

Rendezvous is HERE!

Oct. 12 –14

The thirteenth Southwestern Canoe Rendezvous is about to take place – a new millennium, a new chairman, a new location, a new “feel”. We are looking forward to EVERYONE being there to enjoy the camaraderie, try new boats, learn new skills in clinics and at workshops. Here are a few “new” items we would you to experience:

1. **Sat. night Banquet** -yes, we’ve always had a banquet, but none like this one. It includes not only good food, but a wonderful banquet hall, a video of the Rio Grande and the freestyle championship held in an awesome setting. After this, join us for a **PARTY** – one inside the hall with visiting with old friends, listening to music, dancing, and meeting new people learning about paddling.
2. **Cardboard Canoe Race** on Sunday. Here kids will construct their cardboard canoes at 1:30 and the race will begin at 2:30 – join us for this event
3. **Raffle ticket sale for a Rendezvous quilt** – Cheryl Cleary has created the most beautiful quilt using Rendezvous T-

shirt designs over the years. Buy tickets for this at \$1 each.

We will also have some of the tried but true events that we have had in the past and all enjoyed:

- Used boat sale



Boats line up at rendezvous for taking clinics, seeing workshops, and visiting friends – bring yours this year and Keep them in the canoe corral for your use only

- New boats to try and buy
- Auction of donated paddling items
- Clinics and workshops

As most of you know, this is a volunteer event, put on by the Houston Canoe Club. This year the Rendezvous Committee has

had a big challenge and was forced to move or cancel the event. We succeeded in getting Fluor Corporation to allow the Houston Canoe Club to move the event to their Business Complex on Oyster Creek . This new location will be new to everyone – staff, visitors, instructors, vendors, etc. and this requires more help. So, I'm appealing to all of you to join in on the fun and to help HCC with this challenging and adventurous endeavor. Below are the areas we will need help

2. direct traffic and hand out maps as drivers come into the complex
3. serve as Shepherds at the clinics
4. take the Welcome Wagon around to vendors and instructors with drinks and homemade cookies
5. man the canoe corral for those boats brought by participants

This is YOUR RENDEZVOUS – Volunteer to help out! Contact Donna Grimes at (713) 728-1645 donna.grimes@mindspring.com

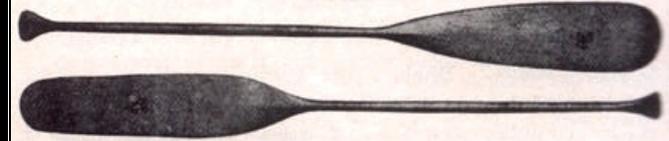
Help before Oct. 12:

1. help with putting up posters and distributing clinic registration forms at your place of employment, in stores in your area – especially those that may have interested clientele.
2. help with a booth promoting both HCC and the Rendezvous at the Buffalo Bayou Coalition's Dragon Boat Races on Oct. 6th at Buffalo Bayou
3. Help on the weekend of Oct 6-7 to lay out exhibitors' sites (contact Bob Arthur at boba100@aol.com)
4. make 3 dozen cookies to bring to the Rendezvous for the Welcome Wagon refreshments for vendors and instructors.
5. Help with site set-up on Thursday and Friday, October 11 & 12 and clean up on Monday morning ,Oct. 15. Contact Fraser Baker at fraser@flash.net
6. volunteer your home to house out-of-town instructors or attendees – tents in your yard or rooms in your house. Cheryl Cleary will coordinate this. Contact her if you have space at clcleary@excite.com or (713) 521-1642

Help at the Rendezvous itself:

1. man the HCC membership table

Sin of the Single Blade



A clean catch with water to wade.
Few bubbles its path made.
The calling, the lure of the single blade.

Smiles abound from a distance glade,
As light plays the dance's shade.
Movement is beauty with the single blade.

Another stroke delicately laid,
As the next prepares its dive to raid.
Transporting the single blade.

Moving up to a higher grade.
Lessons to respect, often paid.
Reaching for harmony with the single blade.

Now with water unafraid
Drops on the shaft to cascade.
Union made with the single blade.

At rest, this spade.
The warm rays beginning to fade.
My joy, my guilt: sin of the single blade.

OC Boatman

Welcome to Our New Members

Pete & Susan Cragg

11 Emory Oak Ct. The Woodlands, TX 77381
critters@wt.net 281-367-0863
Heard about us on the net

Edward P Wuensch

7210 Winding Trace Houston, TX 77086
(281) 272-5360 ewuensch@yahoo.com

Mary Flood

6023 Verdome Lane Houston, TX 77092
713-263-8131 mflood@ev1.net
heard about us on the web

Steven and Jane Pituch

20603 Prince Creek Dr. Katy TX 77450-4907
281-398-2338 spituch@ev1.net
heard about us on the web

Karl Schleicher

alker School Rd. Sugar Land, TX 77479
karl.schleicher@pgs.ldm (281) 565-0914
heard about us on the web

Marta Bianchi and John Boone

422 Bayou Cove Court Houston, TX 77042
(713) 781-5999 jlboone@houston.rr.com

Edward and Mary Vance

111 York, S. Houston TX 77587
(743) 941-3257

Dean Scott

PO Box 1537, Port Lavaca, TX 77979
(361) 552-8802

Kevin Kisor

2203 Woodland Springs, Houston, TX 77077
(713) 780-4200 kevinwkisor@msn.com
Learned of HCC from a 2001 Rendezvous Ad in a Magazine

OOPS! The writeup for the Sims Bayou trip in the September newsletter was attributed to Natalie Weist but was actually from the hand of Evelyn Merz the trip leader. Natalie did contribute the photo, but the writeup was Evelyn's - need to give credit where credit is due! Natalie

FOR SALE: HCC BULLETIN BOARD

CURTIS VAGABOND solo traveling canoe for smaller persons. Like new condition, fiberglass, 14'8" Blue hull. \$400.00. Call Linda Arredondo 817-924-3989 lrarre@aol.com

LOON WORKS MISTRAL: Hatteras off-white, cherry decks & outwales, spruce gunwales. Perfect condition, a beautiful boat. Half ribs, sculpted cherry seat. \$2800. Call Linda Arredondo 817-924-3989 lrarre@aol.com

For Sale red **DAGGER IMPULSE** whitewater open canoe - a real good beginners boat. Garage kept, wood gunwales, foam saddle, air bags, thigh straps, knee pads, & foot blocks. I'm firm on \$550.00. I'm also selling an **OCEAN KAYKAK RAPIDO** It's lime green & it's a real surf machine. Perfect for Galveston waves. I'm firm at \$300.00. Ken Barnard @ 713 666-5666 or Ken@controlsolutionsinc.com

DAGGER SOJOURN solos canoe for sale - Wooden gunnels - \$700 or best offer. Contact Bryan Sherwood at (713) 681-4674 or bryan1204@yahoo.com

TANDEM FIBERGLASS KAYAK - good for flat water and for fishing. Includes splash skirt, 2 paddles that convert from kayak paddles to single blade. 2 air bags and 1 waterproof bag. \$400 or best offer. Contact Bob or Julia Soper at (956) 381-0690 or rasjas@swbell.net

Like-new Kevlar **DAGGER TYBEE SEA KAYAK** - 14'10" \$2,000 (\$3,000 in stores) and Kevlar **MERIDIAN SEA KAYAK** - 16' - for \$2,000 Contact Chet Tigard at (281) 494-7977 or Tigards2@ha-pc.org

TANDEM DAGGER DIMENSION -16 ft. tandem canoe, designed primarily for whitewater, excellent condition with kevlar grunch pads and air bags \$695. Call John Ohrt (713) 877-1504 or jeohrtjr@aol.com

Houston Canoe Club Officers for 2001

Commodore **Fraser Baker** 713-796-0946
fraser@pobox.com
Vice Commodore **Lillian Tigard** 281-494-7977
cbtigard@msn.com

Recorder **Marilyn Peery** 713-669-9193
kit.santome@pdq.net

Purser **Candy Donahue** 713-666-6542
paddler@pdq.net

Fleet Captain **C. Cleary** 713-521-1642
Ccleary@excite.com

Newsletter Ed. **Donna Grimes** 713-728-1645
donna.grimes@mindspring.com

Governors:

Mary Carter 713-461-5466
marcar1@pdq.net

Mark Andrus 979-849-3732
Gandrus@dellepro

Bill Grimes (713) 728-1645
William-Grimes@hlp.com

Rendezvous Chair: Jim Null 713--664-1083
medislide@earthlink.net

Newsletter Deadlines

Submissions to the Newsletter are encouraged. The preferred method is a Word document. Pictures in jpeg or gif. Submit articles, sales items, pictures by general meeting OR by the 18th of the month.

Electronic submissions:

Donna.grimes@mindspring.com

Snail Mail:

Donna Grimes
4838 Kingfisher
Houston, TX 77035

Change of Address

Contact HCC Recorder, Marilyn Peery

Nominating Committee:

Officers for 2002 are being considered by this year's nominating committee. If you are interested in being an officer or know of anyone who is, please contact one of the following:

Anne Olden aolden@ix.netcom.com

Mary Zaborowski Maryzabo@flash.net

Chet Tigard Tigard2@hal-pc.org

Bill Grimes William-Grimes@hlp.com

Mark Andrus Gandrus@dellepro

Houston Canoe Club General meeting September 12, 2001 Minutes

HCC Officers present:

Fraser Baker, Lillian Tigard, Donna Grimes, Candy Donahue, Mary Carter, Mark Andrus, Bill Grimes Not in attendance: Marilyn Peery and Cheryl Cleary

Approval of Minutes of previous meeting was deferred until next meeting. Cindy Bartos agreed to take minutes in the absence of the Recorder.

Nominating Committee announced for 2001 – 2002
HCC officers: Anne Olden, Chet Tigard, Mary Zaborowski, Mark Andrus (current HCC governor) and Bill Grimes (current HCC governor)

Donna Grimes announced the place and date for the 2001 HCC Christmas party: Northwest Fitness Center; December 8, 2001

Trip Report conducted by John Bartos (due to absence of Fleet Captain)

Candy Donahue made a motion that a letter be sent from the Houston Canoe Club to Mr. Mark Kramer at the Armand Bayou Nature Center in support of a grant application that would fund various activities at Armand Bayou. This would include projects such as a canoe trail, replacing the floating dock at Bay Area Park and placement of interpretive signs promoting the Armand Bayou Coastal Preserve. Seconded. Motion passed.

Pursers Report: Candy Donahue made a motion change the club bylaws to increase the Houston Canoe Club's yearly membership dues to \$25 (for both new and previous members). Motion passed by more than the requisite 2/3 of the members present.

Rendezvous Report: Jim Null made the motion for the HCC to give the Southwestern Canoe Rendezvous \$13,000 advance money to be repaid at the conclusion of the Rendezvous. Seconded. Motion passed.

Motion to adjourn.

Submitted by Cindy Bartos



A SMILE is an
inexpensive way
to improve your
looks

Who Be These People?

HCC Officers and other members of the Club

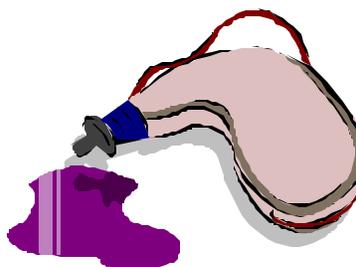
Martha Williams –the recipient of the infamous quote, “Draw Right, Martha!” , said many times by her former husband, Leonard Hulsebosch.



Martha flashes that sweet smile she's famous for

1. Where were you born and raised?
San Antonio, Texas
2. Are you married, have children ?
Twice widowed.
Leonard Hulsebosch (42 years)
Barry Williams (7 years)
Leonard and I had 6 children and 8 grandchildren
3. Where educated and degree.
B.S. degree in Fine Arts from Trinity University in San Antonio
4. Previous occupations? Worked as Display Window Decorator at Wolff & Marx, a now defunct department store in San Antonio, where Leonard and I met. Worked 3 years and quit to raise a family. When our youngest was 16 I started to work at Sears as an Executive Secretary. Worked there for 11 years and retired.
5. Present occupation. Canoeing, camping, traveling, reading.
6. Other places lived, how long in Houston?
Lived in Galveston 7 years, then Houston 32 years, then Austin 5 years, then back to Houston in 1998.
7. How did you become involved with HCC?
I was introduced to canoeing by my son, Robert. Then Leonard decided he'd like to try it and fell in love with the sport. Leonard, son Lenny and I took lessons from Don Greene. Somewhere along the line Leonard met Buffalo Allright and bought our first canoe from him (Grumman aluminum). Hot in summer, cold in winter - thank goodness for modern fabrications. Leonard found out about the club from a sporting goods store, I think. We went to our first meeting in March, 1983.

8. What is your favorite type & place to paddle?
I like moving water with some not too technical rapids, just enough to make it interesting.
My favorite place to paddle is the San Marcos, but I also enjoy the Guadalupe, Buffalo in Arkansas, the Ouiska Chitto in Louisiana, the Pecos, Rio Grande, etc., etc.
9. Any other comments.
My association with HCC has been some of the happiest times of my life. I have met so many wonderful friends and always enjoy being with the group.



Funny Fact:

On a trip down the Pecos River, we were on our second or third day when Skip Donovan's plastic wine bag sprung a leak. Without a moment's

hesitation, I poured all the water out of one of my gallon jugs and we proceeded to rescue the contents of the wine bag. After all, one has to have priorities!

Donna Grimes – HCC officer: Commodore '95, Fleet Capt.'96 & 00, Newsletter editor '01



1. Where were you born and raised? in the windy, sagebrush covered, cold, dry no-man's-land of Rawlins, Wyoming
2. Are you married, have children - In 1994, I married Bill Grimes, present governor of HCC & past pursuer. I have four children,(one of whom is an excellent paddler) and 4 granddaughters.
3. Where educated and degree? I attended the University of Wyoming, but finished my degree at Pan American University in Edinburg, TX. I had a double major of history and English with a teaching certificate
4. Previous occupations? how long? I have taught in Pharr, TX at PSJA High School(9 yrs), then Brazoswood High School in Clute, TX (13 yrs),In 1993, I moved to Houston and taught at Clements High School in Sugar Land until 2000 (7 yrs).
5. Present occupation – the best of all occupations! I'm re tired and can come and go and do whatever hits my fancy! I travel, work on the newsletter, read, volunteer with girl scouts, paddle all over the country, and have other interests I have yet to pursue...just been too busy!
6. Other places lived, how long in Houston – in Wyoming (23 years) and then Texas...(and I'm not telling how long here!)

7. How did you become involved with HCC? After reading an article in the Houston Post about touring kayaks (which featured John and Cindy Bartos) my husband and I decided these kayaks would work great with our hiking trips. Then we

attended the boat show at the Astro-arena, where HCC had a booth – joined the club in 1988 and I've been active ever since!

8. What is your favorite type and place to paddle? I've paddled all sorts of water – expedition trips in Canada, bayous in Houston, large white-water (Class IV), and I must say, my favorite is definitely the moving water, preferably Class II-III. In Texas, my favorite is the Medina River, but of all the rivers I've done, my favorite is the Tellico in Tennessee – it's like the Medina (small, clear, and twisty) but on steroids! Meaning more drops, tougher class, and an adrenaline high!
9. Do you have any other hobbies or outside activities? I love hiking, backpacking, stream fishing, reading, playing accordion and singing with my husband, traveling to diverse cultural spots, visiting historical and literary sites, plus art museums. I love water and enjoy my water pond and fish in my backyard. I have four grandkids that I thoroughly enjoy spoiling.

Survivor of the Sabine 2001

I whined on my way to the river of clouds and rain
I wanted to stay in town-I must have been insane.

Core survivalist were those who went
With overloaded boats and contentment.

Adults with children braved the elements
The children only worried about their condiments.

Variety in greenness of grass and vine
Finally, God granted us free time.

Sheets of white Thicker and thicker
The canoe ahead Slicker and slicker.

Wilderness and people-No cat but a dog
Boats upon boats Paddling the fog.

The group was smaller than good weather years
Feeling tribal we got to know our peers.

We went exploring on old Cow Creek
An obstacle course most sleek
We were gliding, sliding and made a sharp
turn
We felt like we didn't have nothin' to learn

Under the tarp we chatted when the rain did
pour
No one ran to the tent behind domed door

The water was high and we traveled fast
Recognizing the sandbar was a tricky task

I bought a t-shirt that said **I survived**
Ha! I had fun- that thought was contrived.

With laughter, wine, and song
a trip is never, ever, too long.

Seeing the sun, Feeling the moon
Tomorrow comes Far too soon.

Stardust
(alias for our own Sharon Anderson)

WONDERS OF NATURE

Volunteers are best among us
By GARY CLARK - Special to the Chronicle

I've written often about the wonders of birds, butterflies, foxes and other wild creatures that share the world with us. Today, I want to consider the wonders of people who volunteer to make our natural and civilized world a better place. I was horrified last week by the vicious nature of the twisted minds that ripped mercilessly into the fabric of our world. Yet I was also inspired by the gracious nature of the gentle minds of the people who rushed voluntarily to restore our world.

The spirit of human caring didn't surprise me. Over the years, I've seen hundreds of volunteers put in long hours of hard work to hold together the delicate fabric of our natural world, then turn around, take a breath and hold together our human world.

I'll describe the work of some of those people. All of them would tell you that there are dozens of other volunteers whose names are more worthy of mention than their own. That's the nature of gentle-minded people....

Candy Donahue was a certified public accountant who is pursuing a degree in environmental science. She became hooked on nature while she was working as a volunteer at the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center and the Armand Bayou Nature Center. She led nature tours for children. Prairie restoration is Donahue's current passion. Having spent countless hours gathering data about prairie plants, she explains that once you learn the names and characteristics of plants, you begin to see more than you ever saw before.

"I'm doing my part to make this world a better place," Donahue says, "but I'm having an absolute blast at the same time."...

To the above volunteers and the hundreds of others that make our world a better place, I say thank you: Thank you for demonstrating that one of the wonders of nature is the human spirit of giving that can overwhelm all forms of terror.

Barker Reservoir Families

an historical account of the Buffalo Bayou by Louis F. Aulbach

After the great flood of 1935, a flood eclipsed only by Tropical Storm Allison in June of this year, the city of Houston asked the Corps of Engineers to build a reservoir as a means of controlling the devastating floods along the Buffalo Bayou watershed. Barker Reservoir encompasses the land that included the ranches of two significant families in the history of Houston and Harris County.

Buffalo Bayou bisects the area of Barker Reservoir as it places the lands of the Habermacher family to the south of the bayou and the lands of the Marks family to the north.

The Habermacher family was the most prominent family in the area from the 1830's to the 1880's. Thomas and his wife Marie brought their family from Germany to the area along the San Felipe Road. They were typical in many ways of the German settlers to the region during the 1830's, some of whom settled in the northern part of Harris County while others settled west of Houston in the area known, then and now, as Spring Branch. But, although many of the other Germans took up farming, the Habermachers seemed to focus on cattle, mules and wagons. They were teamsters hauling the cotton and other goods between the Brazos farmland and the shipping centers Houston and Harrisburg.

In the late 1840's Prince Solms-Braunfels mentions stopping at Habermacher's on his trips from Houston to New Braunfels. By the 1870's, Habermacher Settlement was a prominent station on the Texas Western Narrow Gauge Railroad that carried cotton from Pattison to Houston.

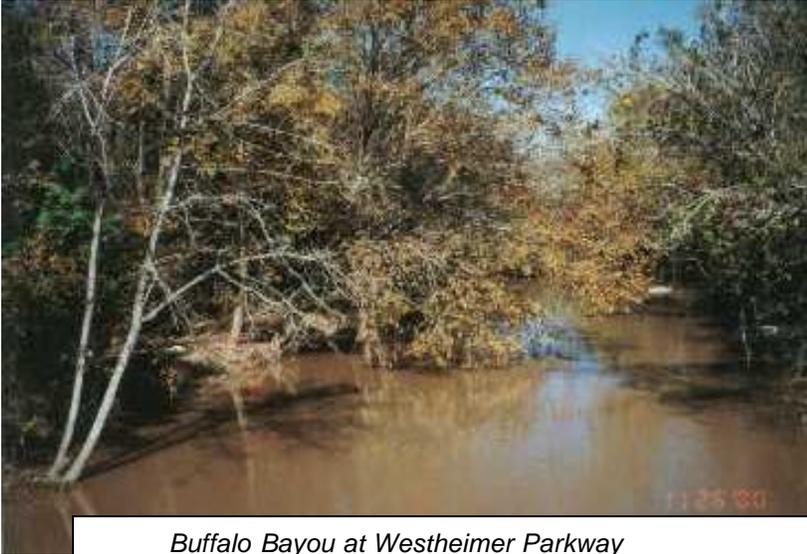
August T. Marks was a cowboy who rode in the cattle drives after the Civil War. By the 1870's, Marks was acquiring land in the area. The family still maintains a remnant of the formerly vast LH7 Ranch near I-10 and Barker-Clodine Road. Emil Marks took over the ranch from his father in 1891 and he made it one of the premier cattle ranches in the region. In the 1930's Marks helped found the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. He was one of the organizers of the Salt Grass Trail Ride.



LH7 Ranch – near I-10 and Barker-Clodine Road

This reach of Buffalo Bayou flows across the coastal prairie lands south of Katy and I-10. Historically, it was not much

more than a large drainage ditch. In recent times, however, it has been channelized and widened into a retention basin to serve the drainage needs of the Cinco Ranch development. The greenbelt long the bayou from TX99 to Westheimer Parkway actually has become a welcome access point for hiking, biking and canoeing in the far southwestern reaches of the reservoir.



Buffalo Bayou at Westheimer Parkway

There is a small, unpaved parking area where the bayou crosses Westheimer Parkway. A county park extends south along the west bank. It is possible to put your canoe or kayak in at this point and paddle upstream to the junction of Buffalo Bayou and the Diversion Canal where a lake has been formed.

Upstream of the Westheimer Parkway bridge, however, the bayou is off limits to paddling due

to Corps of Engineers regulations. But it is also worth noting that the bayou retains its native, wild and untamed character from this point until it reaches the gates of the reservoir spillway. The small narrow stream flows through a riparian forest that clogs and overhangs the streambed, often making it impassible by boat due to fallen trees and logjams.

The area along Westheimer Parkway and east of the bayou crossing is George Bush Park which is administered by Harris County. The Barker-Clodine Road has been converted into a hike and bike trail near the ruins of the Habermacher Settlement. This trail heads north across Buffalo Bayou to the headquarters of the LH7 ranch. Several other hiking trails penetrate deep into the forest and meadows of the reservoir.



Buffalo Bayou upstream of Westheimer Parkway

Even in the midst of the heavily populated west side of Houston, Barker Reservoir offers a "remote" place of wild solitude. It provides a rare glimpse of the way the land was before the coming of the European settlers.

Cheryl Cleary has created a Rendezvous Quilt using Designs from past Rendezvous T-shirts. Absolutely Beautiful! Plan to buy tickets at the general meeting on Oct. 10th and at the Rendezvous. Drawing of winning ticket will be at the Rendezvous.

Up and Coming Trips and Events with HCC

10/1 Galveston Bay Foundation General meeting, 7 PM CEC Bldg. 3015 Richmond. Speaker: Don Richardson, Topic: Bird Migration- How it Works. Guests welcome.

10/12-14 The 13th Annual Southwestern Canoe Rendezvous-

including the ACA National Interpretive Freestyle Canoeing Championship- go to www.houstoncanoeclub.org for details regarding the new location in Sugar Land. An online brochure allows you to sign up now! Hard copy brochures are in the mail to you and can be picked up at your favorite paddling retailer.

10-20 11th Annual BAY DAY Celebration- entertainment, kayak polo, exhibits and more. Sylvan Beach in La Porte on beautiful Galveston Bay. Galveston Bay Foundation event 281-332-3381

10/20-21 Lighthouse Lakes Lone Star Legacy Weekend 9:00 AM -5:00 PM Texas Parks and Wildlife will host a two-day event to celebrate the Lone Star Legacy weekend. All events are free, but donations to the Parks and Wildlife Foundation will be accepted and will all be applied toward the endowment of the Redfish Bay State Scientific Area. The event site will be located on the south side of the Highway 361 causeway between Aransas Pass and Port Aransas, about 1 mile west of the ferry landing. The activities include: Boat Demos, Flyfishing Instruction, Paddling Tours of Lighthouse Lakes, Paddling Tours of Lighthouse Lakes, "Port to Port" Canoe/Kayak Race (512) 389-4642

10/26-27 Open Water Sea Kayaking Workshop with Karen Knight and Bob Foote- for intermediate/advanced paddlers. 281-292-5600

10/27 Canoe and Crab Caper- Paddle Double Bayou and enjoy a feast of steamed blue crabs. Fee GBF 281-332-3381

10/27 Skiffs & Schooners Wooden Boat Festival on Dickinson Bayou see www.scowschooner.org for more info or 281-559-1092.

Roll Sessions *Come and practice kayak and canoe rolls, braces and wet exits. Roll sessions are held at 7 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month at the Westside YMCA pool in Houston located on the Katy Freeway (I-10) at 1006 Voss Road. On the 4th Monday, an instructor is available to teach. For insurance purposes, the YMCA requires all participants to wear a helmet. Fees are \$5 for members of the Bayou City Whitewater Club and Houston Canoe Club and \$7 for non-ACA members.*

Contact Fleet Captain Cheryl Cleary at 713-521-1642 or ccleary@excite.com to add any trips to this page. Any comments or suggestions regarding this page should also be directed to jbartos@ix.netcom.com

If you don't always have internet access, you can call the HCC HOTLINE at 713-467-8857.

Important Dates from Mark Poindexter: c1slalom@hotmail.com

race and polo weekends race #1 nov. 3-4 race #2 nov. 17-18 race #3 dec. 1-2"
at Slumber Falls on the Guadelupe

clinic schudule strokedrill oct. 27-28 river running nov. 10-11

A Peaceful Paddle by Pelican Island, September 13. by Natalie Wiest

That evening after work, Chris and Jan and I met at the shell beach by the T/S Texas Clipper here on the Pelican Island campus of Texas A&M University at Galveston. Fortunately for the start of the trip, my dire prediction of clouds of blood-thirsty mosquitoes failed to materialize and the few at the start buzzed off as we moved over the waters of Galveston Bay. Chris and I got there first and took it as a good omen that there were a large number of dolphins feeding in the outgoing tidal current at our starting point to the west of the Pelican Island causeway. One pair, presumed to be a mother and calf, surfaced repeatedly in perfect unison.

What made the dolphins active must have attracted the brown pelicans too and the huge birds dived in the same area. Chris practiced retro-cooling perfect rolls. I didn't tell him until later that the deep waters dredged around the Clipper are reputed to be very attractive to large sharks as well - but hopefully they were partaking of the same bounty as the pelicans and dolphins and we saw no signs of their presence.

There was little wave action at the put-in, and we were surprised to find that also as we paddled under the causeway into the open waters of Galveston Bay. The shadows were getting longer as days grow shorter and very few clouds dotted the sky. With little wind, few waves, and not much of a current it was truly peaceful out there. The hum of that kind of silence seemed almost unnatural and we realized part of that was the absence of aircraft, anywhere on the horizon. Unusual for the busy airspace around Houston/Galveston. In all of our paddle, only one plane flew overhead, an F-something military jet at low altitude, also unusually quiet.

Our mission, other than just paddling relaxation, was to accompany Jan on her specimen-collecting trip for a graduate level invertebrate critters class. We could have hardly had a better setting although a lower tide would have made her job easier. We all marveled at the tranquil conditions and the bright clarity of the day.



The apex of our out-and-back trip was a sandy beach along the Intracoastal Waterway cut at the northern tip of Pelican Island. Last time Chris and I were out there, it was just covered up in adult and juvenile brown pelicans.

There were a lot fewer this time. I was amused at a clique of juvenile gulls sitting about 30' from where Jan was doing her collecting, and where I had run my kayak onto the sand. They were giving us what-for tongue lashing, raucous talking and laughing (hey, good chance these are laughing gulls, so what kind of talk would you expect). I could imagine them saying to each other "ha, ha, look at those silly humans", "hey, look at that one digging in the sand", "ya think she's finding anything good to eat?", "ha ha, ha ha".

What Jan was collecting was in fact worms burrowing in the sand, but we weren't sharing any with those gulls. She did a second collection around the corner from the first site and this time the object of my bird watching was a huge pelican teetering in a tree again not very far from her. It's lovely to be so close to see the agility and flexibility of those long pelican necks. The bird twisted its head left and right, between Jan and Chris. I could almost see it thinking and it shortly decided this was not safe sport and spread those long wings to dip between us and head out over the water.



The beautiful conditions took on the hue of sunset over our right shoulders as we headed back to campus. In the distance the Galveston causeway divided the pastel sky from the pastel water. I wondered how the artist Bernardo Bellotto, whose work I had admired up close the previous weekend, might have painted it. His 18th century oils have a strong sense of light - he'd have enjoyed the effects of our Texas sunset. Jan and Chris in their white kayaks cast mirror reflections on the quiet waters. As we remarked on the beauty of the day, we enjoyed a last atmospheric tribute to the actions of the last week. The sun became a fiery red ball, half hidden by a distant thunderhead, tinged with gold and orange on its edges. We were reminded that not all is right in the world, but there is some sense of peace to be found on the water. Peace, brothers and sisters, and thanks for coming along for the ride.

Natalie Wiest
HCC Paddler

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Check out the electronic format of this newsletter – available to current members only – At
www.houstoncanoeclub.org

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