

The DDRC Current News

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

March 2004

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 - 6:30 PM @ Enchilada's (directions on back of newsletter). All members are welcome to attend to learn more about club business.

DDRC Welcomes New Members

Kelly Wilkerson
Dale Harris
Jon Peacock

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sympathies and Support

The Dallas Downriver Club wishes to express our deepest sympathies to Mary and Ray Foley in the loss of their daughter, Mellissa Stewart, to lung cancer. The Foleys will be raising 4-year old Brianne and are now in need of a child's PFD, should you have one to share. Please keep the Foleys in your thoughts and prayers.

Get Well

Best wishes for speedy recoveries and good health go to Pat Chamberlain and Faith O'Neill.

Forney Water Safari Cancelled

The exploration trip to exotic Forney, scheduled for March 13 & 14, has been cancelled due to muddy river conditions. We'll try this trip again at a later date.

Upcoming & Ongoing Events & Trips

January 23 - April 9 (Fri.): Arnie Blatt's Fabulous Friday Flip Nights-The Colony Aquatic Park (972) 624-2225. Bring your own boat and practice those rolls. Cost is \$4 per drop-in OR \$15 for 5 visits.

March 27 (Sat.): Urban Paddle and Potluck Adventure - Garland

Meet at 10:00 A.M. at Rowlett Creek in Garland. Put in on Miller Road, just west of Centerville Road. See calendar and Phil's Urban Paddle report for additional information. Bring food for the potluck lunch. Contacts are Pat Chamberlain, pchamberlain29@hotmail.com, 972-727-3586, or Phil Lang, philip_lang@sbcglobal.net, 214-564-9628.

April 2-4 (Sat.-Sun.): Kiamichi River, Oklahoma

We will be camping at KRiver Campground north of Antlers, OK, paddling Sat. and Sun., and enjoying a potluck supper on Sat. night. For information, contact Bryan Jackson (972) 979-2519 or email Bryan.Jackson@paddlinpals.com.

April 3 (Sat.): Brazos River Cleanup

A Glen Rose river cleanup from Hwy 67 down to Brazos Point. If needed, Low Water Canoes (254) 897-3666 will provide free canoes and a shuttle. Tres Rios Resort is offering free camping. For info. contact Ed Lowe at Texas Water Trails (214)-358-0612.

April 8-11 (Thur. - Sun.): Easter Weekend on the Buffalo River in Arkansas

Join us on the Buffalo River with camping at Tyler Bend National Park. Expect about an 8-hour drive from Dallas, driving Thurs. & Sun. (if you are able.) Paddling Fri. and Sat., returning to camp both nights. Can travel Fri. and paddle Sat. if you can't leave sooner. Bring food to share in a potluck dinner. Call Marilyn at 214-208-3528 or 972-370-5844.

April 18 (Sun.): Hidalgo Falls River Festival

On the TRPA Hidalgo Falls property on the Brazos River near Navasota. Events begin 10:00 a.m. with a 6.5-mile downriver race, then Slalom race at 1:30 p.m., whitewater rodeo at 3:00 and awards ceremony at 5:30 p.m.

April 23-25 (Fri.-Sun.): Upper Guadalupe River (because we can't get enough of a good thing!)

Paddling sections of the Upper Guadalupe between FM 3351 and US 281 near Spring Branch, TX on Sat. and Sun., and chowing down on potluck Sat. night. We'll camp at Guadalupe River State Park and recommend that you make park camping reservations in advance. Contact Bryan Jackson at 972-979-2519 or email Hollowcreek@paddlinpals.com.

Upper Guadalupe Trip Report by Bryan Jackson

It was definitely not looking good weather wise for the DFW area when we set off on our Upper Gaud trip on Feb 13 (Friday the 13th of course). Snow and cold temps were in the forecast for as far south as Waco and Austin. The Spring Branch, TX forecast was a little more hopeful, maybe some rain Friday night, followed by a warm Saturday and a warmer Sunday. Conflicting weather reports and the possibility of difficult driving caused many to decide not to go. Just before we hit the road, I received an encouraging call from Jaws, who was already south of Austin, making sure we were coming and verifying the milder forecast. We passed some icy trees in Waco, but otherwise the roads were clear all the way down.

We met up with Jaws and set up camp at Guadalupe River S.P. before dark. The park was shrouded in a mist that had everything damp, but it was not really raining. A little later the Scott's and the O'Neill's made it in and set up. Alan and Betty Scott had their motor home and made sure we knew we had someplace to go if it got too cold or the weather got bad. After dinner and a futile attempt at making a decent fire, we all called it a night early.

About 2 or 3 am it rained, sleeted and snowed for about an hour. As the storm passed the cloud cover went too and it got really cold. Mike O'Neil's thermometer read 25 degrees early Saturday morning and the trees and our tents were covered with ice and snow. It was really pretty, while it lasted. By 9 am the sun was up and bright and the temperature was on the rise. Larry Lewis joined us after driving down early in the morning and we decided that after a late start to let things warm up we would only do a short section of the river.

We put in at Edge Falls Rd., which is about 4 miles above the park. Joined with a group from the San Antonio Saturday Paddlers, we set off down the river. Larry's black lab Audrey and Jaws' lab Samantha came along too. Sam was content for the most part to ride along in the boat, but Audrey was swimming and following from the bank. She got quite a workout. The run from Edge Falls to the park has 3 class I + rapids and a few rock gardens and is a fun paddle at just about any flow. Mile for mile, its probably the most active stretch of the river. The biggest challenge though was right at the put in. The flow at the Edge Falls Rd Bridge was on river left feeding a small rapid and leaving the right side dry and rocky, but the left and center passages of the bridge were clogged with logjams. This meant you had to go under the bridge on the far right and cut across to the left against the current on the downriver side of the bridge while staying off the rocks. It got your blood going, and everyone ran it like they were old masters.

The rest of the paddle was wonderful, good flow, sunshine, nobody dumped, who could ask for more! Sam Sloan made it in by the time we got back off of the river, having waited for the weather to die down before making the drive. After making fun of our soaked attempt at a campfire, he pulled a fresh supply of dry wood from his truck and built a beauty. Dutch ovens and stoves got going and by about dark it was pot-luck time. Corned beef brisket, roasted potatoes, green bean casserole, broccoli casserole, corn bread, chips and dip and cherry cobbler and ice cream for dessert. Folks we're just getting too good at feeding ourselves. Everyone put in some serious campfire time before going to bed. The highlight of the evening's conversation revolved around middle-aged men and Speedos and how the two should not be mixed.

Sunday was another beautiful day, but since we had to pack up and be out by 2pm, we decided to paddle the same run again. The river had dropped considerably overnight, exposing a few more rocks and causing a little dragging here and there, but still a good day was had by all. Betty made us all lunch while we were getting packed up. Her famous Fiesta Soup and salad really hit the spot.

Since we had to fight the weather, we could not spend as much time on the river as we all would have liked. In an effort to remedy that, I have scheduled the trip again for April 23-25. Guadalupe River SP fills up quickly in the spring so make your reservations soon if you are planning on coming.

**** Messages make great *Mother's Day* gifts * See page 6 for how to contact Marilyn Scholl ****

Newsletter EMAIL Issues

Please keep us posted of any changes in your email address. If you'd like to get the newsletter electronically, or haven't been getting it and you're wondering why, we might not have your correct email. Send the editor your email address at cathy_nelle@hotmail.com

As a participant in any DDRC activity, an individual assumes the responsibility of evaluating all inherent risks before participating and assumes any risk of death or injury inherent in the sport. The participant waives claims that may arise against the club, its officers, members, servants, agents and/or trip coordinators, for death or injury to person or property, including claims of vicarious liability and claims arising from civil recklessness or any degree of negligence. Not waived are claims against an individual who causes injury intentionally or with criminal recklessness and claims among driver, owner and passengers of a motor vehicle for injuries.

February Meeting Minutes by Eric & Marilyn

What a great meeting we had in February, with nine guests introduced!

- Trip Reports were shared on the Colorado River Freeze trip and the Upper Guad trip. Due to the success of the Guad trip, we'll repeat it in April. See the website for more information (also on newsletter Pg. 1.)
- New trips and activities were reviewed: Roll Classes in The Colony pool on Friday nights, the February Urban Paddle, and Bryan Jackson's Forney Water Safari (East Fork of the Trinity). For S. White Rock Creek, Dallas, talk to John Pullman. For the Kiamichi trip, see Bryan Jackson, and for Easter weekend at the Buffalo River, please see Marilyn Scholl, Pat Chamberlain or Eric Rounsefell.
- The Hidalgo Falls Race is 4/18-19 (put on by the TRPA). Talk to Rich Grayson for details (or see down-river website.)
- Sam Sloan announced a toll-free number to call to receive the Colorado Guide River Book for \$5.00. (Details on newsletter Pg. 7.)
- Gail Shipley gave the treasurer's report.
- Bryan Jackson, DDRC President, requested volunteers to handle the library, TRC raffle, monthly DDRC raffle and other DDRC duties.
- Mary Beth Kvanli is the new DDRC Safety Chairman and Sally Soldo will handle the Raffle.

Urban Paddle Fest by Phil Lang

The last three winters seem to have been very mild in my mind. They seem to be pretty mild outside too. Is it global warming? Is it El Niño? Is it an Elvis sighting? No, it's just Texas. We decided to run our little Urban Paddle year 'round just to see what would happen. Well, February 28th we had somewhere between 22 and 24 people show up for our event. We were joined by a good-sized group from DFW Paddlers. The day got underway about 10:30 as we headed north on the Trinity from McInnish Park. After about 2 hours on the river we cranked up lunch. The variety of food was awesome! Everything from hot dogs to chicken salad to Rice Crispy Treats to fruit salad, and on and on. Bryan saved the day by sacrificing his trailer to block the wind. Conversation was as plentiful as the food.

If this sounds like your kind of gig, please join us! This month we have a new venue to explore. On March 27th we will be headed over to Rowlett Creek. The put-in is off Miller road at the creek (Mapsco 30E). From LBJ (or 635 depending on your age bracket or where you spent the first 7 years of your life) head east about 7 miles (about a half mile east of Centerville Rd.) until you come to the creek. There is parking on all 4 corners, but we will probably meet in the southwest corner with the paved parking lot. The put-in is a little tricky, but there should be plenty of people to help with the task. It might just take a while if lots of people show up. Not a problem. Upstream has some points of interest. There is a Blue Herrin apartment complex, several cascading waterfalls(joke) and the "Swamp Thang." Downstream empties into the lake and has yet to be explored by man - as far as I know. If you are interested, just come on out and meet us at 10am. If you want more info, call Pat or Phil or send us an email. The info is on the website under "trips and events." Make sure you refresh your browser so you get a fresh batch of cookies (per Bryan).

****John Graves, friend of the Brazos River and author of the 1957 book "Goodbye to a River," was just honored with the 2004 Award of Excellence in Conservation from Fort Worth's Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT). The Star-Telegram ran a story on 2-15 that can be found at link <http://www.dfw.com/mld/dfw/living/7936139.htm>****

Thanks, Jerry Johnson, for the information!



**Pat Bayers (right) and her sister,
Jean Shaffer**

1st Annual Myakka River Race

by Pat Bayers

January 24 brought 53 competitors to the first annual Friends of Myakka River Race. Participants were attracted by the opportunity to support the state park and to paddle this Florida Wild and Scenic Waterway, located southeast of Sarasota.

The state park is one of Florida's oldest; developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1934. Those competing in the 'Distance' race paddled a 4-mile round trip sprint from the park entrance to lower Myakka Lake. The course offered a challenging run, with a

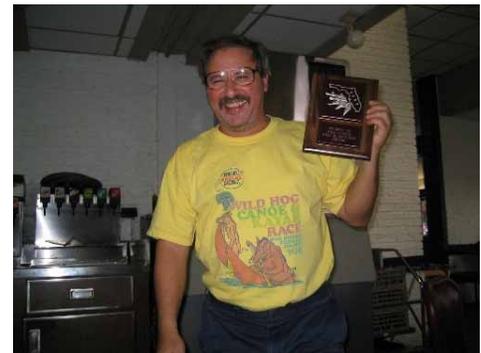
difficult mass start on this narrow river, plus numerous hair-pin turns and shallow sandbars. The turn-around point gave racers very shallow water at the Myakka River delta, topping layers of soft mud.

The shorter 2-mile course took paddlers deep into the park, to the favorite stomping grounds of the American Alligator. On the Monday preceding the race, Jean Shaffer and I paddled the river from the Upper Myakka Boat Basin to the area near the park entrance. We paddled through a birder's paradise. We observed large turtles and counted 114 alligators within a 2-mile stretch. They were enjoying the sunshine on the banks and swimming across the river. 'Gators share the biological subclass *Archosauria* with birds. Like birds, they lay eggs, build nests, and ingest stones to aid with digestion. We were relieved that the temperature was in the 50's . . . perfect for paddling but unfavorable for alligators to feed. They require a higher temperature (60 degrees or higher) to produce digestive enzymes. Throughout our canoe trip, we heard the bellowing of large males. Fortunately, there was no hissing: the sound of an impending defensive attack. These gators do not harm paddlers if they are given the respect they deserve. We reminded ourselves that we visiting their home.

Many spectators cheered the racers along both courses, and a large group took photos and encouraged the racers at the Route 72 bridge. Local newspapers sent reporters to cover the event and a host of volunteers assisted the racers. All participants were given a hearty yell by all as they crossed the finish line on their course. We were very impressed with the impeccable organization of the event, especially because it was the first paddling event that the Friends of Myakka hosted. Their sponsors set up nice booths containing paddling products, outdoor gear, and native Florida plant information. A kayak and gift certificates were raffled, plus all entrants received nicely-designed t-shirts.

FCCA class winners were Jean Shaffer, Women's Short Course Kayak, and Pat & Lewis Bayers, Distance Course Canoe. Class Champions received one-year passes to all Florida State Parks, an awesome prize.

Be sure to come to next year's race, but don't wait until then to paddle the fabulous Myakka River!



Lewis Bayers is Grinnin' Big!

Water Shoe Woes?

Marilyn says (and Simon may too): To kill the smell in your rubber water sandals, wash/scrub, blot dry, then freeze for several days to kill the bacteria that causes odor. (And it makes your ice smell great too! Just kidding — editor on the loose!)

FEBRUARY TREASURER'S REPORT

Starting Balance	\$3,594.74
Collections	
ACA Dues	\$40.00
Membership Dues	\$256.00
February Raffle	\$74.00
DDRC Stickers	\$2.00
Total Collections	\$372.00
Disbursements	
Bank Service charges	\$12.00
Postage	\$37.00
Office Supplies	\$36.44
Raffle	\$109.66
Total Disbursements	\$195.10
Ending Balance	\$3,771.64

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For advertisers wishing to have their ads appear on the Down-River website, please send your .jpg or .gif artwork to Bryan Jackson at bryan.jackson@paddlinpals.com. For questions, call 972-564-2318.

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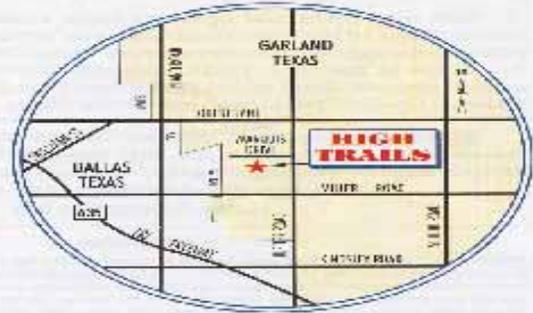
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Paddler Needed for Mississippi

I am looking for someone to accompany me down the Mississippi River this summer. We will travel by canoe, starting at Lake Itaska, Minnesota and end at the mile Zero marker in the Gulf of Mexico.

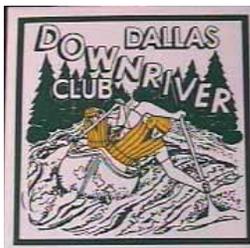
Allow 75 - 100 days. I want to take time to look around and stop at places of interest. Anyone interested, contact me via e-mail (hweiss02@comcast.net) or call me at 972-422-7000.

Henry Weiss, Plano, TX

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Invitation Up Yonder

I invite you to come to our Adirondack Experience Paddlefest & Triathlon Saturday July 31, 2004 and Sunday, August 1, 2004 at Port Leyden, New York. There will be canoe and kayaking competitions, cross-country races and mountain bike competitions. The event will benefit St. Peters Catholic School in Lowville, New York. For more information go here: <http://www.stpetersschool.org/Paddle%20fest.htm>.

Jim and Tammy Lavalley

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The First Great Wayne Robinson Memorial San Juan River Trip

By Ronnie Ash [Installment 3 of 3]

...We were all so pleased with our John's Canyon campsite that we elected to spend yet another lay-over day there. On day 5 we slept late and enjoyed a delightfully lazy day, reading, writing, observing the lifestyle of lizards and the flight of peregrine falcons, swimming, rewarming ourselves lizard like in the sun, and exercising Manny's little ducky in the rapid below our camp. Even Ester mustered up her courage and took the ducky down the wave train. It was a spiritual victory for us all to scuttle the Puritan work ethic and pass the day pleasantly in pointless and perfectly guilt free pursuits!

That evening Diana and Curtis demonstrated the toothpick star and the dancing hair trick, suckering Yolanda and Caitlin completely, and showering them vigorously. Yolanda declared that she'd never be able to trust anyone again!

Apparently we were all chock full of feces, if you see what I mean. We had now exceeded the calculated rocket box (holding tank!?) capacity required for a group of our size. When I visited the head that evening, the toilet paper within was tickling my sensitive backside above. Old Sigmund Freud himself might exhibit a tendency towards "retentiveness" in this situation!

On day 6 we splashed through the little rapid at the mouth of John's Canyon; then set our sights on the San Juan's most formidable white water, Government Rapid. As George had expressed a desire to canoe for a bit I took up the oars in his raft. There's nothing like pulling on a pair of 8 foot oars to make a lad feel manly! Entertained by Linda's pleasant chatter in the bow, we passed Cowboy Hat Rock, sighted Government Bird Rock, and then eddied out to scout the rapid.

Immediately we observed 2 rafts (from other parties) hang up on the guidebook recommended river right route. After studying the situation, we determined that while right was the best route for canoes, the rafts would be better off left of center. Weldon led us off with a perfect run, and I retain an amusing mental image of Diana and Caitlin running the lower part of the rapid with Diana shouting, "Your Other Draw!," as Caitlin mistook her cross draw command and tried energetically to draw them into a diagonal curling wave. The group all negotiated the rapid in fine form, sitting tall in the saddle and smiling bravely, like proper Lone Star boaters should.

As we relaxed on the beach below the rapid, Ester exuberantly squirted Curtis with a water cannon, and he surprised us all by mounting a death before dishonor bailer full of water retaliatory attack. (I can see it on the Fox network now: "When Boy Scouts go berserk!") It's the quiet ones you've got to watch out for!

Two and a half miles downstream we pulled in at the mouth of Slickhorn Canyon for lunch and a hike up the canyon to a cool little pool and a swim. Returning to the boats, Ted took up the extreme sport of rock diving when he slipped on a steep descent and dove into the floor of the canyon. Fortunately, the rocks were undamaged, and Ted retained his ability to send Morse code!

(Continued on page 8)

Interested in a Colorado River Guide Book?

Send \$5.00 to: Lower Colorado River Authority Community Services
P.O. Box 220, Austin, Texas 78767-0220
Phone toll free 1-800-776-5272 for information.

Thanks for the info Sam!

(Continued from page 7)

Back in the boats, we took it around the corner to our final campsite, Slickhorn E, assigned to us by the BLM. After our little paradise at John's Canyon, this site seemed pretty disappointing. How jaded we had become!

God may have rested on the seventh day, but we had an appointment with the shuttle drivers and 17 miles to go. No rest for the wicked, eh what? Very soon after getting underway, we realized that the current was slowing and the silted bottom was getting closer to the surface as the river felt the constipating effect of Lake Powell. The float trip was over. We'd be working for our wages today!

Five and a half miles past Grand Gulch, we stopped at Oljeto Wash for lunch and a brief ceremony in remembrance of Wayne, "Poppa Smurf," as many of us affectionately knew him. Under a magnificent and severely undercut wall where the wash curved in to meet the river, Rich said a few words and scattered a vial of Wayne's ashes alongside his beloved San Juan. I trust that he'll always be about, watching over us as we paddle; gently and quietly encouraging us towards the kindness, concern, and charity which he consistently personified. Rest in Peace, our cherished friend.

On the water again, the canyon walls got shorter and the river bottom began to poke above the surface in places. Our path became longer and more circuitous as we strove to follow the channel through the sand bars and silt. (At the end of the day, Jack's GPS indicated that we'd traveled 22.5 miles in making good our 17!)

George sent word down the line that he need some relief, so I swapped seats with him and was forced to make good on my foolish boast that I could "Portugee (a style of rowing used by Portuguese fishermen) until the cows come home!" Cathy and her crew presented a noble picture of determination. With her facing forward and Bruce facing aft, often with 4 hands on the oars, they stalwartly slogged along. Many weary miles and muscle cramps later, the take out finally came in sight.

At the take out, all was heat, dust as fine as flour, and confusion as 2 commercial groups with semi-truck flat beds, and 3 or 4 private parties tried to unload, derig, load cars, and depart in a space about as big as a basketball half-court. We finally got it all sorted out, and began the surprisingly long trek back to Mexican Hat. Two adventures still awaited us, one enroute, the other in Mexican Hat itself.

On the road, we ascended from river level at 3800 feet to the top of a gargantuan butte at 7200 feet. At the edge of said butte we were presented with a view of the Valley of the Gods and the Goosenecks as seen from heaven itself, gaspingly grand and vast. Then, in a descent as alarming as anything we undertook in John's Canyon, we dropped down the face of the butte on a precarious and severely switch backed gravel road to the valley over 1000 feet below.

Finally, in what may have been the biggest thrill of the entire outing, after 7 days afloat, afoot, and coated with sand, we got to take a \$6 shower at the Navajo Lodge and RV Park! Words fail me! Even now, weeks later, I shiver in sensuous delight at the memory of that event!

It was truly an outstanding trip, and I want to convey my most sincere thanks to all concerned, for everyone contributed, some in large and critical ways, others with a smile in the morning and a willingness to take their place in the chain when we passed gear ashore from the rafts to the campsite. I suspect that we all owe the greatest debt of gratitude to Jack, who volunteered to empty and clean the rocket boxes at the end of the trip. Talk about taking one for the team! SeaBees Rule!!

So, my friends, I believe that the foregoing tale should constitute convincing evidence that in this confusing, confounding, and all too rapidly changing world, there is one comforting constant to which we can cling: "There is nothing, absolutely nothing, half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats!"

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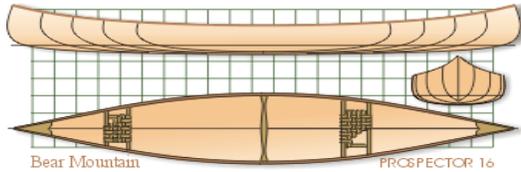
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