



WALTONIAN

President's Letter - *by President Barry Drazkowski*

Welcome to spring fellow Ikes. As I write the wind is blowing and the temps falling. Its 9 degrees and projected to be 10 to 20 below tonight. But the feeders are full, the bird bath is heating water, and the bee hive is freshly stocked with food and insulation. It warms me though to think of the rapidly approaching spring, warm weather, flowers, and renewal. I'm starting my planting plans, as I hope to convert my deer food plots to pollinators, although I realize they do dual service, both for my bees, the deer and turkeys. I've also ordered bees to restock the hive that failed over the winter. Yes, I've learned a valuable lesson, yes even at my age, the below zero temps and wind can starve out a vibrant hive. But age should not be an impediment to learning and growing. No, age and experience should create fertile ground for growth and new understanding.

This was so poignantly made clear to me recently as I've worked with Dave Zentner on revising our Upper Mississippi River Basin Initiative in preparation for its discussion at the Midwinter Ikes National meeting. I, like many of us, have become very frustrated with the political trends at both the State and National levels. I'm frustrated with science denial. As a science person, I always assume that with good science, informed decisions will be made and logic will paint a path forward. We see this with climate change, probably the greatest ongoing denial by many of our politicians since science challenged prevailing perceptions that the world is flat. It took Columbus not falling off the edge and discovering a new world for all to redefine their perceptions of the earth (although us Scandinavians know we discovered this long before Columbus set sail). As our climate warms, our region is realizing a dramatic change, a change that will affect agriculture, water, and all our ecosystems. Soil drying or aridity is going to be significant, for example southern Minnesota will realize up to a 35% reduction in soil moisture within the next 35 years. The science behind this projection is found with NASA and the USGS, at http://www.usgs.gov/climate_landuse/clu_rd/nccv.asp. Now, falling off the edge takes on a very different context, we are going to realize a shift in plant communities, changes in crop production rates, increased susceptibility to invasive species, surface and ground water shortages, and a host of other vulnerabilities that are difficult to even comprehend.

What do we do? The pessimist in me, that part of me driven by frustration and the never ending challenge of economy and

jobs consistently being prioritized over our the health of the very environment that sustains us, suggests that we pick up the big club and engage those that we perceive as our enemy. I ask myself, is that who we are, is that the way of the League? Our members are a diverse group, many are farmers, conservatives, or hold beliefs that us tree huggers often find offensive. So what do we do?

As we "stand with fists doubled" challenged with an ailing environment and increasing challenges to its health. We know that science has failed to elicit the logical change and protections many of us so naively believe should just happen. We forget our human nature, the difficulty with change, the difficulty of accepting responsibility for what is going to get much worse. Society has taught us to live in the present, so worrying about tomorrow goes against enjoying a great dinner tonight, shopping at the mall, going to the kids basketball or hockey game, or a myriad of other things that consumer our present. *President's Letter continued on page 3.*



Minnesota Division IWLA President Barry Drazkowski at the Winter Board of Directors' meeting. Photo by Noreen Tyler.

2016 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES COMMITTEE PRIORITIES

by Chair Don Arnosti

A statewide gathering of Izaak Walton League state board and individual members met in Bloomington one cold day in January to decide what conservation issues we would work on in the 2016 legislative session. They heard presentations from members of our statewide Environmental Issues Committee (EIC) who had discussed and debated numerous issues before presenting recommendations to the gathering.

The following issues will be our legislative focus:

- ◆ School Trust Lands – School Trust Lands comprise approximately 2.5 million acres, managed by the DNR primarily as state forest. In 2012, the legislature passed a law emphasizing the requirement to manage these lands for revenue for the schools. As a result, DNR management has elevated long-term revenue maximization as the dominant goal in the management of these lands. This is incompatible with protection of old growth forests (17,000 acres) native prairies (7,000+ acres) shorelands, and other similar sensitive ecosystems.
- ◆ We shall propose buyouts, rental payments or other mechanisms to prevent economic exploitation of sensitive resources. This might include bonding, surplus revenue, or user fees. We have several resolutions at the Division and National level concerning this issue, going back every year since the passage of the legislation in 2012.
- ◆ Pollinators – Pollinators include hundreds of species of birds, bees, butterflies, beetles, bats, moths and flies, as well as domesticated honeybees. These creatures provide critical reproductive services to hundreds of species of native plants, and approximately 1/3 of our food. (Fruits, nuts, berries and many vegetables.)

Pollinators have been experiencing precipitous population declines as a result of 1) loss of habitat, 2) widespread use of pesticides, particularly neonicotinoids, and 3) habitat disruption in the form of mowing. We propose to address these issues in the 2016 legislature focusing on applying existing road right-of-way BMPs along public roads, encouraging use of native plants in buffers, and restoring proper labeling of native plants for sale to the public.

We have a 2015 Division resolution concerning pollinators.

- ◆ **RIM-CREP III Buffer Easements:** Supporting \$30 million in RIM Reserve funding from bonds recommended by the Governor, which, when paired with federal matching funds, goes to purchase permanent conservation easements on private lands. Minnesota has submitted a five-year \$795 million “CREP III” proposal to the federal government designed to expand buffers on private agricultural land to protect our waters. The state five-year share, to be obtained from bonding, general revenue, and Outdoor Heritage funds could range between \$161-\$380 million.
- ◆ **White Earth Wild Rice River project:** The Outdoor Heritage Council recommended funding of a White Earth Nation project, FA-09, “Protecting Forest Wildlife Habitat in the Wild Rice River Watershed.” It involves purchasing and opening to the public approximately 2500 acres of forestland from Potlatch, which is selling off their lands. This project was uniquely targeted last year for defunding by legislators – all other projects were approved.

SAVE THE DATE! CITIZENS’ DAY AT THE CAPITOL

April 6, 2016

Christ on the Hill Lutheran Church
Saint Paul (next to Capitol)

Check your email & minnesotaiakes.org
for details.



Environmental Issues Chair Don Arnosti.

Continued on page 3.

President's Letter continued from page 1

We must engage a new behavior, if we are to prevail. We must engage a new conversation with those that we view as our opposition. We are all passengers on this spaceship. We need to realize that our government and our politicians are not the answer. They will continue to respond to those loud voices, whether we agree or not. (continued on page 2)

We, however, can change the game. We can begin a new grassroots groundswell, to engage our community in discussing the problems, and yes, we bring in the science. We need to create credibility with our antagonists, to realize we are all citizens in this game; we all have a great deal to lose. This will not happen with the big club, it comes from sincere and heartfelt engagement. It comes from respectful conversations over very difficult issues. Our strength as the Izaak Walton League is that we represent all these differing perspectives. We need to engage each other, through chapter based discussions, which will then form a broader community dialog. We can then reach out to our agriculture and business community partners through our chapters, and begin to grow an informed community discussion about our problems, and most importantly their solutions. This approach is the foundation of our Upper Mississippi River Basin and Great Lakes Initiative. I've got to thank Dave Z, for bringing his life experience and hard learned

lessons to this initiative. To provide perspective on how we build community consensus and chart a path forward that engages us all in thoughtful, science-based, discussion and resulting solutions. Once we change our community, we can then change those that represent us. As always, in defense of our soil, air, water, and the wise stewardship of our land and its resources.



State Directors Craig Sterle (McCabe) and Bob Scheierl (also president of the Wes Libbey Northern Lakes Chapter (formerly Grand Rapids Wes Libbey Chapter) at the Winter BOD meeting. Photo by Noreen Tyler.

Issues Priorities continued from page 2.

- ◆ **NE Minnesota Elk Reintroduction project:** LCCMR recommends funding from the lottery for an Elk reintroduction study in northeastern MN. Concern exists that some powerful legislators don't want state funding to go to tribal-affiliated projects, and that this project could run into problems as the White Earth project did last year (see above.)
- ◆ **Separation of Mineral Promotion Duties from DNR:** A major problem we have in Minnesota is the "charge" the DNR has to both promote and regulate mining. They do a wonderful job of the former, and a poor job of the latter. This could be improved, if their promotion responsibilities were shifted to another state agency. We might be able to have one, unconflicted natural resource management and regulatory agency. Our goal would be to draft a bill and find an author for introduction – to get the conversation started on this issue.
- ◆ **Defend Existing Environmental Laws:** Last year, this took nearly all our time, and rose to "top priority." We hope not to have to repeat that this year; however, this is nearly the same legislature. We would anticipate working in concert with other organizations on this. Concern exists that these areas might be under attack this year:
 - ◇ **Renewable requirements for utilities** were repealed by the House last year, but were defeated after the Governor vetoed the bill at our (and others') request.
 - ◇ **Pipeline companies were recently required by a court to prepare an EIS before constructing a new corridor.** A bill has been introduced by the House Energy Committee to remove this legal requirement.
 - ◇ **Water quality standards** were blocked or interfered with at the behest of rural communities and polluting industries last year. These problems were only partially mitigated with the veto.
 - ◇ **We can only imagine!**

You are invited to join our EIC to support our conservation agenda. We cannot achieve our goals without a strong grassroots involvement.

Please contact Don Arnosti, our Conservation Program Director to get involved! donarnosti@gmail.com

Winter Meeting Weekend

Friday Night Program at Minnesota Valley Chapter

On Friday night, January 29th thirty IKEs met at the Minnesota Valley IKE chapter to hear Mike Kennedy's presentation: "Will Dilg-Conservation Fanatic." Mike told the story how Will, an unemployed liquor salesman during Prohibition, joined with 54 Chicago businessmen in 1922 to form the league to stop the pollution, draining and degradation of America's rivers, streams, forests and wetlands. The IKEs first victory under Dilg was the establishment in 1924 of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, stretching along the river from Wabash, MN to Rock Island, Ill., one of the first refuges of its kind in the US. Will traveled throughout the country establishing hundreds of IKE chapters with thousands of members within the first 5 years of the league. The IKEs organized around major battles to protect the Grand Tetons and, in conjunction with Ernest Oberholtzer and Sig Olson, to stop the damming of the Rainey River and the protection of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, a fight we are still in 90 years later.

Mike's presentation was videotaped and will soon be available on the MN Division Izaak Walton website.

Saturday Morning & Afternoon

Saturday morning started off with Cordelia Peirson the Executive Director of the Minnesota Environmental Fund (MEF) discussion with the board about MEF, its needs and its roll in funding the Minnesota Division office and activities. It is important to promote MEF in your work place if they are a part of your employer's giving campaign and to also encourage your employer to become a part of MEF's payroll giving network. It is easy to do. To learn more about MEF go to mnenvirofund.org. Employees like choice when it comes to their workplace giving and participation in MEF can provide that choice.

For more about the meeting portion of the day read President Barry Drazkowski's letter on page 1 and Don Arnosti's Issues article on page 2.

A big **THANK YOU** to the Bush Lake & Minnesota Valley Chapters for their time and hospitality.

Saturday Evening Program at REI

REI-Bloomington "Grassroots Initiatives in Climate and Clean Energy," hosted by the Minnesota Division and by the Bush Lake and Minnesota Valley IKEs Chapter. The program was moderated by John Rust and focused on small, grassroots efforts to create community solar gardens and small wind projects.

Lissa Pawlisch of CERTs (Clean Energy Resource Teams) talked about Green Energy Pricing Programs in Minnesota. Eric Jensen, formerly of the Midwest Office Energy Program and who is currently the coordinator of the Minnesota Division Energy Program talked about the clean energy projects he is working on. Gary Schwartz of the Owatonna and Minnesota Valley IKE chapters described the Owatonna Chapter's project to put solar on their facility and work in helping their members obtain clean energy (wind & solar) by working with their local utilities and municipalities.

Other presenters included Sean Gosiewski of the Alliance for Sustainability. Sean is organizing faith communities and neighborhood groups along Lake Street in Minneapolis. Also presenting were Rick Condon and Julia Nerbonne. Rick is organizing Unitarian Universalist congregations in Minneapolis and St. Paul, and Julia works for Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light. Julia was speaking on behalf of Cooperative Energy Futures an energy efficiency cooperative based in South Minneapolis and Just Community Solar. Both groups are collaborating on a project to bring to bring clean energy and jobs to low income communities in Minneapolis.

The evening program was a part of the new Minnesota Division Energy initiative. The program's ultimate goal is to help facilitate the establishment of 100% clean energy at all of our chapters. The Minnesota Valley Chapter is hoping along with the Owatonna Chapter to be one of the first chapters to achieve this worthy goal.

By John Crampton



Eric Jensen describes his work on the Owatonna Chapter and Austin community solar projects. Photo by John Crampton.

✓ CHAPTERS CHECK IN

The **Prairie Woods Chapter** (Detroit Lakes) recently has hosted two public forums on the issue of agriculture & water quality and has the third and final forum scheduled for mid March. There is a lot of agricultural production in the Detroit Lakes area - a region whose tourism dependent economy is driven by clean water in our lakes, rivers, and wetlands. Yet, the issue of water quality has not received as much public attention in the region as water quality issues (e.g. Red River flooding, lake water levels, etc.) have. Detroit Lakes is also the home to Rep. Collin Peterson, one of the primary authors of the Farm Bill and ranking member on the House Agriculture Committee.

John Sisser, IWLA Midwest Office's Conservation Associate, helped us flesh out the program and also presented at the first forum held in January. He provided an overview covering agriculture's importance, detailed how agriculture negatively impacts water quality, cited case studies of agriculture's impacts, discussed policy implications and the work of the IWLA on the Farm Bill, and addressed economic considerations.

The second forum was put on in February by **Kent Solberg**, a Verndale area farmer and also Livestock & Grazing Specialist for the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota. Kent's presentation shared information on traditional agriculture's impacts on soil health and outlined natural system agriculture practices designed to maintain soil function. He defines that as soil's ability to capture and store water and cycle nutrients. His five Soil Health principles are: 1) Keep the soil covered, 2) Minimize soil disturbance (e.g. through tilling), 3) Increase crop diversity, 4) Keep living roots in the soil, and 5) Integrate livestock.

He shared some pretty interesting data on both productivity gains and costs that a few producers in MN and ND have experienced. Kent strongly believes that there is a definite role for these improved practices within conventional agriculture. They will both enhance production and provide valuable societal benefits like cleaner water, better wildlife habitat, better food, and increased pollinator habitat. Kent would make a great presenter for other Ikes Chapters in Minnesota looking for a speaker to address this topic.

Finally, on March 14th we will host **Warren Formo** of the **Minnesota Agricultural Water Resource Center** who will share industry's perspective on this issue and also highlight their Discovery Farms program. It is designed to collect hard data on water quality impacts from specific farms around the State.



Will Dilg fishing for his favorite species, black bass, in the backwaters of the Mississippi River. In 1927 our chapter, the Minneapolis Chapter of Izaak Walton, built the Bass Ponds in Bloomington to raise black bass and protect them from the intense pollution of the river.

One of the highlights from the forums from my perspective has been the positive discussions between Ikes' members, local producers who have attended the forums, and members of the public. The discussions have focused on solutions to the problems that we can all work toward. It is obvious that everyone cares about the future of our global food supply, local water quality, and producers' livelihoods. **By Prairie Woods Chapter President Matt Davis.**

Other Chapter news:

Grand Rapids Wes Libbey Chapter has a new name. It is now the **Wes Libbey Northern Lakes Chapter.**

Rochester Chapter has embarked on a program of revitalization, recruiting new members from the area who are interested in preserving and restoring the chapter's wetlands and grounds.

Owatonna Chapter is working with Eric Jensen and Don Arnosti on a project to fit their chapter house with solar panels as part of the Minnesota Division IWLA Energy Program.

Call for 2016 Resolutions

Hello Minnesota Ikes. Now that Ground Hog Day is in the rear view mirror we remind you to begin to think about resolutions your chapter may want to submit at our annual meeting in Owatonna the weekend of April 22-24. We remind you that your resolutions need to be received by the resolutions committee by March 22nd. (30 days in advance of the annual meeting) That requirement allow us to work with you should the Committee have any questions about intended distribution, wording, or factuality.

A few things to consider before sending us your resolution:

1. Check to see if your subject is already covered by a previous resolution. Go to MN Division web site. It may be that we've already addressed the issue. You may still want to submit if you believe the subject very important and that there is a need to re-resolve on the matter.
2. Be certain the subject is clearly part of the Izaak Walton League mission statement!
3. Do not send resolutions that are purely local issues. Resolutions should be of state-wide, regional or national importance.
4. Be sure your resolutions are clear, are accurate, and try to keep them to one page if possible. A clear series of bullet points that serve to underscore the need and purpose, followed by a "therefore be it resolved that the Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America in Convention on April 23rd, 2016, etc."
5. Supporting information can be a submitted as an attachment that will help the committee.
6. Please include instructions on your intentions as to distribution of the resolution should it pass.

And thank-you for submitting your resolutions. The resolution process is an important part of informing each other of your interest' and priorities. The Ikes have a tradition of timely statement on matters that are central to conservation in our state and nation. We also are known for responsible policy decisions. We clearly intend through the resolutions process to also inform the greater community, conservation agency personnel, and the political community of our presence and our urgings.

We are here to serve you. As noted at the Winter BOD meeting, we will be retiring as Co-Chairs of the resolutions committee after this year's annual meeting. Please feel welcomed to join us in the resolution process preceding our 2016 annual meeting, and during the meeting. We believe you will discover the process interesting and informing. This experience may encourage you to volunteer to become the successor team!

One final note. Make every effort to have your chapter represented at the annual meeting, and, prepared to advocate for your resolution. The committee will make every effort to fairly present your resolution to the meeting, however no one can represent your thoughts and intentions quite like you can! Be present and advocate for your interest! On Friday Eve. April 22nd, the first reading of the resolutions and discussion of the resolutions will take place. On Saturday April 23rd, at the annual meeting, all resolutions approved for floor action by the committee will be voted up or down.



We do look forward to seeing you in Owatonna. Send your resolutions to: wchenke1@gmail.com and dzentner@charter.net and copy to ikes@minnesotaikes.org. **Resolution Committee Co-Chairs Bill Henke & Dave Zentner**

Scholarship Silent Auction

Annual Convention will soon be here and with it the yearly Silent Auction. This auction has been held for many years and we usually raise quite a bit of money for our scholarship applicants. Please bring some items to donate for the auction. A good rule of thumb is to have chapters bring 3 items, and individual board members to bring one. If you wish to bring more, that's great! Following are some ideas, but there are many others. Basket items are great and almost anything can be put in a basket. (Coffee Basket, Wine Basket, Kids Basket, Gardener's Basket, Outdoor Items, Camping items, Fishing Items, Natural Products, Bat Houses, Bird Houses, Wood Duck Houses, Bird Seed, Suet, Bird Baths, Field Guides, Picnic Items, Lake Fishing maps, Baked Goods, Food Items, Honey and *Gift Certificates

*Just a word about a gift certificate. We will have an AmericInn gift certificate on the auction. It is worth over \$170. It is good for one room for one night. Maybe you could get a night of your convention stay paid for less.

When you decide what you would like to donate, please contact Cherry Schwartz with the name(s) of your items so a bid sheet can be made. It saves lots of time the weekend of the convention. When you come to the convention, please find Cherry, or Gary Schwartz or Nancy Dolphin to accept your items. Please put your name and chapter name on them, if we need to make a bidding sheet. You can contact Cherry at 507-451-6676 or presike2@live.com

Thank you so much in advance for helping make a great Silent Auction at Annual Convention in Owatonna. Cherry S. Schwartz – Scholarship Committee Chair and Silent Auction Chair

2016 MINNESOTA IKES STATE CONVENTION & Annual Meeting - April 22- 24, 2016

Hosted by the Owatonna Chapter



1926-2016

Minnesota
Owatonna

Friday, April 22, 2016

Reding Environmental Education Center
1546 58th Street SW.
Owatonna, MN 55060

6:00 pm – Registration, social time, snacks, and open bar

7:00 pm – First reading of the resolutions; preview of other business

Saturday, April 23, 2016

Reding Environmental Education Center

9:00 am – Registration opens – Coffee, juice, and rolls

9:30 am – Convention convenes – Welcome

10:00 am – Aaron Wills, Cannon River Watershed Partnership – “Wastewater Management Projects”

10:40 am – US Fish and Wildlife Service – “Wildlife Production Areas in Southern Minnesota”

11:15 am – Eric Jensen & Don Arnosti – “Energy Conservation Programs for Minnesota Ike Chapters”

12:00 – Luncheon, some awards

1:30 pm – Bus tour of environmental sites in southern Steele County – CRWP, Straight Creek Wildlife Production Area, Oak Glen Wayside Rest on MN Hwy 218, Wind Farm, Sun Opta and other energy sites. Bus will return to Reding Center about 3:30 PM.

This bus is provided with a grant from the Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism.

Convention moves to AmericInn

4:00 pm – set up for MN Division
Silent Auction for Scholarships

4:30 pm – Silent Auction opens
(runs until c. 7:00 PM)

5:30 pm – Social Time with open bar, and snacks

6:00 pm – Dinner – 90th Birthday Celebration with more Awards

7:15 pm – Program – 90 Years of MN Division of the IWLA, hosted by VP John Crampton

Sunday, April 24, 2016

AmericInn off Bridge Street in Owatonna

8:30 am – Set up for meeting – coffee

9:00 am – Annual Meeting convenes

12:00 – Annual Meeting adjourns

Hotel information:

AmericInn (Headquarters hotel), 245 Florence Ave, Owatonna, 55060, (507) 455-1142, \$93.50 + tax. Free breakfast and coffee all day (10 rooms have been reserved). For Ike guests, please make Reservations by April 10. The hotel is located behind Applebee's. There are 5 restaurants within one block of the hotel.

Microtel, 150 St. John Drive, Owatonna, 55060, (507) 446-0228, 3 blocks from AmericInn, across I-35.
Country Inn and Suites, 130 Allen Ave. SW, Owatonna, 55060, (507) 455-9295 (2 blocks from AmericInn).

Registration Form - Annual Meeting

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Please send registration to: Gary Schwartz, 100 Shady Ave., Owatonna, MN. 55060, (507) 451-6676 (H) or (507) 363-1710 (cell)

Full Weekend \$55 per person
X _____ = _____

Saturday Luncheon, & Afternoon
tours \$25 per person
X _____ = _____

Saturday Evening Banquet &
Silent Auction \$30 per person
X _____ = _____

Sunday Annual Meeting (free)
RSVP _____

Total enclosed \$ _____



The Izaak Walton League of America

MINNESOTA WALTONIAN

2233 University Ave. W, Ste. 339, St. Paul MN 55114

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Time Dated Material

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Citizens' Day at the Capitol, April 6th, Christ on the Hill Lutheran Church, St. Paul
Annual Meeting & State Convention, April 22-24, 2016, Owatonna Chapter
National Convention, July 19-22, 2016, Holiday Inn & Convention Center, Stevens Point, WI

MINNESOTA WALTONIAN

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Copy deadline is the eighth of the month prior to publication. Send material to:
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2015 Division & National Dues

(Including national dues - Chapter dues are in addition)

Individual \$52.50, Family \$75.00, Student \$30.00, Youth \$15.80

MIDWEST OFFICE

651-649-1446, midwest@iwla.org

AWARDS

TIME TO MAKE YOUR NOMINATIONS

Who deserves an Ike award for outstanding environmental work carried out in 2015. **Many.** Here's your opportunity to nominate your candidates for a whole array of natural resources topics. Deadline for nominations is March 30.

- ✧ The Dave Zentner Minnesota Defenders Award
- ✧ The Distinguished Service Award
- ✧ The Dr. Walter Breckenridge Award.
- ✧ The Ed Franey Outdoor Writer and Conservation and Media Award.
- ✧ Sigurd F. Olson Conservation Award.
- ✧ IWLA Stewardship Awards
- ✧ Ray Haik Watershed District Award.

The Minnesota Division award applications are on the Division website www.minnesotaiakes.org. National awards are on www.iwla.org. If you have questions, please contact the Minnesota Awards Chair, Gary Schwartz at presike1@live.com or 507-363-1710.