

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

THE MERSHON
MUDDLER

◆ *Newsletter of the William B. Mershon 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
Todd Zwetzig

Winter weather is here, but that doesn't stop our members from enjoying the outdoors. I've seen several posts of members with fish and deer that had some snow in the background. We are so very lucky to live in a state where we can jump in some moving water and fish for trout all year. And, if the water does solidify, we still have options—fish for panfish and walleye or tie flies and prepare for next year's fish. So, with all we have to enjoy in Michigan, take time this Holiday season to stop, reflect, and be thankful for all the wonderful opportunities our state has to offer. With that in mind, be thankful to all the individuals that have donated their time over the years to help preserve our precious natural resources. I'm personally thankful for all our directors and members who



Todd Zwetzig, chapter president

(See *Meanders*, page 15)

Clip and Save: Mershon Event Calendar

More complete information and updates will be found on our website (mershon-tu.org/news) and FaceBook page (facebook.com/mershon.tu).

Winter Dinner and Annual Meeting
 Sullivan's Restaurant, at 5:30pm

Monday, January 20, 2020

Fly-Fishing Film Tour
 State Theater, Bay City

Tuesday, February 18, 2020

Spring Banquet
 SVSU's Curtis Hall

Thursday, April 23, 2020

Women 'n Waders Event
 Saginaw Bay Visitors Center, Bay City State Park

Saturday, May 23, 2020

Trout Unlimited icon Art Neumann inducted into Saginaw Hall of Fame

by Dave Cozad, chapter secretary

On the evening of Tuesday, October 22, seventy-five friends, relatives, and well-wishers gathered at the Saginaw Club to celebrate the induction of five new members into the Saginaw County Hall of Fame.

Among the 2019 inductees was Trout Unlimited founding father and longtime Mershon chapter leader, Art Neumann. Joining in the celebration were Art's daughter, Linda MacDonald and husband, Steve, and his son, Doug, and wife, Debra.

Art was nominated for this honor by longtime chapter leader, Dr. William Priest, who served together with Art in a variety of leadership positions within TU. As well, Art and Bill were friends and fellow Rotarians.

Art's nomination highlighted the pivotal role he played in transforming Trout Unlimited from a statewide coldwater conservation organization to one of enduring national significance. While on a two-and-a-half-year leave of absence from Eaton Manufacturing in the early 1960's, Art travelled throughout the United States promoting TU's mission of conserving, protecting and restoring North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. During Art's tenure as TU's first full-time executive director, from offices here in Saginaw, he doubled the size of the

organization through the addition of 30 chapters, while simultaneously creating a sound financial base from which to operate.

When Trout Unlimited was formed in 1959, the founders were pioneering conservationists in the truest sense of the word. They were frustrated with the Michigan DNR's indiscriminate planting of hatchery trout to mask degraded habitat in streams having water quality that would readily support the natural reproduction of trout. Just to provide perspective, it was 13 years after TU's founding when the Clean Water Act was



Art Neumann sharing wisdom at his rod shop in the 1990's.

enacted in 1972. The first Earth Day took place in 1970.

Those early years were very turbulent, as the organization began to grow and evolve. It was through Art's steady hand, singular vision, and evangelical zeal that TU's successful transition to a national organization was accomplished. Today, Trout Unlimited is comprised of 300,000 members in 400 chapters from Maine to California and Alaska. The organization has a diverse staff of lawyers, policy experts, and scientists working out of 30 offices nationwide with an annual budget in excess of \$50 million.

The William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited can be proud of Art's induction into the Saginaw Hall of Fame. He created an institution and helped nurture it for 57 years. Our

chapter members are special beneficiaries of Art's work and that of the other TU founders and early leaders, because Art shared the lessons of those early days so freely and personally with so many chapter members.

Indeed, Art's conservation legacy endures through the ongoing undertakings and accomplishments of Trout Unlimited and its members. For that, we can all be thankful as we reflect often upon Art's words at the close of Trout Unlimited's Philosophy Statement, where he encourages us to—

"... appreciate our trout, respect fellow anglers and give serious thought to tomorrow."

The inscription on the plaque commemorating Art's induction into the Saginaw Hall of Fame reads:

ARTHUR C. NEUMANN
1916-2016

FOUNDING FATHER OF
TROUT UNLIMITED
NATIONALLY
RECOGNIZED
CONSERVATIONIST

INDUCTED INTO THE
SAGINAW HALL OF FAME
OCTOBER 22, 2019



Members of the Neumann family (L to R) Steve and Linda MacDonald and Douglas and Debra Neumann enjoying the Saginaw Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony.

2020 Rifle River cleanup plans announced

by Laurie Seibert, chapter vice president

The Rifle River Restoration Committee has set two dates to provide opportunities to clean up our home river.

On Saturday, June 6, efforts will focus on the coldwater stretch of the

river. Meet at Troll Landing Campground and Canoe Livery at 10am.

On Saturday, September 12, efforts will focus on the warmer lower stretch of the river. Meet at Riverview Campground and Canoe Livery at 10am.

Bring work gloves. Waders may also be appropriate. For more information go to riflerivercleanup.org ♦

Women ‘n Waders News

by Laurie Seibert, chapter vice president

The first annual women's fishing weekend was held in Grayling on October 11–13; it was geared to get novice anglers who

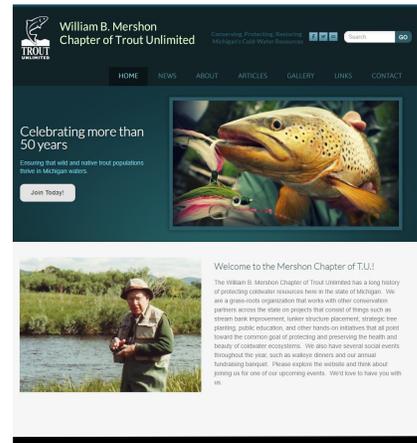
have completed the Women ‘n Waders program out on the water.

Although numbers were small due to weather, the event was highly successful. The William B. Mershon Chapter and the Kalamazoo Valley Chapter plan on continuing to combine efforts in the future, expanding programming to increase opportunities for women interested in fly fishing. ♦



Check out the Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited online

Find us on the web at Mershon-TU.org



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Idyllic. Or, not.

(Too many fly-fishing truths—RMK)

by Bob Kren, chapter advisor
and, occasionally,
Mr. Flyfisherpersonguy

If we were naïve enough to believe the depictions of fishing, in ads, nobody does any kind of fishing other than flyfishing, for trout: chubs, if caught, are released offcamera and encouraged to jog back to the river, though few do. Admit it: no advertiser wants us to look at some dentally-challenged GOB (Good Old Boy) sweatily hauling old bucketmouth out of some murky slop.* No, it's got to be a perfect rainbow trout, sharp focus (soft focus is for making people look better than they really are; trust me, I know), lovingly cradled, often documented in slow motion, never slippery, always compliant until released, slowly and gently. Ha!

Just think of those beautiful waters—clear, wadeable, always sparkling. Not a hint of the slick spots, or the bowling-ball-size rocks that grab feet and sprain ankles, or the greenery that snatches at your fly. Think not, what happens when there's runoff from a storm, or an unexpected release from a dam upstream to send you scuttling and hollering. There's always only one flyfisherperson in the picture, no crowds hunkered at the only honeyhole within 50 miles, nobody wading through the best water just to get to something that only looks better.

Don't get the wrong impression about our onstream clothing from ads, and just because your personal Savile Row haberdasher has the name J. C. Penney, or Goosey Mountain, doesn't mean that some folk can afford to look like a picture from GQ. Patches

on elbows? Nah. My elbows are callused, at best.

And the scenery! —mountains, forests, no houses in sight, no barbed wire, no domestic herds all turned toward the intruder in the river, or dogs abay and snarling, no signs threatening death upon trespass, never the creepy feeling you're being watched by half the hillbilly cast of "Deliverance" (and no banjo music, ever!). No guideboats, kayaks, canoes, or bulky drunks in innertubes, hollering and mooning. All wild critters are at a safe distance, doing wild critter stuff that's non-



threatening—do bears eat only berries? I don't think—and maybe even Bambiesque poses for big beasts.

All fishing is done with big, bushy, easily-seen dry flies only, and every take is splashy and obvious. The hooksets are sudden and textbook, never missed and winding up in your hat, or face, and certainly never a foulhook. Every rod is bent perfectly, every closeup of a reel shows it spinning merrily, sometimes with spray flying off during a particularly long run (or not—just as likely some

lackey is sprinting along the shore, pulling out line. Just sayin'). Every netting of a prey is ideal, never the flub that makes quarry runawayfast, or break off, or wrap itself in most of the leader, or snag the bag, or itself. Every release is effortless, never resulting in a hook buried in your hand, or clothing, or cameraperson.

All days are nice days, clear heavenly blue skies, sun never in your eyes. There's never the thundercloud that races over the canyon walls and, with no warning, drives you to the shelter that isn't there: fear of electrocution can make for some inventive

improvisations of "shelter." Just how good an electrical conductor IS a graphite rod? I'm willing to let you find out, but my rod is over there, on the ground, um, I mean rocks or dirt.

You'll never see any bugs but the ones you want to, and they're always mammoth mayflies, or caddis. Apparently, the good bugs have forced the biting and stinging and just downright ugly bugs out of the neighborhood, so there can be no welts on faces or extremities. Trout eat only big visible pretty bugs, and that's that!

Every cast is a huge booming, Brad Pitt-like cast. We never see the *castus interruptus*, as streamside alder or redwood grabs the fly. We never see a beautiful

pile/puddle/parachute cast, just as we never see fishing with nymphs or streamers. We've just gotta keep up that image of flyfishing as the only kind, perfect in every way. Again I say, Ha!

—Bob K

* OK, there was an ad on the telly a while back, with a burly GOB kissing a bass on the lips, with a long strand of slime between the two to complete the image and the smackeroo. Let's hope that, at least, it was a female bass. ♦

Chapter funding in action

Trout Unlimited's mission is "To conserve, protect and restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds." The following information highlights Mershon-funded efforts undertaken by Huron Pines to restore and reconnect fish populations on some of the coldwater tributaries of the Rifle River. The Huron Pines organization expresses gratitude for the chapter's long-standing of efforts to fund and provide volunteers for many similar projects over the years. The information is provided by Josh Leisen, senior project manager for Huron Pines.

Dear Paul and Membership,

Thank you for your contribution of \$1,000 in 2019, which supported our efforts reconnect trout streams of the upper Rifle River Watershed. Specifically, three undersized crossings were replaced with appropriately sized and aligned culverts that restored fish passage to more than 6 miles of quality headwater stream in the upper Rifle River Watershed. Those sites were the Heath Road crossing of Houghton Creek, the Beechwood Road crossing of Houghton Creek, and the Heath Road crossing of Vaughn Creek. More information on these sites is online here:

OG8: [click here](#)

OG9: [click here](#)

OG16: [click here](#)

Pre- and post-project photos are attached, demonstrating the improvements at each of the three crossings. In addition to removing velocity barriers to fish passage (particularly for brook trout), these projects have reduced inputs of sediment and other pollutants to these streams by reducing erosion and better-managing runoff from the road surfaces. This work also improved local road infrastructure, reducing

long-term road maintenance needs and virtually eliminating risk of a catastrophic road washout at these locations.

Your contribution helped Huron Pines leverage federal and state funding, as well as in-kind contributions from the Ogemaw County Road Commission, to successfully complete these projects in 2019. Materials expenses seem to increase each year, and your contribution also provided direct

support for this on-the-ground restoration work.

Huron Pines greatly appreciates all of the financial and volunteer support the William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited has provided over the past several years. If you have any questions about this work, please feel free to contact me at (989) 448-2293 ext. 16. You can also reach me by email at josh@huronpines.org. ♦



Heath Rd. Houghton Creek pre-project



Heath Rd. Houghton Creek post-project



Beechwood Rd. Houghton Creek pre-project



Beechwood Rd. Houghton Creek post-project



Heath Rd. Vaughn Creek pre-project



Heath Rd. Vaughn Creek post-project

Michigan T.U. Youth Trout and Conservation Camp 2019

by Bill Adams, chapter advisor

On June 27, 2019, we wrapped up another very successful T.U. Youth Troup Camp. This year, we had fifteen (15) campers, two (2) junior counselors, and numerous adult counselors. Our Mershon chapter was represented well by two (2) campers (Clayton

Stimsen and Trent Hill) and four (4) adult chaperones (Laurie Siebert, Don Meyer, Howard Johnson and [myself] Bill Adams). We want to thank our chapter for the financial and moral support.

Next year's camp will take place Sunday, June 21, through Thursday, June 25, 2020. A welcome change to next year's camp will be the addition of 13-year-old boys and girls being accepted as campers. The 2020 Michigan T.U. Youth Trout and Conservation Camp will be open to all youth ages 13–16.

Please contact any officer, board member, or adult chaperone if you have any questions or need more information about the camp. ♦



Pictured, left to right: Laurie Siebert, Clayton Stimsen, Don Meyer, Trent Hill, and Bill Adams.

Rifle River Restoration Committee 2019 Activity

by Bob Spence, chapter advisor

On September 14, the RRRC completed a streambank stabilization project opposite Cole Canoe Base. This was a high bank area above lower

work done by Mershon many years ago. Supervised by Jim Hergott, trees were anchored to the bank utilizing duck bills and cables. This area was steep enough that volunteers were roped in for safety.

The RRRC also hosted a cleanup event on September 21 that covered an extended stretch of the River. Sequenced by Todd Golebiewski at River View Campground, volunteers were transported to assigned areas for a 2–3 hour float. Collection was from

canoes as the water was too high for wading.

The Rifle being Mershon's home river, it is hoped that more members will take part in future RRRC restoration and cleanup projects. ♦

The Banker

by Snarly Windknot

For the past few years, Paul Morand, editor extraordinaire of the Mershon Muddler, has allowed me and my ego the pleasure of publishing some of my writings in the Muddler. I thank Paul for that, and I thank you for reading selected excerpts from what I have come to call Flies, Lies and Otherwise: Poems and Musing of Snarly Windknot. The poem below, "The Banker," will be the final installment (please hold your applause).

Nearly three decades ago, Snarly began dropping ideas into my head. They seemed to come when job stress was especially high. And while I'm sure not everyone has seen the humor in them, they gave me a chuckle just when I needed one. But when I retired in early 2011, Snarly stopped visiting me. I know that sounds kind of dumb, but it's the only explanation I have. The ideas just stopped forming. Unfortunately, I'm not a talented writer like my friend Bob Kren who manages to create article after article for our newsletter. I must admit, I envy his creativity. I'm dependent on this thought chain I've come to call Snarly for my inspiration, and Snarly doesn't

come around anymore. I have to confess, losing Snarly and his fishing buddies, Bill, Mike and Curly, saddens me. It's kind of like having friends move away.

So, The Banker kind of wraps it up. Again, thank you, Paul, for indulging my ego, and thanks to those of you who have not emailed Paul and asked him leave me out of future issues.

(Continued on next page)

The Banker

By Snarly Windknot

This poem really doesn't need a lot of explanation. As I've mentioned, Bill, Mike and Curly were fishing together regularly before they took me into their group and converted me from a happy-go-lucky worm drowner to a frustrated fly-caster. One of the fishing spots they showed me early on was a particular bend in a nearby river that they liked to fish in the evening. It often gave off some nice fly hatches and, because it was a long, sweeping bend, it offered enough room for several people to fish. It was also an easy walk back to the road after dark, so we didn't need to worry too much about falling and breaking a rod tip, or a neck for that matter.

The first time they took me to this spot, which was soon to be one of my favorite evening fishes, I immediately saw what I deemed to be the perfect spot to spend the evening; a large rock right next to the bank where you could half-stand, half-sit while you cast into the tail-out of a nice looking pool. But when I started for that rock, thinking it would be a great spot for a first-timer, they told me I couldn't fish there. They explained that that rock was the banker's spot, and they saved it for him.

It turned out none of them even knew his name. They just called this old gentleman "the banker" because he always sat on that rock on the bank and fished until dark. And while I fished with him many evenings over the years, I never knew his name, either. But, I did get to know him enough to respect his ownership of that particular spot and to respect him as a fisherman. We never talked at length, but we usually exchanged pleasantries, and over the seasons we fished together on that river bend, he taught me to appreciate fishing for the pleasure and peace of mind it brings more than for the fish. For that, I will always be grateful.

The Banker

It was a deep, dark hole, broad and graveled
With as likely a tailout as you could wish
Just one look at this streambed section
Told you it was certain to hold good fish.

At the bank a large rock, perfectly positioned
And no willows behind stood in the way
To snag your back cast and eat your fly.
You could sit and cast from that rock all day.

It was the perfect spot for the evening rise
And when we arrived there was no one there.
But as I moved in to settle and wait
They said "No, wait, you can't sit there."

"That rock is always saved for the banker,
And no one else fishes that hole.
He may not be there yet, but that doesn't matter,
It's early yet so he still might show."

I scoffed "So what if I fish his spot?
Will he call in my loan to even the score?"
"He's not that kind of banker," my friends responded,
"He's just an old man who can't wade anymore."

"We leave him his rock and his hole undisturbed
Even though some nights he doesn't come by.
We always make certain it's open if he does show,
Or at least every night that we're here we try."

The old man did show, just before sunset
And slowly worked his way to his rock.
With an old bamboo rod and one box of flies
He spent that whole evening casting to trout.

As the shadows grew long and gave way to the dark
I asked him how the fishing had been.
He replied, "At my age fishing isn't catching.
Fishing is an evening spent with my friends."

"We all used to come here, to this bend in the river.
Truthfully we came more for the fun and the beer.
Now I'm the only one left above grass,
But at sunset I can still see all my pals here."

The banker hasn't shown up for awhile.
Someone said he just can't make the walk.
I hope there's a river bend wherever he is
Where he and his friends can still meet and talk.

My friends and I still leave his rock open
Though we often fish that same river bend.
We all know there's a day not far off
When just one of us will come back to fish with his friends.

How to tie an articulated streamer (part 2)

by Don Meyer, chapter past-president

This is the front half of an articulated streamer. Last issue, we covered how to tie the back half of this streamer. Just a heads up; Wapsi no longer sells long palmer chenille. If you want any call around and find it now.



Step 1: I use power pro 50 lb. for connection between two halves



Step 2: 5 seed beads of your pick



Step 3: Wrap power pro back and forth on front hook shank and then wrap over with thread, never going to lose that fish-of-a-lifetime



Step 4: Use Sally Hansons to "glue" over thread wraps



Step 5: Tie on appropriate colored clump of bucktail



Step 6: Now 2 wraps of long palmer chenille, or any substitute that is about 2 inches long and sparkly, this helps fill in gap between 2 halves of streamer



Step 7: Wrap body with medium palmer chenille followed by red arctic fox gills



Step 8: Brown laser dub on sides



Step 9: Green laser dub on top and silver minnow body laser dub on bottom



Step 10: Push back and lightly coat with clear Sally Hansons (crunchy)

Step 11: Add eyes of choice

Step 12: Go fish!

**WILLIAM B. MERSHON CHAPTER
OF TROUT UNLIMITED
2019-2020**

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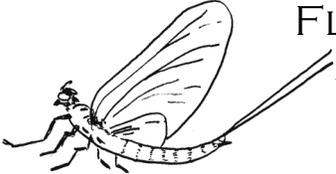
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WILLIAM B. MERSHON CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 MEETING SCHEDULE**

*All Board meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of the month
 at 5:30 p.m. at W.L. Case Funeral Home, 4480 Mackinaw Road, Saginaw*

Wednesday, January 8, 2020
 Wednesday, February 5, 2020
 Wednesday, March 4, 2020
 Wednesday, April 1, 2020 (no kidding!)
 Wednesday, May 6, 2020

—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.**

THE MERSHON MUDDLER

◆ Newsletter of the William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited ◆

P.O. Box 6920 Saginaw, MI 48608-6920

Address Service Requested

Meanders, cont. from page 1)

have given up their precious time to support TU and our chapter. We couldn't do it without you.

Chapter leaders are in the process of planning several more events in 2020. We have the walleye dinner (and annual meeting) in January, the Film Tour in February, our annual banquet in April, and summer work days and cleanups on our cherished rivers. So, stay in touch, put these events on your

calendar, and say "hi" when we get together. See more specifics on what is planned elsewhere in this newsletter and online on our website (Mershon-TU.org) and Facebook page (facebook.com/mershon.tu). I know you will not be disappointed. ◆

*"... appreciate our trout,
respect fellow anglers and
give serious thought to
tomorrow."*

—Art Neuman

