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Volume 52

November 2005

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### Meeting November 9th

Natalie Wiest, giving a presentation on a sea-kayaking trip on the ice-choked waters of Prince William Sound.

Natalie, who maintains the "places to paddle" part of our website, describes herself as an old fogey among HCC members, having been paddling with the club since the mid 1980s. She teaches Fundamentals of Canoeing and Basic River Canoeing with the Girl Scouts and paddles one of her 10 canoes/kayaks at the slightest opportunity. She is also working on a book about paddling around Houston.

We will elect next year's officers at this meeting so be sure to attend.

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

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](mailto:sherrib57@hotmail.com)

Christmas Party

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HCC Christmas Party

7:00 Saturday, December 3

Upper Kirby District Building

3015 Richmond Ave 77098

Meat will be provided. Please bring your favorite side dish. Soft drinks provided.

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## Trip Report: Lake Charlotte

by Ken Anderson

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Only two paddlers (John Ohrt and Ken Anderson) paddled Lake Charlotte on October 23rd. Admittedly this was a short-notice trip but the day was too wonderful to not paddle.

The water level was relatively low; the Lake Charlotte gauge listed it at 7.2. There clearly was wind damage to the area and the channels were both wider and shallower than I expected.

We paddled into Mac Bayou from Cedar Hill Park and well into Mac Lake (lots of mullet there intent on jumping into the boats), then back past Mac Bayou to the Trinity and down to Lake Pass.

While paddling now the Trinity we noticed a slow moving "log" that we gauged to be 10 to 12 twelve feet long. That observation was made from a range of about 100 yards and not having any women along to pick it up and measure it precisely we left our estimate as just that.

We paddled up Lake Pass to Miller. Where Miller empties into Lake Pass we found a 6 foot (or so) alligator sunning on the bank. There's something disconcerting about seeing an alligator slide into the water and out of sight...but where it entered the water bubbles form which begin to head toward your boat. I thumped my boat with my paddle and the bubbles chose to go around the boat.

We had a lunch break on the south side of Miller. Normally cattle graze there but the area looked like there hadn't been much cattle grazing recently since it was a bit overgrown.

We paddled back to Lake Pass and found that same alligator waiting for us. John the Braveheart volunteered to paddle through to Lake Pass (gosh I'm going to miss him...just kidding).

The paddle to Lake Charlotte from Miller was passable but there were quite a few fallen trees that had to be run over, or around or through. At the junction with Lake Charlotte we found significant silting and water plants beginning to choke off the entrance.

We faced some brisk head winds from Bird Island to Cedar Hill Park but that made the final leg all the more fun.

Overall we did about 12 miles in 6 hours on a knockout day. Even the gators seemed to enjoy having us around.

BUT next trip I'm bringing a saw.

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## Trip Report: Lake Charlotte

by John Ohrt

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Ken Anderson posted a trip to Lake Charlotte on the HCC web site and listbot. I told him I was coming and followed the directions to the put in found on the HCC places to go site. They were perfect.

I arrived early and waited down by the beach. It was a beautiful morning; a cloudless sky, with a cool fresh breeze. There was only a slight ripple on the surface of the lake and I watched various flying birds: herons, egrets, ibis, and osprey.

Ken arrived and, as it was just us, we set off about 9:15 am. We decided to take Mac Bayou which was a little ways down the right shoreline. We passed under the pipe and came out into a small lake. We turned right then a quick left and followed that bayou northward paddling easy for about 45 minutes until it deadended.

We retraced our strokes back to the small lake and went the other way, quickly coming to the Trinity River. We got out on a muddy sandbar to stretch; a small deer bounced away through the woods. It took us about an hour to paddle downriver to Lake Pass. We had a tail wind but not much detectable current.

We saw a very big alligator right in the middle channel of the Trinity. Lake Pass was clear up to the cut to Miller Lake, where we startled another big 'gator. He hit the water and just looked at us. Then he submerged and his air bubbles went right under Ken's small kayak.

We ventured into and across shallow Miller Lake, each stroke churning up some mud, but we made it across ok. The numerous cypress knees made it hard to find a lunch spot, but we found one with a good sized alligator sunning himself on a log. We ate lunch, got back in the boats and left and the 'gator never moved. Back in the Miller cut we ran into the big 'gator again and again he dived, but you could follow his air bubbles. We paddled right over him and back to Lake Pass.

The going got tougher but with some pulling and pushing we made Lake Charlotte. The north wind had picked up so we got ready, sucked it up and headed straight across to the put in. We made it in about forty-five minutes beaching about 3:45pm.

It was a great day. We got plenty of good exercise, did some exploring, and saw lots of wildlife. Best of all was we got to spend a day in this wonderful place. A pat on the back to Ken for thinking of it.

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## When Half of the Fourth Became the Sixth -- The Contentious Debate Over the Creation of the Sixth Ward

by Louis F. Aulbach

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Sabine Street Bridge

Click on image to enlarge.

When you paddle downstream from Eleanor Tinsley Park, the Sabine Street Bridge emerges into view from beyond the willows and other vegetation that crowds the banks of the bayou. In the decades after the Civil War, this location was the center of a contentious discussion among the residents of Houston.

In the mid-1870's, Houston was recovering from the economic devastation of the war. Prosperity had returned as the railroad industry had brought new jobs and new residents to the City. Many of the railroad yards and shops were located on the north side of Buffalo Bayou and these residents pressed the City Council to create a new ward to give them more representation in the affairs of local government.

Those who opposed the creation of a new ward objected to the fact that the population of the south side of the Fourth Ward was about 18,000 to 20,000, while the north side was only 6,000 to 8,000 persons. That disparity seemed to dilute the representation of the citizens of the Fourth Ward south of the bayou. Another consideration was that the new ward would produce two new Democratic aldermen while leaving the Fourth Ward with only a Republican alderman.

If that sounds like politics as usual, it probably was. In fact, the Fourth Ward South was populated by large numbers of low income former slaves and free blacks. The Freedman's Town community grew up along the San Felipe Road at this time. The Fourth Ward North, on the other hand, was a prosperous middle class, working man's neighborhood.

Never the less, on Friday, November 10, 1876, at the regular meeting of the City Council, S. C. Liscom submitted to the City Council a petition signed by 122 citizens of the Fourth Ward requesting that a new ward be created from the part of the Fourth Ward that lay north of Buffalo Bayou. The petition was adopted by City Council at that time.

On the meeting of City Council on November 24, 1876, the City Attorney, E. P. Turner, issued an opinion that the City Charter did not permit the creation of a new ward by means of a petition, and the establishment of the Sixth Ward may not have been accomplished legally.

The City Attorney ruled that a new ward may be created only when the population of the wards could be equally distributed among the wards. The reapportionment of representatives of the wards was granted by law to City Council and could not be handled by actions other than an ordinance. Turner argued that the new ward must be created by an ordinance so that it would be subject to the veto of the Mayor.

Alderman Tracy of the Third Ward made a series of motions to revamp the proposal to create the Sixth Ward in accordance with the city charter. Each motion was read and

passed. By the end of the meeting, the ordinance to establish the new ward was passed. The Sixth Ward, created from the part of the Fourth Ward that lay north of Buffalo Bayou, came into existence on January 1, 1877, although it appears that the voting representation on City Council was not changed.

This Sixth Ward arrangement muddled along for two decades, but the matter continued to be a source of disagreement.

At the Council meeting on December 9, 1895, Alderman Repsdorph proposed an ordinance which would create a new Sixth Ward. The disproportionate representation on Council again was the major issue, but with the support of Alderman Kohlhauff and Alderman Bailey, the ordinance passed.

A year later, in January, 1896, Alderman McAughan introduced an ordinance at City Council to repeal the ordinance creating the Sixth Ward and to return to a five ward system.

These disputes highlighted the faults of the ward system as a means for governing the city which, at the turn of the nineteenth century, was a much different place than when the ward system was established in 1840. Finally, on December 10, 1904, a change to the City Charter was approved. In 1906, the city government of a mayor and four commissioners was instituted.

And, it has served us well ever since....

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Anne Olden's "Bomb-proof" Roll  
by John Bartos  
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submitted by John Bartos  
Click on image to enlarge.

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Officers for 2005

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Commodore: **Rudy Rivers**

281.495.9742  
[rudyivers@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rudyivers@sbcglobal.net)

Vice Commodore: **Mary Zaborowski**

713.884.1925  
[coachz66@hotmail.com](mailto:coachz66@hotmail.com)

Recorder: **Christy Long**

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[clong@smith.com](mailto:clong@smith.com)

Purser: **Anna King**

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Governor 2: **Ken Anderson**

281.856.9388  
[klandrsn@hal-pc.org](mailto:klandrsn@hal-pc.org)

Governor 3: **Paul Woodcock**

713.722.4945  
[plwdcck@yahoo.com](mailto:plwdcck@yahoo.com)

Waterline Submissions

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Submit content to the Newsletter Editor, Sherri Blifford, by the 18<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Send electronic submissions to  
[sherrib57@hotmail.com](mailto:sherrib57@hotmail.com).

Send snail mail submissions to  
Sherri Blifford  
11527 Ainsworth Drive  
Houston, TX 77099

General Meeting Minutes  
October 12, 2005

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These minutes have not been approved. Any changes or amendments will be posted in next month's issue of the Waterline.

Officers present: Rudy, Fraser, Mary, Christy, Sherri. Governors present: Paul, Ron, Ken. Anna King resigned as Purser.

**Business:**

2005 Officers Elections - Nominating Committee presented the slate to general meeting:

- Commodore - Christy Long
- Vice Commodore - Rick Brunson
- Fleet Captain - Ann and John Olden
- Newsletter Editor - Sherri Blifford
- Recorder - Bob Price
- Purser - Fraser Baker
- Governors - 1, Bob Arthur; 2, Ken Anderson; 3, Dana Enos.

Fall Festival, Huntsville – State Park cancelled reservations due to park cleanup. We want to thank Cecilia and all those that helped her. It was a good trial run for next year.

Carl Gibson and Trudi asking for water safety volunteers for the Buffalo Bayou Regatta. October 15. Call at 713-664-4317

[www.buffalobayou.org/regattabayou.html](http://www.buffalobayou.org/regattabayou.html)

**Program**

REI Events Specialist Christian McNeil from the Willowbrook REI Store, Hwy 249 at 1960, giving a presentation over "PADDLING IN THE WINTER"

The meeting was adjourned.



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## Pre-Halloween Moonlight Paddle on Armand Bayou, October 15, 2005

by Rick Brunson

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Moonlight paddlers

Click on image to enlarge.

Six intrepid paddlers joined forces to brave the wild and woolly waters of Armand Bayou during the last full moon. Four HCC members and two guests set out from the Bay Area Park canoe launch at 7:00 PM and traveled downstream to Mud Lake and back to the park by 9:00 PM.



Moon over Armand Bayou

Click on image to enlarge.

Along the way they were able to glide up next to several roosting water fowl and were followed closely by schools of jumping fish. One lazy fish even jumped into one of the kayaks for a ride back to shore.

The moon was bright, the water was glassy, the air was crisp and the stories were scary! In other words, we all had a wonderful time.

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**Please join us**

The Canoe Trail Goliad Committee invites you to participate in the  
**3rd Annual Fall River Flotilla.**

- DATE:** Saturday, November 5, 2005
- PUT-IN TIME:** 9:00 a.m. — noon
- LOCATION:** San Antonio River at HWY 59 Bridge, Goliad, TX
- DIRECTIONS:** Beginning at 9:00 a.m., unload your canoes, kayaks, jon boats, and safety gear in the staging area on the north side of the Highway 59 bridge, west of downtown Goliad on the San Antonio River. Then drive to Goliad State Park where a shuttle service will be ready to return you to your boat and gear.
- Next is the fun part! Paddle 6.5 miles of Goliad's scenic riparian corridor to Goliad State Park. Lunch will be awaiting all registered paddlers! Shuttle service will continue until noon.
- LUNCH:** Lunch will be served throughout the afternoon until the last paddler returns to the Park.
- All paddlers must supply their own boat and safety equipment.
- REGISTRATION:** To register, e-mail [info@canoetrailgoliad.com](mailto:info@canoetrailgoliad.com) by Wednesday, November 2.
- CANCELLATION:** Event and shuttle service are subject to cancellation through 8:00 a.m. on event day due to weather and/or flow conditions. In the event of inclement weather or high flows, contact (361) 645-3405 for event status.

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Goliad**



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**Canoe Trail  
Goliad**





c/o P. O. Box 839980  
San Antonio, TX 78283-9980

**Canoe Trail Goliad**

[www.canoetrailgoliad.com](http://www.canoetrailgoliad.com)

Invitation produced courtesy of the San Antonio River Authority.



c/o P. O. Box 839980  
San Antonio, TX 78283-9980

**Canoe Trail Goliad**

[www.canoetrailgoliad.com](http://www.canoetrailgoliad.com)

Invitation produced courtesy of the San Antonio River Authority.