

boatman's quarterly review

**JEFFE
ARONSON**
AND JUMPING MOUSE

Prez Blurb • Farewell • Dear Eddy • Confluence
Books!!! • New Superintendent • Back of the Boat • Perspective
Whale Value • Endowment • Aquatic Food Base • Sumner

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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Prez Blurbs

THIS, MY FINAL PREZ BLURB, is sponsored by Henry David Thoreau. I came to seek out his work because of another poet's work, a modern poet and fellow river guide, Steven Law and his new book of poems entitled *Polished*. There is a piece in this book that talks of Thoreau and what we might have found had he been autopsied. I love this poem. It affects me. This is what I have realized is the meaning of life for me, to be both affected and effected. And...to affect and effect others.

When I began my search for Thoreau's work I found my way to *Walden*, a piece of literature that he wrote while alone in a cabin on the edge of Walden Pond near Concord, Massachusetts. In this writing he talks about the importance of speaking from the "I." I connected to this because I often write from the "you." Additionally, after my first *Prez Blurbs* was published in the fall of 2015 I was emailed by someone who said, he "appreciated my words about the current state of Grand Canyon, but wished I had spoken from my own personal perspective." So, I will here.

I am a writer. I am compelled to write every day, mostly in a journal. I am a yoga instructor. I can't help but see the world from the view of a teacher and body worker, curious about what makes each person unique—how they move, what their body structure is and how previous injuries may play a role in the way they sit or walk or stand. I was not entirely surprised to find out that Thoreau and I have many things in common. He too practiced yoga, while in his secluded home in the woods. He too was fascinated by nature and the world of plants.

Ever since my second river trip on the Grand Canyon with DeeAnn Tracy in 2000 I have been captivated by botany. I followed DeeAnn around on every hike asking about each flower and plant we passed—"What is this called? What can this plant be used for?" I probably drove her crazy. Every trip I walk around with the Grand Canyon book on plants (*River and Desert Plants of the Grand Canyon*, by Kristin Huisinga, Kate Watters, Lori Makarick—back in print by popular demand!). I make it my goal to learn one new plant on each hike I do. I have a terrible memory, great very short term and great long term but the middle is very fuzzy and hard for me to hold on to. My answer to that dilemma is to repeat the facts about whatever it is I am trying to remember over and over until it moves from my short term to my long term memory. I also write a

lot of notes and try to capture my thoughts as I have them. Much like Thoreau did.

I put a piece of paper under my pillow, and when I could not sleep I wrote in the dark. —HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Plants affect me. I want to know their story. I want to care for them and hold their preciousness dear. I deliberately skirt around the bushes and little buds I pass as I walk around camps or on hikes. I think of them as my friends. Sounds a bit nutty maybe but I think their beauty has given me so much pleasure over the years I want to protect them and tell people about them so that they too will be their guardians, not only in Grand Canyon, but where ever their feet step.

It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see. —HENRY DAVID THOREAU

I believe this quote by Thoreau applies to people and places too. One of my favorite elements of being a river guide is getting to experience so many different people. Observing them, giving them a helping hand at a difficult spot on a side-hike, or hearing what affects them as we eat a meal under the infinite sky of the Grand Canyon, surrounded by sand and rocks, plants and wildlife.

I am so fortunate. I don't ever forget that. I am human and have my moments when I let the small stuff get to me, but mostly I look around me and see beauty. I get to work in the Grand Canyon. Someone, thankfully my incredible employer since 2001 AZRA (Arizona Raft Adventures), allows me to take their boats and their passengers on river trips eight to ten times each year. It isn't without sacrifice, there are many things I have not experienced in order that I can have the life that I do... I never had children; I have a sense of adventure that drives me to explore constantly which makes it hard to have relationships with those who don't understand "why;" I am away from many people and little furry beings that I love so that I can drop down below the rim and hear the river rush through my ears and feel the wood handles of the oars or motor tiller beneath my sun-cracked skin. I wouldn't trade my life for anything.

An early-morning walk is a blessing for the whole day. —HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Thank you. Thank you to each of you who love Grand Canyon as I do and want to protect it and support organizations like Grand Canyon River Guides. Thank you for allowing me to serve as President. It has been

a big year in Grand Canyon. I have an insatiable desire to stay involved, not just as a guide but as an advocate for this place I adore. I will continue to fight to protect and learn about and teach about the Grand Canyon. The Grand Canyon and the people who love it affect me and effect me. If ever I wonder whether I am in the right place, doing the right thing, I go to wilderness and to literature to find the answer.

There are moments when all anxiety and stated toil are becalmed in the infinite leisure and repose of nature. —HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Do what you love. Know your own bone; gnaw at it, bury it, unearth it, and gnaw it still. —HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Thank you for listening to a bit of my story.

Laura Fallon

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HOW CAN YOU ADD a charitable component to your online shopping? Shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile) and choose your favorite non-profit organization to support—Grand Canyon River Guides, of course! Then shop just as you would on Amazon with the same prices and selection, and even your same account. Just look for those products marked “Eligible for AmazonSmile donation” on their product detail page before you purchase. AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from your eligible selections. Please note that these donations are not tax deductible since it is made by the AmazonSmile Foundation, not you.

So, shop till you drop on AmazonSmile and support GCRG at the same time! Thanks.

Farewell

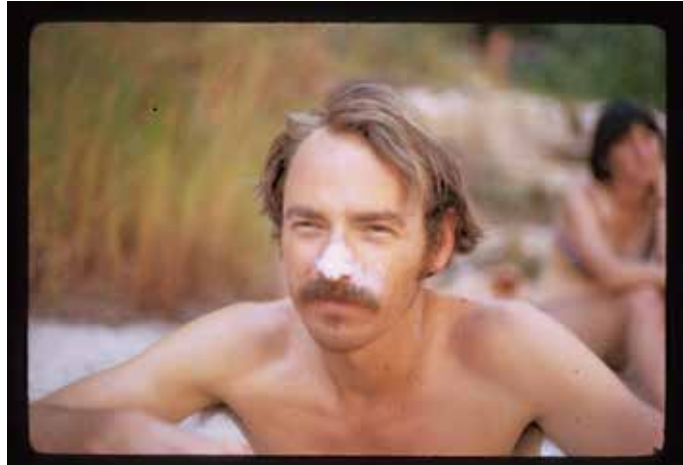
GEORGE WENDT JULY 19, 1941 – JULY 9, 2016

GEORGE RICHARD WENDT, respected company owner and founder of O.A.R.S. (Outdoor Adventure River Specialists), died on Saturday July 9, 2016. He was 74. Born to Otto and Helen Wendt on July 19, 1941, George was raised in Pacific Palisades, CA with older brother David, older sister Marlene, and younger brother Paul. Many of George's formative childhood years were highlighted by the outdoor adventures he experienced as a Boy Scout in Pacific Palisades Troop 223, where he went on to become an Eagle Scout. After high school, George attended college courses at Santa Monica City College and then UCLA, graduating from there with a degree in history and a minor in math in 1963. As a 21 year-old junior actively involved with the Bruin Mountaineers, the university's outdoors club, he joined a group of students on an expedition through Glen Canyon. He and a friend built a make-shift raft from inner tubes and planking and floated the surging Colorado in June of 1962 through "The Place No One Knew." It was a life-altering experience.

Having viewed the recently begun construction of the dam footings on that first trip through Glen Canyon, George along with his brother and friends made it a priority over the subsequent years to return to paddle the rising waters of the Lake Powell, kayaking their way deep into the impossibly narrow side canyons. This fascinating pastime competed for his free time with an igniting passion for floating wild rivers. From 1963 until 1965, George worked part-time at the local post office while enrolled in graduate studies, eventually earning a teaching credential in mathematics and a job at Paul Revere Junior High School. A June 1965 trip through Grand Canyon, guided by brothers Don and Ted Hatch of Hatch River Expeditions, nourished the intoxicating idea growing in George's head that he could lead his own expedition through that fabled canyon. The next few

years saw George pursuing the requisite experience on less-challenging rivers throughout the West in order to acquire a permit to "do it yourself" down the Grand. And as a fledgling conservationist, he became very involved in the Sierra Club's letter writing campaign opposing the planned construction of dams in Grand Canyon.

In 1967 and twice more in 1968, George spearheaded private trips outfitted with the military surplus rafts he and a couple friends had purchased from a then-established outfitter in 1965. Having made a friend and partner in Ed Gooch, a fellow faculty member at Paul Revere with prior Grand Canyon guiding experience, and recruiting burly young men like Bruce Helin and Terry Brian to join the crew, George and



George on the river—1972

Ed booked friends into cost-sharing expeditions. The hint of a business plan emerged. After three more trips in 1969, the Park Service thought they were starting to look like a commercial entity, ultimately granting Gooch/Wendt Expeditions the first exclusively non-motorized permit to operate commercial river trips in Grand Canyon National Park.

In December of 1969, George married his sweetheart Pam, an X-ray technician whom he had met at the Palisades Lutheran Church and proposed to on the beach at Redwall Cavern. Together, they spent the next couple of years moonlighting in the adventure travel business, canvassing for customers and running Grand Canyon trips during the summer months as Gooch/Wendt Expeditions. In 1972, George and Pam took the leap of faith to leave their day jobs and commit themselves full-time to a new company they named O.A.R.S., Inc. From there, the business grew, ultimately allowing them to move out of the Los Angeles area in 1974 and plant a flag in Angels Camp, CA, near the Stanislaus River's wonderful Camp 9 run. George and Pam raised their two sons Clavey and Tyler in a house near the company offices south of town. Although the Stanislaus River had sustained a

robust local business throughout the 1970s and early 1980s before being inundated by the rising waters of the New Melones Reservoir in 1983, George had looked to expand operations beyond the Stanislaus and Grand Canyon to include many of the great wilderness river trips in the western U.S. Over time, O.A.R.S. flourished into a geographically diverse business with bases of operation in six western states, while also sending clients to partner-led trips in exotic locales around the world. O.A.R.S. under George's leadership gives generously to community organizations and river conservation groups along with focused outreach that brings underserved youth and military veteran populations into the wilderness to experience the restorative and inspiring qualities of a river trip.

George died surrounded by loved ones at the U.C. Davis Medical Center in Sacramento, CA from complications caused by non-Hodgkin lymphoma. He will be remembered as a genuinely kind person, a great father, grandfather and friend, and a visionary

entrepreneur. With the relative stability of a Grand Canyon concession contract at its core, George built O.A.R.S. into what may be the most geographically diverse river outfitting company in the world. He leaves a legacy of river conservation and stewardship based on the inspiring idea that spreading the love of wild rivers was the surest path to their protection, now and for the enjoyment of future generations. As the one "in charge" of the remarkable group of river professionals that O.A.R.S. is and was, he was the calm, quiet center holding it all together. We remaining members of the O.A.R.S. family feel a tremendous sense of pride at being associated with such a legacy, and take some comfort in the 47-year foundation upon which our company is built.

Let the rivers flow...

Clavey and Tyler Wendt

Dear Eddy

IN REFERENCE TO THE ARTICLE, *Wait, Is There More?*, IN BQR VOLUME 29 NUMBER 2, SUMMER 2016.

IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS that I read the article *Wait, Is there More?* in the summer 2016 BQR, volume 29:2. The authors are clearly acting as apologists for the abundance of unlawful conduct perpetrated by Park employees. In an apparent attempt to rationalize the entire sordid affair, they have essentially trivialized scores of serious sexual harassment charges by dozens of women. The authors presented their viewpoint without stating most of the salient facts nor revealing the roles they have personally played. They portray themselves as unbiased arbitrators with the goal of helping the community move on. The article would have been more appropriately titled, "Don't believe everything you read" or "The Accused are Innocent Until Proven Guilty." These titles would have more clearly exposed the authors' agenda which is clearly to question the legitimacy of the accusations.

The sheer number of complaints speak for their credibility. There were 13 original declarants and another 22 individuals identified by investigators who reported experiencing or witnessing sexual harassment and hostile work environment. To my knowledge not one of these complaints was about an inappropriate joke or salacious language. In other words, the complaints were not trivial. Many of the complaints

revolved around men overtly approaching women for sex. Women who rebuffed their advancements were targeted, maligned, and harassed until many just quit. Several individuals who spoke up for the victims became targets as well. Ultimately, in an unmistakable retaliatory effort, two women who had previously reported sexual harassment were subsequently accused of sexual misconduct themselves. The accusations against these women were truly trivial, blown out of proportion or were completely false and yet it was the women's positions which were promptly terminated. It was later admitted by numerous National Park Service (NPS) officials including the Superintendent that the terminations were unfair, too harsh and inconsistent.

The article is full of disingenuous assertions that contradict the findings uncovered by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). The investigation lasted over 20 months. Agents spoke to more than 80 individuals including at least two of the authors. Surprisingly, the article calls into question the validity of the investigation itself by claiming, "only a fraction of this story has been told, from a single perspective." and, "Unfortunately, there has been no complete, unbiased investigation." Obviously those statements are completely untenable.

However, the most egregious and misleading statement comes in their defense of the man referred to in the OIG report as Boatman 3: "Only one person accused remains employed at the Park. The Park's investiga-

All are encouraged to go online and read the full report from the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). This can be found at:

https://www.doioig.gov/sites/doioig.gov/files/Misconduct_GrandCanyonRiverDistrict_Public.pdf

Also available is the memo from the OIG to NPS director Jon Jarvis, regarding the breach of confidentiality concerning the original declarations of sexual harassment and hostile work environment. It can be found at:

https://www.doioig.gov/sites/doioig.gov/files/MA_Letter%26DclarationtoSecretaryJewell_111615_Redacted121715.pdf

To get the live links, email GCRG at: gcr@infomagic.net and Lynn would be happy to forward them to you.

tive authority ends at this one man. He has become the scapegoat at this point. Many are demanding his termination. His status as the last man standing has made him the target of people's anger and the object to satisfy the desire for retribution." The dictionary defines a scapegoat as a person who is unfairly blamed for something that others have done. Of the 13 original witness statements, every single one mentions Boatman 3 as either harassing women, encouraging harassment, or retaliating against those who reported harassment. No rational reader of the investigative report would come to the conclusion that Boatman 3 was a "scapegoat." I honestly believe that the authors were hoping that their audience would not have read the report.

The authors encourage the community to "*shift from playing the blame and shame game and move to something that looks more like reconciliation.*" In contrast, I would encourage the community to support the victims by calling for the perpetrators as well as the law enforcement officials who were complicit to be held accountable. It's outrageous that the Deputy Superintendent, the Chief Ranger and the River District Supervisory Ranger unlawfully distributed the confidential declarations directly to the perpetrators. The declarations included personal contact info for every individual, including that of several women still working with the perpetrators. It was an obvious and cynical effort to obstruct the OIG's investigative process. Yet to my knowledge not one has been disciplined and it appears that two of them have been promoted within the NPS.

I believe that when the NPS claims to have a "Zero Tolerance Policy" on sexual harassment, it should be

more than a talking point. When independent investigators conclude that, "We found evidence of a long-term pattern of sexual harassment and hostile work environment in the River District" I expect the perpetrators of the harassment to be fired immediately, not the victims.

I know the women who came forward. For years I have seen their frustrations, fear, anger, and their courage. And I know many women who did not come forward. Many dread hearing people judge their experiences as trivial or tell them it's time to move on much like the authors of the article do. In full disclosure, I know all of this because I was one of the original 13 declarants. I know that there is no moving on for any of the victims until the perpetrators and the law enforcement officials who enabled them are held accountable for their actions.

I would encourage all to read the full investigative report on-line (the top link in the box to the left).

Dan Hall

IN REFERENCE TO THE ARTICLE, *Wait, Is There More?*, IN BQR VOLUME 29 NUMBER 2, SUMMER 2016.

THE SUMMER BQR published an article titled, "Wait, Is There More?". In an apparent attempt to explain the circumstances that precipitated the investigation into sexual harassment conducted by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), the authors of this article made several assertions that are simply untrue and not supported by the report from the OIG. In fact, they dismiss the report all together by stating, "there has been no complete, unbiased investigation that has even attempted to reveal the big picture". This statement is completely erroneous as the investigation into the allegations was conducted by the OIG whose mission is "to provide independent oversight and promote excellence, integrity, and accountability".

The authors also fail to acknowledge the findings of the investigation by stating, "so far, only a fraction of this story has been told, from a single perspective". The fact is that the OIG report concluded that, "We found evidence of a long-term pattern of sexual harassment and hostile work environment in the River District. In addition to the thirteen original complainants, we identified another 22 individuals who reported experiencing or witnessing sexual harassment and hostile work environment while working in the River District." A total of 35 individuals either personally experienced or witnessed sexual harassment, retaliation

or a hostile work environment from employees in the NPS River District; this is not a single perspective.

The article also attempts to give credibility equally to the “accused” and the “accusers” while the investigators made it clear that the victims of sexual harassment that came forward were much more credible in their testimony than the perpetrators who denied all accusations.

The authors come to the defense of only one person, a male employee of the River District, who they refer to as a “scapegoat”. The report showed that this person, Boatman 3, accumulated more complaints than any other person investigated and can hardly be considered a scapegoat.

In contrast to the authors of the article, we the undersigned acknowledge, stand with, and offer our support to the individuals who have experienced sexual harassment, retaliation and a hostile work environment at the Grand Canyon River District. Furthermore, we encourage the National Park Service to work to make Grand Canyon safe and supportive for everyone, and to advocate for a real and viable zero tolerance sexual harassment policy that includes accountability and consequences for offenders.

*Peg Bartlett
Walt Carr
Laura Chamberlin
Nicole Corbo
Lesla Donnelly
Dave Edwards
Marcia Ewell
Lisa Gelczis
Susan Ghiglieri
Alicyn Gitlin
Dan Hall
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*Sam Jansen
Bert Jones
Sam Jones
Scott Marley
Pat Phillips
Christa Sadler
Gibby Siemion
Evan Tea
Barbara Turner
Kelly Vandenberg
Kate Watters
Ethan Winston*

IN REFERENCE TO THE ARTICLE, *Superintendent Dave Uberuaga Announces Retirement*, IN BQR VOLUME 29 NUMBER 2, SUMMER 2016.

IN RELATION TO UBERUAGA’S retirement; the NPS has a cultural problem. It is exemplified in this issue. Their problem is not that much different than the issue that the Catholic Church has. The NPS has known about gender abuse on the river for more than a decade. Until now, they have succeeded in covering it up, squelching those who would raise a ruckus. That is smart if the most important thing to your organization is public image. Not so smart if

your main focus is doing an exemplary job. If they want to change their culture, they need to start at the top and work down, not the other way around. But they have no interest in changing the culture. You can see this behavior throughout the NPS on every level, from refusing to have their science reviewed by peers outside their agency to how they treat their customers, and in every case where their personnel have made management errors. Reorganizing the river unit or retiring the current GRCA superintendent will do nothing to change the underlying cultural problem.

Glenn Rink

IN REFERENCE TO THE ORAL HISTORY, *Henry and Grace Falany*, IN BQR VOLUME 29 NUMBER 2, SUMMER 2016.

THE FIRST TIME I SAW Henry and Grace Falany was in Seven Seas dive shop, which was just below my Baton Rouge, Louisiana photography gallery. They were talking the owner, Phil Cohagen, into bringing a group of divers to Half Moon Cay in Belize. Before we were introduced, Phil said, “Do you want to go diving in Belize?” Yes, was my quick answer.

The second time I saw the Falany’s was in the tiny



restaurant at Hotel El Centro where they sat with Mike and Roxanne Denoyer eating cheeseburgers. After introductions, I looked at the blackboard and read that Cow’s hoof soup was the special. Curious I stood on a bar stool and gazed into the pot, sure enough there were three hooves floating around. I choose the cheeseburger.

This was February 1978; a fairly recent hurricane had damaged the city’s infrastructure. We had water



and electricity about eight hours a day, so it was wonderful to get on the Whitewater Expeditions balcony boat for the twelve-hour ride out to Lighthouse Reef. The fast motor boat, *Brandi Jo*, was in for repairs. If



I recall it was run without oil in the gas. Some of the passengers might have complained a little, but not me. We had huge swells of pristine blue water, yet they were smooth. In the bow sometimes you would lose site of Henry driving the rig as the boat bent over



these waves. Seeing flying fish, dolphin fish, frigate and booby birds made the trip fascinating and looking at the clear blue water brought anticipation of the great dives to come.

Henry and Grace had made this small cay a diver's camping paradise. Twelve by twelve canvas tents with five-inch foam pads were more than comfortable. The constant breeze from the southeast kept us bug free and plenty cool. Meals, as I later found out, were similar to their Colorado River trip menus. It was supplemented with lots of lobster. The diving was the best, canyon and caves, sharks and tarpon were some of the things we photographed.

Toward the end of the eight-day stay, I did not want to leave, so I asked Henry if I could stay through the next group and trade him a slide show of the trip he could use to show dive shops to get more business. The deal was made and I stayed on the island with Wade and Jeanie Falany as everyone else went back to get supplies and the next group. Three days later Henry, Mike and the rest of the Grand Canyon and Belizean crew came back with another group of good divers.

It was such a peaceful and beautiful experience; I came back in '79 for another three weeks. Henry and Mike said I needed to see the other side of their business. They invited me to come to the Colorado River with them. For some reason or another I did not make it for years. Mike Denoyer was persistent and finally in September of 1989 I did an eight-day trip with Mike and that led to many more trips and my book, *Beneath the Rim, a Photographic Journey Through the Grand Canyon*. If it were not for Henry and Grace Falany, a lot of Colorado River joys and friendships would have been missed.

CC Lockwood

All photos by CC Lockwood

Save the Confluence

AS I'M SITTING HERE thinking of the Grand Canyon Escalade development, I can't help but think of my first river trip during the 2015 Guides Training Seminar. I remember feeling nervous and my thoughts were constantly thinking of what to pack, what will the weather/temperature be like? And what am I going to say to these guides in the two weeks that I will be with them? Will I have to talk continuously or is there a scheduled time to talk during the days? Little did I realize that these thoughts would not matter once I was in the Canyon. As the launch day approached and then came, my nervousness grew more intense. It was a whirlwind of activity at the launch site. There were introductions, instructions, packing personal gear into dry bags, and then finally finding which raft or rig to get on. As we left the busy, congested world we were now surrounded by the lapping of the water, the birds flying to and fro, and the occasional small talk on various boats. Eventually the walls became taller and it was apparent there was no turning back.

It was in the next couple of days that I finally got into the groove of the day—wake up, pack, eat, load things onto the boats, and head out. Each day was a different experience the deeper we went down in the layers of time. It became apparent that life has lived here from the beginning of time, from our present day ancestors to small microorganisms. Life had lived here, it made a home, it ate, hunted, planted, it gave life, and it eventually returned back to the Canyon at the end of its life cycle.

Life had endured here for millions of years and throughout this two week river trip I can see why this particular place was chosen. To be protected by the walls of time, change with the flow of the water and the harsh seasons, it is where life was fragile, enduring and yet strong. To witness all the wildlife which made the Canyon its home was heard, seen and felt with

all your senses. Your soul and heart will forever be changed and I can understand why river guides yearn to return every year. This place is captivating.

We now go to the present and reflect on our brief time here with the Canyon. It is apparent on how destructive we are as living organisms to take that all away. We have drilled for dangerous but precious minerals which supply our energy demand; we have pumped what water we could to sustain our everyday needs, without consideration of other living organisms which rely on this precious liquid. We have constructed structures which would bring an ever increasing amount of people to the Canyon in the name of economic development and prosperity. And it is with this progressive thinking that we have



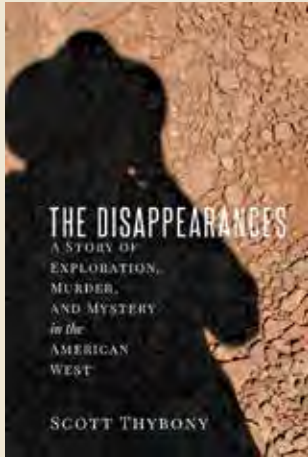
Above the confluence.

forgotten the beauty of the Canyon and those who have called this place home and revered in spirituality by many Indigenous Nations. It is from these Nations that Save the Confluence (STC) has emerged. We have emerged as others before us from this Canyon to protect, conserve, and preserve the balance of the past and ever changing future from threats like the Grand Canyon Escalade. This proposed resort with a gondola, and riverwalk would scar and alter the landscape of Grand Canyon. For six years we have been toe to toe with these developers and will not back down! We will remain to protect this place which we all have come to love, like those before us in histories past. We urge you to remain strong and vigilant with us in this fight and help us educate others to protect this magnificent place. How? Email us at getinvolved@savetheconfluence.com or visit us at savetheconfluence.com to sign the petition.

Sarana Riggs
VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY ORGANIZER STC

Books!!!

The Disappearances: A Story of Exploration, Murder, and Mystery in the American West, SCOTT THYBONY, The University of Utah Press, 288 Pages, ISBN 978-1-60781-483-2, \$24.95.



IN 1935, THREE people went missing in the rugged canyon country of southeastern Utah. Thirteen-year-old Lucy Garrett was tricked into heading west with the man who had murdered her father, under the pretense of reuniting with him. At the same time, a search was underway for Dan Thrapp, a young scientist on leave from the American Museum of Natural History. Others were scouring the region for the artist Everett Ruess, who had disappeared into “the

perfect labyrinth.”

Intrigued by this unusual string of disappearances, Scott Thybony set out to discover the stories behind the headlines by journeying through places once marked on the map as “parts unknown.” Thybony draws on extensive research and a lifetime of exploration to create a riveting story of three lives.

The Grand Canyon, Monument to an Ancient Earth: Can Noah's Flood Explain the Grand Canyon?, CAROL HILL, GREGG DAVIDSON, WAYNE RANNEY, AND TIM HEIBLE, EDITORS, Kregel Publications, 2016, 240 pages, hardcover, ISBN 978-0-8254-4421-0, \$26.99.

GALLUP POLLS INDICATE that forty percent of Americans believe that the Universe and everything in it was created by an act of God in the last 10,000 years. Most of these “Young Earth Creationists” also believe that the meaning of the *Bible* can be taken literally, and that geologic features of the Grand Canyon show evidence of Noah’s flood, as described in the book of *Genesis*. Books, as well as rim and river tours, have promoted this “flood geology” viewpoint in recent years.

This new book, written by thirteen professional (and mostly Christian) geologists, looks at the evidence. It has received praise from Christians as

well as geologists for providing a realistic view of what we see when we look at the Grand Canyon. While I doubt that many “Young Earth Creationists” will bother to read it, anyone else interested in the geology of the Grand Canyon will find it fascinating.

While this won’t fit in your ammo box, it would look good on a coffee table: there’s lots of excellent photographs, charts, maps, and diagram—frequently several to a page—so the meaning of the text is clearly illustrated. It is well organized, and begins with a summary of the “flood geology” thesis: in short, the sediments making up the rocks were deposited by Noah’s flood, and the canyon was carved in these soft sediments as large post-flood lakes drained catastrophically.

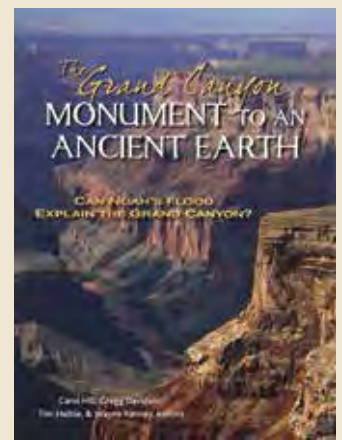
The bulk of the book is devoted to basic geology, with a particular focus on topics relevant to the Grand Canyon: the formation of sedimentary rocks, geologic time, tectonics and structure, fossils, and the carving of the canyon. Non-geologists will find this an easy to read and well illustrated introduction to the science. River guides will find much they can use to help them interpret the canyon for their clients. And anyone with an eye for beauty and curiosity about nature should find it interesting and informative.

The last section is “A Verdict on Flood Geology.” You won’t be surprised to learn that the ideas of the “flood geologists” are not supported by the evidence you can see at the Grand Canyon. On the contrary, as the book’s title says, the Grand Canyon is a “Monument to an Ancient Earth.”

Perhaps the best thing about *The Grand Canyon, Monument to an Ancient Earth* is that it shows that religious beliefs and scientific beliefs don’t have to be mutually exclusive. For many folks, including religious scientists, they aren’t.

The ideas behind Young Earth Creationism and Flood Geology are not only bad science, they are bad religion as well.

Here’s a simple example of why it’s silly to think you can interpret the bible literally: when the book of *Genesis* says Noah’s flood covered the earth, it means it covered the ground, as floods do. The word used in the



(pre-translation) original meant ground, not the planet earth...as the young earth creationists would have it. It's really stretching it to think the authors of *Genesis* meant the whole planet when the concept of "planet" didn't even exist.

Another problem: there are two versions of the creation story: in one, man and woman are created at the same time, in the other Eve is made from Adam's rib. Don't take my word for it, read *Genesis* and see for yourself.

And then which version of the *Bible* do you choose to interpret literally? Wikipedia lists more than 100 different translations into English, and I immediately noticed one that was missing. Why so many translations? Each tries to get it right...

While I'm not religious myself, my father was a Presbyterian minister. So I learned a lot—maybe too much—about Christianity as I grew up. When I was in high school my father was reading the *Bible* in the original languages (Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic) for the second time. He thought all those stories were important, but was well aware that biblical scholars had been struggling for millennia to figure out what they meant to the people who wrote them down.

If you are interested in geology and the Grand Canyon, or curious about the claims of the "young earth creationists," you will enjoy *The Grand Canyon Monument to an Ancient Earth*. It's a beautiful book, very well illustrated, and written by real geologists.

Drifter Smith

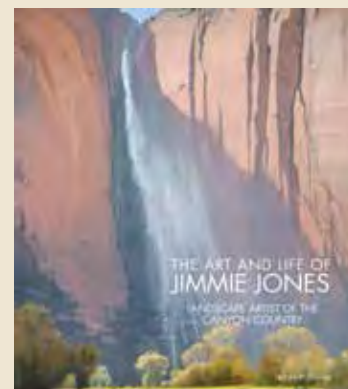
The Art and Life of Jimmie Jones: Landscape Artist of the Canyon Country, JAMES M. ATON, Gibbs Smith (first Southern Utah Museum of Art edition), 2015, 264 pages, ISBN 978-1-4236-2458-5, \$75.00.

AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR Jim Aton, avid river runner and river historian, has taken a step away from the river for his latest book, *The Art and Life of Jimmie Jones: Landscape Artist of the Canyon Country*. Aton, a professor of English at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, hopefully is a familiar name for Green and Colorado River boaters. He previously authored: *John Wesley Powell: His Life and Legacy*; *The River Knows Everything: Desolation Canyon and the Green* (with a separate DVD, *Voices of Desolation Canyon*); and *River Flowing from the Sunrise: An Environmental History of the Lower San Juan River*. One hopes he will continue intelligent and thoughtful writing about other Upper Basin tributaries to fill in the gaps of that geographic coverage.

Contemporary painter Jimmie Jones (1933–2009), Cedar City native son, was also a river runner for a short time. Jones and his best friend and traveling buddy "were both eager to explore the canyons of the Colorado Plateau and figured kayaking was the easiest and cheapest way to do it. [They built their own kayaks, Jimmie's from a Ron Smith V-bottom design with stable oars.] In the summer of 1965, Ron Smith, the founder of [Canyonlands and] Grand Canyon Expeditions, told them that if they wanted to kayak Cataract Canyon, a big water canyon, they should try Westwater Canyon first. It is usually a one-day run, and, Smith said, it will teach you what you need to know about rapids and kayaks. Learn they did." In Little Hummer Rapid, Jones' kayak broke in half, and, since they had no sleeping gear and little food, "they spent 'a couple of very uncomfortable and hungry days down in the canyon putting the boat together.'" This difficult and humbling experience whetted their appetite for more. They boated the Canyon of Lodore on the Green, starting at Flaming Gorge Dam, through all the canyons to Green River, Utah, then overland to Moab and through Cataract Canyon. All this as virtual kayak rookies, with only Dellenbaugh's *A Canyon Voyage* as a guide. They later kayaked the San Juan River, from Mexican Hat to Paiute Farms.

Unfortunately for us, Jones did not produce any known art work from his river trips. Fortunately, about mid-career, he turned from portraits (many done in Mexico, particularly San Blas, where he spent fourteen winters), to landscapes, with his main focus being the area around Cedar City, Zion National Park (over 400 paintings), and Grand Canyon (at least 124 paintings). I'm speculating, but one reason may be that moving water is such a hard concept. Think of all the photographs you've taken on river trips, and consider how few of them really capture the action, or even look very good. Jones spent years mastering certain aspects, such as the color brown, or the color red, and even longer for blue. It was years before he included clouds in his skies, even later for waterfalls. Trees appeared earlier, but took time to figure, and they often changed appearance and location during the process. The patience he expended, the dedication to detail, is so overwhelming to me.

An uncountable number of high-quality images fill this impressive folio, with pages large enough to



allow appropriate sizes for viewing important and impressive detail. A favorite is *Point Sublime* on the North Rim—after I first met my future wife on a Grand Canyon river trip in 1979, we drove there for our one and only visit, so it holds a special memory in our lives. This is a perfect example of Jones capturing distances in his work—what a little girl once told him, “I like your paintings because I can see so far.” But another is a smaller landscape in Zion, *Pulpit of Sinewava*, along a short stretch of the Virgin River (despite my comments about moving water, Jones does include the occasional, non-rapid, but sometimes

swiftly moving, water). However, this is not just another oversize coffee table book, even though that would be worthwhile enough. As a non-artist who has never taken an art appreciation class, I was intrigued with Jones’ learning by painting, his development of the processes and techniques that made him acclaimed and successful. Critics and fans most often compared him to the very well-known Maynard Dixon, and named him the “pater familias of the artists of the red rock.”

C. V. Abyssus

Grand Canyon National Park Superintendent Appointment Announced

FROM A NATIONAL PARK SERVICE NEWS RELEASE, JULY 19, 2016.

TODAY, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE Director Jonathan B. Jarvis announced the appointment of Christine S. Lehnertz as superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park.

Lehnertz, currently superintendent of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, in northern California, will assume her new post in August.

“Chris brings outstanding leadership skills and an outsider’s perspective to the National Park Service. Since she joined the NPS, she has helped us think differently about conservation, preservation, employee engagement and public collaboration,” said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis.

Trained as an environmental biologist, Lehnertz started her conservation career in the Rocky Mountains where she worked as a seasonal wildlife and biological technician for the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Lehnertz spent 16 years with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency before she joined the National Park Service. In 2007, she entered the National Park Service as deputy superintendent at Yellowstone National Park, and then served from 2010 to 2015 as regional director for the NPS’ Pacific West Region. She has been superintendent at Golden Gate

National Recreation Area since May 2015. She is a graduate of the University of Colorado at Boulder.

“Together with the staff and managers at the park, I look forward to keeping up momentum on the important conservation, preservation and operational

activities at the Grand Canyon” Lehnertz said. “Regarding the sexual harassment issues that we’ve learned about, Grand Canyon National Park now has a responsibility to lead the National Park Service in eliminating the factors that have allowed such behaviors. Staff and managers are already working hard to change the working environment there, to ensure that the Grand Canyon is a respectful, inclusive place to work and visit.”

Sue Masica, Intermountain Regional Director said “Grand Canyon National Park connects people to the land and water in an incomparable and inspiring way. We have asked Chris to lead the organization at the Grand Canyon in order to strengthen our employees’

connections to the critical NPS mission, and to ensure that we all perform our duties with integrity and to the highest ethical standards. Chris brings a deep commitment to these standards and will help the National Park Service to fulfill them at the Grand Canyon.”

Chris and her spouse Shari Dagg, and their cat Choco, look forward to settling in and living on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon this autumn.



Photo credit: NPS.

Back of the Boat— The Whale Foundation News Bulletin

AS I WRITE (AUGUST 1ST), I am so exceptionally happy for everyone out-of-doors to note that the monsoons have begun in a regular pattern. What a comforting relief. Good rust, it was getting ridiculously hot there for a while.

In related news, the Whale Foundation recently made it rain for many in our community, offering financial assistance under two different programs. The first, the Health Insurance Assistance Program, awarded 21 of our community members with a stipend to alleviate some of the burden of paying for their own health insurance. Because the program was originally designed to encourage guides to sign up for insurance, those who acquired insurance for the first time this year were granted a larger, \$750 stipend. Others, including those returning to our program, received a \$400 award. We're grateful to have the opportunity, for now, to encourage our community to take action against some unforeseen financial burden that could come in the form of a medical emergency. Premiums are the unfortunate price of operating with a safety net, but the alternative is much worse.

Additionally, the recipients of the Kenton Grua Memorial Scholarship (KGMS) have been announced. Each year, the Whale Foundation awards up to three applicants a \$2000 scholarship to aid in their pursuit of further education. These winners are chosen through a blind process based on a wide set of parameters. Ote Dale, formerly of OARS/Dories, is pursuing a certification to teach yoga so she can share her practice with both young and old in her community in Kanab. Amy Harmon, presently working for Canyon Explorations, is in a dual program, working towards a B.A. in Environment & Sustainability with an emphasis in water, as well as a B.S. in Environmental Biology & Ecology. And finally, Alexis Kimball, in the midst of a Doctoral degree in Occupational Therapy, has received this scholarship

for another year. We wish her the best of luck in her substantial undertaking, as well as all of the guides out there working towards new horizons. Find out if you meet the requirements to apply for the KGMS by visiting our website: whalefoundation.org/what-the-whale-foundation-can-do-for-you-programs/kenton-grua/.



Photo credit: John Napier

One final note: the 2017 Whale Foundation Calendar is due for release soon, and without overstating it, it's going to be something special. We've recorded audio stories for each month from our community of guides, and those will be available to listen to both on your phone through a QR code, as well as being linked on our website as the year unfolds. I think you'll find each story underlines what a unique experience we have all shared, at one point or another, down in the canyon and remind you of what brings us together as a community. It's this collective experience and understanding that the Whale Foundation both relies on to carry out its work, as well as what we hope to cultivate

for the next generation of guides who are joining us now. Please consider supporting the work we do by gifting this calendar to as many people as you can. It's such a great glimpse into this life we share. Be in touch to make your order; whalefoundation@outlook.com, by mail at PO Box 855, Flagstaff, AZ 86002-0855, or by phone at 928.774.9440.

If you have benefitted from any of the services the Whale Foundation provides and would be willing to confidentially share your story, please consider writing through our website's new Conversations feature at <http://whalefoundation.org/conversations/>. Your anonymous testimonial, if used in some of our material, might resonate with other guides facing similar challenges as well as provide a "face" to those we serve for the community that supports us. I hope you will consider this opportunity.

John Napier
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A River Guide's Perspective

To someone who has not run a rapid before and questions the need to do so at all, the lure of this charging volume of water pouring toward your very own vulnerable, fragile body is difficult to explain...it gives an edge to living, a baptism that blesses with a reminder of mortality...once is enough for many, and forever not enough for some. —ANN ZWINGER

I DRIFT ALONG THE EDDY LINES, the places where current and calm meet. Here the two touch and dance, whirlpools swirling down and boils rising up from the depths. Here, as everywhere, water seeks equilibrium, balance. Maybe this is why I find myself so drawn to rivers. They are all about seeking balance. Just as in life, along the course towards equilibrium I often find myself in the midst of seeming chaos. The rapids and cataracts, the waterfalls and explosions of whitewater, the eddy lines and their tango of whirlpools and boils. Here, among the waves and whitewater, is where I remember that magic exists. Engulfed by the currents and the colliding of water and rocks, my soul sings and I know what it means to be alive. In the heart of waters, struggle for balance exists in this special place I long to be, to know, and to take people to. This is why I am a river guide.

It never ceases to amaze me how life can just reach out a grab me sometimes, pulling me into something I know absolutely nothing about and yet simultaneously I feel more at home in than ever before. This was the case with whitewater. For 41 percent of my life now, I have been guiding people down the magical ribbons of rivers that lay themselves out across the varying landscapes of this country. From the steep mountain streams amidst the lushness of Appalachia to the rivers that carve away at time and sandstone walls in the desert Southwest, from a few hours in length to sixteen days and everything in between. Each river its own personality and lessons to teach, yet everywhere water doing the same thing...seeking balance.

I do not wish to romanticize things here or paint you some unrealistic picture of what being a river guide entails. The days are long and the work is hard, both physically and mentally demanding. I've been on trips where the temperature is well over one hundred degrees and on others when it has barely gotten in the thirties. I've paddled through every kind of weather from snow flurries to wind storms to rain so hard I could hardly see past the front of my raft. All the while, no matter what the conditions, no matter how long of a day it's been or what the circumstances are,

it's my job to get my guests safely down the river and have that trip be a positive experience for them. There are a lot of factors to juggle, and then when you throw in people, you just never know what you're going to get.

Anybody can learn to guide a raft down a river, even the hardest of rivers. It would take some time, but learning the mechanics of steering and the intricacies of reading water are not some elite, unattainable skills. Like most things, they take time. What separates those who thrive at being river guides from those who can simply get a raft down the river is the ability to also guide people. People are the wildcard. The river lives by a few set, unchanging principles, the first and foremost being to seek equilibrium. The same has never and will never be said about people. Every trip, I get to meet a completely new group of people. And it's not that I simply get to meet them, but I get to interact with them. I get to facilitate one of life's great adventures for them, and in doing so I have the opportunity to connect with people. Now, just as in regular, everyday life, there are some people who simply suck. Every now and again, those people go rafting. But the vast majority of people show up excited and enthused and ready for an experience, and I consider it one of life's greatest privileges to be able to share in as well as greatly influence that experience.

Being a river guide does not build up my bank account. It has not gotten me ahead in life financially, nor has it ever offered any kind of health benefits or a retirement plan. But for all that it lacks compared to so many other professions, it easily makes up for and surpasses them in stories and experiences. Life is nothing without relationship, without connection, and there are four relationships we all need to foster: with ourselves, with others, with creation, and with our creator. How lucky am I that a trip down the river allows for all of these. I remember early on, I believe it was my second season guiding on the New River in West Virginia, I received a letter in the mail. I had taken a family of four down the river one day and out on a climbing trip one day. The letter was from the mom, and she was so appreciative. She told me how the trip had impacted their family and how much of an impression I had made on her teenage son and daughter. "Thanks for showing her that a climber/rafter/outdoorsman can hold an intelligent conversation. I wanted to share these thanks especially in regards to one the comments you made when I was expressing a little frustration with the lack of



cell phone connection. ‘Thats the beauty of it’ has made me think over and over again about what the important things are. Thank you for bringing me back to the precious moments of living.” What a great memory to be a part of.

One of my most memorable trips, I took six blind people down the Lower Gauley one fall. I dont know if I had ever before or since been so gripped, so focused. The group was amazing, by far the best listeners I have ever interacted with. They asked me to describe everything in as much details as possible as we moved downstream. Before too long, they had attuned their ears so that they could hear specific waves and features that I was describing. At on point, as we were approaching a rapid called Canyon Doors, one of the guys reached out his right hand and finished my sentence for me, “...because all down right side of the river huge cliffs rising up from the water.” Those six blind folks taught me how to “see” the river in a way like I had never before.

Other memories come rushing in. Some being caught out on the river during a flash flood and navigating rapids at water levels not see before, and others of flood waters rising so fast that the safest way out was to hike. I’ve been lucky enough to have certain groups come back for trips time and again, and every time we pick up right were we left off, enjoying some time on the river together. I’ve hugged and held grown men and women in tears on the last day of a one or two week trip through Grand Canyon. Time on a river

gets to people. Stepping into adventure with people and sharing experiences and meals and weather and stories and stars, it’s like nothing else I’ve ever known, and that is why I’ll do it until my body won’t let me anymore.

“If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water.” The quote by Loren Eiseley is one that I think of often. I feel as though I could go on and on about the many things I’ve learned from my time spent on rivers, but then, lessons are best learned through experiences, not words. So my hope for you is that you go and have your experiences. Go run the rivers and see where they take you and who they bring across your path. Spend time with the water, so that you’ll always remember that magic exists. Find whatever it is that makes your soul sing, and live it out. Just like the water, in your search for balance, onlookers will be captivated by the beauty you make.

John Bryant Baker

FOR ULANI: So that you might know, in the depths of your Papa’s soul, there is a wild, raging river.

And to the river guides, to anyone who has ever taught me about the river, and to anyone who has ever allowed me the opportunity to impart some insight to them: I am forever grateful and the pleasure was all mine. Good lines and go big.

What Value Does the Whale Foundation Bring to Our Community?

RIVER FOLK ARE A WILLFUL BUNCH, made so by the constraints of the environs we seek out. Ours is a community built on a history of buckling down and navigating through what may come. From J.W. Powell losing the *No Name* early in his expedition, to any one of us who has been forced to tie a knot in the threads of a trip unraveling for one reason or another, we've seen or experienced firsthand that unyielding requirement to just keep going, no matter the hardship. The walls, the limits of our supplies, and the distances involved demand this much.

But not every trip feels like riding with Charlie Russell. Often, our days on the water simply feel like being on someone else's vacation, for the eighth time this summer, and the expectations from the front office deem we engage with these lost folks with a smile and genuine sense of interest, no matter the heat, the wind, the toelie, or our inability to distinguish which of the five Bobs on this trip is presently on our boat, asking us to put sunscreen on his back. They've spent a lot of money and deserve a good time. Whether you're up for it or not, the show, and party, must go on. A summer of one festive night after another can slowly build habits in us we often don't realize until the folks are all gone and we have our first quiet nights alone. If we sense we might need some help getting things back on track, our self-sufficient ways make it that much more difficult to ask for it.

But for many of us, the show itself is what makes it all worthwhile. On the water, we're in charge, and those in our care hang on our every word. We're the only ones who can get through Hance Rapid safely or have the savvy to pull off an up and over hike to Deer Creek during monsoon season. We've got grit and humor and stories for days. The trouble comes when, as Bob Grusy so aptly put it, we're back home, above the rim, "fourth in line at the bank." Our image, status and stock plummet precipitously without a following and a familiar challenge at which we can excel. The transition away from the river, whether seasonally or professionally, can be wrenching to our ego or at the very least, confounding to our sense of identity. Rather than face a new great unknown, our doggedness can keep us on the water seasons longer than what's fulfilling.

Viewed from the outside, the life of a river guide is enviable and carefree. But for those who have been lucky enough to spend more than their fair share of

time on the river, it comes as no surprise when we hear of a peer struggling with one aspect or the other of the profession, or in the very least, simply wanting to move on from the job. Commercial river running is taxing mentally, physically, and as counterintuitive as it may seem to some, oftentimes spiritually. When we pause for a self-assessment and find the need to seek professional assistance, it's a relief to know there is a place in the community that will understand where we're coming from.

The Whale Foundation was formed in response to a tragedy by most accounts unforeseen in its forming. Yes, friends of Curtis Hansen knew he could get down at times, and from the stories that have been told, he apparently didn't disclose too much of his own troubles. But the community was struck by the severity of Whale's final means to escape his demons. What could have been done and what options were available for Whale that might have rewritten the last chapter of a man's life? The Whale Foundation serves as that option for the rest of us, and stands as an open door to a safe and private place to get honest about what we're dealing with and find real support.

When we can't admit to our peers or our passengers we're feeling a little lost or have experienced something too heavy to shoulder alone, the Whale Foundation offers a discreet means to work out our struggles without the fear of judgment or the need to disguise our uncertainty. And rather than have to paint that picture for someone unfamiliar with the demands of guiding, those who come to our program for assistance are met by mental healthcare providers who just "get it" and are uniquely empathetic and familiar to these challenges.

Beyond, or more likely preceding the mental health care the Whale Foundation advocates for, attention is now being brought to physical health and self-care, as well. Opportunities are made possible for preventative medical measures and procuring health insurance through the programs under the Tim Whitney Wellness Initiative. As Tim reportedly made every guide he met feel valued and a part of something larger, so does the program named in his legacy.

Along with the care for a person's present state of mental and physical health, the Whale Foundation manages the Kenton Grua Memorial Scholarship for those seeking a new future. Here is a leg up, a little help, and maybe most importantly, an

acknowledgement that there is life beyond a river career, and we'd like to help with that too. Just having that legitimizing and encouraging support available every year to a few folks in the community quietly assures others their interests are being considered.

Almost everything the Whale Foundation offers is available through other channels. There are scholarships, health insurance options, counselors and therapists throughout the area that offer similar services to whatever one may need. What the Whale Foundation does that is unique, that is singular in our community, is offer a constant message from a known,

familial entity that assures everyone who needs to hear it, "You are a valued part of this community." And for those struggling, our foundation assures them, "We understand what you're going through, because we've seen it firsthand, time and again, and we're here because we care about this exceptional group of people, because it's our family, too. You don't have to power through this alone this time." For the Grand Canyon river community, the Whale Foundation, simply put, embodies the values of compassionate, supportive and collective care in the spirit of its namesake, Curtis "Whale" Hansen.

Endowment Fund News

GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES was honored to receive our very first endowment fund gift from Mary Ellen Arndorfer, a former board director who has been a member of GCRG for 23 years. We asked her if we could share her lovely note with our members because it so beautifully demonstrates the impact that Grand Canyon and the Colorado River has had on multiple generations of her family and their desire to "pay it forward" to the place they love.

My mother, Jane was first captivated by the Grand Canyon in 1940 as an eight-year old girl in Wisconsin when an aunt returned from the South Rim with black & white photos. She put it on her bucket list. She managed to visit the South Rim briefly in 1968 with her five young children in tow. That was not enough. Finally in 1993 to celebrate her youngest child graduating from law school, she took three of her now adult children on a Grand Canyon river trip. Jane was not a camper or hiker or an outdoor gal in any way. Clean, private modern bathrooms were one of her non-negotiables in life. But that trip introduced me to Grand Canyon and I returned for forty more trips over the following years as a guide for AZRA. And Mom, by then a senior citizen, came on two more river trips with me. Two years ago, after a brief & cruel cancer battle, Mom died. She did not want a public service to celebrate her life, but instead requested that I return her ashes to Grand Canyon, a place she had loved for some 73 years. Last August, along with three of my siblings and nine of Mom's grandchildren, we chartered a river trip and introduced another generation of Jane's family to Grand Canyon and the magic of the river,

while celebrating her life and legacy. Thank you, Mom.

This endowment gift honors Jane, the canyon and the important conservation work of Grand Canyon River Guides and its amazing staff.

—MARY ELLEN ARNDORFER

This heartwarming note really inspires us and we hope you feel the same way. You too can contribute in a personally meaningful and long-term way by supporting the organization that is passionately dedicated to protecting and preserving the place you love, now and in the future. In order to assist you, we have addressed some of the initial questions you might have about the GCRG Endowment Fund.

WHAT IS AN ENDOWMENT FUND?

Simply put, the word "endow" means to provide or supply with income. Therefore, an endowment fund is an investment fund earmarked by an organization's governing board in order to provide a reliable and growing source of income over the long term. Endowment funds are both permanent and irrevocable where the principal is preserved and invested. A portion of the investment earnings can either be distributed as income to the organization, or the annual payout can be reinvested in the fund.

But please note, endowment donations do not replace or diminish the ongoing need for memberships, general donations to GCRG, or Circle of Friends contributions to support the BQR. GCRG's Endowment Fund expands your giving opportunities in a new and long-term way—your endowment gift will benefit our organization in perpetuity.

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE GCRG ENDOWMENT FUND?
You can either send us a check made out to GCRG (please put “Endowment” in the memo portion, or include a note with instructions). Or you can donate online through our new Endowment Portal on the Join/Donate page of the GCRG website, www.gcr.org (just scroll down the Join/Donate page till you see the Endowment Fund form).

WHO IS MANAGING THESE CHARITABLE ASSETS?
GCRG has chosen the Arizona Community Foundation as the home for our philanthropy. Their decades of experience, investment management expertise and community-based approach was a perfect fit.

ARE GIFTS TO THE GCRG ENDOWMENT FUND TAX DEDUCTIBLE?
They sure are. The Arizona Community Foundation will send you an acknowledgement for your tax records.

I WANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE FUND, BUT I’M NOT A MAJOR DONOR. CAN I SEND A SMALL AMOUNT?
Of course! Large or small, it all helps our Endowment Fund grow, which in turn, increases our rate of return. This is a permanent investment that generates income for GCRG over the long term. Truly a gift that keeps on giving.

CAN MY GIFT BE ANONYMOUS? AND CAN GIFTS BE FROM INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESSES, OR FROM ORGANIZATIONS?
Yes, to all of the above! If you send in a check, just let us know your specific instructions. And if you opt to donate to the Endowment Fund through the GCRG

website, there are drop down boxes that address these questions.

CAN I MAKE MY GIFT IN MEMORY OR IN HONOR OF A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE? AND CAN A PERSON BE NOTIFIED OF MY GIFT?
What could be more special than leaving a lasting legacy through a memorial or honorary gift! The answer is a resounding *yes*. If you send in a check, just let us know. And similarly, the Endowment Portal at www.gcr.org is equipped to receive that important information as well.

DOES IT HAVE TO BE A CASH GIFT, OR CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE GCRG ENDOWMENT IN OTHER WAYS?
Beyond a cash gift there are a myriad ways to contribute such as bequests (wills), securities, retirement assets, or even real estate. There are even options that can provide additional tax or income benefits for donors. If you would like to take advantage of any of these options, we’d love to work with you to make it happen and the professionals at the Arizona Community Foundation have the expertise to manage any such request.

WHAT IS GCRG’S GOAL FOR THIS INAUGURAL YEAR?
The Endowment Fund is at \$51,000 now. Let’s see if we can double it before the year is out!

Thank you for your belief in our efforts!

Lynn Hamilton

GCRG Fall Rendezvous 2016 — Let’s Find Our Park!

When: October 15-16, 2016 (note: these are NEW DATES!)

Where: This year marks the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service. Let’s show our own park some love and head to the South Rim for a memorable in-depth experience with our park partners.

Activities: Have you ever wanted see the historic boats? Or check out museum collections that include anything from John Wesley Powell’s pocket watch to split twig figurines that are 2,000 to 4,000 years old? We may also visit the rejuvenated Desert View Watchtower, and take a guided tour of the Power House, a national historic landmark. Lunch at lovely Shoshone Point, a stewardship project to spruce up the historic district, and a fun hike round things out!

Cost: \$40. Bring a bag lunch for Saturday, Oct 8, but we’ll supply all other food. Just bring your fine self, camping gear, an instrument of choice, and BYOB.

The GCRG Fall Rendezvous is open to all current members of GCRG, although you can bring a friend(s) as long as they pay the fee. Postcards will be mailed to guides soon. As we firm up the details, we will post them on the GCRG website (look for the Fall Rendezvous under Guide Resources). You can also pay securely online. Join us!

So save the dates (October 15-16) and let’s go and “find our park” together. What an outstanding opportunity!

Hydropower Waves, Insect Eggs and Citizen Science: What's Up with the Aquatic Food Base in Grand Canyon?

IT'S NO SECRET that the lifeblood of the Grand Canyon is the Colorado River. Its flow powerful enough to carve bedrock, also supports lush riparian vegetation, fish, and other life that would otherwise be completely out of place in the desert. The contribution of the Colorado River to life at the bottom of Grand Canyon is not limited only to water, however: the river also provides habitat for an aquatic insect "food base" that fuels virtually all other life in this ecosystem. Underwater, endangered humpback chub and sporting rainbow trout feed upon larval insects dislodged by the river's swift current. On land, lizards, toads, and spiders run, hop, and build webs to capture the winged adults of these insects once they hatch from the river. In the air, swifts and swallows swoop and dive to feed on the flying insects. Yet recent research has demonstrated that this food base is unnaturally scarce, limiting the populations of fish and other organisms (Cross and others, 2013; Kennedy and others, 2013b). Whereas a trophy trout stream in Wyoming might contain a streambed literally crawling with dozens of species of fat, juicy aquatic insects, including mayflies, caddisflies, and stoneflies (that's blue-winged olives, giant hexes, green sedges, yellow sallies, and salmonflies in fly-fisher-speak), the Colorado River through Grand Canyon lacks large-bodied invertebrates and contains mostly tiny midges. In other words, for being the lifeblood of the food web in Grand Canyon, the Colorado River is awfully anemic.

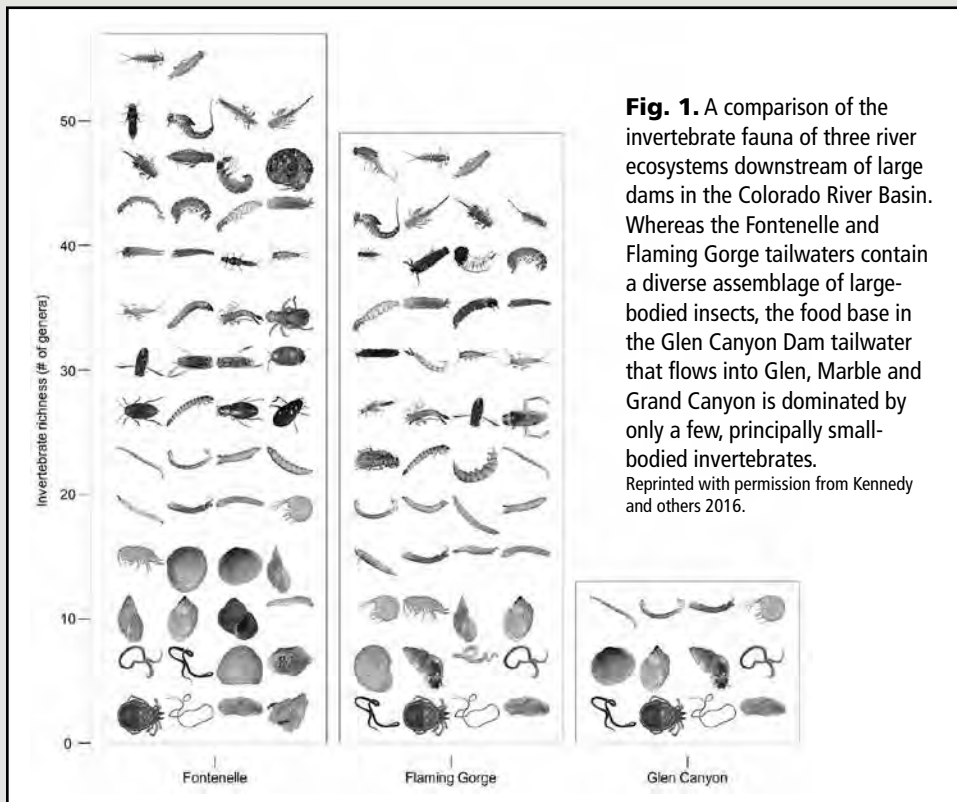
For the past several years, our research within the Flyco ecology lab at the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center (GCMRC) has been devoted to figuring out why the diversity and abundance of aquatic insects in the Colorado River is so low. But before we could put a lot of effort towards identifying the cause, we first had to put this river into context. After all, the situation in Grand Canyon may not be all that strange; maybe there just aren't many aquatic insects in large rivers that have been dammed? To get this needed context, we compiled information on aquatic invertebrates from sixteen dammed, western U.S. rivers, and confirmed that the Colorado River downstream of Glen Canyon Dam in Grand Canyon was in fact very unusual (Kennedy and others, 2016). Compared to the Green River downstream of Flaming Gorge and Fontenelle Dams in the Upper Colorado

The Bottom Line

- 19% of the world's electricity comes from hydroelectric dams like Glen Canyon, far exceeding all other renewable sources combined (i.e., solar, wind, geothermal, biomass).
- Aquatic insects are the foundation of river and riparian food webs and represent the primary prey for countless species of fish, birds, bats, and other wildlife.
- Scientists have long noted the aquatic food base in Grand Canyon is poor, but they've struggled to understand why.
- The citizen science light trapping project has produced the largest ever dataset of emergent aquatic insects, and it is still growing.
- These citizen science data demonstrate that hydropeaking waves are constraining the diversity and abundance of aquatic insects in Grand Canyon by causing widespread mortality of insect eggs.

River Basin, for example, the Colorado downstream of Glen Canyon Dam contains only a quarter to a third of the invertebrate diversity found in these otherwise similar ecosystems (Fig. 1 - Page 20). Additionally, the food base of Fontenelle and Flaming Gorge was mostly comprised of those fat, juicy mayflies and caddisflies that fish and other insectivores love, providing a stark contrast to the anemic food base in the Colorado River.

Once we realized that the aquatic food base condition in Grand Canyon was indeed unusual, we set out to determine why so few insects were able to inhabit this segment of the Colorado River. First, we generated ideas about what stressors might be influencing this aquatic food base. One stressor commonly put forward is the unnatural temperature regime: as anyone who has ever been the victim of a full-frontal wave splash in Hermit Rapid can attest, that water is almost preternaturally cold. However, while we knew that temperature has a very strong effect on aquatic insects, we also recognized that it couldn't be the only, or even the overriding factor limiting the aquatic insects in the river. For example, at river mile 134, Tapeats Creek enters the Colorado and



aquatic insect species don't even feed as adults: their sole purpose is to mate and lay eggs back in the river as quickly as possible. In our time along the Colorado River, we had also personally observed that swarms of adult aquatic insects often congregated right along the river's edge. These observations led us to hypothesize that hydropeaking waves might be impacting aquatic insect populations at their vulnerable egg stage, particularly if adult insects lay their eggs along the river's edge (Fig. 2). To test this assumption we turned to a global analysis of aquatic insects, which demonstrated that most

has water temperatures virtually identical to it, yet this tributary supports a diverse and healthy aquatic insect assemblage similar to those downstream of Flaming Gorge and Fontenelle hundreds of miles upriver—and nothing like the assemblage of the Colorado River only hundreds of feet away.

We then turned our attention to the other completely unnatural stressor in the river: hydropeaking waves. These waves, which are produced by hydropower generation at Glen Canyon Dam, lead to daily changes in river height up to three feet and propagate downstream throughout the entire Grand Canyon. Using our analysis of other dammed rivers in the West, we discovered that the extent of hydropeaking by Glen Canyon Dam is actually much greater than every other river in our dataset except for Hoover Dam, where river height can vary by up to ten feet within a day. Notably, the Colorado River downstream from Hoover Dam also lacked any fat, juicy insects like mayflies or caddisflies, providing one line of evidence that hydropeaking might be the underlying cause of the food base problems in Grand Canyon.

This got us thinking about all life stages of aquatic insects, and whether there might be a specific life stage that was particularly vulnerable to hydropeaking impacts. The adult life stages of aquatic insects are often extremely short-lived. For example, many

of the insects “missing” from Grand Canyon actually cement their eggs to partially submerged rocks, wood, vegetation, and other substrates along the water's edge or surface (Statzner and Beche, 2010). When we first read this paper on the egg laying habits of the world's insects it was a bit of a revelation for us, because it meant that most aquatic insects lay their eggs in precisely the habitats affected by daily hydropeaking waves released from Glen Canyon Dam. Much like a boat tied up for the night at high water only to be found beached the next morning, many eggs laid nearshore at high water throughout the Colorado River will be left high and dry a scant twelve hours later. This represented another line of evidence that hydropeaking waves were responsible for the limited food base in Grand Canyon.

Next, we needed to determine whether the brief periods of shoreline drying created by hydropeaking would actually cause insect egg mortality. However, it was impossible to do this in Grand Canyon, because many of the insect species in question are no longer found there. Thus, we collaborated with our doppelgängers—the BugLab at Utah State University—who work downstream of Flaming Gorge Dam. They collected eggs of mayflies and caddisflies from the Green River in Flaming Gorge, exposed them to drying for thirty minutes up to twelve hours, and then incubated the eggs for a month to see how

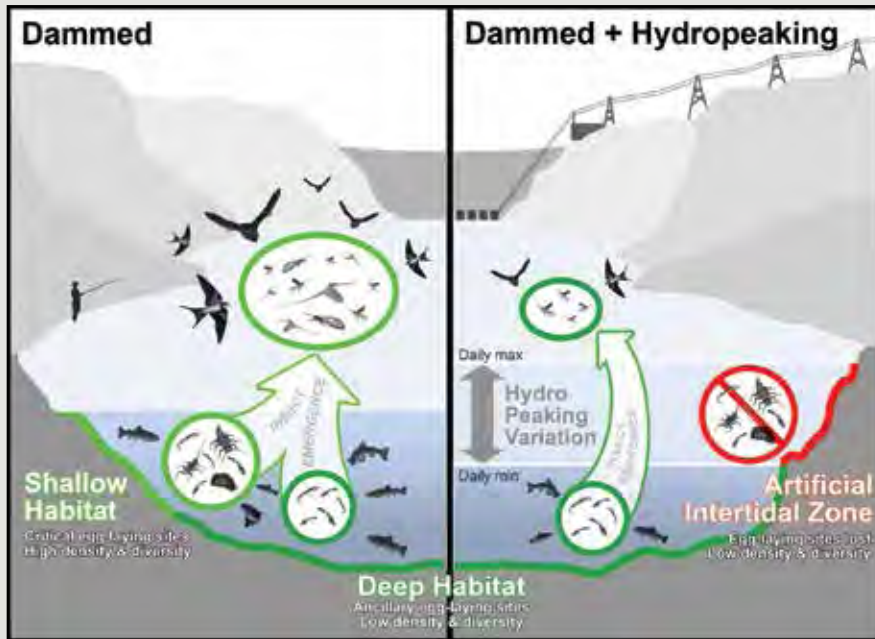


Fig 2. A conceptual model demonstrating the potential effects of daily hydropeaking waves on aquatic insects and the river and riparian food webs that depend on them. Illustration developed by Freshwaters Illustrated and reprinted with permission from Kennedy and others 2016.

many were still alive. The results of this lab study were striking, with near-total mortality of the insect eggs after as little as one hour of exposure to air. Thus, this lab study provided another line of evidence that hydropeaking waves could be responsible for the anemic food base in Grand Canyon.

Although the lab study provided compelling evidence for why some species of aquatic insects are unable to survive in the Colorado River in Grand Canyon, we nonetheless knew that some aquatic insects, particularly midges, were somehow able to persist in this ecosystem. By reviewing natural history papers, however, we learned that midges are actually rather flexible in where they lay their eggs, and depend less on shoreline rocks than mayflies and caddisflies. We predicted therefore that segments of the Colorado River in Grand Canyon that experience low water at dusk would also have higher densities of midges. This is because most midges lay their eggs around sunset, and eggs laid at low water locations (i.e., lower Marble Canyon, the Muav Gorge) at this time would never be subject to drying. To test this prediction, we would need to collect an immense sample dataset to demonstrate such a pattern, leading to a major hurdle: we needed near-continuous sampling of a 225-mile segment of river that was located at the bottom of a mile-deep hole, in the middle of a desert, for months or years at a time. This was going to be really hard!

Fortunately, there was a group of individuals and organizations that regularly travels through this

remote area; several members of the Grand Canyon River Guides and broader boating community answered our call for help (Kennedy and others, 2013a). Each night in camp on their river trips, these citizen scientists used a simple light trap set out at the river's edge for one hour at dusk to collect the winged adult forms of aquatic insects (Fig. 3). Since 2012, more than 100 river guides and private boaters have collected over 2,500 samples, covering nearly every mile of river. From this unprecedented dataset, containing over 1.2 million individual midges, we were able to visualize aquatic insect patterns throughout the entire Colorado River in Grand Canyon. These patterns were remarkably clear: in lower

Marble Canyon and in the Muav Gorge where the hydropeaking wave was at its daily low at dusk, we saw three times greater midge numbers compared to places like Glen Canyon and Upper Granite Gorge where it is high water at dusk (Fig. 4). This massive study in Grand Canyon, combined with other lines of evidence,



Fig. 3. A sight well-known to any citizen scientist boater: setting out a light trap at nightfall along the Colorado River in Grand Canyon. Grand Canyon Youth river trip pictured. Photo credit: Freshwaters Illustrated/US Geological Survey. Reprinted with permission from Kennedy and others 2016.

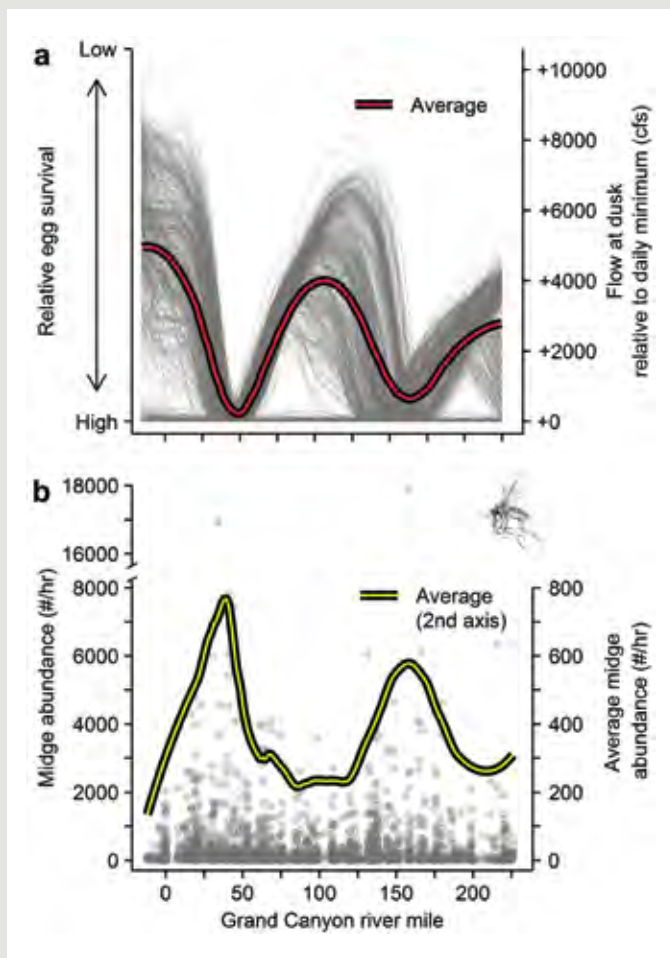


Fig. 4. a) The relative height of hydropeaking waves at dusk throughout the Colorado River in Grand Canyon, for every day in the summers of 2012–2014 (gray lines), and on average. b) Midge abundance from each light trap sample (gray dots) over the same timeframe, showing peaks in abundance where the daily hydropeaking wave was at low water at dusk. Reprinted with permission from Kennedy and others 2016.

strongly supported our hypothesis that hydropeaking waves were constraining both the diversity and abundance of aquatic insects in the Colorado River.

The results of our investigations into hydropeaking impacts on river food webs have recently been published in a scientific journal (Kennedy and others, 2016). Additionally, our findings have been incorporated into the preferred alternative being put forward in the Glen Canyon Dam Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement (LTEMP EIS). Specifically, this alternative includes a provision for experimental “bug flows” that would stabilize flows at the monthly low water level every weekend from May–August, when adult aquatic insects are most active. This would give aquatic insects two days every week when egg-laying conditions are ideal, because eggs laid on

these weekends would never be exposed to drying (we’re betting even insects will appreciate having the weekends off!). If effective, this action would increase egg survival, ultimately leading to a greater abundance of midges in the water, potential recolonization by some of the fat, juicy insect species from tributaries, and maybe—just maybe—a healthier and more stable food web throughout the Colorado River in Grand Canyon. We’re at least a couple years out from seeing such a flow experiment. But if it happens, thanks to the dedicated citizen scientist boating community, we know we have the means to measure its ecological effects.

If you’re a citizen scientist, the next time you go to crack open a beverage at sunset and set out a light trap, know that you have our deepest gratitude and that your efforts are informing and affecting Colorado River management. And if you just so happen to be camped where there’s high water at dusk, maybe pour one out for the bugs—perhaps one day there will be a lot more of them, along with the fish, birds, bats and other wildlife that you find in healthy rivers.

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Why Jack Sumner Stayed

THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL event of the Powell expedition happened at what became known as Separation Rapid, where three crewmembers walked off the expedition. Because Oramel Howland, Seneca Howland, and Bill Dunn disappeared without a trace they never had a chance to explain their reasons for leaving, and historians have filled the void with surmises. Historians who admired Powell have felt obligated to defend him from what might seem like an indictment of his leadership, which was indeed voiced by surviving crewmembers, especially Jack Sumner. Historians have portrayed the three who left as cowards and deserters, and this verdict was immortalized on the Powell Memorial on the canyon's South Rim, which left the Howlands and Dunn off a plaque listing the crewmembers. Other historians, taking their cues from Jack Sumner, have portrayed Powell as a petty tyrant and fame hog whom the crewmembers had endured with heroic tolerance.

Amid all the controversy about why the three men left, there has been little consideration given to why the other crewmembers did not leave. This question is especially interesting in the case of Jack Sumner, who clearly resented Powell's personality and leadership, and who had stronger personal ties with Dunn and the Howlands than did the other crewmembers; Sumner knew Dunn from the trading post Sumner managed at Hot Sulphur Springs, Colorado, and knew Oramel Howland as an employee of Sumner's brother-in-law, William Byers. Sumner had tramped the Rockies for years and faced enough dangers that a trek across the Arizona Strip and into southern Utah should not have scared him.

Sumner did vacillate. When the Howlands and Dunn announced their plans to leave, Sumner "did what I could to knock such notions out of their heads, but as I was not sure of my own side of the argument, I fear I did not make the case very strong, certainly not strong enough to dissuade them from their plans."¹

Powell too admitted that he considered quitting the river. All the men were exhausted, hungry, and ragged, and after thinking they were nearly at the end of the trip, the canyon threw a shockingly difficult rapid at them and left them wondering what else lay ahead, left them badly demoralized. They had to choose between a visible danger on the river or the unknown dangers of trekking fifty or more miles across the desert.

Only a sentence after admitting his vacillation, Sumner said he became determined to continue down the river: "I talked with Major Powell quietly

on the subject. He seemed dazed by the proposition confronting us. I then declared that I was going on by the river route, and explained my plans to him how to surmount the difficulty, plans which were carried out next morning."²

This typical statement, with Sumner claiming all the credit and portraying Powell as a weakling, was why Powell-idolizing historians found Sumner so annoying and sought to discredit him, and Sumner made it easy for them by frequently claiming too much. Yet Sumner may have had a personal motive that made him determined to stick with the river, aside from his assessment that they could deal with Separation Rapid. It's likely that something else was running through Sumner's mind that evening, night, and morning as they camped above the rapid and debated what to do. Jack Sumner surely knew that southern Utah was a dangerous place for anyone with the name of Sumner.

In 1869 the name "Sumner" was one of the most despised names in America. It was despised by three groups that otherwise had little in common: southerners, Mormons, and Navajos. All three groups could be encountered on the trek Jack Sumner would need to make to southern Utah. Sumner also probably assumed that the Mormons still held a grudge against his grandfather, Robert Lucas, who as governor of Ohio in the 1830s had helped destroy the Mormon's attempt to build their own theocratic homeland in Ohio, one of three failures that eventually sent them to Utah to get far away from men like Robert Lucas.

Hatred for the name "Sumner" inspired the most notorious event ever to take place on the floor of the United States Senate. On May 22, 1856, two days after he gave a combative anti-slavery speech, Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts was sitting at his desk on the nearly-empty senate floor when he was attacked by Representative Preston Brooks of South Carolina, wielding a walking cane with a heavy gold knob. Brooks continued striking Sumner until he was bloody and unconscious, and stopped only when his cane broke. Other senators who tried to help Sumner were held at bay by another South Carolina representative wielding a pistol.

Brooks became a hero in the South, which loudly declared that Sumner, one of the leading abolitionist firebrands, deserved what he got. Northerners were shocked by the ferocity of southern feelings, and they finally realized that slavery would never yield to moral persuasion, only to blood. The Sumner beating polarized the nation and energized it toward

war. Sumner, who remained disabled for months, became a northern martyr. After the war he helped lead the Radical Republicans in punishing the South and upholding the rights of freed slaves, which for southerners was an added humiliation atop their military defeat and economic ruin, giving them continuing new reasons to hate Charles Sumner.

The southern dislike for the name of Sumner was reinforced when General Edwin V. Sumner, a distant cousin of Charles, led Union troops in some of the major battles of the Civil War, including Antietam and Fredericksburg. Edwin Sumner, born in Boston in 1797, was a passionate Unionist, and in 1856 he took command of Fort Leavenworth in Kansas and defended anti-slavery Kansans against pro-slavery raiders from Missouri. (The next year, a new Kansas county was named Sumner County for Charles Sumner). In the Civil War Edwin was the oldest field general on either side and commanded the largest corps in the Army of the Potomac, with 18,000 veteran troops. Sumner had been in the army for nearly three decades when he led troops in the Mexican-American War (1846–48). Yet his longevity meant that he had learned military tactics in another era, and he was poorly equipped to go up against Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee at Antietam; Civil War historians have graded Sumner harshly for many mistakes that cost his command 2,200 casualties and threw chaos into the Union battle plan.

Jack Sumner was related to Charles and Edwin Sumner, not closely but through the sprawling Sumner family tree that began in 1636 when William Sumner arrived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, only ten years after Plymouth Rock, and settled in Dorchester. Jack Sumner's line branched off early from the branch that produced Charles and Edwin Sumner: Jack descended from William's son William, and Charles and Edwin came from William's son Deacon. Jack was seven generations down the line from William Sumner. Like many of the leading New England families, the Sumners turned their early arrival into many successes; in 1782 Governor John Hancock appointed Increase Sumner to the Massachusetts Supreme Court, where the next year he helped rule that the state constitution had indeed outlawed slavery; in 1797 Increase Sumner was elected the fifth governor of Massachusetts.

Why would Charles and Edwin Sumner have any relevance to Jack Sumner brooding at Separation Rapid? Because the Mormon settlements in southern Utah, where he would end up, were heavily populated with southerners. Most Mormons came from northern states or from Europe, and the Mormons got into trouble in Missouri because they were seen as opposed to slavery. But when Brigham Young, who wanted the Mormons

to be self-sufficient in everything, decided that the Mormons should set up towns and farms to cultivate and weave cotton in the cotton-favorable climate of southern Utah, he gathered the only Mormons who knew anything about cotton, the southerners. Their loyalties are still obvious today in names like "Dixie National Forest" and "Dixie State College."

Yet is it plausible that Jack Sumner would have thought of this? Wasn't the distribution of southerners in Utah just an obscure demographic detail that Sumner could not possibly have known? This would have been true, except for one thing. Southern Utah had become nationally infamous for the Mountain Meadows Massacre, and the man whom both Mormon authorities and Americans blamed for the massacre was named Lee. John D. Lee came from the same Virginia clan of Lees that had produced Robert E. Lee, which was why John D. Lee made the perfect scapegoat. In the 1860s Yankees would believe anything about the name Lee. Lees were fiendishly clever, bold, scheming, traitorous, and bloodthirsty; Mountain Meadows was just another Lee blood picnic on the way to Antietam. The national publicity given to the massacre and to John D. Lee had notified the nation that there were not just southerners in southern Utah, but treacherous ones. In 1869 John D. Lee was still hiding out somewhere in southern Utah. Jack Sumner undoubtedly knew that when a Sumner foolishly went up against a Lee at Antietam, it had been a disaster. Was another man named Sumner now going to walk defenseless into the realm of another Lee?

Mormons had a second reason for disliking Edwin Sumner.

The Mormons had migrated to Utah in 1847 to create their own Zion, far away from religious persecution and unfriendly governments; Utah was still a U.S. territory largely empty of people or government. Over the next decade Americans watched with growing exasperation as the Mormons proliferated and prospered and openly defied American laws and authority, especially on polygamy. In 1857, President Buchanan decided it was time to force the Mormons to submit. In May, Edwin Sumner marched out of Fort Leavenworth with a large force, with orders to secretly approach Utah, launch a surprise attack, capture the Mormon leaders, and execute them. At least, this is what Mormon leader Brigham Young believed, obsessively.

In reality, Sumner was marching against the Cheyenne on the plains. The real Utah expedition would leave Fort Leavenworth two months behind him, and would not march into Salt Lake City until June, 1858. But the army was somewhat secretive about Sumner's mission, and Brigham Young became

convinced that Sumner's rumored Cheyenne mission was merely a ruse to cover his approach to Utah. In response, Young organized a Mormon cavalry unit, under the command of Col. Robert Taylor Burton, to patrol the plains as far east as Fort Laramie, four hundred miles from Salt Lake City, ostensibly to assist Mormon emigrants on their way west, but actually to locate, reconnoiter, and harass the approaching enemy. Young began mobilizing Utah for war: organizing militias, storing supplies, evacuating outposts, bringing home missionaries. Utah anxiously awaited Edwin Sumner's arrival, and rumors about him became wilder and spread to other states.

In late August, 1857, California newspapers ran the headline: "IMPORTANT NEWS FROM SALT LAKE. BRIGHAM YOUNG ARRESTED FOR TREASON. YOUNG CARRIED OFF A PRISONER BY COL. SUMNER TO WASHINGTON." The story reported that the leader of a wagon train recently arrived from Utah "reports that Col. Sumner with 86 dragoons, of Company G., U.S. Army, arrived in that city on June 25TH, at 7 P.M., and took Brigham Young prisoner, on a charge of treason and other crimes, and started with him for Washington city, within two hours after his arrival, meeting with no opposition on the part of the Mormons."³ These articles prompted George Q. Cannon, editor of the San Francisco Mormon newspaper *Western Standard*, to write Young a mocking letter:

It is astonishing how easily they are sold on every thing pertaining to us, as a people; they greedily swallow the most absurd lies, and prefer them, all the time, to plain straight-forward, reasonable truth. The latest lie in circulation here, is one concerning your arrest, on a charge of treason, by Col. Sumner... This happened on the 25TH of June, and as you did not seem to be aware of it on the 4TH of July, the date of your letter, I send you the news.⁴

Cannon seemed especially annoyed by the suggestion that Mormons would surrender without a fight. Such rumors only made Young more nervous.

One of Young's war preparations was to send George A. Smith, the church apostle who for a decade had been in charge of southern Utah, to warn the settlers there of Col. Sumner's imminent arrival. As recorded by local militia member James H. Martineau, Smith warned:

They intend to hang about 300 of the most obnoxious Mormons; Brigham to be hung any how—no trial necessary for him or the

principle leaders... They expect that one half the women will leave their husbands and cut their throats, and that one half of the men will join them... The United States are sending out 2,500 infantry, besides Col. Sumner's dragoons, which are to rendezvous in G.S.L. City this winter, and 1000 teamsters, the worst description of men, picked up on the frontiers, which are more to be dreaded than the soldiers. They are making great calculations for "Booty and Beauty"... If the troops come among us, and we have to flee into the mountains, we will haunt them as long as they live.⁵

According to historian William P. MacKinnon, who compiled a 500-page documentary history of the Utah War:

In isolated southern Utah—alerted by George A. Smith's preaching and his explicit references to Sumner—concern about a possible descent from the east by the Cheyenne Expedition seemed strongest. As a result, during the period 3–11 September 1857 Lt. James H. Martineau again took to the field with three comrades to scout through the high peaks and alpine plateaus above the Sevier River Valley.⁶

Martineau had "heard the cavalry under Col. Sumner would enter the country that way."⁷ His patrol was one of at least three sent out to watch for Sumner, under orders from Mormon General Daniel Wells to southern Utah's Col. William Dame.

On September 11, at Mountain Meadows, on the Old Spanish Trail, the route by which Edwin Sumner was expected to appear and attack southern Utah, the hysteria that George A. Smith helped whip up there found an outlet, like lightning, against a pioneer wagon train. A dozen years later, in 1869, the fearful, angry energy that Edwin Sumner had helped set loose in southern Utah was still there, partly in hiding, but still ready to strike at a man named Sumner.

In a way, Brigham Young was right about Edwin Sumner: when Sumner was near Fort Laramie he received orders to leave there much of his force, which would be incorporated into the Utah Expedition that was coming along behind him. Sumner himself didn't get to Utah, but he soon became commander of the Department of the West, headquartered in St. Louis, and the Utah campaign was under his jurisdiction. Obsessively or not, the Mormons had come to associate

the name of “Sumner” with a mortal threat.

Senator Charles Sumner never said much about the Mormons, but in a senate speech called “The Barbarism of Slavery,” in June, 1860, he compared slavery to the debauchery of cannibalism and Brigham Young’s polygamy.

Jack Sumner also had a loaded political legacy from the family tree of his mother, Minerva Lucas Sumner.

The Lucas family had deep roots as Quakers, starting in England and coming to America in 1679; a Robert Lucas took part in William Penn’s founding of a Quaker colony, Pennsylvania, which had democratic values far ahead of the rest of America, including respect for Indians.⁸ The leadership of the abolitionist movement was thick with Quakers, including the famous and wealthy Howland family of New Bedford, Massachusetts. It was a coincidence that three of Powell’s crew members had famous abolitionist names, but it did fit in with Powell’s own personal convictions, which led him to enlist in the Union army. Oramel and Seneca Howland, at least, didn’t seem worried about heading off into a Utah inhabited by southerners.

Perhaps Jack Sumner got his westerling spirit from his Lucas ancestors. When Pennsylvania became too crowded, Edward Lucas, Jack’s great-great-grandfather, lit out for the western mountains, which for him was near the junction of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers in then-Virginia, today’s West Virginia. In 1787 the seven-year-old Robert Lucas probably watched his uncle Joseph Barnes guide up the Potomac River the primitive steamboat Barnes had built, two decades before Robert Fulton got credit for inventing the steamboat.

When the American Revolution had arrived, William Lucas, Jack Sumner’s great-grandfather, relaxed the Quaker disapproval of war and joined Washington’s army. The Lucas family had also lapsed from Quaker principles and become slave owners. But this troubled the conscience of William Lucas, who in 1800 moved to Ohio, took many of his slaves with him and set them free. As the country became more polarized over slavery in the mid-1800s, Robert Lucas, a lifelong Democrat who had chaired the Democratic National Convention in 1832 and who had served as the Democratic governor of both Ohio (1832–1836) and Iowa (1838–1841), could no longer tolerate the Democrat’s defense of slavery, and he quit the party for the Whigs in 1852. As governor of Iowa, Lucas had championed Iowa in a boundary dispute with Missouri, which became a more energetic, national controversy because Missouri was a slave state and Iowa a free state. The dispute, involving 2,600 square miles, swung on whether a set of rapids vaguely mentioned by a surveyor was located on the Des Moines River or Mississippi River—it was another good

omen for Jack Sumner that the location of rapids was so pivotal in his family history.

After serving as Iowa’s governor, Lucas returned to Ohio to sell his lands, and he got drafted to run for congress in the 8TH congressional district, whose residents included nine-year-old John Wesley Powell; the Powells lived about 25 miles from Lucas’s town of Piketon. We don’t know if Powell’s father voted for Jack Sumner’s grandfather. Lucas lost and returned to Iowa. The Powells had come to Ohio on the Ohio Canal, which ran between Lake Erie and the Ohio River; the state senator who had chaired the canal committee and shepherded the canal bill was Robert Lucas. The course of John Wesley Powell’s westward migration had been guided by Jack Sumner’s grandfather.

Robert Lucas’s terms as governor of Ohio coincided with the attempt of the Mormons to build their own realm in Ohio. Mormon prophet Joseph Smith arrived there in 1831 and Robert Lucas became governor in 1832. The Mormons were fleeing religious persecution in New York and heading for their promised land in Missouri, and originally the Ohio town of Kirtland was supposed to serve as a safe station along the way, but as the Mormons’ welcome in Missouri deteriorated badly, Kirtland became increasingly important. It was here that Joseph Smith received many of his theological revelations and wrote many key Mormon texts, both religious and civil. In Kirtland the Mormons built their first Temple; determined church hierarchy and practices; developed their cooperative economic system; developed a theocratic style of government; initiated polygamy; and began aggressively harassing opponents.

As Mormon presence and power grew, so did resistance from local and state newspapers, preachers, and politicians. Local businessmen refused to hire Mormons or sell them goods. Mormons had to guard their temple, homes and stores against mob attack and arson. A mob tarred and feathered Joseph Smith, who afterwards had to be accompanied by a bodyguard. Smith raised animosity by organizing a militia, performing marriages without legal authority, and starting a bank without a legal charter. The Mormons took over some local political offices, tried to relocate the county seat, and demanded that a hostile justice of the peace leave office and leave town—an act of intimidation that would soon evolve into the Danites, a secret society willing to murder political opponents.

The Kirtland colony ended disastrously, mainly because of the collapse of its church-run bank. Joseph Smith blamed this collapse on religious persecution by Ohio’s political leaders, which included Robert Lucas. As with Brigham Young’s conviction that Edwin Sumner was out to get him, Joseph Smith’s conviction

that Robert Lucas was out to get him was largely imaginary—but politically convenient.

In the 1830s America was undergoing a frenzy of growth and financial speculation, and Joseph Smith got caught up in the bubble, his bank engaging in many reckless practices, even as he promised his followers that the bank was divinely inspired and guaranteed. In the national financial panic of 1837 the bubble burst, and the Kirtland bank came down with numerous others. Many Mormons felt deceived and betrayed, felt that Joseph Smith had swindled them, and turned against him bitterly, creating the worst crisis yet for him and the church. Smith claimed that the bank had failed because the state of Ohio, out of religious bigotry, had refused to grant it a state charter that would have allowed it to operate with greater freedom, efficiency, and public trust: “Because we were ‘Mormons,’ the legislature raised some frivolous excuses on which they refused to grant us those banking privileges they so freely granted to others.”⁹

It was true that, once started, the bank faced considerable opposition because of its church affiliation. Newspapers campaigned against the bank and many non-Mormons refused to patronize it. One powerful local businessman, Grandison Newell, organized a run on the bank to try to ruin it, enraging Joseph Smith so much that, Newell charged publicly, Smith was plotting to murder him; a court arraigned Smith on this charge, tried him, but found him innocent. The Mormons feared physical violence against the bank. Wilford Woodruff wrote in his diary that they were “threatened by a mob from Panesville to visit us that night & Demolish our Bank & take our property. The wrath of our enemies appears to be kindled against us.”¹⁰ A guard was organized to defend the bank, and they debated whether to use clubs or guns, to merely break legs or to aim for the heart. One of these guards was nineteen-year-old George A. Smith, who spent the entire winter watching the roads for an approaching mob, and who two decades later would be traveling southern Utah to spread the alarm about the approach of Edwin Sumner’s mob.

But it was not true that the bank charter was refused out of religious bigotry.

In these years America was grappling with the dilemma of how to combine its democratic ideals with a capitalist economy that was booming and generating concentrations of wealth and power, especially in its banks. Andrew Jackson had been elected president in 1828 on a promise to control the runaway financial system. Four years later Robert Lucas got elected governor as an anti-bank Jacksonian, and in 1834 Ohioans elected a state legislature that was even more

Jacksonian, full of working-class reformers who were hostile to banks, financial speculation, paper money, and monopolies. Between 1830 and 1834 the number of chartered banks in Ohio had risen from 11 to 31, but now the new Jacksonian legislators called a halt. In 1835 they rejected all new requests for bank charters, and in 1836 they approved only one of 17 requests. Joseph Smith founded his bank in late 1836. He asked the state legislature for a charter, and was rejected. It wasn’t just the Jacksonians who voted against him: in the 1836 election the Jacksonians had suffered a decline (and Robert Lucas was defeated in his run for the U.S. Senate), so now there were more Whigs in the state legislature, and they voted against the Mormon bank because the Mormons were Jacksonians. In February, 1837, the Mormons again applied for a charter, and again they were turned down. The failure to get a charter certainly hurt Joseph Smith’s bank, but he was not singled out by Robert Lucas and the Jacksonians.

There is only skimpy evidence for how Robert Lucas regarded the Mormons, but it suggests he had no animosity for them. Joseph Smith had announced his support for President Jackson and his policies, including his anti-bank policies, and the Kirtland Mormons published a pro-Jacksonian newspaper, which presumably was supportive of Governor Lucas’s policies. Lucas should have regarded the Mormons as a friendly voting block. In 1839 when Joseph Smith was in a Missouri jail, Mormon leader Sidney Rigdon traveled to Iowa confident of enlisting Governor Lucas’s support for Smith and of getting a letter of introduction to President Van Buren; Lucas declined to write anything complimentary about Smith as a person but he did write that during his time in Ohio he had regarded the Mormons as “an industrious, inoffensive people.” Ignoring the fact that Smith had been hauled into court for illegal banking practices under Ohio law and fined \$1,000, Lucas added: “I have no recollection of any of them being charged in that state as violators of the law.”¹¹ According to a major, church-published history book from 1976, *The Story of the Latter-day Saints*, when the Mormons had fled Missouri in 1839 and were searching for a new home, Governor Lucas was ready to welcome them to Iowa.

Iowa historians mention a letter or letters that Governor Lucas wrote to the Mormons, praising the Mormons’ good character and promising them a welcome and fair treatment in Iowa, though Iowa historian Leland Sage notes that these supposed letters “have never been found by researchers,”¹² and cautions that what may have been only Lucas’s “guarded response of some sort” could have been blown out of proportion for the promotional campaign of an eccentric land

speculator, Dr. Isaac Galland, who was trying to sell the Mormons land in Iowa. In fact Galland did sell them thousands of Iowa acres, which the Mormons might have turned into their new homeland, except that the Mormons choose to settle on other land Galland sold them across the Mississippi River in Illinois, where they built the town of Nauvoo. At the least, in 1840, when the feeble U.S. census counted an Iowa population of only 43 people, it would have been the duty of an Iowa governor to promote settlement and not be too choosy about it.¹³

Yet Lucas made a good scapegoat. Most Mormon-written history books followed Joseph Smith's cue and blamed the Kirtland bank collapse and resulting chaos on religious persecution by Ohio politicians. In 1869 there were plenty of Utah Mormons, such as George A. Smith, who had bitter personal memories of Kirtland. It would not have been prudent for Jack Sumner to walk into a Mormon town and introduce himself as the grandson of Robert Lucas.

Jack Sumner did exhibit a dislike and distrust of Mormons, which his family seems to have shared years before. Back in 1861 his brother Charles was migrating from Omaha to join the Sumner family in Colorado when he received news of the first shots of the Civil War. He wrote to his parents and Jack in Iowa: "Heard the news of the fighting at Ft. Sumpter, made me feel bad...let things come on as they may, I am prepared to die anywhere I don't care much where but should prefer to die fighting for my country against the accursed Mormons."

Jack Sumner thought the Mormons capable of murdering Powell crewmembers. Years later Sumner recalled the conversation of the remaining crewmen after the Howlands and Dunn left:

They all seemed to think the red bellies would surely get them. But I could not believe that the reds would get them, as I had trained Dunn for two years in how to avoid a surprise, and I did not think the red devils would make open attack on three armed men. But I did have some misgiving that they would not escape the double-dyed white devils that infested that part of the country. Grapevine reports convinced me later that that was their fate.¹⁴

Sumner doesn't explain these "grapevine reports," but he did mention that one time years later while prospecting in western Utah and drinking with some men in a village, he spotted the silver watch he had given to Oramel Howland to take with him and give

to Sumner's sister in case he did not survive the river. Sumner now tried to get a closer look at the watch, "but it was spirited away, and I was never afterwards able to get sight of it. Such evidence is not conclusive, but all of it was enough to convince me that the Indians were not at the head of the murder, if they had anything to do with it."¹⁵ Again implying theft as a motive, Sumner also claimed that when the remaining Powell crewmembers met Mormon Bishop Leithhead below the canyon, the Mormons at first showed little interest in the three departed crew members, until Powell mentioned they had valuable instruments—a chronometer from the Smithsonian—and then the Mormon's interest perked up. In 1906 Sumner wrote to Lewis Keplinger, who had roamed the Rockies with Powell and Sumner in 1868, and listed the fate of the Powell crewmembers: "the two howlands and Dunn were killed. Powell says by Indians and I Say Killed by the Mormons, Part of the Same old 'Mountain Meadows massacre gang.'"¹⁶

We can't tell how much of Sumner's distrust of Mormons came from his family history, or from his personal experiences, or from later "grapevine reports." But it is notable that Sumner feared the Mormons more than he feared Native Americans. In 1869 a man named Sumner had good reasons to fear Native Americans.

General Edwin Sumner spent most of his 44-year military career as an Indian fighter. When he started his career in 1819 the American frontier lay in Illinois, and he saw it shift westward to California, and all along the way Native Americans resisted and had to be subdued, sometimes slaughtered, sometimes relocated. Edwin Sumner's humanitarian principles did not apply to Indians. Sumner fought in the Black Hawk War of 1832, and the next year when the U.S. Army created a cavalry to fight Indians across the Great Plains, Sumner became one of the first cavalry commanders. In 1838 he began training cavalry troops at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. He took part in campaigns that relocated the Winnebago from Wisconsin to Iowa and rounded up Sioux and forced them to Fort Snelling. Sumner helped to establish more western forts than almost any other commander.

In 1851, Sumner was appointed the military commander of the newly-established New Mexico territory, and his first task was to subdue the Navajos. He organized an expedition of four companies of cavalry, three of infantry, and one of artillery, and marched into Navajo country, shooting Navajo warriors on sight. When Sumner reached Canyon de Chelly he burned all the crops he could find, beginning a scorched-earth tactic that Kit Carson would apply more thoroughly a decade later. Sumner believed that

territorial governor James Calhoun was naïve in trying to placate the Navajos with gifts or treaties, and that they would yield only to “a rod of iron over their heads.”¹⁷ Indians had to be forced to give up their traditional ways and become good Americans: “I am convinced that the only way to subdue Indians effectively and permanently, is to improve their condition, and the best way to do this is to establish posts in the heart of their country, where we can bring them about us, and instruct them in agriculture and other useful arts.”¹⁸ It was this philosophy that inspired Major Carleton and Kit Carson to round up the Navajos and force them on the Long Walk to captivity at Fort Sumner. After the captivity went disastrously the Navajos were released in June, 1868, and they went away reviling the name of “Sumner,” which remains a bitter word to Navajos today. Edwin Sumner didn’t establish Fort Sumner; it was simply named in his honor, but the Navajos didn’t make such a distinction. Edwin Sumner did establish Fort Defiance to intimidate and dominate the Navajos. “If this post,” he wrote to his superior officer, “does not put a stop to Navajo depredations, nothing will do it but their entire extermination.”¹⁹

When Kit Carson marched on the Navajos from the east, they fled to the west and took refuge in the most remote areas they could find, especially at Navajo Mountain and the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. Halfway between those locations was the Colorado River crossing, the future Lees Ferry, and the Navajos did indeed flee onto the Arizona Strip, where they troubled Mormon settlers through the 1860s. Jack Sumner could not have known where he might or might not encounter Navajos on a trek across the Arizona Strip to Utah, but he surely knew that a Sumner falling into Navajo hands would be given no mercy.

In the end, we don’t know for sure what was going through Jack Sumner’s mind at Separation Rapid; this article remains an exercise in speculation. Perhaps the power of the rapid versus the great unknown of a desert trek was enough of an equation on which to make a decision. Yet it’s likely that some Sumner family history at least rippled through Jack Sumner’s imagination, and in the end he choose the route that held no Sumner family history.

Don Lago

FOOTNOTES:

1. Included in Robert Brewster Stanton, *Colorado River Controversies*. (Boulder City, Nv.: Westwater Books, 1982) 203.
2. Ibid.
3. This story was originally published in the *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin* on August 22, 1857, and repeated by other newspapers.
4. George Q. Cannon to Brigham Young, August 31, 1857, LDS Archives.
5. Martineau Record, Transcript, 21–25. William R. Palmer Collection, Sherratt Library, Southern Utah University.
6. William P. MacKinnon, *At Sword's Point, Part 1: A Documentary History of the Utah War to 1858* (Norman, Ok.: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008) 251.
7. James H. Martineau. “My Life.” Diary of James Henry Martineau, Huntington Library.
8. According to one modern genealogical source, the Lucas and Penn families intermarried, although this was not mentioned in the main biography of Robert Lucas by Robert Parish.
9. Quoted in Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, edited by Brigham H. Roberts (Salt Lake City: Deseret Press, 1930). Volume 2: 468.
10. Kenney, Scott G, ed. *Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1833–1898*. (Midvale, Ut: Signature Books, 1983). Volume 1: 123.
11. Journal of History, Vol. 1–2, 403.
12. Leland Sage. *A History of Iowa*. (Ames, Ia.: Iowa State University Press, 1974) 73.
13. Charles Sumner to the Sumner family, April 14, 1861, Byers Collection, Denver Public Library.
14. Colorado River Controversies, 205–6.
15. Ibid, 209.
16. Letter from Jack Sumner to Lewis Keplinger, September 14, 1906, Lewis Keplinger Collection, Kansas State Historical Society.
17. Quoted in F. Stanley, E.V. Sumner (Borger, Tx.: Jim Hess Printers, 1969) 148.
18. Ibid, 155.
19. Ibid, 144.

Ahem

An article appearing in the last BQR by Shane Murphy (A Few Words from Cap’n Hance) was originally submitted for sole publication in *The Ol’ Pioneer*, the quarterly journal of the Grand Canyon Historical Society. The editors of the BQR regret this mistake. All future citations of this article should note its original published location as appearing in *The Ol’ Pioneer*, vol. 27, #3; Grand Canyon Historical Society. Thank you.

Jeffe Aronson & Jumping Mouse

I WAS BORN IN CHICAGO in 1954, in basically a Jewish ghetto, more like a Jewish neighborhood, in northern Chicago. I worked the usual teenage jobs: hot dog stores and as a vendor at Cubs Park [Wrigley Field] and had the usual adventures. I romanticized the wilderness, 'cause living in the midst of Chicago, you don't really get a real hit of forests and lakes and rivers. There's city parks, but the most green I ever saw was when we'd take a vacation every summer and go to one of the little resorts on Lake Michigan. Basically, my life was city, suburb, couple of farms, on and on forever. I was a fairly rebellious little kid. You might guess that.

STEIGER: I can't imagine!

ARONSON: I basically could not see *living*, because living to me was living in a city, 'cause that's all I knew, that's all that existed. I was fairly rebellious and depressed and into the drug scene. I'd read a lot of Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett books and fantasized about, "God, if there were only that now." I had these constant nightmares for probably eight years of my life, from when I was seven or eight years old—me in this enormous building, being chased by guys in white armor. They had a fire-breathing dragon on a leash. I created a way to wake myself up where I would close my eyes and open them again, and I'd be in bed. In my early teens having that dream again, thinking to myself, "I am *not* going to have this dream anymore. I'm going to live this dream out wherever it takes me, and I won't wake myself up." They're chasing me with this fire-breathing dragon and I'm running down the hallway, and I look towards one of the wall panels, and I dematerialize through a wall panel and get to the other side, and there's this ladder going up into the darkness of this tunnel. Below me, as I'm climbing the ladder, the door bursts open, and there's a huge crash, and there's these guys and this dragon, and they unleash it, and it starts climbing the ladder behind me. I get to the top, and there's this porthole, I fling it open, jump out, close and lock it. "This is the end of the dream, I'm out." I'm on the top of this huge cement structure, many stories high, and many city blocks, circular, I know I'm free, walk to the edge of it, and I look and there's trees and forests and lakes and birds flying, and deer watering next to the creek, and the sun is rising and there's a rainbow, and there's a ladder off the edge. The last time I ever had that dream, I was just starting to climb down the ladder.

A few years later, I remember sitting in my kitchen breakfast nook, stoned out of my gourd. My mother



came in, and she knew that I was unhappy, also knew that I was stoned, and she threw this article in front of me about Outward Bound. "Read that." I read it and she said, "Do you want to go?" "Sure, I'll go. Whatever." "We're taking out your bar-mitzvah money, and you're going to go next year. Pick a place." We picked Yosemite, and, at seventeen years old, I flew out to California, hopping a bus in Sacramento, and they drive you up into the foothills, into the mountains, and drop you off somewhere in the middle of nowhere, north of Yosemite National Park in the forest. I was blown away, 'cause I thought, "Oh, my God, it still exists!" I spent the next three-and-a-half weeks completely blowing my mind. It took me into a whole nother universe and basically saved my life. It was so dramatic for me that the moment I got back to Sacramento, I sold my plane ticket and hitchhiked across the United States. My mother didn't know what she'd created. I stopped doing drugs and I started thinking about what I was going to do, and realized that there was some escape from living in the city. In the next year I went to a Minnesota Outward Bound in the middle of winter, which was pretty funny, 'cause I looked at their brochure and it was all canoeing, and I thought, "Cool! I'm going to go canoeing!" That was how dumb I was, and inexperienced. It's 60 degrees below zero and we're cross-country skiing, and I didn't even know what that was at the time, but that was

a real experience, really wonderful. Met some good friends.

One of the people I met there was a guy named David Cross. He lived in Minnesota. We decided we wanted to have another adventure together, decided that we were going to float the Colorado River from the Rockies to the sea. We knew nothing about the Colorado River, we knew nothing about rafting, just that was going to be an adventure we were going to do together.

I graduated that year. My folks moved to Los Angeles. On our way driving, we of course did what everybody does, stopped at the Grand Canyon, which had been not a factor in my mind or life, ever, up until that time. We drove to Desert View Tower. I remember getting out of the car, walking to the edge, and looking over and starting to cry. My chin hit the floor, and I thought to myself, “This is it!” The sun was perfect, there was the river. I had never seen or dreamt of anything like that in my life. We all say the same sorts of things on how the canyon has affected us, and it trivializes it to try to put it into words, but it just completely turned me upside down. I knew that this was going to be my life—somehow.

I kept in contact with my friend David, “We’re going to have a really cool time when we float the Colorado through the Grand Canyon.” In my mind it was log rafts, like Huck Finn. (laughter) It’s like I never wanted anybody to know, once I found out what rafting really was—but that’s what it was to me, we were going to go chop down a few trees and build a raft. His mother had a boyfriend, and they were living in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and he floated the Snake River. We decided we were going to work for the summer, hitchhike to Jackson Hole, learn how to raft, find the headwaters of the Colorado, and start our adventure. We’re talking total naiveté. I went ahead with my summer, I was a carpenter and a subcontractor, ended up leaving L.A. in the fall of 1972 with forty bucks in my pocket, and my backpack. In Jackson Hole, no David. I called him; he said, “I been thinking. First of all, I heard you have to have a permit to float some parts of the Colorado River.” “Oh, come on! We’re in the middle of a wilderness and some ranger’s going to walk up and give you a ticket or arrest you?!” “I’ve heard there’s some whitewater on this river.” “We can walk around it.” “I heard there’s some dams on the river, too.” “We’ll walk around them.” (laughs) “I’ve decided to bag it.” I ended up working for National Outdoor Leadership School and decided that I didn’t want to wash dishes forever to make a living while I climbed and hiked, ’cause I was starting to become a mountaineer and really loving

it. I bought an old school bus, tricked it out, and was going to move to Alaska. I drove to Chicago and to L.A., so I could say goodbye to my folks on my way to Alaska. I had worked in a hospital as an orderly in Jackson Hole and heard about paramedics. I found a really great program, got in, lived in my school bus, bagged the Alaska plan, and worked for an ambulance company, I became a paramedic.

* * *

Lately at the GTS, we’ve heard about disabled and veterans type programs to bring these under-represented groups on the river. In the past few years, I usually run into Jeffe Aronson on the river, but at this year’s GTS we had a chance to talk longer than usual. I’ve known about Jeffe and Jumping Mouse Camp for disabled river passengers almost since its inception, but not all that much about the details. (The name comes from Hyemeyohsts Storm’s wonderful book, SEVEN ARROWS, about Native Americans which follows a family from before they met whites till the reservations. Among the great stories, Jumping Mouse was not only a favorite of Jeffe’s and his colleagues at ETC (Environmental Traveling Companions), but it seemed to fit very well with their project to empower folks with disabilities.) Lew Steiger was also there and we thought it might be a good time to run this old interview with Jeffe, conducted by Lew in November 1998, at Jeffe’s home in Flagstaff. If you know Jeffe, there are also some exciting and funny stories. Edited for publication by Richard Quartaroli. —RQ

* * *

ARONSON: I had climbed with a friend in L.A. for a number of years in Yosemite, but I hadn’t seen him for a couple of years. His name was Denny Eagan, worked for ECHO [The Wilderness Company]. I thought to myself, “Well, I’m jobless, I’ve got some money, living in San Francisco. I’d like to get back out in the wilderness and get back to climbing and figure out what I’m going to do with the rest of my life.” This was 1975. I called Denny’s dad’s home in L.A., but nobody answers. The next morning my roommate says, “Somebody called you last night while you were out.” “Well, who?” “Some guy named Danny or something.” “Denny?” “Yeah, Denny, that’s it. He’s at his dad’s house in L.A., and he wants to know if you want to go climbing in Yosemite.” We called within an hour of each other, with the same plan, after not talking for two years. He says, “I just went on a whitewater school in Oregon with a company called ARTA, American River Touring Association, a guy named Bob Melville and

some other folks. It was the most incredible thing! We gotta do river rafting. We met this group called ETC [or E.T.C., Environmental Traveling Companions], and volunteers take disabled people down the Stanislaus River, and I've decided I'm going to volunteer next summer to do river trips, learn how to raft, and take disabled people on river trips." "Count me in!" I contacted Mark DuBois who started Friends of the River. I was really excited.

I moved to Altaville and Angel's Camp, and spent the summer learning how to raft, and Denny and I did most of the trips, 'cause a lot of the other people had jobs. We had some great adventures on the river. He started working for ECHO and I started working for ARTA in Vallecito. There were a few river companies there, and they all worked the American, Tuolumne, and Stanislaus. We worked 1976, the drought year of 1977, and part of 1978, on the Stanislaus and the Tuolumne. I thought to myself, "Wow, I'm in a raft, like I had dreamed of doing when I went to Jackson Hole." You can imagine my surprise when I get to the put-in and they roll this rubber raft out of the back of the truck. Even though I was a climber and a mountaineer, I still had no idea about rafting. I took to it like a duck to water. The first trip I ever did, I was paddle captaining and rowing and doing some of the Class 3-4 stuff, and I had this incredible feel for it. Melville was there, and Drifter. Jim Tichenor—Jimbo. Sharon Hester was working for ECHO. Moley [pronounced "Mo-lee"; Bob Haymond]. We all lived in teepees and tree houses. It was the ultimate hippie hangout. But that fall there was a Grand trip going out. Jimbo and some other friends of mine, and Patch—Patricia Chambers, the lady that wrote the river runners recipes book later on. This one lady had to bag it, and couldn't go, and I raised my hand. "I've dreamt of this since I was a *teenager!*" That was my first trip in the canyon. It was a 38-day. We saw maybe two trips. This was a private trip.

We did that trip, and it stuck in my mind and my heart for the rest of my life. We'd do trips on the Stanislaus, and Moley was saying, "I got a job in the Grand Canyon!" We'd be camped on the beach on the Stanislaus, and he'd say, "I'm going to work in the Grand Canyon this year." I thought to myself, "I think I'd rather do a few more private trips and not really push the commercial scene in the Grand Canyon right now. Someday I'll probably work it, but it's still such a brand new lover to me, I'd rather just enjoy that awe and experience before I work it." I made a conscious decision in 1976 and early 1977 to do it that way.

In 1978 I went up with Dugald [Bremner] and a couple of others to work Cataract Canyon. He was

working for ARTA and we worked for ARTA-Moab/Cataract Canyon. Suzanne [Jordan] was the manager. I remembered her from the Stanislaus days. She was incredible. She still remains to me one of the most amazing guides and women ever. That fall of 1978 was the first good water year in a few years after that big drought in the seventies. Dugie and I and some others, and Jimbo also, find ourselves at 75,000 CFS in Cataract Canyon. Nobody had anything to compare it to, but I've seen the canyon at 75,000 and 100,000 in 1983, and I saw Cataract at 75,000 in 1978, and I can tell you that it was far more terrifying to go through Cataract. *Very* impressive. There's nothing more fun! I had never rowed a snout before, and they rowed snouts and then motored them across the lake. They also rowed eighteen-foot Spirits. Here I was, this fresh meat, coming out from California, "It's 75,000, it's pretty big water." The snout boats are taken, "The guides have them, we can't give you a baggage boat." "Well, shit, I came all the way just to do a trip here. Hey, I'll row a Spirit." Everybody looked at each other and said, "Nobody's rowed an eighteen-foot boat at 75,000 in Cataract Canyon as far as *we* ever have heard. You'll *die!*" "Oh, no, don't worry about it. Worst comes to worse"—we had Mae West's on in those days—"I'll float into Lake Foul, which is only a couple of miles downstream." Suzanne's agonizing, wondering what she should do, and Jimbo's going, "He can do it! Let's do it! It'll be fun!" I was never so scared in my life, but we got through. Didn't turn over, made it upright, rode up these enormous waves that if you did the canyon in 1983 or even 1984, you know. I made it through and had a great trip and decided I wanted to work in Cataract. I spent the season of 1979 there.

I went back to live the winter of 1979-'80 in Vallecito. In 1979, my mom had died of cancer, so that was a rather big blow. That fall I had my second Grand Canyon trip. We got a permit and went on a 45-day trip. It was a great trip, and we had a bunch *more* adventures. That winter I went back to Vallecito when I found out I had cancer. I got sick and was living with this woman who was driving me nuts. My mom dies, and I felt I had to keep the family together. That was a big stress load that I didn't know how to get rid of, and I'm sure that didn't help me in the long run, when I got sick with my own cancer.

STEIGER: You had testicular?

ARONSON: Yeah. It spread up into my belly and lungs. But at the time, I didn't know what was going on. [Long story here about seeing a doctor in Grand Junction at the last minute on a weekend, on the way to a Yampa River trip.] They give me some drug to put me out, and the next thing I know, I wake up

in a ward room in the hospital with this incredibly excruciating pain up here, like in my lower right belly, not in my testicle. I slowly take my hand and put it under the sheets and I feel my scrotum, and there's only one testicle there, and I thought, "Oh, shit! This is not good." The *first* inkling I had that something was serious and I'd better pay attention. Finally the doctor comes in, "What happened?" "You had a tumor on your testicle and we took it out. We're looking at it now." "What do you mean by a tumor?" "It could be testicular cancer." "Cancer?! You're talking about cancer?!" "We don't know for sure, we're waiting for the lab tests." I'm in a whole nother universe. My life is changed unalterably forever—and maybe ending. We had to do these surgeries, they cut my belly open to see if it spread, and it did. They took all my lymph nodes out of my belly and put me back together. I asked after the belly surgery, "How long before I can row a boat?" They're thinking little rowboats on a lake, not river rafting, "Six weeks." I waited *exactly* six weeks, which happened to be the first trip of the season in Cataract, "If I'm going to die, I might as well be on the river." I couldn't quite row yet, but I rode on the snout of a motored snout, through Cat at high water that spring. We hit this big wave in Big Drop 2, and I fall off between the tubes. All I have that's keeping me from washing into the motor is my left hand, holding onto this strap, and I keep slamming up into the splashboard on every wave. Every time I came down, I'd look at all the passengers sitting in the front, "Tell him to cut the... (glub, glub, glub)" and I'd go underwater. I'd come back up and slam the splashboard and I'd come back down enough to say, "Get them to cut the..." I go back underwater. They're all laughing, they thought I was joking around. The guys in the back didn't know I'd gone off. They finished the whole rapid with me like that and I finally pull myself back up and I felt like I'd ripped—and I had, it turned out—the entire scar, eight or twelve inches of scar had ripped inside, and I had herniated. But I figured, "I'm just going to do the rest of the season." It didn't hurt *too* bad after that. I rowed that whole season with a herniated ventral scar. There were some spots on my lungs, and I went to San Francisco, and they took a piece of my lung out. They had two more surgeries on my belly: one to fix the scar and one to go back in 'cause I was having some problems with my intestines and nearly died from that. I had four months of chemotherapy. It was pretty intense.

That happened to me in 1980, so that winter I spent in Salt Lake City recuperating with a friend of mine, Martha Ham, who started SPOLORE [Special Populations Learning Outdoor Recreation and Education], which

was in Salt Lake City and was based on the model of ETC, taking disabled folks down river trips. My friend, Denny, the climbing partner, the guy I started rafting with, we all lived in Brighton, Utah, up at the ski area. I recuperated and got rid of my adhesions that winter, by skiing. I re-met Rob Elliott, who came out there to ski and to take part in that fall's outfitters' meeting up at Salt Lake City. What's his name, who was the superintendent for all those years—Dick Marks. We started talking, he and I and Martha about disabled trips in the Grand Canyon. That's where the first spark was. "Oh, great idea!"—shakes your hand and that's the end of it and he's gone.

Rob and I got to talking, "I'm ready to do a Grand Canyon trip now." I did a private that year in the canyon, my third. I still loved it, but I felt like it was changing from this brand new lover to somebody I wanted to marry and know for the rest of my life and get really intimate with. Rob said "Come out and do some baggage boats." I did the baggage boat in the fall, and worked with Lorna [Corson] and all those guys, and [Dave] Lowry, and started working for AZRA in 1981. Moved to Flagstaff and started working full-time, and had lots of great trips and lots of great adventures.

1987 rolls around. I had bought Winnie's Natural Foods in 1984, and I bought the building in 1986. I owned property and a business and was working the river at the same time. This guy that I bring to do my carpentry at Winnie's was Gar DuBois [Mark's brother], who had taught me how to raft way back in 1976 for ETC, when we were doing disabled trips. He had worked back in the '60s on WiWo [pronounced WeWo, Wilderness World] trips, for Vladimir [Kovalik]. Nearly twenty years later, he's back in Flagstaff, and he's done with my carpentry. He did a WiWo trip, and started to be the trip leader for WiWo. He comes back one day and says, "You won't believe this. It's the boatman's dream come true."

STEIGER: He's met Edie [Schniewind] on the river and she wants to buy the company and have him run it.

ARONSON: Exactly. He's telling Edie about all these ideas he's got—New Age ideas—about spirituality in the Grand Canyon, running trips for groups that want to awaken themselves and enlighten themselves. [The sale happens and Canyon Explorations is started.] Gar was looking for an office manager and asked me. I had to sit back and think about it. On one hand, I'd worked for AZRA my whole career in the canyon, it seemed a little disloyal to just up and leave them. On the other hand, here's a boatman's dream come true. I committed to them for the year and they committed to me.

The season after starts, and I'm back with AZRA again, did my season and had a good time. I did science trips that fall, when they were just starting. I sold Winnies, and starting to get in shape, starting to think about what I want to do next. I *love* guiding, it's my life, it's who I am, but it wasn't necessarily guiding in the Grand Canyon only. But my right arm started to hurt really bad, and I thought maybe I had some bad tendinitis. I got this excruciating pain in my calf muscle, my right leg, and I couldn't run anymore. I was lifting weights, got this excruciating pain in my left arm. Within five days, all my limbs were useless. It got worse to the point where every muscle and nerve in my body was on fire. This internist in L.A. had been taking care of my dad, and he does a battery of tests, "You have Guillain-Barre Syndrome," which is an auto-immune disease that destroys the myelin sheath on your nerves. With many people that get that they instantly are like quadriplegics, only worse. But if you *do* get it, you lay there, unable to talk or do anything until your nerve sheaths grow back, about an inch a month. I guess I was lucky, because I had the pain and the weakness, but I didn't have complete paralyzation. All the damage is done, and now you have to recuperate and let it grow back. At least I knew what it was finally, and that eventually it would probably get better. I spent the rest of that winter slowly recuperating into the spring and summer.

At CanEx, Enriqueta Gonzalez took over as manager. She had worked for me as the warehouse manager at CanEx. I started consulting for her, and that fall I was well enough to do a trip as a baggage boatman, 'cause I couldn't row a full boat. I went on a trip, and at last I got my Grand trip in, and it helped me out a lot. I remember hiking up to Stone, and slowly but surely just making it up to Stone and crying, 'cause I thought, "My God, I thought I'd never be down here again in my life." That's when Jumping Mouse was born. I needed to pay something back.

I had been ready to stop guiding permanently—at least in the Grand Canyon. I had all this experience with disease: I'd been a paramedic, my mother had died in my arms of cancer, I nearly died of cancer, I had Guillain-Barre. I'd worked as a person with ETC who had a lot of experience taking disabled people on river trips and seeing the joy and the appreciation, feeling like there was a population that didn't have access to the river in the Grand Canyon. "I want to give back something to the Grand Canyon, and this is what I can do. I'll start a company like ETC in the Grand Canyon, and I'll help outfitters be more accessible."

I did all the paperwork, became 501(c)(3). I called a lot of camps and tried to figure out exactly how to

make it work and thinking about policies. My original idea was to get the outfitters to do these trips and be more accessible and train their guides and their office staff—what questions to ask; who to take and who not to take; guides, what to do and how to do it. Maybe put some special trips together, but do mainstreaming where they could take people that *could* go on a regular trip and *do* it, and also maybe do a special trip or two a year for those who just couldn't do a regular trip.

STEIGER: What's the premise for taking somebody disabled? Like when you had Guillain-Barre, if you'd never been on the river, would it have been appropriate for you to go down the river in the midst of that? Suppose you had that, and that was a permanent condition?

ARONSON: Exactly, or muscular dystrophy, or cerebral palsy, or quadriplegia or paraplegia. How do these people experience something that *we* know as the greatest thing in *our* lives?—a lot of passengers say



Jumping Mouse brochure

the same thing—it's the greatest trip in the world. How do they experience that? It's not just because it's a vacation. It's more. For a lot of people, it was the first time they'd been on the water since their accident, or since they got ill. Or it was the first adventurous, risky thing that they'd done, and it really opened their eyes to the possibilities of what they could do with the rest of their life. The perfect vehicle for access. I figured it would take five years to make the Grand Canyon accessible, to make it so that people who'd want to do mainstream could

do mainstream and people who needed special trips, because they needed more time or couldn't handle the heat or whatever, could do special trips. I started making the connection with Ann [Wheat] and Carol [Gary] from the City of Phoenix Parks and Rec., who were my partners and on my board when I started talking with the superintendent at the time, Jack Davis [1989–1991], who was ready to retire, and was looking for something to be remembered by, which was a very fortunate thing for Jumping Mouse. I was starting to think about talking to outfitters. I'm nowhere ready to actually *do* anything. That's when we talked to Jack Davis and told him our ideas and plans. Jack said, "I want you to present to the next outfitters' meeting, next month." It must have been 1989 or 1990. "Tell them what your plans are, and get a feel for how they feel." "Jack, you don't understand. I'm a guide, these are outfitters. Some of these outfitters are good friends of mine, I like them, I respect them, I trust them. But a lot of them are people who are not the type of people who would tolerate this in their employees. It's not going to be received very well." "No, I want you to do it anyway." I was forced into the situation of being a guide presenting to outfitters a whole new idea. Nobody would articulate it, but I knew damned well that some would be very upset, because it might be threatening to their user days.

STEIGER: My take would be that there'd maybe be an aspect of that, but also that there's an inherent queasiness on the part of most of us to dealing with

Right to Risk

Grand Canyon stories are true.
The walls touch a blanket of blue.
The rapids are rollin' us on through,
For a world we hoped for but never knew.

The layers of rock are history in the making.
All the colors are breathtaking.

The stars are bursting with joy,
And there's one little boy
Who loves the water like a fish,
And the Canyon trip was his biggest wish.

By Rose Ann Bolin (cerebral palsy) for David Schaefer (youngest participant; cerebral palsy)

From RIGHT TO RISK (KTSP "On the Arizona Road," Ch. 10, Phoenix, ca. 1994).

people who are extremely disabled. "We don't really want to do this, because this is going to be much too hard."

ARONSON: That's fair enough. That was definitely there, too. I'm only talking about one of the political aspects, the reason I was a little afraid of it, because I knew the logistics of disabilities enough to know that we could have done this. I also knew that there was a little *more* background there. Back in the earlier '80s, one of the guys that was in charge of ETC, Rick Spittler, brought a guy with cerebral palsy out to speak at one of the river

guides meetings, and everybody was in tears, and he spoke very eloquently about river trips for people with disabilities, and wanting the same choice to risk as anybody else, the same opportunity for adventure. It was really well received. But when he said, "I want to go down on the BTS river trip." "We can't do that, it's too dangerous. Insurance companies won't let us do it." Scared, and reasonably so. Rick Spittler in those days was *real* radical. He was going *on* the BTS trip, but they told his disabled companion that he couldn't go. Rick showed up at Lees Ferry with his disabled companion, said he would make a big stink about it in the press if they didn't take him. That put a really bad taste in a lot of people's mouths for many years.

STEIGER: But they did take him?

ARONSON: I can't remember.

STEIGER: I never heard about that.

ARONSON: I can't remember, they might not have.

I can't remember what the upshot of it was—all I remember is the back-door way he tried to do it. But Jack said, "You're going to do it." Here I am, in front of the outfitters' meeting at the rim. I like to be blunt and get to the point, "I've got this idea. It has to do with access to the Grand Canyon for anybody who really needs and wants that experience." I can hear the grumbling starting, and someone speaks up and says, "We're already doing that!" "That's fine. I'd like to see a show of hands who've taken people with physical disabilities down." Three hands went up. "What type of disabilities?" One was people with hearing disabilities,

and one was a trip of diabetics. Only one took a guy in a wheelchair once. I think over the years I'd remembered maybe two or three people in wheelchairs. "I'm not talking about people who are deaf or have diabetes. I'm talking about paraplegics, maybe even low quads who can grab a rope for safety. We need to figure out the rules of what is the bottom line for safety, but there are people who could go down who are not." Several outfitters came up with all these reasons why not. "We're already doing it," was the first reason. The second reason was, "It's too dangerous." I said, "That's diametrically opposed. Either it's too dangerous and you're not doing it, or you're doing it and it's not too dangerous." "Insurance companies—it would cost too much money. It would cost too much to run a trip like that. We don't need another outfitter." That to me was one of the bigger ones, 'cause they were looking at me thinking, "You want to be an outfitter." But I'm not *talking* about user days. I don't care, I don't need a company myself, I don't need to do this. I want to be here and train you, I want to help work out the systems, and then you guys take it." Jack came out, "Jefe's presentation is over. See you later, Jefe, I'll talk to you." I thought, "That's the end of that idea!" He came back to me later, "I'm giving you three years of two trips' worth of user days each year as a pilot program, to make this work or not." He was rather impressed, and he finally saw what I was talking about, about the resistance. From that moment on, I was anathema to some outfitters, because I was a river guide who got user days.

I was doing these trips with the City of Phoenix, and we got \$90,000 a year in donations. Now people were jumping on board, which was great. Joe Biner—and I've got a lot of funny Joe Biner stories. Joe Biner's a friend of mine, and he's got cerebral palsy. Have you ever heard of him? He's a great guide and a great storyteller, and he worked as a guide for *SPORE*, on the flatwater up above Cat. I had told Martha I was doing this, and she helped me set all these things up from the beginning—Martha Ham, my friend who



Snapshots of Jumping Mouse trips. Right: quadriplegic Jim Brahaney lovin' life.

learned how to raft in 1976 with me and my friend Denny, and who had set up *SPORE*. I told her, "Okay, I want a disabled guide." She said, (enthusiastically) "You *gotta* see Joe Biner. I'll send you a tape" of this guy from the TV news in Salt Lake City. He's got a cane and he's kind of crawling along the beach, walks jerkily along the beach, can't feed himself, can't tie his



do you want to do next?” “*My dream is to row the Grand Canyon.*” I thought, “This is my guy!” I call up Joe, and he swears a lot, “You wanna row the Grand Canyon?” “*Fuck yes!*” “C’mon down.” Joe was there, and Carol and Ann from the City of Phoenix, and we’re all meeting about how to set these trips up. We had talked about oar versus motor, and some of my best friends are motor guides. I’ve run motors myself; in fact I see a lot of the benefits of motors. I agree with



all the good points about motors. I have no problems with them. But the board had decided that at least in the first year, they didn’t want to do a motor trip. We knew we could do motors. We wanted to do oar trips, and really work out those bugs. We went back and I confabbed with my board, and I said, “There is some rationale to doing a motor trip, so let’s do it, one each.” “That’s fine, we’ll accede to this.” I led both trips, Cam [Staveley] was

the “backup” motor, ’cause I’d never actually motored a snout in the Grand Canyon before, so I was the trip leader and Cam was my motor man, and he did a lot of that stuff. We had a couple of great trips, a lot of great adventures. We had a trip where a woman had cancer. We had a couple of people on chemotherapy, iv on the trip. We had nurses. We had one-on-one guides or helpers for people. We devised cut-off plastic patio

own shoes. (speaking as if with a thick tongue) *Talks like this—he’s got ce-re-bral pal-sy*, who, with his dad, is a fishing guide in [Darby,] Montana [the motto of Rainbow Outfitters is “No Repeat Customers”], rows his own boat, ’cause he gets his hands on the oars, and they stabilize his spasms, and he reads the water like the best boatman you’ve ever seen. They go through a little story about Joe with SPLORE in the flatwater sections, and at the very end they say, “Well, Joe, what

chairs, roll-up sidewalks.

STEIGER: But there wasn't a concern that that would further fuck them up?

ARONSON: No. Here's the choice: You're going to die anyway. You're going to die a couple of weeks earlier, or maybe it won't affect you at all, but you get to go in the Grand Canyon. Or you may live, but this treatment is okay, you can do it as long as there's a nurse there, keeping you from getting infected, and as long as you have plenty of rest, and you're not pushing too hard. We had people on there who have since died of cancer. We had other people on there who are alive and well, who were doing chemo. We had people with muscular dystrophy who couldn't move, couldn't talk, but the bottom line that we figured out for safety reasons in Jumping Mouse was you had to be able to either hear or see and understand safety commands like "grab that rope!" or "swim to that shore!" You had to be able to somehow grasp a rope if it was thrown to you, like a throw bag. We worked out a lot of different systems for people who had quadriplegia, but they were low quads, so their hands were useable, but weak, but they had really strong [grasps] in the elbow! We practiced with them numerous times on different trips. We tested it, and worked it out. That came to be the bottom line for safety: You had to be able to grab a rope; you had to be able to self transfer. You had to be able to either hear or see commands and understand them. We had no big boats flip, but we had quads in Tahitis, we Velcroed their hands to their paddles with Velcro mitts. We had an able-bodied person with them in a double Tahiti, and they Tahitied 217 Mile, and a lot of flatwater sections. You should have seen the look on their faces, it changed their lives. We had a couple fall out and swim some rapids like 217. They were fine. They had big life jackets, they had somebody right there. We had kayak support on every trip. We figured out all the safety things, so it was probably, with all the extra safety and all the extra additional people and support, we ended up with about the same level of safety as a regular trip with one guide with maybe five out-of-shape people who knew less about their bodies and their abilities or disabilities than so-called disabled people.

I was always trying to give away the trip leadership, 'cause I wanted to *train* people, I wanted this to happen forever, not 'cause I wanted to be an "outfitter," or because of some ego thing. I wanted this to happen forever, and I was trying to figure out how to make that happen. I was starting to back way out of the whole organization, 'cause I could see that it needed somebody really radical to push buttons and make things happen, and that was me, but that person

couldn't also accomplish the good and the positive cooperation that also needed to happen to make it a permanent program, because some hated me so much for these things they felt I forced down their throats. My board came up with this cockamamie plan to cold-call the outfitters and pretend to be a disabled person wanting to book a trip. The idea was to show them that their staff needed training, but I was against it. The board prevailed, so I told them I'd take the blame, because I knew there would be repercussions. Ann and Carol were starting to take over, and be the people that they talked to, and I figured they'd come out clean. When they presented the scheme at the next outfitters meeting, there was pandemonium. After that, most outfitters never talked to me again. But they had Ann and Carol, and I kept mum. We did our next two trips, one of which was with Canyoneers, with Joy and Gaylord Staveley, and they *loved* the trip. In those days, I was still learning—it's my first company, my first nonprofit, my first political battle—and so, yes, indeed, there were lots of mistakes I made. I was a little shrill at times; I was a little harsh at times. But I felt like that needed to be my role, 'cause my goal was to win a battle, and the battle was to make sure that there was accessibility forever, for people who wanted it.

I went back to thinking about how to best figure out Jumping Mouse, and I started *trying* to reach out to some of the outfitters. "I *don't* want a company, I *don't* want an outfit, I don't want your user days. I want in writing something that says you will be accessible, you'll have trained people that really know what they're doing, and you'll do mainstreaming, but you'll also do a trip or two every year for people who can't mainstream. That's all I want, and I'm outta here, gone." Bob Chandler [GCNP Superintendent, 1991–93] was there, and while Chandler was supportive of the program, he wasn't Jack Davis, and he wasn't *that* into it. I went to D.C., and then a letter comes from Roger Kennedy, head of the Park Service in those days, mandating 700 user days, or whatever it was, for special populations river trips. People were coming up to me saying, "These aren't for Jumping Mouse, these are for special populations." I said "Great, that's what I wanted. It's not for me." Got another letter sent the next spring that there'll be 500 user days for special populations, and that's the end of it.

"Now we have to get these 500 days used" I thought. When things started out I called a bunch of people that ran companies across the country for disabled people and asked them for assistance or partnerships, but they all said, "Grand Canyon politics?! Forget it!" Now that we'd accomplished so much, they were ready to jump on board, so I was

saying, “You gotta apply for these days. You gotta use them or they’re going to go away.” That was my role, peripherally, while Ann and Carol from the City of Phoenix would occasionally run a River of Dreams trip. November rolls around of that year. Most outfitters are already mostly booked for the next season, and all these 500 user days still had to go through an outfitter, even though they were for special populations. I called Bruce Wadlington [Grand Canyon concessions], “There’s not even regulations or rules or any announcement that they’re even available. You’ve gotta do something with these 500 user days.” What he did in response was he called some outfitters to a meeting, “Look, you guys, if you don’t commit to doing these special populations trips on your own, I’m going to have to put this out there, because it’s what’s mandated by Interior.” After that I got a letter saying that the mandated user days were rescinded, but the Grand Canyon outfitters have agreed, on a rotating basis, to running special populations trips annually. “Thank God, it’s over.” I put the company to bed, and that was the story of Jumping Mouse. I’d figured five years, and that’s what it ended up being. They use the City of Phoenix and others, putting on more disabled folks than I could have ever dreamt. Last time I checked in, they were putting seventy or eighty people down the river, all these severe disabilities. Sadly I’ve got a fairly difficult relationship with some people because of it. I learned a lot, and we were successful, and now certain people who never would have been able to go down, can go.

Beyond that, I think that outfitting and guiding is people’s lives; it’s the most important thing to me; it’s who I am; it’s who a lot of people I know and love are; it’s very important to the canyon.

That’s the story about Jumping Mouse and how I got into rafting and where I am now.

STEIGER: As far as you know, this program is carrying on pretty well?

ARONSON: Yeah, every couple of years I check in. But they’re doing the trips and it’s all working out. So we succeeded.

* * *

ARONSON: A quick Joe Biner story. Joe Biner was a *My Left Foot* [the movie] type person. When he was young, they didn’t know he could talk, they thought he was retarded. They didn’t teach him or train him or anything. I don’t know that they knew it was cerebral palsy. This is twenty, thirty years ago. One day in his adolescence, he did something to make them realize there was somebody in there, and that’s when

they started teaching him how to read and talk and communicate. Now he is this brilliant, really athletic, handsome, great-humored guy. He’s a certified Grand Canyon River guide. It’s incredible.

He tells this funny story about when he was young, he lived in L.A. His grandma lived in Montana, and she was going to teach him how to ride a horse and keep him on the ranch. His dad bought him a new saddle and sent him and his saddle and a suitcase—Joe’s first trip on his own—on an airplane to this place in Montana where he’s going to meet Grandma. He arrives in this Podunk little town, shows up in the airport and Grandma’s not there. All these people are grabbing their bags off the carousel. Everybody leaves, and the airport is empty, and there’s his bag and his saddle going around the carousel, and there’s Joe with his cane, and he’s wondering what to do. “*Finally I figured I should go get my baggage and bring it down and wait for Grandma out front.*” He drops his cane and he crawls on his knees over to the carousel. He’s on his knees by the carousel. “*I’m gauging when to grab. I’m ready for it. I lunged with my hands, and I grabbed and got the suitcase by the handle. But I forgot that I had cerebral palsy, and my hand seized and I couldn’t let go of the bag. I was being dragged on my knees around the carousel. I finally figured out how to crawl up on top of the carousel. I’m going around and around. I finally pried my fingers loose of this fucking suitcase. I looked around, nobody was around, and I looked behind me, and there was my brand new saddle.*” Grandma shows up about twenty minutes later, and there’s Joe sitting on the saddle going around the carousel, “*Ya-hoo! Giddy-up!*” (laughter)

STEIGER: Oh, that is a *great* story. That’s a killer story. Thanks for telling me that one.

ARONSON: He’s a great guy, you gotta get him to tell you some stories around the campfire. You’re just in stitches, he’s so hilarious.

STEIGER: That is a hell of a story.

* * *

STEIGER: We’re going to focus on some tall tales—river stories, in other words.

ARONSON: One 100,000 [CFS] story. I remember that spring [1983] we went down to see the dam when it was pushing 55,000. We’d cancelled our upper half trip, but had a trip hiking into Phantom. We also had a trip on the water that was an oar trip in eighteen-footers. They decided to hike the people out that were already on the water. Those guides were going to continue on down from there with Suzanne, and then Suzanne was going to hike back in at Phantom to join

us after figuring out how hard the water was, whether if it went up even further it would still be safe. Moley and Don Briggs and Dave Edwards and myself, and I think Martha [Clark] and Lorna, all go on down on the *upper* half to scout it out. We decided we could do it, we felt comfortable. There were fewer rapids, *far* fewer rapids, 'cause a lot of the rapids turn into riffles with the high water. The rapids that were there were humongous, but we figured there were cheat runs, we could do it, and we felt comfortable bringing the passengers. Everybody hiked out, and I hung out at the boats.

The water had come up to 75,000 from 65,000. Our folks hike in with Suzanne and all the other boatmen. Suzanne walks right up, (in an effeminate Southern accent), "Jeffy, oh wait'll you see Crystal. It was *amazing*. I saw a Western rig flip end over end!" We were meeting the people and trying to keep them from being nervous. We're looking professional and calm and cool and everything, and then the ranger walks up, right in front of everybody and says, "We just had another motor-rig flip. You'd better watch it, 'cause you can die down there." People are saying, "Is this okay?" "Oh yeah, don't worry, we're professionals. We're not going to have you ride through Crystal anyway—you're walking. Even if we die, you'll have snacks and wait for the next trip." We're shittin' bricks about Horn Creek, but it's gone. We get to Granite and it's *huge* on the right, but there's this great cheat run along the shore. We get to Hermit, and Hermit was *hellacious*. Not only was it huge, but it was this curling wave parallel to the current. All I remember is plowing with my snout boat through this tubular wave that's parallel to the current, and the wave is on my right and it's crashing over the boat and landing on the left, and I'm going like a surfer through this tube. We have three Spirits and two snouts. We were going to camp at Crystal and run it the next day.

You can feel the earth shake. You hear this huge deafening roar, and Suzanne's, "I want everybody to come down and look at this rapid *right now*." "Suzanne, c'mon, we're nervous enough. Let's get camp started, then we'll go see your rapids." We walk down to the old high scout on the delta, and everybody's jaws hit the floor. The earth is vibrating, the sound of the (bash, bash, bash) is over and above the (imitates sound of fire hydrant wide open) sound of the rapids. The hole is absolutely unbelievable—biggest thing any of us had ever seen. Now that we've all lost our appetites, we go back and start cooking dinner. That night we had Moley playing the fiddle, me on the mandolin, Joel on the banjo, and switched off playing the guitar. I'm not much of a drinker, but we drank some that night. Everybody else went

to sleep and the boatmen are playing music and jamming, and our eyes are bugging, and the sweat's pouring off our brows. We're all frenetically playing this music and then everybody stopped on the exact same note. It was really funny, and we're all looking at each other and all you hear is the roar of the rapids, "We'd better get some sleep. It's going to be a big day tomorrow."

I woke up wanting to puke, I was so scared. Rowing the Spirits was one thing, but rowing the snout to miss that hole, I couldn't see it. So I had a beer. (laughter) I am not much of a drinker, but I could've had a whole six-pack that morning. We made breakfast, but few people ate. We went to scout. With a snout, you know that once you've lost your angle, that's it, you cannot get it back. The oars are in the back, you've got twenty feet of boat in front of you, a ton of boat to row, and it's really tracky. You have to really calculate currents. You had to figure out where you wanted to be, but as you were floating by any particular section, through any particular current, you had to figure out what angle you wanted to have. It wasn't just get a downstream ferry angle and yank. If you were off the current, and the current pushed you off a few inches, forget it. As we're trying to figure it all out, a private trip comes through. Suzie says, "I wanna watch this guy run it." A WiWo trip comes through, "Okay, we'll watch them." They run it, they do fine. All these privateers come through, and the last one is a sixteen-foot Pro, and everybody else had the downstream angle. These guys start rowing, and they got an upstream angle. They start floating towards the hole. He's got two passengers in the front. Finally he figured it out, and he gets his downstream angle way too late, and he starts yanking, and then they are in the right edge of the hole. He turns it straight as fast as he can. Everybody's holding their breath, and you see the boat disappear in the hole, and then it starts coming up the slope. It looked like this teeny, little toy boat on a wave that was twenty times its length. It was all in slow motion, two-thirds of the way up the wave, and it stops. It's surfing the wave like a kayak, but backwards. It was beautiful, the guy was leaning on his oars, and there was this beautiful curl of water coming off both of the blades of his oars. Two people were hanging on, leaning over the front. They stopped, dead. These two people in front stopped looking over the front, and at the same time they both look over their shoulders into the depths of the maw of hell, and the boat slides down the wave and disappears under the water. Three life jackets pop up about, oh, 70–100-feet downstream, right about where Big Red would be, normally. They were gone around the corner and disappeared. The boat made its appearance about 60–70 feet to the left

of where it entered, in the left-hand edge of the hole, and it comes out the top of the breaking wave, clears the water, does a twist and a pirouette in the air, an endo, and lands back in the hole and disappears again. It reappears about in the middle of where the island would have been, 70–80 feet downstream, *upright*, surfaces like Moby Dick, and goes around the corner.

As we're walking back upstream, here comes Tour West. "Suzanne, please don't make us wait for these guys. I'm about to throw up." "We're going to watch these guys, and we're going to have them spot us, just in case." This guy was this big boatman, and he had a trainee with him, "I was in a boat last week when we went through here at 65,000, and one of those huge boxes next to my head ripped off my frame when I hit the hole and it nearly took my head off. We're going to miss it this time on purpose." I left with [Richard Kocim], who was a passenger I had known from a trip before in Cataract Canyon. He had a motor-drive camera, about half a roll of film left. We climb on down and go way upstream in Crystal Creek and wade across the lake, and back to the other side on the lower delta.

We wanted to be as parallel to the hole as we could, next to the wave. The motor-rig shows up, but it's only one of them, not both of them. They're way against the left wall. He turns it straight downstream. I had motored a *little*, not a whole lot, but I'd motored enough to know that he'd better get his angle. "You'd better make sure you got plenty of film in that camera, because if he doesn't turn that boat towards the right-hand shore and start motoring by the time they hit that dike of quartzite over there, they're going to flip." He quickly puts a new roll of film in. They're just floating—the pregnant moment. "He's got about fifteen feet," and they hit the dike, "it's too late, he's toast." We noticed that it's not the boatman who's behind the motor—it's his trainee. The boat starts to turn to the right, like now he's going to start motoring. "Oh, my God! Stop! Straighten it out and motor!" As I'm saying this to myself, you can see the chunky guy that was supposed to be motoring stand up and he's waving his arms and pointing at the guy, and the boat straightens out. They motor in, they hit the wave with this enormous crash, and surf it. The boat starts falling off on a 45-degree angle, and they're surfing on an angle. There's wave above them and there's wave below them. They're not even as long as the wave. All I hear is "ch, ch, click, click, click, vver, click," and the (sound of full open fire hydrant and boulders crashing together). *Bam!* on their side with this huge explosive noise, and *bam!* they flip over, and it sinks out of sight. These life jackets are popping up downstream. Some of them are

close to shore, and they wash up on the shore. Some of them go around the corner, and you see a WiWo boat pull out. The motorboat resurfaces upside down, and those three-inch-wide straps, they're popping, ripping, and exploding like artillery shells. The side tubes start to come off the boat, and they're vibrating in the air and slapping the surface of the water, and the whole boat disappears again. It resurfaces below the hole and goes around the corner upside down.

We ran upstream to get to our boats. I walked up to Suzie, and said, "I don't care if twenty more motor-rigs come, we are leaving this beach, and we're leaving it *now*." "First we'll run the Spirits through, and then you two snouts follow us through, 'cause you're going to have the hardest time missing." The three Spirits go through, and they do a great run and they miss the hole. Suzie catches the wall below Ego Beach—or where Ego Beach *would* have been, but it's twenty feet underwater. She had some adrenaline pumping. I look at Joel and he looks at me and says, "You first!" before I could say, "You first!" (laughter) I jump in my snout, put on two life jackets. I pull out and you know how calm you are—you finally push off shore and this calm peace sets into your soul, and that's where I was for the moment. The water was so high that I could look up at Joel, we pass and locked eyes, and he salutes me, and I salute him back, and then it all came back to me—the noise, the sound, the current—everything was there again. I looked over my shoulder and I got my run. It was like I hit everything perfect, just through fate. I hit the top of the tree, had the right angle, let it fall off at the right moment, and I got next to the hole, and "It's done, I've made it! Yippie! I've survived!" That instant, all I hear is [a high-pitched screech]. I look around, and there's Suzanne, and she wants me to pull to where *she* pulled in. I turn the boat into the right angle, and I start yanking. I'm hearing her voice get louder, "Pull, Jeffy! Pull!" I'm using all my strength, and I'm keeping the sound of her voice screaming at me to the back of my ears, without watching. I look over once real quick to see I'm there, "Pull! Pull! (pause) *SSTTTOPPP!*" (laughter) I lean on my oars and I look around, and I'm plowing into her boat, and they're running in every direction to get away. I slammed into that boat so hard that the whole entire loaded boat cleared the water, went up the cliff, ripped a huge hole in one of her quarters, and it immediately deflated. (laughs) Joel makes it fine. We hit WiWo, and we all float down towards Bass Camp. We hit above Bass at Hotauta Canyon on the right. We knew Tour West was down at the normal Bass Camp. We walked downstream. We saw all these boats like a war zone, tied to shore upside down. Georgie's black bags lined

up at 110 Mile. Frames sticking out of the water—an unbelievable scene. But no other really traumatic mishaps [except for three of our boats missing the pull in at the Diamond Creek takeout]. We hit Deer Creek, and that's when the water went up to 100,000 [the USGS has recalculated at 97,262 CFS, not counting leaks].

* * *

ARONSON: One more, the Havasu flash flood. 1984, I'm with Suzie and Moley. Joel was there. Rob was on a parallel trip. I can't remember who was on which trip. We knew we were paralleling them and we'd catch up with them in Havasu. Lorna was the first boat in the mouth, and she was jammed right into the little hourglass area where it tightens up, but it was higher, so it was at its tightest. The eddy is chock full. I was again in a snout. I'm the first boat on the cliff, and everybody else is tied mishmash into the eddy. There was Sharon, Edwards, and Lowry. I'd go to Mooney, I loved taking the peeps. Perfectly clear, beautiful July day, not a cloud in the sky. I'd hit Mooney and say, "Don't eat your sandwiches yet, we've got about 45 minutes before we have to turn around. We're going to have a religious experience." We all jump in the pool, swim to the wall behind the waterfall, walk along those ledges behind the waterfall, and dive under. I tell them as soon as you're past the water and you don't feel it on your back anymore, turn around on your back and look up, you'll see this incredible rainbow, and it's magic. As I'm taking a few bites of my sandwich, this piece of obsidian-black cloud just peeks over the edge where the waterfall is. "My God, that is the blackest cloud I've ever seen in my *life!*" "You see that cloud over there? That's not just any storm. It's pouring upstream and we're going to have a flood of some sort, so we need to get moving *now*. Finish sandwiches, get your shoes on. As you're walking downstream, I'm going to be behind you, for safety, and give you a head start. I want you to smell, 'cause you'll smell the mud if a flood's coming. I want you to listen, and if the sound of the creek changes from (chrrr) to (CHRRR), you know a flood's coming. I want you to look every time you're near a crossing or down near creek level, don't do it unless you look upstream first. This is *serious*."

I give them a good half-hour start and it wasn't ten minutes before I caught these two guys out of the group. "You don't understand, you see that cloud? It's pouring upstream. We've *got* to keep moving, this is a dangerous situation. Your lives are in jeopardy. You *get* that?!" I'm thinking how many crossings there are. I give them a fifteen-minute head start and catch

them up above Beaver. The cloud and the rain and everything hits us at once, and it starts *pelting* down rain and hailstones the size of marbles. "You guys go down the trail, watch before you cross, remember all the precautions I gave you, get the hell downstream as fast as you can. When the wave hits—it's not an if anymore, it's a *when*—I want you up in the rocks as high as you can get, *fast*." I get down to the creek, cross it, and the first overhang I hit, these two idiots are standing under the overhang, right down at the bottom. "What are you guys doing?! If I catch you one more time, don't worry about the flood killing you, *I'm* going to kill you." They start moving downstream, and I stand under the overhang, and at that moment is when all the waterfalls start. The creek is red, and I'm looking at this incredible panorama of waterfalls—a *hundred* waterfalls on both sides of the creek, pouring over the Redwall. It's this *beautiful* scene, so dramatic. I started to run, I'm leaping over rocks and I'm having a good time, as much as possible. Then I see the guys downstream and they're *standing* in the middle of the creek. I hear the creek sound, look back, and there's this five- or six-foot wave plowing down the canyon. It was really cool. The nose of the flood is moving really slowly, and behind the nose is water moving at what seems like ten or twelve miles an hour. I want to make that crossing, but more than that, at the moment, I need to save these guys' asses. I'm running and I'm screaming, "Get out of the creek! Get up the bank!" They still don't hear me yet, 'cause it's noisy. I looked back at the wave, and I'm beating it. I started to laugh. "Oh, this is so stupid! Why am I here?" I'm *hoping* that they get up the bank, so I *don't* have to do what I know I'm *going to*, 'cause now my adrenaline's pumping. I'm about 100 feet from the bank, and here's the wave coming, but now there's room, now it's not right on me, it's upstream about 150 feet, maybe. I'm looking at these guys. Finally they catch my eye. "Get up the bank! It's a flash flood, man! Go!" They slowly start walking up the other side of the bank, looking at me like I'm crazy. "Okay, wave far enough, swim, thirty yards, can make it. Am I going to make it? Am I not? These guys are dead if I don't."

I leapt in and dove. These guys were still ten feet from shore. I'm underwater, and I started swimming as hard as I could; I came up and I was most of the way across. These guys are still standing five feet from the bank, still hip-deep in water. I got my footing and I grabbed both of them by the collars, backwards to the edge of the water, and pushed them as hard as I could, and I'm scrambling with my feet, trying to catch a purchase as I'm pushing them, and I hit the edge of the water, and let go—they land up in those

alder trees. I grab a trunk of a tree as the wave takes my feet out from under me. (laughs) I'm looking at these guys, and they're looking at me like they're going to be angry, and they look over my shoulder, "Whoa!" One of them says, "Oh! *That's* what you mean by a flash flood." I turn around, just in time to see the old wooden Havasupai bridge go floating by.

The rain goes away. "I think we don't have to cross anymore and we can make the river. We gotta keep our fingers crossed that we see people, and that everybody's okay." We hit this little pod of our passengers, and the women are looking down at their feet and they're crying, and the men are moping. I come up and I go (cheerily), "Hi! How you guys doing? You all right? Anybody hurt? Nobody's trapped or gone?" "No, we're okay." A woman is crying, "We can't make it back to the river, it's flooding, we're trapped!" "We can make it back." Everybody lights up. I feel like the pied piper.

We hit another pod, same thing, and by the time I hit the cave, I had most, if not all, both trips' people, 35, 40 people. We hit the tunnel, and the tunnel is underwater. There's this track above it "Hey, we can make it! Let's go!" I top this little ridge, see downstream on the trail, and up on top is Elliott, Edwards, Schaler, and Lorna. They've all got their life jackets on, throw bags in their hand, and they're all staring intently at the water, 'cause they know there's people upstream that they're responsible for. I give a loud whistle, and everybody else is still the other side of the ridge, so all they could see was *me*. They all look up, I point back with my thumb and I slap my head, which was our sign for "everything's okay." "Yaaaayyyy!" Everybody's jumping up and down, and then I knew it was really funny-looking to them, because one person would pop over the ridge, the next person would pop over the ridge, and you could see them counting on their fingers. This paper comes out, the rosters for the trips. Lorna starts checking off names. I get across from them and we're yelling back and forth over the roar of the flood, "Is everybody there?" "Well, we're missing people." Joel gets the bright idea, "Why don't we go back down to where the boats are? It's quieter there."

I gotta back up a little bit. Before we even hiked up there, before this whole day started, we were in the eddy and I looked up and Edwards goes, "You know, Briggs jumped across that jump-across once." I said, "Whoa, I hope I never have to do that. That's *totally* out of line."

We're on the wrong side of the canyon. I look down in the eddy and there's three boats, where there were twelve or thirteen. "Where's the boats?!" "We'll

tell you later. They got washed out, some people are downstream, it's horrible. But let's get our people down, 'cause it's starting to get late." "How?" Tyrolean Traverse. I used to work for Outward Bound, and so did Joel; they went back to the boats and got all these lines, and they throw them across. Joel and I set up this great Tyrolean Traverse. We're moving fast, 'cause it's starting to get dark. It was great, because the camaraderie was perfect. Everybody had a job to do—somebody was checking names, getting food, getting warm clothes, getting straps and 'biners, tying up the rope, going back down waving [in] motor-rigs as they passed by. We were ready with the Tyrolean. I said, "First person, step up. I'm going to tell you what's going on as I'm putting the straps on. I'm going to push you off the cliff, you're going to go down a little bit, there's going to be a little elasticity, watch your hands, watch your hair. As soon as you're on the rope, it'll be fine, they're going to pull you across, and then they'll take the straps off and you're done. It'll take five seconds, but there's no waiting allowed, 'cause it's getting dark, and we've got 35 people. You all got it?!" (laughs) I take the first lady, clip her on, and say, "You ready?" She starts to say "no" of course, and I say, "Here we go!" and push her off the cliff. "Yelp!" and boinga-boinga, and they pull her across. We start the next person on the spare sling, and we keep rattling them off.

A motor-rig stopped by, and they got a bunch of our people, 'cause we had forty people, and we only had three rafts. I think there was one more raft in the lower eddy, and mine was a snout. "We'll see you at Tuckup. Go on downstream." We get everybody across and it's nearly dark now, and me and Moley are on the one side still. I untie and hand to Moley, and Moley takes these coils and throws them over to Lorna and they're in mid-air and I think to myself, "Wait a minute!" (laughs) I look at Moley, and he looks at me and says, "I don't want to think about it," and takes two steps and jumps. He lands on the little ledge that's there, looks back at me, and says, "See ya' later," and walks away. I look over the edge and I thought, "Oh, God, I don't want to do this! The longer I stick around, the worse it's going to get." I back up the hill and take a couple of steps and jump as hard as I can, and barely make the ledge, and slap up against the cliff.

We all pile in our boats and I got eight passengers in my snout, plus me, which is one hell of a heavy load, and now it's dark, so there's no reason to rush anymore. We float down, and it took us about an hour in the dark. It was really this neat anticlimax, only it wasn't anti. We float on down, and we hear the rapid at Tuckup coming and get prepared, "Oh, God, make

this eddy!” I *just* make the bottom of it, and everybody comes out and yanks my boat in. There’s two AZRA trips and two or three motor trips—I don’t remember how many trips were on this beach, but there were a *bunch* of people—a hundred at least. There’s a kitchen here, and a kitchen there, and a kitchen there, and there’s all these lights and flames and cooking. We finally get together to confab about what happened in the mouth.

Lorna was sleeping on her boat, the first boat in the mouth. It’s totally clear, it’s a beautiful, sunny day. By some miracle, Sharon Hester decided to walk upstream and take a look, but she took her life jacket with her. [some eddy details have been adjusted from eyewitness accounts since this interview] She gets around the corner where you’re looking down, when she sees the wave. She screamed, “*Flash flooooood! Get outta them boats!*”, ’cause Lorna would have been dead, if not others. Edwards was out the farthest, near the mouth, and he remembers that Lorna never touched rubber with her feet as she danced and ran across thirteen boats to get the hell out of there. He grabs his life jacket and a throw bag. People are scrambling, all get on shore in time to see the wave hit Lorna’s boat first. It moves it up on its side, cups it against the second boat, and the second wraps up against the third, and the third wraps against the fourth. The lines are humming and buzzing. Somebody yells out, “Cut the lines! Cut the lines!” Sharon whips out her knife, starts slashing what she could reach. This whole raft of thirteen boats now starts floating out. One of the D-rings had completely yanked out of one of the paddleboats and the whole front half had deflated; another one had a rip in it, one had turned over. This whole raft of these boats floats out into the eddy fence and out into the 45,000 CFS river. They were all tied to *my* boat, which was tied to that little rock that eventually pulled off. But I think we had also tied onto that bolt that’s there. Lowry leaps onto some of the boats and goes after his boat. He had these two guys with him that were passengers—young guys that had been rowing sometimes and had the feel for it. He yells at them, and *they* jump into boats, and they slash their lines. One or all three of them made the eddy at the bottom of Havasu, and the other one or two went on downstream.

Suzanne leaps into the boats. She starts cutting lines, and she’s cast away, leaving behind my snout with two Spirits tied to it, that float back up into the eddy, fortunately. She’s gone on downstream with four boats tied together, one of which is half deflated. Edwards is standing on those ledges and the boats are swinging out into the current, when somebody behind him screams, “Body!” It must have been beautiful,

because here’s 240–260-pound Edwards. He turns, he sees this body about to surface in the eddy fence—this woman’s body, who happened to be a passenger on our trip—and then she gets caught in a current and starts to disappear again. He didn’t even think about it, took two steps and dove, right where she had been. After being caught in that flood and all the things that she later described to us, the thing that hurt the most was Edwards tackling her, “It was the most beautiful pain in the world.” They come up under the boats, and then into the rapids. She’s wrapped around his arms, so his arms are pinned to his body. They’re tight, with only one life jacket, and they’re about nose-deep in the water. They’re floating by and Joel Schaler ‘s running down these ledges in his flip-flops as fast as he can, to keep up with Edwards—who’s near the edge, fortunately. Joel’s got his throw bag, but he can’t throw it, ’cause he doesn’t see Edwards’ arms, Edwards says, “Hit me in the teeth, Boy-o.” Joel throws the bag so perfectly. It goes right between their two faces, and there’s the rope laying in the water. Edwards grabs it with his teeth, and he finally gets one arm open and grabs the rope next to his teeth with one arm. They swung over to the cliff and get pulled out.

Suzie’s busy tying the boats end-to-end, takes the half-deflated boat and she drags up the deflated end of it and ties it to the frame in the middle so it’s not dragging deep down in the water. She takes every spare line on all four boats and ties them all end-to-end, and puts them all in this perfect little coil on the back of the furthest rear boat, which had oars, and she started trying to catch an eddy. The rear boat would catch the eddy, the others would swing towards the eddy fence, push the other one back out into the current, and that was it. She finally decides that the only way she’s going to catch shore is where there is no eddy, jump off the boats, and tie them up as they’re still floating downstream. She knows she only has one chance, because the boats will then be gone. She rows close to the cliffs, takes the coils in her hand, jumps off the boat, and there’s nothing there. The coils are going out of her hand, the boats are going downstream, she’s looking for something to tie to, and finally as the coils are getting down to their last, she sees this rock with a cleft in it. As she gets there, the last coil is going out of her hand. She grabs the knot on the end of the final rope and takes it in her fist and tries to jam it in the crack as it goes taught—*on* her hand. All those four boats in the middle of the current *stop* on the meat of her hand, but they stop. She’s trapped there for a little while. She finally had to pull her hand out, it was all chunked up and meat was showing. She ties them, and she waits for everybody; they discombobulate

themselves and go on downstream. We were patching the paddleboat on shore that night, looking forward to the anticlimax of running Lava Falls the next day.

STEIGER: Oh, man oh man, what a day.

ARONSON: It was amazing. You got the two best stories I got.

* * *

Since it's been almost eighteen years for the original interview, we asked Jeffe to do a quick update of life in the intervening time. —RQ

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ARONSON: I left guiding in Grand Canyon after Jumping Mouse, which had allowed me to return after my bouts with cancer and Guillain-Barre—I wanted to give something back, and I felt like I had accomplished that. I did a private each year with friends and family, but went on to other things, other rivers. Every full-time Canyon guide knows how it consumes us, leaving no summer time to do other rivers, see other places. My dad had a stroke in '92, so in '93 my Australian-born wife Carrie and I took him in to live with us

in Flagstaff. Taking care of him, plus trying to plan ahead and not end up living under a bridge, I became the executive director of the Mainstreet Flagstaff Foundation and headed the \$12 million dollar historic restoration of downtown Flagstaff. Talk about politics, it made Jumping Mouse seem tame, but I'd learned a lot, and it was a huge success. Carrie missed her homeland, and her folks were getting on in age, so I promised her when pop passed away we'd sell our downtown properties and move to Oz.

Pop passed away in '98 and we moved to Oz in '99, bought 12 ½ rough, steep acres of bush land in the Victorian Alps, near the famous Snowy River. I spent the next 13 years building an award-winning off-grid, micro-hydro, and solar powered alternative home on the banks of the Bundara River. I came back during the northern summers and managed a river company in Idaho for four years. Near the end of that gig, in 2005, one of my passengers asked me "What's next for us, Jeffe?" I said dories in the Canyon. He wanted me to guide his family, so I called up Regan Dale from when I worked a season for OARS in '92, and he let me row that charter trip. Afterwards, he told me "If you want to come back, I have a spot for you." Now how do you pass up an offer like that!?



At work. Photo: Justin Baillie



Hermit! Photo: Rick Box

I've been teaching river guiding for La Trobe University's outdoor ed program, and swiftwater rescue in Australia for Eric Riley's Swiftwater Safety Institute, puttering around my place in Oz, and coming back to the States in the northern summer and rowing dories back home for the past eleven years. Haven't seen winter since 1998. We fought the two and one-half million acre bushfire in Oz in '03, and there's some video of us with hoses and forty-foot flames all around us on YouTube. Crazy! Had a few stories published, but that'll never get me rich. Like most guides, my riches are my wife, my friends and family, and having the best damn job on earth.

Links of interest to accompany the Jeffe Aronson interview:

Grand Canyon/Colorado River high water 1983 compilation by Jeffe Aronson:

- <https://vimeo.com/27032184> (Part 1, 29 minutes)
- <https://vimeo.com/101139481> (Part 2, 16 minutes)

S'PLORE and Joe Biner:

- Colorado River near Moab, Rob Rice (KTUX 4 News; 5 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsjYMYwBd5Y>

Jeffe Aronson telling Joe Biner stories (10 minutes):

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qeax35bSthA>

Joe Biner on FaceBook:

- <https://www.facebook.com/joseph.biner.7?fref=ts>

Disabled River Trips in Grand Canyon:

Take Me to the River, MARY Jo WEST'S (1991, Cable 35, The Phoenix Channel; 28 minutes, with 5-minute slide show; with Joe Biner, Jack Davis, City of Phoenix, Jumping Mouse Camp, AZRA):

- <https://vimeo.com/10571442>

River of Dreams, STEVE BODINET (1991, NewsChannel 3; 21 minutes; with Joe Biner, City of Phoenix, Jumping Mouse Camp)

- <https://vimeo.com/10569632>

Right to Risk, BILL LEVERTON (1994 or 1995; "On the Arizona Road," KTSP Ch. 10; 12 minutes; Jumping Mouse Camp, Canyoneers, Rose Ann Bolin poem)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXs2TIF3ICQ>

Accessing the Wilderness: River Trips for Adventurous People with Special Needs: Based upon Grand Canyon River Trips by Jumping Mouse Camp, Inc. (c. 1993, Homestead Press, 200 pp.)

Links:

- S'PLORE: <http://splore.org/>
- Martha Ham on S'PLORE (2013): <http://upr.org/post/nonprofit-organization-celebrates-decades-all-access-adventuring>
- E.T.C.: <http://www.etctrips.org/>
- Right to Risk: <http://www.righttorisk.org/righttorisk/>

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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.

Found one for the archives: From the estate of Mrs. Hopkins (Submitted by Larry Hopkins)
Hatch rig (28-foot, 33-inch tubes) in Hell's Half Mile / Gates of Lodore / Green River
Late 1950s or early '60s

