



# KEELHAULER KA-NEWS

## MAY 2005

### NEXT KEELHAULER MEETING

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>  
The program will be "Saving the Last Great Places of Northern Ohio"

Kay Carlson, the Lake Erie Watershed Program Director for The Nature Conservancy will discuss TNC's mission, both internationally and locally. She will talk in detail about the TNC's programs in Northern Ohio, including the Grand River watershed, Upper Cuyahoga River watershed, Western Lake Erie Islands, and the Oak Openings Region.

"In September, the New York Times travel section, in a story about kayaking Lake Erie, compared the Western Basin islands to the Pacific Ocean's San Juan Islands off the coast of Washington State. There are nearly 100 miles of paddle-friendly shoreline."

This will be an interesting and informative program.

### Keelhauler Meeting minutes, 4/12/05

Hot dogs, chips and sub sandwiches were provided before the meeting.

20 Attendees

New Members:

Karen Vick has taken basic kayaking course and wants to do more.

Approved last month's minutes as printed in newsletter.

Treasurer, Rob Hammond:

Checking account has \$8,645. Vermilion Race has \$1,255 excluding refreshment cost, etc.

Conservation:

Dan Zaleski is becoming more active and plans WEB page link to conservation.

Instruction, Steve Ingalls:

ARC has first aid class May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Tuesday at 5 pm downtown for \$13.00. Class limit is 10 people. Arc has river kayaking classes May 14<sup>th</sup> at Slippery Rock, June 11<sup>th</sup> at Slippery Rock or Conoquenessing, and August 13<sup>th</sup> at Yough.

Library, Mike Duvall:

New kayak surf video in stock.

Rick Gusic Grand Canyon video won award at film festival for Advanced non-professional and is stock.

Membership, John Kobak:

292 paid members, 10 behind last year.

Webmaster, John Kobak:

Message board required new software and revamping causing 2 days rework and some down time. Everything working again,

Newsletter:

Asked for volunteers to solicit news stories from member trips.

Pool Session:

Complete for this session but looking for new chairperson for next year.

Meeting, Bill Miller:

May, Kay Carlson will talk about Nature Conservatory.

June at Hinckley Lake

July at Silver Lake

August at Huntington Beach or else where.

Refreshments, Jim Hunt:  
Bob Bair will supply food this summer. Pop and chip only for outdoor meetings.

Safety, Ed Charlton:  
Three things to prevent, 1) shoulder dislocation, 2) Slips and falls and 3) head injuries.  
Remember that the water is still cold.

Vermilion Race, Rob Hammond:  
Water was low but the upper section was run. Slowest times in 15 years. Keelline Co. donated \$109 to race and sells racing equipment at race. Check Web site Keelline.com.  
Asked for race participation at the Cheat River race on May 6<sup>th</sup>.  
Rescue Clinic June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> on the Slippery Rock.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Dave Hill asked for attendees from the KHCC at the Kent River Fest on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>.

AW/GCPBA announced a new proposal on the Grand Canyon proposing the following:

1. Increase private trip from one to three per day by allowing smaller trips.
2. Replace existing waiting list
3. Reduce max usage
4. Rise private vs. commercial usage

Read Proposal at this web site:

<http://www.gcpba.org/access/comments/comments020105.pdf>

Cheat River take out purchased by MS&T. AW to provide monies to improve area. Voted and passed to donate \$500 to AW for Cheat River take out improvements.

OhioPIRG asked for endorsement from the club, but the board rejected it. Club members were encouraged to support the environmental advocacy group of their choosing.

KHCC will give Tom Annable a good Samaritan medal for stopping in the Vermilion River race to help a team who had wrapped their canoe around a rock.

Ed Charlton asked for volunteers to help Pam Reisinger and the Girl Scouts April 30<sup>th</sup>, three sessions 9:00 to 4:00 pm.

Meeting followed by a safety presentation by Middleburg Heights Fire Department, Shawn Zerman.

## UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL EVENTS

May 27 - 30  
West Michigan Coastal Kayakers' Association (WMCKA) Symposium (16<sup>th</sup> annual)  
Camp Pentalouan, Big Blue Lake, Muskegon County Michigan  
Highlights: Recreational Kayak track, separate Youth program (VERY family oriented) and live music from BetsieBay and the Groove Engine See [www.wmcka.org](http://www.wmcka.org) for details.

July 14 - 17  
Great Lakes Sea Kayak Symposium (21st annual)  
Grand Marais, MI.  
Highlights: Harbor Race, Day Trips along Pictured Rocks Lakeshore, pre-symposium advanced instruction programs See <http://www.glsks.org> for details (registration info will be posted later this month)

August 18 - 21  
Ladies of the Lake Sea Kayak Symposium (2nd annual)  
Copper Harbor, MI  
Highlights: The only all-women's symposium!  
Outstanding reviews from 2004 inaugural event attendees.  
See <http://www.downwindsports.com> for details

August 26 - 28  
Qajaq USA Michigan Training Camp (4th annual)  
Lower Herring Lake, Frankfort, MI  
Highlights: The only regional event 100% dedicated to traditional skills, AMAZING venue and unmatched instruction. Gaining reputation as epicurean paddling event!  
<http://www.waterholic.net/qajaqtc>  
Contact: Dave Braun [dave@qajaqusa.org](mailto:dave@qajaqusa.org)

Nancy Thornton  
Michigan Representative, Midwest Division  
American Canoe Association  
Coastal Kayak Instructor - Open Water  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/michiganaca/>

## Mexico Trip 2005 - Part 3

By John Kobak

Our Mexican RV trip started on the Gulf of Mexico in January and went South to the mountains of Chiapas and then followed the Pacific coast to just North of Puerto Vallarta, to a tiny little fishing village of Playa Chacala. Part 1 & 2 of my story, is in the March & April newsletters.

We had discovered Chacala on last year's trip and found that we could camp next to a small beach house that a local Mexican has been squatting in for the past 30 years. He built two other small homes for his children and grand children along with banos (toilets) and regaderas (showers) for tourists. We got a campsite on the water right next to where we had camped last year. Cost only \$25 per week but no hookups.



The town is showing signs of growth. They now have a library, which has been furnished by volunteers from the USA with computers and high-speed Internet access. I was able to connect my laptop to the network and finally do a little more updating of the club's website.

We stayed here for a week and enjoyed the slightly cooler temperatures. Highs were only in the mid 70's and lows in the 60's.

We hated to leave the beautiful Mexican beaches but it was March and we needed to start back North soon. Our next stop was Mexico's second largest city, Guadalajara. Its metropolitan area has 7 million people, quite a change from all the small towns along the coast. Its 5500' elevation gives it perfect year around weather, attracting lots of American retirees. The beautiful campground here is just outside the outer ring road (Periferico). It is set



**John in his hammock on Playa Chacala**

in large old Hacienda, which is slowly being converted to full time homes. Land here is almost too valuable to continue to use as a campground.

We decided to take a tour of the old colonial central city. They have a subway system from the South Periferico across the city connecting to an E-W line. We could take a short bus ride from the campground to the southern terminus of subway and easily get to the sprawling Mercado Libertad for only 70 cents per person, as opposed to \$10 for a taxi ride.

The market was rebuilt in 1958. It is the biggest in Mexico, three stories high with thousands of stalls with food, crafts, electronics and clothing.



**Produce market in Guadalajara**

After shopping at the market we walked all over the Colonial area downtown.

On Tuesday we had enough of the big city and got an early start to avoid the heavy traffic and stopped at a little town on the outskirts of Guadalajara, called Tonala.



### **Guadalajara Cathedral**

Everyone in this town is involved in the manufacture and sale of arts & crafts, like ceramics, glass, copper or even papier-mâché. After Peggy bought some nice crafts, we were on our way toward the border.

We had good roads from here, mostly turnpikes. They are expensive but it saves lots of time and wear and tear on your vehicle. We made it to San Luis Potosi and spent the night in a turnpike rest area.

A camper had told me that it was much shorter to head toward Ciudad Victoria rather than Monterey. I had asked, "Aren't there mountains to cross"? He said "It's the same both ways". Boy was he wrong. First of all, it is a rough two lane road, and they are rebuilding 35 mi of the mountain road. Then, we had a route choice which he hadn't discussed. Should we continue on RT 101 toward Ciudad Victoria or take a road that said Via Corta. We decided to stay on 101. We knew that this was not going to be fast when all the traffic kept going the other way. There was no traffic at all, and we were going up a well-maintained mountain road. If you were out for a day trip and looking for great views of the mountains, this was it. If you were trying to get to border before Customs closed, maybe this was a mistake. Luckily, we made it in plenty of time and chose a new border crossing called "Free Trade Bridge". It was the easiest way yet to cross with virtually no traffic.

We were going to head right to Houston to see Rich Priem again but found out that it was still snowing in Ohio, so there was no hurry. We drove to Padre Island National Seashore near Corpus Christi. This National Park has free beach camping or very inexpensive camping with facilities and a dump station. It was another great beach location, miles and miles of flat

beach, gentle surf but in early March it is still a little cool to swim.

Like last year, we had a great time in Mexico. The most asked question by Americans is; "Is it safe" or "don't you worry about the Banditos". The truth is that it is a very nice and safe place to travel. The people are very friendly and helpful. Fresh food and fish are very inexpensive. Bottled water is available everywhere for only \$1 for 5 gal.

The most asked question by Mexicans and foreign tourists is; "Where are all the people from the USA". I'll bet only 20% of all the tourists we saw were from the states.

For more pictures and for the complete story, use this link.

<http://www.keelhauler.org/mexico/Mexico05.htm>

If you are thinking of traveling to Mexico and have any questions; call or e-mail me at 440-871-1758, keelhauler@yahoo.com

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## **Kent is on the Whitewater Map!**

**By David Hill**

We've all heard the jokes about the Cuyahoga catching on fire and "there's no whitewater in Ohio". But things have changed for the better.

We put out the fire and the Clean Water Act has forced industry to reduce impacts on this resource. Combined sewers overflows are still a problem and will continue to plague some rivers, but until funding becomes available or pressure is applied to local governments; the problem will continue. One more legacy of older industrial areas in the U.S., but I digress.

As for whitewater, Ohio is not lucky like WV or NC, but we have a few gems. Some of the rapids may be small, but we utilize what we have or create new features when the opportunity presents itself. Examples of both of these scenarios were presented to local paddlers in Kent.

**History**

In 1836 a dam was constructed on the Cuyahoga River near downtown Kent. The project included the installation of a canal lock, which would allow canal boats to maneuver up and down the river and a mill race to power various industrial mills located below the dam. Several problems or obstacles had to be overcome in the construction of the canal. These however, were relatively few as the majority of the route was very favorable for the building of a canal. One especially difficult problem was the steep gorge on the Cuyahoga River at Franklin Mills. It was decided to deepen and widen the gorge at this point by blasting. The legendary Cuyahoga Rapids thought to be where Captain Samuel Brady leaped across the Cuyahoga to escape a group of angry Indians were sacrificed and destroyed for the progress of the canal around 1836. For that time in history, the dam and canal lock were a very important commercial asset, which played a decisive role in the development of the City. While the canal was abandoned in 1869, the mill race continued to be utilized for another 40 years until the 1904 flood washed away the top portion of the dam. The great flood of 1913 decimated the milling business in Kent as a large portion of the canal lock and dam were destroyed. The Kent Dam lay in disrepair until 1924 when a local company teamed up with the citizens of Kent and spent \$6,655 towards the dam restoration project which resulted in the Kent dam that existed up until 2004. The Kent Dam is part of the Kent Historical District, which is listed on the National Register of Historical Places. Research efforts have indicated that the Kent Dam is the 4<sup>th</sup> oldest dam in Ohio and the only dam remaining in Ohio originally built in the 1800's of stone masonry.

### **Problem**

The Ohio EPA has formally identified the Kent Dam as a significant cause of water quality problems associated with the Cuyahoga River. These concerns were revealed in the Ohio EPA Middle Cuyahoga River TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) report issued in March 2000. The report explained that during the warm summer months the mile long dam pool stagnates and cannot hold sufficient dissolved oxygen to meet water quality standards established by Ohio EPA and the Clean Water Act. The depleted oxygen level creates an environment where viable aquatic life cannot survive in the dam pool. The dam has also been identified as a barrier to migrating fish and the associated dam pool

creates aquatic habitat non-typical of a riverine environment. Guided by the fact that the Ohio EPA has the legal authority to issue more stringent discharge limits at the City's wastewater treatment plant to improve Cuyahoga River water quality, the administration evaluated the EPA's alternative recommendation to modify or eliminate the Kent Dam for the purpose of meeting the standards of the Clean Water Act. This alternative would eliminate the stagnant dam pool and restore the area to a natural free-flowing river.

### **Solution**

Numerous feasibility studies and designs were considered, but one fact that emerged as the top priority was that a majority of Kent citizens desire to retain the Kent Dam and associated waterfall. Therefore, in summer of 2002, Kent City Council endorsed the consultant's and City Administrations recommended alternative to install a river bypass around Kent Dam which would 1) meet the water quality standards of the Clean Water Act; 2) avoid costly discharge limits at the wastewater treatment plant; 3) allow canoe and kayak navigation around the dam, and 4) allow the Kent Dam to remain in its current location and maintain the waterfall over the dam. Grant funding was secured for the project and City Council decided to create a historical interpretive park in the area behind the dam (Heritage Park).

### **Designed for Paddlers**

Now for the good stuff. In early 2004, I approached Bob Brown (Kent WWTP) about the overall project and how it would impact paddlers. He welcomed the inquiry and indicated that he had been previously unsuccessful with making contact with local paddlers. We talked about the concept of maintaining the waves below the dam and how best to redirect the flow back into the main channel once the dam bypass was completed. Many of you sent in your petitions supporting the efforts, and they help promote the cause. Thank you.

Several meetings with the construction manager, EPA and City occurred in Spring 2004 and a rock wall was installed on the upstream of the island. The May 2004 flood laughed at the effort, but the flows brought out the locals to surf the waves below the dam.

In June 2004, the rock wall was reconstructed. It was also suggested by the City to remove the large rock



Eric and Max surfing at >3500 cfs.

immediately below the canal lock. You must be crazy! This rock is actually a piece of slag that shows up in photos from 1970 and was probably deposited during one of the historic train wrecks in Kent. Besides it makes a great hole at higher flows and because of its location will upset a few paddlers, therefore it is named "Train Wreck". The City still wanted to move it, but the excavator that was used to rebuild the rock wall was no match for the weight of the slag; so it sits in wait for the next un-attentive paddler.

The original construction plan also had a portage path on river left around the former lock structure should it be needed for higher flows by canoeist since they don't want to carry their boats up the steps on river right. When I explained that exiting the river on the left will leave a paddler landlocked, or they have to get back into the river through the large recirculating eddy that feeds them into Train Wreck, or they will have to carry their canoe over 2 sets a railroad tracks, then up a 30 foot embankment; the City scrapped these plans. It seemed like we were on a roll and the City was willing to listen to our ideas.

Next was the push for installing features upstream of the Main Street in the former dam pool. All we needed was some rocks. The web was bursting with information on whitewater parks, the Olympic Stadium was getting press, and most importantly this spot is 5 minutes from my work! Can you say park & play. After all, the main focus for the City was to allow the public to enjoy the park. If you have paddlers "using" the river, then

people will stop and watch, maybe have lunch, spend time downtown, return regularly, etc. Besides a river with eddys and various flow regimes promotes fish habitats and migration along with increased dissolved oxygen. It's a win-win for everyone. So that was my pitch to the City. All they could say was no.

Well they said yes. But we needed some large rocks. The river bottom is the bedrock surface, and they were not going to cement the rocks in place. This is Kent not Reno or Golden! So I asked some paddlers, looked at the ideas that others were using for whitewater parks, and presented the plans to the City. Well, there was no way they would allow a feature (drop structure) across the channel, but I tried to get 2 at first and 1 at the end; but lost this battle. However, I did convince them to install 3 wing dams and several boulder clusters. But in hind sight the rocks were too small and the budget would not allow additional rock purchases.

OK so what's next, we have a few small rapids; big deal. Remember, this is Ohio which is not known as a whitewater mecca. This section is located downtown Kent and due to its short length can be run several times without a shuttle. You can even walk to several places for a bite and a cold one. The write up for this



Low flow (<200 cfs) looking upstream from Main St bridge.

section of the Cuyahoga is on American Whitewater and can be found here

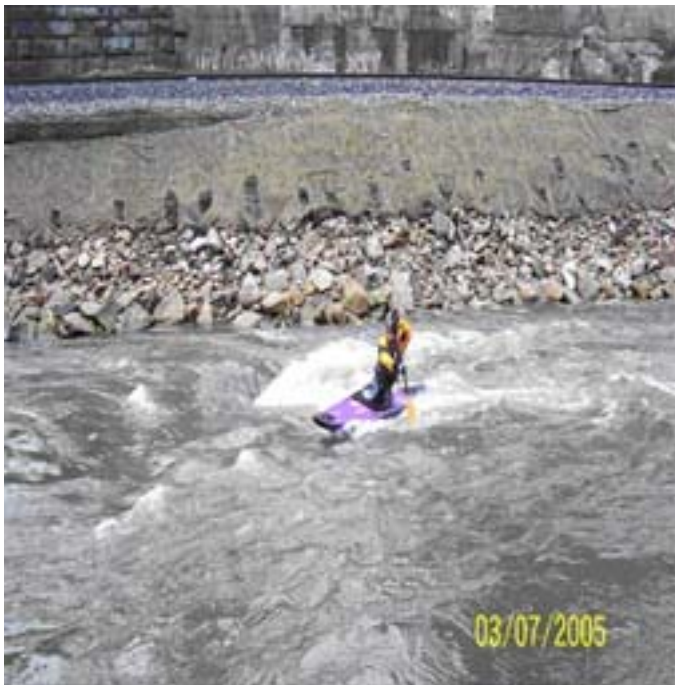
<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/4124/>.

Now that the days are getting longer, this is the perfect opportunity for an after work park & play workout to keep the muscles loose for the weekend trips. So keep an eye on the USGS gage at Old Portage

(04206000), look for flows above 500 cfs, throw your boat in the car, and stop by for a little P&P work out.

### Continuing Efforts

The best thing is to get out to Kent and paddle to show the City that their efforts are appreciated. Some will say that the features are too small, but we all need to practice basic skills. The winter floods have drastically modified the section below the dam and replaced the rock wall with wood. Clean up efforts by a dedicated few in conjunction with local fire departments removed most of the wood and opened some of the rapids. The future of this section is being spearheaded by the efforts of Chris Wing. His enthusiasm and organization skills will be instrumental in making the Dedication Ceremonies and RiverDay Celebration a success. You have marked your calendars for May 20-21, right? If not, you should.



Shawn on the middle features at ??? cfs.



Rob Hammond discussing strainer removal with local Fire Departments.

The City has invited paddlers to participate in the Dedication Ceremonies on May 20<sup>th</sup> and River Day Celebration on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Updates can be found on the official City website (<http://www.kentohio.org/reports/dam-dedication.asp>) or the Kent Cuyahoga River Fest site at <http://www.cfest.blogspot.com/> that focuses on paddlers' interests. There will be tents for American Whitewater, KSU Adventure Center, Keelhaulers, and others; a fish demonstration by Ohio EPA; swiftwater rescue demonstrations by the Kent Fire Department; a land based example of paddling gear/boats for the general public, and an open invitation to paddlers. River levels will dictate activities for each day. Plans are also being made to have Red Bull participate possibly on May 21<sup>st</sup> with a BBQ after river cleanup activities. Remember, these events also coincide with National River Cleanup Week (<http://www.nationalrivercleanup.com/>) so come down and help out.

Lastly, the river will always change the features and add or remove undesirable materials from upstream. This will require our attention to keep the river safe and remove strainers, etc. But it also provides an opportunity to let the City know that paddlers are using the park. The more we use this recreational venue, the more the City will assist with making it better. This means help with removing debris, providing better access and potential restrooms/changing areas,

swiftwater rescue clinics, and just maybe MORE ROCKS for better features.

So get out there and use the river in Kent. Then we can move downstream to pursue the real whitewater in Ohio below the Ohio Edison Dam

([http://www.cuyahogafallshistory.com/big\\_falls.htm](http://www.cuyahogafallshistory.com/big_falls.htm)).



May	UPCOMING TRIP SCHEDULE			
5/1	Little Beaver	7	<a href="#">Steve Zerefos</a>	330-646-7235
5/1	Cheat River Race Clinic	26	<a href="#">Rob Hammond</a>	216-292-5618
5/6,7,9	Upper Yough	32	<a href="#">John Kobak</a>	440-871-1758
5/6	Cheat Mass-Occurrence Race	26	<a href="#">Rob Hammond</a>	216-292-5618
5/7,8	Cheat Fest and River trips	26	<a href="#">Scott Debalski</a>	440-298-1257
5/7,8	Cheat Headwaters or Potomac Highlands	18-24	<a href="#">Steve Ingalls</a>	216-371-8250
5/14,15	N. Br. Potomac Release	18	<a href="#">Ross Brinkerhoff</a>	440-286-1476
5/14	Slippery Rock Creek	13-19	<a href="#">Joe Marks</a>	216-281-1517
5/14,15	Cheat Canyon	26	<a href="#">Jim Hunt</a>	330-335-5203
5/14,15	<a href="#">Red Cross</a> - Basic River and Whitewater Paddling, WPA		<a href="#">Red Cross</a>	440-298-1293
5/20,21	Kent <a href="#">Cuyahoga River Fest</a>		<a href="mailto:cwing@kent.edu">cwing@kent.edu</a>	330-212-7802
5/21	Slippery Rock	13-19	<a href="#">Ann Corey</a>	330-869-6549
5/21,22	River Festival at Kent		<a href="#">Pat Guzowski</a>	216-780-5734
5/21,22	Cranberry River & Williams River	26	<a href="#">Paula Norris</a>	216-407-1671
5/21,22	Lower Yough	23	<a href="#">Mike Duvall</a>	216-521-0094
5/21,22	Middle Yough	12	<a href="#">Robert Bair</a>	216-371-6390
5/21,22	Cheat Headwaters or Potomac Highlands	18-24	<a href="#">Steve Ingalls</a>	216-371-8250
5/21,22	Cheat Canyon / Lower Big Sandy	26-31	<a href="#">Peter Turkaly</a>	804-550-0256



5/27,28,30	Upper Yough Releases	32	<a href="#">Need organizer</a>	
5/28,29	N. Branch of Potomac	18	<a href="#">Mark Cytron</a>	216-227-1392
5/28-30	Cheat Canyon	26	<a href="#">Ross Brinkerhoff</a>	440-286-1476
<b>June</b>				
6/3,4,6	Upper Yough	32	<a href="#">Gib McGill</a>	724-946-9158
6/4	Cuyahoga River, Peninsula to Boston Mills	8	<a href="#">Chris Kiehl</a>	330-869-6549
6/4,5	Cheat Canyon	26	<a href="#">Pam Poljak</a>	440-268-9194
6/5	Lower Yough	23	<a href="#">Sabine Iben</a>	440-543-4969
6/11	Walk - Deer Lick Cave Trail in Brecksville Reservation		<a href="#">Dennis Plank</a>	216-939-8229
6/11,12	Upper New	16	<a href="#">Ed Charlton</a>	440-716-5489
6/11,12	<a href="#">Red Cross</a> - Basic River and Whitewater Paddling W PA		<a href="#">Red Cross</a>	440-298-1293
6/12-24	Colorado Rivers - advanced/intermediate trip, trip could shift by a week if water levels are too high or too low.	25-32	<a href="#">Elliott Drysdale</a>	216-496-8482 C
6/14	Club Meeting & Free Style Clinic		<a href="#">Elaine and Bob Mravetz</a>	330-239-1725
6/18,19	Lower Yough - permits	23	<a href="#">Ron Tomallo</a>	440-953-1335
6/18,19	Middle Yough	12	<a href="#">Carl Kudrna</a>	440-835-5744
6/19,21,26,28	<a href="#">Fundamentals of Kayaking</a> at Mentor Dept. of Recreation Pool		<a href="#">Seanna Perry</a>	216-431-3322
6/20,22,27,29	<a href="#">Fundamentals of Kayaking</a> at Mentor Dept. of Recreation Pool		<a href="#">Seanna Perry</a>	216-431-3322
6/22	Cuyahoga - Burning River Day-trash pickup/poker		<a href="#">Jim Kosicki</a>	216-244-0201 C
6/25 - 7/3	Colorado Rivers - Advanced paddlers	>32	<a href="#">Paul Lang</a>	330-896-3468
6/25,26	<a href="#">Sea Kayaking Fundamentals Course</a>		<a href="#">Red Cross</a>	440-298-1293
6/25,26	<a href="#">Rescue Weekend &amp; Rodeo</a>		<a href="#">Rob Hammond</a>	216-292-5618