MESSAGE FROM THE STATE CHAIRMAN
Mark Low

Hello DU Members and DU Volunteers,

With the close of 2011, I want to thank you for being a valued Ducks Unlimited supporter. Whether you are a DU volunteer putting on events or a DU member who gathers together with your DU family and friends to attend an event, please know that your time and support are greatly valued. Your commitment this past year brings DU one step closer to fulfilling its vision of skies full of waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever.

Looking back on 2011, I’m pleased to share that California DU has had a record fundraising year. Local committees put on 108 fundraising events and continue to be the heart and soul of Ducks Unlimited. While the numbers are still being added up from our fall banquets, California DU will close out the year with more than $1,335,000 in grassroots funds raised for the ducks.

Like everything else in this world, DU’s mission requires money to make things happen. Raising money starts with people. People = Money = Habitat = Ducks. By simply attending a local event, you can have a great time while helping DU fill the sky with waterfowl for future generations. You can also become part of the DU team by volunteering. DU offers passionate outdoor enthusiasts an opportunity to become part of a volunteer fundraising team that is focused on a mission, dedicated to a cause and infuses a lot of fun into the process.

As we enter 2012, California DU is looking forward to another exciting and eventful year. Our key objectives are critically important to the success of DU’s conservation work. We will continue to stay focused on grassroots fundraising... the heart and soul of DU.

I thank all of you for giving me the honor of being your DU California State Chairman. Renewing old friendships and starting new ones has been a plus. There are really a lot of good people in our great organization!

Thank you, as well, for what you do for the ducks. I wish you a happy, healthy new year, and thank you for your continued support of waterfowl and wetlands conservation.

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

Take a kid hunting,
Mark Low
DU DUCK CALLS ATTRACT MORE THAN WATERFOWL

When DU Biologist Aaron Will blows his duck call at the 5th Annual Galt Winter Bird Festival, he’s not going to get the response a duck hunter would expect. Instead of waterfowl winging his way, Will is going to get duck calls blown right back at him, as youngsters of all ages give duck calling their best shot.

DU has sponsored the Galt Winter Bird Festival since its inception and, this year, organizers invited DU to conduct a duck call demonstration. Will volunteered right away and says he’s game if the callers are.

“I’m going to hopefully teach them the comeback call, the contentment quack and a feed call,” said Will. “If there’s time, we may even play my version of duck-duck-goose, since I have a goose call as well.”

The Winter Bird Festival is an amazing opportunity to view the thousands of resident and migratory birds that call Galt their home in the winter months. Rain or shine, the Annual Winter Bird Festival will offer the community a chance to discover why birds play such an important role in nature and why wetlands, agriculture and open space are all crucial to their survival.

Since there’s so much to see and do, several guided bus tours will help guests make the most of their festival experience. Events include a morning and a sunset tour of Staten Island offering a firsthand look at these birds in their natural habitat. There will also be a songbird tour, a children’s tour at McFarland Living History Ranch and a dawn photo-op tour. Join the tour of the Cosumnes River Preserve with the preserve’s manager as your guide, and don’t miss WILD THINGS INC.’s fabulous Wild Animal Performance.

Festival guests will also enjoy delectable foods from local vendors, a Youth Art Gallery showcasing Galt students’ drawings of migratory and resident winter birds, free children’s arts and crafts activities and more.

The festival is free to the public but tours require pre-registration and space is limited so early sign-ups are encouraged.

Galt Winter Bird Festival, Saturday, January 28, 2012, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., McCaffrey Middle School, 997 Park Terrace Drive, Galt, CA 95632

For more information, visit their website at www.ci.galt.ca.us or call 209-366-7100, Mon. - Thu. 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. There’s also a 24-hour recorded information line, at 209-366-7220.
As one drives through the wetlands that surround the town of Los Banos, it is impossible to miss the countless miles of water delivery canals that snake their way across the landscape. This system of canals is all connected, and makes possible the delivery of water to our valued wetland habitat, as well as to our agricultural friends. One will notice that these canals are either concrete lined or earthen in nature, and all serve the same basic purpose of conveying water.

Ducks Unlimited, with help from our Grassland Water District partners, recently completed a canal restoration project that was the first of its kind here in the grasslands. This project restored 10 miles of canal embankment along a stretch of the Santa Fe Canal in the north grasslands. Under normal operating conditions, water delivery canals will efficiently convey water to landowners in a timely manner. However, over time canals can become somewhat “clogged” due to the build up of sediment as water carries soil, debris and other materials into the system. With less room in the canal to carry it, the water pushes outward, eroding the side banks away, which becomes a safety hazard for roads. Typical maintenance of these canals consists of using heavy equipment such as an excavator to dredge the sediment out of the bottom and placing it on the outside of the canal, either on the top or back side of the canal embankment, allowing more water to flow. What is left is a canal with side banks that are generally bare and too steep to support erosion-protection vegetation. This creates an enormous maintenance burden on GWD staff as canal bank erosion will continue to eat away at the roadways.

This is what we were faced with: a canal that needed a major overhaul, with the vertical canal banks decreasing road width to 8 feet in some places. The Santa Fe canal restoration project focused on removing the sediment that had built up in the canal over the years, and used this dredged material to reshape the banks from nearly vertical to a much milder slope. This would provide an improved gradient for the establishment of native vegetation to not only help stabilize the canal embankment, but also outcompete undesirable vegetation such as perennial pepperweed and mustard. Baltic rush plugs and alkali bulrush seed were distributed along the lower to mid portions of the newly restored canal banks, and creeping wildrye grass seed was planted along the higher portion. This diversity of plant species provides increased bank stability and excellent cover for wildlife such as ducks, frogs, snakes, small mammals and a broad range of insects that will be readily fed upon by these critters.

Efficient water delivery is, of course, the primary objective of a delivery canal, and this project ensured that restoration activities allowed the district to maintain appropriate delivery flows to neighboring landowners for all wetland-flooding needs. In addition to the water delivery improvements, the restored canal banks and native vegetation will discourage natural erosion processes and reduce the maintenance effort in the future, saving GWD and its landowners vital resources that can be used elsewhere.

The success of this project has already been witnessed, as nine months after the initial restoration, the canal is inhabited by native, non-invasive plant species, the bank is stable and water is flowing better than ever. “This project has really helped our ability to cut down on costs associated with canal maintenance,
and has vastly improved the stability and integrity of the Santa Fe Canal, while at the same time allowing us to make efficient water deliveries,” said Mike Gardner, Chief of Field Operations for the GWD. “The project has been very successful in both form and function, and we look forward to many more like it in the district here in the future.”

The newly restored canal has a more wildlife friendly feel to it, and the wildlife are indeed responding. “As I recently drove along the restored canal, I witnessed a myriad of species utilizing the habitat including coots, red-winged blackbirds, dove, sparrows and numerous pairs of mallard and gadwall,” said Derek Mynear, a DU Biologist stationed at the GWD office.

Ducks Unlimited has recently applied for a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant that includes a similar restoration project along a stretch of the San Luis Canal, and the funding potential for this grant and all associated projects in the grasslands is looking good.

Since 1986, DU and its partners have restored, enhanced and protected more than 132,000 acres of critical wetlands and associated habitats in the GWD, spending more than $19.8 million. We will continue to partner with the GWD and its landowners to support their efforts in waterfowl conservation and carry out DU’s vision of wetlands sufficient to fill the sky today, tomorrow and forever.

WETLANDS CONSERVATION IN THE GRASSLANDS: PARTNERING FOR THE FUTURE
By Chris Hildebrandt and Derek Mynear, DU Biologists

Much of the work that has been accomplished over the last year through funding sources such as the North American Wetlands Conservation Act has focused on enhancing wetlands and associated habitats while conserving our most precious resource, water. Water is the most critical, and also the most limiting, factor when it comes to wetland management in the Grasslands, and all of DU’s projects have been designed with water conservation in mind.

“Something as simple as replacing a worn out water control structure with a new, more highly efficient one can impact many acres of habitat, allowing for a more productive wetland,” said Derek Mynear, Project Biologist with Ducks Unlimited. “Old, dilapidated metal pipes, faulty structures and high-maintenance open delivery ditches are being replaced with long-lasting materials such as HDPE or PVC pipe, decreasing maintenance costs and water losses, all of which are water conservation friendly measures.”

Some recent projects that have been completed in the GWD include replacing a failing weir on the San Luis Canal with a modern structure that will allow for efficient water delivery to several duck clubs in the north grasslands. Another project in the district scheduled for this summer is restoration of 10 miles of canal banks along the Santa Fe Canal. This project will improve water delivery capabilities, decrease maintenance costs and provide wildlife friendly habitat along the banks. In addition, dilapidated weirs and inefficient water delivery structures will be replaced this spring and summer with newly designed structures for water delivery in the south grasslands, giving staff more options for running the water. Private wetlands conservation projects on the Bardin Club, Industrial City, Big Water and Klamath and Tremontana clubs enhanced more than 1,400 acres of wetland habitat this past summer.

In addition to private lands conservation projects, several public hunting areas have seen similar enhancements this past summer that will provide more habitat, and ultimately allow for more waterfowl hunting opportunities. Several projects were completed on the Los Banos, North Grasslands and Volta wildlife areas that will allow managers to better manage the available habitat while using less water. Through partnership and funding from the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB), an upcoming project on the Los Banos wildlife area will involve installing three new low-lift pump stations that will give habitat managers the ability to lift and reuse water in the area that would otherwise be sent downstream. “This project serves as an example of how partnerships work in concert with habitat efforts on the ground,” said Mynear. “Our ability to go after and secure different funding sources allows us to achieve our ultimate goal of wetlands conservation.”
Without diverse partnerships with private and public entities, these projects and subsequent future projects would be much more difficult to complete. It is through matching funds, such as those provided by WCB, that allows DU to leverage federal funds through NAWCA, which is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Division of Bird Habitat Conservation in Washington, D.C. This revolving conservation partnership is key to maximizing the available resources to put habitat on the ground, which ultimately puts more birds in the sky. DU joins the Grassland Resource Conservation District in recognizing WCB, recipient of the 2010 Martin J. Winton Conservationist of the Year award, for its important contributions to wetlands in the GEA. DU also recognizes that if it were not for the private landowners in the area, there would be no wetlands left for agencies like WCB to conserve.

Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems in the world and provide valuable habitat for a myriad of wildlife species, and Ducks Unlimited looks forward to continuing our valuable partnerships long into the future.

If you would like more information on conservation efforts or funding opportunities for wetlands on your property you can contact DU biologists Chris Hildebrandt, (209) 761-8400, childebrandt@ducks.org, or Derek Mynear, (209) 761-8401, dmynear@ducks.org.

Keep em’ flyin

For more information on conservation efforts in California, visit California Ducks Unlimited.
USA RICE FEDERATION PRESENTS DUCKS UNLIMITED WITH 2011 DISTINGUISHED CONSERVATION ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The USA Rice Federation presented Ducks Unlimited with its second annual Distinguished Conservation Achievement Award on December 8, 2011. The award recognizes exemplary leadership and other major contributions to conservation that significantly benefit natural resources, wildlife and America’s communities. Ducks Unlimited First Vice President George Dunklin and Senior Vice President Paul Bonderson Jr. accepted the award on behalf of Ducks Unlimited.

“As an Arkansas rice farmer, conservationist and avid duck hunter, it is a great honor for an organization that I have such passionate feelings about to be the recipient of this prestigious award,” said Dunklin. “Nothing makes me prouder than to have my rice industry recognize DU’s tremendous contributions to the world of conservation and wetlands. And I can assure you that Ducks Unlimited considers America’s rice growers to be distinguished conservationists and key partners as well.”

Ducks Unlimited has a long history of partnering with rice producers to provide habitat for North America’s waterfowl. Studies have shown that flooded rice fields are a primary food source for dabbling ducks during migration and on wintering areas.

“Three regions support more than half of all wintering dabbling ducks in the United States. It’s no coincidence that those three areas are also our nation’s primary rice-growing regions,” said DU CEO Dale Hall. “America’s rice producers are critical to the health and future of waterfowl. DU is dedicated to keeping rice growers profitable and abundant because what’s good for rice is good for ducks. We thank the USA Rice Federation for recognizing DU today and helping ensure the future of North America’s waterfowl through habitat conservation.”

Nearly 3.4 million acres of rice are grown in the United States each year. After harvest, many rice producers flood their fields, providing critical food and habitat for migrating and wintering waterfowl.

“Ducks Unlimited is an outstanding conservation organization,” said Linda Raun, USA Rice Producers’ Group chairman and charter member of the USA Rice Federation. “DU’s conservation, restoration and management of wetlands and associated habitats for North America’s waterfowl; its understanding of the challenges facing waterfowl conservation; and its vision to address the challenges made the choice of Ducks Unlimited a most deserving one.”

Pictured: California rice producer Nicole Van Vleck (third from left) presents (left to right) DU First Vice President George Dunklin, DU Senior Vice President Paul Bonderson Jr. and DU Director of Public Policy Dan Wrinn with the 2011 Distinguished Conservation Achievement Award on behalf of the USA Rice Federation.
IN MEMORY OF MARK TIMMERMAN

Mark Anthony Timmerman passed away unexpectedly at the age of 58 on October 29 with his wife and family by his side. Mark was the Area Chairman for the Oakdale Chapter and enjoyed hunting and fishing with many beloved friends and family. Mark will be dearly missed.

Mark was very involved in the community in Oakdale. In addition to Ducks Unlimited, Mark was actively involved with the Little League Baseball Association, serving as President for two years. Mark was appointed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in 2007 to the Board of Directors for the Turlock County Fair and was currently a sitting board member. He treasured his time with the board members and looked forward to fair time. He was also a member of California Feed and Grain Association and supported the 11-99 Foundation of Fallen Victims with the California Highway Patrol.

DU MEMORIAL GIFTS

A memorial gift to Ducks Unlimited will support continuing efforts to help wetlands and associated wildlife through habitat management, research and education. It is a thoughtful means of expressing sympathy for someone loved that will help the natural world. It means you share the burden of grief and want to continue your memories of the person departed. A memorial card is sent to the family of the deceased with the name of the person honored and the name of the donor(s). The amount of the gift will not be disclosed.

To establish your memorial gift, please contact Becky Paysinger, DU Manager of Membership Records and Services, at 901-758-3841 or by e-mail at bpaysinger@ducks.org.

AUBURN CHAPTER’S 52 GUN RAFFLE

The Auburn Chapter is holding a unique 52-gun raffle between February 29, 2012, and February 20, 2013. Only 1,000 tickets will be printed and sold for a chance to win a gun - 52 of them to be exact. This raffle coincides with the California state lotto mid-day drawing that will take place every Wednesday. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Bill Eisley at (530) 305-1085.
CHAPTER SPOTLIGHTS

Sacramento Pig BBQ – September 17, 2011
By Jan Young, District Chairman

The 2011 annual Sacramento Pig BBQ was held at the Sacramento Horseman’s Association, a rustic atmosphere that was perfect for the pig BBQ theme. More than 140 DU supporters attended and more than $13,000 was raised.

This fundraiser could not have been possible without the generosity of donors and friends of the ducks. Cold Steele Safes donated a 21-gun safe and Michael David Winery, Sierra Nevada Brewery and Coke sponsored the dinner. Golf-4-Kids Organization and the Elk Grove Cycle Center attended. Each set up a display of their products. Briar Patch Cigars gave away sample cigars to attendees.

As usual, Area Chairman Colby Craig and his dedicated committee members did an outstanding job planning and executing this event. Their focus was fun, friendship and grassroots dollars for conservation. Thank you, Colby and Volunteers, for a job well done! Thank you, DU Members, for your continued support!

The banquet was dedicated to the family of Julian Pereira, a 19-year-old year old committee member who tragically lost his life in a car accident on August 10, 2011. Julian’s family was invited and presented with a framed portrait of Julian signed by each committee member. The committee also presented the family with a Ducks Unlimited bird feeder that was engraved “Julian you will always be remembered and never forgotten.”
Suisun Marsh Military Appreciation Dinner – September 24, 2011
By Rick McGlone, State Sponsor Chairman

My wife and I had the pleasure of attending the Suisun Marsh Military Appreciation Dinner on October 24, 2011, at the 49th Military Police Brigade National Guard Armory in Fairfield. This was a special event and very well organized by Area Chairman James Monteleone and his committee of volunteers.

More than 140 DU supporters were in attendance to enjoy an elegant meal of BBQ ball tip steak and grilled chicken catered by Kinders BBQ. A no-host bar was set up and run by the ladies. In addition to the typical DU experience, the evening was inviting and friendly with a military ambiance.

A special table was set up in front which remained empty throughout the evening in honor of fallen military personnel who could not participate. A hat from each branch of the service was placed on the table and a formal announcement was made to remind everyone that the seats were reserved for soldiers who fought for us, died in battle and could not attend the evening’s festivities.

A color guard presented the American flag at the on-set of the evening. The master of ceremonies described the flag’s history and why and how the flag is folded. We also learned that this American flag had been flown over Iraq and Afghanistan. At the end of the ceremony, the flag was placed in a beautiful shadow box for display and later auctioned off during the live auction.
Several raffles were held throughout the evening. One was for servicemen only.

Greenwings were also an important part of the event, with a special Greenwing raffle and drawing.
The First Annual Fair Oaks Banquet was held on October 21, 2011, at the Orangevale Community Center. Area Chairman Joe Deaser and a very small committee focused on planning an event the local community would enjoy.

There were a number of unique auction items, one was a South African two-man hunt donated by NB Safaris. The package included airport transportation, hunting vehicle and support team, accommodations, food and beverage. The package is valued at more than $6,800 for two hunters and has generated more than $5,500 from live auctions.

April Dias is an avid hunter and has been a volunteer for the Friends of NRA for many years. After purchasing a donated hunt at an NRA dinner, she became friends of the owners, Neil and Karen Barnard. April enjoyed the hunt she won so much that she proudly represents NB Safaris as one of their U.S. contacts. She has traveled to South Africa in the past with a different outfitter, but according to April, NB Safaris’ services and accommodations far surpassed any experience she ever had there.

April lives in Folsom and travels throughout the state and into Nevada to represent NB Safaris at various fundraising dinners (Friends of NRA, Ducks Unlimited and California Waterfowl Association). She provides a display table, answers any questions guests may have, and of course, encourages them to purchase the hunt through an event’s live auction. She has many stories to tell about her adventures in South Africa and she loves to share them!

Area Chairman Joe Deaser volunteers an enormous amount of time to DU and has for the past 30 years. He held the position of District Chairman for many years and is a former California DU State Chairman. In addition to the Fair Oaks Chapter, Joe started the El Grove Chapter and is currently involved in one way or another with more than 20 DU events throughout the Sacramento area. Thank you, Joe, for all you do for the ducks!
Granite Bay – October 27, 2011
By Jan Young, District Chairman

The Granite Bay Banquet was held on October 27, 2011, at the Granite Bay Golf Course. There were more than 165 DU supporters in attendance, which was double the attendance from last year.

Pictured above are a number of happy banquet attendees enjoying friendship and a good time!

GR Trucking donated a number of items for the auction and raffle, and they purchased four corporate tables. For their commitment, GR Trucking was presented with the Unselfish Dedication and Significant Contributions to Waterfowl Conservation award.

Accepting the award from Dinner Chairman Greg McIntosh (far left) is Peter Rozaki, CEO of GR Trucking (center).

GR Trucking has been a family-owned business since the 1950s, originating in the San Francisco Bay Area before moving their corporate office to Sacramento in 2000. GR Trucking’s management team has more than 90 years of combined experience in the trucking and construction industries, encompassing every trade from earthwork to demolition. They are valued DU supporters!

SUPPORT DUCKS UNLIMITED
The ducks need you!
The 36th Annual Placer County Banquet was held on November 19, 2011, in Lincoln. Chairmen Tom Jones and Mike Elston did an amazing job with the help of a very talented and dedicated committee, past and present. Tom and Mike recognized the "first flight" committee members by naming them in the program: Dr. Nathan Dubin, Jerry Jansen, Buddy LaPorte, Don Noyes, Joe Parr and Primo Santini Jr.

The meal was catered by Robert Shea of Steelhead BBQ. Their specially prepared meats were gently smoked for several hours using a variety of split wood including apple wood. The elements came together to create a beautiful red smoke ring around the edge of their brisket, which melted in your mouth. Thank you, Robert and team, for preparing and serving a wonderful meal!

Steelhead BBQ offers a wide array of expertly prepared dishes for gatherings of any size. They serve Northern California, including Chico, Paradise, Orland, Oroville, Redding, Red Bluff, Sacramento and more! Steelhead BBQ caters weddings, parties and special events inside a hall or outdoors. Their fully portable smoke pits come to you. Placer County DU attendees still talk about how much they enjoyed the meal that Steelhead BBQ prepared and served!

There were a number of VIPs in attendance. The Ken Vandre family, Wheatland Smog and Repair, Don Songey, the Pierzinski family and the Thomas Cartier family were special table sponsors. Each special table sponsor package was priced at $850 and included one DU sponsor membership, seven DU memberships, one framed DU sponsor print, a reserved table for eight, $300 raffle packet (including entry in the $100 and a $300 progressive raffles), eight commemorative wine glasses, and one entry into the sponsor drawing. Thank you, special table sponsors!
The Pierzinski family are major donors to this event; they attend every year and are highly valued DU supporters.

Current committee member and artist Jeff Roderick was in attendance. In addition to helping plan and execute this event, Jeff designed the artwork printed on the back of the shirts that were handed out to each DU supporter upon arrival.

Wildlife art and the outdoors have been a part of Jeff’s life since his early childhood, when he would often hunt with his father and three brothers in Northern California.

Jeff was the 2010-2011 California Ducks Unlimited Life Sponsor Artist of the Year. Some of Jeff’s other recent accomplishments include the following:

- 2008—Awarded the prestigious Frank C. Bellrose Award by the California Waterfowl Association for extraordinary efforts on behalf of wood ducks and the California Wood Duck Program
- 2008–2009—California Ducks Unlimited Sponsor Artist of the Year
- 2008—Juried into Pacific Flyway Wildfowl Festival
- 2007–2008—California Ducks Unlimited Artist of the Year
- 2007—Juried into Pacific Flyway Wildfowl Festival
- 2006–2007—California Waterfowl Association, Life Sponsor Artist of the Year
- 2006—Juried into Pacific Flyway Wildfowl Festival

Don Songey, long-time member of the current committee and DU Sponsor, attended and donated eight sponsor prints from his art collection for the live auction. It was such a wonderful donation!

Don is very passionate about DU, especially DU sponsorship. Every year he sets up and mans the Sponsor table at this event. He encourages attendees to consider becoming a DU Sponsor, passes out information and answers questions.

I encourage everyone to consider becoming a DU Sponsor - it is an opportunity to steward the future of wetlands and waterfowl and preserve our beloved sport of waterfowl hunting.
There were eight different alcoholic beverage auction items. What made these items so special is the fact that each winner also won a tool box key - but only one of the eight keys opened a giant tool box that was also in the live auction. The lucky winner of the “working key” was Fred Pifer. To Fred’s delight, the tool box was filled with prizes in each of the eight drawers... and there was a shotgun in the very bottom drawer. The committee took the shotgun apart so it would fit in the drawer - what a prize!

South Lake Tahoe Chapter- December 9, 2011
By Jan Young, District Chairman

The South Lake Tahoe dinner was held December 9, 2011, at the beautiful Embassy Suites Hotel in South Lake Tahoe. The committee set up a huge goose decoy in the lobby for all to enjoy while checking in! More than 100 DU supporters were in attendance and each was handed a DU bag with a wooden decoy, DU hat and 2012 DU calendar inside as they checked in.

Long-time Dinner Chairmen Diane and Kit Arlin (pictured on the left) donate so much of their time to DU... we want to give them a big THANK YOU! The committee was very well organized and worked long hours to plan and execute a very successful fundraising banquet.

Diane and Kit restarted the South Tahoe Chapter six years ago and, to date, have raised more than $100,000 for Ducks Unlimited through this chapter. Their entire extended family gets involved – children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents... and even great grandparents. Now that is family dedication!

Among the many raffle and auction items, the following deserve special mention: A series of DU Santa sculptures from years past and a beautiful antique decoy donated by Mrs. Betty Payne. With their continued support, Placerville Chapter committee members donated a case of wine in addition to purchasing a corporate table. Julie and Ross Durham donated wine that many enjoyed.

Greenwings were represented well at this dinner, with a total of 15 in attendance. There was a special area set aside for Greenwings with activities, games and a special raffle.

Greenwing Chairman Alex Barton has been involved in DU for four years and was an active committee member again this year. He is an outstanding hunter, Eagle Scout and has a real passion for DU.
Alex was instrumental in obtaining a number of youth donations, including an Avery goose decoy, stickers, duck calls, fishing poles and other prizes for the Greenwing activities and raffles.

Alex and his father, Brian Barton, used the Avery goose decoy to create a pluck-a-goose game for Greenwing enjoyment. More than $1,400 was generated from this game alone!

Alex also created a unique bird-wing identification game. Greenwings had to identify more than 20 species of duck wings by matching the different wings to a variety of ducks pictured.

My guess is, one day, Alex will be chairing this dinner!

**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 [ca.ducks.org](http://ca.ducks.org). Traveling out of state? Simply select the state 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 homepage. Don’t miss an opportunity to show your support and have fun at the same time!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter/Event</th>
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<td>St. Helena Banquet</td>
<td>February 3</td>
<td>Kyle Vella @ (707) 287-4143</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morgan Hill Banquet</td>
<td>February 10</td>
<td>Larry Lundberg @ (408) 295-5286</td>
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<td>Chico Couples Banquet</td>
<td>February 11</td>
<td>Curtis Gowin @ (530) 249-2926</td>
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<td>Sacramento Crab Feed</td>
<td>February 11</td>
<td>Colby Craig @ (916) 205-3987</td>
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<td>Clearlake Banquet</td>
<td>February 18</td>
<td>Sonny Sweigert @ (707) 301-0661</td>
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<td>Coalinga Banquet</td>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Joe Arnold @ (559) 935-5819</td>
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<td>DU 75th California Celebration</td>
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<td>Frank Leonardi @ (916) 984-3073</td>
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<td>Fresno Banquet</td>
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<td>Jon Wills @ (559) 301-6445</td>
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<td>Antelope Valley Banquet</td>
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<td>Patti Nygaard @ (661) 943-5456</td>
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<td>Simi Valley Banquet</td>
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<td>Derek Swindall @ (949) 633-8546</td>
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<td>Tracy Banquet</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Frank Leonardi @ (209) 403-8720</td>
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<td>Amador County Banquet</td>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>Mark Bentley @ (209) 274-4224</td>
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<td>Santa Rosa Wine Country Banquet</td>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>Rick McGlone @ (707) 829-8486</td>
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<td>Oroville Banquet</td>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>Greg Kostick @ (530) 515-2345</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honeylake Banquet</td>
<td>March 16</td>
<td>Suzanne Cooper @ (530) 257-0495</td>
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<td>Milpitas Banquet</td>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>Steve Rogers @ (408) 649-0795</td>
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<td>Vacaville Banquet</td>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>Rick Saenz @ (707) 425-2213</td>
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<td>Colfax Banquet</td>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>Robb Rothenberger @ (530) 798-9000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atwater Banquet</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Wayne Austin @ (209) 769-9425</td>
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SAVE THESE DATES

**California DU 75th Anniversary Event - March 1, 2012**

At the Blackhawk Auto Museum in Danville

Doors open at 5:30 p.m., dinner at 7:15 p.m.

This is a semi-formal event with hosted bar, dinner, auction and raffle.

Visit [California DU website](http://www.calducks.org) for more information and to register.

**DU 75th National Convention – May 30 through June 3, 2012**

At the Gaylord Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tennessee

Hotel registration: To book your room at the Gaylord Resort in Nashville, please [click here](http://www.gaylordhotels.com).

More details coming soon!

**California State DU 2012 Convention – July 27 and 28, 2012**

Join us as we celebrate California’s successes and recognize our many Volunteers

At the Rolling Hills Casino in Corning, California

More details coming soon!

EDITORS NOTE

Whether you are a long-time 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.

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