



PRESS RELEASE

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2009 Winners of the Coastal Bend's Premiere Environmental Awards Program Announced

Corpus Christi, Texas

For the seventh year in a row the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation (CBBF) proudly reveals the winners of this year's Coastal Bend Conservation and Environmental Stewardship Awards. CBBF's Awards Program recognizes and honors outstanding Coastal Bend citizens, educators, businesses, governing bodies and other entities that have made significant contributions to the protection of our region's precious natural resources, habitats and native species, and the education of our region's youth.

The 2009 winners are:

Public Service – **Mr. Ed Hegen**, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Coastal Fisheries Division. For a public servant whose efforts and leadership on behalf of the Coastal Bend Region exceed the requirement of his or her job.

Citizen Volunteer – **Ms. Venice Scheurich**, Coastal Bend Sierra Club; AND **Mina Williams, Ph.D.**, Coastal Bend Sierra Club. For a citizen who dedicates time and energy to the preservation of the Coastal Bend Region without any expectation of compensation or recognition.

Business and Industry – **Pelican Island Stabilization Project – Port of Corpus Christi Authority, Texas General Land Office and the US Department of Interior Minerals Management Service**. For a Coastal Bend company and their leadership in giving protection of the region's environments the high priority they deserve.

Nonprofit Organization or Group – **Innovation Academy for Engineering, Environmental & Marine Science**. For a nonprofit organization that has worked to preserve the region's heritage, protect the natural environment, and nurture the prosperity of the Coastal Bend.

Public Awareness – **Mr. David Newstead**, Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program; AND **Lee Fuiman, Ph.D.**, University of Texas Marine Science Institute, Port Aransas. For an institution or individuals dedication and effectiveness in raising public awareness about the natural resources of the Coastal Bend.

Elementary Education – **Ms. Jenna Berlanga**, Montclair Elementary School, CCISD. For an individual teachers dedication and effectiveness in educating students about the natural resources of the Coastal Bend.

Middle School Education – **Ms. Katie Crysup-Sikes**, Seashore Middle Academy; AND **Ms. Norma Morgan**, Cunningham Middle School, Innovation Academy for Engineering, Environmental and Marine Science, CCISD. For an individual teachers dedication and effectiveness in educating middle school students about the natural resources of the Coastal Bend.

High School Education – **Mr. Chad Huckabee**, South Texas Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists. For an individual teachers dedication and effectiveness in educating high school students about the natural resources of the Coastal Bend.

Higher Education - University and College – **John Wes Tunnell, Jr., Ph.D.**, Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. For an institution, professor, or instructors dedication and effectiveness in educating about the natural resources of the Coastal Bend.

The Chairman's Award – **Mr. Robert Wallace, Jr.**, Wallace and Wheeler. For commitment to and extraordinary effectiveness in preserving Texas' rich coastal heritage.

As in years past, award winners are to be honored at CBBF's annual fund-raiser and banquet. This year the dinner and award program will be held at **6:30 PM, Thursday, November 5, 2009**, at the **Texas State Aquarium, 2710 N. Shoreline Blvd, Corpus Christi, Texas**. Dining will take place inside the main Aquarium building, with tables set amidst dazzling aquaria featuring creatures from the Gulf of Mexico.

However, the highlight of the evening is the Awards Presentation, which will follow in the Aquarium's Dolphin Bay Underwater Viewing Area. Master of Ceremonies, Larry McKinney, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, will present honorees with beautiful, one-of-a-kind ceramic awards, designed specially for this event by Aloe Tile of Corpus Christi.

Start the evening with drinks and bidding on our silent auction, featuring over one hundred nature and outdoor-oriented items, including hunting trips, guided fishing trips and outdoor getaways. Don't forget to purchase tickets for our raffle items, including a chance to win a kayak package valued at over \$1,200 (Angler Package includes 15' Perception Kayak, paddles, anchor and rod holders – donated by Jerry B's Kayak Rentals and Sales).

Dinner will feature elegant dining throughout the aquarium with Mexican-style fiesta food from Salinas Catering, Inc. Latin Talk will provide latin-style jazz music for your enjoyment.

Special thanks go to CBBF's Blue Ribbon Independent Selection Committee, chaired by John Wes Tunnell, Jr., Ph.D., Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, for their hard work and dedication to this program. Other members of the selection committee include Linda Simpson, Region II Service Center, representing education; Alan Bligh, Better Business Bureau, representing business; Josephine Miller, San Patricio Economic Development Corporation, representing non-profits; Jim Tolan, Ph.D., Texas Parks & Wildlife Department; Susan Clewis, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality; Robyn Cobb, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, representing state and federal agencies; Bob Corrigan, Corrigan Benefits LLP, representing private citizens; and John La Rue, Port of Corpus Christi Authority, representing Coastal Bend Industry. Our hats are off to these kind folks for all they did to select our honorees. The CBBF Chair and 2009 President, Mr. Carlton "Buddy" Stanley selected the Chairman's Award recipient.

Don't miss this exceptional local event, unique for recognizing the people and organizations who keep the sparkle in the Sparkling City by the Sea. It's not too late to volunteer for this event. Call Smiley Nava at 361-882-3439, or go to the website, www.baysfoundation.org.

Tickets are available by purchasing on-line at http://www.baysfoundation.org/online_store.php, by calling CBBF at 361-882-3439, or by writing to: CBBF, PO Box 23035, Corpus Christi, TX, 78403. The public is invited to purchase General Admission tickets for \$50, Friend of the Bay tickets for \$75, or sponsor a table starting at \$750. Purchase of Friend of the Bay tickets and group tables provides additional support for CBBF to continue this outstanding recognition program, as well as our other outreach and education programs throughout the year. Limited sponsorship opportunities remain for businesses wishing to demonstrate their commitment to CBBF, our environmental programs, and the Coastal Bend's bays and estuaries. Contact Smiley Nava or Candice Mottet at CBBF (361-882-3439) to arrange for your company's sponsorship.