

Volume 3 Issue 7
July 2021



New Paltz Climate Smart Newsletter

July Climate Change Solutions *Meetup*: The Future has Arrived: Why Your Next Car Should be Electric!

Have you thought about getting an EV (Electric Vehicle)? Are you hesitant to make the leap from fossil fuel to electric cars? Perhaps you are exploring this option but have remaining questions. This meetup will be an opportunity to hang out with EV owners and other folks who are in the same boat as you.



Samrat Pathania, a local teacher and EV enthusiast, will talk about selecting, driving, and charging an electric car as well as the ecological and financial reasons to switch to EVs. We would love for you to join us even if you already have an electric vehicle. You are welcome to share your journey of making the decision to buy an EV and your experience.

There will be lots of time for questions and answers as well as discussion.

Jul 6, 2021 6:00 - 7:30 PM

<https://zoom.us/j/98544932462?pwd=NXFWaUtlNlVJV3lyWVBERHlnQVduZz09>

Meeting ID: 985 4493 2462

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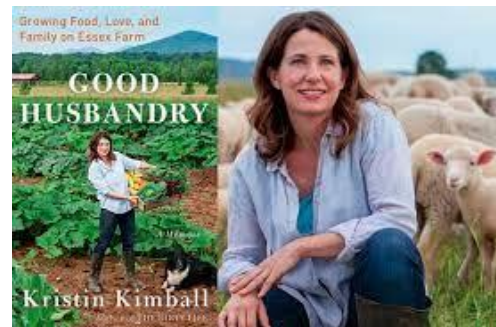
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Climate Smart Book Club: June Review and July Book Pick

The June book for our Climate Smart Book Club was *Under a White Sky: The Nature of the Future* by Elizabeth Kolbert. Orelle Feher shares her experience of the book: “I was impressed by examples presented of how man's attempt to rectify problems in the natural world has caused problems possibly equal to or worse than the original problem. While this is acknowledged it is not always the case because some of man's interventions have had positive results. The feeling I came away with after reading this book leaned toward resignation to what seems to be the impossible circumstances of our climate crisis. Perhaps this is a reality we humans need to incorporate into our approach to the issue of climate change.”

Our book pick for July is by the celebrated author of the beloved bestseller *The Dirty Life* and is the daughter in law of New Paltz's own Dan and Ann Guenther. *The Dirty Life* chronicled Kimball's move from New York City to 500 acres near Lake Champlain where she started a new farm with her partner, Mark. In *Good Husbandry*, she reveals what happened over the next five years at Essex Farm.



Farming has many ups and downs, and the middle years were hard for the Kimballs. Mark got injured, the weather turned against them, and the farm faced financial pressures. Meanwhile, they had two small children to care for. How does one traverse the terrain of a maturing marriage and the transition from being a couple to being a family? How will the farm survive? What does a family need in order to be happy?

Kristin had chosen Mark and farm life after having a good look around the world, with a fair understanding of what her choices meant. She knew she had traded the possibility of a steady paycheck, of wide open weekends and spontaneous vacations, for a life and work that was challenging but beautiful and fulfilling. So with grit and grace and a good sense of humor, she chose to dig in deeper. Featuring some of the same local characters and cherished animals first introduced in *The Dirty Life*, (Jet the farm dog, Delia the dairy cow, and those hardworking draft horses), plus a colorful cast of aspiring first-generation farmers who work at Essex Farm to acquire the skills they need to start sustainable farms of their own, *Good Husbandry* is about animals and plants, farmers and food, friends and neighbors, love and marriage, births and deaths, growth and abundance.

**Next meeting of the Climate Smart Book Club:
July 20th, 2021 7:00 – 8:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/91066225574?pwd=TIVKMU9vNWkxMGE5ZzdTM2VabWMxQT09>

Meeting ID: 910 6622 5574 Passcode: 605408

One tap mobile +19292056099,,91066225574#,,,,*605408# US (New York)

ONE ENVIRONMENTAL STEP AT A TIME

By Jim O'Dowd

Here are nine actions that you can do that are climate smart!

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) 100% renewable electricity; Fixed rate no contract; Virtual solar panels. Add Community solar for 10% discount. Hudson Valley Community Power; 845-859-9099 x 2.

Energy Audit: Contact Cornell Cooperative Extension, Sullivan County, for a free energy audit.
845-292-6180; Sean Welsh Energy Resource Educator.

Buying Organic: This is a vote for no pesticides in our food, safety for farm workers and eliminating toxins from our soil and aquifers. Yes, it's more expensive so check out ewg.org/foodnews/dirty-dozen-clean-15 for a guide to foods that you really should buy organic and those that are not absolutely necessary. Buy local. Join a Community Supported Agriculture Farm (CSA).

Composting: Use the compost bins at the Reformed Church, the new bins at the town hall or start one in your yard. Avoid food waste traveling all the way to a land fill near Syracuse, plus help turn dirt into soil.

Conservation: Turn off lights in empty rooms, turn down the heat in cold weather and monitor AC in hot weather. Take shorter showers. Avoid plastics as much as possible—no easy task in our society. Buy less. *Rethink-Refuse-Reduce-Reuse-Repair-Recycle* in that order. Eat lower on the food chain. Try a meatless Monday

Advocacy: Vote and voice your opinions to politicians and corporate leaders. Join Caring for Creation (C4C), New Paltz Climate Action Coalition (CAC), Climate Smart Communities or another environmental group. There's power in numbers. Contact Jim (see below) for more info.

Small Actions: Small actions and successes do lead to bigger things. They build confidence and help to raise consciousness. That slight shift in consciousness can make all the difference as we become more aware of the challenges we face and take more ambitious actions to address them. Do what you can do, now! Consider every little act as a vote for the environment—our home.

Big Ticket Items: Solar Panels, Air Source Heat Pumps, Ground Source Heat Pump-Geothermal, Electric Vehicle. Go for it if you're able.

Guilt: The best time to lower your carbon footprint was 25 years ago. The second-best time is *right now*. As for guilt... if it motivates you—great. If it makes you depressed and immobilized then *fuhgeddaboutit!* The longest journey always starts with the first step. So, take that step—*please* take that step! Action and movement are great ways to fight depression.

CCA – Letters from Central Hudson Explained

By Jeff Domanski

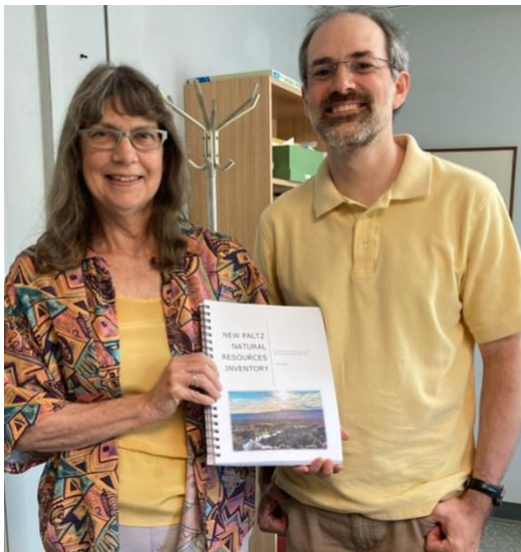
Did you just receive a letter from Central Hudson talking about a switch to Columbia Utilities Power LLC for your electricity supply? FYI - this is for New Paltz's Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program, through which 10 Hudson Valley communities selected Columbia to provide the fixed rate of 6.573 cents/kWh for the next 3 years (through June 2024) for 100% renewable-sourced electricity. This was explained in a letter from the Town of New Paltz, mailed on May 19th. Unfortunately, Central Hudson did not use the same language they used in an email sent to a number of customers before this renewal of the CCA program went into effect.

Hopefully this reduces any concern/confusion. If you have questions, please call the Hudson Valley Community Power team at 845-859-9099

Natural Resource Inventory (NRI)

By Amanda Gotto

This project is finally completed! The Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) report, maps, and online Story Boards were approved by the Town and Village Boards at their joint meeting on June 3. You can electronically view the NRI documents and online interactive Story Boards on the Town website by searching for "NRI". Hard copies of the NRI report and maps are available at Town Hall, Village Hall, and Elting Library reference room.



The New Paltz Natural Resources Inventory identifies, maps, and describes the many natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources found in the Town and Village. It is intended to provide information to help guide long-term decision-making related to planning, development, and conservation.

This NRI updates and consolidates the wide breadth and depth of resource information in New Paltz. Together with the online Story Boards (<https://arcg.is/1Sf0nu>), the NRI enables consolidated access to information about the unique resources in New Paltz not only to elected and appointed officials, but to residents, agencies and organizations, community groups, land development applicants, and researchers.

Major funding for this project was from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund through a grant to the Town from the Hudson River Estuary Program of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Town Compost Bins and Pollinator Garden

Have you been by the Community Center lately? If not, come take a look. The compost bins are open for business! The pollinator garden has been de-weeded, planted, and mulched! The Pollinator Paradise signs are in place! The exquisite murals are hung!

None of this could have happened without the donations of money, time, and materials of so many of you – a huge thanks!

Please come by the Community Center to use your compost bins and admire your pollinator garden and student artwork

If you would like to get involved in this project, please contact us at newpaltzpollinatorparadise@gmail.com. We can still use help watering and weeding 😊



UCCRA Declares Plastic-Free-July

The UCRRA Zero Waste Seminar Project aims to raise community awareness about the impact of waste reduction as a form of pollution prevention. We join the growing community concerned about the effects of plastic on wildlife, human health, our communities, our climate, and our watershed. Join UCRRA in celebrating Plastic-Free-July and pledge to be plastic-free, because plastic pollutes!

The UCRRA Zero Waste Seminar Project will call on our community members to rethink waste through zero waste practices, resulting in improved public health and environmental conservation. 'Zero waste' living is a lifestyle that drastically reduces the amount of garbage we make on a daily basis. Simple choices, habits, and behaviors can make a huge difference! Through innovative education and community engagement, participants in our webinar series will learn new skills and practices about zero waste concepts, gain knowledge about the waste-climate connection, and help to build a culture of pollution prevention in Ulster County.

Sign up for a Zero Waste Seminar *Click on the link below to learn more and sign up.*

<https://ucrra.org/events-classes/zero-waste-seminar-project/>

New Paltz Climate Smart is a sponsor of Plastic-Free-July and is working on a project to decrease single use plastics and other containers at area restaurants. We are looking at a pilot tiffin project and seek restaurants willing to participate. Email newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com if you are interested in learning more.



Be Plastic-Free because Plastic Pollutes!

According to NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, Plastics make up 13% of all municipal waste generated in New York, and approximately 17% of the material buried in landfills (2010).
40% of plastic produced today is used for packaging; which is used once and then discarded in the landfill where it could take more than 500 years to start to break down.
Most of the plastic used today cannot be recycled tomorrow!

Plastic pollutes watersheds!

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) claims that each year, 8 million tons of plastic enters the world's oceans and researchers believe much of it comes from activities on land, including litter sources (2019). Marine debris damages habitat, transports invasive species, and disrupts aquatic food chains, among other serious effects. Microplastics/fibers from clothing also pollutes water systems when released during laundering.

Plastic impacts wildlife!

Ocean plastic pollutes aquatic ecosystems and impacts wildlife at each level of the food chain. Marine life are entangled, injured, or killed due to marine debris. Wildlife may mistakenly ingest plastic debris and chemicals that bio-accumulate up the food chain, which is harmful to the health of fish, seabirds, and other animals – including humans!

Plastic pollutes our communities!

Everyone deserves a clean neighborhood and to enjoy the natural beauty Ulster County has to offer. In the Nation's Largest Litter Study, Keep America Beautiful reports that the presence of litter in a community is believed to decrease property values by as much as 7%. Plastic makes up 19% of all litter found on U.S. roadways (2010). Plastic litter impacts recreation, outdoor activities, tourism, and a sense of pride in our communities.

Plastic impacts human health!

Researchers are continuing to study the effects of plastic use on public health. Microplastics are very small plastic fragments and scientists have found microplastics in seafood, sea salt, tap water, beer, and even honey (NOAA, 2019). Reducing our use of plastics may have health and safety benefits, reducing long term exposure to chemicals that may cause illnesses.

Plastic pollutes our environment!

Globally, we produce roughly 310 million tons of plastic each year. Almost all plastic is made from non-renewable fossil fuels (Project Drawdown, 2019). Plastic production is an energy and chemical intensive process, resulting in toxic emissions of sulfur oxides, nitrous oxides, methanol, ethylene oxide, and other volatile organic compounds (Ecology Center Plastics Task Force, 2020).

Waste impacts Ulster County's Carbon Footprint

New York manages waste using large regional landfills as opposed to local waste management systems. That means that waste must travel far distances for final disposal, which creates green house gas emissions from long-hauling. In Ulster County, each trip to the landfill travels over 480 miles round trip! It's estimated that 4% of Ulster County's GHG emissions are generated from the solid waste sector (Ulster County, 2018).



UCRRA
Zero Waste
Seminar Project



The UCRRA Zero Waste Seminar is a community engagement project by the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency, celebrating Plastic Free July and the many ways we can prevent pollution from our waste.

Funding provided by the Environmental Protection Fund as administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Any opinions, findings, and/or interpretations of data contained herein are the responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the opinions, interpretations or policy of Rochester Institute of Technology and its NYS Pollution Prevention Institute or the State.

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New Paltz Climate Smart July Calendar

Tuesday July 6th 6:00 pm: Climate Change Solutions *Meetup*: The Future has Arrived: Why Your Next Car Should be Electric!

<https://zoom.us/j/98544932462?pwd=NXFWaUtlNlVJV3lyWVBERHlnQVduZz09>

Monday July 19th at 7:00 pm monthly Climate Smart Task Force meeting
[Link to Zoom Meeting of Task Force](#)

Tuesday July 20th at 7:00 pm Climate Smart Book Club: Animal Husbandry

Monday July 26th at 7:00 pm Ulster County Climate Smart Committee
<https://zoom.us/j/94174947702>

If you have any questions about anything in this newsletter, please contact Janelle Peotter, Climate Smart Coordinator at newpaltzclimatesmart@gmail.com



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