



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 23, Number 5, May 2010

Message From The President

The screening of "An Inconvenient Truth" was eye-opening. Al Gore showed a large wall display, going back 600,000 years. He needed a climbing platform (Hi-Lift) to demonstrate the next 50 years with the CO₂ levels literally going off the charts. Then Gore also explained a smaller drop in CO₂ levels in prehistoric times in northern U.S. Cities such as New York and Chicago produced 1/2 mile high ice sheets. What will the high CO₂ levels bring? O.M.G.!

The Earth Day shore clean-up on Saturday, April 17th was lonely. Other groups came to clean up, but no other Riverlovers came to help. Scott Williamson from Croton Park asked me to pick up by Mothers Lap near the Nature Center. I concentrated in a 50 foot corner where the high tide pushed up reeds and a variety of plastic bottles, foam from boats, unmentionables, and fish hook packages. Disappointing to clean up the river for the fishermen when they are irresponsible. However, it was very gratifying to see a small section of the Hudson River shore cleaner, and what a fantastic view of the river. I'd like the Riverlovers to do another clean-up in the near future. Enough said!

For the May 21st meeting we will have a talk on hybrid cars, pro and con, with a hybrid car owner. Let's see how much carbon is saved.

On Sunday, May 23rd at 1:00 pm, we will have a spring-time walk on the new Croton Trail along the scenic Hudson River. There are signs along the trail informing us of the history and geology of the Hudson River valley and the developing society around it. We will meet at the boathouse at Senasqua Park.

In closing, two more events: Seining with Scott Williamson on Monday, July 26th at 6:30pm at Croton Point Park on the beach at Mothers Lap. And what we all enjoy, a sail on the sloop Clearwater on Thursday, August 19th at 6:00pm at the Beacon dock.

Walkabout Coffeehouse Coming Up

The 22nd season of the Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse will close with ANGEL BAND on Saturday, May 8, at Memorial United Methodist Church in White Plains. ANGEL BAND, Nancy Josephson, Aly Paige, and Kathleen Weber "make big noise, loud noise, and boisterous, sad, sweet, goofy, glorious and angelic noise." The trio is backed by a band which often includes well-known local musician, David Bromberg.

The band has been making fans of their audiences all over. They will be featured this June at Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival. Be sure to post your flyer, then come to the Coffeehouse to hear this fine group of singers and musicians. It's the last concert of Walkabout's 22nd season!

Access www.BrownPaperTickets.com for credit card tickets, or for more information, check the website at www.WalkaboutClearwater.org or call 914-242-0374.

Guthrie Legacy Concert A Success

The "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine" concert on April 24th at Tarrytown Music Hall was a huge success, raising lots of money for the Woody Guthrie Foundation and the Beacon Sloop Club's wooden boat, the Sloop Woody Guthrie.

It was a truly memorable evening, once again bringing together Pete Seeger and Fred Hellerman, plus the Klezmatics, Work o' the Weavers, and Rob Tepper. Bob Sherman, of the Woody's Children radio program, was the master of ceremonies, and Nora Guthrie introduced some of the performers with hilarious stories. There was lots of nostalgia, as well as new music, fitting tunes to some of Woody's words retrieved from the Guthrie Foundation archives.

There are literally thousands more of Woody's writings, and we'll hear more of them set to music in the years to come. It's something to look forward to.

County Household Recycling Days

The dates are Friday, May 7 from 1 to 3pm and Saturday, May 8 from 9am to 3pm, at the Franklin D. Roosevelt State Park in Yorktown Heights, along the Taconic Parkway.

Another collection weekend will be held on Friday, June 11 from 1 to 3pm and Saturday, June 12 from 9am to 3pm, at Westchester Community College in Valhalla.

You can drop off labeled household chemicals, including automotive fluids, flammable liquids, pesticides, herbicides, photography and swimming pool chemicals, fluorescent bulbs, fire extinguishers, propane tanks, cell phones, batteries, tires, electronic waste, expired drugs and more. Call (914) 813-5425 for more information.

Pay your dues now—support our river!

\$15 Individual & \$20 Family

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

Certainty vs. Uncertainty

We need to understand a few things about the scientific terms we use in discussing climate change. Uncertainty is ubiquitous in our daily lives. We are uncertain about where to go to college, when and if to get married, who will play in the World Series, and so on.

To most of us, uncertainty means not knowing. To scientists, however, uncertainty is how well something is known. And, therein lies an important difference, especially when trying to understand what is known about climate change.

In science, there's often not absolute certainty. But, research reduces uncertainty. In many cases, theories have been tested and analyzed and examined so thoroughly that their chance of being wrong is infinitesimal. Other times, uncertainties linger despite lengthy research. In those cases, scientists make it their job to explain how well something is known. When gaps in knowledge exist, scientists qualify the evidence to ensure others don't form conclusions that go beyond what is known.

Even though it may seem counterintuitive, scientists like to point out the level of uncertainty. Why? Because they want to be as transparent as possible and it shows how well certain phenomena are understood.

Decision makers in our society use scientific input all the time. But they could make a critically wrong choice if the unknowns aren't taken into account. For instance, city planners could build a levee too low or not evacuate enough coastal communities along an expected landfall zone of a hurricane if uncertainty is understated. For these reasons, uncertainty plays a key role in informing public policy.

Taking into account the many sources of scientific understanding, climate scientists have sought to provide decision-makers with careful language regarding uncertainty. A "very likely" outcome, for example, is one that has a greater than 90 percent chance of occurring. Climate data or model projections in which we have "very high confidence" have at least a 9 out of 10 chance of being correct.

However, in this culture of transparency where climate scientists describe degrees of certainty and confidence in their findings, climate change deniers have linked less than complete certainty with not knowing anything. The truth is, scientists know a great deal about climate change. We have learned, for example, that the burning of fossil fuels and the clearing of forests release carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere. There is no uncertainty about this.

We have learned that carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere trap heat through the greenhouse effect. Again, there is no uncertainty about this. Earth is warming because these gasses are being released faster than they can be absorbed by natural processes. It is very likely (greater than 90 percent probability) that human activities are the main reason for the world's temperature increase in the past 50 years.

Scientists know with very high confidence, or even greater certainty, that:

- Human-induced warming influences physical and biological systems throughout the world;
- Sea levels are rising;

- Glaciers and permafrost are shrinking;
- Oceans are becoming more acidic;
- Ranges of plants and animals are shifting.

Scientists are uncertain, however, about how much global warming will occur in the future (between 2.1 degrees and 11 degrees Fahrenheit by 2100). They are also uncertain how soon the summer sea ice habitat where the ringed seal lives will disappear. Curiously, much of this uncertainty has to do with—are you ready?—humans. The choices we make in the next decade or so, to reduce emissions of heat-trapping gasses, could prevent catastrophic climate change.

So, what's the bottom line? Science has learned much about climate change. Science tells us what is more or less likely to be true. We know that acting now to deeply reduce heat-trapping emissions will limit the scope and severity of further impacts—and that is virtually certain.

Croton Point's Rich Past—Part III

William Underhill set up a brickyard at Croton Point, bringing industry to the lower Hudson Valley. The bricks were made from native clay deposits left by the glaciers. Remains of the once-extensive clay quarries can still be seen in the form of ponds and depressions along the riverfront. Underhill's bricks, identified by the marks "WAU" and "IXL", were used in construction throughout the valley and in New York city. At its height in the late nineteenth century, the brickworks occupied two large compounds that included kilns and drying sheds, workers' housing, and even a rail line for moving clay and finished bricks.

When William Underhill died in 1873, his partner, Richard Tallcott, continued the operations. By 1915, the clay sources had run out and the brick industry ceased operations. Its remains, however, survive in the brick buildings scattered about on Croton Point.

Robert Underhill's other son, Richard, continued his father's agricultural enterprise on the south side of Croton Point, cultivating roses and orchards. He also planted vineyards with hybrids of European and native grapes.

Perhaps as early as 1839, Underhill built wine cellars, the oldest in New York State, and a cider press. These were constructed of bricks manufactured at Croton Point, and of native fieldstone. In 1846, he built a residence at the tip of Tellers Point, an Italianate villa that he named *Interwasser* ("Between the Waters"). In 1851, the hybrid grapes of Croton Point won an award from the American Agricultural Society. Richard died in 1871, and his nephew Stephen Underhill continued the wine business for a few more years. Although the vineyards are gone now, the wine cellars remain tucked into a hillside overlooking South Beach.

In 1900, Judge Decker of Croton leased land on Haverstraw Bay and founded the Croton Point Club, a move that signaled a change in land use patterns from commercial agriculture and industry to recreation. Members of Decker's club and other groups like the Yonkers Canoe Club built tent platforms and cabins on the beach. By the 1920s, this summer community had morphed into the Croton Point Park Association, a bungalow colony situated on the picturesque promontory overlooking Haverstraw Bay.

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What's Happening When

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

May 4, Tues, 6:30pm, **Ferry Sloops 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.

May 8, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse** featuring Angel Band, an exciting trio with wide-ranging music. At Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Tickets \$17.50 in advance (available via www.BrownPaperTickets.com), or \$20 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.

May 14, Fri, 6:30pm, **An Evening in the River with Chris Bowser**. Explore the Hudson ecosystem, with seining, data collection, and a perspective from IN the river. At Beacon Long Dock.

May 21, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Monthly Potluck** at Croton Point Nature Center, with a talk on hybrid cars, pro and con, by a hybrid car owner. Info: www.Riverlovers.org.

May 23, Sun, 1pm, **Riverlovers springtime walk** on the new Croton Trail along the Hudson River. We will meet at the boathouse at Senasqua Park.

June 13, Sun, 12-5pm, **Beacon Sloop Club Strawberry Festival**, at Beacon Riverfront Park.

June 19-20, Sat-Sun, **Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival**, at Croton Point Park. Save the date!

August 19, Thurs, 6-9pm, **Riverlovers annual sail on the Clearwater**, sailing from the dock at Beacon. Mark your calendars!



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Westchester County purchased the 500 acres that were to become Croton Point Park in 1924. Over the years, the park has housed a variety of recreational facilities, including an amusement park, docks and beaches, ballfields, camps and hiking trails. And for many years, the central marshlands were the site of a county landfill, which was finally capped by court order in the 1990s, with participation in public hearings of people from Clearwater and Riverlovers.

Today, it is one of the County's most popular parks, and the home of Riverlovers (in the Nature Center above Mothers Lap) and Clearwater's Great Hudson River Revival,

which started there over 30 years ago, left for a time because of the presence of what was found to be a hazardous waste landfill, then returned after the capping was completed and an environmental assessment by Riverlover and Clearwater Board Member Bill Flank determined that it was safe.

Lots of history resides at Croton Point, and indeed a lot of history lies buried there as well. As more of it continues to be unearthed, the story is being gradually filled in.

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 2010 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



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

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.

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

May Newsletter Contributors: Marilyn Elie, Bill Flank, Robin Fox, Warren Lindholm

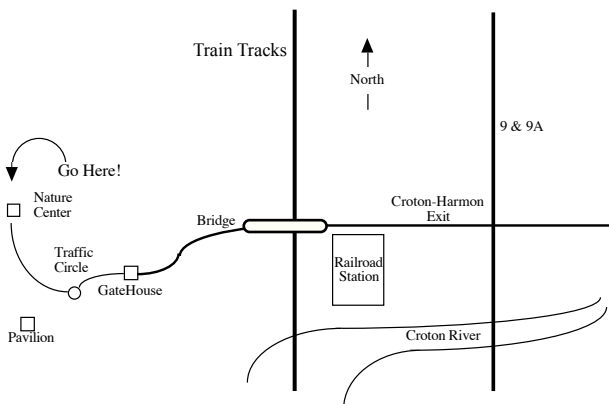
Riverlovers Monthly Potluck and hybrid car talk



Riverlovers, Inc.

P.O. Box 285

Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520



Friday, May 21, 2010

6:30pm

Croton Point Nature Center