



# The North Carolina Taxidermist Association Newsletter

*Spring 2025*

## *Letter from the President*

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We're thrilled to welcome everyone to this year's highly anticipated convention and competition, taking place **July 31–August 2** at our **new host location: Greensboro High-Point Airport Marriott**.

The countdown has begun! Whether you're putting the finishing touches on a masterpiece or like myself just now getting started on that showpiece, there's no shame in the last-minute hustle. Some of the best work comes together under pressure! Remember – you can't win if you don't play – so throw your hat in the ring and bring those showpieces.

Last year's showroom was truly a sight to behold, and we're aiming for another spectacular turnout this year! To make sure everyone has ample time to appreciate the incredible work on display, we've made efforts to **extend showroom viewings** as much as possible.

From breathtaking competition pieces to awe-inspiring craftsmanship, the showroom is a must-see during the event. Whether you're admiring the artistry, gaining inspiration, or showcasing your own work, we can't wait to see another full house this year!

We're very proud to present an incredible lineup of world and national title holder judges for our Masters and Professional competitors. Additionally, our esteemed **State Associations roster of Master Taxidermists** has been tapped to judge our **Amateur and Youth competitors**, ensuring a high standard of evaluation across all levels.

This event promises to be an unforgettable experience, and we can't wait to see each and every one of you there. Whether you're competing, supporting, or simply soaking in the excitement, it's going to be an amazing time!

Be sure to mark your calendars, spread the word, and get ready for an incredible convention and competition. Looking forward to seeing you soon!

Brian

***The North Carolina  
Taxidermist's Association  
2025 Officers***

***President***

Brian Piro  
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***Treasurer***

Daniel Nicholson  
1912 Snowy Egret Dr.  
Morehead City, NC 28557  
[Danielnicholson43@gmail.com](mailto:Danielnicholson43@gmail.com)

***2025 Board Members***

**Mountain**



- Nora Naughton 2025-2026
- Van Draper 2025



**Piedmont**

- David Beamon 2025-2026
- Craig Wyrick 2025

**Coastal**

- Aaron Cruse 2025-2026
- Paul Miller 2025

 **Vendor Space Available!**  Space is filling up fast! If you would like to **reserve a free vendor space**, please contact Brian Piro at **919-288-9393** as soon as possible.

 **Auction Donations Needed!**  We are accepting donations for both our **general auction and silent auction** to help raise funds for our association. If you have **overstocked supplies, mis-ordered forms, or any other items** that could contribute to our fundraising efforts, we would greatly appreciate your support! Every contribution helps us continue our mission and strengthen our community.

Call for Board Member Nominations!

Our organization thrives because of dedicated leaders who bring vision, passion, and expertise to the table.

Now's your chance to be part of shaping our future!

We are currently seeking nominations for the following board positions:

- Mountain Region Representative
- Piedmont Region Representative
- Coastal Region Representative
- Treasurer
- Vice President

If you or someone you know would be a great fit for any of these roles, we encourage you to submit a nomination. Strong leadership keeps our mission moving forward, and we need engaged individuals to help steer the way!

To nominate, simply reach out to Brian Piro at 919-288-9393. The deadline for submissions is July 30th.

Thank you for being a part of our community—let's build an even stronger future together!

## Award of Excellence...

Have you earned your Award of Excellence? If so, make sure you let Ryan Garrison know by **June 20<sup>th</sup>** in order to receive your award at the show!

### ***Are you a NC Certified Taxidermist?***

Did you know there is a North Carolina Taxidermist Association (N.C.T.A) Certification Program? Here's how to become a NC Certified Taxidermist...

- Must be a NCTA Member in good standing & meet one of the three following qualifications in Professional Division
  - One 1<sup>st</sup> Place Blue Ribbon & Best of Category
  - One 1<sup>st</sup> Place Blue Ribbon Plus 5 other points
  - Two 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Red Ribbons Plus 5 other points

Points System:

1<sup>st</sup> Place = 4 points

2<sup>nd</sup> Place = 3 points

3<sup>rd</sup> Place = 2 points

**NC Certified Taxidermist Dues are due for 2025    1<sup>st</sup> Year \$50.00, Renewal \$25.00**

*Please make checks payable to:*

**NC Certified Taxidermist**

*Mail to:*

**Daniel Nicholson**

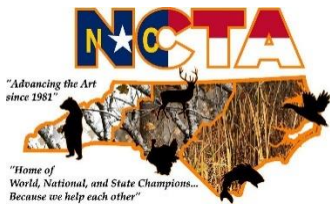
**1912 Snowy Egret Dr.**

**Morehead City, NC 28557**

**\*\*2025 Memberships are Due Now\*\***  
**Please get those in ASAP!!!!**

Ways to join-

- Visit [nctaxidermist.org](http://nctaxidermist.org) and at the bottom of the home page click **JOIN NOW**. Fill out the **ONLINE FORM** then select the **ONLINE PAY (SINGLE OR FAMILY MEMBERSHIP)**
- Download the .pdf at the bottom of the page and mail it in to Daniel Nicholson  
1912 Snowy Egret Dr., Morehead City, NC 28557
- Or print out the form attached to this newsletter and mail to Daniel Nicholson



## North Carolina Taxidermist Association

### Application For 2025 Membership

The NCTA is a non-profit educational organization in the State of North Carolina to further contacts and better understanding among taxidermists and related industries, unite into one organization all interested taxidermists and taxidermy suppliers, disseminates information, aid the profession as a whole by lobbying for fair legislation on the State and Federal levels.

To join the NCTA please fill out the following membership application and return the form along with your check made payable to the North Carolina Taxidermists Association and mail it to:  
Daniel Nicholson 1912 Snowy Egret Dr. Morehead City, NC 28557

*\*If you have filled out the form online there is no need to send this in also.*

North Carolina Taxidermists Association Membership CIRCLE: NEW / RENEWAL  
NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$75 Single Membership    **OR**    \_\_\_\_\_ \$95 Family Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ Check Included    **OR**    \_\_\_\_\_ Paid Online

Please Check the Appropriate Line that applies to your section of the state.

\_\_\_ COASTAL (area East of Interstate 95)

\_\_\_ PIEDMONT (Area East of Hwy 52 to Interstate 95)

\_\_\_ MOUNTAIN (Area West of Hwy 52/Mt. Airy to Winston-Salem to Lexington to Salisbury to Albemarle to Wadesboro)

## *New Location for 2025*

# *North Carolina Taxidermist's 43<sup>d</sup> Annual Convention and Competition*

***July 31<sup>th</sup>, August 1<sup>st</sup>, & August 2<sup>nd</sup>***

***Greensboro/High Point Marriott Airport  
One Marriott Dr.,  
Greensboro, NC 27409***

**Group Rate Cutoff July 17<sup>th</sup>**

**To book your room visit the [nctaxidermist.org](http://nctaxidermist.org) website, click Events and scroll to the bottom of the page and click "**BOOK NOW**"**

## ***\*\*President Challenge 2025 - Whitetail Deer\*\****

### **Judges for this year's competition –**

- Birds: Page Nethercutt
- Whitetail Deer: Dalton Jeffers
  - Fish: Gary Bruch
- Game Head & Life Size: Jason Krause
  - Habitat: Bob Hutchinson
- Original Art: Donna Naughton

## **The North Carolina Taxidermist Association 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Summer Convention & Competition Schedule**

### **THURSDAY, July 31<sup>st</sup>**

9:00AM – 12:00PM	Board Meeting, Set up Competition, Vendor and Registration Areas
12:00PM – 1:00PM	Lunch Break
1:00PM – 6:00PM	Registration Open- Competition Entries Received – Vendor Room Open
3:00PM – Until Done	<b>SEMINAR #1: Jason Krause – <i>Black Bear</i></b> <b>SEMINAR #2: David Beamon – <i>Casting Snakes</i></b>
6:00PM – Until	HQ Taxidermy Supply Meet & Greet in Vendor Room (Pizza & Wings)
7:00PM – 10:00PM	Speed Mount Competition Sponsored by HQ

### **FRIDAY, August 1<sup>st</sup>**

8:00AM – 11:00AM	Registration Open – Competition Entries Received – Vendor Room Open Scavenger Hunt ‘Selfie Safari’ signups
8:00AM – Until Done	<b>SEMINAR #3: Page Nethercutt – <i>Waterfowl</i></b> <b>SEMINAR #4: Gary Bruch – <i>Fish Competition “What the judges look for.”</i></b>
11:00AM-11:30AM	Speed Mount Competition last adjustments
12:00PM – Until Done	Triad Park Shelter #7 Cookout Sponsored by McKenzie
3:00PM – Until Done	<b>SEMINAR #5: Dalton Jeffers – <i>Whitetail Deer</i></b> <b>SEMINAR Children’s Seminar (all ages) – Mel Lopez</b>
3:00PM – 6:00PM	Registration Open – Competition Entries Received – Supply Room Open (No Mounts Received After 6:00PM Friday)
6:30PM – 8:00PM	Competition Room Viewing & People’s Choice Voting
8:00PM – 10:00PM	Kids Pizza/Movie Night (Bring sleeping bag/blanket & pillow to watch movie)
8:00PM – Until	Auction & Door Prizes (Auctioneer – Mr. Andy Kearns), Silent Auction, ‘Selfie Safari’ Scavenger Hunt ends after the auction

### **SATURDAY, August 2<sup>nd</sup>**

8:00AM – Until Done	<b>SEMINAR #6: Bob Hutchinson – <i>Habitat</i> – Located in the Vendor Room</b>
8:00AM – 10:00AM	<b>SEMINAR #7: Brianna Rouse – <i>Feather Art</i></b>
8:00AM – 10:00AM	Vendor Room Open
10:00AM – 12:00PM	General Membership Meeting, Vote for Officers + Board Members – PLEASE ATTEND
12:00PM – 3:00PM	Competition Room Open – Ribbons in Place – Critiques with Judges
3:30PM – Until Done	Banquet – Awards Presentation

*\*\*If you have not Purchased a Banquet Ticket, please wait to enter the Banquet room until the Awards Ceremony begins.*

*\*\*After Banquet and Awards Presentation Pickup Mounts*

*!!No Mounts Removed Until After Awards Presentation is conclude*

**Pre-register cutoff date is July 17<sup>th</sup>!!!**

Pre-register online and save \$10.00. Pre-registration \$55.00 at the show \$65.00. You can also pay for your membership, banquet tickets all on-line at [www.nctaxidermist.org](http://www.nctaxidermist.org).

## **SPEED MOUNTING COMPETITION**

### **Winner will receive the NCTA Speed Mount Belt Buckle**

Returning this year will be the Speed Mounting Competition sponsored by Head Quarters Taxidermy Supply. The Speed Mounting Competition is a fun friendly competition and lots fun to watch.

There will be an entry fee of \$25 to enter, competitors must supply their own mounting stand, tools & supplies (NCTA only supplies time & space for the competition) and you must be a current NCTA member to sign up (So get those memberships in!!). Skin and form can be prepped and ready, but **ALL** material must be separate and nothing pre-installed. You will have 3 hours to complete your piece, at which time you will not be allowed to touch until the following day for half an hour for final adjustments. The four judges will determine which three pieces they feel in their opinions are the top three winners. It will be scored using the same rules and criteria as a commercial entry into the competition. All rules and determination of entries and material will be at the NCTA leadership and judge's discretion.



## Competition Divisions

Competition Entry Fee: \$25 per entry

Collective Artist Division: \$50 per entry

- **Commercial Division**  
The mounts will be judged from a distance and the judge will be looking for a good, sound commercial work. There will be multiple first, second, and third place ribbons. Entry fee is the same as the other divisions. You may enter a mount in any category but after you receive two 1<sup>st</sup> place ribbons in an individual category you have to move on to the Professional Division. You will NOT receive a score sheet.
- **Youth Division**  
No entry fee with registered adult. This includes any youth 12 years old or younger.
- **Amateur Division**  
This division is for someone just starting to compete. You are competing against a score sheet, not against other competitors.  
90-100= 1<sup>st</sup> Place   80-89= 2<sup>nd</sup> Place   70-79= 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
- **Professional Division**  
This division is for someone who has experience but still wants to learn. You are competing against a score sheet, not against other competitors.  
90-100= 1<sup>st</sup> Place   80-89= 2<sup>nd</sup> Place   70-79= 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
- **Masters Division**  
You can enter the Masters Division of your own choosing, but if you have an Award of Excellence in any category or have taken a mount to a higher competition (NTA or World) and have won 1<sup>st</sup> Place, you have to enter Masters Division. If you have two mounts in the same category you must enter them into the same division (for example: two shoulder mount whitetail deer – you cannot enter one into Professional and one into Masters, you have to enter both into one or the other). State Champions will come from this division in each category if there is a mount score 90 or above. Masters division will be divided into all categories same as Professional and Amateur.  
90-100= 1<sup>st</sup> Place   80-89= 2<sup>nd</sup> Place   70-79= 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
- **Collective Artist Division**  
This division has been setup for those taxidermists who want to combine their skills on a certain mount. All taxidermists, Amateur through Masters may compete on a certain piece or pieces. Pieces will be judged for artistic composition by the judges. Scores will be combined by the number of animals and then divided by that number to determine final score. Three ribbon elimination, no multiple ribbons. Scores do not count for points toward your Award of Excellence.

## *Awards. . .*

**Breathrough Award-** The Judge's Choice Best of Show, chosen from first place entries

**Pro 1 Award-** Judges' Choice Best Mount using either the PRO-1 Hide Paste and / or Tans in the mount. Master & Professional entries are eligible.

**Wasco Award-** Most Artistic Entry chosen by judges

**Artisan Award-** The Artisan Award is chosen by taxidermists - not judges

**Van Dyke's Award-** Most Original mount in the competition chosen by the judges

**Chris Barnhardt Award-** A mount that tells the best story, open to all mounts in competition room

**McKenzie Distinguished Award-** Any member, in good standing, with their state association, who has promoted professionalism in his/her business, Advance the art of taxidermy,

Depict taxidermy and hunting in a positive image, Share knowledge of taxidermy techniques, Improve the quality of his/her taxidermy work, Promote the goals of the state association. Chosen by board and members of the association.

**Best All Around Taxidermist-** Highest combined score of 4 mounts in different categories, Whitetail, Fish/Reptile, Birds, Lifesize/Gamehead

**McKenzie Taxidermist's Choice-** Best Whitetail, Best Fish, Best Bird, Best Lifesize

**People's Choice Best of Show-** Master's, Professional, & Amateur Division

**People's Choice-** Best Reptile, Best Gamehead

**Polytranspar Award-** Highest scoring fish using Polytranspar paint

**Ascent Award-** Chosen by judges

**President's Challenge Award-** Chosen by the president and is not based on scores. (Whitetail 2025) \$100 to the winner

**Mounted in Alaska Award-** Best lifesize mount that tells a story, chosen by judges

**Matuska Competitors Award-** Awarded to the Competitor with 4 of the highest scoring entries in the Masters(Gold Eagle) and Professional Division(Silver Eagle). All entries must have a 1<sup>ST</sup> or 2<sup>ND</sup> place ribbon with a combined score of 350 or greater.

**Most Creative Amateur Award**

**Best Up and Coming Amateur Award**

**The Herozion Award-** Best Up and Coming Youth

**The Childrens Challenge-** Youth Best of Show Chosen by the Judges

**Amiture Best of Show-** Judges Choice

**NCTA Habitat Award**

**Challenge of the Arts**

**Judge's Choice Best of Show (Professional)**

**Collective Artist**

**Jim Allred Award-** Highest scoring entry mounted on a Jim Allred form

**\*\* Awards are subject to change\*\***

## Honored Guests:

### Gary Bruch – Fish/Reptiles

I operate a fish only taxidermy studio in south central Pa. I have been transitioning to selling fish replicas and fish heads over the last couple years. In the past 2 decades I have judged or been asked to judge most of the taxidermy associations in the country and the WTC twice. I have won more awards than I care to mention with the most notable being warm water World Champion. When not doing taxidermy, I spend my time with my granddaughters playing Barbie's and having tea parties!

### Page Nethercutt - Birds

Hello everyone! At the last NC show I attended, I noticed lots of new faces. That's great! For those that don't know me, my name is Page Nethercutt. I've been around for a while. I started attending the NCTA as a kid with my dad, back in the 80's. I did my 1<sup>st</sup> mount 46 years ago, at 8 years old. After growing up farming, commercial fishing, and a stint in the military, I went into business for myself. Most of my work involved mammals, but it was birds where I made my mark. As a competitor, I've won many of the top awards in several states. Among them are numerous State Champion Titles, 4 Wasco's, 5 Van Dykes, 3 Big Rock NA Champion awards, The Artisan, 2 Breakthroughs, and Taxidermist of the Year are just some of my highest achievements. I was the youngest to win the Master Taxidermist Award at the NCTA. Besides being a taxidermist, I also wrote for Taxidermy Today for 9 years. I have 3 videos with Taxidermy Training Unlimited, and I sculpt bird bodies and heads for Head Quarters Taxidermy supply. I even went to Hollywood, where I took part in a taxidermy reality show for AMC called Immortalized. It's currently a rerun and you can stream it on Tubi if you'd like. Born and raised in Pamlico County, just outside of New Bern, North Carolina, I live with my beautiful wife Bonnie. We have 5 kids and 5 grandkids. We enjoy gardening, fishing, and hunting. The NCTA helped me and my business become a much better taxidermist. So, when they ask for help, I'm glad to oblige. I'll be doing a flying mount for my seminar. Focusing on the skeleton, reference, and how to get some of those more interesting poses. Hope to see y'all there!

### Jason Krause – Game heads, Lifesize

Hello NCTA! I'm honored to be your mammal judge once again; I was here in 2018 and had a wonderful time. I'm from Pine Grove, PA where I have a full-time studio. I enjoy competing also and over the years have won at Worlds, Nationals, Big Rock, Regionals and the four states where I have gone, (PA, MD, OH, WV). I'll do my very best to help you on your journey to achieve your goals as a taxidermist. I'm looking forward to seeing you all and your pieces.

## **Dalton Jeffers - Whitetail Deer**

Hi! My name is Dalton Jeffers, and together with my dad (Tom Jeffers), I own and operate a full-time taxidermy studio and supply company-Rock Ridge Wildlife Artistry.

Since my dad was a taxidermist, I grew up "helping" my dad in the shop. I mounted my first piece at 8 years old - a spare duck of my dad's, and continued to mess with extras and help in the shop as time went on. In high school, I mounted my first deer. Then in 2021, I competed in my first show. I entered two geese that I mounted during COVID and received two blue ribbon

s and a best of category. That was all it took, I was hooked! I loved taking a deep dive into all the details that make a mount look realistic, and discovering all the techniques that turn a mount into art.

Since that first show, I have been able to compete in Virginia, North Carolina, West Virginia, Maryland, and at the National, and the World shows in 2024. Over the last four years, I have received 3 Breakthrough Best of Show awards, multiple State Champions, the 2024 National Champion Medallion for Short Haired Open Mouth Whitetail, and the 2024 National Silver Medallion in Long Haired Open Mouth Whitetail. At the 2024 World Show, I received a Third Place in Masters Division for Long Haired Open Mouth Whitetail.

I have had amazing teachers and judges that were very generous with their knowledge and time over the years, which has allowed me to do what I love.

I am honored to be your whitetail judge, and look forward to seeing you in my seminar, where we will do a deep dive on eye rotations.

## **Bob Hutchinson - Habitat**

Bob "Hutch" Hutchinson is from Mt. Pleasant, Pennsylvania. He has been doing taxidermy since 1980 and operating a full-time studio since 2001. Through the years, he has earned multiple awards at the state and world levels and has earned his Master's Certificate in Habitat in 2019. He is passionate about habitat and the influence and contribution it has to the overall mount appearance. He was the first designated habitat judge for the nationals in 2016 and over the years he has also judged at many state shows. He was the first ever habitat judge for the World Show in 2019, and then again in 2022 and 2024. In 2023, he was the very first to judge habitat along with mammals for the European Taxidermy Championships in Salzburg, Austria. He has also taught habitat techniques in Budapest, Hungary. Hutch is looking forward to the 2025 Ohio show and is honored to be your habitat judge.

## **Original Art: Donna Naughton**

Donna has been involved in taxidermy for over 20 years and part of the NCTA for nearly that long and hosted many Children's seminars. She has received numerous Awards of Excellence, Best of Category, and the Woody Award. She's the 2<sup>nd</sup> woman to receive the Master Taxidermy Award. When not working in Jacksonville NC on waterfowl, she's busy with game heads and upland birds in Ashe County NC. She's always willing to learn and share taxidermy knowledge and techniques.

# RETURNING FOR 2025



SPONSORED BY MATUSKA  
TAXIDERMISTRY SUPPLY



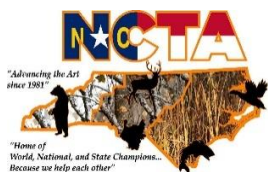
**MATUSKA**  
**TAXIDERMISTRY**  
SUPPLY COMPANY



**AWARDED TO THE COMPETITORS WITH 4 OF THE HIGHEST  
SCORING ENTRIES IN THE MASTER'S (GOLD EAGLE) AND  
PROFESSIONAL DIVISION (SILVER EAGLE). ALL ENTRIES MUST  
HAVE A 1ST OR 2ND PLACE RIBBON WITH A COMBINED SCORE  
OF 350 OR GREATER.**

To be eligible to win the Matuska Award there is a separate \$25 dollar registration fee on top of the registration fees of your other entries.





NORTH CAROLINA  
TAXIDERMIST ASSOCIATION  
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325 REMINGTON LN.  
CARTHAGE, NC 28327

