



## 2005 GCA Fall Gala Canoeing Affair

This year GCA will be doing something a little bit different for the Fall Gala — we have decided to change both the venue and the format. We will have the Fall Gala on Columbus Day Weekend, October 7 (Fri) thru 10 (Mon) at Smokey Mountain Meadows Campground, which is just south of Bryson City, NC. The new format for the Fall Gala will be much more informal and relaxing. Participants will make their own campsite reservations, and breakfast and dinner will be on your own. You can bring and prepare your own food, or there are many convenient local restaurants to choose from.

Smokey Mountain Meadows has campsites, RV hook ups and rustic cabins available, as well as tent camping in the meadow, and is within an easy drive to such rivers as the French Broad, the Nantahala, the Tuckasegee, the Nolichucky, the Little Tennessee, the Ocoee and more. We'll have trips available for all skill levels, so it should be a fun time for everyone.

Campsite prices are \$6 for two people for camping in the meadow, \$14 for two people (\$6/person over 2) for creekside campsites, \$18 for two people (\$6/person over 2) for campsites with water/electricity and \$20 for two people (\$6/person over 2) for RV hook-up campsites. Cabins are available ranging from \$40 to \$58. To make campsite reservations, call Smokey Mountain Meadows at 828.488.3672. To get there: From NOC, continue east on US 74 to the first Bryson City exit, go right, continue about a mile, you'll see signs for the campground. Turn left, the campground is about a mile on the left; you can visit their website at <http://smmcampa.tripod.com/>.

We'll meet at the gazebo each morning (Sat - Mon) around 8 am to discuss current water levels and possible river trips. We'll also need trip coordinators, so if you would like to lead a trip, give me a call or email. We really need folks to coordinate class I-II rivers.

Please give me a call or email if you plan to attend, have questions about the Fall Gala, or can volunteer to help out. Jamie Higgins, 404.508.0761, [jmhiggins\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:jmhiggins_99@yahoo.com).



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## Fall GCA Meeting

The GCA Fall General Membership Meeting & Election of Officers will be held on Saturday evening, October 8, at the gazebo at Smokey Mountain Meadows Campground in conjunction with the Fall Gala Canoeing Affair. We will convene about 5:00 PM, or after the river trips have returned to the site. The brief business meeting and election of officers will be followed by breaking up into groups to go into town for dinner at venues of your choice, or staying at camp and fixin' your own. We'll try to have some sort of entertainment arranged for later in the evening — paddling videos, fun & games, etc.

To get there: From NOC, continue east on US 74 to the first Bryson City exit, go right, continue about a mile, you'll see signs for the campground. Turn left, the campground is about a mile on the left.



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## Who Ya Gonna Call?

The following list is provided for your convenience:

**For general information about the club** - Call the club telephone

number, 770.421.9729, and leave a message. Someone will get back to you.

**To volunteer to help with club activities** - Call President Gina Johnson at 770.971.1542 or contact the committee chairperson for your area of interest.

**For information on payment of dues or membership status** - Call Treasurer Ed Schultz at 404.266.3734.

**To sign up for a club trip** - Call the trip coordinator at the number listed on the activity list.

**To sign up to lead a club trip** - Call Cruise Master Steve Reach at 770.760.7357.

**For change of address or for Eddy Line subscription**

**information** - Call Ed Schultz at 404.266.3734.

**If you didn't receive your Eddy Line** - Call Ed Schultz at 404.266.3734.

**For information on GCA clinics** - Call the clinic coordinator listed on the clinic schedule, or call Training Director Jim Albert at 770.414.1521.

**For information on winter roll practice** - Call Louis Boulanger at 404.373.2907.

**For information on placing want ads in The Eddy Line** - Call Newsletter Editor Allen Hedden at 770.426.4318, or see "To place an ad" in the Want Ad section of *The Eddy Line*.

**For information on commercial ads** - Call Newsletter Editor Allen Hedden at 770.426.4318.

**For information on videos and books available from the GCA Library** - Call GCA Librarian Denise Colquitt at 770.854.6636.



## Board of Directors Meetings

The Georgia Canoeing Association Board of Directors meetings are held quarterly during the last month of the quarter (March, June, September, December). The time, date and location is announced in *The Eddy Line*. All members are encouraged to attend. If you have an item for discussion, please call GCA President Gina Johnson at 770.971.1542 so she can add your item to the agenda. Attending Board meetings is a great way to become more involved with the GCA. Your participation would be much appreciated.



### GCA Executive Committee

President .....	Gina Johnson
Vice President .....	Vincent Payne
Secretary .....	Tom Bishop
Treasurer .....	Ed Schultz
Member Services Chair .....	Gabriella Schlidt
Recreation Chair .....	Jamie Higgins
Resource Development Chair .....	Knox Worde
River Protection Chair .....	Don Kinser
Training Chair .....	Jim Albert

### Submitting Eddy Line Material

Deadline for material to be submitted for publication in the next Eddy Line is the fifth of the month, i.e., for the January issue, material should be submitted no later than December fifth. The editor must receive all articles, trip reports and want ads by the deadline or they MAY NOT be published in the next issue. To submit material via EMAIL, send to gacanoe@mindspring.com. The text of an article can be placed in the body of a message, and photo images can be attached to the message as attached files. To submit material via COMPUTER DISK submit articles or trip reports on a 3-1/2 inch IBM/DOS formatted disk as an ASCII text file labeled with a ".txt" file extension, or as a text file on a 3-1/2 inch high density MacIntosh formatted disk, and include a printed copy (Disks returned only if requested). To submit material via U.S. MAIL, send to: Allen Hedden, 2923 Piedmont Drive, Marietta, GA 30066. All classified ads will be run for two months unless otherwise requested. Hand-written or phoned in material CANNOT be accepted. Contact Newsletter Editor Allen Hedden at 770.426.4318 for questions. Thanks for your cooperation.

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## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

### October

1	Metro Chattahoochee (Note 2)	Class 1-2 Beginner	Steve Reach	770.760.7357
2	Nantahala	Class 2-3 Intermediate	John Scott	770.421.2451
2	Chattooga (Note 1)	Class 3-4 Advanced	Peter Chau	864.885.9477
7-10	GCA Gala Canoeing Affair — Smokey Mountain Meadows, Bryson City, NC — Jamie Higgins			404.508.0761
8	Fall General Membership Meeting & Elections — Smokey Mountain Meadows, Bryson City, NC — at the Fall Gala			
13-16	Florida Rivers (Note 3)	Class 1-2 Trained Beginner	Lamar Phillips	770.939.5087
15	Nantahala	Class 2-3 Intermediate	John Scott	770.421.2451
15	Ocoee	Class 3-4 Advanced	Peter Chau	864.885.9477
15	Chattooga Section 4	Class 3-4 Advanced	Roger Nott	770.536.6923
16	Nantahala	Class 2-3 Intermediate	John Scott	770.421.2451
16	Ocoee	Class 3-4 Advanced	Peter Chau	864.885.9477
22	Hiwassee	Class 1-2 Trained Beginner	William Gatling	770.529.7103
22	Ocoee	Class 3-4 Advanced	Mike Winchester	770.319.8969
22	Chattooga Section 4	Class 3-4 Advanced	Peter Elkon	404.314.3861
23	Fightingtown Creek	Class 1-2 Trained Beginner	Edward Stockman	770.441.9767
29	Metro Chattahoochee (Note 2)	Class 1-2 Beginner	Steve Reach	770.760.7357
29	Cartecay	Class 2-3 Intermediate	Brannen Proctor	770.664.7384

Note 1: Section 3 or 3-1/2 depending on water level.

Note 2: New members and rank beginners especially welcome.

Note 3: Camping at Goose Pasture. Aucilla and Wacissa rivers, Slave Canal. Single-day participants OK.

## Your Trip Could Be Listed in This Space — Call the Cruise Master and Sign Up Now!!

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**Signing Up:** Call the trip coordinator listed to sign up for trips. Most trip coordinators will move a trip to an alternate venue if the water levels and conditions for a particular trip are not favorable. Call early in the week to ensure you get a spot on the trip, and in consideration for the coordinators, PLEASE avoid calling late in the evening.

**Training Trips** are a combination of recreation and training designed to attract those boaters who have completed a formal training clinic and would like some on-the-river time with instructors practicing what was learned in the clinic and expanding skill levels.

**To Volunteer To Lead Trips:** Call the Cruise Master, Steve Reach at 770.760.7357. As usual, we need trip coordinators for all types of trips, from flat water to class 5 white water. Our excellent trip schedule depends on the efforts of volunteers, so get involved and sign up to coordinate a trip on your favorite river today! The GCA needs YOU!

**Chattooga Trips** are limited to 12 boats on ANY section on ANY trip, club trip or private (USFS regulation). Your cooperation in protecting this National Wild and Scenic River is appreciated.

**Roll Practice:** Wednesday evenings from 6:00 PM 'til dark, May thru the end of daylight saving time in October, at the lake at Stone Mountain Park. See announcement in this issue of *The Eddy Line*.

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## GCA Library Items

The GCA Library has many videotapes and books available to any GCA member. All you have to do is call GCA Librarian Denise Colquitt at 770.854.6636 to find out what is available. The cost is \$3.00 per tape or book for postage and handling.

Any / all donations or loans to the library are welcome. (Please, no bootleg video copies.) Send them to:

Denise Colquitt  
3794 Glenloch Road  
Franklin, GA 30217

The following items are currently available:

### Videos:

Canoes by Whitesell  
Cold, Wet & Alive  
Expedition Earth  
Faultline (Will Reeves)  
First Descents (North Fork Payette)  
Grace Under Pressure (learning the kayak roll)  
I Said Left, Stupid: A Video Guide to the Chattooga River (Sect. 2 & 3)  
In the Surf  
Introduction to Canoeing  
Mohawk Canoes (promotional w/detailed boat outfitting instructions)  
Mohawk Whitewater Canoes (promotional w/detailed outfitting instructions)  
Only Nolan (Promotional, Canoe Technique)  
Path of the Paddle: Quiet Water  
Path of the Paddle: White Water  
Performance Sea Kayaking (the basics & beyond)  
Play Daze  
Retendo

Solo Playboating!  
The C-1 Challenge  
The Middle Fork of the Salmon River (Idaho) — by Photographic Expeditions  
Trailside: White Water Canoeing the Chattooga River  
Vortex -- low cost storm water sampler  
Waterwalker (Bill Mason)  
Whitewater Self Defense

### Books:

A Canoeing and Kayaking Guide to the Streams of Florida  
A Canoeing & Kayaking Guide to the Streams of Kentucky  
A Canoeing and Kayaking Guide to the Streams of Ohio, Vols I & II  
A Canoeing & Kayaking Guide to the Streams of Tennessee-Vol I & II  
A Hiking Guide to the Trails of Florida  
A Paddler's Guide to the Obed Emory Watershed  
ACA Canoeing & Kayaking Instructors Guide  
Alabama Canoe Rides  
AMC White Water Handbook  
American Red Cross Canoeing & Kayaking  
Arkansas information (assorted)  
Basic River Canoeing  
Brown's Guide to Georgia  
Buyer's Guide 1993 (Canoe Magazine)  
Buyer's Guide 1994 (Paddler Magazine)  
Buyer's Guide 1996 (Paddler Magazine)  
California Whitewater - A Guide to the Rivers  
Canoe Racing (Marathon & Down River)  
Canoeing & Kayaking Guide to Georgia  
Canoeing Wild Rivers  
Carolina Whitewater (Western Carolina)  
Endangered Rivers & the Conservation Movement

Florida information (assorted)  
Georgia Mountains  
Godforsaken Sea: Racing the World's Most Dangerous Waters  
Happy Isles of Oceana: Paddling the Pacific  
Homelands: Kayaking the Inside Passage  
Idaho Whitewater  
Indiana Canoeing Guide  
Kentucky Wild Rivers  
Missouri Ozark Waterways  
Northern Georgia Canoe Guide  
Ohio County Maps & Recreational Guide  
Paddle America (Guide to trips & outfitters)  
Paddle to the Amazon - The World's Longest Canoe Trip  
Paddling SC-Palmetto State River Trails  
Path of the Paddle  
People Protecting Rivers  
Pole, paddle & Portage  
River Rescue  
River Safety Anthology  
River's End (Stories)  
Sea Kayaking Canada's West Coast  
Song of the Paddle  
Southeastern Whitewater  
Southern Georgia Canoeing  
The Georgia Conservancy Guide to the North  
The Lower Canyons of the Rio Grande  
The Mighty Mulberry-A Canoeing Guide  
They Shoot Canoes, Don't they?  
White Water Tales of Terror  
WhiteWaterTrips (British Columbia & Washington)  
Wildwater (Sierra Club Guide)  
WildwaterWestVirginia  
Youghiogheny-Appalachian River  
**Maps:**  
The Big South Fork

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## Announcements

### GCA Email List

The GCA email list has at this printing about 400 subscribers. Here's how the list works:

By sending an email to "gcalist@yahoogroups.com" you automatically reach all subscribers to the list with the message. Only those subscribed to the list can send email to the list.

To subscribe to the list, send an email to "gcalist-subscribe@yahoogroups.com". You will receive a verification that you are subscribed and a welcome message with instructions on how to unsubscribe and various other commands available through the service. Be sure to save this information for future reference.

All GCA announcements and forwarded email from other sources concerning new river access issues, late



breaking news items of interest to the paddling community, etc., will be sent out via the GCA email list at gcalist@yahoogroups.com. If you want to receive any of this information, please subscribe to the list using the above instructions. Also, don't be shy about using the list to send out or to request information about paddling related topics, rivers you're interested in, etc.

By the way, should you change or lose your email ID, please take a minute to "unsubscribe" your old ID and/or to "subscribe" your new one. ✂

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## GCA Web Page

Check it out at <http://www.georgiacanoe.org>. We are continually adding information and links of value to paddlers. Send your ideas for updates to the GCA web committee at [gcaweb@gmail.com](mailto:gcaweb@gmail.com). Membership applications, GCA waivers and other forms for use by members are posted on the site. ✂

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## Mail Failure Notices

Each month the *Electronic Eddy Line* receives numerous mail failure notices against members' email IDs. If your email address comes back with a mail failure notice, you will be deleted from the recipient list for the *Electronic Eddy Line* until we get a request to be added back with a current email address.

Also, if we get a number of mail failure notices against an email ID on the GCA Email List, that ID is automatically unsubscribed by the listserve software. It is the subscriber's responsibility to maintain the subscription with the current email ID. Your cooperation is appreciated — it makes less work for our all volunteer staff. ✂

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## Support Our GCA Supporters

The GCA web site now features a GCA Supporters web page with links to the companies that support GCA financially by advertising with us. Help out those who help us out — patronize our financial supporters!!

Thanks! ✂

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## Get *The Eddy Line* Via Email

*The Eddy Line* is available via email as a .pdf (portable document format) file. This format allows subscribers to view formatted text, graphics, page layout — virtually the entire *Eddy Line* — just as it appears in printed form. Plus you can see it at least a couple of weeks before the printed copy arrives via snail mail. You can also print out a paper copy of the .pdf file and it looks just like the snail mail copy (except most of the photos are in living color).

The .pdf version requires only Adobe Acrobat Reader (or some equivalent) software in order to view it. Acrobat Reader is sometimes present on PCs running Windows operating systems, or can be downloaded for free from the Adobe web site at <http://www.adobe.com>.

To subscribe to the email version of *The Eddy Line*, send a request via snail mail to:

GCA  
c/o Ed Schultz, Treasurer  
3060 Pharr Court North #315  
Atlanta, GA 30305

Or you can email your request to Ed Schultz at [heloeddy@mindspring.com](mailto:heloeddy@mindspring.com).

Or on your annual renewal form, just check the block for the *Electronic Eddy Line* and INCLUDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS so we can send *The Eddy Line* to you electroni-

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## Canoe Outfitting & Repair

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Email [canoelist@mindspring.com](mailto:canoelist@mindspring.com)

cally. You can also opt out of the paper version to save the trees, as well as printing and mailing expense. ✂

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## Upcoming Events of Interest

October 28-30 — NOC Guest Appreciation Festival — Nantahala River — Wesser, NC, 888.590.9273, [www.noc.com](http://www.noc.com).

November 5 — NOC Tour de Nantahala Bike Races — Wesser, NC, 888.590.9273, [www.noc.com](http://www.noc.com). ✂



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## Summer Roll Practice

Joint AWC / GCA Summer Roll Practice will be held at Stone Mountain Lake this year beginning in May and running through the end of daylight savings time in October. Sessions are scheduled for Wednesdays at 6:00 (or earlier). Admission is free once you enter the park (a season pass is highly recommended if you plan to attend multiple sessions).



To get there, enter the park from the Stone Mountain

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Freeway (East Entrance) and take the first left. Continue about a mile until the road crosses the dam and take the first right into the parking lot. The boat ramp is on the right. Use the area around the ramp to load and unload boats only. There is a fair amount of power boat traffic putting in and taking out at the ramp. Once in the water, try to stay clear of the ramp for the same reason.

Note: Park regulations do not allow "swimming" at this location, so if you are in the water spotting for someone, an explanation to the park officials may be in order. So far no one has been cited for a violation there.

Volunteers are needed to help with kayak, canoe and C-1 rolling. Your help is appreciated! ❧

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## GCA Trip Sign-up Guidelines

Some considerations to be made when signing up for GCA trips and activities:

Be considerate of our trip coordinators (TCs). Avoid calling late at night, or at the last minute, to sign up for a club trip. Many of the more popular trips fill up very quickly. Calling early in the week, or even earlier, helps to ensure you get a spot on the trip and helps the TC to make plans. We do not have an easy time getting people to coordinate trips, and these little annoyances help to discourage the few we get from repeating their favor.

Please do not attempt to sign up for a trip via email. Many potential trip participants may not be aware that participation in club trips is not guaranteed. Two major reasons for this are that trip sizes may be limited because of many factors, and there is a de facto screening process that takes place when someone calls to sign up for a club trip. Boaters are allowed to participate in a club trip solely at the discretion of the trip coordinator.

Trip size limitations may take place due to river conditions, river characteristics, safety considerations, governmental agency regulations, permit systems, parking availability at put-ins & take-outs, or trip coordinator preference (not wanting to deal with the logistics of a 40 person trip). Again, we don't want to do anything to discourage these TCs from repeating their favor, so try to cooperate with these limitations.

For the same reasons, avoid just showing up for a club trip without signing up with the trip coordinator. Calling and leaving a voice mail message or sending an email does not constitute signing up. TCs often do not get last minute messages or emails before leaving for their trips. And if the trip is already maxed out, you may get to the river and not be able to go on the trip.

The screening process for potential trip participants is a tool to help avoid putting TCs and other trip partici-

pants, and indeed the callers themselves, in the awkward and often unsafe position of dealing with trip participants who may unnecessarily get into trouble on a club trip. Other than because of trips being full, TCs may decline to have a caller participate in a trip and gently suggest that perhaps she/he should consider not participating, or signing up for a trip of a lower difficulty level, if they suspect that the caller may not have the necessary skills, experience, proper type of boat or outfitting, adequate paddling or rescue equipment, proper protective clothing, or any number of other things that may affect the caller's ability to participate in the trip without placing him- or herself in an unsafe position. This avoids affecting the quality of the trip experience for the TC and the other participants, as well as not jeopardizing the safety of the screener.

As a potential trip participant, if you find yourself "screened out" of a trip, try to ascertain why, so you can work toward remedying the conditions that cast doubts on your ability to participate safely. Ask for suggestions that may help you prepare for future trips of a particular difficulty level.

As a trip coordinator, try to be honest but tactful when screening potential participants for your trips. Paddlers' egos bruise very easily — we are mostly a proud and independent lot. If it comes down to it, though, a bruised ego is better than a lost or broken boat, a severe injury, or worse. And no one wants their ego to cause problems for an entire group.

One thing that should NEVER be done — Don't sign up for a trip and then invite / allow other people to come with you on the trip. The correct protocol is to have the other people individually contact the trip coordinator directly to sign up for the trip. Again, we want to be considerate of the TCs so they will continue to coordinate trips, and "surprises" are not a good way to do this.

Lastly, please try to be on time at the designated meeting place. The club has a 15 minute rule regarding waiting for late-comers for any club event, so if you show up late and miss the group, PLEASE don't get huffy with the trip coordinator.

Your cooperation and understanding in adhering to these guidelines are very much appreciated. ❧

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## Annual GCA Holiday Party

The GCA Holiday Party will be at Debbie & Keith Dargis' house on December 4th at 6 pm. Join your fellow club members for an evening celebrating the Holidays. We'll have turkey and ham. Please bring an appetizer, salad, or dessert to supplement. We'll also have soft drinks. If you want something stronger please BYOB.

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The address is 5345 Bannergate Drive in Alpharetta. From 285 take the Peachtree Industrial (Hwy 141) Exit North for 9.2 miles. At 3.8 miles into this 9.2 mile drive, you'll need to veer left to remain on Highway 141, Peachtree Parkway, following the signs to Cumming. After you pass the Atlanta Athletic Club on your right (at the 9.2 miles) make a left onto Old Alabama Road. Make your first right onto Buice Road. Take your second right onto Twingate Drive (Doublegate Subdivision). 1st right onto Bannergate. Go .3 miles to Dargis Manor on your right.

From 400 take the Haynes Bridge Road exit east to Old Alabama Road. Make a left onto Old Alabama and a left onto Buice. Follow above directions from Buice.

See you there!



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## Election of Officers for 2005/2006

The following slate of candidates for officer positions for the 2005-6 year have been selected by the Nominating Committee, approved by the Executive committee and voted on by the Board of Directors at the September meeting. The election of officers will be held at the Fall Membership Meeting on Saturday, October 15, at Smokey Mountain Meadows Campground in conjunction with the GCA Fall Gala. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at the meeting.

President	Vincent Payne
Vice President	Tom Bishop
Secretary	Jamie Higgins
Treasurer	Ed Shultz

See you at the meeting / Gala!!



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## Kayak for Conservation

### A Fundraiser for the Tennessee River Gorge

The immensely popular Kayak for Conservation is back and will be held October 15, 2005!

Rock Creek Outfitters of Chattanooga, along with Lotus Designs/Patagonia, want to kayak — and to protect — the scenic Tennessee River Gorge. On Saturday, 15 October 2005, both companies will host a "fun"-draining river tour to benefit the Tennessee River Gorge Trust. Attendees can bring their own boats or borrow one of the many that will be on site for free demo use. Rock Creek and Lotus Designs/Patagonia invite the public to come float the Tennessee and to find another reason to love Chattanooga.

The Tennessee River Gorge possesses great ecological and historical value, and the best view is from water level. Kayakers often encounter great blue herons, river otters and an occasional red-tailed hawk. The trip will

begin at Suck Creek and end 8 miles downstream at Raccoon Mountain. Don't worry, the current does half the work!

A "Post Paddle Party" will be held at Rock Creek Down Under and will include a silent auction of gear and prizes donated by some of Chattanooga's finest supporters. There is a \$35 per person fee for the event, \$30 for current members of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust, and space is limited. To reserve your spot, call the Tennessee River Gorge Trust today at 423.266.0314.

ALL proceeds from this event go to support the mission of the Tennessee River Gorge trust in protecting and restoring the wilderness areas of the Tennessee River Gorge.

Special thanks to the City of Chattanooga's OutVenture, who will be providing gear and shuttle service, as well as to the volunteers and members of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust and their efforts to protect this special wild place.

For more information on this event contact the Tennessee River Gorge Trust at 423.266.0314 or e-mail Julie Beach at julieb@trgt.org.



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## Florida Flat Water Canoe Camping — Goose Pasture

### by Lamar Phillips

Buddy Goolsby and I made this three day trip with the Georgia Wilderness Society, ([www.georgiawildernesssociety.org](http://www.georgiawildernesssociety.org)) last October. You can go to the above web site, click on photos, Florida, Wacissa River 2004 and get an idea of what a wonderful trip it was. You can also see photos from their 2002 trip by clicking Wacissa River 2002.

We have reserved the private camping area at Goose Pasture for Thursday thru Sunday, October 13-16, for a great GCA camping trip. We will be able to accommodate 16 folks who enjoy camping and paddling some beautiful rivers. You'll notice from the above web site that there are beautiful plants and a lot of wildlife in the area.

We will be camping on the Wacissa River, across from the Slave Canal in a private part of the Goose Pasture area. It has a covered pavilion with basic toilet but no showers or water. The site is managed by the Florida DNR and there is no fee. We will be paddling the Aucilla River on Friday and the Wacissa River on Saturday. Both of these paddles are about 5-6 hour paddles. On Sunday, we will paddle the Slave Canal, about a 2 to 2-1/2 hour paddle. This canal was dug by slaves to connect the Aucilla and Wacissa Rivers so that the plantations could have access

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to the Gulf. You'll notice in the photos that there are dead falls on the canal as a result of storms and it is a very interesting paddle.

If you can't come down for the Friday trip, it is worth the drive for the Saturday and Sunday trips. It is about 5-1/2 to 6 hour drive.

For more information, contact me.

Lamar Phillips  
1499 Sanden Ferry Drive  
Decatur, GA 30033  
770.939.5087  
lamarph@bellsouth.net.



## Welcome New Members — Directory Additions

The following is a list of all members who have joined the club since the last update. We will try to include this information on an on-going basis so you can add new members to your Directory. New members are the life blood and the future of the club. Thank you for joining us!!

Benvenue, Pam  
558 Seal Pl  
Atlanta GA 30308  
H: 404-876-7320  
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## Lightning Safety

by Lonnie Smith  
Part 2 of 2  
Prevention

When considering a stance on prevention of injuries caused by lightning, the best methods are proactive ones. Proactive approaches emphasize advance planning and recognition of a potential threat from lightning. A complete plan involves a sequence of decisions on a time scale from days to seconds. (Holle, et al, 1995)

A primary step one should take is to check the weather report before beginning an outdoor activity. A "watch" means that conditions are favorable for severe weather in an area. A "warning" means that the National Weather Service has reported severe weather in an area, and everyone in that area should take the necessary precautions to avoid a vulnerable situation. One should also become aware of the types of storms that form in the area during the season of the activity. (Holle, et al, 1995)

An initial step in developing an appropriate plan for dealing with the hazard of lightning is to designate a



spotter who is responsible for watching for the threat of lightning. Experience has shown that many coaches and officials are so involved in games that they are unwilling or unable to monitor the development of a storm situation at the same time.

Secondly, establish rules for the discontinuation of an activity and strictly adhere to them. If a game or competition has been stopped due to a lightning hazard, instructions should be given to the spectators, competitors and all personnel as to where to go and what to do until the lightning hazard has passed, or the disposition of the game has been determined (Cole & Bennett, 1997). Instructions should be delivered as soon as possible in a clear concise manner.

One method that can be used to assess the danger of lightning in a developing thunderstorm is the flash-to-bang method. The distance to lightning from a given location can be determined because light travels enormously faster than sound, this difference leads to the flash-to-bang method. When you see the lightning flash, count the number of seconds to the initial bang of the thunder. Divide the number of seconds by five to give the

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distance in miles from you to the site of the last lightning.

For example, if the time from when you see the flash to when you hear the initial bang is fifteen seconds, then the distance from where the lightning occurred is three miles. (Vavrek, Holle, & Allsopp, 1993) Normally, thunder can be heard up to an average of a flash to bang time of fifty seconds, or ten miles away. The distance that thunder can be heard during a storm can decrease due to the heavy rains or winds, or even surrounding noises. In quiet locations, especially at night, thunder may be heard coming from farther away.

An important consideration is that lightning has been observed to strike ten miles or more from the rain of a thunderstorm. Lightning may occur in the absence of heavy rain or hail, so the observer has few clues for judging the lightning threat situation. Many victims state there was some blue sky visible at the time of the strike, as expected when storms are not especially strong. Instead, the low flash rate periods before and after the strongest portion of the storm proved to be the most dangerous.

One study done by Holle et al showed that the hazard to people is increased when flashes are not frequent and there is no rain at a location. The researchers in this study composited cloud to ground lightning flash data within the audible range of thunder of lightning casualties for central Florida. The researchers concluded that the end of a storm is very important, because as many casualties occurred after as before the strongest lightning rate around the location of the casualty. Also, low flash-rate situations produced more casualties than high-rate ones. These periods had less than one flash every four minutes within one hour and ten miles of the casualties. Most people do not perceive this to be a dangerous situation. (Holle, 1995)

Lightning presents a false alarm problem. Because of the variables in the data surrounding lightning injuries, it is important to develop a pro-active approach in dealing with the presence of lightning in outdoor sporting activities. It would be impractical to end every outdoor activity or sporting event at the first observation of lightning or thunder. The National Lightning Safety Institute recommends that a flash-to-bang time of fifteen seconds (three miles) or less means that all individuals should leave the outdoor athletic site for immediate safe shelter (NLSI, 1997).

Thirdly, establish areas of safe shelter and precise routes to each of these shelters. A safe shelter has been defined as a large all metal building connected to the ground by plumbing or electrical wiring, and normally occupied by people. The metal plumbing and/or wiring acts to ground the structure. In the absence of a sturdy, frequently inhabited building, any vehicle with a solid

metal top, not a convertible or golf cart, with the windows rolled up can provide a measure of safety (Holle, et al, 1995).

It is not the rubber tires that make the car safe, but rather the metal around the outside that actually dissipates the electrical current. It is also important to remember not to be in contact with any of the surrounding metal during the thunderstorm. A metal-topped building with non-conductive walls, or worse, a building without walls, would not serve as a safe shelter.

In an emergency, if you find yourself in an area where safe shelter is not readily available, it is important to find an area of least risk. One important rule to remember is not to be highest object. Lightning seeks its ground contact point from overhead thunderstorms in about a fifty yard search radius on the ground. Therefore, do not stand in an open area such as a ball field, golf course, or large clearing between trees in the forest. Do not be connected to anything taller than its surroundings that will be attractive to lightning.

If you feel your hair stand on end or skin tingle, immediately assume a crouched position on the ground with only the balls of your feet touching the ground and remove metal objects, including baseball caps. Next, wrap your arms around your knees and lower your head. Minimizing contact with the ground and decreasing your surface area is paramount because lightning current often enters a victim through the ground rather than through a direct overhead strike.

Finally, establish rules for resuming the activity you and/or your group is involved in. The National Severe Storms Laboratory (N.S.S.L) recommends that lightning and thunder be stopped ideally for thirty minutes after the last flash of lightning or the last clap of thunder before resuming an outdoor activity (NCAA, 1997). A good rule to remember is that any individual who feels he or she is in danger of any lightning activity should have the right to leave the field or event site to seek safe shelter.

### **Treatment**

Because of the magnitude of injuries lightning can induce, it is unrealistic to attempt to evaluate and treat a lightning victim on a sporting field. Focus all attention on providing an adequate airway, a palpable pulse, and avoid circulatory compromise. Keep the patient warm, initiate CPR as indicated and prepare them for immediate transport. Remember that the aftermath of lightning injuries is often unpredictable and that virtually every organ can and may be damaged.

### **Conclusion**

Danger in the presence of lightning is largely avoidable, provided the simple ABC's of lightning safety are

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followed. First, **Anticipate** the potential threat of inclement weather in all settings. **Be** vigilant about weather changes, as they may indicate an impending storm. Finally, use **Caution** if any doubt exists as to the safety of being outdoors. You should always have guidelines in place and adhere to them to prevent deadly consequences. With these simple principles we move one step closer to harnessing lightning.

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- *From the Tennessee Valley Canoe Club newsletter.* ✂

## **Hypothermia**

by **Dick Hurd, MD**

Cool weather is just around the corner, so it is appropriate to take a refresher course on hypothermia, which is defined as a drop in the body's core temperature to less than 95 F. I will discuss the physiology, recognition, practical treatment, and prevention. Much of this information was provided at the recent annual meeting of The Wilderness Medicine Society.

First, I want to emphasize that hypothermia is not confined to cold weather. I am a summer paddler, and have seen lots of paddlers shivering after an unintended swim. All we need is cold water, prolonged or repeated immersion, or rain, a little wind, overcast skies, wet clothing, and we have the ingredients for hypothermia. We should have some dry clothes in a waterproof container with us whenever we are on a river, regardless of season.

Second, it is an interesting fact that our perception of being hot or cold is more related to skin temperature than core temperature. This has a curious connection to hypothermia: if you try to externally warm (heating pad, hot water bottles) a hypothermia victim who is vigorously shivering, you may turn off the shivering, making matters worse.

Also, you have all heard of hypothermia victims discovered in various stages of undress: the explanation

seems to be that in the terminal stages of hypothermia, vasoactive chemicals are released causing constricted blood vessels at skin level to dilate, in turn causing the victim to feel very warm — like a permanent hot flash — and remove their clothes.

### **PHYSIOLOGY:**

Hypothermia occurs when there is excess heat loss to the environment. For paddlers, this can be by convection (wind or cold moving water) or conduction.

Conductive heat loss is hastened by wet clothes (5x) or being in the water (25x).

Once core temperature drops below 95 F, shivering begins, which is the body's attempt to increase metabolic heat production. If heat loss continues to below 90 F, shivering ceases and the body begins a slow downward spiral that can result in death. Below 80 F is considered severe hypothermia; the lowest recorded adult survivor of accidental hypothermia reached 56.8 F.

### **RECOGNITION:**

Hypothermia is classified as mild, moderate, and severe, based on core (rectal) temperature readings. Most GCA trips do not have a thermometer along, so there are some practical things you can look for. The following 'rule of thumb' scheme was developed by the Swiss:

Mild	victim alert, shivering	95-89.6° F
Moderate	victim drowsy, nonshivering	89.6-82.4° F
Severe	victim unconscious	82.4-75.2° F
	victim not breathing	<75.2° F

Besides shivering, note that change of mental status and muscular coordination is the next thing to look for; this person may exhibit poor judgment, unsteady gait, slurred speech, and apathy. This is a person you may have to take charge of and convince they are in trouble!

### **TREATMENT:**

Remembering that we are on a river somewhere with 'field' conditions, I am going to focus only on MILD hypothermia, because anything beyond that requires urgent evacuation to a medical facility.

1. Prevent further heat loss: get victim out of water and wind, replace wet clothes with dry clothes, and insulate with a tarp, plastic garbage bag, sleeping bag, leaves, pine straw, etc. This needs to be top and bottom: laying a victim on cold ground allows continued heat loss. A pullover hat should be placed on the head.

2. Facilitate rewarming, of which shivering is the best mechanism. Warm food or warm sugar containing drinks will provide energy needed to maintain shivering.

A hot drink is not helpful — pour a cup of hot coffee in a 10 gal. container of water and see how much the temperature rises! As mentioned earlier, external heat may actually turn off the shivering mechanism. However,

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inhalation of steam from boiling water may help, as may a fire to create a warmer environment.

Given what we usually carry on a GCA trip, other than canoe camping, item #1 may be our only resource. If a victim is moderate or severe, get help fast!

**PREVENTION:**

This should be pretty obvious. Be aware of weather and water conditions when you paddle, and remember they can change. You can put some dry clothes, a "watch" hat, a large industrial size trash bag, a pack of matches,

and a votive candle in a pretty small bundle. If you don't need it, maybe someone else will.

Because the onset of hypothermia can be subtle, be aware of how you feel, and be aware of others in the group: shivering, altered mental status, and altered muscular coordination are the things to look for. Finally, if you suspect this problem, bring it to the attention of others in the group, because the time to begin treatment is when you suspect the diagnosis.

Good luck, and see you on the river.



## US Junior Team at the World Championships

by Chan Jones, USA Wild Water Junior Team athlete

September 2, 2005 — Franklin, NC. This summer, the U.S. Junior Team represented the United States in the 2005 Wild Water Junior World Championships on July 27 - 31 in Mezzana, Italy. The team members were:

- Blake Sparks, 18, Boaz, AL ( K-1 )
- Eric Orenstein, 17, Bethesda, MD ( K-1 )
- Chan Jones, 16, Franklin, NC ( K-1 )
- Emily Stein, 16, Lookout Mountain, TN ( K-1W )
- Erin Wilder, 16, Rockford, AL ( K-1W )
- Bailey O'Sullivan, 17, Roswell, GA ( K-1W )
- Tierney O'Sullivan, 15, Roswell, GA ( K-1W )

Coaches:

- Shaun Smith, Ooltewah, TN
- Maurizio Tognacci (Italian Masters Champion)

We had mixed emotions about the race as we sat in the terminal in Atlanta waiting to board the plane that



Race Watch

would take us to Europe. We were excited, optimistic, and nervous. For several of us, it would be our first international race, and for a couple, our first time out of the country.

After many hours on the plane, at the airport, and in the car, we arrived at our hotel in Mezzana at 5 A.M. after getting very lost in the post night-fall Italian countryside. As you may imagine, we spent the next day sleeping off our jet lag and checking out the race course with Maurizio Tognacci, our other coach.

Tognacci, our other coach.

It took us a couple of days to adjust to the new time zone, but that was all right because there was no water in the river. Because of a severe drought in Europe this summer, the race organizers secured releases in the Noce for a couple of practice days preceding the races.

Paddling the Noce was a new experience for most of us, who had never paddled a glacier-fed stream before. In the morning, we'd paddle the river with only the water the powerhouse released into the streambed, which meant a shallow, boat-beating run. After lunch, when the sun started heating things up, we'd get the glacier-melt that





ran down the mountain into the river. The extra water definitely helped pad things out and made the lines easier. We were doubly thankful for the extra water because we weren't sure how long our boats could hold out, due to the constant banging on rocks as we learned the river.

The first day, we made an early morning run in hopes that we'd beat the other teams on the river and have the water to ourselves. While we achieved that goal, we also succeeded in demolishing our boats in the morning's low water. As a result, several of us had very serious damage to our boats. We quickly ate a bite of lunch and flew to patching our boats around noon. Even with the cheap 5 minute repair kits from the hardware store, it took us until 4 P.M. to get our boats paddle-able for the afternoon runs. Fortunately, our afternoon runs went well, and we learned a lot about the river.

The morning of the nonstop race, the race that would



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determine the starting order for the classic race, we decided to conserve our energy and do some sightseeing on the glacier that fed the Noce. We ended up getting some great pictures of the view, but coming back down from the thin-air and high altitude sapped our energy. It was all we could do to get in our boats and paddle down the course.

That night, after a rest, we attended the opening ceremonies for the event. The athletes representing the different countries paraded through Trento. The rest of the evening was filled with concerts and speeches from the race officials and sponsors.

The next day was the classic race. The real excitement was from all the energy from the spectators on the bank cheering the racers on. All the different teams assembled at the finish and cheered their teammates on. Chan Jones and Emily Stein paddled their way to the top U.S. boat finishes in their classes, with their team-mates close behind.

While the classic race on Friday was a lot of fun, the sprint race was obviously what mattered in the competition. The course was a long stretch of continuous class III, a little like the Upper Ocoee River in difficulty. Before the race, we all felt shaky, and decided to make a quick warm-

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up run. As a result, a boat and paddle were lost. We later recovered the boat, but the damage it sustained from being pinned downstream of the course rendered it unpaddleable, forcing its paddler out of the race.

The crowd's energy was incredible as we raced through the sprint course. The French team managers ran up and down the course cheering their team on, the Germans blew horns and noisemaker at their racers, and the Swiss rang the biggest cow bells we'd ever seen. Italian TV even broadcast the event!

Eric Orenstein and Blake Sparks really stood out among the American Juniors in the Sprint race with solid, clean runs. Chan Jones had a shaky first run, rolling, and losing valuable time near the top of the course. Tierney O'Sullivan dominated the U.S. Women's Team's performance with two consistent runs, giving the British girls a run for their money.

That night, we patched our boats a final time so they'd make it through the team race. The best we could do is hope that we'd stopped our boats from leaking so we could give it our best shot the next day. The Team Race went well, although we were a little on the slow side. To our dismay, we'd overlooked a crack somewhere, and Blake's boat was filling rapidly with water. We ended up finishing together, however, and that's what counts the

most.... being a team.

We couldn't believe we'd spent nearly two weeks in Europe on a paddling trip. Not only that, but we represented our country in the Junior World Championships. In fact, the coolest thing about the trip was how well we 'knit' as a team. We waited in airport terminals across the world for lost boats, learned a new river in three days, spent multiple nights repairing boats together, and ultimately finished as one, together. We'd like to thank our sponsors, coaches, managers, parents, and those who made it possible for us to take this trip of a lifetime.

- From the USA Wild Water newsletter. ✂



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## Letters

### Re: Suwanee River Sill

In the last newsletter, there was an article about how plans to take down the Suwanee River Sill in the Okefenokee Swamp would wipe out the canoe trails. I'm worried that you've sounded an alarm about a problem that's not really there. My understanding is that the sill hasn't had any effect on low-water levels in the swamp, that's partly why it's being taken down. It mostly just holds too much water during high-water years.



I called the refuge the other day to reserve a permit and asked them about it. She said the sill was actually breached several years ago to let the water flow through, with no ill effects -- they just need to pull the bulk of it down. The word from the refuge is that the only trail that might be affected is the one to Cravens Hammock on the western edge of the swamp. I read a copy of the draft plan and it clearly says they intend to preserve the canoe trails.

Not sure who's right, but you might want to look into this a bit more.

- Jamie Wendt, St. Simons Island 

## Five Hours on the Cartecay

by Shari Heinz

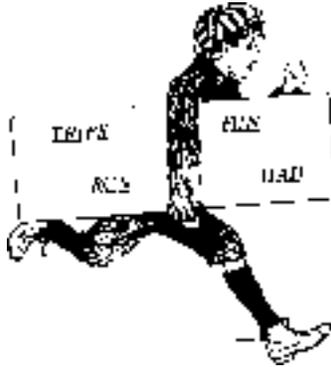
August 14, 2005. Eight little boats paddling down the river, one fell out and the adventure began.

Here I am again, telling a story about the August 14th river trip on the Cartecay. This river is my challenge, I completed the entire trek from Lower Cartecay Road to DNR, twice I portaged and twice I was in the water, once with a line thrown to get me out. Without the guidance, help and patience of all on this trip, success would not be possible for any of us.

All trips begin well before you arrive at the put-in. And don't end until you are safely back at home. There is the packing of your gear and your boat, checking that mental list so nothing is forgotten. There is the drive to the meeting point, on this trip it was again at MOE on Lower Cartecay Road, hellos and introductions and getting repacked into transport to the river. Realizing I forgot my eye goggle holder, AKA eyeglass safety strap, I was able to obtain one from Jay at MOE, a perfect length of kite string.

So here we go, in the water. I've rented a boat, a Mohawk XL12, as my big red boat is still without float bags, something that is needed for any white water river. This is a smaller boat than what I am use to, so a little warm up was needed. A little bit of ferry practice before we got underway (note to self — find a flat water river and practice how to ferry).

The first entertainment came when I was seeing just how far I could lean. Being in the center politically, I found that leaning to far to the left puts one in the cold, cold water really quick. In neck deep water a rally to get the boat upright and to the left bank was the first team operation of the day. Soaked, cold, and a bit in shock, which the unexpected dip caused, I sat on the bank for a few to



compose myself. Soon we were back on the river and approaching the Rock Garden.

The group included 5 open boats and three kayaks: Dick Hurd, Robbie Short, Edward Stockman, Doug Ackerman, and me in canoes, along with Steve Reach, Dave Chaney, and James Royston in their selected styles of kayaks.

The skies were blue; the air warm with no rain in the afternoon forecast. Lunch break at Whirlpool gave us the needed strength and protein boost to continue on.

The water level was just under 3 feet, making certain hazards non-existent; the tree hazard in Mister Twister was not visible but the hole attempted to eat a little old lady in a rubber ducky without a paddle or a PFD. Mister Twister would have gotten a meal if not for one of our spotters, a throw line and a strong grip that was able to get her out.

Shaken, she and the band of fellow ducky floaters sat on the river bank for a bit before they continued into the wilderness. It is hard to understand, you wear a seat belt when you drive, it is the law, yet people get onto a river without those same protections, a PFD. They think that the tube or little rubber boat is all they need. (Note: I portaged at Blackberry and this rapid, Mr. Twister, as I was still a bit shaken myself from my second and last spill of the day. There is no dishonor in going around a rapid. Fellow boaters are there for the pleasure of running the river, not to rescue your butt, SO hug and thank them when they do).

The surf was up and there were plenty of play spots. Several paddlers slid down Clear Creek Falls on the right side, hitting the chute. Eddies were available everywhere at play areas, doing that needed practice of getting in and out of them; I was able to watch the fun they were having. At several of those spots shouts of encouragement could be heard from the side where some of us sat and watched.



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The views of the area were wonderful; local wildlife included a snake basking itself on a log, and some two legged kind that were also sunning, but on an upper deck. The recent rains and flood water destruction became more evident along the stretch between Blackberry and DNR where homes are few. The banks are filled with logs and human garbage washed out of yards upstream. On occasion, whole docks and planking, the remainder of deck chairs or coolers could be seen. One fellow paddler even got a feather for his cap.

All in all; again the river run was great. Exhausted, cramped legs and fingers and an added bruise: I've learned a little more about me and those that paddled with me. I know that I am a beginner on the rivers, paddling just over a year. I need training and practice. Group trips are one way to get that experience. There are many trips run by the club and without them I would be on the banks watching others enjoy.

Again, thanks to those that helped me with my mishaps and pulled me out of the river. I am forever grateful. ❧

There's just something wonderful about a cold, clear winter morning that makes you want to slow down and take time to stop and smell some hot diesel exhaust.

### First Annual GCA "Chick Paddle" by Joy Scott

When Denise Keller and I first discussed the notion of a "Chick Paddle", we were hoping it would be well appreciated. Our reasoning was that it would help those of us of the female persuasion who are enthusiastic about boating not feel so out of place. That is not to say that I have ever been made to feel out of place on a trip. I have found all GCA trips welcoming. But ever so often, when I look around and realize that I am the ONLY woman on a trip (some of which I have led), I start to wonder if I am the freak of my gender — that maybe there is something terrible wrong with me. After all, I don't really encounter any women in my everyday life that would prefer a day on the river without make-up to a "good" (I use that word loosely) day of shoe shopping at the mall.

So, with positive thoughts we set the dates, picked the river, booked a cabin and hoped for the best. So how did it turn out? Let's just say that we are already in the preliminary stages of planning next year's event! Our cabin was not luxurious by most female standards, but for GCA "Chicks" it was perfect. It was only about 15 minutes from both the Hiwassee put-in and take-out, had a huge back deck, no neighbors AND had a hot tub, which was

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utilized nightly.

The flock began to gather Friday night. While most of us had met before, we had some new blood. Katie had just flown back from a business trip, jumped in her car and drove up to spend some river time with people she had not met before, but she was able to arrive before dark, so she had a chance to see her river weekend companions.

Charly had a more precarious time. While looking for our location, she had a nocturnal encounter with the area "Cujo" who proceeded to chase her open Jeep down the road. She arrived to find a group of people out back who she did not know nor could see as the only lights were those from the hot tub.

Guided only by the peals of laughter and some of Denise's more interesting musical selections, she braved the darkness. Within minutes, she was adorned with glow-in-the-dark bracelets and was quickly among friends. With all those expected on Friday now accounted for, the evening ended somewhat early as we had our first day of paddling tomorrow.

Life began to stir around 7:30 am on Saturday. Charly was up and hard at work at coffee, making us her special, triple strength brew. We only needed one pot to get us all going. After nourishment, it was time to prepare for the river.

Boats and cars were consolidated and once gear was dropped at the put-in, drivers headed to the take-out, where we meet our other three paddling companions. Within a short time, we were suited up and ready for the river.

Our group of 11 launched. We consisted of 1 canoe, 1 ducky and 9 kayaks. The day was warm and sunny, the river was not as crowded as your typical summer day and we weren't at the mall. Nothing could have been better.

We were able to practice our rescue and boat corraling skills before lunch as we had a "to remain nameless" swimmer at Eye-of-the-Needle. None the worse for wear but a little damper, our swimmer was quickly in her boat and we headed down to the lunch spot.

After lunch, we continued down river, enjoying the day. We had another bit of rescue practice at Three Chutes (or "Spider Rock" as Denise has called it in her attempt to rename all rapids), as a second boater decided to count trout. Again, after a quick dump of the boat, we were off towards Devil Shoals.

At Devil Shoals, the slightly higher water level had washed out some of the waves, but it was still choppy enough to be fun. For most of the crowd, once was just not enough and seven took off for an up close and personal run sans boat. I made a miserable attempt at rope throwing to assist some of the swimmers into the eddy. Luckily, they

were all better swimmers than I was rope thrower. All made it into the top of the eddy with ease, except Denise. She required a little bit of a tow from a kindly couple in a sit on top, who escorted her back up to the boats.

At the take-out, boats were loaded and we said goodbye to Shelia, our ducky paddler. She had to head back to the big city and pick up a friend at the airport. Denise had to make a run to the office as the cabin key had been misplaced, but within a short time we were back at our temporary home ready for the nightly festivities.

The cabin mates now grew to 10, but we still had plenty of room for dancing and a hoola-hoop competition. Trish and Kathy were the clear winners with everyone else finishing far back in the field. Kim won the handstand challenge, but Marilyn made a valiant attempt. The rest of us did not even try as we knew we were out classed.

The hit of the evening, besides Christine's dance moves, were Denise's home made gifts. She showered us with beaded bracelets, home-made bath salts, lip balms and a concoction she called fairy dust. She did not divulge the ingredients of the latter, so there is speculation that she included ground up fairies.

This may sound a bit like a Mary Kay party, but it was more like a "Paddle Girls Gone Wild" version of a Mary Kay party. There were plenty of jokes, both in good and bad taste, laughter and fun. We were up a bit later than we probably should have, but eventually the evening wore down and we settled in for sleep.

The next morning we had a lot of cleaning up to do before we departed. However, with 10 people ready to pitch in, the place was transformed in no time. After coffee and breakfast, the cars were loaded and we were ready to go.

Outside obligations and the previous night's festivities took their toll and our paddling group dwindled to 5. After a quick shuttle run, we were off. As with the previous day, the weather was perfect and the river was empty.

Our smaller group traveled down the river, taking time for some roll practice and conversation. The day ended without any swims. We loaded boats, exchanged numbers and emails, and headed back to the real world, all looking forward to next year.

I would like to thank all participants in the "First Annual GCA Chick Paddle" for making this a great weekend. We had Denise Keller, Christine Bloomberg, Trish Rogers, Katie Riddle, Kim Templin, Marilyn Ridings, Charly Albin, Kathy Moyer, Kelly Harbac and Shelia Abner. I also want to give a special thanks to Denise Keller for all her hard work in finding the cabin and all her home made goodies. I hope to see more of you "Chicks" at next year's event!



## Metro Chattahoochee — Powers Ferry to Palisades/Paces Mill

by Shari Heinz

8/20/05. Saturday morning the fogs were still hanging low over the Chattahoochee. As I drove over the river at the 400 bridge, I could not see it at all. Upon arrival at the put-in, Northside Drive, off 285 just east of 75, the temperature had already hit 84 and it was only 9:45 am. The weather service was promising high in the 90s with a heat index of 106.

With 8 boats, 11 paddlers, Capri and Dave Bolton, Leif and Xueya Hauge, Steve Reach and Stephane Verberckmoes (visitor from Belgium) boating tandem, Herb Hammond and I paddled solo, and Glen Cook, Jon McDaniel and Todd McGinnis in various types of kayaks, we were the largest group that I have paddled with.

This is a self shuttle trip: The cost is \$3 to park at the take-out or put-in. These are National Parks and monitored, you will get a ticket, so pay the \$3 for parking and put the tag on the rear view mirror. This day the ranger was checking and he was writing tickets.

With the boats and gear unloaded and the shuttle completed, only a 15 minute drive, we were off and going. The put-in is a short walk over a foot bridge and along a maintained path. The river was high, running between 6-7 foot at the gauge. The waters churned brown and swift. Our trip was from Powers Ferry to Pace Mill — about 3.5 miles — and with the current it was going to be a fast trip.

The fog did not start to burn off until we were past the first bridges. The currents and mini-whirlpools under the bridges kept us working the boats to keep them together. Once past the first bend, the river was clear and we could see the entire group. We regrouped among a flock of Canadian Geese that were startled as we headed down stream.



At the put-in....



Evidence of past lack of preparedness — a broken and partially submerged canoe.

At this point, the river is very wide. There are little islands that run along the right side. Strainers along the right bank had to be watched as they were filled with debris. Several logs were seen floating. The currents moved us apart and the first group was waiting in a nice eddy for us solo paddlers. Again together as a group, we headed on.

Then it happened, cry's for help as one of the kayaks lost a paddle. Before it could be retrieved, it had traveled 200 yards plus. The sweep boat stayed with the stranded boater as he made for shore, emptied his boat and got back into the river. They were able to provided him with a spare paddle that was carried.

His paddle was rescued, the rescue boat was able to catch an eddy and wait. The kayaker explained that running with a single blade paddle was not fun.

The main group sat behind an island near Jump-in Rock. Again together as a group, it was lunch time. This was a great place to get in some ferry practice time as the lunch stop was on river right, directly from where we were.

There was an abundance of wildlife. Several blue



Some of the local wildlife.

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herons were spotted, as were turtles and one snake that was seen on our hike. Yes, we had a hike. The air was filled with moaning leviathans, cargo planes that were headed to the armed services air strip that is located on 75 north.

This area of the river has trails that are somewhat maintained running along both sides. Along those trails are places that are wonderful to see if you can. Our hike was on river left. There past an island is a take-out. A short hike into the woods was an outcrop of rocks that has formed a nice cave. Along that hike we spotted a canoe, broken in half, submerged and buried in a strainer between the island and the bank. There were wonderful wild flowers, in yellows, orange and pinks. That is where the Cruse Master spotted the snake, chest high, sun bathing in a low shrub.

The heat of the day was getting to us, so with the hike over we were again heading down stream. The paddle from that last break to the take-out was only about 20 minutes. The entire trip was a speedy race, even though we were not paddling all that fast, completed in under two hours. The currents moved us more than we moved ourselves. Cautions are near the bridges and along the banks.

This was my first trip with my boat since I had float bags installed. The big red boat is a tandem Wenonah Prospector, 15 foot. She is now set up so I can paddle solo and now do the Cartecay and Upper Chattahoochee, among other rivers, without a lot of worry about losing my boat. This gear, along with other safety gear, is for my protection and for those along with me on those trips that I may go on.

Safety gear, such as a PFD, should always be worn on any river. If not, you are not only putting yourself at risk, you are also endangering those with you should a rescue need to take place. I learned the hard way when I swamped on the Cartecay last weekend how important that gear is. Helmets are optional, as are gloves for comfort, some type of foot protection, so you can hike out if you need to. Today the one thing that I ran short of was water. I carried two bottles and left two in the cooler in the truck.

Trip over, all boats being packed, I checked the thermometer in the truck — it had hit 100. ✂

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## Flint River Trip Report

by Moncrief P. Schinsnauzer — Dissociative Press  
— Granny's Gap, Ga. — August 6-7, 2005.  
They Stole My Paddles

"It was one of the most depraved exhibitions of hostility I have ever witnessed," said new GCA member,

Moncrief P. Schinsnauzer, of an incident which occurred at the outset of the recent Flint River excursion. "The two of them fought like enraged hyenas over a water jug filled with reeking gelatinous mold, oblivious to the gang of feral teenage sociopaths, who they later claimed made off with their gear. The woman went into a ferocious snit that I can only describe as pure evil as the paddles were discovered to be missing at the put-in. She pulled a gun and demanded paddles from us. I was frightened."

### Nadir of Decadence

On August 6, 2005, notorious self-unemployed shoal bums John and Betty (more than likely flagrant pseudonyms) were at it again. Posing as legitimate canoeists they conned unsuspecting GCA Vice President Vincent Payne. Having no inkling of the inevitable course of events to follow, Mr. Payne allowed the usurpers a place with his outfit of sober, sane and inoffensive recreational boaters. Trouble began almost immediately.

John hid near the liquor store until the boats were loaded. Betty vehemently denounced all present when she had to untie a previously well stowed couch to facilitate a frantic last second search for a misplaced Professional Gourmet Model Conflagration #3 electric range. This is when the irreversible downward spiral began in earnest.

Betty, looking for the electric stove, found in the water jug a thriving slime mold colony. She then in a maelstrom of obscenity somewhat eloquently berated John. In retaliation for the verbal ambush, John threw the paddles in a dumpster with malevolent glee, blaming it on the aforementioned eccentrically dressed adolescents. Learning at the boat ramp the paddles had gone missing, Betty produced an assault rifle from her pocket book, ordering the meek and defenseless Karen to "cough up the



Left to right: Jean (kayak), Vince, Karen (single canoe) & David.

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oars." According to Moncrief P. Schinsnauzer, this is the point at which he walked to the Riverside Inn for a quick beer. The GCA floaters were so stricken with fear that upon embarking they had a snack.

The others in the water, John stole several items from the bed of an apparently abandoned 1980 Datsun pick up. Among them were a broom and a brand new plunger. Schinsnauzer returned with several erudite Riverside Inn patrons at this time in a failed bid to apprehend the despicable duo. It was too late. They had escaped down river. John was overheard to say to Betty, "Oh, my celestial beauty, would you prefer to propel us with the broom or the plumber's friend?"

### **I'd Know Them Anywhere**

Mortimer Quentin Findleswitch Blowbladder, eccentric herpetologist, long time Merriwether County resident and occasional day laborer, was releasing salt water crocodiles into the river that peaceful August Saturday morning to "give the tourists a charge" when he saw some canoes float by. "I didn't pay 'em no mind but right behind that first bunch of nice lookin' folks a white headed old man was floppin' like a gut shot eel on a bed o' hot coals. He had a broom churnin' the water and that pore lady was a' tryin' to git the commode unstopped. They looked bad suspicious. Like a steam boiler explosion 'bout to happen and a rusty number ten wash tub all co-mixed. I'd recognize 'em any where. I ain't seen nothing to beat it since Harry Hopkins had Uncle Calvin haul a thousand gallon still down to the Cove on a boat made out of heart pine logs and a model A ford engine back in '33. It sank."

Blowbladder, 92, of Chalybeate Springs, also says that the pair bought four water moccasins from him and enquired about the purchase of some cone nosed kissing bugs for the purpose of creating conversation around the camp. Blowbladder readily admits selling the venomous reptiles but denies illicit bug trading on the grounds that he is not an etymologist. "I'm a herp. Maybe I got snakes in the head but them bugs make me nervous."

### **Couple Wreak Havoc at Camp Site**

"Those two were already here. I don't know how they

arrived here before us," Jean, a kayaker of international renown, sighed wearily. "Glass littered the ground all around our truck. The windows were shattered. John said he thought that someone may have broken the windows in search of rum or fishing line to tie out some snakes. Betty snarled from the cab that the ignition lock prevented her from hot wiring the truck. She asked me for a large slide hammer. Their behavior was quite a shock to me. I went fishing."

"We made a superhuman effort to ignore them," an anguished Dave related. "They hovered around our cooking fire like buzzards, smoking cigars, swilling something that smelled like acetone, and drooling over our crepe suzettes and quiche."

In an affidavit later made to the authorities, Dave stated that he made known his wish to use the out house. "I was mocked. Both of them made rude comments, saying that I was required to first pray to a River Spirit for some incomprehensible sort of precision earth quakes and lightning strikes in order to put the creeks right, also to bring back to life Edward Abbey and Brainard Cheney. The most horrific thing was the banner they had hung from the privy. It depicted a nude woman covered with snakes riding an alligator and had a slogan, 'More Beyond'. Weeks of counseling and I still have nightmares."

### **The Ordeal Finally Ends**

"When we awoke the next morning they were gone," stated Vince, "With our boats. The Evil River Twins set off before dawn into a howling hail storm on a flooding river." An overnight series of storms had caused the normally placid Flint to metamorphose into a raging torrent. It crested late on the seventh at 900,000 CFS. The National Weather Service termed the event an anomaly of staggering proportions. "At least we didn't capsize or lose any fishing poles," the universally esteemed Vice-President philosophized.

At press time both shoal bums, Johnny Flush and Badswim Betty were at large. They have been known to frequent boat ramps, fish camps and swamps of ill repute. They should be considered extremely weird. 

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## **Paddle Georgia — Paddling Week on the Chattahoochee**

**June 24-July 1, 2005**

**by Jamie Higgins**

**Part 1 of 3**

This past Winter at a GCA Executive Committee meeting, Gina Johnson brought up an upcoming event called Paddle Georgia and said that GCA had agreed to support this event. Gina was asking for volunteers to

coordinate with Joe Cook, Paddle Georgia Executive Director, and find out what exactly was needed of GCA.

The idea behind Paddle Georgia was very similar to Bike Ride Across Georgia or BRAG. Paddle Georgia would be a weeklong, 110 mile paddling trip on the Chattahoochee from just below Buford Dam to Franklin, GA, just above West Point Lake. The organizers of Paddle Georgia would shuttle participants to the put-in and take-out each day, as well as shuttle them to local high schools and other venues where they would camp for the night. Participants could



Paddle Georgia 2005 Paddlers. - Photo courtesy of Paddle GA.

purchase breakfast, lunch and dinner or bring it with them. They wanted GCA to assist them in providing safety boaters for the more difficult rapids along the route, as well as provide a sweep.

After thinking about it for a bit, I offered to coordinate with Joe. I corresponded with him and talked with him on the phone. What he needed was 2-4 boaters on two sections of the trip and 2 safety boaters on all but two days of the week long trip. He also needed a sweep to bring up the rear and ensure everyone got off the river safely. He offered to waive the \$165 registration fee for the 2 safety boaters and the sweep.

I must admit that waiving the \$165 registration fee seemed very appealing to me. I figured the trip would be novel and fun, and it would give positive exposure to GCA to help Joe out. After all, GCA, is the oldest and most established paddling organization in Georgia, and it's only fitting that we support this event. I also believed in the concept of Paddle Georgia to get more folks out to experience Georgia's rivers. As paddlers, we all appreciate and respect the river. My hope was that Paddle Georgia would



All manner of boats were paddled during Paddle Georgia. - Photo courtesy of Paddle GA.

inspire that same sense of deep appreciation of the rivers that we paddlers have to a whole new group of people who would never have experienced the river otherwise.

Paddle Georgia was a concept that I believed in, and I wanted to do my part to make it happen. So I went about emailing and calling my white water/flat water paddling buds to see if they were interested in doing the sweep or safety boating gigs. I figured I could be one of the safety boaters. I have only a handful of friends that do both white water and flat water, so my pool of potential Paddle Georgia boaters was pretty slim, but I did manage to get two of my friends to bite at the challenge. Kelly Harbac offered to help with the safety boating and Sue Hoagland offered to run sweep. I've paddled both white water and flat water with both Sue and Kelly, and they are both experienced boaters. In fact, I credit Sue for getting me into paddling because she convinced me to buy my first kayak.

The next thing to figure out was what boat to use on the trip. This was tough because Kelly and I were doing safety at the rapids, so we felt it necessary that we bring our white water boats. However, the majority of the run would be flat water, even the days that we were doing the safety boating. Had I not been doing the safety boating, I would have brought my rec boat, which is a Dagger Bayou. It is rated to do class I/II stuff, but has a keel and would be good in the flat water.

I managed to convince Joe to let Kelly and I take two boats: our white water boats for the safety boating and rec boats for the flat water days. I knew it was going to be a tough trip for Kelly and I because all but two days would be spent in our white water boats. The last day would be particularly tough because it would be a 20 mile paddle, and we would be in our white water boats to set up safety for a class II rapid.

Luckily, Mike Winchester was kind enough to loan me his old school kayak, a Perception Pirouette. It is 11 feet long, but still maneuverable and rollable, but had a

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faster hull speed than my creek boat (Piranha Micro 230). It also was roomier and much more comfortable. Kelly took her Dagger Piedra (ww boat) and Dagger Crossover (rec boat).

Gina and Haynes Johnson and Ed Schultz agreed to help us on the first day of the trip below Buford Dam, and Gina and Ed would also help on the Devil's Race Course rapid (Metro Chattahoochee section) on the third day of the trip. I did some research of the white water of the entire trip. I read Suzanne Welander's recently updated book, *Paddling Georgia* and looked on AW's web site.

The first day's run made me a little nervous. Normally, the run just below Buford Dam is mild class I stuff with one class II rapid, but when Buford Dam is releasing, the rapids become III/III+ stuff and this made me very concerned. Many of the boaters on the river would be complete novices and class III stuff would be way above their skill level.

Upon talking with Will Gosney, who had a great description on AW's web site, I decided to see about coordinating with the Corps to see if we could delay the releases from Buford Dam. Fortunately, I work for the Corps of Engineers and was able to talk directly to the person in the Mobile District that makes the release schedules. Gene Morrison, Mobile District, was very helpful and assured me that they would do the releases later that evening when we were off the river. He said they routinely do this and they were just as concerned as I was about boaters going down river safely. I felt a lot better about the first day, but many folks in GCA were all wondering how novices in all manner of boats would fare going through Devil's Race Course.

There were two shuttles to get you back to your car after the week long paddle. There was a Kick Off Day Shuttle where folks parked their car at the final take-out and then they shuttled you back up to the first day's put-in. The other option was to take the End of Paddle Shuttle, which would take you back to your car near Buford Dam and the put-in. Kelly and I decided to take the Kick Off Day Shuttle so we had to spend the night Friday at Forsyth Central High School.

During this time, we would register and receive briefings by Joe about the journey. I was to also give a safety briefing. Kelly and I registered and we got a goody bag full of cool schwag. We got a Paddle Georgia T-shirt, a first aid kit in a water proof container, a cool book published by the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeepers, and bumper stickers and stuff.

The place was buzzing with paddlers and there were all sorts of boats. We saw canoes, rec kayaks, sea kayaks of all shapes and sizes. It was really exciting. There was

an AJC reporter there, Stacey Shelton. She came up to me and said she thought she knew me. We got to talking and we had a common friend. One of her good friends was one of my cycling buddies. Another fellow, Bob, was filming Paddle Georgia for a documentary about Georgia rivers.

Joe began the presentation and told us about where he'd gotten the idea for Paddle Georgia. Joe and his wife at the time, Monica, paddled the Chattahoochee from Helen to the Gulf. After the trip, Joe wrote a book. During their Chattahoochee paddle, Monica and Joe got the idea to do Paddle Georgia. They figured that by getting people out on the river it would inspire them to protect the river.

Joe said that more people than he expected signed up for Paddle Georgia. They had 150 through paddlers and another 200 paddlers doing day or a couple day trips. He explained that Georgia River Network was sponsoring the event and that proceeds from the Canoe-a-thon would be split between Georgia River Network and Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeepers. He also explained that the event was made possible in large part by a \$20,000 donation made by Georgia Power.

After Joe's presentation, I was asked to give the safety briefing. Sue had talked a youngster into helping her with a PFD demonstration. She demonstrated how a PFD could easily come off a child if it doesn't fit properly or isn't zipped up. I then talked about the usual safety briefing stuff (strainers, undercuts, foot entrapment, signals, etc.) I got a lot of questions, and I realized that there were many folks that had never paddled a boat. I figured the first day at the class II rapid would be interesting.

Afterwards, many folks came up to me and asked questions. Some of them were novice boaters and were concerned about the rapids. I tried to make them feel better, but I was a bit nervous myself. I had no idea what to expect at the rapids, but I felt confident that the GCA safety crew could handle it. I was very thankful that Ed, Gina and Haynes took time off from their busy schedules to help us out.

A peculiar thing happened the first night of the trip. About 3 am, I was awakened to a horrible scream. I looked up and a dark figure was running through the campground screaming like a mad man. The screaming fool then jumped in a truck and sped away. The next morning several folks were talking about the mysterious specter. I figured it was a stalker on a high school dare. Apparently, the idiot was fully clothed, which I thought that wasn't much of a prank. At least, he could have the moxy to be butt naked while he disturbed our sleep.

#### **First Day: Buford Dam to Medlock Bridge**

We got off the shuttle just below Buford Dam for the first day of paddling. I was happy to see Ed, Gina and

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Haynes. I don't think I've ever seen so many boats and so many types of boats. There were probably 200 or more boats lying around. I finally found Mike's boat, but also saw that my rec boat was sitting out as well. Kelly and I had to put our rec boats back on the trailer.

By the time we put in, 1/4 of the boaters were floating down river. Kelly, Gina, Ed, Haynes and I made our way through the first little class I riffles. It was very foggy. The water is around 45 degrees below the dam and it causes a beautiful mist on the water. There were trout fishermen everywhere, some of them in their doughnut floats. I felt sorry for them because the novice boaters were bumping into them. We saw a couple of near flips, but everyone stayed in their boats.

We went through one rapid and I could barely see in front of me. I momentarily lost Kelly through the fog. It was really eerie. Then the fog began to lift and we came upon the class II rapid. It has a little entrance rapid with a rock that you had to maneuver around and then the river funneled through a sluice that made a nice wave train. I decided to set up a throw rope. Kelly sat in the eddy just below me, while Gina and Haynes sat in their tandem canoe in a big eddy below the wave train. Ed sat in another eddy just above Gina and Haynes. Everyone was lined up and ready to catch boats and swimmers.

I spent the next couple of hours yelling "PADDLE, PADDLE, PADDLE" and pointing out the line to folks. I even invented a new paddle signal where I took my paddle and air paddled to signal to people to PADDLE. I saw every type of boat imaginable go through that rapid. Sea kayaks (tandem, fiberglass and plastic). Rec boats that were outfitted with all sorts of fishing gear, which poked out all over the place. There were canoes both plastic and aluminum. There was even a rubber raft.



Rec kayaker negotiating the "Hump", class II rapid just below Buford Dam. - *Photo courtesy of Paddle GA.*

Surprisingly, we only had about 5 people swim. Haynes, Gina and Ed did a great job of collecting boats and swimmers up. The small number of swims wasn't because of the skill level of the boaters, but was more of a testament to the stability of the boats. Many people should have swam, but their boats kept them upright. One fellow was even paddling his canoe backwards! The bow, or rather the backward stern, of his boat was angled up in the air. He almost flipped, but remarkably didn't.

I was quite impressed with the sea kayaks. I remember a trip on the Upper Chattahoochee in which I spent a good 10 minutes arguing with Debra Berry that a sea kayak could not negotiate a class II rapid. Dare I say this, Debra was right! Those sea kayaks and the sea kayakers really did well. I could tell that many of the sea kayakers were very experienced because they confidently maneuvered there 15-20 foot boats through the rapids. I was thoroughly impressed because I didn't really think such a thing could be done.

I also saw one of the most dynamic moves ever made in a sea kayak. Two older women were struggling in a tandem sea kayak. They missed their line and went to river left and got stuck on some rocks. Some other guys helped them get lined up right. I kept an eye on them because I just knew they were going to flip, but as they were coming down, someone didn't listen to my PADDLE, PADDLE, PADDLE and flipped toward the end of the wave train. While I was watching the swimmer, I missed the ladies make their way down the rapid. Just as I was looking up for the tandem kayak, I looked down and they were sitting in the eddy just below me.

Now this eddy was just barely big enough for their huge sea kayak. I told them I couldn't believe they made the eddy and then the current started to pull them out so I yelled my usual PADDLE, PADDLE, PADDLE, and they listened. They did the prettiest peel out I've ever seen and floated on through the wave train! They actually looked like pros and I was standing there totally flabbergasted! I talked with the ladies later that evening. I recognized the older one as a cyclist. She is in her 60's and she rides about as fast as me, which is about an average 15-17 mph, which isn't bad for anyone, much less someone in their 60s. I mentioned their impressive moves and they just laughed and said it was their first time in a kayak. I told them they needed to take it up as a hobby because they were naturals.

After about 2 hours, everyone had run the rapid. We paddled on and Ed, Gina and Haynes got out at Settles Bridges and Kelly and I were left to paddle another 13 miles to the take-out. It was a long day, I was happy to get through the first major rapid, and everyone was safe and sound. I was amazed at how beautiful the river was. The



It's hard to believe the Chattahoochee is this beautiful. The water below Buford Dam is emerald green and the scenery is spectacular. - *Photo courtesy of Paddle GA.*

water was a tranquil green punctuated by scenic bluffs. The Chattahoochee snaked around and ever so often there were some class I rapids. I was surprised that the water was emerald green and the river was really beautiful.

That evening we stayed at Roswell High. We were to stay there for two nights. There were lots of restaurants and a Publics across the street. Kelly, Sue, Florence (another friend that joined us for the trip) and I set up camp in a nice wooded area. There were some real characters on this trip. There was John, who was former Army and paddled a nice sea kayak with a American flag proudly waving from his stern. There was Buddy who

borrowed his friend's rec boat for the trip and had never paddled before. He hung up a sign next to his hammock that said, "Buddy, novice paddler". By the end of the trip, I would come to really like some of these folks.

I particularly liked talking with the sea kayakers. There were a couple different sea kayaking clubs who traveled up from Florida. We exchanged information and paddling stories. I always say that paddlers are the most independent, determined and eccentric group of folks I know, and Paddle Georgia further reinforced that opinion.

Later that night, more shenanigans happened. Some kids threw a couple of flares out and almost wrecked their cars squealing from the school parking lot. We also had a fit of car honking in the middle of the night. My paranoid mind was beginning to wonder if there was some sort of conspiracy going on here, but why would these kids care to disrupt Paddle Georgia? I began to wonder if there was some sort of hate mongering terrorist group out there that had it in for paddlers. I mean, who would want to harass a bunch of paddlers? I searched my overactive mind to try to figure out what group would dislike paddlers so much as to disturb our sleep. Maybe it was a group of terrorist jet skiers, or a trout fisherman that got bumped way too many times below Buford Dam, or perhaps it was forest rangers upset that we could paddle Chattooga Section 1. The next morning as I babbled on about this, my friends just looked at me with that familiar expression of, "Just shut up, Jamie".

- *To be continued in the November "Eddy Line".* ❧

## Solo On The Altamaha: Beyond Rifle Cut

by Steve Reach — GCA Cruise Master

Darien is a quiet and venerable river port town 5 hours southeast of Atlanta that was founded by Highland Scots in the 1700s. Ancient tabby ruins along the waterfront are all that remains of a thriving commercial and shipping center that was set afire and burned down in 1864 by the first all-black regiment of the Yankee army, an act that mystified some, since the town was reputed to be of no strategic value at the time. Nothing at all but a historical marker remains of the southbound railway that used to terminate in the northernmost of the 2 town squares. A tiny graveyard displays a sign, 'Here are buried the heads of the founding fathers'. One wonders where else they might have buried the torsos.

Darien's dilemma is partially driven by the fact that although it is a coastal community, it is lacking in the fundamental element prerequisite to most tourist expectations: a beach. There are no t-shirt shacks, no sno-cones

— really no hand-dip ice cream at all — no jewelry stores, surf shops, swimsuit boutiques, tiki bars, or any of the other trappings associated with the modern-day beachgoer experience. There are only a few old antique stores, open at irregular intervals, with some interesting and nostalgic items.

It's 13 water miles to the nearest ocean breakers. Yet Darien has three distinct features that make it highly appealing to tourist trade of another kind — the peace & quiet of a small shrimp boat village, gorgeous marshland scenery replete with wildlife, and the multi-fingered tidal delta bottoms of the mightiest river (in terms of outflow) in the state of Georgia, the Altamaha.

Driving through nowadays you might miss it. You get off at I-95 and you could very well be distracted and sidetracked by the large, new outlet mall and never get into town. If instead you headed south on the old highway, you might fly right past the convenience stores and boarded-up businesses and suddenly find yourself crossing the first river bridge, heading out of town, catching a momentary glimpse of the shrimping fleet in your rear-view. Little you

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might suspect (due to the lack of promotional signage) that hidden away on the back streets are beautiful old historic houses on open live-oak commons, historic old churches, a pair of excellent bed & breakfasts, and a recently-opened restaurant (Skipper's Fish Camp) that I would not hesitate to nominate as one of the finest seafood experiences on the Georgia coast.

We stayed our first two nights at the Open Gates B&B, operated by Jeff and Kelly Spratt; a young couple, both wildlife biologists by profession, very knowledgeable about wildlife and the locale, very helpful, hospitable and accommodating. The library in their house would be enough alone for some people to warrant a visit. It is a cypress wood extension of the main house, sits on the quiet backyard side, is full of wonderful wildlife and history books.

They have a pleasant outdoor pool. The Sapelo Island info center and ferry is an eight-minute drive. Open Gates also has an added advantage of location; it is an easy walk to the fishery, the waterfront, Skipper's, a well-stocked 24-hour convenience store, and the local paddle boating livery.

I am a fundamental white water kayak river runner, but I love canoeing, rafting, rowing, paddling, sailing, boating of all kinds. I normally do not paddle alone, believing in safety in numbers, but this time felt like the exception. Danny Grissett of Altamaha Outposts met me on Thursday morning and he shuttled me to the river and put me in a Perception Captiva. He spent considerable time using a big map, explaining alternative routes and what to expect from the tides and currents. I rocked the Captiva around a bit to get used to the unfamiliar length and stability, pointed my bow upriver, and rode the tidal influx out of town.

The day was alternatively sunny and humid, cool and dry. Throngs of unkempt, dark, mean looking clouds hurried south on gusty winds, heading for their cotillion in southern Florida with a debutante named Katrina. I quickly learned to use the 7-foot stands of reed along the banks as shelter from the wind; the Captiva has a retractable foot pedal rudder that proved invaluable across the bays and bends. I also came to the rapid realization that there is very little solid land accessible out there that does not involve plunging through many yards of tidal reeds, mud, marsh and swampland.

Leaving the constant aircraft-like drone of the I-95 corridor behind, I approached the Rifle Cut, an arrow-straight ditch hand-dredged by slaves in the 1800s to bypass a long meander and ease riverboat access to Darien. The cut runs through cypress swamp and is only 20 feet or so wide. Branches arched over the water, creating a

tunnel at the end of which I could see the bright water of a wide bay a mile and a half away.

Large water birds flew off like pterodactyls. Mullet sprang comically high out of the water everywhere. A tarpon rolled on the surface, big as my leg, flashing bright diagonal silver scales. Insects of types too numerous to count buzzed, hummed and fluttered. The quiet set in; the dim sound of interstate traffic faded far behind. Strangely, I saw no snakes, yet sensed them.

The tide, which had at first pushed me into the cut, now went calm for a few minutes and then gradually reversed, pushing me back the way I came in. I power-paddled the last few hundred yards and exited the cut into a long, wide, open river bay, without a single sign of humanity anywhere to be seen.

The current eased. More birds, more fish, more flowering mystery weeds. I spent nearly an hour exploring the margins of this area, marveling at the biodiversity, enjoying the play of cloud and sunlight, reveling in the solitude and quiet. There was not a boat, an airplane, or anyone visible on shore to break the illusion of having entered a prehistoric time.

I was cruising slowly down river, heading the long way back, when my curiosity drew me towards a break in the margin that for some elusive reason looked different. I drifted in slowly, not paddling. Suddenly, 10 yards off my bow, a patch of water approximating the footprint of a stretch limo exploded up between the cypresses as if an invisible dump truck full of scrap metal had been dropped in. My initial thought was fish, a really big school of big, big fish. Then I spotted the head.

I had invaded the wallow of El Lagarto, Old Albert, Alligator Mississippiensis, and not a little one, either. This was a fat, old, fish-stuffed, full-grown, river delta monster; the distance from the upraised snout to the ripple of the swishing tail tip was pretty near the length of my Captiva. He was only a boat length away. The head turned slightly to the left, a golf-ball eye swiveled to regard me for a second, and he dived under and vanished.

Adrenaline kicked in. As smoothly and ever so quietly as I could manage in my state of near-panic, I stroked back out mid-river and down, visualizing old stories, how they tip ya, flip ya, grab hold and rip ya, and stuff ya under a river bottom log to age until you are ripened to perfection for gourmet alligator dining. Awed and wide-eyed, about this time I started to feel like maybe I had bitten off (pardon the choice of words) a bit more than I wanted to swallow; I was now 5 miles from civilization, a dry-lander in a prehistoric water world, with a very live carnivorous dinosaur lurking somewhere below in the murky river. I momentarily wondered if I had brought an

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extra pair of shorts. And yet, there was a larger monster still to come.

Another mile or two had passed. I was now beginning to relax, although still scouting the banks much more closely, when I rounded a long oxbow and beheld, making a beeline upriver, an immense specimen of the aforementioned ugly black clouds. It was only 20 feet off the water. The air in the gap was green and evil.

Very quickly the wind began to howl into my face, followed by stinging, blinding rain. There was no lightning or thunder. Forward progress ceased to be an option. Against my previously heightened instincts, I turned and made for a hollow spot in the reeds along the bank. Another half an hour I spent immobile, boat wedged in the reeds, fierce wind howling over the tops, yet where I sat was sheltered; zephyrs pushed the boat gently back and forth.

I huddled and daydreamed as prolonged torrents of

rain thrashed my back. It got quite dark. Soaked through, I watched as the wind and rain whipped the whitecaps along the channel only yards away. My mind drifted. I ate my last granola bar and some beef jerky, drank some water. A blissful peace settled in.

They were worried when I got back. Danny met me on a sit-on-top a mile from town, night approaching, wondering if he should go back for the skiff. Mary Ann had begun to understand those seaman's wives of old that waited and watched out over the water for the husband to return, when the phone rang and Jeff came to tell her that I was walking back from the waterfront; terminally wet; dragging my gear; grinning like an idiot; chastened yet exhilarated; ready for crab cakes, Georgia wild white shrimp, sea scallops on the broiler and a good nights sleep with the rain whispering outside.

GCA Needs YOU!! More Trip Coordinators! Please Volunteer! See ya at the put-in.... 

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## The Ins and Outs of Arranging a Swamp Trip

by Christine Switzer

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service maintains and protects nearly 400,000 acres of the Okefenokee Swamp in Southeast Georgia as the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. The Okefenokee has a history of logging, mining and attempted development. After its designation as a NWR in 1937, private interests in adjacent lands have continued to threaten its existence. Under the refuge management, approximately 20% of the swamp is accessible for day trips and overnight wilderness trips. Canoe trails meander through portions of the northern half of the swamp. Terrain varies from cypress forest to open prairie.

March and April are peak months for the swamp because lots of pretty things begin to bloom, the alligators wake up from their winter siestas and the bugs may not be too aggressive (still, head nets and bug dope are on the recommended gear list). The rest of the year is no less exciting. Winter is a great time for birdwatchers, since the Okefenokee is a popular winter destination for many species, including sand hill cranes and great egrets. In the early summer, the baby birds hatch and in the late summer, the baby alligators hatch. Fall brings out more wildflowers and the early birds begin to arrive before the next winter.

Day trips and overnight wilderness trips are available year-round, although low water levels may require that certain trails be closed. The Suwannee Canal, the result of a failed effort to drain the swamp, runs roughly east to west across the middle of the swamp. Most of the

overnight trips spend a portion of their time on the Canal. There are seven overnight shelters or campsites in the refuge, so only seven wilderness trips will be out at any given time. Designated shelters and campsites with privies are available for use during both day trips and wilderness trips. Leave no trace ethics are required to minimize the impact on the swamp ecosystems. Grey water, including dishwater, goes into the privy, not into the swamp. The swamp water cannot be filtered well enough, so water must be packed in for drinking and dishwashing.

Permits can be difficult to obtain, especially in March and April. Trips during those months are limited to two nights in the swamp. At other times of the year, trips can be as long as four nights. Day trips are permitted from any of the access points, but those trips are limited to certain trails. Motorized craft are permitted on most of the day tripping trails, so congestion could be an issue at times. For those truly looking for someone else to do the work, guided tours are available from Stephen C. Foster State Park and the Suwannee Canal Recreation Area.

For wilderness trip reservations, call 912.496.3331 between 7:00 and 10:00 a.m. ET on a non-holiday weekday up to two months before the planned departure. Especially during the spring, flexibility in launch date and persistence will improve the odds of obtaining a launch date. A special campsite is set aside for youth groups. For non-youth groups, wilderness permits are available for groups of up to 20 people, but given the size of the shelters, a group of 10 would be less cramped.

Unguided day trips do not require reservations, but parking fees are charged at many of the access points and

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groups are expected to sign out and sign in at the park office at these access points. The Okefenokee NWR has a "no pets" policy because pets look and smell a lot like food to an alligator.

Travel time varies depending on what traffic allows. Much of the drive follows 1-75 (AKA, the Walt Disney Highway), so competing events, such as spring and summer break, may interfere with the drive. If you plan to take more than one day to make the drive, reserving a

motel room or space at a private campground may be prudent. Some Georgia state parks close really early, as in gates locked at 7:30 p.m.

**Additional References:**

Website: <http://www.fws.gov/okefenokee/>  
Guidebook: Paddling Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge by David O'Neill and Elizabeth A. Domingue  
- From "The Watershed" — newsletter of the Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association. 

## White Water 101: Shuttling & Roof Racks

by Todd Duren

OK, so you've got some gear and your getting into white water. You're working on your roll, you're hooking up with a few new boating buddies and going on some trips. Cool. You want to help with hauling boats and running shuttle, right? Well here are the freshman basics on both subjects.

Most kayakers and canoeists use a roof rack for hauling. You can sometimes get by with factory installed racks, but you'll want to get an after-market boat rack for serious hauling. Thule and Yakima are good brands, offering a variety of towers, bars and stackers to fit most vehicles. Expect to spend \$150-250 for a set. The racks can be positioned 2.5-3.5 feet apart for kayaks. Single kayaks can ride cockpit-down and flat, but hauling groups of boats requires a stacker bar. The stacker bar is a vertical bar attached to the roof rack, allowing boats to lean against it vertically to be tied.

Once you have a good rack, you've gotta attach the boats. Cam straps are typically used. These are available in varying lengths from outfitter stores. You can find them cheaper at discount stores, but make sure they are the right type. For old school flexibility and fewer scratches on your roof, I still like the flexibility of a good braided poly rope and a trucker's hitch. This knot allows fierce tightening and can be tied anywhere along the length of a rope. Get a boater to show you sometime.

Typically you can stack four or more boats on a rack with a stacker. They are placed alternating bow and stern forward to best fit on the roof. A looped strap or rope goes under the tower on each side, holding the whole boat(s) on the roof in a single bunch. Run two such loops around the boats - one in front and one in back. Finally, run a looped rope or strap through the bow and stern handles on each end and down to the bumper. These bow and stern lines keep the load from sliding down the hood and out onto the

...bow and stern lines keep the load from sliding down the hood and out onto the street — I know from experience!

street — I know from experience!

Racks are available for all kinds of vehicles. I've seen pickups with elevated racks over the bed, as well as vans, SUVs, and even Volkswagen Beetles.

Once you get yourself and your gear to the river, you'll usually need to put a vehicle at the bottom of the run so you can get yourself back home. This can be as simple as using an outfitter to take you and your gear to the top, or something more complicated, depending on your situation.

Have all your river gear together in a bag, and leave dry clothes, keys, and licenses at the take-out. Newer electronic keys cannot get wet, so don't clip them to your PFD. Use a dry bag or a key hider. Also, don't forget to give

a few dollars to drivers who save you gas money. Finally, secure your vehicles without visible valuables to tempt local thieves. Here are several ways to set up a shuttle:

Drop car shuttle: This is the fastest and easiest but requires planning. Use two cars. Drive to river with boats on

one car. Drop the empty car at the bottom with dry clothes. Drive to top, unload and go.

Drop and drive: This version works well with limited parking at the put-in, or when meeting other people with gear at the river. Unload all vehicles at put-in. Leave someone to watch gear. Drive all vehicles to bottom and return with driver(s) in one car.

Park and pedal: Works well with one vehicle. Do a drop and drive, but return on a bicycle. Saves gas! Can work by locking bike at take-out as well.

Hitch and bitch: Hitchhiking can work well on busy riverside roads, and also saves precious gas. Look like a boater. Wear your PFD. Unload all vehicles at put-in. Leave someone to watch gear. Drive one vehicle to bottom and return via the trusty thumb.

- From "Eddy Out" — Chota Canoe Club newsletter. 

"When a man's best friend is his dog, that dog has a problem."  
- Edward Abbey.

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## October Solitude

by Ted Gearing

Fall is my favorite time of year. I try to do as much floating as I can in September and October before Winter sets in. One October weekend, Halloween it was, I decided to do a solo trip on an Ozark stream. I like to do this once in a while, just to see if I still like myself. I can usually go about two days (maybe three) before I have to race back to civilization.

Anyway, I'd put on late in the afternoon — gone a few miles downstream and camped on a lovely gravel bar near a spot called "Stinking Pond." Curiosity got the best of me and, as I foraged for firewood, I checked out "Stinking Pond." Well, I found no pond, but I did find the remains of an old log cabin. And, in a small field behind the cabin, I found a pumpkin patch. How fitting for Halloween. I picked a pumpkin and carried it back to camp. |

As my Cajun stew simmered on the fire (Dinty Moore and Tabasco) and the coffee brewed, I sat back and carved myself a Jack O'Lantern. Hot coffee, with just a wee bit of brandy, assisted in the perverted grin of the pumpkin.

As daylight faded, a full moon rose. A wisp of a cloud sailed slowly across its face as I thought of goblins and old scary movies — vampires and the like. Time to light the pumpkin. I set old Jack on top of the cooler and stared at his toothy grin. He stared back with his fiery eyes. More brandy.

An owl hooted in the dark recess of the forest. A musky odor drifted past the fire. Stinking Pond? Something large kersplashed in the water as a bat clicked its sonar above me. More thoughts about vampires. More brandy.

For a few moments, all was quiet as dark clouds rolled across and obscured the moon. Thunder rumbled in

the background. Added to my thoughts of spooks was a new thought — "How safe is this gravel bar?" It wasn't exactly an island, unless the water were to rise a couple of feet. I could always paddle to shore. Should have replaced my flashlight batteries.

From my tent, I watched the campfire turn from flame to coals to steam as the rain got heavier. Lightning flashed. The flame in Jack's head burned stronger than ever. In the blackness following each bolt of lightning, it looked as though the head were floating in the air.

My sleep was fitful — caused by a combination of Halloween, the storm, and too much Tabasco. I dreamed of muddy water, uprooted trees and floating Jack O'Lanterns. I dreamed of blood sucking vampires and of being trapped in my tent as it rolled over in the black flood of the night.

I was awakened by a blood curdling scream. I was lying in water. I grabbed my PFD and lurched out the door — my soaked sleeping bag clinging to my body like a big slimy monster. I had to get to the canoe. I fell — then got up — and fell again — head over heels. I looked up. Above me, a starry sky.

The storm was over — the river was clear. I had fallen asleep with the tent door open. Just a dream. No flood. Just a soggy sleeping bag. No vampires. Just a few hungry mosquitoes. And the scream? Probably my own.

I cooked breakfast. It was a beautiful morning. An owl called in the forest. Campfire smoke and fog intertwined and floated across the river. Dragonflies buzzed the mirror-smooth surface of the water. It was good to be alive.

Once again I smelled a musky odor. I turned around. The Jack O'Lantern was gone. Just a dream — a dream. - From "The Ozark Paddler" — newsletter of the Ozark Mountain Paddlers. ✂



# CLASSIFIED ADS

**TO PLACE AN AD** - Want ads of a non-business nature are free to dues-paid GCA members. Business-related and non-member ads are \$5.00 for up to 50 words, \$10.00 for larger. Send your type-written ad to: Allen Hedden, 2923 Piedmont Dr., Marietta, Ga. 30066, or email to gacanoes@mindspring.com. PLEASE, NO PHONED-IN OR HAND-WRITTEN ADS. All ads will be run for two issues unless otherwise requested.

**FOR SALE** - Canoe. Cedar-strip canoe, 15' double end, 2-seater, handcrafted from Southern red cedar, hand-caned seats, 2 matching paddles. Weighs 50 pounds, floats like a dream. Must see! \$3400 firm. For photo, send email request to murdock1987@charter.net. 864.222.1987. Will custom build cedar strip-pers.

**FOR SALE** - Canoes. One is a Dagger Impulse, fully outfitted, normal wear and tear, but in good shape. \$400. The other is a 17' Grumman with a shallow draft keel in excellent condition. \$500. Email Dick at dksturt@mchsi.com or call 229.244.1303.

**FOR SALE** - Kayak, Bliss-Stick Slick-Stick. New boat... never in the water. Designed specifically for free style where verticality counts. Enables the lighter paddler to put the boat on its end without the struggle associated with larger volume boats. Hull design relatively long to enhance wave surfing and speed. A long carving edge relative to its full length means it's fast and responsive to carving on the wave. Aggressive side walls contribute to a high level of responsiveness. With a kicked-up bow and high knee points, paddlers up to 6 feet can still paddle the Slick-Stick with comfort. On it's end the Slick-Stick is nicely balanced, and in

a hole, shows plenty of kinetic energy. For small paddlers, the Slick-Stick is also a great river play boat. List price \$975. Asking \$750. Call 404.255.0368.

**FOR SALE** - Kayak, Wave Sport Big EZ, red, excellent shape, asking \$550. Float bags available. Call Hank Klausman 770.587.0499 or email at klausgp@bellsouth.net.

**FOR SALE** - Kayak and paddle. Perception Corsica S. Helmet, flotation bags, spray skirt, PFD and equipment bag. All for \$425. Call Larry at 404.915.1722.

**FOR SALE** - Sea kayak, Prijon Seayak, 16' 1" touring kayak with Feather Craft rudder, adjustable backrest, yellow polyethylene trihedral hull; excellent condition; always stored in garage. Pics available by email. Fast, good stability & easy to paddle. \$450. Call Wayne Guerke evenings at 229.386.2104 (Tifton, GA); email gapaddler2@mchsi.com.

**FOR SALE** - Sea kayak, Wilderness Systems Piccolo, \$399. This small touring sea kayak is perfect for day trips. It is very stable and very fast. This sky blue kayak is in great condition and has been stored in a basement. It comes with a rudder that allows you to steer the boat with foot pedals. The rudder is easily retractable for nonuse. The boat is a long-time favorite of smaller adults and kids. The Piccolo is 13'6" in length, 20.5" in width, and 11.5" in depth. The cockpit is 30.5" x 15". It has a small day hatch. It weighs 42 lbs and has a maximum capacity of 180 lbs. If interested email Becca at bbkayak@att.net or call and leave a message at 404.634.5612.

**FOR SALE** - Mountain bike, Specialized Stumpjumper, 17" frame with 21 speed drivetrain, Shimano LX components and RockShok Judy front

suspension. This bike has been well maintained and is in very good condition. \$300. Contact Don at 864.638.5980. Located near the Chattooga River.

**HELP WANTED** - Yes, the GCA needs your help. We need members to serve on committees, label and mail newsletters, etc. Call 770.421.9729, leave a message.

**WANTED** - Kayak, Pyranha M3-233 or Pyranha I-4 Medium or Liquidlogic Jefe. Call Hank Klausman at 770.587.0499 or email at klausgp@bellsouth.net.

**WANTED** - Flat water canoe, used, for solo lake paddling (actually, this is for my brother at his nearby lake in Columbia SC). The lighter, the better, of course. Tim Kelly: w 678.302.1459 or tkelly@btcpa.net. ✈

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# **GCA Fall Gala Canoeing Affair 2005**

## **October 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Smokey Mountain Meadows Campground, Bryson City, NC**

<http://smmcamp.tripod.com/>

Reservations must be made **DIRECTLY** with Smokey Mountain Meadows

For reservations call 828.488.3672

**(DO NOT SEND MONEY TO GCA)**

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**CAMPSITES:** Meadow: \$6/site/night for 2 people

Creekside: \$14/site/night for 2 people

Water/Electric: \$18/site/night for 2 people

RV Hook ups: \$20/site/night for 2 people

(If over 2 people staying per site, then add another \$6/person/night/site)

**CABINS:** \$40-\$58.00/night (sleeps 4-6 depending on the cabin)

**Morning Meetings:** 8:00 AM – Meet at the Gazebo to organize trips

Rivers: Cartecay, Nantahala, French Broad, Tuckeseigee, Pigeon, Ocoee, Upper Chattahoochee,  
Chattooga, Nolichucky and more

Lakes: Nantahala, Fontana

Trip coordinators needed especially for class I/II rivers.

**RSVP to Jamie Higgins, 404.508.0761 / [jmhiggins\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:jmhiggins_99@yahoo.com) so we'll have an idea  
how many are attending**

Slick-Stick is nicely balanced, and in a hole, shows plenty of kinetic energy. For small paddlers, the Slick-Stick is also a great river play boat. List price \$975.00. Asking \$750.00. Call 404.255.0368.



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