



THE Waiting List

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BLEACH BOTTLES, STYROFOAM AND PLYWOOD ...

The Story of "The Sub"

On the Colorado River in the 1960s it was nicknamed "The Sub." This one-of-a-kind boat made specifically for running through the Grand Canyon was different from most other river craft. The Sub went right through waves, while other boats road up and over them. Its real name was *Flavell II* and this wooden boat that was built in a garage became one of the most unique craft to ever run the river, which it did from 1962 to 1970. To understand this boat we must go back to 1958.

It was late in the afternoon when V.R. "Brick" Mortenson and Dwain "Nort" Norton pushed off in the original *Flavell* from Deer Creek Falls. That year Deer Creek was falling directly into the muddy Colorado. In those pre-Glen Canyon Dam days, the Colorado was flowing at 90,000 cfs and the river was truly too thick to drink and too thin to plow.

Brick and Nort were tired from a day of hiking as they pushed off the *Flavell*, along with PT "Pat" Reilly in the *Susie R* and Moulton "Moulty" Fulmer in the *Gem*. The other two boats quickly hit the current but the *Flavell* got stuck on a sand bar. After several minutes, the *Flavell* was free but now behind the other boats that

were hard to see in the late afternoon sunlight.

A little down river at Mile 137.5, which is sometimes call Doris Rapid, a mishap occurred and the *Flavell* was upset. Brick and Nort found themselves in the muddy Colorado. Wearing their life jackets and hanging on to the *Flavell*, they were swept out of the rapid and on down river. Waiting in an eddy, Pat saw



Photos from the collection of Brick Mortenson



... On a very hot summer day, there was no better way to cool off than ride 'The Sub' through a rapid...

the red bottom of the *Flavell* and he and Moulty rowed out to catch the capsized boat. In a short while they had Nort in Pat's boat and got a line on the *Flavell* with Brick hanging onto its side. They almost made an eddy above Fishtail Rapid but the flow of the river was too strong.

The rescue boats took on a load of water in the rapid so they cut the *Flavell* (continued on page two)

(continued from page one) loose. Brick let go of the *Flavell* to get to the *Susie R* but a surge in the powerful river swept him down below the two rescue boats. Four miles later, after Brick had run Fishtail and Mile 140 rapids in his life jacket, the rescue boats caught him and he was rescued. The *Flavell* was found half-sunk way down river by Georgie White and towed into Temple Bar.

Three years later, in 1961, Pat Reilly called Brick and asked him if he wanted to be a boatman again and run the river in 1962 before Glen Canyon Dam stopped the water and changed the Colorado for a long, long time. Brick quickly accepted . . . but there was a catch. Pat had no boats since the *Flavell* and the *Susie R* were retied in 1959. Pat and his other boatman for this trip, Martin Litton, were going to modify McKenzie River boats that became the *Susie Too* and the *Portola*. This design would become the Dories of today. (Pat's boat, *Susie Two* that was renamed the Music Temple, can now be seen at the Visitors Center at the South Rim.)

Brick decided that designing and building his own boat was a better way to go. Especially with ideas he had been mulling over for years as a result of the 1958 flip. So out of sheets of marine plywood and oak boards the *Flavell II* was born. She was 16 feet 8 inches long, 66 inches wide at the beam and 20 inches deep at the chine. It was a low-profile craft, being flat on the top along its horizontal axis, although its decks rounded to the sides. The bow had a depth of 15 inches while the stern had a depth of only 11 inches.

The boat was configured with a bench seat in a front "cockpit" that sat two people who faced forward. The boatman sat in the middle with another passenger seat in the rear. Four removable storage compartments were situated in the center portion of the boat. These compartments were lifted out and carried to the campsite, which greatly simplified setting up nightly camps.

The front, back and sides of the boat had watertight compartments that were filled with foam. The process of filling these spaces was not simple. The expensive ingredients were mixed and the foam would chemically form. Sometimes! It was a very sensitive mix that was affected by temperature. It seemed the foam would either fail to work or else work too well. Another problem was its cost, so Brick came up with the idea of placing plastic bottles in the space and having the foam encapsulate them. In 1962, not many things came in plastic bottles. For example, soft drinks were either in cans or glass bottles. The source of cheap plastic bottles was found by having Brick's 13-year-old son dig through all the local Laundromat's trash for empty bleach bottles.

Another feature was a boat self-rescue device at

the stern of the craft. Inside was a reel with 200 feet of parachute line and on the outside end a float was attached. Around the float was a stainless steel round bar shaped like a steering wheel to protect the foam and to provide a person in the water something to hold at the stern of the flipped boat. With the float in hand, the boat could be saved by swimming to shore and securing the line around a rock. The current would push the boat to the shore.

It was the procedure when running the river with Pat Reilly that safety was a big concern. There were not many people on the river so a trip had to be on their own. As a precaution boats were often run without passengers through the bigger rapids or the boats were lined down along the rapid. Pat never ran Lava Falls for example. Anticipating this procedure to continue, Brick designed a cover over the front cockpit of the *Flavell II* to keep water out when the boat was running rapids with only a boatman or it was being lined.

Brick, who worked the evening shift at Lockheed Aircraft, used every morning and almost every weekend to get the boat built. With the help of family and friends, the *Flavell II* was completed barely on time to make its first river trip in June of 1962. Everyone made the journey to Lees Ferry and the three new boats were launched with appropriate fanfare. The *Susie Too* and the *Portola* were put in the water without incident. When the *Flavell II* was launched it immediately started to fill with water.

Brick had designed a self-bailing system so that if the front cockpit were filled with water while running a rapid gravity would do the bailing. At least that was the theory. Unfortunately, Brick had been in such a rush to finish the boat that the drain openings had not been properly sealed and they leaked. No way to fix it at Lees Ferry so the boat was turned over and the openings epoxied closed, sealing the leaks and eliminating the self-bailing system.

When the *Flavell II* was turned over to do the repair work a little bit of Brick's humor was revealed. On the bottom of the boat was painted in large white letters the word "whoops!" If the *Flavell II* were to flip it would at least be good for pictures.

On June 25, 1962, the *Flavell II* began its first run of the Colorado that had a flow of 52,200 cfs. The *Flavell II* handled great with its 9-foot oars. The boatman sat in a bucketed seat that kept him in place and there was an adjustable footrest for comfort. It was very smooth in the water, it had especially great lateral stability and because of its low profile it had great visibility. In rapids the *Flavell* would attack the water and dive right into the waves. To everyone's surprise, the boat's design

seemed to keep the water out. Around the front cockpit was a metal splashguard that worked so well that rarely were more than sponges used to bail the front cockpit. On that first trip the *Flavell II* only totally filled with water once when its stern was sucked down in a large whirlpool and the water flowed in from the back.

The *Flavell II* was sold to Martin Litton's son John after the 1962 trip. It became one of the boats used by the commercial Grand Canyon Dories that Litton started. John ran all the rapids in the *Flavell II* and it developed its reputation as "The Sub."

During the late 1960s, Brick's design of the boat paid-off as related in a letter written to him by Pat Reilly. "This will make you feel good and certainly raises hell with opinion that the boat was over-gadged.

Anyway, Johnnie (Litton) was running Hance and he had only three oars. Part way down, a big wave took one oar right out of his hand, oarlock and all. He got the spare into play but in a short distance it broke. There he was with only one oar and he still had to run lower Hance, which has become pretty rough in days of clear water. He remembered the nylon line and the float, grabbed it and jumped overboard. He made it to shore OK and reeled, and reeled, and reeled. He had nylon line up to his knees when he pulled the boat up on the sand. He still can't understand how you had all that line cached in that compartment without having the boat 2 feet longer. Anyway, it worked very well. So now you can go ahead with more gadgets — and I'll shut up."

This was not the only time John Litton used the boat rescue reel. Once, while trying to run Lava Falls, John was thrown out of the boat. The boat stayed upright but John grabbed the steering wheel and, to those laughing on shore, it looked like he was trying to steer the boat. He then swam to shore with the float and rescued the boat. Just the way Brick designed it.

On another trip, the *Flavell II* lost its nose in Horn Creek Rapid after a nosedive to the bottom. The trip had a biologist named John Hall who was gathering critters on the trip and placing them in plywood boxes. Well, some of these boxes became the new nose.

Once the *Flavell II* was renamed to save the Grand Canyon. In this era, some river runners had the

idea that if the big bureaucrats at Reclamation could just experience the Canyon and the river they would not want to build dams. Martin Litton, who always liked good jokes, found a great subject when the deputy director of Reclamation was on a trip. Unknown to the director, who was seated in the *Flavell II*, the name of the congressman who was the biggest enemy of the Bureau was placed on the outside of the splash shield. So for photographs and one rapid, the *Flavell II* became the *John P. Saylor*. Secretary Stewart Udall later called the

bureaucrat in to see the great photo of him running the Colorado.

The end of the *Flavell* came in 1970 and is told by John Blaustein who at 23 became a boatman on the *Flavell II* and related the following: "Martin (Litton) had done everything he could to teach me to row during my

first trip. As we all know, however,

it takes far more than one trip to prepare a complete novice to row the Grand Canyon in a wooden boat. I flipped "The Sub" in 23-Mile Rapid, but flipping there was not uncommon in those days.

"As was usually the case, we spent the night below the Little Colorado at the camp above Unkar on the right. Bright and early the next morning we were all prepared for the Upper Granite Gorge. This would be the first of two days of the 'really big rapids.' Typically for me, in those days, I was terrified! As we pushed off from shore, Martin called to the boats behind him to remind everyone to stay away from the wall. Martin went first, and I followed close behind. As we drifted toward the rapid, it was hard to see ahead since we were in the bright morning sun, and the rapid was in the shade of that huge wall. The closer Martin drifted to the rapid, the farther left he was going. At the last minute, Martin started pulling right — the classic 'Major Powell' move. He beautifully cut across the diagonal waves at the top, pivoted to the right and straightened out the boat to float effortlessly down the middle of Unkar.

"I was not so skilled and not so lucky. By the time I realized what Martin had done . . . it was too late! I was in the main current, heading right into the 'big stuff' along the wall. It took all I had just to keep the bow pointed into the waves. I was sure I was going to

(continued on page four)



(continued from page three) hit the wall. At one point a giant wave crashed over 'The Sub' and both of my contact lenses were washed out! From that point on, I was holding on for dear life.

"As we all know now, the real hazard in Unkar is not the wall — the cushion off the wall makes it difficult, if not impossible to hit it. The real hazard is the rocks at the bottom. I drifted into those rocks and hit one of them so hard, it broke "The Sub" almost in two. The sides of the boat were both split from the oarlock to the chine, and the bottom was cracked and splintered from chine to chine. In spite of not seeing much, I managed to get the boat to shore.

"With the help of passengers and crew, we dragged 'The Sub' onto shore and turned it upside down. Martin surveyed the damage. It was a mess! The bow listed to port and the stern listed to starboard. In typical style, Martin said: 'Well, JB, the boats have been banged up this much before, just not all at one time!'

"At Phantom, Martin persuaded one of the rangers to part with a sheet of plywood which he nailed, screwed, caulked and Marinetexed to the bottom of the boat. For the last time the *Flavell II* made it to Lake Mead. 'The Sub' was beyond repair."

The *Flavell II* history on the Colorado was not long but it was colorful. John Blaustein said it best: "The Sub' was great fun to be in, both as a passenger and as a boatman. No other boat put you so 'in touch' with the river. While the rafts and dories bobbed to the top of each wave, 'The Sub' plowed downstream, buried by one wave after the other. On a very hot summer day, there was no better way to cool off than ride 'The Sub' through a rapid. I also recall how easy it was to get a drink of water—we drank from the river in those days. One simply reached to the side—a short reach at that—and dunked one's Sierra cup into the river. All those other guys had to reach way over the gunwale and hang over the side to reach the water!"

Sometimes, different is better and gadgets do work.

Dave Mortenson



Brick Mortenson was one of the first recreational private boatmen. Like many of the current river runners he made time between family and job to experience the Grand Canyon by running the Colorado. Unlike today's adventurers he was lucky enough to be able to run the "wild muddy Colorado". In 1955 when he first ventured down the river probably only 222 people had made the complete trip from Lees Ferry to Grand Wash Cliffs. There had probably been only 490 people who had made the complete or partial runs by 1955. When Brick completed his fourth trip on the river he was one of the 1782 lucky river runners to experience the Colorado as God intended it to be, wild and free.

While working at Lockheed Aircraft in 1955 a friend of his named PT "Pat" Reilly asked him if he would be interested in being a boatman on a trip down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. Pat cautioned him that once they started the trip they would be on their own until they reached Lake Mead almost 300 miles down river. Brick, being an outdoorsman, and having seen a movie of Pat's adventure, quickly accepted. That spring he helped Pat build his second boat named the *Flavell* after an early river pioneer of the late 1800's. It was Flavell who pioneered the technique of approaching rapids while facing forward.

Brick had gotten his first look at the Grand Canyon by crossing over Navajo Bridge and later saw his first rapid by viewing down to Badger Rapid from the rim. In June of 1955 he shoved off from a place called Lees Ferry for a three week "vacation" in the Grand Canyon. Brick had as his passengers Martin and Esther Litton who were also making their first trip down the river. "Marty and his wife had to be the bravest people I know to ride with me since Pat was teaching me as we went," said Brick.

On that first trip Brick did learn about being a boatman and fell in love with the Grand Canyon. He returned with Pat Reilly in 1957 to run the river at the highest level at which it had been run (125,000 cfs). Due to the highwater and the risks it presented they decided to stop their trip at Bright Angel where they left their boats to return in 1958. This was another high water year, but they tried to complete the journey. At river mile 137.5 Brick and his passenger upset in the *Flavell*. They were rescued but the boat was lost down the river. The two boat party continued down to Lava Falls where Pat made the decision that the river at 100,000 cfs was too dangerous with only two boats. The parties hiked out to John Riffey's home near Toroweap after letting the boats go. Later they would find one of the boats in Lake Mead. Georgie White found the *Flavell*, but the third boat was not found until a year later.

Trip Tips / **Clearing The Waters ... Lifejackets**

"...tried letting a 5 gal. bucket of water sit overnight, so mud will settle out, it doesn't" (from rec.boats.paddle)

There's an easy way to settle water using alum as a settling agent. I do this in Grand Canyon and on the San Juan all the time when the river is muddy. First, you need to buy some alum, which you can find (usually) at the drug store in small quantities, or you can buy larger quantities from a restaurant or food supplier, swimming pool chemical supplier, or chemical company. A pound or so would be a very generous amount to carry on a multi-week river trip with a couple dozen people if you settled all your drinking and dish water: odds are, you'd actually use less than half a pound. Alum, by the way, is aluminum ammonium sulfate. It is approved for use in food products, for example it's used to keep pickles crisp. It's the same stuff that's called "baking powder," the aluminum kind... It's also used in municipal water treatment plants to help remove particulates: it's a flocculent. It causes small suspended particles to clump together, so they will settle out. If you have a friend who works in a municipal water treatment plant, you might be able to score a 100 lb sack of the stuff cheap: enough to last you and all your river running buddies a couple lifetimes. My preferred method is to prepare a saturated solution by filling a container about 1/3 full of alum powder or granules, then adding very hot water. On commercial trips I carry a quart sized Nalgene bottle - the kind with a small (narrow) cap - of this pre-mixed solution and I use the cap to measure the amount to settle a five gallon (bailer sized) bucket of water.

A tablespoon of this solution - about half a capful - is stirred into a 5 gallon pail of muddy water: be sure to mix it thoroughly. If the water is very muddy you'll see the flocculation begin within a minute or two. In a half hour or so, almost all of the mud and 99%+ of the alum will have settled out on the bottom of the pail. Then you can decant the clear water into another container, or carefully filter the settled water off the top. The prepared solution is easy to measure and goes to work instantly; sprinkling and stirring the dry powder will also work, but is less accurate and more time consuming: odds are, you'll end up using more alum than you need, and you'll definitely have to wait longer for the water to clear. It's a good idea to use the minimum amount that will work; if you use too much there will be enough left in solution to degrade the taste of your drinking water. This works best in very muddy water: if it's only a little muddy, it's not so effective. Even if you have reservations about adding chemicals to your drinking water (who doesn't?), you might want to consider the advantages of having clear water for washing your dishes. Most of the bacteria present in muddy water are found attached to the mud particles: if you get rid of the mud, you also get rid of most of the bacteria.

When the water runs muddy, I fill a couple bailers and stir in the alum as soon as I've unloaded my boat at camp. At dinner time, the dishwater is clear, regardless of how muddy the river is.

Drifter Smith

Life Jacket Requirements on the Colorado Through Grand Canyon

You need a spare life jacket on each/every boat (not counting kayaks, canoes, or other "playboats" on supported trips). Or a spare for every 10 passengers if you are running a large boat that holds that many people. The throwable will not count for this. You do ALSO need a throwable "floatation device", i.e. a seat cushion (throw bags do NOT count for this), for every boat that is 16' or over. (This is a standard Coast Guard reg. Granted it may not make sense for the Grand but we're stuck with it.)

A word on "spare" lifejackets. They need to be just as good as your "first" lifejacket. The idea is that when the wind blows your "first" away at camp at Kwagunt or Grapevine, you will have a "spare" one to use when you run Crystal, Hermit, and Lava. You should have just as much confidence in your swimming ability in the "spare" as in the "first". Some of the jackets that have come through Lees Ferry were mighty sad excuses for a "lifejacket. I would have feared for my life if I had to swim a rapid in it. They would have disintegrated half way through.

All lifejackets, including "spares", are inspected by the check-out Ranger to be sure they are in GOOD, SERVICEABLE CONDITION. That means: NO tears, NO holes (of ANY size), NO frayed fabric, NO missing buckles/straps, NO duct tape or other repairs (including sewed ones unless factory done). (AND WE ARE SERIOUS AND STRICT ABOUT THIS!) Be careful when you are adding straps, needle point, other decorations or alterations to your jackets. You may end up negating the Coast Guard approval and making them unacceptable due to the alterations you've made.

So please, thoroughly inspect ALL your lifejackets before you leave home and drive from wherever, so you will be sure to have enough GOOD, SERVICEABLE lifejackets when you arrive at the Ferry to launch. It's much easier to send an extra or two back in a shuttle vehicle than to go out searching for another lifejacket the morning of your launch (there just aren't many alternatives down here).

*Ed Cummins,
Lees Ferry Ranger, GCNP*

Private Trip Journals: Katie Lee on “Reentry”

CALL OF THE CANYON

It was a popular Western song of the mid thirties. Bing Crosby sang it, the Sons of the Pioneers, Tex Ritter. I sang it around our campfire on weekends, down in the clean dry riverbeds under a noisy-bright moon in the stillness of Southern Arizona’s desert, to the accompaniment of a cowboy’s guitar, or just the harmony of other voices.

The coyotes joined in.

I was probably thinking, then, of a canyon you could ride a horse through, or Sabino Canyon way up beyond the end of the road, where we’d stream-hop many a mile to secret swimming holes and sycamore shade; where marble smooth granite rocks slipped us into ice-blue cold water in springtime, warm and tea-tan in the fall. In their way, those canyons did call us back almost every weekend during our teen and junior years, before we grew into a type of sophistication that led us away from such wild, enticing activity.

What the “call” means to me now is something else entirely. I hear its echo ringing both faint and loud, vivid enough to tingle all my senses at once; insistent and magnetic enough to put wheels under my feet, no matter the cost. The call I answer to is that of the Big Living Rio Colorado, its wild, remote canyons and sibling tributaries.

Have I been blessed or cursed by this nagging? Few have been spared any reaction at all to those enchanting canyons. Well, yes, there are soulless ones on the order of James Watt, Floyd Dominy, Calvin Black-top, Senators Moss, Hatch and Wayne Half-Aspinall who’ve dragged their closed minds and dollar - signs-for-eyes with them wherever they went, but most people find reentry into their daily lives altered in a way that proves un-settling.

What makes reentry so hard for those who must leave and take only the memory back with them? Does being able to run the same canyon twenty times a year make reentry more difficult, less pronounced, or even absent? I can’t heed the call but two, three times a year, so for me the stimulus will begin a few days before takeout, along with a nagging apprehension about how long before I’ll be here again.

Therefore, I will look more intently at each detail; inhale and store memory of the smells; tracks in sand and mud, temperature of the water in a certain pothole, a seep, a birdnest I saw passing beneath an over-hanging limb, a steep set of Moki steps up slick-rock — then put it all on ‘save’ for coping with the mess we call civilization—that world where I do whatever I have to do in order to return to this one. These last days I won’t even recall the magical places I’ve so recently been in and out of - the ruins, waterfalls, cathedrals, fluted canyons, potholes, caves and cataracts—because those things are still part of me and I have a few more hours of discovery to heap on top of them.

Knowing I must get back to work, I will try to think about where I have to be and when; just simple stuff - not what I actually have to do, prepare, wait for or step over. Yet thoughts like that will skip from my brain swift as a bat scooping water from the river. I have trouble remembering where I left my car; where’s my wallet? Am I supposed to meet someone? Did I leave extra clothes in my trunk? Nothing finds a conclusion. I will even pass off, as if it weren’t a fact, that within hours I won’t be here ... here on this river. I just go on living in this dream world like its the only world I’ve ever known.

How do I do that?

For days now, weeks if I’m on a long trip, I have emptied my brain. My mind is a 360 degree audio-visual camera, responding to Nature and her stimuli. It doesn’t calculate or plan, it just takes in everything it sees, smells, touches and hears, accepts it all, becomes a part of it and moves blissfully along with the flow of the river. It is highly light sensitive, adjusts to shapes and sounds rather than ways and means.

Sometimes I wonder if I have ever reentered society at all. The Glen Canyon left such a mark on me that I can see, smell and feel it as if I’d left it only yesterday; or I’ll sense something that reminds me of the place and ... zap ...

**My wilderness high would
last for weeks ...
... in quiet moments
I could call it up and
make it last long enough
to regenerate my spirit**

be there in an instant. At times that makes me feel like the most fortunate human being on this earth ... at other times, the most devastated..

I know that when friends of mine have just come off the river, or a wilderness hike I must give them space - try not to ask serious question, or have them concentrate on some problem - they're still "out there" not at all ready for this busy, brain-cluttering, nerve-wracking society we live in and deal with. I explained some of these feelings in my book, "*All My Rivers Are Gone*" - and since I'm a sensory type of human it's understandable that, " ... Looking at people, I see a river flowing over their faces; across a page of script a sandstone cliff looms; down the asphalt, a narrow fluted canyon twists; in traffic I hear a rapid's roar, forget what I'm supposed to be doing. I haven't 'come down' yet. My wilderness high would last for weeks, and even after it began to fade, in quiet moments I could call it up and make it last long enough to regenerate my spirit. When I could no longer do that, I used the memory as a broom to put me to sleep."

But there was more.

Along about sunset I'd find myself stopping wherever I was, whatever I was doing, waiting for something; I couldn't remember what it would be. Then one late afternoon, standing on a busy hillside street in Hollywood, I knew. I was waiting for the wind to change from up canyon to down - felt it there in the passing traffic, remembered its touch on my skin. And at night when there'd be static on the radio, I'd hear our campfire crackling. Often I'd wake up with my arm asleep from hanging it over the bed, feeling for the river, the sand, the stream, the sandstone.

We're not crazy, those of us who have these "hangovers" We've been given the gift of finding the way back to our private zone in the natural world, and mostly we don't give a damn if anyone understands our behavior or not. We're even aloof and protective, even a little scared about it, knowing we're in a very special zone that we don't know how to share, except with others who've had the same hangover. People who haven't really "been there" talk about it long and loudly - people who have, don't, because it's impossible for them to express their feelings.

Charles Eggert, who made a documentary film in Grand Canyon back in the fifties - *A Canyon Voyage* - and whom I've long call a friend, has pretty well explained the reentry phenomenon: " ... Maybe it's because the experience is so psychologically personal and ephemeral that it can't really be translated into words. [After 31 days on the river in 1955] ..I felt the most profound effect of re-entry was in relating to other people once I got back atop the earth's crust again. I felt I had been to a place which defied understanding or describing to all who had not been there ... that somehow in my soul I held something which was totally personal and private ... and it is this awareness of absence in others ... which is perhaps the most profound of the 're-entry' experience."



I had no reentry problems after my first fast and furious trill in the Grand - four of us in a 21 foot Chriscraft diesel powerboat- leaving Lee's June 16, 1953, arriving Pierce's Ferry six days later. I had hardly been gone. Everything went by so fast I didn't have time to focus on anything but staying alive while running every rapid on 66,000 CFS. Back in Hollywood, I couldn't stop talking about it to anyone who would listen, recounting the hairiest parts of the journey, the biggest rapids, the adrenaline rushes; but I got no spirit of that magnificent place other than it was unlike any other, bigger than all hell, full of wild water, the softest sand I'd ever felt on lo-n-n-n-g sandy beaches. (Eat your heart out!), incredible colors, mad waterfalls, glorious mud and penetrating smells. (I could be happy that I wasn't crammed into a motored pontoon with 50 other dudes who get far less of the canyon's essence now on a five-day, half-run).

But I hadn't really "been there."

The first reentry problems began the following year after one float trip on the San Juan and two more in Glen Canyon; each marked by a bewildered loathing to return to work and the place where I worked; each successive reentry manifesting itself stronger and longer, But in the Glen's gentle beauty and silence I had time (the soft ticking of the oars) to take a good look at where I was, plus feeling the essence of those canyons. At last, I fully understood that I'd been handed the rarest of privileges, a ever-lasting gift, a treasure that was going to add unmeasurable depth and meaning to my life.

I left my job(s) in Hollywood that fall.

When I returned to Grand Canyon in the summer of 1955 for an oar-driven float in the "Cat boats" (the ones Norm Nevills designed for two passengers and a boatman) I knew the great difference between "being there" and "been there, done that." Adrenaline flowed, but it was no roller coaster ride, it was a lesson in how the earth was put together; how insignificant we are in the overall plan; how little we know and will ever know; and that the best we can do for ourselves, in our little time, is to try to discover who we are and make the best of it.

The Colorado River was that place for me. Perhaps what follows, taken from my journals, not trying to be a *(continued on page eight)*

(continued from page seven) writer and letting it all hang out, says it best of all - at least for those who have "been there."

Saturday - July 14, 1956

... sun was gone when we got to the suspension bridge. The eight (passengers) who take it from here are still up on the rim, coming down tomorrow morning as we go up. The things we need at Phantom we take with us for the night. Boy, what a bedraggled looking crew ... I tell you this old canyon makes you live hard for a few days. Too bad every man can't have the feel of the elements first hand. Humans under glass ... what a sad thing. In the east they don't even know what you're talking about, the way of life is so different ... out in the wide open it's a little better, they spread out, build rooms that look like living outside; but even then, under glass. So it rains on you ... you get wet at 100 degrees or over, what's that? And there's a little sand in your bed - Oh, I can think of lotta people who should never go without sand in their beds. And the sun ... strong, all day ... weathers you up a bit. Devoid of powder and paint the face takes on a little character, not just from the sun, but from relaxing into the real you. I can't even be lavish with' my sorrow for those made-up people, because they don't care ... they don't know.

But I'm so glad Gina came with us ... such a grand person to have on the trip. She's one of us and understands why we feel as we do about our Canyon. She noticed too, that when Nature goes on a rampage and tears up something, she leaves it clean ... when we rip into the land we leave one helluva trashy mess! ... I Sang for quite a while tonight, out on the lawn ... turned in and thought about civilization tomorrow. Oh, Lord, if only we could be ourselves in that world ... but they'd take it all and leave you nothing if you were ... so on go the protective covers. Sad.

Sunday - July 15th - Bright Angel Lodge - Rim

When I said good-bye, I didn't feel very good inside. There they were, those four little white birds (the Cat boats) all nosed together on the sand below the bridge - as we ascended they got smaller and smaller, and I got sadder and sadder ... while the Canyon kept calling ... calling. I got on the right side of the Packer and had the first mule behind him. This a verrreeey smart move ... the farther back, the more dust, pardner! ... and for a while I rid his mule, so I had a nice comfortable journey up.

(That evening) ... we dressed for dinner and went to the bar. I didn't want a drink. Russ (one of the passengers) seemed to fall right back into the slip-shod phoney world with no trouble at all. Gina and I had more to shake off than he did, I reckon ... I couldn't get with it ... didn't want to dance, drink, listen to jute boxes ... nothing but sit there on the rim and try to keep what was left of the Canyon stillness imprinted a little longer. But he was jumpin' and bumpin' and shovin' and suggestin' ..and I was trying to forget where I was ... trying to be down there in the canyon with the rest of them. I was almost rude. I finally gave up and said I was tired ... I was ... of all the yakkity-yak. And sorry for being so bored, because Russ and Paul are nice fellows, just not able to soak up stillness, or know where they've been.

So, when the two deer stood in the flood of head-lights-frozen in silhouette and fuzzy - I gasped at their beauty and longed for their kind of freedom.

Then the lights went out.

Katie Lee

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GCPBA THROW BAG AWARD

The gcpba Throw Bag Award is presented quarterly to the individuals and or organizations who have been a real help to gcpba's mission. This quarter, the prestigious TBA is awarded to recently elected GCPBA board member Ken Kyler, and general member Russell Belknap. These two, with "assistance" from various other backseat board members, completely retooled the GCPBA web site. Check out the ongoing changes at <http://www.gcpba.org>. When you are in the water floating away, and out of the blue comes a throw bag, what can you say? We are most grateful. Thanks.

Notice ~ Noticia New Publishing Schedule

You'll be getting the next *Waiting List* in December, and then again in March, June and September. Don't panic when you don't receive an issue in November. Change is good! (for me) embrace it! sure you'll be bored all November. Sorry, ed.

Critters in the Canyon: Snakes

While traveling in and around the canyon for days on end you may never actually see a snake. Of course, to some folks this is no big disappointment. However, not all of the snakes in the canyon are venomous (rattlesnakes) and an encounter with a rattlesnake rarely ends in a bite (see Doctor Tom Myers' column *Rattlesnakes Bites and Testosterone Poisoning*—spring 99 WL). The abundance of the snakes and frequency of encounters varies. Factors that potentially play a part include weather, abundance of prey, time of day, abundance of people in the area, among others.

It seems as though snakes get the bad rap, especially rattlers.....yet, when encountered by a human, snakes are more likely to react like any other animal and try to get away. Some snakes (whipsnakes, coachwhips) use the tactic of freezing in a position so that the predator would not detect them. Some may move quickly out of the way. Rattlesnakes may either sit motionless, try to move out of the way or if startled, will rattle then most likely move on (or what usually might happen is the human moves out of the way). Just allow the space for the snake to move to safely (out of your way) and there is less of a chance of 'bad' encounters. All snakes, not just rattlers, may react (biting) to someone trying to pick them up or mess with them.

So what are the kinds of snakes you might encounter in the canyon? There are potentially 22 species of snakes, including up to 6 species and subspecies of rattlesnakes within the Grand Canyon region (rim to rim). Of the non-venomous types, the more common ones include striped whipsnake, coachwhip, gopher snake, and common kingsnake. All of these are mostly diurnal (active during the day) and may be seen hunting or moving about in a variety of habitats in the canyon, but particularly the riparian areas of the river, and side streams, in the dry washes and in among upland vegetation.

The striped whipsnake is a long (3 to 6 feet), slender, fast moving snake that is gray, tan, or black with an olive-green cast. A cream or white stripe bisected with black runs down each side of the body. (A garter snake, which may also be seen in the canyon, looks similar, but also has a stripe running down the center of its back.) The whipsnake is thought to be widely spread throughout the canyon.

The coachwhip (or red racer) is also a long, slender quick moving snake. It can be an overall larger snake reaching in length of up to 8.5 feet!! It can be pinkish red, cream, tan, gray or black in color with black crossbars on the neck. The pinkish and cream colors seem to be the more common phases observed in the canyon; there are no records of the black phase in the canyon. The younger snakes will have dark blotches or crossbands on the back on a lighter colored background. This snake is found in the lower reaches of the canyon in the arid, desert environment. The area near Lava Falls Rapid (River Mile 179.5) is the upstream-most record for this species.

The gopher snake (or bull snake) has an overall similar look to the western rattlesnake, but has a slender head and tail and lacks the rattle. It is a cream or yellow-colored snake with black or brown colored blotches or spots on its back. It can range in length from 3 to 9 feet and can be found throughout the canyon, but is thought to be more abundant away from the river corridor.

The common kingsnake (or California kingsnake) is a very distinctively marked snake. It has alternating horizontal bands of black or dark brown and white or cream. Although it is known to inhabit a variety of habitats, in the canyon it has been seen in riparian areas along the river's tributaries. It may be active in the early mornings and in the evenings, but in the hot summer days, it is known to be more active at night.

Then there are the rattlers.....the two species of rattlesnakes commonly encountered in the canyon include the western rattlesnake and the speckled rattlesnake. What about the Grand Canyon rattlesnake? It is one of the subspecies of the western rattlesnake. Both the western and speckled rattlesnakes have the triangular-shaped-head and rattles on the tail. They may be active day or night, but in the summer they seek shade in the heat of the day, typically in the vegetation near the water's edge or in areas lacking water, under the shelter of rocks, boulders or vegetation.

To most of us, some individuals of the western and the speckled rattlesnakes may look very similar. They both can be a variety of colors and sizes. The speckled can be a pinkish color like the classic Grand Canyon rattler. The best identification features to look for are the following: typically the western rattlesnake has individual blotches, spots, or rhombs spaced out along it's back. These botches may be obvious (Great Basin subspecies) or rather faded (Grand Canyon subspecies). The speckled on the other hand has more of a banding pattern that extends down on to the sides of the snakes. These bands are not continuous across the back and sides, but rather broken up (sometimes giving that speckled appearance, hence the name).

Prior to a study I began last year, there was only one record of the speckled rattlesnake in the canyon (RM 274.3). Since then with the assistance and enthusiasm of others, we have now gained records of speckled rattlesnakes all the way upstream to Havasu Canyon (RM 156.8). The furthest downstream (particularly along the river corridor) record of a western rattlesnake is at National Canyon (RM 166.5). Thus as we understand there is an area of approximately 10 river miles were these two species coexist.

(continued on page twentyone)

INCIDENT AT THE BIG DROPS:

A Cataract Story

by Tom Myers

Introduction

In a departure from my usual subject material, *Ammo Can Doc*, our editor Richard Martin asked if I would be willing to allow the printing of my version of a Cataract trip I was on in May. I had written about my own experience primarily for one of our trip members at his request, so he could use it to help write a synopsis of the entire trip. I've been a little reluctant to actually want to see any of it in print. Not so much as to have to try to defend what we did or didn't do, but more to out of respect for the individuals involved.

For all of us, the trip was extremely humbling, and emotionally jarring.

Need it be said, we set out months ahead to try to prepare for this trip. Nothing was done haphazardly. It was well organized, and made up of highly skilled river runners. It included several professional guides, and all the boatmen had big water experience from trips in Grand Canyon, Cataract, or both. I believe the circumstance, especially the unexpected high water more than anything influenced the events that ensued. And more than a reasonable effort was made to avoid such an encounter prior to launching. I am not particularly proud of the role I played. Still, I am proud of the rest of my trip members for how they handled the adversity of the near drowning of one of our members. My own ambivalence to this writing is by far overshadowed by the importance of acknowledging the courage and heroic efforts these individuals, and the commercial guides involved in saving one of our companion's life. I also feel obligated to use it as an opportunity to stress the life saving potential of CPR, especially in cold water immersion with near drowning. Even if it seems hopeless, you cannot predict the outcome. Always make resuscitative efforts. Finally, I would like to see the events of this trip recorded accurately to avoid the deleterious effects of rumor, conjecture and fading memories. That aside, it truly is a remarkable story.

When Cat Roars

Like most river trips, I couldn't wait to get on the water. In Cataract the flows had been staying down around 15 -17,000 cfs for nearly a month; the weather had been cool and dry and seemed to be holding. Calling Canyonlands National Park, they predicted flows of 22,000 when we hit Cataract, and an outfitter said 25,000, max. Good I thought. I felt comfortable with a low water trip, but I really had no desire to see Cataract at high water, above 30,000 cfs, at least from my own boat. I had heard the stories, and seen some of the big water photos. The plan was to cancel if the water was predicted to rise that high. It wasn't the case. It was late May, but it appeared as though we'd be lucky enough to miss the spring runoff. So it appeared.

At the put-in at Mineral Bottom on the Green, I felt my first wave of anxiety when I saw that the equipment rental company had forgotten my extra gear. They were supposed to have given the trip leader two drop hatches for me, as well as two dry boxes. Also, a cooler, which I had dropped off with them to be filled when they packed the food, was somehow left empty. I was frustrated and a little worried. One, I wanted to do my share in carrying gear and food, but I was also worried about having too light a boat. As I rigged with what I had, Greg R. the trip leader, and I talked about filling my boat with water for the Big Drops. The water in Cataract was at 17,500. I had wanted to row Cataract for years. Although my conscious urged me to roll up my boat and leave it, against my better judgment, I chose not to. From that moment on, my boat and I had a date with destiny. On a bigger scale, the whole trip did.

On day two when one of my oarlocks blew out, I had another wave of concern for my own trip outcome, as it now seemed a little ill fated. Fortunately, my friend Kevin, another boatman and real-life mechanic, was able to fix it by converting it to an oar clip. Still, it made it a little awkward with one clipped and one feathering oar.

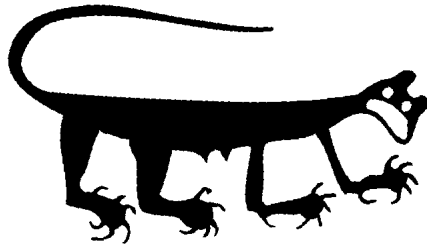
After two warm days since the put-in, the water was noticeably rising. On day three, it rained hard. I

waited somewhat nervously for it to stop, and hoped it would dissipate before it hit the snowpack in the Utah and Colorado mountains further north. Regardless, I knew what it meant: increased runoff. The only question would be how much and how fast. Perhaps we'd be through Cataract before it spiked.

Labrinyth and Stillwater were beautiful. Sixteen people, seven boats and two kayakers, we all were getting along great. I had a good friend riding with me most of the time, Greg's mom, Sandy. A wonderful, energetic person, we had just hiked Rainbow Bridge earlier in the month. Being kindred spirits, we had great conversations, laughs, and great hikes off river. I actually felt honored and flattered she was riding in my boat so much, especially in its condition. It was a twenty year-old 18' Avon, which by the time we got to the confluence was leaking air pretty bad from cracks in the valve boots, and from one seam in the right front thwart. I replaced valves and tried to reseal the leaky boots and seam on multiple occasions over the years, but for some reason, now they seemed to be leaking worse. Another temporary reseal job on this trip seemed to make little difference. Another boatman, Harlan, tried a glue and duct tape job on my leaky front thwart seam while I helped make dinner that night. Over the duct tape he drew a bull's-eye and wrote, "How's my driving, call:1-800-eat-*#@%. It was good for a laugh, but unfortunately, didn't help much.

The confluence of the Green and Colorado was impressive. We camped there for the night. The water looked very high, and as Sandy kept pointing out, there was more and more debris, including some full size Cottonwood trees. She would get a big grin and say, "I'd love to see the water at 70,000!" She was always looking for adventure. She was probably going to get her adventure as Cataract was going to be BIG, no doubt now. Some guides we met told us we'd hit Cat at over probably 35-40K. OK I thought, leaky, old boat and all, I was ready for some whitewater.

That afternoon's rapids were great. Good, clean runs. The oars seemed OK, and the boat was leaking badly, but so far wasn't a problem, as long as I pumped it up good in the morning. The next day, I felt fairly confident for the Big Drops. The water level appeared about



the same. We rigged, had a good, long safety talk, then Sandy hopped in my boat and we were off. I followed as third boat behind Greg the TL, and Harlan. In the top of Mile Long, we had just run a big rapid, and eddied out on the right. Everybody else was on the left above us. We had planned to stay in order, and eddy out after each big rapid to insure the safety of the group. I was very close to the top of the next rapid, closer than I had hoped. I saw Greg R. and Harlan pull out to run the next series. After they went by, I pulled out too.

Unfortunately, had I been paying better attention, I wouldn't have. Another boat was already there. I hesitated to let him go by and lost two strokes. Dropping in at the right of the tongue at the top of the rapid, we hit a

huge hole and weren't straight. We were in a bad position and I knew it. The boat was too light, and over we went. It was quick.

Coming up, I yelled for Sandy, and felt a huge relief when I saw her. She seemed relatively calm and unhurt. I couldn't help but apologize as the waves battered us. We spun and tossed about for a long time, staying with the boat and waiting for an opportunity to self-rescue. I knew we had to get out soon as the Big Drops lay ahead, and cringed at the thought of a swim over Little Niagra or Satan's Gut. There was so little time between rapids. It was one right after another, and eddies seemed non-existent. To make matters worse, my bowline unwound and got tangled around a log and driftwood pile. Spinning and getting battered around violently at times, we worked to try to avoid getting tangled among rope and debris. I tried to get my throw bag to Gary, who was kayaking, so he could bring it to another boat, but it got tangled too. I think we actually swam Big Drop I, as, after I got picked up we immediately eddied left just above Big Drop II. Sandy was no where in sight, but they told me she was OK having been picked up before me. I was relieved we were both unhurt, but I was disappointed too. My boat was long gone, and so was my opportunity to row Big Drops.

Several more boats pulled in. Kevin came by. He had Jane in his boat. An old Avon too, it was really heavy. It had a wooden frame and was loaded down. He couldn't make the eddy, and





dropped into Big Drop II. Losing an oar, he spun around through the huge waves. It looked as though Jane fell out before they disappeared from sight.

Fortunately, Kevin, Jane and his boat turned out to be all right and upright in the left eddy below. About that time Sandy showed up too. She was fine, wearing a grin gave me a big hug and said it was exciting. A seasoned life-long river runner, it was her first flip. Mine too, but I wasn't near as proud of it as she seemed to be. I felt embarrassed and frustrated. The whole trip seemed a little off kilter now.

Surprisingly, my overturned boat was in the eddy too. A funny sight for me, I wanted a picture, but my camera was upside down in the boat. Plus, we still needed to scout Big Drop III, and flip my boat back over. At the scout, Greg R. told me Gary was missing, having gone over Satan's Gut. He had been chasing my boat and was washed downstream. He got caught in the powerful eddy fence before disappearing over the Gut. Things seemed to be going from bad to worse. There was no sign of Gary or his kayak. We had to get downstream, but needed to get everyone through efficiently and safely. We quickly talked about the run. Satan's Gut looked bad. I couldn't imagine going over it in a kayak. The huge "Frog's Wave" downstream in the rapid was monstrous. I don't know which looked worse. The goal would be to miss The Gut first, and deal with the huge wave second. It seemed the best run was a slot that split the two, going right of Satan's Gut, and left of the hole, but we didn't know if it was possible rowing, and didn't leave much room for error. A NAVTEC motor trip approached. They informed us the water was near 45,000 cfs, and we informed them about Gary. They said they would look for him and assist him in any way possible. We watched one of their boats make the run to the left, and the other run the hole catching air off the "Frog's Wave." Both needed full throttle to accomplish their runs successfully. A Holiday triple rig also went by and had a huge ride. I took a deep breath.

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We went back to my boat, and turned it over. The unit was gone and so was an oar, but otherwise it was intact. Kevin got into his boat to go first, but he'd have to get out of that huge, powerful eddy, filled with lots of driftwood. We all knew it would be hard to break out of. We had no idea. Once, twice then three times he couldn't make it out of the eddy. He almost made it on number three. Almost unable to turn around, he tried to push back into the eddy and ride it upstream. It was too late. We watched somewhat in horror as his boat drifted sideways right toward the Gut. Both fortunately and unfortunately, his boat went between two boulders and wrapped on a log at the top. It saved him from an extremely dangerous ride, but his boat was stuck, and

stuck bad. Kevin was gotten off safely, but despite nearly a 45-minute effort by six guys doing a Z-drag to remove it, the boat wouldn't budge. Precious time was ticking by and Gary was still missing. We'd have to leave Kevin's boat to the mercy of the river, at least for now. He thought the "Honky Dory" was as good as gone.

Leaving his boat was gut-wrenching for Kevin and heart-pounding for me. I knew it was now my turn for a shot at Big Drop III. I was ready. Greg suggested I have somebody double

row with me to break the eddy fence. I asked Kevin, although he seemed fairly bushed. We started out somewhat awkwardly, trying to get in sync. Two times we circled the eddy. Finally, we broke the eddy line, and headed away from Satan's Gut. Nearing the top of the rapid, Kevin lost his balance and somersaulted backwards into the bottom of the boat. Seeing his feet fly past my head would have probably had me bust a gut laughing anywhere else but there. With his oar floundering, I grabbed it, and instinctively tried to push away from the big hole. Unfortunately, all the current headed that way. I knew my only hope was to try to hit it straight. With a few adjustments we entered I felt in a perfect position. I pushed as hard as I could to give us some momentum for a counter punch, but the wave was enormous, probably over 20 feet high. The instant we hit, the boat folded, stood straight up, and seemed to

“end-O” over. All I remember was that it felt like doing a backflip off a springboard, then being buried in a crashing torrent. I don't think we could have hit it any better.

Our ride was very violent after that. The boat was 20 feet behind me when I came up. Swimming back, I grabbed on. I yelled for Kevin who was already there. His glasses were gone. He had a maroon contusion on his forehead, and blood streaming down his nose and off several abrasions on his hand. I personally felt like a rag in the wind getting dragged through the water, hanging on by only a few fingers at times. We got battered. At one point I thought the boat was going to flip back the other way. After a short distance I heard voices. One on the right from a solitary figure yelled “Hey, Tom!” I thought it was Jessie, our other kayaker and Gary's son, who had gone downstream to look for his dad. I couldn't recognize him with my glasses off, bent and twisted in my hand. I yelled back “Where's Gary?” but did not hear a reply.

A commercial trip was on the beach on the left. Someone yelled swim to shore. We were tired, still in fast, choppy water. We knew the slack water was ahead, and chose to stay with the boat. We climbed on the bottom. Three miles downstream from the Big Drops, we were able to drag the boat to shore. We were very cold and shivering. We tried to rig up a length-wise flip line using my throw bag rope, almost, but couldn't get it over. With the oarlock buried in the mud in the fast current, it held to the bank and we tied it off. We worked to de-rig it. Me underwater, Kevin on top. We got everything off, without losing anything (at one point we saw the unit float by), and flipped the boat. We opened duffel, and spread the contents across the beach like a big yard sale to dry things out (all contents except one old black bag were soaked). Kevin, depressed about his boat, also hadn't gotten the chance to remove any of his personal items. His glasses were gone and his only spares were at Satan's Gut. Worse yet, so was his insulin. Being a diabetic, he needed it. It was a relief for both of us when we remembered we had put his extra insulin in my boat in an ammo can in the cooler. Then we rested and began to wait.

We waited and waited. We got more nervous with each hour. I told Kevin I thought the one good

thing from my flips would be that some of the participants would choose to walk. I knew Greg R., and I bet this was his plan. They saw the violence of our last flip, and Sandy would be able to tell them how difficult a long swim in a big rapid can be. Maybe that's why the flips happened, and perhaps something positive could still result. The shadows grew longer, and soon, we ran out of words. A motorboat for Holiday came buzzing up. A welcomed sight, we knew it was heading up to meet the commercial trip. We flagged it over. The driver had a couple of sodas he could spare, and said he would report to our group we were OK. Lulled by the silence

of the canyon, Kevin read a book as I paced to the sound of intermittent thundering splashes from sloughing bank into the river.

Upstream, after my boat flipped, the TL told me he talked very seriously with everyone else about the consequences of a flip or swim before the run. As I had

hoped, he strongly encouraged everyone except boatmen to walk. Jane, a sweet lady and happy-go-lucky gal asked not to. A close friend of Sandy's, she also liked adventure, and being an asthmatic, she thought the heat and the difficult walk along the scree slope on the bank would a little too much for her. OK, Greg said he understood, and Jane hopped in his boat. Jane was instructed to stay low against the tube, and had two excellent handholds. They had a great run. They missed the Gut, and were in perfect position for the Frog's Wave. Greg pulled hard for momentum and hit it stern first. It was too powerful. It stood the boat nearly straight up, and ripped both occupants out. Greg made it back to the boat which hadn't flipped, but Jane was nowhere in sight or sound.

Harlan, an outstanding, veteran boatman at only nineteen, came next with Jimmy D. Crashing through the rapid they came out upright only to find Jane's lifeless body floating facedown below the rapid. No pulse, no breathing, her color dusky gray, and her eyes fixed. They dragged her onto a flat rock and began CPR. After several minutes they nearly gave up. Jimmy was convinced she was dead as nothing changed, and CPR was hopeless. Harlan pleaded with him



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not to give up and said he'd go all night if he had to. He was determined to give this everything he had. For twenty minutes they continued. Then a gasping, agonal respiration. And another. She had a pulse! They stopped chest compressions, but continued rescue breathing.

Gary our "missing" kayaker, who turned out to be waiting downstream, was nearby and alright. He showed up with his son Jessie to assist. Jessie was sent to relay a message to the Holiday commercial trip approximately one mile downstream on the left to radio for help. Sprinting, then furiously kayaking across he did just that and brought back help amazingly quick, including another boatman and a doctor from the Holiday trip.

Jane was breathing but essentially unresponsive. She was incontinent, and at times, would cry out incoherently, becoming somewhat combative. She was loaded onto Greg's backboard, then carried a mile over the boulder-strewn shoreline back to his boat downstream. Needing to cross quickly through a fairly large rapid and negotiate around a rock garden to make the Holiday camp on the opposite bank was going to be tough. Greg and the Holiday boatman chose to double row. It was risky, but there was no alternative. Gary was prepared to unstrap her if necessary. Waves crashed over the boat, and they barely missed a rock garden, but they made it safely to the other shore and they landed on the left bank. At the same time, both Greg and the Holiday boatman yelled to wet the beach for when the helicopter showed. It was done immediately without question, as was any assistance needed. Everybody helped.

The odds it seemed of getting a radio message out that late in the day were slim at best, especially with Cataract Canyon not having nearly the volume the scenic overflights of Grand Canyon. The other Holiday boatman who had gotten the message from Jessie climbed to a higher vantage point to make an attempt. Almost miraculously, there happened to be an overflying plane at the very moment. The message was received and help was on its way. Once on scene, the emergency crew was able to get Jane intubated and on oxygen, and

get an I.V. started. She was stable, but critical. They flew her to the medical center at Grand Junction at Sandy's urging. That night the emotionally and physically drained group had a prayer circle for Jane, each other and everybody involved.

Unaware of what had transpired upstream, when Kevin and I heard the unmistakable whup-whup-whup of a helicopter near dusk, I felt a cold chill go up my spine. Having worked at the Grand Canyon as a doctor for nearly ten years, I knew what that meant. It was something bad. Probably really bad. They never flew that late for anything minor. It's too dangerous. It was no doubt for our trip. We thought it must be Gary Perry. They found him in bad shape or were looking for his

body. My heart was racing and sinking at the same time.

Shortly after sunset, through the darkness, came a faint distant sound. We couldn't identify it at first but it came again and again. It was someone yelling. We yelled back. then grabbed a lifejacket whistle and signaled back. It got closer. Then, eerily through the blackness, came a shadowy figure

of a boat, and a lone boatman. It was deathly quiet expect for the soft slap of his oars. When he got close, I saw it was another of our boatmen, also named Greg, the one who had picked me up after my first flip. He looked tired, but otherwise fine, but he wasn't in his own boat. His like Kevin's, he would report was stuck above Satan's Gut. Before he could beach, we asked, "How's Gary?" With little emotion, in a matter-of-fact tone, he said, "Gary's fine." I knew something else must be wrong, but still we had time for a mini-celebration. Then, I asked, "How's everybody else?" His response was chilling. "I'll tell you in a minute." He pulled in and we tied him off. He stepped off. It seemed like an eternity. Finally, gently grasping the shoulder straps of his lifejacket and looking at his eyes, desperate I said, "Greg, how is everybody else?" He took a breath, "I think Jane is dead." His voice was dead serious. He gave me a big hug as the tears came, and started to tell us the story. I thought about how the day's events had been ignited by my flip, how the incidents seemed to cascade, escalating in severity, finally culminating in Jane's death. And then, as "the trip doctor," I wasn't even there as she was dying. I thought of

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her grandchildren. Overwhelmed, I couldn't help but sob. Kevin looking stunned, sat down and said, "I need to tell her husband something, I don't want to. When she was in my boat she said, 'If I die today, tell Bob I died happy'." Kevin ended with, "I don't think I can do it."

Amidst the details that came later we heard of Harlan's and Jimmy D's heroic CPR efforts, and the rest of the trip member's and commercial guides' intense efforts to obtain help and get her evacuated. The story was riveting and commendable. I felt a jolt of hope when Greg said at one point she was screaming. "What! " I said, "How could that be? That's great! There is a chance!" Greg was still dejected. "Ah, she's dead," he said and sat down. After that, for a while the conversation died too. Greg gave us some food. I was starving, but couldn't eat, at least right away. I couldn't sleep either. Sleep came quickly to Kevin who went off by himself. I knew he was thrashed. I envied his snoring. Greg and I talked for a couple of hours. It was late. Greg went to bed. I watched the

stars, listened to the sloughing bank, then envied his snoring too. I saw one of my oars float by, managed a weak grin thinking of how horrendous my flip must have looked, and shook my head. I don't think I slept a wink thinking of Jane

and her family, Sandy and her friendship with Jane, and Greg, our trip leader. A buddy of mine since high school, he has often seemed to struggle at times with the legacy of his legendary grandfather, river running pioneer, Norman Nevills. A compassionate, sensitive man, I could hear him saying "my grandfather never lost anyone." I bet he wasn't sleeping either.

When morning finally arrived I was up with the crack of light, probably 4:30 a.m. Kevin was awake too. Good I thought, time to talk over cold instant coffee. After another hour or two, Greg was awake and we started packing. Shortly after, Greg R. rowed up in his boat. He looked haggard. His voice was gone. Always polite, in a weak voice he asked how we were as we tied him off. Trained as a Wilderness First Responder, he then asked me about Jane's chances after reporting his observations: good blood pressure, excellent oxygenation, spontaneous

movement, and vocalizing. Wow! I was really excited. Jane had an excellent chance. She was going to survive. The real question in my mind was the possibility of brain damage.

The Holiday boat motored up next. Sandy and Wendy, another great gal on our trip, were aboard. They were going to motor out, then drive to Grand Junction to check on Jane. We had Sandy's things dried out and packaged back up. There were big hugs, a few tears, but optimism as we said good bye. Then we started to row out. My boat limped along, leaking air badly. Three of my oars were gone. The clipped oar I borrowed from Kevin squeaked lonely and loud, as if in pain, echoing off the canyon walls. In twenty years, I'm sure she had never taken such a beating. I was exhausted. I thought of the thirty-two miles of lake to row. It was already hot. Then, an unexpected tailwind proved to be my second wind. I jumped ship for Kevin's boat which had somehow been freed by the river, to help him row out. My

boat got tied to Greg's. A storm blew in as we neared take-out. We were the last boat in. To our surprise, there at the boat ramp was Sandy. Her sister Joanie, and daughter

**I remember looking into the storm in
the canyon walls now behind us.
A cool breeze was blowing.
As a ray of sunlight gently
touched on a shoulder of a butte,
I thanked our Creator.**

Shannon, friends of mine, were also there. More big hugs, then the news. Jane was OK! Not only would she survive, but it appeared she had no residual deficits. The joy, the elation the relief were indescribable.

We all felt an incredible bond to each other from the ordeal. Sighing, I gazed to the ground and shook my head in disbelief. I remember looking into the storm in the canyon walls now behind us. A cool breeze was blowing. As a ray of sunlight gently touched on a shoulder of a butte, I thanked our Creator.

Tom Myers



Wet and Wild: Big Water on the Colorado

EDITORS NOTE: The following is collected from an internet discussion that developed after the incidents described in the preceding story by Tom Myers. They are not written as scientific truth, but they are the observations of big water characteristics in both Cataract Canyon and the Grand Canyon of the Colorado by experienced boatmen. Herein lies some good advice.

Why do the rapids in Cataract seem to change so dramatically as the water reaches a high levels, going from relative fun to very violent? RJM

Canyon Jo responded:

—The rapids are formed by “fault-blocks” cracking off the steep walls, not debris fans. This gives them an unsettling unpredictably, as many boatmen have noticed. They don’t look or act the same as the ones in the Grand Canyon or on most other Western rivers. They are also spaced very close together.

—The flows in Cataract can change extremely quickly if there is precipitation or warm weather in the upper basin, which contributed to your trips’ problems. The dams on the Green and Colorado are located far upstream, which gives Cataract more natural fluctuations and frequent high flows than the Grand Canyon. The 45,000 CFS he estimates isn’t unusual in Cataract. Many springs see that much, while August usually gets flows of 5,000 or lower. Needless to say, GC is extremely predictable.

Personally, I stay away from Cat—or even Westwater—in flood.

Canyon Jo

Dave Yeamans notes:

... the policy that Canyonland’s has of requiring (or at least strongly urging) motor use above 50k.

... boaters ... carry a backboard, winch, EMTs, and strong, young boatmen. None of us knows how close to death we are and there will always be room for death bed repentance where we decry our lack of preparedness...

Dave Yeamans

Charly Heavenrich comments:

This experience punctuates the NECESSITY for more training, both in river rescue (every trip should have a rescue bag with z-drag gear; the sweep boat should carry the major first aid, the rescue bag, the back board; someone competent needs to be the scene leader and everyone else MUST support that person; etc.), and first responder. Also on these extended trips, a radio should be required (by rafters, not the government), because we can’t always rely on those commercial trips to be there. We were indeed very lucky.

Charly Heavenrich

Earl Perry writes:

I’ve rowed, motored, and been rowed through Cat at stages from 2.5 - 71K. I’d row it as high as it gets — ... In the time of the water, there is real use for a motor rig as a rescue boat in Cat — I’ve been one, and I LIKE TO HAVE ONE THERE. I’d as soon see them banned in Grand Canyon, where their main use is to serve the plutocracy, and where there is nothing like a comparable need for them. Cat is very different.

In Cat above 40, we run wetsuits or drysuits and helmets on everyone. We put crotch straps on all life jackets. If we have them and the person is of a reasonable size, we run double lifejackets. NO ONE uses these cutie type-III 12-lb flotation zip-up lifejackets unless they put a universal 25-lb job on over the top. Hell, we inflate the drysuits. NO loose rope ends anywhere. No-pin bucking rigs for everyone. Reviewing Bigwater swimming techniques. Everyone in a wet-suit immerses themselves before pulling out to run something that we just scouted, just to preshock the body. We may go so far as to agree among ourselves to staff weaker participants as we staff paraplegics on a gimp trip — have someone assigned to hold them in, and in the last extremity, to swim with them. We put weaker participants in the center in the safer rigs, whether they want that or not. We run buddy boats. We don’t do high, light thrill rigs, we ballast the hell out of our loads, though without adding extra weight. We keep somebody near the motorman — when there is a motorman — who knows how to use a throwbag and who knows how to run a motor, because the trip and the rig may suddenly need both skills. No guarantees that the motorman will be with the rig, no guarantees that anyone who goes in that river will surface within 50 feet of the rig they left.

The motorman needs to stay out of eddies, time his runs between driftwood, run the prop deep enough to avoid most surface crap, and keep centered...: “Your motor is worth more than your life.” The oarsman needs to be terribly, impressively fit, something like a road racer; and above all, to be indomitable, to keep rowing no matter what; he or she may need to row as hard as they can for half an hour, and then suddenly have to row harder for another 5 minutes.

In Cat above 40, you need to know where you are. REALLY know. The point is that Cat above 40 is one of the

few places where the insistence of boatmen on naming everything makes a difference. Who gives a shit about Rancid Tuna or Randy's Rock or Indian Dick Rapid — these are just boatmen showing how cute they are and how they belong to a cute club, and the names they have applied are a self-referent shame compared with the terms that the brilliant namers like Powell and Dutton conferred on a great place. Not so in Cat. For instance, you need to recognize where the Button Hole is going to be when you are still way up on Lake Cataract. You need to know all about Island Rapid when the island isn't any more. You need to have arranged which side you are going to scout Big Drop from. You need to know what the Needle Run is, about the right sneak above 50K in BD2 and what to do about the reflex wave below it. You need to know Frog's Hole and Frog's Wave. You need to know how to handle those terrifying random waves that suddenly burst out in the North Sea. You have to recognize landmarks, because rivermarks are 18 feet under water. If you don't know this stuff, you need to get on a trip with someone who does, or get on the phone to someone who does. Or stay out. Cat above 60K is one place where I would not have minded apprenticing.

In Cat above 40, you need to make the landings you agreed to make. There are some bad places, some places so bad they can take a boat or a human being to pieces; and you have to make decisions about where to place your boat a mile above those deathpoints; and you have to base those decisions on where your boat is going to drift, because it may not have oars, or a boatman, or a motor.

Earl Perry

Brad Dimock comments:

I, too, think Cat is bigger than anything boatmen ARE running in the Grand, but I don't necessarily think it is worse than things I HAVE RUN in the Grand. So although I believe it correct to say there is bigger water in Cat or on the Yampa in flood, than in Grand Canyon NOW, it is only because of the regulatory effect of the big god DAMN at Page. But I was rowing Grand Canyon throughout the big water of the mid-1980s (40-92k) as well as Cataract at levels up into the low '70ks. Grand Canyon has not only the ability to exhibit the extreme near-surface violence of Cataract, but combines it with suction to dreadful depths, with little or no regard to how big or how many life jackets, dry suits or wet-suits you are wearing. There are a few places in Grand that are right up there with the Mile-Long-Big-Drop waveplex in potential to be very, very bad.

Crystal Creek is, or was at that time, the worst, especially for a row boat. The chances were slim of getting all your boats through intact. The swim was through either a high speed rock garden at levels up to around 40k, or a high-speed holefield above that. And in the event of a big wreck, getting all your boats, gear, and people into shore above Tuna Creek were iffy at best. And boy, if you didn't make it in, that is one UGLY place to go swimming. Some flotsam, living and dead, did not get caught up to for another five miles. One commercial raft, with boatmen and some passengers sitting on the bottom, was caught at Elve's Chasm, 17 miles below. This is another Big-Drop-like place where motor support was DAMNED comforting. And to their credit, every single motorboat I encountered during those years was more than willing to pull in and wait for us at Thank God Eddy below Crystal. (And we often gave them a show worth waiting for!) Once Tyler Barton, a motorman from Tour West, had two boats flipped back up before the last boats of the row trip he was spotting had caught up to him.

The Roaring Twenties, likewise, were a fearsome thing for the rowey boats. From the entry to 24-1/2 until beyond the last sucking vortices of Cave Springs, it was one long confusion of sucking whirlpools, erratic exploding waves and cliff-bound eddy traps with unclimbable fences. We would pull out of North Canyon in the dories as gripped and ready as we could get, and expect to be dealing with swimmers, flips, and utter mayhem. The most terrifying spot in there was the right eddy below 24-1/2—there was no way out that I could see, and nowhere to climb out of the boat.

Granite Narrows would habitually smash an entire trip's worth of boats into the right wall, as the entire river flowed in a helical corkscrew for half a mile, plunging down the right wall and resurfacing on the left wall.

Give me 25,000 to 35,000 in Cataract and a dory full of friends. One of the best rides on the Colorado system. Wahoo. Huge. 18,000 to 22,000 in Grand suits me fine as well. Well-formed giant waves and lots of them, most of the rocks under water.

Cataract, Desolation, the Uinta Basin, Grand, San Juan, Yampa, Lodore, Dolores—to know them is to love them, ... Some of those stretches took a little longer—others were love at first sight. They are all my favorite places. Except those stinking dead silent stagnant hell-borne reservoirs. I just can't seem to get there with them.

Brad Dimock



Editor's Notes **Making Numbers Count**

Do you favor increasing the total allocation in order to ease the private boater access problem? What kind of trip environment can you live with in exchange for an opportunity to even have a trip? These are important questions for you to consider.

As a member of the GCPBA it's fairly safe to assume that you are interested in the opportunity to secure reasonably easy access to the Colorado River.

The nearly thirty year debate surrounding non-commercial use of the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon usually ends up as an argument over numbers. We talk about absolute numbers, percentages, share, equity, and parity. We form our opinions. We argue our points. All based on the numbers. Math can be fun can't it? Fortified by mathematical knowledge we march down the Numbers Road with our numerically "irrefutable conclusions." Lots of traffic on that highway.... and plenty of accidents, with some unpleasant consequences.

River use allocation is measured in numbers. Specific user group allocation is some percentage of capacity. It's almost impossible to experience easy access to the Grand Canyon by private boat because the numbers overwhelm the allocation. That situation is the crux of the current Colorado River Management Plan revision process. Our erstwhile NPS planners are busy compiling information in an effort to determine how much total capacity is available for public consumption, within the framework of the unique characteristics of the Grand Canyon, that makes a Canyon trip opportunity so desirable.

Several issues ago, the GCPBA published an article entitled "Increase the Noncommercial Allocation" (February, 1999 WL page one). In that article I included a chart that shows the "spike flow" of use that currently is the way trips are being launched. A concentration of launches spread over just a few months. Use characteristics that are the result of management decisions.

From that chart it is obvious that there is a lot of time when canyon use is very light. That numerical fact could lead one to the conclusion that there are many opportunities for increased use of the corridor if only management could or would change it's ways.

The Grand Canyon experience is more than numbers. So to answer those questions, it is necessary to consider all those elements that make up the issues of the day. Trip quality, crowding, environment, the place of motors, wilderness values and so forth.

When I am adamant about some position or another, later reflection on my personal polarities usually reveals that whatever I am so adamant about might result, if adopted, in some unpleasant unintended conse-

quence like maybe not being able to go on a trip at all or to the other extreme, an opportunity for trips that would not be pleasing to my personal taste. In simple words, I ask myself "if I couldn't go on a trip because (insert some opinion on an issue here) would that be okay?"

Here's an example: "The river is so crowded now, I don't want to go on a trip." You can probably think of your own examples. The point being, as our NPS planners toil away, I think they will probably be considering more than just numbers as they consider a new allocation equation. So should we.

Personally, I think there is a lot of room during the year for many more private river trips. I am eagerly looking forward to reading and publishing the data the various on going studies reveal. When that information is available, I'm sure many of us will sit down and see what kind of numbers we can come up with and hopefully in the future when someone says "See ya on the river" it won't be today's hollow adieu ... we'll actually be on our way!



I am going to change the publishing schedule of our little magazine. Don't be alarmed when you don't receive an issue this November. You'll be getting the *Waiting List* in December instead, and then again in March, June and September. A more conventional seasonal mailing date, and one that makes it easier for me to go on river trips I know I'm sorry, but really I just want to go boating!

Besides, this will give some of the budding authors our membership harbors a little more time to prepare their works. Contributions to the *Waiting List* are solicited. I would sure like to see some more photos, Private Trip Journals, Trip Tips and how about it you sketch artists? send some drawings. They reproduce really well with our rather limited budget, desktop publishing system.



On a personal note, I am sitting here writing this, instead of being somewhere around mile 109 on the Colorado River, as I had planned. because I had a little accident while walking (what's that adage? "Can't walk and chew gum at the same time....") and ended up with my right leg in a cast. Bummer. This is a hell of a way to get your friends to drop by, and they have, and thanks to all my boating friends for the nice cards and e-mails.

"See ya on the river.... soon!"

Ricardo

Earl Perry **Unfortunate Memories**

The piece on the Triumph of Motorized Rafting by Byron Hayes and Ricardo was fine — solidly researched, and relatively restrained in conclusion (May 1999 *WL*, page 3). To me, as a former river ranger for the NPS, the thing brings back some unfortunate memories. At the time, I was on the board of NORS, the National Organization for River Sports, and was in training at baby ranger school on the south rim. Marv Jensen, who was then Grand Canyon's River Ranger, and a good one, too, came to me asking if NORS could provide the NPS some support on getting rid of motors. I told him, "Marv, we'll try, but our members just haven't had much chance to get familiar with the river, given the allocation." Well we tried: wind ... pissing; the whole thing done hugger-mugger by Presidential Candidate Hatch before you could even get a phone chain started. Later the Superintendent of Grand Canyon, Dick Marks, after his management plan had been placed where a glassectomy was necessary to read it, sent us in Dinosaur a copy with a note to my Superintendent which read, "Joe. Thought you'd be interested to see what the next generation of Park Service river management is going to be like." Now my Superintendent, thanks to the genius of Emily Dekker-Fiala and Steve Petersburg, presided over a river plan with equal non-commercial and commercial launch allocations, equal group sizes, no motors, no helicopters, no campsite squabbles, no mandatory trip lengths, a slight overbalance of non-commercial launches vis-a-vis commercials, a system based on launches rather than user days, pleasant cooperative outfitters, and pleasant cooperative non-commercial users. He came down to my office, tossed the next generation of NPS river management on my desk, and said, "So long's Ah'm Superintendent here, boy, this here Marks an' his people ain't settin' foot on ahr rivers." And barring Kim Crumbo, a special case, they didn't.

Well, the "next generation of NPS river management" has been NPS river management in Grand Canyon, pretty much unchanged, for more than half a generation now. Thank God it didn't spread. What strikes me most, and sadly, is the many ways the NPS fluffed it. Right — they took a 1-year moratorium and rapturously embraced it as a near-two-decade defeat for wilderness, snapped it up as a justification for grossly over-allocating userdays to motor outfitters who had lost nothing when the plan was defeated, and have used it as an excuse to delay rectifying what was even then an obvious and conscience-shocking imbalance in allocation.

More serious, really, in the long term, was that they exercised no meaningful oversight over concessions pricing for many years. You hear a lot about how much a commercial trip costs versus a private trip, and who really serves the public. Well, the study that persistently doesn't get done by the NPS-contract sociologists, is a simple curve which discovers what percent of commercial and non-commercial boaters, or boater families, fit into each \$10,000-annual-earnings bracket, which is then fitted against the earnings curve for the American public. My guess? Top 1%. What the truth is, who is the actual public served from an economic standpoint, is clearly relevant in terms of NPS concessions policy act, in terms of their mandate to make sure concessions provide a service to the public which cannot provide its own. (Anecdotes not welcome, please; I and every other boatman who ever pulled a starter cord or an oar has got at least one pauper passenger and one disadvantaged youth passenger and one handicapped passenger story.) But the point, from a bureaucratic perspective, is that by failing to restrain concession rates, NPS raised up a set of millionaires over the last 18 years whose power now far countervails their own, not just on allocation and river management issues, but on resource and wilderness issues as well. Mark Grisham has repeatedly, and straightforwardly, made it perfectly clear that the outfitters' commitment to resource and wilderness issues is exactly as wide and deep as a balance sheet. And this is in the nature of things; why shouldn't the outfitters be relied upon to try to protect what they think of as their interests? It dismays me that the bureaucracy couldn't even see its way clear to protecting its bureaucratic interests.

The point, from a bureaucratic perspective, is that the NPS never took the obvious steps to build up a friendly and counterbalanced power. There was no informed public who could have served for this, except the non-commercial boaters. But you have to create such a public — at its simplest, they have to see the area enough to love it, and study it enough to provide thoughtful and learned input. And then you have to listen. Even now, I have the impression they would really rather the non-commercials would softly and silently vanish away, when the non-commercials are their only hope for support on the serious resource and wilderness issues that center on the river.

The point, from a bureaucratic perspective, is that the NPS never even took the obvious steps to build little empires in the areas where they excel. Here I will do an anecdote. Nobody much loves a ranger with a Glock on his belt (until you really need him and then you want him Right Now). But everybody loves the kind (continued on page twenty)

Earl Perry (continued from page nineteen) of ranger who can tell you about velvet ants being wasps whose flightless females sting hell out of you, and vast inland seas, and so forth — interpretive rangers. I started a program where my patrol rangers had to be prepared and deliver interpretive talks in river camps, if they were invited by the boaters. By god, the Interpretive Division snapped at the chance, trained up their own rangers, and starting sending them on the river. This was exactly what the NPS's real job is, and a hell of a good way to build a budget based on actual public service. In Grand Canyon, they help the guides — who mostly set it up themselves — train the guides to do a job — interpretation — at which the NPS used to be regarded as superb. The last time I was at Lee Ferry, our non-commercial party was asked if we couldn't just take care of our own orientation. Sure. With some ex-professional boatmen, some kayakers, some natural-science academics, some people interested in the natural world and in river history, we could. But as an ex-ranger, what I thought of most was the missed opportunity we represented, the missed chance for a Ranger to do the NPS's job, and gain goodwill for an agency I esteem.

Well, it's unfortunate times. Really crappy management decisions have a way of branching, cloning, and propagating themselves forward with outlier crappy decisions, and secondary justificatory crappy decisions. At this point I wonder if NPS even has the resolve to do some simple, ameliorative launch and trip-length decisions that are clearly within the NPS management purview and would alter everyone's experience for the better, even if they never touched the allocation issue. Getting the CRMP into a system which actually observes due process for all people will be a struggle. One point that's pretty clear by implication from your article is that it's time for GCPBA's members to trim the beard or comb out the sand, put on a suit or a skirt, buff up the thoughtful, concerned manners, and begin to go downtown and visit your Congressman's local staff. Just to point out the issues now, as a distant early warning, just to build up a regular relationship with them. The Washington visits will come later.

Earl Perry

Meet Brick Mortenson, Watch Movies of 50's Private Trips ~ October 8, 1999 ~ Cline Library, NAU

The Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association is honored to be able to invite you to an evening with private river runner Vernon "Brick" Mortenson. Boat builder and aircraft tool designer, Brick first ran the Colorado river in the Grand Canyon in 1955 on a private trip as a boatman for P.T. "Pat" Reilly and his passenger was first time river runner Martin Litton. Brick returned to run the Grand Canyon in 57 and 58, the last years of high water before Glen Canyon Dam. Brick's last run down the river was in 1962, the year before the flood gates of Glen Canyon Dam were to close. Brick will be showing a video he made of the 55, 56 and 57 river trips. The high water shots are fantastic! Brick will also have free copies of his river logs available.

This event, sponsored by the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association, will be at:
Cline Library, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ, on October 8, 1999 at 7:00 PM. A

donation of \$5 to support the GCPBA will be accepted at the door.

We hope to see you all there for this high water showing!



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More than 500 General members in thirty two states, and still growing!

We welcome and encourage editorial contributions, stories, photos, river news, drawings, cartoons, letters, whatever, and for that we will pay *nothing* ... but ... we offer our eternal gratitude.

Send editorial contributions to: leigh@sedona.net or Editor, GCPBA, Box 43, Jerome, AZ 86331

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River Book Review

Dancing on the Edge

Charly Heavenrich

Beyond the Edge Publishing, Box 1555 Boulder Co. 80306 / \$13

"It's a life changing experience." That's a refrain often told by many river runners as they tell their tales of Colorado river voyages. Indeed, the deep recesses of the Grand Canyon offer the traveler a chance to look deeply within the soul. The nature of the long river trip offers them an abundance of time to contemplate.

Author Charly Heavenrich, a Detroit native, takes us along on his first river trip in the Grand Canyon. Charly's not on a private trip. Instead he accompanies his Detroit roommate, and summer season river guide Dean, who invites the author to be part of the crew of a commercial trip. With Bob Seger playing on the car radio, Charly heads west to the promised land and our story begins.

This is a book about two kinds of trips. One, a simple commercial trip on the river, learning to work together as a team with the crew, helping trip patrons along, and the other, a personal inner trip with the author and "Spirit Dancer," Charly's soul teacher, or guide, who appears from time to time to lead Charly to and through the questions that plague many of us during our lifetimes. You know, "life what's it all about?"

River life was new to Charly and he is confronted with a lifestyle unlike any he has imagined. He finds himself working with competent, cheerful people who seem to have developed the inner resources to deal with the challenges of outdoor life, as well as their own inner life, with peace and harmony. Charly also finds himself confronted with the trip patrons, many of whom are experiencing a state of personal disharmony. Each person on the voyage offers a chance for the author to get a glimpse of himself from another angle. Those glimpses start to come together to form a complete picture, and with the help of his inner sage Spirit Dancer, our author starts to put direction into what seems to have been a less than satisfying life. Charly's life was, indeed, changed. He has been a river guide in the Grand Canyon for nearly twenty years now.

If books about the realm of soul exploration appeal to you, then "Dancing On the Edge" is a pleasant, sincere, easy to read book, with enough notes about geography and geology to add wider interest for the reader. There are a few rough spots, some typos and an occasional incongruity that a Grand Canyon traveler might find distracting. Hopefully, those anomalies will be cleaned up in the second edition. I read this book over the course of several river trips, it took quite a beating before the cover fell off and a few pages fell out how about a "waterproof edition" next time?

Ricardo

Critters (continued from page nine)

So now I ask for your assistance in this project. Because some of these species and subspecies may look similar, photographs would be the best tool for identifying the snakes. Photographs allows for a verifiable form of identification. Since the initiation of this project, I have received photographs and slides of over 50 additional records of snakes in the canyon. These additional records substantially increased the number of known records of a few snake species, such as the speckled rattlesnake.

With your assistance we can learn more about the resources in the canyon. I would appreciate it if you would assist with the collection of even more records on the snakes and other reptiles in the canyon. I am interested in a copy of the photograph or slide, the specific location (river mile, canyon or trail name, north or south rim, estimated distance to the river or rim, etc.) of where the snake was seen. Any additional information (habitat, behavior) would also be appreciated.

I know Fall is coming and the snakes are typically hibernating in the winter, but if you could keep this in mind for your next trip into the canyon or have photos (with known locations) from previous trips, I would appreciate it! Please tell others (hikers, rafters, etc.) about my interest and pass on my address. Also please feel free to contact me regarding snakes, the project, or other critters in the canyon!

Nikolle Brown

Nikolle L. Brown 7779 N. Leonard Clovis, CA 93611
black-catnik@worldnet.att.net

PROJECT 1000 IN 2000

It's simple, "Project 1000 in 2000," the GCPBA will be starting it's fourth year in January, 2000, and we've grown to more than 500 dues paying members (there is no other kind!). If each of you would recruit one new member during the coming year... just one ... our membership would pass 1,000.

As well as vastly improving our financial position, it would assuredly let interested folks know that there is a large, fast growing group of independent boaters who really care about Canyon issue. Remember ... Sign up a friend!

Increase the clout!

THE AMMO CAN DOC**Tolio ... Fact and Fiction**

Tolio ... River Rot ...Foot rot ... These are all names for a painful, itchy, red skin rash with blisters that typically involves the top of the toes and feet. The condition seems to be more prevalent in recent years, among Colorado river boaters. It varies in severity and has necessitated a few evacuations, due to spreading secondary infection, and allergies.

Dr. Tom Myers and I have seen several cases over the past few years and have compared notes, photos and ideas. We've conferred with a local dermatologist. In an effort to understand this condition better, we've developed a questionnaire for reporting cases. We've sent this to all the outfitters and also gave copies to the River Ranger at Lee's Ferry. If you send a report, we'd appreciate photos and/or doctor's report copies too. We'd like to see untreated cases, if possible, so we can get cultures and/or do biopsies. As we get more data from these sources, we'll report our conclusions and recommendations in an upcoming issue.

Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

Walt Taylor, M.D and Tom Myers, M.D.

QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1) What day of the trip did symptoms appear? _____
- 2) Where (approx. location) did symptoms first appear? _____
- 3) What month of the year? _____
- 4) What type of footwear were you wearing? _____
- 5) What type of sunscreen or other skin protection were you using? _____
- 6) What type of watercraft? (circle one) Raft w/regular floor, self bailing raft, dory, kayak, inflatable kayak, other (specify) _____
- 7) Were you on a commercial, private, research or NPS trip? _____
- 8) Have you ever had this before? _____ How many times? _____
When? _____ On what river? _____
- 9) How many Colorado River trips so far this year for you? _____
- 10) Do you have any pre-existing skin disease? _____
- 11) Do you have a history of skin allergies? _____ Photosensitivity? _____
Current medication use that might cause photosensitivity, such as Tetracycline, Sulfa, including Septra or Bactrim, Cipro, Floxin, Raxar, or Trovan? _____
- 12) What symptoms did you have? (Itching, pain, redness, blisters) _____
- 13) Were you a crew member or a passenger/participant? _____
Your age? _____
- 14) Did others on your trip get it? _____ Others in your boat? _____
- 15) How was it treated? _____
How did it respond to the treatment? _____
- 16) Name, address and phone number (all optional) _____

Send your questionnaire to:

Walt Taylor, M.D., 1355 N. Beaver St. #120, Flagstaff, AZ 86001
520-779-0361 , 520-779-7143 (FAX)

STINKIN' HOT HIKES **Stone Creek**

Here is another place where there is a lot to do. There used to be a great camp at the foot of Deubendorff Rapid (132 right), but the sand is disappearing at an alarming rate, and you can count on the water dropping out on you in the middle of the night. Where once you had to get your boats back to the water over sand, now you do it over boulders. Not a lot of fun. Still, it's a great place to go exploring.

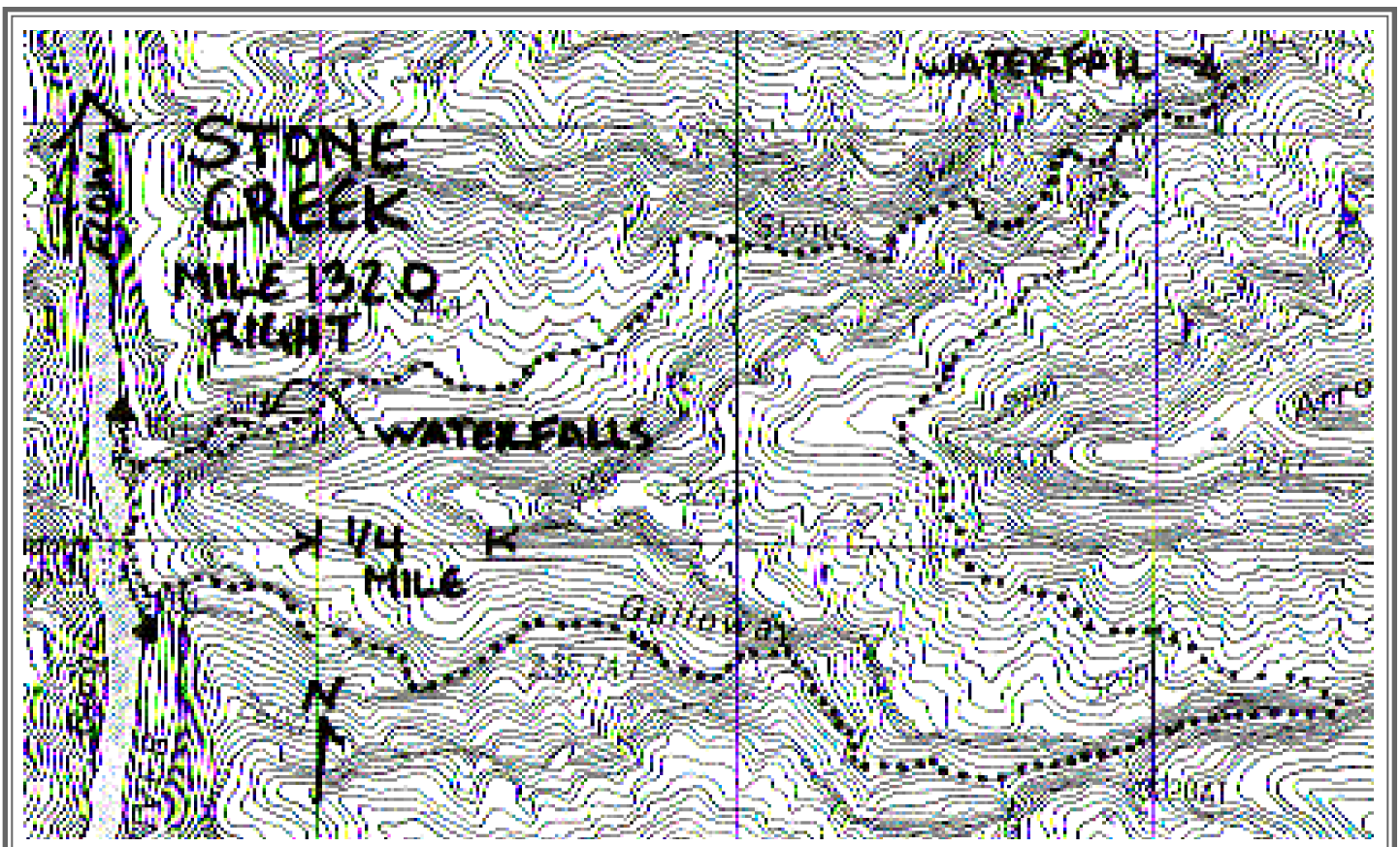
Just out of camp over the boulder pile to the northeast is a small pathway leading to the permanent water in Stone Creek. There is a fine, easy and short walk a quarter mile or less up this path to a wonderful waterfall that is a great get wet spot in the heat of summer. This is a common attraction sight, so be ready to share with other river travelers.

If you want to hike above this waterfall, you will need to hike back less than half way to the boats and look for a route up creek left. You climb up through the grey crumbly Diabase Sill volcanics 75 to 100 feet above Stone Creek, then contour along past the wonderful waterfall below. There is a lot of exposure here, so step cautiously. The route continues up Stone Creek, crossing and re-crossing the creek. There are many wonderful spots to stop and hang along the way, but it's worth the walk on this one to "go the extra mile" (actually 2 miles from the river) to the waterfall in the Tapeats narrows at the end of the trail. There is great shade here in the summer, and fine pools to contemplate. There is a small Anasazi ruin just below the waterfall at trails end on creek right. It's hidden by thick willow and hard to spot.

Those that want a difficult walk can backtrack a quarter mile or so from the waterfall and hike out of the Tapeats narrows on creek left. From here you can climb up-slope a little more to the top of the Tapeats and hike back southwest along the base of Arrowhead Terrace. At the end of the Terrace you can turn south and cross over into Galloway Canyon. Continue along the top of the Tapeats until you hike right into the drainage in Galloway. You will have covered a little over two miles in full sun, so take extra water if you are doing this in the summer. From here, hike back the 2 miles down Galloway all the way to the river, turn right and walk down along the river to camp.

Tom Martin

Excerpted from the soon to be released "Day Hikes From The River, A Guide to 75 Hikes From Camps On the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park." by Tom Martin



NEWS FROM THE CANYON**Newsire Quarterly Review****gcpba NEWSWIRE July 10, 1999 / FAA PLANS NEW RULES**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today released a set of proposals that bring the National Park Service (NPS) closer to achieving the congressionally mandated goal of "substantially restoring natural quiet" at Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP). The NPS defines natural quiet as the restoration of over half of the park meeting those conditions more than three-fourth's of each day. The proposals were defined by the two agencies over the past two years and included extensive consultation with Native American tribes.

The NPS has a clear legislative mandate to preserve the national parks unimpaired for the enjoyment and inspiration of this and future generations. Through this cooperative effort by the NPS and FAA, visitors to the GCNP will have a greater opportunity to experience natural sounds of the park, a resource that is becoming increasingly rare in our modern, mechanized world. National parks prevail as some of the best places to hear the calls of wildlife and the melodies of wind and water. One reason national parks remain such special places is that, among other things, they preserve the unique resource of natural quiet.

"When visiting a national park, people should have an opportunity to hear the call of a raven or the howl of a coyote; the rush of the streams and rivers, fluttering of leaves, the whistling of wind and other natural sounds," stated Jackie Lowey, Deputy Director for the National Park Service. "It is an important responsibility of the NPS to provide an opportunity for people to experience these valuable resources. These most recent actions move us closer to ensuring that Grand Canyon National Park will be conserved and experienced as Congress intended in 1919 when it created the park."

With the passage of the National Parks Overflights Act in 1987, Congress instructed the NPS and the FAA to work together to substantially restore the natural quiet and experience of the park. Special Federal Aviation Regulation (SFAR) 50-2 became effective in late 1988 and established minimum altitudes and flight-free zones over the park. However, despite this and subsequent rulemaking by the two agencies, the park's natural quiet has continued to erode as commercial air tour operations increased. In 1996, President Clinton issued an Executive order directing the agencies to work together to substantially restore natural quiet at Grand Canyon National Park by 2008. The FAA regulations put the park service on track to accomplish that goal.

The documents released today by the FAA include a Notice of Availability (NOA) of routes to be flown by commercial air tour operators; a draft regulation modifying the airspace, including flight-free zones and minimum altitudes; and a regulation temporarily freezing the number of commercial air tours over the park until the NPS and FAA analyze noise conditions and develop a Comprehensive Noise Management Plan. These proposals, together with other rulemaking published in December 1996, extend and increase the protection initiated twelve years ago by SFAR 50-2. The new rules will allow for the continuation of air tours over the park, but will reduce their overall impact substantially by redirecting routes from especially sensitive areas and temporarily limiting additional growth in operations.

The public comment period will extend 60 days from the date of publication of the notices in the Federal Register. Copies of the regulation temporarily freezing the number of commercial air tours and the NOA are available by contacting the FAA office of Flight Standards, at (202) 267-8321. For a copy of the draft regulation modifying the airspace, including flight-free zones and minimum altitudes, contact the FAA Office of Air Traffic Airspace, Airspace and Rules Division at (202) 267-8783. The FAA documents listed above are also available on the Federal Register's web site at www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html <http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html>

gcpba NEWSWIRE June 22, 1999 / ARIZONA RAFT REGISTRATION RULES CHANGE

The Arizona State Game and Fish Department, the state agency responsible for registration of watercraft owned in Arizona, has made some changes to the registration requirements. Any watercraft operated by paddle or oar and that is not operated by any type of motor (electric or otherwise), will no longer be required to be licensed.

According to Madelynn Fenske of the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the new rule will take effect in September, but as of the end of May, no new registrations are being taken on muscle powered craft. But, Fenske adds, if you gang craft together and attach a motor of any sort to a raft, then the raft the motor is attached to must be registered with the state. This is of importance to rafters who intend to use a motor to help them across the lower reaches of the Grand Canyon in the flatwater of Lake Mead.

Arizona residents who had previously registered their oar powered rafts will no longer be sent any paperwork by the State, Fenske adds. If you want to use your raft for a motorized run out, you will have to contact the state for a motorized watercraft registration. The renewal fee will be the same for in-state residents, as fees are based on length of boat, not propulsion type.

gcpba NEWSWIRE June 4, 1999 / ALL WINTER DATES TAKEN

Grand Canyon National Park River Permits staff completed a winter test release today 15 minutes into the final day of the test when they gave away the last available permit. Park staff tracked a staggered call-in for 40 off-peak winter river trips, with available dates from November 8, 1999 to March 15, 2000.

As part of the Colorado River Management Plan review, in the fall of 1998, Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP) opened up 27 private permit launches for December 1998, through February 1999. 14 of those launches were claimed. Results of the 98-99 test are posted at <http://www.nps.gov/grca/colorado/newsltr/pageone.htm>

According to Steve Sullivan, GCNP Permits Program Manager, the Park is using this release of administrative dates again this winter to assess the interest for off-peak winter river trips. Sullivan noted that there was a very short time lead between notification to those on the waiting list and start of the test last year. The notification this year will be 5 months before the first date offered, November 8, 1999, and 10 months before the last date of March 15, 2000.

As was done last winter, the Park accepted call-ins from individuals currently on the waiting list on a fixed time line. The launches were offered on an ordered first-call first-serve basis where people in the top 1000 were able to call in before those in the next 1000.

gcpba NEWSWIRE May 30, 1999 / MAN DIES AFTER FALL INTO COLORADO RIVER

On Sunday, May 30th Todd Strickland, 49, of Tucson, Arizona died after falling in the Colorado River in a remote area of the Grand Canyon.

Strickland was a participant on a commercial river trip that was camped Sunday evening at River Mile 75, twelve miles upriver from Phantom Ranch. He left the camp area alone and walked about 200 yards downstream to fish. Participants of a second commercial river trip camped nearby heard cries for help and saw Strickland floating downstream in the Colorado River. They pursued him in a motorized raft. Upon reaching Strickland, he was unconscious. They pulled him from the river, initiated CPR and transported him back upstream to their camp. The National Park Service was notified by emergency telephone at 7:15pm and park rangers responded by helicopter. Strickland was flown to the South Rim; however, the CPR efforts were unsuccessful and he was pronounced dead at 8:20pm. The initial investigation indicates that Strickland drowned.

Strickland was with a group of friends on the river trip. None of his family members were on the trip. The Colorado River is 50°F and flows at an average speed of four miles per hour.

gcpba NEWSWIRE May 26, 1999 / CANYON BACKPACKERS FOUND GUILTY

On May 26, 1999 Johnny Chatterley of Kanab, Utah and Brian Griffiths of Fredonia, AZ were found guilty in U.S. Magistrate's Court of violations of the Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and other related resource violations within Grand Canyon National Park.

This case marks the first conviction for violations under ARPA within the Park. Chatterley was convicted of possession and removal of archeological resources, possession and removal of objects of antiquity, theft of public property, failure to obtain a backcountry permit, and having a fire in an undesignated area. He was ordered to pay \$1,000 in restitution and was banned from entering Grand Canyon National Park for a period of three years. Griffiths was convicted of possession and removal of archeological resources, possession and removal of objects of antiquity, theft of public property, failure to obtain a backcountry permit, having a fire in an undesignated area, and false information. Griffiths was also sentenced to pay \$1,000 in restitution and was banned from entering Grand Canyon National Park for a period of three years.

Artifacts taken by the men included prehistoric stone tools such as chip stone pieces, knives and projectile points, some as old as 5,000 years.

Chatterley and Griffiths had been backpacking with three other men near Tuckup Canyon, a remote area of the North Rim in Grand Canyon National Park when contacted by park rangers in early January. All five men faced charges for various resource violations ranging from failure to obtain permits for overnight use of the backcountry to theft of archeological and historic artifacts.

Two of the five defendants, Dan and Shane Rife of Kanab, UT pled guilty in U.S. *(continued on page twenty six)*

(continued from page twenty five) Magistrate's Court for failing to obtain a backcountry permit. Each of the Rifles was sentenced to a \$250 fine and banned from entering Grand Canyon National Park for a period of one year.

The fifth defendant, Brian Lee Hermes of Flagstaff, AZ failed to appear in court, a Federal warrant has been issued for his arrest. Anyone with information as to his whereabouts is asked to please contact Grand Canyon National Park's Silent Witness hotline at (520) 638-7767.

The Archeological Resource Protection Act of 1979 provides protection of archaeological resources on public and Indian lands. The Act established federal criminal penalties for unauthorized excavation, removal, damage alteration, or defacement of archeological resources, or trafficking archeological resources obtained in violation of federal, state, or local law. ARPA violations under 16USC 470 aa to 47011 can carry up to a year in jail and \$100,000 fine for misdemeanor convictions, and up to two years in jail and a \$250,000 fine for felony convictions.

gcpba NEWSWIRE May 18, 1999 / RIVER MANAGERS MEET

The annual River Managers Society meetings were held last week in Phoenix AZ. Meeting attendees are managers of various government administered rivers from all over the United States, as well as invited river interested groups like the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association (GCPBA). Attendees came from as far away as Alaska. Also present were invited representatives from the Grand Canyon commercial river concessions and America Outdoors, a river concessions industry trade organization. Non-commercial interests were represented by individuals from American Whitewater, American Canoe Association, and the GCPBA.

Two days of meetings followed an opening ceremony which featured singer-songwriter Katie Lee. Katie Lee, author of ALL MY RIVERS ARE GONE, warned the managers present not to let the CRMP process be derailed this time, like 1981. Katie Lee told the audience to look at the current issue (May 1999) of the gcpba magazine THE WAITING LIST for the complete history of what happened during the 1970's and early 1980's CRMP. Katie told the assembled managers that if a repeat of the 1981 fiasco occurred, they "would only have themselves to blame."

The second day of the meeting was reserved for field trips to selected rivers around the state.

On the third day, preliminary results of the sociological survey conducted last summer by Dr. Troy Hall and Dr. Bo Shelby were partially reviewed. This survey, replicating the 1975 Shelby study, revealed that a majority of private river runners found scenic overflights the most disruptive aspect of their trip, while they rated wildlife, attraction sights and rapids as most enjoyable. Commercial trip passengers listed the rapids as the most enjoyable aspect of their trip. Overall, the private boaters noted a degradation of the river experience, while commercial oar and motor passengers did not. The gcpba will be presenting a complete overview of this study in the WAITING LIST as soon as it is released later this year.

Other presenters were NPS planners Kim Crumbo, Laurie Domler, and CRMP team leader Linda Jalbert. Linda said in the next few months, her team expected to announce a restart of the CRMP process, in the form of an Environmental Impact Statement. Additional presentations included Randy Gimblett, of the University of Arizona, who discussed the computer modeling project, and Jason Robertson of American Whitewater, who presented an update on AW's proposal to open 45 miles of rivers in Yellowstone to kayaking. A panel session and break out discussion groups followed.

The discussion groups were presented with the topic "If you could start over, how would you manage the Colorado River basin system."

The fourth and final day of meetings featured a number of breakout groups. A panel on Institutional Users presented various views on the issue of allocation for this group that currently has no assigned use levels of allocation. America Outdoors Washington DC lobbyist Scotch Pankonin presented the outfitters prospective on "Institutional Use". Steve Munsell of Prescott College presented the "Institutional Users" standpoint. This issue effects not only the National Park Service, but BLM and USFS resource areas as well.

In the afternoon, Kristen Atwell presented her video "Quartzite Falls, a Wilderness Tale". Though not completed, this video explores the dynamiting that occurred at the Falls. Thanks to GCPBA's president, Tom Martin, vice president, Willie Odem, editor Richard Martin, and board member Marty Wilson for taking the time out of their schedules to attend.

gcpba NEWSWIRE May 6, 1999/ PHANTOM EXCHANGE RISK

All river runners who are exchanging at Phantom Ranch need to be aware of the nature and risk of the hike out of the canyon. The hike is seven miles of steep trail, covering an elevation change of over 4000 feet. There is little shade, and you must carry enough water and snack foods to stay hydrated. Anyone who will be attempting a Phantom exchange needs to spend at least a month ahead of time preparing themselves for this physical exertion.

On April 28, 1999, a 52 year old male who was hiking out the Bright Angel trail from a commercial river trip exchange, had a heart attack three mile from the rim. Two of the party were MD's, who immediately started CPR, which was preformed for one and a half hours, at which time the man was pronounced dead. Traffic on the trail was halted during the resuscitation attempt. According to Dr. Tom Myers, the man had no prior history of a cardiac problem.

Dr. Myers, who has worked at the Grand Canyon Clinic for the last ten years, went on to note that each year, numerous exchange hikers are treated for heat related illness, exhaustion, trauma and cardiovascular/respiratory related problems. According to Dr. Myers, the Bright Angel and Kaibab Trails, used by river runners to exchange trip participants, do not equal easy hikes, and poses a potentially serious problem and should be addressed as such. If someone has major health problems, especially heart disease or risk factors, they should consult with their doctor before attempting such a hike, notes Myers.

Those who are planning exchanges should also remember there are two adjacent river camps at "Cremation Camp", river mile 87.2 left. These camps are for river trips with exchanges, and allow exchange trips to reach the trail heads early in the morning. This tragic incident should be a reminder to all river runners to take the Phantom exchange and required hike very seriously.

gcpba NEWSWIRE April 29, 1999 / NPS LAUNCHES RIVER DISCUSSION FORUM

A new internet based discussion forum has been created by the Grand Canyon National Park Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) team to aid in furthering open public discussion on the many issues surrounding the 1998 CRMP review. According to Team leader Linda Jalbert, "Once we see that folks are checking in and contributing to the forum, we hope to structure the discussions with key members of the CRMP team. Keep in mind that we are not able to get into the site everyday, but plan to develop a schedule for reading and responding to questions, concerns, or to on-line conversations as appropriate. Not all staff have access to the web at this time." Jalbert went on to point out that "This site is intended to serve as an opportunity for discussion with members of the CRMP team, and not for personal attacks or criticisms as is seen on other list-servers.



Never under estimate the Raven's determination!

The new forum can be visited at http://www.crmp.com/disc1_frm.htm For information about the CRMP in general, see <http://www.crmp.com>

gcpba NEWSWIRE April 20, 1999/ USER DAYS OVERBOOKED

Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP) River Permits Office has not released a cancelled permit to the phone-in system for 3 weeks. According to Steve Sullivan, GCNP Permit Program Manager, River Operations staff have overbooked summer launches for years. Overbooking allows those who have waited longest on the waiting list to finally get their boats on the water. "We may let cancellations out to the general list later in the season, but that depends on how accurately we overbooked." Sullivan went on to say "the 90 day advance payment of all fees has resulted in a tracking of user days that previous River Operations staff could not achieve." When asked, Sullivan was unsure of the exact number of overbooked trips, but thought the amount was "about 20%."

When asked about exchanging dates, Sullivan said exchanging dates is allowed between Trip leaders who have been awarded launch dates, but that River Operations would not assist in this exchange.

We encourage those who express a desire to exchange dates to post their requests on the various river chat groups." GCPBA board member Marty Wilson noted that "most anything that makes more permits available to those who have waited on the list for a decade or longer and allows them enough lead time to put that trip together is a step in the right direction."

To receive GCPBA Newswire service, send an e-mail to: gcpba@gcpba.org It's free!



Flipped Out! Letters to the GCPBA

Minor Glitch!

What a great job you folks are doing with *the Waiting List*. The trip from that first issue two and one-half years ago to today's polished publications has to have been quite an effort. Today's high quality is reflected in Byron Hayes study of "Motorized Rafting," in the May 1999 issue. It is well researched, well written and very informative. At last the whole sordid story of how we got to where we are today has been pulled together in an understandable presentation.

I need to comment on a very minor glitch in Tom Martin's article on Stanton's photo books. Tom states that Frank M. Brown was Molly Brown's husband. Not so. Frank M. Brown's wife was named Mary, and she was a Denver girl. Molly Brown was from Hannibal, Missouri, and she was married to James J. Brown. Both Browns were Leadville mining men, and they may possibly have known each other. Frank of course, was drowned below Saop Creek Rapid in 1889; J.J. was still very much alive - although not on board - when Molly survived the sinking of the *Titanic* in 1912. Not that this has anything to do with rafting in the Grand Canyon.

Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Keith Watson

Thanks Keith, for the nice words.

Byron will be very pleased by your comments. As for the glitch, thanks for setting this story straight. The Molly Brown notes were not in the original text by Tom Martin, but were added by (*blush*) your editor me. Oooooops.

Stuff Happens

Just a note to thank you all for existing and being proactive regarding the gc. I wonder if you hear from others out here that are glad you have the passion to do this. In reality, it might be easier for folks that get on the river regularly by whatever means or are able to get on it through commercial connections and employment means to be proactive than those of us who get on it once every ten to twelve years and just pay money every year for the privilege of waiting. I have run the gc twice and that is why my interest remains. It is a very special place, but I know that when my number finally comes up this time and I finally get a place on the river that my life circumstances may prevent me from going. Stuff happens. It's kind of like a

long trial that drags on and on. It is much easier to maintain interest on a river that I run every month or even one that I can run each year than a river I may never run again, despite my interest, hope and financial investment.

Keep up the spirit.

George Lee

I like the new look of the *Waiting List*. (plus some nice articles.)

Dick Hamilton

Not So Big ...

The WL was the best ever—truly wonderful. The research and delivery was awesome. Thanks to you and Byron. the original Harding *Newswire* had a problem. The boulder was 1/4 the size of the midstream one. When I typed it up in AOL, I used the ASCII character for 1/4 (alt+189) which looked fine on some of the postings I



No matter who you are ...

got back, but was gibberish on others — I guess it was a translation problem and was interpreted as "the size of the midstream" one. Somebody's going to think we're a little crazy when they see it!

Jo Johnson

Great Historical Account

By the way, the historical account of motors that was in the latest newsletter is great! Please pass along my thanks to the author. Despite all the problems of the Reagan/Watt/Bush/Hatch era, we've had 6 years of

Clinton/Gore/Babbitt and I see no sign they are even remotely committed to better management of Wilderness. I don't think they understand how unacceptable the status quo is (or should be) to the environmental community.

George Nickas
Executive Director Wilderness Watch

Why Such Big Trips?

As a private boater who has done 3 trips down the Grand since 1988, I think I speak for a lot of private boaters when I say we don't necessarily want big trips (i.e. 16 person trips) in the Grand. Everyone I know who has been trip leader or been on a trip has been on a large trip because the NPS fee structure requires the maximum # of people to reduce the per person cost. Only recently, by removing the continuing interest fees and making camping fees per person per night has the NPS removed some of the incentive for large trips.

I had a permit for 25 on the Yampa on May 24, 1999. I took 11. Did 14 others get a launch date because I opted not to max out my permit capacity ?? I don't know or care. All I know is I go to the river to escape civilization, overcrowding and urban life, not to take it with me. The NPS needs to continue to change the fee structure so large trips are not necessary for cash-poor river rats to be able to afford a trip.

Jocelyn Mullen
Private boater and Arkansas
River rent-a-guide

"O my God in Heaven!"

The piece by Robyn Slayton (*Surfacing*, pg 20, May 99 *Waiting List*) please pass on: I'm sorry her husband died, and it's good she's coming to life. Here are two versions of the story she told that we used to perform:

-- as you approached the brink of Hermit, with Sierra Clubbers clucking about the motor, whistle the Surprise Symphony. This was rarely sufficient warning. Then, approaching the fall line, reach back and choke the shit out of the motor. Call, "Oh God! The Motor!" Unchoke and let it smooth. Choke. "O SHIT! There it goes again." Unchoke. Choke. "Sweet Jesus Christ, please give me my motor back!" Unchoke and cruise. We passed the petition to get motors banned and they all signed, but nobody but us was permitted to derogate them.

-- up on the Middle Fork running 10-man rafts, late in the summer when the water was pellucid and warm, you would grow tautly alert, lean sharply forward, point downstream, and say, "O my God in Heaven!" As the dudes stared in horror downstream at whatever it was had terrorized their previously imperturbable boatman, the boatman would slip silently off the back and hide under the rockered end of the raft. When they could not determine what had haired him out, they would turn to question him, and there would be nothing, no one, the boat empty. They would scabble about the boat, but it was nearly impossible to peer far enough over to find the boatman nose-breathing under the rocker.

Earl Perry

BIGGER IS BETTER!?

More motor rigs on private trips = more private boaters on the river.

What can a raft with a motor do that an oar boat can't? Not have to arrange for a shuttle across Lake Mead. Cruise flat water and go down river in an up canyon wind; Go through holes, that oar boats try to avoid, thereby adding excitement to the trip.



Canyon Spy Photo Network

... you can make the wrong run!

Keep you from losing your permit, if plans or health reasons prevent you from taking a 21 day trip. Carry more gear and creature comforts. A group of six can share the experience together; not just recount it in camp. Allows you to sleep later and make camp earlier, younger and older people appreciate the shorter, warmer, drier, safer trips.

You can see more off-river sights in same number of days. Although a passing motor rig definitely draws attention of all around, and can radically decrease

the experience for everyone. Mellow out! ! Get yourself a Walkman with a tape of river and canyon wren sounds, and when you see a motor rig, turn it on. At the end of Georgie White's commercial motor trips (that I feel privileged to have been a boatman on, the passengers would say this was the best trip of their lives. I can't remember one person commenting on the motors or that they lessened their experience.

The only way I see to get data on unused camps would be to fly low over the canyon and count them. Oops! You can't count on pre-trip itineraries. No one can stick to them. No one is going to keep you from splitting a camp site. River runners on the whole are friendly and helpful. But if you come late to a camp, tired from rowing and needing sleep, don't expect to keep the motor rig group from partying and burning off excess energy.

If more private river days were used by private motor rigs, more private boaters could use the Canyon. Do the math; 16 people on an oar trip to Diamond. Taking 18 days = 288 river days - take those 288 days divided by 12 motor river days to Diamond and 24 people could have used the canyon. That's 50% more. Private boaters, how would that effect your upcoming permit number? Motor rigs can and do shut down their motors so the canyon sounds (or lack thereof) can be appreciated. The reason they seem like they're going too fast when they go by oar boats, is because they are trying to get out of your space, so that you can enjoy the canyon the way you want to.

THINGS TO REMEMBER: Bigger is better.

A plane flying overhead is looked at differently when you have emergency panels out and a signal mirror in hand. A good use of a river knife is to effect a rescue or in rigging a boat, etc.; otherwise it should be kept out of the kitchen and in its sheath.

I've been down the Canyon 20 times in paddle, oar, triple rigs and motor rigs (both commercial and private trips). I presently run a 27' J rig with a 30 hp Honda engine. I can carry a full kitchen, head and 8 river runners. I have done kayak support, and don't need a tow out on Lake Mead. All this equipment and expertise can be yours, for 2 plus spots on your approximately 14 day trip ... You're going to see motor rigs on the river; why not benefit from one in your own group? If Powell could have had access to a motor rig, I'm sure he would have chosen it over an oar boat for its safety, comfort, ability to carry more food / gear and more time for off-river exploration.

anonymous contribution

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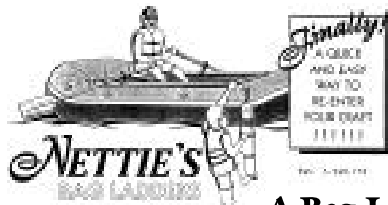
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Tom Talks / LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's been a very productive and frustrating last few months, all bundled up into one. Just like a river trip, some things go really well, and then a boat flips. The following is a short list of what's been happening on the never ending cyber-political river trip:

* The GCPBA, through written and verbal communication with GCNP, requested participation in a recently completed on-river safety trip a month before the trip was to launch. Participants on this safety trip included GCNP on and off river concessions and their trade association representatives, Park Safety personnel, and members of the river guiding association. This trip was a response in part to recent river concessions safety concerns. The GCPBA did not receive a reply to our request, but you know us, we will continue to attempt to work with the Park on this issue. Boater safety will continue to be a strong concern of the GCPBA.

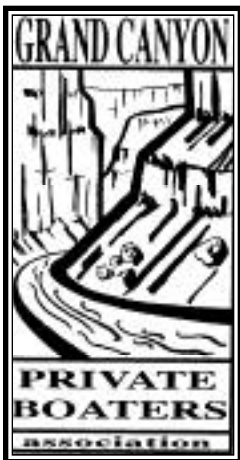
* The Colorado River Management Plan appears to be regrouping, combining the Backcountry Wilderness Plan with the River Plan. This process looks to be transforming into an Environmental Impact Statement. The Park planners hope to have the combined plans back on the table for public review and workshop continuation sometime in July, with the first tentative alternative management plans out for public review next spring. Our hats are off to the GCNP staff, from top to bottom, for all the hard work they are putting into this effort.

* The Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association held a CRMP meeting in Page Arizona, inviting members from the Park, environmental organizations, and river guiding community to attend. The GCPBA also received an invitation, with a string attached. One of the GCPBA Board of Directors was specifically singled out and excluded from attending. Unfortunately, with job commitments, the only GCPBA board member who could attend was, of course, the one person not allowed to attend. Don't you just hate it when that happens?

* The GCPBA was able to assist a member in a communication problem with the river permits office. The end result was that after waiting ten years, the trip leader was able to bring along the members of his trip he wanted. There were a few weeks of worry though, and we would like to thank Grand Canyon National Park staff who assisted in rectifying this particular issue, especially Deputy Superintendent J.T. Reynolds and Permits Program Manager Steve Sullivan.

As always, our heartfelt thanks go out to you, the dues paying members of this electro river trip, who just want to go boating. As you can see, the "rapids" are huge and the "river" in the biggest "flood" of the last twenty years. Hope this finds you all well, cheers,

Tom Martin, President GCPBA



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