

# The Yukon Paddler



YUKON CANOE & KAYAK CLUB

❁ SUMMER ISSUE 2001 ❁

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## A NEW PADDLER

☺ I S BORN! ☺

*Jane Vincent and Trevor Braun are proud new parents of an 8 lb 13 oz baby girl on June 22. Perhaps a C-2 partner for Pelly!!*

## 2001 Executive

President  
Whitewater Kayaking  
Sea Kayaking  
Canoeing  
Communications  
Rock the River  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Program Development

Bob Daffe  
Violet Van Hees  
Gary Morgan  
Leslie Rowe  
Sue Deforest  
Vernon Beebe  
Teresa Landman  
Bill Curtis  
Trevor Braun

## EDITOR'S NOTE Sue Deforest

Hi Everyone! I began my summer with a great start! I had never really canoed much before when I found myself entered in the Yukon River Quest. What was I getting myself into? About two months before the race, I mentioned to some friends that I was ... interested in the race. I was introduced to Yvonne Harris, an avid canoeist. We began to paddle together, she taught me the basics of paddling and ... we trained paddling *upstream* by Miles Canyon! When I learned that she had just retired I was amazed at her fitness level. We decided to paddle the River Quest together and it was a great experience for me. I was amazed at the power of the river and the forces of nature. Extremely high winds plagued all the racers. It wasn't the luxurious 3-week journey described in the Klondike Trail by Jennifer Voss; it was an exhausting 3-day paddling event, but we now hold the women's record! Trust me, I now have more respect for nature and extreme athletes of all ages. I hope to see you all out and about on the rivers, lakes and at the whitewater park! Remember to: SLIP on a shirt, SLAP on a sunhat and SLOP on the sunscreen! Don't forget your lifejacket! Happy Paddling!

## WHITewater PARK UPDATE Vernon Beebe

The "Rock the River" project is more than just placing a rock in river. It began with a vision to create a whitewater park in the Yukon River that would accommodate all levels of paddlers in kayaks and canoes. Over the years, it has also expanded to look at the entire river from the dam to the bridge. The creation of the Spin Wave, the Robert Service Slalom and the cleaning-up of the Intake are all part of this vision. This vision is slowly becoming a reality.

This reality is not as simple as was first envisioned. We can not just go and drop a rock here and there and magically waves and hole will appear. We need to study, design and test various ideas. We are also required to have the appropriate licensing and permits, and need to raise funds and develop partnerships with various stakeholders to make this vision a reality.

Let's have a quick look at where Rock the River is Today:

- ◆ We have a multiyear water license, which has allowed us to place a few obstacles in the river to test out the feasibility of creating a hole.
- ◆ We have a spin wave/hole that works!
- ◆ We have an intake that is safe, clean, and showing very good potential for an awesome beginner wave.
- ◆ We have credibility with the community that we can create features in the river without environmental concerns!!!

Hey!! Guess what? WE Can Do All This And More!!!! But it takes time and it takes volunteer commitment!

We have some very dedicated and hard-working people who have committed many hours to this project

❖ **Congratulations!** ❖

Brian Horton & Nathan Doering

3<sup>rd</sup> place finish in the 2001 Yukon River Quest

## Drop in at the Whitewater Park!

Tuesdays and Thursdays with the  
Yukon Canoe & Kayak Club. 6:30pm to 8:30pm  
Good chance for beginners to gain experience!

and to the overall operation of the Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club, without which, Rock the River would not be possible. It would be impossible to name all the individuals that have contributed to this project over the last five years, as I would surely miss a bunch... Thanks to all of you, your help is what makes it happen. Working with you has been great!!

We have a lot of work left to do and we need all the help we can get. So, all you paddlers who have not had the opportunity to give us a hand but enjoy the fruits of our labor, now is your chance to help out. Give me a call 633-2297 and I will put you to work.

Thanks again to all the people who have put in the effort to make the club work and a special thanks to executive for taking the lead.

There will be a Rock the river meeting in early September so keep your ears open for the date.

Thanks again!



The wave at the intake has been redesigned and made to look more natural.  
Photo by Sue Deforest

## CANOE FLOTATION, WHY SHOULD I?

Trevor Braun

After observing the Yukon paddling community for numerous years it really strikes me that the use of Canoe Flotation on Whitewater day trips in the Yukon is very minimal.

I will talk about the benefits of using floatation, were to get some and how to install it securely.

The purpose of canoe floatation is to displace water that would otherwise fill up your canoe and make it very unwieldy and potentially very dangerous. A canoe full of water weighs in the neighborhood of 2000lbs, not something you would want to try to swim to shore in our placid Yukon rivers. Properly installed air bags will keep you canoe floating high in the water after you have thrown clear during a wild surf or filled your boat full of water crashing through the huge haystacks at the "Gums of Horror"! With your canoe floating much closer to the surface of the river the

chances of your boat sustain major life trauma are minimized. There is less chance of pinning on a rock or sweeper and if it should still get pinned the extraction process is much easier. I know of 2 canoes that were destroyed this year that probably would have been prevented with use of floatation.

There are also many safety benefits, you and your canoe will be much easier to rescue, towing a canoe playing submarine is not fun for the rescuer, not to mention potential dangerous depending on your location. With floatation canoe over canoe rescue is possible (with practice) in less than 1 minute! It is very easy for someone to put themselves at risk rescuing your ill-prepared canoe. Self-rescue (the best kind of rescue) is so much easier with floatation and very difficult without.

Canoe Flotation does not have to be expensive; anything that displaces water can be used. Favorites include inner tubes, often free from a tire shop, tubes are great as they really stabilize your canoe when it is full of water; large barrels or dry bags securely fastened to d-rings on the bottom of your canoe, sheets of Styrofoam cut to fit and glue together work great and almost indestructible. You can buy "Canoe Flotation" which consists of tapered end bags and a center bag in various shapes and sizes. The main advantage of these bags is that they are very light. You need to keep them well-inflated and very important to watch they don't expand too much on a hot day. Also you need to be gentle with them, as they are similar to that pinhole in your thermal-rest being impossible to find.

Installing floatation is easy than you think. Which ever method you use you want to make sure that when your floatation starts to float so does your canoe and that it can't float away when your boat is really full. Two methods I use are drilling holes just under the gunnels and threading light cord between to make a cage and the other screwing or riveting webbing loops under the gunnels on the inside. D-rings on the bottom and sides finish the job.

Canoe floatation really does make a difference for fun and for safety; there is no good reason for not using it. Try to keep every thing else in your boat so it stays below the gunnel line when your canoe is upside down. I must now confess that I have damaged canoes not using properly installed floatation on the Takhini River. If you would like more information on outfitting your canoe give me a call at 333-1225 or check out Thrill of the Paddle by Paul Mason.

A closing thought " Who is responsible for hauling out the broken pieces of canoe after it has become a large piece of river trash?"

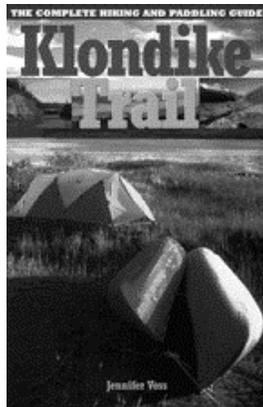
Canadian Recreational Canoe Association  
Canoe Program Review

Trevor Braun is the Program Development Committee Rep of the CRCA Canoe Program in the Yukon. He wants to see how well the CRCA Canoe Standards are working in the Yukon. This committee is made up of Canoe Instructors from across the country who set Canoe standards in many disciplines. His job is to make sure concerns from the Yukon are heard. This committee only deals with Canoe Standards and there are other committees for Whitewater Kayak and Ocean Kayak. He hopes to have the CRCA program available and accessible for paddlers in the Yukon, so you can become certified easily. To answer a Review Questionnaire, or if you have questions/concerns, please call Trevor at 333-1225 or email huski@yukon.net.

BOOK REVIEW: Sue Deforest

Klondike Trail: The Complete Hiking and Paddling Guide

Author: Jennifer Voss  
Lost Moose Publishing



The Klondike Trail is a historic Yukon route indeed. The hike over the Chilkoot Trail, through the Lakes and down the Yukon River was discovered and used for transportation by the First Nations long ago. The prospectors in search of gold used this trail to bring them to the Klondike gold fields by Dawson City. The waterways were the highways of the past. Today outdoor enthusiasts use this route, either in sections, or all at once. Voss describes this adventure as 'a 4 week journey into the past.' Along your journey you may use modern methods and tools, but you can view the historic ruins left behind 100 years ago by the gold seekers. You can witness the 'slow invasion into the quiet north' as you travel the 934 kilometers from Dyea, Alaska to Dawson City, Yukon.

The 'Klondike Trail' by Voss, is an easy to read guidebook. It details each section of the route with travel tips, easy to read maps, scenic pictures, and historic facts. If you don't already appreciate the greatness of the land, rivers and people of the north, this guidebook highlights many wildlife, nature, geologic, historic, and first nation areas along the route. After your travels, there is no doubt that you too will

have a greater appreciation for the beauty of the northern wilderness. Whether you plan for a weekend, one week or four weeks, this is a great book if you are heading to any location along the historic route.

I enjoyed the pictures, maps and historic tales the most. It has fantastic images that take you back to more trying times in the Yukon. Voss touches on First Nations groups, describing the various groups and how their lives were uprooted. However, I wanted to know more details of the changes they endured. If there is anything lacking from this book, it is color pictures but I can live without the color. The mid-size book is handy and holds a wealth of information within. If I were to take one book with me on an adventure that retraces the path of the gold seekers, I would be sure to pack this guidebook!

The Klondike Trail retails for \$19.95 and you can find this book in local stores. Look for it at Max's Fireweed Books on Main Street.

☼ Interesting Websites:

*Canadian Recreational Canoeing Assoc.*  
<http://www.crca.ca/CRCACore.cfm>

*Nunavut Handbook* - <http://www.arctic-travel.com/>

*Canada Adventure Guide* -  
<http://www.virtualnorth.net/>

*Outdoor Travel* - <http://www.backpacker.com>

*Yukon First Nation Tourism Association*  
<http://www.yfnta.org/>

*Hiking* - <http://www.yukontrails.com/>  
<http://www.yukonhikes.com>

*Yukon Outdoors Club*  
<http://www.yukonoutdoorsclub.ca/>



YUKON RIVER QUEST

\* NEW START DATE \*

RACE BEGINS ON

JUNE 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2002

ODDS & ENDS

☼ Notes from Yannick Bedard in Norway:

**June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2001** - Norway is pretty special. Flatwater sprint kayaking (there are no e1) is one of the most popular sports here. I've been in Oslo for 4 days, and I stayed for free at the Strand kayak club. Been paddling with some Norwegian team paddlers (I'm always trailing far, far behind). Today I'm going to Kristiansand, then Flekkerfjord, where more training awaits. Then next weekend it's Bergen, to see the Norwegian sprint and marathon championships.

**July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2001** - I'm still holding up. I've been training 2 to 3 times a day so far, as far as Bergen (west coast). But I've gone back, east of Oslo in Fredrikstad, where I'll be meeting friends from Denmark tomorrow. From then on, we drive north, training in clubs along the way. In 2-and-a-half weeks, we'll be in

the Vesterålen archipelago (about 67-68 degrees lat), and will taper off our training for the big race (www.askr.no). I've been lucky so far, paddling with ex Olympic and World champions, learning from them. They lend me all the boats I can try, and they always let me stay at the paddling clubs for free. I won't say anything about the women here.

**July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2001** - Hey Yukon! I was training with an amazing marathon paddler last week in Lillehammer, and did a bit of whitewater paddling in the area. I've been checking out the rivers of the Jotunheimen National Park (where the highest Norwegian peak is), and I know that I'll have to come back to Norway just to paddle whitewater. Right now I'm in Trondheim, training on the ocean. Sunday morning, were leaving for Sortland, where the race is. It will take us about 2 days to drive, so I have to over train a bit before we take off (2 days in a car softens you up). Then I'll have a week of light training before the race. Hadet Yannick

**July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2001** - Hi everyone! I've been in Sortland for 4 days now, training with some of the guys who will be in the race. I've gotten a hold of a fast sea kayak (Inuk, from Kirton). It's 17 inches (51 cm) wide, and about 18 ft long. There will be some faster boats, but this one is very agile and surfable. On Saturday I'm going to Skipnes (an old, abandoned fishing village), where the race will start on Monday the 23rd. Day one: 30km. Day two: 70 km in 3 stages. Day three: rest day. Day four: 51km in 2 stages. Day five: 42 km. There should be around than 20 competitors from 10 countries. I'm the only Canadian, there's an American, and then a lot of paddlers from Scandina, UK, Germany, and one from Latvia. This race is also part of the Arctic Sea Kayak Festival, so there will be a total of 150 paddlers from 16 countries. This week is gonna be special. I'll write again in about 10 days. Wish me luck! Yannick

**July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2001** - Hey! Wow! What a week! I've had an amazing time, meeting all these awesome paddlers, competing and partying with them. Most of the paddlers were at the level of skill and fitness I anticipated, but all were very different personally than anyone could expect. I was the youngest by a decade. The oldest competitor was 54, and he beat me by 2 hours! There were 18 competitors, and out of the 14 that finished, I was 10th. It was so hard keeping up to hem! We paddled 200km in 4 days, and my time was 22 hours or something. The winner (a marathon paddler from the Irish national team) had a time of about 18 hours (I think). He got 6000 nok (1200 bucks) in prize money. The scenery is amazing. I've never seen anything like it! And since the course was often on the open ocean, we had strong winds and (at one point) 2 and a half meter waves. We all surfed 15 km in about 50 minutes. Well, my camera busted, so no pictures from me. But, I bought newspapers with articles (in Norwegian) and pictures, and a video that was made in this area about the race. There was a filmmaker here during the event, so in maybe 6 months, I should be able to get something from him. Now I've got 3 weeks of paddling in Scandinavia left, so I might go to Copenhagen and train there. If money allows it, maybe Stockholm (I met paddlers from all over Europe during the race). Yannick.

☼ *Kayak Polo Anyone?* Evenings at Chadburn Lake during August. Meet at 7pm. Bring own gear, incl. facemasks. If interested phone Sue 667-6910 to find out days.

☼ *Canoe Instructors Course:* Canadian Recreational Canoe Association **Level 1 Moving Water Instructor Course**

August (date TBA): several evenings during the week and one weekend (times TBA). Interested candidates should have strong tandem and SOLO skills in Grade 3 water - evaluated on your teaching abilities in Grade 2+ Moving Water. Contact Trevor: 333-1225 or huski@yukon.net for information.

☼ *Big Salmon River Tragedy:* Logjams on this river are renowned and unless you know the river and how to avoid the logs, you could end up with serious injuries or even fatal death. A 60-year-old German tourist was canoeing on the Big Salmon this summer when his boat capsized causing him to drown. Please study the rivers you will be traveling on this and any summer! Eat well and be sure to drink plenty of water!

## Membership

With a membership there are many activities you can become involved with. Our volunteers are helping to provide you with many recreational activities:

- Rock the River project, which is the creation of a whitewater Park in Whitehorse.
- Youth at Risk Program, which is an introduction to paddling for youth and is free of charge.
- Kayak Polo recreational league.
- Kayak/Canoe practice session in the Lions Pool.
- Sea kayaking self rescue clinics.
- Youth Paddling Corp, a program for a youth group from the age of 9 to 12.
- Promotion of water sports as a family event
- Use of equipment/gear
- Information and maps
- Annual whitewater kayak rodeo



## Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club

*Membership Application 2001/2002*

*Memberships are renewable annually*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Fees:

|                       |         |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Single:               | \$20.00 |
| Youth (17 and under): | \$10.00 |
| Family:               | \$40.00 |
| Corporate:            | \$50.00 |

|  |
|--|
| <p><b>Send Memberships To:</b><br/>                 Yukon Canoe &amp; Kayak Club<br/>                 PO Box 5546<br/>                 Whitehorse, YT<br/>                 Y1A 5H4</p> |
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### Contact:

Bob Daffe @ 393-3661 or Violet Van Hees @ 633-3154

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# The Yukon Paddler

Summer 2001

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