



"Ding's Darling"

By Timothy T. Eisele

Ding Darling sketched the very first Federal Duck Stamp in 1934. That stamp, required of every waterfowl hunter 16 years of age and older, has been responsible for raising more than \$500-million and preserving more than 5-million acres of wetlands and nesting habitat.

The habitat not only provides protection and breeding grounds for migratory birds, but vital habitat areas for hundreds of other animals and plants, many of them threatened or endangered. Wetlands also filter and maintain groundwater supplies, control erosion, and store floodwaters.

Who was Ding Darling? What Wisconsin artists have won the stamp design contest? How is the winning artist selected? What's the key to submitting a winning entry? Those questions are answered in this interesting presentation about the "Olympics of Art Contests."

Tim Eisele is a freelance outdoor writer, member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America, and founding member and past-president of the Wisconsin Outdoor Communicators Association. He writes articles for **Wisconsin Outdoor News** newspaper, covering the DNR and Natural Resources Board. He has freelanced with **The Capital Times** newspaper, Wisconsin **Outdoor Journal** magazine, **The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel**, **The Wisconsin State Journal**, and for 12 years edited **Woodland Management** magazine, for landowners who own woodland in Wisconsin.

He was invited by the director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to serve as a judge for the 1995–1996 Federal Duck Stamp in Washington, D.C. As one of five judges, he inspected entries, interviewed art enthusiasts, and helped select the winning entry. During his Power Point presentation you will learn about Ding Darling, see some of Darling's political cartoons, see the very first stamp design (worth more than \$275,000), see some of the entries in the contest, see celebrity judge Dave Butz (an ex-NFL player with 3 Super Bowl rings), and you can be a judge and pick a winning entry.

Eisele has received awards as the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation's Statewide Conservation Communicator of the Year in 2009 and 1995, Wisconsin Conservation Congress Outdoor Writer of the Year, Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association Distinguished Service Award, Wisconsin Outdoor Communicators Association Honorary Lifetime Member, Wisconsin Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation Outdoor Writer Award, the Indian Head Country's Warren Knowles Award, and the Madison Audubon Society's James Zimmerman Award for Environmental and Communications Excellence.

Eisele has a B.B.A. and M.S. from UW-Madison, and his master's thesis (Wisconsin Waterfowl Hunter Attitudes of Regulations and Management Policies) was one of the first studies of Wisconsin waterfowl hunters and was presented to the 38th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Washington, D.C.



Artwork by Jim Hautman



Courtesy of Ding Darling Foundation

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