

PRESIDENT'S BIG THANK YOU!

Elliott Hillback, IRLC President

Thank You for everything you do to help this special "Place We Love." Whether you think of yourself as a Volunteer, Supporter, Member, Friend, Donor, Partner, Funder, Board Member, Teacher, Guide, Speaker, Idea Source, Collaborator, Helper, Friend Generator, Recruiter, Fundraiser or something else, your involvement is helping to protect our Indian River Lakes and the whole Indian River watershed.

Our Winter newsletter is again dedicated to YOU this year, because each of you plays an absolutely critical role in the IRLC's ability to accomplish its Mission: Protect + Learn + Enjoy + Forever. Yes, we now have a Staff person, and yes she is doing a great job. Please understand however, we are now, and will always be, a volunteer driven organization that is powered by the ideas, actions, energy, time and resources all of you "donate". Your gift to the IRLC, in whatever form it takes, is invaluable and we appreciate your involvement and support.

I would like to highlight a few spectacular ways that individuals or groups have recently stepped up and made a significant positive impact on the future of the IRLC and the Indian River watershed we work so hard to improve and protect. I'll just give you the headlines here – please look for the details later in the newsletter:

- Dick Edgar, Ron Tibbles and a team of local volunteers have been building our amazing 1,000 square foot Trailside Classroom since early fall (thanks also to Mother Nature). As a result we will have a beautiful new home for many of our events this Spring and beyond ... Dick can always use more hands to finish the project....
- Because of this rapid progress on the Trailside Classroom, Jan Douglass, April Frederick, and the Education Team are beginning to develop an expanded set of programs... we need involvement from parents, teachers....
- We just received a major gift of land, 354 acres with the Indian River running through it, in Natural Bridge. We will be installing a dock, and an existing trail will be improved and marked. We plan to open the trail for cross country skiing starting next year. Lots of fun outdoor Spring jobs as we learn about this land....
- The Water Project is building effective working collaborations with several local governments to improve the design, installation, and monitoring of the septic systems that surround our lakes. We need volunteers to help educate and motivate homeowners, monitor progress....



Pileated woodpeckers have been busy on the Redwood Hill Preserve this winter.

I am very pleased to introduce the launch of the IRLC Volunteer Information Center. Our Committee leaders have prepared a number of mini job descriptions to assist you in finding a rewarding way to help the Indian River Lakes Region while working with your friends and neighbors. A wide variety of job postings are included in this newsletter and many more will be posted on our web site soon.

Last year I wrote about a powerful sentence made up of only 10 two-letter words; "*If it is to be, it is up to US*" defines a great philosophy to live and act by. Thank you for being part of US, the IRLC, and for helping US have a strong positive impact on the Indian River Watershed, the beautiful Place We Love.

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Nature's snowballs

Meet IRLC Members and Volunteers



Dick Edgar and **Ron Tibbles** have been working all winter to complete the new Trailside Classroom on Redwood Hill Preserve. Dick designed the building, which he hopes to complete by early summer. Many thanks to all of the volunteers who have pitched in to help: Paul Wimmer, Chip Wimmer, Bill Wimmer, Andy Meyne, Rich Sauer, Murray Walts and Rick Lopez.



View of Moon Lake from the Donders's camp.

Carl Donders and his family have been on Moon Lake since the spring of 2008, "which makes us newcomers," Carl says. "Having a world away from our regular world is an all-encompassing experience we have never grown tired of." The Donders children were only 3 and 4 when they arrived on Moon Lake, so they have no recollection of a life without the camp. For most people, time spent with loved ones is the best part of having a place on the lake. Carl feels the same way, "Simply being on, in, or around the lake with friends and family is always fantastic!"

Carl is a new IRLC member. He said, "I have chosen to become involved with the IRLC to be part of long term solutions to the issues our lakes are facing. As lake residents we are the custodians of their health and have an obligation to ensure their health."

Katherine "Katt" Nelson was born and raised in Watertown, but she's made Redwood her home for about 35 years. Katt is a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. She says, "I've always loved animals, but I found my true passion after I retired."



Katt and her family bought their camp on Sixberry Lake about 20 years ago. "We see things that many people never have a chance to see," Katt shared, "loons, otters, mink, beaver, Pileated Woodpeckers raising a chick nearby, even a bobcat one year." Katt says she loves the peace and quiet of the small lake. She laughs, "Sometimes you can even hear a raccoon trying to get into the garbage, which wakes up the dog and then, so much for peace and quiet!"

Katt has been an IRLC member since 2001. "Thanks for all the work you're doing on behalf of this beautiful area. It is SO worth preserving."

Kim Cullen is an IRLC hike guide. She says, "I feel that volunteering for the IRLC is a way I can give back to nature. In our technological world, there is the growing problem of becoming disconnected



from the natural world. Environmental education helps create a bridge between the two worlds. Creating a positive nature experience instills the desire to protect the treasures that we possess in the North Country for generations to come."

Kim leading IRLC's annual Winter Wonderland hike.

You make it happen - Volunteer!

You can be a partner in our ongoing work to protect the land and water quality of the Indian River Lakes region for generations to come. The opportunities are endless and we need your help. Take a look at a few of the opportunities below and let us know how you're interested in getting involved with IRLC by joining us as a volunteer. We would be happy to match you with a volunteer position that fits your interests.

Lake Association Project Leaders

This job is for anyone who is interested in helping new or small Lake Associations form, operate, expand and increase their effectiveness. Through education, coaching and collaboration, project leaders will work with Lake Association officers to assist them with areas of concern. 4-6 hours per month, seasonal.

Hike/Paddle Guide

This position is for anyone who enjoys being outdoors and sharing knowledge and skills with others. Volunteers will help plan, schedule and lead hikes on IRLC preserves and paddles on the lakes and river within the watershed. 2-4 hours per month, spring, summer, fall.

Public Program Educators

IRLC is looking for some special volunteers. Special, meaning you have unique talents or interests you are willing to share. Are you fascinated by wildflowers, birds, bugs, geology, or photography? Do you enjoy gardening with native plants or fun projects using unique mediums? Then this is the opportunity for you! 2-4 hours per month, flexible.

Marketing & Communications Assistant

IRLC needs a detail oriented, tech savvy individual to help with a wide variety of communications and marketing tasks. This person may help keep IRLC's website up to date, post events on e-calendars, write and send press releases, produce bulk emails using MailChimp, or help expand the IRLC's reach using a variety of social media outlets. 6-8 hours per month with seasonal fluctuations.

General Office Volunteer

Do you support IRLC's mission, but prefer to work indoors? Help is always needed for a wide variety of daily office work such as preparing mailings, copying, filing, and organizing. Time commitment is flexible, year round.

Water Sampling/Monitoring Team

Calling all scientists, citizen scientists and those who would like to learn more about our water resources! Help develop and implement an Indian River Watershed Water Monitoring Program. This is a fundamental activity to guide decision making on wise stewardship of our water resources. Time commitments will vary and are reasonably flexible for each role: designing the program, carrying out the sampling, interacting with testing labs, compiling the data and generating reports. 6-8 hours per month, seasonal.

Trail Stewards

Trail Stewards will monitor and maintain a segment of the trails on Grand Lake Reserve, Boyd Pond, or Redwood Hill Preserve. Trail Stewardship offers a fun opportunity for a family or outing group to get outdoors while helping maintain a portion of the trail system that IRLC has developed for the enjoyment and enrichment of the community. 6-8 hours per month, seasonal.

Mystery Volunteer

Do you have an idea or a special skill that you'd like to contribute? Contact us to discuss how you'd like to be involved!

Visit our website today to learn more or complete a Volunteer Application Form!

Many other opportunities are available such as Event Volunteers, Speakers Bureau Presenters, Community Outreach, Marketing & Communications, Development & Fundraising, Watershed Mapping/GIS Specialist, Conservation Land Stewards, School Program Designer, Leader & Assistant, and much more. Bring your skills and we'll provide any specialized training needed to get you involved. As a volunteer based organization, your ideas and efforts are crucial to our success!

Another Way to Give

Almost two years ago IRLC hired our first employee with help from a NYSCPP grant. April has done an excellent job while working on a wide range of topics. We are asking for financial support to ensure we have the resources to maintain our momentum as the grant funding period nears its end. An anonymous donor has committed to give \$10,000 to the Staffing Fund plus up to another \$10,000 as a 50% match challenge. Please make a gift today to help us take advantage of that offer!

Members & Donors

*IRLC's work is made possible by the support of our generous donors.
Together we are protecting the beautiful Indian River Lakes area for future generations.*

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Thanks to your support, the Indian River & Lakes Water Project is making great progress for water quality.

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There are many ways to give. Volunteers help with trail maintenance and special events, lead hikes, enter data and much more!

This list represents contributions made between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015. We value the contributions of all our donors and regret any errors or omissions. Please contact us if your name should appear on this list. Thank you for your generous and continuing support!



Your support helps maintain and build new trails, provide programs and events and manage preserves.

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We'd also like to thank our:

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Kim Cullen
 Steve & Vici Diehl
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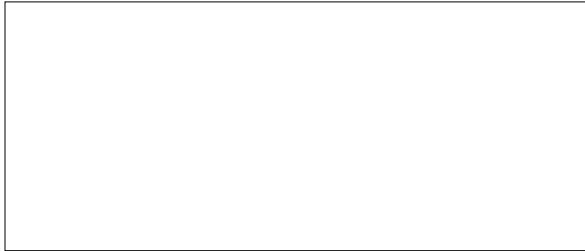
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Save the Dates

May 7 **Birds & Blooms Hike** **10:00am**

Celebrate the arrival of spring with IRLC!

May 30 **Trail Steward Orientation** **12:00pm - 2:00pm**

Anyone interested in becoming an IRLC Trail Steward should attend this informative training program.

Jun 25 **Annual Meeting**

Bring a friend to learn more about IRLC and our exciting plans for the new year!

Jul 19 **Moonlight Paddle**

Join IRLC & TILT for a fun evening of paddling and stargazing on Millsite Lake!

Aug 13 **Celebration of the Lakes** **5:00pm**

Bring your family and friends to the Bella-Brooke Vineyard for an evening of great food, wine, music and fun!

Oct 15 **Falling Leaves Hike** **10:00am**

Enjoy the crisp fall air at this annual IRLC outing!

Don't miss a single IRLC event - make sure you're on our email list by sending a note to IndianRiverLakes@gmail.com with the words Join List in the subject line.



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