



Houston Canoe Club  
*Water Line*



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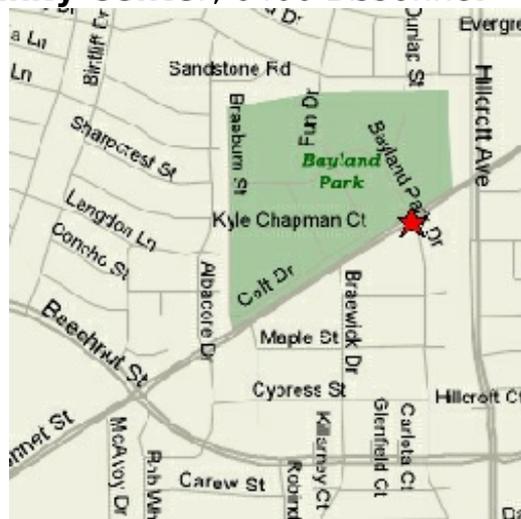
August’s meeting will feature an encore presentation by Dr. David Flynn, B.S., D.C. Dr. Flynn’s presentation will focus on proper nutrition for outdoor activities and general health. If you have any particular health/nutrition questions bring them to the meeting. This is a great time to get some free professional advice.

Dr. Flynn is a graduate of Penn State University and Texas Chiropractic College. He has lived in the Clear Lake area for about three years now and has been an outdoor enthusiast all his life. He enjoys kayaking in Armand Bayou and Galveston Bay.

Dr. Flynn recently moved his practice to Shapiro Chiropractic & Rehab Clinic in Sugar Land. He centers his practice on nutrition and wellness

.....  
Houston Canoe Club meets at **7pm** on the second **Wednesday of each month** at the **Bayland Community Center**, 6400 Bissonnet Street, Houston, Texas 77074.

The meeting is run by volunteers who stumble through an agenda composed of stories of recent trips, descriptions of upcoming trips, paddling related programs, paddling tips, and the introduction of visitors. Gear heads prevail and discussions about all aspects of paddling assure an all around good time. Visitors are very welcome.



The meeting begins at 7 PM at Bayland Park, 6400 Bissonnet, in the community building. The park is located just west of Hillcroft on Bissonnet.



## Safety Signals on the River by Ken Anderson (HCC Purser)

I was talking with a WW canoeist from Pennsylvania who told me about an incident. He said the folks with whom he normally canoes use whistles when they flip over and in need of help (not that I know anything about flipping over...so at this point the entire discussion became something of a hypothetical to me).

He went paddling with a WW paddling group he wasn't familiar with. He flipped over and was going down the river "wildly" out of control but when he blew his whistle his new buddies simply waived at him. He blew his whistle several times and they waived that many times if not more. He told me it's really hard to blow a whistle when your mouth is full of water.

He eventually self-rescued and lived to tell me the tale...unless he's dead and that means if he was talking to me in person I'm writing this from someplace I'd rather not think about.

When he asked his soon-to-be x-good-buddies about their lack of help it seems they thought he was enjoying himself floating down that river. As a group they didn't have any pre-arranged help and rescue signals.

The point is there should be a pre-arranged understanding of safety signals among the group before setting off. For example, if you flip but in control of yourself and your boat you can pat the top of your head to let everyone know you're OK and in control; if you don't send that signal there's a presumption you're in trouble and in need of help.

And that arrangement should not be limited to the use of a whistle. My Pennsylvania friend noted how hard it was to blow the whistle with a mouthful of water...it could have been even harder if he'd been knocked out, had a broken arm, and/or the cold water limited his ability muscle coordination (including my favorite: breathing). Clearly, there are limits to the use of a whistle.

I didn't ask him about his choice of a paddling group...we'll save that tip for another day.



standard signal meaning **STOP**

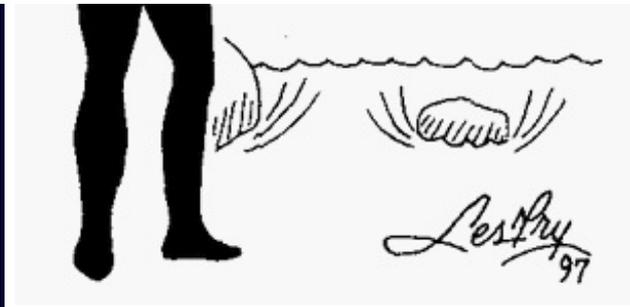
Signal meaning to **Continue** after having stopped



Signal shows which direction to continue. Here hand points to the left....a possible obstruction to the right. The kayak paddle is pointing to the right, so those following would paddle to the right.

The signal that asks the question "Are you OK?" A return pat on the head says Yes, I'm OK





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## The Studemont Railroad Spur

by Louis F. Aulbach

There is a big green wall along Memorial Drive just downstream of the Studemont Street bridge. Constructed as a bulkhead for the roadway of the new Memorial Drive in the mid-1950's, the green wall does not seem that extraordinary. However, upon closer examination, you will find a large notch in the top line of the green wall. That notch, precisely wide enough for a railroad track, is a reminder of the historically significant railroad spur that crossed Buffalo Bayou at this point.



The site of the railroad tracks on Memorial Drive near Studemont Street.

In 1847, the assets of the Harrisburg Railroad and Trading Company and the town site of Harrisburg were sold to a group headed by General Sidney Sherman. Sherman received a charter for the Buffalo Bayou Brazos & Colorado Railway on February 11, 1850, and tracks were laid across Harris County from Harrisburg to Stafford's Point. In August 1853, the BBB&C began operations to bring cotton and sugar from the Brazos valley to the port at Harrisburg.

The period after the Civil War saw the expansion and consolidation of the railroads in Texas and the United States. In 1870, the Buffalo Bayou, Brazos and Colorado Railroad was sold to Thomas W. Peirce who changed its name to the Galveston, Houston and San Antonio Railroad. Peirce had grand visions of a coast-to-coast rail line, and in 1883, his railroad joined with the Southern Pacific Railroad a few miles west of the Pecos River to create the southern route of the transcontinental railroad.

In an attempt to facilitate shipments into the City of Houston, an "entrance" was built in 1880 to connect the GH&SA main line on the south side of the City to the Houston and Texas Central main line on the north side of Buffalo Bayou (paralleling Washington Avenue). This spur joined the H&TC tracks at Chaney Junction and it curved southeast across the south end of town where it

connected with the GH&SA tracks at Stella (located south of the Astrodome).

The growth of residential development in the Montrose area and along South Main Street prompted the GH&SA to establish a better connection into Houston. In 1918, the GH&SA constructed a new entrance into Houston between Chaney Junction and West Junction. This spur went west to the Eureka Junction and then turned south (passing through today's Memorial Park) to West Junction (near the modern intersection of South Main Street, Holmes Road and Hiram Clark Road).

The original 1880 rail cut off was partly abandoned at this time. The tracks that remained extended only from the main line on the north, across Buffalo Bayou, to the south side of Buffalo Bayou as far as West Dallas Avenue. In the late nineteenth century, an industrial center developed along this railroad siding and the rail line served several important businesses including the Dickson Car Wheel Company foundry, the Southern Cotton Oil Company refinery, Butler's Brick Works, the Bayou City Rice Mills and others. In the 1920's and 1930's, the siding served the Sears, Roebuck and Company store on the south bank of the bayou, as well as the Houston Lighting and Power Company construction yard on West Dallas Avenue.

The redevelopment of the inner city in the late twentieth century led to the complete abandonment of the historic railroad spur. The wooden trestle across the bayou was removed about 2000 and the industrial complex on the north side of the bayou was replaced by the residential development called the Memorial Heights. The former Sears store was demolished in early 2007, and little evidence of this railroad link to Houston's earliest times remains.

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## New Members

We want to welcome our new members who have joined in the last month:

**Richard Morin**

rrmorin@hotmail.com

5900 Thames

Austin, Texas 78723-3233

Richard will be going on the Pecos River

Trip with us in October

**Fred Ruedinger**

Fred\_Ruedinger@sbcglobal.net

314 Queenstown

Houston, Texas 77015

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## Camp Moochers by Cecilia Gill

Welcome to "Backwater Backwash", a random and incomprehensible collection of thoughts, observances and experiences in no particular order, so that it makes absolutely no sense at all.

Ah, to go to the Great Outdoors! To get away from people who are always trying to take advantage of you, scam you, mooch from you, con you, and otherwise take whatever they can get from you, only to fall into the hands... er... paws or hooves of other types of creatures who are looking to take advantage of you, scam you, mooch from you, con you and otherwise take whatever they can get from you. The only real difference between the human kind and the animal kind is the fact that one is after money, and the other is after food.

Most of us have had occasion to have our well stocked ice chests opened, even the newer kind with the latching catch, quickly and easily opened, rummaged through and all the best stuff ripped off by nature's little masked bandits, the raccoons. Most of us know how to take measures to prevent that from happening.



Some people even have tales to tell about bears coming into their camps and raiding any and all food and wreaking other havoc. One lady told me a tale about a piece of pizza in the tent and a skunk who found his way in to get it. I have heard stories about gators near lakeside campsites that actually came up on the shore, waiting on the edge of the campsite for food to be tossed to them. I've seen ducks, seagulls, and any number of other feathered moochers come asking for hand outs. I had a pair of persistent geese who must have thought I was going to feed them follow me around for hours one day, both on and off the water! I had a squirrel con me out of my last chocolate chip cookie once! Stupid squirrel...



At Enchanted Rock State Park one night, I was sitting enjoying the campfire while everyone else was in the tent asleep. I heard an odd noise behind me, and thinking it was just Joe getting something to eat or drink, turned to say something to him. It wasn't Joe. There, unlatching the latch on my ice chest with his lower lip and nosing open the lid with his nose was the most beautiful 12 point buck I ever saw in my life! He actually ate a few things before I could shake the awe of this magnificent beast only a few feet





from me. I finally snapped to the fact that he was eating all of our food and yelled, "Hey! Git! Hyaahh!" He just looked at me, and turned to walk very slowly away, head held high, nose in the air, tail down, as if to say, "How very rude! I was finished, anyway," with no fear at all.

**It seems that no matter what you do, no matter where you are, something, somewhere, will try its best to take advantage of you. Even out in the Great Outdoors!**

**SYOTR!  
Cecilia Gill**

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## Houston Canoe Club General Meeting Minutes July 11th

Presenter: David C Flynn B.S D.C

Dr. Flynn gave a presentation on injury prevention to the shoulders and lower back as it relates to paddlers. Dr. Flynn also gave those in attendance information on nutrition.

Christy Long announced the organization the club donated money to and or is an affiliate member of:

American Whitewater \$75.00  
Galveston Bay Foundation \$100.00  
Citizens Environmental Association \$75.00  
Texas River Protection Association \$100.00  
San Marcos River Foundation \$75.00  
Bayou Preservation Association \$75.00

Several of the club's members sit on the board of these organizations.

Bob Price (our Fleet Captain) announced the Fleet Captains Challenge; the club will reimburse a portion of the cost to any club member taking a Red Cross first aid and or CPR course between the July meeting and the end of the year. See the HCC website for more details.

Chuck Babb gave a presentation on the swift water rescue class that he will be teaching on July 28th and 29th. The fee is \$100 and the class will be taught at Pecan Park Retreat in San Marcos Texas. See the website for registration materials.

There were 29 paddlers in attendance.



## From The French to the Frio

By Donna Grimes

Every year the Carolina Canoe Club has the Week of Rivers over the July 4th week in the Bryson City area, and hundreds of paddlers from many states join the club to paddle from easy moving water to Class IV/V water. The Houston Canoe Club has been joining this group for at least 20 years and it is here that many of our paddling skills have improved.

This year only a small group went East. Debbie Snow, Rheda Boardman, Jim Barton and myself. A very small HCC showing. The reason – NO WATER. Yes, the East was having water restrictions while we in Texas were under flood warnings.

One thing about Carolina: there are dam released waters, so even in a drought, you can paddle the Hiawassee (Class I) Nantahala (Class II) or the Pigeon (Class III) or the Ocoee (Class IV).....and..... that's about it, Folks.

Debbie and Rheda got to paddle the Hiawassee on Sunday, but Jim and I took the more leisurely route, arriving later, and planning to paddle on Monday. Low and behold! It had rained a little – just enough to make the French Broad paddleable. It was running about 1000 cfs, and Debbie joined Jim and I to paddle here on Monday, July 2nd.



(group on the French Broad: Jim, Debbie, and Donna on rhs)

There were many shallow spots but enough play spots and fast moving chutes to



keep us on our toes.

**(Debbie surfs a hole on the French Broad)**

On Tuesday Jim and I decided to paddle the Pigeon ( a dam released water). This river begins off I 40 on the edge of the North Carolina border at the Paper Factory. We watched to see how many turbines were open to determine how big the waves were going to be. Big waves, Big holes, and lots of opportunities to



screw up existed.

**(Put in for the Pigeon River; Note the paper plant on rhs which releases water)**

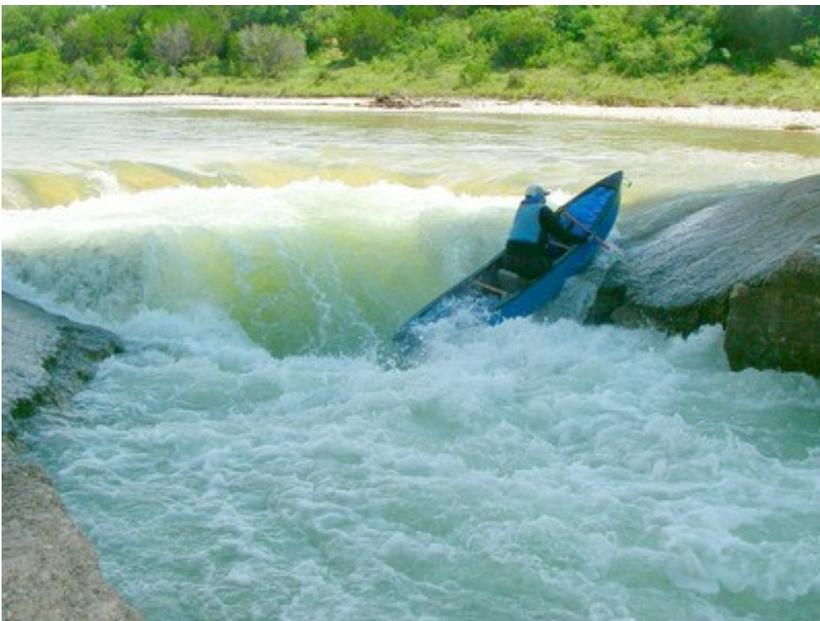
On Wednesday.....since I declined doing the “kinder, gentler Ocoee” (that river has chewed my boat up and spit me out....as well as many others....and I’m too old.....for event he “gentler, kinder Ocoee” ) So. We decided to play tourist that day.

However,, Jim talked with his son Travis who was heading to the Frio for paddling! The Frio was running about 1000 cfs....and Jim and I hadn’t paddled the Frio in probably ten years. So our tents were quickly dismantled, gear loaded and we were Texas bound! Two hard days of driving brought us to Garner State Park on Thursday, July 5th.

Friday, Travis (our hot-shot kayaker) Jim and myself headed to the put –in.....where Travis tipped.....Jim tipped....and I – well- I MADE IT!



**(Travis tips, but rolls back up)**



**(Jim tried to eddy before the drop...but there's not eddy and he came down backwards)**

Shortly after that, Jim decided to surf a hole which ended up being a keeper and he couldn't get out of the hole except to.....yes, you have it. Jim flipped.





OK – the two better paddlers had both tipped AT LEAST once, but not me....until my boat ran over my paddle which lodged between two rocks and I was catapulted over the side. Then there was a drop of about six feet where Jim decided to walk his boat around. Not me, I'm feeling cocky and don't even scout and the first leg of the drop filled my canoe and the second drop caused the predicted flip.



**(Travis tandems with Carey and succeeds on the drop that flipped me)**

Then Travis traded out his kayak for the family tandem so he could take his daughter Brooke and girlfriend Carey paddling. Brooke (age 4) was a champion enjoying the ride...and the body surfing....with her grandpa Jim.



**(Jim body floats with granddaughter Brooke while Daddy Travis watches)**

But even this combination turned over at the falls near the end of the run.

So....big water in Carolina = no tips  
Texas Class II water = six tips! Go figure!!

The Frio was so beautiful! For those who like the Medina, the Frio is like the Medina – just wider and more water. For those that like the Pecos, the Frio has the same flutes where you must carefully chose which seam in the lime rock you'll follow. For those who have not done the Frio – it's beautiful and worth the LONG drive.

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## Birthday Beach Trip

by Cecilia Gill

For weeks now, I have been trying to pin my hubby down to tell me what he wanted to do for his birthday. He wanted to camp, but that's as far as I got. It wasn't until Thursday when he FINALLY decided he wanted to go to Sargent Beach. Thus, the last second invite. Ok, so I packed us up, and when he got home from work on Friday, off we went.



We got there as the sun was going down. We drove way off beyond where the houses and the power lines end, where the cement stops, then the crushed shell ends, then the packed sand, then the soft sand, where you must have 4 wheel drive. But since it was kind of getting too dark by then, and we couldn't really see a good spot, we started heading back. That's when we first spotted the ship wreck!



We went back to the more "populated" areas, and set up camp, with the idea of if we didn't like where we were in the morning, we'd break camp and move. However, we managed to find a nice spot in the dark. We stayed there.

Saturday, it lightly rained off and on all day. I wanted to do some kayak surfing, but there was so much seaweed on the shore, and in the water, that I thought perhaps it wasn't such a hot idea. Especially since my roll isn't better than 50/50 at this point... plus, there was one heck of a cross current undertow going on! Really bad if I flipped and ended up bailing... So, the kayak ended up staying on the car.



We took a long walk along the beach looking for seaglass and anything interesting. We found a hard hat, some gloves and what looked like a steel toe boot, among other interesting items. You know, there are some oil rigs that you can see out there.....



We went to a local restaurant for supper that evening, then went back to the campsite for some birthday pie. We prefer pie as a general rule... The boys were ready to go to bed early. We planned to stay up for a while, but we soon followed the boys to bed.

Sunday, we had breakfast and started off on a long trek to find the ship wreck down the beach. The boys were speculating about finding treasure and all sorts of interesting things. We found another hard hat....

After a while, we realized that maybe it was a lot further down the beach than we realized, and decided to turn around and go back. Our own little pirate Captain Morgan was upset about this turn of events, and let it be known.... loudly! We told him that we were going to take the Jeep down there later, and he seemed OK

with that.

When we got back, we played in the surf near where we were camped. It takes a few minutes to get used to having all that seaweed washing all around and over you, but you get used to it. Plus, we never ventured more than about thigh deep on me. The boys had a grand ole time.

Later, we packed up and went in search of the ship wreck. Its nice to have 4 wheel drive! We found it, and Lonnie and I got out and investigated. I would have done a closer inspection, but I was worried that Lonnie would get hurt, so I didn't. Morgan slept through it. Even when we woke him up, he wasn't so much interested in seeing the boat as he was in going back to sleep. Oh, well....



Then we went to the Krusty Pelican for supper and to watch the draw bridge work. Lonnie behaved and acted nicely, while Morgan acted strangely. I looked a lot like I had been on the little sail boat when it wrecked, and Joe looked rested and refreshed. Then we went on home, to plan our next adventure!

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