

The DDRC Current News

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

February 2006

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Officer nominations — Officer Nominations were taken, elections will be held at March meeting. Nominations so far are: President - Bryan * VPresident - Sam * Treasurer- Thomas * Secretary - open * Newsletter Editor - Carolee

Feb 18/19 Village Creek trip postponed — rescheduled date TBD

Mar 4/5 Kiamichi Trip cancelled — to be rescheduled in April. Replaced in March with San Marcos trip

ACA Paddle America Club status being cancelled — by membership vote

Turn in most miles paddled logs — Award will be in March.

Trips & Events

Weekly thru April 14 — Friday Flips (p.3)

2/16 — DDRC Meeting — 7 p.m.
Enchilada's Restaurant

2/26 — Urban Paddle & Potluck
— The Feb. Urban Paddle will be Sun., Feb. 26th on the Trinity River/White Rock Creek. Meet at the new boat ramp at Loop 12 at 11 a.m. Paddle up and into White Rock Creek and then back for a tasty potluck lunch. See map and details on online calendar. Bryan Jackson at 972-979-2519.

3/4-5 — San Marcos Trip — Replaces Kiamichi Trip. Camping at Pecan Park and participating in the river cleanup on Saturday and doing some paddling on Sunday. Bryan and Sam need to be there for the TRPA meeting on Sun. Look for Kiamichi coming in April.

3/16 — DDRC Meeting — 7 p.m.

3/16-19 — Adaptive Paddling Workshop for Kayaking — Instructors/students/volunteers—read p. 4 for more.

3/24-26 — Upper Guad — (Fri.—Sun.)
We will paddle sections between FM3351 and Rebecca Creek near Spring Branch, TX Sat. & Sun. camping at Weidner's

Ranch Campground .Potluck dinner Sat. night. Expect lots of small rapids and rock gardens, fiberglass or any other fragile material boats would not be recommended, especially if flow below 200cfs. Contact Bryan Jackson at 972-979-2519 or email Hollowcreek@paddlinpals.com . Weidner's Ranch is located east of US 281 on TX 311 about 3/10 mile past the TX 311 bridge over the Guadalupe.

PLEASE TAKE WATER SURVEY

PLEASE take time to take this very simple 9 question survey, yes or no, about water as soon as you can. It is completely non-technical, and takes about one minute. The survey is done by a trustworthy group (The Texas Living Waters Project) and they do not use your personal information for other purposes unless you request that. It is very important that every one of us take these few minutes to do this. Visit the link at <http://texaswatermatters.org/survey/> - and see below for more information: The TexasWaterMatters website is a good one to explore one day when you have the time, since you care about water issues.

Are you concerned about Texas'water resources? Do you want the state to create water policies that will protect our rivers, springs, wetlands, and coastal bays?

Now is your chance to speak up. The Texas Water Development Board has asked for public input on the process it uses to create the State Water Plan--the official document that guides the state's water-use decisions.

We--a coalition of the National Wildlife Federation, Environmental Defense, and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club--have created this short survey on the water planning process. We will share your input with the Board at their stakeholder meeting on February 13th.

The survey has nine questions and should only take a few minutes to complete. For more info, call Lacey McCormick at 1-800-919-9151 or 512-476-9805.

Upper Sabine River Day Trip "The River of Sticks" by Ann Boling

Hi. My name is Ann and I'm married to a card carrying member of the DDRC. This is my maiden voyage story and I'm sticking to it. Names are withheld to protect the guilty.

I survived the "day" trip of over 110 portages solely for the purpose of validating "ignorance is bliss". Over the last 3 years my husband (aka Honey Bunny) has shared his experiences of trips and fellow paddlers with me. I attended this year's Christmas party and thought I might enjoy going on a future club trip. He received an e-mail about a "day" trip for Monday, December 26, 2005, on the Sabine River. Honey Bunny said we could borrow a canoe for two and go together down the river so I decided to give it a try thinking the weather would be nice in the 70s, Honey Bunny paddling the gondola; I'd have my parasol to block the sun and could enjoy the scenery for 4 or 5 hours (a little Venetian experience).

My first clue the Venetian experience was not happening was when I was given a paddle. Oh well, a little aerobic exercise would be a new experience. Next I learned a blockage across the river meant getting out of the canoe (not gondola) getting to the other side of the tree (not blockade) getting back in the canoe without falling in the River (which was ice cold). This entire process now known to me as a portage. Oh well, how hard could that be? After doing the disembarking & embarking every 5 minutes or less for 2 hours, I decided walking down the river without the boat would be much easier-----but this club requires a boat for down river transportation. When in Rome??..

Lunchtime brought comfort to learn no one had been down this stretch of river and the number of portages was not the norm and we had traveled 2 miles in two hours so by my calculation the total trip was to be 6 miles @ 1 mile an hour it's 1 o'clock with 4 miles to go? out of the river by 5:00 and home by 7:00 pm. No problem?I can do this. Well?I lost count of the ins & outs, overs & unders, balance beam mounts & dismounts and time, but it's dark and by my calculation we should be out of the river. Hello??..I now learn about this crow flying mile versus a river mile and the 6 mile calculation of mine was if I were a crow flying from point A to point B in a straight line and no stops and no TREES. The actual river miles were not known until we reach point B, but best approximation was 10-11 river miles. Uh oh. Light bulb is on for a moment and I realize the Survivor film crew arriving by helicopter will not be happening. The 2 kayakers were ahead of the pack and must have reached the bridge (takeout) so we continued on slowly & cautiously in the dark with one light (head lamp) down the river.

(Continued on page 3)



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!



(Continued from page 2)

HARK, a rumbling in the leaves ashore. The light flashed on the bank only to reveal a bear cub with a long flat tail entering the water with a splash. (I was told it was a beaver, but me thinks it was a cross between a bear cub and beaver making it a bearver.) Onward and down river we go until another noise is heard from the right bank. The light flashed toward the noise and a two legged object standing over 6 feet tall covered with leaves appears??..could it be we found the loch ness monster??? Then another object appeared over 6 feet tall covered in tin foil....could it be a giant Jiffy Popcorn or a radio antenna??? No it's the 2 kayakers.... yippee....we must be at the bridge. Wrong....We disembarked and had a pow wow and decided to circle the wagons, build a fire, and become one with the leaf covered earth until day break. It's 10:30 pm now and as I lay looking at the sky...there are actually stars up there. The stars were magnificent, Honey Bunny spotted 2 shooting stars, owls were hooting, coyotes having a hen party (glad I wasn't invited), and dueling snores (actually there were 3 not two). Life could not get any better UNTIL I smoked my last cigarette @ 3:30 am. I estimated my traveling companions had about 2 hours left before my split personality (Sybil) emerged, then I remembered seeing someone puffing on cigars and I could bum one @ day break. Didn't happen..... no more cigars.

Back to the river and more portaging. We took a break to soak up some rays on the bank and eat some cheetos. In the river and through the woods we paddled on and then we knew we were getting very close because we started seeing remains left by humans....trash.....THE BRIDGE and we were there. Our final disembark @ the boat ramp. I was relieved, but sad that my 36 hour day tripping maiden voyage was over. I would not have changed a thing.....well maybe next time pack some toothpaste, hand lotion, and definitely extra smokes.

Thanks GUYS.....and especially my Honey Bunny for keeping me safe, warm and dry...y'all are the BESTEST and I'm looking forward to more bonding river trips without so much tree hugging. Loving you!!!!

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Adaptive Paddling Workshop

Mark your calendars for March 16—19. The American Canoe Association (ACA) will be offering an adaptive paddling workshop in kayaking in Dallas, TX, in cooperation with the Red River Division of the ACA and Kayak Power.Com.

This is a four-day Adaptive Paddling certificate course for instructors that includes how to compensate for a paddler's loss of function due to disability, adaptation techniques for equipment and instruction, how to focus on the paddler's ability and facility and program accessibility. The course involves classroom and hands on learning.

On March 18 and 19, individuals who have significant mobility impairments can participate to receive instruction in sea kayaking from expert instructors. Students learn how to compensate for function lost due to their disability, how to adapt the boat and paddle to best suit their needs, and complete the ACA Introduction to Paddling course.

This course includes paddling instruction in a pool session and paddling on calm water with the instructors. Paddling is a great sport to enjoy with family and friends because water is the ultimate equalizer.

On Saturday March 18, the course will meet at Bachman Recreation Center. On Sunday March 19, at Jackson Point, White Rock Lake Park

This is the first time this course has been taught in the Dallas area, although it has been taught around the country for the past 16 years. The lead ACA instructors will be Janet Zeller from NH, Scott LeBlanc and Mike Swope from TX .


Pre-registration is required for this course and space is limited! For more information and registration forms, students, instructors and volunteers may contact Mike Swope, of the Red River Division and KayakPower.Com by phone at 214-669-1663 or by e- mail at mike.swope@gmail.com. Information is also available at <http://www.texasapw06.com>

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New Guide—Menasha Ridge Press has published *Paddlers' Guide for Treating Medical Emergencies* by Patrick Brighton, M.D. The book presents critical information every paddler needs to effectively handle a medical crisis, from fractures to lacerations to backcountry evacuation. Entertaining and informative, the Guide prepares you to recognize and prevent illness and injury, remain calm, and implement appropriate treatment when needed. Available in bookstores, outdoor stores, online at <http://www.menasharidge.com>, or by calling 800-243-0495. [100 pages with illustrations and index \$9.95] Dr. Brighton is an adventure racer and active in many outdoor activities. He works part-time as a general surgeon and full-time building a house out of old tires.

Mountain Fork Pollution Issue Needs Your Help

Since the 1970's Weyerhaeuser Corporation has been polluting the Mountain Fork, Little, Red and Mississippi Rivers with discharges of toxins and carcinogens into a feeder stream of the Lower Mountain Fork River from its Craig Plant facility near Broken Bow, Oklahoma. Working through legitimate governmental agency and state elected officials efforts have been made to resolve this issue.

Our voices have been silenced. Facts presented have been ignored. Weyerhaeuser continues to allow toxic and carcinogenic pollution from holding pits on its property to contaminate the waters of the rivers listed above. Some of those waters and adjoining lands are used for recreational canoeing and kayaking, fishing, camping, hunting and other legitimate purposes where exposure to dangerous chemical pollution is occurring every time we visit that area.

Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) recently held a meeting in which over 200 people showed up to protest renewal of the expired dumping permit under which Weyerhaeuser had continued to operate since 2002. Legitimate arguments opposing renewal of that permit were presented, the ODEQ unilaterally granted a permit extension without even considering the environmental and human health issues relevant to this matter.

The fight is far from over, but it is going to take the efforts of paddlers and friends standing up and speaking in a unified voice of opposition to Weyerhaeuser's dumping of toxins and carcinogens into watershed streams. We have a chance to get the EPA to intervene and remove ODEQ from participation in this matter IF we act together and act NOW!

Please write letters or send e-mails to the EPA Dallas office to the persons and addresses below:

Bruce Jones, Regional Counsel
USEPA REGION 6
1445 Ross Av, Suite 1200
Mail Code: 6RC-M
Dallas , TX 75202-2733
jones.bruced@epa.gov

Patrick Rankin, Regional Counsel
USEPA REGION 6
1445 Ross Av, Suite 1200
Mail Code: 6RC-D
Dallas, TX 75202-2733
rankin.patrick@epa.gov

If enough opposition to the ODEQ-granted permit renewal is heard by the EPA, then we can get them to step in and take actions that will lead to revocation of the permit and force Weyerhaeuser to clean up and safely remove the toxins and carcinogens that it has been dumping and storing on McCurtain County, Oklahoma land for three decades.

For complete information on this matter please visit Southwest Paddler (<http://southwestpaddler.com/>), click the homepage button labeled "River Issues", then on the River Issues page click the text link to "Mountain Fork (Oklahoma) Pollution Issues".

Your opinion CAN make a difference, but only if you let it be known to the EPA.
Don't DeLay - Act TODAY!

Tales from the River of Sticks

The Sabine Adventure to Remember continues... (Installment 2 of 2)

Marc McCord:

Around 9:30, we saw Steve on river right. I was overjoyed to have reached the take-out. My joy was quickly dashed as I learned that Steve and Jaws were not at the take-out, and that they had stopped because they could not see where they were going. It was fortunate that they stopped where they did because we had an adequate campsite high enough off the river in the event of a flood and a good supply of firewood. Immediately upon landing we built a nice fire and started warming up. It was not particularly cold, but three in our party had decided it was too hot, so they went for a swim and got their clothing wet. Hypothermia was a very real possibility, and the fire gave us light, warmth, and a centerpiece to our camp, as well as drying out paddlers and clothing.

John Pullman:

As dry as the weather had been Paul found armloads of dry wood to burn and the campfire was a calming and literally heartwarming friend which we kept burning all night long. In this case the fire was not an option but a valuable tool which dried our cloths and kept us warm.

Thomas Taylor:

With the crew united and with no idea where the take-out was, even with two GPS handhelds we decided that stopping for the night was the safest option. Between all of us we had some extra food to share, matches; much needed pain relievers and what you would normally carry in your boat for a day trip. We got a fire going with matches and a fire starter stick, shared what food and water that we had and we arranged three of the canoes on edge in a semi-circle with the open end to the north. My weather radio reported that the winds would be out of the south and south west that night. So with a lot of fire wood, dry leaves for insulation, dry bags, PFDs and seat cushions we settled in for a uncomfortable night's sleep (or lack there of!). I think the best decision that we made was to pull off the river for the night. I believed that we were very lucky that no one was seriously injured and only three of us had wet clothes that we were able to dry, after a while, by the fire.

Marc McCord:

In the morning we finished off the remaining food and prepared to begin day 2 of a one day trip. It started right where it ended – portaging across land for about 100 yards to get around the next three blockages in a single portage. It was NOT a good way to start the day. It was a portent of what awaited us - many more portages just like the ones the day before. My GPS recorded 5 hours 19 minutes of paddling time and 7 hours 41 minutes of stop time while portaging. We were able to increase our rate on Tuesday to give us an overall 0.9 mph average speed.

**Thomas Taylor:**

The sun came up about 6:30 - 7:00 am and we put out the fire and packed the boats and headed back to the great river adventure. Paddle the boats, portage the boats, paddle the boats, portage the boats. We did hit another stretch of open water courtesy of nature's best hydraulic engineers (beavers, none were sighted in the day light). We made headway down river, but there were a number of significant obstacles that we would have had problems with if we continued the previous evening. Even still I was pretty beat when all of the canoes stopped for a break about 11:00 am. Finally about thirty minutes later I rounded a bend and saw the tall square piers of the FM1804 Bridge and canoes on the bank!

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John Pullman:

We know who snores the loudest and who sleeps the most soundly. We know who carries the most camping gear and who the most sleepless insomniac is. We know who has the heaviest boat. And who smokes the most tobacco, which has the shallowest and deepest draft and widest beam, highest bows and longest painter. We know more about ourselves now because we literally shared bread with each other and made what could have been a miserable trip into a good thing.

I've been on many perfectly planned and executed trips which I have come away with far less of a good feeling toward my fellow travelers than this one. I am proud and honored to have been included in this adventure. We all literally pulled together for a common goal and I cannot think of a more unifying experience for a small group to have than the one we had on the Sabine.

Marc McCord:

This trip would have done in any paddlers not prepared to face and overcome obstacles. Ann Boling had never been on a trip before, and this was Paul's first time in a canoe. A trip like this could end many marriages, but they came through it smiling and laughing with the rest of us, and Ann can rest assured that future trips she joins will be MUCH easier! The group dynamics and camaraderie made this a trip of a lifetime. I will probably not ever paddle that reach of the Sabine again, but on those two days in December I am glad that I was there with friends and fellow paddlers who met the challenge head on and overcame all obstacles to complete it without injury.

Thomas Taylor:

We left the trailer at the take-out so the boats could be loaded and Bryan and I went back to US 69 to retrieve my truck and begin the trip back to "hollowcreek". On the way back on US 80 I raced three freight trains much to the chagrins of my passengers and we had a great barbecue, vegetable and salad bar meal that couldn't be beat! I got home and unloaded the boat and gear, got a much needed shower and some oral hygiene (I forgot my dental floss also!), took a nap and then got up and wrote this report.

John Pullman:

Yes the trip interrupted our perfectly planned existences. But it gave us back an adventure which we can truly write about. Let's hope that the people who were not on the adventure with us can see it for the good thing it turned out to be.

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Marc McCord:

The part about how we ate a barbecue buffet out of business, and probably scared away potential customers because of the way we looked and smelled, is the stuff of another story, but suffice it to say that we took out our hunger, pains and frustrations on that restaurant. I slept like a baby on Tuesday night and am working on our plans for our New Year weekend trip in two days. It WILL be a much easier trip on ALL accounts!

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Thomas Taylor:

Lessons I learned:

- Never assume that a day paddle will only take a day.
- Keep the skills and abilities of everyone in the party in mind
- Be prepared to handle paddling in the dark, flash lights, glow sticks.
- Stick together; we all should off been off the river at or before 7:30pm.
- Pack a dry back with extra clothes for the season, matches, fire starting sticks.
- At least one tarp for each three or four boats, and one of those flannel sleeping bags would have been great.
- First aid supplies with Tylenol, Alive, aspirin
- Longitude and Latitude for the take-out
- Keep you wits about you and know when its time to bail out or quit and hold up for the night.
- Keep you're own and everyone spirits up share the toils and loads and get home safely to tell the tale.

And as the last word; "I'll be back!" I want to retrieve my Camelbak and it's contents!

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Check this out! <http://www.myspace.com/bigjohn817>

John and Kitty Ballard now have an online blog to post their travel stories an photos (login to see pictures). They travel four to six months a year (boy am I jealous!) We won't have to install a GPS tracker to keep up with their whereabouts now that we can share in their adventures...That's not the case with Alan and Betty Scott. Someone should install a LoJack or something on their fun mobile — they're so hard to keep track of! Looks like we've got two "Where's Waldo" couples of the DDRC! It's time to send me more trip reports!






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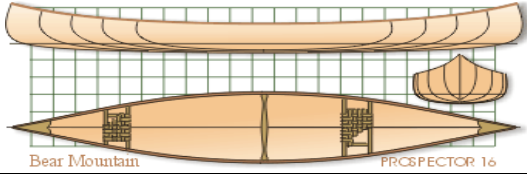
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DALLAS DOWNRIVER CLUB

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*The Official Newsletter of the Dallas
Downriver Club*

DDRC Meetings

Thursday 7:00 PM
February 16, 2006

Enchilada's Restaurant
6526 E. Northwest Hwy.

DDRC Meetings are the
3rd Thursday of every
month.

