



# The Paddler's Gauge

## Upcoming Meetings:

April 21 at 7:30 PM

May 19 at 7:30 PM

## Inside this issue:

Event Calendar	3
Casselman Beginners Trip	4
Webster Springs Trip	5

Included are your Slip Clinic forms. Fill them out and send them in early to make it easier on the volunteers who coordinate this event!

## Submissions

The Paddler's Gauge welcomes and encourages articles, trip reports, information about upcoming trips and releases, opinions, reflections, poems, photos, or anything else you would like to see. This is **your** newsletter. Please note, however, that the editor reserves the right to edit all articles submitted for length or content. Please submit articles via email to [wmoran@potentialtech.com](mailto:wmoran@potentialtech.com).

## I Don't Need No Stinkin' Paddle

By Steve Wang

I know you've seen it. There you are on the Lower Yough or even on the Upper Gauley, and along comes some guy with pieces of plastic strapped to each hand. You're thinking, "Oh he might as well be driving a Hummer" or "He's just showing off." Well I just want to tell you, yea you're right!

No, I'm just kidding. I view hand paddling as an alternative style of boating; similar to the difference of driving a car with an automatic transmission versus a manual

transmission.

My first real exposure to hand paddling was the spring of 2007. Jeff Macklin Nursing a healing shoulder and unable to refrain from paddling like some meth-addict, Jeff Macklin continued to boat by hand paddling with an S&M contrived arm tether (most likely inspired by Judy from Pittsburgh). There we were, anywhere and everywhere, and Jeff plodded along with his hand paddles. At this point I still viewed it as an anomaly.

What drove home its practicality occurred during my first run on the  
(See **PADDLE** on Page 2)

## SOUTH BRANCH OF THE POTOMAC

### Jim Blackham Memorial Trip

Friday through Sunday  
April 17, 18, and 19, 2009

## Coordinators:

Donna Egbert: C412-719-6637  
Judy Polczynski: C724-448-1602

Due to water levels, last-minute changes may be made. Call Judy by cell phone to check last minute arrangements. We usually head for West Virginia on Thursday.

Note: Whitewater classification

ratings given below are based upon average water levels.

FRIDAY: Join us for a scenic, 10-mile run on the Class II North Fork of the Potomac River, beginning at the base of spectacular Seneca Rocks. Meeting time will be 12:00 p.m. in the parking lot at the base of the rocks. Plan to arrive earlier if you want to hike to the viewing platform of the Seneca Rocks North Peak. Many of us often have a picnic lunch in the parking lot prior to running shuttle at 12:15 p.m. Put-in will be at 1:00 p.m., SHARP! Jim Blackham was known for his

(See **POTOMAC** on Page 5)

## 2009 Slip Clinic

Included with your newsletter are forms for the 2009 Slip Clinic.

The clinic is a great opportunity to meet people and learn from more experienced paddlers. If you're not running class V yet, this is a great place to take your skills to the next level by spending two days with experienced boaters.

If you're one of those experienced boaters, please volunteer to instruct or assist another instructor. The clinic is only as successful as the the volunteers make it!

(PADDLE from Page 1)

Lower Big Sandy. Matt Pascal While running the bottom slot of First Island rapid, guess what happened? Matt broke his paddle. Actually, it was pretty cool seeing him upside down and trying to roll. When setting up to roll you could see his hand sticking up out of the water holding only half a paddle shaft. Oh crap, broken paddle and on the LBS. Who has a break down? Never fear, Shawn Yingling tosses his paddle to Matt and pulls out a pair of hand paddles. Ding, a light bulb when off in my head.

My primary boat is a LiquidLogic CR125 which has a sold back band making it virtually impossible to store a breakdown paddle in the back of the boat. Hand paddles? Now that's an entirely different story. I currently keep a pair of Power Pawz in both of my boats as backup.

No, you don't have as much acceleration or power as a shaft paddle. And yes, you have to anticipate your moves earlier and run cleaner lines. But no, I don't think it's fundamentally more difficult or requires more effort. Hold your hands out in front of you as if holding your paddle shaft and simulate stroking in

flat water. Then, drop both hands down to your sides and swing your arms as if pushing yourself along forward. Evaluate the difference.

I know what you are thinking: I don't like the idea of something strapped to my hand. What happens if I have to pull my skirt? Well, you're just a wimp (kidding, again). You need to first practice in a controlled environment and make sure you can shake off or remove the hand paddles for a wet exit. Personally, I have found that I can leave the straps loose and the natural flexion of my hands is enough to keep the hand paddles secure.

Additionally I find rolling with hand paddles almost effortless. With good technique the mechanics of rolling are the same, and in some ways less complex. Just think of it as when you first used chop sticks, eating with your hand would have been easier.

Give it a try. I'm sure you'll be very surprised.

## TRPC Calendar of Events

Date	Trip	Coordinator	Phone
Apr. until it dries up	Mid-week Run Slip to Top II-IV	Steve Bloskis	C 412-715-1813
Apr. until it dries up	Slip (Wed. 5:00) II-III	Gary McCormick Bill Schwab	H412-885-0712 C412-915-6030
Apr. 3-5	Tygart Weekend II-IV, WV	Mike Bailey	H 412-881-2244
Apr. 4-5, 18-19, 25-26	Cheoah River Release, NC		
Apr. 4-5	Elk River Festival WV II-III (IV), WV a.k.a. Webster Wildwater Weekend		
Apr. 4-5, 11-12	Tallulah Falls, GA		
Apr. 5	Casselman II-III	Wayne Carey	H 304-547-1777
Apr. 10-18	Southern Trip III+, V	Jeff Prycl	C 724-331-9566 W 724-925-9675
Apr. 11	Connie Trip	Paul Eisner	412-635-9584
Apr. 11-12, 25-26	North Branch Potomac Release, MD		
Apr. 12	Stonycreek Sinners and Heathen Trip III-IV	Dave Greenwald	H 412-968-0597
Apr. 17	Casselman Beginners' Trip II-III	Bob Baudoux	C412-818-6493
Apr. 17-19	Blackham Memorial Trip, S. Branch Potomac I-III, WV	Donna Egbert Judy Polczynski	C 412-719-6637 C 724-448-1602
Apr. 17	First Scheduled UY Release for 2009, MD	For complete 2009 Upper <b>Yough Release</b> Schedule see <a href="http://www.deepcreekhydro.com/WhitewaterSchedule.I">http://www.deepcreekhydro.com/WhitewaterSchedule.I</a>	
Apr. 18	Blacklick	John Brady	724-840-1385
Apr. 18	Middle Yough Beginners' Trip	Gary McCormick	H412-885-0712
April 19	Cheat Canyon IV, WV	Matt Pascal	(412) 297-9501
<b>Apr. 21</b>	<b>TRPC Meeting</b>		
Apr. 24-26	Stonycreek Rendezvous II-IV		
May-Aug.	Wednesday Night Roll Sessions (6 p.m. until ?)	Jeff Prycl	C 724-331-9566 W 724-925-9675
May 1	Cheat Downriver Race III-IV, WV		
May 2	Cheat Fest (Narrows) II-III, WV	Gary McCormick	H 412-885-0712
May 2-3	Cheat Fest III-IV, WV		
May 9	Casselman River, Alt. Middle Yough	Kevin Cupp, Bob McKinstry	C 724-366-1578 H 412-661-6963
May 9	Kids' North Branch Potomac Trip, MD	Zach & Kent Reigel	C 412-427-9872
May 9-10	North Branch Potomac Release, MD		
May 9-10, 16-17, 30-31	Cheoah River Release, NC		
May 10	Slippery Rock Creek	Joe Marksz	C 216-533-0604
May 15-16	Lower Big Sandy IV, Paddle & Camp, WV	Keith Pasquariello	C 724-255-1148
May 16	Venture Outdoors Point State Park, Pittsburgh, PA	Jeff Prycl	C 724-331-9566 W 724-925-9675
May 17	Middle Yough	Jen & Phil Raber	740-498-7063
<b>May 19</b>	<b>TRPC Meeting</b>		
May 23-24	North Branch Potomac Release, MD		
May 23	Lower Yough Trip III, Work the Lines	Steve Kroser	C412-680-7307
May 30-31	Lower Slip Kids Run, tentative	Dawn Wehman	724-544-0978
June 4-7	Benscreek Canoe Sojourn	Jill Latuch	814-442-8858
June 5, 6, 7	<b>Slippery Rock Clinic</b>	Matt Pascal	412-445-6801
June 6	TRPC Meeting held at Slip Clinic in the evening		

## April 19th Casselman Beginners Trip

**Meet:** Riversport parking lot in Confluence, PA

**Time:** 9:30 am

**Description:** We will run the Casselman, Markleton to Fort Hill section, This section is good for beginners with some moving water experience.

Cold water gear is recommended.

Alternate rivers if the casselman is to high or low is the Laurel Hill, the Fort hill to Hardensville section of the Casselman or the Cheat Narrows.

**Contact:**

Bob Baudoux 412 818 6493    [electrokote@verizon.net](mailto:electrokote@verizon.net)

Deb Broderick 724 787 5111



Just some of the 72 participants of the 2008 Casselman trip.

## Webster Springs Weekend

A trip report by Kevin Cupp

This was a wonderful weekend for paddling at Webster.

For all those who missed it, you should try to go next year. The water was great and so were the people.

TRPC had groups go and proudly enjoyed mother nature in more ways than paddling: some went fishing or hiking and most were camping out for the weekend.

So there you have it, and we have a smiley face to prove it.

### (POTOMAC from Page 1)

punctuality, so we try our best to maintain that tradition! Bring a snack for on the water. The group usually has dinner in Petersburg, complete with storytelling and photos from previous years' Blackham trips. Please bring pictures if you have any to share.

**SATURDAY:** 8 a.m., SHARP! We will organize the 12-mile run on the South Branch of the Potomac in the parking lot of the Fort Hill Motel in Petersburg. Pack a lunch and plenty of drinking water for on the river. This is a very scenic Class I-II run, suitable for beginners and canoes. The main group will be putting in at Big Bend Campground and paddling to the outskirts of Petersburg. However, there is a shorter Class III run upstream from Big Bend with access from the shuttle road that may also be run if anyone is interested. After paddling, join the group for another fun-filled dinner at a local restaurant after sprucing up from a day of paddling.

**SUNDAY:** Meeting time to be determined Saturday evening, but it will be sharp! We will once again organize in the parking lot of the Fort Hill Motel. Usually, we run Hopeville Canyon, a short, scenic Class III stretch of the North Fork, before heading home.

Lots of other things to do...bring the whole family:

Local trails for hiking are available at Seneca Rocks, Dolly Sods, and Spruce Knob, West Virginia's highest point. Check out underground West Virginia at Smoke Hole Caverns or Seneca Caverns. Enjoy the local color at Yokum's and Buck Harper's general stores. The Discovery Center at Seneca Rocks is quite interesting and is a great place to get ideas for local outdoor activities. Mountain biking trail information is also available at the Discovery Center. Bring along your camera, as photographic opportunities abound in this scenic area! Fishing in Seneca Creek and the South Branch is great, but you need a West Virginia Fishing License, available at the crossroad village of Seneca Rocks.

**Accommodations:** Suggested accommodations are at the Fort Hill Motel in Petersburg, WV (304) 257-4717. Smoking is not permitted on the motel property. Small refrigerators and microwaves are provided in every room. Make your reservations as soon as possible, as this is a popular destination in the spring and rooms fill up quickly.

Camping is available near Seneca Rocks at Seneca Shadows Campground (877) 444-6777 or Yokum's Vacationland/Princess Snowbird Campground (304) 567-2351.

## OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Chairperson	Kent Reigel	C 412-427-9872	kezsks@verizon.net
Vice Chairperson	Jeff Rahuba	H 412-882-2803	jrahuba@state.pa.us
Programs	Jeff Rahuba	H 412-882-2803	jrahuba@state.pa.us
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Treasurer	Steve Wang	C 714-721-8212	lost.colorado@yahoo.com
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Conservation	Chrissy Zeltner	C 304-612-1084	chrizee@msn.com
Education	John Rudland	H 412-344-6737	xerox@cmsd.k12.pa.us
Membership	Natalie Thomas	H 724-935-5482	nthomas1@consolidated.net
Newsletter Editor	Bill Moran	C 412-302-4487	wmoran@potentialtech.com
Newsletter Publisher	Rick Gates	H 724-745-2427	rjgst31@yahoo.com
Outings	Steve Bloskis	C 412-715-1813	k1buddha@yahoo.com
Outings	Carolyn Devenny	C 724-456-1241	carealot2@verizon.net
Outings	Jeff Knechtel	C 724-622-0075	jgkayak@hotmail.com
Parks and Access	Jeff Prycl	H 724-836-2549	prycl@rockymountaingarage.com
Racing	Natalie Thomas	H 724-935-5482	nthomas1@consolidated.net
Roster	Barry Adams	H 412-242-4562	bj2adams@juno.com
Safety	Bob Kilbert	C 412-216-1160	bkilbert@gmail.com
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Webmaster	Brian Lorence	C 724-396-6489	webmaster@threerivers.org

### TRPC Meetings

Club meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month, at 7:30 P.M. (Except December and January)

### Meeting Place

Carnegie United Methodist Church

415 Washington Ave, Carnegie

**Directions:** If you are traveling on the parkway heading to the airport, get off at the Carnegie/Heidelberg exit #2. The ramp splits, take the left lane (Heidelberg). This turns into Lydia Street. After less than 1/4 mile you will see a large parking lot on the right. On the left is a business called Xi-Tech. Park in the lot on the right, the church is the last building on the right, next to the parking lot. Lydia Street ends at Washington Ave. If you are coming from the parkway towards downtown, take the Carnegie exit and follow the directions above, as the ramp merges onto Lydia Street.

Three Rivers Paddling Club  
1222 Love St.  
Pittsburgh PA, 15218



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