



The Voyageur's Companion

Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Canoe Club

www.rockymountaincanoeclub.org

May 2013

Jeanne Willson, editor

Carol prepares to conquer the Garrapata rapid on the Rio Grande in New Mexico, May 2013



TAKE NOTE!

Paddling opportunities:

Don't forget to mark your calendar for the annual Rendezvous on the 3rd weekend in July (that's 7/19-7/21). We should have plenty of water in the Colorado and, with luck, no fire ban so our heralded Dutch Oven cook-off can proceed as usual. If you are new to the club, feel free to call one of the club contact folks (see the list at the end of the newsletter) to learn more about our Rendezvous. Novice paddlers with basic moving water paddling skills are welcome.

The View Down River

Bill Ashworth, RMCC President

Well, our paddling year is well underway with some great recent trips and some wonderful adventures coming up soon. The San Juan in April and the Gunnison and Niobrara in May and the South and North Platte and Jackson Hole rivers in June – what's not to like!

The annual Rendezvous will feature the new access point at Two Bridges, nicely breaking up the long run between State Bridge and Catamount, and should make

Karen A. captures a class III rapid, Garrapata, Rio Grande, May 2013



the awful Landing Strip option obsolete. Check out the flyer on the web (or here <http://www.rockymountaincanoecub.org/Portals/0/Event%20Documents/2013%20R MCC%20Summer%20River%20Rendezvous%20flyer.pdf>). Give me a shout if you can lend a hand for Rendezvous (tent set-up, cook-off judging, trip leading and management, and so much more!)

Kathy and I were part of a flotilla of three couples from high school who canoed Labyrinth Canyon on the Utah Green during the last week in May, a trip I never tire of and which just thrilled them. And as we paddled in the wake the pioneers of Western boating (Georgie White, Major Powell, and Denis Julien for starters), I was constantly reminded of the unbroken line of paddling heritage we share with our forbearers and, hopefully, with those who pick up the paddle in the future. I don't know if that was what Monsieur Julien was thinking that when he carved his contact information on the sandstone panel at the mouth of Hell Roaring Canyon in May 1836 (he was paddling upstream!), but I know I was last week.

Keep on paddlin',
Bill Ashworth

May Boat Rigging and Packing for River Canoeing Class

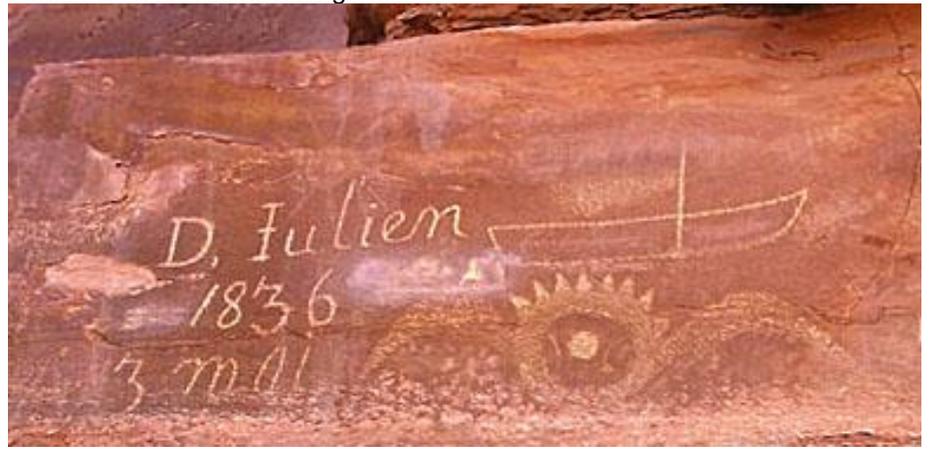
The Cinco de Mayo Boat Rigging and Packing for River Canoeing Class was deemed a great success with **nearly 20 students** attending. We covered the basics of how to prepare a canoe for river paddling

Canoe class: Learning from the masters AND having fun ... how great is that?



("Rigging") and this included things like gluing down kneeling pads, gunwale attachments, D-rings, and installing flotation bags. And we demonstrated some aids to getting to the river (boat loader racks, portage carts, rack tie downs). Under the heading of "Packing" we completely loaded a canoe for a weekend paddle trip, discussing each item in detail and discussed alternatives in many cases. Sample gear lists were distributed. THEN the fun started as the Cinco de Mayo potluck items came out and the garage became fiesta central. Thanks to all who participated and a special thanks to the only-slightly limping Jeanne Willson

Denis Julien leaves historic graffiti!



for her valuable input on first aid, emergencies, and wilderness communication.

March Annual Joint Clubs Paddle Day on the South Platte

The traditional first paddle event of the 2013 season went off without a hiccup on Saturday March 23 under generally sunny skies and adequate water in the South Platte. About 45 boats launched from the Evans ballfield access and nearly 20 of those were paddled by RMCC members. A very good showing! Lots of cooperation was demonstrated at the two portages (especially the second) and a fine time was had by all. Thanks to Roger F for sharing some of his photos of the day.

Coloradans paddling in Wyoming and AIS

Thanks to Roger Faaborg for the good summary below of the changing landscape facing Colorado paddlers in Wyoming waters. Bottom line - all canoes and kayaks used in Wyoming must have 1) an AIS (Alien Invasive Species i.e. zebra mussels et al) sticker (can be purchased on line for \$15) AND undergo an inspection. The one false lead in the Wyoming links is the implication that Coloradans can get their paddle craft inspected in Colorado and then "sealed" for use in Wyoming. Sealing generally involves plastic -cabling a boat to its trailer or rack with an inspection certificate. I've spoken to the Park director a Bear Creek (a Colorado inspection site) and the officials in the State Parks and Wildlife office and, since Colorado



Beginner canoe class with Poudre Paddlers and RMCC: starting off easy!

doesn't require paddle-craft to be inspected and certified for AIS, there are limited options for "sealing" such craft. **So, for most of us inspections will have to be done in Wyoming during daylight hour (fortunately, there are stations open on weekends).** According staff at State Park and Wildlife headquarters, the Denver office will do drop-in inspections and "sealing" of canoes and kayaks M-F during business hours. The address is 6060 Broadway. There's no fee. Canoes "sealed" this way must be brought into Wyoming within 7 days. By the way, we just got our Wyoming decals in the mail – took about a week but they say it can be up to 14 days.

Here's Roger's post.....

It is getting harder to boat in Wyoming. Ken Bauer informed me that all boats have to stop and be inspected as they enter the state during the summer months. That includes canoes and kayaks.

The inspection stations are only open certain hours, so you will have to plan your trips accordingly.

This will affect all floats on the North Platte, including Glendo to Guernsey.

Wyoming is trying to keep their waters clear of invasive species and they are surrounded by states that have them: <http://wgfd.wyo.gov/web2011/fishing-1001290.aspx>

You also have to get the sticker, which you can do online.

<http://wgfd.wyo.gov/web2011/fishing-1000229.aspx>

Google Earth found Karen A's three sections of the class III Horsethief Shorty rapid (RG) and made a composite of them.!



Clarification of insurance policies for canoe trips – ACA and RMCC

Bill Ashworth

Ever since the club voted to adopt a policy of requiring ACA liability insurance (at a cost of \$5 per trip) for all club-sponsored trips, there has been some confusion about just how it's all supposed to work so I'd like to try to clarify a couple of points.

- 1) **ACA membership:** ACA membership is NOT required to belong to RMCC or to participate in RMCC trips. Having said that, many club members (nearly 40 at last count) are ACA members and most of those affiliate through the club. RMCC is a Paddle America Club (PAC) organization and our members are eligible for discounted ACA membership. If you join or renew on line, family memberships (\$40 year versus \$60 for non-affiliates) have the discount automatically applied. However, if yours is a single membership (\$20 versus \$30 for non-affiliates) then "PAC" must be entered into the promo code to receive the affiliate discount. Why join the ACA? Members generally cite the following: a) it's cheaper in the long run if you go on multiple trips each year, especially as a family; b) they feel good supporting one of the few national organizations that support river access issues, paddling safety, and water safety.
- 2) **Cost:** The ACA fee is the same \$5 regardless of the length of the event (e.g. for a day, a weekend, or a week). In other words, there's only one \$5 fee submitted for each participant for each trip report filed with the ACA.
- 3) **Coverage:** The ACA event fee provides liability insurance for the club, its officers, and its trip coordinators. It does not provide trip insurance for participants.

Hope this helps!



Editor's Eddy Lines: Science, Safety, Skills, and Suppertime

Jeanne Willson

Science : There is a new geology book that has great information about Colorado's Front Range geology. There is a lot of information that pertains to rivers. It's easy to read and is well illustrated. The book: *Geology Underfoot: Along Colorado's Front Range*, by Lon Abbott and Terri Cook.

Safety: Bears! There is lots of advice about what to do when you are in the bear's home town. I've included an informative bear article in this issue. It boils down to this, in my opinion: Travel and camp in close groups; have bear spray at the ready and know how to use it; don't cook salmon etc. in camp, and keep a super clean camp with bear-proof food containers.

Skills: Review Bill Ashworth's review of packing a canoe for an overnight trip. He did a great job, and if you missed it, ask him to do it again next year!

Suppertime: Don't invite the bears to dinner!



Bear Safety Tips

From Lauren Himiak, former About.com Guide

For starters, you need to know that bear attacks in the wild are extremely rare. So take a deep breath and relax. Better? But there are some bear safety tips you can take away that will make you feel more relaxed and minimize your risk when you are traveling in areas that are home to bears.

Know Your Bears

Can you tell the difference between a black bear and a grizzly bear? Check out the main differences so you know what you're dealing with.

Grizzly Bear

- Color: Range in color from black to light blonde. Mostly medium to dark brown in color. The long hair usually have a lighter tip, hence they look "grizzled".
- Size: Average 350-500 lbs. Larger grizzlies can reach 800 lbs!
- Height: Stand around 3.3 ft; 6.5 ft at shoulder.
- Shape: Look for a distinct shoulder hump.
- Face: There's a depression between the eyes and end of nose, and they have short, round ears.
- Claws: Very long (2-4 in)
- Prints: Minimal arc in toes, toe imprints are close together, and the claw leave long, visible marks.

Black Bear

- Color: Range in color from black to light blonde. Many black bears have a lighter patch on their chest, and reddish-colored bears are common in the west.
- Size: Average 110-300 lbs. Large males can reach 400 lbs and be larger than a female grizzly.
- Height: A little smaller, from 2.5-3 ft at shoulder. Around 5 ft standing.
- Shape: No hump like the grizzly.
- Face: A straight line runs between the forehead and end of nose. They have larger, pointed ears.
- Claws: Shorter (around 1.5 in)
- Prints: Look for a large toe arc, toe imprints will be father apart, and the claws usually don't leave an impression.

Campground and Picnic Area Precautions

- Never cook or store food in or near your tent.
- Hang food and other items with strong odors (ie, toothpaste, bug repellent, soap, etc.) out of reach of bears. Hang items at least 10 ft above the ground and. If no trees are available, store your food in airtight or bear-proof containers.
- Change your clothing before you go to sleep; don't wear what you cooked in to go to bed and be sure to store smelly clothing along with your food/smelly items.
- Keep the area clean. Be sure to wash dishes, dispose of garbage, and wipe down tables.
- Burn garbage completely in a hot fire and pack trash out - don't bury it.

Backcountry and Trail Precautions

- Don't surprise bears. If you're hiking, make your presence known. Make noise by talking loudly, singing, or wearing a bell.
- If you can, travel with a group. Groups are noisier and easier for bears to detect.
- Keep in mind that bears tend to be more active at dawn and dusk so plan your hikes accordingly.
- Stay on marked trails and obey the regulations of the area you're hiking/camping in.
- If you're hiking in bear country, keep an eye out for tracks, scat, digs, and trees that bears have rubbed.

- Leave your dog at home.

If You Encounter a Bear...

- Remain calm and avoid sudden movements.
- Give the bear plenty of room, allowing it to continue its activities undisturbed. If it changes its behavior, you're too close, so back away.
- If you see a bear but the bear doesn't see you, detour quickly and quietly.
- If a bear spots you, try to get its attention while it is still farther away. You want it to know you're human so talk in a normal voice and waive your arms.
- Remember that a standing bear is not always a sign of aggression. Many times, bears will stand to get a better view.
- Throw something onto the ground (like your camera) if the bear pursues you, as it may be distracted by this and allow you to escape.
- Never feed or throw food to a bear.

If a Bear Charges...

- Remember that many bears charge as a bluff. They may run, then veer off or stop abruptly. Stand your ground until the bear stops, then slowly back away.
- Never run from a bear! They will chase you and bears can run faster than 30 mph.
- Don't run towards or climb a tree. Black bears and some grizzlies can climb trees, and many bear will be provoked to chase you if they see you climbing.
- If you have pepper spray, be sure that you have trained with it before using it during an attack.

If a Grizzly Bear Attacks...

- Play dead!
- Lie face down on the ground with your hands around the back of your neck.
- Stay silent and try not to move.
- Keep your legs spread apart and if you can, leave your pack on to protect your back.
- Once the bear backs off, stay quiet and still for as long as you can. Bears will often watch from a distance and come back if they see movement.

If a Black Bear Attacks...

- Be loud, waive your arms, and stand your ground.
- Fight back! Be aggressive and use any object you have.
- Only if you are sure the bear attacking is a mother who is protecting its cubs, play dead.
- If you have pepper spray, use it. Begin spraying when it's within 40 ft so it runs into the fog. Aim for the face.

As with all trips, be sure to research where you are going and what wildlife is in the area. Preparation and knowledge is the key to ensuring a safe trip for you and yours. Keep an eye out for bear warnings and always talk to a ranger if you have questions or concerns.

Subject: "Protect Our Rivers" license plate is moving forward - you can help



Colorado Trout Unlimited

The "Protect Our Rivers" license plate is on its way to Governor Hickenlooper!

With strong bipartisan support, the Colorado General Assembly has passed Senate Bill 224 to create the *Protect Our Rivers* license plate. The bill passed the House this morning on a final vote of 44-21, having passed the Senate previously on a 26-9 vote.



Each purchase of the plate will generate \$25 for Colorado TU and 100% of the funds generated will be dedicated to the protection of Colorado's rivers.

Many thanks to our prime sponsors for pushing this through some strong anti-license plate sentiment: Senators Kerr and Baumgardner, and Representatives Hamner and Wright.

Many thanks to our staff for countless hours advocating, testifying and prideful begging: David Nickum, Stephanie Scott and Shannon Kindle. To Nick Hoover for his terrific design work. And to past CTU President Sinjin Eberle for stepping down in time to let me take the glory!

We still need Governor Hickenlooper's signature on the bill, and then have some work to do with the Division of Motor Vehicles, but we're told the plates should be available for purchase by January 1, 2014. This is a big win for Colorado TU, but an even bigger win for Colorado's rivers!

If you know others who would be interested in the Protect Our Rivers license plate, encourage them to [sign the petition](#) of support - we will then keep them apprised of the license plate's availability via email.

And thank you for your support of rivers, which made this victory possible!

- Rick Matsumoto, Colorado Trout Unlimited President

www.coloradotu.org

Butler Wash rock art panel



**San Juan
River from
Sand Island
to Mexican
Hat, Utah
April 26-28,
2013**
Karen
Amundson

Ten of us had beautiful weather for this classic run through Navajo Nation lands. Mat B. was our Master Fire Builder and along with Eric N. formed the solo whitewater

canoe crew that led us successfully through three named rapids, two of which were worth scouting.

Bill and Kathy A. were the Polar Bear contingent, camping with no tent fly and going for a full swim at the 2nd camp, which overlooked the Mexican Hat monolith. Ken W. and I demonstrated how to miss the big wave train at 8 Foot Rapid (because the Mad River Freedom fills quickly in big waves), but as a result were thrown into a fast eddy turn on the left bank and a tight peel out through shore rocks.

Marsha D. maneuvered her sea kayak skillfully through all three of the rapids. Maris B. showed us that he could lead the group at a fast clip in his solo-paddled 16' tandem Old Town Penobscot on the last 7 miles of the 28 miles on this trip. And Carol and Werner D. graciously offered to be the shuttle drivers' car, so they missed most of the Twin Rocks Café parting lunch in Bluff.

We were initially going to use the Valle Trading Post (435-683-2226) shuttle of 4 drivers for \$70, but when we found they had put someone else in the 9:00 slot and us at 10:30, we did our own. This gave us a 30 minute head start on other boats, solitude at the Butler Wash Petroglyph Panel, and we just paid Valle the \$3/car/day secure storage fee at the end. Note that Jim Hardin (435-672-2455) in Bluff manages a very customer-oriented shuttle from Bluff to Clay Hills Crossing that saves several hours relative to just an hour of driving on the upper piece.

With 7 of the 10 people new to this river stretch, we spent some time at the several-room River House Ruin and the wonderful Butler Wash petroglyph site, which often has professional photos of it in Indian stone art books. The three camp sites nearest to the Chinle Wash hike were already taken by 2pm (must snag them before noon), so we forewent a visit to the "baseball" petroglyph and the high cliff granary.

Instead, we took a hike to the Mule's Ear Diatreme – remains of a volcanic vent of material from the

earth's mantle from 6 miles depth. Per clues in the San Juan Canyons – A River Runners' Guide (Don Baars and Gene Stevenson), we looked for and found five garnets in an anthill. We also had great views of Comb Ridge and other cool, tilted geologic formations.



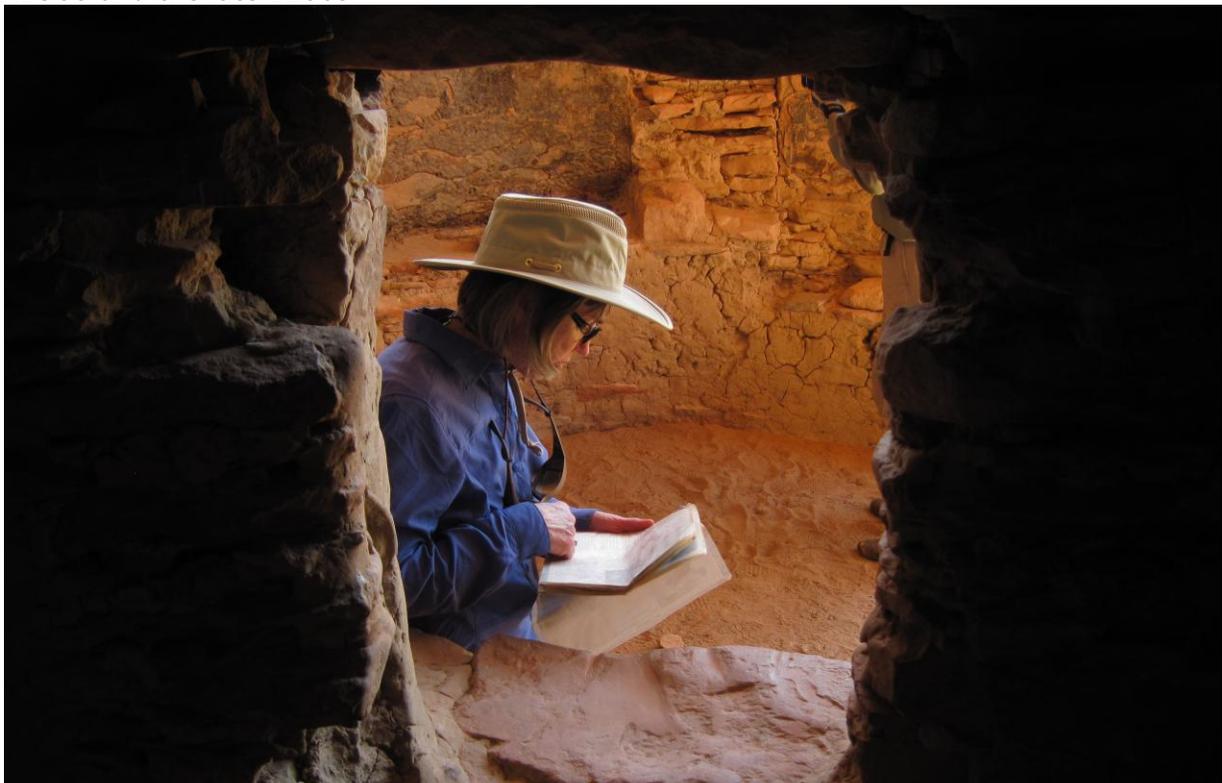
While we enjoyed a few lizards, a snake, heron, beaver, several white-faced ibis birds, and signs of otter, the highlight was several sightings of about 20 desert bighorn sheep. One ram had a full curl. Others displayed how they can leap up short cliffs with ease. Barrel cactus and many other flowers were blooming.

A full moon, clear night skies, and campfires topped it all off. Though the Animas River, Piedra, and Los Pinos were adding many cfs to the San Juan to total over 3000 cfs of input water, they were banking a lot at Navajo Reservoir and using so much for irrigation that there was less

than 400 cfs 3 days before our launch. We started with 540cfs and ended with 790cfs on the trip, so it was bony at times. But we saw large rafts on the water for both sections anyway.

All in all it was a beautiful, rare, non-windy Spring experience with much camaraderie and many good memories.

Kathy studies information about the River House Ruin, occupied by Ancestral Puebloans between AD900 and the late 1200s.



Look carefully at this sculpture in dryland Las Vegas. The Gallagher girls found it and sent a photo home! Yes, full-sized boats.



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: Photos from All-Club Paddle, Basic Canoeing class, Rio Grande, San Juan, and more; Rendezvous announcement; Safety around bears; Protect our Rivers License plate petition

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

Membership: \$10 per year, per household. See Membership section of our website for forms and information. **ROCKY MOUNTAIN CANOE CLUB** c/o Kathryn Mutz, Boulder, CO 80308-1064

