

# The Alamo City Rivermen Babbler

Issue MMCCLXI

December 2004

The monthly newsletter of the Alamo City Rivermen

## Padding the fine line between geek and Bubba.

### Next Meeting

Christmas Party, December 12, 2004,  
Chris Vogeler's, 16327 Old Sable Road  
San Antonio, Texas 78247, 4:00 to 8:00  
P.M.

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### Club Officers

President Kathy Cusick  
kmcusick at junos.com  
830-885-5324

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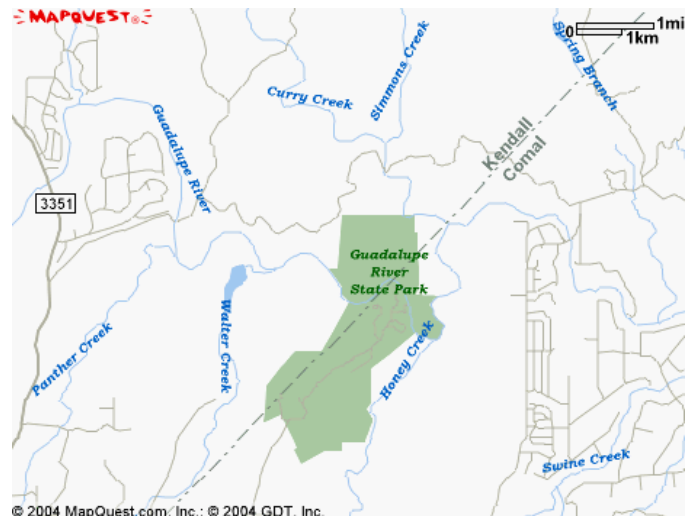
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### Holiday Party (December 11)

Because our other Holiday Party plan fell through, we are having a Holiday Paddle instead. Kathy Cusick is the trip leader. We will do the Novice section (not beginner at this level and temperature) of the Guadalupe River from Edge Falls Road to Specht's Crossing (Nichols Landing) for about 10 miles of river since the flow is so good. We will meet at 10:30am at Edge Falls Road, leave our gear and run shuttle before putting on the river (so should be on the river by noon).



Folks will have a chance to change cloths and/or clean up (for anyone unintentionally getting too wet) and have some hor' dourves at Kathy & Kevin's "Little House" and then move on to a local restaurant for dinner.

We will do a Gift Exchange (\$10 or less with a holiday or paddling theme) before dinner for those who want to participate. The rules for the exchange are complicated and will be explained, but each person bringing a gift will get a number and be entitled to draw for another gift. Gifts should be wrapped so the person selecting doesn't know what it is. Gag gifts are fine.

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### T Shirts for Sale

Get them while they last. Large and extra-large T shirts with the club logo. See Kathy Cusick.

## Upcoming Events

|                     |  |  |
|---------------------|--|--|
| December 11, 2004   | Holiday Paddle                                 | Kathy Cusick, kmcusick at juno.com   |
| January 12, 2005    | Monthly Meeting                                | Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. |
| January 15-17, 2005 | Freeze Trip                                    | Gib Hafernack, 210-492-7517 or Gibguy at Compuserve.com                      |
| February 9, 2005    | Monthly Meeting                                | Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. |
| March 9, 2005       | Monthly Meeting                                | Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. |
| March 13-19, 2005   | Pecos Trip (Pandale to Highway 90 high bridge) | Randy Hohlaus, hohlaus at prodigy.net 493-7058                               |
| April 13, 2005      | Monthly Meeting                                | Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. |
| May 11, 2005        | Monthly Meeting                                | Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. |
| June 8, 2005        | Monthly Meeting                                | Barbeque Station, 1612 N.E. Loop 410, near Harry Wurzbach, 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. |



### THE CRISIS: MEDINA RIVER PARK

(Gib Hafernack)

I have recently learned that the City of San Antonio Parks Department, is creating a new park on the Medina River south of San Antonio. The Park is named Medina River Park and is located at Hwy 16 and the Medina River on river left. The expected opening is some time in January or February.

#### WHAT I DISCOVERED:

I drove into the park and found there is a paved road with turn-around and parking for a number of vehicles. The river is a relatively short distance from the turn around plus restrooms are provided. The park lends itself extremely well for putting in and paddling down to Applewhite Road or To put in at Loop 1604 and use the Park as a Take-Out.

When I inquired about canoe & kayak being allowed to launch I was told that this was **"TO BE PROHIBITED ALONG WITH FISHING AS WELL"**.

#### MY CONVERSATIONS WITH:

Scott Stover (210-207-2872) - Parks Department

He is the Assistant Project Manager of the Medina Park Development and employed with the City of San Antonio Parks Department. The prohibition on not being allowed to launch was coming from the San Antonio River Authority as they owned the river and the Park Department was just complying with their request. He also gave me the reply that the park department had collected input on this issue in a number of public hearings.

Jamal Moreno (210- 207-6924) - Parks Department

He is the Project Manager of the Medina Park Development and also employed with the City of San Antonio Parks Department. He sort of repeated everything that Scott Stover told me.

Karen Bishop & Susan Scott - (210-227-1373) - San Antonio River Authority

They told me they had "no knowledge" of a directive like this coming from the San Antonio River Authority.

## **THE SO CALLED JUSTIFICATION**

Ron Smoothie (210-207-8480)

He is the Assistant Director of Parks with the City of San Antonio and the basis for this policy on Canoe Prohibition decision is based on two City of San Antonio City Ordinances. They are: 22-88 and 22-87

David Plyar has done some research on the above Ordinances, and they read as follows:

### **Sec. 22-87. Swimming in San Antonio River prohibited; penalty.**

(a) It shall be unlawful to swim in the San Antonio River within the corporate limits of the City of San Antonio. "Swim" as used herein shall include bathing, wading or any other water contact recreational activity.

(b) Violation of any of the provisions of this section shall be a misdemeanor offense and shall be punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00).

(Ord. No. 88236, § 2, 8-6-98)

### **Sec. 22-88. Swimming in city parks and city public property prohibited; penalty.**

(a) It shall be unlawful to swim in any body of water, natural or man-made, in any city park or other city public area within the corporate limits of the City of San Antonio, except in designated swimming pools or swimming facilities during operating hours. "Swim" as used herein shall include bathing, wading, or any other water contact recreational activity. "Body of water" as used herein shall include but is not limited to lakes, ponds, creeks, water fountains or any other water feature.

(Ord. No. 88236, § 3, 8-6-98)

Uncited by Mr. Smoothie but nevertheless of interest is the following:

### **Sec. 22-144. Operation of vessels on the San Antonio River for noncommercial purposes.**

(a) No boat or barge may be operated or launched in the San Antonio River channel for noncommercial purposes without written approval of the director of the department of parks and recreation of the city.

(b) Applications for approval to operate or launch vessels on the San Antonio River channel for noncommercial purposes submitted to the director of the department of parks and recreation must include details regarding the applicant, the type of vessel, passenger capacity, Purpose, requested date(s) and duration of launch and operation. For events involving multiple vessels to be operated on the San Antonio River channel, the director of the department of parks and recreation is invested with discretion to accept an application summarizing the required information for all vessels involved in the event.

(c) For purposes of the foregoing section, the "San Antonio River Channel" is defined as the San Antonio River between the city limits and the head waters of the river located at Hildebrand Avenue and Brackenridge Park, together with the Riverbend and all man-made canals connected to the bed of the San Antonio River between these points.

(d) The department of parks and recreation shall develop guidelines for determining approval or disapproval of any such application which are consistent with the purposes stated in this section and stating a process for appeal of any such permit denial.

(e) Any person who violates this section is subject to a fine of up to five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per violation.

(Ord. No. 85958, § 2, 5-1-97)

Ron Smoothie basically told me that if we are canoeing down a Navigable River and cross onto or out of a City Park on the River we risk being ticketed for a Code Violation. The Park Department basically is taking this ordinance and is extending it the entire length of the San Antonio River and then turning upward to include the entire section of the Medina River that would fall within the City of San Antonio.

### **THE SHORT TERM IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed canoe trail on the San Antonio River from Alamo Street to Southwest Military Drive would have us potentially being ticketed at any on the numerous city parks that fall within that stretch if we used those parks as a put-in or take-out.

### **THE LONG RANGE IMPLICATIONS**

If the City of San Antonio can legally do this action then conceivably any other Municipality could just as well do the same thing as in **"RESTRICT OR PROHIBIT"** access to a Navigable River. San Marco at San Marcos City Park, Kerrville on the Guadalupe River, Waco on the Brazos River. Bastrop on the Colorado Rivre at Fisherman's Park, Austin in TownLake. You need to keep in mind that this prohibition is while the Park is open, not just closed.

### **SOME ACTION ITEMS:**

#### **Item 1**

I spoke at the City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, gave my concerns with about how this issue affects canoeist and kayakers all over Texas. I requested that the Board Recommend changes on the ordinance for the entire length of the San Antonio River & Medina River from Alamo Street on south with regards to the Prohibition on canoes. The board's regularly scheduled meetings are the third Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the Lion Field House at 2809 Broadway. The next meeting is December 20 the one in January may be on a different date as it falls on Marten Luther King's Day and may be rescheduled.

The web link is as follows:

<http://www.sanantonio.gov/sapar/parksboard.asp>

#### **Item 2**

Send a request to the San Antonio River Authority requesting ordinance be rescinded for the sections of rivers mentioned above. We could use some other letters of support here on this campaign to justify our cause.

Note: This policy is inconsistent with the SARA's support of Canoeing Trails at Goliad which have plans for using public parks for access points.

#### **Item 3**

Request the San Antonio Oversight Committee (they are the guys responsible for the canoe trail from Alamo Street to Loop 410) recommend this ordinance be rescinded for the sections of rivers mentioned above as it would conflict with proposed river improvements that call for canoe and kayak trails.

#### **Item 4**

We need to send a Formal Request to the Parks Department asking us to be allowed to review all public input that led to the creation of the Policy Prohibition on canoes at Medina River Park.

#### **Item 5**

Consider staging a protest on Opening Day of the Medina River Park by having us in attendance with numerous canoes on our canoes with protest signs and a Petition to sign opposing the ordinances. This would be some time in January or February.

#### **Item 6**

I have written my to Councilman Art Hall and spoken with his representative, they in turn have spoken with Malcomn Matthews, the Park Director who has stated he will look into this Issue. If you have the time, consider writing letters or contacting your respective Council Person in San Antonio along with the Mayor asking that this ordinance be rescinded for the sections of rivers mentioned above.

In addition I am game for any other suggestions or action.

## **DIRECTION TO MOVE TOWARDS – LONG TERM & SHORT TERM**

Rescind the Policy against our launching Canoes & Kayaks at Medina River Park.

Rescind the Policy against our launching Canoes & Kayaks on the San Antonio River from South of Alamo Street and the tributary of the Medina River.

With respect to how and when we discuss these items, the Medina River Park would be something to discuss specifically as an item agenda some time in January or February at a Park Advisory Meeting.

With Respect to our other request to rescind the ordinance against our launching Canoes & Kayaks on the San Antonio River from South of Alamo Street and the entire tributary of the Medina River. This would be item of discussion at the Park Advisory Meeting in the next nine months to a year. They will have to address this eventually as the proposed river improvement to the south channel in the San Antonio River specifically calls for canoe and kayak trails. The subject of the Medina River included in this topic as we do not want similar policies enacted on any future parks on the Medina River if they are planned.

I have actually uncovered even more in terms of what I know about this issue but was trying to keep this article specific to (1) my initial discoveries, (2) some action items, and (3) suggestions on the direction we should move in the short term and long term to address this issue.

If you would like to know more give me a call and I can update you accordingly.

Gib Hafernick, 210-492-7517, or [Gibguy@Compuserve.com](mailto:Gibguy@Compuserve.com)

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### **Featured Website**

<http://www.paddling.net/>

If you are not familiar with Paddling.net, you are missing something. For one thing, everyday you can enter a lottery to win a boat and related gear. Of course, I can personally attest the odds aren't that great, because I have been entering for a long time and have never won anything.

The site has an interesting array of stories and articles of interest to paddlers plus paddling-related photographs. It publishes trip reports by state, so you can often find paddling information if you are going to an unfamiliar area. The site offers manufacturers information on a wide array of paddle craft and accessories. Even better, it publishes reviews of boats and paraphernalia by users, so you can see what other paddlers really think about a boat you might want to buy.

Check the site out and then come back daily to enter the drawing. It's free.

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### **Koppe Bridge Access above Hidalgo**

Over the years paddlers have asked about river access to the Brazos above Hidalgo Falls. Other than the Hwy 21 crossing west of College Station 50 miles upstream from Hidalgo, there are only two access points:

- (1) 28 miles upstream from Hidalgo where Koppe Bridge Road ends at the river, and
- (2) 26 miles upstream where Batts Ferry Road ends at the river.

The Batts Ferry access is not that great (and is probably going to be considered for closure in the future as well), so most people use the Koppe Bridge access. (In fact, we were thinking about using the Koppe Bridge access for the downriver race for the river festival this year.) But the Brazos County Roads and Bridges Dept has been asked by landowners and developers near Koppe Bridge Road to permanently close off access to the river. The Dept is currently keeping a list of people who call to say whether they want the access closed or left open. This is one of those opportunities to protect our access to a river. All you have to do is call the Roads and Bridges Dept (979-

822-2127) and tell them you are against closing the river access at Koppe Bridge Road. The more names they have on the list, the less inclined they will be to close off access.

Thanks for your help.  
Steve Daniel

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The rapids thundered up in front.  
The volume made me want to punt.  
Then I figured what the heck;  
The worst I'd do was crash and wreck,  
And now behold, yes all can see,  
My boat is bent into a "V."



# Alamo City Rivermen

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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: \_\_\_\_\_

## 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