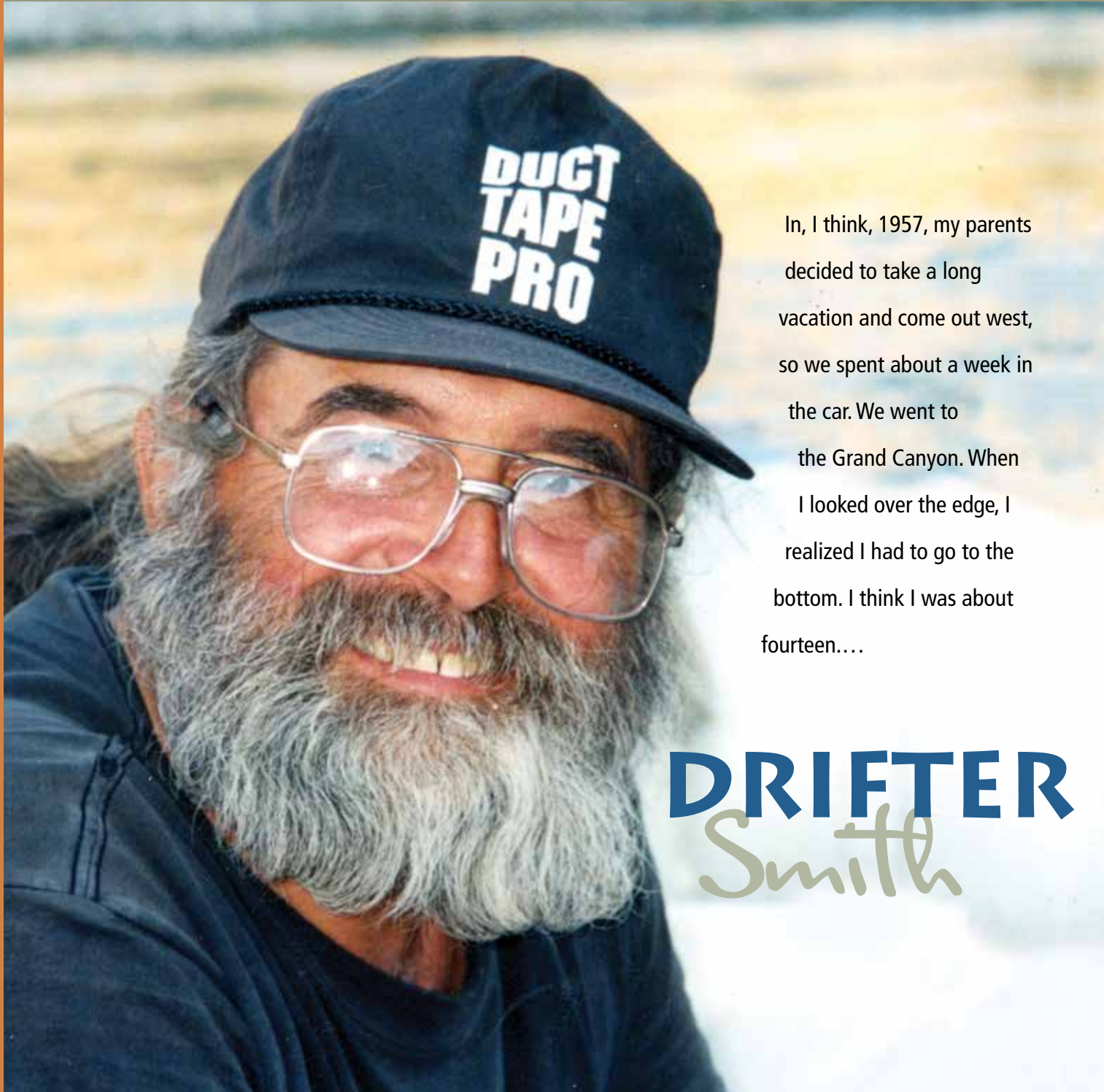


boatman's quarterly review



In, I think, 1957, my parents decided to take a long vacation and come out west, so we spent about a week in the car. We went to the Grand Canyon. When I looked over the edge, I realized I had to go to the bottom. I think I was about fourteen....

DRIFTER
Smith

Dear Eddy • Guide Profiles • Farewell • LTEMP • Calendar • Dunn Party
Escalade Opposition • Back of the Boat • Whitney Wellness Initiative
Colorado River Days • Book Review • Financials • Contributor List

boatman's quarterly review

...is published more or less quarterly
by and for GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES.

GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES
is a nonprofit organization dedicated to

*Protecting Grand Canyon
Setting the highest standards for the river profession
Celebrating the unique spirit of the river community
Providing the best possible river experience*

General Meetings are held each Spring and Fall. Our Board of Directors Meetings are generally held the first Wednesday of each month. All innocent bystanders are urged to attend. Call for details.

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Our editorial policy, such as it is: provide an open forum. We need articles, poetry, stories, drawings, photos, opinions, suggestions, gripes, comics, etc. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Grand Canyon River Guides, Inc.

Written submissions should be less than 1500 words and, if possible, be sent on a CD or emailed to GCRG. Microsoft Word files are best but we can translate most programs. Include postpaid return envelope if you want your disk or submission returned.

Deadlines for submissions are the 1ST of February, May, August and November. Thanks!
Our office location: 515 West Birch, Flagstaff, AZ 86001
Office Hours: 10:30-5:00, Monday through Friday

PHONE	928/773-1075
FAX	928/773-8523
E-MAIL	gcrg@infomagic.net
WEBSITE	www.gcrg.org

Prez Blurb

GREETINGS! I HOPE everyone is having a fantastic river season. It is early August as I write my final Blurb as president. I just came off an invigorating trip a few days ago. Right above Crystal we experienced rain coupled with ominous thunder and lightning. After our run down the right side of the rapid I was especially ecstatic to be Alive Below as we cruised through the rest of the Gems as impressive monsoonal rim falls cascaded down on both sides of the river.

During the next two paragraphs I would like to mention three friends who I admire and have had the pleasure to associate with this season. My former college roommate Jake traveled here to Kanab a few days ago from his home in Virginia. He is about to embark on his fifth trip in ten years through Grand Canyon with Colorado River and Trail Expeditions. Jake is a member of GCRG and I am certain he is one of the best people any guide could ask for on a river trip. In the canyon, he always seems to be up for anything whether it is hiking up Tapeats and over Surprise Valley and down to Deer Creek on a hot August day, or providing a significant amount of muscle and leverage to re-flip a capsized row boat below Lava Falls.

On a river trip in June, it was great to be reunited with two dear friends, Joe and Danita Dunn. The Duns were back for another trip with Western River Expeditions after their first one in 2011. During that trip I noticed they were especially enamored with Grand Canyon and before the trip was over the two were planning to come back again soon. During the interim, the Duns were successful in gathering enough friends and family to charter a full two-boat motor trip for 2013. I greatly appreciate Joe and Danita for their support of GCRG and for passing around several different issues of the BQR on the second to last night of our June trip. Everyone was impressed by the publication and many seemed to be looking forward to becoming GCRG members as a way to stay connected to the canyon.

I was not able to participate in the GTS river trip last spring; nonetheless I feel connected as it was expressed to me by a friend and fellow guide that the trip was one of the best experiences of his entire life. Other guides speaking to me in regards to the trip told of meaningful projects, phenomenal interpreters, and of an exemplary trip leader who brought everyone together. I continue to believe that this annual trip is the best way to learn new knowledge and information about the canyon and become acquainted with others who we share so much with. In addition, the trip is a great opportunity to get the feel for different boats and

equipment, and it also affords participants the chance to get out of a standard routine and hike to places normally beyond reach for most trips. If the opportunity to participate in the GTS river trip next season presents itself, please don't let it pass you by.

During a recent board meeting we discussed the importance of having diversity amongst the members representing our organization. I think it is fair to say that over the past two and a half decades guides who work for certain companies have been more participatory than others. I think it is also fair to say that spanning that same period of time guides from nearly every company have served on the board at one time or another. Possibly what is most needed in regards to upholding and sustaining a diverse board, is a recommitment to inclusion in the most basic sense. In addition to this, regardless of experience or geographic location; we should all make a concerted effort to nominate those around us who we feel would do the best job of leading our organization.

I have understood that the impetus for forming Grand Canyon River Guides was a desire to have a collective voice on issues pertaining to Grand Canyon. I cannot think of a better reason to start an organization or for that matter a better reason to continue the course. Furthermore, I cannot think of a more appropriate forum to exchange thoughts and ideas than the bedrock of GCRG; the *Boatman's Quarterly Review*. If I may leave you with one thought as outgoing president it would be our first mission statement with an added appendage, *Protecting Grand Canyon...and the Colorado Plateau*.

At the end of this month I will be honored to pass over the presidency of GCRG to Ariel Neill. For those who haven't met Ariel, she works for Wilderness, AZRA, and occasionally the Park Service. In addition to being an outstanding person and guide, Ariel is exceptionally smart and will undoubtedly lead our organization well. Lastly, I would like to recognize everyone I have worked with over the past five years on the board for their service, with a special thanks to Lynn for all you do for us! See you downstream...

Latimer Smith

Correction

In the last issue of the BQR (Volume 26:2) we spelled Matt Herrman's last name wrong in the Timeline—our sincere apologies.

Dear Eddy

IN THE SPRING OF 2012, I had the great honor of traveling down the Colorado River by dory from Lee's Ferry to Lake Mead. Our boatmen included Lew Steiger, who told us about Martin Litton's unyielding efforts to save the Colorado River and his role as founder of Grand Canyon Dories. Like many before me, I was deeply moved by this experience, and came away determined to thank and honor Mr. Litton and the boatmen/women of the Grand Canyon.

So I wrote and recorded a song simply called "Boatman." It is my humble attempt to capture the spirit of a dory trip through the Grand Canyon, guided by a special breed of adventurers whose instructions are much more than a primer on how to avoid flipping a boat in Lava Falls; they are metaphorical lessons about how to live a rich and balanced life.

Richard Cassard

P.S. I know that your editors are busy working on the next issue of Boatman's Quarterly, but I want to pass along some exciting news about the song/poem that I submitted to you for publication. Upon returning from a trip out of cell phone range, listening to several voice mail messages, I heard an elderly man's voice say, "this is Martin Litton . . ." I drew a deep breath. Mr. Litton thanked me for writing the song as a tribute to him and the boatmen/women of the Grand Canyon. "Make a tribute to me of all people . . . like Christopher Columbus or something," he said. In a second voice message received a month later he said, "I'm sitting here reading it and singing it . . . it's great . . . it's got a lot of spirit in it." I was overwhelmed with feelings of gratitude and accomplishment.

When I returned his call, Mr. Litton again thanked me for the song and said, "I want to get it down to the River." I told him about submitting it to Boatman's Quarterly, and that I am still hopeful it might be published sometime soon.

EDITORS NOTE: The song lyrics are printed on page 18. You can also listen to the song, download it, and download the lyrics and chords—at least for a while—on the BQR page of the GCRG website: www.gcr.org/bqr.php

Or scan this:



I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED reading your “GCRG at 25” article/interview in the 25TH Anniversary BQR issue. I applaud your editors for devoting the amount of space required for these individuals to highlight those beginnings. I would like to draw attention to the fact that those individuals participating in the dialogue and a number of other folks were instrumental in an even earlier, maybe more seminal, if not so organized origin. To a person, all are too humble to take any credit, or maybe believe they were just a part of a larger movement.

Allow me to describe the times.

It was the hind end of the Oars vs. Motors wars. I came into the Grand Canyon commercial boating scene in 1978. Young, immature and very wet behind the ears. Stayed that way up until the point some of our GCRG at 25 dialogue participants influenced me, more on that later. Looking back, I see that by then the animosity between the oars-motors factions was more from the press, or happening at certain corporate levels and maybe a few die hard individuals than it was from guides.

I had started out working for AZRA in their warehouse trying to get on the crick whenever I could. This was right when they were morphing from ARTA into AZRA. They had split the company into the Oar/Havasu and Motor/Snout Divisions. That was typical of a lingering undercurrent of oars-motors friction at some levels in our industry. Maybe some of it was driven by management divorce, but it was a real split. They had built walls down the middle of the warehouse separating the oars from the motors with only a common food storage space in between the walls. The doors in those walls were to remain locked after you fetched food and if they didn't, you were going to hear about it. The oars-motors split there was quite literal, physical actually. Funny thing was the walls didn't keep boat folks apart. I don't just mean that they hadn't counted on oar or motor guides walking out the opposite ends of the warehouse and getting together outside (we did, go figure). What I do mean is there was a stronger undercurrent of all kinds of guides united by a common love of the Canyon wanting to get together and learn from each other.

Flash ahead a few years. Much like Lew Steiger explains his desire to get a permanent place with the Dories, I had coveted a spot on the Wilderness World crew. After a lot of work, some baggage boats and an amazing stint with VK (Vladimir Kovalik) running the Wilderness World Oregon operation, I landed a Canyon crew position with WiWo in 1981. I felt a real sense of attitude change in our community when I returned. Guides of all types were coming together. A big influence in my life at

the time was the open slot on our crew at WiWo that was regularly filled by a guest guide from outside the company. People like Brad Dimock, Lew Steiger, Fritz (Carole Fritzingler), Whale, Tony and Ann Anderson, Mike Yard and others regularly filled that open slot. It was called the Guest Boatman spot, but then Dan Dierker coined the term Celebrity Boatman for it. At the same time people like Dirk Pratley, Geoff Gourley and Jeff Behan were rowing WiWo baggage boats, coming into their own and injecting new blood.

I didn't know it so much at the time, but the result of all this crosspollination of guides, company cultures, knowledge and techniques was that we were coming together as a profession. And it wasn't just happening at WiWo. I remember being on a trip with Brad (Dimock) and him telling me about his freelance season schedule with five or six different companies. Other freelancers were doing the same thing. Brad would say he was trying to fill out his season, but I think it was just as much about Brad wanting to run every kind of boat with every kind of people that he could. Brad was like a sponge wanting to absorb as much knowledge as he possibly could. This was all before Brad had become a Dory fixture. At the time folks like Brad, Whale, Lew Steiger, Connie Tibbits, Wesley Smith, Stu Reeder were all considered the top motorboat guides in the business. Here they were runnin' oar trips whenever they could. I even found myself on the crick tradin off my oar boat to take a turn on the throttle, or getting my hands on the sticks of a dory as much as I could. On the river it got to be a highlight of a trip when we would run into our pards while runnin' for different outfits.

The same steady coalescence was happening off the river. From Flag to Page to Hurricane guides were getting together. In '83 I was working a normal WiWo rotation of thirteen days on the river with two and a half days in Flagstaff. I would sleep in my truck when in town and spend a lot of time at the WiWo house on Beaver Street with Kyle (Kovalik). Kyle always went out of his way takin' care of me, takin' care of everybody. Some Dory crews had a similar schedule to mine. Coby Jordan and Mike Taggett started dropping in at the WiWo house and hanging out. Dan Dierker lived right next door so he popped in pretty often. Regular WiWo crew like Jimmy and Deb Hendrick, Deb's brother Tim Barringer and Howie Usher made regular appearances along with the various Celebrity Boatmen. People like Cam Staveley or Pete Resnick might walk in the door. I remember Coby and Mike talking about the *Hybernacle News*, asking for content contributions and trying to get it to be more than a Dory publication. I had done several trips with Brad (Dimock) by then and knew he was working on the *Hybernacle* too. There was informal talk about a guides

organization, but that never really went anywhere until later when Kenton and the other founders actually took a hold of it. What I did see happening was that we began to be a community. Motor boaters were no longer smoke belching oafs, Dory guides were no longer snobs and Western guides weren't those guys from Utah who never stop.

Brad Dimock briefly mentions the *Hybernacle News* in the "GCRG at 25" article. For thirty-some years I have always regarded those early editors and the *Hybernacle News* as the precursor of the BQR. Perhaps the community building events leading up to, surrounding and concurrent to the *Hybernacle* were as important to the beginning of our river community and the state of our present day profession as anything.

A couple years later I got fired at WiWo for letting my girlfriend row my boat in Indian Dick rapid at 45,000 CFS (we flipped). I'm sure I've done dumber things, but I don't recall anything specific at the moment. WiWo had hired a woman that was not from the river community to run the Grand Canyon operation. None of us knew her and I don't even remember her name. Two trips after the Indian Dick flip our crew came back from a trip and she was just there in the office. Howdy, you're fired. Only she didn't actually have the fortitude to tell me herself, she made Jimmy (Hendrick) do it. It wasn't my first time getting fired at WiWo so I took it a little easier than my crewmates. Not to mention I knew I'd been pretty stupid. I remember Kyle calling and saying, "Just go talk to VK, he loves you, you'll be on the next trip." Jimmy Hendrick and Dan Dierker were particularly disturbed at how the whole firing went down. We were a tight knit crew. Jimmy and I called each other Crystal Brothers (another story). We were so tight that seeing the pain on Jimmy's face at having to tell me I was fired hurt worse than being fired. The guide community was reaching out to me from all over, I just didn't see it right at that point.

I had a period of numbness after getting canned. For some time I had been confused about how I was gonna get married, raise kids, finish school and balance all that with the Canyon. Our whole crew had also somehow sensed that the end of WiWo was coming. There were only a few trips left in the season, so I drove home to Tucson to lick my wounds and get ready to go back to school.

I hadn't been in Tucson for an hour when the phone rang. It was Dan Dierker. He said, "Get in your truck and get up to Utah, you're rowin' a Dory trip in three days and you're already late." I was both shocked and touched. Actually, I was stunned. We all know Dan has always, and I mean always carried a lot of respect in the river community. Dan puts his mind to it, makes one phone call and I go from fired to Dory guide. Dan had been my mentor for a while at that point. When we first started working

together I was inwardly, very emotionally immature. Dan saw that and took me under his wing. Now, Dan taking you under his wing can be like being put in a wrestler's headlock, but it was exactly what I needed. Dan made it a point to improve me whenever possible, I will always be grateful.

As soon as I set foot in that Dory warehouse I was in heaven. Not just from the boats, boat stuff, paint and old stuffed couches all over, but from the people. That same river community I was already a part of welcomed me. The place was alive and people were everywhere coming in and out. Old pals embraced me and new ones I didn't know yet made me feel at home. Brad showed me around where sand paper and paint was while Martin floated through and was extra benevolent in making me feel a part of things. After a day of sanding and painting Mike Taggett showed up and took me next door to his Chums storefront. He showed me these incredible new machines he had that spun spools of colored thread around at high speed and shot out a Chum. The whole thing was like coming home. I had a couple of good seasons and some great trips with the Dorries before life took me, and Grand Canyon Dorries in a different direction.

My point here is that the folks in the "GCRG at 25" article and others were leaders and busy forming a river community from a time before I even got to the Canyon. Their early efforts, careers...their lives, were the beginnings of what eventually made GCRG possible. This narrative in the first person comes from what I saw through my eyes, but it is about them. It's about camaraderie and caring. I've listed many names here, not for the sake of dropping names, but because every person mentioned here has had a profound, continuing influence on my life. More importantly, they shaped our profession at a time when we needed to come together. Fact is, I've left too many names out that should be recognized.

I was privileged to see our river community go from divided to united. Now it's united with a purpose. Maybe the best thing I can say is this: there are times when I look at the strength of character in my adult sons and know that I was able to pass that to them because people like Dan Dierker, Jimmy Hendrick, the Barringers, VK, KK, Lew Steiger, Brad Dimock and a heap of others passed it to me.

John Markey

Guide Profiles

Chelsea Arndt, Age 27

WHERE WERE YOU BORN & WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?: I was born in Flagstaff, I grew up mostly in Laramie, WY.

WHO DO YOU WORK FOR CURRENTLY (AND IN THE PAST)?: OARS/Grand Canyon Dories primarily, I've worked for AZRA, GCMRC as well as swamping a handful of trips for GCE.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN GUIDING? My first Grand Canyon trip was in 2003, I rowed my first guide boat in 2008.

WHAT KIND OF BOAT(S) DO YOU RUN?: 18' rafts, dories.

WHAT OTHER RIVERS HAVE YOU WORKED ON?: Only a privateer elsewhere.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES/PASSIONS/DREAMS?: I enjoy ceramics, crafting, cooking, riding bikes and hiking, along with various other fun activities. My dream is to someday assemble an army of Chelseas.

MARRIED/FAMILY/PETS? Most of my family lives up in Laramie. My stepdad owns a cabinet shop where my brother Zach works. My mom makes jewelry and stained glass things. My twin sister Shealyn is a nurse and my younger sister Meggan is a student at the University of Wyoming. My dad (Mike Arndt) and Denice (Napoletano) live here in Flagstaff. I'm not married and I don't have any pets of my own though I do get to take care of other people's pets quite often.

SCHOOL/AREA OF STUDY/DEGREES?: I received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in ceramics from NAU in 2010.

WHAT MADE YOU START GUIDING?: Once I got a taste for the lifestyle and began making friends in the community it was hard not to return year after year. I also realized it was one of my few viable skills.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE?: Denice has been working for OARS/Dories for many moons. She got me on a trip

as an assistant right after I finished high school. I've been returning every chance I get since then.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR MENTORS AND/OR ROLE MODELS?: My dad and Denice took my brother and sister and me on lots of private trips during the summers growing up. We all grew up around the OARS warehouse and the river community. I remember thinking all the boatmen were so cool. When I first started rowing, Monte Tillinghast and I did a bunch of trips together which is definitely when I learned about the technical aspects of rowing and reading water. I continue to learn new things from all the awesome people I get to work with. Billie Prosser taught me how to be cool.

WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE WINTER? I work at the OARS warehouse but I mostly hang out in my basement and craft. I also enjoy snow sports.



Margeaux Bestard

IS THIS YOUR PRIMARY WAY OF EARNING A LIVING OR DO YOU COMBINE IT WITH SOMETHING ELSE?: This is pretty much it aside from the occasional odd job. Like I said—few viable skills.

WHAT'S THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT IN YOUR GUIDING CAREER? On my July trip last year we were in that section below Havasu when all those storms were hammering everything. Rowing downstream in the midst of hundreds of waterfalls, then rolling up on National Canyon right after it blew out huge was something else. I've also enjoyed some epic run-outs.

WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST QUESTION YOU'VE EVER BEEN ASKED ABOUT THE CANYON/RIVER? : I love when it's really not a question at all. Example: "Those rocks are down there?" "Yes."

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR FUTURE HOLDS? I'd like to continue guiding and working in the Grand Canyon as well as branching out and working on some other rivers. I'd like to continue my academic education. And also assemble that Chelsea Army.

WHAT KEEPS YOU HERE? Boating is fun.

Chelsea Atwater, Age 27

WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND WHERE DID YOU GROW UP? I moved around as a kid. We lived in California, Maryland and New York before getting settled in Arizona. I grew up mostly in Phoenix after that.

WHO DO YOU WORK FOR CURRENTLY (AND IN THE PAST)? This will be eleven years with Arizona River Runners (ARR)! They're like family!

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN GUIDING? I started swamping for ARR in 2002.

WHAT KIND OF BOAT(S) DO YOU RUN? The S-rig is my favorite! I also love rowing when I get the chance, it's nice to switch up the pace.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE? I came down a trip as a passenger in 2001 and I distinctly remember hiking Saddle Canyon and being in paradise! I didn't grasp at the time how much I would learn and gain from the Canyon, I just loved the idea of adventure and exploration. I was always a nature freak, I guess.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR MENTORS AND/OR ROLE MODELS? There are so many. I still can't believe how amazing people were to me when I first started. I knew nothing at all, but they were so patient.



IS THIS YOUR PRIMARY WAY OF EARNING A LIVING OR DO YOU COMBINE IT WITH SOMETHING ELSE? Oh I'm a helluva waitress in the winter! It's pretty funny! Servers and patrons can get really intense at times, but then you remember—hey this isn't Horn Creek, I think we can all calm down.

WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST QUESTION YOU'VE EVER BEEN ASKED ABOUT THE CANYON/RIVER? Last trip I was asked one of the best questions of my career. There was a couple on the trip, who were coping with a tragic personal loss. They were amazing people and they really embraced the trip. At one point, Jeff asked "What lessons have you learned from boating that you could apply to life?" I took a few moments to answer but I told him the first thing that came to mind: You have to look where you want to go. You can't look at the ledge hole in Lava or the big hole in Crystal, or that is where you'll end up. I think that is a great philosophy for life as well.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR FUTURE HOLDS? I keep trying to look where I want to go, though there are always obstacles! I want to fly helicopters in the Canyon at some point. How awesome would that be?

WHAT KEEPS YOU HERE? I don't know exactly. The question is, what could possibly keep us away?

Chelsea DeWeese, Age 32

WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND WHERE DID YOU GROW UP? I grew up in Gardiner, Montana, at the North Entrance to Yellowstone Park. I still consider Gardiner my primary place of residence.

WHO DO YOU WORK FOR CURRENTLY (AND IN THE PAST)? I currently work for Hatch River Expeditions and have since 2009. Before that, I worked a season for Canyoneers.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN GUIDING? I have guided in the Grand Canyon for the past six years and, before that, guided paddle boats on the Yellowstone River, in Gardiner.



Laura Crossey

WHAT KIND OF BOAT(S) DO YOU RUN? I currently run oar boats and swamp motor boats at Hatch River. Then, just the paddle boats and stern mounts with paddle assists on the Yellowstone. I also like to kayak.

WHAT OTHER RIVERS HAVE YOU WORKED ON? The Yellowstone, Gallatin (for training) and private trips on the Salt River, Smith River, and Hell's Canyon of the Snake.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES/PASSIONS/DREAMS? My hobbies include whitewater rafting, listening to good music, drinking coffee, hiking, backpacking, and telemark skiing in the winter. I am passionate about environmental activism and find guiding to be an appropriate outlet for that. I also enjoy some good writing.

MARRIED/FAMILY/PETS? My boyfriend, Jordon, holds down the fort with our lovely dog, Boon, and Siamese cat, Samantha. He's my best friend and tireless advocate. So are my parents and little sister.

SCHOOL/AREA OF STUDY/DEGREES? I hold a BA in Print Journalism from the University of Montana, Missoula. My focus was on environmental reporting.

WHAT MADE YOU START GUIDING? I've been doing it since I was itty bitty. And I grew tired of journalism.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU HERE? That's a long story. But I will tell you this—I think *nobody* ends up working in the Grand Canyon by accident. It's predetermined. Whether to benefit the Canyon or the person.

WHO HAVE BEEN YOUR MENTORS AND/OR ROLE MODELS?

That's a hard one. There's so many! Kelly Wagner, also with Hatch River, definitely. This wonderful female has taught me everything I know about rowing. Also, my friend and co-worker Rachel Hanson has been a help on the motors. As was Carolyn Alvord, when I worked at Canyoners. My role model in terms of life in general is the unshakable Laura Fallon, a manager with AZRA. She's very centered...

WHAT DO YOU DO IN THE WINTER? I am a Nordic ski instructor, based out of Mammoth Hot Springs, in Yellowstone. I also take people wolf watching. This year I'm trying to get a job driving snowcoaches.

IS THIS YOUR PRIMARY WAY OF EARNING A LIVING OR DO YOU COMBINE IT WITH SOMETHING ELSE? This is my primary source of income, which allows me to pursue my winter jobs and skiing.

WHAT'S THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT IN YOUR GUIDING CAREER? Probably running Lava Falls for the first time. In my first-ever oar boat.

WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST QUESTION YOU'VE EVER BEEN ASKED ABOUT THE CANYON/RIVER? I once had a customer ask me—during a conversation surrounding the danger of oar boats getting stuck on the island below Crystal Rapid—“can't one of those motor boats just drive up and push them off?” I almost laughed. The misconceptions regarding how motor boats operate are amazing! That said, no question is a stupid question. I firmly believe that.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR FUTURE HOLDS? Hopefully, my future involves a quiet retirement with Jordon and our critters in Montana, where we will operate a coffee shop. I want to live in a rustic house and have rabbits and chickens. And a garden. And to raise my next dog from the time it's a puppy.

WHAT KEEPS YOU HERE? The challenge of running some of the world's most loved and respected rapids. A person never returns from a trip feeling perfect (at least I don't!). There's always that voice in the back of your head saying, “Next time I run that rapid I'm gonna run it like this...” Also, I feel enormously grateful to be part of the Grand Canyon rafting community. This is a special type of family. The second challenge—and most important—is to continually improve yourself as a guide. As my friend Roger P says, “You have to step up your game” and ensure customers enjoy and respect their experience in Grand Canyon. This is essential.

Farewell

LOIS JOTTER CUTTER, MARCH 11, 1914–APRIL 30, 2013

BACK IN 1938 BUZZ HOLMSTROM had nursed a crush on her. Fifty-six years later it remained easy to see why. As part of the 1994 “Legend’s Trip”—yet another brainchild of Kenton Grua—a trip that included many renowned pre-dam river runners, Lois Jotter Cutter arguably was not only the most famous, but at age eighty—the second oldest. As the doctor on this, the “Old Timer’s Trip” as it became more affectionately known, my job was simple: Help keep the “Old Timers” healthy.

The trip was run under the auspices of the USGS as “research” into observational changes in the river corridor following the completion of Glen Canyon Dam, specifically changes noted by those few who had experienced the good fortune to have run the Colorado prior. In reality, the trip mission turned out to be a good excuse to gather the Old Timers on the river a last time and record their oral histories before they vanished. For many decades, for example, Lois had been a living legend as one of the first two women to complete a full traverse of the Colorado through Grand Canyon

as passengers of Norman Nevills back in 1938 and had yet to have an in-depth interview. This 1994 trip was Jotter’s first and last re-run in the canyon.

On our first night we camped at Jackass. Here the trip’s three USGS scientists tag-teamed in a prolonged session of geologizing and hydrologizing. After an hour or so, the saturated Old Timers began calving out of sight, like silt banks sloughing into Lake Mead. One by one they retreated silently to their camps. Some of the guides melted away as well. This first night’s didactic session eroded into a last-one-standing contest. In an incredible display of stamina, Lois hung in as one of those last ones. Steadfast and unflinching, she appeared engrossed in the esotery, an academic persona likely forged from her many years as an Assistant Professor of Botany at the University of North Carolina. Hence I felt mildly shocked when she finally leaned

toward me and whispered, “Do you think they’re *ever* gonna shut up?”

Her eyes twinkled and her grin curved mischievous. Like Buzz, I too felt smitten. And as the trip progressed, Lois’s cheery disposition, ready wit, and keen intelligence made her my favorite Old Timer. So much so that I would eventually visit her at home in North Carolina.

In 1938 California native Lois Jotter was a 24-year-old graduate student in Botany at the University of

Michigan. When she docked that same year at Lake Mead after 43 days on the water with Nevills she earned her slot as “number 61” on Dock Marston’s “First Hundred River Runners Through Grand Canyon.” Lois had “borrowed” a hefty \$400 dollars from her dad (whom, she sheepishly admitted, she had never re-paid) to pay her fare to accompany her 39-year old Michigan professor Dr. Elzada Clover on “a trip down the Colorado to collect plants.” Elzie (as Lois referred to her) had contacted Norman Nevills in 1937 about collecting via horseback trips. After Nevills pooh-poohed that notion as not only too expensive but likely impossible, he sold her instead on a river

trip with him as captain. As part of the deal she would have to roust up two other paying clients: one a boatman and the other a woman. The “other woman” was both Norm’s idea and Elzie’s. For Nevills, taking not one, but two women into no-man’s land would foster immense publicity for his fledgling river business. And from Elzie’s perspective having another woman along was simply the proper thing to do. After all, a single, unchaperoned woman boating the Colorado with a pack of wild river men might discredit not only herself, but also the University of Michigan. Elzie’s choice had been simple: the bright and spunky Lois.

Lois’s friends and acquaintances felt shock and concern. “Do you really know what you’re getting into?” This question spurred some fudging answers. “Well, I’ve seen the river,” Lois would say, secretly knowing she had done so only via photos. Prior to meeting the



expectant duo, the even famous solo boater Buzz Holmstrom chimed in with a been-there-done-that warning: “The river is no place for a woman.”

But no prophet of doom could talk these two women out of Nevill’s trip. After all, both Elzie and Lois were already living on the fringes for women of their era simply by opting for earning advanced academic degrees instead of making an immediate transition to marriage, dirty dishes, and diapers.

When Norm’s fleet—the *Wen*, *Botany* and *Mexican Hat*—built by him for this trip, arrived in Green River, Utah for the big launch, so did the nay-sayers. “That’s a bad place,” they offered as final warnings to the women, “and many people have been lost in many places.”

One drunken spectator even planted sloppy and ominous farewell smooches on each woman just before they shoved off.

“Well, if we don’t come back,” Elzie remarked, “just toss a rose over into the canyon for us.”

Widespread worries over the fates of Lois and Elzie tightened up the already high-strung Nevills even tighter. Anxious and determined to run a tight ship to bring everyone home safe, he would prove cautious, demanding, and even abrasive. To the frustration of his passengers, Nevills ordered walks around many rapids or painstaking lining of the boats. Supplies had to be portaged the hard way by crew and passengers. The work was grueling and the food Spartan and monotonous: Underwood Deviled ham, Grapenuts and Rye Krisps.

Early in the trip Lois had lost a bucket to the river and was reprimanded. When a boat came untied in Cataract Canyon and ghost-boated downstream, boatman Don Harris and Lois made a daring, frenzied dash, running rapids to rescue the renegade boat. They succeeded but earned an even heftier reprimand for having allowed the boat to have come untied. When later a boat flipped, Nevills seemed even more edgy.

Soon, Lois admitted, the crew began to gripe. “We called ourselves the Gripers, because we were complaining about this and that.” Norm started calling Lois a “trouble maker,” even though she felt they were



Men trying to be taller than Lois—Bill Gibson and Buzz Holmstrom on left, Gene Atkinson on right.

Lois Jotter Cutter Collection, Special Collections, Cline Library NAU.PH..95.3.26

“equally culpable, equal impatient with Norm.” In Glen Canyon the trip polarized. Norm and Elzie drifted separately from the rest, with no regret from Lois. When the trip fell behind schedule, the Associated Press reported trouble: “*Botanists Lost in the Canyon.*”

When Lois, Elzie and the rest arrived at Lees Ferry no worse for the wear, the nay-sayers, including an impressed Buzz

Holmstrom, changed their tune. Laying over at Marble Canyon Lodge he met Lois. Amusingly, for a photo, he positioned himself standing on a curb on Navajo Bridge to appear taller than the young 5-foot, 8-inch botanist. Buzz gave her the waterproof match case/compass he had carried on his solo trip through the Canyon the year before. Lois kept this for the rest of her life.

Ultimately this trip changed Lois’s life. “I always had been pretty much of a goody-goody,” she would say. “I had always been very serious about studying... to go back and feel very much more self assured gave me quite a different sense of self-confidence.” Indeed, she completed her PhD in Botany at the University of Michigan five years later, one year after she married Cornell doctorate of Biology graduate Victor Cutter, Jr. in 1942. They soon would start a family, move to North Carolina and raise their two children. Following Victor’s tragic and untimely death, Lois returned to academics in 1963 at the University of North Carolina. She worked as Assistant Professor before retiring in 1984, becoming an avid bridge player, gardener, and traveler.

On April 30, 2013, less than a year short of her century mark, Lois Jotter Cutter passed away at her home in Greensboro of natural causes. She was the last surviving member of Norm Nevills’ 1938 trip. Among her most prized possessions remained Buzz’s waterproof match case and her trip pith helmet, upon which at Lake Mead a contrite Buzz had written: “to the girl who proved me badly mistaken.”

Tom Myers

The Grand Canyon Needs Your Voice: The Long Term Experimental and Management Plan for Glen Canyon Dam

SAY THE WORDS “DAM OPERATIONS” and people’s eyes glaze over. The subject seems impossibly complicated and far removed from our daily lives, or just plain boring. We’re here to tell you that they *do* matter, that your voice on this subject will be critical, and that

dam operations directly affect the health of the place you love—the Colorado River through Grand Canyon. People

at the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), National Park Service (NPS), and Argonne Laboratories are working hard right now to develop a new operating plan for Glen Canyon Dam. This plan, known as the Long Term Experimental and Management Plan (LTEMP), will determine the fate of the river corridor through the Grand Canyon for the next twenty years—maybe longer. They’re doing this through a process called an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that allows members of the public to contribute. And they need your voice. This is our chance to make a difference.

The Grand Canyon, that sublime wonder of the world, dream of river runners everywhere, jewel of the

National Park System, needs all the help it can get. You might assume that national park status would be sufficient protection, but it isn’t. There’s constant pressure on the Grand Canyon: to dig up the lands around it for uranium, to fill the skies above with helicopter traffic,

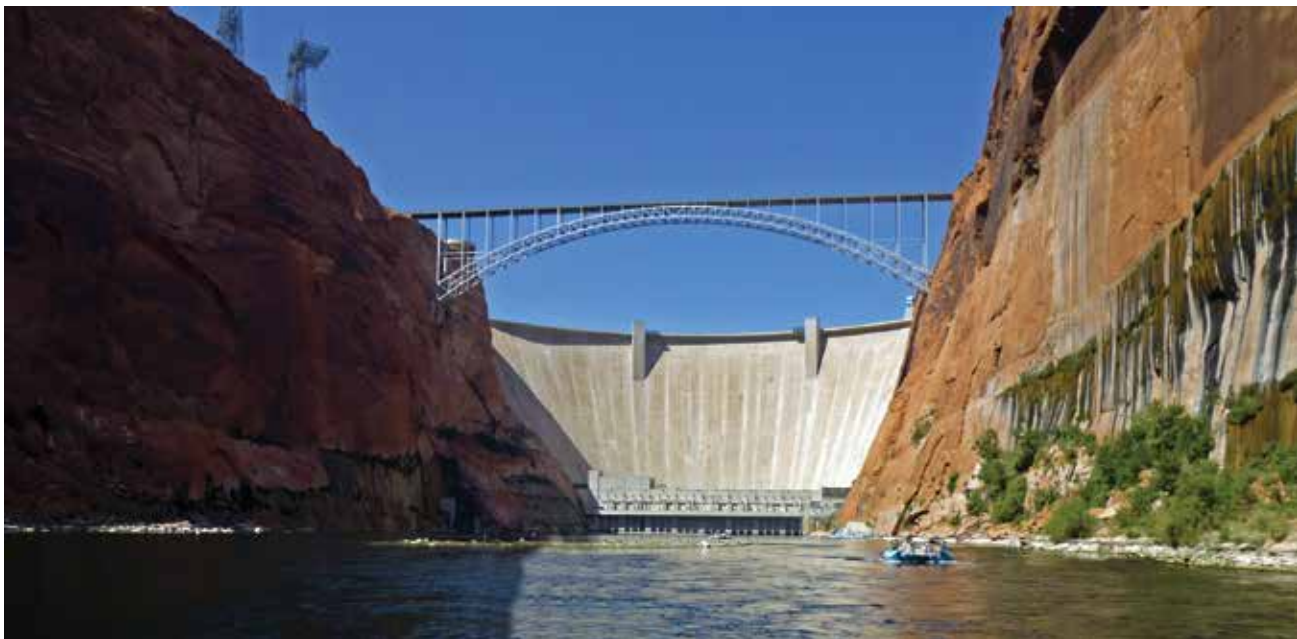
WHAT IS LTEMP?

LTEMP stands for Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan. It will define how Glen Canyon Dam is operated and how the river corridor through the Grand Canyon is taken care of. The plan will be in effect for the next 15 or 20 years.

to pump groundwater away from springs and into new developments, even to have a tramway and restaurant right down near the river.

So what is this LTEMP thing all about, and what can you do?

The story begins a long time ago. For five or so million years the Colorado River flowed freely through what has gradually, rock by rock, become the Grand Canyon. Springtime floods tore through the place, reworking the river bed, uprooting riverside vegetation, and leaving behind millions of tons of rejuvenating sediment in the form of giant sandy beaches. That sediment supported life along the river—plants,



Glen Canyon Dam. photo by Mari Carlos



Beach Erosion. photo by Mari Carlos

birds, and other animals. Wind-blown sand slowed the erosion of archaeological sites. Summer waters were warm, winter flows cold, and native fish thrived.

Fast forward to 1963; the Bureau of Reclamation closed off the river by building Glen Canyon Dam. The dam is a 710-foot high concrete plug sixteen miles upstream of the Grand Canyon. It has eight turbines that can, at their best, generate about 1296 megawatts of electric power. The dam creates Lake Powell, holds back the annual floods that used to rage all the way to the sea, and regulates the flow of precious water between the upper and lower basin states of the Colorado River.

Glen Canyon Dam changed the river profoundly, mainly by making it clear, cold, and calm:

- The dam blocks the sediment. Nearly all the sand and silt that once made the Colorado “too thick to drink, too thin to plow” now settles out in Lake Powell. The only remaining sources of beach sand are the tributaries and side canyons below the dam. They provide less than five percent of the amount that had once pulsed through Grand Canyon.
- The dam cools the river. Water for the turbines comes from low enough in the lake that it runs a fairly steady 48 degrees or so. A big change from

pre-dam summer highs in the '80s and winter lows down to freezing.

- The dam calms the river. Annual Spring flows used to average around 90,000 cubic feet per second (CFS), with occasional ferocious highs of maybe 300,000. Lows during dry times could be 2,000 CFS. Now the normal range is from about 5,000 to 30,000 CFS.

These clear, cold, calm conditions mean it's a whole new river through the Grand Canyon. No annual floods to tear out vegetation and build new beaches. Tamarisk trees native to the Middle East have taken over the shores. Imported trout eat the native humpback chub. Fluctuating flows continue to erode sediment that is

critical for the health of many resources in Grand Canyon—biological, recreational, and cultural. A new, hybrid ecosystem is developing.

DAM OPERATIONS

When the turbines first started spinning, little thought was given to the river corridor downstream of the dam. Financially, the most profitable way to run Glen Canyon Dam is to turn it up during the day, when power demand is high, and back down at night. For years the BOR did this to the fullest extent possible to maximize hydropower revenues. Daily flows generally ramped up from about 5,000 CFS to 30,000 CFS, then back down.

By the mid-eighties river runners and scientists were seeing bad effects in the Grand Canyon—especially the devastating erosion of beaches. They decided something needed to be done, and, to make a long story very short, eventually Congress agreed and passed the Grand Canyon Protection Act of 1992.

This law led to a Glen Canyon Dam Environmental Impact Statement, the creation of a federal advisory committee called the Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) composed of interested stakeholders, a high quality science program, and, in 1996, changes to the way the dam is operated. Daily fluctuations

A FEW ALLIES FOR THE CANYON

- [Grand Canyon River Runners Association](http://gcriverrunners.org/) gcriverrunners.org/
- [Grand Canyon River Guides](http://gcr.org/) gcr.org/
- [Grand Canyon Trust](http://grandcanyontrust.org/) grandcanyontrust.org/
- [Sierra Club](http://arizona.sierraclub.org/) arizona.sierraclub.org/
- [Grand Canyon Wildlands Council](http://grandcanyonwildlands.org/) grandcanyonwildlands.org/

became limited, but monthly flows continue to fluctuate and sediment erosion continues to be a problem.

Research and experiments have continued in the years since. We've tried high flows to mimic pre-dam floods—up to 45,000 CFS or so—and learned that when enough sediment is available, beaches can be rebuilt. We've tried removing trout, and humpback chub numbers have climbed. After many slow and tough battles, we've begun using science to take better care of the Grand Canyon.

THE LTEMP

Some progress has been made, but now it's time for another leap forward. The Bureau of Reclamation and National Park Service are working on another Environmental Impact Statement. They're using all that's been learned through more than fifteen years of good science work to produce a new plan for dam operations.

They'll incorporate a ten-year experiment to run high flows every Spring and Fall when there's enough sediment in the system. They'll include a long-term non-native fish protocol to protect endangered native species. And they will examine the feasibility of non-flow measures such as a Temperature Control Device and sediment augmentation.

They'll also include...well, we don't know yet. The LTEMP team will produce a range of preliminary alternatives, each with a different focus, and recommend one in particular as the "preferred alternative." The Draft EIS will be available for public comment early next year.

That's where we come in. This is our chance to join the conversation and have a real impact on improving the way the dam is managed.

The BOR and NPS, co-lead agencies for this EIS, need to know how we want the Grand Canyon taken care of. They have institutional goals and laws and regula-



Glen Canyon Dam Jet Tubes
photo by Lynn Hamilton

tions to follow, but in the end it's the will of the people that truly drives them. They need to know that you care about the Grand Canyon, and what you want it to look like in ten, twenty, a hundred years from now.

If you value the long-term health of the Colorado River and want to ensure that the plan meets the full requirements of the Grand Canyon Protection Act, they need to know.

If you value camping beaches, backwater habitats for spawning/rearing of native fishes, native plants and animals along the shoreline, and the protection of cultural sites, they need to know. Flow scenarios should maximize the benefits to all these key resources by

bringing in and retaining sediment in the system to the greatest extent possible.

Perhaps you commented before, back in 1996. Do it again. They need to be reminded every time an EIS comes up that river protection is really important to the American public. Over 17,000 people commented on the initial Glen Canyon Dam EIS in the early '90s,

KNOW YOUR ACRONYMS

AMWG—Adaptive Management Work Group

BOR—Bureau of Reclamation

EIS—Environmental Impact Statement

LTEMP—Long Term Experimental and Management Plan

NEPA—National Environmental Policy Act

NPS—National Park Service

WTF—Who Thinks About the Grand Canyon This Way?

reflecting its national importance. We need to generate another huge response this time around by galvanizing the entire river community. That means *you*.

YOUR COMMENTS

The better informed you are about the relationship between the Glen Canyon Dam and the river corridor, the more useful your comments are likely to be. There are lots of ways to learn more.

But remember this: If you've been down the river *just one time*, you know it better than many of the people tasked with managing it. If you've been on a commercial or private trip, you know the place in a way many experienced scientists and managers don't. If you've ever tried describing your trip to someone who's never been, you know how hard it is for them to imagine what the experience is really like.

So, what you have to say really matters. If we fail to speak up for a healthy river and associated resources, the void will be filled by other voices who view the river as a commodity, or as water to be diverted, rather than the lifeblood of the desert and a valuable ecosystem.

This is a pivotal moment for Grand Canyon. Its

future depends on decisions being made through this important process. Stewardship starts with people like you who *care* about this special place.

We urge you to go to the official LTEMP website: <http://ltempeis.anl.gov/involve/index.cfm>, sign up for updates, get informed, and when the comment period opens, let your voice be heard loud and clear.

Sam Jansen

AMWG REPRESENTATIVE

NOTE: (THIS ARTICLE ORIGINALLY APPEARED IN THE SPRING, 2013 EDITION OF *THE GRAND CANYON RIVER RUNNER*)

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Go to <http://ltempeis.anl.gov/involve/index.cfm> and enter your email address where it says "sign me up." When the Draft Environmental Impact Statement comes out you'll be told how and where to make your comments.

Think about the Grand Canyon, what it means to you, and what it should be like for future generations. Read up to get a sense of what other groups are hoping for.

Then make your voice heard!

Event Calendar

Fall/Winter 2013

FALL RENDEZVOUS—OCTOBER 5–6, 2013,
MARBLE VIEW ON THE NORTH RIM
OF GRAND CANYON



View of House Rock Valley from Marble View
photo by Alicyn Gitlin

Come join us! We have reserved a *spectacular* camping spot in the Kaibab National Forest overlooking Marble and North Canyons. There are lots of great hiking possibilities—gorgeous North Canyon on Saturday afternoon, and possibly Walhalla Plateau, Cape Royal or Saddle Mountain area on Sunday. We'll have great speakers like Kim Crumbo (Grand Canyon Wildlands Council) and Roger Clark (Grand Canyon Trust) who can talk about the new Grand Canyon Watershed National Monument proposal, protection challenges for the lands surrounding Grand Canyon, wolves, archaeology and more... The cost is \$40 per person (must be a GCRG member). Carpooling is available. See the Fall Rendezvous page of the GCRG website for details: www.gcrg.org.

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COLORADO RIVER DAYS—OCTOBER 1–8, 2013
A VARIETY OF VENUES IN FLAGSTAFF

There will be an exciting array of events, including a day of tabling in Heritage Square, films, storytelling, lectures, panel discussions, and a song writing contest, all to celebrate the Colorado River. See page 23 for details.



VOICE YOUR CHOICE—NOVEMBER 1–15, 2013
VOTE FOR GCRG AT MOUNTAIN SPORTS IN FLAGSTAFF!

Come by Mountain Sports in downtown Flagstaff and vote for Grand Canyon River Guides as we compete with two other non-profits in the 2ND annual “Voice Your Choice” event. The organization who gets the most votes will receive a \$2500 grant! You must come into the store (at 24 N. San Francisco St.) to cast your ballot—one vote per customer, per day, no purchase necessary, from November 1–15. As a member of 1% for



the Planet, Mountain Sports commits one percent of their sales to help fund conservation projects and local environmental organizations. Therefore, whenever you choose to shop at Mountain Sports,

not only do you get quality merchandise, but you’re also giving back to the Flagstaff community in a really meaningful way. A win-win! Speaking of winning—please help GCRG win this fun competition. Tell all your friends! Vote, vote, vote!!!

14TH ANNUAL RIVER RUNNER FILM FESTIVAL &
SILENT AUCTION—NOVEMBER 2, 2013
COCONINO CENTER FOR THE ARTS, FLAGSTAFF

Celebrate Grand Canyon Youth’s 15TH Anniversary and honor a Steward of the Southwest with the 4th Annual Confluence Award. Attendees will hear youth speak about their transformative experiences, watch inspiring and exciting river-themed films, eat delicious food and bid on a variety of incredible items in the

silent auction. It is truly a fun-filled community event, join us! The funds received at this event keep the program prices affordable for GCY participants.



If you would like to make a donation to our silent auction, suggest a film or sponsor our event please contact GCY!

Spring 2014

WHALE FOUNDATION WING DING—FEBRUARY 22, 2014
COCONINO CENTER FOR THE ARTS, FLAGSTAFF

See the “Back of the Boat” (page 21) for details.

WFR RECERT—FEBRUARY 21–23, 2014 IN FLAGSTAFF.

Details forthcoming.

BACKCOUNTRY FOOD MANAGER’S CLASS—
FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2014
MARBLE CANYON, AZ (EXACT LOCATION TBD).

GTS LAND SESSION—MARCH 29–30, 2014
HATCH RIVER EXPEDITIONS IN MARBLE CANYON, AZ

GTS RIVER TRIP
APRIL 1–7, 2014 (UPPER HALF),
APRIL 7–15, 2014 (LOWER HALF)

The Dunn Party

BLUE SKY WITH A FEW motionless puffy clouds overhead, arid desert surrounding us, parched dry air closing in around us, with temperatures hovering near 100 degrees. Everything was stillness and heat as we stood on the river's edge with mountain vistas off in the distance. Our group of river rafters, nervous with anticipation, was on the boat ramp at Lees Ferry just below Glen Canyon Dam about to put in on the Colorado River for our Grand Canyon rafting adventure.

The blue green water of the river looked so inviting in the desert heat, though it was moving alarmingly fast, rushing forward at what must have been a two to three mile per hour clip toward the entrance to Marble Canyon just downstream from our Lees Ferry boat ramp. The steep, hundreds of feet high, canyon walls looked impressive off in the distance not far downstream, but they were only a hint of what we would witness once we moved through Marble Canyon and into the Grand Canyon proper.

We were the 27 members of the intrepid Dunn Party, named after our high energy, big-hearted trip organizer, Joe Dunn who was the driving force in pulling us together for the trip, well over a year in the planning. Our expedition crew consisted of two boatmen, two swampers, who provided able assistance on all aspects of the trip to the two lead boatmen, and a photographer that the outfitter had sent along to get some marketing photos on our trip, bringing our happy band to a total of 32.

We were putting into the river on our two big "J" rig motorized rafts, each of which essentially consisted of five massive robin's egg blue rubber pontoons lashed together, with a metal frame and storage chests in the middle, a motor well for the small outboard engine in the rear, and lots of ropes and hand holds to keep yourself tethered to the raft through the churn of the Colorado River rapids. We were launching on a Tuesday, and the following Monday would pull off the river below Lava Falls rapid, with 187 miles of river, over fifty major rapids, six or so side canyon hikes and a world of adventure and beauty to take in and enjoy in the interim.

Final instructions from our crew leader, Stephen Wiley, one of the premier boatmen on the Colorado, a final chance to opt out of the trip if this really was not the outdoor adventure for you—no takers on that offer—and we were off. Smooth cruising for the first ten minutes or so and then we all were christened with the first shockingly cold wall of Colorado River water

as we crashed through the first big rapid of the trip. The sound of the rapid had a deep concussive roar and the pressure of the rapid bent the big rubber pontoons upward as the water exploded over the front of the raft and through the spaces between the pontoons.

No escaping, and just hold on tight to keep yourself on board! What an exhilarating rush and my goodness was that water cold. The river water is snow-melt released from the bottom of Lake Powell through Glen Canyon Dam. Very cold indeed, and while we all had a take your breath away moment in the first rapid, we soon learned this was not really an especially big rapid. Sure seemed big at the time. The real excitement was yet to come.

That day and the days to follow quickly settled into a comfortable routine of trying to comprehend the scale and beauty of the canyon rising ever higher around us, enjoying the placid stretches of river. Then suddenly we would hunker down, face pressed against the blue rubber pontoon on which we were perched for the ever more violent rapids as we made our way downstream. Suck rubber!!!

There was much wildlife to observe for the sharp of eye. We saw big horned sheep that seemed velcroed to the Canyon ledges, mule deer with their big pointed ears, a host of colorful little lizards in camp and on side canyon hikes, assorted toads, frogs and tadpoles in the side streams, a canyon squirrel or two, red-tailed hawks, peregrine falcons, turkey vultures, great blue herons, cliff swallows and wrens, and the crafty ravens that operated in teams and would make off with any bit of food or small pieces of gear left unintended. No scorpion or rattler sightings but we knew that they were out there.

The food prepared by the two boatmen and the two swampers was plentiful and delicious—there were three solid meals each day and every day. So tempting to go back for seconds or thirds. And if you liked pork, you were in hog heaven, it was the meat of choice for the week. At night after dinner each evening there was a crew talent show featuring guitar and singing with many of the group, including the expedition crew, participating. Great fun. And then as we settled in for the night the myriad stars overhead and handful of meteorites blasting across the dark night sky provided a magical view for each of us as we drifted off to sleep.

But the main attractions of every day were the river and the canyon. The river with its undulating path past the canyon walls, its whirling eddies, its peaceful stretches for observing the grandeur of it all, then the

adrenaline pumping, take your breath away excitement of the ever more intense rapids as we proceeded down river. Hermit, Upset, Crystal and Lava Falls are names that have new and special meaning for each of us now!

The canyon itself was captivatingly beautiful with the hue and colors of the rocks changing with the changing light through the course of the day. The nature of the rock formations changed, as well, as we headed downstream. The canyon walls became higher as we moved from Marble Canyon into the Grand Canyon and the gorge would narrow at times. Igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rock variants were all represented as we passed through formations dating back as much as half the earth's existence.

The petroglyphs carved on basalt boulders, and ancient cave-like granaries in the canyon walls that we observed were reminders of the early Native American civilizations that had preceded us in the canyon, and had lived in these very places thousands of years ago. Anasazi, ancient Pueblo, Havasupai and Hualapai peoples all lived in this austere place, fashioning their agrarian cultures on the flood plains and in the slot canyons that we hike today. They lived their lives on and beside the river, leaving only tantalizing evidence of their existence to pique our imagination about who they were, and what their lives here in the canyon must have been like.

On the Little Colorado River and up the Havasu Creek Canyon we witnessed the perfect balance of water temperature, Ph level, and the very healthy dose of calcium carbonate washed out of deposits upstream of the side canyon flows producing crystal clear turquoise colored water, flowing over a white limestone bed. It was like seeing a Caribbean getaway right in the middle of the Grand Canyon. The effect was as beautiful as it was surprising.

But as the natural beauty and geologic wonder of the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River came in wave after wave, it was good to remember that the future of this national treasure is not assured. The Colorado River in fact is endangered, at risk, and so too is the Grand Canyon.

With one stroke in 1963, the construction of the Glen Canyon Dam altered the river and the canyon in harmful ways. The vegetation that lines the river was changed, possibly forever, natural fish species were destroyed, and the seasonal floods that cleansed the canyon on an annual basis, much the way that natural fires maintain a healthy balance in a forest, were ended. Ill-conceived public land and water use policies if implemented will put the river and the canyon at further risk.

Most significantly in this regard is the voracious

consumption of water by the communities that use the Colorado River as their source of water present a very clear and present threat to the near and long term future of the river.

The proposed Grand Canyon Escalade would consist of a gondola tramway that would travel from the canyon rim to its floor, a tourist restaurant and an amphitheater on the canyon floor, and an elevated walkway above the river. All of this would detract from the natural beauty and integrity of the river and the canyon near the confluence of the Little Colorado River and the Colorado River where the complex is planned.

Increased overflights for scenic tours of the canyon and commercial interest in uranium mining on lands surrounding Grand Canyon National Park represent additional threats to the health and well being of the canyon and the river.

Moreover, the 22,000 people who raft the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon every year must be not just consumers but stewards practicing "Leave No Trace" ethics developed by scouting.

Each member of our group came off the river this past June with a sense that we had experienced something very special and unique; some said life changing. We spent seven days in a place that is pristine and powerful, yet at the same time fragile. Taking the lead from the Grand Canyon River Guides, many of who are so passionate about protecting and preserving the river and the canyon, it is important that each of us in some way actively get involved as stewards of this National Park. Our energy and support is necessary in order to guard the future for this very special place, to ensure that both the river and the canyon are here for future generations to enjoy, embrace and fully experience.

Mike Mitchell

Boatman – Richard Cassard



On a breezy, sultry evening in a canyon called the Grand
I listened to the Boatman by a flame upon the sand
And as he spoke of rowing, through times of joy and strife
I realized the river tells the story of his life

Search for all the markers, pick your line before you start
If you lose direction find the course within your heart
Put your shoulders to the high side, never cower 'neath the wave
Keep her trim and keep her level, and your fortunes will be saved

Chorus:
Boatman lives out on the water, with a dory for a home
Boatman loves to row the river, finest life he's ever known
Boatman run those raging rapids, pull your dory through the wind
May the River Gods watch over, so you'll live to row again

First Bridge:
Floating on the water in a crucible of stone
The river is a mighty game of chance
The waves may toss and twirl you in a rush of spray and foam
But you must take the oars and lead the dance

Never let your low-side gunnel dip beneath the blue
For if it does the torrent will soon envelop you
You may curse but never panic when the river claims an oar
Keep your wits and trust your instinct and your boat will find the shore

Chorus

Second Bridge:

Many waves are playful, others may attack
Some wash o're the hatches and put you on your back
The rocks are ever shifting as the walls erode with time
With a little luck and courage you'll be fine

With the churning falls behind you don't be arrogant or proud
There's a chance that you might falter 'for the final bend comes round
We are only in the canyon for a moment in the sun
May your ride be ever joyful 'til the final rapids' run

Final Chorus:

Boatman lives out on the water, with a dory for a home
Boatman loves to row the river, finest life he's ever known
Boatman take me down the river, Boatman guide me to the shore
Oh the canyon of forever will be yours forevermore
Oh the canyon of forever will be yours forevermore

This song is a tribute to Martin Litton and the boatmen/ women of the Grand Canyon, inspired by a 16-day dory trip from Lee's Ferry to Lake Mead in May of 2012.

To listen to this song, or get a free download, or lyrics with guitar chords, go to the BQR page of the GCRG website: www.gcr.org/bqr.php—at least for a while—at www.gcr.org/bqr.php or send an email message to richard.cassard@gmail.com.

Or scan this:



Local Navajos Continue To Oppose The Grand Canyon Escalade

THE CONTINUED EFFORTS to establish a Grand Canyon Escalade along the confluence of the Little Colorado River and Colorado River has extended its profile far beyond the month of June, although, there are a number of hurdles to climb before the proposed project continues forward with its gondola tram, river walk, riverside restaurant, and a visitor center overlooking the rim. In February of 2012 Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and Scottsdale Developer Confluence Partners LLC co-signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which reached its expiration date on June 30, 2013. Since then, President Shelly has not addressed the expired MOU or taken any further steps regarding the Grand Canyon Escalade.

As previously explained the MOU signed by the two parties did not include or incorporate any involvement or approval by the Bodaway/Gap community. As such, Bodaway/Gap community members that both support and oppose the Escalade project are unclear as to the future of the Grand Canyon Escalade beyond the controversial MOU.

The Bodaway/Gap community continues to be divided. Family members and households either support or oppose the project based on possible economic development ventures, employment opportunities, and negatives impacts to traditional sacred sites. A major factor contributing to the community division is the continued relationship the Navajo Nation Govern-

ment has with the Confluence Partners LLC beyond the MOU.

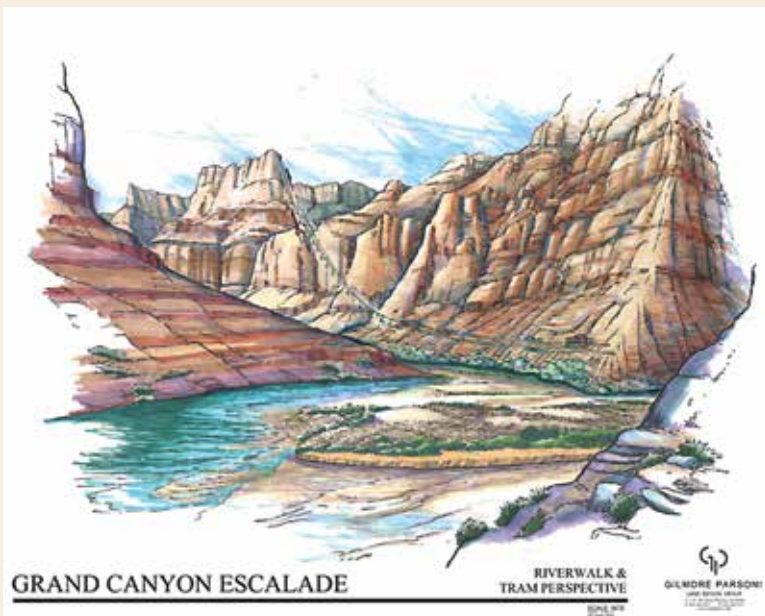
As summer unfolds and the June 30, 2013 date has come and passed, every individual involved—whether for or against the project—continues to await next steps proposed by Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly. Because no public announcement as come from Navajo Nation President, the families and members of the *Save the Confluence* have continued their public outreach and education to protect the confluence from the proposed Grand Canyon Escalade.

Local Bodaway/Gap community members have ensured their opposition by continuing to educate Navajo law makers of the issue, advocate the true essence of their opposition, as well as brainstorm how their community could provide a valuable economic development opportunity that doesn't divide the community and that accommodates the needs of the community and is culturally sensitive.

The lifestyle of Navajo families living along the eastern rim of the Grand Canyon hold much more prosperity to Navajo history than what is portrayed by current controversy. Many of the families living in the Bodaway/Gap community are descendents of great leaders that have endured years of the Bennett Freeze and have outlasted numerous impacts to their homeland. For that reason many of the members of the *Save the Confluence* and the *Protect the Confluence Coalition*

will continue to stand in opposition of the proposed Grand Canyon Escalade project. As we all await next steps and anticipate any announcement from President Shelly, stay tuned to the latest information posted on the *Save the Confluence* website <http://savetheconfluence.com/> or visit their facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SavetheConfluence>. To become active and help, you could sign the public petition on the website in opposition, as well as provide public education of the proposed project.

Deon Ben



Back Of The Boat— The Whale Foundation News Bulletin

2013 KENTON GRUA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Whale Foundation is proud to announce that this year's scholarship recipients are Chelsea Atwater of Arizona River Runners and Jacob Skeen of Tour West. Chelsea is working on her helicopter pilot's license. Jacob is going to school to earn a degree in counseling. Good luck to both of you and congratulations.

Support from the community has allowed the Foundation to award up to three \$2000 scholarships annually.

We encourage all guides with at least five years experience in the Grand Canyon to apply. Applicants do not need to be currently working as a guide. Grants are awarded to guides with traditional and non-traditional educational paths. All applications are blinded before a rigorous review to insure impartiality. See our website for more info: Whalefoundation.org. The next application deadline is June 1, 2014.

2014 WHALE FOUNDATION CALENDAR— IT'S ALL ABOUT WHITEWATER

The new calendar is coming! We expect it from the printers at the end of September. This year we asked boatmen to submit their favorite whitewater shots. Over one hundred photos were submitted. Check out our Facebook page to see a couple of the amazing images you will find inside the calendar: www.facebook.com/WhaleFoundation.

Calendars are \$12 each and \$3 each for shipping. Order through the website, mail, or email at: whale@whalefoundation.org. You can also pick one up at our office at 515 W. Birch Flagstaff, AZ 86002 or retail stores in Flagstaff that carry it (a list of these will be provided on our Facebook page as well.) Special thanks to Bronze Black, Laura Fallon, Peter Dale at Ram Offset Lithographers and all the contributing photographers who made it a wonderful calendar this year. If you are thinking about giving them as gifts, great! There are discounts for orders over ten.

12TH ANNUAL WING DING

Mark your calendars! We will hold our 12TH Annual Wing Ding on Saturday, February 22, 2014 from 6–11P.M. at the Coconino Center for the Arts in Flagstaff.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The following is a list of the current Whale Foundation Board: Bronze Black, Ann-Marie Bringhurst, Michael Collier, Scotty Davis, Laura Fallon, Bert Jones, John Napier, Amy Prince, Pat Rose, Cam Staveley, Christa Sadler, and Connie Tibbitts. If you run into any one of these members of our community, please thank them for volunteering their services. This is truly a gifted group of people and they have worked very hard this past year.

The Whale Foundation Introduces— Health Insurance Assistance Program Through The Tim Whitney Wellness Initiative

TIM'S EFFORTS

IN 1995 TIM WHITNEY was working as a full-time guide at Arizona River Runners while serving on the board of the Grand Canyon River Guides. He was keenly aware that there was friction between many guides and their outfitters over health insurance. In general, it was difficult for guides to afford health care and too costly for outfitters to pay for it. Tim put in numerous hours researching insurance companies that would offer a group policy for river guides. Tim was not the only one trying to figure this out, many

outfitters were also working on this problem and looking into industry-wide group policies. At that time, a group policy was often less expensive than an individual policy but more importantly, it guaranteed coverage of members regardless of pre-existing conditions. To his frustration, he was never able to find a solution to the problem of un-insured boatmen and affordable health care. Tim found, among an array of issues, that the cost savings of a group policy were outweighed by the insurance industry's perception that guides had a higher risk of injury. Years later, authors Tom Myers

and Larry Stevens would report that statistically, Grand Canyon commercial rafting risk fell in between the sports of archery and bowling; so much for the insurance industry's perceptions.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

In the last twenty years many Grand Canyon outfitters have instituted benefit programs to subsidize guides' health care. In spite of these efforts, there many guides who either cannot afford health insurance or are ineligible based on pre-existing conditions. Whether you welcome it or curse it, the Affordable Care Act (ACA), otherwise known as Obamacare, is about to change things drastically. The majority of the ACA will be implemented by January 2014. The parts of the law that concern access to health insurance, pre-existing conditions and the individual mandate will directly affect boatmen.

The ACA takes a reward and punishment approach to what has become known as the "individual mandate." The reward and punishment style is the classic "carrot and the stick" approach. The "carrot" is that insurance companies will have new "play fair" regulations. They cannot turn you down for pre-existing conditions nor can they charge you a higher premium (tobacco users are the exception, they get charged up to fifty percent more). You cannot be charged more based on gender or where you live and there are no more lifetime limits on coverage. State based online marketplaces known as "exchanges" will be set up in October so that consumers can compare policies and purchase insurance before the end of 2013. Here's the "stick" of the ACA; starting in 2014, the federal government will require all citizens to obtain health insurance. Those without insurance will pay either a flat rate penalty or a percentage of income; whichever is *greater*. In 2014, the flat rate penalty will be \$95 *per adult* in an uninsured household, increasing to \$325 in 2015, then to \$695 in 2016. The percentage of income will go up annually as well, one percent in 2014, two percent in 2015, and 2.5 percent in 2016. If you have children, you will also pay half of that penalty for each child. Since the penalty states, "whichever is *greater*," the above flat fee amounts are the minimum. Depending on your income, the penalty could be much higher. If you can prove that the least expensive policy is still more than 9.5 percent of your income, you may be eligible for a "hardship" exemption. There will also be tax credits and subsidies for those making lower incomes. There is a handy subsidy calculator at Kaiser Family Foundation website that will help shed light on individual eligibility: kff.org/interactive/subsidy-calculator/.

Take an imaginary guide, Ruby, 28 years of age (named for the rapid, her parents were also river guides). She has a total income of \$25,000. As a river guide she makes \$15,000 in the summer, \$10,000 as a ski instructor in the winter. She does not smoke and is single with no children. She has asthma and has been turned down for insurance in the past and is presently uninsured. In October she can shop for a policy using the online exchange. She can choose a platinum, gold, silver or bronze plan, higher premiums for platinum and gold, less expensive for the silver and bronze. The higher end policies have less out of pocket costs if she gets sick. Let's say she chooses the silver plan, her policy premium will come in at \$3,281 per year but because her income is low she will get a federal subsidy of \$906 bringing the cost of her policy to \$2,375 (9.5 percent of her income).

One last thing concerning the above information: the politics surrounding the ACA are creating a very fluid situation. All of the rules, regulations, deadlines, and dates may change in the near future. There was an "employer mandate" that required companies with more than 50 fulltime employees to provide insurance which was slated for 2014. In July, the requirement was pushed back to 2015. The result will be that more people will be shopping the exchanges at the end of this year. As long as Congress continues to fight over the details of this contentious law, the program will be in flux. The other thing to keep in mind is that much of the law is as clear as the Colorado River during monsoons. There will assuredly be aspects of the law that need clarification and possibly re-thinking. What is clear is that it's unlikely that any Grand Canyon outfitter will be required by law to provide insurance.

THE WHALE FOUNDATION'S TWWI HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In 2012, the Whale Foundation was given several substantial donations in memory of Tim Whitney with the intention to promote physical wellness in the boating community. The Tim Whitney Wellness Initiative (TWWI) Committee was formed and has been discussing how to assist members of the boating community specifically with physical health issues. There was general consensus that any person is in a more stable position, medically and financially, if they have an insurance policy. They are more prone to have an annual check-up and benefit from early detection of any medical issues. With the implementation of Obamacare, there is an opportunity to encourage members of our community to purchase insurance. An important part of our mission is to provide a network of support services designed to promote the well

HERE'S THE SCOOP

WHAT? Health Insurance Assistance Program

WHO IS ELIGIBLE? Grand Canyon Boatmen who pay for their own insurance and have a policy by January, 2014

APPLICATIONS AT: whalefoundation.org

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Jan 31, 2014

Need ACA information or have any questions? Contact Dan Hall who can recommend an insurance expert. bigdanhall@gmail.com or 928-774-9440

being of the Grand Canyon river guiding community. Therefore, the Whale Foundation is introducing the Tim Whitney Wellness Initiative Health Insurance Assistance Program for 2014. The goal of the program is to encourage those without insurance to purchase a policy, and to help those with insurance afford it.

We are hoping that the “carrot” will look bigger and better with a little extra help from the Whale Foundation. Applicants will be eligible for up to \$400 to defray the cost of health insurance. The number and amount of the awards will depend on the number of applications. Of course, we have limited funds, therefore the program will be competitive. If we receive more applications than expected, the committee will make decisions based on an individual’s financial need. Some of the awards may be less than \$400, some applications may be declined altogether. Please bear with us; in many ways this program is an experiment. The committee plans to review the program and our funding in the spring of 2014 with the intention of improving the program.

The application for the program will be no longer than one page. Boatmen are encouraged to apply if you meet the following requirements:

- Employed as a guide on the Colorado River in Grand Canyon for at least one full season (you do not need to be currently employed as a guide).
- Proof of current health insurance policy (photocopy of insurance card or bill).

- Applicant does not participate in a comprehensive health care program provided by a fulltime employer (other than a Grand Canyon outfitter) nor are they covered by Medicare/Medicaid.

The applicant’s identity will be confidential and known only to members of the TWWI committee. The committee will rate all applications and determine all awards. During the rating process, the identity of applicants will be blinded to ensure impartiality. In the next couple of months we will begin to distribute the application form for the Health Insurance Assistance Program (HIAP) and answer your questions. Please spread the word to those who you think might be eligible and check our website for updates.

So, let’s look at our imaginary guide, Ruby, in 2014. She is paying \$2,375 for her insurance. She just happens to work for an outfitter that offers a health insurance benefit. They give her \$100 for every trip she works *if, and only if*, she has insurance. She is scheduled to work six trips in 2014. She applies and receives a \$400 award from the Whale Foundation. Her policy costs are now down to \$1375, about 5.5 percent of her annual income. The most important difference in her life is that she has coverage where in the past she was turned down. She can breathe easy (literally and figuratively) knowing she can manage a personal medical crisis. Ruby is further rewarded by not having to pay the \$94 penalty tax (which increases significantly in 2015 and 2016).

RIVER INSURANCE

Over half of the Grand Canyon outfitters now offer a subsidy program with various benefits to help their guides afford health care. The Whale Foundation applauds their efforts and generosity. If you work for one of these companies, thank them. If your outfitter does not offer a program, try to encourage them to consider it. Now is the time!

On the river we provide each other with a sort of insurance. If you flip a boat and lose a cooler full of food, you know that the next boat coming down stream will offer what they can. That “river insurance” reflects an ethic that is part of our tradition as Grand Canyon guides. If we all pitch in and extend that ethic off the river, perhaps we can get closer to solving the problem of affordable health care for all...once and for all. Tim Whitney would be proud knowing this is a part of his legacy.

The Tim Whitney Wellness Initiative Committee

Colorado River Days Returns To Flagstaff

WHAT DOES THE Colorado River mean to you? Could you express it in a song? Do you have a great story about a favorite place? Are you trying to recruit volunteers for a Colorado River-related project? Do you want some ideas for how to protect the River into the future? Most BQR readers will enthusiastically answer *yes* to one or more of these questions. For people like you, we invented Colorado River Days Flagstaff.

We don't have to convince you that the Colorado is something to celebrate. You know that the future of our regional economy—and our drinking water—rely on a healthy Colorado. You have seen first hand the amazing plant and animal and human communities that come together because of the River. From October 1–8, we will make sure that everyone in Flagstaff begins to understand these concepts with you.

Last year, the first ever Colorado River Days was a resounding success, and we hope you will participate and make this year even better. Museum of Northern Arizona, Sierra Club, and Grand Canyon Trust are putting together some great events. Please come out and be part of the conversation, meet new friends, cheer on an emerging songwriter, and learn some new ideas.

We're starting a new tradition here in Flagstaff. Think something like "GTS for the masses." Let us know if you'd like to add your own event to this list—we may be able to squeeze you in this year or next!

Note: We are aware of the unfortunate conflict with the Fall Rendezvous. This event is sandwiched between the Biennial Conference of the Colorado Plateau, Pickin' in the Pines, Flagstaff Festival of Science, and Flagstaff Mountain Film Festival. We chose the only open dates before it becomes winter! We hope this doesn't interfere with your plans.

For questions about these events or to get involved, contact Alicyn at 928-774-6514 or alicyn.gitlin@sierraclub.org.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 6 P.M.—Film at Museum of Northern Arizona, 3101 N. Fort Valley Rd.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 7 P.M.—Colorado River Songwriting Contest at Uptown Pubhouse, 114 N. Leroux St. Come cheer on your favorite performers! To submit a song or get more information contact Alicyn at 928-774-6514 or alicyn.gitlin@sierraclub.org

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 6–8:30 P.M.—At Heritage Square. Colorado River Celebration. Organizations connected to the River will host tables in the Square during October's First Friday Art Walk. Get involved with a new cause, meet new friends, and learn something new.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, NOON–4 P.M.—Grand Canyon Author's Symposium at Museum of Northern Arizona, 3101 N. Ft. Valley Rd. Of Lines and Layers, the 3RD Annual Grand Canyon Authors Symposium at the Museum of Northern Arizona will again offer the opportunity to join your favorite Colorado Plateau authors for an afternoon of readings, book signings, talks, panel discussions and childrens' activities.

SUNDAY, OCT. 6, 11 A.M., —LOCATION TBD: Eric Balken of Glen Canyon Institute will present Resurrecting Glen Canyon—How filling Lake Mead first could save water and restore the Colorado River

* **SUNDAY, OCT. 6, 5 P.M.**—At the Grand Canyon Trust, 2601 N. Fort Valley Rd. Stories from the Confluence. A very special night featuring storytellers who hold a special place in their heart for the Confluence of the Little Colorado and Colorado Rivers, including families who live there and local yarn spinners. Would you like to be involved? Contact Emily Thompson at ethompson@grandcanyontrust.org.

MONDAY, OCT. 7, 7 P.M., —LOCATION TBD. The Future of the Colorado River. Presentations and panel discussion by those trying to plan for future conservation and use of the river. Your chance to ask questions and offer your thoughts.

TUESDAY, OCT. 8TH, 6 P.M.—At Museum of Northern Arizona, 3101 N. Ft. Valley Rd. A community discussion regarding the proposed development at the Confluence of the Little Colorado and Colorado Rivers.

* This and other event times and locations are subject to change. Please consult www.coloradoriverdaysflagstaff.org for updated information.

Book Review

Lithic Scatter and Other Poems, BY KARLA LINN MERRIFIELD, Mercury Heartlink, 2013, 108 pages, \$16.00, ISBN 978-0-9882279-9-6.

One of time's functions is of a medium through which we sift experience. Another is that of sculptor of rock and wood, of furrows in the brow and age spots, of canvas and words on paper. "The real relationships that form the world are a dynamical network" according to theoretical physicist Lee Smolin, and the network must evolve over time.

Poets, like outdoor enthusiasts, are tuned to the evolution of networks—networks of canyons, waters and the interpersonal self that change through subtle weathering or in an instant of flash flood. The river runner always stops to scout the rapid run many times before; the poet dissects experience, then dissects again and again to get to its kernel. Time with its constant chipping and reshaping ultimately forces us to confront our sculpted self; at some point, river runner and poet must act and paddle into the current.

Thus, it is no coincidence poet and outdoorsman often embody the same seeker's package. Poet, hiker and boater Karla Linn Merrifield's personifies this congruence in her latest offering, *Lithic Scatter*, a triumph of poems about western landscapes chipping and reshaping her experience of self. In the book's introduction, *Finding Stanzas in the Stone*, Merrifield reveals *I must uncover my inner story at every age*. And she has. A native West Virginian who wandered far as a child, she periodically ventures west from her upstate New York home to camp, run rivers, write and photograph. No stranger to the process, other explorations of hers have also born poetic fruit—poems of the Amazon are collected in *Attaining Canopy: Amazon Poems*; poems of Antarctica are collected in *The Ice Decides: Poems of Antarctica*.

Spanning two decades of travel into the American west, the 59 poems of *Lithic Scatter* take the reader into several uniquely western environs: South Dakota's badlands, Buffalo Bill Historical Center (Cody, WY), Yosemite National Park, Durango's narrow gauge

railroad, down the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon and the San Juan River, into Canyon de Chelly National Monument and onto the northern New Mexico high plateaus of Georgia O'Keeffe and D. H. Lawrence.

One may question such a sweep of poems in one volume, but a constant theme ties the span together: a willingness to question and observe as old layers are worn away, layers of primordial rock and the equally resistant self so often coated by veneers of fear:

*Color terror white
and cast it on the river—
am I meant to float?*

—FROM THE POEM MILE 166: CANYON COLORS

A white woman, a Yankee (her words) in foreign terrain, she floats and scrapes her way towards understanding, and with acceptance learns through a near-catastrophic fall in the desert she can instantly become dust:

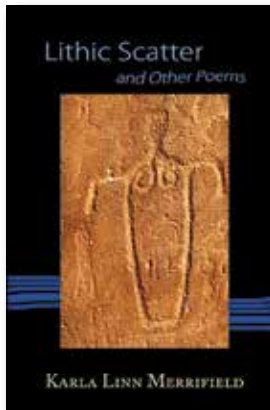
*This is the fault line: no stanza break
five words
where I falter
and fall
into the Mojave Desert
of thoughtlessness.
One misstep, one slip.
Canyon floor brings me
to a halt, sharp-stoned
and searing, to the lip
of the boneyard.*
—FROM THE POEM MAGNITUDE 5.4

With her admittance of daydreaming in unsettled terrain, Merrifield connects herself to us and to fragility. Who amongst us has paid attention to every footfall in canyon country?

If I have one complaint with *Lithic Scatter*, it is with Merrifield's tendency to name places that need no names in a poem. For example, the title poem *Lithic Scatter* (and final poem of the book) opens with

*I wade into the sand wash
the one called Chinle
cool my feet*

Though Merrifield places the reader in Canyon de Chelly, the second line distracts from the poem's flow



and her ultimate encounter with Maria, an 87 year-old Navajo woman tending goats. It is a minor distraction. Maria's *almost toothless almost timeless* grin points Merrifield back towards her goal:

*as I ride out
to Where the Mouth Is
if not a girl again
then a poet with
much more to learn
about coming of age*

Coming of age is ultimately what *Lithic Scatter* seeks

*She shows herself to me
for the first time—
full-faced, brazenly as crone,
Women-Grown-Old,
each crenellation of age
worn unabashedly.*

—FROM THE POEM BADLANDS BEAUTY

Always a new rapid to negotiate, we never come of age, or at least the age we imagine. But in the approach our hope is to do it gracefully, with skill and awareness. Merrifield has and does.

Michael G. Smith

Never Head First

In the last few weeks the NPS has responded to three shallow water diving incidents into the Colorado River. One of these (not involved with a river trip) resulted in devastating injuries.

In two of these incidents the patients were diving into the river from the shoreline impacting their heads into the bottom or unseen obstacles. In the other incident a patient dove off the rear of a raft that was beached. While we continue to see extremity injury patterns from getting on and off the boats and during side hikes, these incidents usually don't carry the potential for instantly catastrophic injury like shallow water diving does.

Brandon Torres
BRANCH CHIEF OF EMERGENCY SERVICES
GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK

Changing Of The Guard

Boundaries don't protect rivers, people do.
(Brad Arrowsmith)

THE POLLS FOR THE GCRG elections closed on August 20th, so you'll notice new names on page 2 of the BQR. As of September 1st, Ariel Neill will move up to the coveted president spot (occasionally known as the hot seat), Katie Proctor will become the new vice president, and new directors elected by their peers will be Ben Reeder, Jalynda McKay, and Justin Salamon. Since Katie is moving up to vice president when she had one year of her director term left, per GCRG bylaws, the board could nominate and by majority vote, appoint a director to the remaining term of the vacant seat. Consequently, we have chosen Evan Tea to fill that one year vacancy, and he has graciously agreed to join us for that time period. The sitting directors who have one more year of their terms are Kevin Greif and Greg Woodall. We're so excited to work closely with all these passionate stewards and river advocates!

I can't say enough about our outgoing president, Latimer Smith, and our three outgoing directors, Roger Patterson, Kim Fawcett and Kelly Wagner. You'll read Latimer's final "PrezBlurb" in this issue. If there were a definition of a salt-of-the-earth kind of guy, I think it must show Latimer's picture. Solid, calm, dedicated, thoughtful—someone who you can always count on. And Roger, Kim and Kelly all shared their perspectives and ideas, and helped out GCRG in a number of important ways. A special thanks to Roger for enthusiastically taking on the GTS trip leader position this year (no easy feat!), raising the bar really high for himself, the participants and the speakers. Whenever you next see any of these fine folk, please thank them for their dedication and service. They helped "guide GCRG" on thorny issues as deftly as they navigate the challenges of the river.

I suppose that what each and every of these river guides share is a moment of clarity such as Roger expressed so eloquently in the last newsletter – a moment where they realized that they should step up and actually get involved. We're so very glad they did – GCRG is the better for it, and the canyon and the river are too. Passionate stewards, all.

Lynn Hamilton
GCRG EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DRIFTER

Smith

I GREW UP IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA, in a coal-mining town south of Pittsburgh, where the Kolb brothers grew up—maybe forty miles south of there. In, I think, 1957, my parents decided to take a long vacation and come out west, so we spent about a week in the car. We went to the Grand Canyon. When I looked over the edge, I realized I had to go to the bottom. I think I was about fourteen. My father wouldn't let me go alone, so I had to convince my dad that *he* wanted to hike to the bottom of the Canyon too. I had done a lot of hiking, but my father was a Presbyterian minister, and hiking was not big on his list of activities. He also knew he was way out of his element. He went and talked to a ranger—and this would never happen today—but the ranger told him how to go down to the river and back in a day. This was in August. The ranger told him, “Well, it's a long hike, it's a lot of elevation change, but that's not the problem. The problem is the heat.” Fortunately, the moon was coming up so that it was high in the sky in the early morning hours. The ranger said, “If you want to go down to the river and come back, you need to get up and get on the trail as early as you can in the morning, and walk in the moonlight down the trail. When you get down to the river, before it starts to get hot, while it's still morning, you need to go back up to Indian Gardens, and then sit in the shade and take it easy. Then when the sun starts to get lower in the sky, head on up the trail to the rim. Be sure to take a flashlight just in case you need it, because the moon's *not* going to be up in the evening.” So that's what we did. We got up maybe, I'm thinkin' three o'clock in the morning, had breakfast, went over, hit the trail, the moon was high in the sky, we didn't have any trouble walking in the moonlight. It started to get light just before we got to Indian Gardens, and we were at the river sometime around eight o'clock in the morning. We sat there and looked at the river for a while and relaxed. Maybe an hour or so later, my dad said, “Well, the ranger says we need to go back to Indian Gardens before it gets hot.” So we started back up the trail to Indian Gardens, and we were probably there at 11:30 in the morning, on our way out. Since we'd started early and already walked a long ways, my dad said, “Well, the ranger says we should take a long snooze in the shade somewhere.”

So we found a cottonwood tree and sat down and rested and snoozed in the shade until maybe 4:30 in the afternoon, when the sun was getting lower in the sky, and the temperature was going down, rather than up again. We got up and continued our hike, and after a while, someplace between Indian Gardens and the rim, it got dark, but we had flashlights. We finished the hike maybe an hour after dark, and there was basically no problem.

Of course the next day we were totally wasted. So we went to see Emery Kolb's movie, which you can do sitting down. And that was my introduction to Grand Canyon river running. Back in 1957, Emery was still coming out and telling the story himself, and narrating the movie. So we got to watch the movie, and Emery, who was from Western Pennsylvania like me—except he was an old guy at that time...I'm guessing he was in his early- to mid-seventies, maybe only a little bit older than I am right now—he told the story about he and his brother makin' this movie in the Canyon, and we got to watch the movie. I was really impressed. I remember thinking, “When I get old enough to do what I want to do, I'm gonna go run a boat down the Grand Canyon.”

Another thing that happened about the same time was I saw one of the early Cinerama movies that had, I believe it was Ted Hatch driving a motor-rig through Sockdolager, and I was impressed. I thought, “That looks pretty cool.” So I thought about that for a long time afterwards. When I went home, after going to the Canyon, I decided I had to have a boat. So I decided I would build one.

STEIGER: Did you get to talk to Emery Kolb personally?

SMITH: Probably did not actually talk to him, or if I did, it was just to say we really enjoyed the movie. But he did narrate the movie himself, and I grew up very close to where he lived before he came to the Grand Canyon, and I felt there was some sort of connection there. Seeing that movie, and hearing him talk about it, was a real revelation to me at that time. Here was this old guy talkin' about when he was young, he and his brother came out, set up this photo studio on the rim of the Canyon, and then a few years later they got this idea of doin' this boat trip. And of course the way they did it was—they got some plans and built the boat themselves, and they started down the river, and the river taught them what they needed to know about boating. So that's what I learned about boating. It's like, “Well, first you gotta get a boat.” Which for me meant build one.

* * *

Veteran river guide Drifter Smith's career has been really distinctive in many ways, not least of which are that he spent the entirety of the Grand Canyon portion of it working for but one company (Arizona Raft Adventures).

A past-President of Grand Canyon River Guides, Drifter had the tiller during the tumultuous run up to the last Colorado River Management Plan. He did a great job of steering us through the many shoals of that whole process.

This Adopt-a-Boatman Interview was conducted in Drifter's sunroom in Flagstaff on January 18, 2013.

* * *

I didn't know anything about boats, but I did live on the Monongahela River, south of Pittsburgh. There was a lot of boat traffic on the Monongahela—coal barges—and even a few steam-powered coal tugs operating in the late-fifties.

I saw a boat plan in—I think it was *Mechanics Illustrated*—for a kayak. It was a wood frame with a canvas cover, and then you'd paint the canvas until it was waterproof. Not knowing any better, I went ahead and built that. I took it out and floated on the Monongahela a little bit, and also on some local lakes. I discovered that painted canvas is a pretty fragile material, and this boat was totally unsuited for doing anything like I *really* wanted to do,



which was to go run some fast water somewhere. So that kind of stymied my boat-ing career. It didn't really end it, but put it on the back burner.

I got out of high school, I went to college, I dropped out of college, I went back to college, dropped out again, got married, finally went back and finished college, and then went off to graduate school for a year,

then decided I really didn't need a graduate degree. Hung out in Philadelphia for a while, sort of a hippie. In the early-seventies, maybe 1971, some friends of mine took a Sanderson trip through the Grand Canyon. I didn't go because my wife and I didn't have—well, for one thing, we didn't have the money, and for another thing, we probably would have had a hard time getting off work to go do the Grand Canyon.

Anyway, these friends of mine came back. They said, "We talked to the guys driving the boats, and they said if you had a boat and some experience, you could get a permit to do this yourself." I immediately thought, "Well, if I gotta spend all this money to go on this trip, it probably wouldn't cost a whole lot more to buy the boat and just take up boating." Long story short, I bought a ten-foot Avon. I believe it was called a Red Seal, smaller than a Red Shank. I bought that from the distributor in Connecticut. I told him I wanted to get a raft I could take down the Grand Canyon. He said, "Well, I got just the thing." Neither of us knew anything about what you need to go river running in the Grand Canyon, and a ten-foot boat is *definitely* too small. But it was big enough to go run some local rivers. I'm trying to think—it was 1972 that I bought that raft. At that time, there was very little rafting going on in the East, but I did have a friend, a guy I knew from caving, that'd done a lot of spelunking up to that point, and he was also a kayaker. So I asked him, "Where can I go with this raft, where I can start to learn something without getting hurt?" He told me about this river in the Poconos, north of Philadelphia, called the Lehigh River. It's a pretty easy—I would guess Class 3—river. And so we threw the raft in the Volkswagen, and my wife and I drove up there.

We got to the put-in Saturday morning, and it started to rain. So I'm sittin' there thinking, "Huh, it's raining." We just sat there in the car for a while, and about twenty minutes later another car shows up and these two guys jump out in the rain, pull out this rubber raft, and start blowing it up. I go over there. I said, "You guys gonna go down the river in the rain?" They looked at me like I was crazy. They said, "You're gonna get wet!" I go, "Oh, okay." So I got out the raft and blew it up and we went down the river—me in my raft—my wife drove the shuttle—and I went with these two guys who had obviously done this before.

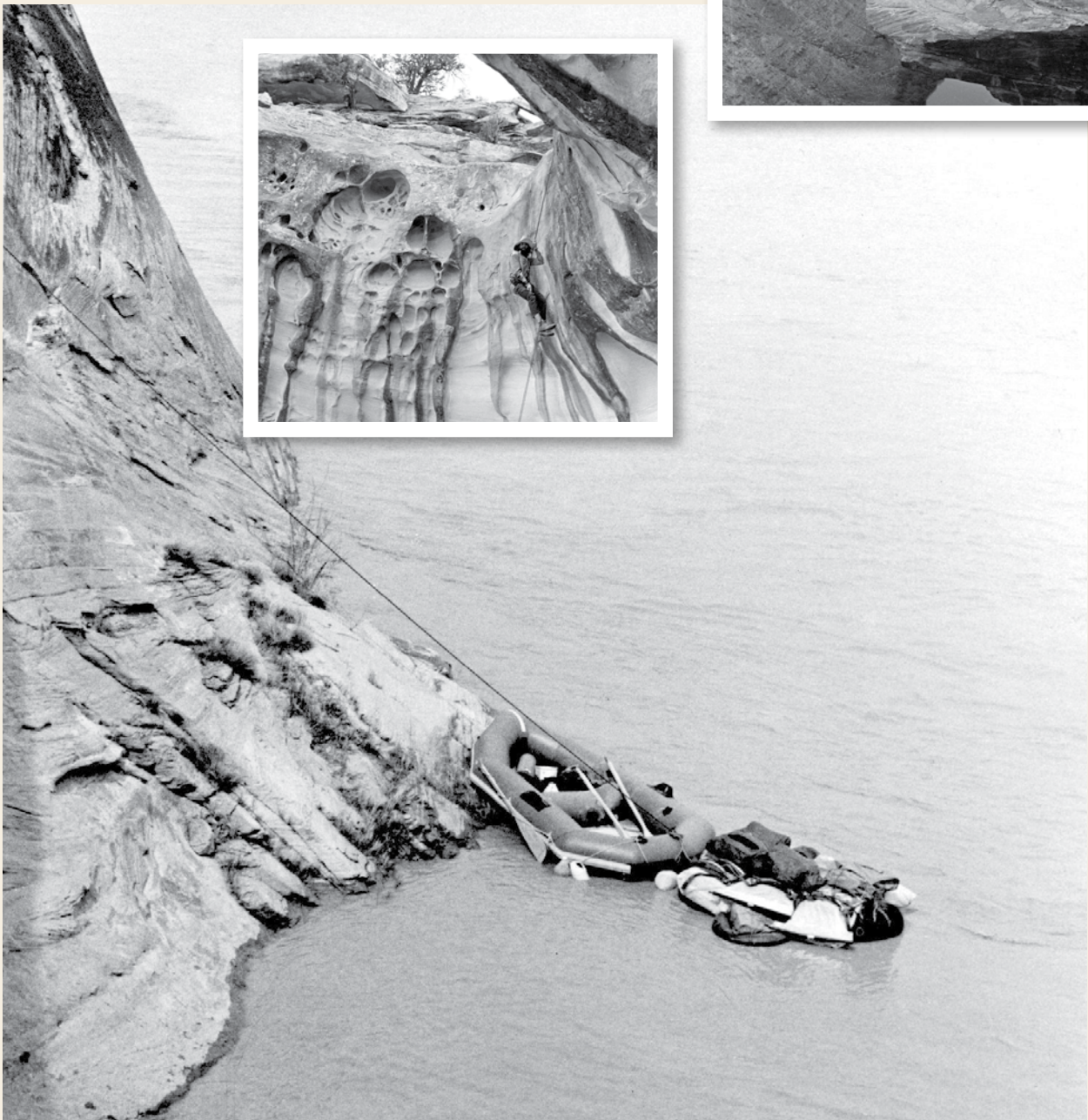
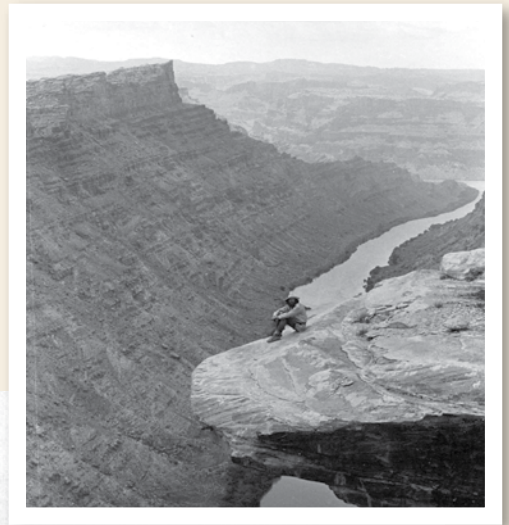
Anyway, I ended up doin' the Lehigh several times. When the water went down after the spring runoff, my wife and I, and eventually some other folks, went up there and started tubing it, which is kind of brutal. You get beat up tubing, but it was a lot of fun. On one of these trips, I remember taking this friend of mine,



Lance and his wife, and we were having a real good time tubing down the river. When we got cold, we'd get out on a gravel bar someplace and warm up. I remember Lance looking at me and saying, "You should be a guide." It'd never occurred to me, because at that point in my life I had no idea what I wanted to do.

Eventually my first wife and I decided to do a longer trip. We went to Canyonlands. This was in the spring of 1972, I think. Canyonlands had only been a park for a couple of years, maybe. For the previous Christmas, I had found a copy of the Ed Abbey book, with photographs by Phil Hyde, called *Slickrock*. I bought that for my wife for Christmas. We looked at that, at these pictures of the desert. "Well, we should go there!" We had this little boat, and I wrote to local companies that did float trips and whatnot, and again, I found out that commercial river trips were more than I could afford, but there was one company that would set people out on flat-water trips and then pick 'em up at the confluence and take 'em back up to Moab in a jet boat. So we drove out from Philadelphia, and we did a two-week trip down the Green River, just

the two of us, and at the end of the trip we took a jet boat ride back up to Moab. We did a *huge* amount of hiking in the course of that trip... We really loved that, and that year there had been a really wet, late winter, and the flowers were extraordinary. My wife and I had never been in the desert before. As we were going back to Philadelphia, we were going, like, "Why are we living in Philadelphia? We should be out west somewhere." So we saved as much money as we could for a year, and then the following spring we quit our jobs and decided we would go out west and look around for a place to live and settle down out there someplace. But the first thing was, we had another Canyonlands trip on our schedule. This time we actually took a friend of ours, and three of us went. We decided rather than go for two weeks, we'd go for a month. Of course a ten-foot raft barely holds three people, but we got some truck inner tubes and made a trailer out of three inner tubes lashed together, and put our waterproof food bags and backpacks on top of that, and we hauled it along behind us, and we went down the river.



STEIGER: Now, when you got your college degree ...?

SMITH: I studied geology. Well, as I mentioned before, I kind of went in and out of college a few times. I compressed four years of education into eight years on the calendar. The final time I went back and successfully finished, I decided that the key to getting through this would be to study something I'm interested in. I had learned a little bit of geology from my father. I had collected fossils in high school, been to the Grand Canyon. Also, I was involved in rock climbing and cave exploration a *lot*—pretty seriously into caving, and not so seriously into rock climbing. But anyway, all those things, geology has some relation. I thought, "This is something I'm interested in, it'll hold my attention, I'll get good grades, I'll be able to keep my scholarship, and I will eventually get my degree." And it worked. In the process of doing that, I also discovered geology was really interesting. But when I got to graduate school, I realized I did not want to work for an oil company. I grew up in a coal-mining town, I did not want to be involved in the mining industry. I had spent too much time in college, I did not want to look for employment in an academic setting, I wanted to get away from that. I could conceive of going prospecting, perhaps. I could also see collecting fossils and mineral specimens for the rock art trade. But neither of those required a degree. So I decided, "I'm getting out of here." And I left graduate school after a year. For a while I thrashed around, but then when I got to river running, especially in the Grand Canyon, I realized that a geologic background was about as good a thing as I could pick. I actually learned a lot more geology on river trips in the Canyon and other places than I did while I was in college. In Rhode Island, there's not a whole lot of visible geology. Almost everything is glacial debris, and all the bedrock is covered up. But at least I knew something about that stuff, so when I got out to where you could see the rocks, like in the Grand Canyon and the west in general, I had a good-enough background that I could read books and articles and educate myself about what I was seeing.

STEIGER: Now your dad, you said he was into rocks? How did that reconcile with him being a minister?

SMITH: My father was not... What should I say? He was certainly not a fundamentalist of the type that you find running around loose today—quite the opposite. My father was a bit of an intellectual. He's one of only two people I've met in my entire life that read the Bible in the original languages, which were Greek,

Hebrew, and Aramaic. So he had to learn—to be able to read—Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic. I remember when I was in high school, my father was laboriously going through the Bible for the second time, reading it in the original languages. His attitude was that these stories were obviously real important to the people who wrote them down, but they lived at a different time, a different place, and a different culture than we do. And so understanding what these stories mean, or meant to those folks who wrote them down, is an intellectual challenge... My father did not disbelieve in evolution, for one thing. I'm sure he thought that God created the world and everything in it, but he didn't think that God had to do it in a literal sense the way it was done in the Bible. For one thing, he was aware that the stories in the Bible don't all coincide exactly—like there are two different creation stories in Genesis, which are not identical. So he knew that even if you believed these stories were the word of God, they were written down by human beings who made mistakes or errors in transcription or what not. He was interested in trying to find out what this stuff meant, but he didn't think you could take the King James Bible or any other one, which is only a translation anyway, and read it and take it literally. He did not believe that. And he was interested in fossils to some extent. But then when I lived in western Pennsylvania, I lived in an area where there were lots of coal mines, and in the slate dumps you would frequently find associated with coal mines, there were lots of great plant fossils. So I used to go hiking outside of town, and there were lots of abandoned mines, and I would haul lots of nice fossils home. That was my hobby in junior high school, and to a lesser extent in high school.

STEIGER: You mentioned having a job when your friends did that commercial trip with Sandersons. What was your work at the time?

SMITH: I was a public health inspector for the City of Philadelphia. I did what Marlene [Gaither] does here in Coconino County, basically. The difference was, I was working in North Philadelphia district, which was the worst part of the city. All the buildings were built shortly after the Civil War. Of course they were all in very bad shape a hundred years later. It was mostly a black neighborhood with some Spanish, mostly Puerto Rican, neighborhoods a few blocks away. Generally speaking, a pretty run-down ghetto area. Most of the business owners there, if they had the resources to leave, had left a long time ago. So the bars and restaurants and grocery stores and things I inspected were all pretty marginal businesses. The district I had, actually I shared it with like three or four of us working there—that district probably had

a population greater than Coconino County. But in that whole district there was not a single supermarket for like a hundred thousand people. On one border of the district there was a supermarket on the other side of the street, but it was not my district. In my district, all the grocery stores were little Mom and Pop corner grocery stores. Of course they were expensive, and one of the things that got me out of bein' a health inspector was I saw food for sale that I would not even consider feeding to a dog unless I was trying to kill it. Saw meat, for example, that was green. What would happen in that area, is the people that *did* have supermarkets—this was back in the early-seventies—if they had food that was spoiling, rather than throw it out, they'd sell it for what they could get for it, to one of these little Mom and Pop grocery stores. So anyway, nobody likes to see the health inspector! (laughs)

STEIGER: Wow. That cracks me up. We gotta get back to the Grand Canyon at some point. But you and Don Briggs both...here's Briggs, a highway engineer, and here if you'd have stayed in that job, here's your pension, there's all this good stuff, huh? But oh no, you aspire to be a river guide! (laughs)

SMITH: Yeah. Well, you know, when you're young, you don't worry about that stuff. You know, the only regret that I have about being a river guide is that I didn't start sooner. If I had it to do over again, knowing what I know now, I'd have gone for it earlier, rather than screw around with all this other stuff I ended up doin' first.

* * *

Turns out my first wife was not as much interested in river running as I was, so we eventually decided to split up. So [after that second Canyonlands trip] she stayed in Colorado, I took my little boat, and I went to California.

STEIGER: Because you had the river runnin' bug?

SMITH: I was definitely into river running. That was my priority. "I'm gonna go find out how to do this and I'm gonna go work on the river." But she had had enough. So we split up. I went to California. I had friends that lived in Kensington, just at the north edge of Berkeley, people I'd known from Philadelphia. So I went to see them, and then when I was there, I realized the ARTA [American River Touring Association] office was over in Oakland. I figured, "I'll go over there and find out where I can go river running while I'm here in California." I went to the ARTA office, I ran into Rob Elliott, and he told me about the trips they were running on the Stanislaus. By then it was, I'm thinking, early September. The river-running season

was winding down, so I took my little boat. He said, "Those guys will be busy on the weekend, but if you show up in the middle of the week, there won't be anything goin' on." So I showed up Monday morning, introduced myself to the people that were there, told them I wanted to go down the river. It turned out they wanted to go down the river too, but they didn't have a boat. I had a boat. They'd been to ARTA's whitewater school that summer, but instead of doing that, I had bought the boat. So we went down the river one day, and then the next day I think we went again, but we went overnight and camped out and all that. So I got to go down the Stanislaus a couple times with some people that had been down before in this ten-foot boat, which was pretty small. And then they had trips scheduled that weekend, for Saturday and Sunday. But Friday night they get a phone call from one of the guys who was supposed to work on this trip, who said, "I'm not gonna be there in the morning. The engine of my car blew up. I'm stuck here in Los Angeles. You'd better find somebody else to run the boat that I was supposed to take." And he was bringing somebody else from L.A. They needed two river guides. So they looked at me, "Do you want to make some money?" I said, "I don't think I know enough to work on one of these trips." They said, "We'll give you a baggage boat. You don't have to take any passengers. Just follow the boat in front of you, and when you see him do something, you do the same thing at the same place." So I said, "Well, if you think it'll work, I'll try it." So we go on this trip on the Stanislaus. We had fifteen-foot boats carrying gear on the Stanislaus. I'd never rowed a boat that big or that heavy before. It took me a while to catch on about how much effort and how much in advance you had to do things. But I only managed to get the boat full of water a couple of times, and I did manage to get it bailed out. I got stuck on a rock *briefly*, but not real long. And we eventually got to camp. At dinner I remember they pulled out all this food and put it on the table. There was more food than I'd ever seen anywhere, except in a grocery store. I looked at the other guides and said, "What are we gonna do with all this food?!" They all looked at each other and then looked at me. They said, "How 'bout you make the salad?" So I made the salad, and watched what they were doing. One of the things was they baked a cake in a Dutch oven, and I was pretty impressed. That's sort of how I got started. Then I came back the next year.

* * *

I worked in Utah in '75, '76, and the first part of the '77 season. Friends of the Earth used to run these celeb-



rity-oriented fundraising trips where they would get a guest celebrity, they would sell the trip, and charge their clients a little more than the river company would if they just booked on the trip. They always had a celebrity to draw people on the trips. And so I did a couple of trips with Ed Abbey. The first one was in 1975, and then I did a second one in 1976. I had read Abbey's stuff. In fact *Desert Solitaire* was one of those books that really got me into boating, and the Southwest in general. Abbey was an interesting character. He did seem to be kinda shy. He was a little difficult to get to know. One of his main focuses on the trip was, there would always be these young ladies that would come on the trip who wanted to meet the famous author in a fairly intimate sense, and he would figure out which one was the most attractive to *him*, and then spend as much as time as possible with her while we were on shore. They'd kind of just disappear into the bushes. And then the river guides had to console the losers, (*laughter*) which wasn't all that terrible. It

wasn't until we'd been into this trip for like, I don't know, three or four days, I got to talking to him about places that he'd hiked around in Canyonlands. He had done a lot of hiking in Canyonlands, and eventually we figured out—I mentioned a place I had hiked to, away from the river, that *he* had been to, and neither of us knew anybody else that had ever been there. But when he realized I'd been someplace that *he'd* been to, and I was the first other person he'd ever met that even knew about this place, I think I came up a little bit in his esteem. And then after that it was like I was a real person.

I went on another trip with him the next year, and in between those trips I had changed my name to Drifter.

STEIGER: What was your name before Drifter?

SMITH: Stuart was my original name. On one of those long float trips I did in Utah down the Green, we started at Green River, and we hadn't gone very far when this motorboat full of people came driving by. I

was sort of aware there were commercial trips on the river, but I didn't really know anybody, never been on a commercial trip and all this, and I didn't think too much of it. But a week later *another* trip came by with the same guy driving, and he recognized us. He'd done the whole trip and had come back and was going out *again*, and we were just a few miles down the river. And so he turned the engine down and we drifted along and talked a little bit, and I asked him what his name was. He said, "Stuart." I'm pretty sure that was Stuart Reeder. But anyway, when he drove away, I realized "There's a guy that's gettin' paid to do this all summer long, and for me—I have to save up for the whole year to come out and do it just once." So that's another time it sort of registered, "Maybe what I really should be thinking about is getting a job as a river guide."

But the second time I do a trip with Ed Abbey, I go over to him and say, "Ed, I changed my name. Please don't call me Stuart anymore. I changed my name to Drifter." And Ed looks at me. He says, "Is it okay if I just call you Drift?" I said, "Certainly a man of your talents can spare a goddamn syllable!" And Abbey said (in a measured tone), "Words are money." That is a true story.

* * *

After I'd done two or three private [Grand Canyon] trips, I went on an ARTA trip as an unpaid assistant. And then in 1979, I actually got a job working in the canyon for ARTA.

STEIGER: Did it occur to you on your first private trip—I mean did the place—did you have this feeling you'd come back?

SMITH: Oh, that's where I wanted to be. Of course I was blown away by the hiking, and the rapids were great. I'd never run big rapids before. The rivers in California I was familiar with were all real small. Running rapids was pretty straightforward, because you could go look at them, and you could see these rocks out there, and you would know, "Okay, when I get to this rock I've gotta be on the left side, and then cross over." There were good landmarks. In the Grand Canyon, it was like, well, the landmarks in the rapids were all holes and waves. So it took me a few days to adjust my thinking and seeing to where I could look at the rapids and figure out where I wanted to go, and then get there. But on that first private trip, which was pretty disorganized, some of the kayakers wanted to laze around camp in the morning, and then throw all their stuff on a boat in the afternoon when it was warm, and then get in the kayaks and go play in the rapids and get to camp, and then have this raft there with their stuff.

So... [*finally*] I told them, "After breakfast I'm taking my share of the stuff and I'm leaving. I'm not gonna wait 'til noon and then have to bust my ass in the wind to get to camp. Therefore if you want to see your stuff when you get to camp, after breakfast put it in my boat and when you get there, it'll be there." One other rafter, a buddy of mine, we decided we would leave immediately after breakfast, and we would go run the rapids ourselves and not worry about everybody else. He'd been down the canyon once, I think, on a commercial trip the year before. When we got to a rapid, we would stop and get out and go look at it and talk about what we were gonna do, and then we'd go run it. There were only a few rapids, a few of the biggest rapids on that trip, where we waited for other boats to show up. Mostly the two of us did it ourselves. We kind of learned our way down the river. That was a great experience.

STEIGER: What time of year was that?

SMITH: I'm pretty sure it was in August.

STEIGER: Probably fluctuating flows, a lot of different water, huh?

SMITH: Oh yeah. And the fluctuating flows back then were like five to thirty [5,000 CFS to 30,000 CFS].

STEIGER: Yeah, that's what I remember. But I remember in the fall they'd turn it off, you'd see a lot of lower... But you'd see everything, wouldn't you?

SMITH: Right. Later on when I started working in the Canyon, of course everybody knew which water levels were good for which rapids, so we would time our travel on the river so we wouldn't be getting to places at the worst possible water level. But on that first trip, we didn't have a clue. We dealt with things as we came to 'em. But then I remember later on when we had those big fluctuating flows, we tried to arrange our camps in places where we wouldn't have too much trouble getting the boats in the water in the morning if the water was gonna go down. And we would try to arrive at rapids at favorable water levels.

STEIGER: Well, when you started workin', it was still ARTA, wasn't it? Or was it AZRA [Arizona Raft Adventures]?

SMITH: The first year I worked, it was ARTA. But that was that terrible year for ARTA, and at that time Rob and Jessica were just running the oar-powered trips and paddle trips. Bill Gloeckler was running the motorized trips. The ARTA office in Oakland was selling the trips. But they had a labor dispute that year. They got rid of the girls in the ARTA office that knew about river trips, and replaced them with people that *didn't*, and the information they provided the passengers was grossly inaccurate. We had people that were hiking in at Phantom who were told there would be

a mule to take their stuff down to the river, and then when they got to the South Rim they found out not only were there no arrangements for mules, but even if they wanted to pay anything, there was no way they could arrange a mule for tomorrow. And they didn't have a backpack or anything to carry their stuff. We had people show up on trips where they had borrowed a trash bag from a ranger on the rim to put all their gear in it and haul it down to the river. These folks were not happy. And as it happened, the contract that ARTA had with Rob and Jessica expired that year. And so they decided, "We're paying those guys a big chunk off the top to sell these trips, and they're doin' a shitty job. We could set up an office and answer the phones ourselves, and give people better information." So the second year I worked—if I'm not mistaken, that was 1980—for that season they booked the trips out of an office here in Flagstaff, and things got better right away, because they talked to people that had been down the Canyon, and they were giving accurate information about what to expect.

STEIGER: I just remember that was such an amazing crew that you guys had.

SMITH: That was some real interesting folks, yes.

STEIGER: Like your first trips in Grand Canyon, how'd those look, just crew-wise and operations-wise, and boats and all that?

SMITH: Well, the first couple of trips I did, and even when I started working for Rob and Jessica, that was definitely kind of a hippie operation. They were barely solvent. They made a little bit of money, but it wasn't a real big deal. A lot of that was they had very poor control over the business aspect of it, and some money got spent about as fast as it came in. The year that they had the problem with the bookings at the ARTA office, and decided to do the bookings themselves, the next year ARTA sued them and claimed that ARTA owned the permit. But as it turned out, the Park decided, after an investigation, that ARTA, in Oakland, never had owned the permit. The permit had been owned by Lou [Elliott], and he had sold the permit to Rob and Jessica.

So my second year, when they did their own bookings out of the office in Flagstaff, they just barely broke even. And that was because they spent all this money on lawyer fees. As a result of that, eventually Jessica decided that maybe she should go to law school, because that looked like that was an easier way of making money than running a river company. Also, she and Rob had split up at that time. Although they jointly owned the business, the Park would not allow them to split it—they had to run it jointly. So Jessica ran some of the trips, and when I started working, I worked for Jessica. And then Rob ran the other trips. And then

Gloeckler ran the motorized trips. So there was a lot of stuff going on business-wise that didn't really contribute much to the company—in fact, kind of worked against it. But finally when Jessica did go off to law school, she hired somebody to manage her half of the company for her, and that went on for a couple years. Then I think when she got to the end of law school she decided she really didn't need to own half of this river company, that part of her life was kind of over with. So she sold out to Rob.

And when that happened, things changed a lot. For one thing, she wasn't there anymore, and she didn't own it anymore. And the other thing, Rob had to borrow a huge amount of money to buy out Jessica. We never found out how much that was, but at the time it was a big chunk of change, and he had to pay this back. In order to do that, everything had to get very businesslike. They had to stop wasting money and throwing it away, and had to pay attention to what was going on. Also, he'd been involved in the business for a couple years already, and I think probably learned a few things. So all of a sudden things got much more professional. And a few years after that, when he finished paying off Jessica for her half of the company, then the company was showing a big profit every year, and Rob truly realized that, "If I just take this profit and put it in my pocket, I'm going to have to pay a lot of money in taxes, but if I could figure out a way to spend it that is an operating expense, that would reduce the tax bite a lot." And so what he came up with was a profit-sharing, deferred benefits plan for the employees, including himself. And since he was the president of the company, he had the largest salary, and he used to benefit from that more than anybody else, but then he was also sharing the wealth with all of the guides and other employees of the company, so that instead of having people that would come and work for a year or two or three, and then go off to find a *real* job, it became possible for people like me and the other AZRA guides to stick around and stay for a long time, and not have to worry that when they got too old to work anymore, or did decide to retire... there wouldn't be any money. And so the profit-sharing thing was, I think, ultimately a result of the fact that Rob and Jessica split the company, and Rob had to pay off the loan, get real businesslike, but then once the loan was paid off, there was this excess profit that had to either go to the government in the form of taxes, or get spent in some deductible way.

The profit-sharing was a brilliant idea, I think. At the time, it was kind of unheard of in the industry, but now something like that, I think is almost standard. Most companies—or many companies, anyway—do



Missing the hole in Crystal Rapid, 1983.

have something.

STEIGER: In my mind...I don't know. I mean, I don't know, but I would certainly not say *everybody* in the business...

SMITH: Yeah. Well anyway, I do know that idea did eventually get some converts. I think it was a good idea. One of the things I like the most about AZRA is, we had arguably the most experienced crew in the Canyon. We had people that had been there...when I left, the average AZRA guide had worked for them for ten years. And now, because of the benefits that they have, and relatively enlightened management, and the fact that the company's large enough that they have a lot of opportunities for scheduling...A lot of their new employees are people that have worked for other companies in the Canyon—sometimes many years. AZRA's gotten some really, really good people. So that's worked out really well.

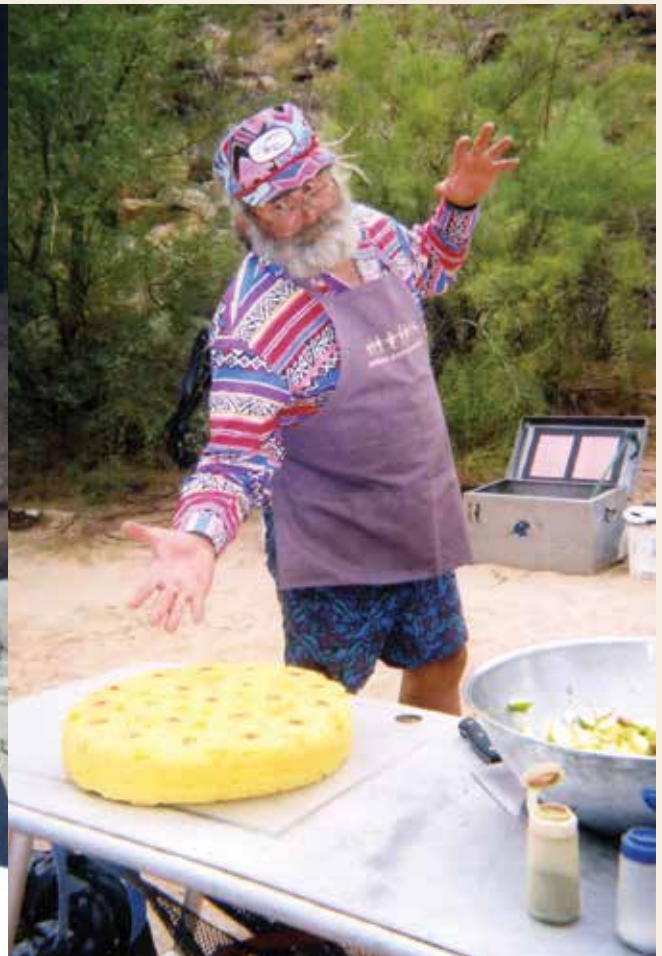
I never saw eye-to-eye with Rob about everything. Frequently I disagreed about things, but one thing where I did agree with him, was his priority was "We're gonna run the best trips we can." He wanted to run the best trips in the industry. I almost thought, "Well, that's kinda crazy, because there's other people that are tryin' to do that too, and some of 'em are doin' a very good job." But the idea that "We're gonna run the best trips we can." I could relate to that a lot. Sometimes we didn't agree about what that was, but at least the objective was—his objective was the same as mine. And he was bright enough to realize, like, "If we do that part of the business well, it'll make money. But if

we focus on the money alone, and not on the quality of the trips—that might not work." And so he focused on the quality of the trips, and he was right, the money came along too.

* * *

One of the most interesting trips I did was the Stanton re-photography trip with Bob Webb in 1990 in January. My connection was basically I planned the food for a 35-day river trip, and I raided the leftovers from the freezer in the food room at AZRA. Rob cut us a deal on the cost of the food. And I planned the meals and packed the food and went on this trip. Rob provided the boats. Jack Schmidt was on that trip too. Yeah. I went as far as Granite Camp, and then I hiked out, and Michael Collier hiked in and took my boat to Diamond Creek. And then I rejoined the trip with fresh vegetables and what not at Diamond Creek, and Michael Collier came back to Flagstaff, and I continued the trip on across Lake Mead to Pearce Ferry.

But anyway, that re-photography trip was extremely interesting in a number of ways. I know that Bob had some idea of what he was gonna find out when he got the pictures a hundred years apart. He knew that things like rock falls and changes of the rapids and landslides and all that kind of stuff should kinda stick out. But other than that—I think his notions about what he was gonna see—mainly he knew he'd see something that was gonna be worthwhile, and it would raise more questions. And as it turned out, he's prob-



ably still getting more questions all the time. And his interest in the vegetation, which I gather is what he's most interested in right now, that was one of the side-line things that maybe he didn't really anticipate. But I remember the way that trip worked, every day you'd have a certain number of targets along the river, trying to duplicate photographs, and [we] generally knew where most of the locations were. And sometimes one boat and one photographer would go one place, and another boat and another photographer would go somewhere else, and then we'd all meet up at camp.

I remember in particular the day that Tom Brownold and I hiked up to the Cardenas Hilltop ruin to take pictures. We had a copy of the Stanton photographs, and we were trying to figure out where they even set up the camera. We had the old photographs, and we had a tripod and a camera, and we're wandering around, looking at it, when we find about the right place. Tom, of course, was a photographer, and I was the photographer's assistant, but we were looking at the old picture, and looking through the viewfinder, trying to make sure we're going to take, as close we can, an exact duplicate, and it gradually dawns on us

that the plants in the original photograph, most of them, with one exception, were still there. I'm talking about the little shrubs. We go, like, "Wait a minute. Is that the *same* plant that was here a hundred years ago?" And the more we looked, the more obvious it became that a lot of these little shrubs and plants that you don't think that much of when you walk by 'em, must have pretty long life spans. There was one plant that was missing, and it was in a place where now there's sort of a trail that goes right by the Cardenas Hilltop ruin. And that one obviously had been impacted by people.

But anyway, that was one of the most interesting aspects of that trip, is by looking at two photographs a hundred years apart, you could suddenly see something that there was literally no other way to see—the fact that these plants last that long.

STEIGER: Is that like brittle bush or ephedra, stuff like that?

SMITH: Yeah, the exact kind of stuff, right.

STEIGER: I remember Bob Webb lecturing about that.

SMITH: Yeah. Well, I mean, it opened everybody's



eyes. I don't think up to that point that anybody had given much thought to how long these things live. And now it's sort of like, "Well, we don't really know." We know it's at least a century.

* * *

Well, the worst medical thing that I ever had on a trip was a guy who was grossly overweight and hiked in at Phantom to join the trip. He must have weighed three hundred pounds, or maybe even closer to four [hundred]—*huge* guy. Hiked down the Bright Angel Trail, we met him at Pipe Creek. He was wearing a cowboy hat and a polyester suit. We go down the river... I remember the day we ran Lava. In the morning I'm goin' to the port-a-potty, and there's this doctor—there were actually a couple of doctors on the trip—and this one was standing there with this grossly overweight passenger, and he said, "Drifter, you gotta look at Mark's leg here." And Mark (not his real name) had cellulitis. His leg was a bit hot and swollen and very painful to touch, and the doctor said, "This is bothering Mark a lot. He didn't sleep very well last night. Do

you guys have any antibiotics?" And I said, "We're not allowed to carry antibiotics, because we don't have any medical training, and we're not authorized to prescribe them. And so we don't, as a matter of regulation, carry antibiotics. However, there's this other guy on the trip, Joe, he is a doctor, and maybe he's got something. Why don't you talk to him?" So then later on, as we were gettin' ready to leave, this guy says, "Well Drifter, I talked to Joe, and I found something for Mark, and I told him what to do... Don't worry about it."

So we go on down the river, and have lunch above Lava Falls someplace. I didn't pay much attention to it at the time, but Mark didn't get off the paddle boat when we stopped for lunch. He had someone bring him a sandwich, but he just sat there. We get back in the boats and we go on down, and we run Lava Falls, and then we get down to mile 183 camp.

Sue and I were cookin' that night, and we're gettin' the kitchen set up and all that, and while we're organizing the kitchen I noticed that Mark is still sittin' on the boat. And then a whole bunch of people go down there and a couple really big guys help him get off the boat, and he kind of laboriously trudges up the sand and lies down kind of in front of the kitchen, and then there were a bunch of medical folks on this trip and they all go over to talk to him. Meanwhile, Sue and I are startin' to cook dinner. Finally this one doc that I had talked to in the morning comes over and I said, "How's Mark doin'?" And he said, "Well, you know, I gave him some antibiotics this morning, I told him to get on the big boat"—we had a snout boat on this trip—"and to sit up and keep his leg elevated and not get wet or cold or anything, and just take it easy. So what does he do? He gets in the paddle boat, sits up all day long, and now he feels terrible. But what can you do, the guy doesn't follow advice and he's overweight." I said, "Well, will he be okay?" "Yeah, he'll be miserable, but he'll make it a couple more days to the take-out." So I'm thinkin' about that.

Meanwhile, this *other* doctor comes up to me. The first was a dermatologist. The second doc taught cardiac medicine at a medical school, and he comes up and says, "Drifter, is there any way we can get him outta here?" I said, "Well, we could try calling a helicopter."

He said, "Mark is sort of a bad patient. This guy doesn't have a brain in his head. He's in poor physical condition. The reason he's got cellulitis is that when he hiked down the Bright Angel Trail, he fell down a couple times, and he scratched his leg. But he didn't mention it to anybody, and didn't get any first aid for it, he just ignored it. But because he weighs over 300 pounds, his circulation is poor. And so the scratches that he got on the trail, they probably wouldn't make

any difference to me or you or anybody else on this trip, but for him, they became this infection. He really wanted to run Lava Falls in a paddle boat today, so that's why he got in a paddle boat. But he didn't tell me, until we just interviewed him now, that he had a hard time sleeping last night because of the pain. Mark hasn't been drinkin' water, he can't remember the last time that he peed. He's in poor physical shape, he does not follow directions. He doesn't even tell the truth to a doctor. The next thing that's likely to happen is he's going to go into kidney failure, and the only thing we're going to be able to do here is watch him die. So if there's any way to get him out of here right now, he should be in an emergency room." So I tell the other guys on the crew, "See if you can get a helicopter." So they get the radio out, and Sue and I continue doing dinner. Finally, like the sun sets, and dinner's almost ready, and I'm about to go down and tell these guys to turn the radio off and save the batteries for the morning, when we hear a plane go across. They were able to get a message (out), but they didn't get a response from the airplane. So they put the radio away, we go have dinner, and maybe half an hour, 45 minutes later, as it's beginning to get pretty dim, we hear this helicopter coming. The helicopter lands on a sandbar a hundred yards away from the kitchen, turns the engine off, and this paramedic runs over. And so I quick tell him what's goin' on with Mark, and tell him to go talk to this doctor who'll tell him what's happening and all that. The guy says, "We think we'd like to stay here, because it's gettin' dark, and we'll fly out in the morning." I said, "That's fine with me, but where you've got that helicopter parked, it's gonna be in six feet of water in the morning." And so he goes running back...

Well, we had this wooden body board/back board kind of thing, and we were gonna put Mark on that and pick it up and carry it over to the helicopter. People looked at it and they realized, "If we put Mark on this and we pick up this board, the board will break." So three of the biggest guys on the trip got ahold of Mark. They were able to shuffle him over and into the helicopter, and the paramedic got back in the helicopter and when they took off, it was *almost* dark. They had all their lights turned on, lit up like a Christmas tree, and all that, and they were flyin' out, but it was effectively dark, which those guys don't like to do.

So anyway, a couple days later we get back to Flagstaff and we go out to dinner. Mark had come with a friend of his on this trip, we had talked to him a bit after Mark left. He said, "Well Mark never takes a vacation, he works seven days a week, he never walks anywhere, he drives everywhere he goes." We get to dinner, and Mark's friend shows up and he said, "I

went to see Mark in the hospital. Mark looks better but his leg looks a lot worse." They had told him, "You're gonna be in the hospital for a while." But Mark didn't want to do it in Flagstaff, he wanted to go home. Mark had driven in this van from Southern California, the van had a bed in it. The hospital agreed that the next morning they were gonna put Mark in the van and hook him up to an I.V., and his friend would drive him directly from Flagstaff to Mark's hometown hospital in Southern California, and he would go directly in the hospital. They wouldn't stop for anything except gas...

Maybe six weeks go by, and then I get a letter from Mark. It turns out when they brought him into this hospital, they told him they thought it was the worst infection of that type they had ever seen, that it was life threatening. They kept him on antibiotics. A week later they operated on his leg, and took out a bunch of infected tissue. A week or so after that, they did a skin graft to close this gaping hole in his leg. And then another week or two after that, he was allowed to go home [this would have been nearly a month after the helicopter evacuation], so I guess he was doin' okay.

But if I had listened to that one doctor that said "Mark will be okay," he wouldn't have been alive when we got to the take-out. I was just really lucky that I had this other guy who was a real conservative. He was telling me, "This guy's a bad patient, he doesn't have a brain in his head, he's in poor physical condition, we have to do everything absolutely right. This is the stuff that medical malpractice lawsuits are all made about, and we need to get him out of here right now, if there's any way that we can do it."

This was, of course, before we all had to take Wilderness First Responder, where there's much more emphasis on what could go wrong, what could happen next... Things had really gone well up to that point, but if we'd kept him on the rest of the trip or got him out the next morning, he probably would have at least lost his leg. I hate learnin' s[tuff] like that the hard way, we were lucky—it could have turned out very much worse.

* * *

Well, you know, my feeling overall is although there have been a few exceptions, most of the river guides that I have gotten to know have been exceptional people, and very different. I mean, it's not like they're all cut out of the same mold... But almost everybody I have known, that spent much time working in the Canyon, has been very interesting and exceptional in some way. I think that one of the reasons passengers really get off on those trips is they don't know what

to expect, but then they come on these trips, and not only is the Canyon more interesting and beautiful than what they expected—the food is better, but the guides in particular are *very* interesting people, many of them have done interesting stuff all over the world, many of 'em have second careers. Anyway, guides are very... One of the best parts of working down there is who you get to work with. That's one of the things I miss the most about not working there, is like, boy, since I kind of wound down my career at AZRA, I did end up doin' a few motor trips in the last couple of years, and I infrequently would be on a trip with somebody I never even heard of before. Every one of them was excellent. They were all just really great people to get to know. So anyway, that was, for me, one of the real high points of bein' a guide. Not only did you spend your time in a beautiful place doing stuff that was fun, and get to meet some interesting passengers, people that you'd never meet under any—or at least I would never meet, under any other circumstances. But the people you work with, and the people working for other companies, by and large they were all just absolutely top-notch kind of people—better than any kind of people you would meet on the average back home.

STEIGER: Yeah. Although it's hard to generalize.

SMITH: Right. Like I said, there were probably a couple of exceptions, but by and large... And I had some other jobs before I got into being a river guide.

I can understand why a lot of people really don't like goin' to work, but for me it was always like, "I can't wait 'til it's time to go out on a trip!" I always looked forward to it. The off season was always too long. And it's not like I didn't enjoy the stuff that I was doing at Flagstaff and at home, and I certainly enjoyed the company of my wife, and we did a lot of really interesting things together, but going on another trip was, for me, always like a *really* wonderful, wonderful thing to do.

STEIGER: Yeah, especially come spring. I think if I had it to do over again, I would have paid more attention to the customers

as well. I think of all the really remarkable people I met and just kind of let slip through my fingers because I didn't answer the Christmas cards, didn't write their addresses down, all that stuff.

SMITH: I have that regret too, because I think there were some people that I probably would have enjoyed getting to know better than I did, but I didn't. I do know I have friends that go back almost forty years from other river trips, that I still keep in touch with. I run into people every once in a while that I did a trip with a long time ago. I don't remember them at all, but they remember me, and they remember the trip they did. It's obvious that for most of them it was like a high point of all the vacations they took. And that was one of the things I liked about Rob's attitude. He expected, when people got back from the trip, that they were supposed to say, "This is the best damned vacation I ever took!" And he realized, he knew enough that it wasn't always gonna work that way, but his attitude is like, "Well, it's the Grand Canyon, and if they don't go home thinking it was the best vacation they ever had, did we do something wrong?" Because that's what he expected, that people would go home thinking it was the best thing they ever did. So we worked hard to make that work. Fortunately with the Grand Canyon for the wallpaper, it's usually not too hard. (chuckles)



Financials

GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES, INC. DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Fiscal year ending 6/30/13

Income

Foundation grants	\$ 38,400.00
Membership income	33,594.00
Circle of Friends	24,312.00
GTS income	17,862.85
General contributions	17,309.00
Sales (t-shirts, hats, etc...)	7,393.00
Government grants	5,209.00
First aid income	4,345.00
Non-cash contributions	3,600.00
Memorial contributions	280.00
Fall Rendezvous income	120.00
Interest Income	186.58
Cost of goods sold	(4,987.03)

Total Income \$ 147,624.40

Expenses

Payroll & benefits	\$ 44,618.42
Contract labor	30,634.38
Printing	20,390.24
Postage	8,762.40
Rent	8,400.00
Food (GTS)	6,976.73
Outside services & outfitters	4,190.00
Insurance	3,908.28
Payroll taxes	3,260.92
Depreciation expense	2,945.00
Equipment rental	2,546.02
Telecommunications	2,114.44
Office expenses & supplies	1,793.12
Travel & per diem	1,630.79
Utilities	1,610.05
Honorarium	1,050.00
Professional fees	660.00
Repairs & maintenance	586.98
Merchant fees	567.96
Other (bank charges, subscriptions)	274.30
Meeting	104.54

Total Expenses \$ 147,024.57

Net Income \$ 599.83

GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES, INC. DRAFT STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

June 30, 2013

Assets

Cash in checking/savings	\$ 59,912
Accounts receivable	194
Postage & security deposits	1,972

Total Current Assets \$ 62,078

Fixed Assets

Computer & office equipment	\$ 42,817
Field equipment	6,148
Database	1,088
Website	4,863
Less depreciation	(47,950)

Net Fixed Assets \$ 6,966

Liabilities & Equity

Payroll liabilities	\$ 1,033
Restricted funds	278
Equity	67,733

Total Liabilities & Equity \$ 69,044

Major Contributors

July 1, 2012 To June 30, 2013

GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES proudly presents the very long list of major contributors who supported our organization in numerous ways during this last fiscal year (July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013). Due to space considerations, this list does not reflect the five-year memberships or contributions under \$100 (including general contributions and Circle of Friends), of which there were many. Your support helps us to move forward and maintain a healthy and vital organization that is better equipped to protect and preserve the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River experience.

We apologize in advance to anyone we may have missed in the lists below. Please let us know. And thanks again, not only to those acknowledged here, but to each and every one of you who support our efforts and believe in GCRG. We appreciate that support more than we can express. Thanks to you all!

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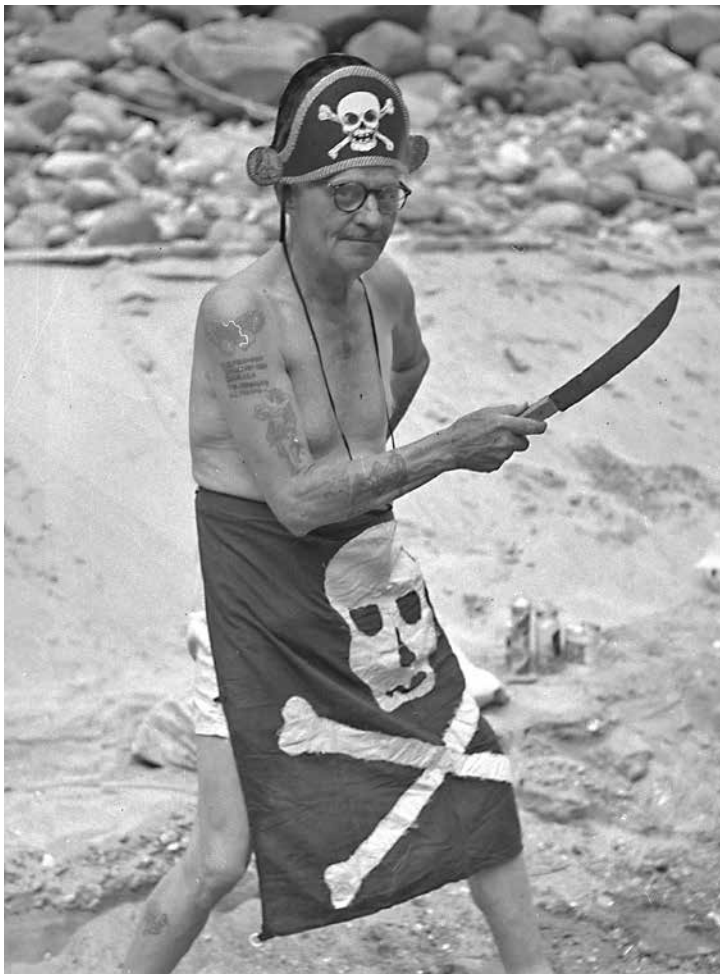
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Memorable Passengers:

Random Shots From
The University of Utah,
Mariott Library Archives...

"I'm 99% certain the pirate is Herman Resseger, who was a passenger on the lower half of my 1956 invitational trip with Frank Wright. His name popped into my head the minute I saw the photo, and he shows up on that passenger list. He was very good amateur photographer."

Gaylord Staveley