

THE VOYAGEUR



www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org

March 2011

THE PRESIDENT'S PUT-IN

A new paddling season is emerging from the icy darkness of this past winter and BRV's have reportedly been seen on several creeks already. It will be good to reunite with our good buddies on the frothy byways after such prolonged whitewater denial. There has been a lot of rain in northwest Maryland, W. Va and southwest Pa. the past couple of weeks and I hope to take advantage in the next weekend or two. Looking forward to dusting off the gear.

Our next meeting is March 22nd and will feature a home grown video from northern BRV's Scott and Denise Gravatt. They did an eastern Canada trip last summer and created DVD evidence that they sent to me for our critical review. Please come and make your comments and I will relay your judgment to our pals in Connecticut. Join us in a couple weeks for some laughs and pizza at Tysons-Pimmit and Anthony's restaurant.

Rick

It's Paddling Season Again!

The BRV paddling season got off to a fine start last Saturday thanks to Jim Finucane, who led a multi-club flotilla on Antietam Creek, and to Jenny Thomas, who put together a Marsh Creek pick up trip that was much enjoyed by a dozen or so boaters. (At right, Kim Buttleman runs the dam on Marsh Creek.)

Jenny was reminded after the fact that one good deed deserves another; thus she was not absolved of leading the second annual Couch

Potatoes' Shakedown Cruise, which has been rescheduled to March 12th with hopes of better conditions. Word is she'll try to conjure up some good options based on what's running and the preferences of those who express interest. See the full year's trip schedule along with the membership roster inside.



23rd Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup

Saturday April 9, 2011

9am - 12pm

[From the website of the Alice Ferguson Foundation — www.potomaccleanup.org]

Since 1989, more than 60,000 volunteers have teamed with 375 partner organizations to tug over 3 million tons of trash from the watershed's streams, rivers and bays. Last year's haul of over 250 tons included more than 15 tons of recyclables, 21,597 plastic bags, 1,844 tires, 14,802 cigarette butts, 3 canoes and 2 couches!

The 2010 Cleanup took place at over 500 sites in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania and West Virginia – all part of the lands, or watershed, that drain into the Potomac. Locations included fields, forests, parking lots and other 'inland' sites, where the trash can be removed before it enters creeks and other waterways.

Why Participate? The Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup has become a decisive catalyst for progress that ignites people throughout the watershed with the Alice Ferguson Foundation's community spirit. The largest regional event of its kind, the Cleanup provides a transforming experience that engages citizens and community leaders and generates momentum for change.

For more information or to register as a site leader, please visit http://www.potomaccleanup.org/trash_initiative/trash_cleanup.shtml



Ed Evangelidi—Always Ready to Shuttle! Too bad Ed didn't submit this photo in time to accompany his 2011 trip preview article in the January Voyageur. In addition to the trips mentioned in last month's article, Ed has some old favorites listed in the BRV 2011 trip schedule inside this newsletter.

Two Shenandoah Waterways Designated ‘Special Project Areas’
Cedar & Passage Creek Landowners Will Benefit from Additional Land Protection Resources
[Press release dated February 24, 2011 from the Potomac Conservancy]

Winchester (VA) -- Cedar Creek and Passage Creek were recently accepted by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) as a Special Project Area. Nominated by Potomac Conservancy, designation of this area will enhance the Conservancy’s land protection efforts in the Shenandoah Valley region, specifically in the headwaters of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. Enhanced and continued protection of Cedar and Passage Creeks ensures the preservation of local drinking water supplies as well as historic and recreational resources. The area contains fragile ecosystems, rare species, and incredible scenic beauty that should be preserved for enjoyment by generations of Virginians.

Special Project Areas are particular geographic regions in Virginia where the VOF board of trustees determines land protection through easements is especially warranted. Nominated areas are judged using an array of criteria including conservation value and public benefit. Community support is integral to the nomination process, which requires letters of support from community members and organizations, expressing their readiness to proceed. “Over the past year, I reached out to the local communities to both gauge and garner support for this designation,” said Potomac Conservancy Director of Land Protection Kelly Watkinson, who oversaw the nomination process. “I was very encouraged by the enthusiasm and support from local officials, landowners, and community organizations, such as the Fort Valley Ruritans.” For landowners in Cedar or Passage Creek communities interested in protecting their properties with a conservation easement, Special Project Area designation will improve their ranking with VOF, making it more likely for their easement to be accepted.

Considered among the cleanest and least disturbed streams in the Shenandoah Valley, Cedar and Passage Creeks have long been a priority for Potomac Conservancy. The Conservancy currently co-holds an easement with VOF at historic Mount Pleasant Farm, a 106-acre property along Cedar Creek. Concerned about the rapid development around her farm, owner Mrs. Caroline Stalnaker chose to permanently protect her land in 2006 to ensure it remains available for agriculture for future generations. “It’s rather an Island, in a sense, because the land is the only property south of Route 81 that hasn’t been annexed or developed,” she commented. Mrs. Stalnaker continues to live and raise sheep on her farm. She is hoping to have her bed and breakfast operation, *Mount Pleasant 1812*, up and running by April of this year. “The designation of this Special Project Area will enable VOF to more effectively build upon the 1,600 acres that we currently protect in these two watersheds,” remarked VOF easement manager Laura Thurman, who works with landowners throughout the Shenandoah Valley to protect their land.

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For more information about Special Project Area designation, please contact Emily Warner at 540-667-3606. To learn more about Cedar Creek and Passage Creek, please contact Emily or visit www.potomac.org/site/priorities/#shenandoah.

Hazard on Catoctin Creek (MD)

Several of us enjoyed a leisurely float on lower Catoctin Creek last Sunday — leisurely, that is, until we discovered that the water route under the C&O aqueduct, which is being rebuilt, is blocked with construction equipment, necessitating a class 3, four-pitch, five-canoe, up-over-and-around portage on river-left. At 5.5 on the Little Falls gauge, there was only about 14” of clearance, too little to limbo; however it should be possible to get under when the Potomac drops below 5 feet.

— Mike Martin

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 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.

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), 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. 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
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Deadline for May Voyageur:
Friday, April 29th

NEXT MEETING
Tuesday, March 22nd

2011 Membership Roster and Trip Schedule inside