

# THE VOYAGEUR



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

January 2006

## THE *Editor's* PUT-IN

I didn't receive Ernie's column before the deadline. It's at least partially my fault since I forgot to send him his reminder. But I decided he deserves a break anyway — serving a second two year term goes well beyond the normal call of duty, and he shouldn't also be forced to come up with another 12 original columns.

It was good to see so many folks at the holiday party. A big "thank you" on behalf of the entire club to Beth Koller for putting so much time and effort into organizing it, and to all her volunteers to help pull it off. See Beth's "trip report" on the party on page 4.

Don't forget to renew your membership for 2006 if you haven't already. Check the mailing label and use the form on page 11 if the label still says 2005. Otherwise, this will be your last newsletter.

Finally, kudos to one of our long-time members: OC-1 paddler Doug White was recognized as a "Principal of Excellence" by the *Washington Post* as part of their 2005 Annual Distinguished Educational Leadership Awards. Doug is a principal at C.M. Bradley Elementary School in Fauquier County, VA. Way to go, Doug!

Frank

## Tohickon Creek (PA) Dam Release, 5-6 November 2005

by Courtney Caldwell, photos by Beth Koller

K-1: Tony Allred, David Cooke, Terry Irani, Beth Koller, Jim Pruitt; OC-1: David Bussey, Alan Dickerson, Ed Evangelidi, Angie Sigmond, Hendrik van Oss; OC-2: Courtney Caldwell & Chris Esswein, Rich & Betty Conde, Robin & Alex Willard; Shuttle Bunny: Dianne Irani. On Sunday Courtney switched to C-1 and Chris to K-1.

Chris and I met up with Ed and Jim at the Tohickon Valley Park campground on

Friday evening. After pitching tents we repaired to Nicola's Pizza, 8 N. Franklin St., Lambertville, NJ.



*Jim Pruitt followed closely by Courtney Caldwell in one of the lower ledges.*

There we enjoyed tasty pasta and BYOB. I discovered a good way to transport the remains of Thursday's left over wine: pour into a Nalgene bottle and overspray with "Private Preserve Wine Preserver." This had the added benefit of being virtually undetectable by the Beer Nazis at Tohickon Valley Park

*(Continued on page 2)*

*Tohickon (Continued from page 1)*

campground.

This year we were treated with fresh coffee each morning compliments of Messrs. Evangeledi and Pruitt, who schlepped down to the Point Pleasant Deli and returned with the coffee and hot chocolate we had ordered the evening before. Bravo! That gave us the jump start to make it down to the Deli for breakfast where I recommend the salmon, cream cheese, onion and tomato on either a croissant or bagel.

Notably absent from the campground were the previously mentioned Beer Nazis. This is in contrast to past years where the rangers have snuck around in pairs trying to catch and evict anyone with alcohol. We saw just one ranger and one maintenance man, both of whom were polite and friendly. They only charged us for one night.

The weather was simply spectacular for early November. The temps rose into the low 70's both days. On river we were treated to a profusion of brightly colored plastic and some pretty autumn foliage.



*Angie Sigmund runs First Ledge.*



*Courtney Caldwell and Chris Esswein on Saturday.*



*Jim Pruitt enjoys one of the many surfing spots.*

crowds. We are usually entertained by the costumes and antics of some of the paddlers. This year was notable for some unwise if not clueless boaters. One fellow on a sit-on-top managed to regularly flip. Miraculously he kept his helmet on during his swim at "No Name", the first of the three ledges. Having not fastened his chin strap he lost the helmet at the next ledge, known as "First Ledge". We were also amazed to see two paddlers in an aluminum canoe with no flotation. They were way over their heads and inevitably flipped and bent the canoe. All the coaxing we could muster could not deter them from clinging to their sunken craft while floating over dangerous drops. Fortunately they were coaxed off the river by a ranger.

Saturday evening we returned in force to Nicola's where they did their best to accommodate our large group. Man did we chow down – probably ate at least 10 baskets of garlic bread. After announcing our presence and placing our orders, some of us repaired to Walker's Liquor Store, across the street for libations. We ended up with a trio of Merlot based wines that offered an interesting taste test.

This release does attract large

offered an interesting taste test.

The flight consisted of two Bordeaux's of the highly acclaimed 2000 vintage, and a Chilean Merlot. A nice looking Zin waited in the wings, but we never got that far. Walker's never ceases to amaze me. The Chateau Greysac I found is readily available in the DC area but virtually impossible to find in the 2000 vintage. Thank you, Terry and Toni for your contributions. David, you can bring that Zin back next year.

I learned something valuable on this trip. It is very helpful to have the sweep be someone who is very familiar with the river and Toni fit the bill. His knowledge of the lines kept the group moving as he could coach the hesitant of us down the drops. Naturally an equally knowledgeable probe is indispensable. In this case "Low in the water" Ed fit the bill. Thanks to both for making my job easier.

## Pine Barrens 2005

by Ed Evangelidi

'Twas the night before Veterans Day and all through the Pine Barrens the creatures were bracing for the annual Pine Barrens on-slaught. People from 4 local canoe clubs were present and two more club representatives were among the no shows. First to arrive at camp in the Byrne S. F. was the most senior veteran, Bob Mumford (OC-1) with countless Pine Barrens visits to his credit. Then me and my OC. Martha Slover then pulled in with the first K-1. Kim Buttleman and Jennie Thomas (OC-2), Hans Haucke (K-1), Terry & Dianne Irani (OC-2) and Terry's brother (OC) and Tony Allred (K-1) rounded up this group. Morning meetings were held at the Red Lion Diner but the only "discussion" was Bob's dislike of the first days' choice and Tony's strong choice for the second day paddle.

Friday saw the group drive to the South River of the Great Harbor River. Bob didn't like this choice because it was tidal and it was low tide (my mistake in not checking) and Kim noticed what looked like very shallow riffles downstream that looked ominous but fortunately were river grasses and not shallows. I just mumbled about the cold stiff wind and we set off to shuttle up Stephens Creek for a T.O. Or we tried to drive off be-

cause the only person who knew where the T.O. location (me) was stuck with a front tire hopelessly stuck in a growing sand sinkhole. I think it was Kim who suggested that everyone stand on my rear bumper to get traction while I successfully backed out. The South River and Stephens Creek are not technically in the Pine Barrens as they are tidal but they are rather nice since the only development is a short piece where big houses are visible across the Great Egg Harbor for a short distance between going down one creek and up the other. Much of the shoreline is a beautiful park (Estelle Manor) and a wildlife management area. We did have to eat in our boats as there was no dry land available at lunch time (ask Hans).

Saturday was a long day on the Mullica River - the Mullica being a good example of the "typical" Pine Barrens creek. Lots of twisty turns in a narrow confined area. Good current and sawed out blow-downs add to your paddling enjoyment. The only constraints were a strainer in a nice drop that forced the group to dry boof off a beaver dam instead of enjoying the drop and the need to eat dinner before finishing shuttle (the sacrifices we have to make while boating). The nice weather brought out other

groups but we were all quite spread out. The (arguably) best part of the day was when we all pulled into a gas station and they substantially lowered their price to below \$2 a gallon. I of course chimed in that I bargained for this group discount.

Sunday I had planned to do a medium length paddle on the Maurice River and a piece of the pretty Muddy Run. But I suddenly decided to do a longer piece of the Maurice instead. This became a long day as it took longer than anticipated; plus we spent maybe an hour at the put in going down a Gawd-awful narrow channel rather than portaging around to the main channel.

Monday was a work day for those poor souls who partake of work and saw Terri's brother and I return to Estelle Manor park. Our interests were to stay on land, so his brother was on a bike (B-1) and I was on foot (F-2). Estelle Manor is a beautiful large county park with lots of trails and is perhaps the premier biking area in all of N.J. Well worth a visit. I also scouted the nearby Tuckahoe WMA and highly recommend driving, hiking or biking it. It reminded me of the Virginia side of Assateague Island. I figure next year there will be a few more "veterans" coming back to celebrate.



## BRV Holiday Party Report by Beth Koller

The BRV Holiday Party was December 10, 2005 at Dominion Hills Community Center in Arlington. Ed Grove did a superb job of collecting monies and passing out door prize tickets. We had a great gathering, with the headcount exceeding 80. Members from years past, such as Andrea Blaschka showed up for the fun. The set-up was a little delayed because of a major traffic jam on the Beltway, but help arrived and just dug in to get things going: Susan Claus, Ginny DeSeau, Phil Di-Modica, Star Mitchell, Kathleen Sengstock, and the John Stapko family were among those who helped with set-up of the tables and chairs; Kathy Mosby brought the table cloths; Courtney Caldwell, Ed Grove, and Beth Koller brought paddling photos for display on the tables; the Fico girls made snowflakes to adorn the windows; all the chil-

children helped to decorate the tree with candy canes; Phil DiModica, Ernie Katz, Court Ogilvie, and Mike Wevrick brought the DVD/video/slide show equipment, and Mike master-minded the hook-ups; Temmy Kimes brought videos from the Bob Opachko archives, while Bob Maxey brought a carousel of some of his fabulous slides; and Court Ogilvie featured BRV paddlers in his DVD presentation.

We had a vast array of food and even met the requests for vegetarian selections made at last year's fest: the main entrees (turkey, ham, beef, salmon, and venison goulash) were prepared by Courtney Caldwell, Ginny DeSeau, Larry Gladieux, Phoebe Hamill, and Court Ogilvie; cider and the fixings for mulled wine were provided by Kathy Mosby; the beer, soda, and ice runs were made by Beth Koller and Rick Koller. The food must have been good because there was very little call for the zip-lock bags

doorway since he could not fit down the chimney while wearing his red lifejacket — plus the matter of the fire in the fireplace. He managed to sport a long white beard despite his recent chemotherapy with his hair just starting to grow back. More adults than children posed for pictures on his lap!

For their service, officers and board members of the club received a brushed metal travel mug embellished with a custom whitewater photograph and our president (for life), Ernie Katz, will be sporting a new tie with waterfalls.

Gag gifts were added to the usual door prize drawings. Donations of some excellent candidate gifts: state-of-the-art (circa 1985) Norse canoe paddle (Phil Di-Modica), kayak paddle *sans* 1 blade and suitably gift wrapped (Terry Irani), Lou's now pink (formerly red) and threadbare paddling shorts framed

for the ages (Rick Koller), one photograph (good for extortion) showing a BRV paddler standing waist-deep in the water next to his boat (Beth Koller), whitewater boater humor book (Ed Evangelidi), and a spare brand new bootie for the 3-legged paddler (Temmy Kimes).

After a slow start during the organizing phase, we ended up with a plethora of door prizes: the two authors in our club, Ed Grove



*Santa congratulates Wes Mills, who is modeling his door prize.*

provided by Kathy Mosby for leftovers. Ed Evangelidi, Temmy Kimes, and Beth Koller made sure we will get off to a good start in 2006 by providing boater fortune cookies.

We had some special guests: Rolling Barbie was joined by Canoe Ken (in a boat fashioned by John Stapko, the inventor of Rolling Barbie, too). Santa Claus (aka Gus Anderson) arrived via the

and Ed Gertler, donated guidebooks; Spring River (5606 Randolph Rd Rockville, MD 20852-2604, 301-881-5694, E-mail: [pete@springriver.com](mailto:pete@springriver.com)) donated three \$15 gift certificates; Spring River also provided discounts on other gear including a dry bag, a bilge sponge, Ocoee guidebooks, paddle wax, paddling gear cleanser, and paddling gloves as well as providing paddling posters for decoration (remember to support Spring River as they ALWAYS support us whenever we ask!); the Underwear Guys (47 N Mill St, St. Clair, PA 17970, 570-573-0209, E-mail: [fiddleheadpa@hotmail.com](mailto:fiddleheadpa@hotmail.com)) donated silk and polypro underwear; Jan Beane of Gotcha Covered ([jbeane50@msn.com](mailto:jbeane50@msn.com)) sewed a red pile changing robe, which the winner (Trish Bunn), modeled (right); Jan Beane also donated several pile caps of varying designs; the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy donated five 6-month memberships, two hats, and a T-shirt, and also helped to provide a beautiful wreath and West Virginia hiking maps on CD; the Anacostia Watershed Society, the Cacapon Institute, Potomac River Keeper and the Friends of the Blackwater donated year-long memberships; the West Virginia Rivers Coalition donated a membership and a T-shirt; American Rivers donated a membership and a small cooler; and the River Network and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation each provided a hat and a membership. The winners of these many gifts included: Gus Anderson, Ashley Anderson, Trish Bunn, Al Cassel, Clark Childers, Ellie Childers, Steve Ettinger, Ed Evangelidi, Bridget Fico, Frank

Fico, Kerry Fico, Phoebe Hamill, Marilyn Jones, Ernie Katz, Ron Knipling, Rick Koller, Keith Merkel, John Meiller, Wes Mills, Star Mitchell, Ron Molinas, Miriam



Radakovich, Kathleen Sengstock, John Stapko, Joe Sullivan, Sue Sullivan, Jennie Thomas, and Scott Zetterstrom.

In a curious turn of events, Beth Koller and Ed Evangelidi received the gag gifts they donated (so these prizes were re-donated) and Kathleen Sengstock, one of the top callers for the West Virginia Rivers Coalition, received a West Virginia Rivers Coalition membership. (She would be willing to swap memberships with another

recipient.)

We had some stylistic helpers assisting with the Rolling Barbie and the game shows (above): Vanna White (aka Ashley Anderson) came attired in the latest in neoprene; Becca (Ashley's friend) and Kerry Fico sashayed around in the latest in river formal-wear: red and green lace spray skirts (created by Ginny DeSeau and Beth Koller); Jamie Fico was seasonal in a red and green lifejacket; and Ryan Mills sported a red and black spray skirt. Kerry Fico received an American Rivers river otter for being the youngest attendee.

Beth Koller, Star Mitchell, Carrie Singer, Dave Singer, and Joe Sullivan provided baby pictures for the "Guess the Paddler" contest. There were three winners: Bridget Fico, Star Mitchell, and Vivian Prunier.

Larry Gladieux and Ginny DeSeau emceed the "David Letterman" Top 10 Excuses for Swimming. There were lots of entries, and some creative ones too. Like "My tandem partner stinks," "I thought Rivers End meant it was time to get out," and "Thought I had a chance of catching trout for

(Continued on page 8)

## West Branch of the Farmington, New Boston, Massachusetts by Scott Gravatt

It's been a while since you've heard from this exiled BRVer, so I thought it was time to get back in touch. Since moving to Connecticut, Denise and I have continued to chase rivers on a very regular basis, although it has been a challenge because everything is still new to us. New rivers, new gauge correlations, new people to boat with. We're finally getting to the point where we feel a little comfortable. We now know quite a few boaters, we have experienced many of the most popular runs, and I am starting to get a feel for the gauge readings.

The folks we hang out with the most are not as comfortable on Class III+/IV water as Denise and I are, but we've started pushing them a little to try more difficult runs. This past October we headed up to a river in Massachusetts that is a well known and popular dam release. It is called the "New Boston" run, and it happens the same time at the same level every year, the fall colors are usually at peak, and hoards of boaters mark it on their calendars. The run attracts all levels of boaters because there are different sections, and with a road next to the river, boaters can skip the more difficult section.

This year was a little different. Like most of the eastern U.S., we had mega-rains throughout October, and to my delight, the river was considerably higher than normal. Everyone arriving in their cars could see the river from the road, and it was roaring! Our friends were nervous, but Denise and I told them everything would be OK. It turns out we lied! It's

been a long time since I have been in the middle of so much carnage!

At the putin a group of seven experienced boaters got together, all psyched up for an exciting run. (Two kayaks and 5 OC-1s.) One of the seven was an excellent boater named Dwayne, who I will describe as an Irish-Canadian open boat instructor. He had been in New England for the past few weeks teaching clinics. On this day he THOUGHT he was taking a day off and paddling for pleasure instead of his usual babysitting a group of lesser boaters. Sorry, Dwayne. We also picked up a woman (OC-1), who asked to join us for the easy first couple of miles.

At this level, even the "easy" section was pretty bouncy. We had not gone a 1/4 mile before the glommer was swimming! Since this was the mild section, she had no problem getting to shore and the boat rescue was fairly easy. Much of this section was totally washed out, and we basically floated down to a section used for a race course. Our glommer took off above the course.

The remaining seven of us worked our way down the race course, avoiding the gates and staying out of the way of the racers who were warming up, but still getting a nice ride through the whitewater. Shortly after the race course is the gorge, where the real action starts. Before the gorge there is an open area where racers take off, as well as boaters who don't want to run the gorge. We stopped to take a break and discuss the tough whitewater that lay

ahead. All seven of us decided to run the gorge.

This section of the river was crankin'! It kept your FULL attention every second! The waves and holes were Class II+ to Class III+, with and occasional IV- drop. What pumped up the difficulty was that all of this action was bank to bank, continuous and ripping down the gorge at a high rate of speed! The roar of the water made communication very difficult, so it was a good thing Dwayne made us rehearse hand signals before pushing off. Not that we had time to notice, but there were quite a few boaters up on the road watching us, having decided the gorge was too much for them.

The plan was for Dwayne and I to lead the group down, and at the bottom of the harder sections we would wait in rescue mode. Very early, Denise flipped but rolled right back up. This was foreshadowing for her. She flipped about 6 times in the course of the day, but she rolled up every time and had a great day!

The real carnage started in the first half mile, before we even got to Decoration Rock, which is the first really big drop. In the section starting just before Decoration Rock, we had one person walk off (Cath), and three swimmers (Ken, Carin and Richie). All three swimmers were separated from their boats and swam for the shore. They got out ok, but the boats were swept away. Dwayne, Denise and I chased the boats (2 open, one kayak) for a loooong ways. We could catch up to them, but the water was so fast and wild,



there was no way to get them to shore, not to mention the eddies were few and far between. We finally called off the chase(s) and regrouped.

The boat-less boaters eventually walked down the road and we told them the bad news: their boats were likely on their way to the reservoir about 10 miles downstream. They started walking down the road in the hopes of finding their boats, while Dwayne, Denise and I got back into ours.

Back out on the river with no boats or swimmers to chase, we had a great time!

This was the kind of whitewater I dream about. Nonstop action! Very challenging and tough enough to be a little scary, but not so bad that it makes you mess your pants. The entire gorge was a fabulously exciting and fun ride! I felt so sorry for the paddlers looking for their boats, up on the road walking past all that

CONTINUOUS whitewater! I think it was the best run I have been on in New England!

After about a mile or more, we came up on Carin's missing kayak, pinned on a rock. It was an easy rescue, and just downstream Richie was able to snag his open boat from an eddy. Richie and Carin jumped right back into their boats and rejoined the trip. Richie made it for a ways, but Corkscrew rapid did him in. It was a long tough swim for Richie. I rescued his boat down near the bridge in New Bos-

ton. The bridge marks the end of the difficult rapids (except "Bear Trap" at the very end). Richie got back into his boat, but he was pretty worn out. We stopped at an intermediate takeout at a Legion Hall, and that's where Richie decided to call it a day.

We took a break at the Legion Hall, and Ken, our other swimmer/boat-hunter, came by with bad news. He had found his boat (a Millbrook fiberglass canoe, nice boat), but it had been pinned on a rock and destroyed. Needless to say, Ken was extremely bummed



*The author on a subsequent trip to Warner River, NH, 29 October 2005.*

out. Looking back, he knew he never should have taken his glass boat out on that river, but regardless, losing a boat is a sad event.

If that wasn't enough, Cath, who had been watching boaters in the gorge, pulled up in her car and announced that Dwayne's very good friend Eileen was missing! Her group had found her boat, but not her! Dwayne immediately took off to join the search. (Eileen turned up, OK.)

That left just Carin, Denise and I. We still had over a mile to go to get to our cars, but the rapids were down to Class II waves. The three of us put back on, expecting no more troubles. However, just around the first bend we came up on some novice kayakers needing help with a boat rescue. We gave them a hand, and they were grateful. I haven't had my throw bag out this much in a long time!

There is one last rapid on this run, Bear Trap, which is the only reason to continue past the Legion Hall. Bear Trap is normally Class

III, but with the high water, it gets a III+ rating from me. I blasted through the meat of it with one last "rebel yell", (although that may not be the politically correct thing to do in Massachusetts). Denise came next and her boat got tossed like Gilligan's *Minnow* (may he rest in peace), and she hit one last roll to finish off her day.

We got to the takeout and we were totally pumped up! What a day! I had made the entire day

with no flips, although I was hanging by a thread several times! Denise and I had bragging rights, noting that of the eight boaters who started the trip, she and I were the only ones to make it all the way from the beginning to the end! I must admit that I'm not being fair to Dwayne, considering he could have done the whole run in a dug-out! Except for the loss of Ken's canoe, we all felt it was a great day on an exciting river!

## Yardwork Leads to Boating and Dinner by Beth Koller

Although the temperature was brisk, more than 26 people showed up the Saturday between Veterans' Day and Thanksgiving to help Gus Anderson complete some of the yard work that was not done be-



cause of his chemotherapy. Lee Prouty helped assemble tools and initiated the raking of the back yard. Kim Buttleman (*left*) continued the raking of the back yard, assisted by a neighbor with a leaf blower. Pete Dragon raked most of the front yard and hauled leaves to the compost heap in the back. The mother-daughter team of Jill and Katie Sayre did the same for the side

yard. Ed Grove manned the chain-saw to cut logs from some tree limbs in the back yard. Phil Sayre trimmed trees in the side and front yards. Frank Fico followed up as the hatchet man, splitting the logs, which Bridget then stacked. Ernie Katz patrolled the grounds for sticks and twigs that were fed into a bonfire. Kathleen Sengstock and Dave Cottingham

(*right*) led a team that picked more than 300 persimmons. The Fico girls and Ashley Anderson enjoyed tossing leaves downward as they cleaned out the gutters. Phoebe Hamill cleaned the front porch. Ashley Anderson and Beth Koller scrubbed deck chairs. Larry Gladieux and Star Mitchell performed miscellaneous



chores. Debby Crouse (Gus's wife) prepared hot drinks. Gus fired up the grill and served London Broil for lunch.

Gus Anderson, Dave Cottingham and Beth Koller then met Barb Brown for a run at Violet's Lock while the Fico family and Kathleen Sengstock hiked. These activities were followed by hot-tub soaks for sore muscles and dinner for piqued appetites. Barb Brown fed 12 of us with wine, chili, fancy bread, ice cream, and fine chocolates.

(PARTY Continued from page 5)

dinner." Winners by audience applause meter were Court Ogilvie, Wes Mills, and Steve Ettinger. Each winner received a pile hat made by Jan Beane of Gotcha Covered.

Joe Sullivan, bedecked in a sports jacket, served as game show host for "BRV Family Feud" (*right*). The open-boat contestants were Frank Fico, Phil DiModica, and Vivian Prunier. The decked-boat contestants were Gus Anderson, Rusty Dowling, and Gary Rappl. The categories were Who, What, and Things You Never Learned in School. Trivia questions for the "Feud" were provided by Tony Allred, Phil DiModica, Ed



Grove, Beth Koller, and Joe Sullivan. Contestants signaled their readiness to answer questions, not by buzzer, but by rescue whistle. The open-boaters took an early lead, but the final score was 160 to 130 in favor of the decked boaters. All contestants received their whistle (courtesy of Spring River). The winners re-



## Hiking in Central Virginia

by Bob Maxey

Keith Merkel and I had planned to hike in the St. Mary's Wilderness, southeast of Staunton, on Christmas Eve. We were unable to access our trail since the Blue Ridge Parkway was closed due to ice and snow. So, we resorted to two old standbys along the Tye River. Spy Rock is accessed via the state fish hatchery along Rt. 56. From the hatchery it is only 2 miles via a side trail and the Appalachian Trail to Spy Rock.

Our hike was a slow one due to the snow and ice on the trail. The ice presented a climbing hazard when we got to Spy Rock, as it covered this rock outcrop. So, being our usual selves, we climbed up the snow and ice to gain the summit. The view from Spy Rock is magnificent: we were able to view the snow-covered landscape for 20 miles to the north, seeing all the way to southern Shenandoah National Park, and for 10 miles to the south, seeing Mt. Pleasant. Our panorama was an unobstructed 360-degree view of both the Piedmont and the Valley of Virginia.

After leaving Spy Rock, we took a short hike to Crabtree Falls, a well-known cascade of six waterfalls, also along Rt. 56. It is well-known since 23 people have died from falls over the years. It was even more hazardous, yet very beautiful, this time since the falls were ice-encrusted. Our hike was made easier by the boardwalks and handrails along the trail.

For those of you who have not ventured into central Virginia to hike, there are other wonderful hikes including Apple Orchard Mountain, an easy walk of less than a mile, also offering a 360-degree panorama, and Apple Orchard Falls, a hike just to the south of the Mountain, also less than a mile, and to a beautiful waterfall. The hikes to Tinker Cliffs, MacAfee Knob and Dragon's Tooth are all three to ten miles in round-trip distances, and all to wonderful panoramas. So, if you are interested in great hiking for a couple of days, head south into central Virginia.

### 2006 BRV Trip Schedule

I'm making my annual plea/threat for our trip schedule. If you have led a trip in the past or would like to lead a trip, please contact me so that I can get you on the schedule for 2006. We had a great schedule in 2005 -- thanks to the many people who volunteered to lead a trip. Please let me know soon for inclusion in the March *Voyageur*. So, if you don't contact me, I'll contact you about leading a trip! — Bob Maxey

ceived carabiners with special gates to accommodate a paddle shaft in rescue situations. They are also eligible for a message on their home answering machine prepared by Karl Ernie Katz (sample version available for audio review). The runners-up received two tickets to the West Virginia Rivers Coalition raffle.

Lou Campagna and Rick Koller prepared the format and a lot of questions for Boater Jeopardy, which will be played at another party or club meeting (there is only so much time for fun at one party).

A special thanks should go out to the folks who stayed late and helped with the clean-up. This included, but was not limited to: Kim Buttleman, Jennie Thomas, Ginny DeSeau, Rick Koller, Phil DiModica, Ron Knipling, Wes Mills, and Kathleen Sengstock.

Items left at the party:

- 1 Large crystal plate

- 1 Yellow plastic plate

- 2 Wooden plates

SERVING

- 1 Camp spoon

- 1 Camp fork

- 1 Silver spoon with leaves

- 1 Large white plastic spoon

- 1 Black handled can opener

- 1 Black handled long spatula

- 1 Cheese server

MISC

- 1 Blue cloth bag from Pike Market in Seattle

- 1 Dark yellow plastic water bottle with black cap.

Please contact Beth Koller (240-506-0417H or 410-786-4633W) if you own these items. I will bring them to the meeting. Otherwise they will be donated to the BRV party material inventory. There was also an earring found during clean-up — contact Ginny DeSeau if it's yours.

## Canaan Valley Circuit Backpack

### by Ed Evangelidi

This circuit covers lands owned by the state of West Virginia (Canaan Valley State Park, Blackwater Falls State Park), federal government: (Monongahela National Forest, Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge), and private property with public access (Canaan Valley Institute, Allegheny Power). The estimated distance is 45 miles of trail plus extra mileage to and from camping points. Those wishing to complete the circuit should pay special attention to camping restrictions that require coverage of certain long distances between camping points. Also note that many trails are not marked and attention should constantly be given to finding the next route segment.

Arbitrarily starting at the northern point of the circuit and heading clockwise: from the supermarket in Davis along the Blackwater River, take the road on the north side (becomes Camp 70 Road or SR 32/18) and cross Beaver Creek on an old wooden bridge, leaving town. In a little under a mile, cross into Canaan Valley Institute land (free map available). Interesting rock formation to the right, overlooking the Blackwater River and lime treatment facility. For (free) camping, continue on Camp 70 road to designated campsites on the right. Note that this is the last camping opportunity for over 15 miles! For hiking, shortly turn left at a pipeline utility crossing and continue a short distance to a four-way intersection. Turn right and continue along an old road for over 1.5 miles, crossing a power line road, five-way intersection with parking

down the hill on right, another minor intersection and finally turn left onto a major trail. [For those camping at CVI lands, you can access the trail easily from near campsites number 2, 4 and 6 by finding trails across the road (north side of road) from your campsite. Remember to quickly turn parallel to Camp 70 road unless entering near camp site 6.] This trail heads towards Rt. 93 and exits the property beyond a gate. Turn right on 93 and continue for about 5 miles until A-Frame Road on the right (new park sign just before turn). Smaller roads before A-Frame are all private and there is currently a large mining operation on the left side of 93 just beyond the turn. Note that A-Frame is wider than the other roads passed on the right and is posted along both sides but the road is public.

It is 10 miles along A-Frame Road before the next change in direction. Approximately half the route is on privately bordered land and half in the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge (also no camping). (Free) maps available of the refuge area. Note that certain lands now owned by a mining company and well posted are within the acquisition area of the wildlife area and may eventually result in the substantial shortening of this segment and avoiding all of Rt. 93.

At parking area at the end of the road continue straight ahead on trail #8 (Cabin Mountain Trail). Pass by (smaller) trails going up Cabin mountain to the left and down to Glade Run on the right. In about 1.4 miles from the parking area you will come to trail 10 go-

ing right (marked for hiking only) and trail 11, Blackbird Knob Trail, going steeply uphill to the left. Go left to the top of the mountain, leaving Canaan Valley and entering the private lands just north of Dolly Sods (maps of the Sods available from the Forest Service). Camping is (finally) allowed here. [The next section is particularly tricky if you are hiking this long loop in a counter clockwise direction.]

Your task here is to stay along the rim of Canaan Valley to your right, enjoying occasional spectacular views. There are many route choices here but you should aim roughly due south, following the ridge. Most start on the old Dobbin RR grade heading south and then turn left near Dobbin Slashings Bogs (headwaters of a fork of Red Creek). The unmarked (still on private property) Raven Ridge and Rocky Ridge trails are best but you can continue on the Dobbin RR grade around to the left (west). There is also a Valley View trail on private Timberline property that follows the ridge here. Harmon Ridge Trail here leads south to FR 80 extended. Cross Blackbird Knob Trail (trail #511) on FR 80 going behind Timberline ski area (partly visible thru trees). Finding yourself on either Red Creek Trail (#514), Breathed Mountain Trail (#553) or Big Stonecoal Trail (#513) will require course corrections to the west. Before you go too far on FR 80 you should find the Cabin Mountain trail, continuing south. If not, you may find yourself taking Whitegrass trails on the left to 3 Mile Trail and continuing south just be-

### Blue Ridge Voyageurs Membership Form

*Whitewater paddling is a risky outdoor sport. BRV is not responsible for any individual's decision to participate in the sport, or for his or her decision to run any river or section of river.*

<b>Annual Dues:</b>	\$15.00	<b>Add me to the email list for:</b>
<b>Optional Contribution to BRV River Conservation/Access Fund:</b>	\$5.00 or _____	_____ <b>Novice trips</b>
<b>Total Amount Enclosed:</b>	_____	_____ <b>Intermediate trips</b>
		_____ <b>Advanced trips</b>

Make checks payable to BRV. Mail to BRV Membership, c/o Frank Fico, 1609 Autumnwood Drive, Reston, VA 20194-1523.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone w/area code: (h)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **(w)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check if interested in:**  **helping with moonlight picnic**  **providing a meeting program**  
 **helping with holiday party**  **leading trips**  **conservation/river maintenance**

low the ridge to Bald Knob). You may use the upper trails (only) of Whitegrass to continue roughly along the ridge line. Whitegrass maps are available at a nominal cost.

You will eventually come to Bald Knob (4308') and a pipeline on the eastern side (You will see many signs announcing Whitegrass trails as you exit the area). There is a trail down the face of Bald Knob (last great view of Canaan Valley from here) from the far side (many intersections going down but generally keep left) or you may take the other scenic route by heading south on the pipeline and picking up a green blazed trail through the woods to the Canaan ski lift (operates 'year round). Exit the ski lift area parking lots and continue down the paved road to Rt 32. Turn right and then a quick left at the Canaan park sign (free park maps available). Continue to the Back Hollow Trail on left if continuing hiking or turn right and continue to campground (open all year with hot showers).

The Back Hollow trail (Yellow Square) will head west and connect in with the Allegheny Trail (yellow blazed, longest trail in WV). Turn right onto the Allegheny Trail (also identified as Railroad Grade Trail, with a blue circle). You will follow the

Allegheny Trail for well over 10 miles. At the end of the Railroad Grade Trail you will come to an intersection where the Allegheny Trail turns left and then exit Canaan Valley park. Limited camping is allowed in the forest here. Turn right onto Canaan Loop Road and left onto Davis Trail (continuing to follow rectangular yellow blazes). You will come down Engine Run into Blackwater SP (free trail maps available). Turn right at the park stables onto the Yellow Birch Trail (Yellow Circle). Left goes to the Blackwater Lodge (lodging, restaurant). The trail will exit onto the park road with a parking area across the road. There is a short trail across the road down to a great view of Blackwater Falls. Turn right and continue walking the road for about a mile for the park campground (open warm weather only!)

To continue the hike, turn right from the Yellow Birch Trail and quickly turn right again onto a service road. Turn left quickly here onto an old dirt road (road 13). Follow to a treatment pond after crossing a creek at a washed out section, basically keeping left staying on the main trail. Follow out to Rt. 32 with the Blackwater River on your left. Cross bridge with endpoint on the right.



## 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 early 2006: January 24, March 22, May 16. 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 North exit and go about 0.6 miles north 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.

**2006 BRV Officers:** Ernie Katz, President; Beth Koller, VP; Bob Maxey, Trip Coordinator; Clark Childers, Treasurer; Frank Fico, Newsletter Editor.

**2006 Board of Directors:** Lou Campagna, Ed Grove, Ron Knipling, Wes Mills, Court Ogilvie, Joe Sullivan

### ***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 editors.

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

### ***In this issue...***

- Trip reports:
  - Tohickon Creek (p. 1)
  - NJ Pine Barrens (p. 3)
  - BRV Holiday Party (p. 4)
  - W. Br. Farmington, MA (p. 6)
  - Yardwork at Gus's (p. 8)
  - Central VA hikes (p. 9)
- Canaan Valley Circuit backpack route (p. 10)

### **Deadline for March *Voyageur*:**

Friday, March 3, 2006

**JANUARY MEETING**  
**Tuesday, January 24**

**LAST CHANCE TO RENEW!** If your mailing label says 2005, use the membership form included on page 11.