Starting at the beginning, instruction on how to get into your boat.

The BWA Clinic had its roots in the very early days of the club. In the Newsletter #3, dated February 1977, there is a short mention of a “Elkhorn Creek Training Party”: 12/17-18/76.

It’s getting close to Christmas now and the General feeling was to try and stay close to home. Is Elkhorn Creek worth paddling at 6 inches? Sometime in the future I may give it a no, but for those of us who wanted out to brush up on a few things, it was heaven. Starting in early afternoon and getting off at dusk, there wasn’t much to any of the rapids at 6 inches. But we combed every inch of what was left, playing around for almost an hour in a few spots. If I can remember there were around 7 or 8 boats each day.

While this was an informal gathering of BWA members with the intent of just working on paddling skills on a cold December weekend and having fun, it shows a belief by early members that you should learn and develop your skills in a class like situation. Many if not most of the first members had learned paddling skills with Sage of the Outdoors. Sage was an outfitter in Lexington that was similar to the early NOC. It not only sold a variety of outdoor equipment but had classes in many outdoor activities like canoeing, kayaking, climbing, sailing,

Continued on pg. 3
Clinic #3 was the first clinic to really set a pattern for most of the ones that followed. After much discussion of the pros and cons of where to have one we decided on the Emery-Obed confluence for several reasons. It had a very large pool which allowed for each class to have it's own space. The shuttle was quick and easy. We had paddled the river enough to know that at both higher and lower water levels there were options that would work for a clinic. You could run other sections of the river system and still not have to drive far. Just as important, most of these options provided streams that were relatively hazard free. Important if you are expecting swimmers. It was definitely more of a wilderness experience, no rafts or buildings and houses lining the banks.

At that time Frozen Head State Park was still new and did not charge fees. In fact it did not have a campground with individual pads. Instead it had a group area that was next to flat creek were all could camp. The other advantage was that it was close to the river. So with that we made it the clinic camp. It was only years later when they had built pads, paved the roads, etc. and had to charge more and more that we moved the camp right to the river.

We solved the food problems by adding five dollars to the cost of the clinic and providing 3 meals in the camp. Tubbo (aka Steve Morgan) and I fixed the like for the first evening meal. This would be surpassed at future clinics with food and country ribs, Tubs Tatters and cole slaw and the like at Dad’s Dinner Theater and Sam’s Pig, but it was a beginning. We arranged with Mildred, owner of a favorite eating spot in Wartberg to fix lots of biscuits and gravy for breakfast that we sent someone to fetch for breakfast. The second morning we had scrambled eggs and the like that we cooked in camp.

That is how the tradition that is the BWA clinic started. This year will be our 27th clinic. The Emory-Obed Confluence has been the location for most of them. We did move it one years to the Big South Fork. That was the year that a student broached Mike Week’s “Worm” and the river swallowed it up. But that story is for another time.

Most years the river gods have been good to us. The river has never been too high or two low to have it.....though there has been times when we would have be happy with a slightly different river level. Most of the time weather has been in the 70 range more or less. We did have several clinics that the second day was on the
biking, etc. Paddlers that had either taught or taken classes at Sage formed the core of early BWA membership. In fact one of our lifetime members, Bob Sehlinger, was in charge of instruction at Sage.

Unfortunately Sage ran into some financial problems and while it keep its doors open for several years more in Louisville it had to shut down here in Lexington by 1979. A Bowlines dated May/June 1979 had an article that said:

Since Sage dissolved....our club saw a need and and responsibility to carry on instruction in river paddling technique and safety. Our first venture, as a club project into teaching was heralded as an enigma of success.

The clinic was not advertised but offered mainly to friends on a non-fee basis. The response was overwhelming with approximately 40 students and instructors participating. The organization committee close watch water level.... prior to the clinic. The Big South Fork of the Cumberland was chosen with some reluctance (a sudden TVAgage increase up to 12,000 cfs) but... turned out to be surprisingly good for teaching.

By Saturday the level at Leatherwood Ford was 3500 cfs and there was a long pool upstream of the low ford bridge(which was replaced years later with the high bridge that you now use to cross the river). We still had to carry boats (mostly canoes up above the last rapid that has the big rock on river right). The first day of instruction was a success.

Dinner that evening at Tobes Restaurant in Oneida...was very good but a tad short on supply.

Things were about to take a downturn that night as rain gradually moved in and turned things into a "near fiasco". Next morning we were having seriously heavy rain. By the time we reached our location for day 2, the BSF canyon the rains had

"....created a stream in the road almost deep enough to paddle".

We stopped at the top of the canyon and our past president Kent Kirchner and a couple of instructors went down to take a look at the river. Kent, who had recently canoed thru the Grand Canyon came back up and exclaimed "I haven’t seen waves this big since the Grand Canyon!". Well, all the students wisely headed home as many of the instructors pulled their boats off the cars and headed down to the river. That ended that clinic. We learned a lot from both that Clinic and the next one which we held at Cumberland below the falls.

There used to be camping on either side of the road just above the takeout for the Cumberland below the falls run. There is also a large rockhouse to road right as you head toward the ramp....big enough to promise shelter for all in case of heavy rain. The Cumberland and Laurel confluence forms a big pool that could be used for first days basic instruction. The second day a trip below the falls as the river level was very low would make sense, or at we thought so. So we decided on the North Fork of the Cumberland as the site for our second clinic. The July 1980 Bowlines reports that: Our second annual novice clinic was an even bigger success than last. We had 50 participants including instructors. The weather and water conditions were on our side this year.

Unfortunately there was more to the story of the clinic then was mentioned. While overall the clinic was successful there was a couple of sticky holes, so to speak. Channel 27 and PM magazine had been doing stories on the BWA over the previous year. It broadcast a story on our winter roll sessions and on a paddling trip to the Tellico. They decided to do a follow up story on our clinic about Sam Dick and his wife taking the clinic. Things went ok on Saturday. Sam Dick was not the most apt student but he and Val did ok.

Sunday, on the river trip, Sam and Val managed to make it down to Center Rock without too many problems. But here was where Sam’s luck was about to run out.

We stopped and scouted the rapid with all the students including Sam and his wife. We had some instructors run it for them to show the line and moves. We set up safety boats. The camera was set up and ready to catch them running a rapid. Sam and Val got in BWA member Stan Slater’s new Mad River Explorer which he had loaned them and headed out into the middle of the river. Just as they reached a small ledge above Center Rock they flipped. Things still might have been ok, but Sam got the painter wrapped around his foot. So there he goes along with the Canoe dragging him into Center Rock Chute. The boat wraps on Center Rock with Sam still struggling to get loose of it. Finally he gets a little lucky and comes free of the rope and we are able to get him to shore, ego and image a bit bruised but otherwise ok.

This is when Sam’s luck left him one more time. We managed to pull the new Explorer off of Center Rock. Well it had a broken gunnel and the abs bottom was caved in. Beuren Garten, who was our open canoe expert at the time, (he had been in this situation before with his canoe) told us to put the canoe on two rocks with each end resting on a rock. He said, now all I have to do is jump on the middle of the canoe and the caved in ABS will pop back out. Well he did and it did....but in doing so it ripped the ABS vertically down the side of the canoe. I will say that Stan Slater was very calm during this and did not utter any thing untoward either Sam or Beuren. When I asked why he was so calm he explained “I think Channel 27 owes me a new boat.”

Well Sam ended up hiking back up to the falls.... but was an unhappy TV personality. Instead of looking good for the camera he had embarrassed himself. Not only that, he had to tell channel 27 they
So you can see we learned perhaps even more things about ground things had smoothed out some. By the time we were back at the camp-restaurant with some dignity. I had to offer him my pull bottle to get friend had ran off and left him as he was trying to at least exit the restaurant with some agitated discussion and I heard Beuren say to the owner “you promised all we could eat”. With that the owner reached under the counter, pulled out a gun and said something to the effect “Yes, but that is all you can eat!”

More food was brought out. Finally, those at the ends got a chicken leg or some slaw or some mashed potatoes, but not some of everything. Beuren responded to the rising chorus of still hungry paddlers and went and talked the owner one more time. There was some agitation discussion and I heard Beuren say to the owner “you promised all we could eat”. With that the owner reached under the counter, pulled out a gun and said something to the effect “Yes, but that is all you can eat!”

With that the restaurant emptied quickly of the still hungry paddlers into the parking lot. Not wanting to be a target, we all quickly headed to the cars, any car, and loaded up. I ended up with some new riders and more of them than I had brought, so I decided since there was to be no more food we should head back to the camp. We all made it back to camp......at least I thought we had.

Cumberland Falls. He had asked them to set up an “all you can eat” supper for a bunch of hungry paddlers. After a full day of teaching and learning all 50 hungry participants headed to the restaurant with Beuren promising us good food and lots of it. We arrived and they had 3 long table set up for us. They immediately started bringing out bowls of food to the end of each table. We all thought “Beuren was right, let me at the food!”. But the bowls of food only managed to get only about halfway down each table before being empty. Each time they would bring more “small” bowls of food, it would vanish before it could reach the end of the table. Well there was patience for a little while, but just a little while, until those at the far end of the tables realized something was very wrong. That the food was good may be true, those who were getting it seems happy with the quality. But there seemed not to be “lots of it”. Beuren hearing the rising sounds of complaints coming from the far end of the tables got up and talked to the owner.

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I drove back toward the falls and found Beuren walking along the road a couple of miles or so from the restaurant. Needless to say he was not happy. Not only had he been embarrassed by his failure to provide us with an all we wanted to eat meal, but his best friend had ran off and left him as he was trying to at least exit the restaurant with some dignity. I had to offer him my pull bottle to get him to cool down some. By the time we were back at the camp-ground things had smoothed out some.

So you can see we learned perhaps even more things about putting on a clinic then we learned at the first one. I did not realize it at the time, but I was soon to be confronted with avoiding these situations. The following year I became the Vice President of the BWA, and you guessed it......we had decided by that time the Vice President would be in charge of putting on the Spring clinic.

The Club had also decided on a number of preferences for the next clinic.

Location. We did not want it too close to Lexington where people might be tempted to go home Saturday night. We wanted it to be a social weekend for all and bring everyone together. At the same time we did not want it to be very distant. While club members thought nothing of driving 4-5 hours or more on Friday after work for a trip, we did not think that would be appreciated by those who did not appreciate that you have to go where the water was.... no matter how far. So that ruled out local streams or more distant ones like the Nantahala and Hiawassee. They were too cold anyway. At the same time we wanted to have it on a free flowing wilderness type river.

Camping. Most of us rarely stayed in fancy campgrounds and never ina nearby motel. In fact we had become experts at finding places that were free and primitive like nearby national forest land, that was part of the adventure. We wanted to keep things at the clinic similar to a paddling weekend.

Price. We wanted to keep the price low. While we wanted to earn money for the club, the goal was to promote safe paddling and bring new members into the club. For this reason, we also did our best to loan students our gear and boats.

Food. It had to be both good and plenty. Just as important it had to be ready when needed. Hungry students standing around waiting for a breakfast or supper not only wasted time and interfered with the instruction, it made for a negative experience.

Instruction. While the price of the weekend was low we wanted our instruction to be as close to the kind of instruction that you would get at the Nantahala Outdoor Center or Madawaska. We encouraged instructors to get ACA instructor accreditation. We would also have classes for all our instructors to help them learn how to instruct and what to teach. There was a lot of basic information that the student needed to know before the weekend. To accomplish this we did several things. We had a meeting with all students one evening the week before the weekend. Here we talked not only about the weekend, but also discussed topics safety, boat characteristics and how your boat works in moving water, river hydrology, etc. We decided to also have an evening at a pool where the students could become familiar with their boat and do wet exits. Other information we would print up and give to the students.

Fun. We knew we wanted all to have fun and come away with good stories and new friends. Thus we always planed things for the evenings like the “Women in Rubber” or “Name That Rapid” and “Big Time Eat Offs”. Other things like a big camp fire and sto-
New Fun for BWA Paddlers this year!
Cheoah River, Long-Dormant Flows Again

The Cheoah is located in Western North Carolina near Robbinsville and not far from the Nantahala. The Cheoah has been dammed and dewatered for four decades. For many years the nine-mile section between the Santeetlah Dam and Lake Calderwood was a fantasy run for the many paddlers that would drive by it on the way to other streams in the area that had water. Relicensing agreements have led to recreational releases beginning this year. The releases on the Cheoah are the culmination of five years of lobbying by NOC, American Whitewater and other private and commercial boating organizations.

This challenging river is perfect for those experienced paddlers that are looking for a new run. With its steep gradient, continuous rapids and fast paced action, the Cheoah will pump adrenalin into your system.

At its' steepest it drops 146 feet per mile, with average flows of 850 to 1000 cubic feet per second (CFS), it is described as a western-style river with exciting drops, huge waves and constant action. What makes it more like a western river is the relatively constant gradient which is more unusual for Southeast rivers that tend to be more pool-drop.

The 9.25 mile Class III to IV+ run has three sections: a narrow top section where frequent rapids wind through trees and shrubs; a middle section that opens up and has long, continuous white-water; and the bottom section with the steepest gradient as well as the largest, most technical drops on the river, including "Bear Creek Falls" and the "Gorge."

The standard release is 4.5'/1000 cfs.

The river can be run at 4.15' / 670 cfs, but you need at least 800 cfs for a good run. The Cheoah gets harder as the flow is increased.

5.0'/1500 cfs is a very exciting, challenging level providing a thrilling trip that keeps you adrenalin pumping.

River levels over 6'/2800 cfs are probably too high for mere mortals with perhaps some exception - the middle section. As the riverbed is cleared of some of the trees and brush, it is possible for easier lines to open up and the danger factor might decrease somewhat.

Gage info:
http://www.americanwhitewater.org/gauges/id/5711/

2006 Release Schedule for Cheoah River

February 8 & 9, 2006
March 21, 22, 2006
April 1 & 2, 2006
April 8 & 9, 2006
April 15 & 16, 2006
May 6 & 7, 2006
May 27 & 28, 2006
June 3 & 4, 2006
October 1, 2006
November 1, 2006

Class IV-V
9.25 Miles
Avg Gradient 83 fpm
Max Gradient 146 fpm

Don Spangler
Cheoah River Map

NOT: All information including (but not limited to) descriptions of rapids, levels, and directions, is subject to change without notice. This brochure is intended as a service to the paddling community and should never be viewed as a substitute for careful river-reading, scouting, and assessment of skills.

Rapid Descriptions

(Mile 9.1)
Put-In
Forest service put-in just down from the dam.

(Mile 8.7)
First Diversion Pipe
30 feet above the river with calm current moving under it.

(Mile 8.5)
Craik's Ledge — Class III+ ▲
A three-foot ledge, with a strong hole in the middle that can recirculate swimmers.

(Mile 6.4)
Southern Revival — Class IV ▲
After a very large pool, the pace starts to pick up here with a long, complex rapid containing back-to-back drops with many offset holes.

(Mile 6.1)
Wima's Ledge — Class IV+, ▲
Below the penstock pipe and swinging bridge, the Cheoah drops over a six-foot ledge with a large recirculating hole. Scout right. The difficulty of this rapid remains the lack of eddies on both sides of the river and sometimes mid-stream, and powerful holes and pushy water.

(Mile 6.1)
Takeout — Class IV+ ▲
One of the Cheoah's toughest and longest rapids, Takeout commemorates the many boaters who have taken off the river early here. Takeout contains many large holes and boulders and can be scouted where the road turns away from the river.

(Mile 5.6)
Holy Rollers — Class IV ▲
Two very long and continuous back-to-back rapids ending in a large riverwide hole.

(Mile 5.1)
Middle Cheoah — Yellow Creek Rapid — Class IV ▲
Opening up considerably, the middle rapids consist of about five miles of big pushy rapids similar to Gaulat but much more continuous.

(Mile 4.6)
Land of Holes — Class IV
One of the best parts of the Cheoah, the so-called Land of Holes is a three-quarter mile section of continuous Class IV whitewater with numerous holes, few eddies, and no breaks.

(Mile 3.7)
The Dead Sea — Class I
A large deadend pool marks one of the only patches of calm water on the entire run. The Dead Sea is in a right-hand bend of the river.

(Mile 3.6)
The Easy Stuff — Class III
The next mile or so is mostly mellow non-stop class III+ read and run, with a few good class IVIs tossed in to keep you on your toes.

(Mile 1.9)
The Forest Service Bridge — Class IV+
The Forest Service Bridge starts the lower portion of the Cheoah. During the two-mile mad dash from here to the lake, rapids accelerate again, plunging through Bear Creek Rapid, a very long Class IV+ rapid.

(Mile 1.8)
Rod's Hole — Class III+ ▲
One of the best play spots on the entire river is about a quarter mile past the bridge offering a big eddy on river left and a riverwide wave.

(Mile 1.5)
Entrance to Bear Creek Rapid — Class IV+
The long entrance rapid to Bear Creek is nearly as difficult as the drop itself with steep waves, holes, and sharp rocks. Eddy right before the big drop.

(Mile 1.1)
Bear Creek Rapid (aka Big Units) — Class IV+ ▲
Bear Creek Rapid is the longest and most demanding rapid on the river, lasting a half-mile. It starts with the Falls (aka Big Uns — a 12-foot waterfall), followed by a rocky slide, a large set of recirculating riverwide holes, ending in a wave train. Scout the entire set starting at the Falls on river right.

(Mile 0.7)
White Highway — Class IV+ ▲
A very steep stretch with lots of routes offer nearly a half-mile of continuous Class IV rapids with five or six defined drops stacked on top of each other.

(Mile 0.5)
Tapoco Lodge Rapid — Class IV+ ▲
The rapid alongside Tapoco Lodge is one of the river's best; it funnels into a great play spot almost parallel to the lodge.

(Mile 0.2)
The Gorge — Class IV ▲
Right after the river crosses under the bridge, it drops into a steep, beautiful mini-gorge before the lake with several Class IV rapids.

(Mile 0.4)
Yard Sale — Class IV ▲
The first rapid in the Gorge is Yard Sale. Right after the bridge can be found three large back-to-back holes with a large collection eddy at the bottom.

(Mile 0.0)
Caldervood Lake ▲
Take out on river right after a short 0.2 mile paddle across Caldervood Lake.
Dan’s Rock.......... The Story

After careful planning, a trip to the mountains of North Carolina was in store for the Wildwater cats. Starting with a small group of five, and after a day mountain biking at Tsali, we whittled down to three. After trying to meet up with the Grimes’ family at the Nantahala, we moved on to where the fun water lives. Only after the efforts of American Whitewater, and the support of local clubs and the National Forest Service support, the river was brought back to life last fall, with guaranteed scheduled releases for years to come.

The character of the river is unlike the rest in the Southeast. The gradient is continuous and rarely shows mercy for the unexpected boater. It boasts one of the largest lost and found threads along with the tales of carnage. This Saturday, the Cheoah would step up to its reputation.

Starting the run in the rain, Dan and I made our way through the thickets of brush and shoal much like the upper Ocoee. Continuing to blast down the easy stuff passing other boaters, we were having a great time. As the channel began to constrict the water, the gradient really picked up. Avoiding holes and rocks is the name of the game on the Cheoah, but sometimes they can be quite friendly as Dan would later find out.

Getting down the majority of the run with ease, the sight of the road disappearing behind the rapids gave notice of what was to come. Then a crowd of spectators appeared over the horizon line, we had made it to the rapid above “The Big ‘Un”. Getting down this rapid has brought Dan and me problems before, as seen in the video from last fall’s first release. With this thought, anticipation was building for me. After dodging holes we neared the bottom, and I saw Dan go over into a big hole. Thinking to myself, “Please, NO! Dan, don’t swim....” and over I go in the same hole. After rolling up, I saw Dan was still struggling to hit his roll. Then I saw the unthinkable, a helmet emerging from the water.

Watching Dan’s boat free of its navigator was impressive. It had unbelievable skill in cart wheeling and tagging various rocks.

some twenty feet above the largest drop on the river, with some of the worst consequences possible. I was thinking to myself “what can I do to help him” as I noticed he began to walk up to the rock in the middle of the rapid. Confused a little, I then thought “what am I going to do?” I saw the boat and paddle go over and I knew Dan was on the rock, and I was getting closer to the edge. I took a couple strokes and slide over the center line landing safely in the water below.

After looking up at Dan, I noticed he was watching his gear float away, so I turned my attention to gear recovery. The toughest rapids on the river follow the big drop, and now I’m trying to focus on getting it back while making it down myself. Watching Dan’s boat free of its navigator was impressive. It had unbelievable skill in cart wheeling and tagging various rocks. However, his paddle went down the flume that I had no intention of visiting, which was the last seen of the paddle. With the help of another boater, the boat was corralled into an eddy and pulled to dry land. It was pretty beat up, and could only imagine what Dan would be feeling if he had swam the waterfall.

I went back upstream about a half mile to see Dan calmly perched on a rock about three times the size of his ass. Not much space to spend an hour and a half while a safe rescue was planned. Option #1 included three raft guides from Rolling Thunder. They thought that a flyby would be most effective and be the most entertaining. Dan was game and thought this would work fine, so he was on board with the plan. Getting a raft was an issue though, since NOC would likely not let them paddle their rafts. Option #2 was a can opener into the rock jumble below, but didn’t fly over well with Dan, but kept his spirits up. NOC then showed up with chins held high after hearing it was their “Big Dan” alone on the rock. Option #3, was conceived and executed without incident. A raft with three boaters in it was lowered to Dan and he patiently waited his time to board. The enlarged audience, who had taken over a lane of the road, then applauded as they were pulled to safety.

This story would build all night to be the conversation of the Cheoah Revival fundraising dinner put on by American Whitewater. Sutton Bacon, the stream keeper, then mentioned that the rock would indeed be coined Dan’s Rock. The evening progressed as AW continued to raise money to help with other river projects throughout the country, and was highlighted by a keynote speech delivered by Leland Davis, who had just published a great guidebook North Carolina Rivers and Creeks. Also awards were given to volunteers who helped make the Cheoah releases possible. After the dinner, a party began up the hill as Big City Sunrise opened their first of three sets. The sellout event was a success! Additional pledges of $1000 and several $500 donations were matched by the numerous other generous donations given by boaters and even a Forest Ranger who supported the project and what American Whitewater stands for. A big thank you goes out to AW for making this memory possible, without their organized support, dewatered river such as the Cheoah and many others would not be flowing today.

Dustin Anderson
# 2006 Release Schedule for Ocoee River

## Ocoee #2 - Recreational Release Schedule for 2006

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### Notes:
- Green: (All times local time) # (eight-hour day; 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.)
- Red: (All times local time) # (seven-hr day; 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.)
- Yellow: (All times local time) # (ten-hour day; 9 a.m.- 7 p.m.)
- Orange: (All times local time) # (six-hour day; 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.)

## Ocoee #3 - Recreational Release Schedule for 2006

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### Notes:
- Green: (All times local time) # (five-hour day; 9 a.m.- 2 p.m.)
- Orange: (All times local time) # (six-hour day; 9 a.m.- 3 p.m.)
- Yellow: (All times local time) # (eight-hour day; 8:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.)
Alan Baldwin passed away on Tuesday, April 4, 2006 in his home in Louisville, KY. Alan was born and raised in Louisville, KY. We met him when he was living in Kannapolis, NC and blossoming as a kayaker. He funded his habit with his profession as a studio photographer in his adopted home in central NC. He learned kayaking with the Piedmont Paddlers. When they folded into the Carolina Canoe Club, Alan became an active member of the CCC, making many Club paddling trips. Once he became proficient kayaker, Alan took the inexperienced under his wing to introduce them to the world of paddling. He unselfishly passed his enthusiasm on to many who then embraced the sport themselves. He was known to purchase equipment, just so he could share it with the less experienced whom he wanted to try paddling.

Alan was renowned among the paddling community during his NC years (the 1980s and early 1990s). He would show up with quite a collection of fine liquors, which he shared freely with his buds, after river trips, of course. He also loved fine cuisine and was known to bring exotic foods to share at Week of Rivers and river campsites. He made a splash paddling the Topolino K2 with Bob Wiggins, making quite the scene on whatever river they tackled. And, Alan was infamous for the clunky old station wagon shuttle vehicle. (As a diehard, life-long University of Louisville fan, he got a lot of ribbing for owning a Carolina blue vehicle.) He scared the beejesus out of anyone who rode through the mountains with him. We chided him regularly to get those brakes fixed!

After more than a decade of shooting weddings, portraits and other stills in his Kannapolis studio, Alan sold his business to become an NOC “photog,” one of the photographers who sits at Nantahala Falls and documents all the raft runs each day. He loved the NOC lifestyle and embraced their Bohemian-like community. He rented Slim Ray’s house off Dills Road. He offered sleeping space to many CCC Members over the years. His pad was party central, stocked with exotic liqueurs, gourmet treats, and an extensive collection of CDs and watched over by his beloved Louie (the cat). During his NOC years, Alan developed a love for the PC. He began building computers and played around with digitizing photos, long before most of us knew about digital photography, much less PCs. He was a whiz and seemed to understand every aspect of computing. Undaunted by PCs, Alan taught himself how to use the many kinds of software available, including PageMaker. He volunteered to take on the job of Layout Editor of The Paddler, a job he accepted with a fervor for a couple of years. He wanted to payback the Club for what it gave to him. He spent 40 hours every other month designing the newsletter for the enjoyment of all.

With aging parents who needed full time help, Alan agreed to return home to Louisville, KY to live with and care for his folks. Tending to his bedridden mother and ailing, but spry dad was demanding for many years. He also enjoyed his nephews and reconnected with his siblings. Despite the rigors of caregiving, Alan managed to have a life of his own, replete with paddling and enjoying life to the fullest. He joined and paddled with Kentucky paddling clubs (Viking Canoe Club and Bluegrass Wildwater Association) while retaining his CCC membership. He managed to find time for a little downhill skiing and joined the Louisville Ski Club. Ever the Derby fan, he hosted an annual Derby party to the delight of many, many hometown and childhood friends.

For income, Alan started a PC business in his parents’ basement. He outgrew those quarters and eventually rented the house across the street. That allowed him to earn a living while still being available to his parents’ needs. He was a whiz at personal and networking computing. And, he became a professional webmaster, volunteering his design services to non-profits and hosting a few websites gratis. His clients will sorely miss him. After Alan’s parents died, he took over the family home and renovated it from top to bottom. Ever the geek, he wired it for sound, communications and remote controls. He set up the basement, once again, as business headquarters, and remodeled the living space for gourmet entertainment and comfy living. Of course, there was the special storage area for his fleet of boats — those he paddled and those he loaned to newbies. We helped Alan on moving day, August 2005. It was a glorious weekend of work and celebrating Alan with more than 30 family and friends who came to help. When the last piece of furniture was placed, Alan delighted in having attained his goal — a house all his own to share with the ones he loved and would come to love.

Alan was a kind, generous, playful, sensitive and loving giant of a man. He took life seriously but loved to have fun. He wanted to share its best times with all of whose lives he touched. He gave freely whatever he had - knowledge, equipment, love, and financial assistance — without expectation of receiving in kind. And he gave it with only the hope that his efforts would make you happier and your life easier. With a loving family and many, many dear friends in Louisville and around the country, Alan’s life seemed so complete. He needed only a single soulmate to make life complete. Alan Baldwin, may you rest in peace, dear friend, paddle all your favorite rivers without end and now have the perfect life partner.

Vann and Laura Evans
The 2006 NPFF

2006 Festival Winners

Best of Festival - *Influx* - David Arnaud
Paddler's Choice Award - *Wet House* - Ammen Jordan
Winner Accomplished Division - *The Cheoah River Release Story* - Rick Gusic
Winner Amateur Division - *Lemonade* - Jeffrey Hazboun
Winner Professional Documentary - *Where The Sun Never Sets* - Rob Coffey
Winner Instructional - *Kayaker's Toolbox* - Joe Holt
Winner Accomplished General Category - *Dakib* - Joel Decker
Winner Still Image - Image titled: Sturgeon Falls - Renee Fawcett

Photos From This Years Event
Madawaska Kanu Camp:
A Working Vacation

Madawaska, aka MKC, is a tidy little camp tucked into the woods, deep in the province of Ontario, Canada. Between Toronto and Ottawa, next to Algonquin Provincial Park, MKC is nestled along the banks of the Madawaska River. The carry from the lodge to the river is much shorter than from the road to the BSF Canyon put-in. Ontario Power Generation (OPG) releases a generous flow over the top of the dam upstream, filling the riverbed with warm water during class hours (approximately 9 am to 4 pm). In mid summer the river temperature is approximately 70 degrees (f). Due to its relatively remote location, and the fact that we will be there during the week, the river is almost entirely ours. We might see 5 people other than campers during the whole week. Contrast this warm, clean, uncrowded river with the Nantahala or the Ocoee, and you can see that it is very conducive to concentrated learning. No fighting with duckies and rafts for space in the eddies, and no ice cold nasal douches or ice cream headaches if you flip.

The camp is the oldest of its kind in Canada, and has been teaching boating skills for 35 years. Claudia and Dirk Van Wijk are Olympic champion paddlers, and took over the camp from Claudia’s parents. The first morning there, after a filling breakfast and a general safety talk, we’ll take our boats down to the river and run the gates while Claudia observes our skill level and starts to sort us into classes. She’ll also talk to you about what your goals are for the week as she decides who goes into which classes. Occasionally after the first day, there will be some switching around, but she generally is spot-on in putting groups together. The instructors are carefully chosen for their skills as paddlers and teachers, and are well-trained in safety measures also.

The camp itself consists of a comfortable lodge building with a reading/game room, a dining hall, and an upstairs classroom or quiet space; a dormitory building with dorm rooms downstairs that hold 2-3 people and bunk rooms upstairs; a camping area; a bathhouse; a sauna and outdoor shower; and some assorted recreational spaces. The dorm rooms are spartan, but you’ll be so tired you’ll sleep regardless. I recommend those over the bunk rooms, which are cheaper but being upstairs, are hotter. The rooms are worth the slight extra cost. But whereever you stay, make sure to buy the meal plan. The food is fresh, tasty and plentiful, seasoned with herbs from their garden. It’s so nice to get off the river, grab a beer, and wait for dinner to be served to you!

The days fly by at MKC, with lots and lots of on-river drills perfecting all your river running and playboating skills. The instructors cooperate so that classes are spread out along the river, and you’re not competing with each other for space in the eddies. We’ll check the bulletin board each morning to figure out what section of the river we’ll be on, and what we’ll be doing. Think boating boot-camp. You will be making moves over and over, perfecting your technique. How many hundred peel-outs or S-turns can one person do? Whatever it takes to get it right. Wednesday is a half-day, with an afternoon trip to the lake to swim, sleep in the sun, or try out each others’ boats. Thursday ends with an “examination” and Friday is a river trip for everyone, often to the Ottawa, or wherever else river levels might suggest. You will not believe the improvement in your paddling skills and confidence from Monday to Friday. And when the trip is over, you’ll have golden memories of new friends from across the US and Canada, you’ll be in great paddling shape, and you’ll feel like you’ve had a REAL vacation.

Zina Merkin

Interested in MKC this year? Contact Zina at zmerkin@uky.edu
More info: http://owl-mkc.ca/mkc/
Paddling Lore
ACROSS
3 Prayed for
6 Kayak inventors (anthropologic)
7 “Sleep tandem, paddle ____”
8 Manuf of canoes, busses and airplanes
10 Keeps those hands warm!
11 Dam if you do, damn if you don’t
15 Niagra of the South
16 Joins above Lost Paddle
17 Spanky says” Best backcountry camping”
20 Ideal color on weather map?
23 Line where the hull and the sides meet
26 Wedding band for class V paddlers
28 Red River activist
29 Front or back loop
33 Home of the big primate
34 Pulverized proboscis
36 Smiling peds
37 Hull curve from bow to stern
38 “Paddle or ____”
39 Original playboat?
40 25 yr wait list, 226 miles of fun
41 Cubic feet per second
43 In lieu of footpegs
45 Playboat cowpoke contest
46 Flat bottom hull

DOWN
1 The bedroom move
2 Running the gates
4 Aboriginal kayakers
5 Training wheels for paddlers
6 The best day to paddle
8 Maps of choice
9 Dirty Bird
12 A.k.a. Rion’s Eddy
13 Guest Appreciation Festival
14 Early sprayskirt material
16 Underwater move
18 Launch town for backcountry paddling
19 “apricot vine place” (Cherokee)
21 Any move which gets the kayak air born
22 Smelliest piece of gear you’ll ever own
24 Throbbing music for a cause
25 It’s more than just a video
27 Land of the mid-day sun
30 Twice fell
31 Snout cork
32 Owns Dagger, Perception, Wave Sport, Mad River, Yakima, Harmony...
35 General’s sprint
41 Single blade, decked boat
42 Local liquid dirt
44 Idaho outfitter

New Strainer on Muddy Creek.

Photo by Dallas Hargis
Kayaker: Harry Chesney
Our Backyard Jewel, In need of a little Polish:
The Upper Red

Less than an hour from Lexington is a river that is without a doubt a “jewel” of Kentucky. It has a small drainage which makes it hard to catch at good level to paddle, but even at a low level it is worth doing just to admire it’s beauty.

The Red river cuts through a Gorge creating a natural paradise. The Gorge is famous for its unique and diverse biology, its many natural arches (with over 80 natural arches, one of the highest concentrations of arches in the world) and many historic archeological sites that had been used by ancient indians. Also, a number of endangered, threatened, sensitive and rare species of plants and animals are also found in the Gorge.

The Red River Gorge covers over 26,000 acres in the Daniel Boone National Forest. The “gorge” is approximately 25 miles long and was created in large part by the Red River which has carved itself a bed some 500 feet below most of the ridges.

Much of the river consists of quiet slow moving pools with large boulders here and there that have fallen off the surrounding bluffs. But there are a number of delightful class 2 rapids often ledges with good spots to play and surf. Don’t get too relaxed as there are a couple of rapids that at higher water levels can be serious class 3 plus. After this past winter’s ice storms there are likely to be a lot of new strainers in the river, so you need to scout a couple of rapids that flow through a twisting and turning large bolder strewn route.

How could a “jewel” like this need a little polish? Well what I have not told you about yet is the trash and old tires that are found along the river banks and in eddies at bends of the river. The trash and tires have been there all the years I have paddled the Gorge. But the aberration was mostly overpowered by the scenery and my enjoyment of the rapids. I had to learn to ignore something that was too common in many of Kentucky’s streams: “tires” and “trash”. We have found many uses for our streams, many of them legitimate, but this is one we all must help stop and do something to rectify.

Thanks to one person who has dedicated much of his free time for many years and BWA volunteers something is being done and year by year the Red River is getting cleaner.

Don Spangler
Russ Miller, who has a self-built home and farm that sits on edge of the gorge loves the Red and takes the trash and tires that have lined the river banks personal. So personal, that for the past several years he has spent evenings and weekends year round to doing something about it.

Russ’s first goal was to get the hundreds of tires that had been tossed into the river out of it. While part of the wider practice of dumping trash over the hills into streams, tires did not move very fast on down stream to “disappear”. They also decompose very slowly, remaining for decades to spoil the view. Now and then the river will cover the tires up for a while, but in time it will uncover them once more. So one by one, Russ finds them, pulls them high on the bank where they can be found on clean-up day.

On clean-up day volunteers put in either at the official Forest Service put-in or if spending the night camping on Russ’s property they lower boats down the bluff to the river and paddle down from there. In the proceeding days Russ has hiked the river and pulled all the tires down next to the river. He has hunted all winter for “Kentucky Ducks” or milk jugs that are used to stuff the tires with so that they will float and can be herded down to the river. Canoers and kayakers bump the slow moving herd of tires with the bows of their boats to keep them in the current. Bump by bump the tires head toward the takeout.

There they are loaded on trucks and disposed of properly. He, the BWA, and other volunteers have done this for several years now. Hundreds of tires have been hauled out of the Red over the last 4-5 years. So many that now the effort is being redirected to the trash that is found in the highwater eddy areas on the river bends. Each year this “jewel” of a river takes on a little more shine.

But the shine of the jewel is not perfect yet. More needs to be done. Your help is needed. You can be a part of the BWA tradition that recognizes we need to give something back to rivers that give us so much enjoyment. Over the years we have been a major force in taking care of the many streams we paddle: The Red, Elkhorn, Clear Creek, Obed, and the Cumberland to name a few. You will enjoy the day and be proud of the results! It is a great tradition to help continue.

Reprinted from the March/April 2003 issue of Bowlines. Come to this years clean-up Saturday May 13!

Don Spangler
Red River Cleanup, May 13

The Red River Clean-up cleanup will be Saturday May 13th. Russ Miller’s place is available to those that want to come down and camp the night before. Campers will rope their boats over the next morning starting at 8:00 and be on the river at 9:00.

Those that choose to drive down on Saturday should use the Forest Service Red River put-in (HW 745 from Campton) and start at 10:00. Shuttle service will be provided if vehicles are kept to a minimum of two or possibly three, let Russ know ahead.

For more information contact

Dustin Anderson at 859-225-7915 e-mail: Wirednut14er@yahoo

Russ Miller at 606-668-6454: e-mail RainyDrift@SAFe-mail.net

BWA meetings are at Sontino's, 450 Southland Drive, Lexington,Ky.
Meetings held Second Tuesday of every month at 7:30pm
To eat during the meeting come a little early so you can place your order before the meeting starts.
For up-to-date info on meetings always check www.surfbwa.org