

The Hoosier Paddler

Volume 45, Issue 7 <http://www.hoosiercanoeclub.org> November 2007



No More Paddles Scheduled?

Don't Despair!!

Fall is the best time to paddle as the water comes back up, we hope, and the temperature cools off and the leaves change to bright yellows and reds. We had perfect weather and water for the run down Big Raccoon Creek on October 20th and 21st. All told, we had forty boats and at least 50 people on Saturday and another 6 or so on Sunday. More to come on this trip later.

Please join us on Sunday, November 18th for the Fall Meeting. We will have a swap meet, turkey dinner and hold elections for new officers and board members. You must be present to vote. See page 2 for the details and page 3 for a list of nominees.

Check out the bulletin board for pick-up trip announcements. The recent rains should allow us to get back out on White Lick creek, the Wildcat and several other streams around central Indiana.

And remember to send in your nominations for awards. First swimmer of the year, most swims on one trip, best trip report, best trip leader and whatever else you can think of. I do not think I qualify for the swims this year, so others have a chance!

I am still looking for a new newsletter editor.
Please let me know if you are interested.

Dwayne James

Editor



The Newsletter of the Hoosier Canoe Club

The Hoosier Canoe Club

Trip Planning Guide

Fall Meeting / Pitch-in Dinner / Swap Meet / Elections

Sunday, November 18, 2007 Carefree Estates Clubhouse 1:00pm – 5:00pm

Come enjoy a fall afternoon of food, drink and entertainment with your paddling buds. Sometime during the day we may even get serious for a few minutes and have a business meeting and 2008 elections. Take the opportunity to empty your closets, garage or basement of camping or paddling treasures and try and pawn them off on your cheap paddling friends. Remember, only paddlers will drive 8 hours to the NOC to save ½ the cost of the gas on a new boat!

Quick Facts

Destination: Carefree Estates Clubhouse, 1202 Leisure Lane, Indianapolis, IN. Carefree is located on south side of West County Line Road on the Indy south-side approximately ½ mile west of South Meridian St. (SR135) and 2 miles east of SR37.

Pitch-In Dinner: Meat (turkey) and non-alcoholic drinks will be provided. Participants should bring complementary items such as mashed potatoes, dressing, salads or desserts.

Schedule	1:00-2:00:	Happy Hour and Swap Meet
	2:00-3:00:	Turkey dinner
	3:00-4:00:	Slide show/presentation
	4:00-5:00:	Business meeting and Elections

Driving Instructions from Indianapolis:

Exit I-465 at the SR37 Bloomington exit. Continue south 4.5 miles on SR37 to County Line Road. There is a Shell station at the intersection. Turn left (east) on County Line Rd. You will pass through 3 stop signs (stopping at each of course). At the third stop you will cross the railroad track and continue east for ½ mile to the Carefree Clubhouse on the south side of the road. If you are coming via I-65 exit at County Line Road and continue west past the Greenwood Mall, Hwy 31 to Meridian St. (SR135). Continue past Meridian St. west ½ mile to the Carefree Clubhouse.

What to Bring:

- ◆Swap meet items
- ◆Pitch-in dish
- ◆BYOB
- ◆Ideas on how to improve the HCC

Contacts: Reggie Baker 317-888-3315 home; 317-308-3332 work

Hoosier Canoe Club Elections

November 18, 2007

The nominating committee of the Hoosier Canoe Club for 2007 would like to present the following slate of officers, to be voted on at the Fall Meeting, November 18, 2007. Only members present are eligible to vote.

Officers:

Reggie Baker (Skipper)

Dan Valleskey (Executive Officer)

Theresa Kulczak (Yeoman)

Matt Slagel (Purser)

Board members at large:

Terry Busch

Dwayne James

Dave Ellis

Kelli Kaneshiro

Sue Foxx

Mitch Meritt

Shirley Gates

Scott Morlock

Garry Hill

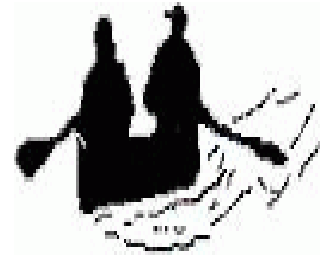
Linda Smith

Jan Hosier

John Wainscott

I would like to thank Reggie Baker, Jan Hosier, Theresa Kulczak, Matt Slagel, and Roger Kugler for their help.

-Dan Valleskey



**Hey, It's
Time to
Paddle!!!!**

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 newsletter.

Dwayne's E-mail address is:
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.



Big Raccoon Creek

Parke Co. Indiana

NEWS FROM THE CREEK

Tuesday April 24

Howdy from Big Raccoon Creek

SPRINGTIME IS HERE

Boy has this been a winter here in Parke County, as far as Big Raccoon Creek was concerned. We have had so much rain that Raccoon Lake never did get dumped down to winter pool. <http://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/wc/reports/lkreport.html> Consequently, the Corps have been keeping the creek at near banks full most of the winter. Part of that was good, and part was bad, depending on your point of view.

From the paddle sports enthusiasts view the floods have swept the creek from Mansfield to Bridgeton clear of debris. We went down the creek for our opening season survey today from Base Camp at Old Mansfield Village to Bridgeton, 7.56 miles. The creek is completely different from last summer. All the huge trees in the creek have been swept into enormous log piles in the bends and deposited, thankfully, out of the way of canoeing. We only found 4 places where we need to do a little cutting to make passage just a little safer for Adventurers.

From Bridgeton Mill owner Mike Rowe's view it was bad because he never did get to accomplish repairs on the Mill Dam. Mike & Karen Rowe are very nice people and "pro canoe". Don't miss a chance to visit with them and hear Mike's Dam stories.

WILDLIFE

We left Base Camp in the late morning, @ 9:30, but still saw lots of wildlife. Many water birds are on the creek in pairs this nesting season. We saw several pairs of Canada Geese, Mallards and Coots. We also watched at least 4 Great Blue Herons hop-scotch down the creek as we came around each bend. They get tired of being pushed out of their territory after a while and fly up and away and return to their favorite haunt back up creek. We surprised this coyote and were amazed at his/her ability to scale an almost vertical cliff at lightening speed. He stood on the top of a 100 foot bank and watched us go on by. From now on this high bank will be "Coyote Cliffs" to us. We saw two large hawks, but did not get close enough to identify them. We were moving pretty fast in our survey and making no attempt to be stealthy. There are always bright blue noisy Kingfishers along the creek. One especially complained of our passing so I assumed she had a nest nearby. We were pleasantly surprised when a young Muskrat surfaced 6 feet off our starboard side and swam along with us for at least a minute. He looked us over and finally turned bottoms up. He did not seem the least bit afraid. We saw a small herd of @ 8 Deer run through a tributary creek where it emptied into Big Raccoon just above Bridgeton.

The best time to observe wildlife on the creek is early morning. Try to stay overnight in the area and get an early start. We have found that a leisurely float, minimum paddling, and being very quiet offers the best opportunity to see and not spook critters. Wear natural colors, green or brown, no bright hats. Poly canoes & kayaks are best for nature viewing. Aluminum canoes just make too much noise.

WATERLEVEL

The Corps have cut back the release of water from Raccoon Lake so the creek is at a nice spring time level. We only touched bottom in one ripple the entire trip. BUT, the water is still cold, so I'm glad I did not get wet!

RIVER WISE

If you adventure down the creek with Raccoon Creek Voyageurs or on your own boat, be very cautious of the Mill Dams at Mansfield and Bridgeton. Last winter in the high water two Kayakers were swept over the falls at Bridgeton. By accident or on purpose we do not know. They survived, but have bruises to prove their indiscretion.

The exit at Mansfield is on the RIGHT at a set of old railroad tie steps just above the old Mill. The Exit at Bridgeton is on the LEFT at the entrance to the Mill Sluiceway. At Bridgeton, DO NOT go under the concrete or Covered bridge while on the main flow of the creek. There is a 9 foot waterfall

We survey the creek frequently and try to keep removed snags that could sweep a Paddler out of their canoe in a rapids. Always think ahead and plan each ripple carefully

CONSERVATION

This winter we got signed up with the DNR and "Adopted" Big Raccoon Creek from the mill dam at Mansfield to the mill dam at Bridgeton. We plan the usual Clean up the creek trips this summer. We will have festivities at Mansfield w/ food & drink for all helpers afterward. Check our web site for info and dates.

Please preserve the creek for the future generation to enjoy also. Leave only the "Wake of your Paddle"

Dave Gahimer

Howdy from Big Raccoon Creek

KAYAKING IN THE RAIN

We have received 10 new Dimension, “sit-on” Kayaks this spring for our Adventurers to enjoy this summer. We have 2, Spirit Duo, two person Kayaks that are broad of beam and very stable. We also received 5 Spirit single person Kayaks that are very fast. And for the younger kids we have 2 Cricket Kayaks, 9 feet, that can turn on a dime and only weigh in at 33#s.

Thursday afternoon, with clearing skies and warmer weather forecast we could not resist the need for “Water Time” any longer and set out from Base Camp for Bridgeton at 4 PM. Ken & I took off on two Bright Yellow brand new Spirit Kayaks. When we were past the “Point-of-no-return” we begin to hear Thunder from the direction of Bridgeton. We got soaked!

WILDLIFE

We did not see much wildlife on this trip. They had much better since then we and stayed out of the rail. I wonder just where a Great Blue Heron hides when it’s raining?

WATERLEVEL

The Corps at Raccoon Lake are slowly staging down the outflow. The creek level today was about 10 inches lower than on Tuesday. Still plenty of water for the shallow draft Spirit Kayaks. We did not touch bottom the entire trip. Water still very cold.

RIVER WISE

Like a Good Scout, always be prepared when you start out on the Creek. A hat and at least a bottle of drinking water. On this trip we should have had a rain suit!

Big Raccoon Creek dos not “Flash Flood” The Corps stages up the water slowly and downstream from Mansfield a release will raise about a foot an hour, so you have time to get to Bridgeton, or off the creek. If you do happen to be on the Creek during a summer cloud burst, I would recommend getting off the creek for an hour afterwards and watch to see if it is going to rise.

Sunday April 29

1ST WORK PARTY, MANSFIELD TO BRIDGETON

Ted & I took advantage of a beautiful late Sunday afternoon to run down from Mansfield to Bridgeton and clear a few things from the creek. As I mentioned in a previous News letter, most of last years debris in the creek has been swept clear by winter floods. We had small debris washed up on the second cross arm on the canoe rack at Base Camp in late March. That’s about 8 feet higher than I’ve ever seen the creek. Consequently a lot of Logs and small debris are now in the woods along the creek. We did clear obstruction at three locations. One was just the tops of a small tree recently fallen. One was at the rapids below **Kikapoo bluff, GPS Lat 39-39-34, Lon 87-07-15**. I almost got caught in this snag on last Tuesday at the base of the fast water, so for safety it had to go. The last was a huge tree completely across the creek in fast water just before the old Iron Bridge about a mile above Bridgeton. It had washed downstream in high water and the top had lodged in a tree on the island and the butt on the south bank. It had the creek completely blocked. We tied the chainsaw to a line, so if I fell in the creek from the island, at least Ted could save his chainsaw. I stood in a rather precarious position hanging out over the swift water and carefully severed the big ol trees neck!. It worked perfectly. The tree fell completely into the swift water, and was swept down and against the south bank. We still have a morning’s work at the entrance to the Sluiceway to the Bridgeton Mill so Adventurers can safely exit the creek to the LEFT above the Waterfall there.

WILDLIFE

We saw the usual Herons and Canada geese, but were delighted with an over flight of a Bald Eagle. Raccoon Lake has a large resident population of Bald Eagles and they range over Parke Counties creeks looking for fish. Also saw a small brown duck, whose species I do not know, with a clutch of new babies huddling along the bank. The babies were tiny, not much bigger than mice!

WATERLEVEL

The level at Raccoon Lake is near summer pool, so the Corps are cutting back the spring release. The level at Base camp is @ 5 feet. The low last summer was 2'3", so there is a good flow in the creek. Last Thursday's rain also warmed up the creek noticeably. It is at least 5 degrees warmer than on Tuesday April 24

RIVER WISE

We begin working with the Parke County Soil & Water Conservation District office (USDA) last winter, at their request, in conservation efforts on Big Raccoon. The two major items to come from that cooperative effort are a nice "Preserve this Natural Resource" sign designed by Professor Bill Osmon, retired from ISU, and the property owner at Base Camp / Mansfield Guest Inn, at Mansfield. We have ours mounted at our launch site. The 2nd item is a catchy Logo phrase "**Zero Trash**" this plays on the recycling arrows signs with the phrase, "**If you carry it in, Please carry it out**", this is a 4x4 colored sticker that we have in every canoe & Kayak to remind people to not litter. The SWCD had the signs printed and distributed them to all canoe rentals in Parke County.

Monday April 30

2ND WORK PARTY, RACCOON LAKE TAILWATER TO MANSFIELD

This was our first trip down this section of the creek this year. It is very different than below Mansfield. The fall is greater and the water is a little swifter. This is the best Kayak section of the creek. Mark Wagner, RCV's Watercourse Conservation Manager

and I in a row boat, and Marty Miranda in a Spirit Kayak surveyed the condition of the creek and cut out obstructions. There is much more "underwater" logs, and large log jams in the turns on this section. We did a lot of work, and have more to do, but the creek is passable to all watercraft.

WILDLIFE

We saw much Beaver sign on this section. Some really huge trees, three feet in diameter are being chewed on by the beaver. Perhaps they are building a Bridge? We were traveling fast and making a lot of chain saw noise, so we did not seek many small critters, just mostly birds.

WATERLEVEL

This upper section of the creek, near the Raccoon lake Dam is typically the lowest water along the entire length of the creek. As small streams further downstream flow in, more water is added. The water flow over ripples and rapids below Bridgeton is typically one to two times as deep as immediately below the Dam. Marty bottomed his Kayak a few times, but this was his first time in a Kayak, so he is learning to "read" the water.

RIVER WISE

There are more homes and cabins on this stretch of Big Raccoon than anywhere else along the creek. Several right at the waters edge. Please respect these neighbors privacy when you paddle by and don't be loud, or get out on their property. They live on the creek mainly because of the peace and quiet. Every one we have met have been very nice so say hello as you go by.

Dave Gahimer

The Raccoon River Rat

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Rockville, IN 47872

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cell 765 592 3723

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Thanks to Dave and his crew, we did not have to run the Raccoon Creek Chainsaw trip this year!!



ERROR COR- RECTION

This is the correct url
for our bulletin board:

[http://
www.hccbuletinboard.org/forums/](http://www.hccbuletinboard.org/forums/)

NOTE:

Please send change of
address to:
Dave Ellis,
Membership Chair
7650 Poplar Road.
Brownsburg, IN 46112



Ray James, Boundary Waters below Lake Polly September 7, 2007

The Hoosier Paddler



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