

President's Update March 2025

Although camps are closed and the town road gate is locked, Mount Riga, Inc. is still busy.

The Board of Directors and community members were pleased with Thomas Brazee's job performance last summer/fall. I am happy to announce that Thomas Brazee has signed a one year contract (Jan-Dec 2025). His email is security@mountriga.org and his cell number is (860) 318-1677. Roxanne Lee continues as our office manager and can be reached at office@mountriga.org or (860) 435-0771. After a brief change to the schedule, Roxanne will once again be in the office on Monday and Thursday mornings. Bridget Schrenkel will continue to work remotely as our bookkeeper and available at accounting@mountriga.org.

After an extensive review of vendors and services by the Lake Management Committee, the officers and Board have hired Applied Watershed Sciences (AWS) for the 2025 season, replacing Northeast Aquatic Research (NEAR) as MRI's lake management consulting firm. Hillary Kenyon is the principal limnologist at AWS. She previously worked with George Knoecklein and has experience working on the Riga lakes. Maggie Moore and Helen Antoshak will continue to manage the community scientist testing efforts. The 2024 NEAR lake report will be available on the website on the Lake Management Committee page.

The Forest Stewardship Committee continues its work on a Strategic Forestry Plan and has sent a survey to shareholders. If you have not yet responded, please do so. Also, both Riga Lake and South Pond dams will have CT DEEP-mandated safety inspections this year.

The Board voted to re-open the Ostrander Guest Beach for the Summer 2025 season. Andrea Combes worked diligently to find a way to open the beach without compromising our commitment to protecting the lake against invasives. The beach will be open to Salisbury town residents from June 14-Sept. 1, 2025 at the following days/times:

Wednesday & Fridays 3:00-6:30 pm

Saturdays & Sundays 12:00-6:30 pm

A beach monitor (who is NOT a lifeguard) will be present whenever the beach is open to the public. The gate will be kept locked at all other times. I would encourage community members to use the Ostrander Beach if the dam/Castinook beach area is crowded.

The MRI campsites will remain closed to the public. Campsite #7 will be available, on a limited basis, to camp owners. Please email Roxanne if you wish to reserve the campsite.

MRI remains committed to allowing access to our land for the purposes of scientific research and are always open to requests. This year we have fielded requests from the Hotchkiss school, Hudsonia, US Department of the Interior and Green Berkshire. While we welcome certain groups this might be a good time to mention that someone was seen spraying plants on our property last summer and we haven't been able to ascertain who they were or what they were doing. Should you encounter anyone, please get a name and who they work for/with and notify me, Andrea Combes or Thomas Brazee.

At our February Board meeting the Board approved the budget for 2025. The budget continues MRI's fiscal tradition of spending responsibly within our means to furnish the community and organization with amenities, services and equipment that it needs. Income will be moderately higher due to a combination of rent increases for Mount Riga properties and our commercial investment properties. In January 2025, MRI increased Mount Riga rents by approximately 9%, and as a result, rents will remain stable for three years (2025-2027), unless otherwise adjusted for real estate taxes.

It is important to note that inflation has increased 13.1% over the past 2.75 years and this increase of 9% does not fully cover the increase in inflation. MRI's expenses continue to rise due to decisions regarding security, maintenance, repair, engineering, lake testing and legal

expenditures. MRI strives to prudently manage overall operational expenses, but the lagged effects of inflation and the changing mix of services influence the decision to increase rent to support MRI's overall operational expenses. As a reminder, MRI considers objectives, such as, 1) providing a fair rate of return on MRI's real estate and 2) supporting MRI's overall operational expenses in the decision-making process.

Three director terms expire at the AGM to be held on October 5, 2025. Those seats are currently held by David Kluchman, Will Storey and Anne Williams.

The next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be held on May 25, 2025.

Happy Spring,
Ana