



The Blue Heron Times September 2026 Issue

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Chapter website: sniwla.org
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IWLA State/National
[IWLA Virginia Division](#)
[IWLA National](#)

Backyard Conservation News
AskH2Green.org
[Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#)
[Department of Conservation & Recreation](#)
[Division of Wildlife Resources](#)
[Hoffler Creek Wildlife Foundation](#)
[Nansemond River Preservation Alliance](#)
[SCCC - Suffolk Clean Community Commission](#)
[Recycling](#)
[TerraScapes Environmental Consulting](#)
[The Wildlife Society](#)
[Virginia Conservation Network](#)
[Virginia Master Naturalist](#)

Classifieds
[Chuckatuck Trading Post](#)
(757)255-9295 5969 Goodwin Blvd, Suffolk

[Suffolk Radio & TV Service](#)
Radio/Television Repair
(757)539-2110, 536 W. Washington Street, Suffolk

[Appomattox River Company](#)
(757)890-0500, 3009 W. Mercury Blvd, Hampton

[Arzillo Recycling](#) (Scrap Metal)
(757)539-8593, Locations: Suffolk & PTMS Blvd

Meetings

Chapter Board of Directors meetings are held on the second Monday of each month. They last met at 7pm on **Monday, September 14th** at the Constantia House behind Baker's Funeral Home. The next month's Board meeting will be at 7pm on **Monday, October 12th** (Columbus Day) at the same location.

Chapter Members Dinner meetings usually are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. The next one will be held at 6:30pm on **Wednesday, September 16th** at the Oakland Church Community Life Center located in Chuckatuck at 5641 Godwin Blvd, Suffolk, VA 23434.

The dinner menu will be chicken pot pie, cranberry sauce, rolls, iced tea, water, and assorted desserts. The cost will be \$10.

For our guest speaker presentation for the evening, representatives from SPSA (Southeastern Public Service Authority of Virginia) Waste Solutions, will talk to us about SPSA SORT.

SPSA Sort (Separating Organics, Recycling, and Trash) is an innovative approach to managing the region's waste and is a start-to-finish regional initiative for managing waste and promoting a circular economy. Utilizing a system of cameras, AI and pneumatic jets to pull organics and recyclables from household trash, SPSA SORT helps southeastern Hampton Roads double its recycling rate and extend the life of the Regional Landfill.

President's Note

It looks like the heat is breaking. We are finally getting some cooler weather moving into autumn. Break out the flannel shirts and jeans and enjoy the cooler days and crisp nights. Time for apple picking, apple pies, and fresh cider. Add a dash of wine to a mug of cider, heat and toss in a cinnamon stick for those cool evenings.

"Winter is an etching, spring a watercolor, summer an oil painting, and autumn a mosaic of them all." -- Stanley Horowitz.

Respectfully Yours,

Chris Ferguson,
Chapter President,
Suffolk-Nansemond IWLA

Calendar of Events

You can review our full chapter website calendar online at <https://sniwla.org/sniwla/calendar> for the most recent information about meetings and upcoming events. NOTE: after accessing the Chapter calendar in your web browser using the hyperlink shown above, you may wish to add this calendar to your own personal Google calendar by scrolling down and clicking on "Add to Google Calendar".

A courtesy extract through the end of October is shown below.

MON 9/14 at 7pm - Chapter Board Meeting.
WED 9/16 at 6:30pm - Chapter Monthly Dinner Meeting.
SAT 9/19 at 10am - Prospective Member Orientation.
THR 9/24 at 3pm - *Chapter BBQ FundRaiser.
SAT 9/26 at 9am - *River Cleanup at Suffolk Constance Wharf.
SAT 10/3 at 10am - Prospective Member Orientation.
SAT 10/10 at 9am - Chapter CenterFire Members-Only Shooting Competition at the Range
MON 10/12 at 7pm - Chapter Board Meeting.
WED 10/21 at 6:30pm - Chapter Fish Fry/Monthly Dinner Meeting
SAT 10/24 at 3-5pm - *Halloween Cleanup Downtime Suffolk

**Note: Events marked with an asterisk count towards work hour credits for meeting the chapter's annual membership volunteer [participation requirement](#).*

HOLIDAYS/COMMUNITY EVENTS:

MON 10/12 - Columbus Day
SAT 10/31 - Halloween

2026 Service Participation Hours

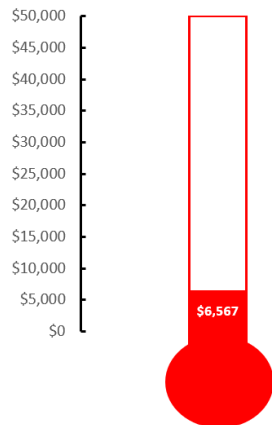
Message from Alan Ferguson, Membership Chair

This is a reminder that each member is asked to complete 8 hours of service for the Chapter. There are two months left in the year to earn these hours. You can find the opportunities on the chapter website in the newsletter and posted to the chapter calendar. You can find the [calendar](#) at <https://sniwla.org/> under the Home tab. By selecting Calendar, you will see the chapter events. Those events listed beginning with an * can earn service hours. If you click on the event, you will learn the details of when, where and point of contact.

The full Member [participation policy](#) is on the Chapter website <https://sniwla.org/> under the Members tab. Participation forms are to be received by December 1st. *Hours earned during the month of December will be applied to 2027.* A \$150 fee will be assessed to members not meeting the 8 hour minimum per the policy.

Please bring your [participation forms](#) to a dinner meeting or event. You may also mail them to Alan Ferguson, 3231 Matoaka Road, Suffolk, VA 23434.

Thank you for helping keep our Chapter strong, active and engaged



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN TRACKER

The graph to the left shows that we've accumulated \$6,567 in donations thus far towards our goal of raising money for expenses related to repairs and/or alterations of our chapter park dam. We are asking members to consider making a contribution to the Capital Campaign. This tracker will be included in future newsletters and updated at members' monthly meetings.

Please contact our Treasurer if you are willing to make a donation. Any help is very much appreciated. Contributions may be tax deductible; see your tax professional.

CAUTION: BE SURE TO MONITOR YOUR EMAILS CAREFULLY FOR POTENTIAL SPAM/PHISHING ATTEMPTS. The chapter will not send emails to members asking for any type of payment or donations.

DWR 2027 Wildlife Calendars

Members, DWR (Department of Wildlife Resources) 2027 Wildlife Calendars will be available for purchase at the front check-in table at the **October chapter dinner meeting** for \$10, which is a discount of 37% off the retail price.



Recipe of the Month - Cajun Chicken and Sausage Jambalaya

Source Credit: Lila Brooks <https://queensavory.com/author/lila-brooks/>

Published in [Queen Savory Dinner](#)

Ingredients:

- 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 lb andouille sausage, sliced
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 green bell pepper, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 2 cups long-grain white rice
- 2 tsp Cajun seasoning
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- Chopped green onions and parsley for garnish (optional)

Cooking Instructions:

1. Heat the Oil: In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat.
2. Cook the Chicken: Add the chicken pieces and season with salt and pepper. Sauté until browned, about 5-7 minutes. Remove chicken and set aside.
3. Sauté the Sausage: In the same pot, add the sliced sausage and cook until browned, about 5 minutes. Remove and set aside with the chicken.
4. Sauté the Vegetables: Add the diced onion, bell peppers, and garlic to the pot. Cook for approximately 3-4 minutes, or until the vegetables are tender.
5. Combine Ingredients: Stir in the Cajun seasoning, oregano, thyme, and bay leaf. Cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
6. Add Rice and Liquids: Pour in the rice, diced tomatoes with their juice, and chicken broth. Stir to combine.
7. Add Proteins: Return the chicken and sausage to the pot, ensuring they are submerged in the liquid.
8. Simmer: Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and cover the pot. Let it simmer for 25-30 minutes or until the rice is tender and has absorbed the liquid.
9. Remove the Bay Leaf: Once cooked, remove the bay leaf and fluff the jambalaya with a fork.
10. Adjust Seasoning: Taste and adjust seasoning with additional salt and pepper if needed.

Recap of the August Chapter Dinner Meeting

For the August chapter dinner meeting, the kitchen crew served up a scrumptious meal of meatloaf, red potatoes, three bean salad, and assorted homemade desserts. President Chris Ferguson is shown below on the left swearing in the oath of office to chapter officers and board members; after which Vice President Shawn Bailes (shown below on the right) swore in Chris as President for another term in office as well.

Note: Board Member Mandy Bane (not shown in these photos) was sworn in separately by Chris on September 14th. You can review the current list of officers, board members, and committee chairs at <https://sniwla.org/sniwla/leadership-2026-2027/> and <https://sniwla.org/sniwla/committees/>, respectively.



Our guest speaker for the evening, Byron Carmean, is shown above giving a presentation on "Super Unusal Trees" that he has encountered throughout his many decades of volunteer work in tracking down the very biggest trees on the east cost, by participating in the Virginia Big Trees and National Champion Trees programs.

David Perdue, Chapter Scholarship Chair, is shown above presenting a \$1,000 scholarship award to Katie Gallahorn who is pursuing a civil engineering degree at Virginia Tech. She talked to us about her studies and of engineering workshops in which she participated.

Byron explained that there are very specific criteria for each separate species of tree that involves a point system comprising girth, height, and crown spread. These criteria are not equally weighted, with girth having the most impact on total points, Byron clarified. Interestingly, Virginia has the largest number of registered biggest trees across all tree species than any other state, Byron added. Recently, a young man with some technical savvy in aerial surveillance techniques using Google Earth, Eagle View, etc. has joined Byron's group to help in the hunt for yet more big trees. For more information on the Virginia Big Tree program and the National Champion Tree program, see <https://ext.vt.edu/natural-resources/big-tree.html> and also <https://nationalchampiontree.org/>, respectively.

For the full recap article posted on our chapter website, see <https://sniwla.org/sniwla/august-2026-members-meeting/>.

Chapter BBQ Fundraiser Scheduled for Thursday, September 24th

Message from Chapter Fundraiser Chair/Board Member Richard Wentz;

Article reprinted with revisions (in bold italics) from the August 2026 newsletter issue.

To obtain tickets for our upcoming BBQ Fundraiser scheduled for Thursday, September 24th at 3pm, please contact Mr. Richard Wentz **no later than September 22nd** at email: rehwentz@gmail.com or (757) 635-1215. Also, you can scan the QR code or visit <https://sniwla.org/sniwla/chapter-bbq-fundraiser-thursday-september-24th-2026/> to share the flyer shown below with social media sites or to download a printable version of it.

Note: Members, to volunteer to help out during this fundraiser (such as bagging and handing out food to-go containers, taking tickets, handling parking lot duty), **you are encouraged to come out and volunteer for the event. Just show up any time between 2:30 PM and 5 PM, and we will put you to work!*

The volunteer hours you work will be credited to help you meet your chapter membership participation annual 8 hour requirement. See <https://sniwla.org/sniwla/membership-info/membership-participation-policy/> for more information.



Thursday, September 24th, 2026
3:00 PM—6:00 PM

Westminster Reformed Presbyterian
Church, 3488 Godwin Blvd, Suffolk

\$15 Ticket per person

Captain Bob's BBQ & Fried Chicken
w/ Cole Slaw, Mac & Cheese, Hushpuppies

To support the S-N IWLA Conservation Projects &
Environmental Education

Tickets are available for purchase now!
To buy yours, contact:
Fundraiser Chair/Board Member Richard Wentz
e: rehwentz@gmail.com
m: 757.635.1215 (leave voicemail message).



***Suffolk Nansemond River Cleanup Saturday, September 26th**

Message from Sam Chambers, Chapter Save-Our-Streams Chair

Article reprinted from the August 2026 newsletter issue.

Members, Suffolk's Litter Control Department (Keep Suffolk Beautiful) will be coordinating a Nansemond River cleanup in September.

WHEN? Saturday, September 26th, 2026 at 9am to Noon.

WHERE? Constant's Wharf Park and Marina 100 E Constance Rd, Suffolk, VA.

Volunteer on land or in your canoe or kayak. Grab your kayaks and join us for the Nansemond River Cleanup. This annual regional event is organized by Keep Suffolk Beautiful and the Izaak Walton League, and is aimed at enhancing the health of our watershed. We'll gather at Constant's Wharf Park and Marina. Suffolk personnel will provide cleanup supplies at the site. Volunteers planning to participate by boat should bring their kayak or canoe. Long grabbers will be distributed to those using boats. Stay updated by following Keep Suffolk Beautiful on Facebook and Instagram. This is a pet-friendly event.

For more information, call (757) 514-7604 or email KSB@suffolkva.us. Also, see <https://www.suffolkva.us/1244/Nansemond-River-Cleanup>.

**Note: Chapter members can earn chapter volunteer work credit hours towards accumulating the required annual minimum volunteer participation hours by participating in this river cleanup. See <https://sniwla.org/sniwla/membership-info/membership-participation-policy/> for more information.*

***Halloween Cleanup Downtown Suffolk, Saturday, October 24th**

WHEN? Saturday, October 24th, 2026 from 3pm to 5pm

WHERE? Nansemond Brewing Station 212 East Washington Street, Suffolk, 23434

Are you haunted by litter? Then this cleanup event is for you. Keep Suffolk Beautiful is hosting a scary Halloween Cleanup! We highly encourage participants to dress up in their Halloween costumes! Prizes will be awarded to the 'Most Original' and 'Most Eco-Friendly' costumes! Litter grabbers, reflective vests, gloves, and bags will be provided on-site.

No registration needed, participants will meet outside of the Nansemond Brewing Station (212 E. Washington St., Suffolk VA 23434) to sign in and receive equipment such as litter grabbers, safety vests, gloves, and bags. The cleanup will sweep through the enchanting streets of Downtown Suffolk, casting a spell of beauty over the area. Afterward, brave volunteers are invited to linger and enjoy a chilling pint at the brewery or a wickedly delicious meal at one of the nearby eateries. This is a pet-friendly event.

For more information, call (757) 514-7604 or email KSB@suffolkva.us. Also, see <https://www.suffolkva.us/1347/Halloween-Cleanup>.

**Note: Although this event is not coordinated by our S-N IWLA chapter, members can earn chapter volunteer work credit hours towards accumulating the required annual minimum volunteer participation hours. See <https://sniwla.org/sniwla/membership-info/membership-participation-policy/> for more information.*

Legacy of Gerald Patrick McCarthy with the Izaak Walton League

Submitted by Chapter Board Member Mike Lane

Gerald McCarthy was instrumental in launching the Virginia Division IWLA hallmark "Save Our Streams" program. He worked closely alongside the Virginia Division on major landmark efforts such as the initial 1970s campaigns to preserve and restore the Great Dismal Swamp. A summary of his obituary is presented below. *Source Credit: For the full obituary, published by Richmond Times-Dispatch on Aug. 2, 2026, see <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/timesdispatch/name/gerald-mccarthy-obituary?id=62098241>.*

Obituary Summary for Gerald Patrick McCarthy March 23, 1943 - July 28, 2026:

Gerald Patrick McCarthy died peacefully, but unexpectedly, on July 28, 2026, at home beside his wife of 49 years, Lucile Jamison Anutta McCarthy. Jerry was a lifelong learner, reader, traveler, author, public servant, and environmental and philanthropic leader. He combined his engineering experience with his appreciation of nature to guide environmental efforts in Virginia and beyond.

Governor Linwood Holton appointed him as the first executive director of the Virginia Council on the Environment. Conserving and protecting the environment became Jerry's life work. Over the course of his career, Jerry served numerous governors, Democratic and Republican, as a valued board member of state agencies, including the Chesapeake Bay Citizens Advisory Committee, and the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, among others. Jerry also was a member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) from 2002 to 2011.

In the philanthropic world, he was the founding executive director of the Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) where he served for 36 years. He also was a founder of the Environmental Grantmakers Association, the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network, and Exponent Philanthropy. The work of the VEE and the many non-profit environmental organizations it helped, is described in his book, *Blueprint for Going Green: How a Small Foundation Changed the Model for Environmental Conservation*, published by the University of Virginia Press in 2024.

Conservation News - Menhaden Public Comments due by October 9th, 2026

Source Credit: WHRO Public Media

Article "Public will get to weigh in on proposed changes to Chesapeake Bay menhaden harvest"

By Katherine Hafner, Published August 6, 2026

Officials who regulate the Atlantic menhaden industry have debated in recent years how to balance the historic fishery in the Chesapeake Bay with growing concerns about the ecosystem. The Menhaden Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has advanced a document for public comment with potential changes to harvesting menhaden in the bay. The commission helps manage fisheries along the East Coast, including 15 states from Florida to Maine. This proposal outlines options for cutting the amount of menhaden the industry can catch by up to 50% and spreading the harvest more evenly throughout the season.

Environmental groups lauded the move after Wednesday's meeting. New Hampshire board member Dennis Abbott said officials can't keep waiting. "If not now, when? We've been fooling with this for many years," he said. "We've been working on menhaden since I've been here so many years ago, and I'm of the opinion that we'll never have adequate science to back up any position that we take. It's so variable, and it changes over time."

To access the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission public comment portal see these links below for more information:

- https://www.whro.org/environment/2026-08-06/public-will-get-to-weigh-in-on-proposed-changes-to-chesapeake-bay-menhaden-harvest?utm_source=Iterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=news_20260807#
- <https://asmfc.org/news/press-releases/states-schedule-public-hearings-on-atlantic-menhaden-draft-addendum-ii/>

Note to S-N IWLA Chapter members: Any comments that you post to the Commission's public comment portal should be as an individual, not on behalf of the IWLA organization.

Conservation News - USDA Forest Service Roadless Rule Rescission Comments Due September 21st, 2026

Source Credit: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) website URL

<https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2026/08/18/usda-acts-remove-roadless-rule-restrictions-exacerbate-rising-wildfire-risk>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has proposed a formal rule to rescind the 2001 Roadless Rule, which would lift federal protections against road building and commercial logging on nearly 45 million acres of inventoried national forest. The Public Comment Period is Open through September 21, 2026. Citizens can submit feedback on the draft environmental impact statement through the Forest Service's Regulations.gov using docket number FS-2025-0001 RIN 0596-AD66 at this USDA website <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/FS-2025-0001/comments>.

Note to S-N IWLA Chapter members: Any comments that you post at the Forest Service website comments portal should be as an individual, not on behalf of the IWLA organization.

To help put this rescission rule issue in perspective, IWLA National Editor Michael Reinemer has posted an article in the Outdoor America publication (Issue #3 dated September 1st, 2026) entitled "Rollback of Conservation Laws Calls for Restoration of Protections and Reimagining How We Steward Outdoor America". It discusses the implication of this Roadless Rule Rescission as well as other potential rollbacks to the Endangered Species Act, PFAS safeguards for drinking water, the size of existing national monuments, the Bureau of Land Management Public Lands Rule and the downsizing and politicization of federal agencies. See the full article at: <https://iwla.org/rollback-of-conservation-laws-calls-for-restoration-of-protections-and-reimagining-how-we-steward-outdoor-america/> for more information.

IWLA National News - National Convention Recap

More than 300 members, guests, volunteers and youth gathered in Bloomington, Minnesota on July 30th for the Izaak Walton League's 2026 National Convention to learn, collaborate and advance the League's conservation mission. Attendees celebrated volunteer achievements, heard from conservation leaders and participated in discussions and decisions that will help shape the League's future. For more information, see <https://iwla.org/2026-iwla-national-convention-summary/>

IWLA National News - Forever Chemicals - How PFAS are Poisoning Waterfowl as Well as Humans and What We Can Do About It

Source Credit: Outdoor America, Issue 2, 2026, by Lisa Ballard

Forever chemicals are a category of over 15,000 manmade compounds, primarily per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or simply PFAS. They are "forever" because their carbon-fluorine molecular bonds are so stable and strong that they don't breakdown in the environment, at least not for a thousand years. What's more, they are everywhere—in our water, soil, homes, clothing, bodies, the deer eating your petunias and the mallard in your freezer that you shot last fall. PFAS are contaminating water, wildlife and people, with emerging research showing waterfowl can accumulate these toxic substances and serve as indicators of broader environmental pollution. The article highlights the urgent need for stronger regulations, pollution prevention and public action to reduce PFAS contamination and protect clean water, wildlife and human health.

For more info, see

<https://iwla.org/forever-chemicals-how-pfas-are-poisoning-waterfowl-as-well-as-humans-and-what-we-can-do-about-it>.

IWLA National News - Hamilton Chapter Conservation Camp - Six Years of Outdoor Adventure Inspire the Next Generation of Conservationists

Source Credit: Donna Shriver, IWLA National Digital Communications Manager

For the sixth year, the Hamilton Chapter's free three-day Conservation Camp introduced 52 youth to hands-on outdoor learning through activities focused on fishing, wildlife, forestry, water quality, survival skills and other conservation topics. Made possible by Izaak Walton League members and a network of community partners and volunteers, the camp gave children opportunities to explore nature, build practical skills and contribute to conservation projects.

For more info, see

<https://iwla.org/six-years-of-outdoor-adventure-inspire-the-next-generation-of-conservationists>.



Suffolk-Nansemond Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America

w: <https://sniwla.org>

e: info@sniwla.org

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