

BOWLINES

Award Winning Newsletter of The Bluegrass Wildwater Association since 1976. Nov/Dec 2021

In our own words.....

In this Issue:

NPFF 2022

Preview of Old Bowlines 1991-1995 to be added to BWA website

Your Bowlines newsletter is a great record of all our paddling adventures & memories

Share some with us! Send your story & any photos to Bowlines Editor: donspang@aol.com

In this Issue are previews of Bowlines from 1991 to 1995 to be newly added to the BWA Website that has Bowlines issues from 1996 to present

2022 National Paddling Film Festival
February 19, 2022 | Lexington, KY | Asheville, NC | Online

BLUEGRASS WILDWATER ASSOC. PRESENTS

Hybrid

**NATIONAL PADDLING
FILM FESTIVAL 2022**

Feb. 19, 2022 | 4:00 PM to 10:00 PM EST

LEXINGTON, KY | ASHEVILLE, NC | ONLINE

Looking Ahead

Second Tuesday of the Month, 7:30 pm

BWA Monthly Meeting

For more information on

Club Meetings & Activities

always check the online Calendar.

<https://www.bluegrasswildwater.org/events>

BWA web site:

<https://www.bluegrasswildwater.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 the nineties!

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

Club Officers 2020-2021

President	Sandra Broadus	859-983-4475
Vice-President	Ben Mudd	859-230-4763
Treasurer	Kyle Koeberlein	502-370-1289
Secretary	Robert Watts	859-554-8489
Safety	Dave Forman	859-550-9040
Bowlines Newsletter Program	Don Spangler	859-277-7314
Cyber Communications	Floyd Miracle	
Conservation	Michael Williams	859-893-0114
Film Festival Coordinator	Angus Milto	
Equipment Coordinator	Emily Grimes	859-797-6988
At-Large Member	Jansen Koeberlein	270-703-0352
Membership Coordinator	Damon Rosenbarker	
	Terri Covington Brunjes	

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...

National Paddling Film Festival 2022

February 19, 2022

goes **HYBRID** this year!

<https://www.npff.org>

For nearly four decades, the National Paddling Film Festival and the volunteers of the Bluegrass Wildwater Association have hosted an annual competition to determine the best in paddlesport film and still image. From the start, we've had one simple mission: donate as much money as possible to support American Whitewater and other river conservation efforts. Since 1983, our volunteers have raised over \$180,000 for organizations dedicated to river conservation and access.

This year, our festival is moving to a *hybrid* format! Our in-person event will take place on Feb. 19, 2022 4 - 10pm EST at the Historic Lyric Theatre* in downtown Lexington, KY. We will also be streaming live to folks who would like to tune in at home, and the West Asheville Canoe & Kayak Organization is hosting a Simulcast at the Wedge on Foundation in Asheville, NC.

**Attendees of the 2022 National Paddling Film Festival got options y'all!
Folks can opt to tune in solely online, or they can join a live event in-person!**



Buy your Tickets Now & More Info: <https://www.npff.org/2022>

In-Person Tickets (Lexington)

This ticket type also allows folks to view all 2022 submissions on demand from February 6 - February 26, 2022. In addition, this ticket grants purchasers entry into our live event taking place on Saturday, February 19, 2022 from 4-10pm EST in downtown Lexington, KY at the historic Lyric Theatre. The in-person event at the Lyric will feature our famous chili cook-off, a chance to view items in the online silent auction, vendor booths, theatre style viewing of films & guest speakers, and last but certainly not least ...frothy beverages!

Online Only

This ticket type allows folks to view all 2022 submissions on demand from February 6 - February 26, 2022. This ticket also gives purchasers a link to watch the livestream of our in-person event, happening on Saturday, February 19, 2022, and! They won't skip a beat with our first ever online silent auction, powered by American Whitewater! However, this ticket-type is BYOB & MYOC (make your own chili).

In-Person Satellite Event (Asheville)

This ticket type grants purchasers entry to the live satellite event taking place on Saturday, February 19, 2022 from 4-9pm EST in Asheville, NC at The Wedge on Foundation in the River Arts District. This event is hosted by the West Asheville Canoe & Kayak Organization (AKA the WACKOs) and features a guest speaker and vendor booths!

We will once again offer the option for some ticketholders to watch all film submissions for two weeks surrounding the live event, and we are excited to announce we will be collaborating with American Whitewater to launch our first ever online Silent Auction!**

NPFF Needs you to Volunteer to help at the Festival
[Click Here](#)

Please note:

*The Lyric Theatre in Lexington, KY is currently under a mask mandate under the direct order of the mayor for all government owned buildings. This directive requires masks on at all times (while not actively eating/drinking) while in the building, regardless of vaccination status. Please plan to wear a face mask that covers your nose & mouth at our event in Lexington. If you do not have a face mask, one will be provided for you and you will be asked to wear it over your nose & mouth.

**Please note, folks who buy a ticket to the Asheville simulcast event will not have access to view all 2022 submissions on-demand, this must be purchased separately via the "online only" ticket type which will be discounted after 2/19/22.

On-Demand Watch Portal: Open from Feb. 6 - 26, 2022. Available to anyone who purchases tickets for Lexington or Online-Only options (prices below).

Online Auction: Open from Feb. 14 - 20, 2022. Available to the public.

Main Event (February 19, 2022):

Lexington, KY (\$25): This ticket grants entry into our live event taking place on Saturday, February 19, 2022 from 4-10pm EST in downtown Lexington, KY at the historic Lyric Theatre. The in-person event at the Lyric will feature theatre style viewing of films & guest speaker presentations, our famous chili cook-off, a chance to view items in the online auction, vendor booths, and last but certainly not least ...frothy beverages! Plus, this ticket type grants access to the on-demand watch portal.

Online-Only (\$20): This ticket type grants access to the on-demand watch portal from February 6 - February 26, 2022. This ticket also gives purchasers a link to watch the livestream of our in-person event, happening on Saturday, February 19, 2022, and! Folks won't skip a beat with our first ever online silent auction, powered by American Whitewater. However, this ticket-type is BYOB & MYOC (make your own chili).

Asheville, NC (\$10): This ticket type grants entry to the live satellite event taking place on Saturday, February 19, 2022 from 4-9pm EST in Asheville, NC at The Wedge on Foundation in the River Arts District. This in-person event is hosted by the West Asheville Canoe & Kayak Organization (AKA the WACKOs) and features a guest speaker and vendor booths!

Tickets can be purchased at npff.org/tix



SIGN UP FOR CHILI COOK OFF! :

NPFF 2022 Guest Hosts



Todd Wells

Todd Wells is a proud Pacific Northwest local with an obsession for exploratory whitewater kayaking. When Todd's not at home paddling the Little White or White Salmon rivers (his backyard favorites), you're likely to find him pioneering un-run rivers in Alaska, paddling classic Patagonian big water, or off on a wild adventure somewhere in-between.

A National Geographic Young Explorer, Todd has written for Kayak Session, Bomb Flow, Canoe & Kayak, National Geographic Explorer and NRS's Duct Tape Diaries. Over the years, Todd has been involved with several video production companies like Mountain Mind Media, and Love Boat Creative. He has

produced films like Zamora & For the Love. His videos have been featured through Red Bull Media House, National Geographic, and Outside TV.

We are pleased as punch to welcome Todd to the Bluegrass this year! He'll be joining us in Lexington on Feb. 19 to share the stoke about his adventures and drop some knowledge about how he does it through film & still image!



Evan Stafford

In addition to our guest host, Todd Wells, the NPFF will also be welcoming Evan Stafford to our stage! Evan is the Communications Director for American Whitewater and will be joining the NPFF in Lexington, KY on Feb. 19th to chat about the new safety video series AW just produced in conjunction with Mountain Mind Media and the US Coast Guard. You can find the first two safety videos in the series competing in our Professional Safety Category this year, and folks who purchase a ticket with the on-demand option will be able to watch them online for 2 weeks! Tickets to our event can be found at npff.org/tix

Evan has been attracted to the water and rivers from a very early age, and found himself at home

on moving water with a paddle in his hands. His passion for whitewater led him across the Rocky Mountains, country, and eventually the world, exploring rivers with a childlike zeal.

In 2006, Evan co-wrote the guidebook *Whitewater of the Southern Rockies*, while at the same time earning a masters of science degree from Colorado State University in the Human Dimensions of Natural Resources. In 2008, Evan began to put his education to work for American Whitewater, implementing recreational in-stream flow studies across Colorado and working alongside Colorado Stewardship Director Nathan Fey to install the results as in-stream flow targets for river managers, protecting whitewater recreation across the State. In 2016, Evan took a part-time staff role, working on building American Whitewater's outreach and communications program and in 2018, joined the staff full-time as the organization's Communications Director.

Evan lives in Fort Collins, and can probably be found most easily paddling, climbing, splitboarding, or mountain biking in the Cache la Poudre Canyon, or as the locals like to say, "up the Poudre."

More of the earlier issues of Bowlines are coming to the BWA website soon!

Here are previews of Bowlines from 1991 to 1995 to be newly added to the BWA Website to join with the Bowlines issues from 1996 to present. (With more to be added in the future)

FEBRUARY 1992
Vol. 15 No. 7

BOW LINES

Newsletter of the Bluegrass Wildwater Association.
P.O. Box 4231
Lexington, KY. 40504

Film Festival Excitement Building!

Less than three weeks remain before the Ninth Annual Paddling Film Festival to be held on the weekend of February 22 & 23. Response has been very strong, as evidenced by the number and quality of entries received to date. This will be an event that no self-respecting paddler can afford to miss! Along with the excellent viewing opportunities come the prizes, raffle, silent auction, awards ceremony, general socializing and PARTY. As always, all proceeds will be donated to deserving conservation organizations such as AWA and American Rivers to assist in the effort to preserve our cherished river resources.

Thanks to the significant efforts of the numerous film festival committee volunteers, all the moving pieces are being put into place and offer to make this the best festival yet. Rumor has it that this year's boats will include the Perception Pirouette and the Dagger Freefall. The party has been moved to a new (better) location thanks to PartyMeister "M.C. Hammered". The projection equipment to be used this year is said to be a quantum improvement, thanks to B6.

As the festival approaches, please keep in mind that BWA volunteers will be needed to help with the various tasks and logistics before, during, and after the festival. If you have some



Bailey Johnson of Lenoir City, Tennessee doing an ender in an open boat at "Slam Dunk" on the Upper Ocoee. (From the "Louie, G.D.I. Collection")

lodging space available for judges, get with Sockeye to see if it is needed. David "Eddie P. Tato" Earle needs shift volunteers for the front desk, and Spanky will need some help before lunch to get all the meals upstairs. Although we have lost the use of the small classroom for concessions, Mr. Party is working on the scope of offerings and may need some assistance during the actual festival. Concessions and Film Festival Huggle sales will probably be set up in the hallway. For any further information on the above or any Festival business, contact me at 263-4430 or Barry Grimes (film coordinator) at 745-4940.

P.S.—The film coordinator has advised that there are some real mind-blower videos this year - something about waterfalls and caves

and ? ? ? Remaining space is nearly gone, so hurry! See you at the festival!

Mike Molnar, Film Festival Coordinator

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Roll Sessions Every Friday Night!

OCTOBER 1992
Vol. 16 No. 3

Newsletter
of the
Bluegrass
Wildwater
Association.

P.O. Box 4231
Lexington, KY. 40504

BOW LINES

10th ANNUAL

National Paddling Film Festival

February 27, 1993 • 9 AM
Lexington, Kentucky

(UK Health Science Learning Center • Rose St.)

- Amateur & Professional
- Racing
- Humor
- Club
- Hair Boating
- Conservation
- Recreational / Scenic
- Safety / Instructional
- All Proceeds Go To River Conservation

For More Information:

Bluegrass Wildwater Association

P.O. Box 4231 • Lexington, KY 40504

(606) 623-9067 or 277-2172

Woody Calloway on "Gorilla"
Photo by Mike Clark
Computer Enhancements
by Crystal Graphics

10th Annual National Paddling Film Festival

Admit it - as a paddler you love to watch other paddlers "eat it"! Imagine if you will - you just made a successful run on some "famous" Class IV rapids - now comes the real fun.

You drag your boat ashore, find yourself a comfortable perch on a flat rock with a front row view and watch the fun.....

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**NOVEMBER
TO BEGIN IN
SESSIONS
ROLL**



“Don’t be left at home this Spring! Do your paddling friends a favor and learn to roll this Winter!”

Our annual Pool Sessions will be held every Friday from 7 to 9 pm starting on November 20th. They will be held at the YWCA on Cross Keys Road here in Lexington. The cost is just \$5 per night or \$30 for the entire season. Some equipment is available at the pool.

**10th Annual
NATIONAL PADDLING
FILM FESTIVAL**

(Continued from page 1)

Rafters, livery boats, tubers, rubber duckies, novice boaters and of course the ever present “Rock Lizards” are sure to provide the afternoon’s entertainment. For the uninitiated, a “Rock Lizard” is paddledoms scantily clad version of the snow bunny or sand stud who seem to live on certain sun drenched rocks around the more popular and accessible rapids. These elusive river nymphs and gnomes are suspected of possessing some sort of black magic since they have been known to cause even the best of boaters to flip unexpectedly (just ask Mike Clark)! They also

It’s hard to believe, but here we are preparing to host the TENTH Annual National Paddling Film Festival — and it’s going to be a good one! On the weekend of February 27th, 1993, some of the best amateur and professional photographers and videographers in the country will make their annual pilgrimage to Lexington as the BWA hosts the 10th running of this nationally acclaimed film festival. There will be some of the most hair-raising, funniest, and downright amazing moments on river celluloid that you have ever seen, reviewed by a panel of respected judges from the paddling and media communities. Judged in one of several different categories, past winners have included local club productions as well as more professional pieces

There will be raffles and silent auctions of lots of river gear and some vendors will be around to show off some of the hottest new boats and equipment around. And of course our traditional paddler’s party on Saturday. This year, we may even have a few surprises in store. All profits are donated to nationally recognized river conservation groups

So don’t be a Winter “Couch Lizard”! Come join us as a competitor, a spectator or both! If you need more information, please write or call one of the numbers in the ad on the front page, or contact contact one of the club officers on the back of this newsletter.



BOW LINES

Costa Rica Paddling In The Not So Dry Season

It all began last fall when Randi suggested that it was about time to get out of the United States again and head for the tropics. With her school schedule it looked like we would maybe be able to squeeze out 10 or 11 days during her spring break. Therefore, we decided upon Costa Rica because of its' easy accessibility, — leave Lexington at 1:30 p.m. and be in San Jose by 8:30 p.m. that day. We booked flights about four months in advance.

Subsequently, numerous members of the local paddling community expressed astonishment: "Isn't that the dry season?" My reply was always that the Reventazon had daily

releases that made exceptionally fine paddling of practically every range of difficulty. However, we expected everything else to be fairly low or dry. Furthermore, we had another motive which was simply to get out of the country, sight-see, hang out at the beach and work on our Spanish. Randi and I compromised our positions of two and four days paddling (respectively) to three days. The rest of the time was for the volcanos, the beaches and the wildlife.

We arrived in San Jose on Thursday evening and took a bus from the airport to the downtown district where we found our \$8.50 per night Hotel Ticalinda. We went to sleep

that night listening to the mariachi band next door and woke up the next morning to check out the bus schedule to Turrialba. The two hour bus trip cost us a total of \$2.00 and we were in Turrialba by 1:30 looking for our friend, Phil Coleman, who resides there in the winter. We left our backpacks and paddling gear with the barber on the corner down from his apartment, and got familiar with the town. We finally caught up with Phil after he got off the river later that afternoon.

Over dinner that evening at the Soda Brujaba, Phil tells us that he is taking two women, one from Germany and the other from the States, down the Peralta section of the Reventazon the next day. Because of the dry season and the lack of rain over the past 4 weeks, he said that the normally Class V section was releasing about 1200 to 1500 cfs and therefore it would be Class IV.

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Uwe Wachkamp on Jungle Run Rapid (Reventazon)

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BOWLINES

When we got to the big rapids on the river, Upper and Lower Huacas (pronounced "Wakus"), I was told by Phil to stay as far left as possible. Upper was not bad on that side and was a bit washed out. The right side was, however, improbable. I ran left. The Lower was class V, anywhere you ran it. Normally, there is a channel between a large boulder and the left cliff and a hole to punch in between. On this day, the boulder was a large and lethal pour over and the hole was HUGE. Having no choice but to punch the left and better side of the hole, I came upon the top of the next wave only to see that I had to punch another hole, only to crest and punch another and then another. I paddled my butt off and was glad to have muscled through it. There is no way to carry that rapid. On the right side were holes of monstrous Class VI proportions. Fortunately, everyone on the trip did fine through this rapid.

At this point, the raft had only lost one customer, a man whom Randi grabbed and pulled in the boat before he got totally away from the craft. But the problems were about to begin. At a rapid called Cimerones one of the raft customers had fallen out and was getting ready to get recirculated into a big hole. I jumped into the hole to assist, got thoroughly thrashed, rolled up only to see part of my wooden paddle blade floating ahead. I didn't hit a single rock - the power in the hole was just that great. Fortunately, we were 3/4 of the way finished and only two significant rapids ahead: Tres Equis and Dos Montanas. Still it was a hassel and the water was big and pushy.

Then, the raft flipped when it surfed a hole in some obscure rapid. Everyone except two took a long swim down fast current over rocky shoals. It hurt me to watch. Randi was sure she would get bruises on her behind (but she didn't - I checked!). I could do little for anyone with one blade so I just got to the end of the rapid the best I could. When we got to Dos Montanas, I tried limping down the left side and avoiding the holes the water wanted to push one towards. The raft was not so fortunate. It almost made it through a big hole. The key word is "almost". I watched it slide backwards, get on a big high side that lasted for about 3 slow seconds and then flip. The flip was actually more of a slam dunk. Everyone swimming, the other kayakers in hot pursuit, I could only watch from my pitiful circumstances. Everyone floated through the

bizarre narrow canyon that is the sight of a proposed dam still threatening to forever drown this beautiful river.

We designated the rafters as the "Pacuare Swim Team" for the valient dousings they took most of the day. Phil and I joked with Randi about the advantages of hardboats. Phil and Randi joked with me about the advantages of two blades. The raft customers, one of which was considerably shaken and ashen looking, seemed certain to never take a raft trip again. We, on the otherhand were certain that we had a great time and could not wait to paddle again.

The next day, Tuesday March 16, promised continued high water. Randi was sick of the rain, sick of paddling and sick of me because that's all I wanted to do. She really wanted to go the beach, get some sun and relax for her vacation. Monday night the Germans told us they wanted to do the Peralta section and Phil thought it would be a great ride if it was not too high. Fortunately, the rain let up about 11:00 p.m. and by the next morning it looked like a run was possible. We agreed to meet the Germans at noon. Randi decided that she and a friend (the American on the first raft trip), were going to the Indian ruins instead. She definitely did not want to paddle the Peralta section at high water with a bunch of macho yeehaws.

At the put-in the river was noticeably higher. That morning the gage approximated 1.8 meters and by put-on time, but before the release, the gage was down to 1.65 meters. That translates to a pre-release flow of about 3500 cfs. Downstream with the other flows coming in, it would pick up to about 5000 to 6000 cfs, by Phil's estimate. Everything on the river was different, bigger, harder and just plain freaky. There were five of us in all. The Germans were all good paddlers, but when it came to the big rapids, even they preferred to let Phil run them first. Phil is an exceptional boater and has total control out there. I was impressed.

Without going into detail ad naseum, let me simply say that the thirty some-odd class IVs were now all class Vs. Jungle Run was a sneak by all of us. El Horrendo was even more HUGE than before. The surfing waves were unbelievable. There was so much play on the river that I cannot even begin to describe it. Oh, if only I had river like that fifteen minutes from my house. No wonder Phil Coleman has

been coming there since and 1980 and has made it his winter home when he is not running his raft business, Precision Rafting, in West Virginia.

The next morning, we took the bus to San Jose, rented a car and drove to the beach on the Nicoya Peninsula to Montezuma. There we got sun, checked out the water falls on the beach, saw lots of monkeys, and enjoyed the local scene. What a great way to end a trip paddling in Costa Rica. Imagine sitting on an open deck of a restaurant with a great meal of shrimp and pasta, more than you can eat for about \$3.00, the sun is setting, the colors of the sky are changing from oranges, to blues, you can see the southern cross coming into focus over the horizon, a good bottle of guaro is on the table and your best friend in the world is sitting right beside you. That was the way my trip ended. I love Costa Rica!

Brent Austin

Classifieds

Kayak, Float Bags, Spray Shirt, Travel Cover, Blue Dancer.

Call Cathy Currier.

623-0852 or 623-6010

Noah "AQ" Aeroquatic

kayak - Structurally sound. Proven performer for Class II & up. Best ender boat ever made! Easy roller.

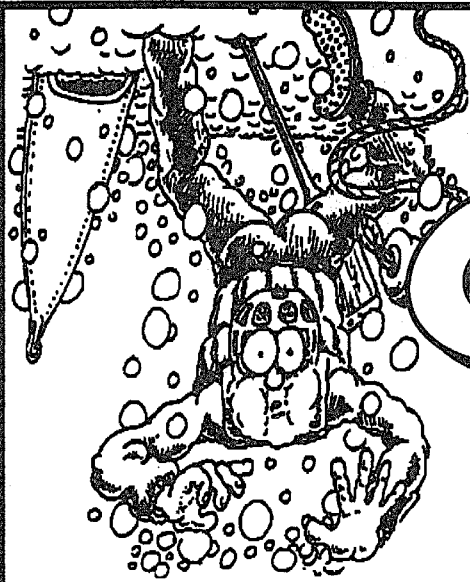
Call Rich Lewis at 502-473-3287(w).

Throw Bags (2) - 65' orange 3/8" polypropylene rope - \$12. 65' yellow 7/16" heavy duty polypropylene rope - \$20.

Call Rich Lewis at 502-473-3287 (w).

LOST!!! — Extrasport PFD, blue, medium. Last seen at pool sessions on 2/19/93. Reward. Please return to

David Earle at 268-0791.



SPRING CLINIC

1.9.9.3

FROZEN HEAD STATE PARK WARTBURG, TENNESSEE APRIL 23, 24, & 25

Beginner & Intermediate (Kayak & Canoe)
Children 6-12 (Kayaks Only)

- 2 days of on river instruction
- 2 nights of camping
- 2 Breakfast / 1 Dinner
- Entertainment

*For more information,
call Mike Weeks at
278-0864 or 263-5877.*



AUGUST 1991
Vol. 15 No. 2

Newsletter
of the
Bluegrass
Wildwater
Association.

P.O. Box 4231
Lexington, KY. 40504

BOW LINES

As we headed south on I-75, "Mr. Danger" claimed that he had just seen three planets in alignment in the western sky. Now I had heard these kinds of stories from Mike Weeks before, (the "cat story", "skunk ape", and tales from his high school reunion to name a few), so I was understandably skeptical. Did this strange occurrence hold some deep astrological significance for the weekend ahead?

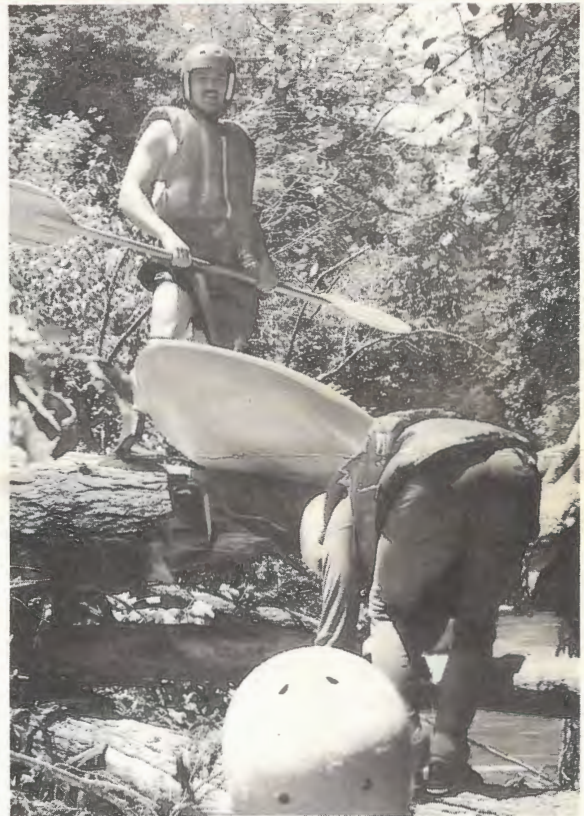
It had started the night before when Mike Clark called to report that the Weather Channel was showing a huge storm sitting right on top of Laurel County for the second time that week. We had no way of knowing water levels, but the prospects looked good enough to take a chance. After all, Cane Creek had never been run before and initial scouting reports indicated that this could be one of the best creek runs in the state. Mike Weeks and I would head down that night and Mike Clark and Don Copeland would meet us in the morning.

When we got to Laurel county, we discovered that the "storms" that had come through twice that week were actually tornados that had ripped up that part of the Daniel Boone National Forest. Any attempt to get to the put-in would be futile, blocked by the hundreds of trees that had been ripped out by their roots. We socialized with one of the locals that had tried to negotiate a particularly bothersome oak and found himself waiting for a wrecker to come from forty miles away. We talked of metaphysics and other subjects well into the night, as we pondered an alternate way to get to the river.

We knew the water was low when we got to the bottom of the 4 wheel drive goat trail with our compadres the next morning, but we decided to go for it anyway. Weeks summed it up nicely — "It beats mowing grass"! Low water can be an asset when running a steep creek for the first time. Even if you have to carry around a few places, the water won't push you around at times when you might have to make snap decisions. A couple of strokes into the first bend in the creek and we realized that the low water was going to be the least of our problems. **TREES, TREES**, and more **TREES**. I've heard of creeks up in the trees before, but this was ridiculous. They were down everywhere! We were shocked that the storms had done so much damage in the bottom of such a deep gorge. The tornados must have come right up the streambed from its junction with the Rockcastle.

As you can tell from the accompanying picture, we spent the better part of the day scraping down the creek and carrying around, under and over trees. The scenery was just spectacular, the best that I have paddled in Kentucky. Numerous times we paddled under waterfalls dropping right into the river. The whitewater was pretty much a dud for the first couple of miles until crossing the Sheltoee Trace trail. From here down would have been a wonderful class III+ run without the trees. The gradient in the last section felt like about 50 ft./mile — half of what we were expecting.

With sufficient water to make it a good run, this section of creek has become a real death trap. Without a crew of lumberjacks clearing the way, this creek will remain unrunnable for **MANY** years to come. Its a shame though... nice creek. — ED



Mike Clark on Cane Creek — "Up In The Trees"

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A DEATH ON THE RUSSELL FORK

Brent Austin

The Russell Fork is a favored playground for many paddlers in the Bluegrass White Water Association during the fall releases after the Gauley season has ended. Everyone knows this river is dangerous and contains numerous undercuts and strainers. The river has taken several lives, most recently rafters who have had the misfortune of swimming in the area above Maze which contains an exceptionally dangerous undercut. But until recently, the river has not taken the lives of any fellow kayakers that I was aware of. But it was just a matter of time.

On April 23, 1995, Michael Munn was paddling the river with several other boaters at 410 c.f.s. Mike was a competent paddler who had been on the Russell Fork numerous times before and paddled other streams like

of risk or concern. Fist is another matter. Fist has a 30-50 yard approach at the normal fall releases of 800 c.f.s., which requires running to the left of a rooster tail but to the right of a huge boulder that is entirely undercut. Several years ago, a woman on a commercial raft trip went underneath the boulder and was later found in a cave in the back after some people had heard her cries for help.

During the fall of 1994, there were at least two significant incidents at Fist involving kayakers. A woman from Raleigh, North Carolina became partially trapped in her boat underneath the undercut boulder for approximately ten minutes requiring Chris Hipgrave to be lowered down in a harness, consider breaking her legs, but did not and was eventually able to evacuate her out of there. Several

catching the eddy and ran it straight through instead. As a result, he was unable to maneuver the craft sufficient to avoid getting washed into the area where most of the water is flowing; right underneath the undercut boulder. As a result, he got washed into the crack in the corner of the undercut boulder where he was initially stable and leaning into the rock. During the course of this, another paddler threw Mike a rope. When he reached to grab the rope, the flow caught the edge of his boat and he flipped under the rock. Some fifteen to twenty minutes later, Mike's boat, paddle and then he washed out the back side. Attempts to resuscitate him failed.

Mike was aware of the cavity under the boulder and may have even been trying to look for it. It's possible that some logs and strainers have washed up underneath over the winter and spring and he got tangled up in that. We don't really know for sure at this point. All we do know is that Mike was an experienced paddler, was very familiar with the Russell Fork, and made a wrong move at the wrong time.

Everyone in the boating community is saddened by this loss to our ranks. Mike was forty-five-years-old and had a good number of friends that he paddled with regularly. We share a great loss with his family and friends.

Please take this river seriously. While many of us feel we can paddle this stream blindfolded, Mike's death is a reminder of the serious nature of the run. I have always thought that Fist was one of the most dangerous spots on the river for decked boats. With two near misses last fall and now this, it serves as a reminder to many of us that bring new people down the stream to take special care around this dangerous spot. Please be safe when running this river and enjoy!

It is well known among frequent paddlers of the Russell Fork that Fist is an exceptionally dangerous spot for kayakers.

the Wautaga and Upper Yough. He was no beginner. According to James Stapleton of Elkhorn City, Mike had paddled the river with him the week before and was knowledgeable about the river at many different water levels. James last saw Mike that prior week at Fist rapid.

It is well known among frequent paddlers of the Russell Fork that Fist is an exceptionally dangerous spot for kayakers. While Maze has proved lethal for rafters, kayakers comfortably ferry above the undercut at Maze in class II water without a great deal

weeks later, I personally witnessed Barry Grimes, an expert boater, disappear under the same undercut boulder for approximately a minute-and-a-half before he washed out the back side to safety. It was a terrifying moment for me and even more so for Barry.

Michael Munn knew that at the levels of 400-500 c.f.s., running Fist typically requires catching an eddy on the left upstream of the undercut. From there, peeling out in a left to right angled motion, one typically avoids the risk of the undercut. Apparently, Mike decided to forego