

June 2005

North Texas River Runners



Commodore's Column
By Curtis Boerner

Ahoy from the Helm,

"LAND OHH!!!" (Where's the water???)

Yes, it is turning into a real Texas Summer. As we know, this means very little water and very little rain. We should all probably take a few hints from our environmental officer Jean's report on water conservation at home. Fix leaking faucets, take showers instead of baths, water your grass when it is cool so the water does not evaporate where just a few of her tips. Still, even with these conservation efforts we all know that will not make the rivers flow around town. So what does this mean? Road Trip!!!

We have had many club members take road trips to other areas of the country to find water this past month. Some have traveled to the Southeast to find that flowing water of the Smokey Mountains. Another group just returned from a permitted trip on the San Juan in Utah. I am sure there are more road trips out there in search of liquid to paddle on. We of the club look forward to hearing the trip reports full of adventure and laughter at this month's meeting. Start embellishing those tall tales now.

See you at the meeting,
Curtis

June Program Make it Last

Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without! (Ronnie Ash's mantra). Come on out to the June meeting and let George Wilhelm show you how to make Ronnie's mantra your own! He'll be presenting on how to maintain your paddling & camping gear for years to come! Let George show you how to save money and make your camping investments last.

Inside this issue:

Lighthouse Lake Trails	2
Water Conservation Outside Your Home	3
Canoeing: A Way to Live Life	4
More Lighthouse Photos	5
Meeting Map	6

Water Conservation Outside Your Home

By Jean Muncrief

I hope you all have been thinking about conserving water inside your home over the last few months. Now that it is summer, let's talk about saving water outdoors. It has been estimated that during the summer months, 50 to 80% of all water used in a household is utilized for outdoor watering!

So here are a few simple ideas for painlessly conserving water outside of your home.

First, water lawns in the early morning hours when temperatures and wind speed are lowest. (This should be easy to remember as that is also the best time to paddle in the summer!) Watering early reduces losses from evaporation. According to the local extension office the secret to watering your lawn is water deep not frequently. Most plants and grasses need long roots for healthy growth. If you give them a light sprinkling every day, the roots stay short. Most Bermuda grass lawns need around an inch every 5 to 7 days. Try putting out a rain gauge to monitor water used when sprinkling and how much natural rain your lawn receives in a week. This will help you adjust watering amounts. In addition (this is a really easy one), make sure sprinklers water your lawn and shrubs, not the paved areas.

Second, try raising the lawn mower blade to the highest position or to at least 3 inches. A lawn cut higher encourages grass roots to grow deeper. It also shades the root system and holds soil moisture better than a closely clipped lawn.

Third, avoid over fertilizing your lawn. The application of fertilizers increases the need for water. Apply fertilizers that contain slow release, water insoluble forms of nitrogen.

Fourth, mulch to retain moisture in your flower beds and gardens. Mulching also helps to control weeds that compete with plants for water. Plus you don't have to pull as many weeds which means more time for paddling!

Fifth, plant smart. Use drought resistant landscaping and native plants. Try grouping plants together with similar water needs. Texas Parks and Wildlife Web Page has a landscaping guide to native plants for all climates in the state. Check it out - there is lots of good information there!

Sixth, a simple water saving device to use is a shut off valve on the end of your hose. These are relatively inexpensive at hardware stores. A hose left running may put out about 300 gallons per hour so if you only save one minute of water running, you save 5 gallons! Also, check the washers in your hoses to help prevent leaks.

Seventh, use a broom instead of water to remove leaves, grass clippings, etc from your porch, side walk or driveway or use my personal favorite, a leaf blower.

And the last tip, if you have kids or grandkids, think twice before purchasing recreational toys that require a steady stream of water. Remember if they are hooked up to a hose, water usage for one of these toys may be close to 300 gallons per hour!

I have only touched the surface of all the water conservation efforts we can personally do inside and outside of our homes to conserve water. But remember, by making minor changes to our habits, we can make big steps toward water conservation.

Remember:

Saving Water Now:

- Ensures water for future generations
- Helps buffer against future droughts
- Preserves our environment through a balanced ecosystem
- Helps keep water flowing continuously out of reservoirs into our rivers
- Helps keep all of our rivers running for our paddling enjoyment

So next time you are out paddling and enjoying the water's edge, the cleanliness of the river, or the thrill of a rapid give some thought to conserving water in your personal life. It can make a difference for us, our paddling sport, our families in the future and the rivers and streams and all they support.

Canoeing: A Way to Live Life By Derrell W. Little

The title could have been more appropriately: “A Way To Live Life”. Charles, from the beginning to the end of the class was always stressing safety. To be in the class one had to demonstrate their ability to swim fully clothed in street long sleeve shirts and long pants with shoes and socks. We were required to swim the width of the pool on our stomachs and then back across the pool on our backs followed by treading the water to test our physical condition and ability to swim when necessary on the white water.

Before each trip, we were told how much money would be needed from each member for gas and camping permits. In case someone forgot, the drivers still lost money in depreciation on their vehicle.

Each vehicle in the caravan was also given a walkie/talkie device to keep each vehicle in touch to express desires for a stop for gas, restroom, or other necessities.

When we were on the water in our assigned canoe, we had to have our life vest (Type III) on, zipped up and tied. We also had to have our helmet on to protect our head. The canoes had extra flotation bags that had to be full of air to ease canoe recovery and provide additional flotation to a downed paddler and keep the canoe on top of the water.

The above paragraph reminded me of observations of other people on the river floating on intertubes from automobiles. There were other canoes, kayaks and almost if not all had any life vests, or helmets. I encourage anyone reading this to call your state representatives and encourage them to create laws to ensure anyone on Texas rivers has to follow the guidelines of the American Canoe Association requirements, not American Red Cross.

We also had to learn how to secure canoes to the trailers to ensure safety to other motorists on the highway. In addition, we had to ensure all camping gear in the trailers was properly secured and protected from the weather for the trip to the river.

Prior to any trip, the class was divided into food groups and encouraged to plan each of the breakfast and evening meals for the time in camp and the lunch meals on the river. The evening meals were not to be sandwiches, but a meal like one would prepare for a guest invited to your home for someone's party to pay them an honor. There was always the incentive to be chosen as the best meal, the first servings of a cobbler prepared by Allen, an assistant instructor. The cobbler reminded me of the time I was in Boy Scouts and we cooked cobblers in each of the Patrols.

A canoe trip is a team/class effort and teaches one how to accept responsibility and work in teams. The class as a whole is also a team and each individual is alert to any mishap that happens to a team member. Those downstream of the incident are watching for lost paddles or other gear including shoes which on occasion are found much, much later on the downstream side. Those closest to the incident are using their canoes to bump a downed canoe to the shore and persons with rescue throw ropes are assisting in the rescue of the paddler.

When a member or a paddle team are taking their turn in an exercise, other members of the class are watching to see what they can learn by watching and listening to the instructor coach the student(s) in the exercise.

Before the canoes are put in the river for the downstream run, there is a dry run of the canoe strokes to be used on the river. There is also a check to ensure appropriate paddles, life vests, helmets, air bags inflated and personal gear are loaded.

The exercises on the trip include on and offside eddy turns, ferrys, maintaining a straight course, surfing with some demonstrating their balancing skills on the wave.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

On a canoe trip, one learns to expect surprises and adapt the planned schedule to the weather, current air temperature, and water temperature. If the sum of the water and air temperature is less than 120 degrees, the weather conditions are not safe for canoeing exercises.

The class also took some of this unavailable river time and had one of the advanced students demonstrate the use of Prussik Loops to retrieve a pinned canoe.

Other team efforts include the setting up of the tents and use of waterproof ground covers underneath the tent and inside the tent.

After supper each night, we watched the video pictures made during the day by Allen of the trip down the river and applaud the successes and instructors make comments for improvement.

Before the last canoe downstream for the outing, class members prepare for departure on the return to camp such that all the members have to do is to load the trucks with their gear, clean up the camp site and climb in assigned vehicle. The above means that the tents are down and packed with tent poles, stakes, tent fly, and inside and outside moisture barriers. One must also ensure that the air mattress has all of the air out and the air valve is securely closed.

When we arrive back at the school, everyone is expected to assist in the unloading of equipment and canoes. We must also make sure all of the tents and ground covers are hung to dry in the pool area.

I expect some class members like me forgot to thank the instructor and assistant instructors for giving their time and providing transportation for equipment canoes and us.

A couple of tips are provided that I learned from Charles. If you get a cut or a blister on your hand, putting some stuff on it called New Skin can ease the pain very fast. It smells something like nail polish and looks similar to clear nail polish, but it is not nail polish. But, you do apply it to the wound like nail polish and let it dry. You will forget about your wound until it is time to put on another coat of "New Skin" on the wound. You can buy "New Skin" over the counter at the drugstores. I suggest everyone get his or her own bottle of "New Skin".

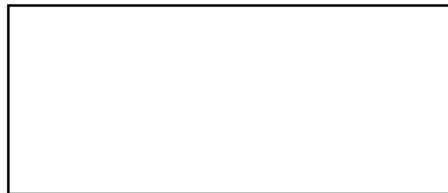
Second tip, get a ball cap preferable made of polyester and with a brad on the inside that holds the button on top of the cap. Remove the brad and button. Wear this cap underneath the safety helmet to keep the sun out of your eyes. The polyester cap suggestion is to reduce the heat on your head. Removing the button on the top of the cap keeps the helmet from trying to make a hole in your head.

I look forward to the next class and hope all return for more fun on the white water rivers available to us.





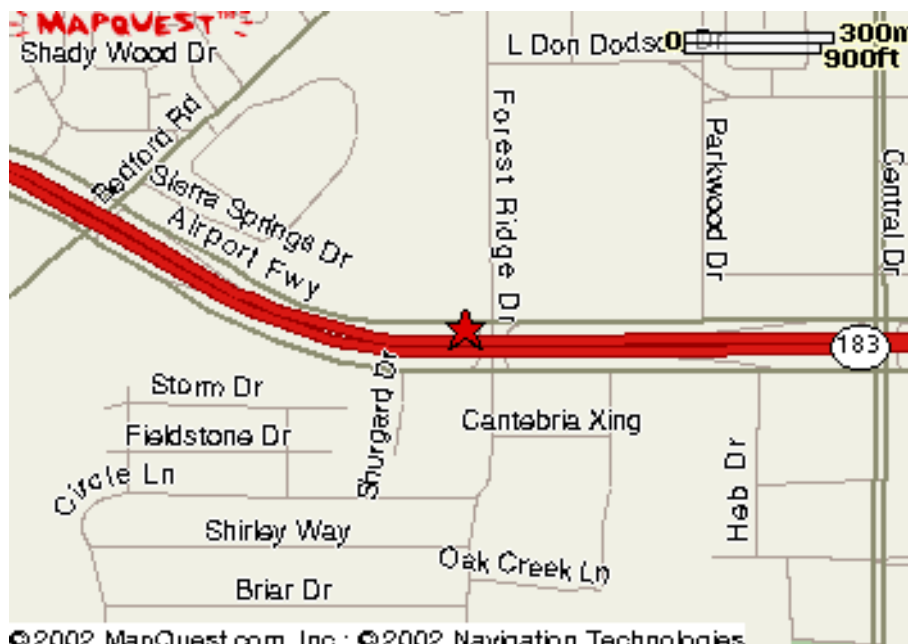
The North Texas River Runners
P.O. Box 1284
Bedford, TX 76095-1284



Home of the Prairie Dog Surfing Society
“If we’re not in the hole, we’re sitting right beside it.”



**If you would like to receive the Newsletter by email, please
contact: gigixL13@msn.com**



Club meetings
are held on the
last Tuesday of
the month at
Spring Creek
Barbecue from
7:00–9:00 PM
Next Meeting:
June 28th

Spring Creek Barbecue
1509 Airport Freeway
North-West Corner of Forest & 183
817-545-0184