



# Riverlovers RCurrents

Volume 19, Number 10, November 2006

## Riverlovers Doings

As far as recent events go, we won one and we lost one. On the bright side, we had delightful weather and a well-attended Hudson River School art slide show and discussion with Cynthia Andersen on Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, preceded by our usual Riverlovers Potluck at the Croton Point Nature Center.

But on Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup> we ran into a bit of frustration, when we (including ye olde editor) didn't know the combination of the new gate lock and couldn't get to first base, so to speak. We got it all figured out eventually, but unfortunately after the fact.

We'll make up for that on October 13<sup>th</sup>, when we meet at the Nature Center for our next Potluck, and we'll decide on how much we can contribute to Clearwater from the proceeds of the ShadFest a few months back. We'll also lay out what we can do, in cooperation with the Nature Center, to locally implement Clearwater's new proposed initiative to address global warming. We can help promote awareness, and let people know how they can be a part of the solutions to this planet-threatening problem. Come and find out what we, and you, can do right in our own backyard.

The Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse will be starting up again in the Fall on October 14<sup>th</sup> with Cathie Ryan and her band, followed by David Roth and Nancy Tucker on November 11<sup>th</sup>. Guy Davis and Ann Rabson (co-founder of Saffire, the Uppity Blues Women) will appear on December 9<sup>th</sup>. The first half of the season concludes with the hugely popular Jay Ungar and Molly Mason on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January.

Last season, we brought several batches of our friends, took part in the participatory songfest, and enjoyed some great nights of provoking entertainment. Plan not to miss out, and while you're at it, support our river too. Check the calendar on page three for details each month.

## Lawn Care & Pesticides Full Disclosure

Is a lawn care service applying pesticides to your lawn? If so, here are some facts you need to know. New York State law requires that a written contract be signed before pesticides can be applied by a lawn care company to residential property.

All pesticides, including weed and insect controls used on lawns, trees and gardens are potentially dangerous. In a contract, you can limit which pesticides, if any, will be applied on your property. By knowing in advance which pesticides will be applied, when they will be applied and what their toxic properties are, you can be prepared to take precautions to avoid unnecessary exposure to yourself and your family.

State law requires that the contract states all warning of potential harm to humans, pets and the environment as listed on the label of the pesticides to be used, the brand and generic names of the active ingredients, the total number of applications, the total cost, and the dates when pesticides will be applied (which may be approximately stated as a range), along with the lawn care company's business registration number, applicator certification ID number, name, address and phone number.

If the company cannot do the application on the dates in the contract, they must get your permission before applying pesticides on alternate dates. The lawn care company must also post signs on your property indicating that pesticides have been applied. In some counties in the state, applicators are required to provide 48 hours advance notice to neighbors with property lines within 150 feet of the application.

To avoid pesticide contamination, consider Integrated Pest Management as an effective alternative that only uses chemical methods as a last resort to control pests. You can find a complete listing of regulatory requirements for lawn care contracts at [www.dec.state.ny.us/website/regs/part325.html#325.40](http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/regs/part325.html#325.40) and you can get more information on Integrated Pest Management at [www.oag.state.ny.us/environment/ipm3fold.html](http://www.oag.state.ny.us/environment/ipm3fold.html).

*(Reprinted from the April issue of The Compass, the newsletter of the North River Friends of Clearwater, who got it from a pamphlet by the New York State Office of the Attorney General)*

**Be part of the solution, not part of  
the problem!**

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

## FDA And Bush Administration Politics

The Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) distributed a 38-question survey to nearly 6,000 scientists at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to obtain their perceptions about scientific integrity in the agency. Nearly 1,000 scientists filled out and returned the survey, whose results clearly showed evidence of political interference.

A summary of these findings is shown below. Unless otherwise specified, the points below refer to the percentage of scientists at the entire agency who responded to the survey.

**I. Interference with Scientific Determinations at the FDA**  
Large numbers of agency scientists reported interference with their scientific work:

Almost one in five (18 percent) responded, “I have been asked, for non-scientific reasons, to inappropriately exclude or alter technical information or my conclusions in an FDA scientific document.”

More than three in five (61 percent) knew of cases in which “Department of Health and Human Services or FDA political appointees have inappropriately injected themselves into FDA determinations or actions.”

Three in five (60 percent) also knew of cases “where commercial interests have inappropriately induced or attempted to induce the reversal, withdrawal or modification of FDA determinations or actions.” Fifty percent also felt that non-governmental interests (such as advocacy groups) had induced or attempted to induce such changes.

### II. Negative Effect on Public Health

FDA scientists’ responses suggest that the agency’s ability to fulfill its mission—protecting public health—is being put at risk:

Only half (51 percent) feel the “FDA is acting effectively to protect public health.”

Less than half (47 percent) think that the “FDA routinely provides complete and accurate information to the public.”

Less than half (49 percent) agree that “FDA leadership is as committed to product safety as it is to bringing products to the market.”

### III. Chilling Effect on Scientific Candor

Agency scientists report being afraid to speak frankly about safety concerns and feel constrained in their roles as scientists:

One-fifth (20 percent) say they “have been asked explicitly by FDA decision makers to provide incomplete, inaccurate or misleading information to the public, regulated industry, media, or elected/senior government officials.” In addition, more than a quarter (26 percent) feel that FDA decision makers implicitly expect them to “provide incomplete, inaccurate, or misleading information.”

Two in five (40 percent) said they could not publicly express “concerns about public health without fear of retaliation.” More than a third (36 percent) did not feel they could do so *even inside the confines of the agency.*

### IV. FDA Scientists Face Immense Pressures

FDA scientists reported that they have inadequate resources to

perform even the basic work of the agency. The lack of resources and other pressures have strained scientists’ morale:

Nearly 70 percent do not believe the FDA has sufficient resources to effectively perform its mission of “protecting public health . . . and helping the public get the accurate, science-based information they need to use medicines and foods to improve their health.”

Less than half (44 percent) say they “respect the integrity and professionalism of FDA leadership.”

Two in five (40 percent) describe their morale as poor to extremely poor, while a mere four percent rate their morale as excellent.

More than half (52 percent) say their personal job satisfaction has decreased over the past few years, while only 18 percent say their job satisfaction has increased.

Less than a third (32 percent) think the agency “is moving in the right direction.”

### V. Scientists Recommend Changes at the Agency

FDA scientists had strong opinions about reforms that would address some of their concerns:

Nearly two in three (63 percent) said that the “laws and regulations that govern FDA, including the agency’s structure, need change for the agency to better serve the public.”

More than four in five (81 percent) agreed that the “public would be better served if the independence and authority of FDA post-market safety systems were strengthened.”

This is the most brazen attempt to apply ideological and political rejection of science in the public interest in the past hundred years. Where, and when, will this unprecedented madness end?

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## “Who Killed The Electric Car?” Us!

If you have not yet seen this movie, you really should! It tells the story of General Motors’ EV1, an electric car that was produced in the 1990’s, and its demise—all the more unfortunate in light of recent events. *Ye olde editor* took it in recently at the Paramount, and the main feeling it generated was that of anger.

Who’s to blame? Well, you and me for starters, because we don’t want to let our leaders know we care, we don’t want to let the auto companies know we will support something that has been demonstrated to work well, we don’t want to tell the oil companies we want an energy-independent and global-warming-free future, and we don’t want to disturb our blissful ignorance and apathy.

Very briefly, under pressure from the oil industry, General Motors called in the leases on these cars (the only way they were put on the market), and then proceeded to crush them all. The automotive industry and big oil in this country are pushing for hybrid cars and not true electric vehicles. It is unlikely that an all-electric car will ever make it into mass production. In Europe, big oil and the auto companies are relying on diesel engines to cut oil consumption, and hoping to use coal conversion technology to produce a significant fraction of the needed fuel.

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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.

Oct 8, Sun, 3pm, **bluesman Guy Davis** at Paramount Center for the Arts, 1008 Brown St, Peekskill. \$25. Info: [www.paramountcenter.org](http://www.paramountcenter.org). or 914-739-2333.

Oct 13, Fri, 6:30pm, **Riverlovers Monthly Potluck** to kick off the new season. Decide on our Clearwater donation. Join us and take a share of our global warming education & other new projects. At Croton Point Nature Center.

Oct 14, Sat, 7:30pm, **Walkabout Clearwater Coffeehouse presents Cathie Ryan & her band**, at Memorial United Methodist Church, 250 Bryant Ave, White Plains. Tickets \$17.50, open seating. Proceeds benefit Walkabout & Clearwater. Refreshments available. Free parking. Informal songfest 6:45pm. Info: [www.walkaboutclearwater.org](http://www.walkaboutclearwater.org) or call 914-242-0374.

Oct 15, Sun, noon-dusk, **Beacon Sloop Club Pumpkin Festival** at the Beacon Riverfront. Mark the date, and support our sister Sloop Club.

Oct 21, Sat, 8pm, **Mainstage Presents Dar Williams**, at Irvington Town Hall Theater, 85 Main St, Irvington. \$35. Info: 800-595-4849 or 914-591-6602, and [www.themainstage.org](http://www.themainstage.org) or [www.irvingtontheater.com](http://www.irvingtontheater.com).

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](http://www.paramountcenter.org). or 914-739-2333.

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

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We could even use coal in the U.S. to generate the needed electricity, and still save energy and global warming emissions, but there are better cost-effective ways as well. Better battery technology is available, better performance and more amenities, but there is resistance to change, and that's the hard part.

Recently, Solectria has built more than 1000 electric cars, and its best-known model is based on General Motors' Geo. In the 1990's it won the Northeast Sustainable Energy Association's American Tour de Sol rally a number of times. Quite a few companies are now doing conversions, and they are fairly popular among the cognoscenti in California. There's even a luxury electric car available for about \$100,000.

If you want more information, check out: [www.ev1-club.power.net](http://www.ev1-club.power.net) and [www.sonyclassics.com/whokilledtheelectriccar/electric.html](http://www.sonyclassics.com/whokilledtheelectriccar/electric.html).

*Follow-up to our recent reprint of Tom LaBarr's article in the Beacon Sloop Club's "Broadside."*

## EPA Reaffirms Mercury Limits

EPA has now reaffirmed its 2005 rule controlling mercury releases from coal-fired plants through an emission-trading scheme. They determined the rule is sound, legally and technically, after a review request by over a dozen states and five environmental groups. EPA also endorsed its plan not to use a technology-based approach to control emissions. This is the first regulation anywhere of mercury from coal-fired plants, but critics say it is weak, violates the Clean Air Act, and will cause deposition hot spots. Clearly, we have to do better!

### 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 2006 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:

- |                                   |       |                                      |        |
|-----------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| <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

Co-President:	Eric Marshall	827-3696
Co-President:	Kate Marshall	827-3696
Vice Pres. (programs):	Robin Fox	271-6088
Vice Pres. (membership):	Gunnar Andersen	432-3112
Secretary:	??	??
Treasurer:	Daria Gregg	944-8396



### Interest Group Coordinators

Interest Group	Coordinator	Phone
Boats	Jon Lambert	
Book Club	Daria Gregg	944-8396
Envir. Education		
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		
Riverwatch	Art Ansel	271-5316
ShadFest	Robin Fox	271-6088

### 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.

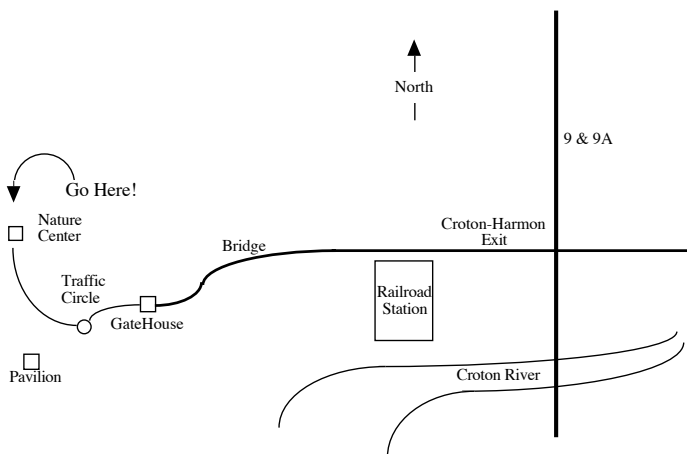
Newsletter Committee: Editor, Bill Flank; Associate Editor, Mel Fitting  
October Newsletter Contributors: Bill Flank

## October Monthly Potluck Croton Point Nature Center



**Riverlovers, Inc.**

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



**Friday, October 13, 2006**  
**6:30pm**