

The Alamo City Rivermen Babbler

Issue MMCCLXIII

November 2006

The monthly newsletter of the Alamo City Rivermen

Padding the fine line between geek and Bubba.

2006 Turkey Trot Goes Islander!

(New & Revised)

Next Meeting

November 8, 2006, Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near the intersection with Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.

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Randy Hohlaus

The Head Turkey is saying that this year has been so rough, that after dodging Thursday's basting pan he will not be in the mood to have to break down his tent more than once this year. In fact, it has been so rough that he feels like the stuffing has been knocked out of him, so we agreed to change the format again and figure a way to do a two day trip without having to pack up on his Big Day. Since Fayette County lifted its burn ban this past month, he agreed that the Trot will move back to a favored section of river this year. Last year we did Little Webberville Park down to Bastrop, with a recon of the Freeze Trip Island. This year we will move downstream to a little more remote section, between Smithville and La Grange on the Colorado.

We will float from LCRA Plum Park on the Colorado to La Grange, from Saturday November 25 through Sunday November 26. The total trip length will be about 19 miles. This stretch has no road or bridge access, so you will have to be entirely self sufficient. We will camp on an island, have a great chance to fish, chill out, catch z's, birdwatch, whatever. The island we are shooting for is about 6 miles down from the Park. We will stay there Saturday night. My log from our trip in '02 says that this was a good spot. Now, 4 years later, it still should be, but come prepared. There is another island about 1 more mile down where we camped in primo style in '99, but my log also said that it got overgrown. This is a good stretch for novices, and is quite scenic. If you need to rent a boat, the nearest are Cook's Canoe Linery in Webberville, (512) 276-7767, or Howell's Canoe Livery in Columbus, (979) 732-3816. Neither is very close.

(Continued, next page)

Upcoming Events

November 4, 2006	Goliad Canoe Trail—4th Annual Flotilla	
November 8, 2006	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
November 24-26, 2006	Turkey Trot, Colorado River	Randy Hohlaus, hohlaus at prodigy dot net, 493-7058
December 2006	Christmas Party in lieu of meeting	Chris Vogeler's House
January 10, 2007	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00.
January 2007	Freeze Trip	Gib Hafernick, gibguy at compuserve dot com
February 14, 2007	Monthly Meeting (make sure you have roses delivered during the day, so you'll be permitted to come to the meeting)	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00
March 14, 2007	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00
April 11, 2007	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00
May 9, 2007	Monthly Meeting	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 6:30 to 9:00



(Turkey Trot, continued)

Camping and access under our permit will be \$5 per vehicle, and per night, you pay your own way in. Note that LCRA has a burn ban in the park itself, but you can still use gas stoves, just no campfires. However, as I will be in no great hurry on this weekend, we will plan to meet at the park Friday evening anytime after noon. If you need to, you could rent canoes from the outfitters in Columbus, but probably would have to get them yourself. This will allow you to have Thanksgiving with family and friends and catch the Cowboys game before heading out.

Warning, I don't know what time it will be, but I may break the cardinal rule of camping and try to get TV of the annual Turkey weekend game between Texas A&M and t.u.¹ at the park. If not, there will definitely be a radio tuned to it. Bring the nachos and beer, while we cheer. I anticipate we will do our own shuttle this time, as the nearest shuttle guys are either in Webberville or Columbus. Meals in the park are on your own, I'll probably grill a steak. The next morning on Saturday, we'll plan on running a shuttle, maybe at 9:00, maybe at

¹Editor's Note: "t.u." appears to be a reference to THE University.

10:00, whenever we run out of flapjacks and coffee. But if you are planning to join us without camping over, you need to be at Plum Park by 9:00am on Saturday. We will likely self shuttle, but bring at least a 20 spot just in case we hire a shuttle driver to save time. We will leave the cars in La Grange, and will need a few volunteers to bring everyone back to Plum Park. Those cars can be left there until Sunday. However, we will not be responsible if there is overnight damage or theft to any car, but we have not had problems in the past on this river.

The Saturday dinner on the island will be community dutch oven shrimp etouffee, maybe with some of the catch of the day thrown in, salad, french bread, dessert. All other meals will be on your own. Take out will be at the Hwy 71 crossing at La Grange, about a 13 mile float on Sunday.

How to get to Plum Park. From La Grange, take Highway 71 West for about eight miles and turn right on Prairie Valley Road (County Road 448). Travel approximately two miles to the site entrance. If you want to go, I need to know and get you on the list for meal planning, and in case we have to deal with flood conditions. There will be a trip fee based on the cost of the dinner meal and shuttle, if necessary. Email Randy Hohlaus at hohlaus at prodigy dot net or call 210-493-7058 to sign up. See you on the water.

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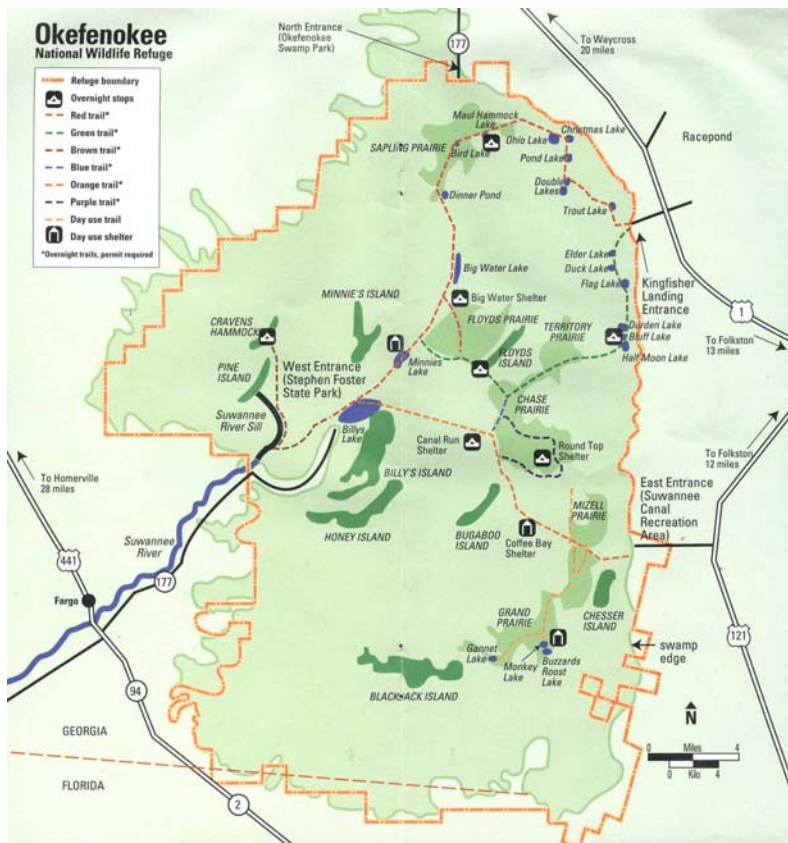
Okefenokee

Ken Bennight

Last Summer, Susan and I drove to South Carolina for vacation. Along the way, we passed the Okefenokee swamp, which is in southern Georgia, south of Waycross and east of Valdosta.. The largest part of the swamp is within the 396,315 acre Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge.

Home of the cartoon opossum Pogo,² the Okefenokee has 110 miles of canoeable waterways. When passing, Susan and I stopped at the visitor's center, and I bought a copy of a booklet, "Paddling the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge" by David O'Neil and Elizabeth A. Domingue. It offers detailed information on the paddling trails.

Both day trips and overnight ones are available. On overnight trips, you must generally camp on wooden platforms, because dry land is hard to come by. The day trips range from a little over 2



²"We have met the enemy, and he is us." <http://www.pogopossum.com/>

miles to almost 11 miles. Overnight trips range from two to five days. The more remote trails are not always well-marked and are sometimes overgrown with aquatic vegetation.



In planning trips, especially camping ones, most of us are accustomed to checking weather forecasts. That is advisable with the Okefenokee, too, but the Okefenokee has another type of forecast I had not previously encountered: an alligator forecast.

(<http://www.okefenokee.com/gators.htm>) There are enough alligators around popular Texas paddling sites that I imagine the difference between here and there is less the concentration of alligators than that the Okefenokee caters better to paddlers. I would further predict that, with a measure of common sense, Okefenokee paddlers will have more trouble with insects than with alligators.

The trails are designated with colors. The day trips tend to stay in well-traveled areas, and if you use them, you may encounter other paddlers and sometimes power boats. The overnight trips are mostly in paddler-only areas.

The Okefenokee is hardly a weekend paddle trip, but when planning larger expeditions, it's something we should keep in mind.

PS: If you're not familiar with Pogo, among the things you missed is his take on a familiar Christmas carol:

Deck us all with Boston Charlie,
Walla Walla, Wash., an' Kalamazoo!
Nora's freezin' on the trolley,
Swaller dollar cauliflower alley-garoo!

Don't we know archaic barrel,
Lullaby Lilla boy, Louisville Lou?
Trolley Molly don't love Harold,
Boola boola Pensacoola hullabaloo!

Donkey Bonny brays a carol,
Antelope Cantaloup, 'lope with you!
Chollie's collie barks at Barrow,
Harum scarum five alarum bung-a-loo!



Alamo City Rivermen Mileage Log Sheet

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

Estimated Miles: _____ Comments: _____

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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 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