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Photo courtesy Guyette and Schmidt Inc. A rare Black Duck decoy, carved by Lee Dudley of Knott's Island, was sold at auction for \$60,375 at the 23rd annual fall decoy auction in Easton, Md. The auction price was more than twice the presale estimated.

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## Knott's Island decoy sold at \$60K

Friday, December 4, 2009

Dudley carvings highly sought by collectors



### *From sports reports*

The Albemarle area is rich with tradition and history of hunting and art. Those two came together a few weeks ago in a unique way.

On Nov. 11-12, a hand-carved decoy by Lee Dudley of Knott's Island was sold for \$60,375, more than twice its presale estimate, at a Guyette and Schmidt Inc. auction. Dudley, who died in 1942, and his brother Lem ran Dudley's Island Shooting Club during in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Lee Dudley carved Canvasbacks, Redheads, Scaup and Ruddys for the club and many of those carvings have fetched high prices at auctions.

The majority of Dudley's carvings were done prior to the turn of the century and few have survived the years intact, making them valuable items. They routinely fetch high prices at auction and a Ruddy Duck carving from around 1890 located in the Shelbourne Museum in Vermont is estimated to be able to draw as much as \$1 million at auction. The record price for any decoy at auction is \$856,000 for a Merganser Hen sold in January 2007.

Other area carvers were also featured in the auction, which included over 650 pieces, were Alvirah Wright of Duck, William Bailey Barco of Currituck, James Best of Kitty Hawk and Robert Morse of Church's Island.

Guyette and Schmidt Inc., based in St. Michaels, Md., is the world's largest decoy auction firm, having sold more than \$121 million in decoys since being founded in 1984. The group's next sale will be held on April 22-23 at the Pheasant run Resort in St. Charles, Ill.

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