

The **BLUE RIDGE VOYAGEURS** Newsletter April 2017

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CLUB BUSINESS AT THE PUT-IN

Well, boating season is beginning to heat up, several trips have been rumored to be on the books and in progress. See the newsletter and webpage for updates on trips and, if so inspired, **sign up to lead a trip**. Webmaster Mike Martin will post it, and I will publicize upon request via e-mail distribution.

The **roster is still in progress of being updated** and will be finalized in the next couple weeks. Please get your dues in if you still want to receive the newsletter and be on the roster/e-mail list. A couple reminders have been e-mailed to folks who have forgotten. The club will start a new e-mail list based on the membership roster and the newsletters will be e-mailed to those folks. A separate informal distribution list will still be used by me, and I will add interested nonmembers. This list and other lists that various paddlers are using will be used for general distribution. Meeting announcements, trips, and miscellaneous paddling info will be sent out to folks on this list, but not the newsletter. All club information is available on the webpage.

Frank Fico has a Facebook group he is moderating for paddling trips. Please see the club's excellent webpage that explains everything you need to do to join the Facebook group.

Our **next meeting will be Tuesday, May 2, 2017 at 7:30 P.M.** Barb Brown has generously offered to present on the history of whitewater paddling in the Mid-Atlantic region, especially in the DC area. I will post the details as we get closer to the date. The meeting will again be at the Clara Barton Community Center (7425 MacArthur Blvd # 151, Cabin John, MD 20818) and the pizza afterwards at the local Ledo's (5245 River Road Bethesda, MD 20816). Plug the addresses into a mapping program for directions to get to either location, Google, Mapquest, or equivalent, which will give better directions than I ever could.

Beth included a "**Quick Trip Report**" form in the last page of the previous newsletter. This is a useful medium for helping the editor publish recent trips in upcoming newsletters. Check it out. It can be submitted to newsletter editor electronically (brvnewsletter [at] earthlink.net) or via mail (PO Box 9513 Silver Spring, MD 20916).

Hope to see another great turnout as we did in March. A lot of new faces turned out to listen to Mike Aronoff's amusing and informative Salmon River presentation.

Rick

CALENDAR

Missing Calendar Information **HELP!**

We are missing information on a number of dam releases and festival dates including the MooseFest Whitewater Festival, the Potomac River Festival/Falls Run, the Over the Falls Race/Party-Ohiopyle, and the Russell Fork release.

Please forward information to the newsletter editor and web guru AND the Facebook manager.

Activity Dates

Clean-up activities are in green Festivals are in red Trip/Education activities are in blue
ERRATA: The dates for Bloomington releases have been amended.

The planned Tallulah Gorge April releases have been cancelled by George Power to permit dam maintenance. <http://www.gastateparks.org/TallulahGorge>

April 1-Saturday--Tallulah (**Cancelled, no fooling!**)

April 2-Sunday--Tallulah (**Cancelled**)

April 7-Friday--**Elk Fest**

April 8-Saturday--**CKAPCO ACA Level 4 WW Kayak Instructor Update Certification**

--**Elk Fest**

--**BRV-CCA Potomac Watershed Cleanup**

--Stonycreek-PA/**Stony Trip (Fall back date 4/15)**

--Tallulah (**Cancelled**)

--West Fork Tuckasegee River Bypass

April 9-Sunday--**CKAPCO ACA Level 4 WW Kayak Instructor Update Certification**

--**Elk Fest**

--Stonycreek-PA

--Tallulah (**Cancelled**)

--West Fork Tuckasegee River Bypass
 April 13-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 April 14-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 April 15-Saturday--**ACA-Intermediate Kayak Class**
 --**Bluebell Trip**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --North Branch of the Potomac-Bloomington
 April 16-Sunday--**ACA-Intermediate Kayak Class**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --North Branch of the Potomac-Bloomington
 April 19-Wednesday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 April 20-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 April 21-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Upper Yough
 --**WV Week of Rivers-Start**
 April 22-Saturday--**Anacostia Watershed Society Earth Day Cleanup**
 --Cheoah
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Stonycreek-PA
 April 23-Sunday--Cheoah
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Stonycreek-PA
 April 26-Wednesday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 April 27-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 April 28-Friday--Cheoah
 --**CKAPCO ACA Level 4 WWW Kayak Instructor Certification**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Upper Yough
 April 29-Saturday--**ACA Swift Water Rescue Refresher/Practice**
 --**Brunswick to Point-of-Rocks Float Trip (Fall back date 5/6)**
 --Cheoah
 --**CKAPCO ACA Level 4 WWW Kayak Instructor Certification**
 --**NOC Spring Fling**
 --North Branch of the Potomac-Bloomington
 --Upper Nantahala & Cascades
 April 30-Sunday--Cheoah
 --**CKAPCO ACA Level 4 WWW Kayak Instructor Certification**
 --**NOC-Spring Fling**
 --North Branch of the Potomac-Bloomington
 --Upper Nantahala & Cascades
 --**WV Week of Rivers-End**

 May 1-Monday--Upper Yough
 May 2-Tuesday--**Meeting: Barb Brown Presentation**

May 5-Friday--**Cheat Fest/Cheat Downriver Race**
 --**French Broad Festival**
 --Upper Yough

May 6-Saturday--**Cheat Fest**
 --Cheoah
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --**French Broad Festival**
 --Stonycreek-PA
 --Upper Yough

May 7-Sunday--Cheoah
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --**French Broad Festival**
 --Stonycreek-PA

May 8-Monday--Upper Yough

May 12-Friday--**ACA Swift Water Rescue Certification**
 --Upper Yough

May 13-Saturday--**ACA Swift Water Rescue Certification**
 --**Antietam Trip (Fall back date 6/3)**
 --**CCA Potomac Down River Race**
 --Cheoah
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --North Branch of the Potomac-Bloomington
 --**Smokey Mts Week of Rivers--Start**

May 14-Sunday--**ACA Swift Water Rescue Certification**
 --Cheoah
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --North Branch of the Potomac-Bloomington

May 15-Monday--**CKAPCO ACA Levels 1-4 WW Kayak Instructor Certification**
5 day workshop--Start

May 17-Wednesday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)

May 18-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)

May 19-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Stonycreek-PA/**Stonycreek Rendezvous**
 --Upper Yough

May 20-Saturday--Cheoah
 --**CKAPCO ACA Levels 1-4 WW Canoe Instructor Certification**
5 day workshop--Start
 --**Dealer's Choice class 2 within 2 hr radius (Fall back date 5/21)**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --**Green River Race (Yup, that Green River)**
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --Stonycreek-PA/**Stonycreek Rendezvous**

May 21-Sunday--Cheoah
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --**Green River Race**

--**Smokey Mts Week of Rivers--End**
 --Stonycreek-PA/**Stonycreek Rendezvous**
 May 24-Wednesday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 May 25-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 May 27-Saturday--**Camper at Teeters Campground**
 --**Smoke Hole Camper**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --North Branch of the Potomac-Bloomington
 --Stonycreek-PA (Special release)
 May 28-Sunday--**Camper at Teeters Campground**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --North Branch of the Potomac-Bloomington
 --**Smoke Hole Camper**
 --Upper Yough
 May 29-Monday--**Camper at Teeters Campground**
 --**Smoke-Hole Camper**
 --Upper Yough
 June 2-Friday--Savage
 --Upper Yough
 June 3-Saturday--**Riverkeeper River Palooza Kick-off (Harpers Ferry)**
 --Savage
 --Stonycreek-PA
 June 4-Sunday--**Antietam historical float (Riverkeepers)**
 --Stonycreek-PA
 June 5-Monday--**Shenandoah float trip (Riverkeepers)**
 --Upper Yough
 June 9-Friday--**Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival**
 --Upper Yough
 June 10-Saturday--**Dealer's Choice Intermediate-Advanced**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --**Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival /Tim Gavin Down River Race**
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --West Fork Tuckasegee River Bypass
 June 11-Sunday--**Dealer's Choice Intermediate-Advanced**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 June 12-Monday--Upper Yough
 June 16-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Upper Yough
 June 17-Saturday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Stonycreek-PA
 --Upper Yough
 June 18-Sunday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Stonycreek-PA (**Stony Trip**)

June 19-Monday--Upper Yough
 June 21-Wednesday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --**Key Bridge Boathouse--Solstice evening paddle (Riverkeepers)**
 June 22-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 June 23-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Upper Yough
 June 24-Saturday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --**Fort Washington—Float trip (Riverkeepers)**
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --Upper Yough
 June 25-Sunday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --**Mallows Bay (Riverkeepers/Chesapeake Conservancy)**
 June 26-Monday--Upper Yough
 June 28-Wednesday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 June 29-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 June 30-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Upper Yough
 July 1-Saturday--**Carolina Week of Rivers--Start**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Stonycreek-PA (reservoir dependent)
 --Upper Yough
 --West Fork Tuckasegee River Bypass
 July 2-Sunday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Savage
 --Stonycreek-PA (reservoir dependent)
 July 3-Monday--Upper Yough
 July 4-Tuesday--**Potomac Fireworks (leader needs OC partner)**
 July 6-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 July 7-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Upper Nantahala & Cascades
 --Upper Yough
 July 8-Saturday--Cheoah
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --Upper Yough
 July 9-Sunday--**Carolina Week of Rivers--End**
 --Cheoah
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 July 10-Monday--Upper Yough
 July 13-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 July 14-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Upper Yough
 July 15-Saturday--**ACA Swift Water Rescue Class**
 --**Potomac Paw Paw Camper (Riverkeepers)**

--Stonycreek-PA (reservoir dependent)
 --Upper Yough
 July 16-Sunday--**ACA Swift Water Rescue Class**
 --Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --**Potomac Paw Paw Camper (Riverkeepers)**
 --Stonycreek-PA (reservoir dependent)
 July 17-Monday--Upper Yough
 July 19-Wednesday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 July 20-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 July 21-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Upper Yough
 July 22-Saturday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --Upper Yough
 --West Fork Tuckasegee River Bypass
 July 23-Sunday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 July 24-Monday--Upper Yough
 July 26-Wednesday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 July 27-Thursday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 July 28-Friday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Upper Yough
 July 29-Saturday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --Stonycreek-PA (reservoir dependent)
 --Upper Yough
 July 30-Sunday--Deerfield-MA (Fife Brook)
 --Lehigh (boost release)
 --Stonycreek-PA (reservoir dependent)
 July 31-Monday--Upper Yough

Festivals (in chronological order)

The 19th Webster Springs Whitewater Festival (aka Elk Fest) 2017

Elk Fest will open Friday evening, April 7 and run through Sunday, April 9.

www.visitwebsterwv.com/event/webster-wildwater-weekend/ This itself is a small miracle given the significant amount of flooding in the area last June. The event, which is run by the Upper Elk River Watershed Association (304-847-7653; wcd@websterwv.com) will be done a little differently this year. It will feature exploration of the rivers in the area, music, door prizes, parties, and fun with your paddling comrades!!! The Saturday night bonfire at the council circle at Camp Caesar in Cowen will get started at 7 P.M. There will be a T-shirt give-away and prize raffle (an Aire Tomcat inflatable). To off-set expenses, a donation of around \$5 or \$10 is suggested. Due to low participation, the down river race has not been scheduled for this year.

Lodging in the rustic cabins of the Camp Cesar 4-H camp (304 226-3888) is available by advance reservation as is on-site camping. Other local lodging is also available. A list can be found under the lodging tab at www.visitwebsterwv.com.

So boogey down to Bergoo; get wet in Webster Springs; dine in the river fruit basket (Cherry, Cranberry, Williams), get-down on the upper sections of the Gauley, and explore the various sections of the Elk.

Also consider supporting the watershed association which also annually provides free native tree seedlings to local residents to prevent erosion and protect local waterways and thanking Geary Weir, Executive Director of the Webster County Economic Development Authority (www.visitwebsterwv.com www.websterwv.com; 304 847-2145).

Cheat River Festival 2017

Cheat Fest will open on Friday afternoon, May 6 in Albright with a downriver race and musical acts.

The race fee has not yet been announced, but will include the mandatory ACA fee. (ACA members should provide their membership numbers.) At 4:40 P.M. on the river bank, there will be a mandatory safety talk and pre-race meeting. (Boaters should have arranged their shuttle prior to racing.) Paddlers will have 10 minutes to enter their watercraft and assemble behind the historic railroad trestle. This will be followed by a warning horn blast one minute prior to the start of the race and then a prolonged horn signal that marks the *en masse* start. There will be a post-race party--with details to be announced later.

The festival itself will open at 5:30 P.M. and will feature two musical acts Friday evening. The cost of 2-day tickets prior to the event is \$25, while advance ticket costs for Friday and Saturday are \$10 and \$15 respectively. The cost of on-site tickets is an additional \$5 except for Friday only tickets, which will remain at \$10. The ticket price does NOT include camping fees.

For more information, call 304-329-3621 or check the web: <http://cheatfest.org/> and <http://www.cheat.org/events/cheat-river-festival/festival-faqs/>

Stonycreek Rendezvous

This festival will be held Friday, May 19 through Sunday, May 21 at Greenhouse Park (Green House Road-just off of State Route 403, Johnstown, PA 15905) which is along the Stonycreek River.

There will be multiple boating opportunities in addition to running the canyon section. The initial release from the Quemahoning Reservoir will start at 11 A.M. on Friday, but the water will not reach the canyon put-in until 2 P.M. The other two days, the release water will reach the put-in by 10 A.M. There will be a down-river sprint race from Carpenter's Park to Greenhouse Park (class 2+) on Friday evening. The whitewater park will be open for play boating. If there has been recent rain, tributaries of the Stony of varying degrees of difficulty may be runnable.

In addition to the paddling, the festival will include gear vendors, food vendors, entertainment, and camping. Festival entrance fees are \$10/person/weekend. Camping fees are \$10/person/weekend. Beer and wine can only be purchased on-site because of liability issues. No alcoholic beverages can be brought to the Park.

Please consider supporting future releases from the Quemahoning Reservoir. (*How to do this was detailed in the previous newsletter.*)

For more information, look at <http://benscreekcanooclub.com/rendezvous/> or contact Rick Bloom at rickpb@aol.com.

Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival/Tim Gavin Memorial Down River Race

The Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival will be held on Friday, June 9 and Saturday, June 10 at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship (11661 Harpers Ferry Road, Purcellville, VA 20132). There will also be on-river events including the Doah Cup Raft Race (Millville), the Attainment Race (on class 1 and 2 rapids from Bass Rock to Lock 34), and Tim Gavin Memorial Race (on six miles of class 2 and 3 rapids on the Shenandoah starting at the River and Trail put-in) <https://harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org/river-race-info/>.

There are fees for the various events, and ACA insurance must be purchased for river events. On-site camping is permitted with purchase of a festival ticket (\$30 for both days, \$15 for Friday, \$20 for Saturday). This event is held annually to raise environmental awareness and financial support for river conservation.

For more information call Mike @ 304-676-6853; <https://harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org/>.

TRIP ANNOUNCEMENTS



...Help, I need somebody. Help, not just anybody. Help, you know I need someone, help...

BRV needs someone, somebody, YOU to lead a trip!

BRV-CCA Potomac River Clean-up

April 8. See the **Conservation** section.

Early Season Stony Run—A Warm-up Before the May Rendezvous Festival

Jim Pruitt (jim.pruitt@gmail.com; 724-329-5360, 703-728-0816) will co-ordinate a trip on the Stonycreek River (<http://www.thestonycreek.com/>) just a stone's throw from his house (well, a bit longer) on Saturday, April 8 or Saturday, April 15—depending on water and weather and life. Stay on his call list if you are interested.

In Search of Bluebells on Tax Day

Dean Geis (443-250-0864) will lead his annual trip in search of wildflowers, and bluebells in particular. The focus will be on scenery and stretching muscles with an early season warm-up session on easy water. Tentatively the trip will be on the upper Monocacy River or a tributary on April 15. Weather, water levels, and blooming patterns may change the specific details of the trip. Let Dean know early if you are interested in the trip so that you can be on the call list. Please contact him via phone (his preferred mode of communication).

Float Trip

John Stapko (301-953-1949), creator of the “Rolling Barbie”, will co-ordinate a float trip between Brunswick and Point-of-Rocks on the Potomac on Saturday, April 29 (with a back-up date of Saturday, May 6). Bring a fishing pole. Bring a Supersoaker.

Smokey Mountains Whitewater Warm-up

Richard Hopley, aka Oci-One Kanubi (rhopley@earthlink.net; 301-755-0471), will lead his annual BRV/MCC week of paddling throughout the Smokeys from Saturday, May 13 through Sunday, May 21. There will be two or three base camps with day trips emanating for these. A class 3 or 3+ stream or creek will be paddled each day. The itinerary is not fixed so that the group can follow the best water levels throughout northern Georgia, western North Carolina, and eastern Tennessee. Paddlers are responsible for bringing their own camping and paddling gear. Both the water and the air may be cold. Paddlers should be up early enough to prepare their own breakfasts and lunches in camp prior to each day’s departure. Supper will be eaten on the road at mid-scale restaurants.

Historic/Folkloric Antietam Trip

Beth Koller (240-506-0417) will organize a trip down the Antietam with a tentative side trip to the seldom visited medical museum part of the park or to Sharpsburg for something to eat or drink. The tentative date is Saturday, May 13, with a fall back date of Saturday, June 3.

Class 2 Dealer’s Choice

Al Cassel (casselal66@gmail.com; 202-669-5224) will organize a class 2 day trip within a two hour radius of home. The date will be Saturday, May 20 with a fall back date of Sunday, May 21.

Camper at Teeters Campground, Albright, WV

Daryl and Mike Martin (imnostooge@yahoo.com; daryl_54@yahoo.com) along with Courtney Caldwell (courtney.caldwell@lfg.com) will organize a Memorial Day Weekend Rendezvous in the Cheat watershed. Groups will run river trips from lower intermediate levels to advanced levels.

Smoke Hole Camper

Len Rice (lrice31@cox.net) will organize a self-support, multi-day paddling trip through the Smoke Hole section of the Potomac over the Memorial Day weekend. The skill level required is low intermediate.

June Stonycreek River Run

Megan O’Reilly (treemegan@yahoo.com; 301-512-0711) will get off her high horse to get into a boat. (*If you don’t get it, read the last newsletter.*) She has penciled in Sunday, June 18 as the date. If you are a first-timer to this run, let her know in advance.

June Dealer’s Choice

Ned Howenstine (iingh1@hotmail.com) will organize a Dealer’s Choice intermediate-advanced trip for the weekend of June 10 and 11th.

Fourth of July Fireworks

Starr Mitchell (starmitchell@verizon.net) is willing to lead a fireworks cruise **IF** she can find an open canoe paddling partner. (She has a canoe.)

Summer Picnic

Mark Wray (redshoestwo@juno.com) will organize the annual Summer picnic to co-ordinate with the monthly full moon. People will meet on August 5 at Violet's Lock to paddle across the river. Open boats are wanted to convey the heavy cargo.

Lehigh Bound

Alan Dickerson (dickerson_alan@yahoo.com) will co-ordinate some late Summer or early Fall trips on the Lehigh in eastern Pennsylvania.

Pine Barrens Car Camper

Ed Evangelidi (edevange@localnet.com) will lead a car camping flat water/fast water scenic trip through the New Jersey Pine Barrens over the extended Columbus Day weekend, October 7-9.

Eastern Shore Car Camper

Ed Evangelidi (edevange@localnet.com) will lead a car camping flat water/fast water scenic trip somewhere on the Eastern Shore over the Veterans' Day weekend, November 10-12.

TRIP REPORTS

Up a Creek--Upper Cedar Creek That Is—January 25, 2017 Trip--Ron Knipling

Much of December and January had been too cold and dry for paddling, but on Monday, January 23, we had a big rain and warm-up, which brought streams up for a few days. Wednesday the 25th was prime time, with sunny skies and temperatures near 60 degrees. I wasn't ready for class 2-3 given the cold water, rusty paddling skills, and the likely small group. Jenny Thomas and Kim Buttleman agreed to my proposal to run class 1-2 upper Cedar Creek from Star Tannery, corresponding (with small changes) to Roger Corbett's Section 1. Corbett's Cedar Creek Section 2 from Stephens Fort to Route 11 is among the most popular, classic creek runs in Virginia, but Section 1 is mostly forsaken. ☹

The weather and water were perfect. I judged the water level to be +12', with the Winchester gauge reading 3.64' or 427 cfs at the mid-point of the run. We put in on Route 714 above Star Tannery and took out at Route 623, which was about nine miles total. This was mostly the same as Corbett's Section 1, but shifted upstream a bit. Corbett's book may be "The Bible," but one can still be sacrilegious! Corbett rated the scenery as only "Good", but the almost-continuous shale cliffs on river right for much of the run were stunning and beautiful. Few houses or other structures were visible from the creek. I'd say "Very Good", and almost as lovely as Section 2.

☺

This was my second time down this stretch. The first time, in the early 1980s, my wife Leslie and I paddled it tandem AFTER I jogged the entire 12-mile road shuttle from Stephens Fort back to the Route 55 put-in. *Such energy!* I had only fleeting memories of that earlier run, but paddling the creek still felt nostalgic.

I coincidentally thumbed through some old *Voyageurs* and found a December 19, 1992 report, by Frank Fico, of a high-water run on this stretch on one of the shortest days of the year. Frank and Bridget started even higher upstream than we did, at Cold Spring Run, which was about five miles above Route 55. A county sheriff accosted them, claiming that “rivers” were open to the public for navigation but that “creeks” were privately owned. They sneaked onto the creek, though, and finished their run at Route 623 **in the dark!**

The Gorgeous Gunnison Gorge (Colorado)--Karen Egbert

Last summer was a summer of doing Colorado runs we hadn't done in a long time—the Granite section above the Numbers on the Arkansas, Dowd's Chutes above the Upper Eagle, the North St. Vrain in its post-2013 flood configuration, and last, but not least, the Gunnison Gorge (aka the Gunny). This is a long, desert run on the dam-released Gunnison River in far western Colorado below the class 5 Black Canyon stretch.

The Gunny Gorge isn't run very often.

#1--It's about a **five hour drive** from the Front Range.

#2--Pleasure Park, the **takeout** where you camp the night before running the gorge, is **thick with mosquitos**, despite being in a semi-desert climate.

#3--You **can't drive a normal vehicle** (even a moderate clearance 4 WD) to the put-in.

You have to hire the Pleasure Park shuttle service's Suburban for \$350 to get down the road, or find friends who will risk their high-clearance vehicles on that road; then pay \$85 per vehicle for the shuttle driver to take the truck back to the put-in. The shuttle would take several hours if done in a round-trip. The dirt road down to the river is about five miles, very rough with big dips and drop-offs in the dirt roadway, and can't be driven much above walking pace. (If it's been raining, often a vehicle can't make it back up.)

#4--Once you get down the road, you have to **carry your boat** (some people drag theirs, but it's a lot of boat abuse) **600 vertical feet and more than a mile down** the Chukar Trail to the put-in. (No wheels allowed because it's in a wilderness area.)

#5--Then it's **13.5 miles downriver** with some flowing smooth water and some nice class 3.

Soooo it requires a really **early start for a long day**.

#6--The last time we did the Gorge, it was a club trip during which a newbie paddler dislocated his shoulder at Buttermilk Rapid (on the county line, so **neither sheriff's office wanted to claim it in their jurisdiction for rescue/evacuation**) on the 4th of July (**when the search and rescue folks weren't really working**), and we got off the river past dark. Back to camp about 2:00 A.M. River rangers, the search and rescue team and an ambulance were all involved. But that's another story.....

...Nonetheless, we'd been discussing a possible Gunny Gorge run with our regular paddle buddies as the Summer went along. July came....

Step #1--Kent has a Toyota Takoma, Ken Kloppenborg (whom some of you may know from the WV Week of Rivers) has some kind of high-clearance truck, AND they volunteered their vehicles.

Step #2--We wanted to fill-up the vehicles to reduce the per-person shuttle fees, BUT we needed to a)--get all the boats and equipment down, and b)--have space for the shuttle driver. Our group size was going to be eight (David, Diane, Dick, Jill, Jon, Karen, Ken, and Kent) until Dick was

invited to the Main Salmon three days before our trip... so off he went. With the shuttle drivers, it was still a tight fit.

Step #3--We got up at 6 A.M., did the drive in from 8 to 9:15 A.M., and hiked down from 9:45 to 11 A.M., including a 15 minute first-aid stop. Diane tripped on the way down, gashed her forehead, and bled in the copious way head wounds tend to do. Lots of cleaning, butterfly bandages and duct tape had her ready to go again. Jon & Karen double-carried with leashes holding most of the weight on their shoulders, but it was slow since the one in back (they traded off) had trouble seeing their feet on the rough trail. The trail was longer and rougher than we'd remembered it, although the road wasn't quite as bad as we'd remembered.

The Gorge is gorgeous (no pun intended) and feels remote and wild. We saw a lot of bighorn sheep and lots of waterfowl, including mergansers. It has a real Western desert big water feel even at about 1000 cfs, and mostly class 3 pool-drop rapids, with a couple of 2/2+ and a couple of 3/4s. The water comes off the bottom of the dam and is beautiful, clear, green, and colder than we'd expected. We were in shorts, drytops (in Karen's case, not enough layers underneath), and nylon pogies to keep the desert sun off our hands, but we wished we'd had our neoprene pogies instead. It was a sunny 90's beautiful day.



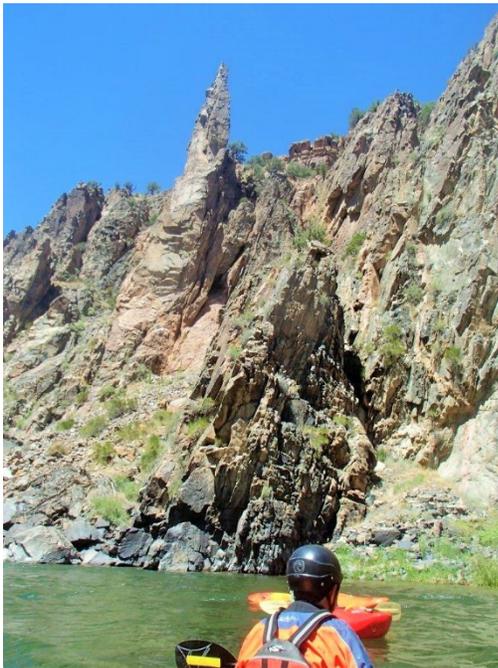
We put on about 11:30 A.M. The rapids are mostly wave trains and boulder gardens with some slot rapids. They weren't hard, but weren't trivial either. They were lots of fun. There were three class 3s and a 2+ before lunch (1-1:45 P.M.) above Buttermilk.

After lunch, the gorge opened out in Ute Park before narrowing down again at very technical and rocky Red Canyon Rapid. Miles 7 through 8 have three more class 3s, two boulder gardens, and a wave train, T-Dyke. We had another stop here from 3-3:40 P.M. Miles 9 through 10 have the hardest rapids: S-Turn, Squeeze, 3 Drops (holes and slots), Cable (very technical, with large holes and two narrow slots), Jumpin' Jack Splash (big hole and laterals), Gate Keeper (narrow slot), and Grand Finale (rocks on left). The rapids were read-and-run except for Squeeze (a class 3-4), where Kent remembered to take the correct right line. (The center flow ended up going over rocks, and the left looked like a steep hole plunge), and Cable (the big one), where again Kent correctly remembered to go down the river right side. **(This was no small feat given that Kent had last run the Gorge about four years ago; our last run had been nine years ago.)**

From there, the canyon widens out again, but even these last two to three miles flowed pretty quickly. We had lots of merganser sightings here. We got to the end of the rapids at 4 P.M., and to the take-out at 5 P.M. Jill's non-paddling husband had a huge treat for us at the take-out: chilled, ripe, **dripping-with-juice Palisade peaches** from the nearby Palisade orchards.

Heaven! They helped ameliorate the misery of the voracious mosquitos as we changed and loaded up.

We all agreed it was a great day, really fun, and that the Gunny Gorge is worth doing about every other year, given the logistics hassle-to-reward ratio. By year after next we'll have forgotten how long the carry down felt. We picked up the Taylor River on the way home. And there is a story about that as well...



Editor's note: I can attest to the intense green color of the water and to the terrain—having hiked down into the Black Canyon. The hike is significant enough that the rangers give you a certificate of completion! That hike put this river on my bucket list.

I can also attest to the fun that can be had in rapids of the Granite section and with an après boating side trip to nearby Leadville.

QUICK TRIP REPORT

In a hurry? Hate to write? Can never remember who was on the trip? Keep one (keep a handful) of Quick Trip Report Forms in your glove box and have someone fill it out during the shuttle.

The report can be sent to the newsletter editor electronically (brvnewsletter [at] earthlink.net) or via mail PO Box 9513, Silver Spring, MD 20916. It's that simple. It will be appreciated!

Trip date(s): _____
Trip destination(s): _____
Trip participants: _____

Water levels/gauge readings: _____
Any access or safety issues: _____

Notable aspects on or off the river: _____

Photos available: _____

[HISTORIC/FOLKLORIC SIDE TRIPS WHEN BOATING](#)

One of the best things about paddling is all of the interesting places we go to that we might not otherwise see. Several of us have had the opportunity to visit Fort Mulligan 304-257-1313 right on Routes 55/28 in Petersburg, West Virginia, 26847 (next to Grand County Hospital and just a few blocks away from the local DQ) after paddling a segment of the South Branch of the Potomac.



http://fortwiki.com/Fort_Mulligan

The valley of the South Branch was strategically important. It was bordered on one side by the fertile acreage of the middle Shenandoah Valley and on the other side by the B&O railroad infrastructure and the coal reserves in the upper Potomac drainage area. The hill on which the fort was located provided extensive high-ground surveillance. Either Confederate or Union troops occupied this site (or near-by territory) every year of the Civil War.

The fort, built in late 1863 under the command of Colonel James Mulligan, replaced earlier temporary fortifications. There were earthen works surrounded by an abatis (meshwork of tree branches to prevent scaling of the earthen works) and lined with timbers. The fort had multiple entry points and gun mounts and ammunition storage structures. In 1864, because of an impending major attack by the Confederate General Jubal Early, Colonel Joseph Thoburn evacuated the fort under the cover of night and intentionally destroyed most of the garrison structures.

Today the earthen works remain, and there are nine cannons from the war. In about an hour, we were able to stretch our legs on the trail system, get a lay of the land, inspect the remains, read the trail markers, and learn about military life from the writings of Joshua Winters, a Union private in the WV volunteer infantry-Company G, who was garrisoned there.
<http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=14518>

Such detours can cap off an easy day on the river and can be made even better by the location of a DQ just down the road (15 N Main Street)!

TRIVIA



The first member to accumulate 200 points will be awarded a prize from the shameless division of BRV commerce. The questions are arranged by category-as in the game show “Jeopardy”.
The questions will remain open until there is a correct response. The questions from the January newsletter remain open.

WHAT

1--What is the importance of the Fairfax stone? **10 points**

WHO

2—Which President is affiliated with the Fairfax stone? **10 points**

WHAT

3—What river was originally called Sugar Tree Creek, but was renamed by Lord Fairfax after his dog drowned in the river? **10 points**

WHAT

4—7 Name the correct state and river watershed for each “Laurel” waterway
Big Laurel Creek, Laurel Creek x2 in WV, and Laurel Fork. **10 points each 40 points total**

THINGS NEVER LEARNED IN SCHOOL

8--On what river might you run ride a “greyhound”? **10 points**

THINGS NEVER LEARNED IN SCHOOL

9--What river needs to be found? **10 points**

FEATURE ARTICLE #1

The Top 10 Reasons for Swimming--Scott Gravatt

The other day I was hanging out with another old retired guy. You may recall that he used to host a late night TV show. So I said to him, “*David, what would be your list of the Top 10 Reasons for swimming on a whitewater trip?*” He smiled and said...

- #10. The sun was in my eyes!
9. I got my Jackson roll mixed up with my Kent Ford roll!
8. A raft got in my way!
7. I would have braced up, but the water was too frothy!
6. Paddle Snake!
5. That rock wasn't there last time I ran this river!
4. Well, it looked like an easy wave to surf!
3. I was looking at the topless sunbather on the shore!
2. I didn't see that hole because I was mugging for the photographer!

(...Pause here for the drum roll...)

And the **Number One Reason** for Swimming...

1. **Rick Koller asked me to take over as 'President for Life', and I panicked!**

RIVER ACCESS

Yough Fees—Our Roving Reporter—Jim Pruitt

There is good news for those paddling the Lower Youghiogheny this season. There will be a price reduction for permits. They are now \$2, half the previous amount.

There is an unfortunate catch. Reserve America, the vendor that handles the Bureau of State Parks reservations system has instituted a \$5 transaction fee. This fee is for all transactions, and was added to bring Pennsylvania up to the national standard. Since boating during peak season (between 8:00-3:00) is a fee related activity, it will be affected by the \$5 transaction fee. The reduction of the permit cost from \$4 to \$2 is the Bureau's response to this new \$5 transaction fee. Some important things to remember:

- The **season pass price will be unaffected** by the change, so those who boat the Lower Yough frequently are encouraged to purchase a season pass for the same price of \$40.
- **The \$5 fee is per TRANSACTION--not per BOATER.**
A group of three in a raft (or a group of three hardboaters) would pay \$2 each plus the \$5 transaction fee. That would be a total of \$11, one dollar less than the previous cost. All members of the group need not be present at time of purchase, nor do they all need to be in the same launch time slot. The \$5 fee is charged by Reserve America, if it is a group of one or one hundred, is literally a fee for each transaction. Boaters are encouraged to establish their groups prior to approaching the window. It is the goal of Ohioyle State Park to make this transition easy and with as little impact as possible on river users.

Please share this information with anyone you feel might be affected by these changes, and of course, happy paddling.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

WVHC River Committee Vacancy

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy (<https://wvhighlands.org/>) has a vacancy on the rivers committee. Contact Cynthia D. Ellis, 3114 Steel Ridge Road, Red House, WV 25168, (304) 586-4135, cdellis@wildblue.net.

Water Monitoring with WVRC

The West Virginia Rivers Coalition is looking for water monitors. They have a joint program with Trout Unlimited and will train volunteers. (<http://www.wvrivers.org/make-a-difference/volunteer>)



[Team River Runner Needs You!](#) (Info and pictures from Joe Mornini)

Joe Mornini, the founder of Team River Runner (TRR) (www.teamriverrunner.org), left a Walter Reed Hospital pool session early to speak to the club at the March 7 meeting. He provided a short history of the organization founded in 2004 and how they have evolved from providing paddling opportunities locally to veterans with amputations to a group with chapters throughout the United States and one which now addresses a broader range of disabilities through a variety of adaptive equipment and teaching. He reiterated that the most important thing the group provides is a **sense of community**—something we already know as paddlers.



Transferring to the boat is a key step in those with an amputation, paralysis-other neurologic dysfunction, or muscular dysfunction. Modifications in equipment and technique may be required. Note the stability pontoons on the stern of the yellow boat in the water in the image on the right.



Getting to the water may take some creativity.



Games are fun for everyone! Sighted guides help visually impaired paddlers. Water football tournaments are held at the national level.



Many of us have tried hand paddles.

This is a different approach for someone with two levels of amputation.

But it's really the same—being free with your boat.

Contact Joe (301-233-8882) regarding **non-monetary donations of equipment** (which may be tax deductible). Such boating related equipment includes:

- Helmets
- Good quality PFD's
- Kayak paddles
- Spray skirts
- Kayaks (which are occasionally sold to purchase other boats to meet fleet needs)
- Paddling jackets and/or rash guards (preferably in larger sizes)

The group also runs on elbow grease from volunteers. Please contact Joe if you would be willing to help with teaching sessions. TRR sponsors an **Open House Family Paddling Day every Sunday at Riley's Lock from 2 PM-5:30 PM and welcomes volunteers.**

Upcoming activities that might be of interest to BRV paddlers include: Our **Sunday, October 1, 2017 Biathlon, which consists of a one mile paddle and three mile run.** Folks can form a team and raise funds!!

Most importantly, Joe urged BRV get the word out to veterans who could use TRR as a way to connect with other veterans and with paddling community volunteers. Anyone who is disabled, whether military or non-military, and who might benefit from the healing aspects of paddling and community is welcome at the Sunday sessions.

SUMMER JOB

Paddle Your Summer Away—And Get Paid for It!

Mercersburg Summer Programs is currently accepting applications for a seasonal canoe and kayak instructor, who will organize and lead instructional activities for the Adventure Camp and other Summer programs associated with the Mercersburg Academy. It offers the opportunity to build a curriculum vitae in outdoor education while paddling. The contact person is Coleman Weibley, Assistant Director of Mercersburg Summer Programs; 717-328-6225; 300 East Seminary Street, Mercersburg, PA 17236; www.mercersburgsummer.com; summerprograms@mercersburg.edu.

FEATURE ARTICLE #2

Thrills and Spills on the Main Salmon in Idaho—Mike Aronoff

This provides a recap of some of the types of material presented by Mike at the well-attended March 7 meeting. Mike owns CKAPCO (Canoe, Kayak, and Paddle Company), which provides instruction, offers certification, and organizes trips (www.ckapco.com/, 703-850-1257; or email mike@ckapco.com. Mike cut his paddling teeth with the BRV and can probably relate some stories about the editor from trips such as those in the Cheat Gorge.

After the flight to Boise, we checked into the Best Western Vista motel. After dinner, we met our guide, Chris (*Action Whitewater Adventure*), for orientation and a final question and answer session. The following morning (5:30 A.M.), we met in the lobby for breakfast and to pack out with our gear for our air flights to Salmon. The flight was about an hour and a half in length. The plane on which I flew held four—so multiple planes were needed for the 18 participants. The flight was really cool. It traveled over and through the Sawtooth range. At times, we were not as high as the peaks we flew past. Most of the snow was gone, but there still were a few holdout patches. We could see rivers, fires, and much more. At the airport, we were greeted by Verle, the owner- outfitter.

Although most food and equipment was provided, other essentials (you know, beer, wine, booze, fishing gear, and fishing licenses) were acquired by participants on their own dime at North Fork. The selection was good, and prices really quite fair. The trip itself followed the river, and we saw a lot of interesting things, including big horn sheep and river features. At our destination, Corn Creek boat launch, we set up the boats, and soon we were off in paddle rafts, 18 foot gear rafts, duckies, kayaks (personal boats and rental Jackson kayaks: Fun Runners, Karmas, and Zens), a Shredder, and even a stand-up paddle board stashed on the raft. **Participants had the option of switching water craft or putting him/herself and his/her boat on a raft for rapids they did not want to run.**

The level was 0.45 ft (or 3300 cfs) at the put-in ramp. This contrasted with the circa 5400 cfs reading from the American Whitewater page, which uses a gauge further downstream. The

difference is due to all the creeks and rivers that flow into the Main Salmon between the two gauges. This level was average for our launch date. The week before, it had been 0.7 ft.

After a quick 1.5 miles, we came to our first named rapid, Killum, which, with its rating of class 2+, served as a warm up. This was followed less than a mile later by Gunbarrel, also class 2+. There were several less significant rapids...until mile 8. There we were greeted by the big waves of a class 3 rapids, Ranier. Next, at mile 8.6, was another class 3 rapids, but with a suggested scout, Alder Creek. Then nothing of consequence until Lantz at mile 11.2. There we all got some unexpected excitement from this big wave reverse S turn. The guide book describes it as a class 2+; we gave it a class 3 rating! The last named rapid of the day was Devil's Teeth, rated class 2+ to 3. Pretty much all the rapids had good-sized, fun wave trains. We estimated the wave height to be between 6 and 8 feet for the bigger ones.

On our first night out, we camped just below Devil's Teeth. We unloaded, set-up, and then kicked back after our short, 13 mile day. Cold libations flowed. Dinner was steak, baked potatoes, salad, and cheesecake for desert. **Some slept in tents; some did not--such a pleasure to camp WITHOUT mosquitos.**

The following morning, we had time for our personal wake-up rituals and a good breakfast before getting underway at 9 A.M. Our first stop, Devil's Toe Pictographs, occurred shortly thereafter. Then it was another few miles to Little Devil's Teeth Rapid, rated an easy class 2. The next three miles were scenic, but otherwise unremarkable.

This ended at mile 20.8 with Black Creek Rapid. This rapid didn't exist until 2011. It continues to change and is the steepest, most technical drop on the river. **I rated the drop a class 4.** We scouted from river left and saw on river right at least a partial tongue to avoid the big hole. When I got over to the right, I couldn't see the line--so I followed a boat that had disappeared over the lip. Hmmmm.... Turned out to be a bad choice because I was *way* too far right, and I went **DIRECTLY INTO THE HOLE**, which swirled me around violently. Multiple roll attempts failed, and I was running out of air-- so I did a manly swim. (*See the 10 reasons to swim article.*) There were several other flips by other paddlers, but at least the paddlers were on or closer to the tongue! No harm done, but I will definitely not do that again! However, there's a good chance that the line will change—next year far left??

After that excitement, we had a pretty relaxed run until visiting Maisie, a class 3 drop at mile 26.2. The next biggie was Bailey, a class 3+ rapids at mile 32.5. This drop was notable for a hole hiding in the wave train. We ran right without mishap.

From there it was only a mile to our camping site at **Allison Ranch. This interesting place has white sand beaches, cool cabins, a museum, and a tiny airstrip.** Although it usually isn't open to the public, our company is friends with the caretaker Jim Mozingo, who treated us to a tour of the museum as well.

Day 3 was truly awesome! Twenty-six miles of great rapids! Sapp Creek, 5 Mile, Split Rock, Little Stinker are all class 3s. **Big Mallard is a class 3-4 rapid with BIG WAVES and a BIG HOLE. Nobody fed the duck. Of course, ya gotta have a Little Mallard**—which we ran

without difficulty. This was followed by Elkhorn, rated as a class 4 at some water levels, but not at this level. It was just long and fun. Growler was really growling on the left, so we took a center route. Whiplash, which can be the toughest rapid on the river at high water, is class 2+ at lower water. Next was Boise Bar, just another class 3 rapids. Ho Hum. Then we took a break at Buckskin Bill's where we saw the small museum dedicated to Sylvan Ambrose "Buckskin Bill" Hart (1906-1980), who purchased 50 acres of land at Five Mile and built defensive structures including a stone turret to ward off government encroachment. He had a blacksmithy and made his own weapons. He used deerskin for clothing. (<http://www.bikeraft.com/colorful-river-characters-salmon-rivers-buckskin-bill/>) Pretty interesting! Some of us bought ice cream; others beer at the little shop in this remote area. It was then just under two miles to our final rapid of the day, Ludwig, class 3, with more BIG waves. This left us invigorated for arrival at our camp a half mile later, mile 55.7. The camp was called Dead Man (a pilot died there). Twenty-six beautiful miles, 12 notable rapids, how could it be any better? No one even thought it was a long day, but the evening libations were sure good.

On day 4, we had another great breakfast and then were on the river at about 9 A.M. The first five miles were gentle followed by a couple of fun class 2 rapids. There was more spectacular scenery on our way to Cottontail Rapid and T-Bone Rapid, both class 2-3. The first rapid of consequence was Dried Meat Rapid, but by then we were already approaching by camp at Slide Beach, mile 75.2. **Our fine Mexican dinner was followed by a talent show and dress up event. What happens on the river.....**



*Editorial comments: Is it time for the SnapChat disappearing act here?
Photo from a trip participant. Originator unknown.*

Day 5 had an easy start. Just past the Confluence with the South Fork of the Salmon, there was Chittam Rapid. This can be class 4 at some water levels--but not so for us. This was followed by Vinegar Rapid, whose powerful flow develops a big hole that flips rafts at low water. We scouted river left. I wish we had checked on the other side because **I ran the worst line possible**. I injured my hand and other things. I was the bozo. Needless to say, **no one followed me or my line**. The last rapid of the day and the trip was Carey Falls, just a half mile before the Carey Creek Boat ramp, our takeout.

Epilogue

The Main Salmon is a great fun river to paddle and simply a great place to experience. I quit trying to compare it to the Middle Fork early on during the trip. They are both wonderful rivers, but with different characteristics. I will continue my comparative studies....

For 2017, we will run only the Main Salmon.

- August 13 is the first river day, and August 17 is the last river day.
- Folks, who are driving need to be in Salmon, Idaho on the 12th.
- Folks who are flying into Boise, need to be there by the 12th as well.
- There is a shuttle available if one is driving from the put-in to the take-out.
- For those flying into Boise, they can fly out on the 18th later in the day because we spend the night of the 17th in McCall and get everyone back to Boise the morning of the 18th.

I'll be coming home then, I guess (:

For photos, see: <https://www.ckapco.com/new-events-1/2017/8/13/main-salmon-river-idaho>

Photographic Postscript

Several club members, Barb Brown, Lou Campagna, Dean and Lori Geis, and John Snitzer have been on Salmon trips with Mike. Barb Brown brought some of her slides to show after the presentation and at the post meeting pizza session. Below are some of the scenic photos that she took on the trip:





*Steep canyons,
big waves,
white beaches,
Buckskin Bill's,
new friends,
the Main Salmon....*

CONSERVATION

Anacostia Watershed Society Earth Day Activities

The Anacostia Watershed Society (<http://www.anacostiaws.org/>) will be sponsoring a river clean-up April 22 from 9 A.M. until noon. There will be multiple clean-up locations in Montgomery County and Prince George's County. For more information, call Bryan Chasney 301-699-6204 x108 or register via the following ;
<http://www.anacostiaws.org/userfiles/file/Earth%20Day%202017%20flyer-2%20sided%20bilingual.pdf>

April BRV-CCA Joint River Clean-up (material provided by our own Kathleen Sengstock)

The annual Alice Ferguson Foundation's (<http://fergusonfoundation.org/>) Potomac River Watershed Clean-up will be at 9:00 A.M., on Saturday, April 8, 2017. This is part of their "Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative". The BRV and CCA will be joining in the effort by sponsoring a clean-up at Seneca Landing Boat Ramp/Riley's Lock (Lock #24) on the C&O Canal (<http://www.rundc.com/Doc/MD/Montgomery/C&ORileys.htm>). River levels permitting, boats will be used for island and canal clean-up--so bring your boats. All clean-up supplies will be provided. You may get a little dirty or wet. Consider bringing water and food for lunch along with a camera to document the fun and to give the newsletter editor some photos!

Your crew chiefs will be Kay Fulcomer (kayfulcomer@gmail.com; 301-990-7575) and Kathleen Sengstock (kathleen456@verizon.net; 240-381-7189). Given them some advance notice so that they can plan for the amount of supplies and arrange tasks. For folks who have not been there, take I-495 to River Road (Route 190) heading west, outside the beltway, and continue on River Road at the T-intersection by turning the left. Turn left at the bottom of the hill onto Riley's Lock Road. There will be parking available just as the lock and the towpath stairs become visible.

Cacapon Caper: The Friends of the Cacapon (material provided by Rachel D'Agostino)

An 81-mile-long river, the Cacapon is located in the Appalachian Mountains of West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle region. The headwaters of the Cacapon River, known as the Lost River, is 31.1 miles long. **The Lost and Cacapon Rivers, however, are actually the same river.** The two names arose because the Lost River flows underground in Hardy County and emerges a few miles downstream as the Cacapon River. As a result of geological history, the Lost River literally loses its water into the ground--hence its name, the Lost River. For much of the year, no surface water can be seen for 2.5 miles.

The Cacapon River is renowned for its bountiful fishing, paddling, diverse wildlife, and natural scenery. Notably, the weathered outcrops and boulder-strewn mountainsides along the banks of the two rivers--which are revered for their scenic beauty during paddling trip--offer clues to a geologic history hundreds of millions of years old. About 250 million years ago, Appalachia underwent its last phase of mountain building. Peaks were thrust four to six miles above sea level and then slowly eroded into the rounded mountains we see today. Some of the oldest rocks in the Cacapon basin are more than 500 million years old, and a variety of fossils can be found along the banks of the river.

The Friends of the Cacapon (formerly the Lower Cacapon River Committee, Inc.) began as one of West Virginia's earliest watershed associations. It is an environmental nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring the Cacapon River remains one of West Virginia's highest-quality rivers so that residents and visitors alike can experience year-round enjoyment of clean water in quiet commune with nature. More specifically, efforts focus on the lower stretches of the Cacapon River that run through Morgan and Hampshire Counties to the mouth of the river, where it joins the Potomac River before entering the Chesapeake Bay.

The group works to support the health of the river and access to the river through a variety of activities. In addition to clean-up and monitoring projects, they work with local landowners in watershed management. **Last year they also had a paddling trip down one of the sections of the Cacapon.**

For more information or to join or to participate in activities, contact Rachel D'Agostino (President) at Friends of the Cacapon River, P.O. Box 321, Great Cacapon, WV 35422 or 304-947-7590 or info@cacaponriver.org.

Cacapon Redux: Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust

The Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust (<http://clrlt.squarespace.com/land-trust/>; Route 1 Box 328, High View, WV 26808; 304-856-1010) created a **Cacapon River Water Trail and Watershed guide**. Funding and/or technical support was provided by the Blue Moon Fund; County Planning Departments (Hampshire, Hardy, and Morgan); the Friends of the Cacapon River; the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; the National Parks Service Rails, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program; the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources; and the West Virginia Stream Partners Program. Landowners and community members provided feedback during public meetings.

The guidebook (<http://clrlt.squarespace.com/water-trail-guide/>) includes access points for paddling and fishing, hiking trails, public recreational area, landmarks, and roads. The guidebook

can be downloaded. Waterproof versions are available for purchase (via P.O. Box 58, Wardensville, WV 26851; 304-856-1188). **(At least 1 will be offered as a prize for the trivia contest.)**

For those of you who have forgotten, the gauge information for the Cacapon watershed can be found via:

- **USGS 01611500 CACAPON RIVER NEAR GREAT CACAPON, WV**
<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/usa/nwis/uv?01611500>
- **USGS 01608000 S F SOUTH BRANCH POTOMAC RIVER NEAR MOOREFIELD, WV**
<https://waterdata.usgs.gov/usa/nwis/uv?01608000>

In addition to the “Lost” section, there are three other segments:

- The 15 miles from Lake to Capon Bridge broken up by two DNR access ramps.
- The 11.5 miles from Capon Bridge to Route 127.
- The 38.3 miles from Route 127 broken up by five DNR access ramps.

The scenery is terrific in all three sections. Fishing is notable in the first and third sections-with bass, in particular, being available in the first section. Rocky cliffs, including Caudy’s Castle and Chapel Rock, are found in the first two sections. Soaring eagles may be seen there as well.

The rapids in all three sections may be boat scouted by intermediate or better paddlers at moderate levels. The second section has the most significant rapids and takes four to five hours to run. There are three ledges. The first, at the end of a river bend, is best run on the far right in low water, but can be run left of center at higher levels. The second, marked by Chapel Rock, is best run on the left. The third, which is the largest, offers several routes on the right at higher water levels. The third section has a dam near the end that requires a portage.

Invasive Species of the Month: DIDYMO (aka ROCK SNOT)

This single-cell algae was originally found in higher latitude, nutrient deficient, cold water streams. This brown, white, or yellow algae forms dense mats on stream bottoms. These mats smother out other plant life and out-compete native algae. This affects the food chain for animal life in the river. Effectively, the river dies.

Once established in a stream, didymo cannot be displaced or removed. At least 11 States have a water body with didymo. **Prevention is the ONLY answer!**

- Consider what you are wearing.
 - If you are wearing clothing or using gear that can absorb the cells and/or stay wet for a prolonged period of time, there is a risk of cross-contamination. Life jackets, paddling sweaters-fleece, and booties with felt soles confer particular risk.
- Consider your boat.
 - A boat with a wet interior can transfer the algae during emptying and during swims.
- Inspect your gear for algae.
- Do not dispose of gear down the drain.
- Dry and treat clothing and gear.
 - If absorbant→

- ♦ Soak in very hot water (>140°F) for 40 minutes OR
- ♦ Soak in dishwashing liquid 5% solution in hot water (>120°F) for 30 minutes.
- If non-absorbant→
 - ♦ Soak and clean gear in 2% household bleach for at least one minute OR
 - ♦ Soak and clean gear in 5% table salt solution for at least one minute OR
 - ♦ Soak and clean gear in 5% dishwashing detergent for at least one minute.
 - ♦ Dry gear (e.g., boats) in sunshine for at least 48 hours and rotate to make sure that no places retain moisture. This may require deflating and cleaning of float bags.

http://bugwoodcloud.org/mura/phcwpma/assets/File/AquaticInvasiveBrochure_April2013.pdf
<https://www.fws.gov/columbiariver/ANS/factsheets/Didymo.pdf>

[Potomac Riverkeeper River Palooza Events](#)

The season will kick-off Saturday, June 3 in Harpers Ferry with tubing, duckie paddling, and rafting followed by a party and camping. The season will end Sunday, September 24 at the National Harbor with a party and concert for clean water. In between, there will be a variety of events including:

- *June 4-Sunday--Antietam Creek historical float trip*
- *June 5-Monday--Shenandoah River float trip for bird watching and scenery*
- *June 21-Wednesday--Summer Solstice evening paddle from Key Bridge Boathouse*
- *June 24-Saturday--Fort Washington float trip*
- *June 25-Sunday--Mallows Bay paddle in conjunction with the Chesapeake Conservancy*
- *July 15 and 16-Saturday and Sunday--Paw Paw camper*
- *July 21-Friday--Shenandoah float trip for fishing*
- *August 27-Sunday--Bloomington*
- *September 8-Friday--Dyke Marsh evening paddle including stand-up paddle boarding*
- *September 9-Saturday--Women on the Water with Calleva on the Potomac Heritage Trail*

[Upper Elk River Watershed Association](#)

See Webster Springs Whitewater Festival (aka ElkFest). Their seedling give-away is on Saturday, April 8th. Consider supporting the association and the project, which helps reduce erosion.

[FEATURE ARTICLE #3](#)

[North through Alaska: Canoeing the Muddy, Kantishna, and Tanana Rivers—Alan Dickerson](#)

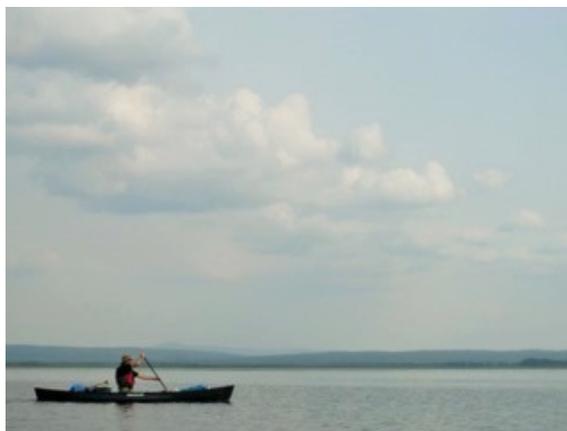
Map info: http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/nav/rdi/kantishna/kantishna_maps.pdf
https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fsbdev2_037700.pdf

On July 7, 2015, I flew to Fairbanks, AK to meet my good friend, Sam Bishop, for a 280-mile canoe trip from Lake Minchumina, which abuts Denali National Park and Preserve about 70 miles NNW from the summit of Denali. The plan was to **paddle from Lake Minchumina, north on Muddy River** (approximately 50 miles), **north on the Kantishna River** (approximately 200 miles), and then **north on the Tanana River** (approximately 30 miles) to take out at the boat ramp at Manley Hot Springs **14 days** later.

Sam is a native of Alaska, whom I got to know during his days from 2000 to 2008 in Arlington as a Washington correspondent for the “Fairbanks News Miner”. Many BRVrs and MCCers will remember Sam from his many day trips and campers with us during those years. Sam, having spent part of his youth with his family in a cabin on Lake Minchumina canoeing, hunting, and running trap lines, is very familiar with the Kantishna area and the rivers we were scheduled to paddle. Many of the people whom we met at the Lake and on the way have known Sam and his family for many years.

Sam, his daughter Nell, and I flew by bush plane from Fairbanks to Lake Minchumina on July 9, collected his solo Wenonah Argosy which he had shipped ahead, spent some time catching up with the local residents, sorting and packing gear, and cleaning up a classic 16-foot Old Town Tripper. We spent the night in his parent’s spacious cabin (approximately 12-by-12 feet!) and launched first thing the following morning.

Alaska was in the thick of its second-worst fire season on record, so as we crossed Lake Minchumina, there was a beautiful blue sky overhead, clear glassy water below, and a ring of towering pillars of pyrocumulus clouds all around. The Muddy River is the outlet for Lake Minchumina. (*See the maps above.*) While most of the lake is crystal clear, the east end is fed by the Foraker River, which dumps a load of gray silt brought down from the Heron, Foraker, and Straightaway glaciers in Denali into the lake and Muddy River. **This makes the Muddy a soupy cauldron of thick clouds of gray silt**, which has to be settled and boiled (many beaver on the Muddy) to be potable. Even with this treatment, it makes for a gritty breakfast mush and a very effective tooth polish!



The Muddy is generally not much wider than Antietam Creek, but carries much more water with its very brisk current. **The Muddy’s 50-mile channel of continuous loops and turns requires constant navigation of swirls, reaction currents, eddy seams and “minding the helm”**. After such daily mental concentration, we camped on favorable sand bars that form on the inside bends of each turn where the mosquitos were more content to remain in the abutting alder thickets rather than around our heads.

One of the fires was burning somewhere in the “flats” around which the Muddy courses, and, on one evening, we had paddled into a slough and found a nice camp site. As soon as we finished

unloading, a thick fog of smoke rolled in. Given the change in wind direction that brought the smoke our way, we decided to respect the counsels of prudence and high-tail it out of there for a safer site. Fortunately, that was our only brush with the fires, and a couple of days later the smoke dissipated or changed direction away from us for good.

The Muddy had lots of **ducks and geese** with their young broods. The adults were molting and the young were mostly not yet able to fly so we had continuous entertainment watching them run on the water ahead of us and try to take cover in the shore brush or hunker down until we passed. Again, there were **many beaver** and beaver lodges on the Muddy, and it obviously had not been trapped for some time. We also spotted a **lynx swimming** across the river and several **eagles and owls**, but no large mammals.

The Kantishna begins immediately downstream of the confluence of the Muddy River, Birch Creek, and the McKinley River. Consequently, the Kantishna is much larger and faster than the Muddy, bringing its *own* load of silt from the Peters and Muldrow glaciers in Denali. The only “whitewater” on this trip was at this confluence, and it was a tricky task to watch for the right boil with a seam going in the right direction to catch the ride out to the faster Kantishna. Once there, however, the river presented a beautiful wide expanse of eroding permafrost banks, shallow channels, and sandy islands headed by massive driftwood logjams.

The Kantishna is the river that gave its name to the mining district of interior Alaska that stretches from the Tanana River to the north slopes of Denali and to the 1905 gold stampede that made the river a highway to the diggings. We stopped and inspected the remains of the old community of “Roosevelt” that was established in 1905 at the highest point on the river that was navigable by steamboats during the stampede. The remains of the community are several birch cabins and other out-structures that have since been used as cabins for hunters and trappers. The roofs are intact, but sagging, and the structures themselves are slowly sinking into the permafrost.

We saw very few beaver on this river as compared to the Muddy. We continued to see lots of water fowl and seagulls, including one very perturbed Mew Gull. This bird initially conducted high altitude bombing passes and followed these with a half dozen low-level, head-on, very disconcerting strafing runs. We finally saw that we had inadvertently paddled between her two chicks, who had been swimming down river for safety. We saw **moose** on four occasions on the Kantishna, including one cow with two calves, which had gotten distracted by the flurry of geese we had sent scrambling downstream. The distraction cause her to pause at the thicket wall long enough for some very good photographs. On another occasion, as we passed a turn in the river, we caught a cow and a calf swimming across the river ahead of us.

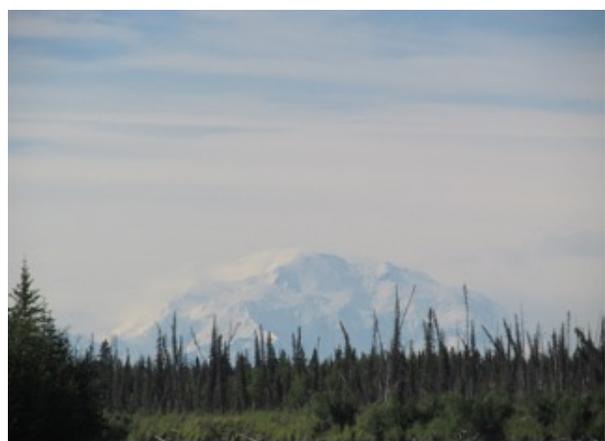


We also got to spend some quality time on separate days with two of the four other human beings we saw on the entire trip: Jim Smith and Mike Turner, both subsistence residents living in cabins built by themselves and living off the hunting and trapping and any other means of income they could find. Jim and Mike are long acquaintances of Sam and his family and were very welcoming to us.

Jim's cabin was 16-by-16 feet, and his compound of outbuildings was surrounded by an electronic bear fence. He was accompanied by his part-Pomeranian "bear dog" who, by the way, is very jealous of his owner's attentions. He had many stories of his encounters with bears, wolves, and an unsympathetic Fairbanks law enforcement officer. Said officer, during a routine traffic stop on Jim's last visit to Fairbanks, discovered his unregistered pickup (without insurance), his long list of "priors", and his many outstanding failure-to-appear warrants. Hardship, I would say, has made him the hermit that he is.

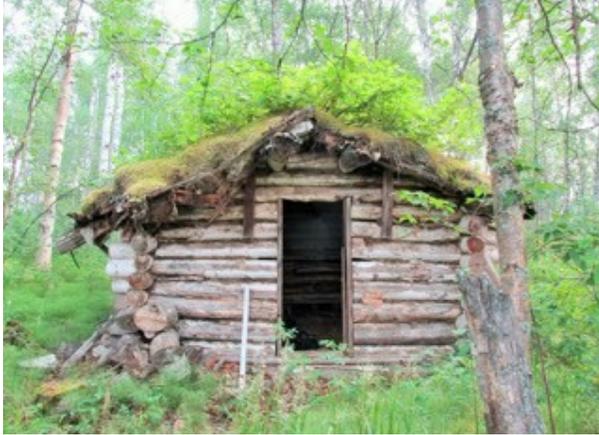
We found Mike at his cabin the next day, and he was quite a contrast to Jim the day before. Mike's wife, Fran, was in Fairbanks on their annual shopping run so Mike was by himself with his two dogs. They used to run dogs in the winter on their trap lines, and I counted 16 dog houses on their property. Now, however, they use snow machines, and the number of their dogs have been reduced to two, a brother and sister pair. Mike and Fran have, literally, built a compound with a number of sheds, workshops, root cellars, and other out-buildings. They are both very good craftsmen. The spruce cabin is much larger than any we saw on the trip. In fact it looks more like a lodge than a cabin. They built a large hot house for vegetables, and there were many raised vegetable beds wherever they could be placed for maximum sunlight. They grow and dry EVERYTHING for eating over the long winter. Mike also supplements his income with outside carpentry work and builds fish wheels on the side. One of these fish wheels was tied up along the bank. We had dinner with Mike, camped in his front yard, shared breakfast with him in the morning, and then were seen off as we pushed back out into the river.

As soon as we rounded the first bend below Mike's place, **the towering Denali (Mt. McKinley) came into view**, dominating the horizon to our south. Because of the smoke haze in the first days, the restricted view from the narrow Muddy River, overcast rain days, and other obstructions, this was the first time we were able to see it. **Jaw-dropping! Just flat out jaw-dropping as it loomed over the entire landscape draped in its sublime white folds of snow, glacier, and clouds!!!**



We entered the Tanana River with just about 30 miles left in our trip. **The Tanana is one of the wide, navigable rivers of the Alaska interior that runs for 584 miles from eastern Alaska to the Yukon River and is one of the main supply routes for communities and cities along its**

course. The current picked up once again and helped us along our way. The riverbed, however, was dominated by numerous shallow islands and sandbars, many just barely submerged. This meant that we had to be alert to changes in the surface indicating the locations of shallow water so we could scout passable channels or make sometimes frantic course corrections.



Sam's brother has a cabin a few miles below the confluence, so we decided to take a layover day and enjoyed a solid roof, solid floor, gas cooking, comfortable chairs, and a deck to dry out our tents and other wet gear. On our next to last day, after leaving the comforts of the cabin, we passed several eagle nests and saw our one and only bear, a **black bear** rustling around in the bushes along the shore, who beat a hasty retreat when it spotted us.

On the last day, as we approached Manley, we passed a well-used fishing camp and a high bluff with numerous steel cables in place to support fish wheels. Sam commented on what appears to be a cultural shift that he observed on this trip: the absence of people fishing and operating fish wheels along the rivers even though this was the season of the chum run. In the past, there would have been a number of these in operation and a number of people net fishing, but we had seen none. He also noted that there had been very few trappers running lines during the recent winter. He attributed the lack of trapping, in part, to the low price for furs, but the lack of fishing appeared to be due to declining interest in even this subsistence activity of Alaska's past.

In fact, we only saw four people and two boats during our entire trip after leaving Minchumina (a plus in my mind). But, I would add, we also saw only two or three Private Property signs which, to me, was a welcome relief from the litter of "No Trespassing" signs and "Private Property" signs stapled to every tree along our local rivers.

We pulled up to the Manley Hot Springs boat ramp in the early afternoon of the 14th day and roused our napping shuttle driver, who had driven up from Fairbanks in the morning. **We soon had our boats and gear loaded into the back of his truck and set out for the 4-plus hour drive back to Fairbanks over a route of paved roads, semi-paved roads, gravel roads, and major road development. Sights of beautiful mature spruce forests and vistas of distant mountain ranges to our north closed out our trip.**

SAFETY

CCA Potomac Downriver Race-Call for Safety Boaters

The 62nd consecutive Potomac Downriver Race will be run on Saturday, May 13. It is organized by the CCA and co-sponsored by Sycamore Island Club and the Potomac Whitewater Center. BRV club members may participate as racers, safety boaters, or in other volunteer positions. For additional information about serving as a safety boater, please contact **Howard Morland** at 703-525-1429 or e-mail hbmorland@aol.com. He and the CCA would be grateful for the involvement and the safety expertise of BRV club members. Many thanks to Howard for forwarding information on this activity. (See the prior BRV newsletter and <http://www.canoecruisers.org/>).

Did You Know? A PFD Law--(The initial Pennsylvania PFD alert was provided by our roving reporter Jim Pruitt)

Pennsylvania has a cold weather life jacket requirement. PFDs are required on the State's waterways from **November 1 through April 30**.

Connecticut has a similar law for anyone in a manually propelled vessel from **October 1 through May 31**. Type I, II, III, V, or V-hybrid type jackets ARE REQUIRED.

Massachusetts requires canoeists and kayakers to wear PFDs between **September 15 and May 15 inclusive**.

New York requires that the owner and the paddler of smaller pleasure craft including canoes and kayaks make sure that a PFD is securely worn when the boat is in operation between **November 1 and May 1**.

Maine limits its PFD requirements to only those canoeing or kayaking the **Saco River** between Hiram Dam and the Atlantic Ocean between **January 1 and June 1st**.

Maryland and Virginia do not have cold weather life jacket laws.

Safety Training

Charlie Duffy will be spearheading the following safety training sessions that were more fully described in the last newsletter:

- *April 15-16--American Canoe Association Level 4 (class 3 water) Intermediate Kayaking class.*
- *April 29--SWR Level 4 Refresher/Practice Session.*
- *May 12-14, 20-21--American Canoe Association Swiftwater Rescue (SWR) Level 4 SWR Instructor Certification.*
- *July 15-16--ACA Level 4 SWR Skills Class.*

Charlie will be including the BRV in these activities. Some of these involve fees and prerequisites. All questions should be directed to Charlie Duffy: 703-938-3949 h; 703-407-0909 c; charlie_duffy@yahoo.com.

Instruction Training

Mike Aronoff will be offering the following sessions:

- *April 7-9--American Canoe Association Level 1-2 Touring Kayak Instructor Certification class.*
- *April 8-9--American Canoe Association Level 4 Whitewater Kayak Instructor Update Certification class.*
- *April 28-30--American Canoe Association Level 4 Whitewater Kayak Instructor Certification class.*
- *April 29-30--American Canoe Association Levels 1 Canoe Instructor Certification.*
- *May 15-19--American Canoe Association Levels 1-4 Whitewater Kayak Instructor Certification workshop.*
- *May 20-24--American Canoe Association Levels 1-4 Whitewater Canoe Instructor Certification workshop.*
- *June 16-18--American Canoe Association Level 1-2 Touring Kayak Instructor Certification class.*

Knotty Situation

The last edition featured the bowline knot. The following video was included.

Sensei Ryan: www.youtube.com/watch?v=EocwRnBZAtQ Scott Gravatt had the following comments “The bowline video is good. I never tried that method, but it works.”

Please feel free to forward comments regarding the video.

KNOW YOUR FELLOW MEMBER

John Snitzer:

(John sent this in from Chile—no excuses for everybody else unless you’re sick in the ICU!)

1--How long have you been paddling?

I started kayaking in 1979. At lunch on a New River raft trip, I watched the kayakers and realized that I was riding a rubber bus downriver. They were in sports cars. I wanted to drive my own sports car.

2--How did you get into paddling?

Simple: Took a class. Bought a boat. Found like-minded people.

3—How did you come to join the BRV? How long have you been in the BRV? Are you a member of other clubs?

I quit whitewater paddling in the 80s, started a new business, went back to grad school, etc. During a 2013 sea kayaking trip in Patagonia, I was talking with Chris Spelius (ExChile) about how much I missed whitewater now that I was back in Chile. He said to come on down, and that they would get me back into whitewater. I did that the following winter. Back home I joined every club in the area for access to the paddling community. My base is the Thursday Group of CCA. There is no finer group of people with whom to paddle.

4--What kinds of watercraft do you paddle? Which is your favorite and why?

I like my big point and paddle Remix 79, more comfy than my sofa, and it masks my inadequacies.

I also like my wooden sea kayak from CLC (Chesapeake Light Craft), called Night Heron (<http://www.clcboats.com/shop/boats/kayak-kits/performance-kayaks/stitch-and-glue-night-heron-sea-kayak-kit.html>). It is light, stiff, fast, and looks really, really cool on my car.

5--In how many states have you paddled (kayak; sea kayak; other)?

Lots. I have paddled in States along the eastern seaboard in either a whitewater boat or a sea kayak. The only exceptions are Delaware and Rhode Island. I have also paddled in destination river states out West and toured the Great Lakes region.

Have you ever paddled outside of the U.S. (kayak; sea kayak; other)?

I've paddled in a few countries, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Patagonia--mainly for whitewater. Touring, there is no finer way to meet local people in a foreign country than assembling a folding boat on the beach; the fishermen know the winds and currents as well.

Favorites:

- *West Virginia and Patagonia for whitewater*
- *Maine for sea kayaking*

Wish list:

- ✓ *Cuba, they have mountains and tropical storms don't they?*
- ✓ *Missouri River through the breaks in Montana a la Lewis & Clark.*
- ✓ *A season in Idaho.*
- ✓ *Another Grand Canyon trip.*
- ✓ *Lots more.*

.....My gear will be in the van March 1.

6--What is the hardest thing that you have paddled? Why was it so difficult?

Actually, my first trip down Little Falls, 1979! It was fast and powerful and scary as hell... I had eddy turns, ferries, and a roll, but had never used them in earnest. After that, I realized that rivers were readable, rapids could be deconstructed, and that I could figure it out and match my skill set to the problems at hand.

After that, the Grand Canyon, like Little Falls only bigger; then the Russell Fork, like Little Falls with more gradient and bigger boulders. And so on. Note that I took a swim on Little Falls this past Fall. It is still worthy of respect!

7—You live near the Dickerson race course. Have you had the chance to paddle on it? How does it compare to natural whitewater?

Not since it opened. In the 80s, several of us found that the wave at the outflow was good for playing. This encouraged us to go further upstream. Entry required a seal launch (followed by a roll). The run was essentially a series of connected troughs, i.e., a sluice. File it under "Stupid Things Done When Young".

8—Any other “Stupid Things Done When Young”?

Paddling on the James and negotiating around semi-submerged railroad cars while not knowing what other industrial debris lay underwater. The difficulty factor was further increased by the wind, which was so great that I was blown over and had to brace.

9--You have paddled during the WV Week of Rivers. Can you describe any particularly memorable runs?

All good. What's not to like? Best part of WOR is waking up every morning in the midst of my tribe in whitewater heaven, and the only question is “Where do we paddle today?”. Good food too.

10—You have paddled during the WV Week of Rivers on other trips with cold or inclement weather. Are there any particular type of gear you have found helpful during these types of situations?

Yes. The best piece of gear is the Boeing jetliner--to take me to somewhere comfy. Other than that, I do like my Hot Hands Pogies. Gear is so good now that I'm rarely uncomfortable.

11--What are the aspects of paddling that you most enjoy and why? You paddle both flat water and class 4 white water. Comment on the appealing aspects of each.

- *I love being in nature. Paddling gives me that every time.*
- *I like the feeling of being good at something physical in whitewater....reasonably good that is.*
- *It is satisfying to plan and execute a good trip in a sea kayak, and you're often among wildlife.*
- *I much more enjoy the community of fellow paddlers on the river than I do standing around at social gatherings.*

12—Sources say that you are a good cook. What are your specialties?

Being in Chile, I'm biased right now, but I have in my quiver:

- *a pastel de choclo (corn pie) recipe from a cook named Ismael down here whom I love.*
- *salsa pebre, a garlicky Chilean sauce that ruins you for the stuff in the jar.*
- *grilled salmon, which we just had Wednesday night on the beach as the river roared by. (Most of the salmon you buy in DC is from Chile anyway. Hmmm, that would be a good WV Week of Rivers supper!*

It doesn't get dark here until 10ish--so sitting on the beach, drinking wine (great wine!) and hanging out with paddlers from around the world while the stars come out is SWEET.

John Stapko:

1--How long have you been paddling?

I have been padding regularly since 1961 with a few years off for time in the Navy.

There was a short time from 1953 to about 1956 when we had a pond, and my brother and I built a raft with some inner tubes shipping crate wood, and we would paddle around our pond and fish. Then in 1956 they built the George Washington Parkway through pond.

My real whitewater paddling started in about 1974 or 75 and continued seriously until about 2008 when I was temporarily sidelined by an illness. I am now back in the saddle-the saddle of a canoe that is.

2--How did you get into paddling?

What really started me on the road to serious paddling was fishing! My River Buddies, John Marshall and Bill Sterrett, and I frequently would fish off the Little Falls Dam, but we thought that, IF we had a boat, THEN we would be able to catch more fish.

Well, it turned out there was a boat sitting in an old barn at an abandoned house... SO we sort of commandeered it. We took it to "The River" (Potomac) where we hid it in the woods and repainted it.

That was the summer of '61. We used it all that Summer. Funny thing though, John's dad was a DC real-estate agent, and one day someone who knew him saw us on the river. When we got home that evening, John's dad was there with two new life jackets. He said "I can't keep you off the river so always wear these".

Some of our boats were built in my dad's basement. We would paddle across the river and go to Glen Echo when it was still an amusement park.

3—How did you come to join the BRV? How long have you been in the BRV? What is the Sycamore Island Club and what type of role(s) have you played in it?

I am currently a member of CCA, BRV, MCC, and Sycamore Island Club. I joined the CCA in about 1976 and the BRV about 1984 or 1985.

Sycamore Island is a boat club on, of all places, Sycamore Island, an island in the Potomac River about half-way between Glen Echo National Park and the Little Falls dam. I have been a member there since 1988 and served as a deputy captain for a while.

4--What kinds of watercraft do you paddle? Which is your favorite and why?

I have paddled both OC-1 and OC-2. Most often it is OC-1. For about 10 years, I paddled OC-2 with another river buddy. When I started with the Wednesday Night Paddle group, I started paddling solo almost exclusively.

5--In how many states and countries have you paddled?

I have only paddled in the US--mostly in the Mid-Atlantic region. The exception was for bear hunting trips to Maine during which we did some trout fishing by canoe.

6--A paddling article suggested that you spent some time in Alaska. What did you do in Alaska?
I was working at Fairbanks Machine the Summer before the pipeline came into being.

I didn't have a boat in Alaska, but I did make it up to the Yukon River before the bridge for the pipeline was built and at least got to stick my feet in the water. If I'd had a boat I would have paddled across the river and hiked the 10 or 12 miles to the Arctic Circle.

I was fortunate to have gone on a Salmon fishing trip with my boss, Everett Eyth, who had a cabin cruiser in Valdez. We fished about three hours and then cruised up to the Columbia Glacier, netted pack ice for the cooler, saw the glacier calve, and saw some whales.

7--What is the hardest thing that you have paddled? Why was it so difficult?

I think the hardest paddling for me has been at Entrance Rapid on the Lower Yough. I don't know why I just have never found the best route. Railroad is tough also. I have always taken a sneak route through.

8—Can you tell us about the origins of “Rolling Barbie”? What kinds of gear does “Rolling Barbie” have? Does she have cold weather gear or is she a fair-weather paddler?

www.blueridgevoyageurs.org/brv_jan06.pdf

The idea of the Rolling Barbie was conceived at a BRV Christmas Party. When it came time for the door prizes, the tickets typically were placed in a plastic bag and shaken a little. I noticed that the tickets pulled from the bag were too often consecutive numbers. This problem continued for the next two years. Because I thought that the tickets weren't getting stirred enough, I concluded that a ticket tumbler was needed. Being a paddler, then the idea of a kayak tumbler emerged.

It took me about another two years to make it because I didn't want to saw the paddler, Barbie, in half and then attach her to the lid with a screw. My wife was the one who suggested that I cut a hole in the lid and wire her in. I remember the first time I brought her, and some young girls, I think they were Frank Fico's daughters, were having such a great time playing with her.

Her helmet is a Ping Pong ball cut in half and held in place by a rubber band. Her first life jacket was made from a mouse pad by my wife's co-worker. The later one was actually a Christmas tree ornament. (It appears that Barbie is in need of cold weather gear!)

9—What are the aspects of paddling that you most enjoy and why?

I paddle/have paddled for a number of reasons:

- *When I was younger and first started boating, it was mainly for adventure and fishing.*
- *I have always liked being physically active and noticed how much better I felt after a bit of paddling.*
- *I enjoy the “rush” I get from paddling. After I got out of the Navy, I took up motorcycling for the same reason. But as the traffic increased, it just got too dangerous to ride. I gave up riding and went back to paddling. I got the rush I needed from whitewater canoeing.*
- *Today it is just enjoyable to be on the water somewhere.*

GEAR UPDATE

The Use and Benefit of Sit-on-Top Kayaks—Gus Anderson

Many years ago I bought a Prijon Twister sit-on-top kayak. I don't remember why I did so, but it turned out to be a **great boat for young kids**. I took it to pool rolling when my daughter was three or four, and I was able to roll it while she sat between my knees and held onto my legs. Later when she was 10, she paddled it on her own down the Yampa and Green Rivers through Dinosaur National Park. Jamie Fico did the same in the same model boat.

The boat was also **helpful** to me when I was recovering from a serious illness and **could not get in and out of a regular kayak**.

Some of these boats can also **double as a stand-up paddleboard**.

These boats can be a good option for **kayak fishing or taking a dog or child or cooler along** for the trip. On the West Coast, they are popular for sea kayaking and scuba diving as well as whale watching. They have the advantage of not having to be bailed out if you flip and swim in deep water far from shore.

There are an incredible variety of designs out now. Some of these have pedal-powered propulsion. Many have very comfortable seats and seat backs. Some have water-tight compartments to store food and/or gear. Others have rod holders and bait buckets.

One disadvantage is weight, but this can be overcome with the use of a boat cart if your put-in has easy access or a boat ramp.

A good place to see various designs is at LL Bean in Tysons Corner. Also Jackson Kayaks has been developing very good fishing kayaks.

Rovalex Replacement? T-Formex?

We have an undercover reporter working on the saga for a possible replacement for Royalex, formerly made by PolyOne. More to follow.

GUIDEBOOK REVIEW

Bruce Ingram's "Shenandoah and Rappahannock River Guide" --Larry Lempert

Because the standard, very good guidebooks for Virginia paddling were published many years ago (Roger Corbett, 2000, Ed Grove, 1992), it could be exciting to consider Bruce Ingram's "*Shenandoah and Rappahannock River Guide*" (2nd ed.) issued in 2014....**If you love fishing, that is.**

Ingram, to his credit, in 167 pages, covers every mile of the South Fork and main stem of the Shenandoah and the Rappahannock, but he does it through the lens of a fishing enthusiast. By no means does he profess to be a whitewater paddler. Everything you need to know about his attitude toward whitewater can be summed up in the admonition (attributed to the operator of River Riders, Harpers Ferry) that only expert canoeists should undertake the "Shenandoah Staircase", and Ingram's personal advice that "White Horse" on the Potomac and "Sandy Beach" on the Rappahannock should be portaged.

But to each his or her own, and if fishing is your passion, then surely nowhere else will you find such detail on the best fishing spots, types of fish to be targeted, and even (at great length!) types of bait and lures to use in every section of these rivers. He gives access information for every section, although it can be difficult to correlate this information with the 12 pages of not-very-detailed maps consolidated at the end. There is no information about camping along the rivers.

Ingram makes appropriate mention of rapids in each section, almost all class 1 and 2, so novice paddlers using the book for fishing guidance or just for lazy floating will not be caught unawares.

Ingram does include quite a lot of interesting historical background. However, he has made the odd choice of sprinkling these historical observations across the whole book, mostly in chapter openings and seemingly at random (that is, not related to the section discussed in the chapter).

Several other Ingram guides in 2014 editions are available:

- James River Guide: Insiders' Paddling and Fishing Trips from Headwaters Down to Richmond
- New River Guide: Paddling and Fishing in North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia
- The South Branch and Upper Potomac Rivers Guide

And not surprisingly from the same author: Fly and Spin Fishing for River Smallmouths (2008).

Editor's Note: Bob Maxey has reviewed another guidebook from the same author on the New River. It will appear in the next edition.

BOATER'S DINING GUIDE

A run on the Yough, the Savage, or the North Branch might not take long, but on a Sunday afternoon, folks are usually in a mood to get some mileage down before stopping for dinner. Ron Ray has introduced homeward bound boaters to an Asian restaurant, the Banana Leaf Express, in LaVale, MD; 301-729-8577).

It offers a variety of Chinese, Japanese, and Thai dishes. Thai noodle dishes include pad Thai and coconut noodles. The curries are notable and include massaman curry, panang curry, and pineapple curried shrimp. On request, the curries can be tempered for their spiciness. Japanese entrees focus on teriyaki. The Chinese dishes run the gamut from chicken and vegetables stir-fried in a honey sesame sauce and chicken with chunk pineapple cooked in a cream sauce to seafood sautéed in spicy garlic and Mongolian beef. Lisa Fallon is a big fan of their version of Chinese crab rangoon appetizers

Although it lacks any exterior ambiance and has limited interior ambiance, it has some real pluses.

- ✓ The menu includes plenty of choices for meat-eaters and vegetarians.
- ✓ The portion sizes are huge.
- ✓ The prices even better. Most entrees are between \$9 and \$11.
- ✓ There is plenty of table space for larger groups-if tables are combined.
- ✓ There is adequate parking, with gas available near-by.
- ✓ Best of all, it is right on the main road that parallels I-68 (1235 National Hwy, aka US 40) - reducing the likelihood that group members will get lost.

HUMOR—Ed Evangelidi

I hope to be there when it comes time to surf “the wave of the future”.

Ambidextrous whitewater person: Ski it today (Winter); boat it tomorrow (Spring).

Motto of a good whitewater paddler: “In low braces we trust.”

I have a *mouth* and a *head*. I *run* on occasion and I have a nice *bed*. But a river has all these and a *bank* too. How rich!

What is the definition of “paddling”? That interval between the put-in and take-out... from Ed's “completely logical but useless definitions of terms”.

The Physics of Paddling: $E=MC^2 \rightarrow$ kinetic energy of a body = mass of a body x speed of light squared **Fun = Gradient x (Cubic Feet/Second)²**

How can you call your phone a “smart phone” when it was too dumb to complain about you not putting it in a good dry bag before you flipped?

You've canoed all your life. What are you doing now with that kayak and raft? “My financial planner said I had to diversify my holdings.”

I was paddling through a wilderness area when I spotted a class on shore. I paddled up to the group just in time to hear the instructor say to the class that they had removed all non-native invasive species until I came along.

I was getting quite tired at the end of a long day and had hoped to have gotten off the river by now. I saw an old timer up ahead fishing so I paddled up to him and asked him how far it was to the take-out? Not being a boater, he just scratched his head and said that there was a burger place 30 miles ahead, and it might have take-out.

This pompous American was boating on a class 3 river in Europe and complaining that it looked like a class 2 river back home. They scouted a class 4 rapid and he said that it looked like a class 3 rapid back home. He then ran the rapid and screwed up pretty badly. He said he couldn't believe he screwed up so badly on such an easy rapid. One of the European guides volunteered that maybe he got caught up in the exchange rate between U.S. and European rapids.

Do you *really* want to know why I like frozen river water? Because it's the only thing that will crack up when I tell a bad joke.

Enuf said!

MEMBER EQUIPMENT FOR SWAP OR SALE (or Early Spring Cleaning)

- CANOE: Caption tandem with wood gunwales. More sporty than the workhorse Dimension. Stored indoors. \$1000 (or call). Dean Geis.
- KAYAK: Red BlissStick RAD 185 playboat. In good condition. \$350. Gus Anderson
- KAYAK: Yellow WaveSport Lazer river runner. Stored indoors. \$375. Beth Koller
- PADDLE: White, fiberglass Sidewinder. ~200 cm. Minimal use. \$100. Beth Koller
- PADDLE: Lightning Gradient. Right fix. 197 cm. Used 10 days. \$80. Jim Pruitt.

PARTING SHOT AT THE TAKE-OUT

Stay tuned for:

- the May program at which our own Barb Brown will present a program on the *History of Whitewater Paddling in the Mid-Atlantic*,
- a report on *Paddling in Patagonia* by John Snitzer after he has recovered from the jet lag and the culture shock that occurs when returning from a multi-week vacation,
- the debut of the “Literate Boater” with a review of *Canoes--A Natural History in North America* by Ron Knipling,
- a feature article by Kim Buttleman and Jenny Thomas who ditched their primary hard boats to write about *Multi-Day Trips with Inflatable Kayaks (IKs)*, and
- another *guidebook review*; this time by Bob Maxey.

Consider:

- Providing **updated water release and festival schedule information**.
- Testing your boating and boating area trivia knowledge and receiving accolades from your fellow paddlers (well, maybe a small prize) by answering the **TRIVIA QUESTIONS**.
- Reviewing and commenting on articles/videos such as that in the **KNOTTY SITUATION** to make the club/newsletter more interactive.
- Listing your **gear for sale or swap**.

Future Editions:

- Send content for the newsletter to **brvnewsletter (at) earthlink.net** or **BRV Editor PO Box 9513 Silver Spring, MD 20916**. The interval between issues may be two to three months. To avoid stale-dated material, plan ahead. To facilitate layout and distribution of the newsletter, please submit materials at least 10 days prior to the publication date. The next publication date is expected to be **mid to late May**.
- If you have an idea for the newsletter, take a stab at it. Short is OK.
- If you have photos, please size them to 1024 by 768 in a high quality JPG formatted in the sRGB color spectrum.
- Photographs with enough contextual information for a “Name that Rapids” or “Name that River” segment are also being sought.

BRV MEMBERSHIP/ROSTER INFORMATION

The membership form is being revamped so that it will provide more information about members’ interests and skill levels-which may help when putting together trips. We would like to finalize the roster so it is important that members complete and proof-read his/her member roster questionnaire and **pay the annual dues: ONLY \$10!**

For now, until electronic payment is set-up, checks may be sent to Ginny DeSeau 1105 Highwood Road, Rockville, MD 20851. The questionnaire may be included along with the payment. If the membership questionnaire is sent electronically, it may be sent to Beth Koller

QUICK TRIP REPORT

Trip date(s): _____

Trip destination(s): _____

Trip participants: _____

Water levels/gauge readings: _____

Any access or safety issues: _____

Notable aspects on or off the river: _____

Photos available: _____

Can be submitted to newsletter editor electronically (brvnewsletter [at] earthlink.net) or via mail PO Box 9513 Silver Spring, MD 20916

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