

Eddy Out



Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville TN. Established 1969

March-April 2013

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



Oh, I Remember That, Middle Tellico Jan. 20th.

This trip on the Middle Tellico brought back many memories as three old timers of Chota and one newcomer bundled up at the put in below Jared's Knee on a cool, but sunny, day. After feeling the waters and scouting some rapids on the way to the put-in, Pete Feist decided that he would put on lower down and start out watching some seasoned boaters tackle the rapids.

After we warmed up, Doug Johnston, Gary Kilpatrick, and I started down the river. It was early in the trip when Gary, the leader that he is, thought that Doug and I should work on our swift water rescue skills. This only whetted Doug's and my appetite, and at fairly regular intervals on down the river we reciprocated. It seems that many times after regrouping someone would be overheard saying, "Oh, I remember that." Fortunately the sun kept

beaming its warmth down on us and the Tellico's beauty kept dazzling us. It was a glorious day to be on the river.

Once Pete Feist felt that we had sharpened our rescue skills enough, he yelled down that he was ready to paddle. So we pulled over for a break, had some snacks, and continued on down the river to our take out at Osterneck. The rest of the paddle was uneventful except that we all enjoyed each other's company and of course took in more of the scenery. The Tellico is certainly one of our gems as a local stream.

On our way back home we stopped off in Maryville to stimulate the local economy, and refreshed ourselves with some beverages and burgers. We also shared a few memories and had a few laughs as talk of rivers and future trips drifted through the conversation. After an appropriate amount of time, we toasted once more to the river gods, waved to each other a safe trip home and we were off.

Pete Dolan



The Florida Panhandle in Late Winter, March 3-8

Going south in the winter seeking the sun and warmer paddling conditions is a gamble. The trip started by scraping the snow and ice off the windshield before dawn dreaming of Florida sunshine.

Five touring boaters met in Wakulla County Florida on Saturday night. Early Sunday morning we paddled the Wakulla River, one of the most diverse ecosystems in the state. The river emanates from one of the largest fresh water springs in the country. Recent flooding rains had it flowing at about twice the normal speed. I have paddled the river many times in the past and usually encountered alligators, turtles and rare birds. The weather was cold and gray, not a gator in sight. We did see a variety of birds but far fewer than normal. We floated down the fast flowing river in just over an hour.



Jack Webb and Dave Cole floating down the Wakulla River

After our Sunday morning paddle we drove to St. Joseph Peninsula State Park 90 miles to the west. The five paddlers from Sunday, Jim Martin, Deb McCarter, Jack Webb, Dave Cole and Jack Graham, met up with Pete Feist and Mark Warner at the campground. The night was cold but we sat around and ate a great Dutch oven pot pie and dessert. That was the trend for the rest of the week. Cold windy weather but good eats.

On Monday we paddled on St. Joe Bay up the peninsula with a slight breeze from the south. After a few stops and a lunch break we headed back. The slight breeze turned into a stiff headwind making choppy conditions and slow going. The easy paddle turned into a 13 mile workout. We loaded up in the late afternoon as it started to get cold.



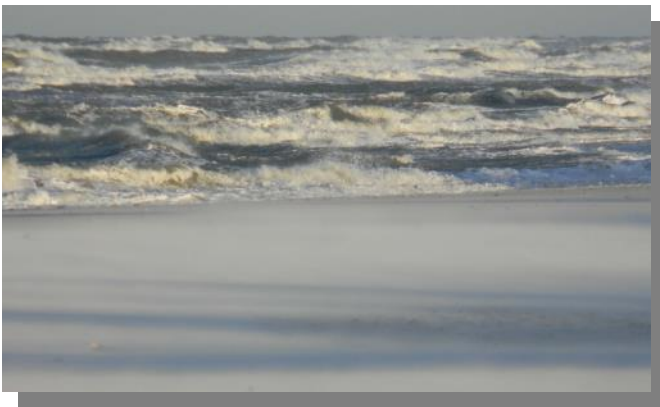
The next morning the winds were forecast to be from the northwest at 20 to 30 mph. The Gulf beach was crashing surf. We decided to launch our boats in the protected waters at the south end of the bay. We paddled about a mile around a point and came straight into a 25 to 30 mile per hour headwind straight out of the north.....not the direction it was predicted. After a few minutes it was obvious we were not making any progress toward our destination. We hit the beach, ate lunch, warmed up in the sunshine and then turned back. The paddling day was over but not the fun. A few of us hiked in the wilderness preserve while others chose a quiet afternoon in camp.

The rest of the week the winds did not let up. The nights were cold but the days were sunny and clear. We hiked, ate, drank and relaxed. Pete and Mark got in one more paddle before we all split up and headed for home.

The part of the Florida Panhandle we visited is called the Forgotten Coast. Parts of it are untouched by development and urban sprawl. The weather in the winter can often be fantastic with warm days and mild nights. We just happened to be there in a cold spell.

Even though we didn't get to paddle every day there were no complaints.

Jim Martin



Beach surf in the morning.



Shrimp dinner shared with a neighbor.



Endangered St. Joe Lighthouse.



Hiking in the wilderness preserve.

Tragic Paddling Accidents

Two paddling accidents in March claimed the lives of canoe paddlers.

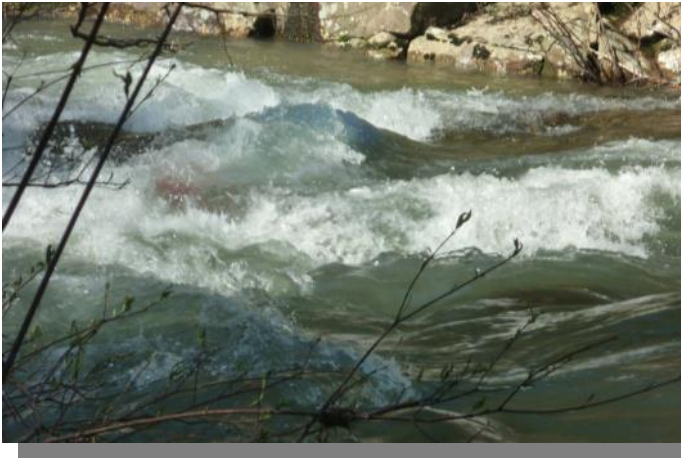
The first incident happened on Monday March 11th on the Little River in the Smokies. A Canadian white water paddler, Steve Senior drowned after being trapped below a ledge near the Sinks. He was an experienced open white water canoe paddler taking part in the annual, "Ain't Louie Fest". He was wearing a dry suit, PFD, helmet and other safety gear.

The group Senior was paddling with were experienced in swift water rescue. They immediately went into action and managed to get him out of the water and start CPR before rescue crews arrived. Unfortunately Senior was pronounced dead the next day at Blount Memorial Hospital.

The second incident occurred on Sunday, March 18 in the Upper Tellico Lake area. Three men in a canoe were fishing near the Harrison Branch boat ramp, they were not wearing PFDs. The boat turned over leaving all three in the water. One man swam to shore, another stayed with the canoe and was rescued by a passing boater. The third man, 25 year old Edward Russell of Maryville drowned. His body was recovered later that night by the Rescue Squad.



Rescue operations on the Little River March 11, 2013. Picture courtesy wbir.com



Can you see the pinned boat in this picture? Hint: It's red, white and blue. This is a class II no-name rapid on White's Creek In Rhea County. The boater was in the wrong place at the wrong angle. He got lucky and swam out of this. We all hiked out minus one boat.



This is what it looked like a day later. You can see the undercut rock a little more clearly. You can also see the boat is now twisted around the rock. A Z-drag was required to get this boat out of the water.

Swift Water Rescue Should be Mandatory

Whether you are rescuing or being rescued, every kayaker, canoeist and rafter needs to learn the skills that are taught in a swift water rescue class. Can you wade in that current? Which knots do you use under different conditions? How can mechanical advantage help you in different situations? These are the things that you will learn in a swift water rescue course. But just as important as these skills are, a swift water rescue class will teach you to think and assess situations quickly, make a plan and take action.

It is pretty obvious that if you are running really difficult whitewater, you will need swift water rescue skills at one time or another, but what about the rest of us? Do you need to take a swift water rescue class if you are barely running Class II? A few years ago when I was a new boater, barely making in and out of eddies and swimming everywhere, I decided to take a swift water rescue class because I thought it would be fun and I'd get to hang out with the cool kids. It was pretty intimidating for someone who had been boating for a grand total of six weeks to be taking a class using rapids on the Ocoee. I learned how to wade in current, by myself and with a group, and how to throw a rope and how not to. I learned firsthand how much force is on the rope when you have a swimmer on the end of it, especially a swimmer who is considerably bigger than you. I practiced combat swimming and experienced the end of the rope for myself. I learned some knots and how to set up a z-drag. I also drank some beer and listened to some stories and had a good weekend.

So how does this help a Class II boater? Well, it makes you a much better victim. Because I had taken the class I knew how to help my rescuers help me. It's always good to make the rescuer's job easier if you want them to keep rescuing you. It also made me much more aware of hazards on the river and more prepared for them. I purchased some safety gear and learned how to use it. I've been on the victim end of a serious situation, but thankfully, I've never had to be on the rescuing end. I know from experience that Class II water can cause fatal situations just as rapidly as Class IV. Pinned boats, snagged spray skirts, and foot entrapments can happen on no name rapids just as quickly as on Death Falls. I consider myself the most important person on the river any time I paddle so I want to do everything in my power to save myself. And if my paddling buddies get into trouble, I want to know that I did everything possible to help them.

Take a swift water rescue class. And take more than one. Different instructors and students bring different experiences and perspective to the class. I try to take one every other year. Take your paddling buddies with you. You never know when you might find yourself in trouble and need some help on the river.

Angela Garrison



**Angela Garrison at Boater Chick Festival
On the Ocoee River.**



**Angela dropping off a ledge on the Telli-
co River.**



Volunteer Opportunities at the Rev 3 Triathlon

Rev 3 Knoxville Triathlon returns !!!! Chota has been requested to provide safety boaters for the swimming portion of this Knoxville event. Chota Canoe Club will receive \$500 donation for our efforts. This will be our 4th year in helping with this event. All touring and white water paddlers are needed! This is on the water safety swimmer support.

The competitors practice on Saturday morning May 4 and we will need 10 or more volunteers. Practice is from 11am to 2:30pm.

Race day, May 5, we are needing 20 or more volunteers early in the morning. We will be done by 10am.

For those who would like, we will organize both flat water and white water trips after the race support is over.

Please sign up and enter "Chota Canoe Club" as the Volunteer Team or Group Name information.

<http://rev3tri.com/knoxville/volunteer-3/sign-up/>

Please send me an email that you've signed-up, because separate detailed information about the event will be sent via email.

Doug Johnstone
865-804-5240 cell
canoeone@tds.net

Rankin Bottoms Expansion

TWRA and the Conservation Fund are currently engaged in negotiations for the purchase of an 800-acre parcel adjoining the Rankin WMA. The tract includes most of the mudflats of Rankin Bottoms and, on the opposite side of the railroad grade, most of the high ground, extending all the way to the shoreline on the Ten Islands side. Rankin is best-known by birders for the number and variety of migratory shorebirds appearing in late summer to feed on the mudflats that emerge as Douglas Reservoir is drawn down. The purchase would allow protection of critical habitat and secure public access to shoreline that's now posted with no-trespassing signs by the property manager.

As drawdown proceeds, vegetation covers the Rankin Bottoms floodplain, and the Ten Islands mudflats emerge, becoming the prime Douglas birding hotspot. Viewing from shore is very limited and there are far fewer records than on the Rankin side, but the variety of birds reported is equivalent. Certain species seen at Ten Islands, namely, Franklin's Gull, Black Scoter, and Tricolored Heron have never been reported at Rankin Bottoms, as far as I know. The proposed acquisition would allow viewing from more than a mile of the eastern shoreline of Ten Islands and, of course, ensure habitat protection there as well.

So, for birders, the deal would mean a huge expansion of protected shorebird habitat and public shoreline access. The high ground, consisting of about 300 acres of fields and woodlands between Rankin Bottoms and Ten Islands would also be opened to the public.

Your letter of support for the acquisition can help to emphasize its importance for conservation and wildlife observation. Send a few words to John Gregory, TWRA Region IV Manager

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john.c.gregory@tn.gov

and copy to Pete Wyatt, Regional Wildlife Manager-

Pete.Wyatt@tn.gov

Ijams River Rescue

The Ijam's Nature Center River Rescue is Saturday, April 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Chota will again be working out of Ned McWherter Park, located under the north (downtown) end of the South Knoxville Bridge.

Canoes and large sit-on-top kayaks work great for cleanup events, but if you don't have an appropriate boat, River Sports Outfitters is providing canoes and gear at the site for Chota members. In addition to the River Rescue T-shirts, there will be prizes for participants provided by www.floattote.com.

Several Chota members have already signed up, but we would like to get a crew of 25-30 out for the event. If you don't want to paddle, or are bringing non-paddling friends, there's plenty of opportunity to work the shoreline.

Please RSVP if you plan to attend, so the Ijam's folks can plan for cleanup supplies and T-shirts.

Again, thank you to River Sports Outfitters and www.floattote.com for supporting Chota in this event.

Roger Arnwine

Canoe School Plans

The position of Canoe School Director remains unfilled. In a meeting on March 22 the board discussed plans to conduct the school in a very different way than years past.

I have volunteered to teach Kayak Touring as a one day event. We have a tentative date of Saturday June 8. We plan to hold the class at the Cove at Concord Park on Northshore Drive in Knoxville. This plan solves a lot of problems we have had in the past.

New boaters can rent from River Sports Outfitters. It is a more convenient location for most people and it does not require overnight camping. We will try to rent the pavilion for off the water discussion and a lunch break.

The whitewater portion of the school was discussed but there is no plan in place. If members have suggestions or would like to volunteer to lead the session contact any board member or bring your ideas to the next monthly meeting.

Jim Martin

Notes from the Editor

We all paddle because it's fun. Everyone has their own level whether it's a thrill seeking adrenalin rush or a relaxing cruise on a sunny day. The common bond in our club is the human powered craft and enjoying our watery environments.

The recent drowning deaths in East Tennessee show us that what we do can be very dangerous. One man died at one end of the scale. He was paddling at a high level in whitewater. He was experienced, prepared and with a group of expert paddlers.

The other victim was out with his buddies on a relaxing fishing trip. He was obviously unprepared. He was not wearing a PFD and paddling in cold water conditions. He probably didn't even know what would happen to him if immersed in cold water for more than a few minutes.

Although the incidents are totally different they both were probably preventable. With better training Mr. Senior might not have become trapped underwater. With a PFD Mr. Russell probably would have swam to shore.

Neither of these victims were members of our club but the accidents illustrate some of the primary reasons we have our organization. We conduct safety training to keep each other safe. We have insurance and a trip liability waiver that spells out a paddlers personal responsibility and keeps fellow club members protected from liability lawsuits.

Keeping the club going is critical just for these reasons. It is also important because it makes it easier for all of us to get out and enjoy paddling with our friends.

We still have unfilled positions on our board and as of this writing we have no plan to do a whitewater canoe school this year due to lack of leadership.

To quote Russell deCastongrene from a recent e-mail..."Feel free to step into the void."

Jim Martin

Newsletter Editor