

The Watershed Reporter

From The Executive Director

Rebecca Fedewa

It's hard to believe that spring is here once again. The crocuses are blooming, the tulips are starting to show some real promise, and the river is starting to wake up. This time of year always brings about thoughts of change, along with promise for what the



Rebecca Fedewa

year may hold — will the fishing be as good, maybe better? — which trails will we ride or hike? — how many cool bugs will we find during our sampling session?

This season of renewal also brings

some fresh faces to the Flint River Watershed Coalition board of directors. I would like to welcome Irene Bashore, Duane Elling, and Jim Ananich. Our new members bring a wealth of knowledge and skill to the board and we are very excited to get them to work! You can read more about these three and all our board members on the FRWC website (www.FlintRiver.org), but allow me to give you a brief introduction here.

- Irene is active volunteer with GREEN and other FRWC programs, and comes to us from General Motors where she works as an environmental engineer.
- Duane is a communications officer with the C. S. Mott Foundation, and initially got involved in the FRWC through his participation in our Benthic Monitoring program.
- Jim is the current president of the Flint City Council,

and has been a long time supporter of the FRWC and its programs. We also feature Jim in our "10 Questions with..." column on page 3 this month.

The strength of our organization lies with our members and with our board of directors, and I couldn't be more pleased that Irene, Duane, and Jim have agreed to join us in our efforts to protect, preserve, and improve the Flint River Watershed.

At the same time, we bid a fond farewell to two long serving board members who stepped down at the end of their terms, after contributing in so many ways to the growth and development of our organization.

- Sue Kubic joined our board in March 2002 as a representative from the Genesee County Drain Commissioner's office. Sue provided invaluable leadership on our annual river clean up, and we are happy to report that her involvement in that program will continue.

- Amanda Kurzman served on the FRWC board since June 2005. Amanda brought a unique and valuable insight to many board discussions, and helped spearhead the redevelopment of our website (www.FlintRiver.org). While Amanda won't be active with us in the future, we don't take it personally; her move to Poland makes that a little difficult!

Please join me in welcoming our newest members to the FRWC board, and say adieu to our exiting members. These individuals make an enormous commitment to the FRWC and I am so pleased to have the opportunity to work with them all.

A Blog by Any Other Name...

As one of the hottest trends ever to hit the internet, and one that's not likely to die out any time soon, I'm almost certain that you've probably heard at least one of your friends or relatives mention blogs or blogging. You may even be an avid blogger yourself. Millions of people around the globe have joined the blogging community as a way to talk about their interests, vent their frustrations, or share their joys with the virtual world. Even huge multi-national corporations have begun to incorporate these "virtual diaries" into their online marketing campaigns as an easy and effective way to increase branding and to get out information on new products and services. So, like many others, the FRWC has hopped on the band wagon and joined ranks.

Why blog when we already have a presence at MySpace and Facebook, as well as a newly redesigned website and e-newsletter? Well, the reasons are many. A blog not only provides us with yet another avenue to reach a wider audience, but also allows us to do things such as guest interviews and other items that we could not normally include in the e-newsletter due to space limitations. And it gives us an information hub that we can continually add to without crowding everyone's inbox.

With new content being added to it on a weekly basis, it's sure to provide a lively read. The main focus will, of course, remain events and happenings that directly affect the watershed, but other things of interest will also be on the virtual menu, such as tips on living green and more.

Article contributions, ideas and interview ideas are more than welcome, and we sincerely hope you'll stop by our latest cyber-acquisition at <http://frwc.livejournal.com> to show your support. We look forward to seeing you there!



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The Watershed Reporter is published quarterly by the Flint River Watershed Coalition. The Coalition is dedicated to promoting the importance of protecting our natural resources. It works closely with the public and with private agencies and citizens' groups in carrying out its mission.

FRWC Board of Directors

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FRWC Board meetings are held the third Friday of the month at Mott Community College in the Genesee Room of the the Prah Conference Center.

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design & layout by Jon Wood

Jean Gumper: The Nature of The Artist

Born in Hawaii, Jean Gumper moved to Michigan at an early age, where she grew into one of the finest woodcut artists in the U.S. As a young child, Jean was very curious and inventive, and by the time she entered college, her creative side was well developed. Jean attended the University of Michigan and later the University of Wisconsin. Interestingly enough, art was not her first choice in majors, moving from Asian Studies to pre-med before finally deciding that printmaking was her true calling.

While Jean left Flint in 1978, she still holds the area close to her heart. "It

has been wonderful to see the transformation of the Flint River since my childhood." Jean still comes back to visit family.

"When I visit, my mother and I take very opportunity to walk on the river walk in Flushing and I'm working on a

couple of new pieces about views I experienced there last fall." Jean's work is a process of pressing inked blocks of birch wood onto absorbent paper. She does this in steps, applying one layer of color at a time. The resulting works tend to be very emotional and eloquent, and the style with which she captures the

beauty of nature is stunning. Jean has stated that she likes to use the landscape as a way to communicate emotion and experience, and many of her works pay homage to Asian art. Her impressive style has won her much note, including a commendation by the Colorado Council on the Arts in 2000, where she was granted the Artist Fellowship Award. A collection of Jean's



Woodland Meditations

work titled "Woodland Meditations" also was featured this past fall in the Ford Graphics Gallery at the Flint Institute of Arts

Jean now lives in Colorado, where she resides with her husband and son and teaches at Colorado College.

Annual Community and River Clean Up

Along with April showers and May flowers, spring brings us a full winters worth of garbage and refuse no longer hidden under the snow. Each year, the FRWC helps coordinate a "River Clean Up" to spruce up our River and get us all ready for a season of activities in our watershed.

Over 250 volunteers in last year's event helped us pull an equivalent of 246 bags of garbage from the watershed in Lapeer and Genesee counties. This equaled about 1,700 cubic feet of trash and included TVs, tires, shopping carts, bikes, a freezer and other rusted metal items. Just think what we will do with your assistance and support!

Help us continue in our efforts to protect, preserve, and improve our watershed. We would like to incorporate more clean up sites into our annual event, both along the river and in our neighborhoods. Contact the FRWC if you would like to suggest a location for a new site, or if you are interested in joining us at any of our established sites. We'll provide the supplies, t-shirts (in Genesee County) and munchies. See you May 9th from 9:00am to 12noon!

Springtime Opportunities

Chairman's Update: Jack Minore



Jack Minore

The next few weeks are the busiest of the year for the FRWC — and they present the best opportunity for volunteers. It's a great time to get your hands wet and/or dirty and learn just what it is when we talk about our many programs. You can be involved in any number of ways, and you can read in some detail about most of the programs elsewhere in this newsletter. But just for your convenience, let me list some key programs here perfect for your volunteer help or just for you to take part in. Not yet scheduled, but we MAY have a great boat ride later in the year to celebrate our work on all of these projects and enjoy the sunset on Mott Lake.

•**Benthic Monitoring:** You can help us determine the health of a stream by finding and identifying the number and varieties of "creek critters" in it. Its great fun to wade a stream and net the 'critters' which are then identified in a lab. The training itself is fun — whether or not you can volunteer for the testing. Training is 3:30 on Apr. 13th — and test days are Apr. 25 and 30.

•**Clean-ups:** The great news is that we are finding less and less each year to clean up — and are covering more sites. The Flint River Trail clean-up is April 25th and the annual Community and River clean-up is May 9th. Volunteers will enjoy the work, the results, and the hot dogs!

•**Earth Day(s):** There are at least three Earth Day related celebrations this year — April 15th at UM-Flint (get those tax returns filed earlier!); April 18th at Mott Community College; and April 25th — the annual Wild Lapeer Day in downtown Lapeer. Each has an interesting program for your enjoyment and enlightenment.

•**River Walks:** Over the course of the summer, a number of educational and recreational 'gentle' walks will be scheduled on various paths along various points of the river and/or some of its tributaries. Currently, walks are set for April 22, May 27 and June 18th. Watch for more details as to time and location — in the newsletter and on our website.

Finally, if you just can't find the time to participate in these and the other programs of the Watershed Coalition — but want to support them — contributions and sponsorships are always welcome. Some of the dollars to support the programs come from grants, but those usually don't cover all of the costs, staff time, printing and equipment. We welcome contributions at any level — and sponsorships at the \$100 and up level. OR, sell a family member, neighbor or friend on the idea of joining us — and supporting the FRWC through their membership.

And take a moment this spring to 'take a hike' near the water — whether on one of 'our trails' or on other walkways in your County Parks. Both Lapeer and Genesee County have great places to walk — the linear pathway in Lapeer or For-Mar for just two examples. Finally: got an idea for an event that we haven't offered? Let our staff or me know — and we'll see what we can do to accommodate your interests.

10 questions with...



Jim Ananich

1) Why are you a member of/work for /volunteer for the FRWC?

I became aware of the organization about 4 years ago and was asked to volunteer sometime for a clean up and decided that the watershed was too important to not get involved with it's protection.

2) What FRWC programs do you participate in?

I have been active in the yearly clean up and have had speakers come into my class to speak to my students, but plan to participate more this year.

3) When did you first get involved in the FRWC?

About 4 years ago.

4) What's your favorite part of the watershed?

Not really sure.

5) What is the most interesting thing you have seen in the watershed (wildlife, garbage, someone doing something unexpected, etc.)

I was playing golf at the Mott Golf Course and a guy on an inner tube floated by.

6) What's your favorite river (any river) memory?

Tubing with friends on the Au Sable river.

7) What worries you most about the watershed?

The fact that so many people think that it is beyond repair.

8) What gives you the most hope?

The volunteers that care enough every year to help clean it up.

9) If you could change one thing to help improve the watershed, what would it be?

Hamilton Dam would be a natural dam that is attractive and allows for fish to pass.

10) Who is your river/watershed/environmental/conservation hero?

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

What if the FRWC had a penny for every time you searched the Internet?



Here's a new easy way to raise money for the Flint River Watershed Coalition. Just start using GoodSearch.com as your search engine and online shopping mall. Every time you search the Internet or make an online purchase at one of their partner merchants, GoodSearch makes a donation to the FRWC and it's powered by Yahoo! so you get great search results!

Ready to Ride!

(After the Trail Clean-up, that is)

I hope that by the time you read this, you will be thinking of spring hikes, bike rides, outdoors jogging and the like. As I write it, the weather has yet to inspire me! But the time to 'hit the trail' is upon us. As usual, the Friends of the Flint River Trail will start their regular Sunday rides on the first Sunday in May — May 3rd this year — at 2:00 PM. The rides continue every Sunday through October with the Flint Farmers' Market as the starting point. We will regularly ride about 13 miles total -- from the Market to either Stepping Stone Falls or Blue Bell Beach and back. But, for families with young children or for the folks just getting 'back on the bike' we will have shorter rides to accommodate your needs — from about 3 to 6 mile rides depending on the group. Starting? Same time, same place: Farmers' Market at 2:00 PM.

The trail looks pretty good now that the snow is gone, but the usual collection of leaves and occasional other crud from the winter will need to be picked up to make the trail more pleasant for riding. The annual Spring trail clean-up is set for Saturday, April 25th (it's always the last Saturday in April). Details: plan on meeting at 10:00 AM at the Viet-Nam Veterans Park on James P. Cole Blvd — on the river —and just south of Hamilton Avenue

In addition, there are occasional rides to other trails in mid-Michigan — on a schedule yet to be announced. It promises to be an exciting year — with two new trails less than an hour's drive from Flint — and lots of trail expansion / building / planning in the works for Genesee County and the immediate vicinity. Check the tires, get that tune-up, and get in some warm-up miles: see you on the trail!



The "Flint River Paddlers" is a group of paddle sport enthusiasts from the Flint Michigan area who share a common goal of paddling and conservation on the Flint River Watershed. We invite all ages and all paddle sport interests and abilities to join our group; canoeists and kayakers alike are welcome to join us, and both interests are present in our current membership. The group will paddle everything from kayaks, canoes and rafts on our "home river" (the Flint River) and more technical whitewater runs throughout Michigan and other parts of the country.

As a grassroots chapter of the Flint River Watershed Coalition (FRWC), The "Flint River Paddlers" helps promote river conservation, stewardship, and the recreational aspects and opportunities present in the Flint River Watershed. Currently there is no financial obligation related to becoming a member of the Paddlers. However, due to our association with the FRWC and our common goals, we do require a current annual membership with the FRWC to be an active member of the Flint River Paddlers.

Our first official business meeting of 2009 will most likely occur before this article reaches your mailboxes. We will discuss meeting locations, switching to a bi-weekly paddle, day and time of bi-weekly paddles (Sunday afternoon at 2:00 or a new day and time?), and the calendar for trip locations and dates for 2009. All of the events for the Flint River Paddlers are posted on our club's live interactive calendar on our web site at www.flintriverpaddlers.org. We also have our discussion forum, with threads related to all aspects of paddling not only on the Flint River, but also throughout the country. There also is a thread for selling used equipment, or for those of us who are looking for a piece of gear that a fellow paddler may be looking to sell.

As a part of our conservation efforts, the Paddlers will organize and lead a "Paddle Pick-Up" event in the spring and the fall of each year. The first "Paddle Pick-Up" will be May 9th in conjunction with the FRWC's Community and River Clean Up. We will be paddling a stretch of the river picking up any and all trash that we find both in the river and along its banks. If you would like to help with this event, or learn more about it, we will be having a pre-planning meeting in late April, time and location TBD.

We will be working on some fund raising events this year including a kayak package raffle, club logo shirt and hat sales, and more. We also recently received some, what I believe to be, excellent news from the YMCA Downtown Flint. After much work trying to find a pool to use for working on rescue, safety, rolling, and general paddling techniques during the winter and throughout the season, the staff at the Watershed Coalition has established the initial communications for us to be able to use the YMCA Aquatic Center for this purpose. More updates related to this development to follow shortly.

This year, the second year for the Flint River Paddlers, promises to be a very exciting one indeed. Through the generous sponsorship of the FRWC, not only will we be able to have fun paddling together and expanding the recreational user base on the Flint River Watershed, but we also will be able to work to improve the resources that we use for our sport.

I sincerely look forward to seeing each of you on the river sometime soon. So get out there and get your paddles wet.

Yours in paddling,

Eric M. Hall

Founder of the Flint River Paddlers

erichall@flintriverpaddlers.org

Now Available!

FRWC Hats

Show your love for the river!

Hats are only \$12.00 each and shipping is just \$3.00 no matter how many hats you buy!

Send check or money order to:

Flint River Watershed Coalition
432 N. Saginaw St. Ste 238
Flint MI 48502



Order Form

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City/State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ E-mail _____

I have enclosed a ___ check or ___ money order for:
NUMBER OF HATS _____ x \$12.00 Subtotal _____
Plus shipping \$3.00
Total _____

Get Set For Spring Benthic Monitoring

Its time to look for bugs. And worms. And snails. And maybe even some crayfish. For the 10th year, the FRWC is conducting benthic (under the water) macro (large) invertebrate (critters with no spines!) sampling on the creeks and streams of the Flint River Watershed. We have 33 sites in Genesee and Lapeer Counties, and we need additional monitors to get out and get wet to help us gather valuable data used by the FRWC, the county, and even the state. Monitoring dates are April 25 (Saturday) and April 30 (Thursday).

Contact Sue Lossing at the FRWC if you are interested in participating. No need for experience, we'll have a training session for new monitors, and will make sure your first trip to the creek is with an experienced volunteer.

To see our sites, past years' data, and other information on Benthic Monitoring, please visit our website at www.FlintRiver.org and click on programs. We have a fun interactive map that provides links to data, photos, and directions to all our monitoring sites.

Genesee GREEN, now with STEM!

Every spring, students throughout Genesee County participate in GREEN — Global Rivers Environmental Education Network. With support from the Genesee County Community Water Quality Consortium and General Motors, the FRWC has helped coordinate this amazing program that gets area students out into their local creek to conduct chemical and sometimes biological water quality monitoring. Each participating classroom then prepares a presentation of their results, develops some ideas of why their stream is scoring the way that it is, and presents their ideas to their peers at the annual Student Summit held at Mott Community College.

We are very proud of all our past and current GREEN participants. And this year, we are looking forward to expanding the program in two big ways.

First, with generous support of the Royal Bank of Canada, we have some additional funds to begin bringing GREEN to classes in Lapeer County. Second, with generous support from EarthForce and the GISD, up to 20 GREEN classrooms in Genesee County will begin incorporating a service learning project into their studies through a program titled STEM — Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. STEM classrooms will receive additional training and curriculum to help them in this new and exciting endeavor.

The Student Summit will be held May 15th, and the public is welcome to attend. Come hear what kids in your area have discovered about your stream, and what you can do to help protect, preserve, and improve your watershed.

Want to see photos from the FRWC? Check them out at
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/frwc/>



Flint River Watershed Coalition's
photostream

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A Big Thank You to New and Renewing Members!

A large, involved, and interested membership is critical to our ability to carry out our watershed programs. We could not fulfill our mission without our supporters. In addition, our sources of funding and grants look at our ability to maintain a viable membership base as one of their key measurements of our success.

We are looking forward to 2009 and continued growth in membership. If you know of anyone who may be interested in the activities of the FRWC, please pass this newsletter on to them along with the membership application, or call our office and let us know. We will take care of contacting them.

The following is a list of the individuals and groups who joined our organization, or renewed their membership since the last newsletter. We sincerely appreciate their support in our efforts. Welcome them when you see them on the river this summer!

New and renewing members of the Flint River Watershed Coalition

James and Susan Adams
Marilyn Alvey
Anna Paulina Foundation
Herman and Donna Caldwell
John Chahbazi
City of Flint
Thad Domick
Ryan Eashoo
Lisa Easterwood
Esther Fuchs
Cynthia Gardner
Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce
Earl Gravlin
Thomas Haley
Peggy Johnson
Jack and Ruth Kay

Byron Latter
Tobias Lerke
Victor Lukasavitz
Robert McAllister
Peter McCreedy and Beth Neuman
McLaren Regional Medical Center
Wally and Marge McLaughlin
John Moldovan
Jack Nettleton
Michael and Julianne Riha
Richard and Katherine Saunders
Diane Schaefer
Raynetta Speed
Harold and Debra Golden Steinman
The Whiting Foundation



Flint River Watershed Coalition Membership Application

I am pleased to become a member of the Flint River Watershed Coalition:

Name _____
Address _____
Organization _____
City, State, Zip _____
Telephone (h) _____ (w) _____
Email _____

Enclosed are membership dues for:

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$ 10	<input type="checkbox"/> River Patron	\$ 250
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> Watershed Protector	\$ 500
<input type="checkbox"/> Family/Group	\$ 40	<input type="checkbox"/> Watershed Guarantor	\$ 1000
<input type="checkbox"/> River Sponsor	\$ 100		

I have enclosed an additional gift of \$_____.

Some companies will match an employee contribution to an eligible charity or non-profit organization. Please check with your employer to obtain a matching gift form, if applicable.

Your support is sincerely appreciated. The Flint River Watershed Coalition is a not-for-profit organization with 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt status. Your contribution is tax deductible. Please make checks payable to:

Flint River Watershed Coalition or FRWC
432 N. Saginaw Street, Suite 238
Flint, MI 48502

Great Lakes Funding Integral Part of 2010 Budget

President Obama recently announced an unprecedented investment of \$475 Million in his Fiscal Year 2010 Budget to restore the Great Lakes - an effort that is key to creating jobs and growing our economy. Additionally, there



could be as much as \$1 billion in other Great Lakes restoration and economic recovery funding provided to the Great Lakes states through increased funding for the Clean Water and

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs. Thirty-five million people rely on the Great Lakes for their drinking water, and millions more benefit from the commerce and business that depends on the waters of the Great Lakes.

This investment is a major victory for the Great Lakes, and represents the largest, most serious commitment to Great Lakes restoration in history. The U.S. House Committee on the Budget recently passed its budget resolution that calls for a commitment to restore the Great Lakes. This action paves the way for the full House and Senate to pass a budget that advances Great Lakes restoration and economic recovery before the problems get worse and the solutions more costly.

The funding the President has called for

will create jobs, revive our economy, and restore the Great Lakes. According to the Brookings Institution, an investment of \$26 billion to restore the Great Lakes will lead to at least \$50 billion in economic benefit for the region. Funds also will begin implementation of a multi-year strategy for tackling problems such as untreated sewage and invasive species, and calls for action to: modernize sewage treatment, clean-up polluted harbors, restore wetlands, and prevent unwanted, new species from invading the lakes. Each of these steps is essential if we are to restore the lakes and revive our economy.

You can learn more and contact your Members of Congress by visiting www.healthylakes.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MONTH DATE/DAY

TIME

EVENT

APRIL

13	MONDAY	3:30-5:30pm	Benthic Monitoring Training, Lapeer
15	WEDNESDAY	10:00am - 2:00pm	UM-Flint Earth Day Celebration
17	FRIDAY	8:30am	FRWC Board Meeting Genesee Room, MCC
18	SATURDAY	9am-3pm	Annual Earth Day & Garden Celebration, MCC
21	TUESDAY	7:00pm	Lapeer Chapter Meeting
22	WEDNESDAY	Various time/locations	Schools take part in GREEN water quality test
25	SATURDAY	9am	FFRT Annual Clean Up, Vietnam Vet's Park
25	SATURDAY	10:00am-4:00pm	Wild Lapeer, annual fest downtown Lapeer
25	SATURDAY	10:00am-3:00pm	Benthic Monitoring Lab Hours UM-Flint
30	THURSDAY	12:00pm-3:00pm	Benthic Monitoring Lab Hours UM-Flint

MAY

9	SATURDAY	9:00am-12:00pm	FRWC & Community River Clean Up
9	SATURDAY	10:00am-2:00pm	Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day
15	FRIDAY	8:30am	FRWC Board Meeting (@ GORMAN bldg prior to GREEN Summit, MCC).
15	FRIDAY	8:30am-1:45pm	Genesee GREEN Summit at MCC
19	TUESDAY	7:00pm	FRWC Lapeer Chapter Meeting
27	WEDNESDAY	10:00am	Flushing River Trail Walk (start at Riverview park)

JUNE

6	SATURDAY	TENTATIVE	Creekfest, Ortonville, Michigan
16	TUESDAY	7:00PM	FRWC Lapeer Chapter meeting
18	THURSDAY	6:00pm-7:30pm	Barber Memorial Park Walk Montrose; also Kayaking instruction from the Flint River Paddlers
19	FRIDAY	8:30am	FRWC Board Meeting Genesee Room MCC

Annual Membership Meeting a Great Success!

The annual meeting of the Flint River Watershed Coalition was another successful event. Held on



Ken DeBeaussiaert

Wednesday, January 28th, it capped off a year of activities, and helped us celebrate our successes by presenting several awards to our friends and supporters. John Moldovan of General Motors accepted the 'Dr. Gary Pace Volunteer of the Year Award' on behalf of the GM GREEN team. GM has been

a financial backer of our Genesee GREEN program for several years. Besides a generous grant, GM also provides many hours of volunteer work through their team of individuals who help us out with the program through teaching, mentoring, analyzing river samples, and overall providing guidance to our students. The third annual 'Joe Leonardi Leadership Award' went to Carl Haas for the work he did in the Lapeer area on obstruction removal. His efforts that he headed up continue to make a huge difference in the eastern portion of the watershed. Finally, two service awards were presented to FRWC Board members in recognition for the work that they have done in organizing important programs. Both Dennis Zicha and Sue Kubic will be departing the FRWC Board in 2009, but left behind a solid foundation

for continuing our monitoring program and our annual cleanups. We sincerely appreciate their many years of service to the Board. The keynote speaker at the annual meeting was Ken DeBeaussiaert, the Director of the Office of the Great Lakes. He spoke about how "the economy and the long-term well-being of our citizens are dependent on the health of the waters that feed the lakes, and the near-shore areas that buffer the lakes." The full text of his presentation is available on the FRWC website at www.flintriver.org. The annual meeting next year will be held in the third week of January, 2010. Please plan to put this on your calendar as soon as we publish the date. The program, the awards, the food, and the fellowship are a very rewarding way to celebrate the beauty of the Flint River Watershed.

The Flint River Watershed Coalition Thanks all of its Members, Friends and Supporters!



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