



The Voyageur's Companion

Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Canoe Club
www.rockymountaincanoecub.org

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February 2010 issue

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Jeanne Willson, editor

Meet the Press-idents

Karen and Jim Baker-Jarvis

We look forward to serve you as the co-presidents of the club for the next year. Karen Amundson did a fantastic job in her years leading the club, as did all of the other past officers over the years. Bill and Kathy Ashworth hosted a very successful permit party Jan 16; we would like to thank them for their hospitality.

The officers also met and decided to buy some club equipment: emergency locator beacon(s), throw ropes, smaller toilets. We also decided to post the club equipment (and its location) on the website. Gail Campbell gave us an overview of tee shirts we could get silkscreened, and we are in the process of selecting shirt type, sizes, and logo/picture. Thank you, Gail.

As for our values, we would like to emphasize are safety, companionship, having fun, and adventure. The club over the years has a great safety record. This is due to the many competent club members who volunteer as trip coordinators. However, we never should let our guard down. Just because few major events have happened does not mean something will not happen in the future. There's always a balance between safety and pressing one's limits.

TAKE NOTE!

Swiftwater rescue classes to be taught this summer

Details are still being worked out, but we will be offering one or two classes in paddler and boat rescue. The classes will be taught by an ACA-Certified Swiftwater Rescue instructor. Would you like to learn:

- How to use mechanical advantage to save a pinned boat
- How to rescue a swimming paddler, or a stuck or trapped paddler
- How to train others to prevent accidents and to respond well when accidents occur
- How to direct others in your group to act as a team in a rescue situation
- How to use a throw rope effectively and safely
- ... and many other skills?

If so, look for final dates, probably in May and again at the summer Rendezvous in July, depending on demand.

Our safety fair will happen this April. Please attend! It will be indoors at the George Meyers pool in Arvada. It's much more fun than you might think! Watch for details in your email.



A critical skill we all need is basic first aid with appropriate equipment: CPR, anaphylactic shock from bee sting, nuts, or other allergy, snake bites, broken bones etc.

Red Cross runs classes and the Colorado Mountain Club (CMC) runs some great wilderness-oriented training that is very appropriate for our club, too. We recommend that someone on each trip has a copy of the book *Medicine for Mountaineering*.

To increase our safety skills, this year we hope to run a one-day swiftwater rescue class. In addition, Greg Jankowski volunteered to organize a safety

fair in the Meyers pool in April. We also hope to have a basics paddling class again this year and maybe a whitewater class. We plan to set up an informal Golden/Lyons canoe night this spring where we can meet either at the Golden course or Lyons course, depending on water levels.

We thought we'd share some stories about ourselves so that you can get to know us better. This issue is Jim's turn; hopefully, Karen will write more for the next newsletter.

Jim speaks:

Growing up in Minnesota, my Dad bought our family of 10 kids an aluminum canoe one summer when I was about 12 years old in exchange for us five boys moving about 100 tons of dirt in our backyard by wheel barrow for landscaping purposes. My four brothers and I constantly canoed and fished the lakes and rivers of NW Wisconsin by our cabin. Being in Minnesota, canoeing was "cool".

The Green River through Dinosaur, 2009



Quiet waters near the monastery on Rio Chama



I did my first major river trip to Canada with a friend in 1968 when I was 18 to the Peace River in British Columbia. In our senior year in high school a friend and I developed a plan to start on the Parsnip River in British Columbia, canoe the Peace River through Alberta and maybe go further all in one summer. In early June we packed our gear and canoe into our 1950 Chrysler and drove the 2500 miles up to the put in. We looked at the swollen Parsnip River running fast, in flood stage, and jammed with logs and floating debris. We asked a local ranger if we could park

our car at his ranger station until we were finished. He said no and said don't get caught in a log jam as it will most likely be fatal. That night reality started to creep into my mind and I, for the first time, wondered "what we were doing?"

We made a good decision the next day and parked our car at a local gas station and hitch-hiked up the Alaska Highway to wait until the river calmed a bit. Our second ride was with some kids who had stolen a car in Fort St. John. They hit speeds up to 110 miles/hour on the gravel Alaska Highway. We finally begged out at Muncho Lake and in a few more days finally made it to Alaska and then headed right back on a bus to find a much better river. Given the two weeks we had lost, we only made it almost the full extent of the Peace River to Fort Vermilion (I believe 500-700 miles). I took a bus and got the car and drove back to get my friend and gear. It was a real adventure with no support and little experience.

I first got into whitewater canoeing in 1970 with the Minnesota Rovers outing club. We had a lot of intense trips, but survived. A couple of trips stand out. One was a trip to the Kettle River (Hell's Gate) class 3- 3+) and running the rapids in flood stage, in a complete snowstorm. Of course we all swam many times). Later I met my wife Karen in 1975 on this same section of river, paddling a closed C-2 together.

Another trip that stands out is a canoe trip to the Flambeau River in Wisconsin. The class 2-3 river was in flood stage on a cold day in early April. In the first major rapid we had at least 6 swimmers with no wetsuits. I remember them shaking uncontrollably and we got a fire going and warmed up. We continued down the river through a number of class 2 rapids, then got to one with quite big waves (in those days we put a truck inner tube in the canoe for flotation). I remember my partner and I were leading the way; we totally filled up, but made it to shore. I looked up the river and there were 5 canoes capsized and 2 canoes wrapped on rocks. My partner and I headed back upstream using eddies and got to one of the boats and helped them pull it off the rock and then dragged them to shore. We and others helped rescue people and finally all were on shore, but we had 2 useless mangled boats, near-hypothermic people and 5 miles to the take out, and it was getting dark. Two of the canoes now towed the two mangled canoes with now 3 in each boat. We traveled through

some class two rapids in the dark. Anytime we heard the upcoming rapids I remember the passenger in our boat started sobbing with fright. We got to the takeout where the cars were parked and camped overnight and all was well.

I met Karen in 1975 and introduced her to riding freight trains to get to climbing, backpacking trips, ski mountaineering trips, and for return transport back to Minnesota on various long bicycle trips in the West. It's hard to find a woman who would ride freights in the summer, not to mention through North Dakota at minus 20 degrees F, but Karen did many times. Later we went to Northern Ontario most every summer to canoe the lake-river system and since we moved to Colorado 21 years ago we have canoed most summers in Saskatchewan with our kids and have been involved in the canoe instruction in the club and many club trips. I must admit I prefer the solitude of Canadian canoeing. I'm a conservative canoer, partly from some past harrowing experiences in climbing and canoeing. I've wrapped two canoes (one aluminum in the 1970's and a Dagger Caption). I like to have fun, and press my limits a little.

Editor's Eddy Lines

Jeanne Willson

I hope you are reading Jerry Nolan's Conservation Roundup column. He collects newsworthy items from publications around Colorado and nearby states on topics relevant to boating and the land we boat through. Topics include water rights, public access, permitting issues, bark beetles, tamarisk, and many others. I always find an article of interest (or more) in the collection he sends out. Non-members take note: this column is one of the benefits of belonging to Rocky Mountain Canoe Club; consider joining us!

Newsletter and submissions formatting:

You've probably noticed that a more standardized look for the newsletter has developed over the last few years. I am always glad to get any submission in any format, but it does help if you can incorporate some or all of the following:

- Article titles are in Arial bold, 14pt; author's name in Ariel normal 12 pt; both left-justified (not centered). Sub headings are Arial Italic. Headings are dark blue with first letters of each word capitalized.
- Body of text is Times New Roman 12pt, in black. Paragraphs have no first-line indent; they are block-style.
- Photos: Please try to make them about 0.5 MB (500 KB) to 1.5 MB before you send them to me. We love photos that are not just another paddler running a Class II rapid so be inventive!

Safety:

A set of quick videos with some valuable safety tips: http://www.ehow.com/video_2354216_canoes-safety-tips.html

Skills:

(Editor's note: I hope that more of our experienced paddlers will continue to write short pieces about safety and skills to share with others for publication here. If you are not comfortable writing, please give me a call, tell me what you want to share, and I'll write for you, crediting your ideas. Following is another of Jerry Nolan's excellent submissions. Jerry and his wife Marci have many years of experience paddling and Jerry has had great success racing both canoes and kayaks.)

Paddling Around or Through Holes

Jerry Nolan

A hole occurs when swift water flows over a rock and causes surface water on the downstream side of the rock to move upstream. The downstream and upstream collision of water behind the rock constitute the hole. The colliding water goes down the hole to the bottom of the river. Holes range in size from small to enormous. The speed of the current, the volume of water, and the height of the rock determine the nature of the hole.

One advantage of kneeling high in a canoe is that holes ahead can be spotted a little sooner so there is more time to react. If there is time and enough room on the river the canoeist can execute a zigzag to miss the hole. Tandem teams should practice zigzag maneuvers on flat water. The bow person presumably will see the hole first, and will move the bow left or right to avoid the hole. This maneuver should get the stern paddler's attention (some bow paddlers will yell "hole" or "rock"). With the bow now aside, the stern paddler will be able to see the hole or rock the bowman is trying to avoid. The stern paddler then maneuvers his end of the boat around the object. If the stern paddler tries to move his end of the boat too soon, the zigzag maneuver is ruined because the paddlers are trying to move the boat sideways. Since canoes are not shaped for moving sideways quickly, the canoe will likely go right into the hole. On the other hand, if the canoe was just drifting then moving the canoe sideways might be an option, but most paddlers prefer paddling forward slowly in rapids because the zigzag is almost always more efficient than moving a canoe sideways.

In a second scenario, the paddlers do not see the hole until they are right on top of it. In that case, it will probably be better to go straight through and hope the canoe doesn't swamp. Another scenario is the bowman executes the zigzag and gets the bow clear of the hole but there is not enough time to get the stern clear of the hole. In this case the stern of the boat will be pulled quickly downstream out from under the stern paddler. To prevent a capsize the paddlers need to lean hard downstream on a hard downstream brace. The paddlers will feel the canoe stop suddenly as it hits the hole. Continue the hard downstream brace until the boat moves past the hole and downstream.

Remember, if you do capsize, get upstream of the canoe so you don't become the center of a canoe-rock sandwich. If there are hazards ahead, especially strainers or sweepers, abandon the canoe and swim to safety.

Some holes are downright dangerous. These holes are often called "stopper holes" or "keepers" If you paddle into one it will stop your downstream progress and hold you and/or your boat. Try maneuvering or swimming to the side of the hole to escape. Man-made structures such as dams are the most dangerous because of their symmetry. Other holes are considered to be fun amongst expert boaters. Expert boaters paddle into these holes to perform tricks. Competitions to see who can do the best tricks are called rodeos.

Some holes on our rivers are infamous and are fun to talk about but not fun to tangle with. Without trying to name the top ten, here are a couple that I am familiar with. On most top-ten lists you'll find the hole at Skull Rapid in Westwater Canyon. As you approach Skull Rapid the horizon of the river disappears. The hole is almost river wide. Most folks run river left to avoid the hole. This hole will easily capsize a raft. One swimmer of a capsized raft told me he was twirling around under water for about thirty seconds before resurfacing. There are pictures at coloradocanoetrails.info. For me, the most infamous hole is Big Drop Three in Cataract Canyon at 20,000 cfs. This is a river wide hole. It did mean things to me and I didn't like it. Enough said.

Treasurer's financial summary

Kathryn Mutz, our new treasurer, has provided this summary (prepared by Kathy Ashworth) for the club:

Beginning Cash	\$3,726.06	This includes a late 2008 deposit
Receipts:		
Dues	\$2,414.00	
Advertising	\$0.00	
Other - TC Class fees	\$0.00	(Trip coordinator class, not offered last year)
Total Receipts	\$2,414.00	
Disbursements		
Newsletter	-\$844.26	
Internet	-\$303.40	
Dues (ACA)	-\$150.00	
Brochures	-\$101.90	
Other	-\$402.04	(Food for meetings)
Total Disbursements	-\$1,801.60	
Ending Cash		
Total Receipts	\$2,414.00	
Total Disbursements	-\$1,801.60	
Net Change	\$612.40	

Please send any updates of your contact information (mailing address, email, or phone number) directly to Kathryn Mutz at kathryn.mutz@colorado.edu. Thanks!

Club's Dolores River Interests represented

Tony Littlejohn, Montezuma/Dolores County rep.

Bighorn on the Green River, Utah, July 2009 (photo by Tom Jacklin)



For the last year I have been representing the club in monthly meetings of the Lower Dolores Working Group, comprised of about 60 local, and diverse, stakeholders. We are charged with forging updated management plan recommendations for the river corridor from McPhee dam to Bedrock (administered by BLM/USFS).

The agenda has been mostly fact finding and education. Now we're getting to the nitty-gritty job of forging recommendations for protections of the many "Outstanding Remarkable Values" for which the corridor is noted, among which is recreational boating.

In representing club interests, I've found alignment with Nature Conservancy, Wilderness Society, American Whitewater, Trout Unlimited, and the San Juan Citizen's Alliance, all of which are pressing for permanent federally legislated protections.

Whirlpool Canyon on the Green through Dinosaur. Photo: Tom Jacklin



While BLM/USFS have found the corridor to be suitable for Wild and Scenic designation, and while such designation would be in the club's best interests, the majority of working group stakeholders is opposed due to a Wild and Scenic clause which grants a federal reserve water right (an exceedingly junior right) which nonetheless freaks out the consumptive water use community and their allies. Therefore, other legislated protection platforms will be examined, such as "special management area," a good example of which is a National Conservation Area

in which flexible language can be adopted to placate diverse interests. Congressman Salazar might then be inclined to introduce such legislation should consensus among stakeholders materialize (and assuming he is re-elected).

The good news is stakeholders are talking to one another, and many suspicions have been overcome. I will keep you abreast as this all unfolds. To be a part of all the proceedings and to offer your input, go to <http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/drd/>, and click on Lower Dolores Plan Working Group. This has long been one of the club's primo runs, and your involvement is encouraged.

Rocky Mountain Canoe Club Information

CLUB CONTACTS

President	Jim & Karen Baker-Jarvis
Treasurer	Kathryn Mutz
Newsletter	Jeanne Willson
Schedule, Web	Bill Ashworth
Membership	Mark Roberts
Advertising	Greg Jankowski
Conservation	Jerry Nolan
Quartermaster	Doug Hurcomb



In This Issue: Upcoming classes; meet our new presidents; paddling through holes; Dolores River Management; financial report

Schedule of events: Winter pool sessions; spring training classes coming soon.

Website: <http://www.rockymountaincanoecub.org>

Membership: \$20 per year, per household. See Membership section of our website for forms and information.

Katie G. goes for it in Warm Spring Rapid on the Yampa July 2009



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