



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 28, Number 1, January 2015

Message From The President

Happy New Year 2015! We have many activities planned for the coming year. But first, we closed 2014 with a Nova special, "Solar Energy—Saved by the Sun." Nova presents "A provocative mix of scientists, economists, and ordinary citizens who are all pushing the envelope of solar power's untapped potential." We need more Solar Power!

We are excited about Teatown's annual Hudson River EagleFest. This year it will be held on Saturday, February 7th (inclement weather date Sunday February 8th). Riverlovers will once more be serving home-made and donated soups and baked breads at the Croton Point Nature Center for volunteers and vendors from 11 am to 1:30 pm.

We need volunteers to bring soups, breads and butter, and to help serve. We also need volunteers for the Outreach Table from 9am to 4pm. Riverlovers will get plenty of exposure since large crowds are expected at the big tent. Call Gunnar at 432-3112 if you can help with soups at the Nature Center or call Warren at 739-9028 if you can help out at the Outreach Table. (Both phones are in the 914 area code). If you are, or even if you are not, volunteering at the EagleFest, please come and see the various activities.

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." Village Voice quotes: "...to find the story of the global resurgence of electric cars, following the race to be the first and the best ... It's not just the next generation of green cars that's on the line, it's the future of the automobile itself."

For the February 20th Potluck we will be screening another car documentary, a PBS Nova special "Car of the Future—Engineering for the Environment." Some of our members who have hybrid cars will share their experiences with them, so you can get some inside facts.

For the March 20th Potluck we will screen Robert Stone's "Earthdays" in anticipation of the Earth Day celebrations in April.

For the April 17th Potluck we will screen a DVD of Robert Stone's "Pandora's Promise."

2015 will be an exciting year with many outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, sailing, canoeing and kayaking. We will have more documentaries and speakers on environmental topics. Come to our meetings, come to our activities. Together we can educate ourselves, and others, protect the Hudson River, and maybe even 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 with us this month as another great season of acoustic music continues. Our 2014-15 schedule:

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!

Riverlovers Needed To Help At EagleFest

by Gunnar Andersen

Teatown's annual Hudson River EagleFest will be held on Saturday, February 7th, 2015 (snow date Sunday, February 8th) at Croton Point Park.

Riverlovers will again be serving soup and bread to EagleFest volunteers at Croton Point Nature Center from 11am to 1:30pm. We need volunteers to bring soup and bread and help serve. We also need volunteers for the Riverlovers table at the EagleFest main tent from 9am to 4pm.

If you can donate some soup or bread or can help out at the Nature Center, please call Gunnar at 914-432-3112. If you can help staff the outreach table, please call Warren at 914-739-9028. We need all available Riverlovers to help at our big event of the year. Call, and mark your calendar!

The Sound Bite vs The Bigger Picture

The Associated Press recently reported that the huge Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating Facility in the Mojave Desert, the biggest solar thermal plant in the world, producing 392 megawatts, enough electricity to power 140,000 homes, kills a bird every two minutes, or 100,000 birds a year. While a more sober and careful assessment shows the true figure to be only a fraction of a percent of that, these kinds of sound-bite-style claims are all too common nowadays and are increasingly being generated by supporters of nuclear and fossil fuel as well as deniers of climate change.

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Book Review

The Collapse Of Western Civilization: A View From The Future (104 pages), by Naomi Oreskes, historian of science at Harvard University, and Erik Conway. Recent No. 1 environmental best-seller on Amazon.

This may be science fiction, but this is where the present path on climate change is taking us. A lot of what is described in the story—floods, droughts, mass migrations, the end of humanity in Africa and Australia—results from the current inaction to numerous very clear warnings.

Dr. Oreskes used to think the scientific community was divided about climate change, but in 2004 when she researched over 1,000 articles on the subject published in peer-reviewed science journals for a different project, she found a totally different picture to be true. She asked how many of these papers disagreed with the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change statement that "Most of the observed warming over the past 50 years is likely to have been due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentrations."

To her surprise, not one of them disagreed. She published her finding in the AAAS journal *Science*, and stirred up a storm. She got hate mail and demands that she be fired, but she also got quoted in Al Gore's "Inconvenient Truth." Because she used the word "consensus," the people who claim that climate change is a myth exploded. Their strategy is based on spreading the idea that the science is still unsettled. They say that if you aren't absolutely certain that there is a problem, you can't justify doing anything about it. One of the ads put out by the coal industry asked "How much are you willing to pay to solve a problem that may not exist?"

Then she talked to some colleagues working in other environmental areas, and found that these serial critics—they went after anyone who published a paper identifying an environmental problem—were a small group of physicists who had become well-known for their work in rocketry and weapons development during the Cold War. None of them were climatologists, but they had become key vocal figures in the climate change denial campaign.

They also criticized findings on acid rain, ozone depletion, and other environmental issues, using a strategy developed during the tobacco wars which insisted that the science was unsettled. They attacked any researchers whose findings they didn't like, and they demanded equal media coverage for what they claimed was a "balanced view."

It turns out that the battle wasn't really about science, but about economics. This small cabal of physicists were strong believers in an unrestricted free market, which they deemed essential for their brand of democracy. What they attacked were serious problems that the unregulated free market didn't respond to. The free market can't prevent acid rain or climate change, and the only way we know about these things is through science. To prevent harm, we need regulation, and that is anathema to those people.

But Dr. Oreskes notes that recent polls show that 70 to 80 percent of the American public accepts that climate change is real, and the majority is willing to spend money to take action. Just a short time ago, 400,000 people made their voices heard in New York, and they speak louder than those few dozen hoaxers. The question is whether our political, economic and social institutions hear our voices while there is still time to avoid calamity for the planet.

Water Don'ts, Do's & Other Facts—II

by Moira Croghan

We can fix the water pollution problem if we let nature do its job. To protect our soil and water resources, we need to think SLOW. We need to create opportunities for greater water infiltration during rainstorms. We need to impede the water and not let it run off too quickly. It needs to be diverted to areas where plants are growing, and where soil can filter and purify it.

A single square inch of soil can contain a million microorganisms that will remove pollutants. Letting the natural environment do its job is cheaper than having to clean up the water later so that it is safe to drink and use. Plants help remove even more of the pollutants and contaminants, and the more plants the better.

It's important to dispose of oil, other automotive fluids and household chemicals properly. Keep them out of our streams and ponds by using local toxic material drop-off sites, such as those regularly scheduled by Westchester County. Maintaining vehicles to reduce leaks, and never pouring hazardous materials on the ground or down a sink or storm drain is an important step in the right direction.

Keep your septic system functioning properly. Like any other system, a septic tank needs to be maintained to operate properly, but even then, it doesn't do much to prevent nutrient pollution. Avoid putting strong chemicals down the drain, because they will kill the beneficial bacteria that live in the tank and drainfield. Septic tanks should be pumped out periodically, and failing drainfields must be replaced. Unfortunately, these systems are only designed to break down sewage waste, and they don't prevent nutrient pollution from wastewater entering our groundwater resources.

Shorelines of water bodies are important zones that can protect the health of water and aquatic organisms. A plant buffer helps regulate water temperature, protect the bank from erosion, and filter pollutants from stormwater. Rather than mowing along the edge of a stream bank, bushes, trees and native plants should be added to protect it.

Pick up your pet's waste. It's easy to reduce pollution from pet waste—just pick up after your pet. Their waste contributes to dangerous bacteria and nutrient pollution, and can spread disease. Many stores carry biodegradable bags for picking up pet waste, and there are even convenient disposal sites along some popular walking trails.

When you use pesticides and lawn or garden fertilizers, read the label carefully. Fertilizers are composed of the nutrients nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, and the content of each is listed as a string of three numbers on the bag. Grass and garden plants need varying levels of each chemical to grow properly. Test your soil to see what it needs. Over-application and sloppy use lead to fertilizer washing out from lawns, sidewalks and streets into storm drains and ultimately into waterways.

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

**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 that much to your annual dues.



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.

Jan 1, Thu, **Celebrate, and make those New Year resolutions.** And don't forget to celebrate being a Riverlover too!

Jan 10, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse featuring Tom Chapin.** Come see a great show with a fabled performer. At Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Advance tickets at www.BrownPaperTickets.com/producer/5602 via credit card (\$18), or \$23 at door. Sing with the Walkabout Clearwater Chorus at its informal Teachabout starting at 6:45pm. Info: 914-946-1625 or www.WalkaboutClearwater.org.

Jan 16, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Potluck** at Croton Point Nature Center. Screening of "Revenge of the Electric Car." More details on page 1. Info: www.Riverlovers.org.

Jan 17, Sat, 4-8pm, **Clearwater's Open Boat Event at the Kingston Homeport & Education Center**, 50 Rondout Landing, Kingston (next to Hudson River Maritime Museum). Join in for a Hudson Issues workshop, a Potluck supper (bring your bowl and utensils), a song swap and Clearwater artifact sale. See www.clearwater.org for details.

Feb 7, Sat, **Teatown's annual Hudson River EagleFest.** (Inclement weather date Sunday February 8th.) Riverlovers will once more be serving soups and baked breads at the Croton Point Nature Center for volunteers and vendors from 11 am to 1:30 pm. See details elsewhere in the *Currents*.

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More even-handed studies, comparing data from renewables and from fossil fuels and nuclear, show that bird deaths at wind farms per gigawatt hour of electricity generated are less than half that at nuclear plants, and less than a thirtieth of that at fossil-fuel plants. Over the course of a year, fossil-fuel plants in the U.S. kill about 24 million birds overall, compared to 46,000 killed by wind farms.

The sound bite is easier to digest than stepping back and looking at the big picture. If you didn't pay attention to a phenomenon beforehand, you won't have noticed changes—even big ones. How would you know that the oceans are 30 percent more acidic than they used to be, or that sea level will rise several feet in this century and then keep rising.

We remember the pictures of the 2010 BP blowout in the Gulf of Mexico, but that's old news now. Do we realize that more than 600,000 birds have died as a result of that mega-spill, and that it is still killing sea turtles and dolphins and contaminating the seafood in areas where humans fish?

While we think that one very visible death is a tragedy, we tend to treat a million deaths as just a statistic. And we need to recognize that wind and solar are not only problems, but are solutions to the deadliness of the fossil fuel and nuclear industries, which arises from routine environmental devastation, as with tar sands, or catastrophic accidents, as

with the BP spill, or the sabotage of the entire planet by climate change.

Climate change is everything, a slowly unfolding change and a calamity larger than any other. It's the whole planet for the foreseeable future, the entire atmosphere, all the oceans, the poles, the weather, crop failure and famine, spreading tropical diseases, desertification of huge swaths on the globe, and the gloomy fate of the great majority of species on earth.

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:

<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

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

January Newsletter Contributors: Gunnar Andersen, Moira Croghan, Warren Lindholm

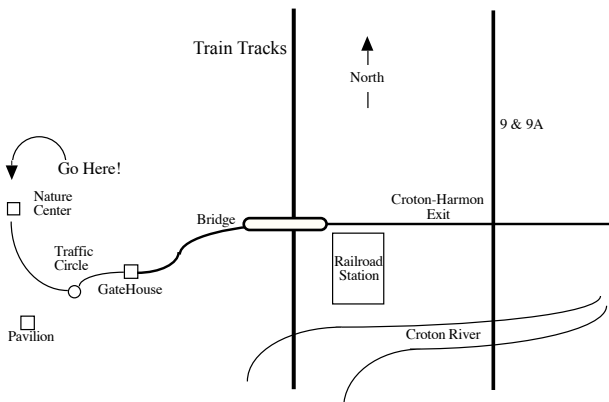
Riverlovers Monthly Potluck and screening of *Revenge of the Electric Car*



Riverlovers, Inc.

P.O. Box 285

Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520



Friday, January 16, 2015
6:30pm
Croton Point Nature Center