

THE VOYAGEUR



www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org

Summer 2014

THE PRESIDENT'S PUT-IN

The river levels have been kind to us so far this year, not real high but there's always some interesting water to be had. Another plus this year are the releases on the Savage, always a zesty run. I look forward to seeing many of you this summer on the float.

Mark Wray will have details for the moonlight picnic in this issue of the *Voyageur* [see box at right]. See you there.

Rick

Spring Paddling on Rappahannock Tribs by Bob Maxey

Covington River, March 30

Paddlers: Larry Lempert, Frank Fico, Bob Maxey, Matt Anderson, Matt Davidson (perfect size group for a small river)

Gauge: Rixeyville 8.0-8.5, Battle Run 200-250 cfs, put-in RC ~3"

We had several days of rain prior to the weekend. Frank Fico suggested the Covington and it was great. The rain stopped just before we started and we stayed dry all day. Matt Davidson had to be rescued due to a tree across the river; other than that there were no problems. There were numerous logs to deal with, but we had to get out only twice more for them. Everyone did the S-turn Volkswagen Rock rapid just fine. The river was just above 0 (as shown by the bridge gauge on Rt. 622), as it was a little scrappy. There are a lot of ledges in this 6-mile run and it was a good warm-up for more spring boating. We were only on the river for 2+ hours and the temperature

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2014 BRV MOONLIGHT PICNIC

LOCATION: The usual **Violette's Lock/Virginia Canal Loop**, off River Road, north of Potomac, MD.

DATE: **Saturday, July 12, 2014**

TIME: Meet at Violette's Lock parking lot at **5:00 PM**. Canoe/kayak departure at approximately 5:30 PM; return to Violette's Lock approximately 10:30 PM (or whenever you like).

BRING: Food (see below), blanket/chairs as desired, water, bug repellent, flashlight(s).

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

A-G: salads, uncooked veggies, fruit dish

H-N: desserts, snacks

O-Z: pasta, casserole, cooked veggies, rice, etc.

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

COST: **\$5** for adults, **\$3** 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 at 703-222-4842 by **Thursday, July 10th**.

CAMPING: It is permissible to camp at the picnic site, so if you would like to do so, bring your gear.

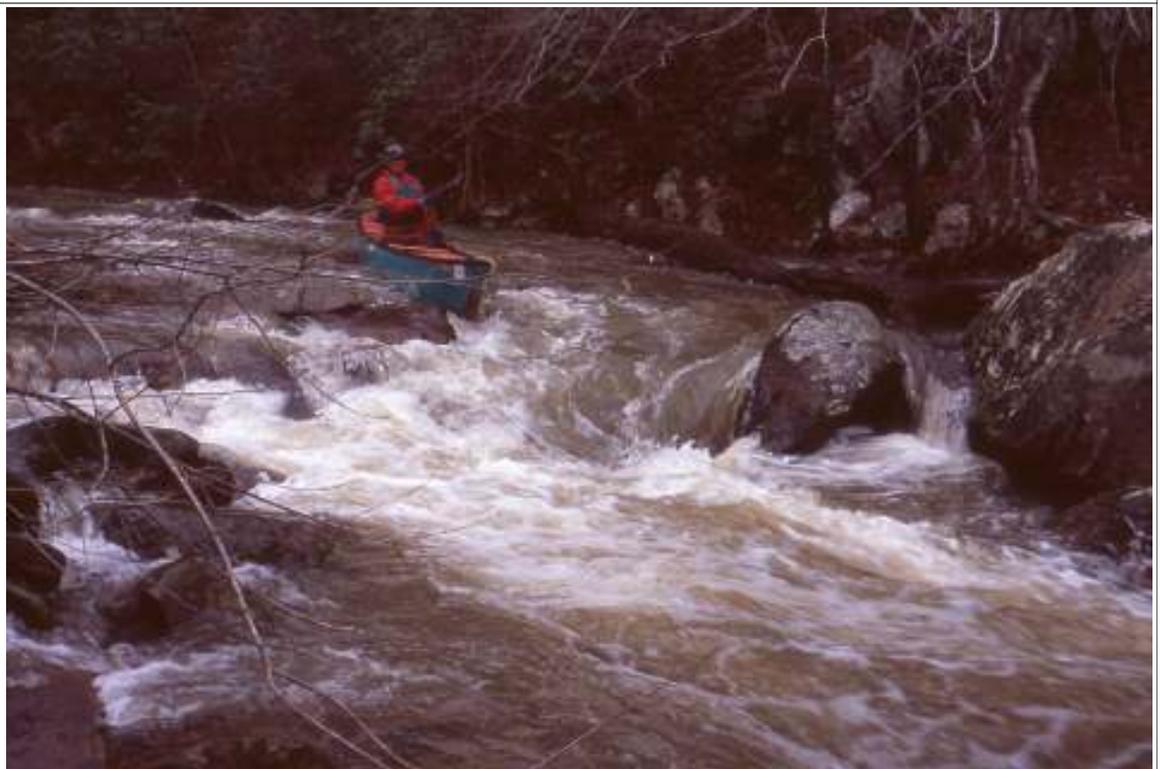
PARKING: Parking at Violette's Lock is unrestricted, but there is little police surveillance. This has not been a high theft location in the past, but please do not leave valuables in your vehicles!

Rapp Tribs (Continued from page 1)

was 42 — perfect dry suit weather. As soon as we got the boats loaded for the return shuttle, it started to sleet. I could not believe the snow storm that was present from Manassas to Alexandria. We paddled during the only dry time of the day.

Rush River, May 1

Paddlers: Glen Johnston, Kim Buttleman, Mike Martin, Bob Maxey



Frank Fico enters Volkswagen Rock rapid on the Covington.

There were several days of rain earlier in the week, so many rivers were up for a few days following. We chose the Rush River, which I had never paddled before. The put-in along Rt. 211 is great: covered picnic tables, changing rooms and fireplaces. But, the paddling to the Rt. 626 bridge is terrible: there are at least 3 bad strainers in this stretch. After several of us (not named above) had a bad brush with these logs, the group

was reduced from 7 to 4. The rest of the trip was nice; there were only 2 more portages and lots of fine white water at a 1-foot level. This trip was quite a contrast with the wintry paddle on the Covington. There was a beautiful green hue on the trees; redbud and dogwood were out in profusion. In summary: this is a nice winter paddle or after rains in the spring or summer, but do not put in at the Rt. 211 bridge.



Matt Anderson makes the crux move at Volkswagen Rock.

Lower Shenandoah River Basin Tributaries

by Ed Evangelidi

The Shenandoah River crosses from Virginia into Jefferson County, West Virginia just before emptying into the Potomac. The eastern side of the river is hemmed in by the close in Blue Ridge Mountain but the western side is mostly a broad plain stretching towards Opequon Creek on the west side of the county. The entire area is a karst area with substantial underground water including underground lakes and many springs. Unfortunately the surface area is well developed with many property fences. Major tributaries that should be included in any paddling summaries of the area include:

Flowing Springs Run

Most people who paddle the Shenandoah Staircase drive over this run just before putting in at Millville. It always has some flow from springs but occasionally rises to paddleable levels. An upper section from Country Club Road (just off US 340) to US 340 in Halltown runs along a rail line. The lower section is prettier and also runs along the same rail line but is not considered as a continuous paddle because of a recently built fence across the stream by a federal government agency that does not allow trespass. Therefore this short section below the federal facility with ducks, beavers and lots of wood can only be reached by a long carry in from a battlefield hiking trail from a parking lot on Bloomery Road.

Evitts Run

From Rt. 51 to old US 340 in Charles Town is a section that WV uses to stock trout. Old US 340 has a nasty pipe under the road that requires care. From

there to Cave Run Road is a section that seems to have more water than the sections above and below it. There is a nice park and trail off Cave Run Road that one can use to scout the strainers. Below here is a section that is included in the Capital Canoeing and Kayaking guidebook.

Bullskin Run

From Rt. 13/2 to the North Fork of Bullskin Run (the North Fork is unscouted) is another run that is trout stocked. This section with nice rapids is a bit narrow and requires a lot of water to run. From the North Fork to the Shenandoah River is a section much more likely to be paddleable.

Long Marsh Run

At Rt. 38 (Smith Road) the creek is quite narrow but holds water and wood. An alternate put in is on a tributary at the intersection of Rts. 38 and 25/6. Take out on Rt. 25/2 (Dutch Hill Rd.)

Notes:

1. Bullskin Run has its own USGS gauge and I noted that at 70-75 CFS most of these runs were paddleable. Flowing Springs Run was at a nice low level with high water in Charles Town; Evitts Run was at an okay high level; Bullskin Run was also okay on the high side below the North Fork and too low above; Long Marsh Run was at an okay level.
2. These runs would accompany the map on p. 322 of Capital Canoeing and Kayaking.
3. WV DNR has a fishing map of the river that shows the access points between the state line and Millville.

Roster Updates

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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 announced via email in January, March, May, September, November. The Moonlight Picnic will be on July 12 and the Holiday Party will be on December 6; details to be provided in the Summer and Winter newsletters, respectively. 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.

2014 BRV Officers: Rick Koller, President; Mark Wray, VP; Mike Martin & Daryl Hall, Trip Coordinators; Clark Childers, Treasurer; Frank Fico, Newsletter Editor; Kathleen Sengstock, Conservation.

2014 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: via electronic mail (preferred; send to fico1@netzero.net), on disk, typed, handwritten, faxed or over the phone. For trip reports, try to include the following information (if applicable): names of participants, relevant NWS gauge readings of nearby rivers, description of the water level on the river (e.g., minimum, moderate, maximum, or number of inches above or below "zero"), weather conditions, hazards, difficult rapids, info on put-ins or takeouts, distinctive scenery, and overall difficulty in relation to rivers well known to BRVers. New information about the river (e.g., new hazards) is particularly important. **Photos** are also published. Send prints to the webmaster or e-mail digital photos to the newsletter editor.

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

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



The Voyageur

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

In this issue...

- Trip Reports:
- Covington and Rush (p. 1)
- Lower Shenandoah tribs. overview (p. 3)

Next Meeting: Saturday, July 12
(Moonlight Picnic)

Deadline for Autumn *Voyageur*:
Friday, September 5th