

In our Own Words.....

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Why We (I) Paddle
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The 1987 Yangtze Expedition
Eddy Lines

Bowlines, The BWA, & You.

The Bowlines is 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 & the BWA.

These are only a small portion of the many articles worth reading. 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.

Issues are on line for Easy access: <http://bwa.shuttlepod.org/Newsletter>

Now we would like to hear from you about why you boat.... and what boating with the BWA has come to mean to you and your life. If you help, I can make this a regular feature in each future issue.

It can be just a paragraph or two or it can be a page or two. Some of our best stories over the years has been about our club and how the BWA & paddling has been an important part of their life.

Just email your story to me (your Bowlines editor) and hopefully a photo of you paddling or with your BWA friends so we can get to know and recognize you. Tell us:

Why we (I) paddle & why I am BWA member.

Looking Ahead

Second Tuesday of the Month, 7:30 pm

BWA Monthly Meeting

Location can vary

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

<http://bwa.shuttlepod.org>

All BWA

Meetings/Activities are on
hold, check BWA web site
or look for e-mail updates

Roll Sessions

For Dates, info and to register go to Calendar:

<http://bwa.shuttlepod.org>



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://bwa.shuttlepod.org/Newsletter>

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

http://www.bluegrasswildwater.org/bowlines/BL30thAnnv_Aug06.pdf



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

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Equipment Coordinator	Jansen Koeberlein	270-703-0352
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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...



Why
do
We (I)
Boat?

WHY?

It started with my conversation with an old lady in a parking lot when I learned to:

"Always say yes, more than no"

I've always found it interesting to hear the reasons why people get into kayaking. For a lot of older kayakers, it usually follows some drastic change in life. A divorce, kids growing up and moving off, getting into a new relationship, or just the feeling that their chance at trying something like this is passing them by. For younger converts, their parents got them into it, their friends are doing it or just that certain knowledge that they'll live forever, and nothing can hurt them. Who knows, for a lot of them that seems to be about right but for me it was different. For me, it was fishing, an old lady and a few well timed conversations.

As a young man, probably no more than 12 years old, I had a conversation with an old lady in a parking lot that changed my life. It was the reason for my bouts with spelunking, free climbing and hiking, It was the reason why I spent 11 years on a submarine, (living underwater for 4 of them), it was the reason I travelled the world and spent time at the North Pole and indirectly, why I got into kayaking. What the old lady told me was to "always say yes, more than no", help people whenever you can and above all else, to live an adventurous life because regardless of what they tell you, you've only got one shot at it.

Although her words have made an impact; taken by themselves, they are pretty much the same we've all heard before; Don't waste your life son. Treat others the way you'd like to be treated. Make your passion your occupation and you'll never work another day... The list goes on, but coming from her on that hot summer day, it was somehow different.

Maybe it was the regret in her demeanor or the sadness in her voice when she said, "If I had to do it all over again, I'd jump the first banana boat to South America. I'd wash dishes to pay for passage to Europe or do whatever I had to do, to do something worthwhile." Although I heard her words, it was what she said last that made the biggest impact. "I am at the end of my life. I was always going to, I was always getting ready to, someday I would, but I never did and now I've missed my chance. Take my advice, do whatever it takes but don't end up like me; filled with regrets and too old to do anything about it."

Who knows why some things stick with us more than others, or why some advice carries deep meaning while the rest is just noise? For me, her advice struck a nerve. It's the reason why I've done some of the things I have or made the decisions I've made, and as a consequence why, one day I found myself running a class 4 rapid in a fishing kayak with no helmet and 3 days worth of camping gear taped to the top of it.

Although the old lady's advice set the stage, why I actually started boating was because of fishing. Back in the day I used to fish a lot. Although I normally just released what I caught, I did enjoy hooking a big one. One day, while fishing the locks of the Kentucky River I came up with the idea that if I got a cheap kayak, outfitted it with fishing pole holders, a space for some tackle, bait and finally an anchor, that I could paddle right up into the rapids stay in one spot and land the really big ones. I know, I know... It's amazing that we survive some of the things we do but like I said, the old lady said to say Yes more than No, so off I went to Dick's to find a rec boat.

Surprisingly, it actually worked fairly well, I had to cut anchor several times when a big cat would just about pull me under but it was a lot of fun and I was catching a lot of really big fish. It was a lot of fun that is until I started realizing that I was having a better time getting to my spot then actually fishing it. I soon started leaving the poles and the bait at home and searching for bigger and bigger water to run and for a couple of years that's what I did. In that old POS rec boat I ran creeks, which, at the time what I considered big rapids. Also, from time to time, I also ran class 3 rivers like Cumberland Below the Falls & when I would pass raft traffic, the guides were shaking their heads. Once, when I was too stupid to walk the portage or at least remove all the canned foods and camping supplies taped to the top of the boat, I even ran a class 4 rapid called Angel Falls. As you can imagine, aside from replacing camping gear, I was swimming "A LOT" If I had continued down that path I'd either be dead or so physically broken down from constantly pulling water



Fish?
Swim?
Boat?
Be Adventurous?

filled rec boats out of the water that I would have found something else to do poorly with my time. All that changed one day when I met my first group of actual whitewater paddlers.

It was after a day of swims and emptying boats when at the take out of Cumberland Below the Falls I noticed a group of paddlers coming around the bend and watched in amazement when one of them flipped upside down and then rolled back up. My mind was blown. As they paddled closer on that hot summer day, they all started doing it. Although I couldn't believe my eyes I had to find out how this magic was happening... In short order I struck up a conversation. It was the first time I learned about whitewater boats, and about the Vikings and the BWA. It was the last time I ever took that rec boat on moving water.

Now, many years later, although I'm not a bad paddler, I'm still a long, long way from the best. I guess age and injury have taken their toll, but I'm happy paddling when and where I want and the experience has changed my life! Although I look back on those times and wonder how my stupidity didn't kill me, I'm really thankful to have met those kayakers and the old lady who once told me to "Say Yes more than No" .

Bob Larkin

More WHYS?

Reflections On Paddling from a new member: Wayne Catron

A little over a year ago I joined BWA. At that their point in time I thought I was a good paddler. The last year has proven that completely wrong, and I'm still not as good as I thought I was a year ago.

In the last year my swimming has improved immeasurably, the number of cuts and bruises that my body sustained definitely reveals that boating is a contact sport, and my suburban neighbors are pooling their money to either pay for a lawyer for my wife or an analyst for me. Some of the time, usually after a long cold swim, I think that if they got me a shrink I'd use him. But be it due to low monoamine oxidase, high catecholamines or just lack of good sense, I do love it.

I would also like to thank all of you that have given me support be it moral or physical over the last year. But I owe a special thanks to Sam, Terry and Don for helping this floundering C-1er through his roughest times.

Wayne Catron, Bowlines, May/June 1980

Thanks to the "Old Guy" for the Impact they had on our lives.

So I'm floating down the BSF the other day and I got to thinking, (not one of my strengths). I really want to say thanks to all the old guys in this sport. I would go out on a limb and thank some individually but I'm afraid I'd forget someone and start an e-mail war on the list serve. Anyway here I am floating down the river in a nine foot long boat and thinking it's a little too long when it hits me that THEY opened up this sport in boats 12 and 13 feet long.

This makes me feel silly thinking my boats too long for such and such creek. We all owe a lot to THEM. THEY fought the early wars of access, gear development , boat design, and all the crap it takes to stay with boating for the long haul. Think about what THEY had to do to go boating. There wasn't any miracle fabrics to stay warm. No fancy dry tops, dry suits, poly pro, fleece, stay dry, stay warm, fancy fu fu stuff like we have today. These guys went out on the cold days and boated anyway. OK so a few bit the dust from hypothermia but they kept going out.

Now granted some of THEM, OK maybe most of them, drank a lot and maybe THEY didn't know THEY were boating, but THEY still paved the way for the rest of us. THEY paddled boats that looked like pencils sharpened on both ends made out of stuff called fiberglass. THEY even paddled big long canoes made of birch bark and canvas and, oh, maybe I'm getting carried away. There is a bunch I'm sure I've been thinking that will not get into print, and some real heart felt stuff that I feel but didn't down on paper or keyboard or what-ever. But anyway I would like to take a moment to say thank you to each and every one of you guys and gals who loved white water enough to take the risks, brave the elements, and stick with the sport long enough, so that I can come along, years later and enjoy the benefits of a truly wonderful sport with a truly wonderful group of people.

I ask the rest of you to thank an old fart when you see one and tell THEM just how much of an impact THEY have had on our lives. OK I'm done.

Dave Allnutt July/August 1999

Another WHY?

A flat water stream led this Florida Boy
to a life of loving his memories of
Paddling Rapids & his Paddler Friends.

Mike Weeks



Saddle Creek and Peace Creek merge to form the tranquil Peace River. Crystal clear water boils to the surface through fresh water springs as the river approaches historic Fort Meade, Florida. Passing under the US Hwy 98 bridge along the east side of town the water is as clear as freshly cleaned glass with a steady current on most days. The River flows southward through Zolfo Springs and continues twisting it's way to the Gulf. The river winds through thick sub-tropical forest that eventually blends into vast grassy flatlands with grazing cattle just before reaching the takeout 66 miles later.

In 1976 my friend John Urban, my brother Ric and I decided to canoe the Peace River after watching the movie Deliverance. After borrowing 3 canoes from the YMCA where the three of us were volunteering we headed off to the put-in at Fort Meade. After packing our overnight gear and supplies we pushed off and began what would end up being our first big whitewater adventure. It was a near perfect weekend with clear skies and only the sounds of Mother Nature. Well, except for John, Ric and I uttering over and over just how much we were enjoying ourselves.

The river was quick but very smooth. The vegetation left no shoreline uncovered. As Otters played and cracked mussels on their stomachs they paid very little attention to us. We were simply 3 guys about to experience our very first "whitewater" run..

About mid afternoon we rounded yet another bend in the river only this time to our surprise we heard a steady rumbling up ahead. It almost sounded like water pouring over a ledge. It was water pouring over a ledge! There about 30 feet in front of us was a river wide, 4" drop. With the vegetation so thick there was no way to portage and no way to skirt it. After careful consideration we agreed that we could make it. One by one we blasted over this almost insignificant drop. Insignificant in size perhaps but extremely significant to all three of us in many other ways. As soon as we had all run the drop we all pledged to become whitewater boaters. We pulled our canoes behind us as we waded back upstream several times in order to run the drop over and over. We were hooked. That day on the mighty Peace all three of us became whitewater boaters.

About a year later I moved to Kentucky. Not knowing anything at all about kayaking or canoeing I bought a 17' Coleman. John came to visit a couple of weeks later so of course we took this monster of a boat down Boone Creek at flood stage. We wrapped the canoe around a boulder in the middle of the creek but lived to tell the tale. The next day as I was beating the canoe back into shape, the fellow who lived behind me jumped the fence and started quizzing me about the damage to the canoe. Within 30 minutes I was in his van on the way to run the Elkhorn. This strange fellow, "The Ned", even invited me to go along with him to the next BWA meeting. That night I met Sam Moore, Tubbo, Don Spangler, Buren Garten, and others who would end up as close friends from boating with them with the BWA.

For some 35 years I paddled whitewater rivers in the USA, Canada, Mexico, Central America and South America. More importantly I met so many good people and would become my life-long friends. I could have never imagined that a single 4" ledge on the Peace River could have made such a positive change in my life.



Read about one of BWA's "Legendary Paddlers"
Mike "Dr Danger" Weeks

<http://www.bluegrasswildwater.org/bowlines/BowlinesMarApr2016.pdf>



A Different WHY?

Passing On The Tradition

'What's this club all about anyway?' 'What do I got if I Join?' These are but a couple of questions Posed by people I talk to who are curious about our club. At first I am usually frustrated by anyone who would ask such elementary questions. The basic answer I feel is to pass on an ever growing tradition. To be a good whitewater boater takes some skill that can be learned In a weekend, some practice at what you've learned. and then hooking up with a group of boaters who can pass on this tradition of river education. This river education is best passed from one to the next, not by book or film. but by taking that novice and Inviting him to go with you. Try to lead and help then all you can and encourage them when they do well.

This tradition of helping is what encouraged me In the sport. A few well placed phone calls, invites on trips. and finally someone taking me under their wlng for a paddling season.

Since then I've had great respect for this effort. And since then I've picked someone each year and helped them along the best I could by just trying to pass along the tradition. . .

Sam Moore

October 1981 Bowlines

Another "why?"

I Know a River

*I know a River, where the waters are clean,
Where the fish are still living, in her mountain streams.
This is my River, she runs through my heart,
I know we can save her if we each do our part.
And I know a People, who still give a damn,
For this dear River, they'll still lend a hand.
But who are these people, who keep hope alive?
For without the fresh waters, we'll never survive.
And I know a Mountain, where the waters arise,
She spills through the Greenwood, under Eagle skies.
She's carved all these memories, as old as the hills,
For the future children she's carving still.
And where are their Greenwoods, the hemlock and pine?
For the life of the River is so intertwined.
And where are her creatures, the otter and bear,
The owl and the heron and the bobcat's lair?
For the gifts of the waters is what we all share*

CHORUS

*These are the waters,
the living blood
From the tiniest trickle
To the raging flood!
There is no place,
Upon this blue earth,
The waters have not given
Our lives and our birth*

Anne Severn 1999

Bowlines Nov/Dec 99

So many "whys?"

Yes, you can have more than one why..... and there can be a new why as to why you paddle and why you are part of the Bluegrass Wildwater Association.

I started paddling because I enjoyed being outdoors especially surrounded by nature and it's wonders. In time that turned to the Adventure and Excitement if offered as I found new rivers to explore and run. That also became finding the challenge it offered me and the self-confidence I discovered.

As time went on, I found the wonderful friends I could share all this with. All of these thngs and more I found were "why" I paddled. One more thing I often cherish nowadays are the wonderful memories I have and continue to add.

Tell us about why you paddle and are in the BWA.

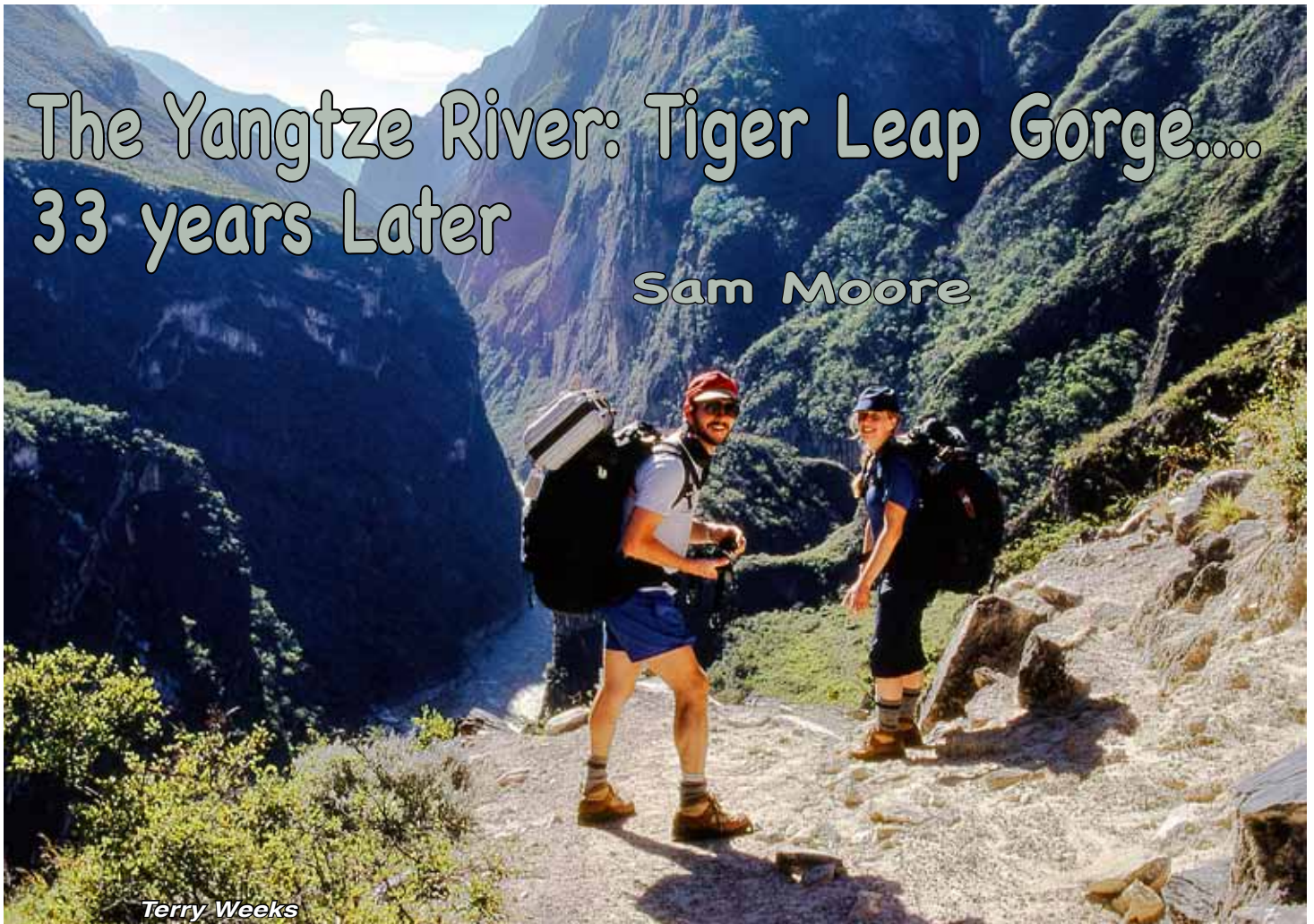
Make it as short or as long as you want, add a photo or two or three when words are not enough.

Send it to me , Your Bowlines Editor:
donspang@aol.com

I will do the rest to help tell your story!

The Yangtze River: Tiger Leap Gorge.... 33 years Later

Sam Moore



Terry Weeks

Sam & Karen Moore scouting Tiger Leap Gorge in 1986

I don't look back too often unless Don Spangler asks and it's something for the BWA. I have a soft spot in my heart for all the friends and memories I grew up with. Well here goes, a short preface about a trip long ago and half a world away.

Riding in the back of a Toyota Land Cruiser for days on end through western China during 1986 and 87 I had the opportunity to witness a great country's transformation from an agrarian peasant land into the "workshop for the world". We were on the edge for sure. That area of China was not open to outsiders at that time. On our tour to the river, we drove over a portion of the Burma Road. It was a winding mountain road that was a backbone to supply war material to the Chinese by the western powers during WWII. It was paved sometimes, windy for sure and there were only a few cars on the highway. One strong memory was watching wheat being cut with a scythe and then laid into the highway. Watchful eyes would stand by the road and sweep some grain pressed from the shaft after cars passed. Now bullet trains ply the same lands moving thousands of people daily. We visited Kunming, "the city of eternal Spring". We only saw bamboo scaffolding on a few multi-floor buildings. Now Kunming has hundreds of tall buildings and more cranes than you can count rise above the city skyline. When we were in China, the Yangtze was a free-flowing river. It's no more. We were the only ones on the trail high above the gorge. During the day we marveled at the mountain range around the river. Now there are tour buses that drive into the gorge and a sky chair that can whisk you quickly to the top of Yulong Shan the "Dragons Back Mountain. Certainly, China has changed. We've all changed. Some things for good and some not as good. Along with the prosperity, the Chinese people have paid a high price for the rapid western assimilation they worked for. I'm talking mainly about their environment. There is wilderness that begs to be explored and savored because it's not eternal nor easily restored.

I say to you simply this, "Live your life like there is no tomorrow but plan today for your next adventure years away". If you can see yourself there, you CAN get there. I've continued adventuring to this day and I can assure you that there are many Yangtze adventures out there. You just have to want it bad enough to make it a priority.

Sam Moore



Back-paddling thru The Pages of Bowlines....

More of our proud BWA Legacy that is worth remembering

From the March/April 1998 issue of Bowlines



1987 Yangtze Expedition

by Sam Moore



Tiger Leap Gorge with Jade Dragon Snow Mt

I don't believe any people can give a send-off like the Chinese. Our boats drifted down the wide river from the put-in. In the tall grass we could see 50 red flags waving in the warm sunshine. Young voices singing in harmony accompanied the banners in a patriotic tune as children marched into the town of Shigu. Some 100 students from the local school formed a circle at the edge of the river luring us to the bank. The youngsters sang several songs and then began to dance. My eight year quest to boat the Yangtze had finally come to pass.

One day at the University of Kentucky's map library I was researching another river: the Ganges in Mexico. While waiting for the clerk to dig up one of the topos, I found a large 3-D relief map of China. The Tibetan plateau was impressive, standing millimeters above the rest of the map. Three rivers descended off the east face of this plateau. The Salween, Mekong, and Yangtze all run in an easterly direction across the plain, then descend rapidly from 15,000 to 6,000 feet. The Yangtze makes a further descent through a section called the Great Bend. This bend can be seen from any atlas map as two hairpin turns in the river. This is where I decided to mark my whitewater future. As soon as the Ganges trip was over my interest focused on China. I told my friends about my goal to be the first C-1 paddler down the Yangtze. I began my campaign by writing several letters to the Chinese Consulate, China Sports Federation, and the China Mountaineering Association. I did not receive a reply.

My next tactic was to find a partner who was already doing business in China. After some investigation I started working with Odyssey Tours & in addition called Richard Bangs at SOBEK. He gave me enthusiastic support for the project, and from that time we never looked back. We worked diligently and we watched while others tried to gain a permit for the Yangtze. We kept telling the Chinese we only wanted to run the great bend section and not the whole river. We wanted to paddle what we considered the best section of the river. Finally on December 31, 1986 we were granted a tentative permit to run the river providing enough funds could be raised.

In 1966 we recruited 10 kayakers with the qualifications worthy of the trip and SOBEX agreed to provide an equal amount of qualified rafters. In May we received an official letter of agreement and preparations began in earnest. The Chinese government had sanctioned a similar trip for Ken Warren and his group called the Sino-American Yangtze Expedition. In addition, two Chinese groups were going to attempt a first descent of the river ahead of Warren. In the following weeks we heard of no less than 12 deaths on the river from the three expeditions. In a sudden move, the Chinese government rescinded its agreement with us and denied us permission to proceed with the expedition.

The Yangtze river is China's longest and the third longest river in the world. It has been considered to be the premier river expedition of our time. The upper reaches are remote and are sparsely populated with minority peoples who have traditions unique even to the majority of the Chinese people. An expedition down the Yangtze would breach several barriers. Our goals were to map the area for future travelers, meet and acquaint ourselves with local inhabitants, study the geology of the area, and of course run the river and the many rapids thought to be in the deep canyons. The reaches of the upper Yangtze "Chinese Chang", meaning "river of golden sand" in Chinese, were mapped at a scale of 1:200,000 in 1946 by the U.S. Defense Mapping Agency. The maps were declassified in 1981 and distributed to several major universities. The University of Kentucky was lucky enough to have a set of these maps. I studied the gradient and mileage lines and calculated that the river would have an average gradient of 12 feet per mile for the 250 mile length of the expedition we planned. Unfortunately the drop appeared to be confined to two sections where the river had steep canyons and the gradient was in the 50 feet per mile range. I suspected that the river would probably have a flow of about 50,000 cfs. This combination could make for a very difficult expedition if these maps were accurate.

When the Chinese government turned our expedition down in 1985, we petitioned for a permit to explore a section of the river by foot. We were given permission for a hike through the area of "Tiger Leaping Canyon" in the great bend area of the gorge. We arrived in late October. The temperature was about 86° Fahrenheit and the skies were clear. The area around the gorge had been closed to foreigners since the revolution so we felt privileged to be some of the first Westerners in that area of Yunnan province.

During our time in China we learned several critical facts that would help our attempt at the river. The river was

big, although we could get no exact flows we estimated the volume at 50,000 to 60,000 cfs. Also, Tiger Leaping Canyon is not an easy place to reach. It is a good two-day drive from Kunming to the river. In places along the river portaging would be a nightmare. At one point in the canyon Jade Dragon Peak rises vertically 3,000 feet from the river edge in a sheer cliff leaving no area to portage. Below lies a great rapid, the first in a series of monstrous rapids, where earlier in the summer this rapid had claimed the lives of three Chinese explorers,

Although the river appeared dangerous, the beauty of the area was so overwhelming, that I was not shaken. I felt that given the right conditions, a competent team would be able to make the descent safely. Later we arrived in Beijing for negotiations on an attempt in 1987. During discussions with government officials, I continually brought up our high qualifications and our regard for safety. These issues were paramount in my mind, and our emphasis on safety seemed to reassure our hosts,

The following months brought good and bad news. The permit would be reissued, but at a higher price. This expedition had been privately funded, and because of the price increase some of the participants could not go. Also there was some skepticism that we would not be able to make that final dollar figure to reach that distant river shore. However, in the last month SOBEK was able to raise the permit fee, and so we were off.

October is a beautiful time in Yunnan. The summer monsoons have left the streams full and the grains in the field are ripe for picking. The air is clear and warm in the subtropical climate that sweeps all but the highlands of that province. Reports stated that the monsoons this year had been light but were late. I did not know how to interpret this information, so decided it didn't really matter. We were here to run the river whatever the flow.

The two-day bus ride from Kunming to the put-in point at Shigu was exhausting. The first day's drive was over the Burma road of WWII fame. It appeared to be little improved from then. Because of the slow pace of the bus, our group of 17 had plenty of time to get acquainted. Most of the expedition members were veterans of expeditions from all over the globe. It was a comforting feeling to be traveling with such an experienced crew. Since the previous year my kayaking group had dwindled from 9 to 2. I believe the increased cost and the possibility that we might not make it even in '88 made some of the folks reluctant to try again.

The crew was made of 15 rafters, six of whom were SOBEK guides; two hard boaters; and three Chinese guides. Although this was a large exploratory group everyone had a professional attitude about the expedition and its purposes. Cooperation and understanding are essential to the success of any river trip. This one would require more. As we say in the BWA about running rivers "Plans are made to be changed." and there were no exceptions for this China excursion. We knew that from the put-in to Tiger Leaping Gorge the river would be relatively flat. This would be our shake down cruise, so to speak. The first three days were uneventful except for the beautiful scenery and the great sand beaches which made excellent campsites. Our camps were filled with locals who watched our every move with great interest from the time our boats landed till darkness.

On the eve of the third day we rounded a sharp bend in the river to see the entrance of the great canyon where the earth rose sharply to over 18,800 feet. Directly ahead, the river carved but a narrow slice into the edge of the great mountain. The view from this point is the most impressive I've ever seen. Jade Dragon Peak stands watch over the river in almost a vertical fashion. The peak is but a couple kilometers from the river's edge at 6,000 feet. On the west side of the river, Haba Shan rises to over 15,000 feet, but does so in a less dramatic way. The only way I know to express the grandeur of the moment is to guess at how many hundred photographs were taken of that scene. Surely Kodak would be proud. This is a sight worthy of satisfaction for almost any explorer. We made camp just above the entrance to the gorge. That evening the sun cast a most beautiful tint on the snow covered mountain in an extraordinary addition to the almost surrealistic environment we had entered.

That evening we all talked about our scout of the river and what future we might have in the gorge. My scouting of this section last year had been encouraging. I told the other members that depending on the water level, a successful descent of the canyon might be possible. Several of the expedition members ran quickly down a trail into the canyon to examine the first rapid. Their report was as follows. The first drop is about 30 feet into a large hole, the cliff rises vertically about 100 feet on the right bank and about 50 feet on the left bank

Below the first cascade the river goes through a picket fence of boulders creating a maze of keeperholes and turbulent currents. After discussing no fewer than 5 alternative plans, we decided to send our gear around by truck and hike the gorge. There was an excellent trail along the left side of the mountain. This was barely a scouting trail, since many times the line would climb to 1000 feet over the numerous rapids,

The year before I had hiked to a spot where it appeared the rapids ended. This was a distance of about ten miles into the gorge. Much to my chagrin, the trail continued for another 8 miles before reaching the first village, where our boats could be reached. The next morning came and we awaited the hike with good expectation. I told the hikers it would be an all-day affair but thought the length would not be much more than 10 miles. At evening's end we bivouacked in a space blanket underneath a rock overhang at the river's edge. Another trip member and I had completed the hike, only to find the ferry boatman had left for the day. The rest of the group were more fortunate, they had found accommodations in a local village. In the morning the boat driver appeared and reunited us with our gear. Within the hour we were all gathered around some food that our hosts had prepared.

By evening our four rafts were rigged and ready to continue the journey. We rode only a short distance to a remote beach at the beginning of a second, smaller canyon. On the next day we plunged into the unknown in earnest. None of the locals had seen the river any farther than 10 kilometers downstream. After about 5 miles we saw the first horizon line. Each boat took an early start to the wall to avoid any possible mistake. There was a small creek entering from the left and a gravel beach. We took our scouting positions there. The river slid down a glassy chute in a beautiful "V". To either side were large hydraulics. The line was clear. Ride the left side of the V then break left over the 20 foot waves for the big ride. Dave Edwards who works on the Grand, said this rapid reminded him of Hermit at about 85,000 cfs. However big it was, it was plenty big enough to hide my Gyramax C-1 from the downstream view. For about the next ten miles there were large class III-IV rapids that didn't require scouting. Our first full day of whitewater ended at a sharp turn where the river pounded into a cliff.

The locals came down to visit and offered a warm welcome. The people of the upper Yangtze are mainly made up of minority groups. The people in this region were Nachi in origin. This culture is a matriarchal society where women hold the property and carry the family name. They have a distinctive dress wearing black turbans adorned with turquois. They also wear a bright blue back plate around their waists. In China dress is the feature that most signifies the cultural differences between the minorities and the mainstream Han Chinese. For the most part the locals are self-sufficient. There was no large surplus of goods in any of the villages we visited. The villagers did produce some eggs, chickens and a goat for our consumption.

The next day we ran several large rapids. As in the Grand Canyon, it was in the washout that the paddle grip tightened and the strokes came quick. There were some mean ones too. At the end of a rapid called "Hung Men Low" I paddled through a wave train into a



huge swirly where my boat disappeared clear up to my waist This rapid was of particular difficulty for the rafts. The waves were steep, and midway through the rapid there were three gaping holes, The tack taken by John Yost and Skip Horner of SOBEK was to crest the first wave and slide off the left into some slack current The plan looked good on paper, but didn't pan out so well. The first boat ejected the swamper as It went up the second wave. Skip pulled hard as the overboard passenger pulled himself aboard. John's boat wasn't nearly as lucky The boat didn't make It over the left side of the wave but went up the wave and flipped over. This made for a long swim for the occupants till the boat could be hustled to shore.

The scenery had changed from the snowcapped mountains of the eastern Himalayan thrust to canyon country with a relief of 5000 feet above the river. The sun's first rays filtering over the craggy rim made a special glow that was enhanced by the morning's first cup of fresh-brewed coffee.

Each day the scenery changed, For three days we toured through a section of river that was only class III-IV in difficulty, but was truly spectacular in beauty. In this section of the river we purchased a pig for roasting. We stopped near a village anticipating a cross-cultural night. While we cooked the evening meal the locals brought a generous amount of Mao Tal for our consumption This white liquor is as potent as paint stripper The battle only needed the triple skull and cross bones to make It official,

After dinner the local school children entertained us with a traditional dance. Later we all Joined In and had a great time, This was a splendid evening when both groups learned to appreciate and understand something about each other

From the top of the great bend placer mines were beginning to appear along the river. Every few miles we would pass entire families hard at work trying to extract some of the river lode. The weather began to warm up as we left the Influence of the higher mountains. We bought oranges, bananas, and apples along the river.

The heat of the autumn sun was cooled only by the next big wave In the third section of river. The climate was nearly perfect The most difficult section lay downstream from a village named Sedu. These folks don't get too far away from home, They told us that the last rapid was only a few kilometers downstream and assured us that the rest of our expedition would be pleasant Our guide told us about the Chinese group that descended this section of river In 1985, They came upon an unscoutable rapid and ran It straight up. At least one boat capsized and two of the expedition members drowned. This expedition was undertaken In the summer when the Yangtze was at peak flow. We hoped our timing was better.

The rapids were large and long In a quick staccato procession. From our scouting positions they sometimes looked small and smooth like Double Trouble on the Ocoee. At river level they welled up high waves that crashed down on our small crafts and gave us great rides. This section is a classic! It provides long, roller coaster rapids and technical moves, all in 85,000 cfs of water. The river alternated between seething rapids and calm pools. At each rapid there was a good scout. We were fortunate to have lower water

After this Section the canyons gave way to green hills dotted with grass huts and ram earth shelters. There were waterfalls everywhere, long silver bands that fall to a boll hundreds of feet below. This river had It all. By the time we reached the take out, we were all satisfied that we had experienced some of the greatest rapids and scenery on the continent.

If you are Interested in obtaining Information on future expeditions to China please write:

SOBEK Expeditions
Angels Camp
California, 85222
or
Sam Moore
sam.moore.lex@gmail.com

Find out about a BWA Legendary Paddler:
Sam Moore in Bowlines 2016May/June
Issue:

<http://www.bluegrasswildwater.org/bowlines/BowlinesMayJun2016.jpg>



Eddy Lines of Interest

BWA Steering Committee Meeting Minutes 8/4/2020

A virtual meeting of Bluegrass Wildwater Association was held. Meeting called to order 7:40 PM.
Steering Committee Members in Attendance

Name	Office	Present	
Sandra Broadus	President	Y	
Emily Grimes	Vice President	Y	
Walt Hummel	Secretary	Y	
Kyle Koeberlein	Treasurer		
Don Spangler	Newsletter Editor		
Bob Larkin	River Conservation Liaison	Y	
Dave Foreman	Safety Officer	Y	
Clay Warren	Program Director	Y	
Regina Hatfield	Film Festival Coordinator	Y	
Michael Williams	Web Meister	Y	
Jansen Koeberlein	Gear Meister		
Gus Milton	Member At Large		
William Samples	Membership Coordinator		
Robert Watts	Past President	Y	

Officer Reports

President - Introduction of Steering Committee members

Treasure - Have \$5,500 on hand.

New Business

Discussion of the budget and transparency

Fixed expenses for fiscal year \$2,300

Post budget spreadsheet on website

Discussed coming up with a COVID-19 statement to post on website

Discussion of By-Laws and the majority of membership voting requirements

Approved \$220 for printing and mailing Elkhorn Creek Parking Passes

Discussed results dues increase vote/survey - 33 responses

Ideas for promoting value of membership

Communication methods discussed - alternatives to messenger, preference to use e-mail

Covered ideas for meeting programs that can be done virtually

Motion to spend up to \$500 for the design of a new logo

Motioned seconded and passed

Motion to give the President discretionary spending authority of \$300 a quarter

Motion seconded and passed

Motion to make [Name withheld] a lifetime member

Motion seconded and passed

Adjournment

Club Member made a motion to adjourn the meeting on 8/4/2020 @ 9:30 P.M. and it was seconded by Club Member. The motion was carried

Walt Hummel

8/10/2020

Secretary

Eddy Lines of Interest

BWA General Meeting Minutes

8/11/2020

Call to Order

A virtual meeting of Bluegrass Wildwater Association was held. Meeting called to order 7:40 PM. Steering Committee Members in Attendance

Name	Office	Present	
Sandra Broadus	President	Y	
Emily Grimes	Vice President		
Walt Hummel	Secretary	Y	
Kyle Koeberlein	Treasurer		
Don Spangler	Newsletter Editor		
Bob Larkin	River Conservation Liaison	Y	
Dave Foreman	Safety Officer	Y	
Clay Warren	Program Director	Y	
Regina Hatfield	Film Festival Coordinator	Y	
Michael Williams	Web Meister	Y	
Jansen Koeberlein	Gear Meister		
Gus Milton	Member At Large		
William Samples	Membership Coordinator		
Robert Watts	Past President	Y	

Officer Reports

President:

Budget - current funds on-hand \$5,500, Fixed annual expenses \$2,500

Budget will be posted on website as part of website redesign

Posted COVID statement

Voting still open to raise membership dues next year

New website in development, there will be a page for the budget

Steering Committee approved the following motions:

\$250 for printing parking passes

Give President discretionary authority to spend up to \$300 per quarter

Spend up to \$500 for design of new logo - working with Cricket press

New Business

A motion was made to require all grant proposals for BWA sponsored events be brought before the Steering Committee prior to submission for approval detailing the amount of the grant request, what the funds will be used for, and who we are requesting the grant from. Following the event the event organizer must provide a detailed accounting of how the funds were used.

Motioned seconded and passed

Trip Reports

Adjournment

Club Member made a motion to adjourn the meeting on 8/11/2020 @ 8:30 P.M. and it was seconded by Club Member. The motion was carried.

Walt Hummel

8/11/2020

Secretary