



Canoeing and rafting attract several thousand people each year to the portion of the Delaware River in Pike and Wayne counties. Much of the area has been designated a National Scenic and Recreational River and is administered by the National Park Service. Here a couple admires the rugged shoreline while drifting through a calm eddy near Milford.



Delightful Detours in Pike and Wayne Counties

by Doug Hay

Forests, fields, mountains, lakes, waterfalls and the unspoiled Upper Delaware River — in a word, the great outdoors and the recreational pursuits that it offers — characterize Pike and Wayne counties. Add an occasional picturesque hamlet and a bit of history, and you have inviting delightful detours in the northeast corner of Pennsylvania.

In these two counties, you will also find second home developments, honeymoon resorts, a variety of restaurants and all the amenities which one would expect in a Pocono Mountains vacationland. In addition, this area of the state is experiencing the most rapid residential growth in the Commonwealth, and boasts a space-age communications facility.

A local farmer mows a hayfield at Milanville's Innisfree Youth Hostel in Wayne County.

**Pennsylvania's Northeast,
where Zane Grey, Gifford
Pinchot and John Roebling
left their marks.**



Map of Wayne and Pike Counties

The county line runs northeast from La Anna on Rte. 291 through the middle of Lake Wallenpaupack, south of Hawley to a point near Atco on the New York border. The shaded areas represent national and state park and forest lands.

Pike County

Pike County, population 22,000, was created in 1814 from part of Wayne County. A local legend is that the county was named after a weathervane carved in the form of a fish (a northern pike) which is attached to the cupola of the old county courthouse-jail. However, Pike County was actually named after **General Zebulon Pike**, famous explorer and discoverer of Pike's Peak, Colorado.

The most direct route to the area is Interstate 84 east. A taste of the rural and recreational nature of Pike County is had almost immediately at 2,791-acre **Promised Land State Park**, which offers 535 campsites, family cabins, two lakes for swimming and boating, 25 miles of hiking trails, an amphitheater and interpretive nature programs through the summer months. The park is reached on Rte. 390.

Hunters and fishermen, as well as hikers, may bypass the Promised Land and take Rte. 402 south to **Peck's Pond** and **Porters Lake**, which are situated close together in the middle of several thousand acres of wetland and state forest. Rustic accommodations are available.

A few miles east on Silver Lake Road is the first of Pike County's fabled waterfalls, several of them in fact, at **Childs Park**, a unit of the **Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area**. Hiking trails follow the Dingmans Creek alongside a series of cascades. There is also an 18th-century industrial site and picnic grove shaded by tall hemlocks.

The road ends at the site of the former village of **Dingmans Ferry**, an early Delaware River-crossing which evolved into a settlement and 19th century resort center. Little is left now but weed-choked foundations, as the village was bought and bulldozed by the federal government to make way for a dam and lake project that was subsequently shelved. Even the post office that still bears the name has moved up the ridge. However, a National Park Service field office in old Dingmans Ferry offers information on more waterfalls and hiking trails in the vicinity and there is a campground nearby. The **Pocono Environmental Education Center** offers tours, educational programs and lodging.



J. WALLIS PERRY

The Concord Stagecoach Hiawatha used to carry mail and passengers between Milford and the railroad station at nearby Port Jervis, N.Y. The restored coach is on permanent display at the Pike County Historical Society's museum in Milford. During the county fair each October it parades the borough's streets.

While most of the people are gone, longtime residents like **Leonard B. Herr** can point out the sites of former hotels, stores and residences, some of them evidenced by ornamental plantings gone wild. "Those foundations where the old dwellings were bring back many fond memories, proof that money isn't happiness entirely," says Herr. "A full belly, good friends and a comfortable place to sleep go a long way also."

A sharp contrast to this ghost town can be found 10 miles north along the Delaware River on Route 209. **Milford**, the Pike County seat and one of the nation's first planned communities, was laid out about 200 years ago with wide streets and narrow alleys named for berries and fruit. Students of architecture and aficionados of small-town America could spend days here.

Notable structures in Milford include **Forest Hall**, a massive bluestone building, and **Grey Towers**, a Norman Breton-style chateau, both designed by noted 19th century architect **Richard Morris Hunt** for the **Pinchot** family, which produced a former Pennsylvania governor and the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service. That government agency now owns Grey Towers, the former Pinchot estate, and conducts tours of its buildings and 100 acres of landscaped grounds. A short walk from the chateau is the **Sawkill Falls**, an impressive cascade that some consider the most scenic waterfall in the Poconos. Visitors must ask for directions, as the trail is unmarked.

Victorian, Colonial and Georgian features can be observed in many of the fine



RIVER REPORTER

Anglers try their luck at Pond Eddy, Pike County, a favorite fishing hole of Zane Grey, the famous author of western and fishing articles who lived and wrote at a home in Lackawaxen, Pike County, now a museum.

homes on the borough's shaded streets. Fifty to 100 years ago, Milford was a vacation mecca and a filming site for early moving pictures by D.W. Griffiths. The Pike County Historical Society's **White Columns Museum** offers several displays and exhibits of that era, including the restored Concord stagecoach, **Hiawatha**, which brought passengers from the train station to the numerous hotels and boarding houses. A more grisly artifact is the **Lincoln Flag**



The Roebling Bridge, the oldest standing suspension bridge in the United States and a national landmark constructed by the designer of the Brooklyn (New York) Bridge, spans the Delaware River at Lackawaxen, Pike County. The structure was built in 1848 as an aqueduct to carry the Delaware & Hudson Canal over the river.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

which, according to a well-documented story, was at Ford Theater the night the Great Emancipator was shot, and is stained by his blood. An actress with the cast brought the flag home to Milford with her.

Some old hotels are still in business, along with their more modern counterparts, but Milford today is becoming something of a residential and second home haven for New York television notables and Fortune 500 executives, as well as artists and craftsmen. The borough is growing in popularity largely because it retains much of the flavor of a bygone era, even to a preserved one-room schoolhouse and a working gristmill. "We're just starting to realize what we've got here," in the words of **Jack McNece**, of David R. Chant Realtors, which offers brochures outlining walking tours of the borough and information on other regional attractions.

Among its amenities, Milford offers a fine sand beach on the Delaware. There is an annual music festival each summer, and the streets are roped off and converted into a midway for the county fair in September. The many maples lining

the streets make for a spectacular fall foliage event in the latter part of October.

Seven miles from Milford on Routes 6-209 north is the Borough of **Matamoras**, pop. 2,300, the most populous of the 13 Pike County municipalities, where an airfield turned into a park offers picnic and recreational opportunities. The hub of the borough is the Mayor's Corner, an old-fashioned candy store and coffee shop where everyone from eight to 80 gather to discuss baseball, politics and local gossip. Matamoras Mayor **Joe Ricciardi** serves the coffee, along with good-natured jibes at the men and passes at female customers.

From Matamoras, it is five miles more on Delaware Drive (LR 549) to the quaint whistle-stop of **Mill Rift**, where there is a scenic overview of the river valley and one of the most challenging stretches of whitewater along the Delaware.

Several canoe and raft rental outfits are passed on the Milford to Mill Rift detour. Customers may launch here or ride the outfitters' motorized transports to

other bases at various points along the river that provide a choice of journeys from seven to 70 miles in calm or fast water. Many do it in a few hours. Others pack camping gear in their vessels and take a few days.

Ten miles west of Milford on Route 6 is the **Shohola Falls Waterfowl Management Area**. The Shohola Creek drops 100 feet over many steep ledges. A lake managed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission provides nesting and feeding sites for native ducks and migratory geese, and is well-supplied with game fish. The commission maintains an eagle-hacking area on the lake. A good way to see much of the wildfowl is by canoe. Large powerboats are banned.

The Twin Lakes Road (LR 51008) branches off Route 6 six miles west of Milford, passing exclusive homes at **Twin Lakes**, a haunt of 19th Century writer **Stephen Crane** (*Red Badge of Courage*). The road is impressive during June when the Mountain Laurel blooms. It joins Route 434 at the village of **Shohola**, site of a gravity railroad and turn-of-the-century amusement park. Sho-



TOM RUE

Assistant Milanville Postmistress Ruth Tyler flies the colors. The post office is located to the rear of the Milanville General Store.

peace with the settlers during the days when Pennsylvania colonists began to have designs on this part of the country. Dan Beard started one of the first Boy Scout camps near here in 1910.

Wayne County

The road runs into Route 652, in **Wayne County**, which was "named for a colonial general known to his contemporaries as **Mad Anthony**," in the words of **Thomas Rue**, an associate editor with the *River Reporter*, a weekly newspaper based in nearby Narrowsburg, N.Y., that circulates in the county. "Originally settled by Connecticut Yankees, many of whom served in the war against the Crown, Wayne County residents today retain much of the independent spirit of their revolutionary forebears," says Rue, who has sometimes been the target of his readers' wrath. The county was officially carved out of Northampton County in 1798, and today boasts just over 40,000 residents.

Taking Route 652 east, visitors may cross the Delaware into **Narrowsburg** to visit the National Park Service office there, which has information on the **Upper Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River**. Crossing back into Pennsylvania, River Road (LR63027) winds through farmland north along the Delaware to the tiny hamlet of **Milanville**, overlooking the **Skinnners Fall Rapids**, which once terrorized logging rafters and is now the nemesis of novice canoeists. The village has the **Innisfree Youth Hostel**, which stresses chemical-free lifestyles, and a quaint general store-post office.

The River Road passes the **Land House**, a 200-year-old Colonial saltbox painted barn red that is reputed to be the oldest existing house in the county. It is privately owned.

Route 371 west passes through **Tyler Hill** and some of the upland dairy country that Wayne County is famous for. Route 247 and Route 170 south lead back to the Lackawaxen River and **Prompton Lake**, an Army Corps of Engineers flood-control project that doubles as a recreation area.

Route 6 east leads to **Honesdale**, the Wayne County seat, where a gravity railroad brought coal from the Pennsylvania anthracite fields to a port on the D&H Canal. The borough was the home

hola boasts **Rohman's Inn**, a 150-year-old hotel that served as an emergency hospital for injured Confederate prisoners of war during a Civil War train wreck. Formerly a political seat of power, Rohman's has a dingy, smoke-stained tap room with low tin ceilings, unique barstools, one of the largest collections of fire department jacket patches in the world and a jukebox with a 50-year-old custom recording, *Springtime in Shohola*. The building also houses Pike County's only bowling alley, a three-lane affair that now has automatic pinsetters.

German Hill Road winds and twists its way to the village of **Lackawaxen**. Of interest is the **Delaware Aqueduct**, built in 1848 by **John Augustus Roebling**, who used it to test the wire rope cable suspension techniques that later went into his design of the Brooklyn Bridge. The Lackawaxen structure was designed to carry the Delaware and Hudson Canal *over* the Delaware River. Today, light vehicles travel through the reconstructed trough and pedestrians instead of mules walk the "towpath." Said to be the oldest suspension bridge still standing in America, the Delaware Aqueduct is a National Historic Landmark owned by the National Park Service, which conducts interpretive tours.

On Scenic Drive, in the village, is the **Zane Grey Museum**, the house in which the famous author lived between 1905 and 1918, when he wrote the western novels, baseball stories and sport fishing tales that made him famous. The house contains many of Grey's books, photographs and possessions, including his dentistry tools. "He discovered that he liked fishing and writing more than

he did pulling teeth," says **Helen Davis**, daughter of Grey's close friend, **Alvah James**. Davis lives in the large rambling structure and conducts tours for visitors, relating from personal experience many anecdotes about the late writer, who is buried in the small cemetery nearby, within view of his beloved river.

For those who want to indulge in Grey's favorite pastime, the Park Service maintains a public river access to the Delaware and Lackawaxen Rivers here. It is heavily used by fishermen and other boaters, including kayakers who are discovering the white water thrills to be had on the Lackawaxen during the hours when an upstream dam is releasing.



TOM RUE

The Wayne County Courthouse in Honesdale fronts on the town square, overlooking a fountain and a statue of the county's namesake, Major General (Mad) Anthony Wayne.

Route 590 west out of Lackawaxen follows the towpath of the old D&H Canal, the remnants of which are visible in many places. The road parallels the scenic Lackawaxen River. About eight miles from the village, LR51017 branches north past beautiful **Lake Teedyuskung**, which bears the name of a Lenape Indian chief who advocated



RIVER REPORTER

Modern-day Huck Finns rafting on the Delaware River which is the eastern boundary of both Wayne and Pike counties.

of the **Stourbridge Lion**, said to be the first working steam locomotive in the U.S. A full-scale replica of the Lion is displayed along with other railroad memorabilia by the **Wayne County Historical Society** in a museum and research library at 810 Main St. A few times each year, in summer and fall, the **Wayne County Chamber of Commerce** operates rail excursions from Honesdale to Lackawaxen, along the scenic Lackawaxen River. It is best to call or write in advance for a schedule.

East on Route 6, **White Mills**, an early American industrial center, has an old fieldstone factory that was once the home of the famous **Dorflinger Glass Works**. The Dorflinger estate is now a wildlife sanctuary that offers walking and guided tours around a lake and sponsors an annual summer "Wildflower" music festival on the grounds.

Route 6 continues to **Hawley**, another old industrial center that has gone high-tech. Nearby is the **AT&T Satellite Operations Management Center**, one of the world's most advanced telecommunications control stations. The facility directs all satellite operations for AT&T, including the tracking and controlling of the Telstar satellites used by major broadcasters and computer companies to transmit audio and video programming for public and private consumption throughout the United States. Tours are available every half-hour, noon to 3 p.m., June 1 through

Aug. 31; Fridays only at 2 p.m. the rest of the year.

Hawley is also the jumping-off area for **Lake Wallenpaupack**, the largest artificial lake in Pennsylvania, with 5,700 acres and 52 miles of shoreline. The 1,280-foot long Wallenpaupack Dam was built between 1924 and 1926, with some 2,700 laborers. The purpose was hydroelectric power, which is still generated by Pennsylvania Power & Light Company, but the major effect has been to transform a rural farming community into a **recreational growth area**. Resorts, marinas, second-home developments and **businesses of all kinds** have sprung up around the lake. A watershed management district was recently formed with the objective of controlling mounting erosion and sedimentation problems caused by the growth. PP&L has a visitor center at **Wilsonville** that details the building of the dam and generating facility.

The utility also maintains public lake access and camping areas there and at **Ironwood Point, Caffrey and Ledgesdale**.

On a ridge above the latter community, on the southern shore of the big lake, is **Lake Lacawac**, said to be the southernmost undisturbed glacial lake in the U.S. It is managed as a nature and wildlife sanctuary, offering interpretive and educational programs throughout the summer.

I-84 may be picked up here for the return journey.

Doug Hay is a Pike County resident, freelance writer and editor of the weekly *Pike County Dispatch*, of Milford, the only newspaper published in the county. He acknowledges the valuable assistance of Thomas Rue, of Milanville, associate editor of the weekly *River Reporter*, on the Wayne County portion of the text. ✦

Additional information on Pike and Wayne counties is available from:

- The Pike County Chamber of Commerce, Milford 18337; telephone (717) 296-8700.
- The Wayne County Chamber of Commerce, 742 Main Street, Honesdale 18431; telephone (717) 253-1960.
- Hawley-Lake Wallenpaupack Chamber of Commerce, Hawley 18428; telephone (717) 226-3191.
- Pocono Mountain Vacation Bureau, W. Main Street, Stroudsburg 18360; telephone toll-free 1-800-POCONOS.

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