



## Federated Conservationists of Westchester County

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June 2014

### FCWC'S 49TH ANNUAL MEETING

On June 12th the FCWC held its 49th Annual Meeting at the beautiful Kathryn W. Davis RiverWalk Center in Sleepy Hollow, NY. The pavilion at the Kathryn Davis Center, overlooking the Hudson River, provided a nice backdrop for the event and many came out to help honor deserving awardees.

Following a picnic dinner and networking, a business meeting was held where new Board members and officers were elected. Continuing on the Board as Class of 2017 are Carole Griffiths, Jason Klein, Mindy Swope Quintero, and Nortrud Spero. Newly elected officers include Jason Klein and Carole Griffiths as Co-Presidents, Carolyn Cunningham and Larry O'Connell as Co-Treasurers and Robert Carroll and Mindy Swope Quintero as Co-Secretaries.

This year, FCWC was able to present two exceptional people with our Green Seal Award, former Commissioner of the Department of Community Development and Conservation for the Town of Greenburgh Thomas Madden and Dani Glaser, founder and CEO of Green Team Spirit. Thomas was given this Award for his instrumental leadership in the development of new environmental standards for the town, including the adoption of Green Building code for new site development, revisions to the Energy Star code, Energy Improvement financing for commercial properties and a Smart Growth Development Study, focusing on mixed use development, as part of the Town's comprehensive plan update.

Dani was recognized this year because of her environmental leadership and advocacy in the areas of business, government, and non-profits. Along with running Green Team Spirit, Dani is one of the creators and administrators of the Westchester Green Business Challenge; an organizer of Green Drinks Westchester; and a MetroPool Board Member. Dani combines her wealth of business experience with her passion for the environment and a healthier, more sustainable world

We established the Edith G. Read Award in 2006, to honor one of Westchester environment's prime movers and extraordinary conservationists, and this award is given annually to a youth or group of students who show exemplary commitment to environmental issues. This year, the Edith G. Read Award was given to Ty Ingram, a senior at White Plains high school. He received this award for his impressive Advanced Science Research Project on algae turf scrubbers that can be used to treat wastewater.

We thank everyone who came out to help recognize these deserving honorees and for your continued support for FCWC. We hope to see you all next year for our 50th Anniversary celebrations!



## ENJOY SAFE BEACHES THIS SUMMER

**By: Zack Kashdan, FCWC Intern**

Now that summer is here, we're all eager to take advantage of the great beaches that New York has to offer. However, despite the beautiful weather, water quality in the Hudson River and Long Island Sound is not always safe for humans to swim. After periods of strong rain events, many times, for precautionary reasons, The Westchester County Health Department preemptively closes those beaches due to heightened levels of bacteria in local waterways. The infected water tends to be storm water effluent from old, deteriorating sewer pipes, which in turn discharge near several major beaches. According to a report published by the Natural Resources Defense Council's (NRDC), there were over 20,000 days of beach closures around the nation due to dangerous levels of bacteria. Fortunately for our region, we have two organizations dedicated to tirelessly protecting our waterways from such harm and to notifying the public when the water is not safe to enter.

For over forty years, Save the Sound has brought together scientific knowledge, legal expertise, and local citizens in an

effort to protect and remediate coastal areas; in doing so, they have made countless beaches safe for public use and restored habitats for local wildlife. Save the Sound employs not water quality assessments, but also volunteer coastal cleanup teams to make our coasts clean. Over the past ten years, 17,000 coastal cleanup volunteers have traversed 500 miles of waterfront, removing 137,500 pounds of trash along the way. For more information about beach closures on the Western end of Long Island Sound, sign up for Save the Sound's 'Sound Swim Alerts; found here <http://tinyurl.com/SoundSwimAlerts>.

Riverkeeper's focus is on the other side of the County, on the Hudson River. Similar to Save the Sound, Riverkeeper monitors water quality on the Hudson River Estuary (in conjunction with scientists from Columbia, Queens College, and citizens) via their patrol boat. The Riverkeeper patrol boat travels more than 5,500 nautical miles; testing for a wide array of contaminants, including: fecal-indicating bacteria, oxygen, turbidity, temperature, salinity and chlorophyll. To learn about the latest water quality testings along the Hudson, please check out <http://www.riverkeeper.org/water-quality/hudson-river/>.

We at FCWC encourage you to get out and enjoy our County's beaches this summer, but make sure you check these resources before making your weekend plans.

## FCWC'S CLIMATE CHANGE SUMMIT: WHY WE NEED IT

**By: Sara Goddard, FCWC Board Member**

On September 12th, Pace University Law School's Center for Environmental Legal Studies and FCWC will hold an all-day conference on climate change. Climate change is a hot policy topic; scientists, legislators, and policy makers are focused on tackling the problem and advocating for prescriptive action. Given this intense scrutiny on climate change, why is there a need for a summit devoted to the topic? Unfortunately, the climate change issue is one that is snarled in a knot of misconceptions, political maneuverings, and ideological fallacies. It is undoubtedly one of the searing problems of our day, but information has been obscured by a cloud of rhetoric created by a coalition of opponents determined to undermine public support for climate legislation. As a result, there is a large divide between consensus among scientists and public perception of the problem.

First, let's state the facts: Climate change is here and it's happening now. The staggering abundance of scientific data support this conclusion. To summarize the most recent and salient sources:

The U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change authors, a group of over 1,200 recognized experts, have concluded in a series of reports that climate change is "unequivocally" caused by humans and will cause destruction and massive social upheaval if nothing is done to cut emissions.

The latest National Climate Assessment report states that "climate change is already affecting the American people in far-reaching ways."

The fact that "97% of climate scientists agree that climate-warming trends over the past century are very likely due to human activities, and most of the leading scientific organizations worldwide have issued public statements endorsing this position." (NASA site)

So how do we expose the truth and get the facts out? How do we mobilize our communities to take action? The key is education, but the way information is disseminated is of critical importance. A recent study published in the journal Climatic Change illustrates this point well. The authors acknowledge the "well-documented campaign in the USA to deny the reality and seriousness of anthropogenic climate change" but find that when people are informed of the facts from scientific evidence, they are far more likely to support government action to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

Now, more than ever, the phrase, "Think Globally, Act Locally," is imbued with urgency. The federal government is limited in what it can accomplish, but our individual communities can take action, with guidance from local leaders. The key is mobilizing constituents; making the issue personal, but not so dire that people feel helpless to act.

The FCWC climate change summit will be the ideal forum for disseminating information, sharing ideas, and learning from national experts about what solutions are available to municipalities. With its specific focus on local legislators and public officials, the summit will enable these individuals to take what they've learned and translate it into action in their communities. With fabrication and misinterpretation clouding the real picture, it is essential to promote the true facts on climate change. The FCWC summit will accomplish this. Please attend on September 12th!

You can read the full article on our [blog](#).

To RSVP for the Westchester Climate Change Summit, click [here](#).



## UPCOMING EVENTS

For a full list of our member organization's events and happenings, check out our Federation Calendar at [www.fcwc.org/events](http://www.fcwc.org/events). Remember to always confirm events before attending. Check back regularly as we are always updating.

### **Keeper's House Restoration Groundbreaking**

**Sponsored by:** Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail

**When:** Friday, June 27, 11am - 12pm

**Where:** 15 Walnut Street, Dobbs Ferry

Join Friends of the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail- at long last - to break ground on this huge project that will transform the Keeper's House into a Visitor and Education Center with educational exhibits, State Park offices, bathrooms and much much more!

### **Wild Edibles Dinner**

**Sponsored by:** Friends of Hilltop Hanover Farm  
**When:** Friday, June 27, 5-7pm  
**Where:** Hilltop Hanover Farm, Yorktown Heights

Fancy yourself a survivalist? Looking to learn how to live off the land? Join Hilltop Hanover farmer and naturalist Wilson Chang, and get your hands dirty in this wild edible workshop. Learn how to identify and sustainably forage a variety of local species found in forests, fields, and wetlands. Then, once you've brought in your foraged bounty, learn how to prepare and season your wild edibles using farm-fresh Hilltop Hanover produce! Online registration is required; \$30 per person. Located in Barn F. Call (914) 962-2368 or register online at [www.HilltopHanoverFarm.org/Events](http://www.HilltopHanoverFarm.org/Events)  
<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/594408>.

### **Bedford Audubon Society and New York-New Jersey Trail Conference Trail Stewardship Workshop**

**Sponsored by:** Bedford Audubon Society and New York-New Jersey Trail Conference  
**When:** Saturday, June 28, 9am - 1pm  
**Where:** 35 Todd Road, Katonah

For: volunteers interested in trail maintenance and stewardship. The workshop is free and open to interested volunteers 16 years of age and older. Taught by Hank Osborn and Rose Bonanno of the Trail Conference, volunteers will learn the basic skills necessary to maintain trails in a way that is harmonious with the surrounding wildlife habitat. These skills include assessing trail conditions, clearing, blazing, the proper use of tools, and how to report trail problems. No prior experience is necessary, and participants should wear hiking boots, bring water and work gloves, and be prepared for changing weather conditions. Interested volunteers must pre-register online at [www.nynjtc.org/workshop/intro-trail-maintenance-trail-u-865](http://www.nynjtc.org/workshop/intro-trail-maintenance-trail-u-865).

### **Explore Teatown Lake**

**Sponsored by:** Teatown Lake Reservation  
**When:** Saturday, June 28 1-2pm  
**Where:** Teatown Lake Reservation, 1600 Spring Valley Road, Ossining

Pick up a net and join Erin Baker, down at the boathouse to find out. All Welcome! Free for members, \$5 for non-members. Programs require pre-registration. To register, call 914-762-2912 x 110.

### **Teaching Trails: A Community Path for Environmental Education**

**Sponsored by:** Greenburgh Nature Center  
**When:** Sun, June 29, 11:30am - 12:30pm  
**Where:** Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Road, Scarsdale

Join Greenburgh Nature Center for a Guided Trail Experience through the woodland forest. Maybe you'll discover who left

that track, which tree makes the best animal home, or which plant makes its own heat to help melt through the late winter ice! Program runs approximately 45 minutes. FREE (With support from Con Edison). For more information: [www.greenburghnaturecenter.org](http://www.greenburghnaturecenter.org).

### **How easy can it be? Composting for the whole family**

**Sponsored by:** Greenburgh Nature Center

**When:** Saturday July 5, 11am - 12pm

**Where:** Greenburgh Nature Center, 99 Dromore Road, Scarsdale

There's gold in those leaves, grass clippings, weeds and kitchen scraps! Come discover the magic of compost and learn how easy it can be to turn your yard and food wastes into valuable fertilizer for your garden. Members \$5, Non-members \$8. For more information: [www.greenburghnaturecenter.org](http://www.greenburghnaturecenter.org).

### **Monday Morning Bird Walks**

**Sponsored by:** Saw Mill River Audubon

**When:** Monday July 7, 7:30-9:30am

**Where:** Muscoot Farm off Route 100

Start your week by joining SMRA on their free weekly birding walks at local birding hotspots. Great for beginners and experienced birders alike! Call or email for directions and where to meet or if you want to borrow binoculars; otherwise no RSVP needed. Note the earlier start time of 7:30 am for spring and summer walks. Meet 7:30am in the main parking area for Muscoot Farm off of Route 100. For more information call (914) 666-6503.

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We hope you find the information contained within this E-News relevant and useful. As always, please keep in touch and let us know your thoughts and ideas regarding environmental issues throughout the County.

Sincerely,

Federated Conservationists of Westchester County

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