

# the news

the journal of Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.

volume 6    number 3    late summer 1993

## Consensus

### Stan and Ray

### Hydraulic Jumps

### EIS Future

### Concessions

### Recycling

### The Best and the Worst

### Sanitation

### Navajo Bridge

### Hyde Photo

### New Officers

### Georgie's Rapid?

### Poop

### Piddle

### Further Education

### Heritage Fund

### Fall Plans

### So On. So Forth

## River Water in His Blood



Lois Jotter and Don Harris in Glen Canyon      Elzada Clover

**M**exican Hat Utah really isn't a place many people head for on purpose. It was even less so in 1937: on a long dirt road from nowhere. But that's where young Don Harris's job took him, and it was there he contracted that lifelong affliction we all know as *The River*.

He was born and raised in Soda Springs, Idaho, working on the family ranch in the summer and schooling in town in the winter. After high school he earned a degree in civil engineering and worked with a few government agencies before the United States Geological Survey sent him to Mexican Hat.

Some fifty-six years later, a couple of us sat down and asked Don to tell us a bit about his life, which spans boating on the rivers of the Colorado Basin from a time when only the eccentric adventurer would launch an expedition in a hand-built wooden boat, to the heyday of commercial motor-rig operation.

**Harris:** I wasn't really looking forward to going to Mexican Hat. I didn't, at the time, love these lonely outpost places, as I figured it was. But after I'd been there a while and got pretty well acquainted with Norm Nevills, why I started to enjoy it.

continued on page 26

## Who Do We Work For?

**T**he Outfitters, right? Sure. That's where the pay check comes from, that's who does the hiring and firing, the scheduling and de-scheduling. The home of the occasional squabble and the inevitable petty politics. In a very real sense, that is who we answer to down there. But who else do we work for?

The Park Service, of course, by default. They are charged with preserving, protecting and interpreting the place for the American public. But, of course, they can't. Neither they nor we would like to see a ranger at every beach, on every trail, in every boat. So it's up to us to do that job for them. They need us to do that as much as we need federal protection for our playground/office.

The Passengers. They're the one paying the fare. The ones who have scrimped and saved for that vacation of a lifetime. It's up to us to help them have it, or at the very least, not prevent them from having it. In most cases, this will be their only chance, and we shouldn't our bad day their bad day. Our job is to facilitate the experience, to help them get the most from the place.

The Canyon. We work for the Canyon. The poor thing is defenseless. And regardless of how much propriety the NPS, the scientists or the boatmen take in the place, nobody owns it, and nobody knows best how to care for each and every facet of it, each and every resident critter. So it's up to each of us to look out for the place, to learn and convey all the information we can and to recruit ever more friends and protectors for the place.

A big job. A lot of responsibilities. Why would anyone do it? Because there's one more entity we work for...

Ourselves. That's the catch. That's why we put up with the incredible demands and regulations we are saddled with. The long hours, the job insecurity, the difficulties of maintaining a life outside of the ditch.

We like the wallpaper in our office, the good eats in our restaurant, the E-ticket ride on our roller

coaster, the first rate companions/ audience/hecklers we live and play with down there, the professional counselling of the moonlight rippling across the river on a balmy summer evening. Somehow we even like the consistent challenge to do the job and do it right.



*Brad Dimock*

## the news

...is published more or less quarterly by and for Grand Canyon River Guides.

### **Grand Canyon River Guides**

is a non-profit organization dedicated to  
**Protecting the Grand Canyon**  
**Setting the highest standards for the river profession**  
**Providing the best possible river experience**

**Guide Membership** is open to anyone who has worked in the river industry.

**General Membership** is open to everyone.

### **Membership dues:**

\$20 per year

\$100 for 6 years

\$195 for life

\$277 Benefactor

Please save us trouble and renew before you're due.

General Meetings are held each Spring and Fall. Board of Directors Meetings are held the first and third Tuesdays of each month. All interested members are encouraged to attend.

### **Officers:**

<i>President</i>	Brad Dimock
<i>Vice President</i>	Teresa Yates
<i>Secretary/Treasurer</i>	Jeri Ledbetter
<i>Directors</i>	Fritz Dave Edwards Tim Whitney Shane Murphy Dirk Pratley John Toner
<i>Past President</i>	Tom Moody

We need articles, poetry, stories drawings, photos, opinions, suggestions, and more.

Written submissions should be 1500 words or less and, if at all possible, be sent on a computer disk. PC or MAC format; Word Perfect or Word are best but we can translate most programs.

Deadlines for submissions are the 10th of January, April, July and October.

GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES

P. O. Box 1934

Flagstaff Arizona 86002

phone or fax (602) 773-1075



# Money and Love

Lew Steiger

Senate Bill #208 brings up big questions for the river business in Grand Canyon....

(Or was that love and money?)

Fast motor trip full of great people, up early on Havasu morning, everybody really humping it to help load the boats. "What else ya need, dude?" asks Russell, a used car buyer from New Jersey, as he slings me the last dutch oven. "Money and love," I tell him. "Not necessarily in that order."

Russell laughs. "You know what they say, Lew." "What?"

"Love can't buy you money."

I laugh back. We've got this thing going: cynical banter about American values. Before he started buying cars for dealers, Russell owned a repair shop that kept eight mechanics busy full time. "It's your muffler bearing, ma'am," Russell said earlier, mocking excesses in that business. "I'm afraid it'll run you about \$350.00. Could you wait a half an hour? We can get right on that for you."

I winced when he said that. And I wince again when I think about it now. "Welcome to the Ultimate Grand Canyon Experience" says the brochure on this one. (A five day, balls to the wall race against time?) "Everybody in the boats, please. We gotta go."

The truth is, I'm in this one for the money. All the way. But love keeps tripping me up.

## Money

GCRG got a pretty strong letter this spring from an old 20-year vet who chided us for screwing around with the Glen Canyon Dam EIS so long and not confronting our outfitters to get a bigger piece of the pie for boatmen. We need health care, better wages, pensions, etc. The guy who wrote the letter is a good boatman and a sharp customer too, so it made us think about all that stuff in earnest. Somebody said, finally, "The outfitters have enough to worry about right now as it is. They can't very well take care of boatmen if they're fighting for survival themselves."

The comment referred to S. 208: a bill introduced in the U.S. Senate by Arkansas Senator Dale Bumpers.

S. 208's concern is concession reform in the National Parks. What it mainly seeks to address is the fact that some bigtime concessioners are realizing huge profits thanks to advantageous positions in the Parks, but are paying back little in the way of concession fees, or taxes, or good deals to the public.

To alleviate this, Bumpers wants to open up a more competitive bidding process for all concessioners, big and small. Grand Canyon outfitters aren't the major focus here and the bill has understandably made outfitters, (and some of us at GCRG), concerned.

The outfitters, through their national organization, America Outdoors, have taken the stand that language reading something like "... all other criteria for the permit being met, the Secretary may give preferential consideration to the existing outfitters..." be altered to read "the Secretary shall give preferential..." etc.

For us at GCRG, a couple of points seem clear: without healthy, stable outfitters, there can't be healthy guides. And without a solid, well established river business that thinks long term, the public will never get good river trips.

Opening up a highly competitive bidding war, it seems, would only foster a short term, cutthroat mentality, which would eventually hurt both guides and our customers, not to mention our bosses.

Making the size of the concession fee returned to the government a primary focus of commercial permit evaluations is counterproductive too. It buys into America's worst disease: myopic worship of the bottom line. And adopting it in Grand Canyon will only pass higher trip prices on to our customers.

Those points notwithstanding, though, the question remains: In our industry, is there a problem? Have we, (or our outfitters), gotten too greedy?

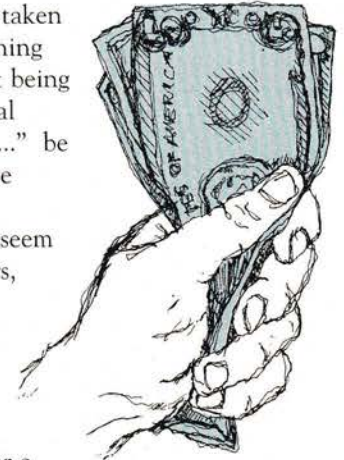
If so, what is the cure?

So far, the rate control in this business has been compellingly simple: "Whatever the traffic will bear." about sums it up. And right now that translates to about \$200.00 a day.

Why have we done so well in the past? Hard work and diligence, yeah. But mainly it's the Canyon. We lucked out and stumbled into a magical place that happens to sell itself. And does the most important part of our work for us. The greatest value our trips offer comes from the place, not us.

## Love

Most of us got into this thing for some kind of love: the Canyon, the river, the boats... maybe just the attention, the pleasure of controlling (more or less) a captive audience.

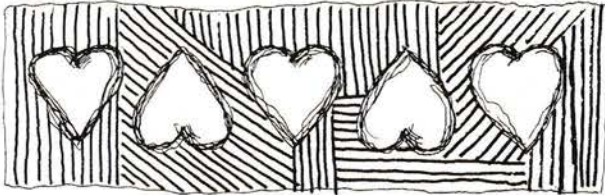




Whatever the case, we loved it. And we'd have paid them to let us go.

The icing on the cake was that our people loved it too. They came back more than happy, feeling like they'd gotten a screaming deal. And that was how it should be.

The love problem I have now is complicated.



(Aren't they all?)

This trip I'm doing is with a great company. Excellent management and crew, very dialed in. Terrific boats and system. Good pay and benefits.

But the problem is threefold. One: The guys who count the money and sell the trips don't live here anymore. (And some of them never did.) In the place where they count the money they charge the going rate and never bat an eye. They've shaved the schedule down to the bone and they will sell you that all-American trip and never think twice about, or even understand, the pleasures they've gutted out of it. For the lack of one or two extra days on the schedule we've cheated thousands of customers out of some of Grand Canyon's best: Saddle Canyon all to yourself; Nankoweap in the evening; a half day at the Little C when it's clear; sleeping in at 114; going all the way up at Elves; the long, glorious afternoon at Deer Creek; Matkat; Beaver Falls... the list is endless.

The argument for running the fast trip is always the same: "America wants it." "That's the trip that sells."

And the answer to it remains the same too: People buy what we sell them. If we told them the longer trip was a better deal, and why, they'd believe us. They'd understand instantly.

Part two of my personal problem is a little credit card situation. Great winter, but things did get a little out of hand and now here I am, doing some money counting of my own.

But part three is Russell and everybody else on this trip. They're all totally cool, is the thing, and it breaks my heart to have to beat them up so bad just to get them down the river on time... to smile and tell everybody we're doin great, even though we just had to blow off Elves, Stone, and Deer Creek because of congestion or dwindling options on the schedule... impending darkness.

Russell's in the used car business now, but he's gearing up to make a change: counseling for couples. I laugh at this one. "Dude," I do my Russell imitation. "You're going to have to hustle up a lot more green stuff if you want to hang on to this action. Catch my drift?"

Russell howls. He means it, though. He really doesn't keep score that way anymore, and everything he does on this trip is a testimony to that. He helps the stragglers up the trail; sits in front of the boat when no one else wants to; stays up late to help me fix a malfunctioned spare motor. In short, he constantly exhibits the exact opposite of your basic "What's in it for me?" mentality.

Did Grand Canyon bring about this spiritual shifting of gears? Nope. Just reinforced it.

My theory is Grand Canyon was put here to remind us of one salient fact: life is short and we'd better spend our time wisely. Part of which means doing good work, not being greedy, giving back to life as good as we get.

How am I going to reconcile that with mercenary boating? I don't know. Maybe write an article about it and try to get it printed, whether it gets me run out of the river business or not. Get out of bed a little earlier, quit futzing around so much, pick up the pace.

S. 208? Not perfect, but maybe we'd better take a hard look at the issues it purports to address: excessive profits made at the expense of our National Parks. In GC it's not just the fast ones, either. It's the expensive ones too. (Is \$900 a head for a three day Whitmore reprieve a good deal?).

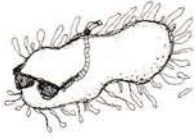
Our job in this instance is essentially the same: the U.S. Government, the NPS, and the Grand Canyon river business all have the responsibility- dictated by the old laws and the proposed new one as well- to facilitate the best visitor experience possible, at a reasonable cost.

The burden on us today is that we are headed toward a Grand Canyon river experience that is pared down and sanitized; accessible only to the world's richest people. And nobody in their right mind should want to see that. It's a situation that runs directly counter to some of the most basic lessons the place has taught us.

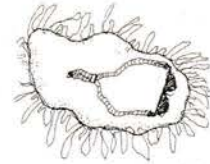
The fact is, however S. 208 shakes out, if we can't keep our trips good and their price affordable and in line with the services provided, then we don't deserve to be there- outfitters or boatmen either.

We'll keep an eye on S.208 and keep you posted.





## On Sanitation



The Coconino County Department of Public Health is taking a new role in Grand Canyon Food Service and Sanitation. At the request of and in cooperation with Federal and State officials, the CCDPH is developing a program to permit and inspect food service commissaries in the Grand Canyon. By the beginning of next year, all outfitters will be required to obtain a food license, and river trip kitchens will be, on occasion, visited by inspectors from the county.

In a letter to commercial river companies in April of this year, Marlene Gaither of CCDPH noted that in spite of obvious difficulties in providing food service on grand Canyon river trips, no program existed to deal with the specific needs and problems of Grand Canyon river companies.

Currently, the river industry exists in what amounts to a regulatory vacuum. Although the County Health Code requires all establishments that handle or serve food to have food licenses, Grand Canyon outfitters have ignored or perhaps been unaware of this requirement. Although guidelines for Colorado River trip sanitation have been developed by both the NPS and the Arizona Department of Health Services Division of Disease Control, efforts to implement these guidelines have been sporadic at best.

Outfitters generally have some place where food is packed in preparation for trips; while these facilities are subject to the same licensing requirements and sanitary regulations that apply to restaurants, grocery stores, food wholesalers, soup kitchens, and other places where food is handled, the NPS has never taken an active interest in inspecting or regulating these facilities, nor has it raised the issue of proper licensing. Consequently, most (if not all) outfitters are deficient in some respect when it comes to pre-trip food packing and handling.

Kitchens on the river are unique. The code of existing standards for "non-specific places or operations" (everybody that doesn't fall in some other category for which specific codes exist) requires food establishments to have, among other things, screened windows, water from an "approved source", hot and cold running water, sewer connections, etc. It is the lack of these basic sanitary amenities that makes food service in the Grand Canyon unusual and, from the health department's point of view, especially risky.

Food handlers in all licensed establishments are required to have specific training in the basics of sanitation, in the form of a short course for food handlers taught a couple times each month by the county health department. River guides usually receive

little or no formal instruction in food handling and sanitation, yet we work under conditions generally associated with travel in the third world: we generate our own potable water, cook in the midst of blowing sand and buzzing flies, and have no direct connection to any sewer. At any time, some of us are literally pissing in the water supply the rest of us...

On a typical trip, a group of people - perhaps from all over the world - are confined with each other in what amounts to a more intimate association than is found in a typical First World household... where else would you be sharing a bathroom with up to 25 other people?

People from diverse habitats - healthy and sick - along with their food and feces, travel in prolonged and intimate association on a combination Disneyland ride, drinking water supply, pissoir, and sometimes mother-humper white-water blender.

Everything considered, it's amazing that food service on Grand Canyon river trips works as well as it does. The health department, with an eye to protecting the public, believes that things could be improved.

As I understand it, the new program has several implications that directly affect guides, outfitters, and their clients:

Outfitters will be required to upgrade warehouse food packing facilities to existing codes, if they aren't already in compliance, before they can obtain the required food license.

Guides will eventually be required to complete some training in the basics of sanitation, through a course to be offered by the health department. The content of the course will directly address the unique hazards of our industry, and will focus on the proper ways and means of minimizing the risks we face.

The NPS food handling and sanitation guidelines will be revised, as needed, and Coconino County Department of Public Health will be making inspections on the river and in the warehouse.

Ultimately, we all stand to gain from this process, but everyone needs to understand that guides, outfitters, and, passengers will need to become more sanitation conscious on our trips. Some old bad habits will need to be broken, and we may need to rethink how and why we do some of the things we take for granted.

If you have any further questions, you might give Marlene Gaither a call: 779-5164 extension 12. She's been on the river, understands that our situation is unique, and I'm sure will do her best in developing sensible and effective guidelines for our benefit.

*Drifter Smith, AZRA*





# Up Ahead the Channel Divides

Jack Schmidt

An enjoyable aspect of reading *the news* is the persistent use of river metaphors that permeates much of the writing. Picking the right route through a rapid is like picking the right EIS alternative: Moody says send one boat down the other run!

I'll push the river analogy one more time.

Many folks with differing perspectives about rivers, nature, and society have been brought together in the past decade, unified in the resolve to find a more environmentally appropriate way to manage Glen Canyon Dam. More recently, all these folks have joined, willingly or not, with power interests and consumptive water users to develop a set of alternatives to be analyzed in the EIS. In this sense, each interest has floated downstream from its own headwater stream, and the different boats have become one flotilla now that the small streams have joined. Maybe this combined flow is moving us along at a faster pace. Now we run together; we're in the Canyon and the ride has its wild moments.

Just when it seemed that the flotilla had reached its full size, a new tributary with new boats has joined the flow. Native Americans have joined the flotilla when we thought the Canyon trip was well under way — guess they came down the Little C!

From here on we'll float as one group, with one unified decision before us. After all, the dam can only be operated one way; water can only be released into one channel. But will our river full of increasingly diverse boats necessarily stay together for the entire course to the sea? Nature suggests perhaps not, at least not without trying. Up ahead, we approach the delta, the channels divide, and only if we anticipate far enough downstream will we be able to keep most of us on course. One thing is for sure — how the waters, and the craft upon them, redivide ahead will not necessarily be how they had originally joined upstream. Nor should we expect that to be. Nature and river politics aren't that simple.

Here are some of the decisions and issues up ahead which may divide us in unanticipated ways. Each of these questions are ones which citizens concerned about river management must answer. None of these questions are ones that ought to be delegated to scientists or bureaucrats, although both groups can provide useful information. Each of these are questions of value, and such questions must be left to the

democratic process in which we all participate.

## 1. For what values should Grand Canyon be managed?

This issue has been around for a long time, and it won't go away. What do we want for our canyon? Beaches? Tamarisk? Biodiversity? The old river? The new river? Steve Carothers and Bryan Brown argue in their book *The Colorado River through Grand Canyon* that we must accept the existing "naturalized river," a blend of the old and the new, a mixture of native and introduced organisms and natural and artificial processes." Bruce Babbitt, in his introduction to the same book, writes "there is no point in romanticizing about restoring [the Colorado River] to its former, pre-Glen Canyon condition. Leave it to the monkey wrenchers to fantasize about blowing up the dam or re-creating the old muddy Colorado by scooping up silt from the bottom of Lake Powell and mixing it back into the water releases." I guess the sediment augmentation idea doesn't have much chance with him, but everyone is hopefully educatable.

There is a compelling case to argue for the new river, and the river corridor is certainly far more biologically diverse than it was before dam closure. The aquatic food base has completely changed, and poorly conceived notions of restoring the old river might have profound negative biologic impacts. But even in a naturalized river, we must know what the resource priorities are. Are river banks covered with tamarisk such as along the lower Green what we want? Is regular destruction of marshes an acceptable trade-off if high discharges can build larger and higher beaches? Why not consider some dredging in Lake Powell if it improves the net Canyon sediment balance? Should we care about managing the dam to assist trout spawning at Nankoweap if such management increases eagle populations? Should we care about trout at all?

Although these questions seem scientific, at their roots they are not. These questions are instead ones of value, and they are questions appropriate for all citizens to answer. We can not maximize all Canyon resources at the same time. We must prioritize the values of resources; we must decide which ones are most important. We must decide how much of the old river we want back.

## 2. How sure is sure?

Everyone has learned much from scientific research results, and the Canyon is managed far better now than it was 20 years ago. Scientists have also learned





that some earlier ideas about the river ecosystem were wrong or incomplete. For example, we once were sloppy in our language and suggested that all floods were erosive. We are more accurate when we say that too many floods of too high a discharge are erosive; a few floods would help rebuild beaches.

We must also recognize that one of the ends of scientific inquiry is more questions. Scientists have answered some questions but others will always remain. There will always be another scientist, or continuing ones among us, who claim that their newly proposed work will resolve matters and finally lead to "scientifically sound management policies."

The question before all of us is how much uncertainty can we live with and how much uncertainty is acceptable in developing a management plan. What is the trade-off between resolving more uncertainty and acceptable levels of expenditure and resource impact? Scientists can prioritize their own work and peer review their own results. Managers can demand better models and engineering designs. But citizens and Canyon users must ultimately take a stand. It is the obligation of scientists and engineers to clearly lay before the public the trade-offs of uncertainty and its elimination. It is the obligation of citizens to decide whether the costs and impacts inherent in resolving these uncertainties are acceptable. Otherwise, scientific questions and research will expand to fill all available money, boats, and beaches.

### 3. How much monitoring is sufficient?

This question is similar to the previous one. There is much in nature to measure, and agencies are lined up to do just that for the LONG TERM. How much of this is enough? Ecosystem scientists can list many interrelations of this wonderfully diverse Canyon, but do all these relations need to be measured? Every season? Every year? Every time they change? Again, citizens and not just scientists need to address this issue. You, as boatmen and Canyon citizens, need to provide some guidance to the development of the Long Term Monitoring Plan. Do we err on the side of a spartan, low impact plan and risk not measuring critical variables? Do we err on the other side?

### 4. To compromise or not?

The current debate on the preferred EIS alternative is symptomatic of issues to come. Most scientists generally find that the low fluctuating flow alternative is sound and reasonable for maintaining humpback chub populations. Doubt remains, however, in the minds of a few, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has stood by what they feel is a better approach — seasonally adjusted steady flow. The projected lost power revenue costs of this latter

alternative are high. What are we to do or think? If we're paying all these scientists and most say that the low fluctuating flow alternative is all right, isn't that enough? Unfortunately, no. Is the answer to pay less attention to science because scientists always disagree? Should we spend more time thinking about the politics of the Grand Canyon Protection Act which seems to mandate that power production be ignored in the development of the most environmentally sound operating scenario? If we fall back to raw politics when the thinking gets tough, then why fund so much science? Well intentioned people on the environmental side of these issues may divide (see the last issue of *the news*). The chub management issue seems a clear case where further research is mandated, but nevertheless every Canyon citizen needs to form their own opinion about the merits of this, and other, "technical" issues.

### 5. Can we separate the Canyon's interest from our own?

It is easy to say "I just care about the Canyon, not myself." But the fact is that lots of lives have been made very different by the existence of the present environmental concern and big money that is associated with Grand Canyon management. Scientific and bureaucratic careers have been launched and maintained, Flagstaff's economy and many personal economies have been boosted, environmental groups find it easier to raise money. Do we know when to slow down? Do we know when to stop?

The point of all this is that much of our course lies ahead. And ahead the issues may not divide us by any traditional stereotypes of boatmen versus WAPA-types. The objectives of biodiversity, maximum beach area, or a low-impact canyon are all bound to create alliances of unusual sorts. Do we want more sand if that would also give us less trout, less vegetation, and perhaps more flexibility in hydropower operations? Do we want maximum biodiversity and a clear river if that limits beach erosion but also constrains hydropower operations? Are we all agreed that survival of the humpback chub is the highest value for river management? I suspect that the future alliances that resolve these issues will not be those that one would expect based on where each boat first launched.

But that is just what we would expect on a real river. It has been a long trip, we have gotten to know each other, but up ahead the channels divide. Now is the time for all citizens to take control of the boats. Don't just leave the rowing and motoring to the scientists and bureaucrats. Talk it out, forget about where we each came from. If we do, most of the boats, maybe all, will get to the sea.





# Farewell

This spring we lost two great boatmen. Both drowned. Both were pushing their own envelopes, having the best time they knew how. Ray Interpreter was 26 and partying hard. Stan Hollister was the same age but with twice the years, swimming the big stuff. Both were too young. Both were outstanding characters and superb boatmen. They gave a great deal to all of us and to our community.

We'll miss you guys. Thanks for everything. Have great runs and we'll see you downstream.

## Stan

I did not think river gods could die. But they do sometimes. Stan Hollister drowned on June 3, 1993, doing what he wanted to do, being totally Stan. He would not have minded much.

He liked Cataract trips, without any frills. No shuttle, no boat, no companions. In 1983, he enjoyed the peak flows of 110,000 cfs through the twelve miles of Cat rapids, by walking in on the Red Lake trail, putting on his wetsuit, stowing his clothes and thin sleeping bag in a black bag, and jumping in. At the end of the rapids he hiked back to his car, stopping to sleep along the way. In 1983 his river trip took about one hour. In 1993, his trip did not end. He would have been 52 in a month.

He was a fast walker. Only the Tarahumara would be faster. He would get off a bus in Baja, stretch his long skinny legs and walk a good two hundred miles in just a few days. He sea-kayaked 40 mile stretches through high winds and waves while sharks swam along side.

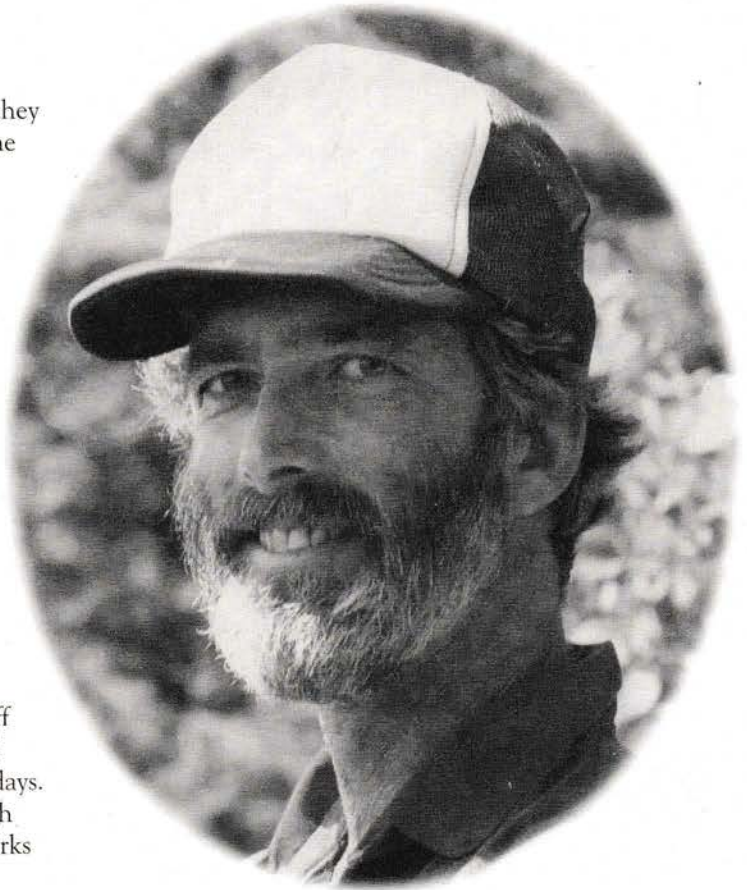
Stan was a minimalist- in words, in using the world's resources, in showing emotions. Extremely self sufficient, but not self absorbed, always helping people, usually behind the scenes and without being asked. He swam Cat for the exhilaration but he was just as content rebuilding a VW engine, sewing his raincoat back together for the hundredth time, replacing a tooth on his lifejacket or looking for the cheapest yogurt at the market.

He was happy just as he was. He did not try to emulate anyone; he was not waiting for something to change or improve. He lived in the present, with fond memories of places seen, trips taken.

He loved finding things- old tools and shirts at thrift stores, a vacuum cleaner along a road side, a 25-horse Johnson on the river bottom, flip flops in eddies. I'm glad that we got to find him- at the bottom of that most beautiful hole in the ground which he called home for twenty-odd years.

Plant some orange globe mallows for Stan and remember.

*Maxine Dunkleman*





# Ray

ray is dead. drowned somewhere on the Salt

the Awesome Arrogant Asshole. one of the greatest hearts I knew. his intuitive understanding of people, their fears and hurts, expressed itself as great warmth and a de-stressing sense of humor.

he seemed to not want people to take him seriously. I remember him sitting atop an upside down kayak strapped on the roof of an NAU Handicap Van, paddling away fiercely.

his passing is not just water under the bridge. not to me. not ever.

mid twenties eaten up face that big Indian nose and alcoholic girth. ray the river guide. so much wisdom.

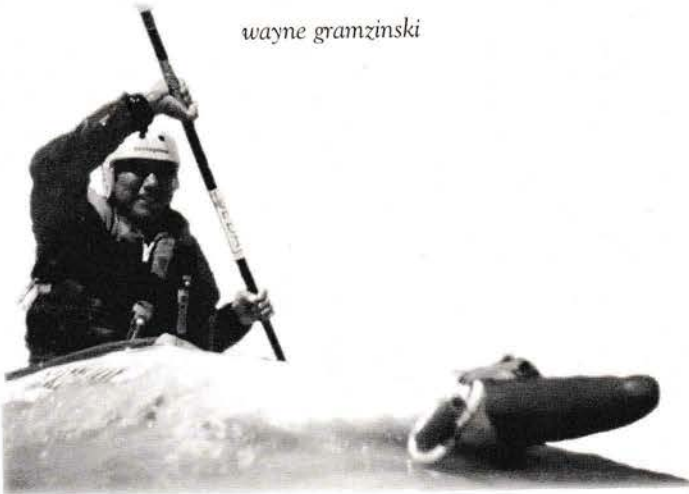
I remember him in his tahitian skirt on dress up night with a tie on over naked chest, beer in hand. how gently he lifted the girl with multiple sclerosis on to his boat.

he was a natural. a boy from a hoods-in-the-woods program, cleaned up and set on his way, only to stumble again and later again and again— drinking. he could row anything, and well, and with such a light touch.

that deep voice, telling stories about africa and the dancing black mamba, is gone.

perhaps we've denied men the ability to be legends in our time. men such as jimmy hendrick, ray interpreter, others living and dead. there are special people who walk among us for a time. ray was one.

*wayne gramzinski*



the news



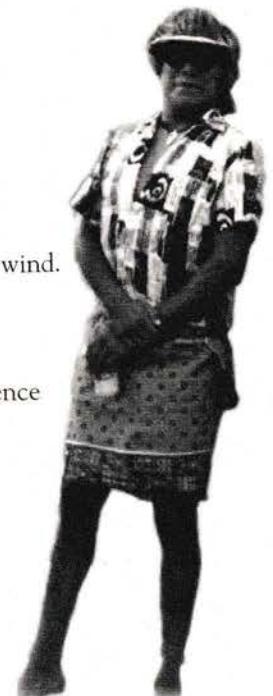
# Hosteen

...The passing of Ray from this world is a tragedy that affects me too deeply to do justice to in words. I know I share this feeling with many who Ray touched in his all too brief life.

Ray's friends will pay tribute to him on every Grand Canyon trip we ever do from this day forward. We will tell his stories to the wind. Our hearts will be full in our chests at times, full of sadness at his passing, full of joy from his very existence in our lives and others'.

I hear his war whoop above Granite, his falsetto chuckle in the coming dusk.

Go in beauty, Hosteen.



*Jeffe Aronson*

page 9





The guide members' Board of Directors ballots had a short questionnaire on how and what GCRG is doing. Here is a representative sampling of the responses we got. If any of these stir you up or make you think, well good. Drop us a line. Give us a holler. WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

### best things

- The activism and the interactivism (all the community building)
- Very commendable- all that has been accomplished in these last few years
- Getting the word out on the EIS
- Newsletter is great!
- Putting effort into protecting the Grand Canyon
- The educational sections in the newsletter, i.e. geology, fish, info...
- Providing boatmen with a forum
- Allowing boatmen to meet and communicate between companies, which brings all guides closer
- Good job keeping an eye on the NPS
- Providing guides' perspective to NPS
- Guide Training Seminars
- Lobbying in congress! Wow!
- Cool stickers
- Keeping retired boatmen informed
- Attempting to educate, enlighten, make aware, shine a light into those people doing trips who lack a commitment to esthetics and education!
- Organizing great parties
- Being active; getting the boatmen's view across to other Grand Canyon entities
- Great "news" issues; gaining national visibility
- Liaison with concessioners, NPS
- Dedicated Board of Directors
- Bringing more interaction between guides of different companies; cooperation
- Speaking for the guides; keeping good relations with all parties- but hopefully not at guides' expense
- Gold mine of good info in newsletter
- Some unifying stuff for fractious folks
- EXISTING!!- putting out a great newsletter- keeping us all in touch- even us "Northern" boatmen
- Working with NPS and GCES
- Creating a voluntary unification point for all boatmen
- Keeping boating and non-boating public abreast of happenings in and around the Grand Canyon. Keep up the good fight
- Widening the group of supporters for GCRG causes
- It's great having an organization backing us, since we're so busy on the river
- Allowing individuals to have a voice, and allowing information to be spread throughout the River Guide community
- Bridging the chasm between the hickory heads and the motorheads

- Representing us with the higher ups
- Bringing the voice of the river guides to the forefront and offering information and support to guides
- GTS is a real treat for me cause I don't do very many trips anymore
- Congrats and thanks for all the hard work, and how far GCRG has come. A good organization and I appreciate the work past and current officers have done to get more folks involved. My hat's off to you. I'm proud to be a member
- You're making every effort not to be cliquish. Spread the power!
- All the everything- GCRG is the unbelievable ultimate realization of the intrinsic totality of the Third Eye of the Duck. Keep up the great work

### worst things

- Putting up road signs
- Becoming too political, spreading yourselves too thin. Concentrate on a couple topics- when completed, move on
- Not being "out there" politically with the NPS
- Perception is GCRG is becoming an oarsman organization
- Still too much a feeling of "us" and "them"- old guides and new guides
- Not making more \$
- I can't see a worst thing at this point
- Continued education is great, but *advanced certification* is only going to gum up the works
- Alienating north rim motor boatmen
- Wasting time pretending to fight with the park
- Not working to stop the new Navajo Bridge
- Not addressing exploitation of guides: 1) Guides rowing 12 days to Separation; 2) Guides told they will lose job if they make workmans comp claims; 3) Guides carrying passengers for baggage pay
- NPS regulations plus Health Department restaurant standards are lessening the wilderness experience
- Not using volunteers to maximum potential
- Not having more birthday parties like Georgie's
- Dues are too cheap! \$25 or \$35
- The tent
- Be careful not to insulate the board from the rest of the group. It's too easy to turn board members' opinions into the official word
- The idea that every GCRG member must get the GCRG logo tattooed on their butt
- Take down the adopt-a-highway signs!
- Overworked volunteers





- Maintaining officers and directors who all share a common perspective, i.e. old school and cliquish
- Getting too friendly with the bureaucrats
- Ain't doing nothing that is not commendable
- Not skeptical enough of politicians and professional environmentalists!! (i.e. McCain and G. C. Trust)
- Jumping on air tours (no toilet paper, no erosion!!)
- Not enough emphasis on better ways to DELIVER quality service (too much talk)
- Maybe getting involved with other offshoot group- Moab, Idaho; sharing ideas is a good concept but how much time do you guys have anyway?
- Seems to be a disproportionate % of GCRG shakers and movers from rowey boats, while rank and file boat-for-bucks motorheads eschew GCRG. Why?
- Contributing to House Rock Valley sign pollution
- Damned few outfitters come to meetings. Why?
- The worst thing to do is nothing

### things we should do

- More hands on tricks, less poetry, more substance in newsletter
- Have you looked into Grand Canyon West helicopter traffic over Burnt Springs and Quartermaster Canyons? You might want to! Burnt Springs is where the only Grand Canyon rookeries of Great Blue Herons and Black Crowned Night Herons are.
- Protect our motor babies! G.C. Trust will divide and conquer to get rid of motor rigs! (I don't motor, but motor rigs were here before me)
- Looking into boatman retirement; toluene and aluminum are not adequate choices
- Getting more info about the research going on in the Canyon out to the boatmen
- More parties
- Acting like a union or becoming a union?
- More intensively surveying the exact needs of guides as individuals and as a group- namely to help improve the quality of professional guides- and to assist in their ability to live as normal people once ten to twenty years have passed!
- Are we archiving river movies? If so, let's have more movie nights
- Organizing Wilderness First Responder courses
- Compensating the people who work so hard on *the news*
- Run an "available" for work" hotline
- Work to standardize pay, benefits
- Work to eliminate the "baggage boatman" position; equal pay for all!
- Lobbying for pension, health insurance benefits
- Crack down on NPS meddling
- Promote ongoing (continuing) workshops - correspondence courses
- Not drinking enough beer

- Insist that the park enlarge the ramp at Lees Ferry. Maybe a private ramp downriver from the cable
- Work with Park, Hualapais, etc., to form long term management goals and plans for the Canyon
- Get all the old time boatmen involved somehow! There is an unbelievable wealth of knowledge there!
- Raising the dues to \$25
- News releases- national and regional media- with pics- putting our spin on things in the big ditch
- Coordinating efforts and political action with the Grand Canyon Trust and American Rivers
- GCRG visors
- Would like to see how GCRG could get more involvement from Utah- (and elsewhere)- based Grand Canyon boaters
- A little help in effectively contacting and writing to government officials about matters of concern; maybe a little bit more than just "Write your congressperson"!
- Research on-river sociology and how passenger expectations are changing
- I think GCRG ought to expand their focus on environmental and water issues and take a look at the entire Colorado River system
- Keep pursuing an active dialogue between Park/ Boatmen/Companies
- Working to reduce regulations on the river: Playboat rule, Lifejacket rule, New kayak guide certification
- Offer info to travel groups on type and quality of different trips and professionalism of their guides
- A resource museum with a video history
- Somehow try to make all company owners more aware of the value that long-term professional river guides have to their companies. We are highly skilled, underpaid professionals!
- Maybe working with the schools in the region
- I think that defecating and urinating in dry sand is a serious problem. Some of my favorite camps are now uncampable due to the stench. I know some boatmen make a point to have people urinate in dry sand. Little T.P. piles are showing up wherever you kick the sand. Let's attack this mentality!
- Intensify Anti-aircraft campaign
- Expand our interaction with owners and management. You're working hard on our behalf. Thank you. Keep opening up to fresh perspectives on how to provide a healthy support system for guides
- I would like to see the NPS change their policy on privateering, (taking pay as a private trip guide)
- I'd like to see a composting facility for human and organic waste from river trips. The technology is largely available
- Hey - keep it up - you're all appreciated - well - usually anyway!





## Elections and Opinions An Editorial

Some won and some lost, which is usual in most elections. This one wasn't much different. After the polls closed and the figures got tallied, **Martha Clark**, **Bill Liebfried** and **Christa Sadler** garnered the most votes. These folks are the happy—and unsuspecting—recipients of more work than they wanted, which is also usual after somebody wins an election.

The people that lose-out on the drudgery of keeping GCRG alive and breathing for the next two years, Tom Vail and Jeff Behan, did, in the first place, volunteer to run for office. In these parts, that is a major accomplishment all by itself. They were there when the gradient got steep and hoped to make a difference. No problem. They, and a few other unelected folks, will continue to do just that. They're doin' it right now, helping around the office, writing for *the news*, running to the print shop or post office or both, running to Grand Canyon for a meeting, running some place else for another meeting and, once in a while, when nothing else is happening, running down the river, too.

Sometimes, usually the first and third Tuesday of every month (but not too often in the summer), we run to Board of Directors' meetings. Our own, that is. Usually, we're the only people sitting there, which is weird. We talk about issues that affect Grand Canyon and what we imagine to be our livelihood in Grand Canyon. We do that earnestly and honestly. We—whether we're elected or not—attempt to define those issues of greatest interest and concern to our membership. Then, if we decide to, we try to set in motion whatever it is we think will work toward that end. We make every effort to go about what we want in a manner we think benefits all, because we're all in it together.

Given that, it's curious to note some of the suggestions/responses to the 'questionnaire' included as part of the 93' GCRG Ballot.

Many people indicated we're doing a great job; some even felt we excelled in a few areas. Thanks; we do try. Too, there were a lot of good, solid, suggestions for us to think about and work on, and we will think about them and work on them, just like you asked.

Somebody said they hated the tent. Ditto with us also, at least for what remains of it. He or She didn't offer an alternative, which is okay, except to say, Why not? No doubt, we need a new idea on that one. Got any? Someone else wanted to know why more outfit-fitters don't attend our meetings. Uh...its a mystery to

everybody around here as well.

A few responses indicated some folks think GCRG is a "rowbaby club" comprised of ensconced Flagstaff best buddies. This, if you will allow me the luxury, is a ludicrous statement. Nearly half the GCRG Board and Officers are motor-type people (some are even ambidextrous) and I, for one, didn't know a single person on the Board until elected. Then comes the cruel slosh of cold water square in the face—that GCRG doesn't represent Utah (or North Rim) (or wherever) boatmen, guides and swamper. I ask you: is that an accurate statement? Next, after splitting hairs very—very—thin, someone's gonna say we don't have a Utah motor pilot on the Board.

Sorry. Wrong again.

We are not an exclusionary organization. The only people whose opinions and concerns are excluded are those who exclude themselves by not communicating with us; not getting involved. Getting involved means caring, and it means work.

We need your help, your suggestions, your energy, your rational criticism, your body and brain, on the telephone or in person, at our meetings and most other places, come Hell or high water. And, we need your help whether you're elected or not. If we weren't interested, we wouldn't be doing it. How about you?

Shane Murphy

## Home

*Sun bleached bone,  
etched in stone the figures and faces  
of this place.  
Where the river rolls rock to sand...  
Sand to water.  
Water is Home*

*We white men came  
as they were told we would.  
They were told we would...  
And now each time the moon passes  
so does a piece of you.  
Gone from now to secret place  
where the river rolls  
sand from rock...  
Water on sand.  
Water is Home.*

KW



## Report From Lees Ferry

I want to thank everyone for their patience during my transition to the new ranger at the Ferry. You have all been very helpful while I learn the requirements and how to fit into your community. I think I can even put about twenty names to faces. (how would you all feel about wearing nametags for a year or so? just kidding...)

### Navajo Bridge

Navajo Bridge construction began May 3. We stay in close contact with the construction folks to keep track of activity: they are a great bunch of folks and are very accommodating. The bridge passage window, (11 AM to 1 PM) is in effect on weekdays; *not* on weekends or holidays. You may launch at any time, but may be delayed at the bridge if you miss the window. From time to time there will be no window during the week. A safety boat is on the river to hold traffic; it has radio contact with the construction foreman and the launch ramp at Lees. Those missing the window will be allowed through only when it is safe to do so.

Currently scaling operations are under way on the Navajo side to remove all hazard rocks from the construction zone. All of these rocks are being brought up and removed from the area. With the exception of a few very dangerous rocks, none will be released into the Canyon. Only the necessary rocks will be removed to prevent scarring. Safety nets will be in place to catch everything bigger than an inch and a half.

It sounds like work will stop from early October until after January 1, so most of the non-motorized season should be construction free. Steel should start arriving after the new year and we will be back on the bridge window routine. Stay tuned.

### Scatman

The rumors are true. The Scat machine at Meadview is in service. The dollar bill switch is installed so keep some bucks handy. Keep a handwashing set up handy too. Please follow the directions *to the letter*, especially completing the cycle so you don't get out of synch. For any problems, try to track down Dave Chapman, the Lower Gorge Ranger in Meadview, 564-2320.

Dave says a lot of interesting material is finding its way into the machine: a comb, a toothbrush, tin cans... You can't stand guard on your toilets, but we need to let people know that these toilets need to be treated just like their toilets at home, (assuming they don't use their home toilets for trash cans).

### Guide Licenses

Carol is trying to empty a file of partial guide certification cards. You know who you are: help us clear these up. Also, there may be some of you waiting for a card and not hearing from us. There seems to be a black hole here that gobbles up resumes, CPR certifications and even entire clumps of paperwork held together with wire clips. If in doubt as to your status, contact us.

From now on, when you come to take the test, we ask that you have all your paperwork in hand. For recerts: a current CPR and approved 1st Aid card. For new guides or upgrades to trip leader: the above cards and a *current* resume.

About the *kayak safety boat certification*: all that is required for this is to have a current guide certification card and submit a resume of river kayaking experience.

Feel free to grab us on the ramp if we can help with anything... except rigging your boats.

See you on the ramp.

*Blu Picard (and Carol)*

## NAFTA Highway Update

In the last issue, you read about the proposed northward extension of I-17 to I-15 through canyon country as part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (If I'd Wanted to Sell Diesel Fuel...). Since then, Arizona Dept. of Transportation (ADOT) eliminated from study the corridors through Marble Canyon but not those through Page.

The three remaining proposed routes all come from Flagstaff, pass near Cameron and go to Page. One of those gets there by passing along the east side of the Echo Cliffs to Page. From Page, all three rejoin and head towards Kanab but only one makes it there. One veers northward up Meadow Canyon, another veers northward up Johnson Canyon; both of these eventually join I-15 just north of Panguitch. The third makes it to Kanab before going south to Fredonia, Hurricane, and finally I-15. They eliminated going north from Kanab because of some endangered critters in some pools just north of town.

At a special city council meeting in Flagstaff, citizens voiced strong opposition to running it through there, despite a city council mostly in favor of the idea. We heard from ADOT that the Kingman route would be 1.2 billion dollars cheaper than the Flagstaff route. Since then, NAFTA has run into some potentially significant legal snags. But, we have a president and many others still strongly pushing passage of the law.



## Shifting Sands of Time

*The issue was simple and straightforward. Beaches against low power rates. And the plan would be just as simple. The public meeting was to be held at a large hotel right downtown, lots of traffic, lots of people. And rumor had it that the power interests were going to bus in a bunch of folks from out of town to make a big showing. The media would be there, especially if we gave them a call ahead and let them in on it. Picture it; busy front steps, people arriving, cameras rolling, warm summer evening light. Unnoticed a dump truck slowly rumbles up a side street. People step aside as it swings up into the registration lane. With a belch of diesel it backs toward the main doors and dumps 4 tons of fine, white sand on the front steps. People shout, cameras roll, and a spokesman steps up to the camera to state that this sand represents the beaches of Grand Canyon which were being swept downstream at an alarming rate. Too late to make the 6:00 o'clock news but should make it at 10. Might even the national news shows in the morning...*

Such a scene never occurred but it was certainly discussed. Instead the public meeting went off rather smoothly. Buses of supporters did arrive. Both sides made angry statements denouncing the motives and tactics of the other. Power bills were going to go through the roof. The Grand Canyon was being washed away. It made the local 10 o'clock news.

Thirty years ago a new awareness of the environment sprang on the scene and a new consciousness was born. No one thing symbolized this shift better than the battle over the construction of Glen Canyon Dam. From that battle too sprang methods for focusing public opinion on threats to our earth, air, and water. Since then many of these issues have been waged directly in front of the public, with letter campaigns, national advertising, marches, protests, and media events. Techniques were refined, mailing lists honed, and all sides learned to effectively focus and motivate public response. Today these strategies are no longer the domain of a single, dedicated crusader with a typewriter. They are big and sophisticated and, as often as not, are effected by trumpeting our differences.

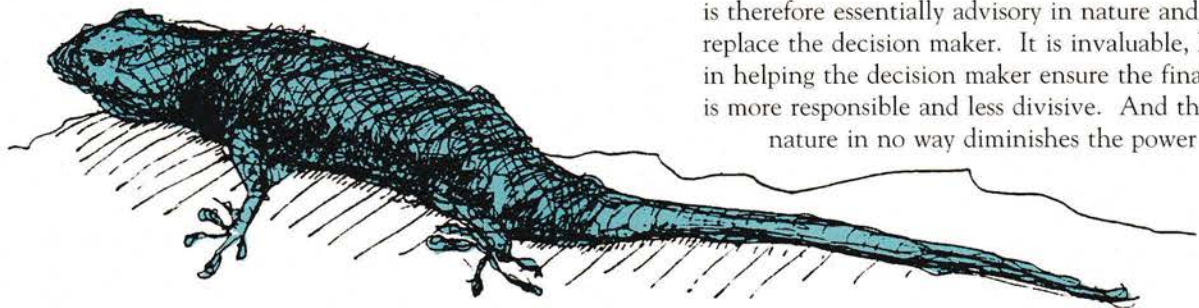
There are few real

benefits to showing where we agree.

Consensus and the end of gridlock. We hear these phrases so often these days they seem almost meaningless. But behind these buzzwords is a sincere and widespread effort to find new and more efficient ways of solving the moral and cultural issues that confront us today. Not that we are all of a like mind now, that our values and ideas are completely converging. It's simpler than that. It's the realization that many of the decision making processes we've evolved no longer serve their purpose, no longer provide us with solutions in a timely and effective manner. And nowhere is that more evident than in issues of our nation's economy and environment.

The dictionary has two very different definitions for consensus. The first, "a majority of opinion", is well established. Our present system is based on majority rule. But often the process of establishing a majority entails stressing our differences more than our commonalities. The end justifies the means, triumph is more important than agreement. The second definition, "general agreement or concord; harmony", is very different and desperately under-used. We need to resurrect real consensus, to focus on agreement first, and resolution second.

For two very different reasons the time has come for a new process. First, issues are seldom as clear as they once were. It's rare that we can simply be for or against a new project. Instead the issues revolve over how we manage existing resources. Such is the case in Grand Canyon. We are no longer in a position to bring back Glen Canyon or the pre-dam Colorado River, we must decide how to manage the river we have. And secondly, we can no longer afford the time, money, and energy to wage the simple "majority rules". Change will be slow because the process is a departure from the present. But it won't replace our present system. Consensus cannot be used to impose an unwanted action on any member of the process. Any effort to do so forces that member to withdraw, and consensus defaults to simple majority rule. The process is therefore essentially advisory in nature and will not replace the decision maker. It is invaluable, however, in helping the decision maker ensure the final decision is more responsible and less divisive. And the advisory nature in no way diminishes the power of





agreement. On the contrary, the strength of consensus comes from the number and diversity of viewpoints that agree. It is more important that a wide variety of stakeholders agree on a few subjects rather than few stakeholders agree on all subjects.

Is it possible. Yes. There are many examples of effective consensus processes today. The nearest involves the Cooperating Agencies for the Glen Canyon EIS. As little as two years ago there were wide differences of opinion over many aspects of the EIS. Today instead of two decidedly armed camps these agencies are focusing on two very similar alternatives. Is this agreement binding on the Secretary? No. But the fact that a wide and diverse consensus has emerged will make his decision much easier and will allow all at the table to go home with less animosity.

I attended the strategy meeting where the truckload of sand was discussed. To the credit of all there it was never seriously considered. Not because it would not have made the news but because it would not have been effective. There was a gut feeling in the room that that pile of sand would not have brought us closer to our objective.

A solution. Issues are different, lines blurred, and those wearing black and white hats not as obvious as they once were. It's not as simple as being for or against a dam; we are instead faced with the question how do we best use the dam? We find ourselves in new alliances with strange bedfellows. But as we find it harder to completely disagree we therefore must find it easier to agree.

There are many opportunities for agreement. The consensus now present in this EIS is an opportunity to generate more. It is up to us, the various stakeholders, to determine a long-term philosophy for maintaining the Colorado's downstream environment, the objectives of dam management, and the role of science in the Canyon's future. The Adaptive Management Program and long-term Monitoring Program can only benefit from the participation and collaboration of many viewpoints.

We will not always have consensus. But we can agree on as many points as possible. We should be judged by the amount we agree. Each agreement represents something we don't have to spend precious time, energy, and money fighting over. And we should encourage others to join us. The strength of consensus comes from the number and diversity of viewpoints that agree.

*Tom Moody*

## X Marks the Spot

There has been some confusion regarding whether or not one should pick up the photo-panels lying around the river corridor. I hope this article will be helpful.

Photo-panels have been used for a number of years as a means for referencing aerial photographs to exact points on the ground. This is required for accurate delineation of vegetation, habitat areas, sand bar movement, etc. The panels are used to keep the photographs properly aligned with the geographic coordinate system used in the canyon; they are essential to the integrity of individual research projects and the long-term monitoring program. We know the panels are an eyesore, but they serve a very important research function.

There have, however, been several incidents in the past where panels were left in place much longer than necessary. The panels only have to be in place long enough for the aerial photographs to be taken. This usually means that panels shouldn't have to be on the ground longer than 3 or 4 weeks. If the panels get removed **before** the aerial photo flight, then that area of the photograph will not get accurate referencing. It is GCES' intention not to leave panels in place between aerial photo overflights.

There is probably more than one rotting panel still waiting to be taken out of the Canyon. Because of these mistakes, we have called GCRG for assistance.

Several guides were recently asked to pick up panels from a Memorial Day photo shoot. These folks put in many hot hours hiking to panel locations, only to find that the panels had already been removed. While we could not explain the removal, it became evident that a better means of communication was necessary. Accordingly, GCES proposes the following methods for getting this information to the guides:

- 1) On each panel placed, we will write the date it can be removed.
- 2) We will inform the Lees Ferry Rangers of anticipated photo shoot dates and locations and panel pick-up dates, so that guides have an idea of how long a panel should remain in a given area.
- 3) If you find a fading or rotting panel, please pick it up and put a small cairn where it was.
- 4) Please return all panels to the GCES office.

Your efforts to help us keep the Canyon clean are very much appreciated. If you have any questions, please call Chris Brod, Mark Gonzales, or Frank Protiva at the GCES Survey Dept., (602) 556-7459.

*Frank Protiva*



# Poop

There are several issues regarding the newly implemented Grand Canyon National Park Service regulation concerning the handling of human waste on the river that merit discussion.

The primary concern for guides I have spoken with is the greater health risk resulting from increased handling of fecal matter. Regardless of the various multi-day use container systems utilized to comply with the new regulation, guides are much more exposed to open feces and the dangers inherent therein.

Both the Infectious Disease and Occupational Health Service offices at the University of Utah Health Sciences Center not only corroborated my concerns about the health risks, they stressed the necessity for vaccinations against the Hepatitis B virus for everyone handling human feces. While it was their medical opinion that Hepatitis B vaccine was imperative for those in direct contact with feces, they also noted that Hepatitis B is but one of a host of potential health risks.

As guides, the increased exposure to these risks translates directly to increased risks for people we take through Grand Canyon. The exposure would occur primarily through food preparation, for which most guides are also responsible.

I would like to enumerate some of the areas of greater contact with human feces:

1. Lids of multi-day use containers often have feces on them. These lids have to be handled each time the system is set up and torn down.
2. The funnels on certain systems require daily cleaning. The brushes used to clean them retain fecal matter and/or used toilet paper. The brushes have to be rinsed in water which in turn has to be dumped somewhere.
3. Emptying said containers is problematic. The Scat Machine at Pearce Ferry has been out of order more times than not for me thus far. River companies that do not have in-house Scat Machines must empty feces directly into septic systems. In most cases this involves "pouring" the waste into concrete holes or through grates.
4. The containers must then be cleaned. This is done by high pressure water spray, which can splash back, or by direct brushing.

There have been instances where some commercially available containers leaked at the drain plug directly into boats. There was another case where one of my co-workers was splattered with feces that was left in the Scat Machine from a previous user.

Aside from the health risks multi-day use containers pose other problems. These include the weight of full or partially full tanks, as well as space inefficiency packing them.

It is apparent that given all the above, the previous system was much cleaner, safer and more efficient. I recognize that one of the reasons behind this new system was to get away from non-biodegradable waste (plastic bags). I concede that this is a goal we should all work towards. In this case, however, the new multi-day use, reusable container has created more problems than the one it purportedly solves.

It is my understanding that another reason for the new system was to comply with the "Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, as amended, for all municipal solid waste landfill (MSWLF) units and the Clean Water Act, for MSWLF's used to dispose of sewage sludge. In my reading of both amended acts I did not find any reference to the illegality of disposing human waste in the forms we would generate on river trips at MSWLF's. (See Federal Register/ Volume 56 No. 196/ Wed. Oct. 9 1991/ Rules and Regulations/ Subpart A).

This was corroborated by Jerry Allen, Environmental Protection Specialist at the EPA Regional Office in Denver. He said there is nothing in the new regulations that make it illegal to dispose of human waste in the forms we see on river trips at MSWLF's. He added that the decision to accept human waste at MSWLF's is entirely that of the owner or operating agency with no bearing to legal requirements.

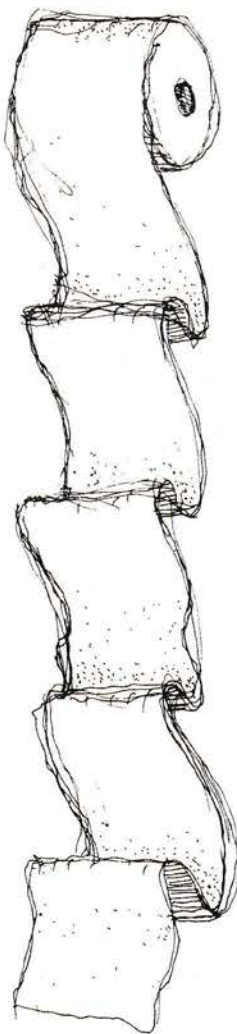
Given all the negative aspects associated with the new system, I would like to suggest that the option of using the previous system be reinstated until a system can be devised whereby direct contact with fecal matter is virtually eliminated and we are not contributing to the burden of non-biodegradable waste at our landfills.

I recognize that there may be river companies that use the new system and find it workable. I am certain that, given the option, several would prefer to utilize the old system until the "best" system is devised.

Any additional comments and suggestion are welcome. Thanks !

*Abel O. Nelson*

grand canyon river guides





## Piddle

**O**kay: you're a half mile up the Little Colorado and that third cup of coffee wants out. Which way do you point? Or maybe you're up above Deer Creek in the shade and a passenger has to tinkle. Where do you direct him/her? How about at the main pool at Elves? Or at the first crossing at Havasu?

The question is often brought up, but few people know the answer. And is that answer appropriate in every situation? Well, let's talk about it.

Here are the rules:

The River regulations state that:

- Urine must go,
  - 1) in the Colorado River,
  - 2) below the high water line in the wet sand or
  - 3) in the toilet. Period.
- No soap or *any other product* may go in side streams or within 100 yards of the stream's confluence with the Colorado. Period.

On the other hand, the backcountry regulations state that:

- Urination will take place at least 100 feet from any side stream. Period.

The boundary between River and Backcountry is not well defined but can be loosely defined as 1/4 to 1/2 mile from the river.

That sums it up, at least in terms of the legalities. In many spots the back country regulation can be followed without any problem and with little chance of odor building up. In others, however, fragile soils or sheer cliffs may prevent getting a hundred feet from the stream or even off the trail. This situation can be exacerbated when it is a heavily used area, such as the Little C or Havasu. But if peeing in the stream were legalized, what about the low volume streams such as Elves and Deer Creek? Ick.

Would a carry it out policy work?  
Ummmmm...maybe not.

What to do?

- Always suggest that bladders be emptied before a side hike begins.
- State the rules for backcountry peeing.
- Do your best.
- Write **Whuddyathink?** with suggestions on how, *if at all*, the rules should be changed or amended. Think about it. It's tricky.

## Wuddyathink?



### On trimming tamarisks...

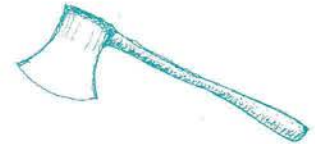
Like Shaving- It's Unnecessary.  
*Russell*

On the river I've: shaded under, found a little calm from the wind in, found a little privacy behind, and tied the boat to them.

*Steve Stratton*

Bonsai Tamarisk  
Shade trees are nice.  
The tamarisk don't belong.  
They're not going away,  
So use them.  
Trim them carefully, Like a bonsai.

*Moe Guinness (a.k.a. George Bain)*



At a place such as Grapevine we should actually plant them along the slipface to keep what is left of the beach from eroding into the river.

*Steve Savage*

They are intruders, an exotic species in the Canyon, and they are getting too dominant- but so are we! They've got the same rights as we have. Live and let live.

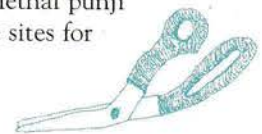
*Achim Gottwald*

It's like chives. Trimming seems to invigorate growth. Poison? A peril to the river water. You have a problem with the damned things.

*Carol Burke*

As long as it's done without leaving lethal punji sticks. Perhaps we could designate some sites for bonsai trimming. Ah, the zen of it all.

*Anonymous*



I might clear out some pointed dead branches on the trail to the porta potty, but I do not agree with landscaping a campsite to look like a state park. All things in moderation, especially modification.

*Bob Melville*



For our next issue, send 25 words on:

### Off-River Piddling

(see article on left)



## Closing the Recycling Loop

Ever wonder where all the plastic, paper, aluminum, glass, and tires you've been collecting and recycling ends up? Aluminum cans and glass jars are usually recycled back into new cans and bottles, but what about the more difficult-to-recycle materials like plastics and tires? Here are some new, innovative products that are being made from recycled materials:

### The Deja Shoe:

Eco Sneaks™ and Envirolites™ shoes are made mostly of recycled materials: The molded upper rubber parts and outsole are made from a combination of tire rubber, polystyrene cups, milk jugs and food

trays. The interfacing is made from recycled pop bottles. The neoprene foam cushioning is made of trim waste from wetsuit and gasket manufacturers. The layer under the foam cushioning is made from magazines and corrugated cardboard. And when the shoes eventually wear out, you can send them back to the manufacturer for further recycling.

### 1992 Recycling Totals for River Companies

Aluminum	3.8 Tons
Glass	7.8 Tons
Steel	3.1 Tons
Cardboard	5 Tons
Plastic	1 Ton
Stories of our heroic deeds	27.3 Tons

### Fleece Fashions:

Patagonia and Sierra Designs are unveiling pullover sweatshirts and jackets of fleece fabric made in part from recycled post-consumer plastic bottles. Supposedly, they'll look very similar to the currently-used fleece.

### Smart Scrubbie:

The Scotch Brite scouring pad is made from 100% recycled soda bottles.

### Recycled Tire Products:

Ground rubber is being used to make a variety of products like irrigation tubing, indoor and outdoor athletic surfacing, and as rubber cart paths in golf courses. The largest market for ground tire rubber is as a binder or an aggregate in asphalt pavement.

It's products like these that help make recycling work. To close the loop, buy recycled products.

*Kris Campitelli*

## "Georgie's Rapid" Project

As many of you are no doubt aware, over a year has gone by since Georgie White Clark "ran her last rapid", as the late Dock Marston would have said it. Those of us who worked with her are especially feeling the loss.

Now that one year has passed the U. S. Geological Survey Board on Geographic Names will consider the naming of a geographical place for Georgie.

The time has come to put together a request that will convince them that this incredible woman is worthy of this honor.

The fact that many of her former passengers and crewmen hoped to honor her by having Crystal renamed as "Georgie's Crystal Rapid", or just "Georgie's Rapid", was presented to GCRG but was turned down. I know it would not be prudent to try to force this on the guides and that is why I am turning to you for ideas.

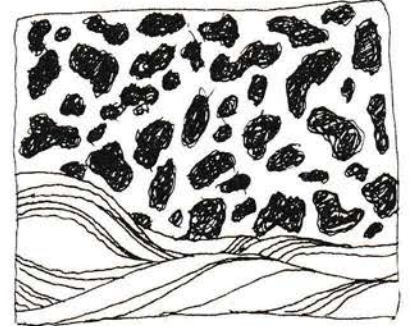
Teresa Yates has suggested 24-Mile Rapid which, in low water, can cause a few good hoots and hollers. She also says that there is no particular history associated with that rapid. Therefore that might be acceptable. I would appreciate hearing other suggestions and reasons for same.

Please realize that rapids below Lava Falls would not be acceptable. We want as many people made aware of Georgie and her remarkable career as possible. I also want to point out that Georgie thought of many rapids other than the big guys like Hance, Sock, Crystal and Lava as just "Miscellaneous". She lived for the powerful rapids and giving her passengers the biggest thrills she could. The bigger the waves, the bigger her grin when she came through them!

What about a plaque? Does anyone know how to go about doing that, including possible cost?

Please drop me a note or a postcard as soon as possible. I realize this is getting to be the busy time of year, but this project needs to get going. You can reach me at the address given below. Thanks a lot for your help. It really is appreciated.

*Roz Jirge*  
1729 Bishop Drive  
Concord, CA 94521  
(510) 825-9410





# Rocks, Rapids and the Hydraulic Jump

Tom Moody

**W**ater flows downhill. Side canyons make rapids. Rocks make holes. These are the essential facts that face each of us as we travel down the Canyon. But these are just the essentials; there is much more to the story. Why are the rapids where they are? Where do the rocks come from and why does the water act like it does when it meets a rock? Do rapids change? Shedding light on these and other questions is the story told here. The geomorphology and hydraulics of the Grand Canyon are complex subjects. As anyone knows who spends much time on a river, the dynamics of turbulent water are anything but simple. But I will leave the equations to more technical papers and ask those more knowledgeable in these subjects to excuse my simplifications.

One of the side benefits of the study of the operations of Glen Canyon Dam is a more thorough look at the river and its rapids. Much of the information presented here is extracted from the work done for the Bureau of Reclamation's Glen Canyon Environmental Studies (GCES). In particular I would like to thank Sue Kieffer for work on the rapids and waves of the Canyon, to Bob Webb for insight into debris flows and an analysis of the photos taken by Robert Stanton in 1890, and to Jack Schmidt for an understanding of the Canyon's dynamic geomorphology.

## Rapids: a primer

In Grand Canyon virtually all rapids are formed by the rock debris carried into the river from side canyons. Tumultuous summer thunderstorms and severe winter storms wash large amounts of sediment into the river, narrowing the river as a fan of debris is built. Because side canyons tend to form along structural weaknesses (or faults) in the rock, canyons on both sides of the river are common and can provide twice the material. As the river is narrowed a sort of dam (technically called a weir) is formed which backs up the river and forms a quiet pool above the rapid. This pooled water then rushes over the weir in an effort to drop back to its original level, gravity speeds it up, and a rapid is formed.

## Debris Flows: rocks that float

The fact that our side canyons are very steep allows water flowing down them to pick up a great deal of energy. Flash floods normally come to mind when we think of mechanisms that move rock down these canyons and flash floods do carry considerable sediment. But a much more efficient mechanism exists to

move really big rocks down our normally dry washes, one that can actually float house sized boulders. It's called a debris flow.

When the Colorado is thick and muddy it contains less than 15% solids. A hyperconcentrated flow such as a flash flood may be made up of as much as 40% solids. But a debris flow can be 85% solids, so thick that large boulders are floated on top of the flow. Because it acts only as a lubricant, a little water can move a lot of rocks. The next time you pass the rock at President Harding consider that it probably floated down the steep slope on river left and half way across the river. Debris flows may be the topic of a later story in *the news*, so enough said here.

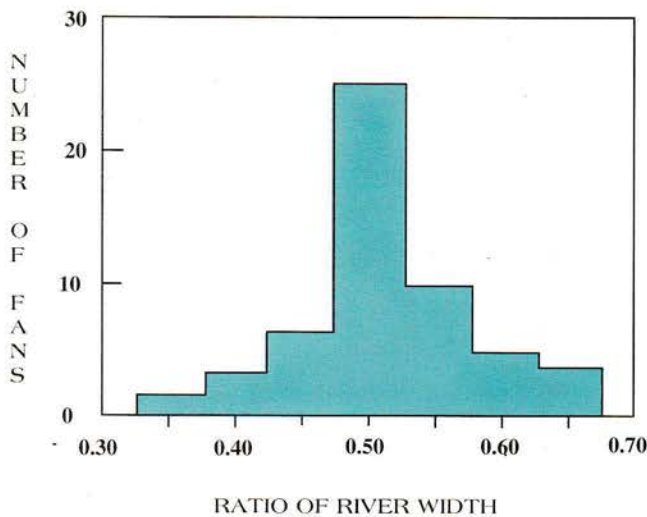
## River reshapes the rapid

No sooner does a debris fan form at a canyon mouth than the river begins to remove it. The river's success in this task is dependent on how much energy it can muster for the job. Higher energy comes from more velocity; the tighter the constriction the higher the velocity through it. In fact, the river's ability to move material increases with the square of the velocity. If the river current's speed doubles, the force is multiplied by four. A tripling of water speed increases force by nine. In short, high water removes the largest rocks in the shortest time. And the pre-dam Colorado often saw high water. Natural spring floods regularly brought 80,000 - 125,000 cfs through the Canyon. Floods of 125,000 cfs in 1957, 220,000 cfs in 1921, and an estimated 300,000 cfs in 1884 have been identified. Of course the closing of Glen Canyon Dam in 1963 put a stop to the high spring floods. Until 1983 that is....

## A Common Width Ratio

In her investigations of the Colorado's rapids, Sue Kieffer came upon an interesting phenomenon. It seems there is a "normal" ratio between the width of the river at constrictions formed by debris fans and the width of the river immediately upstream. At the majority of Canyon rapids the river narrows to about one half the it's width upstream, a ratio of 0.5. We understand that as each new fan is subjected to the forces of high spring floods, rocks and debris will be washed downstream and the channel widened. It is less obvious why there should be such a "standard" width ratio. What force acts so uniformly on all debris fans to bring them to this standard? The answer may lay in a physical phenomenon we see on the river everyday, a hydraulic jump.





Histogram of the ratio of the narrowest constriction to the normal width of the channel upstream. Values are for the Colorado River as it passes 59 of the largest debris fans in the 225 mile stretch below Lee's Ferry (from Kieffer, 1985).

### Hydraulic Jumps

Hydraulic jumps are common in our rapids. Most of the waves and holes we try so hard to avoid are some class of jump. When you gaze at the ledge at Lava, or the hole at 209 Mile, or the waves in the tongue of Crystal you are witnessing a hydraulic jump in action. What causes them and why do they occur? There are at least a dozen equations to describe the basic nature of water flow but the only one you need to know here is  $Q = VA$ . The flow of water ( $Q$ ) equals river speed ( $V$ ) times the cross-sectional area ( $A$ ) of the channel. We see it all the time. As the dam releases more water the river moves faster (greater velocity) and the river level rises (greater area). In narrow stretches of the river the current is faster, in wider sections it is slower. Because water does not compress, this is always true.

But what happens to water that is flowing through constrictions? Depending on the velocity and depth of the stream, the flow is described as being subcritical, critical, or supercritical. The slow, placid river above President Harding is certainly subcritical. The swift, turbulent water down the right side of Lava is just as certainly supercritical. Critical flow exists as a transition between these two. When water flows very swiftly it builds up a lot of energy. This internal energy can be thought of as a combination of the turbulence and velocity of the water. If the velocity increases very swiftly or the depth decreases quickly, as in our rapids, the flow can become supercritical and very unstable. The internal energy of the water, a function of its velocity and depth, can become greater than the force of gravity which is holding it down. Suddenly the river is trying to cram too much water through too

small a tube. Some of the internal energy must be released and, being constrained on three sides by the channel, it does so by rising upward and slowing back to its subcritical state. A hydraulic jump is formed. Most of these we see as waves, the most severe we call holes.

The wall of water formed can be steep and dramatic. Our  $Q = VA$  equation must be satisfied, so the river behind the jump (or hole, remember) has a greater depth and slower velocity, and reestablishes the balance of energies. Because the main ingredients for a hydraulic jump are swift water and quickly changing depths, rapids are perfect incubators. Three things common in a rapid can bring on a jump: 1) the river channel can suddenly shallow, 2) a large obstruction (such as a rock) can cause the water to shallow as it moves over it, and/or 3) the channel can quickly narrow. In the Canyon it's usually some combination of these. But how does that effect the width ratio of rapids?

### The Normal Wave

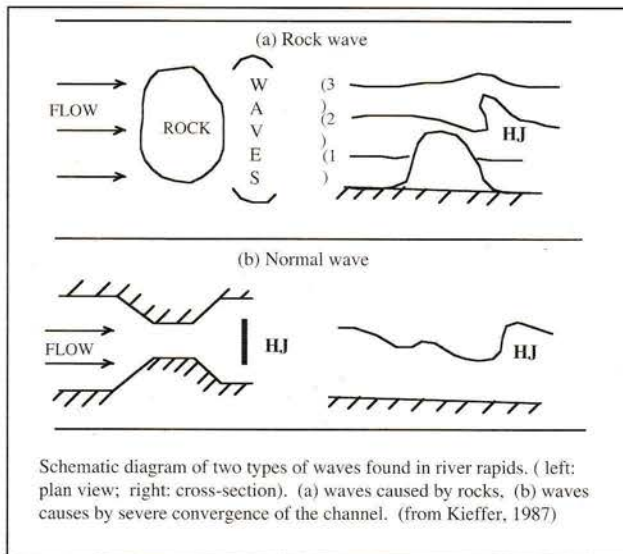
When the high water of a spring flood hits the severe constriction of a recent debris flow a hydraulic jump or hole of enormous size and power can form. Such a hole is not associated with individual rocks as we are used to experiencing. It is a broad, backbreaking wave created by supercritical flow formed by the sudden constriction of the river and the high velocity of the water. This wave, called a normal wave, is perpendicular to the river flow, often spanning the width of the river, and can be tens of feet in height. The wave has tremendous turbulence and can quickly erode and widen the channel until the flow again becomes subcritical and the jump subsides. Sue Kieffer attributed the uniformity in width ratios to this process. As long as the channel is erodible the process is essentially self regulating. If the constriction is too narrow, high spring floods create a normal wave which in turn erodes the channel sufficiently to remove the wave. But the closure of Glen Canyon Dam in 1963 ended the natural spring floods and up until 1983 river levels rarely exceeded 30,000 cfs. Any rapid that formed during those 20 years had not yet fully matured. As we shall see, this is exactly the case at Crystal.

### Crystal: A rapid's rapid.

Crystal Rapid, the rock garden, Slate Creek eddy, Crystal Hole,..... Crystal. With the possible exception of Lava Falls few rapids in the world evoke such universal respect and awe. How many sweaty palms have climbed to the top of the bluff and gazed down on the tumultuous waters? Has anyone climbed up there without sweaty palms and a dry mouth?

But Crystal is more than a large rapid. It is long;





one of the longest we have in the Canyon. It is situated in the ominous depths of the upper Granite Gorge. And it's not a pretty place to get in trouble. An upside down boat or swimmer has a long swift float ahead all the way to Tuna Creek or beyond. That is if the rock garden is safely negotiated. There are as many different runs as there are boatmen to run them. While the runs in Lava have stayed pretty much the same over the past 25 years, Crystal has changed dramatically. Its recent history gives us a glimpse into the evolution of the rest of the rapids in Grand Canyon. So if you're interested in what makes them tick, whether you've climbed to the bluff with sweaty palms yet or not, here is the story of Crystal of Grand Canyon.

#### Pre-1966

Little changed in Crystal Rapid between Robert Stanton's first photos in 1890 and 1966. But over the past 25 years it has been the one of the most dynamic in the Canyon. At the turn of the century Crystal was a long but relatively minor rapid. The 1923 U.S.G.S survey party measured a drop of 17 feet. (See pictures) The run was wide and the river pushed to the right or Crystal side. There was no rock garden. The main pre-1966 obstacles were rocks on the left, the result of a large debris flow out of Slate Creek. The force of this flow, which occurred sometime before 1890, was such that it pushed material tens of feet upstream. The large rock we still see on river left just above the mouth of Slate Creek came from that debris flow and hasn't budged in more than 100 years.

#### 1966 Flood

In December of 1966 a severe winter storm struck the western United States. It was neither the largest

nor most severe to hit this region but it set off a sequence of events that was to dramatically effect all who subsequently floated the Colorado. Instead of snow this warm storm brought rain to the high elevations of the Colorado Plateau. It is estimated that only about 5 inches of rain fell in intense cloudbursts along the upper drainages of the Crystal amphitheater but this rainfall triggered 19 slope failures in the Hermit Shale, Supai Group, and Muav Limestone. These failures provided the material for several debris flows that joined in Dragon Creek and flowed 13 miles to the Colorado River at an estimated 10 to 12 miles per hour. At the river 10,000 cfs of rock debris collided with 10,000 cfs of river water, severely constricting the river to a width of less than 100 feet and increasing the fall of the rapid by 16 feet. "Lake Crystal" was formed, drowning the tail waves of Boucher Rapid upstream.

In the span of a few minutes Crystal became a completely new rapid. But it was a young and immature rapid. The river cleared what it could from its channel and formed the rock garden below. With a drop of 33 feet it was now certainly one of the longest and swiftest rapids in the Canyon. But it differed from most other rapids in two important ways. First, the main drop and narrowest constriction (barely 100 feet wide) did not occur at the head of the rapid as is common. Most of the fall was spread relatively evenly between the tongue and the constriction well below the Slate Creek eddy. Standing within this constriction was a large rock. The famous Crystal Hole was formed when the river, accelerating swiftly down the long slope of the upper debris fan, became supercritical when forced over the large rock and through the narrow constriction simultaneously.

The second and most important difference was in the width ratio. The constriction in Crystal was barely one quarter the width of the river upstream instead of the more common one half. This severe narrowing certainly contributed to the size and power of the old Crystal Hole and played an important role in the events of 1983. Crystal had yet to completely come of age.

#### 1983 Flood

By 1980 a series of wet years had completed the filling of Lake Powell and the dam stood at near capacity. The winter of 1982-83 produced twice the normal snowpack in the southern Rocky Mountains. Just enough room remained to accommodate a normal spring runoff. But this spring was anything but normal. A series of warm, wet storms spread rain along the snowpacked watersheds and the rivers feeding the Colorado rose dramatically. Glen Canyon Dam began releasing excess water in early June, 1983. By June 7th



the Colorado River was flowing at 50,000 cfs; by June 22nd, 70,000 cfs; and finally peaked on June 26 at 92,000 cfs. The inflow to Lake Powell peaked shortly before at 120,000 cfs.

During that period enormous changes took place in Crystal. As the river rose the old "Crystal Hole" was replaced by a large hydraulic jump, (Normal Wave) perpendicular to the river current and about 100 feet downstream of the old hole. As flows reached 50,000 - 60,000 cfs much of the debris fan was covered with slow water and the run of choice was through the tammies there. Loud cannon-like booms from the main channel announced the movement of large boulders. The Normal Wave surged to heights of 30 feet. At 92,000, cfs water (and boats) entered the wave at almost 30 mph while velocities through the wave were only a little over 10 mph. Going through the wave was like hitting a two story wall at 20 mph. Even the largest rafts flipped.

Meanwhile the rising power of the river increased the width of the channel by removing the shoreline along the crystal debris fan. At the same time it deepened its channel by eroding upstream toward the head of the rapid. When the water finally dropped in October, Crystal was very different. Gone was the old

Crystal Hole, replaced by a strong hole or two at the entrance of the rapid. The narrowest point and the steepest drop now occurred at the head of the rapid where a strong hole was now the focus of river running. The rock garden received the majority of the material torn out of the main rapid. Most significantly the width ratio had increased from .25 to about .40. It was expected that the increased width ratio would be sufficient to eliminate the



supercritical conditions that created Crystal's Normal Wave. But a few springs later, as the river rose again to more than 45,000 cfs, I personally watched a large breaking wave appear just where the Normal Wave had been, perpendicular to the current and nearly shore to shore. One of our rafts actually flipped twice exiting the rock garden right side up but worse for the wear. A second raft flipped, and with the boatman perched on the floor, floated all the way to Elves before finding an eddy.

#### Epilog

While Crystal can now be considered a full grown rapid, it is by no means completely mature. Its width ratio of 0.40 is still less than the average of 0.50. Higher flows would almost certainly result in supercritical flow and another Normal Wave. Sue Kieffer's calculations show that the 0.50 width ratio is probably the result of river levels in the range of 400,000 cfs. Crystal will have to wait for the silting of Glen Canyon Dam before experiencing those flows. It may just do so. In spite of the 1966 debris flow, Crystal drainage is not considered particularly active. An event of that magnitude may not occur there again in the next 1000 years. Interestingly, according to Bob Webb, the side canyon which will most likely produce the next new rapid is none other than Prospect Canyon at Lava Falls.

Now that could be interesting.....



### Crystal Rapid: Before and after

On the left is a Stanton Photo, taken from the scouting terrace and dated February 8, 1890. Note the debris fan from Slate Creek and the absence of the Rock Garden.

On the right is a duplicate photo by Ralph Hopkins, dated February 1, 1990. Note the invasion of tamarisk and the tremendous delta shoved well past mid-channel. Also note the effects that tens of thousands of fret-hours of boatmen's feet have had on the (formerly) cryptogamic soils. In spite of that, 5 Mormon Tea plants have persisted through a century. Photos courtesy of Bob Webb and the National Archives.



## Further Education of Guides: Stalling or Flying?

I was talking to a river pard the other day about learning to fly a plane. We talked about what causes a plane to stall. "It's an awful feeling", he said. "The plane kind of shudders and jerks and well, stops flying. If you don't do something, it starts to fall out of the sky!" "Wow," I dumbly said, "I guess stalling is really important to learn about." "Uhh...yep".

Some guides are worried about this. After mentioning the possibility of a credential in the last issue of the news (Professional Guide Workshop), some folks conjured up images of more requirements and tests and bureaucratic nonsense. One guide stated that "we aren't academics, that's not what we do". So, now what?

Well, we've also heard a lot of encouraging words to continue building an educational program that goes beyond the yearly Guides Training Seminar. The idea is that the GTS, as superlative as it is, only reaches the relatively few guides who can manage to get there. The excellent speakers and spontaneity of the event will continue to be a treasured event. But, the GTS is designed to cover a wide smattering of topics relatively lightly. I mean, its a great hit; but what can we do for guides who really want to sink their teeth into a particular topic? And, how can those guides link into a network of others with similar interests? How can

we more effectively share the tremendous wealth of experience out there on interpretation tricks?

We're presently assembling a questionnaire with a few such pertinent questions on this topic. When you get it in the mail, please think and respond. And plan on helping us get something rolling at the Fall Meeting in Moab.

Canyonlands Field Institute in Moab is interested in working with us to help establish a guide training program using their expertise in outdoor experiential education. They've volunteered to put on a special edition of their Endangered Fish of the Colorado River workshop in conjunction with the fall GCRG meeting. It will take place on Sunday afternoon, Nov. 14 in Moab after the GCRG Meeting.

It's mid July on the Plateau. The desert air has a different smell. Could it be the monsoon? If I was flying a plane up there right now, I'd want to know all about stalling. Don't forget what we stand for: "setting the highest standards...", "... the best possible river experience" and all that good stuff.

*Andre Potochnik*



## Fall Meeting in Moab

If you haven't marked it on your calendar yet, magic-marker in the weekend of November 13-14 for a pilgrimage to Moab. We'll be gathering at Ken and Jane Sleight's Pack Creek Ranch for a multi purpose Fall Meeting.

We can camp in the nearby Forest Service Campground, or if you like, Ken and Jane are making us a bare bones deal on lodging in the cabins at about \$30 per night, per person, for the nights of November 12 & 13. If you want to reserve one of the 50 beds, you need to send a \$20 non-refundable deposit in to GCRG today. Be sure you mark it "for Pack Creek deposit", so we don't think it's for dues.

We need to know NOW if you want a room, as Pack Creek needs to rent the rooms out to the general public if we don't want them. **Deadline for this discounted rate is an August 20 postmark on your deposit!** After that, the ranch will be open to the public at the regular rate (call (801)259-5505.)

We're anticipating a lot of old time boaters as well as a lot of fresh young Utah faces. Not an event to miss!

Here's a very rough itinerary:

### Thursday, November 11

Afternoon Powell Museum tour and show in Green River?

Evening Party at Ray's Tavern?

### Friday, November 12

Gather at Pack Creek in the afternoon.

Party and storytelling

### Saturday, November 13

Morning: GCRG Fall Meeting

Afternoon: Creation of some sort of an Upper Basin river guides association

Evening: Storytelling and party

### Sunday, November 14

Morning: First General Meeting of Aforementioned New Organization.

Noon: Depart Pack Creek Ranch

Afternoon: Mini-course on Endangered Fish, put on for our benefit by and at Canyonlands Field Institute, in Moab.

**Monday & Tuesday:** Bring-Your-Own-Boat-Float on the Moab Daily stretch of the Colorado. Camp at Onion Creek

## Utah Boaters Unite!

Due to popular demand, a large part of our Fall Meeting itinerary will be devoted to helping form an Upper Basin guides association. Be thinking about what its structure should be, who and what it should include or exclude, and who the leadership figures might be.

Spread the word among your friends and throughout your company. Be there. The rivers need you.

## Heritage Funding

As evidenced by the sheer bulk of this issue, our oral history project is still under way. Funding for it, however, is a bit problematic. Northern Arizona Special Collections has donated a great deal in the way of equipment and transcriptions. And a special thanks to general member Misty Norby for a generous donation. But it's a costly process, the coffers are bare, and poor old Lew is still a couple Grand in the hole.

What to do? Well, Don Briggs, boatman and movie producer, (River Song, Grand Canyon Mule Ride) is hard at work on a film on the history of river running on the Colorado. You've probably seen him with his film crew at the last few GTS'es, Georgie's party, etc. Don, too, has to generate funds, and has come up with a plan that will help us both out.

He is "selling" one half interest in his film in the form of several \$6000 "shares". Some of these shares are *donated* to the project in the name of a charitable organization. When the film goes on the market, the first proceeds will go to pay off these shares- that is to say, the charitable organization in whose name the share was donated will be paid off. After that, Don will get half the profits and the other half will be distributed to the shareholder charities. Cool, huh?

Well, Don has already generated about \$2000 towards a GCRG share (or half share). He's hoping to find more donors to bring this amount up to \$3,000, or, better yet, \$6,000. What this means is that once the film goes to market, GCRG will get a lump of dough, followed by funding for several years. The Tides Foundation is handling the finances. We've earmarked this as the GCRG Heritage Fund, to be used towards the Oral History project and other heritage related efforts.

So if you know anyone with a little or a lot to donate to this very worthy **tax-deductible** cause, contact Don Briggs, 398 Eleventh Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. 415 864-6990. He'll be happy to answer any questions. Thanks!



## Helping Old Friends

**A** friendly reminder that Mother Nature needs our help down there in the Big Ditch. As advertised in the last issue of *the news*, the first outfitter initiated resource management trip will depart Lees Ferry in rowboats on October 24th for 18 days of pleasantly demanding work restoring trails and revegetating sensitive riparian areas.

The food and boats are provided. That means it won't cost you a dime to tag along, to be part of the solution—maintaining and protecting the place we each love well. It's a great opportunity for all interested comers to learn the hard-work-hands-on-up-close-and-personal techniques used by Kim Crumbo and NPS' Resource Management team to stabilize trails, maintain sensitive vegetative zones and stabilize certain camp areas.

The trip is divided into above-Phantom (Oct. 24 - 31) and below-Phantom (Nov. 1 - 10) portions, both limited to the first 12 lucky people to sign up. Each section needs eleven trail workers and one cook. All you have to do is get your name on the paper and be at South Rim with your bags packed! Is that too easy, or what? Contact Laurie Lee Staveley at Canyon Explorations (602) 774-4559 or Bill Gloeckler at Arizona River Runners (602) 527-0269 to get your name on the list.

An 'orientation meeting' is planned on the South Rim, Saturday October 2nd, and focused on the evolving techniques used to maintain and stabilize Grand Canyon's sensitive areas. Guides, outfitters, and all other interested persons, are urged to attend. Plan on planning on it.

And prosper. You'll make a difference by doing Grand Canyon an important service that we all can appreciate in the years to come.

## Coming Events

**Aug. 7-8, Vernal and Sept. 20-21, Moab**

**Endangered Fish Workshops**, by land and boat, for guides and outfitters. \$10. Contact Canyonlands Field Institute, Box 68, Moab, UT 84532. (801) 259-7750

**October 14-16, Flagstaff**

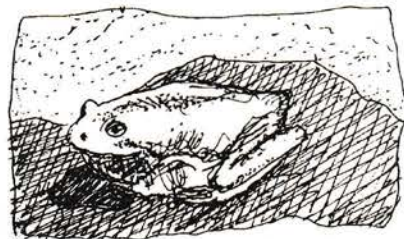
**8th Annual Wilderness Emergency Conference**

Contact Sharon Harbeck, R.N. Flagstaff Medical Center, PO Box 1268, Flagstaff, AZ 86002. (602) 773-2055

## a boatman's love affair

*We tease each other, the River and I;  
She carries me slowly toward an overhanging rock.  
I let myself be drawn in until the last moment,  
Then I take a few long smooth strokes with my oars  
And silently slip by her innocent shore.  
I softly caress her smooth liquid surface  
And watch my swirls and waves dissolve into her.  
We share our peace as I drift with her,  
Enjoying her vistas of steep canyon walls  
Dusted with hazy chaparral,  
Interrupted by cliff hanging cactus and bare precipices,  
With soaring hawks and eagles at the canyon's rim  
Against white clouds and blue sky.  
A breeze blows over us and I dabble my oar in her ripples.  
I feel her cold spray against my warm skin  
As she capriciously slaps me with a wave.  
As we play together, feeling each other,  
I feel intensified and close to her.  
A subtle heavy rhythm begins to grow from deep within her.  
The palms of my hands start to sweat as I dip my oars  
And take long, firm strokes,  
Holding myself upon her smooth flowing current.  
Her rhythm is heavy and strong  
Swirls and whirls begin to disturb her calm.  
She moves faster, stronger.  
I am being drawn in.  
I go anxiously, excitedly, willingly.  
I drop into her.  
She grows to a frenzy.  
I stroke hard and quick.  
We rise and fall.  
My raft slaps her liquid surface.  
Dropping, rising, flopping, splashing, plunging,  
She pulls me deep into her,  
Embracing me with waves.  
Kissing me with deluges of water.  
Together we ride and fall, crashing and writhing.  
The climax is only an enduring moment  
As she subsides to a frothy calm.  
Spent, I float out of her throbbing rapids.  
Satisfied, gratified,  
Enamored and exhausted;  
Feeling ever so much  
closer in our new calm.*

Bob Melville





Norm's parents owned the tourist lodge, just above the old road there, and his little home was an eighth of a mile to the east. I lived in a little cabin on the opposite side of the road from the lodge, that the government rented from Nevills... a little two-room cabin.

We had many experiences together over in Monument Valley. Some of the tourists would stay over in Norm's parent's lodge. If they wanted to go over to Monument Valley, he'd take them over. He had an automobile with big, low-inflated tires, so he could go on some of the sandy areas. Wasn't like it is now, of course. So I went over with him to Monument Valley on two or three occasions.

My work didn't require all of my time every day, so I could take a half day off every once in a while and go do what I wanted to.

My first river trip with Norm was just four miles, from the back of the Hat, they call it; that formation they call Mexican Hat. You'd put a boat on there and float down to the bridge. The old bridge.

There were quite a number of sand waves out in the center of the stream. It was fairly smooth towards each shore. So we shoved off and he headed out towards those sand waves, cause he'd been in them before. I says, "You're not going to get into those big waves, are you Norm?" He kind of grinned and went right on into them. He could see I was a little concerned. But when I could see how the boat handled it, why I wasn't afraid any more.

Norm took me on two or three trips from Bluff down to Mexican Hat, and there's where I learned to run the river. My blood started to boil over about that time.

**GCRG:** Had you boated at all before that?

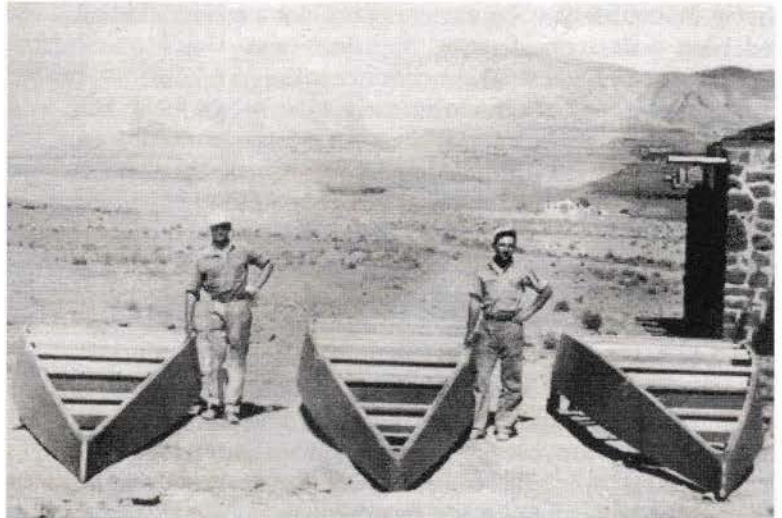
**Harris:** I did do a little rowing on Bear Lake, [in Idaho], but I had never been on a river until the San Juan.

**GCRG:** Was Nevills taking tourists down the San Juan?

**Harris:** Well, he was taking an occasional trip down the San Juan with paid passengers, but not on a big scale at that time.

**GCRG:** How did the '38 Grand Canyon trip come about?

**Harris:** He recruited these people from Michigan. Ann Arbor, Michigan. The year before one of them had stayed overnight at the lodge. Norm had been over to his parents lodge and talked to her, [Dr. Elzada Clover], and visited. He got her interested in making a river trip and maybe collecting plants, for botany. So she decided to go the next year. Her assistant, Lois Jotter, decided she'd go too. And they got another fellow, Gene Atkinson. So it was the three of them from Michigan, and Bill Gibson, the photographer. And... uh... myself.



Norm Nevills and Don Harris building Cataract boats

The next spring was when we began to build the three Cataract boats that we used on the Cataract trip and in the Grand.

I was stationed there as the engineer at Mexican Hat. That didn't, like I said before, require all of my time. So I had some free time about every day there in the spring. [Nevills] asked me if I wanted to help him.

He ordered the plywood from Super Harbord Company up in Washington; had it shipped down. And of course we had to hand saw out the pieces. No power tools.

The bottom was all one piece; nine-sixteenths inch marine plywood. The decking was three-eighths. These that Nevills and I built had oak ribbing in them. The *Mexican Hat* I fell heir to by helping Norm build the three of them. The deal was if I go and be a boatman, then I get the title to one of the boats. So that's how I got title to the *Mexican Hat*.

**GCRG:** That was sort of the start of commercial river running in Grand Canyon. Right there. You guys building those boats. Did Nevills talk about that?

**Harris:** I think he had that in mind. I think he could



visualize some commercial operations with them.

As you know, I started out with the group at Green River, Utah, and we were delayed due to a couple of instances...

**GCRG:** Aren't there a couple of wild stories about that?

**Harris:** Right, yeah. We had pulled in at the head of Cataract above the first rapid, to look at a Major Powell inscription on a big rock. And then, while we were stopped, we were about a quarter of a mile above the first rapid, so we walked down the right bank, to inspect this rapid from shore. While we were down there looking over the rapid, my boat come floating through empty. And, ah, Bill Gibson, the photographer says, "My God, there goes the *Mexican Hat!*"

So I ran back up. Norm says, "Get in my boat and see if you can overtake the runaway boat." So I went back up to where the two lady botanists were and Lois Jotter went up and joined me in the pursuit of the runaway boat. We ran down about close to four miles through about six or eight rapids.

**GCRG:** Those were the first big rapids you ever ran?

**Harris:** It was absolutely the first big whitewater I'd ever run. Or ever seen. 'Cause there wasn't too much in the San Juan that you'd call whitewater. Couple of small rapids between Bluff and Mexican Hat... but they won't fit in Grand Canyon or Cataract Canyon anywhere.

That was a pretty wild ride. I, ah, faced downstream in running a rapid and in between rapids I'd turn around with the bow downstream and row as hard as I could to try to overtake the runaway boat. Time we got down through about four or five rapids I was pretty well tuckered out.

So I pulled off to the right into an eddy to get my wind a bit. And I said to Lois, "Well, we'll go back into the current and go down to where there's another big eddy on the left, about half a mile further down, and then we'll pull to shore and go down below a point there where there should be another eddy. And if the boat isn't there, we will just give up.

Luckily, I walked down that quarter of a mile to that point on the left bank and the *Mexican Hat* was floating around in the eddy there, still right side up. The cockpit was half full of water.

After we'd tied it up in that eddy there, it was about, maybe, three or four in the afternoon. So I headed up river and Lois stayed down with the *WEN*, Norm's Cataract boat. So I did that, and got up there, oh, sundown or thereabouts. They were on the

opposite side where they had come through that first rapid and camped. So I shouted across and they come across and picked me up. I went over and had a bite to eat, and then Norm took Atkinson and me back across to go back down to where Lois Jotter was. We had flashlights and by then it had become pretty dark. So we found our way by flashlight about a mile or so and then the batteries played out. We didn't like the chance of running on to a rattler or something, you know, after dark, so we laid out on a flat rock 'til daylight. Then we walked on down and got to where Lois was about the time Norm and the other two people came through. And then we were all together again.

But I figured that it was very fortunate to have that boat drift off into an eddy below this point. Otherwise it might have been bottom side up clear through the Big Drop, wrecked it maybe. So the lord answered my prayers then, for sure.

[We] portaged the lower end of the Big Drop. We were a day and a half getting the three boats and gear around that. Six of us working in, uh, pretty warm weather, somewhere around mid to the last day of June. Carried those boats across those rocks.

**GCRG:** I guess Clover and Jotter were pretty tough gals?

**Harris:** They weren't sissies by a long beat. I'll say not. They did their share.

**GCRG:** And then there was a flip at Gypsum Creek?

**Harris:** Yeah, Gypsum Creek Rapid. The center boat with Bill Gibson and Gene Atkinson. Norm was in the lead boat with Elzada Clover. The two other fellows in the center boat, and then Lois Jotter and myself in the third boat, the *Mexican Hat*. Well, Bill Gibson drifted away from the boat, and Gene got back to the overturned boat. We picked up Bill, and then Gene got pretty well towards the shore. Norm had got out of the boat.

I can't remember all the details... anyway. Gene Atkinson and Elzada Clover were in one of the boats, towing the overturned boat behind, and she was hanging on to the rope and they tried to go to shore and they couldn't make it. So Norm was on shore and they went on down through the next little rapid. By that time we picked up Bill, and Norm hollered across and said he was stranded on the left bank and the other boats had gone on down. So we pulled to shore to pick up Norm.

So the next rapid of any consequence below there, after we picked up Norm, was Clearwater Rapid. It



was a good straight chute, it wasn't on a curve, and it didn't drive hard into either bank; and my idea was that we could have run it all right, cause it was a good, straight chute. Some pretty good sized waves. Norm says, "Oh, we better not take a chance, we better pull in." So we pulled in on the right bank and lined it down. But the other two boats had gone on through, one of them bottom side up. We hadn't overtaken them yet.

We caught up with the other two boats. They had finally got them both to shore down where the water had quieted down, down two or three miles, so we pulled in there to camp.

We spent all the next day drying out things, food, sleeping bags, and so forth, of the overturned boat.

GCRG: I understand there was a bit of friction on the trip, with Norm's leadership. Do you think a lot of that was due to it being his first time in big water?

**Harris:** I think so. I'm pretty sure it was his first time in big water, and after the capsize in Gypsum he wanted to be pretty cautious, you know, overly cautious, to avoid any other trouble.

We didn't arrive to Lees Ferry until about four or five days late. That's one reason that I decided to leave the party at Lee's Ferry- I was nearly out of leave, although I could have gotten an extension on my leave, I think. But I left the party there anyway. Kind of regretted it ever since.

As soon as I got back to Mexican Hat, I was scheduled to go back to Salt Lake City, when my leave was up. So that's what I did. As soon as I gathered up my stuff the next day or two, I headed back to Salt Lake City.

\* \* \* \* \*

GCRG: How did you come to meet Bert Loper?

**Harris:** I had heard a lot about him, and he was in the hospital for some minor thing in Salt Lake City. So I went in to see him and he said, "I've had two or three occasions when I was planning to go through the Grand Canyon, and all of them faltered and fell apart and I never did get to go through. So I'd like to go through the Grand Canyon and if you'd like to go, maybe we could organize a trip." And that's how I met him.

According to what he had told me, he'd planned trips through the Grand Canyon on two or three other occasions. They all petered out; didn't materialize. Once he waited down there for somebody else to show up- I guess he must have waited for a week or so. And they didn't show up. He was, at that time living as a

hermit. So he took his boat back upstream from Lees Ferry clear to Red Canyon in Glen Canyon. Rowed it and pulled it with ropes, you know, where he could. I guess it took him maybe a month to do it. So he was quite a tough old guy.

Of course I didn't know him when he was a young man, He was sixty nine when I met him. But I learned more about the tricks of the river and studying the currents and things from Bert Loper than I did from anybody else. And that was the '39 trip through the Grand.

GCRG: What was your style of rowing?

**Harris:** Head the stern downstream, and then you face your danger. Face downstream and quarter to boat to shift right or left. And row upstream to check your velocity if necessary. And that was the technique in running those Cataract boats.

Norm knew the river well and was a good oarsman, but he hadn't the experience in whitewater that Bert had, because Bert had been a boatman for a number of government survey parties on the river prior to the Grand Canyon. On the San Juan and on the Green River; all the full length of the Green through Lodore and Split Mountain. He'd been through Desolation and those upper Green River Canyons.

GCRG: I've always heard that he had kind of a fiery personality.

**Harris:** Yeah. He wouldn't take a lot of gaff from anybody, you know. And he was a powerful oarsman and I guess kind of a rough and tumble guy in his early days. Pretty rugged. He didn't back down from anybody.

He smoked till he was fifty years old, so he told me. And then he quit; made up his mind he was going to quit. And he quit to the point where he was a real crank about anybody smoking. He just couldn't stand to see anybody smoke.

He was a great guy!

He lived in Green River part of the time and did odd jobs around there. He made a little money as a boatman for these survey parties on the rivers. Then he worked in the mines a little here and there... wherever he could get a little work.

He fell in love with the Colorado River when he was living as a hermit along the banks of the Colorado in Glen Canyon. Red Canyon was where his little cabin was.

He was a powerful oarsman for his age, you know. Nearly seventy years when he went in the Grand in '39. When Bert was in Salt Lake City he entered a rowing contest in Liberty Park. He competed against



the young fellas and he won the prize.

He had a knack with oars that I've seen seldom equaled.

GCRG: Did he talk much?

**Harris:** Well, when he got started he did. But normally not too much gab. [He had] kind of a husky, burly voice. If he had something to say, he'd say it.

GCRG: Who all went on that '39 trip? Bill Gibson was on that also?

**Harris:** Yes, he was. Bill was on the trip, as I said, with Nevills in '38. And he wanted to go again and get some additional footage on his sixteen-millimeter movie. So he was anxious to go again. And Bert, of course, had been wanting to go for years. And he wanted to have a passenger, so [Chet Klevin], a friend of the photographer, came out with Bill and was Bert Loper's passenger on this Grand Canyon '39 trip.

GCRG: Did you have high water?

**Harris:** We had kind of a medium stage. I don't recall the stage but it was a good boating stage. Maybe



Harris (right) and Brennan scout Dark Canyon Rapid Al Morton

in the twenty thousand range, twenty five thousand.

GCRG: Did you have pretty light loads?

**Harris:** Yes. See, there were only two people to each boat. We didn't have a lot of heavy equipment of any kind. Just Gibson's photography gear and the food and our bedrolls. That's about all we had.

GCRG: Would you scout the rapids?

**Harris:** We stopped at the first big rapid, which is Badger Creek, and pulled to shore and walked down to take a look. Make an inspection on it. I said to Bert, "You think we can run it?" He says "Sure we can run it! It's just a matter of *how* we're going to run it!" Picked out a course, and he says from then on Don Harris never asked "Can we run it?", he just asked. "How're we going to run it?"

[We] looked at most of the major rapids from shore and charted a course through in our minds and ran through. We didn't portage or line any of them.

As far as I know, Buzz Holmstrom was the only one to run [Lava Falls] prior to our trip. It was quite a bit lower stage at this point than it was when we left Lees Ferry, because we had a receding stage all the way. We gave it a pretty good casing from shore before we attempted to run it. We had no problems at all.

[Later] we run it with power boats on a hundred thousand. Which was quite a thrill.

I don't recall the rapid where Chet got sucked overboard, but no problem... he rode through the rapid with his life preserver and we picked him up down at the foot of the rapid.

We rowed down the upper reaches of Lake Mead for a couple of days, down as far as Pearce Ferry. At that point we'd arranged previously for a power launch to come up and tow our boats down to the Lake.

GCRG: So after that you did several more trips with Loper?

**Harris:** I did two or three in Cataract Canyon. Went down the Yampa and the Green. Then that long trip from Green River Lakes to Green River, Utah. Three of us. We had two boats and three people. That must have been close to a seven hundred mile trip. When we made our launch we proved it could be done in plywood boats, but you'd have to go when the water's right on the peak, or you'd have them beat to pieces, so rocky in places. Proved it could be done, but we also proved it wasn't practical at all.

GCRG: I've never heard of anyone else ever doing that trip.

**Harris:** I haven't heard if they did either.

GCRG: Whose idea was that trip?

**Harris:** Bert. Bert wanted to run it. He says, "Let's



see if we can't run from Green River Lakes clear down to Green River, Utah." And I was agreeable to it. I could get my leave from the government to go. So we went.

GCRG: You would just do these for fun?

Harris: Yes, [Bert] wanted to do some more boating and boating was in my blood at that time too. So my youngest brother went with us as a third member of our party.

GCRG: How long did that take?

Harris: About three weeks. We launched right in Green River Lake there. Rowed down a quarter mile,

put an ad in the Salt Lake Tribune to try to recruit a couple passengers to go with us to help defray expenses and to give us company riding in the boats. So Jack Brennan was one of the fellows that answered the ad and went with us. Jack was a postal clerk in Salt Lake City. There was another fellow who went too, but he didn't take to the river like Jack did.

The river got in Jack's blood. We became partners in a mild commercial way after that, just very small. Try to get a few passengers to help defray the expenses so we'd get a free trip.

GCRG: Jack built a Cataract boat too?

Harris: He built a boat designed off the *Mexican Hat* that I had. Built one very similar to it, and named it the Loper, after Bert.

GCRG: So then all through the forties you and Loper, you and Brennan, and various combinations of people were doing these trips and trying to get a few people to help pay the expenses?

Harris: That's right.

GCRG: All over the southwest and Idaho?

Harris: Uh huh.

GCRG: And it was in the forties that you first became a paid boatman for the USGS?

Harris: Yes. Well, I was on the payroll for my job and doing the thing I liked and not having to take leave for it. See, I worked for them and they wanted to make an inflow study on the Colorado and Green River system in the state of Utah.

They had known I had gone through Cataract and some on the Green and the Yampa. They had another fella that was a fair boatman. But he never learned to read the river like a good boatman would. Like Bert or myself or any of these young fellas that read the river... like you...

GCRG: Sometimes we think we can read it.

Harris: Read the river and you know what you're doing. A person that's going to be a good boatman has got to have respect for the river. That's what everybody tells you. But on the other hand he don't need to be afraid of it. Some are naturals for it, and others are not.

So we started up about the Utah/Wyoming state line at Linwood. Then came down through all those



Ticaboo Canyon Don Harris at motor Al Morton

down to wherever the outlet was and then into some whitewater for a ways. Then a lot of meandering, slow water down through Daniels and on past Big Piney and down near where Fontenelle Reservoir is now. A lot of quiet water there now. We didn't stop to do much hiking. Just floating the river.

GCRG: What was it that you really liked the most?

Harris: Just being out there and riding in a boat I guess.

GCRG: When did you meet Jack Brennan?

Harris: I don't remember the year. But it was when Bert and I had planned a Cataract Canyon trip. Probably mid-forties. We wanted to go through Cataract Canyon. We each wanted to row our own boat. We didn't particularly like to ride alone. So we



canyons measuring all the little tributary inflow streams.

GCRG: You flipped in Ashley Falls on that trip?

**Harris:** Ashley Falls, uh huh. There was a huge rock almost as big as this room, I guess, in the center of the channel at Ashley Falls. At the stage we ran it we tried down the left side. And pilot error is why I capsized. We pulled to shore and looked at it on the left bank before trying to run. But I missed the drop over. You just can't see where the drop over is until you're almost on it. If I'd had one of the fellows that was with us stand on the shore and take pebbles and toss them off right at the head of the drop over so I could see whether I was left or right, then I could have hit it where I was supposed to drop over. But I was about a boat-width's off to one way or another. And so I got out of control and capsized.

[When] we got to Green River, Utah, we divided the party and two of us went in one boat over and put in at , uh, what do they call that ranch up there above Cisco?

GCRG: Westwater?

**Harris:** Westwater. We put in at the head of Westwater and the other two went on down the Green River and we selected a date to meet at the confluence. So we did that. Then the four of us and the two boats went on down through Cataract to Lees Ferry.

GCRG: Tell us about the '49 trip

**Harris:** Well, backing up to the '39 trip, when we were being towed across Lake Mead after running the Grand successfully, Bert got to thinking. He says: "This has been a wonderful trip; ideal. There has never been any friction or contention. And the age of you three young fellows combined about equals my age. That's an old man with three young fellows and there hasn't been any friction. So let's plan to go when I'm eighty, ten years hence."

I said, "Oh, that sounds agreeable to me," not even imagining that he might still be alive ten years later.

When the ten years had passed he brought it up again. He was still in pretty good shape. His heart was a little bad, but he said, "Well, it's time to go now, it's ten years later." We tried to talk him out of it but nothing will do. But he was bound to go if we hadn't. He'd've gone alone and tried to make it. So that was why it was planned. I was with Jack Brennan then and he was my partner.

GCRG: Didn't Harry Aleson go along too?

**Harris:** Yeah, he was kind of tagging along with us. He had his separate camp unit and everything. We kind of traveled together but we didn't cook or anything together or eat together. He had one passenger and an inflatable ten-man war surplus raft. And then Bert in his eighteen foot plywood boat and me in the *Mexican Hat*. But Bert had a strong young guy with him as passenger that I had arranged to go with him, to relieve him at the oars in the quiet water between rapids, so Bert could relax a little. But Bert wanted to do it all. So he never let this young fellow even touch the oars.

We'll never know, I guess, whether Bert had a heart attack or whether he capsized or drowned. But I suspect he had a heart attack. They didn't pull ashore to inspect that rapid at twenty-four and a half. They had started to, and he didn't make a little sandbar just above the rapid a ways. And it was rocky there just a little further downstream. So he said to Wayne, his passenger, this young fellow, "Well, it's rocky, we don't want to land there. Let's go through the rapid." So they did, And , of course, Wayne's back was to Bert; he was on the stern of the boat, facing downstream, and he couldn't observe Bert. But when we picked him up he said Bert hadn't tried to position the boat when entering the rapid. So I suspect he exerted pretty heavy on the oars and then maybe had a heart attack and wasn't able to control the boat and they capsized. That's my theory what happened.

[When] we caught up, Wayne Nichol, his passenger, had got on top of the overturned boat and rode through a couple of smaller rapids and then he got a hold of the bowline. It drifted into an eddy and he had got pretty close to shore. So he jumped off and got to shore. By the time he got to shore and got some footing, why the boat had drifted around to a stronger current and he was unable to hold the bowline to hold the boat. So he had to let go and it went on down and it lodged on a gravel bar down near President Harding Rapid.

We pulled it to shore and pulled it up where it rested from then on. And ditched the motor up under some brush. It had an outboard motor in there to use across Lake Mead, when they got down there. Bert had a typewriter. They put that and a couple or other items up under some brush and then we went on the next day, of course.

Harry Aleson went in later and picked up the motor and the typewriter and some of the those things that we left. I think he went down the tramway where the Bureau of Reclamation was drilling for a damsite. He got some of those fellows to take him in a motor-boat to where this motor was cached, and back down



and then hauled it out on the tramway.

**GCRG:** Did Bert always carry a typewriter?

**Harris:** Maybe he had on some of these survey trips, I don't know, when he was a boatman for the river survey. He wasn't a very good writer, so he took along this typewriter to write something that was legible. He wanted to type up some notes from each days progress, sort of a typewritten diary.

I think Bert had a premonition that he might not make this trip, being at his age, and his doctor advised him no strong exertion with his heart condition. He said, "If anything happens to me on this trip I don't want you to try to get me out. You just take me above high water line and scoop out a shallow grave and cover me over and put some rocks on top and leave me. That's where I want to be. In the Canyon." Well, that's where he was, all right, but he wasn't above high water.

**GCRG:** What was the story of Bert's flip on the '39 trip?

**Harris:** He pulled ahead of us just ahead of Gateway Rapid, and he was looking down in the cockpit of the boat, and he started to bail a little water out and wasn't paying attention to what was going on, so he drifted on into the rapid sideways, and it capsized! He and his passenger. Well, they righted the boat in midstream and rowed it to shore. By the time we caught up with him, why, they had things straightened around again and mopped the hatches out 'cause a little leaked in through the hatch covers when it was bottom-side-up. So as he sat down he looked up at that rapid and he says, "Kiss my ass!"

\* \* \* \* \*

**GCRG:** How did you come to use the hard-hulled powerboats?

**Harris:** I was sold on powerboating through there after I was a boatman for that Walt Disney trip in nineteen-fifty-three. Dock Marston was the head of the boating part of it, and he asked me if I could get away and be a boatman for him. So I managed to get the leave and piloted one of the seventeen-foot aluminum Smithcraft boats through. The lead boat was Rod Sanderson, the Sanderson brothers' father, and Marston rode with him. It was a much smaller boat, but it was powered with an outboard, just like ours were. The two seventeen-footers had a spare motor up under the bow. Don't remember the horse-

power, I believe twenty-five, that's all they were.

**GCRG:** How did you drive those powerboats?

**Harris:** Standing up at the steering wheel up front. And I liked it so well that Jack and I decided to each get a small fiberglass hull and build some watertight compartments in them ourselves and then use the same arrangement that we had on those seventeen-foot Smithcraft. These fiberglass hulls we bought down in California, they were only fifteen-footers, but we made several trips with them and they proved out pretty well. We made the Grand a couple of times in them. I know we went through in '54, believe it was. And '57, I know we were on high water in '57. We left Lees Ferry on receding stages, a little over a hundred thousand. Time we got to Lava Falls, figured it had reached to about ninety thousand. But that's a wild ride. At ninety thousand Lava Falls kicks up some pretty big waves.

**GCRG:** In a fifteen-footer with an outboard. I bet that boat got kind of small.

**Harris:** (laughs) It sure did. Yep. It went down through one deep trough and up to where the crest was and almost didn't go over the crest. It just jiggled a bit there. I was afraid it was going to fall over to the side. But it went on over. No Problem. Just a wild ride.

We made several runs through Cataract with these powerboats and then later on I got a little bigger fiberglass hull and put an inboard outboard on it. I made a couple of runs through the Grand with it. I had an eighteen-foot fiberform hull, made in Salt Lake, I guess they were. Anyway, I had an eighteen-foot with a MercCruiser on it. A hundred and something horses, I believe it was. My last trip in the Grand with powerboats was with that boat.

I never had a lot of trouble running with powerboats. But I didn't feel at ease like I did when I went to the inflatables. Those big thirty-three-foot inflatables you're not worried about punching a hole that you can't repair.

**GCRG:** I'd imagine one of those fiberglass boats might have just sunk if you'd flipped it over.

**Harris:** Yeah. Luckily I never did capsize in one of them. I've capsized in the Cataract boats two or three times, but not in the powerboats.

**GCRG:** In the early 50's you were one of the folks in on forming Western River Guides Association. Whose idea was that?



**Harris:** Les Jones was one, I believe, and Howard Smith was one that thought they ought to have some kind of an organization. But there were only about six or seven of us when they first organized. I was the first president of it.

**GCRG:** What were some of the things you were doing with WRGA?

**Harris:** Well, we tried to promote river safety and clean camps, two things I remember. And enjoy the outdoors.

**GCRG:** How did you come to run the big inflatable motor rigs?

**Harris:** Jack was still my partner when we went to the inflatables. We could see, if we were going to operate commercially a little bit, we could take many more passengers on an inflatable than we could on these powerboats. About the most you could take were three, besides the pilot, on those. We didn't want to be overloaded, so we went to the inflatables.

I bought two from Jack Curry. I think he found some war surplus rafts down in a big warehouse in Tennessee somewhere. And they had a whole raft of them sent up to Salt Lake City.

Car load of them, I guess, truckload. And I bought two of the thirty-three-footers from him. And then I rigged them up with outriggers on the side, like they do now. We found them satisfactory for our use.

I ran quite a few trips in the summer. Maybe two or three each summer while I was still employed by the USGS. And then, of course, I retired when I was fifty-six. And then I devoted pretty near all summer for a few years after that to river running.

**GCRG:** Where were you getting your clients?

**Harris:** I put an ad in a Western Gateways magazine. And after that, word of mouth gave us about all the business we wanted to handle. We had quite a few repeat passengers, from various locations.

I think we ran that ad a couple of issues is all. And we

did have an ad in Desert Magazine, I think, one or two issues. But other than that it was word of mouth. Then we sent out our literature, which is very simple. Not elaborate like some of the outfitters now.

We offered the trip for \$365 for nine days with the big inflatables. And if there were ten or more we offered a ten percent discount. We didn't get rich. We made extra dollars on the side. But we weren't doing it to get rich. The enjoyment was half the reason. And if we could make a few dollars on the side while doing something we enjoyed, why so much the better.

**GCRG:** Did you enjoy the people you took down? Did you like guiding people?

**Harris:** Yeah, most of them. We met some wonderful people. Of all the ones we took over the years, you can count the duds on the fingers of one hand. Some that were kind of obnoxious, you might say, that didn't cooperate. Thorn in your side. But most are wonderful people. Took a couple from North Carolina that were lovely people. Couple from Boston, Massachusetts. They come back again for another trip and brought their two sons.

**GCRG:** When did you meet Mary?


**Harris:** Nineteen sixty-four. Through mutual friends. She had lost her first husband in a car accident about three years before I met her, and I had divorced from my wife about that time or a little later.

[Mary has entered the room and realized she'd better give us the real story on this.]

**Mary:** I want to tell you what happened on the very first date. It was a blind date. Blanchard called me about this friend, and said, "We talked to Don and he wants to meet you. Will you come over?"

So Saturday night, I guess it was, I hurried over to their house. Guess what? You know where he'd gone? On a river trip! (laughs) First blind date I ever had and I got stood up by the river!

**HARRIS-BRENNAN  
RIVER EXPEDITIONS**



**See the Grand Canyon  
from the Colorado River**  
Travel "First Class" via  
our special Motor Boats.  
For more leisurely runs  
take our Pontoon Float Trip.

*We also run the Green, Yampa, San  
Juan, Salmon Rivers and Lake Powell.*  
25 years experience as River Guides  
**Harris-Brennan**  
250 N. 500 E. Box 776 Centerville, Utah 84014  
Phone (802) 399-1838  
Drop us a line, use coupon on page 77

Western Gateways Winter 1968



That should have been a clue. The next date, well, we decided we'd try it again. We had a drive up Little Cottonwood Canyon. We sit on the bank and he runs the little stream with leaves and sticks. And I thought, "Boy, he's had it. This guy's had it."

On our honeymoon we went on the Grand Canyon. That was the first river trip I'd ever had, and we went in those fifteen-foot powerboats.

**Harris:** Well, it wasn't long after that that she went several trips. Jack and I were still partners. And then, a year or two later, Jack said, "I think I'd like to get out of it." So I bought his share of the business and she took his place as chief meal planner and cook.

**Mary:** But we made many trips together and I enjoyed every one of them. In fact, every sand bar began to look like home.

\*\*\*\*\*

**GCRG:** So the car crash in seventy-two was what brought an end to your career? Or were you getting ready to slow down anyhow?

**Harris:** No, I wasn't getting ready to slow down. But that damaged me enough that I didn't feel up to the whole operation of the outfit, of the business. So I turned it over to my son Alan and Dave Kloepfer.

Of course, following that I made a few private trips. None in the Grand. I made Cataract a couple of times. And Desolation two or three. And up on the Salmon in Idaho for two or three trips. Easy trips, you know. Get a good crewman to go along with me. But I did most of the piloting after that, on these big rafts with the outboard. Never was able to row anymore after that- I got a crippled left hand. But I piloted the motor all right.

**GCRG:** That's quite a career on the river, from before there was commercial river running to what we have today. When did it first occur to you that commercial boating might really catch on?

**Harris:** I guess when I saw Georgie White with her big groups was one factor that made me think, "This is gonna be a pretty big business someday."

Yeah, it sure has changed over the years, all those years.

We've had some wonderful experiences on the river as a lot of people have. And like I said before we've met some desirable people that we still associate with, correspond somewhat. Course a lot of my old

river buddies have passed on. Jack Brennan's gone, Aleson's gone... Dan Lehman...

I'm not old now but it's been a hell of a lot of years since I was young.

**Mary:** Well, these old river runners, the thing about them, they had river water for blood. And they still got it. He runs the river from the car. We go up a canyon, you know, like

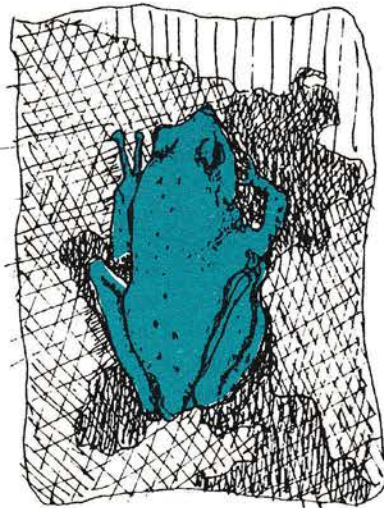
on the Snake. You know how you follow the canyon year round. And he's driving and he looks over and he'll say, "How's the rapid over there?" And I will say, "I'll drive. You run the rapids." And no matter how many times we go up there, he does exactly the same thing. He has to see what the rapids are like.

So I think he's still got river water. He still dreams about it.



Don and Mary Harris, GTS '93

d. edwards



*Don and Mary Harris were interviewed at their home in St. George, Utah on February 9, 1993 by Brad Dimock and Lew Steiger.*

*Additional material came from Don Harris's talk at the 1993 Guides Training Seminar. Transcription by Teresa Yates. Editing for clarity and continuity by Brad Dimock. Thanks to NAU Special Collections and to Don and Mary.*



# Financial Statement

Fiscal Year 7/1/92-6/30/93  
Grand Canyon River Guides

Beginning Balance 7/1/92		6,019.06
<b>INCOME</b>		
Memberships	21,941.06	
Contributions	3,992.00	
Interest	77.94	
Equipment Rental	800.00	
First Aid/CPR Income	3186.00	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<b>29,997.00</b>
<b>SALES</b>		
T-Shirts	6,432.00	
Other Sales	386.50	
<b>TOTAL SALES</b>		<b>6,818.50</b>
<b>COST OF GOODS SOLD</b>		<b>(6,494.63)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Equipment	3,008.68	
First Aid Classes	2,993.36	
Legal/Accounting	10.00	
Meeting Expense	1,996.68	
Office	2,243.79	
Postage	3,889.80	
Printing	10,900.72	
Service Charges	77.16	
Telephone	1,346.03	
Travel	242.11	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>(26,708.33)</b>
<b>GTS LOAN REPAID</b>		<b>764.46</b>
<b>ENDING BALANCE June 30, 1993</b>		<b>10,396.06</b>

# Membership

Guide Members	429
Lifetime Guide Members	12
General Members	398
Lifetime General Members	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>848</b>

## '93 GCRG T-Shirts

Still for sale. See coupon below.

lapel design  
'93 GCRG t-shirt  
by Fritz



thanks...

...to all of you for your incredible contributions and energy. Keep it up. Special thanks to Mary Williams for the drawings, and to Don Harris, who we couldn't track down to get permission to run the story. Sorry, Don. We couldn't help ourselves.

*the news* is printed on recycled paper with soy bean ink by really nice guys.

## Care to join us?

If you're not a member yet and would like to be, get with the program! Your membership dues help fund many of the worthwhile projects we are pursuing. And you get our lovely journal to boot. Do it today.

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>General Member</b> Must love the Grand Canyon Been on a trip? _____ With who? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$20 1-year membership <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 5-year membership <input type="checkbox"/> \$195 Life membership <input type="checkbox"/> \$277 Benefactor (A buck a mile)* *benefactors get a life membership, a silver split twig figurine pendant and our undying gratitude.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Guide Member</b> Must have worked in the River Industry Company? _____ Year Began? _____ Experience? _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$_____ donation, for all the stuff you do. <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 short sleeve t-shirt. Size____ <input type="checkbox"/> \$17 long sleeve t-shirt Size____ <input type="checkbox"/> \$.50 GCRG logo sticker. (2 free with membership)
Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____	Total enclosed _____





b. dimock

## Hyde Found

**B**oth Pete Reznick and Brad Dimock found the location of one of the final Hyde photos (see Vol. 5 No. 4, p. 25). Mile 165, right shore, looking upstream. Tuckup Canyon is just to the left of the photo.

But we already knew they made it that far. Now we need to find the other photo location. That'll be a lot harder.

## Bio Bio Dam Halted

**M**aybe. The latest word from Chile is that the Pangué Dam, which was scheduled to inundate the lower third of many Grand Canyon boatmen's winter home, has hit a serious snag. A court decision says that the current design of the dam violates downstream water rights. The dam, in both form and function, will have to be rethought. Although this could be the death knell for the project, the court decision is being appealed and could be reversed. We shall see.

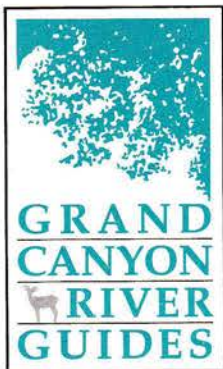
## Tatshenshini Becomes Park!

**O**n June 22 British Columbia Prime Minister Mike Harcourt announced that the entire Tatshenshini-Alsek region will become a provincial park twice the size of Grand Canyon. This decision effectively removed the threat of the proposed Windy Craggy open pit copper mine project to be built in the heart of the wilderness.

The 2.37 million-acre Tatshenshini-Alsek wilderness Park comprises all of British Columbia that lies west of the Haines Highway and south of the Yukon Territory. It will link Glacier Bay National Park to the Yukon's Kluane Park and adjoining Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. Harcourt called for Canadian, U.S., Yukon, and tribal governments to join in seeking to link the four parks into a St. Elias-Tatshenshini world wilderness Reserve that, at 21 million acres, would be the largest international protected area in the world.

Our hats go off to the government of British Columbia. And to Lynn Canal Conservation, a small grassroots organization a lot like GCRG, which led the local fight up in Haines Alaska. If you would like to send them a word of thanks, write

Prime Minister Mike Harcourt  
Legislative Buildings  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4  
Canada



BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
FLAGSTAFF, AZ  
PERMIT NO. 10

P. O. Box 1934  
Flagstaff, AZ 86002  
phone or fax  
(602) 773-1075

FORWARDING AND RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED  
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED