

IRLC 2016: Excited and Very Proud (But a Bit Exhausted)

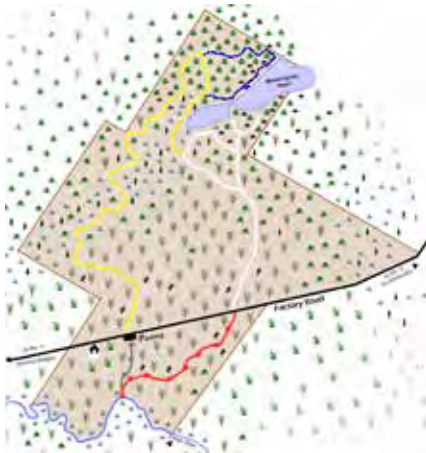
Elliott Hillback, IRLC President

The headline above sums up the year 2016 for our Indian River Lakes Conservancy. With your support as Members, and the deeper involvement of a number of you, your friends and your neighbors as Volunteers, we made absolutely amazing progress in support of the four key goals that are reflected in our motto: **Protect • Learn • Enjoy • Forever.**

I would like to summarize a few of our most interesting and exciting advances during 2016 and thank by name some of the key people who helped make them happen. In a year with so many great accomplishments there just isn't enough space to thank each person by name, so I will start with a **Special Big Thank You to *everyone* who got involved, who volunteered, who helped care for this Place We Love!**

A few examples of IRLC People helping Protect Land and Water while creating more opportunities for everyone to experience, enjoy and learn about nature:

- Early in the year we received a gift of the beautiful and important 354 acre parcel now known as the Baker Woods Preserve which borders the Indian River near its headwaters. With support of NYSCPP grant funding, Board Member (and neighbor of land donor Doris Baker) Matt Carney and a team that included his amazing family played a major role in designing and building a 3.5 mile trail network, an accessible overlook and other amenities in less than a year! So, special thanks to Matt and his family, to donor Doris Baker, and to Board Members Ed Robertson and Dick Edgar for their significant involvement.



- Board Member Dick Edgar and volunteer Ron Tibbles deserve special thanks for designing and building our beautiful and functional 1000 square foot, accessible Trailside Classroom which we will use to launch two new Summer Education Programs in 2017 - one series for adults and one for children. A special thank you to Dani Baker for organizing and funding our first speaker series at the DePauville library which became the model for these expanded summer programs. Dani has also been a strong supporter and advocate for the Trailside Classroom and the all access trail. Isn't it great when several projects come together to create something Great! (There are many interesting volunteer opportunities in these education programs.)



- We plan to begin building a one mile "all access" trail in our Redwood Hill Preserve by mid-year because Board Member Mark Scarlett took on the unenviable task of combining grants from two different NY State agencies so we could build the right trail for the public with the least environmental impact. Thanks Mark for your tenacity and persuasiveness.
- The Adirondack All-Taxa Biodiversity Inventory conducted a 24 hour Bioblitz primarily on IRLC Preserves. Thanks to volunteers Vici and Steve Diehl and our staff person April Frederick, this first effort outside the Adirondacks has begun documenting the importance of the A2A (Adirondacks to Algonquin) corridor. A team of over 20 scientists from around the state identified 547 species of living things. That is the largest

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Excited and Very Proud

...continued from Page 1



BioBlitz participants plan their day

- number documented in any of the 13 BioBlitz events held to date and reconfirmed the extraordinary biodiversity found in the Indian River Lakes Watershed and its importance in the entire region.
- The Indian River and Lakes Water Project continues to educate and increase the awareness of homeowners, anglers and other visitors about the need and the methods available to improve water quality in our Indian River Watershed. Many thanks to Board Members Ed Robertson and Jim Ninos, retired Board Member Rick Lopez, and the increasing involvement of the Presidents of the Lake Associations of all the Indian Lakes for continuing to move this broad, complex effort forward. We need much more help on water quality!!
- There are also many “unsung heroes” like Kim Cullen, who often serves as a trail guide and naturalist, or Grass Lake residents Doug and Chris Hagan, the stewards for the Marc A.F. Baker Island Preserve for several years. Thanks to them and all the other unsung heroes we wish we had the space to thank individually.

Volunteers also made major contributions to building the strength and skills of the IRLC, increasing the public’s awareness of the IRLC, its mission, and its activities, and to maintaining our ability to run as smoothly as possible:

- All our Board Members helped in the massive process of filing for National Accreditation from the Land Trust Alliance but *huge special recognition* must go to Board Member Denise Robertson with major support from Ed Robertson and Mark Scarlett. April Frederick, our sole Staff Member, and expert consultant Henri Jordan also played pivotal roles. Thanks. (The Commission will make its final determination in early 2017.)
- Our *most successful Celebration of the Lakes of all time* and various other public events were organized by retired Board Member Tammy Lueck, Board Members Denise Robertson and Jan Douglass plus Betsy DuBois and many others – thanks for an amazing job.
- Several volunteers including Gail Wright and Louise Scarlett deserve kudos for taking on critical, but often overlooked duties in administration and we really appreciate their support. Betsy DuBois has been a big help in the communications area.

I added the **“but a bit exhausted”** part to the title as a friendly way to get your attention. All of us on the Board would like to ask for your help. Please consider getting personally involved by volunteering your time, your knowledge and/or your energy. We really need to expand our human resources to effectively handle the opportunities and responsibilities we have to make a positive difference in this place we all love! You can check out a few job descriptions in this newsletter and many more on our website. You can also contact April (at our office) or our Board Members to find other interesting opportunities to help. If you have something you want to do or learn more about that we don’t have listed, call April or any Board Member. In any case, find a project that looks like fun, one that lets you explore something new, or one where your unique skills and experience can make a big impact and then **volunteer**. Meet new people from the area, bring a couple of friends along with you, or do both. **The IRLC offers many opportunities that are personally rewarding and fun while making a real, measurable difference for the Indian River Lakes Area we all love. Try it, have some fun and see how great it feels!**

Volunteer Opportunities

Trail Monitors check and maintain a section of our public hiking trails. 6-8 hr/month
Hike & Paddle Guides lead programs for the public on IRLC properties. 4-6 hr/month
Office Volunteers help with a wide variety of indoor projects. Flexible time commitment.

Visit the Get Involved tab on our website to learn more about these and other volunteer opportunities.

The mission of the Indian River Lakes Conservancy is to preserve the natural character of the area, with a focus on protecting clean water, fish and wildlife, and the scenic vistas along the shores of the lakes and the Indian River and to educate ourselves and the community about the natural habitat in which we live.

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IRLC Investigates Mini Sewer Districts

When the effort by the water quality committee to amend the zoning law in the Town of Theresa was halted last summer Assemblywoman Addie Russell invited us to apply for a state grant. Responding to this invitation the idea of a mini sewer district was brought to Addie's office and they encouraged pursuing the grant with that idea in mind. The sewer district would involve a set of neighboring camps or cottages with waterfront all backed by a single large parcel. A septic system would be built on the parcel to accommodate the set of cottages. Approximately 40 such situations exist on the lakes and Indian River in the area. Assuming that the grant is made available we hope that people in at least one of the 40 situations will agree and that a demonstration project can be done.

As part of the justification for the grant we are interested in pictures or documentation you may have concerning water quality on your lake or the Indian River; issues such as algae blooms, fish kills, unwanted weed growth or some other issue that may be related to poorly treated waste water. Also, if you are in a situation where a mini sewer district might be helpful to you, let us know. Contact the IRLC office at (315) 482-4757 or april@indianriverlakes.org.



Rick Fuhrman holds one of the wood duck boxes he donated to IRLC

Kathleen Kazakoff Joins IRLC Board

Kathleen has always lived near water – the Great Lakes, Niagara River and most recently Red Lake. She has enjoyed countless family vacations in Algonquin Park and the Adirondacks over the years. These experiences have helped develop her passion for the outdoors and deep concern for the environment.

Recently retired, Kathleen moved to Theresa, near Red Lake, from New Paltz in August, 2015. She has two daughters, one in Redwood and the other in the Hudson Valley. She enjoys gardening and being outdoors on her 19+ acres. She is carrying on her late husband's passion for feeding birds and learning about the different species that visit her feeders.

“Growing knowledge and protection of the environment has been within the

fabric of my life. Now that I am retired, I am looking forward to learning more about the Indian River Lakes and educating the community about the IRLC.”

Visit our website to learn more about Kathleen and our other directors.



Don't miss out! Subscribe to our listserve by sending an email to indianriverlakes@gmail.com with "Join List" in the subject line.

Meet a Member - Rick Fuhrman

Rick Fuhrman recently donated two beautiful wood duck boxes to IRLC. He keeps track of the birds that visit his bird feeder and enjoys building bird houses. Last spring, IRLC received two of Rick's blue bird boxes. He decided to take on duck boxes after seeing a wood duck land in a tree near his house.

Rick and his wife Helen have lived year round on Clear Lake since 1989. Their cozy cottage near the boat launch provides them with plenty of entertainment and opportunities to meet new people. Rick says, “You'd be surprised at the things you see!” and he often finds himself stepping in to lend a hand when needed.

Rick is an avid outdoorsman. He enjoys hiking, paddling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, bird watching and exploring. He jokes that he was “forced” to learn to enjoy these activities. Rick has 22 years of military service, 4 of which were active duty. He was stationed for a time in Spain, where the cost of living was very low. When he returned to the states, he found that he couldn't afford the same types of activities that he had in Spain. He decided that he could pay once for a

kayak and have a lifetime of experience with it. “I was forced into it by being frugal!” he laughs.

Exploring is one of Rick's favorite activities, whether on foot, by paddle or in the car, he loves to see new places. An enthusiastic kayaker, he has paddled all of the Indian River lakes, much of the St. Lawrence and its tributaries both US and Canadian, and many of the regions rivers and streams.

He also likes meeting new people. “Reaching out,” he calls it. It is part of what brings him to conservation organizations like IRLC. He enjoys the camaraderie of working together on a trail or conservation project with others and the connections he makes with people he meets on guided hikes and programs. But, the conservation is important to him too. Rick worked in a gas station near the current location of the Salmon Run Mall in Watertown. “Kids would fly past in their cars because they could race out there. It was the edge of town. I like progress, but we also need trees and wilderness,” he said. “This place is unrealized by so many. We have to protect as much of it as we can.”

Members & Donors

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

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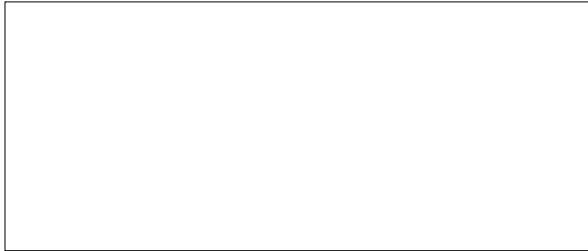
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IRLC & the Depauville Free Library Present Natural Science Talks

This series of programs takes place at noon at the Depauville Free Library

Jan 28 A Biography of Earth Written by NY State Geology

Feb 25 5 Ways to Save a Frog's Life and Every Reason Why We Should

Mar 26 Thirty Years of Change - Local Observations on Climate Change

Apr 29 Jefferson County Hydrology and the 2016 Drought

May 13 Birds, Blooms & Bugs Hike 10:00am

Join us to welcome spring at the Grand Lake Reserve!

Jun 24 IRLC Annual Meeting 10:00am

Join us for an IRLC Update and a fun hike!

Aug 7 Moonlight Paddle 8:00pm

Join IRLC & TILT for a fun moonlight paddle on Millsite Lake!

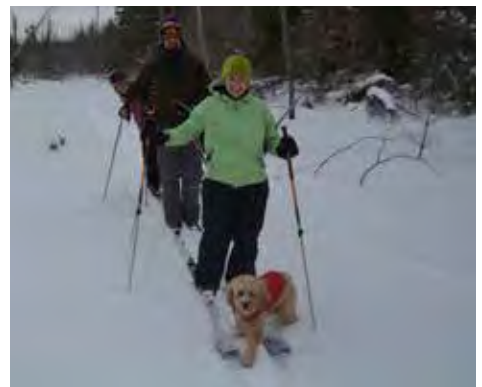
Aug 12 Celebration of the Lakes 5:00pm

Bring your family and friends to Bella Brooke Vineyard for IRLC's annual gala event!

Check our website regularly, more events are coming this summer!!

More than 3 miles of trails are open for xcountry skiing and snowshoeing at the Baker Woods Preserve!

4114 Factory Rd., Natural Bridge



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Type "Indian River Lakes Conservancy" in the

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