

A LOCAL CHAPTER OF
AMERICA'S LEADING NONPROFIT
COLDWATER FISHERIES
CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

THE MERSHON MUDDLER

◆ *Newsletter of the Mershon-Neumann Heritage Chapter of Trout Unlimited* ◆

1989, 1996 & 1997 RECIPIENT OF THE MICHIGAN COUNCIL TU CHAPTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Meanders

A few thoughts from
the president
Laurie Seibert



Laurie Seibert, chapter president

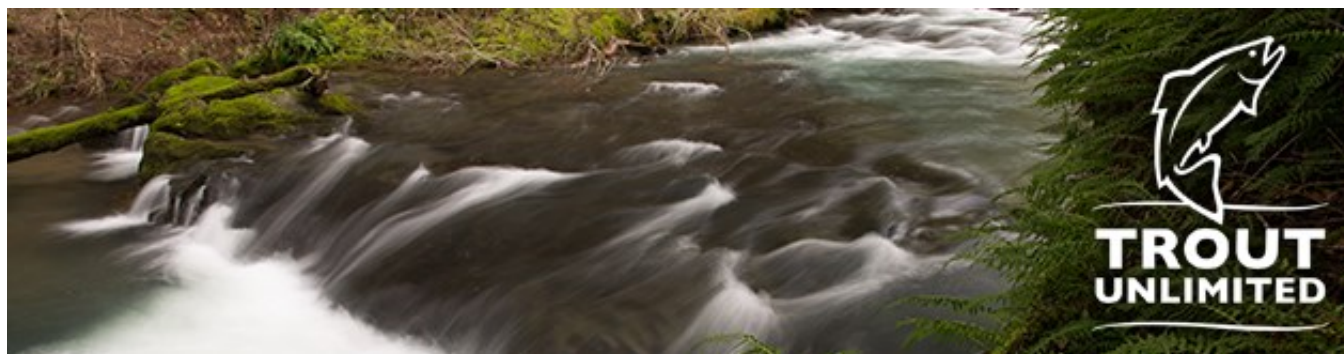
I love January- the return to structure, cleaning out the old and starting with a fresh slate. Our chapter also seems to use January as a reset point. We begin discussing candidates for new directors, planning for events begins in earnest, and we settle into the business of doing some good for cold water resources.

Our annual meeting is the official election time for new directors. Last year we had no candidates; this year we have so many excellent nominees we need to adjust our bylaws to include them all on the board. What a wonderful problem to have! Each candidate brings with them a different set of skills, interest, and reason to join. Some are conservation enthusiasts, some are educators who want to share their knowledge, some are just feeling it's time to give back to the sport. Whatever their motivation, we welcome them. Please either come to the annual meeting and vote in person, or look for your ballot in your email to offer your support of the board and their new members.

Leaders are not just on the board- we have many members who share their time and talent to bring our chapter goals to fruition. Members stepped forward to organize our online store, set up the film tour, complete the Gamble Creek conservation project, and teach beginners to tie flies.

But we need more people like them. There are no plans to host a banquet. No one wants to step forward to serve on the committee much less chair it. We struggle to get people to run an educational program for youth. We do not have a membership, education, or diversity chair person. These are all important roles that do not need to be held by a director. Please consider helping with one of these positions.

I feel great pride and satisfaction with what our chapter is working toward. But I also see so much more we can do. Thank you for allowing me to be the leader of this chapter, and thank you for showing your support for me, the board, and the fish, by giving of your time, ideas, and talent. ◆



Annual Meeting

by Laurie Seibert, chapter president

Coming to the annual meeting will be a new experience this year. After conducting the meeting virtually the past few years; we are returning to an in person meeting with a bang! We will forgo the traditional fish dinner by substituting a buffet at the Horizon Center featuring prime rib, shrimp and pasta, and chicken piccante; along with the sides and salads. Kevin

Feenstra, noted author, fishing guide, and nature photographer will do TWO of his most popular presentations: matching baitfish and birds along Michigan's rivers and waterways.

Plan on attending February 10, 2023 at the Horizon Center in Saginaw. Happy hour starts at 5:00 with a cash bar. Kevin's first presentation on birds will begin at 6:00, dinner at 6:45, and the baitfish presentation will begin following the meal. Kevin uses his experience as a popular guide to describe how and when to use artificial means to match these

baitfish; knowledge which will enhance any angler's skill set.

Please encourage your friends to attend. You do not need to be a member to enjoy the evening.

Due to the nature of this event, tickets are \$50.00 and MUST be purchased prior to February 3. They are available online at mershon-neumanntu.org. ♦

SAVE THE DATE

Save our cold-water resources

Annual Meeting

February 10, 2023 | Horizons Conference Center, Saginaw

Purchase tickets TODAY! @ Mershon-NeumannTU.org



Editor's Column

by David Oeming, chapter editor

"Americans of all ages, all conditions, all minds constantly unite. . . . (in) America I encountered sorts of associations of which, I confess, I had no idea, and I often admired the infinite art with which the inhabitants of the United States managed to fix a common goal to the efforts of many men and to get them to advance to it freely." "In the United States, as soon as several inhabitants have taken an opinion or an idea they wish to promote in society, they seek each other out and unite together once they have made contact. From that moment, they are no longer isolated but have become a power seen from afar whose activities serve as an example and whose words are heeded"

—Alexis de Tocqueville,
Democracy in America (excerpts)
(1840)

All Chapter members, and other *Muddler* readers, are cold-water fishery enthusiasts. Each may not be a born leader – many are loners and outright standoffish regarding favorite runs and holes – but all enjoy hanging out with like-minded persons who fish. No one joins a TU Chapter to flaunt personal expertise and acumen regarding dominion and control over a fish

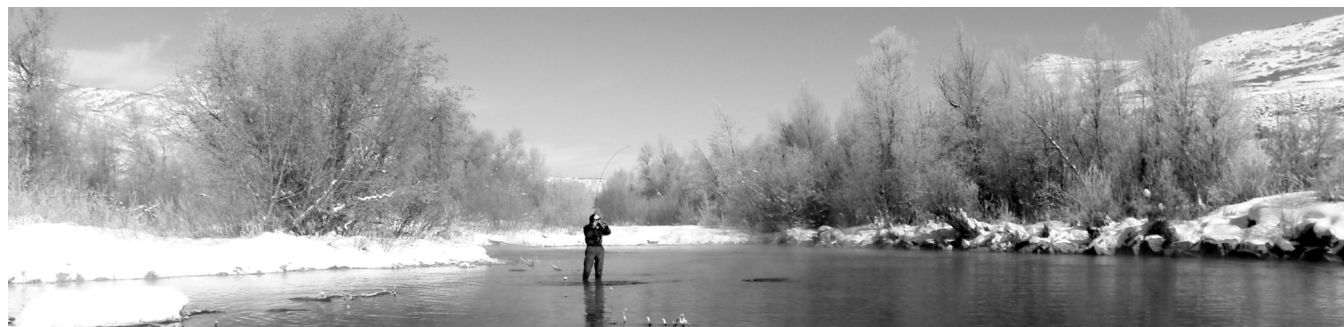
measured in inches; in fact, most members hope covertly, if not outright openly, to find out how, when, and where to pursue and hopefully capture such a trout. We all have our secrets, but we believe other like-minded folks have better secrets than we do.

Our indefatigable President Laurie Seibert notes in her President's Message following herein that the Chapter is short several board members. The job of a Chapter Board person is not onerous – can't be, because in the misty past the Board allowed me as a member – but it is essential to continuing the fine work of the Mershon-Neumann Chapter. I can say from my experience that the reward of joining other people to advance, discuss, plan, promote, and simply roll around in the common goal of improving cold-water fisheries in Michigan makes board membership, as Tom Sawyer would have it regarding redecoration of a white picket fence, into play rather than work.

As for de Tocqueville's "power seen from afar . . . whose words are heeded", readers of the *Muddler* are well aware of the current threat to enjoyment and use of the Manistee and Au Sable River regions including **over 480 square miles of adjoining public lands and two significant watersheds** because of the Camp Grayling land and Alpena Air National Guard airspace expansion requests pending before our Governor for

approval. There are social media sites full of and even devoted to polemic and vitriolic comment about these proposals, but these sites are simply noisy, not analytically or politically relevant. The words that will be heeded by the decision makers – read, our Governor acting as Commander in Chief of the Michigan National Guard and Air National Guard, and as Chief Executive of both the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs – will be written and communicated by associations such as Michigan TU and the Mershon-Neumann Heritage Chapter, not anonymous (or simply initialed) commenters on Facebook and Twitter.

It takes an informed, motivated, and committed Board of Directors to be heard by the decision makers. President Seibert cannot do it all herself; running an effective organization is a community endeavor. Please contact Laurie Seibert or a current board member now and volunteer to help the chapter. ♦



Chapter Events

Please put these activities on your calendar. Additional information will be on our website, mershon-neumanntu.org; or on our facebook page, www.facebook.com/mershon.tu

Fly tying squirmy wormies. No experience or equipment needed. Tie one for yourself and one to donate to the tie-a-thon	Free!	January 14, 2023	11:00	Alice and Jack Wirth Library, Bay City	Contact Laurie 989-205-3763
Annual meeting featuring two presentations from Kevin Feenstra as well as a full deluxe buffet meal.	\$50.00 per person. Tickets are required and must be purchased online prior to Feb 3, 2023	February 10, 2023	Happy hour at 5:00, bird presentation at 6:00, dinner served at 6:45, followed by a presentation on baitfish	Horizon Center, Saginaw	Mershon-neumanntu.org for tickets
Women 'n Waders Designed to give the basic information needed to get started in fly fishing. No equipment or experience needed.	\$20.00 per person, tickets and registration online beginning in February.	Apr 8, 2023	8:30 to 3:30	Saginaw Valley Research and Extension Center	mershon-neumanntu@mershon-neumanntu.org
Women on the Water weekend at Pere Marquette River Lodge.	Pricing is being finalized but it will include two nights lodging (double occupancy) at the Pere Marquette River Lodge, full day guided float trip on Saturday, and most meals including something special for Mother's Day.	May 12-14	Check in Friday evening, check out Sunday morning after breakfast	Pere Marquette River Lodge	Updated information will be found on facebook: https://www.facebook.com/events/940760797088253?context=%7B%22event_action_history%22%3A[%7B%22surface%22%3A%22page%22%7D]%7D Or contact Laurie at president@mershon-neumanntu.org
Michigan Trout Unlimited Youth and Conservation Camp	Contact the chapter for sponsorship information. Applications are due before April 30.	June 18-23	12:00 noon on the 28 until 12:00 noon on the 23	Ralph A. MacMullen Conference Center, Roscommon MI	Application: https://michigan-tucamp.org/camper-application/

Lost and Found

by Larry Brown, chapter director

At one time or another, we all find ourselves lost. Sometimes this happens in the woods or when following a new trout stream flowing deep through uncharted territory. Rarely is the realization that of being lost the result of deliberate action. More often it comes from being lost in other thoughts and not paying close attention to the task at hand. Keeping calm and thinking clear are essential to finding your way back to familiar ground.

Several past episodes come to mind. One involved a Spring backpacking trek through the Susquehanna Mountains of Pennsylvania. The weather had been quite variable. On the first night, our tent had collapsed under heavy snowfall. Later in the week, we were hiking in shorts. During one of the daily treks, our

tent poles fell out of my partner's pack. He continued walking for several hours. That evening we noticed our missing equipment. The two of us went back to get it while the rest of the group made dinner and fished for trout. As we walked up Cardiac Hill, darkness rapidly descended. After insisting that I go back to our camp, my partner ran ahead, taking our only light with him. Now left alone in the dark, I lost the trail. Walking in near total darkness through steep terrain proved tedious. The thick brush required holding your arms upright in front of your face. Using your feet, you could sort of feel where the trail was. When you started stepping on brush, you were off the trail. Quiet walking meant you were still on the trail. At best it was slow progress, punctuated by startled deer crashing away through the thickets. Our camp was several miles downhill. After an indeterminable amount of time and several breaks to calm down, the lights our camp came into view. I found my partner was already there. I quickly

walked up to him, clenched my fist until the knuckles showed white, and hit him squarely in the mouth. Our partnership ended then and there.

Another incident occurred while hiking with a large group on the Chilkoot trail through the coastal mountain range of Alaska. Here we played follow the leader along a well used trail through damp coastal rain forest. The steep terrain was thick with towering trees: Canadian Hemlock, Douglas Fir, Sitka Spruce, and Aspen. The forest floor was covered with thick mats of moss. Occasional open areas held patches of prickly leaves with Cloudberries the size of quarters. Now and then, you would spot a huge pile of dung, full of berry seeds and long black hair. We trudged on, feeling quite small amongst our majestic surroundings. Slowly the trail narrowed, then abruptly ended at a large matted down area littered with fresh dung.

(Continued on page 6)



Found, *continued from page 5*

We had lost the trail. Suddenly, a flurry of snapping saplings, cracking branches, and rapid heavy footfalls reached our ears. It sounded like a locomotive was going through the woods. Fortunately, it was traveling away from us. Then all was quiet. We took a compass heading, did a quick about face, and headed downslope, away from the terrifying noise. In a half hour or so, we regained our properly marked trail. From then on, we stuck together, made a bit of noise, and paid close attention to our route. Thereafter, it often felt as if some large animal was watching us.

Of course, trout fishing always carries the inherent risk of getting lost. When exploring new territory, you just stay in the water and let the river be your guide. Taking shortcuts by bushwacking often results in trouble. The old timers used to say that when you are lost you tend to travel in circles because one leg is stronger than the other. After a while, the woods all look the same. It is a cloudy day. You cannot hear the river or see the sun. Now, you are lost. Consult with your compass, be mindful of the local iron rich rock strata, and calm yourself. Ah, there is a nice deer trail leading toward toward a creek.. Indeed, following creeks always leads to larger water. Deer trails often follow the most efficient path. None to soon, the beautiful river becomes visible up ahead. Wading upstream proves tiring. After some time, far in the distance, your truck appears. You have found your way out. A cold beer awaits.

Sometimes you get lost for a different reason. The novelist George Higgins once said, "Life is hard, and it's a lot harder if you are stupid." It begins with walking out on the ice of the bay with the wind at your back. You continue walking until you are too tired to walk any more. The shoreline fades into the distance amid blue ice

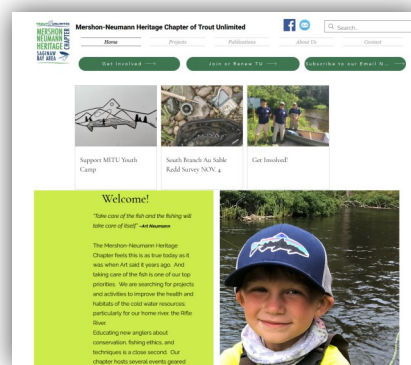
and sparse swirling snow. There is plenty of time. Why not check on the fish? A hole is quickly spudded, a baited hook is sent down. After awhile, the first perch is raised through the hole, followed by several others in quick succession. The fish bucket is filling up with future tasty morsels. At home they will be quickly fileted, dusted in fry mix, fried in hot oil, garnished with almonds and quickly devoured. Or maybe not.

Time passes unnoticed. The snow continues to increase in volume and ferocity. The shore is now totally obscure in the distance. When the fish bucket is full, you stand up to see a landscape gone completely white. You have no idea in which direction the shore lies. Your compass is in the car. You decide to head for shore, hoping you can choose the right direction. You have no tracks to follow, no point of reference, nothing is left to mark the way. You make a long trek that ends near open water. You turn about face and continue walking. Night is descending, You continue walking. You pass your own tracks in the snow. You have made a big circle. You sit down for several minutes to clarify your options. Slowly, the snow is clearing. There lie the lights of the shore. Your long walk begins. Three or four miles, who really knows? You reach the parking lot bone tired, completely chilled, and totally relieved Your car is not there. You ask a stranger, "What landing is this?" His reply confirms that you have walked to the landing that is a mile north of where you parked. Another long walk awaits.

The ride home is uneventful. The heater is blasting warm air on your wet clothes. A hot shower, a big meal, and a warm bed await you. In the morning, you have fish to clean. Your wife greets you at the door, "How was fishing, dear?" "Oh, the usual," You reply. Life is good for another day. ♦

Check out the Merston- Neumann Heritage Chapter of Trout Unlimited online

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Merston-NeumannTU.org



Find us on Twitter
@wbmershontu



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facebook.com/Merston.TU

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Squirmy Wormies

Squirmy Wormies...as much fun to say as they are to tie! Seventeen members of the community came together January 14 to tie 100 squirmy worms for the Tie-a-Thon. Experienced and brand new tiers alike sat at the vices and had a great time watching the board fill with a wide variety of the wiggly lures. ♦



Tippet Size in X	Diameter	Approximate Breaking Strength LBS	Recommended Fly Size
8X	.003"	1.75	22-28
7X	.004"	2.5	18-24
6X	.004"	3.5	16-22
5X	.006"	4.75	14-18
4X	.007"	6	12-16
3X	.008"	8.25	6-8
2X	.009"	11.5	4-8
1X	.010"	13.5	2-6
0X	.011"	15.5	1/0-4

It's Time to Apply for the Michigan Trout Unlimited Youth and Conservation Camp

The Michigan Trout Unlimited Youth and Conservation Camp will be held June 18-23 at the Ralph A. MacMullen Conference Center in Roscommon. Our chapter not only sends several adults to act as counselors, but we also send 2-3 campers each year. If you have a youth, age 13-26, who has any interest in fishing or conserving could water resources, please contact us so your student can be one of the kids we send.

There is no experience or equipment other than a pair of waders needed. The camp provides varied and constant activities to fill the four day time frame designed to help develop skills and interests in conservation and the fish we work hard to protect.

Applications can be found at michigantucamp.org/camper-application and must be submitted prior to Apr 8, 2023. Before completing the application, please contact Laurie at president@mershon-neumanntu.org for assistance. ♦



Macbeth and Flyfishing

as Bob Kren recalls from English 4, toward the middle of the last century

Act I, scene 1

It's a pretty nice day on the heath, really. Enter three flyfishers.

First Flyfisher (FFF): When shall we three meet again,
In thunder, lightning, or at the local bar?

Second Flyfisher (SFF): When the casting's tossed, and done,
When the fish is lost, or won.

Third Flyfisher (TFF): Where the place? At the barstools or in a booth?

Other two: How uncouth!

This is The Bard!, dammit! Show some respect.

All FF: Wherever 'tis, 'tis there to meet with (loud thunder, spooky voices whisper) . . . Macbeth.

Act I, scene 3*

The Heath, a local estaminet (that's Italics for "bar")

FFF (slightly tipsy): Hey!, bro! Where you been?

TFF (slurring his words): A warden's wife had some M&M's in her lap
And munched and munched. "Arrest ye none, wife," your hubby's gone
And you have no badge to carry, nor ticket to issue.

SFF (lifting his head off the bar, slightly): Thash tellin' 'er. Urp! (noisily replaces head back on bar)

Enter Macbeth and I. We're buds, you know.

MacBeth (MacB): So foul and fair a day I have not seen. Speaking of "foul,"

Who are you three, so drenched and drained in your attire

That you look not like the inhabitants of this world.

Speak, if you can: what are you?

All FF:: Just some flyfishers from downstate Saginaw way.

And who are you to talk, all decked out in Patagonias and pantaloons?

Who do you think you are, Mel Gibson and Moe Howard (loud Saginawian laughter)?

MacB and Bob K:: Nope.

All FF: Oh. All hail, MacB! Lord of nympling, and dries!

All hail, MacBeth! Lord of streamers and wets!

All hail, MacBeth! That shalt be Kreh hereafter!

All hail, BobK! Lesser than MacBeth, and greater!

Not so happy, yet much happier! "Kreh" and "Kren."

Weigh them, yours is as heavy, speak them, it doth become the mouth as well. Conjure with . . .

MacB: Awright!, awright! Wrong play, already!* Sheesh!

All FF: Lay on, Macbeth, and ready thyself for thy big sloliq . . ., solqui, . . speech.

Act V, scene 5*

Macbeth is at his tying bench.

MacB: Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow

Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,

Until finally Opening Day strides in russet mantle clad

O'er yon high eastward hill.*

'Til then, there's the magics of anticipation and preparation.

Act IV, scene 1*

All FF: 'Round about the tying vise fly,

On the hook ingredients tie,

Deer hair, from ripe roadkill rife

With ages' odors and yet, giving life

On the steel first to lie.

Hey, we're 'bout out of room

On this page to vent our gloom.

Let's just quit, while we're ahead

Call it a day, then off to bed.

** I skip around a lot. Even among plays. It's what's called "autistic license." Look it up. BK*

MERSHON-NEUMANN HERITAGE CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED 2022-2023

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The Mershon-Neumann Heritage Chapter of Trout Unlimited wishes to extend a heart-felt thank you to these businesses and individuals. Their generous support helps to defray the costs associated with distributing this Muddler.


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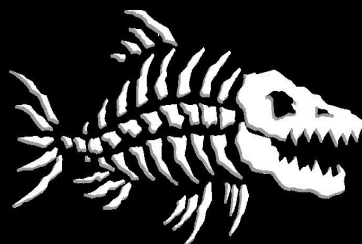
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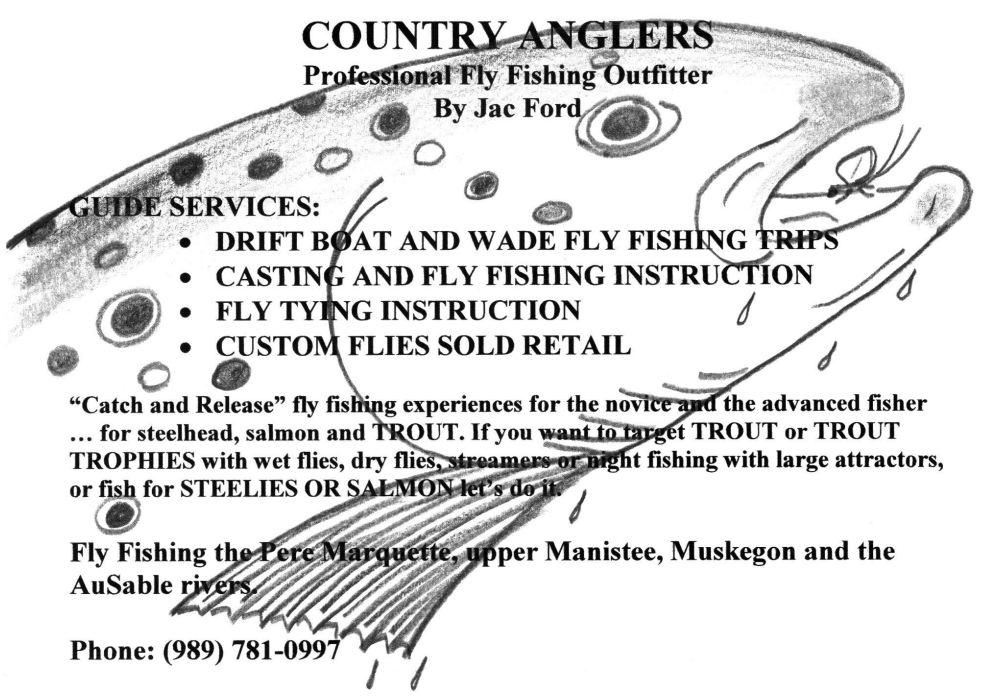
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MERSHON-NEUMANN HERITAGE CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING SCHEDULE

*All Board meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month
at 5:30 p.m. We usually meet at W.L. Case Funeral Home, 4480 Mackinaw Road, Saginaw.
However, until it is safe and feasible to meet in-person, we are meeting via Zoom.*

February 1, 2023

March 1, 2023

April 5, 2023

May 3, 2023

—No meetings during summer months—

**We welcome you to attend any of the board meetings.
Your input is an invaluable resource in our efforts to serve the resources we enjoy.**

**To join our Zoom board meeting, use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87838776443>
or dial in +1 312 626 6799,87838776443#.**