

Christmas in Hawaii – the theme of the HCC Christmas Party – *details pg. 6*

Another Fun Thing to Do With Your GPS

By John Bartos

Okay, so you have that neat Global Positioning Satellite receiver. Sure it is a great tool on paddling trips. You use it to find your way across the bay back exactly to your launch point in the fog. You use it to find exactly where you are in relation to the only spring for miles out on the Pecos or that great camping spot on the Sabine. You use it to find out exactly how far and how fast you have paddled and you carefully download all of this information into your computer. Well, if you haven't discovered the world of geocaching, you might want to incorporate this into your paddling routine.

We recently placed the first Houston Canoe Club geocache. You can go and find it at N29 50.636 W94 43.881. More information about our cache is available at [Geocache.com](http://www.geocaching.com/seek/cache_details.aspx?ID=42594) at http://www.geocaching.com/seek/cache_details.aspx?ID=42594. In the logbook within the cache, recorded for posterity are the names of all of the HCC paddlers that were on the trip when the treasure was hidden.

What is geocaching? It is a game in which you can use your GPS to locate any of thousands of caches that have been hidden around the world and info about their location recorded on a Website. The sport really took off in 2000 with the government removal of Selective Availability, which had limited the accuracy of GPS readings. The caches take many forms but many are like the HCC treasure, which is in a plastic container and contains numerous valuable items. Included in ours are HCC membership forms, several unusual key chains, a guitar pick, a letter opener, a kazoo and a \$1 million dollar bill. The protocol is to search for the cache, place a note in the logbook contained therein, and take one of the treasure items and leave one of your own. No food should be placed in the stash or animals will find it before people. After you find a cache, you can also go online and record on the above referenced Website that you have found it. If you find the HCC cache, let us know on the club e-mail list (hcc@houstoncanoeclub.org) as well. If you register on the Geocache site, periodic updates will be sent to you about new stashes in your area. If you are traveling anywhere you can enter coordinates, city names or zip codes to find caches in the area.

Obviously this activity meshes nicely with outdoor pursuits such as canoeing, kayaking, biking and hiking. Participation is free and gives you another excuse to paddle out around the Wallisville area.



Can you find the geocache? (photo: John Bartos)

Foul Weather Paddling *by Paul Woodcock*

The perfect weather for paddling is temperature between 65 and 70 degrees with no wind. Unfortunately, I would only be able to paddle two weekends a year with these conditions. Since I try to paddle at least one-day trip and one camping trip a month, I have learned to paddle in all conditions. Plus, when you are on extended wilderness trips, you have to deal with whatever Mother Nature offers you. I have paddled in sleet and snow at 19 degrees and raced in August temperatures of 105 and I have come to appreciate the special beauty of paddling in adverse weather.



Don't be deterred by rain! (photo: Fraser Baker)

One of my first experiences of camping in the cold was on the Buffalo River in Arkansas. We woke in the morning to find 4 inches of snow, that thick, heavy snow that clings to the branches. The calling of an elk in the distance broke the silence which accompanies heavy snow. Later that day while hiking the trail in the park, we were able to see the trail of the elk in the valley below us. The next day the water was extremely cold but the flow was exceptionally high making it one of the best trips I have paddled on the river. I hadn't discovered the Seal Skins water proof socks at that time, but it is one piece of clothing that makes winter paddling much more enjoyable.

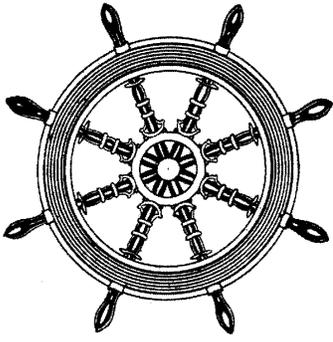
One of the wettest and coldest days I spent was on the Bloodvain River in Canada. It was cold and drizzly all day and at times you could feel the sting of sleet against your face. It seemed that at almost every portage, the rain came in a deluge. I remember seeing Dana Enos wrapped up in a tarp sitting next to his canoe waiting for the rain to let up so we could start the portage. We finally decided to camp early. I cut down a couple of small saplings to make room for a tent while Mary heated up some soup. There is no greater joy than sitting naked in the tent drying out, drinking soup, and then crawling in a sleeping bag slowly growing warm, listening to the rain hitting the tent. The next morning it was clear, and as I climbed the cliff overlooking the bend in the river at sunrise, watching the geese circle before landing, and seeing the beaver return to his lodge, every thing seemed so much more intense and beautiful because of the discomfort of the day before.

I love to watch a storm slowly moving toward me, seeing the lighting in the distance, smelling the ozone, feeling the hairs on the back of my neck rise as the storm comes closer, the rush of the wind just before the storm hits, and seeing the beauty of the rainbow after it is over.



An otter comes out to visit you in cool weather (photo: Debby Lockey)

I love to paddle, and with all of the high tech. clothing available, there is no reason not to paddle through sleet, snow or rain. It is a joy to be near Nature in all of Her moods. One of the foremost benefits of foul weather paddling is the opportunity of getting closer to wildlife. Maybe because they have more sense than me or because they don't have the benefit of Gortex and fleece, they tend to stay in one place and allow you to get much closer than you normally could. It is at these adverse weather times, Mother Nature allows you to better enjoy her other creatures.



From the Helm: Candy Donahue *Vice Commodore (2000)* *Purser (2001), Governor (2002)*

It seems a little strange to get a "From the Helm" column from an officer who had to give up their position for lack of time and who has not been on a club paddle for a *year and a half* (the last one was the Kids Paddle 2001). Some of you really new members are wondering, "Who is this?" Sorry about that. But good news sometimes comes with the bad, and that's really the case here. It takes time—a lot of time—to change careers in the middle of your life, and I'm very busy doing that.

I miss paddling and I miss my paddling friends, but I've got my eye on the prize, which some day will be a job in the ecology field. You can understand my desire to spend the working part of my life, not just volunteering and playing but doing something to preserve our rivers, bayous, wildlife, prairies, cypress swamps, and all the habitats in between. A few years ago, I went to Houston Community College to get the 34 hours of math and science. I spent a semester at U of H Clear Lake as an environmental science graduate student, and **now I'm an ecology and evolutionary biology graduate student at Rice. YEH!!!!**

But, back to paddling and HCC. I first joined the club many years ago after learning to paddle with the girl scouts. I went to several meetings, but I didn't have a boat and didn't feel comfortable asking *strangers* to loan me one or find me a paddling buddy. So, I didn't go on trips and quit going to meetings—but I kept up the dues and kept getting the *newsletter*. Saw a notice about a women's paddle on Village Creek, and a number to call if you didn't have a boat and needed a paddling partner! I tandemed with Donna Grimes, and the next year I WAS AN OFFICER IN THE CLUB! Donna took me under her wing, took me on my first trip down the San Marcos, gave me lots of tips, and encouraged me when I signed up for Bob Foote's three-day white water training and thought I really couldn't do it....

I value the friendships I made in the club and hope to be more active in the future. I think HCC people are some of the friendliest, most considerate and encouraging people I've ever met, and I encourage any of you new members who are hesitating to get involved to dive right in there. Take advantage of the "buddy" paddles and really get to know these people—you'll be glad you did.

Candy Donahue

USCA CANOE INSTRUCTORS CERTIFICATION COURSE

Bob Spain –USCA Certified Canoe Instructor Trainer

I am planning to offer a United States Canoe Association (USCA) Canoe Instructor Course in January. The course will cover basic instruction to teach a "beginner canoe" course. The course will include 4 hours of classroom instruction followed by 4 hours of on-the-water demonstration. The cost of the course is \$95 (\$75 for USCA members) which includes an instruction video, instructors polo shirts and membership in USCA, which is required. All students will have to pass a CPR /first aid course to receive the canoe certification .

I prefer to schedule the class on Friday and Saturday, because I can get some assistance from other instructors for the Saturday on-the-water portion. I am looking at the January 15 through 18 period. The maximum course size to 12 to 14 people.

If you are interested or you know someone that is interested in taking the course, please have them respond by email (bob.spain@tpwd.state.tx.us) or phone (512-389-4635-office) or (512-302-1005-home) which dates that you will be available. There will be a \$25 dollar deposit to reserve a spot in the course. The money is needed to order instructor t-shirts in advance.

Who Be These People?

Mary Zaborowski

(top mileage paddle for a number of years, consummate trip leader, and Vice Commodore for 2003)



1. Where were you born and raised? Born: Houston, Texas in Heights Hospital Raised: NATIVE TEXAN/Native American in Houston and weekends in all Texas State and National Parks and the Tomball Area. Attended All Houston ISD Schools and Grad of John H. Reagan High School.

2. Are you married, have children I'm Divorced and Widowed - I have two natural children, Gary , Mary Ellen II (married to Methodist Minister, Tim Hall) and adopted two, Crystal and Guy. Last I counted I have 16 grand-children. I've been adopted too. they all call me Me Maw, which I truly adore and love them all.

3. Where educated and degree? Houston ISD; John H.Reagan High School; Houston Community College with A.A. - Associates in Arts, A.A.S - Associates in Applied Science; University of Houston B.S. Ed, Double Major: Health and Physical Education Minor: Outdoor Education and Recreation; University of Southern California M.B.A. - Business Administration and presently working on Ph. D. in Business Administration.

4. Previous occupations? Teacher /Head Coach Houston I.S.D. 25 years, other district 4 Total 29 years. Working on my 30 year this year!!!

5. Other places lived and how on in Houston. Houston, all my life, 47 years, plus the 4 years up in East Texas teaching and coaching girls basketball, volleyball, track and field, tennis and golf.

7. How did you become involved with HCC? A friend brought me to a meeting. We started paddling together. I've paddled earlier as a child with my grandfather and with the scouts, with my children and as a scout leader.

8. What is your favorite type and place to paddle? Canoe, either tandem or solo. Place to paddle has to be CANADA. The wilderness is truly fantastic, with its beauty of the moving water, waterfalls, rapids, being in the " BUSH" I love to paddle into the wilderness to feel Wo Ya (Cherokee for God-Great Spirit) and nature. Expedition trips are what I love. Will return to Canada this summer to do a Big Trip..... The Hayes River in Manatoba, Canada. Yes!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

9. Do you have other hobbies or outside activities.? Yes, I do tennis, golf, gardening, Native American crafts, writing, working on my place in Slocum, Texas preparing for upcoming retirement?????

10. Any other comments. I've really enjoyed paddling with the HCC people for the past 8 years. Various type paddling and styles. I would never dreamed of being Outstanding Paddler. It was an honor to receive and be among better paddlers than I who really deserved this award. I like getting on the river and just paddle, stopping to camp, cook, enjoying the sunsets and sunrises. Being on the river, which the Cherokees call LONGMAN, gives me a inner peace, that I can't put into words, yet I like sharing with others who enjoy the same outdoor paddling as I.

Hollywood Comes to Houston!

by Louis F. Aulbach and Linda Gorski

That a Hollywood film production company would use Houston as a location for filming a motion picture is not very surprising. That a film crew arrived here in 1924 is a lot more interesting! In those early days of the motion picture industry, Adolph Zukor and Jesse Lasky, producers for Paramount Pictures, were looking for a large herd of longhorn cattle to provide the background scenes for their upcoming epic tale of the first Texas cattle drive to Abilene, Kansas, after the Civil War. California just did not have that many longhorns. **But, Texas did!**

Bassett Blakely, a Fort Bend County rancher, was contacted, and, in August, 1924, director Irvin Willat brought his movie crews and equipment to Houston for the filming of the silent movie version of Emerson Hough's novel "North of 36". The Blakely Ranch, west of Houston, became the site for this movie production. Although they originally were only planning to shoot cattle herding scenes here, Willat was so impressed with the locale and the warm Southern hospitality that he decided to shoot the whole film on the Texas location.

Blakely brought together 3,000 head of longhorn cattle from his herd and the herds of his neighbors, who included Emil Marks of the LH7 Ranch. Scenes of cattle ranching were staged at the ranch and on the vast and open prairie that we now call the Katy Prairie. In one spectacular scene, a small lake on the ranch was used to simulate the dangerous crossing of the Red River by the large herd.



The final product was "North of 36", a silent, black and white cowboy movie that starred Jack Holt, Ernest Torrence, Lois Wilson, and Noah Beery, Sr. This film followed the huge success of 'Covered Wagon' that also starred Lois Wilson. Wilson, who began her career after winning an Alabama beauty contest sponsored by Universal Pictures, was an accomplished amateur photographer. She recorded the cattle drive in "North of 36" in full detail. Much of the film is devoted to her footage of the real-life cattle drive. It is reported that this was one of the 'last major cattle drive' in the United States, but, in reality, it was staged by the ranch hands of the Blakely Ranch on the open prairie south of Katy.



Pure bred Texas longhorn cattle still graze on the LH7 Ranch, west of Barker Reservoir.

Although "North of 36" was a lackluster movie, the themes woven in the story are so compelling that the film was remade in 1931 as "The Conquering Horde". Again, in 1938, a remake starring Randolph Scott was called "The Texans." Both remakes relied upon the stock footage and the action highlights of the original film, including the spectacular panoramas of the cattle drive.

"North of 36" is a fitting tribute to the talent, as well as the beauty of Lois Wilson, who at age 26, filmed invaluable footage of the cattle drive that was better than the scenes the professional cinematographer and crew were able to capture while recording the event.

In 1937, Bassett Blakely sold his ranch to William M. Wheless, Jr. Wheless then brought in four of his friends as partners in the operation. The joint venture of these five ('cinco' in Spanish) partners became the Cinco Ranch. Subsequently, developers purchased the Cinco Ranch in 1984, and the first homes were built in 1991.

The vintage silent film and the local history associated with its filming have been resurrected in the Fall of 2002 for promotional purposes for the new Fort Bend County branch library in the Cinco Ranch subdivision.

Welcome, New Members:

Rea and Rebecca Inglis

1509 Van Buren Dr, Deer Park, Tx 77536
281-930-9164 reainglis@msn.com
heard about HCC at REI

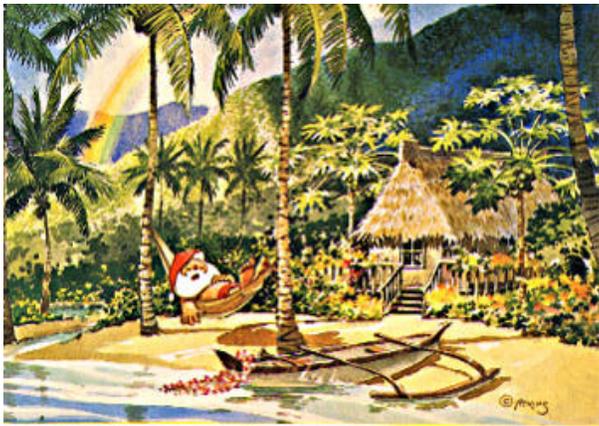
Ray and Mary Moravek

1003 Llarenza Falls Dr, Sugar Land, Tx 77479
281-265-7595 moravekrq@aol.com
heard about HCC from ACA Website

For Sale:

16' Wooden Canoe, Perbourough design, Cedar, Ash, Walnut. Weighs only 55 lbs. Excellent condition \$1700
Contact: 281-395-1703
vodell@houston.rr.com

Ladies Wet Suit – size 12-14 Neoprene
Excellent condition \$25 Contact Martha Williams 713-849-4467 marthaw713@aol.com



HCC Christmas Party MELE KALIKIMAKA!*

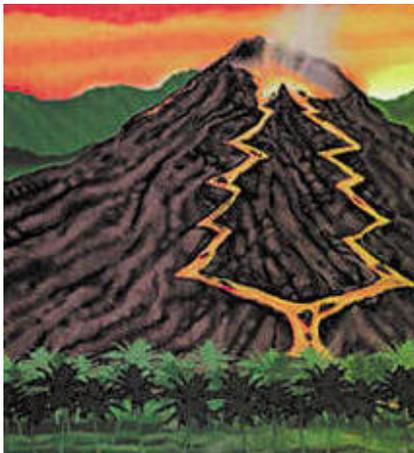
*Merry Christmas! in Hawaiian

We've all dreamed of a white Christmas, but this is Houston and **it ain't gonna happen!** So in **this year's HCC Christmas party fantasy**, we'll have chestnuts roasting on a lava flow, sandwomen instead of snowmen, lights on palm trees, tiki torches with tinsel, and a surfing Santa. It's Christmas in Hawaii! Wear your red wooly sweater or an aloha shirt or both! Leis encouraged! Mixing of Yule icons and island traditions is the order of the night.

When? Saturday, December 14th from 6 PM to ??????

Where? Northwest Fitness and Sports Club
5304 Hollister – between Hwy 290 & Pinemont
Check map at :
www.northwestfitness.com/about.html

What to Bring? Hawaiian attire (if 'ya want!)
Food – cover dish, salad, or dessert
(HCC provides drinks and meat)
Family – this is the time – it's a family affair!



What to expect? Socializing, eating
and whatever Cheryl Cleary and Ann Derby
decide; they're in charge!

**See ya on Saturday at
the Party!**

A Day at Lake Charlotte – by Will Blumentritt

After almost two weeks of rain, we finally get a streak of good weather. So, on Wednesday, 11/6/02, John and Cindy Bartos planned a Saturday trip to Lake Charlotte. Due to the wonders of e-mail and the internet (John posted to the HCC web page and sent out to the HCC e-mail list) we are able to get 12 boats to show up at Lake Charlotte with three days warning. We had about an equal number of kayaks and canoes and were in the water by 10:00, out by 2:15. The water was 12.8' (which is 5 - 6 feet above normal), and the temperature was delightful, although a little windy. However, the nice thing about the swamp is that the wind only effects you when you're out in the middle of the lake, and that was less than half of the trip.



HCC geocachers: L to R- Richard Lebreque, Wes Simmons, Skip Rathgeber, Scott Simmons, Suzy Plaisted, Natalie Wiest, Meredith Wargo, Ellen Shipman, April Carpenter, Cindy B., Marilyn & Cliff Peery, Kevin Carpenter (Photo: John B)

We started at Cedar Hill Park and headed southwest towards Bird Island, which at these water levels isn't really an island. It's just some trees coming out of the water. But I had fun here. Being an island, it has a population of critters, including snakes, which have nowhere to go when it floods. So they find a place in the trees to hang out until the water recedes. In the last couple of years, I have become fascinated by snakes -- their muscular

structure is amazing. So I used my paddle handle to fetch one out of the roots of an overturned cypress tree. This little guy (30-36 inches) was quite calm and crawled around my paddles for a minute before deciding to go for a swim to get away.

From Bird Island, we headed southwest towards Lake Pass Bayou. With the water that high, you can paddle so many places, so we decided to explore some alternate routes and cut through some fairly thick underbrush. From Lake Pass, we took the cut into Lake Miller and headed to the south bank for a lunch stop.

John had decided to place a geocache, which is a box of interesting stuff and log book for others to find. If you don't know what this is, see <http://www.geocaching.com/>. Geocaching is primarily for GPS techies. I'm not really GPS ready yet, but it was fun deciding where to put the geocache. The real highlight of the trip was where John and Cindy took us after our lunch stop. East of Lake Miller and south of Mud

Lake are acres and acres of woods that are simply beautiful to paddle at high water level. From the time you leave the southeast corner of Lake Miller until you reach the southern edge of Mud Lake, it is solid woods, with very little underbrush. (If there is any, it is under water at that level.) There are simply an infinite number of ways to paddle through the woods. I could spend hours in there -- it's relaxation at its finest. And while it doesn't seem like it, it is really almost impossible to get lost. As long as you head east and north, you will eventually get to Mud Lake. It seemed like about a 30 minute paddle through the woods and was quite majestic.



Will holds the snake he "rescued" from a tree (photo: John Bartos)

The Lake Charlotte area has grown to be one of my favorite place to paddle and this trip certainly reinforced that. Lake Charlotte has so many different trips you can take and is so different at high vs low water levels, that it can be visited many times. And when one tires of Lake Charlotte, there is other conveniently located places -- Old and Lost Rivers, Cotton Lake down to Trinity Bay, Turtle Bayou to Lake Anahuac, and Double Bayou. If you haven't been out that way, you really owe it to yourself to get out there -- we have some beautiful days in November through February.

The Lake Charlotte water gauge can be found at <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/tx/nwis/current/?type=flow> Lake Charlotte is near the end of the Trinity River Basin listing. 6-7 feet is low, but still paddlable, though you will catch mud with a deep canoe stroke -- some passes may be difficult to navigate (but there are plenty of places which are easily accesible).. 8 - 9 feet open up all the passes.. 12 feet or so opens up not just the passes, but also turns much of the entire area into a swamp. I've paddled at all levels, and each has its unique characteristics.

Water officials ready for water war with Environmentalists

Wed. November 20, 2002 06:31 EST

(San Antonio-AP) -- San Antonio water officials and two river panels are arming themselves for a political war with environmentalists over the Guadalupe River.

The city and river authorities face a clash with the San Marcos River Foundation over a plan to draw up to 94 (B) billion gallons from the Guadalupe River each year.

The San Antonio Express-News reports the city, the San Antonio River Authority and the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority are expected to seek a permit this week to divert the water.

The application would force state environmental regulators to choose between San Antonio's water needs and the San Marcos River Foundation's request for exclusive rights to the water.

The environmental group's executive director Dianne Wassenich says the effect of diverting so much water could be negligible -- or it could be disastrous. She says it would depend on when the water's taken -- when the river is high or in drought.

San Antonio River Authority general manager Greg Rothe says all associated with the project are sensitive to the bay's vulnerability.

December Trips with the Houston Canoe Club

12/8 Buffalo Bayou

Paddle Buffalo Bayou from Terry Hershey Park to Wilcrest. Contact Bob Arthur by phone 713-686-0418, or by email boba100@aol.com.

12/08 Cypress Wonderland

Before the pace of holiday events reaches its peak, get firmly in touch with nature by paddling through the network of lakes and bayous that wind through the largest cypress forest on the Texas coast, only 30 miles east of Houston. This is one of the most scenic canoe outings in Southeast Texas. Paddling time: 4-5 hours (moderate/strenuous). Suggested contribution to the Houston Sierra Club: \$10.00. BYO canoe orkayak. Contact Tom Douglas by phone 713-869-6026.

12/14 Pre Party Paddle (PPP)

Buffalo Bayou Sat. December 14. Put in at Woodway and take out at N. Shepherd Drive. A short paddle, yet a beautiful one to get the day started, before the Big Party that evening. Contact Mary Z. and Paul W. by phone 713 884 1925, or by email maryzabo@sbcglobal.net.

12/14 HCC Christmas Party

Will be held at Northwest Fitness Center. Directions and details about the party are provided under the "MEETINGS" button. Contact Ann Derby and Cheryl Cleary.

Roll Session: 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 \$10 for members of the Bayou City Whitewater Club and Houston Canoe Club and \$15 for non-ACA members.



Renewal - 2003



Houston Canoe Club Membership Application

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Spouse's name _____ Address _____

City/St./Zip _____

Email (*write clearly*) _____

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

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 _____

HCC Membership Fees: (Effective Jan1 – Dec. 31)-If you joined AFTER September, 2002, your dues are paid thru 2003

HCC family Membership \$25.00 _____

Make Check payable to Houston Canoe Club
Turn it into the Purser, Kevin Casement

Or Mail to:
Houston Canoe Club
P.O. Box 925516
Houston, TX 77292-5516

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Houston, TX 77292-5516

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

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