



The Buzz

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October 17, 2012

Smallmouth Population in the Potomac

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November 28, 2012

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November 2012

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Our speaker at the October meeting will be John Mullican of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. John began his career with the Maryland DNR as a technician in 1988 after graduating from Frostburg State University with a BS in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology. John is currently the Western Region District II Manager with the Inland Fisheries Division. He is responsible for fisheries management in Frederick and Washington Counties and the nontidal Potomac River. Much of his free time is spent fishing the Potomac and other regional waters. As you can see from the accompanying picture, John knows where the big ones are, and hopefully he'll share some of his favorite spots with us during his talk.

John's presentation will cover how the Inland Fisheries Division surveys and manages the upper Potomac River smallmouth bass fishery, the most recent data, which PRSC mem-

bers have contributed to through the blue cards we've filled out and passed out, and long-term population trends.

Swap Night Returns

We will also be holding the second Swap Night of

the year. At our October meeting, feel free to bring gear to swap/sell to other members. Set up at 6:45 and the swap will go until our regular program starts at 7:30 with time after the meeting for any final transactions.



John with a very nice Potomac River smallmouth.

Club Executive Board
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Upcoming Items

Potomac River Smallmouth Club - Member Night

Join Us Wednesday, November 28 for PRSC's Annual Member Night. Yes...that date is correct. Usually we meet the week before Thanksgiving, but since the holiday is a little early this year, we'll be meeting at the very end of the month. Once again we'll be featuring some great food and drink, great raffle prizes, and great company (if you like a room full of story telling [lying] fishermen and women). Its a great time to reminisce about the smallmouth fishing so far in 2012. Also, Jack Cook will be handing out awards for the fishing contest, and Herschel Finch will be giving out the Sanford award for a PRSC member's cleanup/conservation efforts. The fun starts an hour earlier at 6:30pm, so don't be late.

PRSC Picture Sale

From now until Member Night, PRSC is offering for sale another Mark Susino print. This is a beautifully framed print, still in shrink wrap. The club bought a few of these a few years ago for fund raising purposes. So we are selling this. The starting price is \$200. This will be a silent auction, with a sheet to record bids. Bids will go up in increments of \$5. At member night the high bid will win the picture.



Potomac Riverkeeper

Potomac Riverkeeper Ed Merrifield's Retirement Party. Sunday, October 21 - 3pm-6pm. They invite Potomac Riverkeeper members and friends to celebrate Ed Merrifield's 10 years as President and Potomac Riverkeeper. After ten years of outstanding service to the Potomac River, Ed Merrifield is retiring as Potomac Riverkeeper at the end of the year. Join them to honor him at a retirement party on board the Cherry Blossom, generously donated by the Potomac Riverboat Company and catered with food by Clyde's. The party is free, but contributions to a special Ed Merrifield Fund for Clean Water Enforcement will be accepted. For more information go to <http://www.potomacriverkeeper.org>.

Potomac Conservancy

Canal Stewards at Fletcher's Cove. Sunday, October 28 - 10am-12pm. Help the Conservancy clean up and beautify the land and water at Fletcher's Cove in the C&O Canal National Historical Park. This monthly cleanup day is open to all ages, and is part of the Canal Stewards program, engaging volunteers in a long-term relationship in which they become the caretakers of a designated site within the park. Cleanup activities include picking up trash, pruning vegetation along trails, and repairing the towpath and trails. Wear clothes that can get dirty- we'll provide all the necessary tools and equipment. Please meet in the lower parking lot. For more information, contact wadhams@potomac.org.

For more information go to their website at www.potomac.org.

PRSC Updates

By Steve Moore

Fly Fishing Benefactors to attend Oct 17 Meeting

For the fly anglers in the club, Fly Fishing Benefactors will be on hand at our swap meet with a selection of gear for purchase. FFB designs and manufactures their own line of fly rods and reels with quality comparable to what you would expect to find from Temple Fork Outfitters or Orvis. You can also get fly boxes, fly line, and accessories from them. The company usually donates 100% of its net profits to various charitable causes to include Friends of the Rivers of Virginia, Project Healing Waters, Casting for Recovery and others. So, if you need some gear at good prices, come prepared to be impressed. As a side note, Fly Fishing Benefactors is supporting our member night by providing a Mountain Pack Rod as well as a 4wt Shenandoah fly rod for the "big" table (total retail of the two items is \$280!). If you can't make it to the swap meet, please visit their website at www.flyfishingbenefactors.com.

Club Leadership Positions

At an upcoming meeting, the club must replace several incumbents who have reached the end of their terms of service. Randy Chandler has served above and beyond the call of duty as President for two years and Vice President for this past year. In addition, as a result of health issues with his mother-in-law, Steve Moore will end up moving to Wilmington, NC at some point next year - creating the need to transition leadership of the club to whomever is the next Vice President. We need volunteers to step forward and help out with keeping our successful club going. If you are interested in serving in any of the other board positions, please let Steve know by sending an email to president@prsc.org. Some of the other board members have served for years and may well come the opportunity to hand over the reins to fresh blood.

October is our Fall Swap Meet!

It's the end of the season and time to trade or sell the gear you know you will replace next year. One man's trash is another's treasure! The club will host the fall swap meet at our October meeting. Bring your gear and set up at 6:45 and, if you are not an active trader/seller, come early to participate. The normal program will kick off at 7:30. We should have some time at the conclusion of the program for you to complete any transactions.

PRSC Gear Choices Expanded!

At the October Swap Meet, we will have additional choices for PRSC gear. We now have a few moisture wicking long sleeve T-shirts as well as fleece jackets – all emblazoned with the embroidered PRSC logo! Regular T-shirts and hats are only \$15 with the long sleeve T's and fleece at \$25. 2XL and up sizes slightly more.



River Smallmouth Fish

Article by Jamie Gold

Fall - leaves changing color and starting to fall to the ground, the crack of the bat of playoff baseball, referees' whistles calling high school, college and professional football games, and kids and teachers returning to school. With the passing of the Autumnal Equinox and the amount of daylight getting slightly less every day, Fall is the beginning of the end of the year as nature starts to prepare for the approaching winter. For smallmouth fishermen like us, the changing angle of the sun and the dropping air and water temperatures all signal to our chosen species that it is time to fatten up for the winter. This means that the fish are feeding aggressively and the big ones are out and active again during the daylight hours.

I decided to take advantage of this time of year by getting out on the Shenandoah River the last 2 Saturdays in September.

On Saturday, the 22nd, Randy Chandler and I went to Downriver Canoe on the South Fork to shuttle us up river for an all day float. I've dealt with Downriver many times and they always do a great job. We did the Burners Bottom float. I was excited to get back there because that's where I caught my big musky earlier in the year.



Randy Chandler with a very healthy Fall Shenandoah Smallmouth bass. Photo by Jamie Gold.

The air was cool in the morning, but warmed up throughout the day. The water temps were certainly down from the Summer highs, and too chilly for wading. Also, the water levels had dropped and the water was clear.

Randy had a good day on the water while I struggled. He ended up throwing a variety of top water baits (buzzbait, torpedo, etc) and a variety of soft plastics, including a Case worm with a chartreuse tail that I had never seen before. Earlier this year

Terry Cooney and Randy Chandler getting ready to launch. Photo by Jamie Gold.



hiking in the Fall - Wow!

I fell in love with using a buzzbait, and used that much of the day. However, this was not really a day for a buzzbait - the skies were too clear and there was a lot of grass on the water (I think everybody in the Valley mowed their lawns on Friday). I also used some soft plastics, but never found a pattern. Finally, the fly rod came up with zilch.

Undeterred by the results on the 22nd, I was determined to get out again on the 29th. This time Terry Cooney joined Randy and me for a trip on the main stem of the Shenandoah. With 3 of us, we ran our own shuttle and did the Rte. 50 to Locke's Landing float.

We were concerned about the water conditions because of rain earlier in the week. The water did have a stain on it, but retained enough clarity to make for good fishing, at least for two of us. Again, the air temps were brisk in the morning, but warmed up through the day.

Terry and Randy both had terrific days on the water. Terry has been using lizards this summer with a lot of success, and that pattern continued to produce (please see his articles for the Buzz from earlier this year).

Randy continued to tear them up using topwater baits - the torpedo bite was really on fire. I didn't have a working torpedo, so tried buzzbait and buzzin frogs, which the fish entirely ignored. The second half of this trip features a series of ledges, and at the ledges I had some success with a tube (green with gold fleck) but even this did not produce consistently.

What made the day memorable was the combination of many fish and big fish. The highpoint came when

Randy cast a torpedo bait, twitched it and then paused. The fish hit it hard enough that I could hear it, though downriver from Randy. After a fierce fight, Randy landed an incredible 22" beast of a fish. All of us were blown away by the size of this beauty. Best of all, it looked perfectly healthy and swam away no worse for the wear.

Randy Chandler with a 22" inch monster fish. Photo by Jamie Gold.



Pete Pfothenauer with the big fish of the day, a 20" S. Fork pigbeast. Photo by Randy Chandler.



Kids with Cancer Fish

By Jamie Gold

As long time readers of the Buzz know, twice a year Phil Maisel hosts a day long fishing event at Lake Anne in Reston for a chosen group of folks. Early in the Summer it's a group of injured veterans. In the early Fall it's a group from an organization called Special Love, which is for families who have a child with cancer. The guests usually arrive around 10am. We then take them out on the lake in pontoon boats for some largemouth bass fishing. While on the water, the volunteers set up lunch, including grilling hamburgers and hotdogs and laying out the fixings and side dishes. After lunch, we offer the guests a chance to go back on the water for more fishing or just a boat ride

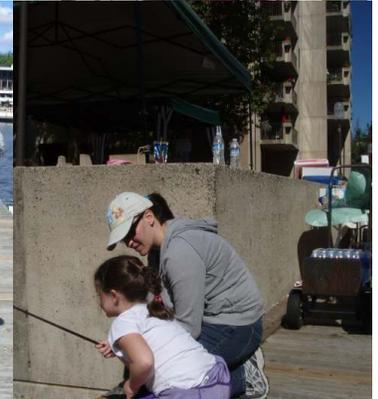
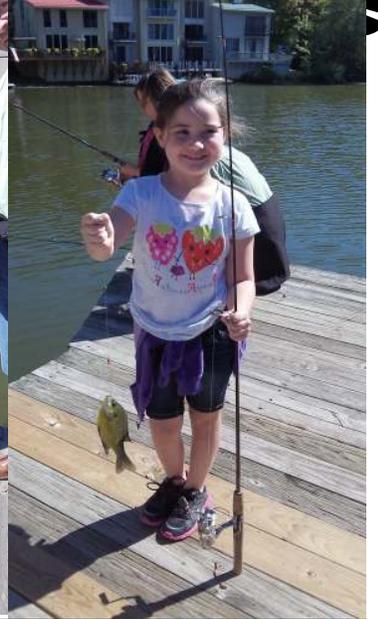
On Sunday, September 30 Phil hosted his Kids with Cancer day. A group of us, including current and former PRSC members Donna Hicken, Steve Kimm, Stan Koller and his wife, Margie, Tom Lightfoot and myself, are happy to help out with these events. Wallace Harvey has been a regular at every event, but was out having hip surgery (I wish you a speedy recovery Wallace). Also participating are several of Phil's neighbors, who kindly contribute their time and boats. There is also a group of his neighbors who pilot small motorized sailboats on the Lake. They helped out as well and even let some of the kids pilot a boat. Finally Bonnie Amshey, PRSC's Speaker Chair Bill's wife, stopped by to drop off some delicious homemade cupcakes...which were devoured.

This time worked a little different than usual, but all still had a great time. Guests started to trickle in around 10am. In the morning, everyone seemed content to just fish from the dock where we were set up. I think the fact that they were catching fish had something to do with it. After a terrific lunch cooked up by Steve Kimm, our guests were ready to get out on the water, and we were happy to oblige.

Kudos to Phil for hosting another great event. And I think I speak for all of us who help out...Thanks for giving us the opportunity to participate in such a worthwhile event.



Fishing Day at Lake Anne



PRSC On the Water

By: Jamie Gold

Members of PRSC have been busy this past month catching and photographing some awesome fish. Enjoy, and feel free to submit pictures of fish that you've caught for next month's Buzz.

Father and daughter going fishing.



Chris and Sarah Schaupp. Photo by unknown.

A fantastic 22" smallmouth bass. Congratulations!



Lisa Schaupp. Photo by Chris Schaupp.

Nice 4.2 lbs largemouth.



Randy Chandler.

Teaching kid how to fish...priceless.



Steve Kimm. Photo by Jamie Gold.

Very nice smallmouth bass..



Sarah Schaupp. Photo by father Chris Schaupp.

With another really nice smallmouth bass..



Randy Chandler. Photo by Jamie Gold.

Nice Potomac River smallmouth.



Marty Burkard. Photo by Chris Schaupp.

A "nice" catfish...don't let him slime you.



Lisa Schaupp. Photo by Chris Schaupp.

Love that small...having fun fishing.



Kids with Cancer guest. Photo by Jamie Gold

One more of this incredible 22" smallmouth



Randy Chandler. Photo by Jamie Gold.

History of the PRSC Fishing Contest

By Jack Cook

I am writing this from memory, so I might be off a year or so here and there.

We have had a fishing contest in this club since about 1990. In the early days, a total of slightly over 200" to win the William Shriver Award. For 1996, the Potomac watershed, including the Shenandoah River, suffered through two floods that scoured the rivers out. As a result, in 1997 there were practically no fish in both the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers.

Beginning in 1998, the fishing started to improve, and it improved steadily until 2003. In 2003 we had our first fish kill on the South Branch of the Potomac. Interestingly, my personal best year on the Potomac was 2003. For 2003, 2004, and 2005 it took totals of better than 250" to win the contest. In 2006 the winning total was 246".

But this was also the beginning of the decline. However, after several down years, Randy Chandler's total of 235" and other things lead me to think that the rivers are recovering.

The North and South Forks of the Shenandoah and the lower end of the Potomac fished well the last couple of years, and I've had many encouraging reports this year.

Get back out on our home rivers and I think you will be pleased with the results.

Members can review the rules of the fishing contest on the club website at: <http://www.prsc.org/fishing-contest/>.



Conservation Corner

By Herschel Finch

As you may well imagine, Jeff Kelble and I communicate on a regular basis. Most often this usually occurs at Riverkeeper events or over the phone if he or I have a question for each other or to clear up something we heard. Sometimes, like this year, it was to coordinate a visit from Bruce Ingram for an article he was writing. But any time I talk to Jeff, I generally learn something about what's going on in the watershed of our favorite river. But this time, I heard him say something that really surprised me.

Back at the Shenandoah Riverfest in August at Andy Guest State Park we had a discussion about fishing reports he's received from various sources, the PRSC being one of his *major* sources of reports. Jeff said that, taking into account everything he's heard about catch rates, sizes, and general condition of those fish, he would be willing to state that, in his opinion, the Shenandoah River is "fully recovered" from the die-offs we saw in the early 2000s. And since we were also standing there next to Steve Reeser, who nodded in agreement, I took that as gospel.

Of course on its face this sounds like extraordinarily good news. As dedicated anglers and conservationists we should be dancing in the streets over this news. But let's take a look at this statement. He said "in his opinion", and "recovered from the die-offs." Basically this statement about the river being fully recovered only applies to fish populations. We're catching multiple 18-20 inch fish again after several years of their being scarcer than hen's teeth. And we have a multitude of 8-10 inchers coming up behind them that will replenish the stock for years to come. This Fall I expect to once again take Pete Photenhour and Tom Earheart to school on how to use a jerkbait to scare up 14-16 inch smallies on every other cast.

But the caveat to that statement came a moment later... **the conditions in the river that caused the die-offs in the first place are still present. The overload of nitrogen and phosphorus, the excess chemicals from improperly treated water, the mercury, the PCBs... all are still there.** And although, through Jeff's and other's efforts, small steps have been taken to improve all of those impediments, they're still with us, and will be for the foreseeable future. We are a long way from being done, and I suspect we never will be.

An elderly member of the Izaak Walton Chapter here in Warren Co. asked me once if I thought the river would ever get to the point where he could drink from it again. Hal said he remembered as a boy back in the very early 1900s that he and his little fishing buddies could spend all day down at the river fishing and just bring a couple of ham biscuits and an apple for lunch. And if they wanted a drink they just cupped their hands together and drank straight from the river. What a wonderful mental picture that is, isn't it? A river in North America, clean enough to drink straight from, with no filtration, no boiling, no washing it through a treatment plant. Sadly I had to tell my 93 year old friend that no, I was pretty sure, given development, how many people now live in the Valley (not to mention how many chickens) the days of drinking straight from the Shenandoah are long past. But what we can do is be ever vigilant, and keep working with Jeff, and Ed and the whole staff at Potomac Riverkeeper to make sure we can keep our waterways as clean as we can make them.

I think the image of a couple of overall wearing little boys, with ham biscuits in their pockets, cane-pole fishing on the bank, and drinking from the river with their hands, is a good image to keep in mind when we wonder what were working toward. We may never get there...but having goals is good, don't you think?

PRSC
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PRSC would like to thank the following for contributing to Member Night and being friends of PRSC.



Big Time BBQ (Scott Cocherell)



PRSC Wishes to Thank our Recent Speakers

February 2012 - William Heresniak,
www.eastertrophies.com.

April 2012 - Capt. Steve Chaconas.

May 2012 - Richard Martin, Potomac Paddlesports.

July 2012 - Capt. Charles Wright, Chokoloskee Charters.

August 2012 - Jeff Turner, 50 Trophy Waters in 50 Days in 50 States.

September 2012 - Beau Beasley,
www.beaubeasley.com

2012 Contest Results

October 2012 Report By Wallace Harvey

I regret to inform you that I survived the replacement of my hip. I won't say I'm totally alive and well, but doing as well as can be expected. I will say I was standing on it the day of surgery and walking the next morning. Now on to the good stuff. I got a note that Randy Chandler, our Guru of Fishermen, had a nice day on the Shenandoah recently. From Section II, Route 50 to Lockes he had a Best 5 Total for the day of 92.5" The largest was 22"; the smallest was 16.5". We should all have such a rotten day. Congratulations to Randy!

The only other report I got was for Chris Schaupp for his wife. We need to get Christ to get her to join. With a report of a 22" smallie for his wife, she needs to be the member, not him. Unfortunately we cannot include her in the contest, but it is nice to hear of another 22 incher on Section III of the Potomac.

As I said last month, fall is great fishing time. I feel there are more great fish out there for you to catch. Best hurry as the contest closes at the end of the month. With two twenty-two inch fish reported this month, I should think you can't wait to get out there a wet a line. Good Luck!

2012 Results

Section 1, Biggest Fish: Jay Eiche, 21.5"

Section 1, Best 5 Fish: John Lipetz, 89"

Section 2, Biggest Fish: Larry DiJoseph, 22"

Section 2, Best 5 Fish: Bill Pearl, 87.5"

Section 3, Biggest Fish: Bill Pearl and Wayne Tate, 20"

Section 3, Best 5 Fish: Bill Pearl, 86.5"

Largest on Fly: Wayne Tate, 20"

New Member: No Entry

William Shriver Award: Randy Chandler, 245.5"

Grover Cleveland Award: Larry DiJoseph, 22"

The Potomac River Smallmouth Club was founded in 1988 as a non-profit recreational club in accordance with IRS section 501(c)(7). Dues are \$35/year. Monthly meetings are held at 7:30 PM on the last Wednesday of each month (except December) at the Vienna Volunteer Firehouse. Club by-laws and member rosters are published once a year and available during meetings or upon request. The Club newsletter, "The Buzz", is emailed to all members prior to each month's meeting and is available at local fishing/tackle shops. Articles, photographs and general information relating to smallmouth bass fishing are solicited. The Buzz reserves the right to edit all materials submitted for publication. Observations, conclusions and opinions expressed in The Buzz are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the club, its officers, or the editor. All materials submitted become the property of the club. Every effort will be made to return photographs at the monthly meetings, however the printing process occasionally results in the destruction of a photograph. Send copies and make sure YOU have the negative.