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2017 Texas Conservation Hall of Fame Inductees Selected

Amarillo, Kingsville men honored for their conservation contributions, Operation Game Thief program also lauded

Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation (TPWF) has selected the honorees for the 2017 Texas Conservation Hall of Fame. Tio Kleberg and Fred Bryant (Kingsville) are being honored for their individual accomplishments and their work together at the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute. Wales Madden, Jr. (Amarillo) is being honored for a lifetime of philanthropy, much of which has benefitted Palo Duro Canyon. The Operation Game Thief program is also being recognized for supporting Texas Game Wardens for more than 35 years.

“We’re pleased to recognize the significant accomplishments of our honorees,” said Kelly R. Thompson, chair of TPWF’s board of trustees. “Tio Kleberg, Fred Bryant and Wales Madden have devoted their lives to work that will benefit the wild things and wild places of Texas for generations to come. The OGT program has supported our Texas Game Wardens in countless ways and has helped reduced poaching of the wildlife resources that belong to us all.”

Fred Bryant, Ph.D., is the Leroy G. Denman, Jr., Endowed Director of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. The institute’s mission is to provide science-based information for enhancing the conservation and management of wildlife. Dr. Bryant received his Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife Management from Texas Tech University, followed by a master’s degree from Utah State University and a Ph.D. from Texas A&M University.

Tio Kleberg grew up on the King Ranch, working with and learning from the best land managers, geneticists, and wildlife biologists of the time. Mr. Kleberg graduated from Texas Tech with a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science. Following an honorable discharge from the U.S. Army in 1971, he returned to work on the King Ranch where he developed a passion for what would become his life's work. Mr. Kleberg has served as trustee of the Caesar Kleberg Foundation for Wildlife Conservation for 37 years and is also a founding member of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute at Texas A&M University-Kingsville.

Wales Madden, Jr. is a longtime Amarillo civic leader and businessman. He joined the Navy in 1945, and after his service, attended the University of Texas at Austin and received a bachelor's degree and a law degree. An avid outdoorsman, his lifelong passion for Palo Duro Canyon has led to many philanthropic accomplishments, including leading the fundraising effort for the Palo Duro amphitheater, which was dedicated in 1966. He was also the first president of the Texas Panhandle Heritage Foundation and has served as president of the Amarillo Bar Association, the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce and the Don & Sybil Harrington Foundation. In more recent years, Mr. Madden has been involved in other projects to enhance his beloved Palo Duro Canyon, including the Mack Dick Pavilion and Canoñcita Ranch.

Operation Game Thief (OGT), Texas' wildlife crime-stoppers program, allows concerned citizens to be actively involved in ending poaching of Texas' fish and wildlife resources. The program, which is a function of the Law Enforcement Division of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), was launched in 1981 as a result of laws passed by the 67th Legislature to help curtail poaching. Over the last ten years, OGT has provided over \$600,000 in grants to TPWD for the purchase of specialized and technologically advanced equipment for Texas Game Wardens. Combined with enhanced statutory penalties for poaching and trespassing, OGT's efforts have resulted in a substantial reduction in the numbers of poaching incidents in Texas.

The 2017 inductees will be honored at the Texas Conservation Hall of Fame dinner and concert at ACL Live at Moody Theatre in Austin on April 6, 2017. The Texas Conservation Hall of Fame benefits Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, which raises private dollars to leverage public funding for high-impact, transformational projects such as the acquisition of Powderhorn Ranch. For more information about the Texas Conservation Hall of Fame, call 214.720.1478 or email HOF@tpwf.org

For more information about previous honorees:

<http://www.tpwf.org/happenings/conservation-hall-of-fame/>

All TPWF Foundation news releases available online: <http://www.tpwf.org/news/press-releases/>

Since 1991, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation (TPWF) has leveraged public funds with private philanthropy to advance Texas' proud outdoor traditions and conserve our state's wildlife, habitat, recreational areas, and natural resources. Since its inception, TPWF has raised more than \$100 million to help ensure that all Texans, today and in the future, can enjoy the wild things and wild places of Texas.

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