



## FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER

# The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter of The Izaak Walton League of America

Serving the Community Since 1935

PO Box 542, Poolesville, MD 20837

[www.bcciwla.org](http://www.bcciwla.org)

### President's Message

A quick update on membership renewals. The implementation of a new system has not been easy on our volunteers, and I want to thank you for your understanding during this year's process. We are still dealing with some members' renewal notices that were lost or sent to the wrong addresses and some of the recently received checks have not been cashed yet but most renewals have been processed, and we are waiting for the new cards to come from National. We have not shut off any access cards yet and we are waiving any late fees on renewals received by the end of February. Please continue to use your 2025 card until the new ones arrive. Thank you for your patience, and if you have questions, please contact our Membership Secretary Scott Harmon or me and we will get you squared away.

To those of you who have lived in the area for years the recent weather is just another example of the wide diversity in weather patterns we have here. By the time you read this we will probably have had a run of 40-50 degree days and the snow and ice will be in full retreat. But the long-term impacts of this near record snowfall and low temperatures on our local environment will last much longer. Our wildlife has been struggling to find food and fresh water. You can help them by putting out food and water for the birds in your neighborhood.

The effects of this weather are just beginning to be felt in the rivers. The snow and ice have resulted in a much greater than normal amount of salt and other chemicals being used on the roads and as the ice melts and the chemicals are released into the water the increased levels will have a profound effect on the local marine life. I have been working with the IWLA salt watch team and several local organizations to track the levels in the Upper and Lower Potomac and should have something to report in April. Please remember that as members of a conservation organization we are stewards of the land and have an obligation to those we share it with.

Jerry Murray

### FLINTLOCK RIFLE RAFFLE

\$20 Per Ticket



#### Austin & Halleck

Half Stock Mountain Rifle

(1.66 twist)

.50 Caliber Flintlock  
and related items

Tickets are available at the Dinner Meetings

(January - April)

and Muzzleloader Day on March 28

or

Contact Mark Gochnour - [mgdonutman@gmail.com](mailto:mgdonutman@gmail.com)

and Jerry Murray - [jerrym5@comcast.net](mailto:jerrym5@comcast.net)

Drawing at the April Dinner Meeting

Need not be present to win

### New and Prospective Members Orientation Tour

**Tour will not be held in February.  
The tour will start up again in March.**

The March date will be listed in the March Newsletter.  
If you have questions, contact Christine Peterson  
[christineakcp@comcast.net](mailto:christineakcp@comcast.net) or 301 938-9773 (cell).

### CAMPGROUND NOTICE

**The Campground is closed during all  
black powder and firearms deer seasons.**

## Board of Governors

Fiscal Year: September 1, 2025 – August 31, 2026

### OFFICERS

**Francis (Jerry) Murray, President**

202 438-4202 • jerrym5@comcast.net

**Shannon Novak, 1st Vice President**

301 785-8461 • snovak516@gmail.com

**Sean-David Waterman, 2nd Vice President**

816 812-5763 • seandavid@me.com

**Bob Kelly, Treasurer**

202 445-7097 • rnkelly1974@gmail.com

**Scott Harmon, Membership Secretary**

301 467-0645 • MembershipSecretary.BCC.IWLA@gmail.com

**Janet Lamkin, Corresponding Secretary**

301 466-6557 • j.lamkin@comcast.net

**Jason (Andy) Abell, Recording Secretary**

j.andrew.abell@gmail.com

### BOARD MEMBERS

**Stephen Austin**

**Alex Cowan**

**Sebastian Fainbraun\***

**Lloyd Iden**

**Andy Wight, Past President**

240 205-3982 • andywight1@hotmail.com

\* Indicates Officers and Board Members who were absent from the previous month's Board of Governors meeting.

The Izaak Walton League of America – a non-profit conservation organization – is recognized as a Section 501(c)(3) public charity under the Internal Revenue Code.

Address, phone and email changes should be sent to the Membership Secretary at the above address.

Submissions to the *NEWSLETTER* should be sent to:

**Janet Lamkin**  
j.lamkin@comcast.net  
301 466-6557

## IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA MISSION STATEMENT

*To conserve, restore and promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of our natural resources, including soil, air, woods, waters and wildlife.*

## Summary of the January 2026 Membership Dinner Meeting

Jerry Murray, President

### Wednesday, January 21, 2026 – Membership Dinner Meeting

- 1,083rd meeting was called to order by President Jerry Murray at 7:30pm.
- President's report included an update on member renewals, information about spam messages, request to join committees and reminders about upcoming events.
- Reading of previous meeting minutes was waived by motion from members.
- 50-50 raffle for new AV equipment netted \$54.
- Prospective members introduced themselves and talked about their reasons for wanting to join the chapter.
- Membership Sec. Scott Harmon reported:
  - o as of the end of 2025 chapter membership stood at 729 memberships.
  - o he was waiting for cards from National and hoped to be sending them out in February.
- Four prospective new members completed their 3 meeting requirement and were sworn in.
- Proposed amendment to the chapter by-laws allowing for prospective members to use other chapter events in lieu of dinner meetings to fulfill their first two meeting requirements was discussed and approved by a quorum of chapter members attending the meeting.
- Treasurer Bob Kelly provided an update on the chapter's bank accounts.
- Chapter House chair John Lamb reported that there is a new map in the board room showing the chapter's property boundaries.
- Paul Spangler was introduced as the new Wildlife Committee and Hunter Ethics chair.
- Blaine Elkins provided an update on the chestnut orchards and requested volunteers to help with upcoming work that needs to be done by the environmental stewardship and forestry committees.
- Larry Hess provided an update about upcoming events at the rifle and pistol range.
- Jerry Murray requested help with setting up a committee to get portions of the shotgun range back up and running and working on the tasks needed to get the rest of the venues back online.
- Corresponding Sec. Janet Lamkin talked about the Interpretive Walk in the Woods on March 5th and 6th and asked that anyone interested in helping out to contact Andy Wight.
- Janet also reminded everyone that the Feeder Watch program still needs volunteers.
- John Lamb talked about the Hunter Education classes that are scheduled for April 25-26 and September 12-13. Registration is thru the DNR website.
- Janet reminded members that the BOG finance committee is still looking for help and that hunters need to record their harvests in the logbook outside the chapterhouse.

### TALKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE CHAPTER:

- Mark Gochnour talked about the muzzleloader raffle and coyote hunting on the chapter property.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.

**Minutes for the December 2025 Board of Governors meeting were not available.**

## Interpretive Walk in the Woods – March 5 & 6

Andy Wight, Conservation Education Committee Co-Chair  
andywight1@hotmail.com

Each year, B-CC IWLA hosts an Interpretive Walk in the Woods for Global Ecology students at Poolesville High School, giving them a chance to experience conservation, ecology, and the outdoors firsthand on our chapter property. Over the course of two days, we take groups of students on a walk through the woods, passing through several stations on topics such as forest ecology, wildlife habitat, water quality, and land stewardship.

We are looking for volunteers to help with leading or assisting at station stops (ecology, wildlife, trails, habitat, etc.) You do not need to be a professional educator, just comfortable with kids, willing to be outside, and able to follow a simple station script or support role. If you're interested in helping, please contact andywight1@hotmail.com for more details.

The event will be held on **Thursday, March 5 and Friday, March 6**. Typically we run 4 sessions (2 per day). Please watch the newsletter and email blasts for updated information.

**NOTE – on the days of the walks, hunting will be suspended across the chapter.**

## Volunteers Needed

We are looking for members who have a financial background or just like numbers to help our treasurer and the board to manage the chapter finances. The duties would include exploring new avenues for bringing in revenue, saving on our expenses, and running cost analysis on future improvement projects and maintenance. If you are interested, please contact Jerry Murray at jerrym5@comcast.net or 202 438-4202.

## Firearms Training Courses

We will be hosting a variety of firearms training courses at the chapter this year. The first courses are listed below. Signup is thru the NRA website using the link below. B-CC members will get a \$50.00 discount on the cost of the course.

**March 8: NRA Basic Range Safety Officer Course**  
(\$150 Non-Member, \$100 Member)

<https://www.nrainstructors.org/CourseDetails.aspx?Courseid=893707>

**March 29: NRA Basics of Rifle Shooting Course**  
(\$225 Non-Member, \$175 Member)

<https://www.nrainstructors.org/CourseDetails.aspx?Courseid=866217>

**NRA Basic Pistol Training**  
*will be rescheduled due to a conflict.*

## DRIVING ON CHAPTER PROPERTY

Any vehicle including but not limited to cars, trucks, bikes, UTVs, or horses are not allowed off the designated roadways and parking areas due to the risk of soil displacement and erosion on our trails and fields.

Permission to drive on the property can be granted by the Board of Governors or the Committee Chairs in the event of participating with Committee events.

## Data Centers in Montgomery County

Jeff Seaman  
Legislative Outreach Committee

Data center construction, already underway in northern Virginia, is the subject of substantial legislative action locally and at the state level. Last year, Governor Moore vetoed a bill that would have required a study of the impacts of data centers on the environment and on the power grid. In December, the legislature overrode that veto. [HERE](#) is a link to the text of the bill, which requires the Maryland Department of the Environment, the Energy Administration and the University of Maryland School of Business to conduct an analysis of the environmental, energy and economic impacts of data centers on the State. The bill directs that the final report of the joint study must be submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly by September 1, 2026. The bill does not specifically prohibit building or approval of data center projects in the meantime.

Locally, a proposed data center project has received preliminary approval for construction on the old Pepco station in Dickerson, near the Potomac (data centers require massive amounts of water). As is the case nearly everywhere, neither the State nor the County have regulations in place concerning data center siting or resource use. Montgomery County Councilmembers Balcombe, Sayles and Council President Fani-Gonzalez have sponsored a text amendment that would impose certain standards and limitations upon data center projects – such as setback requirements, minimization of impacts on waterways, landscape buffers, lighting and noise limitations. The text amendment would also require generators used at data centers to meet certain emission standards. The text of the amendment is available at [BillDrafting](#). Frederick County has recently allowed data center construction to occupy up to 1% of the land in the County.

The text amendment (ZTA 26-01) will be discussed at a public hearing on February 24 at 1:30. You can observe or attend: [Montgomery County Council to Hold Public Hearings on Feb. 24, 2026](#).

Our friends at Montgomery Countryside Alliance have much more information on their site [Mo-Co Alliance – News](#), as well as avenues for action.

## Izaak Walton League of America

Maryland State Division Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for:  
**Saturday, March 28, 2026**

**Rockville Chapter**  
**18301 Waring Station Road**  
**Germantown, MD 20874**

Coffee and refreshments will be served at 9:15am.  
The meeting will convene at 10:00am.

All members of the Maryland Division are welcome to attend. Only members of the Board can vote on any issues.

You can request a meeting packet by contacting Jeff Deschamps ([jeff.deschamps@verizon.net](mailto:jeff.deschamps@verizon.net)).

**February 2026  
1,084th Monthly Dinner /  
Membership Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 18**

**50 / 50 Raffle**

**Dinner Tickets are sold in the Boardroom**

**Menu**

**Appetizers, Spaghetti, Salad,  
Garlic Bread, Desserts  
Bring your own Libations**

**Flintlock Rifle Raffle Ticket Sale**  
**Tickets – \$20 each**

**Dinner served starting at 6:15pm  
Membership Meeting starts at 7:30pm**

**February 2026  
Board of Governors Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 25**

**7:00pm**

**Environmental Stewardship Projects**

Blaine Elkins  
blaineelkins@verizon.net

The Environmental Stewardship Committee needs some volunteers to complete a couple of projects this late winter/early spring.

First we need to post signage defining the perennial stream buffer from the shotgun area and archery woods down to Izaak Walton Way. We also need to post signage defining the Non-Tidal Wetlands buffers in both areas. We have the latitude/longitude coordinates for each signpost location. Any member with a satellite navigation device that is accurate to within a couple of feet would be a great help in this endeavour.

A second task is limbing and clearing some of the trees in the shot fall area that have blown over since lead reclamation has been completed. We need to clear them so the land can transition to an open meadow that the farm committee can manage.

We also need a working group to review the existing conservation easements on the farm and develop a concise guide for use by the Board of Governors, officers, committee chairs and members so that we all understand the commitments the chapter has made under these easements.

If you are interested in helping with any or all of these projects please contact me at blaineelkins@verizon.net and put EnviroStew in the subject line.

**REMEMBER...**

**Guest hunters are not permitted  
at B-CC IWLA.**

**UPCOMING EVENTS /  
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**B-CC IWLA and Community**

**Check the Chapter website for updates!  
All dates are tentative and subject to change.**

**FeederWatch**

**Weekends**

**Saturdays & Sundays thru Sunday, March 15**  
**Observe birds from the Chapter House**

**See page 8**

**Flintlock Rifle Raffle Ticket Sales**

**Tickets – \$20 each**

**Available at the February & March Dinner Meetings**

**See page 1**

**Chapter House Cleanup**

**Saturday, February 14**

**9:00am**

**See page 7**

**Membership / Dinner Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 18**

**Dinner – 6:15pm; Meeting – 7:30pm**

**See page 4**

**Wild Game Dinner**

**Saturday, February 28**

**6:00pm – 10:00pm**

**See page 9**

**Interpretative Walk in the Woods**

**Thursday & Friday, March 5 & 6**

**7:30am – 3:30pm**

**See page 3**

**Blackpowder / Muzzleloader Shooting Match**

**Saturday, March 28**

**9:00am – 4:30pm**

**See page 11**

**Hunting Logbook**

We ask that deer, turkeys, and coyotes taken on our farm be recorded in our game logbook, located outside the chapterhouse's main door, and by sending an email to President Jerry Murray (jerrym5@comcast.net). When reporting your deer, we ask for the following information; your name, doe or buck (antler count), date and weapon used and the total number of ticks found on the ears of your deer. Other details may also be included such as estimated weight or unusual features.

**Calendar Submissions**

Meetings and events that need to be added to the website calendar and newsletter calendar should be sent to 1st Vice President Shannon Novak, snovak516@gmail.com; Andy Wight, andywight1@hotmail.com; and Corresponding Secretary Janet Lamkin, j.lamkin@comcast.net.



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All dates are tentative and subject to change. Check the website Calendar for updates.

## Monthly Events

*Mondays*

*Mondays*

*Saturdays and Sundays*

*Troop 2027G Meetings (Board Room)*

*Troop 496B Meetings (Chapter House)*

*FeederWatch – From the Chapter House*

*7:30pm – 9:00pm*

*7:30pm – 9:00pm*

*Weekends through March 15*

## FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 7	NAVDHA Annual Meeting in Chapter House	11:00am – 5:30pm
Sunday, February 8	Private Event – Birthday Party	1:00pm – 5:00pm
Saturday, February 14	Chapter House Cleanup	9:00am – 12:00 noon
Sunday, February 15	Troop 496 Court of Honor	4:00pm – 7:00pm
Wednesday, February 18	Membership Dinner Meeting	Dinner – 6:15pm Meeting – 7:00pm
Thursday, February 19	Cub Scout Pack 694 Meeting in the Chapter House	6:00pm – 8:00pm
Wednesday, February 25	Board of Governors Meeting	7:00pm
Friday, February 27	Articles for March 2026 Newsletter are due – send articles to j.lamkin@comcast.net	By End of Day
Saturday, February 28	Wild Game Dinner	6:00pm – 10:00pm

## MARCH

Thursday, March 5	Interpretative Walk in the Woods	7:30am – 3:30pm
Friday, March 6	NO HUNTING ON CHAPTER PROPERTY ON BOTH DATES	7:30am – 3:30pm
Sunday, March 8	NRA Basic RSO Training Course	8:00am – 5:00pm
Saturday, March 14	Chapter House Cleanup	9:00am – 12:00 noon
Wednesday, March 18	Membership Dinner Meeting	Dinner – 6:15pm Meeting – 7:30pm
Thursday, March 19	Cub Scout Pack 694 Meeting in the Chapter House	6:00pm – 8:00pm
Saturday, March 21	Pack 694 Pinewood Derby (Chapter House)	3:00pm – 6:00pm
Saturday, March 21	New and Prospective Members Orientation Tour	10:00am – 11:30pm
Wednesday, March 25	Board of Governors Meeting	7:00pm
Friday, March 27	Articles for April 2026 Newsletter are due – send articles to j.lamkin@comcast.net	By End of Day
Saturday, March 28	Archery Range Cleanup Day	8:30am – 3:00pm
Saturday, March 28	Blackpowder Event	9:00am – 4:30pm
Sunday, March 29	NRA Basics of Rifle Shooting Course	8:00am – 12:00 noon

## APRIL

Saturday, April 4	Rifle & Pistol Range Cleanup	9:00am – 12:00 noon
Saturday, April 11	Chapter House Cleanup	9:00am – 12:00 noon
Wednesday, April 15	Membership Dinner Meeting	Dinner – 6:15pm Meeting – 7:30pm
Thursday, April 16	Cub Scout Pack 694 Meeting in the Chapter House	6:00pm – 8:00pm
Saturday, April 18	Spring Chapter Cleanup Day & Picnic	Starting at 8:00am
Wednesday, April 22	Board of Governors Meeting	7:00pm – 10:00pm
Friday, April 24	Articles for May 2026 Newsletter are due – send articles to j.lamkin@comcast.net	By End of Day
Saturday, April 25	Spring Hunter Education Course	7:00am – 6:00pm
Sunday, April 26	Spring Hunter Education Course	7:00am – 6:00pm

The Campground is closed during all black powder and firearms deer season.

## DUE DATE

for March Newsletter Articles is  
**Friday, February 27.**

Submit articles to: [j.lamkin@comcast.net](mailto:j.lamkin@comcast.net)  
If the article contains photos, please submit  
them as separate jpg files and  
include a caption and photo credits.

## ATTENTION HUNTERS

Tree stands, ground blinds, or any other material that might “save” a location for a hunter must not be left out on chapter grounds overnight.

## Rifle & Pistol Range Committee Report

Larry Hess, Chair  
larry.a.hess@gmail.com

The range is currently closed to the general membership and will re-open in early April. Range Officers and their guests can use the range unless closed to all.

The sign-ups for current range officers and new range officers that have completed the training will be on Saturday, March 7 and Sunday, March 15 starting at 9:00am. Bring your membership card and current RO card to the meeting. Scheduling of duty days will be on-line by Signup Genius after the in-person meetings. Information and links to the on-line R&P Range officer course for prospective range officers will be in the next e-blast.

### Firearms Training Courses

We will be hosting a variety of firearms training courses at the chapter this year. The first courses are listed below. Signup is thru the NRA website using the link below. B-CC members will get a \$50.00 discount on the cost of the course.

March 8: *NRA Basic Range Safety Officer Course*  
(\$150 Non-Member, \$100 Member)

<https://www.nrainstructors.org/CourseDetails.aspx?Courseid=893707>

March 29: *NRA Basics of Rifle Shooting Course*  
(\$225 Non-Member, \$175 Member)

<https://www.nrainstructors.org/CourseDetails.aspx?Courseid=866217>

*NRA Basic Pistol Training*  
will be rescheduled due to a conflict.

### Range Clean Up Day

We will have a range clean up day on Saturday, April 4 from 9:00am – 12:00 noon for members that want to get work hours in.

### Volunteer Hours

Anyone that is looking to get their volunteer hours in early, we have several projects at the range that we would like to get done before the work day. Each requires 1 – 3 people and can be done anytime (weather permitting). Please contact Jerry Murray (jerrym5@comcast.net) if you are interested.

## B-CC IWLA Summer Biathlon Program 2026 Practice Schedule

**MISSION:** To provide a venue for novice through world class summer biathletes to learn and/or refine the skills inherent to the sport.

**To provide** a vehicle to introduce athletes of other sports to the shooting sports and consequently an understanding of firearms and the Second Amendment.

(B-CC IWLA members – please recruit, in particular, middle school, high school, and collegiate athletes – freedom/liberty is never more than one generation away from extinction.)

**ELIGIBILITY:** Summer Biathlon is open to all B-CC IWLA members 12 years and older, as well as, sponsored guests. **B-CC IWLA members rate is \$2.00 per session. Non-member rate is \$5.00 per session. SEASON PASS:** member – \$25; non-member – \$65

**EVENT:** Running distances at B-CC IWLA are set at 5 kilometers (3.1 miles) split into 5 loops or 3 -- one-mile loops. Currently, a single course at each length has been laid out. A short course for those working up to the other distances has been laid out as well. The regulation shooting distance is 50 meters, however, targets are also set at 25 meters for development of the shooting art. There are four shooting stops on the 5km course and two stops on the 3 mile course. Shooting stops alternate between prone (lying down) and off-hand (standing) positions. Five rounds are fired at each stop for a total of 20 shots on the 5km course and 10 shots on the 3 mile course. An equal number of shots are fired from each shooting position.

**SCORING:** Scoring is based on a time to complete basis. A penalty of either one (1) minute or a 50-100 meter penalty lap will be assessed for each shot missed.

**EQUIPMENT:** .22 caliber biathlon rifles are the standard; however, any magazine fed, .22 caliber rifle with either bolt or lever action is permitted. **Only standard velocity .22 caliber target ammunition is allowed.**

If you have questions or wish to be on the B-CC IWLA mailing list, contact Steve Eschholz c: 240- 472-6512 (text/best) / fitnesscrafters@proton.me, chairman B-CC IWLA Biathlon Committee. Other points of contact are: Sonny Lacey c: 469-360-3500 (text best) / sonny@coldwaterdesign.com; Sean Stevens c: 202-230-2256 (text best) / seanhoya@gmail.com.

### Practice Schedule Dates

Saturday, March 28	7:30am
Saturday, April 11	7:30am
Saturday, April 25	7:30am
Saturday, May 9	7:30am
Saturday, May 30	7:30am
Saturday, June 6	7:30am
Saturday, June 20	7:30am
Saturday, June 27	7:30am

Additional Practice Dates will be listed in the March 2026 Newsletter.

**50/50  
Raffle**  
Help Support  
the Chapter!



**Raffle tickets will be available  
at the monthly dinner meeting**

**\$1 per ticket or 6 tickets for \$5**

**50% goes to the ticket holder**

**50% goes to the Chapter  
to improve the A/V system:**

**update sound/projector system, with  
ability to host and record zoom meetings**

### From the Farm Committee

As a friendly reminder – if you are in the fields hunting, always pick up your empty shells.

## Archery Committee Report – 2026 Plans

Chuck Thornton, Chair  
Archery.BCC.IWLA@gmail.com

Your Archery Committee is in the process of drafting an action plan for the 2026 calendar year. Activities under consideration include: a 3D and field archery tournament; the 3D public shoot schedule; training and certification events; an expanded Apollo Archery program; and an archery range officer program.

If you are interested in participating in the Archery Range Officer program, please let us know. Questions under consideration include: Should AROs be certified, and through which certification authority? What benefits would AROs enjoy? Would AROs pay dues, and how much? Would AROs staff the range, and what would the schedule look like? Etc. We welcome your thoughts and input.

We will discuss these topics at our regular monthly Archery Committee meetings, which we hold on the second Wednesdays at 7:30pm via Zoom. Contact us at Archery.BCC.IWLA@gmail.com for details.

### ATTENTION New Members!

**Chapter House cleanups will be held  
on the following Saturdays:  
February 14 • March 14  
Starting at 9:00am**

Join us and earn volunteer hours

**As a reminder – probationary (new) members need  
to help out in one chapter house cleanup as part  
of their sixteen volunteer hours.**

Signup for the cleanups using the  
signup genius link below:

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/  
10C0D4DACA28A7F8C25-51060445-monthly](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DACA28A7F8C25-51060445-monthly)

Questions? Contact John Lamb –  
jpatricklamb@aol.com

### AS A REMINDER...

#### Registering to Hunt on Chapter Property

**If you intend on hunting on the Chapter property, you must register on the Chapter website  
to acknowledge understanding our rules and property boundaries. This is a yearly requirement.**

Link to register:

<https://bcciwla.org/b-cc-iwla-chapter-hunting-rules/>

## Great Backyard Bird Count - February 13 - 16, 2026

Celebrating 29 years of coming together to watch, learn about, count, and celebrate birds.

Founding  
Sponsor:



The Great Backyard Bird Count is an inter-organizational effort between the **Cornell Lab of Ornithology, National Audubon Society, and Birds Canada**. They work together to bring the joys of birdwatching to our members.

Participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count. Spend at least 15 minutes a day, on at least one of the four count days, observing and counting the birds in your back yard, local park, or wherever you spot a bird, and submit your observations online at [birdcount.org](https://birdcount.org).

Have you noticed robins, chickadees, starlings, woodpeckers or cardinals in your yard or neighborhood? Here is an opportunity to count them all for science. The annual count helps scientists assess species populations.

**Join the fun! Mark your calendar!**

**Friday, February 13 through Monday, February 16**

Diane Seward, Citizen Science Projects Coordinator



## Legislative Affairs Committee

Bob Cissell  
bobcissel50@gmail.com

Below are a few notes about proposed legislation at the county and state levels.

### State:

The DNR has proposed two changes:

1. Change Sunday hunting times with a bow to an all-day hunt. They'd like to be consistent across all counties where you can hunt deer, this is with a bow only, all day on Sundays. This bill has been introduced in the House and Senate. This would apply only to privately owned land.
2. The DNR is proposing that waterfowl hunting should also be allowed on Sundays except in two southern counties. This would significantly expand public access to migratory bird hunting on privately owned land on Sundays.

### Montgomery County:

1. There is a ZTA (Zoning Text Amendment) to have new standards (currently there aren't any real guidelines) on how and where Data Centers can be built in Montgomery County. Two key points are that all future data centers must be built on Industrial access land only. They must also be built at least 500 feet from a residential area. They would also be conditional use only (meaning the plan must go through a hearing examiner for approval).
2. There are currently two solar projects approved in the Ag Reserve that exceed our county zoning. One is in Dickerson (4 Megawatt) and one just outside of Poolesville (3 Megawatt). Both of these went through the Public Service Commission for approval.

*Note: Bob Cissell will try to be at the February Dinner / Membership Meeting to answer questions.*

## FeederWatch News

Diane Seward, Citizen Science Projects Coordinator  
trina65@verizon.net

Join other chapter members who count species and numbers of birds observed within species on weekends through March 15.

Our data is reported to Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology, along with data submitted from thousands of other participants across the country. Our data helps Cornell scientists analyze shifts in bird species and numbers within species in the United States and Canada.

Please email me if you can help, trina65@verizon.net. I will send you our tally sheet and instructions. Count birds for at least an hour on two successive days, or on one day if you are pressed for time, from the comfort of the chapter house.

Reserve a weekend, or a single weekend day, using our Signup Genius listed below:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DACAA28A7F8C25-bcc#/>

Happy Feeder Watching!



## Fly Tying Class

John Novak  
Ponds & Streams Committee Chair

Join the Ponds & Streams Committee on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon in the next month or so, **date to be determined**, for a Fly Tying class. Class will be held in the Chapter House from 1:00pm – 3:00pm or 2:00pm – 4:00pm.

If you are interested in participating / having such a class, please let me know – novakgang4@comcast.net. Some equipment can be provided, i.e., vise, bobbin, hooks, and threads. If you have equipment, please bring it with you.

If you know of other fly tyers, please pass this info on to them.

We are hoping a lot of kids will attend!



## Forestry Committee – Redux, Rebuild, Resurrection, Return

Blaine Elkins, Forestry Committee Chair pro tem  
blaineelkins@verizon.net

The chapter has lost the services of our long-term Forestry Chair when he relocated to the west. Most of the acreage of the chapter is forested. It provides habitat for deer, turkeys, squirrels, and bunnies for those that hunt. The understory and canopy provide habitat for song birds and raptors for the bird watchers. There are miles of trails the chapter maintains through the forests that provide access to enjoy these woodlands.

The stewardship of these woodlands is not a passive situation. There is a Forest Management and Stewardship plan for the chapter that requires monitoring and action as necessary. The chapter also has an Invasive Species Survey and Management Plan prepared by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources that identifies and locates areas with invasive issues and recommends corrective actions. There is much to be done.

We need members interested in forestry, wild life habitat, invasive species management, reforestation and just plain trees to come together as a group, review the issues at hand, and develop plans to deal with them.

If you are interested in participating in this venture, please send me an email at blaineelkins@verizon.net with B-CC IWLA Forestry in the subject line, and I will send you a link to a drop box with the above referenced documents and some others. Once we have a quorum, we can get together at the chapter in person or by zoom to plan the first steps.

## Junior Rifle Program

We are getting ready for a new season of the junior rifle program. We will start with some introductory sessions followed by a structured marksmanship program with regular practices that include safety briefings and skill development with the opportunity to compete in local competitions. All equipment will be provided. If interested, please contact Larry Hess: larry.a.hess@gmail.com or Daniel Koehn: dkoehn13@gmail.com.



# Wild Game Dinner

*Connect — Share — Celebrate Tradition!*



Bring your family and friends and link up with fellow chapter members at the annual B-CC IWLA Wild Game Dinner – a night of food, fellowship, memories, and shared outdoor heritage.

**Saturday, February 28, 2026**  
**6:00pm - 10:00pm**  
**B-CC IWLA Chapter House**

## **Share your harvest!**

Plug into the community potluck: bring your favorite wild game (or other) dish – main course, appetizer, salad, or dessert. We start with appetizers at 6:00 pm, followed by dinner shortly thereafter.

## **Share your photos – build our shared history**

We're compiling a slideshow gallery of hunting and outdoors photos from the past year. **Submit your best images to Walt Allensworth, [twangermd@gmail.com](mailto:twangermd@gmail.com), before February 21** to help create a living album representing our collective experiences.

## **Share your stories – link generations and experiences**

After dinner, members and guests are invited to tell their best hunting stories, outdoor adventures, and conservation highlights.

## **Build connection – strengthen our community network**

This isn't just a dinner – it's a living network: every dish, every photo, every story strengthens our connection as a chapter.

## **Points of Contact**

1. Please let us know what dish you will bring to share as soon as you can, so we can coordinate logistics.
2. We are also looking for pictures for the Hunt and Harvest slide deck. Please forward any photos you would like to share and brag about to Walter Allensworth at [twangermd@gmail.com](mailto:twangermd@gmail.com) before February 21.
3. For general questions about the Wild Game Dinner, feel free to reach out to me. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Sean David Waterman, 2nd Vice President  
Email: [seandavid@me.com](mailto:seandavid@me.com)

## Responsible Persons for the Environmental Stewardship Committee

Blaine Elkins, Committee Chair  
blaineelkins@verizon.net

Although the lead reclamation work is complete at the shotgun range, the chapter needs to continue the weekly inspections of the Sediment and Erosion Control Features that are shown in the drawings for our Sediment and Erosion Control permit drawings. We need additional volunteers to do these inspections.

To qualify to do the inspections, you need to go to MDOT certifications program web page:

<https://www.roads.maryland.gov/mdotsha/pages/Index.aspx?PageId=129>

Click on Erosion and Sediment Control Certification. You can register and take the free on-line course and exam which takes 5 hours. Once you pass you will be issued a Responsible Person Yellow card. Send a copy of your card to the committee chair at blaineelkins@verizon.net and I will send you a copy of the link for the Sign Up Genius so you can pick your weekend(s).

Inspecting the silt fence takes about 2 hours which can be credited to your volunteer hours for the year. Once you have received your card and done 1 inspection the 5-hour training time can also be credited to your volunteer hours.

If you have any questions, please contact Blaine Elkins, blaineelkins@verizon.net.

## Chapter Entrances

Members must not block chapter entrances (main gate and cattle gates) along Izaak Walton Way and West Willard Road. Emergency vehicles and farm equipment must have access at all times.



**Check out our Facebook page!**  
**Izaak Walton League of America**  
**Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter**

*If you would like an event to be posted on Facebook, contact Andy Wight at [ConservationEd.BCC.IWLA@gmail.com](mailto:ConservationEd.BCC.IWLA@gmail.com)*



PHOTO BY ARTHUR BELENDIUK

*This picture captures the isolation and gloominess of the depth of winter.  
The farm is lovely any day even in the cold and dark of winter.*

## Blackpowder/Muzzleloader Sight-In and Shooting Match 2026

After being postponed due to sickness and other reasons in the fall, Muzzleloader enthusiasts and the newly interested are invited to participate in the rescheduled Muzzleloader Day Clinic and Shooting Match, Saturday, March 28th from 9:00am – 4:30pm.



Did you receive a blackpowder firearm as a gift or inherited one and don't know what to do with it? You don't want to miss out on this marvelous opportunity for knowledgeable instruction, loads of fun, and the unique smell of blackpowder smoke! Would you like to test your skills against others in the afternoon shooting match and compete for prizes?

Participants will meet at the Rifle & Pistol Range at 9:00am. (Check-in beginning 8:45am) Inline, percussion, or flintlock shooters are all welcome. There will be instructional time for new muzzleloader shooters to develop a workable shooting load, for "veterans" and more experienced shooters to sight-in their guns, and for all to practice shooting.

Bring the muzzleloader (flintlock, percussion, or inline) that you want to shoot or let Mark Gochnour know in an email that you would like to try one out so he can arrange for a loaner. If you are new to shooting a muzzleloader, a veteran shooter will be assigned to work with you. (Mark is a certified NRA/NMLRA Blackpowder Instructor.) If you have never fired a black powder gun or you have one you have never used or are having issues with one you have forgotten or ignored, come for the morning but stay for the afternoon shooting match!

Afternoon Match participants will be provided opportunities to shoot at some unusual novelty targets. Targets will be shot at a variety of ranges from up close and out to 100 yards with prizes awarded to some individual shooters. An overall Grand Prize could be a frozen turkey or ham.

Lunch will be served in the Chapter House around noon with the shooting competition beginning at 1:00pm.

Only muzzleloader shooting participants will be allowed to use the Range during the event. Upon its conclusion, Range Officers and their guests may shoot until shooting time expires.

Contact Mark Gochnour at [mgdonutman@gmail.com](mailto:mgdonutman@gmail.com) for further details or questions. It is important to contact him; especially, if you are bringing a new gun because you may need extra equipment or gear that you were unaware of and their lack could sabotage your experience.

Non-members and guests – use this link and bring this filled out Hold Harmless Form:

<https://bcciwla.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/B-CC-IWLA-Hold-Harmless-Document-1907124-5.pdf>

Members and their guests may register using the following Sign-Up Genius link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DACAA28A7F8C25-61468366-2026>

A small fee will be charged to cover range fees (if applicable), lunch, and the event – \$20.



As a bonus, a donated almost new but hardly used Austin & Halleck .50 caliber flintlock half stock Mountain Rifle (1:66 twist) and related items will be raffled off at the April 15th Dinner Meeting; tickets will be available at the January – April dinner meetings for \$20 each. The rifle will be available at the dinner meetings to check out, as well as at the Muzzleloader / Black Powder match. Look for more details and photos in the Chapter's monthly newsletters and email blasts.

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## 2026 Land Fund

As a member of the B-CC IWLA, I want to do my part and contribute the following amount to the B-CC IWLA Land Fund Campaign.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$1000 \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER

*Your contribution is tax deductible.*

Please mail contribution form and check (made payable to B-CC IWLA) to B-CC IWLA, PO Box 542, Poolesville, MD 20837, donate via paypal on the Chapter's website, or give your donation to a Board Member at a monthly dinner meeting.



## Coyote Control Project on the B-CC IWLA Property

Chapter Members are aware that coyotes have been increasing in numbers and their activity has caused concern with their impact on other animals on the property. Although coyotes can be hunted almost 365 days a year, usually other game is being sought so they are not a priority for most hunters. Individuals or groups of hunters will be engaged in an effort to reduce the coyote predation on the property during the month of February. Those engaged will follow Chapter Hunting Rules and the SOPs and abide by Maryland State Hunting Regs.

**Coyotes may be hunted February 5 – 28. Members must register to hunt coyotes. Below is a link to the Coyote Control Hunting registration form and rules:**

<https://forms.gle/M4dAHYC8FjyWEBcq5>

If you are interested in hunting coyotes on the Chapter property, please complete and submit the form.

Hunting after dark will require notification and approval 48 hours ahead of time.

Any game violations will be submitted to the DNR and may result in charges and membership removal.

Any coyotes killed must be reported to Mark Gochnour, mgdonutman@gmail.com, or John Lamb, jpatricklamb@aol.com, and must be written down in the logbook next to the Chapter House door within 24 hours.

This coyote control project is being done on a trial basis this year and may be repeated in subsequent years. A report of this effort will be submitted to the Board of Governors.

If you have any questions or interest regarding the coyote control project, please contact Mark and/or John at the above email addresses.

## SAVE THE DATE

### Spring Chapter CleanUp Day & Picnic

Saturday, April 18

8:30am - 3:00pm

Come to the Chapter, earn volunteer hours, enjoy a picnic lunch, and join with our fellow chapter members as we clean and prepare the Chapter for the upcoming year.

Any committee chairs or crew chiefs that are planning projects for Cleanup Day, please contact 1st VP Shannon Novak, [snovak516@gmail.com](mailto:snovak516@gmail.com), to help coordinate equipment, volunteers, and other resources.



PHOTO BY DAVID MECKLENBURG