

# The Upper Delaware

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

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This issue of *The Upper Delaware* features one of the strangest and most entertaining stories from our region's lumber rafting era. See page three for details.

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*Most land along the Upper Delaware River is privately owned. Please don't litter or trespass.*



Teacher Jean McMahon's seventh graders at Delaware Valley Central School near Callicoon practice using pH and dissolved oxygen test kits as part of a UDC-funded Water Quality Education Program. The students will use their new knowledge to monitor a stream on school property this spring. Photo by Lori McKean.

## Water Quality Education Program Launched in Schools

**T**he Upper Delaware Council and New York Audubon Society are working to add another "R" to education's basic three. In addition to reading, writing and arithmetic, some Upper Delaware Valley students are learning about a fourth "R"—the River.

A Technical Assistance Grant awarded to the Town of Delaware is helping to fund a 10-month pilot program run by New York Audubon at Delaware Valley Central School near Callicoon, NY. There, a group of enthusiastic seventh-graders are learning about water conservation, the Delaware River Watershed, nonpoint source pollution, water quality monitoring and the history, culture and natural resources of the Upper Delaware River Valley.

The lesson plans and materials will be compiled into a packet that any secondary education teacher in the watershed can duplicate for classroom use.

The program addresses one of the UDC's major goals outlined in its current five-year operating plan: "to develop and carry out an aggressive educational program...(with) one facet designed for school children."

Outgoing UDC Chairman Larry Richardson, Town of Cocheton Representative, championed education during his tenure as Chair during 1993. "We are very much in favor of any educational program that will heighten young people's awareness," he says. "We in the river valley want to protect the quality of life that we have here. We have to

(Please see "Education" on page 8...)

**Special Report**

# River Partnerships Subject of Conference

**T**he Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (DER) and the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) will host a three-day conference on the direction of Pennsylvania's river conservation initiatives into the next century. The conference will be held June 19-22 at the Harrisburg Hilton.

The Pennsylvania Rivers 2000 conference, with the theme "Building Partnerships for River Conservation," will present technical and educational topics to guide interested individuals in river conservation strategies and objectives.

The conference will feature discussion on how business, industry, agricultural and community leaders can work together to enhance Pennsylvania's river resources. Participants will review

case studies of partnership efforts that have led to the conservation of rivers and river values.

## The Upper Delaware: A Model for Success

Naturally, the Upper Delaware, one of the best examples anywhere of a partnership that works, will be featured at the conference, where UDC Executive Director Bill Douglass will make a presentation.

Conference attendees will be able to exchange ideas on the future of river conservation in focus groups on the final day of the conference.

The conference will be kicked off with an evening welcoming reception on June 19. For more information about the conference, call (814) 234-4272. ✦



RIVERS 2000  
CONFERENCE

## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR RIVER CONSERVATION

Call: (814) 234-4272 To receive the conference brochure

**June 19 - 22, 1994**

Hilton Hotel  
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▲ To inspire a vision for the future of Pennsylvania's rivers.

▲ To highlight the contribution of rivers to the quality of life.

▲ To conserve and restore Pennsylvania's rivers through education, awareness and stewardship.

▲ To develop partnerships among diverse interests to enhance Pennsylvania's river resources.

### Upper Delaware Council, Inc.

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

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## River History

# The Elephant in the River

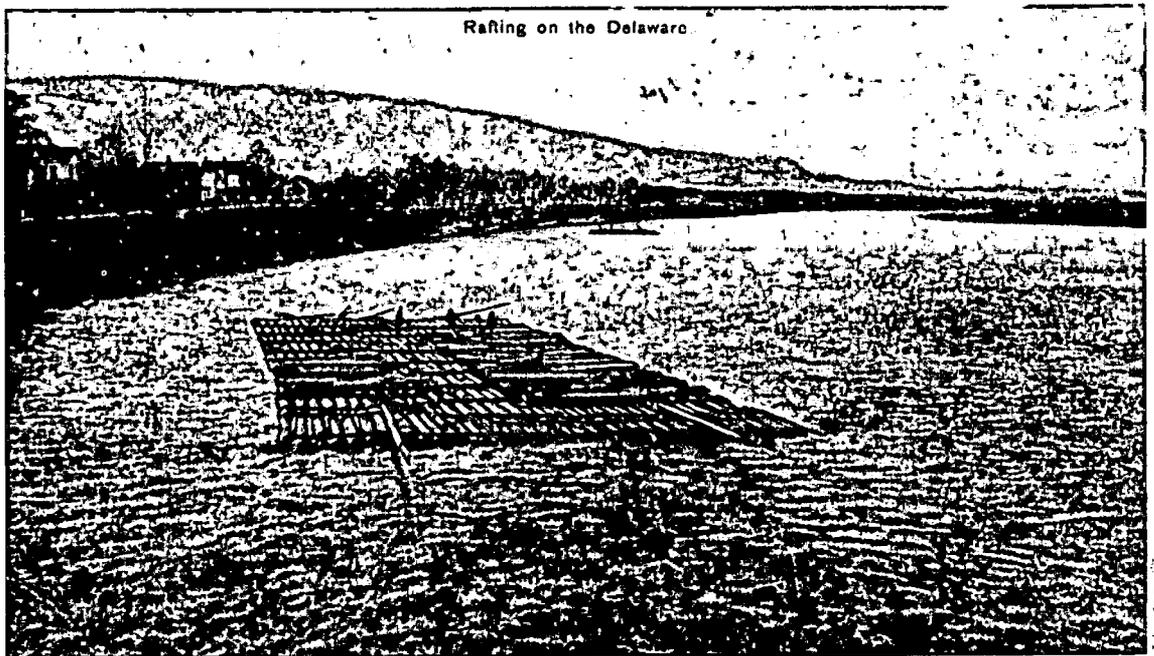
**I**n 1764 Daniel Skinner began a new regional industry by binding logs into rafts and maneuvering them down the Delaware River to markets in Philadelphia, and other river towns. For almost one hundred and sixty years men risked their lives to steer these huge vessels of pine or hemlock downstream on spring's high water or on summer storm "freshets."

Many amazing stories and much folklore surround these raftsmen. But perhaps no true story is as bizarre as the tale of the elephant Tippoo Sahib's encounter with two rafts while fording the river. The

version of the story related here is excerpted from Mary Curtis's publication "Rafting Tales—A Storyteller's Collection," published by the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance in 1983. The article first appeared in the December 13, 1910 edition of the Port Jervis Evening Gazette, and is based on the forty-year-old recollections of local residents.

There are several minor variations on this story. Sometimes the elephant's name is Romeo, an elephant with another circus that likely visited the area. Sometimes the raftsmen stay on the raft and jab the elephant with poles. While there is no way of knowing the details of what happened on that day, many of the facts in this particular version of the story have been verified. Newspaper accounts from 1869 do mention an elephant-raft collision involving Tippoo Sahib. And we know that the elephant's bones ended up near Richmond, Indiana, as the article states.

It is possible that an elephant-raft collision happened more than once. Traveling circuses were common in the latter half of the 1800s. Rafting on the Dela-



*Timber rafts on the Delaware River. These rafts are of typical design, quality, and size of rafts built during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Photo courtesy NPS.*

ware was in its heyday during much of that time. Any animal fording the stream during the spring time, when most rafting occurred, would have had a good chance of encountering a passing raft.

We hope you enjoy this rip-roaring great version of the story, reproduced here as it first appeared in 1910.

### **A Pachyderm of Character**

"This is the story of Tippoo Sahib, who in the sixties [That's 1860s—Ed.] became the most conspicuous elephant on exhibition in this country, and he remained such until it became necessary to put him to death, for Old Tip, as he was familiarly but not affectionately called, had disposed of two keepers and was presumably on the watch for an opportunity to add another to his score. He never let a day pass without doing something to keep up his record as a pachyderm of strong individuality of character. One incident in his career, remembered by residents of this city who were here forty years ago, showed he had ideas of his own.

The Van Amburgh show had exhibited at Port Jervis, N.Y., and was billed for Milford and other places down the Delaware in Pennsylvania. To get down there the show had to cross the Delaware at Port Jervis. There was a big wooden bridge and heavy loaded wagons were using it every day, and had been using it thus for years.

When they got Old Tip to the New York side of the bridge he gave one look at the structure, balked and trumpeted his decision not to risk his royal bulk on it so emphatically that they had to give up the idea of getting him over that way, and took him downstream to where the river was fordable, although there was a rafting freshet running at the time. I may say in passing that the big bridge tumbled into the river of its own weight and years only a couple of days after Old Tip's refusal to go upon it.

### **Tippoo Goes Wading**

After thinking the matter over for nearly an hour on the bank of the river at the ford, during which time he amused himself

*(Please see "Elephant" on page 6...)*

## UDC Hires Werkheiser

**T**he Upper Delaware Council is pleased to announce that it has hired Karl L. Werkheiser as part-time bookkeeper. In this position, he will be responsible for tracking revenue and expenses and will work with Council members to develop and revise annual budgets.

Karl has extensive experience in the areas of financial and business services and served as Financial Administrator for Lafayette College, Northampton Community College, and Lehigh University.

Werkheiser is no stranger to planning issues, and has served on governing, planning, and environmental advisory boards for local governments. This interest in planning and the environment



is one of the reasons he applied for the UDC position after he saw it advertised in local newspapers. Says Karl, "I moved to this area in 1989 and I've been reading about the Council's activities ever since. What attracted me to this

position is the opportunity to be involved with a group whose primary task is protecting a river."

"I used to be a member of the Lehigh-Northampton Counties Joint Planning Commission, and on other planning boards. So planning has been in my background for quite a long time."

For Karl, his new position is more than just a job—it's a source of personal satisfaction.

"Every time that the Council takes an action to improve or protect the river, I can feel some satisfaction that I've had some small part in that," he notes. ✦ — KF

## Survey Shows that Readers Like this Newsletter

We have tabulated the results from the survey conducted in our Spring, 1993 newsletter. Some 119 of our readers responded to our survey (a big thanks to every one of you). As promised, here's a brief report on the results.

When asked to rate the newsletter overall, respondents were overwhelmingly positive. Over 92% of respondents rated the newsletter overall as "very good" or "good," and 88% rated it as "very enjoyable" or "somewhat enjoyable." Over 94% reported that the newsletter is "very informative" or "somewhat informative."

Frankly, we were a bit flattered by the praise that came through in the written comments. "It's a great little paper, very

informative," said one respondent. "We read it cover to cover," wrote another. "A thorough and comprehensive newsletter that targets relevant information. Terrific educational information; excellent news that merits passing on to others as a model. Keep up the good work," said another respondent, who often reprints *The Upper Delaware* articles in his own organization's newsletter.

One thing that came through loud and clear, though, is that readers want to see more articles on history and the environment. Some 80% of respondents read these types of articles "always," and only 35% think that we do a "very good" job of being informative about river history—by far the lowest rating we re-

ceived in the entire survey. Some 45% did report that the newsletter is "somewhat informative" about history, which tells us that there is room for improvement here. You may have noticed that we have already started to respond to these statistics, boosting our coverage on history and the environment by including at least one feature article per issue, starting with the "Hole in the River" article (Summer, 1993).

We may do more surveys in the future to help us refine and improve the newsletter. Even without a survey, your comments on the newsletter are welcome any time—just call or write the Upper Delaware Council. ✦ — KF

# Lackawaxen In Substantial Conformance

## Good News for Both Residents and The River

At its November 4th meeting, the Council approved a resolution finding Lackawaxen Township, Pennsylvania to be in substantial conformance with the River Management Plan and Land and Water Use Guidelines. By way of letter received December 9, 1993, B.J. Griffin, Mid-Atlantic Regional Director of the National Park Service, concurred with the Council's review and recommendation.

### The Tenth Town In

Lackawaxen becomes the tenth town/township in the river corridor to achieve such a determination. Only Berlin, Buckingham, and Manchester Townships in Wayne County, which are not participating members in the UDC, have been found not to be in substantial conformance. A determination has yet to be made for the Towns of Cochection and Hancock.

Ms. Griffin states in her letter that "We commend the Upper Delaware Council and Lackawaxen Township for the thoroughness, diligence and sound

judgment reflected in its review and recommendation. Efforts such as this confirm the valuable role of the Council in enhancing and protecting the special attributes of the Upper Delaware Valley for present and future generations."

### Towns Enjoy Many Benefits

A town or township found to be in substantial conformance benefits in many ways.

When a town or township is in substantial conformance, land use decisions continue to be made at the local level, without interference by the National Park Service. This is especially true if the town or township participates in the Upper Delaware Council.

Local control is the hallmark of the township-developed River Management Plan, which seeks to protect a true national treasure—the Upper Delaware—through local action.

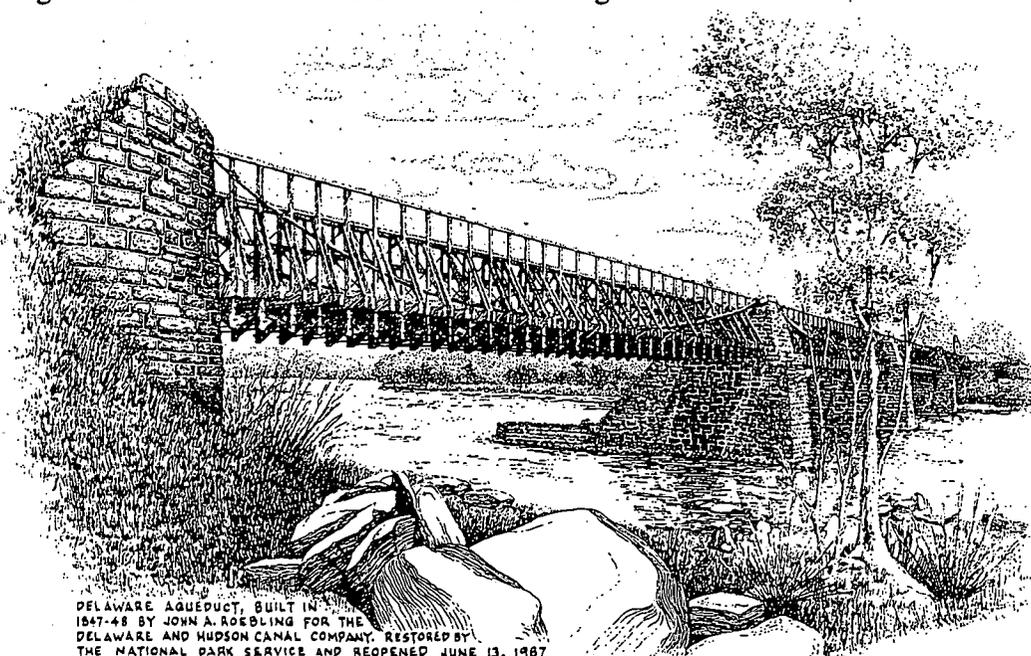
When your town or township is in substantial conformance, there is also the satisfaction of knowing that future

development will be sensitive to the environment and the need to protect the River.

Also, in towns and townships that are in substantial conformance, the land acquisition authority of the Secretary of Interior is greatly reduced.

### Making Partnership Work

David Soete, Resource Specialist with the UDC, comments, "Although the Council's reviews may seem to be long and drawn out, there is a good reason behind the process. This is a partnership, and it is better to establish a good working relationship and come to a consensus on various issues, than to be confrontational or make one party or the other feel like they are being forced into something. The most important thing is to conserve the resources. That is everyone's main goal. But you also have to allow for compatible economic development and growth. So far, we have been able to do all of these things successfully." ✦ — DS



DELAWARE AQUEDUCT, BUILT IN 1847-48 BY JOHN A. ROEBLING FOR THE DELAWARE AND HUDSON CANAL COMPANY, RESTORED BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AND REOPENED JUNE 13, 1987

by sucking up water in his trunk and throwing it on the crowd of spectators, the contrary old elephant concluded to take the trip, and he went into the water and waded on toward the Pennsylvania shore. He had gone but a few steps, though, when he started with such a rush through the water that he almost drowned his keeper, who was in a row-boat. Old Tip had suddenly become mad all the way through.

He had got about half way across the river, trumpeting savagely at every step, when a raft hove in sight around the bank at the bridge. It was bearing directly down with its unsuspecting crew toward Tippoo Sahib and his escort.

The ugly old brute saw the raft and stopped and gazed at it in angry surprise. He was in a fighting mood. Waving his trunk and giving a blast that woke the echoes in the surrounding hills, he turned his front up stream and awaited the charge of the raft. All the efforts of his keeper and others in the escort to turn him out of the channel seemed only to increase his determination to have a bout with that thing coming down upon him.

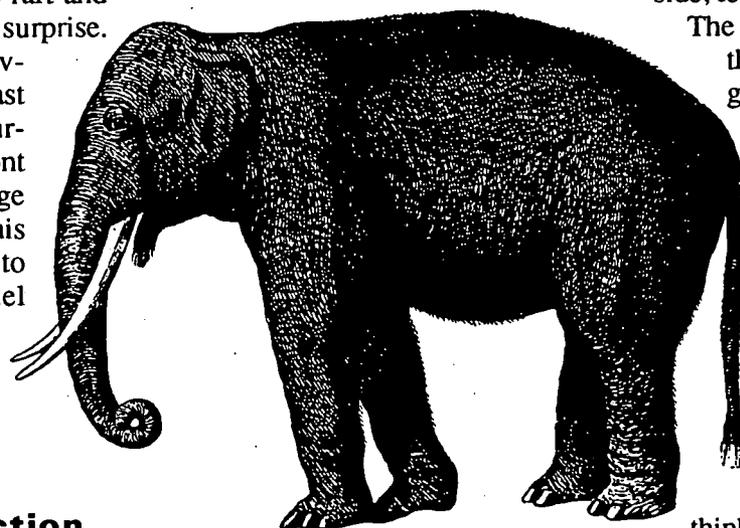
### An Unusual Obstruction

Before the men of the raft understood the situation, the raft had made more than half the distance between the bridge and the ford. As soon as the nature of this unusual obstruction in the channel became apparent to them, they were one and all panic-stricken, and every one of them, pilot and all, leaped from the raft and struck out for the New York side. The deserted raft rushed helplessly on. Old Tip never moved out of his tracks. His fury was a sight to see.

The raft was made of hemlock logs and was at least 100 feet long and 40 wide. The water was swift and so deep where Tip stood that it reached above his belly. Everyone expected of course to see the elephant, as big as he was, carried away and done for by the ponderous raft—the wrecking of a \$10,000 elephant by \$600 worth of hemlock logs.

But when the shock came the raft trembled and its speed was greatly diminished. If Old Tip could have had a secure footing on the stones there is not telling what he wouldn't have done to that raft then and there, but the stones on the river bottom were slippery, and the elephant moved down, not as if he had to, but as if he were merely seeking more stable footing.

He got a foothold now and then, and every time he did so lessened the speed of the raft until its momentum was so much overcome that the hind end of the raft began to swing with the current. This soon turned the hind end around so that it became the front end, and it ran



a way from Tip diagonally across the river toward the New York shore.

Thrown thus out of the rafting channel, it ran a hundred yards or so, where it was cast upon a reef, and the logs flew in all directions, making the raft a wreck. At sight of this Old Tip gave a roar that a deaf man might have heard a mile away. When his keeper and the others resumed their places about him he was still trumpeting blasts of victory and seemed to be perfectly satisfied.

He had spent his fury on the raft and felt better. He turned obediently at his keeper's order and resumed his march to Pennsylvania as if nothing had occurred that morning to distress his temper in the least.

He had barely landed on the bank on that side, though, when another raft

came in sight, just below the bridge. The men on the raft had seen what had happened to the one that preceded them and were pulling on their oars for dear life to land on the New York shore.

When the elephant went out of the river so meekly, though, they thought there was no cause for them to be alarmed, and they rested on their oars, content to pass on. That was when Old Tip caught sight of the raft.

Instantly his fury arose. He broke away and made for the river, his big trunk raised, and trumpeting loudly. The men on the raft didn't wait for further proceedings, but jumped in the river and lost no time in getting to the New York side, leaving their raft to its fate.

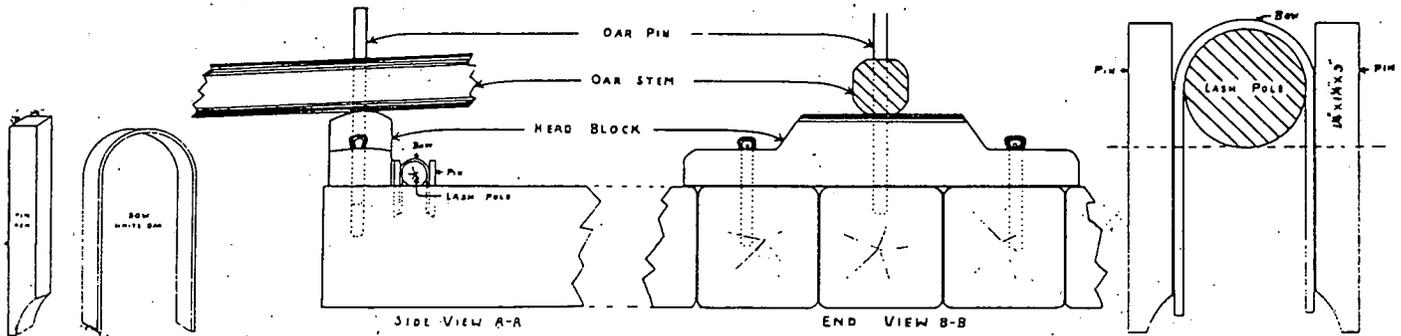
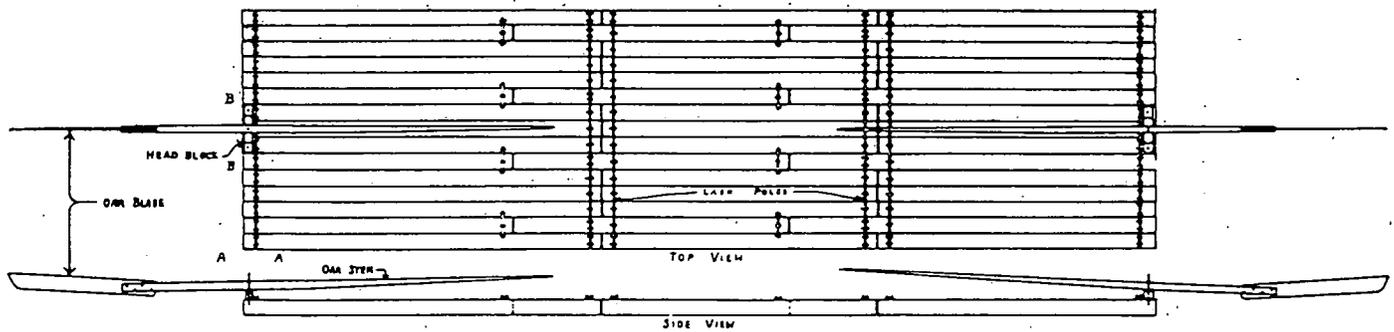
The raft went dashing by, far out in the river, and Old Tip stopped, gazing at it as it fled, and apparently concluded that it was too big a coward for him to waste time on. He gave a few blasts at it, walked leisurely up the bank, and proceeded with the procession down the Milford road, as calm as a May morning.

It wasn't long after that the Old Tip attacked and nearly killed his third keeper. Then, at Centreville, Indiana, I think, they put the big elephant to death. His skeleton was given to the city of Richmond, Indiana, and I suppose it is there yet."

### Epilogue

Old Tip's bones became part of a display at the Joseph Moore Museum in Earlham College's Lindley Hall. He was one of the largest elephants ever brought to this country, and so became a popular attraction in a museum that drew as many as 5,000 nonstudent visitors per year. In 1924 a fire at the museum badly damaged the bones, and they were eventually discarded.

*The Upper Delaware Council would like to thank NPS Historian Mary Curtis, and Michelle Bottorff of the Wayne County, Indiana, Historical Museum, for the information they provided for this article.* ✦ — KF



### How to Build a Timber Raft

These illustrations show the bow and pin method of raft construction as practiced in the 1850s. The top view shows a piece consisting of three platforms, coupled end to end. Large rafts were made by joining two or more pieces. Lash poles were pinned into place at either end of each platform. Bottom view is a cross section showing the method of pinning, by inserting a white oak bow (bottom, left) into holes drilled in a log on both sides of the lash pole. The lash pole was drawn down tight with square ash pins driven alongside the ends into the holes (bottom, right). The side view shows heavy oars,

balanced and secured to head blocks with oar pins. The end view shows the method of securing head blocks to logs by pinning the center thole pin and two wooden side pins.

Both logs and cut lumber were rafted on the Delaware. Sometimes rafts also carried hemlock bark or local bluestone as cargo.

This illustration is reprinted from *Rafting on the Delaware*, published in 1967 by the New Jersey Agricultural Society. The sketch, by J.D. Tonkin, first appeared in *The Last Raft*, Harrisburg, 1940.

(Please Cut or Tear Along Dotted Line)

## Do We Have Your Correct Address?

If your address has changed or you no longer own property in the Upper Delaware River area, please help us to maintain the accuracy of our records. Fill in your new address or the name and address of the new owner of your property and return this part of the page to the: Upper Delaware Council, P. O. Box 217, Narrowsburg, NY 12764. Thank you for your assistance.

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Check this line and return the form if you wish to have your name removed from the mailing list. \_\_\_\_\_

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## Special Announcement

# UDC Banquet Set for Saturday, March 19

**W**e've had months of short days, long nights, cold weather and slushy roads. Don't let 'em get you down! Shake those late winter blues, and break out the new dress or that fancy tie 'cause it's time for the Council's annual awards banquet.

This banquet has turned into one of our region's major annual events, and for good reason. It's always fun, the food is fine, the company's great, and there's nothing better than spending an evening honoring friends and neighbors who have worked hard to make our valley a better place to live,

work and play.

This year, the banquet will be held at the club at Villa Roma resort near Callicoon, New York, on Saturday, March 19, at 6:00 PM. The guest speaker is U.S. Congressman Maurice Hinchey (NY). For reservations call the Upper Delaware Council at (914) 252-3022, or write us at P.O. Box 217, Narrowsburg, New York, 12764. Please make reservations by March 11. Space is limited, so please make your reservations soon! ✦

*("Education," continued from page 1)*

teach the children to be the stewards of the land."

### "Hands-On" Projects Stressed

Lori McKean of New York Audubon designed the program to keep students' interest by using many "hands-on" projects. Says McKean, "Students will conduct home water-use audits and recommend ways to cut down on water use in the school. They will adopt a stream that runs through school property and conduct water quality monitoring tests for pH, dissolved oxygen, and macroinvertebrates. In addition, the students will learn about the Delaware Watershed and how their actions can affect water quality."

Students also will gain an appreciation for some of the Upper Delaware Valley's historical and cultural resources, such as the Roebling Bridge and Zane Grey Museum, and for its natural resources, including rare plants, animals and birds.

According to McKean, the program's content is specifically geared towards the Upper Delaware River Valley. "This is not a generic program about water conservation and water

quality," says McKean. "Rather, it introduces students to the distinct qualities of the Upper Delaware River valley."

### Learning for Life

"This is information these students can use in their everyday lives," says McKean. "It covers everything from how to save water at home to how to avoid polluting a tributary. It exposes them to some of the River Valley's natural and cultural resources. Most importantly, these kids will gain an appreciation for how their actions can affect these resources. This is something they can carry with them forever."

McKean wanted to design a program for schools because she feels that working with youth is an important, but often overlooked, part of environmental planning. "These kids are our future politicians, planning board members, concerned citizens and caretakers of the land," says McKean. "This is the perfect time, and they are at the perfect age to foster an appreciation of this precious natural resource." ✦ — LM

*The UDC meets on the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 pm in the Tusten Town Hall in Narrowsburg, NY. Committees meet on the third and fourth Tuesdays of every month at the UDC office on Bridge Street, across from the Town Hall. Call the UDC at (914) 252-3022 for further information.*

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