



The Alamo City Rivermen

Babbler

Issue MMCLXXXII

November 2008

The monthly newsletter of the Alamo City Rivermen

Padding the fine line between geek and Bubba.

2008 ACR Turkey Trot Returns to the Roost

Next Meeting

November 12, 2008, Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near the intersection with Rhapsody. **7:00 to 9:00.**

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If you have trouble remembering the tenth anniversary ACR Turkey Trot last year, there's a good reason – it never happened. High water and bad weather conspired like Sacco and Vanzetti to keep us off the water. Well, high water won't be a problem this year, so let's try it again!

Ten (ok, then, eleven) short years ago we held our first Turkey Trot down the Colorado, from Bastrop to Smithville. It was an eventful trip, into the teeth of a rapidly moving storming norther that caused our trippers to congregate in Bastrop at the Oyster Bar's fireplace instead of loading boats. But Fearless Leader knew how to read long-range radar. The lightning and rain swept thru by noon, and our local outfitter led us to a secret put-in that shaved miles off our trip. Thereafter, we spent a two nights and a layover day on an almost island, one of our best trips ever. Raw oysters, eels caught, fly fishing lessons, pecan orchard cannons, secret spots and glorious weather.

In all that time, we have never returned to this stretch of the river. This year we will, in a tardy commemoration. The trip will be from Saturday, November 29, to Sunday, November 30. As always, enjoy Thanksgiving with family and friends and then put in with us for a relaxing two day float away from it all. We will paddle over 20 miles from Bastrop to our takeout in Smithville. Our night's goal: a big remote island about half way down.

This trip is really nice this time of year. The weather has usually blessed us with pleasant days and cool nights, and the tree lined bluffs are usually at their height of autumn color change. And we'll always be hoping for those bald eagle sightings we have had each year. This trip is primarily flatwater, with small riffle rapids, suitable for beginners with flat water skills, who can maneuver around an occasional sweeper. Everyone will have to be self contained, as we will overnight camp on

(Continued, next page)

Upcoming Events

November 12, 2008	Monthly Meet & Greet	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 7:00 to 9:00
November 28 to November 30, 2008	Turkey Trot, Bastrop to Smithville, island camping	Randy Hohlaus, hohlaus at prodigy dot net
December 13, 2008	Christmas Paddle and Potluck	kmcusick at juno dot com
January 14, 2009	Monthly Meet & Greet	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 7:00 to 9:00
January 2009	Freeze Trip?	
February 11, 2009	Monthly Meet & Greet	Hungry Horse Rest., 12333 West Avenue, near Rhapsody. 7:00 to 9:00



(Turkey Trot, continued)

an inaccessible island. Come prepared for weather conditions. This is a good extended wild river experience, with few people to be seen and no bridges or access points from beginning to end. So when you're in, you're in.

We will meet at 9:00am Saturday November 29th at the Tahitian Village launch point below Bastrop. I will send directions out. Rising Phoenix Adventures in Bastrop, 306 Industrial Blvd., across from the State Park, will run our shuttle. We will drop boats and gear, and then shuttle the vehicles down to the takeout in Smithville at the Hwy 71 bridge and ramp by the VFW Hall. Neither I nor the Alamo City Rivermen club is responsible for break-ins, theft, or vandalism. There is a \$25 per boat fee to Rising Phoenix for the shuttle. In addition, canoe or kayak rental is available from Rising Phoenix. For two days rental, it's \$90 for a single kayak, \$100 for a canoe, and \$125 for a double kayak. This comes with paddles, life jackets, dry bag, etc. If you rent a boat, the shuttle fee is included for free. Contact them directly at 512-677-2305. Let them know you are on our trip.

Saturday night we will have a community dutch oven meal on the island, starting with h'ordeurves and the beverage program du jour, my pick of rib-sticking grub, and ending with a surprise cool dessert (if it works). I'll let you know if you need to bring something for the beverage program. I'll bring the fixin's, but I expect help gathering wood, setting the latrine, prepping the meal, and then cleanup. The next morning bring your own breakfast food, we'll have the two-burners going for our typical rolling Rivermen breakfast. Lunches on the river will be on your own. Let me know if you have tables, two-burner stoves, dutch ovens, chimneys and fire pans. May need help with some of these; will let you know. Also, I will need you to come prepared to take some community gear, charcoal or food in or on your boat, as it will not all fit in mine. Everyone will be assessed the dinner charge, when it is determined.

Other than that, you need to outfit yourselves. Bring your earplugs if the pecan cannons are still going. We'll take out at Smithville Sunday afternoon. Let me know by email if you are coming. Bring cash to cover the shuttle and dinner. And send me your cell and /or phone number and email, in case rising water or weather will cause me to cancel. And if you catch an eel, dinner is free! Look forward to seeing you on the water.

Randy Hohlaus, 210/845-2033 cell

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Alamo City Rivermen Christmas Potluck Saturday, December 13th, 2008

Christmas Potluck on Sat, Dec 13th, 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm
(with options to paddle prior and camp in the yard)

Kevin Longin and Kathy Cusick will host the party at their house. There can be a paddle that day if we have a volunteer who will run that. Either Nichols Landing to 311, or 311 to Rebecca Creek Road are really close by. By having the Potluck late afternoon/early evening, folks will have the option to paddle or not. Options are as follows:

1. Come to the house at 3:00 pm for the gathering, which will officially end at 7:00 pm.
2. Paddle late morning/early afternoon prior to coming by the house for the potluck. (Any volunteers to lead that paddle?) We might have some rain in Nov. If not, it will be plastic boats only.
3. Plan to stay over or stay late, as can have a fire in the yard. Anyone wanting to camp in the yard can do so.
4. Maybe some can even paddle again on Sun.

We live off of Hwy 281 in Spring Branch, just south of the intersection of Hwy 281 and Hwy 306 on the north side of Canyon Lake. The actual address is 2294 Puter Creek Road, Spring Branch, TX 78070 for those who want to Mapquest or Google it. Otherwise, come north on Hwy 281, ~ 5 miles past the Spring Branch Store. Make a Right onto Puter Creek Road, which winds left and then right as it goes up a small hill. We are the 2nd and 3rd house on the right, both with circular drives. Feel free to pull into either driveway, as there is not much parking on the street.

If the weather is pleasant, we can have a fire, but the size of the fire will depend on the burn ban. If no burn ban, we have a 6' fire pit. If we have a burn ban, we have 2 chimineas and a raised fire pan. For those who might want to camp, we have a guest house for an all night bathroom, and a truck camper and trailer on site for alternate "facilities". Tents can go pretty much anywhere in the backyard.

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QuickStart your Kayak or Canoe Course, Sat, November 15th, 2008 **Instructors: Kathy Cusick and Kevin Longin**

With the hope of rain on the horizon, and our opportunity for great winter paddling here in South Texas, Kevin and I thought it would be a good idea to propose a basic course. We are American Canoe Association Instructors for both Canoe and Kayak at the introductory level. There is a very basic class for both boat types that is only a few hours long, and we could run one or both, depending on interest level. With only one class it would be 3 hours and will probably take 4-5 hours in total if both boat types are presented. These courses do not require that the participants get wet, but it is not excluded if glorious weather is available. We can tailor this to our group needs to a certain extent, and time can vary depending on interest. The class will be in Spring Branch, near either the Upper Guad or Canyon Lake, depending on water levels.

We can hold the class on **Sat, November 15th**. I would need to know by Nov 3rd in order to register the course. The course will require that participants are insured. Each American Canoe Association Member is

automatically covered, or you can pay \$20 each for the insurance for the day. If you are new to the sport or have never belonged to ACA, I would suggest becoming a member. Membership is available for non-members on a 6 month trial basis for only \$10, includes a subscription to Paddler Magazine which has great information in it and supports a national organization that supports paddling. That would cover you for the class and give you a chance to see if you would like to remain a member of ACA. After the 6 month trial membership, full membership is available with a discount for being an Alamo City Rivermen / Paddle America Club member. You can register on-line and should get a member number right away.

<http://www.americancanoe.org/join/join.lasso>

QuickStart Your Kayak is a brief, three-hour introduction to paddling a kayak. Students are presented with basic information on dressing to paddle safely, potential hazards and simple rescues. A minimal paddle skill set is presented and practiced, allowing students to safely and comfortably maneuver on still water.

QuickStart Your Canoe is a brief, three-hour introduction to paddling a canoe. Students are presented with basic information on boat control, paddling apparel, potential hazards and simple rescues. An entry level of paddling skills is presented and practiced, allowing students to safely and effectively maneuver on flat-water. While both of these are designed as stand-alone courses, the interested paddler can progress to more advanced levels of instruction. These subsequent courses offer greater paddling skill development through additional guided, on-water practice time.

Please let me know the following by e-mail (kmcusick@juno.com):

1. If you are interested.
2. How many participants and their names.
3. Which boat/class type, canoe or kayak or both.
4. If you will become an ACA member for the class (so I know how to register).
5. If you have a specific area or item you wish to have covered.

I will get back to you by Wed, October 29th regarding finalization. Please do not expect a response prior to that, as I will be abroad and not have access to e-mail.



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