



*101 Uses*

*For an NPS*

*Trash-Free Park*

*Litter Bag*

*The Yockatomactrekkers*

*June, MM*

*Credits*

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This work was conceived and drafted by the Yockatomactrekkers of 1999, with additional contributions from the Y2Ktrekkers of 2000 and some NPS personnel who may prefer to remain unnamed.

*And Finally,  
Last but not Least*

- 101) *Trash Take-Out Bag*: Collect trash during your park visit in a TFPTTOB and take it with you when you leave.

- 94) *Bear noisemaker*: Fill a TFPTTOB with dried seed pods, leaves, and other crackling materials and attach it to your pack so it makes noise to alert any bears in the vicinity of your presence.
- 95) *Barf bag*: Worried about getting seasick on the canal boat ride? Take along a TFPTTOB.
- 96) *Spanish lesson (or English lesson)*: TFPTTOBs are printed in Spanish on one side and English on the other. Practice reading whichever language you aren't fluent in.
- 97) *Writing paper*: Keep notes and sketches on your observations. Carry a fine-point waterproof Sharpie. You'll find an adequate supply of TFPTTOBs to write on.
- 98) *Interpretive labels*: To create your own interpretive nature trail, turn TFPTTOBs inside out and use that Sharpie to write identifying information on the bag. Then tie the bags to the natural features that will make up your nature trail.
- 99) *Trail blazes*: When laying out the nature walk, use strips of TFPTTOB to blaze the trail.
- 100) *Inspiration*: Use TFPTTOBs as material for whimsical interpretive guide.

e gratefully acknowledge the inspiration provided by the official 1999 pronouncement of the National Park Service

## C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

### Trash Free Park

The *C&O Canal National Historical Park* is proudly instituting a new **Trash Free Park** program this spring. The concept is being initiated to actively reduce solid waste within the park. The premise is a partnership that will provide a safer, healthier, more satisfying experience for all of us who enjoy the park and its exceptional resources.

Under the guidelines of the **Trash Free Park** program, all trash receptacles are removed from the park and visitors are required to take their refuse when they depart, leaving an unspoiled, trash free park! This initiative encompasses all recreational sections including the day use, picnic grounds, pavilions, boat ramps, hiker/biker and camping areas.

The *C&O Canal* will install **Trash Free Park** signs and provide park users with bags at the various access points throughout the park as a convenience for refuse removal. However, please plan ahead when you visit the park this season. As you prepare items to carry into the park, make accommodations to carry your garbage out when you leave. Make creative choices on what to bring, as trash receptacles will not be available anywhere in the park.

In 1999 the National Park Service (NPS) converted the C&O Canal National Historical Park to a “trash-free park”. This means that the park has no trash cans, and park visitors are expected to carry out all the trash they create while in the park.

Our initial experience indicated that this policy might be so rigorous as to extend to the paper supplies at the trailside sanitary facilities, but queries of the rangers indicated that the lack of toilet paper was either vandalism or a maintenance shortfall.

In any case, our study confirms the outstanding foresight and consideration of the NPS in providing an almost inexhaustible supply of official NPS litter bags, called *Trash Free Park Trash Take Out Bags* (TFPTTOBs) at trailheads, campsites, picnic areas, and other convenient locations.

Our appreciation peaked on a rainy day of bicycling, when we realized just as we entered the park that our shoes were wet but our socks were still dry. Lo and behold, a shoe liner dispenser was standing right beside the trail entrance!

Since this is a new phenomenon in this park, we are proud to be the first to provide a comprehensive interpretive guide to ways the park visitor might take advantage of this new resource while visiting the park.

### *Natural History and Interpretive Uses*

- 89) *Critter-feeder*: Collect your leftovers from lunch in a TFPTTOB. Set it beside the post of the dispenser. Raccoons and other small furry critters will know to look for it there. This saves them the effort of foraging in the bushes. Be sure to separate the recyclables.
- 90) *Specimen collector*: You know you’re not supposed to remove anything from the park, right? Take it home in a TFPTTOB.
- 91) *Gloves*: Do you want to look around under some shrubbery you can’t identify? Did you drop the car keys into a patch of poison ivy? Use a TFPTTOB to protect your hands.
- 92) *Kid control*: When day-care centers take kids on walks outside the center, they keep track of the kids by making them keep one hand on a rope with an adult at each end. You can do the same for groups of kids on interpretive walks by making a rope from TFPTTOBs. Just twist the body of the bags and tie the bottom of each one to the top of the next, just below the handles. Leave the handles sticking out for the kids to hold onto. You wouldn’t want to leave a kid in Paw Paw tunnel, would you?
- 93) *Book cover*: Protect your nature guide from dirt and rain by folding a TFPTTOB into a cover.

- 82) *Cat toy*: Crumple a handful of leaves and twigs in a TFPTTOB. As they straighten out, the TFPTTOB will jump and twitch. Your cat will go berserk.
- 83) *Macramé*: Knot items out of TFPTTOB strands.
- 84) *Slingshot*: TFPTTOBs aren't stretchy enough for the sort of slingshot you make with a forked stick, so make a David-and-Goliath type slingshot by holding the handles and putting the missile in the pocket at the bottom of the bag.
- 85) *Mask*: Plan a skit, and use TFPTTOBs to make masks for the characters. Caution: Do not allow children to inhale the masks, as this might cause them to suffocate.
- 86) *Jai lai stick*: Make a frame from a long forked stick and cover it with a TFPTTOB. Make a ball by using vines to tie a handful of leaves into a ball.
- 87) *Noisemaker*: Blow up a TFPTTOB and twist off the end. Sneak up behind someone and pop the bag by smashing it between your hands.
- 88) *Stuffed doll*: Put a piece of moss the size of your fist in the bottom of a TFPTTOB. Tie off the bag just above the moss with a length of vine. This is the head of the doll. Add a double handful of leaves to the bag and tie it off again. This is the upper body. Another double handful of leaves provides the lower body, and the handles are the legs. Use a permanent marker to add face, etc. Be sure not to select poison ivy for the vines.

### *Hiking and Biking Uses*

- 1) *Shoe liners*: Place TFPTTOBs over your socks and inside your shoes to keep your feet warm and mostly dry. Tuck the tops of the bags into your pants to prevent water from running down your legs.
- 2) *Contaminated clothing containment vessel*: After you roll in the poison ivy, put your contaminated clothing in a TFPTTOB to segregate it from all your other belongings.
- 3) *Knapsack or pannier liner*: When weather threatens, be sure to put all the nonwaterproof items in your pack into a TFPTTOB to keep them dry.
- 4) *Rain hat or helmet cover*: Pull a TFPTTOB over your head down to your ears. Roll up the lower edge. Do not pull down to cover your mouth and nose.
- 5) *Windbreaker*: Put a TFPTTOB flat on the windward side of your body, under your shirt or sweater.
- 6) *Bicycle seat cover*: It's not good for a leather bike seat to get wet. If you get caught in a brief shower, take shelter on the porch of a lockhouse and cover your bicycle seat with a TFPTTOB.
- 7) *Pants protectors*: Are your wide-bottom pants getting stuck in the chain? Tie twisted strands of TFPTTOB around your ankles to keep your pants legs under control.
- 8) *Privacy screen*: If the foliage is too sparse to give you privacy for changing your clothes, hang a couple of TFPTTOBs on strategic branches.

- 9) *Bike fender*: Want to avoid getting a mud stripe, commonly called “trail tail”, up your back as you bike in the rain? Spread a TFPTTOB flat with a couple of sticks and tie it to your rear rack.
- 10) *Repair gloves*: If you need to fix your chain, use a TFPTTOB to keep grease off your hands.
- 11) *Adult rain jacket*: Carefully cut open one side of a TFPTTOB, including the handle, and about 4” of the bottom on that side. Carefully tear a hole in the opposite side near the bottom of the TFPTTOB. Put your left arm through the hole. Pull the split parts of the handle to your waist on the right side of your body and tie them together. Repeat for the right side of your body.
- 12) *Ice pack*: You chronic over-doers will want to ice your aching joints promptly. But you don’t want the ice dripping all over your spiffy new outfit. Put the ice in the bottom of a TFPTTOB and use the handles to tie it in place.
- 13) *Gear organizer*: Do your belongings keep getting mixed up in your pack? Use TFPTTOBs to keep them sorted out.
- 14) *Tarp*: If a rain shower comes up and you don’t have a tarp in your pack to keep the rain off, connect a few TFPTTOBs with thorns or twigs for an emergency tarp.
- 15) *Umbrella*: Maybe the rain shower isn’t moving along, and you can’t wait for it to pass by. Convert the tarp to an umbrella by using small branches as spreaders. Be sure do use fallen twigs – cutting live branches is not permitted in your park.

### *Entertainment Uses*

- 75) *Kite*: Wedge twigs into the TFPTTOB to keep it stretched out. Tie a long piece of string to the center twig. Look for an open area away from trees, and keep the kite away from power lines.
- 76) *Water balloons*: Hot and dry? Kids bored? Have a water balloon battle using TFPTTOBs and pump water for munitions.
- 77) *Scavenger hunt collector*: Plan a scavenger hunt. Supply TFPTTOBs for bring back the target items.
- 78) *UFO*: Construct a frame out of small twigs to keep the mouth of the TFPTTOB open. Put a candle in the center of the frame and light it. The heat will turn the TFPTTOB into a hot air balloon. Do not try this during drought conditions.
- 79) *Origami*: Fold a TFPTTOB into creative shapes.
- 80) *Water wings*: If it’s hot, and you want to go swimming, but the kids can’t swim, and you forgot the water wings . . . pick up a couple of TFPTTOBs on the way to the river. Open them up, capture some air, and tie off the open end to make the balloon. Use the carrying handles to attach them to the kids.
- 81) *Sea anchor*: To slow your raft as you drift down the river, deploy a TFPTTOB behind the raft as a sea anchor.

- 68) *Eyeshades*: You'll be exhausted after all the fun and games. Settle back on the grass for a nap. Wrap a TFPTTOB around your glasses to shade your eyes from the sun.
- 69) *Recycling*: Collect recyclable materials (NOT trash!!!) in a TFPTTOB and take it to your favorite recycling center along the towpath.
- 70) *Camera protector*: Keep rain off your camera with a TFPTTOB. Cut a small hole for the lens, and put your head and the camera in the bag. Do not inhale the bag.
- 71) *Fan*: While you're at it, recruit someone to fan away the gnats. Make a framework of twigs, tied with grass, insert in a TFPTTOB, and wave gently to create a breeze.
- 72) *Diaper cover*: When toddlers play in the dirt, they get dirty. Keep their diapers clean by cutting slits in the bottom corners of a TFPTTOB for their legs and using the handles to tie the diaper cover around their waists.
- 73) *Hiccup cure*: If you don't have a paper bag to breathe in, use a TFPTTOB instead. Caution! Do not allow the hiccuper to suffocate.
- 74) *Bib*: Your delicious berry pie from Weavers could leave stains all over your best T-shirt. Tie the handles of a TFPTTOB around your neck to make a bib.
- 16) *Safety Line*: When hiking or biking with a small child on slackwater sections with sheer drops to the river, twist a few TFPTTOBs together, attach one end to the child's belt, and hold onto the other end to keep the child away from the edge.
- 17) *Cell phone case*: Keep dust, rain, and insects out of your cell phone by carrying it in a TFPTTOB. Don't lose control of your bike while talking on the phone.
- 18) *Gaiters*: When the winter snows are deep, wrap a TFPTTOB around each ankle to keep snow out of your boots.
- 19) *Tourniquet*: To control profuse bleeding, stretch out a TFPTTOB to strands and wrap tightly around a limb between the wound and the heart. Be sure to observe the usual precautions about tourniquets.
- 20) *Bandage*: When the bleeding is under control, cover the wound with sterile moss and hold in place with a TFPTTOB.
- 21) *Sling*: To support an injured arm, bend arm and place it in TFPTTOB, then tie the handles behind the victim's neck to support the arm.
- 22) *Winter mittens*: To keep your hands warm, partly fill two TFPTTOBs with moss or dried leaves, then insert your hands and tie off around your elbows.
- 23) *Hoist rope*: To simplify getting your bike and gear up the stairs at Harpers Ferry, braid several TFPTTOBs into a rope and use it to help lift the heavy stuff.

- 24) *Water bottle cover*: When the weather is foul and the trail is muddy, wrap a TFPTTOB around your water bottle to keep it clean.
- 25) *Pack*: If you left your daypack home, or if your bike doesn't have a rack or a pack, you can carry your lunch, sunscreen, and bug repellent in a TFPTTOB. If you're biking, hang it from your handlebar.
- 26) *Sun visor*: Make a framework of vines and twigs, then cover it with a TFPTTOB and perch it on your head.
- 27) *Glue*: For minor repairs, pull a TFPTTOB into strands, twist several strands together, and melt with a match. Let the melted plastic drip onto the repair site. Do not drip melted plastic onto other things, like bare flesh.
- 28) *Swim Trunks*: When it's hot and sticky but you forgot your swim trunks, make do with a TFPTTOB.
- 29) *Shoe laces*: Shoe laces break at the most inconvenient times! Stretch out a TFPTTOB and use it instead.
- 30) *Camera padding*: The towpath is rough in places, and it isn't good for your nice camera to bounce around as you ride. Fill a TFPTTOB with moss to form a padded camera cradle.
- 31) *Croakie*: Keep your eyeglasses or sunglasses from falling off by using the handle of a TFPTTOB to tie them to your head.
- 61) *Ice chest organizer*: It's no fun when water from the melting ice in the cooler gets into the left-over sandwiches. Use a couple of TFPTTOBs to keep the food separate from the ice water.
- 62) *Pooper-scooper*: Be sure to clean up after your pet. Turn a TFPTTOB inside-out over your hand, pick up you pet's droppings, and turn the bag right-side out over the droppings. Dispose of properly.
- 63) *Guitar case*: Don't let the rain get on your guitar. Cover it with a TFPTTOB.
- 64) *Seat cover*: If your picnic table seat is wet or dirty, take a seat cover from the nearby TFPTTOB dispenser. Do not confuse the seat cover with a place mat. You don't want to sit in the peanut butter, do you?
- 65) *Child's rain jacket*: Tear open the center bottom of a TFPTTOB, being careful not to tear all the way to the edges. Tear a 4" hole near the bottom of each side seam. Pull the bag over the child's head, with the child's arms sticking out the side holes and his head through the bottom. Do not allow the child to inhale with the bag over his face.
- 66) *Sack races*: For entertainment, hold sack races for the kids, using TFPTTOBs for the sacks.
- 67) *3-legged races*: When the kids are tired of sack races, hold 3-legged races for the adults, using twisted TFPTTOBs for the leg ties.

### *Picnicking Uses*

- 55) *Place mat:* If your picnic table top is wet or dirty, take a place mat from the nearby TFPTTOB dispenser. After lunch, recycle one of the place mats as a *critter feeder* (see below) by collecting the scraps in one of the place mats and leaving it near the dispenser.
- 56) *Anchor:* When you put your six-pack in the creek to chill, it's likely to float away. To prevent this, put a few rocks in a TFPTTOB and tie the handles to the six-pack rings.
- 57) *Dog's water bowl:* Your dog gets thirsty too. Make a water bowl by rolling down the top of the TFPTTOB. You may need a couple of twigs to make it stable.
- 58) *Clothesline:* Twist and pull a TFPTTOB into strands and tie it to a couple of trees. You can hang your swimsuit and towel out to dry while you eat.
- 59) *Wet clothes bag:* When you're ready to go home, your swimsuit and towel may still be wet. Pack them in a TFPTTOB so they don't get everything else wet on the way home.
- 60) *Tuna salad mixing bowl:* Everyone knows that in the summer it's not safe to take tuna salad sandwiches because the mayonnaise may go bad on you. To avoid this, carry a can of tuna and some individual-serving packets of mayo. At lunchtime, dump the tuna and mayo into a TFPTTOB and squeeze to mix.

### *Camping Uses*

- 32) *Hanging food pantry:* At night, put your food and other smelly items in a TFPTTOB and hang it from a tree to protect it from bears, raccoons, and other hungry critters.
- 33) *Pillow:* Stuff a TFPTTOB with leaves so your head can rest easy.
- 34) *Water carrier:* Use a TFPTTOB to carry water from the pump to douse your campfire.
- 35) *Pancake batter mixer/dispenser:* Instead of carrying and cleaning up a messy mixing bowl, mix your pancake batter in a TFPTTOB. Snip a tiny bit off a bottom corner, and dispense the batter directly into the frying pan.
- 36) *Laundry bag:* Keep your dirty laundry from smelling up your pack by keeping it in a TFPTTOB.
- 37) *Shower:* Poke a couple of dozen pinholes near the bottom of a TFPTTOB and hang it from a tree. Fill with water and stand underneath.
- 38) *Lantern hanger:* Tie the lower end of a TFPTTOB to the hanger loop of your lantern. Suspend the lantern by the handles. Attempt this only with battery-powered lights, not with kerosene lamps or candle lanterns.
- 39) *Galoshes:* Waterproofing in your shoes ineffective? Use TFPTTOBs as overshoes to keep the water out.

- 40) *Literature collector*: As you collect interpretive brochures to use as fire-starter (see our companion volume, *101 Uses for an Interpretive Brochure*), keep them dry in a TFPTTOB.
- 41) *Air mattress repair*: Locate the hole in the air mattress and roughen the surface around the hole with a stone. Pull a TFPTTOB into strands and twist several strands together. Hold a match under the end of the twisted strands and let the melted plastic drip onto the air mattress to form a patch. Do not drip melted plastic onto your fingers or other body parts.
- 42) *Pack cover*: If your backpack isn't waterproof, cover it with a TFPTTOB.
- 43) *Emergency tie-downs*: If you pull gently on opposite ends of a TFPTTOB as if you were pulling taffy, it will slowly stretch into a long string. It won't be terribly strong, but it's good enough to hold your bundle together for a few hours.
- 44) *Tent fly pull-outs*: To get some air circulation between your tent fly and the tent, you need to pull the edges of the fly away from the tent. Use TFPTTOB strings for this.
- 45) *Rope*: For a stronger kind of cord, braid several long TFPTTOB strings together.
- 46) *Ground cloth*: Protect your tent from the soggy, soggy ground and the foggy, foggy dew by spreading a few TFPTTOBs under the tent.

- 47) *Dental floss*: Personal hygiene is important on a camping trip. Stretch a TFPTTOB into strands and clean between your teeth.
- 48) *Lightening bug collector*: When you catch lightening bugs at dusk, collect them in a TFPTTOB.
- 49) *Candelaria in your campsite*: For a particularly festive camping experience, put a row of TFPTTOBs braced by twigs between the picnic table and your tent. Put a lighted candle in each.
- 50) *Rain gauge*: Wonder how much it's going to rain tonight? Set up a TFPTTOB in an open area, and measure the contents in the morning.
- 51) *Fishing line*: One of the delights of camping is broiling fresh-caught fish over the campfire. First, though, you must catch them. For fishing line, stretch out a TFPTTOB and tie one end to a stick and the other end to a thorn.
- 52) *Fishing lure*: You'll need something to attract the fish. Tie a piece of a TFPTTOB into a small bow to make a lure.
- 53) *Fishing creel*: After you catch the fish, you have to carry it back to camp. Use a TFPTTOB as a creel.
- 54) *Lobster bib*: Well, a crawdad bib, anyhow. After catching crawdads for dinner, keep your shirt clean by fashioning a bib out of a TFPTTOB.