

Izaak Walton League of America

November 2025



**The Financial,
Environmental,
and Human
Cost of Project
Zodiac –
Google's New
Data Center in
Fort Wayne,
Indiana – is Too
High!**

(Page Two)

Fort Wayne Chapter

News





THIS ISSUE

Issue Cover

Page 1

Index of Content

PAGE 2-7

The Financial, Environmental, and Human Cost of Project Zodiac – Google's New Data Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana – is Too High!

PAGE 8

President's Letter

Page 9

Problems with 2026 Renewals & Buildings & Grounds Improvement

PAGE 10-11

Know Your Limits (KYL) Competition

Page 12

Range Reports

Page 13

Now Chapter PFAYS Available On-line

Pages 14

Rim Fire Competition

PAGE 15

In Memoriam—Chapter Loses Two Long Time Leaders: Lahr and Wells

PAGE 16

Happenings Around The

This is an official publication of the Fort Wayne Chapter of The Izaak Walton League of America and All Rights are Reserved.

KEY EVENTS THIS MONTH



COVER PHOTO

Most notable at this year's championship was the entry of 12-year-old Elliott Taylor, son of Range Manager Zachary Taylor who shot a combined score of 423 (4th place) with a score of 219 at 50-yards and 204 at 100-yards. This was Elliott's first competition, and he was shooting a rifle loaned by another member. Great job, young Man. We are proud of you!

PAGE TWO—Seven: Dangers From Huge Data Center

This issue's guest article addresses the various conservation and environmental concerns associated with the construction of the Google Data Center in Fort Wayne, as well as the upcoming Public Hearing scheduled for Thursday November 13th. See Time/Place in article.

Dannie and her husband, Shawn, attended one of the open houses organized by the Fort Wayne Chapter. Subsequently, they discovered a mutual interest in the conservation issues championed by the Izaak Walton League of America (IWLA). They have raised concerns related to PFAS, commonly referred to as "forever chemicals," which are linked to numerous health issues. Additionally, they have noted the challenge posed by rising electricity demand and its implications for the national energy infrastructure, as well as the adverse effects on freshwater supply and associated pollution by PFAS, "Forever Chemical Pollutants". These topics have been extensively discussed in previous editions of the *Fort Wayne Chapter NEWS*.



PAGE 10 & 11

KYL Competition—John Legge wins.



PAGE FOURTEEN Rim Fire Competition

PAGE FIFTEEN

In Memoria: Long Time Chapter Leaders Lahr and Wells pass away.

PAGE SIXTEEN

Conservation Happenings





The Financial, Environmental, and Human Cost of Project Zodiac – Google's New Data Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana – is Too High!

By Danielle Doepke- Friend of IWLA

Subhead: Data centers and their support facilities contaminate our land, water, food, bodies, and future. As consumers, the cost of building new infrastructure that's robust enough to feed the beast is of us.

Public Health & Safety: Data centers' semiconductors and cooling systems are made using PFAS, toxic chemicals referred to as "forever chemicals" because they do not break down in nature. The cords, piping, and electronic equipment throughout the centers and their campuses are also coated with PFAS. The offsite facilities that manufacture the equipment that is ultimately installed in and around data centers are also high-pollutant areas, spreading the PFAS exposure to a footprint even larger than the Google data center's proposed 900 acre campus. Since PFAS do not break down in nature, they accumulate in drinking water, ground water and aquifers, fishing and recreational areas, air and soil samples, food sources like crops, fish, livestock, and other non-human organisms, and in blood samples of human beings. Studies have revealed that exposure to PFAS causes serious health risks in human bodies — cancer, birth defects, kidney, liver, and thyroid disease, fertility and reproductive issues, hormonal disruptions, risks to pregnancy, and a range of other serious individual and generational, hereditary health issues.

Higher Utility Bills for Consumers: The electricity demand of many data centers are equal to a small city, and new proposals for data center campuses — campuses like Google's Project Zodiac data center being built here in Fort Wayne, Indiana — have energy demands comparable to small states. Existing energy grids are being overwhelmed by data centers' energy demands, and an overwhelmed grid can result in blackouts, disruption to essential services, and catastrophic system failures. New infrastructure must be built to support energy demands and avoid grid failures, and that multi-billion dollar cost falls to the consumer through higher bills.

Environmental Impact: In September 2025, Google's request to expand their data center campus and build on 2.8 acres of protected wetlands was approved by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. Wetlands are vital ecological systems, as they improve water quality, control flooding, provide habitat for non-human living organisms, and support the overall health and function of the ecosystem.

On Thursday, November 13th at 6:00pm, there is a Public Hearing at Ivy Tech's Northeast Indiana campus on North Anthony Boulevard.

The meeting will go until 9:00pm **or** until all public comments have been heard. While the Indiana Department of Environmental Management will not provide responses to questions or comments made during the hearing, our individual and collective voices should be put on record.

At the very end of this article, I've included names and phone numbers of local elected officials as well as local and state government entities that you can call. You can voice your concerns, ask for additional information, and apply public pressure for our concerns to be addressed.

In all of my research for this piece, I was unable to find any arguments in support of AI or data centers that outweigh the collective catastrophe that it will bring to our community. The economic impact forced on people who are already suffering and struggling to pay their bills, the strain on our infrastructure and natural resources, and the threat of serious, long-lasting, and generational illnesses — those three issues alone should be enough for all of us to want to fight for a better future.

I have to believe that we have some sort of avenue for action. The ultra wealthy and their corporations cannot continue to be allowed to enact violence against the masses. They should not be allowed to poison our communities and then turn around to sell a "cure" through their for-profit healthcare system. We need to ask ourselves, "if not me, then who? If not for us, then for the generations that follow." •



PROJECT ZODIAC—COST TO ENVIRONMENT IS JUST TOO HIGH—Continued from Page Two

- * PFAS, or per and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are a class of over 16,000 chemicals used in industrial and manufacturing facilities and are often used in the manufacturing of water, heat, and stain resistant products.
- * Commonly referred to as “forever chemicals” or “everywhere chemicals,” PFAS do not naturally break down in nature and are unfortunately found in common products that consumers use regularly.
- * Because PFAS do not degrade, these toxic chemicals accumulate in the environment, our food sources, as well as in the bodies of animals and people.

Where Do PFAS Come From?

PFAS contamination comes from industrial and manufacturing facilities, and they are also found in everyday items like non-stick pans, cosmetic products, cell phones, paint, carpeting, food packaging, and more.

Industrial sites that release PFAS include:

- * petroleum stations and terminals
- * chemical manufacturers
- * commercial printers
- * plastics and resin manufacturing sites
- * paint and coating manufacturers
- * semiconductor manufacturers
- * makers of metal products and electrical components
- * textile mills
- * landfills and waste disposal facilities
- * military bases
- * airports

What Do PFAS Have to Do with Data Centers?

Data centers must consume massive amounts of energy and water in order to operate; energy is needed to power their search engines and water is needed to power their servers as well as cool them down. Throughout data centers and their operations, large amounts of PFAS are used and produced.

Within data centers, PFAS are used to coat cables, piping, and electronic equipment. PFAS are also found in the manufacturing of the data centers’ cooling equipment and semiconductors. While those items produce PFAS pollution on-site, the supporting manufacturing facilities that make those items are also high pollution areas.

Data centers also produce massive amounts of electronic waste, with frequent equipment breakdowns and subsequent equipment upgrades. That waste either ends up in landfills, where it pollutes the surrounding water systems, or it is incinerated. In the case of incineration, the PFAS compounds are not destroyed, but rather broken into smaller pieces that are still PFAS, as well as other byproducts that have known and unknown health risks.

For a reminder and very simplified breakdown of the water cycle: water evaporates, becomes condensation and precipitation, and then returns to the land to repeat the process. When water is contaminated by toxins like PFAS, those toxins seep into every interconnected process that takes place within our environment.

PFAS Impact All Of Us, Present and Future.

In contaminated areas, PFAS have been found in drinking water, ground water and aquifers, fishing and recreational areas, air and soil samples, food sources like crops, fish, livestock, and other non-human organisms, and in blood samples of human beings. As a reminder, PFAS are considered forever chemicals as they do not break down in nature.

Studies have found that PFAS are in the blood of nearly every person in America, and testing of umbilical cord blood and breast milk indicates that exposure begins before birth. PFAS are poisoning our current communities as well as future generations.

PFAS have been linked to cancer, birth defects and developmental delays, decreased immunity and resistance to immunizations, high cholesterol, kidney, liver, and thyroid disease, fertility and reproductive issues, hormonal disruptions, risks to pregnancy, and a range of other serious health issues.

For just one example of PFAS’ biological impact, look to the residents of the [Cape Fear River basin of North Carolina](#).

- * Beth Markesino, 38, who lives roughly 11 miles away from Kennedy, still mourns the loss of a 2016 pregnancy she believes is



PROJECT ZODIAC—COST TO ENVIRONMENT IS JUST TOO HIGH—Continued from Page Three

Hypothermia connected to the fact that she drank water potentially laced with PFAS. About 23 weeks into her pregnancy, sharp stomach pain sent Markesino to doctors who found her unborn child had not developed kidneys, a bladder or bowels, and wasn't producing amniotic fluid. Six months after burying the boy she named Samuel at a family plot in Detroit, Markesino saw a local news story reporting that PFAS [linked to pregnancy complications](#) had contaminated her drinking water. "I'll never know 100% if that's what happened with my son, but I drank the water, and I drank tons of it," Markesino said. She has since suffered from PFAS-linked health problems that include ovarian cysts, thyroid cysts, and tumors.

- * Over 70 miles west, near Fayetteville, 38-year-old Adrian Stokes suffers from health problems that include thyroid disease, kidney cysts, pulmonary embolisms, an autoimmune disorder, an enlarged liver and debilitating exhaustion. "I feel like I could probably kill myself because of how bad I hurt," he said. Pets he once had also suffered a range of health problems.
- * A few miles away, US army veteran Mike Watters founded a citizens' group to seek answers on PFAS contamination concerns after his three dogs died of pancreatic cancers. He helped connect 30 local owners of sick dogs and horses with university researchers who drew blood from the animals, tests that confirmed the animals were contaminated with PFAS too.
- * For Amy Nordberg's husband, Jonathan Shands, the push for research comes too late. He has little doubt about who and what to blame for her January death. Tests showed PFAS not only in the family's drinking water, but also in his wife's blood. Before she developed cancer, Nordberg was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, which new science links to PFAS exposure. Then, over the course of three agonizing years, a cancer that first attacked her sinuses and face spread rapidly.

While reading the above article, I was reminded of Erin Brockovich and her investigation and lawsuit that uncovered Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) had been poisoning the water supply of Hinkley, California. Several hundred residents of the small town cited health problems such as cancer, tumors, and birth defects.

I was also reminded of Flint, Michigan, where over 140,000 people were exposed to lead and other contaminants in their water. Despite public outcry and first-person evidence of illness, city and state officials downplayed the public health crisis for years and told residents on multiple occasions that the water was safe. Symptoms of lead poisoning include abdominal pain, diarrhea, constipation, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, headaches, general weakness, skin rashes, and loss of hair. In children, lead exposure damages brains and nervous systems, leading to slow growth and development and cognitive deficits that result in learning, behavioral, hearing, and speech problems. In Flint, the lead contamination and poisoned water led to an outbreak of Legionnaires' disease, a severe bacterial induced pneumonia.

I'm also reminded of the Tuskegee Experiment, where the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) conducted experiments on Black men in Macon County, Alabama for 40 years. 600 Black men were deceived and told that they were being treated for "bad blood," and no one gave informed consent to be an experiment subject of the United States government. In the mid-1960's, PHS investigator Peter Buxton uncovered the unethical experimentation and reported his findings to his supervisors, who informed him that the experiment would continue until all of the participants had died, autopsies were performed, and the project's data could be analyzed. Buxton leaked his findings and in 1972, Jean Heller of the Associated Press broke the story which prompted public outrage and forced the study to finally stop. Unfortunately by that time, the PHS employees carrying out the study had killed nearly 130 people and infected a community with a generational hereditary disease — 28 men had died from syphilis, 100 more had died from related complications, and at least 40 spouses had been diagnosed with syphilis and the disease had been passed to nearly 20 children at birth.

"And remember kids, the next time that somebody tells you, 'the government wouldn't do that,' oh yes they would.

We Will Pay For Their Greed.

The explosive growth of AI and the massive data centers needed to power it have caused electricity bills to rise nationwide. The electricity demand of many data centers are equal to a small city, and new proposals for data center campuses — campuses like the ones currently being built in Fort Wayne, Indiana — have energy demands comparable to small states.

Existing energy grids are being overwhelmed by data centers and their supporting facilities' energy demands. This is resulting in blackouts, disruption to essential services, and catastrophic system failures resulting in mass casualties.

In February of 2021, Texas' power grid failed and resulted in one of the most severe energy crises in United States history. Millions of residents were left without power for days in freezing temperatures, resulting in hundreds of preventable deaths. People died of



PROJECT ZODIAC—COST TO ENVIRONMENT IS JUST TOO HIGH—Continued from Page Four

carbon monoxide poisoning from improper use of generators, lack of power for medical equipment, and inability to access emergency services. As power outages swept through the state, nearly 5 million residents were left without water as their pipes were frozen.

In order to address an overloaded grid, new infrastructure must be built and the multi-billion dollar cost falls to the individual consumer through higher utility bills. The price of energy itself is also increasing alongside the increased energy demand from the data centers. In a recent study, Bloomberg found that electricity costs as much as 267% more than it did five years ago in areas located near data center activity.

The multi-billion dollar, Fortune 100 companies and the tech executives behind these data centers have no fiscal responsibility to pay for the needed upgrades to infrastructure, or areas where entirely new infrastructure has to be built.

What Can We Do to Protect Ourselves, Our Family, Our Friends, and Our Community?

In January 2024, Google was confirmed as the tech giant behind “Project Zodiac,” a 12-building campus spanning more than 700 acres, with some reports putting that number closer to 900 acres. In 2024, the project was approved by Allen County Commissioners, the Allen County Plan Commission, Fort Wayne City Council, and the Fort Wayne Redevelopment Commission with no input from the public.

Despite recent public opposition, the [Indiana Department of Environmental Management](#) approved Google’s 2025 request to expand and build their data center campus onto protected wetlands. [Hatchworks LLC](#) is the company behind the application.

Public opinion was largely against the expansion of Google’s data center campus, and despite multiple requests from local residents to hold a public hearing, no meeting was granted.

Here is a look at some public comments shared via local news articles:

“Our ecosystems are on the brink, and Indiana has prioritized destroying these vital and fragile habitats. Protected wetlands should remain protected for not only the species that depend on them but the communities that also benefit from the resources they provide for clean water.”

“These data centers that have gone up around the country have destroyed the communities they’re in. Why should anyone rubber-stamp higher utility bills and less usable resources for actual residents of the area, let alone the destruction of important wetlands?”

“If this application is approved I worry about the species that will be lost and displaced as well as the impact on local water for the area. Indiana is ranked the worst in the nation for overall pollution. Our local soil and water conservation districts have been sounding the alarms about the E. coli in our rivers. IDEM found PFOS in all fish samples. Why do we want to promote more contamination to our waters?”

Unfortunately, Google has already begun construction on their data center and it is located at 6015 Adams Center Road. The entire campus is projected to span nearly 900 acres and have at least twelve buildings on site.

To help put that size into some perspective:

The Indianapolis Motor Speedway = ~560 acres — *you could fit nearly two Indianapolis Motor Speedways in the same space as Google’s data center*

The Lucas Oil Stadium = ~41 acres — *the data center campus is currently projected to be the size of about 21 Lucas Oil Stadiums.*

Gainbridge Fieldhouse = ~17 acres — *the data center campus is currently projected to be the size of nearly 53 Gainbridge Fieldhouses.*

As of late September 2025:

Google’s request to expand their campus and build on an additional 2.8 acres of protected wetlands has been approved by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

Google, via Hatchworks LCC, has submitted an application to The Indiana Department of Environmental Management to increase the number of diesel generators by nearly five times the originally proposed amount.

The original request, approved in 2024, was for 36 generators and 36 tanks, which hold 6,000 gallons each of diesel fuel.



PROJECT ZODIAC—COST TO ENVIRONMENT IS JUST TOO HIGH—Continued from Page Five

This new proposal requests 179 generators onsite (*5x times as many generators as the initial approved request*) that will create about 528 megawatts of power, along with 179 storage tanks that will hold 1,074,000 gallons of diesel fuel (*that's 179x times more than the initially approved request*).

Attend The Public Hearing

On Thursday, November 13th at 6:00pm, a Public Hearing is being held at Ivy Tech's Northeast Indiana Campus on North Anthony Boulevard.

The meeting will go until 9:00pm **or** until all public comments have been heard. While the Indiana Department of Environmental Management will not provide responses to questions or comments made during the hearing, our individual and collective voices should be put on record.

Talk to your friends, your family, your coworkers, your mail person, anyone who will listen . Encourage everyone to attend the public hearing and do not leave until every public comment has been heard.

Call Your Local Representatives:

As a regular person and a Fort Wayne resident, I'm not sure exactly what our options are for recourse. Project Zodiac was intentionally shrouded in mystery for over a year, it was approved without public input, and the ground has already been broken.

Questions & Conversation Starters to Consider:

- 1) What is your current position on the Google Data Center and Project Zodiac? *This is important to remember and have on record for upcoming elections — these positions are held by elected officials; they serve the people.*
- 2) Have you or your staff reviewed new articles and scientific studies regarding data centers' energy usage, water consumption, and PFAS pollution? If yes, how are you and your office using your elected position to work towards either:
 - a.) stopping development entirely, cancelling Google's contract, re-zoning the area *back* to agriculture, and beginning restoration of impacted wetlands or
 - b.) a commitment from Google to work with community and area leaders to find solutions to concerns, and pausing further development and project advancement until further public hearings and community feedback, a review of the scientific data regarding energy usage, water consumption, PFAS pollution, and general environmental impact comprehensive, actionable plans to reduce environmental harm and a commitment to implement all recommendations and guidelines from environmental conservation and preservation groups considerable investment towards local infrastructure including energy grids, public education, and community advancement programs and consideration of any additional requirements or demands made by community leaders and public hearing contributions
- 3) If they are not aware of data centers' impact on local communities, ask them to attend the **Thursday, November 13th 6:00pm Public Hearing taking place at Ivy Tech's Northeast Indiana Campus on North Anthony Boulevard.** *If they are available and ultimately are in attendance, introduce yourself. Be cordial and let them you that wanted to put a face to your name.*
- 4) If they are not aware of the data center's impact on local communities, environment, wildlife, and the overall biological risks, and respond negatively to the invitation to the Public Hearing, ask to schedule a date and time to meet to discuss the topic in person. *If you feel so inclined.*
- 5) Ask if there are any avenues that the public can take outside of contacting this office to address our collective and individual concerns. Also if there is any precedent (*to their knowledge*) of projects that had been previously approved but had their approval rescinded and contract cancelled?
- 6) Thank them for their continued consideration and attention to the topic.

Allen County Board of Commissioners

Therese M. Brown: (260) 449-7555

In 2023, Ms. Brown voted YES to rezone land for Google and Project Zodiac

Richard E. Beck: (260) 449-7555

In 2023, Mr. Beck voted YES to rezone land for Google and Project Zodiac

Ronald Turpin: (260) 449-7555

In 2025, Mr. Turpin was elected and succeeded Nelson Peters



In 2023, Mr. Beck voted YES to rezone land for Google and Project Zodiac

Ronald Turpin: (260) 449-7555

In 2025, Mr. Turpin was elected and succeeded Nelson Peters

Fort Wayne City Council

- * **Paul Ensley**, 1st District: (260) 255-5176
- * **Russ Jehl**, 2nd District: (260) 255-4580
- * **Nathan Hartman**, 3rd District: (260) 918-0046
- * **Dr. Scott Myers**, 4th District: (260) 278-8977
- * **Geoff Paddock**, 5th District: (260) 341-3250
- * **Rohli Booker**, 6th District: (260) 553-5066
 - * *Project Zodiac is taking place in her district*
- * **Martin Bender**, Member at Large: (260) 427-2977
- * **Michelle Chambers**, Member at Large: (260) 299-8449
- * **Tom Freistroffer**, Member at Large: (260) 414-5288

Allen County Department of Environmental Management

Stacie Huber, Director: (260) 449-7181
Josh Ritter, Program Manager: (260) 449-7880
Jessie Reeder, Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator: (260) 449-4433
Betsy Perry Patton, Communications and Outreach Coordinator: (260) 449-7878

Fort Wayne City Utilities

(260) 427-1234

Indiana Department of Environmental Management

Omar El-Rjoob, Office of Air Quality: (317) 232-4971
Clint Woods, IDEM Commissioner: (317) 233-2550
James Turner, Waterways Section Chief: (317) 234-6352
Barry Sneed, Public Information Officer: (317) 232-8596
Allen Carter, Communications Director: (317) 233-4927
Natalie Rodriguez, Director of External Relations: (317) 619-2942

Indiana State Legislators

Sen. Travis Holdman, District 19 (*my district*): 800-382-9567
Sen. Tyler Johnson, District 14: 800-382-9467

- * *Project Zodiac is taking place in his district*

Philip GiaQuinta, House Minority Leader: 800-392-9842

Congressional Legislators

Rep. Marlin Stutzman: (202) 255-4436
Sen. Todd Young: (317) 226-6700
Sen. Jim Banks: (260) 321-7130

Support Our Local Environmental Conservation & Preservation Organizations

[Hoosier Environmental Council](#)

[Fort Wayne Chapter of Izaak Walton League](#)

[ACRES Land Trust](#)

[Little Rivers Wetlands Project](#)

[Black Pine Animal Sanctuary](#)

[Southwest Conservation League](#)

[Fox Island County Park](#)

[Sources & Supplemental Readings](#)



Fort Wayne Chapter, IWLA



Our Chapter has been bustling with activity as the fall leaves have begun to drop. The Fall Fest was a success enjoyed by many. I was happy to see many familiar faces along with many new ones. Thank you to all the individuals who volunteered to help and we look forward to another gathering next year.

Looking to the end of the year as 2025 comes to a close I'd like to personally ask you to consider making a contribution to the Chapter.

Help support our Chapter for end of the year tax advantages. Supporting our non-profit organization is not only an investment in protecting our natural resources—it will also provide valuable tax advantages. When you donate to our Chapter, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, your contribution is tax deductible, meaning you

can subtract the value of your donation from your taxable income when filing your federal income tax return.

How It Works

To qualify for a deduction:

- You must itemize deductions on your tax return.
- Keep written acknowledgment or a receipt for any single donation of \$250 or more.

These rules apply to cash donations, as well as gifts of property, securities, or other non-cash assets.

Special Advantages for Retirees with 401(k) and IRA Accounts

Retirees have additional opportunities to give through Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs). If you are age 70 1/2 or older, you can donate directly from your IRA to a qualified nonprofit—up to \$100,000 per year—without counting the amount as taxable income.

Key Benefits of IRA Giving:

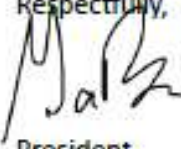
- Avoid Income Tax: QCDs are excluded from your adjusted gross income (AGI), helping reduce potential taxes on Social Security and Medicare premiums.
- Meet Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs): The transfer counts toward your annual RMD, allowing you to satisfy IRS requirements while supporting a cause you care about.
- Maximize Charitable Impact: Because you avoid income taxes, the full amount of your contribution goes directly to the organization.

For retirees who wish to leave a lasting legacy, donating directly from a retirement account is one of the most tax-efficient and meaningful ways to give.

Leave a Lasting Legacy

Every dollar you contribute helps advance our mission of conservation—preserving clean water, wildlife habitats, and outdoor recreation opportunities for future generations. If you are so inclined to make a contribution and would like it earmarked for a particular area of our Chapter please mention this on a short note included with your contribution.

Whether you're a working professional or retired, supporting a conservation nonprofit benefits both nature and your financial well-being. Always consult a qualified tax advisor to ensure your contributions are structured in the way that best supports your goals and maximizes your tax benefits.

Respectfully,

President
IWLA-FW



PROBLEMS WITH 2026 RENEWALS

We apologize for the issues regarding 2026 member renewals and new member processing. National IWLA recently launched newly designed software that has encountered numerous problems with membership renewals and new member processing. We found that many renewals reflected a 2024 membership year instead of 2026, and we discovered one-hundred-fifty 2025 Paid-up chapter members who were inadvertently dropped by National from our membership rolls for 2026. We also experienced batches of new membership applications forwarded 3 months earlier had not yet been processed. This was very disappointing as a successful launch had been reported at the National IWLA Convention held in July.

We have sent several letters to the National Office. Following our first letter forwarded on September 4, 2025, we received a promise to 1) investigate each reported issue and might require some time, and 2) a commitment to schedule a virtual meeting with our Executive Board in the meantime. Unfortunately, October 12th, we have not yet received a date for the promised meeting despite our follow-up communications.

If you hold a paid membership for 2025 and have not received your renewal for 2026, please send an email to our Membership V.P. Bernd Buldt (iwl.fw.membership@gmail.com)

We appreciate your patience as National works through the challenges of this poorly executed launch.

Also, do not forget to your 2026 Rifle & Pistol Range fee of \$50.00, if not yet paid. If you forwarded your member dues, but not your Range Fee, it can be forwarded to the chapter at 17100 Griffin Rd, Huntertown, IN or you can drop in the safe slot to the left as you enter the chapter door.

Sincerely,
The FW Chapter Executive Board

Building & Grounds Improvements

Projects completed this past month:

- 1) Monitored trail camera at Walton Pond
- 2) Built meter stand at Walton Pond
- 3) Trenched for electrical lines at Walton Pond
- 4) Cleared undergrowth by greenhouse
- 5) Removed stumps by archery
- 6) Spread gravel for parking at Walton Pond
- 7) Treated Walton Pond pavilion and outhouse for insects
- 8) Invasives removed west of the Skeet Range
- 9) Restocked firewood at campsites
- 10) Removed fallen trees from trails
- 11) Water sample submitted to IDEM
- 12) New Trail Signs on East Trails.





2025 KYL Competition 50 & 100 Yd.

Inaugural Match; Improbable winner

The first **Know Your Limit Match** (KYL) at the Izaak Walton League of America Fort Wayne Chapter rifle & Pistol Range was held on October 11, 2025, and the winner was a complete surprise.

In matches over the last two years, championships have been awarded to Todd Chiddister, Kevin Briner, Randy Johnson and most recently J.D. Coxe, but the **Know Your Limits** inaugural went to a newcomer shooting a semi-automatic rifle. Chapter member John Legg, who is also the new range Maintenance Manager, pulled out a surprising victory over the reigning .22LR champions.

It was a perfect October morning with winds under 3mph and J.D. Coxe bringing a dozen Dunkin Donuts, excitement ran high as the inaugural **Know Your Limits** match was about to begin. Following a safety and rules briefing, six determined members drew a playing card to determine the shooting order.



KYL Targets at 50 and 100 yds.
On lane 2—22LR ONLY!

Know Your Limits is a unique contest in that shooter must be prepared to shoot an identical 8-target array at both 50 and 100-yards. The name of the event derives from a contestant having to decide how far they wish to advance, because a single miss at one hundred

yards will cost them all the points they have accumulated in the current round. The match consists of two rounds shooting eight targets on each array. However, hitting targets at one hundred yards brings valuable points that usually determine a winner in most matches.



John Legge takes 1st place KYL

VISIT Our FINE ADVERTISERS





the Fort Wayne Chapter

Page 11

At the end of the second and final round, previous champions found themselves with zero points and a new contestant, John Legg, who plays it very conservatively winning with a total of 1,020 points out of a possible 2,000 points. Tommy Rini was second with 680 points, 12-year-old Elliot Taylor was third with 650 points, J.D. Coxe was fourth with 540 points.

Pat White—CRSO



Todd Chidester,
Retiring Champ



J.D. Coxe
4th Place KYL



Tommy Rini
2nd Place KYL

Carrie White
Realtor | Broker
(260) 310-5037

Stemen Align & Brake
3607 North Wells Street Fort Wayne, Indiana 46808
Stemenalignandbrake.com
Stemenalignandbrake@gmail.com
(260)483-4030

A.A.A. PIANO WORKS, LLC
Piano Tuning, Cleaning, Repairing and Evals
Brian Doepke (dep-kee)
R.P.T. (SEE BACK)
260-417-1298
www.aapianoworks.com Email: aapianoworks@comcast.net
Member of Piano Technician Guild — Over 25 Years of Music Education

**BYRNA
LESS-LETHAL**
STORE ADDRESS: 4534 Industrial Road
Fort Wayne IN, 46825
Hours: Mon-Sat 9:30AM-5:30PM
STORE PHONE NO: 260.800.1815
CUSTOMER SERVICE NO: 978.868.5011
byrna.com



COMMITTEE REPORTS THIS MONTH

TRAP & SKEET

R/M Dillon Repperger

Number of rounds shot: 175
Skeet 73
Trap 102

Number of shooters: 66
Members 44
Non-members 22

RIFLE & PISTOL

R/M Zac Taylor

Attendance

Month	Members	Guests	Total	Avg. Temp	Avg. Wind
July	247	36	283	84° F	5.7 MPH
August	321	36	357	70° F	6.0 MPH
September	290	38	328	66° F	5.2 MPH

ARCHERY

R/M Anne Bowser

Archery- September was a busy month for archery. The final Youth Intro to Archery had a great turn out with 21 kids attending. Many new faces and the kids all did great. Definitely looking forward to next expanding next year.

Had a good number of people show up for the last 3D shoot (23) including 4 kids.

The American Heritage Girls came out to get their badges for archery. There were 15 girls in total and everyone did a great job. The girls had fun and will be back in the future for new members to get theirs as well.

We had 5 new membership sign ups from our Archery programs this year.

We are looking forward to further expanding our archery program in 2026 building upon the momentum gained in 2025.

WALTON POND

Chair Brian Doepeke



With the increased popularity of Walton Pond, with several people catching large Bass, we wanted share with you the do's and don'ts of holding a Fish for a picture.

To avoid injuring the fish, do not hold it just by the lip when displaying it for a picture. Always use another hand to support its belly to avoid injuring the mouth area of the fish.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.





You Can Now Make Chapter Payments Online

We Now Accept Credit Card Payments!

The Fort Wayne Chapter is now equipped to accept credit card payments for:

- Guest Fees
- Membership Dues
- Membership Renewals
- New Membership Applications



Note: As a non-profit organization, a small processing fee will be added to your annual membership dues.

Guest Fees

Simply follow the posted signs and scan the QR codes to pay quickly and securely.



Membership Dues

Online Credit Card Payment:

Visit iwla-fw.org/membership to get get started.

Current Member Renewal

Current Member Renewal

OR

New Membership

New Member Applications

You will be asked to complete a online form to provide information required by the new National database.

Then you will simply select your membership level.

Check Payment:

Remit your annual dues payment with the enclosed envelope!



We're making it easier than ever to support our chapter and enjoy all the benefits of membership. Thank you for helping us grow!



Rim Fire Competition

CRSO Pat White

The Fall 2025 Rimfire Championship is now in history the books, and a new champion has been crowned.

It was a perfect October morning with temperatures in the 60's with little or no wind. This event featured the highest number of contestants recorded with eight marksmen and women vying for the coveted crown. This round of shooters included J.D. Coxe, Doug Krawczyk, Tommy Rini, Todd Chiddeste, Elliot Taylor, Rebecca Fortman, John Fortman and John Legg. The champion from the Spring 2025 event, Todd Chiddeste was on hand to defend his Spring title, but a new top shooter surged to the front. J.D. Coxe shot a record 484 total with a perfect 250 at 50 yards and 234 at 100 yards. The previous high score was 457 and was shot by Todd Chiddeste in the 2025 Spring Championship. Most notable at this year's championship was the entry of 12-year-old Elliott Taylor, son of Range Manager Zachary Taylor who shot a combined score of 423 (4th place) with a score of 219 at 50-yards and 204 at 100-yards. This was Elliott's first competition, and he was shooting a rifle donated by another member. Following the event, J.D. Coxe was awarded half of the \$80 entry fee. The remainder was submitted to the chapter's treasury. All contestants agreed that this Fall's event was one of the most enjoyable they have ever experienced.

Pat White—CRSO



John Legg



John Fortman



Tommy Rini



Competition in full swing



Todd & Chiddeste on left and
Zac Taylor and son Elliot on right.



CHAPTER LOSES TWO PAST LEADERS

Marv Lahr

We commemorate the life of Marv Lahr, a distinguished member of the Fort Wayne Chapter, who passed away on Thursday, October 9th.

Marv became a member in 1986 and remained actively engaged until 2022, when he began to experience declining health. His dedication and commitment to the organization throughout his tenure serve as a testament to his character and influence within the Chapter.

Several years ago, the trailhead of our West trail system was named in recognition of Marv's substantial contributions, serving as a lasting tribute to his dedication to the Chapter. Marv held various leadership roles within the chapter over the years, including President and Treasurer, and participated in numerous committees.

He was a long-time member of the Finance Committee. He actively participated in the Bylaws Committee during our transition from the older Constitution/Bylaws to the newer Bylaws/Rules format. This challenging process required meeting weekly for months of careful work under the tutelage of Jodi Arndt Labs, a well-respected leader at the national level who provided weekly reviews until the project was finished. Additionally, Marv worked with the Range Committee in 2015, playing a key role in finding funding the Rifle and Pistol Range that we use today. His efforts connected us with the Indiana Division Endowment Committee, which provided an unprecedented loan of \$34,000 for our R&P project. This project ultimately cost about \$83,000 to complete, despite a lot of volunteer work.

Furthermore, Marv's contributions extended to the Division level, where he held the positions of Chair of the Division Executive Board and as a member of the National IWLA Board during his final tenure.

Marv was known for his candid communication style and his sometimes-loud perspectives on various topics that often sparked lively discussions during Chapter Board meetings. However, he was frequently correct in his assessments, and many, including myself, gained valuable insights into the culture of Izaak Walton through his guidance.

His absence will be profoundly felt, and I will personally miss him as a dear friend.

Jay Butler

Bob Walls

According to our records, Bob Walls became a valued member of our chapter in November 2007, and his unwavering dedication spanned the next 15 years.

Over the course of my time knowing him, I witnessed the strength of his spirit as he navigated the challenges of living with a single leg, having lost the other to diabetes. In earlier years of our association, Bob utilized a prosthesis that enabled him to participate in our events actively, demonstrating an inspiring resilience against the relentless grip of a chronic condition that can be pretty debilitating. Despite diabetes being a formidable opponent, he approached it with grace and tenacity.

As a passionate shotgunner, Bob made significant contributions to our Trap and Skeet program. He was an active member of the Trap and Skeet Range Committee, where his enthusiasm shone brightly. Following Jim Gerencser's departure from the role of Range Manager, Bob stepped up to fill that crucial position, showcasing his commitment to our chapter. When I assumed the role of Treasurer, Bob was already a Director on our Board, regularly attending meetings and immersing himself in chapter activities, whether through direct involvement or as a supportive presence.

During our Youth Outreach Trap events, Bob was a familiar sight at the table, his hands deftly breaking down 20-gauge shotguns returned from the range. He took pride in meticulously cleaning and maintaining these shotguns, ensuring they were ready for the next group of eager young shooters. In later years, even as he faced health challenges, Bob creatively adapted his chapter role, continuing to invest his time in our chapter activities. After stepping back from leadership positions in Trap and Skeet, he undertook the critical task of managing the financial aspects of our public shoots for over a year. Furthermore, he consistently coordinated our chapter's participation in establishing registered shoot dates with the ATA, showcasing his relentless commitment to the sport.

Even when his health declined to the point where attending chapter functions became impossible, Bob remained deeply engaged with our chapter. He would read through the newsletter and regularly reach out to me, inquiring about the latest events and developments within the chapter. His dedication extended to maintaining close communication with the leadership of Trap and Skeet, demonstrating his affection for the Sport. Bob cherished the memories he created as part of our chapter and held them close to his heart.

Bob also was a good friend.

Jay Butler



Conservation Happenings Around The Chapter



The diligent removal of invasive species has been a focus for us this summer, leaving behind several towering burn piles scattered around the Chapter property. We successfully cleared approximately ____ acres, battling through dense vines that reached up to 4 inches in diameter. Come spring, we're eager to enrich our landscape by planting a variety of native species of plantings that will thrive in the local ecosystem.

Our Pumpkin Patch experience was a tale of highs and lows! While the deer feasting on our pumpkins found it to be a gourmet delight, our hopes for a bountiful supply for the Fall Festival were dashed, leaving us with few pumpkins.



On a brighter note, our mums turned out absolutely stunning, showcasing vibrant colors that captivated everyone. By the time you read this, we will have completed our sale as a highlight of our Fall Festival.

Adding to our excitement, we are thrilled to announce that for the first time since erecting our bat houses, a thriving colony of bats has taken up residence. Depending on the species, they may migrate to the caves of northern Kentucky for the winter and should arrive here again in the Spring. This is a promising sign for our local biodiversity and a joyful milestone for our efforts!





Chapter Hosts Angola Boy Scout Troop



The Chapter hosted Boy Scout Troop from Angola, IN, in town for Community Outreach Work, including help set up the Fort Wayne Haunted House.

Contact Us!

President—Gabe Bowser
(gbows09@yahoo.com)

Trap & Skeet Mgr. – Dillon Ripper
(dillonripperger@yahoo.com)

Archery Mgr. – Anne Bowser
(amarieb3810@gmail.com)

CRSO—R&P Range
Pat White

Walton Pond Chair—Brian Doepeke
(briandoepeke@gmail.com)

Buildings & Grounds—Gabe Bowser
(gbows09@yahoo.com)

Treasurer / Website—Melissa
(iwlafwtreasurer@gaiil.com)

FW Chapter NEWS Editor
Jay Butler
jaybutler1940@gmail.com

Chapter E-Mail – (iwlafw.org/contact)

Chapter Website— (iwlafw.org)

Chapter Phone Number - (260) 619-6768

Effective:
October 15, 2025



RIFLE & PISTOL RANGE

Fall/Winter Hours

Open: 10:00 am
Closed: 5:00 pm

Closed Wednesday and Thursday



Below are the current renewal rates

- Individual Membership** – Full access for one adult
\$122/year or \$172/year with **R&P range pass**
- Senior Membership** – Discounted rate for adults age 65+
\$110/year or \$160/year with **R&P range pass**
- Family Membership** – Includes all household members
\$172/year or \$222/year with **R&P range pass**
- Senior Family Membership** – Includes all household members
\$165/year or \$215/year with **R&P range pass**
- Student Membership** – For full-time undergraduates students
\$74/year or \$124/year with **R&P range pass**

Pay Dues Online!

iwlafw.org/membership

** If you pay online, there is a processing fee added to dues amount **

