

# The Upper Delaware

A newsletter about the environment and people of the Upper Delaware River Valley in NY & PA

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**The Upper Delaware  
available on-line or by mail!**

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**HIGHLAND REMEMBERS:** A 200 lb. steel I-beam recovered from the World Trade Center in New York City is now part of the Town of Highland's Heroes' Park. Town Supervisor Andrew Boyar, at podium, dedicated the 9/11 monument on Sept. 10, 2011. (UDC Photo by Laurie Ramie)

## Town of Highland Dedicates 9/11 Memorial On 10th Anniversary

Ten years after a devastating terrorist attack on America, the Town of Highland created a monument park to help assure that people never forget the heroism and sacrifices that were exhibited on September 11, 2001.

Heroes' Park, next to the Highland Town Hall in Eldred, also honors military veterans and emergency service providers.

Steel sculptors Janet Rutkowski and Walter Kenul crafted the central 9/11 memorial using a 200 lb. I-beam from the destroyed World Trade Center towers that the town picked up in New York City on May 25 after having applied 18 months prior to receive the artifact.

Highland Town Supervisor Andrew Boyar

told the large crowd that gathered on the evening of Sept. 10 to publicly unveil the monument that it was built for the community to have a place to visit, reflect, and pay respects.

"All across America countless services like this one are taking place. In a uniquely American way, we grieve and celebrate our heroes at the same time. We show our respect for the great loss, but we also proclaim our resilience," he said.

Boyar, who chaired the town's WTC 9/11 Memorial Task Force, said that the level of local involvement was extraordinary.

"In all, 70 individuals worked on or volunteered at the project and more than 200

**Please see 9/11 on Page 5**

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



## Upper Delaware Profile: Tony Ritter

Tony Ritter feels like the luckiest man around. He gets to spend potentially every day from April to October on the Upper Delaware River - and gets paid to do it.

Ritter has operated the "Gone Fishing" charter guide service for 17 years. It's a career path he never anticipated while growing up in New York City or working in the corporate commercial arts field.

"I feel very fortunate to be able to introduce people to this river. Most of my customers are from the metropolitan area. They want to learn how to read the water and become more proficient at fishing, but it becomes about more than that as we spend a whole day together. I share anecdotes about the history of the river valley and talk about our issues," he says.

Ritter's intimate exposure to the subtle nuances of the river has sparked his activism to advocate for its protection.

"The more time you spend on the river, you develop landmarks. I've gotten to learn where every riffle and rock is between Deposit and Lackawaxen. I really enjoy it. The day I stop becoming enthused about the scenery or my profession is the day I should stop," the 56-year-old says.

Ritter attended schools in Manhattan and Westchester County before earning a 1979 Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Minneapolis College for Art and Design.

He returned to New York City and worked in 3-D package design before joining magazine publishing company Conde Nast.

Ritter and his wife of 26 years, Linda Slocum, bought a house on Little Lake Erie in Narrowsburg in 1986 as weekenders. They became full-time residents in 1992.

"This area just grows on you. The more I liked Narrowsburg, the less I wanted to go back to the city. The trick was how to be able to afford to stay. I didn't have any plans to become a fishing guide when I moved here," he recalls.

Ritter obtained a real estate license and is the proprietor of Preferred Homes and Properties in addition to his Gone Fishing business, which he started in 1994.

"I realized I might fail at it but it was my dream. I worked hard to get my name out for the first couple years. I was a columnist for the Times Herald-Record from 1995-97 and wrote many fishing articles for the Sullivan County Democrat. Today I have a lot of repeat clients. People mostly find me through the Internet or trade shows," he says.

For the past 15 years, Ritter has chaired the Town of Tusten Zoning Board of Appeals. He currently serves on the town's Zoning Re-write Committee and helped draft the Comprehensive Plan.

"I'm a firm believer that small towns run



Tony Ritter, Town of Tusten, NY

on volunteerism. A great part of this life is the opportunity to make the town a better place. I want to have a say as a stakeholder in this community," Ritter says.

In that spirit, he has entered the race for a council seat on the Tusten Town Board, running on the Republican and Conservative lines in the November 2011 election.

Ritter was appointed by the Town of Tusten as Upper Delaware Council first alternate to Representative Susan Sullivan in January of 2010. He was elected to chair the UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee on Feb. 3, 2011.

He became involved in order to promote the UDC's mission, which in turn benefits his own interests in resource conservation.

"The river is my economy. It's as practical as that. The UDC is a very important organization. This is the conduit for me to be heard at these meetings. I enjoy the give and take, and the colleagues I'm with. As a committee chair and member, I encourage respect for all opinions," he says.

Since 2003, Ritter has written a daily blog at [www.delawareriverfishing.com](http://www.delawareriverfishing.com) and he has volunteered since 1996 to maintain the Town of Tusten's website out of his belief that everyone should have free access to their local government.

In addition to meeting fishing guide license requirements from New York State, Pennsylvania, and the National Park Service, Ritter is a member of the Sullivan County Board of Realtors and Multiple Listing Service. He enjoys fly-tying, photography, and spending time with Linda, a concierge at The Spa at Woodloch.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity to make a living here. I wouldn't have traded anything I've done for the last 17 years that led to where I am today," he says. ♦

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# UDC Elects New 2011 Chair, Hires Secretary

Larry H. Richardson, who has represented the Town of Cochection, NY on the Upper Delaware Council, Inc. (UDC) for the past 22 years, was unanimously elected on May 5 as UDC chairperson for the balance of 2011.

A vacancy in the chairperson's position was created on March 21, 2011, when the Damascus Township Board of Supervisors voted to remove Dolores A. Keesler as its representative to the UDC.

Keesler, who had served as Damascus's UDC representative since Aug. 18, 2008, had been elected chair at the Council's Jan. 5, 2011 annual meeting.

Richardson's fellow 2011 officers are Vice-Chairperson Nadia Rajs, Town of Lumberland, NY; and Secretary-Treasurer John B. Niflot, Town of Fremont, NY.

This marks Richardson's third tenure in the top seat since his 1989 appointment to the non-profit organization's board, having chaired the UDC in 1993 and 2001.

## Other Board Changes

Since the last issue of "The Upper Delaware", UDC board membership changes in addition to Damascus Township's representative vacancy include:

Westfall Township, PA - Peter P. Kenny resigned on June 2, 2011 after having been appointed representative on March 2, 2010. The alternate position has remained vacant since Dec. 31, 2009.

Town of Delaware, NY - Alternate Robert E. Fisher resigned on Aug. 1, 2011 after a tenure that began on Mar. 16, 2011.

Town of Deerpark, NY - Phil Chase announced his retirement from the UDC at the Sept. 1, 2011 monthly meeting. The



**RICHARDSON TAKES OVER:** Town of Cochection Representative Larry H. Richardson, right, accepted the chairperson's gavel from UDC Vice-Chair Nadia Rajs (Town of Lumberland) at the Upper Delaware Council's May 5, 2011 meeting. (UDC Photos by David B. Soete)

same date is effective for Alternate Mel Decker, who had served since 1996.

Chase, who turned 80 on July 31, was appointed to the UDC in 1994, served as UDC vice-chair in 1998 and chair in 1999, and helmed the Water Use/Resource Management Committee for many years.

The retired Port Jervis science teacher was the 1991 UDC Community Service Award recipient for his environmental activism focused on improving Delaware River flows and fisheries.

## New Staff Member

UDC Office Manager Carol Coney retired from the organization after 19 years of service, effective May 24, 2011.

Advertisements for a full-time secretary to replace Coney resulted in the submis-



**UDC Secretary Cindy Odell**

sion of 47 applications reviewed by the UDC's Personnel Subcommittee.

On August 29, 2011 Cindy A. Odell of Honesdale, PA reported to work.

Odell is a 1983 graduate of Narrowsburg Central School and earned a 1985 Associate's Degree in Business Administration from SUNY Cobleskill.

Previous employment includes Leeward Construction, the Sullivan County Clerk's Office, and Lander's River Trips. ❖

**RETIRE FROM UDC:** Town of Deerpark Representative Phil Chase, left, and Alternate Mel Decker retired from the Upper Delaware Council board on Sept. 1, 2011 after serving for 17 and 15 years, respectively. The brothers-in-law are shown at the Council's 2011 Awards Ceremony displaying Chase's raffle prize of "River Overlook", a framed photo taken by David B. Soete.





# UDC Honors River Valley Contributors

The Upper Delaware Council, Inc. (UDC) recognized contributions to protect and enhance the environment along the Upper Delaware River at its 23rd Annual Awards Ceremony held April 17 at Central House Family Resort in Beach Lake, PA.

Pennsylvania Representative Sandra J. Major (111th District) delivered the keynote address to the 82 guests in attendance.

Major provided insight into active environmental and economic initiatives in the Commonwealth, while expressing appreciation for the Council's work.

"For more than 20 years, the UDC has developed and managed comprehensive strategies to conserve and preserve not only the Upper Delaware River, but the wildlife, land, fauna, and communities that call the river valley home," Major said.

"This one organization has accomplished the seemingly insurmountable tasks of bringing together 13 local governments spanning two states under the umbrella of one cause - conserving the natural resources of the Upper Delaware River," she added.

Major noted that the UDC could not do all this alone. She congratulated the honorees for answering the call to improve the river valley in their various capacities.

The UDC's Distinguished Service Award was presented to Peter E. Nye, affectionately regarded as "The Father of Bald Eagles in New York State".

Nye retired on Sept. 23, 2010 after a 36-year career with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation that included 33 years as Leader of the agency's Endangered Species Unit.

A familiar presence in the eagle-rich river valley, Nye developed a hacking technique and restoration program which saw the



**AWARDS CLASS OF 2011:** Accepting honors at the UDC's 23rd Annual Awards Ceremony held April 17 at Central House Resort in Beach Lake, PA were, seated from the left: James Daley, for the NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation, and Mark Hartle for the PA Fish and Boat Commission, Partnership Award; Peter E. Nye, Distinguished Service; Kathleen Michell, Special Recognition; Dorothy Moon, Special Recognition; Harold G. Roeder, Jr., Oaken Gavel; Ann Steimle and Don Hunt, Jr. of the Lumberland Volunteer Fire Dept., Lifesaving Award. Standing from left: Dan Plummer, for Friends of the Upper Delaware River, Community Service Award; UDC awards presenter Nadia Rajsz; Frank V. Schwarz for the Town of Lumberland Cultural Series, Cultural Achievement; John and Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio, Volunteer Award; Paul Weamer, Recreation Achievement; and Chief William Kofert, Westfall Twp. Volunteer Fire Dept., Lifesaving Award. (UDC Photos, pages 4-5, by David B. Soete)

number of bald eagle breeding pairs in NYS increase from a mere two in 1980 to 223 in 2010.

The 2010 mid-winter count reported 658 eagles state-wide, up from 401 in 2009.

Nye knew and personally visited every eagle nest in the state. He climbed trees to monitor their status, tracked them by satel-

lite, made recommendations for habitat protection, and did educational outreach targeting youth and the general public.

The Robin M. Daniels Memorial Lifesaving Award cited the July 31, 2010 night-time rescue of a New Jersey rafting couple who sustained injuries from attempting to scale the 200-foot Hawk's Nest cliff in the Town of Deepark to reach the road from the river after darkness had fallen.

Seven responding fire departments from Lumberland, Port Jervis, Sparrowbush, Huguenot, Westfall, Mill Rift, and Matamoras; and two ambulances from Port Jervis and Hudson Valley Paramedic Service/Regional EMS, shared the award for the tricky, successful rescue.

The Partnership Award went to the PA Fish and Boat Commission and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Division of Fish, Wildlife, and Marine Resources for their collaboration on the "Recommended Improvements to the Flexible Flow Management Program for Coldwater Ecosystem Protection in the Delaware River Tailwaters" White Paper report released on Feb. 17, 2010.

John and Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio took

**Please see HONORS on Page 5**



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS:** UDC Executive Director Bill Douglass presents PA Representative Sandra J. Major (111th District) with a gift in appreciation for her service as keynote speaker.





**EAGLE EYE NYE:** Pete Nye of Feura Bush, NY, offers thanks for receiving the UDC's highest honor for championing successful bald eagle restoration and educational initiatives in New York State as UDC Public Relations Specialist Laurie Ramie looks on.

#### **HONORS, continued from Page 4**

home the Volunteer Award for founding the 10th Annual Narrowsburg EagleFest and their efforts to raise public awareness of wildlife conservation and the natural environment through programs, publications, and photography.

"Fly Fishing Guide to the Upper Delaware River" author Paul Weamer of Coburn, PA received the UDC's Recreation Achievement Award, while the Cultural Achievement Award was bestowed on the Town of Lumberland Cultural Series that celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2010.

Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR) received the Community Service Award for the non-profit organization's advocacy work since 2003 to protect the

Upper Delaware River ecosystem and cold-water fishery, monitor environmental threats, and support flood restoration efforts for Town of Hancock streams.

Special Recognition Awards were given to National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Curator and Cultural Resources Program Manager Dorothy Moon for overseeing the complete renovation of the Zane Grey Museum in Lackawaxen, PA, and to wildlife rehabilitator Kathleen Michell for numerous contributions since 1985 to the Narrowsburg and greater river valley communities.

UDC Town of Delaware Representative Harold G. Roeder, Jr. received an engraved eagle statuette commemorating his leadership of the Council in 2010. ❖



**SPECIAL CERTIFICATE:** UDC Vice-chair Nadia Rajsasz surprised Dolores Keesler, right, at the awards ceremony with a Certificate of Appreciation for her service to the UDC as Damascus Township Representative from Aug. 18, 2008 through Mar. 21, 2011, including her leadership roles as vice-chair in 2010 and election as Council chairperson on Jan. 6, 2011.

#### **9/11, continued from Page 4**

individuals and organizations supported it financially," he said.

The monument was dedicated to the memory of the 343 firefighters, 60 police officers, eight EMTs, and 2,983 victims who lost their lives that day in 2001, which includes more than 1,100 individuals for whom no traces have been recovered.

Boyar shared personal anecdotes of friends lost and local residents whose lives were directly touched by the tragedy.

"Most of us have a story to tell," he said.

The monument sits on a bluestone octagon and directly aligns with the North Star.

Inscribed memory bricks are available for \$100 to continue the restoration of Heroes' Park, for which a dedication of five military stone markers will be held on Veterans' Day, Nov. 11. Contact Highland Town Clerk Doreen Hanson at (845) 557-6085.

Fellow river valley Town of Deepark took possession of an 11 1/2-foot-long steel artifact from the World Trade Center in 2010 to place in its memorial park located near the Town Hall in Huguenot.

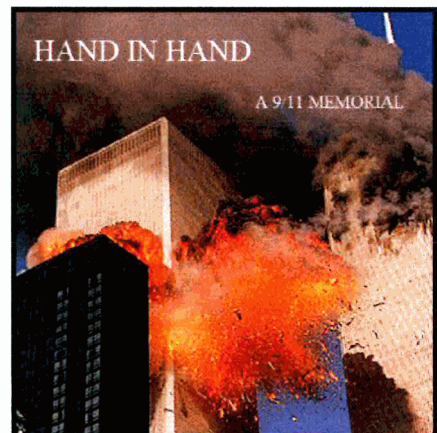
Deepark has held annual tributes supported by public donations to mark each anniversary of 9/11 since 2002.

Town of Delaware UDC Representative Harold G. Roeder Jr. recently learned that his 2005 musical composition, "Hand in Hand: A 9/11 Memorial", has been accepted into the National September 11 Memorial & Museum's online digital database for art works created in response to 9/11.

Roeder dedicated the nearly 11-minute, Christian song to his late father, retired New York Fire Department 32nd Battalion Chief Harold G. Roeder, and to all those who perished on 9/11.

Lyrics inspired by the tragic images of people jumping out of the burning towers hand in hand were written by Paul Kahan and Carol Maier, while Jack Heinicki provides vocals to Roeder's accompaniment.

To read liner notes and listen to the song, log onto <http://registry.national911memorial.org> and type "Roeder" in Artist Filters. ❖





# Upper Delaware Council Activity Highlights

Highlights of Upper Delaware Council activities and river valley issues from mid-March to early September 2011, not mentioned elsewhere in this issue, include:

## LACKAWAXEN QUARRY APPEAL

The Upper Delaware Council filed an appeal in the Pike County Court of Common Pleas on Aug. 19 of Lackawaxen Township's July 23rd written approval of a Conditional Use Application for the Holbert Brothers Bluestone Co.'s (Holbert) proposed 40-acre quarry expansion.

The Notice of Land Use Appeal petitions the court to reverse and dismiss the township's decision, or alternatively to vacate the decision and remand the matter for a properly noticed hearing at which the UDC would be allowed a meaningful opportunity to participate, cross examine witnesses, and offer evidence.

Holbert applied to the Lackawaxen Township Board of Supervisors on April 28 for a permit to allow "blasting, crushing, and screening of limestone rock" in a new, 40-acre section of the existing 10-acre quarry operation located entirely within the river corridor boundaries. The application was virtually identical to one that was submitted, and withdrawn, in 2008.

At a June 8 public hearing attended by two out of three township supervisors, the UDC and the National Park Service were denied the Party status they were both given in 2008 and not allowed to testify.

The UDC approved a July 7 comment letter strongly requesting that the township "deny the application because it would constitute a clear violation of the Lackawaxen Township Zoning Ordinance, and it is not in substantial conformance with the Land and Water Use Guidelines in the River Management Plan for the



**UDC RAFT TRIP:** For the 23rd year, the UDC sponsored a family raft trip on August 7 in which 77 adults and children paddled a seven-mile stretch from Barryville to Pond Eddy, NY. Kittatinny Canoes was the host livery. Pictured above from the left, Milford, PA teens Emily Neumann, Rachel Dudge, Alyssa Lewis, and Jared Feiler launch from Luke's Landing. Due to a persistent rainfall the day before the trip, the river height was 4.91 feet at Barryville with a water temperature of 70 degrees. (UDC Photo by Laurie Ramie)

Congressionally-designated Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, a unit of the National Park System."

The UDC's letter was not considered at the July 20 meeting where the supervisors voted on the Holbert application.

A follow-up letter dated Aug. 4 requested clarification of a condition in the Lackawaxen board's July 23 written decision pertaining to whether Holbert would be allowed to bond each of the 40 acres rather than reclaim them one at a time.

Township Solicitor R. Anthony Waldron replied in an Aug. 17 letter that a 30-day appeal process was running and "it is out of the hands of the Supervisors to make any changes, even if it was requested by a person or entity that has party status."

The PA Department of Environmental

Protection's Bureau of Mining and Reclamation issued two notices of violation and a compliance order against Wayne D. Holbert based on a July 21 inspection.

The agency alleged that the Holbert Quarry had exceeded its state-permitted mining area by 4.7 acres, field boundaries were not accurately marked, and an Air Quality permit was needed for the crushing and screening units in operation.

## WATER MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

New York State, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and the City of New York approved the implementation of a new water management plan for the Delaware River Basin as of June 1.

The one-year interim plan succeeds the Flexible Flow Management Program that expired on May 31.

A \$5.2 million mathematical computer model called the Operation Support Tool developed by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is being used to provide better information on when it is safe to release water without unnecessarily increasing risk to the public water supply from the reservoirs.

More water is being released to the West Branch of the Delaware River to improve the aquatic fisheries habitat, and New York City agreed to target certain voids in the reservoirs seasonally to help mitigate downstream river flooding.

On April 7, the UDC sent a letter to the Delaware River Basin Commission strongly supporting the implementation of the release recommendations for coldwater ecosystem protection improvements from the White Paper produced by the New York



**DAYS OF YORE:** Regular passenger train service through the Upper Delaware River Valley ceased in the 1960s, but on Aug. 5, the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks carried a special excursion by a circa-1950 EMD E8 diesel locomotive pulling eight passenger cars. The train traced the route of the old Erie mainline from Hoboken, NJ to Youngstown, OH. Above, the 2,250-horsepower locomotive painted in authentic Pennsylvania Railroad colors passes by the 1850s-era Cochetcon Station, considered the oldest surviving railroad depot in New York State. Railroad buffs were out in force to document the journey. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

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#### **HIGHLIGHTS, continued from Page 6**

State Department of Environmental Conservation and Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

#### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS**

The FY 2012 round of the UDC's Technical Assistance Grants program received seven applications by the Sept. 2 deadline, requesting a total of \$26,800 in funding. The UDC has budgeted \$16,700.

A special Project Review Committee meeting to review applications took place on Sept. 13. Recommendations will be presented for action at the UDC monthly meeting on Oct. 6.

#### **RESOLUTIONS AND LETTERS**

The UDC approved the following letters and resolutions on the indicated dates. Copies are available upon request:

4/7 - To PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), comments on the agency's draft Delaware River Management Plan;

4/7 - To Damascus Township, review of proposed zoning ordinance amendment pertaining to oil and gas wells and pads;

4/7 - To EBI Consulting, viewshed analysis requested for proposed telecommunications facility in the Town of Fremont;

5/5 - To NY and PA Departments of Transportation, new directional signage for Grover Hermann Hospital in Callicoon;

5/5 - Resolution 2011-03 Supporting Sullivan County's River Corridor New York Main Street Grant Program Application (Callicoon, Narrowsburg, Barryville and Pond Eddy target Main Street areas);

7/7 - Resolutions Approving UDC FY 2012 Budget and Work Plans for the Water Use/Resource Management, Operations and Project Review Committees;

7/7 - To PFBC, comments on proposed rulemaking for Personal Flotation Devices, Nov. 1-Apr. 30;

8/10 - To Town of Cochection, review of proposed Zoning Law, Subdivision Law and Comprehensive Plan Supplement;

9/1 - To Eagle Creek Renewable Energy, support for Town of Lumberland's Mongaup Welcome Park Proposal.

#### **GREAT WATER DESIGNATION**

The Delaware River was designated a "Great Water" on World Water Day (March 22) by a national coalition formed in 2009 to protect waterways of high economic, social, and environmental importance.

The Washington, D.C.-based America's Great Waters Coalition selected the Delaware for the 2011 honor that has been extended to only 18 rivers nationwide.

"The Delaware River has an irreplaceable role in this nation's past and present - whether it can have a healthy and contributing role in our future will be determined by the actions and decisions of today," commented Maya van Rossum of the Delaware Riverkeeper. ❖



**ILLEGAL FISH FARM:** The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation ordered an allegedly unpermitted tilapia fish hatchery discovered by National Park Service rangers on Big Island two miles south of Callicoon, NY to shut down following a July 29 inspection. Lewis Wu of Spring Valley, NY received a Notice of Violation from the DEC on Aug. 1 that required him to dismantle the operation that consisted of monofilament-covered, manufactured ponds, piping, and compressor stations to pump Delaware River water; dispose of the fish; and remediate the site to its original condition. The investigation continues and federal charges may be pending. (Contributed Photo by Stefan Spoerri)

## **Pond Eddy Bridge Plan Raises Questions**

The New York-Pennsylvania Joint Interstate Bridge Commission approved a project schedule at its annual meeting held May 19 in Dunmore, PA which anticipates that a design-build contract for the Pond Eddy Bridge could be let in 2012 and constructed in 2013 at an estimated cost of \$9.5 million.

The Pond Eddy Bridge that connects the Town of Lumberland, NY to Shohola Township, PA over the Upper Delaware River was first identified as a capital project in 1993. Approximately \$3 million has already been spent for preliminary engineering and design.

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to replace the 1904 Pond Eddy Bridge was being circulated for signatures at press time, though not without controversy.

Objections to the bridge replacement option have been raised by groups including Friends of the Pond Eddy Bridge, the Upper Delaware Preservation Coalition, the Historic Bridge Foundation, Preservation League of New York State, Preservation Pennsylvania, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, on the basis of the bridge's 1988 listing on the National, Pennsylvania, and New York State Registers of Historic Places, and its culturally aesthetic value to the Upper Delaware River Valley.

Engineering analysis reports have concluded that there is "no feasible and prudent alternative to retain the historic bridge", which would be documented for archival retention and auctioned off to the highest bidder who commits to moving and preserving the bridge within 90 days of its removal.

The single-lane, 504-foot Pennsylvania truss structure has been subject to numerous emergency repairs and temporary down-postings of its seven-ton weight limit.

The impasse over alternatives to address the bridge's deteriorating condition prompted PennDOT to seek arbitration from the national Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in 2006. The ACHP, along with the State Historic Preservation Offices for NY and PA, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), are required signatories on the MOA.

Concerns have also been expressed over the adequacy of the consulting process required for this project under the National Historic Preservation Act.

The Upper Delaware Council, which is listed as a concurring party in the MOA, sent a letter to the FHWA on Sept. 1 reaffirming support for the construction of a new bridge "on the basis of public safety, sound financial investment, and long-term sustainability."

The Council pointed out that the MOA omitted listing the Town of Lumberland as a concurring party, and did not include Lumberland or the UDC among the 13 members of a Design Advisory Committee that will meet in three workshops to recommend a preferred bridge configuration and aesthetic features to PennDOT. The UDC believes that this should be a more proactive, collaborative process among the stakeholders. ❖



# River Valley Battles Against Invasive Species

One of the most common questions heard in the river valley this summer was, "What's up with all those triangular purple boxes hanging from trees?"

They proved to be **Emerald Ash Borer** (EAB) traps placed in grid patterns to detect any new infestations of that invasive, tree-killing beetle.

Lures in the center of the traps emit chemical smells to attract EAB adults, as does the color purple, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Pennsylvania deployed an estimated 8,000 traps while NY had about 6,000 out.

The metallic-green bugs with coppery red or purple abdomens, about the size of a penny, have destroyed tens of millions of Ash trees in North America since they were first discovered in Michigan in 2002.

In New York, EAB has been found in nine counties as of August. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) enacted a quarantine in late August restricting the movement of certain wood products in 19 counties, including Orange County.

"We're beyond the pretense of thinking we can eradicate it," NYS DEC Region 3 Natural Resources Supervisor Bill Rudge

## Emerald Ash Borer Information:

[www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info) (national)

Hotline in PA: 1-866-253-7189

Email in PA: [badbug@state.pa.us](mailto:badbug@state.pa.us)

[www.agriculture.state.pa.us](http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us)

Hotline in NYS: 1-866-640-0652

See "Report EAB" link at:

[www.dec.ny.gov/animals/72136.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/72136.html)

told the UDC at its Aug. 4 meeting. "We hope we can slow the spread so that the environment can adapt."

In PA, EAB has been detected in Wyoming and Sullivan Counties, but not yet in the river valley as of August. Buying and burning only local firewood is advised to help stop the spread of this forest pest.

The invasive plant species **Japanese Knotweed** that was introduced to North America in the 1800s for ornamental use has been a pervasive problem locally.

As a companion to its March publication of a brochure with the same title, the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. sponsored two public seminars on April 30 on "Spread the Word ... Not the Weed! Battle the Invasion of Japanese Knotweed on our



**KNOW YOUR KNOTWEED:** Participants at the UDSB's April 30th Japanese Knotweed seminars learned that the invasive plant has some redeeming value: it's edible and healthy. Samples and recipes for squares, pies, and cobbler were shared. Ants and bees also consider it a treat. (UDC Photo by Laurie Ramie)

Native Plants, Riverbanks, and Views".

The educational campaign was facilitated by a Federal Highway Administration National Scenic Byways Program grant administered by the NYS Department of Transportation's Scenic Byways Program.

At the seminars held in Narrowsburg, Catskill Regional Invasive Species Partnership Coordinator Meredith Taylor characterized it as "a really tough battle" due to knotweed's remarkable ability to regenerate itself, spread, and grow aggressively.

"It comes down to landowner education. The main take-home message is: don't spread it," she said. Request the brochure at [info@upperdelawarescenicbyway.org](mailto:info@upperdelawarescenicbyway.org) or visit [www.catskillinvasives.com](http://www.catskillinvasives.com) for help.

The threats don't end there.

In June, the invasive plant species **Giant Hogweed** was discovered in two locations in eastern Sullivan County, NY.

Contact with the sap of the plant, which can grow as tall as 16 feet, can cause blisters that last for months or years and result in blindness if it gets into the eyes.

Descriptions and photos are available at [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809/html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809/html). To report potential sightings of Giant Hogweed, call the hotline at (845) 256-3111 or e-mail [ghogweed@gw.dec.state.ny.us](mailto:ghogweed@gw.dec.state.ny.us).

The **Asian Longhorned Beetle** has destroyed more than 50,000 hardwood trees in New York City, New Jersey, Chicago, and Worcester, Massachusetts, and could be heading to this area next.

The black-and-white insect has attacked at least 18 species of trees including maple, birch, willow, and elm, by feeding on their nutrient vessels.

The DEC offers more information on this invasive bug from China at (518) 402-9425 or [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7255.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7255.html). ❖



**REVOLUTION REMEMBERED:** Kai Moessle, far left, and Dan Hogue III, far right, of the Navasink Long Rifles, accompany representatives of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, from the left, Barbara Gropper (Wayne Chapter, PA), Marjorie Fuller (Old Mine Road Chapter, NY) and Nancy Madison (Beaverkill Chapter, NY) as they present floral tributes during the Commemoration of the 1779 Battle of Minisink held July 23 at Sullivan County's Minisink Battlefield Park in Minisink Ford, NY. Historian Peter Osborne of Easton, PA delivered the keynote address on "The Spiritual Values of the Men Who Fought in the Battle of Minisink" in the ceremony sponsored by the Sullivan County Historical Society. On July 22, Pike County Historian George J. Fluhr hosted his 37th consecutive commemoration at The Grave of the Unknown Soldier in Lackawaxen, PA, which holds the remains of a militiaman who was killed in the river valley's sole Revolutionary War battle but not discovered until 1847. (UDC Photo by Laurie Ramie)



# Natural Gas Drilling Awaits Regulations

As the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) faces multiple lawsuits over its natural gas development regulations, the federal/interstate government agency has set a special meeting on October 21 to consider their adoption.

The Friday meeting to be held from 1-3 p.m. in the Patriots Theater at the War Memorial in Trenton, NJ, will be open to all but will not include a public hearing.

The DRBC has received approximately 69,000 submissions based on its call for comments since its draft natural gas regulations were published on Dec. 9, 2010.

The commissioners and staff have been reviewing the submissions and considering how the draft rulemaking should be modified based on the public input.

Six public hearings were held at three locations in Honesdale, PA; Liberty, NY; and Trenton, NJ in February 2011 and written comments were accepted until April 15.

Transcripts from the 18 hours of oral testimony, as well as all submitted comments entered into the record, may be viewed online at [www.nj.gov/drbc/NGC/index.htm](http://www.nj.gov/drbc/NGC/index.htm).

The DRBC will have to defend itself from multiple accusations that it did not comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 by failing to undertake a full environmental review before developing its draft natural gas regulations.

Lawsuits have been filed in U.S. District Court by the New York State Attorney General's office on May 31; by five non-profit organizations including the National Parks Conservation Association, the Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Delaware Riverkeeper, Hudson Riverkeeper, and Riverkeeper, Inc., on Aug. 4; and by Damascus Citizens for Sustainability, Inc. (DCS) on Aug. 10.

NYS Attorney General Eric Schneiderman contends that the DRBC should conduct a full environmental review that weighs potential damage to the welfare of people and the drinking water quality in the Delaware River watershed before any gas development is allowed in the Marcellus Shale region.

The environmental groups want to force further studies of the potential cumulative impacts of gas drilling on the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, the river, and its wildlife.

The DCS lawsuit emphasizes the need for a human health impact assessment.

New York State will accept public comments through Dec. 12 on its revised draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) that was released in sections on July 8 and Sept. 7.



**LAYING PIPE:** The Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. was laboring in Wayne and Pike Counties all summer installing new parallel line and pressure stations as part of its 300 Line Expansion Project to transport natural gas through northeastern Pennsylvania. This pipe section above was being prepared at a site off Rt. 652 between Beach Lake and Honesdale in early August. (UDC Photo by David B. Soete)

In addition to that 1,537-page document which pertains to environmental mitigation measures for natural gas extraction, the state plans to issue its proposed regulations governing high-volume hydraulic fracturing in early October.

Four public hearings in November will be announced to cover both the SGEIS and the regulations. Comments can be submitted to [www.dec.ny.gov/energy/76838.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/76838.html).

The full draft SGEIS is available for review at the above website, 75370; along with fact sheets from studies on Socio-economic Impacts at 76878, and Traffic, Cumulative, Visual & Noise at 76873.

The state will not issue any permits for gas drilling until the SGEIS is finalized and the DEC issues its Findings Statement.

Local communities continue to grapple with the issue of how much control they can exert over this industrial development.

New York State's draft rules state that permit applicants "must certify that a proposed activity is consistent with local land use and zoning laws".

While municipalities appear to have some discretion as to where drilling could be allowed, their ability to ban it completely is questionable.

The UDC member towns of Lumberland, Highland, and Tusten have been investigating the issue of zoning out drilling.

Those towns, along with UDC members Cocheton and Delaware, have also been working for three years through the Multi-Municipal Task Force to create a road use agreement to protect their infrastructure from high-frequency heavy truck traffic.

The Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, Inc. approved an Aug. 22 resolution calling for a ban on traffic involved in new forms of heavy industrial use and mining from passage on New York State Route 97, while supporting the continuation of traditional forms of truck usage of the highway. See [www.upperdelaware scenicbyway.org](http://www.upperdelaware scenicbyway.org). ❖



**JUNIOR RANGER:** Abby, a yellow lab who is the pet of retired National Park Service Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Chief Ranger Glenn Voss of Beach Lake, PA, got into the spirit of the "River Dogs on Parade" at the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance's 21st Annual Narrowsburg RiverFest held July 24 on Main Street. His walker was Becky Finch of Barryville, NY. (UDC Photo by Laurie Ramie)



# Meet NPS Chief Ranger Joe Hinkes

National Park Service (NPS) Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River Chief Ranger Joe Hinkes always had a soft spot for this area.

His first permanent position as a law enforcement ranger was in the Upper Delaware from 1993-96, stationed in the Milanville, PA office.

He and his wife Ann lived in Beach Lake. Their son, Liam, was born here.

"We really liked the area, especially all its recreational opportunities," Hinkes says.

His NPS career that began in 1990 in Grand Teton National Park took him from the Upper Delaware River to the desert of White Sands, NM for three years, prior to an 11-year assignment at the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

When the Chief Ranger position opened



Joe Hinkes

up, Hinkes eagerly applied and returned to the Upper Delaware in March 2011.

"I've felt a change in attitude since I was first here. People seem to recognize that

there really is a positive role for the National Park Service to play in the economy, safety, and quality of life of these communities," the 45-year-old says.

Hinkes oversees eight commissioned officers in the Protection Division, two of whom are summer seasonals and three who are subject to winter furloughs, in his first supervisory position.

"This is the most challenging place that I've ever worked because of our jurisdiction here and so much depending on building relationships with key partners," the Madison, WI native says.

Since coming on board, Hinkes has faced an unfortunate rash of five drownings that occurred on May 28, June 13, July 27, July 30, and Aug. 4, the most in an Upper Delaware summer since 1980; as well as a series of high-water events; and several criminal investigations involving multiple agencies.

Noting the common theme of people not wearing life jackets or attempting to swim across the river, Hinkes is focused on how to effectively get the safety message out through visitor contacts, new bilingual signage, coordinating with boat rental liveries, and considering social media strategies.

"Our #1 goal is to protect human lives. We're also aware of the strain on our emergency responders. I've been working closely with the five counties to integrate the Park Service into the overall community of emergency response folks," he says.

Hinkes has pushed for increased on-river patrols, weeding out unlicensed fishing guides, and shares Superintendent Sean McGuinness's vision for how NPS can play a more integral role in the river valley.

For the past two years, Hinkes has been the leader of the NPS Northeast Region's Special Events and Tactics (SET) Team.

The 15-person team is deployed nationally to assist local parks with law enforcement needs, such as drug interdictions on the Arizona border and a violent crime wave at Wind River Indian Reservation, sometimes for months at a time.

Hinkes also has experience in firefighting and is a certified firearms instructor.

He earned a degree in Secondary Education from the University of Wisconsin at Madison before discovering while living near Glacier National Park that "I could get paid to do what others take vacations to do" by joining NPS.

He, Ann, who is director of the Center for Development Disabilities in Milford, PA, and their kids Liam, 15, and Eleanor, 13, reside in Sandyston Township, NJ.

Hinkes enjoys woodworking and occasional trips to a family farm in Ireland. ♦



**WINNING POSTER IMAGE:** UDC Senior Resource Specialist David B. Soete's photo of Junction Pool and Point Mountain in the Town of Hancock was selected to represent the Upper Delaware on Pennsylvania's "River of the Year" posters. (UDC Photo by Cindy Odell)

## PA River of the Year Forum Set Oct. 19

A forum to celebrate the Delaware River as Pennsylvania's River of the Year for 2011 as well as the Delaware River Basin Commission's (DRBC) 50th anniversary will be held on Wednesday, October 19, at the Shawnee Inn. The resort located in Shawnee-on-the-Delaware, PA is marking its 100th anniversary in 2011.

The DRBC and Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau are organizing the invitation-only event. Invited keynote speakers include governors of the four river basin states, as well as U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary Ken Salazar.

There will be two panel discussions on river recreation opportunities and the future of river basin commissions, followed by a reception, dinner, art show, auction, and raffle. Visit [www.riveroftheyear.com](http://www.riveroftheyear.com) for forum details and news of other upcoming events.

The 17th Annual Delaware River Sojourn, held June 18-25, averaged attendance of about 62 people per day. Sixteen through-trippers went the whole way.

"High Admiral" awards were presented in the Upper Delaware section to Dolores Keesler of Damascus, PA, and river flows regime activists Jim Serio of Hancock, NY and Dr. Peter Kolesar of Columbia University. Upper Delaware S&RR retiree Sandra Schultz of Accomac, VA won first place in the art contest for her drawing to match the theme, "A River of Life". For a look back at the 2011 Sojourn and plans for the 2012 event to be held during Rivers Month in June, visit [www.delawareriversojourn.org](http://www.delawareriversojourn.org). ♦



# Kittatinny Debuts Zip Line Attraction

By Fred Stabbert III, Publisher  
Sullivan County Democrat

(Re-printed with permission from Catskill-Delaware magazine, Summer 2011)

Visitors to Kittatinny's Barryville campground might not see the newest addition for the 2011 season - at first.

Then suddenly, off to the left, they will notice a forty-foot high wooden tower with two steel cables coming out of it.

As they turn their head to the right to follow the cables they will see the other tower to which these cables are connected.

"We wanted to build the zip line where people could see it," Dave Jones, whose family owns Kittatinny, said. "It was a perfect fit to go over our parking lot. A good use of space."

And if visitors somehow miss it at first, they will surely hear the high-pitched whine of zip liners descending from the launch tower down to the landing zone.

"It's a 36-story drop in a little over 3,000 feet," Dave said. "Your first ride is a little scary."

That might be an understatement.

As you stand at the top of the 40-foot tall launch tower you have a bird's eye view of the Delaware River - nearly 400 feet below.

It's a view normally reserved for eagles and hawks.

And then you remember - you don't have wings.

What you do have is a full-body safety harness, a helmet and some of the most well-trained guides available.

"All the guides go through training and are certified as either lead or assistant guides," Allen Crouthamel, Kittatinny's Operations Manager, said. "This ride is also inspected daily by our staff and monthly by myself."

"There is also a semi-annual inspection by an outside vendor," he said. "That's a critical component inspection."

With redundant safety systems on both the harness and braking systems, the zip



**TWO-MILE THRILL:** Riders on Kittatinny's zip line can reach upwards of 50 miles per hour. At its highest point, riders are nearly 150 feet off the ground on their 3,000 foot, 36-story descent. With ropes to hold on to, riders can steer themselves on the way down to stay straight. (Contributed Photo by Fred Stabbert III)

line is extremely safe.

Riders can hit top speeds of 50 miles per hour as they soar from the mountaintop down the 3/4-inch steel cable until eventually being slowed down and stopping at the bottom.

The dual racing lines - believed to be the fourth longest in the United States - offer a spectacular view upriver as you race down the mountainside inside the tree-lined course.

The planning process began late last summer as Bonsai Designs, from Grand Junction, Colorado arrived in Barryville to develop the zip line ride.

Their expertise is in designing courses that fit seamlessly into their natural environment, leaving the smallest footprint on the land, which means Bonsai only uses environmentally sound products.

Bonsai utilized the natural materials and woods from the immediate area, instead of building concrete and steel towers that would disrupt the natural flow of the elements.

"Considering the nature of our business, we wanted to be as minimally intrusive to the habitat as possible," Crouthamel said.

"This is a perfect fit for us," Jones added. "This will help us to extend our season and make us an almost year-round attraction. It's a huge zip line which is not only thrilling but scenic, too. It's a beautiful ride."

Jones hopes to have 200 riders per day. Kittatinny also offers paintball fields, 350 campsites in its 250-acre campground and canoeing, tubing, kayaking and rafting trips on the Delaware River.

Zip line rides are \$44 per person, or visitors can purchase a 3-ride special for \$99 (applies to the same rider). Riders must be at least 8 years of age and weigh between 60 and 250 pounds.

To book a zip line adventure, visit [www.kittatinny.com](http://www.kittatinny.com) or call 1-800-FLOAT-KC. ❖

## Please Help the UDC to Update Our Mailing List

The Upper Delaware Council offers its free newsletter on-line at [www.upperdelawarecouncil.org](http://www.upperdelawarecouncil.org) or via postal mail. Please advise us if you wish to discontinue your mail copy, would like to sign up as a new mail subscriber, or if there are any changes to your name or address for our records. Return this notice to: Upper Delaware Council, P.O. Box 192, Narrowsburg, NY 12764; or call (845) 252-3022 or e-mail [laurie@upperdelawarecouncil.org](mailto:laurie@upperdelawarecouncil.org).

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P.O. Box 192, 211 Bridge St.  
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*Working together to conserve the Upper  
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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 or visit [www.upperdelawarecouncil.org](http://www.upperdelawarecouncil.org) for specific meeting dates.

## Upper Delaware News, Views and 'To Do's'

### UDC Award Nominations

The Upper Delaware Council wants to hear about individuals, organizations, communities, and agencies that contributed to the Upper Delaware River Valley's quality of life in 2011.

Public nominations for the UDC's 24th Annual Awards Ceremony will be due by March 12, 2012.

Nine award categories are available.

Visit [www.upperdelawarecouncil.org](http://www.upperdelawarecouncil.org) to find a nomination form with descriptions, a list of past recipients, and the date and location for the spring awards banquet. ♦

### Conservancy Accredited

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy (DHC) in August became one of the 135 out of 1,700 land trusts in the United States to be awarded accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

DHC had to meet national quality standards for protecting important natural places and working lands, and for organizational operation and management in order to earn the accreditation.

The Conservancy has helped protect

over 13,000 acres in its four-county area of Pike and Wayne, PA, and Sullivan and Delaware, NY.

It also founded the "Shop Local Save Land" initiative in brochure and website form to give residents a direct connection to producers of local farm, forestry, and farm market goods.

The Delaware Highlands Conservancy's mission is to "conserve our natural heritage and quality of life in partnership with landowners and the communities of the Upper Delaware region."

For more information, call DHC's Hawley, PA office at (570) 226-3164 or its Monticello, NY office at (845) 807-0535, or e-mail [info@delawarehighlands.org](mailto:info@delawarehighlands.org). ♦

### Ultimate Fishing Town

The hamlet of Roscoe in Sullivan County won the World Fishing Network's Ultimate Fishing Town USA contest on June 6.

More than 300 towns across the United States were nominated in March, with the field narrowed by 20 finalists in April.

Of the more than one million votes cast on-line, Roscoe received 272,257 to edge out the St. Lawrence County community of

Waddington by just 2,197 votes.

In addition to receiving national bragging rights, Roscoe won \$25,000 from the Eagle Claw company to be used for a local fishing accessibility project and a feature production to air on the World Fishing Network. ♦

### Kittatinny Cleans Up

Kittatinny Canoes organized 236 volunteers to scour 70 river miles and 140 miles of shoreline for its four-day 2011 "On and Under the Delaware River Clean-up" from Ten Mile River Access in NY to the Delaware Water Gap in PA and NJ.

Recovered were 15.95 tons of trash, 75 lbs. of aluminum cans, and 344 tires. ♦

### Common Waters Grants

The Common Waters Fund administered by the Pinchot Institute for Conservation awarded \$250,000 in grants to 48 forest owners in the Upper Delaware River Basin in July, according to Pike County's Susan Beecher, Upper Basin coordinator.

Visit [www.commonwatersfund.org](http://www.commonwatersfund.org) for information on the next grant round. ♦