

# The Alamo City Rivermen

# Babbler

Issue MMCCCLIX

August 2005

The monthly newsletter of the Alamo City Rivermen

## Padding the fine line between geek and Bubba.

Next

### Labor Day at Junction, September 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005

#### Meeting

August 10, 2005, Hungry Horse Rest.,  
12333 West Avenue, near the  
intersection with Rhapsody. 6:30 to  
9:00.

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#### Club Officers

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The Alamo City Rivermen have reserved the Patio at Morgan Shady Park in Junction on the Llano River for Labor Day weekend. September 2nd thru the 5th on Labor Day Weekend.

The Austin Paddling Club has reserved the location immediately adjacent to the "Patio" which is known as "My Spot". This was where we camped for the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. The Alamo City Rivermen have extended an invitation to the Austin Canoe Club to hang out at "The Patio" but we will be collecting on our end for the Rivermen while the Austin Canoe Club will collect on their end for "My Spot".

The price of "The Patio" is \$50 a day plus \$3 a day per person on the camp grounds.

Here is the Alamo City Rivermen Plan for that weekend:

#### September 2 – Friday

I am planning on going up Friday evening with the intention of setting up camp at the location called "The Patio". I expect to arrive sometime between 8 to 10 o'clock PM. I will eat dinner along the road someplace.

#### September 3 – Saturday

I will do some running in the morning and then have breakfast. You are essentially on your own for breakfast and lunch, but as a rule the breakfast tends to turn into community meals. I am planing on doing the canoeing from the State Park to Morgan's Shady Park a distance of about 6 miles. In the evening I am planning on doing some grilling on "The Patio". We have the option of going to Historic London Dance Hall to do some dancing for those interested.

#### September 4 – Sunday

I am planning on doing a bike ride on my road bike in the morning and then taking it easy. Generally there is a group going someplace I just don't know where. Breakfast and lunch repeat themselves. I will go into town to buy the groceries for the (1) Community Meal that we will have. That meal will be Calibacita with rice and bread. I would like to use several (2) burner stoves and rectangular dutch ovens for cooking the calibacita and charcoal and the standard dutch ovens for the rice. If you have one, consider bringing it as I expect a large crowd.

The cost of this meal is based on the following carefully constructed algorithm: (Total Grocery Cost)/total number of people eating it).

(Continued, next page)

## Upcoming Events

August 10, 2005	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
August 20, 2005	Ford Canoe Challenge, Local celebrities, city officials, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts compete in timed heats between the Convention Center and Rivercenter Mall.	Not a club event. 227-4262, ext. 104
September 2-5, 2005	Labor Day Trip, Morgan Shady Park, Junction, Texas (S. Llano River)	Gib Hafernicks, gibguy at compuserve dot com
September 14, 2005	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
September 18, 2005	Splash Triathlon, Seaworld	David Plylar, wavegrazer at lycos.com
September 23-25, 2005	Bird Island/Coastal Trip	Gary Tupa, gtupa at yahoo dot com
October 8-10, 2005	Angelina-Neches Forks	Ken Bennight, 826-7071, bennight at stic dot net
October 12, 2005	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
November 5, 2005	Goliad Canoe Trail, San Antonio River, Goliad	Randy Hohlaus, hohlaus at prodigy.net 493-7058
November 9, 2005	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
November 25-27, 2005	Turkey Trot	Randy Hohlaus, hohlaus at prodigy.net 493-7058
December 2005	Christmas Party in lieu of meeting	???????
January 11, 2006	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
January 2006	Freeze Trip	



(Labor Day at Junction, continued)

### *September 5 – Monday*

Breakfast and lunch repeat themselves. I will do some running in the morning and then have breakfast and gradually taking my time packing up returning to San Antonio in the afternoon.

### SOME INFORMATION PLUS SOME OTHER STUFF

Morgan's Shady Park the phone number for the campground is 325-446-2580, day or 325-446-2071, night. The location "The Patio" is situated on river left about 1 mile upstream of the bridge leading into Junction.

The website for the campground with directions is: <http://www.MorganShadyPark.Com>

There are showers and restroom accommodations and we have a nice grassy area for tent camping plus there are several other sites in our immediate vicinity.

There are various options for canoeing. The segments vary from 14 miles to 3 miles. Last year we had several different groups going on different sections of rivers. You can even just hang out at the campsite and do nothing at all.

The cost of this trip is based on the following carefully constructed algorithm: (Total cost of "The Patio" for days rented)/total number of people plus 3 dollars per day per person.

When arriving at the campground check in with the office and let them know you are with the Alamo City Rivermen. Lavern Harden is the owner and she is expecting us. We will collect all money at the campsite on and then turn it over to her. She actually likes our group as we are pretty well behaved plus we pay her for our group. So be nice and polite when visiting with her.

The Address for the Camp is as follow: 600 South 6th Street / Junction, Texas 76849

Directions:

1. From San Antonio take I-10 west to Junction, approximately 110 mile.
2. Exit IH-10 at the 456 marker.
3. Turn on to Hwy 377 / 83 to come to Junction. This becomes Main Street in Junction.
4. Follow Main Street to the Kimble County Courthouse.
5. Turn right on Sixth Street. (There is no marker to tell you that this is Sixth Street until you go one block. And as Laverne points out, "Well, you wanted to come to a small town!")
6. Stay on Sixth Street until you enter the park on the banks of the South Llano River.

Hope to see you there

Gib Hafernick; 210-492-7517, or, Gibguy at Compuserve dot com

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### **Campfire USA Paddling Program**

CampFire USA Balcones Council sponsors a Paddling Program open to kids ages 12 and up (under 12 if parent accompanying). Day and weekend paddle trips are scheduled throughout the year. We take both canoes and kayaks, and have both available for loan. The emphasis is on safety, fun, and learning good river skills. A one-day Orientation to Paddling class (required for new participants) is scheduled for Aug 27, 2005.

Last year we paddled the S. Llano, Rio Grande Boquillas Canyon, San Marcos River, Lighthouse Lakes Trails (coastal), and Guadalupe River. This year we have some repeats, plus Caddo Lake, Colorado Bend, and white water play days at Tom Miller Dam. See the Camp Fire USA web site at

<http://www.campfireusabalcones.org/programs/outdoor/paddling/index.htm>

or call 476-1861 for more information and to register. Camp Fire is for boys AND girls, and is a great way for families to spend time together.

Elizabeth Gray, Camp Fire USA Paddling Program, egray88 at hotmail dot com, 512-476-1861

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## 2005 Carolina Canoe Club's "Week of Rivers" Trip Report By Kathy Cusick and Kevin Longin

We left San Antonio Thursday, June 30th, in our truck and self-contained camper, and drove straight through (a 19-20 hour drive) to Smokey Mountain Meadows Campground in NC near Bryson City where the Carolina Canoe Club sponsors the "Week of Rivers" (for



A Few of the Texas Paddlers at Week of Rivers

great information on the campground go to: <http://smmcamp.tripod.com/> and [www.carolinacanoecub.com](http://www.carolinacanoecub.com) for the Carolina Canoe Club). The Carolina Canoe Club has a membership of greater than 700 and I would estimate at least 200 of them were at the Week of Rivers event. There were a significant number of paddlers who came from Texas, mostly Austin and Houston .

The fun part of the event really began for us on Saturday morning, when the Week of Rivers quickly becomes a way of life that revolves around talking about river levels, weather reports, paddling, and spending time with old friends and new acquaintances.

Since, most of the rivers back east run with a combination of dam release, and natural water flow that can't be completely determined until that particular day, there are morning meetings each day in the large group tent where this information was posted and discussed. Then, local club members volunteer to lead trips to rivers of their choice that day based on the information at the meeting. Each group splits off in the area around the tent, and plans are made to round up

a shuttle and head out for the day. There are usually trips for all paddling levels from beginner to expert. There are often clinics for the members put on by expert or professional boaters. Next year we hope to participate in Joe Greiners "Kinder Gentler Ocoee" trip/clinic. We had planned on it this year, but it was cancelled due to hurricane Cindy. Every year we come away as significantly better paddlers after this event, both because of the great rivers there as well as the opportunity to paddle with folks better than ourselves who have an interest in sharing their knowledge of paddling.

Not only is the paddling some of the best in the country, there are also many side activities available. The Nantahala Outdoor Center (NOC), has a large center with a great store, areas to picnic by the water, restaurants, and a great viewing area to watch folks in all sorts of water craft run Nantahala Falls. There are lots of sightseeing opportunities, steam trains, gem mines, and tons of general scenic drives.



Kathy at Blackberry Falls

**7-2-04 (Saturday) Cartecay Section II** 10 miles, Level: 2.8+ft or 700cfs (higher level than average, but perfect for paddling) Class I-II++ Kevin Longin & Kathy Cusick (OC-1), John and Ann Olden (Houston CC-OC1), Dave Ramsey and Crew (Houston-K-1) +10 or more other paddlers in various types of boats (Trip Leader: Joe Greiner )

The Cartecay River is nestled on the banks of the river in the beautiful North Georgia Mountains. It is perfect for novice and intermediate paddlers to hone their whitewater maneuvering skills. The Cartecay's is a great beginner-novice river. There are moderately technical rapids, characterized by Class II water and highlighted by three sizeable rapids and small-medium drops, but all



drops can be easily portaged. (First Fall, Blackberry Falls (Class II+), and the grand finale, Clear Creek Falls or “The Slide” (II ++)).

Although we were using this as a river to warm up run after our long drive, the rapids held enough consequences for those that were unprepared/unlucky that it reminded us never to underestimate the risks of paddling any river. (A kayaker encountered a submerged log at Mr. Twister = scary story with the reminder of a large bruise on her right arm (good thing she had a great hand roll!). An experienced boater in a C1 (kayak playboat converted to a canoe) had a roll-over at The Slide and an encounter with an underwater rock = a ~12-15cm diameter lump on the back of the head created through a high quality Kevlar helmet (which sustained a spider web fracture, A Houston kayaker rolled-over at The Slide and had an encounter with the same rock mentioned before = broken nose with nasty gash requiring 7 stitches;

**(Sunday) Little Tennessee** Class I-II- 1400cfs Good flow with the addition of extra rain during the shuttle. Trip leader = Rich. Our daughter Heather and her boy friend Colby drove over from Nashville, TN to join us for the next several days.

Ledges galore. Lots of surfing. At the end of the day Kevin’s arms ached from paddling up stream so much to get onto all the surf waves.

**7-4-05 (Monday) Cullasaja River** Trip leader: Bill. Kathy Cusick & Kevin Longin (OC-1), Heather, and Colby (K-1). The Cullasaja starts as a very steep and “creeky” river, with several huge waterfalls. We did go sightseeing after our paddle to see these majestic falls, and hike in to one of them. Be sure to visit the falls on the upper section. We put on the river below all the major drops, which was still a bit “creeky” for the first mile with class II+ rocky, fast, fun stuff. It slows down within a mile, with flatter, though still moving sections breaking up the rapids. There was plenty of good surfing, as well as great scenery. This was a fun little river, not far from camp, so makes a good novice run when you want a relaxing day.



#### **7-5-04 (Tuesday) Pigeon River - Upper Section,**

Level: 2500+csf (3 turbines) Class III-IV+ Trip Leaders: Joe Berry. Kevin Longin & Kathy Cusick (OC-1), Colby Bird (K-1), Christy Long (Houston CC K-1) + about 10 other paddlers.

The Pigeon is made up of the Upper and Lower sections, and we ran the Upper stretch, which is five miles long, running from the Waterville Dam to Hartford Tennessee. The Upper is the more challenging of the two sections, with several Class III rapids and a couple of Class IV drops. The most notable rapids for us were Lost Guide and Accelerator (a 25 yard stretch which loses 12-15 feet of elevation). Other rapids include: Powerhouse, Hawaii Five-O, Roller Coaster, Big Rock, Too Late, Vegamatic, Razor Blade, Super Glue, After Shave, and “Last One?”. Unlike last year (when we ran this a flood) the river felt fairly manageable although it was still very high with large standing waves that regularly swamped our boats. Kevin had a little difficulty at Lost Guide rapid, but Kathy was able to make the whole trip upright. A significant achievement in big water in an open boat.

**7-6-05 (Wednesday) Chattooga Section III, GA,** Earls Ford to Route 76 Bridge, Class II-III+ (IV+), 2.46ft (High), 13 miles of free flowing river (*i.e.* not dam controlled)



Kathy on Dick’s Creek Ledge

Trip leader = Charlie Laws (Charlie is a Houston, TX paddler, who now works for NOC as a guide). : Kevin Longin & Kathy Cusick (OC-1), Colby Bird (K-1), Donna & Bill Grimes, Jim Barton and Cliff Peery (all Houston CC –OC-1) as well as Christy Long (HoustonCC K-1). There was also a second group from our encampment with CCC, for a total of about 28 paddlers.

**Class III (+) Rapids:** Dicks Creek Ledge, Sandy Ford Rapid, The Narrows, Second Ledge (A 6-7 foot tall ledge), Eye of the Needle, Rollercoaster, Painted Rock, Bull Sluice (**Class IV(+)**, Mile 12.2)

The major rapid is Bull Sluice a Class IV rapid. On river right the line is through Double Drop (the “bull”) followed by the sluice, dodging Decapitation Rock in the middle of the river. This is the more difficult run with higher consequences for mistakes. Due to high water, those that decided to run the rapid chose the line on

river left called the Virginia Slide, or Single Drop. Charlie, Kevin, Kathy, Colby all had good runs (although Kathy's boat completely swamped and submerged in the hole / wave at the bottom).

This was a great day and we look forward to being able to visit section III again next year. We will probably work on our skills quite a bit more before attempting the more challenging Section IV in canoes or kayaks.



Kevin on Bull Sluice

(Thursday) Little River of the Smokies (TN) 3470-5000cfs flood stage truncated section 3 or "Elbow to the Y" run Class II-III, Min 2.5, Max. 4.5 – The description for water levels in this section states that between 2.5 and 3.0 feet, it is an excellent beginner-intermediate trip; from 3.0 to 4.5 feet it becomes much more significant, and above 4.5 feet, it is as pushy as the Ocoee but only 20-30 feet wide, and above 5.5 it is not recommended to run it.

All that being said, our best estimation is that the river level peaked at 5.1 feet just before we put on it. We determined that the river was not coming up by watching a tree of debris in the river as well as noting that there was no new debris coming downstream for the hour or so while prepping for the run and running shuttle.

This is usually a novice-intermediate run, but this was something altogether different. We didn't bother with bringing lunch or cameras as there would be no time to stop and no pull outs big enough for more than a couple of boats. It was a wild ride, but only a few swims took place. It was a great test of our river reading skills. Kevin got to practice a bow rescue just learned at our Swift Water Rescue class in May. We had about 10 cars of tourists following our progress on the road alongside the river, taking pictures and cheering us on.



**7-8-04 (Friday) Nantahala**, Near Bryson City, NC; 8 miles Class II-III

Kevin Longin & Kathy Cusick (OC-2), Rich (K-10)

The Indian word *Nantahala* means "land of the noonday sun," and aptly describes the steep-sided Nantahala Gorge as the sun doesn't get a chance to burn off the fairly consistent fog created by the warm moist air condensing over the almost icy water until later in the day. This makes a perfect habitat for lush groves of rhododendron (some of which were still in bloom), and mountain laurel.

The 5 mile run of constant waves and swift currents create what are basically Class II rapids (19 of them) with Class III Nantahala Falls waiting at the end.

We planned this run as a way to test our whitewater tandem abilities. It is fairly difficult to switch from solo to tandem in whitewater, since tandem requires rapid clear communication or the boat can end up in the wrong place at the wrong time quite easily. We had such a good time we ran the section twice. Both runs through Nantahala falls were good (upright), although the second run was



little better. The picture below is from our second run, taken by the professional photographer who sits at the falls taking pics all day long of NOC rafts, duckies and private boaters running Nantahala Falls.

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### **Proposed Swap (from Sean Winters)**

I've been out of "rivering", as I call it, for about 5 years and am looking to start again. My wife and I are not looking for anything fancy, just something for lazy trips down the Brazos, Guad, and wherever else we might happen off to on a weekend.

I have: Toshiba Satellite A10-S127, 2Ghz Celeron, 15.1" screen, 512MB RAM, 80GB HD, CDRW/DVD drive, built-in wifi, fresh battery, 2 power supplies/chargers (one for your desk and one for your laptop bag). Unit is 1.5 years old and in great shape. Some wear on the keys from use but no scratches on the case or the screen. I paid \$1250 for it new and upgraded to the 80G drive for another \$250. I still have the original box, packing materials and install CD (XP Pro and all Toshiba utilities).

You have: Canoe in great shape that will carry two adults and ~100lbs of gear. Paddles and PFDs would be nice too.

I'm in the Waco area but would be willing to meet you somewhere if we can work something out. Email me at seantx at gmail dot com, and I will be glad to send you pics.

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### **Annual Mustang Island State Park Beach Trip Report Weekend of July 22-24, 2005**

Participants: Kathy Cusick, Kevin Longin, Gary & Cathy Tupa, Virginia Villarreal, Kirk Cammarata

Once again we made our annual trek to the beach at Mustang Island for a weekend of beach camping. The full moon was on the 21st, so we still had a nice big moon that rose over the water each night at about 10pm. This was a small group, with only 6 members showing up, but a good time was had by all. The weather was great and the surf was a great deal of fun.

Most of us arrived pretty early on Friday evening, July 22nd, and got the camp set up in pretty good time. Due to hurricane Emily passing through earlier in the week, the port-o-potties and picnic tables had been removed from the beach. Since Gary and Cathy Tupa had those items covered, it was not a big problem. We still had the shower right next to our site, and plenty of shade tarps for lounging in the shade.

Everyone brought their sit-on-tops and had a great time surfing. The surf was not huge, but the waves came in nice sets and there were lots of rides caught all the way to the beach. No dolphin sighting this year. Other than solo kayak surfing, Gary enjoyed surf fishing, while Cathy and Virginia enjoyed sand chair surfing. Kathy and Kevin paddled out to one of the oil rigs, and the swells out there were big! It was a lot of fun paddling down the backsides of those swells, and they rode a wave in from the farthest point out that they were breaking into the beach in the tandem boat.



Saturday night we will did a dutch oven thing (green beans), but the highlight was the smoker that Gary brought along to smoke pork loin and sausage. It was wonderful! We had roasted corn on the cob, cookies and brownies to round out the menu. We will also do a potluck

breakfast Sat and Sun Virginia Villarreal whipped up a great breakfast. We had a nice beach fire that was really red hot as the wind kicked up Saturday evening to fan the flames.

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## Angelina-Neches Forks October 8-10, 2005

Ken Bennight

I so enjoyed Tom Rust's Spring trip to Caddo Lake that I was inspired to set a similar trip this Fall. The location is not quite so far as Caddo Lake, though it is in deep East Texas. It's a beautiful place well worth the drive. The trip will be Columbus Day weekend, For those who get the holiday, it's a wonderful opportunity. I don't get the holiday myself, so I'm taking the time.



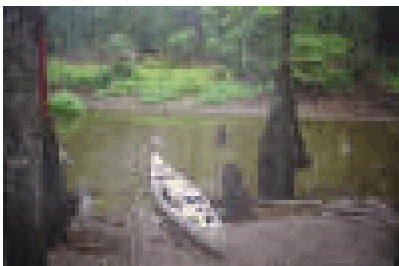
The name "Angelina-Neches Forks" refers to the confluence of the Angelina and Neches Rivers, which occurs in the upper reaches of B.A. Steinhagen Reservoir between Woodville and Jasper. B.A. Steinhagen is slightly down the Angelina River from Sam Rayburn Reservoir.

The Big Thicket National Preserve begins just below B.A. Steinhagen so, although the Forks are not within the preserve itself, they are well within the historical Big Thicket. The accompanying Mapquest map is misleading in that, the two previous times I have been there, the river channels are discernable much farther downstream than depicted. The actual confluence is readily identifiable.

As you can see, the main swamp is inside the "Y" of the confluence. As you paddle along the main river channel, you see bays open up with views similar to the accompanying picture. The apparent grassy bank is

actually water with a floating vegetative mat. I tried and can attest that the mats are too thick to paddle through.

If you penetrate farther, however, you can proceed up sloughs to get a view such as the one with the beached canoe, where I had lunch on a previous trip.



We will put-in Saturday, paddle to a Corps of Engineers campground, accessible only by water, probably along the banks of the Angelina. We should have time for a little exploring Saturday and then more exploring in earnest Sunday. Monday will be for a little more exploring, paddling

out, and driving home. I am not a Dutch-oven cooker myself, so unless someone volunteers to coordinate communal meals, food will be on your own.



Martin Dies, Jr. State Park is on the banks of B.A. Steinhagen, below the Forks. On my previous trips, I have put in there. That is a possibility for this trip, but I am presently leaning toward an upstream put-in at Bevilport, on the Angelina River. Whichever place you choose, no shuttle is necessary; the put-in and take-out are the same. I will need an advance headcount to get adequate Corps of Engineers camping permits. Please email me at [klbennight@yahoo.com](mailto:klbennight@yahoo.com).



## 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

# 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 (individual) or \$25.00 (family).

Please use this name for your membership roll: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send mail to the following address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Happy Paddling. Thank you.

Member, Alamo City Rivermen Canoe and Kayak Club

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_