



Winter Roll Practice

Indoor pool roll sessions begin the first Monday in January and run through the last Monday in March, with the exception of the MLK holiday. Plan to take advantage of this great service provided by your club. Whether you want to learn to roll, practice your roll to stay sharp, teach a fellow paddler to roll, or work on other techniques such as wet exits, hand rolls, deep water re-entries, etc., the indoor heated pool is THE best place to hone these skills in the middle of the winter. For details, see the announcement inside.



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.

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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"The only thing to do with good advice is to pass it on. It is never of any use to oneself."

- Oscar Wilde.



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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 Vincent Payne at 770.834.8263 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 generally are held quarterly the first Thursday of the last month of the quarter (March, June, September, December) at 7 PM at the Carl E. Sanders Family YMCA in Buckhead, 1160 Moores Mill Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30327. All GCA members are encouraged to attend. If you have an item for discussion, please call GCA President Vincent Payne at 770.834.8263 so he can add your item to the agenda. Attending Board meetings is a great way to become more involved with the GCA. ✂

GCA Executive Committee

President	Vincent Payne
Vice President	Tom Bishop
Secretary	Jamie Higgins
Treasurer	Ed Schultz
Member Services Chair	Gabriella Schlidt
Recreation Chair	Denise Keller
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 gacanoec@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, 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

December

1	Board of Directors Meeting — Carl E. Sanders Family YMCA	Vincent Payne	770.834.8263	
3	Toccoa	Class 1-2 Trained Beginner	Gina Johnson	404.512.0832
3	Chattooga Section 3-1/2	Class 3-4 Advanced	Jodi Kaufmann	706.759.3857
4	Cartecay	Class 2-3 Intermediate	Jackie Pickett	404.622.6825
9-11	Edisto (SC) Camping (Note 1)	Class 1-2 Trained Beginner	Vincent Payne	770.834.8263
10	Broad	Class 1-2 Trained Beginner	Connie Venuso	404.633.8038
10	Mulberry Fork (AL)	Class 2-3 Intermediate	Joan Steed	256.362.0335
10	Chattooga (Note 3)	Class 3-4 Advanced	Peter Chau	864.885.9477
10	Exploratory Wild Card (Note 4)	Difficulty TBD	Roger Nott	770.536.6923
10-11	Nantahala (Note 2)	Class 2-3 Intermediate	Jackie Pickett	404.622.6825
17	Cartecay	Class 2-3 Intermediate	Gina Johnson	404.512.0832
17	Chattooga (Note 3)	Class 3-4 Advanced	Peter Chau	864.885.9477
18	Chattooga (Note 3)	Class 3-4 Advanced	Bryant Smith	404.428.9177
28-1	St. Marys Camping (Note 1)	Class 1-2 Trained Beginner	Vincent Payne	770.834.8263

January

14-16	Florida Rivers Weekend	Smooth Water	Mo Friedman	770.469.8414
16	Little River (AL) (Note 5)	Class 2-3 Intermediate	Dane White	256.435.3827
21	Upper Chestatee	Class 2-3 Intermediate	Roger Nott	770.536.6923

February

16-20	Florida Rivers Weekend (Note 6)	Smooth Water	Gina Johnson	404.512.0832
18	Etowah Tunnel Section	Class 1-2 Trained Beginner	Vincent Payne	770.834.8263

Note 1: Multi-day, overnight camping, paddle with the Prez.

Note 2: Saturday and/or Sunday run, camping Saturday night near the river.

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

Note 4: Location TBD, depending on water levels and skill levels of participants.

Note 5: MLK day trip - Upper and Chair Lift sections. Paddle either or both; Upper is Class 4, Advanced.

Note 6: Camping at Juniper Springs - day trips on area rivers.

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: Monday evenings 7:00 -9:00 PM January thru March, at the Warren / Holifield Boys' & Girls' Club pool. See the announcement in this issue of *The Eddy Line*.

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

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. ✂

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. Membership applications, GCA waivers and other forms for use by members are posted on the site. ✂

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. ✂

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! ✂

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.

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

Upcoming Events of Interest

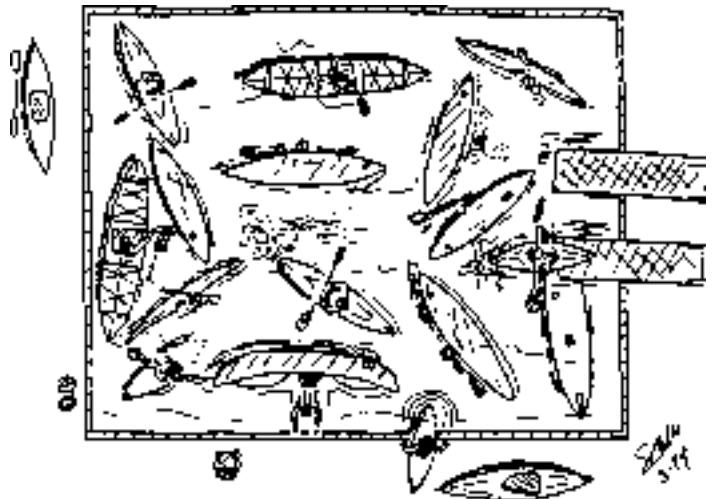
January 1 — Cartecay Chili Run — Mountaintown Outdoor Expeditions, Ellijay, GA, Jay Srymanske, 706.635.2524.

February 4 — Locust Fork Invitational Slalom Races — Cleveland, AL, www.BirminghamCanoeClub.org>>Races.

March 4-5 — Mulberry Fork Slalom & Wild Water Races — Garden City, AL, www.BirminghamCanoeClub.org>>Races.

March 25 — Locust Fork Classic Slalom Races — Cleveland, AL, www.BirminghamCanoeClub.org>>Races. ✂

Winter Roll Practice



Joint GCA / AWC winter roll practice is back! Indoor pool roll sessions will be held Mondays from 7:00 to 9:00 PM beginning Monday, January 9, and running through the last Monday in March. Plan to take advantage of this

great service provided by your club. Whether you want to learn to roll, practice your roll to stay sharp, teach a fellow paddler to roll, or work on other techniques such as wet exits, hand rolls, deep water re-entries, etc., the indoor heated pool is THE best place to hone these skills in the middle of the winter.

LOCATION: We will be returning to the Warren / Holifield Boys' & Girls' Club. The club is located at the corner of Berne and Marion Streets near Grant Park. To get there, exit I-20 at the Boulevard / Grant Park / Cyclorama exit southbound. Go about 1/2 mile to the traffic light at Berne Street — turn left. Go about another 1/2 mile and you'll see a large brick building on the left at the corner of Berne & Marion Streets. Turn left. You are at the Warren Club building. The pool entrance is in the rear. Enter through the gate on the far end of the building to unload boats.

Once again the ACA carries our insurance for this event, and non-ACA members will be required to sign up for an ACA event membership at an additional cost of \$10.00 for the entire event (January thru March). This is in addition to the \$5.00 per session paid to defray pool rental expense. ACA members, have your ACA number available or pay for an event membership.

Louie Boulanger is our Roll Practice Coordinator. If you have questions about roll practice, or would like to volunteer to help, either with instruction or with keeping track of money and waivers, call Louie at 404.373.2907.

BE SURE YOUR BOAT IS CLEAN. A hose is available at the door to rinse out river mud, old bird's nests or cobwebs. ✂

GCA MLK Smooth Water Weekend

Jan. 14, 15, 16, 2006

**Martin Luther King Holiday Weekend
by Morris (Mo) Friedman, The Vagabond**

Time for the annual Florida Trip. I've decided to modify the choices and expect to paddle the Silver River in Ocala, Rainbow River in Dunnellon, and the Crystal River in Crystal River, FL. All of these are spring fed with millions of gallons per day of crystal clear 72 degree water. Possible paddle on the Hommassa River and/or Chassahowitzka River. Featured dining will Skeet's BBQ in Dunnellon, and Cody's Roadhouse in Crystal River. This is our annual trip to paddle with the manatees.

Weather can change quickly from cold at night to hot during the day. Whatever the weather, I'm sure we'll have an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Those wanting

more info can go to www.geocities.com/vagabondmo/gcamlk or call The Vagabond at 770.469.8414. I'll need the e-mail addresses and phone numbers for those wanting to sign up for the trip. ✂

Ocala Presidents Weekend Trip

February 16-20, 2006

by Gina Johnson

Haynes and I are coordinating a camping weekend in Ocala National Forest over President's Weekend in February. We will be arriving on Thursday and leaving on Monday. There will be day trips on the spring runs and rivers in the area. We missed Juniper Springs Run last year because of damage from the fall storms and hope that we will have the opportunity to run the river this year.

This is flat water. If you need a tandem partner or would like to paddle, but don't have a flat water boat, please let me know. Sea kayaks and recreational kayaks are fine.

We are staying at Juniper Springs Recreation Area, site #31, Tropic Camp Loop. You can make reservations at www.reserveamerica.com. The gates lock in the early evening, but you can get a gate combination if you call ahead. This is a pretty park, but unfortunately, no electric hookups. Please send me an e-mail at Haynesandgina@alltel.net if you are interested in joining us. My cell phone is 404.512.0832 if you have questions. ✂

Paddle Georgia 2006, Etowah River

Save the Date: June 24-30, 2006

PG 2006 is set for June 24-30 with a special paddling workshop on June 23. Advertisement for the event will begin in January 2006. Registration forms and online registration will be available at this time as well.

PG 2006 will cover almost 120 miles of the Etowah and Coosa Rivers from Dawsonville in North Central Georgia to Rome in Northwest Georgia. The first sixty miles of the journey wind through Dawson, Forsyth and Cherokee counties. A long, vehicle-assisted portage will carry participants around Lake Allatoona with the trip resuming below Allatoona Dam. The final sixty miles flow through the ridge and valley region of Northwest Georgia in Bartow and Floyd counties. Along the way, Paddle Georgia will visit Dawsonville, Canton, Cartersville and Rome.

The canoe trip is suitable for beginners with a handful of exciting class I shoals. Highlights of the trip include Dawson State Forest, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's

Lake Allatoona and Dam, the Etowah Indian Mounds, antebellum plantations, Georgia Power Company's Plant Bowen, Euharlee Creek Covered Bridge, historic downtown Rome, the Coosa's Lock and Dam Park and numerous Native American fish weirs.

PG 2006 Itinerary on the Etowah & Coosa Rivers:

Day 1: Dawson Do Si Do — Ga. 9 to Old Federal Road — 16 miles

Day 2: Cherokee Cha Cha — Old Federal Road to East Cherokee Dr.— 17 miles

Day 3: Canton Contra — East Cherokee Dr to Canton 14 miles

Day 4: Allatoona Amble — Canton to Fields Landing — 13 miles

Day 5: Indian Mound Meander — Allatoona Dam to Euharlee Creek — 17 miles

Day 6: Fish Weir Flamenco — Euharlee Creek to Reynolds Bend — 20 miles

Day 7: Three Rivers Ramble — Reynolds Bend to Lock n' Dam — 19 miles



20th Annual Cartecay River Chili Run 1/1/06

by Jay Srymanske

With frost in the air and winter coming, it can only mean the original Cartecay River Chili Run is coming fast. A proud tradition started when Gary Foster said he would do the run on 1-1-87.

Mountaintown Outdoor Expeditions has hosted the event under all weather conditions and river levels every New Year's Day since then. A great day on the river followed by great chili, a tradition started by Leo Linebaugh, is hard to beat. Nothing can top starting a new year with the dip of a paddle and the dip of a spoon with the folks that started it.

Enter your favorite chili recipe in the Chili Cook-off. Shuttles from 10 am, chili from 12 noon, and Chili Cook-off results at 3 pm. For more info call 706.635.2524. Hope to see you there!

Always here for paddlers, Jay.



GCA Loses Long-time Member

by Gina Johnson

The GCA, Haynes and I and the NOC family all lost a wonderful friend on Monday October 17. Tom McCormick had been a kayaker every since I can remember. He and his wife, Jeanne, would come up from their home in Middle Georgia and spend time at the Nantahala, buying a home not far from the NOC. When Tom retired, he took up raft

guiding, which he loved. He had a stroke several years ago and recovered amazingly well, but no longer was comfortable raft guiding. He continued to paddle and helped us with the Southeasterns as a safety boat for several years.

Although he had trouble with his health, Tom continued to be active and continued to boat. He was riding his bicycle in Pembroke when he was hit by a car. The only positive in this tragedy is that he died doing something he loved, rather than in a hospital, away from his loving family.

Tom had the biggest smile and his eyes always sparkled. He reminded me of a gray bearded Santa Clause. I can see Jeannie and Tom floating down the Nanty, relaxed and at peace with the world. May God bless them both.

Jeannie sent Tom's obituary, excerpts of which follow:

Thomas Spencer "Tommy" McCormick, age 66, died Monday morning at Memorial Hospital in Savannah from injuries sustained in an auto accident. Mr. McCormick grew up in Savannah, but lived most of his adult life in Pembroke. He was a Navy veteran and a structural steel detailer, retiring after over 25 years of service. He enjoyed motorcycles, kayaking, was a CASA volunteer and a devoted husband, father and grandfather.

Survivors include his wife of 27 years, Jeanne McCormick of Pembroke; four daughters and three sons-in-law, Angela and Mike Reed of Pembroke, Kathleen Lambert of Dayton, Tenn., Amy and Monty Sharp of Knoxville, Tenn., and Darcy and Chris Thielemann of Arnold, Md.; one son and daughter-in-law, Paul and Mindy Boyette of Pembroke; one brother, John Wesley McCormick of Marietta; and nine grandchildren, Tray and Kyle Altman, Jason Lambert, Jeb and Jensen Boyette and Anthony, Alyssa, Aaron and Blaise Thielemann.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Stroke Association, a division of the American Heart Association, National Center, 7272 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75231-4596; or to the American Red Cross, Blood Services Southern Region Headquarters, 1925 Monroe Drive, Atlanta 30324.

A Remembrance

I remember the first time I met Tom and Jeanne. I was a new kayaker, I guess back in '95, and they were on our trip on the Nanty. They sat at Surfer's entwined in each other's arms, laughing and smiling. I thought surely they had just married, but as I recall, they said they'd been married 28 years. I was awed and inspired.

And I never saw Tom again but what he was smiling and happy. I always felt good seeing him; somehow felt

happier for the meeting. I know I will miss him, miss seeing someone on the Nanty in the distance and hoping it's him, and miss seeing him and Jeanne coming through

the falls, laughing.

What a great guy!!

- Marvine Cole



American Whitewater Affiliate Club Member Discount

Your paddling club membership ensures that American Whitewater will be able to maintain its vigilant protection of your white water rivers.

AW Membership Discount

As an affiliate club of American Whitewater, each of your club's members can join American Whitewater for \$25, a \$10 discount. To use this great discount, simply call 866-BOAT-4AW or go to www.americanwhitewater.org/ membership and enter the code CL10gca into the promotional code line.

Volunteer and Make a Difference

One of the most rewarding aspects of membership is discovering one of the many opportunities to get involved as a volunteer. Read on to learn more about how you can take the next step and become actively INVOLVED.

AW Journal

Consider writing an article for the AW Journal. Tell the world about a great paddling trip that your club organized or share a conservation win. It's your magazine.

AW River Festivals

River festivals and events are some of AW's most successful fundraisers, but it takes a lot of people to make them successful. Consider becoming one of those people that makes it happen!

Conservation/Access

The AW Staff is made aware of hundreds of river issues each year. Why not get your club involved and assist AW and your paddlers by attending a meeting or working

with local government officials to protect your local rivers.

AW Website

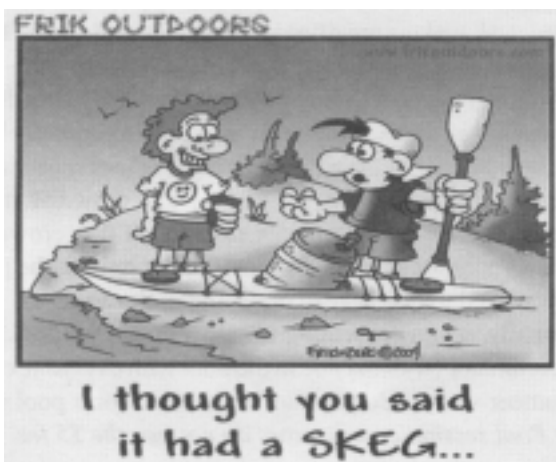
Become a member of the Stream Team and help create the most complete white water resource in the world. Do you really love a river and want to share it with the world? Then learn how to become part of the Stream Team.

River Stewardship Institute

Consider becoming a trained river activist. More than ever, private interests are utilizing high dollar lawyers and hired gun consultants to tell you how the "process" works. Attend an RSI and learn how the process is supposed to work and then stand up and help protect your favorite local rivers.

For more information about getting involved and to access the most comprehensive white water resource in the world, visit www.americanwhitewater.org.

Thank You!



Please Join...

THE ROSWELL
Canoe Kayak
CLUB

We are looking for members of all ages and skill levels to "Paddle" every Thursday night at 6:00 PM at Azalea Park on Riverside Road in Roswell.

Club meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays of every month in the pavilion at Azalea Park.

We hope to have a home on the river soon for boat storage and competitions!

For more information contact: roswellpaddle@yahoo.com



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!!

Bellows, Rick
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Tips for Planning a Safe River Trip

By David Bachor

Know the river

Find out the difficulty of the river. Get descriptions of the rapids from books or first-hand accounts.

If possible, before paddling, carscout the river by driving along it and looking at the rapids and / or hazards.

Understand the Class I-VI River Classification System. Find out the rating of the river you will be paddling.

Get current stream flow information for the river you will be running. Compare it to known or recorded levels. Always paddle a river when its water level is holding or dropping, never when it is rising. It may rise to a



dangerous level while you are paddling.

Find out the gradient of the river.

Find out river characteristics — drop / pool, continuous, big / small rapids, etc.

Remoteness — are there any access points along the river?

Are difficult rapids easy to portage?

Get local air / river temperature. Be aware of impending weather changes.

Know your skill level

Have you run a river similar in difficulty to this one?

Have you run this river before and do you remember the rapids?

Can you lead others safely down this river?

Do you have a confident river roll?

Can you assist others in need of help?

Can you read river signs and pick your own lines through rapids?

Be honest with yourself and others about your own skill level. You may endanger yourself or them if you are in over your head. If someone suggests your skills may not be up to running a particular river or rapid, don't take offense, their advice may save your life.

Know the skill level of the group

Is everyone skilled enough to run this river?

Do you trust the leaders to safely guide the group?

Are the leaders familiar with the river and know the rapids?

The group should have more skilled boaters than beginners.

Have proper equipment

Basics: helmet, life jacket, spray skirt, paddle, footwear. Helmet should be solid and properly fitted. Life jackets should be snug and buoyant enough to swim in white water.

Wet suit, dry top, spray top, polypro. pogies, skull cap. If the air temperature added to the water temperature is less than 100 degrees Fahrenheit, you need to wear something to keep warm.

Boat floatation — properly fitted and inflated.

Safety items: Throw bag, first aid kit, knife, whistle, carabineers, duct tape, matches or lighter.

Nose clips, sunscreen, hat or visor, eyeglass strap.

Extra gear for replacement or loan. Bringing that extra jacket may help save someone from hypothermia.

Make sure boat and all gear is in good condition. Inspect others' gear.

Food and water. Drink frequently when paddling, even if you don't feel thirsty.

Dry clothes and towels left in vehicle at take-out.

Spare set of car keys, securely tied into boat.

Always try out new equipment under familiar conditions.

Don't bring a brand new boat down your first descent of a difficult river.

Running the river

Scout any unfamiliar rapid that cannot be completely seen from above. Scout any rapid that is new.

Scout familiar rapids when water levels are higher or lower than normal. Hazards may form at various levels that did not exist at levels when previously run.

Eddy scout only rapids that can be completely seen from above, or when receiving direction from a competent leader who is familiar with the rapid.

Get / give instructions on correct line. Make sure people who are unfamiliar with the rapid know the line. Demonstrate proper line if possible.

Have lead and sweep boaters. These should be very competent boaters who are very safety conscious and on the lookout for others.

Have a buddy and keep track of each other.

Keep the group together. Never let anyone in the group get out of sight.

Trip leaders need to count heads frequently.

Notify others if you need to stop and get out of your boat. Don't crowd others while running a rapid. The person ahead of you may stop suddenly to assess a situation. You may run into them accidentally and cause one or both of you to flip. Also you may be depending on this person to guide you through the rapid, and suddenly find yourself in the lead.

Learn to eddy-hop. This skill will allow you to reevaluate the rapid you are in by letting you stop and look around, or to catch your breath.

Portage:

o Any time you want. If you don't feel comfortable with the rapid, the best line is over the rocks on the side of the river. Never belittle or tease someone for wanting to portage. Support and encourage them. Don't try to change their mind, respect their decision.

o Whenever there is a threat of injury or death.

o Whenever your physical conditions won't allow. Cold, tired boaters don't think clearly and cannot respond quickly.

o To set an example for others in your group.

o Tell others when you think they aren't qualified

Wear safety gear at all times, even when scouting or portaging. Rocks can be slippery and your helmet or life jacket may protect you if you slip or fall in. It's a good idea to carry your throw bag with you when scouting a difficult rapid. If you watch others run the rapid, you will be ready to assist if they need help.

Observe river courtesy / etiquette. The boater running through the rapid always has the right of way. If you are playing on a wave or hole, get out of the way for approaching boaters. Never enter a crowded drop or eddy when there is not enough room for you.

Safety

Be a competent swimmer.

Boat only at your skill level.

Know how to read a river and recognize hazards such as undercuts, hydraulics, strainers, pinning situations, etc.

Know how to self-rescue. An Eskimo Roll is an essential skill, but if you do swim, know how to get to safety.

Know CPR.

Know first aid.

Have a first aid kit.

Know AW river hand signals.

A group consists of a minimum of three boaters. Never paddle with any less. If a boater gets hurt, this allows one person to go for help and the other to stay with the injured

Whitewater Monthly

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Our Guest Appreciation Festival was a huge success this Halloween weekend. More than 5,000 guests visited the gorge to swap gear, search for deals and celebrate the paddling season. Great bands played Friday and Saturday night, contributing to

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person.

Know how to throw your throw bag — practice before getting on the river.

Be in good health and be physically fit. Be in good mental condition. Know your limitations. Attend training classes for CPR, and first aid.

Make sure all boats are securely tied down to car top roof racks. Secure all boats with additional bow and stern lines tied to bumpers.

Drugs and alcohol have no place near a river. Never boat while under the influence, and don't allow anyone under the influence to paddle with you.

Rescue

Always go after the swimmer first. Gear can be replaced, lives cannot.

Collect gear after the swimmer is safe.

Give instruction to swimmer. They may be panicking and not thinking clearly.

If you must swim, stay with your boat. It has lots of extra floatation to hold on to, and makes it easier for rescuers to find you. Always stay to the upstream end of the boat to avoid getting trapped between the boat and a rock.

Never stand up in moving current. Standing can result in a foot entrapment situation that may lead to drowning.

Float on your back with your feet pointing downstream to provide cushioning from oncoming rocks. Swim toward the shore and stand up only when you are in a shallow eddy.

When running difficult rapids, have people stationed down river with throw bags.

Never endanger your own safety to rescue another person or you may find yourself in need of rescue, too, and make the situation worse.

Take time off of the river to practice and learn new rescue skills.

- From the Chota Canoe Club newsletter.



Potable Water

by Dick Hurd, MD

On a typical GCA trip we bring the water we plan to drink with us, but with canoe camping trips, we may not be able to bring all we need, and may have to get it along the way. I have taken a lot of inadvertent swims over the past 25 years, as most of us have, and have gulped a little water here and there but never became ill. Of course, I never did this in the Metro Chattahoochee! Because waterborne disease is dose dependent, there is a big difference between

a little splash in your mouth and drinking a quart or more. I plan to discuss the disease risks in water, and what we can do to make water safe for consumption. Information presented is derived from lectures and handouts at the Wilderness Medicine Society meeting this past summer.

Around 1980, when I first became interested in long distance hiking, as long as water was clear, and came from a spring or a running stream, I would drink it "as is," boiling water only for cooking purposes. Then articles began to appear about the risk of Giardia, and I changed my ways, either boiling or using Iodine tablets. Imagine my chagrin in 1999 when I developed a major Giardia infection after returning from a two week hike in New Hampshire and Maine. It was so sudden and so severe I am convinced I might not have made it if I were still on the Trail.

That same year, passing through Andover, Maine, I learned that the town water supply was contaminated with Norwalk virus — something we tend to associate with cruise ships — and several hikers had become ill. As you will see, there are many things to be concerned about in the water we drink in the woods.

Roland Meuser, in his classic 'Long Distance Hiking,' did a meticulous survey of AT thru-hikers in 1989. Water was always treated 14% of the time, never treated 18% of the time, and somewhere in between for the rest. Surprisingly, about the same percentage of hikers developed gastrointestinal illness in all categories, and he concluded that "it makes no difference how you purify your water or whether you treat it at all!"

This conclusion was echoed at the WMS meeting when the speaker on this topic concluded the lecture with the question: "Does it really matter?" Read on and you be the judge, but I think it does.

1. What are the hazards and risks in water?

a. Chemicals and Pesticides: This will be mainly from industrial discharge and agricultural surface water runoff, and is certainly a problem in many of the rivers we paddle.

b. Waterborne Pathogens: Listed in decreasing size of the organism, these include Parasites: tapeworm and ascaris (water contaminated by sewage or pasture runoff); Protozoa: Giardia (the most common cause of gastrointestinal illness) and Cryptosporidia; Bacteria: E. coli (Metro Chattahoochee!), Campylobacter, Salmonella; and Viruses: Norwalk, Hepatitis A. This is only a partial listing of the more common organisms.

2. How do we avoid them and provide safe potable water?

I don't have an answer for chemicals and pesticides except to know the area, and avoid water sources that are

likely contaminated. In other words, good judgment. As to waterborne pathogens, we have several options:

a. Boiling: If you want to take no risks, this is the way to go, but it consumes time and fuel. The rule of thumb is to bring water to a rolling boil for one minute at or below 5000' elevation, and three minutes at or above 6500' elevation.

b. Microfiltration: This will remove suspended particulate and organic matter, but a heavy load may necessitate cleaning or replacing your filter. It is a good idea with heavily silted water to let it stand a while in a container before filtering. The filter pore size should be less than 1 micron, and it will get everything out of the water except viruses.

Some filters include iodine in the resin, but the water passes through so quickly that it is questionable as to how much iodine is released, plus there is no way to know when the iodine in the filter is exhausted. Disadvantages include weight, possible malfunction, and clogged filters. Finally, if you are concerned about viruses (Norwalk!), you must still treat chemically.

c. Chemical Disinfection: The mainstays are Iodine and Chlorine. Without going into a lot of detail, Chlorine is unstable, is pH sensitive, and is affected by organic material, and so is not a good choice for hikers. My remarks will be confined to Iodine.

There is some concern as to the effect of long term use of Iodine treated water on the thyroid gland. I consulted an Endocrinologist on this and was advised "not a problem". Nevertheless, it may be an issue if you have thyroid disease or are pregnant. Also some people are allergic to Iodine.

Iodine kills everything except Cryptosporidia, and the kill rate is proportional to the Iodine concentration, contact time, and water temperature, with a somewhat linear relationship. For example, the standard dose of Iodine is 8 ppm (parts per million); I am advised that this probably kills everything in 90 seconds, so 10 minutes is a sufficient wait if the water temperature is over 40 degrees.

If the water temp is under 40, double the contact time (i.e. 20 minutes), or if you use a lower concentration to eliminate the taste, also double the contact time. For example, if you used 4 ppm, you would wait 20 minutes, but with cold water you would wait 40 minutes. Available products include:

Iodine tablets: 'Potable Aqua' is convenient in that one tablet in one liter of water produces 8 ppm. However, I have seen these tablets take a long time to dissolve, especially in cold water, and am unsure at what point the water becomes "safe". Also, once you open the bottle, exposing the tablets to oxygen, they start losing potency, so



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in a typical hiking situation, with frequent opening/closing the bottle, it is suggested that the tablets may not be effective after two weeks.

Iodine Solution: 'Polar Pure' is my choice. The iodine is already in solution so it goes to work immediately, but the rules about contact time and water temperature still apply. This will treat large quantities of water (2000 quarts), and is reliable as long as iodine crystals are visible in the bottom of the bottle. For those not familiar with this system, you refill the bottle with water with each use, and the water becomes saturated with iodine for the next use. One disadvantage is the potential of a bottle filled with liquid to freeze, but I have never encountered this problem.

Summary:

I have reviewed the problems and potential solutions for dealing with water in the outdoors. Because filters don't get viruses, and Iodine doesn't get Cryptosporidia, you must combine both if you wish to be as safe as possible. Boiling remains the gold standard. Good luck and stay well.

White Water Helmet Design

by Brad MacMonagle, CWWA Safety Director

One of the problems we have with white water

helmets is no standards. Most other sports have some kind of recognized helmet standard. In Europe they have the EN 1385 CE white water helmet standard. In the US, ASTM is still working on it. Some helmets are available here that meet the Europe standard, great! Other helmets could be just as good, better, or worse. You need to decide.

Here are some key things to consider about helmets. There are few hard rules, educate yourself and make a choice.

First, it must fit well! It must sit on your head without rocking front to back or side to side. Most helmets include some padding mechanism to fix the fit. Try different styles and brands. I've had helmets that I couldn't get to fit well. Then strap it on. Fit the strap snug. Fast water will lift your helmet off your head, exposing your forehead. Back straps are also very effective. Again, try one on and see if it keeps the helmet from rolling back.

What style helmet? I'm not talking about color and glitter. More like neck coverage, ear coverage, visors, and face guards. More coverage, the better. Your choices are: Does more helmet over your neck get in the way. Does ear coverage hinder hearing, hold water after a roll, maybe a half ear style helmet works. Fixed visor or floppy one. Some argue that a fixed bill can catch water (from a fire hose) and flip it back on your head. Soft stick-on visors are

an option. Face guard, keeps the rocks away from your face or snag it in strainers. Either argument loses.

What kind of padding should a helmet have? A stiff expanded styrene material offers great impact protection. Make sure it is designed for multiple impacts and wet environments (in case your looking to cross train a helmet from another sport). Another common liner is minicell. We all know and love this stuff. It can offer good impact protection when used with a hard shell and enough thickness. It also has proven durable in the water.

I tend to look for a hard composite like shell with a minicell liner or an expanded styrene type liner and any kind of shell. If you look at a softer shell material, you want to maximize the coverage of the liner. Don't give the sharp edge of the rock with your name on it a chance to crush the shell and find your head.

So, if you're still reading, who am I? I'm the Colorado White Water Association Safety Director. I'm an ACA Advanced SWR Instructor. I'm the guy who has planted his unguarded face on a rock resulting in a broken nose. I'm the guy who found that sharp rock with his name on it, that snuck between the padding in his helmet, resulting in six stitches to the top of my scalp (yes, this cut was under my helmet).

I'm also the guy who dug into this data years ago and made choices about what helmet to buy. What did I buy? Grateful Heads Hard Hit. It has a hard shell, full minicell liner, half ear coverage. I added a soft visor (wife thought it looked like a bowling ball without the visor). I don't have a face guard. If I changed anything, I'd add the back strap.

Make sure your helmet fits well and is strapped down snug.

- *From the CWWA email list.*



Thoughts on Survival Gear

by Larry Cable

There has been a lot of talk on Boater Talk and American Whitewater lately about what to take as survival gear for winter paddling trips. While I don't profess to be an expert, I've spent my fair share of time sleeping out rolled up in my poncho, so let me give you some of my lessons learned.

What is Wilderness Survival? At the basic level, it's keeping the body within an acceptable temperature range, reasonably hydrated and with enough fuel to adequately support normal body functions. It is important to understand what body functions take priority and address those issues.

Simply put, you will die of hypothermia/exposure before you die of thirst, you will die of thirst before you

starve to death.

The military survival courses give their priority of work as first aid (they are assuming an aircraft crash), shelter/protection from environment, water and then food. From a boater's point of view and considering first aid to be an entire subject in and of itself, only the last three really affect us, particularly shelter/protection from the environment and water. Lets take a look at these individually.

When we talk about shelter/protection from environment, what we are really trying to prevent is hypothermia. So how does the body lose heat? The basic mechanisms of heat loss are conduction, evaporation, convection and radiation. So how do we prevent and/or slow these processes? The first and most important step is to dress for the environment.

For winter and early spring boaters, in my opinion, a minimum level of dress should be dry top, layered pile/poly, neoprene or fuzzy rubber pants, and decent shoes. A farmer John under the dry top is better, a dry suit is still better, and a Gore-Tex/breathable dry suit is ideal.

Remember that dry suits do not insulate, so wear the proper layers under it. If you can't wear shoes in your boat, get a different boat for winter creeking. Carry a helmet liner and a spare pair of pile of poly gloves; you lose a lot of heat through your head and hands. As a side note, if you are hiking, carry a full rain suit, a pile or wool hat and a pair of gloves.

I carry water purification tablets with me on river trips. While you can probably survive for several days without water, especially in the southeast, dehydration affects performance fairly quickly and makes you a lot more likely to become hypothermic, so water becomes a survival issue a lot sooner than most people realize. Take the tablets along and stay hydrated.

A good alternative is a water bottle with the built in filter. Then all you need to do is scoop and drink. Be aware that silty water will clog a filter in a heartbeat, as will high tannin levels. I would still carry the tablets as a backup even with one of these units. Pur makes a chlorine based tablet if you are sensitive to iodine.

So what do I carry in my survival kit? A survival blanket called a "heat sheet", LED flashlight, butane lighter, 2 "Wetfire" fire starters, a candle, water purification tablets (Potable Aqua), a small tube of sunscreen/bug repellent (this isn't a critical item in the winter, but I leave it in there anyway), a Fox whistle, a small compass, a piece of aluminum foil (wrapped around the candle), backpackers toilet paper (my single concession to civilized standards) and some kind of energy bar. All of this fits into a 32 oz Nalgene bottle with a bit of room to spare and weighs around a pound.

I prefer the "heat sheet" to a "space" blanket because it's a bit larger and the outside is blaze orange. Any of these aluminized poly film blankets do an excellent job of slowing radiant heat loss and help with evaporative and convective heat loss by blocking the wind. They do very little to prevent conductive heat losses, something to keep in mind if you end up trying to sleep in one overnight.

The "wetfire" tinder blocks are small, burn hot, and will light when wet, an important issue if you are trying to start a fire with wet wood. An alternative to these are "esbit" fuel bars. They are small and will also light when wet, although not as easily as the former.

The candle is a back up, it puts out a surprising amount of heat if you set it between your legs and block the wind with the survival blanket. You can actually heat water over it if you have a canteen cup (you can fabricate a cup to heat water with from the aluminum foil in a pinch).

The sound of a Fox whistle is supposed to carry farther than the standard, but this is something that I haven't tested. The compass I carry is a small Silva compass that will clip to a pocket. I use a Princeton LED flashlight because of the size, brightness and long battery life. This kit is easy to throw into your butt pack or day pack if you decide to go for a hike too.

I carry a separate first aid kit in a dry box, although it is easy enough to put these items into a Nalgene bottle (the cheapest reliable dry storage). I carry a CPR shield and gloves in the pocket of my PFD, along with a whistle


and a knife (my preference is a folding Spyderco Rescue). I carry a basic pin kit in a separate small dry bag (pin kit = 2 prussic loops, 2 carabineers, and 15' tubular webbing) plus a 5/16" spectra throw rope to complete my basic creeking gear.

A couple of parting thoughts if it comes to the point that you are going to have to walk out/spend the night on the river. Walking out in the dark can be very dangerous and it's very easy to get lost if you are not on a clearly defined trail. Find or build some shelter and settle down for the night and walk out the next day.

Be familiar with the basic orientation of the area that you are paddling, where the roads and access points are and how to get to them. If you are separated from the rest of the party, they paddle out and you can't, have a plan on where you are going to meet and what the contingency plan will be if you aren't at the meeting.

Learn how to build a fire when the wood is wet (hint: only the outside of the wood is wet generally, shave it off and burn the dry part). The dead limbs close to the trunk of standing trees are often dry even after a rain. If you end up sleeping out, try to insulate yourself off of the ground with dry leaves or dry grass, it helps with conductive heat loss into the ground.

Hope this helps if you ever find yourself in one of these situations.

- From "Bowlines" — newsletter of the Bluegrass Wildwater Association. 

River Access

Wilson Creek Gets Protection it Deserves

Earlier this fall the North Carolina National Forests released the Comprehensive River Management Plan for Wilson Creek. The plan, as required by law, outlines how the Pisgah National Forest will manage Wilson Creek as a recently designated Wild and Scenic River. The Forest Service is required to manage the river in a manner that protects the values that led to the river's designation, and they have done just that.


The plan represents scientifically sound and wise river management. Under the plan, the ecological integrity of the Wilson Creek corridor will be protected through the elimination of logging, mining, road building, and dam building - as well as through proactive measures like stream bank restoration using native species. Non-motorized recreational use will be supported through the creation and management of river and trail access areas that

disperse use and provide high quality recreational experiences. Vehicular use will be limited to existing roads, and non-motorized uses like paddling will be encouraged and supported under the new plan.

Wilson Creek is a beautiful and unique class III-V white water stream on the eastern edge of the southern Appalachians. It has a long history of paddling use that is recognized in the plan, and is a favorite of paddlers throughout the south. The plan also will protect and enhance the upper reaches of Wilson Creek, and ensure that paddlers will be enjoying Wilson Creek for as long as there are paddlers and creeks.

American Whitewater collaborated with the Forest Service on the creation of the plan, and fully supports it. We would like to thank the US Forest Service and all the other people and organizations that worked to protect Wilson Creek as a federally designated Wild and Scenic River.

You can read the decision notice and plan summary at the following link: http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc/nepa/grandfather/wilson_creek_dn.pdf

- From the American Whitewater web site. 

Goose Pastures Camp/ Paddle

October 13-16

by Lamar Philips

Goose Pastures is in NE Florida just east of Tallahassee so Buddy, Belton and I got an early start from Atlanta so we would hopefully have time for a short paddle after setting up camp. Our campsite that we reserved through the Florida DNR for the three nights would be on the bank of the Wacissa River. It is a gated private primitive campground with a large covered pavilion with picnic tables. There are several tables around for private tent sites also. It is a beautiful, well maintained campground and can be reserved for groups at no charge.

Buddy had been wanting a Coleman grill and fortunately we stopped on the way down and purchased one because our camp stove had a bad valve and could not be used. I had told Jean and Ilana that they could use our stove and we would have all been in trouble without the grill.

We arrived at the campground about the same time as Jim Neutzel from Columbus and set up camp. We then decided to make a short paddle across the river into the Slave Canal that was dug by slaves to connect the Wacissa and Aucilla Rivers in order to transport products down to the coast. It is a beautiful paddle under over hanging trees and very swampy. The water is very clear and we saw hundreds of fresh water mullet and a few bass.

Jean and Ilana arrived shortly after we returned to camp so we gave them a hand setting up camp. After dinner, we had a nice camp fire and lots of stories.

Friday morning we left camp for a shuttle over to the Aucilla River. Unfortunately, we had problems finding the take-out. Buddy and I had made this trip last year and



thought we remembered where the take-out was. After a lot of driving and stopping folks for information, we finally found it, only a couple of miles from our camp. Oh well, Christopher Columbus was lost too!

We finally got on the Aucilla about 11:30 AM and found that the water was about 5 feet below last years level, but was still plenty deep. It is a free flowing black water river with clear water and steep banks. There are 3 or 4 cabins near the put-in, but after the first quarter mile, nothing but

river, forest, alligators, turtles and a few birds. We did pass a few fishermen but they were very friendly.

Unlike most Florida rivers, the Aucilla has a few rapids. Most were minor, but there is one rather difficult rapid that drops about five to seven feet over several yards. Belton was paddling a new wooden sea kayak that he had just built and wisely chose to portage this rapid. Jim went first in his canoe followed by Jean and Ilana in their rec kayaks. I went next in my sea kayak and could not make one of the turns near the bottom and ended up above the water on a flat rock. While Jim was trying to help me off the rock, Buddy hit one of the rocks head on, but we both survived. It was a gorgeous paddle and a beautiful day. We got off the river about 5:30 PM.

When we got back to camp, Mo had arrived. We had a late supper, built a campfire and were entertained by Mo and his guitar. Of course there were a lot of tall tales shared too.

Saturday we shuttled up to the put-in for the Wacissa. The Wacissa is a spring fed river with very clear water and is very wide at the beginning. It is beautiful with water lilies and plants covering several hundred feet from the banks, or actually swamp. A few hundred yards down from the launch, the spring is off to the left of the river and has a small opening that you have to find to enter.



Jim in Aucilla Rapids.



Jean taking a swim in Aucilla while Ilana watches.



Buddy & Lamar in Slave Canal.

Once in the spring it opens up and there is a swim dock. Over the spring is a very large American flag that someone has hung between two very tall trees. It is very impressive. Jean and Jim were the only two of our party to be brave enough to take a swim in the very, very cold water.

We left the spring and continued down the river admiring the beautiful scenery, alligators and birds. About


halfway down, a gentleman has built a dock and picnic table for paddlers. We had our lunch and rested for a half hour before starting our final leg. Thankfully, the paddlers don't abuse his generosity and the area is kept very clean.

The river narrows at this point and there are a number of options that you can take to explore. We were lucky that the ones we chose all went back into the main channel and we didn't have to back track. We made it back to camp around 4:30, very tired.

It was a great paddle except for about five air boats that we met after lunch. It seems a shame that they let those loud air boats into such a pristine river. In addition to the noise, they really tear up the river plants and stir up the water.

After supper, we had our usual campfire but we all turned in early.

Jim and Mo had to leave early Sunday morning and Jean and Ilana had a relative in Tallahassee with a new baby that they wanted to visit, so we broke camp early. Since Jean and Ilana had never seen the Slave Canal, we paddled a couple of miles into the canal. Like the rest of us, they thought it was beautiful and want to paddle through to the Aucilla on the next trip.

The weather was beautiful and we had a wonderful trip. I'm just sorry that more members of the GCA did not get to share our experience. Maybe next year. 

Fall Gala Report

by Jamie Higgins

We had a very successful Fall Gala the weekend of Oct 7-9. After suggestions from various GCAers, we changed the venue and went to Smokey Mountain Meadows Campground in Bryson City, NC. We also decided to be more laid back and not have the club-organized breakfast and dinner at the Gala.

The rain put a damper on things a bit on Friday evening and traffic was horrible getting to the mountains. It took me 5 hours to get to Bryson City from Stone Mountain, and others had similar horror stories. On the way to the campground, I stopped off at the River's End Restaurant at the NOC where I recognized a few of my paddling friends' cars. I walked in the restaurant and there was about a crowd of 10 GCAers (Denise, Tom, Kate, Barbara, Mike, Mona, Gretchen and Jodi, just to name a few).

Everyone was having a great time talking about paddling while they ate their dinner. We all were wondering what the weather for the weekend would be like. Of course everyone agreed, it wouldn't be a Fall Gala without some rain. At least this year we didn't have a hurricane

bearing down on us.

After dinner, we headed back to Smokey Mountain Meadows. Some of us shared a cabin. The cabins were very rustic on the outside, but it was very nice on the inside, and the campground facilities and bathhouse were very clean.

We awoke the following morning and it was overcast and foggy. It looked like it would rain. We met at the pavilion and discussed what rivers folks wanted to run. Luckily, a GCA member had a lap top, so we were able to find out what was running. A couple of folks stepped forward and offered to run trips down the Ocoee, Little Tennessee, Tuckaseegee and the Nantahala. After the meeting, we all went to our prospective rivers and paddled.

By the time we got on the river, the sun started to come out. Saturday and Sunday both turned out to be spectacular autumn days. The temperatures both days got up into the 70s. On Saturday and Sunday, I paddled down the Nantahala with a couple of friends. The Nantahala was absolutely gorgeous. The water was clear and the golden leaves waffled down from the overhanging trees. It made for a postcard picture scene.

Of course, no trip to the Nantahala is complete without visiting NOC and Endless Rivers. My paddling posse and myself spent a small fortune in buying paddling


gear and paraphernalia.

Saturday evening we had a campfire (well actually we crashed someone's campfire). At the campfire, we were invaded by alien paddlers wearing glow in the dark jewelry. Not to worry, it was just Denise Keller and friends showing us the latest fashion in illuminating jewelry courtesy of Wal-Mart. We probably had about 50 folks sitting around the campfire talking about the day's paddling adventures. We had several new paddlers and lots of seasoned members of GCA. We spent the evening around the campfire sharing paddling tales and adventures.

The following morning we met again at the pavilion and segregated in groups to go paddling. Most folks opted to run the Nantahala again, so we had a group that put in at Patton's and another that put in at Ferrebee. Again, we had a near perfect day for paddling and a perfect ending to

a great weekend.

All in all, it was a wonderful Fall Gala. Most of the folks I talked to enjoyed switching the venue to Smokey Mountain Meadows and no one seem to really mind that GCA didn't provide breakfast or dinner. The only thing that mattered was that we were on the river and paddling with good friends.

I've enjoyed being Recreation Chair this year, but I'm ready to move on to be Secretary. I appreciate everyone's patience and kindness in helping me with the Extravaganza and the Gala. I pass the Rec Chair baton to very capable hands. Denise Keller has the honor of being the Rec Chair for next year, and she has already earned the nickname "Ms. Social Director". Ms. Social Director already has some wonderful ideas lined up for the next year's Spring Extravaganza. 

Cheoah River Redux

by Hank Klausman

October 8, 2005. Many things in life take two (or more than one) tries (or attempts) before you can really decide if you like them. Examples from my experience are eating oysters, opera and helicopter skiing. There are some notable exceptions, with sex being my personal favorite. The latest case for me was the Cheoah River.

The first recreational flow was on September 17 and you can read details of this run in my report of September 19, 2005. The announced water release was 1000 cfs which should have produced class IV/IV+ rapids. A mandatory bus shuttle was set up from the Robbinsville High School to avoid traffic and parking problems. All this was being coordinated by the US Forest Service (government), TAPOCO Power (regulated corporation) and American Whitewater (volunteers).

Well, with such a snafu ripe environment, Murphy's Law kicked into overtime. Remember, Murphy said if things CAN go wrong, they WILL go wrong. In this situation, Murphy was an optimist. Over 500 paddlers from as far away as Oregon, Idaho and Michigan showed up. Only one school bus was available for the hour long shuttle, so John and I were the last two squeezed into the third shuttle at eleven a.m. Our friends arrived late and didn't get on the river until mid afternoon.

Then the guy turning the wheel to open the flood gates must have miscalculated and poured 2000 cfs into the tiny streambed. He must have realized it was too much and cut back to about 1500 cfs later that morning. This water volume transformed the Cheoah into an honest class V torrent of blind drops and huge holes. Imagine the swollen current rushing (or roaring) down a very narrow

channel, often dropping at over 100 feet per mile. The Cheoah has been dry for 75 years, so it was clogged with brush and (there were) almost no calm spots or eddies to rest or scout. None of us had ever been on this river and would have liked to stop and scout or even portage some rapids. But the steep banks, thick scrub, poison ivy, current velocity and lack of eddies forced us to run rapids blind.

Twice I chose the wrong line and had violent learning experiences. Fortunately, I was able to roll back up both times with only minor scratches and bruises. Half our group swam and only four of six completed the run. Peter lost both his boat and paddle. Bryant's canoe was wrapped around a tree and they couldn't retrieve it until the next day.

Needless to say, I had doubts about returning to the Cheoah for the next release on October 1. Didn't think I could stand another learning experience. I fired off a few nasty emails about possible sabotage on the water level. Most of the paddlers (admittedly all experts) replied that they loved the high water and to stop bitching. Hey, there are no guarantees in paddling. Any time you get on a river, you take your chances.

But Kevin Colburn, Access Director at American Whitewater, did seem to understand my point and said he would communicate with the power company. Knowing some of the places to avoid and safe lines, and hoping that TAPACO could get their act together and provide the actual amount of water they promised, convinced me to try again. Actually, my paddling buddies said if I wimped out, they would replace me with one of those young, hotshot lady boaters.

It may be just a matter of time before I am supplanted anyway, but I figured we at least knew many places to

avoid and some of the lines, so I found myself returning to the Cheoah for a do over.

This time all six of us drove up Friday so we could get an early start. John had some friends camping near the take-out who were not paddling, so we did our own shuttle. This first section has few rapids, so we entered the river at Joann's Store about a mile or so down from the official put-in.

Of course, this gave little warm up, and we immediately entered some of the most technical white water in the most narrow part of the river. Fortunately, TAPOCO Power got the water release close to the amount promised at about 1150 cfs. This gave us very technical class IV/IV+, which we all agreed was not as pushy and intense as the higher volumes. But we soon found out the river became less forgiving of mistakes, as more rocks were exposed.

Within the first mile, Doug broached on a rock amidst some bush. When he pulled into an eddy with me, his hand was bleeding freely from an open flap on his knuckle. He wisely decided to take off and said he would take my camcorder to video us at Bear Creek Falls, AKA The Big Gun.

The first big drop is a river wide ledge which is best (actually safest) to run far right over a five or six foot drop through a big hole. Each boater ahead of me disappeared off the ledge. I held my breath until I saw a paddle held upright to signal all clear for next.

The next serious section was called Take-out Rapid, where Bryant's canoe fell into the hole sideways and he had to swim out. We herded his boat into calm water on the right side. Bryant stood under his canoe, lifted it out of the water to drain and tossed it upright.

We pulled out on river right above the class IV approach to Bear Creek Falls. I wanted to scout at this level before deciding whether to run. At this water level,



Doug Pratt in deep concentration on the Cheoah.



Doug negotiating one of MANY holes on the Cheoah.

the far left ledge was dry but the vertical drop looked more like twelve feet. Several kayaks still ran the single drop on center left, but water seemed very shallow at the bottom. The most popular route was the far right chute which had two holes, one midway and other at bottom. Several boats were flipped in one or both and it looked like a lot of bodies were bouncing off rocks.

Doug said he was inspired and wanted to run the Big Gun. I had just about convinced myself to try it when I noticed a blonde lady waving to the ranger from her car across the street. I swore I saw a mummy sitting in the passenger seat, so I followed the ranger for a better look. The mummy turned out to be a shirtless guy with almost his entire head wrapped in gauze. The left side of his face was completely soaked with blood, which was dripping off his chin onto his chest and lap. It seems he had flipped at the Big Gun, smashed his head on a rock and swam. They wanted the ranger to radio downstream to see if anyone had retrieved his kayak.

I walked back to Doug and told him I would portage this rapid.

Bryant's open boat got swamped in the entrance rapid. He missed the right side chute and was swept between two guard rocks over the double drop. The run out current flipped his canoe but he rolled and paddled behind a rock to bail. The bank vultures clapped and roared in approval. Ricky came through with a clear line and John ran the double drop on purpose, looking good. I set up the video to take Peter and Doug, and waited and waited.

A few empty kayaks washed over the falls but I didn't see any swimmers. A paddler came running down the road yelling for a rope, so I ran upstream to help. I saw Peter standing in waist deep water behind a rock about ten yards offshore. The current was too swift for him to get to shore. Doug was sitting in his kayak below, helpless and blowing

his whistle in frustration.

At that moment, Nolan Whitesell and Sudi Lenhart were driving up from the take-out and stopped to ask me how my day was going. I yelled for them to pull over and get a rope. When Peter finally staggered up the bank, he looked pretty beat up, with bloodshot eyes and head bruises.

Doug signaled he still wanted to run the falls. Peter went looking for his boat, while I videoed Doug make a clean redeeming route off the right side. He immediately took out to help Peter find his boat and said they would meet us at the take-out. I wanted to continue, but didn't see any of our group and knew I couldn't paddle alone. Then Robby Hansen and some other hot paddlers pulled up and said I could hook up with them.

We started down the far left channel to avoid a river wide hole, but had to cut back right to avoid a roadblock of rocks. A half mile down, I ferried behind some brush and was delighted to see the rest of my group. They were chasing Peter's kayak, when Bryant's canoe was pinned at the rock jumble.

My Okefenokee Swamp Adventure

by Howard Hall

As has become my tradition for my October 10th birthday, I went on a short vacation trip. This time I fulfilled my dream of paddling the kayak on the Okefenokee Swamp NWR out of the Suwanee Canal Recreation Area. It was just a day trip, but one with a life experience I'll never forget. Here's a hint of what happened.


After returning home I had my oil & filter changed; and while waiting I picked up a July 2004 issue of Esquire magazine and read an article titled "The Five-minute Guide to Surviving Everything." Obviously a guys' article. It covered 25 different situations, like Frostbite, Being in a Sinking Car, Being Lost in the Wilderness, Quicksand, etc.

But the one that popped out and surprised me, surprised that I would ever see it at all, that it — in 25 words — answered my questions about what had happened to me on the Cutoff segment of Orange Canoe Trail on the Suwanee Canal in the Okefenokee Swamp that Sunday morning. [How to survive] An Alligator Attack. I'm not joking. I was attacked and pursued by an estimated 6- to 8-foot alligator. Here's what happened.

I had already done my intended day paddle into the swamp's Cheshire and Grand Prairies and had returned to the Suwanee Canal, the main drag back to the put-in site. The day trip was about 3-4 hours of paddling. Not being too

When Ricky saw Bryant swimming and the nose of his canoe sticking straight up between some rocks, he didn't know what to do. They eventually got Bryant reunited with his boat, put Peter's kayak on the bank, and then hung out until I came. What great friends to wait almost thirty minutes for me.

The last two rapids were the most technical, but we followed Brandon and Mike and all did well. We stopped below to watch a kayak pin on the rocks we had just missed. The boat flipped as it washed off. We saw several roll attempts, then the head of a swimmer. She swam to the bank and climbed out while her group chased her boat.

At the take-out, many groups arrived either towing empty boats or carrying lost paddles. We all agreed that while the water level was less intense than before, the river was more punishing of mistakes this time. More rocks to hit and pin on. A lower water release would probably be too bony and dangerous. I liked 1000 cfs and did well. But truth be told, I'd probably like to try it again at the pushy 1500 cfs level, now that I know the lines. Of course, I'll deny I ever said that. 

terribly tired I decided to explore a short and narrow section of the swamp canal called the Cutoff. It forms one side of a small island-like area. Because it's so narrow, it feels intimate as you pass by all the swamp flora and openings in the brush that provide a sneak peak at the prairie on the other side.

As I paddled it's length, I was briefly startled by a flurry of activity in the water immediately to my left, a splash and a loud whack on the underside of the front of the kayak. An alligator had slapped the bottom of my 12-foot Pungo and "escaped" as it appeared to be startled by my passing by. I never saw it really. The swamp water is coffee or dark tea colored with visibility of about a foot, and 'gators are black mostly. . . a perfect camouflage.

Gators are stealthy creatures anyway. I thought to myself, I scared that one away. I should have no problems with the American alligator, they're easier to deal with than I had concerned myself. So I thought.

The end of the Cutoff came and I'd have to return home via the wide canal. But I liked the "personality" of the stretch I had just taken and decide to return the same way. Apparently that was a mistake.

Paddling along I was again startled by a flurry of energy in the water to the immediate right of the kayak's front end. Then I saw the thing. It appeared almost like a black ghost rising from the coffee water. It was facing the same direction I was traveling. I was about to run into an 8-foot alligator that had just floated up to make a full-length, full-body presentation on the surface. [After some

time to think about it since that day, I surmise that by the size of its head, it may have been a 9-12-foot specimen.]

I "hit the brakes" and the 'gator thrashed itself around toward me and showed its profile at the bow. Its head out of the water and eyeing me. I could have reached out and touched it with the 203 centimeter paddle. This is not good, I thought. I had read that you can intimidate them, make them go away by slapping your paddle on the water or splashing them. I tried it. I got it good with a paddle full of water, so much so that it had to shut its eyes.

Then it reared its head and tail right out of the water, opened its jaw wide, thrashed violently and snapped in my direction, at the kayak's bow. Remember, this 'gator was within paddle reach and it just got closer. It started to swim at the right-side, center of the boat — me.

Got to change the way this is going, I thought. If I move away a bit it may leave me alone and swim away. Maybe it feels cornered between the boat and the bog shore, as was part of this situation. I back paddled a tiny bit.

It swam aggressively at me. Then I knew, this is NOT good. If this thing grabs me I am a goner, even if I tear my arm away. If this modern-day dinosaur jumps in the kayak, it'll go over and I'm a goner. I'd be in it's domain of black water.

I paddled backwards furiously, all in all probably 100 to 200 yards backwards with the 'gator in hot pursuit. The faster I went the faster it went. For about the first 25 yards it was dead on the boat about a yard away, and closing. It wasn't even making a ripple in the water as it glided faster and faster. Nose and eyes coldly fixed on me, its quarry.

I was frantic about not seeing where I was going — I was staring at that beast staring at me as it's dinner, or whatever. I paddled as hard and fast as I could backward. I was immensely concerned about backing into a branch sticking out, getting hung up, and then eaten.

The frantic back paddling was also causing me to rock and yaw the boat unpredictably. I could capsize, and then be eaten. This was not looking good. Somehow I managed to gain control and paddle effectively faster. In retrospect, I didn't know I could do it so fast and with so much control.

None the less that alligator was gaining on me. In fact, at my fastest pace, probably after about 50-75 yards or so, that 'gator kicked it in high gear. You could see the extra energy being exerted. It was putting off a turbulent wake from its nose. It's head seemed to wiggle a tiny bit back and forth.

It always kept about 5 to 10 feet away. I was so glad I'd been cycling all summer plus kayaking, so my endurance was great. Finally I started to open the distance, even with the alligator kicking up a nose wake. It never

stopped, but did slow down as I got further away.

When about 25-50 yards was between us I executed a quick turn, hoping not to get caught in the brush along the narrow canal. I didn't look back and paddled like I was racing until I reached the bigger canal, rounded the corner onto it and was clearly out of that 'gator's territory. I don't think I took my eyes off that 6- to 8-foot monster while back paddling. And I guarantee it never once took its cold gaze off me.

It was just being a 'gator, one of God's creatures doing what 'gators do. This is apparently the season in which the baby alligators hatch in the Okefenokee Swamp. Possibly the one I ran in to (almost) was likely protecting her young. Another possible scenario might be that it had a kill and did not want me to get to it.

Who knows.

And I was just being a human doing what we do. But I am certain between the alligator and me, only one of us felt anything. It was me. I'll leave it to your imagination as to what that was, but I thank God I never lost my presence of mind. At the beginning of my swamp paddle I had asked Him to protect me and keep me safe on the swamp that day.

I guess when life showed its dangerous teeth and when possible harm came my way, He stepped in and gave me the power to evade and succeed. It might have been Him that kept me paddling so effectively backwards. I don't know if I ever truly know God's will or way for my life, but I do know I am glad He is with me. Thank God, again!

The Esquire article, by James Kendall and Anya Strzemien mentioned above, had this to say [with my inserted remarks] about surviving an alligator attack:

"If a big alligator wants you, it probably won't let you go. Hit it in the eyes and nose [after you've splashed it's eyes and nose]. When it starts rolling and shaking [thrashing], that's when you're in big trouble. If the thing isn't too big (under six feet), you stand a chance, but you're not going to pry its mouth open, so don't even try.

"Get on top of it and keep it from moving too much [Yeah, right, what if it has you by the head?]. Stay there until it lets go [Like what else can you do? Fake unconsciousness?]. If the alligator is more than twelve feet, be grateful there are good prosthetics out there [after you claw or cut your way out of its stomach]."

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The following two articles depict a recent Tallulah release from two different perspectives — volunteer and paddler.

Tallulah Falls Dam Release

November 5, 2005

by Shari Heinz

They stood there at the end of their journey, helmets on, 205 skirted men and 19 women, paddle held at their sides, a fraternity of boaters, members of a clan, those that have taken a challenge that many of us are not willing to or able to do. The first thought that came to my mind was that they looked like modern age Vikings: A proud band of boaters.

They came from Texas and Maryland. From Georgia, Tennessee and the Carolina's, and other states near and far. The youngest was 14. All with boats, loaded on the vehicles that brought them to this place, some stacked high, trucks filled with gear for camping and boating.

Some boaters were migrating from one release or new run to another for several months and this was the last stop before returning home for winter. Dressed in shorts, some colored in bright oranges covered in blue and white flowers and even striped leggings, they prepared their gear and checked their vessels before starting out.

It had taken years to get to this point, the work of dedicated people that wanted this section of the gorge to be open to boaters. We thank the volunteers and the staff and those organizations for helping this happen.

The first weekend's volunteers: Mark Singleton, Executive Director, American Whitewater; from GCA: Brian Belke, Steve Brock, Shari Heinz, Evelyn Hopkins, Dick Hurd, Joan Hutton, Susan Kyle, Todd McGinnis, Roger and Beth Nott, Emmy Parker, Marilyn Ridings, Don Robertson, John Watson.

The alarms sounded at 8 AM signaling the start of the



Warming up at the put-in.

release of 500 cfs. The water travels some 3 miles to the power house and needs to be at a stable level before anyone is allowed in the water. This took over 1 hour. At 9:10 approximately, the power house called to state the water has stabilized, the first three kayakers reached the swing bridge above the last set of stairs into the gorge at 9:35. The run had begun.

The morning sun was filtering through the leaves colored crimson and orange. Conifers, green against the deciduous in color, created a landscape of beauty. The maples mustard trimmed with red.

The fragrance of the hemlocks and pines was soon replaced with the smell of the water, sweet algae. The roar of the waters as they run over the rocks and into the pool above the put-in could be heard as you approached the South Rim Trail.

Rainbows formed in the spray from Hurricane Falls, mists filled the air and traveled up on the currents that carried it up the gorge walls. A breeze was created, moving the flora and fauna that makes its home along the banks in the gorge around the swing bridge.

For a few minutes I was the only person there, no park visitors, no boaters had yet to complete the top part of the stairs. It was quiet, yet filled with sounds. This was truly worth what I gave to be here. I have no words that can explain how that felt.

In order to run the release, you must first pay your dues. Along with the boat carry to the top of the south rim stairs, there is the decent into the gorge. As I walked the trail, as a volunteer, and took the first steps down to the swing bridge, I realized that the boats had to be dragged, carried or slid along the hand rails down some 650 plus stairs.

Some boats weighed at the least 40 and up to 70 + pounds, plus safety gear (consisting of a pfd, helmet, throw



After the carry down, surveying the put-in.

lines), snacks, some with cameras and cell phones. The hand rails were great for sliding the boats along with the need to dodge only a few trees along the way. As you descended, your knees would start to shake and your body heat up.

At the platform one could see paddlers stripping off splash and dry shirts so they were not all sweating by the time they arrived at the put-in. At the platform just above the put-in the boaters stacked their boats, waited for their bodies to recuperate from the journey to the bottom.

There were kayaks of many types, a few inflatables and several open boats. I watched as they hauled all this to the base of the gorge just below the unrunnable Hurricane Falls. Once there, they waited their turn to launch off the lower platform, taking great care not to infringe on the endangered plant — persistent trillium.

The pool at the put-in allowed the voyagers time to warm up their muscles before attacking the first class 4 rapid that they will face for the day. I stood there for



Looking downstream at the first rapid.



Into the water one by one.

several minutes watching them play in the area just below Hurricane Falls, surfing right below the out look platform, then one by one they started down the gorge.

From here I can not tell you what happened, as I stayed on the shore. They bobbed along the water and out of site.

At the end of their trips at the parking lot, when the shuttle returned them back to the real world, if you listened you could hear about the adventures. Of how when bracing for a plunge into a hole the force of the water snapped a few \$100 plus paddles, and the long tiring flat water trek after the run across the lake to the take-out and shuttle.

I watched as the wet and weary Vikings stood there, paddles held high. Proud of themselves for what they had done. For each, they were here for a different reason. For me, it was to see something that can only be witnessed if you volunteer. I know that my small donation of time helped make their experience happen. ✂

Tallulah First Timer's Trip Report

by Jay Manalo

"Whose little bathtub is that?" another boater asked me, noting my 6.2 foot long Dagger G-Ride as he walked by with a much longer river runner.

"Uh, it's mine," I replied.

There I was, halfway down the 600 plus steps leading to the bottom of the Tallulah Gorge. I had walked down to the water several times before as a volunteer for the releases, but I had never imagined that I would be running the river myself, let alone in a play boat. I had awakened early that morning, even before my alarm clock went off. I was nervous and just wanted to get it over with.

As I reached the bottom of the steps and put my boat down at the platform, it laid side by side with a multicolored selection of creek boats. Big creek boats. Mine was a dwarf in comparison. I wasn't sure if this was still a good idea. But I had made the decision to run this river for my first time. It was something I had decided that I did want to do after all, and the conditions were right — good weather, a Saturday (i.e., lower CFS) release, and (I was hoping) the right mindset.

As I walked down to the water, I looked at the entrance rapid. When I sat down in my boat, I took another look at it. I had seen it before when volunteering at the platform, but it sure looked a lot different from a boater's perspective. A lot steeper. Scarier. I watched other boaters much better than myself and in a lot bigger boats

throwing braces as they ran the rapid. "Here we go," I thought. "No turning back now."

Fortunately, Sam Wilburn led me down a sneak to the left of the main drop; it was a little rocky, but I liked the fact that it avoided some of the gnarliness. As I reached the bottom of the eddy and looked back up at the rapid, I realized that there was definitely no turning back now. I watched other boaters surf in a small hole below the entrance rapid, but not wanting to press my luck too much, I decided to shy away from playing that day.

Next up was Tanner's Boof, which I found to be like a bigger version of the single drop at Bull Sluice. Pretty fun. I regained my composure long enough to talk to the photographer sitting on top of a nearby rock and gaze at the sheer vertical rock walls that rose above me. Just around the corner was a huge horizon line.

Oceana. To put it simply, I had absolutely NO intention of running that rapid whatsoever. I recalled my impressions of seeing it from the observation platform several hundred feet above the rapid, and even from that high up it had looked intimidating.

As I portaged the rapid on river right, I cheered on several boaters as they screamed down the left and center-to-left lines. It seemed unreal to see a slide that big and that fast, not to mention seeing boaters disappear into The Thing in person. Absolutely incredible, but not for me....

Gauntlet I don't remember that well except for catching an eddy on river right and then ferrying over to river left to set up for Bridal Veil. As I sat at the top, unable to see past the horizon line, I knew that this was another one of the "big ones" on the river. I thought about getting out of my boat to scout, but I decided not to. Watching another boater get surfed in the small top hole made me somewhat concerned, so I knew I had to stay left and out of the way of the hole as much as possible.



Autumn colors at Tallulah Gorge. - Photos by Shari Heinz.

I told Chuck that I was going. I paddled down, sneaking past the top hole, and committed to the slide. It was a fast, scrapey ride down a long shallow slide to the bottom, and boy was I glad to have made it.

As I sat in the pool at the bottom, rejoicing after running Bridal Veil, I decided to play tourist and take some pictures. "I've got to take lots of pictures of my first run down this river!" I thought. I popped off my spray skirt, pulled out my camera and started taking pictures.

I then handed my camera to Chuck to take my picture as well. But the river has a funny way of rewarding tourists. I was sitting right on an eddy line with my spray skirt off when my boat caught an edge and the cockpit started to fill with water and sink. I didn't even try to roll; I just bailed out of my boat.

As I swam to shore, my boat floated downstream without me. Fortunately, some other boaters were able to chase it downstream as I scrambled over the rocks on the bank to try to catch up with it. Finally, they caught up with it at the top of the Zoom Flume and were able to help reunite me with my boat.

Embarrassing, indeed, but I realized that there could have been much worse places to swim other than swimming in an eddy. Lesson learned: when taking pictures or playing tourist, leave the spray skirt on!

Zoom Flume was probably my favorite rapid on the river. Not intimidating at all, very straightforward, and just a fun "kiddie slide" down the river.

To be honest, much of the rest of the river was a blur. Some of it was probably due to adrenalin, and some of it was probably due to the sweep crew catching up with us and making sure that we stayed ahead of the water before it was shut off.

After Lynch's Wrench, I ended up running the rest of the rapids by boat scouting, reading and running, and asking the other boaters around me constantly, "What's the line?" I think that in many ways not land scouting every rapid actually helped to lessen my anxiety. I just had to commit to running the lines, reading the current, and maintaining my boat control as much as possible.

Tom's Brain Buster, however, stands out from the rest of the blur. As one of the sweep boaters described it to me, it was "chunky." "It'll bounce you left and right," he said, "and then you'll want to work your way around the right of that rock at the bottom."

Well, bounce me left and right it did. Unfortunately, I did not get far enough around the right of the aforementioned rock, and consequently I got pushed up onto my edge and subsequently flipped. As I was upside down, I soon discovered why the rapid was so aptly named "Tom's Brain Buster." After taking several shots to the helmet, I

felt the current mysteriously set me back upright all on its own. Didn't even have to roll. Well, maybe my head bouncing off rocks helped.


After running a few more rapids (again, it really was a blur), I finally spied a large brick building on river right. I then whispered a single word out loud.

"Powerhouse."

I knew we had to be close to the end of the river. As we ran the last rapid, I turned to Chuck and demanded, "Is that it? Is it over?"

After confirming that we were now at the lake, I let

out a rebel yell of relief. The Tallulah was over. I looked back at the powerhouse, the last rapid, and the cliffs covered with the reds and oranges of autumn. After a mile of intense white water, the most intense I had ever paddled, it was a peaceful sight.

After paddling across the lake to the take-out, I was never more happy to cram myself into a van full of wet boaters, driven by none less than Wayne Dickert of NOC. And my little bathtub, the Dagger G-Ride? It was nestled against all of those big creek boats in the back of the trailer, similarly crammed, yet quiet as well. 

Paddle Georgia — Paddling Week on the Chattahoochee

June 24-July 1, 2005

by Jamie Higgins

Part 3 of 3, continued from the November *Eddy Line*

Day Four: Peachtree Creek to Metro Park

The next morning I told Joe flat out that if the Wave was as big as it was yesterday or bigger that Kelly and I weren't going to run safety, that we didn't want to be held responsible, furthermore, we didn't want to spend the entire day chasing boats and people down. Joe made the announcement at breakfast.

If the previous days warning didn't get people's attention, then this latest announcement did. Despite the latest warning, people were still asking me if I thought they could do it. I finally started telling people. "Listen, this rapid made me pause and think a moment. I would run it, but I have a white water boat, 5 years of white water experience, and a half way decent roll. Plus, who wants to swim in that polluted water?"

The day before Kelly and I mistakenly took the downstream waste water discharge for a rapid because it was being discharged at such a high rate that it was white and frothy like a rapid. When Joe told us that it wasn't a rapid, but the discharge point all I could say was YUCK!!! It was way gross!

We got off the shuttle to the Atlanta Water Works. I climbed straight up the structure and anxiously peered down toward the Wave. To my amazement, it was gone. The mighty wave was reduced to a flat riffle that was more like a class I. I did a dance and "Yeah, thank you river gods and goddesses." Joe anxiously looked over and said, "The river gods are with us today." I agreed and went about setting up safety.

Kelly and I hung out at what was left of the Wave and played around. The biggest danger to paddlers were the slalom gates that were dangling down ready to bang folks in the head. Kelly and I sat there and watched the water

rise. It was an incredible amount of flow going through the river. We stayed a couple of hours and then headed on down the river.

The river was moving incredibly fast. By far, this was the dirtiest, ugliest part of the river. It was sad. We saw dredging devices that dredged the river for sand. We passed several wastewater treatment discharges. We passed Six Flags. We passed tons and tons of trash and debris.

Sue didn't have to do sweep this day. Someone else volunteered to do sweep. Sue found an inner tube with a cooler (complete with a 12 pack of beer) in it and decided to keep it. She spent most of the day dragging the inner tube behind her boat.

As we floated on down, I wondered what this section of the Chattahoochee use to look like before we 8 million plus Atlantans infested the banks of the river. The dreary overcast day only made the polluted river seem even more depressing.

The current was fast, so we were at the take-out in no time. I was relieved the Wave was behind us and I was looking forward to a day that Kelly and I didn't have to run



A refreshing swim at a waterfall on the last day.

- Photo courtesy of Paddle GA.



Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper Executive Director and fellow paddler Sally Bethea takes out on the final day.

- Photo courtesy of Paddle GA.

safety. I was also hoping that the river would be less dreary the following day.

At the take-out, Lamar Phillips, another GCA member, helped us pull out our boats. He'd volunteered a couple of days to help out. We greatly appreciated his helping hand, especially after paddling all day.

That evening we listened to Sally Bethea, Executive Director of the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, as she talked about how this section the Chattahoochee was the forgotten section of the river. She said much of state and local governments have written off the lower section of the Chattahoochee, but that in fact it was still a beautiful resource for the citizens of Georgia. She talked about how the Chattahoochee was in the center of the water wars and how valuable the Chattahoochee is to the economic growth of metro Atlanta.

The Chattahoochee provides 70% of metro Atlanta's drinking water. Her organization's mission is to ensure that the Upper Chattahoochee is protected not only for clean drinking water, but for recreational uses as well. She thanked us for participating in Paddle Georgia and explained that this was the only such event in the Southeast and even the nation.

Day Four: Metro Park to Capps Ferry Bridge

The next morning I awoke to a rash on my arms and legs. After much advice from my fellow paddlers, everyone diagnosed me with poison ivy!! I braced myself for the next few days of paddling and itching!!

Kelly and I traded our white water boats for our rec kayaks. It felt nice to just get in my boat and not worry about anyone or anything! Kelly and I just paddled lazily

down the river.

The river wasn't as fast moving as the day before, but it was much more scenic. The water was muddy, but there wasn't trash and debris floating everywhere. I was relieved that the river seemed to be much cleaner.

Just before we took out, we went upstream on Dog River to the base of Dog Reservoir. As we meandered upstream, we could hear yells and laughter as folks were reverting back to children enjoying a hot summer day swim.

Dog Reservoir was a fairly new lake created for water supply. It served as a really nice swimming hole. The dam's spillway was very safe and the water was deep in spots. Everyone yelled at me to take a swim, but I was stubborn for awhile. It was the first day in four days that my butt was literally dry. Sitting in that white water boat, day after day, made for a soggy existence.

Finally, the hot day won out and I jumped in. It was very cool and refreshing. It's funny how a dip in the cool, crisp water just seemed to make everyone happy.

Kelly and I got off the river at a reasonable time. We were enjoying our day off! We were both excited because Paddle Georgia was setting up camp at Bannister Mill Historic park, and we were given an option to get a room there. Fortunately for us (especially me and my poison ivy), we decided to get a room. Bannister Mills was a very nice and a picturesque place. It was site one of the oldest mills in the state of Georgia, and they claim that they were the first in the state to produce electricity.

Air conditioning and a nice, soft bed never felt so good! Like every night of Paddle Georgia, I fell asleep from



Sue Hoagland, sweep, and Peter bring up the rear at the end of the 110 mile trip.

- Photo courtesy of Paddle GA.

exhaustion.

Day Five: Capps Ferry Bridge to McIntosh Reserve

We woke to a scrumptious meal cooked by the folks of Bannister Mills. It was a really tasty spread of eggs, bacon, and pastries. Kelly and I were looking forward to another off day and paddling in our big, roomy rec boats.

Kelly and I paddled at a comfortable pace. The river was again spectacular and we paddled through mainly green farm land. Occasionally, we'd come upon a little rapid. We were sort of silly trying to maneuver our big rec boats in position to surf waves.

I got a great picture of Kelly in her big ol' boat surfing a little wave. It was great fun. I was impressed how well my rec boat responded to the little class I rapids. It actually maneuvered fairly well. I couldn't catch eddies well, but it got me through the rapid with ease.

The entire day we thought we were going really slow, until we realized we'd paddled 11 miles in about 2 hours. At mile 11, some of the Paddle Georgia folks got off the river and took a tour of Georgia Power's Yates coal fired plant. Apparently, the Georgia Power folks were extremely cordial and treated them to cold sodas and water and sandwiches. Everyone was impressed with the plant, but having not taken the tour, I couldn't comment on it.

It was remarkable how the Chattahoochee recovered from the harsh pollution of Atlanta. The river took on the appearance of a placid, farm river with an occasional gentle rapid intermingled to liven it up a bit. It wasn't quite as hot as the day before, but we got off the river around 1:30 pm at McIntosh Reserve. Again, we were enjoying our day off.

McIntosh Reserve is a state park that hasn't opened yet. It was really beautiful and this was my favorite place that we camped. My poison ivy was now really starting to bug me. Everyone was very kind and was offering me their various creams, salves and soaps to help ease my pain. I heard every known remedy for poison ivy, and I was very appreciative of everyone's concern and hospitality.

Of course, this was a hallmark of Paddle Georgia. Our campsite was nestled right on the river and we went to sleep to a white water paddler's serenade of the sounds of rapids.

Day Six: McIntosh Reserve to Franklin (THE FINAL PUSH)

I knew that the last day would be the toughest. I knew paddling 20 miles in a white water boat on mostly flat water would be hard and painful, but actually doing it is another thing! Kelly and I begrudgingly said farewell to our roomy, comfy rec boats, and made our way down to the river in our white water boats.

I was feeling really tired and groggy because I'd taken

two Benedryl the night before for my poison ivy. I had a very restless night between the heat and the poison ivy. The Benedryl only made me anxious and sleep did not come quickly as usual. There were a few rapids at the put-in and Kelly and I played a little bit in them.

We were to set up safety at Daniels Shoal at mile 18. Daniels Shoal was the largest natural rapid on the entire 110 miles of the Paddle Georgia route. Kelly and I had a long paddle before we would even get there.

The paddle was very slow going. The current wasn't as fast as previous days and the sun was now beating down on us horribly. I began to get disheartened while we were paddling along with Sally Bethea. She had the same boat as my rec boat, which is a Dagger Bayou. It was beautiful blue and white, and I suddenly became envious of her as she effortlessly paddled past us.

We stopped at an awesome waterfall to cool off and eat lunch. As with the previous day, the water fall served as a refreshing swimming hole. As we paddled and then walked up to the water fall, the happy laughter of children and adults alike harmonized with the rush of the water pouring down the fall.

People were standing on a ledge right under the waterfall and a couple of paddlers were helping people to the waterfall. Adults and children of all ages were splashing around joyfully in the pool below the falls. In fact, we all concluded that waterfall was a magical fountain of youth.

It seemed as though the river's waters had such a cleansing affect on all of us. Of course, we white water paddlers already know this... don't we? Why else do we use



Kelly Harbac and Jamie Higgins, safety boaters for Paddle Georgia.

- Photo courtesy of Paddle GA.

terms such as playing and play boating? Something about the water brings out the best of being a child again, and for those precious few moments, nothing else matters but yourself and the river.

This is the gift of the river, and the folks of Paddle Georgia were experiencing the splendor of the river in that moment at that waterfall. It is a memory that I shall always carry with me.

Kelly and I dragged ourselves away from paradise and got back on the main stem of the river. After what seemed an eternity of paddling in the infernal heat, I recognized the spot where we were to set up safety. We began to approach the class II rapid when Harlan in his motor boat came up to Kelly and told us to go to the right. Kelly and I put on our helmets and preceded to the left. We saw Sue sitting on top on a rock on river right. I recognized the class II drop was on river left, but I followed down the rapid and followed Sue's instructions. We totally avoided the class II drop.

I asked Sue why she was standing there and she said Harlan had directed her to take people down the river right side because folks were flipping on river left. Now we talked up this drop all week long and I knew folks might be disappointed, but I figured we'd listen to Harlan.

Sue, Kelly and I spent the next 2 hours directing people down the rapid. We had no flippers, but then again it wasn't much of a rapid. About 3 pm, a thunderstorm started to threaten and lightening could be heard popping downstream. Most folks had paddled on by, and I was ready to leave. My poison ivy and attitude was on a downward spiral. I asked Sue to come back with us, but she refused to leave her post.

I then realized that the water was dropping. Amazingly, Buford and Morgan Falls Dams affected the river levels all the way down to Franklin. I knew the last two miles would be even slower because of less current pushing us along.

Upon the realization that the water was dropping and that the last 2 miles would be even slower going because of it, I had a meltdown. I cursed flat water, the hot weather, the impending thunderstorm, poison ivy and my white water boat. I just plain cursed. I had an old fashion hissy fit, and with 108 miles under my boat with only 2 miles to go, I'd declared that I'd had it with paddling and I wanted to get of the blankity-blank river! Poor Sue and Kelly just looked at me like I was out of my mind, which at that moment I was.

After my meltdown, I decided the Benedryl and the heat were making me a little crazy and that I should just get off the river. Kelly and I paddled off and Sue waved us good-bye. I felt bad about leaving her there, but I just

couldn't handle another moment. After a week of sitting in eddies for hours at a time and chasing after boats, and yelling "PADDLE, PADDLE, PADDLE", and fretting over rapids and novice boaters, and hellishly hot days in a cramped white water boat, I'd reached my proverbial breaking point.

I stewed for the last 1-1/2 miles, thinking to myself that I'd never see the end of this day. Kelly and I caught up to a fellow and his daughter paddling in a canoe with a pirates flag sticking out of the stern. We chatted for a while and we could see the bridge at the take-out point was just about 1/2 mile in the distance.

About that time, the heavens opened up and a hard, hard rain came pouring down. I looked at the heavens and yelled, "Where were you hours ago when I was dying from the heat?" Kelly and I put on our helmets to keep our heads dry and buttoned up our spray skirts and paddled as fast as we could to the bridge.

Somewhere in that last 1/2 mile in the torrential downpour, I began to chuckle to myself about myself. How silly I was to curse the flat water! After all, the river is the river regardless of whether it is flat water or white water. I figured the river gods and goddesses were showing me their displeasure for my stupid outburst, and who was I to curse the river? I once again was humbled by the river and mother nature.

Kelly and I paused at the bridge as we looked at the take-out. Just as we were making our last strokes to end our 110 mile journey, the rain stopped. Our new found family of Paddle Georgia paddlers began to help us out of our boats and put up our gear.

Shortly after we got off the river, Sue and the last few paddlers of Paddle Georgia 2005 paddled up to the take-out. Paddle Georgia 2005 was over. A party was to follow, and everyone was saying their good-byes and exchanging email addresses and phone numbers. Stacy Shelton with the AJC was interviewing folks for her article. She wrote a very nice article about Paddle Georgia, which was in the AJC's Sunday edition that following weekend.

All I wanted to do was get home to my dogs and kitty, a hot shower, air conditioning and my own bed. The poison ivy was killing me. As I said my good-byes, Joe told me they had an award for me. I thanked him, but I told him I was miserably itchy and exhausted, and I just wanted to go home. I congratulated Joe and April Ingle, Executive Director, Georgia River Network for their hard work and their great success.

I began my journey home. It felt weird driving my SUV to my house. I was a little sad, but happy that it was over.

It took a while for the whole thing to sink in. Paddle

Georgia was quite an accomplishment, and I was very happy to participate and to do the safety boating. The river gods and goddesses got me and a couple hundred people through this journey safely. They were good to us that week.

Next year Joe plans to do Paddle Georgia 2006 on the Etowah river. I've volunteered to help again.

Paddle Georgia is an outstanding event, and I've recommended to Gina and GCA that we continue to support this very worthy paddling event. It brought hundreds of people to the river, and they got a chance to partake of the river's gifts. I believe the more people that experience the river and get back to our river heritage, the more likely people will be to work to save it.

I suspect most of the paddlers were positively changed. I know it made a positive influence on me. I've lived in Atlanta for 9 years, and as an environmental professional, I've followed the water wars and water planning along the Chattahoochee. Paddling the Chattahoochee put a different perspective on my ideas about the river.

Instead of a just a drinking water source or where our waste water is dumped, I now view the Chattahoochee as a living body that is unique and beautiful. Those of us who participated in Paddle Georgia 2005 will never look at the river in the same way. It is a spectacular river and it deserves our respect and protection.

Every time I cross over the Chattahoochee, at the I-285 bridge, I look downstream and think fondly about my week of Paddle Georgia. Plus, how many people do you know that have paddled 20 miles of flat water in a white water boat or would admit to it? I guess everyone's gotta have a claim to fame.

I'd like to thank Ed Schultz, Gina and Haynes Johnson for all their help in setting up safety, and to Lamar Phillips for volunteering as well. A very, special thanks to my friends Kelly Harbac and Sue Hoagland for volunteering to run safety and sweep for the entire week, and most of all for putting up with me!

Weather forecasts are horoscopes with numbers.

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 gacanoec@mindspring.com. PLEASE, NO PHONED-IN OR HAND-WRITTEN ADS. All ads will be run for two issues unless otherwise requested.

FOR SALE - Canoe, Wenonah Edge. A fiberglass recreational version of the Frankie Hubbard designed slalom boat. Turns on a dime, surfs very well. Excellent condition. Fully outfitted - full length foam saddle with foot pegs, knee pads, thigh straps, air bags. \$500 OBO. Allen 770.426.4318.

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water rivers, canoe camping and exercise. Excellent condition; always stored in garage. Pics available by email. \$450. Call Wayne Guerke evenings at 229.386.2104 (Tifton, GA); email gapaddler2@mchsi.com.

FOR SALE - Canoe, Swift Dumoine. 16' 6" Royalex boat good for river tripping/white water. Has front/rear air bags, Kevlar skid plates, 3 position seating - 2 contoured web seats and one kneeling thwart for solo paddling. It has knee pads throughout and a contoured yoke for easy portage. In good condition, \$800. Call Jason @ 404.372.7774 or Georgette @ 678.342.9389

FOR SALE - Kayak, Wave Sport Descente. Great condition, big creek boat, and good in big water like the Ocoee. Easy to roll. Call Jim Maier 770.218.7638. \$325.

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.

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