

# THE VOYAGEUR



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

January 2010

## THE PRESIDENT'S PUT-IN

Greetings fellow frost boaters, as your new "Previously-Elected *Presidente* (I prefer this title as opposed to "Recycled Prez" — that tends to elicit the image of an empty beer can), I would like to thank the previous administration for a fine job: Jim Pruitt, Lou Campagna, Jenny Thomas, the board and of course Frank Fico for the newsletter.

I think the club got a lot more trips going the last few years thanks to the excellent work of Jenny and the clubwide email postings she did each week. New trip co-ords Mike Martin and Daryl Hall will undoubtedly continue this new tradition. It really made it easier to keep up with what was happening out there. I know I got out more last year than I have in awhile and got to know more people to boot. It keeps the club active.

A nagging problem we have to deal with is the shorter meeting times. The library, as you all know, now closes at 8 pm instead of 9 so we're forced to one hour of meeting time. It's difficult enough for folks to get to the library at 7 pm, let alone any earlier. I will try and find a better venue so we can still have adequate time for presentations and member "discussion," aka lies and BS. If anyone knows of a possible good place let me know and we can kick it around the membership and see if it flies. Meanwhile, we will still go to Pimmit Library for now. Anyone have big basement we can use bimonthly?

The next meeting's program on Jan 13th is scheduled to be a slide show by Bob Maxey featuring western national parks and scenic areas: Yellowstone, Tetons, Zion, Bryce and other places he has backpacked, skied and hiked. See you hopefully inside on the 13<sup>th</sup> for the meeting and maybe out on the river.

Rick

## Rappahannock River at Fredericksburg, November 15, 2009

by Ron Knipling, photos by Beth Koller,  
historical research by Ed Grove

Seven restless souls ventured down I-95 to the Rappahannock Fredericksburg run (Motts Run to Old Mill Park, 4.5 miles) on this Indian Summer Sunday. Three kayakers were Dick Pierce, Mike Turner, and Beth Koller. Four OC-1ers were Ed Grove, Mike

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*A ramp-assisted seal launch at the put-in.*

*RAPPAHANNOCK (Continued from page 1)*  
 Martin, Daryl Hall, and me. In the past, for me, the Fredericksburg run has been a default 2<sup>nd</sup> choice when other, smaller streams were too low. Consequently, I had never run it at more than a few inches above minimum. This day was different. Several days after the Hurricane Ida coastal storm, the Rap at Fredericksburg was running at 3.6' or about 2,500cfs. Before the storm, the river was at 250cfs. Following torrential rains, it rose to 8,000 and was at 2,500 and falling on this day. This was just above the "safe maximum" of 3.5' (2,200cfs) suggested by the Friends of the Rappahannock. On the prominent red-yellow-green staff gauge on river left just above the fall line rapids, the water was at the top of the green, just a couple of inches below yellow. For our group, it was a stimulating but non-threatening level.

When the 15' Embree Dam was removed a few years ago, I thought it would create a series of rapids comparable to those of the fall line below the dam. Unfortunately, the dam removal created just one Class 2+ rapid and several other easier rapids and wave trains. At this 2+ rapid, about 200 yards below the I-95 bridge, the removal of the dam has revealed a bit of Virginia and U.S. history. There is a well-preserved stone wall near the left bank. It's about 100' long and protrudes about 4' above the water line. It diverted water from the main flow of the river, but we wondered about its exact purpose and history. Ed contacted his paddling buddy Bill Micks in Fredericksburg and found out that it dated from circa 1750 when it was built to channelize water to a mill powering a forge. The forge manufactured rifles and ammunition used in the Revolutionary War! Apparently, these rifles were still used in the Civil War. However, in 1854 a large dam was built which bur-



*Top to bottom: Ron Knipling, Ed Grove and Dick Pierce.*

ied the wall under water. Then, in 1910 this older dam was replaced with the Embree Dam. After that dam was blown up by Senator Warner several years ago, the sediment behind the dam began to wash away -- ultimately revealing this wonderful stone wall. Indeed, it appears that the wall was well preserved under silt during the 150 years it was under water in the dam holding. It looks like it could have been built just a few years ago.



*Daryl Hall*

The best Rap whitewater is still found in several juicy ledges below the former dam. The next-to-last rapid, just upstream of the Rt. 1

bridge, seemed the squirreliest. When it was my turn to run it, I approached two different slots on the right and was intimidated by both of them. I retreated back upstream to an eddy, re-reconnoitered, and ferried over for a wider left-center tongue. Others seemed equally cautious at this rapid. No swims, though, for our group. We found the river engaging and delightful in the sunny 70° warmth of the day.

### **Lower Goose Creek Navigation Canal** by Ed Evangelidi

Just about every old timer has paddled the “whitewater stretch” of Goose Creek from the Fairfax Dam to Rt. 7 — many years ago, when the put in access was easy. A few of you have even paddled from Rt. 7 to the Potomac. With a very long shuttle to Maryland’s C&O or a long paddle on the Potomac to an access point in Virginia, as well as providing only a few rapids, this lower section was not a popular run. However, these sections of the creek are steeped in history as part of the Goose Creek and Little River Canal. I had always wanted to see more of the canal remains as I floated the creek but it was not always easy to spot these hidden gems from a boat.

I’ve finally been able to see the ruins along the creek — on foot. There is now a blue blazed trail from Keep Loudoun Beautiful Park (Rt. 7) to the Potomac. The roughly three miles of trail on river right goes past the old mill just below Riverside Parkway and the long sections of remaining canal. Both are by the remaining Class II rapids. The mill is quite broken up but some of the old machinery is still evident. The canal is mostly not clearly visible from the river and still contains some nice sections of stone locks easily explored from the trail. The countryside is mostly town houses and golf courses but for the most part there is a pretty good forest buffer along the trail.

In addition to providing the nice access trail, the parks people have provided a boat access at Kephart Bridge Landing. Still involves a bit of a carry to the creek, but it provides the option of taking out here below the rapids or putting in here and paddling flat water to the Potomac. It also provides access to the trail for those who don’t want to invest the time to see the whole trail. Incidentally, the trail continues downstream along the Potomac to Algonkian Park and will connect in with some upstream trails on the Potomac. There is also a marked trail on nearby Broad Run. For further info on the trails, see [www.potomactrail.org](http://www.potomactrail.org).



**Tohickon Creek, 7-8 November 09.**

*Clockwise from lower right: Lori Wernersbach and Bruce Labaw shredding it up, former Prez (and canoer) Jim Pruitt, unknown canoer (ask Jim), Dave Kogut and Kim Buttleman swap whitewater tales of terror in an eddy, displaced member Scott Gravatt meeting the rest of the BRV contingent halfway. [Photos by Beth Koller.]*



## Clean-Up at the Anderson's by Jamie Fico

Waking up bright and early at the grand time of 9 o'clock on a weekend is not a typical action of many teenage girls, but Saturday, November 21<sup>st</sup> was not a typical day. Today was the day our family was going over to the Anderson's house for a cleanup organized especially for Gus and his family, something worth my sister Kerry and me dragging ourselves out of bed for. Upon arriving at the scene, Kerry and I armed ourselves with rakes and set off to reunite with David "Cotton" Cottingham, also known as "Birdy-Man" from a case on the Yampa River trip when a humorous bird decided to "drop" a little something on his inviting-looking head. He appeared to be the one commanding what we should be doing, since everybody else seemed to blank on the task, and

therefore received the unofficial title of clean-up organizer. Sadly, Kerry and I were disappointed to find that Ashley Anderson, who was our typical comrade-in-arms for any outdoor expedition our parents decided to take us on, had taken up another offer that morning and was doing a clean-up for her school crew team which she had recently joined. It was no time for pouting though, and Kerry and I set to work on the mountainous layers of leaves residing in the Anderson's back yard. We must have raked about ten million of those leaves before the piles became a big enough problem for everyone walking around them to do something about them. Some folks began transporting the leaves with tarps [see photo above (Kim Buttleman and Ernie



Katz)], to be bagged and dealt with later, making it seem as though they were transporting loads of loot to hoard in a treasure ship like bloodthirsty pirates. After breaking our backs with the leaves, Kerry and I split up, I working on the persimmon tree and Kerry helping our dad with the gutters. Neither of us seemed to be having much luck though, for I was entangled in the branches looking like an idiot trying to prune the tree and Kerry was having a hard time trying to find a pair of gloves that were waterproof so she wouldn't have to freeze her hands off in the gutters. Finally, when a bucket of leaves was dumped on Kerry's head while climbing down a ladder, she had had enough of the gutters and began to help me with the tree. We had a lot of success, but after our ladder was stolen by Hans Haucke, probably unknowingly, we claimed the tree presentable and focused on other tasks. I was quite impressed with Ginny DeSeau, for she was perched precariously on top of a ladder pruning a very tall bush [see photo at left (with Ed Grove steadying the ladder)], when I knew for a fact she was absolutely terrified of heights. Another impressive task was Jenny Thomas' trek under the very same bush to put the stone wall

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*CLEAN-UP (Continued from page 5)*

lining the herb garden back together, which she did amidst all the falling bits of bush from Ginny and her associates. An earlier heroic act of Jenny had been her rescue of a fuzzy caterpillar she dubbed, if my memory serves correct, Herman. Most importantly, I would say, was Gus's overseeing eye on all the proceedings. He stood like a major commanding his troops to battle from a high window in the house [see photo at right], where I assume his wife Debby, looking out for his health, confined him to. After most of the work was done, we all enjoyed a fine lunch in the Anderson's house. Shiny-eyed and invigorated to help, Kathleen Sengstock showed up just in time to help with the cleaning up of the clean-up [see photos below], around the same time Ashley showed up to share with us how her day with her crew team had gone. All in all, it had been a wonderful day, and we returned with sweating brows and newborn muscles to our homes that night with a wonderful sense of fulfillment in our minds.



An account of who attended the clean-up is as follows, but may not be entirely accurate since no official attendance was taken: Kim Buttleman, David Cottingham, Ginny DeSeau, Frank-Bridget-Jamie-Kerry Fico, Larry Gladioux, Ed Grove, Hans Haucke, Carter Hearn, Ernie Katz, Beth Koller, Rick Koller, Ursy Potter, Kathleen Sengstock, Jenny Thomas. Thanks to all and apologies to any we may have left out.



*Facing page, clockwise from bottom right: Jamie Fico fends off leftover Halloween decorations while pruning a persimmon tree; Hans Haucke and Carter Hearn fill a leaf bag held by Frank Fico; Ernie Katz, Ed Grove and Rick Koller take a lunch break; clean-up organizer David "Cotton" Cottingham. [Photos by Beth Koller.]*





## 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 2010: January 13, March TBD, May TBD, July TBD (Moonlight Picnic), September TBD, November TBD, December TBD (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.

**2010 BRV Officers:** Rick Koller, President; Mark Wray, VP; Mike Martin & Daryl Hall, Trip Coordinators; Clark Childers, Treasurer; Frank Fico, Newsletter Editor; Kathleen Sengstock, Conservation.

**2010 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 March *Voyageur*:**  
Friday, March 5th

**NEXT MEETING**  
**Wednesday, January 13th**

**LAST CHANCE TO RENEW FOR 2010!** If your mailing label says 2009, this is your final newsletter unless you renew now.