



# *The Voyageur's Companion*

Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Canoe Club

[www.rockymountaincanoecub.org](http://www.rockymountaincanoecub.org)

**November 2013**

**Jeanne Willson, editor**

## **The View Down River**

Bill Ashworth, RMCC President

Well, with most of the club events of 2013 behind us, I'm happy to report that it's been a spectacular season of boating, despite a rather dry winter in the Rockies. Thanks to all of you for your active participation, especially to the trip coordinators who made these trips possible. I'll review the trips and statistics in detail for the November annual meeting, but I want to make a special note of the July Rendezvous at Radium. With nearly 60 folks attending AND the return of the Dutch oven cooking competition, it was a really fun and memorable weekend.

But the year's not quite over yet, with a couple of out-of-state (and out-of-country) trips (Quetico and Canyonlands) underway in early September and the annual Ruby-Horsethief Class I canoe camping trip near the end of the month. And on November 16, we'll hold the Annual Meeting at Jeanne's Place in southeast Denver, where we'll hold an election for club officers, watch paddling slideshows, and enjoy a potluck dinner. More details to follow in October. Anyone interested in taking on a more active role for next year should contact me.

Finally, while the club is enjoying strong membership with good retention, our continuing success will depend on being able to offer interesting trips. So where do you want to go? Think about that and bring (or send) paddling destination suggestions to the Permit Party in mid-January. This summer saw a new trip on the calendar (5 Wyoming Rivers in 5 Days) and there are several others in the works for next year, along with the old favorites. But we'd really like to know where the members want to paddle – so let us know!

Keep on paddlin'

Bill Ashworth, RMCC President

## **5 Wyoming Rivers in 5 Days – June 2013**

My wife Kathy and I did this trip in 2007 with a California canoe club I'd belonged to before moving to Colorado and we loved it so much we decided to repeat it for our Colorado paddling buddies. Our mid-June timing was perfect with great flows on all the rivers we paddled; the Greys, the Hoback, the Gros Ventre, the scenic Snake, and the Buffalo Fork. The seventeen of us used two base camps to explore these Class II rivers and our NPS Gros Ventre campground won the grand prize: a perfect Grand Teton view AND bison, moose, and elk scat; the Trifecta!

The Jackson Hole/Grand Tetons region is a fantastic setting for some of the best canoeing rivers in the west. We'll definitely do this again in a couple of years!

### **Caption for photo: Launching on the Buffalo Fork River**

Kneeling: Janet M, Ken W, Pauline E, Chet P, Kathryn M, Janet M

Standing: Lyn B, Jeanne Y, Pam N, Kathy A, Kerry E, Doug H, Jeanne W

Not pictured: Bill A, Suzie K, John M

## What to Keep in Your Car for Emergencies

Jeanne Willson

Consider each of the following. You'll probably never need much of this stuff. Still ...

Cell phone, possibly a pre-paid emergency-only cell phone

Cell phone car charger

Good, useful and well-stocked first aid kit stored out of the sun/heat. Replace adhesive bandages often – they won't stick if they have gotten too hot for too long. Bring necessary medications.

Waterproof flashlight with extra batteries, and/or wind-up flashlight

1A10BC or 2A10BC multipurpose fire extinguisher

Two or three reflective triangles (easier to deploy than roadside flares), and flares. If your car breaks down, place one triangle 10 feet behind your vehicle and then the next 100 feet behind. Hold the triangles in front of you as you walk to help stay visible to oncoming traffic.

Information: numbers of your insurance carrier or agent. Paper and working pen to take notes (description, insurance information) of other vehicles involved in an accident with your car or for writing down instructions from 911, or directions.

More information: Phone numbers of people you could need to call in an emergency (next door neighbor, friend, parents or kids, (speed dial doesn't work on someone else's phone), roadside assistance provider. Consider laminating that information. Paper to leave a message – consider a Magic Marker for visibility and rain-proofness. Pencil and Notepad — You might need this in case of a car accident, so you can jot down the other driver's information.

Non-American-Express credit card to buy gas in the middle of nowhere in the middle of the night on the way to the put-in.

### **Tires:**

Foam tire sealant (pressurized can) for minor punctures.

Major punctures: portable air compressor that runs off car battery/cig lighter, and tire sealant (about \$60); should have on all dirt road travel; you'll need it if you run out of pressurized tire sealant. Not the best for floatbag inflation, though.

Tire pressure gauge: periodically use it to make sure your spare tire isn't also flat. I am talking yearly or better, not every decade. You should also make sure you have everything you need to change a tire at your disposal. This includes a jack and a lug nut wrench or tire iron; check your owner's manual to find out where they are located.

Owner's manual.

Snow scraper, small shovel, and a snowbrush; winter gloves, coats, hats as appropriate.

Sand or cat litter as the pebbly material can be used to create traction.

Long-burning candle in a tin coffee can to help generate light and heat. Keep a set of matches in a waterproof container

Auto Escape Tool — In case your car is submerged in water, this gadget has two small steel tips designed to break a window with one or two blows, and a sharp blade to slice through seatbelts. Some models are fluorescent, which makes them more visible in the dark or under murky water. Usually this tool can be clipped to your keychain, or attached to your visor.

Blanket — Use it to cover hot car seats in the summer months, or to stay warm should you get stranded in the winter.

Cleaning Items — wet wipes, tissues and plastic trash bags — good for trash or a carsick child.

Extra (Hidden) Cash — Buy gas to get you home if you lost your wallet. It's happened. I'm just sayin'.

First-aid Kit — Get two that are well-equipped — one that can easily be reached from the front seat and one for the back seat. Each should contain antiseptic; cleanser and ointment packets; bandages; scissors; tweezers; gauze; instant cold packs; latex gloves and a first-aid guide.

Flashlight or two — Wind up or battery; cylinder, headlamp, or lantern. Or all three.

Jumper Cables — Look for the compact, coiled type that fit neatly into their own bag. 12 feet long, at least.

Matches — Have 3 ways to make a fire – matches, flint, butane lighter

Meal Kit — Keep non-perishable items like packs of crackers, dried fruit, peanut butter, energy bars and even canned tuna with pop-top lids in your car.

Maps — City and state. I know you have a GPS but bring the maps anyway, ok?

Telephone Book — Or program the number to Google 411 into your phone — 46645. Just send a text with the business name (or a general term), city and state to this number, and the address and phone number will be sent back to you — for free (though standard text message rates apply).

Tools – There's not much on a car that you can fix these days but some screwdrivers and a multi-tool do get some use. Especially the bottle opener. Hey, that is a tool.

Towel — protect steering wheels and seats from the sun.

Water — Carry a plastic jug full of water to drink and a spray bottle to provide a quenching mist in extreme heat. In case your engine overheats, that water can also be the lifesaver for your car.

Whistle. You know what to do.

# The Ashworth Angle: Year in review

Bill Ashworth, President

## RMCC *State of the Paddling Union 2013:*

### Thanks!

- Most importantly, to all the **Trip Coordinators** (a record **FOURTEEN**) whose efforts made all our Club trips possible;
- To Jeanne Willson for generously opening her home for **both Club potlucks (Jan Permit party and Nov Annual Mtg)**;
- To all our **tireless club officers** who have agreed to stand for re-election: Jeanne Willson as Newsletter editor, Doug Hurcomb as Quartermaster, Kathryn Mutz as Treasurer, and Anne Fiore as Webmaster and your humble servant as President;
- To Jerry Nolan who has cut back on this canoeing but continues to act as our unofficial Conservation blogger.

### Trips and Events

Once again, this year I'm delighted to announce that the number of and participation in our scheduled outings remains strong and growing. To wit:

No. of outings and events:	2011 (11)	2012 (24)	<b>2013 (24)</b>
No. of participants:	2011 (185)	2012 (270)	<b>2013 (303)</b>
No. of trip coordinators	2011 (6)	2012 (10)	<b>2013 (14)</b>

- Here's a summary to the outing and events, no. of participants, and coordinators:
- **January:** Permit Party (30, J. Willson);
- **April:** Joint Clubs Paddle (20, B. Ashworth); San Juan (10, K. Amundson);
- **May:** Boat Rigging and Packing Class (20, B. Ashworth); Niobrara (12 K. Edwards); Joint Canoe Classes with Poudre Paddlers (12, E. Hermann);
- **June:** South Platte (0 – scrubbed for wind, A. Fiore); North Platte 6 Mile Gap (10, F. Hurcomb); North Platte Sanger to I-80 (6, J. Mallory); Rio Grande Ute Canyon (0 – scrubbed for low water, K. Amundson); Wyoming 5 Rivers (17, B. Ashworth);
- **July:** Yampa Canyon (14, K. Amundson/P. Noe), Gross Reservoir (11, K. Ashworth/K. Mutz)
- **August:** Louise led a car-camping canoe trip on the Colorado above Moab
- **September:** John M. couldn't do the Green in Canyonlands and substituted the Colorado in Canyonlands. It's all good.
- **October:** Bill ran his fall Loma to Westwater trip

We were fortunate to have Poudre Paddler's excellent instruction corps provide our Basic Canoeing classes this year owing to Jeff Oxenford's time and talent's being lured away by the start-up Paddling Club he's founding at his daughter's Golden high school. Thanks again Eric, Mike, Will, and Deb from Poudre! Our first Canoe Rigging and Packing class was well received and well attended and will be repeated in coming years.

### Membership

Our membership grew this last year (after dipping the previous year) and when secondary members (generally spouses) are added, we have over 150 folks on our rolls as paid up members.

No. of households:	2011 (100)	2012 (90)	<b>2013 (112)</b>
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### Finances

Per the attached report from Kathryn, our Treasurer, the club's finances are doing fine, validating our decision two years ago to reduce our annual dues from \$20 to \$10. Interestingly, our friends to the North at Poudre Paddlers have done the same thing. And unlike last year, where we had a slight (\$20) deficit, this year we have about a \$500 surplus, year over year. We'll try to whittle that down with the beer and pizza at the Annual Meeting in November ☺.

**Up close and ... oh, that rock is WAY too close!**

**-or-**

**A philosophy to live by: pin your heart on your sleeve NOT your boat on a rock**

We (Bill and Kathy) were thrilled to get a slot on Pam N's Yampa permit this summer and it was a wonderful trip. The low water for the first couple of days though meant A LOT of rock dodging and agonizing slides over "growlers". We had no difficulties on the named rapids but just below Big Joe we managed to get our Old Town Adirondack pinned. Kathy was flushed out but I clambered over the hull onto the offending rock. From there I was able connect my 75ft throw bag to my 30ft bow painter and throw it out into the current where one of our kayakers was able to pick it up and paddle it to the river right shore. However, no amount of pulling by the able crew assembled would budge the pinned boat. Another crew on river left was unable to get another throw bag to me and eventually paddled to the other side where they got a bag to me which I attached to my stern painter. By positioning themselves upstream from the first party, only a small amount of pull was needed to move the canoe and start it headed downstream again. Followed by me. The bottom line: Belnap river map and Swiss Army knife lost on the capsize and swim (\$35); a life lesson in teamwork and leverage (priceless).

Treasurer's Report – Rocky Mountain Canoe Club 2013 Financial Summary

**Beginning Cash \$5,998.23**

***Receipts:***

Dues 2013 \$1,020.00  
Dues 2014 \$40.00  
Miscellaneous \$50.00  
Total Receipts \$1,110.00

***Disbursements***

Newsletter \$0.00  
Internet -\$72.00  
Dues (ACA) \$0.00  
Brochures \$0.00  
Events -\$238.73  
Other\* -\$255.60  
**Total Disbursements - \$566.33**  
**Ending Cash \$6,541.90**

<b>Net Change -\$543.67</b>
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Respectfully submitted,  
Kathryn Mutz, Treasurer RMCC  
2013

## Looking forward

It's been a pleasure to serve as your Club President this year and Kathy and I look forward to an even better year next year should I be returned to office. Here's hoping to see you at the Fall and Winter potlucks and somewhere on a river next season.

Specific goals for next year

- Increase the number day trips and events
- Move the website to a more stable and accessible platform

Keep on paddlin'

Bill Ashworth, RMCC President 2013

## Yampa Canyon Trip Presents Challenges – June 30 to July 5, 2013

Karen Amundson

Our first challenge was deciding whether we would have enough water for the June 30 Yampa Canyon (YC) trip on Pam Noe's permit. The head river ranger at Dinosaur National Monument said canoes/kayaks could make it if we started with at least 500cfs. We had about 720 at the put-in and 500 when we got to the confluence with the Green. As we did a lot of rock dodging, we would not want it any lower. In the past, Jill Stecker had given a '700+cfs at the put-in' rule, and we found that to be agreeable.

Day 1 was uneventful after we finally got our vehicles lined up for the shuttle and slowly got onto the river. We stopped soon to see the Shank Dugout Cabin and his corral for captured wild horses, and after another river mile we entered the scenic canyon. All of our camps were the same as our delightful 2009 YC trip, except this time we had Teepee Camp the first night instead of Ponderosa. We started our YC Swim Club on a nice wave train at Teepee, but the beach at Ponderosa and its closer tent sites make it a better camp for future picks.

Day 2 was a big 17 miles to Harding Hole #2 and included several class II and III rapids. One tandem flipped, but recovered quickly. Then the Presidential pair pinned their canoe on a rock in the middle of the river. Janet Mallory's kayak was useful in getting a throw bag stretched from Bill Ashworth's canoe to the right bank. And after a trio waded river left to get another bag to Bill – who luckily was on the rock that captured his canoe – we also dragged that bag over to river right. With 8 of us pulling on 2 ropes, up- and down-stream of the boat, we finally got the boat to move off of the boulder. It took an hour of hard work by all.

Kathy Ashworth and I did a short hike up Johnson Canyon, just a mile short of our lovely Harding Hole #2 camp (#1 has a less rocky landing). The canyon was pretty and easy to walk and deserves further exploration. We were the only group in Harding Hole, and on the entire Yampa as well it seems. Half the crew did a morning hike up Bull Canyon to the top for views, and then we embarked on the day's trip

Day 3 and the morning of Day 4 were spent meandering through very scenic colorful canyons, with the Grand Overhang, Cleopatra's Couch, and Tiger Wall the named features. We did a ¼ mile hike to Signature Cave where there were petroglyphs, early river runner signatures, and great silhouette photos. Mantle Cave also required a short hike and displayed about 50 varying Fremont Indian food storage units along with good signage to explain them. We picked the best landing and tent sites from between Laddie Park #1 and #2 and got into

full Swim Club mode, including demonstration of various paddle strokes (without paddles... like air guitar) and a bit of water ballet.

Before noon on Day 4 we arrived at Warm Springs Rapid. The entry was steeper than in 2009, with two new huge boulders positioned so they were almost sure to flip you. Your best bet would be fairly high water with a raft. It is unclear whether there would be a water level at all friendly to canoes and kayaks. We all portaged about 30 yards - - the shortest distance possible as it was hard carrying canoes and gear among the jumble of rocks. A few people pumped spring water at the end of the main rapid, and we continued on to the beautiful Box Elder #3 camp.

It had a long, deep, gorgeous beach of the finest sand and numerous tent sites among the many trees. But alas, we were cajoled into complacency (did not tie up all canoes and all equipment right away) and were hit by a microburst around 7 pm just as some of us were starting to rope up the canoes. The microburst was strong enough to blow canoes up into the air, creating a wall of flying canoes. I was struck on a knee and a forearm by something and knocked out of my chair, watched helplessly as my canoe ended up in the river. Luckily it was blowing upstream and Hugh O'Neill waded in far enough to get it. Janet was hit in the back of the head by a canoe, and Jeanne Willson took a hit to her forehead and upper arm. Wendy Phillips was running and a canoe flew over her head, narrowly missing her. Two rolltop tables and other small tables and gear were mangled, and Pam's ski poles – stuck deep in the sand to secure her boat – were badly bent. Jeanne retrieved various peoples' loose items from the river, Dave Flanigan collected numerous things under a tipped over canoe, and Candace Winkle swam across the river to retrieve items.

After getting my wounds bandaged, I dragged my canoe 30 yards to a stout tree and tied it. Others followed suit. People checked and rebuilt tents. The wind had disappeared and two people decided that we would not get another sand-blasting wind. An hour or more went by and then the winds picked up quickly. Everyone grabbed an item or two and dashed to their tents as the second microburst hit us. Most of us sat spread eagle trying to pin the bottom of tents down, but with arms up to keep the wind from flattening tents. Jerry N. was setting his tent up when he was hit by a dust devil that lifted his tent over a tree, carried it 50 yards and threw it in the river. The tent poles were never found. We re-grouped to insure that everyone was OK and then gradually retired, many of us exhausted and shaken.

Day 5 was busy with a short river mile to Sand Canyon where we all hiked part way into a slot canyon but only 5 people made it up the slick slope and continued a half mile to a cool natural bridge. Dave fetched a throw rope to help them descend, and we would want to use one on any future trips so everyone could ascend past the tough spot. Another mile down the river we reached the confluence and saw a raft party. We explored and found petroglyphs above a talus slope on Steamboat Rock. Then we stopped for water at Echo Park and lunch a mile further with a nice view of Mitten Park Fault's twisted rock layers.

Jones Hole #2 camp was pleasant, with no sign of ring-tailed cats or the resident skunk from 2009. 8 of us hiked 2 miles up to tiny Ely Creek and really enjoyed the butt-dam waterfall. A few of us went further to the nice petroglyphs. Jones Creek is less than a mile into Utah, so Art Breda had a one-day fishing permit and caught/released 30 trout. A park service guy from the #3 camp – full of veterans in a park-sponsored tamarisk work party – came over and told us all about the tamarisk beetles and how much good effect they were having in Dinosaur N.M.

Day 6 would be our longest at 19 miles, including a few class II rapids, then windy flats, and 3 class III's in the final 8 miles. Jeanne's partially healed leg – her fibula was fractured in early March – was acting up so we left her at the Rainbow Park ramp where we had lunch. The Ashworths tracked her down later. So for the home stretch, the 13 of us played leap frog with 2 rafting parties through the 4 named rapids, impressing them and ourselves with nary a flip this time.

Probably Candace and Dave (Breckenridge) were the most improved tandem team, with Art and Laurie (New Castle) a close 2<sup>nd</sup>. Wendy was only on her 2<sup>nd</sup> river, but in good hands with Scott McDonald and his

Dimension. While Pam had not done class III's prior to YC in a solo canoe, she looked like a pro in her borrowed Prodigy X. Hugh was often in the lead, and Jerry usually handled sweep, including the rescue of one (had to tie her boat to his) person trying out a solo in the windy flats. Nine people had never done the YC; Bill and Jerry did it decades ago, and Scott, Jeanne and I had been on the good 2009 trip where 8 out of 10 of us actually ran Warm Springs Rapid and nobody flipped on the entire trip.

We had mixed emotions upon reaching the Split Mountain take-out. It is hard to leave the river, but pinned boats, portages, and multiple microbursts had worn us down some. Thoughts of being served at restaurants and sleeping in secure beds were starting to sound good. All in all, it truly was a good group of 14 people, as everyone had contributed selflessly to manage the trip's challenges and were rewarded by the beautiful canyons and fun rapids.

## Rocky Mountain Canoe Club Information

### CLUB CONTACTS

President	Bill Ashworth
Treasurer	Kathryn Mutz
Newsletter	Jeanne Willson
Schedule, Web	Carol Duecker
Membership	Gene Ehlers
Website	Anne Fiore
Conservation News Roundup /	Jerry Nolan
Quartermaster	Doug Hurcomb



***In This Issue:*** Five Days/Five Rivers; The Rio Grande; What to keep in your car

**Website:** <http://www.rockymountaincanooclub.org>

**Membership:** \$10 per year, per household. See Membership section of our website for forms and information.

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