



Riverlovers Currents

Volume 19, Number 11, November 2006

Riverlovers Doings

We had a really productive and well-attended Potluck meeting on October 13th at the Nature Center. We decided on how much we would contribute to Clearwater from the proceeds of the ShadFest a few months back, and we also laid out what we can do, in cooperation with the Nature Center, to locally implement Clearwater's new proposed initiative to address global warming.

We planned a number of events for the future, including a joint Potluck meeting with Ferry Sloops on Saturday, November 11th at 4pm on Randy's Barge at Randy King Marina, at the end of Kings Ferry Road in Verplanck. We want to help them celebrate their return to the waves with their new boat, the *Whimbrel*.

For December at our Holiday Potluck, Eric is arranging a speaker on the seasonally appropriate topic of the environment and religion, as a follow-up to some of the Garrison Institute conversations that some of our members attended. And in January, Susan is putting together an edited video of the presentation on the nuclear problem that Dr. Helen Caldicott made in White Plains in October.

We're looking forward to a reprise of the very successful bread and soup serving activity that we did at last year's Eagle Weekend at Croton Point, and this is set for Sunday, February 11th at 1pm. Cynthia will be coordinating the arrangements for preparing and serving the food to the visitors coming to the Nature Center programs that day. Listings for this and some of our other events will appear in the County calendar, thanks to Nature Center Naturalist Scott Williamson.

The Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse will feature David Roth and Nancy Tucker on November 11th, and Guy Davis and Ann Rabson (co-founder of Saffire, the Uppity Blues Women) will share the stage on December 9th. The first half of the season concludes with the hugely popular Jay Ungar and Molly Mason on the 13th of January. Rumor has it that Pete will be there in February, and that's sure to attract a big crowd, so get your tickets early.

These events, which include an opening singalong, are lots of fun and good entertainment. Bring your crowd of friends and join in. You won't be disappointed!

And last but certainly not least, *Riverlovers Currents* extends a rousing welcome to our incoming President, Gunnar Andersen. We're off to a good start with our planning, and I know all of us will want to give Gunnar all the support we can muster, as we renew our sense of purpose and our dedication to environmental education and environmental action in support of our river.

The Food And Health Problem

During most of the industrial era, the food industry has been fixated on providing as much food as cheaply as possible. Any connections between farming, nutrition, food and health were either assumed or ignored. But healthy food requires healthy soil, clean water and healthy plants and animals.

Cheap food is a cornerstone of our agricultural policy. It allows us to maintain our quality of life. However, in the quest for ever cheaper food, changes in production methods have changed food itself. The nutrient value of foods had declined by 5% to 35% during the last half century.

The loss of nutrient value in fruits and vegetables is further exacerbated by the fact that the industrial system is based on large farming operations that are often far from where the food is consumed. It has been estimated that food travels on average 1500 to 2000 miles from farm to table. While fruits and vegetables may be genetically altered to retain their appearance during this long trip, vitamins are lost over time and protein breaks down. So the trip not only adds a "fuel tax" to the cost of food, but it may also deliver food with reduced nutritional value.

While only 3% of all antibiotic use is prescribed for therapy in humans and 2% for therapeutic use in animals, 27% is fed to animals as a non-therapeutic ingredient in feed to increase the rate of weight gain and to prevent disease outbreaks in confined animal feeding operations. An unintended consequence is that this contributes to the development of bacteria that are resistant to these antibiotics, which are critically important in treating many human infections. And antibiotics are now routinely found in lakes and streams.

So is this food really "cheap"? Let's calculate the cost of food based on the cost per calorie, the basic unit of energy.

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Recognize that we eat food to obtain its energy content—and here you thought all along that it was because it tasted good. By the measure of cost per unit of energy content, 22 other countries had cheaper food than we do. And if we look at nutrient value, then the cost per unit of vitamins, minerals and proteins is inexorably increasing.

We now spend over 16% of our earned income on health care, and this percentage has been increasing at the same time that the percentage of our earned income spent on food has been decreasing. Is there a connection here? Our modern industrial food system has been designed without considering human health.

However, there is now an increasing awareness of the burgeoning health problems that are directly related to food and diet, as we recognize the alarming rates at which obesity and diabetes have increased. Twenty years ago, obesity rates were in the 10-14% range, but now they are double that. In 1980, 5.8 million Americans suffered from diabetes, and by 1999 this had risen to 11.1 million.

It's clear that we must change from an industrially-based food system to one that is ecologically based. Lots of policy changes will be required at all levels, and they will be complex changes. There are, however, some things we can do as individuals, as we promote our own health.

- Buy direct from local producers whenever possible. The food will be fresher and tastier, and more nutritious as well.
- Reduce consumption of highly processed foods and eat a variety of fresh foods. Eating a more diverse diet will encourage biodiversity in the fields used to raise your food, especially if it is raised by diversified family farms rather than mass-production industrial monoculture.
- Encourage schools, hospitals, restaurants and caterers to buy from regional farmers wherever possible.
- Ask your supermarket manager to feature locally grown, organic and sustainably produced foods, or even better, patronize the local farmers' markets in our area.

It won't be easy to change our food system. But if we continue to focus only on producing a lot of "cheap" food, we won't stand much of a chance of being healthy.

Adapted from Glynwood Center literature on sustainable agricultural practices

Climate Change Conference

The DEC Climate Change Policy Office and the Hudson River Estuary Program have organized a one-day conference for local decision-makers to explore the issues surrounding climate change in the Hudson Valley. The date is Monday, December 4, and the location is the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel, Poughkeepsie.

The goal of this conference is to present the latest scientific findings on existing and potential future impacts of climate change on human and natural communities, and provide local leaders with insights that may help them plan for and manage these impacts. It will cover existing and potential future effects on water supplies, agriculture, sewage treatment

facilities and transportation infrastructure, as well as the potential for loss of protective wetlands along the river shoreline. This will be a first step in gathering our local expertise so that we can learn together.

To register contact Kristin Marcell, Hudson River Estuary Program, at 845-256-3017 or kamarcel@gw.dec.state.ny.us

State Funds Environmental Protection

To its credit, New York State has passed a new law providing a record \$225 million in Environmental Protection Fund monies, representing a \$75 million increase over the previous fiscal year budget. The appropriations, which exceeded Governor Pataki's original proposal by \$45 million, provide for continued aid for municipal parks, waterfront revitalization, municipal recycling, non-point source pollution control, and agricultural and farmland protection.

In addition, new monies were made available for ocean and Great Lakes protection, water quality improvement, and invasive species control. In an enlightened move, 25% of the funding for municipal parks and waterfront access was set aside for low-income communities now underserved by open space.

While the Assembly also passed a measure to strengthen wetlands protection laws, the Senate unfortunately failed to act on this. At least we got something. Wait 'till next year, as they always say.

Quote Without Comment

"Behind the ostensible government sits enthroned an invisible government owing no allegiance and acknowledging no responsibility to the people. To destroy this invisible government, to befoul the unholy alliance between corrupt business and corrupt politics, is the first task of the statesmanship of the day."

Theodore Roosevelt, April 19, 1906

Local Attractions—III

Here are some local places to go, for a bit of local history and culture. Don't let the tourists know more about your home stamping grounds than you do!

Van Cortlandtville Historical Society at the Little Red Schoolhouse, Oregon Road and Locust Avenue, is open the third Saturday of each month from September to June, from 2 to 5pm. Info: 736-7868.

The Cortlandt Museum is at 137 7th Street in Verplanck. Info: 734-1110.

The Croton Historical Society presents exhibits at the Croton Free Library on Cleveland Drive, during regular library hours. Info: 271-6612.

The Ossining Historical Society, at 196 Croton Avenue in Ossining, is open Monday, Wednesday and Sunday from 1 to 4pm. Free. Info: 941-0001.

Ossining Urban Cultural Park Visitors Center, with exhibitions about Sing Sing Prison and the Old Croton Aqueduct. Free, and open daily from 10am to 4pm. Info: 941-3189.

Maryknoll Missionaries Exhibit, at the Maryknoll Center in Ossining, is based on the extensive archive collection of missions, their deeds, hardships and triumphs. Info: 941-7636.

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What's Happening When

Sundays at the Beacon Sloop Club, **Farmers' Market** 10am-4pm. Local cheeses, eggs, pasta, bread, etc.

Nov 2, Thurs, 8pm, **Arlo Guthrie & The Woody Guthrie Legacy Tour** at Paramount Center for the Arts, 1008 Brown St, Peekskill. \$40-\$45. Info: www.paramountcenter.org. or 914-739-2333.

Nov 4, Sat, 2pm, **Survival Skills** at Croton Point Nature Center. Imagine life without computers, DVDs and shopping malls. Focus is on techniques of survival in the woods, including fire starting, shelter building, etc. Info: 914-862-5297.

Nov 5, Sun, 3pm, **Crooked Still alternative bluegrass group** at Paramount Center for the Arts, 1008 Brown St, Peekskill. \$25. Info: www.paramountcenter.org. or 914-739-2333.

Nov 11, Sat, 2pm, **Lying Awake in the Hudson**, at Croton Point Nature Center. Meet Helen Fairbush, author of a children's picture book, *Lying Awake*. She will explore Hudson River marine life through slides, decoding of maritime signal flags and other children's activities. Info: 914-862-5297.

Nov 11, Sat, 4pm, **Riverlovers Joint Potluck with Ferry Sloops**, together celebrating our commitment to the Hudson River. At Randy's Barge at Randy King Marina, end of Kings Ferry Road, Verplanck.

Nov 11, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse presents David Roth and Nancy Tucker**, at Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Tickets \$17.50. Proceeds benefit Walkabout & Clearwater. Refreshments available. Free parking. Informal songfest at 6:45pm. Info: www.walkaboutclearwater.org or call 914-242-0374.

Nov 12, Sun, 1pm, **MALFA Archaeology Open House** at Croton Point Nature Center. Share an afternoon of archaeological adventures with your local archaeological organization. Info: 914-862-5297.

Nov 18, Sat, 1-3pm, **Squanto and the Pilgrims**, at Croton Point Nature Center. Was there a "First Thanksgiving"? Why do many Native Americans think of Thanksgiving as a sad day? Learn the answers in a slide show and discussion hosted by archaeologist Susan Dublin. Info: 914-862-5297.

Dec 2, Sat, 2pm, **Amazing Animal Tracks**, at Croton Point Nature Center. Kids of all ages can learn shapes, habitats and adaptations of animals at Croton Point. Info: 914-862-5297.

Dec 2. Sat. 8pm, **Mainstage presents Ritchie Havens at Irvington Town Hall Theater**, 85 Main St, Irvington. Tickets \$35. Info: 800-595-4849 or www.themainstage.org.

Dec 2, Sat, 8pm, **Paramount Center for the Arts presents Bluegrass Explosion with the Del McCoury Band**. Tickets \$30 & \$35. Call 877-840-0457 or order online at www.paramountcenter.org.

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The Historical Society of Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow is at One Grove Street in Tarrytown. It is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays from 2 to 4pm. Info: 631-8374.

The Village Hall in Dobbs Ferry has a permanent display of Native American artifacts. Info: 693-2203.

The Hastings-on-Hudson Historical Society is located in Observatory Cottage in Draper Park. It is open Monday and Thursday from 10am to 2pm. Info: 478-2249.

Finally, live music every Friday night, at the Peekskill Coffee House, 101 South Division Street. Info: 739-1287.

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 2007 to: Riverlovers, P.O. Box 285, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

Yes! I Also Want To Join Clearwater

Please sign me up in the following membership category:

Individual	\$40	Mariner	\$500
Family	\$55	Sailing-Master	\$1000
Contributor	\$100	Benefactor	\$5000
Sponsor	\$200	Student	\$10

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please include check payable to Clearwater, or charge by credit card

Visa	MC	Discover	Amex
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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:	??	??
Treasurer:	Daria Gregg	944-8396

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
November Newsletter Contributors: 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	Jan Ravase	739-0640
Photographer/Archivist	Beverly Dyckman	739-5057
Potluck	Robin Fox	271-6088
Publicity		
ShadFest	Robin Fox	271-6088

Join Us!

Riverlovers and Ferry Sloops Joint Potluck Supper

Bring a dish to share with 4-6 other people
Celebrating our commitment to the Hudson River



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



Ferry Sloops' new boat, Whimbrel

Saturday, November 11, 2006
4:00pm

Randy's Barge, at Randy King Marina
End of Kings Ferry Road, Verplanck