Norm Fred
*The River Guard*

Norm Fred launched Boardman River Clean Sweep in 2004 when he and a few others did a small project of pulling trash from the river. The following year he had 80 people lending a hand in the Annual Boardman River Clean Sweep. Now they routinely clean not only the Boardman, but the Au Sable and Manistee rivers, too.

"A lot of people helped get it started," said the 80-year-old former Coast Guard dentist who sprinkles his history of the group with a dose of humor. Last year the group expanded its efforts, cleaning up dump sites along the rivers and in wooded areas. The river-loving volunteers completed 55 cleanups last year.

Originally from Georgia, Fred "fell in love with the Great Lakes" during his Coast Guard years. He moved to Traverse City in 1972 and loves to spend time on area rivers.

Following those early years, the organization grew in popularity and there are now Clean Sweep efforts on several other Michigan rivers. "That's something I'm most proud of," said Fred. "For the folks in the group, it's not work. They love to be on the river." —AP