

The MI Marsh Chatter



Michigan Ducks Unlimited Newsletter

4th Quarter - Winter 2021/2022

Ducks Unlimited conserves, restores, and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl.

These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.

A Word From Our Chairman

Tracy Oberleiter: 2021 - 2022 State Chairman



Well, 2021 has come and gone and I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season and was able to spend time with their family and friends. As it turned out, 2021 was a good year for Michigan Ducks Unlimited as we met many challenges with remarkable answers and outcomes. We changed our summer convention to January and changed our winter Leadership Conference to July, all with

the hope and expectations of being able to get more of our volunteers to attend and enjoy these very informative and rewarding events. Our Regional Directors, Craig, Martin and Kevin did an amazing job with coordinating virtual and in person events with our chapters located all across Michigan. They rolled out some fantastic virtual raffles and auctions that our Michigan supporters could participate in while not leaving the comfort of their homes. During the fall of the year many chapters held in person events that raised important funding

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to keep Michigan on track to keep our skies full of waterfowl today, tomorrow and forever. Bravo to all that helped with all of Michigan's fundraising activities.

We simply cannot accomplish all that needs to be done without our volunteers and DU staff. Having said that, I would like to personally invite all that reads this article to join us at our upcoming Michigan Ducks Unlimited Convention at the Park Place Hotel in Traverse City on January 28th & 29th. Come and bring a friend! The convention will provide an opportunity for all of us to celebrate our accomplishments in 2021 and prepare for opportunities in 2022. It's easy to register.... just click here (REGISTRATION) and you're on

your way to making a difference for the ducks by attending. More information about the convention and fun activities scheduled are included in the following pages of this Marsh Chatter edition.

Shame on me if I don't mention the successful hunting season that many of us enjoyed this past season. Check out the pictures and articles that were sent in from our volunteers and staff in this edition. Have a picture and article that you still want to share? Forward it to Jan Marra, our Marsh Chatter Editor at jan.mcdu@yahoo.com and she will include it in our next publication.

Also, I'm proud to say that Michigan Ducks Unlimited was invited to participate in this year's Christmas in Ida Light Parade and host the featured float with Santa & Mrs. Claus arriving in Ida. This event draws over 50,000 people annually and is televised....and wouldn't you know... we won First Place in the Best Float Contest. We had Santa & Mrs. Claus flown in by Marty the Mallard, flanked by six robo ducks! Check out the pictures in the following pages.

As your state chairman I'm looking forward to the challenges of 2022 and meeting our volunteers in January at our state convention.



Come join the fun and fellowship at our upcoming Michigan Ducks Unlimited State Convention. Information and links to the convention are on the next page.

See you there!



Ducks Unlimited State Convention

at Park Place Hotel & Conference Center in Traverse City



January 28 & 29, 2022

Click Here To Register Now!



OR GO TO: https://ducksunlimited.myeventscenter.com/event/Michigan-Du-State-Convention

Please join us for a weekend of fun, prizes, and awards celebrating wetlands and waterfowl conservation! For only \$100/person, you can connect with friends and peers in a exciting environment filled with outings, events, & games (meals included). Can't make it the whole weekend? No worries. Attend Saturday for only \$75/person.

The 2022 State Convention is being hosted at the historic Park Place Hotel located in downtown Traverse City. For reservations, call 231-946-5000 and don't forget to mention that you are with Ducks Unlimited.

Rooms start at just \$109.95 a night



Friday night kicks off with Mardi Gras Night! Come dressed in your best purple, gold, & green ready to win some beads by playing games. Don't forget to complete your look with a masquerade mask!

The fun doesn't end there. Need to fill your Saturday with some fun?
We have three different options for you to choose from. And no
matter which one you choose, the rate is only \$25/person. All start at 10am
and will have you back in time for our scheduled festivities.

Casino Run to
Turtle Creek Casino

Wine Tour with Grand Traverse Tours *Limit 30*

Wreath Making with HangOn Studios

Need more information? Contact Michael Trombley at 989-860-2143 or trommike@gmail.com



Legislative Reception



On October 20th State Representative TC Clements hosted a legislative reception in Lansing featuring Ducks Unlimited Inc. CEO Adam Putnam. Pictured below are State Representative TC Clements, Director of Public Policy for the Great Lakes Atlantic Regional Office Kyle Rorah, Ducks Unlimited Director of Development for the Great Lakes Atlantic Regional Office Todd Bishop, President of Michigan Paving and Materials Company Rick Becker, Michigan Ducks Unlimited State Chairman Tracy Oberleiter, Michigan Ducks Unlimited State Secretary Max Lehman, Michigan Ducks Unlimited State Public Policy Chairman David Bowers, Ducks Unlimited CEO Adam Putnam, Michigan Ducks Unlimited State Treasurer Dave Perry, Michigan Ducks Unlimited South West Senior Regional Director Craig Curtis and Ducks Unlimited Northern Michigan Regional Director Kevin Stoltz. Attending but not shown was Michigan Ducks Unlimited South East Regional Director Martin Anderson.





Conservation Leadership Luncheon





Michigan Ducks Unlimited State
Chairman Tracy Oberleiter, Ducks
Unlimited Inc. Chief Executive Officer
Adam Putnam and Chairman of the
International Wildlife Refuge Alliance
and Monroe Chapter Ducks Unlimited
member Dick Micka attend the 2021
Conservation Leadership Luncheon at
the Detroit Athletic Club on October
20th. Adam Putnam was one of the
keynote speakers delivering a message
to all on the progress of Ducks
Unlimited's mission to Fill the Skies
with Waterfowl Today, Tomorrow and
Forever.





VOICE YOUR OPINION!

The CWAC meeting is on January 8th and will be setting hunting seasons for the next three years at this meeting so I would like to get as much input as possible from everyone before I attend. Please send your comments and suggestions regarding waterfowl hunting to cruiseplanner1@chartermi.net with the subject titled CWAC. I look forward to hearing from you. – Dale Borske

Dale Borske, CWAC Chair, Former State Chair & State Treasurer



Conservation Corner



Partners Initiate Study To Evaluate Decline In Great Lakes Mallards

Contributed by Dr. John Coluccy, Director of Conservation Planning Ducks Unlimited Inc., Great Lakes/Atlantic Region

Mallards are a shared migratory resource and the most heavily harvested duck species in the Mississippi Flyway, including the states bordering the Great Lakes. Mallards harvested in the Great Lakes region are produced within the region with 58–83% of the birds harvested annually originating from locally produced birds. In recent years, these birds helped support over 2.5 million duck hunter-days in the flyway and migratory bird hunting generated an estimated \$22.7 million in revenue in Michigan alone.

Despite their importance, the Great Lakes mallard population has declined. For example, breeding mallards in Michigan have dropped from a peak of over 500,000 to just under 200,000, and trends in Wisconsin and Minnesota are similar. Waterfowl



Figure 1. Michigan DNR staff crating bait trapped mallards for banding and radio marking.

scientists in the Great Lakes region are at a loss to explain the decline as analyses suggest that mallard productivity and survival has been stable over the same period, and field observations indicate that apparently suitable breeding habitat has gone unoccupied.

The distribution of mallards during migration and winter is shifting northward, and it could be that mallards are shifting their breeding distribution as well. Anecdotally, biologists are now seeing more mallards in urban environments, but these birds are not counted as part of annual breeding waterfowl surveys due to safety restrictions. Mallards are flexible and changes in behavior may be learned but they may also be linked to changes in genetics. Releases of game farm mallards may be impacting the genetic makeup and behavior of wild mallard populations in North America and the Great Lakes.



Figure 2. Michigan State University PhD candidate Ben Luukkonen with the first radio marked hen mallard ready for release.

To investigate the decline in breeding Great Lakes mallards, Michigan State University, in partnership with Mississippi Flyway states, DU and others, initiated a large-scale GPS/GSM transmitter study in spring/summer 2021. This 3-year study will mark nearly 500 female mallards during spring/summer in rural and urban locations across Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois with solar powered GPS/GSM transmitters that download data using cell phone technology. A series of measurements are being taken on each hen to assess condition and a small blood sample and feather is also being collected to identify genotype and natal origin, respectively. This past spring/summer (2021), 178 hens were captured and marked, and an additional 295 hens will be marked over the next two field seasons.

This technology will allow us to document movements and habitat use, estimate the number of mallards that return to the same breeding, staging, and wintering areas, and estimate survival and productivity rates. Resulting data from this study will help us make recommendations regarding habitat and harvest management to increase breeding mallards in the Great Lakes region. Partners in this study include Ducks Unlimited, Franklin College, Illinois DNR, Illinois Natural History Survey, Indiana DNR, Michigan DNR, Michigan State University, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Winous Point Marsh Conservancy, and Wisconsin DNR. Financial support for DU's involvement in this work is generously provided by the Sunshine Charitable Trust and Bill & Linda Demmer.



Successful Hunts in the News



Opening day of duck hunting in the southern zone of Michigan.

Hunters are Dave Steinbach from the Western Washtenaw Chapter & MI DU Major Donor Chairman, Kyle Rorah, DU Regional Director of Public Policy and Nikki Ghorpade, GLARO Public Policy.

Hunting a swamp on Dave's family farm in the same location that he hunted ducks with his grandfather 45 years ago.



MSU COMMITTEE HUNT

Every year the Michigan State DU chapter does a hunt where we get our chapter members out hunting together. Our goal is to get some new members who have not hunted before a chance to get out while giving everybody a chance to do something we love. This year we decided to go to the Fish Point Managed Waterfowl Area to participate in the afternoon drawing. We were in 3 groups because of the party size limit, but all the parties ended up hunting the same general area. We all saw a good number of ducks and various other wildlife. Everyone was happy to get out as a group and hunt an area of Michigan that some may not be able to hunt. The picture is taken with our



members after we turned in the permit cards back at the DNR office after the hunt. - Nathan Steelman

From Joe Tiberi, Western Washtenaw DU Chapter Chairman, "Here is a good pic of my son Carter on his first goose hunt in Washtenaw County. He is hooked...."







Janelle Lehman of the Flat River Chapter had a great second day of Michigan's firearm deer season taking two great bucks on her own farm by Stanton. The first was fighting another buck at 7:00 a.m. and the second was taken 45 minutes later in the same shooting lane.



Charles Myers, North Oakland Area Chairman

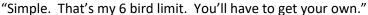
3 man limit from Walpole Island. 4-black ducks, 5-mallards, 5-redheads, 3-bluebills and 1- full color gadwall!



Dan Schulz, Area Chair, Greater Grand Rapids Chapter

Here's the kind of day we're looking for. Lake Michigan far offshore from Muskegon. I got 5 Longtails in Layout. I sheepishly had to ask the tender to come and get me - l'd only brought one box of shells and wasted half on 2 cripples that refused to go down easily.

As we finished picking up our rig in the tender, a line of Scoters came off Mona Lake. I pulled my shotgun out of the case and loaded my last Kent Tungsten shell. Nobody else pulled out a gun. They crossed 45 yards abeam. The Scoter fell like a stone, 1 shot. Our skipper asked, "How far were you leading that bird" and then, "Why didn't you shoot another?".





My weirdest take so far – 4 miles offshore in Lake Michigan, a Timberdoodle gives us a look. Skipper over the radio, "I didn't see anything come in. What do you have down?".

"A woodcock."

Long pause..."REALLY...?".

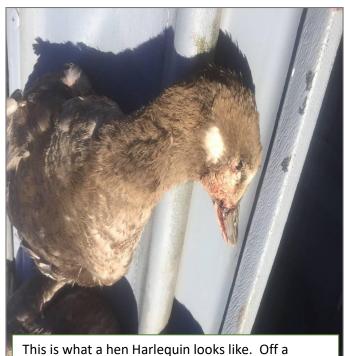
"Yes. Come out and pick it up. I'm not sure how long they float."

I'm now fairly sure they must migrate long distances over water. Like Milwaukee to Muskegon. Fortunately I keep an orange hat in my blind bag from days hunting Lake of the Woods where we'd often bump grouse setting up for shore lunch.



And finally, NEVER SAY NEVER in layout. Bay City is notorious for flights of geese trading between Shelter Island or the Karn Plant an inland fields. One group flew a little too close behind the layout rig. Got used to turning around in the pit blind for 45 yard shots at Geese in Saskatchewan.

You just can't make this stuff up.



Northern Michigan rocky shoreline. We had to pour through the ID guide to ensure it was a Harlie.



One thing is for sure – If I'm headed out for ducks, it's going to be with a Browning Side x Side built the year I graduated from High School. This was the in the days before 3" and steel. It's been lovingly modified to digest both and has served well in the marsh, field, or offshore for 50 years now.

If you're talking upland, it's going to be a Browning SxS Sidelock from the year of my college graduation after US Navy service. I can think of few things in my 45 year career in manufacturing that will still be used and useful a half a century after first being placed in service. That's the kind of tradition that makes hunting so special.

Dan Schulz



DU member, Larry Krueger and grand-nephew, Ethan Orent



Larry Krueger, a Monroe native who now lives in Unionville, recently mentored Ethan Orent, 16, on his first deer hunt. [Courtesy Photo]



Ethan Orent shows off the spikehorn he bagged on his first deer hunt. [Courtesy Photo]

When Monroe Chapter member Herb Krueger passed away his brother Larry stepped in to teach his nephew how to hunt.

You can read the Monroe News article here:

https://www.monroenews.com/story/sports/2021/11/30/monroe-native-mentors-young-hunter-fulfill-brothers-promise/8792640002/

All committee members

Dan Merillat
Kelsey Merillat - Green wing legacy
Moose Merillat- black lab
Frank Manley
Camo Manley- black lab
Curt Alexander
Patrick Fryfogle

Compliments of Doug and Russ Varner

Midland county 12 ducks, 12 geese







Chapter: Orion Oxford

Area Chairman: Joel McCormickDog: Daisy....German Shorthair Pointer

Various hunts











Dave Perry
State Treasurer, State Convention Chair
Dave harvested his eight point buck at
his 3B's Hunt Club in Hillsdale, MI.

Below is **Craig Curtis' daughter, Marina**, with her buck from this hunting season. She started deer hunting when she was 12 years old.

Marina is a Freshman at Northern Michigan University, and is the Co Area Chairman for the NMU chapter. She also became a Ducks Unlimited volunteer when she was just 12 years old.



Joe Robinson
State of Mich.-DNR, Wildlife Biologist
Joe harvested his buck at the Baycreek Farm Hunt
Club in Erie, MI.



State Chairman **Tracy Oberleiter** and State Treasurer **Dave Perry** host their annual family pheasant hunt at the Dundee Pheasant Farm. Just about everyone in this photo is an active Monroe DU committee member or Green Wing.



Michigan Ducks Unlimited State Chairman **Tracy Oberleiter** takes a moment to share a picture of a mallard taken this fall at the Baycreek Hunt Club in Erie.





Ducks Unlimited member **Shane Preston** enjoyed his very first duck hunt in November at the Baycreek Hunt Club in Erie.



Ducks Unlimited TV Films in S.E. Michigan



Southeast Michigan was chosen to be the location for the Ducks Unlimited TV show. The camera crew came into the area in early November to film 3 hunts. Two of the hunts were traditional blind hunts and the third a layout boat hunt on Lake Erie.

The first hunt was filmed at Baycreek Farm Hunt Club. Club member, Joe Robison, Wildlife Biologist Supervisor with the Michigan DNR hosted this hunt. Joining Joe and the other hunters was Kali Rush, Regional Biologist, with Ducks Unlimited. Kali works out of the Great Lakes/Atlantic Regional Office "GLARO" located in Dexter, Michigan.



Ducks Unlimited Regional Biologist Kali Rush along with Joseph Robison, Wildlife Biologist Supervisor for Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Fred Zink co-host of Ducks Unlimited TV show filmed a duck hunt at the Baycreek Hunt Club in Erie Michigan this fall. Their hunt will be televised in the fall of 2022.



The second hunt was the layout hunt which was hosted by Lake Erie Adventures.

Dick "Riverwolf" Whitwam, his son Bobby, and Joe "DecoySlayer" Marra provided all of the equipment, decoys and boats for this hunt. The highlight of this hunt was when Kali Rush took a drake canvasback, the most prized of all diver ducks and it is considered to be a trophy duck wherever it is found.

The third hunt was filmed near Belleville, Michigan. This hunt was hosted by **Joe Robison**, and **Shea Hegedus** of **Harvest Time Outfitters**. Michigan Ducks Unlimited State Chairman **Tracy Oberleiter** was the "celebrity guest" on this hunt!



Michigan Ducks Unlimited State Chairman **Tracy Oberleiter**, Michigan DNR's **Joe Robison**, **Fred Zink** co-host of Ducks Unlimited TV show and **Shea Hegedus**, Harvest Time Outfitters had a successful duck and Canada goose field hunt in Belleville. Their hunt will be televised in the fall of 2022 on the Ducks Unlimited TV show.

Fred Zink, the co-host of the Ducks Unlimited TV show worked on all of the hunts providing stories and commentary for the show. The film crew arrived one day prior to the hunts. They were given a tour of the "Marshland Museum" located on the grounds of the Lake Erie Metro Park, located in Brownstown, Michigan.

The program will be aired sometime in the fall of 2022.

Michigan Ducks Unlimited, and the Monroe Michigan Chapter would like to thank the Ducks Unlimited TV show for choosing our area to film a program It's always good to have the work that we do in this area shown off to the DU family across North America. We would like to give a special thanks to the Baycreek Farm Hunt Club, Harvest Time Outfitters and Lake Erie Adventures for their participation in the hunts. We would also like to thank the Lake Erie Metro Park for the tour of the museum and the use of their marina while filming the Lake Erie Layout hunt. – *Contributed by Joe Marra*





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Ida Christmas Parade





2021 at 9:23:15 PN

The Monroe Chapter was given the opportunity to sponsor and build the featured parade float that Santa and Mrs. Clause rode in this year's Christmas in Ida Light Parade on Saturday, Dec. 4th.



Keith Masserant provided the trailer and the heated indoor location to build the float. Dave Perry, Tracy Oberleiter, and Keith Masserant designed and built the float. Senator Dale Zorn supplied the Santa's sleigh, and many members of the Monroe DU Chapter came

together for pizza and fun decorating and putting on the finishing touches.

The night of the parade was fantastic! The float, all alight, was pulled with the GLARO Suburban, with Santa and Mrs. Clause in the sleigh. To everyone's delight, the float won 1st Place in the parade!





S. E. Michigan Christmas Party



Contributed by Martin Anderson

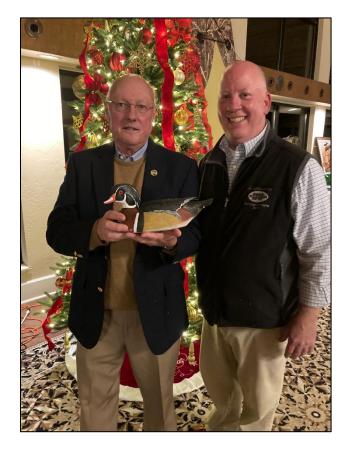


Tracy Oberleiter, Brad and Tonya Conrad, Craig Lesley, and Martin Anderson

On December 3rd the Southeast Michigan Ducks Unlimited Christmas party was held at Paint Creek Country Club in Lake Orion. A hundred volunteers gathered to celebrate and fellowship together. The attendees enjoyed a variety of appetizers and beverages while they socialized and enjoy playing a dice game, hoping to win a Glock handgun or the Busch LED sign plus there was walk raffle for the Kimber Handgun of the Year. There was a good meal for all to enjoy and Martin C. Anderson, the SE MI Regional Director, thanked everyone for attending and for their contribution to Michigan Ducks Unlimited. He also presented a decoy in appreciation to Tracy Oberleiter, Brad and Tonya Conrad, and Craig Lesley for their leadership and dedication to Ducks Unlimited and our conservation mission. Tracy Oberleiter,

the current state chairman, also thanked everyone for their continued dedication to DU and their fundraising efforts. The evening concluded with drawing all the winners on the tiered raffle, which included several firearms and many other great DU prizes and the silent auction was closed. It was a great evening full of celebration and good fellowship.







Recipes



Bacon-Wrapped Venison Tenderloin with Garlic Cream Sauce

6 thick slices bacon

2 (3/4 pound) venison tenderloin roasts

2 teaspoons olive oil, divided

1/4 teaspoon onion powder, divided

kosher salt and ground black pepper to taste

2 tablespoons butter

1 (8 ounce) package sliced cremini mushrooms

2 cloves garlic, chopped

1 tablespoon chopped green onion, or more to taste

½ cup heavy whipping cream, or more to taste

• • •

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).
- Place bacon on a slotted baking pan.
- Bake bacon in the preheated oven until partially cooked but still flexible, 6 to 8 minutes.



- > Brush venison tenderloins with olive oil and season with onion powder, salt, and black pepper. Place tenderloin roasts side by side and wrap them together in strips of partially cooked bacon. Place into a roasting pan.
- ➤ Roast until bacon is browned and an instant-read meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of a tenderloin reads at least 145 degrees F (65 degrees C), about 1 hour.
- ➤ Heat butter in a saucepan over medium heat; cook and stir mushrooms and garlic in hot butter until mushrooms are soft, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir green onion into mushroom mixture; pour in cream. Cook, stirring often, until sauce is heated through. Serve sauce with tenderloins.

Smoked Salmon Pate

1 package (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened

1/4 cup sliced green onions

2 tablespoons mayonnaise

1 tablespoon Dijon mustard

1/8 tablespoon ground red pepper

1/4 pound smoked salmon, skin removed and broken into chunks

Fresh chives

Directions:

- 1. Line 2-cup bowl or mold with plastic food wrap. Set aside.
- 2. Combine cream cheese, onions, mayonnaise, mustard and red pepper. Beat until smooth.
- 3. Add salmon, a few pieces at a time and beat until smooth. Pack salmon mixture into prepared bowl. Cover and refrigerate for 3 to 24 hours.
- 4. Invert bowl on serving plate. Remove plastic wrap from salmon mixture. Garnish with fresh chives. Serve with crackers.



People to Know







Kylie McElrath Regional Biologist

Great Lakes Initiative Ducks Unlimited, Inc. kmcelrath@ducks.org Mobile: (734) 277-8092

Kylie attended Central Michigan University to earn her bachelor's and master's degrees in conservation biology. She has worked various field jobs from banding ducks and surveying waterfowl to checking deer and trapping sagegrouse. Kylie enjoys hiking, camping, backpacking, birding, and has recently taken up waterfowl hunting. Kylie will be helping out with existing wetland restoration projects and taking on new projects in Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin for Ducks Unlimited.



Be Part Of The Next Marsh Chatter

Hi Everyone,

I'd like to extend a big THANK YOU to everyone who sent in contributions to this newsletter. Sharing your stories and pictures is what makes the Marsh Chatter a great way to build our DU family.

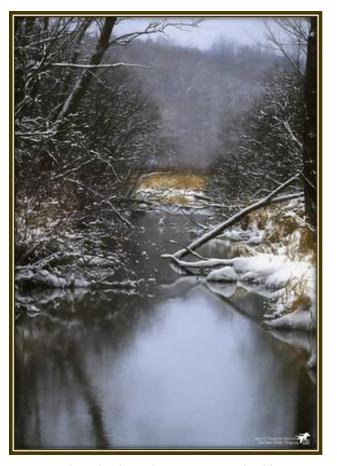
You can be part of the next Marsh Chatter. For the newsletter I'm looking for:

- Pictures: Events, Committee Activities & DU friends
- Pictures: Working dogs at their best, wildlife, stunning scenery and of course, ducks!
- Nominate someone for the "People to Know" spot.
- Recipes: Fish and Game
- Your stories: Hunting, fishing and DU!

Please send them to me at jan.mcdu@yahoo.com Thank you in advance!

Jan Marra

March Chatter Editor



A Painted Wetland Marsh In A Snowy And Cold Winter Photo Courtesy of David Bowers



Sportsman Offroad Package Raffle

March 12, 2022









1 red Can-Am Outlander 450 atv

Loaded with accessories including Custom Trailer by Bedford Machinery Co.



\$20 each or 3 for \$50



The drawing for this great Can-Am 450, loaded with accessories and <u>includes a</u> <u>custom trailer</u>, will be held at the <u>Monroe Ducks Unlimited Spring</u> <u>Banquet</u> on March 19, 2022.

For raffle tickets call any Monroe Ducks Unlimited chapter member or:

Tracy Oberleiter, 734-735-2952
Pat Doran, 734-735-0686
Dave Perry, 734-755-8388
Tom O'Harra, 734-735-7661
Don Rushlow, 734-621-3736
Jan Marra, 734-735-4392

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