

GEORGIA CANOEING ASSOCIATION, INC.



P. O. Box 7023, Atlanta, Georgia 30357

November, 1980

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 15, No.11

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

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

TRIPS FOR NOVEMBER

Nov. 8	Upper Hooch class II-III	Alan Simon	476-5458
9	Cartecay class II-III	George Neill	482-2951 (w)
9	Chattooga IV, class III-V	David Garrity	377-7850
15	Upper & middle Flint I-II	Tom Pritchard	1-228-2655
16	Upper Amicalola I-III	Grant Luckhardt	373-2293
22	Little River Canyon III-IV	Norm Reynolds	455-3498
23	" "	" "	" "
28 (Fri.)	NOC races on the Nantahala.	Call NOC to find out about entry.	
29-30	Okefenokee Swamp	Jimmy "Pogo" Gunter	w: 427-6342; h: 974-8681
	Call in plenty of time so Jimmy can make arrangements. Entry and exit for this overnight trip will be at the Suwanee Canal, on the west side of the swamp.		
30	Ocoee class III-IV+	Hugh Stubbs	952-4926

"The highest good is like water
Water gives life to the ten thousand things and does not strive.
It flows in places men reject and so is like the Tao."

Lao Tsu
Tao Te Ching, translated by Gia Fu Feng and Jane English,
Random House/Vintage Books, New York, 1972.

PETER ELKON (373-7535) is the new impromptu trip chairman.

AN EDITORIAL ON THE SOUTHEASTERN RACES

At the December 3 GCA executive board meeting, a final decision will be made as to whether to hold the Southeastern Championship Races under GCA sponsorship next June. Prerequisites for a positive decision are already stiff: every position on the race committee must be filled by someone making a written commitment before December 3, or no race.

I have worked at the races for the past four years, and have on the whole enjoyed myself. With a lot of planning and some dumb luck, the races in recent years have gone smoothly, and the hundreds of race participants have also expressed primarily positive feelings about the whole event. Why, then, are we so close to abandoning our race sponsorship?

There are several practical reasons. It gets harder every year to run the slalom on time with increasing competition from recreational rafters. Inflation is making it difficult to predict and control expenses. Getting enough club volunteers to man all the judging and timing positions is like pulling molars without anesthesia. With their own commercial and racing enterprises expanding constantly, NOC is having a harder time coordinating their efforts with ours. The NC State Patrol and local residents are increasingly sensitive about the parking and traffic problems created by a major race in June. Etc., etc.

We can also ask those who have run the race in recent years what they think should be done. I have talked to them all, John Shumaker, Norm Reynolds, Bonnie Wolf, Gwen Bergen, Allen Lewis, Jack Weems, Ken McAmis and Bronwyn Fowlkes. Only Allen Lewis is in favor of doing the race one more time, if he gets enough race volunteers signed up by December. All the others are either flatly against running the Southeasterns or have very strong and serious reservations. I would count myself amongst those who are flatly against.

I think that serious races should be sponsored and run by serious racers. Whitewater racing is very different today from what it was when the GCA planned the first Southeastern about a dozen years ago. It is rather like the metamorphosis of sports car racing from the early airport club events to today's Road Race of Champions at Road Atlanta. As the competitors become more "serious" and the courses more difficult, a psychological gap builds up between those racing and the average recreational paddler. In the early days, most of the GCA people running the race also competed, and most of them did tolerably well. Today's slalom course has become so difficult that I have to skip gates just to get down the course upright. I certainly enjoy watching the "real" racers do their stuff, but I just can't put my whole heart into running an event which is so unlike the sort of race I would like to enter. When I have suggested making the race easier so more people could enjoy it, I am told that we are running the Southeastern Championships, and thus are obligated to offer something a champion would find challenging. (In fact, we aren't succeeding at that either. The Nantahala is no longer sufficiently difficult for a championship caliber decked boat slalom course.) In summary, the great majority of GCA membership is not "into" serious slalom racing, and the executive board should not commit the club to running a race which no longer serves the felt needs of the majority of the membership. Even if enough people do sign written commitments to race jobs, I shall offer a motion at the executive board meeting to quash the race effort, and if that motion fails, I shall offer it again to the assembled membership at the January general membership meeting.

Racers can take care of themselves. Rivers cannot, at least not as long as men with ideas of "progress" lack the sense to leave them alone. Every extra ounce of group effort in the GCA should be going toward protection of our most important recreational rivers, especially the Ocoee and the Metro Chatahoochee, and our most significant wilderness rivers, like Amicalola and Talking Rock Creek. If we keep siphoning off club energy into racing without generating a more meaningful conservation effort, we will one day find ourselves racing in drainage ditches. ---Gary DeBacher, Editor

WANT AD POLICY. Want ads are free to members advertising used equipment only. I keep getting ads from people whose names are not in the last two club directories. I throw 'em away. If you are a member and for some reason are not in the directory, it is up to you to convince me of the fact when you submit the ad. I will not research the matter for you; nor will I run the ad and bill you later. Non-members must pay to advertise new or used equipment. No exceptions. --Ed.

GENERAL MEETING AND DINNER - October 22, 1980

If it hasn't been written before, it's been said and needs to be recorded in print: GCA folks are extremely good cooks. Between 60 and 80 people feasted from the Smorgasboard before President Norm Reynolds called the business meeting to order. The first bit of business on the agenda was the election of officers for the 1980-81 term as follows:

President	Norm Reynolds	Secretary	Anna Belle Close
Vice President . . .	Jimmy Gunter	Newsletter Editor . .	Gary DeBacher
Treasurer	Hugh Stubbs	Directors-at-Large . .	Jerry Halladay David Garrity

Norm also announced appointed committee chairmen: Exploration--Roger Hott; Safety--Doug Fortenberry; Environmental Protection--Nancy Wylie; Membership and Publicity--Grant Fortenberry; Impromptu Trips--Peter Elkon; Guide Book--Norm Reynolds. The club voted to experiment this coming year with the Guide Book. It will be printed in substantially the same format, the major differences being (1) that it will not contain the membership list; (2) that it will be printed in sufficient quantity to be distributed to present members and to new members as they join over the next several years; and (3) that an updated roster will be distributed each year to members. Printing in quantity will give the treasury a price break advantage.

Whether or not the club will conduct the annual Mantahala race in '81 or let it go to HOC and/or the ACA is yet to be decided. A paper was passed around as a form of ballot, a vote "yes" to be accompanied by signing up to help on a specific job. It was felt that the members not present should be given the opportunity to respond. Dave Garrity, presently in charge of race matters, needs to know the quantity and quality of support before a final decision is reached. If, therefore, you are interested in the club's continuance with this project, send your vote accepting the responsibility for one of the tasks listed below to Norm Reynolds, 2419 MacLaren Circle, Doraville, GA 30360. The exact date for the race is yet to be determined; at present it looks like it might be the middle or last weekend in June. If the date of the race is crucial to you, please so indicate.

1. Setting up gates Thursday before the race (HOC will design the course).
2. Gate judging.
3. Safety.
4. Timing tables.
5. Starters.
6. Registration.
7. Correspondence.
8. Advertising.
9. General activity volunteer.

If you commit yourself for one of these jobs, it means should you yourself not be able to perform as promised, you are agreeing to find a substitute to function in your place. The Board will come to a decision at its December 3 meeting based on the response received. So, if you feel strongly about the GCA conducting the race, let Norm hear from you immediately.

Roger Hott reporting on the Amicalola said that the Dawson County Forest, once owned by Lockheed and then by the City of Atlanta is coming up for sale. This section in the Dawson County Forest has an excellent take-out and is in our interests to preserve for river enjoyment. The Board asks that you write to the Corps of Engineers urging that they purchase this section for a wildlife habitat in exchange for that destroyed by the Russell Dam, a purchase they must make somewhere to satisfy the law on mitigation.

Martha Forte told of a delightful week spent at the ACA's Sugar Island Encampment. This island, one of the Thousand Islands in N.Y. State, is owned by the ACA. The encampment is summer-long, but may be attended for any length of time to paddle as much of the St. Lawrence as you care to. She urged club members to include it in forthcoming vacation plans.

Have you ever seen anyone juggling 3 or 4 balls while running a rapid or strumming a paddle as his kayak is standing straight up in a hole? These and many dare-Devil activities were caught on movie film and shown at the end of the business meeting. Hank Klausman ran two reels of trips made this summer on Western rivers, and "Fast and Clean" portraying the amazing dedication of young people competing for National Championship titles closed an evening of high entertainment.

(submitted by Anna Belle Close)

For Sale: Slalom kayak, epoxy/poly/glass construction, experienced, but good condition \$170. Mold for slalom kayak, epoxy, with base supports and interlocking flanges (cockpit & seat mold included) \$250. Two junior (11 ft.) slalom kayaks, epoxy/poly/glass construction with neoprene spray skirts, very good condition, \$225 each or \$400 for the pair. Mold for Downriver C-2, French "Tube" design, \$250. Call Doug Woodward at 921-5481(H) or 447-2375(W) (Atlanta).

Spike Cutting Trip on the Broad River October 5th

Four of us arrived at the put-in on a hazy, overcast day with one sledge hammer and two hacksaws. We then prepared the boats and ran shuttle with another group.

When we put on the water, it was fairly high due to the rain in the previous week. We all had fun in the rapids before the spikes, but then the work began--we bent the spikes we were working on over and then loosened them up. They then wriggled out of the rocks which were holding them, so we did not have to use the hacksaws. We removed seven spikes from the sandy beach before lunch rock, and by the time we arrived at the lunch rock, we were shivering and cold and greatly appreciated the hot tea given to us by a group of canoeists from Athens. Walt Sanborn, Sr., also built a fire for us to warm up by.

After enjoying lunch, we waded out into the freezing rapids to knock out the spikes that were out there. Walt Sanborn, Jr., and I worked out on the spikes as Walt Sanborn, Sr., waited at the bottom with a throw rope, as we were thinking about Gary Debacher's leg trapping incident. Mary Nell McGloclin kept the fire going while we were in the water, so it took a team effort to remove the five spikes from lunch rock. By this time, we had been on the river six hours and decided to leave the spikes at the take-out for another day, so there still are some more spikes in the river, but I feel that the trip was a success and that the participants did a fine job.

Paddling KI's were Walt Sanborn, Sr., and Walt Sanborn, Jr.; paddling HDI's were Mary Nell McGloclin and myself.

Hugh Skelton

NOTES FROM WALT SANBORN REGARDING ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF SPIKES: "With limited research as to the whys and wherefores of these spikes, I have received the following details.

"These spikes are (or were) buggy axles. They were placed at strategic places in rapids to deter boats or rafts the Yankees might use to float guns or soldiers across the rivers when Sherman's army marched through Georgia. The Confederates used star drills to make the holes in the rock, placed the axles in the holes, and then filled in the gaps with sand to hold the iron in place against any casual attempt to remove it."

So we Yankees who have had boats slashed by these spikes are still paying for Sherman's sins after 100 years! There are at least a couple of other reasons why spikes are found in some of Georgia's streams. The very heavy spikes seen on the Jacks and the Conasauga were used to hold cables supporting narrow gauge railway bridges against the force of the current. The railways were, of course, used in logging operations. Spikes were also used to hold low dams for various purposes, including pooling logs before opening the dam and flooding them downstream. ---Ed.

CHATTOOGA RIVER, Section IV; Sun., Sept. 21, 1980 - We had a lovely warm day, ample water (1.39 on the downstream Hwy 76 gauge), and a skilled group of canoeists who worked well together to enable us to have a safe, most enjoyable trip. We lunched at 7' Falls, where all but one of our number had clean runs. Entrance Rapid and Sock-em-Dog each also blorted one paddler, but seven of our party, including David Bitler on his first time on Section IV, ran the river with no upsets. David also ran sweep and chased James out of all the big holes where he seemed to want to stay. Section IV is a spectacularly beautiful stretch of river which usually at lower water levels has very clear water. There was a great deal of pollution coming into the river this day from Stekoa Creek. What has happened to the City of Clayton's promise to clean up that stream?

Participants: James Lucas in a C-1; David Ashley, David Bitler, Eddie Donald, Jim Farr, Bill Jones, Ben Maxwell, Forte Rabb and myself in OC-1s. Marilyn Fordham, Nancy Richardson and my wife Beth hiked down to Five Falls, helped us paddle from there, and joined many of us for a feast at Louise's afterwards.

- Roger Nott

Upper Conasauga River Hike- Saturday, October 11. Fearing to be late and miss the group, I did a lot of uncharacteristic (for me) speeding and arrived at the meeting place five minutes early. I then waited half an hour in the chill mountain air, watching the clouds clear off West Cowpen Road. When nobody showed up, I parked the car in the hiker's lot and walked the 2 mile shuttle myself.

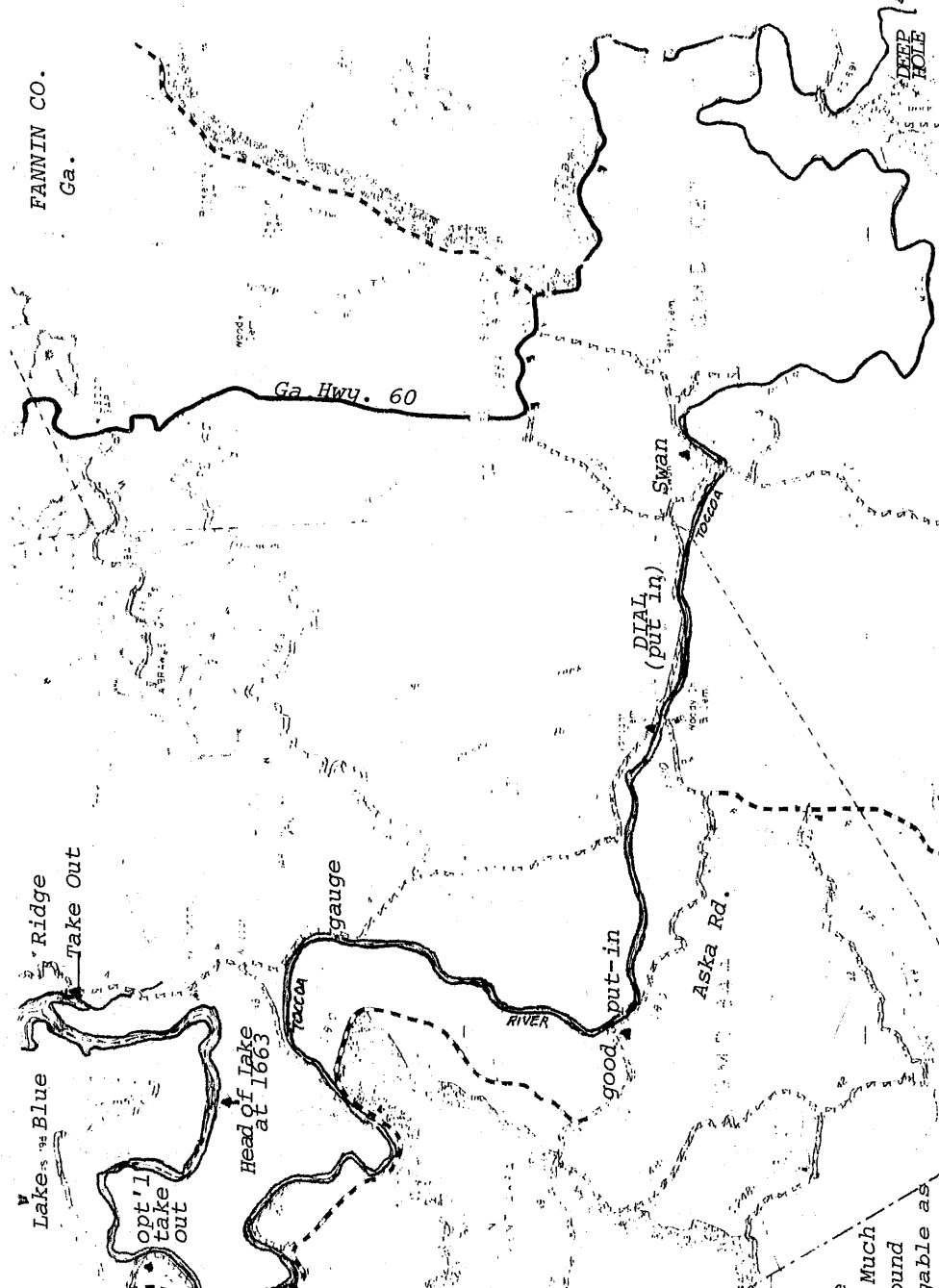
The new section of the Conasauga River Trail actually extends downstream to the vicinity of the Murray Lake campground, but I hiked only the 3 miles from a little downstream of Paint Bank Gap on up to the old jeep road. This section of river rivals any other in Georgia for scenery. It exceeds in beauty even the entire Jacks, with the possible exception of the region just downstream of Jacks Falls. In places the river's rapid descent has stripped the bedrock of all cover, leaving a solid rock maze as wide as a football field, truly a rock-hopper's paradise.

Under special circumstances this section might be padd led by experts, if they are willing to carry in two miles on the jeep road. (The road entrance is very thoroughly gated off.) At least three drops are unrunnable, including one which I shall take the privelege of naming Automatic Choke. In this rapid, the entire river funnels down the right bank, most of it passing beneath an undercut rock. There is a scant 36 inches of room for a boat to pass through without taking the paddler off at the waist, assuming he has not flipped or swamped in the several drops of the approach. Just to turn it from a class V+ to a class VI killer, a log is wedged in lengthwise in the narrowest section.

Anyway, I will try to run this hike again as an overnight next August or September. Apparently some of the group did show up late to do the hike on their own; hope everything went well for them. ---Gary Debacher

P.S. Gluing indoor-outdoor carpet to the soles of my canvas shoes worked quite well for river crossings. The traction on slimy rocks is quite astounding. One must remember, however, that traction on dry rock is not as good as it is with bare rubber soles. In most ways, the tradeoff is quite worthwhile. ---G.D.

EXPLORATION TRIP, LOWER TOCCOA RIVER, DIAL TO BLUE RIDGE LAKE, Sun., Oct 12, 1980 - Most GCA trips have run from Cooper Cr. or Deep Hole to the vicinity of Swan or Dial Bridges. Bill and Annabelle Close extended their July, 1974 GCA trip to Aska Rd. at Big Cr. Those of us who have paddled this standard section of the Toccoa have perhaps been discouraged from venturing further downstream because the river in this section becomes increasingly more gentle and developed and thus less interesting as far as Big Creek. Moreover roads follow much of the river (less than half) below Big Cr. Nevertheless, Richard Lawrence and Karen Dean and Mike Breeden & I decided to canoe all the river below Dial to the Lake. We had a perfect, warm autumn day and a low but very ample water level of 1.0 at the gauge nr. Wilscot. The Flat water was sparkling & clear. What we found was that the gradient, which averaged 15.1'/mi. in our entire 10.7 mi. river trip (plus 2 mi. on the lake to Persimmon Cr.), increased continually as we approached the Lake. It was 20'/mi. in the 2nd 1/2 of the run & 30'/mi. in the last mile. Lake Blue Ridge is normally 1688' above sea level in May but was 25' down at 1663 this day. We had nearly continuous class I-II rapids in the last mile & thus benefitted from the lake level, which sometimes falls to 1650. Most of this stretch we found to be densely wooded. There were many vacation homes along parts of the river but they were virtually all built with minimal tree cutting & with dark, natural wood siding & in attractive designs. Nothing in the run would rate higher than Class II, incl. a dramatic rapid reminiscent of Eye of the Needle at the head of an impressive 200 yd. Narrows. Much of the scenery was excellent, and we found the run overall to be at least as enjoyable as the upper section. Most paddlers will want to take out at the Optional take-out (above) at Flat Cr.. This can easily be reached from Blue Ridge along a good paved Rd. which turns right (south) just NE of the City Limits at Harmony Church on Hwy. 76. The initial pastoral 2.3 miles below Dial can be eliminated by putting in on this same road 3 mi. SE of Flat Cr. at Big Cr. (marked "good put-in" above). It is about 6 mi. fr. Hwy 76 to Flat Cr. Those who wish to paddle the last part of the river and the lake should expect rough going down a bumpy road and the dry lake banks or a long carry uphill at the Persimmon Cr. take-out. Fortunately my '67 Opel has gotten senile in its old age (320,000 mi.) and thinks it is a jeep, so we took out at the lake's edge. The Wilscot and Blue Ridge topographical maps and the Fannin Co. Highway map (copied above) can be helpful in planning a trip on this fine class I-II stretch of the Toccoa.



To Blue Ridge Flat Cr.
 Lake Blue Ridge
 Head of Lake at 1663
 gauge
 Toccoa RIVER
 good put-in
 Aska Rd.
 Dial (put in)
 Swan
 DEEP HOLE
 FANNIN CO. Ga.
 Ga Hwy. 60

- Roger Nott, Exploration Chairman

KEVLAR PANTS? Looking for the ultimate in paddling and hiking trousers? Stephenson's, originators of the vapor barrier insulation principle and still the best tent makers in the business, are now offering trousers made to your size in "Aramid fiber," which is what Kevlar is. Cost is \$55 per pair; you may never need another. Call me if you want to be the first on your block to sport Kevlar pants. I'll give you the ordering information. --Ed.