



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 30, Number 6-7, June-July 2017

Message from the President

Last month I wrote that all the trees are sprouting new leaves. The CO₂ levels in the atmosphere are the highest in May and lowest in November. The trees here and all the Northern hemisphere have fully sprouted, and are taking in carbon-dioxide and giving off oxygen, during the summer. The Earth breathes! Unfortunately, every year the CO₂ levels keep rising. The latest figures from the Mauna Loa test station are: May 2016, 407.39 ppm and now May 2017, 410.36 ppm, a 2.97 ppm rise in one year. This is appalling!!

Riverlovers participated in two Earth Day celebrations last month. On April 29th at Vassallo Park in Croton, we had an outdoor table and again we had good weather. I was very interested in an exhibitor who had a bicycle on a stationary frame with a mechanism to drive a blender. So the rider could blend his own frozen drink. How cool is that?

The following weekend Carl Grimm, Bob Reardon, Gunnar Andersen, Daria Gregg, myself and others from the Unitarian Universalist Church participated in the Riverkeeper RiverSweep. Our group collected 250 lbs. of trash and 150 lbs. of recycling.

The next weekend, on May 13th, Westchester County Department of Environmental Facilities held its Annual Earth Day Event scheduled from 9am to 3pm at the Kensico Dam Plaza. We hosted an exhibit in a nice tent on a cool rainy day. The organizers decided to close at 12:30pm, but we did manage to showcase Riverlovers and gathered 8 e-mails from interested people here and at Vassallo Park.

For the May Potluck meeting we screened a PBS Nova special, "Soul of the Elephant." Briefly, the filmmakers canoed thru shallow rivers and watched bull elephants charge their canoe. Very brave. At the end of the film the narrator said, "In the time you spent watching this film, five elephants were killed for their ivory." Very sobering. At the conclusion of the film the attendees applauded. The meeting was well attended, with 3 additional people from Yonkers, who saw a notice from a local newspaper.

The next day Riverlovers visited the Pepsico Sculpture Gardens in Purchase. We marveled at the giant modern art sculptures. We also enjoyed the exotic trees and shrubs.

The Friends of the Great Swamp will sponsor its annual canoe trip from Green Chimneys, on Saturday, June 10. There are a few openings for the 1:45pm paddle. This is a wonderful canoe trip, and the water levels are high with all this rain. Let me know if you are interested.

The next Potluck meeting will be Friday, June 16th at 6:30pm. This basically is for the volunteers to sign up for the Clearwater Festival on Saturday and Sunday, June 17 and 18. For those not volunteering, we might explore the oyster middens behind the Nature Center, which Native Americans used for centuries. Make sure you attend the Clearwater Festival! This is a wonderful experience, with 39 music performers, and with many activities for young and old.

I brought up the New York State Public Canoe Program at Iona Island at the last meeting. Everyone who is interested seems to like the Saturday, June 24 date at 10am to 12:30pm. This event is free. The paddle is tide-dependent, hence the time. Call me if you are planning to go, so I can reserve your spot.

I also contacted Rebecca Schultz from Constitution Marsh Audubon Center. She will send us dates for canoe paddles this summer. (See details elsewhere in this issue.)

A group of our members has a newer sailboat called the Blue Monk, named after the jazz standard written by Thelonious Monk. It was purchased in Kingston, and even though a trailer was available, our members decided to sail it to Croton. Wow! It was a 3-day trip running with the currents. We will have sails for Riverlovers members this summer. We will also rent kayaks to explore the Croton River. Please contact me at lindholm63@gmail.com or my cell (914-319-3379) or my listed land phone (see page 4), for the various water activities, and for directions.

Great news! We have a date for our annual Clearwater sail! We are going to sail out of Beacon on Sunday, August 27th from 5:30pm to 9pm. This is Riverlovers' favorite activity—a sunset sail on the Clearwater. Members' donation is \$25, non-members \$35, to help Clearwater. I am maintaining a list of who will go on the sail on the Clearwater. To reserve your spot on, mail a check to Warren Lindholm, 63 Cordwood Road, Cortlandt Manor, NY 10567. This will help alleviate the line when we are about to board.

Finally, I researched some data from NOAA's Earth System Research Lab. Ten years ago the CO₂ levels were 386.30 ppm. Now it is up to 410.36 ppm. This is a 24.06 ppm rise in 10 years, or 2.406 ppm per year. Now, CO₂ rose 2.97 ppm in just one year. Evidently the rate of CO₂ rise is increasing. No leveling off! I know this is not popular, but we need to increase nuclear energy world-wide, such as France and the Canadian Province of Ontario have done. We shouldn't celebrate the closing of Indian Point, which I

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Fracking: The Methane Problem

by Bill Flank

[This is the third in a series of articles on fracking.]

Methane's global warming footprint is now widely recognized. It is a much more potent climate change contributor than carbon dioxide—from 25 to 75 times as potent. Fossil fuel production and distribution is a significant source.

Methane may be released as the well is being drilled, since the casing has not yet been cemented in place. Sometimes blowouts happen at this stage, such as BP's infamous Deep Water Horizon disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, but fortunately that's not too common an occurrence.

After a well is completed, methane can be collected for use, or sometimes flared (as in "burned up"). Flaring is usually a temporary disposal technique to reduce the risk of explosion, and is less common than it used to be. Best practices today require collecting the production gas by piping it to a collection and processing facility. From there, the "natural gas" (which is 90% or more methane) enters the commercial market as a fuel for furnaces, water heaters, cooking, etc., in homes and businesses. Some is also used as an industrial building block in chemical synthesis.

A dirty secret about the American natural gas distribution system is that it is very leaky. On average, the leak rate is about 5.8%, which is quite substantial. These leaks are not only an economic loss, but also an explosion hazard. For example, some gas delivery pipes in New York City are over 130 years old, well past their useful life. These iron pipes are bolted together, but pipes and bolts rust and inevitably leak. Repair and replacement are quite expensive—in the billions of dollars for cities—and our infrastructure spending has not come close to keeping up.

A final sobering thought is that if we could reduce the leakage rate by at least half, methane would still have an environmental footprint as high as coal for the same amount of energy production. That doesn't say much for fracked gas as the solution for our energy and environmental woes.

Chemical Exposure's Human Cost

A recent study has estimated the health care spending and lost wages stemming from long-term, low-level exposures to synthetic chemicals. These endocrine-disrupting chemical exposures cost the U.S. \$340 billion in annual healthcare spending and lost wages, according to a recent study of epidemiological data in the peer-reviewed scientific journal, *Lancet Diabetes Endocrinology*.

Here are some of the data: Flame retardants known to lead to an intellectual disability outcome cause 43,000 cases and 11 million IQ points lost annually in the U.S., at an annual cost to our economy of \$266 billion. Organophosphate pesticides like RoundUp cause 7,500 cases and 1.8 million lost IQ points annually, at a cost of \$44.7 billion. Phthalates, widely used as plasticizers, lead to 10,700 attributable deaths a year, with an associated cost of \$8.8 billion. And multiple exposures to bisphenol A and other endocrine disruptors leading to childhood obesity, autism and ADHD cost us another \$5.1 billion.

These compounds, commonly found in consumer products and their packaging and associated with pharmaceutical and agricultural chemical use, can interfere with hormone function and contribute to the development of a variety of diseases and health problems.

The estimated costs equal roughly 2.3% of the U.S. gross domestic product. By comparison, earlier this year, the same group of authors estimated that the same cost for the European Union is \$217 billion, or about 1.3% of its GDP.

The study's authors, experts in endocrine disruptor research, attribute the difference in GDP share to differences in health and safety policies as well as chemical industry regulations. They argue that their findings indicate that the U.S. should adopt more stringent requirements for chemical testing, even going beyond those in the recently revised Toxic Substances Control Act. Profit does not come before the health and safety of people, and there can be no compromise on that principle. People in Europe apparently understand that better than we do.

The Myths We've Been Sold

"Even if climate change is real, it's so hard to tell who or what is responsible for it that it's impossible to do anything about it anyway."

In fact, we do know. The overwhelming majority of climate scientists recognize that CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions significantly affect our climate. Nearly two-thirds of the industrial carbon pollution that fuels climate change can be traced directly to just 90 global producers. These are the same folks that finance the disinformation campaigns aimed at blocking climate solutions for the only planet we have.

Since 1954, 12.5% of all industrial carbon pollution comes from just FIVE companies! To no ones' surprise, they are ExxonMobil, Shell, BP, Chevron and ConocoPhillips.

"To meet our enormous and growing energy needs, the U.S. has no choice but to build coal-fired power plants."

Actually, not only do we not need to build new ones, we should be shutting down hundreds of old, obsolete coal plants across the country. More than 350 specific coal-fired generators have been identified that no longer make any economic or business sense, when there are cheaper and cleaner alternatives ready to take their place. The same can be said for a growing number of nuclear plants, whose owners have been shutting them down all around us because they have become money-losers and financial liabilities.

"We need all the oil we can get our hands on, and there's no good reason not to be drilling for all that oil sitting right under us."

No, we really don't need all that oil. With recent breakthrough advances in clean energy and fuel efficiency, we are now in a position to break our ruinous addiction to oil. We can cut our projected oil use in half in just 20 years, and at the same time save money, protect our health, and lower global warming emissions. We can do all this with the science-based solutions we already have available today.

We need to stop buying the fossilized myths of the entrenched energy corporations, and buy into the future that much of the rest of the world already recognizes and is acting on. What are we waiting for?



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.

June 7, Wed, 7:30pm, **Ferry Sloops Summer Music Series: Julie Corbalis.** At Shattemuc Yacht Club, Westerly Road, Ossining. Potluck supper at 6:30.

June 10, Sat, **Friends of the Great Swamp annual canoe trip from Green Chimneys.** There are a few openings for the 1:45pm paddle. Call Warren for details.

June 16, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Monthly Potluck Supper** at Croton Point Nature Center. Sign up for Revival volunteer time slots, and explore nearby oyster middens. Info: www.riverlovers.org.

June 17-18, Sat-Sun, **Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival is back at Croton Point Park!** For tickets and info: www.ClearwaterFestival.org. Don't miss this year's amazing line-up.

June 24, Sat, 10:00am-12:30pm, **Explore Iona Marsh** with New York State Public Canoe Program. Call Warren to reserve a place.

July 6, Wed, 7:30pm, **Ferry Sloops Summer Music Series: Greg Connors Music.** At Shattemuc Yacht Club, Westerly Road, Ossining. Potluck supper at 6:30.

Aug 27, Sun, 5:30-9pm, **Riverlovers' Annual Clearwater Sunset Sail,** from Beacon waterfront. \$25 member donation, \$35 non-members. Help support Clearwater. Send your reservation checks to Warren—see details on page 1.

Constitution Marsh Canoe Schedule

The Audubon Society Constitution Marsh and Sanctuary guided canoe trip schedule for 2017 is as follows:

- Sunday, June 25 at 1:30 pm
- Sunday, July 2 at 5:30 pm
- Sunday, July 16 at 5:00pm
- Sunday, July 30 at 5:00 pm
- Sunday, Aug 6 at 10 am
- Sunday, Aug 13 at 4:00pm
- Sunday, Sept 10 at 2:30 pm

Trips last 2-3 hours. Reservations are required. Space is limited to 15 persons. As is true for all water events on the Hudson, timing of scheduling is dependent on the tides.

Costs for the 2017 paddling season are as follows: \$45 for adults; \$40 for seniors, students, and Audubon members; and \$30 per child ages 7-17.

For more information or to make a reservation, please e-mail CMACS@Audubon.org or call 845-265-2601, x15.

Pay your dues now—support our river!

\$25 Individual & \$35 Family

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

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calculate saves 75 million tons of CO₂ in one fuel cycle, but rethink our priorities. Thank you for considering this.

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.

*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 | \$50 | <input type="radio"/> Mariner | \$500 |
| <input type="radio"/> Family | \$65 | <input type="radio"/> Sailing-Master | \$1000 |
| <input type="radio"/> Contributor | \$100 | <input type="radio"/> Benefactor | \$5000 |
| <input type="radio"/> Sponsor | \$200 | <input type="radio"/> Other | \$25 |

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, 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

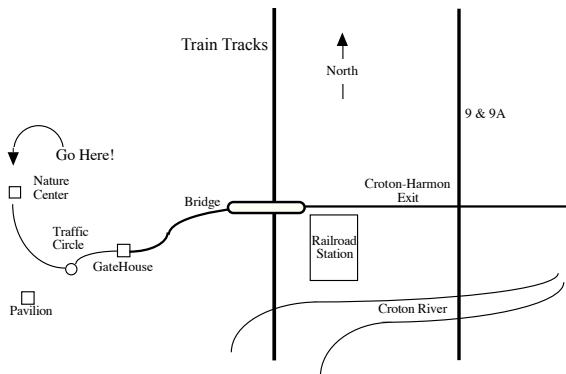
Please send news articles and other items of interest to Riverlovers Currents, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520. Include your name, address, and phone number. Names can be omitted on request.

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

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

June-July Newsletter Contributors: Bill Flank, Warren Lindholm

Riverlovers Monthly Potluck Sign up for Revival volunteer time slots



Riverlovers, Inc.

P.O. Box 285

Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520

**Friday, June 16, 2017
6:30pm
Croton Point Nature Center**