



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 27, Number 12, December 2014

Message From The President

Passage of Time! As the year 2014 draws to a close, the Riverlovers had a fantastic walk on the nearby Oscanawana Island Park. You missed a great opportunity to see some spectacular views of the Hudson and the Furnace Brook woodland stream valley, as well as some unique local history. We walked among the ruins of the McAndrews Estate, abandoned in 1948 (when I was a year old). To see what happened in my lifetime is sobering. What is left of the various buildings are the foundations and stonewalls. No wood frames are to be found. We found the race track for horses and walked the entire loop, while marveling at the support structures surrounding the track. Sandra Flank was our botanist, identifying the various trees and ferns thriving in the reclaimed wilderness, and Bill Flank was our guide to the best trails for us to follow.

For the November Potluck we screened the award-winning documentary, "The Antarctica Challenge—A Global Warning." The ice sheets in Antarctica hold 70% of the world's freshwater, and it's melting into the sea, causing the sea water to have reduced salinity. This water evaporates faster than salt water, bringing more snowfall and rainfall on the glaciers, causing further melting. This phenomenon was one of the items brought up in the film. In closing, it was noted that the Montreal treaty to reduce CFC's has been signed by almost every nation, and the Ozone hole is just starting to shrink.

Now if we could only get together on Global Warming, I read a few excerpts from Mark Lynas's book "Nuclear 2.0: Why a Green Future Needs Nuclear Power" He is also the author of a landmark book "Six Degrees: Our Future on a Hotter Planet." Here's a quote: "But today the anti-nuclear movement is a shadow of its former self. As I hope I have made clear in this book, the advent of global warming has changed the environmental landscape utterly. The Sierra Club, whose website barely mentions nuclear power, has mounted a fantastically successful 'Beyond Coal' campaign in which 150 proposed coal-fired plants will never be built. This book is a call for all those who want to see a low-carbon future to join forces and advocate a huge, Apollo-Program-scale investment in wind, solar, and nuclear power."

For the December 19th Potluck at 6:30pm at the Croton Point Nature Center, we will be screening a PBS Nova special "Solar Energy—Saved by the Sun." From individuals installing solar panels on their roofs to industrial-scale pro-

jects on the Mohave desert featuring massive arrays of mirrors, solar power is gaining ground in the U.S. For this December Potluck we will be selling solar kits and educational toys for the holiday season. These items were very popular at our outreach table at the Clearwater festival.

For the January 16th Potluck we will be screening "Revenge of the Electric Car." This award-winning film is an answer to the film "Who Killed the Electric Car" and brings us up to date.

For the February 20th Potluck we will be screening another car documentary, a PBS Nova special, "Car of the Future—Engineering for the Environment." See what's in store for us on the highways.

For the March 20th Potluck we will screen Robert Stone's "Earthdays" in anticipation of the Earth Day celebrations in April. And for the April 17th Potluck we will screen a DVD of Robert Stone's "Pandora's Promise."

Don't forget that the date for the ever-popular Teatown EagleFest is February 7th, 2015. We will need volunteers for serving soups, and volunteers to help promote Riverlovers at the outreach table. So, wishing everyone a Merry Holiday season, come to our meetings and activities. Together we will educate ourselves, protect the Hudson River, and help save the environment.

2014-15 Walkabout Coffeehouse Schedule

by Robin Fox

Thank you all for helping to make the Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse's 26th season last year a smashing success. We hope we'll see you back again with us this month as another great season of acoustic music continues with the legendary Josh White Jr. The Coffeehouse's 2014-15 schedule is included below:

December 13: Josh White, Jr.

January 10: Tom Chapin

February 14: The Boxcar Lilies

March 14: Joe Jencks/Natalia Zukerman

April 11: Joe Crookston/Mustard's Retreat

May 9: Kim & Reggie Harris

Tickets for individual concerts, as well as half-season and whole-season advance sale options, are on sale at www.BrownPaperTickets.com. To keep up to date, check out www.walkaboutclearwater.org, or better yet, use the url to sign up and join the e-mail list. Bring your friends!

Coal, Nuclear Energy & Climate Change

With the publication of each new report on extreme weather patterns, melting glaciers and rising ocean levels and temperatures, it becomes harder to deny the conclusion reached by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that “Warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented over decades to millennia.”

The report also addresses the so-called greenhouse effect: “The atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide have increased to levels unprecedented in at least the last 800,000 years. Carbon dioxide concentrations have increased by 40% since pre-industrial times, primarily from fossil fuel emissions and secondarily from net land use change emissions.”

The coal industry and the utilities that burn coal to generate electricity are fighting to protect their investments and profits. The International Energy Association claims that phasing out coal completely is not a practical solution, and they note that coal is estimated to account for about 40% of global electricity generation. The World Coal Association claims that coal provides for 30% of the world’s primary energy needs.

In fact, China gets 79% of its electricity by burning coal, Australia gets 78%, and India gets 68%. In 2013, the U.S. relied on coal for 39% of its electric power. And despite the efforts of the industry to find ways to clean up their act, the claim of “clean coal” is an oxymoron.

So what about the nuclear option? As of this past August, 31 countries around the world operated 437 nuclear power plant units with a net capacity of 375 gigawatts. Another 70 plants with a total capacity of 68 gigawatts are under construction, although there have been a number of shut-downs in the U.S., Germany, Japan and elsewhere for economic, safety and policy change reasons.

The World Nuclear Association claims that nuclear power accounts for roughly 11% of global electricity generation, with the U.S. generating about 20% via nuclear facilities. The Nuclear Energy Institute estimates that nuclear energy is the largest source of emission-free electricity in the U.S., at 63.3%. They claim that hydro power represents only 21.2%, and solar, wind and geothermal power represent 15.4% when all factors are considered.

The New York Times recently compared power generated from nuclear and fossil fuels with that generated from renewables for the largest of the world’s economies. Here’s what they reported: Brazil used over 80% renewables, Canada 60%, Germany 30%, China 20%, Russia and India 16%, the nuclear giant France 15%, Japan and the U.S. 13%.

Clearly, some developed nations are substantially ahead of us, and as the world’s largest economy, we desperately need to shorten the transition period into renewables before the looming climate disaster becomes totally irreversible.

Pay your dues now—support our river! \$25 Individual & \$35 Family

It cost \$9.30 a year to send you the *Riverlovers Currents*. Please consider adding at least that much to your annual dues. Support your Newsletter and the river, and get your friends to join you.

Water Don’ts, Do’s & Other Facts—I

Moirra Croghan

We are the problem. Industries and sewage treatment plants are no longer the main cause of water pollution. It’s you, it’s all of us. It results from the aggregate effect of people doing numerous little things on our land. Each act generates contamination that seeps or runs off into streams, rivers and lakes. Alone, these actions seem negligible, but together they seriously degrade our environment by what is referred to as non-point source pollution.

While they are essential in the food we eat, nutrients are not a good thing in water. They cause water pollution and seriously threaten most of the nation’s waterways, and they come from fertilizer, pesticides, animal waste, automotive leakage, household chemical use, and eroded soil.

Soil is not mere dirt. It is an essential, living resource that must be kept in place in order to perform its vital ecological function of purifying water. If soil is allowed to erode, it carries harmful nutrients into the water and suffocates fish, rivers and lakes. Soil is alive because it is teeming with useful bacteria and other organisms that help break down pollutants. As water seeps down into the soil and is cleaned up, the bacteria also purify the air we breathe.

As rain falls on hardened places like bare soil, pavement and rooftops, it picks up speed and power, digging into the ground, creating little channels that get deeper over time, picking up litter, cigarette butts, fertilizers, pesticides, pet waste and automotive fluids. Other contaminants like septic system waste seep through the ground into our waterbodies and gradually build up.

We can ask why so much vegetation is growing underwater instead of on land, clogging our streams, lakes and rivers. Why are beaches often closed to swimming? Blame it on the rain hitting the ground and picking up, and washing away, tons of pollutants every rainstorm. Soil is as valuable to us as water is, but only when left in place and taken care of. Soil covers the earth like your skin covers your body, protecting you and all your organs. If the earth’s cover is cut into, left bare, hit by the rain and eroded, allowed to wash or blow away, the earth is left barren and injured.

Worse yet, our water becomes contaminated. Soil particles are the major source of water pollution today across America. Each grain of soil absorbs fertilizers and toxic chemicals, and then when it rains, those particles are suddenly flushed into bodies of water, carrying the contaminated residues from all of the activities that take place on the land. Tiny amounts from each of millions of activities, by millions of people and animals, quickly end up in our rivers and lakes. These are the water sources we use for drinking and recreation, and we are rapidly overwhelming them and necessitating expensive treatment so they are safe to use.

Do your share for the environment. Together we can make a difference.

Nothing is weaker than water
Yet nothing overcomes immovable objects
As water does. There is no substitute.
Thus weakness overcomes strength,
And gentleness overcomes rigidity.
No one denies it, and no one tries it.

—The Book of Tao



What's Happening When

Sundays, 10am-3pm, **Farmers' Market** at the Beacon Sloop Club, at the Long Dock Park in Beacon. Local cheeses, eggs, pasta, bread, lamb, mushroom spring rolls, fruits and vegetables.

Nov 27, Thu, **Celebrate Thanksgiving.**

Dec 13, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse featuring Josh White, Jr.** Check out the story on page 1, and come see a great show with a fabled performer. At Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Advance tickets via credit card (\$18) at www.BrownPaperTickets.com/producer/5602, or \$23 at the door. Open seating. Proceeds benefit Walkabout & Clearwater. Refreshments available. Free parking. Sing with the Walkabout Clearwater Chorus at its informal Teachabout starting at 6:45pm. Info: 914-946-1625 or www.WalkaboutClearwater.org.

Dec 19, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Holiday Potluck** at Croton Point Nature Center. Screening of PBS Nova special "Solar Energy—Saved by the Sun." More details on page 1. Info: www.Riverlovers.org.

Holiday Note: At the December Potlucks, we'll be selling our popular solar kits and educational toys for the holiday season. Take advantage of the opportunity!

December is a month full of holidays: Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, New Year's Eve. Pick one or more to celebrate! **And don't forget to celebrate being a Riverlover too!**

Fracking Causes Worker Deaths

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, as reported recently in Chemical and Engineering News, at least four workers have been found dead since 2010 at oil and natural gas well drilling sites that use hydraulic fracturing (fracking) methods. The agency, a division of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), will begin investigating the incidents, which occurred in the Williston Basin area of North Dakota and Montana.

Available information indicates that the workers' deaths appear to be linked to exposure to hydrocarbons contained in the "flowback." This term refers to fracking fluids that are pumped below ground level to fracture the rock formations, and then returned to the surface and collected in tanks or ponds.

The "flowback" carries volatile hydrocarbons from these underground formations that are separated from the fracking fluids, and workers are exposed to them in confined spaces. Many of these hydrocarbons are acutely toxic at high concentrations, especially where fresh air is limited. The federal agency, recognizing the criticality of the issue, has made preliminary recommendations to limit worker exposure and improve safety conditions in fracking operations while the investigations continue.

Not only does this add to the lengthy list of fracking risks, which include contaminating huge amounts of water resources, release of toxic substances into the environment, seismic disturbances, infrastructure damage, and well leakage of powerful greenhouse gases, but it illustrates the disregard of the oil and gas industry for even the most basic safeguards to protect its own workers. How untrustworthy can you get?

Here's how to join Riverlovers...
(the local Clearwater Sloop Club in the Northern Westchester-Putnam County area)

Application for Riverlovers Membership

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip _____ Telephone _____
Renewal ___ New ___ Additional Contribution \$ _____
Please send check (\$25 individual, \$35 family) for 2015 to:
Riverlovers, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.
I want to have *Riverlovers Currents* delivered electronically.

Send to this e-mail _____

Yes! I Also Want To Join Clearwater

Please sign me up in the following membership category:
 Individual \$40 Mariner \$500
 Family \$55 Sailing-Master \$1000
 Contributor \$100 Benefactor \$5000
 Sponsor \$200 Student \$10
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Please include check payable to Clearwater, or charge by credit card
 Visa MC Discover Amex
Account No. _____
Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

Mail To: Clearwater, Inc.
724 Wolcott Avenue
Beacon, NY 12508

Your Clearwater membership gets you the *Navigator* and other benefits, along with being part of Riverlovers' "parent" organization representing individuals and Sloop Clubs up and down the Hudson Valley "working for the River."

Riverlovers - Who We Are

Riverlovers, Inc. is a chartered Sloop Club of the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc., an environmental non-profit membership organization whose most visible symbol is its member-owned and operated 106-ft. sloop "Clearwater." As a local affiliate, Riverlovers' purposes are:

- Maintaining an active Sloop Club in the Northern Westchester-Putnam County area;
- Meeting the needs and interests of individuals through a variety of interest groups, including monthly Potluck dinner meetings with varied programs, environmental education and awareness, boats and sailing, concerts and festivals;
- Organizing trips and recreational activities, seminars and workshops, learn-to-sail programs and Clearwater visits;
- Research, education and action to protect our rivers and our environment;
- Working for access and effective land use along the Hudson River and its tributaries;
- Boating projects on the Hudson River, to reach out to the surrounding community for educational and recreational purposes.

We invite you to join us. Contact our interest group coordinators, or write to Riverlovers, Inc., P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Together we can do a lot!



Interest Group Coordinators

Interest Group	Coordinator	Phone
Envir. Education	Bill Flank	238-8240
Membership	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112
Newsletter	Bill Flank	238-8240
Newsletter Distribution	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Outreach		
Photographer/Archivist	Beverly Dyckman	739-5057
Potluck	Warren Lindholm	739-9028
Publicity		

Web Page: www.riverlovers.org

Riverlovers Officers

President:	Warren Lindholm	739-9028
Vice Pres. (programs):	Robin Fox	271-6088
Secretary:	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Treasurer:	Daria Gregg	944-8396
President-Emeriti	Eric Marshall	827-3696
	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112

Newsletter Submissions

Please send news articles and other items of interest to Riverlovers Currents, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Include your name, address, and phone number. Names can be omitted on request.

Back issues of *Riverlovers Currents* are available at our web site, www.riverlovers.org

Newsletter Committee: Editor, Bill Flank; Associate Editor, Mel Fitting

December Newsletter Contributors: Moira Croghan, Bill Flank, Robin Fox, Warren Lindholm

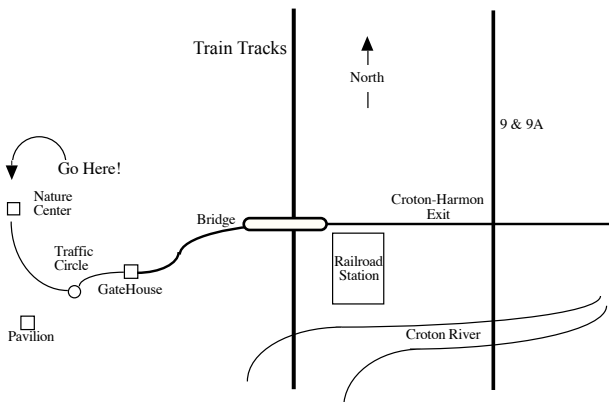
Riverlovers Holiday Potluck and screening of "Solar Energy—Saved by the Sun"



Riverlovers, Inc.

P.O. Box 285

Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520



Friday, December 19, 2014
6:30pm
Croton Point Nature Center