

NEWSLETTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE



March-April 2024

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Questions? Want to contribute to the newsletter?

Patty Geisinger at pattyjoeg55@gmail.com

Membership:

Are you unsure of your membership status? Email pattyjoeg55@gmail.com and Patty will check! Many races remain in the 2024 racing season, and we would love to send you the 2024 Fridge magnet and parking pass!

The link to the website is below. Fill out the form and submit at your chosen level. You will receive 2 vinyl TCKRA stickers, a 2024 TCKRA Fridge Magnet Calendar, a free parking pass for shuttle setting only at the new Fentress Amigos Beach, San Marcos River Retreat (the Goynes) and new this year—Calhoun's in Tivoli, an invite to the annual banquet and the TCKRA Newsletter before everyone else! Thank you for supporting Texas paddle sports!

[Join the TCKRA](#)

About the TCKRA

The Texas Canoe and Kayak Racing Association is a statewide club for people interested in paddle sport racing. The primary focus of the club is USCA and ICF class marathon racing, but other disciplines of paddle sports are promoted through [TCKRA Race Calendar](#)

In 1971 a group of canoe paddlers with an interest in canoe and kayak racing joined together and formed the TCRA (which later evolved into the TCKRA). During the past years the organization has grown to one of the largest canoe and kayak clubs in the state. The club is now recognized as the voice for canoe racing in Texas and its members have gained national recognition. Each year the TCKRA participates in approximately 20 canoe races and the TCKRA also organizes and sponsors the Texas State Canoe and Kayak Racing Championship Series. These championship level race events complement the other annual racing events by recognizing the top competitors in a variety of paddle sport disciplines and classes.

Whether you are a novice paddler, intermediate or seasoned racer, TCKRA is a great way to meet new people, improve your skills and get out on the river. Our membership spans the state and varies widely by age, gender, skill-level and boat type, even our working careers and professions. We also share a great deal in common-the competitive spirit and an enduring love of the water.

Your annual dues help fund events and activities throughout the year and around the state. By joining the TCKRA you enjoy the following benefits:

- 8 championship races, (Unlimited, Aluminum, USCA and ICF, Surfski)
- The Martindale Triathlon
- Spring and fall river cleanups
- Newsletter
- Annual banquet
- Paddling clinics – free to TCKRA members
- 2 TCKRA decals for every member
- A 2024 TCKRA fridge magnet calendar
- A 2024 TCKRA parking pass (for setting shuttles only) at Fentress Amigos Beach and the San Marcos River Retreat, Calhoun's in Tivoli
- A TCKRA membership will give you a voice in the racing community and allow us to continue to promote canoe and kayak racing in Texas.
- Volunteer opportunities throughout the year.

Our members paddle kayaks and canoes crafted from wood, plastic, aluminum, carbon and Kevlar.

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TCKRA>

Follow us on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/tckra/>

2024 TCKRA Officers and Board of Directors

Officers

Morgan Kohut (President)
Shannon Issendorf (Vice President)
Grady Hicks (Treasurer)
Patty Geisinger (Secretary)

Board Members

Sandy Yonley
Clay Wyatt
Clint Sutherland
Lydia Hueslkamp
Tommy Yonley
Mike Smith
Holly Orr
Kaitlin Mynar

Letter from the TCKRA President

Morgan Kohut

Hello river friends! I hope you are all enjoying this gorgeous weather and spending time on your local rivers and lakes. Thank you to all the members who showed up the first weekend of March- we had a record turnout for the Spring Break Open and lots of good river karma from a successful river clean-up. Special shout out to TCKRA members Nate Tart and Jay Daniels and TCKRA board members Sandy Yonley and Holly Orr for organizing those events. We have several more races on the calendar in the coming months and I hope to see many of you there!

SYOTR,

Morgan Kohut
2024 TCKRA President

2024 Race Calendar

(Editor's Note: Races listed are not all TCKRA events but a compilation of all races we know of)

May 11th – 2024 ACA Marathon Natl. Championships & Team Trials, Brooks Lake/Sugar Land, 9am
May 11th – Race the River: Goliad Race, Goliad Paddling Trail, Goliad TX, 9am
May 18th – TCKRA USCA State Championships, Luling Tx, 7:30am
June 8th – 61st Texas Water Safari, Meadows Center, San Marcos to Seadrift, 9am
Aug. 3rd – Neches River Wilderness Race, Palestine Tx, 8am
Aug 17th – Junction Up and Back Race, Junction Tx, 8am
Sept. 6th – San Antonio Race the River, the Riverwalk, San Antonio, 6:30pm
Sept. 14th – Colorado River 100, Fisherman's Park, Bastrop, 5am
Sept. 21st – Junior Texas Water Safari, City Park, San Marcos, 9am

[Upcoming Races and Events](#)

Paddler Profile

In each edition of the newsletter, we will feature an interesting and accomplished member of the Texas Paddling Community. **This Edition contains a special feature as we are highlighting a married couple!** If you would like to nominate someone to be featured in the Paddler Profile, please email their name(s) and contact info to pattyjoeq55@gmail.com

Jim & Myla Weber

What are your full names?

Jim & Myla- James (Jim) Christopher Weber
Myla Hillhouse Weber

Married June 11, 1988, celebrating 36 this year- this our boat number.

Where are you from originally and where do you live now?

Jim & Myla- Jim is originally from Springfield, Illinois, and Myla is originally from Akron, Ohio. We live in Huntsville, Tx now.

How and why did you get started in paddling?

Jim & Myla – It's been a lifelong family activity for both of us!

How did you get started racing?

Jim & Myla- Funny enough, Jim and his friend got hooked watching the Echo Challenge on TV and wanted to find something they could do that was similar. The friend's wife researched and found the Texas Water Safari.



TWS 2005

Where do you paddle most frequently? Together or Solo?

Jim & Myla- We are not far from the Trinity River and Sam Houston State Park, so for convenience, we throw boats in both. When we want to practice day two of Safari, it's the State Park. There is nothing more boring than paddling on a lake. We tend to paddle together so we can talk out issues, but occasionally, enjoy our solo paddles.

What is your favorite race?

Jim & Myla- Outside of the Texas Water Safari, we enjoy the MAC 4 night race. We don't get to it often, we also enjoy the challenge of the Neches River Wilderness Race.



What is the most interesting race you have done?

Jim & Myla- We would have to say the most interesting race would be La Ruta Maya Canoe Race in Belize. Jim paddled and Myla enjoyed the experience from the banks.

What is your cross training do you do?

Jim & Myla- Normally, we begin our cardio training with the 100 Mile-Challenge in November. We add weights and stretching the first of the year and focus on paddling on the San Marcos River in the Spring.



What kind of food or supplements do you use during training and racing?

Jim & Myla- During training, we drink our liquid nutrition, and bring snacks to try out to see if it is something we can stomach during the race. Our liquid is primarily a carb-load and muscle milk, and our snacks can be sweet and salty. Candies that don't melt like Payday or peanut butter M&M's, and salty things like crushed chips, Cheetos, and bacon are some of our favorites. During the race, we rely on drinking our calories and the snacks are just added treats. We will also eat fresh fruit and guacamole cups during the heat of the day. In addition to the food, we take electrolytes in a pill form to make sure we are intaking what our bodies need.



What are your significant accomplishments in paddling?

Jim & Myla- We have both have two TWS solo finishes, we have paddled the Safari with our 2 oldest daughters (and someday –2025, with our youngest daughter Cara), but hands down, we both have over 10 TWS finishes. Of those finishes, we have been in the boat together 9 times. So, is our most significant accomplishment having over 10 finishes, or surviving in the same boat so many times? You can decide.



What do you enjoy most about paddling?

Jim & Myla- it's a great activity that we have enjoyed as a family over the years. Being on the water, enjoying the beauty of what God has created, and spending time with family, each other and friends in the paddling community has become a big part of our lives.

Do you have any training or racing goals for the next few years?

Jim & Myla- Our goal, for as many years as we can, is to continue our regimen of training for the Safari. Jim wants to see how many more finishes we can "rack" up. If we can keep it up long enough, maybe we can share our love of paddling with our grandkids.



How difficult has it been to paddle with a life partner?

Jim & Myla- In the beginning, like anything else, there were growing pains. But as we spent more time together in a boat, we found our common ground. We learned each other's strengths, weaknesses, and roles. After that, racing with each other became more enjoyable and cohesive. We realized how important it is to compartmentalize; canoe racing is racing, not about our relationship. As they say, what happens on the river stays on the river. So, Jim w that when his wife asks for a divorce in the bay, she doesn't really mean it. Mistakes will happen and you can leave them on the water and not take them home with you.



How do you deal with tense race conditions? How do you plan ahead for those relationship stressors?

Jim & Myla- There will always be conditions that are tense and unforeseen. Take them as they come, handle them as best you can, and move forward. It's not if it happens, but when it will happen. Hanging onto the stress is just using energy you need for something else. Bottom line, don't blame each other. Your relationship is much more important. Plan ahead by understanding that everyone in the boat needs to share the same goals. Communicate what you might do if potential difficulties come up.



Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for paddlers just starting out?

Jim & Myla- Spend as much time paddling with each other as you can so that your teamwork can improve. Be open to Suggestions from your partner and be patient. Explain your issues with clarity, not frustration. Jim says there are two reasons to do the Safari. One is to have fun and the second is to get paid. He hasn't received a check yet!

Any final words?

Jim & Myla- The Safari is one of the toughest things you will do, but the reward at the end is worth the suffering!



2022 TWS finish line

Race Reports

TCKRA San Marcos River Clean Up



Thank you to all those who came out and made the San Marcos River clean up a great success. It made me proud to see over 30 TCKRA members volunteering their day to clean the river! We had young and old, paddlers and walkers alike cleaning the river and its banks.

I used to ask myself "Why go clean the river on a specific day with everyone else when I often pick up trash in the river? I am doing my part regardless, right?" Yes, I am still doing my part and helping the river; however, the visual public impact wasn't as great. I have since learned there is power in people being able to witness a huge pile of trash at one given time pulled out of the river.



By working together at a set time, we as a club and paddling community, have been able to bring a greater awareness to the general public as to the amount of trash that goes into our river. Thank you for making this possible! I do believe it is still our best practice to clean the river in our own time too. There is no shortage of litter, and it should NOT wait until an organized river clean up to be picked up. Great job and thank you to all of you who help keep our rivers beautiful.

Holly Orr

Town Lake Series

John Baltzell

2024 Town Lake Race Series Schedule

The Town Lake race series was quite a lot of fun and a great way to start 2024 in January/February! John Baltzell put on another great year of races, and we enjoyed terrific turn outs including for the final race which started with a packed field in the kids race and ended with a yummy potluck! Huge thanks to John for putting on these races for 18 years! Hope to see you next year!



TCKRA Spring Break Open

March 3rd, 2024



Another spectacular Spring Break Open hosted by Jay Daniel & Nate Tart! This year, the dynamic duo solicited sponsors and were able to fund cash prizes for almost all the places and finishers! And Everyone Turned OUT! We broke prior records with over 60 boats in the race and a Huge Aluminum Class! Boats were jammed up at the start which everyone enjoyed watching on video, but it was not so much in the actual moment! We hope the race helped everyone start their year off in a fun way!

2024 MAC Races

Brought to you by Kaitlin Mynar and the Martindale Athletic Club, the annual MAC races were held along sections of the San Marcos River. The intention behind this series was to get folks into a racing mindset, to race how they train, to test equipment and begin their training season! It was so much fun to race with friends! Consider adding these races to your 2025 schedule!

Race 1: City Park to Spencer's Campground

Race 2: Staples to Luling 90

Race 3: Luling 90 to Palmetto State Park

Race 4: *Mike Simmons Memorial Night Race*

Palmetto State Park to Gonzales was Saturday April 22nd, this race involved staggered starts. It was particularly challenging this year with the intense rainstorm, lighting and thunder!

Great Interview about the MAC Races on Canoe Race World Podcast—check it out!

<https://www.canoeraceworld.com/podcast/episode/42b77830/mac-2024>

Texas River Marathon

May 4th, 2024

Great turn out for the Prelim (137 boats) for the Texas River Marathon this year. The low water gave added challenge at the start and the video shows the chaos. It was deceptively warm, so everyone was feeling the effects and that is always helpful when prepping for Safari.



Calhoun's Gator Chase

May 5th, 2024

An incredible 1st race in 2024 with 60 boats who registered and raced together down through the cuts! The big draw was the alligator tooth for sure! Everyone had a super fun time and except for the unexpected thunderstorm with hail, it was a good time and there were no negative gator interactions!



2024 Upcoming Races

ACA Marathon National Championships

May 11th, 2024

When: May 11th and start time subject to change, please visit Event page on Facebook

Where: Brooks Lake, Sugar Land, TX 16740 Creekbend Dr, Sugar Land, TX 77478

Registration: please see Facebook page

More Information: Race information, course description, all details can be found at

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1753202811844012>



San Antonio River Basin: Race the River Goliad

May 11th, 2024

8 am Check in, Race start 10am

The San Antonio River Authority, together with the San Antonio River Foundation, welcomes you to the Race the River Paddle Series! Canoe and kayakers of all skill levels are invited to participate at each adventure race throughout the San Antonio River Basin

The Goliad Race is the second race of the series. This 17-mile pro race, or 5-mile amateur race, will test your endurance along the Goliad Paddling Trail through remote stretches of the San Antonio River.

An award ceremony and racer celebrations will follow each race. Commemorative patches will be given to all finishers, trophies and prizes will be given to top finishers of each category.

- **Pro Racer Check-in Location:** Goliad Paddling Trail- Riverdale Access Point - [N Riverdale Ln, Goliad, TX 77963](https://www.google.com/maps/place/445+S+Commercial+St,+Goliad,+TX+77963/@30.0833333,-98.0833333,15z)
- **Amateur Racer Check-in Location:** [HW 59 River Crossing](https://www.google.com/maps/place/HW+59+River+Crossing/@30.0833333,-98.0833333,15z)
- **Racer Check-in Time:** 8AM-9:30AM (Pro & Amateur)
- **Race Start Time:** 10AM (Pro & Amateur)
- **Pro Race Cutoff:** 1PM at HW 59 River Crossing
- **Race Finish Line:** [Goliad Paddling Trail- Ferry St Access Point](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Goliad+Paddling+Trail-Ferry+St+Access+Point/@30.0833333,-98.0833333,15z) (Pro & Amateur)
- **After Party:** [Branch River Park - 445 S Commercial St, Goliad, TX 77963](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Branch+River+Park/@30.0833333,-98.0833333,15z)
- **Awards Ceremony:** After all racers have arrived at the finish.

Registration Information: <https://runsignup.com/Race/Info/TX/Goliad/RacetheRiverGoliad>



TCKRA USCA State Championship & SUP Race

May 18th, 2024

7:30 am



The TCKRA USCA state championship and SUP race will be held Saturday May 18th at Staples Bridge on the San Marcos River. Men's C2 will be about 9 miles long (laps TBA). All other races will be about 4.5 miles long.

Registration Here: [Register for USCA State Championships](#)

Race course (new location this year): **Staples bridge** upstream to buoy turn and back.

Age Categories:

Men's and Women's:

Under 18 juniors

50+ Senior

60+ Veterans

70+ Grand Veterans

Race schedule:

7:30am	Registration
8:15am	Pre-race meeting
8:30am	Men's C1/Women's C2/SUP
10:00am	Mixed C2
11:00am	SUP Awards
11:30am	Men's C2 two laps/ Women's C1
12:30pm	Kids C2 race
1pm	Lunch/Awards

Awards:

Pay through top 10 with a cash prize for women's, senior, veterans.

61st Annual Texas Water Safari June 8th, 2024, 9am

When: June 8th – June 12th, 2024, 9am

Where: Spring Lake, San Marcos to Seadrift, Tx

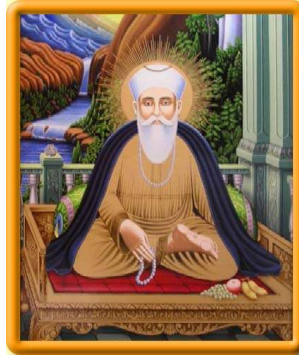
Registration: <https://racehubhq.com/races/TexasWaterSafari2024>

More Information: Race information, course description, rules and procedures, boat types and all details regarding the TWS can be found at www.texaswatersafari.org



Palmetto Hotline

River Guru



Palmetto Hotline

April-May 2024

Greetings inferior racers!

Well, the seasons have come and gone and with climbing temperatures and the distant sounds of boats scraping across gravel bars, it's time for a few of my early Safari predictions.

It seems the racers have finally caught on that high water years are in the past and have hung up their lengthy six man boats for something more compact and manageable to navigate through rocks and limbs. Well, most logical teams...those Cowboys sure are stubborn, yelling about tradition and pushing through the pain (as long as their boat can be lifted, it will be raced).

As June 8th approaches, racers will be thrown into an oven set on broil as we kick off the first truly hot weekend of the year with no less than 110 degree heat index and 98% humidity. And while everyone boasted about El Niño and "all that rain comin" to finally have a high water year, I aligned the jet streams just right to make sure everyone got their money's worth and had to suffer one more low water year (you're welcome).

I predict a normal bump and grind Saturday/Sunday of Safari. The herd of novices and newbies will be culled, leaving just the most brash and unprepared still scratching their heads at which way to go in Gonzales.

Unlimited of all sizes:

As Monday morning dawns, team Logjammin' will be battling neck and neck with the Limestone Cowgirls, each sure that their Mynar-Issendorf combo will win. However, being true men, no one in Logjammin' will ask for directions past Swinging bridge and will fall to their fated name becoming lost in Alligator Lake, still swearing they can make it through in this water level. With flashbacks to 2021, Shannon will have made sure to have 3 gps tracks through the jams and the ladies will take the lead. The Cowgirls enter the bay with the end in sight and begin the journey battling 6 foot waves and 24 mph winds when the Dad-Lad Yonley duo will barge in, intent on showing that tandems can win in back to back years. Double blades flash and both teams will arrive simultaneously to Swan Point, waiting for the drone livestream to determine who won, when Holly & her team will give them a big welcome since they had just arisen from their nap. David, Jonathan, and William jump in the water to help carry up the mystified 2nd and 3rd place boats, but when asked how they got ahead, the only response is, "if you know you know"

Meanwhile, a mean battle of tandem's will still be occurring upriver. Lydia and Wade stay steady in 4th place but in a moment of inspiration, Lydia requests they pull over to create a viral safari dance. While reluctant, Wade will join in, quite distracted and still wondering why everyone in his family decided to go solo and the team falls to 7th place. Chris/Nate and Will/Alex play leapfrog, with Andrew/Brandon, not knowing the true way to win safari is with a young person in the boat, so Clay and Peyton slip by to take a comfortable 5th place finish. Feeling the energy from so many parent-child teams excelling, Brian and Brenda Jones paddle by with easy smiles taking 6th place. Now you may be wondering, wait what happened to 4th place—very respectfully, Salli O Donnell navigated politely through the throngs of boats and no one was willing (able) to stop her. With great panache, the Cowboys pass most other boats to secure a solid 11th!

Solo:

Jason Cade and Chris Champion will be caught casually chatting as they pass tandem and multi-man's sweltering in the heat before realizing they weren't in the same boat and should be racing against each other. Luke Z. and Daniel Baumbach managed to safely make it past those darn posts and trees (with only some choice words as they passed) and the two bonded on the recovery of their boats to finish safari in 13th and 14th place. Geoff Waters and Curt Slaten strategically will draft their way from novice, to aluminum, to tandems until they fly into the top 20 with energy to spare.

Standard:

To give the standard class more competition, Joe Geisinger and Eric Whicker were required to carry an extra 100 lbs in their boat. However, this only made Joe stronger and created more of a monster and the team managed to secure a 10th place finish.

Aluminum:

It was a battle in metal with Luke and Libby taking 1st Aluminum in the top 20 while leaving Jackson/Parker and the Hursts close behind wondering how a mountain man and girl with the kindest "huts" could move an aluminum so fast. But young Candace from Junction cannot be ruled out now that she got Hoyt to see the log jams before the Safari and the team takes 25th without a single sticker lost.

Novice:

Most of the novice boats were distracted by Polecat and Possum Belly telling Safari stories all the way down the racecourse, but the overall winner will be the Father/Son Howlers of the Wolff's who will come in 1st Novice in time for the banquet. But it was a tough race because the Novice Women boat of the newlywed Katie and engaged Rachel will prove that the Possum Belly school of tough Safari teaching will bring them in easily in 1st Novice Women.

Still mullin' over the rest of the racers, so my predictions may change just as much as the weather predictions. Good luck prepping, scrambling to find last minute flares, seal-a-mealing questionable powders, and finding the most ridiculous tights to show off on race day.

The river guru is a collective hallucination shared by the greater paddling community. The views and opinions of the Guru are not the views of the TWS or TCKRA...but we all think it's pretty darn funny.