

President's Message

BRRRR! It is cold outside. We have hit winter with colder conditions than in the past few years. It may be a bit hard to get out in the cold but if you do decide to go out, IWLA-Rockville (IWLA-R) is the place to go! We have trails to explore and woods to walk.

Lake water levels are still very low, and as a result, our annual fall trout stocking is turning into a spring stocking event. Hopefully some winter storms will bring some water to the lake and we will stock. A word of caution about winter activities at the lake. The ice may look solid but is too thin to support you, so STAY OFF the ICE. Emergency response is a long way off if you fall through.

There are some activities ongoing in the cold. Adult air pistol shoots indoors every Tuesday. Junior BB gun and air rifle shoot weekly. For the fly-fisherman, another fun indoor activity is fly tying. Our partner organization, Seneca Valley Trout Unlimited, will be conducting fly tying classes starting in February and continuing bi-weekly until April. It is a great wintertime activity and a lot of fun to create your own flies (info on website).

For the winter-hearty, January means it is wood duck nesting box cleaning and repair season. IWLA-R members meet on Sunday in February from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to repair, clean and prepare wood duck boxes for the 2026 nesting season. Watch the google group for information on locations and weather-driven schedule changes. Come out and support this award-winning program.

Our February General Membership Meeting will be on our normal first Friday, February 6.

Get out and enjoy IWLA-R!

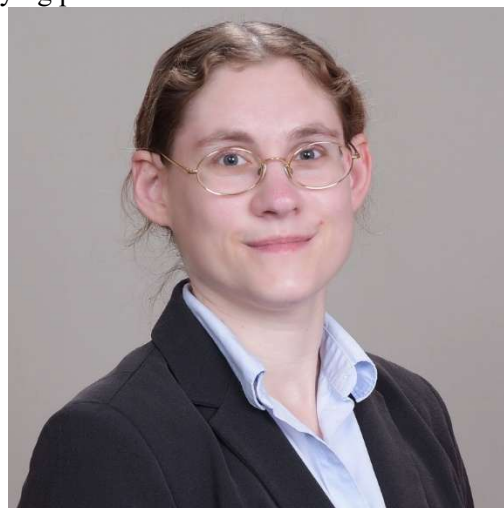
Tight Lines
Noel Gollehon

AI Without Boundaries

Find out what is possible using free software to build a fully private, air-gapped Artificial Intelligence (AI) system. A live demonstration of an AI chatbot, much like ChatGPT, running on a portable computer with no connection to the internet will be held at the Chapter House Lower Level on Feb. 7 at 2 p.m.

February Speaker Focus

Janette Rosenbaum moved to the Seneca Creek watershed in 2019 in order to join the communications team in the Izaak Walton League national office. Janette has a master's degree in environmental studies, with a focus in communications. Outside of environmental work, Janette goes hiking, watches birds, and practices identifying plants.



Presentation notes: What is Seneca Creek? Who are the Seneca Creek Watershed Partners? And how can you get involved? Janette Rosenbaum, President of SCWP, will introduce these friends of the Rockville Ikes.

Cindy's notes

This is a reminder to park in two rows in the open graveled areas. Only park in the spots under the trees if the open area is filled. The objective is to protect the root zones of our trees, while also reducing any chance that a branch falls on a car.

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) results are in! Member Ezra Casteel escorted the team led by Annie Mac. Spotted were 7-mourning doves, 3-gulls, 1-turkey vulture, 3-red-shouldered hawks, 1-yellow-bellied sapsucker, 2-red-bellied woodpecker, 6-downy woodpeckers, 2-pileated woodpeckers, 1-northern flicker, 4-blue jays, 22-American crows, 7-fish crows, 4 more crows of some sort, 5-carolina chickadees, 6-tufted titmouse, 5-white-breasted nuthatch, 5-Carolina wrens, 7-Eastern bluebirds, 1-American robin, 2-cedar waxwings, 1-house sparrow, 12-dark-eyed junco (exotic, naturalized), 21 white-throated sparrows, 14 northern cardinals.

Fishing Great Seneca Creek

Over the fifteen years since rediscovering my love of fishing, I've built a personal list of favorite waters across Maryland, Washington, DC, and Northern Virginia. Among them—quite proudly—is a spot located on the Rockville Chapter property along Great Seneca Creek.

This stretch sits right behind the Jim Berrier Memorial Lake. Although the spot can be approached from either bank, I've found the most productive method is wading into the creek upstream of the riffle above the swimming hole. As the creek bed drops off, you'll notice a large boulder on the left. In this area, I'm often standing chest-deep, looking out over the hole that runs eight to ten feet down. Its depth, the gentle, food-bearing current, combined with its position above the riffle, makes this spot a natural gathering place for a surprising variety of fish.

Over the years, this single hole has produced largemouth and smallmouth bass, rock bass, bluegill, and even creek chub. November is especially rewarding, as smallmouth feed aggressively to bulk up before winter slows their metabolism.

While many Chapter anglers prefer fly gear, I typically use spinning tackle and artificial lures. In late fall, my go-to setup is a medium-light St. Croix Triumph paired with a 4–4.5-inch swimbait. Two patterns have consistently produced: the Keitech Easy Shiner in Smallmouth Magic or Table Rock Shad. Both run about \$5.49 for a pack of seven. Smallmouth Magic, with its silver-green flash, tends to draw more bites—though usually from smaller fish—while the purple-yellow Table Rock Shad often tempts larger bronzebacks. Regardless of color, the swimbait's vibrating paddle tail reliably triggers strikes from bass, chub, and rock bass alike.



As temperatures warm, this little section of Great Seneca Creek also offers exciting topwater action. Smallmouth here will readily explode on a Rebel Pop-R or a Whopper Plopper. After a few surface eruptions quiet the topwater bite, switching to a shallow-running crankbait—especially in red or white, to mimic baby shad or crawfish—can keep the action going.

Fishing (continued)

One word of caution: finesse presentations such as Ned rigs or drop-shot rigs tend to hang up in the submerged branches and beaver structures that line the creek bed. While they can catch fish, they just as often catch wood, leading to broken lines and lost lures.

For those who haven't yet explored this hidden gem on our Chapter grounds, it's worth a visit. Whether you're tossing topwater plugs in summer or swimbaits in late fall, Great Seneca Creek offers a remarkably rewarding day on the water—right in our own backyard.

~Phillip Mariscal~

2026 Range Officer Training Class Schedule

Range Officer Training Classes will be held to train new range officers and recertify existing RO's due for recertification in 2026. The class dates are: **March 21, May 30, August 29, and October 24** (all on Saturday).

For new Range Officers, class prerequisites are that you must be Range Approved for at least six months; have a completed Range Officer Certification Card signed by three Duty Range Officers while using the pistol range on separate occasions; and successfully complete a test on the Range Rules prior to the class (the test is administered on-line approximately two weeks in advance of each class). Upon class completion, new Range Officer candidates must also successfully serve as the Duty Range Officer during the live fire portion of a new member Range Orientation Practical Training Class. Range Officer credentials (a Range Officer Range Card and pistol range coded Chapter Access Card) are then issued.

Existing Range Officers require recertification every 5 years, which consists of completing the RO Training Class and the pre-course Range Rules test.

Range Officer qualified members are granted the privilege of using the rifle and pistol ranges (see the Range Rules for specific times) when a Duty Range Officer is not present on weekends. With the privilege of greater range access comes a responsibility—you must serve as a Duty Range Officer for a three or four-hour weekend shift approximately twice each year.

For more information or to register for a class, contact Duval Crist.

~ Duval Crist, Range Coordinator ~

Full house on January game night



BOD Meeting Notes:

A request by SVTU & IWLA-R to host a happy hour at the lake on May 1 for participants and instructors in the Fly Fishing International (FFI) Casting Instructor Certification Course's Regional event was approved.

Leadership appointments: The Chapter's liaison to Seneca Creek Watershed Partners is Shelton Mooney
Actions:

- Consensus-change cable service to Direct TV to save funds
- APPROVED: Purchase of automatic door closures for installation on outside doors and the Environmental Management goals for 2026
- Moved to establish an Ad Hoc committee to evaluate pros & cons to becoming a stand-alone 501c3 organization

Other:

- MEMBERSHIP: Non-renewing members as of 1/31 will be removed from the database and access cards cleared, meaning no access to locked facilities. After 1/31 they will have to be reinstated at additional cost
- FINANCE: Our annual internal audit will be scheduled after the books are closed for 2025
- SCOUTING: Annual recharting for Scouting America groups underway
- RANGE SAFETY: A review of the Range Rules is underway, RO class schedule posted on the website
- GROUNDS: A fence was installed for safety of the wellhead with the help of the Monday Night Crew
- APIARY: Except for 1 hive, bees are doing well
- LAKE: Low levels continue; a group walked the feeder stream and found no sign of an active spring needed for higher lake inflow
- ENVIRONMENTAL: Draft policy for hazardous trees available for review.

Conservation Award Presented

Joe Walther received a National IWLA Conservation Award at the January 2026 General Membership Meeting. Joe received the award for the IWLA-R Wood Duck Program he continues to improve. Joe was at the January meeting to not only receive the award but also to present on the current success of the Wood Duck Program and to encourage volunteers to come out and participate. The Wood Duck Workdays will continue through February 8, 2026.

New Members Recently Inducted

Max Choudry	Boyd
James Forsberg	Silver Spring
Doris Lee	Rockville
Stephanie and Kevin Williams	Silver Spring

A warm welcome to all!

Ike's Want Ads

For sale: Beretta PX4 Storm by Langdon Tactical (Full-Size G-SD). Lightly used. Fantastic, just not for me. 9mm, with LTT trigger job, RDO cut and RMR plate, NP3 parts, cut and crowned NP3 barrel, GrayGuns steel flat trigger, three NP3-coated 10 round magazines. Asking \$1,399. (retails \$1,704).

1. Smith & Wesson, .45ACP, 1911; 5"; \$1,400
 2. Smith & Wesson, .44 Magnum, 6.5"; \$1,300
 3. Smith & Wesson, .44Magnum, 4" 1,700
 4. Smith & Wesson, .38S&W, 5"(rare); \$ 850
 5. Mauser Broomhandle, 30 Mauser ;BOLO; \$3,500
- Colts, S&Ws, Glocks, etc. for sale, contact Terry Popkin for information & photos.*

To place a non-commercial ad, email Todd Anderson.