



# TIMBERLINES

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter  
Izaak Walton League  
November 2025

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

## Coming Events

### November 2025

- 11 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 25 Social Educational Meeting 7:30 pm  
Senator John Hoffman (MN34)  
Environmental Legislation in Minnesota  
During the Upcoming Session

### December 2025

- 9 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm  
No Social Educational Meeting

### January 2026

- 13 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 18 Holiday Party Carrol Henderson:  
*A National Legacy*

WLA Breckenridge Chapter

Holiday Party

Sunday, January 18, 2026

\$25 suggested donation

Proceeds go to the Breckenridge Chapter's Scholarship Fund

4 p.m. – Social Hour  
Silent Auction  
Hors d'oeuvres

5 p.m. – Dinner  
Bring desserts to share!

6 p.m. – Program  
Carrol Henderson  
*A National Legacy*

Please RSVP to  
Barbara Franklin (bbfrankli@gmail.com)  
Call or text  
763-242-0432

Everyone Welcome

Social Educational Meeting:

Tuesday, November 25 7:30 pm  
Senator John Hoffman (MN34)  
Environmental Legislation in  
Minnesota during the upcoming  
session

Despite his grave wounds from an attempted assassination and the series of reconstructive surgeries he has undergone since, including one this month, our Senator, John Hoffman, has agreed to be our guest speaker for our November meeting. His passion in government has always been Human Services, the committee that he Chairs, but among the several other committees on which he sits is the Environment Committee, which is so important to Izaak Walton League members. We will attempt to steer the conversation toward conservation issues, but other topics may be raised as time allows. Should the Senator's health issues unexpectedly cause him to cancel, we hope to have Bruce Anderson fill in as our speaker.



# Some Troubles in Paradise

By Tim Johnson

A last-minute program change, due to the scheduled speaker's health allowed me to present a talk on National Park of American Samoa. Relatively speaking, the Manu'a group of islands where our family spent most of our time there, is by far the most pristine. The reason for this is of course the difficulty of access to this remote part of the archipelago.



The Polynesian navigators who discovered Samoa brought with them staple food plants and animals that changed the ecology of the islands forever but not nearly as much as it has been changed by their discovery by European explorers in 1722 (200 years after Magellan's expedition to circumnavigate the planet). The most populous island of American Samoa had a perfect natural harbor, Pago Pago (pronounced Pango Pango), so merchant and naval ships frequented it, bringing in non-native plants and animals intentionally and sometimes unintentionally. They also brought in new human diseases, killing many of the islanders, and a new religion, Christianity which was almost universally adopted.

The National Park of American Samoa was only established in 1993 on some of the lands, reefs and lagoons on three of the islands (Tutuila, Ofu and Ta'u), all initially leased for 50 years. The Manu'a group (60 miles east of Tutuila Island) is the least populated but they still face many ecological challenges. Rats, feral pigs, dogs and cats threaten native species as they have in Hawaii. So do many introduced plants which take advantage of the

disturbances caused by the frequent cyclones that strip the leaves and branches of the tropical rainforest. Fortunately, the invasive bulbuls and myna birds have only reached the main island of Tutuila whose unsustainable human population growth has already caused the alteration of much of the natural habitat. Tuna canneries there, polluted the Pago Pago harbor with their waste, killing most of the corals before the companies were required to dispose of it further out to sea. Municipal waste disposal is also a problem on all the islands as there are no recycling facilities and space for landfill is limited.



The reef on Ofu Island is the "jewel in the crown" in my view. The threatened flying foxes and native birds are amazing as well. But Ofu too, is threatened by global burning of fossil fuels. Not only does the resulting warming of the ocean lead to ever increasing bleaching and consequent death of the corals, but acidification of the waters threatens the basic chemistry of reef formation. The Manu'a group has made some progress in converting their electricity source from diesel to solar but it is we in



the rest of the world that must accelerate the transition to clean fuels to save this gem. Further east, Rose Atoll is also part of American Samoa. It was designated a Marine National Monument in 2009 and fishing is restricted. Unfortunately, President Trump, in one of his attacks on our National Monuments, issued an executive order to open Pacific Islands Heritage Marine National Monument, to Samoa's north, to commercial fishing. As of now, the courts have ruled against him, thanks to action taken by Earth Justice. No such order affects Rose Atoll at this time.



Moorish idols in center foreground

The NPS in its brochure says the following: “The National Park of American Samoa serves as a living laboratory for scientific research, offering unique opportunities to study rainforest and marine ecosystems. Scientists from around the world visit the park to conduct research on a range of topics, from biodiversity and species conservation to climate change resilience. The park’s coral reefs, in particular, are a focus of global attention due to their apparent resistance to rising ocean temperatures and changes in pH levels, which could provide key insights into the future health of coral reefs worldwide.



Bluegreen chromis & Humbug dascyllus

In addition to scientific research, the park plays a critical role in conservation efforts. It protects species that are under threat from habitat loss, invasive species, and climate change, ensuring that these ecosystems remain intact for future generations.



“The breathtaking beauty of the National Park of American Samoa is another key feature that sets it apart. Visitors can experience a dramatic landscape of rugged sea cliffs, verdant rainforests, and white sandy beaches, all set against the backdrop of the vast Pacific Ocean. The islands are the peaks of ancient underwater volcanoes, with landscapes that tell the story of their formation over millions of years.

The remoteness of the park adds to its allure, offering a sense of tranquility and isolation rarely found in other national parks. Whether hiking to the summit of Mt. Lata on Ta'ū, the highest point in American Samoa, or exploring the untouched beaches of Ofu Island, the park provides a unique opportunity to experience wilderness in its most pristine form.”



Giant Clam (*Tridacna* sp.)

## More About Lead

*By Karen Ostenso*

In the Fall 2025 edition of “Solutions,” the newsletter of Environmental Defense Fund has a revealing article about lead in schools. The example used is the Milwaukee school system, where a lot of the buildings were erected before 1978, when lead was banned.

Milwaukee found 108 of its schools were built before 1978. Some attempts had been made to mitigate the risk of lead exposure, but lack of funding was limiting their progress. As increased testing revealed more contamination, a group of parents called for more to be done.

On March 26, Milwaukee authorities requested federal help. Specifically, they asked that epidemiologists from Centers of Disease Control and Prevention’s [CDC] lead poison team come to help. Unfortunately, this happened just after Health and Human Services secretary Kennedy had eliminated all members of that team.

The parental group organized a town hall, calling for more help. Wisconsin Senator Tammy Baldwin took their pleas to Washington D.C. The pressure caused Kennedy to relent and he said he would maintain 51 million dollars for childhood lead poisoning prevention. Some lead experts were rehired in June.

Nevertheless, grants to remediate lead in contaminated homes still cut by millions of dollars and federal funds for lead pipe replacement are still under attack.

This sounds like a partial success story. It begs the question as to why parents have to agitate, and politicians have to put on pressure to restore perfectly reasonable funding.

This is a good example of why Health and Human Services needs to resume its normal role, and why it needs a rational and scientifically educated secretary.

Considering that lead is especially harmful to kids, parents should not have to organize and agitate to simply get well established successful help.

## Prescribed Burn at River Park

On November 3, a contractor carried out a prescribed burn on the northern end of River Park (101 83rd Avenue North). Next, the contractor will



seed the area with native plant species.

Prescribed burns are controlled fires and a commonly used prairie management practice to control invasive species and promote plant regeneration.

### **Benefits of a prescribed burn:**

- Invasive species can quickly out-grow native plants in the spring, blocking the light they need to thrive. Burning knocks back these invasive species and woody bushes and trees that creep in, giving the plants that belong on the prairie time to emerge in full sunlight.
- Burning helps stimulate growth of new plants. Over time dead plant material accumulates and burning helps that material decompose faster returning nitrogen and nutrients to the ground.
- The dark layer of char and ash absorbs more sunlight that helps warm the ground and encourage germination.

*Reported by Tim Johnson*

# Many Hands Make Light Work

Saturday, November 1 was a beautiful fall day to get the Chapter House and Grounds cleaned up both inside and out! A good crew of volunteer Chapter members spent part of their afternoon sprucing up the Chapter House and grounds. Tasks accomplished included mowing, blowing and raking leaves, stacking firewood for the winter, pulling buckthorn, bringing in the water hose and deep cleaning inside. Volunteers included the Thelens, Jaci & Rex Hale, Chris Geeting, Josh Wildt, Cindy Olsen, Karen Ostenso, Steve Schaust, Jim Arnold and Tim Johnson.



Photos by Tim Johnson and Karen Ostenso





## Opinion: Loving Our Ducks

In articles a few weeks apart, Dennis Anderson's columns in the "Strib" called for a DNR summit on the subject of scarce waterfowl in the State of Minnesota.

Hunters, of which I was once one, are practically enraged about the scarcity of ducks, the too early seasons set for hunting them, the scarcity of wetland habitat and so on.

In one of his articles, he quotes one die-hard duck hunter as saying "he loves ducks" and in the next few sentences he says "I love to shoot them". Now then, if you love something, do you strive to shoot it, thereby killing it? Blast the feathers off it and then pose for pictures bragging about your skill in wing shooting? Or possibly pot shooting? (Shooting while they sit on the pond.)

I agree, seasons are too early and limits too liberal. The reasoning I don't know.

However, here is a thought: how about closing the season for a couple years? How about duck hunters (and the general public) donating to the DNR the value of their lost years Duck Stamp for the purpose of creating habitat 2 years in a row? If you really love the ducks, this kind of donation seems reasonable.

Anderson says seasons should be adjusted to allow for the harvest (killing) of surplus birds only. Whenever was there a "surplus" of any kind of game bird or songbird in the last 5 or 6 years?

Personally, I try to help wood ducks and some mallards avoid the early season shooting by feeding them until it's cold enough that they will head directly to the Southland in a great hurry, thereby bypassing many local and flyway shooters.

If you actually do love ducks and want to increase their numbers, then do something to help them. Shooting them, especially when they are scarce, is not the way!

P.S. Written on October 23, 2025 while watching 96 wood ducks and approximately 12 mallards feeding

in our front yard. This place has become a semi-fall refuge for wood ducks for the last 40 years or so. This will no doubt end as the City takes over our property and converts it to a mostly peoples' type park.

*Dick Brown*

Ed. Note: "Duck stamp revenue is used to purchase and lease wetlands and wildlife habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System, with 98% of the funds going directly to the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. These acquired habitats are used to protect migratory birds and other wildlife, and the fund also supports conservation efforts like grassland protection and restoration."



### **Chapter House Rental Rates\***

Current Members who are in good standing only  
(damage deposit: \$500.00; \$100 for previous renters)  
Monday through  
Thursday.....\$150.00  
Friday, Saturday, Sunday &  
Holidays.....\$200.00  
Scouts: (damage deposit \$50.00)  
Overnights.....\$50.00

\*Rates and terms subject to change without notice; please contact the Chapter for special circumstances.

The Rental Agreement and Renters Checkout List are available on our website.

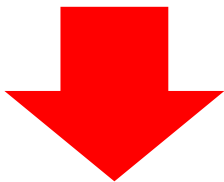
For availability, please contact Tim Johnson by email [johns860@mac.com](mailto:johns860@mac.com)

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter  
Izaak Walton League of America  
8816 West River Road  
Brooklyn Park MN 55444

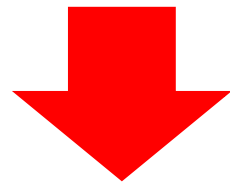


If you would like to submit an article for the Timberlines, please send it to  
**Barbara Franklin at: [bbfrankli@gmail.com](mailto:bbfrankli@gmail.com)**  
**Deadline is the First Day of each month.**

All articles in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the position of the Breckenridge  
Board of Directors. The Editor reserves the right to edit material as necessary.



## Please Renew Your Annual IWLA Membership



You should have received your Membership renewal forms for 2026 in the mail.  
Please return these to Barb Franklin with the pink portion and your dues by November 30.  
Second notices will be sent out the first 2 weeks of December.

