

# GEORGIA CANOEING ASSOCIATION, INC.



P. O. Box 7023, Atlanta, Georgia 30357

November 1981

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 16, No.10

Deadline for material for the next newsletter is the 15th. Submit material to Gary DeBacher, CRM, 1441 Clifton Rd. NE, Atlanta, GA 30322. PLEASE TYPE BORDER TO BORDER (ZERO MARGINS) WITH INDENTED PARAGRAPHS AND NO VERTICAL SPACING BETWEEN PARAGRAPHS. This format makes it much easier for me to lay out the newsletter. Good, high contrast photos are also welcome, as well as conservation clippings.

WANT AD POLICY: Ads are "free" for GCA members selling used equipment only. For non-members, or for GCA members selling new equipment, there is a 5 dollar charge. The editor does not take want ads over the phone; please type it up and send it to the above address.

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION PROBLEMS? CHANGE OF ADDRESS? Contact the GCA membership chairperson, who currently is Oreon Mann. The newsletter editor doesn't handle address or mailing problems.

NEXT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING WILL BE THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF NOVEMBER AT 7:30 PM, AT THE GEORGIA CONSERVANCY HEADQUARTERS.

## TRIP SCHEDULE:

Nov. 7	Nantahala class II-III	Jerry Holladay	H: 688-1842; W: 688-8970
8	Upper Hooch class II-III	Mark Levine	926-8683
14	Wild card class III	Norm Reynolds	455-3498
15	Savannah class I-II (down to Trotter's Shoals)	Roger Nott	H:1-536-6923; W:1-532-5410

27-28 NOC Turkey Classic, Nantahala River. Wildwater match races and Jiffy Slalom.

Our cruismaster is Jerry Holladay, and he's always glad to hear from people volunteering to lead trips. Call him at 688-1842.

NEW GCA OFFICERS. At the October 23 general membership meeting, the following were elected to one year terms as club officers:

President- Roger Nott  
Vice Pres- Mark Levine  
Secretary- Karen Laber  
Treasurer and Membership Chairman- Oreon Mann  
Training- George Neill  
Cruismaster- Jerry Holladay  
Officers at large- David Ashley and Grant Luckhardt  
Newsletter- Gary DeBacher

FOR SALE: Quest Kayak, excellent condition \$250  
Call Hank Klausman Off 955-0553, Res 255-7420

I'd like to express an editorial word of appreciation to all the GCA officers who have served during the past year.

## EDITORIAL RAMBLINGS, some of them even slightly important:

First off, sorry the newsletter is late again. We have been doing marathon grant-writing at work, and even when I was free, the word-processor was not.

There may not be a December issue. Although I have a big backlog of topics I'd like to share with you, the postal rate increase has me concerned. Skipping a month saves a lot of money. I will be reviewing the projected cost of the newsletter with the printer and with our treasurer Oreon Mann, to determine whether a dues increase may be necessary in 1982. Remember that most of your dues money goes to print and distribute the newsletter.

If you have a serious complaint about something I put in the newsletter, or about something I fail to put in, please count to ten a few times and then give me a call before you take the matter up with GCA Executive Board. First, I often do not attend board meetings, and it is hardly fair to the board to dump a problem in their laps when I am not there to answer for my actions. Second, based on the experience of the last two people who have gone "straight to the top" with their complaints, I think you'll get a much more sympathetic reception from me. Rightly or wrongly, the board tends to take the view that a newsletter editor in the hand is worth two cases of Busch, and about a three-term editor they will hear no wrong, even if he doesn't attend meetings like he should. Now, I don't want anyone to feel abused or neglected, and if you'll give me a chance to talk things over with you, we'll figure out what went wrong and how to set things right.

The most recent controversy arose because I did not print a race announcement for a USCA flatwater marathon in Florida. The announcement was sent to my home address, and I didn't realize I had misplaced it until the night I typed up the newsletter at work. Nevertheless I must admit that I receive many race announcements, most of them for whitewater events, and most of them do not get printed. Typically, race announcements are spread all over the page, so with printing and postage costs a serious factor, I can't just paste 'em up the way they come. Second, in deciding whether to condense and type a race announcement, I make a personal judgement as to whether the information has any real utility for our readers. The few serious racers in the club get extensive preliminary race listings through their ACA publications, and these listings include the more important races in all categories, including olympic flatwater, marathon, sailing, poling and whitewater. For the rest of the membership, the only events anyone is likely to enter are in the immediate region, within four hours radius of Atlanta. No matter how important an announcement is to the person submitting it, it is not reasonable to expect me to spend time condensing and typing it unless it is important to other members as well. If I put in extra typing time, conservation issues get first priority, followed by safety topics. I read many other club newsletters, and their editors apparently follow the same policy.

With respect to the omitted race announcement, the plaintiff charged that flatwater paddling is systematically ignored in the newsletter and in club planning overall. I started paddling on flatwater in KY, two of my three boats are fast flatwater designs, I was for several years a USCA member, I admire the USCA, distrust the ACA, and continue to do flatwater paddling whenever I can get to rivers and lakes where it is worthwhile. Russ Koester's trip announcements and reports on flatwater trips have been prominent in the newsletter in the past two years, with occasional similar contributions from others. The club does not schedule much local flatwater paddling because in north

Georgia and similar piedmont and mountain regions, there is a very high correlation between quality of scenery and presence of rapids. Flatwater sections around Atlanta are, with rare exceptions, scenically uninteresting. In summary, I do not feel that flatwater activity is receiving less attention than it merits. If there are really a lot of flatwater fans out there, why don't you call the cruismaster and volunteer to lead some trips? That's the only way things will ever change.

In order that everyone will have maximum freedom to disseminate announcements in the newsletter on any topic having even remote relevance to canoeing, I am going to spell out some rules under which I will virtually guarantee to print what you submit. These are set forth below and will be reprinted as part of the general information I include in future newsletters, along with ad policy, etc.

TO BE SURE YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT GETS PRINTED:

1. Type it border-to-border (zero margins) across the width of standard 8.5 by 11 paper.
2. Keep it under 8 lines in length.
3. Send it to my work address, Gary DeBacher, CRM, 1441 Clifton Rd. NE, Atlanta, GA 30322, so it arrives before the 15th of the month.
4. Include your phone number so I can reach you immediately if necessary.

If you adhere to these four conditions, your announcement will be printed, probably with no further editing. If you don't, chances are I will print the announcement anyway, but I will exercise editorial judgement as to priority and format. To negotiate special arrangements (longer text, expansive format, application forms, retyping, obscure topics, etc.), call me at home, 7-11 PM, at 634-4651.

Some folks have expressed surprise, or even annoyance, that I will not accept ads or announcements by telephone at my home, and will not guarantee the future of things mailed to my home either. The reason is simple. Experience has shown that I often lose things before taking them to work, and even forget that I had them in the first place. Things sent to me at work get put safely in the "print" pile before I have a chance to lose them. Rules and restrictions are annoyances in themselves, but sometimes they save worse unpleasantness. ---Ed.

Hey! How would you like to go to Idaho? And spend a week camping and paddling on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River? And return home with a bunch of nearly true tales about those bodacious Western Rivers? Well here's your chance. I will submit an application for a permit about December 1. If you would like to have your name on the application, check the following and if you qualify, send your \$100,000 deposit to the Expedition Leader, Sir Jackson.

To qualify you must:

1. Notify Sir Jackson of your intentions.
2. Be comfortable on the Ocoee River.
3. Understand that you will be out-of-doors (that means woods) for 6 or 7 nights.
4. Take an oath that you will make sure that the Expedition Leader is happy and comfortable at all times, including having cold beer at the end of each paddling day.

Now, if you can hack it, call Sir Jackson and humbly place your name on the list. The trip is limited to 15 people, so either get your name in early, or come up with a nice bribe.

Jack "One and a Half Arm" Weems (I inherited Garity's arms when he retired).  
938-5263

UPPER CHATTAHOOCHEE -- Saturday, September 19 -- In her newsletter write up of a July 11 Upper Hooch trip, Polly Heyward posed the rhetorical question "How low is low?" in reference to a gauge reading of 1.68. I now have the answer to her question which is "1.44 is too low." Although the Guidebook gives a gauge reading of 1.9 as the minimum runnable water level, both Northern Georgia Canoeing and the Whitewater Home Companion (an absolutely wonderful book) give .8 as the minimum level. In all due respect, I would suggest that both of these excellent books must be in error. At 1.44 it was SCRAPE along city. The trip took approximately an hour to an hour and a half longer because of the low water level and the time expended getting unstuck. Nevertheless, other than the water level, it was a wonderful trip. Absolutely perfect weather and excellent companionship. In fact, this was the first time all year that I had paddled with my wife. As many of you have already discovered, becoming parents can seriously interfere with your paddling. My 17 month old just can't seem to get his low brace down yet. On the really negative side, we discovered a bath-house almost completed at the beach just below Buck Shoals. Next year this usual lunch and stopping point will be a camp and will be off limits. A positive discovery was that a new section of Hwy 365 has opened cutting down on driving time from Atlanta. Hwy 365 still terminates at Hwy 23, but a left on Hwy 52 in Lula will take you back to Hwy 365. You then take a right on 365 and go north approximately 11 miles to the next traffic light and turn left on to Duncan's Bridge Road. Our party consisted of all open, regular sized, normal canoes. Paddling tandem were Lewis Jacob/Kit Ryan and Julian Maloof/Adam Lefhoff. The solo paddlers were Ted Maloof, Pat Robins, Nancy Barker, Polly Heyward, Richard Blews, Harold Hill, Jim Sweeny, Sabra Hanson-Holladay and myself, Jerry Holladay.

CHATTOOGA, Section IV, Saturday, September 26, 1981 - No one in our party had ever run Section IV as low as we found it this gorgeous day, .6 on the '76 Bridge gauge. We saw heretofore unexposed rocks and got an interesting lesson in the hydrology of several familiar rapids. (E.g. - the diagonal rock on the bottom left of Cork Screw, which at certain levels creates a powerful curler which has flipped countless paddlers to the right, was 10" out of the water.) Rock Jumble, Crack, and Shoulder Bone were too low to run, and the final drop in Entrance was very scrapey. We all tried Rock Jumble a different way, incl. 2 upside down efforts, but no one found a very satisfactory route. Yet the rest of the rapids could still be run smoothly, if one were careful enough. Except for the swims at Rock Jumble, the rest of the river we all ran upright, incl. Five Falls, 7' Falls, and the Main Drop at Woodall. Cork Screw seemed particularly mean at this level and whopped up on a couple of our party right smart before spitting them out backwards. We took a leisurely pace and lunched beneath Long Creek Falls, where we stuffed our bellies with ripe muscadines picked at the top of the falls. A fine day!

Participants: Rick Ashton, Richard Cathey, Louis Jacob and Wayne Johnson in OC-1s; John & Tee Brower, Mike and Peter Gordon, who had a spectacular run of Cork Screw, Larry & Betsy Smith, and Beth & I in tandem opens.

- Roger Nott

## River Rescue Systems

by Les Bechdel, Safety Chairman, Dixie Division, ACA

A rescue rope, be it a throw bag or the traditional throw rope, is now considered a standard piece of whitewater gear carried on all river trips. What features do we want for a rescue rope for river trips?

1. It should float; most good ropes are made of polypropylene.
2. The diameter should be large enough that the rope is comfortable to handle and work with; usually  $\frac{3}{8}$ " to  $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter.
3. The rope should be long enough to reach a swimmer but not so long that it cannot be thrown effectively. This means most ropes are between 60 and 80 feet in length. Some ropes are longer, 100 feet or more, but they are for more specialized mechanically-assisted rescues.
4. The rope should be strong enough to be safe and useful in the event of a mechanical rescue.

To make the rope an effective tool there are three important factors:

1. The rope thrower/rescuer should be skilled enough to be a positive asset in a rescue rather than a liability.
2. The safety rope should be accessible to the paddler at all times.
3. There should be at least two ropes carried on every trip.

There are two types of ropes in general use as rescue ropes: the braided polypropylene rope in throw bags and the standard twisted polypropylene rope which is coiled for throwing. Both types have merits and limitations and it seems to be a never-ending argument among paddlers as to which is better.

The standard twisted rope is typically found in  $\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter with the most popular length being around 70 feet. It is traditionally yellow in color for visibility and ultraviolet blockage and it has a tensile breaking strength of around 4200 pounds. This throw rope must be coiled correctly before throwing. It is usually thrown underhand or side arm. There are coils in both hands with the coils paying off the non-throwing hand as the rope is fully extended. Many professional guides and instructors prefer throw ropes over throw bags because they feel the rope can be retrieved faster for repeated throws. Possible problems with the standard rope include:

1. It is slower to employ initially.
  2. It does not stow easily and the random loops can be a hazard to the unaware paddler.
  3. It generally requires more practice to throw accurately than does the throw bag.
- The braided polypropylene rope of the throw bag is generally smaller in diameter, usually  $\frac{3}{8}$ " with a tensile breaking strength varying between 1750 to 2200 pounds depending on the manufacturer. The rope is randomly stuffed into a brightly colored nylon bag. Most throw bags have a buoyant material attached to the rope and bag. The bag then provides a convenient handle for the swimmer to hold on to. The throw bag is usually thrown with an underhand motion which is familiar to anyone who has ever played softball. For repeated throws the rope is coiled like the standard throw rope and the bag is swung in a circular fashion not unlike David and the biblical slingshot. Some of the potential problems of throw bags:

1. The bag tends to fill with water or "bucket" as it is pulled in if the drawstring at the top of the bag has not been properly set.
2. The bag with its ethafoam insert can get lodged between rocks.
3. It takes longer to make repeated throws.
4. During cold weather it is possible for the rope inside the nylon bag to become frozen together.

Minnesota kayakers joke that using a throw bag in the early spring is like throwing congealed spaghetti. The performance characteristics of the throw bag and the standard rope also differ when mechanical rescues are considered. For most technical rescues the standard twisted rope is superior. It is easier to grip when you and 18 Boy Scouts are trying to unpin a canoe using the classic "armstrong" technique. The standard rope can be quickly tied to other ropes if additional length is needed whereas the nylon bag and the pre-tied grab loop tend to get in the way. Finally, and probably most important, the  $\frac{1}{2}$ " rope is a lot stronger than the  $\frac{3}{8}$ " rope. This becomes very important to the nervous rescuer who is depending on a rope in the midst of a raging rapid. There are, however, some instances where the throw bag is necessary in rescue work — where you've only got one hand free to throw with.

There is no definitive answer to the popular controversy concerning standard ropes and throw bags. As discussed above there are arguments for and against both types. Generally, I would recommend the throw bag for recreational use and let the professional make his own choice. Different situations and different rivers demand certain choices. The best recommendation for any paddler is to **always** carry a rope and practice using it.

## Our wild rivers are disappearing.

Of all the vestiges of wild America, free-flowing rivers and streams are perhaps the most precious and rare. Yet one by one, our rivers are being dammed, channeled, dredged and developed. Here are some of the sadder examples.

- The once fabulous Glen Canyon of the Colorado lies buried beneath a 186-mile long Bureau of Reclamation reservoir. It has come to be known as "the place no one knew," because so few people had the opportunity to see what was one of the loveliest places on earth.
- Thousands of miles of beautiful meandering streams throughout the Southeast have been straightened, stripped of vegetation and lined with concrete or rip-rap.
- Millions of acres of our nation's best farmland have been destroyed by dams and canals. Not only were farmers kicked off the homes of their ancestors, but some of our most idyllic river valleys were lost forever.

## This tale of loss can go on forever —or it can be stopped. That is where the American Rivers Conservation Council comes in.

ARCC is the voice for unspoiled rivers in Washington.

ARCC lobbies Congress for strong river protection legislation . . . ARCC works with the Forest Service, the Interior Department, and other federal agencies in developing new river preservation proposals . . . And when plans are made to senselessly dam wild rivers, ARCC fights like a tiger—whether its against the Corps of Engineers, the Water and Power Resources Service (BUREC), the Tennessee Valley Authority or one of the private electric utilities.

*"The American Rivers Conservation Council can point with pride to an exceptional record of successes in Congress. When I need river information, this is a group I turn to."*

—Rep. Phil Burton (D-CA)

Chairman, National Parks Subcommittee

Buried in the 1980 Oil Windfall Profits Tax Bill was a provision that would have allowed more than \$2 billion in tax credits and exemptions for construction of private dams and pumped storage projects. ARCC brought this fact to light and argued persuasively against subsidizing destructive new dams when the potential energy of thousands of existing dams has never been developed. Two days later, the provision was dropped.

## But a good record is not enough. Rivers today are threatened as never before, and to save them ARCC needs your help.

- The Saint John River in Maine flows free for 200 miles through a wilderness area that has no equal east of the Mississippi. But the Corps of Engineers' economically unsound Dickey-Lincoln Project will flood out over 250 miles of the river and its tributaries—unless the dams can be blocked.

- The Suwannee River, heralded in song and steeped in history, is still an unspoiled paradise. But this national treasure is doomed to succumb to pollution and uncontrolled development—unless permanent protection can be provided.

- The Stanislaus River, in California, is the most popular whitewater of the West. Almost 100,000 people, including boaters, fishermen, campers, hikers and cavers, visit the river every year. But this fabulous canyon will be lost forever—unless filling of a downstream reservoir can be halted.

# Support the fight to save our nation's rivers!

## Join ARCC today.

The American Rivers Conservation Council  
323 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
(202) 547-6900

ARCC Membership Benefits  
As an ARCC member, you will be kept informed on current river issues through the ARCC newsletter and action alerts.

New Members will receive a complimentary copy of FLOWING FREE (complete with a 1981 update), a citizen guide to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and an indispensable reference for all river lovers (\$4.00 value).

Through ARCC's River Trip Program you will have an opportunity to participate in a variety of rating, canoeing and kayaking trips. All members receive a copy of the Trip Schedule and contributing members receive an individual 10% discount on trips. Sustaining members receive a 10% family discount.

**YES!** I want to become a member of the American Rivers Conservation Council and help save free-flowing rivers!

Enroll me in the following membership category:

- regular . . . . . \$15  lifetime . . . . . \$200
- contributing . . . . . \$30  agency/corporation . . . \$25
- sustaining . . . . . \$60  student  over 65 . . . . \$10

Check enclosed, made payable to ARCC.

Please charge to my:

Visa  Master Charge  American Express

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature for charge \_\_\_\_\_

I am already a member of ARCC and wish to renew my membership at this time.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Because ARCC actively lobbies in Congress to protect wild rivers, it does not enjoy tax deductible status. If you wish to make a tax-deductible contribution to protect rivers, send a check to the *River Conservation Fund* at the same address.