



Volunteering

By Jeff Heidelbauer
Region 2 Flyway Vice President Ducks Unlimited

Ducks Unlimited is a volunteer driven organization. The volunteers are what make DU so effective at being the best and most efficient wetlands conservation organization in the world. Volunteers are the driving force for raising the money that the DU professionals use to enhance and preserve wetlands and associated uplands for the benefit of wildlife and man. Volunteers staff the numerous national committees that keep DU focused on its mission. Last but not least the DU Board of Directors is made up of volunteers that steer DU on its ultimate course.

Because volunteers are so important to DU, it has always been important to recognize and thank volunteers for their dedicated service to the DU cause. The newest approach to do this will be initiated in 2019. This program will recognize years of volunteer service to DU beginning with 25 years and continuing at 5 year increments all the way to 50 years. Yes, we have a few volunteers with 50 years of volunteer service to DU. Special lapel pins have been designed for each of the service levels, similar to the pins for levels of giving by major donors. DU staff has also begun to pull together the list of volunteers with 20 years of service for the next stage of this recognition project.

The pins and recipient lists will be distributed to each state and the states will determine the best approach for presentation of the pins and recognition of the volunteers at the local level. It is important to note that this has been a difficult project pulling all the years of service together for all of the over 3,000 active volunteers that makeup the DU volunteer family. The system for record keeping has changed several times over the past 50 years and the headquarters for DU has moved from Chicago to Memphis during this time as well.

Recruiting and retaining good volunteers in DU is extremely important to the success of DU. Ask a long time DU volunteer and they will always tell you that you "Join DU for the Cause, but you stay with DU because of the People", friends you will have for a life time. If you would like to become a DU volunteer contact Bill Marketon, State Chairman 605-310-9793 or Don Thorpe, Senior Regional Director 605-630-8696.

Longtime DU Supporters Pledge Financial Support and a legacy gift

Bruce and Annie Knowlan have enjoyed the outdoors all their lives. Growing up in Minnesota they frequented the lakes in the northern part of the state to enjoy the summers and each autumn they traveled to the South Dakota prairies to enjoy the bounty of the fall migration.



Bruce & Annie Knowlan



They so appreciated the prairie pothole region along with the friendly farmers and ranchers in north east South Dakota they decided to purchase their own a piece of paradise. Many fall seasons and longtime relationships have been enjoyed since they purchased the land. They restored both upland and wetland habitats and enrolled those acres into long term conservation programs. Bruce and Anne have shared their land with many family members and outdoor enthusiasts and now they plan to leave this treasured place to Ducks Unlimited to ensure it will be protected and passed on to future generations.

In 2017, Bruce attended a DU "Evening of Conservation" event in Aberdeen South Dakota where he discovered the difference DU is making on the landscape and how he can become a part of DU conservation mission. Bruce and Annie have made 2 major donor gifts since that event and now intend to give their land in South Dakota to DU through their estate plans.

Interested in becoming a major donor or discussing gifts of land to enhance Ducks Unlimited's conservation efforts in South Dakota, Contact: Director of Development Terry Kostinec, tkostinec@ducks.org (605) 760-5791 or Director of Gift Planning, Chris Cole ccole@ducks.org (601) 259-0669

Benefits of gifts of real estate

- Avoid paying capital gains tax on the sale of the real estate
- Receive a charitable income tax deduction based on the value of the gift
- Leave a lasting legacy to Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
- The land is used as a match for new public grants providing a larger conservation footprint