



Cruiser

Canoe Cruisers Association of Greater Washington, DC, Inc.

The Chairman's Cockpit

By Angela Killian

If you haven't already, please take a moment to check out the **Member Survey** available on the website at www.ccadc.org. This is your last chance to tell the Board what works at CCA and what doesn't. If you have trouble with the survey questions, or would like to expound on your answers please contact the Chair directly at chairman@ccadc.org. Your answers are important to us and will be considered when all results are tallied!

Finally, CCA is in need of a **new editor for the Cruiser**. I think you will all agree that Susan Sherrod has put together many wonderful issues, but work has become too demanding for Susan and she has asked to be replaced. Please contact her directly at newsletter@ccadc.org if you are able to take on this task for the club. **Thanks, Susan, for your wonderful work!**

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Missouri Rive, Montana—Lewis and Clark's "buffalo jump" at Slaughter River Trip report by Tom Gray starts on page 8. Photo by Larry Lynch



The Missouri River, Montana—Photo by Larry Lynch

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CCA Meeting—Wed., Oct. 29 & Fri. Dec 5

By Ed Gertler
CCA Programs Coordinator

CCA meetings are normally held at the Clara Barton Community Center, 75th and MacArthur Blvd in Cabin John, MD, at 7:30pm.

Wednesday, October 29 Meeting

"Retracing the Path of Jack London." Mike Dixon, who loves paddling, the far Northwest, and the writings of Jack London, combined those interests to launch a series of visits to Alaska and the Yukon doing as the title describes. Tonight he shares his experiences with slides and commentary for a most unique show. Come join us.

Friday, Dec. 5 Meeting and Bazaar

As usual, we will be combining our November and December meetings to dodge conflicts with holidays. But this is not just any ole meeting. It is the return of our annual bazaar, swap meet, and all-round good time. There will be local retailers, backyard merchants, and craftspeople displaying their wares and an opportunity for you to buy or sell used equipment. And last but not least, all your friends will be there.

But really best of all, there is a great program. Our guest speaker is Dan Soeder, a hydrologist from the Maryland office of the U.S. Geological Survey. Knowing our preoccupation with river levels, Dan will educate us on their fabulous river monitoring system, how they get the information to us, and hydrology in general. Do come and join us and give Dan a well-deserved warm welcome.

Please Note: Parking can be a sensitive issue. We will have the lot behind the building available. Otherwise, please consider carpooling or parking farther away, especially if you have an identifying feature like a boat on your car.

Call for Cookies: It would add to the festivity of the special December meeting if those with hidden talents for such would bake some cookies or other goodies for the event. Even some regular junk snacks would be appreciated. Let the program chair (Ed at 301-585-4381) know if you can help or just surprise us. We will have a refreshments table set up.

Nantahala Trip

Oct. 31- Nov. 2, '03

By: Jennifer Plyler

Join the CHOTA Canoe Club (Knoxville, TN) for our annual trip to celebrate Halloween and Guest Appreciation Festival (GAF) at the Nantahala Outdoor Center (http://www.noc.com/events_gaf.htm) October 31-November 2, 2003. We will paddle the Nantahala River (Class II-III) on Friday and Saturday. Sunday, we will paddle the Ocoee River (Class III-IV) in east Tennessee.

I have rented several cabins in the Nantahala Gorge (see <http://www.nantahalacabins.com>). The cost for Friday and Saturday night will depend on the number of people who stay. Plan on about \$40 a night. The sleeping arrangements include bunk beds or sleeping on a futon. No tent camping is allowed at this establishment although tent camping can be found nearby. The cabins come equipped with full kitchens and baths and some have fireplaces and Jacuzzi's.

A \$35 deposit is required no later than September 24. You are welcome to confirm after this date but I cannot guarantee your accommodations since they are on a first come first serve bases.

Since I plan on visiting family before and after GAF, you will have to provide your own transportation to and from NC/TN. It is approximately 10 hours to the NOC and 12 hours to the Ocoee from the DC metro area.

If interested, please call Jennifer Plyler at 301.445.4815 before 8 PM.

Free Firewood

It's yours if you come haul it away.
Call Kathleen Sengstock,
(301)649-3917

Boat for Sale

Five-year-old Mo-hawk fiberglass canoe, Nova 16, in good condition, w/paddles, two life jackets, solo saddle: \$600 obo. Port Tobacco, Md. until mid-September, then in Greenbelt. 301/934-1412, elilu@juno.com.

Ever Wanted Your Own Island?

By: Matt Berres, Potomac Conservancy

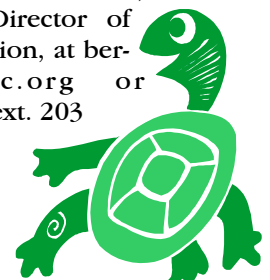
The Potomac Conservancy seeks a Minnie's Island Caretaker to oversee natural resource management and volunteer coordination responsibilities of the Conservancy's Minnie's Island preserve. The Caretaker will work with the Director of Community Action to organize volunteer workdays, education programs, and island open houses and to coordinate other activities in conjunction with the Conservancy's Lockhouse 8 Learning Center. Leadership experience and canoe/kayak competencies required. Natural resource background or educational/interpretive experience desired. Part-time volunteer position. Various fringe benefits provided, including access to your very own place on the Potomac.

To apply send resume and cover letter describing why you want to be the Caretaker to: Minnie's Island Caretaker, c/o Potomac Conservancy, 1730 North Lynn Street, Suite 403, Arlington, Virginia or email to: riverrat@potomac.org.

Volunteer Lockkeepers Needed

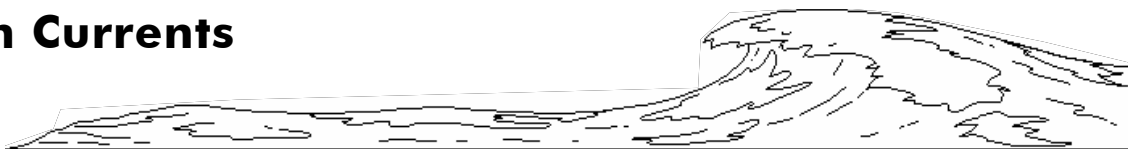
The Potomac Conservancy is recruiting a cadre of "Lockkeepers" to assist as docents at its Lockhouse 8 Learning Center. Lockkeepers will be responsible for staffing the Lockhouse on weekends and evenings, handing out literature, answering questions, and assisting with other interpretive tasks. Volunteers will be asked to make a minimum 6-month commitment. Training will be provided. This is the perfect opportunity for history buffs and those who enjoy people.

For more information, contact: Matt Berres, Director of Community Action, at berres@potomac.org or 703.276.2777, ext. 203



Conservation Currents

Edited By Mac Thornton
CCA Conservation Chairman



WASA Report on Potomac Sewer Makeover

(Note: this memorandum from the DC Water and Sewer Authority gives an update on refurbishing the Potomac Interceptor Sewer along the Potomac. In 1999, CCA sued WASA to force these changes).

This memorandum provides a summary of project activities since the last public meeting conducted on October 3, 2002. At the time of the October 3, 2002 meeting, the Federal Register notice for the Potomac Interceptor (PI) Long-Term Odor Abatement Program Environmental Assessment was published and the public comment period was underway. The public comments received during the meeting were generally in favor of the preferred alternative (alternative #2), including strong support from the Cabin John Citizens Association (CJCA) and the Bannockburn Civic Association (BCA), and opposed to the placement of an odor treatment unit at Site 15 [Lock 10](alternative #3).

Upon receiving strong support from the public and the National Park Service's stated intent to support the preferred alternative, DCWASA and our Consultant began preparation of conceptual designs for the PI odor treatment units. A Concept Finalization Report was submitted to DCWASA on February 10, 2003, which included our Consultant's recommendations for mechanical treatment systems, HVAC systems, electrical and instrumentation systems, as well as details regarding civil, geotechnical, struc-

tural, and architectural design elements. DCWASA provided report comments that were satisfactorily addressed by our Consultant.

The conceptual design and architectural information for Sites 1995, 27, 17 and 4 were presented to representatives of the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) of Maryland and the District of Columbia on February 12, 2003, as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). Since that time, DCWASA has been working with the NPS and SHPOs to refine the architectural features of the four sites located within the lands of the C&O Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal) and George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP). A second meeting was held on April 23, 2003 to present architectural modifications that were made based on the NPS and SHPO input at the February meeting. Additional concept alternatives were requested for Sites 27 and 1995, and a third meeting was held on June 25, 2003 to present sketches for the new architectural concepts. One additional round of architectural alternatives was requested for these two sites at the June 2003 meeting, so the design team is currently working on architectural sketches to reflect the requested concepts. In addition, the NPS requested small modifications to the architectural sketches for Sites 4 and 17, which are currently being produced. Once approval is received from the NPS and SHPOs, architectural renderings will be prepared for the four sites, and it is expected that a Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will then be issued for the project.

Multiple applications for Special-Use Permits were approved by the NPS to conduct topographical surveying and geotechnical drilling at the four NPS sites, and this work is currently underway and mostly complete. Once the data from the field work is received, the design team will proceed with finalization of the conceptual design of the facilities, including civil, geotechnical, and structural concept designs. The conceptual design is expected to be completed in August 2003, and the detailed design is expected to start immediately after the conceptual design is approved by WASA. The approved conceptual design will represent about 60% completion of the design process. The detailed design is expected to take six months to complete, and the construction bid package is anticipated to be ready in March 2004. Construction is expected to begin in late summer 2004. Currently, the overall project schedule is on-track with estimated construction of the facilities to be completed in late spring/early summer of 2005.

DCWASA plans to post additional information on the website in the coming months indicating the progress of the PI Long-Term Odor Abatement design, as well as posting graphics of the architectural renderings of the buildings in NPS lands. In addition, DCWASA plans to coordinate with the CJCA and BCA to plan another public meeting this fall, once the architectural renderings are complete and the FONSI has been issued by the NPS.

Submissions to the Cruiser

Should be made via e-mail to newsletter@ccadc.org, submitted on 3.5" disk, or typed for scanning. No special formatting is required, but plain, block style is preferred. **Photos**—are strongly encouraged and can be e-mailed, or snail-mailed. Color photos are preferred.

Advertisements

Classified Ads—The first 3 lines are free. Each additional line is 75 cents per line. Send classified ads to newsletter@ccadc.org.

Lost & Found—No charge. **Give-Aways**—No charge. **Paddlers Flea Market**—on the web at ccadc.org—No charge.

Display Ads—\$5 per column inch, Quarter page \$40, half page \$75, full page \$150, insert \$300-\$450. Display ads can be submitted via e-mail, 3.5" disk, Zip disk or CD-R. Hard copy ads will be scanned. Advertisers receive a link on our web site. For additional information, e-mail newsletter@ccadc.org, or call Susan Sherrod at 703-725-4278 evenings. **Payment**—must be received prior to publication.

Mailing Address—Cruiser Editor, Canoe Cruisers Association, PO Box 3236, Merrifield, VA 22116-3236.

Rappahannock Fall Line, August 2nd

By: V Star Mitchell

The night before my scheduled Rappahannock Fall Line trip (Mott's Run Landing to Fredericksburg), I was sweating bullets concerning the water level. The CCA's Handbook says the minimum level is 3.3. When I started checking the American Whitewater gauge, the level was 2.47 and in the non-runnable gold code.

I started to think I should begin the miserable task of calling all in my group and telling them we're not meeting at the I-95 rest stop, but at the I-66 rest stop and we were going to be doing the Remington-Kelly's Ford section of the Rappahannock. I knew what a mess this last minute change could possibly become. If it were the same meeting spot, it could be much easier.

A paddling buddy had told me that she had made it down this part of the river at a level of 2.2. The river was rising, so I thought at 2.47 and rising, perhaps I would not be stoned to death by my group of paddlers. Saturday morning I arose to check the gauge. American Whitewater showed the river at 5:15 a.m., to now be 3.27 and in the green code and runnable. Praise to the river gods; I had made the correct decision.

John Stapko arrived bright and early at my house and we proceeded to load his 18-foot Old Town Voyager canoe and my kayak on top of my van. We were soon headed around the Beltway making good time only to find a major backup of traffic trying to exit onto I-95. It took us at least 15 minutes or more to just get onto I-95.

Knowing how smart I am, on I-95, I soon got into the middle HOV lane headed south at record-breaking speeds. WRONG! I thought the HOV lane ended before the first rest stop on I-95. So with the big long canoe sporting its bright orange painted bow and stern and the little lemon-yellow kayak on top of the big green GMC "Atealla the Van" we flew down the HOV lane past the rest stop while looking at the cars, waiting patiently for us to

arrive, parked there with boats on roof racks.

Tim Tilson had previously warned me about the misconception of getting off at the correct place for the exit to this rest stop, and what a devil of a time one would have going to the next exit and backtracking (as he had previously done). Well, I wasn't even in the correct lanes of the highway to take any exit. Getting out of the HOV lane and backtracking was an ordeal, but we did manage to do it and arrived only about 10 minutes late.

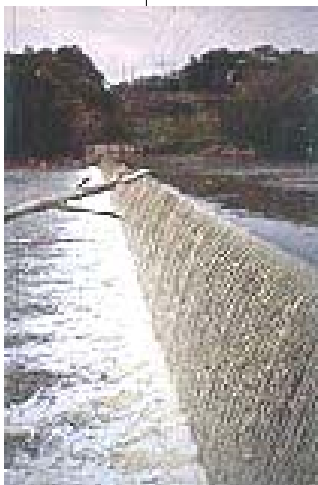
The faithful paddlers were all there awaiting my arrival. The group consisted of: Alan Dickerson OC-1, Jeannine Hagan K-1, Kip Reynolds K-1, Kathleen Singstock K-1, John Stapko OC-1, John Paul Tolson, and Jan Wolf OC-2, and myself K-1. The rest of the drive down I-95 was relatively slow and bumper to bumper, but moving. John said, "This traffic must be like this all the way to Florida!" I knew there was a BRV James River trip and I was sure glad we were not driving all the way to Richmond.

The weather prediction was for a very hot humid day with thunderstorms. Most of the DC area got the thunderstorms, but down there in Virginia, we had an overcast sky for most of the day and a wonderful blowing breeze that felt like a storm was coming up. Fortunately, no storm ever materialized. The overcast and breeze kept us invigorated.

As I remember, this was a first time run of this section of the river for everyone on the excursion, except for me (lucky group). I greatly regret that no one brought a camera to document these boaters' first time entering the river by the approximately 20-foot (my guess) wooden boat ramp slide into the water. Al-

though many of you may have old pictures of the dam, you may not know that as I write these words, that section above the dam is supposed to be closed to boaters in order that the dam(s) can be removed.

We learned from a local paddler the above information. He told us there are two dams on the river. There is the large dam that you can see. Up river from the large dam, under water is an older smaller dam. After the large dam is removed, the smaller dam will then, also, be removed. We can all wait with baited breath to see what kind of rapids lie under all of that dam(n) water. Just think, unknown rapids that beckon us to



VEPCO's Embrey Dam on the Rappahannock River.

play and await new names! What is more, I guess I have the distinction of being able to say, "I led the last organized CCA trip down this section of the Rappahannock with the portage around the old dam."

"This dam has a history that extends back to colonial days when it was the first dam built for a canal bypassing the fall-sline rapids. Civil War photographs show a 12- to 15-foot

dam with a great deal of water flowing over it." Virginia White-water by H. Roger Corbett. I don't know where Roger got this information or where he saw the picture of the smaller dam, but according to the local paddler, there is still a smaller dam there upstream from the large one. Too bad that Roger did not live to see the uncovering of the smaller dam about which he wrote.

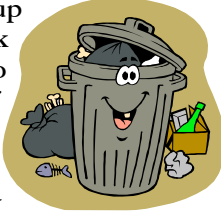
I had asked the group to bring plastic bags to clean up the trash mess at the dam. Several months earlier, Jeff Davis, Jeff's neighbor, Dr. Jim Hale, Jean McAulay, and I ran

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

this section. We picked up trash and put it into plastic bags (left by previous litterers). We gave the place a "face-lift," but considering the flimsy bags we found lying about, it was not possible to pick up all of the trash.

My group scurried about like ants on a hill and picked the grounds clean. We ended up with a huge heavy-duty oversize black bag full of garbage that John Stapko graciously put in his canoe. A few of us had grocery-sized bags of trash stuffed in our boats. Just below the dam there is a roadside "park" with a garbage can where we unloaded this stinking stuff.



I just do not know what kind of people feel that they have the right to "trash the world" and leave wads of dangerous fishing line, broken bottles, non-biodegradable Styrofoam, beer cans, etc. One item we found was a metal bowl that should fit into a bong. When the dam goes, maybe it won't be such a hang out for the "potheads" and "trashers."

We ate lunch enjoying spray and mist blowing in our faces from the roaring and pulsating 20-foot VEPCO Embury Dam. The dam's vivacious rhythm seems to mimic the beating of a noble heart. Unknown to the old dam, soon its heart will beat no more.

After the dam, the more interesting rapids of basically Level II to II+, invited us to stop and play. All of us were hunkered down in our boats either on our knees or sitting on our bottoms except for John Stapko who gave us a show by running ALL of the rapids standing in his canoe and paddling with a double bladed paddle. It is always nice to have unusual entertainment on a trip! No one flipped or swam on any of the rapids (maybe we weren't playing hard enough). At the one Level III rapid, all chose to take the river-left, Level II side. However, we did stop so people could climb over the rocks and check out the rapid on river-right.

The take-out was the usual vertical climb to the road above, but we all helped one another and made the most unpleasant part of any river run an esprit de corps event. The local paddler gave us a great supertime tip and we were soon loaded-up and headed for Allman's. (From the take-out, go south on Bus. Rt.1 aka Jefferson Davis Hwy. Go about one mile. Look for Allman's at the intersection of Augustine Ave. and Powhatan St.) Go to www.fredericksburg.com/Movies/2002/062002/bestBarbecue for more information.

Allman's is a Bar-B-Q restaurant, locally owned and run by a charming black family. The environment has the "homey look-of-yesterday," with a huge authentic stuffed bore's head on the wall. The grandmother knows all of the recipes and does the cooking. The granddaughter waited on us and another relative (son?) was behind the counter. The friendliness and the food were a ten. The prices were very reasonable (suitable for tight-fisted paddlers). I finished my Bar-B-Q off with a chocolate sundae and bought one of the big, nut-filled, homemade brown-

(Continued on page 6)

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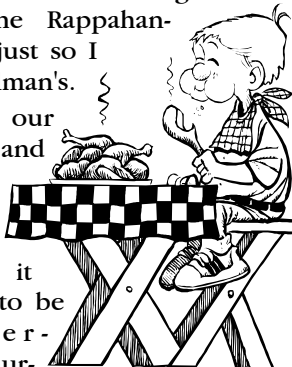
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Rappabannoc (Continued from page 5)

ies for the road. I want to go back and run the Rappahannock again just so I can eat at Allman's.

We said our goodbyes and then John and I headed for DC. Well, it turned out to be DC literally. Oh, hur-



ray, the HOV lane was now turned around and we could get back in it and go north. With boats on top, off we flew, like bats out of hell (or I should say the way the average boaters seem to drive)! But, alas, perhaps my heavy foot or our lack of concentration, we missed or there is no exit off of the HOV lane onto I-495. The signs were now saying we were in the HOV for I-395! John exclaimed, "Oh my gosh, we're on the HOV Lane to Hell again! We're going to fly through the District!" I'm sure going to have to pay more attention from now on when I drive in HOV lanes.

Alas, we saw an exit for the George Washington Parkway. I made a quick exit and we were off of the HOV Road to Hell. Then we had an argument that sounded like two married people or two tandem paddlers as to which way we should go. John said, "Go Chain Bridge!" I said, "No! Key Bridge is the way to my house!" John retorted, "I knew I should have driven!" I replied, "Guess what? I'm driving and we're going Key Bridge!"

After I crossed Key Bridge and we made a left turn on M Street and then a left turn onto Canal Road and flew out of DC to Bethesda, John was gracious and manly enough to admit that was indeed the best and fastest way. I now view it as a better way (for me at least) than I-95, I-495 and my usual exit.

Words on a page can never really give you the feel and spirit of a trip or the camaraderie that prevailed. Despite the traffic hang-ups (that one soon forgets), I would give this day, this group, and this run a ten.

A Few Words About Saving Your Life

By: Gus Anderson

When I recently read about the kayaker who drowned below Bull Falls on the Shanandoah when he swam and his spray skirt caught on an underwater snag, I was reminded of the only river fatality I have seen in thirty years of paddling rivers all over the country, and the lessons about safety that I learned but have neglected in recent years.

The fatality that I encountered was on the Klamath River in far northern California in the summer of 1977 or 78. I had learned to kayak in the summer of 1974 and had learned to row a raft on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River in 1975 or 76 when I was the only kayak on a raft trip put together by the owner of a small rafting company.

The following summer he decided not to run his trips so I sub-contracted with him to run weekend raft trips on the American and Klamath Rivers.

I was doing a joint trip with Echo River Trips on the Klamath River along a stretch that parallels a highway. The river level was fairly low and we were approaching a class two rapid when we saw a woman on the left bank waiving frantically at us. We pulled over, and she told us that a raft had flipped in the next rapid and was wrapped around an underwater limb that stuck out from a downed tree on the left side and that a teenage boy was missing.

We unloaded our passengers, and I rowed my raft down to the rapid. The approach was very shallow and the current funneled to the left of a large rock where the raft was wrapped around the tree limb. I managed to pull to the right of the rock and get downstream of the raft and tie up to it. The other guides brought two more rafts down and tied up in the eddy behind me.

We tried to pull the raft out from under the limb which was about six inches below the water surface, but the front end of the

raft was bent over the top of the limb with the current piling up in the bow, creating enough pressure to keep us from pulling the raft under the limb.

The raft had wrapped at the front edge of the metal rowing frame so that one third of the raft was on top of the limb and two thirds were below the limb, upside down. Everyone in the raft had been washed out and downstream, but had now made their way back to the raft except for the missing boy.

To get the raft out, we had to cut the floor of the raft away from the tubes in the bow so that the current could flow through and release the pressure on the bow of the raft. I was then able to pull the raft out from under the limb using the oars on my raft. I swung the raft around into shallow water in an eddy where the other guides were able to reach under it.

They found the boy under the raft with the collar of his life jacket caught on the T-hole pin of the rowing frame which is a heavy metal pin to which the oar is attached. We tried CPR for an hour afterward but could not revive him.

For many years after that I always carried a knife with the thought that in a situation like that only you can save yourself in time to avoid drowning. Over the last



few years I have neglected that lesson and failed to carry a knife. I am reminded by this recent incident that situations like this can arise on easy sections of rivers under circumstances where without a knife to cut yourself free you are not going to be rescued in time to save your life.

I plan to resume my old habit of carrying a knife every time on every river.

Missouri River trip, Montana, August 1-8, 2003—Part 1

Fort Benton to James Kipp Recreation Area, 150 miles

We were a group of six men in four canoes, five Gray boys and a Lynch: the three brothers Chet, Tom and Gordy Gray, Tom's son Brian, the brother's first cousin Will Gray, and Larry Lynch, Gordy's long-time mountaineering partner. Our ages ranges from 37 to 64.

There is a good, strong current for almost the entire trip. The river's flow at Fort Benton ranged from 4700 to 5100 cubic feet per second. The USGS gauge height there ranged from 2.0 to 2.2 feet. I estimate that it would still be possible to canoe the river with 1.5 less than we had. The current moves at about three miles per hour. Most days, we found ourselves paddling for 4 or 5 miles, then if the current is good, rafting together to drift while enjoying the scenery and a drink or a swim. Drifting was especially pleasant in the White Cliffs area, watching the rock formations as we floated by.

The elevation at put-in was 2620 feet; at take-out it was 2260. That's a 360-foot total drop with an average gradient of only 2.4 feet per mile. The River Mile numbers referred to are not posted along the river, but are marked on the series of four topographic maps entitled Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River sold by the Bureau of Land Management. The maps are at a scale of 1:63,360 or one inch equals one mile, with a contour interval of 100 feet.

We had been advised to prepare for both hot and cold weather, but we had all hot - sunny days with temperatures in the 90s, with lows no less than the mid 60s. We had thunderstorms the last three evenings in camp. On several days, we had to paddle into strong winds.

TRIP DISTANCE SUMMARY

- 8/1 6 miles Ft. Benton fairgrounds (river mile -.3) to Evans Bend Camp (mile 5.9) 2 hours
8/2 24 miles to rough camping on an island to the left of Three

- Islands (mile 29.7) 7 hours
8/3 26 miles to Eagle Creek Camp (mile 56) 8 hours
8/4 17 miles to Pablo Rapids Camp (mile 72.9) 5 hours
8/5 20 miles to rough camping on the right below Holmes Rapids (mile 93) 7.5 hours
8/6 17 miles to rough camping at Greasewood Bottom (mile 109.7) 6 hours
8/7 27 miles to Hideaway Camp (mile 136.7) 8 hours
8/8 13 miles to James Kipp Recreation Area boat ramp (mile 149.4) 3.5 hours
150 miles total in 47 hours

DAILY LOG:

8/1/2003 - 6 miles in 2 hours

We arrived in Fort Benton at 8:30AM, but didn't put in until 1:30 PM. We visited the Bureau of Land Management's Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River Visitor Center where we got some very helpful advice about camping sites, drought conditions, and hikes to take. We were advised that whether or not the store at Judith Landing is open depends on whether Amy comes in. We were told it would be OK to dig cat holes rather than buy a "Luggable Loo". Then they showed us a video about the river. After posing for a photo in front of the statue of Lewis and Clark and Sacajawea, we went to the Adventure Bound facility for our rental canoes and supplies. They lead us over to the fairground which would be our put-in spot. We unloaded our consider-

able gear and asked the Adventure Bound guy if all of our canoes could be with web seats rather than the form-fitted vinyl ones. We then had four Old Town Discovery 169 canoes - 16 feet and 9 inches long with flat bottoms to carry lots of stuff. We would have two solo canoes and two tandem canoes. There were still some last-minute things to do, so Chet, Will, Gordy and Larry went back to buy ice and film, gas up the cars for the shuttle, buy fishing licenses and get lunch. Meanwhile, Brian and Tom started packing the four canoes.

By starting at the upstream end of town, we got the benefit of seeing Fort Benton from the river, imagining how it looked in the steamboat days, when, in high water, boats would unload passengers and freight by the Grand Union Hotel, now restored and in business.

This wide river, with strong current takes some getting used to. If you choose a route, you may be unable to go as planned, unless you



*Paddling the Badlands. Tom Gray and Chet Gray
Photo by Gordon Gray*

allowed plenty of distance to get where you want to go. The river is in control, pushing you forward. We camped at Evans Bend Primitive Boat Camp, at mile 6. The only facility was one iron fire ring. We had

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Missouri River (Continued from page 7)

been warned by the B.L.M. ranger that because of high danger of fires, we must never build a fire unless there is a ring. We swam at camp. A strong southeast wind kept the night warm.

8/2/2003 - 24 miles in 7 hours

The amount of bird life increased. There were lots of families of Canada geese. We encountered many white pelicans. Now we know why Adventure Bound uses the white pelican as its symbol, painted



The former "Eye of the Needle" stood here. Larry Lynch, Gordon Gray, Brian Gray. Photo by Tom Gray.

on each canoe. We startled several mule deer. The set of four maps from B.L.M. were helpful in telling where we are, but are inaccurate in its portrayal of islands. The river obviously shifts its course a lot. Some river channels shown on the map do not exist. Some channels that we canoed weren't shown on the map. The map showed a mile-long rapid named Black Bluff Rapids. When we got there, there was no rapid at all, not even a riffle. As we passed the mouth of Marias River, we watched for the channels in its delta, shown on the map. They don't exist. USGS showed 490 cfs flowing in the Marias that day, about 10% of the Missouri's flow. It's hard to imagine today why Lewis & Clark's crew spent ten days debating which fork was the main river. The Marias must have been in flood when they arrived.

After some swims to cool off while floating with the current, we made camp on an island on river

left at mile 29.6. The islands on the right at that point are labeled Three Islands on the map. After the 98° day, clouds rolled in and held the heat in. It was too hot in the tent, so I sat out until midnight.

8/3/2003 - 26 miles in 8 hours

We traded places in the canoes, as we do every day, so people paddle with different partners, in both ends of the canoe. Everyone got their chance to paddle one of the two solo canoes. The weather was still overcast, it began to drizzle, and a strong wind blew from the northeast. Much of the morning this wind was in our faces, slowing us down. Up to this point, we had been traveling through agricultural land, with frequent irrigation rigs spraying river water on fields. Frequent steep bluffs and islands kept it from being too civilized. We did not see another boat. We are seeing

a lot of fish, about 20 inches long, probably carp, that are feasting on the thousands of floating insects. The carp slowly swim upstream with their mouth open, scooping up insects. They look like they are wearing orange lipstick.

As planned, we stopped at Coal Banks Landing. We refilled our water carriers, and dumped our trash at their dumpster. As we had lunch at one of their picnic tables, we watched two sea kayaks and three canoes put in. The B.L.M. host told us a group of 12 had put in earlier. A few miles farther on, we saw the group of 12. It was a huge war canoe with guides steering it. The passengers sat two by two with paddles. A large motorized inflatable raft carried their gear.

The river was now flowing southeast, so the northwest wind had become our friend. Finally the famed White Cliffs came into view with intricate shapes eroded into them. A great one formed a sheer

wall on our left. That was the only place where the cliffs come all the way down into the water. Pilot Rock was a black column in the last farm along the river. We finally arrived at this day's destination, Eagle Creek Camp at mile 56. There were two other small groups in other sites at the camp. It would be the only camp we would share on the trip. Directly across the river is a 160-foot vertical cliff, at the top of which used to stand the Eye of the Needle. That famous rock structure was destroyed by vandals in 1997.

After dinner, Gordy, Larry, Brian, and Tom paddled across the river to climb to the top of the rock. We found a steep, narrow slot up which we could climb. There were four pitches that required hand holds. At the top, we took photos of each other. The view looked just like published photos of Eye of the Needle looking downriver. The climb back down was scary in the steep pitches.

As we did most evenings, we sat around the campfire (we had foraged for firewood before reaching the camp) singing, passing around Chet's guitar. About 10:30 this evening, we had a visitor. A man walked over from a nearby site and told us politely to shut up. He said he is an off-duty B.L.M. ranger, camping tonight with his family who is trying to sleep. We had seen the regulation mandating quiet hours between 10PM and 6AM.

**8/4/2003 - 17 miles in 5 hours
Today is Chet's 64th birthday!**

After a quick breakfast, we began our much-anticipated hike in Neatts Coulee. Ever since seeing the beautiful photo of hikers in a narrow slot canyon, we wanted to know where to find it. Back in the B.L.M. Visitor Center at Fort Benton, ranger Mark Schaeffer told us the path into Neatts Coulee begins at the downstream end of Eagle Creek Camp. We hiked into the coulee and turned right at the fork as directed by Ranger Mark. Suddenly, we were in the slot canyon. We could reach out and touch vertical rock walls on both sides. There were places where rock scram-

(Continued on page 9)

Sassafras River Trip

By: Ed Pilchard

Intrigued by Hulbert Fortner's 1944 opinion that the Sassafras was the most beautiful river on Maryland's Eastern Shore (see "Rivers of the Eastern Shore" by Hulbert Fortner), John Heidemann and I had a look-see there on the first Saturday in September and found things had changed. At least, the weather was beautiful: sunny, light breeze, air temperature in the 70's. We put in at the Fredericktown public landing, about 400 yards west of the Route 213 bridge, and headed upstream. Both river banks were lined by big power boats and sailboats. Lettering on their transoms and sides informed us that most hailed from Atlantic cities and ports; one was from the State of Oregon.

Our attention was soon diverted to the source of the deep, mellow sound of a ship's horn and low rumble of its diesel engine: a 50-foot sailing yacht talking to the lift bridge tender. Although traveling at "No Wake" speed and about 200 yards from us, it sent us a series of big waves that were barely accommodated by the freeboard of my Wen-

nah Solo Plus. A few minutes later, our attention was again diverted by the "mad bee" sound of an outboard motor boat bearing two boys going full-tilt down the middle. This time, the waves were smaller but still big enough to require a change in our line of travel so as to meet them bow-first. On we went for about a mile along the Kent County (south) shore, occasionally exchanging greetings with those we saw working or relaxing on their boats and docks. The opposite (Cecil County) shore appeared mostly undeveloped east of Fredericktown with grass meadows and tracts of deciduous trees, the land gently sloping to the water line. We could see a few more docks and man-made structures upstream from Greg Neck Boatyard where we turned about, taking out after an hour on the water.

From Hulbert's book and a Kent County brochure, we were reminded that most of Georgetown, at the south end of the bridge, was burned by British soldiers during May 1813. A church and two brick houses were left.

Kent Co. native, Catherine "Kitty" Knight, defied Admiral Sir George Cockburn and refused to leave an invalid neighbor resident while torches were being applied to the porch. "Kitty" reportedly beat out the flames with her broom while the soldiers marched back to their boats. The two houses have since been joined and currently constitute The Kitty Knight House and Restaurant (telephone 1-410-648-5200). We lunched inexpensively at Twinsey's Restaurant in Galena, then checked out the public boat landing at the end of Fox Hole Road, about two miles east of Galena, off Route 290. Here, the Sassafras is about 100 yards wide and has the character of a place for fishing boats and water skiers.

Continuing eastward for three miles on Routes 290 and 299 we found no public access to the Sassafras there nor at the village of Sassafras and its mill pond, sans mill. Although we didn't check out the Route 301 bridge, our copy of a recently revised map shows no public parking or river access at that location.

Missouri River (Continued from page 8)

bling was necessary. After a quarter mile, the slopes opened up and we turned left at a second fork, following it up to high ground. From there, we saw distant mountains, the only time on our trip we could see out of the valley of the Missouri River



Singing around the campfire, Missouri River, Montana. Tom Gray, Will Gray, Larry Lynch. Photo by Gordon Gray.

Breaks. Ranger Mark had told us to head north across the level summit, and come back down the north fork of Neatts Coulee. He said there are Indian tipi rings at the top and natural arches on the way down this return route. We didn't see them, but we did encounter a twelve-foot high drop in the floor of the stream bed. We climbed down that dry waterfall and continued down the coulee to our camp site. The green vegetation in the coulee was nothing like the arid environment outside.

After some food, we finally loaded the canoes and started paddling, at 11:00AM. We are now in the heart of the White Cliffs. It is spectacularly beautiful. In many places, the cliffs are eroded into fancy shapes. As you drift down

the river, you can gaze in awe at the features passing by. A camera can't capture it; where would you point it when it's spectacular in every direction? Among the white sandstone cliffs are many dark volcanic intrusions. Some are tall plugs like LaBarge Rock, some are long black dikes, some look like walls that by their texture resemble bricks laid in rows. Because we had already had a good hike this morning, we didn't hike up to Hole in the Wall. When we passed the bottom of the trail to Hole in the Wall, there were already six canoes and three kayaks pulled up on shore. We passed some formations in white sandstone that looked like European cathedrals, with carvings of saints, each in its own compartment. We made camp at Pablo Rapids Camp, mile 72.8

To be continued

On The River—(and off)

N=Novice PN= Practiced Novice LI=Low Intermediate I=Intermediate
HI= High Intermediate AI=Advanced Intermediate A=Advanced E=Expert

Check the **On-Line Calendar** for schedule changes and the **Message Board** for last minute trips at ccadc.org To **Volunteer** to coordinate a **Trip** contact Gus Anderson at (703) 903-9738 or Boatngus@aol.com.

October

31 I NC Nantahala River—call Jennifer Plyler before 8 PM, (301) 445-4815.

November

1 I NC Nantahala River—call Jennifer Plyler before 8 PM, (301) 445-4815.

2 AI TN Ocoee River—call Jennifer Plyler before 8 PM, (301) 445-4815.

16 Join fellow members for a **trip and event planning party** at Barb Brown's house on the Potomac. We will provide beer and burgers, and you bring your thoughts on what kind of trips and events we should plan for next year. The house is next to the tow path so the spouse and kids can come and take a hike while we do the planning. Sunday, Nov. 16th, 3 to 6 p.m. 10801 Admiral's Way, Potomac, Maryland (first left upstream (west) of Swain's Lock, last house on the dead end street near the canal.) Tel. Gus for more info 703-903-9738. Call Barb if you get lost. 301-765-9115

December

5 **CCA Meeting and Holiday Bazaar**—Speaker will be from the USGS. See details on page 2.



Introduction to Canoeing 2003

By: Ed Pilchard

A total of 88 potential canoeists attended this year's "Introduction to Canoeing" sessions on the C&O Canal at Fletcher's and Swain's boathouses. That figure represents the smallest response we've seen since 1972, when CCA started offering beginner classes to the general public. We held 21 classes this year during June, July and August. Rainy weather, a fallen tree at Swain's, and the draining of the C&O canal at Fletcher's prompted five cancellations.

CCA volunteers John Heidemann and Ed Pilchard instructed at both boat houses for most of the June, July and August dates. John Paul Tolson, Jan Wolf, Ed Kron, Robin Siegel and Kathy Sengstock also instructed at Fletcher's, while Jim Finucane, Mike Fisher, Tom Dugan, Fred Huemrich, Susan Sherrod, Lee Tucker and Barbara Brown lent a hand at Swain's.

We thank the friendly boat livery proprietors at Fletcher's and Swain's for again availing us of their facilities and equipment.



Ed Pilchard with a group of students at Swain's Lock.

Canoe Cruisers Association



Canoe Cruisers Association of Greater Washington, DC

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**First Class
Time Limit**
