the people you enjoy, it is hard to say goodnight and goodbye.

This committee had so much fun planning and executing their event, I bet they will be phoning Antoinette and Julie to start their 2011 planning earlier this year. Of course, after the snow melts!
DeAnza Chapter – November 4  
By Rich Dengler, Volunteer and Newsletter Editor

The DeAnza Chapter’s 32\textsuperscript{nd} annual fundraiser was held Nov. 4 at Mariani’s Restaurant in Santa Clara under the leadership of Dinner Chairman Forrest O’Brien and Co-chairman Tom Farris. This dinner is always a sell out and fun to attend!

The chapter is very special to me - one that I have stayed close to for many years. In addition to being located close to where I live, I was the dinner chairman from 1984 to 1989. State Chairman Eric Rudgers was also on the committee back in the early 1980s. Seems like yesterday!

The Hall was filled to capacity with staunch DU supports – including Larry Lundberg, Grand Slam Life Sponsor and Sponsor in Perpetuity, seven Life Sponsors (pictured below) and 29 Bronze Sponsors.

Life Sponsors (Left to right) - Dave Lunning, Steve Riely, Dawan Lee, Bret Fuller, Jennifer Janson, Jeff Kraus, Larry Lundberg, Tom Farris, and DU Regional Director Frank Leonardi.
One unique auction item was a one-day guided duck hunt for two hunters in the world famous Butte Sink with retired San Francisco 49ers Eric Wright and Dave Flore. The hunt was donated by Dave Goularte.

Who wouldn’t want to hunt with retired 49ers in the famous Butte Sink?

There were other unique auction and raffle items that made the event interesting – a 7 nights Palm Springs vacation in the historic Twin Palms area of Palm Springs (the house was once owned by film star Debbie Reynolds), a gun safe donated by Alan Hills of Liberty Safes in San Jose, a fly rod package donated by Forrest O’Brien and Todd Hosman consisting of a Powell fly rod, *Colorado Trout Flies* book signed by author Todd Hosman, and four hand-tied trout flies by Colorado fly tier A.K. Best (who is profiled in the book), and private tasting of premium single malt Scotch whisky for 12 people donated by Steve Beal, Senior Master of Whisky. Steve is one of 15 Masters of Whisky worldwide and one of only four Senior Masters of Whisky.

The extra detail that this committee gave to displaying their auction and raffle items was very impressive. The items were carefully laid out in very attractive displays.
The Placer County Chapter had their 35th annual banquet on Nov. 20. Dinner Chairman Tom Jones and Co-chairman Jeff Rodrick had an incredible committee that helped put on a very successful event. One of the special highlights of the night was the ladies’ raffle with handmade wine stoppers and a beautiful handmade blanket. All of the donors donated materials and time.

There were 10 Sponsor tables. Each table was presented with a 2010/2011 Sponsor print which was created by their very own co-chair/artist, Jeff Rodrick. In addition, each person at the table received an engraved wine glass with the words “PCDU 35th Anniversary” – a nice take-home gift.

The 2010/2011 Sponsor print is entitled “The Bull Session.”
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 Ducks Unlimited Website at [www.ca.ducks.org](http://www.ca.ducks.org). Traveling out of state? No problem! Simply select the state that you will be visiting in the dropdown menu (on top of the California DU webpage) and that state’s upcoming events will be listed for you to browse on the state’s home page. Don’t miss an opportunity to show your support and have fun at the same time!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Dinner Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento Crab Feed</td>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>Colby Craig @ 916-205-3987</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chico Couples Banquet</td>
<td>February 5</td>
<td>Scott Douglas @ 530-896-0035</td>
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<td>Morgan Hill Banquet</td>
<td>February 11</td>
<td>Larry Lundberg @ 408-295-5286</td>
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<td>Coalinga Banquet</td>
<td>February 18</td>
<td>Joe Arnold @ 559-829-7428</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atwater Banquet</td>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>Garland Austin @ 209-769-9425</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clear Lake Banquet</td>
<td>February 19</td>
<td>Dale Heizer @ 707-295-0856</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chowchilla Banquet</td>
<td>February 25</td>
<td>Frank Pittz @ 559-706-3128</td>
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<tr>
<td>Antelope Valley Banquet</td>
<td>March 4</td>
<td>Patti Nygaard @ 661-943-5456</td>
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<td>Jackson Banquet</td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>Tom Sears @ 209-274-2843</td>
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<td>Fair Oaks Banquet</td>
<td>March TBD</td>
<td>Joe Deaser @ 916-600-4883</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracy Banquet</td>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>Gian Marcucci @ 209-640-0733</td>
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<td>Milpitas Banquet</td>
<td>March 17</td>
<td>Steve Rodgers @ 408-210-0591</td>
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<td>Wine Country Banquet</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>Rick McGlone @ 707-829-8486</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honey Lake Banquet</td>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>Suzanne Cooper @ 530-257-0495</td>
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<tr>
<td>Riverside Banquet</td>
<td>March 25</td>
<td>Gaby Musil @ 909-772-4746</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vacaville Banquet</td>
<td>March 25</td>
<td>Rick Saenz @ 707-425-2213</td>
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Ducks Unlimited Volunteers, their families and guests are invited to attend the annual California State Ducks Unlimited Convention **April 15-16, 2011**, at the Peppermill Resort Spa Casino in Reno, Nevada. The convention is for everyone, from the newest DU Volunteer to the most seasoned drakes and hens. It also provides a great opportunity to visit three of the better-known outdoor stores - Cabela’s, Scheels and Sportsman’s Warehouse - during your stay in Reno.

Your state officers and convention committee have planned a celebration of all the hard work and dedication of DU Volunteers with a totally new convention format. The Welcome Party will begin Friday evening with a hosted bar where everyone can enjoy the company of other DU members. Saturday’s activities will begin with an opening presentation from our Pacific Flyway delegates and DU Regional Directors. Following the short presentations, you will have the opportunity to experience the fun of notable DU raffles – raffles that have proven to be fun and rewarding for some of our state chapters.

Everyone loves a good raffle and we all enjoy winning, especially when all we have to do is purchase a ticket for a few dollars. Well, you will love the raffle activities the convention committee has planned and it is all free. That’s right – FREE! All convention attendees will be issued DU Bucks that they can use to play and win raffle prizes. You won’t want to miss the fun!

A delicious filet mignon and salmon luncheon will follow with presentations from our state officers and talented biologists. Special state achievement awards will also be presented, and you will hear from a few of your current state board members as they share their leadership stories and introduce you to your newly elected board.

This year’s convention will end around 3:30 p.m. allowing you to enjoy your afternoon and evening in Reno. There will be no evening banquet or auction as in the past!

The convention committee has tried hard to keep the cost down so you can participate this year, meet new and old friends, be included in the acknowledgment of your dedication to DU, and have fun. Please join us at this year’s State Convention and enjoy informative and social activities with a fellow DU supporter! Online registration is available at [http://www.ducks.org/california/events](http://www.ducks.org/california/events) or you can mail in the enclosed Early Bird Registration Form.
Everything about the Peppermill is over the top... and we mean that in a good way! While the flashy decor is the first thing that will strike you, there is a lot more to the Peppermill experience that sets it apart from your average casino, including: consistently good dining choices with frequent specials, an entertaining atmosphere on the casino floor, comfortable rooms and suites and top-notch service.

The Peppermill continues to gather accolades for the Reno/Sparks area in the Nevada Magazine's Best of Nevada reader polls. These include: best hotel/resort, best place to gamble, friendliest casino, best gourmet restaurant, best Italian restaurant and the best buffet.

Peppermill is located about two miles south of downtown Reno on Virginia Street. The area south of the Peppermill, near the Reno-Sparks Convention Center, is home to some lovely shopping malls and restaurants. North of the Peppermill you will find Scheels and Sportsman's Warehouse. If you are flying to Reno, the airport is close by.

**Entertainment at the Peppermill**

Themed bars are located throughout the casino. There are 16 of them with a wide range of moods and settings. For example, the Terrace Lounge is relaxing and intimate, and offers singing performances by classic variety bands on Friday and Saturday. The Fireside Lounge has cozy plush booths, specialty drinks and free appetizers. Each booth features a state-of-the-art sound system and high-resolution plasma screens which play all the latest music videos all night long. The Fish Bar has aquarium filled walls and tiki drinks. The Banyan Bar has a tropical South Seas theme where you can enjoy a variety of tropical drinks, classic cocktails and fine wines at the edge of a rainforest canopy.

Peppermill Casino is a vibrant, purple wonderland for adults. There is pink and purple everywhere (the lights, furniture, etc); the rest of the space is filled with tropical plants, chandeliers, video monitors, themed bars and casino games.

There are more than 1900 slots, including popular old stand-bys, the latest video machines and a few that you can't see anywhere else in Reno. The machines are all "ticket-in, ticket-out" for easy redemption (and cleaner hands). Video poker players might find some full-pay machines if they look long enough. In addition to machine and table games, there is also keno, a smoke-free poker room and a race and sports book.

Peppermill runs frequent tournaments, as well as some bigger, less-frequent tourneys. The weekly tournament schedule includes events in black jack, keno, poker and video poker, and slot machines.

The Plus55 program includes benefits such as discounts on meals for senior citizen such as “2-for-1 Island Buffet” breakfast or lunch.

If you haven’t visited the Peppermill, check it out online at [http://www.peppermillreno.com/](http://www.peppermillreno.com/).

**Register early to participate in the Early Bird Drawing!**
Join us in Reno on April 15 & 16

Deadline to return this form is March 25, to be entered in the Early Bird Drawing.

REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Name: _______________________________________________________________
Address: _____________________________________________________________________________
City: _______________________ State: _____________  Zip Code: _____________
Email Address: _________________________________________________________
Phone Number: __________________________________________________________________

Number of Registrations - $60 per person: ___________________________________________________
Includes hosted Friday evening hospitality and welcome party, Saturday business meeting and luncheon.
Names for Badges: ________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Payment Method:  Check# ______  Credit Card # _____________________________
MC Visa AMEX Discover       Expiration Date:   ________________________________
Signature: ____________________________________________________________

Checks payable to Ducks Unlimited.
Mail registration form to:
Rich Dengler, 10281 Stonydale Drive, Cupertino, CA  95014-1029

Overnight hotel reservations can be made with the Peppermill for a DU group rate of $99 per night double occupancy. The block room cut-off date is March 25. To make a hotel reservation, phone the Peppermill at 1-800-282-2444 and identify yourself as part of the DU group (group code MDULC11).
ENSURE THE FUTURE OF WETLAND AND WATERFOWL CONSERVATION FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN – GET FEATHERED

Feather Society members make a crucial difference in the conservation cause by remembering Ducks Unlimited in their estate and financial plans. Careful planning often allows Feather Society members to enjoy substantial tax advantages while supporting DU’s conservation mission.

**What happens to your gift?**

When a planned gift is received from an estate or will, Ducks Unlimited places the money in the DU Endowment, similar to a savings account. The principal of a gift placed in the DU endowment remains intact, while the annual interest income generated provides permanent funding for vital conservation programs.

**How do you become a Feather Society member?**

Feather Society members pledge to make a gift through their estate to Ducks Unlimited upon their death and/or the death of their surviving spouse. DU can provide helpful information to aid in your estate planning.

The estimated amount of your future gift and your gift plan can be determined after you make your pledge. While there are many options available for you to use in fulfilling your Feather Society commitment, the most common gift plans are:

- Designate DU to receive a portion of your estate in your will. This could be in the form of specific percentage or dollar amount, or even specific assets (stock, land, etc.).
- Designate DU as a beneficiary of a portion of your retirement savings plan (IRA, 401k, etc.).
- Establish life income gift arrangement that will provide you income and eventually leave a gift for Ducks Unlimited.
- Designate DU as a beneficiary of a portion of your life insurance benefits.

To establish your planned gift, or to receive additional information, contact Jon Rich, Director of Gift Planning at (901) 758-3763 or Email: jrich@ducks.org

Make a commitment to future generations—
Join the Feather Society!
EDITORS NOTE

Whether you are a longtime DU supporter, or a first time member, the News from the Nest is YOUR California DU newsletter. For any aspiring writers and photographers, what makes the News from the Nest truly ours are stories and photos by California DU members. Please take the time and 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