



Central Iowa Paddlers

Volume 13 Issue 4

September 2009

This newsletter is a publication of the Central Iowa Paddlers, an informal group of paddlesport enthusiasts. The mission of the club is to share information, promote recreation opportunities and paddlesport safety, and encourage care of our aquatic resources. The group includes new and experienced paddlers with canoes and kayaks of all kinds. Visit us on www.paddleiowa.org and pass the word!

MEANDERINGS

"The sea, once it casts its spell, holds one in its net of wonder forever."

"The happiness of the bee and the dolphin is to exist. For man it is to know that and to wonder at it."

"The sea, the great unifier, is man's only hope. Now, as never before, the old phrase has a literal meaning: we are all in the same boat."

"We forget that the water cycle and the life cycle are one."

Jacques Yves Cousteau

"You live in Iowa and you're a kayaker? Where the heck do you paddle?" I travel extensively for work, and when I tell people of my passion for paddling, I often get the above question. They don't know about the 11,000 acres I paddle on Rathbun Lake, they've never heard of Water Trails, and it never occurs to them that Iowa has rivers. Apparently the Mississippi and the Missouri are only located in the states that share their name!

These people are also surprised to hear that paddlers come from surrounding states to learn from, consult with, and buy from Iowans with names like Piper, Nate and Casey. The idea of white watering in indoor pools and outdoor holes seems strange. Isn't whitewatering something you do in Colorado and off waterfalls? The idea of paddling clubs, expos, and demos sounds odd; especially since they think Iowa is corn, caucuses and fairs.

Maybe the fact that Iowa is a paddling Mecca should stay our little secret.

And by the way, CIP members are not necessarily the stay at home types. This summer we have paddlers reporting from the waters of Ireland, the Yukon, and Canada. *"Where the heck do you paddle?"* Where there's water!!! - Steve Parrish, editor -

REPORTS

We have the Winners!

- John Craun won the Paddlefest 10 mile Race in July. He also completed the North Carolina 100 mile Challenge in September (even though about two thirds of the entrants did not complete due to weather!)
- Dianne Lowry's all-female relay group won first place for women at GAAR (Great Ames Adventure Race) on September 6

CIP's own Professor Lichen (John Pearson) has his book in print "Deep Nature," featuring Iowa macro photography by Linda and Robert Scarth and text by John Pearson, will become available from the University of Iowa Press beginning Thursday, Oct. 1.

The book will be available at bookstores or directly from the UI Press, by phone at 800-621-2736 or online at <http://www.uiowapress.org>. It'll be a page turner!

First Annual Dam-to-Dam PADDLE Trip picture and article by Diane Michaud Lowry

Fourteen paddlers departed from the Sycamore Boat Access under the direction of Red Rock Armada Admiral John Craun. Armada seaman Jerry Kemperman was also on hand to assist the large group of many new paddlers down the Des Moines River. Along the way we lost one environmentally aware and experienced canoer who stayed behind to clean up some trash (practicing for Project AWARE?). He showed up at the Birdland take-out as we were disembarking. What luck, he'd found a new, better padded canoe seat. With any luck we'll do this again next year.



Safety by Steve Parrish (picture by Diane Michaud Lowry)

"Moonlight Floats" are popular in Iowa. Red Rock and Rathbun in particular have become havens for trips involving paddling in the dark. A few reminders are in order for those who plan to ply the waters when it is dark

- Safety lights are not only smart ... they're the law. The basic rule for lakes is to have a 360 degree light that can be seen from at least a mile away (typically stern mounted for a kayak) and a beam light (flash light or headlamp). And, like a PFD, they're worthless unless they're on!
- Stay together. The dark can be disorienting for even a skilled paddler. With a group there is the opportunity to correct a misjudgment in navigation or distance. Also, a group provides a bigger visual footprint for other boaters.
- Try night paddling in phases. Some paddlers get seasick because of the lack of horizon at night. Try a short night paddle before taking on the big waters.
- Use your equipment. If you have a GPS, mark a waypoint at your putin. You may get lost, but your GPS won't. If you have a 2 way VHF weather radio, bring it along. On lakes with marinas, the emergency channel is likely to be monitored.



Water Trails Everywhere!

There has been an explosion of activity related to Water Trails in Iowa. Rather than repeat it all in this Newsletter, we suggest you review the DNR website on this initiative:

<http://www.iowadnr.gov/watertrails/trails.html> As the website reports:

Water Trails Underway!

216 Miles of Designated Water Trails

1,125 Miles of Water Trails Under Development

Go to www.paddlelibrary.org and click "enter library," read the rules and click "go to library". Once you find a resource you want to borrow, click on "borrow from library" and it will bring up an email format to John's email address. The subject reads "I want to borrow an item from the library". Type in what you want to borrow and then John will get back to you with the cost for shipping, usually around \$1.50 media rate.

Paddling Library continues as a valuable resource

The Paddling Library is a great success. We all appreciate what John Wenck has done to give us instant access to resources that are sometimes hard to find or downright unavailable. Here's how to access the library:

TRIP REPORTS

Atlantic Sea Kayaking by Scott Evans

A short day trip on the Atlantic with Jim Kennedy of Skibereen, Ireland has got to be one of the most peaceful events I've encountered since starting kayaking five years ago. His skill as an instructor, guide and historian blends the best of everything paddling means to me. Finding Reen Pier in Union Hall, Ireland was an event unto itself. *Atlantic Sea Kayaking* is based in a beautiful



harbor on the south coastline of Ireland, west of Cork. They operate seven days a week and have several options for kayakers including day paddles and nighttime excursions. After three hours of paddling on Castle Townsend Bay one only wanted more opportunity to explore and definitely wanted his/her own boat and unlimited time.

We paddled out to the edge of the harbor with the exiting tide, where we encountered large friendly swells and beautiful spinnaker'd sailboats finishing a race from Kinsale, just outside of Cork. The weather for our two weeks in Ireland

was spectacular with only one day of rain and flowers at their ultimate peak intensity. After returning in the afternoon we planned on the nighttime paddle starting at 2130 and Jim volunteered to bring the tandem over to our harbor pier, which saved us 20km of left-side of the road white-knuckle driving. The trip up to the end of the bay took us into dead calm waters with bio-luminescent sprinkled kelp that sparkled when you ran your hand through it. We ended our journey at midnight and waved goodbye to one of the most experienced and friendly kayakers you could ever encounter.

The Emerald Isle is definitely a kayaker's dream. We also stopped at Killaloe, on the "lovely" Shannon River, where the longest river in Ireland lazily winds its way to the sea. It would be another great trip to spend a week just navigating through the wonderful countryside enjoying all

that Ireland has to offer. We did find time to support the local Irish economy by toasting each day with a smooth Guinness “tonic”. A fine way to end a wonderful experience.

Yukon Paddling

In June Greg Vitale provided us with this note about famed central Iowa paddler Adam Brooks: *“Adam is about ready to set off on his most remote trip yet- more than 2300 miles on the Yukon River. The logistics of this trip, and especially getting his kayak to the Yukon River, has been quite a challenge. As a result, Adam recruited Dave Kraemer’s help in getting north so he can start his paddle. This trip is Adam’s fourth major adventure and his first fund raiser for the American Cancer Society in honor of both his mom and his dad who died from cancer. Adam’s website and the opportunity to contribute to his fund raising efforts is at <http://www.myriverquest.com/>. The Des Moines Register’s write up is at <http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2009905170302>. Let’s all wish Adam the best.”*

Shortly afterwards Dave Kraemer gave us a peak into the process of getting Adam shuttled to the Yukon. If you want the entire log, email Dave at davek_27@yahoo.com. Here’s a peak at his story:

After five days on the road, this is how it is: dumbstruck and blind from fatigue, totally useless behind the wheel, would have sent us plummeting down a mountain or into an icy lake or piled into a moose had I kept driving. Dick in the driver’s seat, slumped against the door, turned away from me, beady-eyed, unshaven, glazed, sweaty, just as exhausted as I am but forced into the traces by my incapacity, seething because I can’t finish my shift.

And he says, “I’m sure glad I came! Is this heaven?”

No.

And it wasn’t Iowa, either.

It was, however, one of the most beautiful spots on the planet – Jasper Provincial Park in British Columbia. And I was just awake enough to realize I was squandering my chance to see it.

Dick Howard and I took in the park, if you can call it that, along with Banff in early June on the return trip from White Horse, Yukon Territory, where we delivered Adam Brooks and a kayak for Adam’s grand adventure down the length of the Yukon River to the Bering Sea.

Adam will come back with a real story. But in the meantime you get this, lies and other stories from the trip up and back, I think probably the longest shuttle ever made by a Central Iowa Paddler.

We drove a total of 5,600 miles, close to 100 hours in the car, in seven days, three nights on the ground, three nights in motels. We made it through bad food, bad roads, surly wait staff, overpriced coffee, a forest fire and a night camping with a bear. We suffered for half the trip from country music and the other half from our own bad jokes.

And I know that, though Dick now hates me, I could not have asked for a better traveling partner.

Adam succeeded in his river quest. As the July 20 edition of the Ames Tribune reported: “Yukon Gold: Mid-Iowa paddler takes only 33 days to kayak 2,300-mile Yukon River.” In memory of his mother and father, Adam raised nearly \$5,000 for the American Cancer Society prior to the trip. If you would like to contribute to the cause, contact Adam at www.myriverquest.com

MR340 by Dave Kraemer

(note: This is a long article, even edited, but we have received an outpouring of appreciative emails on Dave’s story – a sample included below. Enjoy! – editor -)

I’m back from the MR340. I blew down 200 miles of river in a day and a half, on pace with my plan, looking strong and beating the mental game. I was somewhat sore, but still outrunning the pack I was traveling with. Feeling good about my decisions, managing my fluids, chasing away all the black doubts that crowd your head when you’re slogging hour after hour. Then I hit The Wall.

I signed on to the 340 this year at the invitation of my friend Travis Konda of Kansas City. The 340 is a non-stop ultramarathon on the Missouri River from Kansas City to St. Louis. There are mandatory checkpoints along the way, and opportunities to stop and rest, but many racers simply try to run it as fast as they can, without sleeping if possible.

In January, when Travis sent out an invitation, I had nothing but time. This seemed like a life-challenge and a perfect opportunity. I began training this winter and after ice-out picked up in the water on the Mississippi and at Lake Holcombe as much as I could, though in the end, not as much as I had planned, or needed.

And as if training for this would not have been enough, I bit off even more and decided to build a boat particularly for this race. I have a sea kayak that would have worked, but I decided it was not as light or as fast as I wanted. After much planning and talking with boat companies, I settled on a bit of a hybrid design, half kit-boat, half Dave's invention. It has a hard stitch-and-glue hull (wood and fiberglass) and a soft skin-on-frame deck (cloth coated to repel water). Construction has been a joy and a chore. I finally got to work on it in June. It took 6-8 weeks of steady work, several hours each night. But in the end, it's beautiful. Dubbed "Ragdoll" for its soft top. My wife Mary asked if it was more because that's how it made me feel after paddling it that far.

As race day approached, we also began laying in gear and supplies. It was like a siege. Cases of water, electrolytes, food, batteries, maps and lists. Mary was to serve as my ground crew, following me from checkpoint to checkpoint, refueling, filling my water bottles, setting up the tent and tearing it down (I had decided to allow myself 10 hours over the course of the race).

Sunday we drove the route backwards, stopping at each checkpoint to mark it on the map and assess the landing. Missouri is beautiful. Rolling hills and vineyards every half mile along the eastern half of the route, and the Katy trail, a 240 mile bike trail, parallels the river. We hit the safety meeting Monday night, getting my t-shirt and getting fired up. The race director informed us that 45 percent of those who start don't finish and that the great weather we'd been enjoying might not hold.

Tuesday morning we awoke in a thunderstorm and pouring rain. The landing at the start was jammed with people dashing around in the rain and taking shelter under the highway bridge. The start was delayed an hour and a half. Worried about lightning. Worried about how my boat would behave in the current. Piled on too many clothes. Peeled them off again. Finally began to feel better when we got in the water. Travis and I paddled far upstream, away from the start, to sit and wait.

When the gun went off, but soon began threading my way through the crowd. The boat moved easily and much quicker than nearly everyone around me. Back where I was there were few real challenges. It was 10 miles out before I settled in to a group that was working at my pace.

First checkpoint was 56 miles out. I arrived hot and tired, but the turn-around was good. At the second stop I ate dinner, then set out for Miami, Mo., which was the third stop, 105 miles from the start and where I planned to sleep. The full moon came up about 8 p.m. and I caught up to a group of about 10 paddlers. Boat lights traced sinuous trails through the darkness. The moonlight provided plenty of illumination to avoid bouys and the wing dikes that stud the Missouri, but the safety in numbers also was comforting. It was a beautiful night paddle. I pulled in at about 12:30 p.m. Mary fed me and left for a motel. I sacked out in the tent, tired but happy.

Happiness ended about 3 a.m. when someone's gas generator fired up. I got out to ask them to shut it down, but couldn't raise anyone in the RV. I needed to sleep more than I needed to solve this problem, so I squeezed in some earplugs and tried to go back to sleep.

On the water the second day at 7 a.m. Longer distances between stops. My pace dropped off somewhat from what I'd been pulling the first day, but still well ahead of average and on target for my plan, to end in St. Charles late Thursday night.

The plan was to make it to Jefferson City by midnight again, about a 120-mile run. But along the way I decided to lie over at Cooper's Landing, about 25 miles short of Jeff City, sleep for a few hours, and then hit the river again about 3 a.m. for a moonlight run.

I left Franklin Island about 5:30 p.m. for a relatively short 23-mile trip to Cooper's. Told Mary it should take about three hours and I wouldn't need my running lights because it would still be light when I got to Cooper's. Soon after hitting the water I realized the fallacy of my math and started pushing hard to beat the dark. Still drinking every 10 or 15 minutes, stopping to pee on the hour, things were working relatively well and I was once again pulling 8 mph at times when I could find the current.

But as dark approached I realized I would need to stop to put on my lights. Passing several nice looking sandbars, I got to a stretch that didn't look so opportune. A kind of dark-looking island on my right looked like it might work so I pulled in to the slack water. Immediately, a big carp rolled under my boat. These fish can weigh 50 pounds and are reported to leap clean out of the water when disturbed, knocking people out of their boats.

Disconcerted, I nosed the boat up onto the island and stepped out, sinking immediately into knee-deep mud. I fell over backward, kicking the boat out from under me. The tube from my hydration bag dropped into the swirling muck. Out in the river, three boats passed by, gawking like passerbys at a crime scene. Somehow got myself out of the mud, dragged the boat up onto dry land, dug out the lights, washed off as much mud as I could and climbed back in, gingerly crossing the slack water for fear of surprising a carp again.

Dark fell, not as brightly lit as the night before, and no one else around. This was a more threatening stretch of river, with more and larger wing dikes and a tricky landing at Cooper's. Still, I pushed hard, upset by the mud incident, my plan rapidly unraveling. The lights of Cooper's came into view, then disappeared as I rounded a bend. The sound of rushing water, all of a sudden I realized I was on a dike, this one just under the surface. I passed over with no scraping, but was frightened by the possibilities.

Mary met me at the landing. She'd been waiting for two hours, neglecting the dog left in the car, watching the river for me. I was glad to see her. We pulled the boat out and I staggered into another world.

Cooper's is a private tavern/landing/camp back along a gravel road where you would never find it, except when you stumble on it accidentally. It has what you might generously call river character. And on Wednesday night, at the top of the ramp there was a party in full roar. Guitars thrummed, drummers beat on old picnic tables, cans and maybe things like turtle shells or the skulls of some other poor creatures. Bluesy voices growled. The smells of fried food and beer and sweat and dust billowed up. Lanterns hung by cords over small and large knots of garbage, bonfires and people in t-shirts and tattoos. Great place to grab a few hours of needed sleep, I thought. The plan was falling apart rapidly. Still, I squelched the negativity.

Mary got me some soup while I wolfed down a peanut butter sandwich that had been in my deck bag since I started a day and a half ago. There was a shower, so to speak, inside the store at Cooper's. I decided to de-mud. The woman ahead of me in line took one look and said that if I would be quick, I could go ahead of her.

Through the crowd, I weaved and staggered. My head was clear, but I could not make my legs work. My heart was racing and my arms ached. Back at the tent I assessed: I had stopped

drinking when my tube fell in the water back at the island. And I noticed my urine begin to change colors as the hours marched on. Not good.

More, as I began to add up the times, I could not make them work out to get me to St. Charles still by Thursday night. I had 140 miles left to go, optimistically 20 hours of boat time alone. I still needed sleep that night, and would need sleep again the next night to cover that distance. The race would go until Friday at midnight, so in all actuality, I could still make it. But at the back of the pack was not how I wanted to do this race. And it would mean two more days of heat and struggle even if I could recover enough to get back in the boat.

I could see this was not making Mary happy either. She asked tentatively: Is it time? I told her I did not want to make a decision when I was exhausted and she fairly assessed my rationality. I slept for four hours. The alarm went off and I creaked out of the tent. The moon lit the water and boats slipped quietly from the landing. But I was still walking in wild lurching circles with no control. My body had stopped recovering. I had to pee but couldn't. Dehydration was obvious. Not a good time to get in the boat. I crawled back into the tent and told Mary I was pulling out.

A few hours later, I watched through tears as the volunteer crossed out my name and marked me DNF. It was harder than anything encountered on the river. Several boats were readying. I waffled. Too late. It was done.

We drove to St. Charles later that morning, in time to greet Travis. He made it in 51 hours, 35 minutes, putting him clearly in the all-time leader board and likely in second or fourth place among solo men this year. I slowly recuperated throughout the day. As strength grew, so did second-guesses about my decision. The decision to pull out was absolutely the right decision at the time. In the condition I was in, I should not have gotten back into the boat. Rehydration underway is nearly impossible and to try to continue would have put me, and maybe others, at risk.

While I am disappointed I could not finish, I could not have been prouder of my boat, which performed spectacularly and drew comments all along, and of my crew, which is to say, Mary. We get by with the support we give each other. I enjoyed the best support anyone could receive.

... and Don Wall's Response to Dave's story!

Great effort on the Missouri 340 event this summer. Of possible interest I safety boated last Wednesday morning at the annual Iowa City VA TEE tournament at the Riverside Casino and Golf Course at a half day kayaking opportunity for some of the physically disabled veterans. They had a couple of VA people from the east coast promoting this opportunity but the key guy was a Kevin Carr from creatingability.com. Kevin has been working on devices to enable disabled persons to paddle canoes and kayaks. He showed up with a trailer load of Current Design kayaks with some small pontoon devises that attach to the rear hatch cover; he also had one chair device for a disabled person that could be adapted to a canoe or a kayak with a large cockpit. He is trying to develop a device to allow one arm paddling. We had a nice flat water pond about the size of Ada Hayden's north lake and great fall weather and everyone had a good time. I gather the VA may try to develop more paddling opportunities for disabled veterans but would need local help to set up anything at a specific location

Woodland Caribou Provincial Park 2009 by Eric and John Holzmueller

Established in 1983, Woodland Caribou Provincial Park (WCPP) lies on the western Ontario border, 100 kilometers west of Red Lake, Ontario. It is only half the size (1.5 million acres) of the

Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW), but receives 95% fewer visitors compared to BWCAW each year. Of course there is a reason for this. You really have to want to go to Woodland Caribou. It is not close to civilization. In fact, WCPP is closer to polar bear habitat than it is to a major city. Red Lake is the nearest town to WCPP and is about 1280 km from Des Moines. Once in Red Lake it is another two hour drive along a rough logging road to reach an entry point into the Park.

Prior to reaching our entry point (Leano Lake), the most common entry point at WCPP, we purchased some maps from a local outfitter (Goldseekers) in Red Lake. While in Red Lake we also self registered for a permit. Before the trip started, we were hoping to at least see one woodland caribou within WCPP. However, while registering for a permit we noticed a stack of



post cards with a caribou on the front. On the back was a request by Park staff to send in the post card if you saw caribou in the Park and report how many you saw, your location, what it was doing, etc. Needless to say, the post cards didn't give us any encouragement that we would see a live caribou in the Park. Overall, we paddled for seven days and covered approximately 90 km, including 39 portages covering 6200 meters. After entering Leano Lake we headed south to Kilburn Lake. While trolling on Kilburn Lake we spotted a female moose about 1/2 km away. She was swimming between two islands and at first all

you could see were her big ears flicking back and forth. She got out of the water when we were about 50 meters away and ran off into the woods. It would be our only moose sighting of the trip, but we did see a number of loons throughout the journey. From Kilburn Lake we headed northwest to Aegean Lake. Northwest of Aegean Lake a large area of the Park was recently burned. This created some difficult portaging. There were quite a few downed logs and in many places the forest was burned to the bedrock leaving few signs of a trail. Luckily someone had set up rock cairns to guide us from one lake to the next. The burned area was by far the most difficult section to portage through. Portages in unburned areas were by no means easy because they were oftentimes over grown, swampy, and hard to find from the boat. Park staff does mark each portage with a single blaze on a nearby tree, but this mark rapidly fades, or in some cases we found the tree had fallen over.

After paddling through the burned area we made our way to Wrist Lake and then Mexican Hat Lake where we found a nice campsite by a waterfall. Unlike the BWCAW where you are required to stay at designated campsites, WCPP does not restrict where you can camp, although Park policy encourages you to camp at 'established' campsites. Even though you have the freedom to camp anywhere, you don't necessarily want to. Typically there is a reason a site has been used before and your best bet for a bug free night and comfortable slumber is to find a nice established site that receives a breeze to keep the bugs away. Fortunately for us our outfitter marked some nice campsites on the maps we purchased, some of which we may not have found without his guidance.

At Mexican Hat Lake we found the fishing to be quite good for walleye, which seemed to favor white or chartreuse two-tailed jigs. We also caught several northern pike during the trip, which seemed to bite on just about anything we tossed into the water. We caught fish nearly every day

we tried and even included some in our meals. Although many of the lakes we paddled were deep enough to support lake trout, we were never able to reel one in despite several attempts of slowly trolling across various lakes with a heavy spoon.

From Mexican Hat Lake we completed our circular route by paddling east back to Leano Lake via Bunny Lake. Although we didn't actually see a woodland caribou, the trip was still enjoyable. After our exit from the park around noon, we headed south stopping near Cloquet, MN for the night and reached Des Moines by 2:00 p.m. the next day. Because of the travel distance and remote area, I wouldn't recommend WCPP as a first time wilderness outing. If you have explored most of the BWCAW (and Quetico Provincial Park), however, WCPP is a great place for your next adventure.

Apostle Islands by Steve Parrish

How many different trips reports can we write in the CIP Newsletter about the Apostle Islands? Based on my last trip, I'd say we can write as many reports as there are trips. The next trip is always different than the last. This July was my sixth trip to the Apostle Islands on Lake Superior, and it was the first trip without some kind of unplanned-for challenge. Number 1 involved paddling in a squall and have a rudder line break; Number 2 had wind that forced an unexpected extra day on Sand Island. Number 3 included a 25 mile paddling day in 37 degree waters (with the waters turning nasty). Number 4 featured black flies from hell. And Number 5 had the unforgettable learning experience of two kayakers capsizing in stirred up winds.

I'm not saying this trip didn't involve challenges, but they were ones we built into the itinerary. John Pearson, Brian Lange and I came from Iowa, while James Keyes and Brett Ensor drove in from Omaha. We met up with two Minnesotans at York Island: Dave ("gitcheegumeguy") and Katherine. These two Minnesotans are as expert as there is about the Apostle Islands. Because of good weather, we were able to paddle out to Devils Island, explore the sea caves AND camp there. The Boss (a/k/a Lake Superior) is not usually that accommodating! We also paddled to islands I had not previously been to, including Rocky, South Twin and Beaver. Some brisk westerly winds gave us the opportunity to practice our surfing skills in open water, as well as exercise our muscles slogging through cross and bow waves.

A circumnavigation of Oak Island and then camping there was a great finish. The next morning was a pleasant slog back to our take out at Little Sand Bay. Although we had no incidents or problems, I can relate two equipment tips for those planning big water trips. First, the 2 way VHF radio that many paddlers bring for monitoring weather can also be used as a communication device. On two days, paddlers were located at different camp sites. We were able to coordinate travel plans by choosing a channel and a time to talk on our VHF radios. Second, believe your equipment. The last day I directed my companions to what I thought was Point Detour. Just before pushing off, I checked my GPS compass and it showed me pointed southwest instead of west. I simply decided it was somehow off and lead our group towards the sited point. When we came close to the point I realized we had paddled to Point Raspberry, not Point Detour. We had wasted well over a mile of paddling into a head wind because I let my ego trump my common sense. Compasses are meant as an important aid. If you don't agree with your instruments, figure out what is causing the difference!

For me, a trip to the Apostle Islands is a reward for all the paddling and practice I put myself through during the year. Build up your endurance, practice your rescues, hone your water skills and, as a reward, you get to camp at beautiful islands with incomparable sea caves. And, you get to travel with paddlers who you know are safe, skilled and fun.

River Paddling in Oregon, Idaho and Montana by Steve Parrish

My good friend Frank turned age 70 this year, and with that event he started working on his Bucket List. One item on his list was to go white water rafting. I was recruited to help him complete his mission. We decided to enhance the experience by tying the trip into someone else's mission. Vicki is a woman intent on running a marathon in all 50 states. She planned to complete her 47th and 48th states by running the Portland Marathon July 4 and Missoula

Marathon July 12. So, Frank, Vicki, her husband Adrian, and I decided to paddle and play between marathons.

OREGON Our water vacation started July 5 with a guide service taking us on a 2 1/2 day trip down the Lower Deschutes River. This popular rafting destination is famous for some seriously fun Class III rapids. Combined with beautiful high desert canyon camping and engaging off-river diversions, it is a perfect way to experience the beauty of eastern Oregon. The adrenaline rush of the rapids was in no way dampened by the fact that the experience was safely controlled by the oarsman in the back of the raft. And, we had a chance to spread our wings by occasionally paddling an inflatable kayak down the river. The inflatable was fun, but provided none of the control or precision of a true white water kayak.

IDAHO Our next leg on the trip was a more serious venture into white water rafting. We attacked the snow melt Lochsa River in central Idaho. This untamed wild river is replete with Class IV and V rapids. We were there on the final runs of the summer, meaning the CFS was down, but the technical requirements were up. A lot of the experience was dodging huge boulders and digging out of holes. Our boats were simple rubber rafts where the guide had no more control than we did. No oars; just seriously paddling! The next day involved lots of paddling, but in more calm conditions. We used small kayaks to paddle the Middle Fork and Selway Rivers in central Idaho. A nice mixture of flat water and rapids, my inexperienced friends learned about spilling and recovering in frigid water, while I got more practice than I wanted digging them out of said frigid water.

MONTANA Our final run felt like old home week for me. I had fly-fished Clarks Ford outside of Missoula several years ago. To go out this time and white water raft it in its canyons further increased my love for this popular river. At first we were concerned because we were one boat among dozens on a beautiful July Saturday. Our fears were dismissed as the water quickly separated the boats and gave us plenty of challenge to focus on. Some of the Class III rapids on Clarks Fork are begging for a boat spill, but I'm pleased to report none of my encounters with the water during the entire trip were involuntary ... unless you want to count when my crewmates kicked me into the water while I was doing my best Leonardo DeCaprio Titanic impression on the bow of the raft!

My friend's next item on his Bucket List is doing the biking thing in Sturgis SD. I told him he'll have to find another friend for that.

Iowa Paddlers Membership

DUES: \$10 per year

Includes emails, Newsletters ...
And Fellowship!

Membership, Dues, Emails for CIP list

Lynn Aldridge

laldrigd@uhl.uiowa.edu

(641) 363-4451

Central Iowa Paddlers

P.O Box 17

Des Moines, IA 50301-0017

Send: Dues, email announcements

Newsletter, Information, Questions

Steve Parrish

sbparrish@q.com

5138 Robertson Dr

Des Moines, IA 50312

515-284-6910

Send: Articles, pictures