



# The Paddle

## Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers

Spring 2007

### Letter From The President

By Dan Eigenbrode

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The spring snow melt is now behind us as we start to enter the late stages of spring and early summer. I hope everyone got his or her share of cold water paddling on those hard-to-catch snow melt-dependent creeks and rivers. I equally hope many of you improved or got your roll at the March MDCC pool sessions. Hopefully we will have some steady rain and dam releases to help us in our quests for whitewater fun as we reach the summer paddling season. Less gear, warmer water, warmer air temperature, and hopefully some rain, present a good opportunity for those less inclined to bear the colder seasons to come and join

those who paddle year round.

One of these opportunities is the Thursday Night Paddle (TNP), which is in about its 7<sup>th</sup> year since being initiated by Tim Potter, who has relinquished his Tsar status this year. However, the TNP goes on. Other than the Potomac local paddles, folks will venture to the dam releases such as North Branch, Lehigh, and Lower Youghiogheny. Some will head south to catch some water. Others will be chasing rain. No matter your ambitions or skill levels, I want to bring up some "food for thought" when it comes to paddling

with MDCC.

First, our local paddling area is the Harpers Ferry area including the Potomac Needles, the Shenandoah Staircase, and the Antietam and Catoctin creeks. For the second year in a row, MDCC participated in a Potomac wide cleanup organized by the Alice Ferguson foundation. We worked with the Harpers Ferry Ranger and the C&O Canal Volunteer Coordinator to haul away "a lot" of trash from the Potomac banks on both sides of the river. While putting a big dent in the litter, many more cleanups and man hours are needed to clean that area

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### 2007 MDCC Banquet

Over 50 MDCC member and their guests filled the basement of the Zion Lutheran church in Williamsport, MD on Feb 24th. The evening started with river chat followed by a great assortment of good food provided by the

attendees in pot luck fashion. This year's dessert and main entrée selection was fantastic.

The entertainment consisted a DVD "video" put together by Dan Eigenbrode that consisted of photos taken dur-

ing the 2006 season of MDCC members. Photos and short film clips highlighted the past year's river and pool action. If anyone wants a copy of the DVD, contact Dan.

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## A Bull Falls Story

By Vitas

This was the first Millville to Sandy Hook trip of the year. I have fourteen photos of people going down Bull Falls plus myself and one who went down before I was ready. So I think there were sixteen paddlers on this one.

This story is not so much about the trip itself, but about my first swim at the falls and my rescue by Dan. Who always seems to be there whenever someone is in the water instead of their boat. To begin, as I paddled out from the scouting rock I was vacillating between eddying out or going through the falls and on to

through the wave train. As a result I didn't position myself to do either one. I flipped after a couple of strokes, as I was enjoying a fish eye view of the wave train after Bull Falls and then a remarkably poor attempt to roll. About this time being out of air thinking it would be good to breath and see the sun again. I exited the Hurricane and handed it off to another paddler. Then using my paddle swam to shallow water within wading distance of an island. Dan not realizing I was kneeling on solid ground came up in front and urged me to grab the back of his boat. Not really needing rescue at this time

I thought about it for a second then grabbed his boat. Now here I am kneeling waist deep on a rock with Dan paddling, paddling, paddling like mad and going nowhere. Eventually he looked back and I was laughing so hard that I figured I might as well tell him what was happening before he figured it out himself. Dan wasn't amused, I got up and walked to my boat. Thanks Dan you made that swim the best ever.

## Tales of a SIKman: Revisiting Crested Butte's Quadruple Crown

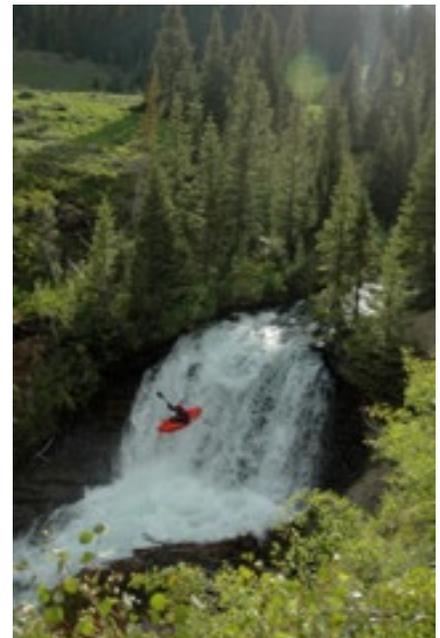
By The Dogg

Throughout the state of Colorado, there are many great areas with lots of SIK creeks. However, the area that gets the Grade A, Top Choice, make you want to stand up and yell, "Doggpound!" seal of approval is the Crested Butte area. Within the land surrounding the town of Crested Butte lies the elusive Quadruple Crown, 4 steep runs that will satisfy the vertical addiction of the most hardcore creek boater. These runs are the coolest things since Chuck Norris! It is always nice to see an activity where a guy can go and get a little crazy without too much of a stink being made. It used to be that a guy could drink a little ripple or smoke a little grass, howl at the moon or maybe challenge the mayor's son to a gentleman's duel. Nowadays these things are considered to be against the unwritten laws of society and are frowned upon. Despicable. But I digress.

The 4 runs that make up the Quadruple Crown are the Upper East,

Oh Be Joyful, Daisy, and the Slate River. All present different challenges and all are well worth the effort. Oh yeah! It was time to get sonic like a hedgehog, funky like a chicken, and ill like repute! It was time to pass Go and collect 200 dollars! Joining me on this adventure was fellow Fluid Team member Seth Chappelle. Since all of these runs are roadside creeks, Bryon Dorr followed along to shoot video and photos and the Dogg cheerleaders were there cheering in support at every drop. We also decided that Crested Butte was the perfect venue to show off the greatest creek boat in the world, the Fluid Solo.

Since the Upper East is the easiest of the 4 runs, we decided to start there. Although very fun, It is not all the scary. In fact, I've seen more terrifying things in your mom's bread and potatoe pudding! The normal put-in is below the town of Gothic but I heard that there is another big drop upstream so we put in at a trailhead



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## April 22, 2007 - Antietam

### Bernie Lager

6 people went on the Antietam (Ron, Chuck, Vitas, John N, JJ, & me), we put in at the Rt 34 Bridge and took out at the mouth of the Antietam. The level was about 3.5, the water was cold but the air was warm (I think it reached 80), it was a beautiful day on the creek. High points = Everyone made it safe, the weather was awesome, Furnace Rapid was fun, the shuttle went well, then we stopped for ice cream at Nutters.

## April 1, 2007

### Muddy Creek

### Diesel Dave

For all the banter about too many local paddles, I was a bit surprised only Dan & I showed up for Don Chance's scheduled trip to Muddy Creek, a Susquehanna tributary, which was about two and half hours from Hagerstown. Having just arrived from Costa Rica at 2am, I was pushing it to make the 9am rendezvous at the Rt 32 park-n-ride, and was grateful Don was driving the rest of the way so I could catch up on sleep.

But the Muddy was something new, the temperature in the 50's, and I was anxious to get a few early spring paddles. The Muddy is nearly as scenic as Siddeling Hill, but certainly a step up in technicality....

after some early easy riffles, we caught up with a group from Baltimore at Snapp Falls, a pretty straight forward 4 foot class 3 drop run on the right, which we ran without scouting. The trick was to angle slightly to the left to avoid the rock wall on river right after the drop, which I grazed anyway. Both Don and Dan ran it twice.

We overtook the Baltimore group at Muddy Falls, a class 4 chute which was too low to run at 3ft. It's a 15 foot drop through a fairly narrow canyon. The takeout to portage had limited space above the chute, so we ferried down one by one. A few of the Baltimore group did some 10-15 foot seal launches from a rock below the rapid.

After Muddy Falls, there was a series of interesting and fun ledges in close order. A picturesque waterfall entered on river left marking the end of the rapids and the beginning of the mile or so of flat water above the Conowingo Dam before the takeout. It was similar to Dargon's Bend, and just as boring.

We stopped at Stark-Moon on the way home.....all in all, a very worthwhile trip, even with the flatwater.

### WINNER BEST TRIP REPORT

*March 17, 2007*

*Small Creek*

*Dealer's Choice-*

*By Jim Pruitt*

*I went west and paddled on Thursday (45 degrees) and Friday (32), Snowed all day Friday and Saturday. All those who expressed interest in the trip had bailed Friday night. Some folks from GBCC and MCC paddled the upper Stony in WV. Saturday had a high of 17 out west - to cold for me, drove home.*



April 22, 2007

## Seneca Creek into the North Fork of the South Branch

By Bobby Miller

On April 22, a group from Mason Dixon including myself, Tina Blaik, Cindy Omailia, and Rob K headed to the Seneca Rocks area to run Seneca Creek into the North Fork of the South Branch. I first paddled in this area when I was 11 years old and always love to go back. Tina and I met Rob and Cindy at the Strasburg McDonald's that conveniently doubled as a gas station. Just when I was thinking what a novel concept this is, I walked inside the restaurant only to see Ronald McDonald, Mayor McCheese, and the Hamburglar dancing the Boot Scoot Boogie. Horrified by this display, we quickly made like a tree and got out of there!

The day was extremely pleasant with the sun shining and blue bird skies. The drive up Corridor H was very pretty with all the rock formations and green trees blooming. The scenery just kept getting better as we approached the Seneca Rocks area. This part of West Virginia is one of my favorite areas that I have ever visited. I would love to own a place out here someday. I'd like to think that if I won the Lottery that this dream would come true but I would probably end up blowing the money on pennywhistles and moon pies! We left a car at the takeout for the Hopeville Canyon and headed up to check Seneca Creek.

I was pleased to see that Seneca Creek had a decent amount of water at the bridge. We headed upstream, losing water with each tributary we passed. The stream was looking shallow once we passed Onego but we kept going. We finally got to the turnoff for the normal putin and

stopped to have a look. The creek was shallow but the water was clear and deeper than it appeared. There was definitely some scraping that would occur but the overall enthusiasm of the group squashed any damper that a few rock scratches could have put on the day. Besides, Tina was paddling a new Fluid Solo that didn't have many scratches. I assured her that if she paddles with me, she'll put more than a few scratches on the bottom of that boat.



We headed downstream maneuvering through the small cobble gardens and down the numerous ledge and slide drops. I had forgotten what a wonderful stream Seneca Creek is and I was blown away by the bedrock rapids. One early slide had a rock in the middle that was kind of tricky. Tina hit the rock and got rolled upstream. She was able to execute a strong brace and right her kayak before finishing the slide. As we approached Onego, the gradient stepped up a notch and there were several larger ledges and slides. After a little excitement, we stopped and ate lunch at a pretty 2-3 foot ledge

under an old abandoned bridge. While we hung out, Tina and I made several runs of this drop, laying the smack down time after time.

Continuing downstream, Seneca Creek got away from the road and into a gorge. The rapids were swift and mostly uncomplicated but the scenery was top drawer. Soon, Seneca Rocks came into view, which is one of the prettiest spots in all of West Virginia. That also signaled the last major

rapid of the run, Junkyard Falls.

This rapid is a steep series of ledge drops with accompanying holes. This rapid will pack your lunch and eat it too if you're not careful. This is no place for the sometimes roller! I ran the rapid and hopped out to take pictures. Everyone aced their line through the drops and came out smiling. More swift rapids carried us into the town of Seneca Rocks. There is one last ledge with a nasty hole right in town. Rob didn't punch it and ended up taking the ride of his life in there. I looked up-

stream and all I saw were flashes of helmet, paddle, and boat getting tossed around. The hole had a firm grip on him and I feared there would be nothing left to him but hair, teeth, and eyeballs when all was said and done. Luckily, he was able to claw his way out of that boiling vat of death.

Soon, we were on the North Fork of the South Branch and were greeted by mile after mile of Class 2 wave trains. The scenery continued to be spectacular and got better with each passing mile. With the Hopeville Canyon still to come, I knew that day

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## Laying the Smackdown on the Water Gap

Few areas in the country boast the high quality creeks that the Delaware Water Gap does. So, as you could well imagine, this area is a favorite of the Dogg. Oh Yesh! The Delaware Water Gap is the greatest thing to come down the pike since Nintendo Wii! It had been awhile since I had gone up to that waterfall haven and I was very anxious to go. You've got to strike while the iron's hot! Besides, I needed some excuse to provide you with another work of literary greatness. I may be a part time writer, but I am a full time hero! It's true! It's true! The Water Gap had run many times but I always had an excuse like being too busy or it being too long of a drive. When it comes to making excuses, where does it end? I'll tell you where it ends! RIGHT HERE!

No excuses and a crew of 4 of my best creeking buds brought me to the Delaware Water Gap on October 29 for some good old fashioned whitewater paddling. The crew consisted of Joe Stumpf, Seth Chapelle, Bryon Dorr, and Steve Grayballs. This train was bound for glory and nothing was going to stop us! I was a little over-anxious to get there and I couldn't wait to get to the creeks. I don't think you understand what I'm saying, I literally couldn't wait. So, I had the guys cryogenically freeze me for the drive up and then unfreeze me so it would seem like no passage of time between when I left my house and when I arrived at the creek. 5 minutes later (by my clock) we pulled up at Hornbecks Creek. We were stoked to find it running at a nice level. This creek can be run quite low but it was nice to see it with a slightly higher than low flow. Before putting on the run, I made everyone do the mandatory gear test by

jumping in the creek to make sure that our drysuit/drytop gaskets and seams didn't leak (I personally put new gaskets on and restitch the seams by hand each year so I didn't have to worry). When we were good and hypothermic, we put on and got out for a quick scout at the first drop, Bobby's Falls. Local lore has it that the greatest kayaker in the universe once got flipped and knocked out in this drop. However, like any true world class athlete, I have returned many times to layeth the smacketh down on this drop many times. Today would be no different. I slid in be-



low a nice Louisiana Thrasher habitat (a strainer) and cruised down the drop cleanly. Everyone in the group followed with nice lines. We found the next gorge to be clean of strainers so we bombed on down through Left Turn and Let the Good Times Roll. Immediately after these drops is Twist and Shout, a steep slide into a wall. You line up at the top and careen down the slide at a high speed into the pillow and then continue dropping through the runout. We all had nice runs except for Joe who hit the pillow and did a sweet offside helpless flip. There is nothing more amusing to a carnage junkie than seeing a C-1er catch his edge and flip to the side without a blade. It is always brutal looking and always a crowd pleaser! I hadn't

## By The Dogg

smiled that big since I whooped up on that blind man at Parcheesi!

Next, we were out scouting Goliath, which is a drop of about 50 feet over a wide, shallow cascade. I would have preferred to see more water and I think that was everyone else's conclusion except for Joe. Joe scouted the drop for awhile and got in his boat, ready to go for it. However, a thigh strap malfunction in the pool above prevented him from firing this drop up.

Continuing downstream, we scouted Slot Machine, which is a cascady 12-15 foot drop into a very narrow slot. I had never run it before due to low water or trees but this time the level was good and it was wood free. Steve went first and had a nice run. I followed and aced the drop but forgot to turn my paddle as I fell through the slot. My blades each caught on rocks and the paddle went flying out of my hands and up into the air. There is no doubt in my mind that those H2O paddles are the strongest on the market! Joe got a little screwed up in the approach and ended up a little further right than desired coming off the bottom drop. However, he dropped through the slot cleanly.

The run picks up again for its final gorge shortly afterwards. Once you enter this gorge, there are no laws! It's the Thunderdome! In this gorge are some of the finest drops anywhere. There were some hikers that had gathered at this point and they were quite concerned for our welfare. However, I assured them that the Revolution's

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# May 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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**Grab your Glory!**

**Send in your trip reports!**

		15	16	17 TNP	18	19 Beginner Kayak Class
20 Catoctin	21	22	23	24 TNP	25	26 Lehigh Bloomington
27 Lehigh Bloomington	28	29	30	31 TNP		

# June 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
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					1	2 GW Canal
3 Dealer's Choice	4	5	6	7 TNP	8	9 Lehigh Bloomington
10 Lehigh Bloomington Casselman	11	12	13	14 TNP	15	16 Tuckahoe River Tim Gavin Race & Rodeo &
17 Practiced Novice Kayak Class	18	19	20	21 TNP	22	23 Lehigh
24 Lehigh	25	26	27	28 TNP	29	30

# July 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 Lehigh Dealer's Choice
8 Lehigh LOWER YOUGH	9	10	11	12 TNP	13	14 Dealer's Choice
15	16	17	18	19 TNP	20	21 Lehigh Dealer's Choice
22 Lehigh	23	24	25	26 TNP	27	28
29	30	31				

# August 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 TNP	3	4 Lehigh Sandy Hook →Brunswick
5 Lehigh LOWER YOUGH	6	7	8	9 TNP	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 TNP	17	18 Lehigh Dealer's Choice
19 Lehigh	20	21	22	23 TNP	24	25 Ohiopyle Falls Festival & Race
26	27	28	29	30 TNP	31	

## Letter From The President *(Continued from page 1)*

off route 340 near the area known as the wide spot and the goat trail. While the outfitters concentrated their efforts in the Wayside area, we increased our area and manpower from last year's 4 people cleaning less than a 100 yard stretch to 14 people (12 MDCC members) cleaning a mile of the C&O and 200-300 yards of the 340 side river banks. Awesome! MDCC will continue to be part of this effort, even if it is not our trash, it is our playground. Think about continuing the effort and let's get even more people out there next year.

Second, I'd like to mention the shuttle, which is the part that involves getting to and from the river, and can be a challenge when large groups and minimal parking are factors. The shuttle is the hardest logistic part of planning a trip. However it is not the shuttle logistics I wish to address, but the rising cost of the shuttle. Gas prices are already exceeding \$3.00 a gallon. While no green fees or lift passes are required in kayaking, we sometimes have to drive quite a ways to find water in usually not so fuel efficient vehicles. A round trip to the Lower Yough or North Branch could easily cost about \$40 in gas (at \$3.00 a gallon and 25mpg). Members should do their best to help minimize and share the cost when it comes to getting to the river.

Usually the President's message includes a "be safe out there" clause and mentions the cold weather, proper gear, etc. In this newsletter, safety emphasis is on the Rope. I have seen throw bags in use this year on several occasions, either for equipment rescue or just lending an "extended hand" to a swimmer. It's valuable "must have" gear that should be in every kayak and

canoe. Keep in mind it is for your paddling buddy if he/she should need a rope and hopefully he/she has one stowed for you. It is not hard to learn how to throw and catch a rope. Learn how to do both. If you are not comfortable throwing a rope, still carry one as you never know when you need to give it to someone that needs it. If you are exiting your boat for a lunch break at your favorite place of carnage viewing, or to scout a rapid or any other situation where you could witness an "accident", take your rope with you. Otherwise, it should be secured, but easily accessible in your boat, just like your lunch.

Lastly, I would like to mention the volunteerism that is absolutely necessary for a club like MDCC to survive. This includes the banquet, pool sessions, classes, membership, trip schedule, web site, river cleanup, trip coordinators, pickup trips, and this newsletter. I see a lot of volunteers in one form or another and would like to encourage this pattern to continue so that we are a club of many volunteers sharing the load and not a club of a few doing it all. It is appreciated by all, and is rewarding and fun. Thanks to all of you giving the extra effort.

Well, since Tina is looking for trip reports, I'll give you two minor carnage reports and call it *Dumb Things I Did This Spring*.

*Lower Dry Fork, WV.* We had a great run two days before on this gem of a creek. As we entered the second rapid from the putin, I recognized the river left rock and the line we took on the earlier run. For some reason I decided to go right at the last moment and avoid the hole by

skirting the "feeder wave" of the hole and slide into the depression behind it. Dumb move. The "feeder wave" quickly flipped my kayak, with some air, and I landed on my head, in about 3 inches of water covering a rock. I continued to slide down the rock ledge until I felt deeper water and rolled up to find myself surfing on a wave. It reminded me of a good hit while playing high school football. It reminded me why we wear helmets. The helmet bashing also gave me another excuse for any future temporary brain lapses.

*Top Blackwater (above the falls).* We paddled about 10 miles of flat water through Canaan Valley before hitting the class 2-3 rapids above the falls. I got kind of close to the person in front of me as they went river right to avoid an obvious hole. I saw them getting into branches on the river right bank and decided I'd once again take the "feeder wave" route. (I am describing the wave at the end of the hole coming in from the channel at a slight angle). This time, probably because I stopped paddling, the hole decided to keep me. At first it was an exciting ride, then turned into an endurance nightmare as I couldn't get right or left. It was a rather deep hole. I heard folks yelling at me and am sure it was all good advice, but nothing came through clearly. I decided to flip and see if I would come out. I flipped and didn't like the feeling, so decided to bail (swim). I squirmed some as I forgot to pull the skirt at first. I then found myself outside the hole standing in waist deep water playing tug of war with my boat and the hole. I was back in my boat 5 minutes later with a renewed appreciation for holes. And feeder waves, if that is what they are called.

## Letter From The President

*(Continued from page 8)*

Stories like the above are part of the fun and I saw a lot of MDCC folks on the river this spring broadening their horizons with new rivers and skills. I witnessed and lived a couple “dumb” things that are all very much part of the learning process. I hope everyone continues the enthusiasm to expand his/her paddling abilities. Have a safe, fun time doing so. (Try not to do provide us with endless learning opportunities by doing too many dumb things, but be sure to share the good stories if you do.) See you on the river.

## 2007 MDCC Banquet

*(Continued from page 1)*

Thanks once again to Bob Devine, there were door prizes for everyone and a very entertaining time in their distribution as each recipient was to disclose their prize so the audience could uhh and ahhh at the nice, practical gifts.

The MDCC Canoe Trophy awards were presented to the following people:

Vitas Eidukevicius: For his consistent and good photography of MDCC paddlers on the river and his prompt posting of such. Vitas' photos helped make the 2006 MDCC DVD and presented some nice action shots. Look for Vitas and his camera on the Thursday Night Paddle (TNP). Presented by Dave Russo.

Rob Koenen: New to the club and to paddling a kayak, Rob's enthusiasm and natural abilities surpassed any

### A Kayakers Prayer

By Anonymous

My Boat is my Shepherd,  
I shall not want for too much  
It leadeath me down whitewater  
it restoreth my soul...

My boat is my cocoon.  
It protecteth me (along with my pfd and helmet)  
It keeps me buoyant in high water.  
It spares me from the rocks below  
It restoreth my soul...

Yea, though I walk down the valley of cubicles or whatever I do for a living  
It restoreth my soul...

Many thanks to those who have come before me  
They make it look easy  
What to many looks hard...

What do I love the most about boating?  
Probably hanging out with you guys.  
and the restoration work.  
and the whitewater.  
in no particular order....

## 2007 MDCC Banquet

*(Continued from page 1)*

expectations as he managed combat rolls on his first outings and managed the Lower Yough with little difficulty. Presented by Dan Eigenbrode.

Merrill Pearson: For her ongoing willingness to help out as Vice President and get that trip schedule together. For collecting the most ducks on the Antietam. And for her motivation to move up her paddling skills a few notches and encourage others. Presented by Dan Eigenbrode.

Dan Eigenbrode: Using a play on Bobby Miller's "Best Trip Everrrrrr.", Dan was given the canoe for his role as President and being "The best President Everrrrrr." Presented by Merrill and Sylvia DuRant.

Jim Norton: For the consistent entertainment factor of being upside down or stuck in a hole, or bleeding from a paddle snake attack. Lets just call this the upside down a lot Barney be, or Barney not, swimming and swearing, paddlesnake bitten, truly fitting canoe award. Presented by Dan Eigenbrode

Eric Vance: In absentee. For his addiction to using ropes and knots as opposed to straps for securing boats to the vehicle roof. There is a story behind the award, where apparently a new boat of a fellow paddler fell off the shuttle vehicle after begin secured by Eric. A special canoe award was designed and presented by Jim Norton.

### Special awards:

John Roche: In absentee. John's "cavecar", an older model full station wagon, since retired to the scarp yard, was a common sight at the shuttle point of TNP and other local Harpers Ferry or Sandy Hook trips. A special Fred Flintstone and car were presented to John by Dave Russo.

Bob Devine: For his time and dedication over the past couple years as Treasurer. A special framed poster was presented to Bob, showing a Salmon heading upstream, only to get into trouble. This was representative of the Team Salmon, a group of MDCC folks that prefer to attain the river, of which Bob is now Captain. Presented by Sylvia and Jim.

In summary, the banquet was a great turnout, great food and a great way to start the 2007 season.

### SIKman:

*(Continued from page 2)*

upstream of town. At the put-in, the creek was very tiny and flowed swiftly along a shallow streambed. After a quarter mile of Class 1, we came to a steep walled gorge and the creek disappearing over a horizon line. The creek necked down and went down a narrow slide that exited left off a 12-15 foot diagonal falls into a narrow corner. I flew down the slide and launched a SIKy off the falls. This got the cheerleading squad all fired up and they converged on me to celebrate. After a quick dance session, I told the ladies to save their energy because there would many more

SIKy's launched during the course of the day. Seth and I raced downstream, bombing the Upper East's many cascades and slides. The run ends above Stupid Falls (a bouncy 60 foot cascade). We opted not to run the falls because it definitely needed more water and I feel that Seth and I are now dumber for having laid our eyes on it. We didn't sweat it too much and headed over to Ch Be Joyful for the second leg of The Crown.

Ch Be Joyful is the steepest of the Crested Butte creeks and is famous for its big slides and waterfalls. Seth was particularly fired up to run this creek since it contained the bigger drops than he had ever run. The run starts with a 15 foot waterfall that goes through a narrow twisty notch on the left. If you're a smooth operator operating correctly, this drop can dish out some serious boofs. I flew into the notch and caught the flake shelf perfectly under the hull of my boat and went air born. They could hear the sound of my boat pancaking on the water all the way down in Crested Butte! They brought in a Richter Scale to measure the impact that boof had! Seth followed with a nice launch of his own. We bombed the next several slides and drops to a 25 foot waterfall. We both plugged in off the falls and headed downstream to face more high speed waterslide action. The run ends in grand fashion with an extremely long slide that ends in a 10 foot cascade. After some high fives from Seth and Bryon and some booty shaking dances from the cheerleaders, we loaded up the Go Big Rig and headed to Daisy.

Daisy is my favorite of all the Crested Butte creeks for its tiny size and continuous drops. After several fun slides and cascades, we came to Big Wood Falls, a near 20 foot falls followed by a slide. Seth set up video and I flew down the approach slide and launched a humongous boof that drove

## SIKman:

*(Continued from page 10)*

the crowd of adoring fans wild (Oh Yesh! It was SCHWWWEEEEETTTTTI!)! Of course, you wouldn't expect anything less from the greatest kayaker in the world! I got out of my kayak to video Seth and he informed me that he missed me on the video. Needless to say, the Dogg was none too thrilled to hear this news. I roundhouse kicked him in the throat and told him to get it right this time. I carried up and fired up another righteous boof, this time getting it captured on film. Seth followed up with a NICHE boof of his own. We stopped soon after to set up video at Rip Your Head Off, the last drop of the creek. I sailed smoothly down the approach slide and launch a schweet boof through the pinch slot, falling 6 feet onto the clapper slab.

Seth and I continued down the Slate to finish the last leg of the day. Most people think that the Slate isn't worth a pisshole in a snowbank because it looks flat from the road. Let me tell you, reader, the Slate packs some punch once it enters the gorge. There are many slides and drops up to 6 feet tall, many of which are gorged in and are complicated by trees. Granted for superpaddlers like Seth and I, the drops were no big deal but they were a lot of fun. Towards the end of the run, there is a famous drop named Wicked Wanda. This drop had tees in it the last time I was here and I ran the approach drop before realizing I had dropped into a gorge with the only escape being to climb straight up and out. I promised that I would be more careful this time and would scout the drop before committing to the approach. However, I failed to recognize the drop until I was already in it and I boofed the approach and landed in the same cliffed in eddy that I trapped

myself in four years ago! Wicked Wanda had once again proven to be a formidable opponent for the Dogg! I couldn't see Seth and couldn't really signal him to get out. I tried holding my paddle up but realized that that means to come downstream. He melted straight in off the horseshoe ledge approach and emerged riding a bow-stall, a technique that a friend of ours told us was a great way to hold your position for boat scouting. I'm unsure of how Seth felt about being in this position but, luckily, he dropped back down flat and caught the swirly eddy I was in. I tried to stabilize to climb out but the swirly eddy prevented this. I looked downstream and could see that the trees and boat that had blocked up the rapid last time were gone. After debating with Seth about the best course of action, we decided that climbing out of the boat and up the cliff was very risky and could result in a terrifying swim. I concluded that the only way out was to head downstream and hope that sheer talent and good looks would be enough to carry me safely through the drop. I hung left, pillowing off the undercut on the right and went cleanly off the 5 foot drop and through the boily hole at the bottom. Seth followed with a nice line as well and we both breathed a collective sigh of relief that we were no longer trapped in that gorge. No one was happier that the Dogg had emerged unscathed than the cheerleaders and they showed their excitement with an extra special dance routine at the takeout.

It was a sweet day, 4 great creeks, SIK drops, huge boofs, and a great adventure.

## Seneca Creek

*(Continued from page 4)*

could only continue to get better. Passing several fields of cows, we decided to play a game called "Hey Cow!" The object of this game is to yell, "Hey Cow!" at a group of cows and count how many look at you. My personal best is 7 cows but I have been practicing hard and plan to break my record this year. On this day, we were only able to get one cow to look at us. I guess those West Virginia cows aren't as polite as the ones back in Maryland! Continuing downstream, the miles went by and I wished the day would never end. We had a great water level, wonderful rapids, 70 degrees temperatures, and a fun group of people. It truly was THE NECTAR! We did have some excitement at a few spots (by excitement I mean swims). There was a particularly steep rapid with a rock boof that caused a flip and a swim. We took a break here and hung out on the warm rocks. Moving on downstream, we encountered a diagonal 2 foot ledge and a cliff with a weird pillow that made for some more excitement. I told the paddler, who we'll call Tina B. in an effort to hide her identity, not to worry about that pillow, it has put many a paddler down for a damp rest! We drifted on stopping for some laughs in the Kissing Cave, a sizeable cave you can paddle into and soon we were at the start of the Hopeville Canyon.

17 miles into our run, we arrived at the start of this wondrous canyon. The walls closed in and the scenery that I thought couldn't get any better did indeed do just that. You better bring you're A Game if you venture down there. You might get down in that canyon and wish you wasn't! There's rocks bigger than a house and waves bigger than the ocean! Those that go into the canyon without the



## Water Gap

(Continued from page 12)

Thrasher makes its home in these strainers. This supports the much joked about theory that strainer removal causes years of environmental damage. Obviously, unless Scotty can beam me up to the Water Gap instead of driving 4 hours, I'm not going to come up there with no water to cut out trees. However, you won't find me tying myself to a strainer with a "Save the Louisiana Thrasher" sign across my chest either! The ranger asked us to turn the people in if we find out. Right! But apparently, it is a fine of "tens of thousands of dollars" for this crime so you tree cutting scofflaws out there beware!

Raymondskill had a good flow in it so the character of the run was quite different than the steep shallow drops of Hornbecks. The run starts out with several steep slide/ledge drops. The first one is a slide into a 6-8 foot boof. Right after, you have to punch a big pourover hole. The next steep slide carries you to a pool above Iron Staircase. This drop requires you to punch a curler up top and fall off a 10 foot drop with a boof slab halfway down. Bryon went far right where the boof shelf sticks out a little more. His boat made a loud bang sound when he hit the slab. Luckily, he was using a Fluid Solo which is made of nearly indestructible plastic and the hit didn't phase the boat. After a short pool, we were out scouting Flirting With Disaster.

Flirting With Disaster is a nearly 30 foot falls onto a rock shelf with a fast slide run out into a 6-8 foot drop. A piton off this drop would certainly clean the sand out of your wicket! It has recently been run several times by a few young punks so I was interested in giving this drop another look. I had walked it for years and was planning on running it on this trip.

However, the daylight was fading fast and the water level was higher than optimal. My buddy, Jared, had run it at a medium high level and told me that it is not recommended. The water hits the wall on the left pretty hard after the falls, whereas at low water, it pillows around more. Heeding this advice, I decided to wait for another day. The lighting wasn't good anyway so the likelihood of me getting a "front page of the magazine" kind of picture was low. Let's face it, if you can't catch it on video or film and then use it to promote yourself throughout the kayaking world, then it is not worth doing. I'm not sacrificing my body for nothing!

We bombed the rest of the creek down to Raymondskill Falls, a series of 3 waterfalls dropping close to 150 feet. The top falls is a burly 50 foot clapper that cascades into a wall. There is only one man on Earth other than me capable of pulling off a successful run of this falls, and we all know that Chuck Norris will never run it. I would like to see it at low water for consideration of a run. We portaged this falls and walked down the steep gully to the turbulent pool between the first falls and the second falls. The second falls is a sweet 35-40 foot near vertical cascade. It is pretty straightforward down the right into a deep pool once you get to the lip. However, the water coming off the top falls creates erratic oscillation of the neighboring particles which makes it difficult to ferry out and get to the right place. Once you get over the edge, it is one of the sweetest drops in the Water Gap and is a great way to finish off a sweet day of creeking. I hopped in my boat first and faced tremendous chaos. Many would have been scared, perhaps even panic stricken. But not the Dogg! I've seen things more terrifying in your mom's bread pudding! I entered the maw and

dropped cleanly down into the pool below. Oh yesh! I was happier than a dogg chasing a rabbit through a patch of Timothy grass! Joe and Steve followed, firing it up with schweet lines while Bryon took photos. Seth took his good old time scouting and left us in suspense. I knew he was going to run it all along, he couldn't fool me. Sheeeeeeee! He couldn't even fool his own mother on the foolingest day of his life with an electrified fooling machine! He got in his boat and fired up a righteous line the rivaled the Dogg's for smoothness. As we were leaving, we scouted the final 50 footer, which actually looked almost doable. It has a huge boof ramp that you could launch and fall 50 feet into the rock infested pool below. I think I might consider it with a little more water, it looks sweet!

Oh yeah! It was another sweet day in the Water Gap. Big drops, good water, and great friends made this a spectacular day. Best day EVERRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!!!!



Merrill at the top of Pete Morgan  
at Cheat Canyon on May 12,  
2007

## Lost & Found

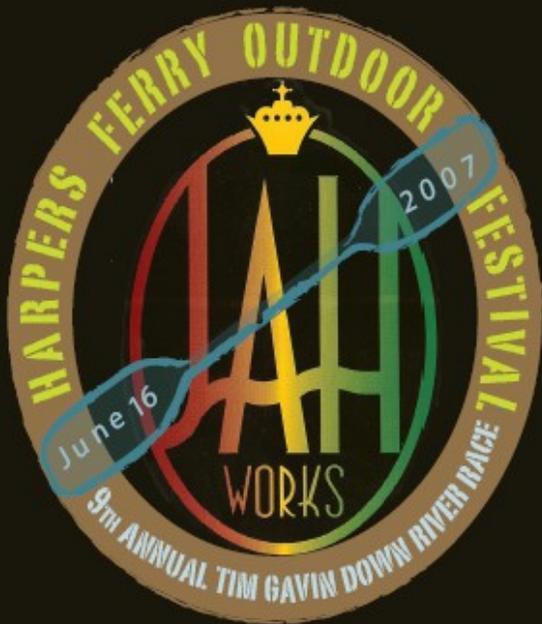
LOST : Red rescue rope  
lost at Bull's tail on the  
Shenandoah May 6th.

FOUND: Wet suit at pool  
sessions



# Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers

[www.masondixoncanoeclub.org](http://www.masondixoncanoeclub.org)



[www.harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org](http://www.harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org)

## HARPERS FERRY OUTDOOR FESTIVAL

The Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival is a yearly event held to have fun & raise money for river conservation. Money raised through the event will help Friends of the Cheat, Friends of Blackwater, Friends of the Shenandoah River, & WVRC.

Admission to the Festival is only \$5 & is free for overnight guests at the KOA, & anyone participating in the 9th Annual Tim Gavin Down-river Race.

### THE FESTIVAL beginning @ 2pm

#### LOCATION

Spend the day (& the night, if you please) at the KOA Campground in beautiful Harpers Ferry, WV. Right off Rt. 340 @ 343 Campground Rd. Check out the festival website for a map.

**LIVE MUSIC** - (bring a lawn chair and prepare for the weather)  
Come hear live music all afternoon & into the night!

- 2:00-4:00 PM OLD VIRGINIA
- 4:40-5:30 Lynn Routzahn
- 5:30-6:30 Keith Lovett and Moon Blue
- 7:00-9:30 Jah Works

\*\*Check our website for performance updates.\*\*

#### SILENT AUCTION

Bid on 100's of items from Pelican, Teva, Kokatat, Confluence Watersports, Backcountry.com, & many more, between 2 & 8pm!

#### FOOD

Have a bite to eat while you listen to live music!

#### CAMPING

Discounted rates (20% OFF!) for Race Participants & Festival Goers @ the KOA! Just call 304-535-6895 & tell 'em you need to camp for the festival. Call ahead for limited cabin sites. There are plenty of tent sites available.

### THE RACE beginning @ 1pm

The Tim Gavin Down-river Race Starts at River & Trail Outfitters put in near Millville WV on the Shenandoah River. Then, Paddle as hard as you can till you get to the take out at the confluence of the Potomac River & Piney Run in Virginia. All Boat Types welcome! There will also be a Rodeo or Attainment Race (level dependent).

For more information, call 304.676.6853. Or, visit:  
[www.harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org](http://www.harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org)

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