RMBL

Welcome to Gothic!

As President (Dan) and Chair (Bruce) of the RMBL Board of Trustees, we write to welcome you to Gothic this summer and give you an update on what the Board has been doing since last summer.

SAIL moves on to Tasmania. SAIL, the atmospheric project with all of the striking equipment in Gothic and its twice daily balloon launches, will be packing up and leaving for Tasmania in the coming months. We all benefited while they were here. Not only will the science that they've been doing be highly impactful, their personnel added a lot to the community and they will all be missed. The project also brought substantial resources that permitted us to grow our staff to accommodate their needs while also bringing in highly qualified staff that allowed us to grow in other ways. Their loss will cause some belt-tightening that we discuss below. Hopefully, we will continue to recruit atmospheric researchers and projects to our community because the RMBL is an outstanding place to link small scale ecological studies with Earth System Science more broadly.

North Village campus update. The North Village campus project has been slow to launch because of the long Mt. Crested Butte permitting process. We anticipate, as Ian wrote the other day, that it will be ultimately approved this calendar year. At that point we have an option to purchase land for our Mt. Crested Butte Campus. The Board is actively engaged in planning this purchase and future development that will address compelling housing needs as well as provide year-round research facilities. The rise in construction costs has slowed us a bit and we need to revisit budgets and planning before formally launching a capital campaign. SAIL permitted us to 'staff up' for an anticipated pivot to the capital campaign, but now we must reconsider staffing levels given these delays in permitting that may prevent a graceful pivot to development.

RMBL is financially stable. The expected loss of SAIL revenues, inflation, and slow growth in annual giving have created a financial situation that the Board and Ian along with senior staff have been working together to address since January. The outcome is that to continue to stay financially stable, RMBL will undergo staff reorganization in the context with the planned departure of Ian and Jennie. Ultimately, our goal is to ensure we have a stable

staff that can support RMBL. Given Ian and Jennie's transformative work over a quarter century (!) this is a challenge we are taking very seriously. To keep as many staff as possible going forward, Ian and the Board are also working to create new sources of revenue through foundation support, exploring other options, as well as maintaining our ambitious, yet vital, annual giving program.

Summer social events to interact with the Board. Our July Board meeting will be focused on planning for revised budgets and evaluating the potential to expand our support to include philanthropic foundations. We are planning social events and view this as a great time for the community to meet the trustees and for the trustees to meet the community.

We want to be accessible and the Communications Committee is planning a variety of meet-and-greets as part of our Tuesday Happy Hours (5PM at the Ruby Lounge before dinner and before the weekly talk), we hope to continue the very successful program of having trustees join field crews to learn about their research while helping them. The Communications Committee is planning a town hall in the second half of July. Finally, Bruce will continue his annual meeting with graduate students.

We want everyone to know that the RMBL Board is passionate about RMBL and our scientific excellence and has been and will continue to work hard with Ian and the staff to ensure RMBL continues to be the place to conduct high quality and impactful science.

We hope everyone has a productive and rewarding summer.

Sincerely Yours,

Dan Blumstein, President
Bruce McLean, Chair