

FISHIN' POLE, PACK & PADDLE

FLOAT FISHERMEN OF VIRGINIA

WINTER 2011 ISSUE



2011 DUES ARE PAST DUE!

It's that time of year again!
Please send your payments to
your chapter treasurer.

We look forward to seeing you
on the river!

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PRESIDENT'S PADDLE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Well here we are starting the second decade of the new millennium. We had a very productive winter meeting at the Cumberland State Forestry Office. The twenty five members that came out for the meeting helped us to determine the float schedule for next year, which is listed in the minutes from the winter meeting.

If anyone is available to help with the children's float in the middle of June we could sure use the help. We are expecting approximately fifty children that will all need an experienced paddler to help them down the river. The scheduled date for the children's float is June 11th.

It is with a sad heart that I must inform you that Jay

Graves, an active member of the George Dickel Chapter, passed away of pancreatic cancer at the end of January.

I am looking forward to a great paddling year with lots of water (I'm crossing my fingers). Hopefully I will see lots of you at Douthat State Park April 1st and for the Spring Fling April 9th or if not I will see you all for Memorial Weekend. Paddle Safe and remember to leave the river cleaner than you found it.

President,

Brian Vande Sande
RIP-Jay Graves - You will be missed!

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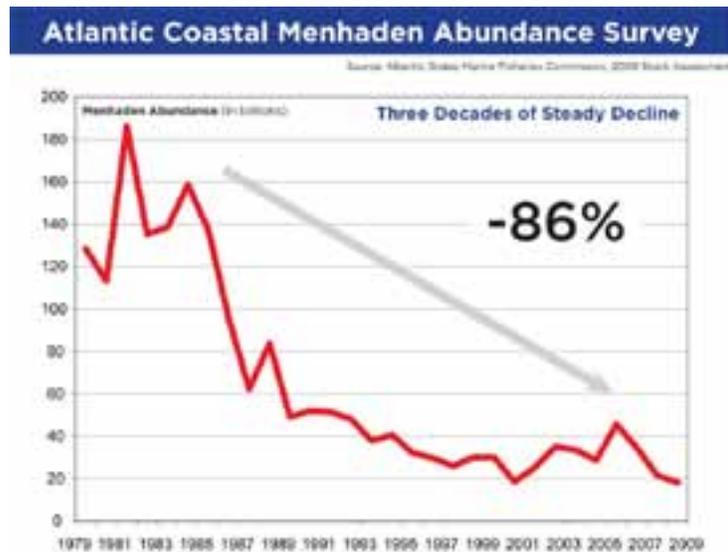


Fighting Bad Bills & Big Payoffs

Mountaintop Removal: The legislator from coal country wants to promote mountaintop removal, coincidentally after he accepted much money and favors from the coal companies. The coal miners are convinced this is a good thing, even though they would have more jobs with underground mining. Sen. Phil Puckett put in SB1025, which would have bypassed State Water Control regulatory review and undermined the DEQ regulations put in place by the Clean Water Act. Even DEQ does not like it.

We are in the process of trying to kill this really stupid, short-sighted bill, bought and paid for by coal company dollars. Mountaintop removal destroys streams beyond any hope of ever restoring them, so it is a particularly bad piece of payola politics. If you can contact your legislators please do so, even if they are not on the committee hearing the bill.

Menhaden: Next we have another fine example of money buying votes. The multi-national menhaden company on the eastern shore, Omega Protein, has spent over \$97,000 on legislators this year to keep the management of the menhaden fishery in the hands of the legislature and not give it to VMRC. VMRC stands for the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. Now wouldn't you think that VMRC would be the best place for that management? Of course. But then the Omega Protein might have to actually act responsibly.



So the bill to send the menhaden management to VMRC was killed by those senators paid off by Omega Protein. End of story for this year. But don't forget the issue because it will be back. Like oysters and crabs and clams... menhaden are now in trouble, so the problem is still with us. Check out the trends below.

There are more horror stories in the state legislature, but we don't have room for them all. If you want to work on any of the issues, just let me know. Bill Tanger

WINTER MEETING NOTES

President Brian Van de Sande called the winter meeting to order December 4, 2010 at Cumberland State Forest after being officially “paddled in” by Ginnie Peck. Brian then called for reports.

Minutes from Labor Day meeting were published in the Pole, Pack and Paddle which some members did not receive prior to the meeting so Secretary Linda VanLuik read the minutes which were then approved.

Webmaster Report

Webmaster Bob Born was not present.

Newsletter Report

Newsletter Editor Allison Herbert explained there were delays in getting the Fall newsletter in the mail but it is always available to members via the website. Sending the newsletter by bulk mail saves money but also slows down the delivery time. She needs email addresses of members who want to receive their newsletters electronically. She is currently archiving old newsletters dating back to 1976. Allison gave credit to Jennifer Pettee as the author of the story that will continue in the Winter issue.

Treasury Report

Treasurer Katherine Waller Boyd reported that as of November 30th, we have \$10,000 in investments. She listed some expenses and revenues that have occurred in the past quarter. She will be destroying documents that are seven years and older. In order for Katherine to have accurate membership numbers, local membership / treasurers need to send a memo with the bank deposit slips, so Katherine will know exactly how many total members are part of the state organization. The treasurer’s report was accepted.

Membership Report

In order to keep accurate records, new Membership Chair Tim Stuller will be developing a template in Excel that he will send to local treasurers. This spreadsheet will need all members’ contact information: address, phone email addresses. He

asked that local membership/treasurers color code changes when sending their lists to the state treasurer, newsletter editor and membership chair. Tim also distributed to chapter representatives addresses that need corrections or updating. It was moved and approved that an updated membership list with all contact information be placed on the club’s password-protected webpage.

Conservation Report

Conservation Chair Bill Tanger recommended Shenandoah River Keeper Jeff Kelble as a potential nominee for the Randy Carter award. Bill then reported on several issues. The Commonwealth’s water quality assessment shows that every two years, 2 thousand more miles of water are polluted, which adversely affects the Chesapeake Bay. The Environmental Protection Agency has rejected Virginia’s water improvement plan which must be resubmitted. The Bay Report Card which is published every year shows that on a scale from 100 being pristine to 0 being highly polluted, the Bay scored 48. Friends of the Rivers of Virginia is looking at updating the State of the Rivers Report that they initially released ten years ago.

In relation to access issues: talks continue with CSX about their selling or giving land for improved access at Locher Landing at the confluence of the Maury with the James River; paperwork for the proposed Cushaw project is being prepared for the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s review and then will be forwarded to CSX; the threat of a lawsuit has changed Explore’s board’s attitude towards access to the Roanoke River at Rutrough Road. Jim Garner also reported on an access opportunity on the horizon: a one mile boundary on the North Anna that belongs to the state fairground and has a non-motorized boat ramp may be given to Caroline County. We may need to write as an organization and as individuals to support this or the land will revert back to the state fairgrounds.

Editor’s Note

The opinions expressed in FPP&P are those of the author and not necessarily those of FFV or its members. Articles and material for publication may be submitted to the FPP&P editor. Preferred format: E-mail with attachments in Word, RTF, and/or JPEG. Dates for submitting material for publication: 1st of February, April, August and November. The Editor reserves the right to edit as needed. Comments, criticism and compliments are always welcome.



PADDLE FASTER

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is the second part of a story that was featured in the fall issue of the FPP&P. The author, Jennifer Pettee, was not given proper recognition for this story in the fall issue as her name was left out of the published newsletter. I apologize for the error and I hope you all enjoy the remainder of the story.

(continued from Fall Issue)

I had just decided that this might actually turn out to be one of the most remarkable and pleasant outings of my life when we were plunged sideways into another set of rapids. This time, we flipped almost immediately. I came up under the boat. Yes, that thing that hardly ever happens, happened to me. I saw sunlight glowing through the top (bottom) of the boat and I knew what had happened. I walked my hands along the boat until I came out from under it, as Bill had advised. I inhaled some sweet air and looked around for Ted. Ted had somehow got his sneaker caught in the rope tie along the edge of the boat and was dangling in the water like bait. Ever helpful, I swam over and tried to lift his body up out of the water to take some pressure off his foot. This act hopefully instilled some confidence in Ted that I truly loved him. I was completely useless as far as real assistance was concerned, but I livened the mood by adding an 'I Love Lucy'-ish feel to the whole scene. We did eventually free Ted from the boat and slithered back into the boat, one and all. It was then that someone noticed that my knee was bleeding from a fairly nice gash. I tried not to look concerned. I was one of the guys. A couple of scars or a bacterial infection did not worry me. We were out of the rapids and back in the boat, and that was all that mattered. It was then that Tom suggested we go back into the rapid to do what is known as "surfing".

Surfing is when you turn the boat back into the rapids, locate a little hole (aka hydraulic) in which there are some little waterfalls and willfully stick the front of your boat into it. Your boat becomes stuck there and you are

tossed about like pork chops in a Shake N' Bake bag. If you manage to stay in the boat, you are congratulated by any onlookers who happened to be watching. If you don't, you are flushed into and then back out of this little physics experiment like last night's dinner down the toilet. We tried this many, many times. We even succeeded a few times. I didn't hear any cheering. All I heard was the blood rushing through my ears and the otherworldly garbles of voices as I fought to make my way back out of the water, time and again.

We flipped the boat so many times, I lost count. I cut my elbow on something. I came up under the boat twice more. When finally, towards the end of the trip, I was literally pinned on a huge rock by my own boat, I decided I had had enough. Actually, it was more of a physical reaction than a decision. This time, as I once again swam towards the boat and Ted, a big sob came out of my throat.

"I can't (sob) do this (sob) anymore."

I said this to Ted. My body was trembling a little. I felt defeated. Ted said, "You don't have to!"

So logical. So true. So then I called on what little energy reserve I had left and rolled my bloated body back into the boat. We only had one more set of rapids before we reached the end of our trip. When we came out on the other side, Tom offered, "Do you want to go a little further or get out here?"

I thought he must be stoned.

(continued from page 4)

“Get out here!” I practically begged. I was bleeding now from several places, including a little fat lip.

He looked at me. “You wanna get out here?” He asked.

I nodded.

“Fine! Get out!”

And then he put his hand on my chest and pushed me out of the boat.

With shaking knees, I climbed out of the river and onto the banks. I knew I would not go down the river again the next day with the others, as was planned. I looked over at Pete. He too looked like someone who had enough of the Gorge. I felt a little bad for him. He would make himself go. He was a man. It was much easier for me, as a woman to beg out. I thought about my neighbor’s wife, my friend, who had decided to stay home. Somehow, she had instinctively known that this was not for her. How I envied her wisdom and dryness. We drove back in Bill’s minivan at a breakneck speed with the side doors wide open. His van was decorated with pictures of adventures, patches from national parks and bird feathers.

That evening we unpacked our gear and relaxed before going out to dinner. I opened up a beer and within minutes of taking my first sip, I was running to the bathroom across camp. Apparently, sustained anxiety and my stomach don’t mix very well. I vomited a mix of beer, river water and fear until I was sure I was completely empty. The only thing left was perhaps the biscuit from this morning. I felt better.

As I returned to camp, I glanced at the moldy shack holding the hodgepodge of ‘gear’ that had looked so promising earlier that day. I now saw it for what it really was; a collection of old and sun-bleached PFDs and barely serviceable paddles, probably scavenged off of chubby and inexperienced housewives floating face-down in the river. I swallowed acidly, but brightened at the idea of dinner as I noticed people preparing to drive into town. I surveyed the men that had taken us down the river that day. These were not men for which watching competitive sports on TV and popping open Pabst Blue Ribbon was all that was needed to feel alive. Well into their 60’s and, in one case 70’s, these guys needed to be hurled down a river, thrown onto some rocks and hit in the head with their own paddles to feel like getting up in the morning. These were not people that lived life in a careful, plodding way the way most of us do. They had not given up their passions in life with the advent of

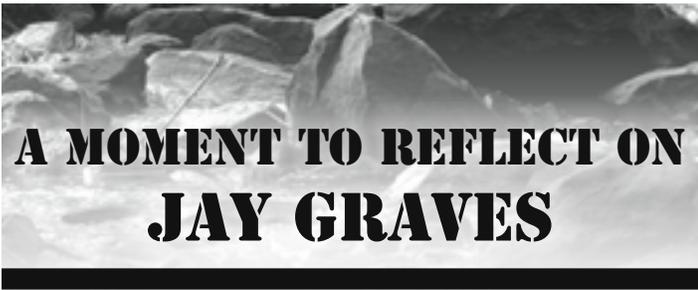
age or families. They showed up every summer, ready to begin a season of rafting the New River Gorge and The Upper and Lower Gauley, and they did it in a way that made me feel a little less than genuine when I thought of my own life and its distinct lack of outdoor adventures.

The truth is, I never even bothered to learn anything about the Gorge or that area in West Virginia before the trip. After an exhaustive few minutes of Wikipedia research, I have since learned that the river is loosely separated into 2-3 parts; the Upper Gauley, which is an almost 10 mile run of more difficult, mostly Class V rapids and the Middle/Lower Gauley which is delightful mix of Class III, IV and V rapids. The river and its rapid difficulty vary dramatically with the water levels. The Gauley is damned by the Summersville Dam, an Army Corp. of Engineers project until the first Friday after Labor Day, when “Gauley Season” begins. A series of damn releases during the fall open up the Upper Gauley to the brave souls who want to tackle rapids with names like “Lost Paddle” and “Iron Ring”. The Gauley River itself has many names and is also known as the “Chin-que-ta-na” and also “To-ke-bel-lo-ke”. I imagine these are Native American names that loosely translate to “where stupid white people crash in boat”.

That day taught me a bit about myself that I might not have other wised ever learned. It wasn’t deep or even life-changing. It was this: I am a Big Baby. There is a reason I have a toiletries bag with “MOM” written boldly on the front. I am pale and flabby because I DON’T go outside, I DON’T swim in raging rivers and the only decorations in my minivan were crushed potato chips and unopened ketchup packets.

With a little arm twisting, I convinced Ted to stay behind with me the next day. We shuttled the rafters down to the river and picked them up later on. Ted and I drove around the area, up to the Upper Gauley and Summersville Lake, safely strapped in our minivan and took in Mother Nature from behind the power windows.





A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON JAY GRAVES

As many of you may know by now, we lost a dear member of the FFV family. Jay Graves lost his battle with cancer, on Friday January 28th. A memorial service was held Saturday, February 5, 2011 at First Baptist Church, Park Street in Charlottesville.

Jay was one of the first Randy Carter Award recipients back in 1990.

Below are some reflections by those who knew him best:

"It's hard to believe that we have arrived here so quickly...life will never be the same without Jay and we were blessed to have him in our lives for the time we did."

"Jay was a multi-faceted person. He was kind & gentle, generous and tremendously helpful, caring, and empathetic to everyone he met. He treated everyone

with a special kind of friendliness and respect. He was extremely attentive to his family, friends, and employees. Jay was an avid outdoors person, loved hiking and paddling, cars and ski diving. He simply cared how those around him were doing, and at the same time, he was someone who took life by the horns; and sometimes pushed the envelope to the edge.

Jay was a "notes" type of a person. As explained at his service, he wrote LOTS OF NOTES to people all the time. (Jay and his family own & operate a taxi service in Charlottesville.) On the back of his taxis there is a sticker, "Take Note, not insult." That was Jay."

The FFV family expresses our deepest sympathy to the friends and family of Jay. May you all find peace in the memories you have of him and honor his life with future happiness.



2011 CALENDAR AND RESPONSIBILITIES

April 1-3: Jackson/Back Creek Weekend

Location: Douthat State Park Contact: Rick Mattox

April 8-10 Dickel Spring Fling on the Rockfish

Location: Bob and Ginnie's place Contact: Ginnie Peck

April 29-May 1: Cajun Weekend on the Rappahannock

Location: R5 Contact: Randy Carter Chapter members

May 7: Appomattox River Clean Up

Location: TBD Contact: Ginnie Peck

May 27-29: Memorial Day Weekend at R5

Location: R5 Contact: Frank Owens

Budget: FFV will provide \$600 for dinner; RC's will cook; porta potties will be at the going rate.

June 11: Annual Kids' Float on the James

Location: TBD Contact: Erica Simms Goode

Budget: The state will provide approximately \$380 for lunches.

September 2-5: Labor Day Weekend on the New

Location: Whitt Riverbend Park Contact: Aaron Mittel

Budget: The state will provide \$600 for dinner; Roanoke and Dickels will cook; \$300 for porta potties.

December 3: State Winter Meeting

Location: TBD Contact: Brian Vande Sande

Details: Potluck at noon; meeting at 1 PM

NOTE: When River Tax is collected for state meeting weekends, tax will be \$5 per person and \$15 per family; when daily fees are required, at campsites, fees will come out of river tax that is collected.





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WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU ON THE RIVER!

