

The DDRC Current News

Newsletter of the Dallas Downriver Club—Visit our website at www.down-river.org March 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 Tuesday** of the month - **7:00 PM** @ At Half Price Books on Northwest Highway. All members are welcome to attend to learn more about club business.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Paul Boling Update — Paul is up and running (well pedaling)! His doctors have released him to do basically whatever he wants and is able to do. He's back up to 40 miles a day on his bike and hopes to be in paddling shape real soon. He went fly fishing solo up on the Mountain Fork this week., so Ann must concur with the doctor's prognosis.

Newsletter content needed— Hey gang...Please share your adventures, recipes, photos, classifieds, wants & needs (!) with us for our reading enjoyment. Email content to newsletter editor Carolee Doty at la_sirena_84@yahoo.com.

Trips and Events

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

3/15— Monthly Meeting at On the Border

3/17-18— Kiamichi River

4/6-8— Mulberry, Big Piney Rivers

4/14— Brazos Cleanup

4/21-22— Swiftwater Rescue Class

4/22— Garland Earth Day

4/28-29— Middle Sabine River

5/5— Medina River Cleanup

5/12-13— Illinois River

5/26-28— Memorial Day Trip on the Little River



John K. watches as Tom Taylor prepares dinner in his "kitchen" at the site of his new home in McKinney. What will the neighbors think?

If you do not receive the newsletter by email but wish to be notified of trips by email, contact Bryan Jackson at hollowcreek@paddlinpals.com.

Spring Fest - A San Marcos River Paddling Festival

March 30-April 1, 2007

As Tommy paddled swiftly down the San Marcos River he wondered why so many dams blocked the river. The dams had not been used in decades. When he ran into dams like the one at Thompson's Island, made of piled up rocks, and such, he got out and cleared a path for his canoe to pass. One dam, Rio Vista, was actually run-able in his race boat; though he rarely did it because his race boat was his vehicle of choice, and it usually wasn't worth breaking it for the chance to run the falls. So Mr. Tom Goynes started campaigning to have dams like these removed to return the river to a more natural state. This led to the formation of the TX River Protection Association, www.txrivers.org, which fights the damming and drying up of our precious Texas Rivers.

Tom's tireless efforts to protect our rivers have had far reaching effects, but many of his greatest victories are hard to measure. The war rages on for many of us, and while in most battles it is hard to see victory for either side, Hidalgo and Rio Vista Falls will forever mark the success of a man who has led the paddlers of Texas for 40 years through his love of the river. The mere fact that Tom shows up to fight for what he believes in is a victory for the rest of us, paddlers, because every drop of water that he saves or keeps flowing is one that not only we get to paddle, but our kids might get to enjoy. . . So come celebrate the newly constructed Rio Vista Falls with Tom and your fellow paddlers from around the state on his home river, the ever-flowing San Marcos March 30 – April 1, 2007. Preregister: <http://www.redriverracing.org/springsfest.htm>

Demos

Instruction

Competitions

March 30 – April 1, 2007 at Rio Vista Falls Park, San Marcos, TX

Demos:

Discover what new or used kayak suits you best with the help of San Marcos's own kayak shop: TG's Canoe/Kayak, and representatives from all of the major manufacturers!

Instruction:

Try fishing from a kayak or hone your paddling skills with the guidance of caring, nationally certified, local instructors from San Marcos's own non-profit, paddling school: The Olympic Outdoor Center; including US National Team members, Olympians, and Olympic hopefuls! Don't miss the video and picture presentations on your potential Adventure Trips to Mexico, the Southeast, the Appalachians, Colorado, and the Ottawa!

Competitions:

Cheer on your local team The Red River Racing Team as they compete against teams from around the country on their home course: Rio Vista Falls or put your paddle in for the Texas State Relay race or the San Marcos Marathon! Then enjoy a Freestyle Canoe performance during dinner at the San Marcos River Pub's crawfish boil!

Seminars Include the following and more:

Never Ever- Don't miss this chance to try kayaking with the care and guidance of instructors from the Olympic Outdoor Center. Technique defines the quality of your paddling experience so do not let bad habits take root. Learn to paddle right, right from the start. \$10

Demos – Do you have a boat on your wish list? Come try your dream boat before you buy one. Boats are available to paddle from manufacturers like: \$10 **Whitewater: JACKSON KAYAKS, RIOT, LIQUIDLOGIC, PERCEPTION, DAGGER, WAVE SPORT, AND EURO Recreational: WILDERNESS SYSTEMS, DAGGER, LIQUID-LOGIC, PERCEPTION, OCEAN KAYAKS, OLD TOWN, HERITAGE, AND RIOT. Canoes: OLD TOWN, WENONAH, BUFFALO, and ALUMACRAFT.**

Water Divas – Ladies learn to paddle much more quickly than most men so why should you be held back by some guys that think that they know better? Come learn from instructors who live and breathe the sport, and understand what you are facing while learning to paddle. \$20

Swiftwater rescue – Do you know what to do if you get into trouble in a river? Would you enjoy your time on the water more with friends and family if you knew how to help them if they get into trouble? Come experience, analyze, prepare for and execute rescue scenarios with the guidance of professional rescue instructors. \$20

Kayak 101 - Have you tried kayaking, and want to learn more? Get started with some help from seasoned veterans, and certified instructors that can help to make your progress quicker and more fun. \$20

Canoe 101 – Did you know that most kayak technique was developed by canoers? Come learn why, and other surprising things about canoeing. \$20

Fishing 101 – Do you want to be where the fish are without them knowing that you are there? Discover where to go, what to bring, and how to catch the next “big one” from a kayak or canoe. \$20

360's – Do you flush out of your favorite wave when you start to turn? Then practice spinning back, and enjoy another dimension to your kayaking. \$20

Get Vertical – Would you like to jump your kayak out of the water? Modern whitewater kayaks can all get vertical; it is fun to use the power of the water to fly out of the water. Come play with instructors that can unlock the potential of your kayak. \$20

Rafting/ River permits – What do you paddle if you want or need to bring more than just the most basic equipment on the river? Some of America's best stretches of river require multi-day trips, and only allow limited access. Find out how you can join local and national groups to do these trips, and plan to organize your own trip with the help of experienced instructors. \$20

Whitewater – Do you see a natural playground or a hazard when you see whitewater rapids? Water creates natural playgrounds when it falls through rocks that can be dangerous. Learn how to use the power of the water to play with it in your boat safely. \$20

Stroke Drills – What makes good paddlers “smooth?” The quality of your strokes defines your experience in a boat. So practice the skills that make the good paddlers so good.

Intermediate Whitewater – Do you like whitewater? Then tap into your paddling potential to take your enjoyment of the sport to the next level. \$20

Paddling Events — See the online events Calendar for more details

March 17-18 - Kiamichi River We will Camp at K River north of Antlers Ok and do day paddles on the river. Saturday potluck theme is Irish in honor of St Patrick's day. RSVP to Bryan Jackson if you plan on attending.

April 6-8— Mulberry/Big Piney Rivers, Arkansas—We will be camping at Long Pool Campground and paddling Friday and Saturday. Bring items for a pot luck dinner on both Friday and Saturday nights. We will return home on Sunday. Intermediate skill level required. Contact Bryan Jackson for details.

April 14— Brazos River Cleanup near Glen Rose TX. Join the Friends of the Brazos and volunteers from all of the Dallas area paddling clubs to give the Brazos a spring cleaning. Meet at Tres Rios Campground at 8:30 am. Bring rakes, shovels or a pick or digging bar as there be big trash on the Brazos. Last year we dug up close to 150 tires ! Barbecue lunch will be served to all volunteers after the cleanup. For more info, contact Ed Lowe @214-358-0612 or email twt-edlowe@msn.com

April 21-22- Swiftwater Rescue Class Instructor Phil Meyer will be holding a two day session. You can take either a one or two day class. \$75 per day. Those that took the one day class in October may take both days for \$95. Contact Bryan for more info.

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April 28-29 Middle Sabine River We will be paddling from the US 79 bridge to the FM2517 bridge on the Sabine in Carthage. We will be camping on the river, so bring everything you need for one night. Fishing is excellent on this trip so bring your tackle. More details to follow on the web site events calendar.

May 5 Medina River Cleanup We will be camping in Bandera (camping area TBD) Friday and Saturday night. River cleanup on Saturday and provided we have sufficient flow, we paddle the river on Sunday. Contact Tom Taylor for more info.

May 12-13 Illinois River Camping at Peyton's Place and paddling day trips. Potluck on Saturday night. More details to follow on the web site events calendar.

May 26-28 Memorial Day Weekend Currently planned for the Little River, but we may move it to the Middle Sabine depending on the April trip. Watch the events calendar for details.

Another Upper Sabine River trip.

By Dale Harris

I guess we had to keep trying the upper Sabine River. Surely you've heard the stories of the upper Sabine from a little over a year ago. Where there were so many trees laying across the river that a few of our DDRC colleagues did not make their overall goal and had to spend the night on the river with little preparations. Well on this trip we went a little farther south and did not have the problems with trees clogging up the river.

Marc McCord, Walter Velez and I canoed the Sabine River near Carthage on February 10th and 11th. The weather was a little chilly, ok a little cold, but we had sunshine. It was also a little windy, and as always the wind was in our face. We met Saturday morning at the 1794 bridge and boat ramp at 8am the boat ramp already had several fisherman who had launched their boats. Marc was his usual self, optimistic about the day on the river. Walter, however, was not felling good and hoped a day on the water with fresh would do him good.

We had mapped the river out so we could do two 12-mile days and the water was moving fast (1.5 – 1.8 miles per hour) enough that it seemed it would not be a problem. Do to the speed of the water we decided to travel light and not take our camping gear. We placed one of our vehicles at the route 79 bridge to the south and we were off. Saturday went very smoothly, with the exception of the wind and the cold.

(cont. page 7)

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Another Upper Sabine River Trip (cont.)

This section of the Sabine is your basic East Texas River – tannic in color and because we were in there in early February the trees and underbrush were also brown. So needless to say it was your typical winter drab as far as scenery goes. Now having said that I must tell you about the beautiful beaches along the Sabine – they are just gorgeous. We ran across a large sandy beach every mile or so on the upper section and about every ½ mile or so by the time we reached our take out point. It was a bit early for the white bass run but Walter did catch one nice fish.

We camped at the 79 bridge and boat ramp. We were late setting up camp because I didn't like the idea of camping with in 200 hundred yards of a 4 lane highway so I drug Mark to two other “put-in” places to look at. We ended up camping at the 79 bridge, but it felt like you were camping on a main road at the edge of town and right in plain site of everyone.

The next day we decided to canoe the section of river above the section we did on Saturday. We put in at the route 59 bridge and boat ramp. The boat ramp was being rebuilt so not may boaters and it was no problem for canoeist. This section is about 6 miles long and had a small waterfall at about the halfway point. And it had a few small rapids after the waterfall.

Overall the upper Sabine around Carthage is a smooth easy to canoe river and easy to manage your own shuttles. There is usually good water flow and last but not least there are numerous long sandy beaches to camp on. The main reason I wanted to do this trip report is because I think this could be an alternative to a Kiamichi River when the water is low on the Kiamichi. Like the Kiamichi it is about 3 hours away from Dallas, but it has excellent on the river camping spots. And it has more average water flow than the Kiamichi. Just food for thought!

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Trip Report: by Tom Taylor

San Marcos River Clean Up March 3-4

Tom Taylor, Steve Crowe and new member Lee Crawford participated in the San Marcos river clean up the first weekend in April. Now I had a hard time with the initial concept since every trip is a clean-up trip for me, especially on the San Marcos.

The three of us and six members of a Houston group covered the section of the San Marcos from Staples Dam to Fentress. I have paddled that section twice before but it was Steve's first and Lee's first trip in a canoe.

We found more trash than the group initially expected, since it's not a toober section of river, mostly highway trash and fisherman leavings. We started at about 11:00 am after the shuttle and got off the river about 5:00.

We had a great fish fry courtesy of Spenser's Canoe Livery and two nights of free camping courtesy of Pat Spenser and Shady Grove Campground.

Next trip is the Medina River Clean-up near Medina TX. Hope to see more of us there, its a river we don't often get a chance to paddle.

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IT HAS COME TO MY ATTENTION THAT A BILL WILL BE INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE PETE GALLEGOS THAT WOULD BAN GLASS CONTAINERS FROM TEXAS RIVERBEDS. IT IS LISTED AS HB 450 WHILE IT WILL NOT COMPLETELY SOLVE THE LITTER PROBLEM IN RIVERS, IT IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. I ENCOURAGE YOU TO READ IT AND IF YOU SUPPORT IT PLEASE WRITE OR CALL REPRESENTATIVE GALLEGOS AND LET HIM KNOW YOU SUPPORT IT. THE HONORABLE PETE GALLEGOS, TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, P.O. BOX 2910, AUSTIN, TX. 78768-2910. 512-463-0566.

This bill would ban "possession... of glass containers... within boundary of a state owned riverbed...". I guess that permits them on shore? At least it's a step in the right direction.

Rich Grayson

Eight Days in the Lower Canyons of the Rio Grande, Part 4

by Marc McCord

After a wild ride at Rodeo Rapid and a most difficult portage at the very low Upper Madison Falls the rest of the trip seemed easy. Rather than our customary campsite on the Mexican side, we opted for a large and comfortable campsite on the Texas side above Lower Madison Falls, which we would encounter the following morning. After that portage we just wanted a decent place to rest and recuperate for the remainder of the trip.

We encountered a difficult time getting through Lower Madison Falls because it was Bone Zone paddling all the way, and there were plenty of places to get stuck. Lower Madison was a pinball run, with canoes bouncing left and right and left again off every boulder in our paths. Sam made a very clean run, and Tom's was nearly as clean. In spite of what he often claims, I personally saw Zoltan bouncing off boulders. He claims that all the scratches and dings on his boat were put there by others, but I know better! Larry Rice aced the run in his inflatable canoe and Larry Welch, construction hardhat atop his head, managed to get too far right and beached on rocks.

The run started fast and furious, as I chose a line down the far left side. Near the end a couple of boulders conspired to trap the bow of my boat between them, and my run ended by my having to get out, free the boat, then line and pull it the rest of the way through. Somebody must have pulled the plug on the part of the river where I was paddling, because the water was just too low for a clean run. As with most things in life, I should have taken the middle road, but that ain't never been my style, and I was not about to change then!

Gary and Julie made a very good run, as did Gib and Virginia. Walter made a great run - he did not capsize or pin his boat, though he tried. Below Lower Madison, we had a very scenic and easy paddle down to Panther Gulch, where we camped overnight. It was hard to tell that we were actually at Panther because the tinaja was overgrown with cane and we never got stuck in the river left quicksand that inundates that area. Larry Rice, Tom and Gary opted for the very high ground - the high rent district, if you will, so they could look down on the rest of us poor souls. Climbing out of boats and unloading gear was somewhat difficult due to the low water conditions and the depth of the river right up against the bank, but we made it.

While we prepared a delicious dinner of grilled cod fillets and steamed vegetables, which ended up taking longer than anticipated, Gib set to making one of his remarkably delicious Dutch oven peach cobbles. If you have never tasted Gib's peach cobbler, then your life has truly been shortchanged. We ended up taking no chances - we ate dessert first! Personally, I like that philosophy on life! Before the rest of the meal was ready half our group was snoring - LOUDLY - and



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the rest of us ate as much fish and vegetables as we could stomach after stuffing on cobbler, every bite of which was devoured.



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The next morning we found that Panther Rapid was a mere pussy cat, and nobody had any problems other than the fact that the water was too low for any real whitewater excitement. Panther is one of my favorite rapids on the Rio Grande, but we were a couple of weeks too late for a fun ride. We paddled a long day down to Lady Finger Bend, where we camped for our last night on the river. We had an excellent campsite with an easy landing and a fairly flat area for setting up tents.

By now, the stress of a long trip was starting to wear on everybody, and we had a long discussion about camping where we did. It was earlier than we would have normally stopped, but the site looked inviting, and in the end I made a command decision that we were staying there for the night. We set up camp, started preparing a wonderful dinner, and in the process of walking the area discovered very fresh mountain lion paw prints that were nearly as large as Walter's hand. This cat had to be at least 150 pounds, and perhaps much larger. The prints were clear, and we could tell that the lion had recently watered there.

We built a fire using all the remaining firelogs that we had brought with us, then sat around the warm fire on a brisk night looking at the stars and reflecting on how much we had enjoyed a truly grand trip in the Lower Canyons. Larry Rice had not been there since 1978. Zoltan does this trip every year. It was my fourth Lower Canyons trip, and my third since 2003. For everybody else, this was their first trip to this magical place, those almost all of us had run other parts of the river, and most of us had done it together on at least one occasion.

We awoke on our final morning on the river. It was just about dawn - a little after 6 AM. While packing my bags inside my tent I heard a gawdawful roar of a very large mountain lion immediately behind our tents. I figured it was pissed because we were at its watering hole, but it was not about to come into our camp and encounter a bunch that might be of a mind to have mountain lion for breakfast. Having already seen numerous, large paw prints, we were ready for anything.

Now, I have made eight Rio Grande trips since 2003, but have never seen a lion or a bear. I have seen scat and paw prints, but no actual sightings of one of those animals. I grabbed my camera and came flying out of my tent, ready to "shoot" the big cat. It never made an appearance. By now, Gary was grinning like a ****-eating possum, and that was when we learned that what we heard had been a Zobcat, which is a VERY large beastly species from Hungary that walks on its hind legs and often paddles a canoe in the Texas Water Safari. Zoltan had

(cont. from previous page)

done a perfect imitation of a lion, and he fooled everybody except Gary, who was in on the prank.

Realizing we had been had, we finished packing, and then hit the river for a short few miles down to Dryden and our take-out, where Ted Thayer had parked our vehicles. Ted had done everything he was supposed to do, and we were happy to find everything in fine working order upon our arrival. A great trip was in the books, and we packed our vehicles for the trip back home.

On a sad note, we later discovered that Stillman Dudley Harrison, who was one of the pioneers of Terrell County, had served in the Texas Legislature, as a County Judge, and held many positions as civil servant and philanthropist, had passed away the day before our trip ended. I had known that he was a little under the weather, but had no idea that we would not get to



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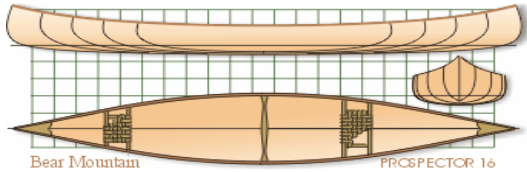
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Attention all DDRC Members:

2007 membership dues are now due!

Time to get your 2006 paddling logs in for the Most Miles Paddled awards. Deadline is the March meeting.

Don't forget, you get double miles for participating in river cleanups and BONUS miles for volunteering in Earth Day, Outdoor Kids Adventure Days and other activities through the year.

Nominations for Officer elections will be open at the January and February meetings with elections being held in March. Elected offices are President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Newsletter Editor.

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*The Official Newsletter of the Dallas
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Next DDRC Meeting

Thursday 7:00 PM

March 15, 2007

On the Border

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**DDRC Meetings are the 3rd
Thursday of every month.**

