



**President’s Message**

As members of IWLAR we all have access to both read and post on the Chapters general Google group at [iwlar@googlegroups.com](mailto:iwlar@googlegroups.com). This is a valuable information source that can reveal opportunities for volunteering, upcoming events that you wish to attend, and an active exchange forum that lets members re-home items they no longer need.

But this forum is not a place for you to post opinions on politics, political statements or language that is offensive or abusive to any group. The IRS has strict rules concerning statements made by 501c3 organizations. (IWLAR is a 501c3 and it is what gives us our tax exempt status.) The IRS states "Contributions to political campaign funds or *public statements of position (verbal or written)* made on behalf of the organization in favor of or in opposition to any candidate for public office clearly violate the prohibition against political campaign activity." (italics added) The line between candidate and political party is indistinguishable. To protect our tax-exempt status, IWLAR will not allow ANY political commentary on the Chapter sponsored Google Group. And because we are an organization that welcomes all, offensive or abusive statements are also banned. We are adults here; I should not have to define political or offensive statements. (If you have to think “would this offend anyone”, then just don’t send it!)

On a more positive note, on December 17 the chapter grounds were the location of a team conducting the Christmas bird count. On a gray day with rain on the way, they counted 21 different species of birds. The most of one species being the 10 Carolina Chickadees that were observed. (I personally do not know how they count the Chickadees shooting through the underbrush, it is not like they line up for you!) Are you a birder? Have you been to our property in the morning to see what birds you can find? Are you interested in starting a bird group at the Chapter? There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer and earn your volunteer hours.

Tight Lines  
Noel Gollehon

**Firearms Rulings:** The Montgomery County District Court has overturned the County’s Bill 21-22E, which forbade having a firearm within 100 yards of certain facilities. The state’s HQL requirement is also being adjudicated in the courts but remains in effect for now.

**January Speaker Focus**

The Speakers for the January GMM will be Helen Woods and Mike Marra. They will discuss Tangier island, an island in the Chesapeake with a rich history but whose existence is threatened by erosion and climate change.



Helen has been a passionate general aviation pilot since 1998. A biologist by training, she spent several years serving as a search and rescue pilot and managing a search and rescue training program prior to accepting a job as a wildlife survey pilot. Today, as a flight instructor, owner, and manager of Chesapeake Sport Pilot, she is dedicated to sharing her love of aviation with others through affordable, quality flight training.



Mike Marra organizes the Tangier Island Mission Team of eight churches from Central Pennsylvania each year. Mike has been serving on missions since 1982 in Honduras, Guatemala, Belize, Spain, Kentucky, Mississippi, Virginia, California, Washington DC and Pennsylvania. He is a 27-year retired US Air Force combat veteran aviator and currently is a professor at the US Army War College.

## **Wood Duck Conservation in January**

With January upon us, it's time to once again prepare the Chapter's wood duck nest boxes for the spring nesting season. This is a great opportunity to get a jump on your volunteer hours for 2024, contribute to a worthwhile conservation activity, and work alongside some great people in the process. This year's work days will include January 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th, and February 4th. Each Sunday, volunteers will go out in the field to repair and replace boxes, check the predator guards, cut away brush and, most importantly, record nesting success from last spring. And as you can imagine, it takes many hands to get the job done so please consider joining us for one or more work days. This is also a great opportunity for middle school and high school students to earn Student Service Learning (SSL) hours!

If you are not familiar with the program, the Chapter's Wood Duck Conservation effort has helped maintain nesting boxes and monitor wood duck populations since the 1950's. IWLAR maintains about 75 wood duck nesting boxes in Montgomery County, mostly in McKee Beshers Wildlife Management Area west of Poolesville. Winter is the best time to prepare them for the birds' arrival in late February/early March.

A few days before each wood duck work day, details about the next work day's meeting location, etc., will be announced via the IWLAR Google Group. Assignment of specific tasks will happen that Sunday morning, on-site. In general, we meet at the designated location at 10:00 a.m. and work is usually done by 1:00 p.m. The boxes are in wooded swamps and that requires wading in shallow water so chest waders or hip boots are ideal. All tools and repair materials are supplied; you just bring the warm, willing body.

Keep an eye out for the weekly announcements in January on the IWLAR Google Group and sign up when you can. To sign up for any of the work days contact Joe Walther. Hope to see you out there!

## **Christmas Bird Count results 2023**

Birds on the Chapter property were inventoried on the overcast morning of 12/17/2023 as part of the 2023 MD/VA Christmas Bird Count. Twenty species were recorded: 6 mourning doves, 1 red-shouldered hawk, 1 yellow-bellied sapsucker, 1 red-headed woodpecker, 4 red-bellied woodpecker, 4 downy woodpeckers, 1 hairy woodpecker, 1 pileated woodpecker, 3 northern flickers, 5 American crows, 7 fish crows, 10 Carolina chickadees, 7 tufted titmouse, 5 white-breasted nuthatches, 1 winter wren, 6 Carolina wrens, 9 eastern bluebirds, 3 American robins, 13 white-throated sparrows, 3 song sparrows, 1 eastern towhees, 2 northern cardinals. The crows were headed south.

Get your volunteer hours! Anyone interested in being a monitor for our Chapter's bluebird trail in 2024 should sign-up with Cindy Stevens. Training is provided.

## **Recognized with NRA MQP Pistol Ratings!**

On December 10, 2023, the Rockville Chapter recognized several NRA training team members who participated in the National Rifle Association (NRA) Marksmanship Qualification Program (MQP) Pistol shooting discipline. The NRA MQP is taught to students by NRA Instructors as continued opportunities for skills development. Over several months of training development, team members were challenged with course-of-fires shooting nearly 500 rounds of .22LR ammunition at reduced-size official NRA competition targets using the two-handed standing position, firing and support hands only and under timed conditions against established par rating scores.



NRA MQP Pistol ratings achieved by team members were Marksman: Adam Sutherland (not pictured); Sharpshooter: Shankar Dhanaraj; Expert: April Marrone; and Distinguished Expert: Nick Carone, Rich Clement, Brian Gruber, Pete Lee, Joe Ober, Jacob Song, Yien Tsai, Travis Vaught, Henry Wei, and Jim Williams.

## **IWLAR Adopts Policy for Google Group Behavior**

The Board of Directors of the IWLA Rockville Chapter has adopted the following policy about posts on the Chapters Google Group. This policy applies to all Google Groups the Chapter hosts, the most visible is the general group at [iwlar@googlegroups.com](mailto:iwlar@googlegroups.com).

A member who posts political or offensive statements will have their right to post in Chapter Google groups suspended for a minimum of 90 days. After that period, the member's right to post MAY be reinstated after the President receives a written communication that confirms the member understands the type of material that is not acceptable, and agrees to not violate the policy with political or offensive statements. If the member violates the policy again, their right to post will be permanently suspended.

## **Fly Tying Classes Coming Soon**

Have you ever wanted to try to tie a fly? The process to create a "bug" looking fishing lure on a hook with fur, feathers and thread is a fun and creative process. IWLAR members and friends are welcome to join Seneca Valley Trout Unlimited for their spring fly tying classes starting on January 29, 2024. The introductory first class will be followed by 6 additional classes spanning February, March and April. We have vises, tools, and materials available for your use. All we need is you! Check the "What's Happening" section of the website <https://iwlar.org/> for details.

### **The Rockville Email Group**

The Rockville Chapter operates a members-only email list for announcements and discussions among members. The newsletter comes out once a month, so the email group is the only way to stay informed about important things that occur in between newsletters. You will be added to iwlar@googlegroups.com automatically when you become a member unless you request not to be added.

You can remove your address from the list anytime, but we are hopeful that you will not do this because the list is the most effective way to receive short notice activity announcements and cancellations.

### **Chapter Newsletter Distribution**

The Chapter has recently changed the Newsletter distribution options. Electronic distribution of the IWLA-Rockville Chapter Newsletter is now the default. Chapter members may still receive a hard copy but will be required to "opt in" to do so. To receive a hard copy only, contact Judy Danish.

If you do not receive the Newsletter in your email and wish to do so, contact David Schwartzman.

### **New Members Recently Inducted**

Andy Iams Gaithersburg  
Walt & Sally Martin Boyds  
Will Rush Germantown  
Terry Stump & Kyle Stump Ijamsville  
Sandy Worsham Germantown  
Pete Yanni Gaithersburg  
Les Bland Gaithersburg

A warm welcome to all!

### **Ike's Want Ads**

For information and photos on a number of classic firearms, including the following:  
S&W Perf.Ctr 460 Magnum & 500 Magnum,  
S&W 1911 100th year Commemorative  
contact Terry Popkin tjpopkin@mac.com  
301-742-3131

**To place a non-commercial ad**, write to the Chapter's PO Box 2255, Germantown, MD, 20875, or contact Todd Anderson. Ads must be submitted by the third Friday of the month.