



HOOKED ON THE OUTDOORS

By Mike Johnson

They say that necessity is the Mother of Invention.....but for this issue I'd like to take a bit of literary license with this saying. In this case our necessity, or reality, was a house full of visitors from out of town (up to attend a family graduation).....and our invention was more dire inspiration.....what to do with 12 people when we are in the middle of an unprecedented string of 90+ degree days and nobody wanted to leave the house due to the oppressive heat. Have to hand it to the Mrs.....she said "Why don't we take everyone tubing?"...I for one, who was rapidly growing tired of the cramped quarters in the Johnson house,said "Great, can we go today?"!!!

Now we are not talking about snow tubing.....still a favorite winter pastime of ours and written about glowingly in this space a few years back....this is tubing down a river. I guess the closest thing any of us had done along these lines before was riding around the lazy river at those mega water parks....but this was going to be "the real deal". I was curious as to why me, being such an outdoor and water lovin' type of person, had never done this before....sure enough I figured it out... "It would sure be tough to fish out of an inflatable tube". Well, since now I knew we were going....my mind started racing thinking about how one might actually fish from a tube floating down a river (and I was just about to get onto some really good ideas)....and then the Mrs. chimed in "Just in case you were thinking about it, there will be no fishing while we are tubing". ☹

Actually it is all good....it is hard to be more in touch with nature than you are when you are floating down a river with nothing distracting you. Think about it...you are basically at ground or eye level with all things in the surrounding woods and in the water. The things you see and hear from this perspective really are quite amazing (so glad one of those things was not a snake on the day we went).....and did I happen to mention that the water which you are sitting in/on top of felt really, really refreshing on that 90+ degree day. And seriously.....there is absolutely no athletic skills nor strength required for river tubing...and all things considered it was fairly inexpensive to do (although we did "upgrade" to a premium tube...which basically means in theory your rear end stayed a bit drier during the ride down the river, NOT !!!). This was truly one of those things we said after our day of tubing, "Can't believe it took us so long to try this.....we'll be back before you know it".

Most river tubing in these parts take place on the Dan River...and there are a handful of places that will rent you tubes and provide the necessary transportation up the river if need be. Pack a lunch and some drinks (yes you can even rent a special tube to hold your cooler)...and take a lazy but truly exhilarating float down a river before summer runs out. Just remember 2 things....first, resist the temptation to bring along your phone....it will get wet and you will be sorry (get a CVS or Walgreen's cheap waterproof camera with a wrist strap...the best pre-float investment one can make). Second....leave the fishing rods at home and enjoy nature's sights and sounds at its best.

In closing, just a reminder about the **Second Annual Our Community Press Fishing Tournament**. Entries will be accepted through August 31st, and there will be awards for the biggest bass, biggest catfish, and biggest fish caught by anyone 10 years old or younger. For a complete list of the rules (there are not many and they are really basic), check out the previous edition of Our Community Press. Fame (at least in this paper) and fortune (in doughnuts) await the winners.....so drop what you are doing, enjoy the waning days of summer, wet a line as they say....and of course until next time....Tight Lines !!!!

**Fishing Tournament Rules are now on our website
www.ourcommunitypress.com**