



# The Paddle

*Spring 2009*

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

## Message from the President

Greetings my boating buddies,

I am happy to say I get to serve as your president until someone else wants to step up. In the mean time I get to become more involved than usual in the club activities. There have been some great trips this year and I hope you all keep an eye on the calendar and the message board to see what trips are developing and who is leading them. I have been lucky enough to paddle with a few club legends. Ron Shanholz was one of the original club presidents (for many years). Bobby Miller not only dives off of perfectly good water falls but also served a stint as our club president. (3 years)

I am fortunate to be following the past president Dan Eigenbrode. His records and advice is right on the mark. I placed my name in the hat for the presidential position because I have enjoyed the people in the club and the times we get together to boat. It is my turn to give back to the club that made paddling safe for my son and me.

On that note I hope someone out there will consider giving back to the club in the capacity of club treasurer. We are in need of a replacement treasurer, the sooner we hear from a volunteer the sooner we can help the person through the transition.

You may have noticed that we have been having difficulties with web page. We have been fortunate enough to have Vitas and Chuck Davis start work on a new and improved web page. The page is our main way to communicate. Without it we cease to exist. John P. has been doing a great job maintaining our web page and will be relinquishing his role as web master to Vitas and Chuck next year. If there is something you would like to see on the web page then look at their contact information and make a few suggestions. The contact info has not been changed for a while but their addresses are correct. Dan has shifted to the newsletter and I am the new president, though the contact portion of the web page does not reflect that as of yet. It can be corrected when Vitas and Chuck have a chance to fix it (I do not think they have access to that info at this time).

Please get out and paddle. Take a newbie out with our club to make paddling a fun, safe and memorable happening. I do so hope to SYOTR!

John Navarro



## **"Grand Canyon"**

*By Zoe Chappelle*

The walls are rising higher and higher

They are closing in all around,

The layers and height gather,

It's a never ending tunnel, it's like you're being trapped,

trapped to never escape.

But you're free!

It's just you, red canyon wall, lots of crazy and calm water

The small sliver of sky up above the walls,

This is being free.

*Zoe Chappelle is a student at Boonsboro High School. She enjoys writing poetry.  
And paddling of course!*



Zoe and her mom, Sheila.

## **2009 Officers**

President: John Navarro  
Vice President: Ericka Hoffmann  
Secretary: Sheila Chapelle  
Treasurer/Membership: Sylvia DuRant

## **2009 BOD**

Merrill Pearson  
Vitas Eidukevicius  
Jamie Geraghty  
Jim Norton  
Dan Eigenbrode  
Dave Russo  
Ron Shanholz

## **Trip Report !**

### **Never Judge A Book By Its Cover**

*by Bobby Miller*

For years, many paddlers have driven past Georges Creek through the towns of Midland, Lonaconing, and Barton on the way to the North Branch release. I would be willing to bet that many of you have scoffed at the prospect of running this stream as you have seen this railroad damaged, trashy, urban stream that flows with orangish water down towards the North Branch of the Potomac. I agree that the list of reasons not to paddle Georges Creek is high but indulge me, reader if you will, and take a look past its outward ugliness. Look inside the stream for what it truly is and you will find that there truly is a diamond in all of this roughness.

On May 9th, a strong group of paddlers including myself, Bob Devine, Sean Devine, Steve Speck, Jeff Kahn, Scott Anderson, and Drew Wimmer went out and ran the Stony River into the Kitzmiller section of the North Branch of the Potomac (a classic 13 mile Class 3-4 run). I had told Bob before the trip that Georges would be running and that I planned to run it after our run. I asked for help with shuttle and Bob generously agreed with a smile and a few choice words of encouragement. :-) So, we dropped my car at the ballfields in Westernport and headed for the putin. The guys dropped me off at the liquor store in Midland, approximately 9 miles from my car. They wished me well, all the while laughing, before heading into the store to make their purchase. Having only two hours to complete the run, I knew I would have to paddle fast but I am used to that so I wasn't concerned.

Over a decade before, I had kayaked this stream at an extremely low level. We scraped and handwalked the entire way down the creek so I was excited to have about 4 more inches of water for this run (4.6 on the Georges Creek gauge). I started out maneuvering down through the rocks early in the run. The towns of Midland and Lonaconing had built several rock dams in the stream so I was greeted with many 1-2 foot drops, lots of cobbly rapids, and, much to my surprise, an occasional bedrock slide. Other excitement included a dangerous pipeline that I was able to spot ahead of time and jump on the left and one strainer in fast water that I was also able to get around. The scenery at times was quite pretty when the creek would pass by rock cliffs on the left bank. The right bank housed the road and most of the trash along the banks. The water level was great and I was pleased to be able to travel along and rarely scrape the bottom of the creek. As the miles rolled past, I was found myself pleasantly surprised at what a nice stream this was. The rapids were continuous and I always enjoy a good race against daylight.

Downstream near the town of Barton, the gradient started to pick up. The town of Barton has built more of the rock dams, only some of these were getting closer to 2+ feet in height. The bedrock slides began to increase in frequency and length. Soon, I was at a horizon line where there lies the biggest drop of the run, the Barton Bruiser. The Bruiser is a dam that drops 8 feet onto a slide. Although it looked like it might be a hard hit at the bottom, the good amount of water in the creek padded out the landing. I came down the slope of the dam and launched a schweeeeet boof stroke at the lip, landing so flat that they heard me all the way down in Cumberland. The landing on the slide was very smooth and, for that moment, I felt like I was on a West Virginia steep creek instead of an intermediate stream. From here, the creek really stepped up the gradient and the rapids became more difficult. There were slides that were 50 yards long, some ledges, some steep cobble bars that threw up waves close to 3 feet tall, and even a section of boulder drops! Unfortunately, as the whitewater got better, the scenery got worse. Mine acid ran into the creek, adding an orangish tint to the water, and the sewage treatment plant that I paddled by certainly added more than flow to the stream! LOL! However, I was not going to let a few unpleasanties ruin my run down the whitewater that was getting better with every mile.

At one point, I passed a creek that entered from the right over a 5 foot ledge. The creek had a good amount of water in it so I decided to carry up to run the drop. However, the banks were very steep, making it difficult to find a suitable place to climb up. I decided to climb up a rock pile at the next bridge down. Unfortunately, I didn't sponge out all the water that had accumulated in my boat and the extra weight made it difficult to climb up. I was almost to the top when the sloshing water in my boat caused me to lose my balance and tumble 10 feet back down to the creek. Luckily, my boat, paddle, and my bones came out unscathed. Not to be denied running a new drop, I carried back up the bank and walked upstream to the tributary. I put in on a strainer and slid in. I went down a slide and took a huge boof stroke as I launched off the 5 footer. I landed so flat that they thought they were under cannon fire down in Westernport! As I continued downstream, I finally did reach the town of Westernport. I thought that the stream might slow down through here but it saved the best for last. There were two big slides ending in 4 foot ledges with big holes to jump back to back. It was exciting to come to an unexpected horizon line and have to go for it! What a great way to end the run! I prefer this memory to the pipe dumping in sewage right at the confluence or the fact that I took out right above the Westernport Sewage Treatment Plant on the North Branch.

As I carried my boat past the ball fields, everyone watching the games seemed shocked to see a kayaker. Most people were friendly and wanted to hear about my experience. So, what did I tell them? Of course, I told them that I had just finished a run down one of the best streams in Maryland. For underneath the ugly exterior, there truly is a gem if you can open this book and look inside.

## **2009 MDCC Schedule**

The club has decided to go to a "working" online schedule at the link below. This schedule will constantly be updated and anyone that desires can add a trip or change the details at their leisure.

If you would like to add a trip contact Ericka: [speleofire@yahoo.com](mailto:speleofire@yahoo.com)

If you would like to have privileges to change or add your own trips, contact Vitas: [vitas@frontiernet.net](mailto:vitas@frontiernet.net)

**<http://www.masondixoncanoecub.org/trips.html>**

## **Where Can I Get Gear, Information or Instruction?**

**<http://www.rivertrail.com/>**

**<http://www.riverriders.com/>**

**<http://www.potomacpaddlesports.com/>**

**<http://www.valleymill.com/boats/>**

**<http://www.antietamcreek.com/>**

**<http://www.outdoorexursions.com/courses/home.php>**

**<http://www.noc.com/>**

**<http://www.wvrivers.org/>**

**<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/>**

**<http://water.usgs.gov/>**



FOOD !

## 2009 MDCC Banquet

About 55 members and guests (we were short door prizes) Great food again. Thanks to Prez John N and family, Jamie, Keith, Ericka, Sylvia, Brek, and Dan Canyon for their efforts making it happen. Thanks to everyone that brought great food and helped with the setup and cleanup. Special kudos to those that joined in on Canyon's dance.

Awards:

Big Boy Pants: Jim Norton for the LG (superman)  
Big Girl pants: Brenda Benner for the UY (wonder women)  
Most improved: Sean Caron  
For being JJ: JJ Navaro  
Special award to Bernie Lagers family  
For HFOF and conservation : Lisa Cullinane  
For conservation and being a great guy: Chuck Davis  
Special gift for being strapless : JD Pearl

*Note: JD, Lisa, Lagers, and Brenda not present.*

The guy in the hard hat is Kayak Highway Recovery Team (KHRT) representative Dan Canyon with his two assistants Ericka and Sylvia in vests. A presentation was given on securing your kayak and what to do if you lose it with emphasis on using straps. Followed by disco song "Disco Inferno" by the Tramps. (it was a skit) Also shown was 2007 MDCC DVD, 2007 banquet skit and 2008 DVD.

*Note: Dan Canyon's presentation was met with mixed reviews such as "It got a little long at the end", "no offense, but bring back the dancing girls", and "thanks for making us laugh". KHRT has since disbanded.*



*Dan Canyon above. Disco train below.*



## 2009 Pool Sessions

Again, a great success! Thanks to all helping out and big kudos to JD Pearl for taking the time to instruct the "instructors".



*Lisa instructing*



*JD and son Brycen*

## 2009 Cleanup

*by Chuck Davis*

A very big thanks to everyone who helped out!!!

We had a phenomenal turn out for the cleanup this year! In addition to the many members and volunteers from the Mason Dixon Canoe Club and the HFOF (the festival) we had a lot of volunteers from around town, the county, and beyond. And Mother Nature also came out with a fine showing of sunshine, albeit somewhat windy and chilly at first it warmed up quite nicely in the end.

The Results: 50 volunteers, 160+ bags of trash, about 6 tires, and 1 very full dumpster.

Bakerton - Approx 42 volunteers collected over 125 bags of trash and recycling, plus lots of loose trash and at least 8 old carpets. We completely filled the trailer and then some. We ran the tractor for 3 hours (thanks Mitch!). We actually had to call it quits a little early since we filled the trailer and ran out of bags. WVDEP provided the dumpster/trailer and hauled it out that night.

The Widespot - 2 volunteers collected 12 bag of trash and 5 bags of recycling. Harpers Ferry National Park Service brought a truck to haul and dispose of the trash.

C&O Canal - 6 volunteers collected 30 bags of trash and 3 tires. C&O Canal National Park Service retrieved the bags which were left along the canal.

[http://www.harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org/blog/?page\\_id=141](http://www.harpersferryoutdoorfestival.org/blog/?page_id=141)



*Ericka shows her "prize"*



*Gang at C&O*

## **2009 Potomac River Ramble**

**June 24th - 28th**

This year will be 2 days on the Monocacy and 2 on the downstream Potomac. The website should have plenty of info on it. It is a non-profit event. Refer to web site for information. This is not a MDCC event, just passing the word.

<http://www.potomacriver.org/>

## HFOF

June 20, 2009

The **Harpers Ferry Outdoor Festival** is held each year to raise money for river conservation, encourage environmental awareness, and have fun doing it! It's located just off Route 340 at the KOA Campground in beautiful, historic Harpers Ferry, WV. Admission to the Festival is only \$10.00 and is free to overnight guests of the KOA, participants of the Tim Gavin and the Amateur Raft Races, and children under the age of 12.

The Festival Noon - 10pm

Browse through our vendors' displays and have a bite to eat from participating local restaurants. Lots of interactive kid activities available. If you're feeling adventurous participate in the 1st Annual All Age Trike Race. Bid on hundreds of items in our huge Silent Auction from noon – 8pm, featuring great products from *Kokatat, Teva, Confluence Watersports, IR*, and many more! Listen to live music until 10pm. This year's superstar lineup includes *Mark Cullinane, Rock Cliff Cross, Rootless, Furnace Mountain Band, and The Woodshedders*.

The Races

2nd Annual Harpers Ferry Cup Amateur Raft Race 10AM

11th Annual Tim Gavin Down River Race 1PM

3rd Annual Potomac River Attainment Race (or whitewater rodeo) after the Tim Gavin race.

This is not a MDCC event, just passing the word.

**For more and latest information on the races and festival check the website:**

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

## Editors Note

*by Dan Eigenbrode*

2009 started out with a drought and then more than average rainfall. For the experienced boater, it was a good spring. Now that the weather and water are approaching warmer temperatures and the levels coming down, the perfect opportunity arises for beginners and novices to get out and enjoy the river. Every Thursday night the club meets at Cindy Dees parking lot and paddles the Needles section in Harpers Ferry. If you are interested in doing this, or know someone that is, contact the current Tsar Dave Russo or just post.

Many club members are willing to lend time and gear to get you on the river safely. All ya gotta do is ask. We look forward to seeing you on the river.

The last page of this newsletter is the membership form and waiver required. If you have not done so yet, please submit your form along with 2009 dues (only \$10) and mail to the address given on the WEB site under Join <http://www.masondixoncanoecclub.org/join.html>

**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)*