

# Campus Forum

A publication for the employees of Rivier College



## Bill McKibben Encourages Students to Become Activists

“If I can do this kind of work as an activist, so can you,” Bill McKibben told students attending an FYS program on October 9. Twenty years ago, McKibben wrote the first book on global warming. “We can see the scientific method working and the political system failing almost completely and utterly over the same period,” he said, despite the fact that most Americans are convinced that we need to do something to combat climate change.

McKibben told the audience that he was 27 when he wrote *The End of Nature*. “My naïve thought was that people would read it and go do what needed to be done,” he said. That didn’t happen.

Two years ago, McKibben decided he needed to do something beyond speaking and writing about climate change. He organized a five-day march from Robert Frost’s summer writing retreat to Burlington, Vermont—more than 1,000 people participated. At a rally on the shore of Lake Champlain, the marchers demanded that politicians sign a petition to cut carbon emissions 80% by the year 2050.

When McKibben saw a story saying that the rally had been the largest gathering to date on global warming, he decided to spread the word beyond Vermont. He and six college students began the Step It Up campaign. They e-mailed people to ask them to organize demonstrations on April 14. The result: 1400 demonstrations in all 50 states—the largest day of environmental activism since the first Earth Day.

McKibben says that the demonstrations were exciting and effective—within days, presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama had both changed their environmental platforms. But six weeks later, scientists reported that Arctic sea ice was melting more rapidly than they had anticipated. “The problem was much more dire than we’d thought,” said McKibben.



Bill McKibben signs a copy of *Deep Economy* for a student after his presentation.

Bill McKibben, continued on page 2



## Agape Community to Discuss Sustainable Living

Suzanne Belote Shanley and Brayton Shanley, two of the founders of the Agape Community in Ware, Massachusetts, will visit Rivier on Monday, November 10.

The Agape Community has a Catholic identity and ecumenical and interfaith outreach committed to sustainable living and an engaged practice of nonviolence. They offer short and long-term retreats which have inspired people to live a more simple, creative lifestyle emphasizing a theology grounded in a sound ecology rather than consumption.

Members of the Agape Community drive a car powered by recycled vegetable oils and live in a straw-baled house that uses solar power. “They show people how you can use what you have. They find ways you can be closer to the earth while preserving some sense of community, where people need each other to get by,” says Mary Jane Silvia, Director of Campus Ministry.

The program is free and open to the public. Sponsored by Campus Ministry and the Green Campus Committee.

## Graduate Student Named Sam's Club Teacher of the Year

Katie LeLievre, a student in Rivier's graduate special education certification program, received the annual Sam's Club Teacher of the Year Award. She teaches seventh grade language arts at Hudson Middle School in Hudson, N.H. The award included a \$1,000 check for LeLievre's school as well as a personal gift certificate to Sam's Club.

Bill McKibben, continued from page 1

"Everyone dramatically underestimated how sensitive the planet's balance was."

A one-degree rise in Earth's average temperature was enough to set off a feedback loop that caused frozen undersea methane stores to melt, releasing more greenhouse gasses into the environment. McKibben says that since change is happening quickly, we've got to figure out how to respond quickly.

Scientists have determined that the greatest amount of carbon that can safely be in the atmosphere is 350 parts per million. "Anything above that means we're in grave danger. We're already at 380 and we're going up 2 parts per million a year," McKibben said. "But at least we have a number—we have one powerful fact about the world we live in."

World leaders are meeting in Copenhagen to develop a follow-up to the Kyoto Protocol. "That treaty will be our last chance to really do something about climate change," McKibben said. He and his Step It Up collaborators have decided to try to publicize the number we need to reach to reduce the risk of dramatic climate change to put pressure on negotiators around the world who will participate in the talks in Copenhagen.

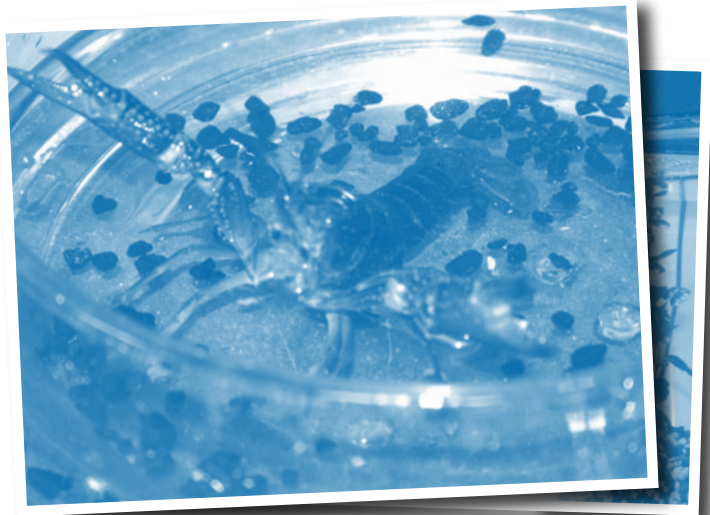
McKibben also discussed ideas presented in his book *Deep Economy*, the common reading for students in the First Year Seminar program. He explained that our culture's dependence on fossil fuel has made us rich, destroyed our climate, and made us the first people on earth who don't need neighbors for anything. As a result, McKibben said, Americans feel an enormous loss of connection with each other.

The reemergence of the farmer's market has been good for the environment and for communities. Shoppers at farmer's markets typically enjoy fresher food that tastes better and engage in more conversations than shoppers at supermarkets.

McKibben told the students in the audience, "You people are particularly well-situated to understand what I'm talking about if you pay attention. In college, you live as humans have lived for the last thousands of years—as a community." ■

## Rivier adds Aquatic Research Laboratory

In October, Rivier College opened an aquatic lab for student and faculty research. The lab includes both salt water and fresh water tanks.



Dr. Susan Barbaro, Associate Professor of Biology, says that the new lab is a great addition to Rivier's facilities. The College already had extensive instrumentation for protein characterization, microbe identification, tissue culture, anaerobic growth analysis, electrophoretic separations, centrifugation, enzyme assay, electronic cell counting and genetic analysis. "The new lab gives students another way to get hands-on experience, especially students interested in the biology program's new environmental science concentration," says Dr. Barbaro.

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—Dr. Barbaro

Working with Associate Professor Dr. Sue Cooke, senior biology major Ryan Carney has developed a research project examining how well crayfish detect different wavelengths of light. "Crayfish generally exhibit avoidance responses to light. Ryan is monitoring heart and ventilation rates while exposing the crayfish to light of different wavelengths across the visible spectrum and UV," Dr. Cooke explains.

In addition to advising student projects, both Dr. Barbaro and Dr. Cooke will conduct their own research in the lab. Dr. Barbaro's research focuses on microbial ecology in freshwater ecosystems, while Dr. Cooke will study the effects of temperature and salinity on lobster physiology. ■

# Faculty and Staff News:

publications, presentations, professional accomplishments and more...

**Dr. Ann Ackerman**, Associate Professor of Education, recently attended a dialogue on improving mental health and trauma informed services for refugee/resettled youth and their families in Concord, NH. The session included a report on a study conducted by researchers at Wellesley College under an Endowment for Health grant. The other attendees at this invitation-only forum included educators, mental health specialists, and municipal and state representatives. Dr. Ackerman is Chair of the Nashua Ethnic Awareness Committee which has two subcommittees: the Granite State Health and Wellness Initiative and Disproportionate Minority Contact.

Professor of Computer Science and Mathematics **Dr. Vladimir Riabov** presented "Applying Software Quality Metrics in Object-Oriented Design and Testing of Networking Systems" at the NEQC 57th Conference of the American Society for Quality (ASQ) held in Marlborough, Massachusetts on October 14-15, 2008. More than 300 engineers, scholars, and managers from New England attended this conference.

Senior Lecturer in Psychology **Dr. Jane Dwyer** was interviewed for the newsletter *Online Classroom's* "Tips from the Pros" column. Dr. Dwyer offered seven tips for personalizing an online course. Her suggestions ranged from sending students an introductory letter to offering students the chance to facilitate online discussions.

New Hampshire State Commissioner of Education Dr. Lionel Tracy visited Education Instructor **Joann Nichols'** Parent, Teacher, Learner, and Community class and her Advanced Psychology of Education class to interact with students and discuss the Follow the Child initiative. Dr. David Elkind will join the Parent, Teacher, Learner class via Blackboard discussion to answer questions on his book, "The Hurried Child," which is being used in the course.

Senior lecturer **Frederick T. Dehner** has been selected for inclusion in the *2009 Who's Who in America*. From 1986 through spring 2008, he taught undergraduate and graduate courses in the Division of Business Administration; since fall 2005, he has taught biostatistics and mathematics courses in the Division of Sciences. He is also a popular facilitator for the RISE program, offering courses such as Slow Down and Enjoy Life, Our Changing Earth, The History of the New York City Subway System, and The German Navy in World War II.

## Sympathy

Sympathy to the friends and family of mathematics education major **Clara Burroughs**, who died on October 9.

## Welcome

**Darrell Lee** has joined the Business Office as an Accounts Receivable and Collections Specialist.

from the office of  
*Human Resources*

### United Way Campaign:

The 2009 campaign has begun—you are invited to participate. If you have not received a giving form and would like to contribute, please contact Lynessa at ext. 8717.

### Open Enrollment reminder:

Open enrollment for 2009 benefits is November 4 through November 21. All benefits eligible employees will receive a packet of information on or before November 4 via campus mail. Anyone who will be on vacation during this time should notify Diana Strano before November 4 at [dstrano@rivier.edu](mailto:dstrano@rivier.edu).

Open Enrollment (non-mandatory) Informational Meeting Schedule will be held in the Dion Center Board Room. Meeting dates and times are:

Wednesday, November 5, 7-8 a.m.

Thursday, November 6, 10-11 a.m.

Thursday, November 6, 2-3 p.m.

# Events

## October 28

- Faculty-Staff Annual Fund Campaign Kickoff  
Dion Center Reception Room, 11:30 a.m.

## November 6

- Invisible Children Schools for Schools Campaign  
Sylvia Trottier Hall Room 235,  
1 p.m. and 7 p.m.

## November 7

- Biology Seminar Series: Sustaining Fish Populations and the Fishing Industry  
Mendel Hall Room 201, 2:30 p.m.

## November 10

- Community Sustainability  
Dion Center Reception Room, noon

## November 13

- Ethics in Healthcare  
Dion Center Reception Room, 6:30 p.m.



**Rivier**  
COLLEGE

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## Celebrate the Faculty-Staff Annual Giving Campaign Kickoff

Rivier's Faculty-Staff Annual Fund Campaign Committee invites Rivier employees to attend a harvest luncheon celebrating the launch of the 2008-2009 Campaign. The luncheon will take place on Tuesday, October 28, 2008 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Dion Center Reception Room. The kickoff will include a brief speaking program and raffle prizes.

Please RSVP to Tim Starkey at [tstarkey@rivier.edu](mailto:tstarkey@rivier.edu) or ext. 8512.



REACHING NEW HEIGHTS  
THE RIVIER COLLEGE FACULTY-STAFF CAMPAIGN

## Sign up to Create a Basket of Blessing

Campus Ministry is looking for departments and organizations willing to contribute baskets for Rivier's annual Thanksgiving project. Local human services organizations distribute food baskets to needy families in the Greater Nashua area. Baskets should be assembled and decorated by November 24. Basket sign-up forms are available in the Office of Campus Ministry or from Meghan Coyle at [mcoyle@rivier.edu](mailto:mcoyle@rivier.edu).