

*The Schweikart Can
will be our subject
for the 2006
Show Pin.*

midwest
D•E•C•O•Y
collectors association
NEWSLETTER

2006 SHOW DISPLAY TO FEATURE MICHIGAN DECOYS



Tom Schroeder Canvasback



Ferdinand Bach Canvasback

Renew your membership now and sign up new members.

Our association is making steady progress. We have more members than any other time. Our newsletter is improving as we pursue the challenge to make them collectible. The web is gaining content and momentum toward becoming a better resource for our members and potential members. We estimate that our association has more than 19,000 years of collecting experience and our collections have in excess of 250,000 items. Keep your network active and enlist new members as many new decoys are becoming available.

Make your plan to attend the 2006 show as it promises to be our best ever.

Contact Pheasant Run and ensure that your arrival date is set. If you haven't attended lately you will be surprised. Ken Cole has been busy organizing our member display. This year will feature an impressive list of Michigan carvers including Bach, Christie Brothers, Mason, Dodge, Finch, Finkle, Foote, Hayden, Kelson, Meldrum Family, Quillen, Reghi, Ben and Frank Schmidt, Schroeder, Schweikert, Smith, Stubing, Vandenbosch and Zachmann. Make time Friday or Saturday to see this display, it promises to be special.

MIDWEST DECOY COLLECTORS

OFFICERS

Herb Desch	President
Roger Ludwig	Vice-President
Tom O'Key	Treasurer
Open	Secretary

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tom Bosworth	Roger Ludwig
Rose Claussen	Tom O'Key
Ken Cole	Rick Sandstrom
Herb Desch	Joe Tonelli
Alan Haid	Jim Wierzba
Steve Handevidt	

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Midwest Decoy Collector's is to foster the hobby of decoy collecting by attracting new collectors, by seeking out and preserving old decoys, gather information about old carvers and their methods of historical records, and hold an annual show for decoy collectors and carvers for the exchange of information about their origin.

The Midwest Decoy Collectors Association is a nonprofit, educational organization, incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois. It invites membership to all persons who have an interest of any kind of collecting decoys and sporting collectibles.

DUES

Dues are \$15.00 a year, or \$40.00 for three years, payable on January 1. This entitles members and a guest free admission to the April show, newsletters and an annual directory listing all members. The mailing address label indicates what year's dues have been paid. Please mail your dues with checks payable to M.D.C.A. to the following address:

Tom O'Key • (847) 842-8847
310 Woodview Road
Lake Barrington, IL 60010-1731

WEBSITE

www.midwestdecoy.org

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings! This Holiday Newsletter should reach everyone right after Christmas. We hope you and your family had a pleasant Holiday Season.

The April Show seems like a long time ago but there has been activity on the part of your Board. The most significant event is that the Internal Revenue Service has granted our application for 501(c)(3) status. This means our not-for-profit status has been clarified. There are implications for our Association and our members. The Association's tax status has now been clarified and we will also apply for a not-for-profit mailing permit. This should significantly reduce our mailing costs. For members, you can count your dues to the Association as a charitable deduction on your Federal tax return, if you itemize deductions. Since the dues are less than the \$75 threshold, we *do not* have to mail out confirmation of your contribution.

Treasurer, Tom O'Key has prepared an analysis of recent revenue and expenses for the Association that appears elsewhere in the Newsletter. We have had revenues and expenses slightly north of \$40,000 for several years. With last years table price increase this will go up but so have expenses. Tom has also provided a breakdown of how our revenues are spent (e.g. Annual Directory, Newsletter, website, Pheasant Run, etc.). Several of you have asked to see financial results. Tom will have them in his room at Pheasant Run next year. Stop by his room if

have an interest in seeing them.

Our friends at Guyette and Schmidt have informed us that the Illinois Department of Revenue has contacted them to verify the sales tax exemptions for those who bought items at their auctions in St. Charles and claimed the exemption. You should make sure your "Certificate of Registration" is current. If you need information for Illinois registrations check out their website at www.revenue.state.il.us.

Planning for the April 2006 Show is well underway. Ken Cole and Jim Aiken are heading up a superb collection of Michigan decoys for this year's Show Exhibit. Rose Claussen is planning two "Collectors Seminars", on different days to facilitate the opportunity for more to attend. Jim Wierzba has completed the layout for the tables and assignments are beginning. We are planning the Friday night networking buffet with Pheasant Run. Our advertising is targeted on the sporting collector segment and focused publications that support them.

This gets us to the topic of attendance at the Show. An increasing membership is the surest way to increase attendance. Please think about what you can do to increase the number of members. You know who should be a member, ask them to join. Also spread the word! Word of mouth is far more pervasive than advertising. Our show is the event that should not be missed. Talk it up!

Herb

ABOUT YOUR ASSOCIATION



Thanks to Ed Wojo for his support to the board as Secretary. Ed has chosen to end his board activities in order to spend more time with Melissa and their 5 hunting dogs pursuing their hunting/retrieving/traveling passion.



Roger Ludwig is busy updating our plans for the identification and evaluation clinic that we conduct each year.

The 2006 show is shaping up to be a special event. Plan to attend the Friday night networking buffet.



Donna Tonelli has been busy sending articles to the major magazines to create more support for our cause. She has great MDCA history developing on her website. Be sure to read.



Bill and Rose Claussen have been active planning two collectors seminars for this years show.



Bob and Kristin Lehmkuhl won our special mention for their great display of Wisconsin Mallard hens at last year's show.

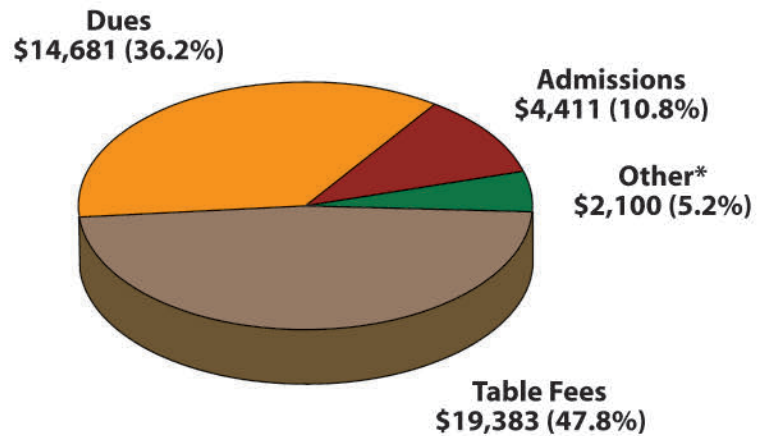


Jim Wierzba is finalizing the show table layout and beginning assignments. Get your table reservation in now as we look for a sellout.

SUMMARY OF MDCA

**Average Yearly
Revenue
(\$40,575)
5 Years
(2000 through 2004)**

* Includes Silent Auction
Commissions, Interest and
Show Pin Sales



There has been a growing interest in our association's financial status, and with the recent granting of federal 501(c)(3) (non-profit) tax status, it seems like a good time to acquaint the membership with some of the economic highlights of our organization. To help with the analysis, we have included a couple of pie charts showing the percentage breakdowns of our major revenue and expense categories averaged over a 5 year period - 2000 through 2004.

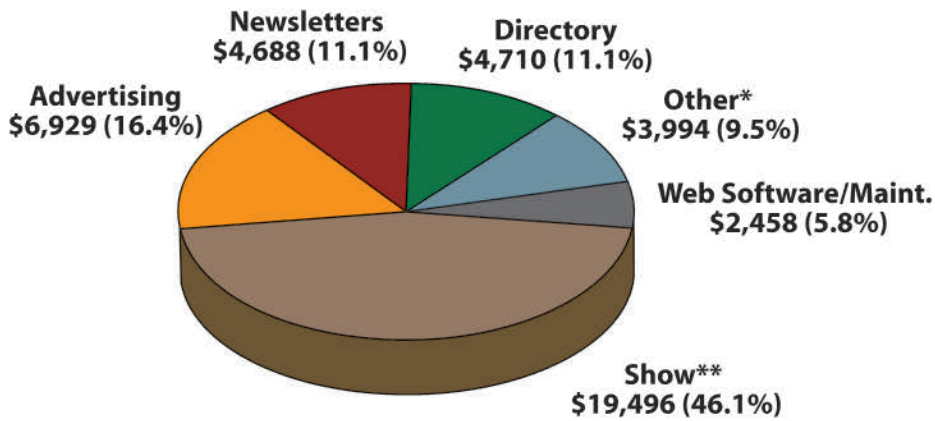
On average, our cash flow over the past several years has been negative. In fact, 3 of the last 5 years have been in the "red". Our largest loss year was 2003 when we wound up the year spending almost \$7,000 more than we received. The factors driving this negative trend are that certain costs, such as, Pheasant Run fees, Website software and maintenance, insurance, etc. have been growing while our revenue stream has been relative constant. Our two primary sources of revenue are dues and table rental fees. Without raising dues, which was last done in 1981, the only way to increase dues revenue is to increase our membership. We have made some progress in this area but it has proven to be difficult and slow. Regarding table revenue, we are pretty much maxed out on the number of tables we can fit into the Pheasant Run Megacenter, so the only real way to improve revenue in this area is to raise table fees.

Noting this downward trend, the board members began examining various solutions to improve our financial position. After looking at the 2003 results, it was decided to leave dues and table fees constant and attempt to reduce some of our ongoing expenses. This approach was somewhat successful, and in 2004, we operated slightly in the "black", finishing \$600 positive. However when taking into consideration the fact that our expenses have been increasing (especially those associated with putting on our annual Show) and that the only areas where we can reasonably cutback on expenses are advertising and newsletters, the board felt we needed to take a more aggressive approach. Since expenses related to hosting our annual Show (Pheasant Run, Advertising, Badges, Security, Temporary Help, etc) have been exceeding our primary source of Show revenue



*Display at West Bend, WI
Art Museum*

FINANCIAL RESULTS



(Table Fees) it was decided we had no choice but to raise the table rental rates. Therefore, beginning in 2005, table fees were increased to \$75 each. The previous increase was in 1989.

Although this has definitely raised our table revenue for 2005, we're still not experiencing the overall monetary boost we would like to see to fund more advertising and membership recruitment activities. This is because we are experiencing a partial offsetting reduction in dues revenue, mostly stemming from the fact that more and more members have been opting for the \$40 three year membership. This has resulted in some increased revenue for the past two years, but is affecting us now, since a number of members are "paid up" and did not need to contribute dues in 2005. This trend will continue for 2006, with almost half of our membership having paid up dues through that year. On the expense side of the ledger, we have had some encouraging developments. We were successful in negotiating what we feel will be a very favorable contract with Pheasant Run over the next 3 years. Under the terms of this agreement, we should be able to keep most of our Pheasant Run expenses relatively constant. Going forward, this potential for additional revenue and more stable costs, should strengthen our financial situation.

Although limitations of space make it difficult for us to provide much of an in-depth description of our association's economics, we hope this gives you a little better appreciation of the financial operation of the MDCA organization and some of what we can expect the next few years. One fact is certain. We remain committed to providing all our members with the best overall quality collecting experience we can deliver, including the best decoy and sporting collectible show in the Northern Hemisphere, informative newsletters, educational seminars, opportunities to view, handle, buy, sell and trade collectibles, and very importantly, meet and network with as many fellow collectors as possible.

Please feel free to drop by and see Tom O'Key (Room 107) at the Pheasant Run Resort during our annual Show in April to ask questions and discuss in more detail the financial operation of our association.

Average Yearly Expenses
(\$43,275)
5 Years
(2000 through 2004)

* Includes Donations, Insurance, Postage, Supplies, Registration Fees, etc.

** 85% of these expenses are Pheasant Run fees

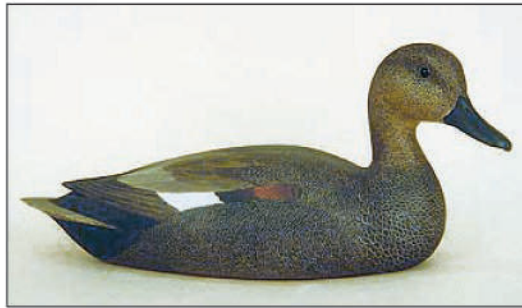


Now this is a Decoy!

2005 MIDWEST DECOY COLLECTOR'S ILLINOIS RIVER DISPLAY TOP 5

The Midwest Decoy Collector's Association was founded in 1966 with the specific mission to further the knowledge and history of decoys. In 2002 the Board of Director's decided to resurrect an old tradition and create an opportunity for our show attendees to view a special display of our member's decoys to increase the exchange of information and expand our knowledge of various regions of carving. The first year our display focused on Mason Factory Decoys and coincided with the release of the new Mason book by our members Alan Haid and Russ Goldberger. We quickly realized that we had created history as the display represented the best of the best and was the only time that these birds could be viewed all at the same time. It was a huge hit! Year two focused on Wisconsin birds and enjoyed a tremendous response from our show attendees.

2005 featured Illinois River Decoys as Tom O'Key and Joe Tonelli recruited and Tom Bosworth arranged 39 outstanding decoys. Our members responded with a memorable and diverse flock of decoys. The viewers voted on their choice for best and 19 of the 39 decoys received votes as members favorite. We are pleased to share the pictures of the top five and some basic background information on each of the carvers.



Harold Haertel (1904-1995) Gadwall Drake. Mackey, the famous collector, summarized Haertel's skill as a carver when he said " His perfection of detail and adherence to species conformation and plumage pattern are second to none, and his present work is incomparable." Our members agreed making it their first choice.

Stephen Lane (1842-1900) Pintail Drake. Among the earliest of carvers and a key contributor to the development of the Illinois River style. Notice the close attention to detail and the scale and line in the Lane decoy presentation. Males and females were made with different size patterns.



Brink Lane (1875-1954) Mallard Drake. Stephen's son who carved less than 100 decoys, but this fine sample shows the unique and attractive style.

Robert Elliston (1849-1915) Sleeping Black Duck. The excellence of the Elliston decoy influenced many other carvers. The high set eyes and distinctive head are a notable characteristic of his birds. This is the only known black duck and the only known oversized decoy carved by Elliston.



Charles Perdew (1874-1963) Mallard Hen. This full-cheeked turned head beauty is an outstanding example of the famous Perdew style; notice the line of the head, neck and full carved breast.

MICHIGAN DECOYS TO HIGHLIGHT 2006 MEMBER DISPLAY

Nate Quillen Canvasback



Ben Schmidt Hooded Merganser



*John Schweikart
Canvasback*



Marty Hanson, Jim Aikin and Ken Cole reviewing decoys at the auction preview. Jim and Ken are leading the Michigan member display collaboration for 2006.

Ben Schmidt Blue Goose



Mason Hen Merganser



SPECIAL INTEREST



The Evan's collectors plan an information sharing rendezvous at each of the shows. It's a lot of fun and a great example of the type of networking that makes St. Charles **"The one show that you simply can't miss!"** Make your show reservation now and bring a friend to enjoy all the activities. Happy Collecting!

Midwest Decoy Collectors Association

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