



FOUNDED 1989
ACA PADDLE AMERICA CLUB

SPRING-SUMMER, 2011
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The MOUNTAIN PADDLER

ARTICLES OF INTEREST
FOR OUR PADDLING COMMUNITY

EDITOR'S NOTE by Sue Hughes

Once again I'm laughing at myself; I thought there weren't enough articles to start this issue and all of a sudden it was almost too long.

And, as always, it was a treat to put together and learn about the good times our members have been having. It was especially nice to notice how many new faces were involved in these spring paddles.

Coming at the end of paddling season will be a special "How To Do It" issue, and the next *Mountain Paddler* will have Lou Ann and Dave Hustvedt's account of their self-supported kayak trip in Glacier Bay, Alaska. Their pictures look amazing.

Paddle often, paddle safely and see you July 16th at PaddleFest for great food and camaraderie, fun paddling, and Lou Ann's intro to windsurfing, too.



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Wild sweet peas in Hunter's Cove, Alaska

SPRING PADDLING

DATE: JANUARY - APRIL

MEYERS POOL PRACTICES

The usual crowd and some new faces kept their skills and kayak muscles in shape over the winter with bi-monthly practices at Meyers Pool in Arvada. People were still talking about what they'd learned at the Club's lessons in June. Some of the attendees were members Russ Hardy, David and Lou Ann Hustvedt, Marsha Dougherty, John Ruger, Andy McKenna, Kristy and Rich Webber, Mark Willey and Brian Hunter, and instructors Matt Lutkus, Ray Van Dusen, Gary McIntosh, Dan Bell and Brian Curtiss.

DATE: MARCH, 2011

SPRING WAKE-UP AT LAKE PUEBLO

By Jud Hurd

Brian Hunter and I took a few days in March and went down to Pueblo Lake to shake off the effects of the winter's hibernation. Ice was finally off the lake and we wanted to see if we remembered how to get into a kayak, let alone make it go. Besides, the cabin fever was reaching a pitch. So, we hooked up Brian's trailer and headed south. We did a short paddle out of the Southshore Marina the afternoon we arrived, in our dry suits of course due to water temperature. As usual the spring winds came up, but we paddled enough to get some of the kinks out. It very quickly became obvious work was needed on our technique and stamina. The next day we got an early start and made it further up the south shore. The water was very high and allowed us to go way back into Rock Creek. We took a break at the back to hike around a little and then headed back to Southshore. The winds came up again, as usual, but we got in a good paddle.

As we approached the boat ramp we saw a huge crane parked on the ramp. They were trying to pick a large yacht out of the water and load it onto a flat bed. The story we got was a couple from Oklahoma was taking their boat from Colorado to Chesapeake Bay. We never found out why. We watched this process for about two hours while they figured out how to rig a sling under the boat and lift it up without it tipping and sliding out. But they got it done.

The best part of this trip was Brian did all the cooking. I would definitely give Chez Hunter a 5-star rating. Our last day we didn't paddle but we did explore the south shore by truck. We found a nice spot on the southwest corner of the lake where we could park and launch for an easier exploration of the western end of the lake, which is definitely something I would like to do on another trip. All in all it was a very successful trip and we both returned home feeling ready and raring to go for a full season of kayaking.

SPRING PADDLING, CONT.

DATE: MARCH 17

LAKE MCINTOSH AFTER-WORK

Getting the "After Work" series off to an early start, Marsha Dougherty, Anne Fiore, Russ Hardy and Kate Wallace enjoyed a chilly St. Patrick's Day paddle on McIntosh Lake.

DATE: APRIL 9

LONE TREE RESERVOIR



John Borton, new member Chris Dohmen, Anne Fiore, David and Lou Ann Hustvedt, Jud Hurd, Kristy and Richard Webber, Stan White, Mark Willey, and day members Larry White and Steven Horney paddled Lone Tree Reservoir in April.

Newcomer Steve was in Boulder on work and wanted to do a bit of kayaking while he was here to keep in shape for some upcoming races. He found RMSKC on the web and contacted Jud. Emails were exchanged, and Anne Fiore brought Gary Cage's boat and Jud lent him the rest of the necessary gear.

It sounds like he was a fine addition to the day. Jud reports, "He was a great guy except that in a few strokes he was way ahead of us. He was great to talk to and gave us all some hints on getting more power out of our strokes."



Photos by Chris Dohmen

(Continued on page 4)

SPRING PADDLING, CONT.

(Continued from page 3)

After the paddle Steve emailed, "Please extend my appreciation to your group for loaning me a boat and gear and allowing me to paddle with you all yesterday. It was good to get back on the water, and I enjoyed meeting your group. I hope I didn't offend anyone by running rapidly back and forth; I haven't had a lot of time on the water lately, and I need to use whatever time I can get to prepare."

Jud responded, "Nobody took offense and we enjoyed watching your technique. Everybody is always looking to learn. It was fun having you and you are welcome back any time. I know we can always round up a boat for you."

As usual, RMSKC members go out of their way to help everyone have a good time on the water.

DATE: MAY 7

UNION RESERVOIR SPRING PADDLE AND PICNIC

The annual Spring Union Paddle and Picnic was as much fun as always; people paddled in small groups around the lake catching up on the winter's news.



Subway sandwiches instead of a BBQ meant less work for the organizers and everyone said they were extraordinarily tasty. After the subs and chips Brian Hunter shared some of his jewelry with the ladies because it was Mother's Day weekend, and people tried out Stan White's new TideRace Xplore-S kayak. Then the die-hards did another lap or two before calling it a day.

The participants were: Kathleen Ellis, Sue Hughes, Brian Hunter, Jud Hurd, Lou Ann Hustvedt, Gary McIntosh, Julie Reckart, Ray Van Dusen, Kate Wallace, Rich and Kristy Webber, Stan White, Mark and Suzanne Willey, and new member Janet Mallory.



Stan's new boat, with Rich checking its secondary stability.

LATE SPRING EVENTS

DATE: MAY 28

OPENING DAY AT GROSS RESERVOIR

Brian Hunter met Lou Ann and Dave Hustvedt at Osprey Point for the traditional Memorial Day weekend paddle on Gross Reservoir. The water was down 80 feet but other than that the paddle was just another lovely day on the water in Colorado's mountains.

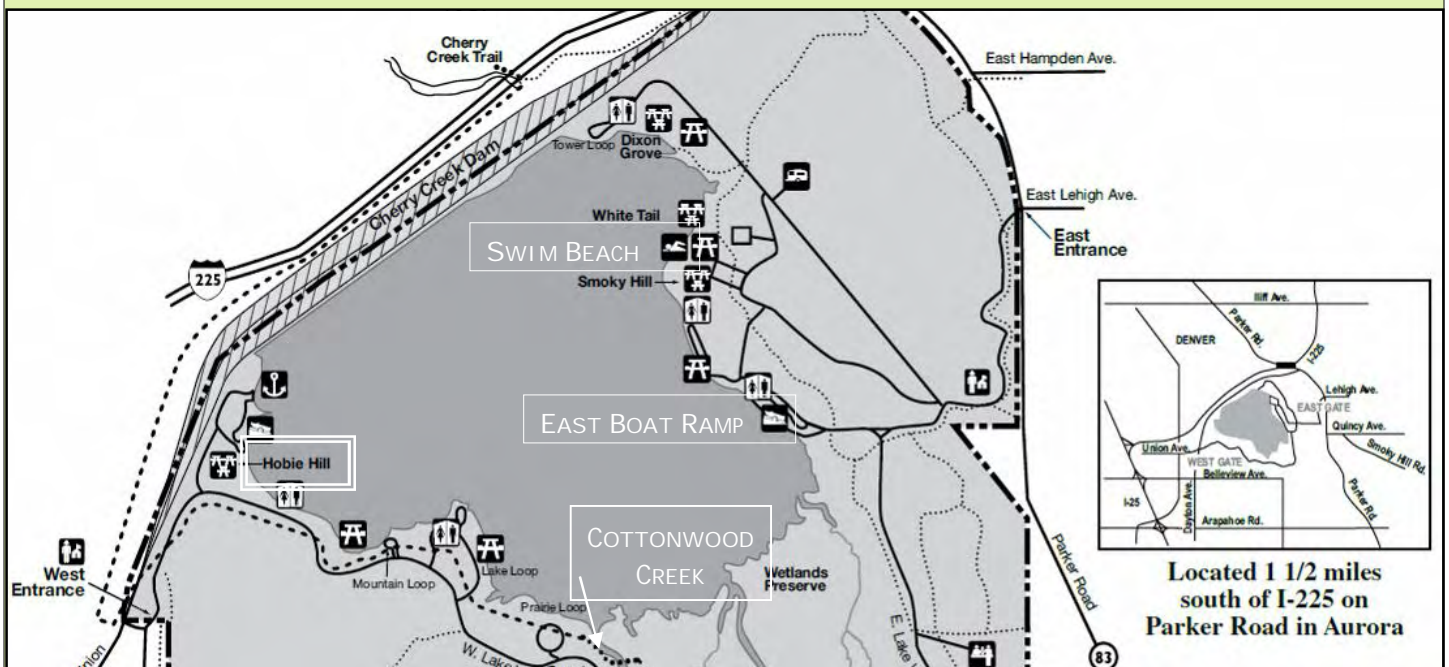
DATE: JUNE 4

SECOND ANNUAL CHERRY CREEK TOUR DE SHORE

John and Sharon Borton, Chris Dohmen, Marsha Dougherty, Gary Greeno, George Ottenhoff, Jud Hurd and Bernie Dahlen met Trip Coordinator Brian Hunter at the east boat ramp on a beautiful spring morning. The reservoir is in Cherry Creek State Park, a small wildlife refuge almost completely surrounded by the city; its rich diversity of wildlife includes many kinds of birds, a herd of deer, coyotes, snakes and even land-bound box turtles.

Everyone arrived on time and there were plenty of helping hands to get the kayaks to the water from cars and trailers. The blue sky sported a few puffy clouds while a light breeze played across the lake from the west when they started out.

After a short briefing they paddled west-northwest past the swim beach to the outlet tower on the east side of the dam where they regrouped to paddle together along the exposed dam. The ski and wake board boats go whipping past along the dam so they chose to paddle in a tight, secure group to be more visible in this frequently congested area. They paddled about two and a half miles around to the Hobie Hill picnic area where they stopped for a snack and a trip to the restrooms.



After about 20 minutes of nibbling and chatting they got back on the water and made their way along the southern shore to Cottonwood Creek. Four of the group took a short excursion into the creek, which only goes back a few hundred yards.

While the four were exploring the creek, the wind picked up to 8-10 mph. A couple of other paddlers headed back to the boat ramp, splitting the group. To make matters worse, one of them had forgotten a PFD with car keys in it on the picnic table at Hobie Hill. The amazing thing was that no one in the group noticed the member was paddling without a PFD.

Back at the put-in, another paddler stepped up and drove around the reservoir from the east boat ramp to the picnic area and recovered the PFD and car keys. All's well that ends well, but this was a real wakeup for the whole group: we really need to look out for each other even on short day paddles and not let this type of thing happen.

DATE: JUNE 10-12

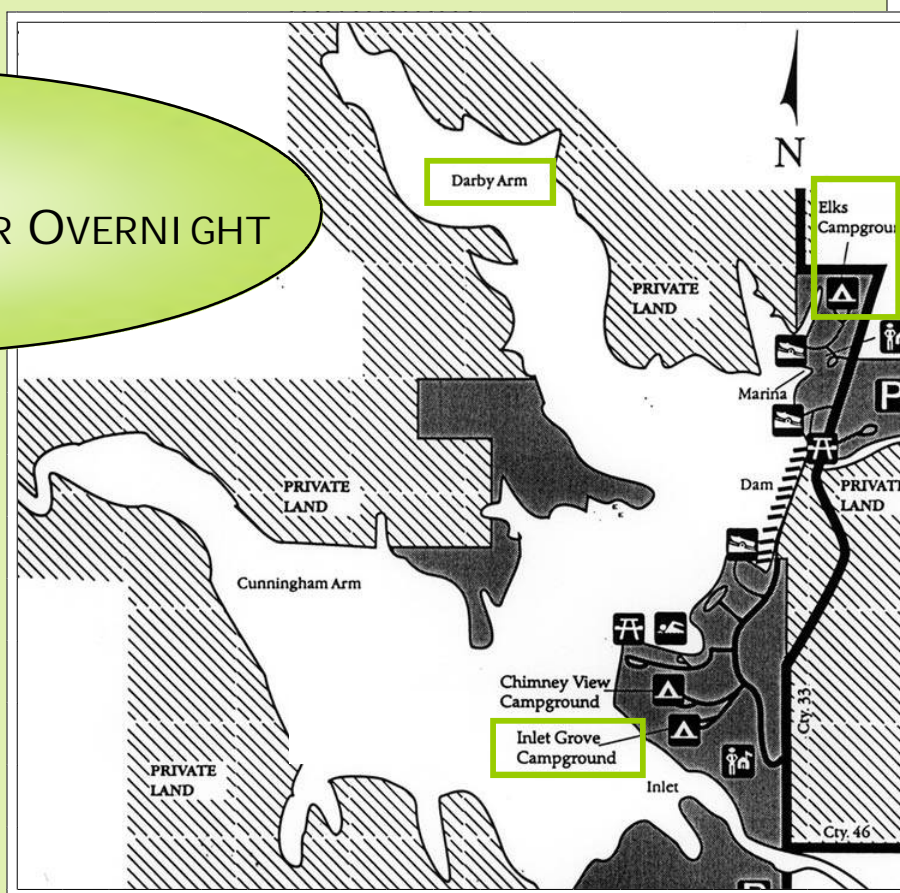
STERLING RESERVOIR OVERNIGHT

By Jud Hurd

The first multi-day paddle of the season took place in June at North Sterling State Park with twelve RMSKC members getting together for a great weekend of paddling, camping and visiting. Those enjoying this trip were Brian Hunter, Marsha Dougherty, Anna Troth, Anne Fiore, Annette Mascia, Pam Noe, Bernie Dahlen (and Wilson), Chris Dohman, and Ann Odasz with her children, Johanne and Tobias Albrigtsen. I was the trip coordinator.

The weekend started with people gradually arriving at the Elks Campground on Friday and setting up their camp sites. It was a picture perfect afternoon with a bright sun, comfortable temperature and low winds. About mid-afternoon Brian, Chris, Bernie, Anna, Annette and I decided we needed to take advantage of these ideal conditions and went for a short paddle. We stayed in the cove around the Elks Campground and scared up a bunch of carp as we got into the weeds near the back. When the carp moved through the grasses they would wave and it reminded me of scenes from *Children of the Corn*. Anne explored the campground and surrounding area with a nice bike ride.

Bernie and I went into town for dinner and ended up eating at a Mexican restaurant because the food is usually good and service is usually fast. We were a little short on time as I had asked everybody to meet at my campsite at 7pm. Well, life being what it is the service at this particular restaurant was about the slowest I had ever experienced. So, by the time we ate and got some Cool Whip for Chris's apple crisp it was almost 8:30 before we



got back to camp. Of course my loving and compassionate fellow paddlers understood the situation and didn't give me any grief over being this late. Now, if you believe that I would like to sell you some ocean front property in Arizona. Marsha and Pam had arrived so we were able to hold our meeting and decide what we wanted to do the next day. Winds were projected to be up so we decided to start by 9 am and paddle the Darby Arm.

Saturday morning we got up and I began preparing my breakfast burritos. As people came by I offered them a burrito and soon there were five of us enjoying breakfast burritos, fresh melon and coffee. The day was beautiful: no clouds, good temperature and best of all the wind was down. However, during breakfast it began to pick up so that by our launch at 9:00 there was a pretty strong wind blowing. Pam had a wedding to attend back in Denver and she had gotten up early for a paddle. She came off the water and reported that the winds were really blowing and the main part of the lake was beginning to show whitecaps. Normally the Darby Arm would have given us some protection from a prevailing west wind, but the winds today were out of the south and blowing straight up the arm. However, being the intrepid paddlers that we are, we headed out. Half the group stayed in the protected cove around the campground.



Annette, Chris and Brian rafted up against the wind

Chris, Annette, Brian, Bernie and I decided to brave the wind and try for Darby Arm. We made it to the corner to turn up the arm but Bernie was having trouble getting his kayak to turn so he headed back to join the others. He later figured out that the weight of a large water jug he put in his stern hatch was anchoring him down and he was just pivoting around it.

The four of us headed up Darby Arm. We had a strong following wind and for a while we rafted up and let the wind blow us along. It was fun but kind of boring after a while so we split off and

paddled to the back of the arm. Eventually we had to turn around and head out of the arm against a strong head wind. Brian's anemometer was measuring around 15-18 knots with an occasional gust of 20. We estimated we had 12-18 inch waves and an occasional one a little bigger. Going was slow and hard but we made progress. Annette and Brian stayed close together while Chris and I stayed close. Chris doesn't have a rudder or skeg on her boat; she did just fine going straight into the wind but holding her boat against a cross wind was going to be difficult. So we all paddled until we were well past the corner to turn back toward our launch site. Chris was then able to make the turn and head to the campground.

I turned around to join Annette and Brian for the paddle back but when I got to them they asked if we really wanted to head in or try for Cunningham Arm. We decided to go to shore to take a break, eat lunch and discuss it. We made shore just fine and while we were eating a couple of guys on jet skis came up and inquired about us. It turned out that when Chris made it back to the ramp she turned around expecting to see three boats behind her. When she saw none she became concerned that something had happened and sent the jet skiers out to look for us and make sure we didn't need assistance. I think this is a great example of paddlers looking out for each other and we really appreciated her concern and action. It was unfortunate we didn't have a way of telling her we decided to paddle a little more. Anyway, all was fine.

On our side of the arm where we were eating it was pretty calm since we had a tail wind. But when you looked across the arm the water was being churned up with some good whitecaps, so we decided we had enough. We paddled past a couple large groups of pelicans (boy do they stink when there is a large group of them) and headed back to camp. The rest of the



day was spent relaxing including a nice shower. A few people took a hike to explore the area and Ann Odasz arrived with her son and daughter, Tobias and Johanne. They are just getting back into kayaking so Brian and I spent some time answering a lot of questions and visiting with them.

Dinner time finally rolled around so we all got together to grill some meat and share some fine vittles. Let me tell you the food was great. I can't figure out which I enjoy most about these outings—the paddling, the company or the food. It is pretty much a three-way tie. After dinner the wind died down and Ann, Tobias and Johanne wanted to go out into the protected cove so Brian, Bernie and Marsha joined them for a nice paddle.

Those of us who stayed behind drove over to explore the campgrounds and facilities on the south end of the lake. We decided Inlet Cove would be a great place to launch Sunday morning for a short paddle before heading home. When we got back to camp we got everybody together and announced that the *North Sterling State Park Sunday Morning Paddle Planning Subcommittee* had made a decision to launch at Inlet Cove and paddle the south end of the lake. Being there were no objections, other than Bernie didn't want to start at 9 am, it was agreed.

Sunday morning started out just like Saturday, except I didn't have enough breakfast burrito mix left to feed everybody. We had clear skies, low winds and nice temperatures. Everybody ate, broke camp and loaded up the kayaks to head for Inlet Cove; that way we didn't have to get back to camp before check out time.

We made it to Inlet Cove and launched by 9:00. The south winds came up again, although not quite as strong, but since we were on the south shore we had good protection. We had a great paddle around trees and the campgrounds. We went up the inlet arm to a walking bridge but the inlet was posted that we couldn't go up very far—too bad as it looked like it would be fun to paddle. Since the water was so high it went far back into the trees and we all had

fun bushwhacking through the trunks and branches. We paddled around to a trailhead on the southwest corner where we took a break and had something to eat. We paddled a couple of little coves there and then went back to the cars. Everybody loaded up, we had a picture taken with Wilson, and after a group hug we all headed home. I thought it was a great trip and would like to do it again.



Just a prairie dog out for a swim?



This photo and the one of the pelicans by Brian Hunter the others by Jud Hurd

ACA LESSONS



DATE: JUNE 18

ACA BASIC STROKES CLASS AT McINTOSH LAKE

Brian Curtiss and Gary McIntosh reviewed basic strokes and rescues with Bernie Dahlen, George Ottenhoff, Russ Hardy, Sue Hughes and Stan White's son, Tristan White at McIntosh Lake in Longmont. First they discussed paddle shapes and foot-peg placement. Next a supervised wet exit, and then a wet exit and assisted reentry,

were a must for anyone who hadn't already done them.

The instructors were in the water for safety and confidence-building during the wet exit portion.

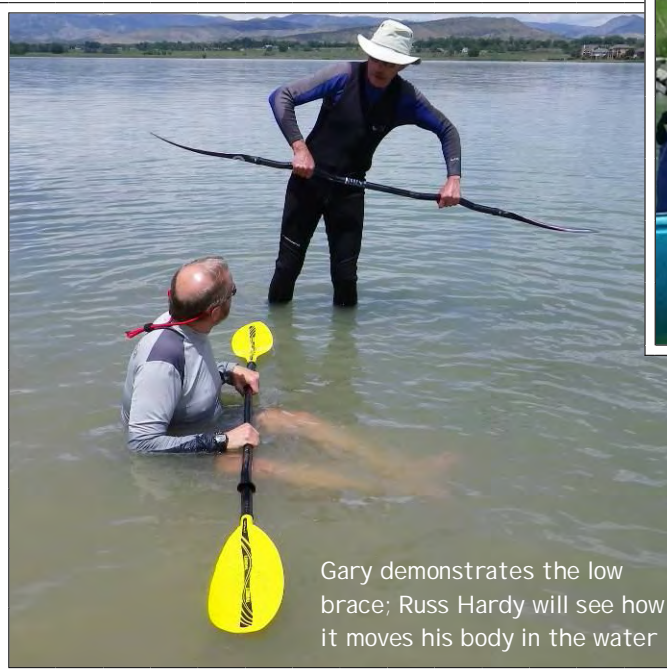
The look on Tristan's face when he did the body twirl that got himself from his back deck into the cockpit was priceless.



Gary McIntosh and Brian Curtiss start Tristan's wet exit



Brian holds his boat for Tristan's reentry



Gary demonstrates the low brace; Russ Hardy will see how it moves his body in the water

The sweep, draw strokes, the forward stroke, reverse strokes and bracing rounded out the morning.

After lunch and Russ Hardy's extraordinary cookies they practiced reentries and assisted rescues.



DATE: JUNE 25 AND 26

THE GREEN VIRUS INFECTS COLORADO PADDLERS

By Brian Curtiss

Last winter I contacted a number of the coaches who provide sea kayaking lessons at the various east and west coast symposiums to see if any of them would be passing through Colorado during their travels. I was hopeful since I had noticed that there were many who had classes listed on both coasts.

One of the people who responded was Turner Wilson of *Kayak Ways* in Maine. He and Cheri Perry teach Greenlandic techniques and offer skin-on-frame boat building workshops. A real plus is that they bring their collection of

low-volume kayaks, traditional paddles, avataqs, tuiliqs and norsaqs [definitions on the next page] so that students aren't required to have their own Greenlandic gear. We traded a number of emails and phone calls and settled on a date that fit with their plans to reach a 10-day skin-on-frame building workshop in Portland by the end of June.

Five of us from the Club (Brian Curtiss, Sue Hughes, Rich Webber, Kristy Webber, and Mark Willey) spent Saturday with Cheri and Turner learning the basics of Greenlandic paddling. We started with stretches (Cheri is also a yoga instructor). Then they demonstrated



Cheri Perry helps Rich with the paddle movement; Bette was holding the boat and keeping the avataq from blowing away

EDITOR'S NOTE: I wish there were pictures of the members who took the class on Saturday, but all the photos are from Sunday, when I was not a student.



Turner helps Bette Curtiss practice pulling the boat under herself while supported with an avataq; her dad and Rich hold her boat in the wind

how the paddle is constructed and how it is fit to the paddler. This information helped us each select a paddle or two from their large collection that we used later in the day. It will also help if we should choose to make our own paddles (several folks including Rich Webber have already done so).

We spent the rest of the morning in our own kayaks learning the basic strokes using the Greenlandic paddle: several versions of the forward stroke



A class member working on rolls;
another keeping the boat in position

(canted, sliding and vertical), sweeps and several versions of the bow rudder turn, sculling draw, and high and low braces.

We had more discussions over lunch; then in the afternoon we donned tuiliqs, grabbed an avataq, selected a skin-on-frame kayak and learned a basic Greenlandic roll or two.

On Sunday, Brian and Rich returned along with four non-club members (Patty Lee, Paul Callor, Bette Curtiss, and Brian Moore) to spend another day with Cheri and Turner. We reviewed the basics in the morning and spent the afternoon working on rolling.

The big difference was that the wind came up on Sunday afternoon (10-15 mph out of the west with gusts to 30 mph) which added another dimension to the experience. It was so windy that tow ropes were used to keep the rollers from blowing out of reach. (Note to self: rolling up *into* the wind and waves is way easier than trying to come up on the down wind side!) At the end of the day, several of us paddled up wind to finish the day surfing the wind waves back to the put in.



Balance bracing in the waves that were big for McIntosh Lake

Overall, I think everyone had a great weekend learning new things. Both Cheri and Turner are talented teachers as evidenced by the three or four people who rolled for their first time. While I'll continue to look for opportunities to bring in other outside instructors, I think that we will be seeing these two back here in Colorado in the future.

DEFINITIONS

AVATAQ: A bladder traditionally used as flotation for a seal harpoon. It can be used as a self-righting aid when learning the basics of rolling.

TUULIK: A Greenland style paddle jacket and sprayskirt combo; it is a very warm and dry garment designed for paddling in unforgiving cold conditions. It is meant to be roomy and not restrict movement in any way.

NORSAQ: A throwing board used to add power to the throw when harpooning prey; well suited to train Greenland rolls and a great passing stage to learn hand rolling.



Turner helps Patty Lee with the angle of her wrists



The author and her husband, Larry Kline

A RELUCTANT KAYAKER TRAVELS TO THE EVERGLADES

by Carole Kline

I'm not a person who usually looks for reasons to leave Colorado in the winter because I like the snow and most of the associated outdoor activities (cross country skiing, snowshoeing, etc).

Judd Hurd's well timed e-mail caught my attention though, proposing a kayak camping trip for a week in the Everglades. I needed to burn up some extra vacation time and my husband Larry and I were looking for a winter trip. The website showed a kayaker peacefully floating through the mangroves watching exotic birds; another photo promoted their excellent campsite meals prepared by the guide.

The "no experience necessary" statement was all I needed to prompt further interest. No fan of wind, swells or brisk currents, the trip sounded like one I could enjoy. We scheduled with *Crystal Seas Kayaks* for a five day and four night trip in late January; we would be kayaking in the Ten Thousand I lands area of Everglades National Park in southwest Florida.

We were met on our first day at park headquarters in Everglades City by our guide "JP" who showed up promptly with Seaward and Eddyline kayaks (tandems and singles), spray skirts, life vests, paddles and food for the entire trip. JP looked like a skinny kid just out of high school in need of more calories. "Where is my paddle float so I can do a self rescue?" was my question for our young leader. "I'll be the one who rescues you, m'am, but you probably won't need it, these boats are super stable," he said.



Mangrove trees



Carole and Larry are in the center, JP is the fellow in knickers to the right of Larry; Jud Hurd was the photographer.

I wondered if he was adult enough to lead six kayakers through the "wilderness". His enthusiasm and energy level however were contagious, setting a good tone for the trip ahead. I soon realized he was a strong, experienced, mature and competent leader.

In our group was my husband Larry and Judd Hurd from RMSKC, and Thor, Karen and Wendy. Thor was from Norway, Karen from a small town in Michigan and Wendy from Portland, Oregon. All had done some kayaking in the past.

After a few pointers on paddling and maneuvering our boats, we set off for our first night's destination. A tailwind pushed us through Chokoloskee Bay into the mangroves to Tiger Key where we set up camp on the white sandy beach. On the way we saw cormorants, pelicans and white ibis. Our island was on the Gulf of Mexico, chosen for the light breezes that kept the mosquitoes away. The camping was primitive on this trip, with a sparsely maintained porta-potty at the second camp and no shower facilities. Our guide cooked a delicious dinner of tilapia, couscous and fresh salad with strawberry cheesecake for desert. It was impressive to see what he could put together with just a camp stove.

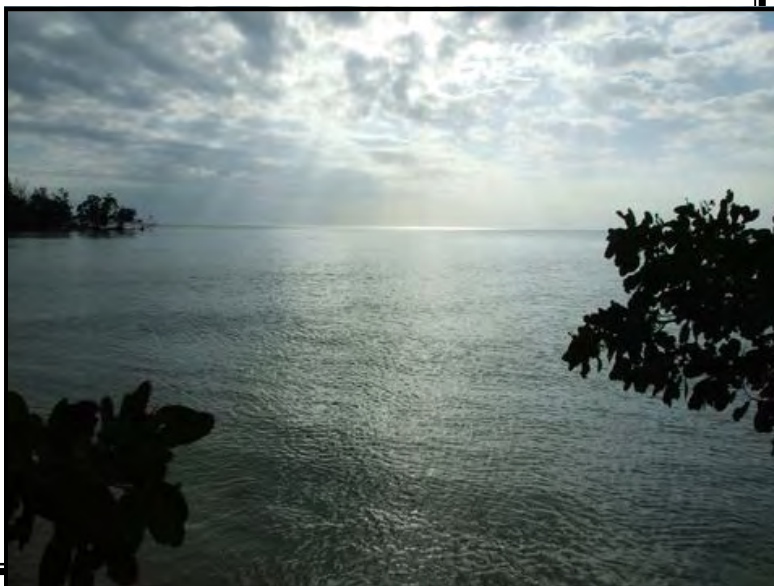


Day Two was very windy ahead of an approaching cold front. Our plan was to paddle across the bay to explore some mangroves, have lunch on Fakahatchee Key, and then return to our campsite. I found out how difficult it



was to maneuver a tandem kayak in the wind and current. The bow was sitting high out of the water with all of our gear out of the boat, creating more wind drag. My husband became frustrated with me and my weak paddling; I became tired and frightened as our boat nearly crashed into the shore opposite of where we needed to be. Larry's concern was that we were being blown towards the mangroves with low laying limbs and roots encrusted with barnacles. Only the day before one of our group inadvertently paddled into these river-like "sweeps" and almost capsized. It was a tough seven miles. I vowed I would never kayak again and thought about all of the good skiing I was missing. That night, a thunderstorm roared through the islands and brought colder weather.

My nemesis, the wind, was still around the next morning; the sky was cloudy and it looked as though it would rain. I talked to JG about leaving the trip, feeling that I was just not strong enough to stay and help Larry paddle the tandem. JG thought it was a bad idea and reassured me I would be fine. After a delicious pancake breakfast, we packed up the boats and headed to our next campsite on Jewel Key, 6.5 miles away. JG said there were rats living in the bushes. Great, I thought. We paddled on the Gulf side through 20 mph winds and 2 foot swells. The boat was more stable fully loaded. There wasn't much bird viewing on this leg of the trip, just toughing it out on the open water to get to the next campsite. This beach was much smaller but had spectacular views of the Gulf on the windward side and a peaceful bay with plentiful bird life on the lee side. Things were looking up. Larry and I relaxed with a glass of wine and we had another excellent meal. The temperature that night dropped to the high 40s and the stars were incredible.



The other two women and I voted for a calm paddle through the mangroves for the following day. We were tired of fighting the winds. Karen was a serious amateur photographer who wanted more wildlife pictures. The original plan was to do another open water paddle on the Gulf side to Rabbit Key. We thought we had changed the guide's mind, but once we were out on the water the men decided to go for the open water. Coming back, there was more wind and whitecaps to fight but I did much better, understanding how we could use the wind and currents to our advantage to stay on course. We couldn't always stay with the group but this time Larry had explained our tactics to the group leader who said, "Go for it, man, do what you need to do". Since our guide knew our plan and approved, I felt better about being farther away from the group. We had been chastised for not staying with the group earlier; "I can't help you out if you get into trouble so stay near the group," JB had said. Wise words for all kayakers to remember, it's too easy to strike out on your own and forget about the overall safety of the group.

Kayaking back on the final day was a short six miles. We had planned to do a hike on Sand Fly Key but the landing area had no room for all of our boats so we opted to do an extra jaunt through some mangroves before the final push.

I ended the trip feeling less a reluctant kayaker, but I still prefer a calm shoreline with birds to view in the cool early morning air to an open water, adrenaline-pumping fight with the wind and current. I learned some new skills and built confidence. Shortly after returning home I found myself in front of my computer searching for guided kayaking trips in the Pacific Northwest for the future. Next time however, I would consider a tour with a mother ship just in case.

Until then, you'll find me happily on terra firma with lots of snow gliding around on my cross country skis in the winter and running or biking in the summer, with the occasional calm weather early morning paddle to check out the birds.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE GOING: Make sure you have taken the class offered by the Club's excellent instructors and build up some upper body strength and you will enjoy your trip much more. I had taken the class and worked on upper body strength but I could have done more. Understand that this is a wilderness trip with no showers, toilets or cell phone connections, but you will get restful nights, away from noise and technology with fabulous star gazing. JB says that the best month to do this trip is February.



PADDLING MISSOURI'S CURRENT RIVER

by Ray Van Dusen

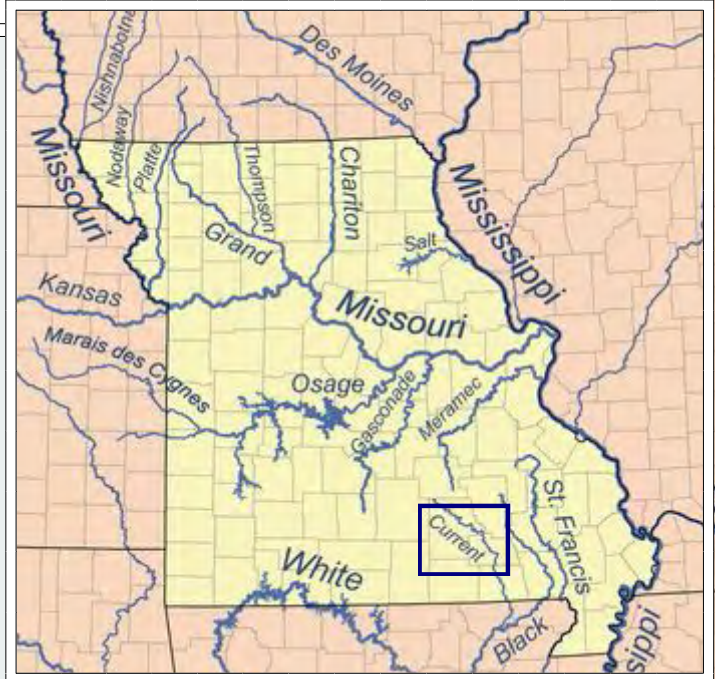
On April 2, 2011,
Canoe Colorado

did a trip down the Current River in the Ozark Mountains of south-central Missouri. It's a Class I river for the area that we paddled.

Three of us, Jerry Nyre, Eric Niles and I, put in at a low water bridge at Cedargrove and did our shuttle.

The river had a good flow and was wide enough that we had room to move around to miss the trees that were down and in the water. A lot of them point downstream so a paddler has to know how to move his boat sideways. A stern rudder, side draw, a low brace and even sometimes a bow rudder are all strokes that are needed on both sides, and a paddler has to be able to do them at once. The water was fairly clear and the bottom was mostly small rock nearly the whole trip; instead of sand bars along the river it was this same rock that had washed up in high water.

The Current is mostly spring fed, so we didn't have willows growing out in the water like we had last year on the Buffalo River. I've never seen such large springs as on this river; one had such force shooting from the side of the river it made waves up to two feet high like a fire hose spraying into the water.



We saw bald eagles, white tail deer, wild turkeys, more kingfishers than you can count, and a lot of turtles, two or three different kinds.

We had a bit of rain the first night and had a light rain most of the first day that stopped so we could put up our tents and fix supper. That night we had bats flying around and the frogs were so loud that they kept waking us up the whole night.

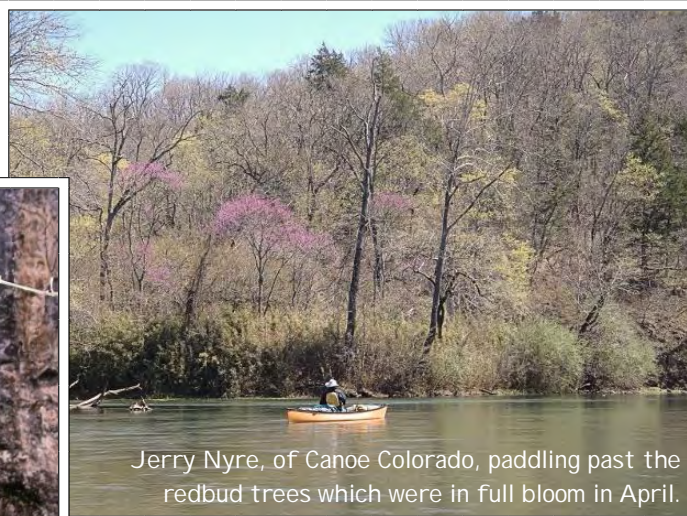


Limestone bluffs line much of the river

(Continued on page 16)

We paddled around 100 miles and took out at Hawes or Gooseneck landing. We had a shuttle driver that took Jerry's truck home with him and then met us at the take out. We called him from US Highway 60 the night before we wanted to be picked up which really worked well—he was driving up as we carried the first load of gear to the boat ramp.

This is a nice river and I'm glad that we did it. It is a long drive but there's not a lot of traffic and it's on mostly good roads.



Jerry Nyre, of Canoe Colorado, paddling past the redbud trees which were in full bloom in April.



RMSKC member Eric Niles coming out of the cave at Welsh Spring, one of many in the limestone cliffs along the river.

In 1964, over 134 miles of the upper course of the Current River and its tributaries were federally protected as the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, the first national park in America to protect a river system.

Hardwood trees, rock ledges, caves, springs, gravel bars, and towering limestone bluffs line the banks of the river.



The author on the Current River



Photos by Jerry Nyre and Eric Niles

SUFFERING FROM CABIN FEVER?

PRESCRIPTION: SPRING TRIP TO CORPUS CHRISTI

By Jud Hurd

I know we didn't have a harsh winter this year but still, in February I started getting a serious case of cabin fever. I figured a good prescription for this malady would be a trip to Corpus Christi for a week of paddling, camping and sunshine. Here is a day-by-day report of my trip:

DAY 1, WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 23: After a couple of weeks of pouring over gear and food lists I finally got packed and got an early start from Fort Collins a little before 6 am. Of course, I had to make the requisite Starbucks stop for some caffeine to keep me awake, and then I was on my way. I had some books on tape so between those and the coffee, keeping awake wasn't a problem. MapQuest showed the shortest and fastest route was to Limon and then south on Highway 287. My goal was Lubbock, Texas, which is about 600 miles and 9+ hours away. After knocking around Amarillo and Lubbock I drove 639 miles which took me about 10.5 hours with a couple of stops along the way.

Driving through southeast Colorado, the Oklahoma panhandle and the Texas panhandle was interesting. Pikes Peak was especially clear but there is just a whole bunch of empty land. There was a lot of traffic, especially the big rigs, but I was able to make good time. After I turned south on 287 somebody in a little white car went blowing by me. Some miles down the road I saw the lights of a highway patrol car and sure enough, he had that car pulled over. I know I am not supposed to wish bad on anybody, but it was satisfying to see justice being served for once.

Brian Hunter will be proud of me on this part: I did not make a room reservation in Lubbock because I wasn't sure how far I would decide to drive. When I got there I pulled into the Super 8 and the clerk said a room was \$50. I said thank you and was getting ready to leave. The clerk asked me how much I wanted to pay for a room and I told her \$40. She said, Okay \$45. I again said thank you and started to leave when she said, Okay \$40. Brian, does this remind you of San Diego? I found a really nice hole-in-the-wall Thai restaurant, *Thai Pepper*, just off campus and had an excellent Pad Thai with chicken and shrimp for \$7.31 plus tip. I recommend it if you are ever in town.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Jud advertised this trip to RMSKC members last winter and several of us were thinking about going but had to cancel because of one thing or another.

It's nifty that he went by himself and had such a good time, illustrating the saying, "If you always wait around for someone to have fun with, you'll miss out on a lot."

Best of all, now that he's been there he can be an extra-effective guide for next year's trip!

DAY 2, THURSDAY FEBRUARY 24: It was a quiet day of just driving to Corpus Christi. As I drove south the landscape changed from prairie grasslands to rolling hills with scrub oak. The closer to the shore the more hills and scrub oak, probably due to more moisture coming in off the Gulf. Also, the temperature and humidity was rising. Those jeans that felt good in the morning started to feel a bit heavy and I was happy to change into shorts when I got to Corpus Christi. The day's drive was about 560 miles and about nine hours.

The route is a hodge-podge of state roads with very little interstate. However the state highway speed limit is 70mph and there aren't that many towns or much traffic so you can really cruise. But watch that speed. I saw a couple more cars pulled over by the highway patrol. I got into Corpus a little after 4 pm and got a room at a Motel 6. I didn't want to try to find a campground and set up camp that late in the day.

Corpus Christi's population is around 305,000 and the town runs along the coast. Driving around town is not bad, especially if you have a GPS and addresses. Dinner that night was the China Garden Super Buffet and cost \$9.73. It is a little more than we get back home with a lot of seafood: all types of shrimp, oysters on the half-shell, crab legs, stuffed crab, fish, sushi and the usual Chinese fare.

DAY 3, FRIDAY FEBRUARY 25: I woke up to a heavy fog but it was supposed to burn off around 9 am. I had agreed to meet Ken Johnson who chose to retire in Corpus Christi in 1992 specifically for the variety of sea kayaking. Ken has written a number of web articles on kayaking Corpus Christi including *Sea Kayaking the Bays Around Corpus Christi - 16 Easy Day Trips*. John Whorff just published a book called *Kayaking the Texas Coast* and included the following about Ken in the acknowledgements: "Of all the people who helped me, Ken Johnson was the most significant. He has helped me work out routes, contributed GPS information, and provided a variety of pictures. Ken is a legendary figure in the sport. He even has a Mayan Seas boat in production that bears his name. At the time of writing he is seventy-seven years of age and still paddles more than sixty miles each week to stay in shape. For five years we have shared adventures all over the coast with many interesting people. We have paddled together in heavy surf, in adverse weather conditions, and even at night on some of the routes in this book. He is a great friend and a hero on the water (see *Sea Kayaker* magazine, issue 117, April 2007). Thank you, Ken!"

I echo those sentiments. Ken is now seventy-nine years but looks 20 years younger. His web site (<http://home.earthlink.net/~johnsonkw/kayak-corpus/id12.html>) says to contact him if you are coming down and he will show you around. Ken made me breakfast and offered to let me sleep on his couch. We went to the Corpus



Ken Johnson and the La Niña

Christi Bay area and paddled along the downtown skyline. An exact replica of La Niña is moored here. It was built in Spain using the same design, wood and construction. You can paddle up to it and see the wooden pegs. It is surprisingly small considering it transported about 30 people plus provisions across the Atlantic. There had also been La Pinta but it burned down. The insurance process took about three years to settle and then whoever got the money took off with it instead of restoring the ship. Ken used to work on the crew of the Niña when it was still sailing but now it just sits moored and deteriorates. A little way down the coast the *USS Lexington* is moored and is now a museum. You can paddle right up to and around it which is kind of fun. The winds were up

to about 15-20 mph and we had some good waves but not high enough to surf. Ken said this is pretty usual but early mornings and late afternoon it calms down. So, if you come here you need to be comfortable in wind and waves.

That morning we did about six miles in a little over two hours. We then headed south on Ocean Drive along the bay to Padre Island for lunch at Snoopy's. It's one of those places you order at the counter, get served on a paper plate or a plastic basket and they only take cash. Ken says they have the best seafood for the best price in town and it was very good. On the drive down we passed a whole string of really nice houses facing the bay;

there is some money in this town, let me tell you. After lunch we drove north on Padre Island and soon crossed over to Mustang Island and ended up in Port Aransas. Ken stopped and pointed out a number of places to put in and paddle. You can get a \$12 annual permit to park on one of four beaches on the Gulf side; these are valid for a calendar year for parking within the city limits of Port Aransas or Corpus Christi. But pick your time so that the waves aren't too high. There is a public park on the Gulf side of Port Aransas where you can camp on the beach for \$12 a night. Water and bathrooms are available but you don't have the picnic tables. I decided to pass and went 40 miles north to Goose Island State Park for camping in the



Jud's car on the Port Aransas beach



Goose Island campsite, with shade from the oak trees

nice oak trees. Tent sites with water and no electric are \$13 a night but there is no charge to use the showers. All the electric sites were gone so make reservations early if you want one of those. Ken stayed at Port Aransas for some more paddling but it was about mid-afternoon so I passed to head north and get camp set up. Dinner again was Chinese buffet; I detected a trend there.

DAY 4, SATURDAY FEBRUARY 26: I was on my own and the biggest issue was where to go paddling. The wind was up so I wanted a somewhat protected area. I finally chose to stay inside Copano Bay on the east

shore where I was a little protected from a stiff southeast wind. I paddled 5.8 miles in a little over 2.5 hours along the shoreline looking at the nice homes. There were a bunch of people wading way out into the bay and fishing. I saw a couple guys come in, each with a stringer of about six nice-sized speckled sea trout.

When you look at a chart of this whole area, including Corpus Christi Bay and Laguna Madre, you see that there are huge expanses of water miles across but they are extremely shallow. Some bays that may be eight miles across are only 7-10 feet deep at the deepest. The intracoastal waterway where the oil tankers come in is 45 feet deep and has to be dredged out and maintained so it doesn't fill back up. So, while there is a lot of water it isn't deep. The air temperature is in the mid 70's and the water temperature is 70°. It is fairly safe paddling but I still stayed close to shore. I figured if I do my usual half-roll I can just wet exit, stand up and walk to shore.

Since it is so shallow and there are even shallower reefs all around you don't see any speed boats. I did see one unusual looking boat and paddled out to say hello. They were oyster fishermen using a wire basket to dredge oysters from the floor. They then fill up 110 pound gunny sacks they sell for \$25 each. That's right, \$25 for 110 pounds of fresh oysters. Now compare that to the price we pay for them in the restaurant. They offered me a couple dozen oysters but I didn't have a way to keep them and I never learned how to shuck an oyster. I would probably have cut off a finger if I tried on my own. Besides, I was getting all the oysters on the half-shell I could eat at my nightly Chinese buffet.

DAY 5, SUNDAY FEBRUARY 27: Winds were projected to be 20-30 mph and gusting higher so I planned a sight seeing day. Ken called and he and a friend were paddling the Aransas River and invited me to join them. But I had to pass in order to take care of extending my camp site for another two nights. One of the things I wanted to see was on Goose Island: "Big Tree". It is a very big oak tree that is over 1,000 years old—kind of neat. The oak trees here don't just grow tall. They grow up and then turn and grow parallel to the ground which is also kind of neat. So, I have seen Big Hole in Bend Oregon and Big Tree in Goose Island State Park Texas. I wonder what big thing is next.

I had to buy more ice that morning and you can get it at the gas station for 69 cents for eight pounds and only 99 cents for a large bag. That is amazing compared to what we pay in Colorado. I found a Barnes & Noble so that I could catch up on coffee and rolls and email. I saw a lot of Corpus and did a little shopping. I thought there would be some nice kayak shops here but Ken says there aren't; you have to go to Houston. I did find a marine store that had a nice deck compass which I had been wanting for a long time. I think the winds got up to 40mph and when I got back to my camp my brand new shelter was upside down and the frame was all twisted up. Lesson learned: do a better job of tying down large camp items.



Big Tree on Goose Island

DAY 6, MONDAY FEBRUARY 28: I decided to try paddling the north and east shore of the Aransas Natural Wildlife Refuge. To get to one of the four designated launch sites I had to drive north and then come back south. When I got there the launch sites didn't look that great and some had a pretty good hike to the shore. So, I turned around and headed back. I lost about an hour and a half, but that happens when you don't know the area. I ended up paddling about 6.5 miles from Rockport to Fulton among some really nice houses right on the bay. I was paddling about 200 yards offshore and still hitting bottom. So far the mornings had been overcast but it usually burned off around noon. It was a lot calmer after the previous day's blow and the temperature was closer to 80°—really nice paddling conditions.

This is a good place to tell you about my camp neighbor, Kevin. Kevin was from Edwards, Colorado, believe it or not. I drove over 1,000 miles and two days to camp next to a Coloradoan. Kevin looked to be in his late 50s and he was "kind of retired". I never did find out what that meant but he doesn't work. He just travels around in his jeep, mostly camping and enjoying nature unless the conditions are really bad. Kevin has a girlfriend who was born in Mexico City but now lives in Minneapolis with her 16-year old son. Kevin swings by every once in a while to see her. The sky was clear and I noticed late in the evening that Kevin had his two spotlights on his jeep turned on and pointed across a field behind us. I asked him about it and he said he was getting back at the #*\$^# people in the campsite across the field who had so many lights on around their motor home that it looked like a carnival midway. He hated that and it was interrupting his star gazing. The next morning I mentioned they had the lights off when I got around 3am and Kevin said, "Yeah. I took a hike last night and asked them to turn them off."

DAY 7, TUESDAY MARCH 1: I broke camp and perhaps none too soon. We had a clear morning and the winds were supposed to be light, relatively anyway. Goose Island has a lot of birds on it including whooping cranes. So all over the campground you see people carrying binoculars and just staring into the trees. I ran into one guy that morning that said a Yellow-Faced Grassquit was nesting here. It is fairly rare to find it outside the Dominican Republic so everybody was coming down to see it. He arrived last night and has already spotted it.

I took the Port Aransas ferry across the intracoastal waterway. My plan was to paddle across the waterway and up the coast to a lighthouse. At my put-in I met a man who was admiring my kayak; I got a lot of that down there. I started to explain some about it and he informed me that he was a maritime engineer so he understood all that. He advised me to go back across on the ferry to put in and not try to cross the waterway as the tide current can be strong. But I knew I could make it because this is where Ken and I were going to paddle the afternoon of the first day. I started off and the water seemed a little squirrely. I made it across the waterway okay but about halfway across I began thinking: I am in 45 feet of water instead of six feet; if I dump I can self rescue but I bet that oil tanker won't see me in the water and will run right over me; what am I going to do if the winds really pick up in the heat of the day and I can't get back across? So, after making it across I turned around and went right back. I took out and drove to a put-in on the safe side of the waterway and enjoyed seven more miles of paddling in really nice conditions. I got out to the point where I could see the lighthouse but it was farther away than I wanted to do at the end of the day. I had a great paddle; it was exactly the type of day I was looking for when I came down here.

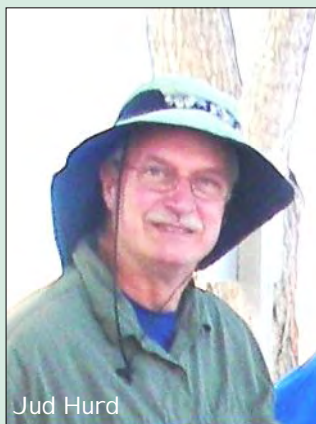
Well, all good things must come to an end so the next day I headed home. It was a great trip and one I would like to do again, and again, and again.



HERE IS A SUMMARY OF MY COSTS FOR PLANNING FUTURE TRIPS:

- Gas: \$351 (but I did a lot of driving around Corpus Christi)
- Gallons: 108 at \$3.25 a gallon
- Miles: 3,013 = 27.9 mpg
- Distance and Time: Fort Collins to the coast, 1175 miles in 19 hours
- Motels for four nights: \$160
- Camping for four nights at Goose Island State Park: \$52
- Purchased meals, because I am too lazy to cook at camp: \$105
- Ice: \$4
- Total cost: \$672, not including what I spent on food to take on the trip and souvenirs

Read Larry Kline's account of paddling near Corpus Christi in the 16-3 Fall, 2008 and the 17-1 Winter, 2008-09 issues, which are posted on our website.



Jud Hurd



All photos by Jud Hurd; the picture of the author by Larry Kline

OUR WEEK AT BBB'S SEA KAYAK CAMP, ORCAS ISLAND, WA

By Kristy and Rich Webber

Shawna Franklin and Leon Sommé, owners of *Body Boat Blade International* located on Orcas Island [red arrow on the map on the next page] were our instructors for the course, assisted by Dave Thompson. Shawna and Leon both hold BCU 5 Star-Sea awards and are BCU Coach Level 5 aspirants.

Before getting wet we started the day with a classroom discussion of risk assessment. The overall intention of this course is to give a paddler the skills to plan and execute a kayak trip around the San Juan Islands. Risk assessment seemed like an excellent place to start. In the classroom setting we discussed wind and weather, and touched lightly on the use of VHF radios. What does a 10 knot wind look like on the water? 20 knots? We talked about group dynamics, leadership and how to decide if a paddle was a "go" for the group; it was a gentle introduction a kayak expedition.



Listening to Leon at the lake

Then it was off to a fresh water lake to allow our instructors to assess each of our paddling and rescue skills. Shawna demonstrated how to enter our kayaks. She called it the "speed entry". It required getting wet, and since it was cold water, and since it was the first group paddle and since it might have been assumed that we would work up to getting into the water, we were delighted to discover how fun it is getting wet doing her entry (you run into the water with your boat, hurl yourself on the back deck and pull yourself up to the cockpit like a cowboy re-entry). That was the beginning of several playful exercises intended to teach better balance in the boat and also feeling comfortable about falling out of the boat.

They were curious about where we learned to edge our boats so well and seemed impressed that two land-locked paddlers had the abilities that we did. (Kudos and many thanks to our

excellent RMSKC instructors: Gary, Brian, Dan and Matt). Amazingly, Stan White had signed up for the same course, so RMSKC was well represented in this class. Seeing that we already knew what they were demonstrating, they were quick to help us refine what we had learned or to introduce us to new strokes and exercises. They were excellent teachers who described, demonstrated, and repeated each technique. They made learning fun. Keeping the body in safe alignment, using the body to control the boat, learning how to maximize the design of the boat efficiently and finally learning how to integrate various paddle strokes seemed to be the philosophy underlying everything we learned, hence the *Body Boat Blade* name.

Our second classroom day began with a review of weather information (Isobar charts, VHF weather reports, and "cloud forecasting"). Then it was time to tackle one of the completely unfamiliar tasks: tides and currents. We studied a chart of the area as well as an almanac with tide information. With these tools we practiced determining the best departure time from and to a specific destination based on weather, tides, distance, etc. This requires thinking about things like ferry angles and using ranges. It was great fun and seemed easy enough while sitting in a classroom. Then came time for some water work. That day we went to Obstruction Pass [see the map on the next page] to play in the ebbing current where we moved in and out of tidal eddies and practiced rescues in a tidal race.



Kristy in a tuiliq for warmth

To end the paddling day we donned neoprene tuiliqs and worked on static braces, high brace recoveries and even attempted high brace rolls. Another full, exciting and exhausting day.

The third day of classroom was devoted to preparing for an overnight trip to another island. We spent time learning about navigation. As a group we were required to assess the weather and tidal currents and determine a destination based on those factors.

Collectively we decided to go for Sucia I sland. Individually we worked out the best time to leave, the bearing, the distance and the estimated paddling time and then compared notes to find a consensus. We also had to decide how to plan our camp dinner (we were individually responsible for all the other meals). This was made easy by a suggestion that the instructors experiment with a new dish. It was a winner: pasta with salmon in a cheese sauce, with asparagus and roasted hazelnuts.

We loaded up our vehicles and headed for the point of departure. We spent time on the beach working out our bearing and ferrying angle based on the current and winds and then departed. Two people were in charge of keeping the bearing and the rest of us were in charge of determining when we were half way through the crossing to the other island. Once we decided we were half way Leon asked us to stand up on top of our boats—highly unexpected. Once again through play we spent some time working on balance, self or assisted rescues, and watching what happened to our heading when we were drifting in the tidal flow.

On Sucia we set up camp in a magnificent setting. Being early in the season we seemed to be the only campers around. We agreed to an after dark paddle in our protected bay to experience the ocean's phosphorescence. Magical, mystical and mesmerizing, a paddle's stroke set off an explosion of light in the water. Ribbons of light streamed off the bow of our boats as we glided through the water. Though it was long after a typical camp bedtime on an already long and full day, it was an unforgettable experience.

After breakfast we grouped around the table and listened to the VHF radio for the weather report and in the process were given instruction about how and when to use a radio. We made our paddle plan for the return to Orcas I sland, taking into account all the things we had been studying the three previous days. While paddling along the coast of Sucia, we came to a barnacle-covered rock being washed by waves. We were instructed as a group to figure out a way for all of us to get out of our boats and onto the rock. After realizing that the instructors were serious (it was *their* fiberglass boats most of us were going to bash against the barnacles) we cooperatively succeeded in the task.



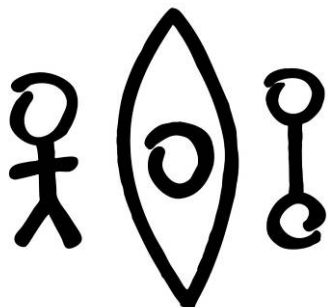
The return crossing was a longer paddle and the conditions were rougher than the previous day. For some of us it was the biggest water paddled to date. We had learned to stay together as a group and to keep an eye on each other. We practiced figuring out where we were in the crossing. It was a wonderful adventure. It was particularly satisfying that we had assessed our risks, determined our route, kept or adjusted our course as required and still managed to do some practicing while in transit. Once back on Orcas we ended the day with a pleasant group meal in a local restaurant.

Over dinner we decided to use the last day to practice skills, learn about towing and try out other boats and water craft. In the morning *Body Boat Blade* brought a variety of paddles and water craft to the lake for us to use. We had at our disposal multiple expedition kayaks, a racing kayak, a Greenland skin-on-frame kayak, a SUP, a whitewater playboat and a canoe. There were Greenland paddles and a wing paddle to try. By Day Five we were all feeling a little tired and this was a perfect way to end the week.



Rich squeezing into a skin-on-frame kayak

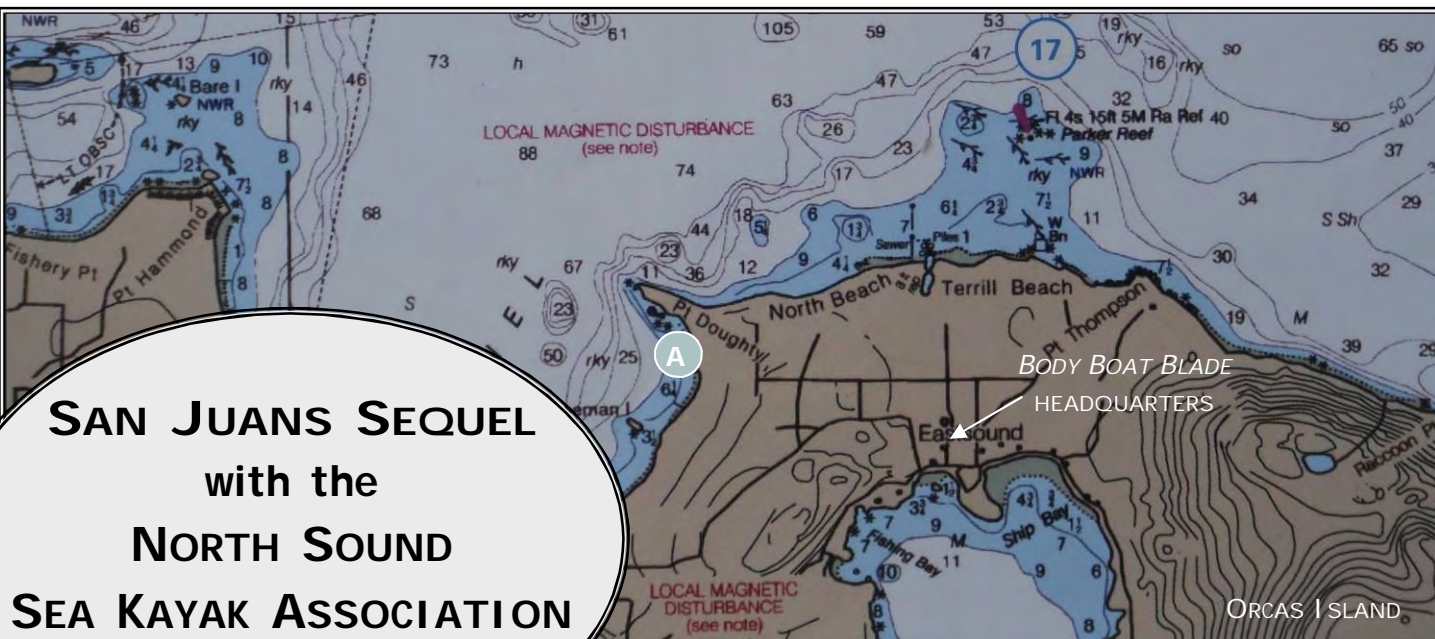
This course met and even exceeded all our expectations. For anyone interested in learning more about coastal sea kayaking, this would be an excellent choice. Their website is www.bodyboatblade.com



Sunset on Orcas Island



Rich and Kristy Webber



SAN JUANS SEQUEL with the NORTH SOUND SEA KAYAK ASSOCIATION

by Stan White

After signing up for a 5-day *Body Boat Blade* sea kayak course on Orcas Island in Washington, I started considering and researching options for additional paddling, which led to joining the North Sound Sea Kayak Association and doing a four day trip to Stuart Island, northwest of San Juan Island [identified on the map in the previous article] with them.

Before the BBB class, I resumed where I left off on my last trip to the Northwest—on Lake Union, a unique urban spectacle in the midst of Seattle with ocean access. Day Two included paddling out of Seattle's Golden Gardens Park with noisy barking sea lions before taking the ferry to Orcas Island.

On Orcas I managed to meet up with six (seemingly) locals, including David who would later be teaching some of the 5-day *Body Boat Blade* class, on the north shore to paddle around Point Doughty [A] past the Cascadia Marine Trail campsite and back. The group also included two friends of Leon Sommé and Shawna Franklin's from Iceland and a woman from Russia. With Canada to the west and Mount Baker, majestic in the clear sky to the east, it was wonderful being in the middle of that group. I was the only person who didn't see porpoises, but who couldn't notice the population explosion of baby jellyfish?

The final day before class was another solo trip, this one out to The Nature Conservancy's Yellow Island from Deer Harbor, to witness the prime wildflower season. I heard the camas were in full bloom, the best in years. Seals, bald eagles, Jones Island, pigeon guillemots...during the afternoon slack it was nice to be back.

The exceptional BBB's 5-day course included standing up on kayaks, a static brace, a couple of longer crossings, the campout on Sucia Island, paddling at night in the God-awesome phosphorescence, and I could go on and on; school was never this much fun.

Following the class, I ferried to San Juan Island and the highlight of the trip which would start the next morning after meeting the rest of the North Sound Sea Kayak Association members coming off their ferry.



Yellow Island is famous for its wildflowers

This all came about after e-mailing Bill Brackin, the NSSKA trip leader, nearly a month before with an honest assessment of my experience, requesting to join them for the trip I saw scheduled on their website. Now we were having introductions, breakfast, and some spare time before the eight of us loaded boats at Rueben Tarte Park [1] on San Juan Island for the journey to Stuart Island.

We paddled north to Limestone Point and crossed Spieden Channel to Green Point and around Spieden Island. We then crossed New Channel and paddled through the Cactus Islands to the southern shore of Johns Island [2], then passing Gossip and Cemetery I islands [3] to camp at the end of Reid Harbor [4], which would be our base camp for the next three nights.



The author on Gossip Island

The next day was open to hanging out, hiking and or paddling. I joined Karl for paddling but didn't know exactly what we were going to do. We worked the north shore of Reid Harbor paddling less than 1 nautical mile per hour observing marine life, interesting rock formations, deer and all the things a paddler normally misses when traveling from point A to point B. We took lunch on Gossip Island [3], listening to and observing bald eagles, then headed to Reef Bay [5] on the north side of Johns Island before heading back with a stop on Cemetery Island [2]. Paddling with Karl who knew so much about the marine environment was an eye opener and turned out being one of my favorite times of the trip.

Day Three was spent with the entire club circumnavigating Stuart Island rounding Turn Point Light and taking the Prevost Harbor [near 6] route around Satellite Island [6]. It was 11.5 nautical miles with perfect Pacific Northwest weather. Picking up camp on the fourth and final day put us on the return route in dynamic water rounding the western point of Spieden Island en route to Sentinel Island [7] and across Spieden Channel to San Juan Island. As anticipated, near Spieden Island we observed a herd of African antelope-looking creatures but could not quite identify exactly what they were. The trip wound down in Friday Harbor with celebratory beer, lunch and good-byes.

In the back of my mind was one more place I wanted to go. For the encore, I spent a few hours paddling from Smallpox Bay at San Juan County Park to Lime Kiln Light and back [on the southwest coast of San Juan Island, off this map], taking my time, observing marine life as I had done with Karl on Stuart Island.

I highly recommend RMSKC members joining other clubs in the Puget Sound region for trips in the San Juans, or any place else in the world.

(More pictures on page 27)



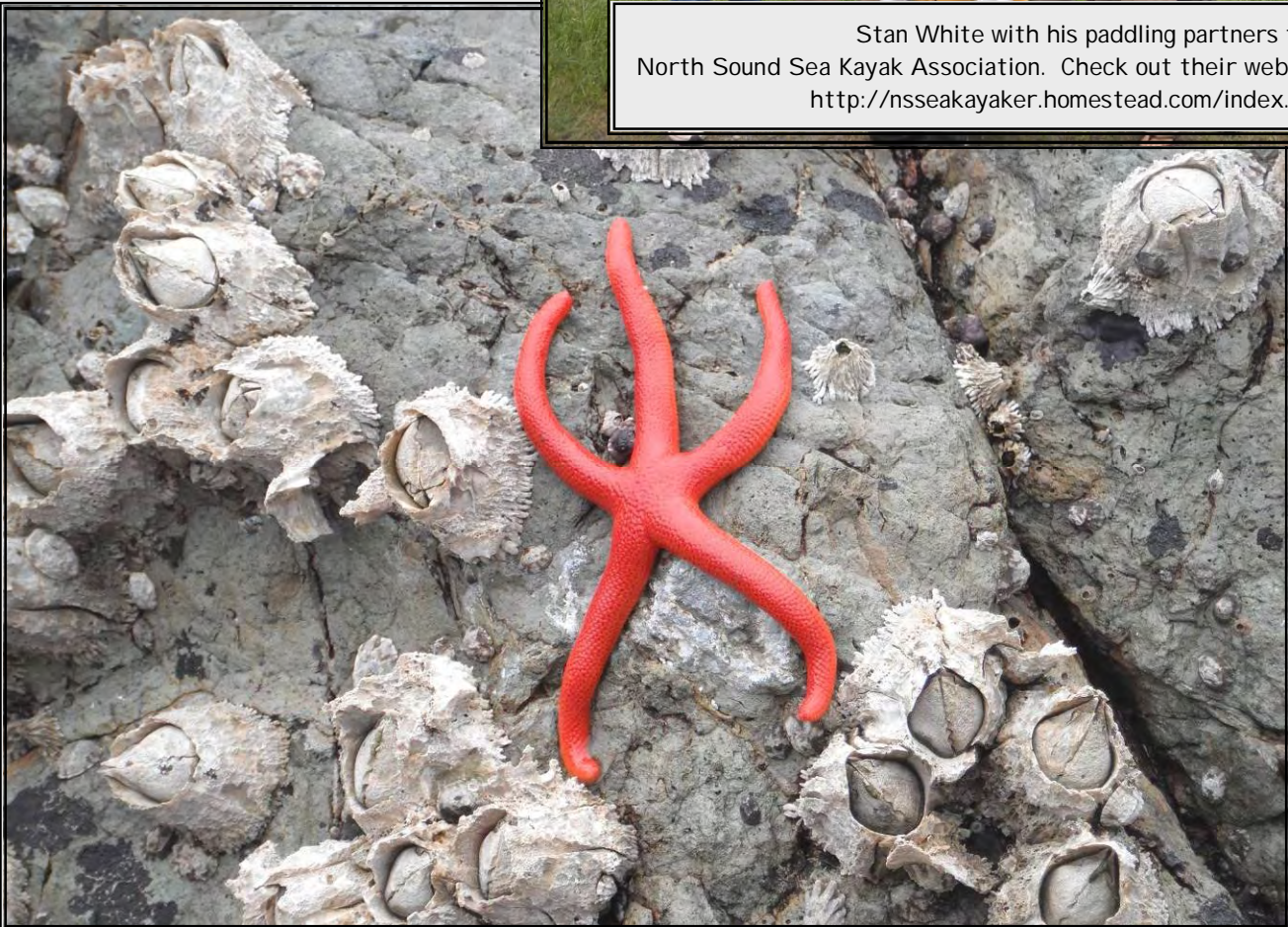
BBB CLASS PARTICIPANTS, left to right:
Leon Somm , unidentified student, Stan White,
Kristy Webber, Shawna Franklin, and Rich Webber

The RMSKC's *Mountain Paddler* is published to communicate the ideas and experiences of our paddling community.

If you have questions or concerns about an article please contact the editor or the author for clarification.



Stan White with his paddling partners from North Sound Sea Kayak Association. Check out their website:
<http://nsseakayaker.homestead.com/index.html>



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