

2015 Illinois TU Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp A Success Story in its Eighth Year

The eighth edition of the Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited's Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing camp was successfully completed during the week of July 26-31 at the RAM Conference Center in Roscommon, Michigan.

The 2015 camp lived up to its mission to develop the next generation of cold water conservation advocates while also providing a rigorous introduction to the sport of fly fishing on the famed Au Sable River. An experienced Trout Unlimited mentor team guided twelve 13- to 17-year-old campers through prime time morning and evening fishing sessions. Throughout the week, an abundance of "hands on" active learning opportunities were conducted during the fully loaded mid-day periods.

"The camp is designed to be an intense experience that makes a significant impact on youth," said Willie Beshire, Oak Brook TU board member and camp director. "At the end of camp, participants were asked to evaluate their experience through personal essays. One young man wrote that the camp helped him identify a new career aspiration—to work in conservation. A young lady's evaluation expressed a sincere thank you to the mentors for changing her view of life."

The camp mentors and instructors were comprised of Trout Unlimited members from Chicago's Oak Brook and Gary Borger chapters and Michigan TU, along with biologists from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Michigan State University and a private company.

Highlights of the various camp activities follow.

Electro-shocking Fish Survey

Neal Godby, Senior Fisheries Biologist with the Michigan DNR and his crew led our campers to conduct a fish counting survey on the Sturgeon River near Wolverine, Michigan. Armed with a generator (floating in a small boat) connected to two electrical probes, Neal and his crew searched under various river bed structures to find and stun fish. Campers were wide-eyed when a beast of a trophy-sized brown trout was caught in the small stream.

Stream Improvement Project

Steve Sendek, biologist and owner of Northpoint Fisheries Management, and his crew supervised campers who performed stream improvement work on the Au Sable River

near Grayling, Michigan. Campers were in the water engaged in a variety of tasks including floating timber downstream to the desired work location, operating the water jet drill, inserting wood pylons deep into the stream bed, and anchoring various types of "lunker structures" and barriers to erosion.

A Day with the Professor

Professor Steve Kohler of Western Michigan University lectured the group on the unique geology of the region and why it has produced river systems among the most stable in the world. He also provided an introduction to entomology and offered insights as campers captured and identified macroinvertebrates throughout a day in the stream. Professor Kohler also led a hydrology study to demonstrate how stream velocity and flow capacity are measured.

Macroinvertebrate Studies

Students used "D-nets" and "kick nets" to capture premature insects in their larva and nymph stages during one stream session. In another experiment, campers retrieved macroinvertebrate traps which had been planted in the Au Sable River three weeks prior to camp. Campers gained appreciation of the life cycle of insects such as mayflies, caddis flies and stone flies. Campers also learned how professional biologists use insect populations and their diversity to monitor stream health.

Fish Dissection

Elle Gulotty, Michigan State University biologist captivated the campers as she led a session featuring the dissection of both native trout and perch. Ms. Gulotty discussed the anatomy of these species and drew contrasts between cold water trout and warmer water inhabitants.

History of Logging and Its Impact on the Au Sable River

Ken Pott, a local museum director and Michigan historian, hosted our visit to Hartwick Pines State Park which has preserved one of the few remaining stands of old growth forest in Michigan. Mr. Pott led a tour of the park's museum and summarized the history of logging and its devastating effect on the Au Sable River. Campers learned how Michigan's forests were wiped out in the late 1800s to build Chicago and other major cities in the region.

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Meetings and Events

Chapter meetings will resume the third Wednesday of the month starting September 16 at the Oak Brook Recreation Center, Central Park West building near 31st Street and Jorie Blvd. in Oak Brook, Illinois.

September 9
OBTU Directors Meeting
7:00 p.m.

September 16
Chapter Meeting
Speaker: Matt Smenk
"Tenkara Fly Fishing"
7:00 p.m.

October 10
Coldwater River Study

October 14
OBTU Directors Meeting
7:00 p.m.

October 21
Chapter Meeting
Speaker: TBD
7:00 p.m.

November 11
OBTU Directors Meeting
7:00 p.m.

November 18
Chapter Meeting
Speaker: TBD
7:00 p.m.

December 2
OBTU Directors Meeting
7:00 p.m.

December 9
Holiday Party
Location TBD
6:00 p.m.

www.obtu.org



Campers are briefed on their stream restoration project (left photo) which involved creating a series of lunker structures (center photo) after cross-cutting spruce trees (right).

All Things OBTU...

By Stan Zarnowiecki, President

As our summer winds down Oak Brook TU winds up. We will be reconvening our monthly membership meetings on Wednesday, September 16 at 7:00 p.m. at the Oak Brook Recreation Center Central Park West building near 31st Street and Jorie Blvd. In Oak Brook. However, activity will start earlier at 5:00 p.m. with our featured speaker, Matt Sment of Badger Tenkara, demonstrating fly rod casting with Tenkara rods outside on Recreation Center property. We will also be serving some snacks so bring your favorite non-alcoholic beverage and a lawn chair and join us. The formal meeting agenda will begin at 7:00 p.m. and Badger Tenkara will have a presentation about this style of fly fishing. They will also have a special deal for this evening only if you want to purchase a Tenkara rod, so bring your wallet if you have been wanting to add this equipment to your fly fishing arsenal.

Also, I want to personally thank all of the volunteers that have participated in OBTU programs this past spring and summer. Over 40 members sacrificed their personal time to volunteer for one or more activities including Trout in the Classroom, May 9 Spring Fling event, June 10 macroinvertebrate study in Michigan, Orvis 101 and 201 classes, Illinois Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp and our five monthly Youth Fly Fishing Classes. You deserve to be recognized and this meeting will also feature a "volunteer appreciation" night. You will be recognized to the audience and will receive a small token of appreciation from me.

We have a Fall Coldwater River Watershed macroinvertebrate study scheduled Saturday, October 10, in Michigan, along with a salmon fishing trip to the Muskegon River the weekend of October 3-5 which is featured on page 3.

Besides our fall kick-off membership meeting September 16, we have meetings scheduled October 15, and November 9. Our recent membership survey sought your suggestions for our December event which we will start planning soon. All of this information can be found on the Oak Brook TU website (obtu.org) as dates get closer.

Please continue to support our chapter through both active volunteer and financial participation. Members are invited to attend all of our meetings and events. Feel free to bring a friend. We need membership participation and input so that we can continue to provide activities that interest our members.



September 16 Meeting to Feature Tenkara Fly Fishing Overview

Badger Tenkara is based in Madison, WI, home to the incredible trout waters of the famed Driftless region and a wide variety of warm water fisheries packed with panfish and bass. The company is dedicated to providing high-quality Tenkara fishing equipment and experiences.

Badger Tenkara was founded by Mike Lutes and Matt Sment. Mike Lutes is a life-long outdoorsman, hunter, and angler. After becoming frustrated by certain aspects of "regular" fly fishing, he was drawn to the simplicity of Tenkara. Mike has been fishing Tenkara style for over three years.

Matt Sment served as a U.S. Army paratrooper, and is a graduate of the North Carolina Outward Bound Outdoor Leadership program. Tenkara fishing has been his primary outdoor pursuit for over three years. Matt will be our September 16 guest speaker.

"Badger Tenkara approaches Tenkara fishing as an adventure of exploration," said Matt Sment. "Rather than confine the techniques and equipment to their original and very specific origins, we embrace every opportunity to expand the style's applications. We fish year round, for cold and warm water species, and adapt the platform to suit changing conditions. Our goal is to push the limits and show that Tenkara simplicity can be effective for almost any fishing, almost anywhere!"

Tenkara Gaining Popularity in U.S.

Tenkara is a simple style of fly fishing that is steadily gaining popularity with American anglers. Unlike more familiar fly fishing equipment, Tenkara rods are longer and do not utilize reels to manage line. Instead, the line is attached directly to the tip of the rod, which allows for precise casting and drifts that are virtually drag-free.

While originally developed in Japan by commercial fisherman for trout fishing on high-gradient mountain streams, it is easily adapted to a wide variety of species and environments. Tenkara is exceptionally well suited to fishing Driftless streams, and is also a great tool for catching bass and panfish.

The Tenkara presentation will examine the origins of the style and discuss the unique characteristics of Tenkara equipment. It will also include details on rods, lines, and flies that are commonly used by Tenkara anglers. Additionally, Matt Sment will discuss how and why Tenkara is an extremely personalized style, and how that translates into a great fishing experience!

Visit the Badger Tenkara website (badgertenkara.com) for more information.

Come Early to Test Cast Tenkara rods and Meet New Members

Matt Sment of Badger Tenkara will be available from 5:00-6:30 p.m. with demo rods for OBTU members to use prior to the meeting. New Tenkara rods will be available to OBTU members at a discount.

Over 200 members who participated in the Orvis Yorktown FF101 and FF201 classes who joined TU this past spring and summer are invited to their first chapter meeting and an opportunity to meet Board members to discuss various conservation and youth education volunteer opportunities.

Matt Sment of Badger Tenkara will be the September 16 chapter meeting featured speaker.

Orvis Yorktown "Orvis Days" Set for Saturday, October 3

The Orvis Yorktown store will be hosting their annual Fall "Orvis Days" event on Saturday October 3 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Activities follow with specific presentation times to be posted to the Orvis Yorktown website in the next week. Or call the store (630-932-6573) for more information.

Fly Tying Workshop – Members of DRIFT (DuPage River Fly Tyers) and Nifty (Northern Illinois Fly Tyers) will be stopping in to tie up some of their favorite flies and show you some of the tricks of the trade. Learn the basics of tying and take home a new pattern of your very own. They'll show you what you'll need in tools and talent to get started in this fascinating and practical art form.

Big Game Fly Tying Demonstration – Dave Kuntzelman from Chi-Tie will be showing off his special form of big game fly tying and will be discussing fishing in the harbors and lakeshore of the downtown Chicago area.

Wisconsin Fly Fishing for Trout and Muskie – P.J. Smith will be on hand for the afternoon talking about guiding the Driftless region of Wisconsin for trout, muskie fishing on the fly and other angling opportunities within a day's shot of the Chicagoland area. He will also discuss drift boat fishing and be displaying his 15' StealthCraft Aftermath drift boat!

Smallmouth Fishing in our Backyard – Members of the Illinois Smallmouth Alliance will be on hand to teach folks all about smallmouth angling opportunities available right in our own back yard! They'll also be tying their favorite Smallie patterns at the vise.

Oak Brook Trout Unlimited will be present throughout the day to share information on becoming a TU member and OBTU activities. Volunteers will be needed.

Please contact Jim Schmiedeskamp for more information (312-375-6502; jimsmiedes@gmail.com).

The Librarian's Corner

by Phil Young

Advanced Classic Wet Flies with Don Bastian

(Bennett-Watt HD Productions, Inc / 200)
113m / DVD

A few years ago I obtained a copy of the 1968 printing of Ray Bergman's 1938 classic Trout. Among other pieces of trout fishing wisdom, this book contains 9 color plates of paintings of over 400 wet flies and their recipes. I have tied and used some of these patterns for brook trout and they still work very well.

In **Advanced Classic Wet Flies**, Dan Bastian ties six wet fly patterns – Ferguson, Belgrade, Silver Doctor, Gold Stork, Watson's Fancy and Sabbatus. The materials are listed both in and on the DVD, so that you can obtain the materials if you wish to tie along with the DVD. Mr. Bastian does an excellent job of describing the tying materials and how to use them effectively, from correctly wrapping floss and mylar ribs to cutting and matching slips for married wings and tails. This is an excellent DVD for anyone who ties wet flies and others who would like to try. Even experienced tiers can get tips and new techniques from this DVD.

This DVD, as well as others in the chapter's library, are available for check out at chapter meetings. If you are holding any of the chapter's other videos, please return them when you are finished so that others may view them.

Michigan Kings Fishing Trip Scheduled for October 12-14

Are you interested in targeting fall King Salmon this fall?

Oak Brook TU member Tom Hoagland has reserved guides and accommodations in Newaygo, Michigan on the Muskegon River for a fall fishing trip. Along with Kings (also known as chinook salmon), the river should be holding steelhead, browns and rainbows.

The fall bite is memorable, as most fish will be keying in on eggs being laid by the salmon in their redds or spawning gravel beds. Guides use egg patterns and beads to fish these giants. Key areas are from the Croton Dam on the Muskegon River downstream to Newaygo.

The cost of the trip is approximately \$850.00 per fisherman which includes three days of lodging at a very nice B&B providing breakfast each morning. Kevin Feenstra's guide service (www.feenstraguideservice.com) will be providing the guides with drift boats and lunches for each of the three days. What's not included are dinners for each of the three days and tip for the guides.

The dates of the trip are Monday, October 12, through Wednesday, October 14. Travel dates would be departing Chicago on Sunday, October 11, and coming home after fishing on Wednesday October 15.

Tom is looking to finalize the reservations and has room for eight fishermen (including himself) so he needs a \$200.00 deposit to hold your spot. Reservations need to be made as soon as possible, as the Feenstra guide service is in very high demand during this fall peak fishing season and these available dates won't last if they are not reserved soon.

To confirm your reservation or talk to Tom about details, please call him at 630-664-8471 or email him at trhmt1@yahoo.com.

Sounds like a great trip so thanks to Tom for putting this together.



King or chinook salmon will be one of the species pursued during OBTU's fall trip on the Muskegon River in October.

2016 Conservation Project Plan Approved

OBTU's Board of Directors approved the chapter's proposed 2016 conservation activities at the August meeting. TUDARE funding and Coldwater River Watershed Council support continues as long-term commitments.

"We plan to return to Farmers Valley Creek, Sparta, Wisconsin and to begin support of Weister Creek (pronounced wee-stir) in the Driftless Area," said Rick Ralph, Conservation Committee Chair. "The Conservation Committee is also stepping up to lead conservation advocacy and identify work opportunities for chapter members."

The chapter decided on 2016 conservation activities and their funding recently because our 2016 fiscal year actually begins in October, 2015. We also need to make commitments now so the various project managers can commence their planning for next year. A total of \$10,200 is budgeted for OBTU's 2016 conservation projects.

2016 Conservation Project Highlights

TUDARE (an acronym for Trout Unlimited Driftless Area Restoration Effort) is the umbrella organization that coordinates and supports cold water conservation in the Driftless Area of Wisconsin. OBTU's support is in the form of money donated to directly support TUDARE general operations.

TUDARE is founded on the great work and passion of TU volunteers. There are more than 15 chapters around the region that have worked with agency partners to restore sections of approximately 60 streams. Over \$10 million has been raised in state, federal and private contributions for stream restoration projects. Each year, the TUDARE project restores approximately 12 to 18 miles of stream each year in the region.

Michigan's **Coldwater River Watershed Council** will continue to receive both OBTU volunteer and financial support in the form of two macroinvertebrate study work days in the spring and fall. Our chapter provides the basic field data that goes into the science of conserving the watershed as a cold water resource. Our work has increased in importance following the devastation last year in which vegetation was scalped from the river bank. The effect of the changes in the stream will be measured, in part, by our work. OBTU is represented on the Coldwater River Watershed Council by Marvin Strauch.

Farmers Valley Creek in Sparta, Wisconsin will continue to receive both OBTU volunteer and financial support in 2016. Stream restoration work began in 2014 will continue next year with the installation of lunker structures and bank restoration work to reduce both soil erosion and phosphorus discharge within the city. Our financial contribution will be leveraged to get a large government grant. We also plan at least one work day for this project in 2016.

Weister Creek begins a new and expanded role for OBTU in Vernon County, Wisconsin. The project is a long-term effort that is expected to quadruple the fish population in this important tributary to the Kickapoo River in the heart of Wisconsin's Driftless Area. Our contribution is financial. All work is done by contractors on government-owned land that comprises the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Government funding is leveraged by private funding such as that from OBTU.

Conservation Committed Recognition

The Conservation Committee members include Jim Bailey, Willie Beshire, Bob Borhauer, Will Campbell, Jayson Cheever, Dan Donahoe, Rich Ference, Frank Harford, Carl Kernodle, Claude Mays, Howard Miller, Dave Moore, Marvin Strauch, Joe Vitti, Ken Voight, Tom Wilhelm, Dennis Wisnosky, and Stan Zarnowiecki. The committee is chaired by Rick Ralph.



This section of the Farmers Valley Creek in Sparta, Wisconsin was restored in 2014 as a result of both OBTU volunteer and financial support.

OBTU Concludes 11th Youth Fly Fishing Season

By Marvin Strauch, Youth Education Chair

Most of us in Trout Unlimited have arrived here as sportsmen interested in giving back to the resource—ensuring that there are cold water resources available for our children and grandchildren. Many of us are also fly fishers. It has been the hope of many of us, as well, to impart both our love of the outdoors, and of the sport of fly fishing, with a shared concern for the health of our cold water resources and their fisheries.

And this lies at the root of Oak Brook Chapter Trout Unlimited's youth education programs. This year marks the 11th year of Youth Fly Fishing programs for Oak Brook Chapter TU. The program has operated under a few different names over the years; originally billed as "First Cast," then the "Fly Fishing Merit Badge" class. Now open to boys and girls 11-18 years old, it is appropriately called "Youth Fly Fishing." The core of the program remains the same. We discuss the basics of fly tackle: rods, reels, lines, leaders, fly types, and how to select the appropriate tackle for your desired fishing.

The basic knots are taught, as well as a session on fly tying, in which the young people tie a foam beetle and a soft hackled wet fly. There are sections on safety, fishing regulations, fishing ethics, and of course, the TU message. After these sessions we move outdoors and teach basic fly casting, including the overhead cast and the roll cast. Then it's off to fish. The program makes for a full day, and lasts a full 8 hours. But at the end, the young people will all have caught at least one fish (usually a bluegill) on a fly, and have been exposed to the sport of fly fishing.

Over the years we have seen a number of young people with surprising skills right out of the box. Over these years, we have successfully built a sustaining program to be proud of. We provide the necessary rod and reel outfits to teach at least 15 students per class. We also furnish fly tying kits for these same 15 students in each class. Generous donations over the years, have given us quality fly tying vises, tools and tying materials. Support from local fly shops have allowed us to purchase needed items at significant discounts, if not provided as outright donations.

And of course, the heart of any program is the volunteer staff. Over the years, well over 30 OBTU members have given their time to help out. Some of our current staff are original volunteers. Their selfless donation of time and talent, without any compensation, is deeply appreciated. In recent years, we have found the word spreading on our program. We estimate that over 700 young people



Over 700 boys and girls have participated in OBTU's Youth Fly Fishing program over eleven years.

will have participated in the program by the end of this year. And in recent years, we find that along with area Boy Scout troops, a couple Girl Scout troops, as well as interested Chicago area boys and girls, we have also taught young people from as far away as suburban St. Louis; Dodgeville and Wausau, Wisconsin; and Midland, Michigan. Apparently we have a successful formula in place. But a program is only as successful as its next year. So please continue to spread the word about OBTU's Youth Fly Fishing program to the young girls and boys in your family and neighborhood. As well, join us in 2016 as a volunteer and mentor by contacting me for more information.

Special thanks to our 2015 Youth Fly Fishing staff: John Barrett, Willie Beshire, Steve Carlson, Bob Davenport, Edward Evans, Fred Hodge, Dave Lunardini, Jason Marquardt, Phillip Simmons, Marvin Strauch, Phil Young, Stan Zarnowiecki, Frank Zbyski.

October 10 Coldwater River Fall Study

OBTU members will return to the Coldwater River on Saturday, October 10, to continue the three-year macroinvertebrate survey as part of a Michigan Clean Water Corps grant which commenced in 2014.

"We return to the Coldwater River on October 10th for the fall survey," said Marv Strauch, who is a member of the Coldwater River Watershed Council. "We'll again require a staff of volunteers to complete the survey. And once again, the Coldwater River, Tyler Creek, and nearby Rogue River and Muskegon River will all offer varied fishing opportunities for anglers interested in catching trout and fall spawning chinook salmon while in the area. And of course there is the camaraderie of working together with your friends on a valuable project."

As with the past spring and fall surveys, audit teams will be formed, and each team will visit one of five sites along the Coldwater River or its major tributaries—Tyler Creek, Duck Creek or Messer Brook. Each site will be observed for any physical changes since the June audit. Then samples will be taken by volunteers using D-nets from the various habitat types within each site. Samples will be collected into large pails before each team returns to our base at Tyler Creek Country Club where we will identify and count everything collected. This Saturday morning activity is usually followed by a cookout and the opportunity to do some local fishing. Drive time from Chicago to the Tyler Creek Country Club is about 3.5 hours.

As reported in our last newsletter, in a case of what seems to be bureaucratic bungling, the upper 10 miles of the Coldwater River were almost completely denuded of the trees along its banks which caused the banks of much of that same stretch to be severely damaged. This work was supposedly undertaken to improve drainage for area farms. Thanks to an intervention by Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality, this work came to a halt.

"But for now, the upstream damage led to more dramatic siltation in the river," said Marv Strauch. "Our macroinvertebrate survey becomes even more important as a tool to track the effects of this disastrous action to the forage populations on the Coldwater."

More information on this situation can be found in a story titled "The Coldwater River Drain Disaster" which can be found in the online summer issue of Michigan Trout magazine at www.michigantu.org.

To volunteer for the October 10 Coldwater Study, please contact Marv Strauch (mjstrauchjr@gmail.com; 708-638-1318).

2015 Illinois TU Youth Camp

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Introduction to Fly Fishing

Campers were taught the basics of fly rod casting and then coached on reading the water and various tactics for fishing dry flies, nymphs, and streamers both up and down stream. Despite a heat wave and challenging fishing conditions during the week, there were sporadic hatches and rising fish which at times created some good opportunities on the Au Sable. As expected, the morning Trico hatches demanded technical fishing with fine leaders and small flies (size #24-26). The evenings saw fish rising to take caddis, light Cahills, blue wing olives and others. Campers were also treated to an outing at Kneff Lake to demonstrate how they could apply their fly fishing skills in the Chicago area without ready access to trout streams. Campers were delighted with an abundant haul of bluegill and rock bass with a number of larger, rod-bending fish landed.

Fly Tying Workshop

Fred Hodge of TU led fly tying sessions. Each camper participated in an introductory workshop on fly tying, hosted by Fred Hodge. Each camper was provided with a vice, tools and supplies to enable them to gain hands on experience tying a variety of flies.

A Day on the Au Sable North Branch

Carl Hueter, a long-time Michigan TU leader and local property owner, hosted our group for a day at his house on the North Branch. Mr. Hueter led a tour of the North Branch of the Au Sable and discussed fluvial geomorphology (the process by which the flow of water changes the land). Mr. Hueter and other area property owners made the day special by personally guiding our campers while they fished several Au Sable private access locations while providing inspirational leadership.

Special Recognition for OBTU Camp Volunteers

OBTU volunteers included Willie Beshire (camp director), Laura Andersen, Steve Carlson, Mike Fleetwood, Fred Hodge and Keith Sutherland. Special thanks to these colleagues for their time planning and running this year's camp.

2016 Camp Planning Already Underway

Planning is already underway for next year's camp which is scheduled July 24-29, 2016. We will again be providing this unique opportunity to a small number of qualified teens. If you have a relative or neighbor between 13 and 18 who enjoys the outdoors and would be a good candidate for the 2016 camp, please get them in the pipeline by contacting Willie Beshire, Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited Youth Camp Director (Phone: 630-200-2532, email: wbeshire@aol.com).

Operating Fund Donation Form

Please donate to our Operating Fund to help Oak Brook Trout Unlimited cover expenses for chapter meetings, guest speakers, special events and communications programs. OBTU is a 501(3)C non-profit and donations are fully tax deductible and greatly appreciated.

Please make your check payable to Oak Brook Trout Unlimited and mail to: P.O. Box 5046, Oak Brook, IL 60522

Retain a copy of this completed form for your tax records

\$15 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$ Other _____

Name

Address

Address (Apartment Number)

City

State

Zip

Phone

Email (optional)

Please contact the following board member regarding volunteer activities or other questions

Stan Zarnowiecki	President	Officer	vp@obt.org	708.606.4148
Rick Ralph	Vice President	Conservation Program	Rralph1@comcast.net	630.939.2643
Dave Lunardini	Treasurer	Officer	djl22@att.net	630.939.3471
Carol Hennessy	Secretary	Officer	clhennessy@earthlink.net	815.341.6010
Jim Schmiedeskamp	Director	Publicity/Communications	jmschmieds@gmail.com	312.375.6502
Marv Strauch	Director	Youth Education	mjstrauchjr@gmail.com	708.638.1318
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