

# The Alamo City Rivermen

# Babbler

Issue MMCCLVI

July 2004

The monthly newsletter of the Alamo City Rivermen

## Padding the fine line between geek and Bubba.

### Next Meeting

July 14, 2004, Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near the intersection with Harry Wurzbach. See the [linked map](#). 6:30 to 8:30.

-o0o-

### Club Officers

President Kathy Cusick  
[kmcusick@juno.com](mailto:kmcusick@juno.com)  
830-885-5324

Vice President David Plylar  
[wavegrazer@lycos.com](mailto:wavegrazer@lycos.com)

Sec./Treas. Marie Searight  
[marie@wireweb.net](mailto:marie@wireweb.net)  
830-625-0604

Editor Kenneth Bennight  
[bennight@alumni.utexas.net](mailto:bennight@alumni.utexas.net)  
210-826-7071

Mailings Kevin Longin  
[kevin\\_longin@baxter.com](mailto:kevin_longin@baxter.com)  
830-885-5324, ext. 5189

### Independence Day Trip Canceled

The Independence Day trip to Junction and the South Llano has been canceled for want of a leader. Gib had to bow out because he was scheduled to participate in the rescheduled Water Safari. **Don't drive to Junction expecting the club to be there.**

-o0o-

### Mission River

"Boy, am I glad Susan didn't come along!" There was a point early in the Mission River trip when I exclaimed that. Many of you may have heard me mention that my wife Susan does not paddle, in part because she has a low tolerance for things going wrong. I had almost, but not quite, persuaded her to join this trip. Being on this trip would not have improved her attitude to future trips.

The trip was June 19. We had two boats. Tom and Nancy Carnes were the only club members to come along. I paddled with my high school friend, the owner of the ranch, Van Huseman.

Because of recent rain, the river was up. Concerned that the trip might be too short, we put in on Blanco Creek just below the Highway 202 crossing. The creek is not accessible from the bridge, but it was easily accessible from inside Van's fence.

Less than 20 yards into the trip, we hit the first log jam that required a portage, then another within about 20 yards of that. That's probably when I exclaimed about Susan not being along. In all, we encountered some nine logjams serious enough to require dragging boats around or over. We were able to scoot by or over as many others. Of the nine serious logjams, seven were on the creek segment. Once we got on the river proper, things improved markedly.

Although no part of the trip is far from the town of Refugio, much of the surrounding ranch land is little traveled, and the area seems remote and wild. We saw many birds, including whistling ducks, which were new to me. Van and I saw only one small snake, and it was harmless.

Log jams aside, it was an interesting and fun trip. I am glad I made it, and I think the Carnes were, too.

Ken Bennight, 826-7071, [klbennight@yahoo.com](mailto:klbennight@yahoo.com)

## Upcoming Events

July 3, 4, 5, 2004	<b>Canceled. Do not drive to Junction expecting to see the club there.</b>	<b>Gib Hafernick, 210-492-7517</b>
July 14, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
August 11, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
September 4-6, 2004	Labor Day Trip	????
September 8, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
September 11, 2004	Bird Island Basin, Padre Island	Gary Tupa, <a href="mailto:gltupa@swbell.net">gltupa@swbell.net</a>
October 13, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
November 10, 2004	Monthly Meeting	Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M.
November 26-28, 2004	Turkey Trot, Colorado River	Randy Hohlaus, <a href="mailto:hohlaus@prodigy.net">hohlaus@prodigy.net</a> 493-7058



### 6/13/04 Medina River Trip Report

By Kathy Cusick & Kevin Longin

The Medina River was running about 1000cfs on the Bandera gauge on Sun, 6/13/04. We had a group of 6 in solo boats that included 2 WW canoes, 3 WW kayaks and one recreational sit-on-top kayak. The run was from Third crossing to the Second Crossing takeout well upstream of the town of Medina. This was about 8 miles long and took us 4 hours with a bit of surfing and playing along the way.

The put-in was right at the low-water crossing with good access and good parking. The water moved quickly through some “pucker brush” where it was out of its banks and into some saplings. It opened up a bit just before a wonderful waterfall lined on both sides by rock. This consisted of 3 drops. The first 2 were only 2-3 feet and the third was about 4 feet, followed by a nice eddy on river right. The water was a little pushy over the falls, and most of us did not hit our intended lines, although all successfully negotiated them. In fact, most of us ran them a second time, again, with good results. The river was flowing nicely, but there were still a few pools at this level. There were a lot of fun rapids, and the hazards involved trees in the main flow of the river, some of them very large, and some of them only large limbs. This section at this level did require good boat control skills, and that the paddler have solid eddy turns and peel outs. This was a beautiful section of river, with many springs and creeks running into it. Since much of the river runs along highway, there was some traffic noise, and we did have company at the low water crossings.

-o0o-

## Memorial Day Hill Country Weekend of Rivers Trip Report

By Kathy Cusick and Kevin Longin

Since we have had so much good river flow in the local area, the Guadalupe River was running between 500cfs and 600cfs for the weekend, we tried a local event with a flexible format for the holiday weekend. We didn't know about water levels until it was too late to get a camping reservation anywhere, so went with what we could. The format allowed for multiple trips each day for different level paddlers, and also for participation all weekend or any day or days during the weekend. As it turned out, we had a group of paddlers with the same choice of stretches to paddle each day, so we paddled as one group each day, but arranged for several take-outs for the second day, and again paddled as a group on Monday. This worked out well for everyone. This should be a repeat event in years of good local water.

SAT -- We had 10 people on Sat, with 9 paddlers, 7 in solo WW canoes and 2 in WW kayaks with one being a sit-on-top. We paddled from Specht's Crossing/Nichols Landing to Rebecca Creek Road Crossing. This was a total of 10 miles. Dinner was on the grill in the yard for 4 of us while the remainder of the group chose to go to a local restaurant, but all of us had cake, cobbler and ice cream together to finish off the evening.

SUN -- We had 11 people on Sat, with 10 paddlers, 7 in solo WW canoes and 3 in WW kayaks with one being a sit-on-top. We decided to paddled from Bergheim to Specht's Crossing/Nichols Landing, although we had several paddlers take out at Edge Falls Road, and a few at the State Park, while 4 of us paddled the entire stretch. We learned a lot about surfing, and did a bit of basic instruction with folks we ran into on the river. This was a total of 13 miles for the 4 who paddled the entire stretch, 4 miles to Edge Falls, 8 miles to the Park. Again, there was a group of 5 for dinner in the yard and the remainder of the folks went to dinner on their way out of town.

Mon -- We had 4 people on Mon, with 9 paddlers, 1 in solo WW canoe and 3 in WW kayaks with 2 being sit-on-tops. Since this was our 3<sup>rd</sup> day, we decided on a short stretch, from 311 to Rebecca Creek Road Crossing, and played quite a bit along the way. We ran Mueller Falls multiple times while we also stopped for lunch and to socialize with the Saturday Paddlers doing the same stretch. We also surfed and swam at each of the other rapids between there and Rust Falls. Rust was a blast at this level, and we each ran it more than once. This was a total of 4 miles. Dinner was leftovers in the yard for 4 of us before saying good-byes for the weekend.

-o0o-

### 6/12/04 Blanco River Trip Report

By Kathy Cusick & Kevin Longin

The Blanco River was running about 900cfs on the Wimberley gauge on Sat, 6/12/04. We had a group of 4 in solo boats that included 2 WW canoes, 1 WW kayak and one river canoe. The run was from Burnett Ranch Subdivision below the Narrows to the John Knox takeout. This was about 8 miles long and took us 4 hours with quite a bit of surfing and playing along the way.

The put-in is considered a private area, and we were the guests of one of the residents. This is a low water crossing with good access. As we were unloading our boats, a man came by on a pool raft, and was quite suddenly sucked right into a culvert pipe that was below the surface. We were quite relieved to see him wash immediately out, although he was unaware that he might not have, and was more concerned with the fact that his raft did not come out than he was about being alive. Oh, well.

The first ½ mile had 2 very exciting drops that each consisted of a cascade followed by a pour over. Unfortunately, the banks were not conducive to portaging back up and running them again. The river was flowing nicely, and there were very few pools at this level. It was really nice to paddle a river with gradient! There were fun rapids, a few drops with large rocks, and a low head dam, but no "keepers" in any of these places. This section did require good boat control skills, and that the paddler have solid eddy turns and peel outs. This was a beautiful section of river, with many springs and creeks running into it. We ran into only a few other boaters and a handful of people on the banks the entire trip.

-o0o-  
**Tour de Tejas**  
**“Abrazo de Amistad”**

On September 10, 2004 a historic journey will begin! A crew of four will launch a 34' canoe to embark on a 1200-mile journey up the Rio Grande River, from Boca Chica and Bagdad all the way to El Paso and Ciudad Juarez...and finally to Anthony, Texas.

In all of the history of the land, originally known as Tejas, such a feat has never been accomplished, let alone undertaken. The only means of propulsion for this journey will be paddles and a sail.

Interestingly, 105 years ago in 1899, Robert T. Hill, the Father of Texas Geology, was hired by John Wesley Powell (who surveyed the Grand Canyon) to survey the Big Bend. Hill and his crew surveyed the Big Bend portion of the Rio Grande. After Hill died in Dallas, his Big Bend field notes were declared lost in 1957. In 1986, Pecos Jack discovered Hill's field notes in archives that were going to be disposed of at SMU. For five years in a row, from 1992 to 1996, Pecos Jack used Hill's field notes to retrace the course that Hill took from Presidio to the Pecos River. It will be our privilege, 105 years later, to compare his notes to what will be a state of the art GPS tracking experience. We hope also to publish the two sets of notes.

The duration of this trip will be about three months...from the mouth of the Rio Grande to El Paso. Attached is an itinerary of the departures and arrivals. We will have a four-member crew. Three of the members will be Pecos Jack (Jack Richardson), Jay J. Johnson, Sr., and Barbara J. Johnson.

We will also have six additional positions open to the public on the canoe. For two of those positions, we will be inviting dignitaries, mayors and/or tourism directors of each community from both sides of the river to join us for a short portion of the trip to share in promoting a “Shared Experience” of “Amistad”.

Often the dignitaries enjoy the special thing events in their communities and the common person is left out. So, for the next two positions will be inviting grass roots citizens from each side to join us for a portion of the trip. Here's the most special highlight of our “Tour de Tejas”. For the remaining two positions open to the public, we will be inviting two youths, one from each side of the border to share in and enjoy this historical experience of friendship. We feel that the education of the youth is imperative if we want friendship to be embraced by generations to come.

We welcome the endorsement of any and all elected officials. We believe that any elected official that supports and shares in “El Abrazo de Amistad” will earn the respect of this part of the world.

We also seek and welcome the endorsement of any civic leaders, as well as any state agency or organizations that would like to share in this “Tour de Tejas” and the “Abrazo de Amistad”. We are confident that all the communities will enjoy sharing their solidarity of friendship with you, during this event. We are also open to media participation since the more coverage we generate will only insure that this part of the world would become understood, appreciated and become a destination of discovery. We will seek to document our journey and will welcome writers to help us do so.

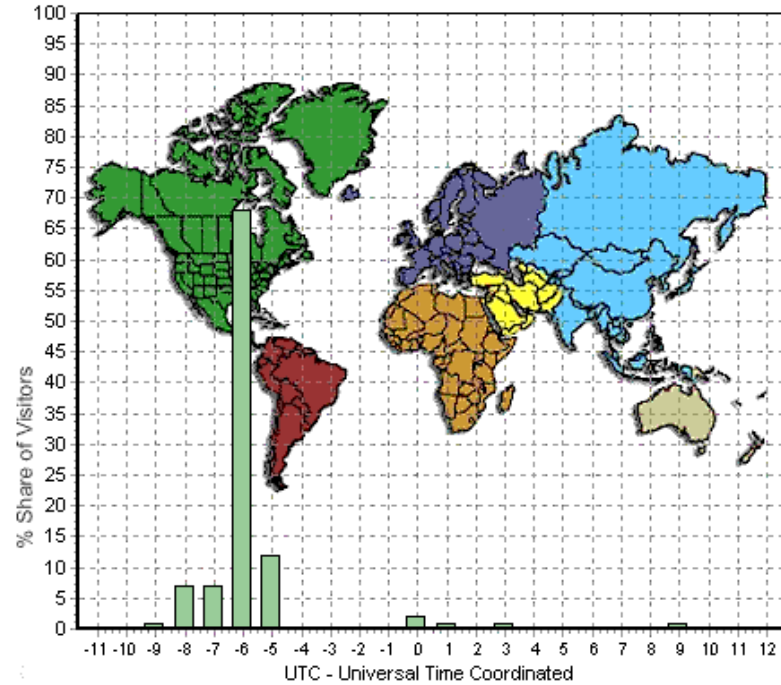
Since the “Tour de Tejas” will last about some three months, from September through December, we will welcome endorsements from a variety of companies. With regard to our lodging, we will accept lodging in the communities along the way. For the majority of the “Tour de Tejas” we enjoy camping along the banks of the Rio Grande. We will be fully equipped to do so. Needless to say, knowing how often we will go without a real bed and a real shower...we would more than welcome lodging and meals in the populated areas. Of the three months and the 1200 miles, we will spend nearly two of those months without such luxuries. Never would we turn down such a kind gesture as a shower or meal. Margaritas will also be welcome.

A final note. Some may ask why we are going up river. If you've ever tried to paddle down river in the face of a high wind, you'd not ask. Going against the current of a slow moving river is a pleasure in comparison to going against a 50 mile an hour wind. With exceptions, winds on the Rio Grande come from down river.

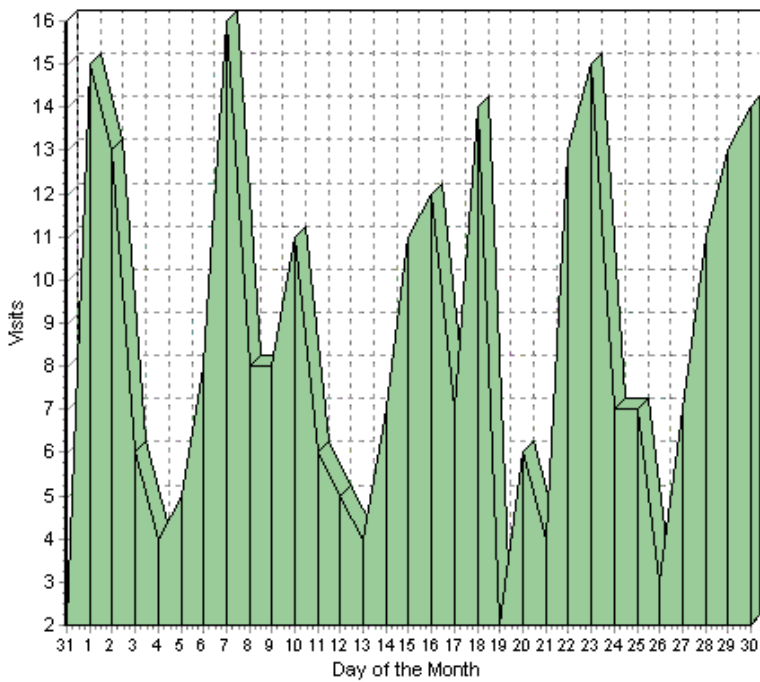
Presented by: Jay J. Johnson, Sr.

## Web Site Update

According to the new sitemeter installed on our website, we are getting about nine hits a day. The graph below breaks down viewers by the time zones they are located in. Sitemeter also lets you see how people find your site. It shows that visitors found our site by a variety of means such as Google, Yahoo, the old URL, the Houston Canoe Club, the Dallas Downriver Club, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and many others. Below the time zones graph is a graph showing number of visitors per day.



None of this is essential to know, but you might find it interesting.



# 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 \$20.00 (single) or \$25.00 (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: \_\_\_\_\_

### Rivermen Mileage Log Sheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River \_\_\_\_\_ Put \_\_\_\_\_ Take \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Comment \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River \_\_\_\_\_ Put \_\_\_\_\_ Take \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Comment \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River \_\_\_\_\_ Put \_\_\_\_\_ Take \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Comment \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River \_\_\_\_\_ Put \_\_\_\_\_ Take \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Comment \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River \_\_\_\_\_ Put \_\_\_\_\_ Take \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Comment \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River \_\_\_\_\_ Put \_\_\_\_\_ Take \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Comment \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River \_\_\_\_\_ Put \_\_\_\_\_ Take \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Comment \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River \_\_\_\_\_ Put \_\_\_\_\_ Take \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Comment \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ River \_\_\_\_\_ Put \_\_\_\_\_ Take \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated \_\_\_\_\_ Comment \_\_\_\_\_

## 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