



www.houstoncanoeclub.org

Volume 53

December 2005

[Click here to return to the MENU](#)

Contents:

Click on a title below to go to the story.

To print an article, right click and select print from the menu. If that doesn't work, send me an email and I'll give you the link to it that will print.

[Friendship](#) by Sharon Anderson

[Trip Report: Ultimate Urban Paddle](#) by Paul Woodcock

[On Rivers](#)

by Mary E. Zaborowski

[Trip Report: Dickinson Bayou](#)

by Paul Woodcock and Mary Z

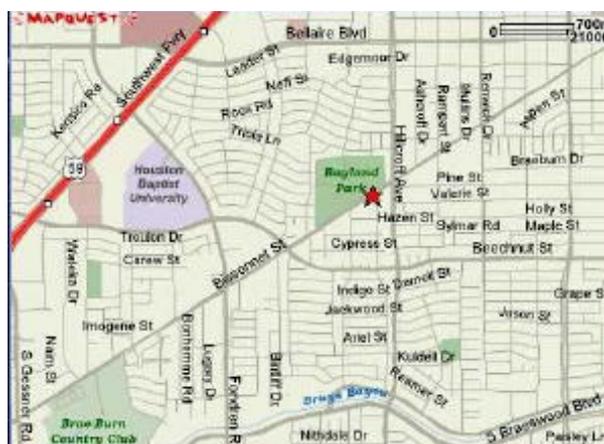
[Newbie Journal: Moving on](#) by sherri

[Trip List](#)

Meeting January 11th

Please note we have a new meeting location!

Come join us at 7 pm at Bayland Community Center located at 6400 Bissonnet, Houston, 77074, just west of Hillcroft. We always welcome visitors.



Mapquest Map to Bayland Park

Click on image to enlarge.

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 to the Editor at the following address.

joanne8678@yahoo.com



Mary Zaborowski in her kitchen

Click on image to enlarge.

Photo by Sharon Anderson

Ahhh, that word that reaches out its hands and holds mine, the core, the heart, the embodiment of a person called friendship; shown as one being a mother hen, a story teller, an organizer, a cook, a path blazer, a nature protector, one who laughs, someone who is downright crazy, and a paddler of many rivers. She's a cake mix of goodies. Her name is Mary.

I used to wake up before dawn on a river trip, tired and wanting to close my eyes one more time. Outside my tent I'd hear soft voices from people stirring in tents and around the kitchen area. There would be pots and pans sliding across a camp stove where laughter was getting a little louder like a soft alarm clock luring me out of my bedroll. A waft of lip smacking bacon, popping in hot oil, drifting on a cool morning breeze, sifted through my tent. Sizzling eggs, wall-eyed and yellow-orange, stared at the cook with a blank look. Coffee was a brewin' on the next burner, strong enough to make one's nostrils flair as the fragrance entered with a deep breath. These morning aromas and sounds were enough to make anyone pack up a wet tent and hurry down to the kitchen area, no matter how cold, damp, wet, or sunny the morning presented its self. That crazy-sweet lady was always standing in front of a stove with a wide grin.

As soon as she saw me she'd yell, "Hi Darlin', come on down. I've got some hot coffee ready for ya." It was that smile and laughter that really started my day and the tribe of people who were there with me on the trip that made canoeing such a pleasure and of great interest.

Excuse me for digressing into memories of past canoe trips with Mary, for this is a story about the Fall 2005 Colorado River Trip. I noted several months ago that there was a celebration paddle put on by Fraser and Janice. Mary Z. would be joining them to continue a Dutch oven cook out tradition. Paul would be there to keep a mountain of gear organized while Mary cooked. I invited Logan to come along. To my surprise he did want to "get out of Dodge" for the weekend.

Packing consisted of listing gear then trying to find it. Late Friday night I repacked because I had way too much of everything. All of it had to fit into a solo canoe and kayak. Finally, I was packed and ready. Now, I just needed to get a good night sleep. BZZZZBZZZZBZZ4:00 O'clock alarm. Throw a few items in an igloo, get dressed, catch a weather report, and anxiously await Logan's arrival so we could "hit the trail" on time. I flew by Sealy, turned around after an 11-mile miss. We found the Whataburger, which was housing paddlers meeting up for breakfast. I wasn't hungry but ate some high fat fast food anyway. New people and old friends were there. The excitement was stirring.

The caravan started. We drove through fog with white headlights creating a chain of paddlers linked by light beams. We became the Illuminati.

Our group was the first to arrive at the put in. We unloaded boats and gear and became one with the mud. I packed my two boats on shore's edge with Paul watching on the bank. I told him, "I don't think I can get everything in these two little boats." "I always pre pack before a trip," Paul said, smiling with a Woodcock grin. I could see that my gear looked bigger than my little boats, however; with a little confidence and a lot of perspiration, it all fit. I drove the shuttle.

Boats filed into the water with no regard for the lead boat or any instructions. People were ready to paddle! It didn't take long for Fraser to gain lead of this Wild Tribe and become lead boat for a while. Like all trips, boats were strewn down the river, at times coming together in small groups for socializing. It was a beautiful day in Mother Nature's neighborhood. The 16-mile paddle against the wind tired even the seasoned paddlers who sported toned cells. It was a long day, but full of conversation and beautiful things to see. Just before the campsite, an eagle's head and tail flashed pure white in sunlight, as it rode the thermals just above us. Absolutely beautiful. We saw three eagles and one juvenile, a few catfish, herons, and the very bottom of the river more times than we wanted.

Once we landed, Mary set up the cook area. I put up my tent. I was a little nervous about camping so far inland. I went down to the cook area. Meat was already sizzling. Ron, Linda, and I cut vegetables. Robert's daughter, Stephanie, helped me prepare bread with butter and garlic. Mary kept the Dutch ovens going. Sometime after dark, a wide semi-circle of paddlers formed around the fire sharing a glass of conversation. Logan helped Mary by keeping the fire a blaze. Beef stew was served in three large black pots. While the tribe ate, Mary and I made cherry rum cakes. I thought we would have to get out bows and arrows to keep the Wild Tribe at bay as the cakes turned a light tan color. The dessert disappeared to the last gram.

Fraser turned the cooking fire into a campfire. He had gone native in the mysterious moonlight during the twilight of conversation. As Mars loomed a red glow in the sky he became shamanic. Many of us were feeling we had influence in the spiritual realm. Bottles of access were ritually shared. The illuminati were lit.

Soon, people disappeared into tents after stargazing and hot air blazing. Mary walked over to me, held out her hands, and said, "Put your hands between mine." I thought she was going to show me a trick or a joke. She clasped my hands and quietly said, "Thank you, thank you for helping me." I was touched by her sincere gesture of gratitude. It works, if we all work together. Before we went to bed, Mary and I cleaned the cooking gear while other friends helped close down the kitchen for the night.

The next morning, before I was out of my tent, Ron had coffee going. People circled for breakfast like in the era of covered wagons, long ago. The Wild Tribe slowly disappeared off the land as gear was gathered and people paddled down the river towards the end of another great adventure. Mary and others cleaned up the morning kitchen area. They were amongst the last to leave camp, picking up forgotten items and things of their own. They left only their footprints. I don't know when she rested. Mary never stopped cooking, working, smiling, talking, and cleaning.

One boat was baptized in cool water on the way to the take out. Cherished material goods sank below sight in watery depth. Never to be cherished again. Everyone helped each other with gear and boats at the final stop. The Wild Tribe dispersed transforming from river rats into camouflaged citizens, once again. Then all traversed home like a vanishing tribe.

Take care, do good deeds, and stay in touch.

[Back to Index](#)

The Ultimate Urban Paddle

by Paul Woodcock

[Back to Index](#)

The December 3 Christmas had been canceled but Mary and I wanted to paddle anyway. We wanted a short paddle with no shuttle so we decided to put in on Buffalo Bayou at The old Spaghetti Warehouse.

When we arrived we were greeted by the ducks that hang out there. I looked across and saw White Oak Bayou where it joins Buffalo Bayou at the jail. We decided to paddle up it as it was something I had always wanted to do and it would be new territory. As we passed under the first overpass we were greeted by a bum (homeless person in politically correct language). The roar of the traffic as we crossed under 45 made conversations impossible. An egret was on the side of the bayou and he just stood and looked at us as we paddled by. I guess city egrets aren't upset at the proximity of humans. A red-tailed hawk circled over head. We saw the yellow blinking lights of the construction crew as we paddled by. They waved, surprised at seeing a canoe on White Oak Bayou. We were dodging shopping carts, old mattresses, bikes, and a great collection of trash.

As we paddled on, we saw a creek coming in to the bayou and we paddled up it. The first bridge we came to had solid cement sides down into the bayou making a tunnel we could paddle through. It was just a two lane street so it wasn't really dark inside. There was a 4-foot pipe coming in the side and a great amount of water was rushing through it. You could smell the chlorine so I guess Houston had another broken water main. It became shallow so we turned around and went up the bayou.

The sides had become cement so we were now paddling in the man-made channel. The sides were adorned with gang graffiti and we saw a male with a spray can running away at our approach. As we headed Northwest the grass above the bayou was cut and park benches lined the bike path. People were riding their bikes and walking their dogs. We had arrived at Studewood where all the new condos have been built. It was 83 degrees in December and I even had to swat at mosquitoes.

We turned around and went back to the Spaghetti Warehouse where Mary got out and I soloed up Buffalo Bayou. As I passed the Aquarium - the new restaurant with the giant Ferris wheel - the sides of the bayou became very park-like with benches and trails. The art work on the Wortham Theatre caught my attention. They are building a bridge over the bayou and I saw workers landscaping the bayou. It is going to be beautiful along here in the spring. It was interesting to see what we can do to make Houston Bayous enjoyable to hike and paddle. The wind was getting stronger so I turned around and returned to the takeout.

It was the ultimate Urban Paddle with the best and worst that Houston has to offer the urban paddler.

[Back to Index](#)

On Rivers

by Mary Ellen Zaborowski

[Back to Index](#)

"The springs and rivers, to bathe in them gives new life, to drink from them cures every bodily ill." - Cherokee Wisdom.

The rivers have more meaning to me, being of Native American Blood- Cherokee Indian. The river as we call "Long Man" (ga nv hi dv as ga ya) gives us a way of travel, replenishes our need of water for our physical bodies and purifies our spirit with the sounds of the rapids and falls. The wildlife that lives inside and along the riverbanks nourishes our bodies for the food as we travel its moving waters. The cool waters as we drink and bathe in its streams takes care of our bodies during the hot summer months. The sound of the musical rapids keeps our attitude on a level note, yet it keeps flowing, like the blood that pumps through our veins and gives life!" I know every river, stream and woods..... I have hunted and lived like my fathers before me and like them, I live happily!"- Ten Bears: Sioux.

It saddens my heart when I see how we treat the waters that Mother Earth has given us. They were made pure and clean, and we are the "Care Takers" that are now destroying their existence. What do we leave to our future grandchildren? How do we explain to them how once the Rivers we paddled ran pure with lots of life and we neglected to take care of it for them.? Yet, is it too late to try and help save our waterways.? It takes all of us, from the government, and local people, to set forth now on a voyage down the streams and rivers, to keep them moving pure for our future generations, while on Mother Earth." We sang songs that carried in them melodies of all the sounds of nature, the running of waters, the sighing of winds and the calls of the animals teach your children." Crow Feather – Teton Sioux.

Oh hear the river sing through its chorus of multiple rapids. Feel its pure coolness rush over our skin. Taste the life it gives our bodies. See the beauty of blue waters with an abundance of colored variety of fish. Smell the freshness that the running water gives back to the air we breathe. Last, the Spirit of the River that restores the positive attitude to our living souls. Oh brother and sister hear me, through I'm just a lowly poor Indian, who hears the Great Spirit in the Winds, see him in the Clouds, yet, feels the peace he gives in the moving pure waters of the Rivers. "The Great Spirit made these mountains and rivers for us, and all this land." Blackfoot- Crow, 1850.

Sincerely yours on the Rivers,
Me li (Mary)

[Back to Index](#)

Christmas Paddle on the Dickinson Bayou with the Kingsburys

by Paul Woodcock and Mary Z

[Back to Index](#)

When Paul and I first heard of this paddle, it was at the HCC Christmas Party on Dec 3, held at the Upper Kirby Building. We had paddled the White Oak and Buffalo Bayou that morning and were looking for another adventure. Paula was going make chili and I offered to bring the tortillas and tamales. Saturday evening came and we only had a few who showed. Paula and Rob had many who called, yet didn't show. Yet, the seven of us ventured out to Dickinson Bayou on Saturday Evening heading towards the Community Park, about 1 hour away from their boat dock on the bayou.

Rick Brunson, Paul Woodcock, Paula and Rob Kingsbury, Ashley and boyfriend, and I started out on a cool evening. Two Solo Canoes, two tandem canoes and one kayak. The night air was setting in, yet down in the bayou it didn't feel too cold. We saw lots of herons, sea gulls, white egrets, and two owls flying over our vessels as we headed towards the Community Park to see the Christmas Lights. As we paddled past the other big homes on the waters we could see their lights shinning bright adoring their homes, yet lit the way of our paddle.

With laughter in the air and a great feeling of being on the water again, it lifted our spirits almost as high as the birds flying over our canoe. We got to the Park and the sight was great. Elephants, Crabs, Shrimp, Sea Horses, Penguins, Deer, and other figures were outlined in lovely lights. It was very nice to walk among this light show after paddling for an hour to stretch our legs. People were amazed that we paddled the bayou to see this light show at Dickinson.

The paddle back was quick since we knew that chili and other goodies were waiting our arrival. After eating, Paul and I accepted the challenge from the kids to play pool in their den (billiards). Yet, the kids took the "Old Folks", but not without a good long game. We said our good-byes and Happy Holiday to all and headed back to Houston. I would like to see this paddle happen again next year, but with more committed paddlers from the HCC. This is truly a wonderful Festival Paddle to paddle with love ones, and families to start your Holiday Season on a high note.

[Back to Index](#)



Newbie Journal: Moving On
by sherri

[Back to Index](#)

Thank you, friends, for allowing me to edit the newsletter these past three years and indulging my fun with the Newbie Journal.

Water humbles you. There's a pattern: You get cocky and then humbled. The game is to have fun in between the two extremes. The same could be said for the newsletter. It was fun. Then it was work, late into the night, wishing I were on a river instead. Then would come an email of encouragement to make it worthwhile.

What I learned is that the journey is a celebration all its own. Getting from point A to point B is dull unless you soak in the sounds, scents, and delights of the moment.

A lot has happened in the last three years... a new house, new lifestyle, new friends, great joy. Thank you, Rudy Rivers, for negotiating to get me my house. Thank you, Paul and Mary, for the shared coffee and talks. Sharon Anderson's article (see the one on Friendship) says it all so I won't even try. The list could go on and on. I'm grateful to have such friends.



Terlingua Creek

Click on image to enlarge.

I spent part of the holiday in Terlingua, camping on Terlingua Creek, hiding away from stress and house remodeling. It's a place like no other, with rugged, savage beauty. It calls to mind all the stuff of how "the stars at night are big and bright..." It was a good place to get nostalgic. Yes, it's hard to say good-bye but the time has come for a change. The Newbie isn't new and there are wonderful opportunities (with new challenges) beckoning.

Next week your new editor will begin her turn. Please give her your support and encouragement.

When I asked the officers from last year for their "farewell" comments, Rudy Rivers wrote:

"Thanks to everyone who helped me during the year, and remind them that nothing gets done unless someone steps up to the paddle." That about sums it up. Whether you choose the bow or stern, you need to contribute or the boat just goes in circles. Do your

part to keep the club moving.
See you on the river
or bayou
or creek.

[Back to Index](#)

Not Found

The requested URL /hcc_trips.pl was not found on this server.

Additionally, a 404 Not Found error was encountered while trying to use an ErrorDocument to handle the request.

*Apache/2.2.15 (CentOS) mod_ssl/2.2.15 0.9.8l DAV/2 mod_auth_passthrough/2.1
FrontPage/5.0.2.2635 Server at www.houstoncanoecclub.org Port 80*

[an error occurred while processing this directive]