



Houston Canoe Club *Waterline*



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Table of Contents

Next Meeting Announcement
Last Meeting Minutes
New Members
Market Place
No Water? What our Members Do When They Can't Paddle
Psychedelica on the Bayou - Do you Remember the Love Street Light Circus?
Backwater Backwash
The Bow Saw - a Handy River Tool
Boat Builder's Corner
Photos of Items for Sale

Trip Reports:

Upcoming River Trips
A Week at Shumla, west of the Pecos River
Buffalo Bayou - Allen's Landing to the Ship Channel
Two trips on the Old, Lost and Cutoff Rivers
Cotton Lake in Summer
Pelican Island Circumnavigation Summer 2009 Issue 2
Labor Day Weekend on the Sabine River

The Waterline is the monthly newsletter of the Houston Canoe Club, Inc. The Waterline is made possible by your dues and critically depends on member contributions. Please submit items to HCC's Newsletter Editor, Linda Gorski at LindaGorski@cs.com.

The Waterline is prepared by an on-line newsletter editor written by Fraser Baker, HCC's Webmaster.

Next Meeting Announcement

When: October 14, 2009 @ 7:00 PM
Where: Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston, Texas
Directions: First driveway, North side of Bissonnet, just West of Hillcroft.
Speaker: Paul Woodcock
Speaker Bio:
Description: Our very own Paul Woodcock, veteran expedition paddler and [Sieur de LaSalle](#) of the mid-continent, will guide us with a thoughtful discussion of the art of the shuttle.

Be sure to set this date aside on your calendar, then come out to support our speaker and club.

Last Meeting Minutes

Date: September 9, 2009

Recorder: John Ohrt

Minutes: Commodore Bill Grimes called the meeting to order.

The Safety Minute was a discussion and demonstration of yoga for paddling by Bill Grimes and yoga instructor Jerry Randall.

One new member and three guests were welcomed.

The program was a power point presentation on paddling in Wyoming by Bill Grimes and Jim Barton. Rivers included the Yellowstone, the Gros Ventre, the Greys, the Wind, the Hoback and the Snake. The scenery was spectacular.

Past Commodore Jim Barton stood in for Donna to deliver the Fleet Captain's trip report. Past trips included Pelican Island, Cotton Lake, the three day Labor Day trip to the Sabine, a moonlight trip to Armand's Bayou, the Llano River by Junction, Goose Island at Rockport, and the Spring and Current Rivers. Upcoming trips included Spring Creek, the Neches, the Big Bend area, and the Huntsville camp out over Columbus Day.

John Ohrt read the minutes of the August General Meeting, and they were approved as read.

Bill Grimes announced that he needs volunteers for a Nominating Committee, and for a Task Force to look at the web site (Fraser Baker, Louis Aulbach, John Rich, and Harmon Everett are already on it). Ken McDowell reminded Bill that the officers had approved a motion for that Task Force to report its findings to the club by the end of the year.

The meeting was adjourned

Please contact HCC's recorder, John Ohrt, if there are any omissions or corrections.

New Members

Member Name: Gordon Start
Membership Type: individual
Member's Family: Sandra - Spouse
Nicholas, Caitlyn - Children

Member Name: John Clark
Membership Type: individual
Member's Family: Blanca

Member Name: Bill Cooke
Membership Type: individual
Member's Family:

Member Name: Walter Light
Membership Type: individual
Member's Family:

Member Name: Sophie Lopez
Membership Type: individual
Member's Family:

The HCC cordially welcomes new members to our club. New members are the life blood of the HCC, so be sure to provide opportunities for all our new members to paddle by coordinating more trips.

Market Place

Items For Sale

Item: Vintage Canoe Paddle
Description: 57 inch handmade ash wood (I think) Featherlite. Very thin 1/8 inch blade. See photo elsewhere in newsletter.
Asking Price: \$70
Contact Name: Debbie Wiggins
Contact Phone: 409-363-1627
Contact Email: debbiewiggins@gt.rr.com

###

Item: Vintage Canoe Paddle
Description: 54 inch Sawyer woodworking paddle 1/4 inch blade thickness. See photo elsewhere in newsletter.
Asking Price: \$80
Contact Name: Debbie Wiggins
Contact Phone: 409-363-1627
Contact Email: debbiewiggins@gt.rr.com

###

Item: Vintage Canoe Paddle
Description: 52 inch Angle Paddle by Kidde (?) Bent Shaft 3/8 inch blade thickness. See photo elsewhere in newsletter.
Asking Price: \$85
Contact Name: Debbie Wiggins
Contact Phone: 409-363-1627
Contact Email: debbiewiggins@gt.rr.com

###

Item: North Face Internal Frame Backpack
Description: Never used. Two compartments. Padded shoulder and hip straps. See photo elsewhere in newsletter
Asking Price: \$135
Contact Name: Debbie Wiggins
Contact Phone: 409-363-1627
Contact Email: debbiewiggins@gt.rr.com

###

Item: Vintage Primus Canister Stove
Description: See photo elsewhere in newsletter.
Asking Price: \$35
Contact Name: Debbie Wiggins
Contact Phone: 409-363-1627
Contact Email: debbiewiggins@gt.rr.com

###

Item: Swedish Army cooksets
Description: I have a few Swedish army surplus cooksets (brand new, never used) which include a Trangia alcohol stove, windscreen, small and large pots aluminium and an alcohol bottle. Perfect for canoe tripping. One ounce of fuel burns for 7 minutes in mine and will boil a cup of water in about 4 minutes for that quick cup of coffee. These have been used by the Swedish army for over a hundred years so they're pretty much fool proof. Complete packed kit measures about 4" X 7" X 7" See photo elsewhere in newsletter.

Asking Price: \$20.00 each
Contact Name: Bob Arthur
Contact Phone: 713-681-0888
Contact Email: rwarthur@oplink.net

###

Item: Repair kit for Klepper
Description: Former owner of a double-seat Klepper Aerius Classic has a repair kit (blue canvas and gray rubber hull patches) and unopened polish and preservative chemicals available to a Klepper owner and sailor with a good home. Originally cost \$45. You may have it all for \$20 American. Also have a detailed assemble and parts list for the wooden framework.

Asking Price: \$20.00
Contact Name: Ron Scott
Contact Phone: 281-931-3780
Contact Email: ronscottx@mac.com

###

Items Wanted

Please contact the Newsletter Editor to post any items that you may have for sale or desperately need.

No Water? What our Members Do When They Can't Paddle

by
Linda Gorski

It's been a dry summer here in Texas. Hill Country rivers are running at historically low levels. Simply put, there's not enough water to paddle on many of our favorite local rivers.

Some of our members escaped to the east coast for the Week of Rivers. A couple have done some paddling along the Texas gulf coast or on Buffalo Bayou. And a few have gone over to the San Marcos to take advantage of one of the Hill Country's few flowing rivers.

So what have our members been up to this summer with paddling opportunities somewhere between slim and none? Here's a glimpse at a few of our members and how they spend their time when they're not paddling.

John Rich, arguably one of the Houston Canoe Club's most avid paddlers, is also a seasoned parachutist. With over 5,000 skydives under his belt, he spends most Saturdays up in Waller County at the [Skydive Houston](#) parachute center. John started jumping out of airplanes in 1978, and has been going at it ever since. He also participates in rifle shooting matches with [Bayou Rifle Club](#) two or three Sunday mornings per month, at distances ranging from 200 yards to 1,000 yards. On top of all that, he likes to get out hiking, camping and/or canoeing at least one weekend per month.



John Rich jumps with the flag during July 4th celebrations in Waller County.

Louis Aulbach has been a member of the Houston Canoe Club since 1980. An avid expedition paddler, he has also written [five books](#) on paddling the rivers of Texas including the Rio Grande, the Pecos and the Devils. Louis is also writing a book on the history of Houston as it developed along Buffalo Bayou. The [Buffalo Bayou Partnership](#) is taking advantage of Louis's vast knowledge of the history of the city and his love of the Bayou and has put him to work guiding historic boat tours on the bayou several times a month. Louis recently retired as Records Manager for the City of Houston but says he is busier now than when he was working full time! He was appointed earlier this year to the [Harris County Historical Commission](#) and is an active member of the Commission's historic marker committee. You might also see him on several upcoming segments on Channel 55's ["Postcards from Texas"](#) as he gives a guided tour up and down Buffalo Bayou with the film crew.



Louis Aulbach guides a historic boat tour of Buffalo Bayou for the Buffalo Bayou Partnership

Photo by Linda Gorski

Linda Gorski has been a member of HCC since the 1990s but recently spent 8 years abroad and just rejoined the club earlier this year. In addition to being Louis Aulbach's co-author on many of his stories and two of his books, she is also an avocational historian and archaeologist. She is currently participating in two digs in the Houston area including one at the [San Jacinto Battlefield](#) where archaeologists have discovered the retreat route of the Mexican Army and, more importantly, Colonel Juan Almonte's surrender site. She is also working with another group of archaeologists at [Groce's Plantation](#) in Waller County, uncovering the oldest cotton plantation in the State.



Linda Gorski holding a 17 inch Mexican Army bayonet she excavated from the site of Colonel Juan Almonte's surrender near the Battlefield at San Jacinto.

The End

Psychedelica on the Bayou - Do you Remember the Love Street Light Circus?

by
Linda Gorski and Louis Aulbach

Okay fellow paddlers. Dial it back to the mid-1960s. Summer 1967 to be exact. Especially those of you who were young adults and living in Houston at that time. Or those of you who had hip parents who were living in Houston at the time.

Do you remember the Love Street Light Circus and Feel Good Machine? It was a short lived but extraordinarily popular psychedelic music venue located on the third floor of the International Coffee Company Building, that rundown, green building at Allen's Landing on Buffalo Bayou.

David Adickes (yes, the same David Adickes who sculpted the statue of Sam Houston on I-45 at Huntsville, the Virtuoso in front of the Lyric Center and many other iconic pieces around Houston) opened the music venue there that he called Love Street Light Circus. Inspired by a psychedelic New Years Eve event on December 31, 1966 at the Fillmore Auditorium in San Francisco, David took advantage of a space that was offered to him in the International Coffee Building as an art studio and turned it into Houston's counter-culture music headquarters that opened in June 1967.



The derelict International Coffee Company Building

Photo by Linda Gorski

In its heyday the exterior of that now pea green building was painted in vibrant colors with huge Mondrian type graphics. We have not been able to find a single photo of the building painted in psychedelic colors but we have found the man who painted it. If you have a snapshot of that building painted with vibrant blue, red and yellow geometric figures we'd love to see it.

According to several folks we've interviewed, the third floor of what is now a derelict building was transformed by Adickes into a state of the art, technological wonder. The Zonk Out area was filled with large mattresses covered with black painted canvas and strewn with hundreds of colored pillows so patrons could lie down while taking in the show.



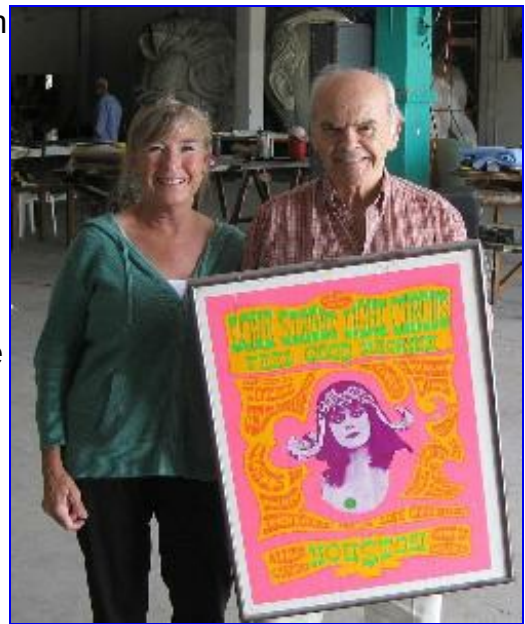
Interior of the Love Street Light Circus including Zonk Out area.

Then there was the light show which was operated from a balcony above the Zonk Out area. Adickes experimented with various techniques to create his light show, in one case using upturned plastic bonnets from salon hair drying units filled with water and food color that he made splash to the beat of the music. He also used sheets of glass with water and oil and coloring to develop his unique light shows.

Popular local bands of the era appeared at Love Street including Red Crayola, the Thirteenth Floor Elevators, and Moving

Sidewalks. It was also the site of ZZ Top's first public show in 1969. Rumor has it that members of these bands covered one wall of the third floor with their signatures and other graffiti -- including Jimi Hendrix who made a guest appearance. Unfortunately, the walls have been painted and plastered and those scribbles are gone.

The other walls of the interior were covered with posters designed by Adickes - wonderful posters in fluorescent colors, the most famous of which is the one featuring Theda Bara staring out and beckoning patrons to come in and enjoy the "Flop Down 3-D Total Environment Happening" and "Lights and Sound Explosions for the Love Generation". Today those posters are valuable collector's item. If you have any of these posters, we'd love to photograph them.



Linda Gorski and David Adickes with his signature poster for the Love Street Light Circus

Photo by Louis Aulbach



The sign in front of International Coffee Building with renderings of what it will look like when it is renovated.

Photo by Linda Gorski

The International Coffee Company building has been empty for over 40 years and has fallen into disrepair. However, it has recently been purchased by the Buffalo Bayou Partnership and is slated to be renovated into offices, meeting space and even a canoe and kayak rental.

We are currently looking for information about the building to write some really good articles prior to the building's new life. So if you have memories or photos to share, please send them to lindagorski@cs.com.



Louis Aulbach in front of the sign advertising the renovations to be done on the International Coffee Company Building in the background.

Photo by Linda Gorski

The End

Backwater Backwash

by
Cecelia 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.

Speed. The need to get there fast. Now. MOVE IT! MOVE IT! MOVE IT! GO! GO! GO! NOW! NOW! NOW!

Ahem I apologize. Ever been on a trip where the leaders would say "Alright folks, this is not a race!" and then proceed to beat a path as fast as humanly possible from point "A" to point "B" with no stops in between? Yeah, me neither...

OK, really, I've been on a lot of them like that. I, as a leader, tend to run sweep. I tend to stop, play, piddle around, look at stuff, take a break, rest, have lunch, take a few pics, and occasionally get my paddle blade wet.

This past Labor Day weekend on the Sabine, there were people who were afraid that they wouldn't be able to keep up. HAH!!! Even when I run with a motor I am usually the very last boat to come in! I stop at every sand bar. I don't care that we only paddled 10 feet, SANDBAR!!! BREAK TIME!!! I race to see who can get there last.

A nice man was worried about me and hung back to make sure I was alright. I think I may have annoyed him because I stopped at every dadblasted sand bar I saw and got out to swim and play. I think he finally realized I was BUSY PLAYING! and decided he wanted to get there. As slow as I go, I have never gotten to the camp sites after dark. That last day is about four or six miles (not sure... keep hearing conflicting info. It's not long, anyway.) I usually make that 4 - 6 miles (keep in mind, there is a current, the boat will move whether you paddle or not...) in about 8 hours. It's not my paddling, it's my LACK of paddling!

I met a lovely couple who actually beat me for last place to the take out. They seem to follow my philosophy about river enjoyment. Simply paddling is alright, but not as much fun as embracing, communing with the river or whatever body of water...

Anyway, if you plan to race me, even if you have never paddled before, there's an excellent chance you will win. I'm there to play in the river! You know, getting there is most of the fun! But I get there eventually. Y'all go ahead and set up camp. I'll go jump in the lake... or the river...

PS- I have precious few pics of this trip, since it turns out that my waterproof camera isn't...

The End

The Bow Saw - a Handy River Tool

by
John Rich

A bow saw is a very handy tool to have along with you in your canoe during trips on the water. Most of the time you will probably not even need it. And many times I've hesitated to even bother bringing it along, because it seemed unnecessary. But you never know when it's going to come in mighty handy on the water. And it's better to have it and not need it, then to need it and not have it. So even when the chances of the bow saw being required seem low, I've gotten into the habit of bringing it along anyway. And every once in a while, it really pays off.



The bow saw



Ken Anderson cuts through a downed tree

It can be used to clear brush out of the way to allow passage of boats to go unimpeded. This not only allows passage of your own boats, but is also good community trail maintenance for paddlers which may follow at a later date. Cutting a limb or two can also be much easier than a portage around an obstacle. And instead of having to give up on a path, it allows you to penetrate beyond where you would otherwise have been able to travel. In this photo, Ken clears a path on Lake Pass, between Lake Charlotte and the Trinity River, through trees blown down by hurricane

Ike.

For overnight campouts on the riverbank, the bow saw is used to cut firewood, to provide warmth in cold weather, heat for cooking, or just for a pleasant outdoor atmosphere for chatting with your friends at night. I find that a bow saw is much quicker than an axe, and it's also lighter to carry in the boat. Here you see a different Ken cutting firewood for the evening campout on Ratcliff Lake.



Ken McDowell cuts firewood

But most importantly, the bow saw can be a vital tool for rescue. I've only used mine for that purpose one time, so far, but the bow saw in that situation was critical in saving a trapped boat. A tandem canoe pair went riding around a blind curve in a creek on fast current, only to bump sideways into a log strainer, spilling both paddlers into the water. The canoe then played submarine and went completely underwater, and became trapped underwater in the branches of the log. After getting the paddlers safely to shore, we worked on freeing the boat, but pulling on the bow and stern lines was not working. I paddled up next to the log, pulled out my bow saw, leaned over the side, and sawed off a limb underwater. It felt very strange to be sawing underwater - that's something I had never done before. But this freed the boat and allowed it to pop back up to the surface again, where it was retrieved. Without the bow saw, this boat rescue would have been much more difficult.

Bow saws come in various sizes, measured by the length of the blade. The large ones run 30 to 36 inches, the medium ones about 20 inches, and the small ones as little as 12 inches. The cost varies from \$15 to \$30. It's cheap insurance for a rescue situation, and a cheap tool for brush clearing and firewood. The one I use, pictured at the beginning of this article, is 21" in length. I have a larger one in my garage which I use for yard work, but I found it a bit too cumbersome in the canoe. The small ones can be a bit too slow to cut, as the length of the cutting stroke is reduced. So, like Little Red Riding Hood's porridge, the medium-sized one is "just right" for me. It fits nicely in the canoe, and also cuts efficiently.



Rivet replaced with a nut & bolt

Some of these hardware store bow saws are rather cheap in construction. The main failure point is the rivets used to attach the saw blade to the bow handle. Before that rivet has a chance to fail on me, I drill or punch them out, and replace them with a sturdy nut & bolt. You can use a product like Loctite to glue the nut in place so it won't come loose on you and get lost, at an inopportune time.

The next problem I had in adapting my bow saw to canoe use was the blade guard. The blade guard is designed to protect the blade in storage, and to protect the user from being cut by the sharp teeth when you're not actively using it. The saw comes with a cheap plastic strip which is difficult to remove and install, and which degrades quickly. I've tried several things to improve upon the factory blade guard. The first was to take a foam swimming pool noodle, slit it lengthwise half way through, and slip that over the blade. That actually works okay, but it's bulky, and the blade teeth catch on the foam when you try and install it, and that shaves off lots of little bits of colored foam which end up all over the place. My second attempt was to take a length of old garden hose, slit it lengthwise, and slip that over the blade. This is less bulky, but it's still difficult to install over the blade, and you can end up drawing blood trying to get the blade inside that small slit in the hose.

Now we come to my latest bright idea for a blade guard. The blade is about $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide, so I purchased a piece of 1" inside-diameter PVC pipe at the hardware store, for \$2.50. I cut that to the length of my blade, and then ran that section across my table saw to cut a lengthwise slot in it, from end to end. If the kerf (cutting width) of the saw blade isn't wide enough, you may want to make several passes just slightly apart to widen the channel in the pipe. You want the pipe to slip easily over the teeth of the saw blade, and since the teeth are bent alternating slightly left and right for cutting, you need a groove that is wider than the actual thickness of the steel blade.



Blade guard



The blade can now be easily slipped through the open slot on the plastic pipe. Then all you have to do to keep it in



Blade guard installed

place is to rotate the pipe 90°. Since the blade is wider than the slot, in this orientation it cannot come off. To remove the blade guard, rotate the pipe to align the slot with the backside of the blade, and slip it off. This guard protects the blade from damage, and more importantly, protects you and your gear in the canoe from being accidentally sliced up by the blade.

The humble bow saw - consider making it a useful and important part of your river tool kit.

The End

Boat Builder's Corner

by
Skip Johnson

My old American Heritage Dictionary doesn't have a succinct definition of fairing that encompasses the subject at hand, so here goes.

Fairing (far'ing) v. to make a surface smooth and even, without dips, bumps or hollows.

Without dips, bumps or hollows is the challenging part, but it is doable and the results most worthwhile.

If you're building an EasyB you are well on your way since the computer generated forms were fair to begin with, almost by definition. First cut loose the rubber bands at the sheer using a sharp single blade razor blade or utility knife. Looks pretty 'hairy' at this point.

Pulling the rubber bands only takes a little while, pinching the bands and pulling close to the hull breaks off most of the bands at the surface and you can hear some of the bands pull out on the inside. The rest of the inside bands will come out easily later. Also remove the finish nails at the sheer.

Once the bands are popped off the outside it's time to knock off the glue and rough edges. Here I use a belt sander with a fairly coarse belt, 60 grit or so, but a fairly gentle touch.



Hairy Stage

Photo by Skip Johnson

A short digression, most of the woods suitable for canoe hulls, particularly cedar, are pretty powerful allergens; take proper precautions. A plain paper dust mask is probably worse than no mask at all. A vacuum equipped sanding system is the premier way to do things but is sort of bulky and awkward.

Tools with a built in dust bag are helpful plus you end up with some sanding dust which is useful in just a bit.

The traditional way to fair a hull is to take a long board, 2' or more, with sandpaper glued to surface and have at it with the board parallel to the long axis of the boat using a figure eight kind of motion. This works but it takes a lot of elbow grease and some patience. Dave Yost once told me his favorite method was to get a long sheet of floor paper (a really aggressive type grit) and clamp one end to a heavy weight (tool box in this case) and fair the hull shoeshine style. Being something of an airtool junkie, my favorite tool is an airfile, a tool



usually used in auto body shops. Whatever method you use the idea is to have a long, 12" or more, straight surface against the hull so you will be taking down the high spots and bridging the low spots. 60 grit or even coarser is appropriate here bearing in mind that final sanding doesn't need to be any finer than 80 grit. Once the hull starts to really take shape, I find that I can feel the uneven spots as well or better than by eyeball.

You may be one of those meticulous builders that get everything just right but I always have a few gaps in the joints where the edges haven't been super snug or the joints not perfectly fitted. Usually these are near the ends of the hull, at the turn of the bilge and at the centerline.



Bow - Steve's Easy B

Photo by Skip Johnson

Filling can be either with conventional filler (Famowood is a good one) or a mixture of epoxy and sanding dust, assuming you've saved some of the dust from your sander of choice. It's better to do all this filling before your final sanding otherwise you will be able to notice the light skin of stuff that was wiped off the surface before you glassed the outside, even though it looked perfectly fine before you glassed it. Trust me on this.



Filling - Easy B

Photo by Skip Johnson

the boat will look like when it's glassed. Which will be the next thing we talk about.

Tools for Fairing

Photo by Skip Johnson



In a Hurry - Steve's Easy B

Photo by Skip Johnson

Now is the time to fill these little imperfections, trust me no one will notice these in the end unless you're shooting for an absolute show boat finish in which case you shouldn't be listening to me in the first place.



Filling - Steve's Easy B

Photo by Skip Johnson

Final sanding should be done with an orbital tool with 80 grit or so paper, the idea is to remove all the scratch marks from the coarser paper. The bow and stern need to be rounded over about a quarter of an inch or so, a super sharp end will be almost impossible to glass over, extremely fragile and hydro dynamically unnecessary. If you are of a mind to, there's no reason you can't moisten the hull with a damp (not wet) rag to raise the grain for a final sanding. I've not found that to be necessary but it does give you a hint of what

To be continued...

Photos of Items for Sale

**by
Newsletter Editor**



Photo of items for sale including North Face backpack, paddles, and primus stove. See "Market Place" for particulars about each item.



Swedish Army Trangia stove sets for sale. See "Market Place" for particulars.

Upcoming River Trips

HCC Trips:

Date: Saturday, September 26, 2009
Title: TRIP CANCELLED Paddle and Raft Ocoee & Canoe/Kayak Nantahala in North Carolina

Inclusive Dates: Sept. 26 - Oct. 4

Description: TRIP CANCELLED This will be a minimum 5 day trip with 3 days of paddling and 2 travel days. Firm date has not been set but paddling days must fall within the above listed days.

Tentative schedule is to leave Houston Sep 27 and drive straight thru. Raft the Ocoee on the 28th, canoe/kayak the Nantahala the 29th and visit NOC while there, and then raft or canoe the Ocoee the 30th. Return trip will be Oct 1. These dates can be changed to meet needs of participants and paddling days can be extended if desired.

No whitewater experience needed to raft Ocoee. Helmet, PFD, and paddle needed. The Nantahala is a good learning venue for someone wanting to paddle whitewater. NOC rents inflatable kayaks, which are a ton of fun. Canoeing / kayaking the Ocoee requires that each participant have their own boat properly outfitted.

If this trip is a go, there must be at least 4 participants signed up by Aug 30 and dates finalized by Sep 3. The raft will accommodate 6 paddlers plus me. Campground or cabin to be determined. No more than 2 vehicles.

If interested or questions, call Billy Welborn 979-245-3996 or email bdwelb@sbcglobal.net

Skill Level: **Intermediate:** Knowledge of basic whitewater safety, self-rescue and rescue such as retrieving a pinned boat. Able to capture small eddies, run Class 2 rapids confidently, but challenged by Class 3 rapids such as Cottonseed on the San Marcos at say 300-400 cfs.

Contact: Contact Billy Welborn by phone 979 245 3996, or by email bdwelb@sbcglobal.net.

####

Date: Sunday, September 27, 2009

Title: Lake Powell paddling and hiking with Kokopelli Club

Inclusive Dates: Sept 27 - Oct. 3

Description: The Kokopelli Club has invited the Houston Canoe Club to join them on their annual paddle along the many finger canyons of Lake Powell on the Utah/Arizona border. This week trip will include many nights of shared cooking and telling stories with daytime adventures of exploring the canyons.

Skill Level: **Beginner:** Familiarity with basic strokes and can make the boat go straight on flat water typically experienced on Armand Bayou, can maneuver the boat on slowly moving water, is aware of basic river safety and can confidently avoid hazards and strainers frequently experienced on Texas' Colorado River or the Buffalo Bayou at a modest flow rate.

Contact: Contact Donna Grimes by phone 713 728 1645, or by email donna.grimes@mindspring.com.
###

Date: Saturday, October 10, 2009
Title: Annual Huntsville State Park Get Together
Inclusive Dates: Oct 10 - Oct 12
Description: This is an annual event. We will get to the park to check in Friday evening. Saturday, we will have a morning paddle around the lake, do other activities around the park during the day, then have a pot luck supper Saturday evening. Sunday, we will have another morning paddle, then pack up to go home.

More information will follow closer to date.

Skill Level: **Neophyte:** Never paddled before.
Contact: Contact Cecelia Gill by phone 832 7412713, or by email whitewaterider@yahoo.com.
###

Date: Saturday, October 10, 2009
Title: Pecos River in West Texas TRIP FULL - CLOSED
Inclusive Dates: Oct. 10 - 18
Description: Pecos River is one of my favorite rivers in Texas. 60 miles of wilderness with lots of pictographs and petroglyphs and canyons to explore. The dates listed included a day of traveling up and a day for traveling back. We will put on on Sunday and take off on Saturday - 6 nights of expedition paddling

Skill Level: **Intermediate:** Knowledge of basic whitewater safety, self-rescue and rescue such as retrieving a pinned boat. Able to capture small eddies, run Class 2 rapids confidently, but challenged by Class 3 rapids such as Cottonseed on the San Marcos at say 300-400 cfs.

Contact: Contact Donna Grimes by phone 713 728 1645, or by email donna.grimes@mindspring.com.
###

Date: Saturday, October 17, 2009
Title: Matagorda Bay Nature Park
Inclusive Dates: October 17, 2009
Description: The paddle is through a unique natural wetlands habitat in the estuary waters of E Matagorda Bay. View a broad array of coastal waterfowl and immature commercial fish. Discover why Matagorda County is number one in the nation for bird species diversification. Matagorda Bay Nature Park www.lcra.org on October 17, 2009 from 9 AM to 1 PM. The cost is \$25 with your own boat, \$50 if they provide a boat. Register with Marcus O'Connor (979) 863-2063 or moconnor@lcra.org. For help finding lodging,

contact Honey Leveen.

Skill Level: **Beginner:** Familiarity with basic strokes and can make the boat go straight on flat water typically experienced on Armand Bayou, can maneuver the boat on slowly moving water, is aware of basic river safety and can confidently avoid hazards and strainers frequently experienced on Texas' Colorado River or the Buffalo Bayou at a modest flow rate.

Contact: Contact Honey Leveen by phone 713 988 4671, or by email honey@honeyleveen.com.

####

Date: Saturday, October 17, 2009

Title: Matagorda Bay Nature Park

Inclusive Dates: October 17, 2009

Description: The paddle is through a unique natural wetlands habitat in the estuary waters of E Matagorda Bay. View a broad array of coastal waterfowl and immature commercial fish. Discover why Matagorda County is number one in the nation for bird species diversification.

Matagorda Bay Nature Park www.lcra.org on October 17, 2009 from 9 AM to 1 PM. The cost is \$25 with your own boat, \$50 if they provide a boat. Register with Marcus O'Connor (979) 863-2063 or moconnor@lcra.org.

For help finding lodging, contact Honey Leveen honey@honeyleveen.com or

Skill Level: **Beginner:** Familiarity with basic strokes and can make the boat go straight on flat water typically experienced on Armand Bayou, can maneuver the boat on slowly moving water, is aware of basic river safety and can confidently avoid hazards and strainers frequently experienced on Texas' Colorado River or the Buffalo Bayou at a modest flow rate.

Contact: Contact Honey Leveen by phone 713 988 4671, or by email honey@honeyleveen.com.

####

Date: Sunday, October 18, 2009

Title: Boquillas Canyon of Rio Grande River CLOSED - TRIP FULL

Inclusive Dates: 10/18- 24

Description: TRIP FULL - ONLY ALTERNATES
We will be doing a canoe trip through Boquillas Canyon in the Big Bend National Park from Monday, October 19 through Saturday, October 24.

We will meet at Rio Grande Village campground on Monday, Oct. 19 and put in on Tuesday morning at 8:30 am. We will spend four nights on the river and have one layover day for hiking and exploring, taking off the river about noon on Saturday.
It requires paddling skills for Class II water, expedition

canoe packing
and compliance with the regulations for the Rio Grande
Wild and Scenic
River.

This trip is limited to 10 boats. When it is full, there will be
a
waiting list.

Skill Level: **Intermediate:** Knowledge of basic whitewater safety, self-rescue and rescue such as retrieving a pinned boat. Able to capture small eddies, run Class 2 rapids confidently, but challenged by Class 3 rapids such as Cottonseed on the San Marcos at say 300-400 cfs.

Contact: Contact Louis Aulbach by email lfa@hal-pc.org.

####

Other Club Trips:

A Week at Shumla, west of the Pecos River

August 2009

by

Linda Gorski, John Rich and Louis Aulbach

Many of us who enjoy expedition paddling in Texas don't just paddle to paddle. While we look forward to the challenges of a long river trip, exhilarating rapids, setting up camp in a different place every night, and the solitude of being on the river, we also like to spend a little more time hiking, exploring and really getting to know our environments.

For a week in August, Louis Aulbach, Dana Enos, Linda Gorski and John Rich took on a volunteer project at the [Shumla School](#) for the study of Native American rock art on the banks of the Pecos River west of Comstock. Our good friends Carolyn Boyd and her husband Phil Dering, both former professors in archeology at Texas A & M University, established this school in 1998 to provide the opportunity for intense study into the human use of materials, land and art in the Lower Pecos region, which, according to international experts, contains the largest concentration of rock art in the world.



Map from Houston to Shumla School on the banks of the Pecos River.

Map by Louis Aulbach

In exchange for cataloging the research library at the school, we were able to base camp at this absolutely remarkable place. Hike a few meters from the complex and you are deep in the Chihuahuan desert. Hike a bit farther and you're in the canyons of the Pecos River.



John and Dana hike away from the Shumla School complex.

Photo by Linda Gorski

Since it was August in west Texas and easily 105 degrees every afternoon, we had a good excuse to stay indoors and tackle our library project during the heat of the day. But each morning, we headed out just after sunrise to hike to the banks of the Pecos and explore, from the high bluffs and mesas, the area we normally just see from the river.



Dana, Louis and Linda become librarians for a week.

Photo by John Rich



Louis and John hiking on the bluffs at Shumla Bend above the Pecos

Photo by Linda Gorski

Even better, on two of the mornings, we took our canoes down to the boat ramp below the Pecos High Bridge and paddled around the mouth of the Pecos, the Rio Grande and Lake Amistad. We explored areas we always miss during long expedition trips, since by the time we reach this point, we are ready to take off the river and head back to Houston.



Linda and Louis paddling away from the put in at the boat ramp near the Pecos High Bridge.

Photo by John Rich

During our morning paddles we discovered several amazing rock art shelters and other caves that showed signs of ancient human occupation (not just the trash of modern fishermen and campers). One of the best concentrations of rock art on this section of our paddle was [Parida Cave](#) which is easily accessible from a floating boat dock installed by the National Park Service.



Looking out from inside Parida cave, across the Rio Grande to Mexico.

Photo by John Rich

For those of you who have not had the opportunity to see first hand the rock art of the Lower Pecos River, let me give you a brief overview. The Pecos River Style is a form of archaic Native American art believed by most scholars to be religious in nature. The rock art is found in rock shelters along the main canyons and tributaries of the Devils, Pecos and Rio Grande rivers and in northern Mexico but the focal points of the art's distribution and the areas of greatest intensity is the mouth of the Pecos and the Devils in Val Verde County. Designs include shamans,



Map showing location of Pecos Boat Ramp

Map by Louis Aulbach



John and Dana scout the canyon walls near Parida Cave and Parida Cave Annex.

Photo by Linda Gorski



This geometric design in Parida Cave was the first of its kind we'd seen in rock shelters on the Pecos.

Photo by Linda Gorski

anthropomorphs (human figures), zoomorphs (animal figures), hands, geometrical figures, and even historical figures.



John on the side of a cliff photographing rock art inside a large shelter.

Photo by Linda Gorski



The intriguing image which called for John to climb up there.

Photo by John Rich



Dana photographing rock art at Parida Cave.

Photo by Linda Gorski

The moral of this story is that if you want to paddle in this area with your family or fellow paddlers, but NOT do the 5 to 7 days it takes to paddle down the Pecos where you will encounter challenging whitewater, perhaps beyond your paddling skills (Linda says she speaks from experience here) you can bring your boats out to the Pecos River, camp at [Seminole Canyon State Historical Park](#) only two miles away (one of the best state parks in Texas), put on the water at the boat ramp every morning and hike and explore and paddle to your heart's content. Seminole Canyon

itself has three different hiking tours you can take to see prehistoric Indian rock art, as well as remnants of 1880's railroad camps.

And just a mile west of Seminole Canyon is the White Shaman Preserve, a rock art cave tour led by the [Rock Art Foundation](#). The Rock Art Foundation also works with private property owners in the area to conduct other public rock art tours. If you schedule these things properly, in just a few days you can see a dozen amazing ancient Indian rock art sites that will just boggle your mind, and keep you up late at night in bed thinking about what the abstract images might mean.



One of the rock art panels at a shelter in Seminole Canyon State Historical Park.

Photo by Louis Aulbach

In addition to exploring caves full of rock art, you'll also see lots of wildlife, birds, desert flora, and I'm told the fishing is as good as it gets. Then, you can head back to the campground every evening and still enjoy many of the experiences you'll have paddling the Pecos River from Pandale down to the boat ramp.

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, fellow Houston Canoe Club members Terry and Kathleen Burgess who live just east of the Pecos River in Comstock have recently opened [Val Verde Paddlesports](#). They offer guided tours of rock art

sites along the Pecos and Devils River and can give expert information about what else there is to see in the area. Their website link is above, or you can reach them at 830-313-2977 or info@wpaddlesports.com.



Pictographs, including human figure with antlers



Mystery images

If you'd like to read more about the rock art of the Lower Pecos River there are several books we can recommend including [*"The Rock Art of Texas Indians"*](#) by F. Kirkland and W.W. Newcomb and [*"Rock Art of the Lower Pecos"*](#) by Carolyn Boyd.

There are also some informative websites dedicated to the study of the rock art of the Lower Pecos, the best of which is probably [Texas Beyond History](#).

One final note. These rock art sites are of incredible historic importance. They deserve to be respected and protected. The old adage of "take only photos and leave only footprints" applies here.



Louis, Linda, Dana and John at the end of a great week of work, hiking, paddling and camaraderie.

The End

Buffalo Bayou - Allen's Landing to the Ship Channel

by
Linda Gorski and Louis Aulbach

This is the second in a series of short articles to whet your appetites for an upcoming trip Louis Aulbach has promised to lead for members of the canoe club along Buffalo Bayou from Allen's Landing. Watch the newsletter and trip announcements for more information.

In last month's newsletter you read about a paddling trip on Buffalo Bayou from the put in at Allen's Landing at the foot of Main Street west to Studemont Street. This wonderful stretch of the bayou takes you through the heart of downtown Houston and offers unique glimpses of the spectacular modern architecture and beautifully landscaped slopes on both banks.

This month we will highlight a paddle that takes you from Allen's Landing east on Buffalo Bayou toward the Ship Channel. Along this section of the bayou lie the ghostly relics of an earlier industrial age. The old and rotting bulkheads, wharves, factories and warehouses covered with a tangled and wild jungle of kudzo, trees and other tropical foliage are in stark contrast to the sleek modern architecture we saw to the west of the put in.

That contrast is immediately apparent as soon as you pass the modern bulkheads at Allen's Landing.

Look to your right and you'll see the iconic pea green International Coffee Building, a weathered hulk of its former self. The building was constructed in 1907 as the International Coffee Co. It was acquired by the W. D. Cleveland Wholesale Grocery Company in 1914 and operated until the early 1930's. In the late 1960's, the building was turned into a psychedelic music venue called the Love Street Light Circus by none other than David Addickes, Houston artist and sculptor of the Sam Houston statue in Huntsville. This building has been empty since the 1970s but has recently been purchased by the Buffalo Bayou Partnership which has plans to renovate it. (See more about this building in another article in this newsletter)



International Coffee Building

Photo by Linda Gorski

Heading further down the bayou we pass stark remains of this old warehouse on the right which was the former Schumacher Warehouse. The warehouse stands on the site of the Schulte Brewery, one of the first breweries in Houston and a popular drinking spot in the 19th century.



Schumacher Warehouse

Photo by Linda Gorski



Minute Maid Park

Photo by Linda Gorski

You might only see this next very recognizable modern structure paddling back to the put in. Minute Maid Park is home to Houston Astros. Opened in 2000, it was officially named the Ballpark at Union Station since it was built on the site of Union Station and its rail yard.

The Gabel Street Electrical Plant provided Houston with all of electrical power from the late 1890's until 1924 when another plant was built in Pasadena. Water was pumped from the bayou through these pipes into the cooling towers in order to dissipate the heat produced by the dynamos.



Cooling pipes for Gabel Street Electric Station

Photo by Linda Gorski



GH&H Railway bridge.

Photo by Linda Gorski

The Galveston and Houston Junction Railway built the first railroad bridge across Buffalo Bayou at this location in 1865 to connect with the H&TC Railroad on the north side of the bayou. The G&HJ merged with the GH&H Railway in 1871.

Erected in 1932 to replace a dilapidated steel swing bridge, the McKee Street bridge is a reinforced concrete bridge with partial through girders that rise in parabolic arches above the roadway. Artist Kirk Farris was commissioned to paint the bridge in 1985 and it has become a landmark since.



McKee Street Bridge

Photo by Linda Gorski



The Bayou City Compress, located on the north bank of Buffalo Bayou, was the largest cotton compress in Houston during the late



Old Wharf Structure on location of Bayou City Compress and Dock

Photo by Linda Gorski

1890's and early 20th century. For decades cotton producers and buyers throughout the South brought large bales of loosely packed cotton lint to cotton compresses where they were transformed into small, concrete-like bales ready for shipment to textile mills throughout the world. Although it shipped the majority of its cotton through the rail yard behind it, there was a loading dock located near this same spot for access to the bayou.

These railroad ties which have been eroded out of the north bank of Buffalo Bayou are the remains of the Texas Western Narrow Gauge bridge across Buffalo Bayou. The TWNG operated during the last quarter of the 19th century and brought cotton and other products from the farmland near Pattison and Sealy. The straight roadway of Westheimer Road, beyond the Galleria, follows the former TWNG right of way.



Texas and West Narrow Gauge roadbed exposed in the bank of the bayou.

Photo by Linda Gorski



Louis Aulbach paddling under the Houston Belt and Terminal Drawbridge

Photo by Linda Gorski

The Houston Belt and Terminal Railway built this drawbridge across Buffalo Bayou in 1913. The bridge, called a Strauss Bascule bridge, was designed by Joseph Strauss who also designed and built the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. The Highway 59 overpass through Frost Town is built directly over this bridge.

The concrete silos of the former Houston Shell and Concrete facility now mark the location of a proposed pocket park on the Hike and Bike Trail that runs along the south bank of Buffalo Bayou from Jensen Drive to Lockwood Avenue.



Silos of the former Houston Shell and Concrete Company



The Houston Belt and Terminal Railway bridge, just downstream of Hidalgo Park, marks the beginning of the Houston Ship Channel and the Port of Houston.

Bridge above the Turning Basin

Photo by Linda Gorski

The Port of Houston and the Houston Ship Channel are protected zones. Do not paddle beyond the H&BT bridge into this area.

The best time to paddle this section of the bayou is in the late winter or early spring when the dense foliage on both banks is down and you can see more of the ruins that lie beneath, and perhaps even beach your canoe or kayak and hike up the banks to see some of the structures close up. If you fancy yourself a photographer, this section of the bayou offers some real photo ops that most people in Houston have never and will never see.



End of the Line for paddlers.

Photo by Linda Gorski

As I said last month, paddling Buffalo Bayou through the downtown area is not only an easy and enjoyable float, it's also a history lesson in itself. If you're interested in reading more about how Houston developed along the bayou before you paddle, go to Louis Aulbach's website at <http://users.hal-pc.org/~lfa/>, click on "Buffalo Bayou" and read many of the stories that will eventually become part of his book, *"Buffalo Bayou: An Echo of Houston's Wilderness Beginnings"*. Better still, join us for a paddle on this wonderful urban waterway.

The End

Two trips on the Old, Lost and Cutoff Rivers

August 15 and 30, 2009

by

Natalie Wiest

It had been a while since I'd paddled the Old/Lost/Cutoff river complex and it didn't take much coaxing by Dave Kitson to get me loading a boat and heading out; first on the 15th and then because we'd had such a good time, again on the 30th with more of our HCC friends.

Part of its appeal is the shade in the heat of our long, humid summer. It was just beautiful out there, and I think these trips should be done more often; always plenty of water and lots of cool stuff to see.

The put-in for the first trip is the 1409 highway crossing of Old River. It's a few miles north of I-10, from which one exits at highway 565 and heads north to 1409; then east about a mile and you're there. This works very well for an out-and back trip of whatever length you would like and you have Old River up and downstream; and the Cutoff from the downstream leg and not far from 1409.



Dave Kitson on the Old River

Photo by Natalie Wiest

You can see from the photos how serene the setting is, and this time of year expect to see wild hibiscus in bloom, and the nut and cypress trees setting their fall fruits. Big leaf-chewing grasshoppers were in evidence, and water bugs skittering about. The exotic bird of the trip was a swallow-tailed kite. One of them did a virtual tail-stand within 30' of the canoe, showing off its distinctive v-shaped tail, its white belly and neck, and its ability to get a drink from the river on the wing, just like the skimmers do on the bay. Its mate hovered above as I sat in astonishment, camera in my lap. What a beautiful sight to see, and I'm sorry I don't have the photographic evidence. I have posted another set of photos on [Webshots](#). (Click the link to see 19 more photos.)

There are interesting side routes to explore; and grazing cattle. Must have been Bevo's brother grazing beside the river with an impressive spread of long horns and a face marking just like the trademarked logo for University of Texas.

Part of Dave's exploratory urge is to offer day trips for the club, and we found an excellent place for a lunch stop off the Cutoff. Watch for his posting on the HCC site or listserv. It's a trip you can really enjoy – and shade and critters too.



Cattle peeking through the cypress knees

Photo by Natalie Wiest



Dave explores a side-passage.

Photo by Natalie Wiest

The second trip was August 30th, this time joined again by Dave, plus Paul Woodcock, his granddaughter Alexis, and Joe Coker. This time we met at the highway 565 exit; then unloaded boats at 1409 and shuttled a vehicle to the Hugo Point boat ramp, south about 2 miles from IH10. Map of that route is attached as we paddled one way south, making a jog through an interior lake none of us had paddled before and found loaded with swamp lilies (*crinum Americanum*) in bloom.



Pickerelweed in bloom.

Photo by Joe Coker



Map of paddles on Old/Lost and Cutoff Rivers.

Photo by Natalie Wiest

Pickerelweed was there in its purple glory; and this time, another camera crap-out for me, so photos are from Joe Coker. He's posted a complete set on his [Shutterfly](#) account. (Click the link to see 79 more photos.)

This was a 10 mile trip; after the 14-miler I dragged Paul on the week before (Pelican Island), I was pleased to see he was still game to paddle with me and we thoroughly enjoyed this trip as well.

The End

Cotton Lake in Summer

September 6 2009

by

Natalie Wiest

Cotton Lake area offers a place to paddle in the heat of summer, even without shade. A visit from my longtime friend Marilyn Kircus just had to have a little paddling adventure and this was the spot we chose. We were joined by my daughter Ellen, Tracy Caldwell and Dutch, Bill Cooke, Karel van Lookeran, Bob Griebel, Dave Kitson and Joe Coker

10 of us made this trip, meeting up at the gas station/convenience store at the highway 565 exit for I-10 east of Houston. We traveled south on 565, then east (well, a left turn) on Gou Hole Road and followed our noses on down to the Hugo Point boat launch. The launch has two busy concrete ramps for the motoring crowd, but it works well for canoes and kayaks too and has a nice big parking area to make access very easy.



Map of Cotton Lake

Photo by Natalie Wiest



Leaving the put in

Photo by Natalie Wiest

From the launch we headed south and on to Old River Lake for a short distance, then west on Red Bayou; south on Cross Bayou; southwest on Trinity Bay, and returning north on Red Bayou.

Navigation is fairly tricky, but at least once you are on the bayous south of Cotton Lake you can't wander too far afield as there are dikes surrounding off-limits areas to the east and west.



This old tower marks the entrance to Red Bayou at Old River Lake.



Kayakers head south

Photo by Natalie Wiest



Photo by Natalie Wiest

This is almost exclusively coastal marshland, with tall grasses that limit your vision and make navigation a challenge. There are few places to get out of your boat, but a shell midden right on the bay makes a nice spot for 10 people to eat their lunches.



Lunch on a shell midden

Photo by Natalie Wiest



Lodge stripped to its concrete foundations and pilings by Hurricane Ike.

Photo by Natalie Wiest

This area got hit hard by Ike, but the natural areas seem to have recovered very nicely. The fancy hunting/fishing lodge that graced the southern part of the bayou was swept bare to its concrete foundation and pilings.

It was glassy flat and calm like a mirror as we paddled out on to Trinity Bay, over shallow water and seagrass beds. The water was clear enough there I got to see a ray or skate swimming along right next to my boat – and an even quicker glance at a very sizable critter chewing down on a hapless 12" fish. I'm sorry I didn't get a better look – was it an alligator, a redfish, what other kind of large

predator?

The black dots I'd first taken for tree stumps in the shallow area proved to be a sizable flock of brown pelicans. I'm sure they were feasting too. Back in the swamps several of the party got to see a least bittern that held obligingly still for picture taking, and black simmers and black-necked stilts among the gulls.



Relaxing after a long paddle

Photo by Natalie Wiest



Flock of brown pelicans

Photo by Natalie Wiest

This trip got a bit longer than I'd anticipated. Dutch's GPS registered 12 miles for this one. As we paddled along, big dark storm clouds were building and sure enough, the wall of water I spotted first north of the I-10 bridge on Old River Lake caught us before we could get to the takeout. Ellen, who had refused to hold our umbrella in a position to facilitate sailing

the canoe, wasn't so shy about holding it overhead as the rain pelted all the rest of us.

All in all, another wonderful day on the water. It's a beautiful day out there, don't miss another week without paddling!

The End

Pelican Island Circumnavigation Summer 2009 Issue 2

August 23, 2009

by

Natalie Wiest

Well, one good turn deserved another around Pelican Island, and this time I had 10 companions for the circumnavigation of August 23. This time I was joined by John Bayduss, Dave Kitson, Joe Coker, Ken Anderson, Paul Woodcock, Karen van Lookeran, Mike Pollard, Sondra Fabian and Barton Hill.

We met at the Texas A&M University at Galveston shell beach beginning at 8:30. That is, I thought I'd be there early and arrived prior to 8:15. To my astonishment I found Paul Woodcock and John Bayduss already arrived and just chomping at the bit to get going. A few stragglers and Houston traffic victims arrived a bit later so it was 9:30 until the assembled group pushed off for points known and unknown. It was truly a lovely day on the water – who says there isn't enough water to paddle or that it's too hot to paddle on Gulf coast Texas this time of year? Surely none of us believed that, before or after.



Map of Pelican Island paddle route

Map by Natalie Wiest

We paddled west under the 51st Street causeway, then north toward Texas City.



Getting underway

Photo by Joe Coker

The group was frisky enough and willing to go for a slightly (?) longer route and a lunch break at the Texas City Dike. It's still closed to wheeled vehicle traffic, so a perfectly nice sand beach was all ours.



A brief delay for a passing tanker

Photo by Joe Coker

We delayed to let a passing tanker head up the Texas City Channel (hey, they're a lot bigger and faster than we are, and can't stop or turn in their narrow channel) and rounded the bend into headwinds to sit for our repast and watch the traffic in Houston Ship Channel, and the Bolivar ferries on their transit. There were quite a few fishermen about in their motorboats, bobbing and fishing where the fishing pier and baitshop used to be before Ike.

Apres lunch we paddled the east shore of Pelican Island and were rewarded for the effort by sight of the largest flock of brown pelicans I've ever seen; accompanied by a goodly number of bright pink roseate spoonbills. Unfortunately for me, my camera had seized up by then, but Joe Coker has shared his great pictures of the birds and the trip for your enjoyment.



Perfect spot for lunch

Photo by Joe Coker



Roseate Spoonbills and brown pelicans bursting into flight as we paddle by.

Photo by Joe Coker

The area near Sea Wolf Park was as bouncy and boisterous as usual. Coast Guard patrol boats, PWC, cabin cruisers, ferries, and Houston Ship Channel and Galveston Channel boat traffic churned up plenty of wake. Joe and several of the others paddled out to take a closer look at the concrete ship The Selma. For more information on the Selma, for those of you of historic bent, try this Website:

<http://www.crystalbeach.com/selma.htm> Thanks to the sharp eyes of Dave Kitson who found the article in the first place.



Concrete Ship the Selma.

Photo by Joe Coker

Several of the rest of us were feeling the effects of the distance by then and glad to wait for the return of the more frisky ones to round the point at the Park and pull in for another rest break.

We chugged on down the channel and returned to campus about 3 p.m. Dolphins showed their smiley faces and arched backs along the way; an immense cruise ship was loading at the dock and getting ready for a trip into the Gulf. This time there was less action at the docks along the way, and no worrisome boats pulling in and out across our path – and vice versa. We were all feeling the effects of that extended paddle that pushed our mileage to 14. A pleasant repast was had afterwards at [The Spot](#), including a live band. Dutch joined us there, having had to suffer the indignity of being on call that day so he could only watch us paddle from the ferry and land.

It was a great day on the water, y'all, wish you could have been there too.

I've posted more of Joe's photos and some of my own to [my Webshots site](#).

The End

Labor Day Weekend on the Sabine River

September 5 - 7, 2009

by
Tisha Matticks

Just like clockwork, Labor Day Weekend 2009 found some 200 folks paddling in the annual bash on the Sabine River. Some of us arrived on Friday night and camped under the bridge. The others arrived Saturday morning and started to shuttle their vehicles to the take-out point.

It was a colorful morning, everyone getting ready for our three day, two night trip. It was hot, but a good breeze was blowing all day.



One couple beats the heat on the Sabine River trip.



Cajuns and Texans get ready to paddle the Sabine.

All photos by Tisha Matticks

Clouds started moving in and we made camp and set up our tents just in time. It poured down for about an hour on our first campsite... Shortly after, meals were cooked and a campfire was on it's way.



First campsite.



Cecelia Gill and her son Morgan find a way to keep cool. Cecelia is holding small clams.

The next day was beautiful, sunny, low breeze, not like the day before, it was very,very hot... We took several breaks on this Sunday prior to reaching our second campsite.

Darren Gaebel agreed to carry the beer and wine coolers.



Darren Gaebel waits his turn on the rope swing

Then we had a neighbor join us, Cheryl Neil. She had a blast. Philip and I were on the Sabine River for Memorial Weekend and we felt it safe to invite a beginner. Cheryl used one of our kayaks since Philip & I decided to use one of our canoes for the weekend.



Darren Gaebel and his Yellow Submarine carrying the wine and beer coolers.

He and others found a hanging rope to jump into the river to cool off.



Cheryl Neil enjoyed paddling the Mattick's kayak.



Campsite on the Sabine River.

That night was simply gorgeous, we had a sing-a-long, most of us would start a song and could not finish it, due to the lack of knowing the words... But we made do and had a great bonfire going.

We woke up on Monday to a foggy, foggy morning. We could not even see the other side of the river. And through the course of our trip we did encounter several birds, fish, an otter, snakes and lots of huge logs in the water and on the surface of the river's water.



The Margarita tent shrouded in fog.



We all seemed to enjoy our Labor Day Weekend and I do believe I can speak for all of us. We had a fantastic time, we enjoyed



**Tisha and Phil Matticks in their
tandem canoe on the Sabine**

each others company and enjoyed making
new friends. Can't wait til next year and hope
you can join us next time!

Lots more pictures available on [My Facebook](#), Tisha Matticks.

The End