

THE INNER FRONTIER

Good day everyone...it's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.

Between the Pennsylvania Turnpike on the South and the new Keystone Shortway on the North, a huge strip of Pennsylvania--has changed very little since the early settlers passed that way. I have heard salesmen who have driven the area for many years--call it the Desert of Pennsylvania, and it is anything but that. Pennsylvania showcases in that Inner Frontier perhaps the most scenic, adventuresome trailway of the State. Within it in Centre County, one finds many and diverse visitations. Bellefonte, its northern gateway, is the home of five Pennsylvania Governors. There is the hilly area of Pleasant Gap--with a view which is almost without peer in Pennsylvania, up the side of a three mile mountain. There is fishing that cannot be surpassed anywhere in the State. At State College, Pennsylvania's University, chartered as a Farmers High School in 1855, one finds that the original 59 students at Old Main have now become 40,000, and Penn State today is 15th in the nation in full-time enrollment, with a particularly beautiful rustic campus. Watching a football game there with the hills a blaze of fall color is a memorable experience. There are art galleries, sheep and beef barns, flower gardens, Old Main itself, and the Nittany Lion overlooking the hills after which he was named... Nearby, at Boalsburg, one finds the Shrine to the men of the 28th Division, the bucket-of-blood men with the Keystone patch on their shoulders who fought this nation's wars honorably; and across the road almost, the little known, yet tremendously historical chapel, where the family-descendants of Christopher

Columbus knelt to pray during the 16th century. This family chapel, with its altar, religious painting, vestments, and relics was shipped from Spain and rebuilt on the Boal Estate at Boalsburg. The mansion itself was built in 1789 and its fine examples of American craftsmanship includes carriages, weapons and other family possessions beside the Columbus heirlooms. This is the inner frontier--Centre County--and there is much, much more--a town named Snow Shoe, wild countryside at the edge of the Edgar Allan Poe area; the foothills on the western slope of Pennsylvania's Seven Mountains. The last time I went through the little community of Centre Hall there was---believe it or not---a "for sale" sign on that community's railroad station--and a few miles beyond that is Penn's Cave--an all water cavern--which my children consider the greatest experience they have ever encountered in Pennsylvania--riding through flatboats far underground, between the glacial icicles of another age. You soar to the top of mountains in this Inner Frontier of Pennsylvania--and reach depths far below the land--and every inch of it is beauty--Pennsylvania's Inner Frontier--the hills, valleys, and caves--views and towns of Centre County.

This is Pete Wambach. It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania.