



The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

September 2024 Edition

## Title: 2024 Howard Geller Award: Chris Hunter as MFFC's Volunteer of the Year



At the Club's annual Banquet ringing down the curtain on the MFFC's "program year," it honored Chris Hunter as the recipient of the annual Howard Geller Volunteer of the Year Award.

In announcing the award recipient, Committee Chair Mike Matuszewski said, "The Geller Award is named after one of the most selfless, dedicated, extraordinary members of our club, the late Howard Geller. Before his passing more than a decade ago now, Howard displayed a truly selfless attitude toward all things Club-related.

"If there was an event or school that needed staffing Howard was there. If there was advice needed, Howard, a past Board member and officer, was there with words of advice and encouragement. If there was a school

especially, one that focused on youth, Howard was there.

"Tonight's honoree is cast in the same mold as Howard, always to be relied upon. Very simply, he's there. When something's needed, he's among the first to respond. When the Board is seeking advice, he's among the first individuals sought out." Chris Hunter has served the MFFC over the years in a wide array of position & activities:

- As a Board member and officer and past president
- As an organizer of and instructor at various schools
- As the chairman of the Admissions activity at the annual Midwest Fly Fishing Expo;
- In helping to revamp and formalize the way in which the MFFC instructs fly casting.
- In manning the camera and computers to offer Club members access to the Club's meetings via Zoom.

Upon receiving the award, Hunter said, "I am shocked and humbled. I can't tell you all how honored I feel."

In keeping with long-standing practice, each year's award recipient is determined by a committee comprised of surviving prior recipients: Al Haxton, Mike Matuszewski, Joe Sprys, Terry Herron, Al Bulszewicz, Todd Schotts, Bill Shannon, Peter Albertson, Kathy Oehring, Dave Nowicki, Kevin Lipp and Sybil Hunter. Deceased honorees are Howard Geller, Mike Doyle, Jim Telinda and Joe Sattler

### Upcoming Club Events

- 09/11/24: Speaker Meeting
- 09/18/24: Board Meeting
- 09/25/24: Activity Meeting
- 10/02/24: Activity Meeting
- 10/09/24: Board Meeting
- 10/16/24: Speaker Meeting
- 11/06/24: Speaker Meeting
- 11/13/24: Board Meeting
- 11/20/24: Activity Meeting
- 12/04/24: Speaker Meeting
- 12/11/24: Board Meeting
- 12/18/24: Garage Sale Event
- 01/08/25: Speaker Meeting
- 01/15/25: Board Meeting
- 01/22/25: Activity Meeting
- 02/05/25: Speaker Meeting
- 02/12/25: Board Meeting
- 02/19/25: Activity Meeting
- 03/05/25: Activity Meeting
- 03/08/25: Midwest Flyfishing Expo
- 03/09/25: Midwest Flyfishing Expo
- 03/12/25: Board Meeting
- 03/19/25: Speaker Meeting
- 04/02/25: Speaker Meeting
- 04/09/25: Board Meeting
- 04/16/25: Activity Meeting
- 05/07/25: Activity Meeting
- 05/12/25: Board Meeting
- 05/14/25: MFFC Banquet

For the most current listing of events, check our club's website: [mffc.org](http://mffc.org)

## Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board of Directors Meeting May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024

### Roll Call:

Meeting called to order at 7:30pm

Present: S. Hunter; K. Lipp; B. Green;  
J. Bada; J. Aukee; N. Tabaka; B.  
Strachan

Absent: J. Deputat; J. Eriksson; J.  
Aitken

**Approval of the Minutes:** agenda  
from 04/10/24 approved

**Approval of the Agenda:** agenda  
from 05/08/24 approved

### Officer's Report

**President:** S. Hunter

- Thanked Board and membership for support during her tenure.
- Hatch is under construction (final proofing).
- Note from Casting committee uploaded to the board drive for review.
- Mark Hendricks to be at the March /April 2025 speaker meeting to do a casting demonstration in the gym.

**Vice President:** K. Lipp

- Nothing to report

**Treasurer:** B. Green

- Presented the budget and final treasurer's report
- The annual banquet prizes and income from ticket sales are in good shape
- A full group of new members are scheduled for WaWaSum
- Some conservation grants were made

**Corresponding Secretary:** J. Bada

- Total number of eBlast: 8
  - Monthly Meeting Announcements = 4
  - Special News / Announcements = 3
  - Hatch Announcement = 1
- Number of Contacts
  - Total Contacts = 370
  - eMail Open Rate = 72%

- Speakers for upcoming Meetings
  - April: Steve Haywood (HFF Custom Rods)
  - May Banquet: Dirk Fischbach
  - June: Andrew Stein (Motor City Anglers)
  - July: Matt Dalton (NuCanoe)
  - August: TBD
- During the Expo received three commitments for speakers in the Fall 2024
- HFF Custom Rods for flyrod building set for June 14-16 2024, there are 2-3 open spots left

**Membership:** J. Deputat

- Total members at fiscal year ending July 31, 2023: 407
- 508 renewal letters mailed July 31, 2023
  - Current: 411 active members
  - 47 former members 2022
  - 54 former members 2021
- Member surveys were mailed to 407 current members.
- As of 5/8/24: 418 members have paid their dues 80% by check or cash
  - 136 surveys returned (33%)
  - 79 new members

### Events and Outings:

- New Member Outing: 05/08/24
- MFFC Banquet: 05/15/24
- Smallmouth Outing: 05/16/24
- GLC Casting Demo: 06/07/24
- WaWa Sum: 07/17 – 07/20/24
- MFFC Picnic: 07/20/24
- Montana Trips: weeks starting 07/27, 08/03 and 08/10/24
- Wisconsin Driftless Outing: 09/29/24

### New Business:

- Jim Aitken to mail out New Member Packets
- Kevin Lipp to look into Meeting Tags/ Name Tags.

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### 2024-2025 Club Officers

#### President:

**Kevin Lipp**

*president@mffc.org*

#### Vice President:

**Jon Bada**

*vicepresident@mffc.org*

#### Treasurer:

**Jim Aitken**

*treasurer@mffc.org*

#### Membership:

**John Eriksson**

*membership@mffc.org*

#### Recording Secretary:

**John Aukee**

*recordingsecretary@mffc.org*

#### Corresponding Secretary:

**Vacant**

*correspondence@mffc.org*

#### Director At-Large:

**Norm Tabaka**

*ntabaka@gmail.com*

#### Director At-Large:

**Joyce Haxton**

*rainbow10trout@gmail.com*

#### Director At-Large:

**Terry DeFauw**

*tdefauw59@aol.com*

#### Immediate Past President:

**Sybil Hunter**

*Sybil.MFFC@gmail.com*

### Club Editors & Publishers

#### Hatch Editor:

**Jon Bada**

*vicepresident@mffc.org*

#### Club Webmaster:

**Sybil Hunter**

*admin@mffc.org*

#### Club Facebook Administrator:

**Joyce Haxton**

*rainbow10trout@gmail.com*

**President's Message**

Here are the 2024 MFFC Conservation Grant Recipients

This year's Conservation Committee approved funding for the three conservation grant requests. These grants addressed areas that the Committee considered significant or, in one case, a matter of comfort.

**Cedars for the Au Sable - \$1000**

Young northern white cedars are disappearing from Michigan's riverbanks. Long-living cedars have been a vital part of the northern Michigan river ecosystem for centuries. They cool the rivers with their shade, stabilize the banks and create habitat for fish and their food sources. But in the last several decades, young cedar seedlings have been severely over-browsed by white-tail deer and hare.

The Club has a long history of funding t restoration/ reforestation project. The Cedars for the Au Sable, a 501 (c) (3) organization, has distributed over 20,000 white cedar seedling planting kits for planting on the Au Sable and Manistee rivers since 1997. The kits include 10 cedar seedlings, protective fencing and education and continued oversight to ensure the seedlings reach maturity. The planted seedlings have a survival rate of over 70%.

The next time you are fishing on these rivers look around; you will notice mature white cedars and newer cedars protected by fencing. These trees will help will safeguard the future of the AuSable and Manistee rivers as healthy cold water fisheries.

**Grayling Fish Hatchery Bluegill Pond Bubbler and Restocking Project - \$2500**

The Grayling Fish Hatchery's Bluegill Pond is a key attraction for families visiting the Hatchery. The pond, which is easily accessed via a trail and fishing docks, is an excellent kids-only fishing venue that reminds us that kids and bluegills are the perfect fishing combination. It's a safe place for kids to observe aquatic vegetation, ducks, frogs, turtles, aquatic insects, bass, the namesake bluegills and occasional snakes. The pond is a crucial component of the Hatchery's goal of fostering the next generation of fishers and conservationists through engaging learning opportunities.

The Club funded a new bubbler system to ensure that oxygen levels within the pond remain at optimum levels for supporting the pond's wide variety of aquatic life. Our funding also allowed the Hatchery to restock the pond with bluegill at the beginning of the season.

**Dam 4 Porta-Potty - \$350**

The Club partnered with Lovells Township to place a porta-potty at the Au Sable North Branch Dam 4 landing for the summer. This busy landing is used by fishers, kayakers and canoeists throughout the season. The landing, as many of you know, has no facilities to use when nature calls.

We want to thank the Lovells Board, they were great partners. We appreciated the sign they put up at the Lovell's boat launch



Michigan DNR News: **More than 9.1 million fish stocked in 2024 means plentiful Michigan fishing**

Anglers can look forward to great fall fishing, due to successful spring and summer fish stocking by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The DNR stocked a total of 9,118,112 fish that weighed nearly 321 tons and consisted of 10 different species and one hybrid.

Fish stocking is an important activity to provide both Michigan residents and visitors with quality fishing opportunities. These efforts also bring an estimated \$4.2 billion into the state's economy and help support [a Great Lakes fishery valued at more than \\$7 billion](#).



To complete the task of stocking, 17 specialized trucks started in early spring and took 451 trips – traveling more than 100,000 miles and 2,829 hours – to 691 stocking sites. Releasing fish early in spring can reduce their loss to major bird predators, like cormorants, whose peak migration times come later in the season.

"We had another excellent spring and summer stocking season that will bring ecological benefits and fishing opportunities to Michigan anglers," said Aaron Switzer, DNR fish production manager. "Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our staff, healthy, high-quality fish were reared and delivered to stocking sites in excellent condition. The numbers produced and stocked met the targets for most areas."

The number and type of fish produced vary by hatchery, as the source and temperature of the water determine which fish can be raised in that location. Fish are reared in Michigan's state fish hatcheries anywhere from one month to 1 1/2 years before they are stocked.

In Michigan there are six state and two cooperative hatcheries that work together to produce the species, strain and size of fish needed for fisheries managers. These fish must then be delivered and stocked at a specific time and location to ensure their success.

Each hatchery stocked the following fish this spring:

- **Marquette State Fish** - stocked 323,710 yearling lake trout, brook trout and splake (a hybrid of lake trout and brook trout) that in total weighed 41,771 pounds. This hatchery stocked 90 inland and Great Lakes sites.
- **Thompson State Fish Hatchery** - stocked 1,171,696 fish that included yearling steelhead and spring fingerling Chinook salmon. These fish weighed 102,442 pounds in total. This hatchery stocked 64 sites (the majority located on the Great Lakes).
- **Oden State Fish Hatchery** - stocked 762,074 yearling brown trout and rainbow trout that in total weighed 112,704 pounds. Oden also stocked 3,689 adult brown and rainbow trout that in total weighed 8,148 pounds. This hatchery stocked 159 inland and Great Lakes sites.
- **Harrietta State Fish Hatchery** - stocked 684,487 yearling brown trout and rainbow trout that in total weighed 84,812 pounds. This hatchery stocked 200 sites (the majority located inland).
- **Platte River State Fish Hatchery** - stocked 2,272,494 fish that included yearling Atlantic salmon, yearling coho salmon and spring fingerling Chinook salmon that in total weighed 161,396 pounds. Platte River also stocked 31,514 Skamania steelhead obtained from the Indiana DNR that in total weighed 4,314 pounds. This hatchery stocked 23 sites (the majority located on the Great Lakes).
- **Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery** - stocked 1,485,711 fish that included yearling steelhead, yearling muskellunge and spring fingerling Chinook salmon that in total weighed 123,381 pounds. Wolf Lake also stocked 22,067 channel catfish obtained from the Ohio DNR, that in total weighed 670 pounds. This hatchery stocked 51 sites (the majority on the Great Lakes).
- **A cooperative teaching hatchery at Lake Superior State University** - stocked 19,285 Atlantic salmon weighing 1,849 pounds into the St. Marys River.

Included in this year's total fish stocked were 2.4 million walleye spring fingerlings. These fish, reared in ponds by the DNR with extensive support provided by local sporting organizations, were stocked at 61 inland lakes and rivers and Lake Michigan. Some hatcheries will also provide fish for a few additional stockings (consisting of brook trout, Atlantic salmon, walleye, lake sturgeon and muskellunge) to be made this fall. The lake sturgeon will come from the cooperative hatchery in Tower, Michigan, that is operated with Michigan State University.

The public is welcome at any of Michigan's state fish hatcheries to see the fish rearing process firsthand. For more information, visit [Michigan.gov/Hatcheries](http://Michigan.gov/Hatcheries). To find out where many of these fish were stocked, check out the DNR's Fish Stocking Database at [michigandnr.com/fishstock](http://michigandnr.com/fishstock).

Michigan DNR [midnr@govsubscriptions.michigan.gov](mailto:midnr@govsubscriptions.michigan.gov)  
Aug. 6, 2024

Contact: Jeremiah Blaauw, 906-235-7679 or Marcee Wardell, 517-855-1604

**Illinois Commits to Invasive Carp Barrier Project**

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (July 1, 2024) — In a significant step toward preserving the Great Lakes, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker has signed the Project Partnership Agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, greenlighting the crucial Brandon Road Lock and Dam project. This agreement is pivotal in preventing invasive carp from entering Lake Michigan and threatening the Great Lakes ecosystem.

“Signing the Brandon Road Project agreement will help protect our fishery, our economy and quality of life,” said Marc Smith, Great Lakes policy director for the National Wildlife Federation. “We applaud Governor J.B. Pritzker for his leadership in working with Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, all the Great Lakes states, the U.S. Congress, and the Biden Administration for finalizing this project.”

Governor Pritzker's decisive action unlocks millions of dollars in federal investments, sets the stage for construction to begin in early 2025, and ensures the protection of the Great Lakes' ecological vitality and economic prosperity.

This milestone was achieved through the collaborative efforts of numerous stakeholders. Special thanks are extended to Michigan Governor, Gretchen Whitmer, who has been a steadfast partner in this endeavor, and to Senators Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) and Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) for their unwavering support and advocacy in securing federal funding and legislative backing for the project.

Invasive carp pose a severe threat to the economic health of the Great Lakes, specifically the region's \$7 billion commercial and sport fishing industry and \$16 billion outdoor recreation industry. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has identified building additional structural measures at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam near Joliet, IL, as the most feasible way to prevent the upstream migration of these destructive fish. With the Project Partnership Agreement signed, the project can proceed, taking advantage of a planned lock closure at Lockport Lock near Brandon Road and allowing construction to commence later this year.

Additional NWF state Affiliate quotes:

"The Great Lakes represents a \$2.3 billion fishery for Michigan alone," said Amy Trotter, chief executive officer for Michigan United Conservation Clubs. "Congratulations to Governor Pritzker, and all the Great Lakes partners for finalizing this important project to protect the Great Lakes from invasive carp."

"Invasive carp are a clear threat to our fishery and outdoor recreation heritage of Lake Erie," said Matt Misicka, executive director, Ohio Conservation Federation. "Thank you to Governor Pritzker for signing this agreement that will help keep invasive carp out of our Great Lakes."

“This historic step by Governor Pritzker shows the commitment we need to protect the natural heritage of Lake Michigan,” said Dan Boritt, executive director of the Indiana Wildlife Federation. “Lake Michigan is a treasure for Hoosiers, and Pritzker’s bold action will help protect this jewel from invasive carp for generations of anglers and outdoor recreationists alike.”

“Governor Pritzker’s commitment to protect the Great Lakes from invasive carp is a true milestone achievement for conservation,” said Cody Kamrowski, executive director, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. “Wisconsin’s economy, outdoor recreation and culture is deeply connected to the Great Lakes and finalizing this project ensures future generations can enjoy these one-of-a-kind bodies of water”.

Submitted by: National Wildlife Federation - Anna Marie Zorn, [ZornA@nwf.org](mailto:ZornA@nwf.org)



One of Expo Vendors and now club member, Matt Dalton explains advantages of the NuCanoe while flyfishing for bass during our July summer meeting



(Continued from Page 3)  
**May 8th, 2024 MFFC Board of Directors Meeting**

- Web Site, Kevin Lipp reported: Google clicks = 341 and 6.93k impressions. We will review month over month reporting for web stats.

**Old Business:**

- Jon Bada will start doing the Evening Hatch this fall
- Member retention we need to keep doing what is recommended in documents, active engagement of new members and
- Casting Clinic - Thanks to Wayne and Peter for their work on the clinics, Wayne is stepping down, Peter and Chris will continue
- Chris Hunter to take a Casting Class in Ohio sponsored by the FFI, for additional certification. The MFFC Casting Certification is separate from the FFI certs.

**Visitor:**

- Terry DeFauw (2024-25) Board Member

News from Robert Gordon Scouting Merit Badge Merit Badge Instructor: This is one of four fish caught on a fly that he tied, thus William Thompson completed his Scouting Fly Fishing Merit Badge



Congratulations William!!

Club Member: Greg Bajuk catching a nice smallie using a 4-inch olive color minnow (skinnier game changer) and a brown trout trix (same idea as a game changer but with a head on it)” on the Shiawasee River.



**New Club Members:** Tight Lines!!  
 Ron Delph (Ann Arbor, MI)  
 Bryan Mayes (Farmington Hills, MI)  
 Keith Moses (Port Huron, MI)  
 Tyler Saez (Chesterfield, MI)

**Didymo Found in the AuSable River:**  
(Continued from Page 8):

Conduct Extensive Sampling through Community Engagement: Michigan TU has assessed 68 algae samples for didymo across the state. We are encouraging the angling and recreational community to help us monitor for didymo presence and better understand didymo’s distribution by sending us samples, with the goal of 500 samples over the next two years. Check out Michigan TU’s Didymo Monitoring webpage to learn more about becoming involved. We also plan to monitor water quality, light, flow, and other environmental variables on the Boardman, Manistee, and Au Sable Rivers to tease out drivers of bloom formation.

**Build Partnerships:** Michigan TU is working with local chapters, the Michigan Fly Fishing Club, Michigan guides, DNR, EGLE, Great Lakes Environmental Center, MiCorp, and university faculty to learn more about didymo in Michigan, and collaborate to minimize the consequences of didymo blooms. This fall, annual in-person meetings will be held to discuss data needs, strategize, and further collaborations.

**Conclusion:** Didymo’s presence in the Au Sable River underscores the importance of vigilant monitoring and proactive management. EGLE has installed signage at more public access points along the Au Sable River to inform visitors about didymo and encourage proper gear decontamination. By raising awareness and fostering community involvement, we can better protect our rivers from didymo and other invasive species and preserve their ecological integrity for future generations.

This article was originally published by Michigan TU (Summer 2024)

**Editor’s Note:** we (MFFC) have Didymo Sampling Kits available for members to participate. These were created by one of our members (Glen Easterbrook) and can be picked up at one of our club meetings. Sampling and mailing instructions are included in these kits

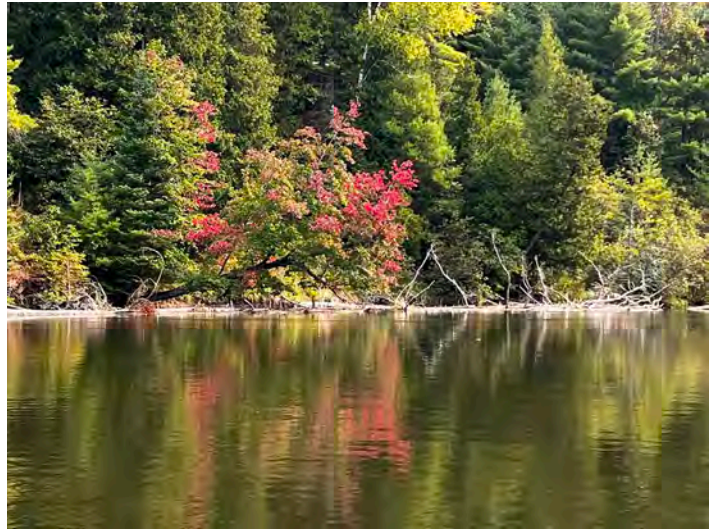
On an early June float down the Manistee River, Spencer Vanderhoof landed this 21.5" brown trout. Spence was back out the next night with guide Ed McCoy and in his words: "Last fish of the night was feeding steady. It ate my fly and I thought I was hooked to a log. It didn't move. It must of realized it was hooked and launched itself straight out of the water! Ran around a few seconds and was off."



Below are Scott Freeburg and Jon Bada enjoying early season Hex Hatch on the AuSable in June 2024. Using traditional hex patterns to catch these Monsters of the Midway. They even caught a few smallmouth bass that gave them a run for their money. Not a bad way to start the Hex Season.



Upon reading Gates AuSable Lodge September Newsletter discussing "Hot Fall Splendor"



And guess who popped up on their Newsletter:



No other than our own "Wet Fly Guy", Al Haxton with this one nice brookie. But the story goes that he was using a size 16 ant.

You can read the rest of the newsletter at:  
<https://gateslodge.com/2024/09/hot-fall-splendor/>

Please feel free to send your friendly Hatch Editor on your latest stories and pictures. Who knows, you might appear on a future Hatch. Email me: [vicepresident@mffc.org](mailto:vicepresident@mffc.org)



**Didymo Found in the AuSable River: A call for Awareness and Action** by Dr. Jordyn Stoll, Michigan TU Aquatic Ecologist

In August 2023, Michigan Trout Unlimited began monitoring Michigan rivers for the presence of *Didymosphenia geminata*, commonly known as didymo or rock snot. This invasive alga can form extensive mats that disrupt river ecosystems. Between April 16th and May 14th, (2024) TU collected and analyzed 19 samples from the Au Sable River watershed, yielding critical insights into didymo's presence and distribution.

**Key Discoveries in the Au Sable Watershed:** During the monitoring period, TU discovered didymo cells in three out of 19 samples from the Au Sable River, including public access points along the mainstem. On April 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Parmalee Canoe Launch showed no visible signs of didymo. However, a microscopic examination of an algae sample revealed didymo cells with and without stalks.

By April 29<sup>th</sup>: additional samples were taken from the same site, as well as from down-stream at Whirlpool access and upstream at McMasters access. Didymo cells were again found at Parmalee, and a single broken didymo cell was identified at Whirlpool. No didymo was detected at McMasters, and none of these sites had visible didymo blooms.

On May 14<sup>th</sup>: The Parmalee Canoe Launch was sampled again, and a single dead cell was found. No live didymo cells or cells with stalks were identified.

**Understanding Didymo's Impact:** Though tiny, Didymo cells can produce long stalks, forming mats or blooms that degrade river habitats. Unlike other bloom-forming algae, these mats typically develop under specific conditions, such as in clear and cold waters with low dissolved reactive phosphorus. Although no extensive didymo mats have been observed in the Au Sable River to date, the presence of didymo cells suggests that these mats could form under the proper environmental conditions.

**Implications for the Au Sable River:** The discovery of didymo in the Au Sable River, particularly near public access sites, is concerning. Given its proximity to the Upper Manistee River, where didymo has been confirmed, it is not surprising to find didymo here, as it is thought to be unintentionally spread by anglers and recreationists. Didymo can easily be transported between river ecosystems on angling gear, boats, and waders, highlighting the need for stringent decontamination practices. This includes spraying boats off at car wash stations or at home between every trip to a different river. Waders and other gear can be decontaminated by freezing overnight in a chest freezer or washed with detergents. Research into more specific decontamination methods is ongoing, but 409-Solution is thought to kill didymo and works for New Zealand mud snails, too. Bleach and Dawn (dishwashing liquid) are known to kill didymo, but not New Zealand mud snails.

**Contact :** [Jordyn.Stoll@michigantu.org](mailto:Jordyn.Stoll@michigantu.org).

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