



NEWS

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**NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM PREMIERES NEW FEDERAL DUCK STAMP EXHIBIT;
HOSTS CEREMONY TO DEBUT 1996-97 DUCK STAMP**

Breaking with tradition, the new 1996-97 Federal Duck Stamp will be unveiled June 27, 1996, at the Smithsonian Institution's National Postal Museum in Washington, DC, to coincide with the opening of the museum's new Federal Duck Stamp exhibit, "Artistic License: The Duck Stamp Story." The permanent exhibit was made possible by a gift from Jeanette Cantrell Rudy of Nashville, Tennessee, an avid waterfowl hunter and one of the world's most renowned collectors of Federal Duck Stamps and philatelic rarities.

Another ceremony to kick off the new Duck Stamp and honor its designer, artist Wilhelm Goebel of Somerset, New Jersey, will be held on June 29, 1996, in Basking Ridge, New Jersey. The 1996-97 Federal Duck Stamp goes on sale nationwide for \$15 on July 1.

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is grateful to Jeanette Rudy and the National Postal Museum for giving a resounding stamp of approval to one of this agency's most longstanding and successful conservation programs, the Federal Duck Stamp," said John Rogers, acting director of the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "It's a terrific help to the Service's wetlands conservation mission that the nearly half-million people who visit the National Postal Museum each year now will learn about the invaluable conservation contributions of waterfowl hunters, stamp collectors, artists, and wildlife enthusiasts who buy Duck Stamps and help conserve wetlands habitat and waterfowl."

The 800-square-foot Jeanette Cantrell Rudy Gallery, depicting a wetlands scene, includes displays of rare Duck Stamps and other philatelic artifacts to highlight the Federal Duck Stamp's role in conserving wetlands and waterfowl. Tracing the origins of the Federal Duck Stamp Program, the exhibit includes rare Duck Stamps, stamp irregularities, as well as unique stamp-related materials prized by collectors.

The exhibit also displays three mannequins featuring the faces of Jeanette Rudy, who is depicted hunting waterfowl; Jim Hautman, a two-time Federal Duck Stamp artist from Minnesota, who is portrayed sketching wildlife; and Jack Gregory, a long-time

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associate of Rudy's who assists with her philanthropic endeavors, who is portrayed birdwatching. The faces were made from actual plaster casts of Rudy, Hautman, and Gregory.

Federal Duck Stamps, formally known as Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps, must be purchased annually by waterfowl hunters 16 years of age and older. However, they are also purchased by a growing number of stamp collectors and other conservationists as a way to contribute to wildlife and habitat conservation.

Money from the sale of Duck Stamps is used for wetlands acquisition for the National Wildlife Refuge System, one of the world's most diverse collections of lands and waters dedicated to wildlife. Since 1934 when the Duck Stamp was created, stamp sales have raised \$500 million for the purchase of more than 4 million acres of habitat for the refuge system, which now includes 508 units nationwide. Federal Duck Stamps are sold for \$15 at most U.S. Post Offices, national wildlife refuges, sporting goods stores, and K-Mart and Wal-Mart stores. They cost \$1 in 1934 when they were first sold.

The 1996-97 Federal Duck Stamp--the first to depict a recognizable landmark--features a pair of surf scoters in flight over New Jersey's southern shoreline with historic Barnegat lighthouse in the background.

The ceremony at the National Postal Museum will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (with a press preview in the museum's atrium at 9:30 a.m.). Hosts will be Deputy Interior Secretary John Garamendi and James H. Bruns, director of the National Postal Museum.

The June 29 ceremony honoring artist Wilhelm Goebel will be held at the Somerset County Park Commission's Environmental Education Center in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The event will include a special Federal Duck Stamp Hometown Cancellation ceremony hosted by the local postmaster, an official signing ceremony, keynote speeches by Federal and state conservation agencies, and self-guided hikes through adjacent Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.

The Basking Ridge ceremony is made possible by support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Ducks Unlimited, Inc.; Trenton Stamp and Coin Co.; the U.S. Postal Service; Applejack Ltd. Editions; Sport'en Art; the New Jersey Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife; and the Somerset County Park Commission.