

# *The Hoosier Paddler*

Volume 44, Issue 9 <http://www.hoosiercanoeclub.org> December 2006

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## **Christmas Party Saturday, December 16th, 2006**

The Hoosier Canoe Club Christmas Party will be held Saturday Dec 16 at 7:00 PM. The Timms will be hosting the HCC Christmas Party at their home.

Please bring an appetizer, side or desert. For directions give us a call at 317-298-9048 or an email at [d-timm@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d-timm@sbcglobal.net).

**MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!**

## **2006 HCC Flat Water Trip Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	
<b>Dec 30</b>	Loxahatchie River Florida	Ken Miller	954-570-9491
<b>January 1, 2007</b>	Eagle Creek New Year's Day Float	Dwayne James	317-834-3649

We will run Eagle Creek from Zionsville down to the Park weather and water permitting. Please contact me no later than 5 pm on Sunday, December 30th for last minute trip revisions and directions. We will meet at 10 am at the park at Zionsville.

Please contact the trip leaders for further information.

And remember to check the bulletin for pick-up trips and other timely announcements.

**The link to the bulletin board has been changed and you will probably have to register again to get access: <http://www.hccbulletinboard.org/forums/>**

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*The Newsletter of the Hoosier Canoe Club*

## **French River Trip Report (continued from November, 2006)**

### **Worth Donaldson**

#### **French River – Day 3, Inukshuk**

It sprinkled on and off during the night. During a lull in the early morning showers I packed up and joined Jim for breakfast. Jose eventually rose and said, "I thought we were sleeping in". I responded, "I didn't want to pack in the rain". It began to mist and I donned my rain wear for I did not want to get my outer layers wet. I have been wearing the same pair of wet, smelly socks and boots since we started the trip and have not been able to get them to completely dry for the days are too short and cool.

We had been looking forward to this day, a day full of rapids and promising fishing opportunities. We quickly arrived at Little Pine Rapids and easily lined the upper section. Standing on a slab of slick, smooth bed rock the bottom section of the rapids tugged hard on our lines while trying to pull us into the river. Lining this last section, I watched my gunnel roll and begin to drop. Call it skill or luck, I was fortunate not to fill my canoe with water.

After studying Big Pine Rapids the decision was made to portage around it. The rapid descends into a small gorge and appeared easy to run if you can avoid a rock in the center of the narrow chute. The rock is located at the very top of the rapid and receives the majority of the water flow; thus, creating a big standing wave. In warmer weather, we probably would have tested our skills and attempted to run it.

Due to low water levels Double Rapids was nothing more than fast flowing swifts. Very quickly, we arrived at Double Rapids Island. To the right of the island is The Ladder. Here, voyageurs would accidentally swamp their 36-foot long boats in a narrow space between two ledges in an attempt to avoid the Blue Chute located on the left side of the island. Divers have found numerous artifacts around The Ladder. We paddled past The Ladder because water levels appeared extremely low. We thought we could possibly run the Blue Chute. After running the Blue Chute, a nice long C-II rapid, and allowing Jim to bail a little water out of his canoe, Jose and I paddled to the last rung of The Ladder.

It was like a maze trying to avoid all the boulders and barely submerged rocks. We found The Ladder to be full of boulders the shape and size of beach balls.

Not far downstream, we portaged 30 meters around a no name rapid and stopped in hopes of a shore lunch. Jose and I caught nothing but Jim was able to feed us with the numerous walleye he caught.

After filling our bellies with fish, we launched the canoes with anticipation of running three more sets of rapids. We approached an island. Jim went left and Jose and I go right. Eventually, the walls closed in on us until there was no more water to paddle. Instead of portaging to the main channel we turned back. While trying to catch up with Jim, we questioned where we are. Where was the roar of the rapids? Due to extreme low water levels we did not realize the swifts we ran were Big Parisien Rapids. Furthermore, we suspected our paddle through a narrow, fast flowing gorge was Devil Chute. Little Parisien Rapids was nothing more than swifts. Once again we are having navigation issues due to problems with the photo-copied maps and low water levels. Fishing boats become numerous around Hammerhead Bay. When we strayed off the main channel one fishing boat spoke up and gave us guidance on how to navigate the "S" turn where islands appeared on our maps. We never noticed Crooked Rapids.

We camped on an island across from Ed's Island that was heavily posted with private property signs. After setting up camp, Jim stated he was going back to take a picture of the 6-foot tall man before it got too dark. Jose and I did not know what he was talking about. After hiking several minutes to the center of the island we spied the inukshuk.

I asked Jim what on the earth possessed him to hike so far inland? He responded, "I was just trying to find a good spot to pitch my tent". Unfortunately, finding the perfect campsite or tent pad was impossible. Most campsites had too many mangled or hacked up trees due to the indiscreet quest for firewood. Furthermore, large level tent pads were rare. Sloping bedrock was the predominant tent pad feature of every campsite we found.

During dinner it threatened to rain; thus, with Jose's help I pitched a tarp. After dinner we all turned in for the night. Once inside my tent I smelled an insidious aroma that has slowly become stronger with each passing day. It was an odor of sourness and spoiled meat. I searched the tent for the odor and locate it beneath my rain fly. It was my wet boots and socks that refuse to dry.

#### **Day 4 – The Cross and Heathens**

As usual we rose early; however, we took our time breaking camp. Jim was on the water first and led the way downstream. Unbeknownst to Jim, Jose wanted to hold back, slow the trip down and sets the pace accordingly. Once again, we had begun to see several fishing boats. Jim was not interested in visiting Cross Island and called it a tourist trap. However, Jose and I persevered, stopped and paid homage to the Jesuit priests that were massacred by the Iroquois in a raiding party on their way to attack the Nippissing band in 1649.

It was another cold morning and our slow pace down the river kept me from feeling warm. By late morning we found ourselves on a small island sharing a hot lunch of corn chowder with chicken, hummus, crackers and blackberry wine. Although we had not seen any otters, their presence was everywhere. The island was littered with mussel shells. Soon after, a tandem canoe passed us by.

After getting back on the water, Jose took off and left Jim and I behind. Quickly he put 500 meters between us, then a kilometer and then 2 kilometers. We could barely see him far off in the distance. We were a few hours away from being out of the park and I was annoyed. What was he up to? Had he changed his mind? Are we leaving today? Jim and I do not give chase; eventually we lose sight of him. Upon seeing the Ontario hydro transmission lines far off in the dull gray horizon we both realized the trip was almost over. Once beneath the power lines, we finally got a glimpse of blue skies, something we had not seen since the beginning of the trip. Not soon afterwards, we began to shed our layers of clothing for the clear skies had made the afternoon turn hot.

Eventually we found Jose floating in a small cove off Dalton's Point. I asked him, "What's up? Why did you take off"? Jose responded, "I wanted to catch up with the tandem paddlers" and almost did in his Kruger Seawind.

By 2:30 we had paddled 12 kilometers and found probably one of the nicest campsites along the river just past Lost Child Bend. Lost Child Bend got its name from the crying of a lost Native child that was never found but heard for six days. After making camp, we all do a little laundry and take sponge baths. Jose having nothing to wear made a loin cloth using bandanas and rope.

Our campsite had a nice sandy beach. Beside our campsite and to the south was a gentle sloping slab of granite that slowly rose and pointed up river as if it was a finger on one's hand. Climbing the slab high into the sky, we found wonderful views in all directions.

However, in the middle of the river sat an expensive house with views of sunrise and sunset. In addition, there was a platform tennis court on this island. It was obvious that this bothered Jose. Every now and then he would glance over and asked, "Who would build a tennis court in the middle of no where? Why? Why would you build a tennis court in the wilderness"? Eventually, Jose paddled over in his loin cloth and strutted around the premises looking more like a voyeur than a voyageur in searched of an answer. During dinner, Jose reported what he found and saw while Jim fed the gulls the majority of his hot and spicy chili.

With promises of a beautiful sunset, Jose and I climbed the granite mound and patiently waited. Jose asked, "Why, why would you build a platform tennis court here". I am not sure what possessed me but I began to strip. Once butt naked I asked Jose to take my picture. I climbed to the top of the mound and stood with arms outstretched one hundred feet above the water waiting for the click of the camera.

Shortly thereafter, a pontoon boat materialized and broke the magical spell of dusk and the promises of a beautiful sunset. They dropped anchor in front of the picturesque islands and proceeded to fish well past dusk.

### **French River – Day 5, Magical Views at the Porn Palace**

Throughout the night I am awoken by noises around my tent. I do not fear the visitors for they are making way too much noise to be bear or moose. Eventually, I am awakened by Jose prancing near my tent. Rudely, he shined his light on my tent prompting me to asked, "What's up"? He replied, "I see animals by your tent and they have BIG eyes"! I am too tired to care. I rolled over and go back to sleep.

The morning was extremely foggy. Thus, we take our time breaking camp and eat a hearty breakfast of granola, eggs, ham, bannock with sausage gravy and coffee. Instead of orange juice, I drank the last few dregs of blackberry wine I had left.

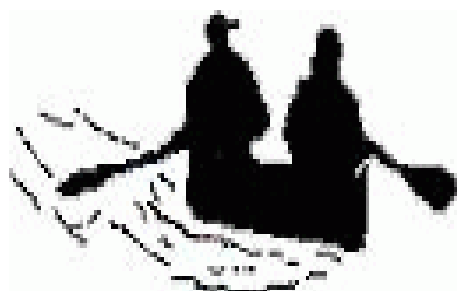
All too soon we found ourselves on the water paddling in a magical wonder land. The fog shrouded and adorned the islands. A loon appeared nearby and mysteriously disappeared as quickly as it had appeared. Silence, we can feel the silence and hear the voyageurs whispering.

Within the hour we arrived at the mouth of Stony Rapids and paddled upriver for a glimpse. Returning to Dry Pine Bay we are greeted with scenes of fishing boats.

Within minutes Jose and I arrived at Meshaw Falls and purchased some ginger ale from Pete. Jim was half-way across Dry Pine Bay and heading for Loon's Landing before we could finish our beverages.

By the time Jose and I arrived at Loon's Landing Jim had already retrieved the van and was loading his gear for the long drive home. Before leaving to take showers, Jose purchased a map of the French River and asked, "Who would build a tennis court in the middle of no where? Why? Why would you build a tennis court in the wilderness"? We are told by the owner, "An American owns it, an American movie producer. He makes pornography films there". Jose and I got a good laugh out of this. Even Jim saw the humor in it when he realized Jose was walking around the premises in a loin cloth and I danced high on a bluff in the nude.

All too soon, the trip was over. We agreed it was not quite what we expected but it was still better than anything we could have paddled in Indiana. We left wanting and unsatisfied. There was not enough white water and it was a little crowded. Thus, we talked about possibilities for next year during our long drive home; Georgian Bay, the Spanish, Winisk or the Nahanni.



## *The Beaufort, Carrot Island Experience*

I'm writing from the Internet Cafe in Swansboro, NC. We have been kayaking every day. The first evening three of us paddled about 2 miles around an island and back to camp. The next day on Saturday four of us paddled to Bear Island a distance of 12 miles total. Sunday more paddlers arrived and we paddled to the other end of Bear Island a distance of 6 miles. The trip to the island was fast since the tide was going out. We watched some fisher surf fishing catch two Drum fish. We explored the island, had lunch and started back. We had to leave before the in-coming tide could change the direction of the current. It was a hard paddle against the wind and current. We also got confused and a little lost traveling in the many tangled streams that weave through the sea marsh. It was a good day and the entire group from the Hoosier Canoe Club were here. I have paddled with some of them for 25 years.

Tuesday, we drove to Beaufort, NC which is about 45 minutes from Swansboro where we are camped. The weather was overcast and rain was predicted, but we started the trip anyway. We were to circumnavigate Carrot Island. After we entered Bogue Sound, it began to rain. We believed we could get around the island before the storm. We were wrong. The sea started having white caps, the rain was coming at us so hard it was difficult to see. The wind whipped up so fast, it almost blew the paddle out of my hand. We couldn't continue, the harder we paddled, only just kept us in the same place. Our leader called a retreat. With the wind and waves to our back it was like a roller coaster ride.

It was an exhilarating struggle of endurance. The white caps would roll under us and for a few seconds we would be on the top of a large surfing wave going faster and faster. Then another wave would hit the stern of the boat and try to tip us over. It was a blast. Debbie and I headed for the town to take out. Debbie and her husband has been there and knew their way around. I was glad when we turned around she was my paddling companion. We headed for a pier where the Outer Banks Pedestrian Ferry had a empty berth. We took out there and pulled the boats out on the pier. One couple took out about a mile from where we took out and this wife walked the two miles to the put-in to get their car. One man was paddling a kayak without a rudder and he had a lot of problems fighting the wind and waves. He has vertigo and was in bad shape. He came to where we took out and we helped him out of his boat. At that time, we took the boats out to the street to be picked up later. Many of the rest of the paddlers kept going to the put-in to take out. They later told us that it was difficult going against the wind and current.

Another couple were at the Maritime Museum and saw us. They came over to help and do whatever they could. He took me to my car so I could come back and get my boat. After the boat was loaded, I took Debbie and Gary to the put-in where Gary got his car and Debbie helped her husband load their car. After everybody was on land and ready to leave, we decided to go back the campground, check out the tents and campers. It was a time for a celebration. We met at a Mexican restaurant and had a grand time telling each other about each others experience. Each person was paddling in their little world with the exception of the couple and their dog who were paddling the a Klepper two person folding kayak. It was quite an experience and after it was all over and everybody safe and dry, we could celebrate the good time we had experienced.

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Your friend, Max Kidwell,



**For a great time in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area without leaving home, join in the discussions and read the trip reports posted at Canoe Country.Com**

**<http://www.canoecountry.com/bulletinboard/>**

**Please send a card or note to one of our own who is away from his family while serving our country: 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. John Gates.**

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## Newsletter Editor

Dwayne James is editing the HCC newsletters. Articles for the newsletter will need to be sent to him by the 15th of each month to make it into the next month's newsletter. Dwayne's E-mail address is:

[dwjames@doe.state.in.us](mailto:dwjames@doe.state.in.us) Please mark your mailings as HCCNEWSLETTER ITEM. Dwayne can be reached at 317-834-3649 or at 317-232-9043. Please do not format your text. No colors, no graphics, no fancy indenting or lines. Times New Roman is a great font to use—please.



## The Hoosier Paddler



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