

# THE VOYAGEUR



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

November 2010

## THE PRESIDENT'S PUT-IN

I hope everyone had a successful Fall paddling season; I've heard through the grapevine that Gauley season was a good time for the people who made it down. Now with the weather changing, the small creeks come to the fore and I am looking forward to this upcoming creek season. Also upcoming is the November meeting on Thursday the 18<sup>th</sup>; a canoeing video is in the offing unless someone wants to present some trip pictures or video of their own. Let me know.

The BRV legislature is now up for consideration and anyone who wants to write-in their candidate is welcome to do so, otherwise the previous year's cabinet will remain intact and will be officially announced at the Christmas Party on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Details for the party should be published in this newsletter [see page 7]. It will be held again at the Dominion Hills Rec Center. See you at the meeting and Christmas party.

Rick

## Blacklick Creek, 16 May 2010 by Mike Martin



It's not every day that one gets to discover a new gem, but I got just what I hoped for one fine afternoon in May on Blacklick Creek (PA) with Ed Evangelidi and Courtney Caldwell. Actually, we didn't "discover" anything, as Ed had run it several times before, and the creek is well known to many Pennsylvania boaters. But having heard from Ed and some other folks that Blacklick is a fun run and a great, if harder to catch, alternative to Stonycreek, it had been on my to-do list for years, and this time the gauges cooperated.

I met Ed and Court at the Blue

*Courtney Caldwell on Blacklick Creek, PA*

*(Continued on page 2)*

*BLACKLICK CREEK (Continued from page 1)*

Knob Campground late Saturday night. We had plans to rendezvous with other BRV members and run either Stonycreek, or run Blacklick if the gauge was in the sweet spot (4.2'/400 cfs on the Josephine gauge.) After dithering over breakfast in Johnstown, we drove about 30 minutes to the takeout in Josephine (Indiana County), then blazed a trail around a bridge construction to a put-in on river right about six and a half river miles from town.



After some boogie water at the put in, “the river quickly distracts *Ed, chillin’ in the water*

you with a wondrous display of almost continuous rapids, little ledges, boulder patches, playable holes, and surfable waves,” Ed Gertler notes in his PA guidebook. I would add the terms “grabby hydraulics” and “involuntary boofs,” and say that the broken ledges on the top part reminded me of Stonycreek, and the boulder gardens on the lower part reminded me of the Cheat. Gertler rates it Class 1 to 4-, and he

notes that there are two tough spots — the second of which is hard to recognize. “If this is your first run,” he wrote “you will probably know that you are there by the fact that you are stuck in a big hole at what you thought was an innocuous spot.”

Boy, he was right about that. From above, I watched Ed take what appeared to be a leisurely river right line

and plop into an eddy below. I had the same idea but achieved it only by getting catapulted to the bank by a grabby diagonal curler, against which I could brace from my onside. From there, I managed to pinball my way down river right while getting rodeoed here and there by holes. While emptying out my boat, I looked up to see Courtney taking the same approach and thought, uh oh, that’s not a lefty’s move.

Court and I managed to dry off by the time we reached the take out. It’s amazing how a new river and a cold bath followed by a warm beer makes for a great outing.



*The Garden of Angry, Diagonal Curlers*



Ed also notes that most of the land through which the river flows, which had been badly scarred by mining, is now a state wildlife management area and has rebounded fairly well, though acid mine drainage is still quite apparent. A bike trail runs down the old railroad grade on river right, which makes for a fine river-scouting hike, and there's a parking area at the Rt. 259 trailhead near the put in. It would not be that far of a carry from the parking area to a bush-wack put in off the trail.

**Gauges:** Keystone Canoeing (1998 edition) puts canoe-zero

*Court warming up in the sunshine*

**Notes:**

Ed notes that for some reason Blacklick doesn't seem to be on many DC area boaters' radar, and it's probably best kept that way given the crotchety landowner on the river-right put in on Rt. 259 in Heshbon. The bridge over the creek was closed and there appeared to be a construction right-of-way down to the water, just outside of the fence line for the fellow who lives there. Apparently, he likes to be asked for permission nonetheless. I told him we didn't think he was home and didn't want to risk letting his Dobermans out of the yard by opening the gate to knock, and he seemed to be fine with that. There are no houses on river left, but it's a pretty steep drop to the river.

at 4.2' on the USGS Josephine gauge, and AW puts it at 750 cfs. At 4.2 (400 cfs), we had as much water as I cared to deal with. According to Ed E's notes, 3.8' will do, and I have no doubt he's right.



*Ed surveys the top part of what should be called Scrape Right Or Swim*

**ROSTER UPDATES:**

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### **2010 BRV Retrospective** *photos by Mike Martin*

*BRV*ers paddled a variety of rivers this year, and based on his photo collection posted on Picasa, Mike Martin was often in the thick of it. (For proof, see photo at left!) See Mike's entire paddling album at <http://picasaweb.google.com/innostoooge/TEMPPIXLR#>.

*Clockwise from bottom right: Ron Knipling on Moorefield Canyon, Ed Evangelidi somewhere below Fayette Station on the New, Beth Koller(?) in Lower Keeney on the New, Mike Martin in Lower Keeney, Larry Lempert at the bottom of Showers Rapid on the Stonycreek, Michael Wellman on the Casselman*



**Youghiogheny Defense Party, November 18**  
**by Mark Singleton, American Whitewater [from an email alert dated 25 Oct 10]**

Come celebrate and defend the Yough! YOU are invited to the Youghiogheny Defense Party!

This event benefits the Yough Defense Fund of the Mountain Watershed Association. Proceeds will help cover legal expenses incurred in challenging the proposed Curry Mine.

Date: Thursday November 18, 2010

Place: Falls City Pub (Wilderness Voyageurs) in Ohiopyle

Time: 5pm: Doors Open (drinks available)

6pm: Food starts (heavy Hors d'oeuvres)

7pm: Music (short sets) and events start

Party is open to the public! It is not necessary to RSVP, but it will help us prepare so if you can, RSVP by emailing [keng4rivers@gmail.com](mailto:keng4rivers@gmail.com) or find MWA on Facebook (search for Mountain Watershed Association) to let us know that you're coming to support the Yough!

**Curry Mine Background Information:**

One year later and not much has changed, though action is expected on the zoning appeal before the end of the year and costs are expected to continue to rise....

The Curry Mine project is a large proposed strip mine along the banks of the Youghiogheny River just below the southern border of Ohiopyle State Park and adjacent to the Great Allegheny Passage bike trail. This proposed mine could potentially have a huge impact on the Yough and two of its tributaries. The Fayette County Zoning Board denied Amerikohl's request for a zoning variance, but now Amerikohl has appealed the Zoning Board's decision. The coal company has also filed a revised application with the Department of Environmental Protection for a strip mining permit. To date, legal expenses for defending for the Yough from this threat have cost over \$11,000 and will only go up as the organization prepares for a decision on the appeal and the possible issuance of the DEP permit.

This is a winnable fight! We know this because the Zoning Board recognized the importance of protecting the crown jewel of the Laurel Highlands and Ohiopyle, and in a rare move, denied the variance due to the evidence of adverse impacts on the resource and public. The coal company may have deep pockets, but they can't match a concerted congregation of passionate and motivated supporters of the great and beloved Youghiogheny! If you want to act, this organization is the key vehicle in the legal battle to do so, and your support is needed.

The Youghiogheny River is an exceptional resource and is incredibly valuable to our area. Public uses of the river include fishing, biking, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, birding, botanizing, to name a few. This rich resource dramatically enhances the quality of life, property value, tourism and economy of the Yough region. In fact, most people recognize the Yough as the cornerstone to the region's natural beauty and allure, which drives the recreational and economic value for local and visiting public alike. Now, more than ever, the Yough needs true friends!!



### CCA to Host Doug Ammons December 3rd

BRV members are invited to a program given by renowned paddler and author Doug Ammons at the Clara Barton Center in Cabin John, MD. Please visit the CCA website at <http://ccadc.org/meetings.html> for details.



## 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

## 2010 BRV Holiday Party

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

**DATE:** **Saturday, December 11, 2010**

**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 Mark Wray by **Thursday, December 9.**

## 2010 BRV TRIP SCHEDULE

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Nov 11-14	Eastern Shore car camper	N/PN	Ed Evangelidi
Dec 18-Jan 16	Central Florida trips	N	Ed Evangelidi

## 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 24, May 26, August 21 (Moonlight Picnic), September 29, November 18, December 11 (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:** Bill Collier, Ginny DeSeau, Ed Grove, Ron Knipling, 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 BRV'ers. 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 BRV'ers. New information about the river (e.g., new hazards) is particularly important. **Photos** are also published. Send prints to the webmaster or e-mail digital photos to the newsletter editor.

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

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



### ***The Voyageur***

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

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**Deadline for January *Voyageur*:**  
Friday, January 7th

**NEXT MEETING**  
**Thursday, November 18th**

**RENEW NOW for 2011:** If your mailing label says 2010, use the membership form included on page 7.