

# THE VOYAGEUR



[www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org](http://www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org)

November 2011

## THE PRESIDENT'S PUT-IN

It's election time for the BRV; the incumbents on the board and activity coordinators have agreed to continue on for another year, myself included. However, a couple of our club activity coordinators wouldn't mind stepping down (and may have to anyway) so that others may try their hand. These 2 positions include the conservation chairperson (Kathleen Sengstock) and trip coordinator (Mike Martin). Mike especially would be willing to give up his post anticipating a very busy year personally for him. He and Kathleen have done a great job and we are indebted to their generous contribution of time and effort. Let me know if you have an interest in either slot on the "ballot". Also if anyone else in the club wants to try their hand on the board or overthrow the current president this is more than possible as well.

The Christmas/Holiday party is also on the upcoming schedule on Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>. Our esteemed VP Mark Wray will be organizing this again. *[See page 3 — Ed.]*

Our next meeting is on Nov 8<sup>th</sup> and will feature an exciting open canoe DVD. I think that the newsletter may come out after this meeting so I hope some of you enjoyed the film. And as usual pizza and beer at Anthony's afterwards.

Rick

## Savage River, 25 September 2011

by Len Rice

On September 25, Wes Bryden (K1), Phil Troutman (OC1) and I (K1) paddled the Savage River release at 1000 cfs. This was my first run of the Savage but it felt like the second since the night before I had watched Wes' helmet cam Youtube video of the entire run from a release earlier in the year!

Despite the crowds at the put in, there were no backups on the river itself. The first time down we scouted the dam near the first part of the run. I was a little anxious since, on our approach to the dam I noticed a kayak stern hovering above the horizon line in an approximately 10 second vertical pin. However, Wes and I successfully boofed the pourover about 5 yards right of the break in the dam on the left side. Several K1s ran the technical far right slot and a few braved the somewhat obstructed dam break. Phil portaged this drop.

Wes hit his roll early in the run, owning the rest of the river quite handily. I enjoyed the rollercoaster ride almost as much as that less-than-sane spring 2011 WV run of Grassy Creek with Keith Merkel and Lee Belknap. (As an aside, I am still grateful and somewhat amazed that Keith led us to that flooded gem, and even more appreciative that the strainers kept their tendrils off of us. I found it quite amusing that Lee with his ears duct-taped to protect his auditory apparatus, Keith with his glasses fogging up to the point that he had me lead (thanks a lot!) and me with my conservative philosophical views, resembled the Hear no Evil, See no

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*SAVAGE RIVER (Continued from page 1)*

Evil, and Speak no Evil Trio. But I digress.)

Phil was wishing for a bailer throughout the run but emerged from every drop with a smile on his face. There were enough eddies to allow for boat drainage, and we arrived at the takeout with enough time to consider a second run. Unfortunately, we were not able to squeeze onto the first two ASCI shuttle vans, but soon the third van had us back at the put-in, climbing the river side road to the tunes of the Doobie Brothers and Heart. Shortly after putting on I noticed that I had taken on some water in my usually dry boat. After the dam boof, Wes and I waited in the pool below to help out Phil as he attempted the drop. His line was right on, so I had time to contemplate the additional water that I was now sitting in. Despite Wes' advice that this was the last good place to take out if I was having serious boat problems, I decided to forge ahead.

I emptied my boat and tried to believe that my spray skirt was just not in place properly, but after having run the slalom course and a few of the bigger drops, I realized something was seriously wrong and discovered a 5 inch crack in the bottom of my boat. I knew this was coming based on the current condition of the plastic, but thank goodness it gave way on a roadside run and not the Gauley! We discussed Phil and Wes finishing the run but they graciously took off with me. We were calling it close making the last shuttle anyway, so this gave us time for a relaxed return to Northern Virginia.

## Upper James River Water Trail

by Ron Knipling (adapted from the Virginia Conservation Council newsletter)

Botetourt County has developed the Upper James River Water Trail to encourage residents and visitors to experience the beauty and history of the river. A key objective is to protect the natural beauty and character of the river in partnership with landowners, businesses, state agencies, and citizens to promote sustainable recreation. The water trail has six public access points along the 45 miles, 14 miles of which is designated a Virginia Scenic River. The 45 river miles begin at Iron Gate and end at Arcadia; they correspond to Corbett's Sections 1-4 on the river. These sections are Novice level (Class 1-2) with an average gradient of about 5' per mile. A reading of 2.3' at Buchanan is considered zero for the run. I have paddled about 10 miles of the trail and found it very enjoyable, perhaps similar in nature to Anglers to Lock 10 on the Potomac. There are several outfitters in the area that can provide shuttles. More information, including maps, is at [www.upperjameswatertrail.com](http://www.upperjameswatertrail.com).

### *More from Ron: 1842 Ode to Passage Creek (and a girl who lived there!)*

A new book (*Welcome to Fort Valley*, by Jeanette Conner Ritenour, James Harris Trott, and Margaret Akers Trott, Fort Valley Museum, Inc., 2010) includes an anonymous poem entitled "Passage Creek." The poem, written in the romantic style of the period (e.g., Whitman, Emerson, Poe), was published in *Godey's Lady's Book* in 1842. An excerpt follows:

Look down! Its darken'd waters,	dreams.	With a cheek as fresh as morning,
Beneath their veil of spray,		And a heart as fresh as spring.
Go rumbling on, and tumbling on,	. . . It ushers from the mountains,	
Like porpoises at play;	All bright – we'll change the	. . . Her mien, her grace, her win-
Thus dashing, through the unnum-	theme	ning face,
ber'd years,	From its waters to the daughters	Oft draw to Passage Creek
Along their rocky way.	Of this blessed mountain	Your bachelor poet, and impart
But from this crag their uproar	stream;	A summer's dew around his heart.
seems	. . . And there is one among them,	
Like murmurs that we hear in	A little winsome thing,	



## About the Blue Ridge Voyageurs (BRV)

The **BRV** is a voluntary association of experienced paddlers from the Washington, DC area. Club benefits include: trips for all skill levels (most at intermediate and advanced levels); BRV website and hotline for information and pick-up trips; *The Voyageur*, published 6 times a year; club roster, published yearly in March; holiday party; conservation projects; moonlight paddles & picnics; big trips to the Smokies, Canada, Europe, and Western rivers.

**Meetings:** BRV will hold meetings from 7-9 pm on the following dates in 2011: January 26, March 22, May 10, August 13 (Moonlight Picnic), September 13, November 8, December 3 (Holiday Party). Meetings are followed by beer and pizza at a nearby pub. Location: Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library on Leesburg Pike (Rt. 7) in Falls Church, VA. The library is on the east side of Rt. 7 about 0.6 miles south of I-495. Or, from I-66, take the Rt. 7 West exit and go about 0.6 miles west on Rt. 7. It's on the right.

**BRV Website:** The BRV website (<http://www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org>) provides information on trips, meetings, and other club events.

**2011 BRV Officers:** Rick Koller, President; Mark Wray, VP; Mike Martin & Daryl Hall, Trip Coordinators; Clark Childers, Treasurer; Frank Fico, Newsletter Editor; Kathleen Sengstock, Conservation.

**2011 Board of Directors:** Gus Anderson, Bill Collier, Ed Grove, Ron Knipling, Rick Koller, Wes Mills

### ***The Voyageur: Newsletter of the Blue Ridge Voyageurs***

*The Voyageur* publishes information on club events, conservation and safety news, the club trip schedule, and other news of interest to BRVers. Publishing **trip reports** is a particularly important newsletter function. Trip Coordinators are requested to write up all club trips - particularly trips to unusual or especially interesting rivers. Trip reports and other articles are accepted in any form: via electronic mail (preferred; send to [fico1@netzero.net](mailto:fico1@netzero.net)), on disk, typed, handwritten, faxed or over the phone. For trip reports, try to include the following information (if applicable): names of participants, relevant NWS gauge readings of nearby rivers, description of the water level on the river (e.g., minimum, moderate, maximum, or number of inches above or below "zero"), weather conditions, hazards, difficult rapids, info on put-ins or takeouts, distinctive scenery, and overall difficulty in relation to rivers well known to BRVers. New information about the river (e.g., new hazards) is particularly important. **Photos** are also published. Send prints to the webmaster or e-mail digital photos to the newsletter editor.

Address changes: contact Frank Fico, 1609 Autumnwood Dr., Reston, VA 20194-1523, (703) 318-7998, [fico1@netzero.net](mailto:fico1@netzero.net). The annual roster will be kept current via updates published in each issue of *The Voyageur*.

Membership applications/renewals: submit to Frank Fico. Must renew by February 15 each year to be listed on club roster and continue receiving *The Voyageur*.



### ***The Voyageur***

c/o Frank Fico  
1609 Autumnwood Drive  
Reston, VA 20194-1523

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**Deadline for January *Voyageur*:**  
Friday, January 6th

**NEXT MEETING**  
**Tuesday, November 8th**

**RENEW NOW for 2012:** If your mailing label says 2011, use the membership form included on page 3.