



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 22, Number 3, March 2009

Riverlovers Doings

by Gunnar Andersen

Here's what's in store for us in the months ahead. Make plans to join us and be an active part of the river community.

Friday, March 20: Riverlovers Potluck dinner/meeting includes an update on the status of Indian Point and the application for relicensing. With ShadFest coming up on May 17, we will, of course, devote part of every meeting to ShadFest planning.

Friday, April 17: Riverlovers Potluck dinner/meeting. Clearwater's Executive Director, Jeff Rumpf will give us an update on Clearwater's activities, like the Quadricentennial celebrations involving the river, Pete Seeger's 90th birthday, and Clearwater's new Beacon home.

Saturday, May 17: Riverlovers Nineteenth Annual SHADFEST!! Details concerning the availability of shad, performers and schedules will be posted on our website as plans come together. Volunteers are always welcome and are invited to our annual Clearwater sail, sometime in August. Last year it was a lovely sunset sail from Verplanck.

Saturday and Sunday, June 20-21: Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival. Riverlovers will again be a part of this great annual festival.

Friday, July 17: We will repeat our popular Potluck and river seining adventure with Scott Williamson from the Nature Center. This is a big hit with both adults and children. Check the website for details.



We'll get a more complete report later, but here's a fanciful scene from EagleFest, that Riverlovers were a part of.

Photo by Beverly Dyckman

says of them, "Bright Morning Star reunites to bring harmony and spirit to community in a time when it is most desperately needed." Come and lift your spirits!

Don't forget to join the crowd and enjoy the fun at the Walkabout Coffeehouse in March, when the famed Bright Morning Star group, reunited again, takes us on a musical and theatrical journey through the worlds of politics, drama, people, humor, satire and spirituality in one package. Holly Near

Recycling Nuclear Fuel

There's a theory that recycling spent nuclear fuel increases the risk of weapons proliferation. However, new technologies may be able to reduce the inventory of weapons-grade plutonium. A dozen nations have the technology to make bombs from spent fuel, and there is fear that such knowledge may fall into the wrong hands.

Scientists at our National Labs are currently developing ways to recover and reuse the valuable components of spent nuclear fuel without ever isolating the weapons-grade plutonium. What results is a mixed fuel that is unsuitable for weapons but can be used for fueling reactors.

Among the benefits are elimination of the environmentally damaging processing of new uranium fuel and the energy-intensive separation of the fissionable isotope. Existing processed uranium is recycled and mixed with the byproduct plutonium and other isotopes in spent fuel, allowing efficient use and re-use of the small amount (about 0.7%) of fissionable material contained in natural uranium.

This approach would allow us to safely manage the used nuclear fuel inventory, recapturing and reusing the valuable constituents of spent fuel and eliminating the rapid build-up of waste streams with no place to put them. Instead of continuing to produce and accumulate more plutonium, it can be re-used in mixed form without ever separating it and creating a potential weapons-grade stockpile. The fuel cycle is thus substantially extended, and this ultimately reduces the net inventory of dangerous plutonium in the world.

We certainly can't forever protect a continuously increasing inventory of spent nuclear fuel, and recycling in this manner can help to reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation. We can also lower the cost of nuclear fuel production and better manage our waste streams. This co-extraction route represents a major step forward in resolving the nuclear conundrum, and it can alter the nature of the debate about nuclear power.

Instead of putting waste into a geologic repository with the need to isolate it for 10,000 years or more, we can deal with a very much smaller volume of hazardous material requiring isolation for only two or three hundred years. It's conceivable that a sustainable nuclear cycle can be developed that would lower carbon emissions, and improve our security position and our balance of payments problem, while providing relatively clean electricity for the future. It's something to think about.

U.S. vs. European Regulations

A recent book titled “Exposed: The Toxic Chemistry of Everyday Products and What’s at Stake for American Power,” by Mark Schapiro, spells out the differences between the U.S. and Europe regarding chemical regulation. It’s not an anti-chemical rant, by any means.

It doesn’t make lots of scientifically unfounded claims about the toxicity of consumer products, it doesn’t take information out of context, and it doesn’t use scare tactics like claiming that a study revealing that trace amounts of bisphenol A leach out of polycarbonate plastics condemns all plastic materials.

The author is the editorial director of the Center for Investigative Reporting in San Francisco, and he addresses the complexity of risk-benefit analysis. He concludes that the U.S., which used to be a world leader in regulating chemical safety, has now fallen behind Europe and, surprisingly, even China, in protecting its citizens.

Europe emphasizes the precautionary principle, which maintains that a chemical should not be marketed unless it has been shown to be safe. American chemical producers are of the opinion that the precautionary principle is naïve. Determining risk based upon the inherent toxic properties of a chemical is unrealistic, they say. It’s the actual exposure that matters, according to them.

For example, phthalates, which are used as plasticizers for polyvinyl chloride, one of our most popular plastics, have been replaced in Europe with safer materials, while we continue to make toys that present a potential hazard to children. There are a number of other examples of chemicals commonly used in the U.S. but not allowed in European products, where competitive but safer materials are used instead.

This means that Americans are buying products that would not be legal in Europe or, in some instances, China. Canada is also emulating Europe, making it difficult for us to sell them our products. These countries allow less mercury, cadmium, lead, chromium, formaldehyde and other hazardous materials in their products than we do. Ironically, they sell us products that don’t meet their domestic standards but are acceptable here.

This book concludes that the United States is no longer where it imagines itself to be, at the center of a universe around which the rest of the world revolves. We are in the process of being passed by, and we are becoming uncompetitive with other nations precisely at the worst of times for this to occur. We need to stop this downward spiral if we want to maintain our position in the world.

Energy Use, By The Numbers

Where do we stand, as a state and as a nation, on this crucial question? Here are some sobering data compiled by the Wall Street Journal.

While we in the U.S. are profligate energy users, we are not the worst in the world, on a per capita basis. We’re actually 10th, behind such other high users as Qatar, Iceland, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Canada. But when it comes to total energy consumption, we’re right on top. Just behind us is China, using 73% as much as we do, with a population that’s

four and a third times as large as ours. Russia, with half our population, uses only 28% as much energy.

We are the leaders in nuclear power generation, even though half of our electricity is produced from coal. Other fossil fuel-rich countries like Russia, Germany and Canada also use significant amounts of nuclear energy.

Nuclear Power, in Billions of Kilowatt Hours

U.S.	807	Germany	133
France	420	Canada	88
Japan	267	Ukraine	87
Russia	148	Sweden	64
South Korea	137	China	59

Wind power, much more common in European countries like Spain, Netherlands, and Germany, is gaining ground in a few states here, but New York is lagging behind others and is not even in the top ten:

Installed Wind Capacity, in Megawatts

Texas	4446	Iowa	1271
California	2439	Washington	1163
Minnesota	1299	Colorado	1067

When it comes to solar power, we’re right up there, but we’re not the leaders. We’re actually 4th in the world:

Installed Solar Capacity, in Megawatts

Germany	5761	Japan	2248
Spain	2303	U.S.	1407

Wouldn’t it be nice if we found some other things in which we could be world leaders? For starters, how about renewable energy sources in place of fossil fuels? And how about conservation instead of profligacy? What a wonderful boost to our economy!

Hudson River History Shorts

Four hundred years ago in December, 1608, King Henry IV of France instructed his ambassador, Pierre Jeanin to meet secretly with Henry Hudson to discuss leading an expedition. When the Dutch East India Company learned of his meeting with the French, they decided to hire Hudson to look for a northwest passage, and they requested his return to Amsterdam.

On January 8, 1609, Hudson signed a contract with the Dutch East India Company to search for a northwest passage. The contract required that Hudson make his residence in Holland and that his wife and children live there during his voyage. It also stipulated his route and that logbooks and charts be delivered to the directors on his return.

One of the contract provisions was that “the above named Hudson shall, about the first of April, sail in order to search for a passage by the north, around the north side of Nova Zembla, and shall continue thus along the parallel until he shall be able to sail southward to the latitude of sixty degrees.” If he did not return, there was a provision that his family would receive half of the contracted price of 400 guilders, a princely sum at the time.

Meanwhile, along the river that would bear his name, the sub-tribal groups, or clans, were ruled by sachems, along with local and tribal councils to deal with issues of common interest. The sachems of the different families or clans formed the general council which met to discuss major issues, such as wars.

(Adapted from Beacon Sloop Club’s Broadside)



What's Happening When

Daily at 11:11am, Sat at 9am & 2pm on WAMC and upstate affiliates, **The Clearwater Moment**. Snippets of news, history & song. Turn on, tune in.

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

Mar 1, Sun, 5pm, **Uptown Coffeehouse, featuring Lui Collins** with songs, readings, traditional banjo tunes. 4450 Fieldston Road, Bronx. \$15. Info: (718) 885-2955, www.uptowncoffeehouse.org.

Mar 4, Wed, 6:30pm, **Ferry Sloop Meeting & Potluck**, at Croton Point Nature Center. Our sister organization and sailing group shares a home, a mission and some activities with us. Info: www.ferrysloop.org.

Mar 7, Sat, 10am, **Eagle Watch at George's Island Park with Nature Center's Scott Williamson**. Meet at lower parking lot, bring binoculars & dress for cold weather. Info: (914) 862-5297.

Mar 7, Sat, 1-3pm, **Croton Point Nature Center work project**. Last chance to control vines before they go to seed. Gloves provided. Info: (914) 862-5297.

Mar 8, Sun, 1-4pm, **MALFA Archaeology Open House**, at Croton Point Nature Center. Info: 862-5297.

Mar 14, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse featuring Bright Morning Star**. At Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Tickets \$20 in advance (available via www.BrownPaperTickes.com or walkaboutclearwater.org or 1-800-838-3006), or \$25 at door. \$15 at door with student ID, \$10 children 6-12, open seating. Proceeds benefit Walkabout & Clearwater. Refreshments available. Free parking. Informal songfest starts at 6:45pm. Info: www.walkaboutclearwater.org or call 914-242-0374.

Mar 15, Sun, 10am-3pm, **Indoor Farmers Market at Westchester County Center**. Fresh produce, baked goods, flowers, plants, maple syrup, honey, jams, wine & dairy products. Admission free, parking \$4. Info: 995-4050 or www.countycenter.biz.

Mar 20, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Monthly Potluck at Croton Point Nature Center**. Join us to hear an update on the Indian Point license renewal hearings. Check our website at www.riverlovers.org for the latest info.

Mar 28, Sat, 8pm, **Clearwater's Spring Splash, featuring Jeff Tweedy** in concert. Beacon High School, Beacon, NY. Info: www.clearwater.org.

April 1, Wed, 6:30pm, **Ferry Sloop Meeting & Potluck**, at Croton Point Nature Center. Our sister organization and sailing group shares a home, a mission and some activities with us. Info: www.ferrysloop.org.

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

It costs \$7.60 a year to send you the *Riverlovers Currents*. Please consider adding at least that much when you pay your annual dues. Support your Newsletter!

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 2009 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
Secretary:	Cynthia Andersen	432-3112
Treasurer:	Daria Gregg	944-8396
President-Emeritus	Eric Marshall	827-3696



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		
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.

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

March Newsletter Contributors: Gunnar Andersen, Bill Flank

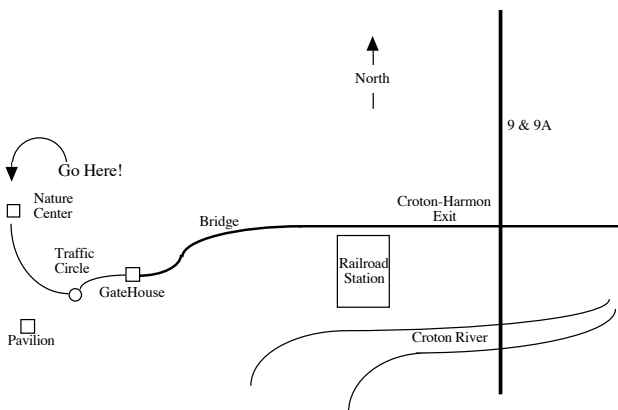
Riverlovers Monthly Potluck and Indian Point Relicensing Update



Riverlovers, Inc.

P.O. Box 285

Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520



Friday, March 20, 2009
6:30pm
Croton Point Nature Center