

## **Richard Burdon**

Richard Burdon brings decades of expertise in agritourism, conservation, and sustainable community development to his candidacy for a three-year term on the Dallas Safari Club Board.

Based in Wanaka, in the South Island of New Zealand, Richard is the third-generation steward of his family's high-country property – Glen Dene Station. He is a passionate conservationist, dedicated to ensuring the sustainable management of the land for generations to come. As custodians of the land, animals and community, Richard and his wife Sarah have a distinguished reputation for excellence in environmental management and agritourism. They support conservation around the world through the provision of financial support to wildlife conservation, advocacy, and education initiatives.

As the founding Chair of the Lake Hawea Stakeholders Group, he has been instrumental in coordinating environmental efforts between its members, including local councils and government bodies, optimising resources and outcomes for the local area. Richard is also a Guardian of Lake Hawea, reinforcing his commitment and advocacy for ecotourism and conservation. In this role he plays an active role in ensuring that Lake Hawea water quality, biodiversity and ecosystems are maintained and managed sustainably and safely.

His dedication to driving measurable change is further demonstrated in his involvement of the establishment of the Hunters for Conservation Trust, where he also serves as Chair. The Trust has a singular purpose to enrich and safeguard New Zealand's great outdoors through supporting hunter conservation endeavours.

In addition to his conservation work, Richard is a seasoned professional within the international hunting industry. He contributes to the New Zealand Professional Hunting Guides' executive, reflecting his deep commitment to ethical and sustainable hunting practices. His leadership was recognized in 2023 with his appointment as one of three International Vice Presidents representing the Pacific Region on the Dallas Safari Club Board.

Since 2000, the Burdon family have invested significant environmental capital into Glene Dene Station and its sustainable operation as a land-based business, which includes the management of Cross Hill Lodge and The Camp at Lake Hawea. With his wife Sarah he has worked hard to ensure this agritourism business operates under key regenerative tourism principles adopted by the Queenstown Lakes District Council and wider community. In 2022 Glen Dene was awarded Qualmark Gold Level Certification, the highest possible

certification under New Zealand's tourism accreditation programme, for its sustainability practices and exceptional customer experiences.

Richard's influence extends into broader rural and environmental sectors. He is a director of Landward Management in Dunedin, a firm that specialises in project management, biosecurity, ecological management, and farm business consulting. Richard has just completed a six year term on the board of the Telford Farming Institute a rural educational facility in Otago, where he advocated for education and sustainable rural practices.

Throughout his career, Richard has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship, community sustainability, and the promotion of responsible hunting and agritourism practices—values he is eager to contribute to the Dallas Safari Club Board.

## **Rebecca Jones**

Rebecca Jones is a dedicated outdoorswoman, hunter, and conservation advocate who understands that a strong organization starts with its members and their engagement with its purpose. She is a seasoned people-focused brand strategist with deep expertise in guiding organizations through change, both internally and externally. With a strong focus on aligning leadership, brand strategy and generations of connection to the outdoors, Rebecca helps organizations strengthen their legacy while adapting to the future. She is a mother, guide and mentor to a 7-year-old daughter who has just started on her bird-hunting journey.

Her most recent role was Chief People Officer (CPO) at Orvis, an international outdoor lifestyle brand, which showcased her ability to lead people and brand strategy within organizations that value conservation and the outdoor experience. Prior to Orvis, Rebecca held the CPO role at European Wax Center (EWC), where she led the company's people strategy through a period of transformative growth, helping the company achieve a successful public company listing (IPO). Her experience demonstrates her ability to manage complex, large-scale transformations, which would be beneficial for DSC as it grows its membership and expands its conservation efforts.

Rebecca's commitment to conservation and outdoor heritage is further underscored by her board positions with the Texas Wildlife Association and Her Upland, organizations dedicated to supporting wildlife conservation and outdoor education. As a board member for Her Upland, she actively promotes multigenerational engagement in the hunting and conservation space, encouraging the involvement of women and girls. Her board work and role on the Convention Committee with the Texas Wildlife Association also aligns her with DSC's goals, as she supports efforts to preserve hunting heritage, protect property rights, and steward wildlife resources. She is also a mentor for the TWA Adult Learn to Hunt Program.

In addition to her professional roles, she is passionately involved with numerous outdoor and conservation organizations, including DSC and others such as Trout Unlimited, Pheasants/Quail Forever, and the Quail Coalition. She serves as an

ambassador for Sporting Lead Free. Rebecca is an intentional student of conservation, habitat and wildlife management. As an adult onset hunter, she has made up for lost time and gained broad Upland and Big Game hunting experience across USA, Australia and Central America and is a passionate Extreme Long Range precision shooting and Sporting Clays competitor and loves to fish, both conventional and fly.

In sum, Rebecca brings a unique blend of executive leadership, strategic people expertise, and deep conservation values to DSC. Her demonstrated success in driving organizational growth, supporting inclusive and ethical practices, and fostering member engagement makes her a strong candidate for a director role. Her skills and passion would help DSC strengthen its structure, deepen its community impact, and further its mission of conservation and outdoor heritage.

## Jay H. Leyendecker

From a young age I would accompany my grandfather out on ranches in Webb County. We spent thousands of hours together hunting, fishing, and appreciating the land itself. Land appreciation was always the center point of all our trips into the country. Leave it better than how you found it.

From his foundation we pursued all indigenous game species with a focus on whitetail deer. I was fortunate enough to take my first buck at seven years old, under my grandfather's guidance. As time wore on and my passion for the land grew, I found myself getting more immersed in the international world.

At the age of 12, I attended a local wildlife exposition where one of the exhibitors was selling hunting books, his name Bob Harper. He recommended a single book for my nonexistent collection, *Horn of the Hunter*. Bob, his wife Betty, and their company, Outdoor Visions, were longtime exhibitors at the DSC Convention. From that summer day forward, I knew Africa was in my future on a grand scale. I began guiding whitetail hunts at 16 years old for local ranches and would work for local wildlife biologists on weekends (when not guiding) and during the summers without pay. I wanted to learn the craft; an education was my payment.

At about this time, I also joined in on wildlife capture crews where we would catch net-gunned whitetail and exotics. Capture is an art in and of itself. A year and change later in 1999 I embarked to Africa at the age of 17 for a 7-day plains game hunt in South Africa, a gift from my grandfather upon my high school graduation. I ended up staying for three months after that. Between spring and summer sessions I was in Africa. I graduated with a four-year Business Administration degree and later went back to school and earned a two-year Wildlife Management degree. Fast forward to 2009, I found myself looking down on my full Professional Hunter's License in Botswana. I worked for legendary hunter Johan Calitz and apprenticed under he and Terry Palmer. They taught me the art of dangerous game hunting. All this time, I would spend 6 to 7 months on the African continent professionally hunting and upon my return to Texas I would commence my Texas hunting/capture season. During those years I was hunting or was in the field for 300+ days a year. Botswana closed in 2013 and due to many uncertainties at the time I elected to come back to Texas and pursue a career that I always wanted but didn't have the time due to my life abroad, ranch sales. I was blessed to be accepted by Hall and Hall as part of the family in 2017. The company I dreamed one day I would be a part of. In fact, some of the introductory conversations

about my transition into ranch brokerage took place on the DSC convention floor. I have been a partner of the firm ever since.

To this day I still take care of my old hunting clientele with their international hunts and own various exotic species. I own addax, Arabian oryx, and scimitar-horned oryx and therefore still involved with exotic wildlife industry. I have personally or professionally hunted South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia, Namibia, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico, Alaska, Texas, Florida, Montana, North Dakota, and Colorado for various species.

I have dedicated my life's work to the betterment of land and wildlife. It's who I am and all I know.

## **Mike Oropallo**

Mike is a lifelong hunter, fisherman, conservationist, and outdoorsman. The outdoors and wildlife are not only his passion, they are also his profession, as a volunteer and wildlife attorney.

Mike has been honored with numerous leadership, advisory and advocacy positions in and for many outdoor, wildlife and conservation organizations, including as a Board Member of the Pope & Young Club, a member of the advisory committee of the National Taxidermists Association, and a current Assistant Vice President of the Dallas Safari Club/DSC. He is a longtime supporter and member of the Dallas Safari Club, having attended conventions for the past twenty years. He is also a member or life member of these and other organizations such as OVIS, The Wild Sheep Foundation, Boone & Crocket, and many other state and local conservation clubs and organizations.

Mike is a four-decade long trial lawyer and an environmental/wildlife law attorney, has achieved the recognition of his peers and adversaries by being named to numerous leadership positions including as a Best Lawyer and Superlawyer, where he was featured in Superlawyer® magazine for his outdoor and wildlife legal experience, lifelong love of birds, and for hunting, fishing and the outdoors. He is also the Co-Team Leader of Barclay Damon's Outdoor & Wildlife Department.

Mike is an avid bow hunter, turkey hunter, waterfowl hunter and fly fisherman, has hunted all over the world, including in Africa, Argentina, Greenland, Mexico and many of the Canadian Provinces, and has successfully harvested dozens of animals with the bow, all six wild turkey species with the bow, and all of the huntable North American Waterfowl species.

Mike has assisted numerous hunters with issues involving permitting, importation and the seizure of sport hunted trophies. He regularly counsel's museums and others on a myriad of wildlife law issues. And he advocates for the hunting community on proposed legislation and Endangered Species Act listing issues (including opposition to the Polar Bear listing).

Mike resides on one of the beautiful Finger Lakes (Owasco) in rural Central New York, with his spouse Kim, and extended family and grandchildren.



## **Russell Stacy**

Russell Stacy is a fourth generation Agri-Business operator in Natchitoches, Louisiana and owns an outfitting business with his partner and wife, Mary Edith. Hunting has been a tradition in Stacy's family for all his life. The entire family has made multiple trips around the globe to many hunting destinations.

Involvement in conservation and wildlife organizations has been an integral part of Stacy's career development and philanthropic endeavors. Stacy currently holds Life Memberships in the following: Dallas Safari Club (DSC), Houston Safari Club, National Rifle Association, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Texas Wildlife Association, Alaska Professional Hunters Association, Wild Sheep Association and Safari Club International.

Since becoming a Life Member in DSC (2011), Stacy has served as a volunteer, Co-Chair and Chair of the 2020, 2021 and 2022 Life Member Breakfast and 2023,2024 and 2025 Convention Chair. He and his family also served as greeters at the Exhibitors Breakfast during the 2020 Heritage Convention.

For the 2019-2020 year, he accepted an appointment and fulfilled the duties of an Assistant Vice President for DSC. He accepted an appointment and fulfilled the duties of a Director for DSC for 2020-2022. In 2020, Russell accepted an appointment to the DSC Foundation Board of Directors which he continues to hold. He has served as the Co-Chair of the Auction Committee for the 2021, 2022,2023,2024 and 2025 Convention.

Stacy earned a BS in Agri-Business (1990) from Northwestern State University of Louisiana. He currently resides in Natchitoches, Louisiana with his wife and daughter.