

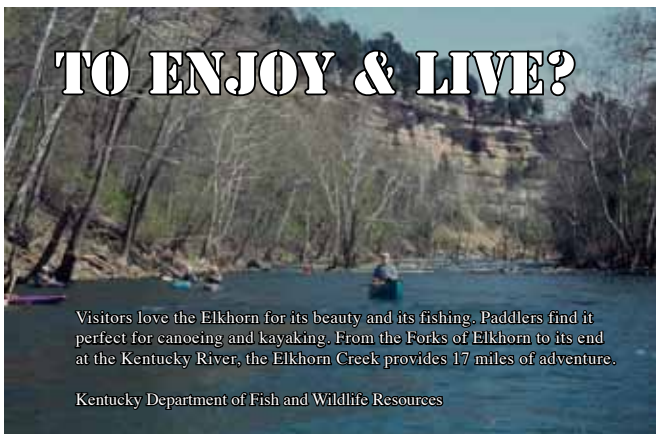
BOWLINES

Award Winning Newsletter of The Bluegrass Wildwater Association since 1976. Sept/Oct 2018

In this issue:

What Can Be Done to Save Lives at the Distillery Dam on the Elkhorn?
Short History of the BWA and River Safety
Gauley 2018
Off the Cuff: Comments from the Forum Worth Remembering
Eddy Lines of Interest

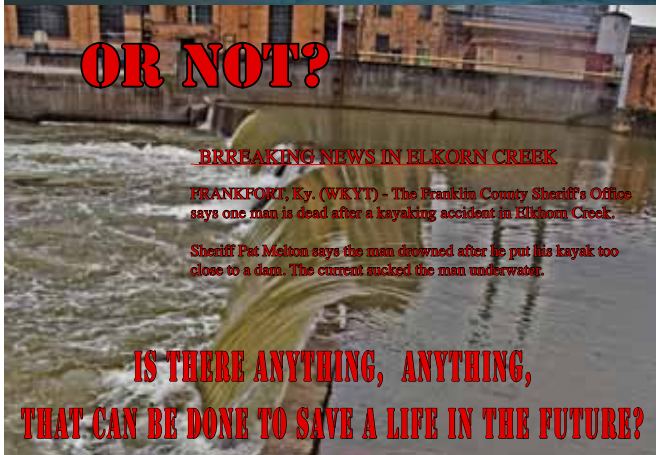
In our own words.....



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Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources



OR NOT?

BREAKING NEWS IN ELKORN CREEK

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Sheriff Pat Melton says the man drowned after he put his kayak too close to a dam. The current sucked the man underwater.

**IS THERE ANYTHING, ANYTHING,
THAT CAN BE DONE TO SAVE A LIFE IN THE FUTURE?**



GAULEY 2018

Brent Austin

Brent Austin early Gauley run

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The Bowlines needs your help!

It needs stories and articles that only you, the BWA membership, can provide. Your stories are important and we are all appreciative of your efforts to contribute your paddling trip stories, photos and paddling related articles. It is what has made this newsletter unique in the Whitewater paddling world:

We focus on printing the BWA's members original stories.
Please write for the Bowlines!

Looking Ahead

Coming BWA Meetings

Second Tuesday of the Month, 7:30 pm

BWA Monthly Meeting

Meet & Eat

Location can vary

For more information on Club Meetings
& Activities always check the online Calendar.

<http://www.bluegrasswildwater.org/?f=calendar>

Pool Canoe/Kayak Roll Sessions

For date updates check:
<http://bwa.shuttlepod.org/event-2379023>

Learn to wet exit, bow rescue, and roll.

Meet BWA members and be involved.

Wash your boats, inside and out, before arrival.

The tent is going up over the Pinnacle pool this week and winter rolling sessions will begin Friday November 2nd at 7:45. This year Christmas and New Year's don't interfere much so we should have sessions every Friday in December and January.



The BWA wishes to thank Canoe Kentucky for it's support.
We urge you to patronize them for your outdoor needs.

Check out Bowlines Online Archive with many great issues going back to 1998!

Issue Archive:

http://www.surfky-bwa.org/html/bowlines_arcN.html

A must read for all members, our 30th Anniversary issue:

http://www.surfky-bwa.org/bowlines/BL30thAnnv_Aug06.pdf



Bowlines is the Newsletter of the Bluegrass Wildwater Association, POB 4231, Lexington Ky, 40504

Club Officers 2018-2019

President	Mike Daugherty	859-554-8489
Vice-President	James Welch	859-954-2025
Treasurer	Kyle Koeberlein	502-370-1289
Secretary	Dot Edwards	859-351-0132
Safety	Hanley Loller	859-806-9843
Program	Sam Arnold	859-983-4475
Newsletter	Don Spangler	859-277-7314
Cyber Communications	Joe Wheatly	859-361-0892
Conservation	Sandra Broadus	859-333-0208
Film Festival Coordinator	Dan Durick	859-230-4763
Equipment Coordinator	Sarah Leach	262-751-4476
At-Large Member	Karen Payne Gill	812-221-5514
Membership Coordinator	Brian Storz	859-351-0132
Past President	Kyle Koeberlein	502-370-1289

Join in on the Fun!

Join the BWA! BWA Membership \$20/individual; \$25/Family year entitles you to receive the newsletter, 10% discounts at many local and out of state outfitter shops, use of club equipment, discount at pool rolling sessions, a listing in the BWA Handbook, a stream gauge guide, and web site with a forum for member's messages & a parking pass for the Elkhorn.

Meetings are held at 7:30, the second Tuesday of each month at location announced on our website: <http://www.bluegrasswildwater.org>

**BWA members want to read your story!
Short or long. Sad or Funny.
Tell us your paddling related story! Please!!**

Files can be e-mailed to the Editor: DonSpang@aol.com



About the BWA's Bowlines

The Bowlines has been a unique record of the BWA and its members. Unique in that it has been more than a listing of club activities and general information about paddling and related issues. When you read Bowlines you read about each of us and what we thought and did over the years. Members have contributed articles not only about paddling, conservation, and the club, but also stories crafted with humor, imagination, and the spirit of enthusiasm of life and enjoyment of each other. These are only a small portion of the many articles worth rereading. There have been songs, poems, soap operas, jokes, cartoons, wedding announcements, birth announcements, and unique trip reports among all the issues. Not what you might think you would see in a whitewater club newsletter.

We owe a thank you to all the newsletter editors that spent countless hours preparing each issue. To all you club members a big BWA hand for your contributions. Please keep it up! Now dig in and enjoy old memories or chuckle at the amusing stories, poems and pictures...



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**IS THERE ANYTHING, ANYTHING,
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WHAT CAN BE DONE TO SAVED LIVES AT THE DISTILLERY DAM ON THE ELKHORN?

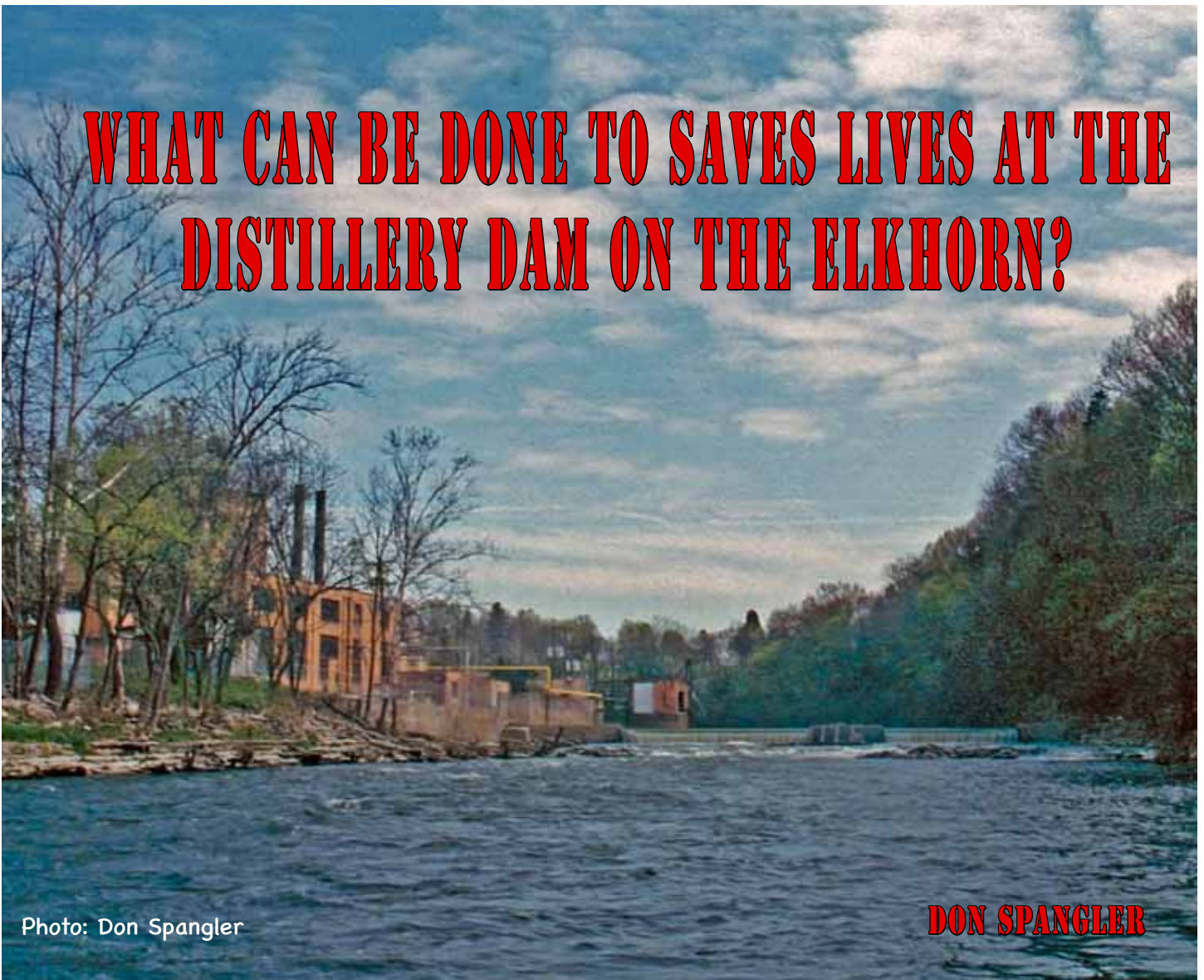


Photo: Don Spangler

DON SPANGLER

As a canoer for almost 50 years I love paddling the Elkhorn. I have paddled it hundreds of times over the years, Summer, Fall, Winter, & Spring at almost all water levels. I appreciate being able to go to the Elkhorn, run a shuttle then run the river and be home all in the space of an afternoon. I understand many others including fishermen, paddlers, tubers, painters, writers as well as those who are lucky enough to live on the creek, all of us have a spot in our heart for what this wonderful creek has meant to us.

But I also have concern for those who have drowned needlessly while portaging the distillery dam, as well as possible future drownings. Those who died made serious misjudgments, likely because they did not know how to avoid the danger inherent in moving water and how to avoid dangerous situations. In the years I have paddled the Elkhorn this has occurred 3 or 4 times that I remember. There has also been a number of extremely dangerous incidents around the dam over the years also.

Almost always there are advocates of what should be done to prevent a future incident. Some of the proposals are for simple easy and relatively inexpensive remedies, others are major and would require significant effort change and expense.

But to date, little has been done on either end of the scale.

Lack of any important action is not because it is not a critical issue or that those involved do not care. I think it may be due to believing that a solution must be perfect and accomplish not just perhaps preventing another drowning, but also other things that while good, take the focus off of the one simple urgent action.

Preventing another death.

I would like to pose a series of ideas that do not need to be done simultaneously and could be changed as may seem prudent. To start, we should do some basic things to improve what exists.

Actions for immediate consideration:

1. Communicate about Dam Hazard with info about where and how to portage, how to avoid backwash or recirculating current made by water flowing over the dam and where to put in. Signs should be posted at forks bridge, the bridge to the distillery and at the dam.

2. Consider any possible rescue aid that could be provided at dam and how to use it, and some way to call for help.

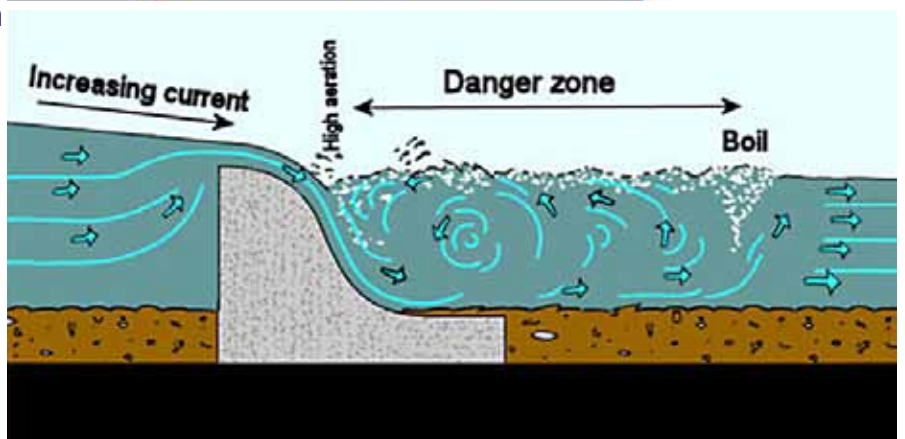
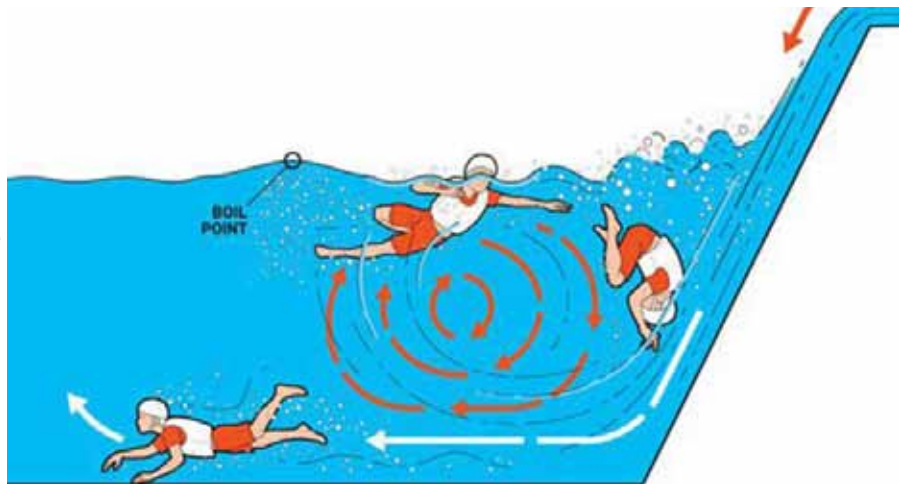
3. Perhaps provide a small landing for takeout at top of dam, some improvement for the portage trail, and a landing for boat put in at a safe location..

Criteria for what things to be done should be to keep it simple and reasonable.



Discussion of when and how to do this should include interested parties such as Jim Beam, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, Frankfort Fire Department & pertinent local rescue organizations as well as representatives of local citizens groups that would include paddlers, fishermen and those that may have an interest in enhancing safety at the dam.

The focus at this time should be to achieve a limited goal and improving safety around the dam. Yes, there are great possible ideas for the area and the creek, but by limiting the focus some resolution of the need is more likely to be met.



Phase 2 actions for near term consideration:

Creating Public Awareness & Understanding for the Elkhorn to complement Step one and Enhance Good/Safe Use of the Elkhorn Creek

Phase one will be important to improving the safe use of the dam and the area around it. But continued efforts that are focused on both the dam and the creek can promote continued public awareness of safe use of the Elkhorn. Also local use in many forms fuels support and pride for the Elkhorn.

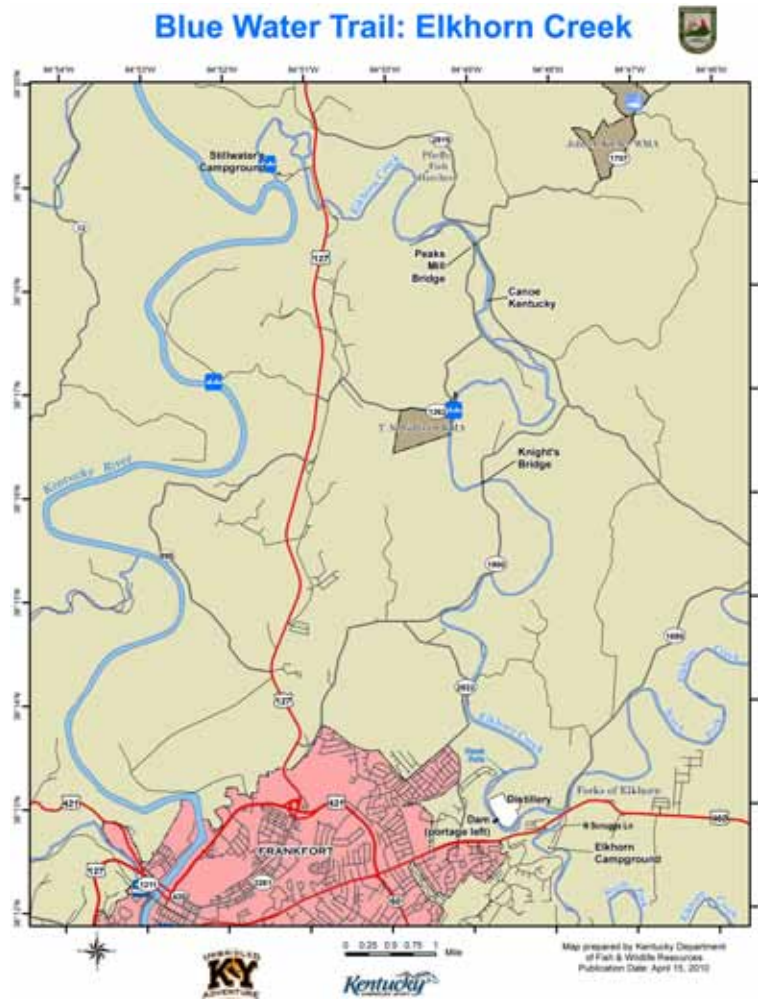
Phase 2 should start by building on the modest goal in phase one: Safer and better use of the Elkhorn. To go beyond the modest effort in phase one, why not have a weekend each year to encourage people to participate in activities on the Elkhorn. This will build appreciation of this resource by many folks.

Since the seventies I have seen many good uses of the creek in addition to paddling it. Fishing, picnics on an island, photography, canoe/kayak races, paddling instruction, river rescue classes at one of the dams, cleanup of trash, demos & tryouts of boating gear and more.

Other possible uses include: Visits by school classes to teach natural science or local history that includes the history of the Elkhorn, how the Elkhorn with its distilleries, farms, and good fishing has been important to the economy of Kentucky. There could be competitions



Blue Water Trail: Elkhorn Creek



The two forks of central Kentucky's Elkhorn Creek join just east of Frankfort to form one of the state's best-known streams for floating and fishing for smallmouth bass.

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for rescue groups from Kentucky with money prizes that these groups could use for equipment. Also fishing competitions to remember & celebrate Frankfort jewellers who created bait casting reels that revolutionized bass fishing, photography and painting competitions to honour artist Paul Sawyier.

Elkhorn Creek is a stream that is waiting to be used in so many ways.



Photo: Don Spangler

Phase 3 actions for longer term consideration:

The Elkhorn around the distillery is scenic and offers many opportunities for the Distillery to become more of a focus for visitors and others. It's prime location offers opportunities for visitors to Frankfort (who have several other distilleries to visit in the near area) to discover about it's famous Bourbon.

For visitors and with being so close to towns like Lexington a restaurant could be a big draw. It has a unique opportunity to complement a Bourbon tasting with having a small restaurant that serves food cooked with bourbon. Jim Beam could also have classes on cooking with bourbon and sponsor other related activities at the Distillery to promote it's business.

Another opportunity would be a museum with historical artifacts on Jim Beam bourbon, the Elkhorn and Frankfort. All this would of course be overlooks the historic and beautiful Elkhorn Creek.

Other possibilities:

Create a small white water park at dam, have the Bluegrass State Games use the Elkhorn as a place for a paddling venue, Along with a cookout, have a float contest for the best decorated float on the Fourth of July.

With imagination the Elkhorn Creek is a gold mine of opportunity for all to enjoy rather than often only thought of when a death occurs at the dam.



Short History Of The BWA And River Safety



Photo: Jan Atlee

Don Spangler

Our Club, the **Bluegrass Wildwater Association**, was formed in 1976 because a handful of canoe and kayak paddlers had learned a valuable lesson: Paddling, especially paddling white water, is a sport that is best done in a group. We understood that paddlers needed to know many things about the sport and rivers, thus the club was formed to accomplish that.

Paddling knowledge at the time was taught to us by **SAGE**, a local outfitter that taught many outdoor skills, including paddling white water, to what would be future members of the BWA, which did not exist yet. In time there would be others that would instruct us in white water paddling, (and still do), like the **Nantahala Outdoor Center** in North Carolina, **Madawaska Kanu Camp** in Ontario and lately, **Canoe Kentucky** in Frankfort. But when SAGE was no longer around, we realized the need for the BWA to become involved in teaching paddling skills and safety. Thus the **BWA Spring Beginners Clinic & Winter Roll Sessions**. BWA members became involved in a big way! Remember there were not many of us back then, so it was important that we all would play a part.

The **Bowlines** newsletter became a way not only to record and share out paddling trip stories, but to pass on information about rivers, safety and paddling. It still is. The BWA started having a Spring beginners clinic based on the SAGE model. The first clinic was at Leatherwood Ford on the Big South Fork. We started having roll sessions on Sunday Morning at the UK Memorial Coliseum pool in the winter. Water was always so cold we would wear our wet-suits!

Thinking out the box, in 1982 we had the **BWA River Safety & Rescue Symposium**. We had presentations from many organizations and government reps including the Ohio Division of Watercraft, National Park Service, American Canoe Association, Coastal Canoers, American Red Cross, Nantahala Outdoor Center, the TVA, Charlie Walbridge of the River Safety Task Force, Russ Nichols an important producer of river safety films, Emergency doctors like Dr. Frank Laudermilk and other local/regional experts of note. It was a success and impacted not only local river safety but had an affect on river safety knowledge and practice in the Southeast.

In the eighties we started a program that would partly subsidize our Safety Officer to take a **River Safety & Rescue Class** at the **Nantahala Outdoor Center**. This with the agreement that the officer would pass on those skills and the knowledge to our members in classes and our newsletter.

The BWA has organized safety related classes for it's members for many years including, wilderness first aid, CPR, river rescue, throwrope skills and rope knots useful for paddlers.

All these efforts were important and have played a part in saving lives and highlights a commitment to safe paddling.

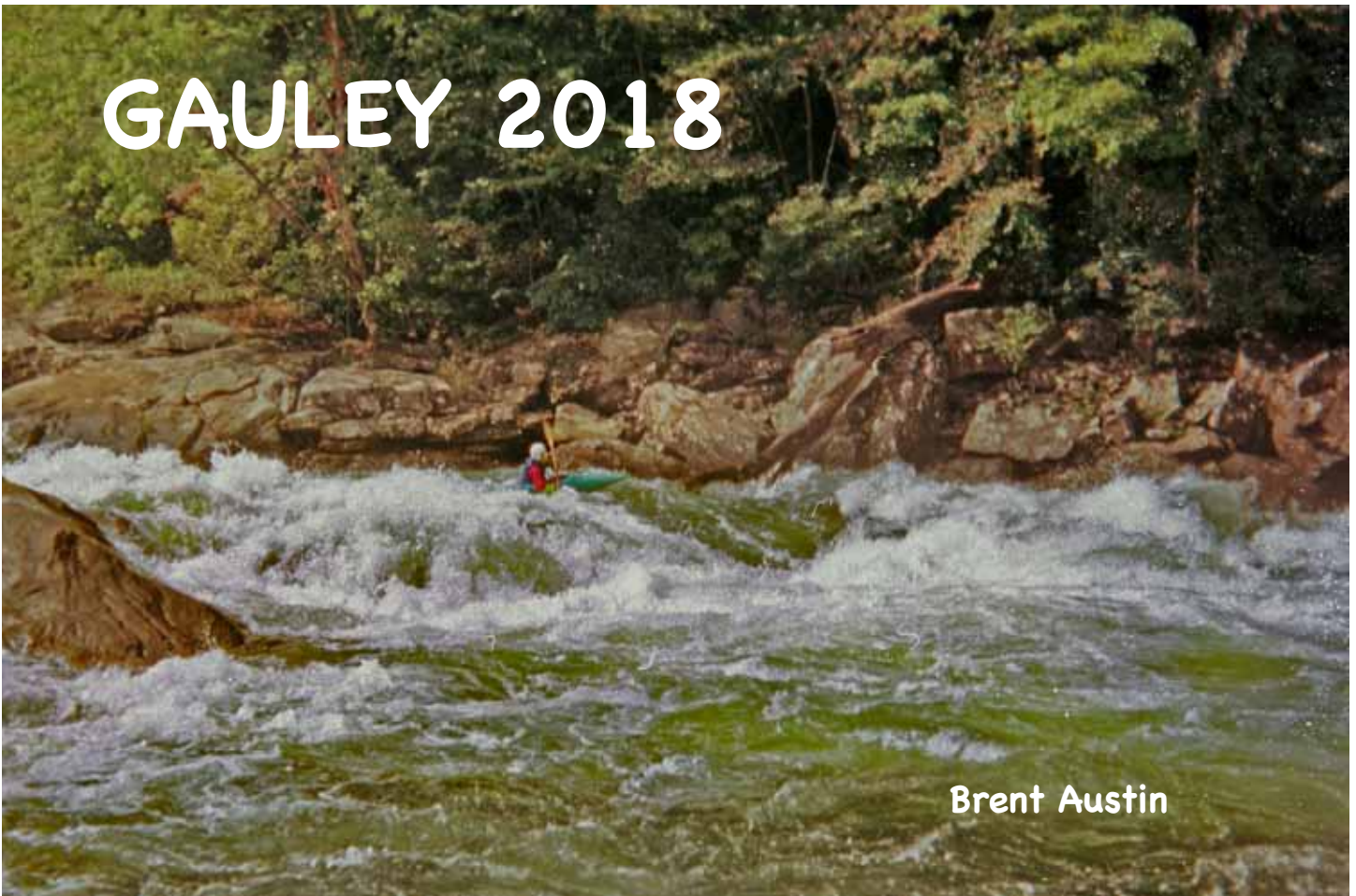
1982 Southeastern River Safety & Rescue Symposium



February 12-14

sponsored by the Bluegrass Wildwater Association

GAULEY 2018



Brent Austin early Gauley run

This was not my most active Gauley season. And that is an understatement because typically by the time Russell Fork comes around in the first weekend in October, I have already booked some dozen runs on the Upper Gauley and a few days on the Upper Yough with a sprinkling of New River action mid week. This was not one of those years as work banded down on me in a perfect storm of deadlines that synced up with my Gauley season. Boy was I grumpy as a result.

So, the first weekend I rallied Scott Mills to roll with me from Tennessee up to the Gauley where we arrived, late Friday night at Tawney Farms to a big gaggle of Kentucky boaters from BWA and Viking lands, to plenty of others, all there to hear music and camp in between the take out for the Upper and the put in for the Lower. Very sweet spot for just \$15 a night.

The next morning, I made arrangements to run shuttle for a run on the Lower with Scott and friends and with raft support, we had a great leisurely trip. It had been a few years since I had been on the lower, like maybe ten, I don't know, but I had forgotten how nice the rapids are and how amazing the scenery is down there, since I am almost always on the Upper. Saw Hanley out there and he seemed surprised to see me. Jason Hettich showed me a boof at Upper Mash that I had never done and it was so good I did it with Scott the next day too and then went home to go work. Great to have a driving buddy when all I could think about was getting back to work on a few legal briefs. (Not sure why they are called that since they are so much work).

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Dead covers played by a band called “River Funk” and then went to bed listening to the periodic eruption of the crowd until the wee hours of the morning, probably because someone landed a good right in the boxing match between boxers too drunk to box.

The next day we packed up and went home so I could go back to work. That was Gauley season for me and I was not happy about it. What did I learn? Well, I think it is important to work and take care of responsibilities, but I also think it is important to make time for quality of life issues which for me, includes Gauley and Russell Fork season and the moments that brings. I mentioned to a friend of mine, that if I had the chance to do one thing more in my entire life, would it be go out and make \$100,000 in income, or get one more good Gauley season in, staying at the river for weeks on end? The latter for me. That is about what it felt like this fall, and I am going to do my best to not have that repeat next year. Three Gauley days was not enough. I loved the limited days I had out there with new and old friends, but it was not enough.

So, I now plan to make up for that with a whole bunch of Russell Fork weekends this year. Rendezvous is in Haysi this year. WE GET EXTRA RELEASES SCHEDULED THIS YEAR! That is a lot more quality time on the river and with my lifelong friends – people and a place that I love with all my heart, for so long.

So, maybe this year’s Gauley season was to remind me of what is important in this journey we call life – it is not always about the mundane stuff like work, but about the little moments we share with our friends and loved ones that truly matter. Pay attention to surroundings and those moments with special people that make quality of life so palpable. Get through the grind and when in those places and in those moments, be aware. “Once in a while, you get shown the light, in the strangest of places if you look at it right.” (Jerry Garcia)

I will see many of you on the river soon! Support the Russell Fork Rendezvous and Join AW!

Brent Austin



Gauley Dam tubes away!

Russell Fork Releases extended two extra weeks



Russell Fork River 2018 Whitewater Schedule of Releases (Updated Oct 4, 2018)

Dates	Times	Flow
Oct 6-7	9:30-3:30	800
Oct 13-14	9:30-3:30	800
Oct 20-21	9:30-3:30	800
Oct 27-28	9:30-3:30	1000
Nov 3-4*	9:30-3:30	900
Nov 9-10*	9:30-3:30	350
Nov 11-12*	9:30-3:30	400

***Additional whitewater release weekends to allow an assessment of impacts as part of a study to optimize winter drawdown. Target flows are 1100 cfs (800 cfs plus Russell Fork flows) not to exceed 1300 cfs at the Bartlick gage.**

WASHINGTON, DC -- Tourism in Eastern Kentucky will soon get a much needed boost from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. U.S. Rep. Harold "Hal" Rogers (KY-05) announced today the whitewater rafting season will be extended by two weeks at the Breaks Interstate Park, which includes Kentucky's eastern-most point in Pike County, as well as Virginia.

During a budget hearing in March, Rogers reminded the Army Corps and the Bureau of Reclamation about a long-standing request from local residents to extend the whitewater rafting season on the Russell Fork River by discharging water more frequently from the Flannagan Dam on the Virginia border. Since that budget hearing, through his role as Chairman Emeritus of the U.S. House Appropriations Committee, Congressman Rogers worked closely with the Army Corps Headquarters and Huntington District to make this action possible.

"Whitewater rafting has been a great economic boon for tourism around the Breaks Interstate Park, but the season has been cut short each year. I applaud the Army Corps for adding additional water release dates at the Flannagan Dam, which will extend the downstream whitewater rafting season into November and attract more recreational enthusiasts to our region this fall," said Rogers. "In light of the recent downturn of our coal industry, we must capitalize on every opportunity to diversify our economy and enhance our unique tourism options in our beautiful Appalachian mountains."

The Army Corps has scheduled weekend releases at the Flannagan Dam during the first four weeks in October and will conduct two additional "test" releases on the first two weekends of November 2018. A public scoping meeting will be held on September 27, 2018 at 6:30 pm at the Breaks Interstate Park Conference Center.

Off the Cuff

Comments from the Forum Worth Remembering

BWA Storefront

August 09, 2018

You can now show your love for the BWA by ordering swag online.

BWA Store Front: <https://teespring.com/stores/bwa-store>

Best Regards,

Kyle Koeberlein

Russell Fork extended release public meeting

9/27/18

Pasting this in from Todds post on the main forum to get a double bump:

Thanks for posting this brother! Its my belief that this schedule will stick. Ignore rumors about other dates and levels unless you see it on the CORPS site. The worse case scenario is that nobody shows up on these weekends. NOV 3-4 dates are being studied for consideration of 900 use on other dates(!!!), the next weekend dates are more to monitor changes in fishing by the smaller releases. I personally plan on fishing that weekend and reporting the results in a survey to the USACE. I know the 830+ that we saw opens up some rafting lines that aren't in any of the sections otherwise but makes the upper less janky especially.

We need as many people as possible to be there BOTH of this historic release events to prove we are force and will use the resources that the CORPS seems willing to consider giving. If you aren't racing or running safety in the Green Race you don't have an excuse to miss this precedence setting event for future extended releases in the Russell Fork! We started the precedence by getting the flows in spring for the swr and kayak clinics many years ago and this is just as an important step as those were then. I am going to offer very special rates for commercial rafting and ducky rentals during the two November weekends with free wet suit rentals.

If you see a USACE or Breaks Park Ranger doing surveys go to them, Dont wait on them to come to you to fill one out. The USACE one is going to have less boaters simply because few people put in at the dam because its not near the gorge and there are shorter shuttle routes to Bartlick and Haysi. It is vital that folks who use the other access areas have access to those entities internal surveys. Your cars are also being counted right now at Garden hole and Ratfliff hole so back up and forth a few times on the cables if you have time and gas, haha.

Be on the lookout for meeting notices coming up in the winter and spring. Attending and commenting on those meetings is vital in our work to secure future schedules during feasibility studies.

jasonfoley

9/28/18

I attended. It was a good meeting and I met some of the folks opposing. There were only three paddlers there. But, we are going to get releases the first two weekends this November. Probably 350-400 for maybe a three or four day first weekend and then 800 the next weekend. Paddlers need to show up for future meetings if you want input on release amounts and days.

Brent

10/8/18

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jasonfoley

10/18/18

Are you prepared for the idea of fighting for these releases? There is a public scoping meeting being held at Breaks Interstate Park for the collection of public comments regarding adding two weeks of scheduled releases to the end of the October 2019 draw-down releases as a test. This is happening in 2018 during the normal period that the CORPS has historically flushed the remainigin 75% of summer pool left in the lake 24/7 until winter pool is met.

I know its a Thursday and Gauley Season but there is a small opposition in Dickinson Co VA that has formed against adding any new releases during any time of the year. They have said as much as its their lake and they dont want the CORPS to change any thing for any reason. These are the same folks who have refused to be a part of the process for 20 years but now are against this process continuing. Misinformation, downright lies, and rhetoric have been flying but thank goodness the CORPS operates on science and data. They plan on filling the room that night to oppose something not on the agenda but regardless we need numbers too.

Flannagan Drawdown Public Meeting Announced

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will hold a public meeting to inform the public and seek their input regarding potential changes to the winter drawdown process at the John W. Flannagan Dam, located in Dickenson County, Virginia, on Sept. 27, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. at the Conference Center at the Breaks Interstate Park, 627 Commission, Cir., Breaks, Va.

An appraisal completed in 2017 identified a potential opportunity to optimize the current winter drawdown process at Flannagan Dam to extend the whitewater season and allow for additional downstream recreation opportunities.

To modify the winter drawdown process, an analysis must first be conducted. An important part of the analysis is input provided by the public and local stakeholders. This analysis would evaluate operational parameters, formulate alternative strategies to balance competing needs, and assess potential impacts associated with modifying the winter drawdown process in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act.

For more information, contact the Public Affairs office at 304-399-5353.

Please try to make this meeting next Thursday, I am going even though I need to be at Cumberland Falls the next morning. For that reason i wont be able to offer rides. I urge folks to start to follow this more closely especially on social media but be respectful and take the high route because after all we are winning right now. : The Sept 13 USACE Huntington District post on Facebook regarding the public meeting for 2 November weekends is basically distilled to no, whatever the subject their answer is no. [www.facebook.com]

if you talk to officials in Haysi or Dickenson or Buchanan Counties in VA ask them if they support extended releases. With the Rendezvous going back there the BWA has considerable influence. People ask what to do. 1- Attend all public meetings 2- submit comments for each survey period when they happen, 3- GO boating during these test releases.

Eddylines of Interest

BWA Steering Committee & Member Meeting not available on line at this time