



The Buzz

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September 28, 2016

Walt Cary To Speak at September Meeting

Upcoming Items

PRSC Meeting
October 26, 2016

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Our speaker for the PRSC club meeting on September 28th is none other than Walt Cary, "The Virginia Popper King." That title was bestowed on Walt a number of years ago by Beau Beasley. Walt has been a fixture at area fishing shows for decades. And his poppers have been featured in many upscale fly shops, catalogs and fishing gear retailers both near and far. If you want some of his tasty little morsels of cork and lacquer, you can get them at Mossy Creek Fly Fishing Shop in Harrisonburg, and at Green Top down in Ashland. But Walt is calling this his "No Secrets" tour and is going to answer every question you might have about how to make his poppers. But I suspect he'll tell a few of his famous stories as well.



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Upcoming Items

Join us Wednesday, October 26th, for our monthly meeting. Steve Chaconas will discuss Mann's fishing products. 7:30-9:00 PM at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave, McLean, VA.

Bassyaks in Your Future?

Do you fish lakes as well as our local rivers? Do your shoulders ache after a long day of paddling? If so, you might want to consider a Bassyaks trolling motor kit for your kayak.

I ordered one back in June in anticipation of my annual trek to New York in July. The kit arrived the day before my planned departure, two weeks later than promised by the company. Despite that, I was impressed with the quality of the parts and workmanship. Then I went into panic mode as I realized the only installation instructions were a CD full of pictures! I made a quick phone call to Bassyaks to talk through one step I didn't understand and then set to work. The company provides good customer service, and I was able to speak directly with the guy who built and shipped my kit. I began installation at 4:00 in the afternoon and finished about 2:00 AM. I felt like I had completed a dissertation in electro-mechanical engineering!

So how well does a Bassyaks kit perform on the water? It's awesome baby! I purchased the 45-pound thrust Minn Kota motor with the upgraded electronic throttle control module to maximize battery life. It provides infinitely variable speeds both forward and reverse, and I was able to get more than 7 hours of continuous trolling operation on a single charge, using a 12-volt U1H AGM battery weighing 13 pounds. Directional control is achieved by linking rudder pedals I installed on my Jackson Big Rig via a cabling system to the motor mount. It works very well. The one criticism I have is with the optional lift kit, which is supposed to allow you to raise the motor out of the water from the cockpit. I will have to modify the provided actuator arm to better engage the trolling motor bracket lever. I'm thinking a wrapping of dense foam rubber and duct tape will do the needful. Come talk to me if you're interested. — Rick



Club Trip, Brunswick to Pt. of Rocks

By Rick Mrstik

On September 24th I lead a Club-sponsored trip on the Potomac from Brunswick to Point of Rocks. Joining me were Hank Firey, Jack Turner, Chris Schaup and his daughter Sarah, Ms. Shawn, and Kevin Coffey. We gathered at 7:00 AM at the Brunswick launch under overcast skies and low water conditions. After positioning vehicles downstream, we hit the water. The first hour or so had me wondering if I'd lost my touch or if the fish just weren't going to bite. By 10:00 my faith was restored by landing a 10-inch smallie on my go-to 5-inch Fat Albert grub. Around that time the wind kicked up, blowing 10-15 mph upstream, making paddling and boat positioning a challenge for most of the float.



It was a very enjoyable trip despite the wind and low water. It was not a big numbers day, but everyone caught fish. Chris and Sarah lead the pack with a combined 23 fish, and I had the pleasure of watching nearby as Sarah landed the very nice smallmouth pictured at right

I landed nine fish for the day, with my best coming in at 16 inches. He hit hard on one of the 5-inch Keitech swim baits that I bought from John Lipetz at last month's meeting. He provided a memorable battle on my lightest rod, twice attempting to wrap himself into the ever present weed beds and then making a dash under my boat at the end, pulling hard against the drag the whole way. I used my infamous extra-large orange landing net to keep him in the water as I promised to make him famous with this selfie.



Blast From the Past

Sarah Schaup (left) with her first Potomac smallmouth caught when she was 8 years old.

Fly Fishing Off Catalina Island

By Jamie Gold

Back in July my company flew me out to San Diego to meet with the engineering team. I decided to take advantage of the trip and fly out to the west coast two days early. My goal—go fishing again with Vaughn Podmore of SaltyFly (<http://www.saltyflyfishing.com/>). Long time readers of *The Buzz* might remember that I fished with Vaughn a few years ago and had a great time catching Calico Bass on the fly rod out of Huntington Beach, CA. This time the target species were Bonita, Yellow Tail, Calico Bass and Pacific Barracuda . . . again all on the fly rod (take that Jack). For those of you wondering, this was the second to last trip I did this summer before my shoulder gave out on me—strained rotator cuff and biceps tendinitis. But oh what a trip it was!



I met the good captain early Sunday morning at the boat launch in Long Beach, CA. After getting re-acquainted, we set off. Our first stop was at a floating bait dock in San Pedro to get some small bait fish to use as chum. Then it was off on a 50-minute ride across the water to Catalina Island. The water drops off quite steeply from the land, so we were going to be fishing quite close to shore. The weather was cool and a bit windy first thing in the morning, so I was happy to borrow Vaughn's windbreaker for the ride over.



I used a 9-weight fly rod with a full-sink line to get the fly down into the strike zone. During the day I cast a variety of streamers, to imitate the bait fish we had and those in the water. The tactics and techniques I used were things I had never done before on a fly rod. First, Vaughn would take a handful of the baitfish and throw them into the water. This would get the fish stirred up. I would then cast the streamer, tuck the rod under my right shoulder, and use a double-handed, hand-over-hand retrieve to move the fly as fast as I could. Although exhausting to do for the day, it was incredibly effective.

Almost right away I caught my first-ever Bonita. Let me tell you, these are incredible fish! While similar in size to smallmouth bass, they fight like smallmouth on steroids. They don't jump, but they are really fast, pull extremely hard, and don't quit, as evident in the picture above. This fish had my 9-weight rod completely bent over. Smallmouth don't even do that to my 6-weight rod, which has a lot less backbone. You can see what one of these bad boys looks like in at right. notice the forked tail. A forked tail on a saltwater fish means they are built for speed. For the day I caught and landed 30 of these amazing fish. Did I tell you my shoulder hurt at the end of the day?



Fly Fishing Off Catalina Island

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One thing that amazed me about these fish, and some other saltwater fish I've hooked (like bonefish), is the shock of energy you can feel down the rod when you hook one. It is a pure jolt of vibrant life being conveyed from fish to fisherman. The closest analogy I can think of is to imagine taking your fly rod and sticking the tip of it into an electrical socket.

A more challenging species to catch on the fly rod is the Yellow Tail, of sushi fame. They are much more selective than Bonita and proved to be a more elusive quarry. However, I did manage to land a few them, which is not bad for a first timer. As you can see from the picture, they are a beautiful species of fish. This was a nice 6 pounder that was my big Yellow Tail of the day. Overall I caught four for the day. These fish also fought very hard, and had a different fighting behavior than the Bonita. So after a while I could tell which species I had hooked by the way they acted on the end of my line.



I also managed to catch two other species of fish. About a dozen or so Calico Bass came to the boat. These fish tended to hold deeper than the Bonita and Yellow tail. So to catch one all I had to do was let my line sink for a longer amount of time. If I had so desired, I could have caught a ton of these, but they were not our main objective. An example of one of this fish is below. Finally, I also managed to land two Spanish Mackerel. I did not catch any Pacific Barracuda.

Not only did I have a great time fishing with Vaughn, and not only did I catch a good number of terrific fish, but I got an added bonus. One of the Yellow Tail I caught managed to swallow the fly. It was not going to survive, so the captain threw it into the icebox. About an hour or so later, Vaughn cut up the fish, broke out some Soy Sauce and wasabi, and served up the freshest sushi that I've ever had.



All-in-all it was a terrific trip, one of the best guided fishing adventures I've ever had. So if you ever find yourself headed out to the West Coast, get in touch with Capt. Vaughn and set up what could be the trip of a lifetime. In fact, I'm already trying to put together a trip for me and two friends for next summer to do the exact same thing. Tight lines.

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Kevin Coffey and Rick Mrstik with part of their catch from a half-day of fishing on Lake Anna with guide Chris McCotter, who spoke at our club meeting in August.

The trip took place on September 23rd under bright sunny skies. We caught six different species of fish, including large-mouth bass, striped bass, white perch, crappie, channel catfish, and bullhead.

The bass were caught mainly on top water using Zara spooks and flukes, but we also caught several sublegal stripers on the bottom in 30 feet of water near the dam. Chris says the fishing gets even better in October and November.



2016 Fishing Contest

Fishing Contest

by Jack Cook

Nothing new to report.

To submit an entry visit <http://www.prsc.org/fishing-contest/entry/>

Entries Thus Far

Section 1, Biggest Fish:	No Report	
Section 1, Best 5 Fish:	No Report	
Section 2, Biggest Fish:	Randy Chandler	20"
Section 2, Best 5 Fish:	Randy Chandler	76"
Section 3, Biggest Fish:	Randy Chandler	21"
Section 3, Best 5 Fish:	Bill Pearl	85.5"
Largest on Fly:	Chip Comstock	12"
Best 5 Fish on Fly:	Chip Comstock	54"
New Member Big Fish:	Randy Hall	18.5"
New Member Best 5:	Randy Hall	75"
Grover Cleveland Leader:	Randy Chandler	21"
William Shriver Leader:	Bill Pearl	160"

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 McLean Community Center. 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. 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.