



The Alamo City Rivermen

Babbler

Issue MMCCXLVIII

November 2003

The monthly newsletter of the Alamo City Rivermen

Padding the fine line between geek and Bubba.

Next Meeting

November 12, 2003, Barbeque Station,
1612 N.E. Loop 410, near the
intersection with Harry Wurzbach. See
the [linked map](#). 6:30 to 8:30.

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Wedding Invitation

Chris Vogeler & Sherry Kline will be married on Saturday November 15, 2003 at 7:30 PM (show up about 6:45 or so if coming) at the Mansions at Canyon Springs in Stone Oak in the Community Center. All are welcome to share in the joy and in attendance. Gifts not necessary.

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Fiesta Earth Day Sprint Canoe Race - April 17, 2004

The Only Olympic Sprint Race in Texas with Lanes

The Alamo City Rivermen are please to announce the Fiesta Earth Day Sprint Canoe Race will be held on April 17, 2004 at Woodlawn Lake in San Antonio, Texas.

This race will be different from most canoe races done in Texas as we will hold the event on a 5 lane 250 meter sprint course. Each lane will be 22 feet wide and marked by a series of floats at 25 meter intervals for each lane.

What makes this event unique is we can create any number of divisions and classes for Junior canoeist and adults to enter combined with a series of heats and elimination heats finishing with a series a championship final for each class of division created.

Who's on Board

Girl Scouts of San Antonio(GSSA)

Will participate in the event with the goal of having several classes of races for the Girls Scouts. The long range goal will be that the Girl Scouts of San Antonio will become the caretakers of the Rowing & Sprint Course left over from the 1993 San Antonio Olympic Festival.

San Antonio River Authority

Will handle promotion and publicity, including flyers and 300 plus cool looking hats made up for the event.

(Continued on next page)

Warm Sprint Rehabilitation Hospital

Will help coordinate and manage a division for “people with disabilities”.

Oak Hills Lions Club of San Antonio

May provide volunteers to coordinate timing and running the event.

Help Needed

I am looking for organizations, publications, names, addresses, and phone numbers of groups that might be interested in participating so the San Antonio River Authority can provide information to them.

Volunteers locally to help out, particularly those individuals well versed in running elimination events such as track or field.

Volunteers (out of town) who would like to show up and help the day of the event.

Further details contact: Gib Hafernick, 210-492-7517 or Gibguy@Compuserve.com

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Upcoming Events

November 10, 2003	228 th Marine Corps Birthday ¹	editors get their perks
November 12, 2003	Monthly meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
November 15, 2003	San Antonio River at Goliad, day trip with overnight camping option	Randy Hohlaus, hohlaus@prodigy.net , 493-7058
November 15, 2003	Vogeler-Kline Wedding	Mansions at Canyon Springs
November 28-30, 2003	Turkey Trot, Colorado River, La Grange to Columbus	Randy Hohlaus, hohlaus@prodigy.net , 493-7058
December 2003	Christmas Party	
January 14, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
January 2004	Freeze Trip, Colorado River	GibGuy@compuserve.com , 822-8901
February 11, 2003	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
March 10, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
April 14, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.

¹On November 10, 1775 in Tuns Tavern in Philadelphia, what did the first Marine recruited say to the second? “Quit your belly aching. You should have seen the old corps.”

April 17, 2004	Fiesta Earth Day Sprint Canoe Race, Woodlawn Lake	GibGuy@compuserve.com , 822-8901
May 12, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
May 29-31, 2004	Labor Day Trip	???????
June 9, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.



Goliad Trip

Here is the latest poop on our Saturday November 15 day trip on the San Antonio River to promote awareness of the proposed Goliad Canoe trail.

1. TPWD has graciously agreed to let anyone coming to help with the float to camp free at Goliad State Park. We have some spots already reserved. If you have already signed up, I do need to know if you intend to do this as a day trip or a camping option. If you are yet to sign up, please let me know about going ASAP and how you want to do the trip, and how many you can take in your canoe. If you just have a kayak or solo boat, you can still join us!
2. Now not only our dinner, but also our lunches on the river may be provided by the Goliad folks. Will keep you advised.
3. Based on our upcoming trip, The Goliad Canoe Trail Committee has gotten the County Commissioners to clear Ferry Road from the town to the river, the unpaved path to an old ferry crossing. It also sounds like they also might have a new cut down to the river bulldozed in in time for the trip. We may get out and go get an ice cream in town on the way!
4. We should have some compadres from the Houston Canoe Club helping us out also. The River Authority is bringing four people to float with us, and we anticipate that TPWD will be joining us also.
5. Still need boaters to take people down the river. Ya'll let me know if you can.

PS.: Our past president, Chris Vogeler, is getting married on the 15th also. If you know Chris personally, and are included in the happy proceedings, I encourage you to go and not feel any conflict about going to his wedding. I tried to get him to get married on the river, but he was afraid the ring might drop in the water. Best of Luck, Chris!

Randy Hohlaus , 210/493-7058

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Lowest Guadalupe

Paddlers in the San Antonio area routinely refer to the Upper and Lower Guadalupe or Guad. The Upper Guad is the river above Canyon Lake, and the Lower Guad is the river between Canyon Dam and New Braunfels. But that leaves a lot of river lower than the Lower Guad. Most of the river below New Braunfels is not appreciated enough by Texas paddlers.

A surprising secret known (almost) only to Texas Water Safari racers is the bottom of the Guadalupe River near Port Lavaca, where it runs into Guadalupe Bay. It is lush and has abundant bird life. In defense of the water safari racers, by the time they get to this segment they are so zonked out they cannot appreciate the beauty around them.

On the weekend of October 11-12, 2003, the Alamo City Rivermen congregated at the Seadrifter Inn at Seadrift, Texas. From there, the plan was to split into separate groups to take advantage of the varied paddling opportunities within 20 or 30 miles. I wanted to paddle the bottom segment of the Guadalupe, and Joan Caswell joined me in my 17 foot Grumman canoe. We put in at the last bridge across the river, paddling down to the river's mouth and back up to the bridge. Although the river was flowing, the paddle back upstream was not difficult. We started late in the day, but we were off the river before 4:00.



Typical river view.

The banks are covered in dense foliage, often with huge stands of elephant ears and palmettos. Shrubs and small trees abound, often smothered in vines. Water hyacinth are ubiquitous and are as beautiful as they are noxious. We saw large gar rolling on the surface. Parts of the river brought to mind the African Queen with Humphrey Bogart and Katherine Hepburn. Parts reminded me of the floating gardens of Xochimilco, near Mexico City, although it's been nearly 40 years since I was there. The scenery makes the trip.

To get to the bridge, start at the intersection of the Guadalupe and State Highway 35, between Tivoli and Port Lavaca. Immediately south of the river, a dirt road runs downstream. Although there is a gate, it is a public road. If you find the gate closed, close it again behind yourself. Closing gates behind you is a part of cattle country etiquette. Drive down the dirt road for 4.6 miles and be prepared to get muddy. As you draw close to a red-roofed house, another road intersects from the left. The bridge, which is wooden, is just a stone's throw from the intersection and easily visible. Gib Hafernick, a water safari racer, describes the bridge as the last point where girl friends and widows can see their loved ones go by. The put-in is a little tight, the banks are slippery, and you should beware the poison ivy, but those are the only problems on the entire trip.

On the downstream river left side of the bridge, there is a memorial to Capt. Charles Burkhart. It gives his birth and death as November 19, 1952 to approximately March 14, 2002. The "approximately" is on the memorial. I don't know what happened, but I suppose he drowned at or near the bridge.

This river segment should not remain a secret. It is beautiful, peaceful, and an easy day trip. The area is a long enough drive from most major metropolitan areas that you may end up spending the night in the area, but there is no need to spend the night on the river. The round trip between the bridge and the bay is only a little over five miles. Unless you venture out into the bay, you need no particular skills to enjoy this trip.



Looking downstream to river's mouth.

A way to make a trip to the area worthwhile is to combine paddling this segment with paddling some of the bayous that cross Highway 35 just north of the Guadalupe, between the river and the Victoria Barge Canal. Goff, Hog, and Schwings Bayous are prime candidates. Given the paucity of camping facilities in the area, you are probably better advised to stay in a motel in Port Lavaca or one of the other nearby communities such as Seadrift. Although it's a slightly longer drive, Victoria offers a wider range of accommodations.

Exercise caution in planning to camp on the river. There is little if any high ground to river right. Much of the surrounding land is marshy, and the banks themselves are often indistinct amidst the thick vegetation. We stopped for lunch and found a relatively dry spot to put cushions. It would have been difficult to find a dry spot big enough to pitch a tent. If you are in the marsh at night, don't walk around without a light and take extreme care. This is prime alligator habitat. But don't let that deter you from the trip. We saw no snakes or alligators (I have been told alligators may keep snakes in check). There may be a little more high ground to river left, but we did not try to get out there. There is high ground along some of the nearby bayous, but that is the Guadalupe Delta Wildlife Management Area. You can check with Texas Parks and Wildlife, but it is my understanding they do not permit camping.

The USGS 1:24,000 quadrangle labeled Austwell, Texas covers the trip. It shows that the Guadalupe splits into north and south segments a little below the bridge. The split is not apparent as you go downstream. The entrance to the north channel may be closed altogether, or it may just be hidden in the thick vegetation.

If you are looking for an easy, scenic, little-paddled trip, this is it.

Kenneth Bennight

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Text of 4 X 4 Bill

As most of you know, the recent legislature passed a bill limiting automobile traffic within the gradient boundaries, Specifically, Title 5, Parks and Wildlife Code, was amended by adding Subtitle I to read as follows:

SUBTITLE I. PROTECTED FRESHWATER AREAS CHAPTER 90. ACCESS TO PROTECTED FRESHWATER AREAS

Sec. 90.001. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Emergency" means a condition or circumstance in which a person reasonably believes that an individual has sustained serious bodily injury or is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or that property has sustained significant damage or destruction or is in imminent danger of significant damage or destruction.

(2) "Motor vehicle" means any wheeled or tracked vehicle, machine, tractor, trailer, or semitrailer propelled or drawn by mechanical power and used to transport a person or thing.

(3) "Navigable river or stream" means a river or stream that retains an average width of 30 or more feet from the mouth or confluence up.

(4) "Protected freshwater area" means that portion of the bed, bottom, or bank of any navigable river or stream that lies at or below the gradient boundary of the river or stream. The term does not include that portion of a bed, bottom, or bank that lies below tidewater limits.

Sec. 90.002. OPERATION OF MOTOR VEHICLE IN PROTECTED FRESHWATER AREA PROHIBITED. Except as provided by Section 90.003 or 90.004, a person may not operate a motor vehicle in or on a protected freshwater area on or after January 1, 2004.

Sec. 90.003. EXEMPTIONS.

(a) Section 90.002 does not apply to:

(1) a state, county, or municipal road right-of-way;

(2) a private road crossing established on or before December 31, 2003; or

(3) operation of a motor vehicle by:

(A) a federal, state, or local government employee if operation of a motor vehicle is necessary for conducting official business;

(B) a person if operation of a motor vehicle is necessary for reasonable purposes related to usual and customary agricultural activities;

(C) a person if operation of a motor vehicle is necessary to and is authorized by a mineral lease;

(D) a person if operation of a motor vehicle is necessary to and authorized by a crossing easement granted by the General Land Office under the Natural Resources Code;

(E) a person if operation of a motor vehicle is necessary to an activity authorized by Chapter 86;

(F) a person in response to an emergency;

(G) a person if operation of a motor vehicle is necessary for the lawful construction, operation, or maintenance of equipment, facilities, or structures used for: (i) the production, transportation, transmission, or distribution of electric power; (ii) the provision of telecommunications services or other services delivered through a cable system; (iii) the transportation of aggregates, oil, natural gas, coal, or any product of oil, natural gas, or coal; (iv) the production, treatment, or transportation of water or wastewater; or (v) dredge material disposal placement;

(H) an owner of the uplands adjacent to a protected freshwater area, the owner's agent, lessee, sublessee, or the lessee or sublessee's agent, representative, licensee, invitee, or guest for reasonable purposes related to usual and customary operation of: (i) a camp regulated under Chapter 141, Health and Safety Code; or (ii) a retreat facility owned and operated by a nonprofit corporation chartered under the laws of this state before January 1, 1970; or

(I) an owner of the adjacent uplands on both sides of a protected freshwater area and the owner's agents, employees, representatives, and lessees only for the purpose of accessing the owner's property on the opposite side of the protected freshwater area when no reasonable alternate access is available.

(b) This chapter does not apply to any river with headwaters in a state other than Texas and a mouth or confluence in a state other than Texas.

(c) A person exempt under this section who operates a motor vehicle in or on a protected freshwater area shall do so in a manner that avoids, to the extent reasonably possible, harming or disturbing vegetation, wildlife, or wildlife habitat within the protected freshwater area. A person exempt under this section who is crossing a protected freshwater area shall cross by the most direct feasible route.

Sec. 90.004. LOCAL RIVER ACCESS PLAN.

(a) A county, municipality, or river authority may adopt a written local plan to provide access to a protected freshwater area located within the county's geographical boundaries or the river authority's or municipality's jurisdiction.

(b) A local plan adopted under Subsection (a) may: (1) notwithstanding Section 90.002, allow limited motor vehicle use in a protected freshwater area; (2) provide for the county, municipality, or river authority to collect a fee from a person accessing a protected freshwater area, the amount of which may not exceed the estimated cost that the county, municipality, or river authority incurs by allowing the limited use of motorized vehicles in protected freshwater areas within its jurisdiction; or (3) establish other measures consistent with the policy and purposes of this chapter.

(c) Before a local plan adopted under Subsection (a) may take effect, a county, municipality, or river authority must file the plan with the department. A local plan does not take effect until the plan is approved in writing by the department.

(d) The department may approve, disapprove, or modify a local plan filed under Subsection (c). In determining whether to approve, disapprove, or modify a local plan, the department shall consider whether the plan: (1) protects fish, wildlife, water quality, and other natural resources; (2) protects public safety; (3) provides for adequate enforcement; (4) coordinates with adjacent and overlapping jurisdictions; (5) provides for and publicizes adequate public access to a protected freshwater area; (6) provides for adequate public services relating to access to a protected freshwater area; and (7) protects private property rights.

(e) The department by rule may adopt additional criteria or procedures to govern approval of local plans. Lack of rules adopted under this section alone is not a sufficient basis for rejecting a local plan.

(f) The department may conduct periodic reviews of a local plan filed under Subsection (c) to monitor the effectiveness of the plan.

(g) A person who has reason to believe that a local plan filed under Subsection (c) does not comply with this section may file a petition for revocation of the plan with the department.

(h) The department shall revoke approval of a local plan if the department finds, as a result of a periodic review conducted under Subsection (f) or a petition for revocation filed under Subsection (g), that the plan as implemented fails to meet any of the criteria for approval established by Subsection (d).

(i) The department may adopt rules necessary to implement this section and Section 90.002, including rules relating to locations from which a person may launch or retrieve a vessel by trailer from the banks of a protected freshwater area. For purposes of this subsection, "vessel" has the meaning assigned by Section 12.101.

Sec. 90.005. ASSISTANCE FROM DEPARTMENT.

(a) The department shall assist a requesting county, municipality, or river authority in developing a local plan.

(b) A county, municipality, or river authority implementing a local plan shall remit to the department 20 percent of the county's, municipality's, or river authority's gross receipts from fees charged under Section 90.004(b)(2) to offset the department's administrative costs associated with implementing this chapter.

Sec. 90.006. STUDIES. The department may conduct studies necessary to implement this chapter.

Sec. 90.007. LANDOWNER RIGHTS.

(a) A prescriptive easement over private property cannot be created by recreational use of a protected freshwater area, including by portage over or around barriers, scouting of obstructions, or crossing of private property to or from a protected freshwater area.

(b) Nothing in this section shall limit the right of a person to navigate in, on, or around a protected freshwater area.

Sec. 90.008. PUBLIC ACCESS.

(a) Except as otherwise allowed by law, a person may not restrict, obstruct, interfere with, or limit public recreational use of a protected freshwater area.

(b) This section does not allow the public to use private property to gain access to a protected freshwater area without permission of the landowner.

Sec. 90.009. MOTOR VEHICLE RECREATION SITES.

(a) The department shall establish a program to identify and to facilitate the development of motor vehicle recreation sites that are not located in or on a protected freshwater area. The department shall seek the cooperation of political subdivisions, landowners, nonprofit groups, and other interested persons in identifying and facilitating the development of motor vehicle recreation sites under this subsection.

(b) The department shall seek and use funding from the federal government and other sources outside the general revenue fund to identify and facilitate the development of motor vehicle recreation sites under Subsection (a).

Sec. 90.010. ENFORCEMENT. All peace officers of this state shall enforce the provisions of this chapter.

Sec. 90.011. PENALTY.

(a) A person commits an offense if the person violates Section 90.002 or 90.008.

(b) Except as provided by Subsection (c), an offense under Subsection (a) is a Class C misdemeanor.

(c) If it is shown on the trial of an offense under this section that the defendant was previously convicted two or more times under Section 90.002 or 90.008, on conviction the defendant shall be punished for a Class B misdemeanor.

(d) Each violation under this section is a separate offense.

(e) Notwithstanding Section 12.403 of this code, Subchapter B, Chapter 12, Penal Code, applies to punishments under this section.

SECTION 3. The Parks and Wildlife Department shall submit to the legislature a report regarding the department's identification and development of motor vehicle recreation sites under Section 90.009, Parks and Wildlife Code, as added by this Act, not later than September 1, 2004.

SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.



I know of a fellow who paddles a boat.
He'll paddle anywhere he can get it to float.
But he often will frown
When the water goes down,
For then in the shallows his boat he must tote.

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Can I Hunt From my Canoe or Kayak?

On a recent paddle I encountered someone at the put-in who mentioned he hunted along the river in his canoe. I asked if he meant ducks and geese. He meant deer and hogs. As I read Parks and Wildlife's rules, prudence would limit hunting from your paddle craft to migratory game birds unless you are on private water. Here's what Parks and Wildlife has to say:

Legal (Hunting) Methods

Animals and game birds not classified as migratory may be hunted from a motor vehicle, powerboat, sailboat, or from any other floating device within the boundaries of private property or upon private water. Migratory game birds under certain circumstances may be hunted from a boat on public water. See the migratory game bird section for the exceptions.

Migratory Game Birds

Lawful Hunting Means and Methods: Shotguns, archery equipment (except crossbows), falconry, dogs, artificial decoys, and manual or mouth-operated bird calls are lawful. Hunting is permitted in the open or from a blind or other type of concealment or from floating craft or boat provided that all motion resulting from sail or motor has ceased. Sails must be furled and motor turned off before shooting starts. A "sinkbox" is unlawful.

Ken Bennight

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San Felipe Creek

Put-in: Moore Park on Highway 90 in Del Rio
Take-out: near Primo Street, close to the cemetery
Duration: 1 hour
Length: not sure, a couple of miles

This past Sunday I paddled San Felipe Creek in my hometown of Del Rio. I try to paddle it everytime I go down-it's a nice, clear creek running through the older parts of Del Rio as it makes its way to the Rio Grande. Many beautiful 150 year old homesites are found along the way and there are a few small rapids along with a dam that is runnable. The hard rains of Saturday hadn't raised the level like I had hoped, but it was still a great paddle to end the day. Last time I paddled, I stopped and listened to a band play in the park nearby.

The put-in is usually crowded with toobers and swimmers, but Sun was cool and misting, so no one was in the water. The take-out isn't fun-a steep, muddy bank to climb up. The trip is very enjoyable and I highly recommend it to anyone making a trip to the border. There are several other great paddles in the area-Lake Amistad and the Rio Grande.

Gay Culbertson, gculbertson@lycos.com

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San Antonio River

Put-in: I35 south of San Antonio
Take-out: Loop 1604
Duration: about an hour
Length: about 3 miles

The San Antonio River below SA is a pretty, small river that runs through lots of nothing but beautiful scenery. The river was up a little on Monday due to the rains from the weekend. I put in at the I35 bridge and tried to paddle upstream to where the Medina River comes in, but the flow was too strong and there was a logjam I didn't want to go over. I paddled down to the takeout taking my time enjoying the solitude. I've done this section before but at the regular flow-this was much better! Don't know what the flow was but it was up about a foot. There are a few strainers along the way, but other than lots of trees, there's nothing else.

Gay Culbertson, gculbertson@lycos.com

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Cypress Wonderland Trips

Hello fellow lovers of swamps and bayous,

We will have a trip on Saturday, December 6. Canoes will be available to rent and have delivered to the site by a new local outfitter in Anahuac: the Trinity River Canoe Rentals. The rental cost for these is \$30 for the day, provided more than one canoe is rented by the group (otherwise it is \$35 for the day). It will be an all-day affair, running from around 9:00 a.m. until around 4:00 p.m. The recommended contribution to the Houston Sierra Club is \$10.

For those who are sure they can make it, we can send more concrete details as the trip times draw nearer. Many of you have made this trip with us before, and we look forward to seeing you again. For those of you who have wanted to go, but weren't able to for one reason or another, this could be that special chance. "Is it really that good?" you might ask yourself. Well, yes it is.

Hoping to see you there, Tom Douglas and Linda Shead, baymail@evl.net

Alamo City Rivermen Mileage Log Sheet

Date: _____ River: _____ Put in: _____ Take Out: _____

Estimated Miles: _____ Comments: _____

Date: _____ River: _____ Put in: _____ Take Out: _____

Estimated Miles: _____ Comments: _____

Date: _____ River: _____ Put in: _____ Take Out: _____

Estimated Miles: _____ Comments: _____

Date: _____ River: _____ Put in: _____ Take Out: _____

Estimated Miles: _____ Comments: _____

Date: _____ River: _____ Put in: _____ Take Out: _____

Estimated Miles: _____ Comments: _____

Date: _____ River: _____ Put in: _____ Take Out: _____

Estimated Miles: _____ Comments: _____

Date: _____ River: _____ Put in: _____ Take Out: _____

Estimated Miles: _____ Comments: _____

Date: _____ River: _____ Put in: _____ Take Out: _____

Estimated Miles: _____ Comments: _____

Alamo City Rivermen Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Home Telephone: _____

Business Telephone: _____

The Alamo City Rivermen try to keep their activities safe, but risk is inherent in water sports. We cannot and do not guarantee safety. The Alamo City Rivermen disclaim liability for accidental injury or death in any sponsored event. As a condition of membership and participation in club sponsored events, I release, acquit, and forever discharge the Alamo City Rivermen and its officers, agents, and members from all liability arising out of or relating to a sponsored event, even if negligence of the club or its officers, agents, or members is a cause, and even if I die or am injured. This release includes not only actual paddle trips but also all other club events and driving or riding to and from club events.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Membership dues are the same for an individual or a family. As a member of the Alamo City Rivermen, you are automatically entitled to our monthly newsletter, NOC Outfitter store discounts, a \$10 discounted membership in the American Canoe Association through the Paddle America Program, and subscription to our email list. Details on these benefits are available in our newsletter.

I prefer to receive the newsletter: (Please circle the one you choose)

Dues if newsletter sent by email \$15.00

Dues if newsletter sent USPS \$20.00

(Note: Newsletter copying and mailing has been our biggest expense; using email frees up money for other activities, including our website.)

Mail this completed form, together with a check, to:

Alamo City Rivermen Canoe Club
P.O. Box 171194
San Antonio, Texas 78217