

THE INNISFREE ALMANACK



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Editor: Tom Rue

Graphic Artist: Marci MacLean

The **Innisfree Almanack** is a periodic newsletter published by the Innisfree Youth Hostel and mailed first class from Milanville, PA 18443.

The **Innisfree Almanack** welcomes letters, short articles, and poetry which relate to the Milanville/Skinners Falls area, as well as other material of interest to Innisfree guests.

Requested donation is \$5.00 per four issues.

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Innisfree Corporation is a private, not-for-profit corporation. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Sponsor this newsletter!

Innisfree needs your help. Having received a favorable response to the first issue of the **Almanack**, we are presenting you with a second.

Subscriptions by guests and past guest of the Innisfree Youth Hostel helps make the newsletter possible.

Thanks also, to **The River Reporter** for allowing us the use of its typesetting equipment.

Marci MacLean (who agreed to donate her services solely on the condition that the editor ease up on his lead foot when driving past her house), your work and expertise on the graphic layout of this issue was invaluable. Thank you!

Advertisements by local businesses are also a great help. The cost is \$10 for a business card-sized space. Innisfree guests are urged to **support our advertisers**. Tell them you saw their ad here.

We recognize the reality that **The Innisfree Almanack** may never pay for *itself*. Its primary readership consists of those who have stayed at our hostel in the past, and whom we hope will return — *soon*.

Send your subscription in now.

AMERICAN YOUTH HOSTELS

Innisfree has been operating a hostel near Skinners Falls for a number of years. In 1983, the board of trustees voted to seek chartered status as an "official" hostel by becoming part of a worldwide network of similar establishments. After doggedly pursuing such recognition through what seemed to be a long and grinding process, at presstime we appear to be very close to acceptance by American Youth Hostels (AYH).

AYH was incorporated in 1936 by an act of Congress as a membership organization offering opportunities for travel and outdoor recreation to all, but especially to young people, in scenic, cultural, and historic areas. AYH is a member of the International Youth Hostels Federation, comprising 62 countries.



Nate Herman and Annie Hat perform at Innisfree's April 11th "comet party" in the recreation hall.

Nat & Annie

A "comet party" was held in the rec hall on April 11, with 27 people in attendance. The evening was highlighted by a performance by **Nate & Annie**, a comedy-music team from Callicoon, NY. The performance was terrific, and well received by the crowd.

April 11th marked the night Halley's Comet passed close to the earth

Night of the Comet, a cult horror flick about a comet which passes the planet and turns everyone not inside a metal structure into orange dust, was not so well received. Neither was the nonalcoholic punch.

The evening was publicized locally as "an alcohol-free evening activity for students and adults." While the hope was to attract organized groups of teenagers, most who came were considerably above the drinking age.

This, in part, accounted for the poor attendance during the movie and pot-luck dinner early in the evening.

Unknown to us, a "pre-party party," where wine and beer were available, was held down the road at the home of a local resident. After Nate & Annie's performance, a "post-party party" was held in the same home.

Innisfree was told on June 24, by AYH national headquarters in Washington that its charter as a "supplemental accommodation" (meaning that it is a private establishment and will have "mixed," AYH and non-AYH use) should be complete within a month.



Bud and Ann Rue enjoy the rapids at the Skinnners Falls recreation area, near Innisfree.

“Wild & Scenic River”

The Delaware River is the only major river along the North Atlantic coast that remains undammed along its main stem. In 1978, a 73.4 mile stretch of it, between Hancock and Port Jervis, NY, was designated by the U.S. Congress as a “wild and scenic river” and is now administered by the National Park Service (NPS).

Most of the land along the river is privately owned. Canoeists and others must secure landowners’ consent before leaving the water, except in an emergency or at designated access points such as at Skinnners Falls.

Canoeists, rafters, and tubers are required by law to wear life preservers while on the water, but federal regulations do not apply on private land.

For river-related emergencies, call the NPS at (717) 559-7527.

Response Card

Please send me more information on the following:

- Innisfree Youth Hostel
- American Youth Hostels (AYH)
- **Innisfree Amanack** subscription — \$5 contribution
- **The River Reporter** (local weekly newspaper) — \$15 per year
- **River Reporter** note-cards — \$3.50
- Other

Contribution enclosed: \$ (tax-deductible)

Name

Address

Phone

The Innisfree Almanack. P.O. Box 47, Milanville PA 18443

Innisfree Club

Ten to 12 weekends a year, groups of students from Lawrenceville, NJ visit Milanville with Bud Rue, who teaches math at Lawrence High School.

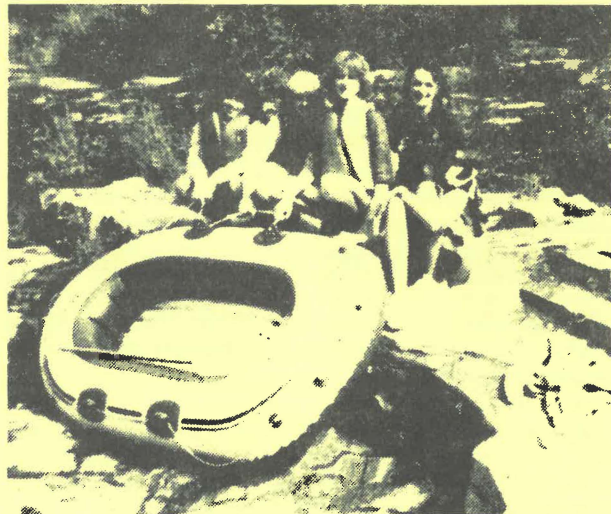
The group is called the *Innisfree Club* and exists to foster peer-group interdependence and friendships in the school.

Members of the club commit not to use alcohol or drugs or create a disturbance in the area on their weekend visits to Innisfree and the river at Skinnners Falls.

Before each warm-weather group goes home at the end of the weekend, Bud accompanies them to the rapids area there, and the group collects garbage bags full of empty cans, broken glass, and other refuse discarded by recreationists and others who are not concerned about the ecology of the area.

Bud reports that he witnesses positive effects from these group-building experiences at Innisfree when he sees the students in school, back in New Jersey.

On occasion, individual students who have expressed a particular appreciation for the area are invited back during the summer, to work in exchange for their stay.



A group of Innisfree Club teenagers from New Jersey pause to rest after braving the Skinnners Falls rapids.

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Summer on the Upper Delaware

Jim Miller and Kris Deniken, both of New Jersey, relax under a white pine in Innisfree's front yard, overlooking the Upper Delaware National Scenic & Recreational River.

Innisfree library & meeting hall

The following letter appeared in the March 6, 1986 edition of *The River Reporter*, a newspaper published in Narrowsburg, NY:

To the Editor:

Because we feel that THE RIVER REPORTER is the local community newspaper which is of the greatest interest to recreationists and others who visit Innisfree, we have been saving issues for the last three years.

We are missing the following numbers of Volume XI: 1, 12, 13, 14, 16, and 19. Enclosed is a check for \$2.10 to cover the cost of the back issues. Let us know if this amount is not sufficient.

Innisfree has a library of over 2,000 books on the first floor of our dormitory building which, by prior arrangement, local residents are invited to use.

Our recreation hall is also available, at modest rates, for community meetings and other events.

You may contact us at 717/729-7762.

Best regards,
 INNISFREE YOUTH HOSTEL
 Bud, Ann, & Tom Rue
 Milanville

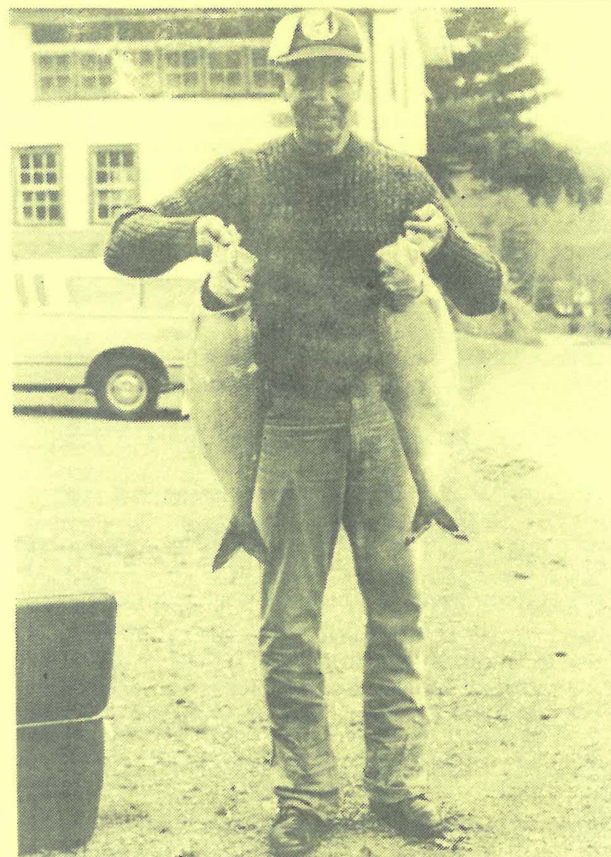
Save the Delaware

*I walked down to The River tonight.
 There I heard the voice of the Lord.
 The flowing waters there said to me that the earth
 and all things that in her are continue,
 Despite the actions of people above.
 "Lord God," I said,
 "Open to me the windows of heaven,"
 And the were opened.*

Nothing stops her.

*There is **no** exception*

- Submitted anonymously



They're here!

Fisherman and Innisfree hosteler Gerry Hartzel, a printer from Souderton, Pennsylvania stands in the Innisfree Youth Hostel parking lot and proudly displays part of his recent shad catch from Skinners Falls.



Mowing the hill

Oscar Ropke of River Road, Milanville has been mowing hay every summer, with his wife Vivian, for over 40 years. "There's nothing to it, really," he laughed, "You just keep going around in circles until you either get it done, or you go crazy."

Years ago, the Ropkes began harvesting loose hay with a pitch-fork, and later graduated to the convenience of an automated bailer. "Next, I'll have to get a kicker," he said, to throw the bails onto the wagon.

Until 1969, Oscar and Vivian Ropke operated a farm in Callicoon, NY boarding house in Milanville called "Hillside Acres," originally built and operated by Vivian's father, A. J. Thomas.

In the spring of 1970, the boarding house was purchased by a group of teachers from New Jersey and renamed Innisfree.

Hostel Rates

Bunk rooms (2-8 per room)

\$7/person/night

Lodge rooms (1-2 per room)

Double: \$20/night

Single: \$15/night

Cottage

\$125 weekly

\$25 nightly

Apartment

\$175/weekly

\$35/nightly (2 bedroom)

\$25/nightly (1 bedroom)

Meals available

Group discounts available

Insurance surcharge

In an effort to adapt to the insurance crisis which is sweeping the nation, Bud Rue of the Innisfree Youth Hostel recently announced an across the board insurance surcharge at the nonprofit bed and breakfast facility near the Skinners Falls rapids.

Like many other nonprofit organizations locally and nationally, Innisfree's public liability premium skyrocketed this year to \$4000, up from \$400 in 1985, which represents 40% of the hostel's gross revenue for 1985. The premium hike is up from \$400 — a 1000% jump, according to Rue.

All hostel guests will be charged \$1.25 above the rate for the room they stay in. Basic lodging at Innisfree varies from \$7 to \$25, and ranges from a bunk with no linen to a fully-furnished cottage with all the comforts of home. Innisfree has a sleeping capacity of 55 for groups of an educational or recreational nature. The hostel is staffed by volunteers.

The corporation has has a clean insurance record, Rue said. Never operated as a business, it exists "to provide lodging and meals to people of limited means who have an appreciation for the area," according to a brochure. Some guests work in exchange for their stay, but now even they will be asked to contribute to the insurance fund.

Open year 'round

The Innisfree Youth Hostel is open all week, year 'round.

Meals, prepared by Ann and Bud Rue, are available daily from the end of June through the beginning of September, as well as on weekends off season.

For those who cannot afford regular hostel rates, special arrangements can be made to work in exchange for room and board. Generally, people work three to four hours a day for each night they stay at Innisfree.

Innisfree does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, or sex.

Hostel concerned with comets and personal growth

MILANVILLE — *Innisfree*, a nonprofit youth hostel and inn, offers a unique type of lodging on the Upper Delaware River.

Started by school teachers from Montclair, N.J., *Innisfree* has remained open, "with some interruptions," as a not-for-profit public eating and drinking (non-alcoholic) place for 15 years. It also offers a conference and "growth center" for secondary schools, social service agencies, colleges and private industry.

The name does not mean that literally, *the inn is free*—it comes from a pastoral poem by Yeates— but owners Bud and Ann Rue say that no one draws a salary, and they do allow "young people of limited means to trade work for their room and board.

The Rues, who serve as president and vice president, also offer home-cooked meals, provide river float trips and lead periodic excursions down to the Delaware to collect garbage bags full of empty beer containers deposited by others not as concerned about the cleanliness of the area.

Innisfree Corporate Secretary Thomas Rue edits a periodic "almanack" aimed at those who stay at the facility or are involved with the organization.

The organization will put on

a "comet party" April 11, to benefit its "human relations training program" the following weekend. Featured are *Nate & Annie*, a comedy-music team composed of Nate Herman, who has written for and performed on the Saturday Night Live television show, and singer-writer Annie Hat. They reside in nearby Callicoon.

The party, on the night Halley's Comet passes closest to the earth, will also feature a "pot-luck dinner" and the video-tape, *Night of the Comet*. It is billed as a "non-alcoholic occasion...open to both teenagers and adults."

The "growth laboratory" the following weekend is designed to help participants "increase self-awareness and enhance interpersonal skills." It will give group members an opportunity to "experiment with new and more productive ways of expressing themselves in a 'laboratory' setting." It is modeled after a similar program at Trenton State College. Fee includes two nights' lodging and meals.

Innisfree has not been completely immune from the political turmoil surrounding the Upper Delaware National River project. A recent publicity release gave some local residents the impression that the corporation was a project of the Na-

The Isle of Innisfree

I will arise and go now, and go to *Innisfree*.
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made:
Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honeybee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.
And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings:
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of linnet's wings.
For always night and day, I hear [the] water lapping,
With low sounds by the shore
While standing in the roadway or on the pavements gray:
I hear it in the deep heart's core.

—William Butler Yeates (1893)

tional Park Service.

The Park Service, which has been getting blamed for several transgressions lately, wrote a letter for publication in the *River Reporter* Narrowsburg, in which Supt. John Hutzky stated that the agency has "no association with *Innisfree*, implied or otherwise. We don't discredit youth hostels, as they have proven beneficial in other places, particularly in Europe. However, such a program must succeed on its own merits, rather than through an implied relationship with the National Park Service."

This led *Innisfree* secretary Rue to regret the ambiguity in a followup letter of his own adding, "We are inclined to remind Mr. Hutzky that if the National Park Service is to succeed in its efforts in this valley, it will have to be on its own merits, in

order to gain the support of the local communities. *Innisfree* neither supports nor opposes the Park Service in these efforts...we simply acknowledge its existence. In no way do we wish to either align ourselves with its goals or imply our approval of its methods."

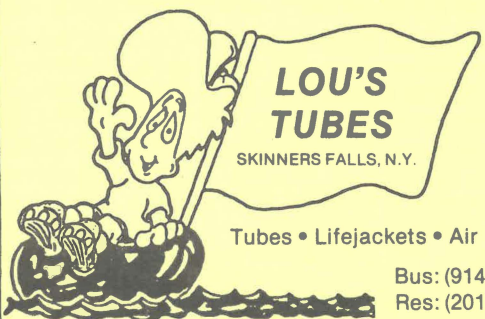
That's telling 'em.

Those who want more information about *Innisfree* or its programs may contact Rue at P.O. Box 47, Milanville, Pa., 18443 (717-729-7762).

[Written by Doug Hay, Editor, the *Pike County Dispatch*, Milford, PA, April 3, 1986. Reprinted with permission.]




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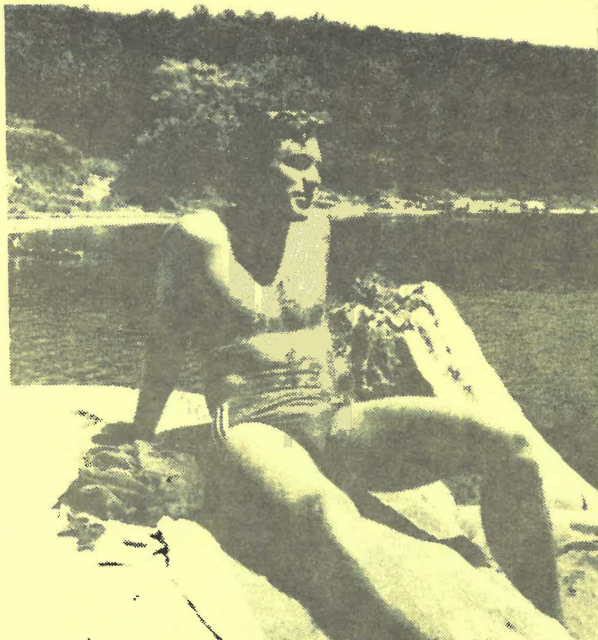
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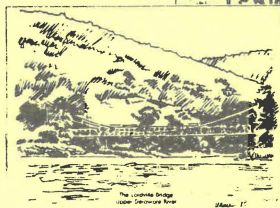
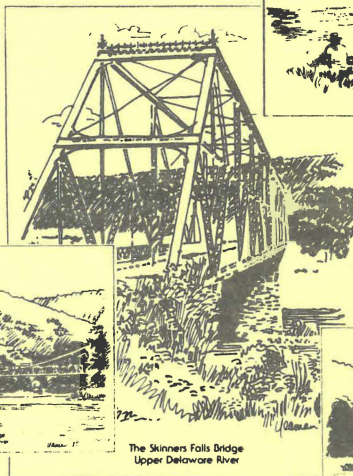
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Catherine Clifford of New York City and Michael Schlanger of Southfield, Michigan enjoy the Upper Delaware River at Skimmers Falls.

Catherine writes for a major women's magazine and Michael is a printer. Both were participants in Innisfree's 1970 camp program.

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Coming events

STOURBRIDGE LION

JULY 19-20, 26-27: HONESDALE — "First train in the USA." In 1985, over 8000 rode the Stourbridge Lion Rail Excursion. Benefit for the Wayne County Chamber of Commerce. Tickets available at (717) 153-1960. (Also scheduled for October 4-5, 11-12, and 18-19).

FIELD DAY

JULY 26: CALLICOON — Day of games and fun at the Delaware Community Center. Benefit for Delaware Volunteer Fire Department

"FAMILY FESTIVAL"

AUGUST 2: CALLICOON — Day-long carnival with storytelling, square dancing, 50/50 bingo, wheels of fortune, balloon sculpting, face painting, and a variety of other live entertainment. Benefit for the Delaware Community Center.

WAYNE COUNTY FAIR

AUGUST 4-10: HONESDALE — County-wide exhibits of agricultural and folk traditions.

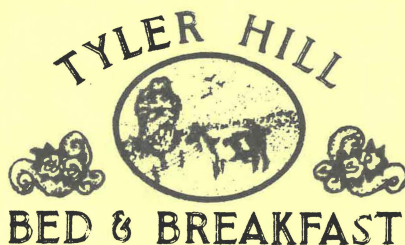
RUE FAMILY REUNION

AUGUST 25-27: MILANVILLE — 50th birthday celebration of Bob Rue of Canton, Illinois. Innisfree Youth Hostel will remain open to the public, but may be crowded.

OKTOBERFEST

OCTOBER 11-12: NARROWSBURG — Festival of German traditions and lifestyles in the Upper Delaware valley. Benefit for the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance.

*For reservations or information,
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Detour directions

Coming from New York (Route 17B): Turn right onto Route 97 North, to Cochetcon. Cross bridge into Damascus, PA. Take first left onto River Road. About four miles downriver is Milanville. Turn left at the flagpole (just after the general store). Follow the River Road about a quarter of a mile. Innisfree is on the right.

Coming from Pennsylvania (Route 652): Turn left onto River Road at the Pennsylvania side of the Narrowsburg Bridge. Follow the River Road about six miles. Innisfree is on the left.

Italian pizza in Milanville

Rocky and Maryann Degori, owners of the Milanville General Store, recently acquired a pizza oven and began selling pies to the public.

An 18-inch pie is \$6.00, Rocky said. Extra toppings are \$1.00 each.

The dough is made by Rocky himself. He said he learned from his mother, who was born and grew up in Calabria, Italy.

It takes about a half an hour to cook a pizza, so to save time it is best to phone your order in ahead. Call (717) 729-8390.

Fresh pastries are available at the store on weekends.

The Degoris fear that the closing of the bridge at Skinners Falls this season could cut into their business so much as to cause the store to close.

Innisfree guests are encouraged to patronize the Milanville General Store for groceries and other sundry needs.

A U.S. post office is located in the rear of the store.

Innisfree goes "dry"

In an effort to avoid members of "the beer-can chucking river turkey crew," whose misbehavior has given parts of the Skinners Falls area a bad name, the board of trustees has agreed that Innisfree's policy will be **no public consumption of alcohol**.

Guests may store beer at Innisfree to drink off premises, but are reminded to properly dispose of bottles and cans.

The only exception to the no public drinking policy will be for groups that wish to reserve the entire facility. But an 11:00 p.m. "quiet time" and expectations of good order will still apply.

For more information, contact Bud, Ann, or Tom Rue.

Bridge closed

The bridge at Milanville which connects Pennsylvania and New York will be closed for repairs from June to October of 1986, according to officials at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT).

The work will include replacing and extending the guardrails, putting in new pins which connect the two trusses, painting the bridge, and replacing the wooden decking.

The deck will be taken up late in the summer, PennDOT said.

Detours from New York mean driving three miles upriver to Damascus, or six miles down to Narrowsburg.

Tater Bug, presently of Nobody's Station, NY, told **The Innisfree Almanack** that he plans to provide ferry service between Nobody's Cafe and Milanville at the base of the rapids. "If you want to be picked up, just give a shout," offered Tater.

The closing of the bridge at the high point of the season was protested by over 200 bridge users, earlier this year, in a petition taken at the Milanville General Store, an editorial and several letters from concerned residents, and a request from the Conference of Upper Delaware Townships (COUP).



Tater Bug, a/k/a Eddie Tyler

Nobody's Cafe

Tater Bug gives character and spirit to Skinners Falls, during warm weather, where he camps below the rapids on the New York side. He sells soda, gum, and candy to recreationists on the river.

Visitors are always welcome at his campfire, he says. With some, he shares a sample of his family "recipe" — cider made by himself at Innisfree, with secret ingredients which he will not reveal.

When you stop in, ask for a tour of the old railroad cistern at Nobody's Station, and an Indian burial site up on the mountain.

In cold weather, Tater lives in a trailer in Beach Lake with his wife Cindy.

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35 miles (two days) downriver from Skinners Falls.

EDITORIAL

The Upper Delaware River controversy

Innisfree has been under continuous ownership in Milanville since early 1970. In that short time, we have witnessed tremendous changes in the use of the river here.

Most noticeable to us, because of our location, have been the improvements at the Skinners Falls rapids. With the cooperation of the Town of Cochecton and the NY Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the National Park Service (NPS) maintains a fishing, boating, and swimming access, complete with informational kiosk, rest rooms, and trash disposal services.

Riverfront landowners report dramatic improvements in the way their property is treated by recreationists since the NPS's appearance on the river in 1978.

Each day rangers and volunteers from the National Canoe Safety Patrol or NPS "Volunteers In Parks" (VIP) program are stationed at Skinners Falls and other locations on the river.

The NPS was recently honored by the National Water Safety Congress for having *zero* fatalities on its 73-mile stretch of river during 1985, down from 10 in 1980. This record low is attributable, at least in part, to the excellent work of the rangers.

However, the controversy surrounding a river management plan is not as simple as these facts alone might suggest. Some local residents fear federal confiscation of their homes and property, such as took place during the 1970's downriver in what started out as the Tock's Island Dam project and ultimately became the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

Others maintain that what we have here, designated and set apart by Congress in the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, is "a special kind of park" where the federal government has no jurisdiction on private lands and would never condemn property unless it were able to show a "clear and direct threat" to the ecology of the river.

It is apparent to some that the NPS is a great lumbering bureaucracy, and that perhaps its most dismal failure in this region has been in the area of public relations and information. Many residents are still uncertain and fearful concerning its role.

Innisfree takes no position, official or otherwise, on the question of an NPS presence here. Individual officers or members of Innisfree Corporation are free to do so, but any such statements do not represent the position of the organization.

Use of our facility, for various purposes, has been offered to both the NPS and to local organizations which oppose its presence.

Our primary concern is for the people, the river, and the river valley, in that order. We are more interested in seeing the area's most precious economic resource — the Delaware River — preserved and managed effectively than we are in what levels of government are involved in that process.

As one Damascus Township supervisor put it not long ago, "The river will run whether they [the NPS] are here or not. It has for a good many years. I think it'll keep right on a'goin'."

Letters to

Innisfree



Innisfree hosted a delicious dinner for 56 of our volunteers and provided accommodations for my family for the weekend. Our weekend at Innisfree was relaxing and filled with country hospitality and good food.

It's like going back home.

Richard Rhodes
Commodore
National Canoe Safety Patrol

Use the enclosed money [\$10] to continue your newsletter, or for any type of PR you wish.

Love,
Jeff Kelson
Morgantown NJ

Enclosed find copy of an article on Innisfree printed in this week's **Pike County Dispatch**. Good luck with your endeavors. Maybe we should get together some time and discuss mutual interests and enterprises. We run a small bed & breakfast on the river in Mill Rift, which may be suitable as part of a link in river tour packages on the Upper Delaware — sort of a river hostel system, involving your place, ours, and others. Let me know if you're interested.

Yours,
Doug Hay
Mill Rift PA

I can see that spring is arriving in the Delaware Valley. As I read my copy of **The River Reporter**, I get a bit nostalgic. Fortunately, I have the paper to let me take a "trip" in my mind once a week. I, too, was disappointed I could not see Halley's Comet — but hope your party was a success.

I have not forgotten about the giant slate stones but, as yet, have no new property on which to put them. I haven't given up hope that I will find something this year.

I hope you are all well and happy — my own condition has improved considerably in the last eight months.

My best to you all —

Penelope Branning
Los Angeles CA

Continued on page 11

Guest expectations

Welcome to Innisfree. We try to keep our hostel neat, clean, and a pleasant facility for all. In order to do so we need your help. Please take note of and adhere to the following:

1. No drinking on the premises.
2. No smoking anywhere, at any time in the dorm.
3. Use the driveway for loading and unloading only. Park your vehicles in the parking lot.
4. Do not use the driveway for any purpose past 10:00 p.m.
5. Quiet time begins at 11:00 p.m.
6. We are not responsible for personal belongings. Room locks can be provided upon request.
7. If you use Innisfree equipment return it.
8. At your departure, leave your room at least as clean as you found it. Sweep out your room and bring your garbage to the main house where it can be separated.
9. Open fires on the ground are not permitted. Grills are available for use on request.
10. Above all, **use common sense** in your consideration of Innisfree property and of the rights of others.

Any guest who violates the above rules or who becomes offensive to others in any way may be asked to leave without refund of lodging charges.

(Continued from page 10) — LETTERS

Thanks for the **Almanack**. I enjoyed your response to Hutzky's letter.

I'd like to visit "this place" when I'm back East next time.

Steve Krum
Duncanville TX

I know where Innisfree is now! I was out on a motorcycle ride with a friend and I saw the sign right there beside the road! I doubt if I could find it again on my own though, but it was fun suddenly running into the sign! We were in a bit of a rush or I would have stopped in.

A couple of times I almost called you at Innisfree to see if I could just come hang out for a bit when I felt like I just **had** to "get away from it all."

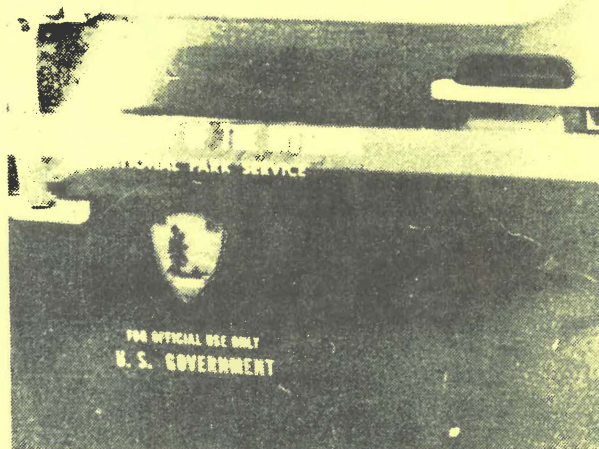
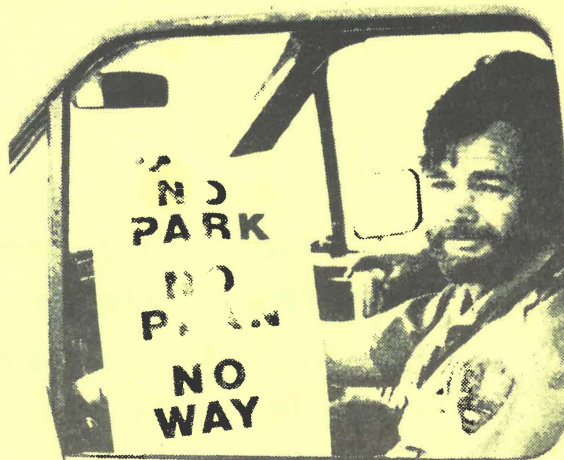
Anyway, let's get together!

Love,
Jenny Flaughner
Princeton NJ

The **Almanack** was really nice. Maybe when I get some extra money I'll subscribe.

Say hi to your parents and family. Write me soon and keep keeping Innisfree beautiful!

Love,
Lori (and Ryan) Wheeler
Virginia Beach VA



Ranger Dennis Brewer

Lost & found

National Park Service (NPS) ranger Dennis Brewer displays an article found lying on the ground along the roadside in Milanville.

The juxtaposition of the NPS uniform, the federal Interior Department truck, and the sign (which is presently visible on many Milanville properties) is a statement about the level of tension which exists here with regard to the presence of the park service

DONATIONS SOUGHT

Innisfree is looking for contributions of a basketball backboard and a functional piano for the rec hall.

Contact Tom Rue at Innisfree.

Donations to Innisfree Corporation are tax-deductible under Section 501(c)(3) of the tax code.

INSIDE:

- *NON-PROFIT YOUTH HOSTEL NEAR SKINNERS FALLS*
- *LETTERS TO INNISFREE*
- *RESPONSE CARD — SEE PAGE 3*
- *EDITORIAL: THE UPPER DELAWARE RIVER CONTROVERSY*

INNISFREE
P.O. Box 47
Milanville, PA 18443

FIRST CLASS

TO:

FORWARDING AND
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED