

The great outdoors

An outdoor adventure to remember

BY RICHARD FIEGELMAN
Special to The Post

What do you get when you combine five young men ready for adventure, a raging creek driven by spring thaw, and a homemade raft at which Abe Lincoln would have chuckled in amusement? For starters, you get wet. Such was the weekend spent several years ago with a few college buddies addicted to the outdoors.

The weather was warm for mid-April, and Pine Creek roared through the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon like a liquid lion tearing at primal rock. The Canyon is a place of rare beauty even by Nature's standards. Pine Creek winds its serpentine way through miles of lithic walls with sheer drops of up to one thousand feet. Vermilion sunsets and dawn-like moonlight stir the hearts of even the least passionate of souls. The ancients walked the canyon paths in search of food, and the Indians fished her waters and explored her hidden secrets. Deer and bear roamed free and knew her peace. For weekend warriors, the Grand Canyon is enchanting.

With childlike expectation, we spent the day before launch from Ansonia, working like bees on an incongruous hive, the raft. Plywood sheets with drilled

holes, strong rope and six Mack truck inner tubes provided the materials. When finished it was sturdy enough, but resembled a flatboat, not exactly a rapid runner. Of course, my fellow frontiersman being "knowledgeable" sailors saw no problem.

In addition to the flatboat, we packed an inflatable Navy raft with our tents, sleeping bags and dry stores, and tied it to the flat's stern. Behind the Navy raft was an inner tube with plywood bottom which held our refreshments. Our destination was Blackwell, 28 miles to the south.

When we cast off at 5 p.m. that Friday night our three ship caravan must have looked like the early morning freight which passes through the canyon. I noticed several fishermen with amused expressions.

The feral evening and meandering current steered us slowly through each coil of the creek, lulling each with feelings of repose and reflection. Dreams welled of all those who had passed this way over the long centuries. We shared a vision of wilderness, and the solitude which such timelessness kindles.

We landed at 8 p.m., built a fire, made camp, and after tall tales and opinions of the day ahead, slept soundly. Our dreams danced on firelight, and floated on wood smoke toward the stars.

At first light it was obvious that the fun was about to begin. The thunder of beginning rapids echoed from downstream. We packed and pushed off anticipating the Nantucket Sleighride which lay ahead.

Three miles south our makeshift raft ran head-on into the tempestuous Owassi Falls. Owassi is a dreaded quarter mile of white water in which only the well-prepared triumph. We, of course, were not. Owassi lifted our top heavy boat like a TV preacher lifts wallets. And she let us down as hard. There is no terror like being under a raft in whirling currents with submerged boulders banging at your body. For five seconds (an eternity) thoughts disappeared. All that remained was a primal fight for the surface. Finally, returned from Neptune's grasp, we all gripped the raft and made it to shore in calmer water. There was laughter, but eyes told the real story. Youths in the throes of forever had found mortality. And it scared the heck out of them.

We made Blackwell on Sunday afternoon, exhausted, but invigorated by our near disaster. We understood that death had no terms save the final payment, and in Nature thereafter is no second chance. This time we had won. And like darn fools, given the opportunity we'd do it again.



ARE THEY BITING? — An area fisherman, complete with the necessary gear, tries his luck on Harveys Lake. Area anglers report it has been a good ice-fishing season.

Ice fishing offers challenging sport

BY JENNIFER WILSON
Special to The Post

For many anglers it has just begun. It's time to get out the old thermos, fill it with coffee, and head for your favorite lake or pond. Ice fishing season is in full swing and if you don't hurry up you're going to miss it. Speaking for myself I know that there are few experiences that get the adrenalin flowing like seeing the little flag on the tip-up flying over one of the holes in the ice. Or, when your bobber makes that straight, swift disappearance, never knowing for sure whether you've hooked the ferocious bass, a lichen slippery pickerel, or the tasty little smelt.

When I was a girl, fishing through the ice was left almost entirely to the boys. Times have changed. Another change for the better includes the improvement of equipment for the sport. In the old days people used to use a hatchet to cut holes in the ice. Now motor-powered ice augers can cut a nine-inch hole through the ice in 10 seconds. Or, the less expensive manually operated auger can cut a hole in about a minute. When you go out to fish through the ice don't

forget to take along a slotted spoon or strainer to skim the ice chips from the top of your hole. If you're into convenience you can set up an ice shanty to protect you from the elements. Oil stoves, gas lanterns, and bottled gas stoves provide the serious ice fisherman with all the comforts of home. If you are like me you prefer not to become so weighted down with gear.

In this case, all you will need is a jigging pole, bait, and a few tip-ups to make for an exciting day at the lake. As far as the bait is concerned, minnows are very popular for the fresh-water fish. Another good lure for the panfish is a small silver or gold ice jig. To set the depth of your line, attach a weight to your hook and let it sink to the bottom, then raise your line about a foot from the bottom and your line is set.

To jig, simply raise and lower your wrist and arm for several seconds and then raise your pole up to shoulder height. Keep at it and you will hook into a fish sooner than you think.

Fortunately we don't have to drive hundreds of miles in order to fish. We are lucky in that we

have many lakes and ponds in our area, Lake Carey, Lake Winola, Harveys Lake and Frances Slocum just to mention a few. Many of these lakes have a large variety of fish. From the giant lake trout to the tasty little smelt which are very popular this time of year. Remember, fresh fish provide a superior nutrition base. Keep in mind that fish with scales are much better for you than your high-cholesterol shellfish found in saltwater. Take your catch home, clean them and leave the skin on your fish, the skin is good and tasty when panfried. I have been broiling my trout lately and they are as delicious as the fillets that you pay dearly for commercially.

So get out there and enjoy the winter. You don't have to have a snowmobile or all-terrain vehicles to benefit from the season. Many anglers who enjoy fishing in the warmer months put away their gear at the first sign of cold weather. In doing so they are missing out on some of the most enjoyable fishing to be had. Even if worse comes to worse and you don't catch anything - you are still in for a healthy, invigorating adventure.

Ships

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have to this 60 ton ship? While at war with Great Britain, the United States could have this ship to assist in bringing the English flag down.

This is an account written by D. Yarrington. "During the War of 1812, the great ship Luzerne was built on the river bank in front of John P. Robinson's stone house. I saw the launch. A thousand or more people were present. The war spirit was rampant at that time, and the people of our town expected that the noble Luzerne was going to assist in bringing the "Flag of Great Britain" down. A few days after the launch, a sufficient flood arose and the ship was named and started down the river toward the ocean, but in passing the Falls of Canawaga, she ran on the rocks and lay there till the ice in the river broke up the next spring, when she was totally destroyed.

This passaged appeared in the Gleaner April 17, 1812.

"The Launch"
"Last Friday (April 10, 1812) was the day on which the launch of the vessel on the stocks in this Port was announced. A scene so extraordinary, two hundred miles from the tide waters of the river, raised the curiosity of everyone. The old sailors and the inhabitants of

the seaboard, whom the vicissitudes of fortune had settled in the sylvan retreat, and to whom such scenes had once been familiar, felt all interest so naturally excited by events that call up early and interesting recollections. The novelty to those who had never witnessed such a view, excited their curiosity to the highest degree. The importance of the experiment too, did not fail to augment the general solicitude, for on its success, depended the important consideration, whether the timber of our mountains could be profitably employed in shipbuilding, and our county to be benefitted by the increase of business, which such a pursuit would naturally produce.

"On the Sunday preceeding the interesting day, a beautiful new pair of colours were displayed from her stern, according to immemorial usage, as a token that in the course of the week she should be launched. From Monday to Friday, people began to gather from all parts of the county.

"She measures between 50 and 60 tons. Her colours were flying from her stern, and near 30 persons were on board.

"The after block was knocked away-every eye was filled-all was anxiety, but she did not move. The men on board all gathered near her bow, and

then run in a body to her stern. She started - moving for half a minute slowly-the velocity increased and she slid most gracefully into her destined element, amid the shouts of thousands.

"As she met the water, Capt. Chapman christened her in the usual style, "The Luzerne of Wilkes-Barre."

"Nothing could be more beautiful every spectator was amply gratified."

So the 'Luzerne of Wilkes-Barre,' as she was christened left her dock at Wilkes-Barre and floated down the Susquehanna River toward the freedom of the expansive ocean. But her fate was not so glorious.

Outside of Middletown, north of Harrisburg at the "Falls of Conawago", the Luzerne went aground. The receding waters of the summer had caused the ship to become hung up on the river bottom. At first people thought that the ship could be saved in the spring when again river waters would rise but ice, due to an early thaw caused the ship to break up and by spring nothing of it remained.

Mr. Arndt who had lost all, left Wilkes-Barre, moved to Buffalo, and later to Green Bay, Wisconsin. This had been the beginning and the end of shipbuilding in the Wyoming Valley.

Glass producers offering booklet

As Pennsylvania's solid waste crisis becomes more severe, an increasing number of municipalities are exploring recycling. To help in this effort, the state's glass container manufacturers have prepared a new booklet, "Pennsylvania Glass Recycling: A How To Guide."

The 12-page brochure covers the need for recycling, collection methods, processing requirements and markets for glass containers. There is also a chart for estimating the weight of the material collected.

"Pennsylvania's glass container industry wants to be a

part of the solution to the solid waste crisis," said Douglas Gibboney, Executive Director of the non-profit Pennsylvania Glass Recycling Corporation. "The purpose of this new booklet is to provide an overview for government officials and others who are considering recycling but have not yet begun programs."

Gibboney noted that glass is 100 percent recyclable. All seven Pennsylvania glass container plants use recycled glass as an ingredient when making new bottles and jars. Recycling glass saves energy, extends fur-

nance life and reduces the need for raw materials; it also conserves valuable landfill space.

Copies of "Pennsylvania Glass Recycling: A How To Guide" are available by writing the Pennsylvania Glass Recycling Corporation, 509 North Second Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101.

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