



PACK & PADDLE



Fall
September 2015

"The challenge goes on. There are other lands and rivers, other wilderness areas, to save and to share with all. I challenge you to step forward to protect and care for the wild places you love best." — Dr. Neil Compton

GRAND CANYON – TRIP OF A LIFETIME

By Roy Stovall

The view from the Grand Canyon rim is an unforgettable wonder of the world, but rafting the Colorado River at the bottom is the stuff of dreams.

The 2015 Ozark Society river expedition was a seven day motorized raft trip 280 miles through the Grand Canyon. Sixteen members took the trip, but were separated into two groups when the outfitter encountered problems procuring permits from the National Park Service.

Day 1. Our subgroup of eight Ozark Society members met the outfitter in Flagstaff, and commenced our journey April 25 from Lee's Ferry, mile-0. We met eight other passengers and our three guides, and we felt like old friends by the week's end.

Lees Ferry, a sun-baked valley below the soaring Vermilion Cliffs, was established by the infamous John Lee, executed for directing the Mountain Meadows Massacre, an 1857 mass murder of wagon train pioneers from Harrison, Arkansas. Below the Paria River, sheer vertical cliffs rise 950 feet, the gates of Marble Canyon.

We encountered the first rapids and a brief shower ensued, the only precipitation for seven days. We cruised by Vasey's Paradise, a waterfall gushing from a vertical canyon wall, and splashing through vines and greenery. We stopped for the night at a cozy shelter bluff known as Little Redwall. We covered 34 miles in a half day.



Little Colorado River

Day 2. The geology is remarkable. The canyon walls are narrow and vertical the first few days, rising straight up from the river, home of myriads of violet-green swallows and white-throated swifts.

Nankoweap Canyon was a prehistoric village. A 1,200-foot bluff towers over the plain, and half way up, archaic Indian ruins perch in a sheltered ledge, doors open to the sky. We hiked up and rested among the ruins, suppressing vertigo while gazing at the stunning panorama.

The Little Colorado River flows from the Painted Desert in the south. We hiked upstream and body-surfed rolling rapids. The mineral rich water makes your skin feel soft and clean. We

camped at the confluence of the two rivers, mile-62, the best campsite of the journey. The starry sky illuminated magnificent cliffs, and shooting stars skipped over the gorge.

Day 3. We rafted under Cape Solitude, an awesome promontory on the frontier of Grand Canyon National Park. We entered a corridor of pink Zoroaster granite, and the canyon widens into a broad basin, the rims ten miles apart, with vertical bluffs buttressed by massive talus slopes 400' high. A multicolored panorama of palisades, buttes, mesas and temples stretches to the horizon.

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Trailbuilding – October and Beyond

By Ken Smith

In October, volunteers will resume building the Buffalo River/Ozark Highlands Hiking Trail. The first crew, sponsored by the American Hiking Society, will work the week of Oct. 18 – 24, followed by returning “Alumni” volunteers the week of Oct. 25 – 31.

The volunteers want to finish several short pieces of trail to complete an eleven-mile stretch going downriver from U.S. Highway 65 to the Red Bluff Road. The work will include installation of a 20-foot trail bridge across a deep gully 200 yards below Highway 65. Material and labor for the bridge are to be donated by the Ozark Highlands Trail Association. The Association (OHTA) is also to assume responsibility for maintaining the trail.

Volunteers will camp at Tyler Bend. Anyone who can work on the trail can camp there without charge. There will be a completely equipped kitchen tent, but volunteers need to bring their own food and sleeping accommodations. For further information, contact Ken Smith, phone 479-466-7994, or e-mail at kennethsmith616@yahoo.com .

Beyond October, two problems need to be resolved before attempting work on the isolated 5.5-mile midsection of the 28-mile trail. Archeological sites need to be dealt with, and a tract of privately owned astride the trail must be transferred to the National Park Service. To learn more about this...stay in touch, into next year.

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OZARK SOCIETY DEPOSITORY: Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, AR 71701, (501) 575-5577.

MEMBERSHIP: Dues for membership in the Ozark Society are: Individual and Family: \$15; Contributing: \$25; Sustaining: \$25; Life (one-time fee): \$200 under 65 years, or \$100 for those over 65.

Chapter membership adds to the fun of Ozark Society membership, but is not required. **However, chapter membership requires membership in the Society.** Their dues structure is as follows: **Mississippi Valley Chapter of Cape Girardeau, Missouri:** \$5; **Bayou Chapter** of Shreveport, Louisiana: \$10; **Highlands Chapter** of Northwest Arkansas: \$10; **Sugar Creek Chapter** of Northwest Arkansas: \$5; **Buffalo River Chapter** of North-Central Arkansas: \$10, or \$5 for email newsletters only; and **Pulaski Chapter** of Central Arkansas: \$10; **Student Membership:** \$5. Mail one check for both Society and chapter dues to: Ozark Society, P.O. Box 2914, Little Rock, AR 72203.



In Memory of Bob James

By Janet Nye

“The Legend is gone.” This sums up my feelings about the passing of long time Ozark Society member, leader and friend on Sunday, July 5, 2015. This is a quote from David Hedges, son of Margaret and Harold Hedges, who were co-founders of the Ozark Society and certainly legends in their own right.



Bob wore many hats in his military, community and professional life. He served wherever he was and was a natural leader. He loved life and people, specifically teaching many of us about the natural and historical

details of the places we hiked and paddled. He was a leader in the Society, serving on the Foundation Board and leading multiple hikes and float trips.

Alan and I were so blessed to have backpacked with Bob into Richland Creek Wilderness on a mid-March weekend in the late 80's. With each step we took, we learned more and we felt his soul-enriching passion for this amazing place through his warm, soft voice. When we set up camp above Twin Falls, Bob pulled a St. Patrick's Day clover out of his pack and hung it on a branch over our site. I learned then, that this man paid attention to detail and was indeed very special. Bob was the leader of the Memorial Day canoe floats, which he nicknamed “rainfests” because of the consistent downpours that happened on these floats.

Probably what many of us know about Bob James was his passion for The Canyon. He made over 25 trips to the Grand Canyon leading backpacks, returning often to the place that brought him such joy.

Bob touched so many of us, leading by example. His wonderful and amazing wife, Melba has nurtured and cared for Bob during these past few years. I know she will be returning to join us as we pass Bob's spirit to the next generation.



OS General Meeting October 3-4

By Jenny Hackman

The Fall All-Society General Meeting will be held October 3-4, 2015 at the Crater of the Diamonds State Park near Murfreesboro, Arkansas. The park is located two miles southeast of Murfreesboro on Arkansas Highway 301. For further information on park hours and fees, contact: Crater of Diamonds State Park, 209 State Park Road Murfreesboro, AR 71958, telephone: (870) 285-3113 or e-mail: crater@arkansas.com. More information can be found at:

www.CraterofDiamondsStatePark.com

The Bayou Chapter will be hosting the event and we are looking forward to seeing and meeting members from the other chapters. Charles Kirkland, a wilderness first responder, will present a session on wilderness first aid. Charles has worked all over the world in many different climates and activity settings providing wilderness medicine services to injured individuals. He has a wealth of knowledge regarding

wilderness medicine. There will also be a silent auction from donated items from a member who has passed away (you are welcomed to donate items also) and the proceeds will go to the Ozark Society. We will have a potluck supper and a Dutch oven desert cook off. On Sunday, there will be options for hiking in the park, diamond digging, and paddling depending on the water levels.

I hope everyone can join us for some fun in the park.



2015 Ozark Society Buffalo River Float...The Tradition Continues!

By Steve Heye

Late spring saw the return of the Ozark Society's oldest and most enjoyed adventure trip, the float down the Buffalo River. This year's trip was held from Tuesday June 9 through Saturday June 13. A final total of 49 folks spent 5 days on a most excellent group float.

Stewart Noland and I, both members of the Pulaski Chapter, organized the trip this year. It had been a few years since the last float, but most of the group gear was available or was replaced and so the biggest problem was the menu and gathering the food. In lieu of the usual johnboats, Stewart donated the use of a couple of his rowing rafts as the supply boats for each of the groups. Other participants brought inflatables to give each of the three groups a supply boat. And as usual, Wild Bill's Outfitters helped with the shuttle of the vehicles.

As the majority of you are aware, this spring was one for the record books as far as rainfall. The trip leaders monitored conditions of the river right up to the week of the trip, to assure group safety. Three times in the month before the trip, the river went over the 10' mark on the St. Joe gauge. However, a forecasted dry week



Misty Morning

would mean the river would drop into safe float levels. Still this did not mean the group would float the traditional Tyler Bend to the White River stretch. A call was placed to the Corps of Engineers to see what conditions may be on the White River on July 13. The plan was to go straight across the White once leaving the Buffalo to Riley's Landing. The Corps said if the level of the White at Newport dropped below 12', they would release excess water to lower the pools at Bull Shoals and Norfolk. We all know the White has cold water and if it was flowing fast, this crossing may be too much on some of our paddlers. So with one week to go, the decision was made

to move the float upstream starting at Carver and finishing at Hwy. 14. The mileage would still be the same at 61 miles. This would also provide a cushion should the rain return and the river rise. This stretch had several spots where we could use as a take out if the river rose. It never did and was almost too low at the finish!

The paddlers went in three groups: Orange, Purple and Yellow. The group gear was spread out on the beach and each group began to stow it on the group raft or in their personal boats. Each group boat also had a color pennant flag for identification.

Thanks to Janet and Alan Nye for leading the Purple group, which included many Louisiana floaters. Stewart took the Orange group. His group had a lot of his rafting buddies and longtime friends in it. I led the Yellow group, which had a great cross section of folks from all over.

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Loading up



Grand Canyon

(Continued from Page 1)

We surged through named rapids. Passengers in the bow cinch rain suit hoods over hats, lean forward and brace for the inevitable drenching. A shout goes up when the huge raft drops into the cataract, as the pilot grips the tiller. The bow explodes standing waves, flinging sheets of cold water on bow passengers, while the stern passengers laugh. The biggest laughter erupts when a chance wave douses passengers in the normally dry stern. Two intrepid front row volunteers serve as entertainment by receiving colossal soakings of frosty water.

We camped at Hotauta Canyon, mile-108. The Milky Way bridged the starry sky from the south rim to the north, shooting stars made their nightly appearance, and constellations wheeled slowly across the heavens.

Day 4. Another beautiful day. The Colorado turns from blue to jade green. We examined geologic formations in Blacktail Canyon, and swam under a large, refreshing waterfall at Stone Creek. We frolicked in Deer Creek Falls, cascading to the riverbank. Leaving the waterfall, we



ascended a winding goat trail up the canyon slope, past collared lizards and barrel cactus, to a hidden box canyon 300 feet above the river. We entered the passageway in the side of the bluff, and filed nervously along a narrow mezzanine ledge in the steep wall, glancing down at the creek flowing in the chasm. The ledge widens into a verdant alcove, shaded from the desert sun. When we reentered the sunlit Grand Canyon, we were awed by the breathtaking scene of the river below and vast canyonlands beyond.

Day 5. Canyon wrens sing from every bend. American avocets loaf on sandbars, graceful, leggy water birds with long upturned bills. Sandpipers patrol the water line, cinnamon teal ducks fly up from the reeds, and flycatchers, phoebes and yellow warblers sport in the trees.

We tied up at Havasu Creek, another

luminous turquoise colored stream. The steep trail and side canyon are lined with ocotillo cactus, topped by flame colored flowers.

Lava formations dominated both banks. We hurtled through Lava Falls Rapid, the scariest cataract. The drop is only 13', but a mistake could pin a boat under the torrent.

We camped at Fat City, and the moon rose in late afternoon. Grand Canyon camps are wonderful: afternoon sun enhances one canyon wall, morning sun illuminates the opposite canyon wall, bluffs constantly change hues as the sun crosses the sky. Guides set up the kitchen and portable seats. Within 20 minutes, passengers convene to sip boxed wine and chat. The food is plentiful, and excellent.

Day 6. Diamond Peak, a pyramidal volcanic cone, stands dramatically over the desert. We inspected Pumpkin Spring, a mammoth travertine bowl overflowing mineral water. Side canyons were a real treat. Every canyon invites exploration, most feature sparkling, warm water creeks and waterfalls.

We cruised downstream, past rapids where honeymoon couple Glen and Bessie Hyde disappeared in 1928, and passed the final rapids before Lake Mead. We camped at the broad mouth of a canyon at mile-247.

Day 7. May 1 was hot and sunny. The river was blue and peaceful for twenty miles, before civilization encroached. The river widens and turns brown entering the lake.

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Buffalo Trip

(Continued from Page 4)

This year we had folks from Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Missouri, Virginia, D.C. and of course Arkansas. After a safety talk and a chance to get to know each other over lunch, each group pushed off to float down the Buffalo.

Most nights, one group would camp on sandbars alone from the others. We tried to do this to give folks the experience of more solitude at least one night and then camp with other groups to get to know the others on the trip. The last night of the trip at Spring Creek had all three groups together to share the week's events.

The group took off the river at the Hwy. 14 landing. Wild Bill had shuttled the cars down to the big parking lot and as participants came in, we helped load up group gear and get boats on people's cars. We had the majority of the group off the river by noon. Those who were showing up to float down from Hwy. 14 must have thought we all looked a sight as we trickled on to the beach. We may have looked ragged, but as far as I could tell, there were no complaints and smiles on everyone's faces. A lot of us ate lunch and then headed back to where we called home.

There will most likely be a float next year after talking to those who went and those who just couldn't make it this year. Alan Nye, President of the Ozark Society, polled all three

groups the final night to find out where we did it right and where we did not quite hit the mark. We are contemplating some changes for the next trip, including putting kayakers in one group with an extra johnboat for their gear and expanding cooler capacity. If you didn't get to tell Alan Nye your suggestions, please send them to Heye@aristotle.net

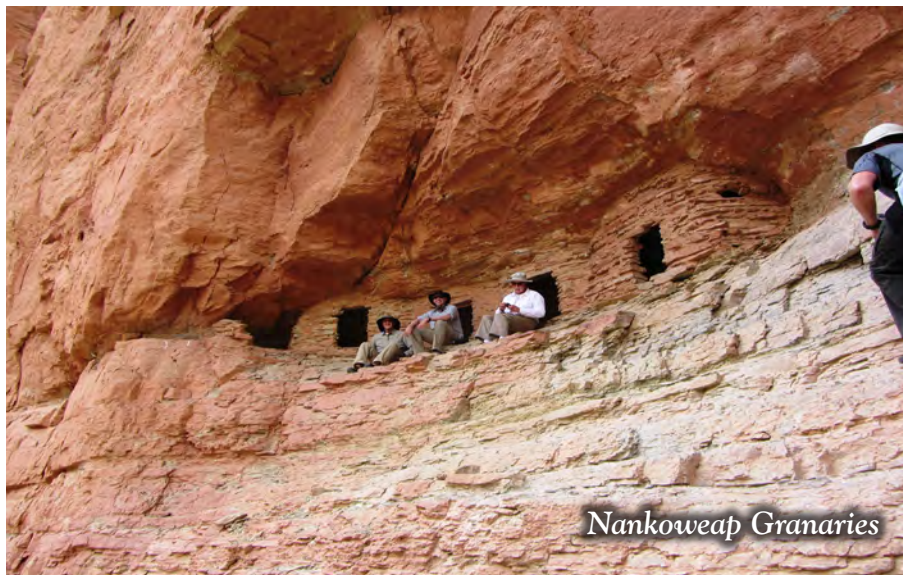
Stewart and I would like to thank all those who came with us this year. We hope it was a highlight of your year so far! We had fun putting this trip together. If you have a link to any photos you would like to share, send the link to Carmen Quinn, email ccquinn23@yahoo.com and she will get the link on the website.

See you next year!

Grand Canyon *(Continued from Page 5)*

The raft grounded on a submerged sand bar, and the men jumped in and pushed the raft free. The Grand Wash Cliffs descended to a desert valley surrounding upper Lake Mead, and we motored to Pearce Ferry landing, terminus of our adventure at mile-280.

Springtime is the ideal season to float the Grand Canyon: the Colorado River is blue and clear, waterfalls and springs flow profusely from side canyons, days are warm and nights are cool. This wonderful trip lasted only seven days, but the memories will last a lifetime.



Nankoweap Granaries



Deer Creek Falls



Come Celebrate the Buffalo!

Join us on **OCTOBER 23, 2015** for an evening “Celebrating the Buffalo”, America’s first national river! The Coalition (Buffalo River Watershed Alliance, Ozark Society, Arkansas Canoe Club and the National Parks Conservation Association) is sponsoring the fundraiser to support our educational efforts, legal expenses and other projects to protect the Buffalo River from pollution caused by factory-size concentrated animal feeding operations.

Ken Smith will be honored and will be present to sign his books. This festive evening will include a sit-down banquet dinner, live music, a silent auction; books, t-shirts and photos for sale; a video room in which one can record a message about the Buffalo and what it means to you. The banquet itself will begin in the Town Center Ballroom at 6:00 pm. The dinner program will conclude at 9:00 pm, but music and socializing will continue until 11:00 pm for those who wish to remain longer.

Tables for 8 sell for \$1000 (think \$125 per person), and there are still tables available. Individual seats at tables for 10 are \$100. Invite friends to share a table with you on a beautiful fall weekend. Public ticket sales began August 4th. Go to www.celebratethebuffalo.com/ and press the “Buy Tickets” tab.

Also:

- The event will take place at Fayetteville Town Center, located at 15 W. Mountain Street. Parking is free in the Town Center garage.
- A pre-gala party with a cash bar will be held in the lobby of the Town Center from 5-7 pm. The public is invited to attend for a \$5 donation, while banquet attendees may attend for free. Coalition members will staff informational tables to share information about their organizations and activities.

Colorado Trip 2015

Below are few photos taken by Luke Parsch while on the OS Colorado Trip. A link to more of his photos from the trip can be found at www.ozarksociety.net under the tab “OS Outings-Trip Reports”.





The Ozark Society
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Grand Canyon 2016

By popular demand, we have asked Canyoneers outfitters in Flagstaff, Arizona to work with the Ozark Society in offering a large motorized raft, six night, seven day, All-Grand Canyon trip, launching April 17, 2016. Canyoneers has agreed to hold 15 spaces on the April 17 trip until September 1, 2015, after which the trip positions will be available on a first come, first serve basis. Several members plan to go on this trip, so if you are interested, I encourage you to act soon. All of the trip information is available at www.canyoneers.com. If you make reservations to go on the trip, please email Stewart at bosshq@aol.com so we can have an idea of the interest in the trip.

If you wish to participate in Ozark Society outdoor events, please make note of the following statement and requirement:

I acknowledge that I understand the nature of this event and represent that I am qualified, in good health and proper physical condition to participate in the activity. I understand the risks to my person and property associated with the event. I agree to release from liability and not to sue the Ozark Society (including the individual Chapters of the Ozark Society) and their officers, directors, the event leaders, coordinators or instructors for any injury, damage, death or other loss in any way connected with the event.