

PRESS RELEASE



Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest

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For Immediate Release

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The Art of Conservation

National Best of Show Winners Announced at State-Fish Art Expo

BLOOMINGTON, MN—Wildlife Forever was pleased to announce the national winners for the 2004 *Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest* during the fun-filled State-Fish Art Expo at Mall of America on June 12th. A distinguished panel of judges selected the “Best of Show” winners in three age categories:

Grades 4-6	1 st Place	Evan Martin	East Pearl, PA
	2 nd Place	Tony Beranek	Portage, MI
	3 rd Place	Justin Davis	Campo, CO
Grades 7-9	1 st Place	Dean Weaver	Vandalia, IL
	2 nd Place	Mark Pontow	Appleton, WI
	3 rd Place	Anthony Bierstedt	Huron, SD
Grades 10-12	1 st Place	Joshua Joint	Erie, PA
	2 nd Place	Celeste Governale	Fort Bridges, WY
	3 rd Place	Tiara Jenkins	Pittsburg, MO

Winning artwork was on display for hundreds of thousands of Mall visitors to admire and an Awards Ceremony acknowledged the hard work of the talented young artists. Wildlife Forever’s Chairman of the Board Scott Grieve presented each winner with a blue ribbon and prizes. Special events also included a family fishing event at Buffalo Days in Buffalo, MN plus outdoor games.

Tiara Jenkins of Pittsburg, Missouri won the Cheap Joe’s Art Stuff, People’s Choice Award, which is presented to the student whose artwork receives the most votes from Mall of America visitors during the Expo.

Winners and their families from across the United States were in attendance at Mall of America to participate in the State-Fish Art Expo. “The future of our wildlife heritage and natural resources depends on quality conservation education for today’s youth. The support of the parents in traveling all the way to Minnesota from as far away as Idaho, New Jersey and Texas shows that, together, we’re accomplishing that goal,” remarked Wildlife Forever President & CEO Douglas H. Grann.

One highlight of the State-Fish Art weekend was when winners were recognized on the playing field of the Metrodome before the Minnesota Twins game on June 13th. Winners of the 6th Annual *Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest* and their family members who attended the Expo received free entry, compliments of Twin’s

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first baseman Doug Mientkiewicz and his wife Jodi, to participate in the pre-game awards ceremony prior to the Twins ballgame against the Philadelphia Phillies.

“The Twins are huge supporters of the youth of our community and throughout the nation. To see Doug Mientkiewicz personally shake hands with the winning artists just minutes before playing baseball demonstrates his commitment to sharing the wonders of the great outdoors with America’s youth”, said Grann. “The Twins were instrumental in creating life enriching memories for the winners of this year’s State-Fish Art Contest and contributed to the development of strong family values.”

The State-Fish Art Contest uses art to introduce students to aquatic conservation. According to Grann, “The *Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest* is a program that emphasizes the wonder and enjoyment to be found in the natural world. By using art, the contest imparts important lessons in a way that really resonates with students.”

To enter the contest, young artists create an illustration of their state-fish and a written composition on its behavior, habitat, and efforts to conserve it. Entries are categorized in three grade levels: 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12. Educators nationwide have utilized the full-color *State-Fish Art Contest Lesson Plan*, an interdisciplinary educational supplement specific to aquatic natural resources that includes extensive background information, a species identification section profiling each state fish, a glossary, and student worksheets. The lesson plan can be downloaded at no cost from the State-Fish Art website, www.statefishart.com.

Located in Brooklyn Center, MN, Wildlife Forever is a multi-species conservation organization dedicated to preserving America’s wildlife heritage. Wildlife Forever is the non-profit arm of the North American Fishing Club and North American Hunting Club, representing 1.3 million members nationwide. Working at the grassroots level, Wildlife Forever has funded conservation projects in all 50 states, committing millions of dollars to “on the ground” efforts. Wildlife Forever values habitat restoration and enhancement, land acquisition, research, and management of fish and wildlife populations.

Sponsors for the *Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Contest* include Mall of America, Cheap Joe’s Art Stuff, Minnesota Twins, North American Fishing Club, Jiffy Pop Popcorn, and Pemmican Beef Jerky.

For more information visit www.statefishart.com, America Online (Keyword: Fishart), or call toll-free at 1-877-Fish-Art. Contact: Brett Richardson at (763) 253-0222 or brichardson@wildlife forever.org.

Digital copies of artwork are available upon request.

