



2021 National Convention Vice President's Report

Fellow Ikes,

Yogi Berra, among others, is reported to have said “the future ain’t what it used to be.” I’m not sure when or why he may have made that statement, but I’m sure many today can relate to those words. As I think about those words and the future, I choose to do so in a positive light.

Looking at some of the activities Ikes members participated with over the last 18 months, I can tell you our Midwest chapters are also staying positive about the League and its future.

Zach Moss, IWLA Save Our Streams Midwest Coordinator, demonstrated how citizen scientists can monitor local streams during a newly created Master Conservationist program. This program, from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, brought together a number of Dubuque County like-minded organizations to show those participating in the program the importance of good conservation practices.

The Upper Mississippi River Initiative (UMRI) throughout 2020 and into early 2021 hosted virtual meetings focusing on water and soil conservation practices in farming. With in-person meetings now taking place, UMRI continues to offer programs that show how to be a successful farmer and protect our natural resources at the same time.

The Des Moines Chapter, in addition to hosting the UMRI programs, has presented conservation programs on the importance of protecting our watersheds, migratory birds in Iowa and the quality of water the city of Des Moines draws for residential drinking.

The Linn County Iowa Chapter spent much of last year cleaning their chapter grounds after the August 2020 derecho went through the Cedar Rapids area. The chapter is working to re-establish their monarch butterfly program and honeybee hives. In addition, they are preparing a 5-acre section of land that will be turned into a pollinator garden & native prairie area. The chapter is also using many of the trees downed by the derecho to make information kiosks and seating benches to be installed around the pollinator area and part of their nature trail.

The Minnesota Division and chapters stay committed to keeping members informed by hosting a series of Zoom meetings and webinars on key conservation issues. They also continue to form partnerships with other League chapters and conservation organizations to promote the mission of the League.

These are just a few of the ways chapters and divisions are looking to the future. We each look at the future through a different lens. I see a positive future for the League and would ask you to join me in making that the view each and every member of the League sees.

Thank you for all of the time and energy you devote to conservation.

Vicki Arnold
National Vice President