

boatman's quarterly review

the journal of Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc | volume 22 | number 2 | summer 2009

# Mike Denoyer

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## boatman's quarterly review

...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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## Farewell

### JOHN HARPER

JOHN HARPER of Palisade, Colorado died on April 22. He was 78. John ran rivers in the 1950s with Mexican Hat Expeditions. He was with the Rigg brothers in May, 1952, when they took two Cris Craft cruisers through the Canyon. In July of that year, John rowed a cataract boat on Mexican Hat's regular expedition, putting him among the first 164 to have rowed through Grand Canyon.



*Gaylord Staveley*

## Help! Help! Help!

DOES ANYONE OUT THERE have a spare computer monitor lying around that you're not using anymore? GCRG desperately needs to upgrade from our current "mini-me" screen with a pathetically tiny 15" viewable area to something that will work with some new software we're getting soon.

What GCRG needs is a computer monitor with a 1280 x 800 pixel (or higher) display with a 16-bit video card. Flat panel display is preferred, but really we aren't picky. Those specs are the important thing.

So if can help us out with a donation of this sort, we'll be happy to send you an acknowledgement letter for your tax records. Get rid of something you're not using, get a tax break and help GCRG in the process—what could be better! We'd sure appreciate it.

## Prez Blurb

**S**UMMERTIME IS HERE! Everybody's getting back on the river, seeing the Canyon all green and fresh, it's my favorite time of year, at least 'til September rolls around, or maybe the monsoons, they're pretty fun too. So I want to wish you all a good summer; nice folks, fun trips, no bad accidents, all that good stuff.

We've been busy here at Grand Canyon River Guides. We had a great Spring Meeting up here at Hatchland. The weather was good, there were lots of happy people of all ages and backgrounds, good speakers and not all inside either, the Park Service flew in their big helicopter before lunch so we could get a look at it and talk about safe rescues and then after lunch many of the local tribes set up stations outside where we could gather in small groups and learn about their views and concerns. Saturday was a really nice day. Brad Dimock kicked off the evening regaling us with tales of Murl Emery (all this time I thought Emery Falls were named after Emery Kolb). Matt Fahey showed us some beautiful films as well as some whitewater chills, spills, and thrills, followed by a fabulous raffle in which the Beav won nothing! *El Coochise and Country Express*, a really fun band from Hopi land, rounded out the night with dancing and rock and roll. Even though they couldn't be there in person, Chaco generously funded Saturday night's dinner, and the "libations" were courtesy of Chaco, Mogollon, Artisan Metal Works and Cork n' Bottle. Sunday morning was more of the same with some good science and history talks and a good strong wind to blow us all home!

Thanks to all the speakers and presenters. Thanks to the Park and the tribes. Thanks to Simone for cooking. Thanks especially to Lynn Hamilton and Emily Dale Perry for doing the lion's share. And thanks to all of you who came out and enjoyed! Be sure and save the weekend of October 17TH for our Fall rendezvous out at Kane Ranch in fabulous House Rock Valley! Condors, Cowboys, and Cliffdwellings!

Okay, that's enough exclamation points for a while. One thing I've learned in 20 years of leading trips in the Canyon is that the guests that you want to spend the most time with usually aren't the ones that you need to spend the most time with. I've learned, the hard way, that a lot of problems down the road can be avoided by paying more attention to the folks that aren't as much fun. I know most of you know this already. We here at GCRG are trying to apply the same principle to some of the issues affecting Grand Canyon, specifically the issue of Navajo sponsored jet boats and helicopters in Marble Canyon. I'm sure those of you in Flagstaff have read in the papers much

of the brouhaha surrounding this issue, we've already fired off a letter to superintendent Steve Martin supporting him in maintaining the tranquility of Marble Canyon. Not that we have anything against the Navajo, it's just helicopters and jet boats we're not particularly fond of.

Fortunately, our own Nikki Cooley was keeping her ears open and got in on a meeting with Mike Anderson, the Navajo businessman proposing the jet boat venture and learned some facts. First of all, he would like to run daily jet boat trips from Lees Ferry down to the Little Colorado River and helicopter his people out from the old pad. He already has one jet boat sitting in his warehouse. But he doesn't want to get arrested, and so far neither the Cameron Chapter nor the tribal government in Window Rock have offered to back him in a legal fight, so that project is on hold. He's concentrating right now on getting a dam-down to Lees Ferry operation going similar to Colorado River Discovery. Secondly, the Hualapai have been in contact with the Navajo regarding the wonders of helicopter tours, the Cameron chapter has been in contact with Maverick helicopters, and the Government in Window Rock has been in contact with Papillon about helicopter tours in Marble Canyon, possibly using the old pad at the confluence. Those of you who take out on Lake Mead know the kind of "Disney Jungle Cruise" meets *Apocalypse Now* experience this can create.

We want to encourage the Navajo Nation and Mike Anderson to get on the river in a responsible way by participating in process already set up by the park in the Colorado River Management Plan. And we want to encourage them to respect the traditional cultural and natural values of Marble Canyon and the Confluence by just saying no to helicopter tours. Please let us know what you think by writing us or getting in touch with us at [gcrg@infomagic.net](mailto:gcrg@infomagic.net) or our Facebook page, we'll keep in touch.

All right, enjoy the rest of the BOR, and get out there and have some good, clean fun!

*Matt Herman*

# Guide Profiles

Matt Claman, Age 50



photo courtesy of Petra Lisiecki.

**WHERE WERE YOU BORN & WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?**

Born in Boston, grew up in Dallas.

**WHO DO YOU WORK FOR CURRENTLY (AND IN THE PAST)?**

OARS/Grand Canyon Dories.

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN GUIDING?** Since 1987.

**WHAT KIND OF BOAT(S) DO YOU RUN?** Oar rafts and dories.

**WHAT OTHER RIVERS HAVE YOU WORKED ON?** Just about every road-accessible river in Alaska with enough water to float a raft, and a couple that didn't have quite enough water.

**WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES/PASSIONS/DREAMS?** Biking and cross-country skiing, cooking, photography, helping to make the world a better place, writing a book and rowing until my body can't do it any more.

**MARRIED/FAMILY/PETS?** Lisa Rieger and I have two teenage kids, Maia and Ben, and one dog, Bandit.

**SCHOOL/AREA OF STUDY/DEGREES?** Colorado College, BA-History, and University of Texas, JD.

**WHAT MADE YOU START GUIDING?** Coming as a passenger on a dory trip in 1986.

**WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE?** A passion for rivers and the outdoors, and sharing the experience with others.

**WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR MENTORS AND/OR ROLE MODELS?**

Kenton Grua and just about every guide I have been privileged to work with. I try to learn something from everyone.

**WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE WINTER?** After 20 years work as an attorney in Alaska, I became Acting Mayor of Anchorage in January 2009, when Mark Begich defeated Ted Stevens for a seat in the us Senate. I finish my term as mayor at the end of June 2009.

**IS THIS YOUR PRIMARY WAY OF EARNING A LIVING OR DO YOU COMBINE IT WITH SOMETHING ELSE?** Guiding in the Grand Canyon is my primary way of keeping balance in my work life.

**WHAT'S THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT IN YOUR GUIDING CAREER?** Arriving in Flagstaff expecting to row a baggage boat and receiving the opportunity to row a dory.

**WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST QUESTION YOU'VE EVER BEEN ASKED ABOUT THE CANYON/RIVER?** Do you ever get bored in the Grand Canyon?

**WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR FUTURE HOLDS?** More boating, more public service, and more time with my wife and children.

**WHAT KEEPS YOU HERE?** The canyon, the river, the guides, and the people who treasure the experience.

Nikki Cooley, Age 29



**WHERE WERE YOU BORN & WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?** I was born after my mother drove herself to the Fort Defiance Hospital during a December blizzard. I grew up in Blue Gap, Flagstaff, but mostly in Shonto on the Navajo Nation AKA “the rez”.

**WHO DO YOU WORK FOR CURRENTLY (AND IN THE PAST)?** I work for AZRA/Discovery but have done trips for CANX, GCY and NAU Outdoors.

**HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN GUIDING?** Great question because it depends on who you ask. Since 2001, while in college, I did a number of assistant trips for CANX and AZRA (Grand Canyon and San Juan Rivers). After honing my boating skills, I became a real (paid) guide for AZRA in 2005 but feel like I’ve been working longer.

**WHAT KIND OF BOAT(S) DO YOU RUN?** I love motor and oar trips alike but had to cut down on motor trips since my involuntary involvement with a bus.

**WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES/PASSIONS/DREAMS?** My long term objective is to keep encouraging Native people to get involved in getting an education in protecting and caring for our natural resources whether it’s through a college/university or taking a Native Guide Training Course.

**MARRIED/FAMILY/PETS?** Married to Craig Ahrens... finally!

**WHAT MADE YOU START GUIDING?** I met Kristin Husinga at NAU who introduced me to many river folks including Lora Colton who invited me on a Canyon trip. I remember being on the paddle boat with her and shouting commands in Navajo. It worked! But it was doing assistant trips on the San Juan River and Colorado and AZRA folks that started me guiding. I love being outdoors, sharing my culture and being with new and old friends on the river. Plus the physical aspect of guiding is appealing.

**WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR MENTORS AND/OR ROLE MODELS?** There are so many in passing that have taught me a thing or two but to name a few would be Craig Ahrens, Alex and Fred Thevenin, Nicole Corbo, Kristin Husinga, Jason Mackleprang, John O’Brien, Jerry Johnson, Ed Hench, Louise Teal and many more that I’ve been lucky to meet and/or work with.

**WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE WINTER?** I mostly work on the raising funds and awareness about Native Guide Training Program, eating mutton, and catching up on reading.

**WHAT’S THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT IN YOUR GUIDING CAREER?** After completing my first paid trip in the Canyon and realizing that I am one of the first Native women and perhaps the first Navajo woman to do so!

**WHAT’S THE CRAZIEST QUESTION YOU’VE EVER BEEN ASKED ABOUT THE CANYON/RIVER?** There are a couple questions that come to mind and the first is, “Why do we have to sit on sand all the time and where did it come from?” and “I love your color! How long have you been working on your tan?”

# Flying Fish: The 2009 Humpback Chub Translocation Experiment

**I**N JUNE 2009, the National Park Service will translocate nearly 300 juvenile humpback chub from the Little Colorado River to Shinumo Creek in Grand Canyon National Park. The goal of this experiment is to gather information about how this endangered species will respond to translocation to a smaller tributary. This project will enable biologists to assess the feasibility of using translocation to establish an offsite refuge and an additional aggregation of humpback chub in Grand Canyon. The National Park Service and Bureau of Reclamation are funding this translocation experiment to increase the understanding of conservation efforts that must be undertaken in order to ensure that this native fish continues to survive in Grand Canyon. The project is a collaborative effort between the NPS, BOR, the Grand Canyon Wildlands Council, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Humpback chub (*Gila cypha*) are an unusual-looking member of the minnow family endemic to the Colorado River basin. These fish, which can live as long as 30 years and reach lengths of almost 20 inches, are characterized by large fins and pronounced humps behind the heads of adults. Like the other fish endemic to the Colorado River, humpback chub are adapted to natural conditions of the Colorado River—high turbidity and seasonally variable flows and temperatures.

Relatively little is known about the populations of fish in Grand Canyon prior to the closure of Glen Canyon Dam. Today, the largest humpback chub population in Grand Canyon is near the confluence of the Little Colorado and the Colorado Rivers. Humpback chub spawn in the Little Colorado River because the water released from Glen Canyon Dam in the mainstem Colorado River is too cold for successful reproduction there.

Humpback chub was first listed as an endangered species in 1967 and today is protected under the Endangered Species Act. The decline in humpback chub populations is due to a variety of significant human-caused changes to the aquatic habitat in the Colorado River basin. In Grand Canyon, humpback chub face a dam-altered ecosystem, as well as competition with and predation by non-native fish such as rainbow and brown trout that thrive in the clear cold waters of the post-dam Colorado River. Nonnative parasites such as the Asian tapeworm, and the possibility of a catastrophic event such as a

hazardous materials spill from a bridge that crosses the Little Colorado River are also significant threats.

The conservation of humpback chub is a critical component of Colorado River management in Grand Canyon. The establishment of second reproducing humpback chub population below Glen Canyon Dam is an important step in conserving this species in Grand Canyon. One of the options for reaching this goal is the establishment of a satellite humpback chub population in a suitable Grand Canyon tributary. Historically, humpback chub would have used other tributaries besides the Little Colorado River but currently may be excluded from such tributaries due to competition and predation by nonnative fish species. Recently biologists successfully translocated humpback chub within the Little Colorado River into previously unoccupied habitat above a set of barrier falls. This action set the precedent for a potentially successful translocation in another Grand Canyon tributary that may provide suitable habitat.

Shinumo Creek is a small, clear tributary that joins the Colorado River at approximately River Mile 109. It is fed by springs in the Redwall Limestone and by surface flow from the North Rim, especially during spring snowmelt. Shinumo Creek has dense vegetation along the shoreline and a good abundance of aquatic and riparian invertebrates. Biologists selected Shinumo Creek as the site for the translocation experiment because it appears to have suitable habitat for humpback chub based on water quality, water temperature, and available foodbase.

One of the most important features of Shinumo Creek for the translocation experiment is the presence of barrier falls just above its confluence with the Colorado River. A fifteen-foot (five meter) waterfall located a few hundred yards (meters) above the Colorado River isolates



Humpback chub. Photo courtesy Melissa Trammell



*Seining humpback chub in the Little Colorado River. Photo courtesy of the NPS.*

acceptable humpback chub habitat in Shinumo Creek from non-native predator fish in the mainstem Colorado River. Upstream of the fish barrier, two species of native fish, speckled dace and bluehead suckers, and only one nonnative species (rainbow trout) live in the stream. Native fish are more abundant than rainbow trout, indicating that some co-existence may be possible between these competing species.

In July and October 2008, crews of biologists from the National Park Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Grand Canyon Wildlands Council used hoop-nets and seines to capture approximately 300 juvenile humpback chub near the mouth of the Little Colorado River. These two to four inch (50–130 mm) fish were transported out of the canyon by helicopter. The small humpback chub were treated to remove parasites at the Arizona Game and Fish Department Bubbling Ponds Fish Hatchery for approximately one month. The fish were then transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Dexter National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center, in Dexter, New Mexico to overwinter and grow to a size that would allow

identification tags to be implanted. Passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags, which are small electronic tags that will aid in monitoring after translocation, will be implanted within the fish while they are at the hatchery a month before the translocation.

In early June 2009, the fish will be transported again by helicopter to a landing site near Bass Camp at Shinumo Creek. Prior to the release of the humpback chub into Shinumo Creek, a team of biologists will use electrofishing techniques to survey the existing fish community. Non-native fish will also be removed from the translocation reach. Biologists will temper the humpback chub to Shinumo Creek water condition, and then release them into stream reaches with suitable habitat.

The field work for this translocation project is strictly regulated in the permit issued by National Park Service, the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This project was determined to have no adverse impacts on the park's natural and cultural resources. Additionally, helicopter landing zones, campsites for field personnel, and many aspects of

field logistics were designed to minimize impacts to visitors in these backcountry areas.

The experiment of translocating young humpback chub into Shinumo Creek is an important opportunity to assess the effectiveness of translocation as a conservation strategy. The information gained via this experiment will lead to a better understand of the methods needed to establish a second humpback chub population in Grand Canyon.

An intensive three-year monitoring program will follow the translocation of humpback chub into Shinumo Creek. Biologists will evaluate the success of the humpback chub translocation using established fish surveying techniques such as snorkeling, hoop-netting, seining, and electrofishing. Data will be collected on the size, condition and health of humpback chub and their distribution in the translocation reach. The habitat characteristics of Shinumo Creek, including water flow, water quality and temperature and other variables, will also be monitored. A PIT tag antenna will be placed near the falls to record any fish that are washed out of the stream by monsoonal floods.

Specific questions to be evaluated include whether the young humpback chub survive the translocation,

and if they will remain in Shinumo Creek. If they survive in Shinumo Creek, will the humpback chub grow, mature and reproduce there; and if so, will their offspring remain in Shinumo Creek? If the translocation is successful, genetics monitoring will be initiated to ensure that inbreeding or genetic drift does not occur in the Shinumo Creek population. Additional translocations to augment this population will be considered based upon the analysis of the first year's findings.

*Allyson Mathis, Steve Mietz, Bill Leibfried,  
Larry Stevens, and Bill Persons*

NOTE: Allyson Mathis is the Outreach Coordinator and Steve Mietz is the Natural Resources Group Lead for the Division of Science and Resource Management for Grand Canyon National Park. Bill Leibfried is senior scientist with Leibfried Environmental Services. Dr. Larry Stevens is the Senior Ecologist for Grand Canyon Wildlands Council. Bill Persons is fisheries biologist with the Arizona Game and Fish Department. Steve can be contacted at [Steven\\_Mietz@nps.gov](mailto:Steven_Mietz@nps.gov). Larry can be reached at [Farvana@aol.com](mailto:Farvana@aol.com).



*Shinumo Creek. Photo courtesy of the NPS.*

## Traditional Tribal Values Versus Business and Sovereignty Rights

**Y**Á'ÁT'ÉÉH! I am of the Towering House Clan, born the Reed People Clan, maternal grandparents are of the Water That Flows Together Clan and my paternal grandparents are of the Manygoats Clan. I was born in Fort Defiance, Arizona and raised mainly in Shonto, Arizona and the Northern Arizona region. My name is Nikki Cooley and I am a member of the Diné (Navajo) tribe.

For as long as I can remember, I have always introduced myself in the Diné way because I was taught by my elders that introducing our clans was the Diné way of saying, "Hi, my name is Nikki. How are you?" Our clans are like our identification cards because they are how other Diné identify us, and without them we are a bit lost. The term 'Yá'át'ééh' has multiple meanings; it's used as a greeting that both parties say to each other. It means "All is well," "I am well," and so on. Most importantly, you're not greeting just people but all living things including the animals, sky and earth. To understand the Diné one must know about and understand the innate connection of Mother Earth intertwined with the culture, language and history, and the people themselves. The Diné stories and prayers all recognize and acknowledge the important role the Holy People and Mother Nature play in our daily lives.

At a young age we, the Diné, are taught that humans must live in harmony and balance by making our daily offerings of corn pollen and prayer. We rise before the sun and make our offerings and prayers asking for harmony and balance in our daily decisions and work/home life. Throughout my teens and twenties, curiosity about Diné culture and perspectives about different issues from visitors around the world have reached me in various situations. The questions and overwhelming interest from passengers on my first river trip as an assistant for AZRA made me realize that there was a need for local Native American perspectives to be learned and heard on the river. My conversations with Hopi, Zuni, Paiute, Cherokee and Gwichin tribal members echo similar sentiments about Mother Nature.

In the last few years, my time on AZRA motor and oar trips, NAU Outdoors, GCY and Wild Rivers Expedition trips have allowed me to share my knowledge, and answers the questions of curious passengers and river guides. In my discussions with passengers and guides, I always made it a point to talk about Diné relations and perspectives of the river, land, plants and animals. I've talked about how contemporary Diné strive to maintain harmony and balance with respect to nihimá nahas-dzaan, Mother Earth, while learning and educating ourselves to survive in mainstream society's ways. I've

talked about how important it is that non-Natives and Native people alike need to respect the traditional tribal and natural values of the land. I've spoken at the GTS at Marble Canyon, at the cultural event sponsored by Western River Expeditions in Salt Lake, talked with individuals and written a few articles. I feel as though I have been working very hard on the behalf of the Diné people and other tribes about the importance of respecting the cultural importance and value we ascribe to the river and the earth.

On April 3, I read the *Arizona Daily Sun* article about the Navajo Nation and a Navajo entrepreneur wanting a piece of the commercial river business, I had mixed feelings. On one hand, a viable economic opportunity for the Navajo and on the other, the accelerated degradation of Marble Canyon, Little Colorado River and the river corridor. The article talked about the Navajo owned company running one-day trips to Little Colorado River (LCR) confluence and then flying folks out at a heli-pad in the LCR corridor, and how the Navajo Nation might not wait for the Grand Canyon National Park Service's permission. My reaction to the newspaper article was one of disappointment. The decision to assert sovereign land and water rights in this method seems hurried and irresponsible to the environment and the Navajo people.

Soon after the article came out, I had many conversations with my peers and tried to make sense of the situation. Luckily, I was invited to a meeting at the Grand Canyon Trust to hear Mike Anderson's side of the story and see how far along his business proposal was. To make a long story short, Mike Anderson is a ten-year businessman with close ties in the Page and Flagstaff community who wants to create a Navajo owned commercial river outfitter. The Navajo Nation government (namely the Division of Economic Development) wanted and still wants to assert their sovereign claim in the tourist industry surrounding the Colorado River and Grand Canyon, and wanted to partner with Mr. Anderson. After many discussions with the Navajo Nation, Mr. Anderson decided to hold off on running a pilot jet boat trip down to the LCR until he could get full judicial and government support from the Navajo Nation government. At the time of our meeting, he was still waiting to hear confirmation for the support, but for now he would concentrate on developing smooth water river trips from the dam to Lees Ferry. Mr. Anderson wants to go through the same process as current outfitters while the Navajo Nation wants to act as soon as possible, even if it means overriding Park Service mandates.

During the meeting, I was given the opportunity to express the concerns of GCRG and personal concerns as a Navajo river guide and tribal member. Mr. Anderson listened to our concerns and suggestions, and answered our questions. From this meeting, we learned that the *Arizona Daily Sun* article fostered many rumors and misinterpretations of Mr. Anderson's business endeavors. As Mr. Anderson said himself, if he didn't care about our concerns he would never have agreed to a meeting at the Grand Canyon Trust. I, for one, was very thankful that he came to Flagstaff to listen to our concerns and clear up any misunderstandings because willingly walking into a firing squad or worse yet encountering a

fired-up Navajo woman is never a good idea.

I whole-heartedly support the assertion of tribal sovereignty rights but I say we, Natives, need to assert our rights/claims in socially and environmentally responsible ways. We need to assert our rights in accordance to our cultural beliefs and traditional practices that say we respect Mother Earth, we are a part of the environment and she is a part of us, and we need to continue our care and respect. I know that the same beliefs and practices go for river guides and that's why we love and continue to work in the Grand Canyon and other rivers year after year.

*Nikki Cooley*

## GCRG's Letter to Superintendent Martin

April 23, 2009

Superintendent Steve Martin  
Grand Canyon National Park  
PO Box 1934  
Flagstaff, AZ 86002

Dear Superintendent Martin,

Grand Canyon River Guides Association is writing to support you in your staunch defense of the Colorado River Management Plan and the tranquility and natural values of Marble Canyon. The daily jet boat trips proposed by Michael Anderson, unnamed financial backers, and some elements of the Navajo Nation government are an eminent danger to Grand Canyon National Park and to the overriding NPS mission to conserve those values for future generations to enjoy.

On January 3, 1975, President Carter signed the Grand Canyon Enlargement Act, simultaneously including in the Park the entire Grand Canyon from river mile 110 to 277, and returning 185,000 acres of ancestral homeland to the Havasupai People, symbolizing the fact that National Park Service and tribal values need not be at odds. Sadly, as you well know, having served on the river unit in the late 1970s, the park never really assumed ownership of the river below Diamond Creek, leaving a vacuum of authority between there and Lake Mead into which crept many abuses of the Parks' natural values. Please do not let the same fate befall Marble Canyon!

Nobody is denying the right of Navajos to do as they wish on Navajo Lands, and the development of economic opportunity in Dinétah is certainly to be applauded. However, running daily jet boat rides through the entirety of Marble Canyon, and then helicoptering guests out from one of the most sacred sites in the canyon is antithetical to both park and traditional Navajo values.

As a Diné Nation member and GCRG board member/river guide, Nikki Cooley states, "The Diné cultural traditions of caring for and respecting our Mother Earth are directly intertwined with our prayers, stories and teachings. These values are stated daily in our clan system, language, history, and in the Diné Nation's defense against the violations of Mother Earth. We, the Diné, speak of how we need to care and respect our Mother so future generations may enjoy the bounties the earth has to offer."

We support the Navajo Nation's goal in developing viable economic opportunities for the Navajo people, however, the direct economic benefit to over 250,000 Navajos is uncertain at best. Nikki Cooley says, "The

Diné Nation people and government need to pursue economic avenues that will be environmentally sustainable and responsible. This will be in conjunction with preserving traditional values and practices while developing sustainable economies on the Navajo Nation.”

The problems associated with this proposal are many-fold, from increased use outside the scope of the Colorado River Management Plan, to the obvious safety hazards of running large jet boats up and down the river, and the same significant erosional effects of large wakes as we see in the lower canyon. Additionally, the helicopter traffic would make it more difficult to comply with the Overflights Act of 1987 by substantially degrading the visitor experience, impairing the natural soundscape, and potentially impacting Hopi cultural values associated with the Sipapu. Taken together, these are clearly “unacceptable impacts” as defined in the NPS 2006 Management Policies, “which individually or cumulatively would:

- Be inconsistent with a park’s purposes or values, or
- Impede the attainment of a park’s desired future conditions for natural and cultural resources as identified through the park’s planning process, or
- Create an unsafe or unhealthful environment for visitors or employees, or
- Diminish opportunities for current or future generations to enjoy, learn about, or be inspired by park resources or values, or
- Unreasonably interfere with
- Park programs or activities, or
- An appropriate use, or
- The atmosphere of peace and tranquility, or the natural soundscape maintained in wilderness and natural, historic, or commemorative locations within the park.
- NPS concessioner or contractor operations or services.”

The current commercial prospectus and the Colorado River Management Plan give ample welcome and opportunity to Native American individuals and/or tribes to enter river running and participate *in the process*. However, we’d like to strongly emphasize those three words. The current proposal is clearly outside of the scope of the CRMP as it seeks to present the Park with a *fait accompli* based on Hualapai precedence.

We understand how challenging and delicate “government to government” relationships with tribal entities can be. However, we feel that the best way to evaluate this proposal is to take the tribal element out of the equation. Is it a good proposal? No it is not. Has it been proposed within the scope of the CRMP? No again. Ultimately, this is a strong test of the NPS’s ultimate responsibility for resource protection and the quality of the visitor experience in Grand Canyon National Park. We have every confidence that you will hold firm in its defense, and Grand Canyon River Guides joins you in remaining fully invested in the continued success of the Colorado River Management Plan. How we meet this challenge today will have lasting repercussions for the future...

Respectfully,

The Board and Officers of Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.

Matt Herrman	President
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Erika Andersson	Director
Nikki Cooley	Director
Steve Nicholson	Director
Deanna Sanderson	Director
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Fred Thevenin	Director

## Guides Training Seminar Success!

IMAGINE A GORGEOUS, warm day *without wind* in Marble Canyon in spring. A rare phenomenon indeed, but we were fortunate enough to experience it for this year's Guides Training Seminar, on Saturday anyway! Of course, by 11:00 on Sunday the winds started to howl and the drive home was a bit harrowing but hey, that's normal—bring lunch stuff inside, batten down the hatches—no problem.

Still, what a day it was on Saturday with about 200 of us at Hatchland. Thankfully we had plenty of outside activities planned including a simply fascinating multi-tribal workshop with lots of show and tell, offering outstanding opportunities to discuss tribal perspectives on a more intimate level. Guides and tribal participants alike enjoyed the new format. Many thanks to Joelle Clark from the Native Voices on the Colorado River Program for coordinating this outstanding part of the GTS as well as to all of the tribal representatives who joined us. With representatives from the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, and Havasupai tribes, the session went far to deepen our understanding.

We also had a helicopter land near the Hatch warehouse (yes, it's true!) for a critical situations lecture and demonstration. The ability to ask questions of the pilot was incredibly helpful. And hey, it's pretty neat to check out a helicopter when it's *not* an emergency. Thanks to Ken Phillips and his staff for making this happen. We appreciate the ability to inject practicality into the GTS!

And of course, we had a myriad of fabulous talks. Our thanks to all our wonderful speakers who came from near and far to join us! Great questions from the guides in the audience spoke to how interested and engaged everyone was. We were also very fortunate and very honored to have the Superintendent join us. His commitment to the river community really shows and is much appreciated.

The raffle was big fun (thanks to all of you who donated!) and may I say we had an *awesome band* from Hopiland (*El Cochise and the Country Express*). Leigh Kuwanwisiwma put his plug in last year and we took him up on it. Glad we did! Lots of dancing into the night. Even though they couldn't be there in person, Chaco generously funded Saturday night's dinner, and the "libations" were courtesy of Chaco, Mogollon, Artisan Metal Works and Cork n' Bottle. Thanks to all of you!

From the Grand Canyon river outfitters who send their guides and monetary support, to the Grand Canyon Conservation Fund, Grand Canyon National Park, and the Grand Canyon Association, all of our GTS partners show a strong commitment to support this outstanding interpretive learning opportunity. If you were there, we hope you really enjoyed it, and if you

weren't, better catch us next year because we're already hatching plans!





Photos: Wayne Ranney

## GTS River Trip 2009

THE 2009 GUIDE TRAINING SEMINAR featured an all-star cast of speakers, sponsored by Western River Expeditions with trip leader Steve Wiley running the J-Rig. Five rowboats and a paddleboat ran the Canyon April 1-15, representing OARS, Wilderness, CRATE, Adopt-a-Beach, and AZRA who also brought the paddle raft. Day one started out with five California Condors riding thermal waves above the Navajo bridges. At Soap Creek, Kassy Theobald from NPS Revegetation talked about social trails and campsite reconstruction. We learned about the continual goal to establish campsites below the old high water mark, and eliminate social trails. To do this, the Park Service has used vertical mulching (deadwood buried to stand upright), organic litter, and boulders in place to create a natural environment that establishes where hiking and camping should be. That night we found camp at Hot-Na-Na.

Alan Peterson, Professor at Coconino Community College talked after lunch at Tiger Wash to compare pictures from Powell's 1871 expedition to see how the canyon has changed. His talk introduced the challenges of Powell's first and second expeditions, and how difficult it was for photographs to be produced. Peterson talked about the time period of Powell's expeditions, stemming from the Industrial Revolution and advancing into the Romantic Period where exploration of the blank spots on the map in West followed the Civil War.

At Nautiloud we made camp and gathered for Megan Kohli from the Park Service talking about scat. With a brown, cone shaped bag, Megan had each person reach into the pseudo scat to pull out different objects repre-

senting things we can learn from animal excrement. Objects represented health, diet, territory, proximity and whether or not the animal has Alpha traits.

Back on the water we pulled on the sticks through some wind before taking a break exploring the dam test sites in Marble Canyon. At Saddle Canyon we hiked through blooming Red Buds to the falls. Down to Eminence Break we stopped to camp and pull the invasive Russian Thistle that has begun to take over the beach. This was the first attempt to remove the non-native species here. Around the campfire, Wiley pulled out the guitars, drums, tambourines and the music played into the night.

The next day we made short miles, staying just behind threatening clouds. Camping at Kwagunt Creek, we awoke to snow on both rims. River Ranger Dave Derosiers demonstrated a z-drag before we pushed off for the day.

At the Little Colorado, Alan Peterson talked more about Powell, and his time at the LCR. He continued to talk about how the artwork that accompanied Powell's writings affected the public's perception of the West during the romantic period. Besides Powell's photographer, E.O. Beaman, Baron F. W. von Egloggstein and Thomas Moran focused on emphasizing the dramatic landscape with some level of exaggeration. Moran's influence helped to pass Yellowstone and Grand Canyon as National Parks.

Floating in the eddy next to the Salt Mines, Beep Jenkins passed around photos of Hopi traditions and talked about the significance of that place to his people. At Carbon Creek we stopped and hiked up to the Butte Fault line and back. Camp that night was at Tanner Flats.

At Unkar we stopped to pull the infamous camelthorn that has invaded beaches. Kassy Theobald showed data compiled on this continual project, and how the effort has shown a decline of invasives. After lunch, Megan Kohli from NPS dressed Oars boatman, Bill Bowker, as a California condor. The interpretive talk was a fun visual about how this endangered species has adapted, with each part of the costume representing a different adaptation. During the afternoon, the boatmen got a taste of bigger water, running Hance and Sockdolager before pulling into Grapevine Camp. That night, Stacey Hamburg from the Sierra Club talked about the history of the organization, the victories and struggles of David Brower and the Sierra Club's current battles with uranium mining around the rim of the Canyon.

At Phantom, we said our goodbyes to the folks leaving, and met the boatmen and interpretive speakers that joined for the lower half. The morning was full of anticipation as nerves built in the Inner Gorge. Steve Wiley pulled over above Granite to change his motor not firing at full cob. All the boatmen had clean runs, although "high side!"



Peter Huntoon tells the group about "exploring" the "cave" behind the source at Deer Creek. Photo: Geoff Carpenter

might have been heard echoing off the walls of the canyon a couple of times. We pulled into camp above Crystal with enough time to hike down and watch Dave Desrosiers, Marc Yeston and Matt Slater from the Park Service rescue an abandoned dory trapped in the rock garden. By NPS helicopter, a zodiac was dropped with a specialized 60 hp outboard jet prop. With Desrosiers at the throttle, Yeston and Slater were able to free the private trip sacrifice. After Desrosiers cleared the zodiac of the Rock Garden, he whipped the boat around and nearly caught air in the waves right of the Garden to catch up to the overturned dory drifting towards the Gems. The boat was tied up above Tuna Rapid before the zodiac returned to camp.

The next morning proved to be busy with intensive camelthorn pulling, geology from Wyoming Professor Peter Huntoon, and an interpretive talk from Ranger David Smith about geologic time. Before jumping in the boats to run Crystal, AZRA guide and certified yoga instructor Laura Fallon led the group in breathing and stretching exercises that allowed the group to pass without a similar fate of the dory.

At Tuna, we stopped to load the dory onto the J-Rig, and transport the boat to Lower Tuna where it could be short-hauled out of the Canyon by chopper. The Gems were run without imperfection and the group met up at camp with Superintendent Steve Martin who hiked down to the Ross Wheeler.

Down to Elves Chasm, the group paused for a quick stop. A few river guides disobeyed Trip Leader orders and followed the Superintendent to upper Elves for a quick viewing. At Blacktail Canyon, Ranger David Smith talked about relating to guests. Through the acronym "DUDE" he talked about the formation of Grand Canyon. Deposition, Uplifting, Down-cutting and Erosion is a basic way to talk to kids (and dudes) about what forces built the environment they are experiencing.

Dubendorff proved to be a challenge for some. Intense runs over table rock changed the color of some pants, but luckily resulted in minimal consequence. At Talking Heads camp Geologist Peter Huntoon challenged the idea that Grand Canyon was cut in six million years. The professor had studied Grand Canyon for both his Masters and Doctorate degrees, and took the group on a loop hike towards Cogswell Butte and down to the Patio at Deer Creek. Huntoon talked about how the river channel used to run further right here, before landslides temporarily dammed the river and pushed the current to the left. We saw river cobbles 500 feet up and right of where the river runs now. At the top of the loop, Herpetologist Geoff Carpenter caught a Side Blotched lizard and showed the group how to identify this species compared to Tree lizards. Down at the Patio above Deer Creek, Carpenter found a Tree lizard but chose not to disturb it out of respect to the Native Americans that



*Dave Smithe talks about botany at Deer Creek. Overlook.  
Photo: Geoff Carpenter*

find this place sacred.

With a relaxing afternoon, the excitement returned with big clean runs at Upset. At the Upset Hotel we stopped for the night, the last on the GTS for Superintendent Steve Martin, and Rangers David Smith and Marc Yeston. After dinner, around the campfire, Yeston and I were deep in discussion. We talked about the future of water in the West, and the impacts of our current water storage plan. While talking about Glen Canyon, Yeston offered, "I think we will see Glen Canyon restored, and possibly in my lifetime," the Backcountry Ranger has spent his career at National Parks around the Colorado Plateau, and knows this country intimately. "Not for aesthetic reasons but for economic reasons. As water becomes more scarce and expensive, people will realize that water storage in the desert just isn't logical, or efficient." Certainly this is a discussion that is important to talk about, especially within current drought patterns.

The next morning Martin, Yeston and Smith hiked out at Havasu and the GTS continued. We stopped to hike at Fern Glen and Stairway. During lunch at Stairway, Carpenter showed the group Tree lizards and Western Whiptails.

On down to Lava Falls, Dave Desrosiers and Maddie Tighe from NPS Monitoring removed donations at the Vulcan's Anvil. To the Hualapais, this site contains healing powers and wish for this place to be respected. At the Lava scout, the oarsmen got a good view of Steve Wiley on the motor going big in the V-wave. His lone passenger, Peter, got rocked off the dunnage pile and could not contain his laughter. Tequila Beach is home for the



Ben Reeder runs Upset as folks watch from NPS snout and Western J-rig. Photos: Geoff Carpenter



night, and we celebrate clean runs.

In the morning, Laura Fallon starts the day out right, and leads the group in a yoga session. Floating downstream, Maddie rides on my boat and talks about a project she is working on for the NPS. The GTS trip has given her an opportunity to talk with Grand Canyon guides about their home, and what they would like to relate to private trips going down the river. Maddie wants to compile some of these thoughts into an informational guide to give out to each private trip.

From Adopt-a-Beach, Zeke Lauck had been stopping at beaches with Tim Dealy throughout the trip to take

pictures for comparison of how beaches are affected by deposition and erosion. At a beach near 192 Mile Canyon, Zeke talks about the affect that high fluctuating releases at Glen Canyon Dam had on beaches before the management plan was revised. With a strong back eddy effect, pools of water would be left when the water dropped. This environment created opportunities for swampy conditions where reeds and tall grasses took root. At 202 mile we stop to camp.

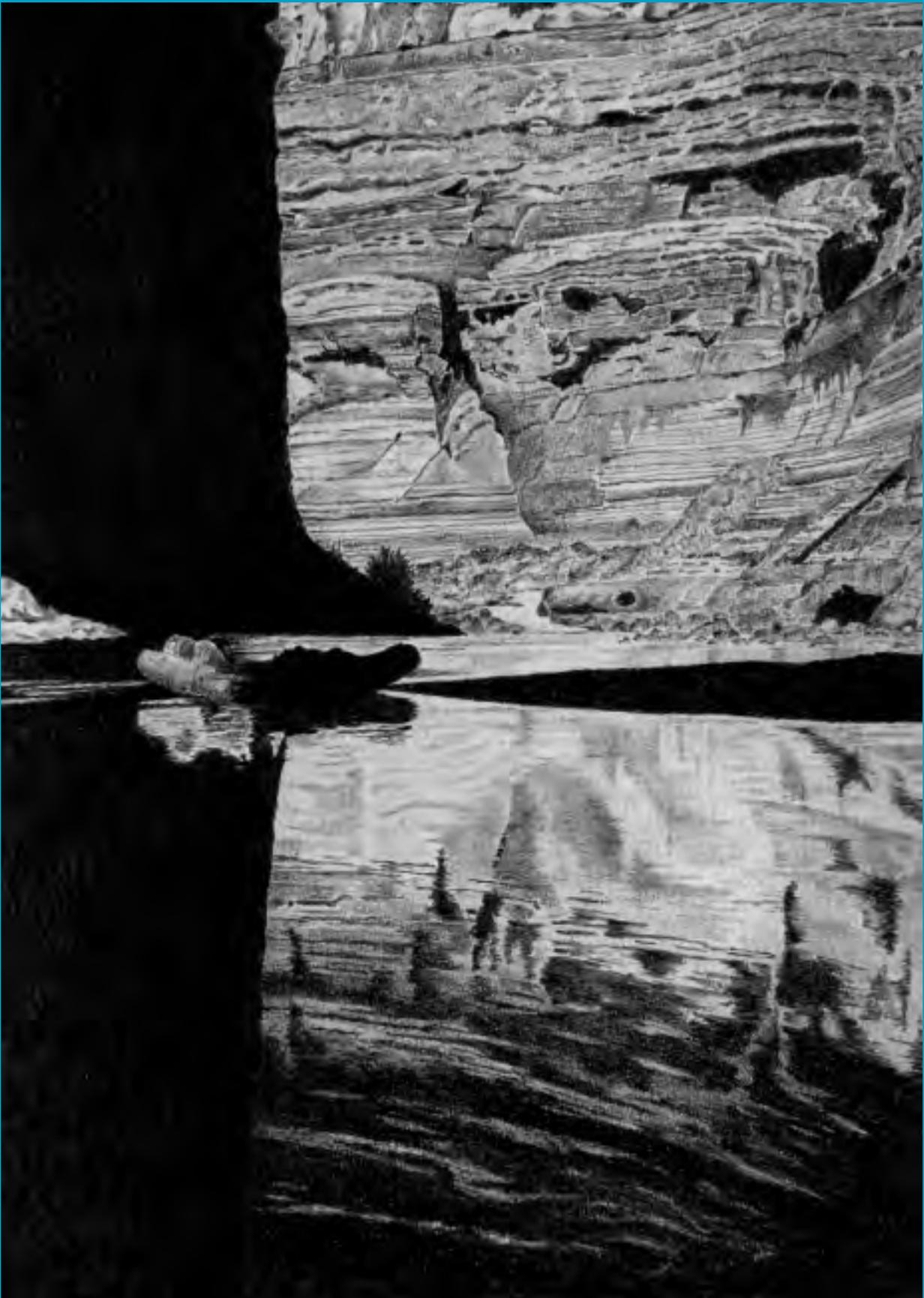
Downstream. We stop at Fall Canyon where the Park Service is working on an archeological site. The team gives us a tour of Paiute roasting pits that were being excavated to learn more about the Paiute culture. Beep Jenkins from Hopi talked with the archeologists and provided some information about how the Hopi used roasting pits and continue to do today. With over 475 known archeology sites throughout Grand Canyon, the Park Service informed us that only five percent of the Park has been combed for sites.

That afternoon we pulled through gusting wind to get to our last camp at 221 mile on the right. The guitars jammed into the night as we celebrated a great trip, full of good knowledge and with new friends. At Diamond Creek the group worked together to get the boats out of the water, and said goodbye to Wiley and crew that continued down to improve lower camps. With snowflakes falling as we drove up the wash, it was only appropriate to stop at the Snowcap Café for the last meal of GTS 2009.

*Ben Reeder*  
GTS RIVER TRIP PARTICIPANT



This is the tail end of the "dory rescue" (upside down on rock gorgen at Crystal). We dropped the dory, zodiac and gear at the beach below Tuna. Photo: Geoff Carpenter



*Marble Canyon*

*Jerry Weber*

# The Pipe Dreams of Real River Pirates

THE GCRG BOARD has submitted comments on an audacious water extraction project by a private entrepreneur named Aaron Million who wants build a 560 mile long, ten feet diameter pipeline from the Green River in Wyoming over the continental divide to the east slope of Colorado. This pipe would export 250,000 acre-feet per year out of the Colorado River basin into the Mississippi River drainage. We can't afford that, especially in a time of drought and projected drier conditions due to global climate change. Some think that any water exported out of the Colorado River basin should pay a per acre-foot stipend to the Colorado River Basin Fund as compensation to reduced hydropower generation, lost aquatic habitat for native species throughout the basin, and reduced navigability of rivers for recreational boaters.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

We urge you to send your own comments to the Army Corps of Engineers at [MCRG.EIS@usace.army.mil](mailto:MCRG.EIS@usace.army.mil) or the snail mail address shown below by July 27<sup>TH</sup> (Note: the deadline has been extended).

## GCRG COMMENTS FOR EIS SCOPING:

Ms. Rena Brand, Project Manager  
US Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District  
9307 S. Wadsworth Blvd  
Littleton, CO 80128-6901

Dear Ms. Brand,

Grand Canyon River Guides (GCRG) is a grassroots 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1988 to provide over 1,700 river guides and river runners with a collective voice regarding the protection of natural resources and the visitor experience in Grand Canyon National Park. As river stewards, it is our mission to protect Grand Canyon, provide the best possible river experience, set the highest standards for the guiding profession, and celebrate the unique spirit of the river community.

We would like to take this opportunity to provide our perspectives regarding the project currently proposed by the Million Resources Conservation Group (MRCG) to withdraw water from the Green River for Front Range development in Colorado:

1) *Keep the water in the river.* Do not export any more water from the Colorado River watershed. Sustained drought conditions and projections from global warming require that all available water be kept

within the watershed. Do not send our water to the voracious developers on the east slope of the Rockies just to make a few people wealthy.

- 2) *Don't ruin our river habitat.* Impacts to aquatic and riparian ecosystems are irreversible, severe, and go against all efforts to restore river ecosystems from the upper Green River to the Sea of Cortez. This affects the Upper Colorado RIP, Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program (GCDAMP), and Lower Colorado Multi-Species Recovery Program (MSRP), the endangered species and many other resources of concern.
- 3) *Americans love their southwest rivers for recreation.* Depletion of water from the river strongly affects many recreational needs including, white water rafting, fishing, hunting, and flat-water pleasure boating. Any reduction in water flow detracts from the quality of life and the local economies of the Colorado River basin.
- 4) *Can you really afford to compensate the western slope for this water diversion?* If the total economic and natural resource benefit of this water is evaluated for the west slope of the Rockies, it would likely be impossible for east slope water developers to repay this economic loss to the people in the Colorado River basin in perpetuity. Full valuation of benefits of this water to the west slope communities from the headwaters to the sea must be undertaken and a mechanism for compensation completed before this project is further evaluated.
- 5) *Consider drought conditions.* The proposed pipeline would take a quarter of a million acre feet of water per year out of the system regardless of the climatic situation in other areas. This diversion would only exacerbate water shortages downstream and increase their likelihood. As stated in the April 15<sup>TH</sup> edition of the *Arizona Republic* newspaper, "Federal water managers are projecting that the surface of drought stricken Lake Mead will sink next month to the lowest point since May, 1965. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation says in a recent report that by July, the vast Colorado River reservoir on the Colorado/Nevada/Arizona border will drop more than thirteen feet from its current level of 1,105 feet above sea level. The lake level is now 30 feet above elevation 1075; that's the trigger point for a federal shortage declaration that would force Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico to reduce their combined water use by 400,000 acre feet per year."

Ultimately, the long term ramifications of this proposal are wide-ranging and profound. As passionate river stewards, GCRG will act whenever a natural resource is threatened or the quality of the Grand Canyon experience is compromised, even when those threats come from outside of Grand Canyon National Park. Water in the western United States will always be a contentious and hotly debated topic as you may have found through your

initial scoping sessions. The bottom line for our organization and for many other river users throughout the river system is this sentiment: *Don't give our water away.* Consequently, and for the reasons stated above, Grand Canyon River Guides respectfully requests that the MRCG pipeline project not move forward.

*Grand Canyon River Guides*

## Grand Canyon Trust Volunteers— Ways To Give Back, From The Rim To The River

**E**ACH YEAR, THE WORK that volunteers accomplish begins with individuals showing an interest in giving back, meeting new people, and exploring the landscapes of the Colorado Plateau. These volunteers will get their hands dirty working on conservation projects in beautiful places, work that creates memories and friends that will last a lifetime. But, perhaps most important, they give back to the places they love. Grand Canyon Trust (GCT) volunteers experience the land on an intimate level; by toiling to remove invasive tamarisk and camelthorn, bending down low to identify a plant, or measuring the flow of a hidden spring. Regardless, it is a deeper experience through which a greater appreciation emerges than one can gain by simply driving or walking through a place.

River guides are important educators and have the ability to share with their passengers the stories behind the scenery. Working together, Grand Canyon River Guides and Grand Canyon Trust can reach more people, foster deeper connections with spectacular places, and expand the community of people committed to protecting the greater Grand Canyon Region. Any person who spends time rafting through the Canyon feels the overwhelming power of their surroundings. GCT's volunteer program offers ways for people to take that positive feeling from their river trip and make a difference, while continuing to experience and learn from the Grand Canyon.

Most of the Colorado River community is already familiar with Grand Canyon Youth (GCY), a local nonprofit that does a fantastic job of getting kids on the river to learn and have fun. This year, GCT is partnering with GCY and the Grand Canyon National Park (GCNP) in the *Partners in Science Rim to River* program. On these two trips, twenty high school aged volun-

teers will start their journey on the rim by doing four days of service work on the Kaibab Plateau on GCT's Kane and Two Mile ranches, and the north rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The group will participate in service projects relating to invasive species, livestock management, and protecting sensitive riparian ecosystems. Then the group will spend nine days on either the upper or



*MNA Budding Botanist Training. Photo courtesy GCT staff.*

lower half of the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon learning and participating in National Park Service (NPS) invasive species removal and monitoring activities. The trip is interlaced with lots of time to relax and have fun.

Do you or someone you know love plants? Our *Budding Botanist* program is a great opportunity for aspiring plant nerds to learn all about regional flora, plant collection techniques, and mounting specimens for museums and herbaria. This program is a collaboration between the GCT, Arizona Native Plant Society, Northern Arizona University, Museum of Northern

Arizona, and the Desert Botanical Gardens to document the diversity of Arizona's flora. All volunteers are trained and armed with botanical knowledge before they participate in exciting trips in and around the Grand Canyon to complete botanical inventory projects.

*Budding Botanist* volunteers will be collecting valuable information to be used in a larger project called the Plant Atlas Project of Arizona (PAPAZ). Both Canyon newcomers and veterans might equally embrace this opportunity to participate in such a wide-ranging and important project.

Our *Spring Stewards* project also engages volunteers in an issue of regional importance while focusing on springs in the Grand Canyon and its watershed. We all know how necessary water is for life and how scarce and precious it is in the desert. Many of us have had the privilege of visiting some of the springs that are scattered throughout the Grand Canyon. These springs are home to diverse communities of plants and insects and are important water sources for larger animals and birds.

Several factors put these resources at risk. Climate change, groundwater extraction, and mining all pose threats to these springs, threats that are not completely understood. The *Spring Stewards* program aims to address these concerns. Volunteers are trained by NPS hydrologists to assist in the monitoring of springs in Grand Canyon and the Colorado River watershed. In the future, trained volunteers will have an opportunity to adopt springs, revisiting them often to collect important data that will be tracked over time and help answer important questions about these precious and sensitive resources.

In 2008 Grand Canyon Trust began an ambitious effort to remove tamarisk and Russian olive from a seventeen-mile stretch of the Paria River in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management, and with funding from the Arizona Water Protection Fund. Since this area was retired from grazing in 1999, it has become a high priority for restoration. The Paria Canyon is one of the primary sources for Russian olive trees in GCNP, and contributes to the larger effort by the Park Vegetation Program to remove tamarisk from Colorado River tributaries. Volunteers and field technicians worked side-by-side to complete baseline ecological monitoring by



*Spring Stewards Training, April 2-5.  
Photo courtesy GCT staff.*

collecting data that will help determine how the removal of exotic plants affects native vegetation recovery, channel form, and breeding bird populations in this unique ecosystem. On-ground treatment efforts are fueled largely by volunteer labor, and will be ongoing for the next four years.

It is our hope that the river guide community will take note of these great volunteer opportunities and file them away in their mental libraries of inter-

pretive information. As you talk with folks on the river, the trail, or in town and learn of their passion for this place and their desire to give back, perhaps then you can share these opportunities with them. The Canyon's stories of geology, human history, adventure, politics and science are compelling. This is a great time to share an emerging story; one of service, learning, and giving back. Visit the Grand Canyon Trust's website for more information: [www.grandcanyontrust.org](http://www.grandcanyontrust.org)

*Travis Wiggins*  
VOLUNTEER PROGRAM COORDINATOR GCT



grand canyon river guides

## Cooperation Goes A Long Way: The Campsite Rehabilitation Project below Diamond Creek

**B**ELOW IS A RECAP of a unique, project-oriented extension of the GTS river trip, April 15–17 from Diamond Creek to South Cove. Amazingly enough, participants were able to accomplish *all* of the campsite rehabilitation work that they set out to do. If you travel below Diamond Creek now, you'll find the campsites there are much improved which should go far to alleviate crowding and congestion while improving the visitor experience in this area. It was gratifying to see such a wonderfully cooperative endeavor come to fruition and achieve such great success.

GCRG would like to sincerely thank Steve Wiley, our GTS trip leader, and also Trent Keller from Western River Expeditions for conceptualizing the project and helping in its coordination and implementation. And of course, our deep thanks to Loretta Jackson-Kelly, Sharon Wilder, and the Hualapai tribe. Their support and input was much appreciated, and they sent a group of hard working folks to help! As Trent expressed, "Everyone on the trip enjoyed the chance to get to know them, and the interaction and camaraderie with them helped to make this trip a success." Additionally, the NPS was also instrumental in allowing us to do this work, supplying the tools, and sending the trail staff to coordinate the actual work. Our thanks to everyone who participated.

The trip report from Trent Keller/Western River Expeditions is as follows:

*On the trip, we were able to accomplish a lot more work than I would have imagined. To give everyone a summary of what camps are available:*

*We first stopped at upper Bridge Canyon Rapid, and looked at this site closely. The pull-in on river left above the rapid accesses a fine camp for a group size of 32. We did not do any work here as it works well enough. The lower pull-in is not usable, as it is too steep and overgrown to get up to the camp.*

*Below there at Gneiss Canyon on river right, things are pretty steep and slim. Unfortunately, there is not a lot that could be done here. It would host a small group.*

*The first place we did work at was just above the Army Corp of Engineers camp at Mile 237.5 on river left. This has been a usable camp until the high water release of last year. We spend several hours here and were able to make this a very usable camp for groups of up to 32. There is a lower beach and an upper beach with a very small creek running through the middle that had flashed out and had a drainage that was difficult to cross. We established a very nice trail connecting these two camps, cut vegetation to make nice clearings for campers on both sides, and made a toilet trail on either end of*

*the camp. It would be very easy to camp any size group there.*

*Separation Canyon is the same as last year. It will work fine enough for any group size as long as it is not flashing.*

*We then pulled into the old camp at Mile 243 and spent the rest of the first day, and a good part of the next morning working here. Last year the kitchen area at the front of the camp washed out during the high water release and this camp had gone mostly unused. Here, we cut out an entire new kitchen area, established a trail up to it from the boat parking, made a great toilet trail going downstream, and opened up the old campsite clearings throughout the camp. It took a great deal of work to cut hundreds of arrowweed and tamarisk and to level sleeping areas with shovels. We also reinforced the camp trails with rocks and logs to stabilize them from washing out very easily. This camp is now as good as it ever was- entirely suitable for a group of 32.*

*The next day we went down to Spencer and did some trash cleanup and minor work to the toilet trail. A few years ago the Hualapai tribe put in a permanent porta-potty here. It is here for all of us to use. Please make sure that we are using either our own toilet system, or the permanent porta-potty. The stream is very important to the tribe, and they would like us to make sure that our guests do not use it as a restroom. Feel free to let your guests walk up the stream for about 1/2 mile. Beyond that and on the banks of the stream away from the camp are considered off-limits by the tribe. Please make sure all of our guides and guests are aware of this and respect their wishes for how we treat their land.*

*From here we went down to Surprise Canyon. Surprise- the upper pull-in and kitchen area sand has washed away since last fall. The lower area will still work fine for a group of up to 32. The boat parking is not great, but the gravel and sand bar up high are very usable. We looked at this site, and moved downstream without needing to do any work on it.*

*After lunch, we pulled in on river right a mile below Surprise, at about Mile 249. There is a fin of rock that sticks out just above an overgrown strip of sand. We have always called it Tomahawk because of the fin of rock. We spent the rest of the day working on this site. We carved out a toilet site downstream, made a staircase to an upper camping area and delineated several tent sites in this upper area. In the lower thickets, we cut tamarisk and arrowweed to clear a kitchen area, cut out arrowweed to make camp clearings, and hacked out very thick non-native grass with shovels to clear more tent sites. We also broke down many of the dead standing tamarisk forest at the waterline to clear out bathing and boat parking areas. When we finished later that evening, this beach also made a terrific group site for up to 28 people.*



North Canyon

Jerry Weber

# Back of the Boat— The Whale Foundation News Bulletin

## 2009 FALL LIAISON TRAINING

**H**HEY, HERE'S AN INVITATION you should consider. The Whale Foundation (WF) is holding a short (four hours) informal training session on what being a liaison is all about. The free session will be held in Page on October 5<sup>TH</sup> of this year at the WRA warehouse.

Why consider this training? All of us guides encounter social situations in which we recognize a problem—either incipient or full blown—that we wish could be magically solved. While there exists no true magical fix for the situations we face, there does exist a non-profit organization whose sole mission is to assist river guides who may be experiencing issues which hamper their abilities to perform at the levels we all aspire to. These issues may be substance abuse problems, physical problems, social or family problems, or, in the case of Whale (Curtis Hansen), running out of companies willing to hire (or re-hire) him. As most of us guides internalize guiding as a major—if not defining—aspect of our identity, any problem that affects our guiding also tends to threaten our very identity. These sorts of challenges need not be met alone. Life is not a rapid with one boatman responsible for the outcome. Instead, luckily, we have a team at our disposal. And you could be part of that team.

The Whale liaison training is invaluable to each of us in simply tuning us in to be able to recognize when things may be going off track—in ourselves or fellow crew members—and to understand how easy it is for any of us to get free counseling through the Whale helpline.

What is the main role of a liaison? It is simply for us to:

1. Be capable of recognizing when a fellow guide is in trouble,
2. Be knowledgeable about all the resources available from the WF for helping to solve guides' problems,
3. Be an easy referral buddy to fellow guides experiencing problems to invite them to use the helpline and to explain to them what an invaluable lifeline it can be (and has been).

Consider this liaison training as a throw-rope to a guide caught in the current and floating willy nilly toward the center of lower Crystal Rapid. By the way, this brief training session still leaves you time that day to check out Antelope Canyon or take the Glen Canyon damned tour or whatever in the Page area. More to the point, you will be more savvy about the profession of guiding in Grand Canyon. Moreover, your tool kit as a member of the various crews with whom you will work will contain

a lot more useful tools...including that metaphorical throw rope.

To sign up or to get more information, call Fran at 928-774-4288.

## GTS SIXTH ANNUAL HEALTH FAIR

The GTS Health Fair had 68 guides who signed in and had the opportunity to speak with our providers about medical, mental, or dental issues. Fifty guides came to check us out and got their lab slips for screening potential problems like cardiovascular disease, colon cancer, leukemia, liver and kidney function, electrolyte imbalances, diabetes, thyroid function, anemia, infection, and prostate issues. We also had screenings for oral and dental health, depression, skin cancer, and physical therapy advice. We provided screening for women's health, breast exams, and handed out free mammogram vouchers for those at risk for breast cancer.

The Health Fair tents, located this year behind Hatchland's warehouse, had an amazing group of providers who are the key to the success of our "health awareness" opportunity. We would like to give Wyatt Woodard FNP a *big thank you* for another successful year of organizing this year's fair and much gratitude to the health providers who volunteered their time and expertise: Dr. Karl Bigler, Dr. Jane Bigler, Kelly Rowell PT, Kim Fawcett RN, Alan Motter FNP, Susan Ash, Dr. Janine Thomas, Beth Kennedy, Dr. Rich Haag, and Susan Hamilton RN. We would also like to thank Sonora Quests Medical Lab and Northern Arizona Radiology for their contributions and support for this event.

Hatch River Expeditions, thank you for providing the space for another great GTS. See you next year!

## SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE—JUNE 1, 2009

The money raised at the February WingDing makes this scholarship program possible and is one of the best things the WF does to support the river community. We award scholarships to guides in career transitions. We want to again send a profound thank you to our sponsors and donors for their generous support of this important program. Kenton's legacy and spirit is celebrated in each of these awards.

We encourage guides to apply for these grants since the scholarships are given to those with traditional and *non-traditional* educational paths. All applications are blinded before a rigorous review to insure impartiality. Applications may be downloaded from the website ([www.whalefoundation.org](http://www.whalefoundation.org)) or mailed to you from the office. The next application deadline is June 1, 2009 and all materials must be submitted by that date.

### DISCOUNT PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

If you need to purchase prescription drugs, the wf suggests two ways to save you money: A Whale Foundation USA Prescription Drug Card and/or discount generic drug programs through markets or discount stores.

**USA PRESCRIPTION DRUG CARD:** The Whale Foundation and Jeff Marston of the Resource Centers for Management, Inc are providing USA Drug Plan's discount prescription drug cards available *free* to the river community. Our extended family and friends can also use these cards. *A portion of the proceeds from the drug sales will be contributed to the wf.* If you are in Flagstaff, you can pick up a card at our office (515 West Birch) or you can download and print a card at [www.a083.usadrugplan.com](http://www.a083.usadrugplan.com).

Here are the general details of the program:

- The card can be used repeatedly for pharmacy purchases.
- Instant application or use of the card—no activation required.
- All persons in any given household can use it—no subscriber name required.
- An average savings of 15% on brand name drugs.
- An average savings of 46% on generic drugs.
- About 80% of most national pharmacies accept this card. (Target, Walmart/Sam's Club, Safeway, Frys, Walgreens, K-Mart, Albertsons and others.)
- Drug pricing and pharmacy location information is available on the program website ([www.a083.usadrugplan.com](http://www.a083.usadrugplan.com).)

To test the program benefits, a member of the Whale Foundation Board of Directors used the drug card at Sam's Club last summer and saved approximately 25% on his prescription medications.

**DISCOUNT GENERIC DRUG PROGRAMS:** Many markets and big box stores now offer common generic drugs for \$4 for a one month supply or \$10 for 3 months. Different types of medications are included in these plans. Simply bring in a prescription issued by your physician to the pharmacy at Wal-Mart/Sam's Club, Target, Frys, Albertsons, Safeway or Bashas and ask if it is one of the medications covered under the \$4 drug program. You don't need to have insurance for this program, and even if you do, the charge for the drug is still only \$4 if it is one of the drugs on the program list. Drugs available through two of these programs are listed on the wf website.

### WHALE FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 2009 Board of Directors includes Alida Dierker, Dave Edwards, Susan Hamilton, Sharon Hester, Sarah

Hatch, Elena Kirschner, Chris McIntosh, Pat Rose, Christa Sadler, Derik Spice, Mark Thatcher, Alex Thevenin, and Wyatt Woodard. We want to thank these committed individuals for donating their considerable talents and time to support of our river family. If you are interested in volunteering for the Board or in other capacities, please give us a call at 928-774-9440. We look forward to hearing from you!

### "STILTS AND REDTAILS ON THE RIVER"

—for John Presley

*twenty-seven—maybe more, maybe fewer,  
but twenty-seven was what we had been—  
twenty-seven black and white birds  
red legs streamed out behind flashing wings  
came into our morning and over our river  
to do an impossible ballet of flight and light  
rising, diving, now skimming the river  
now splitting the morning-still sky  
they flew as one thing, each somehow cued  
by each other in a dance too complex to plan.*

*and we watched as one, one missed a cue, a beat,  
whatever, and lost the dance, winged off,  
winged off on its own, fell out of the dance.  
but the dance pulled it back, into its time,  
and the dance went on till one last loop, and they  
all beached themselves, and sat quiet as if as amazed  
as we were, stunned in our boats at their show.*

*we can't imagine they did it for us; it was theirs,  
some morning ritual of belonging to a larger whole,  
but we were—that word we'd searched for—  
yes, were privileged to see it together as we  
each prepared ourselves to leave the river  
and the sand, rock, water and each other  
under the watch of the redtail sailing above  
in the larger currents ahead and beyond  
but still with us still down there together.*

George Sibley

(John was on a trip through the Grand Canyon last summer when he fell on a hike at Stone Creek, and died there of his injuries. Friends with him on the trip told the rest of us he had said to watch for a redtail hawk.)

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Flagstaff, AZ 86002 – 0855  
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Email: [info@whalefoundation.org](mailto:info@whalefoundation.org)

## Books, Books and More Books

*River Rescue* BY LES BECHDEL AND SLIM RAY; CFS PRESS; ISBN-13 978-0-9649585-6-2, ISBN-10 0-9649585-6-2; SOFT COVER 6 X 9; \$24.95.



AFTER TWO YEARS of being out of print, *River Rescue* is back. CFS Press is now publishing the definitive guide to river safety, due out May 1, 2009. The 4TH edition is bigger and better than ever, with 292 fact-filled pages, 106 illustrations, and 144 photographs.

I can't believe it's been 24 years since we published the first edition, which was the first book to cover rescue techniques for kayakers, rafters, and canoeists. Up until that time it was all a pretty much hit or miss proposition.

The book was sparked by the death of friend and fellow raft guide Rick Bernard on the Chattooga River in 1979, whom we were unable to rescue when his kayak got pinned. Les Bechdel and I began teaching rescue classes at the Nantahala Outdoor Center the next year and eventually decided to write a book about it. After four editions there's a lot of hard-won knowledge distilled into just under 300 pages, most of it learned by analyzing accidents and trying to figure out how to deal with them. It also led me into a "career" in river safety—something I'd never have imagined.

The pace of change and innovation has slowed somewhat, although the standards of instruction and performance are higher than ever and equipment like rescue PFD's are now in common use. Through the magic of the internet I was able to find some truly scary photos of real rescues and incorporate them into the new book, along with some first-hand accounts.

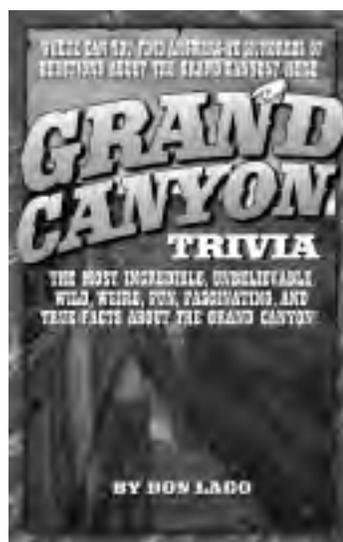
Featured in the new edition are:

- new photos and first-hand accounts of rescues
- expanded material on big-water rescue—new gear and methods
- self-rescue and rescue of others—by hand, boat, rope, and other ways
- tools and techniques—rope work, throw bags, boat handling, high- and low-tech gear to use when seconds count
- rescue organization—leadership, teamwork, patient care, evacuation, and more

*River Rescue* has been the authoritative reference for canoe, kayak, and raft—from beginner self-rescue to big river teamwork—since 1985.

*Slim Ray*

*Grand Canyon Trivia: The Most Incredible, Unbelievable, Wild, Weird, Fun, Fascinating, and True Facts About the Grand Canyon*, BY DON LAGO, RIVERBEND PUBLISHING, ISBN 13:978-1-60639-004-7, \$9.95



KNOW HOW ANNOYING it is when you are seconds from entering low-water Horn Creek and a passenger asks you how the Colorado ranks in volume among North American rivers? Or high-water Crystal and someone asks whether the pre-dam Colorado had more sediment than the Nile? You wouldn't have this problem if you'd stashed *Grand Canyon Trivia* in your ammo can. This new book from frequent BQR contributor, Don Lago, holds hundreds of

fun facts, figures, comparisons, history, quotes, lists, and lore. It includes sections on geology, the river, the trails, wildlife, botany, history, and Native Americans. The bite-sized entries are easier to digest than longer books—so you won't need to spend all of Hance explaining that it would have taken John Hance 280 million years to dig the Grand Canyon, as he claimed he did. Available at various outfitters, gift shops, 6-pack eddy, and 5 Quail Books.

*The Adventures of Salt and Soap at Grand Canyon*, BY LORI ROME, ILLUSTRATED BY TANJA BAUERLE; GRAND CANYON ASSOCIATION, ISBN: 978-1-934656-04-4, 32 PAGES, PAPERBACK, 11" x 8 1/2", FULL COLOR ILLUSTRATIONS—AGES 4-8; \$9.95.



**A** CLASSIC CANINE Colorado River adventure story in Grand Canyon: *The Adventures of Salt and Soap at Grand Canyon*

What boatman doesn't dream of adventure? The Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park has the adventures we dream of. Imagine the rugged canyon hiking, waterfalls to play in, camping under starry skies on sandy beaches with campfires aglow, witness to booming thunderstorms, appreciating the spectacular scenery, nature and geology, and the thrill of rafting the 150 plus mighty rapids of the Colorado River!

In May 2003, two stray puppy dogs embraced Grand Canyon's amazing challenges to find an adventure of a lifetime and ultimately a home filled with love. Their curiosity and love of human companionship carried them through rugged hikes down Salt Water Wash following park rangers on patrol and riverside camping in a violent thunderstorm, rafting the unpredictable rapids of the Colorado River with a

private boater's river trip, patrols at Phantom Ranch at the bottom of the canyon with the park ranger staff, encounters with mules, a harrowing eight minute helicopter ride back to the rim with the park helitack crew, and a new life on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. Salt and Soap experienced adventures most only dream of and theirs is now a part of Grand Canyon's remarkable history.

Written with compassion by the park ranger who adopted the pups, this one-of-a-kind canine adventure tale reveals the kindness of strangers, the adventure of Grand Canyon and the Colorado River, and the joy puppies can bring to everyone. This unique story is a rare treat now available as a picture book for children of all ages published by and available through Grand Canyon Association, [www.grandcanyon.org](http://www.grandcanyon.org).

Salt, Soap and the author would love to make contact with that private river trip that became a part of the pup's adventure in the Grand Canyon. Contact the BQR if you have information.

Lori Rome



## Flipped Out for Grand Canyon

SEVERAL YEARS AGO we asked you for pictures of big-water shots in Grand Canyon for a fun and funky book project to be called *Flipped Out for Grand Canyon*. Fortunately, many of you kind folks responded with several really cool flip, *big ride* and other river mayhem shots. Unfortunately, the project was shoved off the back burner and stuffed into a rocket box. It was recently reopened, but we need even more shots to make this outrageous book complete. We're also hoping to include some off-the-wall images from shore. These can be unusual shots of the landscape, flora or fauna. Perhaps you have a picture of a bighorn standing on your boat deck, a raven flying off with your underwear, a rock falling, a flash flood—whatever. We're looking for shots that you just don't see every day, the ones show the uniqueness of the Canyon and keep us flipped out for this place.

Please scrounge any old or recent photos you may have if you think you have something that might be worthy of immortality. Any and all photos used will be credited and a small user \$ fee paid. (Hey—it beats a poke in the eye by a paddle). Muchas gracias!

Please contact Tom Myers, 928-213-9299; puma-press1@gmail.com

*Your friends at Puma Press*



Lava Falls fun. Photo courtesy of Jim Kelly.

### Span of Ages

one hand—  
one embrace of rock

a billion years  
gone—but in my grasp

a billion  
years without me  
within me.

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### The Pinch

Water has traveled this canyon—  
rocks, boulders, pebbles tell that tale.  
But not today.

Rock to rock on tiptoes up the river bend.  
The walls close in.

Higher  
Darker  
Nearer  
Can you touch both sides?

Not yet.

Turning  
Deeper  
Can you touch both sides?

Soon.

Now the perfect silence—  
a tiny sliver of sky—  
sliver of a moon.

At last—a moonlight canyon walk  
in the heart of the day.

I touch both sides.

*Diane Benninghoff 2008*

# Adaptive Management of Glen Canyon Dam— What's Going On

## RESTORING THE CANYON'S SAND BARS

**M**UCH HAS HAPPENED since we last wrote something in the BQR on AMP activities. GCRG was successful in helping advocate for the High Flow Experiment (HFE or BHBF) which was done in early March of 2008. Many of you supported this and we thank you. Other organizations such as Grand Canyon Trust, Grand Canyon Wildlands Council, and the Hopi Tribe were also deeply involved. The HFE restored hundreds of sand bars throughout the Canyon. It also moved many tons of sand out of the river channel, up onto the beaches and above the recent highwater line (25,000 cfs). GCRG showed up for the opening of the bypass tubes by then-Secretary of the Interior Kempthorne. The various agency heads of the National Park Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Geological Survey were also in attendance.

It was a great relief to finally get that done for the canyon. We had been pushing hard to do another BHBF since October of 2006, when an enormous regional storm contributed vast amounts of sediment to the river below the dam, setting up the sediment-enriched conditions to run a flood flow to restore many ecosystem resources in the Grand Canyon. We are still waiting for official scientific results from the science center. Reports will start coming in this summer with final reports due in December 2009. Peer reviewed results take time to produce, but are necessary to have full confidence on how to move forward with future experiments or operations.

## ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE DAM

Current research in the Grand Canyon tells us that lower peaks and lower fluctuations preserve more sediment. Since the HFE, much of GCRG's effort has been on getting Reclamation to run flows that minimize the erosion of the newly built sand bars and store more sand in the Canyon. This slows sediment movement to Lake Mead, which is also a good thing for downstream user groups. We are advocating for an experiment to try equalized monthly water release volumes (EMV) as a way to reduce sediment export to Lake Mead and to reduce the frequency of BHBF experiments. Sediment transport data shows a continuous decline of sand in Grand Canyon over the past two decades under the current fluctuating flows. We want to reverse that trend to one of long-term sustainability of sand bars. Sand is critical to habitat conditions for nearly all of the resources that we're trying to conserve.

GCRG proposed two motions to the AMWG at the April 29–30 meeting:

- 1) AMWG recommends to the Secretary of the Interior that during fiscal year 2010–11 a high flow experiment be conducted if and when sediment-enriched conditions are reached, as described in U.S. Geological Survey, 2006.
- 2) AMWG recommends to the Secretary of the Interior that during fiscal year 2010–11, an equalized monthly volume experiment be conducted to: test and improve sediment transport models; and, determine if sediment can be sustained and near shore habitat stabilized for the benefit of the ecosystem.

The purpose was to get the AMWG and the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) to begin planning for the next high flow experiment and also to figure out how to retain the benefits of those bar-building events over longer time spans. Unfortunately, GCRG was unable to get a two-thirds majority of those stakeholders present to go along with motion #1.

In an attempt to develop a more useful discussion and group consensus, we rewrote motion #2 to develop a subcommittee that would work to proactively integrate emerging science with possible future experiments in a timely manner. Even this very reasonable motion did not receive full consensus of the group. The Adaptive Management Work Group is made up of 25 different stakeholders, and many of them live and work far away from the Grand Canyon. Equalized monthly volumes would mean some reduction in the highest flows in the winter months and the summer months. These are the two seasons when hydropower can be sold for the most money, so some of the stakeholders aren't yet willing to trade that off against an experiment to conserve sediment.

GCRG will continue to work to find common ground with the other stakeholders, to advocate for best science, for responsible management, and for improvement of the natural and cultural resources that we all care about in the Grand Canyon.

Thanks to all of you river and canyon nuts that make a positive difference for Grand Canyon. And, many thanks to the Grand Canyon Conservation Fund for supporting our work. We are the people who can do it. Get involved, get informed and get organized. Let us know what you see in the Canyon, what is working, what is not.

*Andre Potochnik*

AMWG REPRESENTATIVE FOR GCRG

# Proposed Aerial Overflights and Reduced Flows

THE USGS'S GRAND CANYON MONITORING AND RESEARCH CENTER (GCMRC), as part of the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program, is tentatively planning to conduct scientific overflights in Grand Canyon National Park over Memorial Day weekend. Aerial photographs and topographic data are proposed to be collected for the Colorado River corridor between Glen Canyon Dam and Pearce Ferry on Lake Mead, as part of an ongoing scientific monitoring effort to help manage important park resources.

The data collected will allow researchers to track the size and number of sandbars and related near-shore habitat. Sandbars are a resource of management concern because they provide habitat for wildlife and support backwaters for fish, but have been reduced in size in the Grand Canyon as the result of sediment exports under current dam operations and encroachment of woody vegetation. The data will also provide highly accurate spatial information on vegetation and wildlife habitat in the river corridor.

The proposed mission will involve two fixed-wing aircraft flying at an elevation of about 5000 feet above ground level between 10 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. from Friday, May 22 to Thursday, May 28, 2009. Flights will be done at speeds that are consistent with the capacity of the research equipment and to avoid long periods of noise in any one place. The narrow timeframe for data collection is purposefully planned to eliminate shadows in the photographs due to the sun angle and orientation of the steep canyon walls. Based on planning estimates, the proposed data collection mission should be completed within five days. However, an additional two days have been allotted to account for any interruptions in the mission due to inclement weather or issues with the data collection equipment.

During this proposed data collection, water releases from Glen Canyon Dam will be ramped down beginning at approximately 6:00 P.M., Thursday, May 21 and will be held steady at 8,000 cubic feet per second from May 22 until May 27, 2009. Releases will be held steady during the overflights so that measurements are not affected by variable flows and to provide consistency with previous

monitoring efforts. Memorial Day weekend was selected for the overflights to minimize loss of power revenues, as holidays and weekends are periods of lower energy demand. The late-May timeframe also provides optimal sun angle for the imagery. Researchers will supplement the data collected by the overflights by collecting data on the ground in the river corridor at the same time as the overflight missions.

Because aircraft may be annoying to some visitors, we want the public to understand the importance and value of developing sound scientific information needed to

improve the management of important park resources. In order to achieve highly accurate results from the overflight missions, aerial photo panels are required to be placed at specific locations throughout the river corridor. Every attempt will be made to lay the panels out as inconspicuously as possible. The panels are scheduled to be

placed during a survey river trip in mid-April, and will be recovered by a collaborative river trip between GCMRC and Grand Canyon Youth in July. Due to the importance of these panels in obtaining the desired data, it is appreciated that these panels remain undisturbed throughout the month of June.

The Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program traces its inception back to the Grand Canyon Protection Act of 1992, the most recent authorizing legislation for federal efforts to protect and restore resources downstream from Glen Canyon Dam. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Interior and facilitated by the Adaptive Management Work Group. The U.S. Geological Survey's Grand Canyon Monitoring Research Center has responsibility for scientific monitoring and research efforts for the program.

The USGS serves the Nation by providing reliable scientific information to describe and understand the Earth; minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters; manage water, biological, energy, and mineral resources; and enhance and protect our quality of life.

For further information, please contact John Hamill, 928-556-7364.

Thomas M. Gushue



Examples of digital imagery collected during a previous mission (2002). Shown are examples of the Color Infra-Red data as seen from above near River Mile 30 (left), and a 3-dimensional surface drape of the True Color composite looking at the LCR confluence (right).

# Mike Denoyer

EVERYBODY'S FIRST TRIP has got to be an epic. I mean, just a wonderful, wonderful experience... the trip started the end of March, 1973. I think it was a nine-day trip, with Whitewater River Expeditions. The guides on that trip were Rick Hillsamer, the trip leader. Stan Jantz was the follow boat. We had a guy named Monk was a swamper for Rick. Monk was a taxi driver out of Aspen, just kind of a different type of guy; and the other swamper was Rod Richardson, swampin' for Stan. Rod Richardson's daughter was married to Henry [Falany's] brother, Robin, so that's how the connection was there. Rod Richardson was just a great guy. He's passed away now. We called him Sea Daddy, because he reminded me of when I was in the military, this old first classman on a trip, who'd been around for twenty-five years—he was always referred to as the "sea daddy" on a ship, because he had all these stories to tell, and all the experience, and took care of everything. Rod Richardson was like that too, an old guy, and just a character. He loved to drink beer. But very nice, very gentle guy. In fact, after my fourth or fifth trip he gave me a signal mirror—first signal mirror I ever had. I still have that same mirror. Anyway, that was Rod—called him Sea Daddy.

At that time Roxanne and I knew each other, but we weren't girlfriend and boyfriend or anything. Roxanne, myself, and my roommate, and a couple others from Evergreen State College drove down in my van to Lees Ferry. Actually, we stopped at the campground above Lees Ferry there. They didn't have those shade deals in there then. We came over the Kaibab. I remember we just barely made it over the Kaibab, because there was a ton of snow on the road. We stopped in the middle. It was probably midnight. We were throwin' snowballs at each other. Bailed off the other side, the trip was leavin' the next morning. But we spent the night at the campground there...stayed up all night, just drinkin' and playin' and havin' a good time.

Got up the next morning, went down to the Ferry, and Henry Falany [who owned Whitewater] and Grace [Henry's wife] were there. Our faculty members were all down there. All the students were there. It started snowin' on us. Henry and Grace wanted to delay the trip because of the snow. And Linda Kahan...who we now refer to as "Dr. Hon," —She was my professor, first year at Evergreen; she was actually a neuro-zoologist, that was her field, but biology was her field of interest, so I took a lot of biology classes from her, a lot of labs and such; and she had put this trip together: organized it through Henry Falany and brought the students down—Linda

says, "No way!" Linda's pretty strong-headed. She'll get her way, one way or the other. So anyway, the trip goes, and it's snowin' on us at Lees Ferry. So we put on the river...Another thing I remember about that trip is we thought they furnished beer for the trip. It ends up they didn't furnish beer! So I just took a six-pack of beer with me, thought I'd be in great shape. It got me through lunch the first day. We're out of beer! Of course most of 'em were college students, under age, and they didn't want to furnish it anyway.

Anyway, went down, just a *wonderful*, wonderful experience. Some of the things that stick out in my mind, I remember camping at Nankoweap. I always had a tendency to somewhat remove myself from the group at night. We'd sit around, we'd play and enjoy, but when I set up my camp, I'd kind of find someplace off...I remember laying my sleeping bag down back behind the trees at Nankoweap, and just had this wonderful odor, the smell from the canyon. I bet it was sand verbena. Oh yeah, everything out there had just had a big drink of water. Yeah. I just remember sleeping in this all night long, this great smell from the canyon, just *wonderful* smell of the camp there at Nankoweap. Never forget that one.

We camped at Fern Glen one of the nights down there, and I hiked all the way up Fern Glen with my sleeping bag that night. Went all the way up, and got up to where the falls came in, and put my sleeping bag behind the falls, that ledge back there. The problem I had...It was a wonderful experience, I just went up there by myself...I was afraid, because it was in a dark canyon, I was afraid I wouldn't know when it was gonna be light, what time I had to get the hell outta there. So I kept wakin' up in the middle of the night, wonderin' if I should head back down to the boats to get ready to take off. But I figured it out finally and got back in time. I do remember just packin' everything up there, and having a wonderful night sleeping back there by the falls, that little seep that comes down the very back as far as you can go.

Another place we camped was Bass campground, by the main Bass Camp. Pulled in there, and dinner was done and whatever. So myself and another couple of friends, we hiked up above that rock where you can overlook camp. There's kind of a sandy area, and I decided that's where I'm gonna sleep tonight. We're gonna sleep right up here in this area. So we're sittin' there with our feet hangin' over the ledge, passin' this whiskey jug back and forth. We're lookin' down, checkin' out the girls down here on the beach, and all

the girls kind of are sleepin' together, a big gaggle of 'em over there. We started talkin' about these girls and puttin' our eye on 'em and sayin' how cute they were and such. That's the day I put my eye on Roxanne. I said, "I think she's awful cute, and I'd sure like to hook up with her." Again, we weren't girlfriend and boyfriend then. And so that's when I first had that idea. She didn't know who in the hell I was.

I guess, what stands out for sure about that trip is the natural beauty of the Grand Canyon. But I think more than anything, what got me, was the professionalism and the ability of the guides. That just *really* impressed me. I said, "I would like to be able to do what these guys are doing, and in the way they're doing it." You know, more so than running rapids, I enjoyed seeing the Canyon, and hiking the side canyons. Running the rapids was fun, but it wasn't the major drive for me, it was seeing...at that time we had two guides and what they call two swampers. These guys took care of 30-36 individuals—you know, guided them on hikes, took care of 'em, fed 'em—whatever problems there were, they came up with a solution. There wasn't a *whole* lot of interpre-



Roxanne, first trip, 1972.

tation goin' on at that time. There was some, they always explained some of the biology down there, and some of the geology. But the way they handled situations...there were things like always putting holes in boats. It seemed like at that time everybody was running—the rotten cotton syndrome: you'd go through a rapid, you'd pull over and patch, because the boat would just start leakin', you'd get a big rip in it. But, they'd pull over and they had the ability to patch it and do a great job of it. To me anyway, it didn't seem they were all upset about it, or anxious, they just did it as part of the job, and went on and ran another rapid, put another hole in it, (chuckles) patched it. The head boatman, Rick Hillsamer, I think that was his *third* trip through the Canyon. The follow boatman, Stan Jantz, that was Stan's *second* trip through the Canyon with his own boat.

I remember one time, I always liked to get involved and help 'em out, and do whatever I could to help out around camp...we were camped at Fern Glen, and cooking on wood, so you know, we all gathered up a bunch of wood and have it sitting there ready to cook breakfast or whatever. I got up next morning and thought I'd help these folks out and make coffee for 'em. So, I get the pot of coffee full of water sittin' there, built a big ole' fire around it. No dishwasher...no, no, just the pot of coffee goin'...and realize later I burned up all their wood they were planning on usin' for cooking the whole breakfast. But they had a pot of coffee when they got up! I'm not sure they appreciated that too much. But they were very, very professional. I just remember, thinking back on it, everything from it. Even at the end of the trip, the way a vehicle broke down, and how they handled that, just went ahead and took care of it and made sure things were working properly. Before they'd take off they always were meticulous enough—you know, a lot of people just, the vehicle's there, you jump in, turn the key on and go. These guys would actually go as far as making sure there was oil in it, making sure there was gas, making sure there was air in the tires, the whole shot. It just seemed like they took care of every little detail, whether it was a river running aspect of it or not. They were really great.

So at the end of that trip, that's when we pulled into Separation, had dinner, put everybody back on the boats, tie all the boats together, push out in the current, cut the motors off, and just float all night long, and hopefully wake up somewhere close to Pearce Ferry. We just had a great party, a wonderful time. People were fallin' in the river. I thought it was great, just a hoot of a time.

And so we started talkin' with the boatmen. I still had a little bit left in my jug, so I shared it with Stan. He wanted to know if I could help him out with his de-rig, because all the rest of the folks were gettin' off, and

they were headin' their own ways. So I stayed around with the guys, havin' a great time down there, de-riggin'. It was hotter than all get-out, and it was still hard work also. I helped 'em de-rig. When the truck was loaded and all, we got in the truck and they drove us to the intersection of the main highway goin' to Vegas and the Pearce Ferry Road, whatever that intersection was there. Myself and about six other students stayed there that night, because we had to send another vehicle around to pick up my van, which was still at Lees Ferry. So someone went around, got my van, brought it back. About four o'clock in the morning they showed up with the van, so we all loaded in the van and took off to Washington state, another 24-hour drive back home to Washington. Later that evening is also when Roxanne and I kind of hooked up. We started talking and kind of befriended each other, and just had some nice conversations, and I just really appreciated talking to her. Then it went on as we got back into school...When I started doin' river trips, she came down and did every river trip with me. She'd start comin' down—after I got to be a guide, she'd come down and swamp for me on my trips. So she'd do year after year, trip after trip. Coming down here as a team, we really enjoyed...I'd be runnin' rapids all day, and gettin' all the glory as this great big river-runnin' kind of guy, and pull into camp and I sit back and have a beer with the folks, tellin' stories, and there's Roxanne, *bustin' her butt*, doin' all the kitchen stuff in the camp. Yeah, she worked hard, very hard. It was a wonderful thing. It really was a good experience together, we grew together. She's a hard worker, just did it, just did it—put up with my baloney, *still* puttin' up with my baloney.

Well, that first trip was in March, the end of March, beginning of April of 1973. As soon as I got off that trip I wrote Henry a letter, and he wrote me back within the week. He asked me to be back down there the first of May, that next month. Yeah. He said, "Be down there May 1." So as soon as I got out of school that semester I headed down. At that time the Whitewater warehouse was in a little shop there in Fredonia. I pulled up there the morning of May 1. I waited there for three days before anybody ever showed up! (laughter) You know, I was living in a van at that time.

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*Mike Denoyer and his wife Roxanne worked in the trenches of the Grand Canyon river business, for Whitewater Expeditions, for almost fifteen years before finally realizing a long-held dream and joining a partnership that bought out Ron Smith's Grand Canyon Expeditions in the mid 1980's. Mike was interviewed in 1998, and then again in 2006 thanks to a generous grant from Dan and Alida Dierker.*

\* \* \*



Roxanne and Mike in the '70s.

I was born in 1948 in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, back East. My father was career military and he'd move around every couple of years. Wherever he was stationed, our family moved with him...all over the East Coast, Panama, the Philippines, Japan, all over the West Coast of the United States. I graduated from Rogers High School in Newport, Rhode Island in 1966, and then Dad was transferred to Washington State and I moved over there with the family. At that time I joined the Navy, went in for four years.

My first ship was a battleship called the *uss New Jersey*, pretty good-size vessel. They took it over off the coast of Vietnam to do what they called shore bomb mission—just going back and forth, lobbing projectiles in for guys like O.C. [Dale, who was a Marine over there at the time.]

Once they slowed down in Vietnam, they decommissioned *that* ship...I went back over again on another ship called the *USS Oklahoma City*— it was a guided missile cruiser: typically the same type of duties, shore bomb mission. In, I think it was the latter part of 1969, was when I got out of the military, it was a four-year deal. It was fairly safe.

When I first went in my thought was to make a career out of the military. After about six months of that I thought differently, I just wasn't quite locked-into it. I was seventeen when I went in, so I was right out of high school. You know, it was a job, you got to see the world and I think I grew up quite a bit then through the military doctrine, so to speak. Plus, when I got out, I got to use the GI Bill to go to school. I couldn't afford to go to college at that time without some help, so it really helped out. I went to Evergreen State.

\* \* \*

[A month after that first trip, Mike was waiting at the *White-water warehouse*.] "They've gotta be here sometime." So, I stayed there in Fredonia. (chuckles) May 3 pops around and someone finally shows to open up the warehouse! Had to dig the rubber out, and there's still snow on the ground. All the boats were rolled up out in the fields; scrape the snow off and load a boat up, and go in the store and do some shoppin' for food. Go in the warehouse and chase the mice and critters away, get life jackets and whatever leftover food there was from the year before. Load up a trailer...head down to Lees Ferry...and rigged the boat, and went on a river trip. It was that basic...it seems pretty Neanderthal now, but it was just the ways things were done.

The heavy metal frames, the big orange boxes...then the "Tiny rig." It was an old wooden back frame and a small flat plywood front frame. It was kind of a wild boat...Yeah, sports car, yeah. All the guys trained on that. That's how you learned to run, was you'd get on *that* boat before they let you handle one of the ones that carried all the big boxes. (laughter) Oh, yeah. It was quite the machine, I'm telling you.

I'm trying to think. I'm not even sure I met Henry again the first year. (pause) I may have. I'm sure I met him in 1974. Henry did a number of trips himself, was actually running trips. I'd swamp for him on a lot of trips. But I can't say for sure that I met Henry again that first year.

I enjoyed him, he's definitely a character, but Henry was one of these folks that it was "his way or the highway," so to speak. So, I had the mindset, if I'm going to work for this guy, I'm going to do it his way. He was quite the character, always had his big white, cowboy hat on, flew the Confederate flag...Actually, he was born in Boston, I think. (laughter) Yeah, he was born in

the Northeast, but he was raised in Florida, so he adopted this southern background. John Wayne was his hero.

I'd always go down and rig up Henry's boat for him, and he had to have a knot tied a certain way. He had to have the boxes tied on just right. He had this certain type of trucker's hitch or knot—he'd want you to make sure these boxes are tied on properly. (laughs) Yeah, all rope. And so as Henry would come up, the first thing he'd want to see is that flag flyin' there that he tied on the back of the boat and strapped to a box. Then he'd walk up and grab one of the ropes and "twang" it to see what kind of a "twang" it made, see if it was tight enough. If it didn't make the right pitch, we'd tighten it up.

I think it was in 1974, when he started what we refer to as the "super deluxe trips." It was maybe twenty passengers and fourteen crew, one of those types of deals, you know, where he'd have, of course, a boatman and a swamper on each boat. Then he'd have a bartender, and a bartender's assistant. He'd put up a full bar on the trips, and he brought a couple musicians down, someone



Running the "Tiny rig" for Whitewater in the '70s.

to sing and play guitar. Then he'd bring a geologist or two along, to do the interpretation. It ended up there were times when there was like a dozen crew down there. You know, they were all part of the crew. Then there are these other twenty folks out there that we were catering to, and helping out. He just, I think, had the attitude that in his mind he wanted to offer the best trip available down there. And in his mind, this was the best trip available, because he provided all this stuff. He thought that was very, very important. That's the way he approached it, and he was very proud of that. Whether it was truly that way or not, that's how he felt; and they were great trips. People had a great time with him. But there were just a lot of folks down there. This group was in charge of the bar, that group's in charge of the entertainment, this group's in charge of the interpretation. A lot of stuff goin' on.

**STEIGER:** Was Henry pretty good with a boat?

**DENOYER:** Very good boatman, yeah. He could row a good boat, he could run a good motor. Yeah, he was a good boatman. I got along fine with him. I respected him, in that he had a way of getting things done. It may not have been the most direct way, or the easiest way, but he would knock his head against the wall until he got that wall down. He'd just go ahead on with it like a bull, and he'd accomplish it, whatever that may be.

Yeah, Paul Thevenin was on the scene too. He'd come down when he'd get out...he was a schoolteacher in Eureka. Then when he'd get out of teaching for the season, he'd come down and help organize the warehouse—make sure the food was ordered and the trips were ready and the trucks were running. All the crew would be always on the river, get back off, and go right on another trip, and just keep going. Paul would usually drive the equipment around from—at that time it was Diamond Creek—so we'd go from Diamond Creek back around to Lees Ferry, rig the boats back up again. Then they'd bring a separate trailer down with new food and boxes and stuff. So there would always be someone here. And during that time of summer, it'd be Paul out there packing food boxes and gettin' everything ready for us.

I think Paul Thevenin has *always* been a great inspiration for me. Nothing ever seemed to bother Paul. Whatever happened, he'd just take it as it came and take care of it. He always had a tendency to take people under his wing. If there was someone out there who was having problems, or something went sideways with 'em, Paul would always pay a lot of attention to that individual and help 'em out. He always did things so smooth and so right. He was also, to me, the epitome of a father, of a family-type individual. You know, no matter what *he* was doing, his family was always involved. At that time, probably just Becky and Freddy were the only ones born at first. If he's out there on the ground crawling under a boat patching it or something, the kids would be right



*Whitewater days.*

there with him. They'd be dumping glue all over him or whatever may happen. (laughter) It didn't bother Paul a bit, he says, "That's part of the program," and scrape the glue off and put it on the boat. If we'd go down to Lees Ferry, have to rig up a trip, we'd be drivin' the trucks down, usually have a crew cab with the bed loaded with a bunch of motors in there, and then a trailer pulled behind it with equipment. You'd see Paul layin' in the back of that bed with the motors, and he had each kid—and pretty soon he had four or five kids—and he had 'em all stuck between a motor in a sleeping bag. And they were all just sittin' there having a great time driving down to Lees Ferry. The kids would *always* be there at Lees Ferry when we were rigging at nighttime. He'd make sure all the kids had a place to sleep and he'd take care of them, and then go rig boats. At the same time, tryin' his best to keep all the boatmen out of trouble. He is, I think, a very, very fine individual. He'd do anything for anybody.

There were many times I'd get upset with Henry, and Paul would say, "Oh Mike, it's okay. Now let's sit down and talk about this." And the world was set right again. There were times when we were running an operation down in Central America, there were times when Henry and I would get a little upset at each other, and I'd be ready to leave. I'd say, "Oh Paul, I've had enough of this, I've got to get out of here." Paul would say, "Oh come on Mike, let's go sit down." So, we'd go in the tent and sit down and chat for a half an hour, an hour, and everything was fine. I'd be good for another couple of years. (laughter) He's helped me a lot in life, taught me a lot about life. He actually married Roxanne and me. He was at our wedding.

**STEIGER:** So how long were you a swamper before you ended up runnin' a boat?

**DENOYER:** I think about six trips, and that's the 1973

year. Yeah, I remember now. At that time, that's when Bruce Winter was also working for Henry. I don't know where Bruce was when I first went down there, but maybe that's a couple different schedules going on. Bruce may have been on the river, and then finally I ended up running trips with Bruce. So I'd swamped for him. Then Henry, for whatever reason, needed a boatman, so he wanted to know if I'd be willing to do it. I jumped right on and said, "Sure!" And so, I went down there.

Oh, yeah, no problem. Low water in 1973, anybody can do that. (laughs) Bruce is in there, he's trip leader, I'm second boat. I go down there and I hit every rock in the Canyon. (laughter) I broke the jackass off the motor. I'm sure I went through every one of my motors. We were down there puttin' pieces together, puttin' a number of holes in my boat. I got to a point where I didn't want to see another bit of whitewater, man, it was that bad. I said, "Oh God! I can't do this!" Yeah, and after running six trips and Bruce had let me run the boat, or whoever was runnin' would let me run a bit, and I felt pretty good, pretty confident. Got my own boat, and couldn't do a damn thing right! I was just glad to get to Diamond Creek and get out of there.

**STEIGER:** So you were runnin' a boat like the middle of your first year. (**DENOYER:** Yeah.) Six trips wasn't by any means a season, huh? But the thing you're not mentioning here, is those Whitewater boats were like the hardest boats ever...or maybe the Canyoneers boat? Do you think?

**DENOYER:** I don't know, I couldn't say. Well, yes, it's like where you come from, what you do...All I ever knew was the Whitewater boat and I thought that big



Circa 1977.

ole' barge was the finest machine on the water. (laughter) I had a great time with it on the river.

**STEIGER:** The one time I got to drive one: I thought that was the most challenging boat that I'd ever run. Actually that's *the* most challenging boat I think I ever had to run down there.

**DENOYER:** Yeah, they were definitely good-sized boats, slow in reacting for sure. You've got to anticipate that run about a half-mile upstream. Everything was heavy. The center of gravity was high, you know? They were a little different than what we're doin' now, but it still was great. Big fun. I loved it. You know? Even through the wrecks, and the turmoil, the fun in the Canyon was still there. And all the great folks...Oh, every trip was an adventure. It was really...you didn't know what to expect down there. (chuckles) To know if a motor's gonna make it this time; is this actually gonna be a six-day trip? or is this gonna be a ten-day trip? (laughter) There are times when you'd question if you're gonna be out on the right day.

\* \* \*

Runnin' with Jake [Luck] was a lot of fun. He was a character too.

We ran all through probably the late seventies, I guess. I'm not sure when Jake stopped workin' for Henry. Because we did Belize together, also, with Jake. Yeah. I'm guessin' probably '81 or so, '82, is when Jake stopped workin' for Henry and went to weld for Dean Waterman. But boy, he was quite the character, runnin' down there with him. I remember we used to run into Jake when he was runnin' Western rigs. They'd have their folks helicopter out above or below Lava, and then he'd be dead-headin' down to get off the river, and he and Peggy would be comin' down. He'd have two motors on a Western rig—two 40-horse Johnsons. We'd be camped at 220, and Jake would pull in. He had a peanut can in his hand, and of course Henry always had a bar on a trip [in the early days, before Henry got more serious about his religion], so Henry'd fill that peanut can up with whiskey, and Jake would take off downriver, drinkin' that can of whiskey.

**STEIGER:** Oh, empty peanut can because you couldn't have any alcohol on the river?

**DENOYER:** No alcohol on a Western rig, yeah.

**STEIGER:** So Jake would just pull in and get a little toddy.

**DENOYER:** Yeah.

**STEIGER:** And Henry was okay with that?

**DENOYER:** Oh yeah, he just let it go, it was fine.

**STEIGER:** So Jake was the first guy to twin up? Could that be?

**DENOYER:** I don't know that, but he definitely—he always liked to go on about bein' able to get airborne in

217 Mile. I said, “Jake, you can’t get those things airborne.” He said, “We get quite a bit in the air.” So he went and blasted up the top wave in 217, get as much rubber as you can up in the air. He was quite a deal. I really liked him.

**STEIGER:** I remember just bein’ in awe of him. He was such an imposing figure.

**DENOYER:** Oh, he was, he was. We were down there runnin’ trips with Jake, and here you are, trip leader on a trip. There’s Jake Luck with you. Well, Jake’s pretty much gonna do what Jake wants to do. There’s nothin’ you’re gonna do about it. But he was great. People loved him down there. And he’d pull off the most incredible things, and tell the most incredible stories. I just enjoyed the guy. He was a lot of fun. Had a heck of a temper. Yeah, we did a number of years together. He always had these little poems that he’d recite. I can’t remember...One of ’em was “Face on a Bar Room Floor.” Is that a Robert Service poem? He’d recite that all the time. And then, gosh, what’s the other one he’d always recite? It was great. “The Winner.”

\* \* \*

Henry was looking for—he wanted to, of course, keep his crew working—something to do in the winter. Again, I think he got onto *this* idea from Jack Currey, because Currey did it a couple years previous to Henry doing it. About 1975 or so—yeah, it must have been ’75 when we packed up two boats, and just went down to Belize. We pulled up to a boat ramp there and launched a boat. We’re gonna head out to some islands we knew were sixty miles off the coast.

**STEIGER:** Just in your Whitewater motor rigs? (laughter)

**DENOYER:** Whitewater Grand Canyon motor-rigs, exactly. We got down there on the ramp in Belize, and you know, it’s humid and the mosquitoes are out, and hotter than hell. We had this boat rolled out, had the frames tied down to it, and we were startin’ to inflate the boat, and a local Belizian comes down there and kind of pushes me out of the way. He says, “Here, let me do it.” He grabs the blower and starts pumpin’ up this boat. I said, “Do you know what

you’re doin’?” He says, “Oh yeah, I do this before.” It ends up this guy worked for Currey a couple years ago when Currey went down and tried to run these trips. So, he knew all about it, this guy’s name was Bonito [phonetic spelling], a little Belizian guy, a fisherman. He was the first local we met down there, and we started talkin’ to him about how do we get out to these islands? We had no idea, we had a map, but we didn’t know how to get out there.

It was exploratory, yeah. But we had, you know, a group of folks with us, friends, and Bonito said, “Yeah, I’ll take you out to these islands.” So, we got the boat rigged up and went into a town market there and bought some food and had all this fishing gear. Took off across for these islands, and didn’t even have a compass with us out there. We are heading out in the ocean, and had no compass.

**STEIGER:** And sixty miles, that’s far enough ’til you can’t see shore, huh?

**DENOYER:** Oh yeah, you can’t see shore. So we’re headin’ out, and we have to go through a certain cut. About thirty-five miles off there’s an atoll called the Turneffe Islands, a group of islands out there, and you have to make a cut through the middle of those, but you don’t know where the cut *is*. Of course these fishermen *know* all this stuff, they’ve just done it all their lives. So he’s guidin’ us and he’s tellin’ us to pick out a certain palm tree, and you head for that palm tree and then cut behind the palm tree, then you go through the lagoon with a bunch of mangroves in it, and just a terrific adventure, to go through this narrow cut about a quarter-mile long and you open up in a huge lagoon.



Driving in Belize.



*Diving in Belize.*

Then you've got to pick out another coconut tree, and he's trying to tell you which coconut trees to pick out, because those were your markers. So, you just had to cross this blue and right before you get to the coconut tree, you can see where the cut is. And then you're into the deep ocean. From there you're into the ocean itself. You've got another thirty miles to go, before you get to—the place we were heading for was called “Lighthouse Reef,” a little half-moon caye on there. I said, “Well, how do you know which way to go?” He says, “Well, you keep *that* coconut tree to your back, and keep the sun over your right shoulder and just keep goin’.” (Steiger laughs) “And that's just exactly how we do it, just keep goin' and goin', always keep the sun right here, and as long's you can see that tree...And by the time you lost track of *that* tree, you should be startin' to pick up the tops of some coconut trees on this other island.” (Steiger laughs) And generally it worked. There was a time or two when it didn't. We were out there kind of wondering where in the hell we were. Almost out of gas. (laughter) Running out of gas. “Oh, no!” And then it was great. We made a crossing one time, and anyway, it started getting dark, but there was a lighthouse on one of these islands, on a reef. So, actually, we saw the lighthouse when we were about twenty miles off. So we had to head back. After that, we started taking compasses. A lot easier. (laughter) What the hell are we doin' out there without a compass?

Yeah, we had a great concept. We had an island, we

actually leased this island from the government of Belize. It was uninhabited, there was an old lighthouse on there, and a lighthouse keeper. One-half was like coconut trees and white sandy beaches. Oh, it was a cool thing.

The main gist of it... We did it similar to a river trip. People would fly into Belize City and we'd pick 'em up, and had the same thing: ammo cans and duffle bags, and they'd put the gear in the ammo can, duffle, load it up on the boats, and then we'd head out. Typically, it was like a seven- to eight-hour run out to those islands. You're out there in big seas, big swells goin' across the ocean. Make it in there just right before

dinnertime—leave like at five in the morning. Yeah, real exciting. You'd keep your fingers crossed every crossing you made, you know—just had to get out there. But the majority of the folks that went out with us were divers. People would go out there and sit and read a book under a coconut tree if they wanted to. We had tents set up for everybody. We had a large tent that was a commissary, a cooking area with a nice, long table for a dining hall. We had a little bar built up around a coconut tree. We built all this stuff by ourselves out there. It was just fun stuff. We had our own dive shop, packed a couple of compressors out there, had about a hundred scuba tanks, and all the equipment that went with it. Some people would just snorkel, but it was mainly diving, so we had the Grand Canyon rig set up as dive platforms, we had big awnings over 'em. Dive ladders goin' off the sides and one down the middle. We'd go out and explore these different reefs. As much diving as they wanted to do, it could be three or four dives a day.

It was an ideal diving situation, where you start at the drop off, you had a nice, sandy, sloping area to about thirty feet or so, and then you had huge coral reefs and then a drop-off that went down about 2,000 feet. So, it was perfect diving. Dive two tanks in the morning, come back, have lunch. When everybody's having lunch we'd be out there runnin' the compressor, pumpin' up more tanks, gettin' ready for the next day's dive. Load the boats back up, head out for two more dives, come back in, cocktail hour and dinner. Go to bed, and we'd be up

pumpin' tanks 'til about one in the morning. Then at 5:00 A.M., you're startin' again, takin' people back out on dives. It was great. I loved it.

\* \* \*

We had to go get some supplies—take a group back to Belize, from the island, 60 miles into Belize City. So we took a group out, got 'em into Belize City, and we picked up extra groceries and soda pop, beer and such, and we had just the one boat. It was myself, I don't think Roxanne was on that boat, but it was myself, this fellow we referred to a lot as Joe—Joe Stevens. So Joe Stevens was on that one, Henry's mother and father were on it. Maybe Roxanne was there too—might have been. Anyway, we're goin' out and tryin' to get across that blue. Of course the thing I do is I double-up on the motors, so I'm puttin' two 40-horse Johnsons on a jackass on a Whitewater rig, headin' across the ocean.

**STEIGER:** You could put two of 'em on one jackass?

**DENOYER:** Yeah. I *thought* you could, I'll put it that way. So we put two on there, and just makin' 'em go across. We got through a certain area, broke through the reef, and headed to where Henry and Grace and the rest of 'em were waiting for us. Got out there in the ocean. The jackass broke, both motors went in the ocean. Of course that was my *spare* motor too, I had. I had two motors—the spare I doubled-up with.

**STEIGER:** So it was just too choppy, and the jackass just...

**DENOYER:** Shattered. Those were pot-metal jackasses then, and they just shattered. And so we had a safety rope on 'em, but both motors were in salt water. Wet, yeah. So we pull 'em both up, and we're out just floatin' on the ocean, headin' back towards the reef. So I'm up there, pull the motors apart and take the flywheels off, and try to air dry everything out, makin' sure the points are dry, and pulled the plugs and got the engine somewhat dry...I'd had a safety rope on 'em. Joe and I just pulled 'em up. We got 'em up and tried our best to dry 'em out, with all the humidity and stuff. Could not get the motor started, it wouldn't start. So we're drifting, and we're hearin' waves breaking on the reef. We start drifting back onto this coral reef out there, and the noise is getting louder and louder. And again, we've got rotten cotton down there.

**STEIGER:** So if you go onto that coral reef, it's gonna just shred ya'.

**DENOYER:** Shred the boats. We have a generator with us and a bunch of equipment and such, but we started driftin', getting closer to this...I'm talkin' to Joe Stevens, I said, "Joe, we're gonna lose this whole boat, we go over that reef. No way we can stop from doin' it." And so we drift up on—a wave comes in, grabs the boat, launches it up, and drops it right on the reef, so we're high and dry, right there on the reef.

Sittin' on the reef, sharp coral, elk horn coral, stag coral, all this stuff is just—we know it's gonna tear the boat up. So Joe Stevens and I get a shovel and we had a long pole or somethin'. Maybe it was a rake handle. So as the next wave comes in and pushes us, we're pushin' off this coral. We try to get across this reef, because we know once we get inside the reef, it's gonna be safe in there. But we're trying to help push it across so it doesn't tear the boat up. So we're leanin' over the side...We're layin' on the side of the boat, over the side. The waves were breakin' this way, as the waves come in, lifts up the boat, we start pushin' on the coral reef to try to help the boat across. Yeah, I think there's maybe five or six people on the boat. Maybe Roxanne was there, I don't even remember. But Joe Stevens and I were there, for sure; Henry's mother and father, and it must have been Roxanne too. So as we're pushin' 'er, I'm leanin' over the side of the boat, waitin' for the next wave. Joe's leanin' over the side. But we look at each other, and we just start laughing. "Man! we're gonna die on this thing!" But we just started laughin'. So we keep pushin' this boat across. And then Henry's father was in the military, in the Navy, and he got some serious stuff in World War II, got blown off a ship into the ocean, on fire, and had a very horrendous experience in World War II. He about died on it. I think Henry's father started reliving this stuff...So now he's havin' flashbacks. So Joe and I are sittin' there, tryin' to push off, and he sees Joe laughin'. This is Joe Falany, now, Henry's father is Joe Falany. So Joe Falany starts gettin' mad at Joe Stevens, starts yellin' at Joe, "Stop your smilin'! Let's get some serious stuff done!" And by this time, Joe Stevens is losin' patience. He said, "Aw, you shut up! I'm tryin' to get this boat off the reef!" Everybody's losin' patience. So they get up, and Joe Senior's screamin' at Joe Stevens, and they start gettin' into fisticuffs. I'm sittin' there tryin' to get this boat goin'. I said "Right in the middle of this disaster, you guys wanna start fightin'?" So I had to settle 'em both down, and Young Joe's threatenin' to kick Old Joe's ass. "You think you can kick this old man's ass, come on, bring it on!" I can't believe this is goin' on, right in the middle of this disaster. So finally I get them calmed down, and the boat actually does wash over the reef.

Right, it didn't get shredded. It got a couple of holes in it, but we got over there. Finally we threw an anchor out. Once we got inside the reef, we threw an anchor out. The boat would stay there, without blowin' anywhere else.

By this time it was startin' to get dark. So we have a generator with us, and a long pole with a drop light on it. So we start this generator, and the light kind of comes on at times, so people could find us. Because I know Henry and Grace are waitin' for us. Yeah, "Where are they?" The next morning, sure enough, we had a Zodiac

on our island, one of the locals, a local fisherman that was working for us came in with that Zodiac and found us. They knew exactly where we were driftin' at, he found us. Hooked us up with another motor, and we made it in, and things were fine. But in the meantime, Joe and Joe aren't talkin' for life now. They can't stand each other.

\* \* \*

When we first started going in the Grand Canyon with Henry, he always had a bottle of Jack Daniels. You'd pull in and get camp set up and Henry would have everybody on the crew come down to his boat, and at the time we were only drinking out of Sierra cups—the old metal cups, yeah. And so Henry would pour everybody a little sip of Jack Daniels and sit around and chat for a bit, and then he'd say, "Okay, get the hell out of here, let's go to work." And start doin' the kitchen stuff and the cooking and all.

Henry was always good friends with Earl Leiseberg. You know Earl in the early years, he loved getting into the canyons. Typically we'd have an arrangement where we usually camped around the 220 area, then Henry would always have a little champagne party, a little toast to the trip and everything. He had it timed just right with Earl, they'd have the boats all set up and the radios to the right frequency, and Earl would fly in and zoom down at water level, right at 220, lights flickering on and off, and so we'd all jump on the boat and go out, hang out mid-river, then Earl would come back skipping his



*Jack Daniels in Sierra Cups*

wheels in the river and then go on up above. And when he took off, he'd make a drop to us. Usually it was ice cream. He always dropped ice cream, so it was kind of a deal to have some ice cream the last night. It was quite a show, and the folks had their cameras out, taking pictures. It got to be where Earl would try to get it closer and closer to the beach, so sometimes he'd just come down, he dropped it, skip once and land right up on the beach, just two feet off the water, right up on the beach. Then there were times when he'd bring it in and drop it, it'd land right on top of the table, break the table in half, (laughter) creosote bush was covered with ice cream and stuff would splatter all over the place. It was fun, a good little show. Of course Earl was concerned about—I don't know if it was a legal thing that he could drop down there or not, but he was definitely concerned about it...It was always quite a show to have him come down there, and, you know, flash some lights and drop in the ice cream, and then sometimes he'd get into dropping lobster and butter and ice cream. So we'd have a lobster dinner the last night. And the best deal is that Grand Canyon Expeditions was usually camped up at 219 Mile Canyon. Oh not only would they see this show, but also they'd want some ice cream, so Earl would take one of the gallons out and drop it off to them, they'd be out in their boats gettin' it. (laughter)

\* \* \*

Henry had trips where he'd bring geologists with him to do the interpretation—from different colleges. I learned a lot from them, just listening to their little stories and talks. Then once you start runnin' the boat and they're not there—you start doin' the talks, plus doing a lot of reading on it. I remember you go through one year, like my first year, I was always involved in geology. I read everything I could find on geology of the Grand Canyon. Then you start tellin' these stories. At first, you'd always have to have your book with you, and kind of make sure you're sayin' the right thing, and kind of, "Yeah, this is so-and-so..." So you'd spell it out, and then after doing it for six or seven trips you finally had it memorized and you just start talkin' like you really knew what you were talkin' about. (chuckles) Then next year, you'd get into, say, the birds of Grand Canyon. So you start keyin' out all the birds and givin' little talks on the natural history of these birds, or the life history of these birds. Next year, it would be plants. You'd start studying all the plants, and every time you'd pull into a side canyon, or a lunch stop you'd key out whatever plant was around. So you'd learn the plants. One year you'd go through and learn all the constellations. I had a habit of pickin' a subject a year and just jumping into it, and then...It was always fun. You know, you always took the story of running a river trip: "the more you put into it,

the more you get out of it.” So, you really got a positive feedback from all the folks if you put some good effort into tellin’ ’em about the history down there, whether it be human history or natural history. Of course it makes the trip more interesting for them when you tell a great story or explain about the geology, or whatever it may be. That evening they come up to you and, “Mike, that was great, I really appreciate you sharing that with us.” It made *you* feel better, so you wanted to learn more, and to tell more. So that kind of snowballed. The ole’ feedback deal. Again, this is because my background was in the natural sciences, I really enjoyed all that.

One thing, in telling stories and all, you always tell a story whether it be, say, something as you’re going through Upset on Shorty [Burton], or different stories that have been told by the boatmen down the years, and of course you pick up on what you’ve been told by somebody else before you ever got into doin’ some research and readin’ on it. A lot of times you find out later you were way out in left field on these stories. (laughter) I’d been telling this story for 25 years, and I’d been lying to somebody! (laughs) I didn’t know what the hell I was talkin’ about.

**STEIGER:** I remember Bruce Winter told this great story about, like on his second or third trip, where he gets down there and he’s talkin’ about the “Great Unconformity.” He’s saying “it’s because here’s an *unconformity*, or there’s a *difference* here...” And somebody who knew a little more geology at the time tells him later that evening, “I don’t think you should say that unconformity talk quite that way anymore Bruce.” (laughter)

\* \* \*

I think fourteen, fifteen trips was an average Grand Canyon season with Henry. Yeah, he’d usually head down to Belize in December and be back by the first of May, so he’d head back by mid-April, or so. We really we didn’t take much time off, because we were getting equipment and everything ready to go to Belize, so we’d be going through the river stuff and getting that ready, and loading up the gear to head down to Central America. At that time we were in our twenties, and ten-foot tall and bullet-proof, so you can do anything, and it was fun to do it, you know? It was work, but it was fun.

Well, you know, I think what I saw—which a lot of guides are comin’ up against now—you look at the future down there and you want a little security in what you’re doin’. You love the Canyon, you love guiding, you want to stay with it. You want to stay involved with the Canyon, and you’re trying to figure out a way to do it with security. A lot of it, of course, is financial security, that’s part of it. You know, you keep running trips, and sooner or later your body’s gonna give out on you, and then where are you? What do you do then? I went

through that. After the first few years workin’ with Henry, in my mind, I’d built a bit of security up in the Belize thing, because Henry and I were partners with that. I invested in that financially. So I had *some* security there. Then Henry and I had discussions about me buying-in with him with Whitewater, and I thought, “Well, that would take care of it.” I felt really good about that, if I could become a partner with him, you know, he’d be the boss of it still, the majority stockholder and all, but at least I could count on doing river trips, and if I couldn’t physically actually *do* the trips, I could help manage the company, and still be involved with the Canyon, and be able to take care of my family. I kept thinking about that. But then when Belize finally fell through [when the island Henry used became a bird sanctuary instead,] there went that bit of security; and then Henry and I never put anything together on me having part of the Grand Canyon business. So that’s when I started looking real seriously at trying to get involved in a business myself. Part of it was wanting to stay involved in the canyon, and part of it, again, was wanting a secure future. Not knowing how I’m gonna do it. Sixty-five years of age, and not able to pull on an oar, or start a motor anymore, or whatever it may be? So that’s when I started lookin’ around, and scratchin’ my head, and talkin’ to folks, and got all kinds of fun deals worked out, and real nightmare stuff that was great.

I think like everybody else, that you go through a period...I just wrote everybody. Well, I thought I had investors lined up, anyway, or I had a plan lined up. I’d talk to certain individuals...A *number* of them I approached, but a lot of ’em, of course, were not interested at that time. Some *were* interested. So we just tried to put different programs together, to see what could work and what didn’t. We got a deal one time we figured, “Well, we’ll see if you can get a million bucks together.” You know, get a hundred boatmen with so much money per boatman. Each person would own one percent of the company, so you’d have a hundred partners, and that’s one way of getting all these guys together, and buying a company.

**STEIGER:** That would be real relaxing! (laughs)

**DENOYER:** Oh, yeah. I had it all thought out, and then I stepped back and took a look at it, and said, “God, you talk about a scramble!” (chuckles) You just do all kinds of different scenarios. Over the years, I was actually approached by some folks...They had a term...venture capitalists! Whether they had an interest in the Canyon or not, they definitely wanted to make some money. I hooked up with a few of these fellows, and finally realized why we always call them “financial backers.” Because they always seem to back out of things...Once you get right down to it. I went through a year or two of talking with folks like that, and putting some programs together, and researching just all the



*Life as an outfitter.*

financial backgrounds of the companies, and what you could do, and how you could finance 'em. It came to naught, you know, it never worked out. I'd get close at times, but nothing ever worked out.

**STEIGER:** I remember, it seemed like you were always workin' on that; thinking about it somehow—I mean, for a *really* long time. Years and years.

**DENOYER:** Then one year, I just got fortunate and it worked. You know, things started clicking and it worked.

**STEIGER:** Now here you are running GCE, and Whitewater, for that matter...even though Whitewater's no more itself.

**DENOYER:** Yeah. I feel real fortunate that it finally worked out. We had a lot of help from a lot of very good friends.

\* \* \*

**STEIGER:** It's pretty funny. We went and did this last trip—and beforehand I'm talkin' to O.C. [Dale] in the GCE warehouse, and here's O.C., he just swamped for [his daughter] Emily [Perry]. And then Ann Marie [Dale] is takin' her mom down. Then we go down, we run into the other dory trip, and there's Duffy and Alissa [Dale], and they're all, "Yay! Whoopie!" they're doin' it too.

And here's Cash Kloepfer and all these other guys that are the children of these people that are our own generation. Well, and pretty quick Katie [Denoyer] will be doin' it.

**DENOYER:** Katie, yeah.

**STEIGER:** It's like, "God, that happened fast!"

**DENOYER:** I know, it's so amazing. I think it's a wonderful thing. I love the idea. I was with Ann Marie on her first trip through with her own boat. And just watchin' those kids...we all knew 'em since they were babies—now here they are runnin' the show now, runnin' the boats. Art and Fred [Thevenin], those guys doin' the managerial thing too.

**STEIGER:** Yeah. I'm so proud of 'em all, I really am.

**DENOYER:** I just finished a trip with—I don't know if I told you this or not—Katie just swamped for me on my last eight-day trip I did. It was just wonderful. She was my helper on the trip, and she did it all. She busted her butt down there, and it was just terrific. I got so much feedback from everybody on the trip, how great it was. She's all over it, too. I was a proud father. It's just an amazing thing to see. It's good stuff. I can imagine...I've never seen O.C. get so emotional as the last night on Ann Marie's trip. You know how it is, you give a little talk, we presented her with a book with everybody



Mike, Roxanne and Katie. Photo: C.C. Lockwood

signing it and stuff. Then O.C. was gonna come up and say something about Ann Marie, and he got up there and started talkin'. He tried to talk, and he just choked up. I've never seen him get that way.

Just look down the industry. [Bill] Gloeckler's son, T.J., is down there. He's runnin' boats. You pick the companies, and they're all down here just... Look at the Elliotts. Alexis and Anthea. You've got Trent Keller in there managin' Western now. Lynne's son.

**STEIGER:** And then there's these old guys just hangin' on by their fingernails!

**DENOYER:** I'm hangin' with you, though!

**STEIGER:** I used to go, "Oh no! You're not gonna see me be a thirty-year-old boatman. No way!" And now it's like, "I'm just gonna do it as long as I can. I'm just gonna keep doin' it 'til they tell me I can't!"

**DENOYER:** Myself included, Lew.

\* \* \*

*One of the interesting things about Grand Canyon Expeditions these days—the house that Ron Smith and Mike Denoyer and Marty Mathis, et al have built—is that as this issue of the BQR goes to press, Mike himself is packing his boat to head off on GCE's annual "Ecology" trip, and the interpretive specialist going with him, Oscar Soule, was once Mike's professor at*

*Evergreen State College. Oscar was, in fact, on Mike's very first Grand Canyon trip ever, all those years ago; and Oscar's been coming back pretty much regularly since Mike got into GCE. On the water right now too, and every year about this time, is the annual Evergreen State College GCE Dory trip. This fall "Dr. Hon," Linda Kahan, now retired, will be back for her annual reunion trip with Mike and maybe Roxanne too if Mike's lucky. In the warehouse Art Thevenin, Paul's kid and GCE's current manager, is probably scraping up spilled glue as we speak and contemplating where to put it. . .in other words, what you see a lot of around Mike Denoyer is a remarkable continuity and a deep, abiding sense of loyalty that he has toward the people and places that have been important to him. It's pretty cool when you think about it. . .*

\* \* \*

That dory choice, that's an interestin' story too. We, of course, acquired GCE a while back. It was '86, actually. GCE was not doing rowing trips at that time. But the contract said you could do rowing trips. I wanted to do some rowing trips. "Well, what do you want to row? Do you want to row snouts? Do you want to row Yampas? Or Domars? Do you want to do dories?" I didn't know. I'd done some rowin' trips of mainly the Middle Fork and the Tuolumne and Stanislaus, and rowed the Grand a few

times on private trips, but not that much experience rowin' the Grand. So we decided, "Well, if we're gonna do rowin' trips, let's just check things out, try 'em." So we went up to Oregon and bought an aluminum boat from Jerry Briggs, the Rogue River Boat Shop up there...It was the *Kaibab*, the first dory we bought. Brought it down. We rented a couple of rafts from Bruce Helin, the big fellah. And so we had, I want to say two, but maybe three rafts and a dory. I'd never run a dory before, didn't know. I'd been in one for a couple of minutes, switch off with R.D. [Regan Dale] or somebody. "Let me get in that and row it for a second." So I'd done it for just a little bit.

So we had a dory, and I think three Domars. Connie [Tibbitts] was rowin', John Toner was on that trip. Maybe it was just the three of us. Of course we had a motor-rig...

So we get down there, and I've always used pinned oars, never had feathered oars before, so I couldn't figure these things out. I'm leavin' Lees Ferry...Toner was on, actually, the motor-rig. I'm rowin' the *Kaibab*, the dory, and Toner comes by and started talkin' to me about featherin' and twistin' your wrists and stuff and doin' that. "Oh yeah, we can do that." So I started figurin' that out and gettin' it going. Runnin' down there, just, again, not quite havin' the knack for runnin' that dory, but good fun. Got through there.

**STEIGER:** Typical boatman. "It's a boat, goddamn it! Give it to me here! I'll just figure this out."

**DENOYER:** Exactly. And so basically I just did all my motor runs. That's just the way I ran the thing. I ran it

the same way I'd run a motor-rig—Hance or Hermit or Crystal or whichever, that's how I'm gonna run it. I remember after a while it got to be where I just really had a hard time with this thing. I did the motor run in Crystal, and got thrown out of my boat, and I'm out there swimmin' in Crystal. Pullin' right, and didn't get far enough right, and went in the big wave. Yeah, the new wave. Knocked me right out of my boat. So I just swam, got back into it, and we're headin' for the rock garden. "Oh, man! I'm gonna bang and beat this boat up bigger than..." But for whatever reason, I just maneuvered right on through the rock garden, didn't hit a thing. I don't know how I did that run, but got through there and made it on through. I kept runnin' down there, and I got knocked out of my boat at Fossil. Yeah, Don Saunders [*a partner in the new GCE*] was in the boat with me.

Anyway, we're gettin' down to Lava, time to run Lava, and that's where everybody just started gatherin' up there. There was a couple privates, a couple commercial...there was an OARS trip, a Diamond trip, Wilderness trip, GCE trip...

**STEIGER:** Worst possible scenario!

**DENOYER:** Yeah. And here I've gotta run this damned dory through Lava, not havin' a clue. I said, "If I had some way of gettin' out of runnin' this boat through here, I would do it."

**STEIGER:** "Okay, bad idea! That was a nice try, but let's just forget the whole thing!"

**DENOYER:** So I'm sittin' there, and Roxanne and her sister were on this trip. I said, "Look, I don't think you



Mike at the oars. Photo: C.C. Lockwood

two should ride in the boat with me.” But Don Saunders went with me, and John Toner went with me. John’s talkin’ me through this. We’re up there scoutin’, we’re scratchin’ our heads and figurin’ what we’re gonna do... just a slight push on the left lateral, and then straighten out for the “V” wave, and tuck the oars when you go through the “V” wave, and then be able to straighten out for the bottom. Hopefully you’re far enough left you’re not goin’ in the corner pocket. Okay. I’m just sittin’ there, nervous as all get-out, about ready to throw up.

**STEIGER:** “Bad idea! What was I thinkin’?!”

**DENOYER:** “These damned dories!” So we get in there, and John Toner’s behind me. Saunders is in the front of the boat. I’m rowin’ on through, and just had this incredible run, just a beautiful run, popped out. I stand up and cheer so loud! Man, I’m so happy to be through that thing!

**STEIGER:** “Good idea! I knew we could do it!”  
(laughter)

**DENOYER:** Exactly. So we just go on through, and there’s a ton of people up there watchin’ me go through. “Denoyer doesn’t know what he’s doin’, he’s gonna flip this thing. Let’s get some good pictures of *this* one!” So everybody’s up there, watchin’ this run. Made it through, just had a great run. So all the cheers pop off, and everybody’s havin’ a good time. Everybody’s pulled in down below at Tequila Beach, Lower Lava beach there. It’s lunchtime, so everybody’s settin’ up lunch. I think there were like four commercial companies and maybe three private trips right there, the whole beach was covered with boats—rubber, and one aluminum dory sittin’ there

by itself, side-by-side. There’s lunch tables goin’ up for all these different companies and all the different private groups. Everybody starts sharin’, they go back and forth between lunch tables, everybody’s havin’ a great time sharin’ these lunches, and I’m just happy to be through Lava. “These dories are *great*, man!”

**STEIGER:** “I knew we could do it!”

**DENOYER:** Yeah, exactly. Meantime, all these folks are here, C.C. Lockwood gets this idea about gettin’ a shot of everybody up on all these boats, and all these people. “It’d make a great shot!” So C.C. and Connie have a little conversation first, a little discussion, and C.C. climbs up on one of these lava boulders way back behind camp, up high quite a ways, so he can get a great shot of everybody. Connie’s down there talkin’ to everybody. “We’ve got this great *National Geographic* photographer, C.C. Lockwood, very professional photographer up there, and he’d like to get a picture of everybody, so we can all get everybody together, just lined up on the beach: the privates, the commercials, and everybody, with all the boats behind there. And on the count of three, we moon the guy!” This is what Connie’s sayin’. She’s settin’ this big thing up, wants everybody to moon him. Sure enough, there’s gotta be 75–80 people—I don’t know, we’ve got the picture, we can count ‘em, how many bodies there were, but everybody’s lined up. On the count of three, everybody moons, C.C. takes the picture. It was just a great shot. He’s got it in that...Have you seen that picture in his book? Just a great shot of everybody moonin’. So that’s where that shot came from.



Moonrise over Lower Lava beach. Photo: C.C. Lockwood



*Granite Gorge*

*Jerry Weber*

## Businesses Offering Support

Thanks to the businesses that like to show their support for GCRG by offering varying discounts to members.

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## Adopt-a-Boatman Update

**A**S YOU MAY KNOW, our Adopt-a-Boatman program is the public funding mechanism for our Colorado River Runners Oral History Project. We are pleased to announce that the following adoptions are now fully sponsored:

- Dick McCallum
- Drifter Smith

The adoptions that are still “partial” (i.e. not yet fully funded) are as follows:

- Loie Belknap (\$150 needed)
- Brian Hansen (\$500 needed)

If you'd like to help out with either of these, it is not necessary to donate the entire amount. We can (and

often do) have multiple sponsors for a given adoption.

Please note: As the sheer quantity of adoptions was quickly outstripping our ability to fulfill those commitments, we are not currently accepting new adoptions. However, there are some interviews that we feel are critical to add to our body of work in order to capture those memories before they are lost. Consequently, our program has morphed into a “We Pick ‘Em and You Fund ‘Em” kind of thing. If you would like to put a general contribution towards our Colorado River Runners Oral History project, it can help offset costs of interviewing, editing and transcribing these interviews.

Thanks for your support!

# Fall Rendezvous—Save The Date

**M**ARK THIS DATE! October 17<sup>TH</sup> is the weekend of our Fall Rendezvous and it's gonna be great! This year we'll be camping out at the Historic Kane Ranch Headquarters in fabulous House Rock Valley. Now owned by the Grand Canyon Trust, the Kane Ranch controls grazing on most of the Kaibab Plateau. And the Two Mile Ranch (also now owned by the Trust) controls grazing on all of the Paria Plateau. It's a huge project and Phil Pearl of the Trust will be there to explain to us what it's all about. But wait, there's more! I'm not sure exactly what we'll end up doing, but we're within a couple miles of the Condor release site, there are ruins and petroglyphs everywhere, and Kane Springs itself has been hosting thirsty humans for the last 10,000 years. The Ranch House has hosted such luminaries as Zane Gray, Buffalo Bill Cody, Buffalo Jones, and Teddy Roosevelt himself. Who knows, we may see some bison ourselves on our way out to the Buck Farm overlook.

The last couple years we've been doing more real campouts in the fall and it's been a lot of fun getting boatmen out in their natural environment. More walking, less talking! So plan on joining us in this really cool, underappreciated part of the Canyon!



Historic Kane Ranch Headquarters

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## Care To Join Us?

**I**F YOU'RE NOT A MEMBER YET and would like to be, or if your membership has lapsed, get with the program! Your membership dues help fund many of the worthwhile projects we are pursuing. And you get this fine journal to boot. Do it today. **We are a 501(c)(3) tax deductible non-profit organization, so send lots of money!**

### General Member

Must love the Grand Canyon

Been on a trip? \_\_\_\_\_

With whom? \_\_\_\_\_

### Guide Member

Must have worked in the River Industry

Company? \_\_\_\_\_

Year Began? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of trips? \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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\$30 1-year membership

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\*benefactors and patrons get a life membership, a silver split twig figurine pendant, and our undying gratitude.

\$100 Adopt your very own Beach: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ donation, for all the stuff you do.

\$24 Henley long sleeved shirt Size \_\_\_\_\_

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\$12 Baseball Cap

\$10 Kent Frost Poster (Dugald Bremner photo)

\$ 8 Insulated GCRG 20<sup>TH</sup> anniversary mugs with lid

Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

## Charlie Spencer's Placer Dredge at Lee's Ferry

“One feature about the dredge interested us greatly. This was a tube, or sucker, held suspended by a derrick above a float, and operated by compressed air. This tube was dropped into the sand at the bottom of the river, and would eat its way into it, bringing up rocks the size of one's fist, along with the gravel and sand. In a few hours a hole, ten to fifteen feet in depth and ten feet in diameter, would be excavated. Then the tube was raised, the float removed, and the work started again. The coarse sand and gravel, carried by a stream of water, was removed to the river, after passing over the riffles; the screenings which remained passed over square metal plates—looking like sheets of tin—covered with quicksilver. These plates were cleaned with a rubber window-cleaner, and the entire residue was saved in a heavy metal pot, ready for the chemist” (E.L. Kolb, *Through the Grand Canyon*, p. 179-80). This is the Lovett pipe dredge, invented and manufactured by Thomas J. Lovett (P.T. Reilly, *Lee's Ferry*, p. 225).



1911, Kolb Brothers Collection, NAU.PH.568.1067

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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.

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boatman's quarterly review

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