

TheMackinac

PUBLICATION OF THE SIERRA CLUB'S MICHIGAN CHAPTER • FALL/WINTER 2021-2022

Hope and Hard Work

By Gail Philbin, Chapter Director

This is one of the most amazing victories I've experienced in my 21 years here at the Sierra Club.

-- Rhonda Anderson, Regional Organizing Manager, National Sierra Club

The news that DTE's River Rouge plant officially ceased operations forever on May 31 came in a nondescript legal notice email from the utility last summer, which belied the momentousness of the occasion. For more than 10 years, the Sierra Club has supported community residents in a decade-long fight to shut down the coal-powered facility that spews toxins into this community, leading to numerous health problems and degrading the quality of life.

So, River Rouge residents have a huge reason to celebrate but they know and we know it's also time to get back to work to figure out what's next for this small Detroit suburb. And how can Sierra Club facilitate an equitable transition to a healthier community and better quality of life? Rhonda Anderson, a Sierra Club organizer who worked with local activist-heroes like Theresa Landrum from the beginning, talks about the importance of this plant closing on p. 14.

Other stories of hope and hard work ahead in this issue of the Mackinac include:

- After four years of Sierra Club advocacy, we celebrated Consumers Energy's decision to close the J.H. Campbell plant in West Michigan 15 years sooner than was planned. Still, some utilities are planning to replace coal-fired facilities with gas in places like Grand Haven, where we successfully closed its coal plant two years ago. (p. 6-7)
- In June, the Army Corps of Engineers threw a wrench in Enbridge's plan to build a tunnel for its dangerous Line 5 pipelines in the Straits of Mackinac by ordering the first-ever federal environmental impact analysis. This order presents an unexpected opportunity for Sierra Club, led by volunteer extraordinaire David Holtz and the Oil & Water Don't Mix Coalition, to move closer to shutting it down. However, the outcome of the lengthy federal process is impossible to predict. (p. 5)



Sierra Club has been in the fight to shut down the dangerous Line 5 for eight years and, as with all environmental battles we take up, will stay in the fight for the long term.

- Sierra Club activists have pushed back all year on voter suppression bills, including making 1,500 calls to state legislators that helped kill an attempt to add an ID component of absentee ballot applications and signature verification at polling locations, but aspects of the 39-bill package still threaten democracy in Michigan. (p. 8)

And that's the way it goes—we celebrate the good news and then get back in the fight. Since 1967, Sierra Club has navigated the pendulum swings of changing administrations and political winds and the web of increasingly complex environmental issues. Our staying power and the engagement of people like you are the keys to our success. Keep reading to learn how you can help!



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sierraclub.org/michigan

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet.

TheMackinac

FALL/WINTER
2021-2022

IntheSpotlight

1 Hope and Hard Work 3 Why? 3 Support the Work of Sierra Club 3 Election Alert

GroupInfo

4 Group Information

MitigateClimateChange

5 Line 5 Fight Moves to Court and Permitting Process 6 Moving Beyond Coal to Clean Energy 6 Grand Haven and Industry Come Together to Resist New Gas Plant 7 Michigan Cities Fight for Climate Change 7 Spur Environmental Action Through Letters to the Editor

DemocracyInAction

8 State Legislative Update: Lawmakers Debate Clean Energy and Aggregate Mining

Protect&RestoreMichigan'sBiodiversity

9 "That Democracy Stuff Is Kind Of A Big Deal"

Protect&RestoreGreatLakesEcosystem

10 Healing Our Water - GreatLakes Coalition Update 10 Detroit-Based Rain Garden Project Leads to Partnership with UM 11 PFAS in the Garden? 11 Factory Farm Permit Still on Hold

ChapterElections

12 Vote for Michigan Chapter Executive Committee Members 13 Michigan Chapter Executive Committee Ballot

EnvironmentalJustice

14 When We Win 14 Saginaw Ends Water Shutoffs

SupportingYourChapter

15 In Memory Harry Gubbins, Harold Trebian, Mary Payne, 15 Commemorative and Memorial Gifts 15 What Will Your Legacy Be? 16 Sierra Club's Michigan Legacy Council

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THE MACKINAC

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WHY?

By Deitra Covington, Co-Chair, Michigan Chapter Executive Committee

Why is a short word but it has a deep meaning. Many current events in the years 2020 and 2021 may cause a person to ask the question WHY? For example, why did Marathon Refinery in the 48217 zip code finally decide to offer \$5 million to buy homes in that area? Why did Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune choose to resign? Why did President Joe Biden withdraw troops from Afghanistan? Why has the monarch butterfly population decreased in Michigan? Why is there such a strong debate over the Enbridge Line 5 pipeline? Why did it take so long for Derek Chauvin to be indicted for George Floyd’s murder?

The list could go on and on, involving various issues regarding people, animals, air, water and land. It is possible to be on the PRO/CON side of these issues and yet they might affect the Sierra Club in the long run. Understanding the WHY might help us plan and maintain an environment where we can enjoy, explore and protect the planet.

For many issues we get “superficial” answers as to why the decision was made. The why is often a surface answer that doesn't give the meaning about the depth of the issue. I would implore our members to study, observe and communicate about various issues. Study deeper into a problem and find out the history. Observe what is happening over a stretch of time (see patterns). If possible, communicate with people involved to get first-hand knowledge (see all sides).

Start with why? As we continue our work, let’s think, act and communicate why we are doing what we do – the deeper meaning as to why we are engaging members of the Michigan Sierra Club. In that light, let’s think about why things are happening around us and our world to understand the underlying reasons why certain decisions are being made which ultimately affect the environment.



Deitra Covington
Co-Chair, Michigan
Chapter Executive Committee

Every Vote Matters in Sierra Club Election

Make sure your voice is heard in determining the Chapter’s work by voting in Sierra Club’s Executive Committee (ExCom) election. Four at-large seats are open. Ballots must be received by December 1. See pages 12 and 13 for information and ballot.

SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Enclosed is my/our gift to the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter:
_____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 \$_____ Other

Give online at www.tinyurl.com/supportMISC

Your donation helps provide the flexible funding Sierra Club needs to successfully advocate for Michigan's Great Lakes, wild heritage, and clean energy future.

Your contribution to Sierra Club is not tax-deductible; it supports our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. If you prefer to make a tax-deductible gift to support our work, call Development Director Jan O’Connell at 616-956-6646 to learn how.

Please send your gift to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter,
109 E. Cesar Chavez Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906

Instead of a check, please charge my credit card
(VISA or MC) \$_____.

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

THINK GLOBALLY, AND GET ACTIVE WITH YOUR LOCAL SIERRA CLUB GROUP!

Sierra Club is the largest grassroots environmental organization in the country, and the Michigan Chapter's 10 regional Groups and Committees host outings, political and conservation activities, and informational programs. Members and supporters are invited to attend outings and meetings —everyone is welcome! For inquiries about activities in your area, you can also contact gail.philbin@sierraclub.org.

Sometimes people participate in a Chapter Group other than the one serving the county in which they live. If this is true for you, it's important we have this information because 1) Groups get funds based on their member numbers, and 2) Groups send info to their members through lists based on their member home addresses. To change your designated Group, please contact Sierra Club National's Member Care 415.977.5653 or member.care@sierraclub.org



Clearwater Conservation Committee / CCC

COUNTIES: Antrim, Benzie, Crawford, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, Otsego, Roscommon and Wexford
FACEBOOK: Clearwater Conservation Committee
TWITTER: @NCMIClearwater
VICE CHAIR: Charlie Weaver • ctejedor@copper.net

Greater Jackson Area Committee / GJA

COUNTIES: Jackson
EMAIL: SierraClubJackson@gmail.com
WANTED: Local folks interested in helping us build our outings and membership. If you're interested, email us at: sierraclubjackson@gmail.com

Crossroads Group / CG

COUNTIES: Livingston and western Oakland
MEETS: at group leader homes in Livingston County or West Oakland Counties (first Thurs of the month)
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/crossroads
FACEBOOK: Crossroads Group Sierra Club
CHAIR: Lee Burton, 810-231-9045 or lee.burton@michigan.sierraclub.org
VICE CHAIR: Lee Anzick • leeanzick@gmail.com

Greater Grand Rapids Committee / GGRC

COUNTIES: Kent and Ottawa
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Greater Grand Rapids
EMAIL: ggrcom@michigan.sierraclub.org
CHAIR: Marialyce Zeerip • marialycezeerip6@gmail.com

Huron Valley Group / HVG

COUNTIES: Washtenaw, Lenawee and Monroe
MEETS: in Ann Arbor
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/huron
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Huron Valley Group
EMAIL: HVGSierraClub@gmail.com
CHAIR: Jason Frenzel • a2jasonfrenzel@gmail.com
VICE CHAIR: Anne Brown • aasbrown@gmail.com
OUTINGS CO-CHAIR: John Metzler • johnmetz@applecon.com
OUTINGS CO-CHAIR: Shonda Thoms • sktohm@gmail.com

Nepessing Group / NG

COUNTIES: Genesee, Lapeer, and North Oakland
MEETS: at Mott Community College in Flint
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/nepessing
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Nepessing Group - MI
CHAIR: Mike Buza • theoriginalzuba@yahoo.com
VICE CHAIR: Suzanne Lossing • slossing@hotmail.com

South of the Straits Network / SSN

COUNTIES: Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet and Presque Isle
MEETS: Third Wednesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 at EMS Station 1 1201 Eppler Rd, Petoskey
FACEBOOK: South of the Straits Sierra Club
CHAIR: Dottie Hawthorne, SouthofStraits@michigan.sierraclub.org

Southeast Michigan Group / SEMG

COUNTIES: Wayne, St. Clair, Macomb, Oakland
MEETS: Elks Club, 2401 E. Fourth, Royal Oak
WEBSITE: sierraclub.org/michigan/semg
FACEBOOK: Sierra Club Southeast Michigan Group
CO-CHAIR: Garrett Dempsey • garrett.dempsey@sierraclub.org
CO-CHAIR: Jerry Hasspacher • jhasspac@gmail.com
 The Southeast Michigan Group is holding an election for the Executive Committee. Elected candidates will take office in January 2022. Go to our website (sierraclub.org/michigan/semg) for candidate statements and the ballot. Voting deadline is December 3, 2021.

Southwest Michigan Group / SWMG

COUNTIES: Berrien, Branch, Cass, St. Joseph, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, Van Buren, Allegan and Barry
MEETS: in Kalamazoo
WEBSITE: <https://swmgsierra.org>
FACEBOOK: SWMG Sierra Club
TWITTER: SierraSwMiGroup
CHAIR: Kristi Lloyd • auntkiki@yahoo.com
VICE CHAIR: David Benac • dbenac24@gmail.com

Three Lakes Group / TLG

COUNTIES: Chippewa, Mackinac, Luce and Schoolcraft
MEETS: in Sault Ste. Marie
WEBSITE: tlgsierraclub.org
FACEBOOK: Three Lakes Group of Sierra Club
CHAIR: Roger Blanchard • blanchardclimate@gmail.com

Meetup With the Sierra Club

Meetup is a great way to check on the latest events sponsored by your local Sierra Club entity. Find the meetup page for your local group or committee below:

www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Southwest-Michigan/
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-South-of-the-Straits/
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Three-Lakes-Group/
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Huron-Valley/
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Greater-Grand-Rapids-Committee-Meetup/

www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Nepessing-Group-Michigan/
www.meetup.com/Metro-Detroit-Outdoors-Hiking/ (SEM Group)
www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Crossroads-Group/
www.meetup.com/SierraClubClearwaterGroup/
www.meetup.com/Metro-Detroit-Outdoors-Hiking/

Line 5 Fight Moves to Courts and Permitting Process

By Christy McGillivray, Legislative and Political Director

Sierra Club is ramping up work to force Enbridge to comply with Governor Whitmer's revocation of the easement that allows the company to operate in the Straits of Mackinac. When the governor's Department of Natural Resources revoked the 1953 easement on May 12, Enbridge was officially in violation of the law. Adding even more teeth to her order, Whitmer moved to seize the Line 5 oil profits from Enbridge for every day that it continues to illegally operate. As a founding member of the Oil & Water Don't Mix Coalition, Sierra Club is proud to have worked hard to elect an environmental champion like Whitmer, who needs grassroots support to carry out her orders.

Enbridge has sued to keep operating and it has yet to comply with the governor's orders. In late July, a contractor working for the corporation dropped a 17.5-ton anchor close to the pipeline and abandoned the dangerous heavy debris. The anchor has since been removed but this action fits with the pattern of Enbridge's dangerous practices that continue to demonstrate a clear and present threat.

The fight to shut down Line 5 is now on two fronts: the courts (in efforts to force Enbridge to comply with Gov. Whitmer's order) and through the permitting processes of the Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) and the Army Corps of Engineers. Enbridge readily admits that Line 5 is unsafe and is working on getting the permits from these agencies to build an equally dangerous oil tunnel through the Straits. Earlier this year, Sierra Club celebrated a big win on this front. The MPSC is requiring climate change impacts to be taken into account in the permitting of the oil tunnel and the Army Corps of Engineers is



PHOTO BY RUDOLPH ARNSTEIN, COURTESY OF UNSPLASH

requiring that an Environmental Impact Statement be included as a part of that permitting process. Sierra Club worked hard for the inclusion of these requirements in the process and is ready to engage with both legal and grassroots support to make sure these permits are never issued. The Michigan Chapter needs financial support and volunteer hours to make this happen!

You can make a non tax-deductible donation on this webpage: <https://tinyurl.com/rvmvhzye>. (There is also a link to tax-deductible donations on this page.) If you would like to get involved as a volunteer to drive public comments, email julie.geisinger@gmail.com.



SIERRA CLUB

MICHIGAN CHAPTER



<https://www.sierraclub.org/michigan/sierra-club-solar-partnership>

Affordable Quality Solar Electric Provided by Local Firms Vetted by Sierra Club Michigan Chapter

Find out how you can join the many Sierra Club Members and Supporters with solar installed through our program by contacting the Michigan Chapter Office.

GO SOLAR TODAY!

Carbon Offsets of Sierra Club Michigan's Solar Partnership Since 2015:

- 350,096 lbs of Coal Burned
- 108 Tons of Landfill Waste
- 788,415 Miles Driven by Average Vehicle
- 5,600 Tree Seedlings Grown for 10 Years
- 12,070 Incandescent lamps switched to LEDs
- 35,752 Gallons of Gasoline Consumed

2/5/2021

Moving Michigan Beyond Coal to Clean Energy

By Mike Berkowitz, Beyond Coal Representative

Those who care about clean energy saw a lot of meaningful progress on the issue this summer. The Lansing Board of Water and Light retired its coal-burning Eckert Power Station as a result of Sierra Club's 2017 Clean Air Act suit settlement. Similarly, DTE retired the River Rouge coal and gas-burning plant, driven by decades of community-led activism and the Club's recent settlement. Closing these plants has saved 64 lives by reducing harmful air pollution. In 2009, these plants were emitting 4.8 million tons of harmful carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year when our campaign started in earnest to shut down all coal plants and replace them with clean energy.

More recently, we led a coalition of more than 75 organizations, businesses and elected leaders to launch a climate justice campaign targeting Consumers Energy. Shortly thereafter, the utility responded by proposing to retire its J.H. Campbell coal plant in 2025, moving the retirement up 15 years from 2040! While they did not propose building a new gas plant, the company is planning to purchase four existing fossil gas plants.



Consumers Energy plans to retire the J.H. Campbell coal plant.

PHOTO BY JAN O'CONNELL

The Michigan Public Service Commission will determine the ultimate outcome and Sierra Club is intervening to ensure that the J.H. Campbell plant retires on an expedited timeline while maximizing clean energy instead of fossil gas.

Here's where you can learn more or join our campaign to hold Consumers Energy accountable: micleanconsumersenergy.com.

Grand Haven Citizens and Industry Come Together to Resist New Gas Plant

By Jan O'Connell, Development Director and Energy Issues Organizer

Grand Haven residents and clean energy advocates won a significant victory in August when the proposed Harbor Island fracked gas power plant and office complex bond proposal was abruptly put on hold in response to overwhelming opposition. A high COVID risk rating in Ottawa County's Grand Haven didn't stop more than 100 local residents from attending the August City Council meeting to speak out against a scheduled bond vote to fund a fracked gas plant and office complex on Harbor Island. This took place after the Grand Haven Board of Light and Power (BLP) narrowly voted 3-2 in June to approve a \$50 million bond, of which \$30 million would be allocated to build the new complex, the expensive and controversial bond proposal, amidst severe coal ash contamination on Harbor Island and now recently found PFAS, an industrial 'forever chemical.'

The large turnout and strong opposition to the bond proposal resulted in a unanimous vote by the City Council to hit the pause button on the BLP proposal. Three days later the BLP staff did an about-face and recommended the Board cease the Harbor Island power plant construction plans and instead purchase additional needed power capacity from other generators. This major turnaround is not the end of the story. Additional votes and a state air permit the BLP seeks for the supposedly abandoned power plant are planned this fall, but the people of Grand Haven can breathe a bit easier as their demand for a cleaner energy future was heard and acted on.

Contact Jan O'Connell at 616-956-6646 or jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org with questions or for updates.

Michigan Cities Fight for Climate Action

By Sarah Tresedder, Climate and Energy Organizer

While activists fight for climate action at the federal level, cities are leading the way in protecting our planet and communities in West Michigan. Below are a few municipalities and groups Sierra Club has joined with who are doing their part to make a difference:

- Grand Rapids Climate Resolution Coalition (grclimate.org) has created a resolution urging the city to declare a climate emergency and commit to achieving community-wide carbon-neutrality by 2030!
- The Holland Climate Collaborative (hollandclimatecollaborative.com) has been lobbying Holland's city council to reduce CO2 emissions by half each decade and to speed up the timeline of their Community Energy Plan.
- Throughout the pandemic, climate advocates in Muskegon County held a successful series of webinars titled "Community Conversations on Climate" to educate community members about the impacts of climate change and the solutions cities can take to improve ecosystems.

To get involved in local community work on climate change or start a group, let Sierra Club help! Email sarah.tresedder@sierraclub.org to learn more.




Letters to the Editor Spur Environmental Action

By Sarah Tresedder, Climate and Energy Organizer

When it comes to protecting Michigan's environment, the pen can be mightier than the sword. The Michigan Chapter's new Letters to the Editor (LTE) team will take up that pen to write letters to local newspapers on behalf of environmental and political priorities. Members can join the LTE team at this link: (<https://tinyurl.com/zdwcew>). By joining this team, volunteers can not only submit letters to the editor for the chapter but also get guidance on how to write and submit successful articles to local papers and other news sites.

The Michigan Chapter will provide weekly guidance on news and talking points to write and submit LTEs. Chapter staff have also compiled a list of links for newspapers to make it that much easier to submit letters. We will also highlight these pieces on the Club's social media, blogs and our biweekly online newsletter will highlight these pieces.

Anyone with experience writing LTEs can sign up to become a leader for this new group. Leaders will work closely with Sierra Club staff to draft examples and talking points and help review any written pieces that folks need help with. To sign up as a letter writer or leader, use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/zdwcew>.



Today's employees seek purpose at work. Helping employees discover and support the issues that matter to them is connected to increased engagement, higher levels of productivity and innovation, and bottom line business benefits. Caring for our air, water, land and wildlife rank as top priorities with today's workforce.

That's why the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter is a proud benefiting member of EarthShare, a national coalition that gives businesses and employees across America effective ways to care for our natural resources and contribute to a sustainable future. EarthShare works with the corporate sector to create dynamic and relevant engagement and philanthropic experiences for employees, businesses, and the communities where they live and work. Join us in accelerating the pace of positive environmental change!

To learn more and see the listing of EarthShare groups in Michigan, visit <http://www.earthsharemichigan.org>. You can specifically support the work of the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter through workplace giving. Just contact jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org or call Jan at 616-956-6646 to learn how to get started!

State Legislative Update: Lawmakers Debate Clean Energy and Aggregate Mining

By Christy McGillivray, Political and Legislative Director

The Michigan Legislature spent 2021 pushing bad bi-partisan legislation. Here are some examples of bills we are working on to stop, improve, or pass:

Senate Bills 429-431: Revoke local authority over sand and gravel mining projects in communities. Rather than establishing a true protective, statewide standard for aggregate mining projects, these bills remove as much oversight as possible and unfairly favor the industry over residents and the environment. These bills must be stopped!

House Bill 4236: Removes Michigan's 1% cap on distributed generation that limits the clean energy produced by home solar panels. Upper Peninsula Power and Consumers Energy have exceeded this cap, and DTE is very close. HB 4236 allows for expansion of the solar industry in Michigan, and it would protect and create clean energy jobs. Sierra Club supports renewable energy expansion and the removal of the cap on solar.

House Bills 4715-4716: Allows for creating and financing community solar programs under the Michigan Public Service Commission. These bills ensure that community solar facilities are available to customers of all socioeconomic classes and implement mechanisms to promote community solar in low-income communities. Community solar facilities are vital to the transition towards clean energy sources, and HB 4715-16 are key to this effort.

If you want to help us in this legislative work, sign up for our in-district lobby program!

Fight Back Against Voter Suppression

Sierra Club volunteers from across the country joined Michiganders to fight back against recent Republican-led voter suppression efforts. More than 100 volunteers made calls to inform constituents about this imminent threat to voting rights. In turn, more than 1,500 constituents committed to calling their

state legislators, demanding opposition to the 39-bill package introduced in March designed to obstruct access to the ballot.

"After a safe, secure, and successful election in 2020, we should be celebrating the leadership of Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson and local clerks for not making it harder to vote in Michigan," said Christy McGillivray, political and legislative director for the Michigan Chapter of Sierra Club. "The Republican response to losing in the 2020 election has been to try and make it harder to vote. That is not how democracy works. In Michigan, we value democracy, and over 1,500 constituents demonstrated this by committing to call to stop voter suppression."

The bills drawing the most criticism in the package make it harder to register for an absentee ballot, restrict access to ballot drop boxes, prohibit the secretary of state from making absentee ballot applications easily accessible online, ban local clerks from providing pre-paid postage for absentee ballots and bar clerks from counting absentee ballots in the weeks leading up to an election.

Political Committee Gearing Up For 2022 Elections

Sierra Club is actively working to help elect more environmental champions all across Michigan and protect democracy in the state. Attacks on democracy go hand-in-glove with attacks on the environment in Michigan.

To get more pro-environment, pro-democracy champions elected, we need members to join in this fight. It won't be easy, but Sierra Club has a plan and the people to get the work done. In 2022 with your support, environmental defenders can win targeted races at all levels of government.

To help elect progressive environmentalists to local, state, and national offices, please consider making a donation using the form below or via credit card on Sierra Club's website here: <http://tinyurl.com/q42nfob>.

SUPPORT THE WORK OF SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN LEGISLATIVE CAMPAIGN

Enclosed is my/our gift to the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter:
_____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 \$_____ Other

Give online at bit.ly/SCMILegFund

Your donation helps support our Legislative work at the Capitol and across the state.

Your contribution to Sierra Club is not tax-deductible; it supports our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Please send your gift to Sierra Club Michigan Chapter,
109 E. Cesar Chavez Avenue, Lansing, MI 48906

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip

Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Employer: _____

Occupation: _____

“That Democracy Stuff Is Kind Of A Big Deal”

By Marvin Roberson, Forest Policy Specialist

A friend of mine uttered this phrase in the title of this article on a conference call about proposed voter suppression legislation in Michigan.

Of course, she's right. However, for most of our lives the arc has swung towards more inclusion, less disenfranchisement and greater participation in our democratic institutions. The number and classes of people who were able to vote, hold office, etc., increased over time rather than diminished.

Voting was originally confined to white male landowners. Over the years, decades and centuries, the enfranchising of people beyond this narrow class increased, sometimes at great cost to those who were the driving force behind this progress.

Many of us assumed that this trend would continue. We thought that in a democracy, voters make the best case for their issue or candidate and the one that best represents the voters' views would win.

Boy, were we wrong.

In many cases, the tide has now turned back towards the bad old days. The calculations are no longer how to appeal to the most voters. Now efforts aim to make sure that only the voters who agree with you actually get to vote. This effort is true at many levels and even trickles down to wolves.

Twice Michigan voters voted to ban the recreational hunting of wolves in Michigan and did so by a significant margin. Twice the Republican legislature simply did an end-run around the voters and overturned the votes, thereby disenfranchising the majority of Michigan voters.

In addition, legislators are assuring that the only people who get a say in managing Michigan wolves come from a minority of folks who favor the recreational hunting of wolves. The legislature created a “Wolf Management Advisory Council”. The charge of this council is to advise the Michigan Department of Natural Resources on wolf management.

Almost all of the members, including the member of the mandated “conservation” group, wholeheartedly support the sport hunting of wolves. In addition, a bill has been introduced to limit the members of the council to Upper Peninsula residents where wolf hunting is strongly supported.

These efforts bypass science and the will of Michigan residents. When folks disagree with you, instead of trying to convince them to see your point of view, it's easier to simply not let them have a voice.



PHOTO BY EVA BLUE, COURTESY OF UNSPLASH



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



With your help we can clean up our water

Sierra Club Water Sentinels are the first line of defense of America's waters. We live on the water planet. However, water is a finite resource with only about 1 % of the world's water actually being available for human consumption. Water pollution & over-use are threatening both the quality & quantity of our water resources at an alarming rate. **Keep our water safe. Join Sierra Club.**

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Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy & lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine & \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose a check and mail to:
 Sierra Club, PO Box 421041
 Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 **F94Q W- 2100 1**
 or visit our website: www.sierraclub.org

Healing Our Waters - Great Lakes Coalition Update

By Erma Leaphart, HOW Michigan Co-Lead

The dire consequences of climate change have resulted in urgent calls to address the issue and for an unwavering investment in clean energy.

Wildfires, deadly heat waves, droughts and flooding are occurring in too many places for too long a time. The Great Lakes region has experienced more intense storms, resulting in rising water levels, shoreline erosion and flooding. Detroit recently experienced a 500-year storm, followed by another storm and then another within a four-week period. We experienced flooded streets, basement back-ups, power outages, downed trees and combined sewer overflows. People and the environment are inextricably connected and both are under duress.

The Healing Our Waters (HOW) Great Lakes Coalition hosted Great Lakes Days in March 2021. Sierra Club serving as HOW state co-lead with Ducks Unlimited organized four teams of messengers that met virtually with the offices of 15 Michigan members of Congress to share priorities focusing on water contaminants (e.g. toxic algae blooms, PFAS, lead, microplastics), industrial pollution, invasive species, sewage overflows, polluted stormwater and agricultural runoff, wetlands restoration and protection and the accessibility of water.

Positive outcomes of these efforts in Washington D.C. include passing massive infrastructure investments in water, wastewater and stormwater. Federal support is critical to addressing both climate change and protecting our water resources.

The October 2021 HOW conference, which was to be in-person in Milwaukee, has been postponed to 2022 due to the pandemic, however the originally scheduled plenaries are being offered as a webinar series. To learn more, visit www.healthylakes.org.

Detroit-Based Rain Garden Project Leads to Partnership with UM

By Elayne Elliott, Green Stormwater Infrastructure Community Organizer

Since 2011, hundreds of community members working with the Michigan Chapter have installed more than 100 rain gardens across Detroit. Many were installed through Rain Gardens to the Rescue. This free program educates community members (primarily homeowners) about the benefits of green infrastructure and its role in reducing stormwater runoff that leads to flooding. In addition, Rain Gardens to the Rescue offers participants free native plants and hands-on installation support when participants agree to maintain the garden for at least five years.

The need to measure the long-term impact of these gardens became apparent as our rain garden network grew in recent years from primarily residential projects to large-scale projects at houses of worship and community organizations. Sierra Club has partnered with the Real Time Water Sensor Lab at the University of Michigan and Friends of the Rouge to quantify the effectiveness and impact of green stormwater installations in Detroit. In June, twenty one sensor nodes were installed at unique locations across the city of Detroit. Locations range in size from 75-square-foot residential rain gardens to professionally engineered bioswales spanning more than 2,000 sq. ft. Sites were selected to reflect an array of installation dates, locations and square footage.

Sensors will be installed for at least one year but early data from the project looks promising. Over the course of 24 hours beginning June 25, Detroit received up to six inches of rain in some areas that left streets and freeways flooded. An analysis of sensor data from three sites from June 25-26, revealed that the gardens had peak infiltration rates of 2.4 to 4.7 inches/hour which aligns with the design specifications for each site. A detailed report will be available to the public later this fall. Email glgc@michigan.sierraclub.org to request project updates.

To find out more about Rain Gardens to the Rescue, visit <https://tinyurl.com/ejrxsans>.



PFAS in the Garden?

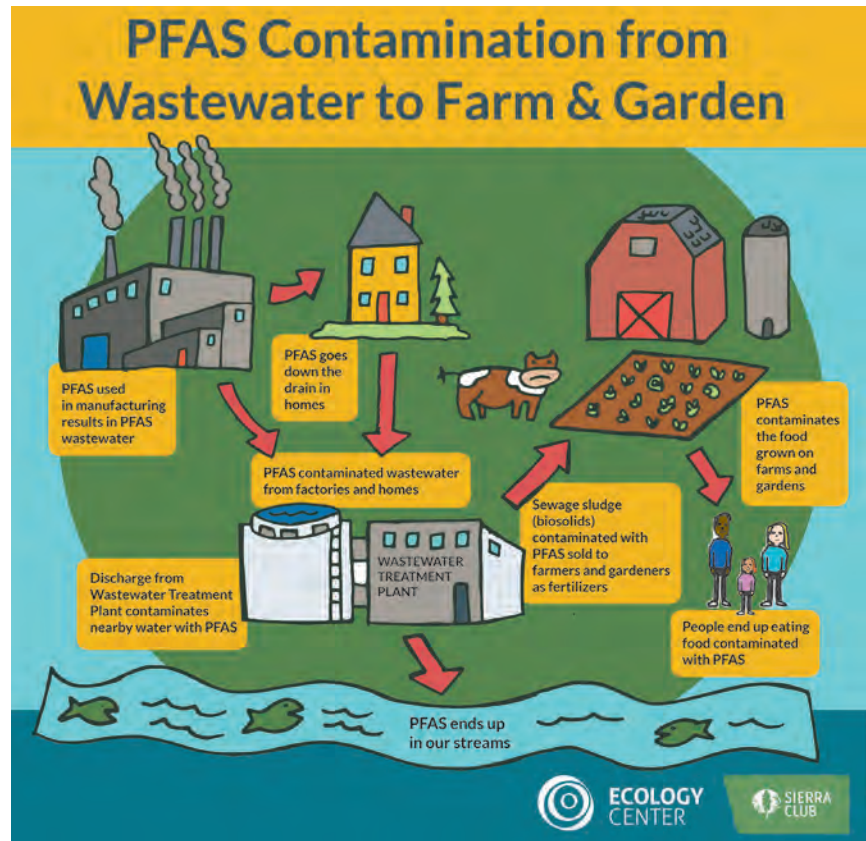
By Christy McGillivray, Legislative and Political Director

Sierra Club and the Ecology Center released a report (<https://tinyurl.com/yp6entjy>) on the alarming presence of PFAS in home garden fertilizers sold as “organic” in home hardware stores. These home fertilizers were chosen for testing because they are made from wastewater treatment plant biosolids - the solid leftovers after wastewater is treated (<https://www.michiganradio.org/post/some-home-garden-fertilizers-contain-pfas>). The ground breaking work in this report was led by chapter volunteer leaders Denise Trabbic-Pointer and Stephen Colby Brown. The data they collected and analyzed with our partners at the Ecology Center show that PFAS is potentially making it into our food supply through the land application of biosolids-based fertilizers.

PFAS are found in biosolids in large part due to the industrial discharges into wastewater treatment plants. However, with the widespread use of PFAS in thousands of consumer products it is unlikely that we will be able to guarantee that PFAS is not making it into our food supply unless we ban the sale of almost all PFAS with some limited exceptions. Michigan has taken some steps to regulate PFAS discharges to wastewater treatment plants, but as earlier reporting shows

(<https://tinyurl.com/ym4ys4bm>) we have not gone far enough in setting standards to keep PFAS out of agricultural products and soil (<https://tinyurl.com/fdxnzt8>).

PFAS are an almost indestructible class of chemicals that are both highly toxic and incredibly mobile once they are in the environment. For these reasons, the Michigan Chapter continues to prioritize demands to get these dangerous chemicals off the market and in the meantime demand rigorous product testing.



Anyone interested in getting involved with our work on PFAS should contact Christy McGillivray at christy.mcgillivray@sierraclub.org

2020 Factory Farm Permit Still On Hold

By Gail Philbin, Chapter Director

Eighteen months have passed since Michigan’s Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) launched a new five-year state permit for how factory farms handle animal waste. However, the permit remains in limbo, making its way through a legal process triggered by the Michigan Farm Bureau and other groups that filed an administrative appeal in 2020. Among other things, the agricultural industry opposes a new January-March ban on the application of waste on frozen and snow-covered ground which Sierra Club and partners fought for throughout 2019. Nutrient runoff from Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) is a key factor in the growth of toxic algae in the Great Lakes and inland waters.

The Environmental Law and Policy Center is representing several groups including Environmentally Concerned Citizens of South Central Michigan and the Michigan Environmental Council that intervened in the appeal process and have submitted testimony in support of EGLE. If you’d like to make a difference on this issue, consider joining Sierra Club’s CAFO Busters to learn how to submit comments on applications for new permits for waste application and facilities. Email gail.philbin@sierraclub.org.

VOTE FOR MICHIGAN CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The six Michigan Chapter Sierra Club members listed on these two pages are running for four at-large spots on the Michigan Chapter Executive Committee. ExCom members set Chapter priorities and policies, ensure financial stability and solvency, and monitor and evaluate Chapter and Club activities. Their willingness to serve illustrates the strong commitment to grassroots activism that makes Sierra Club the most effective environmental group in the country. Please note that due to space constraints, we asked the candidates to limit their statements to 100 words or less. (If a statement runs longer than 100 words, the full statement can be found on the election web page at sierraclub.org/michigan/executive-committee-elections)

Vote for no more than four candidates. You can cast your vote in one of two ways:

-Go online to our election web page and ballot at sierraclub.org/michigan/executive-committee-elections

-Mail in the ballot in this newsletter on p.13.

If you're voting by snail mail, you must write your Sierra Club membership number on the outside of the envelope in which you return your ballot or your vote will be disqualified. Your membership number is above your address on the back cover of this newsletter. This information will also be required for online voting. Paper ballots must be returned to the Michigan Chapter office by Dec. 1, 2021 (online voting deadline is the same).

Abby Clark

Abby Clark is serving her first term on the ExCom as co-chair. Her proudest accomplishments are recruiting a new treasurer, two new ExCom members and helping to coordinate the strategic planning process. A passionate environmentalist, she has spent over a decade working for political and advocacy organizations in Michigan and across the country on communications, issue advocacy, ballot initiatives and managing electoral and advocacy campaigns including multiple presidential and U.S. Senate races. If elected to the ExCom, she will focus on fundraising, communications, organizing and increasing volunteer engagement on state and local climate and water issues.



Ryan Bates

Activist Ryan Bates was the founding executive director of Michigan United (MU), the state's largest community organizing group. He took the organization from a \$50,000 budget and one staff member to a \$5 million budget with more than 30 staff and four offices across the state. Ryan helped build major campaigns, including a successful \$5 million housing reparations payment to Detroit residents and advocating state funding for the Flint water crisis. MU has also played important roles on criminal justice reform, immigrants rights, health care justice and foreclosure prevention.



Mike Buza

I have always worked in service to others. After 40 years as a social worker, I felt a greater need to work in service to the environment. Since then I have attended dozens of township meetings to advocate for renewable energy. I have written many articles on renewable energy and plastic pollution. I serve on the Governor's Council for Climate Solutions, as well as chairing the Nepessing Group. I have been honored to receive the Chapter's Service Award. If elected to the Chapter's Executive Committee I will use my energies to help serve all life forms on Earth.



Devin Rittenhouse

Devin Rittenhouse is experienced in fundraising, political organizing, non-profit board management and most things non-profit. Devin would bring experience from his time on local and state-wide races, serving in past positions from finance assistant to campaign manager. Currently at The Henry Ford, Devin helps create strategic partnerships between corporations and foundations to support the organization's national K-12 STEM education program. He is excited for the opportunity to help steer an organization committed to better environmental stewardship. As an avid runner and triathlete he spends most of his free time outdoors, enjoying all the beauty Michigan has to offer.



Anne Woiwode

For 129 years, Sierra Club has led the fight to protect wild places. Our work has expanded dramatically as climate disasters threaten the planet. We will only protect the future by engaging our members as advocates for a clean, healthy and diverse future for all people and the environment. This is what has motivated me to be part of Sierra Club for more than 40 years as both a volunteer and staff member. I'm deeply honored to be able to serve in this way and I ask for your vote to let me continue in that role.



Mark Meadows

Mark became assistant attorney general in 1975, represented the DNR, DEQ and served on the Environmental Task Force. His positions include serving on the East Lansing Commission on the Environment and the East Lansing City Council and was East Lansing's mayor from 1997-2005 and 2015-2019. In the Michigan House from 2006-2012, Mark was chair of the Judiciary Committee, assistant speaker, assistant Democratic leader, chair of the House Democratic Campaign Committee and a member of the Great Lakes and Environment Committee. Mark currently is chair of the Chapter Political Committee and is chair of the National Political Teams Federal Endorsements Committee.



SIERRA CLUB MICHIGAN CHAPTER 2021 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE BALLOT

Vote for no more than four (4) candidates. The second column of boxes is for the second member of joint membership only.

ABBY CLARK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MIKE BUZA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RYAN BATES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEVIN RITTENHOUSE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ANNE WOIWODE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MARK MEADOWS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Clip out and mail your ballot to:

Michigan Chapter Sierra Club
Attn: Chapter Elections
109 E Cesar Chavez Avenue
Lansing, MI 48906

Write your Sierra Club Membership number on the outside of your envelope to validate your ballot (membership number is above address on the back cover of newsletter).

Your ballot must be received on or before December 1, 2021.

Sierra Club's EVERGREEN Program

Your support for the Michigan Chapter through automatic monthly gifts to the EVERGREEN program is an easy way to ensure that Chapter programs are sustained. The additional contributions from members and supporters like YOU keep our vulnerable wild lands and Great Lakes protected, keeps our air and water clean and promotes and utilizes solutions that fight climate change. These donations add up quickly and are an easy way to ensure that our programs continue. Please consider an EVERGREEN monthly gift to the Michigan Sierra Club today. You can go online to:

<https://wildernessguardian.sierraclub.org/local/?michigan=2100>

Any questions, email jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org
or call Jan at 616-956-6646.

When We Win

By Rhonda Anderson, Regional Organizing Manager

Across the nation, Sierra Club has fought to close polluting, coal-fired power plants and move communities to clean energy. In Detroit, after decades of working side by side with community activists, Sierra Club welcomed the news on May 31 that DTE finally ceased operations forever at the River Rouge plant. WE WIN!

Sierra Club partnered to make this happen with community leaders in River Rouge, Ecorse and the 48217 zip code of Detroit. The River Rouge plant is located in this area along with other sources of industrial pollution such as oil refining facilities and chemical plants. The River Rouge plant has generated emissions of mercury and sulfur dioxide in the region for decades, burdening local residents with chronic illnesses such as asthma and cardiovascular disease. And COVID-19 taught us that predispositions for diseases like these lead to a disproportionate impact of the virus on Black, indigenous and communities of color.

Yet closing an industry, no matter how bad, has consequences. Shutting down a coal plant sets up a life-changing chain of events, including the loss of jobs and tax revenues that result in the loss of local services. Sierra Club has worked with the Blue Green Alliance as well as unions for utility workers and steel workers for months and years of talks took with local governments about how to make this work for everyone, especially the hard-hit



The transition committee to build a better community beyond the River Rouge coal plant closing includes several dedicated residents who have been engaged in the fight for 10 years. Pictured (l to r) are five of the six committee members at the 2019 Sierra Club Michigan Chapter Awards ceremony: Theresa Landrum, Deitra Covington, Vicki Dobbins, Dr. Delores Leonard and Rhonda Anderson. (Not pictured is Ebony Elmore.)

communities of color. And now, community leaders who worked tirelessly and selflessly for years are envisioning what their community will look like without a coal plant.

When WE WIN, lives become better and people can literally breathe better. Everyone is healthier because air doesn't stop at a zip code. The fight of these communities is everyone's fight – the fight against climate change for a better future. When Ecorse, River Rouge and 48217 win, everyone wins.

Saginaw Pauses Water Shutoffs

By Christy McGillivray, Legislative and Political Director

Sierra Club supported a successful effort of Saginaw residents fighting to keep water flowing to the most vulnerable community members suffering the impacts of the pandemic. On June 15th, City of Saginaw officials ended the water shutoffs moratorium that had been in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting 750 delinquent homes with shutoff. Despite the widespread recognition that water shutoffs present a grave public health threat, the City of Saginaw government planned to use this opportunity to take away water from a vulnerable population.

In addition to the shutoffs, the City Director of Inspections John Stemple announced (<https://tinyurl.com/bh3san2c>) that he intended to serve municipal civil infractions immediately to all homes whose water was just shut off. This gave low income residents just 48 hours on a holiday weekend to get their water turned on or incur hundreds of dollars of fees. In response to these draconian measures, Sierra Club signed on to a letter from the ACLU (<https://tinyurl.com/e8m36hvu>) calling for an immediate halt to this practice given possible violations of the Elliot-Larson Civil Rights Act, Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act, the Fair Housing Act and the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution.

After a two-week standoff during which Saginaw residents protested and demanded action, the shutoffs were paused to allow residents to seek assistance to pay their bills. However, because the city has not permanently committed to end the shutoffs, the ACLU sent a follow-up letter in September demanding the city clarify how long the pause will be in place and what set of circumstances would cause a resumption of shutoffs. (<https://tinyurl.com/548rh6hv>)

The shutoffs are a discretionary action. Federal money is available (<https://tinyurl.com/4k3uyz6t>) specifically intended to aid communities of color and vulnerable populations with utility bills. Sierra Club supports Saginaw resident's ACLU-backed demands.



In Memory of Harry Gubbins 1928 – 2020



Harry and his wife, Lynn, spent many weekends in Michigan's forests and along our shorelines backpacking, hiking, enjoying astronomy, camping and cross-country skiing.

They were Michigan Sierra Club members for more than 40 years. So glad Harry's job at Lear Siegler as an electrical engineer brought them to Grand Rapids, where he was involved in the development of a "piece" of the Lunar Module. Eat your heart out Elon Musk!

Friends remember a few hair-raising outings but one particularly stands out, a cross-country ski trip with Harry and Lynn that started with a beautiful moon-lit night in the Cannonsburg State Game Area calling owls. With little notice the snows came in hard, hiding the moon. They skied back with temperatures dropping, slick trails and trees that became invisible. No easy feat. Thanks to Lynn and family for naming the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter for gifts to honor Harry Gubbins.

To walk in nature is to witness a thousand miracles. - Marie Davis

In Memoriam of Harold Trebian 1944– 2020



One of Harold's favorite spots was the Big Sable River in Ludington State Park where Harold often could be found casting his line to fish for salmon in this little river that flows one

mile from Hamlin Lake into Lake Michigan. It was such a favorite spot for Harold that after his passing, his family had memorial buoys made and placed into the mouth of the river where a few unrelated individuals lost their lives due to the dangerous rip currents that all too often form claiming lives on the shores of Lake Michigan.

His daughter and family set up memorial contributions to benefit the Sierra Club Michigan Chapter and more than 10 of Harold's dear friends made memorial gifts to honor Harold's life.

Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing that it's not fish they are after."-- Henry David Thoreau

Mary Payne

December 3, 1926 — November 8, 2020



Mary Payne was an avid lover of nature and the outdoors and through the years she attended many of our Chapter annual retreats at Camp Miniwanca. She lived in the

lakeshore community of Muskegon where she led Sierra Club hiking and cross-country ski outings since the late 1980s and was also an active volunteer for many organizations in the area, donating her time and resources to better the community. She also volunteered for a "big job" in 1996 -- over three days Mary made a remarkable number of trips to transport attendees and presenters to and from the local airport for a large Sierra Club Midwest regional gathering at Miniwanca.

In 2014, Mary had the foresight to take out a Sierra Club charitable gift annuity. This is a good way for anyone who cares about the environment to get an upfront tax deduction and help the Sierra Club and our Michigan Chapter. At the same time, members get a predictable stream of income for the rest of their lives. Payment rates go as high as nine percent, depending on your age. For more information on a charitable gift annuity and a no-obligation example of your benefits based on your age (minimum age 65) and donation amount (minimum \$10,000), contact Jan O'Connell at 616-956-6646 or jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org

What Will Your Legacy Be?



Not everyone can make a large gift to protect the environment during their lifetime, but you can preserve the environment for the future by remembering the Michigan Sierra Club and/or National Sierra Club in your estate plans or will. Bequests to the Michigan Chapter support the conservation work here in Michigan. This funding enables the Chapter to continue protecting the natural splendor of Michigan for years to come.

These gifts cost you nothing now. You can hold on to your assets for as long as you need them and you can change your beneficiaries at any time. If you have already named the Michigan Sierra Club &/or National Sierra Club as a beneficiary, would like to discuss doing so or just want more information, contact Jan O'Connell at (616) 956-6646 or email her at jan.oconnell@sierraclub.org



PHOTO BY COLLIN O'CONNELL



The Sierra Club's members and supporters are 3.8 million of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our

communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.

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Supporting Your Chapter

Sierra Club's Michigan Legacy Council

Sierra Club established its Michigan Legacy Council to honor individuals, groups and organizations making significant gifts to the Michigan Chapter. Their partnership and commitment to our work leaves a lasting legacy. This list is current as of our publication date. Please join us in thanking the current listing of Michigan Legacy Council members:

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- Joyce Arakelian
- Richard M Barron
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- Charles Stephen Baum Endowment
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- James R & Diana Wright
- Raymond Ziarno
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- Lee Burton & Roberta Shaw-Reeves
- Gloria Byle & Larry Byle (Posthumously)
- Connie Cronenwett
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- Gary & Linda DeKock
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- Home 4 Good Realty (Kurt Rietema)
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