

The Oregon Whitewater Association brings private boaters together for the enjoyment of whitewater boating. Our vision is to promote whitewater safety and training for all of our membership in an effort to provide safety awareness and confidence when executing river rescue skills. OWA is the community of choice where fun and river adventures thrive and where people and rivers connect.



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ZIPPING FOR SAFETY

Thank you

**to Casey Dale & Crew
of Bungee Masters Inc.**

View the fun photos from this event on pages 4 and 5

January Club Meeting:

Flying Pie Pizza
7804 SE Stark Street
Portland, OR 97215

Wednesday,
January 13, 2016
from 6:00-9:00 PM

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River Tip

Submitted by Jim Collins

It's the beginning of a New Year and time to start buying, re-packaging and packing food for 23 days on the Grand. Katie asked me to give a few tips for newbies planning and packing for the long trip. I have lots of specifics that would be way too long for a tips article but can offer a few simple suggestions. First, and foremost is the need to think plan and reduce. Plan meals that are tasty and nutritious but do not require a large number of ingredients or timely preparation. A multi week trip is not the time to display your culinary skills.

Organize the food so that it is readily available without searching and make sure you plan on dealing with the garbage in advance. I pack dry goods in rocket boxes that contain one or two days meals (depending on group size) and the boxes then become the garbage. I discard all the unnecessary packaging and re-package if necessary to reduce space and eliminate garbage. My coolers are packed with the food grouped by day so it only takes a minute to open the cooler and get the food out. This allows the ice to make it the whole trip instead of just a couple of days if one is rummaging around searching or making multiple trips to the cooler. Late in the trip the only thing coming out of the cooler will be butter and cheese (remember the famous words of Cary Solberg..."fat is flavor") which will last just fine even if the ice doesn't.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Put in for those permits and try something different. The Salt permits have to be in by the middle of the month but it should run this year and there is nothing like a spring break trip to run a great desert river with good weather.

Do you have something you would like to submit to the OWA Newsletter?

Contact Michele Gila at

VicePresidentNewsletter@oregonwhitewater.org

To show our appreciation and to encourage future contributions, the Oregon Whitewater Association will have an annual drawing for \$150 gift certificate to one of the OWA sponsors. Every member who submits written material that gets published in the newsletter will automatically be entered into the drawing.

Hmmm Remember when we didn't have any water? *by Bruce Ripley*

Nature is funny thing first it's dry and then its wet and then it's dry... Hmmm I suppose that's what leads to average. Well there's a lot of water around now so take advantage of it. If you have not checked out the calendar for a while you should. There are some new trips starting to show up and some more in discussions. On one of my recent trips I was approached about offering a one or two night trip out on one of the coastal rivers. My response? Of course... All we need to run a trip is really just a trip leader! What if you have not run a trip before? What if you are not an expert on the river? No Problem! If you've never run a trip before there are several people in the club who can offer great advice on how to do that.

The most common reaction we get after a trip from trip leaders is "wow that was pretty easy" and the other thing we get is "I want to lead that trip again". If you have not run the river a lot but want to lead the trip don't worry, it's best to have someone with you who has some experience but it does not have to be you. There are several ideas floating around but the November to February period is a great time to schedule some rivers that we don't get to often. So if you would like to get a trip together just let us know and we'll try to help make it happen.

Did you make it out to the New Year's float? If not then you were in the minority. OWA and Team River Runner joined up to float the Sandy and it was a huge success, not only was it a beautiful day but the barbecue was a great hit as well. I don't think we had an official head count but there were at least 26 boats and over 50 people. Thanks to all involved in planning and coordinating the event the club really appreciates it.

Don't forget that the sign up for the Rogue River trip is live now and we are limiting the sign ups to 45. If you've never gone boating in February before this is generally a great trip with pretty decent weather. I think I've seen people in shorts at some point during the trip on every one I've done! That does not mean it can't be cold, but it's generally pretty mild, remember you are basically at the coast. Here's to fun, exciting, and safe boating over the winter.

Team River Runner

The New Year's float is always a great time for the club to join up with Team River Runner and support our local vets by helping get them out on the river, or simply gathering and having a great afternoon picnic. Team River Runner envisions a national network which creates innovative paddling programs designed to assist with the recovery of those injured while serving our country. The Portland chapter of TRR has been a leader in building this great organization. If you have some time and you can donate just a bit of time they would certainly take advantage of your time and skills.

www.TeamRiverRunner.org

OWA January Meeting

The next meeting will be at Flying Pie Pizza in Portland. Please plan to come out and join us for our monthly meeting and speaker. We're looking forward to seeing you there! If

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Zippering for Safety





CHALLENGES OF THE CHARLEY

Submitted by Tom Riggs

Most Alaskan rivers have indigenous names that are exotic in both their spelling and features like the Aniakchak, Kongakut, and Chilakadrotna, but I was getting tired of tongue twisting rivers that seemed to spawn a different pronunciation every time I talked about them so something had to give on 2003's Great White North trip. Andrew Embick's book, "Cold and Fast" and the "Alaska Paddling Guide" are information sources of many rivers to run in the 49th state, some of which have names that can be pronounced such as the Salmon, Fortymile, and that one that gives visions of grass skirted maidens, the Hula Hula. Since weather can be fairly nice in the Interior of Alaska in the summer we concentrated our research to that region. Embick's book contains descriptions of scores of runs in the Last Frontier but he only gives out five 5 star ratings and the Charley made that list. His rating system is based on whitewater, water quality, campsites, and personal experience.

Now that we read about the Charley where the heck is it in this state that is 1/5 the size of the lower 48? The map shows it about 150 air miles east of Fairbanks with no road access and no trails either unless you plan on mushing for several days out of Dawson on the frozen Yukon in the winter. Hey, when I'm looking for whitewater I don't mean that white of water. When to go is the next decision which is driven by a) when is the water level suitable for boating and b) when are the kids out of school. Typically, this river reaches its peak snowmelt about the first two weeks of June and runs too low to boat near the end of July. Since air-line flights and bush pilot arrangements must be made well in advance (February in our case), we opted for the first week out of school which would get us on the river about June 15 and allow us to enjoy the summer solstice just shy of the Arctic Circle. Now to make it happen.

With scads of Delta Airline Miles and 5 months advance notice we should be able to get free airfare to Fairbanks. Not! At least not on Delta. According to the live body I finally spoke to, best odds of booking travel to for free flights is 374 days in advance. Oh, and don't forget to be "flexible in your plans". Why do we call it plans? It should be "shoot from the hip" the way they have it set up. Nevertheless, we were able to book onto Alaska Airlines with miles from them and their partner American. This would allow us to divert our air funds to the bush run.

Planning (or shooting from the hip) these types of adventures can be half the fun fortunately the internet gives us a great tool for much of the logistics. I was able to contact about four air taxi companies that traveled that section of BLM land in the Interior and three of them referred me to Wright's Flying Service out of Fairbanks. One carrier, Fortymile Air, could get us there but we would have to arrange to get to his base in Chicken or Eagle AK. Being a flightless bird Chicken would not have been my first choice as a base for an air company, especially if Eagle were available. Another factor in choosing Wright air is the pilot had actually been to the two potential landing sites in the past and had valuable knowledge about the ½ mile walk from the Three Fingers landing spot through the rock fields to the launch point. He also talked about our group size and the amount of gear we planned on bringing and was very helpful in that respect.

In this post 9/11 era one has to be a "known shipper" in order to send air freight so we opted to pack everything as checked baggage: boat, oars, rowing frame, rocket boxes, coolers, pfd's, river bags, shotgun and ammo, and personal gear for four people. Since everything has to pass through scanners at the airport I chose to supervise the checkers when they looked at our stuff. Of course they wanted to unroll the boat inside the airport but putting that tiger back into its cage was something they weren't prepared to do so they bent the rules and allowed me inside the inspection area and supervised while I rolled the deflated raft into a nice tight cylinder. My brother waited for us at the drop off zone in case something went awry and had to be shipped via another mode. I asked him to bring his knife so I could cut one of the thwarts out if need be to make the 100 lb weight limit. At home I had removed the hand line from the boat and still tipped the scale at 101 lb. Removing the valves would not buy me the other pound. I was prepared to argue the accuracy of the airport scales but the boat was deemed suitable for checked baggage and off it disappeared.

The rowing frame was the erector set offered by NRS and it bundled up well with the Carlisle oars and blades, coaxed by lots of duct tape. One item that counted as checked baggage was the shotgun which had to be in its own hard case separate from the ammo. Given the ammo cans, cooler, stove, etc that we brought we only had to pay for two extra pieces of luggage. Much cheaper than air freight. Our drybags were stuffed to overflowing as we consolidated pfd's, sleeping bags, tents, pads, and yes, chairs into them, but hey, we were going rafting, not hiking.

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As soon as we sat down in the airport Brian threw up. Not really, but I'm just seeing if anyone is still reading. The flight to Fairbanks stopped in Seattle and we chased the sun to the Northwest and arrived in the great North about 2:30 am and got to the Springhill hotel an hour later. It still was not dark and the town was preparing for some major street basketball tournament so hotel rooms were scarce. Book early for lodging in Alaska in the summer.

With the time zone change we gained an hour and used it for sleep before taking our rental van to Albertson's to pick up our pre ordered meats and breads. Not everything was there but with the list we were able to make last minute substitutions for our 7 days in the wilderness. The van had a roof rack which we filled with boat gear but we needed two extra parking spaces to repack the food we purchased. Still everything fit except for about two grocery sacks worth. We would just bring those as loose bags in the air taxi and consume goods on our first two days which would be spent exploring before we launched. That should allow enough space in rafting bags or the cooler to make the journey downstream.

We made arrangements for the staff at Wright Air, our air taxi service, to follow us to National Car Rental to drop off the van and return us to their staging building at the far side of the Fairbanks airport. No sense renting a vehicle for a week that would sit idle. One tip, remember to do the walk around to check for dings when renting a vehicle. In our sleep deprived state we did not and when the bill came to me in Oregon I was hit for damage to a blinker light that I never noticed when we picked up the van.

Because the two possible landing strips along the Charley are very short the selection of planes that can get in and out is limited as are the number of experienced pilots who have been there. We were to be flying in a Helio Courier which can extend the width of the wings for landing and take off and narrow them for better airspeed during flight

Now the landing strip at Gelvin's Cabin would make a good football field except you only have to go 80 yards for a touchdown and the sidelines are only about 20 yards apart. Couple that with the rocks and swales that make up the path and we have an "E" ticket ride.

Everything and everyone was weighed at the airport to make sure we weren't exceeding the Helio's payload limit.

Since the Helio Courier is such a small plane Brian and I joined the pilot and our shelter, clothing, food, and some rafting stuff on the 150 mile flight due east of Fairbanks. The plane ride over this vast taiga was punctuated with views of localized forest (scrub trees) fires and the occasional bush pilot Cessna buzzing across our path. While circling over the landing strip at Gelvin's Cabin we caught our first look at The Charley. It looked pretty bumpy from our elevation. On the hill adjacent to the landing spot we saw the remains of a B-24 that crashed in 1948. Hmm... a possible side hike prior to our river descent.

As we descended to Gelvin's Cabin I took note that the tree line was a mere 100 feet above the river and hiking the open tundra would be easier away from The Charley. The pilot extended the Helio's wings and our airspeed decreased as we circled the landing strip for the inspection run then dropped in oh so slowly for the final approach and landing. It seemed like he would not have scored a touchdown based on the short distance covered on the landing.

Given the limited provisions we could fit into the plane, Brian, the pilot, and I unpacked our gear in about 5 minutes. We made sure we had shelter, sleeping bags and some provisions with us on this trip in case the pilot were to crash on the way back to Fairbanks and strand us. Brian and I watched as the plane taxied down the bumpy dirt and rock airstrip, turned and made its take off run. The plane lifted off the ground in what seemed to be about 100 ft then disappeared over the ridge leaving us in the silence that confirms our remoteness.

We packed our gear to the upstream end of the airstrip where we were near the Charley River. This would be our camp area for a few days. It was somewhat void of vegetation which would reduce the mosquito presence, flat, and near the water where breezes may help ground Alaska's State Bird and save us from blood transfusions. Since Katharine and Kyle were to be on the next load, we had about 4 hours to kill so we assembled the NRS frame, set up the tent, and put together our combination plywood table – raft seat. A beer would be nice right now, but the few we were to bring were on the second load. Poor planning on my part; good planning on Katharine's part.

Charley River Report



While Brian and I were skipping rocks in the river and surveying the black spruce forested river valley, Katharine was doing a little figuring at the airport on what gear we would have to leave behind due to weight limits. I was thinking chairs would be nice but we could sit on the bail bucket or the cooler or a sleeping pad if needed. I didn't see any fish in the river but my mere presence all but guarantees there would be no fish anyway so I scanned the tundra hillsides for game or any other interesting items. I did manage to find a shiny metal sploch about 700 ft up and surmised it must be the B24, our side hike for tomorrow.

Eventually we heard the faint buzz of an airplane which crested the ridge and flew over the landing strip as it circled downward. It was the Helio Courier with Katharine and Kyle. It almost seemed to glide in and land on a dime as it touched down in front of Gelvin's Cabin. I wonder who hiked in to build this airstrip in the first place. From the age of the ramshackle cabin it predated helicopters, so it must have been done by hand. A fitting testament to the fortitude of Alaskan pioneers.

Brian and I met Katharine and Kyle at the plane to help unload the gear. Something was up as Katharine had a wry smile on her face. I finally asked "What's up?" and she proceeded to open a grocery sack full of beers. I asked about violating the weight limit of the plane and she recalled from her pilot training days about fuel consumption and after consulting with our pilot found out that he did not need to "top off" for their trip and she asked how much fuel was burned. The reply was convoluted but amounted to about two cases of beer and a bag of wine. She had the air taxi people run her to the store for the last minute glog while her plane was being packed. Hooray for our side!

We shot some photos of the gang in front of Gelvin's Cabin and then watched the Helio Courier lift off to Fairbanks. We had gone "into the wild". We finished setting up our camp with the gear Katharine and Kyle brought and listened to the sheer silence of the middle of nowhere.

The mosquitos were pesky so we built a fire and burned green stuff to keep it smoky and assist our headnets. We had purchased "sonic" mosquito repellents on line for \$1 each. It was a gamble that did not pan out. The device made a high pitched buzz and had no deterrence on the bloodsuckers. You know when the cavalry rides in to the rescue and they blow the bugle signifying they are on the way. Well the noise the bugle makes is DEET DEET DEET DEET DEET DEET DEET DEET DEET! True to its name DEET mosquito repellent came to our rescue although some of the side effects we experienced were frequent bloody noses. I guess in mosquito country we are subject to bloodletting one way or another.

For dinner we grilled sockeye salmon figuring we should have the fresh stuff first. "Keep an eye out for bears" was the word, although the interior rivers are not as well known for fishing bears as the ones on the south coast. The boys and I walked upstream and had a rock throwing contest to nowhere in particular and again eyed the B24 high up the mountain. Tomorrow's quest.

The sun merely dipped behind the mountain and the stars did not emerge, at least while I was looking. This is midsummer night in the far north and it cooled into the 30s but the mosquitos were less abundant. We slept with our room sweeper shotgun loaded and close at hand. I heard rumors about really big mosquitos and wanted to be prepared.

The next morning we had a hearty breakfast of bacon and eggs in preparation for our climb to the wrecked plane. I broke out the two gps units and marked our camp's location, stocked up with water and snacks, and wiped down with bug juice and we were on our way.

Alaska is rife with bogs and muskeg and seeing a destination and getting there are not necessarily in a straight line as we discovered while trying to ascend the first bench. Our route took us down river a bit then we headed into the black spruce forest which would give way to the tundra after about 100 ft of elevation. It was swampy in the woods and surprisingly humid as we picked our way over downed logs and around small ponds thick with 'skeeters'. As we broke out above the tree line our climb began to reveal its rewards with the expansive views of the river valley and surrounding mountains.

We stopped to grab a breather and a drink from our canteens. The breather part was a mistake, at least the exhaling part, because swarms of mosquitos all came to the birthday party and we were dessert! If anyone ever tells you to slap yourself because of a lewd comment, this is the place where you would gladly comply and say "Thank you sir, may I have another?" Long sleeves, gloves, and hats provided a lot of protection but the main salvation arrived with the breeze that grounded the Imperial Air force of the North. We were on our own mission to see the wreckage from a different Air Force and could see the glimmering body of the bomber above us and continued our trek.

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As we climbed closer to the bomber the boys' excitement could not be contained and they ran up the hill to get to the B-24. There she was, strewn across the hillside with no museum to house her or aviation buff restoring her. I guess the remoteness of the surroundings and the slow vegetative growth would keep her from disappearing anytime soon. It was evident that the Air Force had retrieved the guns and any ordnance. We did find sections of the fuselage and what appeared to be fuel tanks along with the cockpit and wing components. Scrambling amongst the wreckage I heard Kyle call out "Dad, I found the keys to the B-24!". Indeed he had a pair of keys; what they went to who knows, but they came from the bomber somewhere. Brian in the meantime picked up a couple of spent shell casings from a .50 caliber. I took photos.

We sat on the wreckage and had our lunch and enjoyed the sun of Alaska's interior at this high latitude. The river was far below and we could see the black spruce forest thin out as we looked upstream and thicken as we looked down the Charley. The mosquitos were less intense up here with the mild breeze.

Although we could not see our riverside camp we figured we knew where it was and started down the mountain. Trying to avoid the muskeg we stayed on the ridgeline a little too long and found ourselves at river level but still in the woods. If we get to the river we will find our camp but we had some swampy areas we needed to pass. At first we tested the depth hoping our boots would be high enough to keep us out of the drink. No go. Then we found some downed trees and did the balancing act to cross the deeper sections of placid mosquito water. While contemplating how to get across the next section the mosquitos had been called from their bases and were making incessant strafing runs so we decided muddy boots, socks and pants weren't that bad and made for the river post haste.

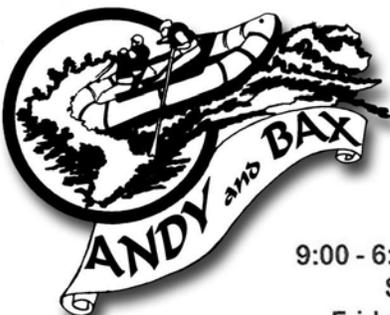
Once we reached the Charley, we did not recognize our location and were at odds as to which direction to bushwack. I said downstream, Kyle said upstream and Brian had no opinion. Time to break out the GPSs. One did not get a fix and the other took forever to latch on to enough satellites and reset its brain for Alaska before it gave us a reading. Upstream was the direction for the waypoint for camp so we began weaving our way through the spruce and willow peeking out to the river to confirm we had not passed camp.

After ¼ mile we could see the far end of the short airstrip and made our way there for easier walking than through the Outback. Katharine had a campfire going and we could see she was reading a book enjoying the solitude of the vastness that is Alaska. As we neared she looked up and started yelling at us "Go away!, Go Away". I guess some people really like their solitude. In fact she got up and left when we arrived, not that she didn't like our company but did object to the company we were keeping; that being the squadron of vampire mosquitos that were encircling each of us.

We added some greens to the fire and the ensuing smoke sent most of the pointy beaked crew elsewhere leaving a manageable denizen of 20 per person as personal escorts. The long sleeves and headnets worked well and a little deet on the wrists and exposed areas eliminated the biting but did nothing for the buzz.

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Being early on our trip we had more fresh vegetables with pork chops for dinner. We knew the refrigeration portion of our meals would not last long so the cool meals would be some of the first to go.

Daylight is long in the summer and we were surprised around dinnertime to hear an airplane circle overhead obviously checking us out but more importantly to the pilot confirming that the landing strip at Gelvin's Cabin was clear. It was our Helio Courier. Did he come to tell us to evacuate? Was he on a mercy mission to deliver more beer? No such luck; he was dropping off a family in two trips with their gear. We finished our dinner and did some cleanup while they settled in.

We went over and talked with the couple with their 10 year old and learned they would be launching in two days after exploring the countryside like we did. Our solitude was further diminished when the pilot returned again with two guys from Germany with inflatable kayaks and a guide. I thought to myself, "Hey, this is my river. What were these people thinking intruding into my wilderness?" I am sure they had the same thoughts about us.

The guys from Germany rigged up and launched at 9pm shortly after they arrived. I suppose they wanted to get away from the rest of us at both ends of the landing strip. The hydrologic data for the Charley says peak run off is in mid June and we were all trying to catch the wave. Next thing I expect is to see some surfers.

Well, twilight was approaching; after all it was 11:30pm, so we sauntered back to our tents and squashed the few mosquitos we disturbed before catching some zzzzzs. The next day our water adventure was to begin.

Up at 7 and the sun angle made it seem like noon. Katharine fried up some bacon and eggs while the boys and I began rigging the 14 ft Momentum with the NRS erector set type frame. Whaddya know? All the nuts, U bolts, bars, and tools made it. Now where did that pump go? We rigged a cargo net suspended above the rear compartment to keep the gear off the standard floor and prevent any cutting board effect should we slide over rocks. All the river bags would rest behind the oarsman and the passengers would be sitting on the front thwart and plywood sections that convert to our table. Four people in a bucket boat for the duration. They do call them a 10 man raft but I think they were looking at the Lollipop Guild when they made that statement.

I strapped one copy of the laminated topo maps on top of the 48 qt cooler in front of me and secured the GPS next to it. I did have a spare set of maps and compass buried in the gear, but on a river you usually only raft in one direction. The map would prove critical on the Yukon as we approached our take out.

The first mile was indeed low as our air approach had indicated but it was manageable with diligent maneuvering. It can only get better as we go downstream and pick up more water volume. We passed by thicker patches of black spruce, some overhanging the river but no imminent threat in the class 1+ / 2- water.

After about 3 miles the hills opened up somewhat and the river broadened dispersing what little water across a wider area. We all know what that means. Shallow water. We were scraping on the rocks but the current kept us moving with a little oar assistance but the horizon did not look promising. Ahead was a freshly tilled boulder garden and since things grow fast in the Alaskan summer sun we were to be treated to a feast of chair sized rocks with most of them sticking their grabby heads out of the water by about a foot.

This was undoubtedly the "lively" section of whitewater during normal and higher flows. The rocks would make a fun bumpy ride ala Metolius style rapids if there were more water. The best we could do would require skills tantamount to maneuvering through rush hour traffic in Rome. This was no short boulder field and Katharine peered at me with that "Now what?" look that issued spears of guilt for getting us into this mess.

I knew we had plenty of provisions with us and we had the bear equalizer as well. My thought turned to the group that was two days behind us with a 10 year old. We have all heard of piracy on the high seas. With our motley crew I knew nothing was beneath us. We could eat their grub and then turn to cannibalism with the tenderfoot first on the menu. But right now I was broached on a rock midstream in the Charley River.

We weren't wrapped but stuck. I yelled, "women and children first!" hoping they would all get out and ferry me downstream like Humphrey Bogart in the African Queen. Katharine would have none of it and the boys and I decided it was time to put our wet-suits into action.

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Over the side we slipped and we directed Katharine to position herself to aid us in our boat lifting. Hey it moved and without too much muscle. This could work. We jumped back in the boat and maneuvered another 30 ft before the channel choked up with boulders again. We repeated this maneuver a number of times and finally the boys were tired of jumping back in the boat each time and figured they could run along side and wrestle the boat free or at least use the river momentum to assist in getting the boat most of the way over the next set of rocks.

Kyle, Brian and I worked the raft through and over rocks for the next 40 minutes then decided we were in no hurry and let the boat jam into the next unavoidable choke point so we could take a break while Katharine prepared lunch. She put together some sandwiches, fruit and cookies to revitalize her man-crew for the continuing assault on the Charley rock garden.

As we progressed downstream the river valley began to narrow and our stints in the boat lengthened between rock ups and eventually the breadth of the river gave way to a narrower but more importantly slightly deeper channel. Don't get me wrong; the fish were still scraping their bellies while keeping their dorsal fins dry but it is amazing what an inch of water can do for floatation. Now that the boat was again a boat our speed picked up to 3 mph and while still concerned about getting stuck on boulders they could be avoided with some diligent navigating.

The shore was lined thick with spruce and alder and willow and if there were animals there we did not see them given the dense cover. Our destination for the evening was a flat across from a cliff face at a sharp bend in the river. The objective was to keep our camps out on gravel bars or points where there may be more breeze to discourage mosquito attacks.

One of the objectives of the US Geological Survey in Alaska is to avoid naming physical features to maintain a sense of being on the frontier. Actually when looking at the topo maps it reinforces the fact that you are a long way from anywhere. We dubbed the nameless cliff across from our camp Peregrine Eyre for the raptors that we found at first to be intriguing with their diving and mating flights. The rapture with the raptors wore off after about three hours of constant screeching. We thought it would end we the sun dipped down but since it remains light out they were determined to party it up. In addition to the blindfold for daylight sleeping I inserted earplugs that night. If only I knew where they hid the keg! The Charley is known for its abundance of peregrine falcons so leave your pet canary at home unless you plan to feed the locals.

The next morning was oatmeal and muffins then off to loading the boat with gear for the next leg of our journey. Although we did not have to drag the boat the river was still shallow and navigating the proper route was always task one for the oarsman.

"Brian, slap the mosquitos on me" says Kyle. "So I can continue to row!"

Being the younger brother, Brian jumps at this invitation and begins slapping the crap out of Kyle's head. Katharine and I are cracking up, trying hard not to inhale mosquitos, snorting as we laugh through our noses.

After about 1/8th of a mile and a pint an a half of blood, our winged guests have had their fill and the strafing run is over. I'm not sure how much we got bit, but the buzzing around our heads sure made it seem intense. We floated down the class I and II sections of the Charley passing small unnamed creeks along the way that contributed to the meager flow. Given our mosquito experience, we opted to eat lunch on the boat as we drifted downstream.

Forest fires are not confined to the Pacific Northwest and we had flown over a number of smoke plumes on our way to Gelvin's Cabin. We were now passing through an area that had seen the ravages of forest fire a few years back. It actually gave us a sense that we might see some large mammals in the more open terrain.

The topo map showed a right hand turn ahead in the canyon section but it said nothing of the large white mass that lay in front of us on river left. As we approached I could see it was aufeis, a layer of snow/ice left over from the winter that collects in ravines and valleys and can actually cover a river. The danger is if it completely covers the river channeling everything below the undercut ice. Swimming in the Charley would be one thing but going under the ice for a mile or even a few hundred feet would be deadly. I got on the oars and tested the current to make sure we could stop on one of the riverbanks for scouting or portaging if necessary. The speed was manageable, so I ferried the raft to the left side of the river to gain a better downstream perspective. To our relief the aufeis did not cross or even bridge the river, but did overhang the left bank for about 300 yards. We passed by studying this phenomenon of the North. The fact that we encountered aufeis gave me concern whenever we were to pass through a gorge section or tight bends.

Continued on page 13

Tonight's camp was to be a layover and our main objective was to find a nice gravel bar where the breeze might blow and ground the mosquitos. After passing a few suitable places I checked the map for flatter terrain where the river channel might be braided. We settled for a campsite on river right where the gravel was more rock than pebble. By picking the large rocks out of two concentrated areas we cleared acceptable tent footprints and set up our homes for then next couple of days.

Dinner that night was steak and we were all concerned about the fragrances attracting grizzlies. When traveling in bear country the proper etiquette is to change out of your cooking clothes before going to bed, store all food and toiletries away from the sleeping areas, and my favorite, place the loaded shotgun next to your pillow. We complied in all areas and had no visitations from ursus horribilus.

Since it was a layover day we all slept in and the overcast skies kept the tent cooler and lower light level which was welcome even though we wore sleeping blindfolds. Those gizmos are hard to find and I still don't remember what they are actually called but we found ours at Walgreen's in Portland. Breakfast was a leisurely affair and we played cards and threw rocks in the river for a couple of hours before it started to drizzle. The boys and I donned our raingear and grabbed the shotgun with the intent of going for a hike up the steep bank. We waded across the shallows and began our ascent through the brush and determined we really would not have any view by traipsing off into the woods with no high point as a destination. Camp and some Schnapps seemed more appealing so our venture was a short one. Rock throwing wasn't so bad after all especially if you try it with your opposite hand. But if you can't laugh at yourself God help you.

The next morning the clouds gave way to clear skies and we resumed our voyage down the Charley noticing that the spruces were getting more intermingled with birch and willow. About 10 am we saw some large creature on river right. Yow! A Griz! As we scrambled for our camera, the bear looked at us for two seconds and skeedaddled into the woods. We have the memory but not the photo. We kept our eyes peeled for the next several miles hoping to see more animals but only saw fish below the boat.

Closer to the mouth of the Charley in the woods on river left is a cabin where the surviving B 24 crash personnel made their way. They spent the better part of a week there before being rescued. Cabins often are stocked with supplies for survival and this was a prime example of how this practice saved people's skin.

Katharine was anxious to go fishing so we beached the boat on a gravel bar while she rigged her pole and cast across the calm pool for grayling and dolly varden. The boys and I built a fire, mostly for the smoke and then went downstream to throw rocks and just goof off. When we saw Katharine throw a fish back into the river we cried out "What are you doing?"

"I'm throwing them back she replied"

"Them? You mean you have thrown back more than one?"

"Yes" she answered.

We quickly plead our case for the need for fresh protein and she promised to keep the next ones and cook them up for our lunch.

While she was frying the grayling over the fire Kyle, Brian, and I decided we needed to prove our manliness and go for a swim in an Alaskan river. Katharine made us wait so she could get a photo of our adventure. God hates a coward so we all made a running plunge into the sub 40F Charley only to break the world record for the 10 yard sprint back to shore as we squirted out of the water like penguins in the Antarctic. We were now manly but you couldn't tell it by our shriveled winkies.

It did feel good to rinse the layers of Deet off our bodies and get into some dry clothing. Our timing was superb as the fish were just coming out of the pan complemented with some crackers and candy bars for dessert. Even though it was sunny it took some time to warm back up even standing near the fire.

We packed up lunch, Katharine stowed her fishing gear and we loaded back up to head downstream. The river had more depth and navigating it was like drifting along the Wilson River. We knew we were approaching the confluence with the Yukon because the terrain flattened and the river meandered. It felt like we were in some swampy river delta as we rounded a bend to come upon the mighty Yukon.

Read the continuation of "Challenges of the Charley" in next month's newsletter

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ to 2 pounds flank steak
- 2/3 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 2/3 cup soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 1 teaspoon liquid smoke
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

Commercial dehydrator

OR Homemade dehydrator: 1 box fan, 5 paper air-conditioning filters and 2 bungee cords



Homemade Jerky

Submitted by Katie Watry

DIRECTIONS

Trim the flank steak of any excess fat. Place flank steak in zip-lock bag and place it in the freezer for 1 to 2 hours in order to firm up.

Remove the steak from the freezer and thinly slice the meat with the grain, into long strips.

Return sliced steak to zip-lock bag. Add all other ingredients to the bag. Seal it.

Shake and massage all ingredients to evenly distribute marinade amongst the steak strips. Place bag in refrigerator and let marinate for a couple hours or overnight.

Evenly distribute the marinated strips of meat onto 3 filters, laying them in the grooves and then stacking the filters on top of one another. If using a commercial dehydrator, follow the manufacturer's direction. If using homemade dehydrator, top the three filters with 1 empty filter. Next, lay the box fan on its side and lay the filters on top of it. Strap the filters to the fan with 2 bungee cords. Stand the fan upright, plug in and set to medium. Allow the meat to dry for 8 to 12 hours for both commercial and homemade dehydrator.

Once dry, remove meat strips from filters and store them in a cool, dry place, in an airtight container.

Paddle Faster, I Hear Banjo Music

Submitted by Dan Hudson

As much as we routinely laugh about the title to this safety message, it contains truth, despite it being emblazoned on our rafting shirts or on bumper/dry box stickers. The saying, of course, comes from the movie *Deliverance*, and was in reference to avoiding the potential danger associated with "locals".

Another sage adage attributed to our rafting culture: "Rig to Flip – Dress to Swim" – references a combination of ideas surrounding our ultimate safety on the river. Without giving any thought to it, we never plan to have a family member from our raft or a member of our group NOT make it safely home at the end of a day on the water. But given an unexpected turn of events, a higher or lower CFS and the change fostered on a rapid, or even the unexpected log deposited on a rock forming a mid-stream obstruction/strainer, we become exposed to danger with our recreational choice for a hobby every time we venture out on the river. As we get deep into our special winter time rafting trips, the first portion, "Rig To Flip", helps us to always consider keeping our rescue, safety, and camp equipment with us in the unlikely event of a flip. Simply said, we don't want to participate in a garage sale or scavenger hunt for someone's gear down river. We don't want to subject the group to the hardship of taking care of someone who lost all of their gear on a multiday trip, especially in winter! I used to think I would never flip a raft, not intentionally, anyway, but I was proven wrong by the water and not only did I flip, but I was rotated and violently ejected out of my raft, along with all of my passengers. The flip was not expected, by any means, and the result could have been catastrophic had our oars not been tethered, our safety gear not strapped securely to the raft, and the drybag with all our valuables (read here: CAR KEYS) securely fastened to the frame of the raft.

The second part of the adage, "Dress to Swim", became very real immediately following our flip as we were now swimming in very cold springtime runoff from the Cascade Mountains. Daytime temperatures would not have been supportive of rapid rewarming once we righted our raft and regained our presence on the topside if we had not been appropriately dressed to swim. Although I was dressed in a high quality drysuit and had decent thermal layering, my fingers were white from lost circulation once I figured out which way was up and had the top of the raft on top of the water instead of under it.

Anyone one of us, at any time, could find ourselves enduring a cold water swim. That being said, not only must we endure it, we must be able to function and self-rescue or participate in the rescue of another. Did you plan on making the swim? Probably not, but they do happen. We must never forget the possibility of an unexpected swim, and the associated dangers posed by cold water.

Being blunt – when I teach – I state the effects of cold water immersion - "Cold Water Kills." Cold water immersion first causes an uncontrolled gasp for air. If you are in the water and inhale water with the gasp, you start the drowning process if you cannot protect your airway. The second impact of cold water is the rapid numbing of the extremities - which reduces fine motor skills and dexterity. Was your PFD appropriately worn before you were ejected into the river? Can you now snap clips, close zippers, tighten straps with a loss of dexterity? The third impact of cold water is caused by the body shunting blood to the body core, therefore reducing blood flow to the legs and arms, making it near impossible to swim or self rescue. All of the above described effects of sudden immersion in cold water can be lessened with proper planning – so your plan needs to be "Dress to Swim" - ALWAYS.

Dressing to swim includes wearing an impact protection device on your personal computer – simply put: wear a helmet. Dressing to swim means anticipating the possibility of a flip and wearing a properly fitted and secured Personal Floatation Device (PFD). A good fitting drysuit, along with appropriate amounts of thermal layering underneath, protects the body core from the effects of cold water. Can't afford a drysuit? - rent one from a local merchant. Dressing to swim means wearing gloves on your hands to protect from the cold and water booties to protect your feet from impacts and the effects of cold water.

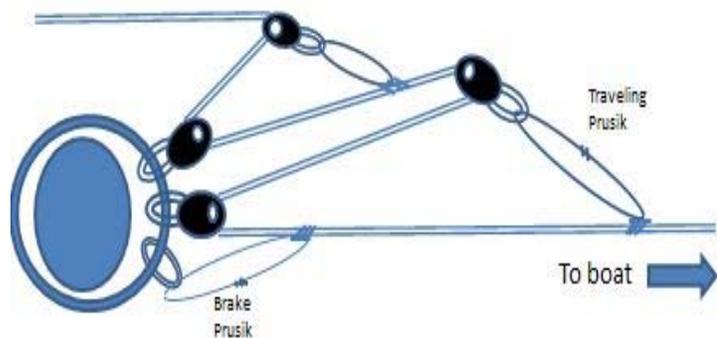
So, yes, paddle faster if you hear banjo music, but please also remind yourself before each rafting adventure: "Rig to Flip- Dress to Swim".

Double Z 9:1

- Double Z Drag
- It offers a 9:1 mechanical advantage

Minimal Requirements

- 1 10' of 1" tubular webbing
- 4 Pulleys
- 5 Locking Carabineers
- 3 Prusik Loops
- Haul line



Knots Needed: Prusik, Double Fisherman's, Figure 8 on the boat

Steve K 2012



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Upcoming Trips

Submitted by Pat Barry,
Trip Editor



TRIP	DATES	TRIP LEADER	CONTACT INFO
2016 Trask River, Class II/III	Feb 7, 2016	Tom Riggs	trriggs@solenis.com, 503-705-5783
2016 Rogue River President's Day Trip, Class III/IV	February 13-15, 2016	Chris Massey, Steve Oslund	chrisamassey@gmail.com stevilone@gmail.com
2016 Spring Break Trip - Lower Deschutes River, Class II/III	March 19-21, 2016	Scott Ogren	Scott@ScottOgren.com, 503-267-9785
2016 Lower N. Umpqua River, Class II/III	April 24-26, 2016	Brenda Bunce	Brenda.bunce@gmail.com, 360-931-4224
2016 Grande Ronde River, Class III	April 29-May 1, 2016	Eric & Candace Ball	balle@pocketinet.com, 509-525-6134
2016 Tax Relief Float, Deschutes River, Class III/IV	April 30, 2016	Bill Goss	zanng@msn.com
2016 Rogue River Lodge Trip, Class III/IV	May 20-23, 2016	Van McKay	vanm1@aol.com, 360-737-3148
2016 Women's Trip on the Lower Deschutes, Class II/III	June 17-19, 2016	Carol Beatty	Stacey Strausberg, scs@scs1024.com
2016 Lower Salmon River, Class III/IV	July 2-4, 2016	Eric & Candace Ball	balle@pocketinet.com, 509-525-6134
2016 Selway River IK Trip	August 4-7, 2016	Eric Ball	balle@pocketinet.com, 509-525-6134
2016 Hell's Canyon, Class III/IV	September 17-19, 2016	Mike Moses	mtymo_@hotmail.com, 509-240-4220

For additional details on upcoming trips or to view past OWA trips go to <http://oregonwhitewater.org/calendar/trip-calendar>



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