

boatman's quarterly review

Bruce Helin

Prez Blurb • Farewell • New Books • LTEMP • Home • Back of the Boat
The Blues • Fall Rendezvous • Trout Reduction • Lynn's Award
Global Guide • Emery Runs Crystal • Beetle Update • Tales • Note in a Bottle

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...is published more or less quarterly
by and for GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES.

GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES
is a nonprofit organization dedicated to

*Protecting Grand Canyon
Setting the highest standards for the river profession
Celebrating the unique spirit of the river community
Providing the best possible river experience*

General Meetings are held each Spring and Fall. Our Board of Directors Meetings are generally held the first wednesday of each month. All innocent bystanders are urged to attend. Call for details.

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Our editorial policy, such as it is: provide an open forum. We need articles, poetry, stories, drawings, photos, opinions, suggestions, gripes, comics, etc. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.

Written submissions should be less than 1500 words and, if possible, be sent on a CD or emailed to GCRG. Microsoft Word files are best but we can translate most programs. Include postpaid return envelope if you want your disk or submission returned.

Deadlines for submissions are the 1ST of February, May, August and November. Thanks!
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River People

River people are a tight passionate breed
Knowing the difference between wants and needs

Living hard, living fast on the river's side
They understand the ebb and flow of life's tide

They have accepting minds and wanderlust hearts
Living each day, their own way sets them apart

Rowing mile after mile through the wind and rain
Breaking their bodies down, but the hearts remain

Going weeks on end with just a river bath
Swearing like a pirate to bring out a laugh

With painted toes, callous hands, and sun-tanned back
Drinking whiskey all night and cheap thirty packs

We live and love each other in place and time
Sometimes you win- or just lose your place in line!

The old ones are the best for' they've done their
time
They have wild-eyed grins and wrinkled laugh lines

A lifetime they have spent living with water
A world of wonder they have to offer

If our Generation could be so wise
Yes it is the river, but it's all about-
The Ride

—Stephen Kenney

Cover

1967 - Young Bruce rowing some early passengers,
down around Carbon Canyon. Ed Gooch in front.

photo: Ron & Eleanor Helin

Prez Blurp

YÁ'AT'ÉEH, HAPPY FALL SEASON TO ALL! For those of you who do not know me, I am Nikki Cooley of the Diné (Navajo) Nation, and of the Towering House Clan, born for the Reed People Clan. Being on the board of directors since 2008 as board member, then vice-president, and now as president has been, to say the least, an ongoing learning experience. I am not ashamed to admit that prior to being nominated and elected by my peers that I didn't know the whole story of GCRG, and just how much Lynn Hamilton does. I bet the hole in Crystal that most up and coming and even seasoned guides do not know the whole story of how GCRG originated or what exactly GCRG does on behalf of the commercial river community and the river and canyon. (I've heard 10-plus year guides admit this... and they were sober.)

As the 2011 year draws to an end, the off-season is the time to catch up on "your other life" and tie up loose ends, including visiting family and friends, or finding that other winter job. It is also a great time to catch up on your current events as related to your "job" and "home", the Grand Canyon and Colorado River. There are a lot of things happening throughout the river season and it's especially important not to lose sight of those issues during the off season when you actually have time to read, ask questions, learn and take action.

For example, an ongoing issue is the uranium mining near the Grand Canyon. Anti-uranium advocates scored a *huge* victory when the final environmental impact statement (EIS) identified the preferred alternative that would withdraw approximately a million acres around our treasured Grand Canyon from mining, subject to lawful existing mining rights. Over 300,000 comments, including GCRG's, were submitted from the public. Although the BLM is not accepting comments on the final EIS, GCRG will be urging the Secretary of Interior, Ken Salazar, to move forward on the preferred alternative to protect the Grand Canyon and its precious resources. I urge you to do the same and submit your comments as soon as possible.

Another issue that is high on my list to be aware of is the Navajo Nation's recent push to get the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to approve their request to begin running air tours over and into the Little Colorado River corridor. The Navajo Nation wants the same exemption the Hualapai tribe received back in 2000 when the FAA exempted the tribe from National Park Service's overflight restrictions because of the economic hardship the tribe incurs. Currently, reports

state the Navajo Nation's unemployment rate is almost fifty percent, which is the main motivation for the Navajo Nation tribal council's approval of a resolution to request to the United States government and FAA to approve exemption from overflights restrictions.

In the past, when this issue has come up along with one-day jet boat trips proposed by a Navajo businessman and the Navajo Nation, I publicly made my opposition against these proposals known. Why do I oppose these potential job creating opportunities knowing that my people, the Navajo Nation, are in dire need of employment opportunities on the reservation? I've worked as a river guide for over a decade, but first and foremost I am an advocate for the sanctity of the environment, my Navajo culture and people. I believe that we, the Navajo, need economic opportunities but there are more sustainable and less invasive ways, even on large and small scales that respect the people and environment. In addition to contemporary issues related to the canyon and river, tribal issues are just as important, because as we all know or should know, there are eleven affiliated tribes who often voice their concern for the well-being of this amazing place.

Like it or not, the Grand Canyon and Colorado River is bordered by Navajo Nation, and these types of issues will continue to arise. Thus, it is so important for all of you, river guides, and those who care of about the canyon and river to keep abreast of these issues, know the facts, so you can share these with your passengers and fellow guides. The media often misconstrues stories to make them more readable or profitable so it is important you read, ask, hear and learn.

Having said that, this is also where *Boatman's Quarterly Review* comes in, because you get articles straight from the sources, and as members you are welcome to send in your questions, concerns and opinions to GCRG. The BQR is a literary gathering place for all who care for how the Grand Canyon and Colorado River are managed, and the issues that affect them. If you are not a member yet or haven't renewed your membership, please do so today. Your membership and donations support GCRG when we weigh in on issues whenever a resource is threatened.

Ahéhee'!

Nikki Cooley, DINÉ

Farewell

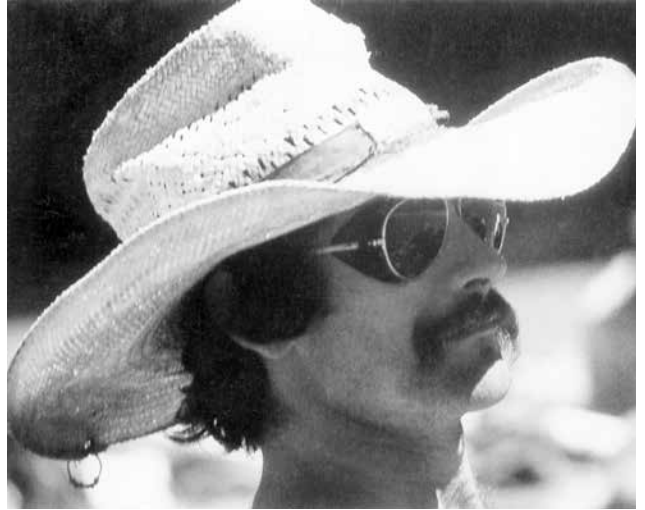
FLOYD STEVENS, JANUARY 13, 1949–MARCH 29, 2010

On March 29, 2010, we lost a very special person—Floyd Calvin Stevens. For reasons that can only be left to speculation, Floyd took his own life and “left for a long horse ride,” as his family so lovingly put it. He may have faced demons, but Floyd, at 6-foot, 4-inches tall, will always be remembered as someone larger than life, both literally and figuratively. He made a lasting impression on all he came in contact with. In a word, he was magnificent.

Floyd Stevens’ journey to the Colorado River was a serendipitous one. He was born on January 13, 1949, growing up in a big family on a dairy farm in Coalville, Utah. Tragedy struck early in his life when a close high school friend was killed in an auto accident. Distraught, Floyd decided to enlist in the Army in 1969 and volunteered to go to Vietnam, but ended up spending two years in Korea. He didn’t talk much about his time there, but always said that it was the worst experience of his life. After his discharge, he returned to Utah and spent a year hanging rebar in the Park City Silver mine, but concluded that this was no way to live. Fortuitously during that time, he met Chris Hogan, who told him about the cool job he had running rivers, and how he thought Floyd would be perfect for the job. Hogan talked him into going to San Diego for a while, where Hogan bartended and Floyd waited tables. The pull of home was strong, however, so when Hogan headed for the Grand Canyon, Floyd went back to Utah. But Hogan would not relent and kept talking up rivers to Floyd, and in 1972 or so, he finally pried Floyd out of Utah by connecting him with George Wendt. Floyd was flat broke when he began working for OARS in California, and then for Wilderness World (WiWo). Somewhere along the way, the Utah cowboy turned into a long-haired hippie living in a tepee by the Stanislaus River. A couple of years working for Wilderness World in Idaho came next, interspersed with a couple of Grand Canyon private trips with Hogan. The Canyon had sung its siren song, and finally Floyd landed a spot on the WiWo Grand Canyon crew in 1975.

Floyd was a commanding presence. He was the strong, silent type—kind of like Gary Cooper. He was a private person and a man of few words, but every word he uttered carried a ton of weight. One time when scouting Hance, Gary Casey wanted to do a hairball right run and told Floyd his intentions. There was a long pause, and Floyd’s cryptic comment was

“Might wanna rethink that.” Gary did the run anyway, making it right side up, but getting thrashed at the bottom. Later in camp, Floyd sidled up to him when no one else was around and said, “You got lucky today”



Floyd Stevens in 1978. Photo by Susan Bassett.

and walked away. Nothing else was ever said, but the message was loud and clear.

Floyd had a wonderfully dry sense of humor. He could say the most ridiculous things with such a straight face, that you were never quite sure if he was kidding or not. The cowboy part of him never left, and he often brought his rope with him on trips. Some of the other crew members started bringing ropes too, and there would often be a whole lot of bailing buckets getting lassoed in camp. One afternoon we shaded up at Three Springs, waiting for it to cool down before heading to camp, watching the burros on the other side of the river. Floyd announced with the straight face that he would ride a burro if anyone could rope one. Several of the crew, who shall remain nameless, hopped in a boat and rowed across. The scene that unfolded was hilarious, as the guys ran around like the Keystone Cops in the blazing sun, while the burros cleverly circled around behind the guys, who never realized that they were the ones being followed. Resting in the shade, Floyd and the rest of the trip were provided some mighty funny entertainment.

Floyd’s rowing was poetry in motion—so beautiful and graceful to watch. He had an economy of strokes that made it look easy. His long arms and legs could practically levitate the boat, which came in handy back in the days when you could send a boat down early



*Floyd Stevens in Lava Falls in 1978.
Photo by Michael Collier.*

and snag a camp. I swear he could outpace a motor rig without looking like he was even exerting himself. Floyd always had our back, always looking out for his pards. He's the only person I know of who would run backwards through the right slot in Lava, and with such momentum that he would be in the left eddy as a safety boat before the next boat had barely entered the rapid.

And then there were the Floydisms. In his smooth cowboy drawl, he'd come up with some unique expressions. Before entering a big rapid, his classic line



Floyd Stevens. Photo by Leah Lokan.

was, "When I say bail, all I want to see is assholes and elbows!" Other memorable lines were: "You could squeeze a dime out of a buffalo nickel's ass!"; "Darker than four foot down a cow's throat"; "Raining harder than a cow pissing on a flat rock". Sometimes, when

we had to push stranded boats back into the water, and some reluctant female passengers stood back and watched, he'd come out with, "Come on ladies, your arms aren't painted on!" These comments never seemed to offend, but rather just made people grin.

In his cool, calm and collected way, Floyd managed to extricate himself from crazy situations. Like the time on a WiWo trip on the Usumacinta River, when the Mexican army snuck across to the Guatemalan side of the river in the dark of night and stole Floyd's raft. Floyd and Vladimir (the flamboyant owner of Wilderness World) went across the river the next morning and Vladimir started yelling at the soldiers, demanding the raft

back. When the guns came out, Floyd was somehow able to maneuver the irate Vladimir into a graceful retreat. Another time, Floyd and a friend were crossing the border from Bolivia into Peru, where they were promptly held at gunpoint and stripped naked. Unbeknownst to Floyd, he fit the description of a notorious drug trafficker. After many long hours, there were finally released, and a graceful retreat was made once again.

Floyd finally left the river after the 1979 season, in order to find steadier employment. He went to Utah

Technical College and became an excellent welder. No surprise, being the perfectionist that he was, he developed a fine reputation in the oil fields of Wyoming and Utah with his own business. He also built a beautiful log home near his family in Coalville. But Floyd's true passion was horses. Back when he worked in the Canyon, he used to bring his horses with him to Flagstaff for the season, where he kept them in a handmade corral next to his tepee. Later on, back in Coalville, he loved team roping, riding in the hills or working cattle. He became a true horse whisperer—breaking, training and selling horses to people all over the West. But the Canyon remained intertwined with major moments in Floyd's life. Not only did his first marriage take place on the South Rim, but some of his ashes rejoined his

beloved Colorado River after his death.

Aww, wugg it, Floydski, we miss you.

Sue Bassett

New Books

Upset in Upset, BY AMIL QUAYLE, 2011, 20 PAGES, (\$3).

RIVER GUIDES LOVE STORIES. And there is no story a river guide likes more than one about rivers and river trips. One that involves a certain amount of ignorance, hubris and luck, in equal proportions, usually fits the bill just perfectly.

Amil Quayle's *Upset in Upset* belongs to that genre of river story, and reading it, one can't help but marvel at how the whole thing worked out. What started as a simple mission—bring your four passengers safely downstream to the take out—became instead a tutorial in what not to do and how luck and an intrepid client can help save the day (that and a couple cans of tuna).

Imagine a Colorado River trip with only four commercial passengers. Imagine rowing a 33-foot rubberized pontoon motor-rig, sans motor, through a rocky rapid at low water. Imagine not making it. Okay, that part might not be so hard to imagine. But almost the entirety of this epic story is a little beyond imagination to today's well-tutored, well-trained and well-outfitted crop of river guides and passengers.

Amil Quayle is one of those men who grew up on the water. Born near the Snake River in Idaho, rivers are as much a part of his life as oxygen for the rest of us. He was among the first boatmen in the nascent days of commercial boating in Grand Canyon, and it is from this time in his life and in the life of the river industry that this story was born.

The late 1960's were the end of an era in Grand Canyon boating. In the early 1970's, the National Park Service would institute quotas and camping restrictions, followed not long after by emergency protocols, guide licensing and health regulations. There are at least four published guides to the river that will show you everything from where to camp to what side of the rapid to run. This has, by necessity, taken a little of the spunk out of river running in the Grand Canyon.

This story has all that spunk and more. It needs to be read by everyone who has run the Grand Canyon, commercially or privately, passenger or boatman. It

is such an unlikely combination of horrible planning and blind luck that it can't help but make the reader who knows the river laugh out loud. And for those who don't know the river, well, you can imagine. Some stories cross all geographic boundaries.

Quayle's generation built the companies that run the river today. Western River Expeditions is one of the largest companies on the river in Grand Canyon, but Quayle reminds us that even the giant companies started out as mom and pop organizations, stumbling through the minefield of learning how to run passengers down the river.

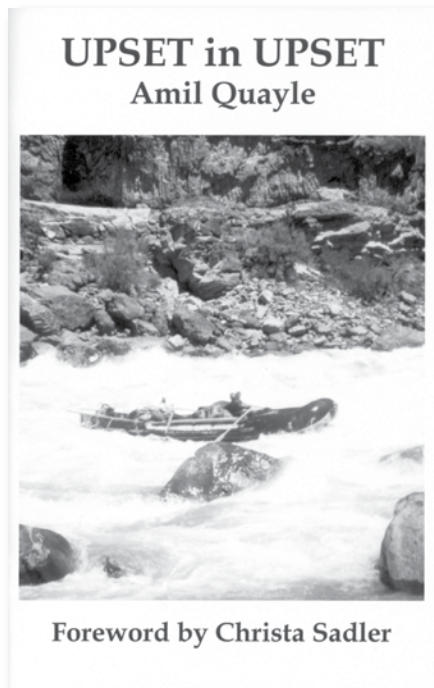
There aren't too many members of the Colorado River boating community left who can remember when Crystal wasn't a rapid, when you could camp at the mouth of Deer Creek, or when making a mistake led to an adventure, rather than a lawsuit. These were the days when guides were learning the craft all by themselves, because there were no boatmen from previous years to teach them. There were no contingency plans. Everything was brand new. Mistakes were made. And stories were born. Thankfully for the rest of us, Amil Quayle still has these stories inside him.

This is a great little booklet to have in your ammo can. At twenty pages, it doesn't take long to read, and it's a humdinger of a story. Once you enjoy it a few times, it will amuse your passengers as well. Might even be a good thing to read around the campfire (when you're allowed to have them, of course).

If you'd like to get a copy of *Upset in Upset*, they are \$3 each plus postage. You can get one from Christa Sadler at christa@thisearthpress.com, or from Amil himself at: Henry's Fork Books, P.O. Box 1, St. Anthony, ID 83445; quayamil@isu.edu.

Enjoy!

Christa Sadler



The Grand Canyon Reader, EDITED BY LANCE NEWMAN,
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS, 2011, 264 PAGES, ISBN
978-0-520-27079-4. (\$19.95)

THIS SUPERB ANTHOLOGY brings together some of the most powerful and compelling writing about the Grand Canyon—stories, essays, and poems written across five centuries by people inhabiting, surviving, and attempting to understand what one explorer called the “Great Unknown.” *The Grand Canyon Reader* includes traditional stories from native tribes, reports by explorers, journals by early tourists, and contemporary essays and stories by such beloved writers as John McPhee, Ann Zwinger, Edward Abbey, Terry Tempest Williams, Barry Lopez, Linda Hogan, and Craig Childs. Lively tales written by unschooled river runners, unabashedly popular fiction, and memoirs stand alongside finely crafted literary works to represent full range of human experience in this wild, daunting, and inspiring landscape.

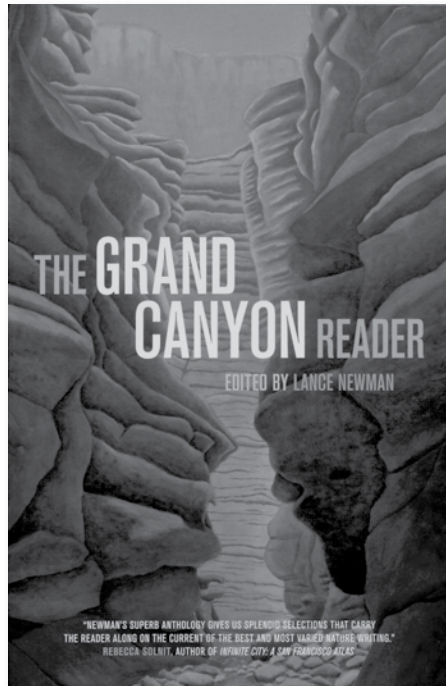
“Word of warning: Reading the essays in this book will make you want to drop everything and traverse the Grand Canyon, rim-to-rim, if only to avoid the tourists hovering. But, with offerings from the likes of John McPhee, Barry Lopez, Wallace Stegner and that curmudgeon Edward Abbey, it also makes you think.” —*Sacramento Bee*

“The stories tell of the delight and wonder that is the Grand Canyon. . . .The timelessness of the canyon means that the excitement continues . . . and ‘The Grand Canyon Reader’ takes us along for the ride.” —*Los Angeles Times Book Review*

“I’ve been on his raft in the Grand Canyon, so I can attest to the fact that Lance Newman can row through both the currents of the Colorado River and the many literary tributaries that have given us great literature on this most unique of American places. The canyon is so many things to so many people: a holy land, an incision into the deep time of geolo-

gy; a place of great and dangerous adventure; an imperiled landscape and a site in which to think about what our relationship to the natural world could and should be. Newman’s superb anthology gives us splendid selections that carry the reader along on the current of the best and most varied nature writing.” —Rebecca Solnit, author *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas*

“To really understand the wonders of the Grand Canyon, we need to see it through the eyes of others. In this reader, Lance Newman opens that world to us. The Grand Canyon of Craig Childs is a long way from that of Colin Fletcher, not to mention John Muir or Joseph Ives, but Newman guides us confidently through all these perspectives and many more. He has selected well, and we are the richer for it. Read this book.” —William C. Tweed, author of *Uncertain Path: A Search for the Future of National Parks*



“These are the Canyon’s literary ‘greatest hits’ alongside lesser known but extremely interesting accounts. Demonstrating an impressively refreshing range of perspectives and

experiences, this is a remarkable anthology of 500 years of human interaction with the Canyon.” —Michael Branch, co-author of *The Height of Our Mountains: Nature Writing from Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mounts and Shenandoah Valley*

Lance Newman, Professor of English at Westminster College, has worked as a Grand Canyon river guide for twenty years. He is the author of *Our Common Dwelling: Henry Thoreau, Transcendentalism, and the Class Politics of Nature* as well as two chapbooks of poems, *3by3by3* and *Come Kanab: A Little Red Songbook*.

Thoughts Leaving Diamond Creek

I've floated this magnificent Canyon twice
Twice is enough
Most never see it
Some come once
Twice is enough

But there's something about this place
It seduces you the moment you leave it
It doesn't leave you
So I think that I cannot bear
Not to see it again

—Dan Barone

The LTEMP Is Coming!

THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION and National Park Service are working together to develop the LTEMP, the Long Term Experimental and Management Plan, for Glen Canyon Dam. What does this mean? Does it matter to us?

Yes. It matters a lot. As to what it means—well, first, a brief history.

Glen Canyon Dam was completed in 1966. At that time it was believed that changing the once muddy, warm and raging river into a clear, cold, controlled flow could make for a great trout fishery, but beyond that little official thought was given to environmental effects in the Grand Canyon.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) passed in 1970. NEPA requires all federal agencies to study the environmental aspects

of all major federal actions.

After completion of Glen Canyon Dam and during the filling of Lake Powell in the 1970's, public concern for the river environment grew and a series of events, in which several Grand Canyon river guides played a role, led to the Phase 1 Glen Canyon Environmental Studies, which found that the operation of Glen Canyon Dam was causing significant impacts on downstream resources. In 1989, a decision was made to prepare a detailed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to reevaluate dam operations and determine specific options that could minimize these impacts.

Nine alternative flow regimes were considered in the final Glen Canyon Dam EIS, ranging from "Maximum Powerplant Capacity" to "Year-Round

The NEPA Process And LTEMP Potential Timeline

1. Notice of intent to prepare EIS released in July 2011
2. Public scoping and comment (Deadline Dec 30, 2011)
3. Draft EIS released
4. Public comment on Draft EIS (Dec 2012)
5. Final EIS (Fall 2013)
6. Record of Decision (Fall 2013)

Steady Flows.” Reclamation completed the EIS in 1995. In 1996, the Secretary of the Interior issued a Record of Decision (ROD) that implemented the “Modified Low Fluctuating Flow Alternative” that we’ve been boating on since. The ROD also implemented environmental

and monitoring commitments including the establishment of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program, monitoring and protection of cultural resources, and the use of Beach/Habitat-Building Flows.

Congress passed the Grand Canyon Protection Act of 1992 to give guidance to the EIS, establish and implement long term monitoring programs and research activities, and to determine if the revised dam operations were achieving the resource protection objectives of the 1995 Final EIS and the 1996 ROD.

As we embark on a new proposed federal action, the river community must work to ensure that *all* LTEMP alternatives meet the primary mandate of the the Grand Canyon Protection Act, codified in Section 1802:

The Secretary shall operate Glen Canyon Dam...in such a manner as to protect, mitigate adverse impacts to, and improve the values for which Grand Canyon National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area were established, including, but not limited to natural and cultural resources and visitor use.

The purpose of the new Long Term Experimental and Management Plan EIS is to “use current and newly developed science to improve and protect resources of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Grand Canyon National Park, and Lake Mead National Recreation Area...” The LTEMP process will be used to decide if dam operations should be changed, and to set up a framework for adaptively managing the dam for the next fifteen to twenty years.

Let me say that again: A process has begun that will determine the flows we boat on, and the way the canyon is monitored and taken care of, for the next fifteen to twenty years!

This sounds to me like something we should have a say in.

And we can. The EIS and a new ROD will be produced through what is called “the NEPS process” (see sidebar), and public comment is an important part of that process. We are able to comment during scoping,

For more info on the LTEMP EIS:

- <http://ltempeis.anl.gov> (the official LTEMP website)
- <http://www.usbr.gov/uc/rm/gcdltemp/index.html> (the LTEMP will supercede the LTEMP EIS which was put on hold. Much of that work and information will be drawn upon for this new EIS process)

and then again on the draft of the new EIS.

This is a really big deal, so we’re giving it our best shot. Lynn, Jerry Cox, the GCRG board, and other GCRG members are hard at work. And we’re talking with other groups, too—Grand Canyon Private Boaters As-

sociation, Grand Canyon River Runners Association, Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association, Grand Canyon Trust, Grand Canyon Wildlands Council, and others. We hope you’ll bring your river hearts and brains to it as well.

Think about the canyon—how it looks to you, what it means, what kind of experiences you and the people you share it with have.

What do we need to do to ensure that people twenty, fifty, one hundred years from now can have the same kinds of experiences, or even better? What is decided in this LTEMP will shape management and experimentation in the canyon for twenty years. What you say, in your own personal comments and in your advice to us, can help ensure that the Grand Canyon of the future is as grand as it is now.

We have until December 30, 2011, to submit comments on the scoping of the EIS. That’s the time to focus on:

- The purpose of the EIS
- Proposed alternatives (especially flow regimes)
- Environmental impacts that should be assessed
- Proposed mitigation to the environmental impacts

GCRG will be submitting comments as an organization. You can also do so as an individual and we really encourage you to do so. The easiest way to submit comments is electronically, at : <http://ltempeis.anl.gov/involve/commentintro/index.cfm>

GCRG will be posting talking points and ultimately our official LTEMP scoping comments on the GCRG website, www.gcr.org. Look under “Advocacy” and “Glen Canyon Dam” and you’ll find them. They will provide great food for thought, and working together we can make a difference!

Thank you for making your voice heard!

Sam Jansen

GCRG’S AMWG REPRESENTATIVE
smdjansen@gmail.com

Home—Native Voices On The Colorado River

“...Grand Canyon is my home, the home of my mother and father, my grandparents. My people lived in contentment in this beautiful place of awe... This is my home. We share this powerful place, this river and canyon, with all the world, but we understand how it was, before the scientists. It was our home before it was a national park.”

—DIANNA SUE, HAVASUPAI

AS WITH MANY RIVER GUIDES who have worked on any river for an extended amount of time, Grand Canyon river guides come to feel, think and call the river and surrounding lands, *home*. So those of us who have worked tirelessly and enthusiastically season after season on the Colorado River, we feel kinship to Dianna Sue’s words. When you hear the words coming out of her mouth, with her eyes closed and her whole being in a sort of meditative state, you can only witness and perhaps feel a little, just a small bit, of the deep, innate, physical and spiritual connection she and her people have to the Grand Canyon. Although a few of us have had the privilege of being on the river with Dianna Sue, most of us have not, and may not ever get to spend 8 to 16 days on the river with her, or with anyone who has her caliber of tribal wisdom. Because of this, her words, along with those of other tribal people, will be the direct link to help us, Grand Canyon river guides and outfitters, understand in a deeper sense the cultural and spiritual connections that we can share appropriately with our passengers and fellow river guides, and even with our family and friends.

Through the *Native Voices Program*, we want to share words and wisdom from tribal members of the



Beep Jenkins (Hopi) explaining blessing process to Georgia and Bill Galoekler at Lees Ferry.

Photo courtesy Nikki Cooley

eleven affiliated tribes of the Grand Canyon. Since technology is a huge presence in a majority of everyone’s lives these days, we figured that sharing through videos and transcription of their words would work best. This is where the April 2011 “Native Voices on the River” trip comes in. It was a journey that was both adventurous and spiritual in every sense of the word, made by twenty people representing six of the eleven tribes: Hopi, Diné (Navajo), Hualapai, Havasupai, Yavapai, and Paiute. It was a journey that was completely unique and extraordinary, attended by tribal members who live ordinary lives above the Rim, but who served on this trip as spiritual and cultural leaders representing their respective communities.

The journey began as all Grand Canyon river trips do, packing and traveling to Marble Canyon and Lees Ferry. The trip gathered for introductions and a hot meal at Marble Canyon after arriving by bus provided by Canyon Explorations. The owners, managers, staff and guides of the newly minted outfitter, *Grand Canyon Whitewater*, greeted the tribal members and *Native Voices* staff. As bedtime approached, last minute questions arose among a lot of teasing, laughter and excitement about the trip. From the beginning to the end, every person on the trip, including the guides, film crew, photographers and a writer, approached this journey with respect, positivity and great honor not only for the Canyon and river, but for each other: each tribe, each people, and each person’s individual approach.

So, early the next morning, everyone arose to a beautiful sunrise and blue skies reaching the depths and beauty over Marble Canyon and onto the Vermilion Cliffs, rested and ready for the journey downriver. Before getting on the vans to the ferry, Alfred (*Diné*) talked about migration routes the Navajo took when crossing the river or traveling to and from the river. His willingness to share his knowledge set the precedent for other tribal members to feel comfortable in sharing certain histories and stories, and to not feel pressured to share everything—especially sacred knowledge that’s not meant for everyone, including other tribal people. But there was one moment that was all-inclusive and meant for everyone, including the non-Native folks. Before the official launch downriver, tribal members carefully took out their sacred pouches of corn pollen, white corn meal and hematite. Individual and group prayers and offerings were made by tribal members for a safe and successful journey downriver, and so as not to offend the Holy People who reside in and around



View from Nankoweap – sacred place for all Native Peoples.
Photo courtesy Nikki Cooley

Grand Canyon was the place of their origination; they lived there for many years before migrating out into what is part of their current homelands. Beep of the Hopi Tribe says, “*This whole area was occupied, lots of people lived here... lots of people lived along the river, experiencing the fluctuations in flows, before the dam.*” And the Grand Canyon is a place where the Hopi and the Paiute send their beloved who are deceased to find their peace and their way to the Creator. For all, including the Yavapai and Navajo, Grand Canyon figures prominent-

ly not only in their stories and their prayers, but has been very important to their actual physical survival. Grand Canyon was and is a gathering and planting place for foods, medicines and materials for life; it’s a source of water, salt and other minerals; and it was a major trade route in the area, with common gathering places and seasonal homes along the way. John Wesley Powell talks of finding melons and corn, to which he and his men helped themselves before they could be caught by the Paiutes who, of course, saw this as stealing. Native people have lived all over in this canyon. This was *home*: where they were born and lived, where they farmed, hunted, prayed and buried their dead. They were only pushed out by the creation of the National Park Service and their individual reservations. The last Havasupai living at Indian Gardens was forced to leave in the 1910s.

the river and canyon. The two motorboats were blessed as well, and the folks from Grand Canyon Whitewater were encouraged to take a pinch of cornmeal or pollen to partake in the offering. They were each guided by a tribal member who explained the significance of the ritual that only Native people partake in unless they invite non-Natives into the process. [Note: *The formality of Native people making offerings with corn pollen and cornmeal is sacred and must not be duplicated by non-Natives unless guided and/or invited by a tribal member.*]

After prayers and blessings, and receiving gifts of lip balm, sunblock and salve donated by DeeAnn Tracy Brown of *Peak Scents*, we did the important stuff: last visit to the porcelain throne; fill up water bottles; orientation by the trip leader; fitted with life jackets; pre-trip group photos; board the boats; and the first head count of the day. Thus launched the first (and hopefully not last) *Native Voices* river trip, which was generously supported by all of the Grand Canyon river outfitters and affiliated Grand Canyon tribes. Let’s begin the story of that journey and all the knowledge and wisdom that came forth from it.

All tribes agreed that the Grand Canyon is not only a place of spirituality, but also a sacred place where they all felt like it was home. This was a major overriding theme of conversations and interviews on this journey. For tribes like the Paiute, Havasupai, and Hualapai, the Grand Canyon has been home for as long as the people have stories. For the Hopi and Zuni,

live here and have provided food, medicine, shelter and tools so that people could sustain their families. This water, this bit of green in a dry desert environment, is home. “[*Water*] is in our prayers, for the rains to come, for the snows to happen. We need the snows already to



Kelvin Long (Diné) playing flute at Redwall on Native Voice River Trip.
Photo courtesy Nikki Cooley

start getting our lands wet for the...upcoming planting seasons. We pray for the rains in the summer time to water our crops and to nourish them. Without the moisture in the ground, our seeds can't grow. Without our crops, we can't survive. For the Hopi people, water is so precious that we don't take it for granted. Every day, it's in our hearts and in our mind." said Howard (Hopi). For all the tribes, their prayers are based on the place; they believe their deities are within, and that all living things have a voice and soul, even the plants, water and rocks. This canyon and this river are life-giving, nourishing, and rejuvenating. The people have been given the special knowledge they need to live in this harsh and sometimes dangerous place with joy and thankfulness.

"When the Paiutes were born, all was water. In the beginning of time, there was just a grain of sand. But these legends are told only in winter. Don't tell them in summer, or you'll have a rattlesnake at your doorstep when you return home. That's what everything is—belief, either you believe it or you don't...Hopi gods and our gods are the same beings, but different names. When the animals were created, they all spoke the same language. The rocks, the animals, everything spoke the same language. Until coyote came along, crazy one who disrupted it. That's why the world is the way it is today: people doing good things and people doing bad things."
—BEANS, PAIUTE

As river guides, we call ourselves and we are known as the stewards of the river and canyon. Those of us who go down each season whether it is once, twice, or fifteen times, we are called upon by our outfitter and by the Grand Canyon National Park Service, to *take care* of each area we visit, hike and camp at. Of course, we often find tissue poking out of the sand or behind the bushes, forgotten items of clothing, jewelry, or pieces of food scraps on the beach from a previous groups' scrumptious lunch, or cans of floating cocktails, items flung into the river by a rapid or the wind. It is a guide's knee-jerk reaction (hopefully) to pick up the "forgotten" item and dispose of it properly, assuming the previous owner "forgot" it or else the wind/ravens caused



Filming, plant, and cultural interpretation at South Canyon. Photo courtesy Nikki Cooley

them to "forget" it. Each area we visit on the river is sacred to us in our own way because it is *home* for the night, and where we replenish our strength for the next days to come. We use the river water to wash ourselves, to hydrate, to cool down and to cook with, but most fun of all, we use the water to go boating!

The point of all this is that we, river guides and passengers, depend on the river and canyon for our livelihood, to replenish our adventurous spirit and learn and see new things. But as tribal members, we depend on the river and canyon for the maintenance and survival of our culture, histories, traditions, prayers, ceremonies, songs, and spiritual guidance. Dianna

Sue says, "All of us are here for a purpose. Everybody was chosen for a purpose..." And Howard (Hopi) asks, "... Coming down into the Grand Canyon now, we're using it, many people are going to be using it for recreational purposes. We can't stop it, it's gonna happen, but I do ask in the future that when you do come down here, you respect it."

These words were shared with *you*, the river guides, because you serve as one of the voices speaking for the water, land, animals, and people in and around the canyon. Before you get on the river, but especially while on the water, you speak with the visitors each and every day about the respectfulness of leaving no trace on land or on the river. In addition to these daily reminders and orientations, guides also speak about the history of the canyon and of the people who boated and hiked before us. Native American history can play a big role in these river stories, and this is where Native Voices comes in. So stay tuned for further articles downstream, and explore with us each tribe's unique relationship with the Grand Canyon and Colorado River. Along the way from Lees Ferry to Diamond Creek we'll stop and discuss the various known stops (some more popular than others) and the tribal significance of each place.

Ahéhee?! Kukwai! Merci Beaucoup! Thank you!

Nikki Cooley (DINÉ), Lyle Balenquah (HOPI), Joelle Clark (FRENCH), and Wendy Himelick

Back Of The Boat— The Whale Foundation News Bulletin

10TH ANNUAL WING DING

THE TENTH ANNUAL WING DING is on Saturday, February 25TH, 2012 from 6–11 P.M. at the Cononino Center for the Arts in Flagstaff.

The Wing Ding is the Whale Foundation's major annual fundraiser but first and foremost it is a huge party and a chance to reconnect with friends. In Walt Taylor's immortal words, "it is a big community hug." There will be dinner and music, live and silent auctions. We also have a couple of great new things planned for this year: special raffles, a kid's corner, a photo booth, and a commemorative 10TH annual poster. We could always use a couple more donations to the auction as well as volunteers to lend a hand with food, beverages, auctions, set up and clean up. Just give Dan a call at 928-522-8822. See you there!

THE 2012 WHALE FOUNDATION CALENDAR

Christmas is right around the corner and this year's calendar makes a great gift. In 2012 we highlight the fantastic 3D artists in our community. Take a look at December's photo taken by Kate Thompson of Andy Hutchinson's dory (unfortunately printed here in black & white). Check out our Facebook page to see



a couple more of the amazing images you will find inside the calendar. Calendars are \$12 each and \$3 each for shipping. Order now through the website, mail, or email at: whale@whalefoundation.org. You can also just send us a check for \$15 to P.O. Box 855, Flagstaff, AZ 86002 and we will send you one. There are a handful of retail stores in Flagstaff that carry it too—you can find a list of these stores on our Facebook page. If you order ten or more, the price is \$8 each and \$2 each for shipping. Holy cow that's a good deal!

BQR ARTICLE AS AN INSERT

For the past couple of years the Whale Foundation has included an article in the BQR as an unattached insert. This allowed us to publish independently of the particular layout and space limitations that are different for each newsletter. Unfortunately, in this tough economic climate, the separate printing fees were becoming a financial burden to the Foundation. Thanks to Lynn Hamilton's creative problem solving and generosity as well as the BQR editors' willingness to be flexible, the article will be part of the BQR once again. As a consequence we may not submit articles for every BQR but we will continue to bring you important information on issues concerning mental health, physical health, and transition strategies. And don't forget—there is an extensive BQR article archive on the Whale Foundation website.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We would like to welcome Scott Davis to the board. Both Scotty and his wife Rachel Schmidt have volunteered to run the cash registers at the Wing Ding this year. That's a big job, thank them for stepping up next time you see them. And of course, it is a privilege to have Scott on our board.

I want to personally thank the outgoing board members for their service to the Foundation; Alida Dierker, Pat Rose, and Alex Thevenin. No "thank you" can convey the amount of gratitude our community owes to these three board members. Each in their own way has donated so much of their time and energy to our programs that it is daunting to even think about moving forward in their absence. Their wisdom, enthusiasm and dedication will be sorely missed. If you are interested in volunteering for the board please email me directly at bigdanhall@gmail.com. Feel free to contact us for any reason!

WHALE FOUNDATION HELP LINE

We are working hard on making our help line answering service system more efficient. If you have had trouble getting through on the help line (877-44WHALE), please try again! We'll get the kinks worked out soon and please know that we are here for *you*.

Dan Hall
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Beating the Off-Season Blues

WHAT AN AMAZING RIVER SEASON! Floating downstream on 26,000-plus CFS brought new opportunities for hikes, camps and great stories of mishaps for those of us who have not seen water this high. It also inspired some to tell those legendary stories of high water in the 1980's. Anyone else put their boat in places they've never been before, like the corner pocket at the bottom of 205? Thank you river!

Now comes fall. It is time to hang up your superhero outfit for a few months and re-enter the world of the mortals. You will no longer be praised for saving small children from certain death in Lava Falls. Your river pals will not have you in tears, laughing, as they explain how it came to be that they were floating downstream clinging only to their oar. You will have to buy all of your own beverages, until April! Gone are the days of your irregular diet, interrupted sleep, and chugging beers until dinner is served. Have you ever considered that your superhero lifestyle might need some balancing and regenerative support come fall? Tiredness, apathy, depression, acne, irritability, allergies and frequent illness are all signals from your body that something is out of sync.

The human body is amazingly adept at healing and regeneration. The saliva, stomach, pancreas, gall bladder, liver, and small and large intestine all process the food that we ingest to produce energy. The liver, kidneys, lungs, skin, and lymph are constantly filtering wastes that our body cannot use. All of this happens without much thought. However, it takes an incredible amount of energy for the body to maintain healthy digestion and keep up with its cleansing duties. And when we bombard our systems with excess food, toxins, stress, and other unhealthy habits, our immune systems suffer. We become more prone to minor illnesses like colds and through time, we are more likely to develop serious diseases in the body. However, when we make an effort to support the body, to regenerate and cleanse even a few days or weeks a year, the body will worship us like the true superheroes that we are.

Fasting is the simplest way to give the body a rest. Dr. Andrew Weil says that fasting one day per week gives the digestive system a break so the body can redirect its energy towards restoring old or "sick" tissues. While fasting, some people drink only water and herb tea. Because you are forgoing french fries and beer for water and tea, it is wise to do restful activities on these days such as yoga, reading, and light exercise or work. However, fasting is not for everyone. Listen

to your body. People who are very skinny, sensitive to cold, have hypoglycemia or blood sugar imbalances or are very ill should not do full fasts. Instead, these folks can try adding more calories in the form of vegetable broths, fruit juices, and or whole fruits (with herb tea and water as well). Drinking juice and eating simple broth soups can help keep blood sugar levels stabilized and maintain enough calories for very thin people.

Another popular system of fasting is the Master cleanse developed by Stanley Burroughs in the 1940's. The tasty lemonade is a mixture of water, maple syrup (not honey), lemon juice, and cayenne pepper, which provides energy along with many vitamins and minerals. Look up all of the details at <http://themaster-cleanse.org/> While some people do this cleanse for ten days, it is important to honor your own body, which may mean that you only do two to four days drinking the master cleanse "lemonade." Others may want to try a different type of cleanse.

Liver cleansing is a bit more involved but I have found it to be one of the easiest ways to cleanse without having to fast for long periods. You eat mostly normal for six days while drinking one quart of apple juice each day. On the sixth day, you begin a 20-hour fast. The goal of this cleanse is to release liver and gall bladder stones, which stagnate in the thousands of ducts in the liver. It is amazing how the body will purge liver stones. To get the step-by-step instructions for Andreas Moritz's liver cleanse, you can purchase *The Amazing Liver and Gallbladder Flush*. I am also happy to send you the instructions as well via email if you contact me directly. Keep in mind that there are many "liver flushes" on the internet. The one recommended by Andreas Moritz works well and I have never had any problem. I have however heard stories of problems with other programs.

The Clean program is a good option for an extended cleanse (three weeks) where you change your diet, take extra nutrients in the form of vitamins and minerals and do cleansing activities such as exercise, meditation and herbal laxatives. Dr. Alejandro Junger developed this program to help people balance depression, hormone levels, allergies, digestive troubles and many other conditions. Numerous people have completely reversed minor and serious illnesses in just three weeks and you can too! It is a little more involved but everything you need can be found at <http://www.cleanprogram.com/resources> or by purchasing his book called *Clean*.

Some cleanses come with kits of supplements that

you can purchase. Remember you can also buy these individually from local herb stores or order them from Winter Sun in downtown Flagstaff. Call them at 928-774-2884 and ask for the boatman's discount.

Remember to treat your body gently following any cleanse. Plan accordingly so you will be successful. Start on a weekend in case you find yourself needing more rest. Do it before or after the holidays, not during. Give your body two or three days before indulging in bacon, caffeine and beer. Eat light for a few days, starting with soups, vegetables and juices. After a few days of light foods, you can begin to eat cheese, bread and meats again. Some foods may upset your stomach, which is a signal from the body that you may be sensitive to them.

There are a few other basics to keep in mind while detoxifying the body. Fiber binds to toxins that the liver filters into the bowel. No matter what type of cleanse you choose, it is always helpful to increase your consumption of fiber so that the toxins will move out of the bowel. This will help prevent them from going back into the bloodstream. With increased fiber also comes the need to drink more water, to prevent constipation and reabsorption of toxins. You can purchase fiber supplement formulas or get fiber from these foods: fruits, vegetables, oatmeal, ground flax seeds sprinkled on salad or mixed into water, psyllium husk mixed into water, apple pectin, or activated charcoal (not really fiber but binds with toxins). For all you boatman moms, wait until you are finished with pregnancy or breast feeding before you do any type of cleanse.

Other good cleansing foods are cilantro (binds to heavy metals), apples (especially tart green ones), beets (raw or cooked), beet and apple juice, chlorophyll-rich foods like fresh green juices, spirulina (protein-rich), fruit, and miso (high in nutrients and good bacteria).

With physical cleansing also comes emotional cleansing. It is not unusual to feel upset, impatient, angry, and general unease when cleansing. Stick with it. This is normal. If something doesn't feel right, discontinue or go more slowly. Get your partner to cleanse with you, so you can laugh about wanting a bacon cheeseburger instead of being angry that they are eating one and you are drinking carrot juice. Most importantly, listen to your body. Have fun and enjoy the physical and emotional rejuvenation. See you next season at the Ferry!

Kristin Harned
Kristin.Huisinga@nau.edu

Blacktail Canyon

Many times the sound of moving water, river and stream
has mingled with my guitar's coppered steel string.
Played on rock and sand, seated and stood,
near grassed pool or dried cottoned wood.
In the cool of night's quiet serenade,
or in the heat of sun's crashing enfilade.

Blacktail, an ancient place of silence and sound,
between pebbled bed and towering rock mound.

Is it the walls that a canyon make
or the still space in between?
Taut strings, softly pulled and touched,
echoing off close and layered stone.
Fingered notes of the winsome minor chord,
changing even the indifferent heart and
reluctant bone.

Blacktail, an ancient place of silence and sound,
a canyon of walls and empty space, bound.

— Greg Trainor

Fall Rendezvous 2011

SOMEHOW IT ALL CAME TOGETHER PERFECTLY—the simply gorgeous fall weather, the people, great interpreters, killer hikes, interesting places and topics, fun music around the campfire. Yup, GCRG's Fall Rendezvous rocked! If you missed it, you should be kicking yourself about now.

Speaking of kicking, the Horseshoe Mesa hike from all accounts, kicks your you-know-what. The Grandview Trail is steep with a capital "S", and has a bit of exposure in spots, but it's a fantastic hike. The trail and the mesa are both steeped in the rich legacy of Grand Canyon mining history. The rough track (now an unimproved trail that still incorporates some of the original "cobblestone riprap") was originally known as

about the transition from Archaic to pre-formative era (early Basketmaker) and how those people lived and used natural fault lines to traverse the canyon. Break out your binoculars next time you're on the trail and you'll see tons of red-hued ungulates romping across the cliff face. A huge thank you to Ellen and to GCRG board member, Greg Woodall, for the outstanding interp!

We then headed back up to Kolb Studios to see the paintings from the Grand Celebration of Art exhibit. What an outstanding collection of works by such art luminaries as Peter Nisbet, Joella Jean Mahoney, Shonto Begay and others. Food for the soul.

From there we headed out to Grandview point



Mallory's Grotto. Photos: Rich Turner.

the Berry Trail and was used extensively to connect the rim with the copper mines on Horseshoe Mesa. The old cook's shack and remnants of that mining past are still evident. Latimer Smith, Clare Magnuson, Sharon Hester, John Magnuson, Steve Almquist, Orea Roussis, and my son Ryan were all were really glad they took the challenge!

And not to be outdone, Grand Canyon Field Trip #2 was awesome as well. We really loved our short jaunt down the Bright Angel Trail to check out Mallory's Grotto with Ellen Brennan, the head of cultural resources at Grand Canyon National Park. Who knew that 4,000 year old pictographs and petroglyphs are right above you on the cliff face, associated with the Archaic period. You've probably passed it a million times and never knew it was there. We learned all

and tromped through the brush to an overlook where we could see both the old Grandview Hotel site and the spot where the original Berry Trail began. Mike Anderson, the former park historian and human history guru shared his knowledge of the early history of the area that really captured a fascinating time and the intrepid people who lived and worked there.

On Sunday morning we learned about the uranium mining issue from Roger Clark of the Grand Canyon Trust followed by a great hike to the top of Red Butte where we could see the Canyon Mine and the Red Butte airport hanger off in the distance. Early river runner and canyon hiker, Jorgen Visbak (92 years young) hiked all the way to the top of Red Butte unassisted and had his picture taken at the top. He was justifiably proud of that accomplishment and as

Clare Magnuson of AZRA exclaimed, “Jorgen is a beast!” Unbelievable! Truly an inspiration to us all.

We rounded out the event by heading over to the old Red Butte Airport to learn about entrepreneur and promoter Parker Van Zandt who created a runway across a meadow in 1927, built a hanger, and launched the first commercial air tours over the nearby Grand Canyon. John Dillon, an aviation enthusiast and pilot, joined us for some knowledgeable interpretation of the site and its history, and even some “show and tell” of early Scenic Airways memorabilia. In his other life, John is the new Executive Director of the Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association, so it was great to get to know him and learn about his grand passion in life.

I want to extend a huge thank you to our wonderful speakers for deepening our understanding, and especially to Ellen Brennan of Grand Canyon National Park who worked with me to plan the Grand Canyon field trips. I also want to send a special thank you to GCRG president, Nikki Cooley for helping me do the food shop and for making the simply delicious green chile posole that everyone devoured on Saturday night. GCRG vice president, Latimer Smith, also deserves major kudos for bringing down a truck full of equipment, spearheading all the meals, and leading the Horseshoe Mesa hike! That was so incredibly helpful to me and his assistance made everything run incredibly smoothly. GCRG Board member Greg Woodall

stepped in with some outstanding interpretation on archaeology and the geological shape of the breccia pipes where uranium can be found (think upside down ice cream cones, for a great analogy). Thanks a million, everyone! A great group effort.

It is understandably hard to improve upon such a perfect weekend, but in the future I’d like to encourage more working guides to attend. Yes, that means you! Part of that may be a function of the timing—the weekend we chose was still in the river season for some folks. I realize too that once the river season is over, focus is immediately elsewhere. However, the Fall Rendezvous is such an outstanding event you’ve just got to join us one of these years. Now that you’ve heard how the 2011 weekend shaped up, I’m sure you’re smacking your forehead saying, “Why didn’t I make the time?!” Good thing is, there’s always next year and we’ll get to work thinking up a fun event location and great hikes that we know you’ll love. Come to think of it, please throw some suggestions our way!

Lynn Hamilton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*Jorgen Visbak at the top of Red Butte.
Photo: Jorgen Visbak.*



The old hangar at Red Butte Airport. Photo: Lynn Hamilton.

Bright Angel Creek Trout Reduction Project

BEGINNING IN OCTOBER 2011, the National Park Service will operate a weir in Bright Angel Creek near Phantom Ranch to trap and remove trout migrating from the Colorado River to spawn. The trout reduction project, combining the use of the weir (fish trap) and electro-fishing equipment, is a multi-year project with the goal of reducing the number of non-native brown and rainbow trout in Bright Angel Creek and the Colorado River. Bright Angel Creek is the main spawning area for brown trout in Grand Canyon National Park. Brown trout are voracious predators of native fish, including endangered humpback chub. The weir will be operated continuously through early February 2012. The project is funded by the Bureau of Reclamation and National Park Service, and is being conducted in cooperation with the University of Missouri and Grand Canyon Trust.

NATIVE VERSUS NON-NATIVE FISH

Bright Angel Creek and adjacent areas of the Colorado River historically supported thriving populations of native fish, including endangered humpback chub. As recently as the 1970's, brown trout, which are native to Europe and Asia, were rare in Bright Angel Creek. They have become a large component of the fish community in the creek since the 1990s, while declines in native fish such as speckled dace and bluehead sucker have been observed. Not only is Bright Angel Creek now an important spawning site for brown trout, a large aggregation of brown trout is found in the Colorado River near the confluence with Bright Angel Creek.

Robust populations of native fish are important indicators of a riparian ecosystem's overall health. Furthermore, a variety of state and federal laws, including the Endangered Species Act, require the protection of rare or endemic

species. National Park Service Management Policies also require that species and natural ecosystems are preserved, and that recovery actions are taken when park resources have been damaged or compromised. The Bright Angel Creek Trout Reduction Project is part of a larger effort to restore native fish throughout Grand Canyon.

Trout that spawn in Bright Angel Creek have been captured in other parts of the Colorado River. For example, large rainbow and brown trout caught last year in Bright Angel Creek were originally tagged with passive integrated transponder tags (PIT tags), or microchips, in the Little Colorado River confluence, which is more than 26 miles away. Brown trout captured in the weir have traveled from as far away as river mile 175, where they were tagged. The Little Colorado River confluence contains the largest remaining population of humpback chub left in the world, and is also an important area for other native fish species.

WEIR INSTALLATION AND MECHANICAL REMOVAL

The purpose of the Bright Angel Creek Trout Reduction project is to benefit endangered humpback chub and other native fish species in the mainstem Colorado River, and to restore and enhance, to the extent possible, the native fish community that once flourished in Bright Angel Creek.

Two methods for capturing and removing non-na-



The fish weir in Bright Angel Creek. NPS photo by Maddie Tighe.

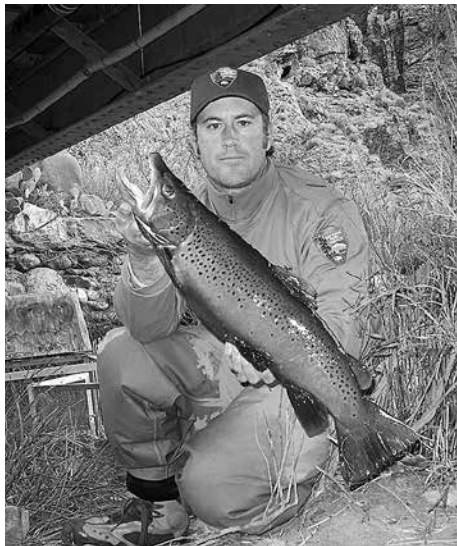
tive trout are being used: a weir installed just downstream of the bridge below the Bright Angel Campground, and electro-fishing between the weir and the confluence of Phantom creeks (approximately three kilometers).

A fish weir is a fence-like barrier erected across a stream that directs larger fish into a box-like trap, while allowing for small fish and water to pass through the structure. NPS fisheries biologists check the trap twice daily, release native fish incidentally caught, and remove all non-native trout. Electro-fishing is a non-lethal method for capturing fish used extensively by fisheries biologists to monitor fish populations in streams, rivers, and lakes. In Bright Angel Creek, electro-fishing is conducted in late October and early February to selectively remove both rainbow and brown trout, and to monitor responses of the native fish community to the non-native fish removal. The NPS employs a beneficial use policy for all trout removed from the stream, as appropriate, following consultation with Traditionally Associated Indian Tribes.

INITIAL RESULTS

To date, the Bright Angel Creek Trout Reduction Project was implemented during the fall and winter seasons of 2002–2003, 2006–2007, and 2010–2011. The weir appears to be an efficient way to remove spawning trout. For example, 423 mature brown trout were captured and removed using the weir in 2002–03 when Colorado River brown trout populations were high. In 2010–2011, 594 brown trout and 454 rainbow trout were removed from approximately 1500 meters of lower Bright Angel Creek with electro-fishing equipment—an estimated 75% of the total trout present. However, additional years of implementation and monitoring are needed to determine whether the project is successful in reducing trout numbers in the Colorado River. Based on modeling of brown trout population dynamics, additional trout control measures may be necessary to maintain low numbers of these non-native predators in both Bright Angel Creek and the Colorado River.

In addition to the potential benefits of removing brown trout to the native fish community in Grand



NPS Fisheries Program Manager Brian Healy with one of the larger brown trout caught in the Bright Angel Creek fish weir last winter. NPS photo.

Canyon, NPS managers consider the operation of the project as an important outreach opportunity. From October 27, 2010 to February 5, 2011, NPS fisheries biologists discussed the project with 120 different visitor groups ranging in size from 1–15 people.

BRIGHT ANGEL CREEK ANGLING

Anglers visiting Phantom Ranch can expect to encounter fewer trout in Bright Angel Creek between the lower end of the Bright Angel Campground and Phantom Creek. However, opportunities to catch large mature rainbow and brown trout will continue to exist in the Colorado River near the Bright Angel Creek. No bag limit for brown or rainbow trout is in effect for Bright Angel Creek, and anglers

are encouraged to keep the trout that they catch.

For questions, please contact Grand Canyon National Park fisheries biologists Brian Healy at Brian_Healy@nps.gov (phone: 928-638-7453), or Emily Omana Smith at Emily_Omana@nps.gov (phone: 928-638-7477).

Brian Healy, Emily Omana Smith & Allyson Mathis

NOTE: Brian Healy and Emily Omana Smith are fisheries biologists and Allyson Mathis is the Outreach Coordinator for the Division of Science and Resource Management for Grand Canyon National Park.



Electro-fishing in Bright Angel Creek. NPS photo by Maddie Tighe.

Confluence Award Goes To GCRG's Lynn Hamilton

GRAND CANYON YOUTH is pleased to announce Lynn Hamilton, Executive Director of Grand Canyon River Guides (GCRG) as the 2012 recipient of the Confluence Award. This award was created in order to celebrate an individual who has made a positive difference in the Colorado River watershed.

Part of the mission of Grand Canyon Youth (GCY) is to inspire youth to become future stewards of public lands. The Confluence Award is given to someone who demonstrates a commitment to education, conservation and service. The award was presented at Grand Canyon Youth's 12TH Annual River Runner Film Festival & Silent Auction on November 5, 2011.

Lynn Hamilton is the second recipient of the Confluence Award. Part of the mission of GCRG is to preserve, protect and defend the canyon, the river, and the magic it bestows on us all. Since becoming Executive Director of GCRG in 1995, Ms. Hamilton



has worked tirelessly to educate and advocate for the Grand Canyon. Her accomplishments include overseeing the publication of the *Boatmans Quarterly Review*, a fascinating publication that includes interpretive science, current resource management issues, oral histories and more. Additionally she co-administers the Adopt-a-Beach citizen science program.

When learning that she received the award, Lynn Hamilton responded, *"The word 'confluence' is especially resonant for me because creating connections has been the hallmark of my tenure here at GCRG as I have strived to bring diverse constituencies together to create a passionate, unified voice for the protection of Grand*

Canyon and the Colorado River experience. Ultimately, I believe that education, stewardship, and advocacy must go hand in hand. Simply put, people must understand before they will care, and they must care before they will defend. It all comes down to responsibility—our collective responsibility. The natural world has the ability to change people's lives in lasting and positive ways. Consequently, it must be our profound responsibility to ensure that these public lands are carefully preserved for future generations to enjoy.

My sincerest appreciation goes out to Grand Canyon Youth for this wonderful recognition and for their profound commitment to fostering the next generation of river stewards. You can make a difference!

Congratulations Lynn. You truly deserve this award. More information about Grand Canyon Youth at www.gcyouth.org. We are now enrolling for our 2012 season.

Emma Wharton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Guiding Goes Global

GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDE, Ariel Neill, was selected to be a speaker at the 2011 Global Geotourism Conference in Muscat, Oman. Neill was one of more than forty presenters at the three day conference, which was held October 30 to November 1, 2011.

The Geotourism Conference gathered earth scientists, tourism practitioners, academics and resource managers from around the world to share their knowledge of tourism and explore ways that geotourism can add value to a destination and a visitor's experience. It drew around 300 delegates from around the world.

Neill was invited to speak at the Geotourism Conference after meeting Ross Dowling during a National Park Service VIP trip in September 2010. Neill was one of the guides, Dowling was one of her passengers.

Dowling is a Professor of Tourism at Edith Cowan University in Perth, Australia, specializing in geotourism and ecotourism and he's the Co-Convener of the 2011 Geotourism Conference.

Dowling invited Neill to speak at the Conference after hearing her interpretation of Grand Canyon geol-

ogy. Dowling was impressed by the accessibility of her information and found it clear, succinct and painted a good mental image and understandable story, he said.

“Ariel is an outstanding boatman and one of the best geological interpreters I have seen in the world,” Dowling said. “Her knowledge, enthusiasm and personal skills make her a brilliant guide and she has the potential to achieve whatever she wants. In my position of training tour guides around the world, I would say without a doubt, that Ariel Neill is one of the finest guides/interpreters on the planet.”

Some speakers at the conference talked about understanding an area through interpretation. Neill followed these speakers and presented an example of a specific way of sharing geologic information with the public. She gave a twelve minute interpretation of Grand Canyon Geology which included slides of Grand Canyon geological features and paleo-geological maps.

Neill received help on her presentation from Wayne Ranney, co-author of *Ancient Landscapes of the Colo-*

rado Plateau. “He mentored me on how to give an effective presentation and how to lecture and run slides seamlessly,” Neill says.

Neill says she spent about a week organizing her speech, which included gathering slides and arranging them and the text together into a Powerpoint presentation. After the material was assembled she rehearsed it two or three times a day until she could do it without referring to her notes, she says.

Neill admits that she was quite nervous to present her material to such a large, distinguished audience. “I was almost as nervous as the first time I ran Horn Creek,” she says, “which was running 7,000 CFS that day.”

The Grand Canyon Association paid for Neill’s flight to and from Oman.

Neill has been a Grand Canyon river guide since 2003. She started her boatman career with High Desert Adventures and has been guiding for Wilderness River Adventures, with her husband Al Neill, since 2005.

Steven Law

Emery Kolb Runs Crystal

EMERY KOLB JOINED A Grand Canyon Expeditions (GCE) history trip as an esteemed guest in 1974. Grand Canyon Helicopters, owned and operated

by Elling Halvorson, flew Emery into the canyon at the Little Colorado River (LCR) confluence. The chopper landed on the upstream side of the LCR and the 93 year-



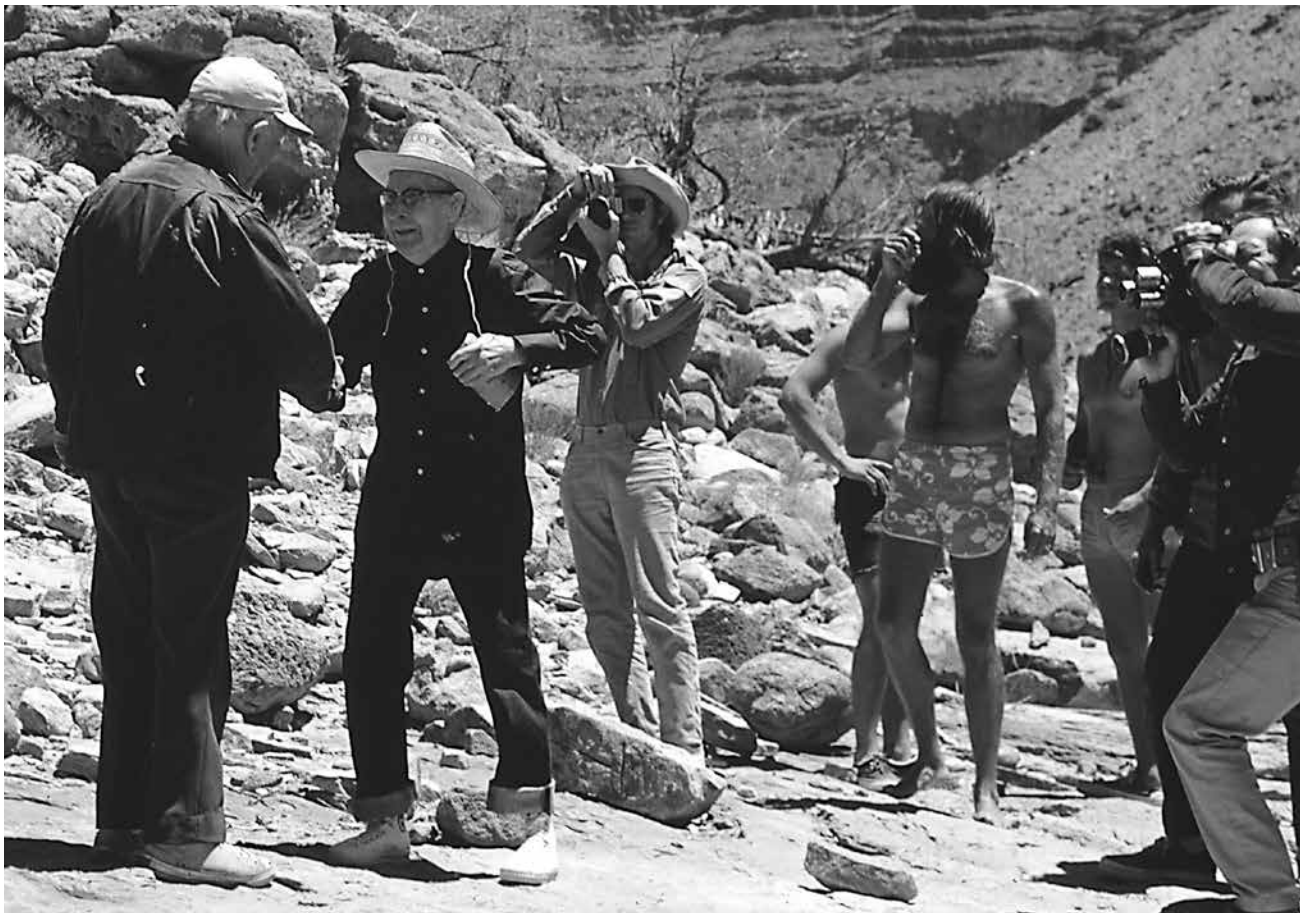
John Sohrweide, Joe Brazie, Emery, and Dock. Photo courtesy NAU Cline Library, Special Collections, NAU. PH:95.11.45.

old Emery was assisted to the river via a rocky slope by boatmen Scott Dunn, Blake Hopkins, and others. GCE had two double boat trips paralleling each other that week. Emery joined two Smith rigs led by John Sohrweide and Wayne McAllister, also along on the same trip was longtime river runner and historian Otis "Dock" Marston. The four GCE boats double camped one night, which allowed participants from both trips to enjoy sharing the canyon with both Emery and Dock. On the sandy beach at lower Tuna, Emery was flown out of the canyon and waved farewell to the remaining crew and to the mighty Colorado for the last time. Before saying goodbye, Emery was finally able to experience running Crystal Rapid, as it was nothing more than a riffle during his early river trips. Emery passed away less than three years later in December of 1976.

Along with Ron and Sheila Smith, Art Gallenson especially deserves credit for facilitating this opportunity for Emery. Art's resourcefulness and connections with Elling Halvorson, who generously offered the flights gratis, made it possible for Emery to soar in and out of the canyon with relative ease. Moreover, Art's care and interest for Emery as a friend and fellow river runner is highly commendable.

Latimer Smith

NOTE: Many thanks to Marc Smith, Blake "Fox" Hopkins, Scott Dunn, and Art Gallenson for sharing this information with me during numerous conversations. Also, special thanks to Art for keeping multiple copies of this liability waiver for the sake of posterity.



*Dock and Emery greet each other at the mouth of the LCR (Scott Dunn in the wild shorts).
Photo courtesy NAU Cline Library, Special Collections, NAU. PH:95.11.25.*

GRAND CANYON

LIABILITY RELEASE/PHOTO RELEASE

Your Name Emery Kolb
(Please Print)

Trip date: May 20-23

I, the undersigned, have received and read the Grand Canyon Expeditions, Inc. trip literature. I understand that like most outdoor sports, river running has certain risks connected with it. I am well aware that during the course of a trip, the boat in which I ride will pass through many extremes of water conditions from calm and slow moving water to very swift and turbulent water called "rapids" which sometimes pass over or around rocks. These conditions will vary depending upon weather and water levels. Because of the many types of water through which I will ride and considering the normal dangers of riding in a boat, I realize that everyone riding in the river boat is subject to being jarred, bumped and splashed upon and that the boat can lunge suddenly forward, up or down or from side to side, or may strike some rocks or other obstruction and that a person could be thrown out of the boat if he does not hold on securely. It is also possible that a boat could turn over.

In order to protect myself, I understand and agree that at all times while aboard the boat or while floating or swimming in the river, I will wear a life preserver.

I also understand that while ashore during a river trip there will be places where I can hike and that I might be walking over rough and rocky ground and that there is always the possibility of slipping on rocks or mud. In addition, I understand that I will have the opportunity, if I so desire, of participating in climbs over steep and mountainous terrain including cliffs and ledges. I also realize that I might encounter some types of insects and other wildlife.

In the event that I require medical care or that I am evacuated from a trip for any reason, I agree to pay and be responsible for all costs connected with such medical care or evacuation.

I understand that due to weather conditions, water fluctuations and other conditions beyond the control of Grand Canyon Expeditions, Inc., it is possible that I may not begin or complete my trip on the day or time scheduled. I hereby agree not to hold Grand Canyon Expeditions, Inc. its agents or employees responsible for any loss or damage I might suffer as a result of such change in the schedule.

I consent to the use of any picture in which I appear by Grand Canyon Expeditions, Inc., its agents or assigns, for any purpose, in any brochure, periodical, magazine, book, motion picture, television show, or other public showing or commercial application without submission to me for prior approval or without additional compensation to me.

I have read and understand the above and of my own free will and not acting under any duress, I do hereby agree that in consideration of being permitted to join Grand Canyon Expeditions, Inc., on any trip I will be bound by the terms of the above and I will assume all risks including but not limited to those enumerated above and I further agree not to hold Grand Canyon Expeditions, Inc., its agents or employees liable or responsible for any injury to my person or property or for any damage I may suffer as a result of any injury to my person or property.

Date: May 20, 1979 Signature: Emery G. Kolb
Age: 93 Address: Box 125 City/State: Grand Canyon AZ ZIP: 86003

IN ADDITION, IF THE PROPOSED PASSENGER IS UNDER THE AGE OF TWENTY-ONE (21) YEARS, the following must be executed by his or her parents or legal guardian.

As parent or guardian of the signor of the above Liability Release/Photo Release, I have read the same, agree to the signing of it and further agree that in consideration of such signor being permitted to join Grand Canyon Expeditions, Inc., on any trip that the terms and conditions of the Liability Release shall be binding upon me as well as said signor and that I will bear the cost of medical care and evacuation as provided above.

Signature of Father or Guardian: _____

Signature of Mother: _____

*****Please return to GRAND CANYON EXPEDITIONS; P.O. BOX 0; KANAB, UT 84741*****

Northern Tamarisk Beetle Update

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE biologists, researchers from Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona, Grand Canyon Youth participants, numerous volunteers, and other partners continued the effort to track the spread of tamarisk beetles in Grand Canyon this summer. They completed beetle sweeping on five trips between May and September, monitored microhabitat changes at a sampling of sites, and tracked the amount of tamarisk defoliation throughout the season. Here are a few updates:

- In 2010, the beetle was most prevalent in the first 25 miles of the river, and sporadically below river mile 108. The greatest densities of all life stages were found in August.
- In 2011, the beetle expanded its distribution, shortened the distance between populations, and dramatically increased in numbers of both adults and larva. Large numbers of beetles were also found in Kanab Creek and upriver from Lees Ferry to Glen Canyon Dam.
- In 2011, biologist observed beetles in late March, much earlier in the season than anticipated.
- No beetles have been documented below Diamond Creek.
- The common name of our beetle is now “northern tamarisk beetle.” The scientific name remains *Diorhabda carinulata*.

The following maps display the level of tamarisk defoliation recorded in 2011. By June, an almost continuous stretch of tamarisk from Lees Ferry to Soap Creek was defoliated, with only isolated defoliation patches further down river. Defoliation was prominent throughout the river corridor by August. By September, the tamarisk in many areas showed signs of refoliation and were greening up again. Remember that it will likely take a few more years before we begin to see mortality.

TAMARISK BEETLE FACT OR FICTION

After receiving numerous questions throughout the summer, we want to clarify a few items relating to the beetle, including its staying power and impacts on the river ecosystem. Do you know fact from fiction concerning the beetle?



Beetle distribution in 2010 and 2011. (L. Jamison)

1. *The tamarisk beetle was genetically engineered to eat only tamarisk and to be sterile.*

FICTION: While that would be a dream come true in some respects, it is not quite right. In numerous studies leading up to the release of the beetle, researchers found that the beetle died without tamarisk, showing that it is very host specific. Tamarisk belongs to the Tamaricaceae family and there are no plant species native to North America in that family, which is good news. Concerning sterility, you have probably seen both adult beetles and larvae, showing that they are actively and successfully reproducing.

2. *The tamarisk beetles are eating the spiny aster!*

LIKELY FICTION: Some astute observers noticed a beetle that looks surprisingly like the tamarisk beetle munching away on native spiny aster. Luckily, it is in fact a native beetle in the genus *Disonycha*. It is much more brightly colored and has very distinct yellow and black strips. We do appreciate keen observations so please keep your eyes peeled and report any suspicious beetle activity to us.

3. *Once the beetle has eaten and killed the tamarisk, other nasty exotic/invasive plants will take its place.*

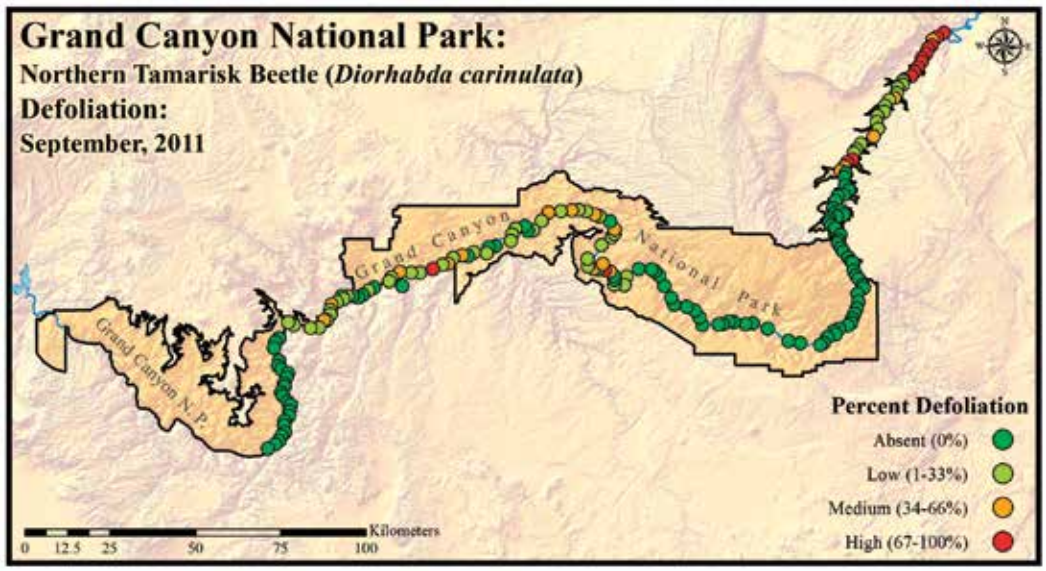
ONLY TIME WILL TELL, BUT HERE'S OUR BEST GUESS: It is not uncommon for other invasive plant species to initially increase and fill areas from which invasive plants have been removed. Often physical removal of non-native plants disturbs the soil and creates a



Levels of beetle defoliation in June, 2011.
(L. Jamison)



Levels of beetle defoliation in August, 2011.
(L. Jamison)



Levels of beetle defoliation in September, 2011.
(L. Jamison)



Typical tamarisk defoliation in 2011. NPS photo.

great niche for colonization by other invasive plants. The difference between that scenario and what we have with the beetle is that there is no ground disturbance from beetle activity. What people are seeing in Dinosaur National Monument and in other places in Colorado is a slow replacement of tamarisk with native riparian vegetation. We hope to see the same thing in Grand Canyon because so many native species surround tamarisk plants. In time, a large percentage of tamarisk may die, leaving more resources and space for the natives, and there will probably be a gradual replacement of tamarisk with natives.

4. *The tamarisk is dead! And if it is not, it will be soon!*
FICTION: Proper terminology is that the tamarisk have been defoliated, meaning their leaves have

been eaten by the beetles, or perhaps dropped due to stress. Trees that were defoliated throughout the 2011 summer began to re-foliate by September, and will re-foliate this spring. Next May, the river corridor will be green again, but not for long. What researchers are finding elsewhere, such as in Dinosaur National Monument and along the Dolores River, is that the tamarisk trees farther away from the river, such as on terraces, die first. Trees that are closer to the water still have plenty of resources. Larger plants may take up to twenty years to die.

How did you fare in the fact or fiction game? We really want to make sure that the right message is getting out to the public, so if you would like more training or information before the 2012 season, please contact us. We are experiencing a dynamic situation that no one completely understands. We cannot predict the future with absolute certainty, but we will continue to provide updates and keep you informed. Please contact us with any questions, comments, suggestions, or concerns.

Special thanks to Levi Jamison (University of Arizona) for the wonderful maps and field work, to Matt Johnson and Chris Holmes (Northern Arizona University) to the field work and data management, and to the NPS river unit for the excellent logistical support.

Melissa McMaster and Lori Makarick

VEGETATION PROGRAM, GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK
Melissa_Mcmaster@nps.gov and Lori_Makarick@nps.gov

Tales From The Truck—That Day In Crystal

IT WAS A BRIGHT, warm sunny morning in early October 1990 or 1991 when we pulled over to scout on river right above Crystal Rapid. We were the seventeen kayakers on the first Otter Bar kayak trip supported by Sleight Expeditions, with Walt Gregg our trip leader. The old “power and glory” wave was still there in those days and after a thorough examination, most of the kayakers chose the dicey, but far easier line—start in the middle and book-it to the right; but not too hard too soon, but, hard.

Our lead kayaker, Phil DeRiemer, ran first, briefly, very briefly, surfing on the face of that big ol’ monster’s steep wave face, before being swallowed and spit out the back of the wave into the meat of the rapid doing a front ender. The right run looked even better than before!

One of our rafts made the run successfully and then came the kayakers. I was in my Dancer XT and as my desire, ran early and was set up in a roiling river right eddy. Just to my left was the last hole to beat for a good run. See me? I’m safe—paddle like hell and join me! Most of the kayakers made the line pretty well, but I had to leave my relative safety to help bring a kayaker into shore after he got Maytagged in the bottom right hole, but now the kayakers were through and the rest of the rafts were on the water setting up for their runs.

Kristen Fagen, rowing the baggage boat, an eighteen-foot, orange Rogue bucket-boat, set up her entry for the river left raft run in the pool at the top of the rapid. As she skirted to the left of sure disaster in the monster maw, the raft was violently hammered by

the frenzied waves off the left wall below and though the raft remained fairly high and dry, she was unceremoniously launched high and inevitably wet, out of the boat and into the chaos below. The classic, “Oh #&%@!” sprang spontaneously from my lips as I peeled out into the rapid to try to grab her before she helplessly washed down onto the island. In my peripheral vision I saw the empty raft being tossed around ferociously, but I lost sight of it as I ferried out above the river right hole. I made it out into madness and Kristin caught my stern as she swept by. She pulled her upper body partially up on my back deck and we struggled back to river right.

Walt ran behind Kristen with one passenger that day and had only a moment to assess the situation below him. After smoothly making his line he was able to somehow reach Kristen’s raft and tugboat the heavily loaded, errant Rogue into that miniscule pocket eddy in the rock wall on river left, above the island. Walt’s passenger, a slight Asian woman, the girlfriend of one of the kayakers, who hadn’t said a dozen words the whole trip, glanced back at him from the front of the raft, with eyes already the size of saucers; don’t know what he said to her, but damned if she didn’t jump up on the front tube of Walt’s raft and leap into the empty raft, grab the outside oar and try to help hold the raft in position! Talk about raising the bar!

I looked at Kristen, now standing knee deep in the eddy surveying her predicament. We both knew what had to be done and we only had seconds to act, but neither of us was all that hot for the idea. So it goes.

“You ready to go?” I yelled over the roar of the rapid.

She gave me a look that said, “Are you effing crazy?” as she scrambled over the rocks and lay out over my back deck. With her fingers tightly gripping the back of my cockpit through the sprayskirt we pushed off to try to make the ferry across the bottom of the rapid to her temporarily corralled boat.

You work pretty hard safety boating on the river

pulling kayakers out of the gnarliest places, but you work real hard when you’re holding a ferry angle across lower Crystal above the island with a VIP on your back deck. With most of her body out of the water I was able to make pretty good progress as we moved left against the current. I kept my eye on the top of the eddy where her raft was being held by Walt’s continuous tug-boating with his raft. I have no idea how he held his ground in that current, but he did.

There wasn’t going to be a lot of room when we got

there. Basically I was going to try to bring my boat alongside her raft, dodge the oar and hope I could hold on long enough for Kristen to make the insane move from my back deck over the tube into the raft. I *really* didn’t want to come in too low and get involved with Walt as he worked with Herculean effort to keep Kristen’s raft bouncing off the river left wall. Then there was the passen-



Creek in his kayak.

ger wielded oar. At that moment I don’t think either Kristen or I felt that we had thought this out real well.

I hit the side of her raft high and hard. The raft left no room in the eddy for my kayak, there was going to be no pausing, so the moment I hit the outside raft tube Kristen, timing it perfectly, pushed up off my deck, grabbed the oarlock and was pulled in the raft by her very shaken new best friend. Hooray for those passengers! Who knew she was so strong?

Meanwhile, back in the kayak, I caromed off the side tube, passed under the oar and was able to get a ferry angle that took me around Walt’s raft which was pulling free back into the rapid, then down the left side of the island, followed closely by two rafts.

ABC Eddy never felt so good.

Creek Hanauer

Bruce Helin

MY MOM STARTED LOOKING at meteorites with Bruce Murray and Gene Shoemaker who started the first lunar laboratory there at Cal Tech, and during that start-up she was doing some more classes in geology, and as part of one of those they did a San Juan river trip.

STEIGER: She got introduced to river running by Gene Shoemaker? Wow.

HELIN: Yeah, Gene and Bob Sharp, and a bunch of folks out of Cal Tech, and some other folks who it turns out were mutual friends of George Wendt. So she did a San Juan trip...and she just had a ball with this bunch, and they decided “Hey, this was a lot of fun in itself.” Even if they weren’t studying geology. So they stayed in touch, and Bruce Julian was a part of that gang. He was a mutual friend of George. Turns out they’d grown up very close to each other in the Pacific Palisades, so there was that connection. And George had one old boat which they’d borrowed for this first field trip. George had done—I think George and Bruce actually did a passenger trip down to Phantom with Hatch in like the mid-sixties, something like that.

STEIGER: In order to practice up, because they wanted to run the river?

HELIN: Right, exactly. So yeah, that was in their mind, and they decided to do a Middle Fork trip first, Middle Fork of the Salmon. It was just these folks doin’ it for fun, and my father and I joined probably a dozen or so people, and George. I forget who-all was on that trip, but did a Middle Fork trip, absolutely blind and clueless. Did it late August, 1966, in the worst drought year in ten years. Nobody knew to check water levels or anything like that. Just went out and did it. We were figurin’ five days for the trip. It ended up taking us three days to get to Indian Creek. Broke every oar we had, and ended up taking about eight days. The Flying B Ranch was kind enough to give us enough food to finish the trip.

STEIGER: So...you guys put in at Dagger Falls, and went right around the corner, and immediately got hammered?

HELIN: Oh, just got hammered. We completely lost a boat to an undercut down in Haystack. Somebody parked in some fast water and left it, and it was gone when they came back, but the bowline was still there. One thing I remember distinctly is that nobody remembered to bring any silverware, so everything was eaten with fingers. You stuck your finger in the jam jar or the peanut butter. That was all there was.

STEIGER: Now, wait. The bowline was still there?

HELIN: Yeah, the boat was underwater, wrapped around this undercut rock. It blew a couple black bags out, and six or eight months later a ranger sent one back to somebody whose name was in it. The boat was an old seven-man, and it turns out it was just a perfect wrap underwater. The shreds were there for months. I saw only the aftermath really, of trying to cut the boat out. Basically, it was fast water, close to shore, and there was a big rock, maybe three or four feet offshore that had a good strong channel to the shore side of it. And they just kind of stopped the boat up against that rock and tied off with the nose to shore and left to come back to check something out. Well, in the interim, somehow the upstream tube had sucked and gone under. Just rolled under, and it was this super undercut rock, and literally you could see just a little of the top of the tube underwater. They went as far as slicing the whole thing open—one side and then the other, hopin’ it would pull out one side or the other. It just was gone. Meanwhile, our boat was falling apart bad. I spent a lot of time standing in the back of George’s boat, pumping...I probably pumped the last ten or fifteen miles of the Middle Fork that first trip, just to keep the boat afloat, ’cause it was leakin’ air so bad. But I just had a ball. We got down to the take-out and I found a rattlesnake under a table or something, and I always liked snakes, so the thing kinda clicked. Well, I was twelve or so, and it just stuck.

Basically, months later, everybody had a great time, but at the end of that trip, everybody was about ready to shoot each other, and was covered with scabs and bruises from sliding over rocks and pushing off here and fending off there. It was just a fiasco trip, but the bottom line was everybody had a great time. “Hey, we can do a lot better next time, now that we know *kind of* what we’re doing.” So it was, “Okay, let’s do Grand Canyon next year!” (laughter) Fine.

* * *

When you think of people who’ve influenced river-running in Grand Canyon over the last fifty years, a long list springs instantly to mind. But narrow that down to those who have really made a difference, and it’s hard to conjure up anybody (not named Martin Litton or David Brower) who’s had a more positive impact on more boatmen overall (and done it more quietly) than Bruce Helin.

On the equipment end, motor-wise, we have Ron Smith and Dave Demaree to give eternal thanks to. Dory-wise: Martin Litton and Jerry Briggs. Rowing in general: Vladimir Kovalik and all the manufacturers

he partnered with over the years for key inflatable boat strides (and Ron Smith there, too).

But when it comes to oar-powered technology in Grand Canyon, nobody has done more—for us all—than Big Old Bruce. The absolutely bomber frames he designed and built for the entire commercial sector have had a monumental affect for the better. Every snot-nosed kid who's come along after the fact will never really know, honestly, how much easier and safer life on the river got with Bruce's frames and side-boxes and other gear. The frames are indestructible, maintenance free, flexible, and simple.

Beyond equipment design in general, though, we pretty much owe the whole concept of rental gear and the "Painless Private" to Bruce, too. He's got a little competition now, but he definitely invented that whole business here.

Bruce grew up in the Grand Canyon, working for George Wendt and OARS since the late 1960's. Along the way, with Sobek Expeditions, he ran trips on the Tatshensheni in Alaska, the Omo in Ethiopia, the Zambezi in Zambia and Zimbabwe, the Bio-Bio in Chile, and the Coruh in Turkey, among others.

The company Bruce and his beautiful bride Nancy run now—PRO, which rents complete trip packages to private boaters—has been going strong in Grand Canyon for almost thirty years. This interview was started in 1998 and added to on a Sobek reunion trip in the fall of 2006.

* * *

I was born in Pasadena, California; grew up there until I was thirteen or fourteen, then moved up to Camarillo for a few years, and went to UC Santa Barbara. Did biology and physics there. Got to know Rod Nash there. Had him for a prof, yeah. Basically my folks—Ron and Eleanor Helin—were from Pasadena and met in High School. My mother went to Occidental, my father went to Cal Tech. My mother graduated with a degree in geology, and my father was a mechanical engineer. My mother had me about two or three months after she graduated, and she went back to work when I was five or six, at Cal Tech.

* * *

One of the crazy coincidences—George Wendt was an algebra teacher down at a junior high school in the Palisades, and it turns out that Ed Gooch was a print shop teacher at that same junior high school. We needed him to do the first Grand Canyon trip we did. The one requirement then that we had to work at to fulfill

was somebody on the trip had to have been down before. That was one of the park regs at that point. And so George had been down *partway*, to Phantom Ranch, but he hadn't been down *all* the way. Somehow, George found Ed at the school he was working at, and they were two rather different individuals, but we had a meeting with everybody...Ed had been a boatman for Georgie in the mid-fifties. Yeah, he was the old sly dog boatman of his era. I forget, he worked for Georgie three or four years, had a lot of great stories. But he was interested in going down, again, with us. And so he was the ticket to get us on the water.

STEIGER: And Gooch-Wendt Expeditions was born?

HELIN: Yeah, basically. That was 1967. And then we just did private trips in 1968 and 1969. In 1970 they decided to start tryin' to run commercial trips. And yeah, it was Gooch-Wendt Expeditions. The problem with that name was everybody was always askin', "Where did Gooch go?" Ed spent a lot of time out on the rez. Well, he came out to do Georgie trips, and also became a trader in jewelry. It was a time when Indian jewelry was just booming in the California area, late sixties, early seventies. So Ed still has a business, Indian Arts of California, or something like that. He saw that was just all of a sudden going gangbusters, and he had all the right connections, so he bowed out, sold his interest in the company, end of 1970, early 1971, something like that.

STEIGER: Well, how'd that first Grand Canyon trip go?

HELIN: Basically, I think we had a great case of beginner's luck. We had...it was basically called a ten-man life raft. It wasn't a basket boat; it was one step up from a basket boat and a step down from an assault boat.

STEIGER: From a ten-man assault boat? My first boat was one of those. Those were bomber!

HELIN: Oh, those were great. I still have one of my first...It has a turned-up end, which we called the snout at OARS. Of course, kind of a misnomer. But it was a ten-man assault boat with a kicked-up nose. I've still got it over in the shop. I used to row it in the early seventies for OARS. But on that first trip we had these ten-man rafts, the splash bumpers were just a little bit smaller than the main tubes—probably fourteen-, sixteen-inch main tubes, and big ol' bumpers. And we did a triple, because Gooch had always...That's what Georgie did. We did run a single boat with it, just to try it, but they figured that the aircraft carrier was the safest way. So we literally went down and bought two of the boats brand new from Pally's Surplus in Santa Monica for twenty-five dollars apiece. Took 'em to the home of a guy named Curt Quebler, who was a



Marble Canyon Lodge, 1967 "Enjoying my mother's shade."
 l-r Unknown, Bruce and Renee Julian, unknown, John Winslow, George Wendt, Bruce and Eleanor Helin.
 Photo taken by Ron Helin.

Porsche mechanic. He had a little backyard down in Santa Monica where we unloaded the boats, got back and pulled the string. You know, these are all set up with their CO₂ cartridges.

STEIGER: To inflate 'em?

HELIN: Yeah, these were brand new surplus. So we popped those and spent the next couple days taking all the sunscreens and the rations and all the plumbing out of 'em, and trying to retrofit 'em somehow with a valve that we could inflate 'em with, with just a manual pump, instead of their CO₂ stuff. Then somebody had the great idea of—oh, they'd seen some boats that were painted silver, because the black was hot. So they agreed that was a great idea. The only problem was they just went down to the local hardware store, got some silver aluminum paint, and it was my job to paint these boats, which I did. Much to everybody's chagrin, about the second or third day, everybody realized the boats were turning black again, and everybody was turning silver. It was hilarious. Yeah, they were just little life rafts, no frames or anything. At the metal shop at this Paul Revere Junior High School, they radiused a couple of pieces of flat—I think it was brass—

and kind of folded up the edges and put a couple of bolts up through 'em. So you glued this piece of brass to the top of the tube, and you bolted on an oarlock holder, basically, and that was your frame. It was just glued onto each side of the boat tube. And hey, you've got seats so why wouldn't you sit on the seat that's in the boat? That kind of thing. We have some old home movies that are pretty funny: everybody low riding, because of course they didn't hold air worth shit.

But no, actually things went really smooth. Ed was runnin' the single boat. Well, let's see, Bruce Julian and George were primary boatmen on the triple. Everybody switched off, but those guys did most of the rapids. I think Ed flipped in House Rock. I think that was the first, "Oh, wow!" The triple, I remember spending a lot of time tying it up. They were thorough about having ties this way and that. There were a bunch of engineers along. Sometimes it was a step forward, sometimes it was a step back, but it all worked. Crystal was the big scare. We were also on edge because of some news we got from the ranger at the Ferry. Shorty Burton had died in Upset like a week before we launched, so there was kinda that little bit

of a pall goin' on around that. Yeah, I think it'd come back to the ranger up at the Ferry. I can't remember who the ranger was at that point. But all went well. We went down and stopped at Phantom, got to know Roy Starkey. He was the USGS guy down there for a long time, until they got automated gauges.

Probably the biggest ride we had was Crystal, and it was a half-year old or something at that point. We almost canceled the trip because of that, because we'd heard so many horror stories and "there's no way to get through," or "you're gonna hafta portage it" and all this. There wasn't much reliable information I can remember. It was kinda, "Well, let's just give it a try." Got down there and I think we must have just basically gone down the left side.

STEIGER: What was the water runnin'?

HELIN: I'd have to guess. My mother kept a journal on that trip. There was good water, probably ten to twenty, twenty-five, somewhere in there—big fluctuations. I was right in the back boat, and we had to have just gone right on down the wall and through the hole. I was in the back of the triple, which is always just the whipper. I'm hangin' on, but the guy—it was Bruce and this fellow... Oh, we had this insane way of holding an oarlock on. The guy in the back would

have one or both hands on the oar... You'd always run on the triple with an oar front and an oar back. But we were running full ring oarlocks, not the open type. A complete ring around the oars, so nobody wanted to put a pin through the shaft of the oarlock to lock it in, because they figured they'd just really break a lot of oars that way, 'cause there's no way for it to pop out. So instead, since we had the extra bodies around, they tied a piece of string through the hole... It was tied to the little hole in the bottom of the oarlock, and then the other end of that about, oh, four or five feet long, to a piece on the boat somewhere. So there'd be one guy rowing, but in through any of the rapids there'd be another guy facing him and keeping tension on this string with his finger. So he's holding on with one hand, and holding...

STEIGER: Keeping tension to keep...

HELIN: The oarlock down into this block we'd made. So it was kinda like a tensioned oarlock retainer. But if it had pulled up hard enough, it would just rip the string off his finger and it would let loose. But if he didn't have tension on it... I mean, nobody knew what they were doin' rowin'-wise, so they had a tendency of poppin' the oar out of this thing all the time. Anyway, I remember... the only reason I was still in the boat



John Winslow and boats, 1967. Photo taken by Ron & Eleanor Helin.

through Crystal was because I could hold on with both hands. We just got this great whip comin' over the top—there goes Bruce Julian, and I think it was Dick Shay, (sproing!) flying out. And I ended up hauling 'em back in. But that was just the action of the rear boat comin' over one of those big waves.

I think I was thirteen on that trip. Yeah, that was it. I was thirteen, I turned fourteen at Diamond Creek. George's birthday is a day later than mine, so we've always done doubles from about that point on for a good many years. His birthday is the nineteenth of July.

So, oh gosh, you know, we really did pretty darned well on that trip. And it was such high water that it was pretty forgiving. I remember at the very end, pulling into Diamond Creek, and what happened? Well, this flash flood came rolling through. The crazy learning experiences, they'd opted for doing the shuttle after the trip, and figured it was gonna take two days. Of course, we had arranged to have Pete Byers—you remember Pete at the Shell station?

STEIGER: Yeah, you bet. He took care of Fred [Burke], too. Pete was always like "Our man in Peach Springs." He took care of a lot of people.

HELIN: I'm sure he did, in that good old Dodge two-ton—he, Jesse and Johnny. One way or another, we made contact with Pete, and he brought one of the

vehicles—just a mid-fifties truck or whatever—down to pick up a couple of people, and then they had to drive back around to Lees and bring vehicles around. It just was... I think it was literally two-and-a-half days. I think my birthday was the first day. You know, July 18, nice cool time of year. But it was fine, we just messed around there, and finally the vehicles came through. Just the first of many dusty, bumpy Diamond Creek rides. I remember Mexican Hat had a bunch of boats stacked up there waiting for the road to get a little better to haul out a bunch of their old flatboats on a trailer there.

STEIGER: A bunch of the wood boats?

HELIN: Yeah. I don't know how long they'd been there, but they looked like somebody had just parked a trailer and was waitin' for another vehicle. Diamond Creek had flooded. We just barely got out, bouncin' all over the place.

STEIGER: So they were still runnin' their wood boats? I'll be damned. Now, what year was that again?

HELIN: 1967.

STEIGER: I thought Gaylord had already gone over to motor-rigs by then.

HELIN: I think that was 1970 or so. I have very fond memories of seeing Gaylord cruisin' down under the bridge with his steering wheel on an early Canyoneers motor-rig. I think that was the first season he had kind of taken it over or changed the name or whatever, but it seems like that was early seventies. The remote jack-ass. Yeah, he was a proud papa that trip.

STEIGER: Wow. So would that first trip of yours have been a "painful private"? (laughs) In terms of organization, I guess.

HELIN: No, it was pretty good. Ma took over—after seeing the fiasco of the guys working with the food on the Middle Fork—Mom took over the food aspects. She's always been a great cook. I remember my bedroom was lined with grocery bags for about a month before the trip, of her setting up each of the meals and all that. She was very thorough.

STEIGER: Oh, she figured it out? "We're gonna bag this by the meal. We are not gonna..."

HELIN: For a long time, OARS basically ran on her meals from that first trip.

Yeah, we used to... It's gone so many different ways. OARS, for the first—until we got into the aluminum boxes and all that—we used to pack each day's meals in one of the old hard black bags. That's just how we ran it. Exactly, one of the medium-sized bags, and each boat would have three or four 'em under your front seat, in the front of your whatever—assault or Green River. And, of course, each flip you usually lost one of 'em. (laughter) 'Cause they were always the worst



The first of many Diamond Creek takeouts for Bruce, 1967.
Bruce Julian, Ron Helin, Bruce and two unknowns.

Photo taken by Eleanor Helin.

ones, with everything falling off, and the straps tearing and all that. It was always good for a special “chef’s surprise” a couple of times. My favorite was humpback chub stew.

STEIGER: Yeah, it was like all military gear, wasn’t it?

HELIN: Oh, God, that first trip everything... The boats, the oars, the paddles, the life jackets, all the containers, all the soft black bags, waterproof bags. Ninety percent of it. I mean, at some point I think we even had some old rations along on trips for emergency food. “Just go down to the surplus store. They’ll have it.”

STEIGER: Boy, we’ve come a long way in thirty years.

HELIN: Yeah.

STEIGER: Well, in your mind, you liked the Grand Canyon as much as the Middle Fork, huh?

HELIN: Oh, I guess more so. You know, I was catchin’ fish, and...yeah, I just had a ball. Basically I just did anything I could. My folks did that trip, and then they started wantin’ to do other things. They’d done river trips for a year or two and had some fun, so it wasn’t lookin’ like there was gonna be another family vacation in that realm, so I just kind of pursued it. I just pestered the poor guys. Really, I’ve always respected them quite a bit because they actually were even willing to consider taking a thirteen-, fourteen-year-old kid along with ’em.

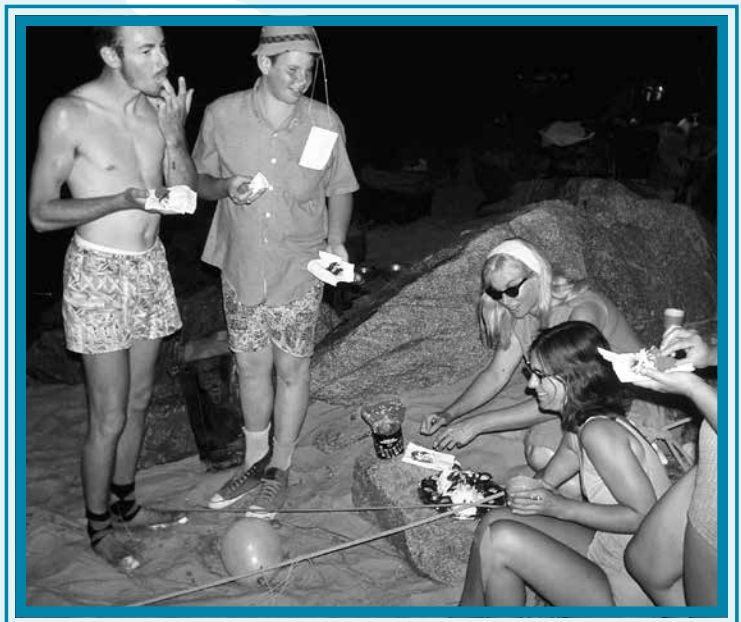
STEIGER: You were a big kid, though, weren’t you?

HELIN: Oh, I was a big kid, and I could help ’em with stuff, but probably my saving grace or ability was that because I’d been raised in the kitchens of my mother and grandmothers, who were good cooks, I could cook. I basically said, “Hey, I will cook every meal, I will wash every dish. Just let me come along.” That worked. And then I’d spend most of the trips tryin’ to talk ’em into lettin’ me row their boats. Little steps.

We went on through the sixties, and 1970 came around, and George asked, “Hey, do you want to row a boat?” It turned out that he actually got some bookings, and there was nobody around who knew what the hell it meant to be a boatman. There were very few people that didn’t think he was totally nuts, and nobody had done it. So I got my own boat, did a couple of trips. I think one was a freebie and the other one I got paid ten dollars a day or something like that. I don’t think the Park noticed then, but a year or so later they got kinda uptight about my age. I was either sixteen or seventeen, but I was a big kid. One situation always stuck in my mind I got a big kick out of: I think it was my second trip that year. A real nice couple got on my boat, and we were rowin’ ten-mans at that point. Or we might have had a couple of assault boats, but



1967, my early attempt at trout eradication. Bruce, Ed Gooch, and three unknowns. Photo taken by Ron & Eleanor Helin.



Second night at Diamond Creek celebrating birthdays, 1967 - my 14th and George’s 24th - George, Bruce, Eleanor Helin and unknown. Photo taken by Ron Helin



Bruce, Ron Helin, Bruce Julian, unknown and John Winslow. Photo taken by Eleanor Helin.

mostly in ten-mans. And just headin' down to Badger and struck up a conversation, of course. It finally came down, "Gosh, how old are you?" (laughter) I was well aware we were stretching things, but I told 'em. They were very nice. The husband and wife quickly conversed rather quietly up front. We were comin' up to Badger, and of course we built it up, it's the first big rapid and all this. "Gosh, you know, can you pull over? We would really love to take pictures of everybody goin' through this rapid, and walk on around." (chuckles) They were being very nice about it, it was very clear what was going on, but they were very nice. "Oh, sure, no problem at all." I kind of pulled on ahead of everybody else and got 'em down there. Then they watched George and Ed go through, and I think there was a fellow named Tom in the other boat. And then I rowed through and got down and picked 'em up. They never got out of my boat for the rest of the trip. But yeah, just started doing trips when I was in high school. It was just the greatest summertime deal.

STEIGER: On those first two commercial trips, what was the equipment like then? You were sayin' it was still the ten-mans. It was the same stuff, huh? The ten-mans and the military surplus bags.

HELIN: Yeah. I had my first flip watching the guy in front of me. I was worried about the guy flipping in an assault boat. Only I did not realize that I was going in exactly the same place in a ten-man raft. He did a tube stand, and I flipped. What really pissed me off is it didn't have a name, or a name that we knew of at that point. And I still never really figured out whether it's an old name that we just didn't know about, or whether somebody gave it that name later—but, Indian Dick. Yeah, I think we started gettin' some Green Rivers from Ron Smith in like 1972 or 1973.

STEIGER: I remember seein' you at Deer Creek with the big old felt hat, kind of a Hoss Cartwright hat. But that was in Green Rivers by then. I remember those boats. Did you have OARS written on those—or was it Gooch-Wendt still?

HELIN: No, it was OARS. I mean, it was a hodgepodge. You probably couldn't have told it from most of the privates at that point in time.

STEIGER: But how many private trips were there, for cryin' out loud?

HELIN: Not very many. We used to run into—oh, I remember meetin' Francois Leydet down at Havasu one time, with a bunch of yahoos. Martin Litton was on it, a private trip they were doin'...and Fred Eise-man.

STEIGER: Well, that trip with Francois Leydet, I bet that was *Time and the River Flowing*. That might've been for that book.

HELIN: Yeah. I remember seein' 'em at Havasu. I think it was the first time I'd seen dories.

STEIGER: Those wild boats they had back then. But they were all different.

HELIN: Yeah, exactly, it was the full menagerie. But Fred had a bunch of nice ones. You know, Fred...I think he was another ex-Georgie guy.

STEIGER: He must be a smart guy.

HELIN: Fred. He had some beautiful dories. I remember runnin' into him a couple of times. But yeah, there weren't that many private trips, you're right.

STEIGER: I don't remember many. I mean, I don't know, 'cause I was clueless anyway. But I do remember kind of recognizing everybody. My first memories of OARS, my real distinct ones were actually of you and who else? Like Dave Shore and Terry Brian. (**HELIN:** Sure.) And those Green Rivers. And your loads started on the top of the tubes and went up from there. That's what I remember. Well, pretty much everybody's load did.

HELIN: Exactly. Oh, God, you gotta have that cooler on top of that back deck.

STEIGER: Well, everything. The whole load was so much higher than it is now.

HELIN: Yeah. We ran the same boats for a few years. You're doin' two-by-eight, two-by-ten frames. Oh, we had thole pins that I think were a foot-and-a-half tall. Pinned oars, drilled-through pinned oars. Drilled through the oar to strap on a piece of tire. It took 'em a few years to figure out that that wouldn't work.

STEIGER: Did they break a lot there?

HELIN: Yeah, exactly—especially after they had a year or two to rot. First we used those closed—just full-ring oarlocks that you had to put on permanently. And we were usin' leathers. The wraps and all were latigo leather, with the collars and all that. You're out there with your brass tacks and doin' all that. And then went to, I think, open oarlocks for a year or two, and then somewhere George picked up a couple of these assault boats that somebody had used for river running, and they came with frames with these huge thole pins. Basically, I think it was the fact that you could train somebody to row a boat much quicker with the pin than you can with an oarlock. And so went to those and stayed with those for probably four or five years. I think it was Terry that finally just called bullshit on it. He got himself a set of oars and a pair of oarlocks and kind of bushed his frame back over to holding an oarlock. So then everybody went back to oarlocks at that point. There was just this back and forth for a number of years.

STEIGER: Was there kind of a revolving door crew at OARS, or was there a core crew pretty soon?

HELIN: It was, I'd have to say, there was a very solid core crew. Basically, George and Ed and Dave Shore and Tom Winchester and I and one or two others ran the majority of the trips for the first couple of years. Well, in 1972, Terry Brian and Skip Horner came on. I took Terry's parents down in 1971, and apparently they went back and told Terry—he was just gettin' out of school. "Hey, go out and try this! There's a kid younger than you rowin' a boat. You can probably even get a job." So Terry Brian and Skip Horner showed up. I think it was spring of 1972. And about that time, Ed and George stopped doing trips. There was another fellow named John Ganahl, who was kinda the first—yeah, Ganahl was the first person to lead a trip at OARS, Grand Canyon trip, besides George. I saw him last at Shore's wedding. But anyway, Skip and Terry came in, and they were rowin' boats after their second or third trip. It was just trial by fire. Then it was Shore and I and Terry and Skip; and folks like Bruce Klepinger, Liz Hymans and Neusom Holmes came in the next year. Doc—Steve Nicholson—also jumped aboard. But basically after that, for several years, up until, oh, 1976, 1977, a lot of the trips were some permutation of those, plus in 1974 I think Sam came over from Fort Lee Company—Sam West, Sam Street, whichever moniker you want to...

STEIGER: First he was Sam Street, wasn't he? Then he changed his name to Sam West when he got to the Park Service, or somewhere in there.

HELIN: Yeah. Well, that's closer to his real name. But we'd seen Sammy—for a couple of years we always ran into him at Deer Creek. And he was running Fort Lee trips. Tony [Sparks] would have three or four people on a trip, and Sam with one of the huge boats. And Sam liked to cook. I think he'd usually done a roast turkey or something the night before, and we were on "C" rations or whatever, so whenever we'd see Sam, we figured it was good for a meal. But Sam wanted to come over and do some rowing. Sam introduced OARS to coolers. We never carried a cooler until Sam came over.

STEIGER: He said, "Just take a cooler.?"

HELIN: Yeah, "Just take a cooler." (laughter) So that was the great change there. That's when all of a sudden these huge coolers started appearing on the back of people's boats, way high. But yeah, strange little additions...he also introduced dish soap and soap, period. We never used to take soap for kitchen or anything like that. We'd just clean everything in the sand. "It works fine." Sam brought in soap. It's kinda scary.

* * *

Yeah. Shore and Skip, Terry and I did a lot of trips together. And Sam a bit later, through probably the mid or late seventies. It was just the classic pieces of a puzzle. We were all very different. But we complemented each other. It was a great match-up and because we only did a few double trips, there's rarely openings for another crew. And what actually happened at OARS to take care of that—because obviously we had some experienced people that had come on just a year later or something, and they couldn't get a trip. They had kind of what they called the "roving crew." They'd go around and do, oh, San Juans and Cataracts and Rogues.

STEIGER: 'Cause George was tryin' to develop other stuff? He had this idea. Wanted to expand, to diversify?

HELIN: Yeah. That was the days of doing a lot of half-day and one-day and one-night "Stans"—Stanislaus trips—and gettin' into the Tuolumne and tryin' on things like the Merced and of course the American and all that. California was gettin' to be big time, but, for people that wanted to get past the one-day scene... literally, it started with a bus George would just send around. He'd schedule the various trips, and the roving crew would just drive from launch to take-out, launch to take-out. We started first doin' Stanislaus trips probably in—my last couple of years at Santa Barbara—so it was like 1974, 1975. I used to commute from Santa Barbara to Angel's Camp for one-night Stans on the weekends during school. That didn't do much for my studies. But then the roving crew started in the next couple of years. I think Rogue was one of the first ones, and San Juan. Yeah, George has just always been puttin' trips on in different places.

STEIGER: I didn't realize Grand Canyon was where he started. I assumed he started in California.

HELIN: No. See, that was what really... There was enough added business from the Stanislaus, that's when George made the jump of quitting teaching, moving out of Santa Monica, moving up to Angel's Camp, and doing it full-time. I think that was probably 1973 or '74, something like that—while Pam was still Nursing. Yeah, that was the big step, and "Okay, we're really gonna make a business out of this."

STEIGER: "So let's get goin'?"

HELIN: Yeah. And just expanded from there.

* * *

STEIGER: Okay, I remember the equipment suddenly went through this—and it seemed like it was overnight—it went through this incredible evolution, and all of a sudden it was cool.

HELIN: In reality, it was probably about four years of

changing.

STEIGER: How did all that go?

HELIN: It was simply a fact of what we had was so bad. I really enjoyed what I was doing, but I could just see a lot of ways that it could be done better. Probably a lot of the ideas were just from lookin' at other people's boats, or how the people would approach different situations or loads and that kind of thing. You know, we just went through this...Remember, our first frame was gluing a brass plate onto the tube of a boat. The next step was two-by-eights. And that really stayed with us 'til Sobek came along. I first

heard of Sobek sitting in the "Dino," an old converted bus we used for a shuttle vehicle going back and forth with trips. Richard Bangs was trying to sell George on giving him some boats for an exploratory and he had this log about running into hippos and crocs and all kinds of stuff that didn't sound right, but he seemed fairly serious about it, so that's where I met Richard and that's where George kind of got Shanghaied into getting involved with Sobek. My interest got pricked about that point in time but I was just starting college, so had to listen to everybody go off and have a good time in Ethiopia for a few years while I was still finishing school, 'cause I knew I'd never go back if I didn't finish school. I guess my first actual Sobek stuff—and it wasn't even Sobek yet, but it turned into Sobek—was Alaska, late seventies, went up and did—after Stan Boor and Richard had done the exploratory on the Tatshensheni, we took the "Magic Bus" up the next year and did a few Tat trips. We needed some frames that we could fly out, because of the Dry Bay fly out situation. I had been lookin' at it, I'm tryin' to talk George into various things, but you know, George was always "If it works, don't play with it, it's fine." And here I'm coming from...

STEIGER: "I have to use this."

HELIN: Right...that, and I've got—my father's a mechanical engineer, and some of that rubbed off, and I did study some physics and all that. "Hey, look, this could be a lot better; this could be a lot more user-friendly. It may cost a little bit, but hey, if we're



*Entering Deep Throat on the Zambezi, 1982.
Craig Alexander in the front with passengers.*

gonna do this for a while, we're gonna spend so many months down here a year...Well hell, I'll just do it for myself." Oh, I think George financed a couple of the less expensive things, but basically in the winter I'd take off and just play with something. The first year in Alaska we had these little steel frames that we'd kinda break apart, but really more fell apart, so we could fly 'em out. They were extremely frustrating and very hard to use. So I came back, and I was helpin' manage California in the spring of 1978, something like that, and George somehow had this—somebody had shown up with this thing and was calling it a frame, but it was just some pieces of tube with some fittings on it.

STEIGER: Speed rail!

HELIN: Speed rail. And I'm going, "Gosh, some of this stuff looks pretty good!" But some of what they had done was just, "Well, this doesn't make any sense." We had the impetus of Alaska, "We don't wanna hafta mess with those steel frames this year. What can we do different?" So basically this was a Gilbert Erector set. I took things apart, and I was able to finally get a catalog of all the different pieces. The guy who had built the first one had an idea, but with a little more lookin', there were some better fittings that were more appropriate for certain uses. So, "Hey, I can put together a real simple little frame here that you can take down to a bunch of fittings and a couple pieces of pipe. This'll be great for Alaska!" So I did those, just the very simple ones, and I went, "Well gosh, I can doll this up a little bit more, put in a couple more support

bars, and make it bigger, and it might work out better on the Grand Canyon trips, it'll hold more." So I did a definitely Gilbert Erector set—this had probably ten or fifteen fittings in it—frame, and used it for a season in Grand Canyon, and it worked out great, bein' able to move oarlocks around at angles and things like that. That was neat. Adjustable oarlocks. But one of the nice things about the old wood frames was the fact you could walk on the wood. We had a front board in the old rig for a seat, and we'd stand up black bags underneath it, and then have a big old table board across the back, and that's where we'd put the cooler, or what we called our kitchen box, "Big Bertha." But we kept the thwarts in. We figured we needed 'em—I mean, I don't think it had really dawned on us early on to even take 'em out, 'cause we thought we needed

to what we're doin' right now. That worked great, but there was painted wood, and steel that would rust. Dick McCallum, I think, had already done some aluminum diamond-plate frames. I can't remember, but I think he had pulled like one thwart out of a boat or something at that point, too.

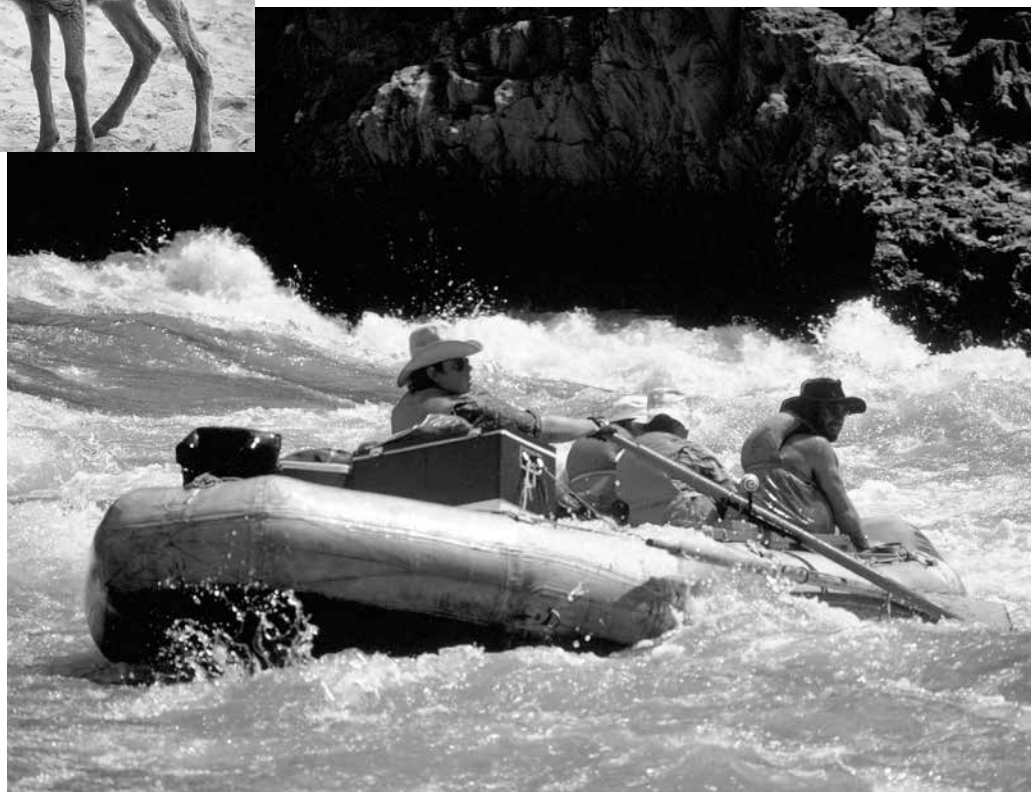
I don't think there's that much original thought in the design—it's just taking things that I'd seen done before and kind of pullin' 'em all together and see if I could incorporate 'em. And it was, I think like 1980, I wanted to build an all aluminum frame but George wasn't buying it. I guess my projections of the cost of doing the next step in aluminum was just more than he even wanted to think about.

I think it was the winter of 1980 that I had made arrangements to get the demo boat from the year before through Jerry Sehigh at Avon, one of the new design Spirits, which seemed to have the right tube size and configuration for what I wanted to do, and it had removable thwarts. During the winter, I used to help a friend run a kind of a custom auto shop in the Ventura area, and he had a tube bender. I started playin' with alloys and finding some tube that would bend and do what I needed, and went down and found a place in LA that would sell me some pieces of diamond plate and built a new



*"Feeding the wildlife."
Bighorn lamb, 1977.*

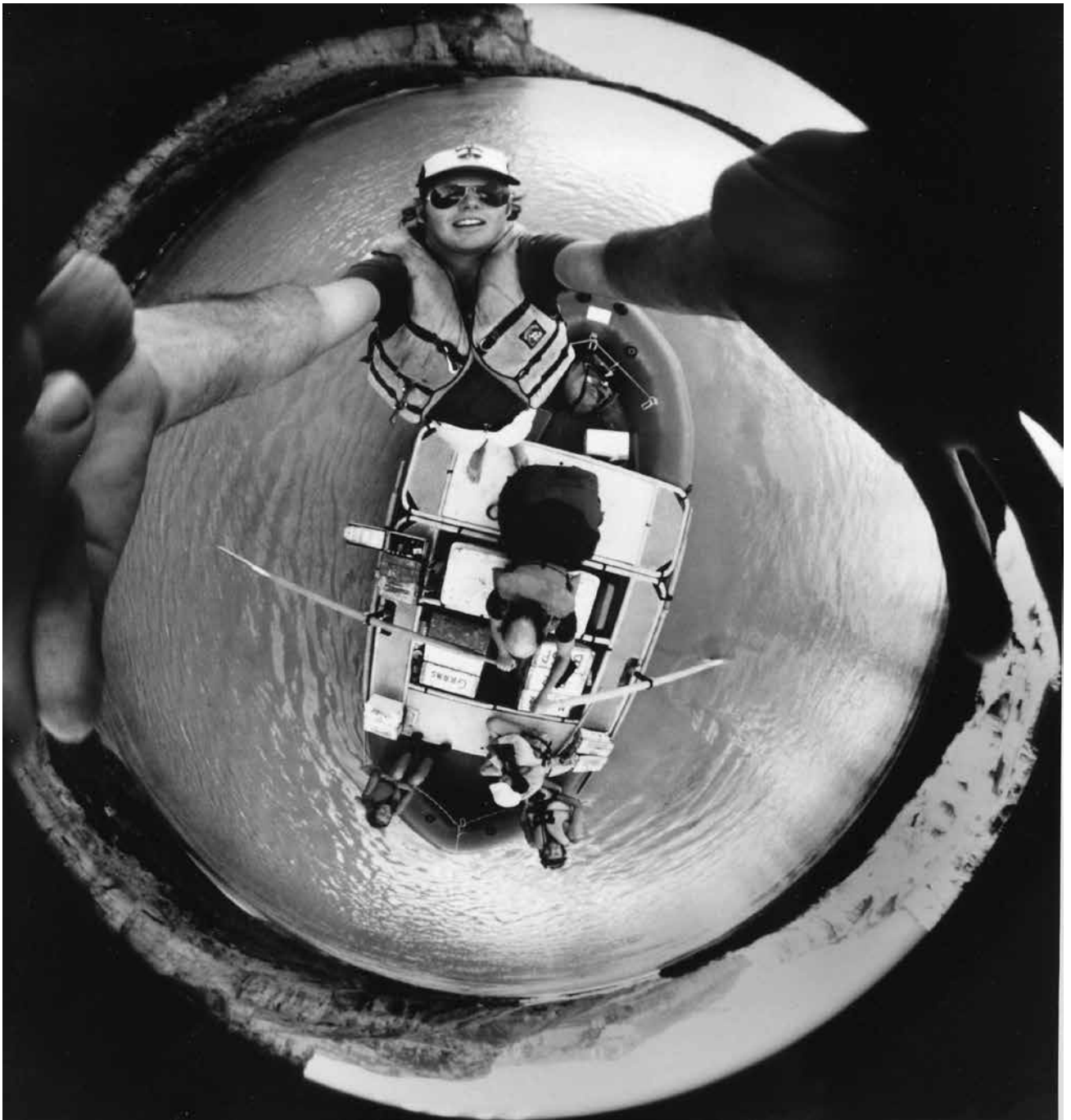
'em for flotation. But as the boats changed—like those Havasu IIs were the first—and they were probably only twenty-inch, but they were bigger tubes than anything we'd seen, and it made the thwarts be a little less important. So I did that strictly speed rail frame for a year, and it was fine, but it was nice being able to have something flat to walk on. I've never been one with grace, poise, and elegance, and having a nice flat place to walk up and down your boat was a nice thing. So the next year, I made a steel one, because the aluminum one had been pretty expensive, and George would go for lettin' me build a steel one with some little wooden inset decks, very similar



Crystal, 1974.

frame in the course of a winter. Then it turns out the folks across the way at this little industrial park made soft goods. They were early, oh, kind of like Tony and Ann Anderson's "Summit" business, making backpacks, wallets, and things like that out of the Cordura, and had industrial machines. So I had got to know those guys and talked them into making me a couple "drop bags" for this frame out of this good, heavy-duty material, in a couple of permutations. The first frame actually had two different types, just to try 'em.

So I think 1981 was the first season I had it out. Oh, God... Well, I took both the thwarts out—that, I think was the main thing that threw everybody off. They'd always figured you can't do that, you're gonna sink, the boat's gonna squeeze together to be two feet wide. I had gone to the trouble of doing interior "D" rings and all this. I went from one extreme to start out with, and just as the trips went by, kept playing with, eliminating certain things. (chuckles) It was great, you could walk around on it, it was really adjustable, it could work for



Fish eye self portrait, 1981. First season of the PRO frame.



Upset Rapid, 2008. My second to last guide trip (before officially retiring).

anybody, but I think the biggest selling point was once the rest of the crew realized I'd already drunk a beer or two by the time they got through untying all their black bags at camp and unloading their boats, I think that was the big leap.

STEIGER: So you made this one frame, and that was your frame?

HELIN: That was my frame, my boat. It was one of those things, my next step, you know, I played around with everything I could. None of George's boats had thwarts you could take out easily. They were all Green Rivers or Grand boats that had glued-in thwarts. I can't blame him, I wouldn't have felt good about cuttin' one of 'em out either, without knowin' how it was gonna work. So I had to go to a different boat to try it in a recoverable fashion, where if it was a completely horrible idea, I could put the thwarts back in and sell the boat. So, yeah, it just was, "Hey, I've got my own thing." I think George gave me a little bit for runnin' it. That was the thing, and then the folks really liked it. The passengers loved it 'cause they had lots of places to lay out. Just a lot more comfortable and a lot easier for them to get around. But it was mainly the fact that—see, we used to tie on every black bag and ammo box; everything with string. We were barely into straps at that point. Anyway I could just take a couple straps off and take twenty pieces of gear out, it was just, "Hey, this is easy!" And I also had done, with that first rig, a

couple of the dry boxes, those aluminum side-boxes, and that was the other thing, "Hey, I've got all my stuff right here." The hilarious thing was my boat would be half empty and the crew would say "God damn it, carry your load!" I'd say, "Okay." I took everything out, and it turned out I had more than any of the loads they were carrying, but it only took up about half the room, just because of the configuration and the boxes and all that. And that's really—I mean, that's when we started bringing down the kitchen sink on OARS trips, because all of a sudden, hey, we've got this huge increase of storage and room. It was pretty funny. I got called on it a couple of times. "Okay, well, you go ahead and add up what you've got on your boat, and come over and see what I got on this boat." "Oh." And just the fact that everybody could row it. You know, whether Joy [Ungrich] was in the rowing seat, she could move things around, and she would be comfortable, and I could turn around in five minutes and row the same boat. And that was, I think, a big thing. Everybody could dial it in.

It's just one of those good combos of I had a little bit of background, and I'd been doin' trips for a while. I knew what worked and what didn't work, and had a direction I was working in. There's very basic things like center of gravity, and the fulcrum for the oars, and just the physics involved. You know, optimizing body position and how you best are able to row a boat most



Nancy soloing in Lava, 2009.
Photo taken by Bart Henderson

effectively, most efficiently. I am as lazy as I possibly can be, and the whole idea was just based on making things as simple and easy as I could. The simplicity, I think, was the main thing. It worked in with a lot of systems that people already had established, so they didn't have to change everything.

STEIGER: All they had to do was buy your frames.

HELIN: It was AZRA, in 1983–1984, they were the first company that went, “Yeah, we want 'em!” Just got a call from, oh, I don't know if it was Rob or Jessica or who it was, but they wanted to see some pictures of the set-up, so I went out to the OARS warehouse and set up a couple of Caligaris with my frames on 'em, tryin' to show the options, and sent 'em off. Sure enough, a couple of months later, I got an order for twenty or thirty sets. Yeah. I've got a couple of classic photos over at the new office—got pictures of that AZRA order downstairs in the basement, the stacks and stacks of frames, just crankin' those out. That was basically a full winter's work that first year.

* * *

STEIGER: The thing about 'em is...once you buy one, that's it. No maintenance whatsoever.

HELIN: Yes. It was very bad planning. I finally figured out what I should have been doing all along is after the frame was built, put a little hole in it, fill the interior with some kind of corrosive gas that would eat the frame apart from the inside after about five years or something like this. (laughter) AZRA's still running those frames. (**STEIGER:** Everybody is.) They've prob-



ably got frames with 200–300 trips on 'em, easy. Yeah. It's been fun to watch. You know, there's been some little tiny changes, and we've added a few things. Maybe the original will be found one of these days. My very first frame set, the one I built for myself in 1980, we lost that in the flood at Diamond Creek in 1985, and it was the one frame that wasn't recovered, because I had aluminum decks, and all the OARS frames still had wooden decks. They floated. And mine sank. So my frame set is somewhere, most likely downstream in the main channel, the very first set.

* * *

PRO was mainly the offshoot of basically getting married and going, “Hey, I have to figure out some way to support a lifestyle.” Obviously my guiding paychecks weren't gonna do that. It was, “Hey, we gotta do this if we're gonna have anything and try and make it.” It was just the frames to start out with. But basically I started getting calls... “God, you know, I got a Grand Canyon trip comin' up this year. We hear you build really good



Nancy and Bruce Helin, southern Ethiopia, 1986.
Heading back to Addis Ababa in a DC-3 the day
after the inspiration for "Hello Jamba."
Photo taken by Brad Dimock

equipment, or the equipment that we should have for the trip, but hey, I'm only gonna do this once, and I just can't really see usin' it anywhere else. Can't we rent it from you or something? Isn't there anything we can do besides having to buy this equipment?" I just kept getting these calls from people with these private Grand Canyon trips, which I don't even know if they'd really been in my consciousness. We knew they were there, but it was just kind of a different world.

STEIGER: You didn't think of it yourself, "Hey, here's an angle?" They came to you?

HELIN: Right, they definitely came to me: the frames and the bigger boat, the eighteen-footer... "Hey, we understand that's the rig to have, but we don't want an eighteen-footer when we're runnin' the Stanislaus or the Tuolumne or the Rogue or the Middle Fork. We want our little fourteens and sixteens or whatever." The Grand Canyon had a unique enough set of requirements for the equipment to do it properly, or to do it the best you could, or at least the best you could at the time. It was different from what most people were set up for, for private boating.

Okay, well, I picked up some Havasus. There was a slight misrun on some boats—I think they had been made for AZRA. They were a little bit off specification, and it ended up I could afford to buy a couple of these boats. I bought two the first year we did it, and just set 'em up and rented 'em out. They were gone,

and people wanted more. Then they wanted to know where our business was located and where they could have their group meet. For a long time I would always deliver the stuff to them. At one point I had gear stored in seven different locations: people's back yards, extra room in their garage, and this kind of thing. But people are goin', "God, Where do we go?" Everybody would come into town, and they'd usually go pick some poor supermarket's parking lot to put it all together. They'd want us... "Gee, I guess, well, rendezvous with us over here," or whatever. And here would be this menagerie, a dozen or so shopping carts all around with this food, and they're tryin' to pack some-thin' over here, and put coolers together over there, and here we're comin' with a couple of boats. "Okay, great, there's the boats. I sure wish somebody could do this food. I don't know how to pack food for fifteen people for fourteen days. Why can't somebody do this for us?!" And, "Oh, we've got all these cars. How are we gonna get there? How are we gonna do this shuttle? This would sure be a lot easier if somebody had a van or a bus or something like that." And we'd just go, "Well, yeah, that's a good idea."

So we went ahead and started workin' on a menu plan, hired a guy to help me write a menu program, modify a program to do menu planning with, because that was gonna be one of the keys. Sure, I can sit down and I can do a menu manually, but it'd take me a couple of hours.

STEIGER: But you'd rather just punch in the number of people and have it do it for the whole trip.

HELIN: Yeah. Just clearly, if this thing was gonna go anywhere, that was a key thing to have... So that came in, and we just started renting vehicles, renting vans from Budget, that kind of thing, and getting a few more boats. We did a number of trips and the reviews were good from all sides. The rangers were very overt about letting the Rim know that the trips we're sending out were far better prepared than the average private trip. And also they even noticed a decline in the numbers on rescues and things like that, they never had to come in to save anybody [who had been outfitted by PRO] because of gear problems They're just goin', "Hey this is makin' our life easier, too. We're not havin' to deal with these rescue scenes or these nightmares."

STEIGER: I wouldn't do it any other way, myself.

HELIN: That's what's been so much fun about it, it is a good thing, and I want to go on one whenever I go, too. You know, we got a bunch of the pards together for the Salt River trip, and we just had PRO set up the trip for us, and it was great! (laughter) It worked. It was crazy. Thank God everybody thought we were crazy for a long time. When we tried to explain what

we were startin' to do, people would just kind of look at me and walk away. But it worked, and it helped everybody. People come off, and they had a great time. It works, and that's been a lot of fun to watch, and watch it grow.

* * *

This is the point in the editorial process where it really sinks in how futile this all is: there won't be room to publish here or even time to record a fraction of the adventures Bruce has had—early trips in Alaska; how he met Nancy on the Paul Winter trip in Grand Canyon; or that wonderful story about the origin of Nancy's song "Hello Jambo," where Bruce and Nancy and Brad Dimock and Elena Kirschner and Tom Moody got a little wasted at the end of an Omo trip and ventured out onto the airstrip by the border in the black of night (after disregarding warnings about border danger) and were suddenly approached by three naked seven-foot tall Sudanese warriors and one of the warriors—after all of them have kind of frantically spouted out every friendly African word of greeting they can think of to no avail—just raises one hand and says simply: "Hello." No room for the full story of how Ron Griffith got an entire oar rammed through his thigh on the Bio-Bio and Bruce had to ever so carefully saw through both ends of the oar with a Swiss Army knife just above Lava South and then stabilize the wound while inside Ron's leg his femoral artery ended up inside the clip itself. (See sidebar story for the gorey details). Alas, we're just going to have to go with what we've got and call it good or at least better than nothing. For history's sake we can at the very least say thanks, sincerely, for the frames, Bruce. Thanks for the whole concept of what PRO does now and the tangible gifts—safety and convenience—you've given to so many people.

* * *

STEIGER: Looking back on it all, what's been the high point of it for you, if you had to say something about your whole "river" experience? Could you even say what was the best part of it all?

HELIN: I would have to go back to the Omo and... whether it's dealing with some of the wildlife, or dealing with the folks down on the southern Omo, I mean those trips were so hard, but they were so rewarding. They were just incredible, life-changing experiences. There's just no two ways about that. And yeah, I love the Grand Canyon. Grand Canyon's my home. I can't imagine not being in the Grand Canyon. But for things you just remember always...the Omo, my

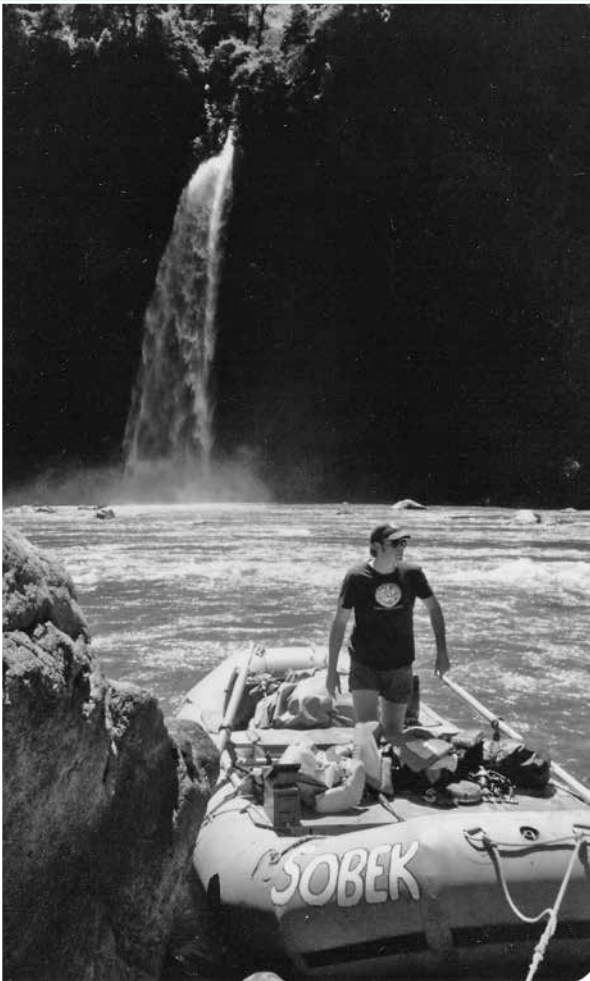
god...you put out a lot, but you got a lot in return. Just, the interactions there. That was great stuff. But really all of them...all the trips I've done, everywhere, have had their aspects. It seems fairly consistent in river running: the more you put out—the more you get out. That's just held true always. And the Omos, boy, Stan [Boor] and I pulled off a couple trips early on—and I'm sure there's been much harder ones, but we're proud of what we pulled off and where we got to, and that we got everybody back from those. Some good stuff there.



Cooking breakfast with some Omo locals.

CHILE 1981 • Rio Bio-Bio

Excerpted from the journal of Bruce Helin, which was written two days after the trip ended. Boatmen: Nuesom Holmes, Skip Horner, Bruce Helin with Dave Shore leading. Ron and Sheri Griffith with Charlie Rau were guest guides sharing a boat. Curt Smith was a safety kayaker and Moth Lorensen was a passenger kayaker. Another Sobek trip was just upstream. [NOTE: the entire stretch from the top of LOST YAK to the bottom of LAVA SOUTH is unbelievably gnarly...It kind of makes LAVA FALLS look like the PARIA RIFFLE.]



In "the Blue Lagoon," 1981. Getting ready to run Lost Yak shortly before the "oardeal" began.

* * *

SATURDAY: Clear skies again—everyone still raving about Dave's birthday dinner—apparently it was a real winner. But now to tighten up the rig for the rapids ahead—retied my frame and tightened the hex screws—my boat was really leaking bad from all sections. But got everything ship shape. Off around 11—first stop—*Milky Way*. Water real low but plenty of time to move—had a smooth run—almost everyone did. Then to *Lost Yak*—it was still scary. The water was down at least 6 feet from last trip, but it looked real nasty. The run was basically the same but instead of running up on the lower rock on the left, the object was to hit it and pivot off it, though it turned out that was unnecessary. Neuy and a couple others had throw lines out so Dave and I ran first. Except for a brief hang up on an entry rock, I had a great run. Also found it much easier to pull

in on the right instead of the left which was the standard move—the current put you on the right and I went with it. Davey came next and tried to get back left, but ended up getting washed on down a bit and the throw line ended up putting him on a rock where his boat was swamped. Once we were bailed out I ferried back across losing little ground. Then set up a line for the next folks—Skip and Neuy's runs were both good and they beat their way back to the left side. Then came the last boat—Ron rowing—Charlie and Sheri riding. After a boat swap to help out the film crew now upstream, they now had an old pro with an Odyssey frame. Ron hit the entry right, but started to get turned sideways. I was downstream a ways but apparently as Ron tried to straighten the boat he hit a hole and his downstream oar hit a rock hidden in the reversal below. He had put a rocket box in the frame on the left side. As the oar popped out it pinned his leg against the box and then having nowhere else to go penetrated the fleshy portion of his thigh just below the femur. It stopped when the oar clip and clamps entered his leg. Part of the oar handle was imbedded in the lid latch of the rocket box after it had passed through his leg. The first thing I heard was Sheri screaming for help. They were far out of reach of the throw bags and all I could see as they floated by was Ron lying back in the rear of the boat while Charlie was pulling the spare and Sheri still screaming. Moth—one of the kayakers—had been near the boat when the accident occurred so he knew what had happened. He paddled ahead and got out of his yak and helped pull them in on the right shore just above the entry to Lava South. Dave and I still had no idea what had happened and were getting the ropes stowed when our passengers who had been taking pictures ran back and told us—though I don't think either of us believed it at the time, but we got going and rowed over. Skip started hiking back upstream to catch the movie trip to bring down their first aid kit. Neusom had gotten over first to Ron's boat and his first comment to me was: "this fella is gonna die!" With that preparation I headed down to the boat. Upon arrival it became quite clear that Ron did have an oar penetrating his thigh. I had to walk back for a second just to let it soak in, then headed in. Sheri, his sister, was holding him and Curt was taking vitals, Charlie holding a sunshade—the sun was cooking. Ron was conscious and coherent which I found amazing. What compounded the situation was the oar clip which was completely inside his leg—the only thing showing on the inside of his



Bruce holding the piece of oar removed from Ron's leg, 1981.

thigh was a half-inch of the mounting sheath and part of one of the hose clamps. After considering the situation for a minute it became clear that the oar was going to have to be cut off. The only saw we had available was that on Dave's Swiss army knife. After arranging people to support and steady the oar, I started. Dave and Neusom were preparing to go for help, Dave on foot and Neuy in a kayak. It took me over an hour to cut through both sides. First I cut the inside almost through, then did the same to the outside. I had to stop periodically to get the cramps out of my hand and legs. Ron took it amazingly well. The saw was shorter than the diameter of the oar so I had to work around the oar—incredibly slow process but it was the only way. Finally, the cuts were made. I had everyone gather clean towels etc. to pack around the piece imbedded in his leg, so after I taped dressings around the oar ends and exposed flesh I immobilized it as best I could. Incredibly there was little bleeding and he still had tactile sensation in his foot—circulation seemed okay, too. Next challenge was to get him off the boat. A back deck had been rigged with

some pads so we got him onto that and strapped him in, though we had to keep his leg flexed to ease the pressure on the oar. Had everyone together and positioned them to lift him off the boat wallowing next to the shore (big rocks) in a heavy surge. Everything went well and got him up to one of the few sandy spots amongst the rocks. Sheri wanted to give him some percodan but I convinced her we should hold off so we'd know how he was really doing. She and Chuck settled him in with a back rest etc. while I got the rest of the folks to unload the boats and help set up camp. Everyone was great. Went back to check on Ron—his muscles were starting to spasm. It then dawned on me I had tons of muscle relaxants and antispasmodics for my own back so I started him on Motrin, Parafon Forte, codeine & aspirin and Keflex. Then got dinner going. Was glad I had planned one soup and salad meal. Checked on Ron again—things were looking up—the pain had eased and his muscles had relaxed—also Sheri and Charlie had arranged some support for his leg in a comfortable position. His foot was nice and warm and he actually could move his big toe a tiny bit. Had a quick dinner then enlisted some help to set up a tarp over him. Everyone came around to tell stories and sing songs. Turned out both Bina and Moth could play guitar—Roger hid in his tent the whole time. Moth has really turned out to be a special guy. Really has got his act together—a great help. I do believe he probably saved Ron's life by getting in front of them and helping to stop the boat. Aside



Border patrol Hvey on the rocks at the top of Lava South 1981.

from moving his legs periodically, Ron was doing well—pills every 2 or 3 hours seemed to take care of things. Everyone stayed around ‘til about midnight.

* * *

SUNDAY: Sheri, Charlie and I stayed up with him. Ron needed the pressure points shifted every hour or so to stay comfortable along with a cushion under his ass and back. Around 4 we tried to set up a support with a camera tripod but it didn’t work too well. But he seemed to be comfortable. I think we all got an hour or two of sleep after we settled back down around 5. The helicopter woke me up at 7:00. I must have been fine tuned for that first WOAK because I ended up rousing everyone else. I



Carrying stretcher to Huey, 1981.

had hoped that we could get one and get it early but I was truly amazed that it was here—a Huey in camouflage paint with machine guns. As it set down initially a ways away, I gave Ron another set of pills to get him through the move, then started getting things put away. There was no good place to land close by. Then Dave arrived with a doctor and a medic. Checked him out briefly then set up a stretcher. The copter boys then decided to come in close and hover. What a mess—like being in a 120 MPH sand storm—but it didn’t matter much. The chopper settled on some rocks 30 feet away and we shifted Ron on to the stretcher. Dave and I and a couple of others carried him over—luckily they had been able to cut the pitch on the blades so the rotor

downwash wasn’t too bad. Got him aboard and then Sheri—Charlie had their bags ready. Then a handshake with Ron and they were off. When that chopper took off it was like a million pounds being lifted off my shoulders. Things were blown everywhere but everyone pitched in and we had lots of time because both Skip and Neusom had to return before we could take off. Skip made it across by mid morning and Neusom in the middle of lunch. I had taken a bath and listened to some tunes to try and relax. I had the good feeling of having done everything I could possibly think of to help Ron survive, and he had. I was confident of that. So on with business as usual—took a while to get reorganized but we were finally ready to head downstream. Neusom ran LAVA SOUTH then I—I still hadn’t had

a chance to scout it—not that it would make much difference. Everyone made it—Brian swam part of it after dumping his kayak. Moth came through with no problem—a definite artist with the kayak. LAST LAUGH was nasty but besides getting filled and washing through the next rapid there was no problem. We came to the conclusion that my boat should be renamed the *Blue Lagoon*. Curt was riding with Chuck now that his kayak was downstream. Camped at Heartbreak Hotel and did an Asado—a large sheep. I was beat but after a stiff dose of Pisco Sours I managed to get through dinner. After removing the hind legs we skewered the rest of the sheep to BBQ. While I was threading the meat on, several sick comments

were made in relation to Ron but it was a real relief to be able to joke about it a little now. The meat and the corn were tough but it didn’t matter much to me. I was asleep soon after serving.

[Note: Getting the helicopter at all was epic too. In the end, Ron made it ok and his leg, though worse for the wear, survived as well. Sheri gave them back the oar clip, which would have ripped out Ron’s femoral artery had they tried to remove the oar on scene.]

A Note In A Bottle

WHILE I WAS HIKEING on the Tonto Plateau in the late 1990's I came across an airplane crash. At the crash site I found this man's wedding ring which was engraved with "Beatrix" and a date. I felt that the relatives of this individual might want to have it so I took the ring with the idea that I could return it to the relatives.

What I found after looking off and on for over twelve years is as follows:

The crash was the result of a midair collision that occurred June 18TH, 1986 between a Bell Jet Ranger Helicopter and DE Havilland Twin Otter (a fixed wing plane). The elevation of the collision was 6,507 feet. Both planes crashed to the ground some 2,400 feet apart although debris was spread over a much wider area. There were five people aboard the helicopter and the twenty aboard the De Flavilland Twin Otter airplane included eleven from the Netherlands, two from Switzerland, one from South Africa and six from the United States, including the two pilots.

Heinz and Beatrix Scheilgel from Switzerland were on the twin otter only 18 days after their wedding.

This was as far as my research allowed me to go. The United States authorities and the Coconino Sheriffs department were less than helpful, even rude when

I tried to gain information about where these victims were from and possible names and addresses of the relatives. I kept trying various sources off and on until 2010 when while backpacking in the Grand Canyon I ran into two very nice people, Karl and Marianne, from Switzerland. I told them the story and they said they would try to get more information for me when they got back to Switzerland. They were able to find the parents of both Heinz and Beatrix and asked if they would like the ring back. One of Heinz's parents had died and neither family wanted the ring as it reminded them of the tragedy. They said that I should consider the ring mine to do with it as I like. They also said that the graves of Heinz and Beatrix had been removed to make room for more graves in their small town.

I thought the best thing to do with the ring was to return it to the site but didn't want someone else to find the ring and some how locate the relatives again so I placed the ring and a copy of this note in a bottle and left it at the crash site.

Robert Southwick

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THANKS TO ALL YOU poets, photographers, writers, artists, and to all of you who send us stuff. Don't ever stop. Special thanks to the Walton Family Foundation, the Adopt-a-Boatman sponsors, "Circle of Friends" contributors, and innumerable GCRG members for their generous and much appreciated support of this publication.



Georgie's thrill boats (triple row-rig) head into Squaw Creek Rapid in Hell's Canyon of the Snake River in June, 1964. Squaw Creek Rapid, one of the largest in Hell's Canyon, was submerged after Hell's Canyon Dam was completed in 1967. Larry Hopkins ran Grand Canyon in 1962 and Glen Canyon in 1963 with Georgie. This photo is from another trip with her in 1964, at age 15.