

# *The Canvasback*

HAVRE DE GRACE DECOY MUSEUM

Summer 2014  
Vol. 24 No. 3

\$7.00



Decoys Great  
of the Basin





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**can•vas•back** (kan'ves bak'), *n., pl. -backs*, (esp. collectively) — **back**.

**1.** a north american wild duck, the male of which has a whitish back and a reddish-brown head and neck. **2.** a style of decoy made famous by carvers of the Susquehanna Flats region. **3.** a quarterly publication of the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum.



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The Havre de Grace Decoy Museum is funded by an operating grant from the Maryland State Arts Council, an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. Funding for the Maryland State Arts Council is also provided by the National Endowment for the arts, a federal agency.

The Museum was incorporated in 1981 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which exists to document and interpret waterfowl decoys as this art form applies to the social and economic life of the upper Chesapeake Bay region. Contributions made to the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum Tax may be deductible.



## IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue, we take a look at some of the earliest known decoys and the environment in which they were created.

The Lovelock decoys were already old when the Roman Empire was new. Amazingly, over 2,000 years later, tule decoys are still made and used by Native Americans in the same way.

Several contemporary decoy makers and the Administrator of the Churchill County Museum and Archives in Fallon, Nevada—not far from Lovelock Cave where the ancient decoys were found—have shared their insights with *The Canvasback*. All are members of the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe whose ancestors have occupied the wetlands of northwestern Nevada for countless centuries.

Tule decoys are the official state artifact of the State of Nevada. The Lovelock decoys have been depicted by the Nevada Department of Wildlife on their state duck stamps in 1979-80 and 1999-2000. ■



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Conversation.**

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## ON THE COVER

Two of the Lovelock decoys are shown on the cover. Accelerator Mass Spectrometry indicates that the older of the two may have been made as early as 500BC. Plain tule decoys were often covered with whole duck skins or with duck feathers and paint made from red ochre and piñon resin. This photo is courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution (catalog numbers 13/4512 & 13/4513). Photo by NMAI Photo Services.



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# From the President

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Dear Museum Member,

The summer issue is always a time to reflect on the Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival held on the first weekend in May. This year's Festival, the 33rd, was another great success. Jim Trimble has taken the time to write a glowing recap, which we have blended with the photos that Heppner Imaging took.

The Festival is our major fundraiser and relies upon all of our generous sponsors and the many very devoted staff and volunteers who put in long hours and great effort and who

attend to more little details than you can possibly imagine. Mayor Wayne Dougherty and the City Council always have our back. Dan and Cindy Lee at MacGregor's Restaurant provided excellent catering for the exhibitors and were up well before dawn preparing the special breakfast buffet. The list goes on and on. I cannot tell you how much we appreciate everything that every single person did.

The Festival last year was affected by the War of 1812 Bicentennial celebration in Havre de Grace. We took away from that experience several lessons learned and incorporated them in this year's planning and execution. We learn something new every year, and we act on it.

Times change and people change. We are vigilant and responsive to those changes, and we have done an excellent job of adapting during the Decoy Festival's 33 years. As we look around at other similar events, we see that they too experience the challenges of change. People have choices, and

we must continue to find innovative ways to get both exhibitors and visitors to choose the Decoy Festival. We know a lot, but we don't know everything. If you have an idea, we want to hear it.

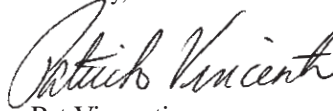
The sporting clays shoot in June was well attended, and the shooters were once again blessed with perfect late-spring weather. Our good friends at the Bay Hundred chapter of Ducks Unlimited provided excellent food for all of the shooters and volunteers, and Bass Pro Shops generously helped with the prizes. Margaret Jones and Ed Henry provided the leadership backbone that held it all together.

For the autumn, we are planning to continue the Waterfowl Day and sanctioned duck-calling contest that we had last October. We are also trying to figure out a new format for the traditional anniversary event in November. Stay tuned for details!

On the tech side, our new website is up and running. We are working to tie in Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, and Twitter as ways to connect with existing members and attract new supporters. The phone system and Internet connection have been problematic for years, so Ralph Hockman took the bit in his teeth and is directing the transition to Comcast, which will improve service and save money.

We are working every single day to keep the Decoy Museum growing and improving. Our loyal members, volunteers, and community supporters make it all possible, and we are very grateful for the things you do. Thank you!

Sincerely,



Pat Vincenti



Photo by Leo Heppner

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# TO OUR 2014 FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS

---



## ***They did it! We could not manage this event without them!***

Thank you to all the many volunteers, staff, directors, and family members who helped in more ways than we can ever hope to express. They all worked quietly and tirelessly on their own time and at their own expense, and we are profoundly grateful for their contributions to this great event. The Havre de Grace Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival would not be possible without each of their efforts!

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# J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest 2014 COMPETITION WINNERS

Congratulations to our 12th annual J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest winners! The contest was held on Saturday, May 3rd at the Middle School Gym in conjunction with the 2014 Havre de Grace Decoy & Wildlife Art Festival. A blue ribbon was awarded to each of the ten competition category winners, and the panel also selected a Best in Show winner. Winners were requested to display their decoys and ribbons at the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum for three months, so stop by and take a closer look.

(See Jim Trimble's Festival article for details.)



Richard Petti with winning Dick Simpers Canvasback

## **Best Madison Mitchell Diving Duck**

**S.R. Smith**  
*pair of original paint  
goldeneyes, circa 1950s*

## **Best Will Heverin**

**S.R. Smith**  
*original paint canvasback hen  
with commercial gunner Lou  
Pennock's brand*

## **Best Lockard Family**

**Darrell and Kathy Hagar**  
*pair of Henry Lockard  
canvasbacks with pulled-back  
stylish heads and in fine Severin  
Hall paint*

## **The Best Delaware River or Jersey Coast**

**Bill Courdrey**  
*early hollow original paint  
Rowley Horner bluebill*

## **Best Dick Simpers**

**Richard Petti**  
*canvasback in mellow second  
coat paint*

## **Best Ira Hudson**

**Jim and Clo Trimble**  
*early hissing goose, circa 1930s,  
in a combination of original and  
restored feathered paint*

## **Best Jobes Family**

**Charles Jobes**  
*a 1950s pair of canvasbacks made  
by his father Capt. Harry Jobes*

## **Best Leonard Pryor**

**Dr. Mort Kramer**  
*original paint black duck dated  
1917 that was made as a wedding  
gift for Pryor's son*

## **Best Unknown**

**Lloyd Sheats**  
*original paint and sculpturally  
pleasing pintail*

## **Best Ward Brothers**

**Lloyd Sheats**  
*original paint pair of 1932  
canvasbacks*

## **Best in Show**

**Lloyd Sheats**  
*original paint pair of 1932 Ward  
Brothers canvasbacks*

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# Havre de Grace Decoy & Wildlife ART FESTIVAL 2014

BY JIM TRIMBLE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HEPPNER IMAGING

It was a fowl weekend that followed a foul week of heavy rains and flooding along the mid-Atlantic. But Mother Nature cleared the heavens and provided three delightfully sunny 70-degree days for the 33rd annual Havre de Grace Decoy & Wildlife Art Festival held May 2-4 in Havre de Grace, Maryland.







This small waterfront community at the top of the Chesapeake Bay was a gunning Mecca for early market gunners and the “sports” that followed, with the first documented decoy makers reaching back almost 175 years. Tens of thousands of decoys were made here and are still being made by present day decoy makers—thus Havre de Grace’s self-proclaimed title of “Decoy Capital of the World.” The city is also steeped in War of 1812 history. It is this same weekend each year that War of 1812 re-enactors descend on the town to defend it again and again against imminent British bombardment, siege, and burning; something they originally did in 1813. However, most of the annual visitors this first weekend in May are there to celebrate ducks and everything else associated with ducks and duck hunting from layout displays, dog handling, contemporary carvings, decoy vendors, decoy displays, waterfowl-related auctions, and an old-decoy contest. This festival is the primary fundraiser for the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum. Cap’n Bob Jobes, a waterman from a family of decoy carvers, served as this year’s Honorary Chairman. A festival program with three days of activities, times, and locations served as a roadmap.

The Havre de Grace Middle School was the venue for the decoy vendors as well as for the J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest. Will Freng and son Marshall put together a fine display of Madison Mitchell (1901-1993) decoys, primarily from the 1930/40/50s, with fine Mitchell examples being contributed by five or six different collectors. Mitchell was the Chesapeake’s dominant decoy maker, with many of the older present-day makers getting their start in Mitchell’s decoy production shop. We applaud



the Museum's efforts in attracting many vendors who displayed and sold old decoys. Museum President Pat Vincenti, author/historian John Sullivan, and renowned carver Jim Pierce were on hand to help identify and opine. There were good crowds both Friday evening and Saturday with vendors reporting good activity. Missing this year were representatives from the various decoy auction houses.

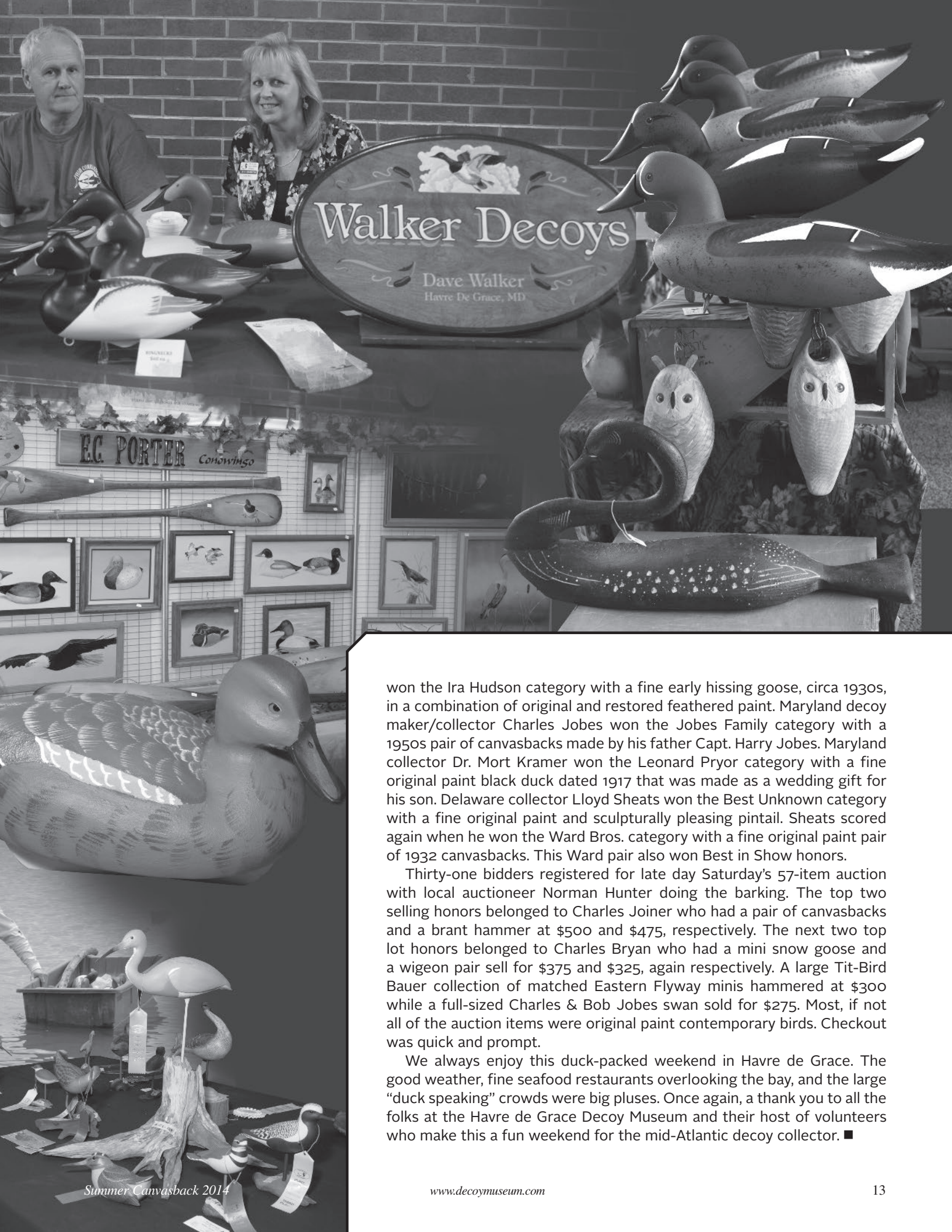
Pat Vincenti called the crowd to order at noon on Saturday at the Middle School venue to acknowledge Honorary Show Chairman Bob Jobes and his father Capt. Harry Jobes who had preceded son Bob by 28-years as Honorary Show Chairman. Vincenti also thanked the Jobes family—including Bob's decoy-making brothers Charles and Joey—for all they have done over the years for the Decoy Museum and for our decoy-collecting hobby. With the Jobes family was longtime collector/vendor and friend Bea Berle, who many years ago, purchased one of 26 Jobes family \$1,000 "special order" goose decoys. After many years of ownership, and with great fanfare and a friendly jibe from Capt. Harry, she donated the goose to the Museum.

Jim & Clo Trimble worked again this year as festival volunteers, taking responsibility and accepting decoys for the ten-category J. Evans McKinney Old Decoy Contest. Eighty-eight birds from 14 different collectors were entered. Chad Tragakis and Rod Benjamin worked as "duck handlers." The three-judge panel is selected each year on a rotation basis with this year's selection including seasoned collectors Tragakis, Phil Ryser, and the Editor and Publisher of Decoy Magazine, Joe Engers. Delaware collector S.R. Smith won the Best Madison Mitchell Diving Duck category with a fine pair of original paint golden eyes, circa 1950s. Smith struck again winning the Best Will Heverin category with a fine original paint canvasback hen with commercial gunner Lou Pennock's brand.

Delaware collectors Darrell and Kathy Hagar easily won the Lockard Family category with a fine pair of Henry Lockard canvasbacks, with pulled-back stylish heads and in fine Severin Hall paint. The Best Delaware River or Jersey Coast decoy was won by New Jersey collector Bill Courdrey with a fine early original paint hollow Rowley Horner bluebill. Another New Jersey collector Richard Petti won the Dick Simperts category with a fine canvasback in mellow second coat paint. Virginia collectors Jim and Clo Trimble







## Walker Decoys

Dave Walker  
Havre De Grace, MD

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Summer Canvasback 2014

won the Ira Hudson category with a fine early hissing goose, circa 1930s, in a combination of original and restored feathered paint. Maryland decoy maker/collector Charles Jobes won the Jobes Family category with a 1950s pair of canvasbacks made by his father Capt. Harry Jobes. Maryland collector Dr. Mort Kramer won the Leonard Pryor category with a fine original paint black duck dated 1917 that was made as a wedding gift for his son. Delaware collector Lloyd Sheats won the Best Unknown category with a fine original paint and sculpturally pleasing pintail. Sheats scored again when he won the Ward Bros. category with a fine original paint pair of 1932 canvasbacks. This Ward pair also won Best in Show honors.

Thirty-one bidders registered for late day Saturday's 57-item auction with local auctioneer Norman Hunter doing the barking. The top two selling honors belonged to Charles Joiner who had a pair of canvasbacks and a brant hammer at \$500 and \$475, respectively. The next two top lot honors belonged to Charles Bryan who had a mini snow goose and a wigeon pair sell for \$375 and \$325, again respectively. A large Tit-Bird Bauer collection of matched Eastern Flyway minis hammered at \$300 while a full-sized Charles & Bob Jobes swan sold for \$275. Most, if not all of the auction items were original paint contemporary birds. Checkout was quick and prompt.

We always enjoy this duck-packed weekend in Havre de Grace. The good weather, fine seafood restaurants overlooking the bay, and the large "duck speaking" crowds were big pluses. Once again, a thank you to all the folks at the Havre de Grace Decoy Museum and their host of volunteers who make this a fun weekend for the mid-Atlantic decoy collector. ■



# Sporting Clay Shoot Results

The 2014 Decoy Museum Sporting Clay Shoot was held at Pintail Point in Queenstown, Maryland on June 14th – a truly spectacular early summer day. After the shoot, the 61 participants sat down for some face time and the awarding of prizes while we enjoyed a great meal provided by the incredible generosity of our good friends and supporters at the Bay Hundred Chapter of Ducks Unlimited. It is a fun event and a great sport that appeals to all ages, men and women, challenges the serious shotgunners, but also encourages the novices. We hope to see both old and new faces next year!

## WINNERS WERE:

### *Champion Member*

1st Fang Campbell  
2nd Mark Wells

### *High Overall*

1st Mark Helmick

### *Vintage Side-by-side*

1st David Defernelmont  
2nd Tony Masino

### *Lewis Class I*

1st Jack Concannon  
2nd Chuck Brady  
3rd Nick Lepore

### *Lewis Class II*

1st Morgan Neff  
2nd Bob Brown  
3rd Scott Hickman

### *Lewis Class III*

1st Ethan Armes  
2nd Dennis Jones  
3rd Steve McClung

### *Junior*

1st Sebastian Leporel  
2nd Bennett Nordhoff

### *Senior*

1st Charles Harding  
2nd Jon Swindle

### *Ladies*

1st Gail Smith  
2nd Diane Denig

### *Hard Luck*

William Hoffman

## Volunteers and Sponsors

A special thank you goes to our generous sponsors listed below and to dedicated volunteers Ed Henry, Margaret Jones and her daughter Morgan, Connor McDermott, and all the folks at the Bay Hundred Chapter of Ducks Unlimited.

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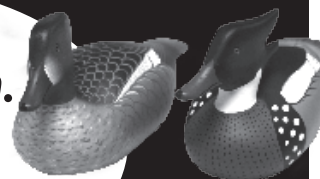
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##### Diver

###### *Bufflehead*

1st Dwinton Morgan

###### *Canvasback*

1st Hazel Goodwin

###### *Hooded Merganser*

1st Henry Stoehr

###### *Ruddy Duck*

1st Henry Stoehr

##### Best of Diver

1st Henry Stoehr  
*Ruddy Duck*

2nd Henry Stoehr  
*Hooded Merganser*

3rd Dwinton Morgan  
*Bufflehead*

##### Marsh

###### *Mallard*

1st Dwinton Morgan

##### Best of Marsh

1st Dwinton Morgan  
*Mallard*

##### Goose & Confidence

###### *Grebe*

1st Henry Stoehr

##### Best of Goose & Confidence

1st Henry Stoehr  
*Grebe*

##### Best in Show

1st Henry Stoehr  
*Grebe*

2nd Henry Stoehr  
*Ruddy Duck*

3rd Dwinton Morgan  
*Mallard*

#### DECORATIVE LIFE-SIZE FLOATING—INTERMEDIATE

##### Diver

###### *Goldeneye*

1st Michael Collier

##### Best of Diver

1st Michael Collier  
*Goldeneye*

##### Marsh

###### *Black Duck*

1st Sam Grasso

###### *Gadwall*

1st Warren Brown

##### Best of Marsh

1st Warren Brown  
*Gadwall*

2nd Sam Grasso  
*Black Duck*

##### Best in Show

1st Warren Brown  
*Gadwall*

2nd Sam Grasso  
*Black Duck*

3rd Michael Collier  
*Goldeneye*

#### DECORATIVE LIFE-SIZE FLOATING—NOVICE

##### Diver

###### *Hooded Merganser*

1st Lee Devine

###### *Ruddy*

1st Lisa Stang

##### Best of Diver

1st Lee Devine  
*Hooded Merganser*

2nd Lisa Stang  
*Ruddy*

##### Marsh

###### *Gadwall*

1st Lee Devine

##### Best of Marsh

1st Lee Devine  
*Gadwall*

##### Goose & Confidence

1st Karen Hatmen  
*Cormorant*

##### Best of Goose & Confidence

1st Karen Hatmen  
*Cormorant*

##### Best in Show

1st Lee Devine  
*Gadwall*

2nd Karen Hatmen  
*Cormorant*

3rd Lee Devine  
*Hooded Merganser*

#### DECORATIVE LIFE-SIZE NON-FLOATING—OPEN

##### Upland Game Birds

1st Timothy Curley  
*Quail*

##### Birds of Prey

1st Al Jordan  
*Great Horned Owl*

2nd James McClaskey  
*Kestrel*

##### Songbirds

1st Al Jordan  
*Orioles*

2nd Hazel K. Goodwin  
*Cardinal*

3rd Gerald Wheatley  
*Woodpecker*

##### Best in Show

1st Al Jordan  
*Great Horned Owl*

2nd Al Jordan  
*Oriole*

3rd James McClaskey  
*Kestrel*

#### DECORATIVE LIFE-SIZE NON- FLOATING—INTERMEDIATE

##### Shorebirds

1st Henry Jacobs  
*Yellow Legs*

##### Upland Game Birds

1st Henry Jacobs  
*Dove*

##### Birds of Prey

1st Sunny Frank  
*Red-tailed Hawk*

2nd Warren Brown  
*Great Horned Owl*

3rd Sunny Frank  
*Screech Owl*



# Carving Competition Results

## Songbirds

- 1st** Carl Tosi  
*Blue Jay*
- 2nd** Carl Tosi  
*Black Cap Chickadee*
- 3rd** Henry Jacobs  
*Cardinal*

## Best in Show

- 1st** Sunny Frank  
*Red Tail Hawk*
- 2nd** Carl Tosi  
*Blue Jay*
- 3rd** Sunny Frank  
*Screech Owl*

## DECORATIVE LIFE-SIZE NON-FLOATING—NOVICE

## Waterfowl

- 1st** Ken Guelta  
*Wood Duck*
- 2nd** Larry Tomlinson  
*Oldsquaw*
- 3rd** Donald Guilgault  
*Loon*

## Shorebirds

- 1st** Mark Daly  
*Sandhill Crane*
- 2nd** Marianne Stoecker  
*Sandpiper*

## Birds of Prey

- 1st** Larry Tomlinson  
*Screech Owl*

## Songbirds

- 1st** Brooke Bailey  
*Wren*
- 2nd** Maxine Brown  
*Nuthatch*
- 3rd** Ron Kussrow  
*Cedar Waxwing*

## Seabirds

- 1st** Ron Kussrow  
*Puffin*

## Best in Show

- 1st** Brooke Bailey  
*Wren*

- 2nd** Marianne Stoecker  
*Sandpiper*

- 3rd** Ken Guelta  
*Wood Duck*

## MINIATURE—OPEN

## Waterfowl

- 1st** Gerald Wheatley  
*Black Duck*

## Bird of Prey

- 1st** Al Jordan  
*Great Horned Owl*
- 2nd** Al Jordan  
*Eagle*

## Best in Show

- 1st** Al Jordan  
*Great Horned Owl*
- 2nd** Al Jordan  
*Eagle*
- 3rd** Gerald Wheatley  
*Black Duck*

## MINIATURE—INTERMEDIATE

## Waterfowl

- 1st** Sunny Frank  
*Mandarin Duck*

## Birds of Prey

- 1st** Richard Clayton  
*Peregrine Falcon*
- 2nd** Richard Clayton  
*Red-tailed Hawk*
- 3rd** Richard Clayton  
*Bald Eagle*

## Best in Show

- 1st** Richard Clayton  
*Peregrine Falcon*
- 2nd** Richard Clayton  
*Red-tailed Hawk*
- 3rd** Sunny Frank  
*Mandarin Duck*

## MINIATURE—NOVICE

## Waterfowl

- 1st** Eric Budd  
*Black Duck*

## Songbirds

- 1st** Carl W Johnson  
*Blue Heron*

## Birds of Prey

- 1st** Marianne Stoecker  
*Osprey*

## Best in Show

- 1st** Carl W. Johnson  
*Blue Heron*
- 2nd** Marianne Stoecker  
*Osprey*
- 3rd** Eric Budd  
*Black Duck*

## "WHITEY FRANCK" SLICK DECOY

## Diver

- Bufflehead*
- 1st** William P. Bailey
- 2nd** Robin A. Oliver
- Canvasback*
- 1st** Robin A. Oliver
- Goldeneye*
- 1st** William Bailey
- Redhead*
- 1st** William Bailey

## Best of Diver

- 1st** William Bailey  
*Goldeneye*
- 2nd** William Bailey  
*Bufflehead*
- 3rd** William Bailey  
*Redhead*

## Marsh

- Mallard*
- 1st** Robin A. Oliver
- Wood Duck*
- 1st** Robin A. Oliver

## Best of Marsh

- 1st** Robin A. Oliver  
*Mallard*
- 2nd** Robin A. Oliver  
*Wood Duck*

## Goose and Confidence

- Other—Emperor Goose*
- 1st** David Robbins

## Best of Goose and Confidence

- 1st** David Robbins  
*Emperor Goose*

## Best in Show

- 1st** Robin A. Oliver  
*Mallard*
- 2nd** William Bailey  
*Goldeneye*
- 3rd** David Robbins  
*Emperor Goose*

## GUNNING DECOY

## Diver

- Canvasback*
- 1st** Dan McGloghlin
- 2nd** Daniel Lozano
- 3rd** Jeff Spencer
- Red-breasted Merganser*
- 1st** Richard E. Belote
- Oldsquaw*
- 1st** Michael Collice

## Redhead

- 1st** Gene Dougherty
- 2nd** Bill Bertz
- 3rd** Gerald Wheatley

## Ring-necked

- 1st** Mark Dill
- 2nd** Gene Dougherty
- 3rd** Gerald Wheatley

## Scaup

- 1st** Robert Barlett
- 2nd** Robert Barlett
- 3rd** Gerald Wheatley

*Other—Spectacled Eider*

**1st** Carl Tosi

**Best of Diver**

**1st** Robert Barlett  
*Scaup*

**2nd** Mark Dill  
*Ring-necked*

**3rd** Richard E. Belote  
*Red-breasted Merganser*

**Marsh**

*Black Duck*

**1st** Robin A. Oliver

**2nd** Guy S. Bandy

*Gadwall*

**1st** Robert Barlett

*Mallard*

**1st** Robin A. Oliver

**2nd** Robin A. Oliver

**3rd** Robert Barlett

**HM** Robert Barlett

**HM** Mark Daly

*Pintail*

**1st** Robert Barlett

**2nd** Robert Barlett

**3rd** Robin A. Oliver

**HM** Brian Lilly

*Shoveler*

**1st** James Romig

**2nd** Eric Budd

*Blue-winged Teal*

**1st** James Romig

**2nd** Gene Dougherty

*Green-winged Teal*

**1st** Chase Passwater

*Wigeon*

**1st** Gerald Wheatley

**Best of Marsh**

**1st** Robin A. Oliver  
*Mallard*

**2nd** Robin A. Oliver  
*Black duck*

**3rd** Chase Passwater  
*Green-winged Teal*

**Goose & Confidence**

*Brant*

**1st** Bill Bertz

*Other – Gull*

**1st** Vincent Pagliaroli

*Coot*

**1st** Vincent Pagliaroli

*Grebe*

**1st** Mark Daly

*Cormorant*

**1st** Richard E. Belote

**Best of Goose & Confidence**

**1st** Richard E. Belote  
*Cormorant*

**2nd** Mark Daly  
*Grebe*

**3rd** Richard E. Belote  
*Gull*

**Best in Show**

**1st** Robin A. Oliver  
*Mallard*

**2nd** Robert Barlett  
*Scaup*

**3rd** Richard E. Belote  
*Cormorant*

---

**WORKING SHOREBIRD**

---

**Traditional Working Shorebird**

**1st** Chris Martin  
*Black-bellied Plover*

**2nd** David Robbins  
*King Rail*

**3rd** David Robbins  
*Piping Plover*

**HM** David Robbins  
*Avocet*

**Decorative Shorebird**

**1st** Gerald Wheatley  
*Lesser Golden Plover*

**Slick Working Shorebird**

**1st** Gerald Wheatley  
*Tricolored Heron*

**2nd** Lou Caputo  
*Avocet*

**3rd** Richard A. Belote  
*Black-billed Plover*

**HM** William J. Belote  
*Killdeer*

**HM** Gerald Wheatley  
*Woodcock*

**Stick Shorebird**

**1st** William S. Belote  
*Laughing Gull*

**2nd** William S. Belote  
*Puffin*

**3rd** Vincent A. Pagliaroli  
*Yellow Legs*

**Best In Show**

**1st** Chris Martin  
*Black-bellied Plover*

**2nd** Gerald Wheatley  
*Oyster Catcher*

**3rd** Lou Caputo  
*Avocet*

---

**GUNNING COCKTAIL**

---

**1st** Capt. Bill Collins  
*Goldeneye*

**2nd** Karen Hatmen  
*Loon*

---

**CONTEMPORARY ANTIQUE  
STYLE DECOYS**

---

**Waterfowl**

**1st** Jeff Keiffer  
*Red-breasted Merganser*

**2nd** Lou Caputo  
*Canvasback*

**3rd** Jeff Keiffer  
*Canada Goose*

**Shorebird**

**1st** William S. Belote  
*Curlew*

**2nd** Warren Saunders  
*Whimbrel*

**3rd** Jeff Keiffer  
*Black-bellied Plover*

**HM** William S. Belote  
*Red Knot*

**Stick Shorebird**

**1st** William S. Belote  
*Sanderling*

**2nd** William S. Belote  
*Sanderling*

**Best In Show**

**1st** William S. Belote  
*Curlew*

**2nd** Jeff Keiffer  
*Red-breasted Merganser*

**3rd** Warren Saunders  
*Whimbrel*

---

**YOUTH**

---

**Gunning**

*Canvasback*

**1st** Luke Taylor

*Bufflehead*

**1st** Taylor Day

*Cinnamon Teal*

**1st** Orion Sam Soukup

*Goldeneye*

**1st** Elizabeth Day

**Best in Show**

**1st** Elizabeth Day  
*Goldeneye*

**2nd** Taylor Day  
*Bufflehead*

**3rd** Luke Taylor  
*Canvasback*

---

**FISH**

---

**1st** Richard A. Belote  
*Blue Gill*

---

**WOMEN'S CARVING DIVISION**

---

**Shore Bird**

**1st** Peggy Wroten  
*Ruddy Turnstone*

# Carving Competition Results

## RIVER GUNNING DECOY: SATURDAY MAY 3

### Divers

- 1st George Williams  
*Scaup*
- 2nd George Williams  
*Ring-necked*
- 3rd Scott Green  
*Scoter*

### Puddlers

- 1st George Williams  
*Gadwall*
- 2nd George Williams  
*Bahama Pintail*
- 3rd Scott Green  
*Green-winged Teal*

### Goose & Confidence

- 1st Scott Green  
*Snow Goose*
- 2nd George Williams  
*Brant*

### Singles

- 1st Robin Oliver  
*Bufflehead Hen*
- 2nd Scott Russell  
*Cinnamon Teal*
- 3rd Robin Oliver  
*Canada Goose*

### Gunning Pairs

- 1st George Williams  
*Gadwall*
- 2nd George Williams  
*Scaup*
- 3rd Scott Green  
*Snow Goose*

### Rigs

- 1st Scott Green  
*Scoters*
- 2nd Bill Thurman  
*Canvasbacks*
- 3rd W. Clenton Warnick  
*Ruddy Ducks*

### Tandem & Single Pairs

- 1st George Williams  
*Gadwall*

- 2nd George Williams  
*Scaup*
- 3rd Scott Green  
*Snow Goose*

### Best in Show

- 1st George Williams  
*Gadwall*
- 2nd George Williams  
*Scaup*
- 3rd Scott Green  
*Snow Goose*

## RIVER GUNNING: SUNDAY MAY 4

### Diver

- Bufflehead*
- 1st Robin A. Oliver
- 2nd Ed Lewandowski
- 3rd Ed Lewandowski
- Canvasback*
- 1st Robin A. Oliver
- 2nd William C. Thurman
- 3rd Scott Green

### Goldeneye

- 1st Scott Green
- 2nd Riley Dabbling

### Hooded Merganser

- 1st Riley Dabbling

### Redhead

- 1st George Williams
- 2nd William C. Thurman

### Ring-necked

- 1st Daniel Green
- 2nd Mathew Kneisly

### Scaup

- 1st George Williams
- 2nd Daniel Green
- 3rd George Williams

### Other—Scoter

- 1st Scott Green  
*Common*

- 2nd Scott Green  
*Common*
- 3rd Scott Green  
*Surf*
- HM Scott Green  
*Harlequin*

### Best of Diver

- 1st Robin A. Oliver  
*Bufflehead*
- 2nd George Williams  
*Scaup*
- 3rd George Williams  
*Redhead*

### Marsh

- Black Duck*
- 1st George Williams
- 2nd Robin A. Oliver
- Gadwall*
- 1st George Williams
- Mallard*
- 1st George Williams
- 2nd Ed Lewandowski
- 3rd George Williams
- HM Ed Lewandowski

### Pintail

- 1st Scott Green
- 2nd Robin A. Oliver
- 3rd George Williams

### Green-winged Teal

- 1st Scott Green
- 2nd Scott Green

### Cinnamon Teal

- 1st Scott Russell
- 2nd George Williams
- 3rd William C. Thurman

### Wigeon

- 1st Tim Stewart

### Other—Silver Teal

- 1st George Williams

### Best of Marsh

- 1st Scott Russell  
*Cinnamon Teal*
- 2nd George Williams  
*Silver Teal*
- 3rd George Williams  
*Gadwall*

### Goose & Confidence

- Canada Goose*
- 1st Robin A. Oliver
- Brant*
- 1st George Williams
- 2nd David Jack
- 3rd Robin A. Oliver

### Other—Goose

- 1st Scott Green  
*Blue Goose*
- 2nd Scott Green  
*Snow Goose*

### Coot

- 1st George Williams

### Best of Goose & Confidence

- 1st Robin A. Oliver  
*Canada Goose*
- 2nd George Williams  
*Brant*
- 3rd Scott Green  
*Blue Goose*

### Best in Show

- 1st Robin A. Oliver  
*Bufflehead*
- 2nd Scott Green  
*Cinnamon Teal*
- 3rd Robin A. Oliver  
*Canada Goose*

# Congratulations to the Spring Raffle '14 Winners



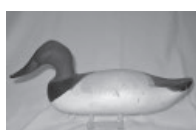
▲ 1st Prize: Charlotte & Joel  
Gaydos (Pair of miniature  
mallards by Bob Jobes)



▲ 2nd Prize: Joseph  
Hardin (Pair of wood  
ducks by Dave Walker)



▲ 3rd Prize:  
Ken Finkenbinder  
(Mallard hen by Pat  
Vincenti)



▲ 4th Prize: Bill Cox  
(Canvasback drake by  
John Clark)



▲ 5th Prize: Bob  
Gregory (Signed  
Valerie Lloyd print)



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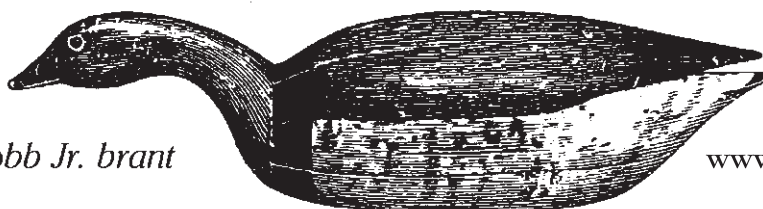
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# HEADS UP! Autumn Events

*We are still in the planning stages, but stay tuned for two big autumn events:*

**Second Annual Waterfowl Day.** On either the first or second Saturday in October, the Decoy Museum will host its second annual Waterfowl Day.

The centerpiece will be the sanctioned 2014 duck calling championships. Anyone aspiring to compete in the World's Championship Duck Calling Contest in Stuttgart, Arkansas must win a sanctioned state or regional duck calling contest, and this will be the last opportunity in Maryland for 2014! Events will be:

- Susquehanna Flats Open Regional Duck Calling Championship (sanctioned)
- Chesapeake Bay Open Regional Duck Calling Championship (sanctioned)
- Maryland State Duck Calling Championship (sanctioned)
- Mason-Dixon Regional Duck Calling Championship (sanctioned)
- Chesapeake Bay Open Goose Calling Championship
- Maryland State Goose Calling Championship
- Bass Pro Shops RedHead Junior Maryland State Duck Calling Championship
- Bass Pro Shops RedHead Junior Maryland State Goose Calling Championship

Last year we had vendors and contestants from 12 states, far and wide—Massachusetts to Ohio to Louisiana to Georgia—and everywhere in between. It will be a great opportunity to find some decoys and to pick up some great new or used waterfowling equipment and supplies.

It takes many supporters to put this event together, so we are trying to get everyone's calendars synced up at the moment. Watch our website for details.

**Anniversary Celebration.** Last year we skipped the Decoy Museum's anniversary celebration, but we intend to resurrect it this year in a format and at a price point that makes it both fun and affordable for our members and provides the Museum with some money left over to fund important projects. We hope to do this in early November. Again, watch our website for details. ■

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# Tule

## TECHNOLOGY



Contemporary canvasback decoys  
by Mike Williams

PHOTO BY  
Jay Aldrich (JayAldrich.com)

## DECOYS OF THE GREAT BASIN

By James W. Carroll, Jr.

One of the least-noticed objects in the Decoy Museum's collection is one of the most significant. A tule decoy made by Joe Allen from Fallon, Nevada (see *The Canvasback*, Summer 1998, p. 28) appears to be an almost childishly crude representation of a goose. However, the simplicity of this decoy belies the depth of the story behind it, and its location near the front door is appropriate, for this tule decoy represents the beginning of what we know of the use of decoys in North America.

Tule (TOO-lee), also known as bulrush, is a species of sedge native to freshwater marshes all over North America. Often found with cattails, tule grows at the shoreline, putting out round, pencil-width, green stems that can be over ten-feet tall. You have undoubtedly heard the expression “out in the tules”—like “out in the sticks”—to describe a remote and uninviting area.

However, if you were a member of the Toi Ticutta subgroup—the “Cattail Eaters”—of the Northern Paiute people or a member of the ancient Lovelock Culture, then “out in the tules” is exactly where you would want to be. Cattail is known as the “supermarket of the swamp” for all of the ways it can sustain people, from the starchy roots to the pollen-laden tips. Cattail pollen is also an important element in many sacred rituals among Native Americans. But that is getting ahead of the story.

Marshes are not what immediately springs to mind when denizens of the East Coast think about Nevada. However, nearly the entire state of Nevada sits in The Great Basin, a 200,000 square mile area that extends from the



*Joe Allen decoy with detail of shaping and cattail leaf wrapping*

Great Salt Lake to Lake Tahoe and north into Idaho and Oregon. The Great Basin region drains internally with no outlet to the sea, and all precipitation either evaporates, flows into lakes, or sinks underground. The Great Basin is actually made up of many small basins and lakes within its boundaries—also known as “drains” or “sinks”—that create the wetlands in this region.

The Humboldt River is 330 miles long and drains most of northern Nevada. Fed

primarily by snowmelt, it terminates at the Humboldt Sink where its remaining water forms a vast meadow and marsh known as Big Meadows. The extensive wetlands of the Humboldt Sink and Big Meadows

*Ivan George decoy covered with skin of a redhead.*

**Photo by Donna Cossette, Churchill County Museum**



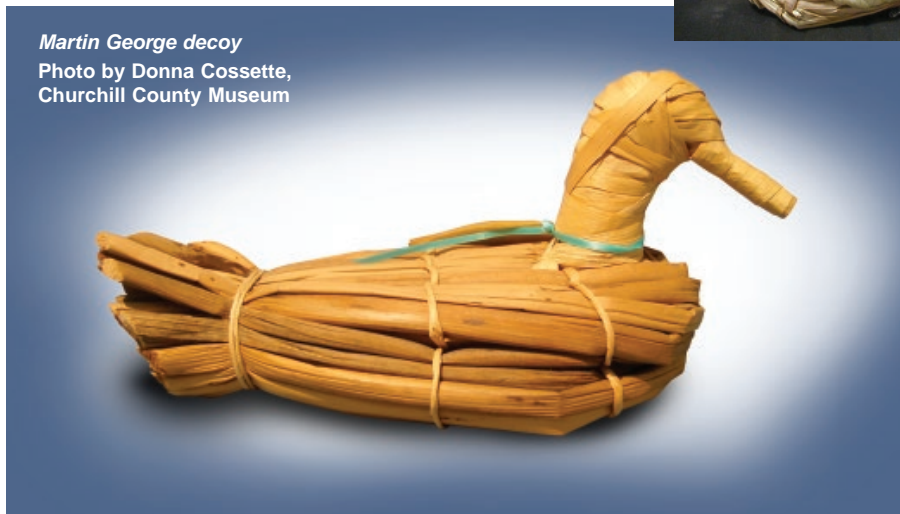
attract migrating waterfowl, and archaeological evidence shows the area probably attracted the first human settlers over 10,000 years ago. In modern times, Big Meadows was a key stopping point for wagon trains headed west. This terminus gave rise to the present-day town of Lovelock, about 50 miles northeast of Fallon.

In the early 1900s, miners were excavating guano deposits from a cave on a rocky ridge along the southern margin of the Big Meadows. Lovelock Cave

proved to be a trove of ancient artifacts left by the indigenous people over countless centuries, but the miners were uncaring in their excavation. Among the items that archaeologists were able to salvage in 1924 were eleven intact and remarkably well preserved duck decoys made of tule and cattail leaves, several of which were covered in canvasback duck feathers, duck skins, and paint made from red ochre and black piñon resin.

The Lovelock decoys are now in the collection of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian.

*Martin George decoy*  
**Photo by Donna Cossette, Churchill County Museum**





Recent analysis of these amazing decoys using accelerator mass spectrometric (AMS) technology confirmed that are about 2,000 years old. Their age suggests that the use by the Native Americans of tule decoys for hunting is as old as human habitation in the region, and the tule duck decoy was named Nevada's official state artifact in 1995.

The Northern Paiutes have an oral tradition describing the defeat of their foes, the Si-Te-Cah, at Lovelock Cave about 1,000 years ago. Whatever the details may be, it is believed that the Paiutes

did in fact displace those ancient indigenous people—known as the “Lovelock Culture”—in that timeframe. No clear linkage has been established between the Lovelock Culture and the contemporary Paiutes, but there are similarities between what is known about their traditions and customs.

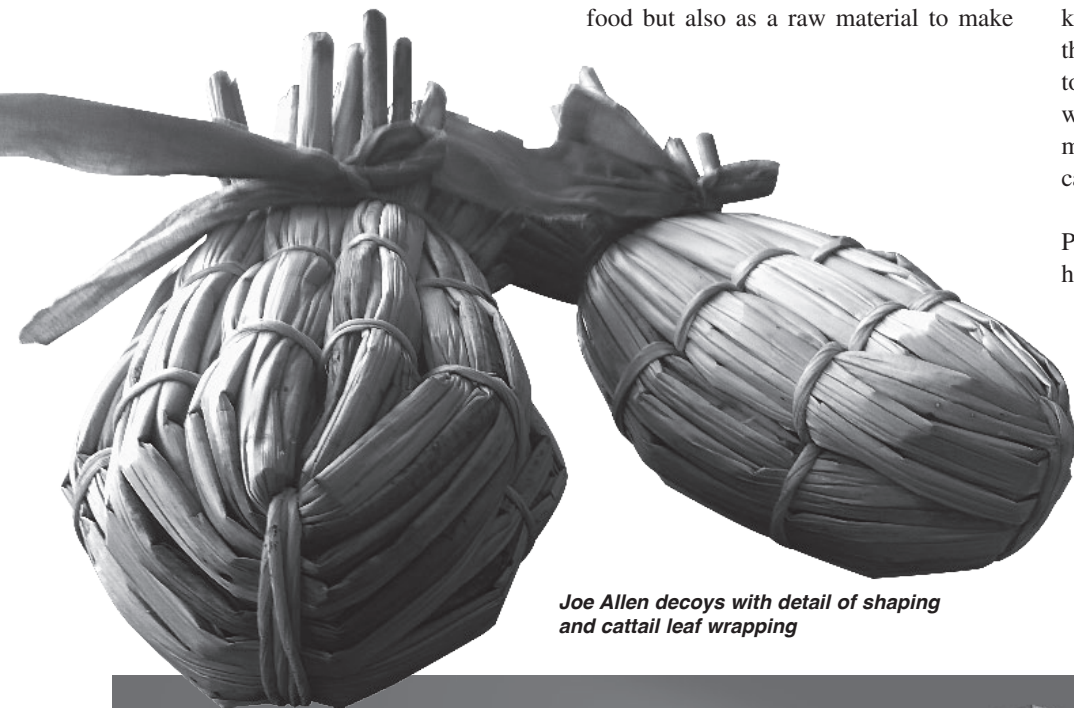
The early Paiutes were hunter-gatherers, as opposed to an agricultural society, and lived off what the land naturally provided. Tule, cattails, and rushes were a versatile resource for the Cattail Eaters—whose territory was the neighboring Carson Sink at the terminus of the 205-mile long Carson River—not only for food but also as a raw material to make

many common items such as bags, mats, sandals, hats, clothing, boats, and even houses. Tule decoys enabled them to harvest waterfowl.

Paiute cultural traditions have been maintained and handed down for centuries by people such as Wuzzie Dick George (born between 1880-1884; died 1984) and her husband Jimmy George (born between 1875-1879; died 1969). They both grew up in the customs of their ancestors and were documented in Catherine S. Fowler's monograph “Tule Technology: Northern Paiute Uses of Marsh Resources in Western Nevada”, published by the Smithsonian. Wuzzie George was very knowledgeable about many of the ways of the “Old People”, especially with respect to the utilization of tule. Jimmy George was a well-known Native American shaman, or doctor, and a decoy maker who carried on this traditional craft.

The cultural transmission of these Paiute decoy-making and hunting skills has been limited in recent years to only a handful of contemporary decoy makers.

Donna Cossette, Administrator of the Churchill County Museum and Archives in Fallon is a member of the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe and an occasional tule decoy maker who is an authority on the history of the region and the traditions of the Paiutes.



*Joe Allen decoys with detail of shaping and cattail leaf wrapping*



Donna was mentored in her decoy-making efforts and explained that tule decoy making is not resource intensive. The three basic requirements are tule, cattail, and a knife. In pre-contact times the knife was made from obsidian or basalt, but contact with European-Americans beginning in the 1820s brought access to commercially-made steel knives. Donna reports that “good tule” is becoming harder to find due to the encroachment of a non-native variety that is shorter and smaller.

Despite the seeming simplicity of tule decoy making, there are significant distinctions among the decoy makers in terms of skills acquisition, materials, and techniques. Learning to make tule decoys runs the gamut from formal mentoring and apprenticeship to the maker being entirely self-taught. Some makers use cattail leaf blades for wrappings and twist them to make twine, others collect Indian hemp (also known as dogbane) that is made into a strong twine both for wrapping the tule bodies as well as to secure the stone weights and anchors. Some decoys are simply unadorned tule while

others are painted with red ochre (iron oxide) and the black resin from burned piñon pine. Still others are covered with feathers or even with the entire hide of a carefully skinned bird. In earlier times, the head of a complete duck hide would be attached to the body using the remaining neck bones, but a greasewood stick is now typically used for attaching a head made of tule or cattail.

Donna names three currently active tule decoy makers who are carrying on the decoy making traditions of their ancestors: Joe Allen, Mike Williams, and Wesley Dick, each of whom is also a member of the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe.

Joe Allen, the maker of the Decoy Museum’s tule decoy, says he does not regard decoy making as a form of folk art. Rather, he sees it as a craft, “like the bow and arrow, a tool of survival”. Joe is a descendant of Wuzzie Dick George and Jimmy George and learned the craft from their grandson, Martin George. Martin and his brother Davin George learned decoy making from their father, Ivan, and Ivan learned from his father, Jimmy George.

Martin George took young Joe under his wing as an apprentice decoy maker in about 1992 when he was

13 years

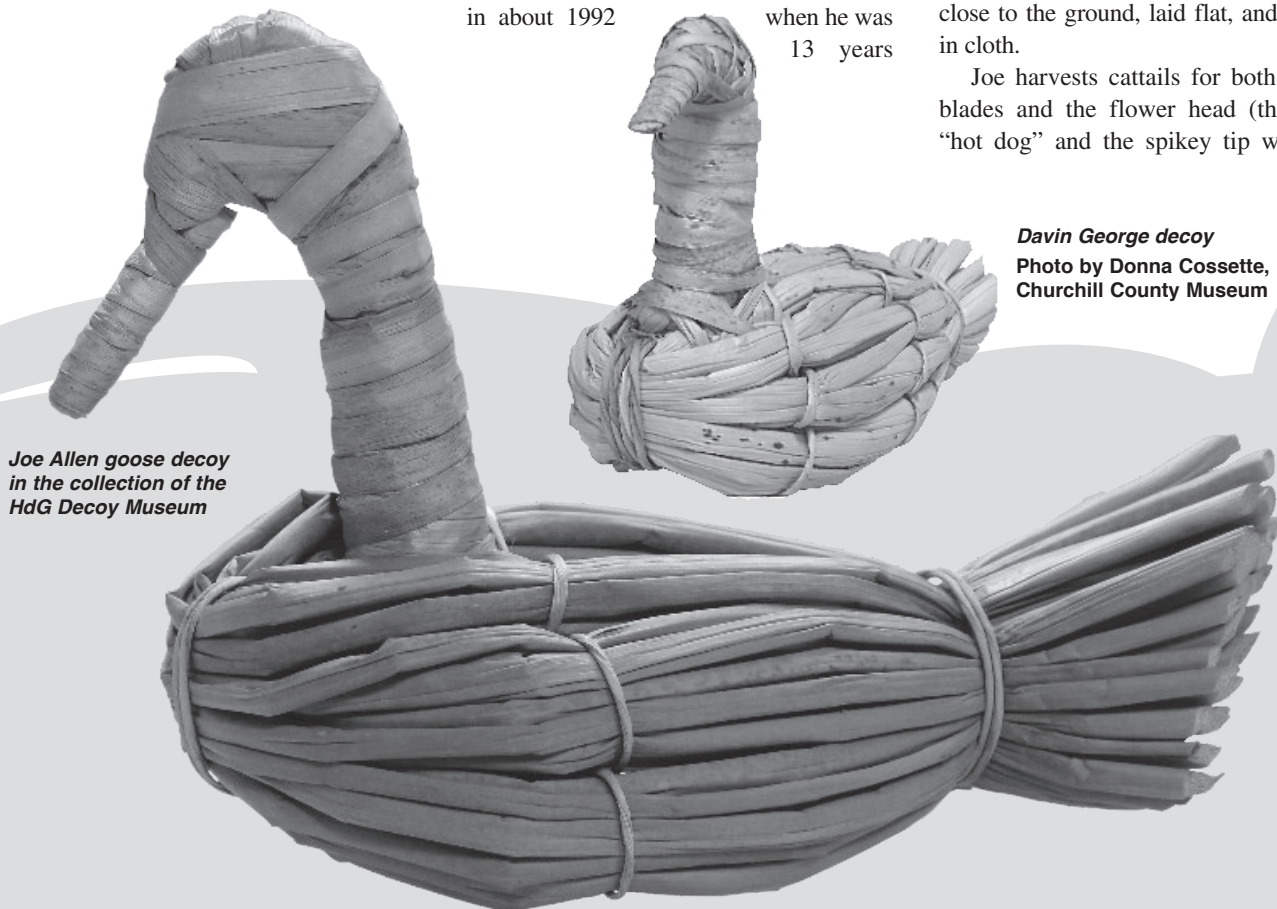
old. Joe would accompany Martin to the wetlands of the Carson Sink to gather the cattails and tules, and learned the elements of decoy making by helping Martin and making various parts of the decoys for him.

Martin died in 1994, and Joe struck out on his own. Losing his mentor was a blow, and Joe described his early solo efforts as of “poor quality”. Nevertheless, still a teenager, he was soon demonstrating the art and craft of decoy making at local schools and events.

By 1999, he began to rely on decoy making as a source of income. In 2000, Joe first demonstrated decoy making at Trembling Leaves, the Native American culture day held at the Wilbur D. May Museum in Reno, where thousands had an opportunity to see his craft.

Joe uses a sharp knife, tule stems, cattail leaf blades, and the top flower head of the cattail. He starts by carefully selecting plant material. He says the best time of the year for collecting is winter after the stems and leaves have had a chance to dry naturally. Tule stems are checked for diameter, length, color, and condition. Stems that are bent, cracked, split, or have other irregularities are unacceptable. Stems are cut close to the ground, laid flat, and bundled in cloth.

Joe harvests cattails for both the leaf blades and the flower head (the brown “hot dog” and the spikey tip where the



**Joe Allen goose decoy  
in the collection of the  
HdG Decoy Museum**

**Davin George decoy  
Photo by Donna Cossette,  
Churchill County Museum**



pollen grows). Leaf blades are used for wrapping and are twisted to make ties. After gathering plant material, Joe always uses the cattail flower heads to reseed the areas he has cleared and thereby ensure that his harvesting is done on a sustainable basis.

Thick tule stems are used for larger decoys and thinner ones for half-size and miniatures. After soaking in water to make them pliable, the stems are cut to length, bundled, bound with twine made of twisted cattail leaf, bent, shaped into bodies, and trimmed to create the tails.

The top flower head of the cattail stem forms the core for the head of the decoy, which is fashioned completely from cattail, wrapping the leaf blades around and around the bent stem to create a realistic shape. The head is attached to the tule body with a strong greasewood pin and secured with cattail ties.

Joe's decoys are made without paint or other embellishment and are differentiated by body size and shape, neck length, and tail shape. One's imagination perceives a relaxed mallard, a high-head canvasback, or a little cinnamon teal. Joe's decoys are decorative—his primary goal is to keep the ancient traditions alive and pass them down. For that reason, he enjoys teaching because it is also an opportunity to learn. Joe is now teaching decoy-making skills to his four-year old son, John.

The cultural transmission over these generations connects this young 21st century apprentice directly with the pre-contact skills acquired by Jimmy George from his grandparents in 19th century.

Mike Williams, now 56, is a master tule artist who has been making traditional decoys for 14 years. Mike is completely self-taught; "I learned the way my ancestors did, by trial and error." He describes visiting Lovelock Cave and feeling a sense of connectedness and resonance with his Paiute ancestors whose lives depended on decoys for the success of their hunts.

Mike is strong spiritually and regards with reverence his calling to make decoys in the ancient way, replicating the look of the Lovelock decoys. One of his relatives urged him to pray over his work, and Mike says he now does so before starting each piece in order to "clear my mind". To him, decoy making is spiritual art, and he considers the skill he developed "a gift" that came to him in visions.

Mike Williams is indeed a gifted artist, and his skill is well known. In 2008, he was the winner of the Nevada Governor's Arts Award for Excellence in Folk Arts. One of his tule decoys is now in the collection of the Smithsonian Institute. He has been featured in a video and in magazines in both Nevada and California.

Mike gathers his tule stems in the fall, before they are damaged by freezing

temperatures. These stems are carefully cut, twisted, and bound into the shape of a duck. He skins and splits the tule stems he will use for the head and breast to expose the inside surface for pigments to adhere.

He paints his decoys with natural red ochre (iron oxide) that he gets from the Walker River Paiute Reservation and with black resin from burning piñon pine in his own ceremonial fire pit. Mike makes his binding twine from Indian hemp, also harvested locally. Each decoy requires about 25 feet of twine, and they are feathered with domestic goose or turkey feathers.

Tule played a powerful role in the everyday lives of the early Paiutes. Mike is determined to re-create the decoys made by his ancestors as a way of honoring them and perpetuating Paiute culture, heritage, and traditions for future generations.

He says he is "blessed to be able to do this art". It is his objective to teach these skills and pass them on, paying homage to a culture that has flourished and adapted to changes in the Great Basin for thousands of years. Mike leads workshops to teach the traditional skills for making not only decoys but also baskets, mats, hats, sandals, and other everyday items.

Similarly, Wesley Dick feels a calling to keep alive, remain faithful to, and defend the traditional ways of his Paiute ancestors and feels that he honors them by continuing to make things from tule, a "very special

*Joe Allen and his son John, an apprentice decoy maker*



*Joe Allen decoys in various sizes*





plant” that is “extremely powerful”. He can quickly name 20 important uses for cattail and tule in the everyday lives of the early Paiutes and regards harvesting tule and cattail as a spiritual act that should be treated with reverence.

Wesley, who is also known by his Paiute name Kwassuh, learned many of the old ways from family members. To him, the knowledge transfer from his elders was a “gift from the Creator.” He now regards himself as a custodian of these old ways and is pleased that people have a renewed interest in preserving ancient traditions that are a part of his own lifestyle.

Well known as a folk artist, Wesley has demonstrated decoy making at Trembling Leaves and elsewhere. His decoys are made from tule and cattail, and he generally leaves them unpainted and unadorned. Wesley makes many different species of waterfowl—from swans and geese to mallards, canvasbacks, and teal.

He turns out decorative decoys for collectors, but unlike Joe Allen and Mike Williams, he also makes decoys for hunting. Wesley hunts game for the table, including the waterfowl in the marshes of the Carson Sink. For his personal use, he covers the tule bodies of his hunting decoys with duck and goose skins.

Wesley says the tule plant is different

in different seasons, and the best season for harvesting tule is in the winter when it is golden tan. In 2011, he was gathering tule plants on the Stillwater Wildlife Refuge in preparation for a demonstration of decoy-making techniques to a group of schoolchildren. His centuries-old ritual of harvesting tule was carried out on the ancestral territory of the “Toi Ticutta” Paiute, but he was confronted by a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officer and fined \$800. He thereby brought down on himself the full weight of the Federal Leviathan and became the case of “Wesley Glen Dick, Jr. vs. The United States”.

Both a Federal Magistrate in Reno, Nevada and the Kuiu Kwaan Tribal Court in Tacoma, Washington subsequently dismissed the charges on First Amendment religious grounds. The Tribal Court specifically noted that, “The Native American Free Exercise of Religion Act of 1993 protects the religious use of animal and plants necessary to carry out one’s religious practices”. But this episode left him deeply committed to ensure that the sovereignty and traditional ways of Native Americans are both respected and protected.

Donna Cossette quickly admits to not being a hunter, but she knows the subject well. She explained that Paiute waterfowlers would leave for the marsh while

it was still dark. The hunting party would typically have one individual—the “duck boss”— who would direct the hunt. Hunters used tule boats to pole their way through the shallow marsh to a known hunting area where there was a small island to

use as a base of operations. A rig of tule decoys would be set out, usually using weighted dogbane twine as an anchor. The hunters would conceal themselves in the cattails and tule, just as modern hunters do in their blinds. Voice calls were also used.

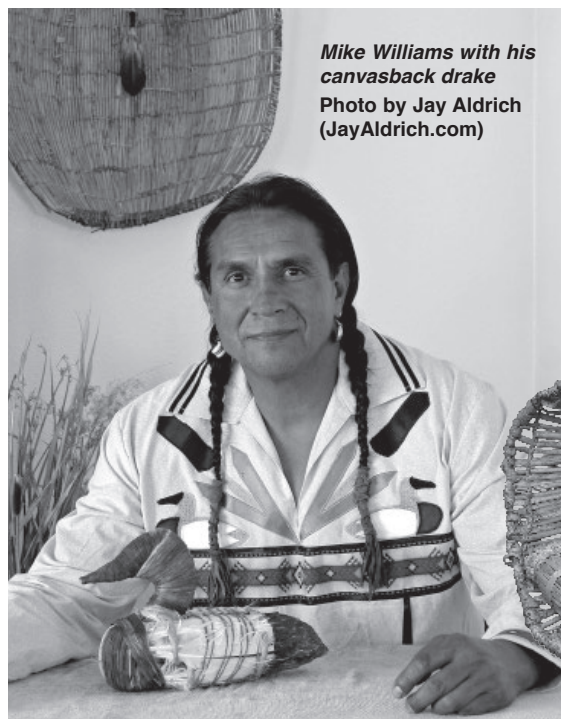
The birds were taken by several means, depending on the circumstances—arrows, netting, stoning, and hand catching. Special “duck arrows” were made using rosewood shafts and greasewood tips, often with a small obsidian point. The arrow was aimed at the water in front of the bird and would be deflected up into it. The arrow had a bulb or protrusion behind the tip that stopped a valuable arrow from passing through the duck and being lost.

Nets made out of dogbane twine were effective for catching ducks that pattered across the surface as they take off and larger birds like geese that cut their air-speed by flaring with wings spread and feet forward as they land. Whether flushed or landing, a submerged net was suddenly raised at the most opportune moment to ensnare the birds, or the birds could simply be driven into a standing net that was camouflaged or concealed. Nets were also used to encircle the birds and herd them to a choke point where they could be stoned or captured.

In some instances, a submerged hunter would cautiously swim to the ducks with his head concealed in a clump of sago pondweed, grab a duck by the feet, pull it under, break its neck, tuck it under his belt, and hope to repeat the process without spooking the remaining birds.

Killed ducks would be encased in wet clay and placed in a cooking fire. This is an easy recipe that you can try at home.

With the benefit of the backstory, you can now see that the simple Joe Allen tule decoy in the Decoy Museum’s collection deserves serious examination. Made from two plants that are sacred to the Paiutes, these decoys were essential to the lives of Native Americans of the Great Basin and sustained them for thousands of years. We are fortunate to have an excellent example of this ancient handcraft. ■



**Mike Williams with his canvasback drake**  
Photo by Jay Aldrich (JayAldrich.com)

**Tule basket and decoys by Mike Williams**  
Photo by Jay Aldrich (JayAldrich.com)



## ***BE ON THE LOOKOUT***

This year's Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival was lots of fun and well attended. Among all of the highlights that Jim Trimble pointed out in his article, there were several things that were worthy of particular note.

## **Breaking New Ground**

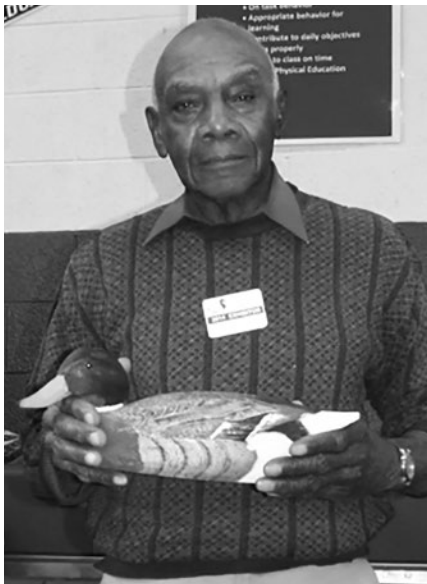
**SHANNON DIMMIG** came to work about three decades ago in the shop of renowned artist, carver, and Decoy Museum Director Bill Veasey where she also attended Bill's classes on carving and painting. Even in those formative years, Bill says she did well in competitions. Bill subsequently downsized and worked alone for the most part.

A few years ago they reconnected, Shannon joined him back in his shop and decided to make carving her living. She has done exceedingly well. In 2004, she won a first-place prize at the Ward Museum's World Championship with her cormorant. Bill regards her as one of the most talented airbrush artists in the country.

Such is the high regard for Shannon in the community of decoy carvers and waterfowl artists that the carvers asked for her to be a judge at the 2014 Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival. We believe this is the first time that a woman judged a hunting decoy class!

Keep an eye out for Shannon Dimmig and her waterfowl art. ■

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## **Still Carving**

**DOUG GIBSON** has been carving for about 40 years. While that is a long time, it is still less than half of his very full life. At the age of 91, Doug is still carving, traveling to shows and events, and teaching and mentoring the next generation of carvers.

That should come as no surprise, for Doug's first career was in teaching and design. Doug served in the US Navy during WW II and returned to Delaware to earn BS and MS degrees. He taught in the Milford public schools followed by 21-years teaching architectural and building design at Delaware Technical and Community College in Georgetown.

Decoy carving is a natural outlet for those creative aptitudes, and Doug has been honored with many awards for his decorative carvings of waterfowl. A common thread that has motivated so many carvers is necessity – if you didn't hunt you didn't eat. Doug was one of 12 children in a farming family and learned from his father how to hand chop bodies. His decorative decoys have finely-feathered detail accomplished with a wood burner and are finished with acrylic paints. His work is now featured in a DVD entitled "Gifted Hands: WoodArt Decoys by Doug Gibson". ■

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at the Museum!**



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## Carving: The Next Generation

**TWO** of the most fascinating exhibitors at the 2014 Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival were brothers Daniel and Jonathan Irons, two young carvers from Queenstown, Maryland. Proud mom Polly reported that Daniel, now twelve, took an interest in tools at the age of 11-months when he discovered the hammer. By six, he was starting to carve. He got a set of gouges for his seventh birthday and a set of knives for his eighth. At that age, he was starting to carve birds—mostly ducks and songbirds.

Younger brother Jonathan, now ten, also took an early interest and began carving at six. He especially likes doing songbirds and other smaller birds in addition to tropical birds with bright colors. Both boys enjoy doing shows and demos.

Daniel and Jonathan have taken top honors in the Ward World Championship with various creations. Both boys came to the attention of Bill Veasey (see preceding page: *Breaking New Ground*) when the Ward Museum approached him about mentoring. Bill introduced the boys to



**Bill Veasey (top left) and Jim Dodd admire the work of Daniel and Jonathan Irons**  
Photos by Matt Button

falconer and master carver Al Jordan from Rochester, NY who was also at the Decoy and Wildlife Art Festival with two of his real live Harris's hawks and many award-

winning and stunningly realistic pieces of his own creation.

Daniel reports that he likes the painting best and the sanding least. Asked about feathering his carvings, he says he likes to paint the feather texture into his birds rather than carving or using a wood burner. Daniel sees himself in coming years doing waterfowl art professionally.

Polly and Mike Irons homeschool their sons and have nurtured this aptitude. Daniel and Jonathan have had the benefit of mentoring and instruction by Dave Connolly in nearby Centreville, Maryland. In addition to Al Jordan, other mentors and role models are Ontario carver Pat Godin and Keith Mueller from Connecticut. The boys are also avid birders who are active with the Maryland Ornithological Society (Youth Division).

It is inspiring to watch them work – a new generation of carvers mentored by masters with an instinct to create. Be on the lookout for Daniel and Jonathan Irons. They are just getting started! ■





# Museum Members

**Thank you and welcome to the following members and businesses that recently renewed their membership or newly joined us. Your continued support and contributions are essential to the overall success of the Decoy Museum:**

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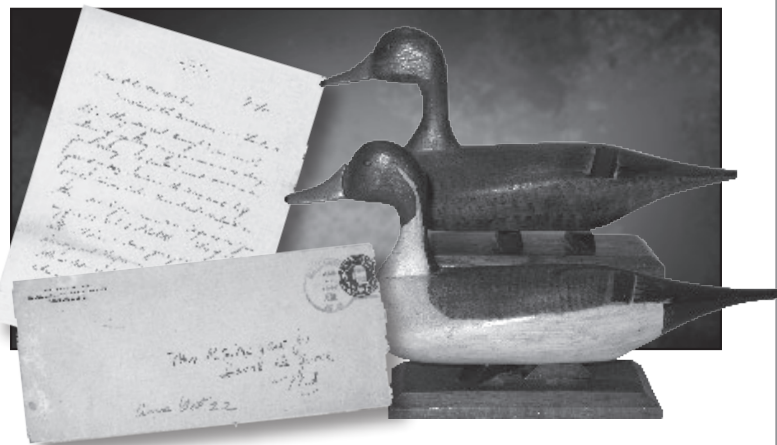




# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## CURRENT EXHIBITS

- ▶ THE GILLIS FAMILY'S COLLECTION OF GUNNING AND MINIATURE DECOYS BY SAMUEL TREADWAY BARNES AND HIS SON HERBERT BARNES
- ▶ THE NEW JIM PIERCE DISPLAY
- ▶ THE EXTRAORDINARY PAIR OF "DADDY" HOLLY CANVASBACKS, A GIFT FROM THE MICHAEL FAMILY.
- ▶ "TOOLS OF THE MARKET GUNNER" EXHIBIT FEATURING A NUMBER OF PUNT AND BATTERY GUNS
- ▶ THE "GUNNING THE FLATS" EXHIBIT
- ▶ THE "WHAT IS A DECOY?" EXHIBIT
- ▶ POTOMAC DECOY COLLECTOR'S ASSOCIATION TEAL EXHIBIT
- ▶ AN EXHIBIT OF FACTORY DECOYS, A GIFT FROM DR. MORT KRAMER
- ▶ "POP" SAMPSON'S HOMEMADE DUPLICATING LATHE FOR MAKING MINIATURE DECOY BODIES
- ▶ "LETTERS TO BOB MCGAW," A GIFT FROM JOEL B. PUSEY



- ▶ A BEAUTIFUL DECORATIVE EASTERN BLUE BIRD CARVED BY MASTER CARVER BARB WACHTER
- ▶ A BEAUTIFUL DECORATIVE CANVASBACK FAMILY MADE BY MASTER CARVER J. NOBLE MENTZER
- ▶ A LIFELIKE ROCKFISH (STRIPED BASS) CARVED BY MASTER CARVER LEE TATE, SR.

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Talk to your children's or grandchildren's teachers and scout leaders about educational programs and tours of the Decoy Museum. Harford County school system classes are free, and we will also welcome your home schooled children! Tours can be tailored to the curriculum and different age/grade levels. Book your tours early by emailing Margaret Jones at [information@decoymuseum.com](mailto:information@decoymuseum.com) or by calling (410)-939-3739.

## AROUND TOWN

**FARMERS' MARKET:** Every Saturday thru October; 9am-noon

**FIRST FRIDAYS!:** First Friday every month; 5pm-9pm

**WATERMEN'S APPRECIATION DAY:** July 26th; 10am-7pm

**HAVRE DE GRACE SEAFOOD FESTIVAL:** August 8th-10th; Friday 3pm-8pm, Saturday 10am-8pm, Sunday 10am-6pm

**51ST ANNUAL HAVRE DE GRACE ART SHOW:** August 15th-17th; Friday 5pm-9pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am-5pm

**HAUNTED HISTORY GHOST TOURS:** September 5th-October 25th; 7pm and 8:30pm

**26TH ANNUAL CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL & CONTEST:** September 6th; 11am-2pm

**RESTORE CHURCH MOVIES AT THE PARK:** September 12th; 7pm-10pm

**COLOR THE BAY:** 5K -Run - September 13th; 9am-11am

**NORTH PARK TRAIL WALK:** September 13th; 10am

**CITY-WIDE YARD SALE:** September 20th; 8am-4pm

**HEALTHY HEART-FORD 5K RUN/WALK:** September 20th; 8:30am-10:30am

**FALL HARVEST & CRAFT FESTIVAL:** September 27th-28th; 11am-4pm

**7TH ANNUAL GRAW DAYS FESTIVAL:** October 11th; 9am-6:30pm

**FALL FESTIVAL AT THE LOCK HOUSE:** October 25th; 1pm-5pm

**HALLOWEEN PARADE:** October 30th; 6pm

**TALES AND TREATS WITH HERITAGE MUSEUMS OF HDG:** October 31st; 6pm-8pm

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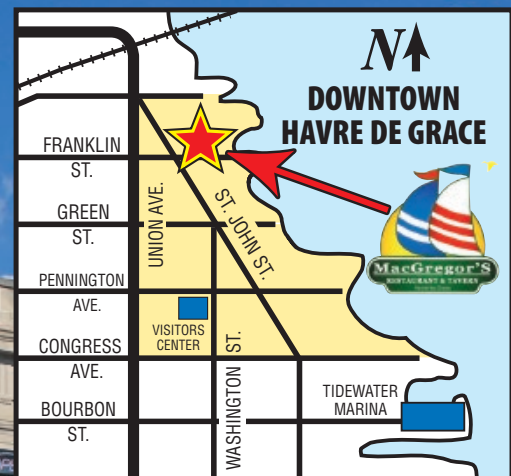
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