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THE EDDY LINE

Volume 44, No. 6

770.421.9729

www.georgiacanoe.org

June 2009

August 21-23 at Eagle Ranch Chick Paddle 2009

by Karen Saunders, Chief Chick in Charge

This year's Chick Paddle will be held at Eagle Ranch. They have a cabin that sleeps 20 with a full kitchen, 2 full bathrooms, a hot tub!(whoooo hooooo), AC, 2 queen beds and the rest are twin bunks. (2 have already agreed to share a queen and 2 others will need to share also.)

Eagle Ranch is about 30-45 minutes from the Hiwassee and about the same to the Ocoee. The Nantahala and Toccoa rivers are close as well, so there ought to be plenty of choices to paddle.

Cost is \$50 per person for the two nights together whether you are in the cabin or in a tent. Sorry, there will be no refunds. Send \$50 Check to Karen Saunders, P.O. Box 1449, Temple, GA 30179.

We still have room for 3 in the house and we can take a few more on the porch and you can also pitch a tent behind the cabin. I will probably cut off the number attending at 25-26 women.

Breakfast and lunches are on your own and dinners are pot luck. Bring a dish to share and BYOB.

We have a lot of fun every year paddling, cooking and hanging out together and just being.....well, crazy! More details to follow. Looking forward to another great year with all the Chicks!

For more info contact Karen Saunders, 678 372-2849. Directions to Eagle Ranch are at <http://www.eagleadventures.com/directions.htm> and a map is at <http://www.eagleadventures.com/map2.htm>.



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Holmberg Named Editor of *The Eddy Line*

by Rick Bellows

Mark Holmberg has been named the new Editor of *The Eddy Line*. Holmberg, who also serves as GCA Recreation Chair, will begin his term with the next issue of the newsletter.

The change in editor is a part of substantial changes to *The Eddy Line*, which will now be published bi-monthly rather than monthly and will focus on trip reports, educational articles and entertainment. More time-critical information, including announcements, trip lists and meeting minutes, will be distributed via the GCA groupmail and website.

The changes were announced in the May issue of *The Eddy Line*, explained in a column by President Tom Bishop beginning on page 8 and addressed in an article by William Garling beginning at page 10 of that issue. A response to that explanation, in the form of an editorial, begins on page 10 of this issue.



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Keeping In Touch

To contact GCA, write Georgia Canoeing Association, Inc., P.O. Box 7023, Atlanta, GA 30357, leave a message at 770.421.9729 or call/email one of the folks listed above.

Groupmail: GCA maintains a group email list to help members share information of general interest. To sign up, go to gcalist-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Website: Information about GCA, forms (including membership application and GCA waiver form), a link to the GCA Store and links to *Eddy Line* advertisers are all at www.georgiacanoe.org.

All About *The Eddy Line*

The Eddy Line, the official GCA newsletter, is available in print or pdf format. To subscribe, contact Ed Scultz at 404.266.3734 or heloeddy@mindspring.com, or mail your request to P.O. Box 7023, Atlanta, GA 30357.

Submissions/Advertising: All submissions and advertising should be sent to *The Eddy Line*, via email to the_eddyline@yahoo.com.

Deadline: The deadline for all submissions, classified ads and commercial ads is the 5th of the previous month (e.g. May 5 for the June issue).

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Views and opinions expressed in articles and editorials are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the official views and policies of the club. Material not individually designated as copyrighted may be disseminated **only** by paddling organizations having a newsletter exchange agreement with GCA: proper credit should be given. Publication of paid advertisements does not constitute an endorsement of the products or services advertised.

UPCOMING GCA TRIPS

June

6	Coosawattee	Trained Beginner	Vincent Payne	770.834.8263
7	TBA	Trained Beginner	Todd McGinnis	770.856.4489
7	Cartacay	Intermediate	Ed Stockman	770.441.9767
13	TBA	Intermediate	Mark Holmberg	770.428.6898
13	Broad	Trained Beginner	Jeff Engel	706.548.5015
14	Nantahala	Intermediate	Debbie Dargis	770.449.9421
18	Ocoee	Advanced	Allen Hedden	770.426.4318
20	Chattooga (Note 1)	Intermediate	Roger Nott	678.316.4935
20	Nantahala	Intermediate	Brannen Proctor	770.664.7384
21	Nantahala	Intermediate	Brannen Proctor	770.664.7384
27	Upper Toccoa	Trained Beginner	Dan McIntyre	404.252.9513

July

17	Ocoee	Advanced	Allen Hedden	770.426.4318
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Note 1: Clean-up trip, Section 3.5.

Check the website calendar for trips that missed *The Eddy Line* deadline and for social events, safety classes, etc.

KEY TO GCA SKILL LEVELS

Flat Water - no current will be encountered; safe for new paddlers.

Beginner - mild current, occasional Class 1 ripples; new paddlers can learn basic river techniques.

Trained Beginner - moving water with Class 1-2 rapids; basic strokes and bracing skills needed.

Intermediate - rapids up to Class 3; eddying and ferrying skills needed; kayakers need solid roll.

Advanced - rapids up to Class 4; excellent boat control and self-rescue skills required.

For more about "class" ratings of rapids, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whitewater>.

Your Trip Could Be Listed in This Space — Call Cruisemaster William Gatling at 770.529.7103!

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 for 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.

Canoe Camping Trips are multi-day trips, generally on flat or mild water, with at least one night of camping. For details on a scheduled trip, call the trip coordinator. To arrange a trip, call Vincent Payne at 770.834.8263.

To Volunteer To Lead Trips: Call Cruisemaster William Gatling at 770.529.7103. As usual, we need trip coordinators for all types of trips, from flatwater to Class 5 whitewater. 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). Boating is prohibited above the Highway 28 bridge. Your cooperation in protecting this National Wild and Scenic River is appreciated.

Roll Practice: *The Eddy Line* has not yet received word of plans for summer roll practice, but in past years summer roll practice has been Wednesday evenings, beginning in May, at Stone Mountain Lake.

Announcements



Monthly Meetings

GCA **Board of Directors meetings** are generally held the first Thursday of March, June, September and December. GCA **Executive Committee meetings** are generally held the first Thursday of January, February, April, May, July, August, October and November. Meetings are at 7:00 p.m. at Page Perry

LLC, 1040 Crown Pointe Parkway, Suite 1050, Atlanta, 30338. (I-285 to Ashford Dunwoody NE, left onto Perimeter Center West, right onto Crown Pointe Parkway, park at 1050 and walk to 1040.) All members are encouraged to attend. If you have an item for discussion, call Tom Bishop at 404.542.1118 to be added to the agenda. Attending meetings is a great way to become more involved in the GCA and ensure transparency in decisions and actions. ✂

Paddle _____ (Pick a State)

This year's Paddle Alabama will take place June 11-13 on the Alabama Scenic River Trail from Coosa to Weiss Lake. More information at www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com.

Paddle Georgia 2009 will be June 20-26 on the Coosawattee and Oostanaula, Ellijay to Rome. More information available at www.garivers.org. (GCA will be looking for help to provide safety boaters, etc.)

And this year's Paddle Florida will be held October 15-22 on the Suwannee River, from Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park near Live Oak to Manatee Springs State Park. More information www.paddleflorida.org. ✂

August 24 through September 2 Montana Canoe Camping Trip

by Bob Sippey

This is a 10 day canoe camping trip on the Mirias and Missouri Rivers in North Central Montana. The trip is being done in conjunction with Florida Sport Paddling and is appropriate for Trained Beginners on up.

We will be paddling in fairly remote territory bordered by large ranches and land controlled by the Bureau of Land Management. Part of the trip will be through the Missouri Breaks, a Wild and Scenic section of the upper Missouri.

The trip will also include some day hikes and ruins along the way, plus some paddling before and after the trip. We will meet at the city park in Ft. Benton, Montana on August 23 to organize and run shuttle.

Please let me know if you're interested in joining us. We'll be on the road, so please call my cell phone at 352.467.0943. ✂

Keep Your Email Address Current

Each month numerous "copies" of the pdf version of *The Eddy Line* bounce back due to bad or outdated email addresses. If email to you bounces back, you will be deleted from the recipient list until we get an updated email address.

When GCA receives a mail failure notice in response to an email to you on the GCA email list, you will be automatically unsubscribed by the listserve software. If your email changes, please "unsubscribe" and resubscribe with your new address.

Thank you. ✂

Support Our Advertisers

The GCA web site now features a "GCA Supporters" web page with links to those who support GCA financially by advertising in *The Eddy Line*. Help those who help us — patronize our advertisers. And when you do, let them know you saw their *Eddy Line* ad and appreciate their support. Thanks! ✂

June, July and August Chattahoochee and Soque Clean-Ups

by Rick Bellows

Don't forget about the clean-up trips on the Chattahoochee and the Soque planned by our intrepid Trash Queen, Bonny Putney.

June 7 - Garrard's Landing to Azalea Drive;

July 18 - Belton Bridge to Lula Bridge;

July 26 - Soque River, Old Cannon Bridge to Duncan Bridge;

August 2 - Highway 255 Bridge to Highway 115 Bridge; and

August 9 - Upper Hooch: Highway 155 Bridge to Duncan Bridge.

For more information, including times and location information, check out the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper website at www.chattahoochee.org or contact Trash Queen Bonny (contact info on page 2). ✂

Meeting Minutes (or Lack Thereof)

As of press time, no minutes of the April or May Executive Committee meetings had been provided to *The Eddy Line*. Whether or not the minutes of future meetings will be provided and posted will be up to the Board of Directors, the Secretary and the new Editor. ✂



MEETING

Upcoming Events of Interest

June 13 - Back to the Chattahoochee Race and River Festival, Atlanta - Tammy Morrissey, 404.352.9828, ext. 12 or www.chattahoochee.org.

August 21-23 - Annual Chick Paddle at Eagle Ranch - Karen Saunders, 678.372.3849, karen5@bellsouth.net.

October 10 - Suwanee River Challenge and Marathon, White Springs, FL - Rod Price, 407.227.5606 or rodprice@hotmail.com.

October 15-22 - Paddle Florida, Suwanee River - www.paddleflorida.org.

February 2, 2010 - Annual Groundhog Day Paddle, Etowah River Tunnel Section. Vincent Payne, 770.834.8263 or anotherrierrat@bellsouth.net.

Fires Creek, 2007

by Allen Pogue

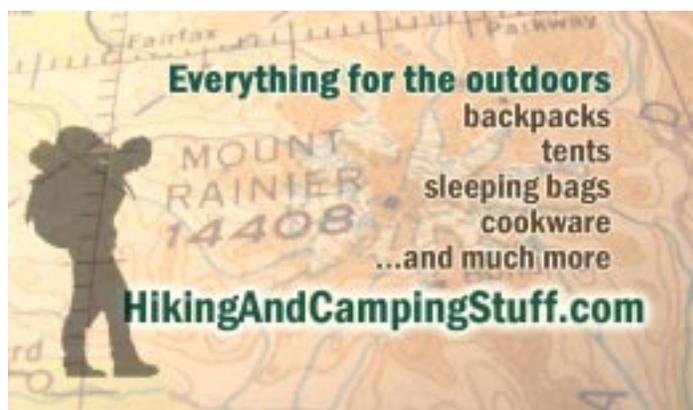
Western North Carolina got a ton of rain over the weekend so five of us plus a shuttle bunny headed up to Fires Creek to finally get in a run on this little-known creek. Participants were Steve Smyth, Augie Westerfield, Brian Swafford, Tim Ward, Allen Pogue, and shuttle bunny Betsy Westerfield.

I have a little trouble putting into words the experience I had paddling Fires Creek. We put in at the first road crossing that was available upstream of the Fires Creek Recreation Area. This gave us about three miles of continuous whitewater, and I do mean continuous. We set up an alternate shuttle so we could opt to paddle on down past the first takeout to add a few more miles of what we thought would be Class 2.

By the way, I now have a new definition of "continuous." This first section is basically a 3 mile long Class 2-3 rapid. I have never paddled anything quite this continuous and I have a little trouble imagining how I could ever possibly paddle anything this continuous again.

If you were to look at one small isolated section of Fires Creek, say 50 feet long, you would probably say "That's a Class 2," or maybe "That's a Class 2+." While true, the wary paddler must take everything in context. And on Fires Creek, the context is that the rapid was probably preceded by about 1 mile of continuous Class 2+ and is probably followed by another 2 miles of continuous 2+, all of this punctuated by a few Class 3 moves and wood, and if you're lucky, there might be five or six eddies big enough to hold, say, one and a half boats. You might not be lucky however, and you will be satisfied if you can merely turn upstream and paddle against the current without losing too much distance downstream before you hit that big pillow thing in between those 30 or 40 other pillow things and rooster tails all why trying to scout the next blind turn for wood.

Class 2 paddlers should not go to Fires Creek. You must



be a Class 3 paddler. And you can't just be the kind of Class 3 paddler who has run Nantahala Falls a few times. You'd better be capable of paddling full-on Class 3 without swimming or this creek will send you on a rocky quarter-mile swim through 45 degree water at about 6 or 7 knots. And you probably won't be able to find an eddy to swim to, you'll just have grab onto a Rhododendron branch and pull yourself up the bank. You can forget about your boat and paddle. Just drive down to the Hiwassee and try to grab them as they go by.

As usual I was very nervous about doing a new run of unknown difficulty. I actually felt a little nauseous which happens when I'm stepping it up a bit, and as I am still new to creeking, I definitely felt I was in for an adventure.



TRIP REPORTS

Since a couple of us were really nervous, Steve decided it would be a good idea to hike upstream a hundred yards or so and give everybody a chance to run a couple of rapids and catch some eddies. If things didn't go well, it would be possible to take out and still get back to the car before dropping off into Nantahala National Forest.

The hiking trail up wasn't too bad, but the rhododendron hell that lined the banks of the creek wasn't too much fun. We had to push around through the jungle and after a couple of false starts, we finally found a decent place to launch. Actually it wasn't a very good place to launch at all but with Tim helping to slow down our seal launches, we were able to get in without any flipping-over shenanigans. Everybody caught a couple of eddies, successfully ran the first 3- without any real warm up and we waved goodbye to Betsy and headed downstream.

Steve was very concerned that we eddy hop our way down properly due to the continuousness of the run and the unknown problem of wood around blind corners. We didn't have to wait long. There is a blind corner less than 100 yards below the bridge. This was followed by more blind corners,

continued on following page

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more continuous whitewater, and not one eddy big enough to hold more than about three boats. It was incredibly fast paced, there was a lot of wood and there were a lot of spots to get pinned, but there was also a tremendous amount of high-quality whitewater. I began to get my reflexes in tune and was hitting all my lines and adapting to the speed of the run. Everyone proceeded in good order and I started to loosen up.

Brian paddled up to me in an eddy somewhere and said, "Well, you wanted to start creeking! You got it. This is true creeking!" He was definitely right. This was my fourth creek of the wet season and it was definitely the most intense.

Just when I was starting calming down a bit, Steve warned us we needed to get out and scout a drop that was around the next corner for wood. From upstream I could see most of the river bed was not viable to paddle and that the drop was probably about 6 feet through what looked to me like a rock jumble. Brian paddled up to me in an eddy just upstream and asked what was coming up. I held up four fingers and shouted over the roar of the creek, "A Class 4." I turned out to be wrong about the rating (probably) but it's definitely a serious drop. Fortunately there was a large eddy just upstream of the drop where we all got out to take a look.

I had to climb up the slope about 15 or 20 feet to get a good look and determined that there was no good portage

available on this side and getting to the other side would involve a hairy ferry right in front of the drop. I was a nervous wreck. At first I said I needed to portage it, then determined that portaging was possibly more dangerous than running it.

There was a very narrow entry slot that really needed to be hit correctly to get the only clean line through the top part of the rapid. It was a tight slot where current went through a slot in a ledge and drove directly into a boulder. If you were far enough right, you would ride a curler off the boulder into the center of the rapid. If you were too far left, you would drop to the left of the boulder into a series of very shallow pour-overs that might harbor potholes and also might have been too shallow at that level to pass without getting pinned. No matter what, going over there would probably be the elbow-bashing line, and I didn't bring any elbow pads. There weren't really any other options. There wasn't anything to the left of the slot and the alternate line on the right side was full of wood.

Steve and Augie offered to go first to show us the line. I saw Steve and Augie run it cleanly and it looked like they were able to negotiate their way down the rest of the rapid without too many issues and eddy out on the left. I started to think that I could do it and I began to get into my boat. Tim and Brian were waiting to see what happened to me.

I finally took a couple of good deep breaths to calm down

a bit and peeled out high into the relatively swift current in order to line up properly. Steve had paddled aggressively into the drop but I decided to match speed with the current until I could get a good look at the slot. When I saw where I wanted to go, I took a couple of forward strokes to make sure I got over some shallow rocks and then used a couple of draw strokes to pull myself right where I wanted to be.

For a moment I thought I was going to hang up on the right edge of the slot, having cheated a little too far to the right, but I skidded by and dropped into the curler where I wanted to. I fell into the middle of the rapid with a little too much right lean and had to brace a little. Then I could see that the middle wasn't completely clean, there were a couple of holes to contend with . . . but nothing that couldn't be punched.

All this was followed within a few feet by a long tongue backed by a hole. I took all of this in within about 1 second. I punched through the upper holes, got a little more swished around than I expected, hit the tongue slightly left and eddied out by Augie and Steve. I had done it and boy was I relieved!

Steve said it was a Class 3. I negotiated upwards a bit and called it a 3+. In my mind, it was a little longer and more difficult than Nantahala Falls, which is an AW "benchmark" Class 3 . . . and the consequences were definitely worse. However, it wasn't really a Class 4, although at slightly higher levels there's no doubt in my mind that it gets considerably worse. There were plenty of pinning opportunities, any swim, especially a swim early in the rapid, would be almost guaranteed to be terrible, and there was no recovery pool. You might just have to keep on swimming around that next blind turn.

Brian and Tim both ran the rapid well, although Tim got a little stern-squirted in his Centrifuge. That happened to him quite a bit all day. Hopefully some day Tim will be able to get a creek boat. There were so few eddies below that the group had to string out a bit when the last couple came down to make room. It's that kind of stream.

After this, I began to feel a lot better and relaxed quite a bit. Steve assured me that the worst was over and I really began to enjoy myself. Brian was riding an adrenaline high and got a grin plastered on his face that didn't come off for quite some time.

The continuous whitewater didn't stop. It just kept coming and coming. We had to avoid a couple of log jams, making sure to choose the correct channel when going around some islands. We had to eddy hop carefully in controlled descents in several places in order to scout for wood.

At one point we came upon a nearly river-wide hole that I had seen from high up on the mountainside when we were driving to the launch. It was a stopper but not a keeper. Everybody made it through but Tim in the playboat got turned completely sideways when he dropped in and sat there for a minute on the backwash. I thought we might get to see a little

freestyle rodeo action but he got lined up straight again and slowly flushed downstream.

We rode curlers, skidded over shallow ledges, dodged boulders and trees, and did quite a bit of laughing. Brian decided that Steve had made up for taking us to the Upper Tallulah a couple of weeks before, where we had ended up paddling three miles of Class 1 at the end of the run. We were having one of the best runs of our lives and we knew it.

The creek never disappointed, continuing to run between steep forested slopes, and rhododendron-lined banks. At the beginning I feared that we wouldn't get to the takeout but by this time I began to fear that we would reach the takeout. I didn't want it to end.

When we finally started to get close to the first takeout, we saw Betsy on river right. She had hiked upstream on a paved trail to warn us that there were two slightly offset strainers ahead that were passable but a little sketchy. We got out to take a look. Steve, Augie, and Brian decided that it was good to go and didn't want to carry their boats but Tim and I decided to walk it. We weren't missing any good rapids so I decided there was no point in taking a chance. Steve, Augie, and Brian all made it through the strainer slalom with some aggressive paddling.

After this we paddled around the corner and avoided a
continued on following page



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big hole right in front of the first takeout that turned out to be a play spot and eddied out to regroup. We could stop there and take out, just stretch and eat lunch, or we could keep going, since we had set another vehicle at an alternate takeout a couple of miles down the Hiwassee from the confluence.

It was getting late, the sky had clouded up, and it was cooling off so I voted that we just continue so that we could run the entire thing before dark. Everybody else also wanted to keep going so we told Betsy to meet us at the Big River takeout. We paddled downstream and the creek quickly began to calm.

We had to get out to walk around a tree that was all the way across the creek. It was an easy, quick portage. Then we passed out of Forest Service property and the houses began.

The banks along this stretch of the stream are clearly under development and there were "For Sale" signs facing the creek in wooded lots. The lower stretches of the creek are going to suffer the same fate as so many other streams in Southern Appalachia, "Cartecay-ization."

At one point we had to paddle over a submerged concrete driving bridge forming a ledge disturbingly similar to low head dam. It didn't appear possible for water to go under it but it has a pour-over and there could be an upstream recirculation. Need to be careful there at higher water.

There was a really fun four foot slide and several other

Class 2 rapids by these houses. This was a sign of things to come. The further we paddled, the more we came to appreciate the creek. Although it had lost its character of being a mountain creek, it had taken on the character of being a high-quality Class 2 playboating run, similar in places to the Cartecay, in other places more like the Nantahala. We got in a bit of surfing and we entered a stretch where the channel narrowed between overhanging rhododendron hells on both sides. This continued for quite some distance. Steve was very surprised at the length as he had thought it was much shorter.

Even though the creek was a bit calmer in this stretch, we still had to look out for wood, and at one point Augie and Brian stacked up on a log that went nearly all the way across. Fortunately the water was neither deep nor extremely fast moving in that area and they were able to extricate themselves. More paddling continued and spirits were very high. I knew it was one of the best trips I have ever been on. It was a spectacular run!

Finally we reached the confluence with the Hiwassee River. We thought the takeout would be right around the corner and we would be glad to see it as it was getting truly cold and we were hungry and thirsty. We paddled and paddled and paddled and ran some Class 1+ shoals here and there. And then we paddled and paddled more and I verified with Steve that the takeout had to be downstream, right? Finally, when it was beginning to get dark, we rounded a corner and saw the takeout ahead. Whew!

As we changed clothes in the frigid wind of the early evening, we all agreed we'd be back (but maybe use the first takeout). The trip and creek get my highest rating!

Exploration Trip, March 1, 2009 Dicks Creek and Middle Fork Broad by Roger Nott

The Middle Fork of the Broad River bubbles up about seven miles ESE of Clarkesville on the south side of the Eastern Continental Divide traced by Georgia Highway 13 at Dicks Hill, which is also the source of Hazel Creek to the east and the North Fork of the Broad to the southeast. For its first ten miles it drains a densely forested natural area almost entirely within the southeastern corner of the Chattahoochee National Forest and the Lake Russell Wildlife Management Area (LRWMA). To the east it drains Davis, Currahee, Farmer, Allen, and Wells mountains before leaving the national forest, entering Banks County and becoming a more pastoral stream.

I have been dreaming of paddling the Middle Fork of the Broad River since the mid-1970's and often talked about it with the GCA's first Exploration Chairman, Gary DeBacher. He walked the entire section we paddled in the 1970's and wrote an exploration trip report for the November, 1976 *Eddy Line* about a 4 mile section of the river, A to B in Welander's

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by
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vzap@charter.net

A Canoeing & Kayaking Guide to Georgia, 40 miles downstream of the headwaters streams we paddled this day.

Our trip was billed in *The Eddy Line* as a Class 2-4 "Exploration Wildcard," meaning we would paddle a stream "not yet written up in any guide book" or on the AW website. There is no river gauge anywhere near the LRWMA, but we figured it had rained at least 2 inches there since Friday night, so our intrepid crew (open boaters Kevin McInturff, Liph Johnson and I) set out to paddle the headwaters of the Middle Fork of the Broad despite forecasts of heavy rain, strong winds and snow.

Kevin had paddled the Middle Fork a few years ago with Jim Gerwer and Chuck Wilburn from the Brown Bottoms bridge, but we decided this day to put in near the head of the Broad River Trail at the FS87 bridge and also paddle 1.2 miles on Dicks Creek before it joins the Middle Fork a quarter of a mile downstream of Brown Bottoms. Dicks Creek is 15 to 30 feet wide here and drops at a rate of 100 feet per mile, mostly in tight Class 1 and 2 drops.

We also found two sliding falls, both of which tempted us but had wood in them. We portaged both easily along the Board River Trail, which hugs the left bank. The first drops about 12 feet and threatened to be a boat basher. The second, a Class 5 which plummets about 40 feet on a 35-40 degree angle, sports a pretty clean line along its left side.

My alibis involved my using a 16 foot, borrowed Boy Scout canoe with no floatation, the in-stream wood (which we could have cut out in about 10 minutes) and the horrendous weather. Yes, the weatherman was right: it rained about an inch and a half, with occasional wind-blown snow, during the three and a half hours we were paddling.

We also had to pull over 2 deadfalls on the creek (and one on the river), but in just over an hour we paddled Dicks Creek and reached the Middle Fork, which more than doubled the flow. Below here the river widened to 30-50 feet and the rapids eased up. However, we still found frequent Class 1 and 2 rapids and a lively 25 foot per mile gradient in the next 3.3 miles to the bridge at Farmer Bottoms. As the river was rising rapidly, we enjoyed many good play spots.

Kevin promised that there was a long, fun Class 3 about a mile past the bridge at Farmer Bottoms, so we decided to eschew the easy takeouts at the bridge and along FS92 on river left during the next three quarters of a mile. Instead we paddled another 1.2 miles to a river left trail just after this rapid.

The Lake Russell topo shows about 60 feet of drop in this 1.2 mile stretch. However, we discovered that 35-40 feet of this gradient is consumed by Kevin's "fun class 3 rapid." Moreover, with three and a half inches of recent rainfall we paddled, without scouting, into a heart-stopping, LONG, continuous series of twisting, Class 4 slides, punctuated with several eye-popping holes and large curlers.

I was feeling pretty proud and thankful to have made it unscathed to the right side eddy at the bottom. I had been surprised by the size and power of the rapid we had just run, which I assumed we had completed. So I didn't worry too much about the horizon line in front of me as I pulled back into the current. As far as I could see was another twisting humongous drop, very similar to what we had just survived!

We all made it to the bottom, smiling from ear to ear! Our exhilaration helped to generate the adrenalin needed for the steep path up to the road, similar to the hike out at Woodall but with and additional third of a mile carry along the rough road to FS193.

We paddled a total of 5.7 miles dropping 260 feet in this beautiful natural area through mature, second-growth forest. Despite the horrendous weather, we had a great trip.

The three of us are already talking about soon putting in a Farmer Bottoms and exploring some of the Middle Fork downstream of our takeout. We know that the river soon leaves the national forest and plummets over a steep, possibly runnable falls, perhaps 40 feet high, into a small reservoir less than a mile after our takeout. What else awaits us?

Directions: The Ayersville and Lake Russell USGS topographical maps will be helpful in planning a trip on Dicks Creek and the Middle Fork of the Broad in the Lake Russell
continued on following page



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Wildlife Management Area. During hunting season, August 14 through the end of February, one may only drive into the RLWMA from the north, by the Game Checking Station on Guard Camp Road (FS87). At other times one can also use Forest Services roads 193, 191, and 92 (both east and west ends) to enter the LRWMA, a good road map of which can be found at <http://www.georgiaoutdoors.com/hunting/WMAmaps/LakeRussellWMA.pdf>.

To enter the LRWMA past the Game Check Station from Atlanta, take I-85 and I-985, which becomes State Highway 365 just past Gainesville. Enter Habersham County, pass Highway 197 and stay on Highway 365 towards Toccoa by bearing right just before the light at the Tom Arrendale Interchange southeast of Clarkesville.

Enter Stephens County and about a mile past the Southern Railroad crossing turn right onto Quarry Road. It will end in less than a mile on old Hwy. 13 (Dicks Hill Parkway). Turn right and in about two-thirds of a mile turn left onto Ayersville Road (Patterson Milliken Rd. on some maps). After about a mile Guard Camp Road (FS87) turns left and is well-marked. A couple of miles after you pass the Game Checking Station Browns Bottom Road (FS 92B) turns right.

For those who do not want to run Dicks Creek, you can put in on the Middle Fork at the bridge about a mile and a quarter down this road at Browns Bottoms. If you continue

straight two tenths of a mile on Guard Camp Road you will reach the Dicks Creek bridge, our put-in. A couple of hundreds of yards past this bridge is the head of the Broad River Trail, which hugs the left bank of Dicks Creek all the way to the Middle Fork and then follows the river for another 3 miles to the bridge at Farmer Bottoms (FS92). To reach our takeout, drive south on FS87 four or five miles more till it ends at FS92.

If you were to turn right (west) here onto FS92 (Red Root Road) you would encounter the Farmer Bottoms bridge over the Middle Fork in about fifty yards. To access our takeout continue straight (south) on what is now FS92 (Kimbrell Creek Road), which stays close to the river left bank for about three-quarters of a mile and provides several easy takeouts for those not wanting to run the last Class 3-4 rapid.

Shortly after it leaves the river, FS92 turns left (east) but you continue straight (south) on FS193 (Post Oak Corner Road) for another half mile. Shortly after fording a small stream a rough road turns right. High-clearance 4WD vehicles might try this road to get closer to the takeout, but it was blocked by felled trees this day and we had to park here and carry out the full four tenths of a mile to FS193.

Editorial

Fix the Real Problem

by Rick Bellows

When I joined GCA in 2005, I was told that \$20 of my \$25 membership fee was earmarked to pay for *The Eddy Line*. I believe that was on the application form I filled out: I know it was printed in the newsletter every month.

In late 2007, when decreasing membership led to financial issues, the Board of Directors set about (contrary to the By-Laws) to eliminate the print version of the newsletter. When I asked about the earmarked funds, I was told the funds had never been earmarked, despite what the postal service was told.

The plan to force an electronic-only *Eddy Line* was eventually abandoned, the membership and financial issues continued, and now the Board has decided to go to a bi-monthly newsletter dedicated to trip reports, educational articles and entertainment, with announcements, trip lists, meeting minutes and the like relegated to the groupmail and the website.

This is a bad idea, for three reasons. First, the purpose of *The Eddy Line* should be to serve the membership, and that purpose is served by keeping the announcements, etc. in the newsletter. The arrival of a newsletter prompts recipient to look at announcements and trip lists that might never be seen sitting passively on the website and cannot be seen by members who don't have computers or don't use them.

Meeting minutes are the best way we members have to



EDITORIAL

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CLASSIFIED ADS

For Sale: Prijon Dupo Duo Tandem Kayak-\$600; Stohlquist Charc Drysuit, Model 56115, Gore-Tex, men's size M/L with front relief zipper, spray skirt tunnel, full latex booties in good shape, needs both wrists cuffs replaced, but neck cuff new, \$400; Mesh Backpack Stohlsac, medium, \$5; Lotus/Patagonia Shop shortsleeve paddling jacket, men's medium, cost \$100, used twice, \$20; Stohlquist short sleeve paddling jacket, men's medium, \$10; Perception nylon long paddling pants, men's medium, \$10; Lotus short sleeve fleece paddling shirt, men's large, \$10; Hank Klausman, 770.587.0499 or klausgp@bellsouth.net.

Reduced For Quick Sale: Mohawk Maxim OC-1 playboat, 8' 10", 41 lbs., red with yellow bags, factory outfitting; excellent condition - 4 years old but used only 3 times and stored indoors; rockered planning hull for experienced paddler. Belongs to BSA Troop 16, Gainesville. \$1221.25 new - will sell for \$700. Roger Nott, 678.316.4935, ocapaddler@charter.net.

For Sale: Current Designs Gulfstream Kevlar sea kayak, 16' 10" by 23.5", 46 lbs.; Derek Hutchinson British design, retractable skeg, day hatch; white with black trim and factory deck compass;

almost new - in water 3 times. \$3400 new, will sell for \$1995. Jay Finnerty, 770.924.1944, jfinn@bellsouth.net.

For Sale: Wavesport Super EZ; still in great condition with only normal scratches - needs to be paddled more than it has been. \$400 on boatertalk - will sell to GCA member for \$350. Gretchen, 770.529.1763, gretchenlm@comcast.net.

For Sale: Whitesel Descender, blue with heavy layup, aluminum gunwales, Percepteion saddle, fairly new red nylon flotation bags. Han an ABS patch by Nolan or someone at his shop - lifetime guarantee. \$700. Joe, 404.325.5486.

For Sale: Old Town Penobscot canoe; very good condition, \$600. Beverly Reynolds, 706.258.1149, spiritpuppy@yahoo.com.

For Sale: Aire Jagarundi cataraft, 2 seats (rear swivels), 38x16x13 mounted drybox; new in 2005 - used only twice; raft cost \$1844, drybox \$239 - will sell all for \$1200. Beverly Reynolds, 706.258.1149, spiritpuppy@yahoo.com.

Wanted to Buy: good used recl/flat-water canoe, 15 to 16 feet, max. 50 lbs

or so, preferably seats 3, stable for kids or fishing, \$400-\$500. Also need 2-3 paddles, 2 adult pfd's, 3 kid pfd's. Malcolm Newell, 678.654.3852, malcolmgn@bellsouth.net.

For Sale: 2 Dagger Encore canoes in great condition; fully outfitted with air bags and saddles; \$450 each or \$800 for both. Also Primex kayak/canoe cart in box and never used, \$75; paddles and other gear. Rick, 404.273.8036, rrhis@mindspring.com.

For Sale: Dagger Caption canoe, pedestal saddle with Yakima foot braces and thigh retainer system. Hull has some patches and a good bit of wear, but it floats. \$100 OBO. Allen, 770.426.4318.

For Sale: Dagger Cascade, pedestal saddle and thigh straps, with knee and foot braces, factory-installed drain plug. Four Perception air bags and Mountain Surf spray skirt (kevlar reinforced where it matters) are negotiable in purchase price. All are in verry, very good condition: boat was bought in the late 90's but hardly used. Boar is a little bright red, a little white, mostly pinkish. Located near Stone Mountain Lake. \$400. Steve Smith, 770.925.3621 evenings or weekends or isnuffy@yahoo.com.

know which officers and chairpersons show up for meetings and what they do and say there. For the sake of accountability, that information should be as freely and readily available to all members as possible.

Second, trip reports, educational articles and entertainment are better distributed via the website. Properly indexed, they are then available to any member whenever that member wants to learn about a specific river or subject.

But most importantly, GCA's financial problem is a result of decreasing membership and can only be addressed by rectifying that membership problem. Instead, the Board has increased membership fees while halving the number of issues of the newsletter and limiting their content. Not exactly a recipe for preserving or increasing membership.

The best effort to address the decreasing membership issue was the Georgia River Explorer Series, created and organized for two years by William Gatling. When William's work made it impossible for him to continue spearheading the GRES, the Board did nothing to continue it and it didn't happen at all this year.

As editor, the issue of the newsletter is of particular interest to me. I strongly disagree with the changes to *The Eddy Line*, especially the change in content. That's why this will be my last issue as editor.

The membership/financial issue can only be addressed by the leadership of the club. If the current leadership doesn't address it, we need leadership that will while there's still a club to lead. 

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