

**81st MUCC ANNUAL CONVENTION**  
**JUNE 22nd TO 24th, 2018**

**Doherty Hotel, Clare MICHIGAN**

MUCC President, Tom Heritier, opened the convention at 9:15 A.M., June 23rd, 2018 at the Doherty Hotel in Clare, Michigan. Changes in the Agenda were announced. The makers of the resolutions were asked to limit remarks to 5 minutes. Those in favor of or opposed to the resolution were asked to limit remarks to 2 minutes. Orders of the Day were read by Bruce Levy. A Quorum was met. Carol Rose read the names of members in Moments of Memory. A moment of silence was observed for them. Tom introduced past Presidents that were attending this Convention. He introduced Russ Mason, DNR Director, who is attending the Convention. Volunteers were asked for the Election Committee. Several people volunteered. Tom announced 17 new clubs are affiliated with MUCC. This is the most new clubs joining in a long time. Nominations were taken for club officers. Several new nominations were taken from the floor before nominations were closed. Fran Yeager, Treasurer gave the Credentials report. There were 150 club members attending with a total of 339 votes. There were no emergency resolutions brought forth. Dan Echinger spoke about the silent auction and the numerous prizes available, including a 450 Bushmaster rifle in a card raffle for \$20 per card. Jack Van Rhee talked about the Bylaws Amendments and Policy Resolutions. The Bylaws Amendments were voted on and passed by the attendees. The resolutions were begun at 10:30 A.M.

Dan Echinger, Executive Director of MUCC, gave the Annual Report at 11:30 A.M. Dan spoke about how well the last year has gone for MUCC. A lot of good actions were taken by the Staff. He thanked all those attending the meeting for their support. Dan is proud to represent MUCC. The organization is unique to the other States for its influence and effective policy accomplishments. It is a shining example to the rest of Conservation entities. It is our 800 pound Gorilla for Conservation in the State Legislature. He spoke highly of the hard working staff and their enthusiasm. He mentioned Amy Trotter, Resource Manager, Stephanie Rustom, Policy Director, Lindsey Laserra, Membership Co-coordinator, Sue Pride, Member Relations and Co-coordinator for Tracks Magazine Jessica Haller, new to the Staff last year, did a good job obtaining a lot of good items for the silent auction, Hunter Sallisbary, new leader for the Boots On The ground initiative, Nick Green, new Editor for MUCC Magazine. I took a look at the latest copy and was very impressed with the content and quality of it. The magazine is now available at Meijers, Walmart, and Kroger stores. It is available in Illinois, Indiana and Pennsylvania. Tyler Butler is the new Camp Director and has been working for the last 6 months. He is

responsible for Trax Magazine, does classroom work and has good experience with Camp management. Our Lobbyist is working on over 100 pieces of Legislation dealing with Conservation issues. MUCC has a good record on getting Legislative approval for our resolutions. MUCC is working with Congress at the Federal level for funding support for the Great Lakes Initiative. Dan spoke about the CWD problem and focusing on invasive species prevention. Part of the problem with effective action is getting the public to care about Conservation and the environment. We need their support to be more effective. Dan thanked the Clubs for their support for the Youth Camp. MUCC expects to put 375 kids through camp this year. Over 56,000 kids have gone to camp over the years. The Organization still needs sponsors for the schools to reach as many kids as possible. It is vital to get the children to support conservation at an early age, and Trax does it well. The Convention recessed for lunch at 12:15.

The keynote speaker was Vicki Pontz, Chairman of the Natural Resource Commission. The NRC meets monthly. She was appointed during the beginning of the CWD problem. Talk about a sink or swim situation. Vicki is committed to transparency and communicating effectively. She gave credit to the DNR and to MUCC for their efforts to handle a bad situation. She was raised on a farm and grew up as a hunter. She had personal experience with conservation as a farm girl. Vicki believes in policy starting at ground level and discipline is critical for success. The pending Farm Bill is a big challenge and it is necessary to set aside personal bias to be effective. She believes MUCC is the important voice of Conservation. She leans on her Staff for information. She hopes to be at Convention again. She was impressed with all the resolutions and the manner in which they are debated and voted on to present to Legislators.

The DNR Director, Keith Creag addressed the members next. The Dept. used to develop methods and put them in the field. Now they are committed to including the public and MUCC for getting their views on the process for field work. He feels they learn more because of their involvement. He said there is \$438 million dollars in the 2019 budget. This is an increase of 34% overall from 2018 budget. The Dept. is very short on CO, s and with the added responsibility for law enforcement it is critical to hire and train a number of officers. It has been found 80% of forest fires start on private land. CO, s now share fire equipment with fire fighters and assist when they are available to help. The Dept. launched a new fishery vessel to help enforce invasive species enforcement. They have gotten 98% of the Great Lakes Basin partners to assist in enforcement efforts to stave off the Carp infestation. He spoke about a new Trail Development program to start at Detroit and go up to the UP. They are also working on establishing shooting ranges on selected Game Areas. They are partnering with the Public Work Dept. on wetlands improvement projects. They are working on trying to remove the Cap on the Trust Fund amount to be able to fund infrastructure work on the 4,000 state parks that need attention.

The Dept. is looking for experts on the Prion causing CWD. There are now 13 counties affected. They are planning to check history in the affected States to see if there are any effective programs in progress. The checking process is very expensive and slow to return answers. There have been 37,000 deer checked at a price of \$25 to \$75 each deer. The Dept. is looking at a \$600,000 expense with no end in sight. Keith took questions from the floor. He verified a CWD case in Jackson County, at Spring Harbor. The Cormorant program was going well and the fishing was improving until the Federal Government stopped it because the birds are migratory. It requires Government action to resume the control process. The Lobbyists are working on it. The Convention was recessed at 5:30 until 8:30 A.M. Sun.

The dinner and awards banquet was started at 6:30 P.M. and the awards were given to those people chosen. In the interest of brevity, I will make those available to members after my report. After 7:45, members attended the Hospitality suite and Silent Action at the main conference room A.

The Convention was reconvened at 8:30 A.M. on Sunday. Tom Heritier called the meeting to order. After the invocation he informed the meeting the next Convention will be held at Houghton Lake on the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June, 2019. In the Fund raising news, the Bushmaster Rifle brought in \$1,460. The Silent Auction garnered \$3,680, with all the other funds donated; the final total was \$5,650. Tom thanked all involved for their help and donations for fund raising. George Lindquist, Past President, began the last 3 resolutions. They all were passed unanimously. He thanked members for attending the Convention. Fran Yeager gave the treasurers report. With the sale of the old building, the money saved by renting without having to pay for updating and upkeep, MUCC has a welcome surplus that will be placed in money market funds. The building was sold last Dec. and MUCC has a 7 year lease on their office area. The White elephant has left the room! The new office space is set up for video conferencing to enable Region officers to attend via computer or smart phone. This is a big plus for those in the outlying Regions. George asked for volunteers for new committees.

Jason Dinsmore, NWF Representative, gave an update. He spent 5 years as a Staff member of MUCC and has spent 6 years with NWF. Dan Echinger was his mentor at MUCC. He began at the Pontiac Camp location and was the 1<sup>st</sup> Camp director for MUCC. In 2003, Camp was relocated at Chelsea. He thanked MUCC for the opportunity to learn so much about Conservation issues. The Organization has raised over \$50,000 in 5 years of fund raising. NWF is going back to basics. They are returning to individual State actions to advance their agenda. Their new focus will be on advancing goals in both State and Federal Legislatures. They are assisting with proposals to get more funding for Michigan Natural Resources. Jason is now based in Minnesota now, but remains a

Michigander at heart. He continues to be impressed with the progress MUCC has made on the Conservation issues for Mi. He is working on the upcoming Farm Bill. Jason assured that he will have an open door policy any time at the NFC for MUCC. Fran Yeager gave the final attendance report. There were 99 registered delegates with 333 vote's total. There were no new resolutions reported.

Tom Heritier praised the Staff for their good job last year in updating and implementing policy resolutions. The Crane Hunting resolution made the front pages of the Detroit News last year. MUCC resolutions make news. Dan gave updates on resolutions from last year. Mourning Dove hunting still on the table, but there is considerably public opposition. The Cormorant problem is ongoing with the Michigan Legislature putting pressure on the Federal Government. Tom urged the members to vote on the upcoming election for Conservation minded candidates. There are lots of changes ahead for all citizens of Michigan. Be sure to register and vote in Sept. The Dept. needs to update the 45 year old Commercial Fisheries Act. The fishermen want to go after more sport fish such as Walleye, Perch and other species. There is a 48 page Bill in the works to protect game fish from the Commercial Fishermen. There needs to be oversight on net placement and gear placement. MUCC is still working on the local government's taxation of our Sportsmen's Clubs. We need to provide a pathway for the Legislature to protect local Clubs from unfair taxes. There are 2 bills up before the Senate and House to hopefully protect the Clubs from unfair taxation on the local level. We need to make sure Legislators that support us get elected in Sept. There will be action on the Endowment Fund to lift the cap on the amount going into it. The Parks need funds from it for maintaining and upgrading their facility's. The Wildlife Recovery Plan will be used to protect against the Carp Invasion of the Great Lakes. The Corp of Engineers has plans in place to protect the Lakes. Now all we need is for them to wake up and get it done. We need to work with the States around the Great Lakes to put pressure on the Federal Legislature to get moving on the problem.

The election committee gave its final report. The results are available to the meeting in my copy of the Convention booklet after my report. The ballots will be kept for 30 days after the election.

The Convention was adjourned at 10.35 A.M. Sunday, 2018. I would like to thank Qua-Ke-Zik members for the opportunity to represent them at this year's convention.

David Kotrch  
Qua-Ke-Zik MUCC Representative