

History of the Janesville Conservation Club

Before the club became the Janesville Conservation Club, it operated briefly as the Janesville Sportsman's Club. The following timeline explains the transition plus some of the club's important events and milestones over the years.

Date	Event
1940	The Janesville Sportsman's Club was founded, with Rudy Sterk serving as its first President. In June, the club planned the following projects:
	 <i>Pheasant Project</i>—the raising, distribution, and winter feeding of pheasants. <i>Fish Project</i>—the propagation of fish in rearing ponds and the distribution of the fish. <i>Reforestation Project</i>—the planting of trees in cooperation with the county schools and the highway department. <i>Sportsman Park Project</i>—the creation of a picnic area and a wildlife exhibit. <i>Educational Project</i>—the teaching of conservation through lectures, class instruction, and contests. <i>Boat Housing Project</i>—the building of boathouses on the Rock River for storing small boats for sport and leisure. <i>Better Relations Project</i>—the creation of good will between farmers and hunters. <i>Junior Sportsman's Project</i>—the establishment of a Junior Sportsman's Club with Jeffris Park in mind, to include a program of reforestation and beautification. Class instruction will be set up in the schools, and contests will be arranged.
	On December 8, pheasant pens were completed, and 1800 pheasants were raised for distribution. The club also built 40 winter feeders. It is

believed that in the early years, the pens were located somewhere in

Date	Event
	Evansville.
	The Janesville sand pits were seined (fished with dragnets) four times for bluegills. Approximately 75,000 bluegills and black bass were released to rock county waters.
	The work for the Sportsman's Park and wayside picnic grounds is to be completed in spring of 1941. The land (at the pheasant rearing pens) was acquired from the county farm and began as a tree nursery with a wildlife display.
	The club assisted in the organization of the Clinton Conservation Club.
	The Janesville Sportsman's Club formed the Rock County Conservation Council, consisting of all the county conservation bodies. We also established the Ducks Limited Membership Committee for Janesville.
	The club acquired 100 squirrel houses from the state conservation department.
	The club assisted the Beloit Isaac Walton League seine-fish the Afton sand pits.
	The club held a wildlife exhibit at the YMCA Hobby Show.
	The club held dog field trials.
1941	Mark Egbert served as club President.
	On January 2, 1941, the Janesville Sportsman's Club filed corporation papers proclaiming the club to be a non-profit venture and changed its name to "The Janesville Conservation Club, Inc."
	Its purpose was "to stimulate and encourage the principles of conservation and sportsmanship." The first regular meeting of the new club was held January 21, 1941, in the Janesville Boat Club building on North Main Street.
	The club held dog field trials.
1942	Walter Lindemann served as club President.
	The club held dog field trials.
1943	Harold Gessert served as club President.
	Hunters associated with the club donated deer hides to the government to help in the war effort.
	The club purchased its first trap machines.

Date	Event
	The club held dog field trials.
1944	Kenneth Bick served as club President.
	In February, the Janesville Conservation Club absorbed the Janesville Boat Club, and all funds and records of the same were turned over to the Janesville Conservation Club. This move was taken so that the Janesville Boat Club might be preserved, and at the close of the war, the Boat Club, if it wished, might again separate and operate independently.
	The early years were plagued with financial difficulties, and it wasn't until 1945 that the building of the present clubhouse was begun in LaPrairie Park. Nearly all of the original materials and labor were donated. The construction of the building was done under the direction of Mr. Val Severson.
	Thanks to Leo Fleming and Charles Weber Sr., the club offered trapshooting on a very limited scale with two, hand-operated traps.
	Mr. Weber supported the club financially during these early years until the trapshooting activities finally became self-supporting.
	The club sponsored the Janesville Pointer and Setter Club spring shooting dog trials.
1945	Kenneth Bick served as club President.
1946	Harry Bumgardner served as club President.
1947	Stan Persson served as club President.
1948	Stan Persson served as club President.
1949	Charles Glass served as club President.
1950	Charles Glass served as club President.
	Late in 1950, the Janesville Conservation Club teamed with the Blatz Brewing Company to print educational posters and promotional advertising that directed the collection of tons of roadside litter.
	The club developed the only trout stream in Rock County—Spring Brook, on the city's southeast side. Wing dams were constructed, and much bank improvement work was done, including tree planting.
	Under the direction of Al Moore and Bob Blumreich, club members spent many man-hours to create the recreational area.

Date	Event
1951	Charles Weber served as club President.
1952	Elmer Schumacher served as club President.
1953	Elmer Schumacher served as club President.
1954	Harry Bumgardner served as club President.
1955	Frank Verbest served as club President.
1956	Scott Marshall served as club President.
1957	Scott Marshall served as club President.
1958	Scott Marshall served as club President.
1959	Earl Glass served as club President.
1960	Earl Glass served as club President.
1961	Earl Glass served as club President.
1962	Charles Glass served as club President.
1963	Charles Glass served as club President.
1964	Charles Glass served as club President.
1965	Bernard Thompson served as club President.
1966	James Paul served as club President.
	The club began erecting wood duck houses.
	The club had 4 traps and held registered shoots.
1967	James Paul served as club President.
	The club donated the money to have six potholes of various sizes blasted in Lima Marsh.
	The club established the scholarship fund.
1968	Gerald Reinke served as club President.
	The club moved the pheasant pens from Evansville and placed them at Sportsman Park in Janesville.

Date	Event
	Trees from the project (1940) line both sides of Highway 51 from the city limits to the Highway 14 intersection. Rudy Sterk and Ken Bick were among the leaders in this project.
	The club constructed Trap No. 5.
	The club also started a vigorous scholarship program for boys and girls interested in pursuing a conservation-oriented vocation. The club awarded three college scholarships and sponsored two high school girls at the summer camp at Wyalusing.
1969	John Link served as club President.
	The club started the first annual ice fishing derby—which was Curt Geller's idea—and netted \$360. Succeeding years brought the total to nearly \$4000.
	Every dollar netted went directly into conservation work—most of it into habitat development.
1970	Ed Kotthaus served as club President.
1971	Ed Kotthaus served as club President.
1972	Ed Kotthaus served as club President.
1973	Al Hamilton served as club President.
	The club held the 3 rd annual fish derby on Whitewater Lake which continued through 1973.
	The club held hunter safety courses.
1974	Al Hamilton served as club President.
	The club held 3 registered shoots.
1975	Robert Follett served as club President.
	The club purchased its first international trap.
	200-bird singles were discontinued for any one-day registered shoot.
	The club's by-laws were updated.
1976	Carl Lichtfuss served as club President.
1977	Orvin Nelson served as club President.

Date	Event
1978	Orvin Nelson served as club President.
	The club held 7 registered shoots.
	The club had 445 members this year.
1979	Ronald Melvin served as club President.
	The club purchased 3 trap machines from the Burlington Conservation Club. One was an international machine.
	Bob Follett acquired some iron for new scoring benches, which Jim Woodward Sr. made.
	In the spring, the club added Traps No. 1 and No. 8, and also moved the driveway to accommodate Trap No. 1.
	In September, the club decided to build an addition to the clubhouse.
1980	Al Hamilton served as club President.
	The club completed the addition to the club house.
1981	Robert Follet served as club President.
1982	Bernard Bond served as club President, and then resigned. Kenneth Schwanke assumed duties as club President for the rest of the year.
	The club held 8 registered shoots.
1983	Kenneth Schwanke served as club President.
1984	Kenneth Schwanke served as club President.
1985	Kenneth Schwanke served as club President.
1986	Kenneth Schwanke served as club President.
	Earl Dennis made outdoor gun racks for the club.
1987	Earl Dennis served as club President.
	The club installed the sign by the driveway.
1988	Randy Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$100.
1989	Randy Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$459. The club distributed the money to the

Date	Event
	following organization:
	• Echo – \$459
	The club installed a new furnace and well pump.
1990	Donald Morse served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$778. The club distributed the money to the following organization:
	• Special Olympics – \$778
1991	Donald Morse served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$653. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	The City of JanesvilleThe Janesville Boys and Girls Club
	The club provided a new fence for the deer pen at Sportsman's Park.
1992	Don Scidmore served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$826. The club distributed the money to the following organization:
	The Rock County Healthcare and Hospice
	The club installed central air for the comfort of its members.
1993	Don Scidmore served as club President.
	Ken Arndt handled the pheasant and deer project.
1994	Don Scidmore served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$550. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 The Rock County Healthcare and Hospice – \$275 Pheasants Forever – \$275
	The club purchased a used Remington 1100 trap gun for \$275 for club use.
1995	Mel Morgan served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$1,850. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 The Janesville Park District (Camden Park Project) – \$700

Date	Event
	 The Green Beret Marching Band – \$700 Pheasants Forever – \$250 Ducks Unlimited – \$200
	The club decided to not hold national trapshooting day anymore. The weather just wasn't favorable at that time of year for the club to profit from the shoot.
	The club purchased a Compaq 486 personal computer and an Okidata printer to be used for the registered shoots.
	Because of county funding cut backs, the club ended its pheasant project.
1996	Don Scidmore served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$2,060. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 The Janesville Park District (for Camden Park Project) – \$1610 Pheasants Forever – \$250 Ducks Unlimited – \$200
1997	Don Scidmore served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$2,060. The club distributed the money to the following organization:
	 The Janesville Park District (for Ice Age Trails, the Parks Tree Fund, and Camden Park) – \$2,200
	The club replaced outside lights.
1998	Robert Follett served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$1,800. The club distributed the money to the following organization:
	 The Janesville Park District – \$1,800
1999	Robert Follett served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$2,000. The club distributed the money to the following organization:
	 The Janesville Park District – \$2,000
	The club purchased a used tractor with forks on it—to be used to carry the targets to the trap houses. Prior to this, the targets were loaded onto a small trailer and pulled behind someone's vehicle. Occasionally, cases of targets fell off of the trailer and got damaged. The purchase of the tractor

Date Event reduced target breakage and loading time.

The club purchased a new computer to upgrade its former system.

2000 Robert Follett served as club President.

The club did not hold a charity shoot this year.

The club erected a metal storage shed at the west end of the driveway. The purpose of the building is to house the tractor, the riding lawn mower, the edger, and the gasoline can. The building will also be used to store extra targets at that end of the grounds when the club holds major shoots. A shelter was added to the north end of the shed to provide shade for the shooters in the summer.

The family of Jim Woodard Sr. donated \$200 to the club in his honor, and the money was used for the shed project.

The club had a plaque made and placed on the shed in Jim Woodard's honor.

The WTA asked the club to host the ATA Central Zone shoot—normally held at Waukesha. The club agreed to host the shoot, even though parking was a major concern. Just before the event, the club's neighbor, Mr. Hughes, agreed to lease his field to us for parking. The club then erected a walking bridge over his fence for the shooters' convenience. The club also ordered Porta Potties to handle the crowd. This was the biggest shoot in the club's history—we threw 91,400 targets over the 3-day event. The club would have thrown more if it weren't for the bad weather that plagued the last 2 days of the shoot. On Saturday, a severe storm went through the area, and the city of Janesville lost its power for several days. The shoot was delayed twice because of the weather. Scoring benches and a pot were turned completely upside down.

In September, the first 6 trap houses were dug out and new prefabricated houses were installed. The club also purchased 6 new Pat Traps.

Members of the club spent many hours digging out the old trap houses and replacing them with new ones. The electrical work was updated. The club completed the first 6 traps in time for the start of the jackpot season in January.

The club purchased a printer to be used as a replacement for the old one and to be able to print checks.

The club purchased a new flat grill for the kitchen and a commercial deepfat fryer.

Date	Event
2001	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$1,734. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 City of Janesville, Parks Division – \$734 Fishing Has No Boundaries – \$500 Scholarship from JCC – \$500 (to be awarded in 2002 to a deserving college student entering the field of Conservation)
	The club initially started the Wall of Honor to commemorate those who have donated their time to promote and support the club and have since passed on.
	The club then decided to expand the Wall of Honor by recognizing deserving club members who are still alive. A plaque with the recipient's picture will be placed on the wall.
	The first recipients of this honor are James Woodard Sr., Ed Kothaus, and Ron Morse.
2002	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$3,000. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 City of Janesville, Parks Division – \$2,000 Fishing Has No Boundaries – \$500 Scholarship from JCC – \$500 (to be awarded in 2003 to a deserving college student entering the field of Conservation)
	Earl Dennis, Bob Follett, and Vivian Follet were added to the Wall of Honor.
2003	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$3,500. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 City of Janesville, Parks Division – \$2,500 Fishing Has No Boundaries – \$500 Janesville chapter of the Special Olympics – \$500
	The club purchased 8 sets of Outers voice calls and replaced trap houses No. 7 and No. 8.
	Mary (Reinke) Lang started running the club kitchen.
	Al Hamilton and Don Scidmore were added to the Wall of Honor.

Date	Event
2004	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$2,500. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 City of Janesville, Parks Division – \$1,000 Fishing Has No Boundaries – \$500 HealthNet of Rock County – \$500 Scholarship from JCC – \$500 (to be awarded in 2005 to a deserving college student entering the field of Conservation)
	The club installed a computer networking system.
	A local Boy Scout troop scored the registered shoots, saving the club over \$5000.
2005	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$3,800. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 City of Janesville, Parks Division – \$1,800 HealthNet of Rock County – \$1,000 Fishing Has No Boundaries – \$500
	Scholarship from JCC – \$500 (to be awarded in 2006 to a deserving college student entering the field of Conservation). If no one applies for the scholarship, the \$500 will go to HospiceCare of Janesville.
	Steve Johnson shot a 300 x 300 at Janesville, and in the process completed his Grand Slam by virtue of his 100 straight from the 27-yard line. The club awarded him a plaque.
	Rudy Sterk was added to the Wall of Honor.
	The club relinquished the deer park to Jim and Nancy Schoonover.
2006	Bill Boyd served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$3,500. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 City of Janesville, Parks Division – \$1,500 Fishing Has No Boundaries – \$500 HealthNet of Rock County – \$750 YWCA CARE House – \$750
	The JCC website was founded.
	The club installed 3S trap software to aid in registered shoots.

Date Event

The club hosted the 5-man team shoot.

Ron "Red" Melvin was added to the Wall of Honor.

Al Arner redesigned the club logo (below) and built a large wooden replica that hangs in the clubhouse.



2007	Bill Boyd served as club President.
	The club threw a total of 432,397 targets for the year.
2008	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	Roger Sawvell was added to the Wall of Honor.
2009	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	Dave Hanson was added to the Wall of Honor.
2010	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	Randy and Mary Bleiler were added to the Wall of Honor.
2011	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$3,300. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 City of Janesville, Parks Division – \$1,000
	Fishing Has No Boundaries – \$200
	 HealthNet of Rock County – \$800 Project 16:49 – \$800
	 YWCA CARE House – \$500

Dell Fassbender was added to the Wall of Honor

2012	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
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The Charity Shoot raised \$4,000. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:

- City of Janesville, Parks Division \$1,000
- HealthNet of Rock County \$500
- Milton Food Pantry \$1000
- Project 16:49 \$500
- YWCA CARE House \$500
- Scholarship from JCC \$500 (to be awarded in 2013 to a deserving college student entering the field of Conservation)

Al Arner and Bill Boyd were added to the Wall of Honor.

The club installed a new roof on the clubhouse.

The club started a Youth Shooting Program in the summer by offering an 8-week *Introduction to Trapshooting* class.

The Youth Shooting Program launched its inaugural newsletter—*Track It and Blast It*!

The club threw a total of 285,175 targets for the year.

2013 Mary Bleiler served as club President.

The Charity Shoot raised \$5,300. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:

- City of Janesville, Parks Division \$1,100
- Fishing Has No Boundaries \$500
- HealthNet of Rock County \$800
- Project 16:49 \$800
- Wounded Warrior Project \$800
- YWCA CARE House \$800
- Scholarship from JCC \$500 (to be awarded in 2014 to a deserving college student entering the field of Conservation)

The club hosted the ATA Central Zone shoot.

Alan Urban made new outdoor gun racks for the club as part of his service requirements for the rank of Eagle Scout. His gun racks replaced those made by Earl Dennis in 1986 (approx.).

The club installed new lights on trap fields No. 3 and No. 4.

The club redesigned its website to attract new shooters, provide more visibility in the community, and offer access by smart phones, tablets, and computers.

	The Youth Shooting Program expanded to a 16-week season, and the kids in the program started competing in registered shoots.
	The Youth Shooting Program applied for and received a grant from the NRA Foundation for \$4,800. The money was used for practice ammunition.
	Members of the Milton High School cheerleading squad, and members of the JCC Youth Trap Team scored the club's 12 registered shoots.
	Gordie Ringlien was added to the Wall of Honor.
	The club threw a total of 351,075 targets for the year.
2014	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$6,500. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 City of Janesville, Parks Division – \$1,500 Fishing Has No Boundaries – \$500 HealthNet of Rock County – \$1,300 Project 16:49 – \$1,200 Wounded Warrior Project – \$800 YWCA CARE House – \$1,200
	The club hosted the ATA Central Zone shoot.
	The club purchased and installed a new Canterbury wireless voice release system for all 8 trap houses.
	The club purchased a new furnace and installed some new windows to reduce the utility bills.
	The Youth Shooting Program created an endowment account with the Midway USA Foundation.
	The Youth Shooting Program applied for and received a grant from the NRA Foundation for \$1,000. The money was used for practice ammunition.
2015	Mary Bleiler served as club President.
	The Charity Shoot raised \$4,845. The club distributed the money to the following organizations:
	 City of Janesville, Parks Division – \$1,000 Fishing Has No Boundaries – \$400 HealthNet of Rock County – \$800 Project 16:49 – \$800 Wounded Warrior Project – \$500

- YWCA CARE House \$845
- Conservation Scholarship \$500

The club hosted the WI SE Zone shoot.

The club hosted the ATA Central Zone shoot.

The club threw over 300,000 targets for the year.

Members of the Milton High School cheerleading squad scored the club's 12 registered shoots.

The Janesville Conservation Club was featured in the July issue of Trap & Field. Bob Zanocco framed the article and presented it to the club, where it now hangs.

The club upgraded its servers and clients to help run registered shoots more efficiently.

The club purchased four used traps from the Brodhead Trap Club.

The north end of the storage shed was enclosed to provide more space for the club's tractors.