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Report from Fletcher's Cove, End of Season - November 3, 2009



Rowboats Receiving Seasonal Repair

"To every thing there is a season..." A thought as old as the Bible (Ecclesiastes 3:1), and an appropriate feeling at this time of year for Fletcher's Cove. Sadly, our "season" has now come to an end. Each year, we are fortunate to wrap spring, summer and fall into one long string of smiles and miles along the Potomac and C&O Canal; but now, the kayaks and canoes are racked-up, the bikes are nestled neatly into their shed, and the classic rowboats are already being repaired and repainted.

As always, I encourage you to visit the park at Fletcher's Cove even in our off-season. It is spectacular right now, the trees ablaze with color, the woods opening up to the soft light



A Last Row on the Potomac

and wildlife still in abundance. The winter will bring a quiet solitude, sharply in contrast to the crowds of summer. It is a GREAT place to take a walk after a snowfall. Fishing from shore is still possible, until the water ices over, and can produce good catches for those with patience. The big blue catfish like to bite in the cold water – I'm expecting to see a seventy-pounder in the near future. There have been many minnows and baitfish around our dock this fall, a good sign for next year.

Brooks Noble scored another huge catfish early in October; this one looks bigger than the one pictured in the last report. Brooks has a few tricks up his sleeve when it comes to hooking the big ones. I'm sworn to secrecy, though! He also has help and encouragement from his partner, Norma, who snapped this photo.



Dimo Goes For a Ride

Before the year ends, I have to mention our "un-official" mascot, and a frequent visitor to Fletcher's. He loves rowboat rides, fishing and playing ball. Dimo, a beautiful German Shepard, lives just up the hill from Fletcher's and is always excited to come-on-down! His household sports three of our current staff, and one Fletcher's worker from the 1970's. Family ties run deep here, even to four-legged members.

Speaking of family, it is now time to say a special thank you to those extended family members that help Fletcher's Cove remain a Washington institution that's loved way out of proportion to its size. First of all, thanks to the dedicated National Park Service folks – from

park headquarters staff, to the tow-path traveling maintenance team. Thanks also to the officers of the United States Park Police; to our fellow Guest Services employees, many of whom are never seen by the customers but are essential none-the-less; to our vendors, who provide the support and supplies needed to service our visitors; and, of course, to YOU, the customers and friends who make Fletcher's Cove a richly rewarding place to be. We hope to see you again, soon!

Dan



Brooks Nobel with a Really Big Blue Catfish

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