

Adirondack Almanack  
July 23, 2011

BLOG ENTRY

## Invasives Program Named 'Conservationist of the Year'

BY THE ALMANACK STAFF

The Adirondack Invasive Plant Program (APIPP) received the Adirondack Council's "2001 Conservationist of the Year" award in a ceremony at the historic Irondequoit Inn on July 9. APIPP is the 27th winner of the prestigious annual award. APIPP Director Hilary Smith accepted on the award on the organization's behalf.

"APIPP has pioneered the effort to get control of the invasive, non-native plants that threaten to destroy and replace the healthy, native trees and plants of our vast Adirondack forests," said Brian L. Houseal, Executive Director of the Adirondack Council. "Under Hilary Smith's leadership, APIPP has identified the places that need immediate attention and has trained and organized an army of volunteers to take on the hard work. It is not easy to identify, and then properly remove and dispose of invaders so they don't take root somewhere else.

"Hilary has also pioneered public education efforts on invasive plants by holding workshops and by writing a newspaper column that appears in local publications across the Park," Houseal added. "That way, APIPP is reaching thousands of people who can take action in their own neighborhoods. Hilary has also expanded her education efforts to invasive insect species, such as the Asian long-horned beetle, the emerald ash borer and other non-native pests that threaten to damage the forests of the Adirondack Park."

The Irondequoit Inn is the first southern Adirondack venue to host the Adirondack Council's annual meeting and awards luncheon. The inn was founded by The Piseco Company in 1892, the same year that the Adirondack Park was created by the NYS Legislature and Gov. Roswell Flower of Watertown. The Irondequoit is on 600 acres between the West Canada Lake Wilderness, to the north, and the Silver Lake Wilderness, just south of the inn.

At the awards ceremony, Smith received a full-size, hand-carved common loon, created by carver and Town of Inlet seasonal resident Robert Padden. The "Conservationist of the Year" award has for the past decade been carved by long-time Adirondack Council member and seasonal resident of the neighboring hamlet of Old Forge, Dr. Robert Poe. Dr. Poe passed away in January 2011.

Previous Adirondack Council Conservationist of the Year award winners include Adirondack Harvest (2010); Governors George E. Pataki and Mario M. Cuomo; New York Times editor John Oakes; NYS Attorney General Dennis Vacco, NYS DEC Commissioner John P. Cahill; Senate EnCon Chairman Carl Marcellino, Assembly EnCon Chairman Richard Brodsky; Assembly EnCon Chair Maurice Hinchey; Adirondack Park Agency Executive Director Robert Glennon;

Adirondack activists including Peter Borrelli, the late Clarence Petty, the late Paul Schaefer and the late State Senator and Public Service Commission Chairman Harold Jerry.

The Adirondack Council is a privately funded, not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring the wild character and ecological integrity of New York's 9,300-square-mile Adirondack Park. Founded in 1975, the Council carries out its mission through research, education, advocacy and legal action. Adirondack Council members live in all 50 United States.

Photo: Left to right are Brian Houseal, Adirondack Council Executive Director; Hillary O. Smith, Director of APIPP; Brandon Quirion, of APIPP; and Brian Ruder, former Chairman of the Adirondack Council (his term ended that day).