

The Upper Delaware

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

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In This Issue...

**Railroad Corp. Aims to Boost
Traffic on Southern Tier Line**

Pages 1 and 4

Upper Delaware Profile:

George Jerus, Westfall Township

Page 2

**Grants to Benefit UDC & Upper
Delaware Scenic Byway Towns**

Page 3

**Pike Co. Passes Bond Ballot;
Heritage Honors Bestowed**

Page 5

**Round-up of UDC Activities;
Plan for Better Growth**

Page 6

**In Memoriam: "Angus" Ross;
Regional News Briefs**

Page 7

**Eagle Excursions Underway;
Narrowsburg Hosts EagleFest**

Page 8

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

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Upper Delaware Council,
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list by filling out the coupon
on Page 7. Thank you.



DERAILED: Just before noon on October 13, a New York, Susquehanna & Western freight train hauling 127 cars broke apart in three places and derailed near Parkers Glen in Shohola Township, PA. No injuries and only minor property damage occurred. The affected cars were not carrying any hazardous materials. The accident is under investigation by the Federal Railroad Administration. (Photo by Lisa Mickles, courtesy of the Pike County Dispatch)

Railroad Corp. Aims to Boost Traffic on Southern Tier Line

One year after taking over the railroad line running through the Upper Delaware Valley, Central New York Railroad (CNYR) officials say they're pleased with their risky decision and eager to expand operations.

"Certainly we have, so far, exceeded our expectations for freight traffic on the line," said Nathan Fenno, executive vice-president and general counsel for New York, Susquehanna & Western Railway Corp. (NYS&W), based in Cooperstown.

During the summer of 2005, Fenno said NYS&W was running three or more trains per day thanks to a seasonal bump and some construction on another line. The more typical frequency is one train a day.

CNYR and NYS&W are subsidiaries of Delaware Otsego Corporation, a regional railroad operator with experience in acquir-

ing lines deemed to be "marginal" by larger railroad companies.

That was the case with the Southern Tier Line, which had been operating at a deficit with dwindling traffic for years. CNYR reports that the salvage value to rip up the tracks was estimated at \$12 million.

"We knew what we were getting into," Fenno said. "We had agreements with Conrail and Norfolk Southern since 1982 to run trains over these lines, but we were not responsible for maintaining the track before. It'll take several years to address what had been many years of low maintenance investment on this line."

CNYR was granted real property tax abatements in Broome, Delaware, and Sullivan Counties as incentive to keep the

Please see **RAILROAD** 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: George Jerus

After terrorists bombed the World Trade Center in 1993, the City of New York called upon George R. Jerus to make recommendations for the future structural protection of high-rise buildings.

The Brooklyn-born engineer and professor, after all, worked from 1963 to 1968 on writing the New York City Building Code as a consultant for the city and Polytechnic Institute.

For Jerus, now age 79 and a resident of Westfall Township, PA, that is just one of many career highlights experienced by a boy who grew up fascinated by infrastructure, attended night-time college courses to advance his move up the corporate ladder, and achieved his dream to have a hand in designing some wonderfully challenging building projects.

"Even in elementary school, I wanted to be an engineer," Jerus says.

Right after high school, though, World War II had other plans for him. Jerus spent three years as an aerographer with the U.S. Navy, stationed in Normandy, France.

Following his 1946 discharge, Jerus went to work as a draftsman for the engineering firm of Meyer, Strong & Jones. By 1970, he rose to the office of vice-president. Jerus remained with the company for 41 years.

From 1987-91, he accepted an offer from Metropolitan Life Insurance Company to join their affiliate firm of Cross & Brown Real Estate Development and Building Management as Vice-President/Director of Engineering. Jerus continues a private practice as a consulting engineer today.

From 1978-90, Jerus did double duty as a Professor of Management at St. John's University and then taught continuing education courses for Penn State in Milford from 1990-92.

Jerus' engineering expertise even gained international attention. He was invited behind the "Iron Curtain" of Czechoslovakia to lecture on high-rise fire systems and called to Korea to indoctrinate officials there on building codes and standards.

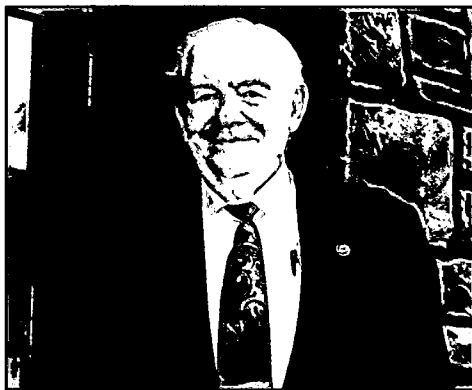
He has published numerous magazine articles and assisted in developing curricula for the National Home Builders.

Jerus was appointed on Feb. 4, 2003 by the Westfall Board of Supervisors as the township's alternate representative to the Upper Delaware Council.

"The UDC has got a lot to do. I don't think that people envision what's required to maintain the river," Jerus says.

He is particularly interested in how development trends will impact the river valley. Population increases, cluster housing, eminent domain issues, and commercial expansions could exact a local toll.

"The dollar is the main consideration,"



George R. Jerus, Westfall Township

Jerus acknowledges. "I believe a system can be worked out to be amicable to both new development and the environment."

Jerus serves as Westfall's Building Appeals Officer and is an alternate on the Zoning Hearing Board, positions which require him to keep current on implementation of Pennsylvania's new Uniform Construction Code.

As Westfall's ad-hoc member of the Pike County Planning Commission, Jerus helped draft the recently-completed Pike County Comprehensive Plan.

Other local memberships have included the Pike County Industrial and Commercial Development Authority, the Pike County Affordable Housing Board, and chairing the Contractor Quality Control Committee for the Pike County Builders' Association.

Jerus is a founder of Pike County Habitat for Humanity, a life member of Pennsylvania (Pike County) Builders, a congregant of St. Patrick's Church, and served on the AARP Board of Directors, in addition to a long list of professional affiliations, licenses, and instructor certifications.

"I have to keep busy. I retired from playing golf," he jokes.

In recognition of the value that he places on continuing education, having earned three degrees leading up to his doctoral candidacy at NYC universities, Jerus is working with Northampton Community College on a proposal to establish a satellite associate's degree program in Milford.

"I would like to keep kids from moving out of the area," he says.

George and his wife of 59 years, Margaret, are the parents of Robert Jerus, a professor residing in Davenport, FL, and Gwynne Wright, an Episcopalian priest based outside Chicago, IL. Their granddaughter, Christina Drolet, lives in Andover, MN.

Jerus' family started out as second home owners in the Upper Delaware Valley, but became full-time residents in 1990.

"The pristine nature of the area appealed to me," Jerus says, and it still does. ❖

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The Upper Delaware is a free quarterly publication of the Upper Delaware Council, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization comprised of member governments from New York and Pennsylvania directly affected by the River Management Plan for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River.

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NY State Grants to Benefit UDC Towns And the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway

Remarking that "we have the natural beauty for tourism", New York State Senator John J. Bonacic announced on Oct. 3 that he has secured an additional \$125,000 to help Upper Delaware River municipalities capitalize on those assets.

The senator convened a press conference in Narrowsburg to note that \$60,000 will be directed to the Upper Delaware Council's (UDC) NY member towns, and \$65,000 will be available to the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. (UDSB).

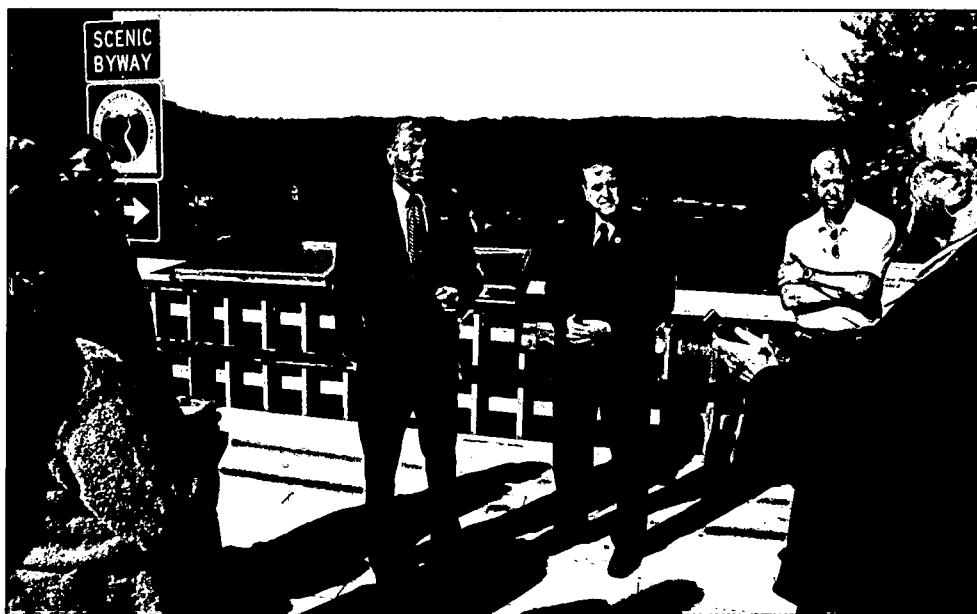
"I have made supporting the communities along the Route 97 corridor a priority," Bonacic said. "With this funding, we continue to invest in the 97 corridor and the towns along it."

Over the past six years, Sen. Bonacic has secured \$235,000 in Legislative Member Item grant programs for the UDC and UDSB, as well as significant, separate funding for other improvement projects such as downtown revitalizations, sidewalks, and public parks.

The goal is to make the area attractive to residents and visitors alike.

"You really live in one of the most beautiful places in the world. As far as quality of life goes, you have your priorities straight," he told the approximately 30 people gathered around him on the deck.

Bonacic encouraged local leaders to pursue another state designation for the river valley to help keep the grants flowing.



PRESS CONFERENCE: New York State Senator John J. Bonacic announced the awarding of \$60,000 to the Upper Delaware Council's eight NYS town members and \$65,000 to the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway municipalities during an October 3 press conference held at the Main Street Observation Deck in Narrowsburg. Pictured from the left foreground, are Sarah Koenig from the *Times Herald-Record*, Senator Bonacic, UDC Executive Director William E. Douglass, Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. Chairperson Larry H. Richardson, and Tom Kane from *The River Reporter*. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

"It's critical that we get the Delaware River Greenway legislation passed. It's important to develop a steady income stream for these communities," he said.

2006 UDC Chairperson Charles Wieland said that the funds have allowed the

Council's eight NY member towns to pursue worthwhile projects that may not have been possible without this direct state aid.

"Through their mini-grants, the towns have advanced public recreation through the enhancement of parks and river accesses, bolstered tourism with new kiosks and brochures, and made needed improvements to town-owned buildings and infrastructure," he said.

Larry H. Richardson, chairperson for UDSB, Inc., commented, "The Upper Delaware Scenic Byway communities are grateful for Senator Bonacic's support of our efforts to make improvements along NYS Route 97 to benefit both the traveling public and the residents of the river valley region. The senator's past and present efforts can be viewed as the building blocks of greater things to come."

Upper Delaware Council, Inc. staff will work with the New York State Department of Economic Development to administer both reimbursement grant programs.

A series of projects being conducted under the senator's earlier, 2004-05 funding round that provided \$40,000 to the UDC towns, \$60,000 to the UDSB, and \$10,000 to the UDC for administration, are underway. Four towns had completed their work at press time. The others have an expected deadline of Aug. 31, 2006. ❖



FIXER-UPPER: The City of Port Jervis was awarded \$9,390 in a previous round of Upper Delaware Scenic Byway funding provided by Sen. Bonacic to renovate the city-owned Park Avenue Observatory on Route 97. Trees will be selectively cut to open up the view, the gazebo will be repainted in historically accurate colors, its stone work will be cleaned, and two interpretive signs will be installed as phase one of the project. (Photo courtesy of Peter Osborne)

line in service.

Fenno said that the company is "constantly looking at ways to improve the infrastructure", such as completing the replacement of 6,000 railroad ties in November.

Derailment Investigation

One setback came on Oct. 13 when a 127-car NYS&W freight train broke apart in three places and derailed over an approximately three-mile stretch of tracks between Shohola and Pond Eddy, PA.

Ironically, the accident occurred on the same day that NYS&W sent a rare passenger train through the area during its Board of Directors' Inspection Tour from North Bergen, NJ to Syracuse, NY.

Without knowing what the train was hauling, local incident commanders opted to amass a full-scale response. More than 100 emergency personnel were activated and preparations were made for potential mass evacuations by land and river.

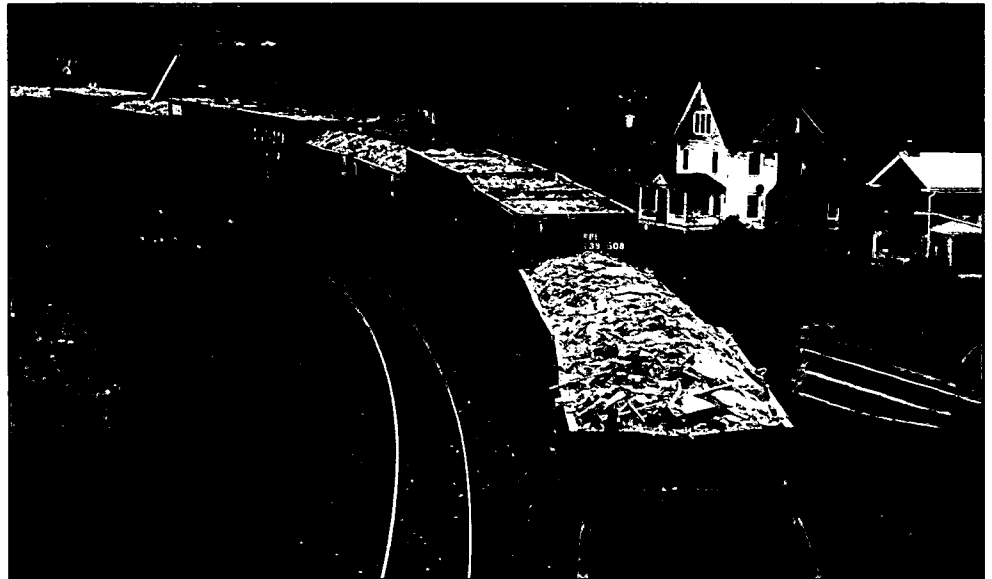
It took nearly an hour to discover that, while some cars on the train did contain petroleum, there were no hazardous threats from the derailed cars.

Complaints centered on the amount of time it took for emergency officials to track down the conductor to review the manifest that specifies the train's cargo.

"We are not satisfied with the way that we handled the communications in the beginning part of the incident. There was a small glitch in this instance that we are investigating," Fenno acknowledged.

"We believe that the primary cause was a train handling error by the train crew. We are dealing with that internally," he added.

The UDC was invited to participate in an Oct. 27 meeting in Shohola to review the handling of the incident. In response to an Oct. 28 letter requesting a "complete and thorough investigation" that the UDC sent



STILL CHUGGING: Construction debris is often the type of freight transported by rail through the Upper Delaware River Valley, shown here in Narrowsburg. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

to the Federal Railroad Administration, FRA Region 1 Administrator Mark H. McKeon wrote back on Nov. 3 to assure, "Regional safety personnel are in the process of investigating this incident. Upon completion of our investigation, we will provide you with a report detailing our findings."

The UDC had asked that the results be made public for educational purposes.

"Though this recent derailment did not result in any deaths, injuries, private property damage, or environmental damage, there is a need to learn from this accident in order to prevent a more serious incident in the future," the letter emphasized.

Emergency Guide

Prior to that incident, CNYR had committed to assist the Upper Delaware Council in its long-desired update of the "Emergency Response Guide for the Upper Delaware River Valley: Port Jervis to Deposit."

This railroad-specific booklet was creat-

ed in 1997 to be utilized as a common reference for dispatchers from then-operator Conrail and local emergency personnel.

It contains detailed, sectional maps and contact information. Five hundred copies were distributed. The UDC had also facilitated a series of orientation meetings and railroad safety training exercises.

"That's a wonderful guide. We will look at that as a template for the rest of our railroad. The first line of response is always the local people. The better they're trained and aware of specific issues, the better it is from both sides of the table," Fenno said.

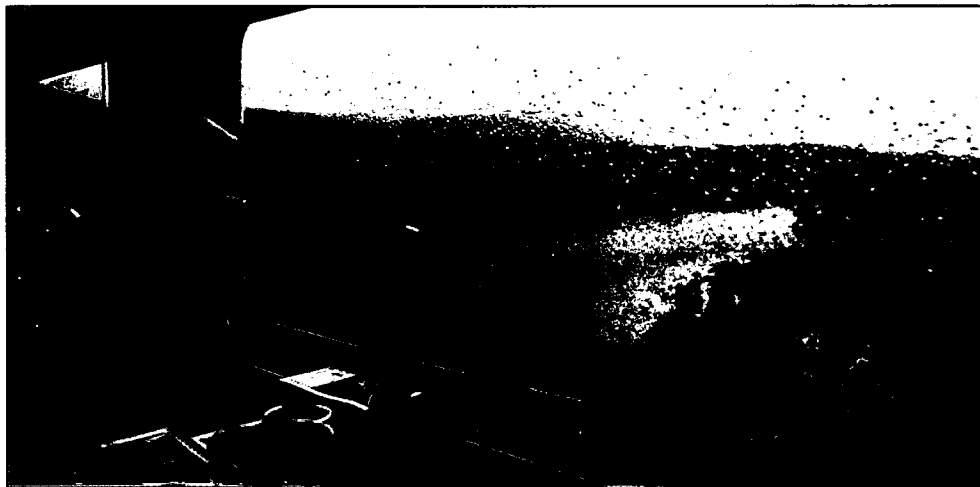
Remove Signals

UDC officials had attended a Sept. 28 public hearing in Binghamton called by the FRA on an application filed jointly by CNYR, NYS&W, and Norfolk Southern Corp. to abandon the automatic block signal traffic control system from Sparrowbush to Binghamton, a distance of approximately 123 miles. (These signals are unrelated to the warning mechanisms at highway-rail grade crossings).

Fenno said that the motivation was the expense of maintaining what they feel is an outdated system relying on overhead towers. CNYR intends to eventually upgrade the communication technology.

At the hearing, however, the railroads significantly reduced the scope of their application. They sought permission to discontinue the signals for just a 3.5-mile section of tracks within the Binghamton rail yard. FRA gave conditional approval to the amended application on Nov. 30.

The UDC has gone on record as "being opposed to any actions which would compromise the natural resources and public health and safety along the railroad line running through the watershed of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River." ❖



RIVER VIEW: Town of Fremont Supervisor James Greier was among the local officials invited to participate in the New York, Susquehanna & Western Railway Corporation's Board of Directors Inspection Trip on the Southern Tier Line from Port Jervis to Binghamton on October 13. Despite the rain, the passengers enjoyed impressive views of the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River. (Photo by Fred Stabbert III, courtesy of the Sullivan County Democrat)

Pike County Passes \$10 Million Rural Character Preservation Ballot

Voters in Pike County, PA gave 68.2% approval on November 8 to a ballot initiative seeking establishment of a Pike County Scenic and Rural Character Preservation Bond.

As a result of the non-binding referendum, the Pike County Commissioners have agreed to provide up to \$10 million to improve and augment planning at both the county and municipal levels.

The funds will also go toward protection of critical habitat and natural resources through the purchase of land or conservation easements from willing sellers, improvement of parks and recreation areas, protection of drinking water, and open space preservation.

Pike municipalities will be able to apply to the county for matching funds to rewrite their land use ordinances. Bond monies can also be used as leverage to seek matching funds from various state and federal programs.

The 20-year bond issue was effectively promoted by The Alliance to Keep Pike Green through a public education campaign. The Alliance is a coalition of conservationists, business people, builders, landowners, local officials, and community residents who share a goal to find balanced solutions to the population pressures that will impact Pike County's land, water, and way of life.

Analysts have predicted that Pike County's population will double or triple within the next 20-30 years, already earning Pike a distinction as the fastest growing county in Pennsylvania.

An independent, ad-hoc committee appointed to advise the Pike County Commissioners has recommended spending \$8 million on land acquisitions and \$2 million on innovative planning initiatives.

The bond money will be raised through a small tax increase. Initial estimates are that the cost would amount to the addition of approximately one mill to Pike's existing 13.75 mill tax rate.

Smart Growth Grant

Pike County recently won a \$25,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to promote "smart growth" in the region.

The funding will be used to develop a computerized growth model that will use satellite imagery to identify areas in Pike and Wayne Counties where new development is likely to occur.



KEEP PIKE GREEN: Masthope Creek in Lackawaxen Township exemplifies the beautiful scenery in Pike County. Voters approved a Nov. 8 ballot referendum establishing a \$10 million Pike County Scenic and Rural Character Preservation Bond. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

These projections for land use changes will assist planners and community leaders in making recommendations regarding infrastructure needs, open space preservation, protection of natural resources, and comprehensive plan updates.

Pike County Planner Michael Mrozinski submitted the successful DCNR grant application.

The Delaware River Valley GIS Work Group - which includes participation by a

scientific team from the National Park Service, NASA, the Woods Hole Research Center, Shippensburg University of PA, and the planning offices from Delaware, Sullivan and Orange Counties, NY, and Wayne and Pike Counties, PA - is spearheading the overall growth model project.

In recognition of the wide-spread regional impacts that development carries, the entire study area is expected to stretch from Albany, NY to Wilkes-Barre, PA. ❖

Heritage Awards Bestowed

The Upper Delaware Heritage Alliance recognized individuals and organizations for their contributions to preserving and promoting appreciation of history in the Upper Delaware River Valley at the Alliance's 24th Annual Dinner held September 25 at Central House Resort in Beach Lake, PA.

Merit Award - Norma Schadt, for her roles as Historian for the Town of Deerpark, NY, founder of the 1863 Huguenot Schoolhouse Museum and National Register of Historic Places site, Schoolhouse Stitchers quilting group, and numerous historic affiliations.

Tom Hill Award for Excellence in Public Service - Sandra Schultz, assistant superintendent of the NPS Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, for her integral work with the Roebling Bridge, Zane Grey House, and D&H Canal projects.

Preservation Award - Martin Bourne and Scott Pere, for restoration of the historic Doyle House in Long Eddy, NY

Recognition Awards - The Navasing Long Rifles, for their frontier living historical re-enactments; the Woodland Weavers and Spinners Guild, for perpetuation of the traditional fiber arts; and the Borough of Matamoras, PA Centennial Committee, for organizing an ambitious series of 100th anniversary celebratory activities in 2005. ❖

UDC Highlights Quarterly Activities

Upper Delaware Council (UDC) activity highlights from mid-September to late December 2005, not covered elsewhere, include:

OPERATIONAL FUNDING

The UDC recently sent informational letters to the region's six New York State and Pennsylvania legislators advising them of the 60%-40%, federal-state cost sharing ratio envisioned in the Final 1986 River Management Plan to fund the Council's annual operations, dating back to the non-profit organization's 1988 incorporation.

While the federal government has honored its commitment to provide \$300,000 for the UDC through a line-item appropriation within the Department of the Interior's budget for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, neither state has ever contributed its respective \$100,000 share.

"This situation of a flat-level revenue stream, offset by exponentially increasing expenses every year, is creating a financial hardship for the UDC," the letter states.

"At the same time that the river valley faces increasing threats to its resources from new development initiatives and growth pressures ... the UDC's ability to respond to those challenges is being jeopardized by consistent funding deficits," it continues.

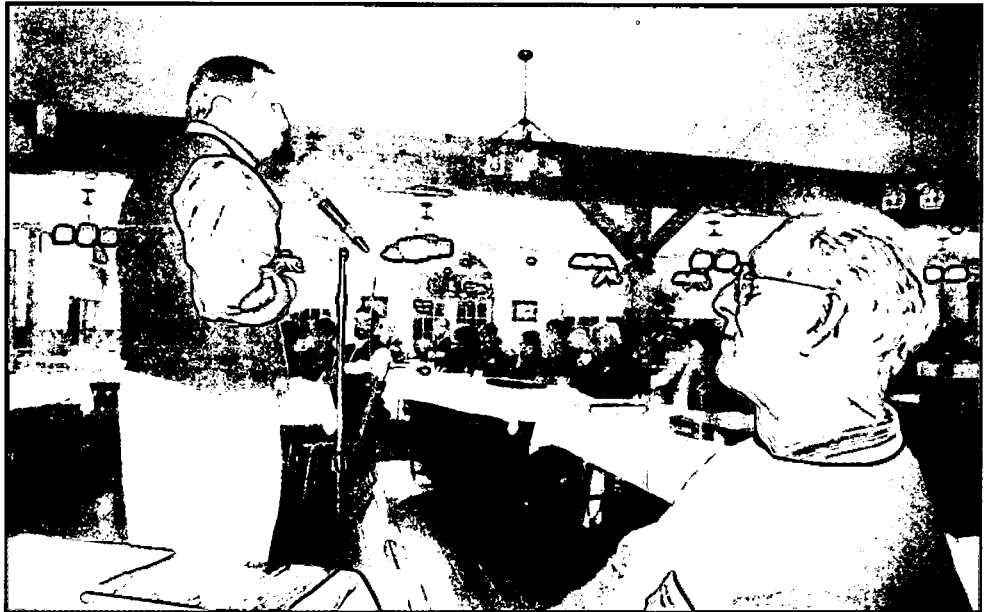
The letters - directed to New York State Assembly Members Aileen Gunther and Clifford Crouch, and Senator John J. Bonacic, and Pennsylvania House of Representatives Members Jerry Birmelin and Sandra Major, and Senator Charles D. Lemmond, Jr. - outline the UDC's proposed allocation of \$100,000 if those state appropriations were forthcoming.

The packets also include resolutions of support adopted by all 11 UDC member towns and townships in NY and PA.

FISHERY PROTECTION

In response to the UDC's Aug. 4 letter requesting PA and NY agencies to work together on enacting a special regulation to prohibit anglers from fishing for thermally-stressed trout between Hancock and Callicoon under conditions of persistent hot and dry weather, a Sept. 1 reply was received from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission rejecting the idea.

"We feel that closing the fishery is not prudent, when the intended result (less fishing mortality) is unlikely to occur. Also, in such dynamic systems, closing and opening fisheries in response to fluctuating stream flows can become very problematic from the standpoint of notification of the public as well as enforcement. Furthermore, publicizing these problems could result in drawing attention to the issue by



SEE WHAT DEVELOPS: Noted lecturer and attorney Ed McMahon of the Urban Land Institute presented a Nov. 30 Forum on Better Models for Development sponsored by the Visioning Committee of the Upper Delaware River Corridor at Central House Resort in Beach Lake, PA. Nearly 80 people attended to discuss the application of McMahon's strategies for sustainable development, growth management, historic preservation, and land conservation to the Upper Delaware River Valley. McMahon's tips for successful communities are also available in his book, "Better Models for Development in Pennsylvania". Town of Fremont, NY Planning Board Chairman Leonard Bauer, foreground, listened attentively. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

those same unethical anglers to which the regulations would be designed to apply," the letter states.

NPS VISITOR CENTER

UDC representatives took a Sept. 17 field trip to preview a proposed new location of a National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Center in the Town of Lumberland.

Two sites, both in the vicinity of the NYS Rt. 97 and County Route 31 intersection, are being considered after the DEC raised concerns about the facility's potential impact on existing bald eagles at the original, 59-acre site in the Town of Deerpark.

The move would require amending the 1999 state legislation that identifies the Deerpark site, conducting an environmental assessment, and scheduling public scoping meetings to solicit comments. Construction funds are not yet allocated.

LEARN AND SHARE

Some meetings and events in which the UDC participated this quarter included:

-- Oct. 5, PA Department of Environmental Protection meeting with the Lackawaxen River Conservancy to discuss the DEP response to sediment flows into the Lackawaxen River from several recent, major construction projects.

-- Nov. 1, Introductory forum in Callicoon, NY to explain the features of the evolving Sullivan County Comprehensive Plan.

-- Nov. 7, Public hearing in the Town of Highland over the proposal to create a

Ridgeline Overlay Zoning District, the subject of UDC Technical Assistance Grant-funded projects also in progress jointly or individually in the Towns of Tusten and Lumberland, and Shohola Township.

-- Nov. 9, Initial conditional use hearing and subsequent meetings by the Lackawaxen Township Board of Supervisors on an application to expand and obtain a second mining permit for an existing bluestone quarry located on State Rt. 1014.

-- Nov. 14, Delaware River Valley GIS Work Group meeting at the UDC office to advance work on the Geographic Information Systems-based growth model.

-- Nov. 17, UDC meeting with Town of Hancock Supervisor Sam Rowe to brief him on the initiation of the Council's substantial conformance review of the town. Hancock is the last of the UDC member municipalities to undergo this formal process of checking the town's land use regulations and codes against the River Management Plan's guidelines.

MAP BROCHURE UPDATE

The UDC is finalizing revisions to its "Visitor Information Map and Guide for Touring the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River" to prepare for distribution of 30,000 free copies in March 2006.

The brochure includes a comprehensive NY-PA river valley map, tips for recreation and river safety, and business listings for lodging, dining, boating, and fishing. ❖

Upper Delaware Interns Needed

Park Ranger internships are now available for the 2006 summer season at the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River.

The anticipated five positions are designed for college students and will run between May 15 and September 4. Housing, a weekly stipend, mileage reimbursement from home to the work site, and a uniform allowance will be provided.

Duties include developing and presenting educational programs, staffing river access kiosks, and patrolling by canoe.

To apply, send a resume with two letters of recommendation to: Upper Delaware S&RR, Attn: Ingrid Peterec, 274 River Rd., Beach Lake, PA 18405. Call (570) 685-4871 for more information. ❖

Watersheds at Risk

The theme of the 2006 Keystone Coldwater Conference set for February 24-25 at the Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel in State College is, "Our Watersheds at Risk: Protecting Water Quality, Quantity, and Stream Access."

Keynote speakers will be Dr. Doug Austen, executive director of the PA Fish and Boat Commission, and Cindy Dunn, Bureau Chief with the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

The \$30 registration fee includes a Friday night reception, Saturday luncheon, and exhibits. Call (814) 863-5100 or visit www.outreach.psu.edu/C&I/coldwaterconservation for more details. ❖

Sojourn Dates Set

Save the week of June 18, 2006 for the 11th Annual Delaware River Sojourn, a canoeing or kayaking experience that offers participants the opportunity to learn more about the recreational, historical, and natural qualities of the river. Check the web site at www.delawareriversojourn.org for program planning updates. ❖

In Memoriam ...

Malcolm "Angus" Ross, Jr., 65

Malcolm "Angus" Ross, Jr., of Tyler Hill, PA, who was the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River's Chief of Resource Management for 17 years, died on November 20, 2005 at Wayne Memorial Hospital in Honesdale, PA.

Mr. Ross worked for the National Park Service (NPS) for over 35 years until retiring on April 17, 1998. He was stationed at the Everglades, Blue Ridge Parkway, Lake Mead, Shenandoah, and Assateague Island before coming to the Upper Delaware.

Affectionately nicknamed as "The Toxic Avenger" for his professional and personal persistence, skillful action, and utter disdain for anything or anybody that dared to contaminate nature, Mr. Ross received the Upper Delaware Council's Distinguished Service Award in 1998.

He carried out his job with good humor,

a personable demeanor, and an obvious love of the resource he protected.

In his acceptance speech, Mr. Ross shared his environmental philosophy.

"I am a true believer that the human race only borrows the environment that sustains us all. We did not create it and our longevity as a species depends heavily on how well we understand it and how little we change it over time," he said.

The son of the late Malcolm and Camille Miller Ross, he was born December 20, 1939 in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Ross graduated from the University of Miami and served in the Coast Guard prior to embarking on his NPS career.

After retiring, Mr. Ross became a disaster assistance employee for the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and responded to numerous floods and hurricanes. He was also a volunteer member of Habitat for Humanity.

Mr. Ross is survived by his wife of 23 years, JoAnne Merritt, who is the Information Technology Specialist at NPS Upper Delaware; a son, Mark, and his wife Selena and grandson Gavin; a daughter, Shannon, and her husband Lorenzo and granddaughter Sophia; two brothers, David and Sandy; and one niece, Amy.

Funeral services were held November 29 at Rasmussen Funeral Home in Narrowsburg, NY. Cremation followed.

Memorial contributions may be made to: Habitat for Humanity of Wayne County, 827 Church St., Honesdale, PA 18431; American Heart Association, 71 North Franklin St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701; America's Second Harvest, 35 East Wacker, Suite 2000, Chicago, IL 60601, or the charity of one's choice. ❖



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE: "Angus" Ross earned the Upper Delaware Council's highest accolade, the Distinguished Service Award, in 1998. (File Photo by David B. Soete)

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, call (845) 252-3022 or e-mail udcramie@hvc.rr.com.

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City/State _____

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Old Address:

Name _____

Address _____

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Zip+4 _____

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

Eagle Winter Excursions Underway

Jan. 14 Narrowsburg EagleFest Strives to Educate and Entertain

Guided eagle excursions that help people find and view the wintering bald eagles that visit the Upper Delaware River Valley region take place every Saturday and Sunday throughout January and February.

The Eagle Institute is once again offering this popular program. Each winter, between 3,000-4,000 visitors come to see the nearly 200 eagles that migrate here, and the Institute has developed several programs to provide the safest and least intrusive eagle watching experience.

Excursions are offered at 11 a.m. each weekend day, weather-permitting, from the non-profit, volunteer organization's winter field office located at 176 Scenic Drive in Lackawaxen, PA. Participation is on a first-come, first-served basis. A \$10 donation per person is requested.

After viewing an educational video, the eagle watchers are accompanied on the bus by a trained guide who will help them to spot eagles, answer their questions, promote "eagle etiquette", and collect data.

The excursions are funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Sullivan County (NY) Visitors Association. For more information, visit the Institute's web page at www.eagleinstitute.org, or call (570) 685-5960 or (845) 557-6162.

On January 14, the excursion schedule will be altered to accommodate the 5th Annual EagleFest taking place that Saturday. The bus will depart at 1 p.m. from Narrowsburg.

EagleFest is expanding its 2006 program under direction of the new Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance. It takes place from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in locations throughout the community of Narrowsburg.

"We established the Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance in 2005 to ensure that EagleFest will continue in its focus to offer a program of activities combining education and entertainment. Our dedication is to increase awareness, understanding, and promote conservation of our wildlife and the natural environment," says Alliance Chairperson John A. DiGiorgio.

Highlights include a 9:30 a.m. festival dedication program, followed by a presentation of live birds of prey by the Milford, PA-based Delaware Valley Raptor Center in the school auditorium. An afternoon opening ceremony and raptor show for a \$1 donation will be repeated at 12:30.

A 1 p.m. panel discussion on bald eagle conservation efforts and a 3 p.m. lecture by Keith Bildstein from Hawk Mountain Sanctuary will take place in the Tusten Theater. Habitat preservation will be discussed by The Eagle Institute's Lori McKean and New Jersey Audubon's Eric Stiles at 3 p.m. in the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance (DVAA) center. River valley and eagle-related documentaries will be shown at the Narrowsburg Firehouse conference center at noon, 2 and 3 p.m.



CLOSE AND PERSONAL: Bill Streeter from the Delaware Valley Raptor Center will return to the 5th Annual Narrowsburg Eagle Fest on January 14 to offer his popular live birds of prey presentations at 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. in the Narrowsburg School auditorium. (Photo by *The River Reporter*, courtesy of Yoke DiGiorgio)

Children's activities include storytelling by John and Teresa Crerand at noon in the school cafeteria, and a 2 p.m. owl presentation by The Raptor Trust at DVAA.

Throughout the day will be silent auction bidding for donated eagle art posters that will be displayed at the River Gallery, assisted eagle viewing on the Main Street Deck, recognition of 2006 featured artist Frank Holmes, ice sculpture carving by Ice Works, and exhibits by regional conservation groups, including the Upper Delaware Council.

The complete EagleFest itinerary is available by calling (845) 252-6509, or by visiting www.naturesartllc.com or www.narrowsburg.org. ❖

The Upper Delaware Council, Inc. meets on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. 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 St., Narrowsburg, NY. All meetings are open to the public. Call (845) 252-3022 for specific meeting dates and agendas.

Upper Delaware Council
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