

The Upper Delaware

The quarterly newsletter about the environment and people of the Upper Delaware River

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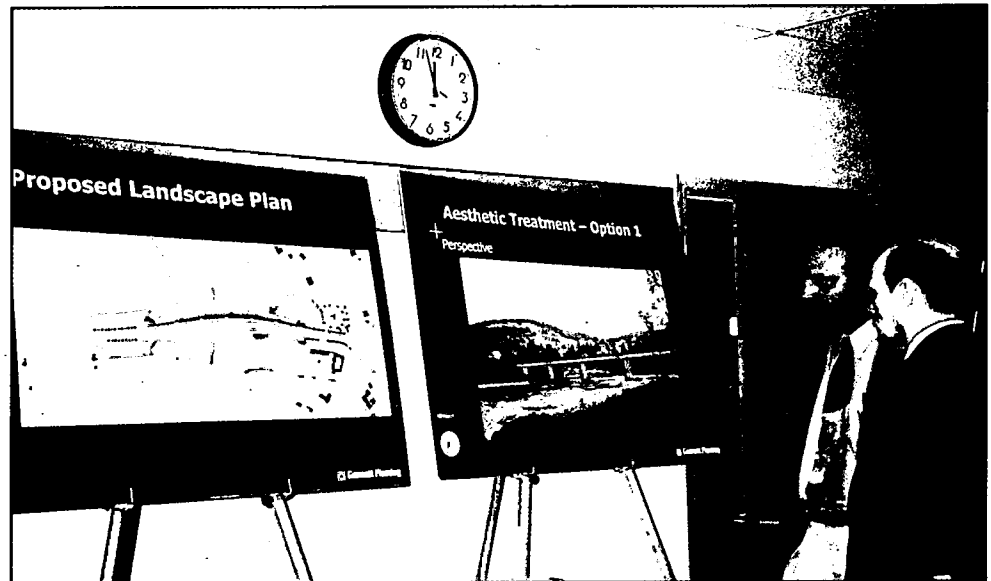
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**The Upper Delaware
welcomes submissions and
new subscribers (free)!**

Send items to Newsletter
Editor Laurie Ramie at the
Upper Delaware Council,
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list by filling out the coupon
on Page 7. Thank you.



NEW BRIDGE: Bernard Walko, at left, senior civil engineer bridge supervisor with the PA Department of Transportation, discusses construction plans for the Barryville, NY-Shohola, PA Bridge with Dave Forney, superintendent of the National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, at the annual meeting of the NY-PA Joint Interstate Bridge Commission held June 12 in Dunmore, Pa. Bids for the estimated \$8.4 million contract to replace the 1941 bridge with a new crossing featuring historical plaques along sidewalk balconies will be let this fall, with completion expected in 2005. (Photo by Laurie Ramie)

Bridge Commission Plans Work On Upper Delaware Crossings

Three new bridges are slated for construction in the Upper Delaware River Valley area over the next four years.

The New York-Pennsylvania Joint Interstate Bridge Commission held its annual meeting on June 12 at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PENNDOT) District 4-0 Office in Dunmore to discuss inspection findings, and allocate capital and maintenance expenditures, for the 10 bridges that cross the Delaware and its West Branch from Port Jervis, NY-Matamoras, PA north to Hancock, NY-Buckingham, PA.

Construction bids will be let this fall for replacement of the 1941 Barryville-Shohola Bridge. The successful contractor will receive a notice to proceed on or about December 1, 2003, provided all environmental approvals are in place.

As of that date, the contractor will be responsible for maintaining the bridge for vehicular use while the new crossing is

built at a slightly upstream arc from its present location.

Construction should take about two years. The new bridge is expected to cost \$9,240,000. Close to \$2 million has additionally been expended since 1996 on the feasibility study, preliminary engineering, and environmental review phase.

That work was prolonged by the archeologically-significant findings of artifacts from a 4,000-year-old Native American settlement on the bridge's Pennsylvania side, and the year 2000 discovery of endangered dwarf wedge mussels in the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River that required a clearance report.

The new Barryville-Shohola Bridge will expand from four to six spans and offer several unique design features based on public input, including a faux bluestone finish and a series of historical plaques in balconies over the piers along the pedestrian

Please see BRIDGES on Page 4

Most land along the Upper Delaware River is privately owned. Please be considerate and don't litter or trespass. Thanks!

Upper Delaware Profile: Melvin Decker

Mel Decker grew up just 100 yards away from the Upper Delaware River on Hook Road in Sparrowbush.

As his childhood playground, the river was the basis of many idyllic memories: setting up fishing lines off the Number 2 Railroad Bridge; chasing after empty boats swept downriver during floods; watching the activity at the local eel rack; and fishing near Cherry Island with his pals.

"It was a great place to grow up," Decker reflects.

Now at the age of 68, Decker still lives in Sparrowbush, although a bit further from the river. His appreciation for the scenic beauty and rich resources of the Upper Delaware River Valley has never wavered.

"I've always enjoyed it. All of my family likes the outdoors too, hunting and fishing," he says, adding with a laugh, "That's how I 'brainwashed' my kids into staying in this area. There's no place better for that than right here."

Decker attended Sparrowbush School through eighth grade, then Port Jervis High School. The 1953 graduate is helping organize his 50th class reunion in August.

Decker studied physical education at SUNY Cortland for two years. Returning home, he took a job assembling power steering units at Ford Motor Company in Mahwah, NJ, sharing the commutes with a few local residents also employed at Ford.

In 1958, Decker learned of an opening with the City of Port Jervis Department of Public Works. He passed the examination and hired on as a water plant trainee. Five years later, Decker was promoted to Water Superintendent.

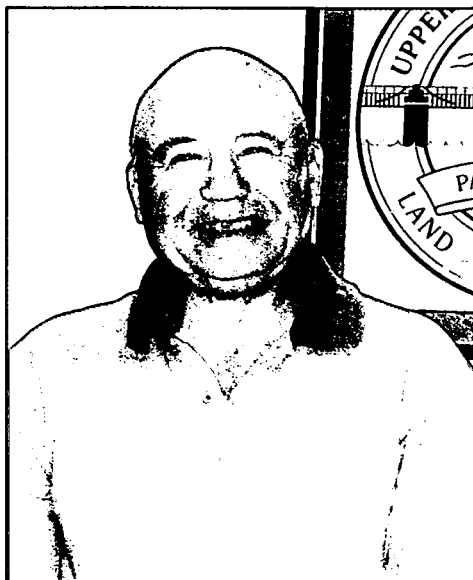
In addition to supervising seven employees, Decker was responsible for overseeing the operations of the plant which handled a million and a half gallons of water per day and was encompassed by 2,000 acres of watershed, three reservoirs, and 32 miles of water mains.

The rigorous infrastructure demands put Decker on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It also required keeping up with all the new water quality standards and available technologies.

Just before his January 1997 retirement which capped off 38 years of city employment, Decker supervised the installation of Port Jervis' new filtration system which was one of the first in New York State to use ozone disinfection.

In 1996, Decker accepted a new responsibility when the Deerpark Town Board asked him to serve as the town's 1st alternate to the Upper Delaware Council.

He succeeded Walter Myers in that position. Acting as 2nd alternates were former Deerpark Supervisor Robert Cunningham



Melvin Decker, Town of Deerpark

and current Supervisor James Chandler. Since 2002, Decker has been the town's sole alternate.

"It's been an education for me," he says. "I make sure to keep up with the minutes so that I know what's going on when I'm needed to attend a meeting."

As one whose time in the river valley pre-dates the existence of the 1986 River Management Plan for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, Decker believes that the UDC partnership "has accomplished a lot of stability in the valley. It's taken a lot of the unknown away and provided a hands-on way to get involved."

Throughout Decker's UDC tenure, Deerpark's representative to the Council has been Philip D. Chase, who also happens to be Decker's brother-in-law.

Mel and the former Dorothy Chase, a retired registered nurse, were high school sweethearts who married in 1957.

They have four sons: Grant of Waymart, Pa., a land surveyor; Steve of Port Jervis, an electrical engineer; Bruce, who works for New York City in Port Jervis' sewage plant; and Dave, a Yellow Freight supervisor also living in Port Jervis.

There are 11 Decker grandchildren ranging in age from 10 to 22.

A deacon at Deerpark Reformed Church and former Pop Warner football coach, Decker enjoys deer hunting, ice and trout fishing, woodworking, and golf. As a trained golf marshal, his most recent assignment was the Buick Open 11th hole.

Decker, who was in charge of "swatting flies" from the horses that his blacksmith father would shoe and had worked in the Eddy Farm Resort stables as a teenager, also owns a quarterhorse named Billy that he and the grandchildren ride. ❖

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Delaware River Sojourn Experience Reinforces Safety Value of Life Vests

By Laurie Ramie, UDC Public Relations

I've never been a "sporty" person. Outdoor adventures are best left to earthy, athletic types who possess the admirable ability to become one with nature while challenging themselves to new thrill levels.

Boating, however, strikes me as the great equalizer. People otherwise considered klutzy, creaky, fat or skinny, can navigate a canoe, kayak, or raft with impunity.

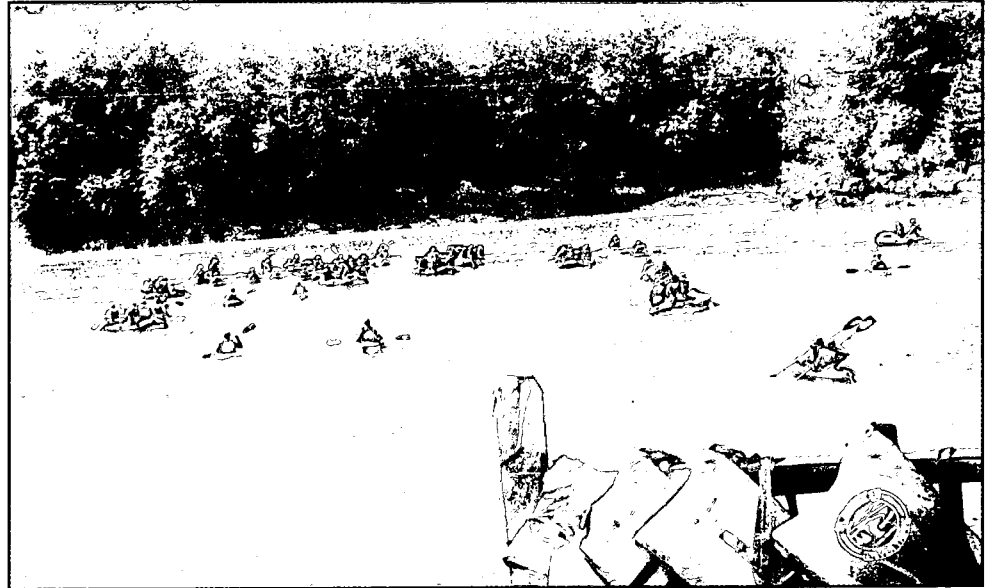
The Delaware River Sojourn annually invites novice and veteran paddlers alike to experience the river, from the river.

"This is not just a recreational event," said 2003 Sojourn Chairperson Suzanne Forbes at the June 14 kick-off ceremony in Narrowsburg. "It's an educational event. We want new people on board so we can teach them about all the natural, geological, cultural, and historical resources of the river."

After six years of working on the land support team for the "Upper" days, I finally took the plunge and decided to investigate the cause of Sojourners' great enthusiasm.

I accepted a friend's offer to borrow his sturdy 12-foot kayak that had once served me well on a flat, placid Delaware section. Sure, my boating skills were minimal based on that one kayak outing, a few canoe runs, and several fun rafting trips, but I had every confidence in the 25-member Sojourn planning committee and top-notch river safety crew.

As Sojourn Day 1 approached, the valley's recent deluge of rain had the river on the rise. Seven feet of unusually turbid, muddy water



AND THEY'RE OFF: The first wave of about 90 participants of the Delaware River Sojourn round the bend after launching from Lander's Narrowsburg Campground on Day 2, June 15.

moving at six times its normal speed caused me some trepidation as we launched from Callicoon, yet there I was - still upright, dry, and enjoying myself - when we reached the lunch stop at the Damascus, Pa. Access.

During that layover, we noticed that the river depth sign posted on the Cochecton-Damascus Bridge had inched up to nearly eight feet. Next stop: dreaded Skinners Falls.

I never had any intention of trying to paddle through those imposing Class II rapids. The

portage path, however, had flooded that morning with waist-high water. Jump in a raft, said the sympathetic safety folks, and your kayak will be carried around for you. Under their watchful eyes, canoes and kayaks proceeded to the extreme right while rafts were advised to head straight down the middle.

Like a bucking bronco, up and down we went, paddling furiously through the waves to keep control, until there, rising in front of our raft, was the biggest, scariest wall of water I have ever seen outside of the ocean.

A millisecond later, I was suddenly airborne, paddle still in hand, catapulted off the back wall of the raft. Four-foot waves pounded my face, sent a stream of 63-degree water up my nose, and roared in my ears.

Hearing someone shout, "Give her your paddle," I reached out for it blindly, gasping and trying to keep my head up. Finally, I made contact and the paddle drew me toward the same raft from which I'd been projected.

My 16-year-old rescuer grasped the shoulders of my life vest and pulled my dead-weight body up and into the raft with all his might, falling backwards with me on top until I could muster the energy to roll off him.

Three thoughts converged in my brain during those initial shocking, panicky moments in the water: 1. Help!; 2. Get into that back floating position that the safety crew had drilled us on; and, 3. I am NOT going to drown because my life vest is on tight.

On June 2, a similar high-water wave at Butler's Rift popped 17-year-old Obinna Okoro of Union, NJ out of his raft during a high school trip. His body wasn't recovered for eight days. He had taken off his life vest.

Please, respect the power of the river. ❖



SOJOURN ADMIRALS: The Upper Delaware section of the Delaware River Sojourn saluted two "Lord High Admirals" at the Day 1 kick-off program on June 14. Alan J. Sorensen, left, Commissioner of Planning and Community Development for Sullivan County, and Richard B. Crandall, right, Supervisor of the Town of Tusten, were recognized for their respective contributions to the river valley. The honorary title originated with Daniel Skinner, the first man to navigate a raft of logs down the river in the spring of 1767, earning the respect of his contemporaries who forever after addressed him as Admiral of the Delaware.

walkway.

The plans also incorporate development of a new Barryville Fishing Access Site next to the bridge as requested by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Pending construction, DOT officials pledged to inspect the bridge at least monthly due to concerns raised this spring by Shohola Township, the Upper Delaware Council (UDC), and National Park Service (NPS) about loose concrete that had been falling from the bridge's underside, some pieces of which were observed up to two square feet in size.

While the problem areas primarily involved the NY and PA shoreline spans, the NPS issued a warning to boaters just before Memorial Day weekend of the potential hazard from falling debris.

DOT crews acted quickly when notified to knock off additional loose concrete with the use of a crane. Both shorelines were fenced off and signed for no trespass. PENNDOT workers have also repaired two holes that had opened up on the deck surface, one with a concrete fill and the other with a steel plate covering.

The contractor will be required to utilize an approved netting system on the current bridge as it is being demolished at the point when the new crossing is ready for traffic. An accelerated schedule for the netting will be considered if the bridge concrete shows further signs of deterioration.

Pond Eddy Bridge

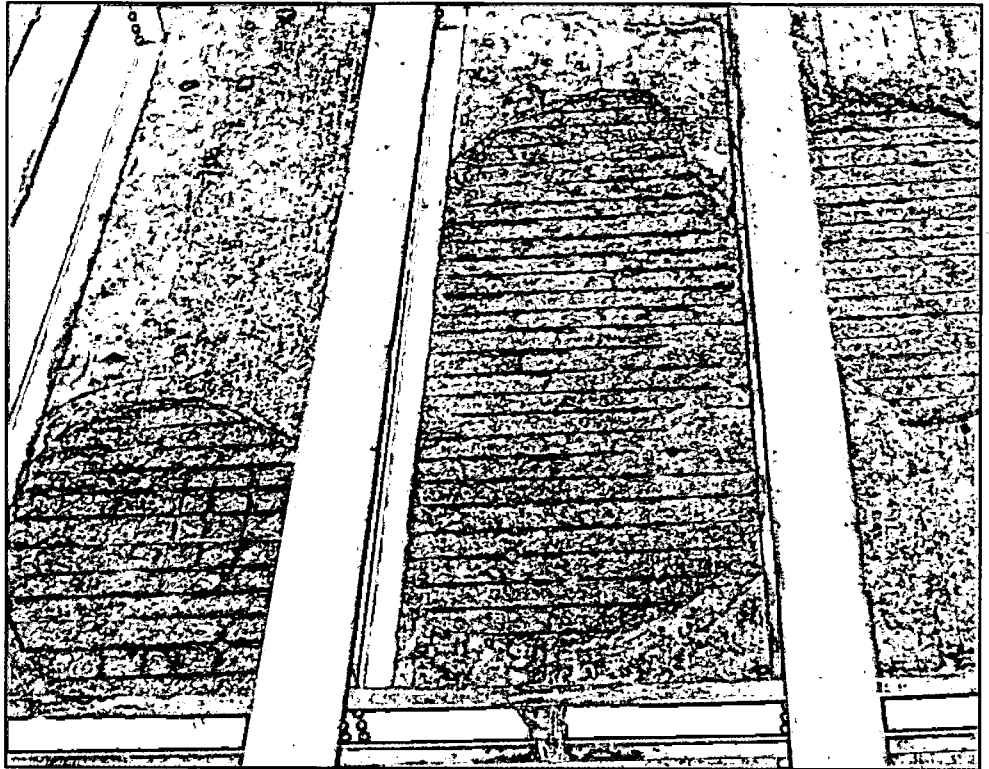
The Joint Interstate Bridge Commission approved a schedule which calls for replacement of the Pond Eddy, NY-Pond Eddy, PA Bridge in 2005 at an estimated cost of \$6 million, plus \$800,000 for the feasibility study, preliminary engineering, and environmental review.

The single-lane, 504-foot bridge is currently posted with an eight-ton weight limit, which is too low for most emergency vehicles and service trucks.

The Pond Eddy crossing provides the only access from NYS Route 97 to the approximately 26 private residences on the PA side. Lands belonging to the PA Bureau of Forestry, PA Game Commission, and Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way are also accessed via the bridge.

A consultant's report studying alternatives, issued in February 2003, suggests that rehabilitating the 1904 bridge would only increase the weight limit posting to 13 tons without compromising the bridge's appearance.

The report recommends replacing the bridge with a four-span, concrete structure in an upstream location under a design-and-build contract that would include historical mitigation and architectural sensitiv-



SHEDDING CONCRETE: The underside of the 1941 Barryville-Shohola Bridge was missing chunks of concrete that were believed to be dislodged by the vibration of heavy traffic. When notified by Shohola Township on May 7 about the fallen pieces, a crew from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation was on-site within an hour to inspect it. Emergency repair work to knock off additional loose sections followed. (Photo by William E. Douglass)

ity requirements.

The proposed demolition of the Pond Eddy Bridge, listed since 1988 on the National Register of Historic Places, has created some controversy.

Groups which support its preservation will become consulting parties as the Commission works toward finalizing the review process. One problem has been that no entity has agreed to take over maintenance of the current bridge if it was left intact. Many Pond Eddy residents have conversely argued for replacement of the bridge in the interest of community safety.

Contracts Anticipated

The Bridge Commission has allocated \$7.5 million to replace the 1961 Callicoon, NY-Damascus, PA Bridge in the 2007 construction season.

More immediately, bids for a contract to replace the deck and add a sidewalk to the 1937 Hancock-Buckingham Bridge were to

be let by the end of June. During construction, a traffic signal will be installed at the bridge to allow one lane of travel to continue. The Commission has earmarked \$1,995,572 for this job.

Two other capital projects are both scheduled to be contracted out in 2004.

The Commission budgeted \$165,000 to repair the backwalls of the PA and NY abutments and the expansion dam on the pier of the 1939 Port Jervis-Matamoras Bridge, and allocated \$60,000 to repoint the stone masonry pier of the 1901 Skinners Falls, NY-Milanville, PA Bridge.

DOT crews are in the process of installing newly-fabricated bridge name signs viewable from the river. The one-foot-high brown signs with white lettering are being attached to the upstream side of each bridge, based on a request from the UDC and NPS at last year's NY-PA Joint Interstate Bridge Commission meeting. ❖

Book Tells History of Delaware River Bridges

A new book by historian Frank T. Dale chronicles 35 of the most historic bridges crossing the Delaware, some of which have served the residents of New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey for almost two centuries.

In "Bridges Over the Delaware River: A History of Crossings" (published March 3, 2003 by Rutgers University Press), Dale tells the stories behind each bridge, covering design, engineering, ownership, finances, politics surrounding construction, and the various floods and fires that often led to their destruction. Along the way, Dale recounts the history of the area surrounding each bridge. Dozens of rare photos and several maps illustrate the book, which is organized by geographic sections. ❖

UDC Presents 15th Annual Awards

The Upper Delaware Council presented 14 awards on April 27 to individuals and organizations that have enhanced the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Valley's quality of life or protected its resources at the UDC's 15th Annual Awards Ceremony.

One hundred and five guests attended the festivities at Central House in Beach Lake.

David E. Hess, director of the Pennsylvania Senate's Office of Policy Development and Research and former Secretary of the PA Department of Environmental Protection, delivered the keynote address.

Hess congratulated the UDC for its environmental activism achieved through a partnership of government and citizens, which he said was also the key to the success of Pennsylvania's \$650 million Growing Greener program that he had helped implement.

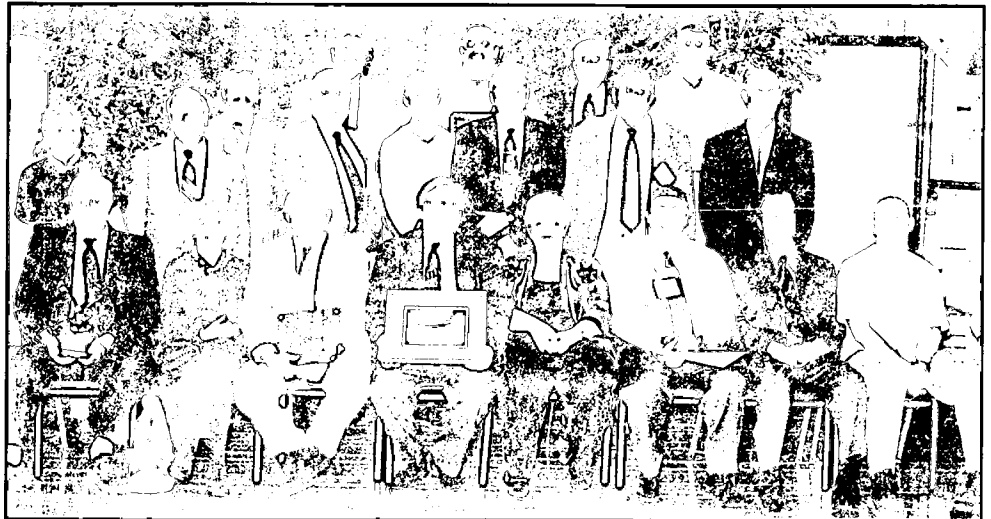
Awards were presented in 10 categories.

Distinguished Service Award: Retired Congressman **Benjamin A. Gilman** was recognized for his co-sponsorship of the 1978 Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River legislation and unwavering support of the river valley throughout his 1972-2002 tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Robin M. Daniels Memorial Lifesaving Award (land): Town of Highland Constable **Robert Maas**; Town of Lumberland Constables **Jason Hettler** and **Steve Crum**; New York State Police Troopers **Vincent Boyd**, **Thomas Loewke**, **Troy Parucki**, **Jason Mattice**; NYS SP Sgt. **Anthony Lupardo**; and neighbor/witness **David Hulse**, for rescuing Dave and Dorothy Sherman from their April 19, 2002 Barryville house fire.

Robin M. Daniels Memorial Lifesaving Award (water): **Andrew and Matthew Boyar** for preventing the drowning of two men in a York Lake boating accident on July 13, 2002 in the Town of Highland.

Outstanding Community Achievement



2003 HONOREES: Accepting awards at the Upper Delaware Council's 15th annual ceremony held April 27 at Central House Family Resort in Beach Lake, Pa. were, seated left to right: **Low Schmalzle**; **Yoke and John DiGiorgio**; keynote speaker **David E. Hess**; **Mary Curtis**; **Jason Hettler**; **Vincent Boyd**; and **Robert Maas**. Row 2: **Sandra Schultz**; **Dr. Richard Tortoriello**; **Joe Zenes**; **Ken Baim**; **John Grund**; **Joel Robinson**; **Andrew Monisera**; and **Thomas Loewke**. Row 3: **Andrew Boyar**; **David Hulse**; **Richard Egan**; and **Grant Turano**. (All photos by David B. Soete)

Award: Shohola Township 2002 Sesquicentennial (accepted by **Andrew Monisera**, Shohola Railroad & Historical Association)

Partnership Award: Calkins Creek Watershed Protection Project, accepted by the Wayne Conservation District (**Grant Turano**), USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (**Ed Sokoloski**), and Ducks Unlimited.

Volunteer Award: Ken Baim of Narrowsburg, NY

Community Service Award: Shohola Creek Watershed Conservancy of Pike County, PA (accepted by **Joe Zenes**)

Cultural Achievement Award: Mary Curtis, retired NPS Upper Delaware Historian and current Town of Delaware Historian

Recreation Achievement Award: National Park Service Upper Delaware unit's river

safety panels (accepted by **Sandra Schultz**)

Oaken Gavel Award: Low Schmalzle, 2002 UDC chairperson and Town of Highland representative

Special Recognition: Richard Egan, Delaware River Sojourn volunteer support

Special Recognition: Narrowsburg Eagle-Fest 2002, accepted by Nature's Art LLC (**John and Yoke DiGiorgio**) and Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce (**John Grund**)

Special Recognition: Joel Robinson, retired, NYS Department of Transportation

Special Recognition: Dr. Richard Tortoriello, 34-year career with Delaware River Basin Commission. ❖



THANKING RESCUERS: In an emotional highlight, Dorothy Sherman and her husband, Dave, far left, attended the UDC banquet to express their personal appreciation to the Highland and Lumberland town constables, and New York State Police troopers, who heroically extricated the couple from the fire that destroyed their Barryville home on April 19, 2002.



CHAIR WITH FLAIR: UDC Chairperson Bruce Selneck of Shohola Township handled his formal duties at the banquet with panache.

UDC Highlights Quarterly Activities

Upper Delaware Council (UDC) activity highlights from mid-March to mid-June 2003, not covered elsewhere, include:

SCIENTIFIC FLOWS

The UDC has joined an effort initiated this spring by The Nature Conservancy, with cooperation from the Delaware River Basin Commission, to establish scientifically-based flow needs criteria for the Upper Delaware River.

Various stakeholder groups are attempting to match the \$250,000 secured by Congressman Maurice Hinchey for an Upper Delaware River instream flows modeling project to be led by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The goals of the Committee on Ecological Function of the Upper River (CEFUR) include determining the flows needed to support a sustainable aquatic community, the best use of water available for release to the Delaware River, and the best options for release and storage of additional water.

RIVERS REGISTRY

As of a March 15 notice published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*, the Pike County portion of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River was officially added to the Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Registry, based on a petition submitted by the UDC on behalf of members Shohola, Lackawaxen, and Westfall townships.

The designation opens up priority grant funding opportunities for those townships with the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

RAILROAD RESPONSE

The UDC received a reply from the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to its letter supporting a change in federal laws that would require railroads to immediately notify local emergency responders in the event of any railroad mishaps that occur within their jurisdictions.

In a March 10 letter, FRA Administrator Allan Rutter explained that there is a combination of federal agency regulations and individual state statutes that are designed to require railroads to provide all interested governmental agencies with immediate notification of certain railroad accidents.

"FRA believes that if we were to change our immediate notification regulations to require railroads to notify local officials, we would possibly be interfering with existing State Statutes and/or existing practices already in place within some or all States to accomplish this objective," he writes.

In the absence of any injuries, fatalities, hazardous materials release, or public danger, no response from local authorities is needed in most cases. Railroad dispatchers do have local emergency num-



ALL ABOARD: One highlight of the Upper Delaware Heritage Alliance's "Rails in the River Valley" symposium held May 3 at the Lackawaxen, Pa. Fire Hall was a Railroaders' Reunion. Pictured from the left, Allen "Brownie" Barnes, Sr. of Barryville, NY; Edson "Mo" Mosher of Matamoras, Pa.; and Lew Schmalzle of Barryville offered fascinating anecdotes about their work on the Delaware Division of the Erie Railroad. Former Engineer Mosher intimately recalled his route's "105 miles of track and 234 curves." (Photo by David B. Soete)

bers on hand, though, and would make those calls when it was necessary and practical to do so, the letter stated.

WATER TRAIL

The first formal meeting of the Delaware River Water Trail Coalition since the awarding of a \$75,000 implementation grant from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources took place March 27 at Pocono Environmental Education Center in Bushkill, Pa.

Participants established subcommittees to start addressing the tasks outlined in the work plan.

The project involves developing a 224-mile recreational waterway from Hancock, NY to the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge in PA/NJ. Products will include a water trail guide listing public accesses and amenities, a web site, and GIS-based recreational maps. Promoting an ethic of conservation and responsible use is a primary goal.

TOWN GRANTS

On March 20, Empire State Development Corporation formally approved the UDC's application for \$75,000 in funding to be divided equally among its eight NYS member towns for projects which enhance economic development, promote tourism, and improve town-owned buildings.

Work is now underway and must be completed by the end of this year. The UDC will continue to administer the reimbursement grant program on behalf of the towns.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Representatives from the National Park Service (NPS) Upper Delaware Scenic and

Recreational River and the UDC met with U.S. Congresswoman Sue W. Kelly (19th District) on March 7 to brief her on the NPS Mongaup Interpretive Center project.

On April 10, the UDC's Government Officials Liaison Subcommittee met with Pennsylvania Representative Sandra Major (111th District) to familiarize her with the Council and its activities.

Both elected officials have picked up portions of the Upper Delaware River Valley through redrawing of district boundaries.

PPL PROJECT

At a May 15 public hearing convened by the PA Department of Environmental Protection to accept comments on PPL Lake Wallenpaupack's Section 401 State Water Quality Certification application, the UDC presented testimony expressing concern over possible water quality and quantity impacts to the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River and over the proposed 50-year term length of PPL's Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license, among other topics.

WATER SNAPSHOT

The Upper Delaware Council served as a co-sponsor for the Delaware River Basin Commission's 2003 Water Snapshot.

From April 22 to May 4, volunteers throughout the 13,539-mile Delaware River Basin tested water quality with common parameters to develop a "snapshot" of the basin's overall health.

The UDC assisted with publicity for the event, and in the distribution of special test kits and data collection forms. ❖

Byway Board Names Officers

The Upper Delaware Scenic Byway's Board of Directors elected officers and approved organizational bylaws at its June 2 meeting.

The board consists of nine charter members: Sullivan County; the Towns of Delaware, Cochection, Tusten, Highland, Lumberland, and Deerpark; the Village of Hancock; and the City of Port Jervis. Each municipality was asked to designate a voting representative and alternate. With a quorum of voting members present, a slate of officers was approved to serve until the board's first Annual Meeting to be called in April 2004.

Alan J. Sorensen, Commissioner of Sullivan County Planning and Community Development, was elected Chairperson.

Larry H. Richardson from the Town of Cochection will serve as Vice-Chairperson.

Peter Osborne, representing the City of Port Jervis, is Secretary-Treasurer.

Various local, state, and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations are being invited to participate on the board as non-voting members.

The Upper Delaware Scenic Byway's Certificate of Incorporation was officially approved on April 1. Registration with the New York State Charities Bureau and the federal Internal Revenue Service for tax-exempt status are proceeding.

Reimbursement for administrative set-up expenses was made possible through a \$20,000 New York Department of State grant secured by Senator John J. Bonacic.

On April 28, the National Scenic Byways Program announced the awarding of \$45,000 in FHWA grant funding to the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway for marketing objectives, including the development of a travel guide brochure and web site.

Byway signage was due to be installed along the NYS Route 97 corridor in July.

Call (845) 794-3000, ext. 5028, or write to Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc., P.O. Box 127, Narrowsburg, NY 12764 for further information. ❖

New Delaware Basin Map Available Online

Looking for a spot to launch your boat, or get an idea of how much water is flowing in a river or stream?

Check out "i-Map DelBasin," an Internet mapping project that features recreational opportunities in the Delaware River Basin.

The application identifies sites to launch boats, gauging stations that provide river flows, state and federal parks, and state and federal fish consumption advisories. There are also directions to get people to their desired locations.

I-Map DelBasin was developed by the Delaware River Basin Commission's Information Management Advisory Committee, consisting of GIS experts from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, along with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Geological Survey, and Lehigh University.

I-Map can be found on the web sites of

the DRBC (www.drbc.net) or the Delaware Estuary Program (www.delep.org).

The application customizes reference maps from the four states into one standardized map. It works best with Internet Explorer, version 5.0 and above.

The DRBC provided \$40,000 in funding for the project; DELEP and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, \$5,000 each. ❖

Visit July 27 RiverFest

RiverFest 2003, the 13th annual music, art, and environmental festival celebrating the Delaware River, will be held rain or shine on Sunday, **July 27**, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Main Street in Narrowsburg, NY.

Featured will be juried fine arts and crafts exhibits, live music, a poster auction, children's activities, refreshments, and information booths on environmental themes.

The event is co-sponsored by the Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce (845-252-7234) and the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance (252-7576). ❖

Battle of Minisink Commemorated

The 224th anniversary of the Upper Delaware River Valley's Battle of Minisink will be observed with ceremonies at the battle site in New York and the Grave of the Unknown Soldier in Pennsylvania.

On Sunday, **July 20**, the Sullivan County Historical Society, National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and Upper Delaware Heritage Alliance will sponsor a commemoration followed by a picnic for participants at the Minisink Battleground Park in Minisink Ford, NY.

The program begins at 2:30 p.m. under the pavilion with "Reflections on the Battle of Minisink" offered by Mary Curtis, retired historian with the National Park Service, and Peter Osborne, executive director of the Minisink Valley Historical Society.

At 4 p.m., the traditional ceremony at the hill-top monument site will begin. Sullivan County Historian John Conway will deliver the keynote address.

All are welcome to join in a picnic supper immediately afterwards. Hamburgers, hot dogs, rolls, soda, and paper products will be furnished. Guests are asked to contribute side dishes and desserts.

Throughout the **July 18-20** weekend, colonial era re-enactors from the Navasing Long Rifles will be encamped at the Minisink Battleground Park and invite people to visit them.

On Tuesday, **July 22**, the annual commemoration at the Grave of the Unknown Soldier, organized by Pike County Historian George J. Fluhr, will take place at 4 p.m. at the memorial in Lackawaxen, Pa.

Major Robert F. Gallagher, U.S. Army, retired, will deliver the keynote address.

The Battle of Minisink occurred on July 22, 1779. After an Indian raid in Port Jervis, militia followed the raiders along the Delaware River, catching up with them at Minisink Ford. A bloody, three-hour battle ensued. Bodies of the defeated military men were left on the battlefield for 43 years until an expedition from Goshen retrieved the remains they were able to find. ❖

New Subscribers and Address Changes Welcomed

If you have friends or colleagues who would be interested in receiving our free newsletter, we will be happy to add them to the mailing list. Please also advise us of any address changes to help update our records. Return this notice to the Upper Delaware Council, P.O. Box 192, Narrowsburg, NY 12764, or call (845) 252-3022.

New Address:

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip+4 _____

Old Address:

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip+4 _____

[] Check here to be removed from our mailing list.

15th Annual Summer Raft Trip

Saturday, August 2, 2003

Sponsored by the Upper Delaware Council

Two river trips are offered for your convenience:

- 1 - Pond Eddy to Matamoras (10 miles, est. 5 hours)
- 2 - Staircase Base to Matamoras (6 miles, 3 hours)

Register by
July 25! Cost:
\$17 adults; \$10
ages 8-18; free,
ages 4-7.

All are welcome to join the UDC for this fun river adventure. Kittatinny Canoes will provide the rafts, paddles, life vests, shuttle transportation, and safety instructions. Minimum occupancy per raft is four people. Parties of less than four will be matched at the UDC's discretion. Participants should be in good physical condition. Children must weigh at least 40 lbs. and be able to swim. Raft times will vary according to river level, wind, ability, and each group's desired pace.

Pack a lunch to enjoy on the river. Bring plenty of drinking water (no glass containers), wear sunscreen and foot protection, and dress to get wet. Small coolers and waterproof bag for personal items such as cameras and wallets should be tied into the raft. For both boating and swimming, wearing of life vests is strongly recommended for everyone; it is required by law for children 12 and under. All participants must sign a Kittatinny Canoes liability waiver at the morning check-in.

Rendezvous and parking for both trips is at Kittatinny Canoes' Matamoras Base, located off Route 209 along Delaware Drive in Matamoras, PA.

Trip 1: UDC check-in begins at 8:30 a.m. Last shuttle bus departs for KC's Pond Eddy Base at 9:30 a.m.

Trip 2: UDC check-in begins at 10:00 a.m. Last shuttle bus departs for the Staircase Access at 11 a.m.

Pre-registration and advance payment (checks made payable to "UDC" or cash) are required. Please send this coupon by July 25 to: Upper Delaware Council, P.O. Box 192, Narrowsburg, NY 12764. Contact Public Relations Specialist Laurie Ramie at (845) 252-3022 or udcramie@ezaccess.net for more information. Thank you!

UDC AUG. 2, 2003 RAFT TRIP Trip 1 (10 miles) _____ or Trip 2 (6 miles) _____

Please list all members of your party, and the ages of any children for the waivers:

Address: _____

Phone, E-mail: _____

Adults _____ x \$17 = _____ + # Children Ages 8-18 _____ x \$10 = _____ Total: \$ _____

The Upper Delaware Council, Inc. meets on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the Tusten Town Hall, Narrowsburg, NY. Three standing committees, Water Use/Resource Management, Operations, and Project Review, meet on the third and fourth Tuesdays of every month at the UDC office, 211 Bridge Street, Narrowsburg, across from the Town Hall. All meetings are open to the public. Call (845) 252-3022 for specific meeting dates and agendas.

Upper Delaware Council
P.O. Box 192
Narrowsburg, NY 12764-0192

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READY FOR MY CLOSE-UP: Unexpected company in the form of Peter Nye, leader of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Endangered Species Unit, visited this baby eagle during his annual inspection of bald eagle nests. Nye climbed a 107-foot white pine tree in the Upper Delaware River Valley on May 29 to check on the welfare of this eaglet and its sibling, as their parents anxiously flew circles around the nest. In addition to taking blood samples and affixing identification bands around their legs, Nye stabilized the nest. In 2002, 94 eaglets were successfully fledged in New York State. (Photo by Peter Nye)

TAG Applications Due

Applications for the Upper Delaware Council's F.Y. 2003 Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) program must be submitted by 4:30 p.m. on July 31.

The UDC's Project Review Committee will hold a special meeting on Aug. 12 to review the applications. The full Council is expected to act on those recommendations at the Sept. 4 monthly meeting.

Since 1988, the UDC TAGs have provided \$491,291 to member municipalities. ❖