

RUNNING FOR YOUR LIFE



The 'Loop' is a special event for all of us: for some, because of the beauty of the Reservation in spring, for others, it is the romance of the Leatherman's story of personal pilgrimage. These reasons actually reflect two fundamental impulses that are critical to human life: the importance of beauty and the nature of meaning that stories carry for us. The 'Loop,' in a sense, is a kind of running for your life.

This idea of running for our lives takes on new significance these days, in the light of the climate change that threatens this beauty and throws into question the very meaning of things. A small group of us in the Town of Bedford are attempting to address the threat by fostering the political will needed to get us – all of us – doing simple, everyday things, like heating and eating, traveling and buying, a little differently. For, that's what it comes down to. We believe that the best and simplest way to do this is by getting us all talking to each other, at the most local level, about the challenge, in an appropriately informed and basically organized way that will result in simple but essential actions: 'Conversations-for-Action' we're calling the effort. We can do it at home, in school, in the office, in the neighborhood. Simple, perhaps; critical, certainly. In fact, it is the way human beings have always addressed the challenges they faced.

Which brings me back to the 'Loop' where I think we could begin this conversation for ourselves: with the spring-awakened trees and plants, with the cold spring water of the rushing river, with

the bemused birds and animals we will encounter, and with each other's bodies and breath and sweat. In other words, we could run the 'Loop,' this year, with a heightened awareness of the beauty that is now threatened, and a greater sense of our own personal pilgrimage in these days of change. The 'Celtic-Navajo' chant we've offered at the start of the race this past couple of years could serve as a reminder to us as we run:

*Beauty before me as I run
Beauty behind me as I run
Beauty below me as I run
Beauty above me as I run
Beauty beside me as I run
Beauty within me as I run.*

*In beauty may we walk.
In beauty may we see.
In beauty may we all be.*

Then, we could bring the 'Loop' conversation back home: back to our friends and colleagues, the way we always do, though, this year with a new sense of significance and purpose: running for our lives.

*Daniel Martin
Cross River, NY*