This is it! The last print issue of the River View Newsletter.
Go to www.mrwa.org so you don’t miss a single issue.

Spring News to be Electronic

This is our last print issue of the River View Newsletter. From now on, we will send you the newsletter electronically. All you need to do is provide us with your e-mail address. Here are easy ways to do this:

Go to www.mrwa.org and fill out your e-mail address in the box on the front page as shown on the right.
If you prefer, send an e-mail to chambj16@ferris.edu.
If you’re more in the mood for paper, mail it to us using the form on page 3.

For those of you who do not use e-mail, we plan to print a few copies of the newsletter for you. Please call us at 231-591-2324 and we’ll make sure you get a copy.

Our greatest wish is to provide you with information that impacts the Muskegon River. You are important to us and the newsletter is a great way to find out about future programs and events.
This is a big change, and it is driven by the cost of paper and postage. We project we will save over $2,000/issue. Thank you for your help.
A Truckload of Tires
and
Tons of Electronics Recycled

By Dixie Ward, Project Manager,
Muskegon River Watershed Assembly

A total of 289 cars from Mecosta County lined up in Big Rapids. Drivers brought their tires, computers & TV's to recycle. They all wanted to participate in the new Electronics and Tire Collection conducted by the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly and Recycle Mecosta. Residents delivered a total of 25,809 pounds of electronics and 1,103 tires that could otherwise have ended up in a landfill or worse. The collection was made possible through a Community Pollution Prevention Grant Program from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.

Volunteers from the MRWA, Big Rapids and Ferris State University student organizations, (Honors, Sustainability and Outdoor Clubs) worked the full four hour collection. They met customers at their car, unloaded their vehicle and gave them a smile and a thank you.

Electronic waste, or e-waste is a growing problem. It is made worse by new products being introduced that make older models obsolete. Electronics contain cadmium, mercury, lead, americium, arsenic, beryllium oxide, and flame retardants. These are just a few of the hazardous materials found in e-waste. It is vital that these materials stay out of landfills where they contaminate ground water and release toxic chemicals.

CM Rubber Recycling takes the tires to create environmentally friendly products including landscaping mulch, playground cover, and other products. Compare that to tires left in a landfill where they last forever as an untapped resource. The welfare of people and our environment depends in part on proper management of society’s wastes. The tire and electronic recycling program is an important step in managing that waste.

The next collection will be held in the spring of 2016 in Mecosta County. Contact Dixie Ward, Muskegon River Watershed Assembly Project Manager, at (231) 591-2320 or projectmgr@ferris.edu for more information.

...And the Survey Says...

Here’s what 83 Mecosta County area residents have to say about recycling:

♦ How did you find out about recycling in Mecosta County?
  Word of Mouth – 52%
  Newspaper – 22%
  Drove by – 10%
  Website – 8%
  Mail – 3%
  Pamphlet – 3%
  Other – 2%

♦ How long have you recycled?
  5+ years – 70%
  Less than 5 years – 16%
  Less than 6 months – 2%
  Less than 1 year – 2%

♦ Do the expanded hours make it easier to recycle?
  Yes – 98%
  No – 2%
A new study is underway to determine whether there is a connection between the presence of Round Gobies and water quality in Michigan rivers. PhD candidate, Corey Krabbenhoft from Wayne State University is leading the study. She sampled the Muskegon River downstream from the Croton Dam this summer. Corey found an abundance of Gobies close to the mouth of the Muskegon River. This winter they will also be analyzing samples for aquatic invertebrates and further water quality measures with the overall goal of investigating the relationship between water quality and Round Goby abundance.

Environmental impact: Round Gobies (see photo bottom right) have been linked to declines in populations of other bottom-dwelling Great Lakes native fish such as mottled sculpin, log perch, and darters. The Round Goby competes with these species for food and habitat, especially spawning sites. Other competitive advantages held by the Round Goby over natives are their ability to survive in degraded water conditions, spawning more frequently over a longer period, reproducing rapidly, and guarding nests from predation of their eggs. Gobies consume the eggs and fry of Lake Trout, posing a substantial threat to this economically and ecologically valuable native fishery. Round Gobies also are troublesome to recreational anglers given their ability to "steal" bait, thus replacing the catch of desired species such as walleye.


Corey Krabbenhoft is working with Dr. Donna Kashian to survey several rivers around Michigan for habitat quality and invasive species abundance.
Farmers make a living by ensuring the production of resources so that you and I can not only eat, but also have wood products for our homes, and affordable fuel in our cars for those family holiday visits. This work is not taken lightly and does come at a cost to the land. Balancing the need to produce food with the needs of the environment is an ever present challenge. Many Michigan farmers have taken it upon themselves to become environmentally certified.

In 2011, Governor Snyder signed into legislation the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program or MAEAP. Since then over 3,000 Michigan farms have been verified by Conservation District personnel for meeting environmental standards in livestock, crop and farmstead production systems. The Cook family of Mecosta County has been verified for their cropping system (see photo below). In Mecosta and Montcalm counties there were 40 verifications, representing over 1600 acres, in 2015 alone. Each one of those verifications represents a farmer’s commitment to following the environmental standards set forth in the program on a voluntary basis. As a part of the program, farmers agree to limit fertilizer and chemical use to the strict, research tested standards for each product. In addition, any pesticide applications must be timed so they dissipate before harvest. It is also worth noting the effects that fertilizers have, whether organic or mined, can harm water quality as has happened in the Lake Erie Basin. For this reason, soil test levels for phosphorus in fields and sensitive areas such as wetlands and slopes are monitored and protected from winter runoff and over application of fertilizer. In addition, farmers install buffer plantings at field edges to contain and filter field water runoff to limit the nutrients that can leave fields. These are also great places for birds and other wildlife.

The MEAEP program staff oversee application and harvest records to ensure the rules are followed correctly. According to Tony Wernette, “As the Conservation District MAEAP Technician for Mecosta and Montcalm Counties, I know that becoming verified is a long process. I applaud all of the farmers that have chosen to work with me to have their farms become environmentally verified. They all have made changes in their farming practices to improve the environment. I look forward to working with any new farmers interested in becoming MAEAP certified.”
Calling all those interested in the Muskegon River Watershed!

Are you interested in learning how to care for lakes, rivers and streams? It’s all about what we do on our land. MRWA is planning workshops.

INTERESTED? Call Julie at MRWA (231) 591-2324 or E-mail: chambj16@ferris.edu. We would love to hear from you.

Do you live on Twin, West, Middle, Bear Lake or Bear Creek?

We’re planning something with you in mind! This spring, special workshops will be held just for you to learn how to prevent pollutants from entering your lake or creek. In fact, a few lucky people will be chosen to have a natural shoreline landscape installed on their property!

Interested? Contact Julie at chambj16@ferris.edu or call 231-591-2324. If you are willing to go the extra mile, we could use your help in talking to your neighbors about this opportunity. After all, the more the merrier! Programs will be planned for early spring.

Welcome New Board Member

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to George Heartwell who recently accepted a seat on the board of directors of the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly.

As many are aware, Mr. Heartwell retired in December as Mayor of Grand Rapids after 12 years of dedicated service. Under his leadership, the city prospered economically and in 2010 achieved recognition by the US Chamber of Commerce as the most sustainable mid-sized American city.

Additionally, while guiding the city into national prominence, Mayor Heartwell created a legacy of environmental stewardship. He served on President Obama’s climate change task force and earned recognition for his ability to attract federal support for successful Grand River restoration efforts.

Due to his wealth of experience and solid record of achievement, George Heartwell obviously has much to offer our organization and we look forward to his leadership and wise counsel in the years ahead.

Thank you Doug Trembath!

After seven years of dedicated service on the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly, Doug Trembath of Sears, MI, retired in December, 2015.

Doug served as member at large, secretary, and led the MRWA transition team responsible for many changes that strengthened MRWA. His contributions are significant. He quietly steered the organization using facts and common sense mixed with a lifetime of experience—much of it involving water. Doug’s contributions have been many and he will be missed by MRWA.

Calling all those interested in the Muskegon River Watershed!

Are you interested in learning how to care for lakes, rivers and streams? It’s all about what we do on our land. MRWA is planning workshops.

INTERESTED? Call Julie at MRWA (231) 591-2324 or E-mail: chambj16@ferris.edu. We would love to hear from you.
Lifetime Members:
Anonymous
Karleen Cox
Tom & Susan Fabus
Michael & Dianne Gabrion
Ken Johnson
Mark King, NCRESA
Catherine Obits, Gerber Foundation
John & Terry Stilson

2015 Members
Cindy Ackerman
Ron Alexander
Edwin Anderson
Tom Anderson
William & Judith Anderson
Jeff Babb
Bruce Baker
Ron Baker
Ray & Linda Banbury
Donald & Pat Bauman
Marty Baumgartner
Maureen Beekman
Curtis Behnke
Julie & Jeff Berwald
Eldon Birtles
Lee Brown
Ron Brown
Robert Bruggink
Bill & Nancy Burmeister
Mark & Miriam Bush
Claudette Byers
John Calabrese
Roger Carey
Jens & Kimberly Christiansen
John Clelland
Judy Cloer
Lillie Coster
Jerry & Ilia Cox
Mary Daloisio
Bill & Dea Danby
Rod Denning
Eckhart Dersch
Carolyn Drake
Kathy Evans
Tom Fabus
Peter Farougi
Chris Fortier
Bob and Norine Foster
Loretta Fritz
Vicki & Neil Frye
Mitch & Jeane George
Edward Gergosian
Robert Gillespie
Sue Glatz
Bre Grabill

2015 Members, We Couldn’t Do It Without You!
Shirley Green
Wayne Groesbeck
Toni Rae Gurn
Michael Guy
Edwin Hansen
Frederick & Cindy Heck
Jim & Gloria Helgemo
Don & Karen Henning
Ellouise Hieftje
Steven Houghton
Dale Hower
Kenneth Hulka
Ed & Patricia Jarrett
Tom Jennett
Barbara Johnson
Eric Johnson
James Johnson
Ken Johnson
Ronald & Robin Kadelsik
William & Linda Kail
Jack Ketchum
Randy & Debbie Knapp
Bob & Beth Krueger
R. Joseph Kwaizer
Jean LaLonde
Pat Lemson
George Liddle
Charmaine Lucas
Sara Ludviksen
Carol Majewski
Lori Melzo & Martin Hoernel
Don Smalligan & Mary Kenyon
Jim Maturen
John & Ginni Mazur
Brad McCormick
John G. McCoy
Sue Ellen & Bob McCreary
Rick & Anne Meeks
Ryan Miller
Alex Monroe
Patrick & Barbara Moran
Dean & Jean Morehouse
Kathy & John Morrison
Greg Mund
Edward Nellist
Cory Nelson
Robert Nicholson
Nadine Norby
Wendy Ogilvie
Stephanie Ogren
Amy Packard
Robert & Nancy Parsons
Doug Pavlovich
Mary Payne
Roger Peacock
Joe Pergande
K. Nils Peterson
Steven Petoskey
Dan Postema
Charles & Sheryl Presler
Allan & Deb Puplis
Mary Pylman
Dave & Betsy Randall
Diane Randall
Kurt Ray
Tom Reichard
Joseph Rentz
Kevin Rodibaugh
Margaret Ross
Stephen & Barbara Ross
Bill & Irene Ruga
Richard & Ruth Santer
Lynne Scheible
Eric Schlaf
Jon Schneider
Lee Schrader
Claire Schwartz
Dave & Kerry Scripps
Fred Smith
Don Snyder
Stephen Sobers
Robert Soltes
Leo & Nancy Speese
Marilyn Speese
Vicki Springstead
Robert Stegmier
Don Stephen
John & Terry Stilson
Kathy Stolaruk
Carl & Peggy Straathof
Mary Sullivan-Pondell
Marcus Sutter
Jim & Jean Sweet
Zackary Szakacs
Vivian TenBrink
Melora Theunick
Denise Totten
Doug Trembath
Roger Tuuk
Gary Unger
Theresa VanVeelen
Jane Vitek
Dixie Ward
Ron Welton
Steve Wessling
Dick Wheeler
Fred Wilder
Robert & Mary Wygant
Todd & Tim Young
Dennis Zimmerma
## Keep it Cool Donations

- Consumers Energy Foundation
- Dogwood Foundation
- Bob and Norine Foster
- Haworth Inc.
- Steven Houghton
- Ryan Miller
- Gary Noble
- Wynne Noble Potter
- Barbara Ruga

## Muskegon River Conservationist

- Edward Gergosian

## Muskegon River Preservation Partner

- Michael and Diane Gabrion

## Muskegon River Protector

- John and Terry Stilson

## Muskegon River Sponsor

- Doug Bard
- Keith and Karen Bumgarner
- J.A. Conrad
- Greg DeWeerd
- Tom Fabus, Hersey Twp.
- Fremont Lions Club

## Muskegon River Contributor

- Cindy Ackerman
- Kurt, Kim & Marbeth Anderson
- Edwin Anderson
- Laura Asiala
- John Avey, Rocky Mt. Elk Foundation

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**Thank you!**

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## Reader Feedback on GMOs

We love to hear from our readers! We want to thank Chuck Krepps of Moorland Township, Muskegon, Michigan who pointed out that we missed an important point in the article entitled, Genetically Modified Organisms, GMOs A Case of Good vs. Evil? By Wayne Groesbeck in our fall newsletter.

Chuck called to say that by using genetically modified crops that prevent weed growth or resist insect and/or disease, farmers no longer need to use chemical controls to protect their crop (some say reduced usage). Thereby, significantly reducing the pounds of chemical that are spread on fields.

In addition, Chuck pointed out that farmers can choose whether they want to use genetically modified seed. Chuck raises corn, alfalfa, oats and beef on his farm. To save on feeding costs, in the fall, he lets his beef cows feed on the leftover cornstalks which saved on his feeding bill for up to 3-4 weeks. He tried using genetically modified corn seed. However, with GMO corn, the stalks got so tough the cows could not eat the plants that were left in the field. (Did you know cows only have bottom teeth?) As a result, to manage feed costs, Chuck has returned to non GMO corn and also has to use pesticides to prevent weeds and insects from damaging the crop.

*Now there's something to think about. Thank you, Chuck!*
**Did you know...**

just one 15-inch maple tree provides $35 worth of water runoff management annually?

Most County Conservation Districts conduct tree sales every spring. Please plant trees this year. For more information, contact the following Conservation Districts:

- Clare—989-539-6401
- Mecosta—231-796-0909x3
- Missaukee—231-839-7193
- Montcalm—989-831-4606x3
- Muskegon—231-828-5097
- Newaygo—231-924-2420x5
- Osceola—231-832-2950
- Roscommon—989-275-3163
- Wexford—231-775-7681x3

**MRWA Executive Board meetings**

**MRWA Executive Board meetings are open to the public and usually held on the third Monday of each month. Please contact us at 231-591-2324 if you wish to attend.**

**Or,**

Visit us at www.mrwa.org

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**Join Us!**

Become a member of the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly.

Be a part of ensuring the Muskegon River is clean, beautiful, and a great fishery.

It’s easy;

Go to http://mrwa.org/join/

And become a member today.

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“The Muskegon River Watershed Assembly is dedicated to the preservation, protection, restoration, and sustainable use of the Muskegon River, the land it drains, and the life it supports, through educational, scientific and conservation initiatives.”

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Send us your E-mail address to chambliss@ferris.edu. Stay in touch!