

# 2020 Chesapeake Challenge

BY KRISTIE CLATTENBURG

This year, the Ward Museum's annual Chesapeake Challenge found a new home in the returning Delmarvalous Festival, which celebrates Delmarva (Delaware, Maryland, Virginia) culture, including decoy carving, other traditional arts and local history. The Chesapeake Challenge was originally held in October during the Ward Museum's Chesapeake Wildfowl Expo, but the Ward Foundation was excited to bring the event to a new audience while celebrating its traditional roots.

A new home for the Chesapeake Challenge wasn't the only change to the competition this year. While competitors and visitors usually look forward to gathering for the event, 2020 added

new hurdles. The doors to the Ward Museum were closed from March 12 until July 21, and when it did open, there were restrictions to ensure everyone's safety. So, what could the Ward Foundation do to still celebrate the love for carving in the area it calls home?

The result was a hybrid in-person and online event. On Saturday, August 8, Ward Foundation staff, Ward Foundation Chair Rich Smoker and a limited number of volunteer judges floated decoys in tanks outside the Ward Museum. Nearly all of the day's proceedings were live-streamed on the Ward Museum's Facebook page for people to watch and get an up-close look at the birds. For the competition, the Ward Foundation accepted mail-in decoys from

across the country and had several local carvers stop by to drop off their decoys. Judges included local, award-winning carvers Arthur Leonard (Chincoteague, VA), Karl Yankey (Hummelstown, PA) and Russell Fish (Chincoteague, VA).

Everyone is hopeful that the 2021 Chesapeake Challenge will return to a more normal, in-person set-up this summer, so do us a favor and save the date: Saturday, August 14, 2021. Join us for the Delmarvalous Festival featuring the Chesapeake Challenge, hopefully in person – but even bigger and better online if needed. And in the meantime, stay safe and stay healthy, and keep carving!



**BEST IN SHOW - BEST IN DIVING DUCKS,  
REDHEAD BY LUKE COSTILLOW (AMHERST, OH)**



**SECOND IN SHOW - BEST IN MARSH & PUDDLE DUCKS,  
BLACK DUCK BY EUGENE T. MERRITT (CHINCOTEAGUE, VA)**



**THIRD IN SHOW - SECOND IN MARSH & PUDDLE DUCKS,  
MALLARD BY LUKE COSTILLOW (AMHERST, OH)**



**BEST IN OTHER WILDFOWL - GREEN-WINGED TEALS  
BY GEORGE WILLIAMS (DOVER, DE)**