

THE VOYAGEUR



www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org

Spring 2016

THE PRESIDENT'S PUT-IN

The 2016 season has already begun with at least three trips looking for paddlers posted in the email paddling world in February. A pretty good start. Remember the trip schedule for the club is listed on the BRV webpage: <http://www.blueridgevoyageurs.org/Schedule.html>. Many thanks to Bob Maxey for putting in the effort for organizing and arm twisting members into leading some trips. (My arm has recovered from his efforts.) Also note the midweek paddling groups on the schedule webpage. I mention this last item for the benefit of the numerous retirees now constituting the club membership.

We will finally convene for a meeting this year barring any new snow storms. It is scheduled for March 22nd Tuesday. Courtney Caldwell has generously proffered his firm's conference room for our gathering. The Library at Pimmit Hills is undergoing renovation for the next 18 months and will be unavailable for our use. The meeting will feature the further adventures of Keith and Carolyn. This time it's a trip to Madagascar. Keith has also promised a BRV member/lemur lookalike contest during the showing with prizes being awarded. A pity Gravatt won't be attending.

We will be calling out for delivery pizza and it will be a BYOB affair. I will also be bringing one case of beer leftover from the Christmas party to supplement the festivities. I will include directions to Courtney's in an email next week.

Rick

Some Steve Ettinger Remembrances by Ed Evangelidi

Most tiny ditch explorations started with X amount of rain predicted by morning. Steve was up on all forecasts and would send word out when things looked favorable. Of course either the amount of rain or location of favorable rain was often not as predicted. But we were at the ready if Steve said conditions continued to look favorable. Most of these trips were in the days of rotary phones, telephone gauge updates (sometimes) and no cell phones or E-mail. You know – the good ol' days.

I'll start with two trips that almost ended it all. Steve noted good rain predictions just north of D.C. and the Hawlings River seemed a good bet to explore. Everything was all set except Steve had a meeting at work that he had to adjourn first. Unfortunately the meeting lasted longer than he expected and we got a way too late start as the "river" (tiny creek actually) drops fast and with our late start we put on about an inch below zero. This river is a nice feisty Class 2 with lots of sharp rocks. We left way too many of them painted with boat colors. But that is not the whole story. As we were running shuttle (with the windows open), Steve was driving with a map spread out in front of him (again, this was way before GPS) and focusing on these back road

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A New Edition of Keystone Canoeing is Out

A fifth edition of Keystone Canoeing came off the press in November 2015. Still bearing the familiar front cover, it hopefully represents a current and accurate picture of Pennsylvania's waterways. I never cease to be amazed at how much the streams and the lands they flow through change, enough so in this case to tweak or significantly change nearly three out of every four pages in the previous (2004) edition. So if you are still using a duct-taped 20-year-old version, I am flattered, but perhaps you are ready for an upgrade.

Stay safe, and see you on the river,
Ed Gertler

The Washington Post, in its appreciation article on author Elmore Leonard following his death, gave examples of Leonard's incisive dialogue. In one crime story, a hoodlum speaks of all the money he got from a big heist: "I spent half of it on broads, boats, and booze. The rest I just wasted." — Ron Knippling

I had a bit too much to drink at a boaters party and I weaved a bit going home and caught quite a few "eddies" too. The officer pulled me over and I explained that I was a boater and was practicing skirting holes and catching eddies while driving home. He said he was a boater too and would have bought my answer if I hadn't missed the two gates at the toll booth. — Ed Evangelidi

STATEMENTS OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>Budget 2016</u>
Cash Balance, January 1	<u>\$ 2,940</u>	<u>\$ 1,925</u>	<u>\$ 2,267</u>	<u>\$ 1,930</u>	<u>\$ 1,605</u>
Receipts					
Memberships	<u>777</u>	<u>1,381</u>	<u>973</u>	<u>671</u>	<u>780</u>
Disbursements					
Newsletter	292	322	188	211	230
Xmas Party/Picnic	1,262	485	572	154	455
Web Site	110	110	-	95	95
Oth er	128	122	215	196	200
Equipment				340	-
Transfer to conservation	-	-	<u>335</u>	-	-
	<u>1,792</u>	<u>1,039</u>	<u>1,310</u>	<u>996</u>	<u>980</u>
Cash Balance, December 31	<u>\$ 1,925</u>	<u>\$ 2,267</u>	<u>\$ 1,930</u>	<u>\$ 1,605</u>	<u>\$ 1,405</u>
Members	<u>90</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>60</u>
Conservation Fund:					
Cash Balance, January 1	\$ 695	\$ (51)	\$ (26)	\$ -	\$ 273
Receipts:					
Conservation	254	325	216	273	300
Flood Relief	-	500	-	-	-
Transfer	-	-	335	-	-
Disbursements:					
Conservation	<u>(1,000)</u>	<u>(800)</u>	<u>(525)</u>	-	<u>(500)</u>
Cash Balance, December 31	<u>\$ (51)</u>	<u>\$ (26)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 273</u>	<u>\$ 73</u>

ETTINGER (Continued from page 1)

routes. I had picked up some sound of what sounded like teenagers joyriding. Sure enough they round a sharp curve in front of us doing about 50 and way out of control. Fortunately Steve heard my "whoa!!!" and quickly pulled off the road just as they swerved the whole width of the road trying to regain control of their car. I lost one of my nine lives on that one. Another time I almost abandoned my boat. We were paddling an obscure creek that flows under I-81 called Narrow Passage Creek. Clearly my least favorite creek – in hindsight – as it had six fences of about 20' high and solid with each fence of a different design and differing materials. I could not see getting our boats up and over these fences but Steve kept trying until we were successful.

Another trip with potentially disastrous results was on one of the three Little Antietams. We were well up into the mountains when we came to the uppermost put in. Steve did not mention at the time that we were at 100 feet per mile at that point and the creek was barely wide enough to float. Steve gracefully let me take the lead. For the next 1/4 to 1/2 mile we went through trees with no way to paddle or stop as we were gorilla walking while pushing off trees — all at a super-fast 100' per mile drop. Any strainer would have been absolutely disastrous. A neighbor was fascinated at us doing this insane thing and she essentially ran safety for us by being at all road crossings.

Another day we were exploring three small creeks west of Winchester, Va. We ran the first creek in a bit of rain and this guy in a pickup truck came towards us at the takeout. He was not happy as we had paddled through his property. He had his wipers on fast forward the whole time and his engine running and heater on as he was talking to us (for well over 1/2 hour). His main problem was that he thought we had paddled through in order to pick his mushrooms. Steve schmoozed him enough so that we were eventually talking beyond the alleged trespass. Steve had one problem when talking to back woodsmen: he of-

ten mentioned that we were from D.C. I've met too many folks in our mountain area who do not like "government" types and anyone from D.C. was a government type.

The next few trips were beyond the boundaries of Steve's book. I had always wanted to paddle Bear Creek coming into Friendsville. We had favorable rains and a large group had gathered at the put in just off the interstate. Unfortunately there was almost but not quite enough rain. I mentioned that the South Fork comes in downstream and sure enough we had enough water there. Fortunately a familiar boater to BRV — Bob Opachko — was there and he casually said that he did not think we should run the lower part because of severe strainers. Realizing that Bob tended to understate problems, I convinced the group that the strainer situation was as bad as Bob had remembered. The group then had a fine run on the North Fork of the Casselman without the loss of boaters or boats. One other day it was just Steve and I and we had settled on the North Fork of Snowy Creek (an Upper Yough trib.). Steve and I traded off leading and I came around a blind turn and heard Steve yell. I barely managed to catch the other micro-eddy and looked down at a long slide into a teacup full of water followed by another long slide with another teacup — with a big solid strainer across it. Looked like sudden acceleration into a major disaster. But we portaged. Finally, a trip report from one of the only times I remember that Steve backed off a creek that I had wanted to paddle. We were at perhaps the uppermost paddle-able tributary of the North Branch Potomac — one of the Laurel Creeks in that area — and it quickly disappeared downstream into a laurel thicket. After a hesitation from Steve, we left and paddled one of the most disgusting looking creeks we ever set a paddle into, the West Fork of Sand Run into Sand Run. It was a "keep your mouth shut run" as it was clearly heavily-laden with chemicals and had a gray oily sheen. Steve of course has had an article written up in the Wall Street Journal about his exploits in local foul waters.

For Sale: Esquif L'Edge (9' solo whitewater canoe/playboat). Includes airbags and new bilge pump. Lime green with yellow bags. Very stable, easy to paddle. Crack in bottom of hull sealed with polyethylene weld; will guarantee repair. Originally \$2,200 with accessories. Paddled approximately 75 times over 3 years. \$750 OBO. Ron Knipling, (703) 533-2895, rknipling@aol.com.

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 4 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 dates to be scheduled in the following months: January, March, May, September and November. 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. In addition to the regular meetings in 2015, there is a club Moonlight Picnic on July 16th and a Holiday Party in December TBD.

BRV Website: The BRV website (<http://www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org>) provides information on trips, meetings, and other club events.

2016 BRV Officers: Rick Koller, President; Mark Wray, VP; Bob Maxey, Trip Coordinator; Clark Childers, Treasurer; Frank Fico, Newsletter Editor; Kathleen Sengstock, Conservation.

2016 Board of Directors: Ginny DeSeau, 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 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, though via electronic mail is preferred; send to fico1@netzero.net. 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 — 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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In this issue...

- Memories of Steve Ettinger (p. 1)
- BRV Treasurer's Report (p. 2)
- 2016 membership roster and trip schedule (enclosed)

Deadline for Summer *Voyageur*:
Friday, June 3rd