

1/28/95

Q-C artist captures nature on canvas

By Linda Cook
QUAD-CITY TIMES

Craig Carlson may spend a lot of time looking at owls, but, as an artist, he's no fly-by-night.

The Davenport artist will be among the artists at the ninth annual Bald Eagle Days Environmental Fair and Wildlife Art Show today and Sunday at Rock Island's QCCA Expo Center."



Carlson

A graphic artist at Litton Instruments & Life Support, Davenport, he says he originally wanted to be an architect or a draftsman. "We had art classes in grade school, all the way up through high school," says Carlson, 35. "I started taking drafting courses in high school. But when we got into the real detailed stuff, I found out that wasn't really what I wanted to do."

Although he did some pencil drawings, he went to commercial art school and didn't really prac-



Craig Carlson's painting of two eagles.

tice art as a hobby for a couple of years. "Where I work at Litton, I do graphic arts there. Years ago they used to have an arts and crafts show for employees. At that time I didn't really have anything

except commercial art stuff I did in college, so I sat down and did a pencil drawing of an eagle. That

— ARTIST

Please turn to Page 4W

Environmental fair offers live birds

"Celebrate the Eagle" today and Sunday at the ninth annual Bald Eagle Days Environmental Fair and Wildlife Art Show at Rock Island's QCCA Expo Center.

Hours are 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. today and 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children age 6-15, free for children younger than 5.

The event will feature new live birds of prey shows presented by The University of Minnesota Raptor Center, environmental exhibits, wildlife art exhibit and sale and outdoor eagle watching.

Five live birds of prey will accompany Jackie Fallon and Connie Hart of the Raptor Center. They will include a mature bald eagle named Yankee, an immature bald eagle called Woody, a red-tailed hawk named Casper, and a great horned owl named Tofte.

The Quad-Cities is the win-

ter home to many bald eagles. The Locks and Dams provide ideal winter feeding areas by churning the water and keeping it ice-free. Fish, the staple of the bald eagles' diet, are stunned while passing through the dam. Equally important for their winter home are the wooded bluffs around the Quad-Cities. The bluffs provide high perches and seclusion for night roosting.

Forty artists will be on-site, too.

Sculptures, paintings, prints, photos, buttons, cards, figurines and more will be featured. Among the artists will be John Bald, Darrell Bush, Mario Fernandez, Casandra Graham, Roxanne Pelteir, Linda Picken and Karen Scheberle. Modern Woodmen offers an exclusive showing of an eagle family photographed by Dr. Steven and Stephanie Ray of Rock Island.

Information: (309) 788-5912.

Artist produces work by using a variety of methods

Continued from Page 1W

kind of got me fired up," he said. A friend began to encourage him to enter his work in local arts and crafts events.

He began entering his art in shows about 12-15 years ago. "At first I did nothing but pencil and scratch board; then I began doing paintings," he said. "Just by listening to the comments, I figured that would be more what people wanted." He still does pencil portraits of pets and families.

He's received such awards as Award of Merit in the 1993 Iowa Wildlife & Nature in Art Show, best of show at the Snake Alley Art Fair, and a purchase award at the Galesburg, Ill., Art in the Park exhibition. His work is available and on display at Marsh & Field Gallery in Davenport, and Woodland Gallery in Davenport and Muscatine, Iowa. His paintings are in collections from Vermont to Alaska and Germany to Belgium.

"The first show I ever did was

Left Bank," he remembers. His subjects have ranged from eagles to foxes to cougars. "Anymore, it's stuff that I know and recognize, like the birds of prey, the raptors, eagles, hawks and that. I just think they're cool — they have that look in their eye, like, 'I'm the boss.'"

He takes his own photos, often at Niabi Zoo in Coal Valley, Ill., or at Bald Eagle Days. Carlson, who grew up on a farm, used to take dogs hunting all the time. "I go fishing now. And I go more hunting

with a camera nowadays."

He's changed directions a bit for his next piece. "I'm working on a painting of a wolf pack. I've had the urge to do this for a while." Wolves are a popular wildlife subject right now, he says. "You kind of see the trend in art magazines, you know what's hot right now. But I've always wanted to do a wolf painting."

If he had to rely on his art, he says, "I wouldn't be the starving artist. I'd be the anorexic artist."