

The logo of the Izaak Walton League of America is a circular emblem. It features a central sun with rays, surrounded by a green border containing the text "SOIL, AIR, WOODS, WATERS" at the top and "IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA" at the bottom. The text "IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA" is also written in a larger font across the middle of the circle.

**REPORT ON THE 85<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OF THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA**

**BIG SKY, MONTANA  
JULY 10 - 13, 2007**

Preface:

The purpose of this report is to inform the membership of the Rockville Chapter concerning the activities and decisions that took place in Big Sky. It is intended to serve as a reference and guide for chapter members who may wish to participate in future annual conventions, to include information on the procedural aspects of business at the convention.

The annual convention was attended by three hundred plus delegates, alternatives, and family members. Three members of the Rockville Chapter attended: Tom Beavers, National Director; Ron Kuipers, who had previously been awarded the National Conservation Award; and Miles Greenbaum, Vice President of the Chapter.

The single most instructive message learned at the convention was that the IWLA is, first and foremost, a conservation organization. All policies, issues and discussions revolved around conservation; clean air issues, water resources, public lands, fish and wildlife, energy, carrying capacity, and outdoor ethics.

Finally, and just as an aside, the choice of Big Sky for this year's convention was brilliant. The setting, the Big Sky Resort, reflected all of the principles and concerns of the IWLA. Located at 7,500 feet altitude in the Madison Range of the Rocky Mountains, close to the world-class trout rivers of the Gallatin, the Madison and the Yellowstone, its natural beauty served as a constant reminder of the League's mission.

Any errors in this report, whether of omission, commission, spelling or fact, are strictly mine and I take full responsibility.

Miles Greenbaum  
Vice President  
Rockville Chapter

### “Early Bird” Party and Auction

The evening before the meetings begin, there is a general get-together that includes a buffet dinner and fund-raising auction. There is usually a large attendance, so there is ample opportunity to meet people and get a feel for who the “actors” are at the convention. The items placed up for auction are generally donated by chapters’ members and, quite frankly, are not all that exciting. But it is a nice way to raise additional funds for the League.

### New Delegate Orientation

Prior to the opening session, a new delegate orientation is held, which is a “must” for anyone that has not previously attended this convention. The orientation is provided by IWLA National staff, and this is a good time to ask any questions regarding procedures, interventions, presentations, etc. It is only one hour, but well worthwhile. It is also a good opportunity to meet delegates from other areas of the country and gain an early understanding of what will be important during the convention issue discussions.

### Reports from IWLA Staff and Officers

Reports were presented by the new Executive Director, David Hoskins, as well as by the current president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and each of the six regional governors. The Rockville Chapter is in Region VI.

Included as Appendix I are copies of these reports. They make very interesting reading for anyone interested in exactly what is going in the League. The major attachment is the IWLA Staff Report, which – in addition to Hoskin’s statement – provides information on each of the major staff activities; finance, administration, development and membership marketing, membership services, communications, computer systems, shooting sports program, and conservation programs. The last category is, of course, the most extensive, including sustainability education programs, watershed programs, and outdoor ethics programs.

Key to many of the reports is concern about the lack of visibility and decreasing membership in the League. It was not explicitly stated, but reading between the lines one can come away with the conclusion that the

reason for Paul Hanson's dismissal was his failure to adequately address that problem. No one ever questioned Paul's commitment to the League or to conservation in general. The issue appeared to be his inability to focus on visibility and membership as a primary responsibility of his office. David Hoskins appears to understand that message. Again, this is my own interpretation and no one at IWLA National was consulted in this regard.

A number of State Divisions are quite active in terms of gaining local visibility for the League; South Dakota and Iowa are primary examples. They purchase and distribute copies of *Outdoor America* to local schools, libraries, and legislators. They also work closely with local media to ensure that all their conservation activities and programs are regularly reported. This is an area in which our Chapter (and State Division) could increase efforts and should be a subject for further discussion.

Additionally, relative to visibility, during discussions at the margins of the meeting, I learned that there are many Chapters throughout the country that offer scholarships in the \$1 - 1.5K range. These are generally not reported in the local media, because there are many, many organizations that offer similar scholarships, and the print media simply does not have room to note them all. What several Chapters do is to take out paid ads in the print media to announce those scholarships, thereby ensuring that the public is made aware, and ensuring visibility. Again, this is something that our Chapter should consider.

### Convention Speakers

Throughout the convention, either during plenary sessions or during luncheons, the League will have arranged for prominent individuals to speak to issues of interest to the membership. The speakers during the 2007 session were all quite interesting, informative, entertaining and "on message". This year, they included the following:

Craig Mathews, Founder, Blue Ribbon Flies, Montana: Craig is a very well known (and successful) person to anyone interested in fly fishing. His presentation included a detailed discussion of fly fishing on the lesser-known waters of the Yellowstone National Park; how to access those waters, seasonal variations, specific techniques, and amusing anecdotes. He also

went into detail regarding the "1% for the Planet" organization. This is

currently a group of 600 companies that donate 1% of their gross (not net) earnings to environmental and conservation projects. Last year, they raised \$12 million for conservation, and are expanding their membership base. Individuals that hunt, fish, camp, or have any other involvement with the outdoors, would do well to consider doing business with those companies.

Anthony Bridgett, Izaak Walton Cottage Chapter, England: Tony is a charming gentleman from England who spoke to the convention about the creation of the Izaak Walton Cottage in Staffordshire and the English streams in which Walton fished. He showed a couple of short films, made for English television, demonstrating how trout are raised and introduced into those streams, and how those streams are maintained in their pristine quality, “as clear as gin, but more expensive.”.

Jim Posewitz, founder of Orion – The Hunter’s Institute, Montana: Orion is the premier hunter ethics organization in North America, educating the public about the traditions of the hunter-conservationist and the ethics of fair chase hunting. His presentation was one that should have been taped and shown at any group concerned with outdoor ethics as it relates to hunting, fishing, or any activity that takes man into the outdoors.

### Awards

Awards are presented at several different venues throughout the Convention, as noted at Attachment II, which includes a listing of past award winners as well. There is an Awards Luncheon, at which the major awards are presented, such as Hall of Fame, Conservation, Robert C. O’Hair, Best Chapter Bulletin, etc. Our Chapter, this year, was fortunate enough to win a Save Our Streams Award, for the work of Tom Vegella; Best Chapter Bulletin Award, thanks to the work of Jay Copsey; and the Defender’s Award.

There is a Membership Awards Breakfast, in which individuals and Chapters are recognized for maintaining or exceeding their membership enrollment. The Rockville Chapter was one of those chapters receiving such an award.

There is also a presentation of two \$2,500 IWLA National Scholarships, which is made during the report on the Youth Convention. These scholar-

ships go to juniors or seniors at the college level that have demonstrated their commitment through at least two years of college. The League's rationale was to complement, rather than compete, with local awards. One scholarship goes to an individual that had previously received a chapter or state division award. The other goes to a member, or son or daughter of a member of the League. This year, the scholarship for a student that had previously received a chapter award was presented to Trevor Michaels, a student member in our Chapter.

It should be noted that our Chapter is certainly qualified to be eligible for more than just those awards received. It is simply a question of preparing and submitting award nominations in a timely and sufficiently detailed manner.

Finally, IWLA staff member Earl Hower, Director of Membership Development & Marketing, asked that he be invited to attend the Chapter awards presentations at the general membership meeting in August.

#### Resource Committees

The resource committees review conservation-related issues across the country and make recommendations concerning IWLA policies that would address those concerns and encourage participation by concerned members. The committees include: water resources, public lands, agricultural affairs, fish & wildlife, energy, carrying capacity and outdoor ethics.

Miles Greenbaum attended the fish and wildlife committee meeting. There were no new positions that had been proposed, but the committee had been asked to comment on two positions relevant to the water resources committee; aquatic invasive species and viral hemorrhagic septicemia. The former had resulted in a resolution that state and federal authorities pass comprehensive legislation to regulate and control the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species and disease pathogens resulting from the discharge of ballast water into the Great Lakes from ocean-going vessels. The latter was a related resolution, requiring that ballast water on ships traveling on the Great Lakes be disinfected to eliminate pathogens.

IWLA 2007 Convention

Page 6

The committee agreed that these were appropriate objectives and concurred in the water resources committee to combine the issues for recommendation to the general plenary.

There was also discussion, raised by the delegate from Oregon, concerning the problem with sea lions feeding extensively on migrating salmon below the Bonneville Dam. Since IWLA policy already addresses the issue of “problem” animals, no additional policy change appeared necessary.

A question was also raised about the planned removal of the Interior Least Tern from the endangered list. Since there was insufficient information available, Mr. Greenbaum offered to raise the question with the Audubon Society and report back to the committee with their position.

Ron Kuipers attended the water resources committee. It consisted of five resolutions, of which three concerned the introduction of aquatic invasive species via ballast water into the Great Lakes. There are already 185 known invasive species in the Great Lakes, costing up to \$5 billion per year for mitigation and in damage to regional economies. The latest concern is for a viral disease that kills fish and is spreading rapidly. As noted above, the resolutions were combined into a single recommendation.

A resolution on “clean water as a public trust” had originally been proposed by the Indiana delegation and was discussed at the three preceding annual conventions. It addresses concern that water supplies are being privatized, sold, and transferred at the expense of local residents. The resolution was recommended to the plenary session.

### Workshops

A number of workshops were offered during the convention. Miles Greenbaum attended the workshop on “Fundraising and Marketing.”

This workshop was held by IWLA staff Anne MacGlashan and Earl Hower. It included information on non-profit fundraising management, sources to look to for information, how to prepare a proposal, and examples

of prospect worksheets. The documents related to this issue are included at Attachment III. Sample grants are available from National, and PERT charts are useful when submitting a grant request. Cost sharing is usually a must, but in-kind services count towards cost sharing, with volunteer manpower

worth \$18.70/hour. Grants are usually well received if they address a service area, such as handicap access and/or community service.

Ron Kuipers attended a workshop entitled “Nature Deficit Disorder”, which addressed ways to get and keep kids interested in the outdoors. After a scavenger hunt designed to illustrate one possible technique, the attendees exchanged examples of successful outdoor programs they had conducted. The book, “Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder” was highly recommended.

### IWLA Trust and Endowments

The IWLA Trust investment fund cash balance currently runs about \$736.5K which produced earnings of about \$56K. Trust Fund earnings accrue to the League’s unrestricted general fund to help balance the annual budget. Many chapters and individuals gave donations of \$1 - to - \$5K for the Trust. Tom Beavers announced that the Rockville Chapter would contribute \$1,000 to the Fund, as in the past. He did not, however, give any money at that time.

The Endowment Board accepts funds for distribution to conservation projects that are beyond individual chapter’s ability to fund. This may be a potential source for Rockville Chapter support, since a statement was made that almost all requests from chapters last year were granted. We need to find out from National how to apply for these grants. As with the Trust, a number of chapters and individuals came forward with donations for the Endowment.

### Election of Officers and Directors

The interesting thing about elections at the Convention is the procedure. At any time that an office is contested, each nominee is allowed three minutes to present their credentials. Following that, three delegates are allowed 1 ½ minutes each to speak on behalf of their candidate. Then a vote

is taken. This procedure is followed every time a nomination is contested. It makes for a lengthy election process. The vote tally is never announced; only the winner.

This year, the only nominee in which our Chapter had a personal interest

was Bob Chapman, from the BCC chapter, running for Secretary. He was opposed by a very competent and involved woman from Iowa. Bob won, giving this region voice on the slate of officers.

### By-Laws Proposed Changes

Two major changes were proposed during this year's convention (see Appendix IV).

The first, proposed by the Pennsylvania Division and supported by the Maryland Division, was to change the name of the organization to "The Izaak Walton Conservation League". This is an issue that comes up every few years. Last time, the change was defeated by only four votes. Following extensive and impassioned discussion, the change was again defeated. This time, the difference was large enough that a count of hands was not necessary.

The other change (actually, several changes) were proposed by the Arlington/Fairfax Chapter. This was a quite complex issue, but can be summarized by explaining that AFC wanted more independence from the IWLA national policies and procedures. For example, they wanted chapter by-laws and articles of incorporation to take precedence over those of the League. All of their proposals were defeated by a vote of everyone to four.

### Policy Resolutions

Six policy recommendations were presented from the resource committees. For each recommendation, speakers presented pro and con arguments, or offered "friendly" changes that would clarify otherwise unclear aspects of the policy recommendation. The six policies are presented in detail in Appendix V.

– Market-based solutions for mitigating global climate change: This is  
IWLA 2007 Convention Page 9

the cap-and-trade carbon credit issue. While there was a lot of objection to the process, it was generally agreed that this is "the only game in town" for near-term carbon emission reduction, and was passed.

– Home energy consumption education: There are many practices, other than "active" home efficiency practices, that can be implemented if the

public were made aware. The resolution passed easily.

– Nuclear energy: This was (in my opinion) a rather weak resolution that simply asked for the federal government to support and encourage methods for the safe handling of current nuclear waste. Of course, it passed.

– Discourage the artificial feeding of game animals in developed areas: This resolution passed, but only after the defeat of attempts to extend the resolution to “all areas”. This would have the effect of not allowing feed drops to stranded animals in winter.

– Moratorium on Great Lakes shipping to control aquatic invasive species: This issue was described under the previous “Resource Committee” discussion. It only recommends a barrier to any shipping whose ballast tanks have not been adequately treated before entering the Great Lakes. The resolution passed.

– Clean Water is a Public Trust: Again, a rather (in my opinion) weak resolution, asking that water supply and distribution should not be privatized; rather, it should continue to be regulated. Passed.

In any event, the *IWLA Conservation Policies* booklet is an extensive summary of the League’s guiding principles and policies, and should be required reading for all members who have even the least interest in paying something back for their use of the outdoors; whether hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, or whatever.

### Parade of States

This is a fun evening. Following the meetings, each of many of the states represented at the Convention opened a suite in which they provided food, drink and give-away items indigenous to their state. This is great way

IWLA 2007 Convention Page 10

to meet folks, eat and drink as much as you want, and get a little better understanding of what folks do outside of Maryland. For example, Virginia served country ham, Iowa served pheasant, Illinois served venison, etc. The Maryland room served crab dip and Maryland wine, and was really one of the most popular of the state rooms.

### Future Meetings

2008: Merrillville, Indiana, July 22 - 25 July. The event will be held at the Radisson Hotel. Merrillville is about 45 minutes from downtown Chicago. They are planning a charter fishing trip on Lake Michigan for Coho salmon and lake trout on July 26. The location is in Porter County, which is also know for its steelhead fishing rivers.

2009: Sioux Falls, South Dakota

2010: Grantville, Pennsylvania (a little Northwest of Harrisburg)

### Action Items

- Decide if it would be appropriate to buy and distribute *Outdoor America* to local schools, libraries and legislators. Work with the Maryland Division toward this end.
- Obtain and make copies of the *IWLA Conservation Policies* booklet available to all Chapter members.
- Consider purchasing ads in local print media to announce our scholarship awards.
- Invite Earl Hower to attend (and perhaps present) National awards at our August meeting.
- Determine Audubon Society position on the Interior Least Tern and communicate to the Fish & Wildlife resource committee.
- Decide on sending \$1,000 to the IWLA Trust Fund.

IWLA 2007 Convention

Page 11

- Determine whether it would be appropriate to apply to the IWLA National Endowment Fund for support for Chapter conservation projects.
- At the margins of the meeting, Ron Kuipers met a number of individuals from other states that expressed significant interest in the chestnut project. He will follow up with them.

- Obtain a copy of “Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder”, and determine whether recommendations made in that book may be applicable to our Chapter’s youth programs.