



The Alamo City Rivermen

Babbler

Issue MMCCLXXVI

May 2008

The monthly newsletter of the Alamo City Rivermen

Padding the fine line between geek and Bubba.

New Meeting Time

Next Meeting

May 14, 2008, Hungry Horse
Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near
the intersection with Rhapsody.

7:00 to 9:00.

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Club Officers

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(looking for a replacement editor)

Please note the new meeting time. We have been late starting fairly consistently, so at the last meeting we decided to push the start time back to 7:00 in the hope we would actually start nearer then.

Wild Man of the Navidad Trip, July 19-20

The Navidad River rises at the juncture of the East and West Navidad rivers and Middle Creek two miles east of Schulenberg in southern Fayette County and flows south-southeast for seventy-four miles to its mouth on the Lavaca River, below Lake Texana in southern Jackson County.

Major towns along the river include Edna and Morales, and major tributaries of the river include Sandy and Mustang creeks. The river is flanked generally by flat terrain with local shallow depressions, surfaced by clay and sandy loam that supports water-tolerant hardwoods, conifers, and grasses.

It is a small stream and not suitable for paddling for most its length. In the lower section near Lake Texana, however, we can expect reasonable paddling levels with a little rain. And it rains more there than here in San Antonio.

As a side benefit you may get a glimpse of the Wild Man of the Navidad. Legends of the Wild Man date back to antebellum times. It is said that slaves along the Navidad River in Lavaca and Jackson Counties called it "The Thing that Comes," for, though no one saw it, there was always evidence that something had come.

Reports are that on moonlit nights from as early as 1836, people would find food missing from their cabins, even though an intruder would have had to step over sleeping dogs to reach it. Families stopped

(Continued, next page)

Upcoming Events

May 11-16, 2008	Buffalo River, Arkansas	George Lackey, 15maggie15 at suddenlink dot net, 325-944-0175.
May 14, 2008	Monthly Meet & Greet	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 7:00 to 9:00
June 2-7, 2008	Green River, Desolation and Gray Canyons, Utah	George Lackey, 15maggie15 at suddenlink dot net, 325-944-0175.
June 11, 2008	Monthly Meet & Greet	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 7:00 to 9:00
July 9, 2008	Monthly Meet & Greet	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 7:00 to 9:00
July 19-20, 2008	Wild Man of the Navidad Trip (paddle the Navidad and car camp at primitive site)	Ken Bennight, klbennight at yahoo dot com
July 28-August 9, 2008	Big Salmon and Yukon Rivers in the Yukon (trip full)	George Lackey, 15maggie15 at suddenlink dot net, 325-944-0175.
August 13, 2008	Monthly Meet & Greet	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 7:00 to 9:00
September 10, 2008	Monthly Meet & Greet	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 7:00 to 9:00



(Wild Man, continued)

fattening hogs, because a fat hog would inevitably be replaced by a scrawny one. Though valuables such as watches or money were never taken, sometimes tools would disappear only to reappear later, beautifully polished. Occasionally searchers would find a camp, but the Wild Man never returned while they waited.

In 1851, residents of the county captured an escaped slave. Occam's Razor says that poor soul was the source of the legend. But Texans never being inclined to let facts interfere with a good story, they've kept up legends of the Wild Man of the Navidad to this day. Who knows . . . ?

The actual segment we paddle will depend on river levels at the time. We will meet Saturday morning



Navidad River in March 2007 near intersection of FM 530 and FM 2437.



(at a location to be designated later, perhaps the Dairy Queen in Edna) and paddle. You need not carry your camping gear in your boat. When we are finished paddling, we will drive 25 miles or so up FM 530 toward Hallettsville to the intersection of FM 530 and FM 2437. We'll camp on Ken and Susan Bennight's land and return home Sunday. If you wish to drive back to San Antonio Saturday evening, you may of course.

(Portions of this article were taken from the Handbook of Texas Online and others from rootsweb.ancestry.com.)

Ken Bennight

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Paddling in the City Limits

As the City of San Antonio expands its city limits, its restrictions on paddling become more relevant. Not too long ago, the City annexed much of the Medina River south of town, thereby closing that area to paddling, at least according to the Park Rangers' interpretation of the relevant code provision. Fortunately, the City has recently enacted a new code provision regulating paddling in the City. Unfortunately, the new section leaves vast discretion in the Director of Parks and Recreation.

By ordinance dated April 17, 2008, the City Code now contains the following:

Sec. 22-91. Operation of canoes, kayaks or other non-motorized vessels on lakes, ponds, river or streams except for the portion of the San Antonio River between Hildebrand Avenue and South Alamo St.

(a) Canoes, kayaks or other non-motorized vessels may be operated in any public lake, pond, river or stream within the city limits, but only in areas designated for such use by the director of parks and recreation. Such areas shall not include:

(1) The San Antonio River between Hildebrand Avenue and South Alamo St. which is covered by sections 22-143 and 22-144, or

(2) On man-made drainage channels. Operation of non-motorized vessels in the excepted areas must be by special permit issued in the discretion of the director of parks and recreation or the director of downtown operations.

(b) All persons operating allowed vessels on the above reference bodies of water shall wear a life preserver vest in an appropriate manner at all times. The city does not have knowledge of the condition or quality of any water way or its suitability for use in canoeing or kayaking. Any operation of the above referenced vessels is at the sole risk of the user.

(c) The director of parks and recreation may temporarily prohibit operation of vessels on such bodies of water during flood hazard times or at other times to protect the public health and safety.

(d) The operation of canoes, kayaks and other non-motorized vessels is prohibited during special events (such as 4th of July fireworks and model boat races) on notice of the director of the parks and recreation department.

(e) Any person violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a class C misdemeanor.

(Ord. No. 2008-04-17-0317, § 12, 4-17-08)

As you can see, man-made channels and the San Antonio River above S. Alamo are off limits, but the director has discretion to permit paddling in other areas. It would no doubt behoove the Alamo City Rivermen to submit to the director a proposed list where paddling should be permitted. Those areas might include:

1. All of the San Antonio River below S. Alamo St.
2. All of the Medina River.
3. All of Salado and Leon Creeks and other creeks with flow adequate to support paddling.
4. Woodlawn Lake, Elmendorf Lake, and all other lakes in the City limits with public access as to which paddling is not prohibited by another governmental entity. The San Antonio Water System and the San Antonio River Authority should be considered "other governmental entities."
5. All lakes without public access, but only with the consent of one authorized to grant access.

Whether to send such a letter and what to include in it would be a good topic for discussion at the May meeting.

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Access Points on Navidad, Just Above Lake Texana

On March 22, 2008, I scouted the three lower-most access points on the Navidad River just above Lake Texana. Starting with the lowest and moving upstream:

1. FM 530 at the Navidad. The river is 60+ feet wide and ample for paddling. I observed no flow and assumed it was lake backup. There is good access to river left.
2. County Road 401. The river is much narrower, but the flow was good. Paddleability was marginal in that it would frequently be necessary to pull the boat over sandy shoals. With a little rainfall, it would be better of course. There is a gauge on the bridge. Access can be had from either side, but it is best from river left.
3. County Road 283. River width and flow are as above. Access is acceptable on either side. The banks are steep, but there is a good place to beach boats. There is also a gauge at this bridge.

Finding this crossing is a little more interesting than most. Travel north from Edna on State Highway 111, which runs from Edna to Yoakum. At Morales, take a right on County Road 2831. You will see a sign for the

Morales Baptist Church. County Road 2831 quickly makes a “T.” Take a left, and then take the first right on County Road 283. The bridge comes up quickly after that.

Though I intended to check the gauges online when I got home, I forgot to do so. The flow information available online now goes back only to April 30, 2008. Between then and May 10, the river has been hovering between approximately 7.3 feet and 7.5 feet. My guess is that it was about the same in March.

Ken Bennight

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New Paddle-Oriented Store

Joe Salvador reports that there is a new paddling-oriented store in town, Texas Paddlesports. It is located at 18720 Stone Oak Parkway and sells kayaks, canoes, fly-fishing equipment, clothing and accessories.

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