

The DDRC Current News

Newsletter of the Dallas Downriver Club—Visit our website at www.down-river.org June 2007

FINE PRINT - The DDRC Current News is published monthly by the Dallas Downriver Club and is provided to its members either by First Class postage or by email. Opinions expressed herein are those of the individual authors and may or may not reflect the opinion of the club or its officers.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION of articles, announcements, events, trips, etc. is the 1st Thursday of the month. It is on a come first served basis therefore sooner is better.

DDRC BOARD MEETINGS are held every **second Thursday** of the month - **7:00 PM @ On the Border** (directions on back of newsletter). All members are welcome to attend to learn more about club business.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Newsletter content needed-- Hey gang...Please share your adventures, recipes, photos, classifieds with us for our reading enjoyment. Email content to newsletter editor Carolee Doty at la_sirena_84@yahoo.com.

Volunteers needed for the TRC and other upcoming events. Please see page 8 for more info.

Whoever won massages from Marilyn Scholl at the last 2 TRCs, please call her at 214-208-3528 to make arrangements with her.

Trips and Events

Details will be posted in the newsletter the month before the trip and on the online calendar as they become available.

June 21—Monthly Meeting—On the Border

June 30—Moonlight Float

July 1—TRC XII Registration opens
Canoe Raffle tickets on sale

July 14 - Kiamichi Trip

July 28—Moonlight float

Aug. 25—Moonlight float

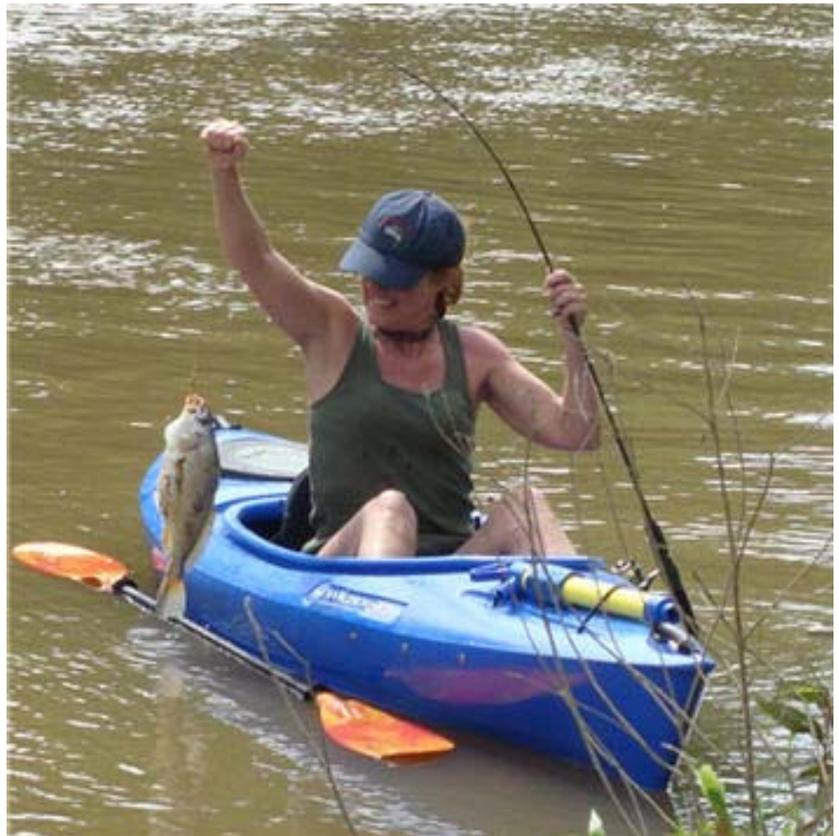
Aug. 25- Trinity River Trash Bash

Sept. 1 - Watermelon Cleanup

Sept. 9 - TRC XII

Lower Mountain Fork evening play trips—Dates TBA

Watch the Events Calendar on the website for more details .



Nancy Jenkins catching a freshwater drum for dinner...on her first cast!
Memorial Day weekend on the Little River

Paddling Events — See the online events calendar for more details

June 21— Monthly Meeting at On the Border Restaurant, 75 and Knox. Be thinking about how you might contribute to making TRC XII a big success.

June 30— Moonlight Float on the Brazos River at the Lake Whitney Dam. We will put in at the boat ramp just below the dam at 5:30 and take out at the Outpost 8 miles downriver, provided they are releasing enough water to get us all the way down. The take-out fee at Outpost is \$6. Bring your dinner, beverages and head lamp. Call Jerry Johnson at 817-354-5395 for details.

July 1—Raffle tickets go on sale for TRC XII. We will raffle an Old Town Expedition 169 (16'9") with 2 Carlisle golden light paddles and 2 PFDs. This is Bass Pro's version of the Discovery 169.

July 14-15— Kiamichi River overnight trip. We will meet at the US 271 bridge at OK 3 in Antlers, OK and paddle 12 miles down to OK3. We will have a light pot luck dinner on Saturday night.

August 25—Trinity Trash Bash. We will team up with Keep Carrollton Beautiful to put as many as 75 volunteers out on the river in canoes to pick up trash as well as give some folks a taste of what paddling is like in the DFW area. Paddle Bound Outfitters, Kayak Power and North Texas Canoe rental have provided rental canoes free of charge to accommodate about 60 paddlers, and DDRC members provided enough to handle the rest.

September 1—Annual Watermelon Cleanup. We will focus on cleaning up the park area where we hold the race, getting the last of the river trash that was missed the previous week and removing any major obstructions that could pose a hazard on race day.

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Playing Catch up... Looking back at March, April and May

By Bryan Jackson

Hi folks. Let me start by apologizing for the May issue. Carolee and I have two different versions of MS Publisher and somehow we managed to corrupt every file we created for the May newsletter. In an effort to get at least the most important news out we created the DDRC News *flash* so that everyone would know about the meeting and upcoming trips. We are now back in business and hopefully all systems are go. Return with me now to those thrilling days of yester month and I will fill you in on what has been happening.

On a sad note, we reported that we had lost two very special friends in March: Hans Weichel and Julie Basham. It was quite a tribute to Hans, with several friends and relatives speaking at the service, a helicopter flyover and a reception hall full of Hans' memorabilia. Hans had so many friends and business associates that the same memorial service was held in San Antonio and St Louis as well.

In April we found out that Charlie Weidner, owner of the Weidner Ranch down on the Guadalupe River, had passed away back in November. If you never had the opportunity to meet Charlie, he was quite the character. He was born and died in the same house there on his ranch. When asked why news of his passing had not been more heavily circulated, his wife Helen said that he would have wanted it kept private. Helen and at least one of her daughters plan to keep the ranch and possibly develop it as an RV park. Then, late in May we learned that Steve Schleter had passed away. Steve was an avid paddler and attended meetings regularly up until a few years ago. You may have seen him helping out at the TRC or hanging out with the Stovalls at Caddoween. Our deepest sympathies go out to the families of our friends who we have lost this year. They will not soon be forgotten.

On a happier note, my daughter Angela's wedding took place the week after Easter. Quite a bit of time was invested getting ready for the big day and it was all well spent. We had a perfect day and everything went just great. I was a very proud dad that day, but I could not help but be a little sad to see my little girl all grown up and leaving home. As of this writing, all is well with the newlyweds. They are busy getting settled into their home. Maybe we will see them on a trip here soon.

We have had plenty of new young faces out on trips with us this spring. Both of Nancy Jenkins' kids have both been along on trips. In fact her son, Brandon, was on the Memorial Day trip the day after his high school graduation. Earl Atnip and his son came along on the Memorial Day trip, and Mark Crowe makes it a point to come along whenever he is in town. It's always good to see young folks getting into the outdoors and taking an interest in paddling.

Well, it's only June, so we have lots of paddling to do yet. The Moonlight Floats are coming up the last Saturday of June, July and August. On Saturday, July 14, we will be doing an overnight on the Kiamichi River between US271 and OK 3 just outside of Antlers. We will also be doing afternoon trips to the Lower Mountain Fork to catch the dam releases in July. Plus we have TRC XII coming up in September, and the two river cleanups to prepare for that race in August. Hope you have the chance to join us. Look forward to seeing you there.



Medina River Cleanup

by Carolee Doty

On the weekend of May 5th, several of us went back to the Hill Country to the Medina River Cleanup in Bandera, Texas. The beauty of the area, including the drive down 281 through Lampassas and Marble Falls, as well as the famed BBQ meal in Glen Rose at Hammonds, is a magnet. The annual river cleanup there is well-run, fun and rewarding. Free camping was available at the city park (open to camping specifically for this event and festivities) or across the street at the Pioneer River Resort (complete with nice showers, pool and Jacuzzi). We didn't make it for the hamburgers Friday night, but Saturday morning before we left, they were serving yummy German sausage in tortillas, donuts, juice...and cooking brisket for dinner!

The river was divided into cleanup sections and shuttles were running to each. We chose the upper section just below Medina and were accompanied by an experienced, friendly, helpful local business owner. The river was gorgeous and the cleanup was a good combination of hard work and fun. Getting larger amounts of "square wire fencing" and rubber hose untangled and into the canoe was challenging, as well as keeping them on the boat! At the end, it was absolutely amazing to see the amount, size and types of debris collected - enough to fill a large city waste container, a long flatbed truck (piled with tires) and a large city dump truck (filled with *stacked* aluminum pieces).

In the evening, dinner was served (delicious BBQ with homemade sides and desserts) and prizes given out for the biggest and best trash. First prize went to a long aluminum john boat which many had passed by as it was so tightly wrapped around a tree. We actually won 4th place for a 10+ ft. military blivit (pontoon?!) which was dragged in by rope behind a canoe. Great folk music was provided by once national artists and a good time was had by all. Lest I forget to mention, the town of Bandera has lots of charming places and people. On Friday night, we sampled the local watering holes with their wonderful live music. A local resident rode up to the bar on his huge pet longhorn, Oreo, and tied him to the rail! Later on, we joined a wedding party, some in from London, dancing and celebrating at the Bandera Saloon.

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DDRC T-shirts available at our meetings for \$10 each.

Annual Memorial Day Float

By Bryan Jackson

Memorial Day weekend found us on the Lower Mountain Fork for a two-night trip down to Ashalintubbi on the rain swollen Little River. We had planned to go all the way to Horatio , Arkansas, but with the river as high as it was we were afraid of not finding a decent place to camp, so we cut it short and made a leisurely trip out of it. We covered a grueling 6 miles the first day and about three or four the second and spent the rest of the time fishing and relaxing. We made a great gumbo the first night out featuring fresh caught fish. Fishing both days was okay, but Steve Crowe had the catch of the weekend with a good size rainbow trout. It was a shame to have to toss him back (no trout stamp). Weldon brought his new 16' cataraft to try out and had no problems thanks to the high water. We covered the last few miles to the takeout in less than an hour on Monday and were off the river by 11:30am.

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A White (?!) Easter Weekend in the Hill Country

By Bryan Jackson

The Easter weekend trip, originally scheduled for the Mulberry and Big Piney rivers in Arkansas, was changed at the last minute due to low water conditions. Fortunately, the Hill Country had been getting plenty of rain so it was decided to go down, camp at Weidner Ranch and paddle the Medina River and the Upper Guadalupe.

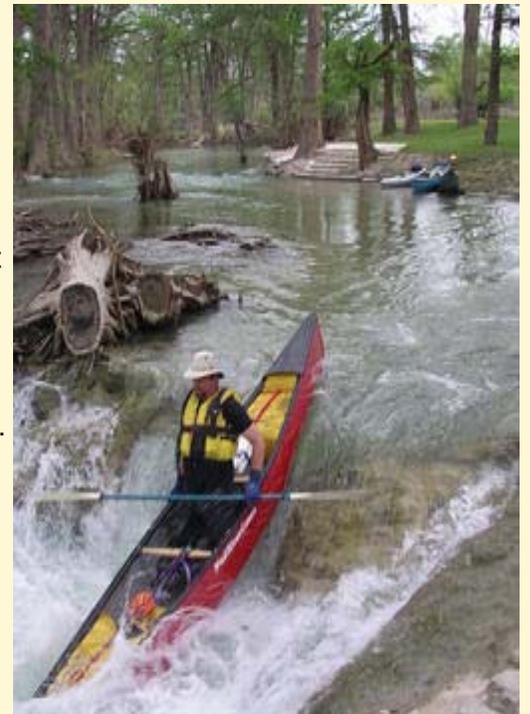
A few of us were able to get away early Thursday afternoon and we arrived at the ranch in plenty of time to set up camp and run a shuttle down to Rebecca Creek Road for a late afternoon run. The weather was absolutely beautiful and the Guad was at an excellent level for a great ride down the river. We made the 5 or so mile run before it got dark, came back, had a big dinner and waited for all the people who had to work on Thursday to arrive.

Friday morning we set off for Medina, TX to put in on the Medina and paddle down to Bandera. Given that it has been quite dry down in the Hill Country a lot of us had never been on this river (myself included) and it had been quite a while for those who had. It certainly was not a disappointment. Loaded with twists and turns and having to thread your way between trees, this narrow little river was a total blast. The two premium attractions, the low water dam drop just outside of Medina and Stewart Falls, both were great fun to run and were expertly handled by all of our paddlers, I might add.

One small snafu in our plans for that day was that the person that was supposed to meet us and provide our shuttle back to Medina got tied up at work and was unable to meet us. We took out at Ranger Park, which is right on TX 16 and asked a passerby for a lift back up to get the van and trailer. As usual Hill Country hospitality was in full effect and Marc was back very quickly with the vehicle, which was a good thing. When we left Medina we had sun and 60's, but by the time we got down to Bandera, the sun was behind some really dark clouds and it was getting cold enough that we built a fire in the picnic area barbecue grill to stay warm. By the time we got back to the ranch that night, it was getting downright cold. We built a fire, had some dinner and turned in early. Sam and Carolee had arrived late Friday afternoon.

By the next morning it was pouring rain, but even that was an improvement since it had apparently been snowing all night. Snowing? In April? Outside of San Antonio? Yep, sure was. And it was just cold enough to be miserable as well. Sam and Carolee as well as Sam and Jean Ting decided to take off for Dallas. We put up Marc's big tent and put a tarp over it and had John K's propane heater to keep the place warm. We took an afternoon trip into San Antonio for supplies, lunch and just to get out of the weather. Sam Sloan reported heavy snow on the road on 281 as far north as Hamilton, so we figured we would just sit tight. No sense taking down a bunch of cold wet tents, it had to get better, right? Of course not, it just rained harder as the day progressed and we sat around in our above freezing tent reading and listening to John's tiny TV. Later it was off to dinner at Spring Branch's own Antlers Restaurant and then back to the tent where we all called it a night.

We packed up early Sunday and got on the road back to Dallas. We had seen enough rain and it did not look like much paddling was going to get done. The highlight of the day was stopping for breakfast at the Blue Bonnet Café in Marble Falls. It definitely deserves its place on the top ten restaurants on a Texas list. You can always tell when we find good food.....nobody talks!



TRINITY RIVER CHALLENGE XII

Preparations for Trinity River Challenge XII are under way, with early registration opening on July 1 and tickets for the canoe raffle going on sale the same day.

The TRC is actually a three-week event since the race is preceded by two weekends of cleaning up the river along the race course and in McInnish Park. On August 25th is the Trinity Trash Bash. North Texas Canoe has already committed to loaning boats for this year, so make sure you thank Richard Steppe when you see him. We will still need extra boats that day, so if you have any extra canoes or kayaks that you can bring to McInnish park or need them transported, please contact Sam Sloan and let him know. Then, on September 1st is the Annual Watermelon Cleanup of the park itself—the staging, registration and lunch/awards area. This is also when most of the various race day committees work on any last minute details. The following week is the big race, with contestants coming from far and wide.

This year's race features a few changes in the rules, including: a restructuring of the recreational kayak classes, a few procedural changes to help get racers into the water in a more organized fashion at starting time and a change to solo canoes that allows racers age 50 and older to use a double blade paddle if they choose to. Also, a new award will be presented this year in honor of our friend and race sponsor, Julie Basham, to the fastest time turned in by a female paddler in a recreational class.

Putting the TRC on every year is a lot of work. We have been fortunate that we have a core group that comes back year after year to oversee the preparation and race day execution. These folks are great at what they are doing, but they need your help to make it happen. We currently need several people to coordinate with Sam Sloan to visit businesses around the area to solicit or collect race donations. We send out dozens of letters every year asking for support, but they need to be followed up on to ensure that we get the donations that we depend on to help defray the cost of putting on the race. We also need people to help at the cleanups and to fill the following race day jobs:

Harbor Masters
Timing and Registration
Food Preparation and Serving
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Please contact Sloan or Bryan Jackson to volunteer. Thanks in advance for volunteering. We know we can count on you to help us continue to build on the success of the past TRCs and make TRCXII the best yet.

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Hi, Folks!

As the dust settles from the stir in the Legislature, I want to send a summary of what **Senate Bill 3**, the omnibus water legislation passed by the Legislature last week, means for our future.

WHAT THE BILL DOES:**Regarding reservoirs:**

Passage of SB 3 means that any reservoir that is recommended in the state water plan as a unique reservoir site will be so designated. It does *not* necessarily mean they will be built, only that they will carry this designation. There is a termination date on the designation for any reservoir whose project sponsor has not voted funding for permitting or construction by September 1, 2015. It puts a few landowner protections in place, but many of those added at one point were stripped out later. It also provides for a study commission with equal representation between Region C (DFW-North Texas) and Region D (Northeast Texas where Marvin Nichols and other reservoirs are proposed). Included are Marvin Nichols, Fastrill, Lower Bois d'Arc Creek, Bedias Creek, Ralph Hall Lake, and 14 others.

Regarding other water issues:

SB 3 contains provisions to promote water conservation and crucial provisions to protect what are being called "environmental flows". The term environmental flows refers to water left in rivers to support fish and wildlife, replenish wetlands, and provide essential fresh water to the bays and estuaries that serve as the nursery grounds for marine animals. There was also language in SB 3 regarding the Edwards Aquifer. I am less familiar with the Edwards Aquifer provisions, but am told by colleagues that some of them are not good.

WHAT SB 3 MEANS REGARDING RESERVOIRS:

- **It DOES NOT mean that these reservoirs will be built!**

- The immediate losers are the **landowners**. The designation puts a cloud over land in the reservoir sites. Property values are likely to go down as buyers are leery of buying land that may be condemned. Landowners not wanting to sell still have great uncertainty about whether to build a house, a barn, or other improvements, whether to plant a long-term crop like trees, whether to invest money in land that may be taken from them and inundated.

- Having the unique reservoir site does increase public perception that a reservoir might be built.

- ***BUT, the designation really doesn't do very much in terms of real furthering of the reservoir projects.***

It restricts state and local governments from taking actions that would preclude a reservoir, but **IT DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT A RESERVOIR WILL BE BUILT.**

- Reservoirs still have to have state and federal permits. They still have to have funding. We are still going to be opposing them just as we were. Our game plan hasn't changed much.

- **In the case of Fastrill, it changes nothing unless the judge rules to overturn the Neches River Refuge.** The presence of the federal refuge supersedes any state designation, so SB 3 has no effect. Should the judge rule completely in favor of Dallas and TWDB and overturn the refuge, which is unlikely, then the designation might influence the politics. But it makes no difference at this point.

WHAT WE NEED TO DO:

THANK the legislators who stood up for us in the legislature! State Representative Stephen Frost was nothing short of amazing. Others who deserve thanks include Representatives Dan Gattis, Jim McReynolds, Chuck Hopson, Lon Burnam, Tuffy Hamilton, Tommy Merritt, and Robby Cook and State Senator Kevin Eltife. All these worked hard to oppose the unique reservoir site designation and protect landowners. Rep. Mark Homer should be thanked for continuing to oppose Marvin Nichols. Rep. Larry Phillips for getting an amendment in the House version (not in final version) to make designation of Bois d'Arc and Ralph Hall subject to a vote of the Fannin County Commissioners Court. Rep. Jim Dunnam for a similar amendment regarding Bedias Creek Reservoir. The contact info for all state legislators is at <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>

We should celebrate the environmental flows and water conservation victories and lament, but not despair over, the passage of unique reservoir site designations. The designation of 19 reservoir sites is hard on the landowners in the areas of the lake, but it doesn't change the situation very much regarding whether reservoirs will be built.

Janice

Janice Bezanson, Executive Director

Texas Conservation Alliance, Formerly Texas Committee on Natural Resources (TCNR)



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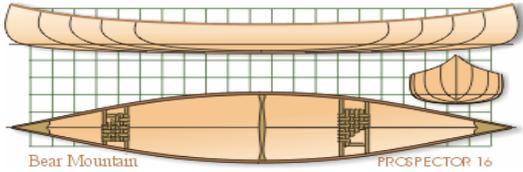
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Attention all DDRC Members:

During the year, various local groups, paddling clubs and the TRPA will be hosting cleanups on rivers around the state.

1) Any DDRC member that participates in any two TRPA river cleanups will receive a FREE DDRC T- SHIRT and 25 miles credit towards the 2006 most miles paddled award (for each cleanup). 2 cleanups = 50 miles, the more you clean the more you earn.

2) Any DDRC member that participates in any two TRPA river cleanups and one of either Watermelon Cleanups in preparation for TRC XI, races for free in TRC XI.

What a deal, what a concept ! Clean rivers, be a friend to the environment, get free stuff! Cleanups will be posted in the newsletter, on the website and email reminders.

~Bryan Jackson, DDRC President

DALLAS DOWNRIVER CLUB

P.O. Box 820246
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*The Official Newsletter of the Dallas
Downriver Club*

Postage

Next DDRC Meeting
Thursday 7:00 PM
June 21, 2007

On the Border
3130 Knox St.
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DDRC Meetings are the 3rd
Thursday of every month.

This will be the site of our
meetings until further notice.

