



# The Paddle

**Winter 2008**

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

## In Loving Memory of Bernie Lager

On Sunday, October 21, 2007, we lost our good friend, Bernard "Bernie" Lager. He was a kind and unique individual with a great love of kayaking and the outdoors. He was one who inspired others with his great attitude and ability to face challenges head on.

Bernie could often be found enjoying a run on some of his favorite creeks and rivers, the Antietam and the "Needles" on the Potomac, with friends. He also introduced his son Erik to kayaking.



A few thoughts and memories shared by club members and friends after Bernie's passing:

"I will miss Bernie a lot. He was one of the most enthusiastic paddlers I have ever met and was a great student in the swiftwater rescue classes. Bernie was a fantastic swimmer. One of the best I have ever seen. Bernie was an all around good guy. I know that our family of paddlers will deeply miss him". (Jim Norton)

"I have always enjoyed paddling with Bernie and was hoping to spend more time on the water together. Even as I was heading to Hagerstown the other week for the NB release he was one of the people I was looking forward to seeing that day. Bummer. He will be, and is, definitely missed. I have several memories of Bernie and many of them are punctuated by the kindness of his spirit." (Chuck Davis)

"I often think of Bernie when I'm out paddling the Needles. He also introduced me to the Antietam and I was looking forward to doing that over the winter with him and others. He was a very kind, gentle person and I am glad to have known him." (Susan Janko)

"I have a few good memories of Bernie. One I have shared lately when talking about the safety day at Violets Lock Loop. I got a real charge out of how enthusiastic people were about doing a protected "shallow water" dive. I was reluctant to jump large because I know what lurks beneath the surface of the water. Rocks! Bernie made me feel like a chump. The very best example was demonstrated by Bernie. He jumped/dove so high. Imagine Bernie splayed out horizontally on a big ole swan dive off a rock (hands protecting the face of course) about 4 feet off the water and perfectly parallel to the water. It was impressive to say the least.

That move exemplifies his enthusiasm for our sport. That is what I remember of Bernie. I only wish I knew him better and paddled with him more often. My condolences to his family and those paddling partners whose lives he touched." (JD Pearl)

"I enjoyed Bernie because he was as passionate about kayaking as I am. We had opinions, dreams and desires that exceeded our experience at the time and plans to develop a strong enough foundation to assist others, as well as ourselves. He followed through to the point of spreading the knowledge of kayaking basics through the boy scout troop his son was involved in and to beginners like my son and I. He shared his time, his riches (equipment) and talent. He had a powerful testament to his effectiveness as a teacher, leader and an example in his son Eric.

I miss his company, enthusiasm and effectiveness in planning shuttles (a rare trait among kayakers). He will be missed by all that he has come in contact with. These few words fail miserably in getting across how wonderful a person Bernie had been with the lives he had touched positively. " (John Navarro)

Bernie was the husband of Gretchen Gamble Lager. Surviving in addition to his wife is his son, Erik B. Lager, of Frederick, one brother, Robert H. Lager and wife Anne, of Frederick, one sister, Linda L. Allibone and husband Peter, of Summit, NJ , and his nephew. Brian M. Lager four nieces, Jaclyn L.Allibone, Kathryn B. Allibone, Christina M. Lager and Sarah Coleman.



Bernie demonstrating a "textbook" shallow water entry.

As wished by Bernie's family, the club will be planning a paddle in Bernie's honor on the Antietam and/or the Potomac in Summer 2008. Details will be posted on the message board.

Memorial contributions may be made to Boy Scout Troop 371 c/o of Assistant Scout Master Bernard G. Lager 4202 Greenvalley Road Monrovia, MD 21770.

## **Business**

### **Message from the President**

With the New Year already upon us, there are hopes of a "wet" year as opposed to the drought conditions brought about by 2007. Of course some are still paddling until the rivers freeze over, but spring is not that far off. The MDCC banquet and roll sessions officially kick off the season soon and I wish the best for all in 2008.

The Thursday night paddle (TNP) will again be back in full force with new newbies and enthusiastic veterans alike. The playing grounds of Harpers Ferry are where most MDCC members learn, and in return, pass on their knowledge to others. MDCC provided us with a basic kayaking class or two, a safety class, and a picnic. The biggest reward was from club members themselves on the rivers practicing and teaching the skills learned in such class environments.

Several paddlers saw new rivers and improved their skills quite noticeably, whether it was on the Needles or the Lower Yough. The encouragement was outstanding this year as we saw some new folks, barely able to keep a straight line in flat water, become confident on class 2 and class 3 whitewater. Without that initial encouragement and guidance from fellow paddlers, some of these folks may have given it up. Everyone at all levels deserve, once again, a big "Yee Hah" for reaching goals and at the same time helping others reach theirs.

The season was not without sadness as we lost a good friend, Bernie Lager. Our thoughts remain with his family and we wish them well. Bernie left this earth early in life, but memories together with Bernie on the river remain. As quoted from the message board, "Paddle On Bernie, Paddle on." You will be missed.

Paddling is fun and great exercise. Paddling is skill and endurance based with different styles and personalities. Paddling is getting outdoors and enjoying the earth's playgrounds available to us. Paddling is about friends and family. Paddling is about giving back and helping others. Paddling is about being safe and developing skills and awareness to help others stay safe. Paddling is an addiction. Paddling is medicine. Paddling is about rivers and people, and the struggles and compassions that are endured on them. Paddling is being alive, and not at the office. Paddling is what MDCC is about. See you on the river in 2008!

## **2007 MDCC BOD Meeting Minutes**

*Many thanks to the Chapelles for hosting this important and fun evening.*

### **Your 2008 Officers:**

President: Dan Eigenbrode  
Vice President: Ericka Hoffmann  
Secretary: Sheila Chapelle  
Treasurer/Membership: Sylvia DuRant

Kudos to ex-VP Merrill and ex-Sec Cindy as they step down after 3 years.

### **Your 2008 Volunteers (excluding trip coordinators, instructors, etc):**

Newsletter Editor: Tina Blaik  
Conservation Chair: Chuck Davis  
Safety Chair: Jim Norton  
Pool Session Coordinator: Dave Russo  
Trophy Manufacturer: Vitas Eidukevicius  
Web Master: John Pramik  
Assistant WEB Master: Bob Devine

### **Your 2008 Board of Directors:**

Merrill Pearson  
Vitas Eidukevicius  
Jamie Geraghty  
Jim Norton  
JD Pearl  
Dave Russo  
Ron Shanholz

Contact Information can be located on the web.  
[www.masondixoncanooclub.org](http://www.masondixoncanooclub.org)

# **Mark your Calendar !**

## **Annual Banquet**

Kick off the 2008 paddle season at the MDCC annual banquet on **February 23, 2008** at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, 64 S Main St, Boonsboro, MD 21713. The event starts at 6:00 pm. Sodas and paper/plastic ware provided. Bring a dish or dessert to share. Email Dan Eigenbrode at [dankayakbike@yahoo.com](mailto:dankayakbike@yahoo.com) for info.

## **Pool Sessions**

Pool sessions will be held at the Hagerstown YMCA located at 1100 Eastern Blvd N from 9am-11am on the following Sundays:

**February 17th, February 24th, March 2nd, March 9th**

- There is a cost of \$15 per person per session and you must be a member of MDCC. You may join MDCC at the session for \$10 per household. Please submit your application prior to the event or bring a completed application to the session. This application is located at the end of this newsletter.
- Arrive as early as 8:30am. Must exit building by 11:30am.
- All gear and boats must be clean. A hose will be provided outside the YMCA.
- Remove all floatation from kayaks.
- MDCC doesn't provide boats but feel free to post on the MDCC message board and someone can help you out.
- Volunteer instruction available.

*For more information contact Dave Russo at [drusso48@aol.com](mailto:drusso48@aol.com).*

## **HFOF Festival**

The Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival will be held on June 14, 2008 at the Harpers Ferry KOA. Festivities begin at 9AM. Proceeds go toward some of our favorite river conservation organizations. Watch the message board for more details.

The Raft Race portion of this event will be held Thursday May 22, 2008. There will be a after party hosted by Butt's Tubes at their shop in Neersville, VA, following race. Food and plenty of fun will be provided. Also, We will be offering amateur Rafters to enter the race and we will provide a guide and a raft for teams who pre register to be in the race. <http://harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org/>

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Sat.	Feb. 9	Dealer's Choice - Small Creek	LI - I	Andrew Petukov & Merrill Pearson andrew@buzzzy.com
Sun.	Feb. 17	Pool Session - Hagerstown YMCA	Pool	9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Sat.	Feb. 23	MDCC Banquet		6:00 PM
Sun.	Feb. 24	Pool Session - Hagerstown YMCA	Pool	9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Sun.	March 2	Pool Session - Hagerstown YMCA	Pool	9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Sun.	March 2	Dealer's Choice - After pool session	II	Ericka Hoffmann speleofire@yahoo.com
Sun.	March 9	Pool Session - Hagerstown YMCA	Pool	9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Sun.	March 9	Antietam - After the Pool Session	II	Chuck Davis
Sat.	March 15	Sidling Hill Creek	II	Ron Shanholtz paddlkayak@aol.com
Sat.	March 15	Staircase	II	Andrew Petukov & Merrill Pearson andrew@buzzzy.com
Sat.	March 22	Muddy Creek	II-III	Don Chance chance@stsci.edu
Sat.	March 29	Elk River / Webster Weekend		Juston Sizemore
Sat.	April 5	Cleanup trip - Paddle afterward		Dan Eigenbrode & Chuck Davis dankayakbike@yahoo.com
Sat.	April 12	Dealer's Choice - Class II	II	Ericka Hoffmann speleofire@yahoo.com
Sun.	April 13	Intermediate Class	LI	JD Pearl JDPaddle@myactv.net
Sat.	April 19	Bloomington Release	II-III	
Sun.	April 20	Bloomington Release	II-III	Dave Russo Drusso48@aol.com
Sat.	April 26	Casselman River	II-III	Ron Shanholtz paddlkayak@aol.com
Sat./Sun	May 3-4	Bloomington Release	II-III	Randy Snapp rsnapp@bechtel.com
Sat.	May 17	Bloomington Release	II-III	Steve Burstein smburstein@yahoo.com
Sun.	May 18	Bloomington Release	II-III	Dave Russo Drusso48@aol.com
Sat.	May 31	Bloomington Release	II-III	



# The Light Side



**From Siddhartha**  
By Herman Hesse

And once again, when the river had just increased its flow in the rainy season and made a powerful noise, then said Siddhartha: "Isn't it so, oh friend, the river has many voices, very many voices? Hasn't it the voice of a king, and of a warrior, and of a bull, and of a bird of the night, and of a woman giving birth, and of a sighing man, and a thousand other voices more?"

"So it is," Vasudeva nodded, "all voices of the creatures are in its voice."

"And do you know," Siddhartha continued, "what word it speaks, when you succeed in hearing all of its ten thousand voices at once?" Om....oneness

## Trip Reports

### Seven Survey Scenic Sideling Hill Creek

Diesel Dave

Sunday, January 13 Approximate Air & water temps: 45 degrees. Level 2.4 dropping to 2.2

Sideling Hill Creek is a wonderfully scenic trip with somewhat elusive running levels. I don't remember having the chance to run it at all last year. Saturday would have been the better run, but with the level dropping slowly enough, I echoed Sean's posted interest and led the trip. We were joined by Mike, Jay & Wendy, Vitas, and Ericka. Three were making their 1<sup>st</sup> descents.

The shuttle worked well....we met at 10am and left the parking lot by 10:09, dropped everything at the put in under the Rt 68 bridge, and thought to leave shuttle vehicles at both the Conservacy takeout (6mi) and the Ziegler Road Bridge takeout (11mi). The creek was running well, but not quite as swift as my preferred 3 foot levels. We were all awed by the mostly pristine scenery and rock formations, and a hawk Wendy spotted early in the trip. Being a chilly day without many playspots, we made the entire trip in about 3 1/2 hours. Except to share that a good day was had by all, the trip probably wouldn't be noteworthy, except for a few mental notes made to self (NTS) as the group leader, which I'll share for their experiential value.

The first NTS occurred after we arrived back at the put-in after having set up the shuttle, only to discover a paddle had been left in a vehicle at the farthest takeout...fortunately hand paddles were present, which averted a lengthy delay. NTS: "as group leader, reminding everyone to check their gear at critical junctures would probably not be inappropriate." Things hide, and even fully functional adults can get distracted and forgetful. (We're still wondering who's medium female black panties were found in the back of Jay's truck!)

The second NTS involved a somewhat embarrassing personal faux pax. We had been warned of the possibility of a strainer (which is always a possibility on small creeks like Sideling Hill). We encountered it about a mile below the Conservacy, a river wide tree across the creek, just around a sharp bend in fairly swift water. Mike, in lead, immediately yelled out "Strainer!" and everyone immediately eddied out.....except me, who decided there was time enough to eddy out closer to the strainer to avoid a longer portage. I quickly discovered the current and low water precluded a firm foothold, and found myself in the embarrassing position of hugging the tree, relatively immobilized by the slightest force of the current, and had to rely on Mike to pull me out. While I'm sure my decision was mightily influenced by the easiness of the creek, and some would suggest "no harm, no foul", the blaring NTS has to be "when someone yells "Strainer!" get off the river ASAP"... the risk is never necessary, and even the easiest of situations can go sour very quickly. The quote at the end of Ericka's email today was most apropos:

*"Good judgment comes from experience. Experience comes from bad judgment!"*

### **All This in Seven Months – And in a Drought Year**

Ericka Hoffmann

Wow. What a year 2007 was! I know... the seasoned paddlers who are reading this are thinking "Huh?!" But in spite of the drought and lack of things running, it was amazing. Well, don't know any better, I guess, because 2007 was my first year paddling whitewater. I actually did get kind of tired of the Needles at too-low-to-register-on-the-USGS-gauge levels. More tired of the lack of water than of the Needles itself. But it was still fun, and definitely better than not paddling. And there were still things to do out there: catch eddies, practice ferrying, surf on anything surfable. And trying to keep from getting hung up on rocks was a great exercise in elementary boat control. Thanks

to all my Sunday paddling buddies who kept getting out there in the low water. You helped make this year a great one for me. As a newbie, in 2007 and so far this year, I ran several things for the first time....

#### Upper Gunpowder Gorge – August 6, 2007

This is such a beautiful river. And the fun, more technical class II rapids were an interesting change



of scenery from the Needles. That cold water (dam-released) is great on a 96 F degree day, too (August 25 comes to mind). That hike through the woods to the put-in is a pain, but it's worth it! The first time I paddled the Gunpowder, when Sean suggested a river north of Baltimore, I didn't expect anything nearly this beautiful, since I wasn't familiar with the area at that time. For my first time down it, we scouted the rapids so I could get a look at them. The hiking trail along the river makes this really easy. The rapids are more technical than most you'll find on the Needles, and the water is a bit bigger. The rapid with the big rock on river-right at the bottom presented a challenge, but I've nailed it a couple of times since then. There are some nice waves to surf on too. And even the flat parts move well, and are gorgeous.

#### First Little Falls (Potomac) Run – October 20, 2007

John E. and Sean were kind enough to lead me down this for the first time. And it still sticks in my memory as one of the best paddling days I've had yet. The weather was beautiful. We started out playing around in the canal, then went up the feeder channel to the river. The more technical Z-channel rapid was quite enjoyable. I wanted to go back and run that one again! The bouncy wave trains were loads of fun. (The return of the NB Perma-Grin!) I was practicing ferrying across some of the easier wave trains and having such a good time doing that. I did not feel out of my comfort zone at all during that run. The last rapid before Little Falls was the most interesting, fun and challenging! You start out on river right, then have to make a turn to the left around that big house-sized boulder and then go to the right again around the rock and then straighten out back over to river left to catch the eddy and get ready or Little Falls. I went over a drop by that huge rock, and punched right through the hole at the bottom! I think that was my favorite part of the whole run. (If the water was lower, the rock making that drop and hole would have been too exposed and that wouldn't have worked). We ran Little Falls on the Maryland side (of course) and that was a blast. As I went through the bottom hole there, I think my boat was completely submerged (BUT UPRIGHT!) at one point. FUN! I loved it!!! Great run. It kind of took the sting out of having to miss the North Branch Bloomington Release the weekend before. Thanks John and Sean!

#### First Staircase Run – October 28, 2007

I didn't dream that the Shenandoah would come up enough to run it this soon. So when I arrived at Cindy D's that Sunday, I was pleasantly surprised that we were doing it – at 2.4 feet on the Millville gauge. I had been yearning for this one most of the summer, having heard how great it was from the more experienced paddlers, and then looking at the depressingly low water that we could see from Rt. 340. My first time on it was definitely an adventure. We had a good group: Vitas, Mike, Marilyn, Ed, John E, Sean, Susan and myself. Once we got past the flat water at the start, there were some very nice rapids leading up to Bull Falls.

*The Carnage At Bull Falls:* Three days after my 37<sup>th</sup> birthday, I got the first stitches of my adult life. I screwed up, and there is video footage to prove it. My big lesson that

day (well, two of them): (1) Rocks are very close to the surface at this level. If you flip, TUCK! FAST! (2) When going over any drop, through any rapid, PADDLE!

When going over Bull Falls I was flipped by the rooster tail wave. I should have gone further over to the right and paddled harder. Classic "Freeze & Flip." ("Ooohhh... look at the pretty waterfall!") I flipped so fast I didn't even have time to brace. My chin hit a rock on the way over (I think?). The Paddle Snake grabbed my paddle when I hit, and I think I bounced off the bottom a couple of times. (Why we wear helmets!). Evidently, I



barely missed a hole called the "Secret Room" that has the reputation for sucking boats off of people's behinds at higher levels. Even though it wasn't as bad at this level, I'm still glad I didn't end up in it. I came out of my boat, and Mike towed me over to a rock. I didn't even realize I'd hit that badly until one of the guys said "you're bleeding" after my swim. I had gotten a pretty good gash on the

underneath side of my chin. Marilyn, bandaged me up, complete with duct tape over the bandage to keep it from getting wet and coming off. So I did the rest of the run with a silver chin. Sean kept picking on me about it. I kept telling him to cut it out because it hurt my face to laugh!

I got through the rest of the run with a bad case of the adrenaline jitters and two more stupidity/nerve related swims. Both could have easily been avoided. I was so off my game after my incident at Bull Falls. The upper section of the Staircase below Bull Falls was fun, in spite of the fact that I was not having a good day. The ledges and drops on that are great fun. (I was told that I took the harder line on that part). I really enjoyed doing Roller Coaster rapid on the Lower Staircase. I could tell when I was having fun because I'd smile and laugh and my face would hurt! White Horse Rapid was crankin' more than I'd seen it up to that point! (It was GREAT!) Everyone was so helpful when I swam. We were all laughing about my carnage after it was obvious that I was OK. Seriously, I couldn't have had a better support group out there. Thanks, everybody!

Susan (who is a nurse) looked at my wound after we got to the take out and said "You need a couple of sutures!" The only Urgent Care facility in the area open past 6 PM was in Hagerstown, MD. Susan knew where it was, so she escorted me there and stayed with me until after the doctor had put five stitches in my face. The doctor was wonderful, and irrigated the wound really well and cleaned it out. I also received a prescription for an antibiotic and a tetanus shot, since I couldn't remember when my last one was. My chin hurt for a little while... especially if I smiled, laughed or yawned.

Ouch. But it healed quickly. It was a totally superficial wound, and you can barely see the scar now.

I have not had the chance to run the full Staircase run and redeem myself since then, due to levels and winter weather. But I have done the Bridge-to-Bridge several times, and love it more each time I'm out there. There is so much to play on, and it's great ferrying and eddy-catching practice! I finally surfed on that Roller Coaster wave for a few seconds the last time we did the Bridge to Bridge on January 6! ("What time is it?!"")

**Winter Paddling: Thank Goodness for Latex Gaskets!**

... and Hydroskin, and Gore-Tex, and neoprene. If anyone had told me back in June that I'd be paddling in January, I would have thought they were nuts. Thankfully, the gear is available to make cold-weather possible. As long as the air temperature is hovering at or above 40 anyway. It's been fun, and has allowed some others and me the opportunity to get out and do the Bridge-to-Bridge run on the lower Staircase. And cold water is definitely an incentive to get a solid roll.

**New Years Day, 2008 - Paddling in January! Am I nuts?**

Nope. Just addicted. I only drank two beers New Year's Eve because there was paddling scheduled for the next day. Boy, have my priorities been adjusted! I didn't realize how windy it was until I pulled into the parking lot at Cindy D's. Due to the wind, a few people who had planned to paddle that day backed out, and it was just me, Bob, Jay, Guth and Pete. It was really enjoyable to watch those guys play on the bigger, badder waves and holes, while I found the more novice features to play on. The guys pointed out a couple waves that I could handle and enjoyed very much. I officially had the first swim of the year. Evidently, I took over that distinction from Pete. I hit that fun drop with the "weird interface" just below the bridge wrong and over I went. It wasn't a bad swim, as the guys and a friendly rock were close at hand. (Thanks, guys!) What a fun day, in spite of the wind making paddle kites. Especially when we arrived at the confluence, I could see the advantage to only having one blade. It was definitely the most wind I'd ever paddled in, and I was afraid that it would mess with my boat control at White Horse. But I got through it just fine, and it was the biggest I've seen it yet, and FUN!

**Sidling Hill Creek – Sunday, January 13, 2008.**

This is a beautiful creek! We had a great group: Dave, Mike, Vitas (with his hand-paddles), Wendy, Jay, Sean and me. The levels on Saturday probably would have been more fun, but this was a great, 11-mile trip, and a very pleasant, easy winter run. The bends in the creek with the rapids in them were the best. The scenery is gorgeous, with interesting rock formations, and exposed anticlines along the way. Very nice!

I have the most sincere gratitude to all the paddlers who have coached, helped and encouraged me since I started paddling whitewater in June. And all who have given

tows, chased gear (and bandaged me) when I've swam. You all have helped make the second half of 2007 absolutely incredible.

## **A Taste of Some Bigger Water**

**Dan Eigenbrode**

I set a goal last Fall to run the Lower Gauley the following year. This is a brief description of how I reached my goal and had a top 10 life time experience.

Last year JD Pearl offered to guide me down the Lower G, and I took him up on his offer with promise of getting some harder paddling under my belt beforehand. I managed some new rivers in West Virginia, which included my favorite: the Dry Fork of the Cheat. With the drought and not much running, I had to resort to dam releases (such as Lower Yough, WISP) during the summer and included a trip down south to the Nantahala and the French Broad. Feeling more comfortable, I jumped on the Savage at 1000 cfs with Eric Vance and JD leading the way. It was by far the busiest run I had been on and we were able to get two runs in. It felt great.



Now it was Gauley time. So, which boat do I use? My I:4? Or my Burn? Depends on who you ask. The I:4 was the boat I paddled the most and therefore the one I was most comfortable in. The Burn, with the larger volume, would be more forgiving and I would be doing less unintentional stern squirts. I went with the I:4. (JohnO rule: never do both new river and new boat).

I met JD at his house before the sun came over the horizon and we booked down toward Summersville with plans of meeting Brenda and Bob by 10:00ish. It was a long trip, but went quickly as we solved the world's problems and discussed the weekend's plans. We met our group at the put in not too far from the planned times and proceeded to discuss what to wear. The day was a gorgeous one and the putin was crawling with paddlers.

We set shuttle, unloaded our boats and proceeded with the steep walk down to the bottom of the gorge. I swear I tip-toed the whole ways down the stairs as my calves were killing me for days after. The stomach started tightening as we neared the river. Yeah, I was nervous and tight. I stretched and played with a small eddy at the putin until everyone starting heading down. I caught a wave or two, looked at JD and said, "Man, I can't get loosened up. I am a little nervous." JD said, "So am I." That can't be good, but he explained he was nervous about getting me down.

Needless to say, we scouted the first rapid call Koontz's Flume and choose a river left line. If you read a description on the rapid, you will discover you don't want to be too far right. Finally, we entered the rapid of the biggest water I had yet to experience. I could really tell the difference. I swore the river was just gonna have its way with me. I followed JD's advice, and kept the boat going faster than the water so I would be in control or something like that. I just paddled like a mad man.



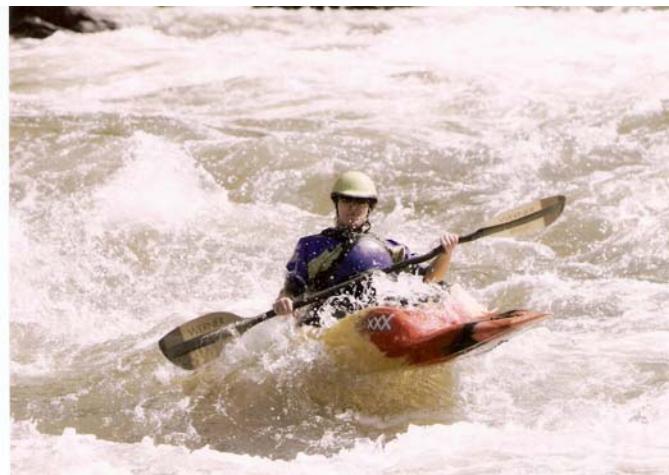
We approached; boat scouted, and discussed each rapid. Sometimes it was just the four of us, sometimes, it was a crowd. I got a taste of some big waves at Upper and Lower Mash rapids and watched some big wave play at Diagonal

Ledges where the line was about a 10 minute wait and the rafts just kept coming. We continued down to a river left move where I missed a line on an eddy out onto a pillow rock and flipped halfway on the pillow. Fortunately I found a brace that put me right pretty quick. That felt good even if I did blow the line.

We are hanging out in some calm and I saw the river get busy at river right. JD and I chatted and watched Brenda and Bob go down and out of sight. At that point JD asked another paddler if this was Pure Screaming Hell rapid and they said, "yes". Well, I guess Bob and Brenda figured that out as well, so I followed JD's lead with the described line in my head. I saw the river left hole (more of a wave at the current level) and saw JD go left as he described. I hesitated and a cross wave flipped me. Knowing what was on the river right (Hell Hole), I rolled back up and seemed not to loose a stroke, saw JD in my sights, and again paddled like a madman. I got into some ledges and rocks on river left, but knew the worst was behind me. Some of the wave trains that day were the biggest STUFF I had ever been on, and it was a blast. I'd never want to swim on that river.

We marveled at the day, ate Mexican and headed off to a hotel to sleep (why camp, when there is a nice hotel there). No day can end better when you met a goal with friends.

Day 2 was a little more relaxed and just as nice of a day. There seemed to be fewer people, and I took the time to look up at the gorge walls and enjoy the scenery some. I still had



some reluctance to see PSH again, but I did fine...maybe a little far left again, but hey, who's keeping score? I did manage a closer look at the river right hole (Hell Hole) and it seemed to go down for a long ways, I had a slight feeling that my boat should be falling into it.....so I paddled like a mad man. Next year I'll catch those river left eddies.

On the boat of choice, the I:4, it was a good one, but I did find myself looking at sky about 3 times and flipped once due to the stern. (yeah, blame the stern) So after some serious thanking my paddling buds and some "that a boy, congrats for not drowning" from them, we called it a weekend and began the ride home. The conversation was more about the weekend and the experience, and I don't think we noticed the world had problems to solve. Well, maybe a few.

\*\*Photos in order: Dan, JD, & Brenda at Koontz's Flume\*\*

**Trip Report, New Year's Day Paddle**  
*Bob Cianfalone*

We had a great paddle, and it was an appropriate way to begin the year. It was actually an aquatic rodeo, and it was a fun adventure for this friendly posse that journeyed on the river for a holiday voyage.

Today, as predicted, it did not rain at all, and it got sunny as well as quite windy. There was an argent glow from the river banks, and the water glimmered in its verdant sheen, all under a brilliant azure sky.

At one point, some of us thought that the increasing roar we heard was from an approaching freight train. Nope: It was the wind.

Putting in at Shepherdstown, we stayed on the WV side until we reached the halfway mark, by Cross Creek Golf Course, and at that point we went full speed at a 45 degree angle and switched to the MD side. We then had a lunch break at Snyder's Landing, courtesy of Coalminer's Daughter.

Albeit the squirrel dropping baby carrots on us was a solid contender for the Rural Family of the Week Award, the singing travel table won the coveted prize. At Snyder's Landing, while the table sang, New Boat Bill ate two little men, and, following his lead, we did likewise. You had to be there.

It was a great adventure, with a fantastic group of paddlers. We all had fun, enjoyed a tremendous workout, and had a fabulous meal.

**MASON-DIXON CANOE CRUISERS. INC.**

**Application and Liability Waiver**

***CAUTION: THIS IS A WAIVER. READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING.***

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Check this box if you do not want your contact information included in the membership roster.

In consideration of the acceptance of my application for participation in events sponsored by the Mason-Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Inc.(hereinafter referred to as the 'Club'), intending to be legally bound, I hereby waive, release, and discharge, for myself and any member of my family and anyone else claiming through me, any and all claims for damages for death, personal injury or property damage which I may have, or which may hereafter accrue to me against the club, its members, trip coordinators, or any other of my fellow paddlers as a result of my participation in a club-sponsored event. This waiver applies to any negligent act or omission and any intentional act intended to promote my safety or well-being.

This waiver is given in the interest of permitting the Club to exist and to serve the paddling community, and to entitle myself and my fellow paddlers to feel free to donate our services and help each other without fear of liability. My waiver is given in exchange for similar waivers to be granted by other members of the Club. My waiver has no expiration date.

I hereby declare that I fully understand and accept the following facts of life on the river: 1) boating on whitewater rivers exposes participants to various hazards; 2) no one but myself is responsible for judging my qualifications for my safety when I choose to challenge my capabilities by boating on a particular river or a particular rapid; 3) I may assist my fellow paddlers to the best of my ability when they appear to need such assistance - but only so long as I can do so, in my judgment, without significant danger to myself. I further understand that this does not imply any legal duty for me to do so, nor for anyone else who renders such assistance to

me. I also declare that I shall abide by all applicable boating laws and regulations and will practice courtesy and safety while boating. I am also aware that the wearing of a proper personal floatation device is recommended on all trips where conditions so dictate, and is even required by some states.

I consent to any emergency treatment that may be considered necessary in the event of an injury or illness during any club-sponsored event which may be deemed necessary by club members or medical personnel.

I represent to the Club that I am eighteen (18) years or older and that I am authorized to execute this waiver on behalf of my family.

Signature(s) of applicant(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature(s) of applicant(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(if applicant is under 18)*