

RIVERMEN

CANOE CLUB

"PADDLING THE FINE LINE BETWEEN GEEK & BUBBA"

www.AlamoCityRivermen.org



Officers and Newsletter Editor are Needed for 2003

All positions are available. See article inside. Please support our club with your help!

Turkey Trot Set for November 29th

Do the Thanksgiving thing on Thursday with Mom or Aunt Bee and then cut loose for a (3) day & (2) night canoe trip down the Colorado River from Smithville to La Grange distance 37 miles. Fishing, birding (bald eagles have been seen on previous trips) and all without the crowds and logistics of trying to get too far from home. First night camp out at LCRA Plum Creek, mile 18 with the second night island camping, mile 30.

Dutch oven community cooking in the evening both nights. Friday night clam chowder and Saturday night Indian lamb stew with rice. Several people had indicated an option of catching up with us at LCRA Plum creek on Saturday if so you need to contact LCRA that you will be launching on Saturday from that location. Cost of trip is dinner for Friday & Saturday night plus shuttle service to be provided by Longhorn Canoes in Columbus Texas. You need to provide for your own breakfast and lunch.

Meet at Hwy 71 & the Colorado River (near Smithville) at 9:00 am on Friday, November 29. We will unload canoes and then run shuttle. I need a firm RSVP to plan for food in the evenings and you need to get your own canoe and equipment. Further details contact me. Gib Hafernick, 210-822-8901 or Gibguy@Compuserve.com

Another Muleshoe Outing Happening on Feb 15th/17th. See Article Inside!

Muleshoe Bend Exploratory Trip in October was a Very Cool Weekend Outing! We now have another Muleshoe set for Feb. See Article in Newsletter!

Basura Bash Clean Up Saturday November 9th Meet at Mission Street Bridge 10 AM.

We will clean from shore and possible paddle a section of the San Antonio River as it will have plenty of water in it. Contact Chris Vogeler at AlamoChris@aol.com Come on down as this is really fun to participate in and really helps the community!

Rivermen Meeting ***Wed 11-13-02***

The Barbecue Station
Loop 410 & Harry Wurzbach
210-824-9191
6:30 - 7:30

Program

Planning Meeting
Work on choosing
Community Award Recipient
and officers for 2003
Christmas Party- Help!

★ The Stars of our Organization! ★

President: Chris Vogeler
AlamoChris@aol.com
210-863-8622

Vice Pres: Randy Hohlaus
Hohlaus@prodigy.net
210-493-7058

Treasurer & Secretary
Marie Searight
marie@wireweb.net
830-625-0604

Editor: Chris Vogeler
AlamoChris@aol.com
210-863-8622

Mailings: Pam Vandermey
pvandermey@yahoo.com



MEMBER BENEFITS

As an ACA (American Canoeing Association) Paddle America affiliated club, Alamo City Rivermen Members are entitled to an optional Paddle America membership in the ACA. This includes a subscription to the magazine Paddler which is really a fine publication. This Paddle America membership benefit will save you \$10.00 over the regular dues. To join you must send the ACA a copy of the official ACR Paddle America membership form letter which you can receive by calling our Officers. The form letter is also in our newsletter every fall when our dues renewal notification occurs. We will not process this for you, you must do it yourself and you must use the form letter the Rivermen provide you to receive the \$10 discount.

Another great benefit is a 10% discount at Nantahala Outdoor Center at 800-232-7238 or www.noc.com Make sure you mention that you're a member of Alamo City Rivermen and ask for our discount. Our membership form is in this newsletter!

ARTICLES / PHOTOS WANTED

If anyone has information on water related topics that would be of interest to our members we want it. If anyone would like to write articles on water related topics and or trip reports we can always use help! Photos would be great also! E-mail all articles to Chris Vogeler:

AlamoChris@aol.com

or mail to: Chris Vogeler
c/o Landstar
10615 Perrin Beitel, Ste. 304
San Antonio, TX 78217

Newsletter by E-mail

Anyone wanting the newsletter by e-mail will need Adobe reader which is free at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html> This is very exciting for our club and please give it a try. It works very well and the more receiving the newsletter by mail is very important to the club for many reasons! AlamoChris@aol.com to get on list!

GET YOUR RIVERMEN

****CLUB DECALS BY MAIL****

ACR club decal stickers are now available by mail order. The possibilities for these four inch by four inch four-color gems are endless. Buy one for each side of your boat, buy one for your car, buy one for each of your paddle blades, stick 'em on your dry bags, put them on your rain suit, sew it to your pfd, trade 'em, heck, take a couple of extra ones to patch your tent with. If you would like to get one or a baker's dozen of these little gems, send your order with \$3.00 for each decal you want to ACR, c/o Randy Hohlaus, 13747 Cedar Canyon, San Antonio, Texas 78231. All orders are confidential.



Hamilton Pool - Check out the web site. It's worth the visit!

http://www.co.travis.tx.us/tnr/parks/graphic/parks_graphic/hamilton_pool.htm
and http://www.october.com/travel/hamilton_pool/

Can we paddle Hamilton Creek? This may be good in the spring! This is a known home to the endangered golden-cheeked warbler. This was a tip from Kevin McNeil. Chris Vogeler AlamoChris@aol.com

MARKET PLACE

For Sale: Hobie float cat 75 expedition package. Purchased January of this year. Only been used about 10 times. Anyone interested in buying it please e-mail Luis Gonzalez. Luis lives in Laredo and can deliver it to San Antonio. Paid 750 dollars for this and will sell it for 550.

dentalcreations@earthlink.net

For Sale: 16 foot Reflection Canoe--two passenger with third seat to use as solo constructed from Royalex three cane seats extra wide touring canoe teal color, black plastic rail knee pads Kevlar caps front and back good condition includes two paddles \$450 contact -- Larry at either home: 210-493-7831 or cell: 210-573-3715

Stolen Boat From: "dean lewis" ondebike@quickca.net

BASTARDS!!!!!!!!!!

There are dirty bastards and anyone who steals a canoe is certainly one. There are REALLY DUMB DIRTY BASTARDS and anyone who would steal my poor beat-up Old Town certainly qualifies for that title. Sometime during the last week my canoe was stolen from my back yard. Most of you know the boat but here is a full description so you can pass it along to any other paddlers. Brand = Old Town Model = H2Pro Material = Kevlar Color = blue Gunwhales and decks = black vinyl Length = 13Ft. 10In. Weight = 56 Lb. Serial Numbers = Under the right deck = XTC17930I293 Under the left deck = XTC 52203C090 Seat = blue foam pedestal Air bags = 2 blue, one is Perception and the other is Old Town Thigh straps = 2 In. black nylon If any of you see the boat please call the police. The case number is 02/652180. Meanwhile I'll be on my bicycle or inline skates. Thanks, Dean.

Red Dagger Bayou Kayak, 10'5"long, 2 paddles, \$325
contact Peter at fuzzy_67@hotmail.com

River Thought Corner Trips - Events Being Talked About!

Send your ideas to the editor at AlamoChris@aol.com

March 2003 (late) - Pecos River Trip - 7day - Pandale to High Bridge with the option of doing the Rio Grande from Langtry to Seminole Canyon State Park if Pecos River is too low.

Contact: Gib Hafernick, 210-822-8901 or Gibguy@Compuserve.com

Brazos River - Chris Vogeler, Don't know when - waiting for someone to call and help me plan. Give me a call and lets go on the Brazos!!!! Help!
AlamoChris@aol.com

Rivermen Mileage Program

To help enhance our members favorite activity we've come up with a rivermen mileage program. It can be fun to keep a log book of when we're on the water and a log book / diary is a great help to stir up memories. I bet we all surprise ourselves when we see just how much we're really on the water. At the end of each year we'll request entries for the mileage program and recognize members who surpass the 100 river mile mark. Entries are to be best estimate and there will be a certificate or pin for each individual surpassing the 100 river miles with possible advanced recognition for high milers above the 100 river mile status. These miles must be accumulated during the calendar year from Jan 1st to December 31st. As this program is being implemented mid year one may estimate past paddling excursions for the first half of 2002. Racing mileage will not be counted. This will be a fun program for our club and anything may change as it's new and not fully developed. Mileage log sheet is in the newsletter and may be reproduced.

Trophy's Awarded to Our Club!

Hans Weichsels community service & high mileage trophies were awarded at our October meeting. Hans made the trip from Dallas with his paddling partner Beverly Swope (Beverly is the high miler recipient in paddling for the Dallas Down River Group for 2000) specifically to personally donate 2 silver bowls and his daughter Linda and family from San Antonio were also present. Each trophy will have each years recipients name engraved on it and will travel from year to year to each member achieving the high mileage for the year and for outstanding community - club service. Many thanks again to Hans and please thank as we see him on the water!

Trips Coordinators Needed

We always need people to volunteer, help coordinate - plan and create trips. It's really very simple. If you have an idea for something you'd like to do in the way of paddling or camping just call or e-mail the editor or one of officers on the cover page. All that needs to be done is have an idea, see if it can be done, make a reservation and put a simple write up for our newsletter or e-mail to the Rivermen Yahoo e-mail list or both. These could be day trips or overnights and can be anywhere you'd like to go. Some of our members have gone as far as Utah and Minnesota so don't let your vision prevent you from putting your idea out to the members. There is probably someone from our group that would like to participate in your paddling idea where ever it may be. We look forward to hearing from you and thanks much!

Remember, any trips, last minute trips - last minute day paddles can be sent to alamo@yahogroups.com If you're not already on this list contact Ken Bennight at Bennight@stic.net to join. To be on this list is the only way to really stay completely informed about what's going on as so many things happen on short notice rather than the 6 week time frame for planning involved with the newsletter which is sometimes to lengthy.

Frost Moon Paddle on Woodlawn Lake, November 19 - Tuesday

Inspired by Davids Plylar's endeavor to have a Moonlight Paddle in September plus the success of the Hunter's Moon Paddle in October I will have a Frost Moon Paddle on Woodlawn Lake, November 19 Tuesday evening from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. Paddle under the light of a Full Frost Moon with the fantastic city background of the Tower of Americas and historic Little Flower Cathedral.

Afterwards we will order some pizza and dine out at the lake on the patio of the Woodlawn Lake Sailing Club. Bring a comfortable chair and drinks or you can purchase drinks from the raspa vendors at the park. Hope to see you there. Gib Hafernack - 210-822-8901 or GibGuy@Compuserve.com

SAFETY TIP FOR

November

By Bill Esparza

Paramedic-EMS-Firefighter

g-esparza@webtv.net

Cold Water Capsize

My least favorite season for paddling is winter. Oh sure, I'll go out a couple of times in December and January, but just so my friends won't call me a wimp. I'm not a big fan of the Freeze Trip either. I went once. Don't know what was worse, the cold, or having to be vice-president for a year.

I'll never forget the day my pollywog bow person and I capsized at "the Chute" one January. Boy, what a feeling when my body submerged! The temperature of the water could have been described with a curse word. Witnesses in the another canoe said they had never seen anybody get out of the water as fast as I did. Hey, I wanted out before my body went numb.

Three tips for canoeing in cold weather:

1. Don't canoe alone. Have at least two canoes and a minimum of three people. This allows for one or two rescuers. Also, if you lose a canoe, you'll have another as a backup.
2. Bring along an extra set of warm clothes in a drybag. Don't forget shoes.
3. If you get wet in cold weather, change your clothes. Demand it of others. This avoids having to deal with hypothermia.

Officers - Newsletter Editor Needed for 2003

We could use some new blood in our officers corral. It doesn't take much and it means alot. All of the current officers would be glad to help as back up and nothing is difficult. We also need an editor. I've done the newsletter for 3 years and it's time for me to have a break. The way the newsletter is currently set up it is very simple to do. I would show anyone with an interest exactly how I'm doing it and be glad to help them. Takes about 3 hours per month but I do it small segments. Anyone interested in any positions with our club please call or e-mail me and thanks for inquiring. Chris Vogeler 210-863-8622 or AlamoChris@aol.com

Turkey Trot Set for Nov 29th / 31st

Smithville to LaGrange on the Colorado river. 36 miles 2 nights on the water. Details next months newsletter. GibGuy@compuserve.com

2002 ACR CALENDAR

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

WHEN WHAT WHERE CONTACT

Contact Phone Numbers at bottom of page!

- *11-13-2002 Monthly Meeting - Program Plan officers for 2003 - work on recipient for Hans Community Service Trophy -
Christmas Party - Where & When BBQ Station 410 @ Harry Wurzbach 6:30 PM
- 11-15/17-2002 Muleshoe Bend Compass work, paddle, bike dutch oven cooking - campout West of Austin - See article in newsletter Charlie Riou
rioucharles@hotmail.com
- *11-19th Tuesday-2002 Frost Moon Paddle Woodlawn Lake See Article in Newsletter Gib Hafernick **GibGuy@compuserve.com**
- *11-29th & 30th 2002 Annual Turkey Trot Colorado River Smithville to LaGrange 36 miles 2 nights on the water **GibGuy@compuserve.com**
- * 12-2002 Christmas Party Your Place **Please call an officer on the cover page!**
- *Jan or Feb Freeze Trip Dutch Oven cook - campout Colorado River Gib Hafernick **GibGuy@compuserve.com**
- Feb 15/27 Ski Utah Powder Mountain See Article **rioucharles@hotmail.com**
- * March 2003 Pecos River Expedition Gib Hafernick **GibGuy@compuserve.com**

Randy Hohlaus 210-493-7058 / Gib Hafernick 210-822-8901 / Ken Bennight 210-826-7071 / Chris Vogeler 210-863-8622 / Charles Riou 512-450-1139

****Monthly Meeting and Program Times**

*** Rivermen Event**

All information is subject to revision at any time!



Rivermen E-mail List Important Part of Membership!

All of our spur of the moment events go out on the e-mail list and it's the only way to know about them. Any Rivermen member that's on the e-mail list can use it to find a paddling partner, set up last minute trips, get more info etc. We've had many last minute trips through e-mail the last 6 months. This is our way of reaching the members without a 6 week lag time to have an announcement in the newsletter and for any last minute trip changes.

These paddling events could be day trips or overnights and can be anywhere you'd like to go. Some of our members have gone as far as Utah and Minnesota so don't let your vision prevent you from putting your idea out to the members. There is probably someone from our group that would like to participate in your paddling idea where ever it may be.

Ken Bennight set up the service and has it operating through Yahoo as a digest. However many messages are sent to the Rivermen e-mail group list Ken has it set as a digest where we only get a maximum of one e-mail per day that includes all messages in one e-mail. We have 53 members on the list so far and about 3 e-mails per week have been going out. We've had no reports of an increase in spam from anyone on the list. Some people who've had yahoo e-mail for several years report they feel they are not receiving spam from and association from yahoo. It works great and we thank Ken for his time and efforts. If you're not on it you're missing out already on some great trips that have already occurred! If you're not already on the e-mail list please contact Ken Bennight at Ken Bennight 210-826-7071 or **klbennight@yahoo.com**

CHECK THIS OUT!

OK, mosquitos...prepare to be repelled!!!!

Use Bounce Fabric Softener Sheets...Best thing ever used in Louisiana. Just wipe on & go...Great for Babies

Bob, a fisherman, takes one vitamin B-1 tablet a day April through October . He said it works. He was right. The odor the tablet gives out through your skin (YOU can not smell it) repels mosquitos, black flies, no seeum's, and gnat's. It does not work on stinging insects. Hasn't had a mosquito bit in 33 years. Try it. Every one he has talked into trying it works on them. Vitamin B-1 (Thiamine Hydrochloride 100 mg.)

Ken said NPR reports that if you eat bananas, the mosquitos like you, something about the banana oil as your body processes it. (Maybe they need the potassium too- lol) Stop eating bananas for the summer and the mosquitos will be much less interested.

This is going to floor you, but one of the best insect repellents someone found (who is in the woods every day), is Vick's Vaporub.

Plant marigolds around the yard, the flowers give off a smell that bugs do not like, so plant some in that garden also to help ward off bugs without using insecticides.

"Tough guy" Marines who spend a great deal of time "camping out" say that the very best mosquito repellent you can use is Avon Skin-So-Soft bath oil mixed about half and half with alcohol.

mix your own:

20 drops Eucalyptus oil
20 drops Cedarwood oil
10 drops Tea Tree oil
10 drops Geranium oil
2 oz. carrier oil (such as Jojoba)

Mix together in a 4 oz. container. Apply to skin as needed avoiding the eye area. Keep out of reach of children. Test on a small area of skin for sensitivities . Experiment with different percentages of essential oil

from Sharon:

One of the best natural insect repelants that I've discovered is made from the clear real vanilla (not the grocery store vanilla extract which is mostly alcohol). This is the pure vanilla that is sold in Mexico. It's cheap there if you know of someone that lives there or in the US close to the border. If not, health food stores usually carry it or can order it for you. I use it half vanilla and half water and find that it works great for mosquitoes and ticks, don't know about other insects.

when all else fails--get a frog

Fight <<http://www.flowgo.com/refer/referral.cfm?page_id=39442>> West Nile...pass this along to all your friends in skeeter land!!!

Muleshoe Bend Orienteering Adventure Club - Rivermen Invited November 15th - 17th

Charlie Rio will be leading a team orienteering challenge while we're at Muleshoe. The activities are: team orienteering challenge (compass work), mountain biking, night riding, hiking, boating, canoeing, dutch oven cooking, cool weather, no crowds, sleeping under the stars, good company & good times. Please contact Charlie at rioucharles@hotmail.com or 512-450-1139 if you know you're coming.

Muleshoe Bend Recreation Area is an LCRA facility located 20 miles west of Austin on Lake Travis. There is a \$5/day fee per vehicle with toilets and potable water available at the entrance. The camp areas are huge with a space of about 50 yards between the tree sites and the water's edge.

Things you should consider bringing: Tent, Sleeping bag, Lounge chair, Plate, drink glass and silverware, Flashlight, food and drinks (breakfast, lunch & dinner), Canoe, Mountain bike and last but not least a compass!

Other items to consider: Firewood, Charcoal, Small propane fuel cell (for camp stoves), Camp table, Citronella candles, Optional breakfast fixens (eggs, bacon, sausage, flour tortillas, etc) . There may be a \$10 food fee for community dinner/s.

People from the Austin area, the San Antonio Adventure Club and the Rivermen will be attending. Some of us Rivermen will be meeting at the HEB at 281 North and Loop 1604 at 7:00 pm on Friday November 15 to do some last minute grocery shopping. and will depart at 8:00 pm for Muleshoe Bend or you arrive on the grounds anytime you wish. You can contact Gib Hafernick (210-822-8902 or GibGuy@compuserve.com) if you know you're going to be at the HEB and we'll wait for you.

Directions: From San Antonio take State Highway 281 North to Highway 71 East. Turn Left on Paleface Ranch Road and proceed about 4.5 miles to Burnet County Road 414. Turn right and travel about 1.5 miles then take another right just before the entrance to Ridge Harbor. Continue until you reach the park entrance at the end of CR414. Approximately 45 minute drive from downtown Austin. 2820 Country Road 414, Spice-wood, TX

Contact Charlie Riou at rioucharles@hotmail.com or 512-450-1139

Your Article Could Be Here!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



Trip Coordinators to be Recognized

Anyone leading a trip will be recognized with a Trip Coordinator Pin. Trips Coordinators are needed to keep things happening for our members at large. We always need people to volunteer, help coordinate, plan and create trips. It's really very simple. If you have an idea for something you'd like to do in the way of paddling or camping call or e-mail the editor or one of officers on the cover page and submit it to the River Thoughts Corner column. All that needs to be done is have an idea, see if it can be done, make a reservation and submit a simple write up for our newsletter. If it's last minute you can use the Rivemen e-mail list alamo@yahoogroups.com If you're not already on the e-mail list contact Ken Bennight Bennight@stic.net.

Outrigger Canoe Team

A group of us in the San Antonio Area are looking at the possibility of forming an Outrigger Canoe Coop in the San Antonio area. Our basic plan is to find 15 to 20 people that would coop together financially with the intent of purchasing a 6 man Hawaiian Outrigger Canoe. If you think of the opening scene from Hawaii 5-O that is what we are talking about. Preliminary estimates are of purchasing a trailer for around 1000 dollars and a used OC- 6 (six person canoe for around 2000 to 3000 dollars). We would like to go into this deal with a pool of 5000 dollars to start with.

The intent would be to train the following weekends: 4 Lake Training Runs, 4 Coast Training Runs, 4 Competitive or Open Weekend Runs. The remaining weekends individuals would train at their own schedule with a routine that could be composed of canoeing, rowing, running, biking, swimming, etc. Note we are not looking exclusively for just paddlers to coop into this, but you need to be in reasonably good physical condition.

Some how we need to form a Queing routine that would set slots for the boat and a form of dues plus some type of fair charge for non-members if they wish to get in the boat. Members would hold individual shares of the boat and could sell their shares of the boat to a non-member pending approval by the members or a board of some kind. The membership eligibility area being considered is a 45 mile radius of San Antonio extending south toward the greater metropolitan areas of Floresville and Poth with the homeport being Seadrift Texas. Ideally this boat would be kept at one of the area lakes.

The long range goal is to use this vessel as a training platform with the intent of becoming proficient enough to enter Outrigger races in Hawaii, the West Coast and East Coast by borrowing or renting a boat in the area if we chose to send a team.

If you are interested in getting in on this deal give me a call. Gib Hafernick 210-822-8901 or Gibguy@Compuserve.com

Pecos Expedition Forming Up: March 15 thru 22

The Pecos Expeditions is shaping up pretty good. If we go by firm RSVP's the trip is about 1/4 full, if we count by people sitting on the fence but have indicated they would like to go the trip is close to 2/3 full. There will basically be 2 cost in for this trip, the food menu and the beverage menu. Beverage is defined as drinks containing alcohol that will be distributed to those that have paid in. A tentative menu for the evening meal is as follows:

Evening food menu:

Saturday – Steaks & Potatoes or Shish-ka-bob with rice (charcoal)

Monday - Vegetarian Spaghetti (stove) with Italian Bread

Tuesday – Indian Lamb Stew with rice (stove)

Wednesday – King Ranch Chicken (charcoal)

Thursday – Ham & Lentils (stove)

Friday – Clam Chowder Stew(stove)

I am working on breakfast and lunch menus. On previous San Juan & Rio Grande trips the breakfast meal was a large community meal to get us on the river. The lunch meal was basically more informal, packed in dry bags consisting of an assortment of non refrigerated meats, cheeses and crackers which were distributed as a community meal at midday with the intent of getting us all in one spot and to discuss a camping location for the evening. If we are cooking sour dough bread for the evening this will be a spot to get it started with the yeast as well.

This will be a well provision expedition and as such a trip requirement will be that you have a canoe for carrying community equipment and food. Community gear can be specific to include food, stoves, ice chest, charcoal, tables, toilet system etc. One of the intents of this expedition is to have a healthy food menu with a well managed beverage program. That's it for now.

Gib Hafernick
210-822-8901
or Gibguy@Compuserve.com

Stranded at Chatterton Falls I think from Canoe, TX? Author Unknown

"Sitting on the bank, the water stares back so deeply you can hear it afterwards when you wish." - Jim Harrison, "The Theory and Practice of Rivers."

I do not believe in omens. That is, I did not believe in omens until recently.

But looking back on the days before we left and on the first few bright days of our paddle through the depths of the wilderness in Ontario's Quetico Provincial Park, there were signs that perhaps pointed to our fate.

My 7-year-old son, Will, was particularly reluctant this time to see me leave. He cried often as we were packing.

"What if you get eaten by a bear?" he asked.

"Willy," I replied, "do I look like something a bear would like to eat?"

He looked at me, somewhat distastefully. "Well, I guess not," he said.

Still, I found it harder than usual to leave him. There was the dying bald eagle. We glimpsed it early in our trip while casting in a quiet bay at the end of a long portage; it tried to hide beneath a downed spruce tree and we could see its wild and frightened eyes. And there was the dark and enormous great-horned owl that greeted our passage through a bog on the very day that misadventure overtook us.

Mike Atkins, my long-time friend and canoeing partner, noticed it first. It seemed a part of the tall stump on which it perched until it slowly turned its head and stared solemnly at us with its great, wide eyes. I remember its gaze being unsettling at the time. But it was a fine day and we were moving through beautiful country and we simply chalked the owl up as another of many wildlife sightings on an eventful trip. Indeed, the first few days of the trip were everything we had hoped for.

We have traveled together on these adventures for many years; it was Mike's eighth trip into the canoe country and I was returning for my fourteenth time. Our route this time took us into the heart of Quetico's wilds.

Our furthest destination was a lake called Camel which we chose only because it seemed the very geographic center of that rugged country, a place we could go where we would be as far away as we had ever been and where, if we were lucky, we would be the only humans for many miles. It's a strange compulsion, I know, but it had always seemed a miracle to us that such a place of space and distance and emptiness still exists and we have always tried to bury ourselves in its furthest reaches.

We left the landing on Nym Lake outside Atikokan, Ontario on Friday, May 12 and arrived on Camel on Monday, May 15 after four long days of paddling and portaging. In that time we met only one other canoe, saw a magnificent moonrise, spotted many signs of wolf along the portage trails, watched a mother moose nursing her nearly newborn calves, and caught feisty smallmouth bass. We were in fine spirits and joked with each other in bad French accents, mimicking the Voyageurs of old.

After a quiet night on Camel, we rose Tuesday morning, downed coffee, pancakes, and smoked bacon and decided to pack up our outfit and move on into the Maligne River country. It was overcast and spitting rain and we didn't want to waste a layover day in bad weather. Our destination, we decided, would be Chatterton Falls, a spectacular series of rapids and waterfalls between Chatterton Lake and Russell Lake on the Maligne River system. We had heard there was good fishing, especially for walleye, in Russell Lake just below the falls.

It rained off and on that day. We wore warm fleece jackets and rainsuits.

Late in the afternoon, on the portage into Chatterton Lake, we paused for a quick snack of sausage and cheese and pita bread. We paddled up Chatterton in a brisk wind and were happy, finally, to round the point into the small bay that led to the falls. Out of the wind, the surface of the water grew smooth and dark and, closer to the falls, we could see the swirling currents as the water funneled toward the cataract. We felt the pull of the falls and quickly backpaddled, then nosed the canoe into a narrow and deep slot between the sloping stone bank and a huge boulder. Our maps showed a campsite on the point and we clambered out of the canoe to climb the steep shore and see if the site had a level spot for our tent.

Up on top, we were relieved to find a beautiful campsite overlooking the narrow canyon with a breathtaking view of the falls and the high, rock walls on either side. We were thrilled, thinking about two long and lazy days in that special place, anxious to get the packs out of the canoe, set up camp, sip a whiskey. We turned back to the canoe and, in a second, all was changed. In our haste to check the site, we had not tied up the canoe - a dire mistake. Mike yelled, a throaty and angry and desperate yell. "There it goes! Dammit, there it goes!" It was over quickly, though it seemed like hours. The canoe made it over the first waterfall, filled with water, and broke up in the second big drop.

I ran down the rocky shore, shedding my coats, hoping to rescue the canoe or packs in a backwater. Mike screamed at me not to jump in but I don't think I ever considered that, knowing the ice had just gone out a few days before. Then Mike yelled that the Duluth pack, our big pack with our sleeping bags and rain tarp, was loose and heading for the last falls I ran, shivering and out of breath, to the slick and roaring water just above that final drop and found a long tree trunk. I maneuvered it out over the water and the pack slid by. [Continued page 10](#)

Rivermen Mileage Log Sheet

Date _____ River _____ Put In _____ Take Out _____

Estimated Miles _____ Comments _____

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Date _____ River _____ Put In _____ Take Out _____

Estimated Miles _____ Comments _____

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 _____

Alamo City Rivermen Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____ Telephone (Res.) _____ (Bus) _____

The ALAMO CITY RIVERMEN ALWAYS strive to make trips as safe as possible. However, some elements of risk are always present in water sports. Therefore, the **ALAMO CITY RIVERMEN** disclaim any liability for accidental injury to any participant in a sponsored event. I do hereby recognize this risk and agree that my participation is at my sole risk and responsibility. I further agree to hold harmless and without fault the **ALAMO CITY RIVERMEN**, its trip organizers, coordinators and officer for liability for any personal loss or injury which I may incur, and do hereby WAIVE and remedy I may have in law or equity. This liability waiver is in effect while in transit to and from any **ALAMO CITY RIVERMEN** event and while participating in any **ALAMO CITY RIVERMEN** outing. AGREED AND ACCEPTED. Signature(s) _____

Membership Dues are \$15 Annually - Single or Family.

Automatic member benefits include NOC outfitter Store discounts, American Canoe Association \$10 membership discount available through the Paddle American Program and subscription to our e-mail list. Details on these benefits are published in our newsletter. Check here to receive our newsletter by e-mail ___ or regular mail ___ E-mail saves us \$

Mail this completed form to:

ALAMO CITY RIVERMEN CANOE CLUB

P.O. Box 171194

Ski Utah - February 15-22

Powder Mountain: More fun-real snow, Deep Powder, 5500 acres, 4100 lift & shuttle served, 1500 Cat served, 2105' vertical, night skiing, 500+'' annual snowfall. Snowbasin: 3200 acres, High speed lifts, Gondola & Tram, Olympic Downhill, 2950' vertical, 400'' annual snowfall Nordic Valley: Night Skiing, Ludicrous Speed Tube Hill. Luxury condos with fireplaces & fully equipped kitchens, clubhouse with hot tubs, fitness room, locker rooms & dry sauna. Central to three resorts, entertainment, dining, ski shop & grocery store. \$475 per person includes Round Trip Direct Air from Austin & 7 nights lodging based on 6 person occupancy in 8-person condo. \$100 holds a spot, due before 11/24, \$200 more due 12/8, Balance due 1/12. Call Charlie at (512) 450-1139 or rioucharles@hotmail.com for reservations and info.

Basura Bash Clean Up Saturday November 9th Meet at Mission Street Bridge 10 AM.

We will clean from shore and possible paddle a section of the San Antonio River as it will have plenty of water in it.
Contact Chris Vogeler at AlamoChris@aol.com Come on down as this is really fun to participate in and really helps the community!

Stolen Boats

Reward for Recovery, BIGGER Reward for Arrest & Conviction!

PLEASE POST!!! KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN!!! TELL YOUR FRIENDS!! FORWARD A.S.A.P.!!!

ATTENTION:

KAYAK TRAILER & 10 BOATS STOLEN FROM CANOESPORT, HOUSTON, TX

September 27, 2002

Trailer:

Tournament Three Tier Kayak Trailer

VIN: CA571684003

Royal Blue (new paint)

Boats Stolen:

Manufacture: Necky Kayaks (5)

17' Looksha IV, poly, rudder Yellow

QNK41013

17' Looksha IV, poly, rudder Yellow

QNK41748

16' Narpa, poly, rudder Yellow QNK35248

16' Narpa, poly rudder Yellow N.A.

14' Dolphin, poly, sit on top, Yellow

QNK41633

Manufacture: Perception / Aquaterra (5)

14' Prism, sit on top, 2 hatch, Yellow

WEM39708I292

14' Prism, sit on top, 2 hatch, Yellow

WEM39206L595

14' Prism, sit on top, 2 hatch, Yellow

WEM39650B999

16' Chinook Exp, poly rudder Yellow

WEM91297J293

16' Chinook Exp, poly rudder Yellow

WEM91302J293

IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION

PLEASE CONTACT:

Bruce Gillan or Charles Duvic

713-660-7000, Toll free 866-665-2925

Houston Auto Theft Dept: 713-308-3500,

(cn138774602-y)

Reward for Recovery, BIGGER Reward for Arrest & Conviction!

CANOESPORT

5808 South Rice Ave. Houston, TX 77081

Pecos Expedition Forming

Pecos River March 15th to March 24th, 2003

This will be an Alamo City Rivermen Trip but we want to keep the numbers of canoes to a small group. I am envisioning a maximum this number of 6 to 8 canoes or about 12 to 16 people. There are two reasons for doing this: 1. We will need to coordinate on logistics for travel, community meals and equipment 2. If we switch to the Rio Grande it will be necessary to carry a toilet system The Trip date will be March 15 thru March 24.

The schedule is as follows:

March 15, Friday - Travel to assembly point

March 16, Saturday - Run shuttles and launch on river

March 17th, Sunday - on river

March 18, Monday - on river

March 19, Tuesday - on river

March 20, Wednesday - on river

March 21, Thursday - on river

March 22, Friday - on river

March 23, Saturday - Exit from river

March 24, Sunday - Travel time back

The minimum flow rate for a no go on the Pecos will be 175 CFS at Pandale.

It is conceivable that we will wait to the last minute to make a decision as to if we go on the Pecos River, a decision to go or not go and switch to the Rio Grande would be made March 10.

A significant level of planning for this trip will be based on two previous Alamo City Rivermen trips one on the Lower Canyons in March of 2001 and the San Juan River in September of 2002.

This will be a well provision expedition and as such a trip requirement will be that you have a canoe for carrying community equipment and food. Community gear can be specific to include stoves, dutch ovens, ice chest, charcoal, tables, toilet system etc.

One of the objectives of this expedition is to have a healthy and diverse food menu with a well managed beverage program.

I am going to start sending future messages with an attachment in Word that will have details specific to the Pecos Expedition. This attachment will be sent only to those individuals that have indicated they wish to go. That's it for now.

Gib Hafernick 210-822-8901 or Gibguy@Compuserve.com

Chatterton Falls Continued: The canoe had been pulled out of the slot backwards by the current and was now out floating on the dark water toward the falls. I don't remember what I thought though I do remember how black the water seemed and how dusk like in the canyon, as though the place were gathering dark to itself, and how eerie the bright green canoe looked as it slid toward the falls, pulled, along with our packs, by a ghostly and unseen hand. The tips of my fishing rods, sticking above the gunwales, bobbed as if someone were t rolling.

It was over quickly, though it seemed like hours. The canoe made it over the first waterfall, filled with water, and broke up in the second big drop.

I ran down the rocky shore, shedding my coats, hoping to rescue the canoe or packs in a backwater. Mike screamed at me not to jump in but I don't think I ever considered that, knowing the ice had just gone out a few days before.

Then Mike yelled that the Duluth pack, our big pack with our sleeping bags and rain tarp, was loose and heading for the last falls I ran, shivering and out of breath, to the slick and roaring water just above that final drop and found a long tree trunk. I maneuvered it out over the water and the pack slid by just out of reach. It popped over the falls like a cork and was gone.

I looked upriver and saw the canoe, bow up, in the raging whitewater just below the second falls. Then it was gone, too, and all I saw were the white blocks of styrofoam that provided flotation in the bow and the stern; they floated past me, over the falls, and out into Russell Lake.

We walked, in shock, down past the falls and onto the shore of Russell Lake, looking for gear. But there was nothing. We checked the campsites below the falls. Nobody.

We took inventory in the dark with the falls roaring at our backs. We had five matches in a waterproof container, a tube of Chapstick.

I have felt the dryness of such fear in my mouth only one other time.

That was more than three years ago when a nurse at University Hospital quietly opened the door of a waiting room and told my wife, Doreen, and me that our 11-year-old daughter, Katie, had died from injuries she received in a horseback riding accident.

But two weeks ago, as Mike and I stood there by Chatterton Falls in the gathering dark surrounded by millions of acres of Quetico Provincial Park with nothing to our name but five matches - and a tube of Chapstick - my mouth was dry as a stale cigar.

We spent that first night huddled out of the wind against a low stone wall far back up in the woods above Russell Lake. We gathered firewood in the dark and built a fire. We used birchbark to start it, sure we could count on the pitch in the bark to catch immediately. Mike had the matches and I gladly let him light the first one; he struck it and it went out. That left four matches.

The second match lit the bark and small twigs and we carefully built the blaze up with other branches and then curled around the warm flames on the cold and damp ground, taking turns sleeping and tending the fire. Shortly before dawn, with the sky showing the first silver light of morning, we kicked apart the fire and walked back toward the rapids. We came across a bear cave in the tumbled, rocky landscape - it was full of bear droppings - and mentally marked its location. Already we were thinking of shelter against rain and cold.

We sat for a while on a sloping rock below the falls. The odds, we speculated, were in our favor. We were on a major travel route at a very popular walleye fishing spot. We had warm, dry clothing and rainsuits and matches (and Chapstick). We had plenty of water. We could survive for many days without food, we figured, as long as we had water.

I don't remember saying anything out loud but I do remember ticking off in my mind everything that would work against us. Our wives, with whom we had left a note about our route, would not know something was amiss for another six days when we had been scheduled to come out. With each passing day we would grow weaker and weaker without food and more susceptible to exposure and hypothermia if it rained or grew colder. Mike started gathering firewood. I walked for a half-mile back up along the falls to the upper campsite where we had lost the canoe. I walked over to the narrow slot where we had so stupidly thought the canoe would be safe. That time, and many others during the next few days, I sat there and stared at that sliver of water. I studied the currents and how they moved, saw the slight backward eddy of water that should have set off warning bells.

I stared at that water harder than at anything I can remember, looking, I guess, for some kind of message. The only message I got was, "Tie up your canoe, idiot," which, under the circumstances, was about as profound a message as I had any right to expect. Back at our makeshift camp, we busied ourselves building a log lean-to against a huge boulder up in the woods. We laid three large tree trunks against its sloping surface, laced saplings through them, then filled in the roof with pine boughs and overlaid that with a layer of thick moss from the forest floor. Shelter was crucial, we figured, and, besides, it was something to do. Sometimes, a bush plane would fly over.

Every time we heard even the faintest buzz of a plane, we raced to the very tip of our rocky point, grabbed the canoe paddles - we had recovered them in an eddy below the falls and waved them like crazy.

Each time, they flew maddeningly on, their drone growing fainter and fainter. Constantly, going about our meager business, we would pause to check the three spots from which rescue would probably come - the end of the portage around the rapids, and two distant openings far out on Russell Lake. [Continued page 11](#)

Chatterton Falls Continued: We felt drained, exhausted. I was so frightened I hardly thought about food. Mike told me after waking up from a nap that he had dreamed of balloons that turned into broasted chickens and plopped into his lap.

We talked, as we rested, about prayer. Mike, who is a scholar of sorts when it comes to Eastern religions, said there were, unfortunately, few Eastern gods or spirits that would offer immediate delivery from such a crisis. As for me, I pretty much scattered prayers in all directions, apologizing profusely each time for not being attentive enough to such matters prior to our disaster. What a weasel, I thought to myself. I was discovering that in crisis situations I was prone to self-loathing.

Later, Mike and I were amused to discover that we had both been sending telepathic messages to our wives; Mike guessed that we were both so spiritually bereft that our wives probably received only scratchy static in the middle of the night. We tried not to think of our families.

The day waned. We trudged up to our lean-to and scraped together birchbark and twigs. Mike struck a match. It flipped into the air above our heads, landed in the muck, sputtered, and went out.

Two matches.

The next match caught and the birchbark flared into welcome flame.

One match.

The ground beneath our lean-to proved cold and damp; we sliced up the styrofoam blocks from the canoe and used them for insulation (we had realized that day that we both still had our Swiss Army knives). The night was clear but very cold. We shivered even in front of the fire. Dawn was a long time coming.

After first light I walked back along the long path to the upper campsite hoping that someone had set up camp there late the night before. It was still empty. I pulled pieces of burned wood from the fireplace and scrawled messages on a rock wall and on stones that I pulled from the firepit and lined up in sentences. "Help!" I wrote. "Other side of falls. Stranded." On my way back I thought about the messages. Bad syntax, I thought to myself. I should have written "below the falls." More self-loathing.

Hoping to catch the attention of the bush pilots that day, Mike and I gathered three huge piles of wood on three separate points, waited for a plane to pass over, then lit the bonfires. Three columns of smoke billowed up through the trees - an international distress signal. We tended the fires for two hours and when they finally went out, we felt more forlorn than ever. We busied ourselves patching the roof of our lean-to and gathering wood.

Late in the afternoon, we stood on the rocky point discussing the possibility of eating grubs and whether we should grill them on little sticks or just pop them in raw. I turned to walk up into the woods, thinking I would kick apart a stump in search of bugs, and there, coming straight toward us, was a canoe. I cannot do justice here to the character and kindness of our rescuers.

There were six of them in three canoes. It was the Dreps boys from Sheboygan. Sheboygan, Wisconsin! There was Bill and Jerry and Joe. Surprisingly, I knew their brother Bob, who is a lawyer for the Wisconsin State Journal. There was also Gary Erbstoesser and his 21-year-old son, Matthew. There was Ronald Broggink, who later told us that when they paddled up and saw Mike and I hugging on the shore, they almost paddled away again.

They were working men, carpenters and drywallers and such. And over the next few days, they took us in as though we were their own. We fondly dubbed them the Ya-heh boys; they were Wisconsin through and through and Wisconsin had never seemed so good to us. They carried their gear in huge packs and in big plastic paint buckets. They wore Green Bay Packers sweatshirts, flannel, red plaid jackets, hunting caps.

We spent three days with them. They gave us a tent, toothbrushes. They cooked huge meals of walleye for us. They kept pulling treats from their plastic buckets and offering them to us (Joe, for example, carried car magazines and venison sausage and schnappes in his bucket).

After a day of fishing and a day being windbound, the Dreps boys and the others paddled us out of there. Sunday morning, Ron lit firecrackers to awake everyone at five. Bill, the leader of their expedition, ordered everyone to lose one Duluth pack to make room for us. They started burning odds and ends to lighten the load - food, bags, and even clothes went into the fire.

We paddled that day for nearly 14 hours with four men in the biggest canoe. None of the canoes had more than a few inches of freeboard. Water slopped in at the slightest wave. But the gang from Sheboygan sang all the way home - cowboy songs and oldies from the sixties. Late in the day, with the sun setting and a rainbow in the sky, we paddled across Nym Lake to our landing as Bill sang "Michael, Row Your Boat Ashore," and the others improvised bawdy lyrics.

That night, I raised my glass to the Dreps boys and their crew. "To the guys," I said, "who saved our lives." I have never made a more sincere toast. I am still haunted by the image of our canoe floating away in the dusk. I always will be, I suppose. But we are already planning future journeys. And I am shopping for a new canoe. After I bring it home, I plan on tethering it to a tree in my backyard.



Llano River Labor Day Weekend Junction, TX 2002
This is part of what we're about. Photos submitted by Zoltan Mraz

