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Meeting February 9th

Program: The LCRA

Come join us at 7 pm at the Red Cross Building on north side of IH 59, near Kirby. We always welcome visitors.

We need your correct email address!

Please send your current email address to Marilyn Peery now.

Email address: mpeery@ev1.net.

The Waterline is the monthly newsletter of the Houston Canoe Club, Inc. The Waterline is made possible by your dues and critically depends on member contributions. Please submit items (please do not embed photos in MS Word documents) to the Editor at the following address.

sherrib57@hotmail.com

Blood Drive for Paul Woodcock

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Friendswood United Methodist Church is having a blood drive on Sunday February 13th. Thanks to Rick Brunson, they have added Paul Woodcock's name on the "Blood Recipient List" and we are all invited to come donate.

Contact Carroll Thronesbery at tbery@earthlink.net or call him at 281 992-4939. He is organizing the blood drive and needs to know how many people are coming.

Paul is in St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital (he's been there since December 17th!) and will be needing blood for his heart surgery. He needs blood, calls, cards, and prayers. Paul helped write the paddling tips column from his hospital bed so you know he's thinking of HCC.

If you can't make the drive, you can still donate blood at St. Luke's for him. It is possible to donate at any regional blood center but it takes a lot longer for him to be credited.

St. Luke's main phone number is 832-355-1000. Since Paul keeps changing from ICU to various rooms, it is easier to call the hospital and have them transfer the call. If you want to go see him, call first to be sure he can have visitors. Then if you park at Hermann Park (for free) and take the train to the hospital, you can save the traffic and parking fees.

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Winter Paddling Tips

by Mary Ellen Zaborowski and Paul Woodcock

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With winter approaching one thinks of what to do with cold weather go and paddle the river.

Looking for specials in the Spring and Early Summer for winter paddling clothing is a must. Silk, fleece in jackets and pants with waterproof socks (I try and find me a sock that doesn't leak or sweat) with good waterproof shoes, gloves, fleece face wear makes for a good foundation for layering for any cold conditions.

A good dry bag for a quick change of the above is needed to be packed if one falls over in cold water. When the sun breaks through the clouds, you can always shed the layers to meet your need of warmth. One must do this because wearing one jacket can make you sweat and then get chilled on the river. Having adequate clothing, hats, paddling gloves will make paddling in the winter rewarding.

You must make yourself drink lots of water while paddling due to dehydration even on cold winter days. Having a small stove and pot handy to boil water is a treat for instant soup, hot cocoa, tea or coffee is great for cold winter day lunches along with crackers, cheese, and hard sausage. Making one pot supper meals makes it easier to clean before the sun sets.

Sometimes its best to start later in the day using the sun, yet you will paddle fewer miles. Yet, if it is a light drizzle or a cold day, sometimes it's best to paddle to keep warm, then use a lay-over day that is sunny to dry out your clothing and make sure the packet food is not spoiled.

While paddling the moving waters of a river, when you come up to large rapids, you might to have long portaging ropes so you can line your boats through instead of getting wet and cold. Another tip is to carry matches instead of butane lighters, due to them being hard to start.

At night when the tempature drops, it's best to place drinking and cooking water under your tent fly, under canvas bags or under dry leaves to keep these containers from freezing. Good lotions for the skin and lips are a must to keep these from chapping and drying out. Even sunscreen in the winter is a must to keep one from windburning.

Shutterbugs (camera people) keep the camera inside a dry box and inside your tent for protection at the night from the windchill. Road flares to start fires with wet wood are great.

Windy conditions come up at night so make sure you have the canoe/kayak tied down with paddles/pfd's and other gear that can fly away down the river. Sometimes it is great to add a few lay-over days for bad weather. Having a good bood along to read if you get confined to the tent because of bad weather that won't let you proceed down the river to your take out. Extra batteries and medicines are a must when you pack.

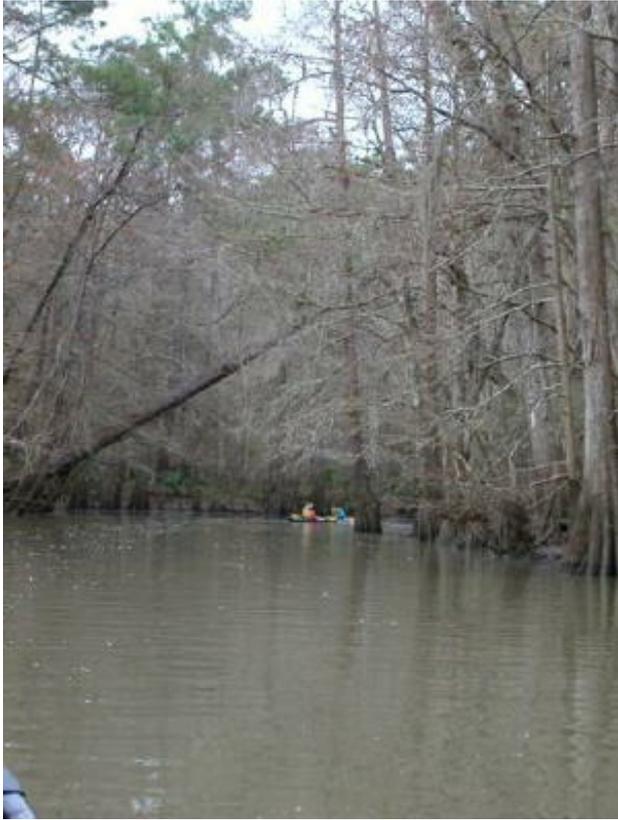
Instead of time (alarm clock) being for miles on the river, the sunrise and sunset, and all elements of nature now govern your paddling for the day. Now enjoy the beauty that winter can give a paddler on the lakes or rivers so you can see more wildlife through the trees. The Canadian Geese are more abundant at this time along the Texas waterways.

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Trip Report: Old River

by Natalie Wiest

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December 29 I started out on an exploratory trip to Champion Lake/Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge, a brand new facility. Unfortunately, what I found was that the access road was gated and locked, so on the suggestion of my intrepid paddling buddy Marilyn Kircus, we put our sites on the Old River instead. What we found was a very nice trip, suitable for novice paddlers, with a good access point and conditions that would appear to make it paddle-able year-round, so I am sharing for your edification and planning purposes.

To get to the put-in, exit Interstate highway 10 east of Houston at exit number 803, which is FM565 and labeled "Cove, Old River, Winfree". Travel north on 565 about three miles to the traffic signal that marks the intersection with FM1409. Turn right (east) on 1409 and follow it about a half mile to its crossing of the Old River. You will see an historical marker for Old River just before the crossing – SLOW down and pull off onto the easement on your right, just before the crossing. This rutted area is used locally for launching johnboats and other small craft. It is totally unimproved, so I don't suggest using it if it's been raining for a while and with the ruts left behind by those who have, approach with caution. You will see a nice wide area for launching on the river. Heading upriver (to the left, under the bridge and beyond) is the trip described here. Heading downriver (to the right, there is so little current it is sometimes difficult to tell), gives access to The Cutoff, or to more open waters of Old River Lake and Lost River before rejoining the Trinity River farther downstream.

Heading upstream on this day, with my mother, two daughters, Marilyn and Ashley Kingsbury, we observed at our lunch stop that the flow of the water in fact was upstream, or so it appeared from items floating on the surface. Perhaps it was wind direction, but in any case, the current was not noticeable for paddling purposes. Most of the way is a wooded bottomland, with cypress trees lining the banks and pines or oaks behind them with palmettos under the trees. Noticeable at the lower reaches are some open pastures that are testimony to the earlier settlements of ranchers and farmers here as early as 1827. Signs of far more recent activities are large homes and a golf course along the left bank of the river (when you are heading upstream). The right bank is pretty much as nature created it with few improvements and only a few stretches of open

pastureland or clearings. The usual number of pipeline crossings are not very intrusive. Like all our local waterways, this one meanders to all the points of the compass but generally trends northwest to the limits of our canoe navigation, perhaps three miles upstream from the put-in. Two large downed trees block the waterway at this point. At this turnaround, trees touch overhead and a large part of the way has tall timber, giving this good potential for a shaded summer trip as well as a delightful midwinter trip as it was on December 29.



Click on image to enlarge.

Interesting natural features include many vining plants, at least in the upper reaches. As the day became more overcast and late afternoon moved toward dark, a pair of barred owls began calling. One was within 30' of the river, up in a tree, and we got close enough to see it wink at us before it retreated farther into the forest. Kingfishers flitted from bank to bank, and robins and cardinals were numerous.

We were later than we would have liked to the put-in, so it was 11 a.m. until we were pulling away from the bank, and arrived back to the same point to load and depart by 4 p.m. We took one break and a lunch stop to make this a very easy 5 hour out-and-back trip.

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The Crystal Ice Works

by Louis F. Aulbach

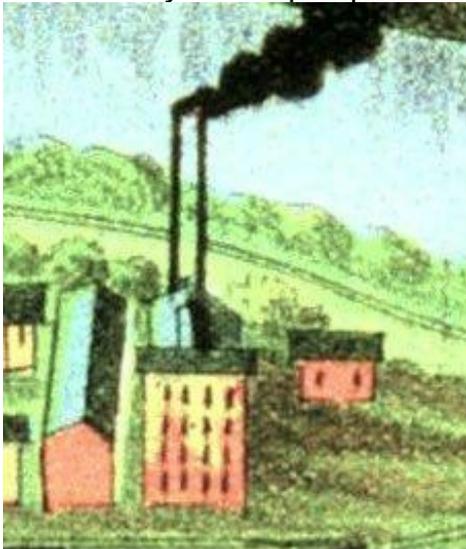
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This wellhead provided artesian water to the Crystal Ice Works.

Barely visible from the top of the bank and little noticed from the bayou when the vegetation growth is high, the ruins of the Crystal Ice Works remind us of the vibrant industrial activity in the Frost Town area during the first 100 years of Houston. Set on the north bank of Buffalo Bayou on the west side of McKee Street, the Crystal Ice Works occupied the site that had been the home of Mrs. E. McKee as late as 1869. About 1880, the Houston Elevator Company built a grain elevator on the site that, by 1885, was leased to and operated by the Texas Star Flour Mills Grain Elevator Company. It had the capacity for the storage of 150,000 bushels of wheat in 26 wheat bins. However, by 1890, the Crystal Ice Works had taken over the facility from the Houston Elevator Company.

The Ice Factory of the Crystal Ice Works was a major industrial enterprise on the north bank of the bayou. It had a capacity of making forty tons of ice every 24 hours using an absorber process. The production of ice was dependent on water and the site on the bayou was chosen for a reason. The water supply for the factory was two fold. There was an artesian well on the lower part of the bank to tap the ground water and water from the bayou was pumped to the facility through a five inch suction pipe.



The Crystal Ice Works as depicted on a "bird's eye" map in 1891.

By 1907, the Crystal Ice Company had made improvements to its main building which included rooms for a freezing tank, a cold storage facility and a condenser room. A

number of other out buildings were located on the property and a rail siding with a loading platform was on the north side of the plant. An additional rail siding extended along the bayou side of the plant. A steel truss, swing bridge had been constructed across Buffalo Bayou at McKee Street in 1904 to increase commercial traffic between the north side of the bayou and the City's East End. Business was expanding. By this time, the Crystal Ice Company, situated adjacent to the Southern Pacific Railroad yard, became a supplier of ice to the local operations of the Pacific Fruit Express. The Pacific Fruit Express, established in 1906, was a joint venture between the Southern Pacific and the Union Pacific Railroads for refrigerator cars used for the rapid shipment of perishable fruits and vegetables. The brainchild of Edward H. Harriman of the Union Pacific Railroad, it became the world's largest owner and operator of refrigerated rail cars.

The Pacific Fruit Express supported the rise of irrigated agriculture in the West. Using a "follow the sun" strategy, it hauled potatoes from the Pacific Northwest in the fall, oranges from California in the winter, and fruit from the Southwest in the spring. In the peak year of service, the Pacific Fruit Express carried 465,000 rail car loads of fresh fruits and vegetables. The Pacific Fruit Express declined in the 1980's due to the decline in railroad service and competition brought by the deregulation of the trucking industry.



The ruins of the Crystal Ice Works near the McKee Street Bridge.

By 1924, the company has become the Crystal Ice and Fuel Company, reflecting changing business conditions. The facility had rooms for an ice machine, a freezing tank, condensers, cold storage and a machine shop. The office was located in a separate building on the north side of building adjacent to the triangular concrete platform.

Economic conditions changed, and the Crystal Ice and Fuel Company ceased operations about 1930. By 1951, the Crystal Ice Works facility and buildings were removed from the north bank of Buffalo Bayou. Only the substructures in the banks have survived the wrecking ball. Embedded in the clay and overgrown with vegetation, the concrete skeleton of the foundation of this once-thriving industrial plant whispers the story of its former prominence.

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"Jane Deere" Workshop for Women
by Ashley Mathews, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
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Do you currently or wish to own acreage or a ranch in Texas? Have you had an interest in learning more about how to manage your land for wildlife and the health of Texas' unique environments? The national BOW program has developed a new program geared toward women who own acreage and wish to learn more about becoming a responsible land steward.

"Jane Deere" is a new twist on BOW (Becoming an Outdoors-Woman). In cooperation with Texas Parks and Wildlife, Welder Wildlife Foundation, Texas Wildlife Association, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, South Texas Natives and Texas Cooperative Extension presents:

"Jane Deere", a workshop for women in agriculture, April 30 - May 1, 2005, Welder Wildlife Foundation, Sinton, Texas. This program is for you if you live, work, play, and spend time on farm or ranch land. Learn more about your land and its possibilities. Workshop registration fee is \$75 and includes 3 classes, 4 meals, Saturday night lodging, use of all equipment, evening programs and fun!

Classes include Wildlife Habitat & Animal Sign/ID, Plant Identification, Native Plants & Wildlife, Map & Compass/GPS, Beginning Shotgun, Archery, Dutch Oven Cooking, Prescribed Burning, White-tailed Deer Ecology & Management, Introduction to Birding & Nature-based Tourism, Stream Ecology, Fly Fishing and more.

Contact Peggy Farrell, toll-free at 1-877/269-6626 for more information or visit www.uwsp.edu/cnr/bow/jane-deere.htm.

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Wilderness Medical First Aid Class in March

by Sherri Blifford

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Don Greene (owner of the Whitewater Experience) is sponsoring a Wilderness Medical Associates class March 5th and 6th. This is a full 16 hours of basic wilderness medical education over a single weekend. He says this course is a condensed, intense, "Reader's Digest" version of vital wilderness medical knowledge for any outdoor leader who takes the safety of friends and family seriously. Part of this course certification requires CPR, which may also be offered one evening during the week prior to the course.

Don requires this course of his guides (and he is actively looking for part-time guides, if you are interested). I took this course last year and unfortunately have had to use it more than once so I recommend it heartily. This is not your basic how-to-apply-a-bandage course. It is serious study with simulations and lots of interaction, taught by a Jamie Butler, a lead instructor with WMA and an ER nurse at one of the busiest emergency rooms in Texas.

One caveat: There is a \$100 nonrefundable deposit so you don't want to sign up on a whim (WMA charges Don whether anyone shows up). Please do not sign up if Aunt Matilda's birthday or a Foley's sale will keep you from attending. This course is offered once a year and every year it fills with people turned away so if you sign up, show up.

[Click here for the reservation form.](#)

For more information, see his website at <http://www.whitewaterexperience.com>

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Governor 3: **Paul Woodcock**

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Change of Address

Submit change of address to Marilyn Peery.

Email address:

mpeery@ev1.net.

Physical address:

Marilyn Peery

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Houston, TX 77025

For Sale

Kayak

Anthony Belcher has a custom built Pygmy Coho kayak for sale.

Toni has moved temporarily to Atlanta and Don Greene is helping him sell the kayak. For details, contact Don at 713-774-1028 or email:

dgreene7@aol.com

Aluminum Canoe

17' aluminum canoe with paddles, with a trolling motor on it. The canoe is in very good shape, but no one knows if the motor works.

\$150. Contact Donna Endsley

email: soadje@co.comal.tx.us

Beaver Aluminum Canoe

I live in the Fort Worth area, but am willing to transport it to a convenient meeting location for a new buyer. \$600. Barb Cutter email:

bjscutter@sbcglobal.net

Yakima racks

I have a set of Yakima racks consisting of 2 - 78" round bars and 4 - 1A

Raingutter Towers with locks for sale.

Retail on the set is about \$215 - they're yours for \$100.00. They have been used for several years but are in excellent condition. Only on the vehicle when hauling boats.

Sandy Truxillo (Go Xplor/Explorer Pack & Paddle)

www.goxplor.com

Phone 713-858-2994

Waterline Submissions

Submit content to the Newsletter Editor, Sherri Blifford, by the 18th of the month.

Send electronic submissions to

sherrib57@hotmail.com.

Send snail mail submissions to

Sherri Blifford

10222 Windsor Lane

Houston, TX 77031

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Bob Foote & Karen Knight Classes

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Bob Foote & Karen Knight, two of the finest canoeists in the US, have agreed to give two separate one day classes to HCC members March 5th and 6th and the classes are filling.

Saturday March 5th will be a solo canoeing class and Sunday March 6th will be a tandem class. Each is limited to 10 people per class, first-come, first-served. The cost is \$50.00 per person per day. This is a fraction of what comparable classes would cost you in North Carolina plus having to drive 1,000 miles.

The classes will be at Oyster Creek in Sugar Land and go from 9 to 5. This is a tremendous opportunity to get instruction at the highest level right here in our own backyard. This is a chance to improve your canoeing skills which can open up a wider world of possibilities for your boating.

These classes are targeted to HCC members, but they are not financed by HCC. For more information, contact Ken Anderson at 281.856.9388 or email: klandrsn@hal-pc.org

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