



2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION

BLOOMINGTON | MINNESOTA

JULY 16-18

**GET
IT
DONE**

Turning Passion into Action

THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA'S 2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION | GET IT DONE: TURNING PASSION INTO ACTION | BLOOMINGTON, MINNESOTA | MSP ST. PAUL AIRPORT HILTON
WELCOME RECEPTION | INNOVATION FAIR | PARADE OF STATES | YOUTH CONVENTION | VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BANQUET | NATIONAL ART SHOW | CONSERVATION LUNCHEON
GREEN SUMMER DAY CAMP | GREEN CREW SUMMIT | AWARD-WINNING FOOD & ACCOMMODATIONS | FAMILY-FRIENDLY ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES

Welcome to Minnesota!

A Quick Note from the National Convention Host Committee!



Welcome to Minnesota and to the 2026 National Convention of the Izaak Walton League of America.

We are honored to host you in a place where water shapes the landscape, where conservation is woven into everyday life, and where generations of Ikes have worked to protect the natural resources that define our nation. Whether this is your first National Convention or one of many, we hope you find inspiration, new friendships, practical ideas, and renewed energy for the work ahead.

This year's theme—Get It Done: Turning Passion into Action—reflects both the history of our League and the challenges of our time. Passion is where conservation begins. Action is what changes the world.

Few stories embody that spirit better than that of our founder, Will Dilg. While fishing along the Mississippi River near Winona, Minnesota, he witnessed threats to one of America's great natural treasures and refused to stand by. He organized citizens, built partnerships, traveled the country, and inspired a movement. His efforts led to the creation of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and helped establish the Izaak Walton League of America itself. Will Dilg did not simply care about conservation—he got it done.

Throughout this convention, you will see that same spirit alive in chapters, divisions, youth leaders, conservation professionals, and volunteers from across the country. Together we will explore successful efforts to protect public lands, restore habitat,

improve water quality, engage new members, develop future leaders, strengthen chapters, and build a stronger League. More importantly, we hope you leave with practical tools, fresh ideas, and meaningful relationships that help you return home ready to take action.

Minnesota itself offers a living example of conservation in action. From the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness to the headwaters of the Mississippi River, from our prairies and forests to the wetlands and lakes that give our state its identity, conservation is visible everywhere. As part of this year's convention, we are proud to introduce the 2026 Annual Art Show on display in the MN Valley Ballroom where you can enjoy a special exhibition of artwork from across the country.

Most importantly, this convention is about people. It is about the conversations that happen between sessions, the friendships formed over meals, the sharing of lessons learned, and the collective commitment to leave our communities, our waters, our wildlife, and our League chapters stronger than we found them.

Your presence here matters. Your chapter matters. Your ideas matter.

Thank you for joining us in Minnesota. We hope your time here is filled with learning, inspiration, fellowship, and memories that will last a lifetime. Together, let us honor the legacy of those who came before us by continuing the work that conservation demands.

Sincerely,
Minnesota Host Committee Leadership



Tedd Suss, President
Camille Morton, National Director
Barb Hanson, Co-Chair
Joseph Barisonzi, Co-Chair
Jim Davis, Communications Chair

Convention Snapshot

Centennial Birthday Party Thursday, 5:30pm

Several Chapters are celebrating 100 Years of Service– and we're throwing a Birthday Party! Carnival games, live music, food, drinks and fun!

Opening Reception Friday, 9:00am

The National Convention kicks off on Friday morning with a welcome from the Mayor of Bloomington, Tim Busse and a video message from Senator Tina Smith.

Plenary Friday, 11:00am

Our plenary speaker for the 2026 National Convention is United States Congresswoman Betty McCollum, who will be introduced by former Secretary of State, Mark Richie.

Awards Luncheon Friday, 12:00pm

The Awards Luncheon is a celebration of the amazing members that have gone above and beyond in the world of conservation, leadership and service.

"Get It Done!" Platform Friday, 3:15pm

When the convention ends, things are just getting started. The IWLA is rallying around five action priorities to carry forward our conservation legacy and sharpen our relevance today.

National Art Show Reception Friday, 5:00pm

Artists from around the country exhibit nature-themed artwork in the MN Valley Ballroom presented by The Kouba Gallery in partnership with ArtistryMN.

Parade of States Friday, 7:00pm

Everyone's favorite event is back and you won't want to miss what each state has in store. Stop by each room to experience food, music, culture and more!

Innovation Fair Saturday, 9:00am - 3:00pm

Stroll through the aisles and marvel at the amazing work our members are doing around the country. It's your chance to give and get advice!

Conservation Luncheon Saturday, 12:00pm

Be inspired and engaged with a fascinating discussion about Conservation, Food, and Public Lands: Building Partnerships for the Future.

Public Lands Leadership Forum Saturday, 2:00pm

Protecting public lands, including the Boundary Waters, and strengthening stewardship for future generations, moderated by Griffith Pugh, host of The Young Ike Podcast.

Volunteer Appreciation Banquet Saturday, 6:30pm

Let's show our appreciation for the many volunteers that give their time, energy and creativity to the Izaak Walton League of America!

Thank You, Sponsors!



A Special "Thank You" to these individual donors:

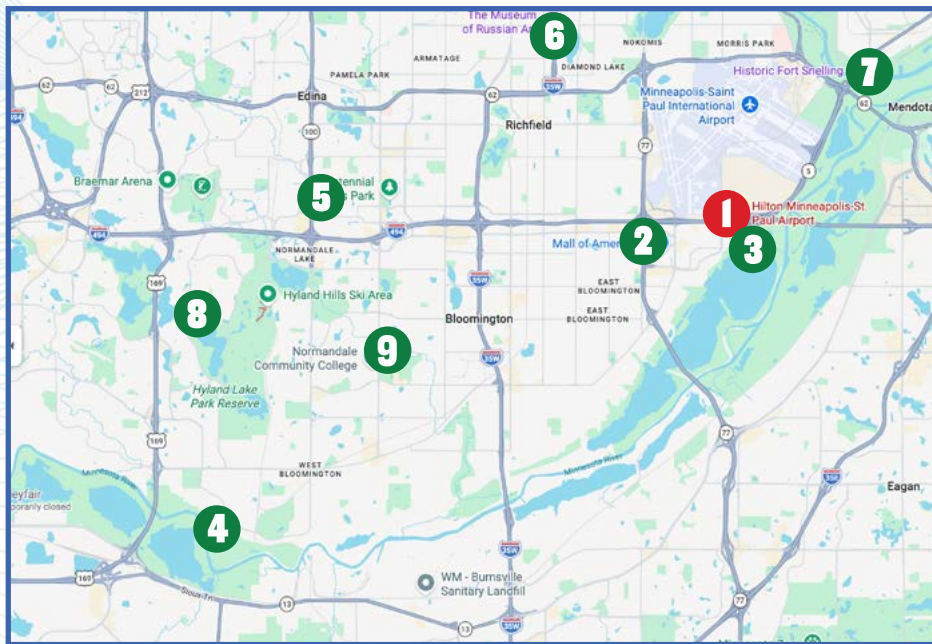
Cherie Aker
Alan Anderson
Jeff Anderson
Polly Andersen
James Burkhardt
Grace Butler
Susan Cassell
Anne Conway
Christine Curry

Marie Cyphert
Tom Ditty
Dean Farr
Richard Graham
George Guyant
James Haese
Chris Henning
William Henke
Diana Iltzsche
William Iltzsche

Lori Johnson
Tim Johnson
William Lesch
David Minge
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Jim Piatecki

Michael Reinemer
Mark Ritchie
Rick Sommer
John Stegmeier
Jim Sweeney
Colinda Trevino
Stephanie Verbeten
Vienna Volante
John Wittwer

What's Around You



1 Hilton Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport

This is home base—the location of the 2026 National Convention. Close to everything, far from ordinary. 3800 American Blvd. E, Bloomington, MN **Phone:** 952-854-2100 www.hilton.com/minneapolis-st-paul-airport

2 Mall of America

Less than a mile away is Minnesota's famous 4-story Mall of America. If you love to shop, be sure to stop! 60 E. Broadway, Bloomington, MN **Phone:** 952-883-8800 www.mallofamerica.com

3 US Fish & Wildlife Refuge

The National Wildlife Visitors Center offers exceptional hiking, bird-watching and wildlife viewing. 3815 American Blvd. E. Bloomington, MN **Phone:** 612-699-4658 www.fws.gov/refuge/minnesota-valley

4 Izaak Walton League MN Valley Chapter

Headquarters for the Green Crew and Youth Convention, this is where many youth activities will take place throughout the week. 6601 Auto Club Road, Bloomington **Phone:** 952-944-1423 www.iwlamnvalley.org

5 Centennial Lakes

Beautifully manicured gardens, walking paths, sculpture garden, putt putt golf, paddleboats and an outdoor amphitheater. 7499 France Ave. S, Edina, MN **Phone:** 952-833-9580 www.centenniallakes.com

6 Museum of Russian Art

An old church renovated into a glorious collection of Russian paintings, textiles, sculpture and jewelry. 5500 Stevens Ave, Minneapolis **Phone:** 612-821-9045 www.tmor.org

7 Historic Fort Snelling

A former military fortification and National landmark on the bluffs overlooking the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers. 200 Tower Ave, St. Paul, MN **Phone:** 9612-726-1171 www.mnhs.org/fortsnelling

8 Izaak Walton League Bush Lake Chapter

The Bush Lake Chapter House is just a few miles from the Convention on beautiful Bush Lake. 7515 Izaak Walton Rd. W, Bloomington, MN **Phone:** 952-358-8145 www.bushlakeikes.org

9 Normandale Japanese Gardens

More than 300 plants, shrubs, and trees have been carefully selected to grow in Minnesota's harsh climate. West Lot, 9700 France Ave S, Bloomington, MN **Phone:** 952-358-8145 <https://www.normandale.edu/why-normandale/community/japanese-garden/index.html>

THE WEST VIRGINIA DIVISION THANKS THE MINNESOTA DIVISION



FOR HOSTING THE NATIONAL CONVENTION



Explore the top 20 things to do in Minnesota. From epic waterfalls to immersive museums there is something for everyone in the Land of 10,000 Lakes!

Adventures Further Out

Why not make it a family vacation? Minnesota is loaded with amazing things to do, see and explore. Whether you're into sports, music, art, adventure, shopping, animals, science, beer, history, nature, architecture, coffee, or night life — there's something here for you to enjoy:



MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Minnesota Historical Society is a premier educational and cultural institution presenting the diverse stories of Minnesota's past. Headquartered at the Minnesota History Center in St. Paul, it manages a wide network of museums, a massive research library, and historic sites stretching across the state.



WORLD WAR II BOMBERS MAKE A RARE APPEARANCE

Two well-known World War II bombers will make a joint appearance in St. Paul as part of the B-29 DOC History Restored Tour July 16–19, 2026, at St. Paul Downtown Airport, where the flying Boeing B-29 Superfortress and the North American B-25 Miss Mitchell will be on display together for visitors.



THE LARGEST SHOPPING EXPERIENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

We call it the Mall of America for a reason! Located just a few miles from the 2026 National Convention, it is the largest shopping and entertainment complex in the United States and the Western Hemisphere.



THE FAMOUS CHERRY SPOON BRIDGE AT THE WALKER SCULPTURE GARDEN

It's one of the largest urban sculpture gardens in the country, with 40 permanent art installations. The Minneapolis Sculpture Garden is free, open to the public, and is open from 6 am to 12 midnight every day.



MINNEHAHA FALLS

One of the Twin Cities' most beloved features is a striking, wilderness waterfall in an urban setting. Overlooking the Mississippi River, Minnehaha Park is one of Minneapolis' oldest and most popular parks!



WHERE DOVES CRY IN PURPLE RAIN

Paisley Park is the sanctuary where Prince would create, record, and perform his legendary music. It is now an immersive look into Prince's life where you can experience the rich history of the greatness created within these walls.

One of Minnesota's most popular foods is our famous Jucy Lucy! Two all-beef patties oozing with melted cheddar cheese in the middle. But be careful! Many visitors return home with a burnt chin! The molten cheese core of the Juicy Lucy is what people remember most!



EAT A JUCY LUCY AT MATT'S BAR

Matt's Bar & Grill, now a Minneapolis landmark, began in 1954 as a neighborhood burger joint. Shortly after opening, founder Matt Bristol created the "Jucy Lucy" when a local customer asked for two hamburger patties with a slice of cheese in the middle.



SALUTE A NATIONAL LANDMARK: HISTORIC FORT SNELLING

Historic Fort Snelling located at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers, is now a historic 1820s military post and National Historic Landmark.



HIT A HOME RUN AT TARGET FIELD

Spectacular yet intimate with breathtaking views and a dazzling array of food. Those are just a few things you can find in your experience at Target Field, the new world class home of the Minnesota Twins.



LOSE YOURSELF IN A WORLD OF NATURAL BEAUTY

The University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is a 1,200-acre public garden best known for its beautiful display gardens, nationally recognized tree collections, protected natural areas and research activities.



CENTENNIAL LAKES PARK

A 24-acre park featuring more than 1.5 miles of paved pathways meandering around a 10-acre lake interspersed with landscaped grounds, formal and informal seating areas, swinging benches and fountains. In addition, the park features a miniature golf course, lawn bowling, paddleboats and concert pavilion.



MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Home to more than 100,000 works of art representing 5,000 years of world history, MIA is one of the largest art museums in the United States. Its permanent collection represents the world's diverse cultures across six continents. The museum has five curatorial areas: Arts of Global Africa, Global Contemporary Art, Asian Art, European Art, and Arts of the Americas.

Program

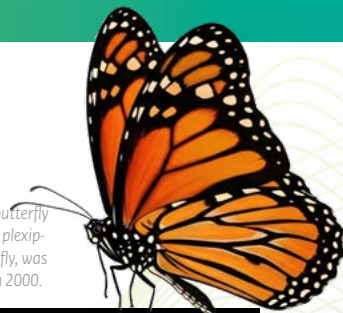
Thursday, July 16

Time	Event	Room
7:30-8:30am	Breakfast	MN Valley Ballroom
8:30-4:00pm	Executive Board Meeting	VII - White Pelican Bay
8:30-12:00pm	Endowment Board Meeting	IV - Hawks Ridge
9:00-5:00pm	Check in and Credentialing	West Balcony Desk
12:00-1:30pm	Joint Luncheon	MN Valley Ballroom
1:30-4:00pm	Committee Meetings	
5:00-5:30pm	Youth Convention Welcome	Executive Boardroom
5:30-10:00pm	Centennial Birthday Party Food, Live Music, Party Games and Fellowship	MN Valley Ballroom

Friday, July 17

7:30-8:30am	Breakfast	MN Valley Ballroom
8:00am	Delegate Orientation Workshop	VII - White Pelican Bay
9:00-11:00am	Credentialing	
9:00-5:00pm	Check in	
9:00-9:30am	Opening Ceremony/Community Welcome Presentation of the Colors - Venture Crew 3111 Welcome – Tim Busse , Mayor of Bloomington Video from Senator Tina Smith	MN Valley Ballroom
9:45-10:30am	Officer Reports	
10:45-11:50am	Executive Director Report	
11:00-11:30am	Plenary Introduction, Mark Ritchie , Former Minnesota Secretary of State Plenary Congresswoman Betty McCollum Awards Luncheon	MN Valley Ballroom MN Valley Ballroom
12:00-2:00pm	Elections	
3:15-4:30pm	Get It Done! Platform	MN Valley Ballroom
5:00-6:30pm	Kouba Gallery National Art Show	MN Valley Ballroom
7:00pm	Parade of States	

The Walleye became the official state fish in 1965. This popular game fish is found throughout Minnesota in lakes and rivers. Walleyes are most at home in the large, clear, cool lakes of Minnesota's northern forests; their eyes are sensitive to light, so they go to deep, dark waters during the day and move to shallow areas at night. Minnesota's record walleye weighed 17 pounds, 8 ounces.



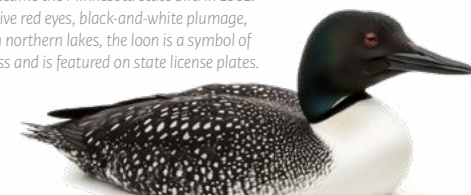
The Monarch was adopted as the state butterfly in 2000. The Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexipus*), also known as the milkweed butterfly, was adopted as the state's official butterfly in 2000.

Program

Saturday, July 18

Time	Event	Room
7:30-8:30am	Breakfast	MN Valley Ballroom
9:00-9:45am	Endowment Meeting	IV - Hawks Ridge
9:00-4:00pm	Innovation Fair	Main Hallway
9:45-10:00am	Break	
10:00-11:45am	Board of Directors Meeting	VII - White Pelican Bay
12:00-1:30pm	Conservation Luncheon Carmen Fernholz Founder, Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture Helene Murray Executive Director, Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, University of MN Public Lands Leadership Forum Griff Pugh Young IKE Podcast, Vice President, MN Valley Chapter IWLA Mike Dombeck Former director of the Bureau of Land Management, 14th Chief of the United States Forest Service Becky Rom National Chair, Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters Joe Duggan Retired, Pheasants Forever	MN Valley Ballroom
2:00-3:00pm	Resolutions and Voting	MN Valley Ballroom
3:15-4:30pm	New Business Volunteer Appreciation Banquet Officer and Executive Board Installation Youth Convention Report Keynote Speaker: Hannah Barisonzi , Founder, Green Crew™ "Bridging Environmentalism and Conservationism for a New Generation of Leadership"	MN Valley Ballroom
4:30-5:00pm		
6:30pm		

The Common Loon became the Minnesota state bird in 1961. Known for its distinctive red eyes, black-and-white plumage, and haunting calls on northern lakes, the loon is a symbol of Minnesota's wilderness and is featured on state license plates.



The Minnesota state flower is the Pink and White Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*), adopted in 1902. Also known as the showy lady's slipper, this rare, protected wildflower is a terrestrial orchid that grows in bogs, swamps, and damp woods, blooming in late June to early July.



2026 Youth Convention

The Official Youth Convention takes place Thursday through Saturday during the National Convention, bringing together young conservationists for three days of immersive, hands-on learning, leadership, and service. Activities are centered at the Minnesota Valley Chapter and the adjacent Bloomington Wildlife Refuge, providing an inspiring outdoor classroom where participants connect with nature while developing practical conservation skills.

Each day begins with a high-energy welcome activity that builds enthusiasm and strengthens the community among participants. Youth are organized into small groups by age and guided by teams of Senior and Junior Counselors, creating opportunities for mentorship, teamwork, and personal growth. Throughout the program, participants rotate through engaging Leave No Trace activities and hands-on water science investigations using SOS+ curriculum-based lessons that connect environmental knowledge with real-world application.

Afternoons are dedicated to meaningful conservation service, where participants work on projects such as invasive species removal, prairie restoration, pollinator habitat enhancement, shoreline stewardship, or tree planting. Project assignments may vary based on weather, site conditions, and youth leadership opportunities, encouraging adaptability, collaboration, and shared responsibility.

The convention culminates with youth presenting highlights of their accomplishments during the Saturday National Banquet, sharing the impact of their work with League members from across the country. Throughout the three-day experience, participants build new skills, strengthen friendships, develop confidence as conservation leaders, and demonstrate that meaningful environmental stewardship is achieved by working together and taking action.



The Rusty Patched Bumblebee, *Bombus affinis*, became Minnesota's state bee in 2019. This fuzzy bumblebee can be identified by a rust-colored patch on its abdomen. It's found in grasslands and prairies in and around the Twin Cities metro area in Minnesota.



2026 Youth Convention

The Youth Convention curriculum combines environmental science, conservation service, and leadership development in a vibrant, youth-led format. Designed around active engagement and teamwork, each day blends structured learning with creative exploration and real-world application.

Leave No Trace Training (Mornings)

Each morning begins with hands-on Leave No Trace instruction led by trained youth counselors. Participants practice outdoor ethics through games, challenges, and real-life scenarios that emphasize one or two principles per day. Youth have the opportunity to earn Leave No Trace certification, equipping them with practical tools to lead low-impact recreation and stewardship in their own communities.

Water Science (Mornings)

Paired with Leave No Trace, the Water Science rotation immerses participants in River Watch water quality monitoring of the Minnesota River Basin. Youth collect and analyze samples using SOS, Chlorine Watch, and additional scientific tools, submitting data to both the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and SOS platforms. These activities connect participants directly to national citizen science networks while teaching essential ecological literacy.

Conservation Service (Afternoons)

Afternoons are dedicated to conservation projects that change daily based on weather, capacity, and youth leadership priorities. Projects include prairie restoration, pollinator gardens, elm restoration, invasive species removal, trail restoration, mushroom inoculation, and pond planting. Youth select their preferred project each day, developing teamwork and agency through meaningful service.

Youth Leadership & Media Team

A dedicated leadership and media crew documents the week's experiences through photography, art, and journaling. Their work culminates in a multimedia presentation showcased at the Saturday Convention Banquet — celebrating youth action and the spirit of "Getting It Done."

Key Outcomes:

10 or more Leave No Trace certifications earned through nationally recognized training during the Official Youth Convention.

3–4 major conservation service projects completed, directly improving the Minnesota Valley Chapter site adjacent to the Bloomington Wildlife Refuge.

Three full days of immersive youth programming for Convention families, blending environmental science, leadership, conservation service, and outdoor skills.

Water quality data collected and submitted to both the SOS+ platform and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency through River Watch monitoring.

Trained counselors, mentors and program assistants lead youth activities and provide an engaging and meaningful convention experience.

Certifications and documented volunteer service, applicable toward Scouting America and GSUSA advancement while encouraging continued conservation leadership.

Youth Convention Schedule

Thursday

- 4:30 PM – Informal Meet, Confirm Paperwork
- 4:45 PM – Official Welcome and Overview
- 5:00 PM – Join Crews
- 5:00-5:30 PM – Forming & Organizing:
Meet Counselors, Review the Agendas and Expectations
- 5:30-6:15 PM – Make T-Shirts
- 6:15 PM – Join the Welcome Party

Friday

- 8:45 AM – Hotel Pickup
- 9:10 AM – Arrive and put away stuff
- 9:20 AM – Gathering
- 9:20-30 AM – Songs, Welcome
- 9:30- 10:15 AM – Session 1
 - Crew A/C: Leave No Trace (Principles 1-3)
 - Crew B/D: Water Science: Watershed
- 10:15-10:30 AM – Mid Morning Snack
- 10:30-11:15 AM – Session 2
 - Crew A/C: Water Science: Watershed
 - Crew B/D: Leave No Trace Game (Principles 1-3)
- 11:30-12:15 PM – Lunch & Games
- 12:30-12:45 PM – Project Introductions/Safety Review
Options: Trail Restoration, Mycology, River Walk, Buckthorn Removal, BioChar Filter, Elm Tree Field Report
- 12:45-12:55 PM – Project Selection
- 1:00-2:30 PM – Conservation Project – Work/Safety Review
- 2:30-2:45 PM – Afternoon Break
- 3:00-4:15 PM – Conservation Project Continues
- 4:15-4:30 PM – Clean up
- 4:30 PM – Report Out
- 4:30 PM – Depart for Hotel
- 4:30-4:45 PM – Campout Overview
- 4:45-5:30 PM – Set up campsite
- 5:00-5:45 PM – Prepare Dinner
- 5:45-6:20 PM – Dinner
- 6:20-6:45 PM – Clean up
- 6:45-7:30 PM – Skit Prep Time
- 7:30 PM – Camp Fire Walk



Minnesota, the "Land of 10,000 Lakes," actually boasts 11,842 lakes (over 10 acres) and over 69,000 miles of rivers, including the Mississippi River's source at Lake Itasca. The state features unique biodiversity, spanning four major biomes—coniferous forest, deciduous forest, tallgrass aspen parkland, and prairie grassland. Key natural areas include the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and the ancient rock formations of the Mesabi Range.



Youth Convention Schedule

Friday (continued)

- 7:45-8:30 PM – Camp Fire
- 8:30 PM – To Tents
- 8:45 PM – Late Night Depart for Hotel
- 9:00-9:45 PM – FireFly and Night Hike
- 10:00 PM – Lights Out!

Saturday

- 7:00 AM – Wake up
- 7:00-7:45 AM – Prepare Breakfast
- 7:45-8:30 AM – Breakfast
- 8:30-9:00 AM – Clean up and Break Camp
- 9:10 AM – Arrive and put away stuff
- 9:20 AM – Gathering, Songs, Welcome
- 9:30- 10:15 AM – Session 1
 - Crew A/C: Leave No Trace (Principles 4-7)
 - Crew B/D: Water Science: Downstream Contamination
- 10:15-10:30 AM – Mid Morning Snack
- 10:30-11:15 AM – Session 2
 - Crew A/C: Water Science: Downstream Contamination
 - Crew B/D: Leave No Trace Game (Principles 4-7)
- 11:30-12:15 PM – Lunch & Games
- 12:15-12:25 PM – Project Reintroduction Introductions
Options: Trail Restoration, Mycology, River Walk, Buckthorn Removal, BioChar Filter, Elm Tree Field Report
- 12:25-12:35 PM – Project Selection
- 12:30-2:00 PM – Conservation Project Work (Safety Review)
- 2:00-2:15 PM – Afternoon Break
- 2:15-2:30 PM – Introduction to the Presentation Opportunity
- 2:30-3:00 PM – Crew Create Presentations
- 3:00-3:30 PM – Practice Presentation
- 3:30 PM – Leave for Hotel
- 4:00 PM – Arrive at Hotel
- 6:30 PM – Regroup to present the Youth Convention Report, MN Valley Ballroom



Wild rice became adopted as the state grain in 1977.

Wild rice, called manoomin in the Ojibwe language, has been a staple food for Minnesota's Indians for centuries. It is an aquatic grass not related to common rice. Early in the summer, the plants bloom with tiny maroon and gold flowers, and by late summer, their seeds mature into dark brown kernels. For many years, basically all of the wild rice produced in the world came from Minnesota, and most still does.



**Learn more about this event
on the Convention App!**



Everything you need to enhance your convention experience all in one place!

Centennial Birthday Party

Thursday, July 16, 5:30pm, MN Valley Ballroom

Many Izaak Walton League Divisions and Chapters are celebrating 100 years of conservation service and community impact. To kick off the 2026 National Convention, we're throwing a Birthday Party! Join us as we celebrate one hundred years of amazing work that will continue to preserve our natural resources for many generations to come. Live music, carnival games, food, drinks, fellowship and good times will launch the 2026 convention into action!

Congratulations to these Izaak Walton League chapters celebrating big milestone anniversaries in 2026.

100th Anniversary

Chartered in 1926

Alexandria Chapter (IN)

Des Plaines Chapter (IL)

Minnesota Valley Chapter (MN)

North Manchester Chapter (IN)

Oil City Chapter (PA)

Owatonna Chapter (MN)

Roanoke Valley Chapter (VA)

Rome Chapter (NY)

York Chapter #67 (PA)

75th Anniversary

Chartered in 1951

Loudoun County Chapter (VA)

Medina Chapter (OH)

Wabash Chapter (IN)

50th Anniversary

Chartered in 1976

Fairfield Chapter (OH)

West Central Chapter (IA)



SINCE



1922

Congratulations to all the IWLA Chapters celebrating 100 years!

Your tireless work and committed conservation efforts are making a difference for the next generation! Thank you for all you do to protect and honor our land, soil, air, water and wildlife nationwide!



Thank you to the
Hilton Minneapolis
St. Paul Airport for
hosting the IWLA
2026 National
Convention.



Visit the
IWLA National
Headquarters in
the Cardinal Perch
Room on the
second floor.

Welcome Ceremony

Friday, July 17, 9:30am, MN Valley Ballroom

The 2026 National Convention kicks off on Friday morning with a warm welcome from the Mayor of Bloomington, Tim Busse. US Senator Tina Smith will make an appearance via video to welcome everyone to Minnesota. We'll also have the presentation of Colors from Venture Crew 3111.



Tim Busse Mayor of Bloomington Board Member, Minnesota Valley Chapter IWLA (on leave)

Mayor of Bloomington and former City Council member, Tim Busse is a collaborative leader advancing practical, community-driven sustainability. He has helped guide Bloomington's leadership in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program, supporting progress in energy efficiency, climate resilience, and conservation. A skilled communicator and consensus builder, he brings together public, private, and community partners to turn environmental priorities into action.



Tina Smith (Video) United States Senator

Tina Smith has served Minnesota in the U.S. Senate since 2018, championing conservation, clean energy, and the protection of public lands. She helped advance the Inflation Reduction Act's historic climate and environmental investments and has been a steadfast advocate for safeguarding the Boundary Waters. Throughout her Senate service, she has worked to strengthen Minnesota's natural resources, outdoor heritage, and environmental future.

Presentation of Colors



The Honor Guard

Presented by Venture Crew 3111, the Honor Guard brings together conservation leaders from across Scouting and the conservation community. Every member is a current or future recipient of the Distinguished Conservation Service Award (DCSA)—Scouting's highest conservation honor.



A Legacy of Conservation

In 2025, the Izaak Walton League of America received the DCSA. The award recognizes exceptional, sustained conservation leadership. For generations, the League has proudly benefited from Eagle Scout projects, Girl Scouts Gold Awards, and DCSA conservation initiatives.



Learn More

The convention mobile app highlights each Honor Guard member and their conservation projects. Visit Venture Crew 3111 to learn how your League chapter can connect with local Scouting conservation programs.



Congratulations Minnesota Division

FOR HOSTING THE 2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION

FROM THE NEBRASKA DIVISION:

ARAPAHOE
COLUMBUS
CRETE
FREMONT
GRAND ISLAND
JESSIE BENTON FREMONT
LINCOLN
SEWARD
SOUTHWEST CHAPTER
THAYER COUNTY
WAYNE

Have a great convention!



Plenary Speaker

Friday, July 17, 11:00am, MN Valley Ballroom

Our plenary speaker for the 2026 National Convention is United States Congresswoman, Betty McCollum, representing Minnesota's 4th District. Representative McCollum will kick off the National Convention with a compelling message of committed conservation, environmental stewardship and restoring critical habitat. She will be introduced by former Minnesota Secretary of State, Mark Ritchie. This powerhouse presentation will set the tone for the remainder of the National Convention. Get ready to start Getting Things Done!



Betty McCollum Minnesota Congresswoman

Betty McCollum is a longtime champion for conservation, clean water, wildlife habitat, and public lands. Representing Minnesota in Congress since 2001, Representative McCollum has been a leading advocate for protecting the Mississippi River, restoring critical habitat, supporting outdoor recreation, and ensuring that future generations inherit healthy natural resources. She has been the driving force behind the Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative, a landmark effort to bring sustained federal investment to improve water quality, restore habitat, reduce invasive species, and strengthen the resilience of America's greatest river. Her commitment to stewardship, conservation action, and safeguarding our outdoor heritage reflects many of the same values that have guided the Izaak Walton League for more than a century.



Mark Ritchie Founder of the Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy and the former Minnesota Secretary of State

Mark Ritchie was elected Minnesota secretary of state in 2006. He was re-elected in 2010. Since retiring from office, Mark has served 3 terms as Minnesota's Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the US Army as President of Global Minnesota. He chairs the Military Historical Society of Minnesota which is opening Minnesota's new Veterans and Military Museum just outside Camp Ripley which includes the longest unbroken stretch on the Mississippi River. He graduated from Iowa State University in 1971 and from the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs in 2013. He and his wife, Nancy Gaschott, have lived in Minnesota since 1980. Mark is a proud member of the Minnesota Valley chapter of the Izaak Walton League and co-chair of the Year of Water initiative.





IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

SOUTH DAKOTA

DIVISION

PROUDLY REPRESENTING
12 CHAPTERS ACROSS SOUTH DAKOTA



BEADLE COUNTY • BON HOMME COUNTY • DAY COUNTY • DEUEL COUNTY • KAPESKA
MADISON #16 • MCCOOK LAKE • RAPID CITY • ROSEBUD • SIOUX FALLS • SUNSHINE • YANKTON AREA

Congratulations to the Minnesota Valley Chapter

Celebrating 100 Years of Conservation Leadership

Thank you for hosting the 2026 Izaak Walton League National Convention.



VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE

IWLASD.org



DEFENDING OUR NATURAL HERITAGE
For today and tomorrow.

Connecting South Dakota Ikes through conservation, education, advocacy, and outdoor recreation.

NEWS • EVENTS • CHAPTERS • RESOURCES • MEMBERSHIP



DEFENDING AMERICA'S SOIL, AIR, WOODS, WATERS AND WILDLIFE SINCE 1922

Awards Luncheon

Friday, July 17, 12:00am, MN Valley Ballroom

The Awards Luncheon is a celebration of all the amazing Izaak Walton League of America members that have gone above and beyond in the world of conservation, leadership and service. We will learn about and applaud the accomplishments of some remarkable individuals.

54 Founders Award: The League's highest honor, given to one person each year who has made outstanding contributions in conservation

Arthur R. Thompson Memorial Award: Recognizes state division that has carried out the most outstanding conservation program

Conservation Award: Recognizes individual accomplishments in conservation

Hall of Fame Award: For outstanding achievements in furthering the League's mission and goals

Honor Roll Award: For non-member achievements in conservation

James Lawton Childs Award: Recognizes chapter accomplishments in conservation

Outdoor America's Future Award: For outstanding youth members

Outdoor Ethics Award: For outstanding work in outdoor ethics

Robert C. O'Hair Award: Recognizes chapter accomplishments in youth programs

Save Our Streams Award: For outstanding work in environmental education and citizen activism for clean water

Shooting Sports: For outstanding efforts to advance the shooting sports

Thelma "Pete" Reed Memorial Award: For outstanding volunteers

Best Division Newsletter: For the best division newsletter

Best Chapter Newsletter: For the best chapter newsletter

Best Division and Chapter Website: One each for the best division and best chapter website

Best Chapter Membership Recruitment and Retention Award:

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

The Red or Norway Pine (*Pinus resinosa*) became the official state tree in 1953. Red pines are tall, stately trees that reach heights of 60 to nearly 150 feet. Their trunks are straight and uniform and may grow to five feet in diameter. When mature, the trees usually are bare of branches for two-thirds of the way up the trunk, with rounded tops or "crowns."



THE MINNESOTA VALLEY CHAPTER

SUPPORTS

Camille Morton FOR NATIONAL SECRETARY

I believe the future of the League will be strongest when experienced leaders and emerging leaders work side by side.

My service to the League extends from chapter leadership to division governance and national service. I currently serve on the Minnesota Valley Board of Directors, the Minnesota Division Executive Committee, and as a Minnesota National Director. I have served on the National Nominating Committee, attended four National Conventions as a delegate, and am helping organize the 2026 National Convention.

I am seeking election for National Secretary because I believe our greatest opportunity is to build stronger connections across generations, ensuring that the values, knowledge, and traditions that built this League continue to inspire those who will lead it tomorrow.



"If youth are the future, we need to be part of the present."

— Camille Morton



Connecting today's experience with tomorrow's leadership.

“Get It Done” Platform

Friday, July 17, 3:15pm, MN Valley Ballroom

In 1922, our founders declared it was “Time to Call a Halt” – now, a century later, it’s time to Get It Done. The Izaak Walton League is rallying around five action priorities to carry forward our conservation legacy and sharpen our relevance today. Each priority below includes concrete actions for chapters and a call for National leadership, grounded in League resolutions and policy. Together, these steps honor our heritage and drive urgent conservation progress.

- **Transform Agriculture for Future Generations**
Farming must sustain us and our natural resources.
- **Protect Clean Water for All**
Every American deserves safe water to drink and healthy streams and wetlands.
- **Conserve Fish, Wildlife, and Habitat**
Our woods, waters and wildlife are an interwoven legacy we must save for future generations.
- **Tackle the Climate Crisis with Natural Solutions**
Climate change is intensifying floods, droughts, wildfires, and threatening all our conservation gains.
- **Protect America’s Iconic Landscapes and Public Lands**
From the Everglades to the Boundary Waters, the Great Lakes to the Missouri River, our nation’s cherished ecosystems define our outdoor heritage.



Learn more about this event
on the Convention App!



Everything you need to enhance your convention experience all in one place!



GET IT DONE! 2.0

PUT THE “SERVE” IN CONSERVATION

“GET IT DONE!” DOESN’T END WITH THE CONVENTION! VISIT WWW.IWLA-GETITDONE.ORG TO GET IT DONE IN YOUR CHAPTER!

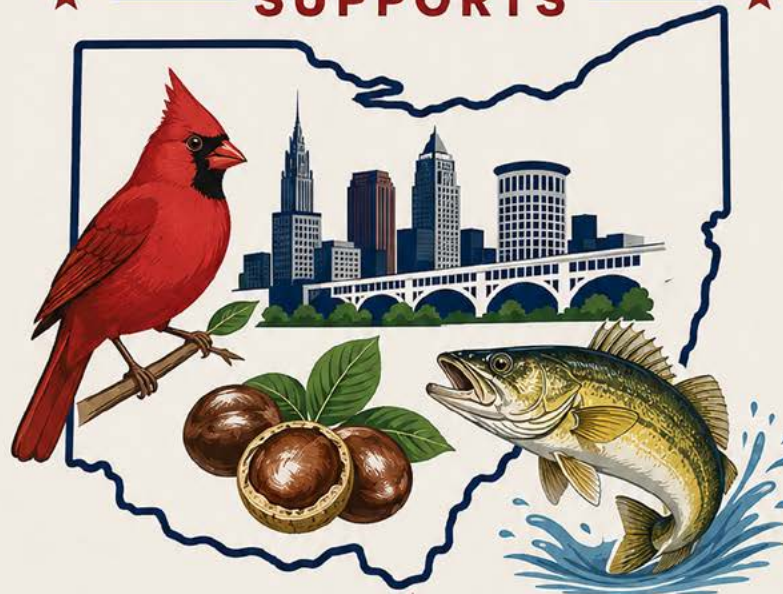
OHIO



DIVISION



SUPPORTS



JIM STORER

for NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

RICK GRAHAM

for EXECUTIVE BOARD

SHAWN GALLAGHER

for ENDOWMENT BOARD

We would also like
to *thank*

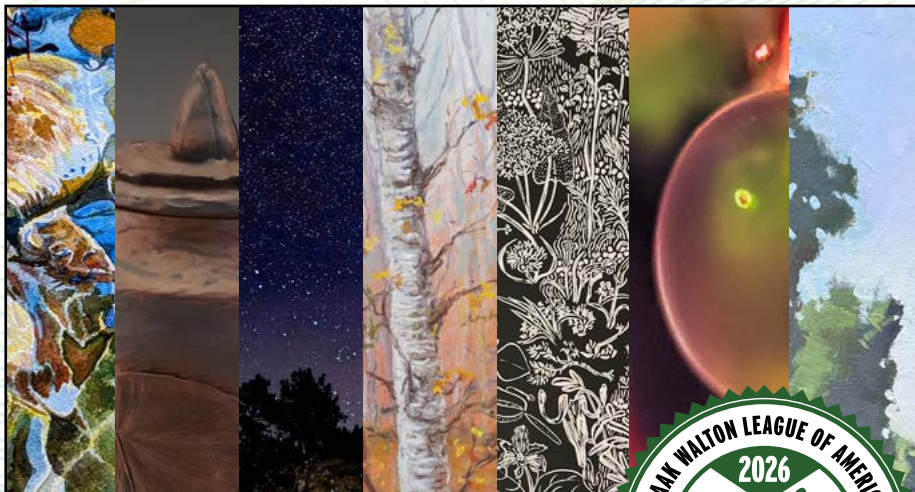
the MINNESOTA
DIVISION
for hosting this years
National Convention.



National Art Show Reception

Friday, July 17, 5:00pm, MN Valley Ballroom

Join us to celebrate the opening of the 2026 National Art Show presented by the Kouba Gallery in partnership with Artistry. This formal reception features the presentation of juried awards alongside opportunities to meet artists and judges. The exhibition highlights the power of art to inspire conservation, featuring works that connect creativity and habitat. The show will be on display in the Minnesota Valley Ballroom

IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA | KOUBA GALLERY

2026 National Art Show

Opening Reception, Friday, July 17, 5-7pm

Hilton MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL AIRPORT **Hilton Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport**
MN Valley Ballroom, 3800 American Blvd E, Bloomington



The Judges:



Don Shelby Retired WCCO-TV news anchor and journalist

Don Shelby is a retired journalist who was a beloved news anchor on WCCO-TV in Minneapolis for much of his career. He is regarded as an experienced investigative journalist, as his work has earned two Peabody awards and three Emmy Awards. He also has won three top journalism awards including the Columbia DuPont Citation, the Scripps-Howard Award and the Society of Professional Journalists Distinguished Service Award. As a committed environmentalist, Don Shelby's home has one of Minnesota's best-known examples of sustainable residential design.



Christy Williams Artist, entrepreneur, and community arts leader

Christy Williams is an artist, entrepreneur, and community arts leader with more than a decade of experience in studio management and arts education. As the former owner and resident artist of Bottle & Bottega Minneapolis, she managed daily operations and instructed thousands of participants in the creative process. She has been active in the regional arts community for years, serving on the Uptown Art Fair Board, coordinating community murals, and collaborating with artists across the Twin Cities.



Maribeth Romslo Filmmaker and multimedia artist

Maribeth Romslo believes that well-told stories have the power to change the world. Her award-winning films have played at festivals across the globe. Her conceptual dance film (Kitchen Dance) premiered at Minneapolis Institute of Art in March 2023. Recent projects include an original documentary series for Reese Witherspoon's new media platform, Hello Sunshine, and a documentary about student free speech in America (Raise Your Voice). Maribeth is currently pursuing her Master of Arts in Graphic and Web Design at MCAD. Her work can be seen at maribethromslo.com.

Exploring the Evolving Human Relationship with Nature.

Visit the National Art Show in the MN Valley Ballroom during the 2026 National Convention!

The Kouba Gallery, a proud program of the MN Valley Chapter, celebrates art inspired by nature and conservation. More than just an exhibition space, it's a gathering place that sparks wonder and fresh perspectives by showcasing new local artists every month.

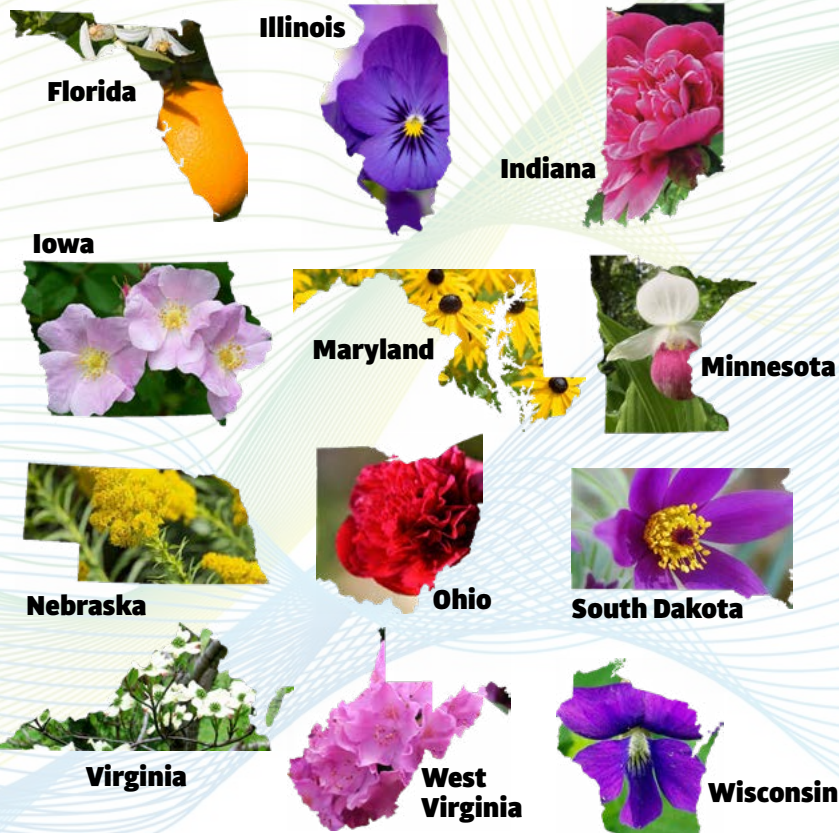
6601 Auto Club Drive | Bloomington, Minnesota | KoubaGallery.org



Parade of States

Friday, July 17, 7:00pm

This annual tradition has been a favorite event for years at past Conventions. And it's back again—better than ever. Roam the halls of the Hilton and visit each room dedicated to a Division and their favorite ways to entertain. Travel “across the country” sampling local food and beverages, listen to music from each state and meet the people that are proud to bring their culture to Minnesota for the Parade of States.



Turn a single drop into a tidal wave of action!

2027 will be a year of change. And it all starts with water! Help promote clean water and water conservation all across Minnesota!



Is there a water-related event happening in your community? Visit www.YearofWater.org to learn more and get involved!

A podcast for nature enthusiasts!

Join us as we wander from park to park and share nature stories of the past and present.



ThreeRivers
PARK DISTRICT

Come explore with us!
ThreeRiversParks.org/Podcast



Learn more about this event on the Convention App!

Everything you need to enhance your convention experience all in one place!



Innovation Fair

A new edition to the National Convention is the first annual **Innovation Fair** highlighting amazing work being done in Izaak Walton League Chapters all over the country. Take a stroll through the aisles and chat with brilliant innovators bringing change to the world of nature, science and conservation. Here's a sample:



Save the Boundary Waters

Save the Boundary Waters protects natural environments against ever-increasing public and commercial pressures so that the area's wild character remains intact for future generations. Our goal is to create a national movement to protect the Boundary Waters from sulfide-ore copper mining.



Young Ike Podcast

The **Young Ike Project** is an environmental podcast and community dialogue initiative created and hosted by Griffith Pugh. The show explores defining environmental trade-offs through long-form interviews and encourages listeners to continue these conversations through community "Podclubs".



Salt Watch & Nitrate Watch

The Izaak Walton League's **Salt Watch and Nitrate Watch** programs equip volunteers and partner organizations with Salt Watch and Nitrate Watch test kits and empowers them to monitor their water, share their results, and advocate for solutions. Anyone can get involved to monitor!



Get The Lead Out

The objective of the **GLO** Initiative is to accelerate the removal of lead pipes where it's needed most, help connect more water systems to historic federal funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and move our country closer to the goal of getting 100% of lead pipes out of water systems.



A Visit From Will Dill

Steven Marking plays **Will Dill** in an inspiring one-man movie entitled *A Visit From Will Dill*. After suffering from the drowning death of his son in the early 1920s, Dill rose from the depths of depression to lead an extraordinary national crusade by forming the Izaak Walton League.



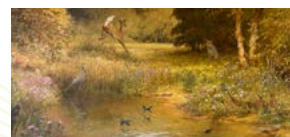
Ikes On Target

The League supports over 100 local chapters with recreational shooting sports facilities -- **firearms and archery** -- that provide opportunities for firearms safety classes, hunter education, marksmanship training and skills competitions.



Iowa Outdoor Expo

The **Iowa Outdoor Expo** for Kids and Families is a free, hands-on event hosted by the Des Moines Izaak Walton League aimed at getting children and families outside. It features activities like archery, BB gun ranges, fishing, and minnow races.



Puzzling Ecosystems

This jigsaw puzzle turns ecological restoration into play! Every box features duplicate, interchangeable pieces that portray both native and invasive species, allowing you to control the narrative of your own puzzle. Here, you're not just a puzzler... you become a conservationist.



Save Our Streams

The Izaak Walton League's **Save Our Streams** is a nationwide program training volunteers to monitor water quality and bring information to their communities. Today, trained volunteer stream monitors across the country are uncovering pollution problems and urging their local leaders to take action on water quality.



The Green Crew

Green Crew empowers young people to take real action on environmental issues, make a visible impact in their communities, and grow as confident, capable leaders along the way. Ready to start a Green Crew in your community? We've got tools, mentorship, and a proven model to turn your passion into action.



River Watch

River Watch is a hands-on, field-based youth science and water monitoring program. High school and middle school students test water quality and analyze river health using Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) protocols. Students then upload this data to a long-term, public database.



iNaturalist

iNaturalist helps you identify the plants and animals around you while generating data for science and conservation. Get connected with a community of millions of scientists and naturalists who can help you learn more about nature by recording and sharing your observations!



Leave No Trace

Leave No Trace is an outdoor stewardship ethic designed to minimize our impact on nature. This table helps provides a framework of seven core principles through games, puppets, and activities, and teaches practical outdoor ethics that help people of all ages enjoy nature while reducing their impact.

We Know the Flow!

The Izaak Walton League's **Save Our Streams** program is the only nationwide program training volunteers to protect waterways from pollution and bring information about water quality to their communities.



Visit us at the Innovation Fair
or www.iwla.org/save-our-streams



Manage Your Entire Convention Experience from Your Mobile Device.

Access comprehensive Convention details through the mobile app—everything you need, right at your fingertips.

MAPS

Never be lost with a complete set of maps:

- Hotel and Convention Layout
- Bloomington and Surrounding Area
- Twin Cities Metro Area
- Highlights and Tourist Attractions

FOOD

Want to know what's on the menu? Check here. You'll always know what to expect for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks throughout the entire convention! And if you have a special request, this is the place!

PARADE OF STATES

Everyone's favorite event has its own spot for information. Check to see who's in the "Parade", highlights, special attractions, and important updates. You can also register to participate in the Parade of States!

MY REGISTRATION

Need to make a change to your registration or update your information? Check here. Change the status of your attendance, your membership level, division, chapter or any other details.

SPONSORS

Find out who's behind the scenes making contributions to the national convention. These are the people, companies and organizations that make everything happen! Learn about them and the value they bring.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

You'll always be in the know! Be continually updated on schedule changes, programming adjustments, activity announcements and general convention information. If there's something important you'll know it!

YOUTH CONVENTION

Get up to speed on everything going on for the Youth Convention including programming, schedules, activities, responsibilities, and leadership. You can even find out about advisors and volunteer opportunities.

FAQs

Got a question? We've most likely got an answer for you. This is the place to go if something doesn't make sense or if you need a quick reassurance. If this doesn't answer your question, contact us!

RESOLUTION HUB

Access materials related to proposed resolutions, including background information and supporting documents. This hub will expand after July 1 to include organized folders and resources for review ahead of voting.

VOLUNTEER

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of the National Convention. This is the dedicated place to sign up, keep track of your time, learn about available positions and where to be at what time. We appreciate every single volunteer!

GREEN CREW™ SUMMIT

Considering a Green Crew™ for your chapter? Learn everything you need to know about starting your own Green Crew™ and connect with the local Green Crew™ leadership here. They can answer questions and get you started!

INNOVATION FAIR

Everyone that has a table in the Innovation Fair is listed here along with their contact info and a description of their project. If you're wowed by what they're doing, connect with them and innovate together!

ART SHOW

If you fall in love with one of the pieces in the art show and want to connect with the artist, check here. Every artwork is listed along with contact info for the artist and their bio. Work out with the details with the artist directly.

ASSOCIATED EVENTS

If you've signed up for some fun off-site adventures, you can always check here for updates and information. Make reservations, add people or pay for your excursion with this one stop shop.

AGENDA

Customize your entire convention experience by building your own personal agenda! Choose the speakers you don't want to miss, the activities that interest you and the events that will make your visit unforgettable.



HOME

This is where to go to start over. It takes you back to the home screen and you can start fresh. Familiarity is a nice thing!

CONTACT US

If you need a direct connection to the host committee, click here. This is where you go if you need a quick answer, directions, advice, feedback, or just to say "hello"!

RESOURCES

This is an important one! Everything from forms waivers, applications, and documents to a full digital version of the national convention program! It's loaded with good stuff!

HOTEL

Got an issue with your room? Need to speak with the hotel directly? This is the place. Change or cancel your reservation. Upgrade your room or make a special request.

Download for Android:



Enter Event Code:
IWLA-GETITDONE!



Download for iOS:



Enter Event Code:
IWLA-GETITDONE!



Conservation Luncheon

Saturday, July 18, 12:00pm, MN Valley Ballroom

Protecting public lands, including the Boundary Waters, and strengthening stewardship for future generations.

The Conservation Luncheon brings attendees together to explore ideas, partnerships, and practical solutions shaping the future of conservation. Centered on this year's theme, Get It Done: Turning Passion Into Action, the luncheon celebrates innovation, stewardship, and collaboration while challenging participants to build new relationships that strengthen both natural resources and the communities that depend on them.



Carmen Fernholz Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture

Carmen Fernholz has been part of an early groundswell of support for organic farming, starting his family's organic farm near Madison, Minnesota, in 1972. When legislative support was rallied to link grassroots ideas for sustainability to University of Minnesota research and innovation, Fernholz was there, sleeves rolled up alongside lawmakers to create the Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships in 1997.



Helene Murray Executive Director, Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, University of Minnesota

Helene Murray leads efforts advancing sustainable agricultural systems. Her work focuses on sustainable food systems, community-engaged research, and connecting farmers, researchers, educators, and nonprofit organizations. Murray also serves on the graduate faculty in Applied Plant Sciences and interdisciplinary sustainability programs at the University of Minnesota. She is widely recognized for her leadership in strengthening long-term agricultural viability through innovation, collaboration, and inclusive engagement.

Speak loudly for this quiet place.

We are leading the effort to ensure permanent protection for the Wilderness from toxic sulfide-ore copper mining. Join us at savetheboundarywaters.org

Photo: Jeff Anderson | jeffandersonphoto.co

SAVE *the* **BOUNDARY WATERS**




NOT BAAAAAAD!

THE AMERICAN LAMB BOARD IS PROUD TO SUPPORT THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

The American Lamb Board is the national research and promotions board representing U.S. producers, feeders, seedstock producers and processors. Saturday's lunch is brought to you by the ALB.

Get to know us at www.lambboard.com



MFMA supports the work and achievements of the Izaak Walton League of America.



Providing services, programs, and leadership to support and promote farmers' markets across Minnesota and our Tribal Nations.

Visit us at www.mfma.org to Learn more and Get Involved!

Public Lands Leadership Forum

Saturday, July 18, 2:00pm, MN Valley Ballroom

Join this exciting conversation surrounding recent threats to Public Lands hosted by Griffith Pugh. Focusing on multiple-use management and keeping public lands in public hands, this leadership forum brings together out-spoken, highly-involved leaders that understand the hills and valleys of public land politics across the country. This impactful panel will discuss public land advocacy, stewardship, and policy management in our current era. If public lands are important to you, don't miss this spectacular event!



Griffith Pugh Host, The Young Ike Podcast,
Chair of The Minnesota IWLA Conservation Policy Committee

Founder and host of The Young Ike, a podcast and community dialogue project exploring today's complex environmental challenges, Griffith studies political science at Haverford College. He has extensive experience in both journalism and social entrepreneurship where he developed an appreciation for how storytelling shapes public understanding. Griffith has served as a Superior National Forest Guide leading youth expeditions into the Boundary Waters.



Mike Dombeck Former director of the Bureau of Land Management,
14th Chief of the United States Forest Service

Dr. Michael Dombeck is one of America's most distinguished conservation leaders and the only person to have led both the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. During more than 25 years of federal service, he helped shape science-based policies protecting nearly 500 million acres of public lands. A Wisconsin native, educator, mentor, and award-winning author, Dombeck has devoted his career to conserving watersheds, protecting wild places, and inspiring future generations of conservationists.



Becky Rom National Chair, Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters

Becky Rom, a retired attorney, has worked on issues regarding the BWCA for most of her life. At an early age, she learned the importance of protecting wilderness areas from her dad, Bill Rom who started a canoe outfitting business in Ely, MN following WW2. She first worked on wilderness preservation when she was a seventh-grader, engaging in public debates on the merits of the bill that became the Wilderness Act. Becky has worked as a citizen activist on wilderness preservation throughout the United States but she continues to be drawn back home to the Boundary Waters.



Joe Duggan Vice President of Corporate Relations, Pheasants Forever

Duggan has an impressive track record with Pheasants Forever working in numerous capacities. Chief among his accomplishments are those in conservation policy – he's been involved in three successful amendments to Minnesota's Constitution. The first in 1998 gave constitutional protection to hunting, fishing, and trapping in Minnesota. He's advocated at state and federal levels for funding and programs supporting wildlife habitat and conservation as well as co-founded the Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Alliance, one of the first state-based legislative caucuses in the nation!



**Learn more about this event
on the Convention App!**



Everything you need to enhance your convention experience all in one place!

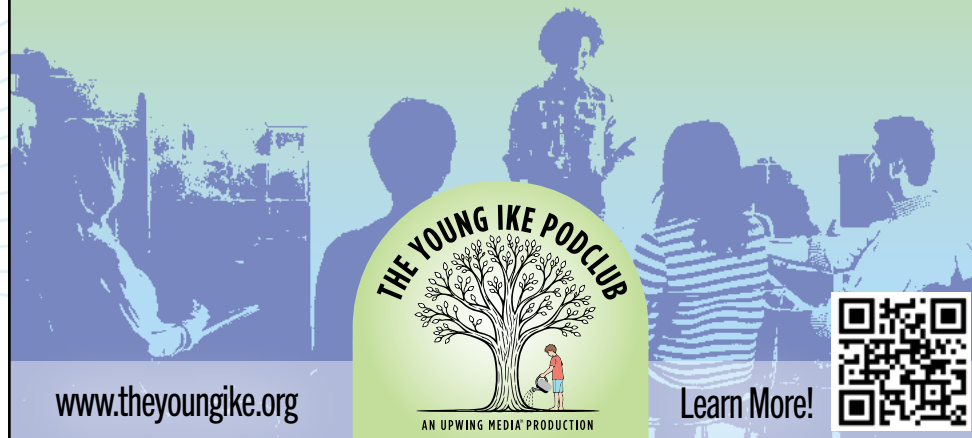
An interview series exploring the defining environmental issues shaping our shared future

Listen to Griffith Pugh interview key leaders as they answer tough questions and dig into real-world issues facing our planet. New topic every quarter.



A community dialogue series that takes The Young Ike Podcast beyond your headphones and into your chapter.

It's like a Book club — but for a podcast! Everything you need to host a Young Ike Podclub! A step by step script, notecards, participant prompts, video content, supplies and so much more!



Resolutions & Voting

Saturday, July 18, 3:15-4:30pm, MN Valley Ballroom

The Resolution Issues Session is a new feature designed to provide delegates with an educational overview of the policy topics that will be addressed through formal resolutions at the convention. Its purpose is to ensure that all delegates become informed about the conservation issues being brought forward for consideration before the formal voting process on Saturday.

By separating issue education from the formal parliamentary process, the convention can maintain a clear and efficient voting session while also strengthening the quality of decision-making by delegates. This session reflects a commitment to transparency, preparation, and informed participation in the League's policy development process.



**Learn more about this event
on the Convention App!**



Everything you need to enhance your convention experience all in one place!

THE WISCONSIN DIVISION OF THE IZAACK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA

The Wisconsin Division Supports
the re-election of Mike Fuge
for Executive - Board

We also look forward to seeing
you in Bloomington.



The Minnesota River is 332 miles long. And we care about every inch.

The LMRWD is the only government agency solely responsible
for the health, resilience and future of the Lower Minnesota River.



www.LowerMNRiverWD.org



LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER
WATERSHED DISTRICT

YOUR RIVER. OUR RESPONSIBILITY.



The Iowa Division extends its sincere thanks to all League members who “**Get It Done**” within their chapters and across the divisions. Your dedication and leadership continue to help shape and strengthen the League.

We encourage you to support and vote for **Craig Enneking** for National Treasurer and **Charlotte Johnson** for the Endowment Board of Directors.

Volunteer Appreciation Banquet & Ceremony

Saturday, July 18, 6:30pm, MN Valley Ballroom

Bridging Environmentalism and Conservationism for a New Generation of Leadership.

Join us as we celebrate the volunteers whose dedication and leadership sustain the work of the Izaak Walton League of America. During Hannah's powerful presentation, we will hear from the Youth Convention participants and review highlights from leadership within the League—honoring those who have carried conservation work forward for decades while also recognizing those who are already stepping up to lead the conservation movement into the future.



Youth Convention Report

Come celebrate the next generation of conservation leaders as participants from the Youth Convention share what they accomplished, learned, and experienced during their hands-on environmental leadership program. Through stories, reflections, and highlights from their conservation service projects, these young leaders will demonstrate the impact of investing in youth. Your presence sends a powerful message that their voices matter and that the League is committed to supporting the conservation leaders of tomorrow.



Hannah Barisonzi Founder, Green Crew™

Hannah founded the Green Crew™ in 2021 as a youth program of the Minnesota Valley Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America. Through a variety of projects, the Green Crew™ works to combat climate anxiety, defend the earth, and conserve nature. Run by youth for youth, Hannah currently serves as the Green Crew's Vice President. Green Crew's Earth Day 2023 Project, the Elm Tree Reforestation Project, was organized by Hannah in partnership with the University of Minnesota.



"It feels good to do good!"

Thank you to every volunteer for your dedicated support to the Izaak Walton League of America!

The Izaak Walton League of America
WOULD LIKE TO THANK

*Mind*Spark Creative*

FOR GRAPHIC DESIGN AND ADVERTISING SERVICES
FOR THE 2026 NATIONAL CONVENTION

GET MINDSPARKED AT:



Jim Davis, Creative Director
612-239-4303



jim@mindsparkecreative.com
mindsparkecreative.com

**Plant the seeds
of Leadership**

Youth can lead—and we're here to prove it! Green Crew empowers young people to take real action on environmental issues, make a visible impact in their communities, and grow as confident, capable leaders along the way. Visit **greencrew.club** today and learn how to start a Green Crew in your Chapter!



A Program of the Minnesota Valley Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America www.greencrew.club

Living Past National Presidents

David F. Zentner (1975 – 1977)
Chuck Clayton (2003 – 2005)
James Madsen (2010 – 2012)
Robert Chapman (2012 – 2014)
Shawn Gallagher (2014 – 2016)
Jeffrey Deschamps (2016 – 2018)
Kelly Kistner (2018 – 2021)
Vicki Arnold (2021 – 2023)
Jodi Labs (2023 – 2025)

Executive Board

Rick Cerwick (Des Moines, IA)
Mike Fuge (Stevens Point, WI)
Rick Graham (Monroeville, OH)
Jack Johnson (Schleswig, IA)
Bill Kelly (Idaho Falls, ID)
Jodi Labs (De Pere, WI)
Rachel McBride Chair (Stafford, VA)
Luann Noll Vice Chair (Chenoa, IL)
Brenda Swartz (Medina, OH)

Division Presidents

Colorado **Michael Peterson** (Colorado Spring, CO)
Florida **Michael Chenoweth** (Homestead, FL)
Illinois **Garrit Struck** (Huntley, IL)
Indiana **Patty Jarosz** (Hobart, IN)
Iowa **Lisa McIntyre** (Indianola, IA)
Maryland **Curtis Howard** (Abington, MD)
Minnesota **Ted Suss** (Nerstrand, MN)
Nebraska **Mike Gaghagen** (Grand Island NE)
New York **Leslie Monostory** (Fayetteville, NY)
Ohio **Gregg Lamb** (Fairfield, OH)
Pennsylvania **Mike Stout** (Castle Shannon, PA)
South Dakota **Kelly Kistner** (North Sioux City, SD)
Virginia **Herbert Pritchett, Sr.** (Fredericksburg, VA)
West Virginia **Michael Masters, Jr.** (Harper's Ferry, WV)
Wisconsin **Mike Fuge** (Stevens Point, WI)

The Lake Superior agate was named the official state gemstone in 1969. It is an unusually beautiful quartz stone banded with rich red and orange colors derived from iron ore in the soil. Most agates are about the size of a pea, but some are as big as bowling balls and weigh over 20 pounds.



Izaak Walton (1593–1683) was a 17th-century English writer famous for authoring *The Compleat Angler* (1653). Celebrated as the "father of sport fishing," his book popularized angling and celebrated the outdoors, inspiring the modern Izaak Walton League of America.

Beyond his writing on fishing, Walton was one of the first professional biographers in English literature. He moved to London as a young man and found great success as a merchant. During the English Civil War, he retreated to the countryside, where he wrote acclaimed biographies of his prominent friends and literary figures, including the poet John Donne and church leader George Herbert.

Walton's philosophy that enjoying the outdoors leads to a drive to protect it inspired the creation of the Izaak Walton League of America in 1922. Founded by 54 sportsmen, the League is dedicated to the sustainable use of natural resources, fighting water pollution, and protecting wildlife habitat. The organization boasts more than 40,000 members across the country.



National Officers

Scott Meyer President (Lakeville, MN)
James Storer Vice President (Willoughby, OH)
Anita Stonebraker Secretary (Montgomery, MD)
Craig Enneking Treasurer (Cedar Rapids, IA)

National Directors

Colorado
Sally McIntyre National Director (Fort Collins, CO)
Florida
Pamela Pierce National Director (Homestead, FL)
Idaho
Bill Kelly Director-at-Large (Idaho Falls, ID)
Illinois
Ronald Moore National Director (Decatur, IL)
Luann Noll National Director (Chenoa, IL)
Indiana
Todd Bryant National Director (St. John, IN)
Jim Buiter National Director
Jeff Farkas National Director (Munster, IN)
Kim Grodetz National Director (Schererville, IN)
Colinda Trevino National Director (Hobart, IN)
Iowa
Rick Cerwick National Director (Des Moines, IA)
Craig Enneking National Director (Cedar Rapids, IA)
Henry Jessen National Director (Battle Creek, IA)
Jack Johnson National Director (Schleswig, IA)
James Meek National Director (Bondurant, IA)
Todd Pierce National Director (Newton, IA)
Doug Pooch National Director (Van Meter, IA)
Maryland
Cherie Aker National Director (Gaithersburg, MD)
Rodger Moran National Director (Germantown, MD)
Robert Pavlick Sr. National Director (Poolesville, MD)
James Piatieski National Director (Damascus, MD)
Minnesota
Jill Crafton National Director (Bloomington, MN)
Camille Morton National Director (Edina, MN)

*List of national directors, presidnets, officers and staff provided by the National Office of the Izaak Walton League of America. Any errors or omissions may be reported to the National Business Office.



One of the early victories of the Izaak Walton League was the first conservation group with a mass membership and heavily influenced the establishment of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge in 1924.

The League was also instrumental in lobbying for early clean water legislation in the 1930s and played a key role in saving the Jackson Hole elk herd.

In the 1940s, the Izaak Walton League of America raised concerns about the pesticide DDT and played an integral part in protecting the Jackson Hole National Monument from the cattle industry in Teton County. They also helped to support the transition of the monument into Grand Teton National Park.

In 1952, the Izaak Walton League in Oregon initiated the "Keep America Beautiful - Don't be a Litterbug" campaign. The idea was inspired by Jeanne Moment and her husband Samuel Moment to highlight the problems of garbage accumulating outside of towns and the increasing number of motorists littering the roadsides.

Backed by members of the Izaak Walton League, they launched an educational campaign in Oregon "to teach Litterbugs and Vandalbugs to stop acting like pigs" along with initiatives that included automakers to include trash receptacles in their cars, paper bags at fuel stations so motorists and service attendants can dispose trash, and pushing for public funding for installing trash cans and to empty them regularly.

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Lester soil became Minnesota's state soil in 2012.

Lester soil is one of more than 100,000 types cataloged in the United States. The top layer of Lester soil is dark brown, rich in decaying vegetation, and crumbly as cake. Next the subsoil becomes brown, and then dark yellowish brown clay loam. Beneath these layers is the parent material--broken bedrock ground up and moved by glaciers flowing from the northwest.



Hilton

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Lobby Level



Morchella esculenta, commonly known as the Morel, Sponge Mushroom, or Honeycomb Morel, was adopted as the official mushroom of the state of Minnesota in 1984. Morels are tasty and considered a rare delicacy by mushroom hunters. They are cone-shaped mushrooms growing from the soil through the leaf mat. They usually are two to six inches high, creamy tan or shades of brown and gray (darkening as they age), with pitted, spongy heads, smooth stems, and hollow interiors. They pop up in fields and forests usually in springtime, and are found more readily in southeastern Minnesota than in other parts of the state. This photograph was taken near St. Paul.



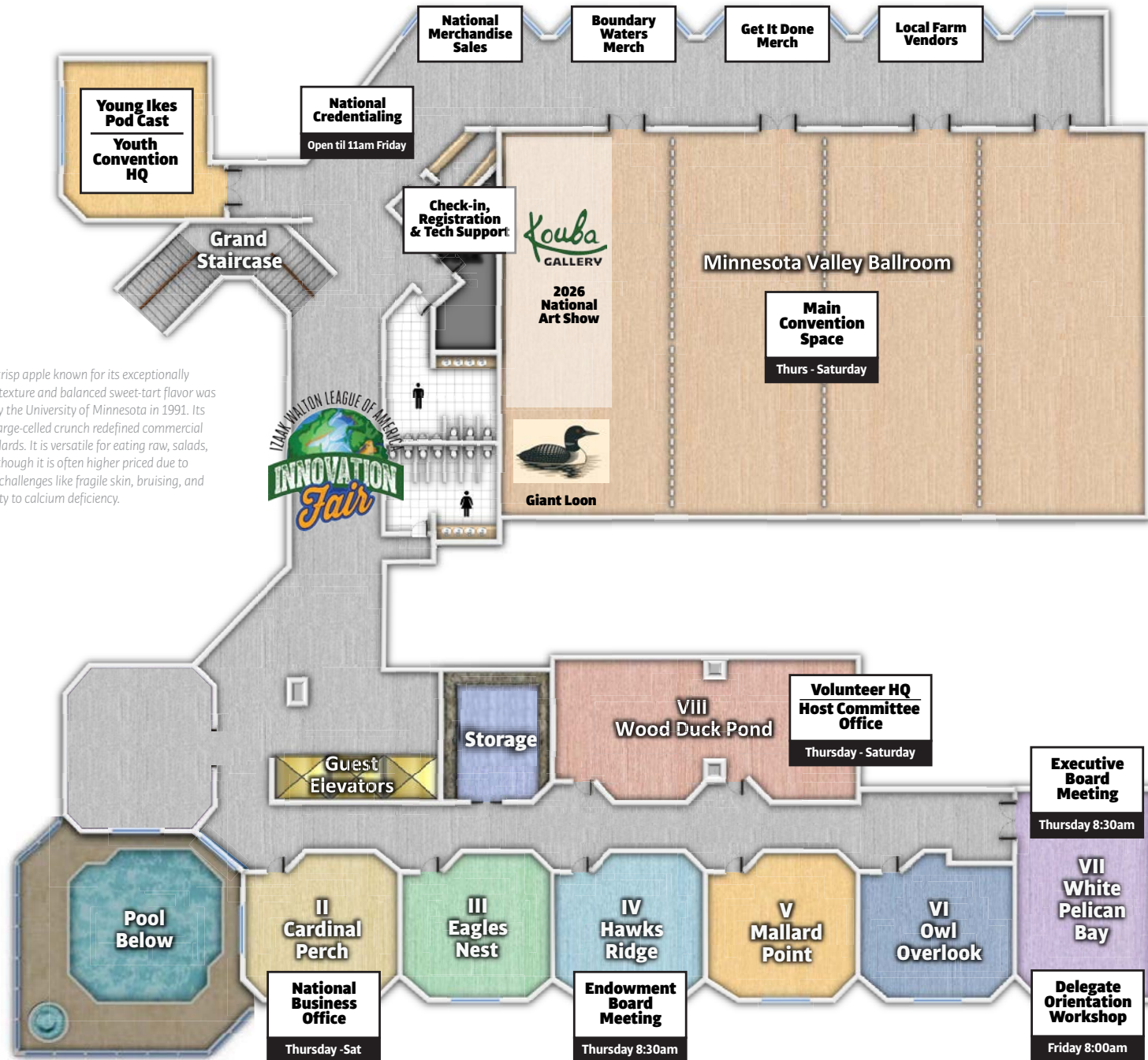
Hilton

MINNEAPOLIS
ST. PAUL AIRPORT

Second Level



The Honeycrisp apple known for its exceptionally crisp, juicy texture and balanced sweet-tart flavor was launched by the University of Minnesota in 1991. Its explosive, large-celled crunch redefined commercial apple standards. It is versatile for eating raw, salads, or baking, though it is often higher priced due to cultivation challenges like fragile skin, bruising, and susceptibility to calcium deficiency.



Save The Boundary Waters

If you're passionate about the BWCA, show it with official merch!

The Save The Boundary Waters Merchandise table will be on site selling very cool apparel, stickers, water bottles and more!



www.savetheboundarywaters.org/shop

Exclusive Convention Merch

The 2026 National Convention Store is Open! Check out all the epic gear available including graphic tees, ballcaps, mugs, water bottles and so much more! Scan the QR Code and let's GET IT DONE! While supplies last! Check back often for new designs!



www.teepublic.com/user/iwla-2026-national-convention

Don Shelby's "Green" House

Don and his wife Barbara built a farmhouse-style home in Excelsior after retiring. Rather than simply downsizing, they wanted to prove that high-performance environmental design could be beautiful, comfortable, and fit naturally into a traditional neighborhood. The home has achieved the highest levels of several green building certifications, including LEED Platinum.



Some of its most notable features include:

- Geothermal heating and cooling using deep wells beneath the property.
- Solar photovoltaic panels that generate electricity.
- Radiant in-floor heating throughout much of the home
- Extremely high insulation and airtight construction, giving it a Home Energy Rating System score around 19—roughly 80% more efficient than a standard code-built home at the time it was built.
- Rainwater harvesting, including a roughly 3,000-gallon cistern that captures roof runoff for irrigation.
- Gray-water reuse to reduce potable water consumption.
- Permeable paver driveway with underground water storage to keep stormwater on site.
- Reclaimed materials throughout the house, including wood salvaged from old Minnesota barns, bridges, and homes.
- Roofing made from recycled materials, including recycled tires.

Architecturally, the home intentionally resembles a classic Minnesota country farmhouse rather than a futuristic "green" house. Shelby has often said he wanted to prove that homeowners didn't have to sacrifice traditional aesthetics to build sustainably.

Take a video tour of Don Shelby's LEED Certified House!

From 80-foot wells, to a secret passageway leading to a state-of-the-art geothermal system, to a stone statue signifying the people most at risk from climate change, Shelby built a home meant to inspire others to act.





July 26 - August 1, 2026

Learn Monitor Advocate

iwla.org/nitrateawareness

an initiative of the Izaak Walton League of America



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Visit the Minnesota Valley Envirothon

Invitational at the Innovation Fair!



How do we balance the quality of life and the quality of the environment?

Each year, over 25,000 high school students across the United States, Canada, China, and Singapore embark on a journey to find creative solutions to this critical question through the NCF-Envirothon!

The Envirothon emphasizes five main areas of study:



Aquatic Ecology



Soils & Land Use



Forestry



Wildlife

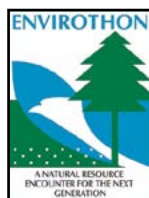


Current Environmental Issue

Our Mission is simple: To educate students about the environment and conservation of natural resources through hands-on outdoor experiences, academic study, and collaborative competitions.

2026
Envirothon Mississippi
Starkville, Mississippi
Mississippi State University
July 19-25, 2026

Hosted by Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission



www.envirothon.org

2027
Envirothon Maryland
Mount St. Mary's University
Emmitsburg, MD
July 25 - 31, 2027

Hosted by Maryland Association of Soil Conservation and the Maryland Envirothon



IWLA Maryland would like to extend its heartfelt gratitude to IWLA Minnesota for its efforts in hosting this year's convention.



Got a great idea for a conservation or outdoor recreation project?

The Endowment Board wants to help you “Get It Done!”
Apply today for a 2027-2028 grant.



iwla-endowment.org



**Thank you Minnesota Division for
hosting the 2026 National Convention!**