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HotLine 713.467.8857

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Program - July 9, 2003

Movie Time

We have two videos to watch.

Popcorn will be served.

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 trip reports, news worthy items and any literary musings you wish to inflict on your paddling buddies to the Editor at the following address.

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Waterline Submissions

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

Send electronic submissions to
sblifford@sbcglobal.net.

Send snail mail submissions to
Sherri Blifford
8233 Kingsbrook Rd., #134
Houston, TX 77024

General Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2003

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

Commodore John Ohrt presided at the meeting.

In honor of safe boating week, Chet Tigard presented a brief talk on various styles of pfd's.

John introduced the officers and guests, who were encouraged to get involved and join the club.

Last month's minutes were read and accepted.

The purser's report was given and accepted. We spent \$550 and took in no new money.

Fraser Baker gave the fleet captain's report. Members told about trips taken and upcoming trips were discussed. Fraser has updated the mileage taken by members.

Free t-shirts will be given to trip participants.

We announced that the list bot is available for anyone to view, and there is good information available.

John announced that the REI Adventure Fair will take place May 17-18 and the roster will be emailed to members in June.

Mary Z introduced Grady Hicks who gave a presentation on canoe racing and the Safari.

The meeting was adjourned.

Change of Address

Submit change of address to Marilyn Peery.

Email address:

mpeery@ev1.net.

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Marilyn Peery
4119 Mischire Rd.
Houston, TX 77025

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A Trip to Canada

by Ron Nunnelly

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One day my Son Edgar and I decided to go to Canada for a couple weeks and paddle some of the area of Quetico Provincial Park. We didn't make this decision lightly. We had been there before and know how remote this place is. For those of you who don't know where Quetico is, look across the border from Boundary Water Canoe Area north of Ely Min.

We started by getting the required Backcountry entry permit from Canada, and then as soon as they opened the Park entry permit we reserved our permit. Before you can get your Park entry permit you have to know where you are going and which lakes and streams you will be paddling. They limit the number in any area so this information is all required to get the permit. With all this information in hand we were then able to figure the number of days (in our case 10 –12 days in) and start planning meals and other items we would need.



Portaging

Click on image to enlarge.

With all this information in hand, the meals planned, and ingredients in hand we started to pack. This can be fun as we were going to leave on Thursday night following Labor Day weekend. I paddled the Sabine Labor Day paddle and returned home on Monday afternoon. So the rest of the packing and cleaning of gear had to be done on Tuesday and Wednesday. After work on Thursday, I pick up Edgar and we head north toward Dallas. We fill up with gas and food north of Dallas and my son starts driving. I tell him to drive to ten or eleven then find a motel. I fall asleep only to be awakened by some very bright lights. We have pulled in for gas again and it is now 2 AM. After a cup of coffee, a tank of gas, and a half hour explaining about wooden canoes we are on the road again. Oklahoma and Kansa pass quickly. Soon we are in Kansa City with the early morning traffic, then western Missouri in very heavy fog, slowing us down for a couple of hours. Iowa is next with miles and miles of corn, same for southern Minnesota., St. Paul, then Duluth.

Finally, come Ely and camp. A good meal at the Chocolate Moose and a good night's sleep Friday night makes things seem really good. Saturday Morning we check all the gear we are taking to Canada then go to Ely to pick up anything we are missing and check out the outfitters for end-of-season sales.



Ron

[Click on image to enlarge.](#)

Sunday Morning finds us on a boat headed to Prairie Portage we are heading up Moose Lake, Newfound Lake, and Sucker Lake. These are among the few that allow motorboats. At Prairie Portage we have our first Portage, get our permits, and pay our camping fees.

The following day we finished our trip up Lake Agnes and a short portage across this lake.

As we leave the Permit office, it starts raining. We move quickly through the end of Basswood Lake and a portage to Burke Lake, a short portage to Sunday Lake, then the portage we call "Agony" to Meadows Lake, then a portage we call "Little Agony" to Lake Agnes. We find a nice camping spot near Louisa Falls.



Edgar

[Click on image to enlarge.](#)

It is still raining. The next morning it is still raining so we head up the lake until we have to pass a large open section where the wind was very strong so we made an early camp for the night.

After another short portage we enter Keewatin Lake; then we found a good spot to camp. It had rained on us all day but was getting lighter. Late in the afternoon the sun broke out and a rainbow appeared. The temperature had been in the forty's at night and the fifty's during the day. It cleared off that night and got colder making the sleeping bag feel real good. The next morning dawned bright and sunny the temperature went up into the mid to upper 60's and we had a real nice paddle to the end of this lake then a short portage another small lake then another short portage into a much bigger lake Kawnpipi our destination was Rose Island and a camp spot. It was early and we had filled the sun shower and were looking to a warm shower. Area we had picked was already taken (one of the first signs of Humans we had seen since leaving Prairie Portage) so we

pushed on through this lake. Near the end of one of the fingers are small falls and a short portage to Kenny Lake.

A very good camping spot appeared just short of this falls so we stopped for the night. Setting up camp and a tarp to break the afternoon wind we both took showers and had a leisurely meal and evening. The next day we portaged around Kennebas Falls into Kenny Lake then the portage around Koho Falls and Little Falls. This put us in Wet Lake where there is another short portage around some impassable water and on down the lake to an area marked dangerous water (a series of small falls). Having worked our way around these, we were in Saganagons Lake.



Click on image to enlarge.

It was time to find a camping spot and one appeared on a small Island the next morning finds us making a short portage across a peninsula and on down the lake. We are looking for a portage into Slate Lake. This is easier said than done as this portage is hidden. From Slate Lake a short portage around some more bad water. We are in Fran Lake a couple of short portages and an unnamed lake puts us in Bell Lake. Three very short portages and a couple more unnamed lakes puts us in Other Man Lake. This starts the Man Cache but we start to look for a Camp Site and find one on an Island in Other Man Lake. The next morning we are heading down This Man, No Man, and That Man. A short portage and through Sheridan Lake and a very short portage where we meet up with a party going in (the first Humans since the falls) this puts in Carp Lake and a very good camp site.

At this campsite we have beaver and Otter playing around. In fact the beaver was busy putting in a winter supply of bark and worked in the Adler's all night. A chipmunk that had visited Our camp earlier keep coming back all night and keep trying to get into our tent all night. The next day found us moving down Carp Lake and into Birch Lake (Carp Lake on the U.S. side of the border. Another short portage puts us into Sucker Lake and on our way back to Ely.

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New to the Club?

by Bill and Donna Grimes

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Every one of us has had the same experience – being new to paddling and attending our first HCC meeting. I remember mine in 1988, when HCC still met off Memorial Drive in a building by Buffalo Bayou. I was impressed by the excitement and enthusiasm generated at the meeting and at the great diversity of trips available for paddlers. At that time, my first husband and I were the proud owners of two long sea kayaks. Our first trip with the club was on the San Marcos through a narrow, winding section below Fentress, TX. We were a disaster!!! Our boats were too long to negotiate some narrow turns; our long paddles got hung up in low branches; we turned over, we made the four hour paddle turn into six as HCC members patiently waited for us to recover ourselves – all this in a very quiet, safe section of the water. Problem: we didn't know what we were doing. Solution: take classes. But in our naivety we didn't understand the many differences between sea kayaking and white water kayaking and enrolled in a five-day course at Natahala Outdoor Center in North Carolina, the Harvard in training schools for water sports.

It didn't take long to learn those small, squirrely white water kayaks were VERY different from our long, straight-a-way sea kayaks. They were less stable but more maneuverable in making turns. After five days I was hooked on moving rapids and eddy turns... and I knew I wanted a canoe rather than a kayak.

We've all found our niches – whether it's kayak (sea or white) or canoe (solo or tandem); whether it's still quiet bayous, catching the rhythm and beauty of free style, or searching for the adrenaline rush of big waves and drops. The Houston Canoe Club offers all of these. Soon we find ourselves selecting trips that suit our interests and paddlers with similar interests. To a new paddler, this might appear as “cliques” – exclusive little groups. It's not. It's just seeing our buddies and planning another trip. If a trip is listed with HCC, it is open to all HCC members. Trip leaders will describe the type of water (lake, coastal inlet, bayou or river) and anticipated water level (flat, waves, slow moving, classes I to V or flood stage). But, because of the different type of water and water levels, different skills are required of the participants. A trip on Sheldon Lake or down the Buffalo Bayou (not at flood stage) may be perfect for someone just learning to paddle, but a trip to Wyoming where rapids will range in difficulty from Class II – IV would NOT be suitable for the novice paddler. Know your limits. Neither of us can roll our canoe, so we avoid class IV and V rapids (unless the pixies have been messin' with us and restored our youth for a couple a' three hours).

One thing our club provides is good, experienced trip coordinators who know the selected paddling section, who are ACA (American Canoe Association) members, and most have experience in river rescue. It is the responsibility of the trip leader to create the safest conditions possible for his the trip participants – one of these is being sure the water is suitable for the person's skills. Because we lead trips down waters that may be dangerous, it is important that we screen our participants – do they have the skills, the right kind of boat, the right clothing, will they follow our instructions? For example, in the summer time, when the temperature is hot and the hill country waters are low, we encourage less skilled people to come and try out these waters. When a potentially dangerous or tricky section of the river comes up, Bill and two or three other experienced paddlers scout the section and position themselves to assist other paddlers. This takes a lot of work and energy on our part, but it's worth it to when we see an anxious “newbie's” face turn to jubilation after conquering a mighty rapid. However, if the water is UP, new hazards appear (trees down, new or reshaped rapids) making it difficult to anticipate hazards and setup safety stations, or if the temperature is cold, our trips become less inclusive of new people for safety reasons. Nothing is more miserable than turning over in cold weather, getting your boat wrapped around trees, losing your gear, possibly becoming hypothermic and making the trip longer and less enjoyable for everyone. Also, as responsible trip coordinators, we are right there

doing everything we can to rescue them, often putting ourselves in peril. On one trip, an inexperienced paddler turned over five times. He no longer had dry clothes, was physically exhausted, and everyone on the trip was anxious at every rapid will he make it or will he turn over and we were exhausted!

We understand very well why the ACA Safety Guidelines for Non-Competitive Events includes: "Evaluate each participant's ability to participate, and be willing to turn away less skilled paddlers or direct them to another activity." No one we know enjoys rejecting participants. In fact, we think that many members shy away from listing trips because they may have to "play the bad guy" by turning down paddlers on difficult trips. It is also a lot of work to put together a trip. It's much less stressful to call friends that you are comfortable paddling with and put together a "private" trip.

Yet, we LOVE taking new people. So, if you are new and if you are inexperienced, start as we did – in slower water and with lessons. Talk to trip leaders about upcoming trips and find out what skills and equipment you will need on these trips. When you're comfortable in flat water, try paddling moving water or surfing ocean waves. (Donna gets seasick ocean kayaking, so that's not on our skill list.) Soon you too will find the types of paddling that best suits you and, hopefully, will soon be leading trips yourself.

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Trip Coordinator's Responsibilities

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The following information is reprinted with permission from the Carolina Canoe Club.

1. Be familiar with the place you plan to paddle - river, lake, etc. - and the surrounding area, put-ins, take-outs, and safe water levels. Obtain maps when needed.
2. Determine the meeting place and time and camping arrangements.
3. Have a list of names and phone numbers of the participants, so they can be contacted if necessary.
4. Select an alternate trip when necessary.
5. Limit the number of participants if necessary; divide into smaller groups when needed.
6. Try to screen participants and, when necessary, politely refuse to take any paddler who you feel is not qualified.
7. Check all boaters for proper equipment, i.e., life jackets, spare paddles, flotation, water, sunscreen, hats, first aid kits, spare clothes, throw bags, helmets.
8. Lead or assign the lead to a boater who knows the area being paddled; assign a skilled sweep boat to bring up the rear.
9. Acquaint the group with plans and organization of the trip, including the lunch stop and anticipated hazards.
10. Station skilled boaters downstream at hard or long rapids, ensuring that throw bags are available when needed.
11. Respect the rights of property owners and thank them for access and camping privileges.
12. Fill out a trip report and submit it to the Houston Canoe Club Fleet Captain.

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Lake Raven Picnic and Stroke Tune Up Day

by Sherri Blifford

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John and Cindy Bartos demonstrate freestyle.
Click on image to enlarge.

We met at Huntsville State Park to paddle around Lake Raven in June, coordinated by our Commodore, John Ohrt.

Following the paddle, we had a picnic and demonstrations of various types of paddling, including artistic displays of freestyle by John and Cindy Bartos and Lillian Tiggard, followed by racing and touring demos.



Lillian Tiggard showing freestyle.
Click on image to enlarge.

Some of us went on one last short paddle to the delight of my nine-year-old niece, Kelley Dickey. This was her first time in a canoe and she jumped right in eagerly. As we entered the park, she noted the warning signs about alligators and got a little apprehensive. I assured her they would not be near us and would run away at all our noise.



Anne Olden and John Ohrt demonstrate techniques

Click on image to enlarge.

When the swimmers began to scream about an alligator, Kelley spotted it swimming just ahead of us. The poor, disoriented, three-foot-long alligator went past us straight into the swimming area until a park Ranger chased it back out to the other side of the lake. It was yet another opportunity to be reminded that we were invading the critters' space and just how unpredictable they can be.

□ The alligator spotting was a neat way to close a nice, relaxed day of camaraderie.

We watched the demos.

Click on image to enlarge.

In July we have more demos of different strokes taught by certified instructors. Come join us at Stroke Tune Up Day on July 26, coordinated by John Ohrt. Check the trip list for details.

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New Members

James Barta
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Gary and Sandy
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Dennis Pumilia
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Robert L and Darlene
Surprenant
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For Sale

Eureka Domed Tent

Good condition; 3 person (really 2) \$25

John and Anne Olden 713-864-0205

aolden@ix.netcom

Wavesport Triple X freestyle competition kayak

At the US Freestyle Team Trials back in November, this model won top spots in men and women's categories.

The boat weighs 33 lbs, is 7'10 inches long and is black with red highlights/cool graphics. 1 year old. Pics available. Located in Dallas. MSRP \$950 - Must sell quick \$349 OBO. Stephen Guy Pocock - 972-686-

7878 sguykayak@yahoo.com

Mad River Canoe - Intrigue

Intrigue, 15'9", three seats, Solo/Tandum, Roylex \$700

Call Mary Zaborowski at 713-884-1925 or 832-215-4551 or email maryzabo@sbcglobal.net

Mary Z is in Canada until late July so, if you can't wait, call Bob Scheffler, 713-692-7494

15-ft sailboat (Sunfish)

Mask, sail, riging, drp wooden eel, wooden rudder, \$600.

maryzabo@sbcglobal.net or Bob Scheffler, 713-692-7494

Mad River Canoe - Freedom

Freedom, Roylex \$700 Email

maryzabo@sbcglobal.net or call Bob Scheffler, 713-692-7494

Mad River Freedom,

Friend in Kuwait needs to sell his canoe Spruce colored, wood trim. It was only paddled on one fishing trip, like new condition. He is asking \$600. Thanks!

Call Bob 713-6927494 or 713-504-1916

Kayak-like boat for two

Phoenix Vagabond Pokeboat (for 2 people), 40-lb

Kevlar, natural Kevlar color, two convertible paddles,

two sets of foot braces, two flotation bags, very stable,

16'5"L x 29"W x 15"H. Used once, excellent shape

Paid: \$2,189 Asking: \$1650

phone: (281) 837-0410 (please leave a message)

pager: (713) 415-7109 (after 3:00 PM weekdays) e-

mail: robcanet@hotmail.com



Kelley learns to paddle a canoe.

Click on image to enlarge.

The past two months have been full of great discoveries. A lot of what we learn on the water carries over to other parts of our lives, even flying canoes.

How NOT to buy a canoe or kayak. This was May's big discovery when I tried out my inflatable kayak on the Brazos River Trip. I won't say it was a disaster but it was pretty funny.

I told my friends I didn't need to borrow a boat or "bum" a tandem ride since this was the perfect place to try out my inflatable wonder. Fortunately Dana, Mary, Paul, and Ron are extraordinary friends. They checked the weather, the river flow, and the wind before our trip. They then calculated how long I'd last and what they could do to make sure I was safe. I suspect they placed some bets on my longevity but no one will admit it.

We started out by sliding into the water. No, we weren't doing a "seal" entry where a paddler gets into the kayak and drops seal-like into the water. Most of us just unintentionally slid down the slippery bank and landed unceremoniously in the water before we ever got near a boat. Got to keep up my muddy knees image, I guess. I got into my kayak and sat on my knees. That put all the weight dead center and the ends promptly "tacoed" (i.e., the ends folded up like a taco shell). Whoosh. Down into the mud. Got out, re-arranged the seating, and got back in only to discover that the seat slides a lot, offering no back support. It's also not more than a couple of inches high so now my legs are straight out in front of me. As the seat slid backward and I strained to sit up straight, I felt muscles best forgotten rebelling. I had sort of an ab machine for paddling.

Whee, this is fun. The little craft bounces around and it's just one step above riding a tube. It's also about as easy to maneuver, unless you want to go in one specific direction. I paddled on ahead, playing with it and feeling the way it handled. By the time everyone else got launched, I had done the equivalent of 50 sit-ups. Then we started paddling down the river for real. Bravely forth, I thought, waving off the others. They grinned and left me in their dust.

By lunchtime, I knew I was in trouble but – and I know this will come as a great surprise - I tend to be a bit stubborn. The sunscreen had washed off. Legs rarely uncovered were bright crimson. I was hot, tired, and aching. But I was going to paddle to the end.

Then my friends quietly launched their reserve plan. Dana took the deflated boat with him. Ron took the deflated paddler with him. They all stifled the "I told you so" stuff, tempting as it must have been.

So, herewith, is **great discovery #1** for May:

Don't shop on the Internet at 2 AM. What seems perfectly sensible then (especially after a few refreshments with friends) may be insane six hours later in the harsh light of day. I really wanted my very own boat. I wanted something I could store in a small condo and handle all by myself, giving me the freedom to go paddling on impulse.

Conventional wisdom says you borrow or rent various types of canoes to see the

variation in designs and you should never paddle alone. Stubbornness netted me a nice play toy that can't do trips with real canoes.

Discovery #2: Be prepared for portages. The next great discovery was how a portage works. In my fantasy and limited experience, all put-ins and takeouts were on nice sites with a short walk to the vehicle. At Stephen F. Austin State Park, I was introduced to reality with a long, uphill portage. Lesson learned was about carrying gear, neatly stowed in one pack, preferably with straps. I needed a long walk for exercise, anyway. That's why I made three trips, right?

Discovery #3: Aloe heals. That night, I headed back to Houston miserable and called a friend to whine. He greeted me with a bowl of ice cooling down big pieces of aloe plant. Forget the stuff at the drugstore in a jar. Slit the aloe lengthwise and put it on a sunburn for instant relief.

Discovery #4: Safety in numbers. By June, I had learned a lot about paddling and was feeling brave enough to take my niece on her first paddle. See the picnic story for my niece Kelley's reaction to paddling and the alligator. I borrowed a canoe – a real one, this time – and we tied it on my car with foam blocks. I wanted the smallest, shortest, lightest one. Fortunately, Don Greene had enough experience to explain to me why I needed a nice stable, wide boat that was easy to handle.

The trip to Huntsville State Park was easy and I was proud of my independence. On the ride home, Kelley started shouting when she spied the rear foam blocks flying loose. We pulled off to the shoulder, with canoe teetering precariously while trucks careened by us. I pushed the blocks back into position. They slid back out in less than a mile.. Feeling very alone (we had left the party early) my confidence was shaken until a whole bunch of cars and trucks with canoes pulled over on the shoulder to help, Thank all of you who stopped. It was most reassuring. A few expert yanks of the ropes and we made it safely home, although very late.

At least I stayed in the boat and didn't capsize it on water or off the car. Now I need to go shopping for a bigger car with a rack. I don't want to be remembered as the one who had the flying canoe when I do the Sabine trip on Labor Day.

See you on the river.

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Swift Water Rescue Class

by Neil Harrison

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John Ohrt raised a question about a Swiftwater Rescue class for the Houston clubs, perhaps this fall or spring. If we can come up with a minimum of 8 (maximum of no more than 10), it's entirely possible to do one (or more). The course would have a classroom session of Friday night (probably at Pecan Park, but that's not set in stone), and in-water work on Saturday and Sunday - cost would be approximately \$80 . Instructors would most probably be Bill Whitaker, Wayne Stiener, and myself.

One caveat: bear in mind that these classes, just like our rivers, are rain dependent. If the water is down, we can show you the stuff, but using it in a class II water on the San Marcos or Tom Miller Dam is different than Class IV water. As a rough head count, let me (neil@harrison.net) know if you might be interested.

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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.

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FrontPage/5.0.2.2635 Server at www.houstoncanoecub.org Port 80*