

The Alamo City Rivermen Babbler

Issue MMCCXLIX

December 2003

The monthly newsletter of the Alamo City Rivermen

Paddling the fine line between geek and Bubba.

Next Meeting

Christmas Party, December 6, 2003,
Henry Holman's, 212 Canada Verde,
Hollywood Park. 6:00 to ????.

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Club Officers

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830-885-5324

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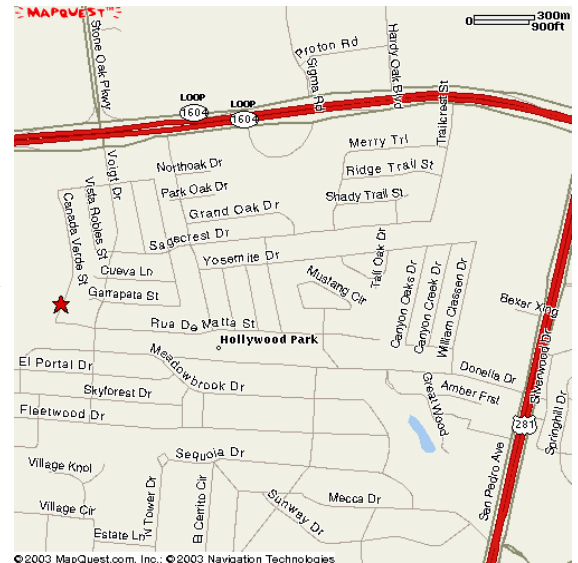
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Christmas Party

The Christmas Party, in lieu of our December meeting, is on Saturday, December 6 at the home of Henry Holman, 212 Canada Verde, Holly Park. It is from 6:00 P.M. until ????. Please bring a covered dish. B.Y.O.B. Bring a white elephant gift to participate in a gift exchange. Please come. All are welcome.

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Holman Residence, 212 Canada Verde

Goliad Canoe Trail

The Alamo City Rivermen have long actively supported developing the San Antonio River for paddling opportunities. Current plans now in motion for restoring the river in the southern Mission Trails area envision providing canoe or kayak accessible stretches within the City limits, a revolutionary idea for this part of South Texas. Now, for the past year, at the invitation of the San Antonio River Authority, we have been working with a committee of local community leaders lead by John Barnhart that support the creation of a river trail in Goliad County, and improved access points to make that happen. The river channel passes right next to the town square, and can link the town and other points with Goliad State Park being either a point of put-in or exit. We have presented concept sketches of what an ideal canoe launch for this river would be, constructed to allow only paddle powered craft to be placed in the water.

(Continued on next page)

Upcoming Events

December 6, 2003	Christmas Party, 6:00 to ????, bring covered dish and white elephant gift	Henry Holman's, 212 Canada Verde, Hollywood Park
January 14, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
January 31-February 1, 2004	Freeze Trip, Colorado River (For our new members, this is the biggest event of the year. You don't want to miss it.)	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.
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 Canoe Trail, continued)

To help the local folks see just what a resource they had, Saturday, November 15 the Alamo City Rivermen Canoe Club played host to the Goliad River Trail Committee, board members and staff of SARA, TPWD including the park superintendent, and others in a short day float along the river. Leah Huth, the superintendent, actually put in a decked takeout at the park and provided temp safety ropes and steps at the Highway 59 put in. We had about 24 boats and 50 canoers, most of us showing up with empty front seats so we could take our guests as boating partners. We had boaters from San Antonio, Austin, Houston, Corpus Christi and San Marcos, to show how a caone trail could be of statewide interest. There was good camaraderie all around.

We put in at the Hwy 59 crossing just above the town. The overall float from there to the park was about 6 ½ miles. The river is very pretty, much like the lower San Marcos, pretty heavily treed, mostly hardwoods with a few surprising cypress in a deep channel. In places there are surprising rock outcroppings and cliffs, and the typical birdlife is seen. A few honking large alligator gars were also encountered. And basically, all natural, very few if any structures of any sort can be seen from the river.

The flow rate was approximately 500 cfs, so it moved a pretty good clip, not muddy at all, typical Texas green water.. This river always flows, even in summer. There were no logjams or obstructions of any kind. Definitely a good flat water trip suitable for novices.

We stopped at Martinez creek on a low rock outcrop and had lunch. The River Authority broke out a veritable buffet line of sandwiches, chips, fruit, cookies and drink, we ate until we were all full. Thanks to Claude Harding and Dale Bransford for the support. Resuming the float, we passed what is know locally as Ferry street crossing, where the stumps of and old wood crossing bridge still protrude from the water. Before that, it was an historic ferry site. It is a right of way about a hundred yards long that feeds right into the town square, and a potential future canoe launch point. Possibly, you could do a float and go in town to eat. Just for us the Commissioners actually

cleared the right of way so we could see how it would work. Finally, down to the state park, where a brand new platform and bank cut had been built where you could take out a boat (it was all high banks before). One local guest said that she had lived all her life in Goliad, had never been down the river and never new how beautiful the river really was.

That night, a bunch of us camped out at the Park and went in town to eat, boats on top of our vehicles, to support the local economy and our hungry appetites. We might have broken the kitchen down with all our orders. Goliad has an incredible hike/bike trail with a boardwalk overhanging the river bank from the State Park into town. We walked (gasp) into town for breakfast. Goliad is an undiscovered gem, tons of history and charm, and well worth a visit. Longer river trips are possible: from Rockdale above where we put-in is a 15 mile trip, and there is even a longer stretch down if you put-in at the park. At some point before the junction with the Guadalupe, there are rumors of a tremendous log jam, but our float was pretty well cleaned out by the recent floods. Some safari boaters among us thought it made a good alternative to training on the same old runs on the San Marcos. This is a good trip if you want an easy float weekend getaway or a training run, especially in Fall through Spring.

This river is ideal for a canoe trail, as the high banks keep it well isolated and would discourage public/private interactions. In conjunction with the hike/bike trail already established, it would make another activity for visitors or families visting the park or the Goliad area. While this concept has a long way to go, both in local support and funding, it was refreshing to see the excitement of the local committee members and the coalition of support building. We may do this trip again next year to check out the Rockdale stretch, so if you would like to join us, let us know.

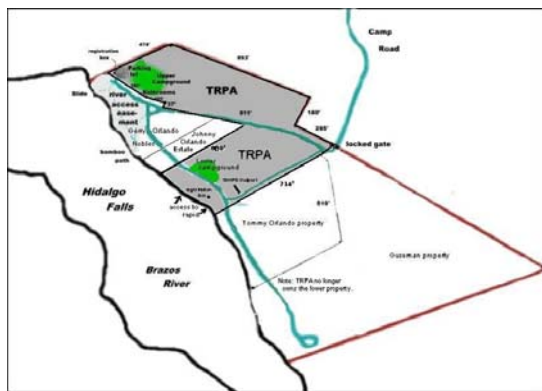
Randy Hohlaus

(Editors Note: Randy humbly says “we” have presented concept sketches of what an ideal canoe launch for this river would be. Of course, it is Randy who conceived of and prepared the sketches. We all owe him our gratitude.)

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Hidalgo Falls Update

For all those who were so generous in contributing money toward the Texas Rivers Protection Association purchase of the four additional acres overlooking Hidalgo Falls: good news. Last Wednesday, TRPA finally closed on the sale when Tom Goynes (TRPA president) came to College Station to sign the papers.



Many of you probably thought that all of this had been finished last summer, but the deal had been delayed by a number of factors. All during that time small bands of volunteers continued to work at the site, ultimately clearing away over 20 tons of debris. In order to get the money we needed for this prime spot, we had to sell 2.9 acres of our land downstream from the rapid and still needed an additional \$15,000 to cover the difference. But as many of you know, paddlers from around the state came through with donations sufficient to guarantee that future boaters will have a wonderful paddlers' Park at Hidalgo Falls that is not threatened by residential and commercial development.

Steve Daniel

(Ed.: See the related website: <http://philosophy.tamu.edu/~sdaniel/hidalgo.html>)

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(Haiku)

Traveling rivers,
Use a pole to push upstream,
Paddle with current.

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An Analysis of Texas Waterways

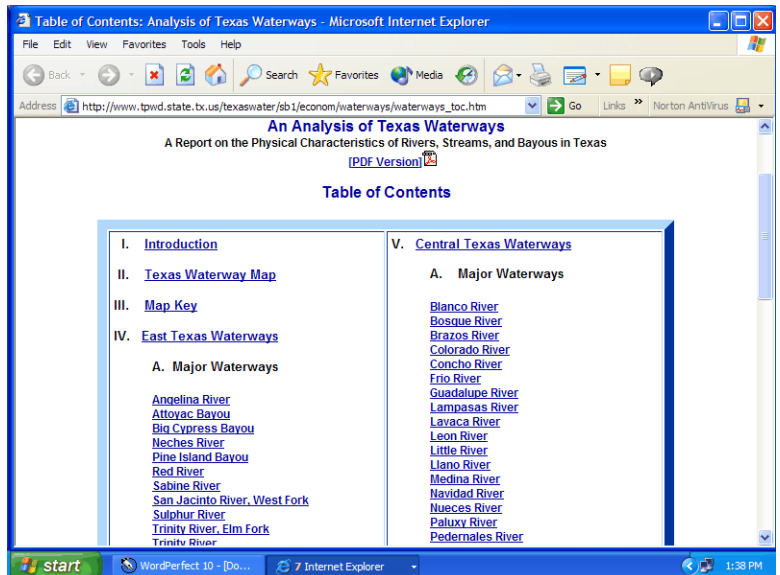
New members may not be aware of all the resources available online and elsewhere for Texas paddlers. Among the resources that should not be overlooked is “An Analysis of Texas Waterways” published by Texas Parks and Wildlife. The Analysis has been published in paper form in years past, but the entire analysis is now available online.

The URL for the main page of the Analysis is:
[http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/texaswater/sb1/econom/waterways/waterways_index.htm#An Analysis of Texas Waterways](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/texaswater/sb1/econom/waterways/waterways_index.htm#An%20Analysis%20of%20Texas%20Waterways)

It, as well as many other sites of interest, is accessible from the links page of the Rivermen website:
<http://www.alamocityrivermen.org/paddling.html>

The Analysis discusses the paddling potential of all the major and many of the minor waterways in the state and often includes maps. It is an invaluable overview of opportunities for native Texans and newcomers alike.

Don't ever despair for want of information where to paddle. The information is convenient and free.



Part of the Table of Contents

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Alamo City Rivermen

P.O. Box 171194 • San Antonio • Texas • 78217

ACA Paddle America
7432 Alban Station Blvd.
Suite B 232
Springfield, Virginia 22150

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am a member of the Alamo City Rivermen Canoe and Kayak Club and would like to take advantage of the club discount to become a member of ACA Paddle America. I enclose a check for an individual/family membership in the amount of \$15.00 (single) or \$20.00 (family).

Please use this name for your membership role: _____

Please send mail to the following address: _____

Happy Paddling. Thank you.

Member, Alamo City Rivermen Canoe and Kayak Club

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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: _____

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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