



The SPRAY

Newsletter for Colorado Whitewater



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UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 11**
Open Pool Sessions (Most Sunday's
through April 26)
- March 24 & 25**
CPR/First Aid Classes

Visit the Events page on the
CW website for more information.

2014 Fall Dinner a Success

By Terrance Standlee

It was November 5 and as the last of the kayaking season started to wind down for most, this year's Fall Dinner was indeed an excellent time to remember and talk about the season's exploits. Thanks to the hard work of Rachel Garza and many volunteers and outstanding sponsors, the evening was a blast. Premium beer, naked burrito bar, delicious desserts, free prizes, great raffle items, and of course Pat Keller, the 2014 male paddler of the year speaking to this year's crowd of attendees, just to name a few of the shenanigans at the event.

With Upslope Brewery as a sponsor, the first 65 people to sign up for the dinner were rewarded with a free pint glass sporting the club's logo filled with beer. This was the first thing that greeted many guests and nothing brings a smile faster than free beer, unless it's good food. The food this year was simple but tasty, filling and went great with the beer and conversations going on at the tables throughout the America Mountaineering Centers large ballroom. Other great sponsors this year were Down River Equipment, AAA rafts, Colorado Kayak Supply, Rab Jackets, our own Debra Cronin with a Hawaiian goodie bag, and of course some merchandise from Colorado Whitewater. Without the help from the local shops, these events wouldn't be as fun.

The highlight of the evening was speaker, Pat Keller, the 2014 Canoe and Kayak magazine's Paddler of the Year. With the competition for this distinguished award being the likes of Evan Garcia, Wildman Ben Marr, our insane friend Rafa Ortiz, play-boating great Dane Jackson, Ben Stookesberry, and legend Rush Sturges the paddling skills of this humble yet great paddler can't be denied. On top of this award Pat was fresh from his third place finish at this year's Green Race with fresh incite on the iconic paddle fest. He also discussed his trip to the New York's High Peak Wilderness with kayaking legend Steve Fisher as they documented an impressive successful run of the Upper Hanging Spear Gorge which boast an unbelievable 950-foot a mile decent and concluding the trip by charging the formidable 70-foot water fall, Hanging Spears Fall. If you missed the dinner, or just want

(Continued on page 4)

Mission Statement

Colorado Whitewater promotes the sport of whitewater kayaking in Colorado and the Rocky Mountain region. The club introduces new paddlers to whitewater, provides training in technique and safety, supports racing, informs the public about whitewater issues, including river access and conservation, and works to resolve related problems. CW is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization run entirely by volunteers.



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THE SPRAY

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MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONS?

To Join CW, visit our website at www.coloradowhitewater.org and join online. To change your e-mail or other contact information: Contact Ryan Lee at ryanleedba@yahoo.com.

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Contact Jodi Lee for rates and specs at jodilee23@gmail.com

Want to Contribute?

We welcome and encourage your contributions on topics related to whitewater paddling.

Email submissions to carrieroot@mac.com

Deadline for Jan/Feb Issue

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(Continued from page 1)

to see it again, check out the video Pat and Steve made of this trip on YouTube under the title "Kayaking the Hanging Spear Waterfall - Headwaters of the Hudson". Pat's take on the sport was truly inspirational as he talked about balancing work with play. He also had an interesting take on how he learns the way of water and spends his time after a severer mountain biking accident this summer as he described using 6" hand carved kayaks he would throw in the water and study in awe of a child just discovering the beautiful movement of water. He described how he would go down to the river and sit and watch these small "toys" float down the rapids and learn the actions of the waves on the small boat. Without a doubt, it was refreshing to see such a great and accomplished kayaker and all around athlete humbly talk about the sport that he, as well as the rest of us, loves. Hats off to the young paddler for his accomplishments and a big thanks to him for entertaining us for the evening and to those who missed it... well, make sure and catch future events so you can be inspired by a modern day legend.

Over all, judging from the smiles and laughs coming from the group as a whole, the event was a rousing

success where we were able to raise money for the club to do many worthwhile projects and make for a club that is involved with the paddling community as a whole. The feeling in the room was one of a family telling old and new stories of an epic season. Please keep an eye out for our next events such as Movie Night and Spring Dinner. And remember, it pays to sign up early.

River Permits

Don't forget to apply for your river permits for 2015. Most permits are due by January 31, 2015.

To apply and find out more details for about the rivers, visit our website.

www.coloradowhitewater.org/river-trip-permits

Open Pool Sessions at Meyers Pool Starting in January

Brrrr. Winter is here. Snow is on the ground, the air is chilly, and you have no intention of kayaking until Spring. But don't put your kayak and gear away just yet. Winter is the perfect time to improve on techniques you learned over the summer, learn new tricks and techniques, or teach a friend how to kayak... all in a nice, warm, indoor pool.

Pool practice is perfect for building repetition of your roll, practicing hip-snaps, bracing exercises, strong paddle strokes, and, of course, tricks such as cartwheels, bow stalls, and enders. It's a great workout, and you get to see your kayak buddies or meet new ones!

CW offers a variety of kayaking classes for beginners, advanced and even kids. The classes are taught by ACA-certified volunteer instructors. A schedule of the 2015 classes will be posted in January at www.ColoradoWhitewater.org/kayak-classes. You may also come to our open pool sessions to practice on your own.

POOL SESSIONS:

Meyers Pool - 7900 Carr Drive in Arvada
Sundays, January through May (check our website to see the exact dates and when the pool is closed)
1:00 - 5:00 PM
Entry fee is \$9.25

Please make sure to rinse out your kayak BEFORE getting into the pool. Clean out your kayak at home, if possible. There is also a hose on deck at the pool to rinse your boat and gear. Also, make sure to thoroughly rinse your boat, spray skirt, and other gear AFTER your pool practice to rinse away all the chlorine and chemicals.





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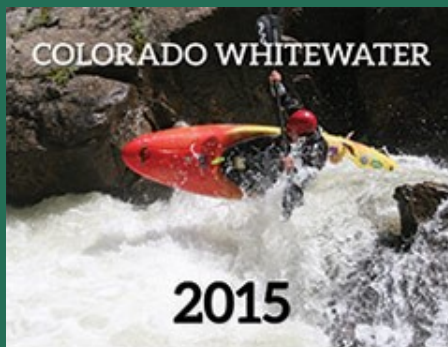
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Do You Have Your 2015 Calendar Yet?

Beautiful photos of the rivers you love will inspire you every month. The Colorado Whitewater 2015 Calendar is available for purchase online at ColoradoWhitewater.org/GetaCWCalendar for only \$15. Or stop by one of these retail stores to get yours today:

AAA Inflatables (Denver), Confluence Kayaks (Denver), Down River Equipment (Wheat Ridge), or Golden River Sports (Golden).



Buy more than one -- makes great gifts, too!

Martin Litton Dies at 97 Passionate Wilderness Conservationist

Martin Litton, 97, a legendary Colorado River guide and fierce wilderness advocate involved in some of the 20th century's biggest conservation battles, died November 30, 2014 of age-related causes at his home in Portola Valley, Calif.



Litton was a Grand Canyon river runner and a longtime conservationist, best known as a staunch opponent of the construction of Glen Canyon Dam and other dams on the Colorado River.

Read Bettina Boxall's article by following this link: <http://www.latimes.com/local/obituaries/la-me-martin-litton-20141202-story.html#page=1>

WHAT HAVE THEY BEEN UP TO LATELY?

By Jodi Lee and Patty Pinkham

Over the years, Colorado Whitewater has been fortunate to book some pretty spectacular whitewater kayakers who have made quite an impact on the sport – whether it's impressing thousands around the world with their extreme kayaking down big rivers and waterfalls; inspiring or teaching others how

to kayak to their fullest potential; protecting our valued, and sometimes vulnerable, rivers; or capturing sweet action-shots of the whitewater sports we love.

Here's a look at what some of our past speakers are doing lately and how they are still influencing the kayaking scene.

WHAT HAVE THEY BEEN UP TO?

Zak Podmore and Will Stauffer-Norris - CW Fall Dinner 2012



In 2012, Zak Podmore and Will Stauffer-Norris paddled 1,700 miles in the Colorado River – from the source of the Green River in Wyoming only to lose the remnants of the river in the vast complex of concrete irrigation canals that begins at the U.S.-Mexico border. They presented Source to Sea: What Remains of the Colorado River, sharing stories and short films from their trips, and examining the complicated relationship between the river and the people who depend on it.



Zak already decided he wouldn't return to the delta until the river did. "I assumed this meant I'd never be back." But in May of 2014, the impossible happened. Zak road the pulse flow in the Colorado River delta to a long, overdue completion of his Colorado Source to Sea expedition. "Last spring was the first time the delta has ever been intentionally flooded for environmental purposes, and I was lucky enough to paddle it for a few days," says Zak.

Read the entire story brought to you by *Canoe & Kayak* magazine: <http://www.canoekayak.com/photos/pulse-flow/>



As for Will, well, he's been paddling some rivers in western China this spring, working with a com-

pany called Last Descents River Expeditions. Their mission is to bring Chinese to see their rivers before dams and development irrevocably change these wild places.

"The Chinese government is proposing to dam the Salween River, which is one of the last free flowing rivers in Asia and one of the most beautiful and magical rivers in China," states Will. "We brought kids and influential Chinese down the Salween to show them firsthand what a free flowing river looks like."

Read his article "Saving China's Salween River, One Trip at a Time" in *Canoe & Kayak* magazine: <http://www.canoekayak.com/photos/saving-chinas-salween-river-one-trip-time/>

WHAT HAVE THEY BEEN UP TO?

Ben Stookesberry - CW Spring Dinner 2011

Where in the world has Ben Stookesberry been since spring 2011? BUSY - that's where. Whether its filming his Brazilian TV show "Kaiak" with Chris Korbolic and Pedro Oliva or paddling through lava in Hawaii, Ben, born and raised in Greeley, CO, is arguably the best expedition kayaker of our generation. All of it captured here for you in photos and film...enjoy.



Summer 2011: Ben Stookesberry and Chris Korbolic did the first and only one day descent of the Middle Fork of the Kings and Kings Canyon in 17 hours. Their 11 mile hike-in began at 2:30am. Instead of the normal 7 days, they did all 50 miles of the toughest run in the Sierra Nevada Mountains including Class II, III, IV, V and even a handful of Class VI rapids. They dropped over 8,000 feet in elevation and reached at the takeout safely at 7pm. <http://kokatat.com/blog/2010/08/the-middle-kings-in-one-day>

Winter 2011/2012: Ben and Chris returned to Africa to the headwaters of the Congo in Zambia and the high mountain rivers in Zimbabwe. The Kafue, a First Descent of The Wonder Gorge Christmas Day, the Lunsemfwa River, Kabweluma Falls, the Kalungwishi, Kalambo Falls and tons more. See Chris and Ben's photo diary here: <http://blog.eddiebauer.com/2012/04/23/chris-korbolic-captures-powerful-imagery-from-the-heart-of-africa/>

Spring 2012: Ben and Chris' adventures continued in Africa where they returned to the village of Kabemaye, Congo. After witnessing the tragic crocodile death of their friend (while kayaking) Hendri Coetzee in December of 2010 (see the documentary film Kadoma), they wanted to help the villagers with the crocodile danger on the river by building bathing/fishing enclosures and helping establish new fresh water. The crocs had become accustomed to human meat after decades of bloody conflict where victims of war were disposed of off bridges. Here is the story: <http://vimeo.com/43967131>

Summer 2012: Ben and Chris conquered the first descent of the Impossible Gorge to the Marble Fork of the Kaweah River in Sequoia National Park in California. Big wall climbing, sketchy lowering with full kayak rigs and a fully committing section of a canyon that was easily Class VI+. This expedition also resulted in the movie Walled In which won numerous awards. <http://blog.eddiebauer.com/2014/11/21/marble-fork-expedition/>

First and only one day descent of Fantasy Fall in CA with four full descents in seven days. Then, headed to Norway, Svalbard and Greenland for a first descent of the Icwaterfalls of Northern Norway and the longest river in Greenland in the Sarfartoq:

Part 1: <http://canaloff.globo.com/programas/kaiak/videos/2470731.html>

Part 2: <http://canaloff.globo.com/programas/kaiak/videos/2496530.html>

Fall 2012: First descent of the Rio Mambucaba in Brazil with Chris and Pedro. 4,000 feet in 20 miles - over half of which was crowded into a 6.5 mile stretch where the river falls into the Atlantic Ocean. Watch one of the best expedition videos ever filmed: <http://vimeo.com/39979356>

Winter 2012/2013: Multiple first descents and paddled in a river of lava in Hawaii. This was the first time Ben was knocked unconscious in a kayak. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/04/03/lava-kayaking-hawaii-video_n_3008014.html

Spring 2013: Expedition in Northern Australia and Papua New Guinea including a landmark first descent of the Iso Gorge: <http://blog.eddiebauer.com/2013/07/26/stookesberry-and-korbolic-unlock-the-iso-gorge-in-papa-new-guinea/>

Summer 2013: Returned to Svalbard Norway to second waterfalls off the melting Braswell Glacier. Also, kayaked the Grand Canyon of the Stikine for the first time.

Fall & Winter 2013 / 2014: Captured numerous first descents in India, Laos and Nepal. <http://blog.eddiebauer.com/2014/04/30/chris-korbolic-captures-epic-images-india-sequel/>

Spring 2014: Returned to Nepal to make a first descent through the inner gorges of the Dudh Kosi flowing off Mount Everest with Nepali Surjan Tamang: <http://adventureblog.nationalgeographic.com/2014/05/20/return-to-the-relentless-river-of-everest-an-overlooked-river-delivers-incredible-surprises/>



Summer 2014: In one of the most heavily documented expeditions with DeLorme InReach and SAT phone connectivity, the team of Pedro, Chris, Ben and Ben Marr - explored into the remote reaches of the Torngat in Northern Labrador Wilderness to paddle the historic George River canoe route, a second descent of the Ford River and to claim the 18 waterfalls of the Nachvak River. <http://blog.eddiebauer.com/2014/11/19/expedition-destination-torngat/>

More to come in 2015 and beyond from Ben Stookesberry!

WHAT HAVE THEY BEEN UP TO?

Erik Weihenmayer - CW Spring Dinner 2012

When we last saw Erik Weihenmayer in 2012, he was planning his next trip to the Grand Canyon. His first had been in a motorboat in 2008. Erik took a second trip to the Grand Canyon in 2013. It was a scouting mission—part kayaking, part rafting. He then returned to the Big Ditch for his third trip just a few months ago in September of 2014. He partnered with Lonnie Bedwell, also completely blind. Erik and Lonnie were planning on kayaking the entire 277 miles from Lee's Ferry to Pearce Ferry on Lake Mead. They had 21 days to do it.

After 6 years of training, 18 team members joined the expedition—10 kayakers, 3 film shooters and 5 raft guides.



Photo credit: James Q Martin

Erik, now 46, is best known as the first blind person to climb Everest and all of the other Seven Summits. He lost his vision at age 13 to a disease called juvenile retinoschisis. Lonnie Bedwell, 49, lost his sight in a hunting accident at age 31, three years to the day after the Navy released him from active duty. Neither of them knew how to kayak before they lost their vision—or before they began preparing to paddle the Grand Canyon.

The first 16 to 18 days went fairly well including the weather. Lonnie's form of navigation differed a little from Erik's. Having already kayaked the Grand Canyon previously in August of 2013, he preferred commands given by his guides from out in front. Erik's two guides followed him, giving him directions via waterproof Bluetooth radios. Both men flipped and rolled back up countless times, but neither swam. Then they hit Day 15 - Lava Day. As Erik paddled in, he flipped in the V wave near the top and eventually pulled his skirt taking a nasty swim. He spent a sleepless night feeling conquered and depressed. The next day, unwilling to accept defeat, Erik convinced his team to hiked back to the top of Lava. "Part of me wanted to just say, 'No way! Why would I ever go back to that and do that thing again?'" , Erik admits. "But I just felt like I had to.

Three rolls later, I was upright in my boat at the bottom of the rapid. There was a lot of hugging and crying. Mostly from me.", he laughs.

On the last day, Erik's family surprised him at the take-out. His wife Ellen, daughter Emma, son Arjun and family friends Kim and Kami. Ellen writes, "It's fun and rather easy to surprise a blind guy. It went like this. Everyone on the team heard about our arrival and kept very quiet. Harlan Taney, Trip Leader, led Erik to the shore, giving his last commands after 21 days of incredible guiding. "Paddle forward. Little left. Forward." Harlan's strong voice cracked with emotion as he saw Emma and Arjun inching their way towards the water. When Erik stepped out of his kayak, 277 miles after entering this mighty river, we were there to rush and shout and hug. So awesome. Erik struggled with the reality. Then, more hugs all around."

Sponsored by Nature Valley, the trip was a complete success. A documentary film based on the expedition, directed by Michael Brown, will be released in 2015.

The trip was also fulfilled in conjunction with No Barriers, the non-profit organization which empowers people to break through, find their inner purpose and contribute their very best to the world. Take the free pledge and make a personal commitment to live the No Barriers life! With your pledge, you'll join a community of individuals who will support and inspire each other on their journey. What's within you is stronger than what's in your way. Click on the link to read their entire journey and check out some of the amazing videos from the expedition: <http://kayakingblind.org/>



Photo credit: Skylar Williams

Erik and Lonnie have been nominated by National Geographic as Adventurers of the Year 2015. Please cast your vote before Jan 31, 2015 for them at <http://adventure.nationalgeographic.com/adventure/>



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WHAT HAVETHETHEYBEEN UPTO?

Stephen Wright - CW Spring Dinner 2012

Since spring of 2012, Stephen, in his own words, is continuing to follow his kayaking dreams all over the world. "I chase water full-time playboating, creeking, squirt boating, river running, instructing and competing."

During most years Stephen spends winter in the southeast United States including Rock Island, TN, then spends a month or two somewhere warm and beautiful like Uganda. Sometime in the spring, he generally heads out to California, then back to Colorado for the early summer months.



Stephen says, "I've spent my past summers corrupting youth on the Ottawa River running the Ottawa Kayak

School's Keener Program - youth paddling program anchored at Wilderness Tours in Beachburg, Ontario. Then it's down to West Virginia, back to the Southeast, and for the past two years, I've been able to head to England to compete in the Hurley Classic in the fall."

Stephen has also been working on his continuing project - or obsession may be a better word - of turning an old Hostess delivery van into an RV. He also has a new scooter that has proven to be an excellent shuttle vehicle. His photography and mad moustache growing skills are always in the forefront as well.



Stephen says, "I always look forward to the time I spend in Colorado each year. It's great to see so many great friends, paddlers, and enjoy the rivers there again. I'm also running another Instructional Adventure to Uganda on the White Nile next year in February. Email or Facebook message me for more info on it! Stay warm and see you soon!"

WHAT HAVETHETHEYBEEN UPTO?

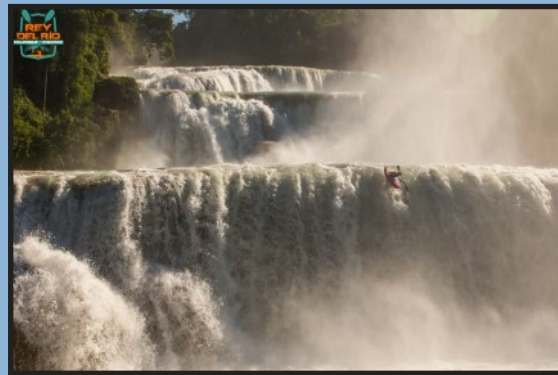
Rafa Ortiz - CW Fall Dinner 2013

We all know pro kayaker Rafa Ortiz loves to run BIG waterfalls. It's what gets his adrenaline pumping. In November of this year, Rafa and Rush Sturges proposed the idea of a waterfall competition to the Mexican Tourism Board. They helped organize the first-ever waterfall competition - Rey del Rio World Waterfall Championships held on the Rio Agua Azul in Mexico.

"We were a bit nervous because November is typically super high water levels and potentially dangerous," Rafa says. "But on race down, it was blue skies and the water level dropped to a manageable level. It was meant to be!"

Putting together the scoring system was a bit challenging as they couldn't just base the winning places off of times for the waterfall section (at heights of approximately 30 feet, 55 feet, and 25 feet). They developed a scoring system where points are scored for Progression, Flow and Style. Each paddler's approach, free-fall, and landing would be factored into the Style score, plus double points tallied for the most consequential middle falls.

Rafa decided to leave his kayak on shore and help run the event instead. Pat Keller, who recently spoke at our Fall Dinner, took first place in both the Boater X and the Waterfall Showdown.



"He was sick! He destroyed it!"

Read the article "Pat Keller claims 'Rey del Rio' title in Canoe & Kayak magazine:

<http://www.canoeandkayak.com/photos/pat-keller-claims-rey-del-rio-title/>

Also, check out amazing photos and results on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ReydelRioMX> A video is coming out in the next couple of days so keep an eye out for it!

Rafa has also been busy filming a movie over the past three years. Sponsored by Red Bull, he is very excited about the footage as they provided a bigger budget and the use of helicopters and drones to capture better footage than ever before. A teaser will be coming out soon and the launch of the movie in the spring.

WHAT HAVEN'T THEY BEEN UP TO?

Natalie Anderson - CW Spring Dinner 2013



Natalie is currently finishing up her dissertation in the field of Fluvial Geomorphology (aka river science) at Colorado State University and should be finished by Fall 2015. Her dissertation centers around driftwood in the Mackenzie Basin in Northern Canada. Closer to home, she is currently one of the authors on a document that helps managers evaluate risks of large wood in streams so that they can

make informed decisions about whether they can leave the wood in the channel for ecological benefits or whether it should be removed due to infrastructure and public safety risks. This document should be coming out this January.

She finds it necessary for her scientific creativity and for the rejuvenation of her 'computering' motivation to intersperse her research with longer kayaking trips. In the past few years she has kayaked in Mexico, cheered for her husband Leif at the 2014 WWGP in Quebec (while kayaking herself), was the third woman paddler to run the Grand Canyon of the Stikine, and have spent a lot of time working on her helix and airscrew on the Slave River. Leif and her now own a house on the Slave River (Northwest Territories, Canada), which is an amazing big water river to come to for paddlers of every ability level to improve their skills.

In 2015, Natalie has two big trips planned, one to Colombia in February and one to the Italian Alps in late June- early July. She is melding her scientific life with her kayaking life in Italy by taking the opportunity to kayak before she presents her research at an International conference in her field. In July-August, she'll be back on the Slave River. Hopefully she'll see you there! She's always happy to help with logistics. You can follow Natalie's adventures by liking her Facebook athlete profile "Leif and Natalie" or by following this blog www.leifandnatalie.blogspot.com

WHAT HAVEN'T THEY BEEN UP TO?

Peter Holcombe - CW Spring Dinner 2014

Many of us already know that the beloved Holcombe family – CW members and instructors – sold their Lafayette house this past summer, bought an RV and started traveling the U.S. for an amazing paddling journey.



From California to Idaho, back to Colorado, and then onto Ontario, Canada, New York City, DC, and all over the east, they've been able to extend their paddling season all year long while at the same time explore many beautiful states and rivers, meet new people, and share ideas on building a community of family and children kayakers.

"It's been an amazing year for us and we are only half way through this journey," Peter states. "Lots more adventures are planned for 2015 and we are looking forward to being back in Colorado for the runoff in May and June." Read the Holcombe's journey by visiting <http://www.ColoradoWhitewater.com/Holcombe-Family-Adventures>. Peter, a professional photographer, has captured incredible photos of their journey. You can follow their journey through their family blog <http://www.Famagogo.com>



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