



**April, 2011**

Our Aims

**PROMOTE** canoeing and kayaking as a water sport  
**TEACH** boating techniques and water safety for river travel  
**PRESERVE** our remaining wilderness rivers for future generations

***Kayaking Video***

***Paul Wolf will show some of the best work from our club's resident videographers including a little underwater photography. He'll also have some video gear to demo.***

**The Craft Room**

**Oak Ridge Civic Center**

**Tuesday  
April 12, 2011  
7:30 pm**

**East Tennessee Whitewater Club**  
Post Office Box 5774  
Oak Ridge, TN 37831-5774

## -OFFICERS FOR 2011-

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### Please keep your dues up to date!

If you want to pay online via PayPal, fill out the form at:  
[http://www.etwcweb.com/concrete/membership/online\\_form](http://www.etwcweb.com/concrete/membership/online_form)  
 Or, send Kary your \$15 check payable to ETWC along with the membership form at the end of this newsletter to:

**ETWC**  
**P.O. Box 5774**  
**Oak Ridge, TN 37831-5774**

### NEWSLETTER DEADLINE – 7<sup>TH</sup> OF EACH MONTH

Newsletter Editor: Bill Lewis  
 Phone: 865-777-5276      Email: [wclewis@tds.net](mailto:wclewis@tds.net)  
 Photos in jpeg, gif, or bmp format.  
 Reports and Classifieds as a Word or Text File Document.  
 Newsletter is available in PDF Format-contact the editor for information.  
 Check out our website at <http://www.etwcweb.com>

### River Gauges by Telephone

(800) 261-5033 – <b>Big South Fork</b>	(865) 632-2264 – <b>TVA Lake and Rivers Gauge</b>
(800) 899-4435 – <b>Big Pigeon</b>	(Knoxville)
(800) 232-7238 – <b>Chattooga River</b>	(865) 751-2264 - <b>TVA Lake and Rivers Gauge</b>
(800) 829-5253 – <b>Green River</b>	(Chattanooga)
(800) 238-2264 - <b>TVA Lake and Rivers Gauge</b> (Out of Town)	

# East Tennessee Whitewater Club Minutes

March 8, 2011

## I DON'T REMEMBER JIMMY AT THE MEETING, WHAT DID I MISS?

### Presentation

Reid Gryder and Frank Modine gave a slide presentation of their 1000 mile journey into Canada and canoe trip down the Esnagami River. Along the way they dined upon the fish they caught along with a little rock tripe. Following the presentation we had an interesting discussion of the ETWC history/

### Treasurer's Report

Kary reported that we have \$403.94 in our checking account and \$4,356.39 in our savings account.

### Trips

ETWC members Barbara Reeve and Paul Akers left on March 6 to hike the full length of the Appalachian Trail, and they have completed over 250 miles so far. You can follow their adventures by going to <http://www.trailjournals.com/yakandstitch/>.

## Upcoming Events:



<http://www.riversportsoutfitters.com/t-PintNight.aspx>

### Riversports "Pint Night"

Tuesday, May 3; 6:00pm to 9:00pm  
Riversports Outfitters in cooperation with Bearden Beer Market are sponsoring "Pint Nights" at their Sutherland Avenue location on the First Tuesdays in May and June. The first 200 people get a free pint glass and fill ups are \$5 with 10% of the store proceeds going to charity. May's charity is the Legacy Parks Foundation.

### TSRA "Rendezvous"

April 13-17, Camp Nakanawa near Crossville, TN.

TSRA's annual "Rendezvous" will be held once again at Camp Nakanawa located 7 miles outside of Crossville.

[http://www.paddletsra.org/news/TSRA\\_April\\_2011.pdf](http://www.paddletsra.org/news/TSRA_April_2011.pdf)

To register, go to the website: [www.paddletsra.org](http://www.paddletsra.org).

# ETWC Beginner's Clinic

This Year's Dates are: June 6 thru 11, 2011

## Registration Form

**Final Registration Date:** May 28, 2011

The East Tennessee Whitewater Club offers an intensive one-week course for beginner kayakers. The purpose of the clinic is to teach basic whitewater techniques and safety. The clinic is appropriate for individuals with no whitewater experience.

Monday, June 6 – Meet at Oak Ridge Civic Center 6pm to 9pm for classroom training.

Tuesday thru Friday – Meet at Clark Center Park swimming area 6pm to Dark.

Saturday – River trip location to be announced.

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THE WHITEWATER EXPERIENCE WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY! A PROMOTIONAL FLYER IS ATTACHED TO PROMOTE OUR CLINIC. TAKE IT TO WORK, SEND IT TO A FRIEND!

We need your help; instructors, safety boaters, and gear is needed. Contact Ariana Beste at (865) 228-3819 or email [bestea@ornl.gov](mailto:bestea@ornl.gov) (Please include East Tennessee Whitewater in the Subject Line), or print out our [online pre-registration form](#)

### Trip Reports & News

**WHAT A REPORT! I'M THINKING I CAN "TO BE CONTINUED" WITH THIS AND GET 2 OR 3 TRIP REPORTS OUT OF IT! WHAT DO YOU THINK? MAYBE 3 OR 4?**

**AND THEN THE RAINS CAME!**

It had been an unusually cold and dry winter in East Tennessee with a fair amount of snow that lingered for long periods of time in the Smokies, but all of that was about to change. Late February brought in a series of storm fronts that would bring much needed rainfall to the rivers and creeks of the area on a regular basis. This is my account of the month that followed.

It was February 23 and I was sitting in the airport in Denver on my return from a ski trip in Utah, checking the weather forecast on my laptop and seeing predictions of greater than one inch of rain falling later in the week. I started sending out some feelers for someone to paddle with on Friday afternoon. I had Greenbrier (Middle Prong of the Little Pigeon) in my sights since it had been a while since I had been in my boat and it is run that I am comfortable and confident on. When the phone rang on Friday morning (Feb. 25),

Tommy had a different plan. Lower Big Creek was running, 2.5'; a perfect first time level according to Tommy.

I was a little apprehensive. It looked like Big Creek would be pretty unforgiving of any upside down experiences and it had been a couple of weeks since I had been out. Still, it was a run that I had wanted to try and I knew I had the skills to run it successfully if I was on my game that day. I met Tommy and Kendall at the takeout and we shuttled up. We put in at the bridge at the picnic area. Big Creek starts off with a bang and pretty much never lets up, the first 50 yards are a series of 2 to 4 foot ledges that occur every few feet downstream out of sight. It is one of the most continuous runs I have been on, with only about 3 pools in it longer than 15 feet in length. It is non-stop action for the full 2 miles of its length, with constant small boofs and driving around rocks and holes. It is a great class III+/IV- creek. I won't say I styled it that day, I had some ugly lines; but everyone finished the day with dry hair. I consider that a successful personal first descent, my first of the year. Tommy had originally planned to make two laps, but after one I was spent. Besides, I had to keep myself fresh for paddling the rest of the weekend..

I got on the phone that evening and the next morning, all my usual paddling partners were busy. I had seen a post on Boatertalk on Friday that Big Laurel was running at close to 1 foot, so I was pretty sure it should hold. I also knew there was a group from Chattanooga (TVCC) planning to take some laps on it. So on Saturday (Feb. 26), I loaded up the Subaru and headed toward Hot Springs hoping to get a PFD on Big Laurel. When I got to the put-in I was surprised to see around 30 paddlers in various stages of gearing up and setting shuttle, I started asking around and found a group to run down with from Columbia, SC. To read the details of those group dynamics, check out the Monday Morning Boof from 2/28

(<http://etwcweb.com/discuss/index.php?mode=thread&id=4308> ). I had a great PFD that Saturday. Well, I consider it a PFD. I had paddled it a year or so earlier down to the first big rapid (Stairstep) where I swam, losing my paddle and forcing me to hike out; so I was happy to get a successful run of the entire river.

Big Laurel is a great run, like several other creeks in this area it runs more than you might think, but it has no reliable gauge other than a visual gauge painted on a bridge piling at the put-in. It starts off slow and easy then you hit two III+ rapids separated by long pools. The last third of the run is almost constant II+ to III+ whitewater rapids with a very similar feel to the Ocoee at 6-8 inches. I highly recommend a first timer on this run try it out at 6 inches, and be sure to scout (and stay out of) Suddy Hole.

With the river levels dropping out, Sunday was a surfing, attainment, and flatwater workout day on the Little River section around Walland. This is just a few minutes from my house so it's easy to get in a quick workout there. With two personal first descents for the weekend I was happy to get what I could, besides there was rain on the way and I didn't want to cash in all my chits just yet.

Monday brought rain back to the area. I loaded up my gear and took it to work with me on Tuesday (March 1) and started scheming how to get out of work early and get a run on something. My contacts were either all already out on something or stuck at work like me. I had almost given up on paddling that day, it was about 3 in the afternoon and I couldn't find anyone to paddle with. Then the phone rang.

Jim: "You paddling anywhere this afternoon? I was thinking about Greenbrier."

Me: "Want to meet at the takeout at 5?"

A quick check of the bridge gauge showed it was running at 2.5 feet, a great medium-high level. At 2.5', Greenbrier starts with continuous whitewater, big waves, and big grins. I think 2.5-2.9' is my favorite level on this run. We paddled fast since we were pushing darkness, no time to play around. My Facebook status from that evening pretty much says it all; "Greenbrier @ 2.5' = after work goodness. Who knows what afternoon goodness lays waiting for tomorrow afternoon?"

I had already scheduled to leave work at noon on Wednesday (March 2). The plan was to go run Big Laurel again with Tommy and Kendall. Kendall had never run it before. We were joined by Jim and a friend. I figured it would be at about the same level that it was when I ran it the previous weekend. As we pulled in to the put-in I checked the gauge, it shows 1 foot. It doesn't really look any higher than it did on Saturday, and when we put on it didn't really feel any different either; until we got to the first big rapid. Stairstep definitely had a lot more water in it, but actually that made it a little easier; the line was more straightforward at that level. The slide at Suddy Hole was a little more padded out, so on to the Narrows.

Just like the name would lead you to believe the Narrows is a constricted gorge in the river, it has 3 or 4 definite sections to it and lasts about one half of a mile or so. Well, the difference in the Narrows between 6" and 1' is huge. I managed to hit the first hole in it and went for a nice side surf for a while. At this level, the Narrows was big pushy water, big waves, holes, and quite possibly the most fun I have ever had in my boat. Asked about Big Laurel at that level later I told someone, "It's a lot like if you put your hands on either end of the Upper Ocoee and just squashed it together until it was only 2 miles long." I was still grinning the next day.

Even I have to put in a full day at work sometimes, so Thursday I had to make do with the memories of the previous days. Spring was definitely coming on, and the rivers weren't holding as long as they were just a week before. The next day (March 4) I got in an after work run on the Little, Sinks to Elbow section, with Mark. The Little has been my go to run for the last 2 years, initially the Elbow to Y section, then moving up to the Elkmont section, and then onto the Sinks to Elbow section. It was lowish at 2.5', but it seemed like I hadn't paddled that run in months so I was okay with it being at a pretty easy level. Besides, it made the boofs at Silver Diner and Eddy Out that much bigger. Feeling good at the end of my run I decided to give the Elbow a go. I've had a love/hate relationship with the Elbow over the last several months; I started off loving it but then it started hating me. The first time I ran the Elbow was last summer and I styled it. Since then I have run it 4 other times, none of which were upright. Well tonight was different, like the song says "It feels like the first time", a good end to the day.

Things were drying up again, but more was coming; unfortunately, not for the weekend. Monday and Tuesday saw anywhere from 2.5 to 4 inches of rain fall over the Smokies, and for me that means everything was too high to paddle. You can have too much of a good thing. I got back out for a run on the Little on Thursday (March 10) at a little over 3'. I'm still trying to make the adjustment to some bigger, pushier water and had a good run but passed on the Elbow this time around.

Friday (March 11), I took off early again with Lower Big Creek and Greenbrier on the list. I met up with Tommy and Mark at the Big Creek takeout, and also ran into Mary Ann, David, and several other Knoxville area paddlers. The level was 3.2' on the Mt. Sterling Bridge gauge, higher than I would have liked. At the put-in the plan was to run through the first drop then ferry to the far side of the river to a decent sized eddy. As I ran the

first drop, I got surfed a little more than I was expecting and didn't make an aggressive enough move into the eddy and wound up running the next drop backwards. This flipped me, a quick roll and I was up just in time to run the next drop, backwards. This drop flipped me again, resulting in two failed roll attempts, a few hard knocks to my head and shoulders, a swim, and finally a twisted ankle. After retrieving all my gear, I put back on again. In short order, I had flipped 4 more times. I rolled after each flip but in the meantime I was taking some punishing hits underwater. After the 5<sup>th</sup> flip, I was only about halfway through the run. I was done, Big Creek had beaten me. I made the "Walk of Shame" with my boat back to the put-in to wait on everyone else. After that, Mark, Casey, and I went to Greenbrier for a run at just over 3' where I got some redemption. Family commitments kept me off the water for a week, until I was able to make a Friday (March 18) evening Sinks to Elbow run with Mark. Once again I had to sit out Saturday, but I had plans for the following day. On Sunday (March 20), Kendall and I left my house early to meet Jason and Kemper in Reliance, TN for a run on the Hiwassee Dries. I had seen on the Monday Morning Boof of 3/7 that the Hiwassee Dries were a run that Jason wanted to do. As luck would have it, about a week later an e-mail popped up in my inbox about the Hiwassee Dries running for the next several weeks. Maintenance was being done at the powerhouse and as a result TVA would be spilling water from Appalachia Dam and through the Dries.

Just getting to the Hiwassee Dries is an adventure in itself. Other than a few people that have run it in the last few weeks it had rarely been run over the last couple of decades. Directions to the put-in and takeout are sketchy, the put-in involves carrying (or sliding, or tossing) your boat down a 50 degree slope of approximately 200 vertical feet. The river itself has several trees and bushes growing in the riverbed, and the amount of water being spilled from the dam that day was such that bank scouting was pretty much impossible. I had researched the run on American Whitewater and was expecting a creek run. What I found when we got there was not a creek run. Everything on American Whitewater references the run at approximately 1000cfs. The current release was approximately 2400cfs.

The Hiwassee Dries at 2400 cfs is absolutely nothing like it is pictured on AW. It is BIG rapids and waves, and the fastest, most boiley/swirly/squirrely water I have ever paddled. Even the flat water was just like being on one constant eddyline. The first rapid after the put-in (without hiking up to Hollywood Bowl) is called Wu or Second Rapid on AW. It has a house sized rock at the bottom of it. At Sunday's flow no part of the rock was visible from above or below. It was a big pulsing whitewater haystack, I never saw it until I crested the wave about 6 ft before it. I had started off a little further to the right than the 1st person that ran it and couldn't make the move around it on the left so I just boofed and prayed, fully knowing that things probably were not going to end well. I landed pretty flat but the hole just swallowed me, there was no paddling to try and escape, it was just like it reached around every part of my boat and shoved it straight down. That's when the fun started. After a couple of windowshade rolls in the hole, I was able to reach down into the current with my paddle and grab enough water to flush out. Still the water was so boiley it took 3 more tries to roll up. This was my only underwater experience of the weekend.

So here I am, back at work. Everything has dropped out of the runnable range. But we have thunderstorms moving in tonight, and more rain for the weekend. I wonder what this rain will bring?

See You On The River.

David McConnell

David will be the recipient of *Cumberland Odyssey, A Journey in Pictures and Words along Tennessee's Cumberland Trail and Plateau*.

## **The ETWC Forum**

Several interesting threads, and some gear for sale on the forum; check it out:

<http://etwcweb.com/discuss/index.php?mode=index>

New users read and register per: <http://etwcweb.com/discuss/index.php?mode=thread&id=1>

## **American Whitewater News**

**An informative discussion about the use of the quick release on your rescue vest. For those with internet check out:**

<http://www.americanwhitewater.org//content/Forum/read/send/21,7339/>

## **Save a Tree!**

We still send out several newsletters by US Mail. If you can receive the newsletter by email, send your email address to [wclewis@tds.net](mailto:wclewis@tds.net). In addition to saving our trees and a stamp, you'll also be able to access the full content via the internet links embedded in the newsletter.

## **Winter Roll Practice**

***Time is running out to Tune up that roll for spring!***

The winter roll practice schedule is below. Practice will be at the Oak Ridge Civic Center from 8:30 to 10:00 pm on Friday nights. In past years, members provided "life guard" services. This year, Civic Center management is requiring the presence of a certified life guard which they will provide at additional cost. As a result, the cost to paddlers is going up. The fees are as follows:

Paddlers older than 18 years of age - \$5.00 / session, \$50.00 for the season.

Paddlers 18 years old and younger - \$3.00 / session, \$30.00 for the season.

ETWC will still need to provide a paddler in charge (PIC) for each session. Since the Civic Center is providing life guard services, the duties of the host will be to setup the fee collection tripod and assure that all participants have completed the appropriate paperwork. Since there will be a life guard present, no training (First Aid/CPR) will be necessary for the PIC. If you would like to volunteer, contact Jason Darby ([wepaddle@bellsouth.net](mailto:wepaddle@bellsouth.net)). The schedule, as it currently stands, is shown below:

	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>PIC</u></b>
<b>April</b>	1	Jason Darby
	8	Rick Zingg
	15	Paul Wolf
	22	<b>NO ROLL PRACTICE</b>
<b>May</b>	29	Paul Wolf
	6	Paul Wolf



**EAST TENNESSEE WHITEWATER CLUB  
MEMBERSHIP & RENEWAL FORM**

Dues: \$15.00 Yearly Family Membership (*January 1 renewal date*)  
Send to: East Tennessee Whitewater Club, P.O. Box 5774, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-5774

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive my newsletter by email. (circle) Yes No

Membership Status? (circle) New Renewal

What boats do you paddle? (circle) Kayak C-1 C-2 Solo Canoe Tandem Canoe Other

What is your paddling ability? (circle) Beginner Intermediate Advanced Expert  
Class I-II Class III Class IV Class V

**RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, desiring to join my fellow paddlers in the East Tennessee Whitewater Club (ETWC), do hereby declare that I fully understand and accept the following facts of life on the river:

1. Canoeing, kayaking, or rafting, particularly on whitewater rivers, exposes the participants to various safety hazards, including but not limited to, water hazards (boulders, undercut rocks, trees, strainers, water formations such as water falls, holes, keepers, hydraulics, and other obstacles), swimming in turbulent water, using paddling equipment, accidents or illness in remote places without medical facilities, and travel in a vehicle not driven by me.

2. No one but I am responsible for my safety when I choose to paddle a particular river or a particular rapid.

3. I further understand that I have no legal duty to assist others, nor does anyone else have a legal duty to render such assistance to me. I certify that I am in good physical condition, that I can swim, and that I have no physical defects or injuries that would prevent me from participating in this activity. I fully understand and agree that, when I participate in canoeing, kayaking, or rafting, there is always the possibility of unknown, uncontrollable dangers and accidental or other physical injury and death. I know I can be killed, and I willingly assume the risks referred to in Paragraph 1 and elsewhere in this release.

Therefore, in consideration for granting me the right to join and participate in ETWC activities, and intending to be legally bound, I hereby release, waive and discharge my right to sue ETWC, its trip coordinators, instructors, leaders, officers, directors, representatives, agents, employees, and affiliates, and also any landowner or governmental unit which may allow ETWC to use its property, for any and all loss or damage on account of injury to my person or property or on account of my death, which may occur during, in preparation for, or in transit to or from an ETWC activity.

I further understand that ETWC carries no insurance for the protection of participants in whitewater activities, and any insurance coverage existing with respect to ETWC shall not alter the terms of this waiver nor impose any liability on ETWC.

This waiver applies only to acts or omissions of ordinary negligence and to any deliberate act intended to promote my safety or well being.

This waiver is signed by me in the interest of permitting ETWC to exist and to serve the paddling community, and to enable me and my fellow paddlers to feel free to donate their services to improving the sport and to help in training those less skilled in the sport without fear of liability.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS RELEASE AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Parent or guardian if participant is under 18 years of age)