

NATIONAL ★ AWARDS ★ 2024



AWARD-WINNING IKES



Each year, the Izaak Walton League recognizes people and organizations within and outside the League for their achievements in conservation, outdoor ethics, water quality, shooting sports, communications and youth-focused work at the local, state and national levels. We also honor members and organizations for their lifelong accomplishments and devotion to natural resources conservation.

**It is our honor and pleasure to recognize individuals
and organizations who made a difference in 2024.**

NATIONAL AWARDS

54 Founders Award

Considered the League's highest honor, this award is bestowed to an individual or organization for outstanding contributions to the conservation of America's natural resources.

Jodi Labs (Wisconsin):

Jodi joined the League more than two decades ago embracing the League's mission right from the start. She had served on the Brown County Chapter board, eventually becoming president. With a vision of having more families and youth involved, the Chapter increased opportunities for all to engage in the outdoors and grew membership four-fold. Jodi continued to rise in the League leadership while providing expertise in communications, management and legal matters. Having served as an officer at the division level and as a national director, Jodi served on the national Executive Board, including as chair, and then led the organization as national president.

Stanford M. Adams Memorial Award for League Leadership

This Executive Board award recognizes the national director or director-at-large for continued commitment to the duties and responsibilities that come with their elected leadership position.

Kelly J. Kistner (South Dakota):

A Family Life member from South Dakota, Kelly served in various leadership positions at the McCook Lake Chapter since joining in 2005 and in 2015, he was elected president of the South Dakota Division. At the national level, he has served as chair of the League's Water Resource Committee, as a national director for the past 10 years and was elected national president in 2019. He served on the Executive Board until 2024. After decades of service, Kelly continues to gather details and inspirations about available resources to share with the South Dakota chapters.

Hall of Fame Award

Recognizes a member's outstanding accomplishments in furthering the mission and goals of the League.

Jeanne Agneessnes (Wisconsin):

Jeanne is a Life Benefactor and member of Brown County Chapter who provided leadership as chapter and division president. She was instrumental in the acquisition and restoration of the native prairie and oak savanna forest of the Chapter's Osprey Point Environmental Center, and she served on the Izaak Walton League of America Endowment board for 17 years.

Richard "Dick" Brown (Minnesota):

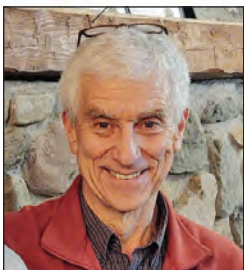
Dick is member of more than 40 years and former president of the Walter J. Breckenridge Chapter. He's best known for his lobbying efforts to "Save Our Wetlands" and for promoting the passage of Minnesota's State Legacy Amendments. Dick recently retired as Chapter's conservation issues chair at age 95.

Anita Stonebraker (Maryland):

As president of the ever-growing Lois Green-Sligo Chapter in Maryland, Anita has also held leadership positions in the Maryland Division, including a key role in financial management. Her life's focus and priority is engaging people and especially youth in conservation. She currently serves as national secretary for the League.

Brenda Swartz (Ohio):

Brenda has held multiple leadership roles including chapter president and president of the Ohio Division. From Ohio's Medina Chapter, she is currently a member of the League's Executive Board. Dedicated to our conservation mission, Brenda is committed to ensuring that the League thrives for future generations.

**Mat Webber (New York):**

Currently the president of the Central New York Chapter, Mat has been an active member since the mid-1990s. He was a key player in the chapter's Project Watershed Program that included a partnership with the Science

Teachers Association of New York State to train high school teachers about stream biology and monitoring techniques.

Conservation Award

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

**Richard N. Corey (South Dakota):**

A member of the Sioux Falls Chapter, Richard is a farmer who practices conservation intensely. He has planted multiple shelterbelts and groves of trees on a barren section of his land and

has enrolled in the USDA Conservation Reserve Program to improve wildlife habitat and has enhanced wetlands for waterfowl nesting.

**Tony DiNovo (Ohio):**

As an active member from Columbus, Ohio, Tony assisted in the fundraising for the Poston Preserve expansion of hundreds of acres in conservation easements and has been involved in bat studies with the Ohio

Department of Natural Resources. He also led the efforts for significant riparian plantings of native trees and understory plants on the Upper Alum Creek Project.

**Richard Graham (Ohio):**

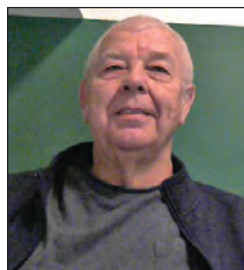
A member of the Executive Board from the Ohio Division, Rick has held various officer positions at the chapter and division levels. He is a conservationist with a passion for protecting the Great Lakes and is a strong advocate

for soil health. Rick regularly contacts the media and elected officials regarding water quality concerns and conservation issues in the Great Lakes region.

**Jack Johnson (Iowa):**

Jack is a longtime national director for the Iowa Division and a member of the national Executive Board. He was deeply involved with his chapter's purchasing a tract of pheasant habitat with wetlands that

eventually became Crawford County Conservation Commission parkland—now open to the public. He led the way for the West Central Chapter to improve inherited property that is now a showcase for songbird and wildlife conservation.

**Ralph Kinch, Jr. (Virginia):**

As chapter treasurer, Ralph helped to foster high-yielding investments that eventually funded improvements to the Fredericksburg-Rappahannock Chapter's grounds. His work also enhanced the Chapter's status as a

vital conservation organization by providing funding for many conservation efforts in the Spotsylvania region of Virginia.

**Brintney Lam (Indiana):**

Brintney has renewed the spirit of conservation at Indiana's Huntington County Chapter. Her work has included the "Plan Bee" pollinator project, efforts to inform the community about the problem of invasive species and

renewed outreach to like-minded conservation groups in the region.

**R. Michael Lane (Virginia):**

Mike is a previous Conservation Award recipient for his advocacy efforts to enhance habitat on the Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. For 2024, the Suffolk-Nansemond Chapter nominated him for his role in securing five

adjacent landowners to allow the completion of the Jericho Lane Trail—which will give future generations an added gateway to explore the Refuge.

**Michael O'Deay (Iowa):**

Michael, from Iowa's Des Moines Chapter, has been a League member for more than 50 years, leading the charge to protect our air, land and water resources.

Through the years, he has encouraged the Chapter to stay

on top of regional conservation issues and, more recently, has worked to raise funds for many conservation projects and community outreach.

**Don Perino (Maryland):**

Because of Don's tireless efforts and work on the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter's meadow filled with native milkweed plants, the site has been officially designated Monarch Waystation #8355 in North America. He has worked

on removing invasive species on the chapter grounds that threaten native plant diversity and reduce the habitat's ecological value.

**The Stalnaker Family (West Virginia):**

The Mountaineer Chapter nominated an entire family—Matt Stalnaker, his wife Jenna and daughter JJ—for their passion for conservation. As caretaker of the Chapter's 1,000-acre

property, Matt maintains the grounds, controls invasive plants and manages aquatic and wildlife habitat. Jenna chairs the Chapter's Adopt-A-Highway program. JJ serves as the youth liaison to the West Virginia Division and encourages participation in conservation projects. The entire family participates in the annual red spruce planting at Canaan Valley Wildlife Refuge and the garlic mustard pull at the Seneca Rocks State Park.

**Tony Sutton (Maryland):**

As a devoted conservationist, Tony is working to revive the American Chestnut tree, managing the American Chestnut Research Orchard at the Rockville Chapter and another site on the nearby Black Hill Regional Park.

**Joe Walther (Maryland):**

Also from the Rockville Chapter, Joe has taken the Chapter's Wood Duck Nesting Box Program to the next level with the increased birth of new hatchlings. This was attributed to his innovation of adding a blue bird box onto the back of each duck box to lure competitive Prothonotary Warblers away from and nesting inside the duck boxes.

Outdoor Ethics Award

Recognizes individuals, groups, or organizations judged to have done outstanding work in outdoor ethics.

**Women Sharing the Outdoors Program (Ohio).**

The Mount Healthy Chapter of Cincinnati, Ohio, hosts this annual program with a focus on providing females with training and educational experiences that embrace outdoor skills. The program also promotes ethical and responsible use of the natural resources. Over the last four years, more than 300 women from the surrounding community have participated.

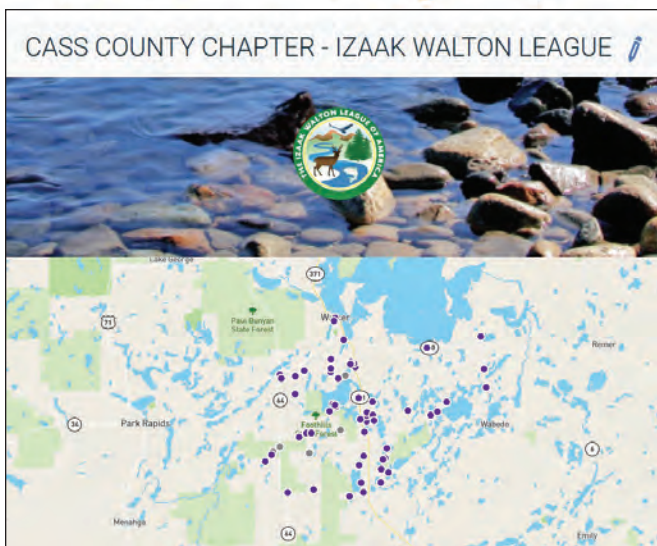
Save Our Streams Award

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

**Frederick #1 Chapter Save Our Streams Team (Maryland):**

This team of chapter volunteers is led by two enthusiastic co-team leaders,

Chris Barrett and Steve Meyer. They use and promote the League's Salt Watch and Nitrate Watch testing kits, monitor area streams and make clean water presentations to local schools. On behalf of the Chapter, they continue to pursue their interest in conservation and protecting the environment.



Cass County Chapter (Minnesota):

These Ikes are fully invested in the League's Nitrate Watch program. In a short period, they reported 74 test results while monitoring 68 sites that span a wide area of northern Minnesota. Going forward, the Chapter hopes to increase public awareness about nitrate pollution in their community.



Art Foltz (Virginia):

The Fredericksburg-Rappahannock Chapter noted that in his 10 years as a member, Art has led the charge for growing the Chapter's involvement in monitoring stream health in the piedmont region of Virginia. He

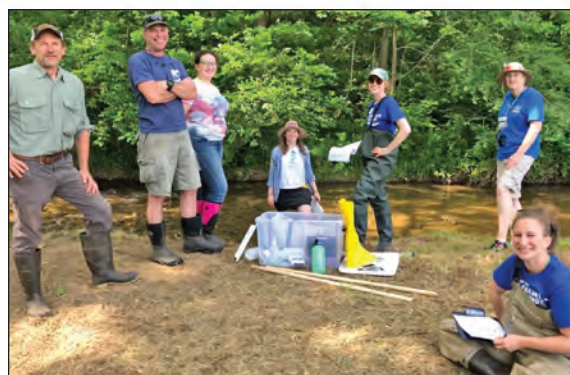
displays leadership for many other conservation activities, projects and endeavors at the Chapter.



Alison Lang-Hickey (Ohio):

This Cincinnati Chapter member is recognized for her work demonstrating the principles of environmental education and citizen activism for clean water. Alison relaunched the state's Saturday Stream Snapshot

Program for the lower Little Miami River watershed.



Mount Airy Chapter (Maryland):

The Chapter fully supports the League's Save Our Streams program (SOS) to protect waterways from pollution and inform their community about water quality. With four chemical test kits, the trained volunteer members monitor 40 locations in central Maryland, including various tributaries of the Monocacy and Potomac Rivers and several public reservoirs and parkland lakes.

Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter Pond and Stream Committee (Maryland):

This volunteer committee is the driving force behind this Chapter's SOS monitoring efforts on Chapter property and on waterways throughout upper Montgomery County, Maryland. They also manage improvements for the aquatic habitat on their two ponds and adjacent wetlands.

Thelma "Pete" Reed Award

Recognizes the member who has volunteered in many conservation projects, educational efforts, community service or chapter leadership development, and is not serving as a national leader of the League but is considered an "up and coming" future League leader.



Phillip Mariscal (Maryland):

He was recognized last year with the Save Our Streams Award, and this year we recognize this Rockville Chapter member for leadership in conservation and community outreach. When

Phillip joined the Chapter, he took over as chair of the SOS program and recruited additional stream monitors. He is a regular at the state-level Water Monitoring Council and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Black Bass Advisory Committee meetings. As an up and coming future League leader, Phillip represents our clean water programs well and shares his knowledge with others in the community.

Outdoor America's Future Award

Recognizes the Izaak Walton League youth or student member who has volunteered in conservation projects, educational efforts, community service or chapter leadership development and is considered a young "up and coming" future League leader.



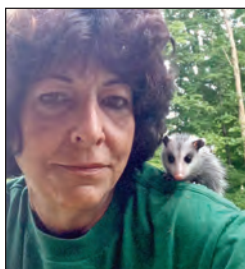
Griffith Pugh (Minnesota):

Recently featured in an issue of *Outdoor America*, this young Ike is an elected vice president of the Minnesota Valley Chapter. Griffith is a founding member of this Chapter's Scouting Green Crew and is active in the Minnesota

Division. He has also played lead roles in the Tree Equity and Elm Tree Restoration projects and demonstrates great potential as an up and coming League leader.

Honor Roll Award

Recognizes outstanding accomplishments in conservation, public education and/or publicity in keeping with the League's goals by an individual or organization.



Louise Broderick (Ohio):

Louise owns and operates a private wildlife sanctuary as part of the Second Chance Wildlife organization and provides training for rehabilitation of displaced and injured wildlife.



Chesapeake Women Anglers (Maryland):

This volunteer group focuses on fostering women's participation in fishing, while promoting outdoor ethics, environmental awareness and conservation practices throughout

the mid-Atlantic region.



Joe Dorrian (Ohio):

Through public presentations as the director of the Ohio School of Falconry, Joe promotes the practice of falconry while advocating for responsible raptor conservation and management.

Shooting Sports Award

Presented to individuals, groups or organizations judged to have done outstanding work to promote shooting sports.



Huntington County Chapter's Shooting Sports Program (Indiana):

Program co-chairs Benny Sams, John Septer and Steve Williams have led the chapter's resurgence and significant membership growth centered around range

improvements and the recruitment of area shooting sports enthusiasts as members.



Brett Johnson (Maryland):

This Rockville Chapter member is well known locally as an avid and skilled recreational archer who has traveled nationwide to 3-D archery tournaments. Brett has shared his experiences and expertise to develop and maintain

a topnotch 3-D course at this Chapter in suburban Maryland.



Loudoun County Chapter (Virginia):

Throughout the last few decades, the Chapter made many recreational improvements on their property, including skeet, archery and rifle/pistol ranges. They offer a wide variety of

education and training programs open to the public and promote recreational shooting sports to women, youth and first-time gun owners.

Mount Airy Chapter Scholastic Youth Trap Program (Maryland):

Led by co-chairs Brandon Jordon and Mark Uzarowski, the Chapter has kept a steady course in training dozens of local youth each year to be safe, responsible and skilled shotgunners.



**Tom Swartz (Ohio):**

Tom, a member of the Medina Chapter since 1963, is an active recreational shooter who organizes the chapter turkey shoots, oversees trap shoots and maintains the archery equipment and course. He plays a critical role

in the Chapter's annual National Shooting Sports Month event where they invite the public and introduce first-time participants to the shooting sports.

**Val Voeltz (South Dakota):**

An avid recreational and competitive shotgunner at the Sioux Falls Chapter, Val plays an important role in successful trap shooting events and engaging young people in target shooting. She also serves as Chapter

treasurer, publishes a newsletter and maintains the website.

Arthur R. Thompson Memorial Award

Recognizes division accomplishments in conservation.

**Ohio Division:**

In collaboration with the 23 local chapters, the Ohio Division contributes to a variety of conservation efforts across the Buckeye State. The Division

has its own grant program for chapters to implement conservation projects, host educational events and promote the League's Salt Watch and Nitrate Watch programs in their communities statewide.

James Lawton Childs Award

Recognizes chapter accomplishments in conservation.

**Minnesota Valley Chapter (Minnesota):**

The Chapter is well known locally for their Elm Tree Restoration Project. They also formed a specialized, co-ed Scouting Venturing Crew Unit with a conservation mission (the Green

Crew) and held annual Earth Day tree-planting events. In addition to reforestation, Chapter projects focused on removal of invasive plant species, water quality testing and trail restoration.

**Dragoon Trail (Iowa):**

The Ankeny Ikes are well-known for state-of-the-art ranges that support shooting sports. The Chapter grounds are also a showcase for conservation. Their prairie restoration efforts added pollinator-friendly plants and

included prescribed burns to foster a diversity of flora. They also installed ponds, creating habitat for stocked fisheries, added an apiary for honeybees and built an outdoor classroom for community use.

Robert C. O'Hair Award

Recognizes outstanding chapter youth programs.

**Brown County Chapter (Wisconsin):**

For years, one of the Chapter's top priorities has been working with local youth and their families. They hosted teddy bear hunts and fishing derbies, sponsored Scout units and welcomed Scouts to

use their grounds, maintained a natural playground and sensory garden, offered a youth archery program and established a family adventure in nature club.

**Rockville Chapter (Maryland):**

This Chapter makes a point of hosting many events and sponsored projects for young people within the membership and throughout the community. The Chapter charters multiple Scout units and offers a youth

conservation program, environmental scholarships, junior air rifle and BB gun training and sponsors 4-H awards.

Best Chapter Newsletters

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

Hamilton Chapter News:

Every month, the Hamilton Chapter of Ohio publishes this informative e-newsletter for members to highlight Chapter events related to conservation issues. The newsletter also goes to local elected officials, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Soil and Water Conservation District and to the county parks and recreation agency. Articles and photos about nature and outdoor recreation are welcomed by the newsletter team.

Arlington-Fairfax Chapter Newsletter:

Published quarterly by Virginia's Arlington-Fairfax Chapter, this full-color newsletter features articles on activities, program announcements and a complete listing of contacts for Chapter officers and volunteers. It is distributed and also posted on the Chapter website. The editors seek articles about local and regional conservation and contributions from members.

Best Division and Chapter Websites

Based on appearance, originality, timeliness, and news coverage.

Iowa Division:

The division's recently launched website (iowaikes.com) is informative, colorful and easy to navigate. Complete information about the League, Iowa Division and all Iowa chapters is readily accessible. It clearly promotes the Izaak Walton League as a community of outdoor lovers in Iowa dedicated to protecting conservation and outdoor adventure for future generations.

Marshall County Chapter (Iowa):

Located in Marshalltown, the Chapter's website (marshallcountyikes.org) is equally informative, colorful and easy to navigate. Information includes Chapter activities, newsletters, membership requirements and a calendar loaded with their many events. It is thoughtfully organized and user-friendly.

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

In an effort to continue to promote member recruitment and retention, we recognize several chapters and one division that successfully grew their membership over the past year.

Best Chapter Membership Recruitment and Retention Award

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

Minnesota Valley Chapter (Minnesota):

The Chapter's membership committee employs an intricate combination of planning, scheduling, recruiting and retention activities as well as communications, resource and people management tools to grow and retain membership. In 2023, the Chapter increased by 49 percent with a net gain of 42 members, and the trend continued through 2024. This well-planned effort has produced a high renewal rate of 77 percent, and the Chapter has grown to nearly 150 members.

John C. Gregory Award

Awarded to the division with the highest numerical increase in members.

Indiana Division:

With a net increase of 54 net new members in 2024.

Membership Achievement Awards

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

Greatest Percent Increase:

Huntington County Chapter (Indiana)

With over 119-percent increase growing from 64 to 140 members.

Greatest Net Gain:

York Chapter #67 (Pennsylvania)

Added 138 new members to grow their total membership to 1,341.

Membership Merit Awards

Recognizes membership growth based on chapter size.

50-and-Under Member Class for Percent Increase:

Davenport Chapter (Iowa)

50-and-Under Member Class for Net Gain:

Wayne Chapter (Nebraska)

51-to-250 Member Class for Percent Increase:

Huntington County Chapter (Indiana)

51-to-250 Member Class for Net Gain:

Miami Chapter (Indiana)

251-to-500 Members Class for Percent Increase and Net Gain:

Dubuque Chapter (Iowa)

501-and-Over Class for Net Gain:

York Chapter #67 (Pennsylvania)

501-and-Over Members Class for Percent Increase:

Fort Wayne Chapter (Indiana)

110-Percent Awards

These chapters grew by 10 percent or more in 2024.

California Orange Fullerton	Iowa Clinton County Davenport Ding Darling Green Bay Iowa County Muscatine Panora Conservation Worth County	Ohio Anthony Wayne Buckeye State Youth Central Ohio Dry Fork Fremont Medina	West Virginia Tucker Zip Little
Florida Cypress Florida Keys			Wisconsin Beloit
Idaho Caldwell		Pennsylvania York #67	Wyoming Travelle
Illinois Calumet Region Des Plaines	Maryland Sportsman's	South Dakota Bon Homme Day County Rapid City Rosebud Yankton Area	
Indiana Fort Wayne Grant County Huntington County Miami Porter County	Minnesota Minnesota Valley Will Dilg	Virginia Arlington-Fairfax Juniors	
	Nebraska Crete Fremont Wayne		

Defenders Chapter Achievement Awards

The following chapters received this annual recognition for their 2024 contributions to the League's mission through successful programs, promoting membership, education, conservation, youth involvement, community outreach and the principles of philanthropy.

Arlington-Fairfax (Virginia)	Dwight Lydell (Michigan)	Loudoun County (Virginia)	Rockville (Maryland)	Wayne County (Ohio)
Austin (Minnesota)	Elgin (Illinois)	McCook Lake (South Dakota)	Sioux Falls (South Dakota)	Wes Libby-Northern Lakes (Minnesota)
Berkeley County (West Virginia)	Frederick #1 (Maryland)	Mid-Shore (Maryland)	Sportsman's (Maryland)	West Central (Iowa)
Bethesda-Chevy Chase (Maryland)	Fredericksburg-Rappahannock (Virginia)	Minnesota Valley (Minnesota)	Sunshine (South Dakota)	Wildlife Achievement (Maryland)
Bill Cook (Wisconsin)	Grand Island (Nebraska)	Mountaineer (West Virginia)	Tiffin-Seneca County (Ohio)	Will Dilg (Minnesota)
Brown County (Wisconsin)	Hamilton (Ohio)	New London (Minnesota)	W.J. McCabe (Minnesota)	York #67 (Pennsylvania)
Bush Lake (Minnesota)	Kampeska (South Dakota)	New Ulm #79 (Minnesota)	Walter J. Breckenridge (Minnesota)	
Cass County (Minnesota)	Lincoln (Nebraska)	Owatonna (Minnesota)	Warren County (Iowa)	
Central New York (New York)	Linn County (Iowa)	Prairie Woods (Minnesota)	Warren County (Virginia)	
Des Moines (Iowa)	Lois Green-Sligo (Maryland)	Rochester (Minnesota)		