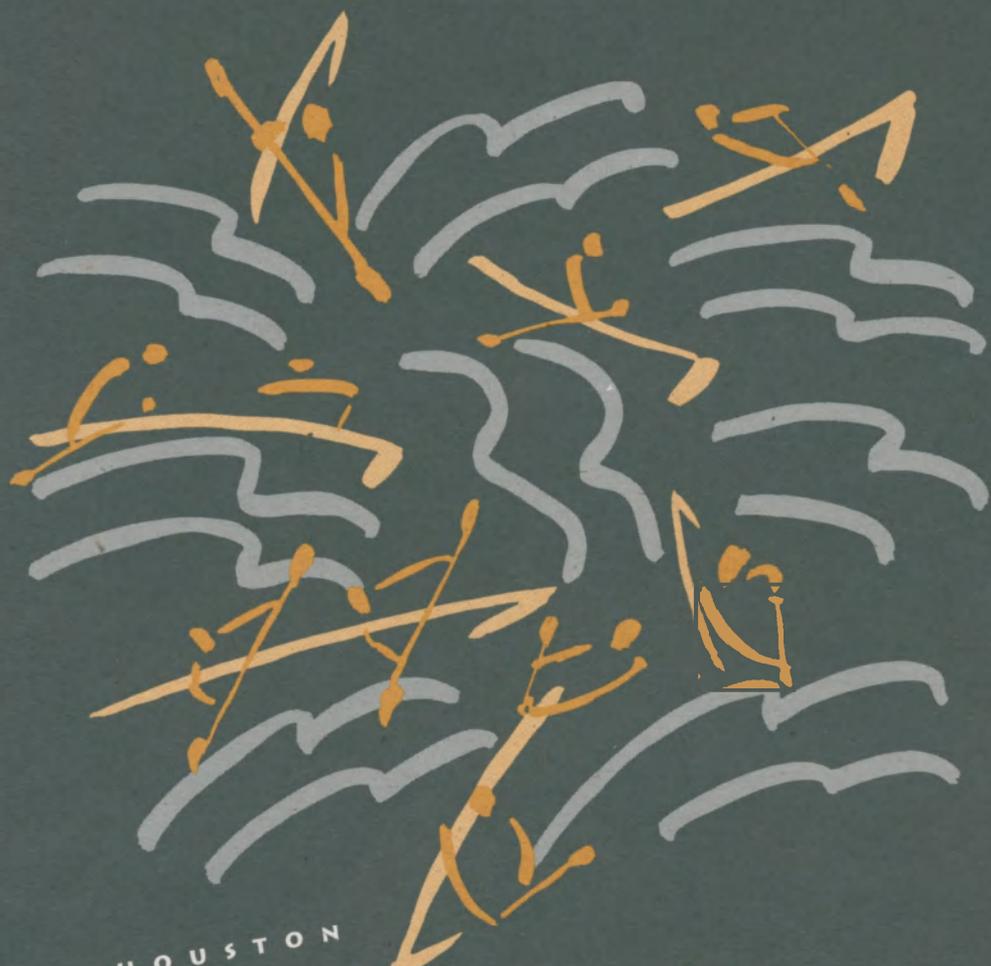


# HOUSTON CANOE CLUB



30<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY  
1964-1994



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HOUSTON  
CANOE  
CLUB

# Rendezvous '94

**OCTOBER 7, 8, AND 9, 1994**  
**HUNTSVILLE STATE PARK, TEXAS**  
(60 MILES NORTH OF HOUSTON)

The Houston Canoe Club in conjunction with the ACA (and *Paddler Magazine*) conducts the nationally recognized sixth annual Southwestern Canoe Rendezvous. The Rendezvous has come to be recognized as the nation's largest and best on-water show and gathering of paddlers, beginner to expert.

Canoe and kayak clinics for beginners and experts, solo and tandem.

Competitions will be held in numerous classes, including the 1994 National Interpretative Freestyle Championship.

Exhibits include major canoe, kayak and coastal kayak manufacturers from the U.S. and Canada.

This year's Rendezvous will introduce a "learning track progression" for beginning paddlers:

Starting from the "never ever" paddler program to choosing your area of interest, boat selection, paddle selection and how to accessorize your new equipment for whitewater, quietwater or coastal kayaking.

For more information contact: **Houston Canoe Club • P.O. Box 925516 • Houston, Texas 77292-5516 • (713) 467-8857**

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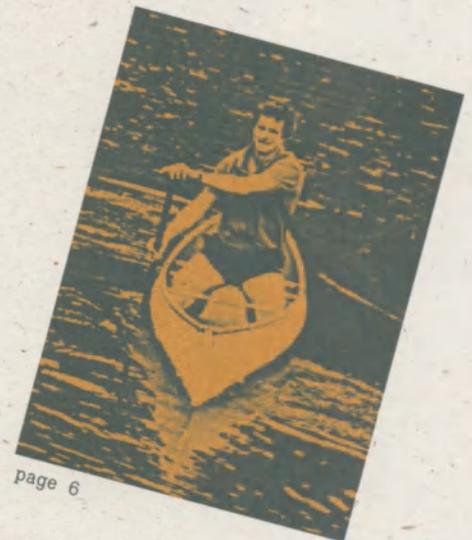
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**Cover:** Sam Hare and Fred Hurd in Corpus Christi after the 1963 Texas Water Safari. Background photo: 1964 club outing. Photos provided by Fred and Marie Hurd.

# From the Editor

**T**his October issue of the newsletter commemorates the founding of the Houston Canoe Club in 1964. That year, at the age of 12, I took my first wilderness canoe trip, which sparked my love for canoeing.

My father borrowed a 17-foot aluminum canoe from a doctor in town, loaded the grey, Ford station wagon with canned food, a two-burner Coleman stove and our Sears umbrella tent and drove me to Ely, Minnesota. With the gunwales just above the water, Pops and I paddled into the Canadian wilderness. We were free, free to canoe, free to fish, free to eat pancakes.

Pops had a passion for pancakes. On the drive from my hometown of Logansport, Indiana, to Ely, we hit every pancake house and every breakfast cafe in the state of Minnesota culminating in a visit to the Pancake Palace.

To a young boy saturated by two-days of maple syrup and pancake batter, the Pancake Palace was surreal. Pops and I sat on raspberry-colored vinyl stools at the white linoleum counter accented with red-metal flecks and ordered pancakes. Pops ordered two specials. When breakfast arrived, the pancakes oozed yellow butter between the flapjacks, while a softball-sized mound of whipped cream careened to one side threatening to spill an inky pool of berries. Peeking out from beneath that glop of cream was a slice of brown-tinted banana. After that meal, I didn't want to see another pancake as long as I lived. Pops had other plans.

That first morning in our Boundary Waters camp, Pops made pancakes. Lots of pancake leftovers. For lunch, he made pork and bean sandwiches with pancakes for bread. Pops ate with gusto. I made faces. Even now when I think of the Boundary Waters pancakes come to mind. But, I also think about exploring islands, fishing and paddling, because that trip fostered my passion for paddling.

If the Boundary Waters fostered my love for paddling, the Houston Canoe Club nurtured it. When I joined the club in 1986, I found mentors who taught me the joy of paddling in rapids. Most importantly, I developed lasting friendships that have been strengthened by canoeing. Many times friends have come to my aid on the river, and many times I have helped others. In an interview in this publication, Fred Hurd, a charter member of the club, says hardships experienced during the first Texas Water Safari was the glue that helped bond the club. I believe that the on-water friendships are some of the strongest bonds I have ever developed.

A passion for paddling has characterized the Houston Canoe Club from the very beginning, ever since Hurd and his wife Marie, and others met in a police substation in 1964 to organize the club.

The Hurds said that in the early 60s if they saw a canoe on top of a car in Houston, they would follow that vehicle to meet the canoeists behind the wheel. The Hurds would introduce themselves to the driver and turn the conversation to canoeing. By chance meetings and shared interests, the community of paddlers that formed the Houston Canoe Club came to be. The beginnings of the club were small. Less than a dozen families attended the early meetings.

Thirty years later the club is composed of about 300 families whose interests include sea kayaking, fishing, white-water canoeing and kayaking, poling, freestyle and quietwater paddling, and racing.

Every weekend, HCC paddlers are on the water somewhere. Sometimes the trips occur on local rivers and bayous and sometimes in remote areas of the United States or far away in Canada or Central and South America.

HCC members have covered a lot of time as well as geography. Since I joined the club, many members have moved on. Some I have lost track of like Petra Luna, who along with Luke Brandon taught me the joys of paddling. But all of those paddlers who no longer attend meetings for whatever reason are missed. All of them made valuable contributions to the club.

Wesley Liles, a longtime member of the club, is an example of someone who has made countless contributions in a quiet manner. In the past he was responsible for organizing cruises for the blind. He has always volunteered for outreach paddles, whether he took Covenant House kids on a paddle or picked up trash along Armand Bayou.

For paddlers with the club for the past 10 years, Leonard Hulsebosch, who died about two years ago, is still strong in our memories. Unlike Wesley, Leonard wasn't known for doing things quietly. He was a Texas presence that filled up a room with his bulk and his voice. But Leonard got a lot done. He was a passionate advocate for river conservation and a firm believer in the art of paddling. The club bears his stamp.

The club is a community made up of all kinds of people who get things done in all kinds of ways. Some people do things quietly and some do things with a crashing of cymbals.

Finally I want to thank all the people who helped to produce this newsletter.

An amazing amount of work went into this issue. The whole thing started with a brainstorming session between myself and Ann Derby, a governor and former commodore of the HCC. Then Rolf Laub and Ramona Branch volunteered to help.

Laub, a graphic designer of the highest caliber, designed the magazine. He developed a beautiful design and attractive layouts. He also produced wonderful illustrations for the various stories in this magazine. Laub works hard, and his volunteer work is beyond price.

Branch took charge of the advertising. She has a strong background in public relations and marketing. She never let up, and the number of ads in this issue attests to her work. Even when I vacationed in August at the Nantahala Outdoor Center in North Carolina, she insisted that I solicit an ad from NOC marketing. I wanted to paddle; I didn't want to sell advertising. But I didn't come home empty handed.

Ann Lindabury performed valuable editing work as this issue neared completion. She has a valuable eye for detail.

All of the writers volunteered and did a fine job. I was impressed by their talents.

May the club have 30 more good years.

Phil Montgomery  


## HOUSTON CANOE CLUB

1964 – 1994  
30th Anniversary Newsletter  
October 1994

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Printing: Hearn Lithographing, Houston, Texas

Printed

on 100% recycled paper

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# Paddling Rights in Texas

B y M a r y C a r t e r

In the last decade, as more Texans set out for the great outdoors, the demand for space on Texas waterways has multiplied rapidly. With increasing frequency, private landowners are pitted against the weekend canoeist in a pitched battle for the use of rivers, streams and lakes. Many private landowners believe that "canoeists represent just another intrusion, who threaten to carve up the countryside and destroy the natural and scenic qualities of the river..." diminishing property owners' ability to enjoy their land. On the other hand, canoeists often face barbed wire placed in mid-stream by ranchers, slashed tires on parked vehicles, or a sheriff at rifle point. To avoid these complications, you should be familiar with your rights before you plan your next canoeing trip.

The first hurdle for any eager canoeist is trekking to the water. While you may have the right to enjoy the water, recreationists cannot trespass on private property to arrive at their destination. In Texas, enthusiasts can only access a river, stream or lake in three ways:

- 1) entering through public property (parks or the land immediately adjacent to roadways and bridges);**
- 2) entering through adjoining public waterways;**
- 3) receiving consent to cross private property. Canoeists who do not abide by these guidelines and cross private property may face a criminal trespass charge initiated by a testy landowner.**

After accessing the water, the canoeists must determine whether a right to use the waterway for recreational purposes exists. Texas law provides for state ownership of all water within the state lines. The public has a right of access to any body of water that is considered "navigable." This navigable state water may be used for recreational purposes, even when flowing over private land. Canoeists may even use natural or artificial lakes which are surrounded by private property, provided they have access. Therefore, any attempt by private landowners adjoining state

waters to restrict public access to the water, including placing fences across the water, should be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Since the beds of navigable waterways are owned by the state, canoeists have broad access to them. Occasionally, the state grants ownership of the land underneath public water to a private party. This may not restrict the public's access to the beds, since these grants may contain provisions explicitly reserving the public's right of access. The beds of non-navigable waters can be owned by private parties and restricted. Therefore, the

public's access to the beds of navigable waterways may be as broad as its right to use the water, but each individual bed may fall into an exception, and it is the careful canoeist that makes certain before arguing with a landowner.

Finally, the canoeist's ability to use the banks of navigable waterways is difficult to determine. First, the dividing line between the public and private property must be determined. Second, whether the land was granted under civil or common law must be ascertained. If the grant was made under civil law, then paddlers may have the right to camp, fish or hunt upon the bank. If the grant was made under common law, then any use of the bank would constitute trespass.

A paddler has other options than using the banks of private property. A canoeist may use the banks of any naturally created island or sandbar. If the island was created by cutting off a portion of a private party's land, however, then the island is owned by that party, and may be restricted. Additionally, the same points that were available for public access can be used. Considering this, the wisest advice is to avoid stopping at banks on private property.

To avoid any possible confrontations on your next outdoor adventure, remember your rights as well as your responsibilities while enjoying the water.

*Mary Carter is an environmental attorney with the firm of Blackburn & Carter.*



# K a y a k s

Captain Charles Francis Hall, an engraver, journalist and explorer, left New London, Conn., in May of 1860 on an adventurous Arctic expedition. His notes and observations of the Arctic people and their customs are described in his book *Life with the Esquimaux*, which was first published in England in 1864. I have been sea kayaking the Texas coast since 1987. Our comparative observations follow:

We came across but little ice, except hergs, and frequently expressed much surprise at it. The icehergs were numerous and many of them deeply interesting.

The January sun was warm and the sky a clear blue. The cool water of West Bay splashed in our faces as we paddled toward the island, which at first appeared as a dark mound in the distance. The details became clearer as we paddled closer. Extending from the island into the water were tall, slender blades of marsh grass, swaying with the wind, almost touching our kayaks as we passed. The island became alive with colors. Reddish egrets pranced along the shoreline, blue herons squawked as they took flight, roseate spoonbills watched from the tree tops and brown pelicans flew overhead. Ah! Winter on the Texas coast!

One of the Esquimaux turned summersets [sic] in the water seated in his kyack! Over and over he and his kyack went, til we cried "Enough!" and yet he wet only his hands and face!

We had almost completed the circumnavigation of Pelican Island. It was the middle of July and it was hot. The warm breeze did little to cool me down and it was still at least an hour before take out. I looked ahead at one of the kayakers as he adjusted his Croakies, then grabbed his paddle and with a snap of his hips, completed a roll that served as instant refreshment.

When we first saw Ninoo (polar bear) we were about two miles distant from him, and I could perceive this "lion of the north" lying down, apparently asleep; but when within half a mile Ninoo saw us, raised himself upon his haunches, looked around, then fixedly at

us, and off he started.

It wasn't until we confirmed with our binoculars that we were sure the large white dots were two of the approximately 150 endangered whooping cranes wintering near Dunham Bay. As we advanced, we took apart our double blades and paddled with single blades so as not to scare them off with the flashing. Our silent approach allowed us to watch the great birds devour a freshly caught fish. This was followed by a spectacular display of "whooping" and dancing between two cranes.



I saw them at a distance coming swiftly in the kyacks. Their number seemed legion. On they came. They met us, and greet with smiles. The kyacks followed in our wake. We looked forward; others and others were coming, as if to welcome us to their bay.

It had been 500 years since the original ships sailed, but reproductions of the Nina, Pinta, and the Santa Maria had made the journey to Galveston to celebrate the historic anniversary. The kayaks

# on the Gulf Coast

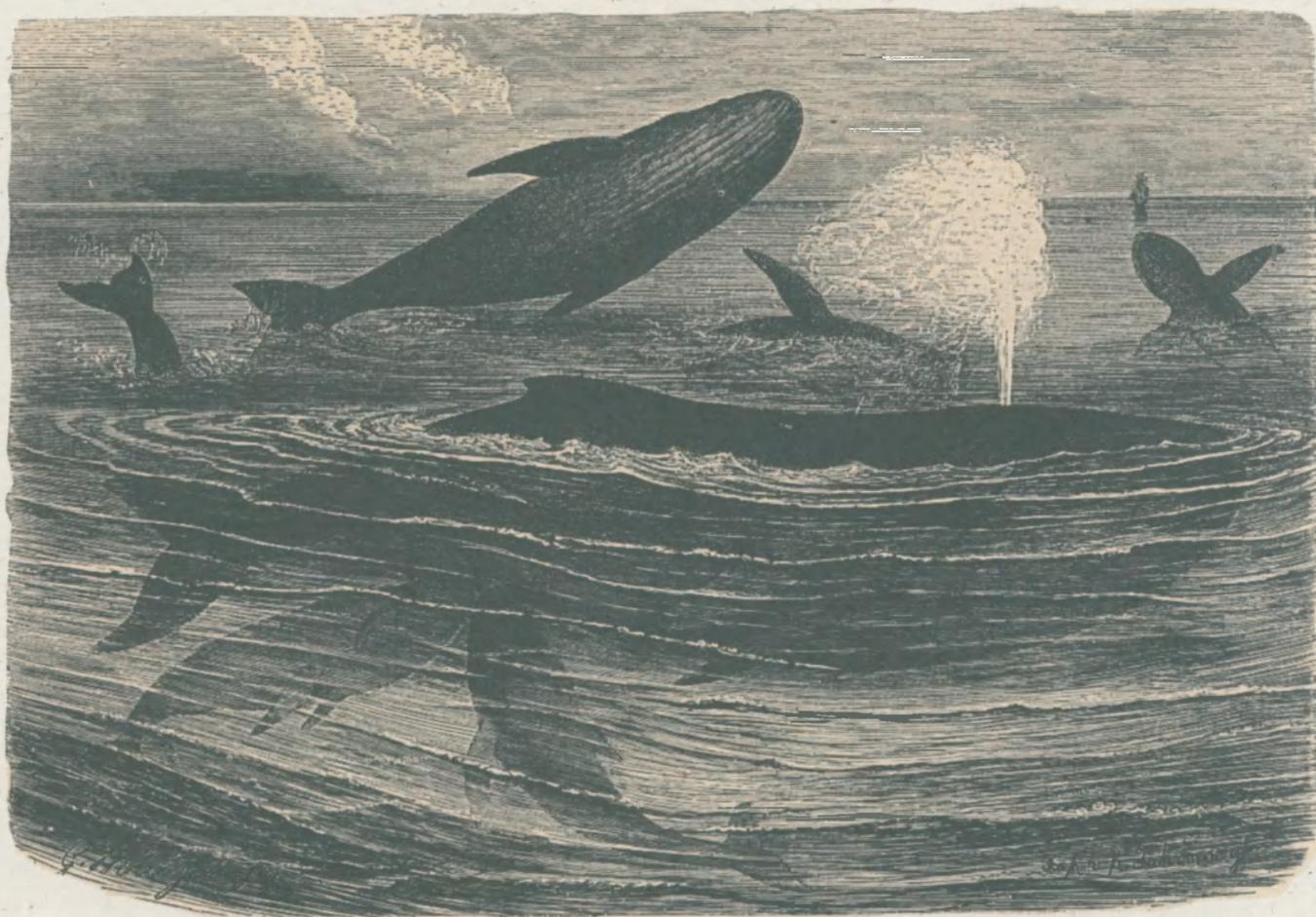
By Cindy Bartos

came. We paddled close enough to touch the weathered wood. We smiled, and we welcomed them to our bay.

Now the custom of the Esquimaux in drinking seal-blood is to take one long s-o-o-o-p-one mouthful, and then pass the dish on to the rest till the round is made.

After a full day of paddling, setting up camp, and finally resting by the campfire, it's not unusual to pass around a bottle of spirits, each taking a sip to seal our friendship and warm our hearts.

Our kayaks cut easily through the breakers as we headed out into the Gulf. We felt our boats rise and fall with the swells that developed in the deeper water. Further out we noticed a shrimp boat sitting with its nets cast and a wreath of noisy gulls. As a kayaker passed on the far side of the shrimper, two bottle-nose dolphins leaped on either side of his kayak - close enough to touch them if he tried. Several more dolphins joined the kayakers, and we spent the rest of the paddle admiring the dolphins' ballet as they followed alongside us until we turned toward the surf and paddled back to shore.



This day saw several of the large-sized whales, called 'sulphur bottoms' by the whalers. Less quiet and tranquil in its movements than the Greenland whale, it becomes furious when wounded.

Kyacks in large numbers danced around us as we made our way to the ship. I remarked to the governor that with all the progress in ship and boat building of civilization, we had nothing in way of rowing with which we could equal the speed of a kyack. This is so. One Esquimaux with his kyack can outstrip any man or men among our people - or any of the enlightened world - in rowing.

Enough said.

# CHARLIE

talks about the Rendezvous, the quietwater sport will influence



Photograph © 1994 Steven T. Reppucci

**By Anne Lindabury**

Charlie Wilson is the Chairman of the National FreeStyle Committee of the American Canoe Association (ACA), the principal author of the ACA FreeStyle manual, and an ACA FreeStyle Instructor Trainer. Anne Lindabury interviewed him in June, 1994.

**AL: How did you get involved in FreeStyle canoeing?**

CW: I had been in downriver solo canoeing for a decade in 1985, when I was invited to exhibit my "Grade VI." canoe packs, thwart bags, and paddle bags at Dana Grover's Cold Run Canoe event in western Illinois. I met David Yost and other FreeStyle paddlers there.

Later that fall I was invited to a Blackhawk Outfitters equipment evaluation trip. Paddling with Phil Sigglekow, Dave Butler, and Guy Rogers, they showed me how much more control FreeStylers had over their canoes than the rest of the world. Compared with them, it was obvious I had rudimentary paddling skills.

About eighteen months later, I ended up sharing factory space with Dana Grover's Cold Run Canoe. There was a pond on the property where I could paddle any time I wanted.

Grover had always promoted on-water canoe demonstrations. We expanded that idea to the format for Conclave, which was held from 1987 through 1991. The format is still being followed today by "Paddling in the Park" in Illinois and the Southwestern Canoe Rendezvous in Texas.

I worked as an advisor for the first Rendezvous, and I'd like to point out that Rendezvous does it better than Conclave. Bob Arthur and the Houston Canoe Club have taken the concept and organized, honed,

# WILSON

## rowth of FreeStyle, and how the e the way America paddles.

and polished it until Rendezvous is the outstanding on-the-water canoe event. It is a wonderful chance to paddle every canoe made and to take lessons from every nationally-known instructor, a tremendous benefit, a natural resource for Texas, raising people's perception and skills. The whole industry looks forward to it every year.

The ACA may do a series of Conclaves next year to raise the public's perception of canoeing in areas where no other similar event is being held. It is neat to see that something I had a part in conceptualizing and organizing is continuing.

### **AL: What part did you play in translating FreeStyle from solo to tandem?**

CW: It goes back to Conclave in 1988. Mike Galt showed up on Friday afternoon without his paddling partner. He took Deb Welbes, a good local solo paddler, and turned her into a tandem paddling partner before the Saturday morning demonstration.

At the time, tandem maneuvers were limited to 90-degree inside- and outside-heeled turns. Our group went through our solo clinic sheet saying, "If you can do this in a solo boat, you can do it in a tandem boat." But we weren't working in a vacuum. The Floridians, including Galt, Marilu Wilson, the Glaroses, and the DeBerrys, were also working on inside- and outside-heeled turns, jammed turns, and reverse maneuvers. By emphasizing initiations and conclusions, we were quickly able to expand to 180-degree turns. It was an exciting time with a lot of people contributing.

### **AL: How did FreeStyle make the transition from a small group of paddlers who enjoyed the same sport to a national activity committee of the American Canoe Association?**

CW: Frank Hosford, publisher of *Canoesport Journal*, encouraged Mike Galt and Marilu Wilson to go to the ACA Congress in Savannah in 1989. They did.

Frank Hosford also set up a presentation opportunity at the ACA Board of Directors meeting in February, 1990. I talked for fifteen minutes and showed a couple of videotapes. Tom Foster, the ACA National Instruction Committee chair, annexed us while we worked out our instructional format. Foster turned out to be a pretty demanding den mother.

No one in the ACA knew that there were only fourteen FreeStyle paddlers in the nation at the time. Our FreeStyle Committee mailing list is now more than 700.

### **AL: How did the Interpretive FreeStyle Competition develop?**

CW: It started at the L. L. Bean Maine Symposium in 1988. Mike Galt was giving a demonstration. I was standing on a hill with Judy Harrison of *Canoe* magazine when she said, "You know, he should do that to music." Lou Glaros, Mike, and I were teaching at Bean's that year and got to talking about it.

Some things you talk about and nothing happens, but Galt had already made a videotape — with an overlay of New Age piano music — showing FreeStyle paddling by Charlie and Wendy Denny, Suzanne Wilson and Courtney Codrington, as well as Marilu Wilson with Mike.

I had seen synchronized swimming in the Olympics, so I called the U. S. Olympic Committee. Barb MacNamee sent information on judging standards for the synchronized swimming competition. Using that as a basis, I wrote the judging standards for the Interpretive FreeStyle competition on my laptop computer in the winter of 1988. I spent a lot of time on the phone with Mike, Lou, and the DeBerrys that winter.

The first competition was held at Conclave 1989 in Mahomet, Illinois. Lou Glaros won solo. Mike and Marilu won tandem. Lou and I did the technical judging. Artistic impression was judged by three volunteers from the crowd who were asked, "Did you like it? Was it artistic?"

Mary Lou Greene, Molly Stark, and Tom MacKenzie exchanged videotapes to develop the judging standards, so we had more advanced standards by 1990.

I have no input now; it's best to leave it to others to alter. Although no one is paid to judge, the standards today are more sophisticated, better defined, and repeatable. Tom MacKenzie does statistical analysis to make sure.

### **AL: How would you answer paddlers who say that they don't need such fancy paddling?**

CW: Non-interpretive FreeStyle paddling has evolved into technical quietwater paddling: We're using advanced whitewater and squirt boating techniques, inside and outside heels, and fore and aft weighting to change the way the canoe acts in the water. We're also beginning to emphasize optimal paddle placement, generally perpendicular to the force involved. As an example, we all "cut our teeth" on the C stroke, but we now use the

pure forward stroke to accelerate and get the boat running.

The FreeStyle Committee is turning into the committee that is pushing, developing, and promoting high-skilled quietwater paddling. That's where the sport is headed.

FreeStyle is becoming the sounding board for how to paddle flatwater correctly. Good technique well done is always elegant. The interpretive aspect of the sport is the same "good technique well done" but exaggerated into an interpretive art form.

Some may say they don't need to know how to paddle well. Maybe they don't, but FreeStyle instructors have taught thousands of students to paddle better – and, when they paddle better, they enjoy it more.

Others may say, "All I want to do is move my equipment to the next campsite or use my canoe as a platform for fishing or photo opportunities." That's cool, but – for anyone who paddles distance or whitewater or who wants to sneak up on birds or wildlife – the better they control their boat, the better they'll achieve their other goals afloat – and the more fun they'll have.

#### **AL: What are you doing now?**

CW: For years it was obvious that I was never going to get my kids through Harvard Law School on the profits from my accessory company. Two years after my 1990 attempt to purchase a canoe company fell through, David Yost came to me and asked, "Do you still want to do FreeStyle boats? If so, what do you want them to be like?"

David is a friend whose knowledge and insight into paddling are generally underappreciated. He has had a lot to do with the theoretical side of FreeStyle as it has grown, especially the hydrodynamics of skidded turns.

We got the first three boats conceptualized and on paper in the first conversation. The length was set, but we went back and forth for several months on the width, depth, shape, and rocker.

Then we had to find a manufacturer. My good friend Ted Bell in St. Paul was building a line of touring boats, so I approached him about building FreeStyle boats. Now, a year and a half later, I'm a part owner of Bell Canoe, and we have turned a small-time company into a big-time company. We have developed new laminates and are building dandy quietwater and moving water boats. It's amazing how well-mannered a FreeStyle boat can be on moving water.

#### **AL: How did you get involved in the writing of the FreeStyle manual and your newly-published book with Lou Glaros, FreeStyle Canoeing, Contemporary Paddling Technique?**

CW: I am a theoretical learner. It's a waste of time to try to get me to learn something just by showing me how. I need to read about it and think about it.

When I got involved with FreeStyle in 1985, Dana Grover had a one-page clinic sheet. The pivot turn was called "The Camp Counselor's Nightmare." The inside-heel turn had been named by Mike Galt and Pat Moore in 1978. The outside-heel turn came from Harry Roberts; it's the only way to turn a



touring boat without picking it up out of the water. Grover's clinic sheet also included a jammed turn. The maneuvers were not well described, so the sheet was not very useful. Harold Deal also had a two or three page list of the maneuvers he used. Grover's clinic sheet and Deal's list became the basis of the FreeStyle manual.

All the members of the early, informal FreeStyle committee interacted. Grover and I did most of the writing. We took Grover's clinic sheet and Deal's list and rewrote until, by 1988, we had a fairly accurate set of clinic descriptions, which grew into the 360-page FreeStyle manual.

Lou Glaros also did his own clinic sheets, so we would show up at events with similar and symbiotic handouts. It was Frank

Hosford's idea to get us together to do the book in 1990. Who knows why it took four years? In the meantime, a more thorough and in-depth manual was written. It is on the table for Committee input at this time.

#### **AL: How has FreeStyle influenced the ACA?**

CW: FreeStyle has "led the charge" in the ACA toward more intellectual rigor concerning hydrodynamics and paddle dynamics. As a result, our FreeStyle manual will be the basis for the new ACA instruction manual, which Laurie Gullion and I will write with credited input from others.

FreeStyle has had significant input into the new Flatwater curriculum: the palm roll, the inside- and outside-heel Duffek turns, and the palm-rolled compound back stroke. FreeStyle has also had input into the five-hour "Introduction to Paddling" course.

I chaired the Commission that rewrote the Flatwater course and sat on the Commission that developed the "Introduction to Paddling" course. As this new "Introduction to Paddling" is disseminated to every Boy Scout and summer camper, FreeStyle will have an impact on the way the entire nation paddles.

In 1987, Mike Galt said that he wanted to change the way the nation paddles. The FreeStyle Committee that was formed around his ideas is doing just that ... through its impact on the Flatwater curriculum and the "Introduction to Paddling" course, as well as through the FreeStyle manual which will be the starting point for the new ACA instruction manual.

*Congratulations and thanks to the Houston Canoe Club!*

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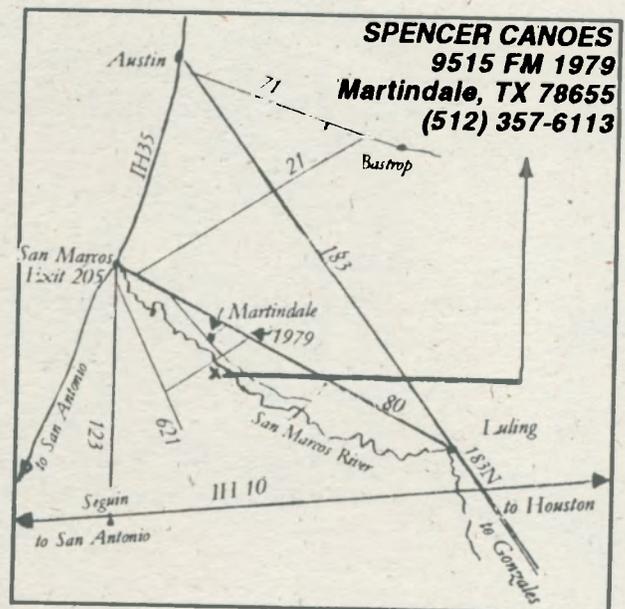


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(River Oaks Shopping Center)

# SAFARI

# BLUES

By  
Robert  
Stricker

**HUT!** We've been following the three-man boat for the past mile or so, neither gaining nor falling back. We're at the beginning of the race, and 260 miles is a long way to go, so we're solidly into a fast cruising paddling rate. However, my ego needs to see us pass a three-man unlimited boat, so I start **"HUT!"** reaching just a little farther on each stroke and pick up the pace slightly. Bob senses my intention and follows my lead. Gradually we close the lead and pass.

That felt good! It's only the first hour of the race and we're somewhere in the middle of the 57 boats that have started the Texas Water Safari. **"HUT!"** We're passing and being passed, sometimes jockeying back and forth several times with the same boats. Later we'll all settle into our positions for the duration of the race. Very little is spoken between

us, the quiet broken only by the **"HUT!"** call from Bob signaling to change sides with the paddle.

So why are a pair of forty-something guys out here trying to compete in the World's Toughest Boat Race? I'm not sure that I've ever come up with an answer. I've spent a major part of my life trying to avoid over-exertion, and now I'm up to my bald spot in an ultra-marathon.

I can thank (or blame) my good friend Zoltan Mraz for being bitten by the Safari bug. Four and a half years ago, Zoltan caught me in a moment of weakness and asked if I would like to paddle the Safari with him. I agreed. Over the next seven months I questioned my decision many times – like during the Reeking Regatta as I silently asked myself the question "If I'm this tired during a 16 mile

race, how am I going to live through a 260 mile race?" – like during the hours and hours we spent at the gym working very specific exercises that duplicate the paddling motions – like during the many long miles we paddled on Buffalo Bayou, the San Marcos River and the Guadalupe River. My body protested all this work that was being imposed on these normally sedentary muscles. But gradually I began to get used to the routine, and afterwards there was always a very satisfying, albeit tired, feeling. All this exercise was actually addicting! I was fortunate to have a partner like Zoltan for my first Safari run. He has been racing and coaching for years. He knew how and what to teach me, and he wouldn't allow me to wimp out!



**"HUT!"** Cottonseed rapid is immediately ahead of us. There's a team in an aluminum boat about 30 yards in front of us. Uh-oh - They're caught on a rock and the water is pushing them sideways. We're closing the gap. They've shoved themselves off the rock and manage to stay ahead of us. **"HUT!"** Double Uh-oh! They've just passed the wall and are still sideways! We're now right on their heels. As soon as I can reach the quiet water behind the end of the wall, I draw the bow left **"HUT!"** then back to the right. **"HUT!"** We've managed to slip past the other boat as though they weren't there. I hope the other boat is OK, but I'm too busy to check. **"HUT!"** We maneuver through the rest of this rapid without bouncing off any rocks. I chuckle to myself just a little as I remember the terror I used to feel when approaching this rapid.

Perhaps part of the appeal of the Safari lies in our ancestry. Early man's survival was constantly at risk and was physically challenging. Those who did survive were those who were able to meet the risks head-on and had the physical strength to overcome them. Risk-taking was ingrained into the character and psyche of the survivors. Today we live relatively safe lives (in spite of what the crime statisticians tell us), insulated from most of the dangers of the world. Our dinner doesn't depend upon outwitting and slaying a large animal. Travel is done in air-conditioned comfort, isolated from all of nature's elements and with no more effort than required to turn the power steering or push the power brakes. We can live most of our lives with minimal effort and risk

But something in us needs risk and physical challenge, needs to take a chance, needs the adrenaline rush of having survived, needs the satisfaction of physical effort. So we drive too fast, we gamble, we jump out of airplanes, we climb mountains, we paddle through rapids. As Carl Jung said, "Man needs difficulties; they are necessary for health."

Some manage to suppress these needs all their lives. These are the people we have pity upon because of their seemingly boring lives.

**"HUT!"** We're approaching the first checkpoint at Staples. As we pull in to the take-out on river right, our ground crew is waiting with fresh water jugs and ice bags to hang around our necks. Lolita, our team captain and my better half, quickly hands us our water jugs and tries to hurry us on. We resist just a little bit and enjoy the luxury of dawdling in the water for a couple of minutes. We find out that we're in first place in the Standard class, and that we're making a reasonable time. I report that I've managed to break a support under my seat. While getting into the boat below the Martindale dam, I sat down too quickly and snapped the cross-brace under the back of the seat. Since then I've been sitting at a slightly odd angle. I should have known this would happen; I've broken every seat I ever occupied in tandem racing canoes - this is broken seat number four! Later, when I want a break, we'll stop and find a stick to prop up the back. Back in the water and we're on our way again.

**"HUT!"**



While I was practicing and preparing for my first Safari run, one of my friends in the Houston Canoe Club who had completed a couple of Safari runs, told me that finishing the Safari would change my life. "Change my life?" That's kind of a strong statement, and after all, this is just a boat race. He was right on the money. I scaled a wall that I previously considered I couldn't climb. My perception of self took a saltatory leap. It was no longer from the viewpoint of "I can't possibly do that." It's now "I can if I want to."

I'd like to end this essay with a rousing story of how we managed to keep our first place position all the way to Seadrift and were cheered by the crowd as we crossed the finish line. However, that's not the way it happened. Mother Nature threw a monkey wrench into my workings. Up until a couple of weeks before the Safari, the weather had been slightly cooler than normal. And now, for the Safari, it was above normal and hot as blazes. I ended up with a severe case of heat exhaustion and knew I'd never make it to the finish line. We pulled out at Luling. My mother has told me that it's time to act my age and leave the racing to the younger guys. I'm sure this will increase her resolve to protect me from myself.

Am I disappointed? You bet. But, there's always next year. **"HUT!"**

## The next Texas Water Safari

will begin on Saturday, June 10, 1995. The entry fee is \$40 per individual if the fee is mailed prior to June 1. After June 1, the entry fee is \$60 per person.

Participants have 100 hours to complete the race which begins at Aquarena Springs in San Marcos and ends 260 miles later at Seadrift on the Texas coast. The 1994 winners completed the race in 36 hours and 52 minutes.

Participants in the race can paddle in one of seven different classes ranging from novice to unlimited.

For more information call Spencer Canoes in Martindale, Texas, at 512-357-6113 or write them at 9515 FM 1979, Martindale, Texas, 78655.



# IN SEARCH OF THE WILD ALLIGATOR - NESTS

By Deborah Cowman

Cowman is a researcher with the Gulf Coast Group, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Environmental Contaminant Research Branch of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

I learned a lot of things at my mother's knee, but one thing I did not learn was to be afraid of alligators. And so, I found myself in a large Texas swamp in the middle of a scorching summer searching for these giant reptiles. Well, to be exact, looking for their nests. I couldn't pass up a unique chance to study the nesting behavior of the American alligator, *Alligator mississippiensis*.

At this very moment I was covered from head to toe in clothing—a long sleeved shirt, long pants, boots and a hat for protection from mosquitoes, poison ivy and green briar. Unfortunately, this also meant I was covered in sweat that somehow managed to trickle into even the most inaccessible places. I shifted my position a little as I wiped the back of my neck. I had been standing in this spot for several minutes scanning the surface of the still, black wafer. Suddenly a large dark head materialized, without a sound and with barely a ripple.

It was a female alligator, a large one, probably 8 feet long. I was able to gauge her length by estimating the number of inches from her eyes to the tip of her nostrils. This measurement is roughly equivalent to the length in feet, hence 8 inches = 8 feet. As she gazed silently at me from her place in the water, I could almost tell what she was thinking. Is this animal on the bank a threat to my nest?

Of course, it was her nest in which I was most interested, although her behavior was also a concern. What materials did she use to make the nest? How big was the nest? How many eggs were in it? Would she let me approach the nest which was on a small island behind her? Alligator nests are often plundered by raccoons and opossums and some alligators guard them attentively, hardly leaving even to feed during the entire 40-90 day incubation period. I had noticed, however, that most wild alligators would swim away if a human approached. Nesting females were usually the most aggressive, especially those accustomed to people. I guess that old saying about familiarity breeding contempt is true.

This particular alligator guarded her nest carefully. I had never been able to get close enough to measure it or to check for eggs. I had hoped that today would be different, but it didn't look promising. Out of the corner of my eye I could see another alligator surface a few feet away and turning saw what appeared to be a large male, maybe 12 feet in length. Without warning he lifted his head out of the water and began to bellow. The vocalizing resembled a roar and was soon returned by all the other alligators in the area. As the air around me exploded with sound I could only turn from side to side and wonder from which direction the Tyrannosaurus rex would be coming. It was mind boggling. When I finally came to my senses and rushed to pick up my recorder—the tremendous noise abruptly stopped.

I knew that bellowing was a mating behavior and not an aggressive one, and so I turned and hurried back to the water's edge. All was quiet on the water front. One alligator cast me a sidelong glance as if to say, What's the matter, ears playing tricks on you? And then silently they were gone.

Stealth is a very important aspect of alligator hunting behavior, and prey is often caught when approaching the water's edge to drink. Not the vicious monsters that they are often portrayed, alligators contribute greatly to the health of their ecosystems. In fact, crocodilians are perfectly adapted for their role as an aquatic predator and haven't changed their general body shape in 245 million years. Why improve on perfection?

I concluded that the mother was probably still close by even though I couldn't see her, which is often the case, and that I would leave this site for today. I wasn't in a hurry to repeat the experience I had the day before. Yesterday I had discovered that alligators can and do run quickly uphill.

Two other researchers and I had gone to a nest site that was high on the edge of a steep bank approximately 8-10 feet above the water. It had flooded this year, the number of nests was down, and many had been built far away from the water.

After we finished our measurements, with the mother still nowhere in sight, I thought to peer over the edge of the bank. Yes, there was an alligator in the water, probably the guarding female. I had a video camera and decided this would be a perfect opportunity to film an alligator slowly climbing uphill. When the alligator spotted me, she began to saunter deliberately out of the water. Standing right between her and the nest, not a smart move, I continued filming her. And I might add, I was also silently congratulating myself on being prepared for such an event.

I had been told that alligators would not run uphill, so you can imagine my astonishment when in the next instant she quickly rose on all fours and charged up the steep incline toward me. I forgot all about the filming – and screaming "Run" to my companions – stumbled as fast as I could through tall weeds with a video camera bouncing on my chest. I had been told to stand my ground, but I didn't really want to test this theory on a charging female.

Alligators are usually very docile creatures, but the instinct to guard a nest is a strong one.

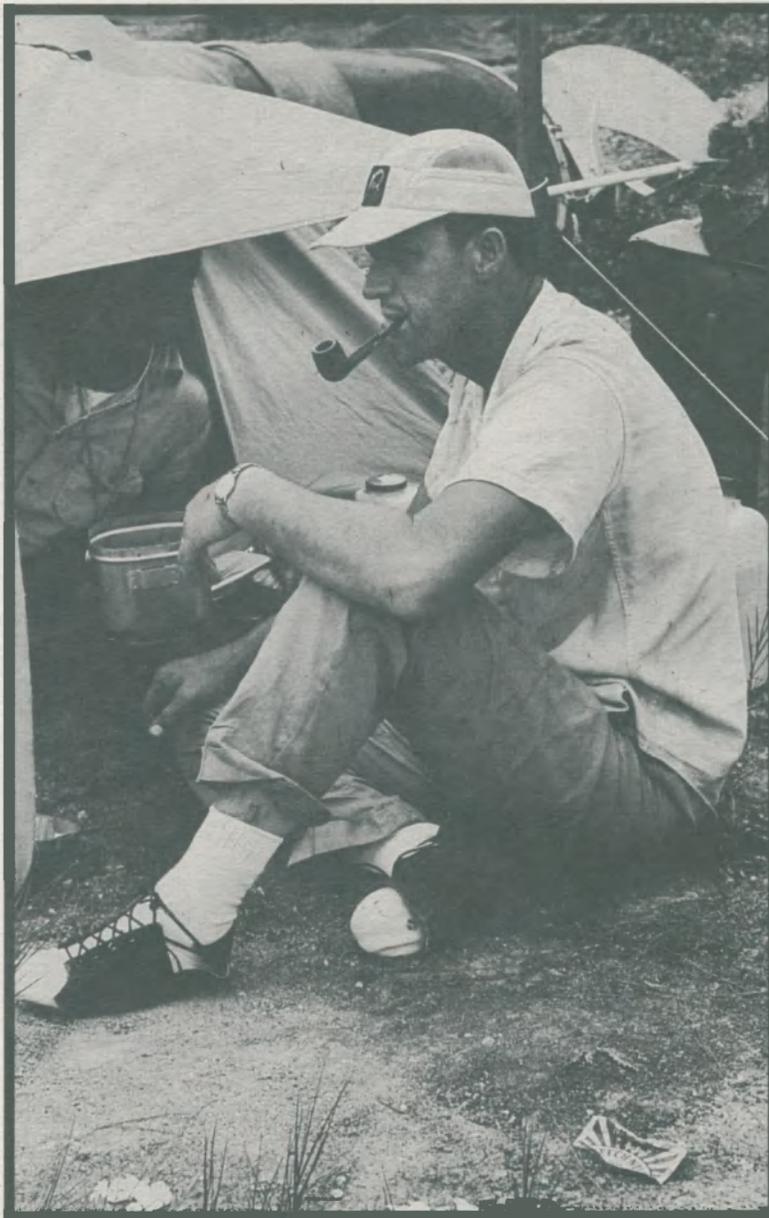
When our hearts stopped pounding and we realized that she had stopped her charge at the nest, we all had a good laugh and felt rather silly. I, of course, had to take the ribbing that I so richly deserved. Walking slowly back, but keeping a safe distance, we observed the mother now lying atop her nest. She was doing her job, protecting her eggs. I could feel nothing but awe and admiration for this animal. And each day that I watch alligators, my respect for them increases.

Alligators are making a comeback. Not long ago they were on the brink of extinction, due to the skin trade in juveniles before they reached reproductive maturity. Now no longer on the endangered species list, alligators are still protected by hunting quotas.

I wasn't able to measure the nest that afternoon, but although tired, sweaty and dirty, I still felt lucky. Lucky to appreciate these animals and to understand that they fill an important ecological niche. And lucky to be able to study a species rescued from extinction unlike so many others now gone.

I could almost hear that nesting female saying, 245 million years. A lot longer than you two-footed newcomers. Why not give us a chance for a few more?

Indeed. Why not?



SAM HARE, WEARING MOCCASINS MADE FROM HIS PARTNER'S BOOTS, RESTS UP FOR THE FINAL LEG OF THE FIRST TEXAS WATER SAFARI.

## O R I G I N S   O F   T H E   H O U S T O N   C A N O E

By Philip Montgomery

When Fred Hurd talks about founding the Houston Canoe Club, he begins with the hardships of the Texas Water Safari: the seven hour portage, the skin sloughing off his water-logged feet, the brackish drinking water, the six-foot waves in Redfish Bay.

Those hardships helped form a strong bond between the four men who comprised the first- and second-place canoes in that boat race. Fred Hurd and his partner Sam Hare placed second in that first Texas Water Safari. The winning team was Lyn Maughmer and Jimmy Jones, both Houston policemen. Those four men were primarily responsible for

forming the Houston Canoe Club, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year.

The club was founded on October 7, 1964 in the Park Place police sub-station in Houston. About a dozen families attended that meeting. Since that time canoeing has increased in popularity in Texas, and the club has grown to more than 300 members.

Hurd, a retired Exxon-company pilot, and his wife Marie were among the founding members of the club. They regularly attend meetings and continue to paddle.

"I think about that [growth of the club] nearly every time I canoe, especially if I'm by myself," said Hurd. "Nobody could have predicted how the club was going to grow and

prosper. Not in your wildest dreams."

Hurd credits the Texas Water Safari with being the biggest trigger to get the club going and to generate the publicity that created a public interest in canoeing.

The Texas Water Safari captured the public's attention in 1963. A blitz of national and local media reported the event. *Life* magazine, then in its heyday, covered the entire race along with *Newsweek* and other national press organizations.

"The Safari got so much coverage," said Hurd, "people became very conscious of canoeing. People realized you didn't drown as soon as you stepped into a canoe."

The Texas Water Safari has changed since



FRED HURD CUTS SKIN FROM HIS DAMAGED FEET AFTER THE SEVEN HOUR PORTAGE DURING THE FIRST TEXAS WATER SAFARI.

## CLUB IN THE TEXAS WATER SAFARI

the first race in 1963. Originally the race went from Aquarena Springs at the headwaters of the San Marcos River then down the Guadalupe River to Corpus Christi—a 500 mile race. Today the race is much shorter, ending at Seadrift on the Gulf Coast, about half the distance of the earlier races. The safari is still an arduous boat race that pushes paddlers to the limit. But when the gun sounded for that first race, no one knew if the men and the lone woman in the race could reach the finish line 500 miles away.

Most paddlers today would not even attempt the trip in those 1963 rigs. Aluminum canoes or canvas folbots were the most popular boats.

Hurd paddled a tandem 17-foot aluminum Grumman canoe rigged for sailing. It was a heavy craft equipped with removable bow flare boards designed to deflect water in the bays.

Generally, the trip to the Gulf of Mexico was uneventful for Hurd and his partner Hare until they neared Victoria on the Guadalupe River. At the last camp near fresh water, Hurd boiled drinking water for the trip along the Gulf. That night, Hare, who had no experience camping, used the drinking water to wash the dishes. Hurd, who was sleeping, didn't discover the mistake until the next day when they had reached the saltwater. They developed a powerful thirst.

"This one fat guy with a big black cigar came up to us, and said 'You boys want some beer,'" recalls Hurd. "We were laying down with our heads under the canoe for shade. I said 'No sir. We can't receive any help.'" The man with the big cigar said "Hell there ain't nobody looking son, why don't you have one." When Hurd refused then the man asked "why not a bourbon and water."

"I started to break out in a sweat just listening to all that good stuff," said Hurd. "I'd have paid him just to lick the sweat off his beer can." But the racers refused the offer and plodded on.

The lack of water almost put Hurd and Hare out of the race, but during the final



WHILE FRED HURD RAILS WATER AND SAM HARE HOLDS THE BOW, A COUPLE, HEEDLESS OF THE DRAMA ON THE WATER, WATCH A CHILD PLAY ON THE BEACH

portage, they found potable brackish water at a windmill. Although they had overcome the shortage of water, that final portage almost did them in.

The officials would not let the racers paddle to the end of the Guadalupe River. The rules called for a portage, a portage which Hurd said took as many as 15 hours to make.

"That 15 hour portage wiped out a good many of the boats," said Hurd. "People just couldn't make it. Paddlers were dead tired at the end of that portage."

Hurd and Hare made the portage in seven hours, but at a high price. Both men had worn leather boots, which remained wet. Hares boots fell to pieces. Hurd lopped off the tops of his leather boots and made moccasins

for Hare. But Hurd had his own problems due to the wet boots.

"The skin just come off like a banana peel on my feet," said Hurd as he pointed at a sole of his foot."

A *Life* photographer photographed Hurd cutting the skin off the bottom of his foot. Luckily for Hurd, the race rules called for lay-over days. Still, the racers could accept no help from an outside source and had to survive on what they carried in their boats. So, for four days Hurd waited while his feet slowly healed.

"I just crawled every place I went," said Hurd "to let my feet get healed, to scab over just a little bit so I could use them. I just kept socks on them and kept them clean."

At that point only 14 of the original 68

boats survived the trip to Austwell on the west side of San Antonio Bay.

When the race resumed, Hurd and Hare paddled to Rockport. Only seven teams made it that far. The worst was to come.

The next day, Hurd asked some shrimpers how were the waves in Redfish Bay. The shrimpers hollered that they could expect six-foot waves and 35 knot winds all the way to Ingleside.

Hurd recalled that when heading into the setting sun and those high waves "You could see the mullet swimming in the crest of the wave coming at you."

For Hurd, an experienced canoe sailor, the trip to Ingleside through Redfish Bay demanded all his skill and attention. He had no time to rest.



THE PHOTOGRAPHER, WHO SNAPPED THIS PICTURE, FOUND LYN MAUGHMER LEANING OVER AND VOMITING BY THE BOW OF THE CANOE AND JIMMY JONES ON HIS BACK IN THE SURF.



HURD AND HARE IN THE FOREGROUND PADDLE ALONGSIDE THE TEAM OF MAUGHMER AND JONES AS THE TWO CANOES PASS A BOAT FULL OF SPECTATORS IN CORPUS CHRISTI BAY.

"In the trough of the wave, you'd sheet in to get some power and then at the top of the wave you'd sheet out to slow down so you wouldn't bury the bow. We were out there nine and a half hours. I couldn't even let go of the lines to go to the restroom."

Hurd and Hare made it to Ingleside, but they were alone. Behind them was one other team, Jimmy Jones and Lyn Maughmer. Lacking Hurd's skill with the sail, Jones and Maughmer had rowed their canoe from Rockport almost to Ingleside.

Bob Brister, a *Houston Chronicle* reporter covering the race, found Jones and Maughmer on a deserted section of beach. Brister took a photograph that has become a water safari classic.

In the photo, Maughmer is bending over, throwing up while Jones is lying in the water.

Brister later told Hurd that Jones looked like he was dead because his arms were washing back and forth in the surf. But Brister had a message from Hurd to Maughmer.

The message, Hurd said, was "Tell Lyn that Fred Hurd is at Ingleside laughing at him. And tell him if he's such a big damn baby he shouldn't have started the race."

According to Brister's account, Maughmer stood up, grabbed Jones and poured him into the canoe. They started rowing and made it to Ingleside.

The next day, those two teams made the final run to Corpus Christi, with Maughmer and Jones winning the race.

"Your world was there in your boat," recounted Hurd. "Nothing else mattered but you and your partner. Human nature was laid out so raw in that race, cause it had never been done before, and you didn't know what to expect."

The experience of that first Texas Water Safari provided the basis upon which the entire club was founded, said Hurd. The race was like a glue that bonded the club together during the early years.

"That is pretty much the history of the beginning," said Hurd. "Good things just happened from then on."

CONGRATULATIONS!

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Club Outing in 1966



Jimmy Jones,  
1st Commodore  
Guadalupe

Sailing  
was big.

The Hurd,  
doing the Chute  
on the Guad.



# DUTCH OVEN COOKING HEATS UP IN TEXAS

By Lolita Stricker

The smell of fresh homemade bread mingling with the heady aroma of fresh vegetables and meat. A dinner at home? Maybe. But it could also be coming from the next campsite, where your nose leads you to Gib Hafernick's sourdough Dutch oven bread, considered legendary in Alamo City Rivermen circles.

For thousands of years folks have cooked in vessels. Christopher Columbus brought cast iron pots with him to America while royal kitchens in Europe were also using them. Itinerant 18th century peddlers, many of Dutch descent, sold pots and pans from the backs of their wagons, so the term Dutch oven was applied. Paul Revere is said to have added a flat lid with a lip to hold coals and three legs so the pot could sit over a fire creating the 'oven' effect we use today. The Colonists used them in fireplaces, with legs, or swinging

from an arm. Cast iron kettles moved west with the pioneers and were considered essential cookware and a necessary part of basic survival equipment. They were a part of the 1804 Lewis and Clark expedition to the Pacific Northwest and across the area known as the Louisiana Purchase. Explorers Jim Bridger, Kit Carson, Peter Skein Ogden and Zebulon Pike were also said to have used them. Gold miners even used them to pan for gold. Their weight might not have made them ideal, but any pot in a pinch.

Both the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts currently use Dutch ovens. Today, Dutch oven enthusiasts agree that the pots are essential for creating the special 'essence' of today's outdoor cooking.

A burning controversy of Dutch oven enthusiasts is cast iron versus aluminum. For

cooks who prefer the 'seasoned,' never-washed pots, aluminum is unacceptable. Others prefer the aluminum pot that can be washed and is much lighter, a special consideration for paddlers. The cast iron pot will rust if not cared for properly and must never be washed with soap and water. The aluminum Dutch oven does not boast the same heat transferring qualities of cast iron, but is far lighter, by as much as one third the weight, making it the metal of choice for many canoeists. Some pots are steel, most have legs, others none. Some have flanged lids. New materials and combinations are being tried all the time as interest in Dutch oven cooking increases. While the controversy rages on, the enjoyment derived from all kinds of Dutch oven pots is inarguable.

The Houston Canoe Club's Southwestern Rendezvous has helped to further local interest in the hobby through the efforts of Jack Richardson of Wilderness Furnishings. Richardson organizes the International Dutch Oven Society's Great Texas Dutch Oven Cook-off, whose winners can compete in the International Dutch Oven Cook-off in Salt Lake City, Utah. Richardson provides the prizes and ribbons for the winners.

Anyone with a Dutch oven and an interest in Dutch oven cooking can enter the Texas cook-off. Robert Crenshaw of the Houston Canoe Club was tapped to be an accomplice in the Great Texas Dutch Oven Cook-off when the son of his friend, Jack Williams, couldn't make it at the 1993 Southwestern Canoe Rendezvous. Crenshaw protested he knew nothing about cooking, but he was coaxed into it by his good friend and paddling buddy. It was Crenshaw's first attempt at the hobby. The pair won the Best Humor award, proof that he was a good sport about it all.

"It was fun," said Crenshaw. "It's not as complicated as you might think. It's basically a baking recipe."

The pair prepared cube steaks Cajun style with potatoes, onions and a little water. "It requires practice," said Crenshaw. "You put everything together, then add coals above and below. It's a way to cook and visit." This initial experience led to a desire to further his expertise.

"Now Dutch oven cooking is on my list of things to get involved in. It's a challenge, the pleasure of the accomplishment of learning a new skill."

Joanna Wolf teamed up with Nancy Burns for the second year in a row to enter the Great Texas Dutch Oven Cook-off. The pair took the 1993 award for Best Positive Attitude. As a member of both the Houston Canoe Club

and the Alamo City Rivermen, Joanna insists the reviving interest among campers is directly related to the Southwestern Canoe Rendezvous cook-offs, with additional enthusiasts swelling the ranks of the two clubs.

"The Rendezvous has made people more aware of the Great Texas Dutch Oven Cook-off but the true enthusiasts were always there," Joanna said.

Joanna regularly uses her Dutch oven at home on the patio to save energy on cooling and cooking.

"I don't want to take the time to cook during the week," said Wolf, "so I do it on weekends, cooking several chickens to freeze in individual portions to eat during the week."

Joanna prefers the lightweight aluminum because she prefers to use soap to clean the utensils instead of the wiping out and oiling process necessary for proper cast iron upkeep. As a fire pan beneath the pots, she finds the older automotive oil pans made of heavy metal hold up better than the newer ones, although she has used an 18" travel grill.

The ever increasing awareness of proper foods has encouraged Louis Aulbach, a member and former purser of the HCC, to use his Dutch oven more, especially on long trips. Tired of emptying cans into a skillet or opening freeze dried packets for a meal led to the development of his recipes. The hard varieties of fresh vegetables like potatoes, carrots, cabbage and onions travel well and provide the proper nutrients to a well balanced meal. He has even brought green peppers and fresh

tomatoes with little loss. To this, Aulbach adds canned meat or fresh fish.

And fresh bread.

"I do bread at home," said Aulbach. "There's a technique that has to be developed. You have to learn how much to mix by hand to get it right so it will rise properly. I've been working on the proper technique about six months. Then I transferred the technique to the Pecos trip."

Aulbach's recent Pecos trip was special to him because he brought his children, Matthew, 6, Stephen, 7 and Rachel, 10. They caught large mouth bass that he filleted. A total of 6 filets went into one Dutch oven. He added mayonnaise, onions, green peppers and carrots and cooked them about 30 minutes. To this, Aulbach added four loaves of fresh baked French bread. Aulbach and his sister, Lauretta Wallace, won the Best Family Participation award at the 1993 Great Texas Dutch Oven Cook-off, his first year of cooking with a Dutch oven.

When the Land's End outdoor clothing people were searching for "real folks" to use in their ads, Gib Hafernick of the Alamo City Rivermen sent them a photo of his Dutch ovens. They were stacked eight high, filled with delicious wonders the viewer could only imagine. Beside the stack stood Hafernick sporting a three day beard, his Land's End clothing scruffy and worn. Land's End was impressed enough to use Hafernick's photo, whether for the derelict condition of his Land's End clothing, his 'outdoor' appearance, or the wonderful stack of Dutch ovens, Hafernick will never know. The picture brought Hafernick notoriety in Dutch oven circles. Local enthusiasts recall seeing the picture of Hafernick and his "eight-high stack."

Hafernick cooks in a big way. He can tell you that four Cornish hens will fit in a 12 inch Dutch oven. He has roasted a 25 pound turkey in three hours in a 19" wide, 13" deep cast iron pot. And he can bake bread from starter he's had since 1988. Hafernick's bread is known along six Texas rivers and throughout at least three canoe clubs, and he kindly agreed to share it.

The bread recipe is very precise. Mix some starter with some flour and water 24 hours ahead, at home. Wait until it's bubbly then pack it in a 12" lidded plastic container. Once at the campsite, add flour to the right consistency, and water until it's enough.

Knead the dough right in the Dutch oven. Then you can get fancy. Break the dough into six balls the size of softballs and place them in a 12" Dutch oven, one to one-and-a-half inches apart. Put the lid on and set the Dutch oven

next to the main meal fire, about 6 - 7 inches away. Turn the pot every 10 to 15 minutes or half a glass of wine. After about one hour, when it's rising well, set the bread on top of the stack and toast it about 30 minutes.

Hafernick's favorite canoe trip is the Alamo City Rivermen's Annual Canoe Freeze trip, a popular river trip during the most miserable weather. Which river it's on doesn't matter.

"It's really neat," said Hafernick. "It's a community event and everybody helps, from peeling onions to fixing drinks. A lot of chemistry goes on there. This year we plan to hold a Dutch oven meltdown in July. It will be like the freeze trip only warmer."

Hafernick prefers cast iron Dutch ovens to the aluminum pots.

"I don't like to wash dishes," says Hafernick candidly. That was also one of the reasons he took up pot cooking. "I used to barbecue. It was a pain to have to mess with the fire, you got a lot of smoke; you burn one side of the food. With Dutch oven cooking, it's all in one batch." And there are no dishes to wash

Modern day cooks follow the ages old tradition for many reasons: healthier cooking far from home, sociability that comes from sharing the meal-making tasks, energy saving, flavor intensity and just for the fun of it. Nancy Burns offers her own poetic version of why it's nice to cook in a Dutch oven.

**Dutch ovens are great  
For those who eat late  
When you're not in a hurry  
To cook in a hurry.  
After paddlin' all day,  
Those coals are okay  
So cut yourself some slack  
And just kick back.**

Dutch ovens are readily available. Equipment can be purchased through Academy, Campmor, Sportstown, Wilderness Furnishings as well as other retail and catalog outlets. So now to decide, cast iron or aluminum? What size? Vegetables in first, or later? How soon is dinner?

**Gib Hafernick beside a stack of Dutch ovens. He wears the sartorial splendor that got the attention of Land's End.**



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## Cooking With Panache:

# Packets, or Lolita's Fajitas

By Lolita Stricker

A hungry paddler returns to the campsite. He parks his boat and lights a fire. He chops his washed veggies, adds the meat, assembling all in foil, and pops them into the fire. Now he's ready for a shower. He returns from the bathhouse, turns his packet on the fire, pops a cool drink and works up a hunger that will be assuaged in about 15 minutes.

The recipe for Packets was developed by Bill Weber, a Missouri paddler and back-packer who believes in a nourishing, well-balanced meal at the end of his day. Since passing the meal on to me, I have further developed it, as I hope you will, too.

The basic essentials are vegetables, meat and a disposable wrapper that serves as a plate. It's so convenient you'll probably dream up your own variations after reading the recipe. The beauty of it, besides its adaptability to many different meals, is that you can have fresh vegetables even if you are miles from the nearest grocery store.

### Basic Packets

#### Meat

(Hamburger, ready-to-eat Polish sausages, HEB's fajita chicken or beef, etc.)

#### Diced raw potatoes

#### Chopped onion

#### Sliced raw carrots

#### Chopped green pepper

#### Seasonings

(Season-all Salt, lemon pepper, Mrs. Dash, etc.)

HEB Pantry Foods does something truly wonderful with their fajita meats and the chicken is the best meat I have tried in this dish. Allow plenty of meat, and be sure to mix it into the vegetables or it may cook in a lump wherever you place it.

Using heavy duty aluminum foil, tear off about an 18" square per person. In the center place the vegetables and meat. Sprinkle generously with seasonings. A pat of butter fulfills the cholesterol requirement, but it is not necessary. The moisture from the meat and the raw vegetables keeps the food from sticking to the foil.

Use a butcher's double fold to completely seal the packet lengthwise. Now, instead of folding the ends under, shake the food toward the center from both ends so there is an ample amount of foil left at each end. Twist these ends firmly to form a handle at each end. It seals the packet, and offers handles to turn the packet midway through the cooking which should take only about 30 minutes, total, on a hot fire.

When the packets are removed from the fire, untwist, open the fold, and eat directly from the foil pañ. The only dishes are a fork and knife and an enterprising cook will carry spares so as not to have to wash dishes.

## A Marriage of Two Solo Canoeists

By Bill Crimes

While preparing for our recent wedding, it was suggested that during the ceremony Donna and I should stand in our solo canoes and step into a tandem canoe upon pronouncement of marriage. This suggestion was preceded by several beers and followed by laughter as it is well known that we are solo canoeists who live by the dictum "canoe solo, live tandem."

But, that suggestion did cause me to stop and consider—as grooms-to-be often do—is this what marriage should become? I am not a tandem canoeist as my past techniques to deal with tandem canoeing can attest.

I had two methods for dealing with tandem canoeing on white water: disempower or overpower the bow paddler.

In the first technique, I would give the bow paddler the smallest paddle available. I always appropriated the stern. I recommend that bow paddlers use a short wooden \$5 Walmart paddle modified with a saber saw so that the blade has approximately the same cross sectional area as a large spatula or one of those 18-inch souvenir paddles. Thus

equipped, the bow paddler is neutralized and can do little harm, but this method only works on the most novice of paddlers.

The second method requires the development of a powerful booming voice which terrorizes the bow paddler into submission and diverts their fear of rapids. This is similar to techniques used by armies throughout history causing reasonable men to walk directly into gun fire.

I have neither the disposition for the latter method nor a bow paddler witless enough to fall for the "small paddle" method. But, if marriage means sharing the same boat, compromises must be made. We will have to be content with smaller water and matching strokes. This strikes me as co-dependent, especially for solo white-water paddlers, reducing individual goals to the lowest common denominator of shared skills.

I prefer to think of our marriage as a good canoe trip. We always support each other but keep a comfortable space between us allowing for maneuvers and mistakes but

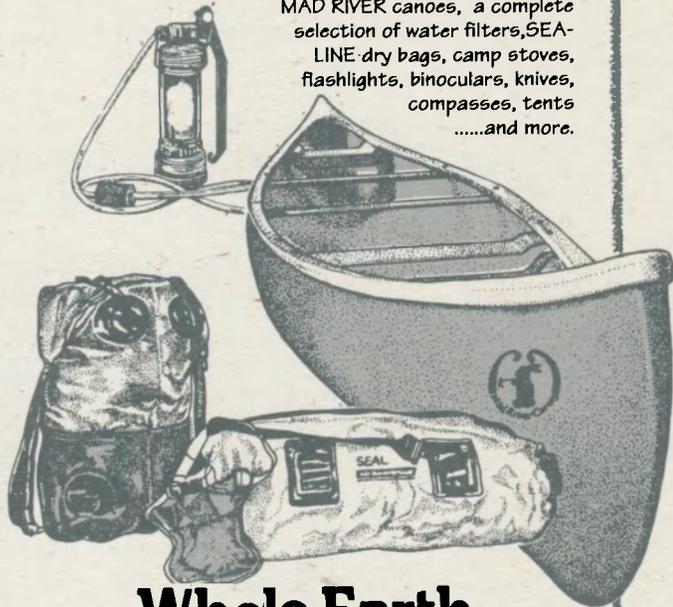
never lose sight of each other. We don't force limitations or fears on each other; we allow the other paddler to make mistakes, but are ready—rope in hand—to assist in case of trouble. We know each other's skills and fears before we put in; we have mutual or compatible goals or destinations such as the take out. But the voyage is more important than reaching the destination. The voyage encompasses the companionship, the surroundings, the side trips, such as rope swings and canyon hikes, and reveling in each other's accomplishments. This, I believe, makes a complete and pleasant paddle and enjoyable life.

I admire those tandem paddlers whose grace, rhythm and elegance have elevated flat water paddling to an art. But river waters, engorged with oxygen and pulsating with life, have always required a personal response. I offer this advice to all solo paddlers: never paddle alone. And when you find someone who will catch you when you flip and who enlivens your paddling, give them space but always keep them in sight.

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## Meetings and Officers

**General Meeting:** The Houston Canoe Club meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the American Red Cross Building, 2700 Southwest Freeway, Houston, Texas. The meeting includes a program, trip reports, a brief business session, and a "Ship's Store" with books and merchandise. Visitors are welcome.

**Social Meeting:** Members gather for food and fellowship at 7 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month at Cafe Express, 3200 Kirby Drive between Richmond and West Alabama across from the main building of Texas Commerce Bank, Kirby. Visitors are welcome.

**Officers' Meeting:** The officers of the Houston Canoe Club meet at 7 p.m. on the Tuesday of the week before the General Meeting at the American Red Cross Building, 2700 Southwest Freeway, Houston, Texas. Club members are welcome to attend.

**Hotline: 713-467-8857** The Hot Line recording provides confirmation of the date, time, and location of current meetings, trips, and other activities. At the end, nonmembers are given an opportunity to leave a request for more information about the Houston Canoe Club.

### Rental Fleet:

**Old Town Tripper**, a tandem downriver canoe.

**Mohawk Rogue**, a solo whitewater canoe

**Scupper**, an ocean kayak.

Contact a club governor for more information.

**Ship's Store:** The store offers for sale T-shirts, maps and books about outdoor subjects such as boating, first aid and nature. A video library is free for all members. The store is open at each regular meeting. For more information, call Bob Mabe at 713-437-9527.

**Newsletter Information:** The newsletter editor can receive items by fax or modem. For more information call 713-721-5851. The mailing address for the newsletter is

### HCC Newsletter

4762 Kinglet

Houston, Texas 77035

The deadline for newsletter information is the first day of the month preceding the month of publication.

**Change of address:** Call newsletter editor at 713-721-5851.

### Officers:

Paula Dittrick, Commodore 713-721-5851

Bob Wall, Vice Commodore 713-445-7936

Bill Grimes, Purser 713-728-1645

Peggy McCullough, Recorder 713-465-5328

Skip and Mary Kay Donovan, Fleet Captains 713-937-1184

Philip Montgomery, Newsletter Editor 713-721-5851

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**Houston Canoe Club**  
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Annual family membership fee is \$15.00. There is a one-time initiation fee of \$5.00.

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## Application for Membership Houston Canoe Club

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Employer .....

Work Phone with Area Code .....

### Spouse's Name

Spouse's Employer .....

Spouse's Work Phone with Area Code .....

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### Home Address

City .....

State .....

Zip Code .....

Home Phone with Area Code .....

### How did you hear about the Houston Canoe Club?

**Liability waiver must be signed to validate membership.**

### Liability Waver

The Houston Canoe Club always strives to make boating experiences as enjoyable and as safe as possible. However, some element of risk always exists in CANOEING, KAYAKING, and WATER ACTIVITIES.

I do hereby recognize this risk and agree to hold harmless and without fault the Houston Canoe Club, its trip organizers, leaders and officers, and instructors from liability for any personal loss or injury which I may incur, and do hereby WAIVE any remedy I may have in law or equity. This Liability-waiver is in effect while in transit to and from any Houston Canoe Club event and while participating in any Houston Canoe Club outing.

Signature and Date .....

Spouse's Signature and Date .....

CUT HERE

# Directory of Clubs and Paddling Organizations

**Adobe Whitewater Club**

P.O. Box 3835  
Albuquerque, NM 87190

**Aggieland Paddle Club**

c/o Steve Daniel  
7988 Drummer Circle  
College Station, TX 77845-9508

**Alamo City Rivermen**

Bill Hill, president  
P.O. Box 171194  
San Antonio, TX 78217  
210-491-9388 (home)

**American Canoe Association**

c/o Chuck Weis  
7432 Alban Station Blvd, B-226  
Springfield, VA 22150

**Arkansas Canoe Club**

PO Box 1843  
Little Rock, AR 72203

**Austin Paddling Club**

P.O. Box 14211  
Austin, TX 78761  
512-448-5171

**Bayou City White Water Club**

P.O. Box 980782  
Houston, TX 77098

**Bayou Haystackers Canoe Club**

10525 Tams Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70815

**Big Thicket Voyageurs**

P.O. Box 787  
Sour Lake, TX 77659

**Buffalo Bayou Coalition**

P. O. Box 130725  
Houston, TX 77219 0725

**Carolina Canoe Club**

P.O. Box 12932  
Raleigh, NC 27605

**Confluence**

Marge Cline  
1343 N. Portage  
Palatine, Illinois 60067  
708-359-5047

**Dallas Downriver Club**

P.O. Box 595128  
Dallas, TX 75359 5128

**Georgia Canoeing Association**

Newsletter Editor  
2923 Piedmont Drive  
Marietta, GA 30066

**Hill Country Paddlers**

John Bilderback  
301 Candice  
Kerrville, TX 78028  
512-257-2323 (work)

**Huntsville Travel Society**

c/o Jeff Coker  
Rt 3 Box 596 D  
Huntsville, TX 77340

**North Texas River Runners**

Billie McCallon  
215 Lakeshore Drive  
Waxahachie, TX 75165  
214-937-8835

**Paddle Texas**

Tom Helzer, president  
P.O. Box 121  
Coupland, TX 78615  
512-856-2245

**Red Cross**

c/o Bob Cargo  
P.O. Box 397  
Houston, TX 77001 0397  
713-526-8300

**South Texas Paddling Network**

(a newsletter)  
P.O. Box 6672  
Corpus Christi, TX 78466-6672

**Texas Canoe Racers Association**

Grady Hicks  
1704 Holland  
Jacinto City, TX 77029  
713-453-5786

## Congratulations Houston Canoe Club on 30 Years of Paddling

FROM

# Carpet Country

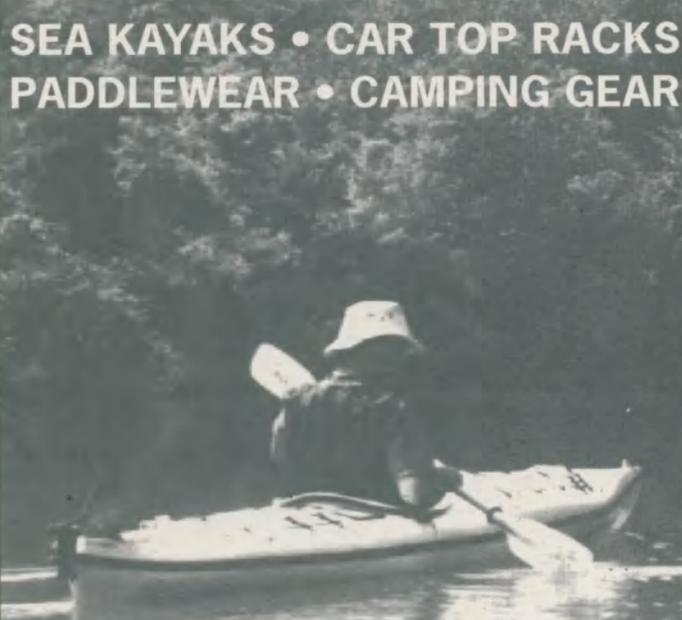
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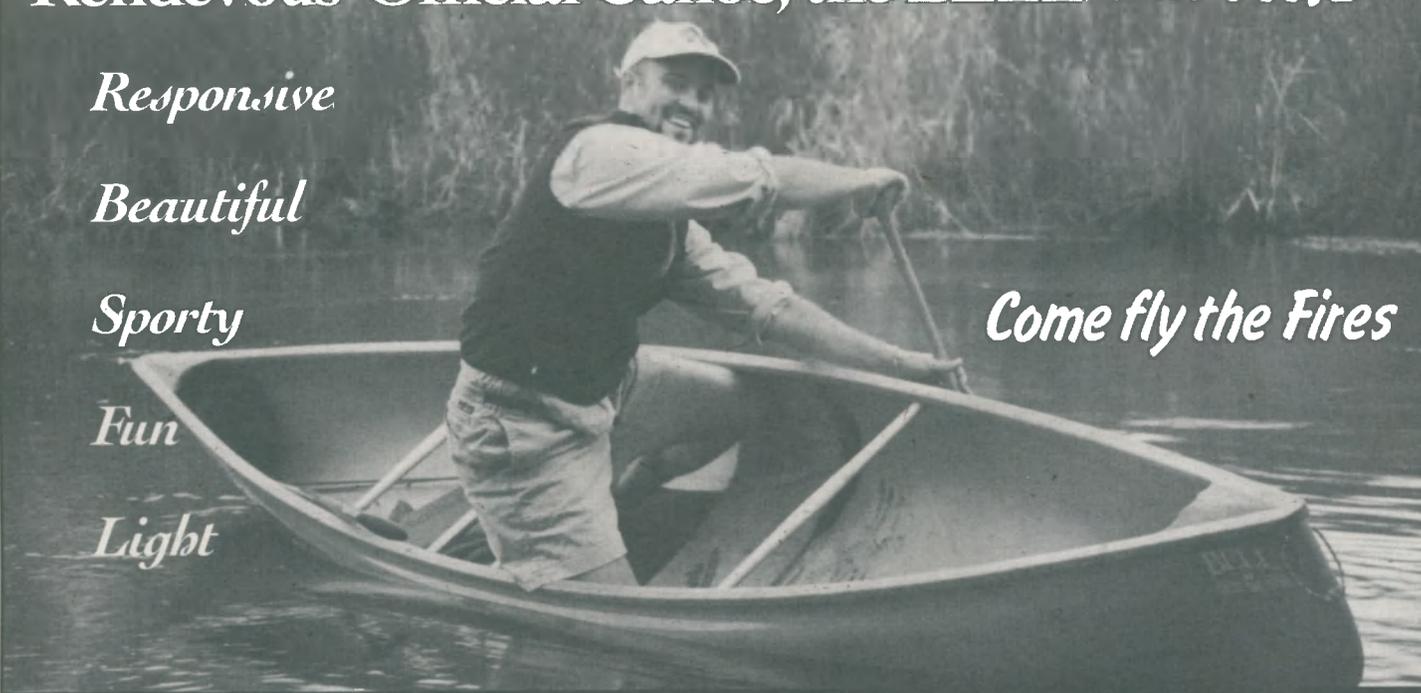
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