



Post Office Box 7023  
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# THE EDDY LINE

Volume 44, No. 4

770.421.9729

www.georgiacanoe.org

April 2009

## Volunteers Needed

### Tallulah Gorge Releases April 4-5 and 11-12

by Bob Focht, Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteers are needed for the Tallulah Falls dam releases and kayak runs, scheduled for the first two weekends in April (4-5 and 11-12).

Volunteers work a three hour shift, either 9 am-noon, or noon-3 pm. Besides seeing the beauty and grandeur of the falls, volunteers can visit the put-in and see the base of the falls. (Boaters and park personnel are the only others allowed to see this magnificent sight.)

For more information, contact Bob Focht at bobfocht@yahoo.com or call him at 404-323-8181.



## What's Inside...

## Paddle Georgia and Paddle Alabama Summer Multi-Day Paddles Scheduled for June

by Rick Bellows

Dates have been set for two major multi-day paddles this summer, both on the same river system. Paddle Georgia will be June 20 through 26, from Ellijay to Rome on the Coosawatte and Oostanaula Rivers. More details on Paddle Georgia are included in the article beginning on Page 4.

Paddle Alabama will be June 11 through 13 on the Coosa River, which is formed by the confluence of the Oostanaula and the Etowah in Rome. Paddle Alabama will take place on a portion of the Alabama Scenic River Trail. A "user's guide" article by Jim Felder, Executive Director of the Alabama Scenic River Trail, begins on Page 5.

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## Mile Markers on the Chattahoochee Work Party Scheduled for May 2

by Rick Bellows

According to a post by Brian Berg on the GCA groupmail, the National Park Service is planning to install mile markers on 45 miles of the Chattahoochee. The markers are intended to improve safety for boaters and anglers.

The Park Service is determining where the mile markers will be placed and will be seeking volunteers to place them on May 2. Some markers will be placed at locations accessible on foot, but others will require the carrying of the signs, a posthole digger and a small amount of cement down the river.

Three organizations have volunteered to help place the markers and the primary volunteer source as of now is Trout Unlimited. Perhaps this would be an opportunity for a group of GCA volunteers to show the Park Service our helpful side and for paddlers and anglers to work together.



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	David Martin (1998/9)	Brannen Proctor (2000/1)	Marvine Cole (2002/3)
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### OTHER IMPORTANT CONTACTS

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## Keeping In Touch

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

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

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

## All About *The Eddy Line*

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

**Submissions/Advertising:** All submissions and advertising should be sent to *The Eddy Line*, P.O. Box 441, Gainesville, GA, 30503-0441 or [the\\_eddyline@yahoo.com](mailto:the_eddyline@yahoo.com).

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

*The Eddy Line*, © 2009, is published monthly as the official newsletter of the Georgia Canoeing Association, Inc., publication address: 3060 Pharr Court North, #315, Atlanta, GA 30305. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Eddy Line*, c/o Georgia Canoeing Association, P.O.Box 7023, Atlanta, GA 30357.

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## UPCOMING GCA TRIPS

### April

4	Chestatee	Beginner	William Gatling	770.529.7103
5	Upper Amicalola	Trained Beginner	Edward Stockman	770.441.9767
11	South Sauty Creek	Advanced	Duncan Cottrell	404.289.6960
11	Toccoa	Trained Beginner	Jack Taylor	770.998.0350
11	Lake Lanier (Note 1)	Beginner	Bonny Putney	404.216.9351
18	Broad River	Trained Beginner	Conny Venuso	404.633.8038
22-24	Okefenokee (Note 2)	Beginner	Roger Nott	678.316.4933
25	Toccoa	Trained Beginner	Jack Taylor	770.998.0350
25	Spring Creek	Beginner	Roger Nott	678.316.4933

### May

2	Sweetwater Creek	Advanced	Duncan Cottrell	404.289.6960
3	Fightingtown Creek	Trained Beginner	Edward Stockman	770.441.9767
23	Chattooga - Section 3	Intermediate	Duncan Cottrell	404.289.6960

Note 1: Joint trip with Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper.

Note 2: Stephen Foster State Park to Floyd's Island to Canal Run to Stephen Foster.

### KEY TO GCA SKILL LEVELS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Check the calendar on the GCA website at [www.georgiacanoe.org](http://www.georgiacanoe.org) for trips, social events, safety classes, etc.

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

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

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

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

**To Volunteer To Lead Trips:** Call Cruisemaster William Gatling at 770.529.7103. As usual, we need trip coordinators for all types of trips, from flatwater to Class 5 whitewater. Our excellent trip schedule depends on the efforts of volunteers, so get involved and sign up to coordinate a trip on your favorite river today! The GCA needs YOU!

**Chattooga Trips** are limited to 12 boats on ANY section on ANY trip, club trip or private (USFS regulation). Boating is prohibited above the Highway 28 bridge. Your cooperation in protecting this National Wild and Scenic River is appreciated.

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

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## Announcements



### Monthly Meetings

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

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

### May 2-3, June 13-14 and August 15-16 GCA Training Weekends Planned

by Gina Johnson, GCA Training Chair

GCA will be hosting training weekends May 2-3, June 13-14 and August 15-16 for kayak and canoe instruction ranging from flat/moving water to Class 3 whitewater. We are planning on camping at Smoky Mountain Meadows and using Lake Fontana, the in-town section of the Tuckasegee, the gorge section of the Tuckasegee and the Nantahala.

Anyone is welcome to join us for the training weekends, including non-members of GCA. The cost will be \$65 per class for members and \$85 per class for non-members.

Advance registration will be necessary so we know who is coming and what skill levels we need to accommodate. If any of you have checked retail canoe/kayak training prices you will know what a great deal this is.

This is a great opportunity to work on your skills. Participants can start as beginners in May/June and upgrade to the next level of instruction for the August class!

Please let me know if you are interested in assisting with the instruction as well. You can email me at [gjohnson@naibg.com](mailto:gjohnson@naibg.com) or [haynesandgina@windstream.net](mailto:haynesandgina@windstream.net) or call me at 404.512.0832. ✂

### Support Our Advertisers

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

### Keep Your Email Address Current

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

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

Thank you. ✂

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### June 20-26, Ellijay to Rome 2009 Paddle Georgia Announced

by Rick Bellows

Details of the 2009 Paddle Georgia have been announced by the Georgia River Network. This year's 5th annual Paddle Georgia will be on 92 miles of the Coosawattee and Oostanaula Rivers and Carter's Lake, running from Ellijay to Rome. It will begin June 20 and end June 26.

This year's Paddle Georgia will be on what the Georgia River Network calls "North America's most biologically diverse river basin." That diversity includes rare mussels, fish and snails as well as unique limestone bluffs. The route will also include human artifacts like Native American fish weirs and century-old navigational weirs.

This year's event will include a Canoe-A-Thon. Participants will be asked to solicit donations on a per-mile basis and the proceeds will support Georgia River Network, the Coosawattee Watershed Alliance in Ellijay and the New Echota Rivers Alliance in Calhoun. Major prizes for the Canoe-A-Thon will be a canoe from Old Town, a recreational kayak from The Outside World and Patagonia clothing.

Day 1 (the "Ellijay Jig") will cover 13 miles of the upper Coosawattee from Ellijay to Carters Lake. Including Class 1-2 rapids, this will be the whitewater portion of the event.

Day 2 (the "Carters Lake Cakewalk") will be spent paddling the 6 miles of Carters Lake, the deepest reservoir east of the Mississippi. The lake, which has 62 miles of shoreline, was formed by damming the Coosawattee. The inundation of the rapids that now lie under Carters Lake inspired *Deliverance*, the James Dickey novel from which the iconic Burt Reynolds movie was later made.

Day 3 (the "Limestone Limbo") will take paddlers into Northwest Georgia's ridge and valley region. Limestone bluffs along the river afford beautiful views and rare plants on this 10-mile leg from the Carters Lake Dam to Audubon.

Day 4 (the "New Echota Trot") will be a day of paddling through history, including 100-year-old mill ruins and modern-day water intake structures. The 14-mile leg, from Audubon to Georgia Highway 225, culminates with optional tours of the

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## Upcoming Events of Interest

April 11 - 12 Mile River Canoe and Kayak Race, Clemson, SC - Jim Normandin, 864.836.7400 or paddler98@bellsouth.net

April 18 - Coosa River Basin Initiative Race and Canoe-A-Thon, Rome - Joe Cook, 706.232.2724 or www.coosa.org.

June 11-13 - Paddle Alabama, Alabama Scenic River Trail, Coosa to Weiss Lake - www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com.

April 24-25 - Paddling/Camping on the Upper Chattahoochee - Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper, www.chattahoochee.org

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

June 20-26 - Paddle Georgia, Coosawattee and Oostanaula Rivers, Elijay to Rome - www.garivers.org.

October 10 - Suwanee River Challenge and Marathon, White Springs, FL - Rod Price, 407.227.5606 or



rodbprice@hotmail.com.

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

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historic Cherokee Indian Capitol of New Echota.

Day 5 (the "Mussel Minuet") will begin with the merging of the Coosawattee and the Conasauga to form the Oostanaula not far downriver of the day's put-in. The 17-mile leg, from Highway 225 to Highway 156, will be through "a treasure trove of biodiversity," including at least 7 different species of freshwater mussels.

Day 6 (the "Armuchee Allemande") will cover the 17 miles from Highway 156 to Highway 140. "Long ridges tower above the river valley at the end of looping bends and long straight-aways" on this flatwater leg.

Day 7 (the "Three Rivers Rumba") will finish the paddle, covering the 15 miles to Rome. The day will end with the River's End Celebration.

In addition to the 92-mile, 7-day through paddle, participants can opt for "Paddle Georgia Lite," which will cover the

first two legs of Paddle Georgia. Space for "paddle Georgia Lite" participants is limited.

In addition to the trip itself, paddlers will receive a t-shirt, a boat decal, a pocket-size dry box from Georgia Power Company, a dry bag and map bag from Hennessy Land Rover and a year's membership in Georgia River Network. The package also includes camping facilities, shuttles between the campsites and the rivers, river descriptions, entertainment, activities, educational programs and "safety services" (which have in past years been provided by GCA).

In addition Georgia River Network, Paddle Georgia 2009 will be sponsored by GCA, Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, the Coosawattee Watershed Alliance, the New Echota Rivers Alliance, the Coosa River Basin Initiative and the Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce. More information and a registration form are available at [www.garivers.org](http://www.garivers.org).

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## Site of Paddle Alabama 2009

### The Alabama Scenic River Trail

by Jim Felder, Executive Director,  
Alabama Scenic River Trail

At 631 miles, the Alabama Scenic River Trail is the longest river trail in a single state. The Trail was designated as a National Recreation Trail about the time of its official opening in the summer of 2008. While the goal of an established campground every ten miles has yet to be achieved in all areas of the Trail, that hasn't kept paddlers from doing its entire length as a unit. Georgia kayakers Richard Grove and Ardie Olsen have both done the trail on contiguous days; Ardie's extraordinary speed earned him the thousand-dollar 631 prize in the fall of 2008.

But the Alabama Scenic River Trail isn't only about long-distance paddling. Day trips, historic destinations, semi-sup-

ported group paddles, overnight trips and extended paddling adventures are to be found along the Coosa and Alabama Rivers and through the Mobile-Tensaw Delta.

The trail begins on the Coosa River at the Georgia state line and winds its way across nine beautiful lakes, with scenery ranging from magnificent wildlife preserves and steep stone cliffs to the tranquil beauty of the secluded creeks of the Delta region-the second largest delta in the US. The Trail follows seven rivers and two creeks through a wide variety of types of paddling and scenery. After passing through the Delta, the route follows the eastern shore of Mobile Bay, ending at historic Ft. Morgan. From ridge-and-valley scenery in the uplands to the salt water of the delta, the Alabama Scenic River Trail is unsurpassed for variety. There is a great whitewater section in the six miles leading into the City of  
*continued on following page*



These members have recently joined GCA. New members are the life blood and future of the club — call one near you and arrange to paddle together.

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W: 404-272-1262  
Email: c\_walden1@yahoo.com  
Email: km\_walden@yahoo.com

Wetumpka, just above Montgomery. To aid you in the long portage of nearby Jordan Dam is our Member and Trail Angel Glenn Dean, gypsy5262@aol.com or call 334.201.1890.

Hopping down the lakes of the Coosa means hopping around the dams of the Alabama Power Company. All of these lakes, in order from the state line south — Weiss Lake, Neely Henry Lake, Logan Martin Lake, Lay Lake, Mitchell Lake and Jordan Lake — along with their respective dams, offer established and signed portages. Paddlers will find adequate portage at each dam with the exception of Mitchell Dam, whose topography is so steep that a portage would require superhuman strength, though it is done, most easily by groups.

Given that most of us paddling Alabama rivers are mere mortals, a shuttle has been arranged by the organizers of the Alabama Scenic River Trail. Paddlers in need of a shuttle around Mitchell Dam should contact G.R.A.C.E.'s Marina (punctuation shown is correct... the marina's name is a combination of the family's initials) at 205.280.4110. There will be a modest charge to cover mileage on this twelve mile

ride, and be sure to give 24 hours notice if possible.

### Montgomery

When approaching Montgomery from upstream the river undulates mostly north and south around two hairpin bends before the southerly three-mile straight stretch into the arms of the city. Just after the North Boulevard Bridge passes overhead, look left for the Montgomery City Marina. The marina's lofty restaurant decks assure a fine view of the river and its doings.

The Montgomery Marina and the Montgomery Riverwalk in sight of it provide various amenities to the traveler and access to the town, its culture and history.

Below Montgomery, paddlers can lock through the Robert F. Henry Dam and continue downriver. The locks generally operate from 6 a.m. until 2 p.m., and again at 6 p.m. until 2 a.m. the next morning. Call the lockmaster at 334.872.9525 for a current schedule or for directions to the paddleboat portage if you plan to arrive during non-operational times.

The banks are steep enough in this part of the river that lock operation and water level control by the dam do not




**JUNE 11-13**  
COOSA—WEISS LAKE

**Paddle Alabama.**  
The group experience

Join the Trail and get your trip and outfitting for FREE. Visit & sign up at [www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com](http://www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com)

This three-day trip will thread through towns and wilderness. Beginners will pair with experienced paddlers. A great time & place to learn to paddle!

appreciably change the width of the river.

### Selma

Below Durant's Bend are the unmistakable Cunningham Bluffs, and less than ten miles below them is the Highway 80 bridge, a signal that the city of Selma is not more than a mile or so further.

The Edmund Pettus Bridge, which comes into view next, was the scene of a bloody confrontation between civil rights demonstrators who had had enough of the old ways and the authorities that intended to force their obedience with violent means. The struggle and subsequent long march over the bridge and on to Montgomery is today a legend of American heroism that brings many visitors to Selma.

South of Selma, which has taken a meandering but primarily east-to-west course from Montgomery, the river takes a dive for Mobile. From Selma to its terminus at the birth of the Mobile River, the Alabama may wander through loops, bights and bends but never strays its aim far from its end 38 miles above the Gulf of Mexico.

### The Big Bends

In the near-figure-eight that is the combination of Canton Bend and Gees Bend, are several places to step out of the river and into civilization and vice-versa. Two of the best in the area-and maybe on the entire river-are Roland Cooper State Park and Miller's Ferry Campground, the latter operated by

the U.S. Army Corps of engineers. Only nine miles or so apart by land, they are about 20 river miles apart. Both are on the east bank of the river (Miller's Ferry Campground was formerly called and still appears on some maps as East Bank Campground) and both offer beautiful views of the sun dropping into the Alabama every fair evening.

Roland Cooper State Park features a small store; there are no provisions at Miller's Ferry Campground. The campground is adjacent to Millers Ferry Marina, which caters primarily to powercraft but whose operator will take care of all who come his way, however they arrive. Roland Cooper State Park offers river access by way of docks and an excellent ramp. Miller's Ferry Campground features both a ramp and several small docks for paddlecraft that step right into well-developed campsites.

### Claiborne

South of Claiborne, the river loops into the low lands of the Mobile-Tensaw River Delta, second only to Louisiana's Atchafalaya Delta in size. Here, the Alabama soon joins with the Tensaw and the Mobile River rises. Between these latter two giants, a jungle world of capillary creeks and streams work back and forth to host hundreds of miles of habitat rich in birds, fish, and mammals to which you are invited to include yourself in a number of ways.

*continued on following page*

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# ROCK/CREEK DOWN UNDER

## Spring is coming and so is the party!

The 2nd Bi-Annual Club Appreciation Night!

April 9th, 2009 at Down Under Boat Store

Get 20% off all paddling accessories

Up to 30% off select boats and paddles

with great discounts on names such as

Dagger, Werner, Wave Sport, Liquid Logic, and many more

Snacks and refreshments will be provided

Thursday April 9th, 2009 - starts at 6pm

[rockcreek.com/kayak](http://rockcreek.com/kayak)

ROCK / CREEK

ph. 888.707.6709

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The perfect place to explore this, the final stretch of the Alabama River before its realm broadens into the wide alligator jaws of Mobile Bay, is Isaac Creek Campground just north (in fact in sight of) the Claiborne Lock and Dam. Operated by the US Army Corps of Engineers, the campground offers full-service sites with concrete pads that can accommodate the biggest rigs with boats and toys in tow but are secluded and wooded enough to satisfy the primitive camper. Fishing must be good here if the number of boats are any indication.

Isaac Creek Campground is clean and well kept, but it's not exactly in the middle of civilization. Monroeville is the nearest town of any size. There is only one place to buy diesel fuel, and that is on the stretch of County Road 21 a few miles south of the road into the campground. Bring what you need except ice, which is available at the gatehouse. Directions vary depending on where you are arriving from. For information, call the gatehouse at 334.282.4254.

If you are traveling in this area, Alabama Scenic River Trail Vice President Linda Vice will be of service to Trail paddlers. She can be reached at 334.636.5505.

#### **The Tensaw-Mobile Delta**

Around a cat's cradle of waterways strung between the Mobile and Tensaw rivers in a ten-mile-wide swath lies 2,550,000 acres of the second-largest river delta in the nation

(only Louisiana's Atchafalaya is larger). It is the last refuge of the state's black bear population and home to endangered species including the Alabama redbellied turtle. If you eat seafood from the Alabama gulf coast, chances are that it was born here in the delta. Comprising only the 135th part of the state's total area, the delta shouldered half of the state's 20th century extinctions. What will the 21st century lose? Hopefully, for all our sakes, not the other half.

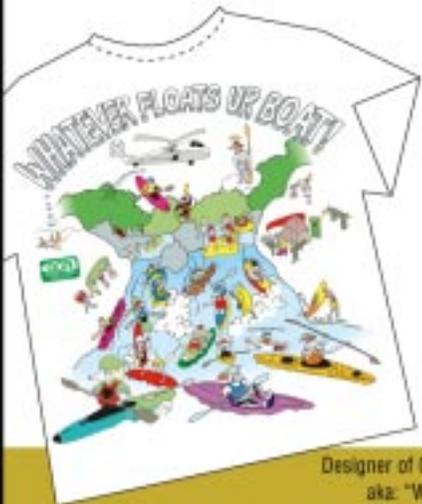
#### **The Bartram Canoe Trail**

Once you pass under the power lines at mile 7.5 you're in the realm of Alabama's Bartram Canoe Trail, a peaceful maze of Alabama jungle designed for the paddling naturalist and outdoor-seeker. Travelers on the Trail can go out for the day from a number of landing for one-day, two-day or longer trips. You may never get closer to wildlife than you can in the trail's intimate creeks and bayous.

Floating and land-based campsites and platforms have been established to provide canoe and kayak travelers with accommodations for eight or less, though at Dead Lake Island the platforms can accommodate larger groups. Reservations must be made online at [www.bartramcanoetrail.com](http://www.bartramcanoetrail.com).

Excellent maps with detailed preparation information are free by request by calling or writing Alabama's Delta Five Rivers Resource Center, 30945 Five Rivers Boulevard, Span-

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**Fort Morgan and the end of the trail**

If you're traveling on the Alabama Scenic River Trail, you're paddling the last miles of a trip that may have brought you from as far away as the Georgia state line some 600 miles away. To finish the trail at its terminus near Ft. Morgan on the tip of the Ft. Morgan peninsula, the paddler will need another night or two to sleep and rest before climbing out at the Ft. Morgan Public Landing near the ferry terminal.

Accommodations on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay are difficult to come by, but assistance can be had from the paddling community who can help you at [www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com](http://www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com). The association's guidebooks provide reasonably up-to-date information, but the web and the contact you will find there will have the up-to-the-minute last word on the subject.

The problem for the paddler is that the string of coastal towns south of Spanish Fort don't bother to provide adequate access for boaters not owning their own dock or having membership in a yacht club. Virtually no land suitable for put-ins or take-outs has escaped the intentions of coastal developers. That said, there are places to stop and even to stay. You just have to check in with [www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com](http://www.alabamascenicrivertrail.com) to discover them.

**Editorial**  
**"Just A Volunteer"**

by Rick Bellows, Editor



**EDITORIAL**

A few days ago, my son's traveling soccer team got their schedules for the spring season. In addition to being late, it was riddled with obvious errors. When I pointed this out, the response was that I shouldn't be upset because the scheduler "is just a volunteer."

I've received the same response when I've commented on the commitment—or lack of commitment—of some of the current GCA leadership. I'm routinely reminded our officers and other leaders are "just volunteers."

Which got me to wondering: when did being a volunteer become a justification for not doing what you volunteered to do? When a volunteer doesn't do the job, it either doesn't get done at all or it gets done by someone else, usually another volunteer who is also doing what he or she volunteered to do.

Volunteering, especially for a leadership position, should be a commitment, not a fling. Volunteers should follow through on what they volunteered to do, whatever that task may be. And volunteers, especially in leadership positions, should be held accountable by the rest of the leadership for their performance of what they volunteered to do.



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## President's Day Panhandle Paddle

by Lamar Phillips

Our President's Day trip had 44 folks sign up for the trip including several from the Apalachee Canoe and Kayak Club from the Tallahassee area. The weather report showed rain for the entire weekend but real paddlers don't believe negative weather reports.

Several of the paddlers arrived Thursday night or early Friday at Blackwater River State Park and Jim Nuetzel coordinated a trip down the Sweetwater & Big Juniper Creek. See Karen Saunders' trip report in another article.

Most of us arrived Friday afternoon and set up camp. Buddy, Jean, Chad and David decided to take what the thought would be a short trip on the Blackwater River before dinner. Unfortunately, the trip was longer than thought and it was almost dark before they got off the river, very tired paddlers.

Shortly after dusk it began a heavy rain that continued all night and into the morning Saturday. Our plans were to meet at the take out Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. and, since some of the folks were staying at another camp ground, Chad and I went to the take-out in case anyone showed up.

Betty and Will drove up about 10:15 and we decided to try to paddle. The roads in to the put-in were extremely muddy

and we had to stop and carry the boats the last couple hundred yards. By the time we set shuttle and got on the river it was about 12:00 and the rain had stopped.

We had a beautiful and uneventful paddle on Boiling Creek but shortly after we reached the Yellow River on the way to the take-out, a couple of deer frightened us by jumping into the river. A great paddle but it took Chad and me about an hour and several dollars at a wand car wash to clean the truck.

When we returned to camp, we learned that several of our "fair weather" paddlers had packed up and headed home. A number of the "serious" paddlers had taken an enjoyable trip down the Blackwater River after the rain stopped.

The weather cooperated Saturday night and Chef Buddy prepared a delicious low country boil that we all enjoyed around a large fire. Wanda Hurd, who had volunteered to make cookies for dessert but left them at home, furnished us "store bought" cookies for dessert.

As we were enjoying our cookies, Liz Carter shared some of her adventures that she experienced while mapping the North Florida Rivers and put-in and take-out directions for her first book. Liz did this in the 70's, before paddling became popular and there was basically no paddling information about the rivers. This information is still used in the latest Canoeing & Kayaking Florida guidebook. We all enjoyed the stories that she and husband Butch Horn shared with us.

While we were all around the fire, I discussed our scheduled paddle Sunday on Turkey Creek. Since this creek is always very tight and pushy with many stumps, logs, and deadfalls, I expected it to be very difficult due to all the rain we had and suggested that paddlers who were not experienced would be wise to paddle Blackwater rather than Turkey Creek. Walker Banning, one of our Florida paddlers, agreed to coordinate the trip on Blackwater. More on this "bad" advise later.

Thirteen paddlers showed up for the Turkey Creek paddle and, surprisingly, the water was at near normal level. Unfortunately one of our paddlers in a rec kayak could not handle the fast, pushy current and after a number of time-consuming rescues, we decided that we would not be able to get off the river by dark with this paddler in the kayak. Lee Tillman, who was in a tandem canoe with his father, Dickie, volunteered to exchange places with the kayaker. This solved our problem and we had a very enjoyable paddle to the take-out on the bay. Dickie and Lee saved the day and the kayaker is going to take rec lessons.

This situation reminds us once again that we must always be vigilant when on the river and that all paddlers must



### TRIP REPORTS

A vertical advertisement for "Paddle Better at NOC's Paddling School". The top section has a yellow background with the text "Paddle Better at NOC's Paddling School" in red and white. Below this is a photograph of a person in a kayak navigating white water rapids. At the bottom, there is a blue banner with the text "Weekend &amp; week-long courses open in April." in white, the NOC logo, and the website "noc.com" and phone number "866.999.7238" in white.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

Non-business ads are free to dues-paid GCA members. Business and non-member ads are \$5 for up to 50 words, \$10 for larger. **Ads must be received by the fifth of the month to be published in the following month's issue.** Mail ads to *The Eddy Line*, P.O. Box 441, Gainesville, GA 30503-0441 or email to [the\\_eddyline@yahoo.com](mailto:the_eddyline@yahoo.com). Please, no phone-in or hand-written ads. Ads run for two issues unless otherwise requested.

**For Sale:** WET SUIT: NRS Little John HydroSkin G2 Titanium plus NRS Neoprene Jacket, men's large, still fresh and like new, used 3x: Together \$140.

Howard Hall 678-376-7689, [hhall1950@bellsouth.net](mailto:hhall1950@bellsouth.net) (ask for photos).

7 (rec kayak), medium-duty, nylon, easy-to-find release strap. Used 3x, like new, \$45. Howard Hall 678-376-7689, [hhall1950@bellsouth.net](mailto:hhall1950@bellsouth.net) (ask for photos).

**For Sale:** SPRAY SKIRT: SEALS, size

be prepared for emergencies. These paddlers were very experienced canoeists who have been paddling white water for years. In this case, we did not have enough safety gear including throw ropes, dry clothes, etc. This was a "flat water" trip but the current was fast moving.

Upon our return to camp, we learned that the Blackwater group had a very serious spill. The rear paddler in a tandem canoe was knocked out of the canoe by a branch, causing the canoe to capsize. Both paddlers held on to the canoe but the water, being cold and swift, they pushed away from the boat and tried to swim to shore, only to end up against a deadfall.

All but three of the other paddlers were on the opposite side of the river, and they made a heroic effort, ultimately successful, to recover the canoe and get it to the other side. The water was apparently several feet above normal, and so very swift. The canoe remained afloat but full of water and pinned against the bank.

The paddlers were able to escape the deadfall and finally get onto the bank, wet and cold. Their dry clothes were in their dry bag with the canoe, along with a robust throw rope, but neither could be accessed by the rescue team. With the help of Walker Banning, Kathy Criscola, Cathy Bridge and Kelly Harbac, and 30 minutes of very hard work, they finally recovered the canoe and got it across the river to a submerged sand bar. The paddlers were finally able to get into warm, dry clothes, and a really scary situation was handled with a good outcome.

This situation reminds us once again that we must always be vigilant when on any river, that all paddlers must be

prepared for emergencies, and that flat water is not necessarily safer than whitewater, given the right, or in this case, the wrong conditions. These capsized paddlers are experienced canoeists who have been paddling whitewater for years, and were the most prepared in the group of 8 boats, i.e. dry bag with clothes and throw rope. In this case, we did not have enough safety gear, including throw ropes, dry clothes, or river rescue training. This was a "flat water" trip but the current was fast moving and the level above normal.

We had two very serious situations on two different rivers. The important thing is for us to learn from these experiences to ensure that we all have safe, fun trips in the future.

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