



Our April 2016 Show will feature Minnesota decoys, like this one by Joseph Marr (Heron Lake, MN, ca 1900)



The Tradition Continues

2016 marks the 51st anniversary of the North American Vintage Decoy and Sporting Collectibles Show, sponsored by the Midwest Decoy Collectors Association (MDCA), taking place on April 19-23 at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois. What began as a small gathering of early, passionate collectors in 1966 has grown to become the largest event of its kind anywhere, attended by enthusiasts who travel from all over North America.

More than 300 dealers will be on site during the week offering over 30,000 sporting collectible items in their rooms and then in the Pheasant Run Resort Mega Center. And the Guyette & Deeter auction always features some truly special items for sale.

The MDCA is excited about this year's show and hopes that current members and anyone else with a passion for this uniquely American folk art will come to celebrate with us in St. Charles in April.

To learn more about the show or to join the MDCA, visit our website at midwestdecoy.org or call Jeff Seregny at 586-530-6586.

The show this year will feature a number of displays and events for collectors of a wide range of sporting collectibles:

- Display of vintage Minnesota waterfowl decoys, preceded by a educational seminar on the history of the great carvings from this area
- Minnesota spearing fish decoy display
- Shell Box display with their colorful graphics and unique designs
- Our second annual shooting box display
- Contemporary Carver Corner with duck and fish carving workshops
- First-ever vintage animal trap display
- A special contemporary carver exhibit featuring the decoys and folk art of Ben Heinemann
- The Callmakers and Collectors Association of America (CCAA) annual meeting with several days of activity including an auction, call competition and a show display

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WHO WE ARE

The **Midwest Decoy Collectors Association** (MDCA) is a nonprofit, educational organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois. It invites membership to all persons. The purpose of Midwest Decoy Collectors is to foster the hobby of decoy collecting by attracting new collectors, seeking out and preserving old decoys, gathering data about carvers and their methods, and holding an annual show for decoy collectors and carvers.

OUR HISTORY

The **Midwest Decoy Collectors Association** was started in 1966 by a small group of dedicated decoy collectors as a gathering in Ottawa, Illinois to reconnect, share stories and trade decoys. Since then, the Club has grown to over 1000 enthusiasts from all walks of life. Our members come from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, three Canadian provinces, England, Switzerland, Japan and Mexico. They write books on collecting, manage auction companies, publish magazines, carve world class decoys, calls and collectibles, provide appraisal services, and form a core network of knowledge on sporting collectibles and their history. That humble gathering of collectors in 1966 has grown to become the **North American Vintage Decoy and Sporting Collectibles Show** – the largest show of its kind. The annual show features room-to-room trading, a tabled show and a major decoy auction in addition to a variety of networking events and educational activities including seminars, displays and carving demonstrations.

DISPLAY ADVERTISING is now being accepted in select issues of this newsletter. Contact **Jeff Seregny** at jseregny@gmail.com or **586-530-6586** for rates and availability.

www.midwestdecoy.org

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

2016 is on the move at St. Charles. As you know, we are adapting to a significant change this year. I think that it can be positive but will require that we are all able to adjust to the change that this means for each of us.

Pheasant Run's upgrade is in-process.

The tower has been completely repainted and all the rooms have been upgraded. The lobby is refurbished and golf wing rooms have been reconfigured. The upgrade of both the facility and service holds the real potential for an enhanced experience for all who attend the show.

Membership is expanding again. In addition to new members we have been able to recapture some who have been absent for a period of time. For example, we had a member renew who hadn't been active since 1996. This means more attendees and fresh items at St. Charles.

Show content continues to grow. We have added several focus areas over the past few years including shooting boxes plus vintage and contemporary fish decoys. This year we are adding shotgun shell boxes for their wonderful art and an exemplary display of traps which will really surprise you.

I have to admit room assignments have become very complicated. In the new configuration, it's a challenge to keep the charm of the event while changing around about 200 room assignments. In the old layout we had areas that we had developed into different groups of related dealers, utilizing all of the A, B, C, D, E, F and G wings and the tower. Now we are only in the E, F and G wings and tower. This creates a ton of change. For example, a majority of the old A wing folks will now have sleeping rooms in the tower, but will sell out of four ground floor common selling spaces during the room-to-room trading days. In all, there will be 35 different

members using these new common areas. The call makers will all be in one location on the 4th floor in the tower.

We are making the effort to talk with every one who has made a reservation in an attempt to develop the best room plan for all. This is not a trivial effort but I'm confident it will lead to a good experience for all. As always we need your understanding and support.

Request for Help! Confirm your show dates, get your dues renewed and reserve your tables now. We need to know who's attending and their needs earlier than in previous years in order to accommodate all well.

Special thanks to our advertisers whose support allows for expanded content and wider distribution of this newsletter. This helps us meet our goal of growing membership and increasing overall interest in our hobby.

Missing you.

On January 3rd our long time member Dick Brust passed. Dick's style and spirit made our world and collecting better. Dick has provided wonderful guidance and support and we will be eternally grateful for his contributions to our club and our hobby.



St. Charles 2016 shouldn't be missed.

Attendees are traveling from all over North America for the 2016 event. People and decoys are coming that we haven't seen in years and many of the items being offered are favorites from old collections. It promises to be great fun!

Happy Collecting, see you at St. Charles!

Rick

Rick Sandstrom

51st North American Vintage Decoy & Sporting Collectibles Show

Don't miss the largest gathering of Sporting Collectibles enthusiasts in North America! The must attend show for anyone interested in America's hunting and fishing past and the great folk art that grew from it.



Vintage Minnesota Decoy Display

Room-to-Room Trading. Guyette and Deeter Auction. Tabled Dealer Show. Free Appraisals. Collector Seminars and Displays.

Once again this year, there is no shortage of great decoys and good fun. As the largest event of its kind anywhere, the annual show is, for many, their once a year opportunity to rekindle old friendships and maybe even add a decoy, shell box, call or virtually any other piece of sporting folk art to their collection.

On the pages that follow you'll see a preview of the many activities planned for this year's show. From Room-to-Room Trading to the tabled event in the Mega Center, and the Guyette & Deeter auction in between, the show is always a wonderful experience for everyone in attendance.

It's not too late to make your plans to attend. Make your room reservations at Pheasant Run by calling Theresa Stafford, the resort's Room Controller at 630-524-5038. And reserve your selling tables for the Mega Center event using the "Table Reservation Form" in the back of this newsletter.

April 19-23, 2016

Pheasant Run Resort
St. Charles, IL

Tuesday, April 19

All Day – Room-to-room trading

Wednesday, April 20

All Day – Room-to-room trading

6pm – Auction Preview Reception

Thursday, April 21

All Day – Room-to-room trading

9am – Minnesota Decoy Seminar

9:30am - 1pm – Show Registration in Library

11am – Guyette & Deeter Auction Day 1

4pm – Evans Collectors Meeting

6pm – Call Makers Auction & Party

Friday, April 22

9am – Call Makers Meeting & Contest Judging

8:30am – Member "Town Hall" Meeting

10am – Guyette & Deeter Auction Day 2

2pm to 7pm – Table Event in Mega Center

Vintage Minnesota Decoy Display

Vintage Minnesota Fish Display

New Shell Box Display

Shooting / Gunning Box Display

New Animal Trap Display

Featured Carver Exhibit – Ben Heinemann

Contemporary Carver Demonstrations / Display

Free Identification and Appraisals

Saturday, April 23

9am - 2pm – Table Event in Mega Center

Friday Displays / Demonstrations / Appraisals Continue



Minnesota Decoys Take Center Stage at Pheasant Run

Waterfowl Display

This year's member display will feature decoys from the great state of Minnesota, "Land of 10,000 Lakes." It will include a broad selection of vintage decoys made by Minnesota's most admired makers - from the collection owned by the Minnesota Decoy Foundation (formed by the Minnesota Decoy Collectors Association) as well as from a number of private collections. This is an opportunity to see great pieces that are rarely available for public viewing.

A wide variety of makers will be represented including John Tax, Alfred Moes, Ole Gunderson, Louis Setka, Joe Marr, Alfred Anderson of Heron Lake, Tuveson Manufacturing Co. and Herter's, Inc. These pieces will be on display both Friday and Saturday (April 22-23) in the Mega Center. Thanks to Marty Hanson and Doug Lodermeier for putting the display together.



Louis Setka, Montgomery, ca. 1940



Joe Marr, Heron Lake, ca. 1900-10



Alfred Moes, Lakeville, ca. 1934



*Marty Hanson / Harold Haertel,
Prior Lake, 1989*



Alfred Moes, Lakeville, ca. 1934



Marv Bennet, Cottage Grove, ca. 1952



Ole Gunderson, Ashby, ca. 1920

Educational Seminar

Always one of the week's favorite events, there will be an educational seminar about Minnesota decoys and their makers at 9:00am on Thursday, April 21 preceding the weekend display. Presented by Doug Lodermeier, author of the seminal book on this subject, "Minnesota Duck Decoys," the seminar will offer attendees an inside look at the history of waterfowling in Minnesota and an up-close look at some of the best decoys ever produced in the state. Be sure to get there early as this is always a well-attended event.



Spearing Fish Decoy Display

Minnesota has a rich history of spearing as one of only a handful of states where winter dark house spearing for northern pike was and still is legal. This year's display will feature approximately 100 exemplary examples of fish decoys from Minnesota made by the best known carvers like Leroy Howell, Frank Mizera, Fred Lexow – along with well documented but lesser known carvers like Albert Morris and John Ryden.

The style, form and paint of fish decoys from Minnesota varies widely due to the isolation of the fishing areas in the early 20th century when most of these were produced. As such, they include some of the finest true-to-form decoys, as well as whimsical folk art versions where the species are impossible to identify. Unlike the examples in last year's Michigan fish decoy display, these Minnesota fish are unique to the state. Thanks to member Jim Krebsbach for bringing these great decoys together in a display that will include many from his own collection. These decoys will be on display in the Mega Center on Friday and Saturday of show week.



Minnesota Waterfowling

We are thrilled to include this edited version of a full-length article that appears in "Minnesota Duck Calls – Yesterday's and Today's Folk Artists" by Doug Lodermeire, L&M Press, 2003. Photos are from the same book.

"Remembrances of Hunting on Minnesota's Lake Christina: 1875 – 1958" by Paul Englund

I was in my shop the other day tuning and finishing some of my "Pit Boss" Goose calls when my hunting partner (my youngest son), Matt, came in. He asked if he could help with anything. So I suggested we straighten up our hunting gear. As I was sorting out the various shot gun shells, I came across a box of Old Blue Peters shells I'd picked up at a garage sale last year, and my mind wandered back to my first duck hunting experience on at the Greyhound Bus Company Duck Camp on Lake Christina.

I woke up that morning to the smell of bacon frying and fresh brewed coffee. It was mid October 1946, I was ten years old, my dad was the cook and he had let me stay overnight. We had shared his bunk in the cook's quarters at the camp on the southeast side of Lake Christina. I got my clothes on in a flash and opened the door to the kitchen just as Andy Nelson came in from outside. He grabbed a cup of coffee and Dad asked how it looked out there. He said, "10,000 Cans were laying on Grandis Bay. Came in last night." Andy was the Chief Guide, Decoy Setter, Dog Handler and all around caretaker of the camp.

After I had breakfast and helped Dad clean up the kitchen I asked him if I could go down to the blind. He said it was O.K. with him if I stayed out of the way. Just as I got to the blind, I heard Andy yell, "Mark" and a flock of ducks came buzzing in off the lake. The hunters shot, and Andy sent the dog as they were reloading. A spent Blue Peters shell flew out by my feet. I picked it up and smelled it; from that moment on I've been obsessed with waterfowling.

Andy was a market hunter starting in the late 1880's until 1918. He would drift his Sneak Boat into the rafts of Cans and Redheads. The ducks would swim in a tight ball ahead of the boat and he would lift his old Black Powder Double over



Andy Nelson, ca. late 30's.

the gunwales and fire into the flock. He would lay back down in the boat and let the cripples calm down and then shoot them in the head with his 22 short, pick them all up and start again on another raft of ducks.

Market Hunters would sell their ducks to a broker who was set up on a loading platform off the tracks by Melby. The buyer would pay \$3.50 for Redheads and \$4.00 for Canvasbacks per dozen, undressed, and ship them daily to St. Paul.

Among the first hunters on Lake Christina in the 1880's was Sam Fertig from St. Paul. He came up by horse and buggy to the lake. Seeing the huge rafts of ducks there he decided to stay and market hunt the lake. Nels Palmquist, who owned the farm where Fertig camped, told the story of helping Sam unload 152 Redheads from his boat one day and hauling them by wagon to the rail platform. There were many others who guided and hunted the lake at the turn of the century and beyond.



Sam Fertig, considered the first market hunter on Lake Christina

In the early 30's, Carl "Eric" Wickman, who started the Greyhound Bus Company, was hunting in the area with some friends and was checked by Andy. Eric asked about good spots to hunt Christina and Andy, seeing they were wealthy men, offered to guide them for a fee to the best dry land point hunting on the lake. He had three good points and two sloughs on his farm.

One of Wickman's hunting partners was Alex Janes who was Chief Counsel for the Great Northern Railway. Hunting with Andy was on a pay as you go basis until 1935 when Janes found out Andy was about to lose his farm to the Federal Land Bank. The hunters made him an offer he couldn't refuse. Wickman and Janes would pay off his mortgage for exclusive hunting rights and the right to build a lodge. Andy would be their guide and maintain the camp and all the boats, decoys, etc.

In 1938 my Dad and his brother Frank were cooking on the "Empire Building," Great Northern's passenger train that ran from Chicago to Seattle. Uncle Frank mentioned to Dad one day that they were looking for a cook at the Greyhound Camp. Dad jumped at the chance. This would give him more time, after the camp closed around the 1st of November, to trap and work on his farm. Dad started cooking at the camp that fall and was the camp cook for ten years.

Andy had three sons, Hubert, George and Cliff. Hubert wasn't around much, Cliff went into the service during the war and George stayed on the farm, which Andy ran while helping guide at the camp.

There were two blinds constructed originally, the main blind just north of the camp and the "Pool Blind" on a point a quarter mile southeast of the camp. In the early 40's, Eric Wickman bought the land across the narrows all the way down to the creek on the southeast side of the lake. He didn't want anyone else hunting on that side and they called it "Eric's Point."

Uncle Frank told me that one morning when the wind was strong out of the northeast that he and George took the President of Northwest Airlines over to "Eric's Point." While they were putting out decoys the Cans were landing in them. It wasn't long before they were close to their limit. Uncle Frank said, "I'm taking ten Cans and going back to camp." George replied, "What's your hurry?" Frank said, "Look up on the road, there's two Federal Wardens watching us with field glasses." He knew them by the car they were driving. So they picked up their ducks and went back to the camp. Uncle Frank said the same morning it sounded like a war was going on down in the "Pool Blind," then all of a sudden the shooting stopped. He found out later they had run out of shells.

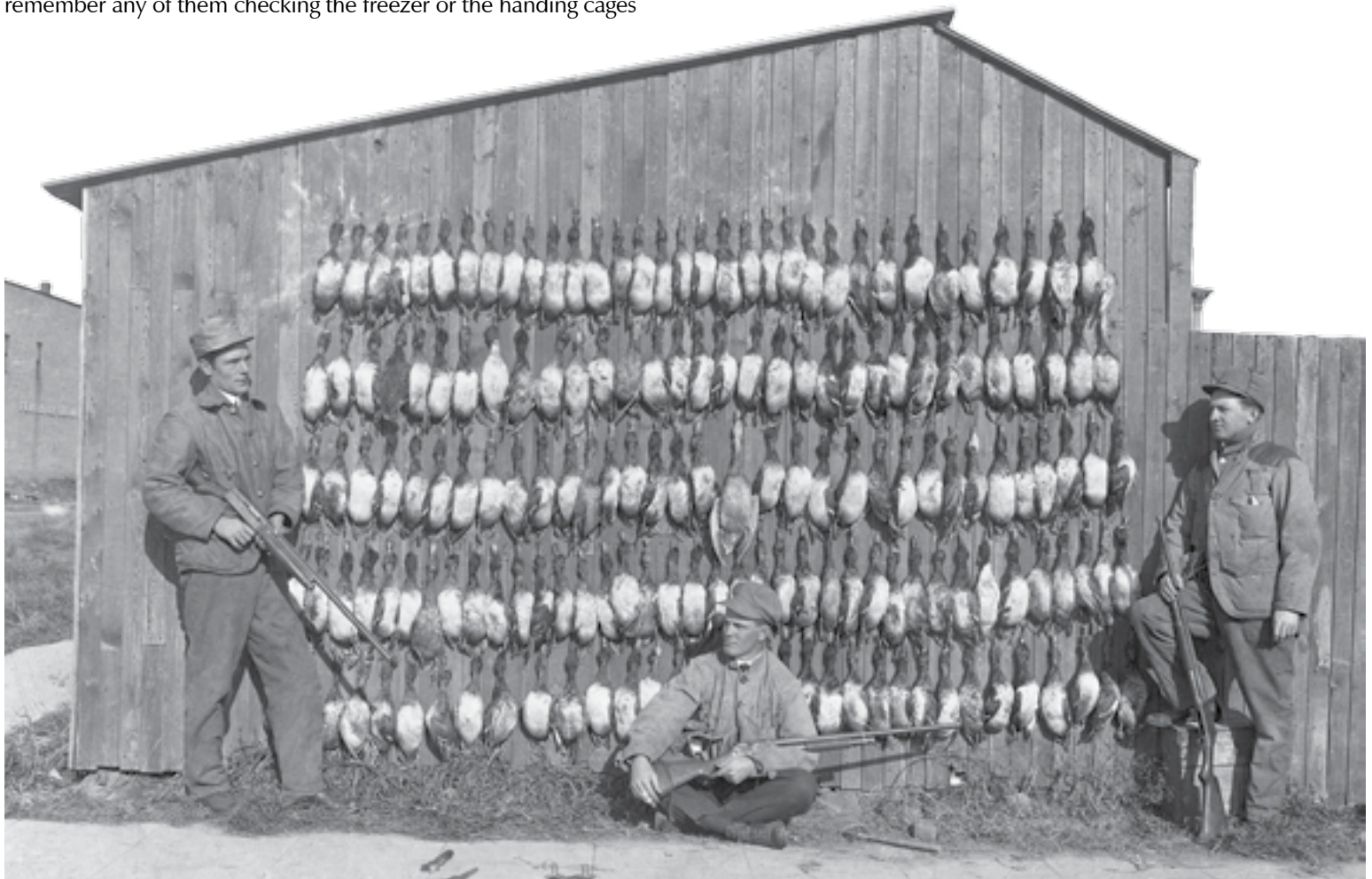
Dad said that occasionally a warden could come into camp. He'd give them a cup of coffee and a piece of pie and he couldn't remember any of them checking the freezer or the hanging cages

outside. I remember the cages being full of ducks and they would always let the Cans and Redheads hang for a few days to age before the pickers would clean them up.

The carp started to come into Christina from Pelican Lake in the early 50's. They put a carp weir in the creek that ran into Pelican in the late 40's that seemed to work fine, but while I was in the Army in 1954, I heard some irate local hunters who were harassed out of their favorite spot on the lake, blew up the weir. I later learned from Duke Anderson, the present Camp Manager and Chief Guide, that it wasn't actually blown up but that the bars were pried apart so the spawning carp could get through. I suppose it was inevitable that the carp would eventually get in, but that was the death knell for Lake Christina and with it tens of thousands of Canvasbacks.

Eric Wickman died in 1955 on his ranch in Florida. Andy died while I was still in the Army in the spring of 1956. I had hoped to be able to hunt with him when I got back, but that didn't happen. In late October 1956, Dad, my brothers Harold and Dave and I got a good morning shoot in the Pool Blind at the camp on Redheads and Bluebills, but it just didn't seem the same without Andy.

Dad passed away in 1990, but Uncle Frank, at 89 is still living in Alexandria and can still hold me spellbound for hours with his stories about the "good old days" on Lake Christina.



After a fine shoot of mostly redheads, ca. 1915. (Credit: Rich Oxley, Oxley Outdoors)

Even More Displays On Tap!

Shot Shell Box Display to Debut

For the first time ever, we will feature about 40 one and two-piece examples of shot shell boxes from the collection of Jim Krebsbach. This display will showcase the major ammunition companies of the late 19th and through the 20th century, such as Peters, Winchester, Austin and more.

Jim's collecting focus has been on boxes produced after the first generation of primed, but unloaded, shells with simple messaging. Once manufacturers started producing and selling fully loaded shells, producers started using beautiful, full-color graphics as marketing tool to help get their brands on the retailer's shelf. This display will include the most popular collector boxes today, those with stunning graphics of ducks, dogs and other game birds. What makes this display particularly special is that most of these examples are in a condition that is exceptionally good and extremely difficult to find. Don't miss this opportunity to learn more about this part of sporting history in the Mega Center on Friday and Saturday.



Encore Gunning Box Display

At last year's show, MDCA Board Member Roger Ludwig assembled a fantastic grouping of old "gunning" or "shooting" boxes from his own and other member collections. This was such a popular display that Roger will, once again, be bringing a completely different grouping of these great pieces of folk art that demonstrate amazing hunter creativity and ingenuity.

These vintage boxes, typically native to Wisconsin (often referred to as "Lake Poygan Shell Boxes"), were generally designed to efficiently carry an array of hunting paraphernalia including shells, gloves, matches, and any other necessary gear. An important component of these unique boxes was a cradle for the hunter's shotgun, helping to protect it from ending up wet in the bottom of the boat, or worse yet, from falling overboard into the drink! Some of these boxes even had cubbies for thermoses and many were designed to double as seats.

About a dozen wonderful examples from throughout Wisconsin will be on display in the Mega Center both Friday and Saturday (April 22-23) of show week.



Ingenuity on display with our first-ever animal trap exhibit.

The 2016 show will, for the first time, feature a large display of rarely seen animal traps from the collection of Sam and Margaret Delavan.

While trapping goes back to the Ice Age when our ancestors trapped animals to provide fur for warmth, trapping has been an important part of growth and development in both Canada and the US. Trapping and fur trading began in the 1600's, and led to the formation of the fur buying Hudson's Bay Company in 1670. As demand increased, trapping led to greater westward expansion as trappers ventured farther and farther into uncharted territories to find more animals, creating trading posts in remote areas as they went.

The traps themselves are as varied as the prey they were meant to capture. And the breadth of this year's display will illustrate the ingenuity and craftsmanship behind these old tools of the fur trade. So stop by the Mega Center on Friday or Saturday to see these terrific examples, and to say, "Hi" to Sam and Margaret and thank them for sharing this great collection.



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Contemporary Carvers on Display

Featured Carver Exhibit – Ben Heinemann



In past years our featured carver exhibit has been one of the most popular events at the show. This year should be no different as we feature a display of the wonderful decoys and folk art carvings by Ben Heinemann of Durham, North Carolina.

A childhood fascination with waterfowl and his first trips to an uncle's duck blind inspired artist Ben A. Heinemann to carve his first

bird in 1971. Ben carved and painted in those early years for his own pleasure.

Heinemann entered his first decoy competition in Davenport, Iowa in 1977, and has gained international recognition since then. In 1978 his carving of a Canadian Goose was judged "Best in World," beginning a string of five goose "World's Championship"



First Place titles. His many other awards include "Best of Shows" and numerous achievement recognitions from a variety of carving competitions from coast-to-coast.

Ben's work has been featured in a number of venues including the Core Sound Museum of Wildfowl Art, Harker's Island, North Carolina, Back Bay Wildfowl Museum, Virginia Beach, Virginia. In 1994 Ben was featured by the Herald Sun Newspaper, Durham, NC as "Artist of the Year."

At this year's show, Heinemann, a long-time MDCA member, will exhibit a broad range of his work including Gunning, "Smoothie" Decorative, and Antique style decoys in addition to a number of other folk art carvings.

A broad range of pieces will make up this exceptional, "once in a lifetime" exhibit. The display will be viewable in the MegaCenter Exhibit Hall on Friday, April 22 and Saturday, April, 23. Don't miss the chance to visit with Ben and see his fantastic work.

Plus, demonstrations and displays by other contemporary makers

In addition to our special display there will be exhibits by more than two dozen member carvers in the Contemporary Carver's Corner – including carving/painting demonstrations where attendees can learn the "tricks of the trade" directly from these contemporary masters.



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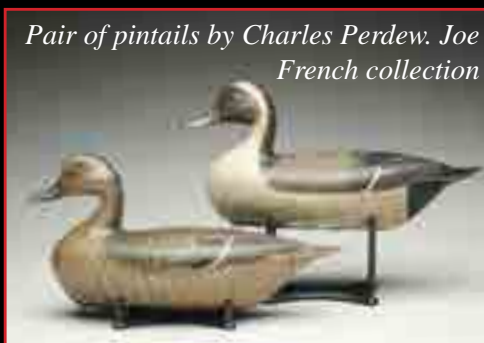
*Exceptional Monhegan Island
style merganser by Gus Wilson*



*Exceedingly rare wood
duck hen by the Mason
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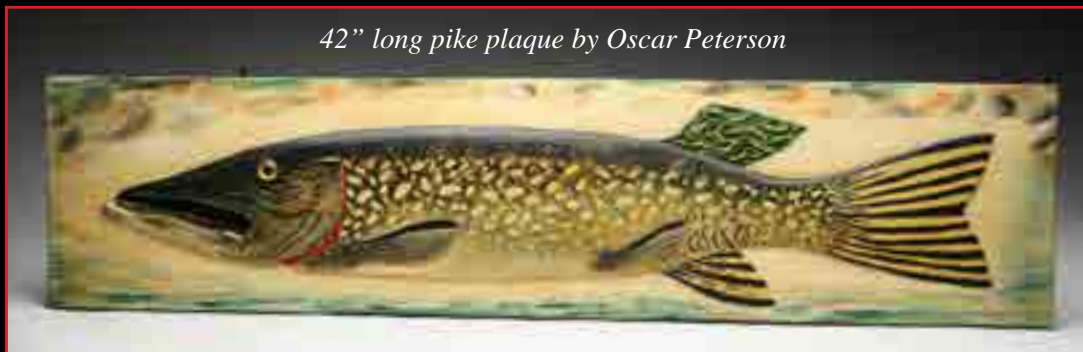
*Pair of pintails by Charles Perdew. Joe
French collection*



Rare sunfish spearing decoy from Lake Chautauqua



42" long pike plaque by Oscar Peterson



*Ammunition advertising
from the collection of Paul
Tudor Jones II*



*Important duck call by
James T. Beckhart*

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Contemporary Spearing Fish Decoys

In addition to the vintage Minnesota fish decoy display, once again this year we will feature the work of many of today's most accomplished contemporary makers. This work will illustrate the evolution from vintage carving techniques to the use of electric tools, air brushes, and special paints to create beautifully detailed decoys that are also functional.

Work on display will include the work of noted makers such as Sonny Bashore, Reggie Birch, Harley Ragan, A.J. Downey, Sr., Dave Kober, and Carl Christiansen. And some of today's best carvers will be on hand to demonstrate their carving techniques. This is a rare opportunity for all those in attendance to learn this wonderful folk art form from the best in the business!



C.B. Lewis



Dave Kober



Sonny Bashore



Reggie Birch



A.J. Downey, Sr.

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George Boyd (1873-1941)
Seabrook, NH, c. 1920

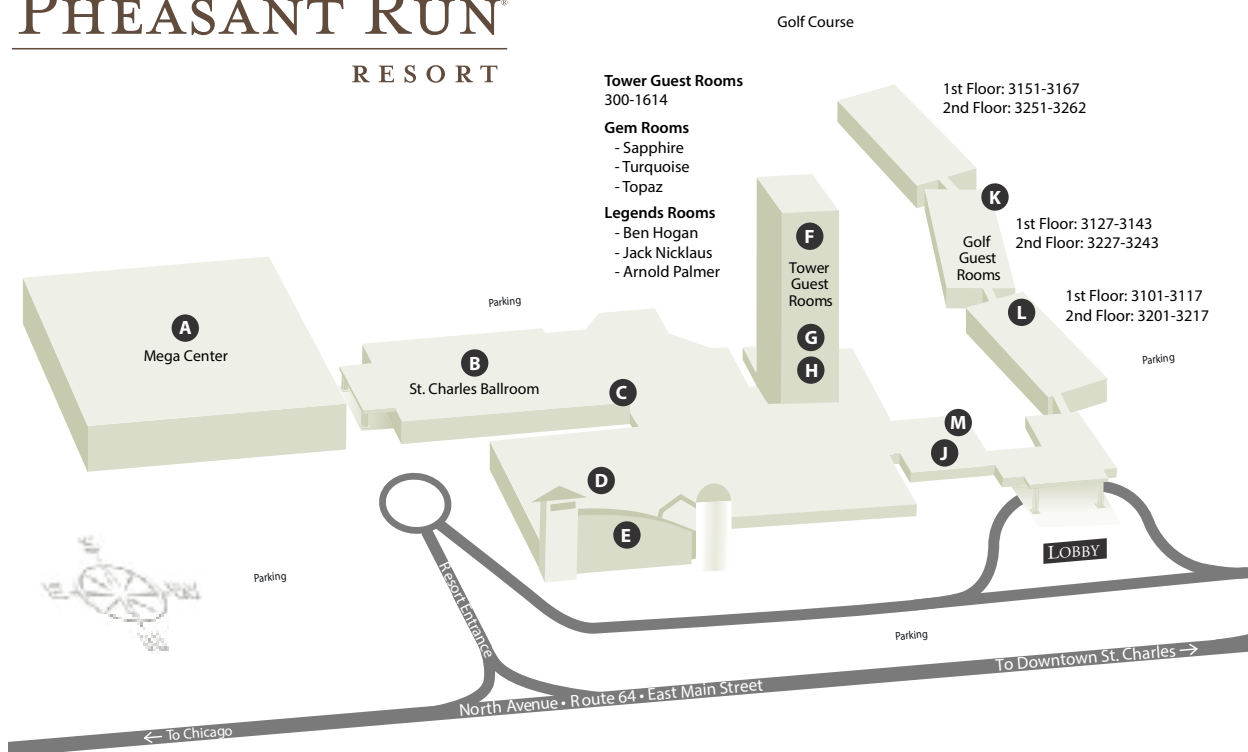
Looking Back and Moving Forward





PHEASANT RUN[®]

RESORT



PHEASANT RUN RESORT MAP

- A** Mega Center
- B** St. Charles Ballroom
- C** Marsalis Ballroom
- D** Broadway Ballroom
- E** Amphitheater
- F** Tower Penthouse Suites
- G** Gem Rooms
- H** Legends Rooms
- J** New Orleans Ballroom
- K** Golf Guest Rooms
- L** Bi-Level Suites
- M** Business Center

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Member Update

The MDCA continues to be the largest decoy and sporting collectibles organization anywhere with nearly 800 active members through the end of 2015. The number of first time members continues to expand with a good mix of both novice and experienced collectors. And we are attracting more and more

folks who collect a variety of sporting collectibles, such as fish decoys, lures, shotgun shell boxes, etc.

Please welcome these new members who have joined us since our last newsletter in November.

New Members since November 2015

Joseph Smith,
Sherrill, NY,
Ken Harris decoys

Tom VeZain,
Woodridge, IL,
Illinois River gunning decoys

Peter Fuller,
Chicago, IL,
Illinois River decoys

Steven Stratton,
Appleton, WI,
Old derelict decoys/carver

Charles Olson,
Sturgeon Bay, WI,

Anthony Erickson,
Pekin, IL,
Illinois River decoys

Bob Vangen,
Stoddard, WI,
Carver/Mason, Evans, Moak, Nelow

Roger Petrie,
Webster, NY,
New York State / Schutte decoys

Club Dues Are Due January 1 of Each Year

While many show attendees often wait to pay their annual dues at the show in April, **dues are actually due at the first of the year. If you have not already done so we urge you to pay your dues for 2016 now.** Not only will this make the registration process at Pheasant Run faster, it will help your club operate more efficiently by providing capital to meet advance show payments and reducing registration staff. In addition, paying your dues now will ensure that your name will be included in the member directory, you will continue to receive all club newsletters and other communications, and have access to all of the online tools.

You can make your payment online (you must first create an online account) at midwestdecoy.org or by **sending a check for \$25 (\$70 for three years)** made out to the MDCA to:
Curt Froyen, 1957 120th Ave., Knoxville, IA 50138.

Online Member Registration

The club's website features a number of online tools to allow us to communicate more frequently with our members, attract new members, and help the club run more efficiently.

To take full advantage of these efficiencies we need as many members as possible to register and set up their personal online account through the club website. If you haven't yet registered, we'd encourage you to do so as soon as possible. Just go to midwestdecoy.org, click on the Member Login button and follow the prompts. If you have any questions or just need a little help, contact Jeff Seregny at jseregny@gmail.com or 586-530-6586.

We Need Your Email Address

As discussed above, one of the key benefits of our new web site and database system is that it allows us to use email to communicate much more efficiently and frequently with our members about a variety of club issues including show details, table registration forms, and even surveys to get feedback to ensure that we continue to meet your needs. Obviously, you won't receive these important communications if we don't have a current email address for you in our database.

So, if you don't want to miss any important club news in the future, go to your online account or check your directory to ensure that we have a good email address for you. To add or correct your email address just send a note to jseregny@gmail.com with your request.



MDCA Membership has its Privileges — Join Today!

If you are not currently a member of the Midwest Decoy Collectors Association, you are missing the many benefits that our members enjoy, including:

- Being part of, and having access to, the largest decoy and sporting collectibles community in North America
- Our Member Directory in print form as well as an online searchable version
- Full subscription to our three times per year club newsletter

- Free entry to our annual show with seminars, displays, walk-in auctions, and networking events
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Member Profile

Tim Gentry: home is where the heart is for this Pekin, IL native

Living and working in Joliet, Illinois for 20 years hasn't lessened Tim Gentry's deep connection to his birthplace of Pekin, an Illinois River town in the heart of one of the richest waterfowling areas of North America. Today Tim is in a high pressure job as a Process Technician at the Exxon Mobil refinery in Joliet, but his interest in decoys was formed early in his life in his hometown.



As a boy of 11 or 12, Tim's dad taught him to duck hunt and took him to the most fertile hunting spots in the area, like Spring Lake, the Illinois River and even the Giant Goose Ranch Club in Canton. He's been hooked on hunting and everything related to it, including decoys and their makers ever since.

This early interest was fueled in part by spending time at the home of a boyhood friend, whose father had a large collection of Illinois River decoys. While he knew little about them, he was immediately drawn to their sculptural form and vibrant paint. He would even occasionally get to tag along with his pal and his dad to the Henry Decoy Show, long before he even thought about collecting decoys.

In his early 20s, Tim dove in and bought his first decoys, a pair of Mallards made by Fred Mott. No wonder, Mott was a Gentry family friend and neighbor in Pekin, and Tim's dad had been telling him stories about Mott's decoy making and his hunting exploits since Tim was just a boy.

From there Tim's fascination with Pekin decoys and their history grew, and with it a burning desire to learn more. Initially, he talked to old time makers and other collectors, went to shows, and devoured everything he could read. To underscore this point, Tim says, "I've read the Illinois River book so many times I almost have it memorized!"

In particular, Tim wanted to get even deeper knowledge of the lives of the old Pekin area makers. He spent countless hours

researching by combing through library records, visiting with old time makers in the area, and learning from other local collectors. *As a result, there is likely no one else who knows as much about the carvers from this rich decoying area.*

He estimates that there were upwards of 65-70 documented old time carvers from Pekin and its immediate surroundings. This is really remarkable given the town's small size relative to much larger cities like its up-river neighbor of Peoria. Pekin was simply teaming with duck hunters, many of whom made decoys solely for their personal use.

Tim's goal has been to own at least one good, original paint example from each of the makers he has identified. He's pretty much accomplished this and has undoubtedly amassed



George Kessler Mallard Drake

the largest collection of Pekin decoys anywhere. In addition to well-known names like Mott, George Kessler, Virgil Lashbrook, Leonard Doren, Tim's collection includes many lesser-known early makers such as Daniel Strickfaden, who founded the Pekin Gun Club and was a friend of Robert Elliston who loaned him patterns, which explains the similarities in their styles.

As a part of the process, Tim has kept a notebook on what he has learned about every Pekin carver he has uncovered, since so many are not included in the Illinois River decoy book. He says, *"This makes me feel like a real part of the history of these birds."*

Over time, Tim's collecting has branched out to include wonderful examples of other Illinois River greats like Charles Walker, Charles Perdew, Elliston and others. He says that his "best" is a rigmate pair of Charles Walker Mallards from the #22 Skinner rig, a well-documented rig from the Princeton Game & Fish Club, ca. 1935. However, his favorite decoy is a drake Mallard made by Pekin's George Kessler. This example is in the maker's later, more refined style of the 1950's, with its bulbous cheeks and outstanding paint. It puts a smile on his face every time he walks by it.

Tim Gentry's collecting demonstrates once again the multitude of reasons that drive us to collect what we collect. For Tim, it is his deep connection with Pekin, his childhood, and the rich waterfowling history of the area. And we should all thank Tim for the hard work he has put in to ensure that this history is preserved for future generations. Tim can be reached at tgentry@comcast.net.



Daniel Strickfaden Pintail Drake



Otto Garren Mallard Hen



Charles Walker Ringneck Drake



*Blue Wing Teal Hen
(Judge Glen Cameron)*



George Kessler Mallard Drake (early style)



Hector Whittington Pintail Drake



Charles Walker Mallard Drake and Hen



*Virgil Lashbrook Mallard Hen
(painted by Edna Perdew)*



Charles Perdew Mallard Drake



Daniel Strickfaden Blue Wing Teal Hen



William Lohrmann Mallards



Henry Schlottman Mallard Drake

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Reserve Your Tables for the April 22-23, 2016 Mega Center Show Now using the Table Registration Form on the next page!

As in the past, priority will be given to returning exhibitors who have held tables in prior years **provided your reservation and payment is received by March 15th.** The table cost remains the same as last year:

\$75
per table

for reservations and payment
by March 15, 2016

\$100
per table

for reservation and payment
after March 15, 2016

Mega Center Set-Up

As in past years, exhibitor table set-up will begin at 12 Noon on Friday, April 22th. **Only table exhibitors will be allowed in the Mega Center during the set-up hours.** The general public will be admitted at 2 pm. A name badge will be provided for all exhibitors, available at the Show registration desk beginning on Thursday morning, or on Friday in the Mega Center before set-up. Please wear this badge in the Mega Center at all times.

Send in Your Table Reservation Form Now!

To reserve your table, please fill out the Table Reservation Form on the next page and send it, along with your check by March 15. If you wish to make a change in your table location or have another request, please indicate this on the form. Your canceled check is your confirmation. You can contact Table Chair, Bill Claussen if you have questions about your assigned location.



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_____ Dues are paid up through 2016 (Y/N)

Person sharing table:

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PLEASE NOTE: All exhibitors must be MDCA members in good standing. If not already paid for 2016, you can pay your dues online at midwestdecoy.org or by including your dues along with your table payment.

If someone is sharing your table they must either be a family member, or be a MDCA member in good standing. They can join online at midwestdecoy.org or by including their dues payment and member profile information along with this form.

Checks should be made payable to the MDCA. Amount

_____ # of Table(s) @ \$75 each (\$100 each if after March 15th) \$ _____

Dues @ \$25 for one year or \$70 for 3 years \$ _____

TOTAL PAYMENT INCLUDED \$ _____

_____ Do you want the same table location as last year? (Y/N)

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51st Annual North American Vintage Decoy & Sporting Collectibles Show Pre-Show Issue — What's Inside!



SHOW UPDATE

An overview of our plans for the annual collector event at Pheasant Run (April 19-23)



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Rick Sandstrom provides Club update and his views on several Club issues



LIST OF CONFIRMED SHOW ATTENDEES

Who's coming and their new room numbers



PREVIEW OF SHOW ACTIVITIES AND DISPLAYS

A look at the many events planned for Show Week



MEMBER PROFILE

An interview with collector **Tim Gentry**, of Joliet, IL and a look at his great Illinois River decoys



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