

THE VOYAGEUR



www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org

September 2006

THE PRESIDENT'S PUT-IN

Boy! This sure is a hard column to write. Nothing is happening. Except for a deluge one weekend early in the summer it has been very dry. After three good years a drought is upon us. I want you to know that I take full responsibility for the dry spell. I have lost my rapport with the rain gods. I cannot even buy a little drizzle. Since I have failed in my duty as president to procure rainfall you should find yourselves a new president. Once again the job is open. We also need a new vice-president and four new members of the board of directors. With the decline in membership there is an opportunity for everyone to serve.

My summer of paddling ended on June 22. I was paddling with the Thursday group at Little Falls. I was heading for the left side of the Virginia chute when the turbulence slowly rolled me over to my right. I was trying to keep my head up to avoid hitting the shallow rocks when the paddle was forcefully pulled from my right hand. The paddle was snapped in half. My hand started to hurt almost immediately. I think all the torque on the paddle broke my hand simultaneously. X-rays the next day revealed that the broken bone was rotated ninety degrees and would have never healed properly. I had surgery a week later. The hand surgeon put two pins in my hand for the next four weeks. Since the pins were removed I have been in intensive physical therapy and believe I am now ready to paddle again.

The next meeting is Tuesday, September 12. I do not have a program lined up yet. If you had an exciting trip this summer you can show us your slides or video. I would like you to know that the pizza fund is all but depleted. Please bring an extra buck or two. I will see you at the meeting.

Ernie

Green River, Utah: Desolation and Gray Canyons, 15-22 August 2006

by Frank Fico; photos by Frank Fico and Ron Knipling

Flow at Green River, UT: generally steady between 1400-1600 cfs

Our previous Western river trips had been at the start of the summer, right after school let out. This year, we decided to enjoy Independence Day festivities at home instead of on the river, and requested mid-August put on dates in each of the river permit lotteries we entered. We knew this would mean lower water (perhaps too low in a drought year, which have been all too common out West recently), but it would also mean we would have less competition for the more popular rivers for which we were applying: the Middle Fork and Main Salmon, and the Green through Desolation and Gray Canyons. Joining us in submitting applications were Wes Mills, Ginny DeSeau and Kim Buttleman. For the second year in a row, Wes was the only one to score a permit, for Desolation and Gray Canyon on August 15th.

We immediately began logistical planning for our trip. The first decision needed was what type of boats to take. Bob Kimmel had successfully run this trip three years ago in a self-supported solo canoe, at a relatively low level of 2000 cfs. My preference was to do the same, in order to avoid the logistics of procuring and rowing a raft. However, the initial estimates of the mid-August flow based on snow pack was higher than

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Padding Where the Rich Play by Ed Evangelidi

Rumor has it that certain (many) BRVvers went out west this year. I suspect that you'll see trip reports or hear about trips to the Grand Canyon, Salmon, Green River, etc. This story is slightly different in that we be talking "circle the Tetons" here. Once upon a time early this year Hendrick Van Oss sent out a message that it has been 6 years since the old Roger Corbett-organized group has gone west and that it was time for a repeat. Never mind that the fast snowmelt was leaving rivers out there pretty low [did someone get my attention with the words "low water" – you bet.]

Not having ever dipped a paddle in those streams and having a boating car with 300,000 miles on it, I looked around for sharing a ride out there with a knowledgeable person and found one with a paddler from the Monocacy Canoe Club. [If he was driving a certain Lincoln, I'd call our shared driving out there the "Continental Divide".] Only thing was that this youngster (62 years old) wanted to drive straight through, day and night; and his goal was to bypass Chicago with minimal traffic headaches. I nixed his idea of leaving here at 3 A.M. but gladly agreed to 10 A.M. That left me with taking a turn driving through %#@&* Chicago. We pretty much cruised through with only relatively minor backups around Chicago and relatively heavy rains in Nebraska. The interstate part of Wyoming was about done when we, er, I ran out of gas 10 miles outside of Rock Springs. I had misread his gas gauge [said we still had gas]. We

also had a dead battery since I valiantly coasted about a mile with the engine off but with all of the car electronics on (lights, air, GPS, radio, etc.) Everyone passing by on the highway slowed down to maybe 75, the legal speed limit. It's getting hot in the desert but our brains were still working. I remembered the Coleman fuel (called gasoline) that we brought along and my partner remembered a jump starter that he brought along. Ten miles later we gassed up and pushed on to camp, just north of Jackson Hole.

I've gone this stupid route before: My first time paddling in North Carolina I saw a beautiful run that was up and thought that maybe we should paddle it after we got well settled in with our camp. It turns out that the run was the upper, upper Nantahala and as many of you know, one jumps on it right then and there as it rarely is runnable. Someone mentioned that the Gros Ventre River nearby was running and I was too sleep deprived to jump on it. Turns out it dropped after I missed my one chance to get on it. Others had run it previously that week.

This group of paddlers was actually quite a collection of people from the DC area, North Carolina, Texas, Florida, Colorado, etc. and they had been paddling for quite some time before we arrived and some went elsewhere after we departed. My early-on rivers were pretty much on the Snake and tributaries. We did the Alpine Canyon section of the Snake, Hoback River, Greys River and some did Granite Creek, all stunningly beau-

tiful Cl. 2-3 water just south of Jackson. We also paddled some easier parts of the Snake, such as the "scenic Snake" below Deadmans Bar and below Lake Jackson and also the Flagg Ranch Gorge. We also hiked one day down from the top of the Tetons. I was able to observe an 8' snow tunnel cut out by what was now a very tiny creek. I was later grateful for having to endure the traffic in Jackson as the town was one of the rare places to buy a much needed bath. Most government campgrounds out there do not have showers. Our first trip out of the Snake Basin was to paddle the Gorge on the Wind River, just east of DuBois. Stunning scenery, more desert like, with Cl 2+ water. Richard Hopley knew a higher put in and higher takeout that allowed us to paddle the requisite miles for a full day without having to deal with getting permission to cross Indian reservation lands.

After the last week of July and the first week of our trip were both ending, Hendrick moved us to Montana via Idaho. I was disappointed that we didn't paddle the Cl. 2-3 "Coffee Pot" section of the Henry's Fork River (due partly to cold blustery weather) as I was hoping to at least notch one river in Idaho. Nevertheless, the Gallatin and Yellowstone Rivers in Montana proved to again be very scenic Cl. 2-3 rivers. We later dropped back down into Wyoming to pick up a day each on the Shoshone and North Fork Shoshone (again Cl. 2-3). I was still taking snapshots of different sights up until the end. Unfortunately the pictures are of

the mountainsides and not of the river carnage as carnage was minimal. We had perhaps one of the best paddlers take a brief swim on the Hoback when he was fishing around in his gear for a water bottle, with paddle out of hand, when a very small rock said "gotcha". Another couple of brief swims were on the Gallatin. One swim was with a raft nearby and we were glad that western raft guides are much more friendly to hard boaters as he chased after a loose throw bag into some nasty, rocky water not suitable for rafts.

We were in bear country the whole time and I realized that I was the bear bait. Since I didn't have a car, I watched boats in some remote place while the others took their time finding the best take out or going back to the put in. Must have been all those days without a shower that made the bears want to pass me by. Incidentally, we stopped at lots of outdoor stores and the best bear sprays were around \$50. So I went to a dollar store and bought a couple of different types of crushed hot peppers and liberally dumped the stuff

around my tent site. I was proud of my frugality when Hendrick mentioned that bears actually like peppers, it's the forced spray of the stuff up their noses that stops them. Besides lots of big animals, we noticed the huge influx of people into the area. Construction was ongoing in many places (trendy Jackson was expected), but it was a shock to eat lunch on a formerly isolated mountain dry wash below DuBois while the other side of the river had new McMansions. Bozeman was building subdivisions and shopping centers by the dozen. But these were only distractions; the rivers, mountains and wildlife were well worth every minute of it. Even the many-hour traffic jam returning by Chicago.

A few useful sites:

www.jacksonholekayak.com a good thumbnail description of the Snake River and tributaries.

www.visitsublettecounty.com info on the uppermost part of the Green

www.allaboutrivers.com Henry's Fork shuttle routes

BRV Officers Needed

Ernie Katz, our President, asked Gus Anderson and me to solicit BRV members to be club officers. We are looking to fill the offices of President, Vice-President, Trip Coordinator and up to four members of the Board of Directors. Gus and I will be in touch with as many of you as we can. If anyone is interested in volunteering for these offices, please contact us. Being an officer is fun and a great way to meet other BRV members. There are some long-time members who have never held an office. The entire club would appreciate a willingness on the part of these long-time members to serve as others have. The BRV has declined in size over the past several years; it is very important for the club's future that we have new officers who show an interest in the club. — Bob Maxey

Paddles Repaired

I have been repairing paddles for Keith Backlund for five years and have my own shop in Friendsville. I am working on three paddles for Beth Koller. I also have some paddles for sale. Please visit my website for pricing, location, and a short profile:
www.polarpaddles.com.
Thank you.

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that, and we knew from experiencing Split Mountain Canyon on the Green last summer that we would be in serious danger of swamping our fully loaded canoes. Although Gus Anderson was unable to join us this summer, he graciously offered us the use of his raft, which we had used last year on the Yampa/Green. Wes and I decided to use Gus's raft to carry our gear, enabling us to run the river in boats with full flotation. Under Gus's watchful eye, we rowed the raft down the Bloomington on the final scheduled release day in early June. We then felt prepared to share the rowing duties on Desolation and Gray, which were described as very forgiving for novice oarsmen. To our dismay, we watched the on-line Green River (UT) gauge fall below 2000 by early August, at which point we were fully committed to our choice of boats.

Our group assembled in Roosevelt, UT on 14-15 August. Bridget, Jamie, Kerry and I had driven out carrying the raft, our Mad River ME and Jamie's Twister sit-on-top kayak. We picked up Ginny on the way, who had flown into Denver. Wes and Ryan Mills and Sharon Hoback also drove out, carrying the heavy wooden raft frame, Rick Koller's Aire Tomcat inflatable kayak, and Wes's Mohawk Probe 14 and Perception Pirouette. Kim Buttleman and Jenny Thomas drove in from Idaho with their twin Tomcats, which they had used to scrape down the Selway earlier in the month. Ron Knipling, a late addition to our group, was driven to Roosevelt by Rusty Dowling and friend John Wilson after flying into Grand Junction. He would be paddling Rick's Tom-

cat. Rusty had planned to join us along with John in his raft, but decided to remain with John after his doctor specifically forbade rafting. Apart from the three self-supported duckies, the remaining eight of us planned to share the canoes and kayak, with Jamie primarily in her Twister and Wes and I sharing raft duties. As it turned out, Kim voluntarily ended up behind the oars for three full days, running the hardest rapids of the trip.

Our party arrived at the Sand Wash put-in mid-day on the 15th, after successfully negotiating the notorious dirt road that runs in the wash the last several miles. As the only one without a four-wheel-drive vehicle, I was the most worried. I had even replaced my "donut" spare tire with a full size, in response to the outfitters' warnings to expect a flat tire. Rusty and John accompanied us in John's vehicle to see us off.

As none of us were experienced raft riggers, we were slow in getting ready to put on. A detailed examination of the river map with the BLM ranger took more time. We noticed thunderclouds massing to the west as we struggled to eat lunch and rig the raft. Suddenly, a squall line roared through ahead of the storm, sending one of Wes's unsecured air bags flying downstream. Jamie (who was closest) and Wes both ran after it, but it was quickly blown out of their reach and on down the river. Drenching rain and hail followed, and we were all forced to take shelter in the vehicles after securing the remaining gear. After waiting some time for the heaviest rain to let up, Rusty and John finally decided they had better leave before the road up the wash became impassable. As the

heavy rain continued relentlessly, the rest of us began to worry about a flash flood coming down the wash and sweeping away our boats, gear and possibly vehicles. We hastily moved vehicles back up to the parking area and gear to higher ground. As it turned out, the mouth of the wash had been diverted by the BLM to protect their buildings at the put-in. However, the ranger later confirmed that a wall of water had come down the wash, and Rusty and John had departed just in time.

After this inauspicious start, we finally managed to get on the river at about 4 PM, a light rain still falling. We found the errant air bag about a mile downstream, at the first bend in the river. Wes was happy to find it still fully inflated. We made camp after only 7 miles on river right at Upper Gold Hole. The site was unimpressive, but it had a nice, level sand bench above a beach that was mostly mud. There was a cliff face and steep talus slope across the river. As we landed, we were surprised to see a horse grazing on the tamarisk along shore. We soon spied three more horses precariously arrayed on the talus slope, in terrain normally reserved for mountain sheep. We did see sheep the following morning, but the horses (one just a colt) were still there as well, apparently spending the night on a slope that would have been scary enough in the daylight. The horses likely came down to the river from a side canyon on the Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation, which began just downstream and remained on the left bank for the next 63 miles.

The skies cleared by the next morning, and we had a nice day to try to make up the miles we lost the

day before. The 84-mile Desolation and Gray trip starts out with 26 miles of flatwater, broken only by three riffles. Most groups try to get past these initial miles in the first two days. Although we scheduled an eight-day trip, we wanted to have a layover day to hike, swim, or just relax at camp. Therefore, we needed to at least make it to Jack Creek Rapid this day, which marks the beginning of whitewater.

Bridget wanted to try rowing the raft before we got to whitewater, so she started out from camp for a short time. We stopped for a quick lunch break at Rock House "Rapids," one of the riffles. With three miles to go to Jack Creek, we experienced our first of the notorious headwinds that often mark this section of river. With the rest of the group forming a drafting line and plodding steadily

downstream, Kerry and I in the raft dropped farther behind as I laid into the oars. It seemed to take about an hour to pass the famous Lighthouse Rock depicted in John Wesley Powell's account of his first descent of these canyons. Finally, Jack Creek Rapid appeared around a sharp left bend, and we made camp just below on river right amongst the cottonwoods above a rocky beach after a 19-mile marathon day.

Day 3 found us anticipating our first day of whitewater. Wes took over the oars, and I paddled

the ME solo, then tandem with Kerry. We stopped at Firewater Canyon after paddling four miles and made the half mile hike up the small side canyon just upstream to the "bootlegger's cabin," mentioned in the guidebooks and recommended by Bob Kimmel. We held a permit (separate from the BLM's) to camp on the Indian reservation, and it also specifically allowed this side hike (but not hiking in general). The "cabin" is actually a rough rock-walled shelter



The Fico's in the bootlegger's cabin.

built into a natural rock overhang, with various tools, clothing, glassware and other materials in and around the shelter. Of particular interest to us was the spring flowing from the cliffside up the trail behind the structure. It was our first source of clear water since we left the pavement on the way to Sand Wash, and we brought containers to fill and carry back down to the river. Most filtered the water at the source, but Ron and I drank some without treatment, with no ill effects. Just to be safe, Bridget and I used our unfiltered water for

cooking only.

Following our side hike, we lunched back at the river before continuing downstream. After two miles, we stopped just above Flat Canyon at an obvious landing on river right, and followed a well-worn trail a hundred yards or so to a large petroglyph panel. We didn't tarry long, as we wanted to camp at Steer Ridge Canyon, seven miles farther. Although there were no rapids of consequence in this stretch, there were a number of

braided sections where choosing the incorrect channel would mean grounding the raft in the shallows. We had been careful to pick the deepest channel following our one grounding the day before, when it had taken a concerted effort by most of the group to refloat it. With the benefit of the ranger's map notations, I led the way

down the proper channels on our way to Steer Ridge. However, there was one rocky rapid where the raft got hung up at the top. The rest of us were at the bottom of the rapid, and could offer no assistance. Luckily, Wes was able to get out of the raft and refloat it himself. From that point, we made sure we had one of the canoes act as sweep behind the raft at all times.

Steer Ridge Rapid, rated II+ in Western Whitewater, is the first rapid requiring a scout. Bridget (in

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The group approaching Three Canyons.

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the kayak) and Jamie (who had run everything in her Twister so far) opted to walk around this rapid. Everyone else ran it cleanly on the left. Wes followed up his raft run

rapid on river right, and we ended our 13-mile day there.

After we had finished dinner, we noticed a beaver swimming slowly toward our camp, almost as if he was checking us out. We later noticed a clear beaver track in the sand from the water's edge up to a small shrub with many branches gnawed off. I'm sure he got back to work on it as soon as we departed the next morning.

On day 4, Kim volun-

teered to row, and he would remain behind the oars for three river days. We negotiated a couple easy class II rapids and pulled out at Rock Creek after 2.5 miles, where a trail follows the side canyon for two miles to another fine set of petroglyphs. We did the hike, lunched overlooking the petroglyphs, and returned to refill our water supply from the mouth of the creek. We floated past the abandoned Rock Creek Ranch and newly-posted "No Trespassing" signs, purportedly the result of vandalism and/or thievery by other river parties over the years. Another 4.5 miles and a few more easy rapids brought us to our camp at Three Canyons, another fine sandy beach on river right backing to cottonwood trees. The ranger had recommended this for our layover camp, and noted several features on the map to which we could hike.

Three Canyons is named for the rincon (cut off river meander) and side canyon that enters it near the downstream end. We started our layover day with a hike around the rincon (about 2.5 miles), starting from the upstream end at which



The natural bridge, rincon and river.



The view from Chicken Rock, upstream toward camp.

we were camped. After about a half mile, we spotted the natural bridge that the ranger had mentioned, but was not found in any guidebook. Most of us scrambled to the top and found a perfect photo opportunity looking through the bridge with the present-day canyon in the background. We continued the relatively easy hike around the rincon and lunched in the mouth of the side canyon under a lone cottonwood. Most of the group returned to camp after lunch, but a few of us scrambled up to a prominent balanced rock formation named Chicken Rock, due to its appearance from the river. After reaching the summit about 800 feet above the river, we enjoyed a spectacular 360-degree view.

Back at camp, we joined the others swimming, taking sun showers, and relaxing. The wind returned with a vengeance by mid-afternoon, and some tents had to be emptied of sand that blew in through the mesh doors. But as we watched a large raft group labor past our camp against the wind, we felt fortunate we were laying over on this day. In the late afternoon, a small herd of mountain sheep moved upstream along the cliffside across the river.

Reinvigorated by our layover, we launched on day 6, intending to reach the end of Desolation Canyon by day's end. We planned a stop 2.5 miles downstream at Chandler Canyon to filter water at the mouth of the perennial side stream. Chan-

dlar Falls is rated II- in Western Whitewater, and we had received no warnings about it. After a quick boat scout, I ran it first solo in the ME, followed by Bridget in the kayak and Jamie in her Twister. There were a couple of holes at the bottom not visible from above the drop that I avoided on the left. I eddied out and looked back just in time to see Jamie overturn in the bottom hole and wash free. Bridget chased down her boat and paddle while I towed Jamie to shore, shaken but unhurt. Everyone else



Kim rows Ryan, Kerry and Sharon through Wire Fence.

successfully avoided the holes, but the raft (with Sharon, Kerry and Ryan aboard) got too far right and shipped a bunch of water. We regained our composure while lunching at the bottom of the rapid, deciding it must wash out at normal (higher) river levels.

We proceeded downstream through a number of easy rapids until reaching Joe Hutch Canyon Rapid. This rapid is only rated class II, but Bob Kimmel and others had warned it would have the largest waves of the entire trip. We

scouted and ran it without incident, with Jamie portaging and Wes running the kayak for Bridget once again. A storm was brewing, so we quickly continued on down, staying just ahead of the heavy rain as it passed from west to east behind us. We exited Desolation Canyon and approached Wire Fence Rapid, not even mentioned in Western Whitewater. But we had been told it was worthy of a scout, so I paddled ahead to take a look. It was a straightforward series of waves clearly runnable on the left, very

similar to Joe Hutch. I motioned Bridget and Jamie to an easy portage spot, and waved the others on through without stopping.

We camped that night after making 13 miles just below Wire Fence and just above Three Fords Rapid, most difficult of the trip. It was a sandy bench interspersed with small trees, with an expansive view of the sky, as we were between Desolation and Gray Canyons.

With the moon waning and rising very late, we had enjoyed stargazing, especially the two previous nights at Three Canyons, where we had seen satellites, the space station and a number of shooting stars. But this night was the most spectacular of all, with everyone around the gathering circle enjoying an unobstructed view of the sky.

The next morning, some of us hiked down for a preview of Three Fords. Although rated only II+ in the guidebook, Bob and others

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GREEN (Continued from page 7) rated it a III or IV at low water. It featured a large hole right at the top which could be skirted by all but the raft, which had to punch it with some momentum. The kids, Sharon and Bridget all decided to walk it. (Jamie was riding the raft and we had strapped her Twister to the back.) Kim and Wes ran first, a tandem in the Probe. They expertly eddy-hopped down the left, looking like they had years of experience paddling together rather than it being their inaugural run. They then walked back up, Wes taking the kayak and Kim the raft without passengers. The duckies (Ginny paddling Kim's) all had good runs. I came up the rear in the ME after videotaping the others and did fine until almost pinning on a small rock in the bottom drop, which I could not see well-enough from my perch high on river right. I was able to step out onto a larger rock and work the boat around the pinning rock.

We proceeded into Gray Canyon, which, apart from the color change from the reds of Desolation, featured shorter but tighter canyon walls. We stopped for lunch at Range Creek, then pressed ahead to try to give ourselves a shorter final day. We stopped to scout Coal Creek Rapid, which Western Whitewater rates as III-, "usually the biggest of the run." It had a very rocky entrance, with big waves at the bottom. I demonstrated a line I saw through the rocks. The others more or less followed my line, with Bridget striking off on a route to the far right that had just enough water. Kim in the raft hung up briefly at the top, but freed himself without having to get out. We continued on to camp

about a half mile above Rattlesnake on river left, with a view across the river at a rock formation reminiscent of Seneca Rocks. It was not ideal, having to carry our gear over mud and rocks to reach the sandy bench, but we were more than ready to stop after paddling 14 miles and two major rapids this day.

On our final day, I took over the oars from Kim, both to get some more experience rowing through rapids and to give Kim a break from the three kids, still all riding in the raft. Rattlesnake was the biggest rapid remaining, rated II+. I negotiated the raft through the rocks without incident. We stopped for lunch just below Sand Knolls Rapid. I switched boats with Wes after lunch and paddled tandem with Sharon in



Ron punches the top hole at Three Fords

the Probe so I could get to the take-out ahead of everyone and videotape their arrival. Though only rated II-, Swasey's Rapid just above the take-out provided a bouncy and exciting close to our trip. We arrived at the boat ramp about 3 PM after an 11-mile final day.

Wes, Jenny and I were very happy to find our vehicles at the take-out with all parts intact. We had made arrangements with Desolation Outfitters in Roosevelt to



Frank picks a route through Coal Creek Rapid.



Wes and Sharon blast through the standing waves at the bottom of Coal Creek.

shuttle them for us rather than waste a day of vacation running the 190-mile (one way) shuttle. They had also provided the portable toilet for our trip, with the proprietor, "Stag Man," dropping it off at our hotel the night before our trip. For only \$45, we got the toilet (with extra tank) for eight days, and then we were allowed to drop it off full in Green River, 10 miles from the take-out. Perhaps the Stag Man miscalculated, but we paid much more than that last year on the Yampa for fewer days, and we had to clean it at the dump station.

After a couple hours de-rigging, packing and loading, we all gathered in Green River at Ray's Tavern (another recommendation from Bob). This time, we were able to beat the storm, which let loose on our way to town. Ray's is a neat mix of local pool hall and boater bar, with walls full of river photos and T-shirts from as far away as the Yough. After an excellent dinner, we said good-bye to Ron, who was staying the night in

we had rented campground cabins for the next several days. On one of our last days in Moab, Bridget, Jamie, Kerry and I and Wes, Sharon and Ryan took the raft out for a day trip on the Colorado River above town, and experienced headwinds worse than any we had on the Green.

Despite the bad weather that delayed our put-on, we really lucked out with good weather for this trip. The winds were generally not bad, and the temperatures were in the 80s during the day and low 60s at night. We heard from the ranger that rowed past our camp at Three

town before taking the train back to Grand Junction the next day. The rest of us drove an hour south to Moab, where

Canyons that the temperatures had been in the low 100s just a couple weeks before. We also noticed the summer crowds were absent from all the tourist destinations we visited in Moab and on the way home, as most schools were back in session. All-in-all, mid-August turned out to be a good time to start the trip, and we may block this time period again for next year. Now if we could just have a little more water in the rivers, everything would be perfect.

Acknowledgements: Thanks to Gus Anderson for the use of his raft for this trip. Thanks to Bob Kimmel for valuable information and a slide show of his trip down Desolation and Gray. I also received detailed information from Susan Klimas of West Virginia Wildwater Association, who has made this trip twice in the past five years. Thanks to Wes Mills for his skill at winning permit lotteries and then following up with logistical arrangements (toilet rental, car shuttle, etc.). And finally, thanks to all the participants of this trip who managed to get along so well together for eight days in very close quarters.



Canoe Camping Pack List

by Ron Knipling; photo by Bridget Fico

Over the years I have been on many canoe camping and backpacking trips, but my trip to the Green River in Utah this summer was my first extended trip. The trip was entirely self-

supported and each person/family was responsible for their own gear and supplies, with the exception of the communal toilet. I spent a lot of time checking and refining my canoe camping pack list, and it took several days to get everything together and packed. But the time and careful planning paid off as I didn't run out of anything and took only a few items I didn't need. So here is a

canoe camping packing list that might be helpful for short or long self-supporting trips. The categories are

mostly functional but also reflect the way I packed and carried things. I have put a question mark next to those items I consider optional. Of course, not all

items apply to all people or situations, and you may have other essential items. *[Despite his "inexperience," Ron packed like a seasoned pro, and we all enjoyed his citronella candle collection in lieu of making campfires. I noticed one item missing from the list below — he pulled out a very compact but fully functional kite during our layover day when the wind came up. It seemed*



Ron at camp #6 on the Green.

like he could conjure up anything that was needed out of his bag of tricks! — Ed.]

Accessible Fanny/Day pack

First aid kit

Paper towels/TP

Camera

Compass/GPS?

Snacks

Handkerchief/sweat rag

Knife

Other personal items

Maps/Guides

(keep accessible in boat)

Boat:

Paddles (2)

Life jacket

River knife

Helmet?

Gloves?

Throw rope

Bailer and/or sponge

Carabiners (Note: they get hot in sun)

Painter/tie ropes

Duct tape, other repair items

Dry Bags & Ties

Large bag(s) for camp gear

Smaller & clear bag(s) for accessible gear

4-6' straps to strap down bags

Small carabiners to attach gear to straps

Other tie ropes

Fluids & Containers

Accessible water bottles (2-3)

Gallon jug of Gatorade, etc. (drink & then use jug for water)

Bladder-type water jug

Wide-mouth jugs/bottles

Water filter (check before trip)

Note: Nice to fix green or Ginseng tea in camp to drink on river later.

Tent & Camp

Pad(s)

Sleeping bag

Pillow

Camp chair

Camp table?

Note: Tent fly can also be used as drop cloth for gear in camp

Stove

Fuel (+ extra)

Pot (s)

Waterproof matches

Small wash cloth

"Food Bag"

Forks, spoons, knives

Sharp knife

Salt & pepper

Scrub pad

Wash cloth

Waterproof matches

Bowl(s) & cup(s)

Mesh bag

Biodegradable soap

Trash bags

Sealable freezer bags, small & medium (very handy!)

Upcoming Trips

September evenings	Local paddling	N/I	Tom Prunier	703-527-3163	prunier@erols.com
Sept. 16	Lower Yough	I	Jennifer Plyler	301-445-4815*	Pls98@verizon.net
October 7-9	Eastern Shore camper	N/II	Ed Evangelidi	304-262-8924	edevange@localnet.com
October 28	Nantahala	I	Jennifer Plyler	301-445-4815*	Pls98@verizon.net
October 28	Russell Fork (Class 3 section)	I	Beth Koller	240-506-0417	ekoller2@earthlink.net
Nov. 4-5	Tohickon	I	Courtney Caldwell	703-802-0155	cccaldwell@lnc.com
Nov. 11-12	NJ Pine Barrens	N/I	Ed Evangelidi	304-262-8924	edevange@localnet.com
Nov. 24 - Dec. 3	Eastern VA/NC area	N/I	Ed Evangelidi	304-262-8924	edevange@localnet.com

*please call before 8 PM

Small gear bag to pack lunch daily

Drink

Coffee and/or tea
Powdered Gatorade, etc.
Powdered milk?
Booze, wine, beer (plenty!)

Food (for each day)

Dinner
Trail mix
Snacks (e.g., pretzels, nuts)
Granola bars
Oatmeal
Sugar
Fruit cups
Gum or other electrolyte snack
Tuna/chicken snack cans
Cookies
Oranges & apples

Light

Headlamp
Flashlights (2)
Extra batteries
Citronella candles (very nice in camp)
Small space lamp?
Small glowsticks?

Miscellaneous

Towel
Trash bags
Small drop cloth?
Cord
Books (e.g., nature books)
Cards, other games?
Writing tablet
Walking stick?

Personal

Medications
OTC drugs
TP/paper towels
Toothbrush & paste
Moist towelettes
Skin lotion (skin gets very dry)
Medicinal lotions (e.g., anti-fungal)
Contact lenses? (hard to keep clean)
Spare glasses
Sunglasses (+ extra?) (Note: Sun is very bright on river.)
Sunscreen
Insect repellent
Wallet/money/keys
Eye shades

Clothing

River shoes

Camp shoes/hiking boots

Socks (thin liner socks work well)
Shorts/bathing suit
Pants
Underpants
Tee shirts
Long sleeve shirts (recommended on river if sun is intense)
Shirt(s)/night shirt(s)
Light fleece vest

Long johns (thin)

River pants
Windbreaker/poncho
Hats (wide brim hat for river)
Notes: Synthetic clothes are lighter, dry faster, and smell less.
Plan on separate clothes for river and camp, as river clothes get very dirty. Gear bags are helpful for organizing clothes.

Other Notes & reminders:

Remove knives, etc. before air travel.
Replenish all supplies you normally carry (sunblock, repellent, medications, etc.).
Bring nothing that will melt under hot sun.

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 2006: January 24, March 22, May 16, July 8 (Moonlight Picnic), September 12, November 14, December 9 (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 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; [vacant], VP; Bob Maxey, Trip Coordinator; Clark Childers, Treasurer; Frank Fico, Newsletter Editor; Kathleen Sengstock, Conservation Chairman.

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), 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. 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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- Trip reports:
 - Green River, UT (p. 1)
 - WY and MT day trips (p. 2)
- BRV officers sought (p. 3)
- Canoe Camping pack list (p. 10)

Deadline for November *Voyageur*:
Friday, October 27

NEXT MEETING
Tuesday, September 12