



CHOTA CANOE CLUB
PO BOX 8270 UNIVERSITY STATION
KNOXVILLE, TN 37996

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July, 2002

Chota Canoe Club
Knoxville,
Tennessee

Purpose:
to
provide
community
paddle
sport
activities,
safety awareness and
techniques while being
actively environmentally
responsible.



Time to RENEW your membership? Check
this newsletter label!

July Meeting Notice

Instructors Appreciation Cookout

July's meeting will be a cookout to thank all of our Chota Kayak and Canoe School Instructors. Student's and members are welcome and encouraged to attend! Chota will provide the food, including hamburgers and hotdogs. You're to bring your beverage of choice.

A boat outfitting clinic will be held in conjunction with our instructor's appreciation cookout, so bring your boat and outfitting. Gary Kilpatrick and Robin Ballard will show us how to outfit a canoe and kayak.

Where: Tyson Park, off of Cumberland Avenue and off of Concord Avenue, Knoxville, TN. Due to construction it is easiest to go to Sutherland then turn on to Concord heading south. Tyson Park is on the east side – left hand side.

Time: 6:30 pm until... Thursday, July 11.

RSVP: Call Robin at 423-587-9043 or email to rdballard@lcs.net to confirm attendance so we know how much food to bring.

Visit Chota on the Web at www.korrnet.org/chota

Trip Schedules

Please visit the Chota website for updated trip schedules.
www.korrnet.org/chota

JULY					
DATE	HAIR	HAIRLESS		TOURING	
6 - 7	Robin Ballard 423-587-9043	Pigeon	See website		See website
13 - 14	Gary Kilpatrick 423-246-5262	French Broad II-III (IV)	Gary Kilpatrick 423-246-5262	French Broad II-III (IV)	Marty Crigger 423-748-0822 Cherokee Lake Flat
20 - 21	Tim Mahoney Sandra Torrisi 865-769-0042	Hiwassee	Tim Mahoney Sandra Torrisi 865-769-0042	Hiwassee	See website
27 - 28	John Campbell 865-856-5859	Nantahala	John Campbell 865-856-5859	Nantahala	See website

AUGUST					
DATE	HAIR	HAIRLESS		TOURING	
3 - 4	Robin Ballard 423-587-9043	Pigeon	See website		Jason Darby 865-675-6084 TBD
10 - 11	Paul Schubert 865-882-2480	Pigeon	See website		Jason Darby 865-675-6084 TBD
17 - 18	Tim Mahoney Sandra Torrisi 865-769-0042	Nantahala	Tim Mahoney Sandra Torrisi 865-769-0042	Nantahala	Jason Darby 865-675-6084 TBD
24 - 25	John Campbell 865-856-5859	Ocoee	See website		Jason Darby 865-675-6084 TBD

Promote community paddle sport activities, safety awareness and techniques, while being actively environmentally responsible.



New Member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change of address	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please enclose \$20 dues (one year from date of joining or renewal date)

Membership Form

Head of Household: _____
 Others in Household: _____
 Street: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone Numbers: Home: () _____ - _____ Work: () _____ - _____
 E-mail Address: _____
 Boats paddled: _____ Paddling activity interests:
 Skill Level: Beginner Flatwater/touring Whitewater
 Novice overnight paddling trips Hairless
 Intermediate day trips Hair
 Advanced evening trips
 Expert Coastal Sea Kayaking Trips:
 I am willing to coordinate club trips
 Youth Activities: Whitewater
 Flatwater
 Can you help at canoe school?
 Instruct OC1 OC2 K1
 whitewater
 touring
 Western Trips: Whitewater
 Flatwater
 Other: _____ other: _____
 Conservation activities: River Cleanups Letter writing campaigns Volunteer for groups
 Other _____
 Safety activities: Safety clinic, mentor Safety clinic, student
 Other _____

Waiver:

Chota Canoe Club activities may involve risk to persons or property. I agree to hold harmless from any liability the Chota Canoe Club, its officers and its members, collectively or as individuals, for any damage or loss of property or any personal injury or death to myself, anyone in my boat, or any member of my family covered by this membership while at any Chota Canoe Club function or on the way to it or from it.

Send to: _____
 Chota Canoe Club Date / Signature(s) / (Parent or Guardian if under 18)
 P.O. Box 8270, University Station
 Knoxville, TN 37996

August Newsletter Deadline: July 18, 2002

Email reports, artwork, photos to Stacia Couch at staciacouch@hotmail.com.

Call (865) 588-1461 with any questions or suggestions.

Roll Sessions and Boating Classes



Chota at the Cove

Roll Sessions on Thursdays at Concord Cove - 6 to 8 pm - starting May 2.
(You can also enroll in a Roll Session Class offered by RiverSports)

Boating Night at Concord Cove

(special visits by boat manufacturers)
5 - 8 pm - sponsored by RiverSports

RiverSports Classes

Contact RiverSports to sign up for the following classes: 523-0066 or 675-2370

Touring/Flat Water Kayaking -
Learn the Basics in a 3 hour course
6 - 9 pm, \$30, at Concord Cove.

Course Dates:

July 1, 10, 15, 31;

August 7, 12, 28

Touring Clinic - Learn how to paddle, pack & camp from your boat
1 evening, 2 full days
\$175 at Concord Cove.

Course Dates: July 11, 13, 14;

August 8, 10, 11

For Sale

For Sale: Blue Hole Sunburst II solo canoe. Very good condition, fully outfitted. High volume dry boat. Paddles great. \$400.00. Mark Evans 865-573-6959

Upcoming Events

Ocoee Release Schedule – See <http://www.tva.gov/river/recreation/ocoesched.htm>

The Upper Ocoee runs every Saturday, 8:30 – 4:30 through August 31, 2002

July 4, 5, 6, 7 – Kids Week at Endless River Adventures, Bryson City, NC. 828-488-6199

Sept 20 & 22 AWF Gualey River Rolling Rodeo

September 21 Gauley Whitewater Festival, Summersville, WV

September 30 - October 6 Russel Fork Rendezvous, Haysi, VI

October 9 - 13 AWF Teva Whitewater National Championships of the Ocoee

October 18 - 20 GAF, Bryson City, NC

November 8-10 Fort Pickens National Seashore annual trip. For details and information, call Ed McAlister, 865-675-2247.

November 16-23 ... Cumberland Islands, Georgia. Self-contained camping/ocean paddling. This trip is sure to be as spectacular as last year's trip to Isle Royale National Park. 6 to 8 person limit on trip. If interested and for more details, contact Howard Cox 865-639-5738 or Doug Johnstone 865-966-3391.

June 2003 Costa Rica Paddling and Adventure Tour. Plan to budget approximately \$1500. If interested, contact Renee VandeBerg at (865) 691-2911 or rvandeberg@coulterjustus.com.

Found

Kayak paddle found on the Tellico, in the 1st half of June, 2002. Please call Bailey Johnson with description to claim the paddle. 865-986-9387.

Deadly Accident on the Upper Tellico

By Frank Bargatze, from "Boater Talk" Internet Forum

Editor's note (Upper Tellico is up above the Ledges Section).

The following words are just as the events occurred on May 4, 2002.

May 4, 2002 began as a normal Ed and Frank day – find food. With our food cravens extinguished, we headed to several outfitters... Around 10:30 a.m. we headed for the Tellico in anticipation of great water after nearly two days of rain. Arriving, we were greeted with a roaring river with over 2000-cfs of water rushing down the riverbed. We rendezvoused with Barnett Williams and Elgin Hollings as scheduled at the bridge put-in for the middle section of the Tellico.

This was Ed's first time back in his boat since last fall after his rib injury on the Ocoee, and also Elgin was attempting her first descent since the tragic loss of her husband, Randy Cook, just two months earlier. It was determined quickly that the river conditions were not conducive for our preset goals of safety and light paddling to ensure that both Ed and Elgin were ready for the rigors of paddling to come this summer...

Barnett Williams suggested that we go towards the upper stretches of the Tellico where the river plateaus for a short distance – class one/two white water. We went 3.2 miles above the put-in for the ledges/upper section and just above the North River confluence with the Tellico. We pulled over at a maintained parking area for

fishermen and unloaded equipment. Barnett and myself ran shuttle, leaving Ed and Elgin in conversation beside the river. Elgin told me later in conversation with Ed that he stated he was very comfortable with the group decision to run this benign section.

I checked with Ed after first rapid as to his physical condition – he said that he was a little winded but felt good. We approached an island that offered a passage to river right and left. I had looked at the river left run when running shuttle. River left offered more challenge than the wide river right route. I worked my way down the river left side and eddied below the island, maneuvered closed to the bank with a freshly fallen tree in the water. The tree was mostly submerged towards the top of the rock and protruded in open view upon the shore. Behind the rock I waited for the others to appear.

I looked up and saw Ed bounce over a small, submerged rock then drop into a small underwater sieve formed by the rock and fallen tree. Ed broached against the tree and then events occurred so quickly that I'm not sure that I can adequately describe actions and motions. I will try.

Ed had a look of panic and was frantically trying to extricate himself. In a matter of seconds he was pinned upside down in his boat. I summoned for help upstream and was spun around in the eddy. When I turned back into the eddy I could see Ed struggling to exit his boat. The boat popped free and floated downstream. I could see Ed's blue paddling jacket submerged under the water.

I immediately exited my boat in the water and climbed onto the rock. It was impossible to reach Ed so I jumped on top of Ed and tried with all human strength to pull him out of his entrapment.

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20 Ways to Tell if You've Been Paddling Too Long"

From: October 19993 – Canoe Magazine (shortened)

1. You forget the name of the river you're on.
2. You think you recognize someone on the street and you ask what paddling club he belongs to.
3. You describe your house as being on road right.
4. You can't associate the word "strainer" with cooking utensils.
5. Your paddle has a name.
6. You're late for your wedding and find yourself sliding down a river bank checking the gauge.
7. A gourmet meal consists of gorp and Gatorade.
8. You get a great deal on a new car, but you don't buy it because the color clashes with your boat.
9. Someone compliments you on your new suit and you wonder whether they're referring to the wet one or dry one.
10. You have more money invested in topo maps than stereo equipment.
11. You pick out a new car solely because the model still has rain gutters.
12. You start a phone chain when it rains heavily on Friday.
13. You realize that you have just traded a vehicle that runs for a boat.
14. You actually like the smell of neoprene.
15. You want to try on clothes at the mall and you strip down beside the clothes rack.
16. You have no doubt that anything can be fixed with duct tape.
17. You carefully arrange your garage to fit more boats.
18. Calling your answering machine gives the water levels.
19. You think "heavy rain" is a good weather report.
20. You see nothing strange about carrying a boat over a mile on a trail that you wouldn't even consider hiking on.

Annual Safety Clinic – August 17

This year's annual safety clinic will be held August 17th, Saturday, on the Hiwassee River starting at 10:00 am. If you have never taken a whitewater safety class this is a must attend (as in you should really, really take this class), highly recommended if you have less than 4 years of paddling experience, and also a highly recommended refresher course. Touring kayakers – we recommend this class for you too!

Cost is \$15 for the clinic. Camping is available at Gee Creek, Quinn Springs, and Hiwassee Outfitters if you would like to spend the night and paddle on Sunday!

What to expect: This is a high energy, hands on class. You should be in good physical condition and dressed to spend a lot of time in the water. You will be rope throwing, walking in water (not on), rescuing people and boats, learning how to navigate strainers if your worst dream comes true, swimming, and so and so forth. Sign up early because space is limited.

What to bring: Your paddling gear, a rope (this is mandatory equipment for **ALL** paddlers), river dress including river boots/shoes, and a lunch.

Please mail payment and contact information (you can use the Membership Form in this newsletter and write "Safety Clinic" at the top of it) to Renee Vandenberg, 1420 Francis Station Drive, Knoxville, TN 37909. Active Chota Membership is required. See your mailing label on this newsletter to determine if your dues are past due – and if so, please make them current by sending in your membership check, too!

2002 Executive Committee

President:	Renee Vandenberg	865-691-2911	r_vandenberg@msn.com
Vice President:	Robin Ballard	423-587-9043	rballard@lcs.net
Treasurer:	Howard Cox	865-693-5738	hcox@icx.net
Secretary:	Mary Ann Grell	865-386-4819	magrell@yahoo.com
Canoe & Kayak School:	Henry Bell	865-379-9247	bell@simulationdynamics.com
Canoe & Kayak School Elect:	Jill Miller	865-573-3451	jillbhome@ntown.com
Conservation:	Jennifer Sauer	865 688-7782	jensauer@aol.com
Safety:	Gary Kilpatrick	423-246-5262	GWKilpatrick@misfinishing.com
Web Master:	Russell DeCastongrene	865-966-5918	russelldec@Chartertn.net
Newsletter:	Stacia Couch	865-588-1461	staciacouch@hotmail.com
Trip Chairperson:	Mary Misulich	865-448-2223	
Member-at-Large:	Franklin Paine	865-281-7178	frickfrack@mindspring.com
Past President	Doug Johnstone	865-966-3391	canoeone@msn.com

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Barnett Williams had gotten to the rock as I was jumping for Ed. After letting go, I swam into the river right eddy and moved up the shore and climbed onto the fallen tree. Barnett and myself tried to secure a rope so that we could get to Ed. The current was too strong and the position of rock and tree made it impossible to quickly get to Ed.

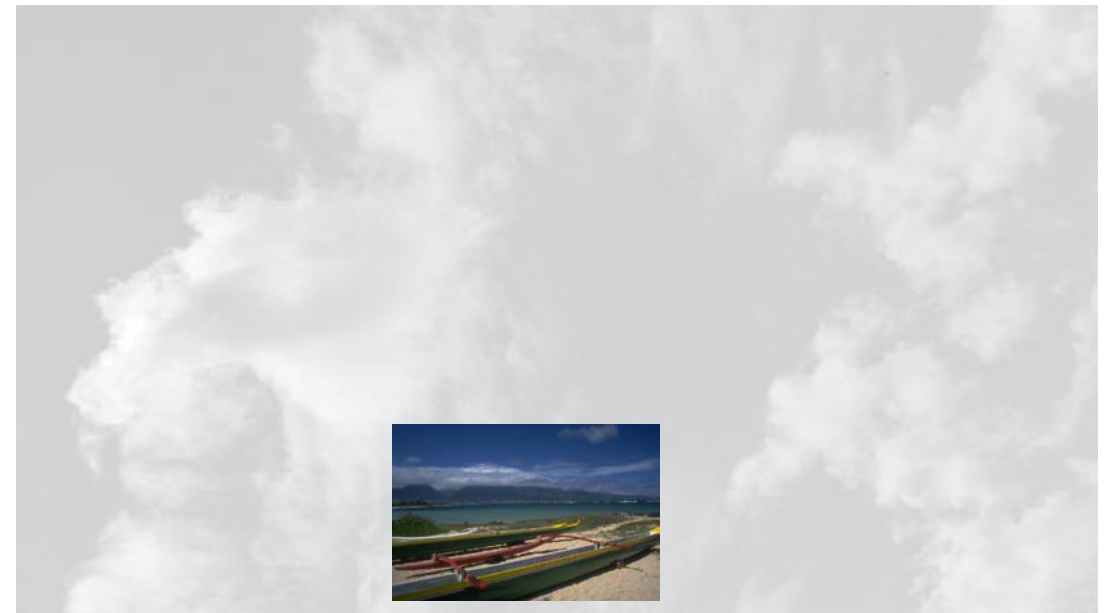
Both of us again jumped to Ed and pulled without success. By now he had been under the water for 15 minutes – we stopped and said a prayer on the rock. Ed's body had shifted from the pulling and Barnett was able to grab Ed's rescue rope that was secured around his waist. We pulled but to no avail.

I swam to shore on river right where Elgin and bystanders wanting to help had gathered.

Barnett stayed on the rock and eventually got a rope around Ed's life vest. He threw ropes to us and we pulled. Just as the rescue squad arrived there was a snap of a branch I assume, and Ed's body floated free. He was immediately taken into the ambulance where CPR was administered.

We gathered equipment, gave reports to the Forest Service and went to Sweetwater Medical Center where Ed was pronounced dead. We called Jill and stayed with Ed until all arrangements had been made. They allowed me to see Ed and say a few words to him. I told he would be missed, loved and not forgotten. He is at peace and on that endless class 4 rapid.

On the way home there seemed to be a big swirling hole in the clouds. I looked at Elgin and told her that is where Ed entered heaven.



Duskin Creek to the Piney River Gauge - 4.0 to 4.5 feet May 4, 2002

Author: Renee VandeBerg. Paddlers: Theresa Vecchi, Jennifer Sauer, Gary Kilpatrick, Russell DeCastongrene, Renee VandeBerg, Mike Lewis, Bailey Johnson, Dan Harp, Jeff Richards, and Charlie Tombras, plus 5 paddlers from Nashville, TN.

You'd think this micro creek on the South Cumberland Plateau, right by Spring City, TN, wouldn't see many paddlers. Well it doesn't, but on this gorgeous, misting day 15 of us showed up at once – the only people to paddle the creek that day. The Chota trip of 5, blossomed to 10 as the GDI boys (including 2 Chota members) appeared on the scene. We were glad they showed because the wave trains at the takeout of the Piney indicated the canyon section of the Piney was too high to run. Ah, but those old (as in experienced) GDI boys seem to know every creek around and the alternate runs to be had when one is too high.

The Duskin has spectacular scenery and is a great Class III run with one Class IV. It was a tight fit with 15 boats, but since we all knew river etiquette (with refresher courses freely offered - "get your own eddy", "don't eddy in above me, eddy in below", "quit jumping into the middle of my group and breaking it up - stay in front or behind") the trip went superb. Great leading, boat scouting, a few bank scouts, excellent eye contact and nods as when to go, boaters keeping their spacing and a look behind to check on the boater in back, made for a great trip.

The day started off with Theresa quickly pinning her boat to a log where upon our heroes, Bailey

and Jeff rescued her. At this point, both Theresa and Jenn were wondering what they had gotten themselves into, which turned out to be a great time and a river they'd do again in a heart beat!

We only had 3 swimmers for the day - 2 at double swim rapids, with one going over Jenn's Ledge. (wonder who?). At double swim, an evil tree yanked Theresa's paddle out of her hands and tipped her over, keeping her paddle. She was soon swimming hard to Renee's calls of "swim to the shore, now". Luckily, Theresa got out in time, but her boat went over the ledge, much to Mike's chagrin. Theresa was a bit dismayed that none of us were in a hurry to get her boat, but she hadn't heard Bailey's earlier announcement that her boat would undoubtedly get stuck in that nasty hole at the bottom of the ledge. Bailey rescued the boat after it washed into the river right strainer (another reason to bouff far left) near the hole.

Jenn, feeling that Theresa's honor needed to be saved, decided that she was going to teach the evil tree a thing or two. However, being in the Land of Oz the tree snagged Jenn's paddle and tipped her over with a sneer. Knowing that when everyone stops in this group something's nasty on the other side of the horizon line, Jenn popped out of her boat to experience a real close up encounter with "sticky" the hole just in time to hear "ball up, tuck", as she plunged over the drop. Actually, Louis was yelling "grab your @#%\$ boat" as he hates to chase them downstream.

Charlie threw Jenn a rope and she watched it drift away, unable to reach it as she was held several inches below the surface. That's the bad thing about sticky, recirculating holes. They let you see the sky but don't let you reach it. Scratching with all her might to the surface, Jenn used the paddle as an extension of her, and as a result caught green water and was pulled out of the hole.

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Thank You to All...

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR INSTRUCTORS, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS FOR ANOTHER GREAT KAYAK & CANOE SCHOOL. Details will appear in the August newsletter as the July newsletter went to press before the school. We're looking forward to receiving your articles about your experiences at this year's schools! Send them to Stacia Couch staciacouch@hotmail.com or Renee VandeBerg r_vandenberg@msn.com.

An Instructors Thank You Picnic will be held at July's meeting for all instructors and members. Chota will supply the food and beverages. BYOB. See the meeting notice on the cover for further information.

CLUB DUES WERE DUE IN JUNE

for the vast majority of our members!!!

Ya gotta pay to play.

Send in your dues NOW while you are thinking about it!

NEEDED – REWARD OFFERED

Safety Clinic Instructors for our August Safety Clinic!!! (sign-up with Renee VandeBerg, 865-691-2911 or r_vandenberg@msn.com and receive a limited edition, John Campbell, Buda style – Chota Instructor t-shirt!).

See p. 12 for more information regarding the Safety Clinic.

News on the Hiwassee Release Schedule

The Hiwassee Release Schedule will be reduced to six hours of two unit use (1 pm to 7 pm), seven days a week, beginning Monday, June 24. The reduced schedule will remain in effect until July 4. For the fourth of July weekend (July 4-7) Appalachia will run 8 hours of two unit use each day (just like now). Hopefully, following the fourth of July weekend the schedule will revert back to the original (8 hours of two unit use). However, TVA will continue to re-evaluate. If inflows increase between now and July 4 and it appears the schedule will allow 8 hours of two unit use, TVA will not hesitate to do so.

As always, you can obtain the release schedule for the following day by calling the Lake Information Line at 800-238-2264 after 5 p.m. or checking the TVA web site at www.tva.gov.

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paddling bud produces a small flask of very fine Tequila to sip along the way.

However, as the bright purple bruise shines across the front of my left hip bone, it reminds me that danger always lurks around a river. Grabbing the boat off the shuttle vehicle and hoisting it to my shoulder, it slips, smashing skin against bone. It's just another reminder that life's safer on the water.

-- Renee

Per an AW Volunteer's Observation: Too many paddlers were on the Tallulah this last Spring that had no business being there. I.e. their skill level, safety knowledge and river reading abilities were below what was necessary to run this river with a decorum of safety. Don't let oozing testosterone suck you into running this river prematurely.

SAFETY NOTES ON WATERFALL DROPS

(from Toby's Lessons, East Tennessee Whitewater Club. Toby MacDermott is one of those great young, up and coming hair boaters who stands your hair on end with his adventures. His tips are tried and true.)

As many of you know, a man suffered a compression fracture at Baby Falls (a relatively safe waterfall of 15 feet on the Tellico River). There are two things to learn from his accident:

- 1) Green un-aerated water is hard water (incompressible, much like a sidewalk), and
- 2) Penciling in will be safer than landing flat, because penciling will reduce the impact on the spine. However, if a piton is a concern, due to known or suspected rock jumbles, flat landings may be preferred. Fluffy, bubbly aerated water is less of a hazard because the bubbles actually cushion the drop, like 'bubble-pak' packing.
 - A. Many common injuries are spinal. To break your back, lean way back or sit straight up. By leaning way back, the cockpit rim will smash into your spine, like a baseball bat swung against your spine. By sitting straight up will mean all your downward momentum will abruptly stop when the boat hits the water, compressing your spine.
 - B. When entering, lean forward for all landings. From high drops, tip your head so your helmet hits the deck, not your face, or lay the side of your head on the deck before impact. If eating paddle shafts is on your menu keep the paddle in front of your face, otherwise keep the paddle to one side when entering.

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Just as she caught air, she said to herself, "swim down next time", thus making it easier to swim out. Ironically, this episode, calmed Jenn and Theresa down substantially. See—swimming is good for you! And now scientifically proven to provide medicinal, calming effects, while purifying you of bad vibes.

Not long thereafter the Duskin dumped into the Piney and the volume tripled for 3 miles of wonderful wave trains and play holes. The waves were so big that at one time you could barely see the gunwales of Gary's canoe above the water line. The day ended way too soon and a month later, I returned to backpack the trail that parallels the entire length of this run. There was a fraction of the water in the creek, but it was still just as lovely.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Obed Wild and Scenic River

Dear Chota,

On behalf of the National Park Service, I would like to thank your organization for the assistance they provided to the Obed Wild and Scenic River on May 18, 2002 for National River Cleanup Day.

The participants in the cleanup picked up over 100 bags of litter and trash in the park in only three hours of work. Removing litter from the park enhances the beauty of this wonderful resource.

Your organization's assistance was a valuable part of the success of the day, and we at the Obed Wild and Scenic river extend our heartfelt thanks for a job well done.

Sincerely,

Kristin Stoehr
Unit Manager

(reprinted thank you letter sent to Chota – GO CHOTA!)

Tallulah Gorge Tallulah Falls, Georgia

This beautiful gorge was dewatered decades ago when the dam was built and the water was pumped out and transported by a huge tube to the power house several miles down river. After an extended negotiation process, we now have releases on this exquisite section, thanks to AW.

On Saturday, April 13th, Mike Lewis and I headed to Tallulah Falls, Georgia for my first run. We had hoped Dulley would join us, along with a couple of Chota members and the Georgia boys. Georgia bowed out with hopes of great rain near home (which didn't happen), Dulley we assumed found a damsel in distress the night before, the only honorable reasons for not making it, and as far as our Chota boys, well....., hmmm, what good excuse is there to miss hair boating?

So we hit the road with the King commenting on how this would be the equivalent of our first descent since he didn't remember the rapids. What the heck, maybe we'd meet up with someone who knew the river. So we found Matt, a great guy from Philadelphia, who was running the Tallulah for his first time. But he was in great shape, a massage therapist, and packed a small container of Tequila, thus exceeding all the qualifications necessary for a third boater.

A year of hype about this 2.5 mile run of solid Class IV, IV+ and two V rapids, viewing AW's pictures (NOT a good idea if you're planning to run it), and the killer descent into the Gorge consisting of what - 572 steps down, my ankles and calves trembled as I got into my boat - what's that about? God it felt good to be on the river and off that stressed out platform where the boaters wait to take their turn getting on the river, one by one.

Seeing the first rapid, Last Step (aka Entrance Rapid) begin a mere 15 yards down from the put-in, my mind conveniently blanked out that it was rated IV+. What a way to overload an already flustered psych. And what difference does it really make? Are you going to carry your boat back-up 572 steps like that other dude did? Not.

Louis promptly found the most difficult way to run Last Step Rapid. We two-stepped the boulders and holes back and forth, with a final dash to the left to avoid crashing into the canyon wall. Not a bad run, although it's a sorry sight to see from the put-in.

Since we were running from the King's memory - anything less than a V was forgotten - we river read, boat scouted, and Louis occasionally asked a kayaker here and there along the way what an upcoming line was. The day's communication went about like this "is that the bouff move & then Oceana?", "is this Amplitheater - where about are the holes - go right, then left - ok", and "well if I weren't trying to show-off how would I run it?" Matt would then ask, "what did he say?", to which I'd reply, "I don't know, couldn't hear him". What a great way to run the river - with no one around to stroke themselves as they give long, dragged out, carnage filled instructions no wants to hear except the person doing the telling.

Oceana with THE THING. Freaky - look at the picture on AW. Better yet, don't, it will only scare you. In person Oceana calls to you, "run me, you can do it, you won't get slammed, come on you'll experience a rush like never before!" Then the analytical side takes over as one person after the next is body slammed on the right (center) line, sling-shotted to the left to the thundering THING, scooted around the corner of it (typically upside down), and sent flying another 25 feet into the hole at the bottom, where they were worked further. And that is supposedly the safest line.

Watching the left line, a number of boaters rocketed 55 feet down the slide, past the THING, only to crash and burn in the hole at the bottom, with 30% of those boaters swimming out. Computing a near 70% carnage rate, I embraced Louis's line "if you run all the rapids the first time, you won't have a reason to come back", and followed his portage. To his credit, Louis has run The Thing several times and been spanked by it a few times. Today he didn't have his elbow pads and last time The Thing gnawed more flesh off his elbows then he cared to relinquish.

Strong Matt however, being young and brave, ran the right line, screaming sideways down the 30 foot slide in 2 seconds, where he was flipped by the 8 foot high pillow of water, body slammed back into the rock slide, and sling shotted upside down to the THING, where upon the huge, 15 to 20 foot spurting pillow of water stopped him, percolated him upside down to the top of the THING, dropped him, then perked him to the top again, slung him around the top left corner of the Thing, and skipped him across the hole. The whole ordeal took about 6 to 9 seconds from start to finish, but that was enough for Matt as he swam out, with skin torn-off his fingers. Proudly accepting the carnage award unanimously presented by the dozen observers, he scouted for the video man. Hey video man - if you're out there - you know the run - we'd really like to get a copy of it!

The entertainment was just heating up. Shortly after Matt's run, George?, tried to portage river left. After dropping his paddle, it slid 55 feet down into the hole. Shortly thereafter, George's feet kicked out from under him, landing him hard on his bottom for his own 55 foot slide down the rock face and into the hole. His boat followed him. Who's cruel idea was that to suggest portaging on the left? Surely this guy

will never reproduce - we can only hope.

After the warm-up run of a IV+, IV and V in 0.25 miles, the fear level dropped precipitously although the guard was up - totally. Louis ran Bridal Veil, the other Class V, while we watched from up above until we thought he'd cleared the hole. Bridal Veil is an EVIL HOLE that will suck you back in and if you swim there's an excellent chance your only way out is via a buddy with a rope - of which there were none when Louis stopped paddling too soon and was sucked 8 to 10 feet back and surfed into the center of the hole. Realizing he was in major doodoo, he did the smart thing and shouted "HELP". Luck would have it that the four kayakers paddling down stream heard and turned around to paddle upstream against a strong current. Louis knew he'd have to hang upright in evil Bridal Veil for a LONG time (in breathing terms) before help arrived.

As the river surfed him back to river left a paddle snake reared up to grab his stern for a final tug into the hole's evil, black depths. The River Gods took mercy on this sole open boater on the Tallulah and yanked the snake's grip loose, squirting the Dagger Quake and Louis out of the hole, to the wild cheers of the 4 kayakers who no longer had to struggle to his rescue.

The rest of the run was pure fun with Louis announcing all too soon that there wasn't much left. "But wait, what about Brain Buster, that Class IV+?". "You just ran it", he said. Brain Buster screams the same message running down it as it does when you looking up it - don't flip here or your helmet will look just like the dude's on the shuttle ride back. He just finished his second run of the day, with a different helmet, after Brain Buster put a 4 inch crack into his first one.

There's still plenty of fun left after Brain Buster, and it's no time to drop your guard. The Tallulah is so much fun that the "damned Lake" run isn't such a bad paddle after all. Especially when your new