

Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers

January, 2016 - Volume 24, Issue 1

www.clubkayak.com/tbsk



www.facebook.com/TampaBaySeaKayakers



Calendar for January, 2016

Sun	Monday	Tues.	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
					Weedon Island 10am Level I and II	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
			Myakka River 9:30am Level I			Weeki Wachee River 9:30 am Level I
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Club Meeting Bill Jackson's Pinellas Park 7pm		3 Rooker 9am Level III			Club Picnic Trout Creek Pk, Hillsborough 9:30 & 9am Level I & II/III Egmont Key Alliance workday
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Indian Harbour Races			The Adventurous Woman club mtg, Bill Jackson's. 6:30 pm			Weeki Wachee River 9:30am Level II
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
						Sarasota Bay 9:30am Level II
31						



Trips & events indicated by this symbol are led by TBSK members.

Put these TBSK Club Meetings on your calendar and invite your friends!

- ⊙ Jan 11: Tampa Bay Watch - the Health of our Water Playground, Rachel Arndt
- ⊙ Feb 8: Bottlenose Dolphin Behavior, Ann Weaver, PhD (Argosy Univ. & NOAA)
- ⊙ March 14: Using nautical charts, Steve Henkind (Navigator, Coast Guard Eagle)
- ⊙ April 11: Manatee Conservation, Virginia Edmonds (Lowry Park Zoo Animal Care Manager)



Trip & Event Schedule

Club Trips



Date	Paddle Difficulty	Description
Friday Jan 1 New Years Day 10am 	Level I and Level II Distance LI: 4 mi LII: 8 mi	<p>New Years Day Brunch - Weedon Island to Crisp Park</p> <p>Meet at Weedon Island kayak launch ramp at 10:00 A.M. for a 10:30 launch. We'll head south through Bayou Grande and then through the canals, emerging into Placido Bayou and then onto Crisp Park for lunch. Bring a dish to share. Distance to Crisp Park is 4 miles, and one-way paddlers may stop here. A shuttle will be set up before the launch. Roundtrip paddlers will go approx. 8 miles through the canals. The longer, outside route to and from Crisp Park may be available if enough paddlers are interested.</p> <p>Please bring water, a dish to share for lunch, sunscreen and a hat. No inflatable PFDs. Please RSVP if you plan to join us. We have tables and a covered pavilion 2 reserved this year. Looking for a volunteer to mind the tables and food.</p> <p>Contact to RSVP and for directions: Hank Brooks jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com 727-724-8983</p>
Wed Jan 6 9:30am 	Level I Distance: 5 or 6 miles	<p>Myakka River State Park Wildlife Paddle</p> <p>We'll meet at 9:30 and launch by 10. This is a wildlife viewing trip with the goal of seeing alligators (if the sun is out) and hopefully many of the wading birds that frequent the park. We will have a Level 1 beginners option which will be 5 miles or less and an advanced beginner option which will be approximately 6 miles long. We'll paddle upstream toward the Upper Myakka Lake and then return downriver to the launch site. This section of the river is narrow with many twists and turns. Most of it flows through a flood plain and has little tree cover and grassy banks. Since this part of the river has one of the highest densities of alligators in Florida, the trip is not recommended for those who are afraid of alligators.</p> <p>What to bring: Money for the entrance fee (\$4.00 for one person and \$6.00 for two or more people per vehicle), lunch (we will stop somewhere a safe distance from the gators for a picnic lunch), and binoculars for wildlife viewing.</p> <p>Contact for directions and to RSVP: Terry or Charlene Proeger tproeger@comcast.net or (941) 356-0854</p>
Sat Jan 9 9:30am 	Level I Distance: 7 miles	<p>Weeki Wachee River</p> <p>Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the headwater outfitter in Weeki Wachee State Park (back left-hand corner of the parking lot as you drive in) to unload our boats and set up a shuttle to Rogers Park. We'll be paddling about 7 miles down stream. The river is beautiful, crystal clear, spring fed and a constant 72 degrees. There is a good chance we will see manatees. The trees lining the river will protect us from most of the wind. Bring your lunch because we will stop during our paddle and \$\$\$ for launch fee which I believe is \$10.</p> <p>Difficulty: An Easy, Level I paddle. Because we will launch later in the day and not be paddling fast, we may not have the boats back on our cars and ready to head home until about 3 p.m.</p> <p>Contact to RSVP and for directions: Hank Brooks jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com or 727-724-898</p>
Monday Jan 11 7pm 		<p>Club Meeting — Bill Jackson's, Pinellas Park</p> <p>New TBSK Web Site: After our old web site crashed, Hank Brooks led the analysis and rebuilding of a new site using the latest web technologies. Hank review our club's needs and how he has addressed them in constructing this new site. See Page 11 of this newsletter for an overview.</p> <p>Tampa Bay Watch, Rachel Arndt: Have you eaten at Crabby Bills? If so, your discarded oyster shells may lie in an oyster reef built by Tampa Bay Watch. In 1970, much of our bay turned lifeless from dredge and fill development. Now, Tampa Bay is one of the only urban estuaries where water quality is improving. Learn more about the health of our watery playground at our January meeting from Rachel Arndt, the Communications Coordinator of the nonprofit Tampa Bay Watch. Over the last 22 years, the professional staff of Tampa Bay Watch has leveraged over 100,000 community volunteers for estuary restoration.</p>



Trip & Event Schedule

Club Trips



Paddle Difficulty		Description
Wed Jan 13 9am 	Level III Distance: 12 miles of open water	Sunset Park (Tarpon Springs) – 3 Rooker Bar Meet at Sunset Park (Tarpon Springs) at 9am for a 9:30 Launch. We'll plan to circumnavigate 3 Rooker Bar, stopping for lunch/snack on the beach. Kayaks must be at least 15' with watertight hatches and bulkheads. Spray skirts and non-inflatable PFDs required. Contact for directions and to RSVP: Phil Sheesley philshesley@hotmail.com or 813-695-7395
Sat Jan 16 9:30am & 9am 	Level I, II/III Dist: L1: ~5 mi LII/III: ~11 mi	TBSK Paddle Picnic - Trout Creek Park, Hillsborough River The Hillsborough River is the favorite place to paddle for many club members. This is a long-boat friendly stretch. The first 2.5 miles until Lettuce Lake is undeveloped and frequent alligator sightings can be expected. Current on the Hillsborough is less than 1mph. Possible motorboats and crowds. Restroom available at Lettuce Lake Park. What to bring: \$2 parking fee. The main courses will be provided by the club, and members should bring a side dish to share. All paddlers bring water, hat, sunscreen, and wear pdf at all times. If the weather looks iffy, check our web site (www.tbsk.club) to see whether the picnic will be cancelled. (We'll send an email too, but we know sometimes emails can get delayed.) Activities coordinators: Keith & Paula Fowler red68tr250@gmail.com . Contact Trip Leader in advance to let them know you're coming. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy Paddle: Meet at the picnic area at 9:30am. This will be about 4-5 miles at a leisurely pace. All boats welcome. Contact: Hank Brooks jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com or phone 727-724- 8983 • Intermediate/Advanced: Meet at the launch area at 9am for a paddle of about 11 miles. This will be a Round Trip paddle between Trout Creek and Rotary Park at about 4mph Ave. Bring non-inflatable PFD. Trip Leader: thereseby@gmail.com or text/call 425-802-2281
Sat Jan 23 9:30am 	Level II Distance: About 7 miles, half against current	Weeki Wachi River Meet at Rodgers Park at 9:30 to be on the water by 10am and paddle to the Spring headwater and return. Bring water and lunch. When you respond please provide a cell phone number in the event of an early morning cancelation. The address of Rodgers Park is 7244 Shoal Lane Blvd., Weeki Wachee, FL 34607 Contact for directions and to RSVP: Tomsobocinski@msn.com or 727-348-1184
Sat Jan 30 9:30am 	Level II Possible wind and waves Distance 8+ miles	Sun Circle Park / Sarasota Bay Meet at the south end of Sun Circle Park near Ringling Museum in Sarasota at 9:30 AM. Launch by 10:00 AM. Paddle south along the eastern shore of Sarasota Bay to City Island, cross the bay to Bird Key, and then return to Sun Circle Park along the western shore of Sarasota Bay. Limited to boats 16 ft. or longer. What to Bring: Lunch, water, sunscreen, and a spray skirt. Please RSVP, preferably by email, and please provide us with your cell phone number in case of a change in plans due to weather. Directions to the launch site are available upon request. Contact for directions and to RSVP: Terry Proeger tproeger@comcast.net (941) 356-0854 or Carl Boettger paddle123@verizon.com (941) 723-7411



Events

Kayak Camping for TBSK Members

We have noted that many of our TBSK members are interested in camping, especially from a kayak. Those that are interested should be aware of these opportunities:

Connecting With Fellow TBSK Campers: . If you are interested in camping, please make sure to let Keith (red68tr250@gmail.com) or Hank (jbrook5@tampabay.rr.com) know. Contact either of them if you need to get in touch with all of the TBSK members interested in camping .



Training from Outfitters

Bill Jackson's Pinellas Park	727-576-4169 adventure@billjacksons.com	http://www.billjacksons.com/classes/ • Introduction to Kayaking—\$78— (call for dates)
Economy Tackle & Dolphin Paddlesports Sarasota	941-922-9671 kayaktoday@gmail.com	http://www.floridakayak.com/kayaks/kayak-classes/ • Intro to Kayaking: \$60 (Saturdays, Turtle Beach—Siesta Key) • Intermediate Kayaking—\$75 (Call for date)
Sweetwater Kayaks St Petersburg	727-570-4844 TheS- hop@SweetwaterKayaks.com	http://sweetwaterkayaks.wordpress.com/skills/ • Foundation Skills Kayak Class—\$75 (Each Saturday) • Directional Control—\$75 (Call) • Rolling Clinic (\$50) (Call) • Greenland Kayaking—\$50 to \$85 depending on skills covered (3rd & 4th Saturdays).

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Friends of the Island Parks (<http://www.islandparks.org>) supports Caladesi Island State Park and Honeymoon Island

- Osprey Trail Walks every Wed, Sat, Sun at 11
- Beach Walks every Friday at 11
- Monthly Shell Show. 3rd Saturday each month at Nature Center, 1pm
- Wildlife Status: http://www.islandparks.org/weather/wildlife_updates.htm



Florida Paddling Trails Association (FPTA). We are the steward of all of Florida's water trails. Our mission is to develop water trails, protect the environment along the trails, and be a resource and voice for paddlers. Hank Brooks is this Region's Director for FPTA. (Our region is primarily Hillsborough, Pinellas, & Manatee)



- **Best Paddle Places:** The FPTA is compiling a top 10 list of places to paddle in each region. We're all looking forward to seeing this.
- **Neptunalia:** Indian Harbour Beach, Jan 17th: 10, 6 and 4-mile courses open to SUPs, kayaks, canoes & surf skis. For more information, go to:

Society for Ethical Ecotourism: Florida SEE is looking for volunteers to help vendors become certified. See info about SEE on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FloridaSEE.org>. Info on the volunteer position can be seen here: http://www.floridasee.org/docs/Florida_SEE_Assessor_Position_Description_2015.pdf



The Adventurous Woman. Fishing, Camping, Kayaking, Hikes for women of all skill levels. Meets the 3rd Wednesday at Bill Jackson's. 6:30pm.

Paddle Florida <http://www.paddleflorida.org/>:
Dates for 2015-16 season

- [January 15-22, 2016: Florida Keys Challenge](#)
- [February 13-19, 2016: The Great Calusa Blueway](#)
- [March 12-18, 2016: Dam to the Bay on the Ochlockonee](#)
- [April 1-3, 2016: Suwannee River Paddling Festival](#)



Tampa Bay Watch: <http://www.tampabaywatch.org>

- Oyster Dome Construction: 1/6, 8, 13, 15 Tampa Bay Watch builds oyster domes onsite at the Marine Center in Tierra Verde from September through April. Ten to 20 volunteers are recruited on weekday mornings.



Keep Pinellas Beautiful strives to keep our community clean and beautiful. We have many volunteers and adoption programs available in which you can participate. <http://www.mykpb.com/>



Egmont Key Alliance (<http://www.egmontkey.info/>)

- **Workdays on the Island are the 3rd Saturday:** 1/16, 2/20, 3/19, 4/16, 5/21, 6/18, 7/16, 8/20, 9/17, 10/15, 11/19, 12/17
- **Discover the Island 2016:** 11/12 & 13



Traditional Qajaqers of the South (TRAQS): Do you want to learn how to efficiently paddle using a traditional "Skinny Stick"? Always wanted to throw a harpoon or to paddle a skin-on-frame qajaq? TRAQS is your event! March 18-20 at Lake Placid Camp in Central Florida. <http://traditionalqajaqingfest.org/>

Florida Water Environmental Association: Over 70 years after its creation, FWEA continues to make historic differences in the advancement of the water environment, science and technology, making it a leading professional water organization in Florida. Our history says a lot about the leadership, dedication and hard work. <http://www.fwea.org>

Florida Paddlers Roundsvous: December 2-4 2016 (over a year from now), Flamingo Campground, Everglades National Park: <http://www.bushpaddlers.org/Rendezvous.html>

TBSK Officers: Elections for TBSK officer positions for 2016 were held at our Holiday Party in December. People who have volunteered for 2016 include:

- ♦ **President:** John Marek
- ♦ **Vice President:** Therese Eby
- ♦ **Secretary/ Treasurer:** Eileen Burns
- ♦ **Trip Coordinator:** Hank Brooks
- ♦ **Activities Coordinators:** Keith & Paula Fowler
- ♦ **Membership Coordinator:** Robin Newcomer
- ♦ **Safety/ Training Coordinator:** Tom Sobocinski
- ♦ **Newsletter Editor:** Bryan Katz
- ♦ **Web Master:** Bill Biles

These people have volunteered to dedicate their time and effort to help TBSK continue to be the most successful Kayak club in the southeastern states. Please remember to thank them for their dedication.

Rattlesnake Key Circumnavigation (Dec. 9)

Story by Terry Proeger

The launch site for this trip was off the Rt 19 causeway a couple of miles south of the Skyway Bridge. Seven kayakers paddled west in Terra Ceia Bay with Anna Maria Island at the Bay Inlet visible in the distance. One paddler did not arrive before the launch time, but later caught up with the group, exhibiting some strong forward paddling skills in the process.

Our paddle took us west toward the mouth of Terra Ceia Bay, then through a mangrove channel on the tip of Rattlesnake Key, and then east along the Tampa Bay side of Rattlesnake Key with the Skyway in the distance.

We stopped for lunch on one of the mangrove islands in San Miquel Bay, just west of the Skyway. It would have been a very pleasant spot except for the trash left by previous parties. What is the mindset of people who leave trash in their wake? We each took at least one can or bottle, leaving our lunch spot cleaner than we had found it.

We returned to Terra Ceia Bay and our launch site via a beautiful mangrove tunnel that ran between San Miquel Bay and Terra Ceia Bay. Total trip distance was a little over 10 miles. Co-leaders: Carl Boettger and Terry Proeger



George Burns Obituary

George Burns passed away on Dec. 4, 2015 after a brief but determined battle with lung cancer. He was proud to have been awarded with me the Ed Styron Award this year for service to the club for his work on the board of directors, as TBSK's Trip Coordinator in 2015, on the club's website, on the New Year's Day paddle, in the trip leader training, and as my trusty "sweep" on almost every paddle I have led for the club since 2010.

Some of my fondest memories of kayaking were in those huge tandem kayaks that we paddled together: the green one we named Nessie and the red one, Rory. George called our paddles in those boats "*dancing with my partner.*" The tandem paddling skills that we demonstrated were the same ones that supported us through 37 years of marriage: a shared goal, good communication, lots of practice, perseverance, mutual love and respect, and a willingness to bite our tongues. I will miss him greatly.

Eileen Burns



2015 Trip Leader Summary and Appreciation By George Burns

We are fortunate living in the Tampa Bay area where we can enjoy sea kayaking almost year round; and TBSK is very fortunate to have a great cross section of kayak trip leaders who actually enjoy taking members on explorations. Our variety of opportunities include cool water springs such as WeekiWachee, Chassahowitzka, and the Rainbow River as well as naturally occurring streams like the Myakka, Alafia, and the Hillsborough. We are fortunate to have the Pinellas Wildlife Preserve and the all-weather facilities of Fort Desoto, Fred Howard and Veterans park. Our access to the Gulf of Mexico, Boca Ciega Bay and the Intracoastal Waterway, Davis Island, downtown Tampa and St. Petersburg truly makes this one of the finest places to sea kayak in Florida.

TBSK trip leaders led 76 trips in 2015. These trips included more than 370 members and non-members. Although we had scheduled 11 paddle picnics, where the club would lead three different levels of trips, because of bad weather only 8 were held. We'll do better in 2016. In addition to the scheduled trips, trip leaders sponsored a significant number of impromptu trips. Impromptu trips differ from the scheduled trips only in that they are not included on the monthly calendar and are frequently only advertised a day or two in advance. Generally this rapid phasing is precipitated by good weather and the combination of tides and currents favorable to a specific trip.

I would like to thank all of the TBSK trip leaders for their dedicated service and would especially like to recognize several who have provided exemplary service.

I would like to give a special recognition Hank Brooks, our president, who has contributed 18 trips to the cause in 2015. Hank loves to lead easy trips on our many rivers and streams. He thus gives beginning paddlers the opportunity to socialize and develop their kayaking skill set.

A very special thank you goes out to John Marek our training coordinator. John has led 7 skill development sessions and 4 separate trips. It takes a very special talent to help people learn the subtle skills of sea kayaking.

As you all know this report should not just be about the number of trips which our leaders sponsor, but about the dedication it takes for Trip Leaders to step forward month after month so we can conduct paddle picnics. We are fortunate to have a tight cadre of leaders who can be called upon with little notice to step forward and help out their club.

Those leaders who have led 5 or more club trips this year include: Eileen Burns; Terry Proeger; Jim Greenhalgh, who led an excursion to the the Florida Keys; Phil Sheesley, who loves to go for a spin along the coast, and our new training coordinator Tom Sobocinski, whose goal is to bring a training program to each paddle picnic in 2016.

I would like to recognize not just those who have led a great number of trips, but all of our trip leaders who have practiced rescue skills, taken training and dedicated a significant amount of time to planning safe, rewarding and fun trips for the club.

Andy Bartley
Carl Boettger
Hank Brooks
Eileen Burns

Therese Eby
Keith Fowler
Jim Greenhalgh
Roy Horgrebe

Kevin Kenny
Mary Mangiapia
John Marek
Gilbert Muller

Brian Page
Charlene Proeger
Terry Proeger
Phil Sheesley

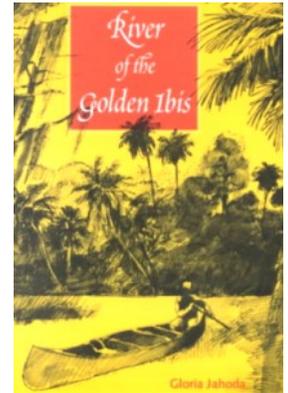
Tom Sobocinski
Al Tillson
Harry Tobin
Robert Yarbough

In addition to some of the prettiest water and most explorable islands in the U.S., our club already has one of the most important resources available: a sound group of leaders who give freely of their time, taking turns to help the club. Please consider joining them and becoming a trip leader to help keep our club vibrant and growing.



Carl Navarra Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Newsletter

Terry Proeger won the Carl Navarra award this year for the seven articles he published this year covering Emerson Point / Rattlesnake Key, Maximo Park, Myakka River, Rainbow River, Wilderness Preserve, Egmont Key, and Shell Key. The winner of this award gets a copy of Gloria Jahoda’s highly regarded history of the Hillsborough River: The River of the Golden Ibis



Ed Styron Member of the Year Award for 2015

Each year we award the Ed Styron Award to the TBSK members who have made outstanding contributions to the club for that year.

This year we noticed that a couple, within our club were making great contributions to improving our club. They both volunteered for club officer positions – one as Trip Coordinator and one as Secretary/ Treasurer. Eileen has also been a Trip Leader for a number of trips - leading over four trips per year.

When our web site broke down and we could not send email to members, they did not just sit there and say, “Web site is down, somebody fix it!”, they took the initiative to create a temporary mailing list until we could get our new site working. In the search for a new site, they were in the “front row” helping make sound decisions on the board.



President Hank presenting the award to Eileen Burns

So it is with great pleasure that we award the Ed Styron Award for 2016 to George and Eileen Burns.



TBSK 2015 Holiday Party





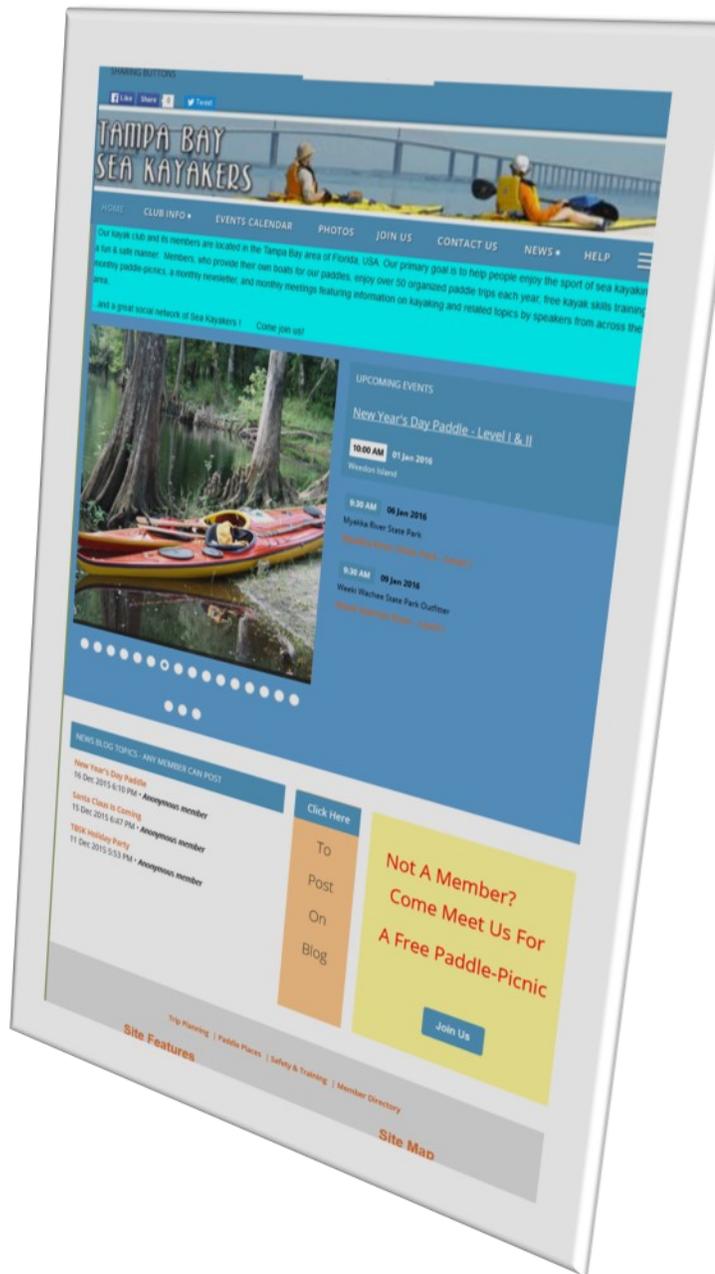
New TBSK Web Site Features

By Hank Brooks

We are very close to launching our new TBSK web site. At our Jan 11 meeting, we will have a demo of the site to show what it can do. Below are a list of the site features, many of which are unique:

Features are listed alphabetically:

- **Blog:** All members will be able to post to the TBSK news blog. Other members can then post comments on the blog articles.
- **Directory of Members:** This is a list of all members and their contact info. It is available to members only. The directory also shows any personal photos you have uploaded to your Profile and your personal picture – if you choos
- **Event List:** TBSK events will be entered by the Trip Coordinator with all the details about the trip.
- **Events Calendar:** All posted events are automatically posted on the Events Calendar. If you click on the event on the calendar, it takes you directly to the Event List, so you can see the details. It also has a feature to enable you to download the event to your personal calendar (e.g M.S. Outlook).
- **Event Registration:** If you want to go on a trip, you can either send the trip leader an email (the old fashioned way) or push the Register button on the Event List and up pops an email form which you can send to the trip leader. You will also be sent an email announcing the event. There is a link in the email which enables you to send an email to the trip leader to tell him/ her that you are coming.
- **Email Notifications:** The system automatically send out emails to remind you that your dues need to be paid. We can also set up event notices in advance for each paddle and to announce that the newsletter is ready.
- **Help:** A button which gives members help with our web site.
- **Membership Renewal:** You will now renew your membership in My Profile
- **Membership Renew Message:** When you need to pay your dues, the system automatically sends you an email reminder. A message will also appear in bottom right of your screen.
- **Membership Status:** Your membership status and the date you must pay your dues is in My Profile
- **Member Directory:** This is a list of all members with their contact info and is only visible to TBSK members
- **My Profile:** From My Profile you can perform most of the functions with our club. You can:
 - o Renew your dues
 - o Change your contact info (e.g your email address)
 - o Unsubscribe to event emails and email blasts (e.g announcing that the newsletter is ready)
 - o Upload photos to your personal on-line file
 If you click on another person’s profile, there is a feature to send them an email.
- **Newsletters:** This is where you can find current and past newsletters.
- **Personal Calendar Link:** Puts events on your personal calendar.
- **Photos:** TBSK Photos are shown on Slide Show You can download personal photos to a Photo Album which you have created under you’re My Profile.
- **Site Map:** Explains how the web site is organized to help you find things.
- **Site Features:** Lists all the features of the site and where they can be found
- **Slide Show:** A slide show of pictures from the TBSK album. Located on the Home Page
- **Upcoming Events:** A list of the next three upcoming events.





Everglades Challenge 2016

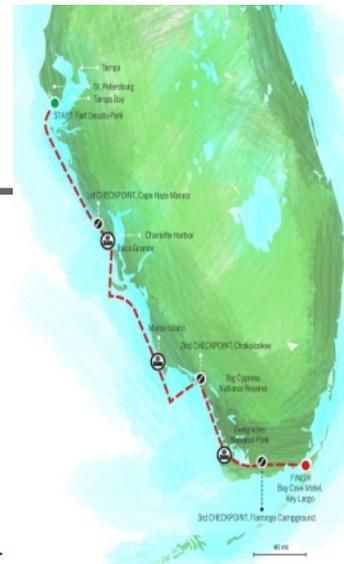
This year's Everglades Challenge will begin on March 5th. Andy Bartley will be available at our January 11th TBSK Club meeting to talk through this event. The Everglades Challenge is an unsupported, expedition style adventure race for kayaks, canoes, and small boats. The distance is roughly 300 nautical miles depending on your course selection. There is a time limit of 8 days or less. Your safety and well being are completely up to you.

From their web site:

WARNING! This is a Dangerous Event! This is a long, grueling race that is extremely demanding, both physically and mentally. Entrants are encouraged to consult a physician to ensure that they are in good health and can withstand the rigors that participation entails. The physical demands of the race, combined with sleep deprivation, heat, cold, water, dehydration, and exhaustion, often cause participants to become disoriented. Amnesia, hallucinations, hypothermia, and other debilitating conditions are not uncommon. Such effects can impair judgement, a condition especially dangerous for the solo paddler or sailor.

Unsupported means that there are no safety boats or support crews to help you during the race. You are not allowed to have a support crew follow you or meet you during the race. It is OK to have family or friends meet you at the official checkpoints, but they cannot provide anything other than emotional support. You must carry the same type of equipment and supplies that you would carry on a major expedition lasting 4 weeks or more. Camping equipment, food, water, safety, communication, etc. is required.

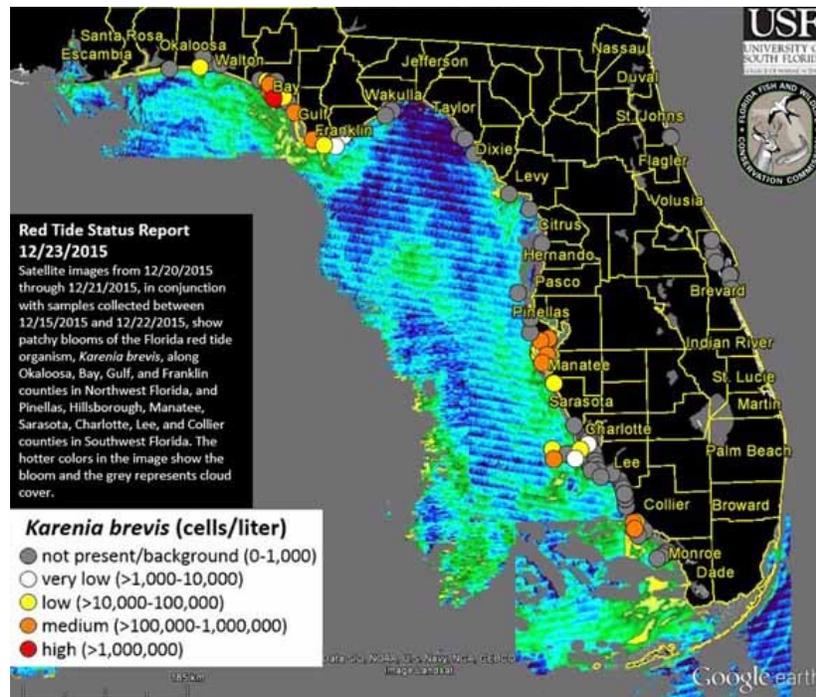
You should be an expert kayaker and/or sailor before you consider this challenge.



Red Tide Status (December 23, 2015)

Based on the most recent available satellite images and analysis of water samples, patchy blooms of *Karenia brevis*, the Florida red tide organism, persist along Okaloosa, Bay, Gulf, and Franklin counties in Northwest Florida and Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte, Lee, and Collier counties in Southwest Florida.

Forecasts by the [USF-FWC Collaboration for Prediction of Red Tides](#) shows western movement of bloom waters off Okaloosa County and little net movement of bloom waters along Bay and Gulf counties in Northwest Florida, and little net movement of bloom waters in Southwest Florida.





Gator Safari on the Hillsborough River (Dec. 16)

Story Bryan Katz Photos by Bryan, Therese Eby, & Katherine Adamson

If Therese had warned me that we were going to be paddling past over 30 gators, I'm not sure I would have gone. I'm sure that native Floridians think of these animals as if they were gerbils. "Oh! Look! A cute little gerbil is swimming towards my boat. Oops! She disappeared under the water. I wonder where she went." Look, Floridians, it's one thing if a gerbil disappears under your boat. It's a whole other thing when a 10 foot prehistoric reptile does it. Yeesh.

By the time we finished, though, I was becoming Floridianized. Gators just became part of the scene. So don't worry if you hear you're going to be paddling through a flock of gators. Well, I guess it's ok to worry a little. But not enough to scare you away.

We met Jane and Katherine Adamson at Trout Creek Park, left Therese's 250,000 mile Ford Wagon in the lot, and shuttled over to Sergeant Park. Through this part of the Lower Hillsborough Park, we'll be paddling about 4 miles west from Sergeant Park to Trout Creek as the crow flies. But crows don't fly along the river, so we paddled a little over 8 miles for the same distance.

Jane, it turns out, lives maybe a mile or so beyond our take-out. She frequently paddles the stretch of the river near her home. When she saw this trip listed, she just had to explore this upstream stretch. And her daughter was visiting from the remote wilds of Denver, so Katherine joined us as well.

The river adopts three characters through this stretch. The upper stretch down to Morris Bridge Park is a somewhat wide but slow stream. It didn't take a great deal of maneuvering up there. Then, after Morris Bridge the river decided to narrow down and meander a bit more. Still no current here, but it took a bit more control to maneuver through the stream and past the gators. Then about a mile above the take-out the river opens up wide, looking more like a lake than a River with about as much current.

Oh, yeah. The gators. We saw all kinds and sizes. There was a kindergarten of 5 babies resting on a log. There were a couple of 14-footers soaking up the sun which, Therese observed, helps these cold blooded beasts digest their food. And many many in between. For me, the few we saw swimming towards us were probably the most unnerving. I hope that even Floridians would understand why that's the case.

Oh, almost forgot. The gators didn't seem to scare the birds away. We were never out of sight of them. And Therese seemed to know at least a little about each one.



Therese photographed this gator just as he was diving into the water



Neither gator nor bird nor human. But we saw a lot of these.



Roseate Spoonbill

Vulture



One flock of Egrets led us down several miles of the river as the kept trying to escape us by flying downstream.

Probably a Great Blue Heron*



*If Therese were writing this, she would know for sure.

TBSK Club Info

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TBSK MEMBER CLASSIFIED ADS

For sale. Contact Sharan 727 868 6470.
Sunrazz@aol.com (exp 5/31)

- **Perception Carolina** 14.5 ft., 24" wide, 39.5x21.5 cockpit 300lb.cap. grad.blue color \$375
- **Necky** 17ft, 25 w cockpit 36x17 Kevlar double rudder pedals, yellow/white \$650

For Sale: 17Ft 2", Valley Pintail kayak, fiberglass, turquoise top white bottom. Skeg works. \$950 negotiable, contact Marilyn at gor-doj48@yahoo.com or 727-612-1713, (exp 6/30)

Classified Ads Policy: Any TBSK member may place a classified ad. The ad is free for the first six months. After six months ad expires. May be maintained for \$5 per month. Please notify the editor when item is sold.

Treasurer's Report

10/31 BALANCE	\$5914
INCOME	
Memberships Dues	\$427
EXPENSES	
Picnics	\$146
Ending Balance	\$6195

Welcome New Member!

Katie Edwards



www.facebook.com/TampaBaySeaKayakers



Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers Become A Member

You may join TBSK online using your web browser. Just go to the link <http://www.clubkayak.com/tbsk> and click Register at the top of the page. Pay club dues at the end of the registration process.

To join the Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers by mail; use the TBSK brochure found at kayak shops in the Tampa Bay area, contact the membership coordinator (contact information is on the preceding page), or write to the address below and request a membership application and waiver of liability form.
Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers, P.O. Box 8682, Seminole, FL 33775

The application and waiver form are also available at TBSK meetings held at Bill Jacksons Store on the second Monday of each month at 7:00pm.

We hope to see you at our next TBSK event.



**Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers
P.O. Box 8682
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