



President's Message

I think we may be past winter! YAY! So now is the time to get out and enjoy the season. Get outdoors and enjoy IWLA-Rockville (IWLA-R).

Now is the time to get to the lake and try for a trout or get to the ranges for some practice. The outdoor shooting leagues (pistol, rifle and muzzleloader) all start in April. Watch the website and look for the google group announcement for enrollment details. You do not have to be a crack shot to come out and have fun.

Lake water levels have improved, and trout were stocked on March 12 on a cold snowy day. We put trout in the lake and some in Great Seneca Creek adjacent to the lake. You are welcome to take some for dinner (up to 3 per membership from the lake). If you choose to fish in Great Seneca Creek, you must possess a valid MD fishing license with a trout stamp.

Next time you are at the Chapter House, stop by the lower level and check out our new bar top. Chris Holler, the bar rebuild master, has finished a new inlaid bar top made with trees harvested on our property. A great big thanks to Chris!

After years of organizing, Jeri Crist is stepping down from the leadership role of our youth conservation education program. Thanks to Jeri for leading a program that engaged our youngest conservationists. This presents a great opportunity for someone to volunteer to be our next coordinator. Jeri has indicated she would be willing to assist so you will not be in it alone. If you are interested just e-mail me at president@iwl.org for more information.

Our April General Membership Meeting will be a week later than normal to avoid Good Friday, it is on the second Friday, April 10.

Get out and enjoy IWLAR!

Tight Lines
Noel Gollehon

This year's **Montgomery County Fair** will be August 14 to 22. Next month's newsletter will feature more details on volunteering opportunities for the event. Those ready to volunteer should contact Bill Leaman.

April Speaker Focus

My name is Lieutenant Irvin Smith, and I was born and raised in Poolesville, Maryland. After high school, I earned a full scholarship to play football at the University of Maryland, where I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice. After completing a previous career, I joined the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service in 2004.



I spent many years on the front lines riding fire apparatus before accepting a position in the Office of the Fire Chief, where I now serve as the Community Action Coordinator. In this role, I coordinate and deliver targeted prevention and education programs such as bystander CPR, opioid overdose response with naloxone, and bleeding control training, with a strong focus on reaching socially vulnerable populations.

I am deeply passionate about proactive public safety and building resilient communities. My commitment to continuous learning and professional development drives my work and keeps me dedicated to strengthening partnerships and advancing initiatives that improve health, safety, and outcomes for all members of the community.

Chasing Rock Bass on Great Seneca Creek

In October 2022, Great Seneca Creek—right on the Rockville Chapter property—gifted me one of my most memorable fishing moments. That afternoon, using a small Keitech swimbait, I landed a Rock Bass (*Ambloplites rupestris*), a species I've long considered one of the most striking freshwater fish in the Potomac River Basin. While many anglers may overlook them, I've always found rock bass both beautiful and elusive, and this encounter was a true surprise.

I've searched online for records of rock bass inhabiting Great Seneca Creek and came up empty. The species is known to exist throughout the Potomac watershed, yet I could find no public documentation of catches specifically in Great Seneca Creek. Though I've fished many parts of the Potomac and its tributaries, I had caught only one rock bass previously . . . last year on the Monocacy River. Finding one on our chapter grounds made the experience even more special.



Rock Bass Caught in Great Seneca Creek, Rockville Chapter, on Keitech Swimbait. In four years of fishing our stretch of the creek, the only rock bass I've seen.

Rock bass are easy to admire up close. Their backs show deep olive or brownish-green tones, while their sides shimmer with gold, bronze, or copper mottling. Their bright red eyes—responsible for the nickname “red-eye bass”—make them instantly recognizable. They lack the fame of trout, crappie, smallmouth or largemouth bass, or even bluegill, but their sturdy bodies and feisty fight give them a charm all their own.

They are not large fish. Most rock bass reach only six to ten inches and weigh around eight or nine ounces. The world record, just three pounds, has been met only twice: once in 1974 and again in 1998, the latter caught on Lake Erie by a Pennsylvania angler. These modest sizes place rock bass squarely in the panfish category—small enough to fit in a frying pan.

Chasing Rock Bass (continued)

You won't find many online recipes written for rock bass; most searches redirect to dishes for rockfish, a different species. Still, if you do bring one home and want to try it in the kitchen, [here](#) is a simple and tasty recipe originally intended for catfish but suitable for rock bass. The ingredients include the following:

- ½ cup light beer
- ½ cup hot sauce
- 4 rock bass fillets (about 6 oz each)
- ½ cup yellow cornmeal
- 2 tbsp cornstarch
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- Cooking spray

So, get out on Great Seneca Creek and see if you can find this beautiful, elusive Great Seneca Creek unicorn for yourself.

~Phillip Mariscal~

Thanks to the Volunteers who cleaned tables on Feb 28



Kayak Class

An introductory kayak class is scheduled, rain or shine, for June 6 from 9 AM to 3 PM at our Chapter House and lake. All kayak equipment will be provided, and the class will be held rain or shine. This class consists of a classroom portion followed by kayaking on our lake. It is for those who have never kayaked and those with limited experience. The session will cover safety, parts of a kayak, entry and exit, and more.

Participation is for those age 8 through adult. For more information see the Water Sports tab under Recreation at our website - iwlar.org. To register, send an email to iwlarwatersports@gmail.com with the number of adults and number of children and their ages. Chapter members are needed that day to assist with transporting equipment to and from the lake and to assist participants while on the water. This is a great way to earn your volunteer hours. Volunteers, please send an email to the same address with your name and the hours you are available to help.

Highlights from the March 20 BOD Meeting

-The Board approved a Range Safety Committee recommended policy guiding those that have concealed and carry permits that use our chapter's resources.

Next member social/game night is on April 24.

-Rechartering the Scouting America troop and pack IWLA-R sponsors has been completed.

-The Board approved a request to use the lower level of the Chapter House as the regular meeting location for a new Daisy Girl Scout Troop.

-The board approved an emergency tree removal policy. We have scheduled service for our portable toilets with Bio Clean. They have serviced the lake and will be servicing the range soon.

-A member has volunteered to lead the door closure device task.

-Several members have stepped up to serve on a committee to evaluate becoming our own independent 501c3 organization.

-We agreed to include the organizations "org" chart in new member packages and place it on the website.

-The Board tabled the motion to investigate county road status for the lake road.

-The board approved plans to upgrade our internal Wi-Fi network and upgrade the connection to the caretaker's house. We will keep Comcast for our internet service.

April 19 Park Cleanup

On Sunday April 19 from 1-4 Rockville Chapter-IWLA members are welcome to join with Friends of Seneca and Patuxent State Parks and Seneca Creek Watershed Partners to a Seneca Creek State Park Clean up. We access the park from the IWALR lake and work the area along Clopper Road and the old Clopper Grist Mill.

Bring your water bottle and gloves with long pants and get outside. We will have hotdogs on the grill after the pickup so plan on sticking around and socializing or maybe toss a lure or fly in the lake to catch a trout. More details will be on the website and distributed via the Google group.

New Members Recently Inducted

Kenneth Voritskul	Rockville
Robbie and Dawn Curtis	Germantown
Michelle Gao	North Potomac
John Smith	North Potomac

A warm welcome to all!

Ike's Want Ads

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.