



The Voyageur's Companion

NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN CANOE CLUB

September 2003

End of Summer Newsletter

The Almost Last of the Presidential Articles from this President

Officer's needed

After 3 years as presidents, it is now time to step down and let someone better take the reigns. Therefore, all that have grumbled or muttered there must be a better way please step forward and pay the club back for the trips that you have enjoyed in the past. We have openings for president, advertising. The position of membership has a couple that has volunteered, Ron & Nancy Stanker. A warm thank you to Ron & Nancy, for offering to take on one of the most difficult of our officer positions.

Our next meeting will also be the officer's elections (or more accurately, the volunteering by individuals or couples) to establish the leadership for the future.

Next meeting Slide and Photo CD Meeting

Our next meeting will be Nov 1, 2003 at Christ on the Mt Church at 6:00pm. We will be jumping into the new century by incorporating both slides and this new fangled digital world. The projector has the ability to work with a PC also. So if you have either slides or digital images from the past seasons, please bring them to the meeting

We will need a slide projector and someone with a fast computer to do the CD's (I'd volunteer ours, however we'd have to have some long slide shows to give our old PC enough time to think)

Summer Rendezvous

Circus tent blowdowns,,, the weather this year provided all with their own personal taste in weather, albeit for only a short time. We seemed to have raised a red cape, or rather a red and white striped tent, to the weather gods, and they responded with a series of micro bursts followed by blue sky and then more storms. Sadly, the tent wasn't able to stay standing during the high winds, so after 2, 3 or maybe it was 4 times, we finally were getting pretty good at reraising the tent.

Keep in touch with RMCC on the
WEB at

rockymountaincanoeclub.org

Trip Schedules
News & Information
Pictures
Training
Schedule **Your** Trip

Dutch oven winners are as follows; Main Dish made by Doug Hurcomb for Bunker Buster Bake. He won hands down for originality. Desert went to Jennifer Jankowski, Rachel Jankowski and Steve Allen for their Apple Crisp. The fresh apples made the difference. Bread winner went to Bob Aiken for his fine Salmon Quesada's. People Choice award went to Mo Morrow for her Lemon Mandarin Dump Cake. This years Riverita's award went to Diane Preusser.

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Next RMCC meeting

November 1 (Saturday)

Christ on the Mountain Church

13922 W Utah; Lakewood

Presidential Articles

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Running Whitewater with Sammer

text and photos by Bob Cook

Sammer Elias and his wife Nancy are off to Bellingham in Washington State to develop another passion; sailing. They bought a sailboat and will learn the ropes for new water and new skills in their new home. I hope to catch up with them out in the Pacific Northwest soon.



I thought it would be nice if someone wrote a kind of farewell story about Sammer. He contributed a lot to bringing together whitewater paddlers in the Club. He is a unique individual and so I thought I would write a bit about my experience with him.

The last run I did with Sammer was down Clear Creek, Lawson to Kermit's. It's a solid class III+ run at the level we ran that day, with Ken Metzger joining us in his Ocoee and Karl Chiang in his kayak. The Lawson's run on Clear Creek is very ledgy and fast, with horizon lines coming up on regular intervals. It is not practical to stop and scout each drop, because we don't want to be taking out in the dark, and there are not enough dependable eddies for everyone in conveniently accessible locations. We proceeded methodically from one drop to the next, the sounds and smells of I-70 accompanying us along most of the way. The only named rapid on the run that we are aware of is "Outer Limits," which was probably a IV- that day. In the past year, I have noticed that Sammer has gone from following behind the leaders to taking initiative on making his own moves. He's taken his lumps too, swimming as much as the rest of us and saving himself with a roll more often than most. That day he would take turns with each as well, but maintained his focus and spirit throughout the day.

Over the last few years we've watched Sammer mature in his boating competence, evolving as he has from an excited and ambitious whitewater neophyte to a gutsy veteran who has tackled a probable first open boat descent down 11 Mile Canyon and joined Alan Whittern down Gore Canyon last season.

My first impression of Sammer was watching him paddle his Old Town Appalachian from his kneeling thwart position down a class II+/III section of the Eagle in 2001. I knew from that first trip that there was something special about this guy with the weird first name. Okay, bear in mind this is from a guy named "Bob."

How far Sammer has come since May of 2001 when he led a group of relative strangers down his "home" run from Edwards to Wolcott. I recall soon afterwards, after hours of questions on the phone and on-line about which boat to get and how to outfit it, he acquired his Outrage. It was in mint condition and he got a great price for it, but he was disappointed that it seemed "kind of banged up." "Banged up!?" I recall saying to him, "heck, that boat looks better after the months that the owners say they had it than one of my boats looks after the inaugural run!" Now, on our last run together, Sammer's Outrage wore the battlescarred look of mismatched red paint patches over his blue hull, complemented by strips of duct tape inside and out. The duct tape attempted to bridge cracks that had developed inside and out from Sammer's many close encounters with rocks. But for this craftsman, his most endearing addition was the pseudo "bang-plate" he had glued to the bow, an old mountain bike tire piece, which gave the curious appearance of a craft that hinted at the possibility that it might be able to climb over boulder fields if it couldn't go around them. He had come a long way from the kneeling thwarted Appalachian, as well as from his sensitivity toward the "banged up" appearance of that shiny new Outrage.

The Outrage had endured many punishing runs, from the regular visits to the neighboring Eagle, to Shoshone, Westwater, the Arkansas, 11 Mile, Waterton and Foxton, among numerous others.



Sammer's passion for the sport led him to study the fine details of outfitting and technique, while foregoing a more traditional path of seeking formal instruction. Instead, he would glean as much as he could by observation or interrogation, contacting myself or Alan or others he paddled with to seek specific ways to improve his skills.

Along with Sammer's penchant for seeking more challenging runs, the other characteristic that will be missed is the energy he brought to bring others into paddling whitewater. He didn't hold an office in the Club, and yet he helped facilitate getting a number of us together from his distant home in Edwards. He has been a good example of someone with a passion for canoeing sharing that experience with others.

See Sammer's TIPS, page 8

SLALOM NATIONALS

By Jill Stecker

The 2003 Wausau Nationals held at Wausau, WI was great! Along with Golden in '99 it was the best organized Nationals in 10 years. We had good representation from Colorado with Bob Fries (from Georgetown), John Graye, Jeff Oxenford, Greg & Karen Jankowski, and ourselves attending. The new Wausau course was challenging without being intimidating. A few weeks earlier, Wausau Canoe & Kayak altered their infamous Big Drop, trying to make a rodeo hole below it. Unfortunately they created something like a low-head dam. It was a keeper that needed to be fixed before the Nationals. So our race chairman, Craig Smerda, got a crane and a big boulder and solved the problem. The newly placed boulder in the middle of Big Drop made for a very interesting ride into the eddy pool below—you never knew exactly where you were going to end up and it was different every time. Most racers picked up water here, but Gordon Black and Randy Carlson were spectacular when they became a submarine and sank out of sight. The weather was perfect—actually almost cool! That was a big change from the last two Nationals in Wausau.

We had a new event for this year's Nationals—a canoe tug of war. After all the necessary but complicated Combined calculations, two teams tied out to endless decimal places. To break the tie, they were put in the pool below

RMCC Co-Presidents competing in the 2003 Wausau Nationals; doing the ferry in the boil below Big Drop.

Jill Stecker



The Tug-o-War. Tie breaker between Gordon Black/Randy Carlson and Dave Paton/Mark Clarke for first place in the Combined race.

Jill Stecker

Big Drop with a rope tied between both tandem canoes sterns.

It was a small racer group—about 60 racers. We had good spectator audience and they were really into it. The race ran like clockwork and we were done early in the afternoons. Had a delicious Italian dinner

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Presidential Articles

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Thank you to our Trip Leaders Dave Allured, Ned Banta, and Paul Holscher for running trips for this event. We were able to enjoy cooler temperatures, a greener environment than in years past, and plentiful water in the river.

Price Stubbs

An opportunity has presented itself on the west slope for a white water park RMCC End Summer 2003

with a year round flow and the federal government has forced the owner of the dam to finally realize that his best option is to lease the dam to Mesa County for \$1/ year rather than pay for the forced upon fish ladder and safe boat passage. Since this is our last part of our term, we have made an executive decision to send \$250.00 to Western Assoc. To Enjoy Rivers to help in their efforts to get the monies necessary to design a world class White Water Park. The money had to be collected by the next meeting of the

Mesa County Commissioners on Aug 18, so waiting until the next meeting would not have been possible. The preliminary plan is to have one side of the river being a class II to -III and the other side being class IV with provision for a slalom course. This modification of the dam will also open that stretch of the river for the first time in a hundred years. The Price Stubbs is the dam just before Palisade at the end of Debuque Canyon.

GRASS RIVER

Historical Synopsis

During the heyday of the fur trade era (essentially the late 1700s and early 1800s) several routes, or tracks, were developed and utilized to effect commerce between Hudson Bay and the North American interior. Earlier, these same routes had been used by native Americans, mostly the Cree, to bring furs down to the Bay (the ocean) for transshipment to European markets. The Hudson Bay Company decided that it would be more economical to build and maintain inland posts and travel routes in order to effectively compete with other rivals, notably The Northwest Fur Company. This network is still in evidence today and modern canoeists will chance upon the remains of a long abandoned post

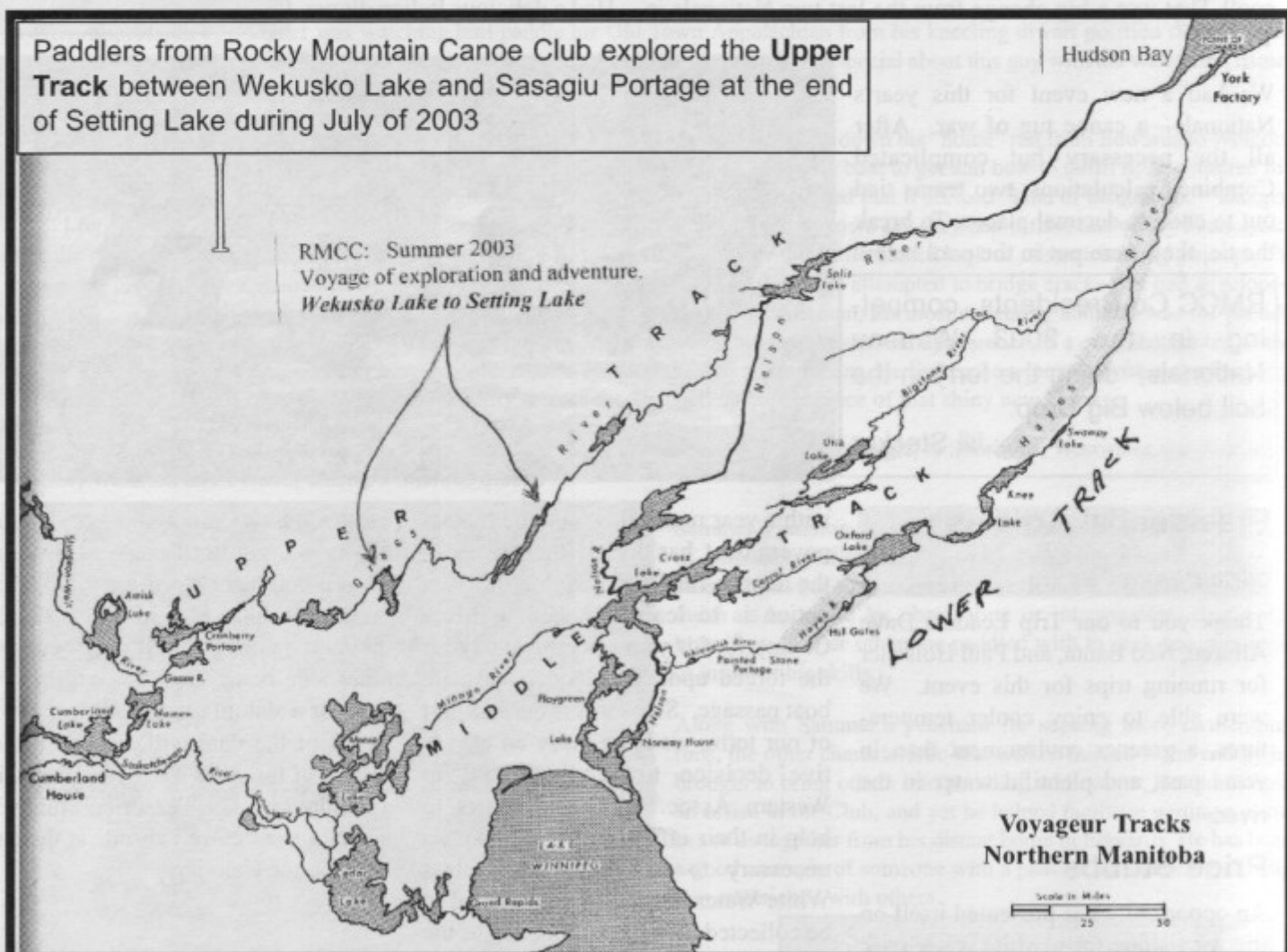
almost lost in the boreal forest.

The Upper Track utilized the lower reaches of the Nelson River and then from Split Lake the Grass River and its many larger lakes to get to Cranberry Portage. From this inland divide, it was basically downstream to the Saskatchewan River and easy passage to the interior. It was actually the easiest route with the easiest portages and took less time to traverse. Cranberry Portage had been in use for hundreds of years by Natives for their commerce and travels, and also boasted fields of wild cranberries. The Middle Track had been used frequently by the Native tribes but was too complicated with low water levels for the European voyageurs. The Lower Track utilized the Hayes River corridor which had a larger water flow and could accommodate the larger and heavier York Boats

that became the HBC norm by 1775. The portages were numerous but manageable even with the large boats. The longest of these was only about a mile. All three of these tracks did utilize some portions of the Nelson River. However, this major river that drained Lake Winnipeg was too rough a route to use in its entirety involving troublesome rapids and requiring several difficult portages.

In 1774 Samuel Hearne, an eminent British explorer, organized a fur trade expedition to penetrate the interior and construct Cumberland House on the Saskatchewan River. This Post became an important inland facility for the Hudson Bay Company and is still in operation today. Hearne started at York Factory on Hudson Bay and first paddled upstream first on the Hayes (Lower Track). He then crossed over

Paddlers from Rocky Mountain Canoe Club explored the **Upper Track** between Wekusko Lake and Sasagiu Portage at the end of Setting Lake during July of 2003



to the Grass River (Upper Track) arriving at Setting Lake in July. He continued via Pakwa Lake, Herb (Wekusko) Lake, Reed Lake, the Cranberry Lakes and finally traversed Cranberry Portage to Lake Athapapuskow. With the aide of some local Indian families he finished his journey to Cumberland Lake via Pasquia (The Pas), which was not a suitable location for a post. The following year he returned to York Factory with 30 fur laden canoes, but it is not certain whether he used again the Upper Track. When Hearne died in 1792 he left behind a precious description of the Indian people and natural history of the barren land.

The Berrys and Hollaways 2003 Grass River route duplicated a portion of Hearne's 1774 exploration but in the downstream direction. They also explored the stone chimney of one ruined HBC post on Setting Lake. They rendezvoused in The Pas, a modern northern Manitoba town, and completed final supplies there before heading into the wilds. In many aspects they discovered much of the Grass River corridor to be very little changed since the days of the fur trade.



Samuel Hearne (1745 - 1792),
Grass River pioneer.

Grass River

2003 Explorations and Adventures

by Lyn Berry

Wekusko Lake, Manitoba

July 16, 2003

Jim & Janis Hollaway along with Lyn Berry & Jeanne Younghaus embarked on their adventure down the Grass River with the assistance of a shuttle from Tony and Jim. For an agreed sum of Canadian Dollars, Tony and Jim shuttled the two RMCC voyageur pairs across the large lake in power boats, thus enabling the canoeists to avoid the recurring afternoon thunder storms, high winds and accompanying heavy waves. A sufficient window of quiet weather early in the evening was just enough to get the job done. This beginning of an 11 day canoe trip was actually a fortuitous decision since the next day was quite windy all day long and a crossing of Wekusko may not have been possible.

Speaking of wind, the prevailing wind in this part of Manitoba is supposed to be from the north west. Throughout their entire 11 day paddle, the wind never was from this direction. Most of the time, it was slight enough to be no consequence, but several times later in the day the wind seemed to rise exactly from the forward direction, which was generally northeast to south. Since the Grass River has essentially no current, this did make for some long and very tiring days before camp could be established.

It is not known what Samuel Hearne and the other fur trade voyageurs did for campsites, but the Berrys and Hollaways were bound to use already established camps. There were no other suitable locations and these campsites were very few. On each day, the first camp that was found was utilized, and on each day this site was found after everyone was ready and eager to camp. Not that these sites were bad, in fact some of them were very spectacular. Where else would you find a place in the trees, with a truly magnificent waterfall, fantastic fishing, 2 good tent spots (that is all that was needed), fine kitchen area, and a bald eagle family high in a birch tree about 40 yards away? Later during the trip, three of the modern voyageurs campsites had to be made on the very edge of the water. One of these was on a small rock ledge along the Grass River, and two others were on the exposed

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The Grass River: plenty of grass, as could be expected.

Lyn Berry



The Lure of the Wild

By Jim Hollaway

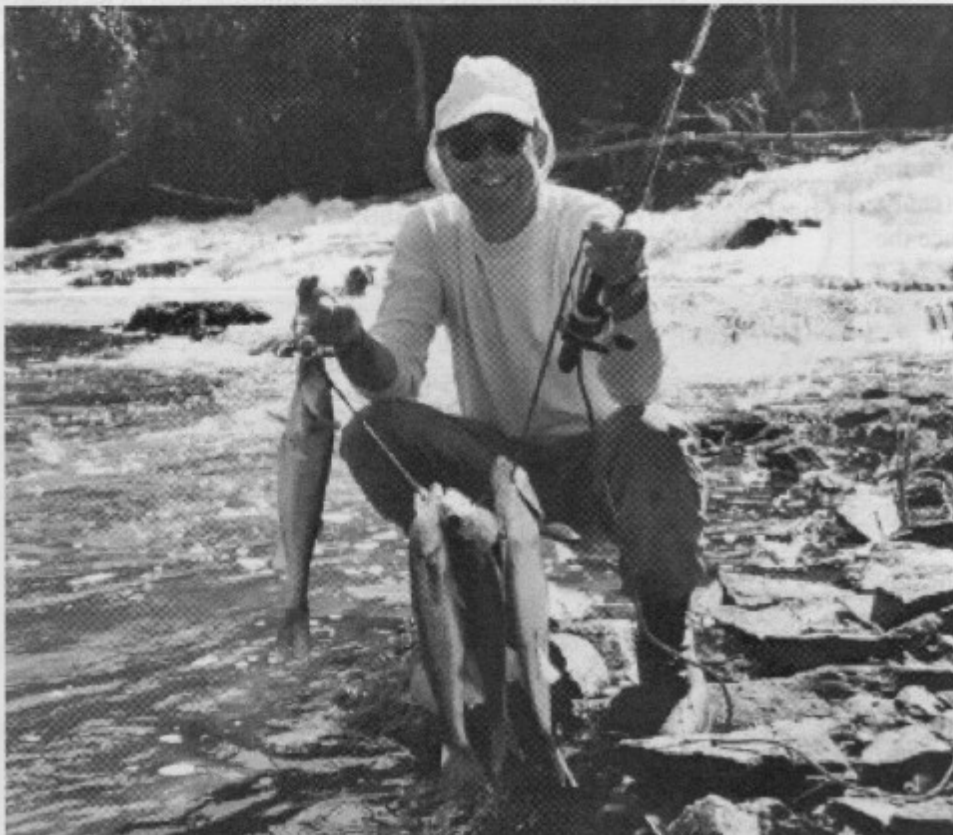
The Pas, Manitoba – They were in there by the thousands. But the perfect, sure-fire one was known only to the locals, the Cree in particular. I wandered, bemused and amazed, up and down the aisles, wondering which to select. Ginnie eyed me as I pondered spoon versus jig. Finally, I couldn't stand it, so I asked for advice. "Surely these zillions of bizarre lures all worked or none did," I said. Ginnie, proprietor of Ginnie's Pro Tackle Ltd., laughed and then selected a guaranteed few for my little tackle box. I bought them along with a canister of bear spray. I was now doubly armed and dangerous.

I had never caught a Walleye, called Pickerel in these parts, or a Northern Pike, called Jackfish up here. Despite having eons of fishing experience, this was all brand new to me. I wondered whether my 5.5' rod and mini-spin reel with 8 lb. test mono would hold up.

Tony Brew, lodge proprietor and fishing guide, ferried us over Wekusko Lake. It was he who told me to fish above and below the falls that Janis and I, along with Lyn Berry and Jeanne Younghaus, would be portaging around as we traveled down the Grass River. On day three, we camped just off the portage trail at an unnamed cataract nearly 20 kilometers upstream of Kanisota Falls. Time to fish. I was after Walleye, not those bony pike. First cast below the falls: a pike; second cast: another pike. This was easy, but not what I wanted. Third cast: yet another pike. Good grief. I changed lures, choosing not one of Ginnie's specials, but an old bronze-colored spoon that had never worked anywhere. I had had a hunch. I snipped two of the three hooks off the treble with pliers and made the remaining hook barbless by pinching down the barb. Although use of barbless hooks is required on the Grass, I would have done that anyway as I fancy myself an angler. Besides, one had to be able to release pike easily, given that they had shown themselves to be abundant, fierce, and prone to inhale the lure.

Next cast, now with ancient spoon, a Walleye. Hooray, but he was too small. Within minutes, however, I had caught seven and released three. We named the place Walleye Falls. We kept four for our dinner, which we fried in a little oil after rolling the fillets in one of Zatarain's concoctions. If we had only bothered to schlep some beer into the wild, things would have been perfect. Nonetheless, as it was, it was not too bad.

Next morning, I was planning to fish for fun; not for food. The Walleye of the evening before had ranged between 16 and 18 inches. Perfect size. First cast, nothing – until the lure was at my feet – and then, a monster. I barely had time to shout "no" to myself, but it was too late – my sure-fire, Walleye lure was swallowed; the huge fish turned; my line snapped; and that was it. For the rest of the trip, I tried every remaining lure I had, but with the exception of a little Sauger and two little Walleyes, I caught nothing but Jackfish; so many in fact that I grew weary of them. It's just not fishing when you catch something nearly every time you cast. Indeed, it ought not be called fishing at all in this part of Manitoba – catching is more like it. Please understand, however, that my complaint is half-hearted at best. I had a blast, and no, we never had to use the bear spray.



Walleye make excellent eating!
photo by Janis

RMCC MEMBERSHIP

Fall 2003

NAME	HOME	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP	WORK	EMAIL
Adams, Laurel							
Adams, Dennis							
Aikin, Bob & Carol							
Akins, Dick & Diane							
Allured, Dave							
Amundson, Karen							
Bachman, Neil and Jill							
Baker-Jarvis, Jim & Karen							
Banta, Edward							
Bartlett, Lee R.							
Baruch, Robert							
Bauer, Ken							
Bayard, John & Mary							
Bergdolt, Mark							
Berger, Larry & Debi							
Bernhardt, Eric							
Berry, Lyn & Jeanne Younghaus							
Bicla, Maris							
Booth, Walter							
Bove, Dana							
Brown, Joanne							
Burke, Tuppen & Mike Gross							
Campbell, Gail							
Capen, Lynn							
Childers, Linda							
Christofferson, Bruce							
Clark, John & Jarmul, Teresa							
Clement, Kevin							
Conlon, Francis							
Cox, Gary							
Cox, Sheila							
Curtiss, Brian							
D'Antonio-Gan, Elizabeth							
Daigle, Dennis							
Davies, Laurie							
Davis, Vincent & Lisa							
Dietz, John							
Dorey, Mike							

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Fall 2003

NAME	HOME	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP	WORK	EMAIL
Downs, Garrett							
Dunham, Andrew							
Edwards III, J. Martin @ Susan							
Edwards, Kerry & Pauline							
Faust, Gary							
Fletcher, Tim & Kathy							
Flint, Bob & Sandy							
Flynn, Ward							
Folsom, Gil							
Freeman, Joe							
Fryer, William & Brackstone-Fryer, Kare							
Gallagher, Bonnie							
Gerrior, Steve							
Gierasch, Molly							
Gingrich, Jay							
Gonzales, Robert							
Graham, Susan							
Graye, John							
Green, Doug & Betsy Hall							
Griffith, Joe & Donovan, Dianne							
Griffiths, Don							
Gruber, Thomas & Jacqueline							
Guenther, Howard & Ann Roppo							
Galley, Terry & Maggie							
Guzzy, Richard							
Hagan, Paul & Alison							
Hagy, Tom & Marketa							
Hayden, Joe & Lyn							
Hermann, Eric & Connie							
Hinde, Debbie & Tim							
Hinson, Jeff & Debbie							
Hollaway, Jim & Janis							
Holscher, Paul							
Hurcomb, Doug & Janet Marks							
Jackson Jim & Hartley, June							
Jankowski, Greg & Karen							
Jennings, Jean & Croft, Michael							
Jesse, Bw & Cecile Mae							

RMCC MEMBERSHIP

Fall 2003

NAME	HOME	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP	WORK	EMAIL
Johnson, Al & Judith							
Keeler, Jeff & Lorna							
Kloppenborg, Ken							
Knapp, Roger & Carol							
Knapp, Tom & Marnie							
Kretzmann, Douglas & Helen							
Laushman, Patty & Dale							
Leppert, Tom							
Licht, John H.							
Littlejohn, Tony & Peggy							
Lyle, Phil & Mary							
Maas, Kristin & Todd							
Magle, Michael							
Maiolo, Frank & Ginny							
Makar, John & Paula							
Mann, Stuart & Williams-Mann, Sarah							
Martin, Rod & Judy							
Martin, Robert							
McCallum, Andrew							
McDonald, Scott							
McLaughlin, Kevin & Sandra							
McLean, John							
McMullen, Larry							
Metzger, Ken							
Mitchell, Doni							
Montgomery, Alistair & Barbara							
Moritz, Frank							
Morrow, Maureen (Mo) & Young, Mark							
Napier, Michael & Carol							
Nelson, Fred & Mary Jean							
Ney, Dave & Jeannie							
Nolan, Jerry & Marci							
Nyre, Jerry/Canoe Colorado							
O'Neill, Hugh							
O'Shea, Michael							
Omer, G. Eric							
Owen, Terry & Jane							
Oxenford, Jeff							

RMCC MEMBERSHIP

Fall 2003

NAME	HOME	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP	WORK	EMAIL
Parrott, Mary							
Preusser, Bob							
Preusser, Diana							
Purdy, Penelope							
Reynouard, Bob							
Rivers, Bill							
Roller, Jim							
Schmid, Joe & Christensen, Katie							
Schoeberlein, Liz							
Shepler, Mark							
Stanker, Ron & Nancy							
Stecker, Bob & Jill							
Steger, Robert & Nen							
Stein, Charlie							
Stinack, Anjila & Geoffrey							
Stokely, Ronald							
Stuber, Mary & Sue Coffee							
Summers, Doug & Kellee							
Tasker, Mark & Anna							
Voutour, Stewart							
Waymire, Tom							
West, Jim & Ann Nye							
Wolf, Barb							
Wood, Charlie & Marcia							
Wudell, Allwin							
Zen, Mark & Melody Miller							
Zoschenko, James							

Grass River ...con't

sandy shore of Setting Lake. It is good that the water levels were low (down by almost 3 feet), since no suitable spot could be found up in the dense boreal forest.

Sasagiu Rapids, Manitoba July 25, 2003

After three final and pleasant days paddling on Setting Lake, the RMCC canoeists coasted into Sasagiu Rapids Park landing. The successful exploration and historical revisit of a portion of the Upper Track was over. *Excellent trip:* abundant wildlife (song birds, shore birds, eagles, other rap-



Janis and Jim (taking a break from paddling by fishing) Hollaway
Lyn Berry

Lyn & Jeanne on the flat waters of Setting Lake

Jim Hollaway



tors, ducks, pelicans, many loons); solitude (even if not a defined Wilderness area); northern lights (on 3 occasions); 1 bear (fortunately crashing and running away); lots of beavers, a few otters and 2 mink; weather (not too hot and very little rain); and finally reasonable mosquitoes.

All finished, all gear loaded, it was off to a hot shower and "kitchen cooked" meal. Jim & Janis along with Lyn & Jeanne were now contemplating their next paddling adventure.

The Duck's Story

By Jim Hollaway

Setting Lake, Manitoba – It was evening number ten, and Lyn and Jeanne and Janis and I were out paddling in a narrow channel of the lake. It had poured earlier, during dessert, but the storm had quickly passed, and now it was dead calm, cool, and just perfect for a short, late evening cruise. Indeed, as the sun (it didn't set until after 10 PM) finally approached the horizon, the lake slicked off, and it got so quiet we could converse with Lyn and Jeanne even though at times they were hundreds of yards away.

Suddenly, two ravens sailed around the point of the island that formed one shore of our channel, roosted, and began to holler at each other. One screamed, at top volume, like some demented soul lost in the woods and then paused

while the other loudly answered with the usual caw, caw, caw, caw. This went on for a bit, back and forth, and as it was, it was an interesting display of nature, nothing more.

But then, into the scene came a lone female duck, a Gadwall we think. She flew around the head of the island that held the two ravens and landed near the opposite shore of our little channel. The ravens continued blasting away, one then the other. When they would pause, perhaps for a breath, our valiant duck would utter a single "quack." The first time that happened, we all laughed. It was funny enough once, but then the three birds continued through multiple repetitions, and we got hysterical. Finally, the duck presumed to quack twice during the lull between ravens. This happened twice, and then all was quiet again. Perhaps our heroine was telling the ravens to shut, up (quack, quack). Tough old bird, we thought, good for her – and peace and quiet returned for our last night out on the lake.

Tips . . .

Tips for paddling class V whitewater in an open canoe.

By Sammer Elias

Most of you don't have a use for these tips, but I'm also guessing that most of you would find them interesting, and some of you really would find them beneficial. This is the last thing I can contribute, so I'd like to offer them. Granted, this is only my advice from my experience. Anyway, here are my five tips to training for class V whitewater, or *feeling comfortable in any lesser extreme whitewater.*

1.A reliable combat roll.

Not because it saves you from taking a swim, but because otherwise you greatly limit how hard you push. When you know that you can roll in almost any situation, then you're not afraid of going over, then you're not afraid of challenging yourself, and trying difficult moves. And by trying difficult moves, I mean making comfortable rapids and comfortable moves...more difficult. More difficult lines, tighter eddies, bigger waves, harder ferries, etc. I emphasize a reliable combat roll, as opposed to a reliable pool roll. So how do you make that transition? Go surf a large wave or an intimidating hole, then when you go over, attempt your roll. Do this endless times. In calm water, your fully planning and expecting your roll when you practice it. In a rapid your not, and that's what messes you up and scares you.

2.Side surfing.

Lots of it. Get in the bigger holes, the ones you think will definitely drop you. This will teach you how to roll your hips instinctively, how to stay loose at the hips, and how to balance the boat.

3.Timing

As you paddle more difficult whitewater, timing does become everything. This is kind of easier learned through experience, rather than teaching. But, I'll list some of the important applications to think about.

Timing for eddies: Don't just paddle like a

robot right into an eddy, wait before your last couple of strokes, and then kick them in at the right time. That right timing controls the amount of turning you do and when you do it, which is the difference between bringing you in perfectly and smacking the upstream rock.

Timing for water tongues: Water moves fastest right at the green water of a tongue than it does before and after that tongue. You want to hook into that fast green water so that you can pull yourself through the hole or wave immediately at the bottom of that tongue. That pull not only allows you to power your way through the water obstruction, but also allows you to keep your boat pointing straight during and after your break through.

Timing for waves: Whether its big standing waves, holes, or small wave trains, they all affect the direction and speed of your boat. Your correctly timed paddles strokes can counter-act that affect. Sometimes its not noticeable, but whenever you hit a wave or go over a wave, it slows you down. Then you have to build your momentum again. And if there are many waves, your constantly working to build your speed again. And most waves pivot your boat slightly, big waves can turn you completely. Many waves push you off your line. Again, then you would unfortunately follow with a stroke or two or three to put you back on course.

To prevent all this foul-play plant your strokes at the right time. If you pull on a forward stroke right as a small wave hits your bow, you'll retain your speed. You've counter-acted the slowing affect of the wave with the accelerating affect of your stroke. If you're between strokes when the wave hits your bow, then you've lost speed. To prevent a larger wave from pivoting your boat, you need to wait, and plant your paddle at the base of the wave, then pull yourself up and over it. That keeps you on line, and in direction.

If you're always timing out your strokes as you paddle through large waves or wave trains, then you can keep your speed and your direction with no recovery.

Timing to help you turn and pivot: Use waves to help you turn, and know the right

time to pivot when paddling through waves. Just as the face of a wave can turn your boat when you don't want it to, you can use it to turn your boat when you do want to.

Time your eddy turn so that your bow is turning on the face of a wave, then that wave will turn you with greater ease and speed. Initiate the turn and get the bow angled in the right direction before encountering the face of the wave. Then the wave will help you the rest of the way, otherwise, if you try to turn in the trough before the wave, the wave can actually mess your turn up.

Besides turning into eddies, if you need to pivot to change direction when you are in waves or approaching a wave, if you time your pivot, so that you are at the crest of the wave when you do it, you will pivot extremely easily. This is because not only is there nothing in the way of your bow or stern, but also because your bow and stern are out of the water, eliminating the friction of the water.

4. Facing upstream from eddy to eddy

Alan Whittern once told me, "In difficult water you should be spending more time facing upstream than downstream". Seemed a little strange at first, but in no time...it made complete sense. This is what makes all the difference between having control in a rapid, and not. So before you even drop into the rapid, eddy-out near the top of the rapid, or even right before it. Then while you are in that eddy, find the next eddy by looking over your shoulder. Pick out the next eddy below it too, a "plan B" eddy, just in case you miss the first one. For your first one, pick one out that's not too far below you, the closer the better. Hopefully its right below the next little drop. Just focus on your next eddy, then go for it. Then do the same eddy choosing over your shoulder again, all the way through the entire rapid. That way you're breaking the rapid up into controlled little steps. You're in control of the whole situation. If something goes wrong, just

dive into your chosen eddy, or into the next eddy down. This is the ultimate way to train for more difficult water, and the only way to paddle in it. And personally, I find it a lot more fun.

5. Constant practice, two or three times a week.

In addition, I feel it is more important, to pound in technique, and perfection of technique at a challenging level. It is more important to be a master at every move you make, a master at every paddle stroke you use, than it is to move up to the next level with sloppiness.

RMCC Trips Schedule

Not too much to publish at this time!! Do refer to the WEB SITE for the latest trips information.

Sept. 20 - 21 Colorado River; Loma to Westwater. Doug Hurcomb The more the merrier, but hoping for plenty of Kids.

Nov. 23 - 30 Rio Grande: Texas / Mexico border, Bug Bend country. Greg & Karen Jankowski

The following trips are sponsored by Canoe Colorado, a recent advertiser in the *Voyageur's Companion*:

September 13-14 Colorado River - Newcastle to Parachute; Beginner Level Trip, Moderate Pace, 40 miles class I+

October 11-12 Granby Reservoir; Beginner Level Trip: Any Pace, Full Moon Paddle.

For more information contact:
Eric Nyre;

Canoeing and Touring back East

by Jill Stecker

We have just finished up another great canoeing and touring trip to the Northeast. We first headed to Wausau, WI for the 2003 Slalom Canoe Nationals. Even with my mildly achy shoulder, we got a 2nd and 3rd place finish out of the three classes we had entered.

We then drove up into Ontario and visited some national and provincial parks, stopping briefly to paddle on the French river—the famous fur-trader canoe waterway. It's a narrow passageway with many falls to portage around. As well, we spent the entire day in the Canadian Canoe Museum in Peterborough. We also visited and had a lovely candlelit dinner at the home of the canoeist who founded the museum, Kirk Wipper. We then crossed the St. Lawrence waterway & 1000 Lakes area and drove into the Adirondacks.

We first mountain biked thru the beautiful hardwood forest to the great lodge Sanantoni situated overlooking a lovely peaceful lake. This year we got a tour of the lodge from university students involved in its historic restoration. We then attended the Adirondack FreeStyle Symposium and took three days of lessons in quietwater tandem freestyle canoeing. We had some very good teachers—Anne and Tryon Lindabury—tandem freestyle National Champions. We performed our paired solo canoe dance at the AFS annual exhibition during the final evening. The following day was the Wooden Canoe Heritage Assoc. annual meeting and we got to view 30 or more of the most beautiful hand-made wooden canoes available, including birch barks. We listened to a lecture by a present day birch bark canoe maker. He said he was teaching his skills to the local Indians in Maine where he lives.

Two days earlier, we visited a canoe paddle maker's woodworking shop. I suggested a design of a paddle I would like to have and two days later he brought me the finished paddle to try out. It performed beautifully and I bought it on the spot—what service!

Bob Stecker admiring wooden canoes of the 1800's

Jill Stecker



Classifieds...

Classifieds information is also on the Rocky Mountain Canoe Club WEB SITE. There, the information is more comprehensive, up-to-date, etc.

These are new ADS:

Wanted:

Inexpensive canoe. Looking for a canoe to leave on my mountain property, and one where I will not be too disappointed if it is stolen like the last one. I prefer a 12-18 ft lake canoe. Willing to do some repairs. Phone: [redacted]

ForSale:

Canoes, Trailer, Rowing Shell.

* Mad River Explorer 17 ft. Great trip canoe—\$500. * Tent trailer, sleeps 6 roomy family floorplan \$1500. * Mad River Revelation, like new, wood gunwales \$1200. * Rowing Shell, beautiful condition \$1200. Mo Morrow [redacted]

Wenonah Cascade Tripping Canoe.

Tandem, Rolalex, 17'6", 75lbs, Olive Green, black vinyl gunwales, web seats, and bow/stern knee pads. Very good condi-

tion. \$850. Located in Montrose, CO. Call Lee [redacted]

These ADS were in the last issue of Voyageur's Companion, but are still available:

Mitchell Premier Canoe Paddle.

Call Dana Bove-[redacted] or [redacted]

Mad River Explorer 16' 4" Canoe.

[redacted] Phil & Mary Lyle

Rogue River 14 ft. Canoe.

E-mail Jim at [redacted]

Kokatat Paddling Top.

Ken Metzger at [redacted]

Dragonfly Solo Canoe.

PFD: Salus Life Jacket

Red Cedar Trader Canoe.

Sammer Elias, [redacted]

Yakima Rack.

Aire Leopard Cataract.

Dave Zader, [redacted]

Thigh straps.

Jim, [redacted]

Drysuit.

Doug [redacted]

Portable Potty.

Chris Edwards, [redacted]

18-1/2 Foot Expedition Canoe.

Contact John [redacted]

Wanted:

Whitewater Canoe. Solo or tandem, under \$600. Please contact Jim [redacted]

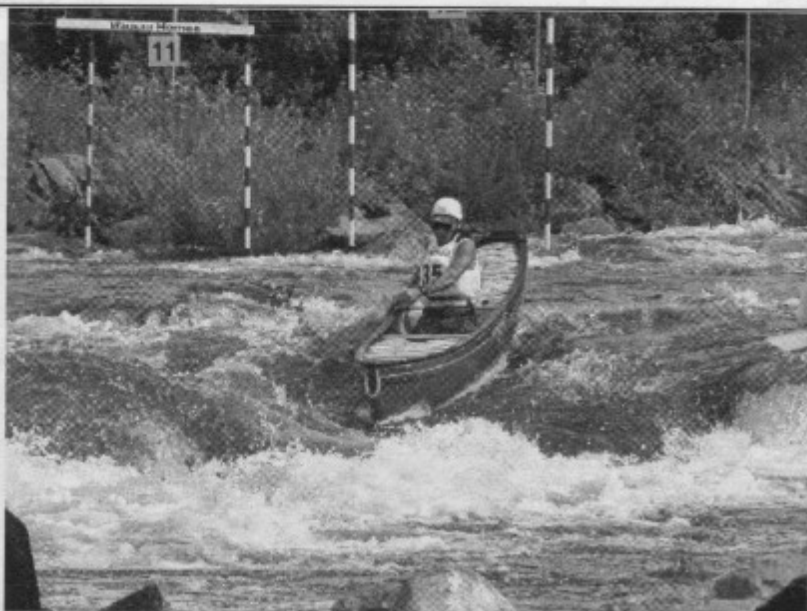
Slalom Nationals ...con't

and great prizes after the awards. An Esquif canoe was given as a raffle prize. A paddler that traveled all the way from Japan won it and was he ever surprised and delighted.

Bob & I had a real relaxing time practicing and racing since I had to conserve my shoulder and rotor cuff repair. Since recovering from surgery, I had only paddled for one hour, twice at the Golden course before we went to Nationals. I was 7 months post op and my doctor said I could compete, but I didn't know if my shoulder would like it or not. The shoulder seemed to like it OK with the addition of ice and Vioxx. We only made 3 practice runs per day and only did 3 classes. This gave Bob a chance to race a class solo. It was like being on vacation instead of the usual marathon we tend to make it. I was hardly thinking competition, just get down the course in good form without straining my shoulder. I couldn't believe it when we beat an experience male tandem team by 50 seconds and got a 2nd place in the Masters Any Length. And we came in third in the Mixed category. We were both very pleased.

Bob racing solo for the first time at the Nationals. He got so much practice without Jill this summer, due to her shoulder rotary cuff repair, that he was in good form to race solo this year.

Jill Stecker





The big submarine. Gordon Black and Randy Carlson sinking below Big Drop (this is the same view as the tug of war scene, this time with water in the course).

Bob & Jill Stecker

This portion of the Grass River also featured magnificent waterfalls.

photo by Hollaway



Portage to bypass a Grass River waterfall.

Jeanne Younghaus



Typical of take-out chores. Summer at Clear Creek.

Bob Cook

The *Voyageur's Companion* is a periodic publication of the Rocky Mountain Canoe Club. It is primarily the venue for the RMCC to post trip schedules, classified ads, and related material, enabling members to share and enhance their canoeing interests. Members are invited to contribute articles on canoe trips as well as informative articles on subjects such as: Paddling techniques, Equipment, Rigging the canoe, Environmental issues, River safety, Camping techniques, Canoe history. Please restrict articles to less than about a page and a half. BUT, nice photos enhance the interest in your news.

Submitting Articles: Editorial material for The Voyageur's Companion should be sent to: Lyndon Berry, Editor, The Voyageur's Companion,

Prefer Word format via e-mail, but most other formats and paper is OK too. I have a scanner, so pictures are welcomed. JPG format is preferred for electronic photos, but most other formats OK also.

Deadline for a next issue is October 20. Get it to me, See it in print.

RMCC Membership:

\$15.00 per Household per Year. Contact Laurel Adams

Mail applications to:



Fall Roster
Inside



Newsletter of the *Rocky Mountain Canoe Club*, an *American Canoe Association Paddle America* partner.

The Voyageur's Companion

C/O Editor