

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

Last October, near the end of the month, there was a post on the TU Open Forum from Chris Wood, TU President and CEO. Apparently there was a Nissan commercial showing a truck driving down the middle of a stream. Chris asked that others join him in sending Nissan a message that it was not OK to glamorize the destruction of a natural resource. Within hours others had added to the thread, contributing their versions of the letters they sent and adding in addresses and links where complaints could be shared. Nine days later Chris added another post- Nissan had edited the commercial to remove the stream footage for future viewing and removed the ad from youtube and the World Series. And sent a check for \$10,000 to help TU in their efforts.

Wow. I felt so proud of how something so powerful was accomplished so quickly by working together. Then I felt regret. I wanted to be a part of that. I meant to- I was going to write my own letter; no copying someone else's words for me. I was going to click on that link... but not from my phone. As soon as I was on my computer Nissan was going to get an earful! I'll finish folding this laundry and then write a great letter. But I never did. And a difference was made without me.

I don't mean to imply Nissan would have pulled that ad completely or sent \$15,000 if they knew their behavior bothered Laurie Seibert. I just would have liked the feeling that what I did mattered.

Everyday we make decisions about what we put energy into. Like many people, I tend to choose what is easiest, what doesn't cause any confrontation, or what seems like the most fun. But every now and then I feel a spark to do a bit more.....to maybe push myself and make someone uncomfortable by speaking up. Or spend more time doing something because it will help people I don't know. Sometimes I think about "what will matter next year?" And I rarely decide it's folding socks.



Image shamelessly taken from the Nissan ad.

We all can't do everything, but if we all do something.....

My challenge to you this new year is to find one thing- just one- that will make you proud you contributed. My guess is; once we find out that it wasn't that hard and we feel so darn good, we'll find another thing.

Myself and the Board of Directors and Advisors wish you and your important people a year full of gratitude.

Here's a newer picture that at least shows a little that I'm female...

We're getting busy!

We are cautiously planning a full lineup of activities for the winter and spring. We hope to see you at least some of the events we have planned:

- Annual Meeting.**
 The annual meeting will be virtual again this year. Our by-laws require we hold a meeting of our members to hold any elections and update all concerned people on the state of our chapter. Rather than hold an in person fish dinner on Martin Luther King Day, we are combining the brief business portion of the meeting with an energizing presentation by Seth Waters, guide and owner of Dark Waters Fly Shop in Iron River, Michigan. Seth is going to share his knowledge of where to fish in the Upper Peninsula. Please join us by clicking on this link on February 10, 2022 at 6:30. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8827215553?pwd=bm04MjFkRXNqVitVL29qKzg3K3RBQT09>. When entering the meeting you will be required to put in the passcode "Darkwaters" You will receive notice in your email as well.
- Fly Fishing Film Tour.**
 The Mershon-Neumann Heritage Chapter of Trout Unlimited, along with Little Forks Outfitters, will be hosting the film tour February 15, 2022 at the State Theater in Bay City. Please watch our Facebook and webpages for more information.
- Family Picnic Fundraiser.**
 In lieu of our traditional Spring Banquet and Fundraiser, we will be holding a picnic at the Bay City Recreation Area, Pavilions 1 and 2. You and your family will be able to enjoy games, silent auctions, and food

trucks. Put Thursday, May 12, 2022 on your calendar. The pavilions have fireplaces so the event will be held rain, shine, or snow. Again, more information to follow by email, Facebook, and on our website.

- Women 'n Waders.**
 We will be holding the 5th Women 'n Wader event on May 21, 2022. As in the past, the all day event will be at the Saginaw Bay Visitor's Center at the Bay City Recreation Area. This event is always fun, informative, and usually fills quickly. Registration will be found on the DNR's Outdoor Skills Academy webpage in early spring/ late winter.
- Family Fly-Fishing Fun Festival.**
 We will be hosting an afternoon of fishing focused fun for kids and adults. The tentative date for is May 22, 2022 with a location yet to be decided. Last year's Festival was wonderful and we are planning even more for this year.
- Michigan Trout Unlimited Youth and Conservation Camp.**
 The camp is back after a few years of forced hiatus. If you know of a youth, aged 14-17, that would enjoy attending the camp, please email our chapter: Mershon-neumann@mershon-neumanntu.org. The dates for the camp are Sunday, June 26, 2022 through Thursday, June 30, 2022 and will be held at the Ralph A. MacMullan Center in Roscommon. We're happy to answer any questions.

The schedule is definitely more full than the past few years! It feels great to be back to planning events designed to engage our members and community; building a strong base to work on conservation. Please remember the important lesson we have learned from the 2020- things may need to be canceled or adapted at the last minute, so keep checking your emails, our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/mershon.tu), and our website (www.mershon-neumanntu.org/) for any updates. ♦



Women 'n Waders



Family Fly-Fishing Fun Festival



F3T



Michigan Trout Unlimited Youth and Conservation Camp

Intra-County Drain Vote Passes

The proposal to join Ogemaw County with Arenac County forming a new, expanded, intra-county drain district passed December 9, 2021. We have been informed by Spicer Engineering that there will be no obvious changes for at least 2-2 1/2 years in Ogemaw County. The entire watershed needs to be surveyed and the information analyzed to determine what properties lie in the actual watershed for tax purposes. It is not expected that taxes will increase markedly within the designated area. There is a \$10,000 annual cap, divided up among approximately 14,000 parcels. An exception may be made if there is an emergency situation involving a larger project.

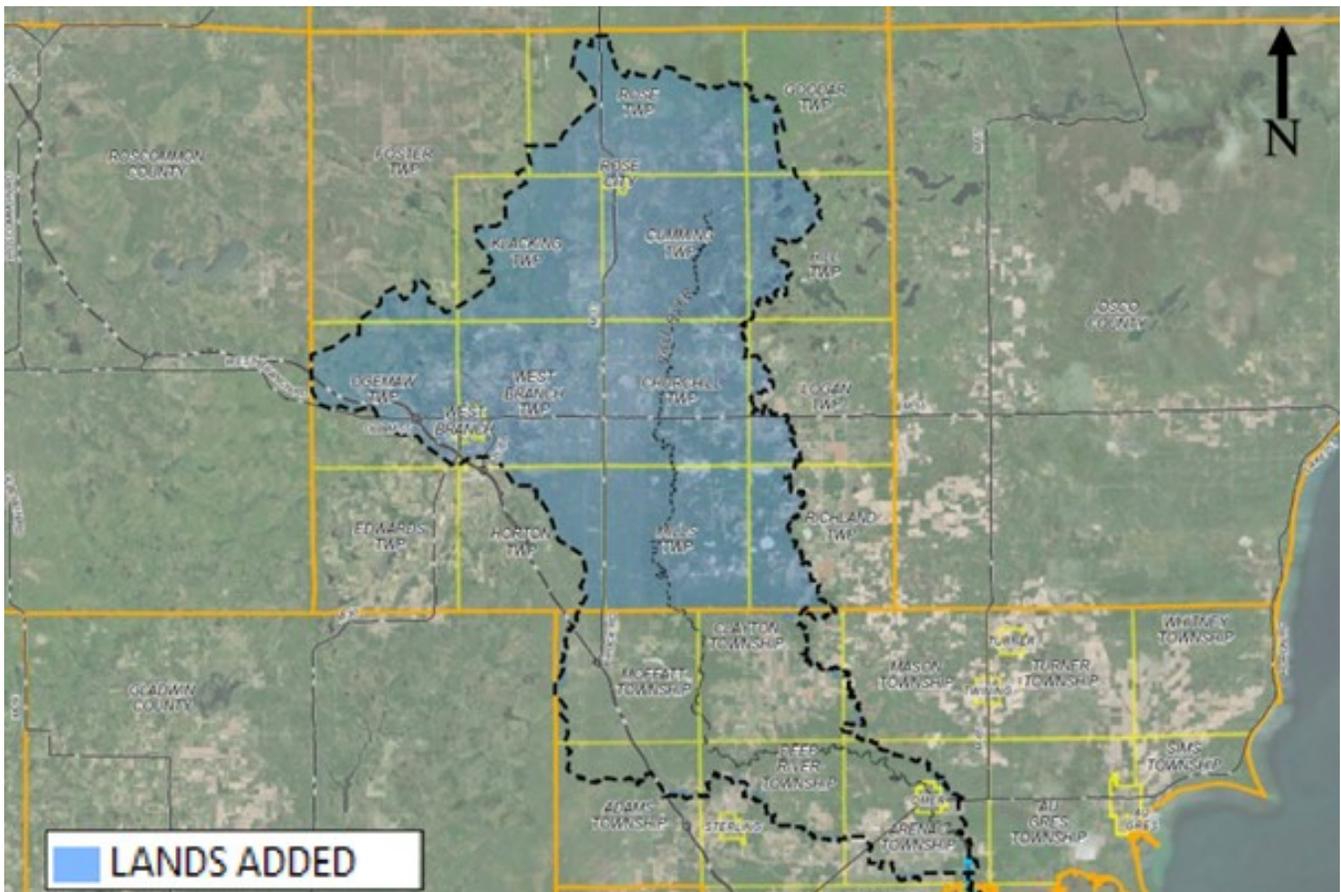
Samantha Nellis, Water Program Director for Huron Pines, shared that she has met with the Arenac County Drain Commissioner, Larry Davis, and he is willing to work with Huron Pines to ensure environmental concerns are addressed for any projects. The

watershed area above Omer remains a Natural River, which means that projects involving the river and surrounding land require permits and approval from the DNR.

Agencies such as Trout Unlimited, Huron Pines, the DNR, and the US Department of Fish and Wildlife will continue to have strong communication to best assure the environmental needs of the Rifle are kept in the forefront of any planned projects.

If you have any other concerns or questions, please direct them to

Larry Davis, Drain Commissioner for Arenac County
120 N. Grove - P.O. Box 747
Standish, MI 48658
989-846-2011
810-624-1161 - cell
ldavis@arenacountyymi.gov



M-NHCTU Joins Saginaw 4-H to Present Fish Academy

The Mershon-Neumann Heritage Chapter has been asked by Stacie Gath, 4-H Program Coordinator Saginaw County through the MSU extension office, to help in developing a Fish Academy Program for youth in Saginaw and surrounding counties. The 4-H program and our chapter have similar goals- to get as many young people as possible involved in conservation through fishing.

This program, the first of its kind in this area, is still in the development stage. Youth, ages 8-19, may come for one or all the sessions but pre-registration is required. It is not a requirement to live in Saginaw County or do they need to be in 4-H, but participants do need to attend

with an adult. All sessions will be held indoors at the Saginaw Field and Stream. Sessions will run from January into May.

Each module will have an educational presentation followed by hands-on activities. Topics such as ice fishing, making your own ice fishing jig, tying flies and crafting tackle, stream health, what fish eat, analyzing bugs found in area water, and how to plan a fishing trip are just some of what will be covered.

Huron Pines, the DNR, and Saginaw County Parks and Rec will also be partnering for this program.

If you are interested in helping or have a youth that would like to participate, please contact us at mershon-neumanntu@mershon-neumanntu.org. ♦



Yoga on the Fly...Stretches the Limits of a Typical Fly-tying Class

On December 7 participants in the Yoga on the Fly learned some yoga poses to alleviate the neck kinks associated with an hour or so at the vice. A few quick stretches between flies helps to increase strength and flexibility on the water as well. ♦



Annual meeting Thursday, February 10, at 6:30 p.m., via Zoom

The Annual Meeting will be followed by a Zoom presentation about places to fish in the Upper Peninsula. Our speaker will be Seth Waters, guide and owner of Dark Waters Fly Shop (darkwatersflyshop.com) in Iron River. Seth has many years of experience guiding and fishing Lake Superior tributaries. Knowledge, enthusiasm, and entertainment are promised.

The Zoom address for the meeting is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8827215553?pwd=bm04MjFkRXNqVitVL29qKzgzK3RBQT09>

Meeting ID: 882 721 5553

The passcode "Darkwaters" (case sensitive) will be required to enter the meeting/presentation. ♦

As I Flopped Down, Drooling, in Front of my “Smart” TV . .

by Bob Kren, M-NHC Advisor, and
Mr. FlyfisherPersonGuy

. . . it all became clear! Just about everything that runs on electricity (batteries not included) is smarter than I.

My corrosion of intelligence has culminated in spending most all my time immersed in surfing cable TV, high-speed internet, and video services, getting up only for bodily functions and to eat and drink too much. Curse you!, cable providers!

Surfing requires a wave, and this wave is being ridden into the ground. I'd do something about it, but I'm too busy surfing. So let's make the best of it, and indulge in a little creative criticism of TV: if I examine the internet, it'll get angry, and mobs with electronic pitchforks and digital torches will drive me from my castle. But there is hope. Just grab your imagination and your eight-weight and we'll find how easily flyfishing can be adapted to commonly encountered shows.

- First, we have the Chicagos: Cops, Firefighters, hotty Doctors, Garbage Collectors, Panhandlers. Why not “Chicago River Flycasters?” They'd fish at night, fighting Oriental carps, corrupt gamewardens, snaggers, invasive clams, drug smugglers, and phragmites.
- Wouldn't the rassling shows – more drama and hubris than Shakespeare, plus the goofy costumes, but without the great speeches – benefit from having the actors (oops, I meant “athletes”) dressed in full flyfishing outfits? Don't bash somebody with a folding chair, use your net; don't pull somebody's hair, grab the lanyard; take off a boot and clobber somebody. The ladies

would wear short hip boots, so all the glitter could show.

- We could have what is pronounced like “Lawn Order,” with its bewildering number of variations, the longest running of which is “SVU,” which has been around for 50 years and Marissa Hargitay ain't aged a day. Look!, it's Marissa, in “Surf Victims Unit,” hauling flyfishers who're pursuing false albacore and striped bass, out of the pounding waves off Coney Island. Manhattan skyline in the background, of course. Everybody rescued has an interesting backstory involving flyfishing and, typically, embezzlement.
- The Hellmark Channel's “Xmas in Bozeman” involves a local girl who moved to The Big City and has a great, yet somehow unsatisfying, career. She returns to snowy Bozeman and slowly but agonizingly falls for a high school crush of hers, whose wife has absquatulated, leaving him with a precious set of twins to raise in bachelorhood. The hook? He takes her flyfishing in some famous river, on New Year's Eve, she falls in love with the sport, and falls into his arms. The pizzicato music is unrelenting.
- There's Cable Network Nuts, and Faux News, draining the air from the room, frightening me with one topic an hour. It's sad when the ads are a welcome break from talking heads: just how many litigators are there; how many different creams and ointments; how often must you be told the same 'phone number; how much tiny print can you read in two seconds; just how much is “shipping and handling?” Putting pundits in flyfishing situations is heresy, so imagine the ads re-tooled to flyfishing: Geoffrey Fiegar in Bill Adams' hat; a magic elixir that makes every fly irresistible to trout (huge! list of warnings); 1-583-832-5993, that's 1-583-832-5993, again it's 1-583-832-5993, dammit!; do not use this product if you are breathing, sentient, or . . .; plus S&H of 2700 Albanian leks. Emus in

sunglasses, and lizards that talk with a Cockney accent? C'mon.

- Where'd we be without Pat Saywhat and Vanna Blanco (who has more teeth than Bert Parks)? Every clue would be about flyfishing, obscure or not. Think of a matrix using the words “Coachman,” “tippet,” “knot,” “fluorocarbon,” and “snag.” When you come up with it, please send it to Pat and Vanna, who need help.
- I swear (not often enough) that at any given instant, there's one of too many versions of “(the) Fat and (the) Furious,” on some obscure channel in the high thousands. These are about an unending series of huge! fish, all caught on a flyrod, all fighting in enraged, deranged, seething and frenzied fashion, in copious, numerous, abundant, and diverse locales. Stunt doubles and special effects and really fast reeling as heroes and heroines bound from boulder to boulder make these interesting. Interesting to fifteen-year-old boys. Oh, did you know that Fatty Arbuckle's first name was Roscoe?
- One may retreat to the calming influences of **PBS**, the **Primarily British System**, where luscious country estates with private streams, and fishing restricted to the owners and their guests, belie the smoldering (“smouldering” in British) resentment of the servants, villagers, and especially the ghillies, who finagle with gear, and apply the occasional shove into deep water, to remind the bosses who's really the boss. There's implicit ghillie-duchess monkeybusiness, but it's never ever shown explicitly.

If I can come up with these variants, so can you. Happy imagining. Bob K



Planting the Seed

by Larry Brown, N-M chapter board member

"You wanna go Fishing today?, asked my Aunt. "Sure, I'll go. Who else is going with us?", I replied. "All you kids can go along. We'll hike along the creek and see if we can find some trout." So, we five kids grabbed our poles, bait, and tackle, and in short order we were underway. For many of us, here began a long fascination with streams, forests, and fish. The only thing we caught that day were chubs. Yet, our safari was a huge success for a bunch of kids, all of whom were under the age of ten.

Our guide was well schooled in the art of angling. She had grown up with her three sisters, deep in the North woods of Michigan. They routinely went camping along creeks found near their home. Their outfit was sparse at best. Sleeping beds were made by cutting and stacking cedar boughs, then covering the pile with a sheet of canvas. Blankets went on top of that. A canvas tarp was strung up above for a roof. Wool shirts, denim pants and floppy hats were worn by all. Only the finest in accommodations would do. Canned beans, bacon, apples, and bread filled out their provisions. They often picked wild berries or watercress along the way. Long, thin, cedar poles were cut and trimmed. A silk line, as long as the pole, was attached to the end of the stick. The line ended at a hook, tied below a small cork bobber. Bait could be anything from a worm to a kernel of corn, or a bit of bacon. Their Papa would tell them, "Just drop your bait in the deep spot by the logjam." Papa used a bamboo fly-rod with wet flies. Although crude by today's standards, both outfits were very effective. Their quarry was brook trout. They fished hard and ate well. Many of their fish were well over a foot long. The trout were fried in bacon grease or broiled on a stick over the fire.

My Dad learned to fish in much the same manner, again under the watchful eyes of his elder Aunties. Fishing with my Dad was more focused on just being outside rather than catching any fish. He never developed the patience for trout fishing. "You sneak up real quiet and make your cast, then you pull out a fish that is barely as long as your hand." He preferred to troll for pike or jig for perch. Northern Pike can be very large and aggressive. Some specimens were three or four feet long. "If he pulls hard, you pull hard. If he pulls real hard, yank his g*##*d##*d head off." This technique worked well on Northern Pike, not so well on trout. And so it was that we kids went fishing at very young ages. We began bait-fishing for panfish and trolling for pike. My Mom cooked whatever we brought home. We ate well. A few of us became serious fishers. Some of us even evolved into trout fishers.

Learning to fish for trout is not so difficult. As small children, we loved to sneak through the woods up to the secret spot along the creek. There, we would throw in a hapless grasshopper to see if a trout waited in the deep. If the hopper was eaten, he was soon followed by another hopper impaled on a hook, another splash, a quick sweep of the rod, and the fight was on. Nothing was more delightful than watching a small child battle a large fish.

Brook trout can be a very cooperative quarry. In time, one may learn to take the trout with a fly. Just being there was just as important as catching a fish. The smell of wild leeks, the taste of wild blueberries, the majesty of a hemlock grove, the bright green of chest high ostrich ferns, the clear gravel bottomed stream, shadowed by large cedars, trimmed with stumps and driftwood, all these sensations will be long remembered in the mind of a child. We went to the woods as soon as we were able.

Fast forward a few years or so. The time has come to take my son fishing at the tender age of three. He has already survived riding in my backpack while I fished from the bank.

Early on, he learned to duck when branches swept his face, swat mosquitoes with gusto, and pull my hair for attention. On one trip, he got so chewed up by deer-flies that his eyes swelled up, resulting in an oriental facial appearance. His mother was not happy. Junior thought it was funny. Listening to the coyotes hold choir practice near our tent was not so funny-more like sheer terror. Somehow, he survived these experiences. His boundless curiosity and enthusiasm made every trip into an adventure.

Sometimes things did not go as planned, like when he set the hook deep into the end of my little finger. The ER doctor froze the finger and removed the hook using a needle. The doctor said,

"My previous patient had an axe stuck in his head, - your problem is minor." That night we got back to Camp and returned to fishing in the lake, out of a canoe. Junior quickly produced a nasty backlash on his reel. To keep him occupied during repairs, I hooked a small sunfish and cast it out, then I handed the rod to him. "Just reel in slowly, there might be something on there" I told him as I returned to my work. Indeed, soon there was something else on there. "Hey Dad, I think I got something." "Just reel it in nice and easy." No, I mean I really got something!" as the rod bent in half. I watched as a rather large northern pike dove under the canoe. His tail was about six inches wide and his length was just slightly shorter than my son's height. After a brief, vigorous tussle, well spiced with laughter, we got the fish in the boat. Junior's laughter quickly changed to cries of terror as he watched the toothy - looking monster violently thrash in the net. He did not want to share the boat with that fish. We headed for shore with the fish in tow. The crisis soon passed. Bragging rights were awarded.

All that was in the past; now, it was time to fish for trout. In knee high

(See *Planting*, page 8)

Planting, continued from page 7

boots and camo sweatshirts, we quietly stalked along the riverbank until we came to a sharp bend sweeping around the root-ball of a massive hemlock. The pool was deep and shaded. An eddy swirled on the outside bend next to the undercut bank. We got in position near the sandbar on the inside curve and waited for things to settle down. "Alright, make your first cast tight to the bank. Then let it sweep into the eddy. If you feel a tug, sweep the rod sideways." Surprisingly enough, all went as planned. A respectable brown trout was racing around the pool, tugging on the end of the line, struggling to reach the tangled roots. "Okay, just keep the line tight. Steer

him clear of any snags. Tire him out until he rolls on his side." He replied, "Why don't you be quiet and let me fight the fish?" Eventually, I netted a brown trout that was well over a foot long. More importantly, Junior had graduated to become an independent angler. He no longer needed or appreciated my advice. Letting go would not be easy.

Yet, letting go is inevitable, as is the passage of time itself. The ancient Greek philosopher: Heraclitus, once said, "The only constant in life is change." Heraclitus also spent a great deal of time out in the woods looking at natural wonders, especially the Danube river. Deep reflection, based on his observations of nature, gave him a sense of truth in life. Inevitably, my son would prefer to be on his own

or with his friends. I would be in the background. So be it, shedding parental responsibility can be very liberating. In the meantime, many more fishing trips would follow with many memorable experiences. Today, my son still loves to fish. We trade stories, techniques, and tackle. Yet we seldom fish together. Fishing alone is fine by me. I look forward to leading my grandchildren into the endless wonders of the natural world just as my Aunt and my Dad enjoyed doing the same for me. All of us planted the seed in the next generation. Hopefully, the seed will grow and multiply. ♦

Charitable Gift Tax Break Opportunity Tax Year 2021

by David Oeming, Editor

The Neumann-Mershon Heritage Fund was established in 2019 by members of our Chapter to solicit donations to a new fund for cold-water conservation. The Fund is managed by the Saginaw Community Foundation. Many local donors have contributed to the Fund, and the Fund advisory committee anticipates sufficient growth in the coming year. Such grants will be used exclusively to improve cold-water fisheries habitat and access in Michigan.

Unfortunately, most individual taxpayers do not donate money to a charity if they are claiming the standard deduction on their federal income tax returns. 9 out of 10 taxpayers take the standard deduction, and charitable contributions have precipitously declined.

Congress, as part of a Covid-19 pandemic relief measure, created a special **but temporary** income tax break for giving money to a qualified charity that applies (for 2021 only) to filers who do not itemize but instead take the standard deduction. A married couple taking the standard deduction is allowed to claim up to \$600.00 for cash contributions made to qualifying charities (including the Saginaw Community Foundation) in 2021, if filing a joint return. An individual filing singly or married filing separately can claim a charitable deduction of up to \$300.00.

NOTE: This donation must be completed by December 31, 2021.

The tax savings value of a charitable income tax deduction for a contribution to the Fund through the Saginaw Community Foundation depends, of course, on the income tax bracket of the filer. It cannot be overstated, however, that a contribution by a couple or individual for maintenance and improvement of the pastime we all passionately pursue is well worth it, especially if a \$600.00 contribution reduces the income tax bill for joint filers in the 25% bracket by \$150.00.

Please contact the Saginaw Community Foundation, 989.755.0545, for information regarding a donation to the Neumann-Mershon Heritage Fund. ♦



FEB
10



TROUT UNLIMITED
MERSHON NEUMANN HERITAGE
SAGINAW BAY AREA CHAPTER

Dark Waters
Fly Shop & Guide Service

Zoom Meeting/Presentation 6:30pm est

Following the annual T.U. meeting, Seth Waters (owner & operator of DARK WATERS FLY SHOP), will give a full presentation on fly fishing the western Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8827215553?
pwd=bm04MjFkRXNqVitVL29qKzg3K3RBQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8827215553?pwd=bm04MjFkRXNqVitVL29qKzg3K3RBQT09)

Meeting ID: 882 721 5553
Passcode: Darkwaters

MERSHON-NEUMANN HERITAGE CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED 2021-2022

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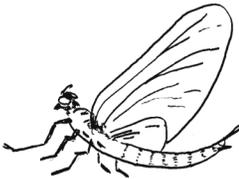
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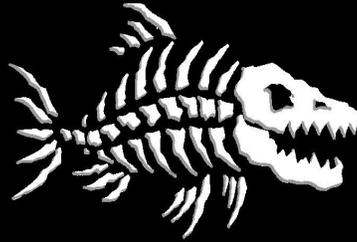
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"I've known Jac for over three decades; he's a total original, cutting his own path, and an out-of-the-box thinker which makes him a great teacher and guide. This book is full of techniques and tips that will improve anyone's game."
—Kelly Galloup

"Jac Ford is far too humble a man to ever say it himself, but he is a Midwest icon that has likely forgotten more about our sport than most ever figure out in the first place. This book is fly-fishing PhD education thinly veiled as entertainment."
—Mike Schmidt



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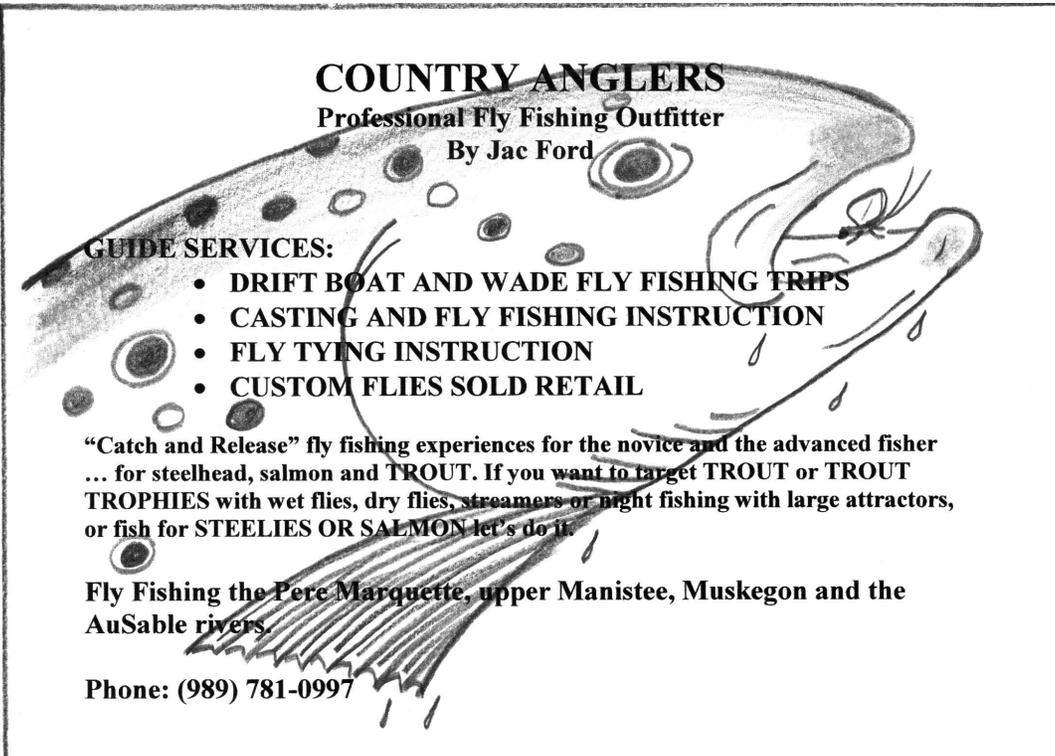
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MERSHON-NEUMANN HERITAGE CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED

**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.

January 5, 2022
February 2, 2022
March 2, 2022
April 6, 2022
May 4, 2022
June 1, 2022

—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#.**

