



# AMERICAN WHITEWATER

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Nov/Dec 2010

## THE BEST OF 2010 STORY & PHOTO CONTEST

[Trouble]shooting the Magpie

The Bombproof Wet Exit

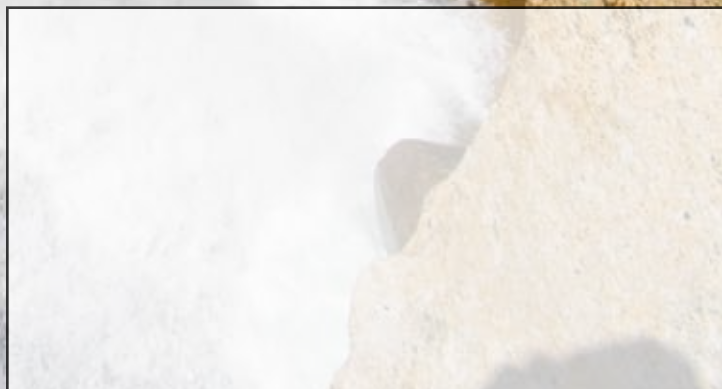
Love and Drysuits

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Beer and Loathing on the Upper Oyacachi

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# AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

## American Whitewater Journal

Nov/Dec 2010 – Volume 50 – Issue 6

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*Ben Stookesberry approaching the lip of Cherry Bomb Falls, Upper Cherry Creek (CA). 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, 2010 AW Photo Contest.*

**Photo by Darin McQuoid**



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# PURPOSE

## RIVER STEWARDSHIP: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Our mission: "To conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely," is actively pursued through our conservation, access, safety and education efforts under the umbrella of River Stewardship. The only national organization representing the interest of all whitewater paddlers, American Whitewater is the national voice for thousands of individual whitewater enthusiasts, as well as over 100 local paddling club affiliates.

AW's River Stewardship program adheres to the four tenets of our mission statement:

**CONSERVATION:** AW's professional staff works closely with volunteers and partner organizations to protect the ecological and scenic values of all whitewater rivers. These goals are accomplished through direct participation in public decision-making

processes, grassroots advocacy, coalition building, empowerment of volunteers, public outreach and education, and, when necessary, legal action.

**RIVER ACCESS:** To assure public access to whitewater rivers pursuant to the guidelines published in its official Access Policy, AW arranges for river access through private lands by negotiation or purchase, seeks to protect the right of public passage on all rivers and streams navigable by kayak or canoe, encourages equitable and responsible management of whitewater rivers on public lands, and works with government agencies and other river users to achieve these goals.

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

**EDUCATION:** AW shares information with the general public and the paddling community regarding

whitewater rivers, as well as river recreation, conservation, access, and safety. This is accomplished through our bimonthly *AW Journal*, a monthly e-news, [americanwhitewater.org](http://americanwhitewater.org), paddling events, educational events, and through direct communication with the press.

Together, AW staff, members, volunteers, and affiliate clubs can achieve our goals of conserving, protecting and restoring America's whitewater resources and enhancing opportunities to safely enjoy these wonderful rivers.

AW was incorporated under Missouri nonprofit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at PO Box 1540, Cullowhee, NC 28723; phone 1-866-BOAT-4-AW (1-866-262-8429). AW is tax exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service.



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# THE JOURNEY AHEAD

IT IS HARD to believe that this is the last issue of the American Whitewater Journal for 2010. That means that by the time you're reading this another year will have come and nearly gone. One of the projects that the board and I have been working on for much of 2010 is that of governance and the process of planning for leadership succession on the American Whitewater Board of Directors. As an organization, AW has been quite fortunate to have a committed group of volunteer board members that provide the organization with high-level oversight and strategic direction.

To sustain this healthy and vibrant board, an effective process is needed to insure an appropriate transition of our directors over time. This transition process must balance the need for fresh new ideas and energy with an appropriate continuity of governance and leadership. This year, for the first time ever, AW members have the opportunity to elect Directors and approve changes to the AW Constitution online. Also the bios of board candidates and governance documents (Bylaws and Constitution) are printed in this issue of the *Journal*.

## Board Election

On page 44, you will find the bios of the four candidates to fill seats on the AW Board of Directors. New to this year's voting, the ballot for our Board of Directors election will be placed online from November 1<sup>st</sup> to December 15<sup>th</sup>. All current members of American Whitewater will be emailed a link to this information. Candidate bios and governance documents will also be posted to the AW website, [americanwhitewater.org](http://americanwhitewater.org), for membership review.

In this year's slate of nominees we have two new candidates, one from Colorado and the other from California. Geographic diversity was seen as a key issue for AW's board

makeup. In the states of California and Colorado AW staff have robust stewardship efforts underway and the board felt that additional bench strength would be valuable to help support this important work. Geographic board diversity keeps AW more connected to the local communities where our Directors and members live and play.

## Bylaws and Constitution Changes

At our annual face-to-face AW board meeting in Golden Colorado, the Board of Directors approved changes to the AW bylaws. They are printed on page 41 for your review. The revisions to the bylaws includes: a) set the number of Directors to 12, b) establish a standing nominating committee, chaired by the Vice President that includes the most recent 2 Past Presidents, c) set the number of Directors elected each year at 4, d) stipulate that the Board fill vacant Officers positions each year and e) specify that the Vice President automatically ascends to the office of President at the end of the President's term. These bylaw changes mean that AW will have a smaller, more focused board with greater institutionalized succession to ascend through the officer ranks.

On page 40 you will find proposed changes to the AW Constitution. These require a 2/3 vote of membership submitting a ballot during the fall election cycle. The major change to the Constitution is the addition of term limits for Directors. This now limits Directors to no more than 4 consecutive terms (12 years) total and no more than 2 consecutive terms without serving as an officer or key committee chair.

Organizational governance and the continuity of such governance are key responsibilities of our Board of Directors. American Whitewater is very fortunate to have board members with a passion for our mission and a mix of appropriate skills to

help guide AW and meet the challenges we face, both now and in the future.

Please join with me and exercise your AW membership to elect this outstanding slate of candidates and approve changes to the AW Constitution.

See you on the river,



Mark Singleton  
Executive Director



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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

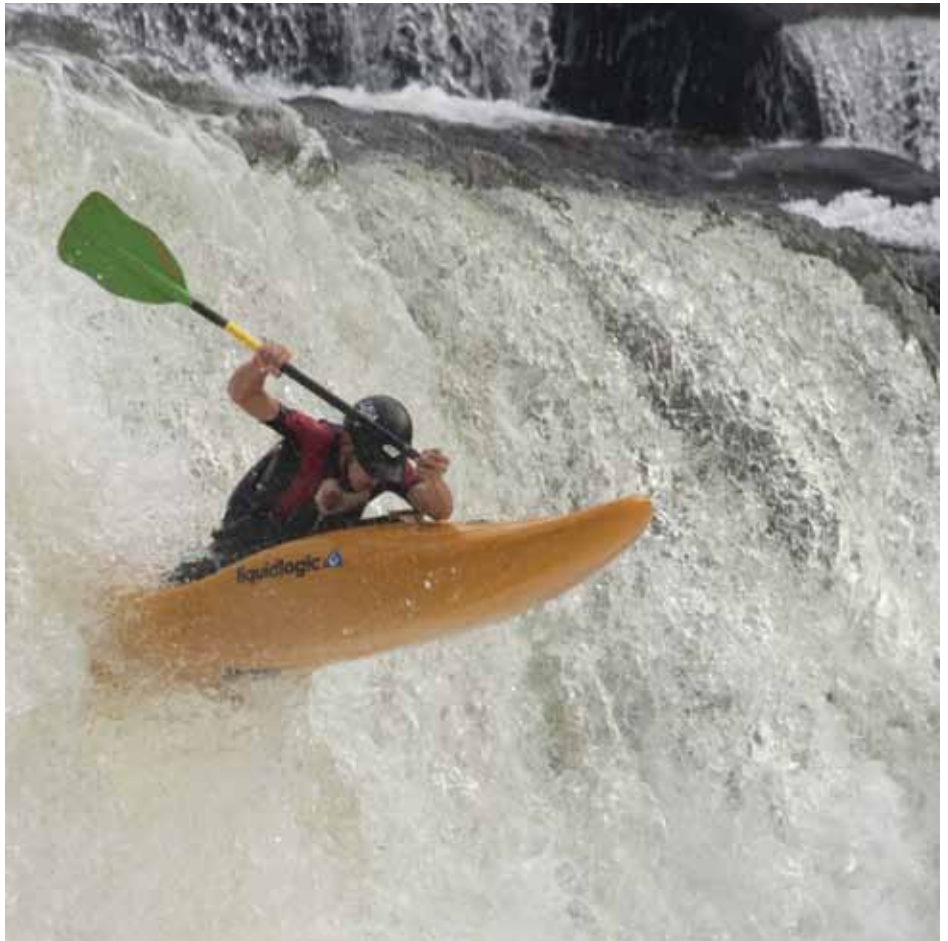
**D**EAR AW MEMBERS,  
I hope all of you have enjoyed a great fall paddling season. Here in the east, where I live, fall is a time when we enjoy great paddling opportunities with scheduled flows on the Gauley, Russell Fork, Tallulah, and the Cheaoh, to name a few. One thing all of these great rivers have in common is how hard AW, local paddling clubs, and volunteers have worked to insure that these flows happen.

Another year draws to a close and for AW it has been good year with a number of successes to celebrate. Several of our successes rise to the top and deserve special mention here. These include:

- After two decades of working on Ohiopyle Falls access AW's effort finally paid off when in August the Pennsylvania Bureau of Parks implemented a pilot program to provide private boater access to run the falls. Our efforts even garnered the attention of the NY Times, which published an article on Ohiopyle Falls on September 9.

- AW's decade-long efforts to secure legal access to New York's incomparable Class IV/V Ausable Chasm reached a major milestone on June 19, 2010 when New York State Electric and Gas opened the gates at their new river access area at the put-in.

- In March, the removal of Dillsboro Dam was completed. The dam removal is the lynchpin in the implementation of the



settlement agreement that also calls for scheduled releases on the West Fork of the Tuckasegee (a Class IV romp through a long de-watered gorge) and the Upper Nantahala. We look forward to finally moving forward with these new releases in the near future.

- In this same column a year ago I wrote about the USFS's recent announcement of a final decision on the Upper Chattooga. Regrettably after a year of non action that includes the withdrawal by the USFS of their final decision, AW's filing of a Federal lawsuit AND the USFS's total abdication of their management responsibility, we finally got a court hearing on October 13. The Honorable Judge J. Michelle Childs heard roughly four hours of arguments and testimony, and stated that she would issue a decision at a later date. Look for more information on this subject here and on the web ([americanwhitewater.org](http://americanwhitewater.org)).

- In a fight that is eerily similar to what we have been facing on the Upper Chattooga, a small but vocal group of anglers that are vehemently opposed to whitewater boating on the McCloud River in California have been advocating to FERC, the Forest Service, and all other regulatory agencies

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*Opposite: Open for Adventure: A C-1er enjoying access to Ohiopyle Falls (PA).*

**Photo by Carol Steen**

**Thru Blue Eyes Photography**

with authority in the case, that boating on the McCloud should be either banned or relegated to the winter months before angling season. Fortunately boaters made a strong showing in a September FERC meeting to receive public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the McCloud/ Pit Hydroelectric project in Northern California.

Also of note in 2010 are decisions made by our board about organization governance during our May meeting in Golden, CO. These include some important changes to our bylaws and some proposed changes to AW's constitution. The most noteworthy of these changes is the addition of term limits to AW's constitution for AW Directors. This change will require a 2/3 vote by our membership.

We also formed a standing nominating committee that includes the Vice President and the two most recent Past Presidents. Norwood Scott chaired the nominating committee this year and was joined by Past Presidents Kevin Lewis and Sutton Bacon. We are delighted to announce a proposed slate of Board members for election this fall. This includes returning Board members Norwood Scott, Chris Bell and Dave Cernicek and new board members Kent Ford and Chris Hest. Norwood, Chris Bell, Dave and Chris Hest have been nominated for a new three year term beginning January 1, 2011 and Kent Ford has been nominated to a special one year term beginning January 1, 2011 to replace long time Board member and AW icon Charlie Walbridge.

Rolling off AW's Board this year are Kristine Jackson and Aaron Pruzan. It has been an honor to work with these two outstanding people over the last several years. Aaron has worked hard on many key stewardship issues in his region during his 8-year tenure on AW's Board and will continue to do so as a key volunteer. Kristine served on AW's Board for 5 years. She is the matriarch of the first family of whitewater

kayaking and a tremendous ambassador for the entire paddlesports community. Kristine and Jackson Kayaks's efforts to encourage youngsters to enter our sport are very important to the future of our nation's rivers. We all owe Aaron and Kristine a sincere vote of thanks for their contributions as AW Board members.

Charlie Walbridge has been on AW's Board of Directors since 1992. During his 18 years of dedicated service he has truly made a difference in our sport. His contributions to the safety of our sport are without peer. His tireless work on the local river issues in the region surrounding his home in Bruceton Mills, WV have been instrumental to improving access on the Big Sandy, the Cheat River Canyon, the Blackwater Canyon and the Upper Yough. I am sure I have left out many other important contributions Charlie has made over the last 40 years; he has truly earned the Lifetime Honorary Board Member status that AW's Board of Directors bestowed upon him during our meeting in Golden. It has been a true honor to get to know Charlie and his wife Sandy. Charlie will continue to work hard on river issues and AW will continue to support his efforts.

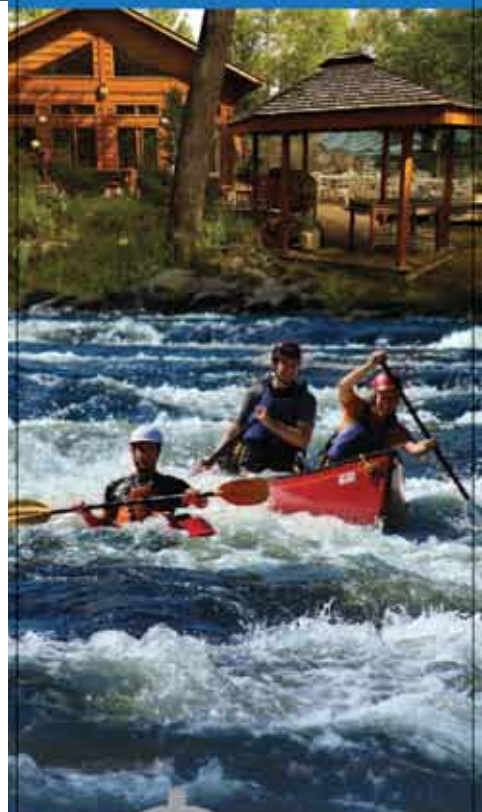
New for this year will be an electronic balloting process. All current AW members will receive information regarding the election process via email. I urge you to vote and to support the proposed slate of candidates for AW's Board of Directors. For more information on all Board related topics, please see page 44 of this issue of the *Journal* for more information.

Happy holidays from the sunny south and thank you for all your support of AW. Best wishes for a great Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas. Please remember AW as you plan your yearend giving and put a little something extra in AW's stocking this Christmas. America's whitewater rivers depend on it.

See You on the River,



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# STEWARDSHIP

## MORE NATURAL FLOWS ON THE MCLOUD

BY DAVE STEINDORF

IN AUGUST THE Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) released its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the McCloud / Pit Hydroelectric Project in Northern California. In this document FERC staff provides their “preferred alternative” for flows on the McCloud River that could go into the new project license to PG&E. In the DEIS, FERC has evaluated a number of flow proposals from, PG&E, the Forest Service, California Department of Fish and Game, angling Groups, and American Whitewater.



Unfortunately, FERC has recommended a proposal in the DEIS that would drop flows earlier in the spring in order to have optimal wading flows by the opening day of trout season. In the DEIS, the FERC staff states, “Given the importance of the existing blue ribbon fishery in the Lower McCloud River, we give more weight to safe angling opportunities than to recreational boating. Therefore, for reasons noted above, we do not recommend American Whitewater’s recreational spring boating releases.” We find this response astounding, especially in light of the fact that the flows that we recommended would only return 1% of the boatable days to the McCloud. In our view, FERC’s recommendation has nothing to do with balancing interests; it is about eliminating boating from the river.

FERC held a meeting on September 9th in Redding, California to receive public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. At this meeting more than a dozen paddlers showed up to tell FERC staff how important the McCloud River is to the boating community. Additionally, American Whitewater and numerous other paddlers have filed written comments on the DEIS in an attempt to persuade FERC of the benefits of restoring more natural flows on the McCloud River. Other state and federal resource agencies also filed comments supporting the need for more natural flows very similar to those proposed by American Whitewater.

The next step in this process is for FERC to take all of the comments they have received from individuals, organizations, the state, and federal resource agencies, and incorporate them

*Dan Thurber wishing for more water on the McCloud.*

**Photo by Darin McQuoid**

## The Wassataquoik, National Parks, and Paddling

By Kevin Colburn

Mr. Chase has voiced concerns (see opposite page) that the formation of a new national park could result in access limits on numerous rivers and streams in Maine, citing several examples of river closures elsewhere. Yellowstone and Yosemite National Parks currently ban almost all paddling within their borders while allowing virtually all other forms of recreation. These policies are arbitrary and ill conceived, and will hopefully be changed as the National Park Service searches for ways to restore the connection between the American public and their public lands. Only these two original National Parks prohibit paddling, while the other 390 National Parks support paddling. We assume that a new National Park in Maine would fully support paddling on its rivers and streams and we would work with paddlers to ensure that is the case. A new National Park would also offer valuable protections for the rivers that flow in and from its borders.

into the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which we expect to see in early 2011.

Thank you to everyone who provided written comments and participated in the public comment meeting. It is important for all of the resource agencies, PG&E, and other interest groups to see paddlers standing up for rivers such as the McCloud.



## DENIED ACCESS TO THE WASSATAQUOIK

BY RON CHASE

**R**ECENT LAND ACQUISITIONS east of Baxter State Park in northern Maine by Burt's Bees founder Roxanne Quimby have effectively denied paddlers access to a whitewater gem, Wassataquoik Stream. For decades, kayakers and canoeists traveled the old logging roads west of Stacyville to reach this pristine wilderness waterway, but no more. During a canoe trip on the East Branch of the Penobscot River last fall, friends and I found that Ms. Quimby has banned private vehicular traffic on the roads leading to the remote mountain stream. Ironically, Ms. Quimby's first visit to Wassataquoik was apparently by motor vehicle. In an article written by Phyllis Austin for *Maine Environmental News* on October 28, 2005, Ms. Quimby is quoted as saying, "'One beautiful warm, sunny day this summer, Don (Hudson) and Dick (Anderson) drove me up there...We sat on the rocks in the stream, had lunch, took pictures and got acquainted with this beautiful region, which I had never seen until then...'" Many of us in the whitewater boating community encourage Ms. Quimby to reconsider her decision, which denies to many others that same personally rewarding experience.

Initially, I assumed that responsible access for low impact whitewater paddlesports would be allowed on Ms. Quimby's lands. As the erstwhile President and frequent trip leader of a prominent Maine outdoor organization, I sent a club-wide email requesting any information members might have on how we could obtain permission for road access. I received many responses, but they were less than encouraging. After following up on several recommendations, I finally reached Mark Weathers, Business Manager of Ms. Quimby's nonprofit foundation, Ellitsville Plantation, Inc. (EPI). EPI manages several large Quimby land acquisitions, including Wassataquoik Sanctuary. According to a non-profit watchdog organization, Implu

Corporation, in 2008 EPI had assets worth over \$125 million and earned income that year in excess of \$23 million. After an extended discussion with Mr. Weathers, he was emphatic that Ms. Quimby would not permit vehicular access to Wassataquoik Stream for canoeing and kayaking – "at this time."

Ms. Quimby's EPI website states that Wassataquoik Stream is recognized as one of Maine's outstanding wild rivers, ranked as having "greater than statewide or national significance" in the 1982 Maine Rivers Study. Her site also reports that Wassataquoik has a 9-mile stretch of rapids including Orin Falls. It goes on to state that her land management policies are "similar to those in effect in the adjacent Baxter State Park." One notable difference, however, is that Baxter State Park has an extensive system of well-maintained roads open to the public that allow boater and fishing access to Nesowadnahunk Stream, Trout Brook, South Branch Pond and many other bodies of water in the park.

Let me make it clear that I have tremendous respect for Ms. Quimby's accomplishments and her statutory rights as a landowner. Her rags-to-riches story is a testament to her skills and perseverance. Within the law, she has the right to do what she chooses with her property. However, it is difficult to comprehend how denial of access for canoeing and kayaking meets her website's stated goal to "...Provide for compatible public access and low-impact human use..." In fact, humans have canoed Maine's wilderness waterways for ten to twelve thousand years.

According to links on her website, Ms. Quimby is a strong advocate for converting the northern Maine Woods into a National Park. Ms. Quimby is perhaps the park's most prominent and influential proponent. Unfortunately, paddlers know that regarding boater access issues, the federal government cannot necessarily be trusted. Arguably unjustified boating bans in the Chattooga National Forest and Yellowstone National Park are examples. Her decision to deny access to Wassataquoik and support

for a National Park that will encompass much of the northern Maine woods are ominous signs for the whitewater boating community. Does this portend loss of access to the Dead River, Canada Falls, Roll Dams, Allagash Waterway, Rapid River, St. John River and the West and East Branches of the Penobscot? Paddling any of these runs requires travel over logging roads.

We encourage the whitewater boating community to support efforts to protect access to Maine's rivers and streams. More importantly, we implore Ms. Quimby to reconsider her decision to deny access to Wassataquoik Stream. Low impact canoeing and kayaking should be an integral part of any land management strategy in northern Maine.

*Ron Chase is an avid four-season outdoorsman and freelance writer, who co-authored the mountain guidebook, Mountains for Mortals – New England. He is a member of the Maine Department of Conservation Boater Access Committee, former Appalachian Mountain Club Canoe Chair and Director, former Recreational Registered Maine Guide, former President of the Penobscot Paddle and Chowder Society (PPCS), and current PPCS Executive Committee Member and Trip Coordinator. His website is [www.ronchaseoutdoors.com](http://www.ronchaseoutdoors.com) and he regularly blogs at [www.trekalong.com](http://www.trekalong.com).*

# FIRST PLACE

## [TROUBLE]SHOOTING THE MAGPIE

BY MIKE MCDONNELL

*Author's Note: These events happened over ten years ago. In writing this account, I leaned heavily on a copy of the letter that I wrote to my brother the day after I got home from the trip. It was invaluable in reminding me of details that were in danger of being forgotten...or exaggerated!*

**T**HE MAGPIE RIVER flows south into the Gulf of St. Lawrence in the heart of Quebec's Cote-Norde region. In mid-June of 2000, with Y2K safely behind us, our four-man crew left Canton NY, bound for the Magpie. Galen, Brad, Ryan, and I were college pals and had been exploring the Adirondack runs that many Northeastern paddlers savor: the Bottom Moose, the branches of the Oswegatchie and Grasse, and the Raquette's Stone Valley. As New York dried out that summer we were keen to head to greener pastures north of the border. Ryan and I were 20 years old, birthday-boy Brad had just turned 21, and Galen was a salty old 25. We budgeted up to ten days for the entire trip, which was divided into three distinct parts. First, run the challenging West Branch, second, paddle about 25 km down Magpie Lake, and third, run the Lower Magpie down to the coastal highway. We thought the best way to carry food and gear for that amount of time was with boats of a bygone era: Brad took his trusty Crossfire, Ryan his baby-blue Rock-it, Galen selected a Dagger Outburst, and I was packing a Pirouette.

Labrador Air Safari, out of Sept-Iles, transported us to a flatwater section of the Upper West Branch. The water was high, the weather was fine, and we were all anticipating some great paddling as we broke camp the first morning and launched our boats. We were not disappointed: within an hour we were running great rapids, and at this early-season level they were linked by speedy conveyor belts of Class III. We ran ledges sporting huge green tongues, big



crashing waves, and frequent large holes. Most of them were boat-scoutable and the rest were easily inspected from naked outcrops. Occasionally someone would get flipped by a big diagonal or back-endered by a hole, but it was a high-volume flush and we didn't have any real problems. Easy portages allowed us to safely pass the beefiest of the holes. Happily, we found that the loaded boats, although slowed by the weight, punched holes really well if you kept a head of steam on.

Around noon Ryan ran a steep line on the right side of a ten-foot ledge, and ended up reluctantly swimming out of the ornery hole at the bottom. The rest of us ran left and quickly caught up with him. He was fine, and by the time lunch was over everybody had forgotten the swim. The afternoon went on much like the morning, and by the time we stopped to camp, it had officially been a banner day of kayaking.

The next morning brought light rain and more big, stompy, boat scoutable whitewater. So too the afternoon. This was a bombing mission, and any stray misgivings about the breakneck pace were elbowed aside by the sheer fun of it. At 4:00 pm we arrived at a section that was visibly steeper, and we tightened the reins a bit. The maps indicated that this was the

steepest section of the trip. We were about 16 km above Magpie Lake. The river was dropping away around a big left turn and we worked our way down a series of good eddies along the left bank.

Ryan had gotten out on a ledge to scout, and from my boat I could see a large eddy below where he stood. It looked to be about six or eight feet lower than where I sat. Ryan motioned to indicate that it was a slide. As I got to the lip, a ridiculous hole came into view to my right, way out in mid-river, clearly formed by the ledge that I was on. Below me were the much smaller suburbs of that big hole. Sliding down the shallow ledge I looked for a flake or any other feature that I could grab with the blade of my paddle. No luck. I speared the hole and felt my bow rise in the boil beyond it. When it surfaced, I was facing river right and the hull of my kayak quickly settled into the hydraulic at the base of the ledge. I kicked it in reverse, but the hole was pitched toward mid-river and my heavy boat was disinclined to go uphill into the eddy behind me. I sized up the gaping maw in front of me; I was going in.

There was a vicious, folding, green tongue in the middle of the hole and I drove for that, right across the meat. It worked. I felt my left edge dig in and climb up, up,



# STORY CONTEST

*Opposite: Galen poses in front of one of the lower Magpie's rowdy pourovers.*

**Photo by Brad Bassi**

up—this hole ride was about to be over before it even got started! That thought was aborted when the exploding break at the top detonated beneath me. Tumbling violently back down into the trough, robbed of my momentum and trajectory, I knew this hole was about to have its way with me. I resolved to hang on and ride until the flush came. Rolling upright in a sidesurf, I glimpsed Ryan watching from the ledge above. Oh, the horror! The eddy I had been going for was only a few yards away but seemed to be about level with the top of my helmet as I rode low in the beast.

A series of window-shading episodes ensued, eventually transitioning into a gut-busting, end-over-end beating. I was down but not out, and I knew I still had a little gas left in the tank. I snatched a breath when I could and clasped my mouth shut when I couldn't. When I was driven down into the deep and dark, my mind said "Aha!" and I dared to think that it was over. But soon I felt froth on my face again, and then that bone-jarring thumping that left no doubt as to where I was. Enough—I pulled the plug and the boat was vacuumed off my legs. My paddle and one shoe took their leave of me. I surfaced a good distance below the hole and drew one gasping breath before immediately flushing through a second hole. I swam hard toward river left, but most of the flow was going right, pulling me that way. I saw my paddle just ahead and managed to corral it. Again I struggled toward the left, but I was gripped by the main current. The river plunged down through a bunch of holes, maybe five, maybe ten. I was losing count and I realized that I was on track to drown if this continued. I let go of the paddle. I

was too tired to keep my head up through the big standing waves so I just clamped my mouth shut and ducked through them. My legs slammed against a submerged ledge, pitching me forward and sending me grating down a low-angle slide headfirst, into the hole at the bottom. I hit an eddy line but it was swirly and it took me deep. When I came up in hypoxic agony, I saw the river through a fuzzy hole the size of postcard. Instead of peripheral vision there was just warm black out there. Swimming began to seem futile and it seemed like I ought to just stop. Still, my arms continued to flop, one after the other, into the water in front of my face, as if under their own volition. Suddenly I was bobbing in calm water, the paddle floating right there against my shoulder.

Several breaths later, my field of vision returned and I swear it was like being at the theatre when the curtain goes up. Oxygen is a powerful thing. In between water vomits I thanked God for saving my life. Draped over a boulder in a large, waist-deep eddy, I turned and looked upstream and saw my red boat coming downriver. I prayed for the boat to join me in the eddy—and it did. I struggled toward the boat and rolled it upright, only to find that it was not my Pirouette— it was Galen's Outburst. The

implication sickened me; for one swimmer to come down that was bad, but two? At that moment I saw Ryan in the current alongside me, pulling hard downstream. He must have seen my terrified look because he yelled "Galen got out," before charging over a horizon line on river right and disappearing from sight.

I dragged the boat up on a rock and emptied it. Galen and Brad came around some rocks and looked surprised to see me. They told me what had happened above. Ryan had alerted them to my perilous situation. As Brad started down the shallow slide, Ryan shoved his stern and helped pop him safely into the eddy below. As Galen followed, he was out of Ryan's reach, and his line ended as mine had: drawn rapidly into the nasty hydraulic. Swimming out, he lost his paddle and, strangely, one shoe. The second big hole surfed him, took him deep, and spit him into an eddy on river left. By that time, Brad was out of his boat and Ryan was back in his, giving chase.

After passing me and Galen's Outburst in the eddy downriver, Ryan continued on in pursuit of my kayak, having caught a glimpse of it ahead. Just below my eddy, he ran a powerful ledge drop that folded into a juicy meltdown. Surfacing below it, Ryan could feel that his paddle had tweaked on

*Beartown on Magpie Lake. This sturdy-looking cabin was close to the plywood shack in which the author was terrorized by the bear. Unfortunately this cabin was padlocked.*

**Photo by Brad Bassi**



# STORY CONTEST

impact. He began to ferry toward river left, where the rest of us were to investigate. Midstream, his paddle snapped cleanly and he was turned into the current. He jettisoned one blade and tried to complete the ferry with the other. No luck; over the next horizon he went and was beaten by the hole below, eventually swimming out of his boat and climbing onto a river left outcrop.

All of this happened very quickly. From good times to hard times was maybe three or four minutes. So it goes. We stood together on the bank and took stock. We were in a pickle. A borrowed satellite phone in a Pelican case was tucked in the bow of my Pirouette, destination unknown. We had lost a good deal of camping equipment and food. We had two real paddles, a breakdown, half of Ryan's paddle, and two kayaks. We had the maps, and they indicated a slackening of gradient and even gravel bars several kilometers downstream. If we hustled downriver, we might be able to recover a boat. If not, Magpie Lake was the best place for a boatless boater to be anyway. An optimist, I thought our chances were good.

We were standing next to steep, high volume whitewater and it continued as far down as we could see. The rugged bank we were on was impractical for portaging, but we found somewhat easier going on flatter ground up away from the river. We worked together to haul the heavy boats up the steep grade to the top, then began dragging downriver. Ryan headed down the bank in search of kayaks. After a while he rejoined us up top with the welcome news that he had found his boat on river left, complete with gear. Things were looking up. Now we had three paddles and three boats. It was getting late, but I was confident that both my kayak and Galen's paddle would be conveniently beached on the gravel bars a little way downriver. We'd soon be back in business.

Ryan also reported that the river had mellowed somewhat and they could put back on. The three of them returned to the river and I continued downstream on foot. Our plan was to meet at the sandbars, about two kilometers below. After an hour of crashing through thick spruce and alders with only one shoe, I met the others hauling boats upslope again. A steep inner gorge had forced them off the water again. If there were any sandbars around, they were under about eight feet of water. I helped haul the boats around the gorge, then we picked another rendezvous point on the map and I continued hiking. I was trying to maintain a view of the river in hopes of spotting my boat by chance or by providence. It was about 8:00 pm, the early stages of dusk, and I was feeling pretty lonesome. Ahead of me, I saw the others paddle around a bend and out of sight, and I felt panicky. What if I got hurt? It would be morning at the earliest before they would find me. Would they even look for me? That thought was



short-lived; if nothing else, paddlers are tight. We were in this together.

I lay on my stomach on a crag and scanned the river below for anything red. Seeing nothing, I rose and turned back into the woods, ducking past a spruce tree. A sharp, spindly branch jammed directly into my ear and a shot of pain paralyzed the left side of my head. I fell on my face screaming, and as blood ran down and dripped off the tip of my nose, I cried for my mother and waited for unconsciousness to come. The bleeding stopped abruptly and I realized that I wasn't going to die alone at night on



*Nearing the end of the team's one-day descent of the lower Magpie- Brad silhouetted atop Magpie Falls late in the day.*

Photo by Galen Webster



*Opposite: Topo Trio on Magpie Lake. Galen and Brad man the boats while the author rides out back. Note Ryan's broken paddle stuck in the back of my PFD—just in case...*

**Photo by Ryan Goodrow**

the bank of a remote river. At least not yet. I got up and pushed on in twilight until I stumbled upon the others setting up camp. That night was awful.

In the morning my feet were a swollen mess of cuts and punctures. But we were camped on a section of Class II so we tried something else: the Topo Trio. While two kayakers each held onto the other's boat, I stood with one foot on each stern and one hand on each helmet. It was actually pretty easy to balance there and as long as the whitewater was tame, they could maneuver well enough by ruddering and we made good time just floating. Several times we encountered real rapids, which forced us to break up. The others would run the rapid, I'd hobble down the bank, and we'd regroup at the bottom and continue. In this fashion, we reached Magpie Lake by early afternoon.

Near the mouth of the West Branch we found a dilapidated fishing camp. This was to be my Howard Johnson's. We were 25 km of lake paddling and 35 km of whitewater river from civilization. The plan was this: Brad, Ryan, and Galen would paddle out to the coastal highway and send a plane in for me. They thought it might take three days to get out; I prepared myself mentally for five. At 4:00 pm they took off. I watched them go; the air was thick with loneliness.

The abandoned cabin had an old bed in it and I put that thing to good use the first night. I was pooped. The next day was pretty lazy. I built a fire and took in the view and tried fishing, without any luck. That evening, as I lay on the bed, zipped up to the neck in a bivy sack, a black bear appeared in the open door of the cabin. This gave me a considerable start but I scared it away easily by yelling as I thrashed my way out of the sack. I propped the door closed with a branch and went to sleep. I was awakened in the wee hours by footfalls outside. The camp had one small pane window at head-height, and I watched the bear prowl the perimeter before brazenly attempting to

force in a rotten section of the plywood wall. I suddenly felt trapped, and when I saw the flimsy wood bulging inward, I reacted by hitting the wall from the inside with a stick, along with more primal screaming. I could hear him retreat into the trees. This second visit alarmed me, but it was almost daylight and I didn't expect any more trouble. I dozed off. The sun was well up when I awoke to the splintering crunch of rotten wood breaking as the bear made his third and most concerted effort to join me in the cabin. I was the cornered animal and, foolishly, fear gave over to rage; I grabbed the cast iron burners from the top of the old stove, and burst out the door. Rounding the corner of the cabin, I saw the bear on his hind legs at the back corner, and I hurled the four burners at him in rapid succession. If I hit my target at all, there wasn't much reaction. He dropped down and sauntered into the woods, stopping to look back a few times. I stood there trembling.

I spent the day with my back to the lake and my eyes roving the woods. I was gripped with fear and the thought of the coming night, sure that the bear would return with increased resolve as soon as darkness fell. I heard movement close by and was never so happy to see a moose in my life. By dusk, my paranoia was fully developed and I had sinister plans for keeping the bruin at bay. When I heard the drone of an airplane and saw it descending to the lake, I felt like a GI in Vietnam when the chopper comes. Bye-bye black bear. The pilot circled a few times, landed, and taxied over. An hour and a half later I was back in Sept-Iles.

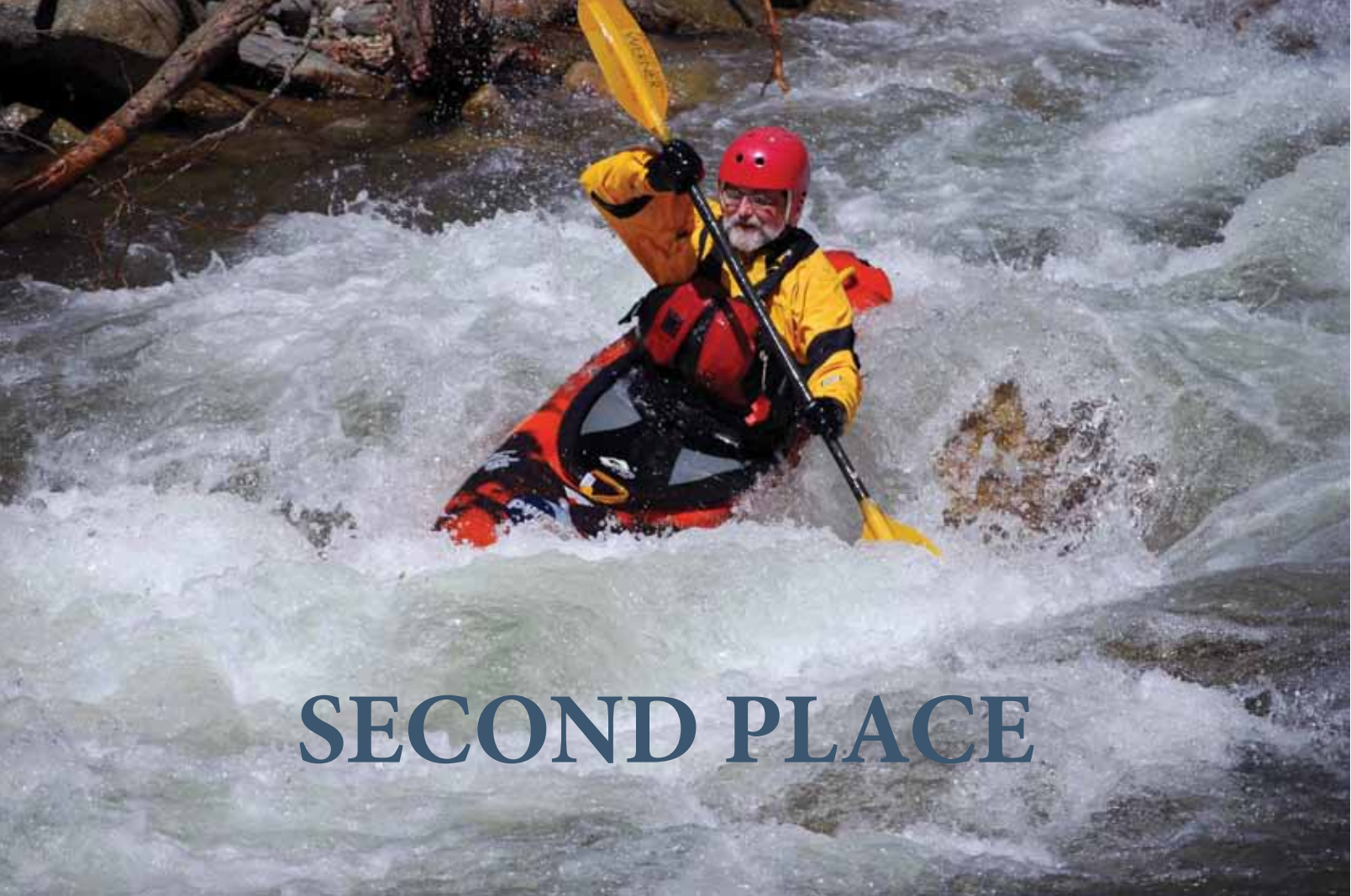
### Afterword

The stick that rammed into my ear did not result in a punctured brain and immediate death, as I had assumed it would. It resulted merely in a punctured eardrum and a whole lot of pus. Some groups do raft-supported trips on the lower Magpie in five or six days; to get me out of the woods, my crew ran it in one. Thanks, guys!

*Ryan holding the line in a stout rapid on the West Branch of the Magpie.*

**Photo by Brad Bassi**





# SECOND PLACE

## THE BOMBPROOF WET EXIT AND BEYOND

BY RAYMOND WILLIAMS

**I**N 1978, WHILE canoeing on Lake Matoaka at the College of William and Mary, I see students in the whitewater kayaking class practicing their rolls. It is one of the coolest moves I've seen. A student flips upside down in the water, then a few seconds later, he sits upright. I'd like to do that.

For some reason, I don't take the kayak class while I'm a student. I spend my twenties and early thirties canoeing easy stuff and backpacking hard stuff, with a few raft trips thrown in. During the early 1990s, I raft the Gauley, and once again, I'm amazed by the abilities of kayakers. They sit still in little pockets of water, calmly talking to our guide, as we blast past them. They even move upstream in places; it seems miraculous. I'd like to do that. This time, I don't procrastinate. I research kayak

schools and decide on the Nantahala Outdoor Center, which is only five hours away.

I begin to imagine myself rolling the kayak and paddling gracefully like the boaters I'd seen on the Gauley.

Checking in at NOC, I meet one of the instructors, Mary, an attractive woman with a friendly smile. Later, I learn that she is one of most influential women in paddling. At dinner, I meet the other participants and second instructor, Pablo. Afterwards, we have our first lesson in the classroom. We introduce ourselves and give our paddling goals.

One woman says, "I don't think I want to say what I do for a living." This gets everyone's attention and elicits a few laughs. Someone says, "Now you have to tell us or we'll imagine the worst."

"I'm a massage therapist," she replies, "but I'm on vacation." Everyone laughs. More importantly, during the clinic week, no one tries to finagle a free massage; although

after the first day, everyone has more than a few sore muscles.

During the session, we learn that the pockets of water are called "eddies" and that they are a paddler's friend. We are shown a diagram of how to enter and exit an eddy. Of course, no one says "enter" or "exit." It's "catch" and "peel out." I realize that in addition to learning new physical skills, I have to learn new jargon as well.

On the carpeted floor we practice the basic C to C bending of the body and hip snap. On the floor, it does not feel graceful. In fact, we fall over awkwardly and clunk our heads on the floor. Mary reminds us that if we were upside down under water, the floor would be the surface, so it's good to hit it. We have to take her word for it at this point. If any tourists who've eaten at Relia's Restaurant happen to wander by, they must think we're some strange backwoods cult performing a ritual, which as I learn more about kayakers, I realize is not far from the truth.



# STORY CONTEST

*Opposite: The author upright on the Tye River (VA).*

**Photo by Leann Perault**

Day one on the water, we learn how to exit the boat while it is upside down. This is known as a wet exit. Over the course of the week, I become very proficient at this, thanks to more practice than I had anticipated.

Learning to kayak isn't quite what I'd imagined. The weather is hot and humid; I'm not sure why we need to wear a wet suit. Flipping in the warm lake water only makes me feel more hot and humid. Plus, it fogs my glasses. We practice T-rescues, basic strokes, and rolling. At one point, while listening to Mary explain a concept, I lean too far and feel the boat start to flip. I know I should do something to remain upright; I just don't know what that is. I decide to practice my wet exit.

After lunch, we head to the river, the mighty town Tuck, more properly known as the Tuckasegee. The water is dark brown, flowing swiftly with big waves, and no sign of our friend, the eddy. Mary and Pablo confer, then announce that a major downpour has pushed the Tuck to an unsafe level for beginners. We drive to the Nantahala. Seeing its clear water with numerous eddies makes me wonder why we didn't start here in the first place. My first impromptu wet exit answers that question. The water is freezing. Now I know why we need the wet suit.

On the river we fall into a routine. One instructor patiently explains the line to each rapid while the other demonstrates it. Mary, especially, is the epitome of grace as she skims across the water, her paddle rarely moving. She and Pablo look like Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire. I feel like Peter Boyle in *Young Frankenstein* (younger boaters: Google "Putting on the Ritz" and "Young Frankenstein" on YouTube—you'll get it).

*Emptying someone else's boat is more fun than emptying your own.*

**Photo by Kurt Sisson**

We wobble down the river in that baby duck procession familiar to anyone who has ever paddled the Nantahala. Our paddles slice the air frequently as we make stroke after stroke, followed by counterstrokes and that backward breaking pry to correct the over paddling we did initially. Mary and Pablo glide into eddies, lean, and face upstream gracefully, just as I remember the kayakers on the Gauley doing. We wobble, lean, counter-lean, snap our bodies, and slap our paddles on the water to avoid flipping. Sometimes, all of the exertion overheats us and we decide to practice our wet exits to cool off. The T-rescues that worked on the lake seemed to have failed us. Pablo and Mary spend as much time hauling us from the river as teaching us, or so it seems.

Yet, they retain their good humor and compliment us on what we do correctly, while patiently suggesting ways to improve our technique. As an English teacher, I admire their teaching skills, but also think they have one advantage over me. When someone is upside down in a cold river while you sit calmly in an eddy, it's a little hard for the student to argue that you're wrong and he's right. I later learn that I am wrong about that, though.

Mary and Pablo gracefully slice across eddy lines, but when my boat hits that same line, it turns sooner than I want, spinning me around as I flail to stay upright. Plus, there are an unbelievable number of rocks lurking just below the surface. The rocks remind me to practice my wet exit, which I wouldn't do otherwise, because—did I mention—the water is cold?

We arrive at a deep pool. Pablo says, "Here's a good place to practice rolling; we'll spot you." If by good, he means a place so cold that you want to spend as little time upside down as possible, then he's correct.

If he means a place where we'll actually roll up, he's wrong. Most of us manage to roll anywhere from 320 to 340 degrees, which is 88 to 94 percent, a good grade in most classes, but not in rolling. We do improve our T-rescues though.

Despite our ineptness, the class is in good spirits that night, and we enjoy our group meal at NOC, laughing and telling stories about our various travels. We also learn more about Pablo and Mary. Both obviously love boating, and their boating stories are impressive.



# STORY CONTEST

Evenings are spent in the NOC cabin talking, reading, or watching kayaking videos. Bedtime arrives quickly. With no air conditioning, we leave the windows open to catch the cool breeze. From the deck below drifts the mumbled conversation of two people: a young woman from New York and an NOC raft guide. She had arrived a day early for her vacation and had met him on a guided ducky trip. Whenever I am about to drift to sleep, one of them laughs, and I jerk awake. Soon there are moments of silence, perhaps he is helping her practice her C to C. During one of those moments, I drift off.

The next morning, I am tired from the exertions of the previous day and from a lack of sleep. The lake is even more unpleasant than yesterday, and my roll isn't much better. Despite her practice the night before, neither is the New Yorker's. I begin to wonder why I thought rolling was so cool. Being upside down is unpleasant; my inflexibility makes it hard for me to get my hands and paddle in position. Even worse, several people in the clinic are rolling successfully almost every time on the lake, but I'm not.

Another NOC group is on the lake, and as an older team flips "Been there," I think, but he rolls up. His group hasn't even practiced rolling, yet. I hate him. As the lake work continues, I sometimes wonder why I've paid for this.

On the river, things are better. My paddling hasn't improved much, but it's more fun to be on the river. Everyone's personalities are emerging more clearly and affecting their paddling progression. One person who rolled easily on the lake and mastered the strokes quickly is more fearful on the river. At times, she freezes and fails to make moves that less skillful paddlers are making. Another is too intense; he tries to overpower the river and tightens up in his boat. He has a good roll, but a weak ferry, something I discover I'm pretty good at. I can keep my boat at the one or eleven o'clock angle as I ferry across the current. Sometimes, it goes to two or ten, but no further. The intense guy goes from one to four o'clock in two strokes and then to six o'clock before barely catching the bottom of the long eddy where we're practicing.

However, one student, an engineer, stands out. He constantly asks me questions about paddling. A nice guy, he's trying

to understand the concepts behind the techniques. Our instructors always explain the concepts, but some moves are counter-intuitive, and the engineer is having trouble accepting them. I just have trouble doing them, but I watch Mary and Pablo and try to imitate them. Each day I get a little better. The engineer will listen, watch, then later in an eddy, he will ask a question with the same pattern, "I know they said we should . . . but don't you think it would be better if . . .?"

I want to say, "Have you noticed how often I swim?" But instead, I reply, "No, I think I'm going to try it the way they said."

Sometimes, he listens. Sometimes, he tests his theories. However, he does remember how to wet exit like they taught him.

The group is improving: fewer flips and more T-rescues. There are few rolls, except when we flip on purpose in easy current. By the end of the day, we're all tired: the students from paddling, the teachers from rescuing us.

The NOC guide is working on his truck when we get back to the cabins; no doubt because a hot gravel parking lot is the best spot in the Nantahala Gorge for car repairs. Fortunately, he finishes his work just as we arrive. That night on the deck, he and the young woman from New York spend more time working on technique and less time talking, so I am able to fall asleep quickly. By the third night, they go elsewhere to practice.

On the third day, we should be paddling better, but we seem to have regressed. Maybe we're tired, or maybe we're taking more chances. In any case, we swim more than ever. On the first day, Pablo had said, "If you're not swimming, you're not learning." We learn a lot that third day. I become very good at holding on to my boat and paddle with one hand and my instructor's boat with the other.

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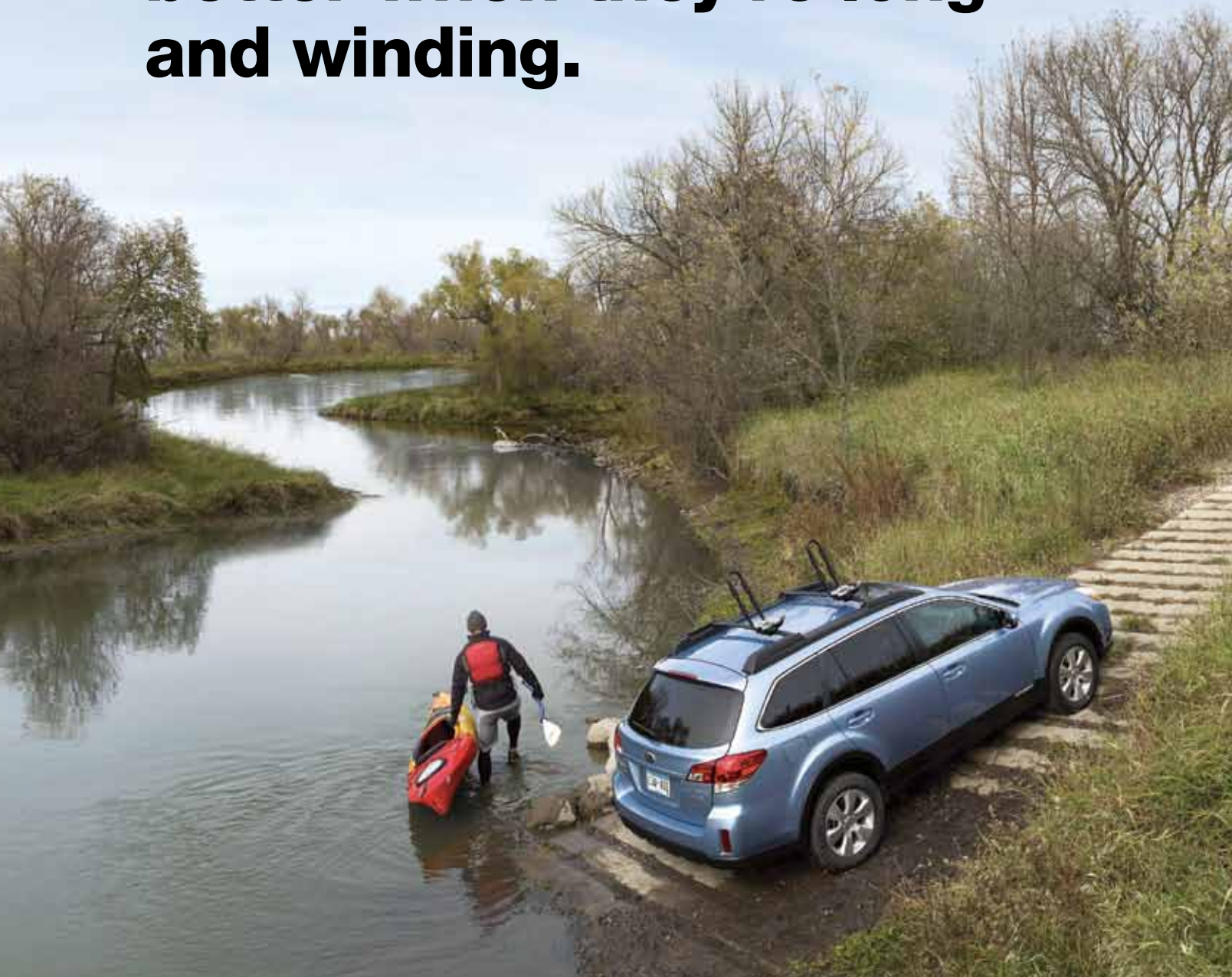
*The author about to demonstrate his bombproof wet exit at Corkscrew on Section IV of the Chattooga (GA).*

**Photo by Morgan Randell**





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# STORY CONTEST

*The author surfing: not quite Fred Astaire, but not Young Frankenstein either.*

**Photo by Kurt Sisson**

By the last day, we are paddling better, catching eddies, choosing lines, and looking less like baby ducks in a procession. We spend more time in the boat and less time swimming. At one point, I hit a rock, and Pablo prepares to chase after me.

But I lean into the rock and feel the current slide my boat around it until I glide into the current below. It is an amazing feeling—so amazing that I decide to take a break from practicing my wet exit.

Later, I catch an eddy, then drift back to give the engineer room to enter. But he has other ideas. He had noticed a rock projecting upstream several feet into the river at a 45 degree angle above the eddy. Reasoning that if he aimed his bow for the space between the rock and the bank, it would stop the progress of his boat faster than the eddy; he tests his theory. The rock does stop his boat immediately, or at least the first few feet of it. The rest of his boat continues downstream as the bow bends around the rock. The boat is now almost in the shape of a 7. Realizing he is trapped, he begins to wiggle and bounce in an attempt to free his bow. Mary yells at him to sit still as she paddles quickly up the eddy. He doesn't hear her, so I yell and fortunately he stops.

She reaches him and explains that if he flips he could be trapped in the boat, so she will



need to straighten it and pull it upstream, which she does. Once in the eddy, the engineer explains why he had aimed for the rock crevice instead of the eddy. For a brief moment, Mary looks past him and gives me a look I recognize. It is the look that teachers use in the faculty workroom when they're describing a particularly difficult class.

The engineer had brought his own boat for the clinic instead of renting one, so Mary tells him that the mishap has compromised its structure enough that it wouldn't be a good whitewater boat anymore. After she paddles off to check on the other students, the engineer asks me, "I know she said not to use it in whitewater, but I think it will be OK. What do you think?"

At the end of the final day, we are told we can run Nantahala Falls if we want. Three of us decide to go for it. After showing us the line, Pablo leads us through the biggest, fastest waves I've seen and into the hardest eddy I have ever caught in my five day kayaking career. I know if I flip, there is no T-rescue or rolling for me there. Thank God, I have a bombproof wet exit.

*Lining up to surf.*

**Photo by Kurt Sisson**



We are running the wild water line: peel out and go right of the top hole, aiming for the triangular shaped rock on river right, then turn just before the rock and follow the current from right to left through the falls. It looks logical and doable from the roadside. From the eddy, it looks much different, bigger and faster. Pablo goes first, and makes it look easy. After a paddle signal, each of the other two goes. Both flip somewhere near the bottom of the Falls. I'm not sure whether they roll or manage a T-rescue. I am too focused on what I need to do.

My peel out isn't pretty, but I manage to miss the top hole, which is the crucial move. However, my adrenaline has me over paddling, and I am on the triangular rock before I know it. I paddle hard on the right in an attempt to turn and miss the rock, but my bow rides up the side, and I feel my boat turning backwards. We had practiced running a rapid backwards earlier that day, so I apply those lessons now. The boat feels good and stable in the current as I start

*Opposite: The author at Corner Rapid on the Maury River (VA), showing that he has improved since his first clinic.*

**Photo by Ken Dubel**



down the tongue going right to left, but looking upstream.

Later, Mary says that the spectators had cheered because it looked like a really cool move. It feels cool, too—that is until I feel the stern sink and start to turn. I slap my paddle and try to brace, but the only result is to signal to the spectators that I am not a hotshot paddler making an impressive move.

In the swirly, frothy water, I try one roll before waving my hands for a T-rescue, and then prove that I can wet exit with grace under pressure—or at least that I can wet exit. Someone yells “rope”; I grab it and swim while he pulls me to shore. Once Pablo has corralled my boat and returned to shore, we high-five and yell in triumph.

The feeling is miraculous, and for the first time that week, I can imagine myself paddling gracefully and skillfully.

## Epilogue

Since that clinic, I’ve continued to paddle frequently, joined several paddling clubs, and made many good friends through

boating. Although nowhere in the same league as Mary or Pablo, I reached my goal of becoming good enough to paddle the New River Gorge, and in fact, went beyond that to paddle the Upper Gauley and Upper Yough, among others. Once, on Section IV of the Chattooga, another paddler commented that my paddle had hardly moved as I crossed the river from one eddy to another, and I realized I had learned one of the lessons Mary taught our clinic. Sadly, Pablo Perez lost his life on a river several years after I met him, but not before enriching the lives of many people both on and off the river. Mary DeRiemer and her husband left the east coast to start their own company on the west coast, where she still teaches with grace, patience, and good humor. She and Pablo gave my paddling hobby an excellent start. I haven’t kept up with my fellow clinic participants, but I’m glad to have spent a week with all of them, including the ones who I mention here humorously.



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Scott Ligare, Kokatat Whitewater Ambassador: South Fork Yuba.  
Photo: ©Darin McQuoid, Kokatat Whitewater Ambassador



# THIRD PLACE

## DUMPSTER DIVING ON THE GRAND CANYON

BY WILL VOLPERT

**W**E'RE IN A van headed to Flagstaff. We hired Ceiba, a company out of Flagstaff, to pick us up at the Diamond Creek take-out for the Grand Canyon, and they've got a driver, so of course we're having a good time telling stories, hooting and hollering. Maybe sneaking beers here and there. Maybe. Over the past 19 days there has not been one moment that couldn't make a great story. We've made great friends with each other. Most of us were acquaintances before the trip but now it's just full on bromances and, hell, even a few romances.

Both my brothers are in the van. Matt is a student at UCSB, Skip at University of Oregon; we don't get on the water together as often as we used to. My girlfriend Dana is sitting next to me. We've done quite a few multi-day trips together but nothing really prepares someone for a 19-day river trip so I'm ecstatic that she loved it as much as I did. Everything other than getting to the river has gone perfectly. Dan Thurber, one of my favorite people to float any river with, had a major vehicle breakdown

*Dana was stoked on having an awesome dry suit.*

**Photo by Will Volpert**

in California. It seems that some gophers took a liking to the wiring under the hood. He had to borrow a van from a friend to get out, and arrived at Lee's Ferry around 10 am the day we were to launch. But that's a whole other story. Other than that, this has been a dream trip. Great people, great river—and really those are the only two things that matter.

In October I purchased two new drysuits: I got Dana a women's drysuit with a drop seat and myself a typical guy's suit in blue/mango. Dana also got a fleecy liner outfit (often dubbed a "penguin suit"). These are sweet to wear underneath your drysuit. They keep you toasty and they're comfortable. Our trip launched December 13th – which is a perfect time of year to ensure that your beer is always ice cold, but it's also that time of year most folks don't go boating because, well, everything is ice cold. With our new drysuits packed and our raft in tow we headed to Lee's Ferry.

We had the river to ourselves and didn't run into another party until the afternoon of our ninth day. We had a great Christmas layover across from Deer Creek. The hiking was



phenomenal, whitewater was plentiful... it was just one of those trips. Dana and I wore our drysuits the entire time we were on the water. They were comfortable so it just never seemed that bad.

Our last night camp was about a mile from Diamond Creek. In the morning we woke up and started putting things away. Dana and I didn't feel like wearing our dry suits with only one mile to go, so we threw them in a black trash bag and into the boat...

Fast forward five hours and the van is pulling into Ceiba's driveway. Our personal vehicles are here so we jump out and move them near the big trailer of mixed gear. All the equipment needs to be separated and put into the correct rig. While Dana and I are throwing things into our little trailer other folks are doing the same with their respective rigs. A few other people are throwing bags of trash into the back of one of Ceiba's trucks, which then is driven to their dumpster where the bags of trash are hurled in. As all this is happening, the trash truck shows up (great timing, right?), picks up the now-full dumpster, lifts it up and over, sets the empty dumpster down, and then leaves for its next destination. Everything is going great.

Let me pause and tell you a few things about relationships. As Dane Cook says, there are two types: you can have a "great relationship" or you can have a "relationship." Dana and I have a great relationship. Regardless of the type of relationship you have, boaters in particular need to be wary of the DTI. This stands for

*Dana Woodruff, Dan Thurber, and Will Volpert enjoying the waters of Havasu.*  
**Photo by Andrew Wilkin**





# STORY CONTEST



Domestic Tranquility Index, an incredibly volatile index that shows exactly how tranquil one's relationship is. For instance, if Dana is having a bad day and I do something nice, like buy her a chocolate snack, the index rises. But, if she is having a bad day and I eat the chocolate snack without asking her if she wants any then the index plummets.

Also, the DTI is tested when shit hits the fan. For instance, when, at this moment in the story, Dana says "Have you seen the drysuits?" this is an instant when shit is definitely hitting the fan because I know that the drysuits are in a black trash bag inside the garbage truck headed to who-knows-where.

We look everywhere. Maybe they weren't thrown out, right? Alas, no one can find them. Dana goes into Ceiba's office to talk to someone who might know where the trash truck is going. Nobody at the trash

company picks up the phone, so she leaves a message. I'm pissed, Dana's pissed, so naturally we blame each other for putting the most expensive articles of clothing we've ever owned inside trash bags. The DTI is plummeting and there is no bottom in sight.

Everything (minus the stupid drysuits) is packed. It's New Year's Eve, we're in Flagstaff, our group wants to party. Dana and I are going to go look for the drysuits and meet everyone at the hotel. We take off headed down the road looking for a garbage truck. The DTI has now officially hit

---

*We laid over across from Deer Creek. A few of us hiked upwards to catch a view of the falls.*

**Photo by Will Volpert**



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# STORY CONTEST

*Even Santa came out to celebrate Christmas with us. We didn't have milk and cookies but we did have an Olympia for him!*

**Photo by Dana Woodruff**

an all-time low. While we're busy yelling at each other Skip calls me and says they were able to get the driver's name and phone number. We call him. He says we aren't really supposed to go through the trash, but he'll wait to dump it until we get to the dump. We look the address up on Dana's iPhone and hit the accelerator.

At the dump the old lady at the gate quizzes us about what we're doing. We try to explain but her response is "You aren't allowed to salvage." I tell her we just really need to see our friend, Patrick, the dump truck driver. She lets us in. We fly by the 5 M.P.H. sign and head into the abyss. I call Patrick; he tells me where he is. We find him and he says that we're "lucky because it was a small load today." The amount of trash is astounding. This would not be a "small load" in my book but, hey, I'm not a trash expert. Patrick, my new favorite person on Earth, gives us a hint. He points at a yellow bucket. "You see that yellow bucket? That was one load before your guys. So," he says, waving his hands in front of a four foot section in the middle



of the huge pile, "your stuff is somewhere around here."

Neither Dana nor I have showered in 19 days. We dive into the trash pile. People throw out a lot more than just household trash. There's a lot of dog crap, two dead cats, and a dead rabbit. And that was just in our four-foot section. As far as we had come, as lucky as we had gotten, and as helpful as everyone had been, I had my doubts that we would find the suits.

There was just so much trash. Too much. And, of course, it's not like a black trash bag is uncommon. But all of a sudden I found a trash bag that was full of empty liquor bottles. These were bottles that had traveled down the river with us, bottles that had united our group and had helped build new friendships, and bottles that were now leading me to our sacred drysuits. I reached down, brushing aside more dog shit, and picked up another black trash bag.

In Flagstaff there are train tracks that go right through the middle of town. It's New Year's Eve and I'm at a bar with a group of friends I would never trade out for anything. Every time a train rolls through town you can get discounted "train shots." Awesome, right? A train rumbles through town, we get train shots, and I hoist my shot high in the air and say, "To the river gods." We cheer and take our drinks. Dana's beside me. We've had a long day of ups and downs with the DTI but we're right back where we started: the index is running high, we're as happy as can be, and we have two awesome drysuits. Plus, hell, we've got a great story.

*Nate Moody and Marcus Lather have no worries while running House Rock in Nate's boat, "the floating patch."*

**Photo by Dana Woodruff**





# STORY CONTEST



## BEER AND LOATHING ON THE UPPER OYACACHI: RUNNING ONE OF ECUADOR'S MOST CONTINUOUS CREEKS

BY DARCY GAECHTER

**T**HE PLAN WAS hatched over a few 20 ounce Pilsners on the porch of Small World Adventure's riverside lodge—appropriately enough because if I were completely sober, Chris and Hilary would have had a much harder time convincing me to go back to that river. But they caught me off guard, 16 ounces in, and the plan was made. We'd leave the next morning and head out to paddle more than 6,500 vertical feet in just under 24 miles. Mano a Mano with one of Ecuador's most challenging rivers, we'd face tremendous gradient, wild jungle, more boofs than we could count, and the omnipresent threat of an Amazonian rainstorm and the subsequent rising of the waters. Ahhh ... the Upper Oyacachi.

The mere mentioning of this river's name conjures conflicting feelings for me. On the one hand, it's an amazing, remote, and challenging run that I love to revisit. On the other hand, it's one of Ecuador's most volatile and unpredictable rivers, and the threat of rapidly raising water is always looming in my consciousness like the memory of a bad dream. I've seen a wide river (80 feet wide) rise over three vertical feet in less than an hour on numerous occasions, so you can imagine how a big rainstorm could render a steep, small volume creek impassable to most mortal kayakers.

The put-in for this run is around 10,500 feet in elevation, and the idea is to boat 24 miles down below the town of El Chaco at 4,000 feet in elevation. The drive from the take-out to the put-in takes over 5 hours and requires both permits and a little Ecuadorian know-how. Once you are on this river, you are on. You need to be ready to get yourself to the take-out either via boating or some serious jungle slogging; there is no hiking out to any road from the Upper Oyacachi. While it is theoretically possible to do this run in one day, it's normally done in two to three days due to several factors: The

logistics of getting to the put-in are tough, the boating is extremely demanding, and the scenery will blow your mind, so it's nice to enjoy it for at least two days once you've gone through all the trouble to get there. One of the biggest challenges of this run is one that paddlers have no control over whatsoever—maintaining the water level you put on with for the entire duration of your trip.

This was to be my third trip down the river. To this date, I'd had a 50% success rate. On my first trip down the river, Don Beveridge and I put on late in the afternoon (planning on a three-day expedition) with fairly low flows. We got to camp around 6 o'clock that night in a light rain. When we woke up, we were relived to see that the river had risen only about 5 inches. As we put on, we found the added flow made for a perfect water level for much of the "inner sections." I am usually inept at guessing river volumes, but I would say on day two we had a perfect 500-600 cfs. We made camp again that night in the rain; only this time it rained *hard* all night long. We awoke to find that the river had visibly doubled in volume, but, at this point, it still didn't look *ridiculous*. We put on and, while we



# HONORABLE MENTION

*Opposite: Don Beveridge, Hilary Neevel, Chris Tretwold group scout the steep, continuous lead in to a nice boof for the finish—the “norm” on the Upper O.*

**Photo by Darcy Gaechter**

were getting pushed around quite a bit, the boating seemed somewhat reasonable. Reasonable, that is, until about 15 minutes downstream of our camp, when we hit a tributary coming in from river left that *again* doubled the volume of the river.

As we cautiously made our way downstream, we hit more tributaries that continued to swell the volume of the river to a now absurd level. For the next five hours we “groveled” our way down the river, paddling what we could, but mostly portaging until we got cliffed out, then finding the most survivable place to ferry across to the other side to resume the portaging. It adds a certain amount of stress to a ferry when you cannot reassure yourself with any certainty that you will survive if you blow it. At this point we both guessed that there was, at a minimum,

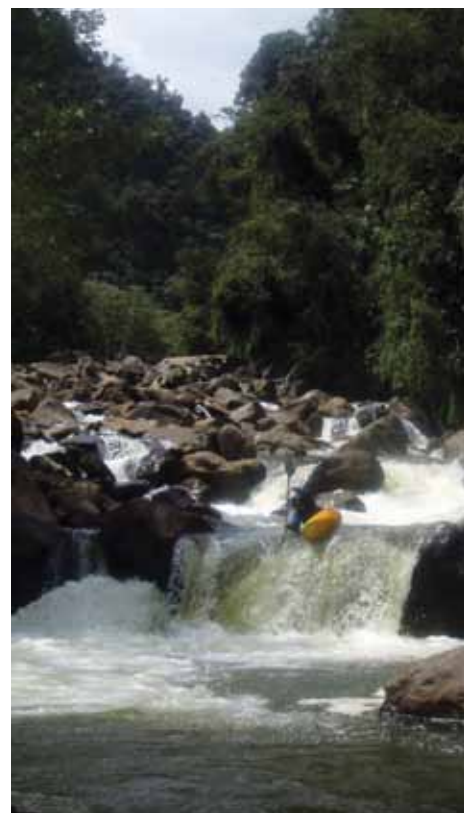
5,000 cfs in the river. Most of the upper run averages between 300-400 feet per mile. Combine that with a flood stage volume and you are officially screwed.

It continued to rain hard all day, and the river was still visibly rising, so waiting out the high water didn't seem like a viable option (especially since all we had left to eat were a few energy bars and one bag of tortilla chips). The one saving grace of the Upper Oyacachi is that there is a trail that “follows” the river. It's definitely nothing to rely upon, as, for at least three quarters of the trail's length, it is many hundreds (and sometimes thousands) of feet above the river level. But, after five hours of attempting some semblance of kayaking (and failing), we finally found at point where the trail came close to the river, and happily committed ourselves to it. “Trail” is a generous term for what we hiked along, but being covered head to toe in mud, having our dry tops torn by thorny vines, and wearing holes in our booties all seemed like an excellent alternative compared to the horrible thundering river below.

After enduring more slippery, slimy hiking with a loaded creek boat than I ever really bargained for, we made it to the put-in for the day run on the Lower Oyacachi. We've paddled this day stretch at quite high levels before, but we'd never seen it anywhere near as high as it was this night. There is a tiny village there and we found out we had missed the last truck out to town (1 hour away) by less than 15 minutes. This was before the advent of cell phones in Ecuador, it was getting dark, and there is no way in hell we were going to paddle the day stretch. We were utterly beaten down and whipped by the river, and we resigned ourselves to another soggy night out eating tortilla chips as our dinner. We pitched our tent on the only level ground we could find—the cement bridge pylon overlooking the cause of all our suffering. While Don and I did go back the next year

*Chris Tretwold on day two of the Upper Oyacachi. This is a typical rapid for this run; there are hundreds more like it.*

**Photo by Darcy Gaechter**



*Darcy Gaechter finishing one of the more complex boulder mazes with a sweet 10-foot boof.*

**Photo by Chris Tretwold**

and complete a successful two-day descent of the run with great water levels the entire way, my first trip is what comes to mind whenever someone talks about paddling this run.

So you can imagine my dismay when Chris and Hilary brought up the Upper Oyacachi on that otherwise wonderfully peaceful afternoon. We were sitting on the porch reflecting upon another successful season of kayak guiding in Ecuador, watching hummingbirds and enjoying our Pilsners. We (Don, Larry, Chris, Hilary and I) had just finished a winter of guiding for Small World Adventures, and were looking at a few days off before going our separate ways back in the US. We'd tossed a few ideas around of how to spend our final days in Ecuador, but a kayaking trip of some sort won out in the end (duh, what else would kayak guides do with their time off)? Hilary and Chris



# STORY CONTEST

just finished their second season guiding in Ecuador, and had been thumbing through the guidebook looking for runs they hadn't done yet. I guess they wanted to "go out with a bang," so to speak, and were looking for something "hard."

Chris and Hilary were intrigued by the book's description of the Upper Oyacachi. I can't blame them, it's an amazing and alluring river, but Don and I had been before, and knew what sort of suffering that section could dish out. Larry Vermeeren, who was on the first descent of the Upper Oyacachi with Don Beveridge and Adam Carter was sitting next to us silently smirking and shaking his head as he always does whenever he hears Don and I discuss heading back to this run. He, like Don and I, is all too intimate with that "officially screwed" predicament that comes with too much gradient and too much water on the upper reaches of the Oyacachi River.

Hilary had never done a kayak-supported overnighter before and I could tell she was starting to like the idea of this being her first (never one to do things half-heartedly, Hilary figured she might as well go big). I just wanted her to know what potential suffering she could be in for (okay, okay, I was trying to talk her and Chris out of it, but without actually admitting my own fears). To Don's and my disappointment, however, Chris and Hilary were motivated and the math all worked out. They had exactly 75 hours before they needed to be at the Quito airport to get on their flight back to Bellingham. If the weather cooperated, we could get organized, paddle the river, and still get them back to the lodge in time to pack up all their belongings and hop on a bus to Quito to catch their flight.

With each successive sip of Pilsner, Don and I relented more and more. Finally, beer-induced bravery spurred us on towards the Upper Oyacachi, and we decided upon a plan: we would finish our beers, get the requisite permits, eat dinner, go to sleep, and the next day begin the adventure. Chris and Don went to town with our friend Wilo to negotiate the permits while Hilary and I gathered up all the overnight gear and



started packing the boats. Luckily, Wilo has enough local clout to interrupt a town meeting to get the mayor to sign our paperwork for the permits; after all, the clock was ticking, only 70 hours remained and we couldn't waste 24 of them waiting another day for permits. Wilo is the man! We never could have procured the permits on such short notice without him.

We woke up in the dark the next morning, made ourselves two days worth of peanut butter sandwiches and loaded our gear into Wilo's truck. We left the warm, dry sanctity of our lodge and drove up through the Cayembe-Coca Ecological Reserve (this is why we needed the permits). We were graced with amazing sunrise views of two snow-capped volcanoes—Antisana (18,875 feet) and Cayembe (18,996 feet) and suddenly all the fear and anxiety of the river vanished and I felt lucky to be visiting this extraordinary place once again. Finally, around 11 am, we arrived at the put-in to one of Ecuador's steepest runnable creeks. With boats loaded down with food and gear for "at least two days," we pushed

*Darcy Gaechter and Hilary Neevel (half in the photo on the left side) in a typical Upper Oyacachi boulder garden on day two.*  
**Photo by Chris Tretwold**

off into the continuous and relentless Upper Oyacachi—a run that fewer than 15 different people have ever done.

We had checked the flow the day before on the "regular" run (a somewhat futile act, since in Ecuador it only takes a matter of hours for things to change, but reassuring nonetheless) and found it to be a great medium to low level. We were lucky and had clear skies all the way to the put-in where we found a water level we were happy with. There are countless significant tributaries that come in during the course of the 24-mile run, so the flow you want to find at the put-in could be considered "bony" at best. Looking back upstream for the first few miles of the trip, we definitely saw more boulders than water, but usually were able to find boatable lines through the vast maze of boulders. Gradually the flow increased and we actually begin to feel like we were really kayaking.

Steep, technical approaches led to countless boofs mostly in the three- to 10-foot range. Continuous boulder garden rapids separated by what might generously be labeled as "pools" defined our day of paddling. As I already mentioned, the average gradient on the Upper Oyacachi ranges between 300 and 400 feet per mile down to the put-in for the regular run (the average for the entire run is 270 feet per mile, but the first 4 miles, and last 6 miles are relatively "flat" leaving the bulk of the gradient concentrated in the middle section). As a team, Hilary, Don, Chris and I are very competent boat scouts, yet the longest we ever went in the upper section without someone having to scout was 13 minutes—and yes, I timed it! The largest, and only true waterfall on the run is roughly

***Opposite:** The Volcano Antisana, our view on the way to the put-in. It doesn't get any better than this!*

**Photo by Darcy Gaechter**



15 feet tall. So, you can do the math, this means very few pools of any consequence, insanely steep boulder gardens, countless awesome boofs, and all and all two days of extremely tiring, but satisfying Class V kayaking.

Day one went well with us making as much downriver progress as possible (it was usually slow going though with one of us having to scout almost every drop). After 7.5 hours of paddling, around 6:30 pm, we arrived at a large rapid that mandated a group scout. Upon scouting, we noticed a fine looking beach for camping. "Camp spots" are often hard to come upon in Ecuador because the typical river's shore is made up either of steep walled basalt cliffs, or rainforest so thick it would be hard to find space to set your paddle down, let alone pitch a tent. So we called it a night, and settled into to a cozy campfire, ate some hummus and lentils, and had nice granite boulders to relax on. It rained for all of three minutes that night, which were an awfully stressful but inconsequential three minutes nonetheless. I thanked everyone I could think to thank when we woke up in the morning to clear skies and good water levels.

On Day two we shoved off around 7:30 am. Chris and Hilary had about 38 hours until

their flight left, but with the blue skies and good water levels, confidence abounded that we'd make it out in time. Everything went smoothly, and we encountered some of the most quality rapids below our camp. It's amazing how seemingly innocuous boulder gardens can turn out to be unbelievably steep upon further inspection! But the river is also amazingly runnable considering how steep and continuous it is. We arrived at the "normal" put-in for the lower section of the Oyacachi River around two in the afternoon. The four of us looked at each other—tired and somewhat beaten down after a total of 14 hours of paddling Class V—and said "no catching eddies until the take-out." We blazed the "day stretch" in 1 hour and 25 minutes. The painful muscles were no competition for the overwhelming feeling of accomplishment of having successfully finished one of the hardest runs in Ecuador.

6,500 feet, 24 miles, and two beautiful days of sunny creeking later, we emerged from the daunting Upper Oyacachi Canyon. Chris and Hilary made it back to Quito in time to catch their flight home, and Don and I reunited with Larry to share one last beer on the porch before the three of us headed home to try to catch the last few weeks of ski season in Colorado.



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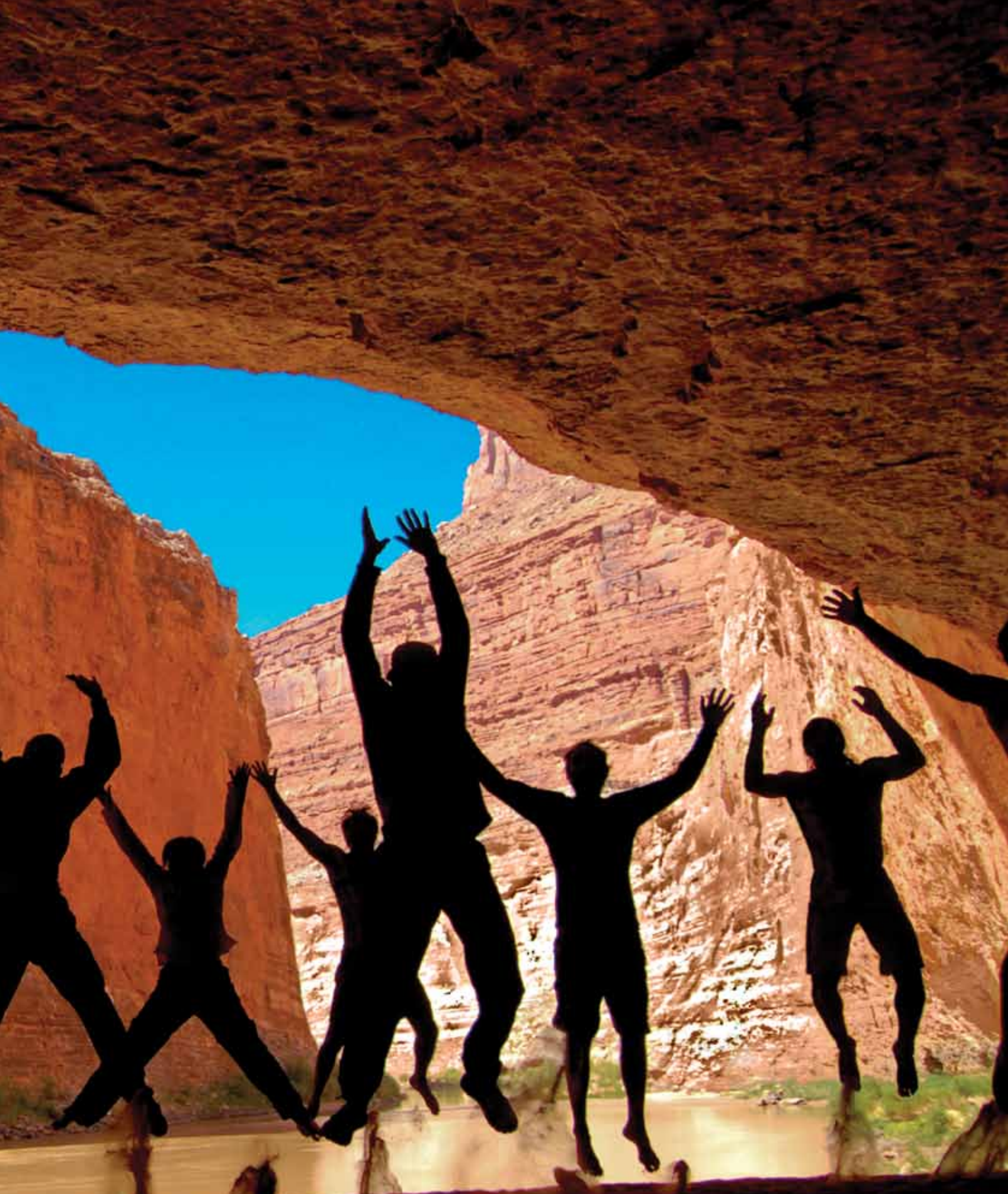


# PHOTO CONTEST

## 1<sup>ST</sup> PLACE







Jump in Red Wall Cavern on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon.  
Photo by Cathy Howard/[www.cathphoto.com](http://www.cathphoto.com)



# PHOTO CONTEST



**2<sup>ND</sup> PLACE**

*David Levitt smelling like a rose in Double Drop on Upper Cherry Creek (CA).  
Photo by Rok Sribar*



**3<sup>RD</sup> PLACE**  
**COVER PHOTO**

*Ben Stookesberry on Upper Cherry Creek (CA).  
Photo by Darin McQuoid*



# HONORABLE MENTION



*Lava Falls on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon.*  
Photo by Cathy Howard/[www.cathphoto.com](http://www.cathphoto.com)



*Chris Burnham feeling the flow at Moshier Falls on the Beaver River (NY).*  
Photo by Harry Berking

# PHOTO CONTEST



*Nearly 100 paddlers attended a "Huckoff" at Grace Falls on the Bear River, Black Canyon Run (ID) to raise funds for a school in Nepal.*

**Photo by Rebecca Margraf**

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*A downstream view of the sunset from Hulapai Acres Campsite in Grand Canyon NP. This photo is an HDR image created from five photos.*

**Photo by Robert Griffiths**

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*Shadow Dancing on the wall of the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River.*

**Photo by Cathy Howard/[www.cathphoto.com](http://www.cathphoto.com)**

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# HONORABLE MENTION



*Hilde Schweitzer, South Fork American (CA).*  
Photo by Darin McQuoid

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*100-foot shadow on the wall of the Grand Canyon  
with the Colorado River flowing through.*  
Photo by Cathy Howard/[www.cathphoto.com](http://www.cathphoto.com)

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*David Bumgarner running Kootenai Falls  
in Montana.*  
Photo by Derek Marson

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# PHOTO CONTEST



Mayhem on the Cache La Poudre River (CO).  
Photo by Brad Modesitt



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# STORY CONTEST

## WILD & SCENIC BACHELOR PARTY: FOUR DAYS OF TREPIDATION, INTOXICATION AND RED MEAT ON THE MIDDLE FORK FEATHER

BY PETE GAUVIN

**W**E ARE DRAGGING Tecate. There is so much beer in the raft on our first day on the Middle Fork of the Feather River—as well as a cooler of frozen red meat and bacon—that the back end keeps hanging up on shallow rapid entrances.

It is a handicap we might do without, but not really. It's Greg's Bachelor Party and there are seven kayakers and three of us in the raft. We need that beer—as well as an auxiliary supply of whiskey, rum and red wine—to lube the wheels of collective male revelry for the next three nights. It's also welcome in easing the nerves of Middle Fork virgins like myself and Greg's brother, Jeff Speicher, from Colorado.

Luckily, for us and our oarsman/commando "guide" Roman Nelson, the first day is the easiest, relatively, so we're told. I use quotations here, because Roman, like his two apprehensive bow paddlers, has never been down this classic 32-mile stretch of Class V running deep in the bedrock cleavage of the Northern Sierra.

Shouldn't a "guide," after all, know what's around the next bend?

Greg, who's paddled the Middle Fork several times and regularly paddles Class V, recommends Roman. "He's a better rafter than a kayaker," he says.

This ringing endorsement is dubious comfort for two neo-rafters. Jeff and I just met the night before when Greg and I picked him up at the Reno airport. A financial advisor in Durango with a wife and daughter and another kid on the way, Jeff becomes my instant partner in Class V anxiety. Years before he was a competitive rodeo kayaker, but recently he has spent far too much time in a desk chair to feel



comfortable committing to a kayak seat on the Middle Feather.

### Experts Only?!

The Middle Feather is widely regarded as the best multi-day river trip in California, and one of the most difficult. Protected since 1968 as one of six original rivers of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, it is the only fork of the Feather that runs free above the slackwater of Lake Oroville.

"None but teams of experts should attempt the Middle Fork gorge," warns the guidebook *California Whitewater* by Jim Cassidy and Fryar Calhoun.

Descriptions like this put me on the kayak-versus-raft bubble as well. I'm a competent whitewater kayaker, but an occasional one, not an ardent boater with miles of sustained Class V under my dry top. Potentially getting in over my head on a multi-day run seems like a bad idea, not too mention a bachelor party bummer should I get rattled or worse. I don't want to chance becoming an unfortunate headline, a sad footnote in the marital union of Wendy Sue Lautner and Greg Speicher.

This, and the fact that Jeff's trip is hinging on the availability of another rafter, makes backing out hard and the decision to raft easy, even though I have major reservations about taking on an intense wilderness river

in a craft that to my inexperienced eyes looks to be a flexy rubberized ejection vessel. And as any kayaker knows, swimming is bad.

As we float down the first few miles of Class III and IV rapids, Roman addresses this concern. "When I say, 'Get down!' get all the way down on the floor on your knees. And keep paddling! STAY IN THE BOAT!"

### Rubber Needle

The real kayakers, a talented, experienced collection of boaters most of whom are Middle Fork veterans, serve as our probes. But kayak cowboys do not always pick the best lines down boulder-strewn mazes for 14-foot inflatable wagon loads. We know this but the lesson is quickly reinforced by experience.

Although our raft rig is a bit portly, we do have the equivalent of "four-wheel drive," as Roman puts it, with him at the oars and Jeff and I as bow paddlers, allowing for maximal mobility. We just have to learn to use it, and quickly.

Where the kayakers often thread lines in an enviably direct and effortless fashion, maneuvering the raft seemingly requires a thousand more strokes, a heart-pounding blend of frenzied back paddling and ferrying and draw strokes, often to set up a last-second raft rotation by one of Roman's oars



# HONORABLE MENTION

*Opposite: Roman Nelson running a narrow slot during a supposed "portage."*

Photo by Pete Gauvin

to squeeze through a constriction without broaching ... and then maybe we're down to our knees in the bow diggin' like escaped convicts to punch a hole. It's exhausting, and of course, exhilarating.

By the time we reach a pool at the bottom, or often sooner, Jeff and I are completely gassed. Neither of us had a clue as to how physically demanding paddling a raft would be. My previous raft experience was more than a decade ago and mostly on Class III water. Since I started kayaking, I'd often jokingly derided rafts as cattle boats. Now, my preconceived notions have been reduced to hamburger, along with my arms. And we've got days to go and tougher rapids ahead.

## Load Consumption

Which brings me back to all that beer. The plan is that by the time we hit the increasingly difficult chokepoints of Franklin Canyon and Devil's Canyon, our burdensome beer ballast will be greatly reduced, making the raft much lighter and more maneuverable.

The first night, at Horseshoe Bend, an emerald-green elbow in the river 10 miles down from put-in, we make a conscious effort to quaff a literal boat load of beer, or at least reduce it by half.

No problemo! A pile of crushed cans the next morning is testament that all stepped up to the Tecate challenge. The equivalent of an anchor has been lifted in 12-ounce increments.

Unfortunately, perhaps, for Jeff and I, our buzz is long gone by morning and the internal butterflies swarm as we load the raft and don our river armor for Day Two. We will have to face walled-in Franklin Canyon, where the river turns solid Class

V and drops 140 feet per mile, with the knife-edged nerves of sobriety.

## Dump Truck

With each rapid run, our comfort and competence level increases. We're making good progress and getting pretty impressed with ourselves. But the river is about to humble us and remind us how quickly it can buck you and your overblown confidence.

Near the end of a lengthy, turbulent rapid, we miss our last move and get pushed sideways up against a large boulder in the middle of the current.

"High side left, high side left!" Roman screams.

But it's too late for me. I'm on the right side, the low side. My feet slide right out of the foot cups and I'm in the water in a split second, worried that I might be pinned against the very same rock that the boat is stuck on. Instead I go under it. I'm relieved to quickly see daylight and get flushed into a pool. Jeff gets spit out too, but out the other side of the rock.

I thought surely the raft would flip, but Roman manages to keep it right side up, stay in the boat and pivot off the rock. Quickly back in the raft in the pool below, Jeff and I are relieved but a bit rattled by how quickly things went south.

"That's what we call a dump truck," says Roman. "When all the passengers go overboard and the guide stays in the boat."

We're all thankful and thirsty when we reach a large sunny and sandy camping beach not too far down. Time to loosen up and let the party begin.

## Strippers and Flesh

The running joke since the put-in has been when, where, and how the strippers will arrive. Some claim they will be kayaking in and catching up to us tonight, purporting to have found that seemingly rare combo—strippers who are also Class V kayakers, or vice versa. The other tale is that they are going to hike down to the river where the Pacific Crest Trail crosses and join us there.

On the beach, the party ringleaders are quickly in motion. Paddles are stuck in the sand in a circle surrounding a spare oar—the dancer's pole. Playboy centerfolds are taped to the paddles.

Rapid inebriation is taking place. The remaining beer is being polished off. A kayaker who swam down his bootie beer. A couple of Kiwi paddlers happen onto the party a bit shocked by the turn their wilderness trip has taken, but happy to share some cold beer and witness a crazy American bachelor party.



*Greg Speicher, the bachelor party's man of honor, watches as C-1 paddler Norwood Scott runs a chute in Devil's Canyon.*  
Photo by Pete Gauvin

# STORY CONTEST

Stiffer booze begins making the rounds. None more so than a pitcher of mudslide, which is about to wipe out the guest of honor. But not before he's blindfolded, forced to wear a skirt and bra and other humiliating garb, and do a jig while hanging on the spare oar. The hazing is in full force. There will be no strippers, other than Greg himself.

There is plenty of flesh, however. When he finishes tormenting the debilitated bachelor boy with sizzlin' dry ice cocktails and other concoctions, ace paddler/campfire griller Aaron Stabel begins churning out a parade of red meat for the crowd of ball-scratching carnivores—tri tip, carne asada, flank steak, sausages, even marinated lamb.

It's a diet at once satisfying and somewhat disgusting ... but we don't want the meat to go bad so Aaron keeps cooking and we keep eating. After a recovery snooze, even Greg is back at the fire, and he's wearing his party shirt. Animal.

## Steppin' It Up

Strong coffee and a plunge in the river help take care of the morning cobwebs. But the butterflies are back. Today we finish Franklin Canyon and camp near the entrance of Devil's Canyon. Silence drapes over the raft as we contemplate what's around each bend, what's over each horizon line.

We scout diligently and portage the worst. We're now a more intuitive smooth-shifting 4x4, impressing the kayak posse with our ability to stick difficult must-make lines.

At mile 26, in the lower chamber of Franklin Canyon, we all get out to scout a thundering plunge, a rapid called, appropriately enough, Eat the Meat, a large and chunky drop with a huge hole at the bottom. Having had our fill the night before, we all decide to skip this one.

Everyone except Greg. He walks back up and slides into his Fluid creek boat. I hold my breath; Greg has shown a propensity for getting stuck in holes. He runs the drop bearing left and, after some momentary stickiness, rides a lateral wave out, styling

it. The night before he lost his guts and now he's showing who has the most.

Seeing this, Aaron considers walking his boat back up to run it.

"That's bad karma," warns Norwood Scott, C-1 paddler extraordinaire. "Once you hike your boat down you shouldn't second guess your decision."

Not wanting to court a bad-karma beatdown, we all abide by Norwood's river credo. Jeff and I are happy to. And besides, Greg deserves his very own slab of prime-rib mettle.

We make camp soon after, before entering Devil's Canyon, where camping spots are slim. The beer is long gone and provisions are thinning. We still have a load of bacon, though. The challenge of cooking it without starting a grease fire is the night's entertainment.

## The Finale

Devil's Canyon is a granite gorge with walls rising a couple of thousand feet above a river choked with massive boulders. We only have five miles to go, but they're tough miles, including a .3-mile mandatory portage and a couple of big rapids that cannot be walked.

It's our last day, but this knowledge keeps our testicles in our throats and our survivor's elation in check.

We knock out some serious rapids and arrive at the big portage, a long, jumbled, multi-tiered rapid that ends with a drop over Granite Dome Falls. Roman de-rigs the raft and everyone assists in the gear hauling. The raft is left inflated, turned on its side, and carried in centipede fashion along the steep, cliff-side footpath.

As we're enjoying a well-deserved lunch atop a house-sized boulder, a team of six other kayakers appear, scouting

the portage rapid. It's the missing second half of the bachelor party that we expected would catch up with us on the second night. They give up contemplation of running the dangerous maze of boulders and drops, depriving us of our front-row seats to potential carnage, and are soon hiking down to meet us.

Our colorful kayak brigade has swelled to a baker's dozen. There are only a few miles to go to take-out, but there's still plenty of meat left, including two notorious Class V's: Helicopter, a must-run, and Grand Finale.

Scouting Helicopter, we watch as a couple of kayakers get tossed and flushed out upside down, unharmed. In the raft, under the capable hands of its now river-hardened crew, it's no big deal. We run it clean. Broad smiles of relief and elation appear.

Grand Finale also roughs up some kayakers, but once again we run it without drama. In the pool below, a leftover Nalgene bottle of Maker's Mark Kentucky whisky makes the rounds.

Less than a mile later we pull out at the Milsap Bar Bridge. We peel down to shorts and sandals and crack beers and jokes, bathe in warm sunlight and the glow that comes from completing an epic trip, a once in a lifetime trip for some of us ... provided that Greg never has another bachelor party.

Good luck Greg and Wendy!



*The crew at camp on Day Two, the night of debauchery.*

Photo by Pete Gauvin



# HONORABLE MENTION

## A SOUL SAVED ON THE NARROWS OF THE GREEN?

BY JOSEPH GREINER

**T**HE RIVER WAS deserted except for Woody's small group. Woody was in the lead and swimming towards the final, very undercut drop.

Today, there is a race that runs the meat of the Narrows, but almost 20 years ago, in the summer of 1991, the river was just beginning to be explored. The boats of choice were the Perception Corsica, the Dagger Freefall, and the Noah Jeti and Jeti Grande. A few brave souls paddled the Dagger Crossfire. Today's paddlers recognize all but the Jeti as "long boats"; some racers even use them in the annual Green Narrows race. Back then they were cutting edge designs. Boofing had just been introduced and all the boats of that era were displacement hull boats. Planing hull boats were still in the imaginations of the designers.

Squirt boating was entering the whitewater lexicon and many creekers had appropriated some of the squirting style and gear. Woody Callaway (real first name of Forrest) had adopted a forest green ensemble. He had a green life jacket and a stylized, swept back, fiberglass green helmet with a lizard like pattern on it. Woody is a large man and with his sunglasses on, he looked a bit like an imposing bug-eyed something out of a sci-fi film.

As Woody put it when I asked him about exploring the run, "We were going down there and each time we would try to successfully run one more rapid. We named 12 significant rapids and called them the dirty dozen starting at Frankenstein and ending at Hammer Factor." The first 11 are packed close together and make up the meat of the run. Then, there is a longish stretch of boogie water until the last rapid, Hammer Factor, which ends in a deep, large pool and lies about 400 yards above the take-out parking lot.

Hammer Factor was run by trying to climb the left hand wall and dropping parallel

*Many years later, a paddler makes the move beneath the undercut in Hammer Factor on the Green River Narrows (NC).*

**Photo by Jakob Käfer**

to the current into a narrow slot that is deeply undercut on the right side. The narrow slot flows out into the placid pool. But if too much (and it didn't take much to be *too much*) right hand angle occurred, the paddler almost invariably found himself stuffed under the undercut. Not as bad as it sounds; the outflow was strong, the undercut deep and clean and parallel to the current. Boaters just waited it out and rolled up in the pool.

As I said, Woody was leading the group on this fine summer Saturday in 1991. The weather was good, and as they approached Hammer Factor everyone was pleased; the run had been clean. Just above the drop into the slot, there is a feature called the Toilet Bowl. Woody swam out of the Toilet Bowl and was headed inexorably towards the drop.

As Woody tells it, he knew what was coming: "There was no time to make it to shore or an eddy. I knew I was swimming Hammer Factor and no one was ahead of me; I was going deep under the undercut. I would be down there a while. When I entered the slot, I took a huge, deep breath and held it and held it. The turbulence under the undercut was as expected. I felt myself inching towards the pool. My breath was starting to run out. Hold it! Hold It!! There's the pool. There's the surface. Quick! Get to the surface. I broke



the surface, surging up to the sky, took a large, loud, deep breath ... and scared the bejesus out of an unfortunate fisherman who had wandered up to the pool to fish. Poor guy never touched the ground all the way back to the take-out parking lot. Even from the pool, I could hear his wheels spin as he peeled out. Felt bad."

Woody later added this PS. He said he went back up to the pool to see the view the fisherman had seen. He found the guy's fishing gear and a moonshine jug. He said he always wondered if some good came out of that. Maybe the fisherman became a Friend of Bill.

One more person scared sober by whitewater boating?

# ELECTIONS

## American Whitewater Constitution Changes

**C**HANGES TO THE AW Constitution require a 2/3 vote of members submitting ballots during the fall election cycle. The major proposed change to the Constitution is the addition of term limits for Directors. This revision will limit AW Directors to no more than four (4) consecutive terms (12 years total) and no more than two (2) consecutive terms without serving as an officer or key committee chair. As part of the online election of new Board members you will be asked to approve the amended AW Constitution.

## American Whitewater Constitution

The Membership of American Whitewater hereby agrees to this amended and restated Constitution of the Organization as of this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2010.

### 1. NAME

The name of this organization is American Whitewater.

### 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of American Whitewater is to:

- Encourage the exploration, enjoyment, and preservation of American recreational waterways for human powered craft;
- Protect the wilderness character of waterways through conservation of water, forests, parks, wildlife, and related resources;
- Promote safety and proficiency in all aspects of white-water activities such as the navigation of moving water, teaching, teamwork, leadership, and equipment design, by publishing and demonstrating developments in these and related fields;
- Promote appreciation for the recreational value of wilderness cruising and of white-water sports.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in this affiliation is open to all individuals interested in the recreational use and conservation of American waterways who will subscribe to the above purposes.

### 4. AFFILIATED CLUBS

All clubs or organizations which share the above purpose are invited to affiliate as member clubs.

### 5. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The powers, duties and responsibilities of proper management of the affairs of this organization shall be vested in a Board of Directors, to be elected to staggered terms by the individual dues-paying members of the organization. The Board of Directors shall consist of not less than 9 nor more than 30 individuals who are each members in good standing of the organization. The Board of Directors shall specify the number of members to serve on the Board before each election. The Board may also appoint up to 10 Honorary Board Members.

Honorary Board Members shall be individuals who, by reason of special expertise, experience, or other qualifications, are especially qualified to advise and assist the Board. Honorary Board Members shall be nonvoting.

Meetings of the Board may be conducted in person or by telephone, including conference calls. Voting and other Board actions may be taken at a meeting, by telephone or e-mail polling, or by mail.

The Board of Directors shall be assisted by a six-member Executive Committee composed of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and two (2) at large members nominated by the full Board. The President shall be chairman of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall be in session at all times, and shall exercise all powers of the Board of Directors; subject only to such restrictions as the full Board may from time to time impose.

The Board, as a full Board or through its Executive Committee, shall have the power to manage all of the business affairs of the organization; to elect or appoint officers or committee chairpersons; to fill all vacancies on the Board, or any committee, or in any office if any when the same occur; to remove from office any officer, Director, or committee member for good cause shown; to hire the Executive Director of the organization; and to do any act reasonably necessary to the attainment of the purposes of the organization.

### 6. NOMINATING NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Before an election the Board of Directors shall prepare and publish in an official communication (journal, website, e-mail, direct mail, etc.) a list of nominees to fill vacancies on the Board, together with their names, a brief summary of their background and qualifications, and a voting mechanism to be used for the election. The Board may accept suggestions from any member or affiliate for nominations. To the extent possible, the Board should be generally representative of the geographical diversity of the membership of the organization.

The President shall be Chairperson of the organizational meeting of each new Board.

### 7. OFFICERS

The Board of Directors shall elect the following officers of the organization from the members of the Board: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The Board shall hire an Executive Director and such other agents of the organization, as the Board deems advisable.

The Executive Director shall be the administrative head of the organization. He or she shall serve as general manager of the business of the organization. The Board may delegate additional authorities and functions to the Executive Director and, notwithstanding any other provision of this constitution, authorize the Treasurer to approve compensation to the Executive Director.

The Executive Director shall receive all funds and manage all finances of the organization and shall be responsible for keeping the books and records of accounts, in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures. The Board shall oversee and monitor all financial matters of the organization.

All other officers or committees shall have such powers and obligations as the Board may delegate to them. Any member may be both a director and an appointed officer of the organization, so long as he is a dues-paying member in good standing.

### 8. VACANCIES

Any vacancy in any office, or on any committee, or on the Board, whether it be occasioned by the inability, disqualification, removal, resignation or death of any officer, Director, or committee member shall be filled for the remainder of the un-expired term by appointment by the Board of Directors, the replacement to be selected from the dues-paying members of the organization.

### 9. TERMS OF OFFICE

Directors shall hold office for a term of three (3) years.

Terms of office will begin on January 1 and end on December 31. All other officers and committee members shall be deemed re-appointed by the incoming Board of Directors to serve until the next Board is elected, unless sooner removed.

A Director may only be elected or appointed to a maximum of four (4) three year terms (12 years total) and no more than two consecutive terms as a Director only. In order to serve more than two (2) terms a Director must serve as an Officer, "At Large" executive committee member or key committee chair.

### 10. REMOVAL

Any Director may be removed from office by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the remaining Directors. Any officer, appointee or committee



member may be removed from office by the Board of Directors on the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members then comprising the Board of Directors.

In all cases of removal from any office, the party to be removed shall receive fifteen days notice in writing of the pending motion to remove and of the specific reasons why removal is being considered. Written communication in the form of electronic mail, fax, or a written letter from the President, or Vice-President of the Board, properly addressed to the last known address of the party in question, shall be sufficient notice, provided that it is mailed at least 18 days in advance of the final action of the Board. Within that 15-day period the party whose removal is being considered may mail to the Board of Directors a written statement in opposition or explanation.

At any time after the expiration of the fifteen-day period the Board may act on the motion to remove, and shall immediately notify the party in question in writing of the decision of the Board.

#### 11. FINANCE

This organization shall at all times be a non-profit organization dedicated to the purposes set forth in this Constitution and no person or organization shall ever profit by or through this organization. All money received by the organization from any source whatever shall be used for membership services, for conservation and education purposes, or for specific contributions toward whitewater sport and river conservation. The Treasurer may approve salaries and expenses of the Executive Director and other employees of the organization and the Treasurer may also reimburse officers or members for ordinary expenses incurred in furthering the purposes of the organization, upon presentation of records of the expenses.

The Board may authorize special items of expense if it believes that the purposes of the organization will thereby be furthered, without penalizing the regular programs of the organization.

Upon the winding up and dissolution of this corporation, after paying or adequately providing for the debts and obligations of the corporation, the remaining assets shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation or corporation, which is organized and operated, exclusively for charitable, educational, and/or scientific purposes related to whitewater or to river conservation and which has established its tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. If this corporation holds any assets in trust, such assets shall be disposed of in such manner as may be directed by decree of the superior court of the county in which this corporation's principal office is located, upon petition therefore by the Attorney General or by any person concerned in the liquidation.

#### 12. VOTING

Each individual dues paying membership (individual, family, affiliates, lifetime) who is in good standing, shall be entitled to one vote for each of the Directors to be elected at the election, and shall be entitled to one vote in any election to amend the Constitution.

The Board of Directors shall make fair and reasonable provisions for the receipt and counting of ballots in all election so as to guarantee that all votes cast are properly counted and the election duly certified. Each ballot must state on its face the date by which it must be received in order to be counted. Ballots received after that date will be rejected. The Board, at its option, may provide in the By-Laws for special or junior classes of affiliates, paying lesser dues, with restricted voting privileges.

#### 13. QUALIFICATION FOR OFFICE

No person shall hold any office or be nominated, appointed or elected to any office unless he is a bona fide dues-paying member of the American Whitewater. Failure to keep dues current shall be a mandatory ground for removal of any officer or director.

#### 14. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

In the event that no elections are held, or that final tabulation of ballots is incomplete on January 1, or if for any reason the new members of the Board of Directors are not ready to assume office on January 1, or in the event that any office, appointed position, or committee assignment is not properly filled by the time the incumbent's term expires, then the incumbent shall hold over in office and be fully empowered to act and discharge the duties of the office until a successor has been duly elected, appointed, or qualified.

#### 15. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution must first be approved by a majority of the Board of Directors, and published in an official communication along with the Board's explanation of the same. In the same communication, a voting mechanism should be provided for use by the members. Amendments shall pass if two-thirds of the votes actually received back from the members are in favor of the amendments proposed. The ballots shall state the date by which they must be received in order to be counted.

## American Whitewater Bylaws Changes

**T**HE AW BOARD of Directors approved changes to the AW bylaws below. The revisions to the bylaws includes: a) set the number of Directors

to 12, b) establish a standing nominating committee, chaired by the Vice President that includes the most recent two Past Presidents, c) set the number of Directors elected each year at four, d) stipulate that Board fill vacant Officers positions each year and e) specify that the Vice President automatically ascends to the office of President at the end of the President's term. AW Bylaws are published here for membership review.

## American Whitewater Bylaws

The Board of Directors of American Whitewater hereby agrees to these amended and restated Bylaws of the Organization as of this 23rd day of May 2010.

#### 1. MEMBERSHIP

Membership for one year will be granted upon written application and the payment of dues in the amount established by the Board.

#### 2. AFFILIATION

Bona fide boating clubs, conservation organizations, and organized groups who subscribe to the purposes set forth in the Constitution of this organization may affiliate with American Whitewater by paying annual affiliate dues in the amount established by the Board.

#### 3. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The number of Directors is hereby set at 12 members.

The President shall be Chairman of the Board of Directors, establish the agenda for Board meetings and run the meetings. In the event that the President is unable to fulfill these duties the Vice President shall assume these duties.

The Directors shall meet at least three times each year to conduct the business of the organization. The meetings shall be at a time and place as determined by the President and Executive Director. Directors shall be given at least 60 days notice of all meetings.

The Executive Committee of the Board shall convene monthly or as necessary to conduct the business of the organization.

#### 4. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating committee shall consist of the Vice President and the two (2) most recent past Presidents that are available and willing to serve. The Vice President shall Chair the Nominating Committee. In the event that less than two past Presidents are available to serve the Vice President shall nominate another Director or Directors as to serve as their replacement on the Nominating Committee.

# ELECTIONS

Each year the Nominating Committee shall issue a "Call for Nominations" to the membership seeking nominations for qualified Directors. The "Call for Nominations" shall be officially communicated to the Membership each spring and nominations will be due by July 1 each year.

All nominations shall be submitted by affiliates or members in good standing and any affiliate or member in good standing is eligible to submit a nomination, including themselves.

The Nominating Committee shall vet the nominations received from the membership and propose a recommended slate of four (4) Director Candidates each year for election by the general membership of the organization. A proposed slate may include more than four (4) candidates from time to time to accommodate circumstances where a vacancy exists on the Board prior to the normal three year cycle or other special circumstances as the Board may deem appropriate.

All nominations shall comply with the requirements established from time to time by the Board.

## 5. ELECTIONS

The Nominating Committee shall have its slate of candidates for the new members of the board of Directors for the upcoming year completed so that the ballot, the list of nominees, a brief summary concerning each nominee, and the instructions concerning voting procedures can be published in an official communication in a timely manner so that votes can be received and tallied by December 15 each year.

Each membership in good standing may cast one vote for each Director to be elected during a given election. The number of candidates equal to the number of Director seats up for election in any given election that receive the highest number of votes shall constitute the incoming new members of the Board of Directors. For example, if there are four Director seats up for election in a given election then the four candidates with the most votes wins.

In the event of a tie vote between any two or more candidates, the President of the Board of Directors then in office will immediately cast one vote, or such votes as may be necessary, in order to break the tie without advancing any candidate receiving his/her vote ahead of any other candidate who received more votes but was not involved in a tie vote. In the event that the President is required to exercise this power, an official communication shall, in addition to the usual election results and notices of appointed by the board, carry a brief explanation of the status of the candidates at the time the deciding votes were cast by the President to break the tie.

## 6. OFFICERS

The Board shall elect Officers to fill any vacant officer positions at the Board meeting each spring. An officer's term of office shall be no more than three (3) years and shall end simultaneously with their current term as a Director. If a Director is then reelected to a subsequent term as a Director, the Board may choose to reappoint them to any officer's position they may have held previously however in no event shall an officer serve more than three (3) years in any position except for the Treasurer's position which may serve a maximum of two (2) terms (6 years total).

The expectation is that the Vice President shall ascend to the office of President at the end of the President's term.

## 7. PROCEDURE UPON ELECTION

As soon as possible after the balloting ends, the incoming Board of Directors will organize itself, elect its officers, and decide whether to adopt, in whole or in part, the appointments made by the previous board or to make new appointments in all or any positions.

New members of the Board of Directors will take office on January 1 following their election.

Any officer, committee members, or director who is removed from office or replaced by a duly elected or appointed successor, shall immediately forward and deliver to their successor all of the files, equipment, and property of the organization in their possession or control.

## 8. VOTING

Where ballots are used, as in voting for Directors, voting instructions shall be plainly communicated on the ballot. All voting in elections for Directors or to amend the Constitution must be done through official communications to the membership.

Voting within the Board of Directors may be informal, and letters, phone, or e-mails will suffice. The President of the Board of Directors may receive and count informal ballots, or the members may decide on any other reasonable manner of procedure.

All official ballots shall have the date by which they must be communicated plainly on each ballot.

## 9. DEPARTMENTS AND COMMITTEES

The Board may at any time establish such Committee or Departments as it deems necessary to conduct the business of the organization.

## 10. FISCAL YEAR

The books shall be maintained on a calendar year basis and audited at least annually.

## 11. PROCEDURE ON NEW MEMBERSHIP

When a new member or affiliate is enrolled, the dues shall be sent to the organization's mailing

address. The Executive Director shall see that (1) the name and address of the new member or affiliate is promptly placed on the list of new members and affiliates, (2) the next issue of the journal is sent to the new member or affiliate, and (3) the new member or affiliate receives any new membership materials which may be available.

All enrollments shall be for a one-year period beginning on the date of the enrollment unless the Executive Director establishes other membership periods, approved by the Board.

## 12. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these by-laws may be made by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. The changes made by the Board shall be published for the benefit of the membership in an official communication.



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# ELECTIONS

## BOARD BIOS

**E**ACH YEAR AMERICAN Whitewater's membership elects board members to serve three-year terms. The following candidates are volunteering to serve three-year terms on the American Whitewater Board of Directors with the exception of Kent Ford, who is running for a special one-year term. Current AW members can cast their votes through mid-December. Vote for any or all of the five candidates on the American Whitewater website: [www.americanwhitewater.org](http://www.americanwhitewater.org)

**Deadline for submitting electronic ballots is December 15, 2010.**

Thank you for your participation in this important election process.

### Norwood Scott



Though I currently call San Francisco my home, I first started paddling over 30 years ago at Camp Mondamin in Tuxedo, North Carolina. Since those first strokes on Lake Summit, paddling has been a major part of my life. I have taught canoeing and competed in slalom, freestyle, surf kayaking, and international wildwater events. I've helped organize events like the Potomac Whitewater Festival, the Great Falls Race, and the Cherry Creek Race.

My educational background, which is in environmental economics and finance, has proved useful while serving on the boards of the Tuolumne River Trust for seven years and American Whitewater for the past ten years. A few of the board positions I have held at AW include chairing the Membership Committee, Stewardship Committee, Nomination Committee, and

serving on the EXCOM Committee as Secretary and currently Vice President.

Professionally, I've worked for an environmental consulting firm, an association offering environmental services to airports, and now the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in San Francisco. As a federal employee, I continue to contribute to the EPA's comments on environmental assessments and environmental impact statements related to FERC hydropower relicensing agreements to ensure that our conservation, access, and recreational concerns are addressed at the federal level.

If given the opportunity to serve on AW's Board for a fourth term, I plan to focus on growing AW's annual budget through increased membership, foundation giving, and grants so we have more resources to devote to today's pressing river issues. In particular, I will fight for increased flows for recreation, sustainable river ecosystems, and access.

### David Cernicek



David grew up on the rivers of the west and now lives in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. His passion for rivers has led him into a career of river-related work. David offers a unique perspective on rivers since he has worked with river issues from many different viewpoints. He has been rafting and kayaking rivers non-commercially since 1982, and has lived and boated in most areas of the country. He has worked as a guide and manager of commercial rafting companies in Colorado and Idaho. While completing a master's degree in natural resource management, David worked as a professional researcher, investigating river user behavior. His specialties are river

carrying capacity, crowding, and conflict issues. David has worked with the National Park Service's River, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program in Washington D.C., where he participated in national river conservation policy formulation and the Wild & Scenic Rivers Program. David has worked as a river ranger on the Rio Grande and Rio Chama in New Mexico, the Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers in California, and the Hoback and Snake Rivers in Wyoming. David is presently the River Manager for the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Jackson Hole, Wyoming where he administers over 400 miles of Wild & Scenic rivers. Part of his job is working with the Snake River Fund, a donation program used on the Snake River in lieu of a mandatory fee program. This one-of-a-kind program is led by the river using community and works in partnership with the US Forest Service to protect and care for the Snake River Corridor. David was awarded "River Manager of the Year" for 2010 by the River Management Society, a national nonprofit professional organization that supports those who study, protect, and manage North America's rivers.

### Chris Bell



I've been a boater since 1969, when I paddled Oregon's Rogue River on a YMCA rafting trip. I learned to kayak after moving to North Carolina in 1985 and started squirt boating in 1987. Today I'm as likely to be found paddling a canoe or rowing a raft on a western multi-day trip with my wife and two daughters as I am to be kayaking or squirt boating. My non-American Whitewater volunteer activities include conceiving and coordinating the



Western Carolina Rescue Rodeo (1992-97), serving as President, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster of the Western Carolina Paddlers (1990-1998, 2004-), and creating and maintaining the boatingbeta.com regional website (2000-). From 2000-2004 I worked extensively with AW on the Cheoah dam relicensing project, where by happy not-quite-coincidence I was fortunate to be able to combine my love of paddling with my professional skills as an economist. I joined AW's board in 2005 and have served as AW's Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee since 2006.

The past five years have been remarkable ones for AW. We have made the transition from an organization whose finances were held together by duct tape, chewing gum and a printer willing to accept very late payments to the envy of the human-powered recreation world. If "The Great Recession" had begun in December 2005 rather than December 2007 you probably wouldn't be reading this issue of the AW Journal. This is a big deal because it means our staff can focus their energy on conserving, restoring and enhancing opportunities to enjoy America's whitewater resources safely rather than worrying about whether they will still have a job in a month's time. Rather than retrenching in these challenging economic times, AW's footprint has expanded everywhere whitewater flows in North America. I hope you are as excited as I am about AW and would very much appreciate your vote returning me to the AW board!

## Christopher Hest



Christopher Hest has nearly 30 years of leadership in the nonprofit sector. He is Chief Executive Officer of Friends Without A Border/Angkor Hospital for Children, where he leads the 501(c)3 organization that supports Cambodia's internationally recognized teaching pediatric hospital, community programs, and satellite clinics. Chris previously directed the resource and partnership development activities of Living Goods, a social business using micro-franchising to reinvent the sustainable delivery of pro-poor goods in Africa. Prior posts include Chief Philanthropy Officer of the William J. Clinton Foundation and Vice President for External Affairs at Freedom from Hunger. Between 1996 and 2005 he led philanthropy activities at The Nature Conservancy California and San Francisco Symphony and was Deputy Director of the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco.

As a direct result of his domestic and international travel in search of whitewater adventures, since 2002 Chris has served institutions with a social justice mission—preserving natural resources, delivering health care in the developing world, and providing opportunity and empowerment for poor women and their families through access to microfinance, education, and health protection. In 2001 he co-established a whitewater kayaking and rafting business with a local paddler in the Indian Himalaya, thereby providing self-sufficiency to one family and seasonal employment for local villagers. Chris ranks the success of that undertaking among his biggest accomplishments.

Rivers are fundamental to Chris's life. He has kayaked on six continents, supports a variety of river protection and conservation organizations, and earned his whitewater kayaking instructor certification from Mary and Phil DeRiemer in May 2006. While career and family do their best to minimize his time on the water, Chris's commitment to young people in developing countries seeking whitewater careers gives him substantial vicarious reward.

For many years Chris was a member of the Board of Directors of the American

Association of Fund Raising Counsel and Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of Healing Waters, an outdoor adventure social services agency. He earned a degree in Political Science and Canadian Studies from Duke University.

## Kent Ford



My wife thinks 17 boats is too many to keep around the house ... so I have narrowed the fleet down to 15, simply by purging those without annual use and yet keeping the ones she enjoys. The wooden dory and the Stand-up board are currently my favorite craft. From any boat, I feel lucky to enjoy the incredible diversity of rivers around the world (330 in 27 countries at last back of the napkin count). Our sport has an incredible history that I have enjoyed documenting in my recent film, "The Call of the River." From that project, I learned to appreciate the timeless work that has been done to preserve opportunities for future paddlers to enjoy the river. In DC, paddlers took then Secretary of the Interior Steward Udall exploring the Potomac. In Georgia, they took President Carter on the river. Walt Blackadar helped advocate for Salmon Wilderness.

The level of AW member's involvement in important access and flow issues around the country is truly outstanding. AW staff is highly regarded as pre-eminent experts in establishing recreational opportunities, and carefully advocating for those with other environmental and flow constituents. With more support, we can accomplish more to protect and enhance the outstanding rivers we enjoy. I look forward to doing my part.

## Class V Sponsor



Since 2006, KEEN's contributions via their Hybrid.Care program have aided American Whitewater's projects all over the US. Keen's long history of support for American Whitewater shows their substantial commitment to our rivers and to our planet.

## Class IV Sponsors



## Class III Sponsor



## Class II Sponsor



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Fit for Adventure



SUBARU

## Boof Sponsors



## Wave Sponsors





American Whitewater is supported by members, donors, foundations, and partners in the whitewater and outdoor industries. In each edition of the *Journal*, we highlight one such partner in this space. American Whitewater urges you not to make purchase decisions blindly. We hope you'll consider a company's commitment to river stewardship when making your next purchase.



Founded in 2003, family-owned and operated Jackson Kayak is dedicated to making paddling better for everyone. From its humble roots in a former laundromat, company founder, Olympian and four-time world freestyle kayak champion Eric Jackson parlayed his passion for the sport into becoming the global leader in whitewater kayak sales.

In more recent years, Jackson Kayak's dedication to promoting the paddling lifestyle has led the company to port its core family-friendly values and boat-building fundamentals – light, comfortable, durable and dry - into the recreation, touring and fishing arenas.

To reciprocate the loyalty its customers demonstrate to the brand, Jackson Kayak backs up its products with a lifetime warranty on workmanship that frequently goes above and beyond the written warranty. Jackson Kayak customers know they always have access to president Eric Jackson, by emailing him at [eric@jacksonkayak.com](mailto:eric@jacksonkayak.com).

Finally, and just as importantly, Jackson Kayak is a long-time supporter of American Whitewater. As one of AW's premier Class IV sponsors, Jackson Kayak has donated dozens of boats to AW to use to encourage memberships, donations and volunteer participation. As an American Whitewater Partner, Jackson Kayak lends its voice in support of rivers everywhere.



# Join



# AMERICAN WHITEWATER Today!

American  
Whitewater  
has been  
extraordinarily  
fortunate in our  
ability to leverage  
a strong grassroots  
base—members  
and other  
volunteers—to  
assist our limited  
staff with many  
whitewater river  
conservation and  
restoration efforts.

Over the years, American Whitewater volunteers have participated in numerous hydropower meetings as well as instream and recreational flow studies; filed comments and assisted with an uncountable number of filings; appeared as expert witnesses; lobbied; worked to fight new dams, remove existing dams, deny licenses, and improve public access to rivers and streams. In nearly every river stewardship issue AW has been involved with, the outcome has been favorable to paddlers. Not only has AW secured favorable decisions for the paddling community, but we are the only national organization representing paddlers as these decisions are being made.

A growing membership base is crucial to our ability to continue with our work. Some studies show that there are currently over 100,000 whitewater paddlers in the US, AW currently has 5,500 active members. When you consider the amount of whitewater river miles that AW has had a direct impact on, this membership number is unimpressive. We need all paddlers to join AW! If you are a member, please be sure that everyone you paddle with understands the work AW does, and how you, as an AW member, value that work.

Membership support is what will determine our ability to continue our river stewardship work in the years to come. Individual annual memberships are only \$35 (\$25 if you are a member of an AW Affiliate Club). This is less than a tank of gas or an inexpensive night out. This is certainly not too much to pay to have a national organization representing your paddling interests all across the country.

It's easy to join or renew an AW membership: Join or renew online today at <http://americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-aw/>; call 1-866-BOAT4AW (866-262-8429); or complete the membership form provided in this Journal and mail it to:

Membership  
American Whitewater  
PO Box 1540  
Cullowhee, NC 28723



**Contact Info**☐ New Member ☐ Renewing Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

\*Note: American Whitewater will never share your information with others

**Membership Levels**☐ \$35 Standard☐ \$25 Member of Affiliate Club

Club: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$25 Student

School: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$50 Family☐ \$75 Affiliate Club☐ \$100 Ender Club

Shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$250 Platinum Paddler

Shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$500 Explorer☐ \$750 Lifetime☐ \$1,000 Legacy☐ \$2,500 StewardFor current major donor  
incentives go to:  
americanwhitewater.org**Donate**☐ Auto-donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ ☐ monthly ☐ yearly (credit card only)☐ One-time donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_**Additional Subscriptions**☐ \$30 Kayak Session Magazine - 4 issues per year (KS donates \$5 to AW!)**Journal Options**☐ Do NOT mail me the AW Journal, email it to me <- Saves AW money, and trees! :)**Auto-Renew (No Renewal Notices!)**☐ Auto-renew my membership each year on the credit card below**Payment Info**☐ Credit Card ☐ Cash ☐ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

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# NEWS AND NOTES

## ONE RIVER STEWARD CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

BY DAVID SU

**K**EN BENJAMIN LIVES in Manchester, CT and at the time of this writing was less than a month out of major surgery, and two weeks away from another major surgery. Because of his surgeries, Ken hasn't been paddling much this summer, but Ken loves paddling and is always hanging out with paddlers even when he's not boating. However, that has NOT kept him off the river. He's on a mission and deserves a great big shout out...let me explain.

We have a crew that's been going to Tville a lot this summer from the Amherst, MA area. For the non-locals, Tville means the playhole or river-run on the Tariffville Gorge section of the Farmington River, which is in Connecticut, between Hartford and Springfield, MA. Ken was at Tville almost every day during August, single-handedly carting out 25 garbage bags full of trash, and he painted over all the graffiti that he could get to at the dam. Remember the steel stays sticking out at the parking lot and near the old bridge pilings and abutments? Gone now too, thanks to Ken.

Tville gets heavy use, especially from non-boaters. There are people river-running, teaching paddling and swiftwater rescue, giving paddling experiences to inner city kids, practicing slalom and playboating, dam-running, inner-tubing, canoeing, jogging, fishing, swimming, sunning on the beach, cooking out, getting poison ivy, sightseeing, biking, walking, drinking, breaking and entering, stealing, throwing bottles, partying, drinking (repeated intentionally), taking dumps, spraying graffiti, dumping waste (an old dead washing machine is still there along with a new dead deer onshore near the gauge) and doing all the things we encourage and discourage around our whitewater rivers.

Tville serves two cities and a load of paddlers in the summer who are aching for river time when there's no whitewater



for at least two hours in any direction. We paddlers love Tville, and the town of East Granby, CT, which has been so positive and supportive of paddlers and competitions over the years (big shout out to the Police and Fire Departments at East Granby), but we have to put up with a lot of negative stuff to go with the positive. Boating even makes me spend money in the East Granby and Simsbury restaurants and pubs, even though I don't live down there now.

In the past I've taken trash out of Tville and discouraged bad behaviors that I've observed there; others I know have worked on the too-healthy poison ivy crop, cut out dangerous dead trees from the river, picked up garbage, run races, checked on me when I was practicing gates in the canal in the dark in the winter (thanks, Robbie and Nellie!), helped with safety and break-ins (thanks, EGPD & FD!). But, no one has dedicated more personal time and energy to just cleaning up the place than Ken. Any paddler who's been to Tville knows that it's a place that needs that kind of care, and automatically would respect the work Ken's doing all on his own. The least we can do is send a big atta-boy to him from the whitewater world.

**Thanks Ken!**

## DOUG AMMONS TO HOST 29TH NATIONAL PADDLING FILM FESTIVAL: SUBMISSIONS CURRENTLY BEING ACCEPTED

BY BETHANY OVERFIELD

**F**OR 28 YEARS the National Paddling Film Festival has been hosting a competition to determine the best in paddle sport videos and images. This competition has provided the paddling community with an entertaining and profitable event to support river conservation. In that time, the NPFF has also helped raise the quality of paddle sport entertainment by providing recognition of talent, along with important and useful feedback, for the artists who make the show a possibility.

NPFF is a 100% volunteer, not-for-profit, grassroots organization dedicated to river conservation. Close to \$50,000 from festival profits has been donated to American Whitewater in just the past ten years alone. Donations have also been made to other regional conservation groups dedicated to water quality and access such as the West Virginia Rivers Coalition, the Green River Access Fund in North Carolina, and Elkhorn Acres in central Kentucky. In addition to this, recent support has been given to the local chapter of Team River Runner, which is a national paddle sport organization established to assist with the recovery of those injured while serving in the U.S. military.

We are ecstatic to announce that legendary expedition kayaker Doug Ammons will be the guest host of the festival in 2011. Doug completed the second descent of British Columbia's Grand Canyon of the Stikine and was the first person to solo the run, a feat that has not been repeated. He was recently named one of the ten greatest adventurers since 1900 by Outside Magazine. Doug has written two classic books pertaining to kayaking, "Laugh of the Water Nymph" and "Whitewater Philosophy" (proceeds from which go to a school in Nepal that he



has been supporting for the last 15 years). Kayaking, however, makes up just a portion of Ammons' life. The Montana native has degrees in mathematics and physics and a M.S. and Ph.D. in psychology.

His new movie "Wildwater: A Love Story" is a collaborative effort with Anson Fogel and will be available for viewing this year at various film festivals. Doug will give presentations both Friday and Saturday nights and will be on-hand for question/answer sessions after each.

Entries are currently being accepted for the 2011 NPFF, so keep those cameras rolling and enter early for your chance to win. Professional, Accomplished, and Amateur submissions for the following categories will be accepted through January 19, 2011: Documentary, Instructional/Safety, and General Boating. In addition, there will be a still image competition (submission deadline January 28, 2011). Judges will score each entry and feedback from each judge will be provided to the entrant. Festival attendees will vote and select the Paddler's Choice Award and the Best Still Image winner.

The festival will remain at Buffalo Trace Distillery in Frankfort, Kentucky. With over 5,000 square feet available inside, and a full wrap-around covered porch, there's more than ample room. There is also sufficient parking for festival attendees. Tours of the stunning distillery grounds will be available as well as bourbon tastings. Festivities will include film viewings, a silent auction, a chili cook-off, and a still image contest. A downriver race that is unaffiliated with the festival will take place on Elkhorn creek the Saturday of the festival.

Additional information about the event will be posted at [www.npff.org](http://www.npff.org) regularly so check back often for all the latest updates.

### It's Easy to Support AW!

American Whitewater is proud of the work we have accomplished in our stewardship program but we need your help to sustain our success. Your support through membership and donations enables our staff to be active and engaged in the process of river stewardship. Donations don't have to be large; each person doing a small part makes a noticeable difference. Many donors fail to take full advantage of federal tax incentives specifically intended to encourage charitable contributions. Such incentives often enable a donor to make a larger gift to AW at little or no additional cost. For more information about maximizing your gift visit the IRS website dedicated to charitable organizations.

American Whitewater is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, EIN# 23-7083760. To learn more about the Giving Options below, contact us at 1-866-262-8429 or visit the "Donate" link under "Support AW" on our website at [www.americanwhitewater.org](http://www.americanwhitewater.org)

- Donate online today!
- Monthly Giving: Contribute a minimum of \$10 via credit card or electronic transfer from your bank account.
- Bequests: Include AW in your will or living trust. Bequests to AW are generally exempt from federal or state inheritance taxes, and subject to an unlimited deduction.
- Combined Federal Campaign: Federal employees including federal civilians, military personnel and U.S. Postal Workers can donate to AW through the CFC a once a year charitable fund raising program. Look for AW (Agency #11351) in the official CFC listing of eligible donors.
- Charitable Remainder Trusts: Convert a highly appreciated asset (such as real estate or stocks) into a lifetime income while minimizing income and estate taxes.
- Employer Matching: Many employers will match your donations to non-profit organizations. This includes membership payments, as well as additional contributions. Check to see if your employer has a matching program.
- MissionFish: Sell your items through the MissionFish program on eBay and the proceeds come directly to AW.
- Other Assets: A gift of real estate to AW qualifies you for a tax deduction based on the property's fair market value. If it is not a river access point, AW will sell the property and use the proceeds to protect access and restore rivers. Acceptance of property is subject to certain conditions. You may also be eligible to receive tax benefits for gifts of real property. Art and jewelry are examples of personal property items that may be eligible. Interested donors should check with your financial and tax advisors and AW on the feasibility and tax considerations of such gifts.
- Securities: Donating appreciated stock to AW benefits both the donor and whitewater rivers. The donor receives two tax-related benefits. First, the gain on the stock is not subject to capital gains taxes. Second, the donor can deduct the value of the stock as a charitable contribution.
- United Way: All federal campaigns, and a few of the local campaigns will allow you to donate to AW.
- Vehicle Donations: Turn that extra car, truck, or RV into a tax deductible donation benefiting AW.

# AFFILIATE CLUBS

## AW'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE

BY CARLA MINER

The Affiliate Club Program lies at the very heart of AW's existence. AW's original purpose since 1954 has been to distribute information among its Affiliate Clubs. AW's relationships with local clubs have provided the backbone for the river conservation and access work it accomplishes. We have over 100 current AW Club Affiliates and they are all doing great work on your behalf. If you don't belong to a club, consider joining one.

Our Affiliate Club Spotlight this issue is on the East Tennessee Whitewater Club an outstanding Affiliate Club and long time supporter of our mission to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely. The East Tennessee Whitewater Club is a club dedicated to: PROMOTE canoeing and kayaking as a water sport; TEACH boating techniques and water safety for river travel; and, PRESERVE our remaining wilderness rivers for future generations.

ETWC holds a meeting every third Tuesday of the month except for June, July, and August; meetings start not-so-promptly at 7:30 PM. When you join ETWC you join a paddling community. There are trips almost every weekend and the club also offers an intensive one-week course for beginner kayakers. The purpose of the clinic is to teach basic whitewater techniques and safety. The clinic is appropriate for individuals with no whitewater experience.

ETWC holds a roll practice almost every Friday of the year. It is a great place to catch up on your skills and plan trips. Next to the Summer Clinic, roll practice is the best place to learn to kayak. There are usually experienced people there to help you forward stroke, back stroke, brace, roll, and everything in between.

Membership in the East Tennessee Whitewater Club is an affordable \$15 a year. To learn more about the ETWC or to join, check out their website at <http://www.etwcweb.com/>. And remember, current members of the ETWC receive a \$10 discount off their AW membership.

Thank you East Tennessee Whitewater Club for your continued support of American Whitewater!

The AW Journal Club Affiliates by state:

### Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks  
Nova Riverrunners Inc., Chickaloon

### Alabama

Birmingham Canoe Club, Birmingham  
Coosa River Paddling Club, Montgomery  
Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

### Arizona

Outdoors Unlimited, Flagstaff

### Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

### California

California Floaters Society, Cameron Park  
Chico Paddleheads, Chico  
Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Paddlers, San Jose  
RTS, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club, Sherman Oaks  
Sequoia Paddlers, Forestville  
Sierra Club SF Chapter, Livermore

### Colorado

Avid4 Adventure Inc., Boulder  
Colorado Whitewater Assn, Englewood  
Friends of the Yampa, Steamboat Springs  
Grand Canyon Priv. Boat. Asso., Colorado Springs  
Pikes Peak Whitewater Club, Colorado Springs  
Rocky Mountain Canoe/Kayak Club, Broomfield  
San Miguel Whitewater Asso, Telluride  
Stand Up For Rivers, Telluride  
University of Colorado Kayak Club, Boulder

### Connecticut

AMC - Connecticut Chapter, Colchester

### Delaware

Wilmington Trail Club Paddlers, Wilmington

### Georgia

Atlanta Whitewater Club, Atlanta  
Georgia Canoeing Assoc, Atlanta  
Georgia Tech Outdoor Recreation, Atlanta  
Paddlers4Christ, Ellijay

### Idaho

Univ Idaho, Recreation Student Org, Moscow

### Illinois

Team SICK, Carbondale

### Indiana

Hoosier Canoe Club, Indianapolis  
Ohio Valley Paddlers, Evansville

### Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, W. Des Moines

### Kentucky

Bluegrass Wildwater Asso, Lexington

Elkhorn Paddlers, Lexington  
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

### Maine

Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society, Topsham

### Maryland

Blue Ridge Voyageurs, Silver Spring  
Greater Baltimore Canoe Club, Cockeysville  
Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Smithsburg

### Michigan

RSC Kayak Club at University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

### Minnesota

SCSU Outdoor Endeavors, Saint Cloud  
Minnesota Canoe Asso, Minneapolis

### Mississippi

Mississippi Outdoor Club, Clinton

### Missouri

Ozark Mountain Paddlers, Springfield  
Ozark Wilderness Waterways, Kansas City

### Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

### New Hampshire

Ledyard Canoe Club, Hanover  
Mt. Washington Valley Paddlers, Intervale  
Merrimack Valley Paddlers, Nashua

### New Jersey

KCCNY, Flanders

### New Mexico

Adobe Whitewater Club of NM, Albuquerque

### New York

Colgate University, Hamilton  
Flow Paddlers' Club, Ontario  
Hamilton College, Clinton  
Housatonic Canoe & Kayak Squad, Ossining  
KCCNY, New York  
St Lawrence University, Canton  
Town Tinker Tube Rentals, Phoenicia  
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Buffalo

### N. Carolina

Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh  
Dixie Division, Tuxedo  
NCSU Outing Club, Raleigh  
Triad River Runners, Winston-Salem

### Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus  
Keel Haulers Canoe Club, Westlake  
Outdoor Adventure Club, Dayton  
Toledo River Gang, Waterville

### Oregon

Eugene Kayaker, Eugene  
Lower Columbia Canoe Club, Portland  
Northwest Rafters Assoc, Portland  
Oregon Kayak and Canoe Club, Portland  
Oregon Whitewater Association, Beaverton  
Willamette Kayak & Canoe Club, Corvallis



## **Pennsylvania**

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Sugarloaf  
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnstown  
Bradford County Canoe and Kayak Club, Sayre  
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, Harrisburg  
Conewago Canoe Club, York  
Holtwood Hooligans, Lancaster  
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valley  
Lehigh Valley Whitewater Inc., Lehigh Valley  
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia  
Three Rivers Paddling Club, Pittsburgh

## **S. Carolina**

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville  
Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

## **Tennessee**

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts,  
Limestone  
Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville  
East Tennessee Whitewater Club, Oak Ridge  
Memphis Whitewater, Memphis  
Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing  
Club, Kingsport  
Tennessee Scenic River Assoc., Nashville  
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga

## **Texas**

Houston Canoe Club Inc, Houston

## **Utah**

Utah Whitewater Club, Salt Lake City

## **Vermont**

Vermont Paddlers Club, Essex Junction

## **Virginia**

Blue Ridge River Runners, Lynchburg  
Canoe Cruisers Assoc, Arlington  
Coastal Canoeists, Blacksburg  
Creek Freak Paddlers of Franklin County,  
Rocky Mount  
Float Fishermen of Virginia, Richmond  
Hollins Outdoor Program, Roanoke  
James River Float Co, Madison Heights  
Paddlers for Conservation, Vienna

## **Washington**

BEWET, Bellevue  
EPIC Adventures, Cheney  
Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Seattle  
RPP Kayak Club, Bellingham  
Spokane Canoe & Kayak Club, Spokane  
Washington Kayak Club, Seattle  
Washington Recreational River Runners, Renton  
Whitman College Whitewater Club, Walla  
Walla

## **West Virginia**

Dbl Z! Whitewater Club, Fayetteville  
West VA Wildwater Assn, S. Charleston  
WVU Whitewater Club, Morgantown

## **Wisconsin**

Sierra Club / John Muir Chapter, Madison

## **British Columbia**

Thompson Rivers Univ Adventure Studies,  
Kamloops

## **DISCOUNTED AW MEMBERSHIP FOR AFFILIATE CLUB MEMBERS**

*By Carla Miner, Membership Manager*

AW offers a discounted Affiliate Club membership of \$25, a \$10 savings. If you are renewing your AW membership or joining as a new member, select the Affiliate Club Discounted Personal Membership online at <http://americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-AW/> Or, if you are renewing or joining by mail or telephone just mention the name of the Affiliate Club you belong to and you can take advantage of the \$25 membership.

A list of AW Affiliate Clubs can be found on our website at [www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Affiliate/view/](http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Affiliate/view/). If you do not see your Club listed here please encourage them to renew their Club membership or to join AW as a new Affiliate Club. Your Club's membership and your personal membership enable our staff to be active and engaged in the process of river stewardship. When you join or renew your membership your support is helping to meet the many challenges whitewater rivers face.

If you have any questions about the Affiliate Club membership, please contact me. I can be reached at 866\_BOAT-4AW or [membership@americanwhitewater.org](mailto:membership@americanwhitewater.org).

## **JOIN AMERICAN WHITewater AS AN AFFILIATE CLUB!**

### **AFFILIATE CLUB BENEFITS**

- Club members can join AW for just \$25 - a \$10 savings!
- Have your club listed in each AW Journal delivered to all AW members
- Post Club information on the AW website to help paddlers find you
- Participate in exclusive AW Affiliate Club promotions and grants
- Most importantly, your financial support helps us save rivers!

Sign-up on-line at:  
[www.americanwhitewater.org/  
content/Membership/join-aw](http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-aw)

For more information contact Carla Miner at  
[membership@americanwhitewater.org](mailto:membership@americanwhitewater.org)  
or at 1-866-262-8429

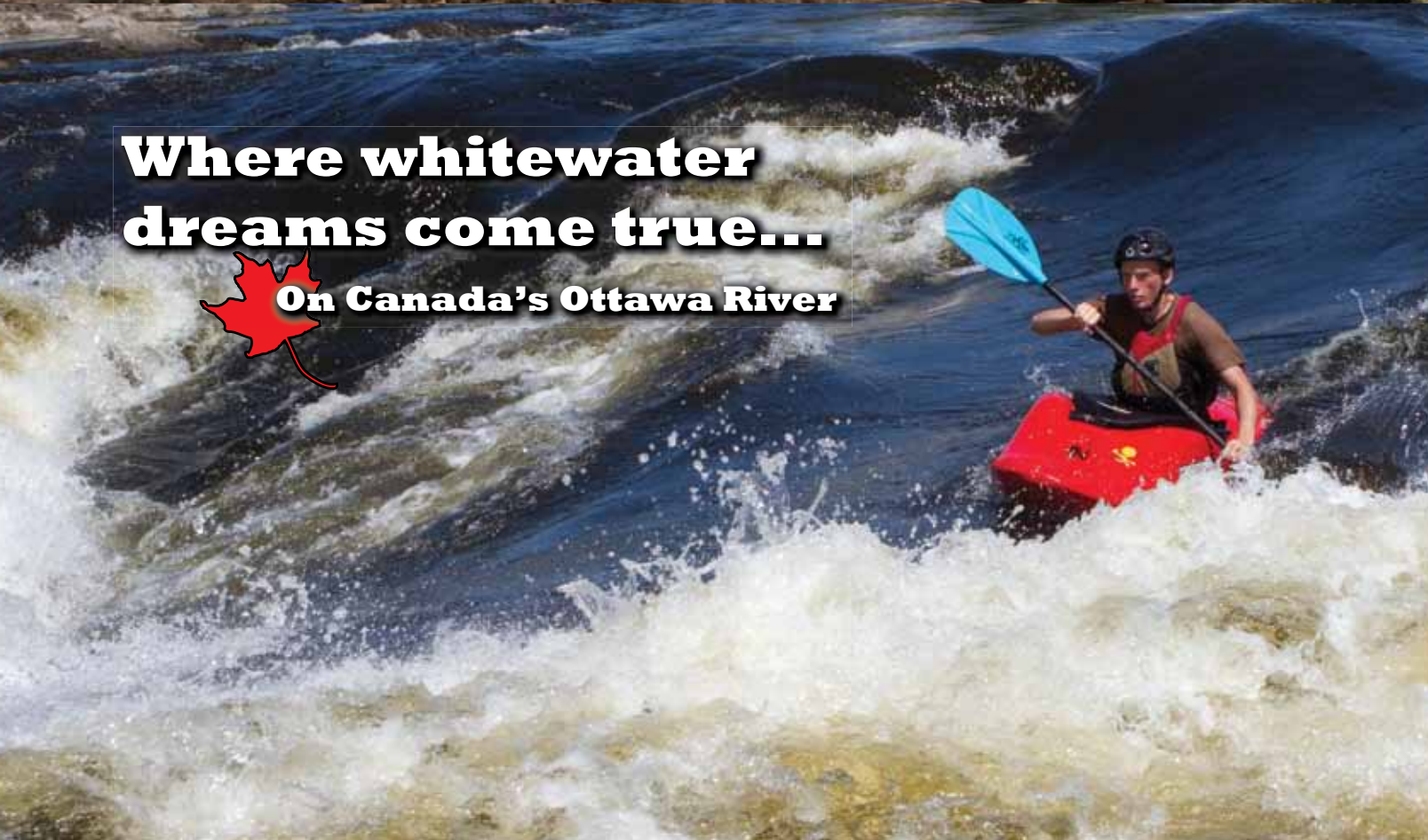




**Where whitewater  
dreams come true...**



**On Canada's Ottawa River**



### **Important 2011 Dates**

- Big Water Memorial Day Weekend May 27-30
- Adult Keeners (why should the kids have all the fun)  
June 4-12 & 18-26
- Keeners (the world's best youth development program Int/Adv)  
3 Week Sessions Starting June 26, July 17 & Aug 7
- Kids Week (ages 7-12) July 3-8 & Aug 7-12
- Teen Kayak Weeks for beginner/novice every Sunday to Friday
- Adult Weeks Beg/Int/Adv every Sunday – Friday
- EJ Week Sun- Fri July 17-22
- Ottawa River Festival Labor Day Weekend Sep 2-5



**OttawaKayak.com**  
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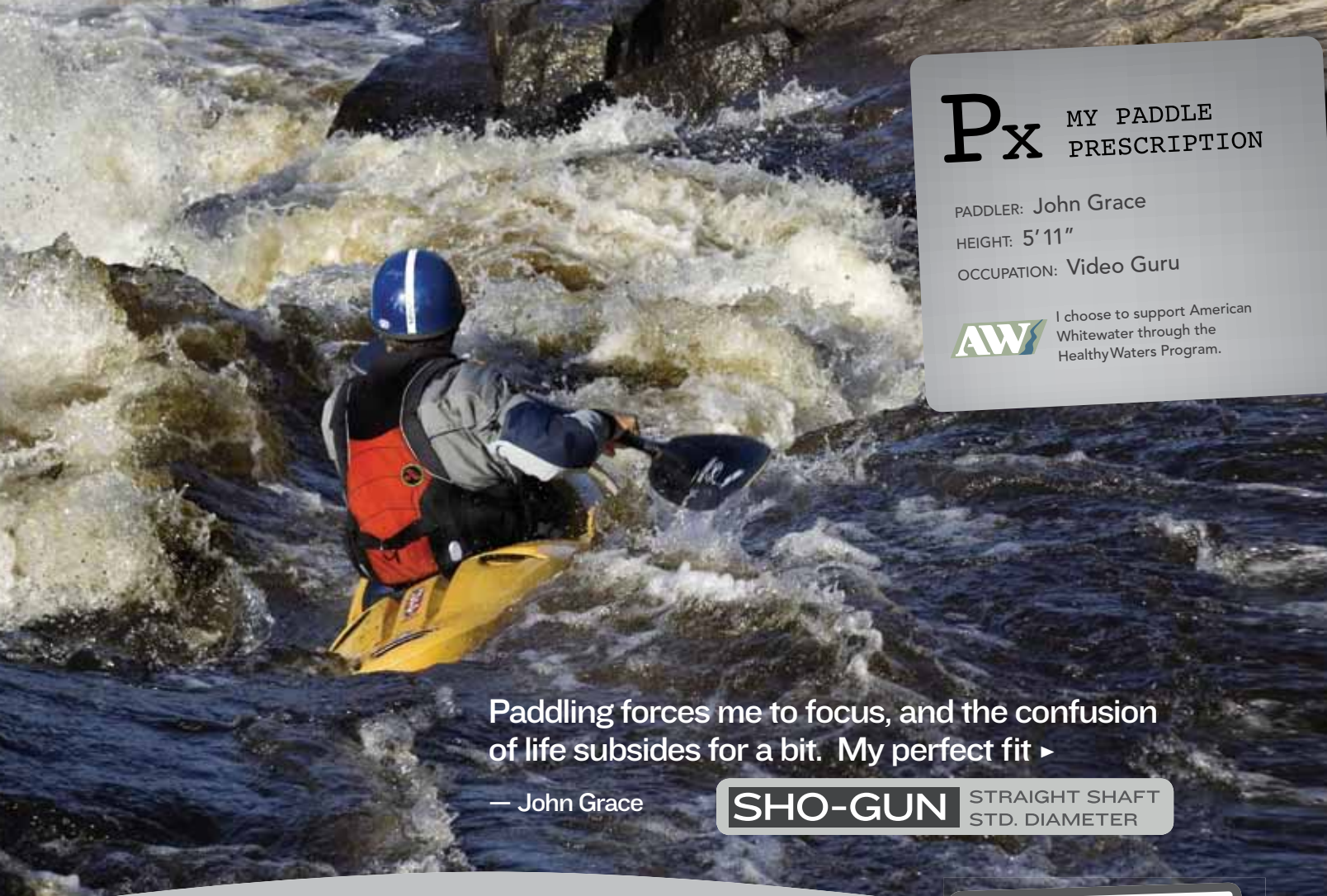
# **AW** AMERICAN WHITEWATER

**Contribute your text and photos  
to American Whitewater**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>General Theme</b>
Mar-Apr 2011	December 21, 2010	Kids/Teens
May-June 2011	February 25, 2011	Roadtrip
July-Aug 2011	April 26, 2011	Women's Issue
Sep-Oct 2011	June 25, 2011	Regional Issue
Nov-Dec 2011	August 11, 2011	Mental Game

**[americanwhitewater.org](http://americanwhitewater.org) > Library > AW Journal, for details**





## Px MY PADDLE PRESCRIPTION

PADDLER: John Grace

HEIGHT: 5'11"

OCCUPATION: Video Guru



I choose to support American Whitewater through the HealthyWaters Program.

Paddling forces me to focus, and the confusion of life subsides for a bit. My perfect fit ►

— John Grace

**SHO-GUN**

STRAIGHT SHAFT  
STD. DIAMETER

# WHAT'S YOUR PADDLE PRESCRIPTION?

Discover your custom fit paddle

- ◀ increase your performance
- ◀ reduce your fatigue
- ◀ and have more fun on the water



Werner offers advanced design features with a variety of fit options to help you choose a truly custom fit paddle. Your custom fit paddle is waiting for you.

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**WERNERTV:** Hear what real people are saying about their love for Werner paddles.



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