

The Chairman's Cockpit

It's hard to believe the leaves have changed and the river is again appearing outside my window. The summer paddling season is winding down — yet the Thursday Group continues uninterrupted - week after week. After a string of California-like days, the river finally dropped to below 2'8". Little Falls became the perfect paddlers' compliment with additional features and surfing appearing as the volume dropped. We savored the Mather Gorge at low water whose dramatic landscape easily rivals Western rivers.

Time to celebrate! CCA's blind leap into legal conservation paid off with a national award from the American Canoe Association - the Green Paddle Award. We knew we had done something special by guaranteeing river access when the politicians golfed, but it was sweet that others thought so too. Most importantly, the Potomac decision set a precedent that will affect any recreational waterway impacted by politicians! Yeah to our devoted team - Jen Sass, Risa Shimoda, Gordon Lang and Kay Fulcomer. And yeah to the little Club that supported them — the little canoe club that could!

Next is the election of CCA's officers. The 2020 slate is included elsewhere in the Cruiser. Even if your schedule doesn't allow participation in CCA's organization, please thank the people who spend endless hours keeping the club healthy and active. Consider joining the board meetings and participating on a committee! Fresh eyes and opinions are always welcome.

Come be wined and dined by the club's holiday party. I have heard we are adding a silent auction with goodies to drool over. Stay tuned! Pack up your old gear and boats to be regifted to your paddling friends. Enjoy a stupendous program. And while you're in the company of so many devoted boaters, plan next years' outings!

SYOTR Barb

Holiday Party

Friday, December 6, 2019: 6:30 at Clara Barton Community Center, Cabin John, MD.

Silent Auction will feature exciting individual and family-friendly lessons and trips from the generous businesses including: Calleva Liquid Adventures; Earth River SUP; Kayak Pucon in Chile; Rios Tropicales in Costa Rica in partnership with the World River Center and the International Whitewater Hall of Fame.

Nominations for CCA officers.

The final deadline for additional nominations for Officers may be submitted by the general membership or the Nominating Committee members to the Nominating Committee up to 10 days before the December meeting, with prior approval of the nominee. Come to the Holiday Party to vote for your favorites.

Committee list on page 4 bottom right.

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Rolling P. 3.

Due to major computer issues and not being allowed to use my work computer to do the newsletter, I have made this one short. Hope to have issues solved by the next issue and will include much of what I was going to include here. Also sorry so late, been very busy at work.
Joan Goodbody, Editor

CCA Meetings 7:30 pm

**Clara Barton Community Center,
7425 MacArthur Blvd.**

Cabin John, MD

Directions: [http://www.canoe cruisers.org/
meetings.html](http://www.canoe cruisers.org/meetings.html)

CCA Programs Coordinator:

Ed Gertler: 301 585 4381 e_gertler@yahoo.com.

CCA Meetings 7:30 pm

**Friday, December 6, 2019: 6:30 Annual Swap
Meet And Holiday Party.**

2020 Dates:

February 24: TBD

April 20: TBD

June 29: TBD

September 28: TBD

October 26: TBD

If the April date seems inconsistent, it is because the normal last Monday in April is booked, Clara Barton being a polling place for the primaries.

The Holiday Party will have the usual party first. Then the good company of your friends, free drinks, and , from those of you who care to contribute, good pot-luck food. A brief business session will be held for elections and random announcements before the documentary.

“Voyageurs Without Trace.” For entertainment, we present another winner. It is a documentary about a trio of French men and women who in 1938, with war clouds gathering over the homeland, slipped into the USA for a grand adventure -- retracing the John Wesley Powell exploration of the Green and Colorado, but this time in delicate foldboats. This fascinating and engaging tale will appeal both to the hardcore paddler, and their nonpaddling spouse and neighbors, so come one, come all.



Submissions to the Cruiser

Should be made via e-mail to newsletter@canoe cruisers.org, or directly to the editor at jodyg13@hotmail.com or submitted on disk, or typed for scanning. No special formatting is required and is discouraged, also use plain easy to read text (fonts) such as arial or times new roman. Single spaced preferred. **Photos**—are strongly encouraged and can be e-mailed (preferred), or snail-mailed. Color photos are preferred.

Advertisements: Classified Ads—The first 5 lines are free. Each additional line is 75 cents per line. Send classified ads to newsletter@canoe cruisers.org; **Lost & Found**—No charge. **Give-Aways**—No charge. **Paddlers Flea Market**—on the web at canoe cruisers.org—No charge. **Display Ads**—Special Rates are available regular prices: Quarter page \$40, half page \$75, full page \$150, insert \$300-\$450. Display ads can be submitted via e-mail, 3.5" disk or CD-R. Hard copy ads will be scanned. Advertisers receive a link on our web site. For additional information, e-mail newsletter@canoe cruisers.org, or advertising@canoe cruisers.org or call Joan Goodbody, editor at 703-887-5013. **Payment**—must be received prior to publication. **Mailing Address**—Cruiser Editor, Canoe Cruisers Association, c/o Virginia DeSeau 1105 Highwood Rd., Rockville, MD 20851 or direct to editor

CCA Pool Sessions for 2020

These are open pool sessions for boaters. Formal instruction is not provided, but there are enough folks around that asking for advice on rolling or other technique is likely to get informal help. Participants are responsible for bringing their own gear. Cost is \$20 per session, plus \$5 for the season if you are not an ACA or CCA member. Dates are Tuesday evenings, January 7/14/21/28, February 4/11/18/25, and March 3/10/17/24/31. 7 PM to 9 PM (out of building by 9). Location is Piney Branch Elementary School, 7510 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD. Pool entry is the pool service doors on the Grant Avenue / southwest side of the building, not the windowed doors in the alcove into the main school. Parking is available in front of the school off Maple Avenue, or off Grant Avenue (approach through the library parking lot off MD 410 / Philadelphia Avenue). If Montgomery County Schools cancels evening events, the pool is closed. As soon as we know that, we will post a message on Paddle Prattle. All participants must complete an ACA waiver, and minors need parental signature. One waiver covers the season. Prior registration is not required, just show up with your gear and money. Minors need to drag a parent along to sign a waiver, or bring a signed waiver.

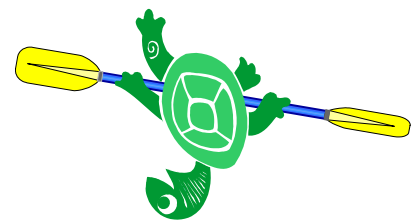


Rolling Classes, Tuesdays, January 7 through March 31, 2020. Same time, Same Place.

When: Every Tuesday
Time: 8 - 10 pm
Place: Takoma Park/Piney Branch Pool
 7510 Maple Avenue
 Takoma Park, MD 20912

For Interested contact
Ron Ray
at:
Email: ronaldaray@verizon.net

Sessions are canceled when Montgomery County authorities close schools and other public venues due to snow emergencies. **See schedule for more details.**





River Access – Year 2019

With but two months to go and the paddling part of the year nearing an end, it's time to take stock of where we are in the ongoing effort to defend against encroachments on our access to local rivers and to improve our ability to paddle along these streams and the C&O Canal.

We've had some fine achievements. The three prime ones are the CCA's winning the lawsuit to cross the Potomac from Violettes Lock to the mouth of the GW Canal while Trump is playing golf (for which we earned the national American Canoe Association's Green Paddle Award), getting water back in the Canal's Pennyfield to Violettes Level, and water restored to the Canal's four-mile Georgetown Level.

After a couple of mistakes in halting paddlers in front of the golf club, the Coast Guard got the message, and our Sunday outings that begin across the top of the Seneca Breaks have been undisturbed. Equally, we are most pleased with the Park authorities' responsiveness to our letters and telephone calls in putting water back in the Violettes part of the Canal in mid-May, fixing an incipient break in the towpath that we'd identified, and even strewing a bit of extra gravel down at the muddy beach that we use to land at the Blockhouse Point takeout below the Breaks.

The lower section of the Canal below lock 5 allows us to paddle back to our cars after running Little Falls – which is being done with far greater frequency this year, with river levels in the 2.6 to 3.1 foot range. Again, we've talked with the Park to raise the Canal's water level.

If you don't mind bulrushes, now you can even paddle down into Georgetown. (Dry as of 22 Nov.)

A project to rebuild the steps at Sandy Beach put-in for Mather Gorge on the Maryland side got postponed to 2020, after we had made a site visit with Rod Newton, the C&O Canal Trust's Chief of Volunteers, and landscape expert John Snitzer to discuss particulars of how to restore the steps so that the same washouts that have damaged the steps do not occur again.

The C&O Canal Park has a new Acting Superintendent. Members of the CCA's access committee are planning a visit to their Williamsport headquarters to discuss thoughts to rewater and develop the canal's paddling potential from Violettes to Georgetown with organized portages around the locks and maps.

Over at **Goose Creek**, another CCA priority - improving the put-in at Sycolin Road, the final 3-mile section, seems to be bearing fruit. Loudoun County Parks has paved the trail with concrete. We're headed to ask Loudoun County Parks about what this "sidewalk to nowhere" portends.

Seneca Creek, which flows past Rileys Lock, is our third local stream access interest, the problem being

recurring tree-falls across the waterway. There we have Seneca Creek State Park's administration paddled with us last year and reported early this June (see the trip report) that from Rte 28 on down is wood free. But then in the 8 July downpour, Seneca peaked at an incredible 10,000 cfs. Another scouting expedition is needed to ascertain any new blockages.

At the **Weverton** take-out up by Harpers Ferry, CSX railroad is claiming ownership of the long established crossing. CCA and others have written in favor of a proposed pedestrian bridge over the dangerous double tracks, enabling legal access to the National Park's towpath and the river.

At **Fletchers** Cove in DC we've backed the C&O Park's idea of an overpass over both Canal Road and the Canal that would eliminate the traffic light and the low car tunnel under the Canal. This proposed project is in its earliest planning stages.

There's a new button on the CCA homepage for "River Access" where we have posted these, our major proposals, and a myriad of other pipe dreams.

We also keep track of water levels in the different sections of the lower Canal, and we mean to keep it updated.

As always, we're looking for members interested in working on these matters. Our River Access Committee head is Gordy Lang. golang@yahoo.com. Also, Barb Brown, John Snitzer, (for Goose: Jack Findling, Pam White), Dave Cottingham, and Alf Cooley.



Enjoying the re-watered canal by Barb Brown

Nominating Committee – Lisa Fallon, Jack Findling, Ron Fisher, Marilyn Jones, Marty Lizak The Nominating Committee submits the following nominations: for Chair, Barb Brown; for Secretary, Jen Sass; for Treasurer, Jim Landfield; and for Membership, Ginny DeSeau. Nominations are now open from the membership. Please submit any further nominations for Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, or Membership to the Nominating Committee.

New on the Website

Here are some new stuff we've put on the CCA website. We want to enhance the website's usefulness as the go-to resource for the Washington paddling community. We welcome your ideas; please send them to webmaster@canoecruisers.org.

1 - A direct link to **Paddle Prattle** is now on the CCA homepage - on the line of handy links starting with weather forecasts and river level forecasts. This gets you fast to the area's breaking news site, kept up by the Monocacy Canoe Club.

2 - **C&O Canal Levels** - started in August, this site (at Message Board, Paddle Posts) keeps you up to date as to whether critical parts of the lower Canal are watered - particularly Level 4 for returning up to your car after running Little Falls - and Level 22 for doing the same after going down the George Washington Canal from Violettes Lock. (BoGeorgetown level is very low: Pennyfield level is dry.) Other parts of the lower Canal right now are dry.

3 - **Gauge Geeks Forum** - started this November (also at Message Board, Paddle Posts) as a place where those interested in gauges and water levels can post their observations and discoveries in the question of how best to measure or predict water levels in our area streams.

4 - **River Access Issues** - This sub-site is on a button started this August as a place paddlers may see what the Club has been up to - and what it plans for keeping river access open and establishing new places to get into area brooks. Also has the details of how we are urging the C&O Canal to pay more attention to boaters'

needs, and particularly for reopening more sections of the canal for boating. Also, Seneca & Goose Creeks, Weverton Crossing.

Reminder of Other Parts of the Website -

- **Trip Reports** - over 90 trips posted this year - second button down on the left side of the homepage. See what other paddlers have been doing and whom to contact if any doubt about what stream you want to go to.



Ed Gertler and Carol Pamar on an unrelenting cold and rainy day in the Pine Barrens—by Barb Brown



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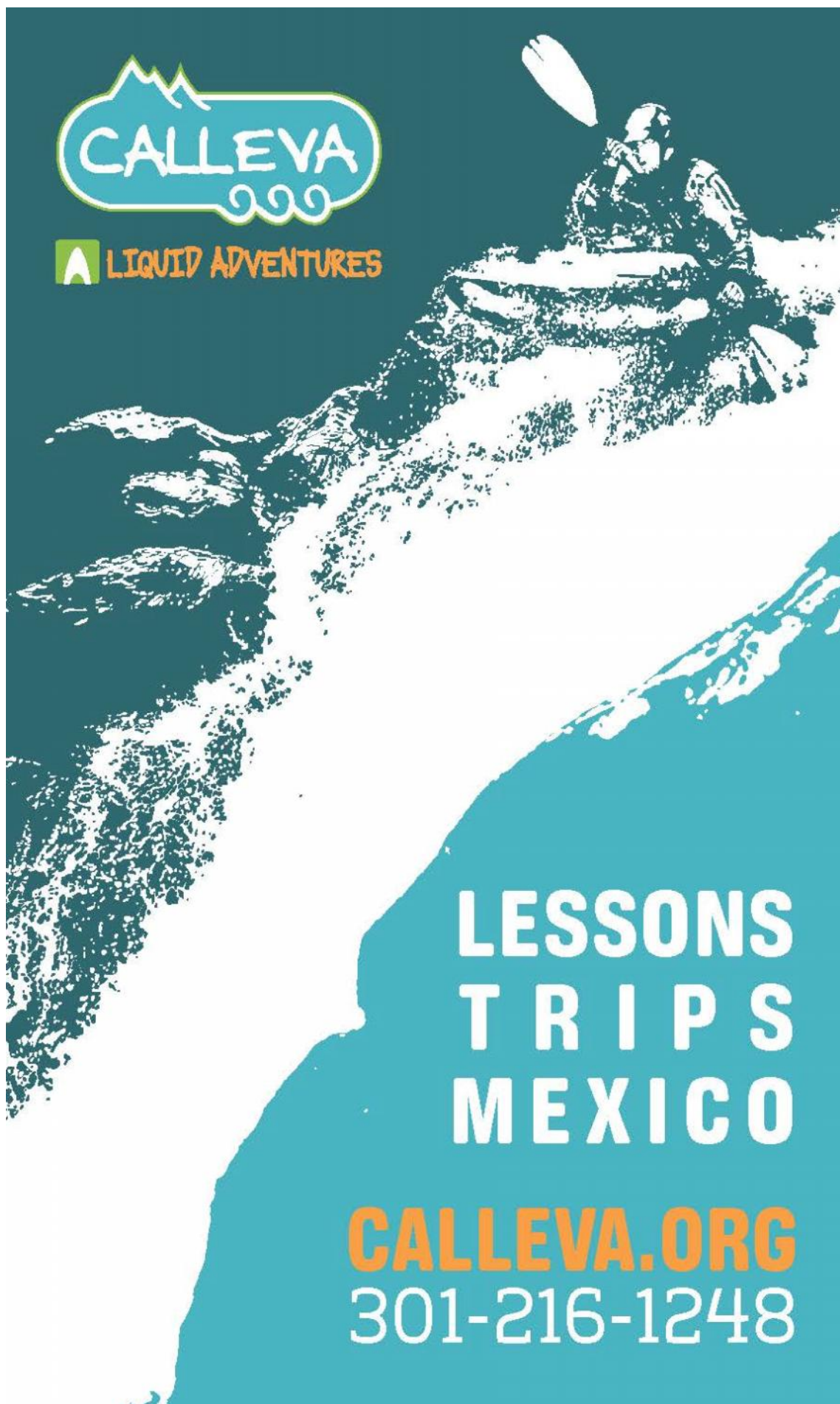


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then 10 am - 6 pm

A photograph of a person in a kayak navigating white-water rapids. The person is wearing a life vest and a helmet, and is holding a paddle. The water is turbulent and white with foam. The background is a dark, rocky riverbank.

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Canoe Cruisers Association of Greater Washington, DC
c/o Virginia DeSeau
1105 Highwood Rd.,
Rockville, MD 20851

First Class Time Limit

Attention
Deadline for
Jan./Feb 2020
Friday
January 10, 2020

Eagles were seen on
almost every trip at
Violettes Lock Loop



Miki Komlosch, Barb Brown and Kathleen Sengstock in Richmond to accept the ACA Green Paddle Award for CCA. Award below

All Photos by Barb Brown, above photo unsure



John Snitzer dwarfed by the cliffs and the Potomac at Mather Gorge



Paul Schelp inspecting a culvert on North Branch Release, below Westernport, See trip report 15 Sept.