

**TBLA'S BASS UNLIMITED BANQUET and AUCTION
A BIG SUCCESS**

By Ramona Moore

The Toledo Bend Lake Association's (TBLA) 2022 Banquet and Auction was a resounding success. The sold out event was TBLA's first banquet in three years, and it was clear from the attendance that the Lake Area was ready to put Covid behind and to celebrate Toledo Bend once again.

The evening began with over 600 guests, sponsors and volunteers browsing items available in the raffle drop boxes, silent auction, live auction, and TBLA merchandise. Emcee Ricky Yeldell mingled throughout the crowd and then Haydn Knight sang The National Anthem which was followed by the invocation. Then the delicious BBQ dinner provided by Brisket House of Jena, Louisiana, was served.

TBLA recognized the lake area Sheriffs and thanked them for their service in our communities.

Auctioneer Kevin McDonald took the stage and kicked off the evening's main event with the live auction. A high point of the evening was the long-overdue recognition of LSU's 2019 championship season by the live auction of the Rodrigue "#1 LSU Blue Dog" print accompanied by an LSU Football signed by Coach Ed Orgeron which sold for \$3,000, as well as a custom #1 LSU Tiger carving that sold for \$6600. Several one of a kind items were also sold in the live auction during the evening, including a She-Shed greenhouse, custom stained glass artwork, a custom made quilt, and a Don Edwards original painting. There was a lot of excitement when the President's Dinner for 8 by Living the Dream's Gloria Thompson sold for \$3000.

To conclude the Banquet, TBLA President Gary Moore conducted the live drawing for the first two guns in the 2022-2023 52-Gun Grand Raffle. Harold Allen of Shelbyville won the Ruger American "Go Wild" 6.5 Creedmore rifle, and Ed Patterson of Longview won the ATI SX Cavalry 12 gauge Over/Under shotgun. The night culminated with the "Ginormous Door Prize" that was won by Gladys Dowden of Many.

TBLA thanks the 2022 sponsors, supporters, and volunteers who graciously donated time, merchandise, money, and talents toward making this event a success. Early estimates of the night's events indicate more than \$100,000 was raised during the evening. These monies are used not only to fund the Toledo Bend Lunker Bass replicas but also college scholarships for deserving students, re-stocking Florida Bass fingerlings into the lake, assisting High School fishing teams, artificial reefs, and many other worthwhile projects around the Lake.

TBLA is grateful to everyone for making this Banquet an event to remember and hope that you put Friday, April 21, 2023, on your calendar for next year's banquet.