



Our 38th Year
Coastal Canoe NEWS
Newsletter of Coastal Canoeists
Winter 2004

Dedicated to the Preservation and Enjoyment of Wilderness Waterways

Richard Walters Reelected President

Dane Goins, New Secretary
Dave Stockdill, Treasurer
Alicia Jahsmann & Goins
New to Board
Doug Jessee Reelected

The membership, at the Annual Meeting on October 18th, at Grove Hill, elected three directors to three-year terms, required by the By-Laws: Alicia Jahsmann of Rockbridge Baths and Dane Goins of Midlothian are first-timers; Doug Jessee of Emporia was reelected, having served a year to fill an unexpired term

Alicia, a St. Louis native, had been paddling for a year around Richmond when she met "some nice folks" who introduced her to Coastal Canoeists 17 years ago. Her BA in Psychology prepared her as a mental health case management supervisor at a community mental health center.

For her own mental health, she prefers an OC1 (Encore or Whirlwind). Her favorite rivers are Goshen Pass and the Upper Yough. Dog walking and reading occupy some of her spare time. She's active in NOW and on the local Democratic committee.

Dane started paddling in 1980. Three years later, Bob Taylor suggested he look into Coastals, after he'd wrapped his canoe above Hollywood. He splits his time among OC1, OC2, and K1. His list of favorite streams reads like a directory of the country's best. Locally, he likes the James, Appomattox, North Anna, Maury, Tye, North Branch of the Potomac, Moormans, and Yough. Afar, the Rio Verde, San Juan, Grand Canyon of the Colorado, Bonaventure, Snake, Green, Machais, Main and Middle Fork of the Salmon, Rogue, and Rio Grande.

Dane was in U of Richmond's class of



Don Bowman & Bob Whaley in Rivers End Rapid on Bill Gordon's 27th Annual Yough Trip

'92. He and Diane have a son, Matt, and daughter, Shelly. He enjoys photography, hunting (is active with Quails Unlimited), and reading.

Doug hails from the banks of the Meherrin in southernmost Virginia. He earned an AAS in Police Science from Halifax C. C. and a BS in Organization Management from St. Paul's. He'd been paddling for seven-or-so years when Steve Thomas introduced him to Coastals, 13 years ago. His paddling preference is OC1 and particularly enjoys canoe camping. He most relishes the Nottoway, Appomattox, James, North and South Annas, and the falls line section of anything else in Virginia and North Carolina.

Doug's other interests include motorcycle touring, history, colonial and Civil War metal detecting and archeological research. He's active with the Meherrin Ruritan Club (Emporia), Venturing Scout Post #999 (Hopewell), and the Tri-City Coin and Relic Club (Hopewell).

Alicia, Dane, and Doug's three-year terms will expire at the end of 2006.

See "The Board" on page 3

Charles Ware Awarded Life Membership

Charles V. Ware of Richmond was presented a Life Membership in Coastal Canoeists at the October Annual Meeting of the club.

He was cited as an active member for 21 years; Conservation Chairman for 10 years; and as a significant contributor to the club newsletter, club trips, and meeting programs over the years.

Charles created the Coastals archive in the Virginia State Library and contributed in other ways to the public awareness of the club.

The 15"x22" matted and framed certificate was signed and presented by President Richard Walters on authority of the Board of Directors.

Charles was nominated for the honor by Cris Leonard. He joins three other recipients: O.K. Goodwin, recognized as founder of the club; Les Fry; and Hunter Marrow.

CC

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 Scott Wiggins, Editor

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 Richmond, Va. 23218
 www.coastals.org

Officers, Directors and Committee Chairs

Position	Name	Telephone	Email
President	Richard Walters		
Secretary	Dane Goins		
Treasurer	Dave Stockdill		
Director	Bernie Farmer		
Director	Doug Jessee		
Director	Cathleen Lowery		
Director	Greg Velzy		
Director	Paul Helbert		
Director	Dave Stockdill		
CaNews	Scott Wiggins		
Conservation	Liz Garland		
Cruise	Ken Dubel		
Membership	Chuck Berkey		
Multimedia	Susanne Smith		
Programs	Paul Helbert		
Raffle	Bernie Farmer		
Safety/Ed.	Rob Ault		
T-Shirt Sales	Cathleen Lowrey		
Webmaster	Lisa Langlinais		

Coastal CaNEWS is a publication of Coastal Canoeists, Inc. The opinions expressed are those of the writers and, unless stated so, are not those of Coastal Canoeists, Inc.

The Editor encourages you to submit material. Written material must be submitted unformatted and electronically transmitted using WordPerfect, Word or Excel. The Editor reserves the right to edit any article. Photographs may be submitted hardcopy, but tiff, gif or jpeg formats are preferred.

Unless otherwise credited, the photography in CaNEWS is that of the editor.

Please submit your material to: Scott Wiggins, Editor, CaNEWS, 10413 Attems Way, Glen Allen, VA 23060-3773,

For membership in Coastal Canoeists, see below.

How to Join or Renew Your Membership

Send your application and membership dues to Chuck Berkey, Membership Chair, 505 Winterberry Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22405-2060.

Submission Deadline Schedule

Issue	Date	Issue	Date
Winter	December 1	Summer	June 1
Spring	March 1	Fall	September 1

Inside This Issue

Committee and Officer Reports

Board of Directors Page 4
 Cruise Schedule Page 15
 Membership Page 5
 Multimedia Page 6
 Program and Quarterly Meeting Page 3
 Treasurer’s Report Page 3

Trip Reports

Shenandoah Page 7
 North Anna Page 8
 Nottaway Page 8
 James Page 8
 Petite Medcatina Page 9
 Youghiogheny Pictorial Page 14

Articles

Charles Ware Awarded Life Membership .. Page 1
 Richard Walters Reelected President Page 1
 Coastals Lose Dick Skeppstrom Page 3

Other

Parting Shot Page 16

Let Yourself Be Heard

Make a club officer, director or committee chair aware of your comments or recommendations on any aspect of the club. Phone, write or email while it’s fresh in your mind.

Giving Back

We’ve all benefitted from someone else’s coordinating a trip, setting up a meeting, writing a newsletter article, chairing a committee, participating in a board meeting or planning a program. Now is the time for you to give back to the club. These are pressing needs where you can be a big help.

Club Need	Contact
Trip Coordinators	Ken Dubel
Person to select quarterly meeting sites	Richard Walters
Assistant Program Chair	Paul Helbert
Conservation Chair	Liz Garland
Quartermaster for Quarterly Meeting	Richard Walters

Advertising in CaNEWS

Advertisements can be sent to the Editor but must be sent in camera-ready format and prepaid. Classified advertisements are free to club members. Advertisements and payment must be received by the submission due dates for each issue.

Size	Dimensions	1 Issue	2 Issue	3 Issue	4 Issue
1/4 pg.	3.75 in x 4.75	\$50	\$75	\$100	\$125
Roster	Contact Editor	\$100			

Coastals Lose River Advocate Skeppstrom

Dick Skeppstrom, who lead Coastals' untiring though unsuccessful fight against damming the Jackson River in the early '70s, left on November 18th for that great whitewater river in the sky, at age 67.

He worked his way into early retirement as a physician/neurologist to dedicate much of his remaining energy to matters conservational. In addition to his anti-Gathright Dam effort, Dick worked successfully (with the help of Coastal Canoeists and others) against the Salem Church Dam on the Rappahannock and the Hipes Dam on Craig Creek.

He was widely recognized as Virginia's No. 1 foe of the Corps of Engineers' dam projects. Dick was a principal of Citizens Against Pollution, and the anti-refinery group C.A.R.E., aided in the survey of Dismal Swamp, and was involved in many other environmental projects in his native Virginia and in Alaska.

He was presented the very first Randy Carter Award, as Virginia River Conservationist of the Year 1973.

Any who would memorialize Dr. Richard H. Skeppstrom may do so with donations to: Alaska Conservation Foundation, 441 W. 5th Ave., Suite 402, Anchorage, AK 99501.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report as of 9/30/2003

Checking	Begin. Balance 1/1/03	
Checking	\$(1,472)	
Special Fund	\$14,354	
Total		\$12,882
Income	\$7,871	
Expenses	\$4,375	
		\$3,496
Checking	End. Balance 9/30/03	
Checking	\$949	
Special Fund	\$15,429	
		16,378
Vanguard Fund		\$8,496
Total		\$24,874

The Board from page 1

They join directors Cathleen Lowery of Midlothian, Bernie Farmer of Williamsburg, and Dave Stockdill of Fredericksburg, whose terms run out in 2005; and Richard Walters of Yorktown, Glen Chalkley of Richmond, and Paul Helbert of Broadway, ending with 2004.

Richard, who was bio-ed in some detail in the Fall CaNEWS, was elected by the Board to serve a second term as President. Dane was elected Secretary and Dave, Treasurer.

Dave, is a native of Glencoe, MN; now lives in Fredericksburg. He and Lucy have grown children, Teresa, Jonathan, and Jennifer. His working career stems from his BS in Electronics Engineering Technology from Minnesota State. He got into flatwater paddling 42 years ago; and was introduced to Coastals and whitewater 16 years ago by Chuck Berkey, Bob Gramann, and Tom Cowan. He paddles OC1. He's most fond of the Tygart (Middle Fork and Gorge) and the Upper Yough. Between weekends, he's been known to do a little home-brewing. CC

Membership

Your copy of CaNEWS is your notice that your dues are due. The address label on your newsletter tells you when your membership expires. When your dues are due, the label will state: "**YOUR ANNUAL \$20.00 DUES ARE DUE!**" (Send \$23 for first class delivery of CaNEWS.

For those who miss this notice, a final bill will be sent. If not paid within 30 days, you will be removed from the membership. No more CaNEWS, no more trip schedules.

Checks should be made payable to "Coastal Canoeists" and mailed to:

Chuck Berkey
Membership Chair
505 Winterberry Drive
Fredericksburg, VA 22405-2060

Program Paul Helbert, Chair

**Coastals Canoeists'
Winter Quarterly Meeting
Saturday, January 17
at
Orange Visitor's Center
(Old Train Depot)
122 East Main Street
Orange, VA**

Camping: Check Website

10:00 a.m. Paddling Richard Walters will facilitate trips on the Slate River. Meet at the New Canton takeout across from Bremo Bluff Saturday. Call Richard if you plan to participate.

4:00 p.m. Board Meeting SilkMill Grille, 101-A Woodmark St., Orange, VA. The Silk Mill Grille is providing a room at no cost. Let's order appetizers and beverages in appreciation.

5:30 p.m. Doors Open

6:00 p.m. Dinner The kitchen at the Visitor's Center is tiny. Our recent potluck meals have been successful. If each party brings enough of something to share with the rest, plus a little extra, we will have plenty. If each brings a major and a minor contribution (a main dish and either a munchie, a salad, a bread or a dessert) we should also have great variety. The club will provide paper plates, utensils, napkins, cups, etc. **7:15 p.m. Program** The size of the room (approved for 50) should encourage mingling among old and new members and those from different geographic localities. Additional information will be announced on the website.

Call for Volunteers We need one or two volunteers living in Orange county. (1) Someone to go by the town office a day or two before the meeting to pick up the key to the railroad depot. The club could cut the cost of the meeting room in half by having a resident take over as agent for the use of the room. (2) Someone to allow members overnight camping. If you can help in either case, please contact Paul Helbert, program chairman. Thanks!

Board of Directors Meeting

Ken Dubel, Secretary

Date of meeting: Saturday, October 18, 2003

Location of meeting: Grove Hill Community Center

Meeting type: Quarterly board meeting, annual meeting and board-elect meeting combined in these minutes.

Meeting chaired by: Richard Walters

Meeting recorded by: Ken Dubel

Board members present: **Officers:** Richard Walters, Ken Dubel **Members:** Doug Jessee, Bernie Farmer, Dave Stockdill, Paul Helbert, Greg Velzy. **Committee Chairs:** Les Fry, Susanne Smith, Liz Garland, Scott Wiggins, Chuck Berkey.

Status of prior meeting minutes: Approved via e'mail.

Officers reports:

President: No report,

Treasurer: No report.

Secretary: Discussion of record keeping, recommended archiving Ca-NEWS online. Question exists as to status of club with State Corporation Commission. Report filed.

Committee reports:

Membership: Current membership stands at 481 families. Requests budget of \$350. Report filed.

Newsletter: Deadline for next newsletter bumped to Nov. 20 to allow more holiday items to be included. Discussed archiving of old editions. Requests budget of cost of publishing / mailing plus \$200. This comes to \$7,250.

Safety / Education: No report. Ken to request budget from Rob.

Programs: 1. Program for this meeting to be a representative from VDOT discussing "natural" stream design. Also a presentation of the "Paddleup", an attachment for flatwater canoes which allows one to peddle rather than paddle. Tom McCloud's pig roast to be served for dinner.

2. Nobody paid to camp at Glen Maury Park (where we held the summer meeting). If anyone would like to "pony up" then contact Paul Helbert. Consensus reached we should send some money to the camp for the use of the shelter in order to keep us in good standing there.

3. Requested budget of \$1,000. Report filed.

Raffle: Continues to be self-supporting, makes a little money particularly if we go to Blue Hole canoe and it doesn't snow. No budget required.

Multimedia: Three members have videos outstanding. Elton Lowery: one tape January '03, Ron Ashmore: three tapes April '03, Alex Herr: one tape '02. Board decided public flogging might be too extreme. (C'mon guys, return the tapes!) Requests budget of \$200. Report filed.

Sales: No report.

Conservation: 1. No "takers" for her chairmanship so far. The budget consists entirely of donations to other organizations. Budget request includes a proposed \$100 for administrative costs (office supplies, postage, etc.)

2. Request is \$200 for American Rivers, \$200 for American Whitewater, \$200 for West Virginia Rivers Coalition. \$200 spread between two to four active groups within the state

to vary year to year.

3. \$100 for "neighborly support", to help surrounding clubs with a cause, flood cleanup, for example.

4. \$600 for a grant program. Grants for river education programs, clean ups, or river environmental stewardship.

5. Report filed.

Website: No report. Richard to contact Lisa for budget.

Cruise: Many trips are evolving into Saturday only or Sunday only day trips. This is not the intention but if that's what members want, that's okay. Old traditional trips have been revived and new ones are forming. A CD was given to the President containing cruise data for backup. \$200 received in '03 was spent on a nice Werner canoe paddle for the trip coordinator of the year (hooray for Jenny Wiley!), a throw rope for the rookie of the year (hooray for Martha James!), and reimbursement for unused Lower Yough permits. Budget request for '04 is \$200.

Nominating: Chaired by Ken Dubel, Chuck Berkey and Dave Stockdill as committee members. Nominated Doug Jessee, Alicia Jahsman, and Dane Goins as new board members. Agreed to by the board. Report filed.

By-Laws: Chaired by Les Fry, Charles Snyder and Norm Shafer as committee members. Received and agreed to proposals for two revisions prior to voting by the membership. Article X section 4 change "1st" to "2nd" to allow audit committee time to make report. Article X section 3 change "and" to "or" to allow checks to be signed by one officer. Report will be filed pending revisions.

Announcements:

1. Charles Ware (hooray for Charles!) was granted a life membership to the club in recognition of his years of dedicated service as conservation chair along with voluminous volunteerism efforts to promote club activities. (This was a motion proposed by Cris Leonard via mail at the last quarterly meeting which was passed by the board, report delayed so as not to spoil the surprise.)

2. Greg Velzy reports the Isaac Walton League is circulating a petition to move the regulation of jet skis to local jurisdictions as opposed to the state where it rests now.

Motions adopted:

1. Elect Doug Jessee, Alicia Jahsman, and Dane Goins to the board of directors. Approved by membership vote.

2. Adopt new By-Laws revised as indicated above in By-Laws committee report. Approved by membership vote.

3. Richard Walters to be President, Dane Goins to be Secretary if he agrees, Dave Stockdill to be Treasurer. Approved by board-elect vote. (Board-elect members present: Richard, Bernie, Doug, Paul, Alicia, Dave.)

Motions rejected: None.

General items of note: The South Fork Shenandoah offered two days of glorious sunshine, mild temperatures and perfect water levels. We had about 30 boats on Saturday from Newport to Luray and five on Sunday from Bealer's Ferry to below Compton's.

Meeting was adjourned.

Membership

Chuck Berkey, Chair

Membership information is not displayed
in the online version of CaNEWS



Newly Elected Board Member Dane Goins Before Youghioghny Falls

Multimedia

Susanne Smith, Chair

To obtain books or videos from Coastals' Multimedia Library - FREE - contact Susanne Smith.

The rules are few, but important:

- 1) Videos & Books are only available to current Coastal Canoeist members.
- 2) The person who borrows the item is responsible for its well-being and timely return.
- 3) Borrowers need to provide their name, current address, phone number & e-mail address.
- 4) The maximum number of items that can be borrowed by a member is as follows: 3 items if picked up at a quarterly meeting, 2 items if sent through the mail.
- 5) The length of time that items can be borrowed is as follows: If picked up at a quarterly meeting, it's due back at the next quarterly meeting. If received or to be returned through the mail, it's due back within 60 days.
- 6) For materials to be sent through the mail, the borrower needs to send a self-addressed, padded envelope with sufficient postage for the required items to the Multimedia Chair.

BOOKS

- Basic River Canoeing, Robert E. McNair, 1972.
Canoeing and Kayaking, American Red Cross, 1981.
Canoeing and Kayaking Guide to the Carolinas Bob & Dave Brenner 2002.
Catch Every Eddy, Surf Every Wave, Tom Foster and Kel Kelly, 1995.
Exploring the Chesapeake in Small Boats, John Page Williams, Jr., 1992.
Falls of the James National Rec. River Feasibility 1992.
Garden State Canoeing Ed Gertler, 2002.
James River as Commonwealth, The, ed. Ann Woodleaf & Lynn Nelson 1984.
Kayaking, Kent Ford, 1995; whitewater and sea kayaking.
Keystone Canoeing Ed Gertler, 1993.
Knots for Paddlers, ACA, Charlie Walbridge, 1995.
Maryland and Delaware Canoe Trails Ed Gertler; 2002.
Paddle America, Nick Shears, 1992.
Paddle Your Own Canoe, Gary & Joanie McGuffin, 1999.
River Rescue, Bechdel & Ray, 1997; self-rescue & teamwork.
Rivers and Trails, David Gilbert, 1978.
Texas Whitewater, Steve Daniel, 1999.
Virginia Whitewater, H. Roger Corbett, 2000; paddlers guide.
Whitewater Rescue Manual, Charlie Walbridge and Wayne Sundmacher, 1995.
Wildwater Touring, Scott and Margaret Arighi, 1974.

INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS

- American Red Cross Presents "Whitewater Primer", "Uncalculated Risk", "A Margin for Error" 1979.
 "Breakthru!"; 2000; intermediate and advance kayaking.
 "C-1 Challenge, The"; Kent Ford, 1990; outfitting, rolling, and stroke instruction.
 "Cold, Wet & Alive", ACA., 1989; paddling story about how

hypothermia develops.

- "Drill Time, Solo Playboating II", Performance Video; 1997; canoe drills.
 "Drowning Machine, The"; dangers of lowhead dams and basic rescue techniques.
 "Fast Track to Kayaking", Sam Drevo; 2002; beginner video.
 "Grace Under Pressure", 1992; learning the kayak roll.
 "Guide to Canoeing", L.L. Bean; types of canoes, equipment, strokes, maneuvers.
 "Heads Up!"; ACA; 1993; river hazards and rescue.
 "How to Organize a Successful River Outdoor Cleanup", Surf Dog Productions, 1991.
 "In The Surf"; 1999; surf kayak instruction; 60 min.
 "Introduction to Canoeing".
 "Kayaker's Edge, The"; 1992; rolling, bracing, surfing.
 "Kayaking", Eric Jackson; skills video - strokes, concepts, roll
 "Liquid Skills", Ken Whiting; 2001; begin. to adv. kayakers.
 "Path of a Paddle"; Bill Mason, 1977; whitewater canoeing.
 "Path of a Paddle"; Bill Mason; canoeing-solo and tandem.
 "Play Daze"; 1999; freestyle kayaking techniques.
 "QuickStart Your Canoe, ACA 2003; entry level guide
 "QuickStart Your Kayak, ACA 2003, entry level guide
 "Retendo!"; 1996; art of precision playboating.
 "Sea Kayaking, Getting Started"; 1995; begin. sea kayaking.
 "Soar, Skills of All Rivers"; intermediate and adv.kayaking.
 "Swiftwater Rescue Training"; actual footage of a rescue at Williams Dam, Richmond.
 "Take the Wild Ride"; 1994; freestyle kayaking w/ the world's best playboaters.
 "Whitewater Kayaking - Natl Paddlesport Safety", ACA.;
 "Whitewater Self Defense"; 1998; kayaking safety techniques.

VIDEOS

- "Area Verde Expeditions", 1997; kayak expedition in Guatemala.
 "Class VI River Runners Raft Trip", 1989; Gauley & New.
 "Costa Rica Rios Aventuras"
 "Deliver Me From The Paddlesnake 2"; 2000; Chattooga.
 "Forks of the Cheat", 1989; history, present issues.
 "Grand Canyon Adventure", 1995; home video.
 "Grand Canyon Whitewater", 1995; home video.
 "James River in Richmond in 1970"; home video.
 "Over the Edge", 1999; freestyle kayaking, and world record waterfall descent.
 "Paddle Frenzy", 1994; kayaking Northwest whitewater.
 "Perpetual Motion", 1994; kayaking Glade and Manns Creek
 "Savage"; commercial video of rodeo boating - Savage gear.
 "Steep Creeking with Catfish", 1993; home video - carnage.
 "Rick Taylor's Solo Canoe".
 "Token of My Extreme"; 1992; hairboating w/Thrillseekers and squirt boats.
 "Treading Water: A Fight for the Survival of the Pamunkey and Mattaponi Rivers".
 "Upper Tye and Piney Rivers", 1972; Les Fry footage.
 "White Mile"; an HBO original movie starring Alan Alda.

Trip Reports

Shenandoah

Alex Ulasiewicz

Ken Dubel picked the perfect time to meet at Newport for the Quarterly Meeting Trip on the Shenandoah. If we were to start at 9:00 a.m., the heavy fog with the very limited visibility would have made us a little reluctant to get on the water. But as it was, the 10:30 a.m. start was as near as perfect as we could hope.

Our canoe topped truck arrived at 10:35 a.m. Darlene and I thought we would be smart and put up the tent at Dam Acres before the trip so that we would not have to fumble through the dark with the chores of setting up camp. We like Dam Acres for camping because it feels a little more remote and there is just something about the name. So we got to the put-in just a little late and the shuttle had been run. Seven or eight kayakers already had taken off down the river and were out of view.

A combination of eighteen or nineteen kayaks, OC1's and OC2's made up the rest of the group. As it is on every river around here this year, the water level is up, somewhere around three and a half feet on the gage near Luray.

After seeing everyone off but us, Ken was getting ready to launch his aluminum canoe. Liz Garland was in the stern and Ken was the grunt in front. Both of them were outfitted with bright orange, horse collar, Mae West, flotation vests. For a trip leader, he is not very modern, I thought. But who am I to judge. Since we are hit-every-rock-in-the-river canoeists, Ken assured us we would miss most of the rocks at this medium high water level. I was to learn later that this was a retro trip for Ken and Liz.

We quickly took up our position near or in last place. I could not call our position sweep because our canoe was the most likely candidate to need sweeping up. The boats ahead grouped together in threes and fours. I could see this was a leisurely paddle for most everyone. Old paddling buddies got reacquainted with each other talking back and forth as paddles dipped into the water. Dave Myers had four of his family in their Old Town Discovery with another child leading the way in a kayak.

The Route 340 bridge at Alma came up quickly. We could not have gone three miles

already. One deeply avowed OC1 paddler, Dave Lewis, decided to try kayaking on this trip. He left his car at Alma just in case this early relationship with the kayak did not go too well. After the bridge at Alma, I noticed the northeast breeze seemed to pick up a little. This breeze blew straight up the river and probably prevented the group from making it to White House in record time. In the shade and with the wind blowing, it was a tad on the cool side.

The lunch stop came up quickly as well. Although the scenery on the Shenandoah is pretty, the fall colors were not here this weekend. There still seemed to be plenty of green left on a lot of trees and I guess the ones that changed had already done so and shed. After the lunch stop I just noticed Dave Lewis, the first-time kayaker, had swapped with Ken. Now, no longer in a kayak, he was paddling the silver Grumman with Liz Garland. I do not know whether they changed at Alma or after lunch. But, hey, what are trip leaders for?

We continued to make serious progress down the river. It was way too much progress for me, a guy that likes to fish. But I did manage to get two of the smallmouth to bite. When we got to within a few hundred yards of the takeout, we went past the first group of kayakers who must have also decided that they, too, had gone down the river too fast. They had paddled back upstream and looked to be playing in a feeder creek. We got to the takeout after having spent about three hours on the water. I wanted to stay and fish a while longer, but I had to admit I was tired and it was time to call it a day.

With the sun shining and plenty of daylight left, I could take the backcountry roads to Dam Acres without the risk of getting lost forever. The ride was definitely quicker even with the narrow, winding roads. There was plenty of time to get a shower and get ready for the pig roast.

The food was just too good for words. The smoky barbecue melted in your mouth. The grilled corn was pleasing to look at and sweet to eat. Although I was not brave enough for the baked sweet potato, I heard rave reviews. And since the meeting was not as crowded as past meetings, the take home portion of barbecue was large. Good, good, good.

The business meeting took place with

a couple of nice surprises. Charles Ware was given a lifetime achievement and life membership in Coastal Canoeists for his all his conservation efforts. Jenny Wiley was presented a high tech paddle for being trip leader of the year. Martha James caught a throw rope for being rookie of the year. Doug Jessee won the dry pants in the raffle. Size small; I hope he can trade them in for a bigger size. Then came the speaker.

When I read the guest speaker was from VDOT, I read *BORING*. But from his first words, his audiovisual presentation was captivating. He studied stream and bank restoration from a man in Colorado. Every type of stream, every type of river was categorized. Every river meander was measured and given a value. For every stream flow it was determined the best width and depth to keep sediment flowing. The flood plains were analyzed to be able to handle the normal every two-year flood. Bridge designs were reviewed with the flood of the century in mind. Plants and trees, especially willows, with six to twelve foot roots were selected to prevent bank degradation. Natural barriers were placed in streams, sometimes in a counterintuitive manner to redirect and absorb stream energy. Anything man might do to a river was studied in a new light which was really an old light done more in tune with nature. This lecture was eye opening and interesting to anyone concerned about water, concerned about land, or even anyone who has ever driven over a bridge. Well done.

After the meeting we drove back to Dam Acres. We were still on the hard top road, passing by a house when we spotted what looked to be a wolf with a raccoon in its mouth near the road next to a three-sided outbuilding. This thing was just about chest high and we were pretty sure it was no coyote. We stopped and backed up to get another look and to see if what we thought we saw was really a wolf. The creature stood there for a few seconds more and slowly slunk around the shed.

With the creature disappearing into the night, we made our way to the tent. Our only neighbors, a group of six or eight teenagers were making merry around a campfire. When it got to be near eleven and three or four nod-offs were interrupted with loud

See "Shenandoah" on page 13

T r i p R e p o r t s

North Anna River

Mary Harlan

Paddling the North Anna is evidently not a sure thing, according to Roger Corbett's Virginia Whitewater (VW), because of the dependence on a dam release. Jenny Wiley, leader of the October 4th trip, had warned that the decision to run it would depend on the water level when we arrived at the river. Obviously several folk were dubious as we began to gather but after all had arrived the decision was made to make the run. Probably the recent rains, added to the dam release, provided the necessary level. In my estimation it turned out to be a classic N/I trip.

The trip was co-sponsored by Coastals and the Old Dominion Appalachian Trail Club. Participants included OC1 paddlers: Jenny Wiley, Barry Ferrell, and Skip Sullivan and K1 paddlers: Mary Harlan, Catherine Ray, Ginny Newton, Frank and Kathy Collins, George and Tracy Bourne, and Lori McCurdy.

An overcast, upper 60ish degree day started us off on our 5 hour paddle. The sun broke through for a couple hours in the middle of the afternoon with a strong breeze for a short while, enough to catch the paddle on the upper stroke and swing a boat. A lovely Fall day for the 11 boats which came from as far as Staunton, Falls Church and Chesapeake.

The river provided a few flat stretches between areas requiring constant attentive reading of the water. Jenny had warned we might do some walking through the "rock garden." However, it was runnable with some scraping. There was one dunking in the first hour at a sharp S turn and two others in the rock garden section but a quick recovery was possible in all cases. The assistance of others in retrieving the boats, picking up gear (and the paddlers) was greatly appreciated. Five of the group chose to portage the fallsline rapid and enjoyed watching the others (including 3 OC1s) run the stretch, probably an upper Class III-IV rapid. Really impressive to watch a 15 ft OC1 maneuver such a rapid as well as the other boats.

Anyone interested in the history of Virginia would appreciate reading the account in Virginia Whitewater of the Civil War

Nottoway River

Doug Jessee

On Sunday, October 12, 2003, after the completion of a well planned and orchestrated shuttle, involving some great friends of this writer, James Rae, Troy Moseley, Jane and Ted Lee, whom all live right in the local community of Emporia, Virginia, members of the Coastal Canoeists, including: Welby Whiting (K1), Nancy Ronald (K1), Ron Hartshorn (K1), Duncan Fairlie (OC1), Steve Thomas (OC1) and Doug Jessee (OC1 – Trip Coordinator), were all set-up on the Nottoway River, just above Purdy, Virginia, without the standard requirement of having to leave vehicles at the put-in (all vehicles staged at the take-out), for the beginning of what turned out to be a most beautiful and enjoyable day of paddling the fallsline of the Nottoway River. Considering the destructive actions involving timber in the area resulting from Hurricane Isabel, except for one obstruction, the river was quite surprisingly navigable. The river provided opportunities for everyone to easily run all of the great little runs that this section of the Nottoway River offers, while providing time for the participants to both enjoy the vistas of the wildlife of the area and the camaraderie of others with similar paddling interests. Based on the feedback received from the group, this trip is a "must do again". If you are interested in receiving more information on this trip than what is already captured in either guide books or past trip reports, please contact either Doug Jessee, or fellow Coastal Canoeists Member Bobby Wrenn, as undoubtedly among ourselves, we paddle this section more in a year than anyone else. CC

battles along the North Anna. Paddling the river today, with its "clean water, bedrock bottom, the rock formations alongside and the large trees along the bank...(in) a virtual wilderness...owned by major lumber/timber companies," (VW) will find it hard to imagine the brutal scenes of the Civil War which were enacted along its banks.

Thank you are in order for the leadership of Jenny Wiley, trip coordinator, and Barry Ferrell, sweep, who made the trip a truly enjoyable event on a beautiful river.

James River

Byron Work & Jenny Wiley

It was a beautiful sunny day as we left for the club trip on the James, Saturday September 13. Well, as the Hertz ads say, "not exactly." As my wife and I left Virginia Beach, it was overcast and warm. The forecast was for partly cloudy with temps in the mid 70s. Sounded like a perfect forecast for a canoe trip.

As we came closer to Richmond, the skies grew darker and it began to rain lightly, then more insistently. Pulling into the rest area on I-64, we spotted other vehicles with boats and inquired about their destination. It seems that Jim, George and Jenny were from Tidewater also and heading to the same club trip. As I had never been there, they led the way and we arrived at Mayo Island's parking area about 9:30. A voice asked "what are you doing here" and I turned and found one of my business partners, Shel and his friend Rich. I had no idea that he (a) was coming on this excursion, (b) was in the club or (c) that he even paddled at all.

Jenny Wiley was the brave trip coordinator and took roll. Our small group of 26 paddlers in 24 boats then set off for Pony Pasture with a short stop at Reedy Creek for those of us who were to exit there. Once we arrived at Pony Pasture, we all unloaded an impressive number and array of watercraft. OC2s were paddled by Byron and Chris Work, Jim and Pat Doyle, Sheldon Fineman and Rick Ayers, Mark and Justin Celny, OC1s by Jenny Wiley, Martha James, K1s by Ginny Newton, George Hamann, Jim Farrell, John McLane, Richard Walters, Mark Celny's wife and older son, young daughter of one of the K1 paddlers, Mike Smith, John Thompson, Keith Cornell, Stephanie, Joan Davis, Wade Kinker, Mark from UVA, and Sean, and inflatables by Ann Lankey and Bill Hankins.

After a brief review of river signals, we set off on the James, which was running about 4.6 in spite of the recent, not to mention current, rain. Jenny gamely shepherded us down the river, talking to each boat in turn and keeping us off

See "James" on page 13

Trip Reports

Petite Medcatina Tom McCloud

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. Ops, wrong story and with apologies to Dickens, but it does apply to this trip. Read on. But be prepared. This isn't X-rated, but it gets rough. On the 19th of July we started the 1,300 mile drive north and east, reaching the end of pavement on Route 138 at the village of Natashquan, Quebec, 500 miles east of Quebec City on the north shore of the St. Lawrence. Our group of wilderness whitewater paddlers were Nate Houser, Tom Cole, and myself, Tom McCloud, all with Blue Hole Sunburst II's, Curt Gellerman in a Mad River ME, and Ed Gertler in a kevlar-glass C-1. Our target was the Petite Mecatina River, (pronounced mec KAT' nah), which heads up in the northeast Quebec wilderness near several more famous siblings, the Moise, Magpie and Natashquan. Unlike those rivers, which get paddled pretty often, there was almost no information available about previous Mecatina trips. That's a factor, which made it attractive! We did know of a group that floated it in 1985, using 18-foot kevlar downriver canoes, paddled tandem. Since we're all experienced solo whitewater paddlers with hundreds of days practice on rocky, technical Appalachian rivers, we assumed we would be able to run a lot of the rapids, by working along the edges, that this earlier group had portaged. So on July 22nd we made the 200+ mile floatplane flight north, into a headwaters lake at ~1,770 feet elevation, the beginning of our 320 mile descent to sea level.

IT WAS THE BEST OF RIVERS July 22 to August 4. The headwaters lake on the high plateau looked typical of other northern lakes and forests, with low, rolling wooded hills, boulder-filled banks with small patches of sand. It would have been a pleasant spot for days' relaxation and fishing. On the lake were some ducks, terns, geese and loons. But from the air we had seen a big boggy area at the south end of this lake, and before long we had paddled

into an apparent dead-end. After exploring further to the west, we found a perfectly nice, clear channel with essentially no current winding through the bog. After 5 miles, in a swampy area with pitcher plants in bloom, and a narrow sandy beach, we camped for the first night, at ~52deg42'N, 63deg15'W.

Already on this first morning a sort of trip-long routine developed: Tom Cole is the early riser who builds a fire and gets the kettle boiling. Others get up later, but generally everyone is around the fire eating the standard oatmeal and coffee breakfast close to 6am. And typically, from getting up until ready to paddle is about two hours.

The Petite Mecatina is little more than



Nate Houser and Curt Gellerman in rapid T. McCloud

a creek here, with adequate water to float a boat, though thin in class 1-2 rock gardens. Most of the time it's a long, skinny lake. At the bottom of rapids Nate caught 1 lb brook trout on nearly every cast, settling the age-old question: "What's for supper". Around the 15-mile mark the rapids picked up to a short section of class 2/3. While running these rapids, a black bear was sitting on the bank, intently watching Tom Cole. When Tom turned to look, the bear turned and ran into the brush. The next morning we passed through a 5-mile stretch of continuous boulder-filled class 1-2 rapids, plus 3 class 3 ledges. Then river reverted to its long pools with little current. With steady paddling we reached the 45-mile mark by dusk. The next day again mostly flat but with a few rapids up to class 3. The river was often 100 meters wide and 100 mm deep with a

sandy bottom. Late in the afternoon some very Wagnerian Opera-like thunder in the distance to the north entertained us, but the rain never hit. We camped at ~62 miles into our route.

July 28: We had camped at the 84-mile mark when rain came. Getting out of the tent at 11am, I found conditions cold with a thick mist being blown upriver, sideways. I watched a pair of nighthawks catching insects over the river. It was tough coaxing a fire to life. In a steady rain we cooked a little and ate warm. That night I zipped up the bag all the way for the first time. This was the only layover day of the trip.

The next morning a heavy overcast slowly gave way to sun. We found more small class 1-2 boulder-filled rapids, and a lot more lake paddling. We saw several osprey and late in the day a confused bull moose – or perhaps more than one moose that crossed the river twice. In camp at the 108-mile mark we observed a pretty sunset as the temperature dropped quickly.

At early morning it was slowly becoming sunny and showing signs of becoming a scorcher. The rapid at mile 109 is a three-part rapid: at the top a routine boulder garden, but part way down is a horizon line. The flow was funneled into the middle where it dropped over a boulder barricade and then is focused onto a huge boulder forming a re-curving wave above and pouring over into a monster hole that looks like light should not emerge from it. Clearly a class 5, our first true portage. We ran several more boulder gardens in the class 2-3 range, and then came on a broad, solid class 3, a problem because it was borderline runnable. Ed probed in the middle - then Nate and Curt followed him. Tom C and I lined along the bank through the top 100 yards, did a short lift over into a pool, and ran out the remaining 300 yards. We finished the day at the 123-mile mark.

You know it's going to be a tough day when, at 8:30am, you're already thinking forward to the swim at the end of the day. One of benefits of having a smooth river with so many miles of shallow, sandy

headwaters was that the water was warm, so frequent swims with a bar of soap, and a wash out of smelly shirts, were enjoyed. The river was now flowing at ~2,000 cfs, but aside from some class 2 rapids; it was entirely slogging it out on flatwater. Lunch on the 1st, we figured to be at mile 168, putting us past the mileage half-way point after 9 days, and keeping us on schedule. Camp was along Fourmount Lake. On the morning of 2 August Nate made pancakes with maple syrup, so the living was easy and the eating was good. We paddled on through Lakes Donquin and LeBreton, both several miles long, with a steady following breeze, and camped at the far end. At 5 a.m. it was crystal clear, calm and still fairly warm. Just as we were leaving camp, a black bear was walking the beach, headed in our direction. When he heard us he headed for cover.

Leaving Lac LeBreton, it starts to look like a river again and a couple big- volume rapids come up. Around 10:30 we ran a long class 2 rapid that has a bedrock 'cliff' on the left at the bottom. We paused below these cliffs to cast, and first Nate and then Curt get good-sized pike on. This was a real comedy of errors. As Nate was playing his, the reel failed, but I grabbed it and continued to hand-line in the pike as Nate made repairs. Nate's was 10 lbs or so and Curt's close to 15. This was a LOT of fish fillets so we had a real supertime feast, and enjoyed viewing a vivid red sun set through thin clouds.

August 4, 2003. In the moist sand near the boats Curt noticed fresh, large, wolf footprints. In an hour of paddling we came to a major rapid, which was passed by a combination of lining, lifting and running. Later I noticed a sow & yearling black bear on the bank, digging in the dirt. Even when I was 50 feet away the little one didn't care that I was there. He looked right at me. Late in the afternoon the scenery changed as we approached some hills, and before long we had reached the first major rapid of the famous canyon section of the Mecatina. The river had grown a lot in volume over the past few days, though with so much lake that had been difficult to detect. Here it is necked down to less than 100 feet, and drops 20 feet through a horseshoe-shaped notch in the water-polished gray granite. I

quickly termed this "The Royal Flush" -- it seemed the perfect fit. There are several incredible, huge kettle-holes in this rock. We camped at the top left, just above this rapid; where there is a sand beach a foot above water level, barely room enough for our 5 tents and a fire. At dusk were surprised to see a bat flying around. It was strange how there had been no wildlife for the first half of the day, and then in the afternoon: gulls, terns, cliff swallows, osprey and two bears.

So after 14 days, which were mostly warm and sunny, with mostly easy, occasionally interesting paddling, and nearly constant following breeze out of the west, we have reached ~mile 238, close to 51deg24minN, 59deg58'W. So far we've had no rude surprises, though some disappointment at all the flatwater miles.



Overlooking the Canyon

T. McCloud

We've also passed the mark where less than 100 miles remains to the take-out point. Now the river takes a sharp turn to the south, cuts a canyon, and heads in earnest for the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Tighten your seat belts.

IT WAS THE WORST OF RIVERS.

The old proverb says 'Be careful what you wish for, because you may just get it', and we had been wishing for current and rapids. The CANOE magazine article from 1985 tells about a portage of 3 miles, ascending a creek, following a chain of highland lakes, then descending a creek, taking three days, in order to by-pass an unrunnable set of cascades. We didn't know exactly how far we had to go to reach those cascades, and still hoped to be able to work the edges and avoid that wicked-sounding portage. But the first job today was to portage

around 'Royal Flush'. The portage went fast, but the problem at the base was two fold: smooth, slippery rock and a surge of 3 feet in the eddy. We loaded the boat, sat in it, waited for the surge to crest, and seal-launched one at a time. Almost immediately we were at another big rapid, and the several big rapids that followed, back-to-back-to-back, now run together in my head. We ran only one after extensive scouting, down a big tongue on the right, then sharply left into an eddy. From there we could stay along the left bank for a couple hundred feet, and then cut out sharply toward the right, aiming to hit a green-water tongue that formed below a smallish ledge/wave and ride that to the right and out the bottom of the rapid. Mostly we portaged. At one rapid we sneaked into a left side slot where we could carry/drag for a short distance over smooth

rock past the really big stuff. We were really up against a sizeable vertical rock cliff with no place else to go. We had no choice but to run out the rest of the rapid, down the left side, which was easily a high class 3. Again we had to seal-launch into the crest of a 3-foot surge. Every rapid was BIG! It looked like 10,000 cfs. It looked like Grand Canyon rapids. It was all class 5 in the center and sneak routes were few. Two more portaged rapids brought us to another formed by an island of solid granite, perhaps one acre in size, which splits the current around itself, before it crashes over at least two ledges

of 10 feet each. There did not seem to be a way past this rapid at water level, so we would be forced up into the woods to portage. Since we were expecting to be forced off the river at the head of the cascades, we kind of assumed that this was the place. Resigned to the start of a grueling portage, we worked back upstream a few hundred yards to where there was a big sandbar we could camp on.

August 6, 2003. The objective of the first hike was to scout the portage route, to see the canyon and the cascades, determine if there were sneak routes at water level, and also to determine where we will re-enter the river at the end of the canyon. So with heavy packs on, we head out. Soon we realized that this forest was extremely thick, and we made poor time. At noon we're

on the top of a bluff overlooking the rapid that stopped us yesterday. In the sun it is blisteringly hot. We do not find the anticipated caribou-moss-covered balds at the top, where the walking would be easy, nor are there the game trails through the woods that we'd hoped for. In the forest you could not see the person only 50 feet in front. At 3 pm break we were nowhere near the end of the canyon and had drunk all our water. We needed water and a place to camp before dark. On the topo maps a lake was shown not far away so Tom C dialed the coordinates into his GPS, and we headed in that direction. I've come to call this place 'Tent Lake', which according to the GPS was 1.8 miles, as the crow flies, from our camp of last night. Admittedly we did not move in a straight line, but after 8 hours of some of the most difficult bushwhacking I've ever done, it was a discouraging thought to think of repeating this twice more.

Up at dawn, each of us packed a light pack with some food, and extra clothes, figuring that we could not make it back here with our gear in a day. It took 3+ hours to reach the boats. Then began the toughest portage I've ever done, pulling and shoving the canoes up hills, and sideways through the dense spruce trees. There are many down dead trees that add to the problems. I don't remember how long it took, hours, and hours, just to get boats and packs onto the boulders near the mouth of a stream on the downriver end of Granite Island Rapid, which wasn't even a third of the total portage distance, and we were real tired. We put on all the clothing we had, and a couple of us used deflated airbags as blankets. Sometime during the night the fire died, and had to be rekindled. The night took its toll.

Then we started to move up the creek. Well, kind of. With packs on we started to walk up along the creekside, but this foray did not last long. The viewpoint was expressed that this portage route was an *impossibility*, that the 1985 group MUST have used some other creek. The argument ran something like this "Suppose we had no information whatsoever about this river? What would we be doing? We'd be probing on downriver until we came to something that we absolutely could not get around. We haven't gone that far yet." Well, I can't argue with that, because its premise is correct. It might even be true. We dragged the boats down to the Mecatina,

loaded the one pack, and headed around the next bend. In only a few hundred yards we were at another major rapid, a long and boulder-filled class 4+, which begins with a big ledge. Had we continued to portage this rapid the canoes would have to go over boulders the size of vans and panel trucks, and the next rapid below was clearly unrunnable. Still uncertain whether we were at the head of the impassable cascades, Curt made a 3-hour scouting hike. On return he had few words: the impassable canyon was just around the bend. The river was white



Nate Houser & Dinner

as far as he could see. Both walls were smooth rock at a 45-degree angle descending into the water, and passage through at water level was impossible. Resigned, we retreated upriver. At the mouth of the creek for the second time, and not wanting to spend another night here in the open, each of us picked up his second pack and, around 2 p.m., started to hike toward Tent Lake. Tom C dialed the coordinates into the GPS, and off we went. As you would guess it was again torture from both trees and heat. A GPS position check was made every half hour. At one point we were 0.8 miles away from the tents, and a half hour later we were 1.2 miles away! It was getting into dusk, and we were becoming concerned. We kind of semi-ignored the GPS and went by dead-reckoning, eventually reaching the lake, but at the wrong end of it, so another 45 minutes of terrible hiking by flashlight was required

to find our tents. So at 9:30 we were getting the kettle boiling to make a bite of supper. It was a really beat up group.

The alarm clock didn't sound as early as usual, and when we did gather by the fire we were not moving very quickly. In talking over our situation it was clear that we had to get the boats up that creek and into the highland lakes, in order to get them close to Tent Lake, and that we would not get this done in one day. It was also clear that we had neither the muscle strength nor the amount of food & days needed to move all five boats. We decided we would paddle out in two canoes plus the C-boat. So again we packed light packs, in anticipation of spending another night in the woods away from our tents and gear. The hike back to the boats went predictably slow on another hot, dry day. At the boats, we carried Nate's and mine well up onto the sun-bleached driftwood, at 51.35535 N/59.88192 W, 40 feet above today's river level. In my boat were the saddle, two full sized air bags and a Norse paddle. Nate tied a note to a thwart, giving the date we had left and where we were headed, and left his fire grid. It was with regret, resignation and a lump in my throat that I walked away. Losing a boat is a humiliation, a defeat. We were getting our asses kicked by this river. The ascent of the creek began. It's not a big creek, only 10 or 15 cfs. Most of the time it was Curt and I moving his ME ahead, and following were Nate, Tom C and Ed, with Ed's boat inside that other canoe. There were innumerable lifts of 3-5-7-feet, up small falls and over fallen trees. The going was slow, but at least we were going, and being wet from the waist down meant that the heat was less of a problem. This little creek rivals in lushness any stream in the Smokies. The rocks were often slippery, and we all suffered many stumbles, cracks to the knees, shins and ankles. It was perhaps 5 hours of exceedingly tough work to ascend the one mile and 500 feet gain in elevation. For a campsite we settled on about the only open spot we saw, a bank rising at an angle some 6 feet above the water. While the guys rigged a tarp and spread out ground cloths, I tended the fire and improvised an one-pot group meal from potatoes-au-gratin, milk powder, dried green peppers and corn, plus a summer sausage. The cook always likes favorable comments but I have to believe these were influenced by fatigue and hunger.

Up at first light, 4am. It had been a quiet, dry night and was again a warm morning. Now we started the different, but equally difficult task, of finding our way. It was here that we realized the problems of using maps obtained off the Internet and printed on home printers: the green ink is water-soluble. Both Tom C's and Nate's maps have suffered water damage, though stored in plastic bags. They have become borderline readable, with the green running everywhere, but the brown contour lines stayed in place. Better than nothing. As we worked through a series of small, interlocking lakes, mostly dragging between them, there were frequent map checks. At the top of a small lake where a sphagnum swamp only inches above lake level divided us from the next creeks' watershed, we portaged across and found a ravine with a trickle running down it. The descent was predictably slow and very difficult because of the thick underbrush and many down trees. After 3 hours we found a very small lake, dammed up by beavers, then following 100 feet of moist boulders, there was a real lake. The trickle feeding the beaver pond MUST be draining Tent Lake, so that's where we'll have to go to retrieve our gear. If anything, this was the most difficult push through the bush we'd done yet. Both the creek itself and the nearby forest were a tangle of fallen trees and underbrush. It was another back-breaking job on top of so many others, after we were already exhausted. But the gear DID get retrieved. We loaded up, got into the bigger lake, and immediately looked to camp. Reunited with all our equipment for the first time in 5 days, we ate a good supper. When I crawled into the tent, on this night like so many others, I was asleep instantly, and slept the sleep of the dead.

With the fire going and breakfast over, we made an effort to consolidate, lighten the loads, and get better prepared to tandem paddle these two canoes. We burned a small bottle of hand lotion, five empty film canisters, two pens and a tablet, a pair of sneakers, a full roll of canoe tickets, a shattered fishing rod, badly torn nylon pants, the lacerated Frog Tog pants and several other small things. Nate left behind a skillet and spatula.. So after this longer than usual 'breakfast' period, we loaded the remaining gear and headed out across this good-sized lake. There was some wildlife here, including ducks, mergansers and some little guys with a white belly, gray top, black

head with white patch just behind the eye. When we found the exit flow we were rather pleased that it was a swamp creek plenty big enough to float a canoe. After following that creek for a several miles, a critical decision point was reached. If we stayed on this creek we might be descending into the Mecatina canyon too soon, where there are still unrunnable cascades. The alternative was to work up-flow, through additional lakes to get to a second creek further downstream. This option involves more miles of dragging and portaging, and keeps up on top for at least two days with very poor maps. We don't know which of these two creeks the 1985 group took. We decided to go with the flow.

Before long the creek starts dropping precipitously over solid rock ledges, the first of them perhaps 30 feet! It's an interesting place, scenic in it's own way. Hard to judge our rate of progress, dragging, pushing, grunting, but we keep moving. Before long we see nothing but sky in front of us: the lip of a 100-foot fall. This one forces a portage into the woods. As you would expect it was again an extraordinarily physically difficult task, but at least it was mostly downhill. During one of these 'poses' a thunderstorm struck. We huddled underneath overturned canoes for a half hour, then continued. As dusk was falling we were nowhere near the Mecatina, though we could now see it, still far below, and we were at the lip of *another* hundred-foot fall. To our left was a brushy field with few trees, and lots of caribou moss, which became home for the night. Big servings of spaghetti, with meat sauce and Parmesan made supper, and we could have gone for seconds. Everyone craved those calories.

After a couple more hours of hard work the next morning we had again reached the big river, viewing both a big rapid above, and a big rapid below, but in both cases there was a boulder apron along the sides and we could pass there if necessary. Good news. Though still in a canyon, the walls were no longer so tight. We took an hour to rest, swim with a bar of soap and wash out clothes, the first hygiene we'd practiced in 6 days. Our bodies looked bad, scabbed, bruised, bug-bitten, and thin, lower legs, ankles and feet swollen. Since we're now 3 days behind schedule, the push begins to make the once-a-week ferryboat in time. We have less than three days. Numerous big rapids were encountered downriver.

Everything was big water racing through big boulders, and nearly everything was a portage. We'd work the edges as much as possible to minimize the distance that has to be walked, and when a route was borderline runnable, it became common practice for the bowman to step out with a pack, lighten the canoe by 200 lbs., and let the solo paddler take the boat through. And a number of really significant rapids, 3-4, were run this way. This is much faster than carrying over rocks. The canyon walls continued to widen, and the hilltops moved further into the distance. We again found ourselves, paradoxically, on a river often resembling a lake. There were long, shallow stretches of gentle or imperceptible current. But when this river decided to drop, it continued to throw a temper tantrum. Nearly every crosshatch on the map was an unrunnable rapid.

It was already getting late when we reached another huge rapid, a waterfall, really, where a notch has been worn in the orange granite. A couple of us grabbed packs and began to walk, scouting the portage route. It was soon obvious there isn't an easy one. After its initial drop into a foaming cauldron, this river does something that no other I know of does: IT SPLITS! With 150 feet in elevation still to loose, these two channels go their separate ways to the coast. The eastern channel keeps the name Mecatina, but the west channel takes the name NetXXXXXX. So we have another critical decision to make: if we take the east channel and the weather gets windy, we'll be unable to paddle out to the island where the ferry stops. If we take the west channel we arrive at a small town where we will have to find someone with a boat big enough to haul canoes out to the island. We slept on it, and in the morning began a one-mile portage around the falls, and at least 4 more class 5 rapids, to get to the west channel. Completing this took us 8 hours! Continuing the push, we paddled on through the afternoon, either portaging or solo paddling several additional rapids. With only 15 miles to go, we had let ourselves believe we really could make it into town this evening. We had talked about getting a hot shower, and what was the first thing we were going to eat, but this damn river simply would not let up. There were rapids on the river NOT indicated on the map. There are map symbols for 'swifts' or small rapids, and nearly ALL of these were

big water class 4 or more, though some we got by with a solo paddler. We'd worked hard for 14 hours, but the lengthy scouting and portaging consumed time and as darkness fell we had 5 miles still to go. By now we all just wanted this trip to be over. Dispirited, we camped one last time.

Up at 4 a.m., Saturday, 19 August, and on the water without breakfast. This afternoon the ferry leaves, and if we are not on it we are stranded for a week. By first light we are portaging another rapid, then paddling, then portaging again, and again.....this river will NOT let us go. At 7am we have reached the final falls, a 50-foot drop to tidewater, and for the first time in 25 days find a well-cut portage trail along the bank. At 8 a.m. we paddle up to the dock at Cheverly. Finding no one to talk with, we're ready to hike toward town when a guy rides up on an ATV. We ask him if he knows a fisherman who might haul us out to the island. He rode away and soon returned saying someone would come soon. Loading everything onto the back of this crabber, we hung on as he headed out into the north Atlantic chop. We passed around what little jerky and gorp we have left: the final breakfast. In an hour we've landed at Harrington Harbor. Free at last, Free at last! Free of the Mecatina, at last! We have made it in time to catch the afternoon ferry out of here! Harrington Harbor is a NEAT place, a fishing community of 300 inhabitants with no cars or roads. The walkways there are wooden 8 x 8's, and everyone rides around on an ATV. In the few hours we have to kill we shower at the only B&B in town, and buy ice cream, cookies, beer, and munchies at BOTH of the general stores. All the locals are interested in talking to us and hearing our stories of the river, as they really don't go inland far. The limit of their travel is the gas they can carry in the Ski-doo during winter, when they hunt moose and cut firewood on the mainland. Come 5 p.m. we've boarded the ferry, and at noon the next day we've unloaded at Natashquan and retrieved our cars. The drive home began immediately.

So if you are considering a trip to the Petite Mecatina, I have one word of advice for you: DON'T! It was by far the toughest trip I've ever done. None of us, and we have a lot of wilderness tripping experience, have ever seen portaging conditions as difficult as those through the woods, and the rapids in this river are suitable only for a class 5 kayaker. And we still don't know

what exactly is inside those 'cascades'. My wilderness gear is wrecked, I have to buy a new boat, and it'll take a long time to heal up from the damage done. This is a trip that will be talked about for a long time as the trip from hell. That's not far from right.

CC

James

from page 8

the rocks and generally out of places we weren't supposed to be. Her main advice to those of us in canoes was "don't follow the kayaks." After watching where the kayaks were going, I happily agreed.

The rain quit and we stopped for lunch at Choo-Choo rapid. The rain returned just as we all opened our lunches. So much for "partly cloudy." After lunch, we loaded up and set off downstream. That is, most of us did. My wife and I managed to find the largest rock in the river, which seemed to have a magnetic attraction for our boat. As it loomed larger and larger, Chris tried to pass it on the left and I tried to pass it on the right. Needless to say, we were soon enjoying the comfortable embrace of the contents of the James River. While I was getting a census of the fish population, Chris was practicing her rock-climbing skills. Now I know how to get her out onto real rock. I was soon surrounded by kayaks, for which I was very grateful. I don't know all their names, but the help was appreciated. After they righted our canoe and got me back in, I paddled to an eddy and started bailing. Meanwhile, Chris, who was still stranded and waving at me, was picked up by Rich and Shel and brought back. With serious second thoughts, she climbed back into the canoe and we set off again. Our flotilla navigated the rock garden below Choo-Choo, stayed upright through the wave train in Mitchell's Gut and generally had a peaceful paddle to the take out at Reedy's Creek. Jenny left us there and she and the rest of the group headed downstream, but someone else will have to tell that story. As we loaded our boats for the ride home, the sun finally came out and provided a beautiful end to a short but enjoyable trip.

As for the lower section, I should have known that something would happen as soon as Ken Dubel joined our 12 remain-

ing boats to make 13 (insert music from the Twilight Zone). The kayakers had some fun at the usual playspots on the way to Hollywood. Our first upside down events happened at Hollywood. We had a couple of swims near the bottom, but people and boats were rapidly reunited. The river didn't take any more "victims" until Pipeline. Richard Walters, the Pres himself, led the way down the last big drop of Pipeline. I was behind him and as I was about to hit the big wave, I saw him emptying his boat as though he had flipped. I figured what was good enough for the Pres was good enough for me so I also flipped as I hit the wave. I guess the surprise of seeing Richard out of his boat interfered with my concentration and made me too weak to brace (at least that's what I tell myself - it might also have been bad karma or the Pipeline troll). At any rate, Joan Davis didn't want me to feel alone (such a good friend) so she also flipped at Pipeline. No injuries (except to pride) and people and boats were quickly recovered.

CC

Shenandoah

from page 7

merry-making, Darlene went over to ask the revelers to tone it down. They complied, as best they could but we still could not get to sleep. So we pulled up stakes, loaded up the truck and Darlene carried the tent to high ground far away from human noise. Best laid plans... We still had to set up camp in the night. Our new site gave us an awe-inspiring view to the stars. The fingernail moon closing in on its last quarter lit up the heavens just about as much as the full moon would. Well earned sleep, at last.

The next morning as our truck rumbled across the cattleguard exit to Dam Acres, a couple of farmers were sitting near the farmhouse. I asked them if they ever saw a wolf around here. At first, they acted like they did not want to volunteer any information. But I told them I did not care if somebody had a wolf, I just wanted to make sure I saw what I saw. They said the people in the brick house have *one*. So we did see a wolf. If it was a cross with a dog, we did not see any dog in this animal.

The Quarterly Meeting Trip on the Shenandoah was educational, fun, tasty and memorable.

CC

Bill Gordon's 27th Annual Youghiogheny River Trip



Felicia Mazur and Mike Hall in Rivers End Rapid



Dane Goins in Cucumber Rapid



George Westerlund in Cucumber Rapid



Dave Stockdill in Rivers End Rapid



Bill Gordon in Rivers End Rapid



Bill Gordon Crashing Through a Hole in Rivers End Rapid

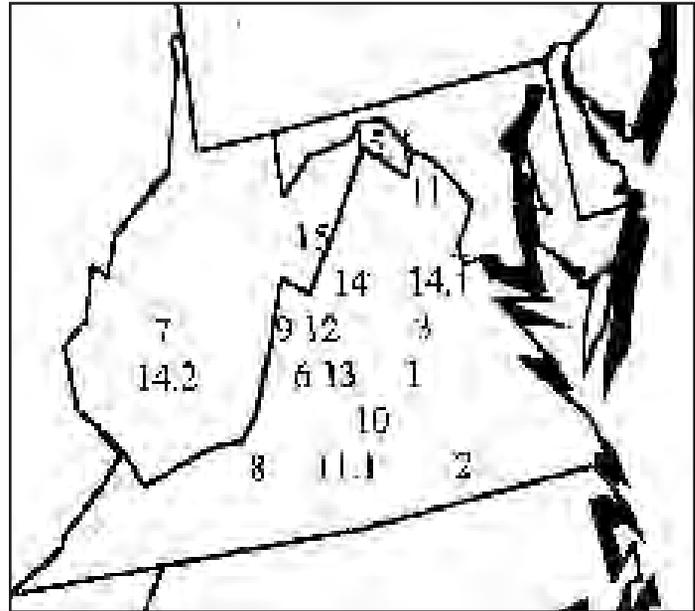
Cruise Schedule Ken Dubel, Chair

The rules are few but very important

Coastal Trips are for Coastal members only. We encourage you to join our club and participate in our trips. Participants assume full responsibility for their personal safety. Coastal Canoeists, Inc. assumes no responsibility for your safety, skill level or any other factors affecting trips.

Trip Coordinators only facilitate trips. Email or call the coordinator before 9:30 p.m., Thursday prior to the trip. You cannot bring unexpected guests. You must self-rate your real skills for any trip. To assist you in selecting a trip, trips are rated according to the AWA Safety Code for Class I-VI rivers.

Trip updates can be found on www.coastals.org.



Date	#	River	Rated	Coordinator	Telephone	Comments
1/1	1	Chilly chili paddle James at Richmond, upper and / or lower	I/A	Jim Ole Geezer Blake		Start the New Year with a friendly paddle followed by chili.
1/10	2	Les Fry's annual Nottoway camper	I	Doug Jessee		A club classic revitalized! (No dogs, please.)
1/17	3	The Slate or the James	Cold	Richard Walters		Quarterly meeting. See website.
1/24	4	Open				
1/31	5	Open				
2/7	6	Maury at Goshen Pass	A	Glenn Rose		Run Goshen Pass with "Mr. Maury" himself.
2/7	6.1	Hardware River	N(I)	Richard Walters		Nice scenery, easy river, the "(I)" due to the temperature
2/14	7	Webster Springs area creeks. Cranberry?	A	Eddie Barnette		Sorry, not for new creekers. Contact Eddie well in advance.
2/21	8	Best running stream in SW Virginia / deep south as plan "B"	I	David Bernard		Trip with CCC. David knows the fine streams in Roanoke area.
2/28	9	Back Creek and Jackson River at Richardson Gorge	N/I	Larry Gross		Two pristine rivers in Bath Cty. Have permission. Slots limited!
3/6	10	Appomattox	N/I	Jenny Wiley		'03 Trip coordinator of the year. Winner of Werner canoe paddle.
3/13	11	Sunday Rappahannock watershed	I	Katherine Mull		Something of a "dealer's choice"
3/13	11	Rockfish River	N/I	Richard Walters		El Presidente takes another group on a scenic run. Easy water.
3/13 3/14	11	Southern Rivers Canoe Camper	I/A	Paul Helbert		Contact Paul well in advance if you are interested in this camper.
3/20	12	Highland County Maple Festival	N/I	Ken Dubel		Same as Larry's trip 2/28, 29 but add a hometown type festival.
3/27	13	Maury at Goshen Pass	A	Alicia Jahsmann		Goshen's running! Well, okay, let's hope so.
4/3	14	Ridges of Madison County	N/I	Bernie Farmer		a.k.a. "Small streams east of the Blue Ridge".
4/3	14	Yard sale at Appomattox River Company in Midlothian	All	Karen Abse		Saturday only fundraiser for Coastals! 9:00 until 1:00
4/3	14	Webster Springs Race on Elk River	I	For		www.websterwv.com/whitewater.html
4/10	15	Easter Eagles Smokehole Canyon - S. Branch Potomac	I	Tom McCloud		Another club classic, good whitewater w/spectacular scenery.
4/10	15	North Branch of Potomac at Bloomington dam release	I	For	Your	

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Bryan Brown Negotiates River's End Rapid on Bill Gordon's 27th Annual Youghiogheny Trip

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Quarterly Meeting
Saturday, January 17
See Page 3 for Details

Dated Material: Please Expedite!