

Christmas Party with HCC Members

By Donna Grimes

HCC is comprised of many types of paddlers – white water, local bayous, the gulf, and free style. Other than at the general meetings, many of these folks do not see the participants of the various paddling disciplines.....except at the annual HCC Christmas Party, held this year on Dec. 8th at Northwest Fitness Center. Those who missed this event, put it on your calendar for next year, but here are some of the highlights.

Tracy Caldwell, general party planner, created some fun games for mixers. First, we were sent on a scavenger hunt looking for such mundane items as diaper pins to more exotic colorful beads. Her second game consisted of teams building their own TALL Christmas tree using balloons and tape. Kevin Casement's team not only filled the balloons full of air, but then used a tall person as their stem and a tall stool to create the required height. With wimpily-inflated balloons and shorter people, my team soon realized we were outdone!

Next, it was time to eat! HCC paddlers are great cooks and the amount and variety of food created overflowing plates and satiated palates.

No one left hungry! A Santa-driven canoe housed the beer and soft drinks to quench our thirst.



Kevin Casement, the tallest Xmas tree of the group



Paul Woodcock auctioneer the Dagger SoJourn

At the brief general meeting, Paul Woodcock helped auction off the Dagger Sojourn and Fraser received a thank you gift of a composite picture of himself and his paddling adventures. Bill and Donna Grimes presented a paddling slide show, using music from "Trip's End" and "Coyote Dance". In "Coyote Dance", Bill used images from Ansel Adams and E.S.Curtis as counter points to

our modern paddling experiences. "Trip's End" was a ballad of a new paddler and his first white water trip. HCC members howled with laughter when the line from the song, "I wished I hadn't seen Deliverance" faded from the movie image of the hillbilly into an image of our own Bob Arthur.

Following the slide show, there was time to just visit and laugh and look forward to another year with the diverse paddlers from HCC.

Raging river imperils kayakers

By Roger Croteau

San Antonio Express-News

Web Posted : 11/27/2001 12:00 AM

NEW BRAUNFELS — Lured by the thrill of whitewater rapids, kayakers are flocking to the Guadalupe River below Canyon Dam this week. But some show up without the knowledge, equipment or skill to tackle the river safely, outfitters say.

Recent heavy rains have prompted a flood release of 5,000 cubic feet of water per second from Canyon Dam, turning the normally calm river downstream into a torrent. Class 2 and Class 3 rapids kayakers usually have to travel to New Mexico or Colorado to find such fast-moving water. The flood releases are expected to last at least another week. On Saturday, a San Antonio woman, Juliet Garcia, 33, drowned while trying to kayak past a small bridge along River Road.

"People don't understand how powerful water can be," said Chris Plummer, a river guide with Gruene River Outfitters. "There is very little room for error when the river is like this. And if you do screw up, it's very hard to get anybody to help you in time. People don't understand this is a different river at 5,000 cfs than it is at 500."

Outfitters stop renting inner tubes when the river reaches 800 cubic feet per second, and won't rent rafts without a guide when the flow tops 1,200 cfs. But that does not stop people from bringing their own equipment to shoot the rapids. The stretch of the river between Canyon Dam and New Braunfels hosts thousands of tourists every summer, and some people think of the river as more of an amusement park ride than a wild torrent, Plummer said.

"One woman lost her glasses in the river and asked if she could come back that night and look for them when they turn the water off," he said. "This isn't Schlitterbahn (water park)."

When the flow reaches current levels, rapids that once provided thrills to teen-agers on inner tubes become a challenge for the most experienced kayakers, with holes 10 feet deep and standing waves even higher.

"I see them come down all the time using those little \$40 rafts you buy at Wal-Mart," Plummer said. "We call them will-pops. They have no business on the water at this level.

"The dumbest thing I've ever seen was a lady floating down in an inner tube in 1997 when the water was like this, and she had a child that must have been 18 months old on her lap and no life jackets or anything," Plummer said. "Luckily a game warden was there and he got her out of the river."

Even experienced kayakers can get in trouble. One broke both legs when his kayak wrapped around a tree in 1997 and almost died of hypothermia because it took more than two hours for rescuers to get him out of the water.

On Monday, Chris Dolton, an architect from Dallas, rode the same stretch of river where Garcia died Saturday. But first he walked the shore and scouted the river so he knew the safest route. "You have to plot your route and know what you are doing," Dolton said. "We portaged around anything that looked too risky."

David Price, of Austin, was another who was drawn by the lure of the whitewater. "Sometimes you get people down here who have never done the river at this level," he said. "They think it is the same, just more water. But it's not. It's totally different. "It's analogous to a Formula One race car," he said. "You might get in one and say, 'I can drive a car so I can drive this.' No you can't, not at 260 miles per hour on a race track."

Plummer said guided raft trips from one of the outfitters that offer the service is the safest way to enjoy the rapids. "It's not that this river is dangerous," Plummer said. "There are just a few spots where you need to know where you've got to be and where you've got to not be."

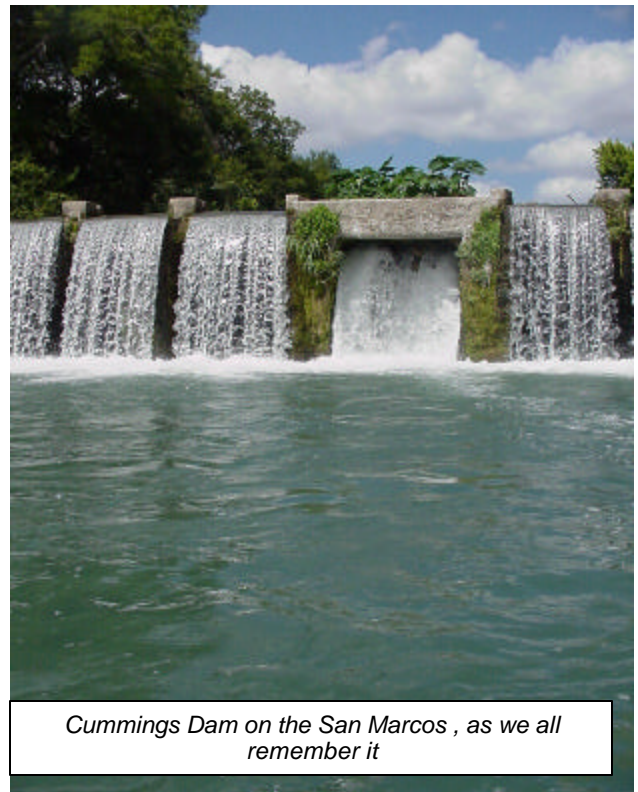
Rcroteau@express-news.net 11/27/2001

Cummings Dam – on the San Marcos

Anyone who has paddled from City park in San Marcos to Pecan Park knows Cummings Dam well. It's a mandated portage on river right, but not anymore. Around the first of December, Alan Cummings (owner of Cumming's Dam) reported that the boards had blown out of the center of the dam with the whole San Marcos River (which was quite high at the moment - up to the bottom of Westfield Crossing) going through the center of the dam instead of going over it. Also the banks were covered with silt so he's not sure if people are going to be able to portage around the dam.

Tom Goynes provided a little history and insight into this Dam in his email posted shortly after the break through. Here are his comments:

In the early 80's Cummings Dam had a major blowout on the right side. The whole river decided to go under the dam one night and by morning the lake was pretty much drained. The owners tell me that the hole was big enough to drive a car through. They decided to repair the dam, so they drained the rest of the lake by removing the boards that are in the center (the same boards that have recently blown out) and then they pumped several tons of cement into the hole and added the new buttress and "stairs" that are on the right side.



Cummings Dam on the San Marcos , as we all remember it

It took them a while to do the repairs, so the lake was drained for several months. At first it was a very dangerous situation, and several kayakers had some trouble with vertical pinning problems while run-ning the slot. But after things settled down (the silt and gravel sediment on the up-stream side of the dam finally eroded away) and there was very little drop. I got to run the slot many times in an open canoe. There wasn't really much to it - even the average boy scout could do it with no difficulty.

The real change was upstream of the dam. Of course, there was no lake. So you could paddle all the way from San Marcos to Scull's crossing with only one portage at Cape's dam. And there was current. And there were little rapids (the last one was right at the confluence of the San Marcos and Blanco Rivers). It was absolutely wonderful. One of the paddlers who ran the river on Friday said that it was already well on its way to becoming a river again.

Some of the old studies show that before Cummings Dam existed there was a very substantial population of the now endangered Fountain Darters at the Blanco/San Marcos confluence. And the USF&WS has agreed that the removal of Cummings Dam would be very beneficial to restoring Fountain Darter and Wild Rice habitat.

Unfortunately the dam was rebuilt in the 80's and will probably be repaired now. Can't have a dam die a natural death, don't you know. But if anyone out there has any pull with the government, now is the time to do it. I sure haven't had much luck tilting with dams.

Tom

Plan B for the Great Unknown of the Rio Grande

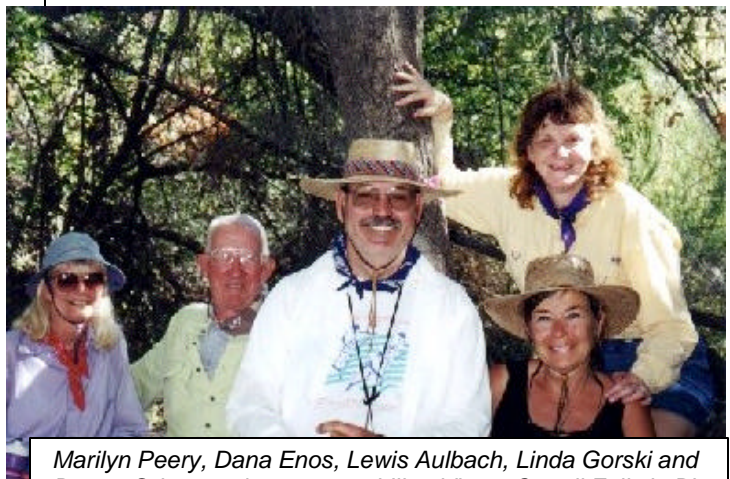
By Linda C. Gorski

One thing I've learned over the past few years of paddling the rivers of Texas is that when you go out to the Big Bend to paddle the Rio Grande...be sure you have a Plan B.

A couple of years ago, I accompanied Louis Aulbach, his kids, Robert and Lolita Stricker and their four grandchildren, and several other folks to the Big Bend to paddle Boquillas Canyon. We hauled a total of eleven boats out there plus all our other paddling equipment. A couple of days before we were scheduled to put on the river it started raining ... and it rained ... and it rained. The morning of our trip, the river at Rio Grande Village was at 16

feet and moving like a freight train. Needless to say, considering all the kids and novice paddlers (myself included) on the trip, we decided to forgo paddling. But we hiked and camped and played endless games of Scrabble; Louis and Lolita fixed some unbelievably scrumptious Dutch oven meals ... and a great time was had by all. In fact, it turned out to be one of our best trips out to the Big Bend ever!

This fall we had a similar, but very different, experience. Louis and I had scheduled a trip to paddle the Great Unknown of the Rio Grande from Santa Elena Canyon to Boquillas Canyon the week after Rendezvous to finish up the research we have been doing for our upcoming book on paddling that section of the river. Donna Grimes, Marilyn Peery, Dana Enos and Louis's sister came along. Unlike our previous experience however, it didn't rain...for months...and months ... and months. And when we got to the Big Bend, every outfitter discouraged us from even attempting the trip. They said the river was way too low...that we'd be dragging our boats a good portion of the way. We heeded their warnings and dropped back to Plan B.



Marilyn Peery, Dana Enos, Lewis Aulbach, Linda Gorski and Donna Grimes enjoy a nonpaddling hike to Cattail Falls in Big Bend

And what a great Plan B it was!

We met Dana at Comstock and after spending the night at Seminole Canyon we had a once in a lifetime experience. The Rio Grande and Lake Amistad are so low right now that you can actually walk to Panther Cave. Jack Richardson, who is guiding tours out there on the Pecos, the Devils and the Lake, showed us the way...through the park, over the dried riverbed, up the canyon, across an escarpment...to this cave with unbelievable pictographs that normally is only reachable by boat.

That night Dana, Louis and I camped at the primitive site at Dog Canyon, on a dirt road off to the left after you enter the Big Bend from the Marathon road. What an incredible experience. It was so quiet, so remote, so clear, so starry with a huge full moon. Magical...especially when the coyotes started their song.

We had planned to meet the rest of the group at Cottonwood Campground the following day and, sure enough, we all gathered and snagged three perfect campsites at the far end of the deserted campground. Lots of trees, water at our front door and even some new pit toilets across the way! Luxury! Not only that, we had wildlife. A family of eleven javelinas and two wild turkeys greeted us cheerfully as we set up our tents and made camp. And Donna and I are sure we saw a mountain lion in the camp on our second night there ... despite what the rest of our crew has to say!

Because all of us brought our boats just in case we got a surge in the river, Louis planned a one-day trip upriver into Santa Elena Canyon. We did that on Sunday and if anything convinced us that we had made the right decision not to paddle for a week, that did it. Between walking the boats over the gravel bars and mud flats, plodding through sticky mud, poling, paddling against the current, and struggling with the

unseasonable 95 degree temperatures for just a mile or so...we stopped for lunch on a canyon ledge and voted to paddle back to the takeout.

Back to Plan B.

Since all of us like to hike almost as much as we like to paddle, we laid out our topo maps on the picnic table and decided where to go first. Since Donna and Marilyn were going to be with us for just three days, we decided to do the best day hikes the Big Bend has to offer while they were with us...Cattail Falls, Mule Ears and The Chimneys. We never cease to be amazed at the variety of terrain the Big Bend offers and these three hikes run the gamut...secret, hidden pools and waterfalls, long stretches of desert, dry creek beds, and even canyons with panels of incredible pictographs and petroglyphs...rare to find in this area of the



Yes, it's a tarantula!

Big Bend. Donna even saw her first live tarantula ... up close and personal!

After we said goodbye to Donna and Marilyn Dana, Louis and I spent the new few days going where few men (or women) have gone before. Again, using our topo. maps and the extensive research we had already done, we hiked far into the desert and found the ruins of several vanished and completely lost to history Mexican villages - complete with haunting

cemeteries and crumbling adobe huts. We found the ruins of the officers' quarters, the enlisted barracks, the blacksmith shop and the corrals at Camp Neville Springs, an 1880's Army outpost that had been manned by the Seminole Indian Scouts. We drove the River Road in both directions and discovered amazing places like the ruins of Johnson's Ranch, which had been quite an active U.S. Army airfield from the 1920's right through the second World War, protecting the border and offering cocky pilots, their white scarves blowing in the wind, a place to take off for their daring flights THROUGH Santa Elena Canyon!

Our best discovery, however, was right off the main road between Castolon and Santa Elena Canyon. You've probably passed it a dozen times in your travels to the put in or take out for Santa Elena. Up on the right, on a high bluff, are the ruins of an adobe house, the Dorgan house. It is actually part of a larger complex that was called the Dorgan-Sublett Complex.

The Dorgan-Sublett Complex included several substantial houses and farmland that stretched along the Rio Grande floodplain from Santa Elena Canyon to beyond Castolon. It's worth a stop. Park your car along the road (there is a pull off) and hike up to the first level which is the Sublett store. Read the historical signs. Go up to the next level. There you'll find the ruins of a three room rock house. But go up a little higher and you'll find the real prize...the melting adobe walls of the Dorgan house, built in the early 1900s and one of the true gems of the Big Bend. The center fireplace of the house is still standing and we thought at first glance it was made of huge slabs of petrified wood, polished over time. Later, we learned that

the fireplace is made from volcanic rock found in the vicinity of Castolon. It is a magnificent fireplace in a magnificent house ...surely a mark of the status that Albert Dorgan enjoyed during his time in the Big Bend.

So, put together a Plan B for yourself the next time you travel to the Big Bend. There are plenty of other great experiences waiting for you if you can't paddle the Rio Grande!

Welcome to Our Newest Members!

James and Mara Buechele

9616 Livernois
Houston, TX 77080-8017
713-973-9312
Heard about us on the internet

Lee and Teresa Jones

3806 Smithers Lane
Missouri City, TX 77459-6260
281-778-7660
leejones@riverwayproperties.com
Heard about us on the web

Heather Cox & Van Odell

1622 Crescent Point Dr.
Katy, TX 77494
281-395-1703
odellvs@airmail.net

Richard Sproll

1236 Thornton Ave.
Houston, TX 77018
713-214-1161
Richard_sproll@aimfunds.com

**We can't change the direction of
the wind, but we can adjust our**

sails



Thanksgiving 2001 on Rivers in the Texas Hill Country

by Janice Frels

Thanksgiving is traditionally a time to pause and reflect on the passing year. It has been a wild ride for me in 2001, from the low of having my house flood and dealing with that for months, to the high of becoming Fraser Baker's tandem partner. We have had some terrific times together in that canoe.

The last trip we did was Donna & Bill Grimes Thanksgiving trip to the Hill Country.

We left Houston early Friday morning with our turkey leftovers for Guadalupe River State Park and a 10:00 am put in. As we were arriving the morning was hazy and cool, but the sun broke through with a vengeance and we had perfect "Chamber of Commerce" weather for the entire weekend. The sky was that beautiful blue that you only seem to be able to find in the fall in the country. At night the stars were so bright and sparkling that it made a quick trip out of the tent when nature called almost fun.

Being a native Missourian (which Chet Tigard says is nothing to brag about), I love the Hill Country of Texas. The rocky bluffs lining the Guadalupe and Medina Rivers remind me of the Ozarks in Missouri. This is my favorite place to paddle. I am a rookie paddler, as any of you who have been on a trip with me will know, and the challenge of water that is moving fast really puts a grin on my face.

Fraser has been my paddling instructor, in addition to learning how to deal with me every day. I admire his patience and steady good humor, and he only "yells" at me in the most quiet, sweet way. For instance he will say something like, "You might want to try putting the blade of the paddle deeper", which translates to paddle harder dummy!

I do feel like I have made some strides in canoeing, and learning the proper vocabulary has been a challenge. Eddy turns, draws, pries, gunnels, etc. were like learning a new language to me. So, when we were barreling down the Guadalupe and Fraser was in the back excitedly saying "Oh gee,gee...oh gee!!" all I could think of was my Missouri upbringing and that "gee" means turn to the right. Luckily I awaited better instructions from the Commodore because I knew he really meant "Oh hell, what do we do now?!".



Janice Frels, a fairly new paddler, learns to surf and enjoys it

But we are getting our strokes and communication in syn, we had a successful 3 days of paddling without tipping over.

Not only was the paddling fun and the weather and fall scenery fantastic, the fellowship we enjoyed was unbeatable. We had a community campfire and Fraser introduced me to a new dish – "Ashened Chicken". Just let your already cooked chicken slide off the grill into the ashes of the campfire, retrieve and enjoy. We also had a wandering minstrel join the group with his guitar, and the music and wine both flowed. Fellow paddlers, you should have been there.

THANKSGIVING WEEKEND TRIP

By Martha Williams

We had a lot to be thankful for: our leaders, Donna and Bill Grimes; their downriver helpers, Chet and Lillian Tigard; fair weather; plentiful of water; and great *camaraderie*.

I arrived at the Guadalupe River State Park entrance Friday morning just in time to join the caravan to the Spring Branch Road put in. There were 25 boats, so we were split into 2 groups. Donna & Bill took one, and Chet & Lillian led the other. Donna had selected a stretch on the Guadalupe with no rapids, due to high water, but even at that we had some fun runs through high dancing waves. I don't know about everyone else, but I took on a bit of water in a couple of spots.

We met at lunch, then split again for the rest of the trip to Weidner's for the take out. Wonderful day on the river!

Back at camp Friday night, Donna broke out her accordion, Bill got his guitar, and we had a fun sing-a-long around a roaring campfire.

Saturday we did the Medina River from Camp Bandina to the roadside park. It was a wonderful, fast and twisty run with lots of places to play (for those who had more energy that I - I was just proud to make it down river). We had 21 boats so again split into 2 groups.

Martha Williams enjoys her favorite river, the Medina



At the waterfall, many participants braved the falls, others went through the trees on river right and took the chute down, which wasn't quite as much of a soaker as the falls. Then there was me - a total chicken, and with the help of Marilyn Peery, dragged my canoe across the grass and into the water past all the maelstroms. There were still more fun rapids and turns along the way to the take out.

Some of us stayed in Bandera and dined at a really nice restaurant. Then back to camp where we had another great evening of music around the campfire.

John Ainsworth added his guitar and voice to the group. Also Cheryl Cleary played a few snappy little tunes on a flutelike instrument, then joined in with the guitars. We also had an added guitarist from a nearby campsite who asked if he could join us, and he treated us to a number of beautiful solos. Donna and Bill sang a couple of really cute duets. The music continued on past the quiet hour, but no one seemed to mind. As a matter of fact, our campfire group grew as neighboring campers joined

us around the campfire. I think all the campers enjoyed it as much as we did.

The people are what makes a trip great, and this one was wonderful !

NECHES RIVER CANOE EXPEDITION

"The alligator slid noiselessly from the sloping bank into the river. His scaly six-foot body making barely a ripple as he disappeared beneath the surface. From behind me, the shrill, raucous cry of an Indian hen (pileated woodpecker), reverberated through the forest. A damselfly perched daintily on the prow of the canoe. Everywhere smelled of autumn leaves, river water, and decaying cellulose. Sunlight filtered through the trees and danced on the current of the upper Neches River. Silently I lifted my paddle from the water and waited for the big reptile to reappear. . . ." reads my notes from a moment in time on the Neches River Canoe Expedition.

There are few places remaining in Texas as wild and primitive as the Neches River bottomlands. The 225-mile ribbon of life that meanders between Lake Palestine and Steinhagen Lake at Dam B is, in places, almost as pristine as when Sam Houston and Davy Crockett forded these waters some 165 years ago.

Giant oak trees still drop acorns as big as ping-pong balls onto the ground and into the water. Sweet gums draped with muscadine and river haw laced with droops of sour 'possum grapes hang over the river. The limbs of huckleberry bushes sag under the weight of their fruit, and sandbars show the tracks of animals that come to the river to drink and search for food. Sometimes a quick survey will reveal evidence of raccoon, coyote, opossum, beaver, otter, and white tail deer, all crisscrossing the same small sandbar. I am reasonably certain I even found the tracks of a cougar on one sandbar.

Unfortunately, the future of this watery Eden is as murky as the river water that swirls over and around the logs and limbs that clog its channel. The water hustlers are for building at least three dams and reservoirs along the Neches valley. The negative consequences of these impoundments will reach to the bays and estuaries along the Gulf Coast. The lack of fresh water in these areas will have disastrous impacts on crab, mollusk, and shrimp populations. Sport fishermen, guides, and the whole array of commercial fisheries will be adversely affected.

The Neches is too unique and environmentally important to suffer the same fate as its sister river, the Angelina, and numerous other streams across the state that have steadily disappeared beneath water piled up behind barriers of concrete and steel. The tremendous waste of tax dollars to build a reservoir when no one needs the water supply and the destruction of irreplaceable wildlife habitat and hunting and fishing land simply must not slip by unnoticed by the people of Texas.

"The river here is choked with logs. Suddenly, at the edge of a treetop, a large mouth bass, that must weigh 5 pounds, explodes straight up out of the water. I could see his entire body amid the spray and bubbles his expulsion produced. My canoe rounds a bend, and I see Gina stopped in the river 200 feet ahead, holding onto a limb of a sunken tree. She is watching a doe and a yearling standing on a narrow shelf at the base of a 20-foot cliff on the Anderson County side of the river. The yearling frantically tries to scale the cliff but quickly rolls back into the river. The doe moves nervously back and forth on their narrow perch while the yearling scrambles out of the water and back to her side. Both animals make another try at scaling the wall, but this time the doe falls into the river. Instead of rejoining her offspring she turns, swims across the river, and disappears into the woods. The yearling quickly follows. . ."

"People working together can make a difference," whirled through my mind as I lashed the 17-foot Grumman canoe onto the trailer and headed to Lake Palestine. My daughter Gina and I hoped that the idea of paddling a canoe from Lake Palestine to Beaumont, approximately 350 miles, would generate public interest for having the river designated the Upper Neches Scenic River by the National Park Service. It wouldn't be easy, but most things worth doing aren't easy. I would canoe the river and sleep on sandbars at night. Gina would begin the expedition with me and would accompany me when possible, but public relations and media coordination would be her responsibility. We hoped that others who wanted to see some wild things saved would join us along the way.

The trip required 25 days from Lake Palestine to Collier's Ferry Park in Beaumont. Measured by just about any yardstick, the Expedition was a colossal success. The weather was perfect, 25 days of Indian summer temperatures and no rain. The media attention focused on the event was beyond our most hopeful expectations. We are all holding our breath to see what Texas Parks and Wildlife will do with their two days of filming our journey between U. S. Highway 79 and U. S. Highway 84. Words cannot describe the feeling of seeing

something you passionately advocate displayed on the front page of a major newspaper like the Houston Chronicle, or the five-part series aired by KTRE-TV in Lufkin.

"There was a bright half-moon which illuminated the landscape; so much so that one could see to move about. Two Great Horned Owls began calling and did so off and on the rest of the night. At 3:30 a.m., I couldn't sleep and crawled out of the tent to look around. The sky was awesome! The stars were brilliant, and you could see forever. The coyotes began their serenade again, only this time it wasn't a lot of yipping. It was more like the howl of a wolf. Long, slow emotional cries. Chills ran up and down my spine. Throughout the night I heard river otters jumping and playing in the river..." (Excerpts from Gina's journal)

There remains much work to be done for the U. S. Congress to designate the 225 miles of free flowing river between Lake Palestine and Steinhagan Lake, the "Upper Neches Scenic River." We first must come together and discuss what is best for the river and what is best for society. Then our Congress must act to make it a reality. It won't be simple or easy, but it is possible and necessary if you consider the consequences of not protecting the Neches.

"I heard the leaves rustle and the sharp breaking of a twig. I raised my head just as a white tail buck stepped onto the sandbar from beneath the willows and sycamores. His antlers were almost comical. They extended straight up from his head probably eight inches before breaking out into six small points. We saw each other at precisely the same time. Neither of us moved. The wind was not in his favor, so he hadn't picked up the dreaded human scent. We stood eyeing each other for what seemed minutes. Slowly the buck began moving his erect head from side to side trying to sniff more information from the air. Then puzzled, but not frightened, he turned and retreated into the cover of the forest."

Want to Build a Kayak?

I have a wooden sea kayak that I built from a kit from Chesapeake Light Craft. I am interested in building another one. If anyone is interested in building a CLC kayak kit, I am willing to work with them. We could build two at a time. I think my garage is big enough to accomodate building two boats.

Steve Weinberg

ctsaiw@aol.com

HCC Trips for the New Year

12/26 - 1/2/02 Rio Grande Trip - Come join Mary Z and Paul Woodcock as they venture through the Santa Elena and Boquillas Canyons of the Rio Grande. This is sure to be a memorable trip. For more details contact Mary at coachz66@hotmail.com or maryzabo@yahoo.com or by phone (H) 713-884-1925, (C) 832-215-4551.

12/29 - 1/1/02 Annual HCC Medina New Year's Trip Traditionally the Tigards agree to bring in the new year by paddling the Medina. Sometimes the Medina is the Frio or the Guadalupe or the San Marcos. . . BUT, they will paddle over that weekend. Contact Chet or Lillian for details 281-494-7977 or Tigards2@hal-pc.org

1/9/02 HCC Monthly Meeting -Wednesday-Red Cross Bldg. 2700 SW Frwy just west of Kirby. Everyone welcome.

1/12/02 Green's Bayou Cleanup

2/2/02 Lake Charlotte, paddle through a cypress swamp in the Trinity River delta area east of Houston. Contact John Bartos 713-957-3809 or jbartos@ix.netcom.com

3/23/02 Annual Armand Bayou Cleanup-associated with Trash Bash- This has been an event that the HCC has been involved in for many years. Help keep our urban wilderness paddling area looking sharp. 281-486-9500

4/5-7/02 La Louisianne Freestyle Canoeing Symposium - Mandeville Louisiana. One of the premier places for beginners to experts to improve their canoeing skills. John Steib 225-654-5224

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.

Any comments or suggestions regarding this page should also be directed to jbartos@ix.netcom.com For Trips or info after January 1, 2002 contact new Fleet Captain Randall Nord rfnord@ondeo-nes.com

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

First Aid Course

If anyone is interested in a Wilderness Medical Associates Wilderness First Aid certification, Jamie Butler, W-EMT, is teaching this 16 hour course on **March 9-10, 2002** at Whitewater Experience here in Houston. Each day the class will run from 8 AM to 6 PM. Cost is \$197 with \$100 deposit to hold your spot in the class with the balance due on the first day of the course. These certifications are good for 3 years.

You can find more information about the course content at the Wilderness Medical Associates website: http://www.wildmed.com/course_fact_sheets/wfa_facts.html#top

CPR certification is not required for this class, but as you all probably know it is certainly something good for everyone to have anyway. Several of the local paddlers including myself have taken wilderness medicine classes from Jamie and as others have attested to before, these are excellent courses and Jamie is a wonderful teacher/paddler.

This class is also being offered to Experience paddlers interested in becoming river guides for Whitewater, so if that is something that interests you, here is an opportunity to learn more about this organization as well.

There are only TWO slots left for this class. If you are interested, contact me at paddlinman@hotmail.com or call me at 713.748.0468 for additional information.

Kevin Casement

Who Be These People?

Lillian Tigard:

Where were you born?

In Boston, MA, my father who was a doctor was doing his residence under Dr. Paul White in Boston. I was the only Yankee, in a family of seven children. I was raised in Houston and have lived here all of my life.



Are you married, have children? - I have been married to Chet Tigard for 22 years on December 8. I have three children from my first marriage and Chet has two. Together we have five. My three live here in Houston and Chet's children live out in California.

Where Educated and Degree?

I went to Webster College in St. Louis, MO. I changed my major twice. I started with a liberal arts program then changed to Drama my true passion. I completed three years worth of credits towards a degree before getting my Mrs. Degree.

Previous occupations? I have had many different jobs in my career. I have gone from a Payroll Manager, Human Resource Manager, to an Administrative Manager, to a Benefit Specialist. I have worked for the last four years at Salomon Smith Barney where I manage 401(k) Plans for John Mott, Senior Vice President. I will end my career in about four years. I have enjoyed learning and meeting all the new challenges that you face in the financial world. This has been a fun and exciting job, but stressful.

Other places lived I have always lived in Houston. In fact I lived in a big house, (remember I was one of seven children), that was considered out in the country. I went to school at St. Ann on Shephard and Westheimer and after school, rode a

bus to the River Oaks Drug store. Mother would then come pick me, my sister and two brothers up for the long drive home. We lived just off old Post Oak Lane. Our house was on two acres that had an old stable for our horse. It was beautiful place filled with huge oak trees, with moss hanging from

their branches. It had a little stream running just in the front of the house with a rustic bridge over the water. I used to climb trees, build tree houses, swing from rope swings and spend hours playing outdoor games with my

brothers, sisters and our neighborhood friends. I was a very lucky child. I hate that I can no longer visit my childhood home, 20 west Oak. President Bush Sr. built a home in my old neighborhood and they have installed security gates, so I can not drive by and see my old home. But I can still see it in my memories, just like it was when I was young.

I have raised my children in Sugar Land, on a piece of property that I was very lucky to have found. It is on Oyster Creek. It has brought me, Chet and our children much pleasure.

How did you become involved with the HCC?

Chet and I joined back in 1981.

What is your favorite type and place to paddle?

White water of course. I have paddled all sorts of rivers from Mexico, Honduras, Grand Canyon, California Rivers, Colorado Rivers, and many Eastern Rivers. But give me the Guad, Medina and Frio and I am a happy camper. I just plan love paddling. I became a certified ACA Whitewater Instructor in 1993 and taught for several years. What has been my greatest love and accomplishment is the Rendezvous. I helped create the clinic structure and many, many aspects of the Rendezvous.

I have recently taken up Freestyle Canoeing, that I call Stylized Canoeing. This has been a wonderful challenge for me and I highly recommend it to other whitewater paddlers. I think of it as a canoe discipline, which focuses on bringing one's mind, body, boat and paddle into perfect harmony. It helps develop grace, balance, flexibility.

From the Helm – Fraser Baker, Commodore:

Last year, when I became Commodore when Jim Null resigned to chair the Rendezvous Committee, I was a bit overwhelmed. I had been a member of the club for less than two years and had no administrative experience (I am a scientist.). I'm sure my lack of experience showed, but I brought a fresh perspective to the position. I must have done some things right cause y'all elected me to continue as Commodore ... or maybe no one else wanted the job!

As I fumbled around, I observed that many details of the officers' duties are transmitted orally. The Bylaws provide only an overview. This adversely affected my past administration, as positions filled by novices did not function well because we did not know what was expected until after the fact. So, to minimize the trauma associated with becoming an officer of the HCC and to improve continuity of function, in my second term I intend to prepare a handbook detailing the duties for each officer and committee chair of the club. This project is already underway, which ultimately will result in a revision of the Bylaws.

As director of a small medical lab aimed at improving cancer patients' therapy, I became experienced in computer and Internet programming, skills that I have brought to the club. With Donna, I am developing a strategy to easily prepare an Internet form of the club's newsletter, which I hope to have completed by spring.

The HCC is a big club with a lot of influence in the paddle-craft community. Its influence is directly related to what we do very well, and that is sponsor paddling activities. I would like to encourage our trip coordinators to lead more trips and encourage "newbies" participation. I was a "newbie" less than three years ago and have logged some 375 miles paddling my boats since then. In 2000 we paddled 7,325 paddler miles. **Let's beat that record in 2002!**

See you on the river.

For Sale:

Dagger Outburst. Blue and marbled red. This all around performer is ready take on all kinds of challenging whitewater. Stable, fast and roomy this boat is equally at home on the tight mountain rivers of the East and the BigWater desert rivers of the West. Only one owner. Never paddled to church on Sundays by a little old lady from Pasadena. Garaged. Outfitted package includes, drain plug, bow nose cap, Salamander back band and stern air bags. \$350. scott.coultas@chamberlainlaw.com

Perception Saber Blue. Warning: This boat may be too hot, hot, hot for you to handle. With the Saber, you can explore the boundaries of your abilities and stretch them to new heights. Long, low and lean this boat is fast and sharp. Your boat will come with bow and stern nose caps. Priced to move at \$125. (white water) scott.coultas@chamberlainlaw.com

Valley Mills Barcelona Blue and Black. Fiber Glass. Paddle a slalom racing legend. This boat was designed for the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona Spain. Learn the fast and clean moves all the racer's know. Adjustable seat and foot braces. Bow and stern grab loops. \$400.

For additional information please contact me off list at scott.coultas@chamberlainlaw.com

PRIJON 16ft "SEAYAK" Made of "hochleistungsthermoplast" HTP {plastic}. It has a factory installed rudder, two watertight compartments, and is yellow in color. Includes nylon sprayskirt and cockpit cover. Also includes "saddles" for Yakima racks. Call Ken Sloan at 713-466-9347 or e-mail at klsloan@aol.com

Development on the Headwaters of Buffalo Bayou

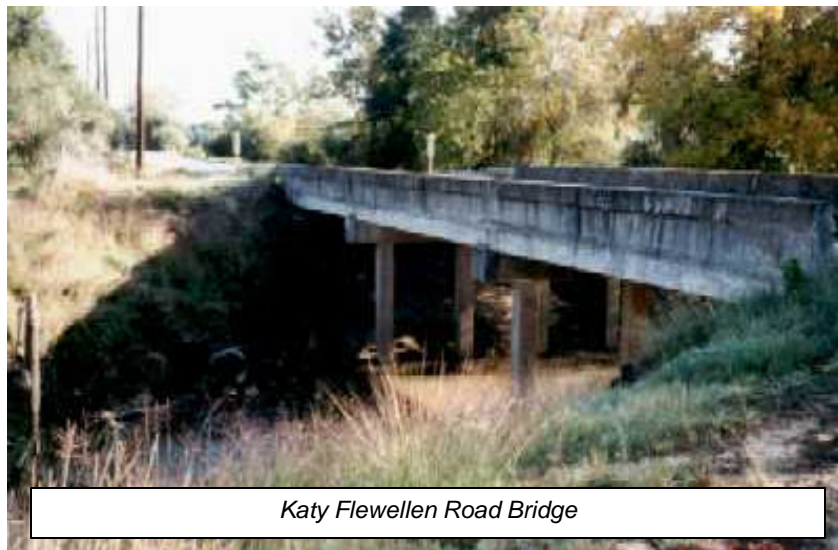
by Louis F. Aulbach and Linda Gorski

When you went out to Katy Mills Mall to shop during the holiday season, did you realize you were a stone's throw from the origins of Buffalo Bayou?

Just past the Pin Oak Road interchange, I-10 crosses a small creek, not larger than a drainage ditch, that exits the thickly wooded area on the north side of the freeway. This little stream, called the Cane Branch, enters the woods on the other side of the interstate and flows south-southeast another half mile or so where it joins the Willow Fork. The junction of the Cane Branch and the Willow Fork is the designated beginning of Buffalo Bayou.

Buffalo Bayou crosses the Katy Flewellen Road about 2 miles below this junction. From the right of way, it is possible to look upstream and see the channelized course of the bayou. The trees have been clear from the banks of the bayou. A 30 feet wide band on each bank is a neatly contoured, grassy easement.

From the Katy Flewellen Road bridge, the access to the bayou is possible on the highway right of way, but a substantial cattle grate across the bayou on the east side of the bridge prevents the use of the stream for canoeing. The land on both sides of the road is fenced and access is prohibited.



The channelization of Buffalo Bayou upstream of the Katy Flewellen Road is most likely the initial stages of the Wood Creek Reserve development. Wood Creek is a planned residential community designed to incorporate the nature preservation of a 100 acre nature park along the Willow Fork of Buffalo Bayou. The property was originally the Poorman family ranch which, in recent years, had become a family recreational retreat of bayou, open fields and woodland environments. The eastern boundaries of Wood Creek extend just beyond the

junction of Willow Fork and the Cane Branch.

The bayou flows through pasture land for about 2 miles to Greenbush Road. The natural riparian woodland cloaks the banks along this section for the most part. Access at the Greenbush Road bridge would be difficult because of the narrow right of way along the road.

On the southeast side of the bayou at Greenbush Road, there evidence of the future development of the prairie pasture land. Patterned road paving has been constructed over an extensive amount of the adjacent fields.

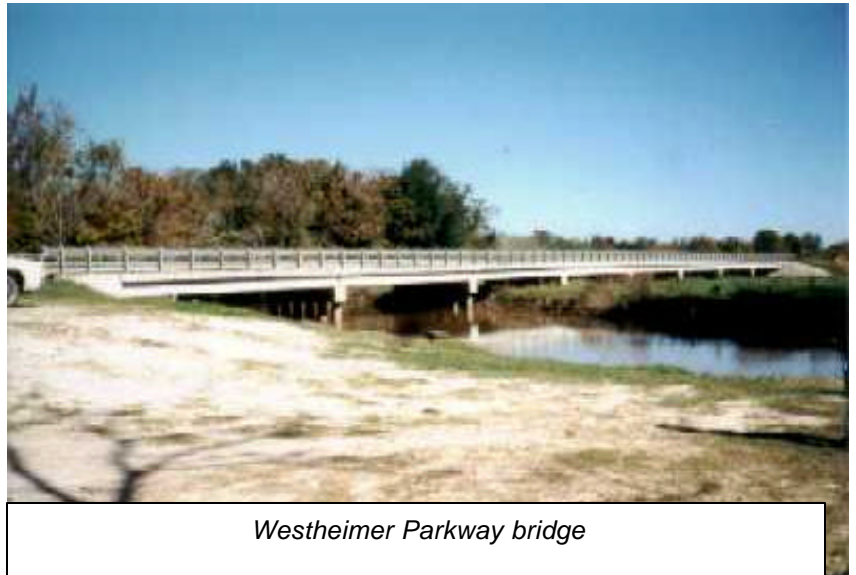
It appears that the pasture land in this area of the watershed is prime for residential development. The section along the bayou between I-10 and Texas 99, the Grand Parkway,

are the last undeveloped tracts along the course of the bayou. Below Texas 99, the Cinco Ranch development is rapidly becoming a fully built residential community. Cinco Ranch covers the western boundaries of Barker Reservoir, stretching from I-10 on the north to FM 1093 on the south.

The next road crossing below Greenbush Road is the Grand Parkway (Texas 99). Within the next two miles, Buffalo Bayou is crossed by South Peek Road, South Mason Road and South Fry Road. A greenbelt allows access to the banks of the bayou from South Peek Road to Westheimer Parkway in Barker Reservoir. Undeveloped mountain biking and hiking trails along the easement extend from several miles. Access to the bayou for canoeing, however, is very limited from the road crossings. There is no adequate parking at or near the bayou.

Downstream of South Peek Road, a Diversion Channel for Buffalo Bayou has been created to improve the drainage through the Cinco Ranch development. The main channel of the bayou goes off to the left, while the Diversion Channel goes southwest, to the right. The two channels converge about 3 miles downstream, just before the Harris County line. Within a half mile below the confluence of these channels, the bayou reaches the Westheimer Parkway.

There is a place along the south side right of way for Westheimer Parkway where it crosses Buffalo Bayou that is used as a parking area. A small park is maintained on the southwest bank of the bayou. It is possible to put your canoes or kayaks in the bayou at this point and paddle upstream to the lake that is formed at the confluence of the main channel and the Diversion Channel. Paddling upstream from Westheimer Parkway into Barker Reservoir is prohibited.



Westheimer Parkway bridge

The greenbelt that extends along the banks of the bayou from South Peek Road to Westheimer Parkway offers good hiking and biking opportunities. At this time, however, the trails are undeveloped. Few people use them, and one gets the sense of remoteness even though suburbia is not very far away.



It will be interesting to see how this phase of development along Buffalo Bayou's headwaters affects the general recreational use of the bayou. Let's hope that it is positive.

Authors on biking trail near confluence]

Please circle type of membership

NEW

RENEWAL



Houston Canoe Club Membership Application



First Name _____ Last Name _____

Spouse's name _____ Address _____

City/St./Zip _____

Email (write clearly) _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Work Phone (_____) _____

How did you hear about HCC? _____

Liability Waiver

The Houston Canoe Club always strives to make boating experiences as enjoyable as possible. However, some elements of risk including personal injury or death and property damage always exist in canoeing, kayaking, and water activities. I do hereby recognize this risk and agree to hold the Houston Canoe Club, its organizers, leaders, coordinators, officers and instructors from liability for any personal loss or injury which I may incur, and I do hereby WAIVE any remedy I may have in law or equity. This Liability Waiver is in effect while in transit to and from any Houston Canoe Club event and while participating in any Houston Canoe Club outing.

Signature _____ Date _____

NEW member ?
Yes No

HCC Membership Fees: (Effective Jan1 – Dec. 31)

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|
| HCC family Membership \$25.00 | _____ |
| (new members only) ACA membership** | |
| ACA Individual \$15.00 | _____ |
| ACA Family \$20.00 | _____ |
| Total: | _____ |

Membership in the Houston Canoe Club makes you eligible for a special discount on membership in the **American Canoe Association (ACA). ACA offers new members a subscription to Paddler magazine, The American Canoeist, discounts on books, instruction, events, and races. It is highly recommended (but not required) that one joins ACA

Membership to the Houston Canoe Club offers you several advantages:

- A member of the oldest canoe club in Texas (established in 1964)
- Host of the largest on-water boat show in the country, The Southwestern Canoe Rendezvous
- Monthly newsletter with articles on local trip written by club members, safety advice, used boats, and upcoming trips
- Trips led by qualified trip coordinators to both local areas and distant locales
- HCC web page, access to instruction, and help with anything paddle related

Monthly Meetings: Second Wednesday of every month at the American Red Cross Building at 7 PM

Address: 2700 Southwest Freeway – Hwy 59 S @ Kirby

Hot Line: (713) 467-8857 – to leave a message or find out about upcoming trips

Webpage: www.houstoncanoeclub.org

Houston Canoe Club
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Time to Renew Your Membership Fill in the Membership Application (pg. 15)

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