

## **Mill River Wetland Committee, Inc.**

*Terrestrial Earth is divided into river drainage basins. The diversity and abundance of life forms on Earth depend upon the integrity and viability of the natural systems in each basin. These systems are frequently threatened by human activity.*

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the Mill River Wetland Committee is to strengthen environmental education and develop general public understanding of river basin systems.

### **Goals**

- To establish and maintain river basin education as an integral part of curriculum within the elementary and intermediate grade levels.
- To promote community commitment to stewardship and sound management of river basin systems.

### **Objectives**

- To operate the River-Lab Program as a model of environmental education, grades 3-6, in cooperation with public and private schools.
- To provide comprehensive River-Lab volunteer guide training.
- To continually develop, publish, and promote the River-Lab Program materials as an effective environmental education curriculum.
- To establish and promote a Mill River Wetland Committee community outreach initiative.
- To encourage support of the Mill River Wetland Committee through memberships, donations, grants, and volunteer activities.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Diane Rossiter

Mill River Wetland Committee, Inc.  
476 Old Mill Road  
Fairfield, CT 06824  
(203) 259-1847  
Web site: [www.River-Lab.org](http://www.River-Lab.org)  
E-mail: [River-Lab@juno.com](mailto:River-Lab@juno.com)

# January – December 2007

## MILL RIVER WETLAND COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

The **2006 Annual Meeting** was held February 2, 2007 at the Fairfield Arts Council in Fairfield, CT. Douglas Thompson, Associate Professor of Geology at Connecticut College, was guest speaker. He discussed how flowing water creates and continues to influence the characteristics of a river system. Mr. Thompson is participating in a CT DEP workgroup that is creating guidelines for how rivers should be managed.

Mill River Wetland Committee (MRWC) Board member **Dr. Marcelline A. Barron** lost a courageous battle with cancer on March 8, 2007. Dr. Barron joined the Board in 1997 and was an invaluable liaison between River-Lab and Fairfield Public Schools in her position as Math and Science Curriculum Leader Grades K - 6. The River-Lab Curriculum Revision Project, which began in 2004 under her guidance, would never have been possible without her. (See Curriculum Revision Report on page 5.)

MRWC celebrated **40 years** of the River-Lab Program on November 16, 2007 at the Burr Mansion in Fairfield, CT. This special event was attended by past and present members of the MRWC Board of Directors, River-Lab guides (current and former), representatives of the Town of Fairfield, and other friends of the environment. The Town of Fairfield presented MRWC founder **Joy Shaw** with an award of appreciation for MRWC's environmental education service since 1967.

**Joy Shaw**, founder of Mill River Wetland Committee and author of the River-Lab Program, was honored as the 2007 Alis B. McGrath Friend of Education. This Fairfield PTA Council award is given annually to a community member who has made a system-wide contribution to Fairfield's public school system. Superintendent of Schools, Ann Clark, presented the award at the December 3 meeting of the PTA Council.



## THE GARDEN EXPO

The **ninth annual Garden Expo**, held March 17 and 18, 2007 at Fairfield Ludlowe High School, raised \$31,663.24 to benefit River-Lab. Gay Gasser, Alex Moran, Anne Weinrod and dozens of volunteers transformed a snowy weekend into a springtime event featuring arts, crafts, and products for home and garden.

The **tenth annual Garden Expo** will take place on Saturday, March 15 and Sunday March 16, 2008 at Fairfield Ludlowe High School, 785 Unquowa Road, Fairfield, CT. Visit [www.TheGardenExpo.com](http://www.TheGardenExpo.com) for more information.

**BECOME A  
GARDEN BOOSTER**  
for MRWC's Garden Expo  
at Fairfield Ludlowe High School  
Deadline February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008

**DRAGONFLY CLUB \$250**  
**PRAYING MANTIS CLUB \$100**  
**BUTTERFLY CLUB \$50**  
**LADYBUG CLUB \$25**

Make checks payable to:  
MRWC, 476 Old Mill Road,  
Fairfield, CT 06824

For information about advertising  
in the program, please call  
Alex Moran at 256-0343

**Mill River Wetland Committee Presents**

  
**THE  
GARDEN  
EXPO**

**To benefit River-Lab**

Saturday, March 15, 2008  
10:00 am – 5:00 pm  
Sunday March 16, 2008  
10:00 – 4:00 pm  
Fairfield Ludlowe High School  
785 Unquowa Road, Fairfield, CT 06824

The tenth annual Garden Expo will be a weekend filled with art, crafts and products for home and garden. Exciting demonstrations will include Chain Saw Carving, Gourd Carving, Wheel Thrown Pottery, Bird Carving, and Live Music. Check [www.TheGardenExpo.com](http://www.TheGardenExpo.com) for updated schedule.

## MRWC WELCOMES NEW STAFF MEMBERS

The MRWC Board appointed **Cathi Zilling** as Executive Director effective January 2008. Cathi has fifteen years of volunteer experience with school PTA boards, church committees, and local charity fundraisers. Her prior professional experience is in marketing and account management, including Parent's Magazine's Child Development Products, Micro Warehouse PC and Mac Catalogs, and Direct Media.

**Amy Armstrong** joined MRWC as Office Manager in August 2007. Amy first became involved with MRWC in 2005 when she served as River-Lab Grade 4 Gear Manager.

## MILL RIVER WETLAND STUDY GROUP NEWS

### MILL RIVER WETLAND STUDY GROUP

#### OFFICERS AND STAFF 2007

##### Director

Charlene Brauns-Schindler

##### Co-Director

Helen Dewar, June-Dec.

##### Group Advisor

Ellie Carrera

##### Schedulers

Helen Dewar RL3

Andrea Metzner RL4

Tricia Money RL5F

Charlene Brauns-Schindler

RL6

##### Trails Chairperson

Curtis Osborne, Jan.-June

##### Nominating Committee Chairman

Charlene Brauns-Schindler

##### Indoor Guide Trainer

Carol Kratzman

##### Outdoor Guide Trainers

Ellie Carrera

Alex Moran

- A total of 3299 students, in study-teams of four to six students, and 201 guides participated in River-Lab in 2007.
- Schedulers Charlene Brauns-Schindler, Helen Dewar, Andrea Metzner, and Tricia Money, along with each volunteer Captain and Guide, again facilitated a successful year of environmental education for River-Lab.
- The following River-Lab guides received recognition for their service at the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic on June 7, 2007:

#### 10-YEAR KINGFISHER PENDANT RECIPIENT

(Badge recipient with a minimum of 10 years service and 66 trips.)

**Mary Beth Colleran**

#### 5-YEAR KINGFISHER PIN RECIPIENTS

(Badge recipient with a minimum of 5 years service and 36 trips.)

**Lib Aspinwall, Kathleen Fulton, Lisa Goven,**

**Susan Levinson, Janet McCaffery, Mandy Milmore**

#### KINGFISHER BADGE RECIPIENTS

(Fully trained guide with 3 trips per level for a minimum of 15 trips.)

**Mary Pat Burr, Helen Dewar, Janet McCaffery,  
Mandy Milmore, Denise Spencer, Mark Tygesen,  
Nancy VonEuler**

#### ADDITIONAL RECOGNITIONS

**Top-Scoring Guides: Mark Tygesen, Helen Dewar,  
Denise Spencer, Susan Levinson, Martha Murphy**

## MILL RIVER LABORATORY PROGRAM 2007

KEY: RL3, RL4, RL6 = River-Lab Program Levels 3, 4, and 6  
RL5F = River-Lab Level 5, Spring Floodplain Unit

Level	# Experienced Guides	# New Guides	# Study Teams*	# of Students
RL6 '07	13	15	85	742
RL5F '07	25	33	132	817
RL3 '07	32	35	171	838
RL4 '07	18	30	170	902
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>3299</b>

Total # Guides serving in '07 = 201

\* A study-team consists of one guide and 4-6 students.

## VOLUNTEER GUIDES 2007

Jim Accomando	Lorna Donnelly	Susan Levinson	Debbie Reynolds
Lib Aspinwall	Doshi Dinal	Polly Linton	George Richards
Doreen Baker	Joanne Dowling	Karen Lynch	Christine Rose
Jill Bebey	Amy Dutter	Mary Magnusson	Debra Rosner
Jenine Beck	Linda Fabri	Laura Maloney	Max Rothman
Mary Ellen Bernheim	Brenda Farrell	Lauren Mappa	Karen Sanger
Mary Pat Burr	Eileen Flora	Tammy Martin	Nancy Sargent
Jim Biardi	Susan Freed	Nancy Mason	Debra Sauer
Deanna Bookus	Jen Gardner	Kate Maxham	Dean Schneble
Amy Borruso	Chris Gerbasi	Janet McCaffery	Lois Schweizer
Beverly Bradley	Marjorie Glass	Christine McCarthy	Liz Schwinn
Charlene Brauns- Schindler	Lynn Goddard	Tom McCay	Martha Seymour
Ginny Campbell	Lynn Goddard	Mike McElroy	Marcy Shinbaum
Judi Cardello	Joan Godfred	Jessie McGrath	Olivia Sims
Sheila Carey	Lisa Goven	Mary Ellen McKee	Nancy Smith
Ellie Carrera	Caroline Graham	Jennifer McMahan	Cathy Sondheim
Fernanda Casey	Mary Grella	Anne Mele	Denise Spencer
Nicole Cassidy	Corinne Gulian	Linda Miller	Debbie Stapleton
Sue-Ellen Chieffalo	Amy Hare	Mandy Milmore	Marie Stark
David Collins	Cheryl Heinzman	Steve Miserocchi	Kathleen Stauffer
Mary Ellen Connelly	Mary Hogue	Kathy Mitchell	Michelle Stearns
Louisa Correll	Ava Hunter	Tricia Money	Stacey Sullivan
Sue Coyne	Warren Joblin	Martha Murphy	Elizabeth Sweeney
Diane Creamer	Karen Johns	Karen Nemiah	Angela Toner
Kate Croarkin	Kari Kaalstad	Hetty Nerod	Dede Traynor
Beverly Crudgington	Janet Kaminsky	Nadine Nizet	Katie Traynor
Pamela Dale	Maureen Kane	Katie O'Grady	Mark Tygesen
Lisa Damp	Constantina Karageorge	Elizabeth O'Neill	Nancy von Euler
Pooja Dave	Katie Keating	Michele Onofrio	Donna Walsh
Meg Day	Beth Kelly	Curtis Osborne	Kay Walshe
Zsusanna Deer	Lynn Kelly	Kim Palmer	Sania Werner
Amy de Lannoy	Emily Kerns	Lisa Perret	Bob Westervelt
Renata Devin	Teresa Kerrigan	Kim Peters	Maureen Whiting
Helen Dewar	Maureen Kiernan	Lauren Pflughar	Jim Wittstein
Eric Dieffenbach	Reini Knorr	Robin Phillips	Elizabeth Wood
Marilyn Donahoe	Peter Kraus	Ellie Pinson	James Wood
Leslie Grattan Donahue	Suzanne	Christine Pisani	Donna Wrigley
	Laginestra	Dorothy Porter	Laura Young
	Jumi Lai	Emily Price	Yvonne Zeisler
	Lauren Lanham	Linda Pryor	
	Laura Lawlor	Karla Ray	
	Kathy Lee	Therese Raymond- Cline	
	Coleen Lerman		

## RIVER-LAB PROGRAM PROGRESS REPORT

### Curriculum Revision Project

The Curriculum Revision Project, which began in spring 2004, has directly aligned River-Lab with the State of Connecticut Science Curriculum Framework. Students' mastery of framework concepts and processes will be assessed on the first statewide Connecticut Mastery Tests in Science for Grades 5 and 8 in spring 2008.

MRWC successfully implemented River-Lab curriculum revisions for the Grade 6 unit—The River as a Link to the Sea: Basin Management and Estuarine Dynamics—in spring of 2007. MRWC staff met with Grade 6 teachers in March and April to introduce teachers to the revised unit. Teachers received a new Teacher Manual of lessons and activities and two 2007 MRWC publications for student use: Introduction to the Estuary and Handbook of Estuarine Organisms. Teacher response was positive and enthusiastic. Feedback from teachers was, as always, extremely helpful to the River-Lab Curriculum Team. This feedback enabled the Team to make minor adjustments, ensuring that River-Lab is as educationally sound and teacher friendly as it can be.

Even though the grade 3 and grade 4 curriculum in Fall 2006 was implemented successfully (as previously reported), the Curriculum Revision Team felt that there were further refinements to the outdoor study-trip that needed to be undertaken and implemented for Fall 2007. The changes that were made helped students to better use the inquiry process in their outdoor laboratory experience. Teachers and volunteer guides all agreed that this year's version was the best yet.

All of these changes could not have occurred without the close collaboration of the Fairfield Public School staff, led by Marcelline Barron and, after her death, by Walter Wakeman. The numerous meetings and discussions that occurred between the River-Lab Curriculum Team and teachers were invaluable in making the River-Lab program an educationally sound and relevant environmental education curriculum for Fairfield's students.



MILL RIVER WETLAND COMMITTEE 2007 CONTRIBUTORS

\* indicates MRWC member

**\$1-29**

Sandra Altieri*	Day One Skate Shop Gary & Marjorie Drucker	Mary M. Gasker Larry Kochman* Peter Kraus* Mary Money Patricia Richie	Eleanor H. & Alexander Thompson James Wood*
Neal & Becky Brady	Jocelyn Eppich* Susan Filipowich*		

**\$30-49**

Merril O. Adelman*	Roger E. Lasky*	Robert & Anne Stephan*
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Lynn M. Goddard*	Nancy Scott*	
Weege Harlow	Mary Martha Sherts*	
Lori Hashizume*	Beverly Siemon*	

**\$50-99**

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Denise Dougiello		
Dunlapp Hibbs		
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**\$100-199**

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Peter R. & Cynthia P. Burnim	Fairfield Garden Club* Alan & Alana Fodeman*	Douglas A. & Meg Jones Daniel C. & Kari Kaalstad**
Juan Carlos & Elinor Carrera*		
Circle Collision		
Holly J. Clancy*		

Kaiser Battistone\*  
 Robert C. & Kathleen O.  
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 Brian A. & Pamela F. Fagan\*  
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 Oliver Nursery  
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 Ruscito Family Foundation\*  
 Sasqua Garden Club\*  
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 Jackie Spano\*  
 Thomas R. & Jane K. Talamini\*  
 Rev. Henry L. & Mary W. Thompson\*  
 Toyota of Westport  
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### \$500-999

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 Diana W Chazaud  
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 Ed Schindler & Charlene-Brauns  
 Schindler\*  
 Jocelyn T. Shaw\*  
 Town of Fairfield

### Gifts in Memory of

Marcelline A. Barron  
 R. William Brauns  
 Lawrence Jeffers  
 Harry L. Shaw

Donna Gallo  
 Jeanette McMahon  
 Jocelyn T. Shaw

### Gifts in Honor of

Sarah Collins

### Matching Gifts Companies

AIG Matching Grants Program  
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Pitney Bowes Employee Involvement Fund

Program

**Honorary Members**

Barbara S. Fenstermacher  
David H. Gibson  
Roger T. Previs

**GIFT PLANNING FOR MRWC**

Does your will include the Mill River Wetland Committee? Please contact Cathi Zilling at (203)259-1847 or e-mail at [River-Lab@juno.com](mailto:River-Lab@juno.com) for more information on how you can **leave your legacy**.

**MRWC CONTRIBUTORS OF GOODS AND SERVICES**

Amy Armstrong	Brian Fagan	Nancy Mason	Curtis Osborne	Barbara Siemon
Bill Bennet	Fairfield County	Kate Maxham	Kate Pengue	Linda Snelham-
Berlin Productions	Real Estate	Janet	Ellie Pinson	Moore
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Ellie Carrera	Maureen Kiernan	Tricia Money	Christopher	Anne Weinrod
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David Collins	Polly Linton	Michele	Kyle Schindler	
Amy DeLannoy	Lucy's Kitchen	Onofrio	Dean Schneble	
Helen Dewar	Laura Maloney	Donna Orazio	Joy Shaw	

**MRWC 40<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION CONTRIBUTORS OF GOODS & SERVICES**

Mary Blossfeld Chung	Martha Murphy
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Mary Beth Colleran	Joy Shaw
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Donna Gallo	Jennifer Titrud
Jeanette McMahon	Walter Wakeman
Mo's Liquor	Anne Weinrod

**GARDEN EXPO 2007 SPONSORS**

Berkowitz, Trager, & Trager, LLC – Lectures  
Honda of Westport – River-Lab Info  
Gay Gasser – Garden Expo Signs  
Maxim Group, James P. Orazio, President – Garden Expo Bags  
Fairfield County Real Estate and Mortgage Company – Bag-A-Bug  
Weinrod Family – Flower Pot Auction  
WSHU Public Radio Group – Media

## GARDEN EXPO 2007 CONTRIBUTORS OF GOODS AND SERVICES

Winthrop Baum	Don's Turnpike Music	Mary Goodbody	Robbins Tesar
The Beach Cafe	Garage	Stephen Gooss	Sue Sabia
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Process	Post 279	Griffin Moran	Sir Speedy
CT Sogetsu Ikebana	Fairfield Warde Class	Katherine Neville	Heather Soroko
Study Group	of 2008	Jo Olsen	Stop & Shop
Coreen's Bridge Floral	Donna Gallo	Organic Gardening	Emily Titrud
Shop	Garden Expo Committee	Mary Jo Palmer	Verdant Magazine
Martha Curtis	Gay Gasser	Party City of Fairfield	Walpole Woodworkers
Day One Skate Shop	Katie Gausepohl	Peabody Museum at Yale	WICC
Double R Design, Inc.	Gilbertie's Herb	University	
	Gardens	Susan Quincy	

*Thank you to all the Garden Expo Committee members and their families!*

## MILL RIVER WETLAND COMMITTEE, INC. FINANCIAL REPORT

January 1, 2007 – December 31, 2007

<u>INFLOWS</u>	<u>Year to Date Dec 2007</u>	<u>Year to Date Dec 2006</u>
Membership Dues	8,835.00	12,785.00
Gifts		
General	4,869.53	1,364.76
Memorials	865.00	170.00
Challenge period	5,005.00	3,906.00
Anonymous Matching	1,000.00	1,000.00
PTA's	1,500.00	10,450.00
River-Lab Program Income		
Fairfield Public Schools study-trips	3,500.00	8,750.00
Parochial Schools study-trips	200.00	200.00
Reimbursement for Materials	<u>12,298.25</u>	<u>3,680.40</u>
	16,068.25	12,630.40
Fundraising		
Garden Expo 2007 (06)	37,340.77	40,182.00
Garden Expo 2008 (07) deposits	5,807.00	3,375.00
Other Fundraising Income      40th	7,415.00	114.00
Tag Sale	0.00	2,181.05
Grants	5,250.00	7,500.00
Other Income	84.97	0.00
Interest/Dividend Income	<u>1,637.32</u>	<u>1,469.87</u>
<u>TOTAL INFLOWS</u>	95,607.84	97,128.08
<u>OUTFLOWS</u>		
MRWC Expenses		
Insurance	10,847.25	11,269.50
Office Storage	1,624.00	143.54
Office Expenses	2,520.78	1,250.83
Copying	4,331.48	4049.62
Postage	2,334.28	1,712.00
Annual Meeting              Publicity	335.00	65.00
Professional Development	100.00	0.00
Business fees/memberships/charity	1,366.64	472.00
River-Lab Program		
Curriculum Development		
Guide/Teacher/Student Materials	3,526.00	11,241.63
Consultants	3,300.00	60.00
Guide & Teacher Materials	4,587.39	178.89
Published Materials	0.00	521.68
Study-trip Expenses	5,703.32	7,168.13
Marketing Dev/Research	1,274.41	0.00
Payroll Expenses		
Payroll Taxes	2,258.35	3,076.31

Payroll Service Fee		1,662.99	1,552.84
Staff Salaries		29,244.53	37,474.92
Employment Advertising		110.00	0.00
Fundraising Expenses			
Garden Expo		9,052.53	8,994.63
Other Fundraising	40 <sup>th</sup> Party	<u>1,210.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b><u>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</u></b>		<b>85,388.95</b>	<b>89,231.52</b>
<b><u>NET CASH FLOW</u></b>		<b><u>10,218.89</u></b>	<b><u>7,896.56</u></b>
<b><u>Beginning Cash Balance</u></b>		<b><u>42,783.26</u></b>	<b><u>34,886.70</u></b>
<b><u>Ending Cash Balance</u></b>		<b><u>\$51,140.95</u></b>	<b><u>\$42,783.26</u></b>

Balances as of 12/31/07		<b>INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Restricted*</b>
<b>CASH:</b>		<b>Oppenheimer Equities</b>	<b>8,790.00</b>	
Checking Account	\$16,617.63	Vanguard Short-term Treasury Funds	24,070.18	19,371.92
Savings Account	29,463.07	Vanguard Inter-term Treasury Funds	<u>27,753.84</u>	<u>22,336.54</u>
Oppenheimer Money Market	<u>5,060.25</u>		\$60,614.02	\$41,708.46
<b><u>Total Cash</u></b>	<b><u>\$51,140.95</u></b>	<b><u>Total Investments</u></b>		<b><u>\$102,322.48</u></b>

\*The restricted investments are funds from HUD for the dam restoration.

Editors: Amy Armstrong, Mary Beth Colleran, Diane Rossiter, & Anne Weinrod



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