



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 21, Number 6-7, June-July 2008

Riverlovers Doings

Our ShadFest on May 18th had shad and got off to a good start for a few hours before being hit with an unwelcome downpour. We had a record number of vendors, great entertainment, and we managed to do reasonably well despite the shortened time. We were joined by the Beacon Sloop Club with their solar trailer and their famous chili, by Ferry Sloops, Clearwater and the Hudson River Foundation as well. Chris Letts did his planked shad baking and shad sampling, and was joined by Tom Lake and Barry Keegan with their exhibits of river lore.

Many thanks to the County Parks Department for their invaluable help and logistical support, and to Scott Williamson of the Nature Center for his exhibits and activities. And of course many more thanks to our great crew of faithful volunteers who cooked, served, staffed and otherwise did all that was needed to make things run for this biggest Riverlovers event of the year.

Join us for our pre-Revival Potluck on Friday, June 20th at the Croton Point Nature Center and find out what's in store, and what the plans are. Don't forget to save June 21 and 22 for Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival, and sign up with Gunnar to help staff the Riverlovers table in the Sloop Club tent. We need a crew of volunteers to take turns for this outreach effort!

Keep in mind that one of the rewards, besides being part of Revival, and helping to promote interest in Riverlovers and environmental protection, is being eligible for the Riverlovers annual sail aboard the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, which is set for Sunday, August 17th from 6 to 9pm, sailing out of Peekskill. It goes without saying that reservation preference is given to our volunteers at ShadFest and Revival. Reap the rewards, and be part of it all!

Our seining Potluck evening with the Nature Center's Scott Williamson at Mothers Lap in Croton Point is set for Friday, July 18th and will feature a new 50-ft. net with some special features. Join us for an interesting and exciting educational experience. Check the Riverlovers website for more information.

We're also planning later on in the year to arrange tours of the county incinerator plant at Charles Point and the Millwood water treatment plant. These things require planning and a fair amount of participation by members, so stay tuned for more details and check the Riverlovers website at www.riverlovers.org.

Volunteer Now

Sail On The Clearwater In August

Riverlovers could certainly use volunteers for our table in the Sloop Club tent at the Clearwater Revival on June 21 and 22. It's an exciting place to be, and it helps promote Riverlovers to a big audience—but that is not the only reward! The Riverlovers will sail on the Clearwater on August 17 and our ShadFest and Revival volunteers are always welcome.

So, volunteer for Revival on June 21st and 22nd—call Gunnar at 432-3112 or Robin at 271-6088, then mark this date on your calendar: On Sunday, August 17 at 6pm Riverlovers will be taking a beautiful sunset sail on the Clearwater from 6pm until 9 pm. We will be departing from Peekskill. You couldn't ask for a better reward!

Household Recycling Opportunity

Mark June 6 and 7 on your calendar for the next Westchester County Recycling Days. It's an opportunity to safely dispose of a number of problematic household items in a responsible way. The hours are 1 to 3pm on Friday and 9am to 3pm on Saturday, and the location is Westchester Community College in Valhalla. Use the main entrance off Route 100.

Here's what you can get rid of: antifreeze, brake fluid, gasoline, kerosene, butane, charcoal lighter fluid, turpentine, polishes, wood preservatives, pesticides, insecticides, herbicides, photographic and pool chemicals. You can also dispose of fluorescent light bulbs, rechargeable and button cell batteries, cell phones, tires and drugs.

Bring in 20 or more plastic grocery bags and get a free reusable shopping bag while supplies last. And to clean out some of your e-waste, pack up your computer towers and monitors, TV's, printers, faxes, phones and small appliances like toasters, blenders, radios, speakers and lamps.

If you trade in your old mercury thermometer, you can get a digital oral thermometer free while supplies last. For questions, call the Household Recycling Info Line at 914-813-5425 or visit www.westchestergov.com/recycling.

Pay your dues now—support our river!
\$15 Individual & \$20 Family

EPA And Political Interference

According to a survey just released by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) and published in Chemical and Engineering News, the official newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society, hundreds of EPA scientists have personally experienced political interference in their work during the past five years.

The Scientific Integrity Program at UCS reported that 60% of the 1586 EPA scientists responding to the survey said there had been political interference in their scientific work. This has ranged from censorship and suppression of federal science work to manipulation of scientific advice, and has been most pronounced in the parts of EPA that write regulations and in the research program that compiles risk assessments on chemicals.

The survey also found that 49% of the respondents knew of cases in which political appointees at other federal agencies inappropriately involved themselves in EPA scientific decisions.

UCS says the survey results show the need for reforms to protect EPA scientists and make the agency's decision-making processes more open to public scrutiny. The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee plans to hold hearings soon. The sad conclusion to be drawn from this is that politics and science mix about as well as oil and water.

Eco-Feedback In The Hudson Valley

It was the ecological conditions in the Hudson Valley that attracted people to its shores, but what we did ended up changing the ecology so that future uses were constrained by the environmental consequences of our actions. Let's look at how this played out over the centuries.

How did human activities transform the river and its landscape? Initially, things like beaver trapping, land grants for farming, lumbering and fish harvesting took advantage of the abundant natural resources found along the Hudson, and the river provided ease of transportation to distant markets. Over time, more forestland was cleared, and agriculture became paramount.

Soon urbanization spread throughout the valley, and water transport gave rise to canal building and increased commerce along the river. Unfortunately, the river was also seen as a solution for the problem of sewage removal. Commercial activities like ice harvesting, brick making, limestone quarrying, orchards and vineyards took advantage of local conditions, leaving their mark on the river. So did iron production, which played a key role in the Civil War, and was a major industry until the early 1900's.

Steam vessels plied the river and eventually displaced sailing vessels for transporting raw materials and goods. They in turn lost ground to the rail lines built along the river, which eventually gave way to truck traffic with its toll of polluted air. Barge shipments held their own, and substantial river and port activity revolves around them to this day.

Highways for transport were developed, and heavy industrial activity took advantage of the river in the twentieth century, leading to the use of the Hudson as an open sewer for companies like GE, General Motors, ConEd/Entergy and many others who dumped waste or thermally polluted the water for cooling purposes.

It was the Con Edison Storm King pumped storage proposal that ignited the environmental movement in the 1960's and led to the Clean Water Act and other legal and environmental milestones.

As a result of this new awareness, a number of regional citizen environmental groups like Clearwater, inspired by Pete Seeger, as well as Scenic Hudson and Riverkeeper, came into being and fostered environmental perceptions among the public. We've become aware of how species, habitats and natural communities have been affected by human activities, and we have begun to recognize how our uses of the river have been constrained by what we've done to it.

With awareness comes understanding and action, and the river is now seen as a valuable source of recreation, transportation, raw material and aesthetic beauty deserving of protection. We can't use it in the same ways that we once did, but we've given the Hudson some new life, and while we still have lots of room for improvement, we've come a long way from the depths to which our river had sunk.

As we change the way we use the river, it will respond and open up new or renewed uses that will let us escape the downward spiral that has been the fate of abused rivers in too many other places.

Saving Gas—And The Environment

There are lots of ways to save gas (checked your tires lately?), but the easiest and most effective way is to slow down (just a little bit). When you add up the savings, it's like getting paid to relax.

So before you get behind the wheel for the upcoming holiday season, show us what you're made of. Pledge to "Drive 55" (or whatever the speed limit is on the roads you're traveling) for Memorial Day Weekend, July 4th and beyond. After all, even jet planes are slowing down to save money!

The Union of Concerned Scientists tells us that dropping from 70 to 60 mph improves fuel efficiency by an average of 17.2 percent. Dropping from 75 to 55 improves fuel efficiency by 30.6 percent!

Put another way, in a family sedan, every 10 mph you drive over 60 is like paying 54 cents per gallon more for gas you bought at \$3.25 a gallon. (The calculation is so out of date, now that we've passed the \$4 mark!) That extra cost is even higher for big SUVs and other less-efficient vehicles.

And the time you save by going easy on the accelerator may not add up to as much as you thought. On a 300-mile trip, driving 65 instead of 70 mph would cost you only 20 minutes in time—but save you a bit of money and let you spew less carbon dioxide. Do it for your planet.



Shad chef Chris Letts and ShadFest coordinator Robin Fox on stage at Croton Point Park.



Photos by George Thompson



What's Happening When

Sundays at the Beacon Sloop Club, **Farmers' Market** 10am-4pm. Local cheeses, eggs, pasta, bread, lamb & mushroom spring rolls.

June 15, Sun, **Beacon Sloop Club's Annual Strawberry Festival**. Beacon's biggest event of the year. Music, vendors, E-tent and of course, strawberries every which way. Info or volunteering, call Phyllis Newham at 845-831-6962.

June 20, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Annual Pre-Revival Potluck** at Croton Point Nature Center. Final details, scheduling and news for **Revival**. Check our website for the latest info, at www.riverlovers.org.

June 21-22, Sat-Sun, 10am to dusk, **Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival at Croton Point Park**. Be a volunteer for Riverlovers, be a volunteer for Clearwater, be a festival-goer, but be there! Info: (800) 67-SLOOP or www.ClearwaterFestival.org.

July 18, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Special Seining Potluck with Scott Williamson**. Be part of a seining session with the new 50-ft ultra-seine & see what lives in Mother's Lap at Croton Point. Check our website or call Gunnar for more details.

Sun, Aug 17, 6-9pm, **Riverlovers Annual Clearwater Sail**. Sunset cruise out of Peekskill, thanking all our volunteers. Check with Gunnar or Robin for more details.

A Tip for Handling Telemarketers

Three little words that work: "Hold on, please..." (then put down the phone and walk away).

Hazardous Train Transport Assessed

Our nation's freight railroads will now be required to carry highly toxic chemicals and other hazardous materials on the "safest and most secure routes" available under a new federal regulation aimed at reducing the risks of derailments and terrorist attacks.

Beginning June 1, the Department of Transportation (DOT) rule will require railroad companies to assess whether it would be safer to send trains hauling chlorine, anhydrous ammonia or other poisonous materials to alternative routes around the nation's largest cities.

"This strong measure better ensures that rail shipments of hazardous substances will reach their final destinations safely and without incident," according to DOT Secretary Mary E. Peters.

The chemical industry relies heavily on railroads to deliver raw materials and to ship finished products. In a dramatic turnaround, it has now welcomed the government's approach. The American Chemistry Council, an industry group, had objected to congressional proposals that would give states and cities the authority to reroute trains away from major population centers. They claimed that conflicting local ordinances would disrupt rail operations.

Critics, however, complain that the federal rule could allow railroads to route dangerous cargo however they see fit, and could preempt attempts by major cities to ban or restrict the transport of hazardous materials within their boundaries. Their position is that it is better to be safe than sorry. That's a much better approach, given the industry's past performance, when the consequences of an accident are so overwhelming.

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 (\$15 individual, \$20 family) for 2008 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.
112 Little Market Street
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

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!

Riverlovers Officers

President:	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112
Vice Pres. (programs):	Robin Fox	271-6088
Co-Secretary:	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Co-Secretary:	Leesa Thompson	528-0098
Treasurer:	Daria Gregg	944-8396
President-Emeritus	Eric Marshall	827-3696

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

June-July Newsletter Contributors: Gunnar Andersen, Bill Flank



Interest Group Coordinators

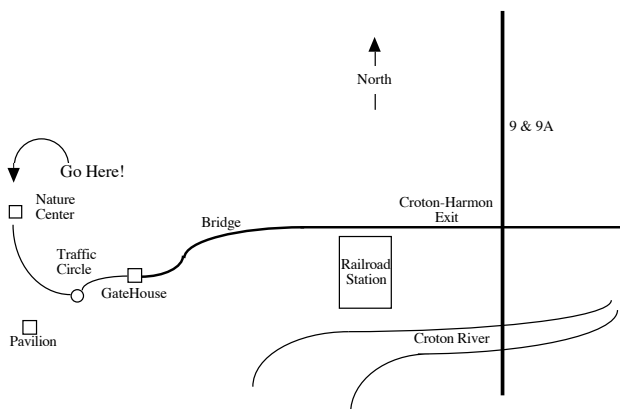
Interest Group	Coordinator	Phone
Envir. Education	Bill Flank	238-8240
Membership	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112
Newsletter	Bill Flank	238-8240
Newsletter Distribution	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Outreach		
Photographer/Archivist	Beverly Dyckman	739-5057
Potluck	Robin Fox	271-6088
Publicity		
ShadFest	Robin Fox	271-6088

Web Page: www.riverlovers.org

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.

Riverlovers Pre-Revival Potluck Croton Point Nature Center Friday, June 20, 2008, 6:30pm



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

Riverlovers Seining Potluck with Scott Williamson Mother's Lap at Croton Point Friday, July 18, 2008, 6:30pm