



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 29, Number 12, December 2016

Message from the President

Late November, early December. Warm days, cold days, short days, long nights. Will we have a warm winter like last year? Is this a new normal? "Welcome to Global Warming!" Our climate is changing, and the signs are everywhere.

Our new President-elect wants to scrap NASA's climate research in a so-called crackdown on "politicized science." Dark days ahead! We the people should let him know what is right and what is wrong!

Riverlovers met for a hike at the Sunny Ridge Preserve on October 30th. I led everyone to the unmarked trail that led to the hidden pond. It's a beautiful pond untouched by man. Bill Flank noticed some stone structures nearby. We explored and found a storage building, stone walls, outhouse, and a see-through fireplace. We were impressed with the information on the identity of the various trees and plants, and which plants are native and which are invasive, that Daria Gregg, Sandy and Bill Flank provided.

For the well-attended November Potluck, we screened part 2 of the 3-part series from BBC Earth, "9 Months that Made You." This part featured segments on our unique faces, cleft lip, girl becomes boy and also the opposite, 90% right-handed and 10% left handed, Albino, our immune system, and extra testosterone.

The December 16th Potluck is at the Croton Point Nature Center at 6:30pm. We will screen part 3 of "9 Months That Made You." which delves into skeleton and bone formation, fetal blood with increased oxygen capacity, infant memory, color blindness, increased night vision, and pre-natal stress.

For the winter months, let's go visit the museums in our area. Saturday, January 14th will be free admission to all residents of Westchester and Putnam counties to the Dia: Beacon Museum. The Museum features modern sculptures and interactive exhibits. We will figure out car-pooling and times in the January *Currents*.

For the January 20th Potluck we will screen either "American Eagle" or "A Sidewalk Astronomer" featuring John Dobson, inventor of an inexpensive telescope mount that brought star-gazing to millions. Of course, we'll discuss volunteering to serve lunch to the volunteers for the February 11, 2017 EagleFest. It's our annual "bread and soup" event.

Come to our meetings, come to our activities. All are welcome. Together we can be educated and educate others to protect the Hudson River and save the Earth and its climate for ourselves and future generations.

Fossil Fuel Interests & Climate

The Paris climate agreement will officially enter force on November 4th. Later that month, the United Nations will hold another round of climate talks.

The world now has a goal of limiting global temperature change to 1.5 degrees Celsius. It's already hard enough to deal with obstinate politicians and nations—it's harder still when polluters are able to influence negotiations.

Tell the U.N. representatives to kick out fossil fuel interests from climate negotiations.

In years past, corporations have hosted industry events, joined as observers through industry associations, and even directly lobbied delegates. This is an unacceptable amount of influence for an industry that is in direct opposition to the mission of the talks.

Years ago, the World Health Organization recognized a similar conflict of interest and banned tobacco companies from participating in related policy discussions.

Some in the fossil fuel industry will do anything it takes to protect their profits. We need to call on governments to defend climate policy from big polluters before the start of the next round of climate talks!

Teatown's EagleFest February 11, 2017

Please reserve this date for the EagleFest. Riverlovers and Ferry Sloops will once again join forces to provide lunch for over 100 EagleFest volunteers. We could use donations of soup and volunteers to help serve. More details on this annual event to follow in the January *Currents*. Call Gunnar to volunteer.

Jay Ungar, Molly Mason at Coffeehouse

The December 10th concert at the Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse, *upstairs* in the upper Sanctuary at Memorial United Methodist Church in White Plains, will feature the renowned Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, continuing the Coffeehouse's 29th season with their award-winning music and storytelling. Jay's fiddling is not to be missed!

Tickets are \$18.00 in advance (until 7:30 a.m. on the day of the concert) and \$23.00 at the door. Students with ID are \$15.00 and children ages 6 to 12 are \$10.00.

Doors open at 6:30pm and the concert begins at 7:30. The trademark informal audience songfest with the Walkabout Clearwater Chorus begins at 6:45. Come sing with us!

Oil & Gas Industry Invading New York

Catskill Mountainkeeper is calling New York's attention to an unfolding crisis as the fossil fuel industry tries to turn New York into an oil and gas state. The numerous oil and gas infrastructure projects that are in various stages of proposal and construction must be stopped. They represent a grave danger to our environment and our health.

Most New Yorkers are unaware that the oil and gas industry is trying to increase our dependence on fossil fuels by investing billions of dollars to construct massive infrastructure projects to transport, store, and use oil and gas in New York. Our state is in danger of becoming a superhighway for the transport of these fuels from North Dakota, other states and Canada, much of it on its way to refineries in New Jersey and to lucrative overseas markets. New Yorkers will pay a high price for having fossil fuels traveling through our backyards, in threats to our environment and adverse effects on our health from toxic pollution, poisonous spills, and catastrophic explosions.

Building infrastructure for dirty fossil fuels is just the wrong strategy for New York and our country. We must stop new fossil fuel development to prevent the worst impacts of climate change, and we must invest in renewable energy.

Infrastructure to carry oil and gas includes a growing web of new and expanded pipelines, compressor stations, a surge of more "bomb trains" carrying highly flammable fracked oil from the Bakken shale and tar sands deposits, and a proliferation of barges and tankers on the Hudson with millions of gallons of these dangerous fossil fuels.

Each individual oil and gas infrastructure project represents a separate and serious threat, but when all of the projects are aggregated together, oil and gas infrastructure expansion is a full-blown crisis. The oil and gas industry is focused on expanding the capability of Albany to become a major oil transportation hub from the oil fields to refineries in New Jersey. At peak transport, the Port of Albany has received hundreds of thousands of gallons of Bakken shale oil a day, but that number would greatly increase if the oil companies implement their expansion plans.

The dangers of oil and gas infrastructure are just as serious as the dangers of fracking. However, infrastructure is more complicated to stop. Much of this proposed build-out is regulated by Federal agencies, but there are portions of the approval process that the State controls. The overall goal is to stop the flow of fossil fuel into and out of our state, and fight for regulations to ensure that whatever fossil fuel does pass through our state, does so in the safest possible way.

Three projects are proposed that will greatly expand the Albany area's capability to receive, process and transfer fracked oil and tar sands crude petroleum. "Bomb trains" are now going in and out of Albany with toxic emissions that must be controlled and regulated, not increased. The fire and explosion hazards are huge and must be minimized. A boiler facility is proposed to liquefy tar sands for easier transport to New Jersey refineries. Also, Pilgrim Pipelines wants to build two bidirectional pipelines to run along the New York Thruway right-of-way and beyond to transfer crude oil to New Jersey for refining, with products being shipped back for transit to New England or overseas

It is abundantly clear that we should no longer be investing in infrastructure for old dirty energy, but instead, we should be putting our resources into building the infrastructure that will make the shift to sustainable, renewable energy happen as quickly as possible.

PCB Clean-Up Review Transparency

At an October workshop to review the PCB cleanup of the Hudson River, Clearwater, Riverkeeper, Scenic Hudson and others said that the Environmental Protection Agency's five-year review process must be handled in a transparent and inclusive manner and that the EPA should not give General Electric a free pass when the river and its fish remain contaminated by polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

A year ago, GE announced it had completed mandated dredging to remove PCBs it dumped into the Upper Hudson River. However, peer-reviewed studies showed the river has not been restored to health and that many Superfund-sized hotspots of contamination remain to be addressed.

Since 2011 environmentalists have called for additional dredging. At that time, an evaluation of the cleanup by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration concluded that additional dredging was needed to reduce ongoing injury to natural resources and accelerate the river's recovery. The conclusion was based on the fact that dramatically more PCBs were still in the river, both within and beyond the areas originally targeted for the cleanup. These unremediated PCBs will likely prolong the time for reduction of PCB levels in the river's fish, and inhibit the river's recovery.

After the first five-year review of the project came out in 2012, environmental groups questioned the ability of the cleanup to meet the stated goals, including reducing target PCB levels in fish, and the failure of New York State's consumption advisories to prevent people from eating contaminated fish. According to John Parker, Riverkeeper's Director of Legal Programs, "Since then, proof that GE's cleanup was not sufficient has been brought to light, so the EPA must address this evidence going forward."

A new five-year review is scheduled to be completed next Spring, in which the EPA must determine whether the cleanup will be protective of human health and the environment. Now, however, the calls by environmental groups demanding a more thorough cleanup are being joined by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation, the New York Attorney General's Office, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand and Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney.

EPA must share with the public the data it is considering in the five-year review, including the tested PCB levels in fish. They should provide a detailed schedule for deliberations, indicate when there will be opportunities for public comment on the data, and outline how the findings by federal and natural resource trustees, environmental groups and the public will be incorporated. EPA cannot find that the clean-up to date has been successful without taking a serious look at a full and complete set of data in this review, and undertaking a fully objective quantitative analysis.

It is clear, based upon the data to date, that the Hudson River, the people, the fish, and the Hudson Valley economy remain at risk. There is much more to be done to deal with the sad legacy of GE's PCB contamination in the Hudson.



What's Happening When

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

Dec 7, Wed, 7:30pm, **Ferry Sloops Winter Concert presents Rick Nestler** with sea shanties & sailing stories, free at Shattemuc Yacht Club, Ossining. Potluck & meeting at 6:30.

Dec 10, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse featuring Jay Ungar & Molly Mason.** *Upstairs* in the Sanctuary at Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Tickets \$18.00 in advance until 7:30am the day of the concert, \$23.00 at the door. Students with ID are \$15.00 and children ages 6 to 12 are \$10.00. Call Brown Paper Tickets at (800) 838-3006 for advance tickets via credit card. Online tickets at www.WalkaboutClearwater.org. Open seating. Proceeds benefit Walkabout & Clearwater. Refreshments available. Free parking. Sing with the Walkabout Clearwater Chorus at its Teachabout at 6:45pm.

Dec 10, Sat, 7pm, **Beacon Sloop Club Holiday Sing**, at the BSG Clubhouse, Beacon waterfront.

Dec 16, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Monthly Potluck** at Croton Point Nature Center. We will screen the third of 3 parts of a PBS special "9 Months That Made You." Info: www.riverlovers.org.

Dec 25-26, Sun-Mon, Celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah & Kwanzaa in peace, looking forward to a New Year.

Feb 11, Sat, Riverlovers & Ferry Sloops provide breads & soups to serve EagleFest volunteers. Save the date. More info next month.

Climate Change Claims Mammal Victim

We've reached a sad milestone: Climate change has claimed its first mammal species. Scientists have been warning us that a large percentage of species will face extinction thanks to manmade global warming, and the future is sadly here.

Climate change's first mammal victim was an adorable rodent known as the Bramble Cay melomys. Sometimes called a mosaic-tailed rat, the melomys was named after Bramble Cay, an Australian island close to Papua New Guinea, that was the only known home for the species.

The primary reason for the melomys demise is no secret: the rising level of the ocean, a devastating consequence of climate change. Bramble Cay island has flooded on multiple occasions when the sea was particularly high, thereby washing away the rodents' homes and drowning many of them in the process.

Over the past 20 years, high tide has put more and more of the island underwater. Coastal vegetation the melomys called home has decreased 97% in the last decade alone.

When we discuss consequences of rising sea levels, we focus on human inhabitants who will need to be displaced from their tiny island nations. We pay less attention to the

animal species that are vulnerable from the rapidly shifting sea levels, some of which can be found in no other parts of the world. We are changing the world, but not for the better!

Pay your dues now

\$25 Individual & \$35 Family

It cost \$9.30 a year to send you the *Riverlovers Currents*. Consider adding at least that much to your annual dues.

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 2017 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:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| <input type="radio"/> Individual | \$40 | <input type="radio"/> Mariner | \$500 |
| <input type="radio"/> Family | \$55 | <input type="radio"/> Sailing-Master | \$1000 |
| <input type="radio"/> Contributor | \$100 | <input type="radio"/> Benefactor | \$5000 |
| <input type="radio"/> Sponsor | \$200 | <input type="radio"/> Student | \$10 |

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please include check payable to Clearwater, or charge by credit card

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Visa | <input type="radio"/> MC | <input type="radio"/> Discover | <input type="radio"/> 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, River-lovers' 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	Warren Lindholm	739-9028
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):		
Secretary:	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Treasurer:	Daria Gregg	944-8396
President-Emeritus	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112

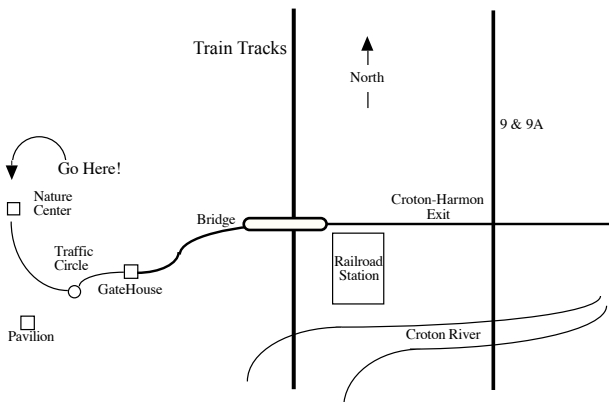
Newsletter Submissions

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: Gunnar Andersen, Warren Lindholm

Riverlovers Monthly Potluck and Part 3 of *9 Months That Made You*



Riverlovers, Inc.
P.O. Box 285
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

Friday, December 16, 2016
6:30pm
Croton Point Nature Center