

\$2.95  
Newstand price



# american whitewater

July/August 1992

*BIGGER AND BETTER IN 1992*

# **GAULEY FESTIVAL**

**Saturday, September 26, 1992**

- *Live Entertainment*
- *Whitewater Marketplace*
- *Silent Auction*
- *Valuable Prizes*
- *Whitewater Videos*
- *Food and Beverage*

**Gates open at 4:30 p.m.**

**Proceeds support AWA river conservation programs**

**At a new location:**

**Nicholas County Veterans Park**

**(across from the Summerville McDonalds)**

---

---

# american whitewater

JOURNAL OF THE  
AMERICAN WHITEWATER  
AFFILIATION

July/August 1992  
Volume XXXVII, No. 4

---

## Features

27

### You Can't Go Home

The Lower Yough was the first home for thousands of paddlers...but it's hard to feel nostalgic for a river burdened with new regulations

By CHRIS KOLL

34

### In Search of a Dream

Was it just a dream of water nymphs--or was it the Siren's song luring boaters onto the rocks?

By DAVID WALLACE

42

### Big Water in the Heart of Texas

It's the oldest rule of Texas boating -- if you find water, boat it!

By CAROLYN PORTER

---

## Departments

8

### Conservation

Relicensing uncovers another new whitewater river...FERC has its wrist slapped...Controversial dam breaks after receiving FERC approval...AWA welcomes Chile delegation...Inside the Beltway

16

### Briefs

Ocoee Rodeo proves tremendous success...Biggest and best Gauley Festival scheduled...French Broad River Days to contribute funds to AWA

24

### Safety

Even experienced boaters need strong leadership during rescue situations

By WAYNE SUNDMACHER, SR.

48

### End Notes


What do you call a woman raft guide? A Rubber Maid!

By CARLA GARRISON

**FRONT COVER:** Youthful boater surfs Swimmers Hydraulic on the Lower Yough. And yes, the boater did observe the current boycott by putting on after three.

**FREE CAMPING CATALOG**

CAMPING, CLIMBING, BACKPACKING, HIKING, BIKING, OUTDOOR CLOTHING



**WRITE OR PHONE FOR OUR FREE DISCOUNT CATALOG**

Eureka, Jansport, Sierra Designs, Slumberjack, Cannondale, Peak 1, Chouinard, Lifa, Optimus, Lowe, Woolrich, Columbia, Camp Trails, MSR, The North Face, Gregory, Kelty.

**PHONE 901-445-5000**

**CAMPNOR**

P.O. BOX 999-TMR  
PARAMUS, N.J. 07653



### ***It's a Rapid Education!***

A leader in whitewater instruction since 1972, MKC offers highly personal instruction from Beginner to Expert levels in both kayaking and open canoeing - leading to diplomas recognized world-wide.

Located on the Madawaska River, MKC provides equipment and transportation during the course, as well as the creature comforts of a vacation resort, including delicious meals served up with old world hospitality. And better yet, our rivers are clean, warm and uncrowded.

Join directors Claudia and Dirk - national whitewater champions - and staff for an unforgettable PADDLING VACATION!

**MADAWASKA** Box 635  
Henry's Bay  
Ontario K0J 1B0  
**KANU CENTRE** Summer: (613) 756-3620

## FORUM

# Realistic expectations

It was after midnight and the phone was ringing. Not a good sign.

I could tell right away by the sound of my friend's voice that something was wrong.

"An old man had a heart attack at the park today. We gave him CPR but he didn't make it." And then, after a tearful pause, "I don't understand... didn't we do it right?"

My friend, a young ranger, recently CPR certified, went on to describe the sad scenario. The park staff had followed the established CPR protocol to a T. But the old man had not survived. Both my friend and her colleagues were certain that they must have done something wrong.

A few days later, another call. One of my buddies was cruising our local river and paddled onto the scene of a drowning, the result of a rafting mishap. My buddy, also CPR certified, assisted in the resuscitation efforts.

"We did it just like they told us ... but he didn't make it. Why?"

And now there is the letter, published in the correspondence section of this issue, from Dr. Eric Weiss and Dr. Henry Herrmann, two boaters who also happen to be acknowledged experts in wilderness medicine, drowning and CPR. In their letter Dr. Weiss and Dr. Herrmann take issue with some of the suggestions made by Wayne Sundmacher, Sr. in an article which we published in the March/April issue entitled CPR: When It's Better Not to Try.

In that article Mr. Sundmacher stated that while CPR is often an appropriate and effective life saving tool, that under certain circumstances in a wilderness setting it may not be worthwhile. Specifically, Sundmacher concluded that CPR should not be initiated in a wilderness setting if the victim's cardiac arrest is due to trauma, if the arrest was unwitnessed and the time of onset is unknown, if the victim suffered cold water immersion of greater than one hour, if advanced life support is more than one hour away or if the evacuation will require a long carry out on a litter.

Weiss and Herrmann concede that under such circumstances there may be little hope of success, but argue that without CPR there is no hope at all. "Give it your best shot!... Your paddling companions deserve a chance, even in marginal situations."

So who is right?

Well, the issue of wilderness CPR has been debated in medical circles for some time and the jury is still out. Weiss, Herrmann and Sundmacher agree that the likelihood that CPR will work depends a lot on the baseline condition of the victim of the cardiac arrest as well as upon the circumstances under which it is administered. And because there are so many variables and because it is next to impossible for one individual to

*Continued on page 4*

## STAFF

**Managing Editor:** Chris Koll, 352 Cameco Circle, Liverpool, NY 13090

**Editor:** Bob Gedekoh, Box 228, RD 4, Elizabeth, PA 15037

**Advertising Director:** Phyllis Horowitz, Box 85, Phoenicia, NY 12464; (914)688-5569

**Conservation:** Pope Barrow, Mac Thornton, Peter Skinner

**Safety:** Charlie Walbridge

**Address Changes:** Keith Morgan, 2601 Tanglewood Dr., Durham, NC 27705

**Missing Copies:** Contact Phyllis Horowitz

**American Whitewater** is printed by EBSCO Media, Birmingham, AL. All rights reserved.

## PURPOSE

The American Whitewater Affiliation (AWA) is a national organization with a membership of over 1300 whitewater boating enthusiasts and more than 50 local canoe club affiliates. The AWA was organized in 1961 to protect and enhance the recreational enjoyment of whitewater sports in America.

**EDUCATION:** Through publication of a bi-monthly journal, the AWA provides information and education about whitewater rivers, boating safety, technique, and equipment.

**CONSERVATION:** AWA maintains a national inventory of whitewater rivers, monitors potential threats to whitewater river resources through its "River Watch" system, publishes information on river conservation, works with government agencies to protect and preserve free-flowing whitewater rivers, and provides technical advice to local groups regarding river management and river conservation. AWA also gives annual awards to individuals to recognize exceptional contributions to river conservation and an annual "hydromania" award to recognize the proposed hydroelectric power project which would be most destructive of whitewater.

**EVENTS:** AWA organizes sporting events, contests and festivals to raise funds for river conservation. Since 1986, AWA has been the principal sponsor of the annual Gauley River Festival in Summersville, West Virginia, the largest gathering of whitewater boaters in the nation, other than at international racing events.

**SAFETY:** AWA promotes paddling safety, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, and maintains both a uniform national ranking system for whitewater rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) and the internationally recognized AWA Safety Code.

**ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSES:** AWA was incorporated under Missouri non-profit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at PO Box 85, Phoenicia, NY 12464. AWA has been granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. The charter includes the following purposes: encourage the exploration, enjoyment, and preservation of American recreational waterways or man-powered craft; protect the wilderness character of waterways through conservation of water, forests, parks, wildlife, and related resources; promote appreciation for the recreational value of wilderness cruising and of white-water sports.

**PROFESSIONAL STAFF:** Except for membership services and the Executive and Conservation Directors position, all AWA operations, including publication of the bi-monthly magazine, are handled by volunteers.

## DIRECTORS

Anita Adams  
Star Route 1, Box 46  
Edmond, WV 25837  
Ric Alesch  
8718 West Floyd Drive  
Lakewood, CO 80227  
Bill Baker  
9420 West Ontario Drive  
Littleton, CO 80123  
Pope Barrow  
136 13th Street SE  
Washington, DC 20003  
Lee Belknap  
1400 Severn Road  
Richmond, VA 23229  
Risa Shimoda Callaway  
P.O. Box 375  
Denver, NC 28037  
Bob Gedekoh  
Box 228, RD 4  
Elizabeth, PA 15037

Susan Gentry  
Route 2, 252  
Deer Creek Trail  
Hoschton, GA 30548  
Dan Givens  
300 South Straughan, #705  
Boise, ID 83712  
Bob Glanville  
66 Deer Run  
Glenwood, NY 14069  
Jack Hession  
241 East Fifth Avenue  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
Bill Hildreth  
78 Beechwood Street  
Cohasset, MA 02025  
Diana Holloran  
Route 1, Box 90  
Fairview Mountain Road  
Reliance, TN 37369  
Chris Koll  
352 Cameco Circle  
Liverpool, NY 13090

Tom McAndrew  
5535 Ridge Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19128  
Jim Scott  
3715 Jocelyn Street NW  
Washington, DC 20015  
Pete Skinner  
Box 272, Snyder Road  
West Sand Lake, NY 12196  
Mac Thornton  
322 10th Street SE  
Washington, DC 20003  
Charlie Walbridge  
230 Penllyn Pike  
Penllyn, PA 19422  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Phyllis Horowitz  
P.O. Box 85  
Phoenicia, NY 12464  
(91 4) 688-5569



### GORILLA

PADDLING THE NARROWS OF THE GREEN

A TERRY SHIELDS PRODUCTION

"GORILLA" is an adrenaline charged film which documents the running of North Carolina's Green River Gorge. This potentially fatal section of whitewater called "The Narrows" was until recently thought to be unrunnable.

Follow Forrest and Callaway, Bob McDonough, Tom Vienias, David Benner, and others down this ominous journey many consider foolhardy. Discover why these hairboaters find this dangerous river so irresistible.

Producer/Director Terry Shields' dramatic point of view pictures let you experience vicariously the achievements of these daring few in a 12 1/2 minute film that is redefining the realm of possibility in whitewater sport.

To get a VHS of "GORILLA" send \$19.95 + \$3.00 postage and handling to:

TERRY SHIELDS  
704 529-1052

# SHIELDS

PRODUCTIONS

1101 SEWICKLEY DRIVE CHARLOTTE, NC 28209

## SERIOUS EQUIPMENT FOR SERIOUS PADDLERS

A FULL LINE OF GEAR FOR  
CANOES • KAYAKS  
RAPIDS • LAKES • OCEANS



Featuring quality products from Perception, Aquaterra, Extrasport, Voyageurs, Pacific Water Sports, Blue Puma, Body Glove, Werner and more

Write for our FREE Catalog of River Gear. Dealers. Ask about our Rescue Bags, Sprayskirts, and Pogies.

**WILDWATER DESIGNS**  
230 PENLLYN PIKE, PENLLYN, PA 19422  
215-646-5034

## LETTERS

### Forum...continued

collect a large enough series of patients to be statistically valid, this question will probably not be resolved soon.

So I can't offer an easy answer, just some observations.

First and foremost, when CPR works and a life is saved, it is a wonderful thing. A human being has literally been snatched from the jaws of death. This does happen... I have seen it happen... but, unfortunately, it does not happen every time. Sadly, in a wilderness setting most of the time the victim dies in spite of our best efforts. This does not mean that CPR is not a good thing. It just means that those who utilize it deserve to know that it doesn't always work.

Medical personnel learn early in their careers that CPR has limitations, but lay people often walk away from CPR courses naively convinced that as long as they adhere to the protocol they have been taught, that the victim is guaranteed survival. Then, when they are confronted with a real life cardiac arrest that has a fatal outcome, they blame themselves. Instead of feeling good about what they tried to do, they feel guilty. That is a shame, because giving CPR inevitably involves some personal discomfort; it is not usually a very pleasant experience.

In fact, I've heard two concerns commonly expressed about giving CPR. One is that the rescuer might somehow contract a disease from the victim, especially AIDS. Well, AIDS is a serious problem, one that I don't intend to trivialize; but less than one in two hundred Americans is infected with the virus. And considering the demographics of the disease and the demographics of whitewater enthusiasts, I'm sure that the odds that a victim of a whitewater accident are HIV positive are even less. Besides, even in the event that a victim was HIV positive, it is unlikely that the disease would be transmitted through simple oral contact.

The other concern is that somehow the victim's heart will be restarted, but that he or she will survive in a persistent vegetative state. A situation where the victim might be "better off dead".

While I can't say that this never happens, I can say that it is extremely rare. Most individuals who receive CPR, especially in a wilderness setting, either recover completely or die.

But ultimately the decision to give CPR is a personal one. Unfortunately, it is a decision that must be made quickly, since unless CPR is initiated promptly, it can not be effective. There is no time to check the **topo** maps, to survey the surrounding countryside or to debate the situation with others in attendance. If you are going to give it, you need to start it right away.

In general, I think that Weiss and Herrmann are right; although the odds of being saved by CPR in a wilderness setting are admittedly small, small odds are better than no odds at all. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

Besides, CPR isn't just for the victim. Even if it doesn't work the rescuers will live with the satisfaction of knowing that they tried, rather than with the fear that they might not have done everything they could. And the victim's family will doubtlessly find it easier to deal with their loss if they know that everything humanly possible was done to save the person they loved.

Both Mr. Sundmacher and Drs. Weiss and Herrmann have raised valid points, points that should stimulate further discussion and consideration within the boating community.

I only hope that this discussion results in more realistic expectations regarding the use of CPR in a wilderness setting. **Bob Gedekoh**

### Concerning CPR

Dear Bob,

We are writing concerning the article **CPR: When It's Better Not to Try** (March/April 1992). We were very happy to see the subject of CPR addressed, and

believe that more whitewater boaters should become proficient in resuscitation techniques. However, we feel that there are a few misconceptions in the article that should be **cleared up**. A minor factual error is the definition of "cold water" as being below 70 degrees Fahrenheit. The Wilderness Medical Society defines "cold water" as that below 10 degrees C. (50 degrees F.)



## LEARN-TO-KAYAK WEEK

A week of kayak instruction in a vacation atmosphere could be just the break you need. Our quality 5-day program on the Ottawa River introduces you to the pleasures of whitewater and the paddling fraternity.

Adult beginner and intermediate courses include kayak, paddling gear, 5-day meal program, camping, resort facilities and instruction.

Season: Mon-Fri; June-Angrist

Cost: \$424 (\$377 US)

Couples Rate: \$399 (\$355 US)

Weekend kayak clinics also available.



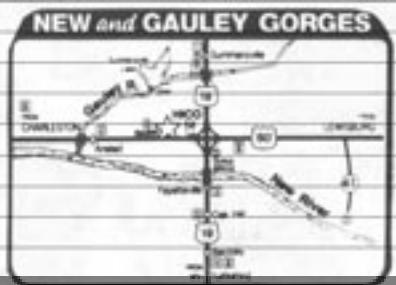
## Wilderness Tours

Box 89, Beachburg, Ontario K0J1C0  
CANADA (613) 646-2291 fax 646-2996

### WEST VIRGINIA'S MOST COMPLETE PADDLING SHOP

Located in the Heart of the New & Gauley Rivers

Products from: Perception, Wilderness Systems, Silver Creek, Harmony, Patagonia, Stohlquist, Rapidstyle, Extrasport, North Face, Teva, Alps, Nike, Birkenstock, AND MORE!



**NORTH AMERICAN RIVER RUNNERS, INC**

On U.S. Route 60, 1/4 Mile East of U.S. 19 Intersection

1-800-950-2585

## LETTERS

A common misconception perpetuated by the **article** is that victims of the sort of accidents described (**C**-15 minutes in 10 degree **C. water**) will be hypothermic. True hypothermia (lowered core temperature) takes a long time to develop—about an hour in ice water. Therefore, unless the victims were already hypothermic before their accidents, hypothermia, reduced heart rate, and difficulty in finding a pulse would not be of concern.

An unfortunate use of statistics is found in the following paragraph beginning:

"Statistics show that under normal circumstances, a victim who receives CPR within four minutes of cardiac arrest and receives advanced life support within the following eight minutes has a **43%** chance of survival..."

The problem is that "under normal circumstance" the victim is an older person with severely clogged coronary arteries, who has just suffered a massive myocardial infarction (death of a significant amount of heart muscle). CPR will not restart the heart of this type of victim, and even with the immediate intervention of high tech modern medicine, the prognosis is poor. Contrast this type of victim with a whitewater paddler in a near-drowning accident. Our "typical" paddler is younger, healthier, and until just moments ago had a perfectly normal heart. If the rescuer can just get some oxygen to that heart, it may well begin cycling on its own.

We also have a difference of opinion philosophically with the article. To sum up our basic thinking: Give it your best shot! There are two reasons for this. First, your paddling companions deserve a chance, even in marginal situations. Do not let long immersion times stop you from initiating CPR. The longest documented submersion followed by complete neurological recovery (no brain damage) is 66 minutes. Do not let the prospect of a difficult evacuation hinder you either. Try CPR for 15-20 minutes at the accident site, if the victim does not recover spontaneous breathing and circulation, discontinue efforts. Remember, even if CPR has little hope of success, without CPR the victim has no hope at all.

The second reason to try CPR is the welfare of the rescuers. As stated in the article, you should never endanger yourself with a foolhardy rescue attempt. However, anyone involved in this type of situation will later experience Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome and associated guilt. A rescuer who feels he/she has done every-

thing possible is going to feel better about what happened, than someone who spends the rest of their life thinking "If I had only tried..."

Sincerely,  
Henry J. Herrmann, D.M.D.  
Dentist, CPR Instructor  
Eric A. Weiss, M.D.  
Emergency Physician  
Wilderness Medicine Instructor  
EMT Instructor

Editor's note: Thanks to Dr. Herrmann and Dr. Weiss, both acknowledged experts in the field of wilderness medicine for sharing their thoughts. For a more detailed discussion of this issue, turn to the editorial on the inside cover of this issue.

### Where's the shirt?

Dear Editor.

In search of "Boat People--A Way of Life" t-shirt as printed on the back cover of **May/June** Journal. Any help appreciated.

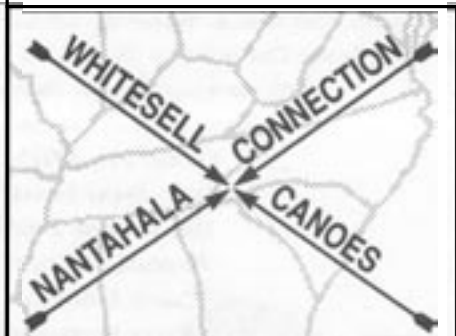
L. Granger  
8718 White House Rd.  
Greenville, SC 29611

(Dear L.--The shirt in question was last seen on the back of Tom, a boatman for MokiMac Expeditions--the company chartered to support a Friends of the River kayak trip down the Grand Canyon. Tom was a well-traveled whitewater person ality and he could have picked *it* up anywhere. However--he is a boatman...if you can find him you could probably trade a case of beer or a bottle of scotch for the shirt.)

### Forget the pirates

AWA Editor:

I don't understand...Pirates on the Kennebec. So what's the big deal? Isn't a river a free flowing body of water open to the public? Why does one group of river enthusiasts have to point their finger at another in blame? Who is this Tom Christopher guy anyway; a commercial raft owner who lost 10% of his potential revenue? Poor money hungry baby! They charge



Come visit our new outpost on the banks of the Nantahala River, in North Carolina. Test drive THE BEST on our eight-mile white-water track. You'll enjoy finding out why a custom-built and outfitted, ready-to-paddle Whitesell Canoe is still your best bet for maximizing your ability on all classes of whitewater.

Call (404) 325-5330 for more info and our free video.



2362-A Dresden Drive, Atlanta, GA 30341

## What's Up?

Water level readings from selected North American river level gauges are "up on *Waterline!*"

Water levels at your favorite boating spots, and more you haven't explored yet, may be "up too! Find out for sure where the best conditions are by calling *Waterline* while you're planning your next river adventure.

Readings are updated continually 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call toll-free, any time of day, for information, sample readings and river gauge lists. We'll mail you details or if you have a fax number handy, we'll fax you everything you need to call our *Waterline* gauge phone right now for today's river levels.

"Live" reporting starts approximately 3/15/92

**WATERLINE**  
**1-800-945-3376**

DOLPHIN DRY CINCH WATERPROOF BAGS  
 H<sub>2</sub>O PROOF COMPRESSION STUFF SACKS  
 WATERPROOF CAMERA BAGS  
 KAYAK STORAGE FLOTATION  
 EXTRASPORT PFD'S  
 KAYAK SPRAY SKIRTS  
 DRY STORAGE BAGS  
 MITCHELL PADDLES  
 CANOE FLOTATION  
 KAYAK FLOTATION  
 YAKIMA RACKS  
 AND MORE

The  
 Innovator  
 In High  
 Performance  
 Canoe  
 and  
 Kayak Gear.

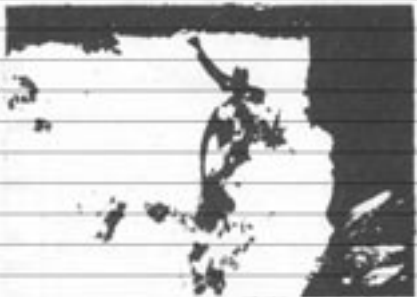
CALL FOR FREE COLOR CATALOG OF  
 OVER 400 PADDLESPOUT PRODUCTS.

1-800-843-8985

**VOYAGEUR**

P.O. BOX 207 • WAITSFIELD • VERMONT 05673

## Green Summer



**An Incredible River...** The Narrows of the Green 300 cfs of water pumping through a tight, undercut, tree-filled gorge with a gradient that exceeds 500 feet per mile in sections.

**An Incredible Summer...** Summer of 1991 Forrest Callaway, Bo Eakens, Doug Wellman, and other expert kayakers tackling the Dirty Dozen rapids. David Simpson providing an awesome display of open boat steep creekin'. And Corran Addison running the Narrows without a paddle!

**An Incredible Video...** Green Summer 20 minutes of extreme creek boating action on the Narrows of the Green. All action, no talk...with great music to add to the excitement!

For a VHS copy, send \$21.95 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling to:

Wayne Gentry  
 Rt. 2, 252 Deer Creek Trail  
 Hoschton, GA 30548  
 (404) 654-2725

## LETTERS

people \$75 a day to raft--isn't that enough income to satisfy them? On every river there are "Pirate Rafters," but this is America where we are free to choose whichever rafting outfit they want and if the glorious, first class, big name outfitters can't compete with Joe Schmo Pirate, maybe they ought to look at their own business policies instead of complaining to Central Maine Power and raising their ire. Because Central Maine Power isn't the "Bad Guy" but if those damn rafters can't stop fighting about there diddly squat 10% than all of us private boaters will get nailed. I've never rafted and have no desire to get mixed up in their mess--but I love the Kennebec and paddle it 2-3 weekends each year (hardboating) and don't want to see it spoiled with a head fee just because a bunch of raft companies can't work together. Anyway...I love AWA, read it cover to cover and maybe we'll meet at Magic or Hell Hole some day!

Sincerely,  
 Heidi Dameisen  
 Mars Hill, NC

(Editors note: Well, Heidi, there are good pirates and bad pirates--and while I'm not in a position to condemn them all, there are some real reasons why boaters should be concerned about pirate activity: 1. Many rivers have limits on the amount of commercial activity allowed. Pirates gain access under the guise of being "private" rafters thus avoiding these commercial quotas. That means the river is more crowded. 2. Pirates are often low-key operations without the safety back-up provided by regular outfitters. Accidents make regulators anxious--and that means trouble for everybody. And when private entities (like power companies) own the access, litigation from a death or injury could result in closing the gates to all. 3. Commercial outfitters usually pay fees and taxes for the right to make a profit running the river. Pirates don't. Commercial outfitters usually are forced to carry certain insurance coverage and employ licensed guides. Pirates aren't. Commercial outfitters often contribute to the improvement of launch facilities. Pirates just sneak on.)

### To help or not

Dear Chris,

I would like to respond to Charlie Walbridge's article, "To Help or Not to Help...That's the Question," in the May/June 1992 issue of the journal.

I was the "good samaritan" who assisted in the ill-fated canoe pin recovery on the Middle Fork River in West Virginia. I came upon the scene shortly after the canoe was solidly pinned. Two members of their party remained frozen in their boats above the pin; one never left his kayak the entire thirty minutes it took to extract the boat.

It seems that when I arrived on the scene, no one, not even Charlie Walbridge, had the foggiest idea of how to extract the boat. I was the person who crossed the pinned canoe to clear the rope to the upstream edge so Charlie could set up the double-z. Where I hurt the rescue attempt was when I tried to lift the canoe higher on the rock it was securely pinned on before the double-z was in place, causing the boat to shift and begin to crack. Charlie failed to mention that when the double-z was in place with three strong men pulling on it, applying tremendous force, the boat totally crumbled, folded and tore. It was evident the canoe was a goner long before I arrived on the scene, despite the efforts of Charlie Walbridge, prince of river rescue.

I feel bad for the paddler who lost her boat, however, it is inexcusable that she left her trashed canoe littered on the pristine river bank.

I am generally not one to criticize other boaters' judgement; I have done more than my share of solo boating and hair-ball creeks and rivers. I also boat the Middle Fork over fifteen times a year, frequently with other kayakers and occasionally alone. If Charlie Walbridge is concerned about the safety of my solo boating, I am equally concerned about this wisdom of taking open boats down a low-level technical river with novice kayakers.

I think it is fine for boaters to test their skills on difficult rivers, but when they run into trouble, it is wrong to criticize those who offer to help. Fortunately, it was only a boat that was lost and not a life.

Sincerely,  
 Paul M. Brager  
 Clarksburg, WV

### IKs...not duckies

Dear Editor,

When my eyes first caught a glimpse of an article title in your March/April issue with the words "Steep Creekin' by Duckie," I was elated. That is, until I realized it was only a video review. As an



## LETTERS

inflatable kayak aficionado, I have been eagerly awaiting the moment when IKs would finally get some **respect** in the paddling community. No such luck.

As an intermediate IK paddler who has been on guided steep creek descents, and who is currently in the market for a boat, I am hungry for information **about** how Iks compare to hard boats with regard to safety and performance, what their limits are, and which models are best. I hope I will begin to see some articles in American Whitewater that give IKs the attention they deserve.

Part of the problem is the insistence on calling these things "duckies." While hard boaters relay stories of things they did in their "Crossfire", "Invader" or "T-Canyon" kayak, IK boaters consistently have their accomplishments marred by a term that belongs on a pond or in a bathtub. If that wasn't bad enough, we also have to deal with the label "geek boat". While the "Thrillseeker" is apparently eroding some of those misguided perceptions, publications like yours could do even more.

I'm sure if you conducted a search of your readers' homes you would discover that many of them have, buried and hidden in some corner of their garage, an Inflatable Kayak. Once found, they may claim it's a rubber duck that they play with in the tub, don't believe it. They keep that IK for those times of low water when their hard boat can't cut it. Besides, we all know a true paddler wouldn't be caught dead sitting in a tub.

David Jenkins  
Silver Springs, MD

(editors note: Neither Bob or I paddle duckies, er...I mean--IKs, so we aren't really qualified to write a story regarding their use. However, we're also aware that people are boating some extreme stuff in Thrillseekers and we'd welcome submissions (with pictures) for publication.

Does American Whitewater consider an IK a "geek boat?" Hell, no! That is, unless it's being paddled by a geek--and because **duckies** are easier to first paddle than a hardboat, many are. **But** you'll have no arguments from us that in the hands of an expert, **IKs** are defining the cutting edge in today's steep **creekin'**.)

### ADDRESS CHANGE

Letters to the editor should be mailed to Chris Koll, 352 Cameco Circle, Liverpool, NY 13090

## KEEL-HAULERS OUTFITTERS

-PERCEPTION-HYDRA-PRIJON-HARMONY-MOHAWK-  
-YAKIMA-BODY GLOVE-BERMUDES-HELLY-HANSEN-  
-KOKATAT-SILVER CREEK-EXTRASPORT-SEDA-

-DISCOUNT PRICES - FAST MAIL ORDER SERVICE-

-CALL OR WRITE FOR A FREE CATALOG-

30940 LORAIN RD. NORTH OLMSTEAD, OH 44070

(216) 779-4545

# PRIJON

## The Finest Kayaks Around the World

The Prijon line of kayaks are blowmolded from HTP—the finest High Molecular Weight Polyethylene. ■ **stiffness** and durability together with our **true** Keyhole cockpits and collision plate loolbraces set a **standard** and **comfort**.



### T-Canyon

Predictable and **responsive**, the T-Canyon offers optimum safety and performance for **everyone** from steep creek boaters to **beginners**. A joy to paddle on any adventure.



### Invader

The **HOT** playboat for the new decade is available in either light or extreme configurations. Unmatched for surfing, yet very comfortable on the edge. **Simply** the best playboat there is.



### Topolino-Duo

The world's first whitewater K2 playboat. It surfs and rolls like a single. Great for expert teams. Couples and **guiding** novices. You can fall in love with a Topo-Duo.

For information on these boats and the rest of the Prijon line, call or write: (303) 444-2336 Wildwasser Sport USA, Inc. P.O. Box 4617, Boulder, CO 80306

# AWA supports Chilean efforts to save Bio-Bio whitewater

The effort to protect the Bio Bio River in Chile has been gathering steam. The Bio is threatened by plans of the gigantic Chilean electric company, Endesa, to build 6 huge new hydroelectric dams. The first two of these, the Pangué and Ralco dams, would destroy most or all of the world class whitewater of the Bio Bio. The company is seeking funding from the International Finance Corporation (IFC), an arm of the World Bank in Washington, D.C., to build the first of these 6 dams (the Pangué Project). IFC decisions are made by a Board of Directors drawn from the industrialized nations which provide money to the bank.

According to AWA Conservation Director, Pope Barrow, the AWA will be using a grant (provided by Yvon Chouinard of the Patagonia clothing company) to support efforts now being made in the U.S. and in Chile to protect the Bio Bio as a free flowing river.

The Bio Bio, located in central Chile, is recognized as one of the four or five most outstanding- and most imminently threatened- rivers in the world.

At a reception held in Washington, D.C., on May 19, 1992 to introduce Chilean activists to IFC officials and US-based environmental groups, Pope Barrow, AWA Conservation Chairman, presented a \$500 check and an IBM computer to Juan Pablo Orrego. Mr. Orrego

represents El Grupo de Accion por El Bio Bio (Bio Bio Action Group) based in Santiago, Chile. Orrego said that the assistance will be used to "increase public awareness in Chile of the ecological importance of the Bio Bio and the destructive effect which the dams will have on indigenous people in the Bio Bio region."

Barrow told the IFC officials assembled at the reception that the Bio Bio is "an ecological treasure, a world famous recreational attraction, and a rich storehouse of biodiversity." Barrow said "Money from the U.S. and other developed nations should not be used to lay waste to such a precious and irreplaceable natural resource."

Jose Antolin Curriao-Pincholet, a traditional Pehuenche Indian leader accompanied Mr. Orrego on his visit to Washington in June. The two men met with IFC officials to explain the plight of the Pehuenche people. Pehuenche Indians have lived in the Bio Bio valley and neighboring regions in the high Andes for centuries. They are dependent for their survival, and for the survival of their traditional way of life, on harvesting pinion nuts from a rare tree, the Araucaria, which grows only in this region. According to Mr. Curriao-Pincholet, the proposed hydropower dams would destroy the traditional Pehuenche way of life.



Chilean delegation of Carolina Morgado, Jaun Pablo Orrego and Jose Antolin Curriao-Pincholet are shown sites by AWA Director Pope Barrow.

## *New whitewater made possible with relicensing*

by RICH BOWERS  
Conservation Program  
Director

We didn't really expect this, and we have no idea where it came from! Perhaps due to pressure from the Congressional level (please see Oversight brief), pressure from environmental and recreation interests, or a recent profound religious experience, but the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) seems to be

taking this relicensing, and recreation interests seriously.

In our last update, the AWA reported that hydropower developers were showing a dismal concern for the opportunities available through this process, and were defending their bottom line at all costs. However, responses from the FERC to AWA study requests indicate that the FERC has seen through this smokescreen, and that recreation (i.e. whitewater) issues will be

given their due.

To their credit, the FERC staff has really taken a dose **lookat** each study (a real job considering that they received over 800 requests), and in several cases to date have demanded that the developer create an expert evaluation team to conduct whitewater feasibility and flow studies. AWA members will be included on this team.

Unfortunately, this does not guarantee whitewater at these sites, but only sanctions a test. Historically, much of the good work accomplished by the FERC staff has been flushed down the tubes at the FERC Commission level.

In the article "Water will rise rapidly", **May/June** Journal, AWA member Mike Sklavos provided a great example of the gains possible through this relicensing.

To date, bypassed river channels on the **Nisqually** River (WA), the **New** (VA), and the **Bear** (UT) have been targeted for whitewater testing.

In early June, **AWA's** regional coordinator Charles Ware and I visited the Buck project site in Virginia. After some serious map referencing, we found the project, and learned that previous weekend flooding had blown out some of the flash gates, and that the historic river channel was cranking. Eager to bag a possible "first descent" (perhaps the first to run this in the last fifty years?) we made a dash past the local fishing interests, braved the forest growing in the channel, and found an ... interesting class II run!

Actually, with less water (the developer will never be able to release this volume of water) this could prove to be a good two to three mile technical run.

As this journal goes to press, I will be joining

regional coordinator Man Lutz and others to inspect the bypassed channel on the Nisqually River in Washington. And plans are currently being made to look at the Bear River in Utah.

The next step is for the AWA, and all other interested paddling clubs and individuals, to intervene in the projects which affect their recreation resources. The AWA will be contacting members and affiliated clubs to create a coalition intervention for each relicensing. To date, intervention deadlines impacting whitewater have been set for the Deschutes Project (OR) July 9, Stillwater (ME) July 22, Pine Project (WI) August 3, 1992 and Ripogenus Gorge (ME) for August 21, Buck (VA) August 17.

Please don't wreck our euphoric state of mind with hundreds of letters to the editor, describing how you boat this New River bypass every day. But please do contact me, I could really use additional info on this stretch as I prepare for dealing with the applicant on whitewater feasibility and flow tests.



Buck Hydro tailrace on the New River



Rich Bowers surfs a small wave below Buck Dam

## *Auburn Dam raises its ugly head again*

River groups, including the AWA, American Canoe Association and America Outdoors, have banded together to oppose the most recent version of the Auburn Dam pork project in California. The Army Corps of Engineers, and several members of Congress, are proposing an expandable dam project to protect the City of Sacramento from future flooding, through the 1992 Water Resources Development Act.

Rather than a good **side/bad** side story, this project is **Bad-Bad** and **Bad!** First off, this project, with a total projected cost **approach-**

ing \$700 million, will not achieve its design goal of providing flood control. Second, this 425 foot high dam would periodically flood more than 34 miles of the upper North and Middle Forks of the American River, which offer the most popular **intermediate/commercial** whitewater segments. This would affect over 50,000 recreational users (including boaters) to this area each year.

Finally, the future expansion of this project could affect seven separate whitewater runs (class II-V), roughly sixty-eight prime whitewater miles in the upper

American River watershed. These runs include areas of the North and Middle forks that the Bureau of Reclamation has concluded are "nationally significant and meet the criteria for the establishment of a [National Recreation Area].", and the outstanding, and federally protected, Wild and Scenic segment of the North Fork.

For additional information, please contact Friends of the River in California at (916) 442-3155, or Rich Bowers (AWA) at (301) 236-0436.

# Congress slaps FERC's wrist

On May 15, 1992 the Environment, Energy, and Natural Resources Subcommittee (House Committee on Government Operations), conducted an examination of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) hydroelectricity program.

If you are ever invited to attend such a hearing as the guest of honor, we recommend that you plan to take an immediate vacation to a country with no extradition proceedings. Even with the FERC as the recipient of Congressional attention, it was not a pretty sight.

Pressure came from three levels: The Congressional panel, lead by Chairman Mike Synar (D-OK),

*"this hearing...did provide notice that this agency needs to change its process, or ultimately turn over its responsibilities to a more sensitive agency."*

Environmental concerns, represented by FERC expert John Echeverria, and by various federal and state agencies.

In addition to the overall beating given to the FERC during this hearing, several specific problems were discussed which impact on river use and health: FERC's general dismissal of agency requests and recommendations, excessive delays and costs with respect to environmental review, and FERC's ability or willingness to adhere to the spirit of the Electric Consumer's Protection Act, which directs this agency to address "equal

consideration" on non-power (including recreation) uses of a hydro project.

Marc Gerstman, Deputy Commissioner and General Counsel for NY State Department of Environmental Conservation, described FERC's relationship with his department as "extremely formal, convoluted and litigious." And Lorraine Bodi, Co-Director for American Rivers, NW Office, considers "FERC's handling of fish, wildlife, and recreation issues to be abysmal." This experience offers an apt description of all environmental/recreation interactions with the FERC, and provides a

good explanation as to why the general public finds it impossible to become effectively involved in this process.

While this hearing represented only a slap on the wrist to the FERC, it did provide notice that this agency needs to change its process, or ultimately turn over its responsibilities to a more sensitive agency. With the number of upcoming events which will determine river protection and access in the future (i.e. the Energy Bill, the Clean Water Act, and others), the heat is on for the FERC to clean up its act and start looking out for the best interest of our public resources.



**"It's  
SO  
soft"**

No more sticky nylon against your skin.

Our new Lined Torrent Splash Jacket has a special soft and light tricot mesh lining that provides unparalleled comfort.



**Call  
(303) 444-8495**  
PO Box 3155  
Boulder, CO 80307

## CHOOSING A WHITEWATER KAYAK?

**Some** still get VANHA designs just because he invented the creek boat. **Others** appreciate the cross-over excellence of his designs ... popular at instructional schools worldwide and a runaway favorite of European rodeo winners. **For you** Ben Franklin took the guesswork out with his 'for' & 'against' list ...

Why VANHA?	Why Not?
UNIQUE ACCELERATORS deliver more power per stroke.	Limited
PRECISION CONTROL eliminates that sloppy loose feeling.	
SMOOTH & SMART hull has an expanded "sweetspot".	Availability
Why NOW?	Reasons Not To
LIMITED EDITION, for those independently minded.	Can't
DARING CONCEPT - leave timid boats behind.	Think
LIMITED LIFETIME WARRANTY - Bond with your new boat or return within 30 days.	of
	Any

contact: **NOAH INTERNATIONAL**  
Rt. 4, Box 4638, Blairsville, GA 30512  
for the better shops.  
**4041745-8899**

# Dam breaks after FERC ignores warnings

After dismissing reports by state and local groups, which emphasized the severe erosion hazards present at this site, the FERC issued a license (#9885) to construct a project on the Fall River in Eastern Idaho. On Thursday, June 11 this disregard for public concern resulted in disaster.

Marysville Hydro Partners, in building a new, two mile penstock, buried this under an existing irrigation canal, and improperly protected it from the areas highly porous rock. The result, when water was re-introduced to the canal, was 40,000 to 100,000 tons of fill and rock debris flushed into this river.

The Fall River, and its downstream neighbor, the Henry's Fork, are both wild

trout fisheries. This disaster comes at the very beginning of the trout season, and recent reports, listing over two feet of silt in the eddies, could well have destroyed the eggs and fry of the trout population. The fallout from this will affect 13 miles of the Fall River to its junction with the Henry's Fork, and this river to its junction with the Snake River.

Irrigation canals connecting this to the North Fork of the Teton River may also be affected.

The upstream whitewater area, six miles of class III-IV, were not affected. However, completion of this project will result in a greatly reduced boating season, due to the removal of 500cfs of water from this river. 400cfs is the lowest boating level for

this stretch.

Currently, the FERC has put a stop-work order on this project, and local groups are pressing to have the license permanently revoked. While the damage to fishing interests may prove to be a

long term disaster, it could provide the attention needed to protect the whitewater resources on the Fall River, and eventually provide a more permanent protection for this area.

## Sespe Creek *whitewater* declared Wild and Scenic

On Friday, June 19, President Bush signed into law the Los Padres Condor Range and River Protection Act. With his signature, 84.1 river miles became permanently protected under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, including the long awaited 31.5 miles of Sespe Creek. Also protected were the

Sisquoc (33 miles) and Big Sur (19.5) Rivers.

An additional 109.5 miles were designated under Section 5(a) Wild and Scenic Studies. These include the Little Sur River (23 miles), and Piru (49), Matilija (16), Lopez (11) and Sespe Creeks.

# TIGHT SKIRTS SPRAYSKIRTS

CUSTOM BUILT THE  
WAY YOU WANT THEM!  
**GUARANTEED.**

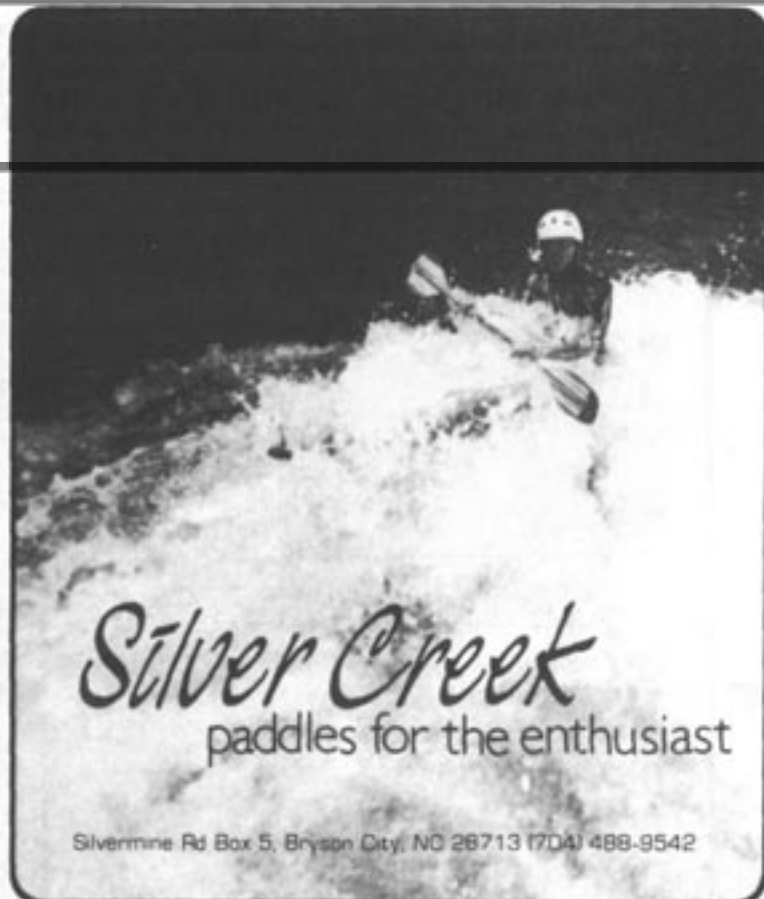
THE CHOICE OF  
WORLD CHAMPIONS



P.O. BOX 8 • OHIOPOLE, PA • 15470

PHONE: 412-329-5952

BOB "NEEDLE" DANIELS & NANCY COLBERT



*Silver Creek*  
paddles for the enthusiast

Silvermine Rd Box 5, Bryson City, NC 28713 (704) 488-9542

*Inside the Beltway*

# Pro-Rivers Energy Bill Now in Conference

By ED E. LINE

An eight-lane interstate highway (known as the "beltway") encircles Washington, D.C.\* like an impenetrable moat isolating the capitol from the outside world. Inside this terrifying inferno, while the rest of the nation looks on in horror, the ponderous wheels of government slowly grind away. The world inside the beltway is a cacophonous Tower of Babel — inhabited by politicians, bureaucrats, T.V. newscasters, lobbyists, lawyers, government contractors, drug addicts, and special interest groups.

Undeterred by this horrific scene, and ever alert to anything and everything affecting whitewater, AWA keeps a close watch on events of interest to whitewater boaters.

The following is part of a continuing series of reports from inside the beltway.

• Stands for Darkness and Confusion.

*Editor's Note: Unless otherwise stated, the views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the policies or views of the AWA.*



## ENERGY BILL NOW IN CONFERENCE

The National Energy Bill continues to stretch its run through Congress into one of the longest marathons in recent memory. This bill, a genuine "geezer", began life more than 2 years ago and is now tottering and wobbling

towards an uncertain end.

When the energy bill began its Odyssey, it was pro hydro. Now, after a "cleansing" process in the Senate and House of Representatives, it is pro river protection.

As this issue goes to press, the National Energy bill is under consideration by a House/Senate conference committee where members of



**"It's  
so  
soft"**

No more sticky nylon against your skin.

Our new Lined Torrent Splash Jacket has a special soft and light tricot mesh lining that provides unparalleled comfort.



**Call**  
**(303) 444-8495**  
PO Box 3155  
Boulder, CO 80307

NANTHALA OUTDOOR CENTER
1 9 9 2

# NOC

## OUTFITTERS STORE CATALOG

EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR  
WHITEWATER PADDLING,  
WE MAIL ANYTHING FROM A PAIR  
OF NOSECLIPS TO A KAYAK.

FOR A FREE CATALOG CALL  
**(800) 367-3521**  
FAX (704) 488-2498

41 HWY 19 W, BRYSON CITY, NC 287139114

# PADDLES FOR THE 90'S



BILL BURGER

Dagger Company, Inc.  
Route 8, Box 204  
Harriman, TN 37748  
615/882-8223



**Paddle with the best.**  
In this modern day age of high technology, synthetic paddles have been evolving rapidly. We have stayed on the leading edge, continually testing, upgrading our products, while meticulously maintaining an affordable price. Our paddles are quite light and durable. Both qualities are attainable when you consider their construction. Call or write for our catalog.

or the Youligoheny in Maryland) and on State protected rivers (like the North Fork of the Payette in Idaho).  
FERC can even authorize private hydro developers to confiscate State park lands to build new projects (such as the 1.0 megawatt Falls Mill Project proposed for construction on the Yantic River in Norwich, Connecticut).  
The State-Protected-Rivers provision in the Miller amendments would put an end to this nonsense. No more FERC voices over State laws protecting rivers. No more confiscation of State parks for hydro projects.  
When the Miller amendment came up for a vote, Members of Congress took time off their worries with bouncing checks to do some good work. These much-maligned politicians behaved like HEROES. They had to be heroic because only the AWA,

this process, allowing other agencies to stick it to FERC whenever FERC tries to license a project without the land managing agency's consent.  
The heart and soul of the Miller amendment, however, is the State Protected Rivers Provision. This is the idea that AWA, and its allies on Capitol Hill, fought hardest for. It survives the House/Senate conference, this provision would revulsonize the hydropower roles of the Federal and State governments. Like Arnold Schwarzenegger in Terminator 2, the State-protected-rivers provision is powerful but humane - it would not destroy FERC - just shoot off a few kneecaps.  
Here's how it works. Under current law, FERC can license hydro projects on State wild and scenic rivers (like the Klamath in Oregon, the Skykomish in Washington,

secured passage of a key amendment, the federal river conservation amendment. Under the Miller Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC") would have to stop licensing hydro projects in national parks and could no longer renew old licenses for existing dams in national parks without park service approval.  
Miller's awaunwardly also strengthens the hand of federal land managing agencies, like the Forest Service, when they 90 eyeball-to-eyeball with FERC in disputes over building hydropower on Federal lands. In recent years, FERC has bullied these other agencies into submission, and even convinced some Federal courts that FERC alone should determine where and how to build hydropower in national forests and on other Federal properties. The Miller amendment would reverse

both bodies attempt to negotiate a consensus resolving the differences between the bills passed by the House and Senate.  
This is not a pretty thing. Watching the House and Senate try to agree with each other about anything is like watching a paraplegic perform a prostactomy without aesthetic...it makes observers squeamish.  
But faithful journal readers have nothing to fear. The gruesome story of the national energy bill—and the continuing political struggle between free flowing rivers and hydropower—will be delivered to your doorstep, no matter what the cost to journalistic good taste.  
Here's what has been happening at the Capital.  
On May 27, in a dramatic cliff hanger vote, Congressman George Miller of California, and his allies,

# CONSERVE



Paddler clears first drop of Lost Paddle on the Gauley. *Legislation* is underway to add land to Gauley National Recreation Area.

American Rivers, and few other small groups were on the side of the good guys. On the other side were the National Hydropower Association, the President of the United States, and Congressman John Dingell, a man whose name is never seen without the adjective "POWERFUL". Dingell is not a charitable man. And he does not like to lose. Although usually not a foe of river conservationists, for reasons still unknown, Dingell took a dislike to the Miller amendment (or maybe it was Miller he took a dislike to?). In any case Dingell blasted Miller's amendment in a ferocious tirade on the House floor.

When Dingell stepped down from the podium, George Miller stepped up. Miller blasted back at Dingell, taking

no prisoners. He was backed up by the Gang of Eight, including Congressman PETE KOSTMAYER of Pennsylvania, the original author and key proponent of the State protected rivers amendment, LARRY LAROCCO of Idaho who has been trying to protect the fabulous North Fork of the Payette from FERC, Congressman DEFAZIO of Oregon, who has been trying to protect the Klamath River, SAM GEJDENSON of Connecticut who opposes the Yantic Falls project, by BRUCE VENTO of Minnesota who wants the Elwha Dam removed from Olympic National Park, RICK LEHMAN of California who led the charge to stop FERC from running roughshod over Federal land managing agencies, NICK RAHALL of

West Virginia who has befriended whitewater boaters on everything and anything, and Congresswoman PATSY MINK who wants to revoke FERC's passport to Hawaii.

When the smoke cleared, it was 221 to 195 in favor of Miller! River conservation advocates collapsed in ecstatic exhaustion.

The key now is to convince Senators to accept the Miller Amendment. This won't be easy, but progress is being made. One encouraging sign - the Western Governors's Association, at the request of Idaho Governor Cecil Andrus, adopted a resolution in favor of the Miller Amendment and transmitted it to Congress. FERC responded by calling the Western Governors action harmful "to the nation's ability to harness environmentally sound hydropower" and

inimical to "energy independence".

The Governor of Idaho, Cecil Andrus, wrote back to FERC blasting FERC's ignorance and inattention to public values. Andrus accused FERC of being unqualified "to assume the role it is attempting to play from the nation's capital". Andrus noted that, on the Fall River in eastern Idaho, FERC ignored State law to license a project through a process the Governor referred to as a "comedy of errors". The project was partially washed out in June of this year, creating what Andrus called "an ecological disaster".

(Editors Note: AWA readers are welcome to join in the battle. It would help to write to your Senator and ask for his support for the Miller Amendment, especially the State

## TRIOLOGY

- ▶ Recreation
- ▶ Industry
- ▶ Environment

### The Magazine for Outdoor Enthusiasts

TRIOLOGY covers travel, recreation and the outdoors. Each issue includes stunning photography and insightful articles on the personal rewards of outdoor adventure.

TRIOLOGY helps you understand what corporate America is thinking and doing about the environment, and what people are thinking about corporate America.

TRIOLOGY is the only magazine presenting the viewpoints of environmentalists and industry...TRIOLOGY explores what needs to be done...and what is being done. Trilogy's common sense approach creates a lively forum for outdoor concerns...allowing you to determine the issues for yourself.

### SUBSCRIBE TO TRIOLOGY AND WE'LL DONATE \$4.95 TO THE AMERICAN WHITEWATER AFFILIATION!

\$14.95 a year - 6 issues OR \$19.95 for 2 years  
SAVE 36% OFF THE COVER PRICE

Money Back Guarantee...if you're not 100% satisfied simply write CANCEL on your bill and return it.

#### TO SUBSCRIBE:

Call: (800) 388-7456

Credit Card Orders or Billing Available



Protected Rivers Provision. Send a copy of your letter to Rich Bowers, AWA, 1609 Northcrest Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20904)

## WHITEWATER LEGISLATION PENDING

The House of Representatives held hearings and passed a bill sponsored by NICK RAHALL of West Virginia to expand the GAULEY RIVER National Recreation Area and the NEW RIVER Gorge National River by more than 12,000 acres. Most of the land, 8,819 acres, would be added to the Gauley NRA. The State park at Carnifax Ferry would also be included. Pipestem State Park would be added to the New River National River.

Still pending is a bill to designate the LOWER

MAIN SALMON in Idaho and a bill to designate the GUNNISON River in Colorado as Federal wild and scenic and a bill—which looks like a real long shot for this Congress—to designate 86 rivers in Washington State as Wild and Scenic.

Legislation is also waiting in the wings to voice Congressional opposition to the proposed Windy Craggy Mine mine on the TATSHENSHINI River in Canada. In addition, the Senate has held hearings on a bill to tear down the hydropower dam on the ELWHA RIVER in Olympic National Park in Washington.

The bill to make Alabama's LITTLE RIVER CANYON a National Preserve passed the House easily but has now run into trouble in the Senate where Alabama's Senator Shelby is either reluctant or asleep at the

switch.

Editors note: Southern boaters need to light a fire under Shelby to get behind the Little River bill. Now is the time to do it. For more information on the need to pass this bill, contact the Office of Alabama Congressman Tom Bevill).

## SHOCKING TESTIMONY ON RIVER ECOLOGY

In recent testimony before the Committee on Energy and the Environment of the Interior Committee in the House of Representatives, experts reported that America's rivers are in much worse ecological shape than many of us previously thought.

Several scientists testified at the hearing that, while most rivers are doing better in terms of water

chemistry, the general biological health of streams in America is a mess. According to Dr. James Karr from the University of Washington, "the biota of North American rivers has been decimated by the actions of human society". Dr. Karr reported that 73% of the fresh water mussel species and 65% of the crayfish species in North America are classified as rare or extinct. He noted that since 1850, 70% of fish species in Midwest rivers declined or disappeared.

Professor Karr blamed most of the destruction on impoundments (such as those along the Columbia River system which have reduced salmon by 85%) and on loss of riparian forest areas. In many areas, Karr said, riparian forests have been reduced by more than 80%. Another scientist said that the

Please turn to page 45

# A New Generation of Whitewater Playboats!

## MOHAWK XL SERIES

More paddling, less swimming. MOHAWK'S Whitewater Playboats are very stable and very dry. Our Playboats are easy to paddle and quick to accelerate. The round bilges which blend into flared sides, forward and aft, result in a canoe that turns on a dime, is stable-surfing and easy to roll. The MOHAWK family of XL Playboats is the right choice for a veteran expert daring to challenge Grade V Whitewater, or a novice learning to paddle Grade II Whitewater! We invite your comparison with any other such canoe. Paddle a MOHAWK XL, look it over, then make your purchase decision. If you can't try an XL, talk to someone who owns one or has paddled it.



Durable *Royallex* hulls, Plastic decks, PVC gunnels with aluminum reinforcement, Aluminum thwarts. Also available — all wood trim including beautiful wood inlaid decks, white ash gunwales with drain slots.

### XL12

#### XL12

A shorter playboat - really quick turns... stable... dry fun in low water rapids... use in Grade II, III, and IV Whitewater.

#### XL13

Our most popular playboat... the more you paddle it the better you like it... paddlers thru 250 pounds are paddling whitewater thru Grade V... really stable... very, very dry... easy handling.

#### XL14

A short combination tandem and solo playboat... fun in rapids, and easy to paddle between rapids... more room... Whitewater thru Grade V.

#### XL15

The tandem playboat... Whitewater thru Grade V... Stable, dry, and maneuverable... A whitewater tripping canoe... good volume...

Specs.	Length	Beam	Depth	Beam 4" WL	Weight	Price*
XL12	12'3"	32"	15"	29"	54#	\$675
XL13	13'3"	32½"	15½"	29½"	56#	\$675
XL14	14'3"	32½"	15½"	30"	60#	\$700
XL15	15'4"	36"	15½"	32"	65#	\$725

\*Add freight to price/subject to change



**Mohawk Canoes**

963 N. Hwy. 427, LONGWOOD, FL 32750, (407) 834.3233

XL12, XL13, XL15 also available at: **Western Canoeing**  
Box 115, Abbotsford, B.C., Canada Y2S 4N8  
Phone (604) 853-9320

# Ocoee Rodeo draws huge crowds

The Ocoee River Rodeo just keeps getting bigger and better.

The 1992 event attracted 121 competitors--a 25% increase from last year--while the number of spectators seemed to double and the festive crowd at Saturday night's party seemed to triple.

The Rodeo has established itself as a major national event with competitors from as far away as Vermont, Montana and Idaho. The event even attracted an international crowd with a squirt boater from Japan and a competitor from Germany.

The Rodeo stretched into a three-day event when more than 50% of the competitors arrived by Friday morning to practice/play on the river. The Ocoee resembled a river festival on Friday with a crowd of hot boaters flashing new moves all over the water.

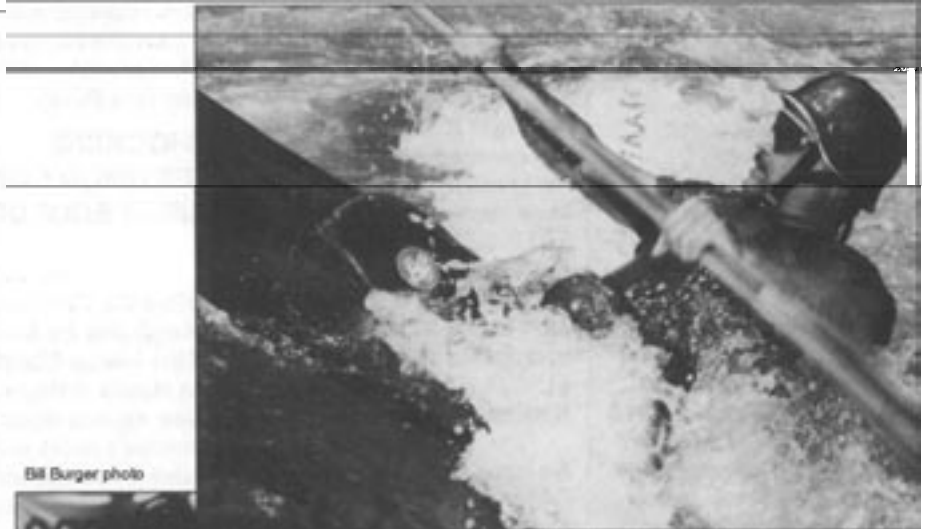
With the squirt boat classes held Saturday and the free-style classes contested Sunday, the weekend was filled with intense competition. Some of the best paddlers in the country turned out and provided a demonstration of the latest skills and hottest moves.

But despite the exciting competition, it seemed like the participants hadn't come just to win--but to be part of the event.

A new judging system developed by Jennifer Wiger was used at the Rodeo with excellent results. Six judges were used with one individual rating variety, two looking at style and sportsmanship and three appraising technical difficulty. Before the event, judges were provided hand-outs defining their areas and a meeting was held so they could discuss their responsibilities over the next two days.

The Saturday night party was a serious whitewater festival with over 500 people attending celebration at Ocoee Rafting in Ducktown. The event included a music by "Blue Groove," a great dinner, a raffle with many great prizes such as a drytop, paddles, fireworks and a Mohawk canoe, an auction where three kayaks were bartered, and a silent auction where five tables full of gear went for great prices.

Thanks to the many volunteers who helped make the rodeo such a huge success. Special thanks go to Jimmy Snyder and John Mason for making a long journey to help judge the squirt competition; to Jennifer Wiger for her work in developing



Bill Burger photo

Bill Burger photo



Bill Burger photo

## Scenes from the Ocoee Rodeo:

(Top) Fred Davis blasts the hole during squirt competition.

(Middle) Doug Wellman ends during freestyle event.

(Bottom) Chris Manderson performs in the decked canoe division.



Bill Burger photo



the judging system; Francis Mallory for lining up the band which created a tremendous draw for the party; John and Diana Holloran at Ocoee Rafting for hosting the party; and of course all the sponsors who made the event possible. And most of all—a thanks to the competitors for making the Ocoee Rodeo the crown jewel of the rodeo circuit.

If you missed this year's event, you can still purchase an official rodeo T-shirt to remind you to attend next year. Send \$10 plus \$2 shipping to: Susan Gentry, Rt. 2, 252 Deer Creek Trail, Hoschton, GA 30548.



Bill Burger photo

## 1992 Ocoee Rodeo Results

### Squirt K-1 men's expert

1. David Frierson
2. Forrest Callaway
3. Lee Bonfiglio

### Squirt K-1 women's expert

1. Susan Gentry
2. Risa Shimoda Callaway
3. Maggie Events

### Squirt K-1 men's Intermediate

1. Todd Braswell

### 2. Dwight Shuler

3. Steve Kauffman

### Freestyle K-1 men's expert

1. Bob McDonough
2. Chris Spelius
3. Andy Turner

### Freestyle K-1 women's expert

1. Hannah Swayze

### 2. Risa Shimoda Callaway

3. Roxanne McDonough

### Freestyle K-1 men's Intermediate

1. Rick Saywell

2. Stan Sterr

3. Brad Waye

### Freestyle K-1 women's Intermediate

1. Lisa Benaron

2. Karen Mann

3. Kate Udall

### Freestyle K-1 seniors mixed (45+)

1. Kathy Kuyper

2. Jim Sheppard

3. Joseph Brasen

### Freestyle C-1 expert

1. Albert Mitchum

2. Scott Shoup

3. Tim Masineupp

### Freestyle OC-1 men's expert

1. Jeff Richards

2. Phil Foti

3. Dale Johnson

### Freestyle OC-1 women's expert

1. Kathy Howerton

2. Brenda Dent

3. Felicia Mazur

### Freestyle OC-2 expert

1. Patrick Rogers/Mike Bringer

2. David Rose/Dick Conner

3. Brian and Judy Anderson

# FERC decision opens Mongaup River

By **KEN FISCHMAN**

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has finally issued a license to Orange and Rockland (O&R) electric utility for its hydroelectric facilities on the Mongaup river. That license, for the first time, will give boaters: (1) legal access and (2) water releases on the two-and-a-half-mile segment between the Rio dam and the river's confluence with the Delaware.

The Mongaup is an exquisite little Class III river, and this hopefully marks the happy end of a long and onerous struggle

between boaters on one side (represented by KCCNY and AWA) and FERC, local politicians and a group of sometimes vicious fishermen on the other. It is expected that about 13 releases per year will be scheduled from April to October. Canoeists will be delighted, but kayakers less so because FERC has authorized only single turbine releases (430 cfs) instead of the two turbine releases (860 cfs) requested. At the higher release level there are many more play spots.

Releases will be scheduled this first year, starting mid-July, 90 days after the granting of the license. There will be a

telephone number to call for information-- hopefully logistics will permit including this next issue.

In the meantime, boaters should know that it is finally legal to paddle the Mongaup. The New York Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has bought the land on either side of the final one and a half miles of the river for eagle winter habitat. The Rio dam usually operates, releasing water from Monday through Friday. Because O&R still owns the land around their powerhouse, it is not yet legal to put in there, but boaters can put in a half mile further downstream.

# BRIEFS

## 1992 Gauley Festival...bigger and better!



The scene at last year's festival...this year's event offers more exhibits, food and activities at a larger facility.

So you're planning on heading down to good ole West Virginy to do a little paddling and check out the annual AWA Gauley River Festival **come** fall. In that case, we'd better let you know where to find us. After darn near bursting at the seams

last year, the 1992 Gauley Fest will introduce an exciting new feature-- elbow room. When the crowds converge on the evening of September 26, it will be at the Nicholas County Veterans Memorial Park on Route 19 in Summersville, West Virginia (see

map).

Not only does this new site put us closer to the Gauley put-in; but now, when you go to sample the fabric on those choice Marketplace goods, you'll have a better chance of grabbing the actual sale mer-

*New England Whitewater Supply*

We know whitewater, And we know whitewater gear. Call us and you'll talk to an expert who is committed to helping you get the right gear, hassle-free.

If it has to do with whitewater, we probably have it...

Call or write for our free catalog and quarterly NEWSletter.

**P. O. Box 149  
Bedford, MA 01730  
617-275-6551**

While we're serious about our **service**, our **NEWSletters** aren't *always* serious. The design at right from a recent **NEWSletter** is available on a **Hanes Beefy T shirt. White or silver. M, L, or XL. \$12 + \$3 shipping.**

The N.E.W.S. INQUIRER

is the Official Tabloid of

*New England Whitewater Supply*

### BIGFOOT MONSTER INVADES GAULEY FEST-NO ONE NOTICES!

"I thought it was a raft guide!" says canoeist.

River Narc  
Surfs Turf-  
Busts Boaters  
"Strokes for  
broke, but  
never tokes"

Exclusive  
Photos:  
Bo Knows  
Canoeing

Elvis Appears  
at Lava Falls

Barreached Photo!

Man with Bowtie Locks Business Partner in Basement.



"I had no choice," says T.W. Williams. "He would have gone to the Gauley, and the August books *still* weren't done!!!"

"I had no food in my stomach for 3 days!!!" says Keven Pearce after bizarre incident



Burt Squirts for Deliverance II  
Loni's concern: "His toupee will get sucked off!!!"

Charles & Di: "SEX WAX saved our marriage!!!"

Former First Lady's Plea Outrages Boaters: "Just Say No to Neon!"

chandise rather than some unknown part of the guy who just stuffed in beside you. We'll also finally be able to provide you with stress-free parking and vastly improved camping facilities.

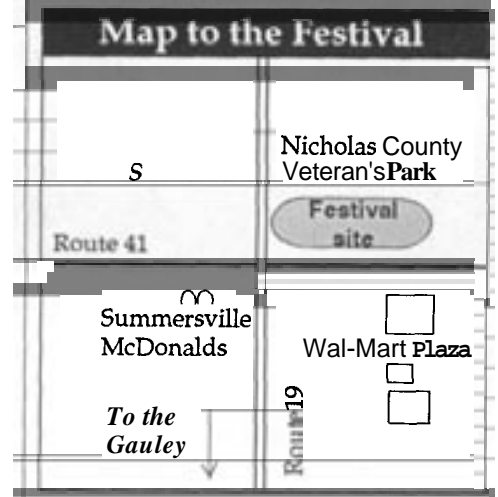
Add these new conveniences to the standard Gauley Festival highlights -- non-stop whitewater videos, an **ever-expanding** Marketplace, the famous **Silent Auction**, our incredible high-stakes raffle, foot-tapping **music** and a wide array of food selections (would you believe even a clam bar???) -- and you come out with a real fine time for all.


So what's in store, you might ask. Things are just beginning to come together, but there's enough in place to whet your appetite. For starters, music will be provided by Focal Point -- a group of rocking river types from Richmond. And Scott **Smalley**, this year's Festival Video Coordinator and member of the Bluegrass Wildwater Assodation's Paddling Film Festival team, reports that he's assembling miles and miles of stupendous, **on-the-edge** video footage that you won't want to miss. Scott assures us that this latest whitewater collection will keep you wet all night long.

As always, the Gauley Festival Marketplace will offer the latest irresistible whitewater and outdoor gear available. There's guaranteed to be a bargain or two to be had -- so bring your checkbook and plan on doing some shopping. To date, we've learned that the exhibitor roster will include:

- AIRE**
- Airtight Inflatables**
- American Whitewater Affiliation**
- Bluewater Canoes**
- Clarke Outdoors**
- Clinch Paddle Company**
- Cool Ridge Company**
- Dagger Canoes and Kayaks**
- Dagger Paddles**
- Kidgear**
- L'eau Vive**
- Lunatic Designs**
- Man of Rubber**
- Millbrook Boats**
- Mohawk Canoes**
- Mountain State Kayak**
- Mountain Surf, Inc.**
- Nantahala Outdoor Center**
- New Wave Kayaks**
- New Wave Waterworks**
- North American River Runners**

- Northwest River Supply**
- Perception**
- Rapidstyle**
- Hoyt Reel**
- Ridge Rider Mountain Bikes**
- Riversport**
- Sidewinder**
- Starlight Cases**
- Surf Dog Productions**
- Tight Skirts**
- Weirwolf Enterprises**





**NORSE PADDLE COMPANY**  
*WHITEWATER*  
**CANOE & KAYAK PADDLES**

with proven

- performance you demand
- durability you want
- value that makes \$ sense


Call or write for information & outfitters in your area:  
RD 1, Spring Mills, PA 16875      814-422-8844

**WE DIDN'T SET OUT TO** create the ultimate kayak school. It just happened. Originally our intent was to create the ultimate wilderness lodge. Kayaking was something we did just for fun. So much fun, in fact, we now offer the best instructional program available. Everything is first class.

Our physical plant consists of 40 acres completely surrounded by wilderness. Private ponds for instruction, private beaches and half a mile of private river front on the emerald green California Salmon River are all located on the property.


Our instructors are well-known experts, our equipment the best exclusively by Perceptions and our lodge boasts numerous amenities including a spa, hot tub and sauna and private decks off of each room. Our teaching technique stresses safety, the proper stroke and an easy-to-learn "sit formula."

We are dedicated to making this one of the great vacation experiences of your life. A color brochure available. Personal size classes. *Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced*



**OTTER BAR LODGE**  
KAYAK SCHOOL

FORKS OF SALMON, CALIFORNIA 96031  
**(916) 462-4772**



*Specializing in  
Squirt Boats*

**THE SOURCE FOR CUSTOM BUILT BOATS**

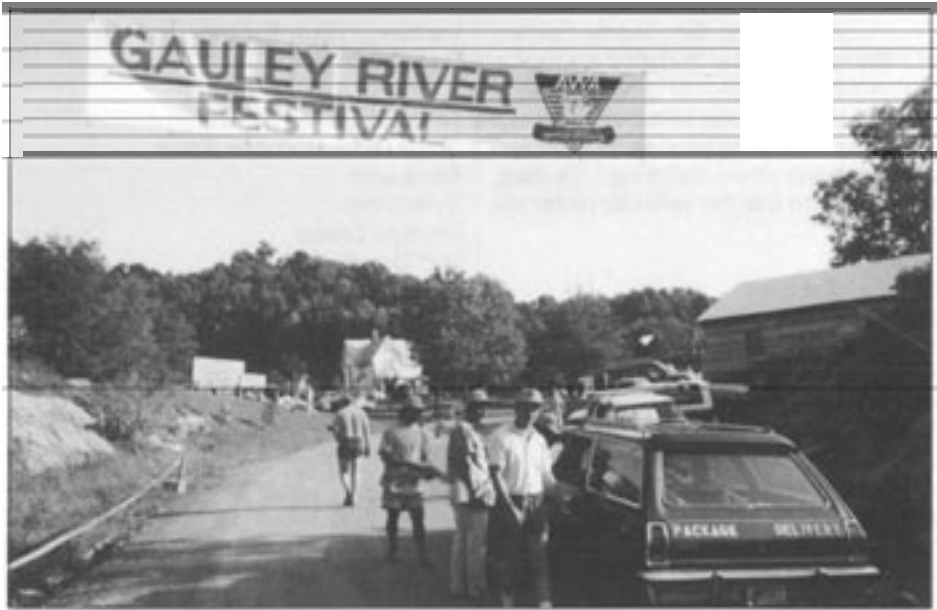
**NEW WAVE**  
KAYAK PRODUCTS

**7780 Chamber Hill Rd.  
Harrisburg, PA 17111**

**717-944-6320**

Dealer **Inquiries** Invited

# BRIEFS



A WA volunteers welcome guests at 1992 Festival

What do you need most? Auctioneer Supreme Chris Koll will be happy to note your bid. And who knows, maybe if it's high enough, he won't even insult you!

And the bottom line is -- as it has been since the inception of the Gauley Festival way back when -- that the proceeds of this evening of frivolity go directly towards funding AWA's growing list of Whitewater Defense Project commitments. Last year's Festival profits enabled us to donate \$5,000 to the West Virginia Rivers Coalition alone, in addition to numerous other whitewater efforts.

So come on out with your buddies and join us on to enjoy the world's largest off-the-river whitewater extravaganza and help support the rivers you love.

## *Festival camping available*

AWA hosted camping will be available both Friday and Saturday nights at the Nicholas County Veterans Memorial Park in conjunction with the Gauley Festival. Extensive tent space is to be had on a first-come, first-served basis (\$3 per person/

West Virginia Rivers Coalition  
Wilderness Expeditions  
Wilderness Systems  
Wildwasser Sport USA (Prijon)

Not bad for a preliminary lineup!  
Remember also that most of these manu-

facturers and outfitters (as well as a whole slew more who can't make it down for the Festival) have donated top-of-the-line merchandise to be had at the Silent Auction. Boats, paddles, drysuits, paddling clothing, racks, outdoor gear -- you name it.



**RIVERSPORT**  
213 Yough Street  
Confluence, PA 15424  
(814)395-5744

One of the top whitewater schools in the country. **Riversport** offers a safe yet challenging experience for first-time beginners, as well as experts.

Friendly Instructors, small classes, excellent equipment, and a beautiful riverfront camp combine to provide the perfect setting for learning whitewater skills. Students are carefully placed in small classes according to skill level, paddling interest and age. We guarantee your satisfaction. Ask about our special clinics and group rates.

Not because you want to be different...

# Because you want to be BETTER!

**Caper and Encore.** Two new solo playboats designed to encourage, not prohibit, proper paddling technique. Whitewater canoes for paddlers, not floaters. Call or write for free catalog featuring all five Dagger models.



**Dagger**

CANOE COMPANY, INC.

PO Box 1500, Harriman TN 37748 . (615) 882-0404

**KAYAKS**

Old Town Headquarters  
USED RENTALS REPAIRS

LARGE INDOOR SHOWROOM-OPEN ALL YEAR "ROUND"  
IN STOCK OVER **500** RECREATIONAL & WHITewater

SEE OVER 40 BRANDS OF CANOES, KAYAKS, YAKIMA CAR TOP CARRIERS, ACCESSORIES WATER-ON-PREMISES FOR TRY-BEFORE-YOU-BUY  
**OAK ORCHARD CANOE EXPERTS**  
2133 EAGLE HBR. RD. WATERPORT, N.Y. 14571  
(BETWEEN NIAGARA FALLS & ROCHESTER-2 MI. E. OF RT# 104)  
800-4-KAYAKS OPEN 6 DAYS (CLOSED TUES.)

night). Tenters will have access to a large bathhouse with hot showers. No advance reservations are being taken on tent sites.

For you creatures of comfort, we've also rented three heated bunkhouses (each with its own bathroom and showers) that, combined, will sleep a total of 88. Cots are provided, but bring your own sleeping bags and pillows. The cost of these bunkhouse slots is \$5 per person/night and pre-paid reservations are recommended to guarantee a **cozy** spot.

For camping information or bunkhouse reservations, contact Festival Camping Coordinator Susan Gentry, 252 Deer Creek Trail, Hoschton, GA 30548; (404) 654-2725.

**Festival volunteers needed**

Volunteers are the backbone of every Gauley Festival. They are assigned shifts in various capacities (day-of-Festival publicity, gate, parking, clean-up, etc.) so that everyone has plenty of time to help out and still have blast. Can you give us a couple hours of your time? We'd sure appreciate it. Contact Festival Volunteer Coordinator Joe Greiner, 1624 Park Drive, Raleigh, NC 27605; (919) 834-4172.

# Gauley Festival hosts Pan American Rivers Seminar

The AWA will be hosting the 1992 Conservation Seminar on Pan American Rivers to be held the day before the Gauley Festival Friday, September 25, in Oak Hill, West Virginia.

The purpose of the seminar will be to (1) convene recreational and environmental groups to discuss current events, and (2) construct a unified strategy for addressing the management of these major river issues.

"As our world becomes more intimate, we are realizing that issues in Chile or Northern Canada, at one time seemingly distant, are really in our backyard," says Pope Barrow, AWA's own Conservation Director. "River Conservationists and river users need to work together with a common strategy and goals. If we do, we can have a real impact on decisions now being made which will affect rivers throughout the world."

Along with this seminar, the AWA will host the U.S. Paddlesports Coalition

meeting, the first since the initial meeting held last summer. Paddlesports coalition members include: American Whitewater Affiliation, American Canoe Association, America Outdoors, National Association of Canoe Livery Outfitters, North American Paddlesports Association, Ohio Division of Watercraft and National Organization of River Sports.

To obtain additional information, call Rich Bowers, AWA Conservation Program Director at (301) 236-0436.

## Parking added at Panther Creek

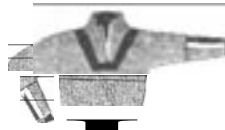
The West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WVRC) has come up with a solution to the parking jam for paddlers during Gauley season. In the past, paddlers have crammed vehicles along the narrow Panther Mountain Road at the end of the infa-

### YOUR TOTAL OUTDOOR CONNECTION



METEOR LIGHT

- Sierra Designs Meteor Light tent \$235
- Therma-Rest pads 3/4 length \$42.95
- Therma-Rest pads full length \$52.95
- Marmot Polar Lite Sweaters (ladies) \$59.95
- Omega Pacific oval carabiners \$4.95
- 6- 60 foot 3/8 proline \$29.95
- 50 foot 1/4 proline \$19.95
- BAGS 50 foot Spectra \$42.95



**DRY SUITS 10% OFF**

### BLACK DIAMOND SPECIALS

#670003



- |                  | reg.  | special |
|------------------|-------|---------|
| ARC fanny pack 5 | 25.00 | \$14.95 |
| ARC fanny pack 1 | 32.50 | \$19.95 |
| ARC fanny pack 2 | 49.50 | \$29.95 |
| ARC fanny pack 3 | 58.50 | \$34.95 |

"WE SHIP KAYAKS"

Dagger - Mad River - Old Town  
We-no-nah - Perception - Infinity

At MOUNTAIN GEAR, we deliver the best in products and service at reasonable prices. Phone and mail orders accepted. Call for our latest ski and outdoor Hot Sheet.

**(800)829-2009**

**MOUNTAIN GEAR**  
2002 N. Division,  
Spokane, Wa. 99207

## BRIEFS

mous Panther Creek takeout trail. The trail is the preferred egress from the Upper Gauley run during Gauley season.

WVRC has negotiated and paid for leasing a field about 150 feet (just uphill) from where the Panther Creek trail intersects with Panther Mountain Road. The leased field will be well-marked, and paddlers should park there to avoid the intractable jams which occur especially when outfitter buses come up the road.

"WVRC arranged for the parking as a small token of our appreciation for the support of paddlers, particularly AWA paddlers," said WVRC's Mac Thornton. WVRC is engaged in an intense battle to gain permanent protection for 13 classic paddling streams in the Monongahela National Forest.

## French Broad Week schedules activities

The annual French Broad River Week's festivities this September will be topped off by Riverstrings, a concert dedicated to river conservation. Proceeds will be divided between the French Broad River

Foundation and the AWA for their ongoing efforts to preserve area rivers.

French Broad River Week will kick off on Saturday, September 12 with a canoe race, and blast through to Sunday, September 20 with Riverstrings. Other events during the week include raft races, a biathlon, river clean ups and information fairs.

On Sunday, September 20, musicians, mountain crafters, children's entertainers and whitewater enthusiasts will gather in North Carolina at the Hot Springs Resort to help raise money and celebrate the French Broad River. Along with this entertainment, folks can enjoy hiking the area's trails, soaking in the hot springs and camping while they learn about river conservation.

AWA proceeds will go towards the purchase of farmland surrounding the Watauga River Gorge. Once purchased, this farmland adjoining the Cherokee National Forest, will then be sold to the US Forest Service as protective land acquisition. The FBRF will use its donation to further its many projects such as the stream monitoring for water quality project, the development of river parks, and the river conservation education program of stu-

dents, dubs and the general public.

If you want to take an active role in helping our environment through the Riverstrings project call Tara Sheridan at (704) 488-2175. For more information about French Broad River Week, call Ken Rudolph at (704) 252-1097.

## Safety funds available for boating clubs

Local boating groups in search of funding for a boating safety project should apply now for a share of \$35,000 in grants to be awarded in early 1993 by the BOAT/U.S. Foundation for Boating Safety.

A grant application packet will be provided to any community-based, non-profit boating organization with a safety project proposal. The deadline for returning completed applications is November 2 and grant awards will be announced in January, 1993. To request a grant packet, write: BOAT/U.S. Foundation, 880 S. Pickett Street, Alexandria, VA 22304.

## *New!* The Rivers of Chile

by Lars Holbek

A brief guide  
to Chile whitewater  
published by the AWA

For your copy send \$10 to:  
Guidebook to Chile  
PO Box 329  
Phoenicia, NY 12464

Proceeds help support  
AWA river  
conservation projects



1969 - 1989

### 20 Years of Canoeing & Kayaking Excitement

---

CANOES

WHITEWATER KAYAKS

OCEAN KAYAKS



Plus a complete accessory line

---

*SEDA is the one with experience!*

Write or call for free catalog

**SEDA PRODUCTS, P.O. Box 997**  
**Chula Vista, CA, 92012**  
**Tel: 619/425-3223**

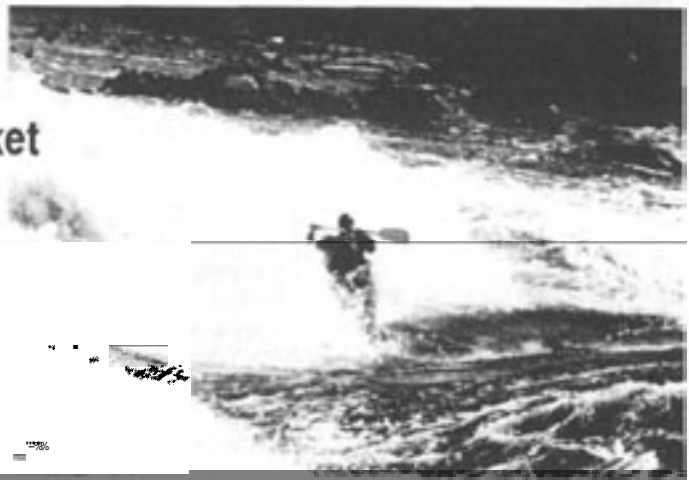




# Don't be sticky...

Let \$20 find a *hole* in your pocket

The AWA is fighting to save our whitewater resources. You can help. Your \$20 membership fee is funneled directly into our effective river conservation actions. Plus--every member receives a bi-monthly subscription to **American Whitewater**...the best semi-professional whitewater magazine in the world!



Join the AWA today and receive *American Whitewater* at home

Yes, I want to join the AWA and receive a subscription to *American Whitewater*. I've enclosed my tax-deductible contribution of \$20 (\$25 Canada, \$30 overseas) to help conserve our whitewater resources and promote river safety.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to AWA, P.O. Box 85, Phoenicia, NY 12464

**THE WHITE**

Without the Bite!  
DRY & WARM

Stohlquist

Free 1991 Color Catalog

Colorado Kayak  
PO Box 3059  
Buena Vista  
Colorado  
81211

(800) 535-3565

## KAYAK CHILE

Expert kayak trips to the Bio-Bio and other big beautiful rivers. Ask for free KAYAK CHILE KIT. Or send \$15 total for 1-hr KAYAK CHILE video. **Sport International**, 314 N. 20th St., Suite 300, Colorado Springs, CO 80904 USA. 719-520-1784. Toll free: 1-800-779-1784. Fax: 719-475-1752.

QUALITY WHITE WATER PRODUCTS

# American

Aluminum rowing frames, camp kitchens, dry boxes and tables. Achilles & SOTAR inflatable boats and FishRite aluminum boats & sleds.

**(503) 773-5582**

1385 Justice Road  
Central Point, OR 97502

Call or Write for our  
Free River Equipment Catalog

# Decisive leadership in rescue situations

*Even a party of knowledgeable paddlers need to have their efforts efficiently directed during a rescue situation*

By WAYNE A. SUNDMACHER, SR.

During a long holiday weekend of paddling class 3-4 water a member of your party suddenly pins on a rock in mid-stream. Each member of your group is very competent individually, so you are confident the recovery of the boat will be accomplished in short order.

Since everyone is of roughly equal ability, your group has been paddling without the need of a leadership structure for some time. This philosophy of equality and shared responsibility for decisions carries over to the recovery effort, which leads to confusion on the part of some participants, and uncoordinated efforts by others.

Each person seems to have a different approach for removing the boat from its precarious position. And without accessing and assessing the problem at hand, a discussion begins about what should be done. Most of the options are aired, but finally the opinions of some of the more dominant members of the group are acted upon. While simpler, less technical solutions have been offered by other participants, they are ignored by some of the more technically oriented paddlers.

One member of the group wades out to the pinned craft and begins attaching lines, while still more discussion takes place on shore. The direction of pull changes two or three times, and because there is so much confusion and disagreement no one is quite sure exactly what the outcome is.

After about twenty minutes of chaos, the lines are finally set. With all the manpower available, an attempt to free the boat is defeated by the strong grip of the current. More confusion sets in, as changes in the angle of pull, and the addition of mechanical advantage is discussed.

A commercial raft trip arrives at the top of the drop, and has been held up due to the hazard your pinned craft presents. The guides offer their assistance, which is accepted after it becomes clear it may take your group half the day to unpin this boat.

The trip leader sends another guide out to the craft to see what needs to be done. It only takes a minute of poking and prodding to assess the situation, and relay this information back to shore. Once the leader is aware of how the boat is pinned, he solicits the opinions of the remaining guides on shore to establish what

options are available.

Three different and technically diverse options have been presented, and while each will produce the desired results, time and safety are key concerns. The leader decides on a low tech, simple solution which may be expanded upon if necessary.

The guide who is out with the pinned boat is instructed to remove one of the two ropes your group has attached, and to lift up on one end. With the same manpower which had failed at previous attempts, the boat is easily freed within minutes.

Now the "I told you so's" begin to emerge. It seems that the same method had been suggested and ignored during the earlier discussion, and confusion. Some members of your group even feel a little foolish, having taken over forty five minutes without success, while the guides were successful in under five minutes.

What was the problem? There were actually several. The first problem was the lack of leadership, or a command structure. Most of the chaos and confusion during a rescue or recovery can easily be avoided by using some form of the incident command system. With one individual recognized as the leader or incident commander, a logical progression of events and teamwork becomes possible. If you examine any swift and successful rescue or recovery, you are sure to find one person assumed a leadership role.

This leader need not be your strongest, or most technically capable participant. In fact, a better use of your manpower would probably dictate otherwise.

A simple incident command structure developed by Rescue 3 International for swiftwater rescue requires four basic jobs or responsibilities;

**LEADER** -Planning, decisions, scene safety, organization, methods, resources. NO "HANDS ON" INVOLVEMENT!

**RIGGER** -Implement the plan, set up equipment, mechanical problems, technical systems. Tends or belays lines.

**GOFER** -Equipment and supplies, communications, interviewing victims, crowd control.

**RESCUER** -Actually performs the rescue or recovery, first aid, swimming, climbing, general manpower.

As you can see, the leader needs only to have good management skills. Once again suggestions can be solicited, but the final decision rests with the leader. This helps to eliminate the confusion of lengthy discussions or arguments, and prevents people with stronger personalities from imposing their ideas on the group. The second problem our paddlers had was the lack of a logical sequence of events. Once each individual's responsibilities have been assigned, the leader must insure the recovery will proceed in a logical manner. This is easily accomplished if one remembers a few simple steps;

**LOCATE** -This may include searching for the victims, accessing the overall site, and determining if additional victims are involved.

**ASSESS** -To properly assess the problem, the physical location must be accessed as closely as possible while maintaining the safety of the rescuers involved. Only after assessing the problem can a clear and logical plan be developed.

**STABILIZE** -This is the actual rescue or recovery process. Stabilization of any victims must always be the first priority, then recovery of equipment may

begin.

**TRANSPORT** -Evacuation of injured personnel or the removal of damaged equipment.

You will note in our earlier example, the raft guides who successfully removed the boat followed these steps. First the boat was accessed and assessed. Once the true nature of the problem was known, then a plan was developed and acted upon. Because the guides had done a thorough job assessing the problem, they were aware of a small difference in the current from one end of the boat to the other, and a small rock under the boat at one end. Once the one end of the boat was lifted slightly, it was easily unbalanced and rotated around the rock.

The third problem our paddlers had is again related to a logical progression in choosing techniques for rescue or recovery. In any rescue or recovery we must always start simple. If we start out with a technical system we may be overlooking something which is much faster and easier to accomplish. In addition, the more technical the system, the more dangerous, time consuming, and prone to failure it becomes.

This is a rather common mistake. Most people deal with problems in the manner they are most comfortable with. The technically oriented members of the group immediately opted for the use of high tech rope systems, while other suggestions by less technical people were ignored. Since swimming and wading around the pinned craft, and attempting some form of strong arm approach is not natural to our paddlers, they chose a technique that was.

This tunnel vision was not a problem with the guides, since their training routinely puts them into the water to attempt fast simple methods first. By opting for a "low tech" routine it is faster and simpler for them to build on the method they started with. With less ropes in the water, and less equipment and force applied to them, the safety level for the rescuers is greater. Additional "low tech" and "hi tech" techniques may be added until sufficient force can be applied to unbalance the boat.

In conclusion, a simple form of scene management and leadership, coupled by a logical and organized sequence, can dramatically increase the speed and safety of any rescue or recovery effort.

**River House Productions**

*Presents*

**REVENGE**

**of the**


**Russell Fork**

Thrill to some of the best boaters in the East getting munched, crunched and generally thumped and pummelled on one of the premiere hair runs in the Appalachians. A radical soundtrack by Bill Perkins highlights this non-stop, action-packed video.

30 Minutes      \$ 2 4 9 5 + \$ 4 00  
P & H

**RIVER HOUSE PRODUCTIONS**  
P.O. Box 415  
Erwin, Tennessee 37650

*Address Inquiries to: Hanley*



**PERFORMANCE By**

**WAVE Sports**

(303) 879-4371 • P.O. Box 775207 Steamboat Springs, CO 80477  
Write or call for a catalog and your nearest dealer.

# Wear your colors

Show yourself as a part of the AWA river gang. All shirts are high-quality 50/50 cotton blend while AWA hats are perfect for concealing those just-off-the-river hairstyles. Our patches are great for recycling ripped jeans while waterproof decals on the bottom of your boat demonstrates your loyalties as you swim to shore.



Order your gear here

item	cost	size	total
T-shirts, AWA logo: short sleeve (S,M,L,XL) long sleeve (M,L,XL)	8.00/12.00		
T-shirts, Bold New Look: short sleeve (M,L,XL) long sleeve (M,L,XL)	8.00/12.00		
AWA River Caps	8.00		
AWA Embroidered patches	1.00		
AWA Waterproof Decals	.50		
Please add 2.50 postage per order for shirts and hats		<i>total order</i>	
mail check to AWA, P.O. Box 85, Phoenicia, NY 12464			

**FREE! WHITEWATER EQUIPMENT CATALOG**

**YOUR BEST SELECTION!**  
 Order our 68-page Catalog and choose from a wide selection of top-quality whitewater gear including self-bailing rafts by Maravia, Riken, Sotar and Avon, catarafts by AIRE, self-bailing Inflatable kayaks by Riken and AIRE, whitewater kayaks and accessories by Perception, paddles by Carlisle, Sawyer and Werner Furrer, oars by Smoker, Sawyer, Carlisle and Advanced Composites, river clothing by Patagontia, Stohlquist and Kokatat, life jackets and river wear by Extrasport, river sandals by Teva and Alp, and much more!

**carcade outfitters**  
 A TRADITION OF QUALITY RIVER EQUIPMENT

145 PIONEER PARKWAY EAST  
 P.O. BOX 209  
 SPRINGFIELD, OR 97477  
 TOLL-FREE ORDERS. 1-800-223-RAFT (7238)

**Northwest River Supplies, Inc.**

*Rafts, Kayaks,  
 and all your  
 other whitewater  
 needs*

**1-800-635-5202**

*Come see us at the Gaudy Festival Sept. 26th!*

*You can't*  
**GO HOME**  
*Again*

*Sometimes  
you feel the  
desire to go  
back to your  
roots -- to  
where it all  
started for  
you..*

Caron instinctively reached for the map when I turned off state route 281 at New Lexington.

"Are you sure you know where this road goes?" she asked as the truck bounced down a lane that wouldn't have merited a blue line in the atlas.

"Like the back of my hand."

"Right," Caron said, unfolding the map anyway. "How long has it been since you've driven this way?"

I had to think for a moment.

"Must be nearly ten years."

Caron looked dubiously at the map as I swerved to avoid a goose that had wandered onto the pavement.

"Are you sure you remember the way?" she asked.

"Would you forget how to get to your home?" I replied indignantly.

The road rose up a long grade and there at the top, just as I remembered it, lay Laurel Highlands State Park. I drove past the entrance, down the hill, and turned sharp right onto an even smaller track.

Caron opened her mouth but didn't say a word as we rattled past the overgrown homesteads and occasional mobile homes that characterize rural southwest Pennsylvania. Finally, the road plunged into a scrubby second-growth forest, past a small settlement, and emptied onto state route 381.

I turned left, negotiated the final sweeping curve, and there was the bridge and the river with mist rising from the water and the white framed buildings of the village beyond.

Ohiopyle.



By **CHRIS KOLL**  
Managing Editor



"It hasn't changed abit," I said to Caron as we swept into town. At first glance, it hadn't. A couple of sun-burned rafters sat on the curb outside the Falls Market eating ice-cream cones. A gaggle of tourists strolled through the park on the right, heading down to take snapshots of the falls. Cars with roof racks lined both sides of the road and a school bus followed by a pick-up towing a trailer of rafts passed us on the left.

"We'll pull in to the boaters parking lot up here on the left," I said to Caron. "That's where boaters used to meet and mooch a shuttle. I remember sitting on the grass by the road, waiting for anyone to head up to the take-out. Maybe things haven't changed."

But they had.

On the lawn where I used to wait to scam a shuttle were two overturned open canoes with the message "the Yough: Pennsylvania's Only Pay River" emblazoned on their keels. And behind the boats paced a picket line of 30-odd boaters bearing signs that read "Just Say No to User

Fees," "You Don't Have a Friend in Pennsylvania" and "Honk To Oppose User Fees."

I turned to Caron.

"What's that old saying about you can't go home again?"

Fifteen years before I had walked back into the woods behind what is now the parking lot and hacked a low limb from a convenient tree. Stripping away the smaller branches, I soon fashioned a stout pole about 10 feet in length.

Hell... who needed a paddle, anyway?

For that matter, who needed a helmet or a lifejacket? Certainly not me!

It was back in 1977 and I had decided I wanted to find what this whitewater thing was all about.

At the time I was teaching and coaching in a little mining town in southwestern Pennsylvania. And one fine spring Saturday, I loaded a borrowed raft on the back of my motorcycle and headed over to the Lower Youghioghan River—just 40

miles away.

The raft didn't make much of a bundle on the back of the bike. It was only eight feet long and weighed no more than 30 pounds. I'd seen similar models displayed at K-Mart for fifty dollars.

But I felt remarkably well equipped. After all—didn't I have a raft when all a person really needed was just an inner tube?

Despite the balmy June weather, the state park at Ohiopyle was nearly deserted. The only sign of whitewater activity was an uninflated commercial raft abandoned by the side of the road and a scattering of vehicles parked across from the river crowned with roof racks constructed of 2x4s mounted on Quick n' Easy brackets.

I inflated the single chamber of the raft with an air hose at a corner gas station and dragged the craft down the street to where a rough trail led down to the river. The put-in was marked with a simple park sign.

Once down by the river, I hefted my improvised paddle, then pushed off into the cool, green water. As my raft had no thwarts, I simply lay on the floor of the raft with my head resting on the rear tube and my feet dangling over the front. I gripped the pole in the middle of its length, alternately bracing and stroking like it was a kayak paddle.

Since I was alone and didn't have a clue where to find the Stewerton take-out, I only negotiated the two-mile section of the Yough known as the Loop where the river wraps around a narrow peninsula. And as the Loop shuttle was comprised of a short walk across the neck of the peninsula, I carried the raft and my stick back to the put-in and did it again.

In retrospect, I wish the episode had resulted in an epic swim or a Homeric trashing...something that would stand as a lesson of the perils setting forth on whitewater without appropriate skills or equipment—or at least provided a better campfire story. But no, the day was wonderful. By keeping my center of gravity low, my boat slid effortlessly through the Loop's class 3 drops.

In fact, that day I might have inadvertently invented the Duckie.

Actually, the only difficulty I encountered came from a group of kayakers who showered me with verbal abuse:

"You Idiot! Get off the river without a life jacket..."

"Do you know what you're doing..."

"You're going to get hurt and we're not going to help..."

I remember thinking: "What a bunch of stuffy, self-righteous know-it-alls. Who do they think they are—God's gift to whitewater?"

Well, come to think of it, whitewater boaters might not have changed much since that day.

Too bad you can't say the same about the Lower Yough at Ohiopyle.



*At the check-in: No fees are required after three in the afternoon, but a watchful ranger makes certain boaters register properly.*

But when I think of the Lower Yough, my memories are not of that initial whitewater experience. Instead, I think of the summer of '82.

Every boater has a summer of '82. It's that season when you first discovered the joys of whitewater. When every weekend meant a new skill learned. When every rapid was an adventure and every roll an accomplishment. When you first felt comfortable in a whitewater boat.

Usually that special summer is associated with a particular river—one where learning was relatively painless. It might have been the Ocoee, Nantahala, Lehigh or Ottawa—but in any case, the water was warm and the rocks smooth. And if the rapids didn't seem challenging to an expert, they were damn significant to you. A clean run was cause for celebration.

I've paddled most of the rivers in the East since my summer of '82. And I've managed to survive descents of rivers that are considered challenging runs. But even still, many of my fondest paddling memories originate from that first season on the class 3 rapids of the Lower Yough.

In 1982, I was teaching in a small town in northcentral Pennsylvania. Every

Saturday I woke before dawn, loaded my boat by the glare of a streetlight, and headed down route 219 for the three-and-a-half hour drive to Ohiopyle.

I drove a battered Chevette in those days and it sputtered and coughed over the final mountains between Connellsville and Ohiopyle. As I crept along at 20 miles per hour I remember praying, "If it only makes this final grade...it's downhill the rest of the way." I never thought about getting home—just to the put-in. And as the car rounded the final curve and I recognized the bridge over the river and the low white mist rising from the water into the cool morning air, well, nothing else seemed to matter.

I made that trip some 50 times during the summer of '82. And as the summer progressed, the river became a familiar friend. Indeed, Ohiopyle seemed like a second home.

I learned the early lessons of running a river on the Lower Yough: eddy-hopping between the rocks and ledges of Entrance, carving the waves in the run-out below Cucumber and sidesurfing the forgiving hydraulic at Swimmers. As I gained confidence, there were always more de-

manding moves to try: ferrying back and forth in front of Dimple Rock, catching the eddy at the top of Cucumber, and riding the tongue across the top of Double Hydraulic.

The Lower Yough of 1982 was far different than the river I had first experienced in 1977. The park had built a check-in station guarding the path down to the river. Private rafters needed a launch permit and underwent an equipment inspection before they were granted passage. Had I shown up with my stick and undersized, one-chambered raft, I'd have been turned aside with a sneer.

River traffic was also greatly increased. Every 30 minutes a wave of commercial raft launched in swarms to be herded downstream by a pair of safety kayakers. And by 10 in the morning, the parking lot across from the river was filled with private boaters.

The shuttle route was also changed. The old Stewerton take-out had been abandoned when the park built a narrow access road to the river at Bruner Run. But to avoid congestion, the park licensed a shuttle service to transport paddlers and their boats to a large parking lot where the road climbed out of the river corridor. Before putting on, a boater paid a buck-and-a-quarter for a plastic token to board the bus at the end of the day.

Older boaters grouched about the increasing crowds and additional regulations—and there were times when I bitched about the line of paddlers waiting to surf at swimmers, getting freight-trained by a raft at Bottle of Wine, or being harassed by over-zealous rangers at the park campground.

But all of my complaints were cleansed away by another day on the river. By the time I'd near the end of the run the crowds would thin and I'd be practically alone as the day wore down. Colors that had been washed by the bright noon sun came alive in the late afternoon: the light green of the water threading through gray midstream boulders, flecks of white where

the water tumbled over a class 2 ledge, the darker green of the thick hardwood forest on shore.

I thought I'd never want to be anywhere else.

But then in the fall I went to the Gauley. And the Upper Yough. And when spring rolled around, I was on the Cheat, the Tygart, the Big Sandy and Blackwater. Sure, I felt some wistful yearnings to see the Lower Yough—my special river—but there was always something else that had water.

So I never went back. Until 10 years later.

"Jeez, I don't know anyone," I whispered to Caron.

We sat on the grass by the parking lot as the boaters paraded back and forth in front of the put-in. The protesters shouldered signs denouncing the Pennsylvania DEC and sported shirts with "Yough User Fees" surrounded by the circle and bar signifying "No!" Periodically, they would break into a provocative chant punctuated by a flurry of sign waving before losing energy and lapsing back into quiet pacing.

I felt unnerved. In my previous days on the Lower Yough, it always seemed like I knew everybody. And since that time, whether it be at Friendsville, Old Forge, Summersville or Watertown—there didn't seem to be a put-in where I didn't know at least one boater. It was part of the comforting sense of community that accompanies whitewater paddling. It felt strange to be an outsider—especially here at Ohiopyle.

The plan called for the demonstration to continue until 3 p.m.—the hour the park stops requiring reservations and user fees. At that time, the protesters intended to stage a "boat-in"—a mass put-in that circumvented the disputed fees. Caron and I elected to join the group, but I wondered if the Yough would provide the old magic while paddling with strangers.

Then I saw Jesse Gonzales.

Jesse Gonzales used to manufacture custom wood paddles called "Gonzo" sticks. And although he's since yielded to the economic necessities of raising a family and gone on to pursue a more profitable vocation, he retains the serenity of a man who works with wood.

Since I met Jesse during my first season of paddling, I'd boated with him on the Gauley, Upper Yough, Blackwater and Tygart Rivers, and he'd always proven to be a foundation of reason, enthusiasm and good humor. In fact, I can only remember one time I'd seen Jesse angry...

There were ten of us packed in Jesse's van at the Shavers Fork take-out. We had paddled over 20 miles on a river at flood during a cold, wet day. There had been several dangerous swims and tedious portages. Now it was 9 p.m. and all we wanted was a warm restaurant.

Jesse handed me a map and an assignment: find the quickest way to Elkins, WV.

"Well," I volunteered. "There looks like there's a road straight over the mountain that cuts off 10 miles."

We spent the next hour slipping up and down a rutted logging track with mud up to our axles. Going back was not an option. There was no room to turn around and the van surely could not climb the rain-slicked hills we had descended. All we could do was forge ahead and pray the van wouldn't fish-tail into the trees or sink into the quagmire of the road.

Finally, after climbing a particularly slippery hill, Jess slammed on the emergency brake and snapped on the dome light.

"Let me see that map," he demanded.

Jess studied the map for less than a minute before throwing it on the floor in disgust.

"Jesus Christ," he roared. "There isn't a road here. We've been following the



goddamned county boundary line!"

Fortunately for me, the boundary line I had mistaken for a road emptied onto the highway. Half an hour later, Jesse was already chuckling as we sat in the **Elkins' Big Boy**.

"The boundary line," he said as his chuckles developed into a full-blown laugh. "You had us driving the boundary line!"

Yep. Jesse is typically an **even-**tempered sort. So when I saw him angry for the second time at Ohiopyle, I knew something was definitely wrong.

"Take a look around," Jessesaid. "Do you **see** anything new here that's been improved for boaters? **All we** really need is a place to park and a little path down to the river. **This parking lot's been** here for years. So what are we getting for our money? Nothing!

"They've built a trail as big as a highway down to the river and that fancy check-in station. Does that help boaters? No! It's all for the damned rafters. The park doesn't give a damn about private boaters. They'd just as soon there weren't any boaters here.

As Jesse raved on, his face grew red and he stabbed the air with a thick finger.

"Does the park charge mountain bikers? No! **Hikers? No!** Tourists who want to look at the falls? No! But boaters are easy to hit on. We've got to walk by that damned check-in station where they can squeeze us for money. Money! That's all the park cares about."

I knew enough about the Ohiopyle situation to realize the problems confronting private boaters and park officials who were enforcing new regulations went deeper than that. But Jesse's impassioned outpouring summarized the heart of the matter: boaters feel they are being treated inequitably.

Sure, hardboaters are a notoriously stingy species. As a group, they waffled over being assessed an additional



*Jesse Gonzales*

\$2.50 reservation fee to schedule a put-in time. But the issue here is more than just the money: it's the way the fee was developed and the arbitrary fashion it is being administered.

To understand the current state of affairs in Ohiopyle, you have to go back to the late 70s—about the same time I made my first descent of the river.

At that time, researchers from Penn State University were commissioned to prepare a study for potential future river use. Their mission was to determine the carrying capacity of the river and make recommendations show the numbers could be **divvied** up so as to support a viable commercial rafting industry—yet be equitable to private paddlers.

Penn State's answer was to dedicate 50% of the capacity to commercially guided rafting trips, 40% to private rafts, and 10% to private boaters.

Of course, the majority of the "private" rafters on the Lower Yough rented all of their equipment from the commercial outfitters located in Ohiopyle. So in reality, commercial interests **dominated** 90% of the user days. But hardboaters didn't bitch much. Especially since the "private" rafters were required to reserve a launch time while boaters could put on

without advance notice.

But that policy changed in 1990 when Doug Hoehn, the new park superintendent, extended the reservation system to hardboaters. And the public outcry from boaters had barely subsided by 1992 when Hoehn arbitrarily decided to require a fee as part of the reservation process.

Hoehn's justification for the charge was a new **Pennsylvania State Park** fee schedule implemented without benefit of public comment in 1992. The schedule included fees for whitewater access applicable at the Pennsylvania parks that accommodated paddling on the Youghioghan and Lehigh Rivers and Slippery Rock Creek.

But enforcement of the fees was not mandated. In fact, only Ohiopyle chose to charge boaters.

Boaters baked at Hoehn's capricious action. Led by the Three Rivers Paddling Club and the Keystone Canoe Club, a coalition of private boaters **organized** a boycott of Lower Yough whitewater—choosing to "paddle after three when the river is free"—and scheduled a series of protests.

The protesting paddlers objected to the user fee on several different levels:

First of all, the system used to

approve the fee schedule was undemocratic. Formerly, changes in park regulations were required to pass through a multi-tiered approval process that allowed for public comment. However, last year the Pennsylvania DEC ramrodded a policy change that enabled park regulations to be altered without public input. So—not only did boaters resent the new fees, but they objected to the way they were initiated.

Apparently, Pennsylvania legislators have also taken a dim view of the DEC's new policy and have introduced House Bill 2364 which would once again require public comment before changing park rules. If the bill passes, and boaters are urged to voice their support of the legislation, the schedule fee pushed through under the old system would be void.

That being the case, you'd think the paddling clubs would be more effective picketing the state capitol in Harrisburg. Or simply burying their congressmen with letters. But the issue has developed into something more than a quarrel with the bureaucrats...it's become a basic disagreement about how Hoehn handles private boaters.

For instance, many boaters perceive the fees as Hoehn's attempt to resolve inefficiencies in the reservation system created by rafters. Previously, the 40% of the launch times dedicated to private rafters were allocated to individuals and commercial equipment rental companies at no charge on a first-come-first-served basis. However, many of the launch slots went unused when private individuals cancelled trips or the commercials failed to rent equipment for a given put-in time.

Consequently, the river wasn't used to its fullest potential. Or—using a more jaundiced viewpoint—the commercials were losing opportunities to rent equipment. By demanding a nominal fee, the park could cut down on the speculative reservation of launch times. Not to speak of making back a few bucks for the park.

Of course, for boaters who didn't want to be apart of the reservation process in the first place, being assessed a fee to help perpetuate the system was intolerable.

And for Pennsylvania boaters—who like citizens of most Northeastern states have seen their taxes rise significantly in the last few years—the idea of paying another fee especially rankled.

"Hell, I'm getting taxed to death," Jesse said. "And now they're making me pay again to use public land. What are boaters going to get back for paying the fees? Nothing! Hell, they're going to take the money and make a parking lot for mountain bikers. And they don't charge them a goddamned thing!"

It was 2:55. Time to finally get on the river. Jesse was still beside me as we shouldered our boats and crossed the road to the check-in station.

"I'll tell you another thing" Jesse said. "The park rangers go out of their way to hassle boaters. I'm telling you, they'd as soon we weren't here."

Now, I'd heard that park officials had been, well, testy in their dealings with boaters. But those rumors had mostly come from paddlers...and you had to consider the source. Boaters never have responded well to authority figures.

I figured the rangers had a tough job to do. And you don't usually win popularity contests enforcing the rules.

We stood in a long line, waiting to register our names and addresses in the log at the portals to the put-in path. To the side of the sign-in station, a uniformed ranger stood in the middle of the trail, arms folded across his chest, blocking the route to the river.

"This is new," I said to Jesse. "Do you always need to sign in, even after three?"

"You do when there's a demonstration," Jesse said.

"It's three o'clock," someone

chirped from the back of the line.

The ranger snapped his head in our direction. "Not by my watch," he said. "It's only 2:59."

Three minutes later, the ranger started permitting passage down the trail. Before a boater passed the gate, he'd tell the ranger his name so the park could double-check that he'd actually signed in.

"That's because people have signed in using names like Saddam Hussein and Donald Duck," Jesse whispered to me.

The line moved forward slowly. Finally, the ranger verified that Caron, Jesse and I had indeed checked in. We were cleared for put-in.

The boaters behind us weren't so lucky.

"We can only allow 15 boaters to put-in every half hour," the ranger said. "You'll have to wait."

What?

"Is that a new rule, too?" I asked Jesse.

"Hell, no," Jesse said. "They just made that up now to hassle us."

I guess you don't win any popularity contests making up rules, either.

I was still simmering as I slid my boat into the green water.

"I don't need this bullshit," I thought to myself. "I don't care what kind of memories I have—it's not the same place it used to be."

But in the end, it was Jesse—albeit a calmer Jesse—who brought me to my senses.

"You know, the sad thing is I only live 45 minutes away," Jesse said. "I could breeze over here all the time. And my little boy, well, he's five now and in a couple of years he'll fit into a boat. I'd like to come over here with him. It's such a pretty place..."

It was if Jesse's words opened a curtain before me. I looked around and suddenly noticed: once on the river, nothing had changed. In the late afternoon with only a few other boaters around—the

scene was the same as 1982...hell, it was the same as 1978.

We caught a million eddies in Entrance then attained our way to the top to do it again. We surfed at Cucumber and worked the river through Eddy Turn and Dartmouth Rapids. We boofed over the hole at Railroad and ferried our way back to the left. We sidesurfed at Swimmers...

Well...we didn't play at Swimmers long. Jesse had only enjoyed a few blasts in his squirt boat and I had executed a couple doughnuts when a father with two young boys took their place in line for the hydraulic.

To avoid humiliation, Jesse and I retreated to shore and joined the proud father watching his sons tear up the hole. The boys couldn't have been over twelve, but they doughnuted and handsurfed and handrolled with shouts of glee. "They're experiencing their own summer of '82," I thought to myself.

The light was fading when we finally pushed on. We were practically alone as we paddled the final miles. All my complaints had been cleansed by another day on the river.

I thought I'd never want to be anywhere else.

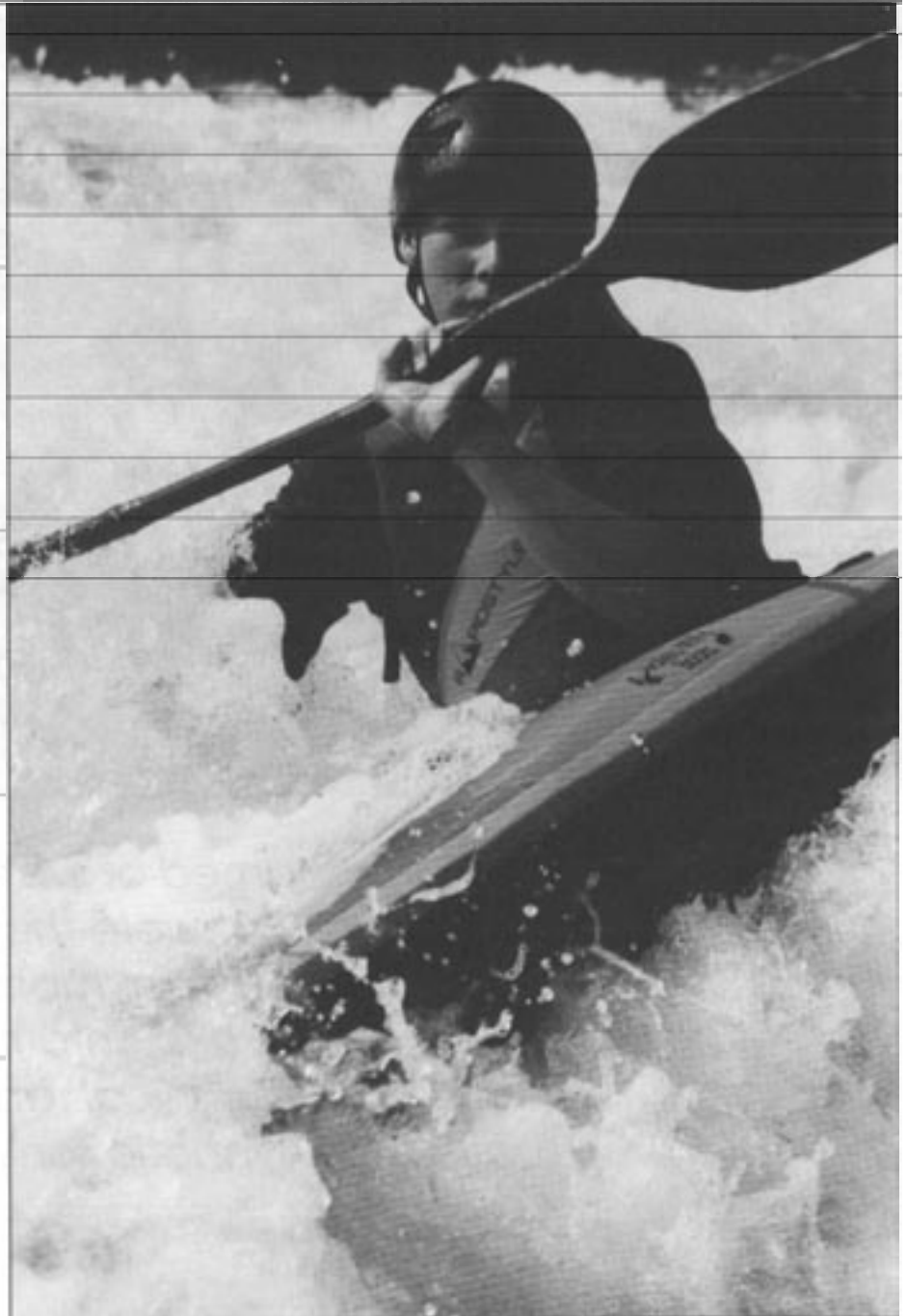
So, I learned my lesson: you can go home again. But I'd like to fire the damn housekeepers.

### EPILOGUE

*The protests at Ohiopyle turned ugly on the final weekend of June.*

*In the early morning, vandals sliced the tube stems on the tires of the buses that carry private rafters and boaters out of the river corridor—stranding river users who had ignored the boycott until 4:30 in the afternoon. No private boater has been implicated at this time, but there's been finger-pointing in their direction.*

*On the same day, a kayaker ~~up~~ proached a rental raft that had broached on a mid-river rock stranding the occupants. When the rafters requested assistance, the boater replied "Sure"—then pulled out his knife the*



**Youthful boater carves up the hydraulic at Swimmers on the Lower Yough**

*sliced the tubes.*

*Spokespersons from the protesting organizations plead that acts of monkeywrenching do not help their cause.*

*However—the opposing side also did not distinguish itself during the weekend.*

*Park rangers placed severe limitations on the size of the demonstration even though the organizers had secured necessary permits. Once the demonstration had started,*

*rangers threatened to arrest protesters on several occasions. The offense? Protesters had stepped a foot out of their designated protest zone.*

*And in the most bizarre incident, rangers reportedly raided the Youth Hostel at Ohiopyle at two in the morning searching for illegal consumption of alcohol. Boaters claim the presence of two prominent protesters triggered the harassment.*



*Nolan dreamed of water nymphs. But were they actually water nymphs trying to lure him onto the rocks of a technical rapid with their hypnotic song?*



By **DAVID WALLACE**

# California's Middle Fork of the Feather

"You better give me the keys to the rental car," I said to Nolan.

It wasn't exactly a vote of confidence for Nolan Whitesell as he prepared to run the class VI- Granite Dome section of California's Middle Fork of the Feather River. But after scouting the **one-third** mile stretch of continuous rapids, I figured there was a distinct possibility that a boat could be lost here.

It wasn't that I was unfeeling about Nolan's well being. If he got into trouble, I felt we could always get him out. But for this rapid, I felt more secure caring the keys with me.

After all, I was running the **far-right** route. The line whose primary difficulty lay in avoiding the thick clumps of poison oak that guarded the shore.

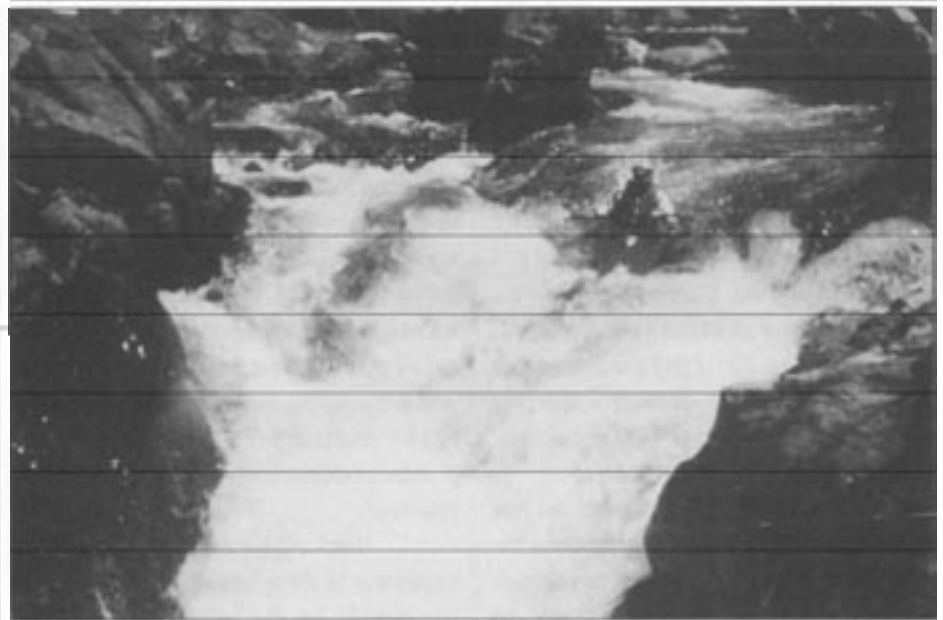
We were in the heart of Devil's Canyon on the last day of a **3** day Middle Fork of the Feather river trip in northern California. Devil's Canyon is an awesome **1000** foot granite-walled gorge with huge granite boulders forming the rapids.

Our last **3** days has been a fantastic collage of challenging whitewater, incredible Sierra scenery and sun, and good camaraderie among **4** friends—the making of a "classic" expert wilderness river trip.

We had started the final day running a number of spectacular rapids, but they paled in comparison to the towering Granite Dome where the river plunged out of sight. Portage time for all but the most bold of **paddlers—or** for those who really **hate** boat hiking. And Nolan **qualified** on both counts.

A wicked class V entrance hole guarded the top portion of Granite Dome, which Nolan handled without incident. From the safety of shore, we exhaled a sigh of relief. Some California friends told us that the week before, an expert Idaho kayaker had been severely trashed running this section. Not good, for you are deep in the canyon, and the portage trail is 50 vertical feet up the cliff.

Suddenly, we could hardly be-



*Curt Lupo enters "Hole-In-the-Box."*

lieve the scene that quickly unfolded. Nolan was now swimming the very ugly crux portion of rocks and raging current pouring into a huge hole. Immediately below was about 40 feet of swiftly moving water leading to the 16 foot vertical water fall grand finale. The canoe went right, was sucked into a vertical jam crack, and disappeared.

Glad I had those car keys.

Nolan swam like a bad dog for the river left eddy above the falls and made a desperate finger tip lunge for the smoothly polished granite wall. While clicking away photos, I thought to myself this is going to be interesting..

To quote from extreme **funhogs** Holbeck and Stanley in **A Guide to the Best Whitewater in the State of California**, "This is it! The Middle Fork of the Feather River is the best self-supported wilderness trip in California". Throughout the 1980's I **kayaked** all over California. But although the Middle Fork had ranked high on my "to do" list, I ended up moving to Atlanta before getting on the river.

Since moving to Atlanta, I regu-

larly paddled with open canoe extraordinaire Nolan Whitesell who also had been wanting to do the Feather. I decided to make it happen this year.

Besides, neither of us were getting any younger.

California in 1992 was in its 6th year in a row of drought conditions. April snowpack for the Feather River drainage was a paltry 46% of normal making the window of do-ability very short. After planning with people and making plane arrangements, it was incredibly disheartening to hear that the river was quickly dropping and might run out before we could get there!

I called the flowphone number 3 times a week to check the Merimack **guage** reading. It was going to be close. Finally May 8 came and the water was low, but still above the recommended minimum. Nolan and I are on.

Saturday at 2:30 AM found us at **Milsap Bar** campground—take-out for the 3 day **Franklin/Devil's** Canyon run of the Middle Feather. We were "greeted" at the ungodly hour of 6:00 AM by one of my

long time California boating, climbing, and skiing friends Michael Latendresse. Michael is a 5.12 climber and expert Sierra wilderness kayaker. In 1991 he made the 3rd descent of the San Joaquin Canyon from Devil's Postpile—an awesome 5 day climbing, **kayaking**, and boat hiking epic through the High Sierra.

Curt Lupo from the **Fresno/Oakhurst** area rounded out our group of 3 kayaks and 1 canoe. Curt is a veterinarian, and came prepared with an extensive wilderness medical kit. I felt confident that Curt would be able to stitch up and repair most injured **animals** we may encounter, but what about mangled boaters?

As headed for the put-in, we downstream glimpses awesome class V+ whitewater of the Bald Rock Canyon section of the Feather. We had planned on

dam builders had similar plans for the **Middle Fork**, but thanks to **early conservation** efforts the **undammed** Middle Fork was protected as one of our first National Wild and Scenic rivers.

The upper Middle Feather run begins **like** a mellow creek at Nelson Point. The flow looked like 400 to 500 CFS. We knew that we would pick up several side creeks along the way, but day one was going to be rocky. This 32 mile section to **Milsap Bar** has a reasonable overall gradient of about 70 feet per mile (FPM), pool and drop rapids, with 11 miles of 80 to 110 FPM. Difficulty of V-(Stanley) to V+ (**Cassady**) depending on which guidebook you read.

**Packing** for a self-support expert kayak trip is always challenging, and this trip would be the most difficult I had

should've stuffed a six pack or two in there.

While **packing**, Nolan told us about a dream he had: he was surrounded by six **wood/river** nymphs of the female type (nymphettes?).

"And oh, you were there too, David," Nolan said. "But don't worry. I told you, 'No way.' After all, you're happily married."

"But, hey," I replied, "this is a dream, right?"

Nolan later confided that he could part with one—maybe. But for the rest of the trip, whenever we couldn't find Nolan, we knew he was in search of those elusive nymphettes.

And where better than the **Middle Fork of the Feather** to find a dream?

We **finally** shoved off around noon in our loaded boats. At about 3900 ft. elevation, very nice large pines and evergreens abound. Just after mile 8 we entered our first real canyon, and things immediately started to get **interesting**—the next 3 miles averaged almost 105 FPM. The canyon is "V" shaped with red rock and huge talus slopes forming one wall. The river dropped out of sight way **below**—wilderness boating at it's finest.

We fell into our pattern of eddy hopping our way down. When the harder rapids fell away too steeply to **see** from a kayak, Nolan proved very handy. He just stood up to acquire a better perspective before the rapid! He'd then provide a brief description then charge down leaving us to follow. We ran most of the canyon this way, and found **fantastic class IV and "fun" V** rapids.

Michael brought along a video **camera**—**conning** Nolan to carry it—and we shot video whenever we got out to scout the big drops.

Around mile 9, Nolan led us through a class IV boulder garden. An initial 4 foot drop through a small hole, and rock slalom to the bottom. No problem.



*Hangin' out in the Devil's Canyon Tanning Salon*

Bald Rock as an alternate destination if the water was too low for the upper section. Thankfully, it appears that our original Feather trip is a go—the volume at **Milsap Bar** is about 700 CFS. Bald Rock can wait to another day.

On the **drive** we also pass through the North Fork of the Feather River Canyon. This section is reduced to a mere trickle because of the multiple dams. The

attempted with a loaded boat. Lean and mean would be our motto! Luckily for us, the weather was classic California—warm and sunny—so no tents, **minimalist** 2 lb. sleeping bag, food for 3 days, clothes, safety gear, plus 1 pint of scotch and 1 liter of wine—definite necessities.

Nolan's canoe might as well be a raft in comparison to our kayaks—just fill up the black bags and lash them on. We



*Nolan Whitesell crashes through a chute flanked by granite boulders in the heart of Devil's Canyon*

Curt went next. At the 4 foot drop, Michael and I watched as Curt was sucked backwards before coming out of his **T-Slalom** which proceeded to execute a perfect tail stand. Fortunately, Michael was in position to assist from shore.

Attributing Curt's dilemma to simply not paddling hard enough off the drop, I charge off the ledge paddling hard. I cleared the hole fine, but my nose start to dive and my boat abruptly stopped. "What the **F\_\_\_\_\_!**"

I'm stuck. Nose underwater and tail up in the air. After a few seconds, I notice something just under water and now on top of my sprayskirt—a log! I'm under a rather large log which is sideways in the drop. I decide that before I sink any more, or worse, that the boat gets some idea about folding, I'd rather go for a little swim. Can't reach the sprayskirt grabloop, and **Damn**, that Bushsport skirt REALLY stays on. I finally get clear and wash UNDER the log, and pop up in the rapid.

Im OK, but I feel very stupid at not **assessing** Curt's situation better. Curt and I greet each other at the bottom of the rapid as "Brothers of the Log".

We continued alternating between paddling through calm beautiful stretches and challenging steep drops. After all our excitement, the day is about gone and the thought of running unknown class V late in the day always makes me rather "anxious", so we agreed to stop at the next nice camp. We found a camp with a great downstream view of the canyon **wall** and called it a day. We guess we are **around mile 10 to 11**. **This camp** is a perfect spot for wood nymphettes, but we are all too tired to look.

When you do kayak **self-supports**, keeping your gear dry is the name of the game. As Curt and I both took swims, there was plenty of opportunity to get things wet. My gear was dry, but Curt is not so lucky. His down sleeping bag is a little bit wet, which is sort of like being a

little bit pregnant.

I'm carrying most of the dinners, and pasta with killer red **clam/veggie** sauce, soup, french bread, red wine, and cookies was the call for the night. Lighten that boat, **YEAA!** Thundering Franklin Canyon awaits us tomorrow. For a night-cap we have **Advil** with a scotch chaser. Advil—the drug of choice for the "older" athlete—and better paddling through chemistry as one of my **kayaking** doctor friends used to say!

Soft spoken Curt, we find out, is an "expert" on women. He proceeds to tell us his theory of "Show No Desire". Nolan is particularly interested in this theory, and we have a lively discussion on this important topic.

Curt claims that the key to dating **Nirvanna** is to show no desire for the first three dates. Be attentive, of course, but appear disinterested in the physical aspect of a relationship.

**THEN** he says, the women get to



**Left: Curt threads through a narrow slot in Franklin Canyon.**

**Right: In this series, Nolan clears the top of Granite Dome Falls (top) only to run into trouble in the crux above the falls (middle). In the bottom photo Nolan's canoe is about to enter the "jam crack" on the right side:**

wondering "hey, ~~this~~ guy's not interested!" According to Curt, the women proceed to take charge!

Obviously, this doesn't apply to boating women—they are more likely to take charge from the get-go! But we pondered Curt's theory as a rising half moon illuminated the night sky.

I woke up around 6:15 AM to a cool morning. I took my minimalist **system** almost to the limit, even sleeping in pile clothing and a hat. I looked over at Nolan, and he had his own idea of "minimalism"—2 pillows borrowed from the airplane, full length expedition Thera-Rest, full sleeping bag, and even the latest issue of American Whitewater!

Michael is at the opposite extreme—his homemade sleeping bag is a glorified space blanket weighing all of 1 pound. He looks cozy though, and since he's paddling a Corsica S he has to be lean and mean.

As soon as the sun cleared the canyon rim it's instantly warm. We've brought along copies of the brief river descriptions, so we get a preview of Franklin Canyon: Stanley says to expect 2 portages and plenty of action with an average gradient of 85 FPM for 7 miles with some 110 thrown in; Cassidy says turbulent **Class V+** rapids with short pools. I like both guidebooks, but most **kayakers** feel that Cassidy overrates rapids by about

half a class. Regardless, we know we're in for some serious big time fun! I took more care in **packing** my boat, making sure that the heaviest items are right behind my seat.

The Pacific Crest Trail bridges signals the start of Franklin Canyon. In less than a half mile we came to a steep drop which **terminated** in a 12 foot waterfall. The rapids are cut through bedrock and bordered by craggy rock walls. I had been advised to portage this **runnable looking** falls because of a rock shelf hidden just below the surface in the landing zone. Perfect for kayak pitoning. Nolan and his canoe—the ultimate fat boat—excel at this kind of drop and cleared the rock and hole easily. Our portage is short but vertical, and the easiest option for us was to lower our kayaks down to Nolan and then jump into the river.

We're barely back in our boats when we had to get out at a rapid called Hole-In-The-Box. The main current plunged in a series of steps, and then funneled into a narrow slanting cut in the rock—an 8 ft. wide and very turbulent "flume ride". Hammer time. Cassidy calls this V+, but today it's fun V. The bottom hole completely buried everyone, including Nolan, and there's plenty of **hootin** and **hollerin** for the video--**AHOOO!**

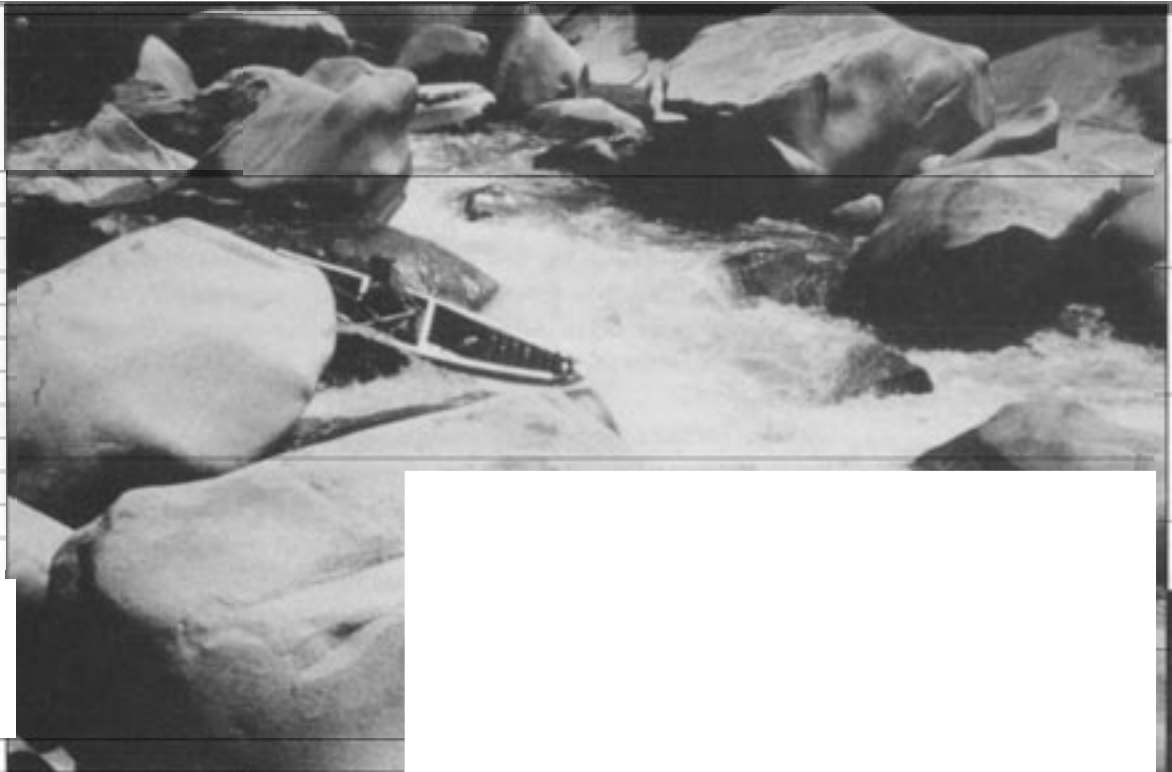
We lunched at a beautiful waterfall tumbling into the river. It's hot and sunny, so

we work on our "au natural" tans at the granite tanning salon. Above us on the cliff are remains from dreams gone bust chasing **gold—old** rusty pumps, engines, pipe, and cable. We are DEEP in the middle of nowhere—no roads, no bridge, no trail. We are amazed at the efforts put forth in pursuit of those little yellow flakes. Heading back to the boats we hear the warning of a "buzz worm"<sup>m</sup>—a small, but loud rattlesnake. That guy could really ruin your day!

The rest of the afternoon was very fun, but difficult. There are many rapids, and the miles do not pass easily. Just when we think things might ease up, the bottom falls out and another big drop looms ahead. Often the harder rapids have long class IV lead-ins which terminate in a class "V ish" big drop—requiring careful eddy catching right up to the edge. At one rapid, I watch Michael through my camera viewfinder go over a 5 foot drop, and then completely disappear. I took the camera down to see what happened, and his kayak exploded completely out of the water in a booming tailstand. He indicated rock pitoning, and strongly recommended portaging. Michael then told us he submarined straight to the bottom of the highly aerated water and was pinned momentarily. That makes "excitable moments" for all of us now except Nolan. We joke about it, but didn't realize that Nolan's time will come.

Late in the day finds us again





scouting a class V rapid. The sun has long passed this part of the canyon and the drop looks ominous in the shadows. There was **some sort of** man-made activity here. Huge timbers cross the river like an attempt was made at some sort of dam. Lots of ugly pinning spots among the logs, as the river cascaded through the debris. The final 10 ft. vertical drop required a ski jump over large logs which we ran successfully on river left. Kayakers have been swept under logs on the river right side—beware!

Around 5:45 we **finally** came to the old PCT bridge, and an excellent beach/meadow campsite. Very large, and no people. The sun is still out on the beach so we strip to **formal** wood nymph attire and soak up the last of the rays. Another fine, but long day—made a whopping 12 miles! We cooked up another **killer** dinner, and enjoy **the warm** evening on **the beach** sharing hits of that nasty scotch—Nolan's fave.

I love the wild, "out-there" feeling I get from doing these longer **self-support** kayak trips. The freedom to camp at some great isolated site such as this, and at least for a few days be light-years away from the "real world". Carrying gear is your ticket to explore a fantastic wilderness river such as the Middle Feather, and the paddling masses are NOT going to be there with you. These same feelings just can't be duplicated in day trips. If we're going to *see* any evening nymphettes this is our last chance.

Day 3—Devil's Canyon day—up early this morning to get going. We only have 10 miles to do today, so we have this wild idea that we **MIGHT** get off the river early—Not! After packing this morning my boat feels great in comparison to day one. We've eaten most of our food, so we better get out today. I don't tell Nolan, Michael, and Curt how light my boat feels for fear they'll give me more stuff.

When it comes to portaging, Curt and especially Michael turn into mountain goats! They both have portage pads sewn on the shoulders of their lifejackets and view carrying your boat as a part of

**Sierra kayaking**. I think that Michael actually **likes** it—Zen and the art of boat hiking. I am a portage wimp in comparison to those two. Michael is sporting his usual fine river attire: white poly-pro top and bottoms which he pretty much wears the whole time. I believe he **even did** an 18 day Grand Canyon trip and wore the same set for the entire time!

We know we had some boat hiking to do today, and some difficult rapids in granite-walled Devil's Canyon. We had six miles until the start of Devil's Canyon, and the five miles or so below our camp feature fun class IV to easy V rapids—**some of the best** on the trip. We also had more water now, and the ample flow provided plenty of action.

We crashed down one series of class IV drops on the fly among big boulders, only to round a corner and find ourselves at the **Lip** of a big vertical drop with tiny eddies. Nolan's boat was partially filled with water and missed the eddy, but managed to "**park**" on a large rock literally on the brink of the big drop. With water washing over the rock, we watch as he gingerly steps out, empties his boat, and then launches off the rock into the crashing holes below!

We get faked out a few times **thinking we're finally** out of Franklin Canyon, only to plunge back into vertical rock walls. We're soon at another big drop with Nolan up on a **rock** to give the report—"no problem—down the middle with speed". I've boated a lot with Nolan in hard whitewater, and know that he can easily bridge holes that I may end up **back-endering** in. If he says, "with speed", I pay attention. Curt hadn't figured this out just yet, and lead down the middle. We soon see his boat go into a vertical tail stand—I hate that!

Michael and I struggled out of our boats while Nolan gave commentary: "Well, he's OK, but side surfing—actually looks pretty stable—still surfing—now swimming". We scrambled up to **see** Curt OK down below, and his boat continuing

to surf without him. After 10-15 minutes, Nolan suggested ramming **Curt's boat** with his canoe as a way to extract it from the hole. Finally, just as Nolan is making a **run** at it, **the boat** came out of the hole. Michael and I both **ski** jumped the hole with gusto!

Around noon we come to Devil's Canyon—mile 28—**only** 4.5 miles to go. Devil's Canyon has towering granite walls and is awesomely beautiful. The character of the rapids have also changed—huge sections of granite have broken off and fallen into the river. We slowly enter the Canyon marveling at the scenery, but **anxious** at the thought of what lies ahead. We ran great rapids among the big granite boulders, and see a 200 ft. waterfall cascading down the left exfoliated granite wall. This is the area my **kayaking** doctor friend Tom Petty calls the "Veranda"—a large granite slab and ledge camp with a full view of the waterfall and canyon. **THIS** is where the nymphettes must hang out! We declare lunch, and partake in the Devil's Canyon tanning salon.

Back on the river, we came to a large pool above a suspicious big drop, bordered by a **large granite dome**—Granite Dome Falls! Time to finish my Granite Dome Falls story:

Friendshad told me that **class VI**—Granite Dome Falls was runnable at lower flows, such as today. I had also figured that Nolan would seriously consider running it, because: 1) he very much likes a challenge; and 2) the 1/3 mile long carry through the woods along the canyon rim with a loaded canoe was likely to be a **ball-buster**! Setting safety for him, however, was going to be a problem. This section is long, and the river plunges steeply with 50 ft. vertical walls on **the right** and 1000 ft. on the left. We were able to position throw ropes about half way down, but for the final crux section—the "Big Enchilada"—Nolan would be on his own.

Nolan successfully ran the top 2/3 of the section, and scouted the moves leading to the falls. The idea was to **run** the left side of the 16 ft falls, but that part

would be cake in comparison to the stuff right above it. Nolan has a bomber canoe roll, and even a hands roll, but he later told us that he made the decision to swim if anything went wrong. He didn't think he could make it to the **runnable** left side of the falls if he tried to roll.

We watched from the rim as he made the class **III** ferry back to river right, but he lost his focus and washed against a bolder. Almost instantly, his upstream edge went under and he was swimming the gnarly crux! Ouch! The canoe washed right and disappeared momentarily in the right **sidejam** crack, only to **come** shooting out vertically and deposit itself in the **calm** pool below! Nolan was OK after making a desperate lunge for a ledge on the left side above the falls.

I found a route down the canyon wall, and made my way out to a large boulder across from Nolan. The best option appeared to be a rope assisted swim. We were about 25 feet upstream from the falls. We had a brief discussion on IF anything goes wrong, Nolan likely goes over the falls. He seemed concerned! I say—**"No Worries!"**

Seriously, I had a solid, anchored, position on the rock, and I figured Nolan would be so "pumped" that he'd jump half way to me anyway—which is what he did! Then it was like pulling in a big ol' carp. We climbed out and finished the portage which was not that bad, and reunited with Michael and Curt. It was the first time I'd ever seen Nolan swim.

Of course, I figured he must have had a reason. It must have been those Water Nymphs. Like the Sirens of mythology whose songs lured sailors into crashing on rocks, the sweet voices of the Nymphs must have charmed Nolan off his line.

We were soon back in our boats, and as far as I was concerned—it would suit me just fine if the river were just "mellow" class IV to the take-out—but **NOOO!** Hard rapids continued to less



*Nolan Whitesell, David Wallace and Micheal Latendresse enjoy a beer at the take-out.*

than a mile upstream of the bridge. The kayakers do one last portage around a 15 ft drop, which Nolan runs fine. This makes a total of 6 portages for Michael and Curt (7 for me), and **2 1/3**—we'll count Granite Dome Falls as a **1/3**—for Nolan.

We were probably within a mile or so of the take-out and out scouting our last class **"V ish"** drop. After seeing it, I was ready to hike if there had been a reasonable portage—adrenalin wise, I had shot my wad. Michael and Curt were none to eager either, so I probe the 15 ft. slanting chute into a turbulent hole which then required running a rocky second drop. Michael, Nolan, and I made it through upright, but Curt flipped and swam after washing upside down over the rocks. We arrived at the take-out bridge at **5:45**—tired, but very satisfied. We had just completed 3 fantastic class V days, and never saw another boater!

So, is this the run for you? It is well within the range of seasoned experts who can handle a true wilderness experience. No one day was as hard as Cherry Creek (upper **Tuolumne**), but all three days taken together with a loaded boat is demanding, and adds to the difficulty. The combination of difficult rapids, portaging, and

paddling 32 miles makes for a physical 3 days—No Wimps!

If the Franklin and Devil's Canyons had road access, they would be instant **advanced/expert** classics and very popular. I much prefer the way it is—a true wilderness experience only for those that really want it. If the thought of carrying overnight gear in your boat is holding you back—Hey, it's OK!—you'll still be able to paddle fine. If you're whining that you can't play with overnight gear—don't worry, the Middle Feather has tons of great rapids—you won't be bored. So for those desiring that western, expert, multi-day fun hog experience, the Middle Feather is waiting.

*David Wallace assisted in the compilation of the AWA's Close Calls Survey and has contributed articles to the safety section of American Whitewater.*

Deep in the heart of Texas?

# BIG WATER



*The lesson is that Texas boaters should never chase rumors of water; if you are there, boat it. But what happens when the river is flowing at 83,000 CFS?*

*Photo by Larry Kolvoord  
Austin American-Statesman*

By CAROLYN PORTER

The reporter, arms folded, leaned against his truck. It was a 4-wheel drive Bronco, emblazoned with the Channel 7 logo. "You have got to be kidding," he said as the four of us piled out of our truck. He gaped at the kayaks on the mud-spattered pickup, and then at the second truck carrying three more boats and boaters. No one answered him right away. The group that had chattered nervously on the 45-mile drive from Austin was now quiet.

The Pedernales River at Johnson City, Texas, usually runs a meager 150 cfs. Today it was higher. Officials expected the river to crest at noon at 83,000 cfs and about 11 feet above normal. The news bulletins warned ranchers to move livestock out of low-lying areas and the park rangers speculated that the flood might reach the Lyndon B. Johnson family cemetery. It had started to drip Tuesday afternoon. And kept up Wednesday. And began to really pour on Thursday. It was now Friday and the central Texas hill country was under a flash flood warning. An unusual warm weather pattern had stalled over Texas, leading to record December rainfalls.

The TV reporter had a point. He and his cameraman, wearing those yellow raincoats and pants that are the uniforms of reporters covering bad weather news events, had parked at the Highway 281 bridge. They were shooting footage of the trees and other debris tossing in the chocolate water that raced under the bridge. The assembled boaters began to discuss alternate flood runs—Barton Creek, the San Gabriels, or the Llano. One veteran reminded us of a lesson he had learned, after a day in which he led a caravan from river to river for hours before finding something running. They had finally kayaked the Colorado for forty-five minutes, the last fifteen in the dark. One passenger had been too car-sick to get on the water. The lesson is that Texas boaters should never chase rumors of water; if you are there, boat it. Eventually, peer pressure spurred

us on to the put-in, the incredulous reporter in tow.

The Pedernales is hard to catch in flood and Texas boaters speak wistfully of it. The surrounding rocky ranch land, scattered with cedar bushes and small live oak trees, drains quickly. The wide river bed cuts through limestone, forming terraced ledges between stone walls. At "normal" flood, the river is full of Ocoee-style play



Bill Leon surveys a mid-river jumble of waves on the flood-stage Pedernales.

spots with plenty of holes and waves. The few hazards are usually gun-toting landowners, lawsuit-wary park officials, or angry fire ants. Today the hazards appeared to be submerged fences, mid-stream trees, and river-wide hydraulics.

The low-water crossing on Ranch Route 1320 has a 10-foot flood gauge. The river is runnable if water is at least one foot over the road. As we pulled up to the crossing, it was clear that the road and the gauge were under water. The reappeared 100 yards across the river and unstable 4-5 foot waves stretched around the bend where we had expected to find flat water. It began to rain again. A new bout of uncertainty hit the group. One member, to his credit, reevaluated his skill level and

volunteered to drive the shuttle back to the take-out instead of boating. The remaining six began to gear up—the level of each participant's enthusiasm measured by the speed at which he or she dressed.

In the midst of this, two boaters appeared in the cedar thicket at the edge of the road. They climbed over the fence, wearily dragging their boats behind them. Each looked suspiciously pale and wide-eyed. They confirmed that three others

had gone on but that the "twelve-foot waves that exploded in your face and drove you backward were too much." Upon hearing that they were nearing the first rapid, they elected the mile-long portage out. The hike back to the put-in had left them with booties full of prickly-pear cactus thorns. They repeated this story to the attentive reporter and his cameraman, but refused to give their names before limping off to their car. Somewhat unnerved, we made another group sanity check. Finally, we put our boats in, waved to the camera, and were swept into the current.

It did not take long to find out why the portagers had made their choice. The river varied between 100 to 200 feet wide. We struck an unhappy medium,

riding the choppy currents uncomfortably close to the huge waves at center and unnervingly close to the half-buried trees at water's edge. Occasionally a surge would break into a frothy wave, creating a sudden side-surf opportunity before disappearing. For the first fifteen minutes, we hugged the right shore, remembering a dam somewhere in the first few miles. It appeared unexpectedly fast and required the lead boats to paddle hard for shore while shouting warnings to the stragglers. We threaded our way into the trees on river right to sneak the low-head dam. The dam had a strong diagonal wave at the bottom of the sneak route which tried to push the boats into the hydraulic. Not far below the dam was a river-wide ledge, runnable on the right, but creating an equally dangerous spot.

With those hazards past, we became a little bolder and tentatively eased out of the choppy water along the bank to ride the roller coaster waves toward center. The boats would hesitate at the top and then slap down onto the backside of the waves. Each boater followed the bouncing helmet in front, always ready to copy any sudden change in direction. Unable to see over the next wave, we were reluctant to surf. We rested briefly at the mouth of North Grape Creek, an excellent flood run if you can avoid being arrested for trespassing. We estimated we had traveled about ten miles in forty-five minutes.

There were remarkably few holes, but the ones we found were formed by river-wide ledges and towered above us. These holes could not be seen until the boats topped the wave just in front of them and could not be sneaked along the shore. A tongue usually appeared near the center of the hole and some frantic paddling carried the boats past the violent holes to either side and over the backwash. Our lead boat made a picturesque back-ender out of one of them.

It was one of the smaller holes that caught two of our boats. As the fol-

lowers crested a wave, they encountered Fred and Marshall side-surfing a six-foot high hole, their boats occasionally slamming together. The rest of the pack fought to avoid the same fate, some of them miss-



ing the tip of Fred's boat by inches. The current and lack of eddies prevented paddling back upstream. We fought to stay close in case someone swam out. Marshall eventually backed out of the hole, so disoriented from his ride that he immediately fell over again. Fred was not so lucky and swam. After stripping him of his prescription glasses and a shoe, the hole discharged him. A rescuer picked him up immediately and began the long tow to the right bank, aided by another boat which led them through the waves. A third boater plowed Fred's boat to shore. The boater who picked up the lost paddle flipped and executed an admirable double-paddleroll. The most difficult part of the rescue turned out to be the barbed-wire eddy fence. The metal fence took a large divot out of one boat. Fred, winded but unhurt, lay gasping on the bank. Luckily, the air and water temperatures were quite warm. Without his glasses, Fred could no longer see the river, necessitating that one of us play seeing-eye boat for the rest of the trip. Our collective bravery had ebbed with Fred's swim and we stuck to more conservative routes.

When the worst was behind us and the end approached, we began to berate ourselves for the amazing waves we had not surfed for fear of what lurked behind them. We consulted our watches,

but a second run would likely end in the dark. Thereporter and cameramangreeted us at the take-out, thrusting a microphone in the face of the first boater to beach himself. He described our run and in-

cluded a warning that only experienced kayakers should attempt something like this. While some members of the expedition vied for the best quote, others hid from the camera lest their employers discover the abuse of sick leave that was taking place. Fred described his swim. Always quick-witted, he slyly identified himself by the name of the Austin boater least likely to appreciate it.

The water had dropped slightly and the debris had ridden the crest ahead of us. After reliving our exploits in self-indulgent detail, we headed home. Fred, who lived an hour in the opposite direction, went home with a pair of borrowed glasses and an admonishment to replace his antique lifejacket.

That night we made the local news.

"The Pedernales River was at its worst today...one of the highest levels in years...But that did not expect some Austin kayakers from taking advantage of the fast moving waters...What is considered dangerous to some is considered a playground to others. These six Austinites took the opportunity to paddle down the turbulent river. Typically, the water flows from 80 to 100 cubic feet per second here. These kayakers were battling the surge at 80,000 feet per second. The dangerous journey ended with no injuries."

(One boater commented) "Oh, I think about midway down there were really some big waves and big holes and, you know, a lot of fun."

"The kayakers made the 12-mile trip in about two hours...While the kayakers reveled in their victory, locals were still concerned about the river."

## Conservation continued

the damage has been going on for so long and is now so extensive that the "total loss of biodiversity may never be known."

Karr said that our obsession with cleaning up the chemical pollution in our rivers has been myopic. While we were spending more than \$453 billion since 1970 to reduce sewage contamination and industrial chemical pollution, we were overlooking the biological functions of free flowing river systems. As a result, nothing has been done to preserve the biological integrity of any river system in America.

At the hearing, Dr. Arthur Benke from the University of Alabama Department of Biological Sciences, took aim at hydropower development. He noted that over 1100 hydro projects are planned or projected. These would increase the number of hydro sites in the nation by 50%. Yet all of these projects would add only 2% to our total hydro generating capacity. Why? Benke said that the best hydro sites are all developed. Yet FERC still pushes ahead with a program which Dr. Benke called "the total exploitation of the nations rivers, regardless of its practicality and of the degra-

ation of rivers as natural ecosystems...[FERC's actions have] already carried us well past a reasonable balance between exploitation and preservation"

### RIVERS AND TRAILS PROGRAM FEELS PAIN OF BUDGET KNIFE.

Despite the efforts of AWA Conservation Program Director and Capitol Hill lobbyist, Rich Bowers, the National Park Service River Watch Program (part of the overall NPS Rivers and Trails Program) has not escaped the budget knife.

This program is important to whitewater interests, but anathema to the National Hydropower Association, because it provides funding for National Park Service experts to promote outdoor recreation on rivers threatened by dam builders. Each year an intense lobbying effort is carried on by American Whitewater and other groups to keep this funding alive. At the same time, an equally intense effort is waged by the Hydropower groups to kill it off.

The Senate appropriations committee voted to provide only \$4.8 million for the entire National Parks Service River and Trails Program. This is less than half of the

\$12 million that river and trail groups feel is needed to fund the program at a reasonable level. The crush of hydropower relicensing in 1993 requires a massive effort by the Park Service. House leaders were willing to go with \$10 million for the program, but tightwads in the Senate Appropriations group (a traditionally pro hydro panel) refused to go along.

### RIVER REGISTRY IDEA LIVES ON

In years past, despite eloquent pleas, AWA has been unsuccessful in convincing anyone to work on this problem. But now Congressman Peter Kostmayer (D-PA) and Congressman George Miller (D-CA) are both pushing the idea. A bill was introduced by Congressman Kostmayer — and now other river conservation groups are jumping on board. American Rivers, the Oregon Rivers Council, River Network, and a bevy of other groups have all been meeting with AWA to develop a bill that everyone can get behind. The final product will emerge sometime this summer or fall. The proposal is being refined and re-refined at a series of mini-conventions held in Annapolis, Maryland.

The complete reference of every whitewater river system in America

## AWA National Whitewater River Inventory

*New 1990 edition updated to include:*

- River maps for all U.S. whitewater rivers
- Revised list of each whitewater river nationwide
- Includes mileage, access points and whitewater rating

Order your  
copy today!

Printed copies available for \$15 from AWA Whitewater Inventory, 136-13th St., SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.  
Also available for \$7 on 5 1/4 inch floppy disc (requires IBM or IBM compatible computer with a hard drive and dBase III)

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ printed copies of the AWA Nationwide Whitewater Inventory at \$15 each.

Total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the AWA Nationwide Whitewater Inventory on floppy discs in dBase III at \$7 each.

Total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

# AFFILIATES

ADK **Genesee** Valley  
 c/o Jerry Hargrave  
 47 Thorpe Crescent  
 Rochester, NY 14616  
 ADK Schenectady  
 P.O. Box 733  
 Schenectady, NY 12301  
 Adobe Whitewater Club  
 P.O. Box 3835  
 Albuquerque, NM 87190  
 AMC Berkshire Chapter  
 c/o Mike Zabre  
 34 Russell Street  
 Greenfield, MA 01301  
 AMC New York  
 c/o Trudy L. Wood  
 41 W. 96th St., Apt. 3C  
 New York, NY 10025  
 AMC SE. Mass.  
 c/o Mark Klim  
 49 Record Street  
 Stoughton, MA 02072  
 America Outdoors  
 P.O. Box 1348  
 Knoxville, TN 37901  
 American Swan Boat  
 Association  
 c/o Glen F. Green  
 312 Duff Avenue  
**Wenonah**, NJ 08090  
 Appalachian Paddling  
 Enthusiasts  
 c/o Bill Perkins  
 P.O. Box 60  
 Erwin, TN 37650  
 Arkansas Valley  
 Whitewater Club  
 P.O. Box 593  
 Salida, CO 81201  
 Beartooth Paddlers  
 P.O. Box 20432  
 Billings, MT 59104  
 Birmingham Canoe Club  
 P.O. Box 951  
 Birmingham, AL 35201  
 Bluegrass Wildwater  
 Assoc.  
 P.O. Box 4231  
 Lexington, KY 40544  
 Boat Busters Anonymous  
 2961 Hemingway Ave.  
**Oakdale**, MN 55128  
 Buck Ridge Ski Club  
 P.O. Box 179  
 Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004  
 Canoe Club of Greater  
 Harrisburg  
 c/o Mary Klaue  
 R.D. 1, Box 421  
 Middleburg, PA 17842

Canoe Cruisers  
 c/o Bill Shallbetter  
 5909 Booth Drive  
 Burke, VA 22015  
 Carolina Canoe Club  
 P.O. Box 12932  
 Raleigh, NC 27605  
 Central Georgia River  
 Runners  
 P.O. Box 6563  
 Macon, GA 31208  
 Champaign Canoeing  
 c/o Keech T. LeClair  
**Brayton** Park, Beach Rd.  
 Ossining, NY 10562  
 Chicago Whitewater Assoc.  
 c/o Marge Cline  
 1343 N. Portage  
 Palatine, IL 60067  
 Chota Canoe Club  
 P.O. Box 8270  
 University Station  
 Knoxville, TN 37916  
 Club Adventure  
 c/o Adventure Quest  
 P.O. Box 184  
 Woodstock, VT 05091  
 Colorado Rocky Mtn. School  
 c/o Bob Campbell  
 1493 Rd. 106  
 Carbondale, CO 81623  
 Colorado Whitewater  
 Association  
 P.O. Box 4315  
 Englewood, CO 80155-4315  
 E. Tennessee Whitewater  
 Club  
 P.O. Box 5774  
 Oak Ridge, TN 37831-5774  
 Foothills Canoe Club  
 P.O. Box 6331  
 Greenville, SC 29606  
 Garden State Canoe Club  
 c/o Linda Gorman  
 170 Stahl's Way  
 N. Plainfield, NJ 07060  
 Georgia Canoeing Assoc.  
 P.O. Box 7023  
 Atlanta, GA 30357  
 G.L.O.P.  
 c/o James Tibensky  
 P.O. Box 2576  
 Chicago, IL 60690  
 Greater Baltimore Canoe  
 Club  
 P.O. Box 591  
**Ellicott** City, MD 21041-1841  
 Guadalupe River Paddlers  
 c/o Betty Walls  
 1781 Spyglass Drive, #153  
 Austin, TX 78746-7914

Headwaters Paddling  
 Assoc.  
 Box 1392  
 Bozeman, MT 59715  
 Hoosier Canoe Club  
 c/o Dave Ellis  
 4770 N. Kessler Blvd.  
 Indianapolis, IN 46208  
 Housatonic Canoe & Kayak  
 104 Kent Rd.  
**Cornwall** Bridge, CT 06754  
 Idaho State Outdoor Pgm.  
 c/o Ron Watters  
 Box 8118, ISU  
**Pocatello**, ID 83209  
 Kansas City Whitewater  
 Club  
 c/o G. Rebecca Stark  
 5600 **Kenwood** Avenue  
 Kansas City, MO 64110  
 Kayak & Canoe Club of  
 Boston  
 c/o Peter Cogan  
 Box 123  
 Putney, VT 05346  
 Kayaking I-IV  
 c/o Schumacher  
 471 Hagemann Dr.  
 Livermore, CA 94550  
 KCCNY  
 c/o Pierre De Rham  
 P.O. Box 195  
 Garrison, NY 10524  
 Keelhaulers Canoe Club  
 c/o Jane Allinson  
 375 Erieview  
 Sheffield Lake, OH 44054  
 Lansing Oar & Paddle Club  
 c/o Jay Hanks  
 P.O. Box 26254  
 Lansing, MI 48909  
 Leaping Lounge Lizards  
 c/o Rick Norman  
 3437 E. Green St.  
 Pasadena, CA 91107  
**Ledyard** Canoe Club  
 Box 9  
 Hanover, NH 03755  
 Lehigh Valley Canoe Club  
 P.O. Box 2726  
 Lehigh Valley, PA 18001  
 Lower Columbia Canoe  
 Club  
 22800 S. Unger Rd.  
**Colton**, OR 97017  
 Meramec River Canoe Club  
 c/o Earl Biffle  
 26 Lake Road  
**Fenton**, MO 63026

Merrimack Valley Paddlers  
 c/o George May  
 157 Naticook Road  
 Merrimack, NH 03054  
 Metropolitan Canoe &  
 Kayak  
 P.O. Box 021868  
 Brooklyn, NY 11202-0040  
 Minnesota Canoe Assoc.  
 P.O. Box 13567  
 Minneapolis, MN 55414  
 Missouri Whitewater Assoc.  
 c/o Dale Brown, President  
 5576 Pershing Avenue, #11  
 St. Louis, MO 63112  
 Mohawk Canoe Club  
 15 Andrea Lane  
 Trenton, NJ 08619  
 National Park Service  
 Upper Delaware **S&RR**  
 P.O. Box C  
 Narrowsburg, NY 12764  
 NORS  
 c/o Mary McCurdy  
 Box 6847  
 Colorado Springs, CO 80904  
 Northwest Passage  
 1130 Greenleaf Ave.  
 Wilmette, IL 60091  
 Nova Riverrunners  
 P.O. Box 1129  
 Chickaloon, AK 99674  
 Ontario Voyageurs  
 PO Box Box 41  
 Adelaide Post Office  
 Toronto, Ontario M5C 2H8  
 Canada  
 Outdoor Adventure Pro-  
 gram  
 Bldg. 2807  
 Mt. Home AFB, ID 83648-  
 5000  
 Outdoor Centre of New  
 England  
 10 Pleasant St.  
 Millers Falls, MA 01349  
 Ozark Wilderness Water-  
 ways  
 P.O. Box 16032  
 Kansas City, MO 64112  
 Perception Kayak Club  
 c/o Perception Inc.  
 1110 Powdersville Rd.  
 Easley, SC 29640  
 Philadelphia Canoe Club  
 4900 Ridge Ave.  
 Philadelphia, PA 19128  
 Pikes Peak Whitewater Club  
 c/o Sarah Dentoni  
 610 North Cascade #6  
 Colorado Springs, CO 80903-  
 3229



Rhode Island Canoe Association  
 c/o Dave Hevner  
 254 Bailey Woods Road  
 Brooklyn, CT 06234  
 River Rendezvous  
 P.O. Box 888  
 Telluride, CO 81435  
 River Touring Section  
 Sierra Club - Angeles Chapter  
 c/o Dave Ewoldt  
 9624 Saluda Avenue  
 Tijuca, CA 91042  
 Roanoke City Parks & Rec.  
 c/o Bill Sgrinia  
 1206 Kessler Mill Road  
 Salem, VA 24153  
 Sierra Club Loma Prieta  
 c/o Dave Kim  
 3309 Oxford Lane  
 San Jose, CA 95117

Sierra Club RTS  
 c/o Lynne Van Ness  
 159 Southwind Drive  
 Pleasant Hill, CA 94523  
 Sierra Nevada WW Club  
 c/o Charlie Albright  
 7500 Gladstone Drive  
 Reno, NV 89506  
 Texas Whitewater Assoc.  
 P.O. Drawer 5429  
 Austin, TX 78763  
 Three Rivers Paddling Club  
 c/o Barry Adams  
 811 Smokey Wood Drive  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15218  
 Toledo River Gang  
 c/o Mike Sidell  
 626 Louisiana Avenue  
 Perrysburg, OH 43551  
 Triad River Runners  
 P.O. Box 24094  
 Winston-Salem, NC 27114-4094

U. of Maine at Machias Library  
 9 O'Brien Ave.  
 Machias, ME 04654  
 University of Tennessee Canoe & Hiking Club  
 2106 Andy Holt Avenue  
 Knoxville, TN 37996-2900  
 Valdez Alpine Club  
 c/o Andrew Embick  
 P.O. Box 1889  
 Valdez, AK 99686  
 Viking Canoe Club  
 P.O. Box 32263  
 Louisville, KY 40232  
 Waterline  
 c/o Irv Tolles  
 P.O. Box 240  
 Manchester, NH 03105

West Virginia Wildwater Assoc.  
 P.O. Box 8413  
 S. Charleston, WV 25303  
 Western Carolina Paddlers  
 c/o Chris Newcomb  
 Route 1, Box 522  
 Candler, NC 28715  
 Wildcat Canoe Club  
 c/o Michael Ranstead  
 3425 E. 106th St.  
 Carmel, IN 46032  
 Willamette Kayak & Canoe Club  
 P.O. Box 1062  
 Corvallis, OR 97339

**Rubber Maid...continued**

team of poodle women into shape. Miraculously, Josie had created an awesome whitewater machine.

For instance, Josie's raft cleared the hole at the bottom of Big Nasty by more than ten feet. My raft bounced through the edge of the hole backwards; we'd probably still be there today if it had not been completely swamped with water.

But the most astonishing thing was the way the river had transformed Josie's team. The Mary Kay women, now boisterously chanting and hefting their paddles victoriously in unison at the base of every rapid, had somehow evolved into river goddesses. They had spunk, they had spirit, they even had a name... they called themselves Josie's Whales.

My stockbrokers spent our entire lunch break nursing their trivial boo boos, preening and making rude remarks, while Josie's gang climbed and launched themselves from a thirty foot jump rock by the edge of the river, hooting and howling and having one hell of a good time. Their ringleader, who looked just like Doris Day, even managed a spectacular half gainer. And catch this... when she bobbed to the surface, her makeup was still immaculate and not a single hair was out of place in her elaborate doo!

As the day progressed, Josie's Whales just got better and better, while the situation in my raft deteriorated to an abysmal level. Instead of attending to river,

the Good Time Charlies spent all their time leering at Josie's crew and making lewd observations. They made vulgar suggestions to me as well, and several of them continued to fling themselves onto me every time we hit a wave. Thank God I was wearing a drysuit, it functioned as a sort of whole body condom.

By the time we came to Coliseum, I had my fill. I'll admit it, I did it on purpose. And I'm not the least bit sorry. After all, I just gave the boys what they obviously wanted... a ride in a great big hole!

That's right... I fed them right into the Cyclotron! Never said a word to them about it, just let them drift down river right. I abandoned ship and boogied for shore about two hundred feet above the monster. Those of you who have paddled the Cheat at high water might be able to imagine what happened next. On the other hand, some carnage just has to be seen to be believed.

Suffice it to say that ten minutes later, when they finally flushed out of the Cyclotron, only to be jettisoned down the dreaded Particle Accelerator, they were changed men. The delicious irony is that it was Josie and her Whales that plucked them out of the wave train downstream.

When Josie deposited them on shore, they were whimpering and sniveling like half drowned pups. What a bunch of crybabies they turned out to be! They

even wanted to walk out... from the heart of the Cheat Canyon, no less! We had to knock two of them out to get them back into the rafts. We probably would have never made it out of there if Josie hadn't taken a couple of them into her raft, while assigning two of her best Whales to me.

At the takeout Josie and I had to shoulder and carry two of the Good Time Charlies to the bus. Meanwhile the Whales amused themselves by tossing one another off the abandoned Jenkinsburg Bridge, a plunge of more than fifty feet!

In the end everything turned out for the best. I knew that I would never be asked to guide again, which suited me fine. The Good Time Charlies learned a little about the power of rivers and lot about the power of women.

As for the Whales, they have given up selling eyeliner altogether. Now days they work for Josie, guiding on the Cheat!

*Editor's note: Carla Garrison has not ventured back into a raft since the episode detailed above. In fact, she has been denied a guide's license by the DEC of four different states. However, it must be noted that many DEC officials are little more than bureaucratic versions of the stockbrokers in Carla's story.*

# Rubber Maid

By CARLA GARRISON

Let me make one thing perfectly clear. I didn't do *IT* for the money. I would never have done *IT* for the money.

And knowing what I know about *IT* now, I can tell you this. Given the choice, I would die rather than do *IT* again.

*IT* was the most demeaning experience of my life; one that might well have destroyed a lesser woman. But let me assure you faithful reader, that, in the end, as always, I came out on top.

But it wasn't easy.

So, you're asking yourself, "If she didn't do *IT* for the money, then why did she do *IT*? Carla ain't no babe in the woods; she should have known better."

Well, I did *IT* for the best of reasons, with the best of intentions. I did *IT* to help out my paddling buddy, Josie.

Now Josie WAS doing *IT* for the money. Having lost her job as the Sales Director for one of the companies that manufactures silicone breast implants, Josie had been living out of the back of her pickup, boating and half-heartedly looking for a new job.

She was down to her last dollar and stranded in Albright, West Virginia when she got the proposition. She didn't have enough money to pay for another Glen Miller shuttle, or even enough to buy a cheeseburger at Little Sandy's. You can imagine how desperate she was. And so, reluctantly, she became the Manager of Down the River Rafting.

But by the second weekend in April, Josie was in trouble. She'd fired most of her guides that Saturday; caught the buggers peeping at their customers, a bunch of WVU cheerleaders, through the walls of the women's change house. Now it was Sunday morning, the river was running high, six feet and rising, and she didn't have anyone to staff her eleven o'clock trip.

And so, Josie turned to me. "Just this once, Carla," she begged. "It really isn't all that bad. It's a small trip, just two rafts. You take one, and I'll take the other. It will be fun."

Somehow I wasn't convinced.

"Come, on, Josie," I whined. "You know I'm allergic to rubber. It makes me break out..."

"Please..." she sniveled. And then, ominously, "If I loose this job I'm going to have to come stay with you."

That did the trick. Josie's a dear friend, but there was no way I could have faced that. Not the way she's hung up on cleanliness. Josie is the only woman I know that flosses her teeth every time she drinks a glass of water.

And so, reluctantly, I stashed my kayak, grabbed a single bladed paddle and headed towards the river. Two groups of six were booked on the eleven o'clock trip that day, and they couldn't have been more disparate.

By one raft stood a bunch of Merrill Lynch stockbrokers from New York. This was a cocksure crew, half ripped and already hooting and howling in anticipation of a rollicking day on the Cheat. Actually, they looked like they were up to it, all clad in brand new pile decorated with the insignias of the various Ivy League Schools they had attended. And they looked fit enough. Like most yuppies of their ilk, they clearly spent quite a bit of time in the gym, as well as in the tanning booth.

The other crew consisted of a gaggle of Mary Kay Cosmetics saleswomen from the suburbs of Cleveland. Apparently they had won this excursion for selling record setting amounts of eye liner.

Hovering in a tight circle, stealing timid glances at the brown, swirling water and giggling nervously, they appeared to be, shall we say, a bit out of their element.

These were women with a lot of hair... big hair... all blonded and poofed up on top of their heads, so that they looked like poodle dogs in heat. But their hair wasn't the only big thing about them. My assessment was that most of them had been patrons of Josie's former employer. And, in practical anticipation of their day on the river, they had put a lot of makeup on too. It looked to me like they were decked out for an epic day at a K Mart, not for an early spring outing on a class 4+ river.

"Which crew do you want?" Josie asked. "It's your choice."

I thought this was one of the silliest questions I had ever heard.

"You've got to be joking," I replied sarcastically and without hesitation. "I'm taking the Good Time Charlies... you can nursemaid the Goldern Girls!"

Josie looked at me with a peculiar

and knowing smile; I should have seen it coming. But hell, I was new to this game, and didn't know any better.

Well, by the time we reached the top of the first major rapid, Decision, I was surprised to discover that I was beginning to grow weary of the boorish behavior of my stockbrokers. By the time we reached the pool at the bottom of the second rapid, Beech Run, I had come to hate their guts.

Of all the things that I came to detest about them, and there were many, two stood out. The first was the arrogant way they hit upon me, without any semblance of subtlety. These guys labored under the impression that they were God's gift to women, when, in fact, they couldn't have charmed the panties off a wart hog. Every time we hit a wave one or another of them would bounce into me, trying to cop a feel.

These jokers weren't human, they were octopi, each one had at least eight hands! And every time one of them referred to me as "Babe" I had to fight the urge to smack him in the kisser with my paddle.

But, worse than the disrespect that they showed towards me as a person and a woman, was the utter lack of respect they demonstrated towards me as a guide. In spite of my excellent instructions and my sincere admonitions about the dangers of the river, they failed to follow any of my orders. In fact, they blatantly disobeyed my every command.

If I called out, "Forward on the right; backpaddle on the left!", they would backpaddle on the right and paddle forward on the left. These wiseasses had no intentions of taking any orders from a woman, irrespective of the consequences. As a result, we careened down the Cheat willy nilly, completely out of control, making total fools of ourselves.

It's a wonder we weren't all killed. To make matters worse, every well known kayaker on the east coast was there that day, laughing at the spectacle of me desperately trying to pilot a raft that was completely out of control.

Josie and her crew, on the other hand, were negotiating the Cheat with awesome grace and precision. I still can not believe how quickly she whipped her

*Please turn to page 47*

# SHREDDER

...the first **SELF-BAILING**  
all inflatable cataraft!  
NO HARD PARTS!

First made for video boats on the Tully River in Australia in 1986, the **SHREDDER** has been built and power-tested ever since. A *great* way for an experienced river runner to introduce a novice to GOOD water! They are stable yet responsive in big H<sub>2</sub>O & fast in flat-water. Two experienced paddlers can stretch their limits...hole punching and wave surfing!



BIG SANDY CREEK, WEST VIRGINIA



UPPER SLATE FORK RIVER, COLORADO

We are committed to the premise that "heavy duty" does not mean **HEAVY**.....the **SHREDDER** rolls up into a compact 18" x 28"! The cross tubes & raised floor eliminate the need for a bulky frame. Have been used as guide boats on raft & ducky trips...made entirely in Pennsylvania.....98% domestic content!

## STANDARD FEATURES.....

- floor
- D-rings
- rope
- splash screen
- foot stirrups

## STANDARD MODEL SPECS.....

- length = 12'4"
- color = **black**
- width = 58"
- weight = 35 - 54 lbs
- tube diameters available = 18.5", 20", 21"
- neoprene/nylon

**PRICES RANGE FROM** \$900 to \$1250

## Airtight Inflatables

SHREDDERS • RAFTS  
MATERIALS • ACCESSORIES

**412 - 329 - 8668**

Box 36 Ohiopyle, Pa 15470

ASK FOR TONY



# american whitewater

**AWA Journal**  
PO Box 85  
Phoenicia, NY 12464

Address Correction Requested

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 326  
Birmingham, AL