

THE VOYAGEUR



www.BlueRidgeVoyageurs.org

Winter 2016

THE PRESIDENT'S PUT-IN

Holiday greetings to all, hope to see lots of people at the upcoming annual holiday bash in Arlington. The upcoming year will highlight members' past season's paddling and alternate adventures at the club meetings. I've already had several members volunteer to share with us their trip experiences. Something to amuse us during the winter doldrums for paddling. See you at the party on Dec. 12.

Rick

Hughes River, Peola Mills to Boston (on the Hazel River)

by Bob Maxey

This trip is classic Randy Carter paddling: close by to Warrenton, small, beautiful and with just enough whitewater to have fun. Keith Masill and I had the river to ourselves. There had been rain for a couple of days preceding our trip on Nov. 20, raising water in the streams near Sperryville. During our dither, Jim Long suggested that we paddle the Hughes, based on a visual reading he made the day before. The Remington gauge was about 6.5 feet when we put on; we had about 6 inches to a foot of water on the river, so Jim's suggestion was a good one. According to the AWWI list of Virginia rivers, the Hughes should not have been runnable. As we were nearing the Culpeper area we could see the Blue Ridge and Old Rag Mountain, to the north of the Hughes, off in the distance. The sky was clear giving us beautiful sunshine for our day. At the beginning of our run, we saw another paddler in the bushes on the far side of the river. Turns out it was Ed Gertler, paddling the river alone after running a bicycle shuttle of 24 miles—twice the length of our trip of 12 miles. Since Ed declined to paddle with us, he could have at least cleared out the three strainers that we portaged or paddled around! None of the ledges on these rivers are dangerous. We saw several deer crossing the river, thankful that we did not have guns! We surprised a blue heron looking for dinner and we chased him downstream a short distance before he flew away from us. It is great to have this small paddling gem so nearby; I hope that new paddlers will enjoy it as well.

2015 BRV Holiday Party

LOCATION: Lyon Village Community Center, 1920 N. Highland Street, Arlington, VA 22201

DATE: **Saturday, December 12, 2015** TIME: 5:30-10 PM COST: \$15 adults, \$5 kids under 12

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 turkey/ham and drinks (soda, wine and beer — approximately two per person).

RSVP to Mark Wray: redshoestwo@juno.com

Harpers Ferry River Access Plan Completed

by Kevin Colburn, American Whitewater

[adapted from a posting November 23, 2015 to www.americanwhitewater.org]

The Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers meet in the small historic town of Harper's Ferry West Virginia. Tens of thousands of people enjoy floating, fishing, and swimming in the rivers each year, and yet river access has proven inadequate and unsafe in meeting the recreational interest. The rivers in this small confluence area are bordered by four National Park units, three states, four counties, a highway, and a railroad. In 2015, American Whitewater worked with the National Parks Service's Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program to create a river access plan that crossed all these jurisdictions, aimed at creating sustainable and achievable solutions to longstanding river access hurdles in the area. The quality, capacity, and handicap accessibility of river access is severely inadequate relative to the quality of these outstanding rivers.

Shenandoah Put In Recommendations:

- Enhance Millville Powerhouse and Tailrace put ins and portage opportunities through engaging in the dam relicensing.
- Pursue new public river access opportunities on Old Standard Quarry land through working with willing landowner(s).
- Explore the potential to purchase or lease a lower Millville put in from willing seller or leasee.
- Create better understanding and sharing of access and shuttle options offered by outfitters.

Potomac Put In Recommendations:

- Improve Potomac put in at Dam 3 by formalizing and expanding parking, possibly by moving gate, through working with managers. This project could align with NPS Harpers Ferry NHP Centennial project for Potomac Armory Canal Trail between Lower Town and River Riders.
- Work with NPS C&O Canal NHP to more clearly share river access rules at Lock 34.
- Create better understanding and sharing of access and shuttle options offered by outfitters.

Take-Out Recommendations:

- Secure a safe and legal public railroad crossing at Weverton with a sustainable trail to the river, in cooperation with CSX, the four National Parks and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.
- Re-design Potoma Wayside with potential ADA and Vehicular access to the river, potentially utilizing one of two old roads to the river in conjunction with the Rt. 340 bridge project.
- Create better understanding and sharing of access and shuttle options offered by outfitters.

Recommendation Summary:

The recommendations in this plan will lead to outstanding public whitewater access opportunities on the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers through creative partnerships. The plan strives to create acceptable short-term solutions to fill immediate needs, while at the same time pursuing ideal long-term solutions that are in keeping with the National Park setting and high quality of the recreational opportunities. When the plan is implemented, the public will have a wide range of options for sustainably enjoying the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers.

Next Steps:

Work groups of diverse stakeholders were established in the summer of 2015 that will address each of the recommendations listed above. Some of these projects are actively moving forward at this time. American Whitewater and the National Park Service RTCA program will help to convene and facilitate these work groups and will bring stakeholders back together in 2016 to share updates and outcomes. We encourage all Park Service, County, State, Railroad, and Transportation planners to consult this plan when planning activi-

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: _____

Address: _____ **Phone** _____

_____ **Email:** _____

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

ties could impact or benefit river access.

Plan Contributors:

The following groups contributed information to this plan: Harpers Ferry Historical Park, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, C&O Canal National Historical Park, Appalachian Trail; NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program; planners from Loudoun Co. VA, Frederick Co. MD, Washington Co. MD, Jefferson Co. WV; WV DOT, HEPMO, CSX, River Riders, River & Trail, Harpers Ferry Adventure Center, Calleva Outdoors, Monocacy Canoe Club, Mason Dixon Canoe Club, Coastals, Canoe Cruisers, Blue Ridge Voyageurs, Baltimore Canoe & Kayak Club, Potomac Riverkeeper, Shenandoah Riverkeeper, Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, River Management Society, and American Whitewater. Thanks!



Reflections on, and of, RC gauge, Passage Creek put-in. Photo by Ron Knippling.

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 August 1st and a Holiday Party on December 12th.

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

2015 BRV Officers: Rick Koller, President; Mark Wray, VP; Bob Maxey, Trip Coordinator; Clark Childers, Treasurer; Frank Fico, Newsletter Editor; Kathleen Sengstock, Conservation.

2015 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
Reston, VA 20194-1523

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Deadline for Spring *Voyageur*:
Friday, March 4th

RENEW NOW! If your mailing label says 2015, this is your final issue. Use the membership form on page 3.