



The Buzz

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Volume 28, Issue I

January 28, 2015

Custom Rods and Fishing Industry Trends

Upcoming Items

PRSC Meeting
February 25, 2015

Fishing Show
February 14, 2015

VA Fly Fishing Festival
April, 2014

Potomac Conservancy
April 2014

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Mark Burks is something of a rarity in the Washington area – he was born in Washington and grew up in Alexandria, Virginia. After graduating from T.C. Williams High School, he worked for VA Power for 17 years. Since then, has worked mostly as a Federal contractor with part-time stints at Galyan’s Trading Post and, most recently, at Dick’s Sporting Goods. He is also the owner/founder of Catocin Creek Custom Rods, LLC.

In his spare time, Mark writes “The Lure of Fishing” column for *The Purcellville Gazette*, which is how I happened to find Mark as a potential speaker for our Club. The title of the article was “ICAST 2014: The Winners.” ICAST, which stands for International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades, is the “Big Daddy” of fishing shows. In the article Mark highlighted the “best of Show” categories from rods to reels to lures. I thought the article was very informative, so I tracked Mark down and asked him to speak.

Since the early 1990’s, Mark has occasionally repaired and converted rods. It was in 2009 when he started his custom rod-building business, deciding to make money doing something he really loves. It was also an extension of his first passion, fishing.

Mark’s Internet based business has grown substantially since its inception, with a customer base that includes anglers from 20 states. He has a pro staff of six tournament anglers, as well being a sponsor of the Liberty University Bass Fishing Team. His approach to custom rods is simple: “No matter how embellished the rod is, it should always be 100% functional!”

In addition to rod building, Mark has worked part time in the Lodge at Dick’s Sporting Goods, focusing primarily in the fishing section. He gets a first-hand view of the trends in all aspects of fishing: rods, lures, line, etc.

At the January meeting, Mark will talk about custom rod building, what goes into the process with a customer, and speak about trends he sees in the industry as a whole with regard to rods, reels, tackle, and more. Hope you can join us for what should be a very interesting evening.



Club Executive Board	<h1>Upcoming Items</h1>
President Steve Kimm president@prsc.org	
Vice-President Craig Bishop vp@prsc.org	Potomac River Smallmouth Club - February Meeting
Secretary Dave Lockard (h) (301) 656-1964 secretary@prsc.org	<p>Join Us Wednesday, February 25 for PRSC's next monthly meeting. We will be at our usual spot, the Vienna Firehouse. The speaker in February will be Captain Dennis Fleming. He has spoken to the club before, but this time we will be talking about Fishing the Boundary Waters of Minnesota. Please join us for a great evening.</p>
Treasurer Jamie Gold C (571) 213-4699 treasure@prsc.org	Rapidan Trout Unlimited - 27th Annual Fishing Show
Trip Coordinator Kris Anderson trip_coordinator@prsc.org	<p>Sunday, February 14 - 9:00am to 4:30pm. Fauquier County Fairgrounds. The Rapidan Chapter of Trout Unlimited will be having their Annual Fishing Show. Please see the following page for more information. PRSC will have a table at the show and we are looking for volunteers to help staff it. If you can help, please contact Jamie Gold at Treasurer@PRSC.org. Also, I encourage you to attend what is always an excellent show with a terrific lineup of speakers.</p>
Program Chair Bill Amshey Programs@prsc.org	15th Annual Virginia Fly Fishing and Wine Festival
Conservation Chair Herschel Finch (H) (540) 635-7636 Conservation@prsc.org	<p>Weekend of April 11 - 12, 2015. Waynesboro, VA. Fly anglers from across the country will celebrate the 15th Annual Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival on April 11-12, 2015. Held on the banks of the South River in Waynesboro, the Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival is the largest outdoor fly fishing event in the country that offers on-stream instruction. Only here can you learn all the latest techniques from the experts and then walk right over to the river and try them for yourself. See p. 12 in this issue of The Buzz.</p>
Librarian Chip Comstock Librarian@prsc.org	<p>For more information visit their website at www.vaflyfishingfestival.org.</p>
Additional Programs Fishing Contest Jack Cook H (703) 573-4403	Potomac Conservancy
The Buzz Jamie Gold (C) (571) 213-4699 Buzz_Editor@prsc.org	2014 State of the Nation's River Report: River Friendly Growth
Merchandise Ernie Rojas H (703) 729-0128 Publicity@prsc.org	<p>Available Now. Potomac Conservancy's 2014 State of the Nation's River report about the Potomac River calls for urgent action to preserve local water quality in the face of rapid urbanization. They take a close look at emerging threats to the Potomac and offer common sense solutions for clean water. The report is available at their website, www.potomac.org.</p>
Past President Steve Moore	Annual Gala at the House of Sweden
Publicity Ernie Rojas H (703) 729-0128	<p>Thursday, April 30 - 6:30pm-8:30pm. Potomac Conservancy will be holding their annual fund raising event at the House of Sweden. This spectacular venue in Georgetown provides outstanding views of the Nation's River as it winds its way past Teddy Roosevelt Island and the Kennedy Center. There will be special cocktails, fun food and a wonderful program. Please mark your calendars to join them for a truly special evening. For more information, visit their website at www.potomac.org/events.</p>

RAPIDAN TROUT UNLIMITED

27TH ANNUAL FISHING SHOW

Sponsored by : Rapidan Chapter Trout Unlimited (WWW.RAPIDANTU.ORG)

Fauquier County Fairgrounds
 6209 Old Auburn Road,
 Warrenton, VA 20186



Admission:
 Adults \$5.00
 Children under 12—Free

Saturday February 14, 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM

(Yes we know it is Valentines Day!)

Featuring Vendors Offering Modern & Antique Fishing Tackle, Guided Trips, Flies, Hackle, Outdoor Accessories, Art , Seminars, Fishing Equipment, Fishing Services, Beginner / Advanced Fly Tying

HOURLY DOOR PRIZES, BUCKET RAFFLES, PREMIUM ROD RAFFLE AND MONTANA / YELLOWSTONE TRIP RAFFLE.

For more information and speaker schedule:
<http://www.rapidantu.org/>
 Chuck Hoysa 540-222-1728

2015 Premium Rod Raffle Prizes

1. Custom Cane Rod-Park Classic--6'3", 4wt, 2pc (*Chris Bogart, Shenandoah Rods, Luray, VA*)
2. Sage Circa Rod Outfit 489-4, Nautilus Reel FWX3/4, Rio Gold (*Urban Angler, Alexandria, VA*)
3. Gortex Wading Jacket & Box Flies (*LLBean*)
4. Orvis Clearwater Rod-9', 5wt, 4 pc (*Mossy Creek Fly Fishing, Harrisonburg, VA*)
5. Box of Custom Trophy Streamers (*Eastern Trophies Fly Fishing, Alexandria, VA*)

<p style="text-align: center;">1 Week in Yellowstone For 2 people <small>Subject to guidelines (See back)</small></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Rapidan Chapter Virginia Council of Trout Unlimited Drawing 2/14/2015</p>
<p>Airfare Rental Car Lodging--7 Days/6 Nights Flies Permits</p>	
<p>\$25 per Ticket <small>(only 300 tickets sold)</small></p>	



Proposal Regarding Fees

Editor's Note: Please see the announcement below from the Maryland DNR regarding the National Park Service's proposal to institute and/or raise fees on the C&O Canal outside of Washington, DC; but including parking at Fletcher's Cove. This page lists dates and times for public hearings. A copy of the proposal from the National Park Service is on the following page.

Attention Anglers, the National Park Service has updated the meeting dates to discuss their proposal to increase and expand fees. The following is their announcement along with a link to their original press release.

HAGERSTOWN, Md. - Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal) has added public meetings in Hancock, MD and Shepherdstown, W.Va. and rescheduled the meeting in Brunswick, MD to discuss the park's proposal to increase and expand entrance and other fees park-wide. The updated meeting schedule is as follows:

January 27, 2015, at C&O Canal Park Headquarters, 1850 Dual Highway, Hagerstown, MD from 6:30-8:00 PM

January 29, 2015, at Canal Place, 13 Canal St, 2nd floor, Cumberland, MD from 6:30-8:00 PM

February 5, 2015, at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave, Glen Echo, MD from 7:00-8:30 PM

February 9, 2015, at Hancock Town Hall, 126 West High Street, Hancock, MD from 6:30-8:00 PM

February 11, 2015, at Byrd Center for Legislative Studies at Shepherd University, 213 North King Street, Shepherdstown, WV, from 6:30-8:00 PM

February 17, 2015, at Brunswick City Park Building at 655 East Potomac Street Brunswick, Maryland from 6:30-8:00PM.

C&O Canal has prepared frequently asked questions to assist in answering questions regarding the proposal. To read these, as well as other information and provide comments on the proposal through February 22, please visit: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/cocanalfees>

Following the comment period and public meetings, feedback will determine how, or if, a fee increase would be implemented.

To read the original NPS press release please go to the NPS web site at <http://tinyurl.com/pafumfh>

Contact: [John Noel](#) with the National Park Service, [301-714-2201](tel:301-714-2201)

ees on the C&O Canal



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Chesapeake & Ohio Canal
National Historical Park
1850 Dual Highway
Suite 100
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301 • 739 • 4200 phone
301 • 739 • 5275

C&O Canal National Historical Park News Release

Release Date: January 5, 2015, For Immediate Release

Contact: John Noel, Deputy Superintendent, 301-714-2201, or john_noel@nps.gov

C&O Canal Invites Feedback on Proposal to Increase and Expand Entrance and Other Fees Park-wide

HAGERSTOWN, Md. - Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park (C&O Canal) in compliance with a nation-wide review on updating entrance fees is inviting the public to comment on proposed entrance and other fee increases. Fees collected at the park are critical to the park's operation, and 100% of the fees collected at the C&O Canal are invested in park projects that improve facilities and experiences for park visitors.

In a memo dated September 5, 2014, National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis, authorized park superintendents to begin a civic engagement process associated with increasing entrance fees within units of the National Park System. In an effort to standardize entrance fees, the 131 units that charge entrance fees have been placed in one of four categories based on size, complexity of operations and typical visitation patterns. To arrive at greater consistency around the Service, parks have been asked to bring their fees into compliance with others within their category. C&O Canal is in Category 1. Other similar parks within Category 1 in this region include: Antietam National Battlefield; Fort Washington Park; Great Falls Park, Virginia; Harpers Ferry National Historical Park; Manassas National Battlefield Park, and Prince William Forest Park.

C&O Canal's current park entrance fee has been in place since 2002. The only location in the park where an entrance fee is charged is at the Great Falls Tavern area off of MacArthur Boulevard in Potomac, MD. The park proposes to expand entrance fee collection to all areas of the park outside of the District of Columbia and to implement a parking fee at Fletchers Cove. As part of this fee expansion, the park proposes to discontinue the reciprocal agreement currently in place with Great Falls Park, Virginia, which allows visitors to purchase a day pass or annual pass that is valid at both the C&O Canal and Great Falls Park, VA entrance stations.

The park also proposes to extend the daily pass effective dates from three days to seven days to better align with popular recreational activities, such as cycling the 184.5 mile towpath.

Proposal Regarding Fees

The proposed entrance/parking fees that would become effective no sooner than May 1, 2015 are as follows:

Park Annual Pass:

- Current: \$20 Great Falls, MD only
- Proposed: \$30 park-wide outside of the District of Columbia

Per Vehicle Pass:

- Current: \$5/person for 3 days Great Falls, MD only
- Proposed:
 - District of Columbia line to Seneca Creek(near Canal towpath mile 22)
 - \$15 for 7 days
 - West of Seneca Creek to Cumberland, MD
 - \$5 in 2015 for 7 days
 - \$15 in 2017 for 7 days

Per Person Pass:

- Current: \$3/person for 3 days Great Falls, MD only
- Proposed:
 - District of Columbia line to Seneca Creek(near towpath mile 22)
 - \$7 for 7 days
 - West of Seneca Creek to Cumberland, MD
 - \$3 in 2015 for 7 days
 - \$7 in 2017 for 7 days

Motorcycle Pass:

- Current:\$5 for 3 days Great Falls, MD only
- Proposed:
 - District of Columbia line to Seneca Creek(near towpath mile 22)
 - \$10 for 7 days
 - West of Seneca Creek to Cumberland, MD
 - \$5 in 2015 for 7 days
 - \$10 in 2017 for 7 days

Entrance fees are not charged to persons under 16 years of age or holders of the America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreational Senior, Access or Military Passes. These passes may be obtained at the park. In addition, the park offers at least six fee-free days per year.

C&O Canal NHP is also proposing to increase or institute fees for campgrounds, picnic pavilions and parking at Fletchers Cove. Comparability studies have been completed to determine rates. The proposals are as follows:

Drive-In Campgrounds:

- Single Site Rate: Current: \$10 per night, Proposed \$20 per night
- Group Site Rate: Current \$20 per night, Proposed \$40 per night

Hiker-Biker Camping Sites: Current: No Charge, Proposed \$20 per night

ees on the C&O Canal

Picnic Pavilion: Carderock Pavilion

- Monday-Thursday: Current \$150 per day, Proposed \$250 per day
- Friday-Sunday & Holidays: Current \$250 per day, Proposed \$350 per day

Parking: Fletchers Cove - There is currently no parking charge; however, the option to establish a parking charge is being evaluated and proposed for comment.

“We are committed to keeping the park affordable and providing visitors with the best possible experiences,” Superintendent Kevin Brandt said. “Fee revenue is absolutely critical to the park operation, and we ask for the public's feedback and support. National Parks are still one of America's best bargains. I don't know of anything a family can do for 7 days for just \$15. The entrance fee provides full access to the park including: the historic towpath; more than 17 miles of backcountry trails; numerous visitor centers and interpretive programs and access to the Potomac River. The park is a popular place where people come to recreate, to learn, to be challenged physically and to be inspired and renewed; however, the park cannot run itself for free, and our fee revenue is essential to providing for public safety, recreation and resource protection.”

Entrance fees have supported a wide range of projects that improved park conditions and visitor experience including: restoration of the Great Falls Tavern, Western Maryland Railroad Lift Bridge, Lockhouse 44, Ferry Hill Plantation and Hancock Visitor Centers; new picnic tables, grills and fire rings for campgrounds throughout park; developing and installing exhibits in visitor centers such as Great Falls and Ferry Hill Plantation; repairing park wells and hand pumps; removing trees from the canal, installation of a water fountain in Williamsport; restoration of historic lockhouses; improving ADA accessibility at park comfort stations, repairing replica canal boats used in interpretive and education programs, and rehabilitation of the CCC era restroom in Great Falls into a space for the free Bike Loaner program. Additional revenue raised by a fee increase could be used to restore additional historic structures such as Swains Lockhouse; Conococheague, Tonoloway and Seneca Creek aqueducts ; expand the park's ability to maintain the towpath; improve campground safety by establishing campground host sites at drive-in campgrounds; restore water in the canal between Lock 5 and Anglers; extend the re-watered section of the canal in Hancock; preservation work on the Paw Paw Tunnel; improve river access at Fletchers Cove and Dam #4, and increase interpretive and educational programming park-wide.

The C&O Canal is a strong economic engine for the area. In 2013, the C&O Canal hosted nearly 5 million visitors who contributed more than \$80 million to the local economy and supported more than 1,000 jobs related to tourism.

To provide comments on the proposed fee increases, go to: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/cocanalfees> The public has the opportunity to comment on the increases for a 48-day period ending on February 22, 2015. Written comments should be provided through this website.

Interested citizens are invited to discuss the proposed fee increases at public meetings to be held in various locations around the park as follows:

January 21, 2015, at the Brunswick City Hall, Council Meeting Room, 1 West Potomac Street, Brunswick, MD 21716 from 6:30-8:00 PM

January 27, 2015, at C&O Canal Park Headquarters, 1850 Dual Highway, Hagerstown, MD 21740 from 6:30-8:00 PM

Proposal Regarding Fees

January 29, 2015, at Canal Place, 13 Canal St, 2nd floor, Cumberland, MD 21502 from 6:30-8:00 PM

February 5, 2015, at Glen Echo Town Hall, 6106 Harvard Ave, Glen Echo, MD 20812 from 7:00-8:30 PM

Following the comment period and public meetings, feedback will determine how, or if, a fee increase would be implemented.

www.nps.gov

Editor's Note: Below is an excerpt from the FAQ's released by the National Park Service for the proposal. I've selected items that are particularly relevant to fishermen and women wanting to access the Potomac River along the C&O Canal.

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Regarding the Proposal to Increase and Expand Entrance and Other User Fees Park-wide

1. Why is the park proposing to increase fees and expand the areas where entrance fees apply?

Since 2010, park visitation has risen about 25% while the park's budget has been reduced by about 10% and staffing reduced by about 20%. In the last five years, three visitor centers have been closed, the Georgetown canal boat was taken out of commission and routine resurfacing of the towpath has been eliminated. Additionally, the towpath and historic structures have a maintenance backlog of more than \$100 million, which may compromise park resources and visitor experience.

Nearly all visitors use the towpath, which requires constant maintenance, and many visitors use resources provided by the park such as restrooms, visitor centers, water fountains, parking lots, access paths to the river and canal prism, and emergency services.

ees on the C&O Canal

16. Would paddlers and people using the park to fish be charged for walking on the towpath to gain access to the river?

Yes. All park users including those using the Potomac River to fish or paddle would be required to purchase a daily pass or annual pass for entrance into the park. The payment of the entrance fee would be required at parking lots and campgrounds in the park. Your proof of payment would be a pass that must be displayed from the inside rearview mirror, or on the dashboard of your vehicle, making sure the face of the pass is visible from the outside.

The visitor uses resources provided by the park such as restrooms, water fountains, parking lots, access paths to the river and canal prism, and emergency services.

17. Will the visitors using Potomac River boat ramps have to pay an entrance fee?

If they have entered the park and utilize a C&O Canal boat ramp, they would be required to purchase a daily pass or annual pass for entrance into the park. The payment of the entrance fee would be required at parking lots and campgrounds in the park. Your proof of payment would be a pass that must be displayed from the inside rearview mirror, or on the dashboard of your vehicle, making sure the the pass is visible from the outside.

The visitor uses resources provided by the park such as restrooms, water fountains, parking lots, access paths to the river and canal prism, and the emergency services.

The national park entrance fee would be similar to existing Maryland Department of Natural Resources fees.

18. At Carderock, would paddlers or climbers be charged a fee, even though most paddlers and climbers never set foot on the towpath at Carderock?

Yes. The fee would be for entrance to the national park. It is not specifically for the use of the towpath. The visitor uses the restrooms, parking lots and river access trails. In addition, the park provides resources to maintain the climbing area.

22. Would my annual pass cover the proposed parking fee at Fletcher's?

No. This would be a separate fee for parking, to discourage commuter use of the lot.

24. What happens after the public comment period?

The National Park Service will review all comments and make a determination.

Late 2014 Fishing

Article and Photos by Ernie Rojas

Dateline: 11-6-14, West Palm Beach, Florida

I landed in Ft. Lauderdale at 10:45a and by 1:00p I was fishing with Capt. Lee...on the Sea Horse (46' Markley). This is drift fishing at its finest and the trip was in memory of a friend of mine named Mike, who lost his life a year ago. Joining us was a young couple: Ellen (who had never been fishing before) and Jeff (head chef at the Breakers). Jake was the mate.

Apparently, it had been windy and rough over the last few days but we were greeted with calm winds and a manageable swell. Jeff was ready to roll!



It was a bit slow (as in no fish) at first and we made our move. But the in our new spot the bottom was rat (shark) infested!



Then....the fishing started up and never ceased until our arms were too weary!

First fish was a wiener fish, and then a blue runner

ng Trip to Florida

which we used for bait to try to entice a big fish!

What you are about to see is a colorful expression of the great reef fishing in FL!

Ellen, who is from London, caught a ton of fish, including a double that produced a big red grouper and a mutton snapper. She had tired arms at the end of the day.

The catch was red grouper, mutton snapper, vermilion snapper, yellow tail snapper, trigger fish including queen triggers, porgies, squirrel fish, grunts and the others that were already mentioned. I think Mike smiled down on us and gave us a great day to fish. I have no clue as to how many fish we caught but Jeff said it was one of the best days in over 2 years. He fishes with Lee often.



Virginia Fly Fishing



Fly anglers from across the country will celebrate the 15th Annual Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival on April 11-12, 2015. Held on the banks of the South River in Waynesboro, VA, the Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival is the largest outdoor fly fishing event in the country that offers on-stream instruction. Only here can you learn all the latest techniques from the experts and then walk right over to the river and try them for yourself.

This year's festival sponsors include Temple Fork, Orvis, Harman's North Fork Cottages, *Eastern Fly Fishing*, Blue Ridge Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, *Virginia Sportsman*, DuPont Community Credit Union, Mid-Valley Press, *Blue Ridge Outdoors*, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and Waynesboro Downtown Development Inc. New sponsors for this year include the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation ([RBFF](#)), Bethany Christian Services, Ruthless Fishing Outdoors and Trout Unlimited.

The highlight of the weekend is the Festival Foundation Dinner, at which the festival committee presents the 2015 Virginia Fly Angler of the Year Award. Tickets for the all-you-can-eat prime rib buffet are \$50 apiece and sell out well in advance of the festival.

The 2015 festival will feature noted fly anglers from across the Mid-Atlantic, including fly fishing icon Lefty Kreh. Other noted speakers and fly tyers include Ed Jaworowski, Bob Clouser, Beau Beasley, Pat Cohen, Dusty Wissmath, Walt Cary, Blane Chocklett, Captain Gary DuBiel, Linda Heller, Colby Trow, and Don Kirk, editor of *Southern Trout Magazine*. Kayak expert and author Cory Routh will also be on hand to demonstrate how to use this unique watercraft to access hard-to-reach waters.

g and Wine Festival

Beginner bass bug fly-tying classes will be taught by fly-tying expert Pat Cohen. This is the class for beginners interested in learning how to tie bass bugs from the ground up. Master Certified Casting Instructor Dan Davala and author Bob Clouser return to teach their acclaimed beginner fly casting classes. Last year's classes sold out—don't delay reserving yourself a spot! If you've been casting for a while but need to gain distance or learn how to overcome windy conditions, then you need legendary casting instructor Ed Jaworowski's superior casting classes for intermediate to advanced level casters.

Between lectures, classes, and lunch, sample fine wines from a number of noted Virginia wineries (tastings included with festival admission). Attendees can wash down their wine with live riverside music.

Returning this year is the very popular Children's Catch-and-Release Trout Pool. Children will be able to fish for native brook trout before releasing their catch into the South River (with the help of their parents).

New this year are Family Fly Fishing Classes (3FC) sponsored by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation. Parents and children will learn the basics of fly fishing and casting together, on a level all of them can understand. The whole family will also get the chance to try a little fly tying! All 3FC classes and materials will be provided at no cost to festival attendees.

Attention, Boy Scouts: You can earn your Fly Fishing Merit Badge at the festival through a program taught in cooperation with the Boy Scouts of America. This special class is free of charge to every uniformed Boy Scout. Space is limited, so reserve your spot today!

The festival is also pleased to announce Trout Unlimited as this year's exclusive Conservation Sponsor. "Fly fishermen know that good fishing requires healthy streams," according to Trout Unlimited Chief Marketing Officer Joel Johnson. "Connecting with this passionate angling community at the festival makes great sense for TU, because it's our mission to make fishing better by protecting and restoring our critical coldwater resources." TU, the country's premiere cold water conservation organization, will also be giving programs over the course of the festival educating the public about their 10 Special Places campaign.

Feeling lucky? Try your hand at winning over \$10,000 worth of raffle prizes including kayaks, high-end rod-and-reel outfits, artwork, and guided trips. This year's Grand Prize is a trout angler's delight. The lucky winner and one guest will be treated to a 3 night stay at the famed South Holston River Lodge, complete with 3 days of guided fishing. All meals and accommodations are included as well as guide and drift boat fishing on the South Holston and/or Watauga River based on water conditions. Fishing license and guide tip not included.

The Virginia Fly Fishing Festival is a one-of-a-kind event: Monies received from sponsors, vendors, ticket sales, and raffles are used to cover the cost of next year's festival with the remainder going to the Virginia Fly Fishing Festival Foundation, which promotes conservation and stream restoration projects. Daily admission to the festival is \$20 per person, and the festival runs from 9 AM-5 PM on Saturday and Sunday. For more information about the festival, visit: www.vaflyfishingfestival.org

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.

Izaak Walton Largemouth Bass.



Captain America Rod.



January 2015 Speaker Mark Burks.

Custom Rod Built by Mark Burks.

Bushido Spinnerbait Rod.

17.5" Shenandoah Smallmouth.



Custom Rod Built by Mark Burks.

Kris Andersen. Photo by Kris Andersen.

Florida Fishing Trip.



Photo by Ernie Rojas.

Nice catch of Chesapeake Bay Stripers.



Photo by Steve Adams.

36" Chesapeake Bay Striper.



Gary. Photo by Steve Adams.

20" Rainbow Trout.



Fish caught and photographed by Jamie Gold.

From Ernie Rojas' Florida Fishing Trip.



Photo by Ernie Rojas.

Successful Day of Florida Fishing.



PRSC's Ernie Rojas and Friends.

New Orleans: Party To

Article and Photos by Bill Amshey

As my wife knows, I'll use any excuse I can find to go fishing. In the past few years, I have had the good fortune of being invited to attend two weddings in New Orleans. The weddings were great and both included the famous New Orleans parades through the French Quarter. But best of all, I got 1-day passes for each gathering to try my fresh water skills against the famous redfish that lurk in the Mississippi River Delta.

Both weddings were in October the week before Halloween; this October, my nephew Peter married the beautiful Kristen. The days before both fishing trips were hotter than blazes, but cold on the mornings we went out. The sharp drops in temperature changed both guides' fishing approaches, but we were nevertheless successful.

I booked my recent trip with Captain Dave Terese, the owner of Pelican State Fishing Charters, www.pelicanstatefishingcharters.com or 504-578-9795. Capt Dave unfortunately was already booked, but he set me up with Austin Plaisance, who at only 24-years-old really knew his stuff and showed my son Greg and me a great day of fishing.

Greg and I left our hotel in New Orleans at 5 AM to get to the boat launch in Barataria by 6:00. Right next to the launch was Cocchiara's Bar, a pretty unique place where we could have sat down with the guys to have a cold one. Capt Dave offered a shuttle service, but we used the taxi driver who drove us to our hotel from the airport, as it turned out to be a bit cheaper. If I go again, I'll probably rent a car for the day.

When we arrived at the boat launch, Austin was waiting for us, and Capt Dave pulled up to the launch point in his fishing boat with sandwiches and drinks for lunch. Austin told us that with the drastic water temperature

drop of 7 degrees, we would not be using artificials but shrimp.

We started out onto the water right as the sun started poking its head over the horizon. Austin first hit some spots outside the marshes where he wanted to go after redfish, and these spots looked very "fishy," but none of us could get anything more than a couple of light taps. We were starting to get concerned that the cold had shut down the fishing.



own....Fishing Paradise

Austin took us deeper into the marshes. Thank God he knew where he was going, because I was lost within minutes. The scenery is flat and has the same tropical look in every direction. And there were some good-

sized 'gators, which we never actually saw in the flesh but did see their swirls as they entered the water from the bank.



After about two hours of hitting some of Austin's honey holes, we started catching some small largemouths, redfish, catfish, and black drum. All the while, Austin was working his phone and talking with his fellow guides. Everyone was coming up short, just like us. But the "hot spot" was finally found.

When we pulled up, there already were three other

boats there, so we moved to an area not far away that had the same look on shore and the wind stirring up the water. Greg, who had been in the front of the boat all morning, asked to switch places. Lucky me! My next four casts, I pulled in larger and larger black drum and then a good-sized redfish.

Greg then accused me of exterminating an entire black drum family, so we switched seats again. His first cast, he caught the big fish of the day – a 2-and-a-half-foot-long redfish. Wow, what a fish! I will never forget the Cheshire Cat smile on Greg's face.



New Orleans cont'd

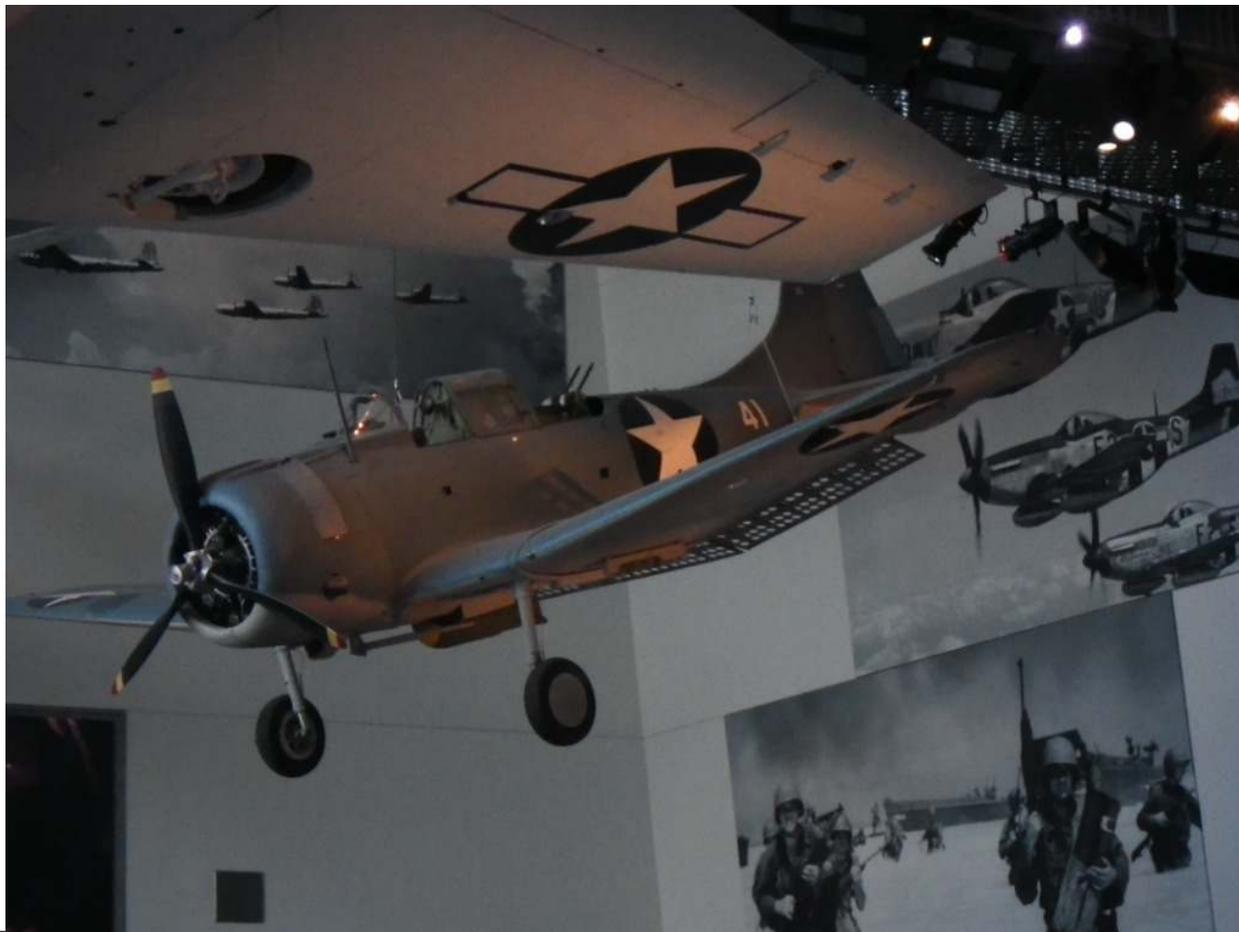
For about an hour or so, we pulled in one fish after another, including redfish, black drum, sheepshead, and the world's smallest catfish, caught by none other than me. On that note, we wrapped up fishing and headed back to the marina. Greg and I have some great memories of catching a large number of great fish, and we have to thank Austin for working so hard to get us on fish.

Regarding New Orleans, The Party City, if you haven't been, put it on your list of must-visit places. The French Quarter is the most famous area with more bars, hotels, and good restaurants than you could possibly count. Bourbon Street is the most famous street for drinking and raising cane. My favorite street is Royal Street, which has lots of great restaurants and where you can always find a band or two set up on a corner playing great jazz and other tunes. This is a very historical area, reminding you of old European cities.

We stayed for the second time in the French Market Inn, which has good accommodations at a reasonable price. Some of our favorite restaurants include: Café Du Monde, Café Beignet, and PJ's Coffee for breakfast; lunch was usually eaten on the run at places not terribly memorable; dinners we enjoyed were at Dickie Brennan's Steakhouse, the Gumbo Shop, and The Original Pierre Masperos.

Two restaurants that top our list are the Acme Oyster House and the Royal Street Oyster House. Both serve great grilled oysters, with Royal Street getting our nod for the better oysters and a far broader menu.

Being a World War II buff, we also spent a day in the World War II Museum, which started out under noted historian Stephen Ambrose as the D-Day Museum. The WWII generation is passing quickly, and here we got to meet several. What a thrill! Even better than catching the big fish.



Conservation Corner

By Herschel Finch

Well, here we go again. I have high hopes for this year, mostly because of how I wound up the end of last year.

On the 18th on December, I received an invitation to attend what was billed as the Shenandoah Summit being hosted by VDGIF and Paul Bugas, Director of Region 4. Also in attendance were Dr. Vicki Blazer from USGS Fisheries Health Lab, Brad Fink and Steve Reeser from Region 4 VDGIF, our own Jeff Kelbe, the Potomac Riverkeeper, and virtually any and all grass roots organizations that are working toward a cleaner and more healthy Shenandoah River. PRSC member Jay Eiche was also in attendance representing the Friends of the North Fork. In all we had at least 30-35 people in the room. It was good to see and finally meet a couple of folks I only know from Facebook, Twitter, or emails back and forth.

We had a lengthy report from Brian Trow, owner of Mossy Creek Fly Shop down in Harrisonburg, VA and employer of a number of the state's most top-notch guides, about their observations on the Shenandoah River from last year. As most of us suspected, the general consensus in the room was that we definitely experienced a die-off last spring of somewhere between 60-70% of the adult fish. Brian related basically what we all in the Club saw as well...a promising early year with good numbers and size and then the yo-yoing water levels from the wet spring over about six weeks basically did a number on the river...and our beloved smallmouth. By the first part of May, fishing was just over for the year with anyone getting 10 fish, or catching a fish above 12 inches being able to call that a good day up on the South Fork of the Shenandoah.

David Mellor of Virginia Tech gave a presentation, introducing us to a piece of "brain storming" (for lack of a better term) software that allows everyone to put forth issues with the river, possible inter-actions with other problems and possible solutions to these issues. It gets pretty messy after a while with all the connections being drawn back and forth to represent inter-connection and relationships, but in the end, I think if we apply the proper methodology, it'll go a long way toward keeping us all on track and working toward a common goal with a common set of tools. We're supposed to re-convene at some point this Spring and take a fresh look at the model we created and see if we still agree with what we came up with or do we need to tweak the model somewhat.

In any event, this is what I've been advocating for several years: a gathering together of like-minded individuals, organizations, both governmental, grassroots, and non-profits, to share notes, projects and efforts with each other and see if we can maybe get ourselves all pointed in the same, and most effective direction. It's taken a while, but it looks like it's finally going to happen. I'll be keeping you posted on how it works out.

PRSC
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Vienna, VA 22183

This is my favorite picture for January. This is from PRSC members Steve Adams and Jamie Gold with Steve's friend Gary after a successful day of striper fishing on the Chesapeake Bay. We caught these while on a fantastic fishing trip in November with Captain Dennis Fleming of Fishamajig Guide Service. Capt. Fleming will be speaking to PRSC at our February meeting.



2015 Contest Results

January 2015 Report By Jack Cook

The 2015 fishing contest is underway. When you have a result to report, call Jack Cook. His phone number is 703-573-4403. If you catch a nice fish or a five fish total, be sure to call it in. This will probably get your name in The Buzz. If it's a so-so total, you might catch nice totals in the other two sections and wish you had that total to go with them.

Last year we had fewer reports than normal, probably due to the constant low water. I want to remind everyone about rookie status. Anyone who joined the club at Member Night 2012 or after that is eligible to enter the rookie category for 2015.

I won't say that winning the William Shriver award went to Bill Pearl's head. However, when I ask him anything about fishing, his answer always starts with "Jack, I'm not going to tell you how to fish, but remember I am the William Shriver winner."

Here is a reminder of the boundaries of each section for the fishing contest. Section I is above the Embury Dam on the Shenandoah and above Dam III on the Potomac. Section II is from those two dams down to the mouth of the Monocacy River. Section III is from the mouth of the Monocacy on down. All tributaries fall into the section where they enter.

Question: What makes a smallmouth fisherman happy? Answer: A Bassinet!

2014 Results

- Section 1, Biggest Fish:** George Moran, 20.5"
- Section 1, Best 5 Fish:** Dave Lockard, 85"
- Section 2, Biggest Fish:** Bill Pearl, 19"
- Section 2, Best 5 Fish:** Bill Pearl, 84.5"
- Section 3, Biggest Fish:** Wayne Tate, 20"
- Section 3, Best 5 Fish:** Bill Pearl, 92"
- Largest on Fly:** Wayne Tate, 20"
- Best 5 Fish on Fly:** Randy Chandler, 75"
- New Member:** John Aucella, 20"
- Grover Cleveland Contest:** George Moran, 20.5"
- William Shriver Award:** Bill Pearl, 176.5"

For contest rules and information, visit <http://www.prsc.org/fishing-contest/>

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 \$40/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.