



Canoe, Kayak and Rafting Newsletter



Tragic News

For those who knew and paddled with him, I regret to pass along the news that **Craig Hightower** was killed on the morning of August 15, 2007 in a motorcycle accident. Check out the list of amazing places and adventures he experienced at his website:
www.backroadsboogie.com/toc.htm



Whispers

She only whispers of death
Whispers so softly that
no words are spoken

No words are needed
I hear her whispers

And I want to shout
“Let me toss your limbs
to the buzzards”

You're dying!
And the secrets
of the world are revealed
by a bluebird near the window

You're dying!
And so our own
returns to the clouds
Ocean no more

I'll look for you in the sky

©Kathryn Streletzky, June 2007

Memorial Paddle for Craig

Craig's paddling friends are meeting for a memorial paddle **Sunday Sept 2nd** on the SF American River. Please join us if you were friends of Craig and would like to remember him by paddling with all of his other friends. This is what he would have liked. Or... join us if you didn't know him, but want to paddle with a whole bunch of cool paddlers that you don't know (yet). He would have liked that too.

We will run the Class III Chili Bar section first, meeting at 8am to set shuttle, and then rendezvous with the Class II group to run C-G. That group will meet at 10:30am to set shuttle, and then wait at Troublemaker to watch the first group's attempts at perfecting the Hightower Line (backwards).

I'll be coordinating the logistics. Please let me know if you'll be coming.

Kevin Whilden 503-381-629

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PUBLIC RELATIONS VOLUNTEER WANTED

Please consider volunteering for the Club's Public Relations post, and helping on the Rudder Committee. GCP is as good as the members make it. If you are interested, please contact me (Mike Lee) at mleeaia@jps.net or 916-372-0313 and I will explain the duties.

SPECIAL DONATIONS COORDINATOR VOLUNTEER WANTED

Please consider volunteering for the Club's Special Donations Coordinator post, and helping on the Rudder Committee. GCP is as good as the members make it. If you are interested, please contact me (Jude Lee) at mleeaia@jps.net or 916-372-0313 and I will explain the duties.

New Web Page Designer

Welcome **Christine Cubillo** as GCP's Web Page Designer! This volunteer position has been vacant for some time now. It is great to know that she is here to help.



GCP Trips

Trip organizers needed! To lead a trip, contact John Simpkin at jsimpkin@hotmail.com or 530-621-1941. Posting a trip in the newsletter will also reduce your annual renewal fee by \$5.00. Just cut your posting out of the newsletter and send it in with your renewal.

Sept. 22. Class III Gorge. Previous Gorge experience required, contact John Simpkin. 530 621 1941 or jsimpkin@hotmail.com

GCP Classified Ads

Classified ads are free for members. Send ads to Elise Goldman at awindsfr@prodigy.net.

**Check out the GCP
Website at:
www.gcpaddlers.org**

Slalom - Rodeo Course At Nimbus Dam Thanks!

Thanks go out this month to the following folks for their contributions towards this worthy cause – Kiran Bhageshpur, Steve & Renee Bouck, Alex & Ellen Peters, and Alan & Lynn Seigerman.

-Jude Lee - Special Donations Coordinator



**CALIFORNIA
CANOE & KAYAK**

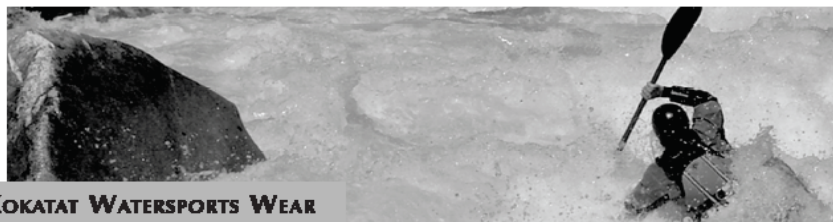
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On The Cover: Craig Hightower on the Rogue River

Roll Sessions for September 2007

Please make sure all of your gear is clean when you bring it to the roll classes so we don't muddy the water. Thank you.

Wednesday: California Canoe and Kayak: Call 916-353-1880 or 1-800-366-9804

Thursday: Sequoia Paddling Club. Call (707) 887-0303

California Canoe and Kayak:
Call 510.893.7833

Current Adventures:

Custom Roll Instruction and Tune-ups for 1-3 participants **Location:** The River Store's on-site Rolling Pool **When:** By request - call Current Adventures at 530-333-9115 to schedule

Wolf Creek Wilderness will be conducting weekly roll sessions at the South Yuba Club in Nevada City Contact (530) 477-2722 or www.wolfcreekwilderness.com

GCP MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS

Christine and Phil volunteered to put together a very basic web page for some of the information, so if you need a copy of the agenda, or you are interested in the treasurer's report, California Unincorporated Association issue, or the results of the GCP membership survey, information on these topics can be found at: www.gcpaddlers.org

Mark Your Calendars

Our annual GCP Holiday Party will be on **Saturday December 8th** at Susan Raycrofts house in Davis.



GCP ANNUAL MEETING

Thanks to our gracious meeting hosts, Sandy Bunch VanderPol and John VanderPol, for having all of us over and making us so comfortable, and to Meeting / Events Coordinator Theresa Simsiman for running good control on maybe our longest meeting ever! Thanks, too, to everybody who came and all the good food they brought, Grill Master Wayne Lee, and ear-responsible audiologist Rae Impster. Look for details of the meeting in next months newsletter!

2007 Chili Bar Release Schedule (Based on Dry Year)

Sept1-30 Friday 3 HRS @ 1300
October-February

Saturday & Sunday 3 HRS @ 1300
Saturday & Sunday 3 HRS @ 1300

In addition, Sept 3, Labor Day, shall have 3 HRS @ 1300 cfs.

Flows scheduled for 3 hours shall meet or exceed the specified minimum from at least 9am until at least noon.

Flows scheduled for 5 hours shall meet or exceed the specified minimum from at least 7am until at least noon on Saturdays and from at least 8am until at least 1pm on Sundays



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Quality guiding and instruction

Rogue River

Grand Canyon

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ACA Instructor courses

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Memorial for Craig Hightower

By Kevin Whilden

This month, the Bay Area kayak community sadly mourns the loss of Craig Hightower, who touched so many people with his generosity and caring, and his zeal for fun on the water. Craig was one of those people who lived his life to the fullest capacity. Even though that sounds cliché, with Craig it was more true than anyone I have met, as he shared his happiness with others in way that was highly contagious. Whether it was on the river, the ocean, the surf, or in the campground, Craig had a huge smile on his face and always had the capacity to make sure others were having an equally good time.

I met Craig this past June, when he offered to take me down the Chili Bar run on the South Fork of the American. I had just moved to

California, and he replied to my post on the GCP email list. He showed me the lines and we had a great time together, and at the end he invited me to join him on his birthday weekend on the same river in July. The story of that weekend can perhaps best illustrate who he was.

When I arrived at Camp Lotus, I learned that all of my parking and camping expenses were paid. Craig then arrived with his van filled with the most deluxe camping amenities. Out came eight reclining camping lounge chairs, an icy keg of his favorite microbrew, several coolers of food including his favorite tri-tip steaks, lanterns and many smaller items to make the camp more comfortable for everyone. He was still smiling, even though he spent most of the after-

noon stuck in heavy traffic rather than surfing Barking Dog which was his favorite surf spot on the planet. That night, as conversation revolved around past and future kayak trips, I met many of his old friends and some people as newly acquainted as myself. Everyone was made to feel welcome when he was around.

The next day, we started with Craig artfully handling the shuttle logistics for a dozen kayakers with different needs and skill levels. We started with the class II Coloma to Greenwood run, where Craig organized the instructional aspects for the newly fledged kayakers in the group. He loved to get people involved in kayaking, and had also started the ClassTwoKayakers@Yahoo.com

Continued on Page 5

12th Annual Year End

Complete Kayak Specialty Store

Kayak & Storewide
Summer Clearance

ONE DAY SALE!

Saturday September 29,
10am-6pm

Special for Club Members!
Shop NOW for the best
deals on whitewater
kayaks & gear

All Used Kayaks
& Accessories
up to

50%OFF



All New Kayaks
& Accessories
up to

20%OFF



595 E. Main St. Grass Valley 477-2722 wolfcreekwilderness.com

Memorial for Craig Hightower Continued

group where he regularly organized kayaking trips for beginners and kept up a steady stream of tips and tricks for newbies. This list is still active, so please consider joining if you haven't already.

At the end of C-to-G, the more experienced paddlers continued on down the Gorge run. Craig had more ear to ear smiles while surfing waves, running Satan's Cesspool multiple times, and punching as many holes as possible. However, one more aspect of his nature came out in a dramatic way. He was a master of being prepared for any situation, which is no surprise as his regular job was the program manager in charge of keeping the FAA's flight computers and radars working at all times. When we encountered another pair of kayakers below Hospital Bar, one of them had a large cut on his forehead from an encounter with the big rock on river left. Craig pulled out his first aid kit, so the guy could be patched up. I usually only carry my first aid kit on harder rivers, as do most of us, but Craig knew better.

The next day, Craig again handled the complex shuttle logistics with aplomb and helped everyone else pack up camp before packing his own gear. The run down Chili Bar was beautiful and fun as always, and we played and surfed at every opportunity. However Troublemaker was the highlight, while the group ran it multiple times. Craig developed the signature "Hightower Line", which is to run the rapid backwards and occasionally upside down. I'm not sure if that was an intentional decision, but from the way he was smiling at the end, you could not tell the difference. His friends will make the Hightower Line a tradition on future trips.

I'm sorry that I won't get to plan more kayak trips with Craig, or develop our Dutch oven cooking skills as we had planned. I'm really going to miss him, as will so many of his friends and loved ones. However he was someone who made the most of the time given to him, and he has hopefully inspired many others to do the same. Rest in peace, Brother. There is a tribute page for Craig at <http://www.regathon.com/craighightower>. Please share your thoughts of him if you haven't already.



Come paddle the slalom course with Jessica Subido!

First, we will walk the course (also known as "scouting the rapid") then visualize the moves. Next, we will paddle the course in three or four sections, doing repeated loops per section. Each slalom course will feature at least 18 gates - with some gates requiring 2-3 moves, you can really put your river running skills to the test!

Eddy Hop Slalom Race

Miracle Slalom Course **Kern River Sept 8-9** (Saturday is practice day and Sunday is race day) Slalom course walk-through and paddle 3:00-6:00 Saturday, September 9 Camping is available at the beautiful Hobo campsite on the river.

Mokelumne Slalom Race

Electra Run Slalom Course **Mokelumne River Sept 15-16** (Saturday is practice day and Sunday is race day) Slalom course walk-through and paddle 3:00-6:00 Saturday, September 15

To those of you who will be taking the Gold Medal Camp this coming Labor Day weekend, these slalom races will allow you to apply and reinforce the new techniques you will have learned. With slalom training, you can run rivers with less fear which translates to more enjoyment, safety, confidence, and style! These are the last two races of this year's Sierra Cup Slalom Series.

I hope to see you there. While playboats will work, if you have a Dagger RPM or something similar, or a modern creek boat, bring that instead!

Please RSVP so I know how many paddlers to expect.

-Jessica Cell: (916) 521-7169 or e-mail:

Jessica@Subido.Net

My website: <http://Subido.Info>

Jessica's Paddling Update

I just completed my last big race for the season. I raced in Canada where I won the Canadian Junior National Championships in C1 and K1 on the Canadian National Team's home slalom course in Chilliwack, B.C. You can see photos and my write-up on: http://subido.info/index_files/Page286.htm

Together with winning the North American Junior Olympics in Denver last month, I had a great year of competitions. Thank you again Gold Country Paddlers for supporting me!



GOLD COUNTRY PADDLERS
P.O. BOX 1058
Lotus, CA 95651



Craig's first day in a Jackson Fun. "It sure was fun", says Craig!