



IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA



## Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club Guidebook



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### Education Contributors

**Dr. Chiara D'Amore, PhD**

**Rebecca Wadler Lase**, IWLA Conservation Education Associate

Dr. Chiara D'Amore, founder of Columbia Families in Nature, has a doctorate in Sustainability Education from Prescott College and is a Toyota-Audubon TogetherGreen Fellow. Her research focuses on the personal, social, and environmental effects of family nature club participation and time spent in nature more broadly. She gratefully acknowledges the inspiration and encouragement she received from the Children & Nature Network in the formation of Columbia Families in Nature and associated research. Dr. D'Amore has more than a decade of experience working as an environmental consultant and has a Master's degree in Environmental Science and Engineering as well as a Bachelor's degree in Biology and International Studies.

Rebecca Wadler Lase is the Conservation Education Associate for the Izaak Walton League of America, where she leads efforts to encourage youth to explore and play in the outdoors. She has a diverse background in conservation biology and community outreach. Ms. Wadler earned a Bachelor's degree in Primate Ethology from Hamilton College and a Master's degree in Conservation Biology from Columbia University. She has worked with the Orangutan Foundation International, Earthwatch Institute, The Nature Conservancy, American Museum of Natural History, and the Wildlife Conservation Society.

### Editorial and Design Support

**Earl Hower**, IWLA Director of Chapter Relations

**Dawn Merritt**, IWLA Director of Communications

**Tamara Lee**, Designer

### Photo Credits

Izaak Walton League of America/Rebecca Wadler Lase and Columbia Families in Nature/  
Dr. Chiara D'Amore.

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This guidebook was produced by the IWLA Chapter Relations Department. For more information, contact Izaak Walton League of America, 707 Conservation Lane, Gaithersburg, MD 20878-2983. Telephone: (800) IKE-LINE (453-5463). E-mail: [chapters@iwla.org](mailto:chapters@iwla.org).

[www.iwla.org](http://www.iwla.org)

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a family nature club is to connect children and their families with nature through direct experience on a regular basis. The way individual family nature clubs are designed to meet that common purpose varies significantly, depending on the context within which the club operates and the specific goals of club leaders. Overall, family nature clubs offer low-cost, simple ways for individuals and organizations to foster positive social and conservation outcomes.



In more than 240 communities across the country, members of the Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA) work to conserve, restore, and promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of America's natural resources. To help fulfill this mission, many chapters offer programs designed to engage youth and families. This is especially important given research that clearly links childhood time spent enjoying nature with care for the natural world. Add the presence of role models for conservation and participation in a nature-based organization, and you have three of the most significant experiences that foster a life-long conservation ethic (Chawla and Derr, 2012; D'Amore, 2015).

Family nature clubs offer an important opportunity to bring these three experiences together by providing a consistent venue for families to spend time together enjoying and learning about nature. Experiencing nature with the important adults in their lives also gives children a sense of well-being and the confidence to connect with the world around them. In 2014, IWLA launched a pilot family nature club, called the Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club, at our national headquarters in Gaithersburg, Maryland. The pilot program informed the development of this guidebook.

FAN Club is a unique program that can help IWLA chapters engage youth and families in the community that each chapter serves. In turn, this can help grow community awareness of the chapter, increase chapter membership, support chapter conservation goals, and offer numerous benefits to participating youth and families.

This guidebook includes easy-to-implement, research-based, and field-tested resources to help chapters start and sustain a FAN Club. Contents of the guidebook include:

- **Benefits of Starting a FAN Club**
- **FAN Club Design Guide**
- **Outreach and Communications Strategies**
- **Event Planning Considerations**
- **Event Activity Suggestions**
- **Tips for Sustained Success**
- **FAN Club Planning Worksheet**
- **FAN Club Checklists**
- **Additional Resources**
- **Examples and Templates**

## BENEFITS OF STARTING A FAN CLUB



**W**hen considering starting a FAN Club, it is helpful to understand the likely benefits for chapters, FAN Club leaders, and club participants.

### Benefits for chapters

A FAN Club is a great way to increase exposure and visibility for IWLA chapters in the local community. A recurring, family-focused event is likely to engage current chapter members as well as attract new families that may later join the chapter or support it in other ways such as volunteering on chapter projects. Promoting family-friendly events in the local media can increase chapter visibility. In addition, young families can energize a chapter and help bring in more young-adult members.

### Benefits for club leader(s)

Research on family nature clubs has identified numerous positive effects for club leaders (D'Amore, 2015). The most commonly reported benefits include enhanced personal relationships, more time spent outdoors, a sense of personal accomplishment, learning about nature, increased leadership opportunities, and satisfaction from teaching people about – and helping people connect to – nature. By all accounts, leading a family nature club is very enjoyable and gratifying.

### Benefits for participants

Research on family nature clubs has identified more than 20 positive effects for club participants (D'Amore, 2015). These benefits can be organized into seven categories for parents and children: learning opportunities, enhanced connections with nature, positive effects for family dynamics, stronger social connections, meaningful and memorable experiences, enhanced personal well-being, and reduced barriers to spending time in nature. There are many additional physical, emotional, and intellectual benefits of spending time in nature that are achieved by participating in a family nature club. For example, research shows that time spent in nature can improve overall psychological well-being, reduce attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and reduce health problems such as those associated with childhood obesity.

# FAN CLUB DESIGN GUIDE

Family nature clubs are as diverse as the communities they serve. Some are located in small towns while others are in large cities. Some clubs focus on environmental education while others focus on child-led free play. And some are intentionally kept small while others have grown so large that offshoots or sub-clubs are developed to manage demand and group size.

For example, in a rural Pennsylvania community, the library has a club that meets every Thursday evening for an hour to read a seasonal book and play. In an urban California area, a club meets each weekend to take a hike at local parks. In a suburban Maryland community, families gather every other weekend at a different place to play, explore, learn, and do conservation projects.



**F**amily nature clubs hold events in natural outdoor settings, are geared toward family participation, and are designed to develop positive connections with nature through direct, recurring experience. Beyond that, the specific structure of clubs varies to suit the context in which they are created. The following are key elements to consider when designing a FAN Club.

## 1. Define your purpose

Having a clear purpose will help to inform many other FAN Club design decisions, such as audience and event structure. For example, do you want to reach potential new chapter members, attract people to a chapter property, educate diverse audiences about natural resources, foster a greater sense of local community, or engage volunteers on conservation projects?

## 2. Determine who will lead the FAN Club

FAN Club leadership can be the responsibility of one person or group of co-leaders with specific responsibilities. Interest, availability, and club design decisions (such as event frequency and location) will inform what makes the most sense for the chapter.

## 3. Identify your audiences

Starting a FAN Club is a great way to engage current chapter members and also invite the public to participate in IWLA events. Consider whether there are particular audiences from the local community that you are interested in engaging. The audience can be fairly large, and there are potential partners in the community that can help you reach segments of the larger group. (See the community outreach section on page 4 for some suggestions.)

## 4. Determine event frequency and time

It is important to establish a consistent schedule for FAN Club events so families can make it a reliable, recurring part of their lives. Event frequency can range from four times a year to once a week – the most common is once or twice a month. In addition, identify a set day of the week and a set time that events will be held. Keep in mind that the day of the week and time will affect who is able to attend.

## 5. Determine event location(s)

For chapters that own property, FAN Club events can be held there and/or at natural areas in the community. For chapters that do not own property, identify local natural areas where you can hold events for a minimal fee or no fee. Some clubs pick a few locations to visit over and over again, developing a close connection with particular places. Other clubs make a point to visit new areas almost every outing, exposing participants to as many outdoor places in the community as possible. Local nature centers, farms, and state/local parks, for example, are usually happy to host a FAN Club event so they can promote their facilities to the local community.

# OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES



Depending on the purpose and audience of the FAN Club, outreach and communications strategies will vary. The following outreach and communications strategies will help chapters build a broad base of FAN Club participants.

## 1. Community outreach

Look for organizations in the community that share your chapter's interest in youth, families, and/or conservation and ask them to help spread the word. Send them the FAN Club e-mail announcement and give them printed fliers/postcards about the club (as described in #4 on the next page) to hand out. Engaging local organizations and inviting them to support and be a part of a FAN Club is very important for increasing participation and raising chapter visibility.

Think broadly on this one, from pediatrician offices to local departments of parks and recreation. Examples of potential groups to engage include:

- **Moms groups/play groups:** Most communities have a local moms group or play date groups that bring parents and children together. Many of these groups have an online presence and/or Facebook page, which is a great place to promote upcoming FAN Club events. If you are not sure how to find these groups, ask someone with young children.
- **Pediatricians:** Many pediatricians understand the value of encouraging children to get outside and will distribute fliers in their office and/or promote the FAN Club to their patients.
- **Preschools/schools:** Local preschools and elementary schools may promote the FAN Club to their families. It may be easier to reach out to families at preschools and private schools due to strict guidelines some public schools have for promoting community events or sending fliers home in backpacks. However, you may be able to attend a PTA event at a public school to promote FAN Club to parents and ask PTA members to spread the word.
- **Local businesses:** Sometimes simply leaving out general information cards or fliers about the FAN Club at local businesses (with their permission) will attract interest. Try leaving promotional materials at likeminded businesses such as health food and outdoor supply stores. Bagel and coffee shops often have community boards where you can post fliers for upcoming events.

- **Community organizations:** Community organizations such as the Lions Club, Kiwanis Clubs, “Friends of” groups, and other conservation organizations (Audubon, Trout Unlimited, etc.) often invite speakers to their meetings. This is a great opportunity to educate the community about a FAN Club and recruit potential partners for planning and/or leading FAN Club outings.

- **Community calendars and neighborhood/HOA Web sites or e-mail lists:** Post events on community calendars in local newspapers, neighborhood or community group newsletters, and local list-servs. Community newspapers will often print events for free in their community calendar page if you post it early enough in the online calendar.

## 2. Build an online presence

Web sites and social media feeds are the primary ways people will obtain information about FAN Club events. These online tools also allow organizers to share photos from events to build some excitement about the program and engage new attendees. (Be sure to have participants sign photo release forms before posting pictures online.) In addition to posting events on your chapter’s Web site and Facebook page, consider creating a Facebook page specifically for the FAN Club to share information and engage attendees in conversations about their experiences and relevant conservation issues. Populate the page with interesting articles and information about connecting kids to nature as well. Creating Facebook “events” will allow people to share your event through their social networks. Consider creating a hashtag for your FAN Club that families can use when sharing information and photos on Facebook and Twitter. Instagram can be used to publish event photos from any smart phone or tablet during or after an event.

## 3. E-mail announcements

An e-mailed FAN Club announcement can be a versatile outreach tool. With minor modifications, the same content can be sent to chapter members, local media outlets, and community allies (see the “Examples and Templates” section for a sample e-mail). All communications materials should include the five W’s – who, what, where, when, and why – of your FAN Club events and links to the

chapter’s Web site or FAN Club Facebook page. You can use some of the language in this guidebook’s “Introduction” to explain the need for – and benefits of – a FAN Club.

## 4. Create printed materials

A simple, eye-catching flier or postcard can engage new audiences that haven’t found you yet online. Printed materials should direct interested families to the chapter’s Web site or social media page to learn more about the FAN Club and the chapter. See the “Examples and Templates” section of this guidebook for more tips on promotional materials.

## 5. Stay in touch

Maintain a list of people interested in the club, including allies and previous event participants. You can use tools such as Excel, Eventbrite ([www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com)), or SignUpGenius ([www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com)) to easily manage this. (See “Online Tools to Assist with Volunteer Management” in the “Additional Resources” section of this guidebook for more information about these tools). Send a brief monthly or quarterly e-mail update that includes upcoming FAN Club events and links to youth-focused resources available on the chapter’s Web site and other family-friendly sites. (See the “Additional Resources” section at the end of this guidebook for suggestions.) Invite FAN Club participants to chapter events – such as Earth Day, fishing derbies, or National Hunting and Fishing Day – that are open to the public. This is another great way to keep the chapter visible in the community.



## EVENT PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS



**D**epending on the FAN Club’s purpose, audience, and location, there are a variety of things to consider when planning an event.

### 1. Event style or approach

Each family nature club tends to have a style or approach that – along with the purpose and audience for the club – influences the way events are designed. Some clubs have very informal events while others follow a consistent structure. Some are focused on child-led play while others have educational objectives. Some prioritize physical activity while others do not cover much distance. Some stay very local and others go further afield. Many family nature clubs intentionally offer a variety of event and activity types. It is helpful to determine the types of events your FAN Club will offer at the start of the planning process and communicate this to prospective participants through all your outreach tools.

### 2. Cost considerations

It is important to be clear about whether there is a fee to participate in FAN Club events. Many family nature clubs are free, some ask participants to cover their own costs (if there are any costs associated with a particular event), some have a small per-event fee, and others require an annual membership fee. Fee structures will influence participation in the FAN Club. In general, FAN Clubs are not designed to be fundraisers, because excessive fees will decrease participation and community engagement.

### 3. Event locations

If all events will be held on chapter property, consider ways to help FAN Club participants connect meaningfully with that land (for example, by focusing on seasonal changes). If some or all events will be held on property owned by other entities, make a list of the places that would be of interest to participants (such as parks, farms, and nature centers). Determine whether certain places would be better suited to certain seasons (e.g., water-based play during the summer and indoor nature

centers during the winter) and participant groups based on terrain, travel distance, and other physical considerations. Contact property owners/managers at the beginning of the event-planning process to determine availability and confirm dates before publicly announcing the schedule. Different levels of coordination are required with different property owners. Ask about existing nature-based programs that may be a fit for your FAN Club – you may not have to set up your own activity.

#### 4. Participant registration

Consider whether families should pre-register for events or drop in the day of an event. For planning purposes, it is often easier if pre-registration is required, particularly if there is a fee involved or if knowing the number of participants in advance is essential to specific events (e.g., you have limited space or must purchase materials before the event). There are a variety of ways to have people pre-register for an event, including asking them to e-mail the FAN Club leader, posting the event to a Facebook or Meetup group page, and using easy online tools such as Eventbrite ([www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com)) or SignUpGenius ([www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com)) to collect names and contact information.

(See “Online Tools To Assist with Volunteer Management” in the “Additional Resources” section of this guidebook for more information on these tools.)

#### 5. Event communications

Post sufficient details about events on the chapter’s Web site and social media pages to ensure potential attendees understand the event and any associated fees and physical requirements. If people are required to sign-up in advance and e-mail addresses are provided, send a reminder e-mail a few days in advance to registered attendees with details about the event and any suggested preparations (such as what to wear or bring).

#### 6. Liability/safety considerations

Most family nature clubs require participants to complete a liability waiver. (A template is included in the “Examples and Templates” section of this guidebook.) It is important to clearly communicate what each event will entail so people can determine whether it is a good fit for their family. Always keep a first-aid kit handy as well as other safety equipment suitable for the terrain (such as a flotation device for an event near a lake or river).



## EVENT ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS



In general, families show up to FAN Club events to explore and play in nature together. For more structured events featuring specific activities and/or learning objectives, there are a variety of places to get inspiration.

The Izaak Walton League has resources focused on engaging youth in the outdoors, as do other organizations (see the “Additional Resources” section for links). Some of these resources are organized by the age of the participants and others are organized by the type of activity or area of inquiry (such as soil, air, woods, waters, and wildlife). Use them to make planning easy!

Common FAN Club activities include:

- Walking in the woods
- Photo scavenger hunts
- Bird watching
- Planting a garden
- Looking for bats at dusk
- Building a nest or den with natural materials
- Visiting a farm
- Berry or apple picking
- Creek exploration
- Live animal presentations
- Campfires and marshmallow roasting
- Fishing

More activity ideas are available in the League’s *Engaging Youth in the Outdoors: A How-To Chapter Manual* and in the “Additional Resources” section of this guidebook. If you partner with community organizations for events, they are likely to have activity ideas as well. For example, the FAN Club we piloted at the IWLA headquarters has partnered with other groups for most of our events, and these partners have planned the outing activities.

As with all elements of club design, consider the purpose, audience, and available locations when selecting activities. Some general tips:

- Prioritize fun
- Allow time for free play
- Focus on experiences that use multiple senses (e.g., water play or picking berries)
- Foster social interaction among participants

## TIPS FOR SUSTAINED SUCCESS



### Getting People To Show Up

- **Schedule events in advance and regularly:** Having FAN Club events on the same day(s) each month and announcing the events far in advance will help families get club events on their calendars.
- **Encourage/require pre-registration:** This helps organizers plan adequately for events and gives people a sense of accountability for showing up, especially if they are asked to cancel in advance.

- **Send pre-event e-mails:** Sending an e-mail reminder a few days before each event helps families feel excited and prepared and increases the likelihood that they will show up. Include weather-specific information on what to expect and how to dress in every pre-event reminder.

### Managing Events

- **Visit new places in advance:** Ensure the location is appropriate for planned events before announcing it. This visit also ensures organizers know where to take breaks or look for critters and can tell participants in pre-event e-mails what to expect.
- **Ensure children have something to do while waiting:** Pick a location where children can play while the group waits for everyone to gather and/or have something for them to do while waiting (such as blowing bubbles or making a simple craft).
- **Welcome participants:** Welcome people warmly into the group and help them connect with each other. Name badges and scavenger hunts can be useful tools to encourage socializing.

### Getting People To Keep Coming Back

- **Nurture confidence:** Encourage parents to slow down and follow their children's interests, and encourage everyone to explore, ask questions, and share their knowledge.
- **Keep it fun:** The major goal of FAN Club events are to get families excited about enjoying nature and inspired to do it more often. So relax and have fun!
- **Send follow-up notes and post pictures:** A thank you e-mail after each outing is a nice touch, especially if you invite constructive feedback that can help in planning future events. Posting photographs on social media platforms and encouraging participants to do the same is a good way to build interest in future events. (Remember to include your club's hashtag.)

### Reaching New Audiences

- **Word of mouth:** This is one of the best ways for people to learn about your FAN Club. Create a welcoming, positive experience for families and invite them to bring their friends to future events. Give them a FAN Club flier to share with their neighbors and invite them to share their photos on social media sites.
- **Media outreach:** Invite local reporters to an event that you anticipate will have a good turnout, photo opportunities, and an engaging story. If a story about your FAN Club runs on a local media Web site, share a link to the story on your Web site and social media pages. Encourage your FAN Club families to comment positively on the story on media Web sites.

# FAN CLUB PLANNING WORKSHEET

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The following prompts can be used to beginning planning a chapter FAN Club.

## FAN Club Design

Club name:

Club purpose:

Leader(s):

Intended audience (e.g., IWLA members, community families, preschool children):

Event frequency:

Event day and time:

Event location(s):

## Communications and Outreach

Online platform(s) (e.g., chapter Web site, Facebook, Meetup):

List of community resources/allies:

## Event Planning

Event type (e.g., informal, free-play focused, conservation projects, learning objectives):

Participation costs (if any):

# FAN CLUB CHECKLISTS

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## Things to do before launching a FAN Club

- Use existing platforms or set up a Web site, Facebook page, and any other online communications tools you are planning to use
- Set up participant registration pages (if applicable)
- Develop chapter-specific liability and photo release forms (see “Examples and Templates” for a sample form)
- Scout potential locations and set dates and locations for several months of events
- Create and distribute announcement e-mails and printed materials

## Things to do before each event

- Develop a basic plan for each event
- Pre-visit the event location to check current conditions
- Communicate the event plan with the property owner/manager (if applicable) and coordinate as needed
- Advertise the event and direct families to pre-register (if applicable)
- Send a reminder e-mail to registered families with event details (at least two days in advance)
- Prepare any event materials (name badges, scavenger hunts, sign-in sheets, etc.)
- Refresh leader materials (backpack with first aid kit, field guides, binoculars, etc.)

## Things to do at the event

- Have a designated place for people to check in
- Check off people’s names if they pre-registered or add them to the list of attendees as they sign in
- Make sure the liability and photo release form is completed for each family member
- Hand out any onsite materials (e.g., name badges, maps, scavenger hunt lists)
- Have something to keep the kids occupied or a place for them to play while waiting
- Gather everyone together to kick the event off – leaders should introduce themselves and let people know what to expect (e.g., route, timing, things to notice)
- Interact with attendees and encourage them to interact as a family and within the group
- Have fun and take pictures!

## Things to do after each event

- Send thank you e-mails to participants with information about the next few events and encourage participants to share pictures and positive experiences on social media and provide you with feedback on the event
- Send a thank you e-mail to property owner/point of contact (if applicable)
- Post photos from the event on your chapter’s Web site/social media pages
- Update the chapter Web site/social media pages to focus on the next event
- Post “testimonials” from participants on the chapter Web site/social media pages
- Send out a monthly e-mail to contacts letting them know about upcoming events
- Post notices about relevant activities and events in the community and/or things to notice in nature (e.g., flowers in bloom, birds migrating, interesting articles) on social media as a way to keep the conversation going

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Izaak Walton League Resources

- **Engaging Youth in the Outdoors manual:** In-depth guide to developing a youth program, including activity ideas. (E-mail [chapters@iwla.org](mailto:chapters@iwla.org) for a copy on CD-ROM.)
- **“Online Tools To Assist with Volunteer Management”:** This one-pager provides an overview of using Facebook, SignUpGenius, Eventbrite, and Survey Monkey to manage chapter events and volunteers. ([www.iwla.org/onlinetools](http://www.iwla.org/onlinetools))
- **“Youth in the Outdoors” webinar series:** IWLA staff and consultants walk you through developing a program that provides youth with positive, educational experiences with nature. ([www.iwla.org/youthwebinars](http://www.iwla.org/youthwebinars))
- **Youth and Families Activities Web page:** Links to youth projects activities, organized by age group. ([www.iwla.org/youthprogram](http://www.iwla.org/youthprogram))
- **“Family Day Outings” activity sheet:** Tips on hosting youth events. ([www.iwla.org/outings](http://www.iwla.org/outings))
- **“10 Exciting, Engaging, Educational Ways to Attract Youth to Your Chapter”:** Ideas for youth events and potential partner organizations. ([www.iwla.org/youth10](http://www.iwla.org/youth10))

### Other Organizations

- Children & Nature Network ([www.childrenandnature.org](http://www.childrenandnature.org))
- Nature Explorer ([www.natureexplore.org](http://www.natureexplore.org))
- Nature Rocks ([www.naturerocks.org](http://www.naturerocks.org))
- Take a Child Outside ([www.takeachildoutside.org](http://www.takeachildoutside.org))

### Examples of Family Nature Clubs

- Izaak Walton League Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club ([www.iwla.org/fanclub](http://www.iwla.org/fanclub))
- Columbia Families in Nature ([www.columbiefamiliesinnature.org](http://www.columbiefamiliesinnature.org))
- Family Adventures in Nature San Diego (<http://quetallsd.wix.com/familyadventures>)
- Prairie Loft Family Outdoor Club ([www.prairieloft.org/Prairie\\_Loft/Prairie\\_Loft\\_Home.html](http://www.prairieloft.org/Prairie_Loft/Prairie_Loft_Home.html))

- Austin Families in Nature (<http://familiesinnature.org/benefits-of-a-family-nature-club>)

For links to other family nature clubs, check out the Children & Nature Network club directory ([www.childrenandnature.org/directory/clubs](http://www.childrenandnature.org/directory/clubs)).

### Books

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# EXAMPLES AND TEMPLATES

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## Announcements

*A basic FAN Club announcement can be modified for a variety of uses. The following example is intended for a potential partner organization.*

I want to share an update relevant to [partner organization name]. The [chapter name] Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America is launching a new Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club that will provide free, fun, community-oriented opportunities for families to spend time together in nature. On [recurring day of the week and time], FAN Club outings will take place in natural areas in and around [city name]. These outings will emphasize nature exploration and include hands-on environmental education and conservation activities. The first FAN Club event, a [brief description of event], will take place on [date] at [location]. You can learn more at [Web URL or social media page URL]. Please share this information with your network – we'd love to see your members there!

## Fliers

Two types of fliers can be useful for advertising a FAN Club. One provides basic information about what a FAN Club is and the other is an event-specific flier, which is helpful to share with participants from one event to encourage them to attend the next event(s). A sample flier from the League's pilot FAN Club is provided at the end of this section.

## Registration

The registration process should capture several key pieces of information:

- First and last name of the registering adult
- Names of all additional family members who will attend events
- Ages of the children attending events
- E-mail address
- ZIP Code
- How the person heard about your event (which will tell you which marketing efforts have been most successful)

Using an online registration tool such as Eventbrite or SignUpGenius will allow you to easily manage registration, contact information, and ongoing communication with participants.

## Liability Waiver and Photo Release Form

It is standard practice to obtain a liability waiver and photo release form from all adult participants (adults sign releases for themselves and their children). A sample waiver is included at the end of this section. This type of waiver can be completed online in advance of events or in hard copy when participants arrive at events.

## FAQs (Web content)

*Customize the following frequently asked questions (FAQs) based on the specifics of the chapter's FAN Club and post them to your Web site.*

**What is FAN Club?** Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club is a program of the \_\_\_\_ Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America. It is our goal to provide families with outdoor adventures they can share and allow them to experience the benefits of time spent together in nature.

**Is there a fee to join?** Most FAN Club activities are FREE. In some cases, a small fee may be required to cover the costs for specific events. Full details about any fees will always be explained in event-specific information.

**Are FAN Club outings just for kids and parents?** ALL family members are welcome! We love having moms, dads, grandparents, aunts/uncles, etc., enjoy the outdoors with the children in their lives.

**Do we need to have experience with outdoor activities?** No! Come as you are. Most events are very simple – walking in the woods, listening to birds, or watching wildlife. Just wear sturdy shoes, weather-appropriate clothes, and bring water and a snack for your family. We will take care of the rest. Please review the details for each outing to see if it is a good fit for your family.

**Can children attend events by themselves?** No. FAN Club requires that adults stay with their children at all times.

**How long are most events?** Most FAN Club outings are scheduled for 2 hours.

**How do I register?** It's easy! [INSERT YOUR REGISTRATION LINK HERE].

## Coming Prepared (Web content)

*Customize the following event preparation guidelines based on the specifics of the chapter's FAN Club activities and post it to the chapter's Web site.*

**Clothing and shoes:** Everyone in your family should be dressed in weather-appropriate clothes and shoes that are comfortable enough to move in and are okay to get dirty. The weather can change quickly, so please wear or pack layers and bring rain gear (if needed). It is a good idea to have a spare set of clothes and shoes in the car or your bag.

**Water and food:** Each family member should have his or her own bottle of water. In addition, packing snacks will help keeping energy up and little bellies happy during these outings.

**Backpack additions:** In addition to snacks and water, include other things you may need for a specific event such as sun protection, insect repellent, binoculars, etc.

Be ready to have fun, explore, and enjoy nature – and each other!

## Pre-Event E-mail

*The following is an example of an e-mail that can be sent to pre-registered participants at least two days before a FAN Club event. The details should be customized to your event.*

Thank you for signing your family up to be a part of the FAN Club outing to Sandy Point State Park this Sunday! The following details are intended to help you make the most of this event, so please read them thoroughly.

**When/Where:** Sunday, March 15, 2:00 to 4:00pm at Sandy Point State Park (100 East College Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21409). There is a \$3 per car fee to enter the park. We will gather at the playground by the beach. Please see the attached park map.

**What:** Sandy Point State Park comprises 786-acres along the northwestern shore of the Chesapeake Bay. We will enjoy a mix of activities, including time at the playground, walking on the beach and along marsh trails, looking for birds, and flying kites.

**Coming prepared:** The high temperature in Annapolis on Sunday is supposed to be around 46 degrees – pretty nice for this time of year! There is a slight chance of rain, but it doesn't look like it will be coming into the area until the evening. Please dress in weather-appropriate layers, including a windbreaker/rain-repellent layer and sturdy, mud-tolerant shoes. It can be very windy on the shoreline. This is a good outing to bring kites, binoculars, and a camera. There are bathrooms in the park, but the refreshment kiosks are closed for the season, so bring your own water and snacks.

**Notes for first-time FAN Club participants:** Please check in with me when you arrive – I'll be the one with the sign-in clipboard. Parents will be responsible for their children during the entire outing and will be supported in finding age-appropriate opportunities to engage them. There is a "frequently asked questions" page and "coming prepared" page on our Web site that I recommend taking a quick look at.

Please let me know if you have any questions. **If you know you won't be able to attend the event, please e-mail me or call my cell phone** [provide phone number]. I look forward to having a lot of fun exploring nature together!

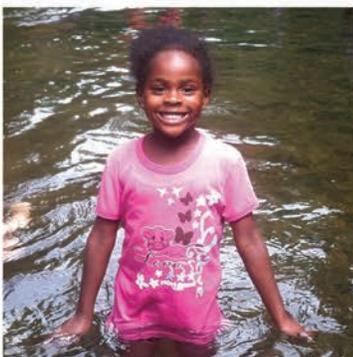
Warm regards,

[Club leader name]



YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE

## Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club



*"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in."*

—Rachel Carson

The Izaak Walton League invites you to join us each month to explore natural areas throughout Montgomery County. These family-focused adventures will include hands-on education, conservation activities – and fun! Best of all, our FAN Club events are **FREE**.

- **April 19, 2015 • 2:00-4:00pm** Spend a day on the farm! Join us at Rocklands Farm (Poolesville) to meet the animals, help plant some veggies, learn about life on a working farm, and learn where your food comes from. We encourage you to bring a picnic meal and join us for a late lunch/early dinner after our adventures. A wood-fi red pizza truck will be there too if you want to purchase food.
- **May 17, 2015 • 2:00-4:00pm** Take a hike on the Billy Goat Trail with Jennifer Chambers, author of "Best Hikes with Kids: Washington DC, the Beltway, and Beyond." Enjoy scenic rivers and waterfalls and local paw paws (if they are ripe!). Parts of the trail are rocky and can become muddy, so good hiking boots are recommended!

**Space is limited and pre-registration is required.** Visit [www.iwla.org/fanclub](http://www.iwla.org/fanclub) for more information and to register for events. Questions? Contact Rebecca Wadler at the Izaak Walton League: [rwadler@iwla.org](mailto:rwadler@iwla.org) or (301) 548-0150 x243.



"LIKE" US ON FACEBOOK! Stay up to date on FAN Club happenings and other family adventure news. Search for "Family Adventures in Nature – FAN Club".



## Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club



The Izaak Walton League invites you to join us each month to explore natural areas throughout Montgomery County, Maryland.

Our family-focused adventures include hands-on education, conservation activities – and fun! Best of all, our FAN Club events are **FREE**.



For more information about upcoming events, visit our Web site at [www.iwla.org/fanclub](http://www.iwla.org/fanclub) or contact Rebecca Wadler at [rwadler@iwla.org](mailto:rwadler@iwla.org).

**Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club**  
**[NAME] Chapter, Izaak Walton League of America**  
**Liability Waiver**

**\*PLEASE READ THE WAIVER BELOW PRIOR TO SIGNING\***

I hereby agree that I, my family, and anyone else claiming through me, will not make a claim against the [NAME] Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America; the [NAME] Division of the Izaak Walton League of America; the Izaak Walton League of America, Inc. or any affiliated and partner organizations, or officers or directors collectively or individually, or the supplier of any materials or equipment that is used for Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club, or any of the volunteer workers, for the injury or death to me or damage to my property, however caused, arising from my participation in the Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club.

I understand that this release is intended to be broad in its effect. I understand and hereby agree to accept any and all risks of injury, illness, or death in connection with my participation in Family Adventures in Nature (FAN) Club. I have carefully read this assumption of risk and general liability release agreement, and I fully understand its contents. I understand and am aware that this is a release of liability and a legal contract between me and the [NAME] Chapter, Izaak Walton League of America, and that it affects my legal rights. I am signing this document of my own free will.

I further consent to the unrestricted use by the [NAME] Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America and/or person(s) authorized by them of any photographs, recordings, interviews, videotapes, motion pictures, or similar visual recording of me and/or my family members.

Parent or Guardian Signature #1 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Signature #2 \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Signature affirms full understanding of waiver. Signature consents to child participation by PARENT/GUARDIANS.

