

2016 NATIONAL CONVENTION

By Dawn Merritt



IKES FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY GATHERED IN WISCONSIN for the League's national convention, which explored the theme, "Defending Our Waters: Past, Present, and Future."

Our week kicked off with water-related activities around Stevens Point: a paddling tour down the Plover River and a talk-and-tour on the topic of sustaining groundwater resources. During convention, we developed the next "big idea" for the Izaak Walton League and heard from speakers about the importance of clean streams for safe drinking water, what's next for national parks, and a farmer's perspective on conservation. Attendees enjoyed small-group workshops on topics ranging from using social media to boost chapter visibility to recruiting new audiences to archery and shooting sports. Delegates also elected national officers and voted on resolutions to establish League conservation policies.

If you missed the action (and weren't following #IKEcon2016), you can catch up with these highlights. And it's not too early to start planning a trip to Ohio for next year's family-friendly national convention at the Kalahari Resorts!

JOSHUA MAYER; IWLA (2); ISTOCK



Celebrating 100 Years for the National Park Service

The National Park Service is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. This milestone is an opportunity to honor the generations of park rangers and other staff who have conserved natural, cultural, and recreational resources on behalf of all Americans. It's also an opportunity to celebrate our incredible national parks — one of America's best ideas for the world.

Cameron "Cam" Sholly, Midwest Region Director for the National Park Service, oversees about 60 national park units in 13 states and a workforce of more than 2,000 employees. As our keynote speaker, Sholly shared his thoughts on the Park Service centennial and the future of the park system.

"Our system represents some of the very best America has to offer," Sholly said. "It truly has become a model for countries around the globe in conservation, recreation, historic preservation, and education." He said that the Park Service has approached the centennial with the recognition that while the first 100 years have been successful in many ways, "we have a long way to go." One of the primary goals of the centennial is to connect with the next generation of visitors, stewards, and advocates. Other challenges include:

- Operating strategically and flexibly
- Increasing relevancy to current and new audiences, many of whom are disconnected from the outdoors
- Managing competing priorities
- Doing the basics well while being adaptable to new ways of doing business

"We have a \$12 billion backlog in deferred maintenance," Sholly pointed out. "It's great that we can attract 300 million people a year to national parks, but not so great if our infrastructure is in such poor shape that none of them want to come back." He said there were also staffing and operating gaps across the system that need to be addressed. "It's great if a park has record visitation, but not so great if they can't provide the service levels needed to ensure our resources and visitors are protected adequately."

The National Park Service is in a pivotal moment. "The challenges we face as a nation require us to be informed, engaged, and open minded," Sholly said. "The idea behind our parks can continue to unite Americans and increase the sense of pride and patriotism within our country." It's a collective responsibility and significant honor that Sholly encourages us all to embrace. "Success in the next century depends on it."

Importance of Stream Monitoring to Safe Drinking Water

Many Americans don't associate what flows through local streams with what comes out of their taps.



But as recent headline-making pollution problems demonstrate, the two are closely linked. That was a key message shared by Peter Grevatt, Director of the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water works in collaboration with states, tribes, and other stakeholders to safeguard America's drinking water supplies. Speaking at our Conservation Luncheon, Grevatt emphasized that drinking water programs are public health protection programs and that the stream monitoring work done by the League is tremendously important to protecting drinking water.

Drinking water regulations generally address what happens at drinking water treatment plants, said Grevatt, but don't say much about what happens to source waters upstream. "But I think you all know that what does happen upstream of the drinking water treatment plant is tremendously important in terms of what is going into the distribution system."

"Whether it's drinking water in the schools that allows schools to be open, whether it's businesses or restaurants, whether it's our homes — drinking water plays an essential role in almost everything that happens in the community," Grevatt said. He talked about several towns that faced problems with unsafe drinking water, including a detailed account of the crisis in Flint, Michigan. Lessons learned from these events will help other communities in the future. "We have made tremendous progress in this country," he said, "but we need to maintain focus."

Grevatt emphasized that source water protection is important for the safety of drinking water, and that this connection offers a great opportunity to talk about why the League's work to protect streams, rivers, and lakes across the country is so important. "I think it's an opportunity to draw greater attention to the work that you do. When you are protecting rivers and streams and making sure they are fishable and swimmable and safe for aquatic life, you are by definition protecting drinking water use in almost every case."

What's the (Next) Big Idea?

Every League member plays an important role in the success of our organization — today and in the future. So at this year's convention, we set aside time for everyone to engage in a conversation about the future of the Izaak Walton League.

What do you want the League to be known for? That's the question we asked convention attendees to answer. And answer they did!

The discussions focused on a challenging goal that League members and a broader cross-section of Americans can rally around. Across nearly 20 small-group discussions, a common theme emerged: clean water.

That's not just because water was the theme of this year's convention! Clean water is critical to all the natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities League members care about. So we have a new **Clean Water Challenge**:

Monitor 100,000 more streams by the League's 100th birthday.

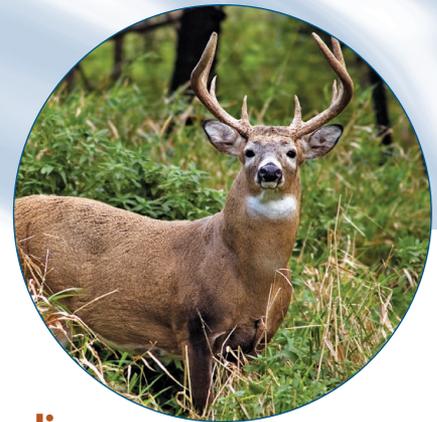
The League turns 100 years old in 2022. Since we were founded around the goal of clean water, this is a very appropriate way to take the League into our centennial.



As a first step toward meeting this goal, we're inviting every League member to join the Clean Water Challenge by signing the pledge card at the center of this magazine. (We even have a second postcard that you can give to a friend!) Taking this pledge shows your support for expanding

volunteer stream monitoring. Every Ike can play a role — from talking about clean water with your neighbors to organizing new stream monitoring groups. League staff will be working on a detailed implementation plan that will equip our organization as well as partner groups and individual volunteers to put this "big idea" into action. We will kick off our nationwide clean water campaign at the 2017 national convention in Sandusky, Ohio.

2016 POLICY RESOLUTIONS



What do channel catfish, climate change, and chronic wasting disease have in common? League members adopted policies related to these topics and more at convention.

Adopted resolutions become part of the League's Conservation Policies and guide League members and staff in our mission to conserve, restore, and promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of our nation's natural resources.

Restore Research Funding for Chronic Wasting Disease

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is a progressive, fatal neurological disease that affects farmed and free-range deer, elk, moose, and other cervids. The disease has spread to 20 states and shows no signs of slowing. There is no known treatment or vaccine for CWD — the only way to prevent its spread is to isolate known carriers.

The federal government has reduced funding for CWD research from a high of \$18.6 million in 2005 to an estimated low of \$1.1 million in 2012 (an estimate because there was no dedicated funding that year). However, federal funding is critical to state efforts to identify infected animals and for research to prevent or treat the disease. The environmental impact of not funding this research is the continued spread of the disease. The financial impact could be billions in lost revenue related to hunting (deer hunting alone generates \$10 billion in spending for travel and hunting equipment nationwide).

League members adopted a resolution urging the federal government to fund chronic wasting disease research at \$17 million annually, which is the average of funding between 2004 and 2010.

Reduce Impacts of Climate Change

There is widespread agreement across the scientific community worldwide that climate change is occurring and humans are contributing to it. Scientists also agree that warming temperatures are already affecting our planet. Moreover, those effects — rising sea levels, more violent storms, and dramatic habitat change for plants and wildlife — could get dramatically worse if emissions of heat-trapping gasses are not substantially reduced.

League members adopted a policy recognizing climate change as a critical risk to the future of our soil, air, woods, waters, and wildlife and advocated for action to reduce the impacts of climate change.





Replace Pipeline Under the Straits of Mackinac

A 645-mile pipeline built in 1953 runs from Superior, Wisconsin, into Ontario, Canada. Along the way, the line runs across the bottom of the Straits of Mackinac — a 5-mile-wide stretch of water that connects Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. The pipeline carries more than 500,000 barrels of oil or natural gas liquids every day.

The current pipeline has single-wall construction. If the pipeline were to rupture or leak, it could discharge large amounts of petroleum products into the Great Lakes.

At this year's convention, members adopted a resolution calling for replacing the pipeline with a modern, double-wall pipeline, including emergency shutdown systems, to protect sensitive water resources.

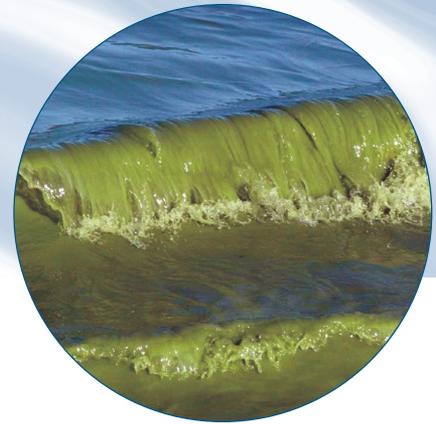


Oppose Commercial Aquaculture on Public Waters

Legislation has been introduced to allow commercial net-pen fish and shellfish farming in public fresh waters. (Net pens are net or wire cages used to hold the fish.) However, commercially-raised fish that escape from these farms are a genetic threat to native species. High concentrations of fish and shellfish in net pens can also increase disease and parasites in surrounding waters and decrease dissolved oxygen available to the aquatic community.

In addition, expanding net-pen aquaculture into public fresh waters could interfere with fishing and other public uses of those waters. This in turn could damage commercial and sport fishing, which generate billions of dollars in economic activity every year.

League members passed a resolution opposing the use of commercial net-pen aquaculture in public fresh waters across the United States.



Require Farm-Level Water Quality Plans

Contamination of our water resources with nitrogen and phosphorus is a growing problem across the nation. Excess nutrients causes algal blooms, damaging aquatic ecosystems and threatening the health of people who use lakes for recreation and drinking water sources. Excess nitrates can also damage drinking water sources and be cost-prohibitive for water treatment facilities to remove from source water.

League members passed a resolution advocating that in the next federal Farm Bill, farmers be required to have an approved, farm-level water quality plan before receiving any federal farm subsidies. Farmers should have the flexibility to choose nutrient-reduction practices that fit individual farm needs. The resolution further states that until federal requirements are enacted, states should require farmers to have an approved, farm-level water quality plan.



Restore Pollinators and Their Habitats

Pollinators have experienced dramatic declines due to a combination of factors — including habitat loss, use of pesticides, and the spread of pests and diseases — which has very serious potential consequences for agriculture and native plants and wildlife. Providing habitat for pollinators and decreasing the use of pesticides will benefit multiple species, improve water quality, and protect human health.

League members adopted a resolution calling for enhanced deployment of peer-reviewed science to regulate the use of pesticides that harm pollinators and their habitats and labeling that clearly warns users of known hazards to pollinators associated with the use of pesticides and other chemicals. The resolution also states that the Izaak Walton League and our chapters support development of pollinator-friendly habitats.



Repeal Environmental Exemptions for Oil and Gas Industries

More attention is being drawn to the widespread environmental degradation occurring in the wake of rapid development of domestic oil and natural gas resources and continent-wide pipeline projects proposed to transport these fossil fuels. Over decades, oil and natural gas exploration, drilling, and refining have been exempt from many of our most important environmental protection laws, including the Clean Water Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, and Clean Air Act. These exemptions give this one industry benefits few others enjoy and put our air, water, and other natural resources at greater risk of pollution.

League members resolved to join with other citizen and tribal groups calling for the repeal of statutory exemptions from all environmental laws that have been extended to the oil and gas industry.



Oppose Harvesting Fish from Public Waters for Private Use

Current regulations in some states do not adequately protect native populations of catfish — wild populations of flathead, blue, and channel catfish — in public rivers and streams from over-exploitation. In some instances, anglers are catching and moving unsustainable numbers of live, large catfish from public waters to private, for-profit facilities such as “pay-lake” fishing operations. In many states, public resources are being taken for private gain without any regulation.

League members passed a resolution opposing the unregulated harvest of live, native species of fish for transfer from public fresh waters for private commercial use or for-profit fishing operations.

The complete text of each resolution adopted at the 2016 national convention is available at www.iwla.org/convention.

AWARD-WINNING IKES

We had the pleasure of recognizing individuals and organizations from across the country who made a difference in conserving outdoor America.

NATIONAL AWARDS

54 Founders Award

The League's highest honor is given to someone judged to have made outstanding contributions to the conservation of America's natural and renewable resources.



Jim Madsen (South Dakota):

Jim has a long and storied history with the League at all levels. He served as the League's national president and chairman of the Executive Board. He also served as president of the South Dakota Division and as a national director. More impressive than any title is his success working to conserve and restore natural resources in South Dakota and across the country.

With a background in wildlife biology and a personal interest in the outdoors, Madsen has led numerous conservation efforts at the state and local levels on behalf of the League. These successes include conserving and restoring local waterways, reintroduction of giant Canada geese to the state, and development of a wetland education center and prairie wetland demonstration site. He is also credited with working with the governor and state legislature to launch the South Dakota Habitat Conservation Fund, which helps fund efforts to develop and improve habitat.

Hall of Fame Award

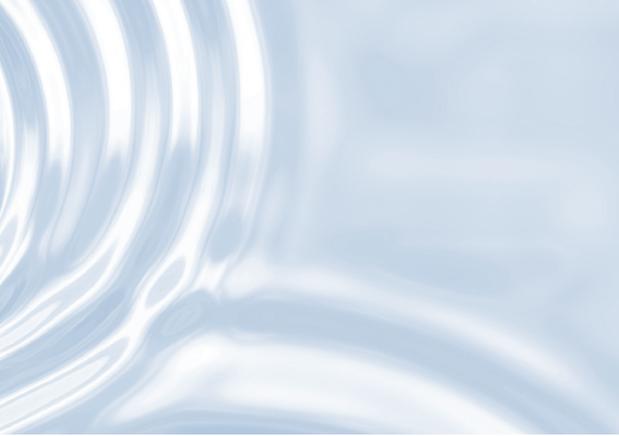
Recognizes outstanding accomplishments in furthering the mission and goals of the League.



Gerald Ernst (Wisconsin): A League member since 1964, Jerry has held numerous leadership roles with the Bill Cook Chapter and the Wisconsin Division, including serving as president of both organizations. As Portage County's first full-time park superintendent, he accomplished a great deal for conservation and outdoor recreation in the state, including creating a park system that is one of the top 25 in the state, designing the Dewey Shooting Range for Portage County, and developing the Jordan Park Nature Center. He also served on the Great Lakes Advisory Committee for more than a decade.



Ron Kuipers (Maryland): Ron has been one of the driving forces behind re-introducing the American chestnut tree in Maryland. He is responsible



for establishing 17 experimental orchards and maintaining these trees in cooperation with the American Chestnut Foundation, Hood College, and the University of Pennsylvania. Ron also helped develop the Rockville Chapter's wood duck nesting box program, through which volunteers placed more than 70 nesting boxes across the county and now maintain the boxes and report to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources on eggs laid and successful hatchings.



Bruce McGlenn (Washington): An IWLA member since birth, Bruce has served as vice president of the Washington Division and president of the Greater Seattle Chapter. He represented the League on a sustainable development tour of the Philippines in 2008, and his photos and text were used to create the *Islands of Hope* report. Bruce has taught fly casting to numerous local groups and teaches outdoor sports for the Washington Outdoor Women's program. For the past 10 years, Bruce has organized the Greater Seattle Chapter's Fourth of July fishing derby for local youth, introducing the next generation to the joys of fishing and the local community to the League.

Conservation Award

Recognizes member contributions to conservation in the name of the League.

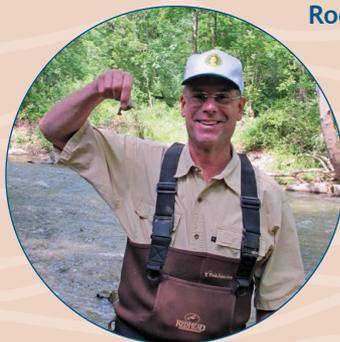
Donald Gates (New York): An elementary school teacher who is involved with educational and environmental activities, Don was a natural fit for developing a youth program for the Central New York Chapter. His "Young Naturalist Program" teaches youth about water quality, watersheds, and how to identify fish, birds, bugs, and plants. Children learn the importance of water to people and the environment – and learn something about their community in the process.

Douglas Harr (South Dakota): In his professional life, Doug has been a partner in developing areas in and around Sioux Falls, ensuring soil erosion control and drainage are properly designed and managed, with an emphasis on protecting and enhancing wildlife habitat. His love of the outdoors has led to a passion for passing his knowledge on to the next generation and mentoring them to be future conservationists. Around the Sioux Falls Chapter, Doug is known for his carpentry skills and, more importantly, for his work to conserve habitat.

William Jackson (Maryland): Bill is responsible for the health of a four-acre fishing and boating lake at the Rockville Chapter. He worked with a professional lake management company to eliminate aquatic invasive species and was involved with the planning, installation, and maintenance of a solar powered aeration system. Bill also contracts for semi-annual delivery of trout and oversees restocking and habitat restoration.



Byron "Butch" Mezick (Maryland): Butch chairs the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter's Forestry Committee and designed the tree-planting program that won the chapter the James Lawton Childs Award. He led the research, selected tree species, and planned and supervised the planting and maintenance, including training more than 100 volunteers. He also teaches outdoor classes for students from nearby Poolesville High School who are enrolled in the county's magnet Global Ecology Program.



Rodger Moran (Maryland): Rodger joined the Wildlife Achievement Chapter in 2013 and volunteered for the Conservation Committee almost immediately. He quickly became instrumental in planning and supervising conservation projects, including reforestation at a nearby reservoir site and installation of a riparian zone to protect a local park. Rodger has generated positive publicity for the chapter's conservation efforts. He chairs the League's regional Chesapeake Bay Working Group as well.



Save Our Streams Award

Recognizes outstanding work in environmental education and citizen activism for clean water.

Monongalia County Chapter (West Virginia): The chapter started a stream monitoring program five years ago after a visit with the Citizen Watershed Monitors at the Harry Enstrom Chapter in Pennsylvania. The Monongalia County Chapter now has seven trained monitors (and plans to train more members) who sample water quality at 12 streams in West Virginia and 3 in Pennsylvania to provide baseline data on local streams and look for pollution related to hydrofracking by the natural gas industry.

Northwest Indiana Paddling Association (Indiana): Thanks to this group, the first completed segment of the Lake Michigan Water Trail – 75 miles of shoreline from Chicago, Illinois, to New Buffalo, Michigan – was designated a National Recreation Trail, benefitting paddlers and coastal communities. The group has also worked with the National Park Service and Wilderness Inquiry to get more than 5,000 youth and adults on local waterways and educate them about water ecology. They helped develop the Indiana portion of the 70-mile Kankakee River Water Trail and helped secure \$1 million to conserve 1,400 acres along the Little Calumet River.

Bonnie Swarner (Indiana): As chair of the Porter County Chapter's Education Committee, Bonnie has focused on education and experiential learning linked to water quality. At chapter-hosted events, she teaches children and their families about water quality and what they can do to monitor and improve it. Bonnie spearheaded a fishing-line recycling program after seeing the effects of discarded line on wildlife, habitat, and recreation. She raised funds for the program, worked with volunteers to build recycling bins, and partnered with local and state organizations to get the bins into areas where people fish. She also works to improve wetland areas and water quality throughout Porter County.



James Lawton Childs Award

Recognizes outstanding conservation programs. Includes a gift of \$500 from the IWLA Endowment.

Small Chapter (<500 members)

White Oak River Chapter (North Carolina): This small chapter is having a big impact on the local conservation landscape. Members fought to conserve nearby Hofmann Forest, a 79,000-acre wetland forest with headwaters for three rivers, which was donated to North Carolina State University as a living classroom. Working with faculty from the university's Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources, chapter leaders had proposed a citizen science program using the forest to engage youth in the outdoors. Instead, they discovered the university was planning to sell the land for agricultural and commercial use. Through community outreach and a lawsuit, advocates (including the League) stopped the sale. The chapter also sponsors an annual conservation poster contest for fourth and fifth graders at four local elementary schools. Winning posters are displayed at local grocery stores, and the winning youth ride with chapter leaders in the Mullet Festival Parade.

Large Chapter (>500 members)

Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter

(Maryland): In 2015, the chapter completed a 5-year effort to plant 5,000 trees across 18.2 acres of what had been highly erodible, poor-quality farm land that the chapter purchased. This project involved not just digging 5,000 holes but also planning which species to plant, where to plant each tree, and

Planting trees at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter.

how to protect the trees to ensure as many as possible reached maturity. In addition to controlling soil erosion, the chapter wanted to provide food for many different wildlife species – from wild turkey and cedar waxwing to deer and chipmunks – through as much of the year as possible. All selected tree species were native to Maryland, and survival rates of early trees informed later planting decisions. Hundreds of chapter members and their families contributed to the success of this project, and members now feel a connection to nature and the growing forest they helped plant.

Robert C. O’Hair Award

Recognizes outstanding youth programs. Includes a gift of \$250.

Small Chapter (<500 members)

Brown County Chapter (Wisconsin):

Chapter members have worked hard to build youth involvement in conservation and the League, engaging more than 1,000 youth over the past five years. Successful chapter programs include:

- Annual Teddy Bear Hunt that has grown to more than 100 families.
- Annual Family Conservation Day with a focus on hunting and fishing activities.
- Family Adventures in Nature Club that involves parents as well as youth in outdoor activities throughout the year.
- New Youth Archery program that not only connects youth with the outdoors but also increases chapter family memberships and volunteers.
- Fishing day for students from a local school for handicapped children, which the chapter has run for more than 25 years. Approximately 250 students attend the event each year, and the chapter teams up with a local high school to bring in additional youth volunteers.



Large Chapter (>500 members)

Rockville Chapter (Maryland):

The Rockville Chapter boosted its recognition in the community with a variety of successful youth outreach programs. The chapter:

- Hosts Youth Conservation Education events that are open to members of the community. Approximately 200 children and their families took part in 2015 events, including a winter hike to identify animal tracks and sounds, a geode cracking event that introduced geology, and exploration of local waters using the League’s Save Our Streams program.
- Holds a robust National Hunting and Fishing Day event that included wildlife education and outdoor recreation.
- Engages youth to help maintain wood duck nesting boxes, which requires sloggng through swamps and fields to count hatched eggs, repair boxes, and collect data.
- Offers opportunities for county youth to earn Student Service Learning Hours through conservation projects at the chapter.
- Offers robust Junior air rifle, pistol, BB-gun, and archery programs. The archery program has been so popular that the chapter has had to cut off registration at 100 youth.
- Introduces youth to kayaking and canoeing through a junior water sports program the chapter has been running since 1974.

Honor Roll Award

Recognizes non-members for outstanding accomplishments in conservation, public education, and/or publicity in keeping with the League’s goals.

Albert “Al” Daher (New York): The League’s Central New York Chapter has sponsored an annual Family Fun Fishing Day event at Onondaga Lake Park for the past 30 years. The chapter’s main partner and supporter for this event has been Mickey’s Bait & Tackle, owned by Al Daher and his brothers. Al has served as the event organizer and principle liaison with partner organizations including the county parks department, state Department of Environmental Conservation, and financial supporters. Al and his cousin, Paul Hage, produced an excellent video of the 2014 Fishing Day event. Al has instructed hundreds of area youth on fly fishing and fly tying techniques over the past several decades.

Seneca Valley Chapter, Trout

Unlimited (Maryland): This group works closely with the League’s Rockville Chapter to teach youth and adults about fly fishing at events for League members and the community, including a National Hunting and Fishing Day event that averages more than 400 attendees. The Trout Unlimited chapter also provides speakers and displays for Rockville Chapter events and consistently advocates for ethical fishing practices and conservation education in the community.

Izabela Sikora (Virginia): An Education Coordinator with the Tri-County/City Soil and Water Conservation District, Izabela has worked tirelessly to develop and expand a citizen-based water quality monitoring program in the Fredericksburg, Virginia,

region. She recruited volunteers, established partnerships, provided training, and pursued grant funding to make her vision a reality. She also developed a partnership with Germanna Community College to engage students in the stream monitoring program.

Lisa Stadler/Stadler Nurseries (Maryland): Lisa Stadler has continued the natural resource conservation efforts begun by her grandfather, who founded the business she now operates. She has served on the program marketing committee of the Chesapeake Conservation Landscaping Council and enrolled her business in the Maryland Native Plant Society, and she participates in the Green Neighbor Forum held annually at Hood College in Frederick, Maryland. She regularly promotes the use of native plants and sustainable landscaping. She has helped many Boy Scouts by providing design and horticultural expertise for their Eagle Scout projects. Stadler Nurseries has supported the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin through the construction, promotion, and sale of rain barrels and by promoting sustainable landscaping and the use of native plants. The firm supports local IWLA chapters through special pricing of plants and materials for riparian repair and forestation projects.

Ronald Wisniewski (Virginia): Ron just retired after 41 years as the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's District Conservationist. Ron traveled throughout Virginia assisting local landowners, farm and urban communities, and governments in developing and implementing natural resource conservation plans. His tireless efforts reached more than 85 percent of the farms within the Rappahannock, Potomac, and York River watersheds and resulted in implementing long-term conservation practices that have helped curb nutrient and sediment pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. In addition to working as a technical advisor, Ron spearheaded programs promoting environmental activism and educational opportunities for youth and adults.

Stanford M. Adams Memorial Award

Recognizes a National Director, Director-at-Large, or Regional Governor who has shown extraordinary commitment to his or her duties and responsibilities.



Harry Kidder (Virginia): The

League has been a leader in citizen stream monitoring for nearly 50 years. Now we're working to engage the next generation of citizen monitors. Harry Kidder donated his time and technical expertise to help the League develop a

macroinvertebrate identification

app for mobile devices. He also worked with League staff to develop technical specifications for a photo-recognition version of the app, which the League hopes to develop in the future. Harry has contributed untold hours to helping the Virginia Division with technology and e-communications projects, including developing a new division website and adding new features to help the division communicate with its members. He continues to engage at the division and national levels to further the goals of the League.

Thelma "Pete" Reed Memorial Award

Recognizes a member who has volunteered many hours at the local or state level and is considered an "up and coming" future leader.

Paul Zarowny (Indiana): Paul has become a go-to volunteer for the Griffith Chapter. He serves as the chapter's sergeant-at-arms and has helped with more chapter committees than we can name, including Archery, Catfishing Derby, Ice Fishing Day, Take Your Kid Fishing Days, Trap, Turkey Shoots, and Wild Game Dinners. Paul teamed up with the chapter's Outdoor Ethics and Education chair on the chapter's Wildlife Education Exhibit, working to educate youth about local wildlife, and continues to offer ideas to improve the exhibit.



DEFENDERS CHAPTER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

At our Membership Awards breakfast, 39 chapters took home the League's Defenders Chapter Achievement Award. To receive the award, chapters must meet criteria in five of the following six categories: membership, financial contributions, education, conservation, youth involvement, and communications. These chapters showcase the depth of the conservation commitment across the Izaak Walton League.

Austin Chapter (Minnesota)
 Berkeley County Chapter (West Virginia)
 Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter (Maryland)
 Bill Cook Chapter (Wisconsin)
 Brown County Chapter (Wisconsin)
 Bush Lake Chapter (Minnesota)
 Central New York Chapter (New York)
 Des Moines Chapter (Iowa)
 Dwight Lydell Chapter (Michigan)
 Elgin Chapter (Illinois)
 Frederick #1 Chapter (Maryland)
 Fredericksburg-Rappahannock Chapter (Virginia)
 Grand Island Chapter (Nebraska)
 Hamilton Chapter (Ohio)
 Harford County Chapter (Maryland)
 Kapeska Chapter (South Dakota)
 Lincoln Chapter (Nebraska)
 Lois Green-Sligo Chapter (Maryland)
 Loudoun County Chapter (Virginia)
 Mid-Shore Chapter (Maryland)
 Minnesota Valley Chapter (Minnesota)
 Mountaineer Chapter (West Virginia)
 New Ulm Chapter (Minnesota)
 Owatonna Chapter (Minnesota)
 Prairie Woods Chapter (Minnesota)
 Rockville Chapter (Maryland)
 Silverton Chapter (Oregon)

Sioux Falls Chapter (South Dakota)
 Sportsman's Chapter (Maryland)
 Sunshine Chapter (South Dakota)
 Tiffin-Seneca County Chapter (Ohio)
 W.J. McCabe Chapter (Minnesota)
 Walter J. Breckenridge Chapter (Minnesota)
 Warren County Chapter (Iowa)
 Warren County Chapter (Virginia)
 Wayne County Chapter (Ohio)
 Wildlife Achievement Chapter (Maryland)
 Will Dilg Chapter (Minnesota)
 York Chapter #67 (Pennsylvania)

THANK YOU WISCONSIN IKES

Many thanks to members of the League's Wisconsin Division and Bill Cook Chapter, who were wonderful convention hosts and provided an exceptional experience for all our attendees. We are deeply appreciative of their many hours of volunteer service that made this year's convention such a success.

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Best Chapter Member Recruitment

Recognizes the chapter that carried out the most effective membership recruitment and retention program.



Brown County Chapter (Wisconsin)

The Brown County Chapter's Board of Directors knew it needed to grow chapter membership to remain an effective conservation organization. Chapter leaders developed a master plan and set 5- to 10-year goals that included developing a youth archery range, building a nature playground, creating a bee and butterfly maze garden, and developing new hiking trails. The master plan re-energized members and focused everyone on common goals. The chapter also put a focus on recruiting family memberships, particularly young families.

The chapter holds membership drives to which current members are encouraged to invite family, friends, and co-workers to learn more about chapter offerings and the League. The chapter manages a 100-acre conservancy area featuring hiking trails that are open to the public. Chapter members actively engage nonmembers they see using the trails, letting them know that the chapter is part of a national conservation organization. Members also constructed a kiosk that provides information about the history of the League and the Brown Country Chapter, details on chapter programs,

and membership brochures. The chapter proudly announces that it is open for new members through signs around the property. Chapter members also participate in public events to increase their name recognition and educate people about the League.

The Brown County Chapter has grown from 70 members to more than 160 members in just a few years. "The key is keeping people engaged and making them feel welcomed and part of something great," says chapter president Jodi Arndt Labs.

John C. Gregory Memorial Award

Awarded to the division with the highest membership increase.

Wisconsin Division: net gain of 96 members (and the winner of this award for the second year in a row!)

Membership Achievement Award

Recognizes chapters with the largest net gain and percentage increase in membership.

Greatest Percentage Increase & Net Gain

Day County Chapter (South Dakota):
230 percent increase/net gain of 76 members

Membership Merit Award

Recognizes membership growth based on chapter size.

50 and Under Member Class

Percent Increase: **Sanborn Chapter (Oklahoma)**

Net Gain: **St. John #1 Chapter (North Dakota)**

51-250 Member Class

Percent Increase & Net Gain: **Day County Chapter (South Dakota)**

251-500 Member Class

Percent Increase & Net Gain: **Glen Park Chapter (Indiana)**

501 and Over Member Class

Percent Increase & Net Gain:

Howard County Chapter (Indiana)

Best Chapter Newsletter

Based on appearance, originality, timeliness, and news coverage, including national and state news and community conservation.

Large Chapter (>500 members)

Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter (Maryland)

Best Chapter Web Site

Based on appearance, originality, and news coverage.

Suffolk-Nansemond Chapter (Virginia)

THE VOTES ARE IN

Election of volunteer leaders is an important part of the League's national convention. In July, members elected Ikes from across the country to lead the League through the coming year.

National Officers

President: Jeff Deschamps (Maryland)

Vice President: Kelly Kistner (South Dakota)

Secretary: Jim Storer (Ohio)

Treasurer: Walter Lynn, Jr. (Illinois)

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Larry Case (Virginia)

Bob Chapman (South Carolina)

Jim Sweeney (Illinois)

DIRECTOR AT-LARGE

Bill Kelly (Idaho)

Rick Sommer (South Carolina)

REGIONAL GOVERNORS

Region I: OPEN

Region II: OPEN

Region III: Pat Kistner (South Dakota)

Region IV: Dean Knight (Iowa)

Region V: OPEN

Region VI: OPEN



2017 NATIONAL CONVENTION

July 25-28, 2017 • Kalahari Resorts and Conventions • Sandusky, Ohio
Great speakers. Informative workshops. Networking opportunities. Giraffes?! You will find all this and more at next year's IWLA national convention in Sandusky, Ohio, where the Kalahari Resorts property brings a bit of Africa to Ohio. It is also home to the largest indoor water park (under one roof) in the country, so plan to bring the family along. (And have we mentioned the ergonomic chairs in the meeting rooms? Or the easy access to fishing on Lake Erie?) Mark your calendar today and look for more convention details early next year!



EARLY BIRD AUCTION

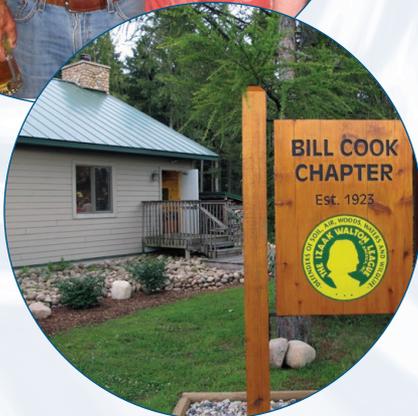
Convention kicked off with an "early bird" event, featuring a delicious buffet and a few surprises (including the first lawn mower we've seen at an auction!).





EVERYONE LOVES A PARADE

Likes from across the country brought local delicacies for everyone to enjoy. From Iowa pork to Virginia moonshine, flavorful treats abounded in our room-to-room parade. Thank you to all our hosts.



DINNER AT THE BILL COOK CHAPTER

Convention attendees enjoyed a delicious pig roast with all the fixins' at the Bill Cook Chapter. The chapter house, built entirely through volunteer labor, features white pine and spruce paneling from trees harvested on the chapter property. The trees were planted by chapter members when they purchased this former farm decades ago, and it is now a conservation showcase.



YOUTH CONVENTION



This year's National Youth Convention offered a variety of outdoor adventures, including a day of swimming, boating, and splashing at YMCA Camp Glacier Hollow; archery and target shooting at the League's Bill Cook Chapter; stream conservation on the Little Plover River; and tours of a bison ranch and cheese factory. (We had to do a cheese tour — it's Wisconsin!)

Young Ikes geocached their way through Camp Glacier Hollow — and found some sweet treats along the way. (It's candy in that old ammo box!)



Exploring art in the woods at Stevens Point Sculpture Park.



Making friends with a big visitor from the rain forest.