

THE VOYAGEUR



www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org

November 2008

THE PRESIDENT'S PUT-IN

Summer came and went, fall colors are almost gone, snow is falling out west and the boating season is past for many of us. I hope you all had a great season both on and off the water. Now we will have the Christmas party to look forward to; I look forward to seeing many of you there.

I would like to thank Court Ogilvie and Lou Campagna for presenting their trip to the Brooks Range in Alaska at the September meeting. Some great photos and not so many wildlife shots — something about the group singing to excess. For the November meeting (Wednesday the 12th), Risa Shimoda will be presenting the International Whitewater Hall of Fame 2007-2008 — Reflections on the Induction Ceremony. IWHOF was founded in 2003 and has been holding elections since 2005, recently inducting the classes of 2007 and 2008, hailing from the US, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, England, Slovenia and France. Join us to watch a tribute to the honorees and anecdotes about the inductees, and the event that honored them recently at the Nantahala Outdoor Center.

We are in need of more presenters for 2009, so let me know if you have something you would like to share with the club.

Jim

2008 BRV Holiday Party

LOCATION: Dominion Hills Recreation Center
— 6000 Wilson Blvd., Arlington

DATE: **Saturday, December 6, 2008**

TIME: 5:30-11 PM

FOOD: Bring a dish to feed at least eight people, as follows:

A-E main meal side dish

F-J salad

K-R appetizer

S-Z dessert

Be sure to bring serving utensils for your dish, if needed. BRV will provide turkey/ham and drinks (soda, wine and beer — approximately two per person).

COST: **\$10** for adults, **\$5** for children 2-12 years old, **free** for those under 2.

RSVP: BRV Board members will be contacting all DC-area members. RSVP to your caller or to Lou Campagna by **Thursday, December 4**.

VOLUNTEERS are needed to help set up and clean up — contact Lou to offer your assistance.

BRV Canada Trip 2008

by Mike Gilchrist and Keith Merkel

photos by Cahil Converse, Keith Merkel and Lee Belknap

Keith said this was the best trip ever. I (Mike) was feeling my back and age, so did more logistics and less paddling, which improved the result for all. Keith Merkel, Mike Gilchrist, Lee Belknap, and Cahil Converse were the group. Keith got seven new rivers in eight river-days, even though he had already been to Canada on this week-of-rivers three times. I got slightly fewer “new” runs because I had done the Ottawa Middle, Rouge Canyon, and St. Catherine’s of the Jacques Cartier before, and I stayed off some creeks this year.

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Upper + Middle + Lower Gauley by Len Rice

At 9AM on September 27, 2008 I arrived at Mountain Lake Campground near Summersville to meet a group of boaters from North Carolina (friends of fellow BRV boater Paul Podgorski). Upon arrival I began transferring my boat to Paul's truck as one of the Lower Gauley contingent, but was soon asked by boaters Quay and Mike if I wanted to join them on a marathon sprint of all three sections. This option had been presented to me several days earlier as "not for the faint of heart" and although interested, I had dismissed it in favor of paddling the Lower on Saturday and the Upper on Sunday. After expressing some half-hearted reservations about slowing them down, and not expressing my own trepidation about not scouting the major drops on the Upper, I decided to join them for my first attempt at the whole river.

One advantage of this was not having to set shuttle, since we would be meeting Paul and the Lower group in Swiss at the end of the day. Another was that Quay had been running the Gauley for 20 years and knew it like the back of his hand. All started off fine with successful shepherded runs through Initiation and Insignificant. I missed the left eddy and surfing opportunities at the bottom of Insignificant, but it was better to not have exerted too much effort here based on what lie ahead. My only thrashing of consequence took place at Pillow where I cut right a little too soon and ended up in the hole just above Pillow Rock. After flipping and attempting to roll unsuccessfully, I should have hung out in my boat until I flushed through, but instead bailed out and spent a somewhat uncomfortable length of time under water. Despite the thoughts that rush through your head as you look up at the surface 2-3 feet above you and wait for your pfd to bob you to the surface, I am always surprised at how long you actually can hold your breath and still think clearly. After a quick rescue, we were off again!

Quay mercifully led me through the middle drop of Lost Paddle on the more conservative left "creek route", but having run that successfully, confidence was back and Iron Ring presented no problem. Quay

offered some great tips on this trip including the one here: clipping the right side of the two waves in the top of the rapid, and then just coasting into the main flow to avoid overshooting into the bad hole on the right, as he soon unintentionally demonstrated.

The second tip came at Sweets Falls. It takes faith to trust the advice of "aiming for the nastiest part of the hole" at the bottom of this drop, but that's what I did, and it turned into a gentle landing that belied its turbulent appearance. Like Quay said, there's still a 50-50 chance of flipping, but so far I'm 3 for 3 at Sweets.

My first run on the Middle included the embarrassing highlight of both Mike and I being juiced by Julie's Juicer at the end of Woods Ferry Rapid. My only swim was at Pillow though, and it felt good to have made a combat roll following two other flips previously that day.

On the flat water stretches I was doing my best to keep up with Quay, who looked like he was barely paddling. Having made good time, we stopped for a while to surf at Diagonal Ledges. After a great last bow surf and voluntary exit off the wave, I headed downstream to join Quay in an eddy. I looked back just in time to see Mike float over one of the ledges at the bottom of the rapid. He rolled but his skirt had popped off for the second time that day and, slowly taking on more water, was unable to make it to shore. After 30 seconds or so of water filled back ends, he swam to shore.

The rest of the Lower went quickly and uneventfully. As we rolled into Swiss, 24 river miles and a mere five hours from the put in, those burgers and beans at the Methodist Church tasted better than ever. Despite a few blisters and aches, this was one of my most memorable river trips. Not as intimidating as my first run of the Upper, but certainly the most challenging. Feeling a little too sore to paddle again the next day, I headed home and less than 24 hours after leaving was back in my bed in Fairfax. What a day!

CANADA (Continued from page 1)

Because it was a summer flood year, we tread cautiously and ran a lot of small streams instead of base rivers. Some of the base rivers we did on side channels (Ottawa Middle versus Main) or easier sections (Rouge Canyon versus Seven Sisters) to save our lives. As Keith said when we looked from the road at Bus Eater on the Ottawa, "I did not come to Canada to be flush drowned."

Staying mostly in raft-company campgrounds rather than commercial mom-and-pops saved us money and aggravation this year. Two nights were free (forest-service type camping). Doing small streams near Montreal and Quebec City meant that we avoided two long drive loops: to the Gatineau / Gens de Terre, and to Saguenay / Lac St Jean. By doing so, we were able to stay in the Quebec City area three days and enjoy the 400th anniversary celebrations.

It was nice of Keith to be the probe on most of these runs, and Cahil calmly to sweep. The safety on this trip was superb, in terms of the capabilities of those who joined me, and willingness to help when someone (like me) messed up. Now a blow-by-blow:

Thursday August 7 we met at Black River Bay campground in Dexter, NY, near Watertown. Past years we've run the Black, but we now skipped it in favor of cleaner rivers. Friday we took a sweet drive and had a photo session along the Rideau Canal en-route to River Run Raft Company on the Ottawa. I got to show Keith and Cahil the Jones Locks of the Rideau, and the



Lovers, the second major rapid on the Petawawa. We ran far right.

village of Pakenham where we were charmed by some teenage girls whose parents ran the deli-art-mart. We bought sandwiches there and ate at Pakenham's historic 5-arch stone bridge over the Mississippi.

River Run is a full-service rafting company on the Ottawa takeout. It's more appropriate for adults than Wilderness Tours, which can get very noisy. R.R. treated us with ultimate professionalism. We set up in meadow camping next to a fence and got to visit with the Coureurs du Bois club from Ottawa. They had just moved their annual "all comers" social-paddle from the Gatineau to the Ottawa, because the Gatineau was at 28 feet (normal is 10-15).

Saturday August 9, Cahil, Keith and I ran the **Petawawa** fall-line section in the town of Petawawa. It joins the Ottawa at the takeout. This river is only 30 miles from

River Run. It is a high-water alternative to Ottawa-Main. It has three rapids worthy of the Gauley: Railroad, Lovers, and Suicide. The Petawawa drains the northern tier of Algonquin Park, and therefore has canoe-camping lore associated with it. The fall-line (bottom) section is tough and invites kayaks and OC1's, not particularly OC2's. The fall-line section is separated from Algonquin Park by a military reservation where they practice artillery (in case Ontario goes to war with Quebec, or in case the Russians attack Sarah Palin's house!) At a level of four feet on the highway bridge, there was no question that the Petawawa had May water with an August temperature.

Lee Belknap showed up from Asheville as we were having dinner in Cobden, Ontario. We had the pleasure of socializing in camp with some old Ottawa River Runners friends: Doug Poulter, Gerard

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Ottawa Middle: Keith below Little Trickle, and running Garvin's Chute sneak.

CANADA (Continued from page 3)

Meszaros, and Ishtar (?), who were also members of the Coureurs du Bois (CdB). One CdB woman was impressed that we had tackled the Petawawa without her guidance.

Sunday August 10. We had a pushy but very fun run on the **Ottawa Middle** channel at 15 feet. Normal summer levels are about zero, and the Main is usually chosen over the Middle. (Main has that flush-drowning bus eater and others). I pointed out, then ran down Little Trickle, the alternative to the nasty Iron Ring, and we all found that Little Trickle was actually Big Flush. Keith and Cahil got good pictures of others running Trickle, and pictures of the waterfalls to its river-right. Keith ran a very brave sneak on Garvin's Chute, the next waterfalls. The rest of us carried Garvin's. Garvin's is beautiful both for kayaking and picture taking. No-name Number Two, the last rapids on the Middle, had always required a shore scout and boulder dodging to catch good flumes. Not this time. Local youngsters were running the drop,

walking 200 yards back and queuing up again at the top to get (surf) the BIG breaking wave in the middle. After watching this from an eddy, we old Anglos didn't bother to scout and just blasted down the center. What the heck, it was all WATER, no ROCKS. Honestly, if the Ottawa is 20,000 cfs at regular summer levels (0 on the gauge), it must have been five times this today.

Monday August 11. Having camped at the very pleasant Azur Rafting ("Esther's Place") on the Rouge, we opted off the Seven Sisters section because it was well above the orange "Do Not Run" gauge line at Propulsion Rafting. Instead, I shuttled while the rest ran the **Simon**, a small

stream near a ski village on the main highway between Montreal and Mt. Tremblant. The takeout was not far from a Class V rapids which passes by a Polar Bear club,



Looking from Rt. 117 bridge at class 4-5 rapid we ran on the Simon.

used for nude and other kinds of bathing by Montrealers. As Keith was getting pinned below the class V, one swimsuit-clad Polar Bear Lady offered to jump in and save him. No one else did (well, maybe Cahil). I was in my street clothes not ten yards from him, without life jacket. Lesson learned: if you are going to take pictures of your kayak buddies near a rapids, wear your river gear and life jacket, even if you are going by car. The pin was soft, but the flip was to the upstream side. Cahil got the paddle, Keith swam to shore, and my camera was later stolen, so we have no evidence of this pin or of Cahil's and Keith's great run of the Class V. Keith picked the Simon out of the book. Doubtful that we will do it again because it's too near civilization. Nice stream, though.

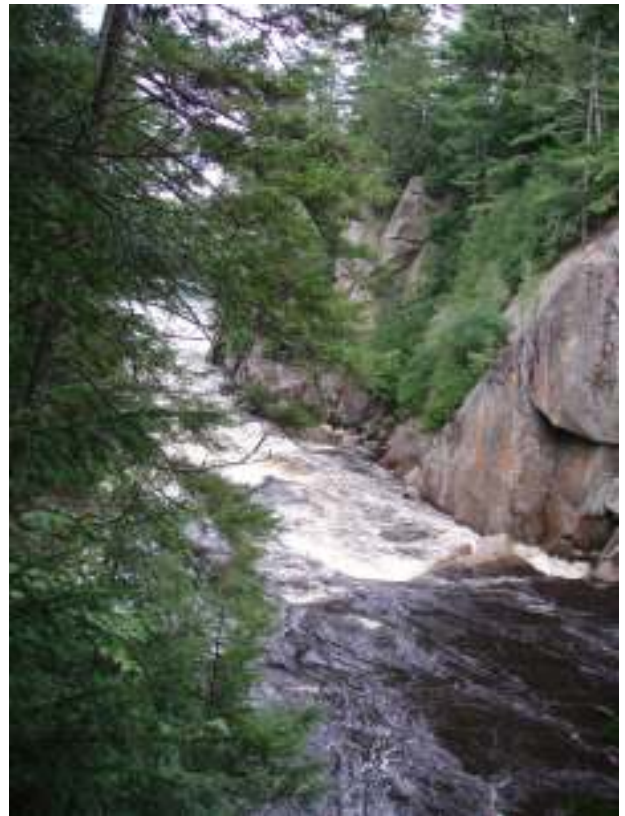
Tuesday August 12. Camped again at Esther's on the Rouge, we ran the **Rouge Canyon**, a spring alternative to the Rouge Seven Sisters. Another famous Bob Gedekoh (Three Rivers Paddling Club) saying came to mind: "Just because you're running your second choice



Lee Belknap in the des Capucines section of the Ouareau.

river of the day, don't think that guarantees it will be easy." At the put-in one raft guide/safety boater in a kayak asked us if we had enough experience for this run.. He was about 25 with blond dreadlocks. We thought he was just hazing us Anglo fellas. He was NOT. Running at 7500 cfs (normal is 700), the first narrow slot was so pushy there was no choosing a line, even though we had all scouted from the cliff-top and chosen a line. I ran ten seconds after Keith. We found ourselves facing each other buried up to our chests in two separate white boils that we thought were holes. It was so violent no boats were showing, even though we were upright. It was the breaking eddy line(s) below the drop. And so on for the rest of an hour of what should have been class II but was Class IV++.

The next three rapids, down through S Turn., were continuous with no mid-stream eddies, and 4-5 foot waves. The day was over a LOT faster than we figured, thanks to the speed of the river.



Looking downstream at the start of the Rouge Canyon's class 4 from hiking trail. We ran down the left.

That night we car-bushwhacked back across the Simon to set up for the Capucines section of the Ouareau. This was another Keith Merkel small stream idea, picked out of the Fortin guidebook. We sand-pit camped along a desolate road near the takeout, having failed to get the cars to the Fortin-designated "book" takeout on account of an un-drivable road. No sweat — free camping. We got within 1.5 miles of the book takeout.

Wednesday August 13. The rest ran the **Capucines section of the Ouareau**. Good choice Keith. Cahil and Keith have pictures. I ran shuttle, got gauges at the internet café in the local public library, and

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CANADA (Continued from page 5) ate a trucker's breakfast. It was a 30 mile each way shuttle. Capucines has one or two extremely pretty class III-IV segments. It runs basically five miles east of Route 125, which is one of the north-south main roads out of Montreal. Chertsey, the take-out village, is not nearly as fancy as the towns along the Mt. Tremblant highway. Thank God. We drove to Camping Un Air d'Ete (Camping with an atmosphere of Summer), in Pont Rouge near Quebec City to set up for the Tourilli or another exploratory stream the next day.

A drunken woman, Rene, staggered into our camp and tried to pick up all the men, one at a time. Of course, it was difficult to take her up on her offers after her burly husband/boyfriend showed up. We fed her wine, not realizing she was already at blood alcohol 0.3.

Later, my camera disappeared from my car. I wish Cahil and Lee would get real girlfriends so they wouldn't invite such people into camp. Rene's two sentence repertoire was "I love you" and "Phhhht" (just spitting); such were her articulation skills with 0.30 BAL. Even the pleadings of her boyfriend ("Let's go back to our campsite,

honey") didn't keep Rene from her quest to marry one of us Yanks. Beware the evils of the fermented grape!

Thursday August 14. I had trouble getting Cahil and Keith out of the campground before 10. Lee is always put-in ready since he eats power bars in the morning. All had fond memories of Rene. Did Lee and Cahil visit her later last night? Why do C and K have such long morning routines? Of course, Keith wonders why I have to get going so early in the morning and can't stay up at night beyond 8:30. Anyway after grocery shopping in Pont Rouge, we got a late look at the **Tourilli**. This I carried off of after an unfortunate swim and loss of boat, but the rest say it was the run of the week. Says Lee: it is as steep as the Watauga, but fewer blind drops. Since running the

neighboring Neilson with Jeff Prycl and the Pennsylvanians several years ago, I've wanted to see the Tourilli, rated one serious step easier than Neilson. The Neilson is all ledges. The Tourilli is all rapids. They run off roughly the same height-of-mountain toward the Ste. Anne, so must have about the same net gradient.

An expected but not adequately prepared-for finding is that the shuttle road is TERRIBLE. Gilles Fortin warns of this in his guidebook. It is only 5.5 km long, so we were tempted to drive it, and did. BIG MISTAKE. That area is being actively logged, and the skidders move logs across the road and create ruts nearly a foot deep! Road builders come along after and spread new sand and stones. (Quebec is ALL sand and stones). A grader tries to level it. We ran



On the Tourilli: At left, a proud Cahil & Lee with the Chute a la Marmite in the background. At right, looking downstream from the Chute towards final class 5 drop.



St. Catherine's section of the Jacques Cartier: At left, the second class 4, continuing around bend left of island. At right, looking back upstream at end of third class 4 and the 12-foot falls on river right.

over a bad new spot before it had been leveled and I whacked the undercarriage of my car, very hard, on a basketball-sized stone. Lee says he saw my BMW actually FLY. This dis-spirited me and I had a bad run. Lee's van was missing one of those rubber bumpers when he got home, but then again it was an old van.

Superman Cahil saved the day, however. Cahil walked down the

hill from the road later in the day and pulled my boat back out from the cliff-walled gorge. I had abandoned it to assure a walk-out through the pine thicket, ½ mile to the road before dark. (Remember the late start?). What are friends for? Thanks, Cahil, for getting my surely-lost boat. He did not have the noise of construction equipment to guide him up the hill as I did. We had to yell to provide direction. But we still completed the river and

boat rescue by 7 PM.

Camping was at the confluence of the Tourilli and Ste. Anne, free. It was a deep grass meadow (wet year, remember), surrounded by birches and pines, right on the Tourilli.

I think this was the best night, with a great night sky.

Friday August 15. This was to be Lee's day to drive home, so we did the **St. Catherine's section of the Jacques Cartier**. I had done this with Norm Fairhurst and the Baltimore Club years ago. It was a LOT more fun than I remembered. We had lunch on a blueberry island next to a much larger wooded island. St. Catherine's is considered a high water alternative to the Tewksbury, Jacques Cartier, but nobody was complaining about it being too easy. Two islands create falls on one side and runnable rapids on the other. After running the rapids, go look at the falls. Take pictures.

Cahil, Keith, and I camped for the next three nights at the Excursions Jacques Cartier Raft Company at the Riviere Jacques Cartier Tewksbury put-in. This was a great choice, guided in part by last year's fight over fees with Camping Stoneham and the total professionalism of the Excursions JC staff. It

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Cahil on downstream tip of the island on the Tewksbury section of the Jacques Cartier.

CANADA (Continued from page 7) was just beautiful, serene, and with enough boaters to form up trips (if you arrive solo).

Saturday August 16. Cahil and Keith ran the **Jacques Cartier Tewksbury** at 0 feet on the bridge (2100 cfs). They report that it was about as high as they wanted. I got my car put up on a rack at Canadian Tire north of Quebec City. They said it was safe to drive to the USA as it was. Only damage was to the center rear support of the exhaust system.

Saturday night, K, C, and I ate at the Le Retro steak house on Rue. St. Jean in Quebec City. They are in the middle of their 400-year anniversary and it is a people-watching grand party.

Sunday August 17. Cahil and I walked the lower old town of Quebec City including two art galleries and the farmer's market. Totally charmed by Sylvie Bourget, directrice of Galerie D'Art Internationale, 87m, rue Saint-Pierre, Quebec, City, Cahil and I almost bought \$1,500 to \$3,500 of oils, each. Instead we bought three copies of the new Guide aux Rivieres du Quebec by Eric Leclerc at the Mountain Equipment Coop (MEC) store. Trying to impress Cahil with my knowledge of local culture, I stumbled into a Charlevoix-specializing real estate office ("immeubles"), thinking it was a furniture store ("meubles"). The very gracious duty-person was puzzled why I was trying to buy all their old desks and chairs. We had time for a drink at the Chateau Frontenac, and dinner at the Creperie Normande on Rue. St. Jean. The previous evening it

was too crowded to get a seat at the Chateau Frontenac front bar.

Sunday, Keith hiked in Parc Jacques Cartier, overlooking the Sautauriski take-out. Monday, all drove various routes to the Black River Bay Campground in Wattertown and camped there. Tuesday August 19: home.

Summary: It was one of the best trips ever, aided by Keith's careful reading of the Fortin Guidebook picking spring runoff streams near Montreal, group safety, and my realization that my skills are more in logistics than river-running. There was great cooperation. Two nights at River Run, two nights at Azur Rafting, and three nights at Excursions



Quadcentennial celebration in Quebec City.

Jacques Cartier, instead of moving camp each day, certainly took the driving frenzy out. At \$7-\$10 per night, who can argue about the lodging costs? This gave us a big restaurant budget with the money left over. Keith expects the rest of the BRV to come on this trip next year, when he leads.



Group photo at the Ottawa put-in: (l-r) Keith, Mike, Cahil and Lee.

Memorial Day Memories by Beth Koller

The holiday weekend started off with a bang: the Buckhannon! A group (including Courtney Caldwell, John Duke, Chris Esswein, Ed Evangelidi, Daryl Hall, Ernie Katz, Beth Koller, and Mike Martin) paddled the class III section. Finding the put-in was a challenge. John attempted to use his van as an all-terrain vehicle with incomplete success. The river itself was busy, very busy! And tight, very tight! From an eddy above one of the diagonal ledges, Beth could see two of the open boaters successfully navigate the drop, but could not determine the route. Ernie then ran the drop. The flailing paddle and subsequent brace indicated that the route should be elsewhere. Beth benefited from this extra knowledge and ran ~1.5 feet left of Ernie's slot. John dutifully recorded all the action on video/camera stills. Daryl had been working on her navigational skills when she ended up high and dry on a rock ledge. Previously, the ever diplomatic Ed had commented on her boating skills: "Your boating is fine, but it would help if you could distinguish between water and rock." Therefore, Daryl knew what was coming: photographic documentation by John. Being a good sport, she took it well. After many twists and turns, the river came to a close. During the long the shuttle, the Clarksburg owners of the house at the take-out invited us to their fire and provided warm beverages.

The following day we were joined by Steve Garra and his wife Mariko on the traditional section of the Dry Fork. They came armed with a tandem canoe, a Penobscot. This would be the hardest river they had ever run. Fortunately, it was a sunny day with good water levels and moderate air/water temperatures. The day provided many opportunities for pictures. The best location was the near river-wide hydraulic half-way down the run. The tandem team used the fast hull speed of their boat to punch the hole [see photo on page 11]. It was very impressive. Chris, however, provided the most entertainment. Although Beth had been encouraging boaters to paddle towards her for the best pictures, she

did not do this at the expense of safety! In spite of instructions to avoid the deepest part of the hole, Chris looked up at the camera, grinned, and briefly paused in his stroking. That was all it took. He was over in a flash. The C-1 paddle flew five feet vertically into the air as if it were a toothpick. John recorded the carnage on video; Beth in still pictures [see below]. Do we smell blackmail?

On Monday, we headed home with a stop at the Caselman River. The best surf of the day was performed by Daryl at the lunch spot. Mike decided to do a little snorkeling at the same location. The day was topped off with a meal at the roadside restaurant between Confluence and Fort Hill, Shepherd's Farm, where we enjoyed lamb and ice cream and took in the wonderful cliff-side views.



New River Rendezvous, Labor Day Weekend 2008

by Beth Koller

There were over 60 people from BRV, CCA, MCC and Coastals. The point man for BRV was Ernie Katz. The meeting place was Ray's Campground in Hico, WV. It was time for the Fall New River Rendezvous!

There had been extensive rain in the New headwaters region. The river was high, very high! By Saturday, the level had dropped to 4+ feet — still very high. Three trips went out: one on the gorge, another from Thurmond to Cunard, and still another from Prince to Thurmond. The last is infrequently run, but can be fun at higher water levels because there is no flat-water. The rapids were not technical in nature; they were primarily wave trains. The largest waves were found at Silo Rapids. The river right waves reached six feet when measured from peak to trough. There was only a single recreation boat swim in this rapids. The newer boaters had plenty of time to practice balance and boat leans under the tutelage Courtney Caldwell, Ed Evangelidi, Ernie Katz, Beth Koller, Dick Pierce, and Ron Ray. Frank, a 17 year-old first-time whitewater kayaker bobbed his way down the river with only a single swim. A husband-wife tandem team from Virginia demonstrated their paddling prowess — even though they took on so much water with every wave train that they went to look for a new boat the next day.

A handful of intrepid paddlers ventured onto the gorge: hardboaters Fern Abrams, Cahil Converse, Terry Irani, Paul Kulowitch, Morgan L, and Sam B accompanied by a fleet of shredders and some fearless open boaters. Terry did not feel the need for a paddle. Instead of the usual exploding holes, Middle Keeney featured HUGE waves. Double Z was not a technical run; instead it had even bigger waves than the Keeneys. Fayette Station ROCKED — well, actually there were few rocks to be seen! There were no swims by the kayakers. One open-boater flipped early in the run and one shredder dumped in the Keeneys.

While there were no sorrows to drown, the groups retired to Pies and Pints for post paddling repast. A small group attended the REEL film fest-which was

sponsored by ACE. There were some short flicks, including a claymation spoof on training for Lockapalooza (an event at the Genesee Waterways Center Lock 32 Whitewater Park in Pittsford, NY), as well as some longer features. The latter included paddling the Zambezi River below Victoria Falls. There were the first runs of the Minus One and Minus Two rapids. Another feature was an exploratory run in Mexico with Eric Jackson. Activities included cutting paths through the jungle with machetes, lowering boats with ropes, jumping falls as a portage technique, losing a boat in a cave, and running slot canyons. In conjunction with the film fest, ACE ran a silent auction with proceeds from the winning bids benefiting the West Virginia Rivers Coalition. Donated items included a kayak, a camping hammock, throw ropes, helmets, weekend get-away lodging, raft trips, t-shirts, hiking socks, and other gear. WVRC staff and board members were on site to answer questions.

The following day, the New was down to 1 foot. Two trips went out: one on the gorge and one from Thurmond to Cunard. The gorge trip, organized by Mike Sawyer, had over 50 participants. There were four rafts as well as other inflatable craft and hard boats. Surprise Rapids was the highlight of the trip. Frank managed to run right through the hole without any consequence. Kirby, a 12-year-old, found a new line to the immediate right of the hole. Ron Ray disappeared except for his helmet when running the left edge of the hole. Several boaters carried their boats up for a second run. Courtney Caldwell assembled over 100 pictures from the various photographers and is editing them into a slide show.

On Monday, the water level remained stable at about 1 foot (3700 cfs). Many paddlers dispersed for an early drive home. Ed Evangelidi and Courtney Caldwell ran the section below Sandstone Falls. Another small group headed for an early morning run in the gorge. Ron Ray and Pete Chapelle teamed up in a Shredder as did Sheila and Zoe Chapelle. Fern Abrams, Cahil Converse, Beth Koller, and Paul Kulowitch completed the hard-shell contingent. The Shredder teams had some high flying moves through Middle Keeney and Fayette Station. Sheila and Zoe

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.

Annual Dues: _____ **\$15.00 (newsletter sent via postal mail)**
 _____ **\$12.00 (newsletter emailed in .pdf format)**

Optional Contribution to BRV River

Conservation/Access Fund: \$5.00 or _____

Total Amount Enclosed: _____

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: _____ **(work or cell)** _____

Email: _____

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

managed to drive the boat into the elusive river-left eddy in Lower Keeney so that they could get out on the flat rock and watch all the action. One boater zipped so close to the base of the Lower Keeney rooster tail that it looked like the paddler was in the curl of a surfing wave. (Yes, we have it on film, but need an enlargement to determine whether it was Paul or Fern!) Paul shot video of Beth disappearing — not once, not twice, but three times in the wave train at Lower Keeney. Cahil showed us a really sweet, creekly, far river right line between Hook 99 and Greyhound Bus Stopper. Beth went left and Fern went right around a hole in Double-Z — only to have a close encounter of the third kind in the wave train below. Fortunately there was no carnage. Zoe and Paul cooled off by jumping 15-20 feet from a river-side boulder. Amazingly, the group was off the river by 3:15 PM.

Steve and Mariko Garra challenge the big ledge on their first run of the Dry Fork. (Photo by Beth Koller.) See story on page 9.



Membership Roster Updates

Pete Dragon
 907 Potterton Circle
 Vienna, VA 22180
 703-255-3447 H
 202-566-2657 W
 dragon.pw@verizon.net

Phil Troutman
 5927 Ridge Ford Drive
 Burke, VA 22015-3646
 703-866-1370 H
 202-366-4669 W
 Phil.troutman@dot.gov

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 2008: January 23, March 11, May 13, July 19 (Moonlight Picnic), September 9, November 12, December 6 (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.

2008 BRV Officers: Jim Pruitt, President; Lou Campagna, VP; Jenny Thomas, Trip Coordinator; Clark Childers, Treasurer; Frank Fico, Newsletter Editor; Kathleen Sengstock, Conservation.

2008 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.com), 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.com. 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 2nd

NEXT MEETING
Wednesday, November 12th

RENEW NOW for 2009: If your mailing label says 2008, use the membership form included on page 11.