

October 2006

North Texas River Runners



Commodore's Corner

We are approaching the time many river runners think is the best time of the year for water activities in Texas. A respite from the oppressive heat and wilting humidity is coming. We will begin having to sleep inside the sleeping bag instead of on top of it. The shrubs and trees will soon change from green to what may only be described as some other color this dry year. All we are lacking to experience the perfect paddling fall in Texas is water. There is no water in the creeks, the rivers are sluggish at best and, of course, the lakes are low. All we know about the rainfall situation is that it will change. The creeks and rivers will flow once again and the lakes will be lapping at the spillways. We just don't know when that will happen.

Those of us who can afford the time and expense of travel can go to the areas of the country that are not experiencing the drought conditions with which we are living. If you are one of those lucky traveling folks, please be sure to take some pictures and be ready to report on your trip so that others can share the pleasure of your trip. If you find travel time to be constrained by time or money, read about paddling or watch videos about paddling or go to the low, muddy lakes to drill on flat water. Sure, these are not activities that many find to be fulfilling, but they are paddling activities and they will prevent "rusting up" while we wait for the rain to begin. It certainly beats sitting around watching the heavens and cursing our bad luck and waiting for it to change. By the way, have you ever noticed how unsuccessful and unhappy those individuals who rely on luck seem to be? Conversely, individuals that prepare, work smartly and approach everything with a positive attitude garner success and happiness. We all have a choice....drift around or paddle with a purpose. — Allen Harrison

October Meeting

Ben Kvanli is an Olympian in whitewater kayak, and currently the first boat on the US National Team in whitewater C-2 (two person decked canoe). Ben will be speaking with the group about his non-profit paddling classes, volunteer work, and love for the sport all year long. This should be a great meeting with lots of information for anyone wanting to become stronger paddlers, or more adventurous in their skills. This would also be a great meeting for members that haven't been to a meeting in a while to come out and show your support of the club, renew your friendships and rekindle your love for the sport. We'll see you all on the 17th.

Poison Ivy

By Ronnie Ash

Well, once again the NTRR's most reluctant public speaker finds himself speaking in public. I hope that you all will forgive me if I tremble, stutter, and sweat!

Jean, our previous environmental officer, did such an outstanding job that a hapless mortal like myself will be hard pressed to measure up. If any of yall have an environmental matter you'd like to bring to the club's attention, do let me know!

This evening, for our environmental episode, let's pay a visit to an inhabitant of our environment that's almost as unpopular as the fire ant – Poison Ivy. Many of you are already far too familiar with poison ivy, but if we can help even 1 paddler to avoid an encounter with the perilous plant, then this effort will have been worthwhile.

In order to avoid it, we must first identify it. Poison ivy grows “vigorously” throughout most of N. America, especially around rivers and lakes. There is more poison ivy now than there was when Europeans first came to our shores because Poison ivy flourishes in edge zones, the boundaries between 2 differing habitats, such as the border between a forest and a clear cut area. Mankind, of course, excels in creating such edge zones.

It grows as a ground cover, a shrub, or a climbing vine. Depending upon the time of year the leaves can be red, light green, dark green, yellow, or orange, and can have yellow or greenish flowers and poisonous gray-white berries called drupes. Generally speaking, each leaf is composed of 3 almond shaped, smooth surfaced leaflets, 2 in a pair on opposite sides of the leafstalk, with the 3rd on the tip. You may have heard the rhyme, “Leaves of 3, let it be.” Beware though, the perfidious thing may have as many as 9 leaves in the group. I have always thought that the leaflets were mitten shaped, but that's not necessarily true. They can have several notches along their edges or none at all.

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The vine of a seemingly dead plant (make no mistake, dead plants, like dead rattlesnakes, can still bite you!) can be another good indicator. Mature vines can have so many little rootlets on their surface that they look furry. My policy is – don't touch anything without first consulting with everyone's favorite botanist, Jean! Poison ivy's evil element is a chemical in the sap called urushiol. One quarter ounce of urushiol would be enough to make every human being on the planet earth break out in a rash. Let's hope the terrorists don't catch on to that, huh?

While some people might appear to be immune to the effects of urushiol, that apparent immunity can disappear with repeated exposures. One need not even touch the plant directly to be exposed. Urushiol can stick to pets, frisbies, throw ropes – anything that comes into contact with it. (Animals, with the exception of a few higher primates, are not sensitive to urushiol) Unless it gets washed off, it can remain potent for years, or even decades in the right conditions.

If you suspect that you may have been exposed, the FDA recommends immediately washing the exposed skin with generous amounts of rubbing alcohol, followed by a wash with water, then a shower with soap and warm water. Avoid an initial wash with soap because it may spread the urushiol around before washing it off. Be sure to wash clothes, shoes, tools, Playthings, or what have you, which may have been contaminated as well.

What if you should discover poison ivy growing in your own yard? Well, the most effective solution is to sell the place and move! Chemical herbicides can kill poison ivy, but they may well kill everything else too. As your environmental officer I can't condone the use of herbicides because somewhere downstream someone will surely wind up drinking it. There's no such thing as a free lunch, you know!

Taking great precautions to protect yourself, you can try to pull it up, but it's unlikely that you could ever eradicate it completely in that manner, for the most miniscule missed bit will soon sprout again. What ever you do, don't burn it! If you're willing to put up with goats they will happily dine upon it. The best action might be to call your county agricultural agent and ask his or her advice.

And that brings us to the most formidable question – what to do if you should break out in that agonizing itchy rash. In that regard I do know where to steer you, for we have a couple of experienced experts right here amongst us. Call Diana or Laurie – they'll set you straight!

Back East

By Dianne (if you don't send me articles you will be subjected to my rants) Poling

My first trip “back east” with Charles went better than I ever expected. Not only are all of my limbs perfectly intact, they weren't permanently bruised. My ego however, is a different subject matter.

The first day we were out, we paddled on the Tellico. I was being what most consider a chicken and my intense fear of the rushing water forced me to decide not to put in above the ledges. Good call, chicken! After watching my significant other flip himself upside down, pin on a large rock and have to pop from his kayak within the first 15 seconds of being on the water, I knew I had made the right choice. The remainder of that day I was incredibly, painfully serious. I don't believe I smiled, laughed, joked or even splashed until late in the afternoon. This behavior is commonly classified as being scared out of your wits. Scott made the nearly fatal mistake of trying to lighten my mood by splashing me above Bounce of Boulder and telling a “joke”. In return of his attempted good deeds, he received a death inducing glare and utterance that will haunt him for years to come. I however did well on that rapid, although backwards, and all the others did well there as well. We had our share of swims, but no one was really in a bad situation on that river. All in all that became one of our favorites of the week due to the fun and challenge that the technical waters offered us.

After 2 days of the Tellico (which by day 2 looked nothing at all as it did on day 1) we moved on to the Pigeon. The river was running hard that day as they had opened all three pumps and there was already water running from the recent rain. We...were...flyin'. Before we began the paddle, Carmen and I stood nervously at the railing looking wordlessly at the water. Later in the day we admitted to each other that we had been so scared and nervous that we hadn't even been able to eat our lunches. The wave trains were long, large and fast and everyone had a blast. Jennifer had a few really cool rolls while running through the wave trains, and as expected Wax and Matt surfed everything they could get their hands on. Carmen even got the nerve up to surf at lost guide rapid and did pretty well. This ended up being one of our favorite rivers because of the huge fast water, with little consequences.

We moved on to the Nantahalla later that afternoon. After a dinner with an amazing and unforgettable view of the Smokey Mountains we set up camp and tried to get some sleep. Due to the snoring of my beloved, I was completely exhausted the next day but I couldn't wait to see what the Nantahalla was all about. For years I've heard stories of this river and in particular the falls and was looking forward to running it. I'm very glad that we did. It was a fun river with very pretty scenery and a much needed break for my top arm. The day ended well and was worth our trip out to see it.

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The last two days of the trip were spent on the infamous Ocoee River. Oh yes, all the horror stories are completely true. This river was huge, it was humbling, it was lightening fast, it was a class VI.....ok, maybe not a class VI, but it was scary that's for sure. I decided to go ahead and paddle the portion above Broken Nose instead of putting in at Double Trouble. This was a fun fun fun part of the river. I did pretty well through that part and loved the whoosh eddy at Broken Nose. However, I am not a big fan of the rock above Double Suck. I couldn't decide whether or not to go left or right of that rock (its left, by the way) and instead plowed right into it, getting spun around in the process and set up to go through Double Suck....side ways. Some how I "willed" my boat to set up some sort of angle and only got the back half of my boat sucked into the hole. I was fortunate enough not to re-circulate, but not fortunate enough to keep a hold of my boat. No matter how loudly I imagined Diana screaming at me to hold onto my boat, I just couldn't do it. I knew that I would be scolded once she heard what I had done, but I just had no power over all of that water. The next time I saw her the first words out of her mouth were "What did I tell you about holding onto your boat?". I knew that Curtis would rat me out to his wife.

Nearly immediately after my swim at Double Suck, I heard the unforgettable words of Charles telling me to "Follow Scott" through Double Trouble. This should always be a red flag to any paddler. When those two words are joined together to form a command, it is time to question your leader's judgement. I followed Scott perfectly...right into the hole at the top, filling my boat with water and making it 800 times heavier than it was prior to following Scott. The difference between our runs however, is that while full of water he is able to maneuver his boat adequately, I have yet to acquire said skill. So I swam again and fortunately for me the photographer on the banks caught it all in super slow motion with her camera. Its very pretty, the bottom of my boat. Although, I became rather tired of seeing it personally. After lunch my sleep deprived and water weary mind had snapped completely, so I pulled my boat out of the water and up to the trailer. I would finish this river tomorrow. I felt like I let myself down, but since I couldn't stop crying from the stress to talk myself into continuing I decided that I would be more of a hazard than anything else. It is very difficult to get a basket case to paddle a boat effectively.

The second day went well once I got a hold of myself (oh yes, there was a complete nuclear meltdown on the bank that morning I assure you), and I ran the portion that I had not the first day. I did portage around Table Saw, but once I saw it I immediately regretted that portage. Oh well. There's always next year. Wax and Matt had some great surfs at Hollywood Hole. Matt had a super long 45 minute blindfolded, no handed surf, and Wax cracked his skull on a rock under the water. Good times.

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Wax is fine and loves the fact that he can say he received a skull fracture while surfing. Most of the way home we were trying to figure out how we can move around our vacation days to try to make another trip out east before the winter comes. Even though I loved it back east, I don't want to postpone the wedding so that we have the vacation time to paddle again this year. Sadly the Ocoee will just have to wait.

All in all everyone had a great time and as promised by Charles for years, our paddling skills jumped by leaps and bounds in a 6 day period of time. Look out Cotton Seed, we will own you soon.

Cheese Enchiladas

By Tyler (not gonna print that) Bennett

INGREDIENTS

4 c. Monterey Jack, shredded
2 c. Cheddar, shredded
2 medium onions, chopped
1 c. sour cream or plain yogurt
1 c. chopped green bell pepper
3-15 oz. cans tomato sauce
4 T. chopped fresh parsley
1/2 t. dried oregano
18 flour tortillas
3 T. chili powder
3/4 t. ground cumin
1/2 t. pepper
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

PREPARATION:

Grease 14 inch dutch oven. Mix Monterey Jack, one cup Cheddar cheese, 1/2 onion (chopped), sour cream, parsley and pepper. Spoon about 1/3-1/2 cup mixture onto each tortilla, wrap around filling and face seam side down. Mix remaining ingredients except cheese. Pour over enchiladas. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake until hot and bubbly. Serve about 18.



The North Texas River Runners

P.O. Box 1284

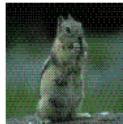
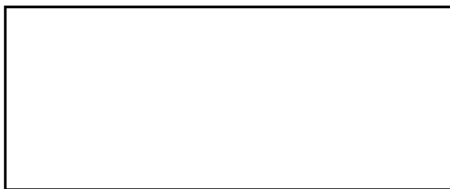
Bedford, TX 76095-1284

Future Meetings.

Here are the last two meeting dates of the year. We hope to see you all there. 7-9 Pm @ Spring Creek BBQ in Bedford.

October 17, Tuesday

November 21, Tuesday



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:
dpoling@gmail.com

Upcoming Activities

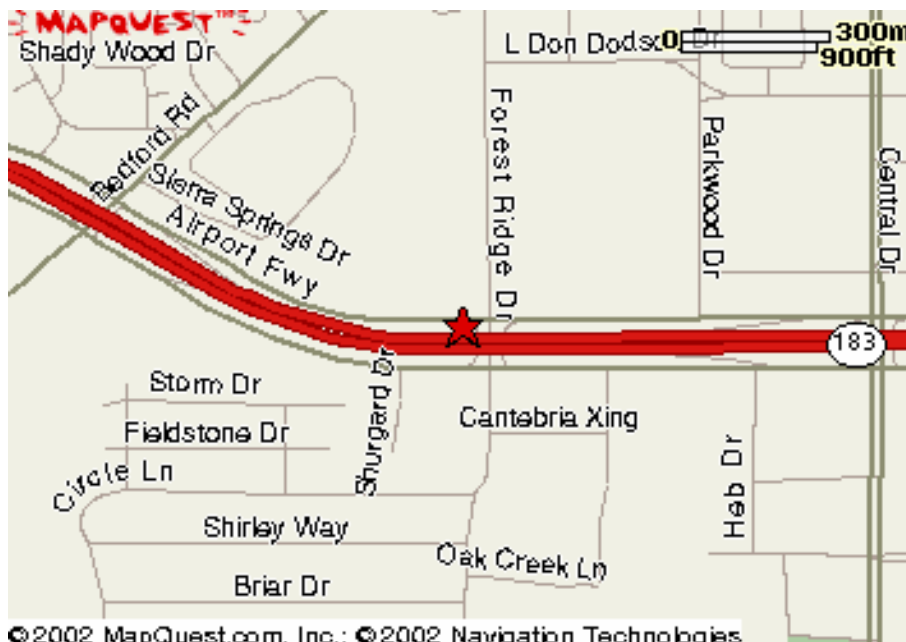
October 21-22 : Saline River Trip.
CANCELLED!

October 27-29: Caddoween in conjunction with DDRC.

November 4th: Annual Boat Repair (attend the meetings for further details)

December 8th: NTRR Christmas party has moved from the 2nd to the 8th.

For more information on any activities, contact Laurie at
queenbee@uwmil.com



Spring Creek Barbecue

1509 Airport Freeway
North-West Corner of Forest & 183

**Club meetings
are held on the
3rd Tuesday of
the month at
Spring Creek
Barbeque from
7:00—9:00 PM
Next Meeting:
October 17th,
Tuesday**