

## The River Connects Us All

Lower Mississippi River Dispatch No 344

Tuesday, April 26, 2015

### Intro:

*We celebrated Earth Day by doing the work we do: helping protect our most endangered habitats by creating stewards in the next generation.*

*We're just returning from a 5-day trip with 37 8th graders from the Environmental Adventure School, which has a 20-year history of outdoor education. I am very proud of one of our newest Mighty Quapaws Valencia Metcalfe who last week arose to the challenge and became the next in our long line of Big Canoe on Big River Captains. She joins other legendary Mighty Quapaws like Clifton Carr, James "Woody" Sykes, Jeremy "Popeye" Hayes, and Oscar "Ojay" Donaby in the distinction of becoming outdoor leaders on the biggest river in North America!*

*Osiyo Valencia Metcalfe! We send our blessing to the four winds in recognition of your achievement! Meanwhile across the pond a large group of paddlers made a marathon effort in support of Quapaw Canoe Company Flood Relief [#Quapaw24BigPaddle](#). Keep reading below.*

### In this issue:

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- Grand Opening of Quapaw Vicksburg
- Quapaw 24 Big Paddle on the Surrey River Wey
- 1st Big River Expedition 2016: Mississippi Matthew Burdine
- Mark River Tribute to John Fewkes

## - - - Bluz Cruz 2016 - - -

*Quapaw Canoe Company has open seats in our big canoes for 2016 Bluz Cruz!*

*For signup go to: <http://www.bluzcruz.com/quapaw.htm>.*

This weekend is Bluz Cruz 2016! Blue Cruz is the classic 22-mile race ending up on the Yazoo River in downtown Vicksburg. Join the fun at one of the great races along the Lower Mississippi River! Begins at 8:00 am on Saturday, April 30th at Madison Parish Port, LA, and ends in Vicksburg, MS at the river front.

Quapaw Canoe Company has open seats in our big canoes for 2016 Bluz Cruz. The race fee will go to support the Service Over Self Organization. Most people paddle their own canoe, kayak or paddleboard. But if you want to join 10 others in an unforgettable team experience, join the teams in one of the big canoes! The Big Canoe offering

includes registration and everything you'll need in the canoe for the day. For signup go to: <http://www.bluzcruz.com/quapaw.htm>.

For more information about Bluz Cruz, please go to: <http://www.bluzcruz.com/>

### **- - - Quapaw Vicksburg - - -**

This weekend is also the Grand Opening of Quapaw Vicksburg! River Angel Layne Logue has decided to open the most recent outpost of the Quapaw Canoe Company for guided adventures on the Lower Mississippi River in the Vicksburg area. For canoeing, kayaking or paddle boarding on the big river in the Vicksburg area contact Layne Logue at [layne@island63.com](mailto:layne@island63.com) or call [662-529-7354](tel:662-529-7354). Our paddles up to Brother Layne and the newest outpost of the Quapaw Canoe Company! Quapaw Canoe Company is dedicated to providing access to the wild splendors of the Lower Mississippi River by paddle power.

### **- - - About Layne Logue - - -**

Layne Logue is the leader and River Guide at Quapaw Canoe Company – Vicksburg Outpost. He was born in New Orleans, Louisiana (Chalmatte) and moved to Vicksburg, Mississippi when his father got a job with the Corps of Engineers. Fishing, hunting, and playing outside was his childhood...and he still plays outside today. Layne also lived in Saudi Arabia for five years (age 9-14) when his father volunteered for an overseas tour. He is currently a Civil Engineer working with the Mississippi Dept. Of Transportation. Layne has always loved the Mississippi River and once he found paddling and John Ruskey, his life was forever changed to support the Mississippi River and all life on it. Layne is also a River Angel and helps the long distance paddlers with providing them a place to stay and resupplying them. Layne is a Bluz Cruz Committee member and helps coordinate the 22 mile Canoe & Kayak Mississippi River race held in Vicksburg every April. He has an eagle eye when it comes to spotting wildlife, and uses his passion of photography to document and share the beauty of the River. Layne's goal is working towards a healthy thriving Mississippi River and providing transportation for people to see the magic that occurs on it. The Mississippi River flows through his heart.

### **- - - My Brotha Mad Dog - - -**

#### **My Brotha Mad Dog by Mark "River" Peoples**

My first year as a guide for Quapaw Canoe Company, I met him, on my first trip from the Helena Harbor. A pleasant man with a cheerful demeanor, but a strong presence, gave me my first complement.

"I knew something great was going to happen to this company..."

I never forget the feelings in my heart at that moment. I knew the Delta was my new home.

That was the type of man he was. He never hesitated to show a person their qualities, but was willing to give constructive criticism when needed. He gave me a thesaurus, that I still can't figure out how to use. He gave me a book for writers that help sharpen my skills and helped me with my approach to stories. He was the anchor for the company who had more stories about the Delta and its history than locals who grew up here. He had an appetite for knowledge and continued to learn throughout his life. He had a list of " suggestions" for me to write about, and I'm sad , he didn't live to read them.

Just like the rivers that flow, the meanders of life are ever-changing, causing us to re-adjust our purpose and vision constantly, humbling us along the way. This life is fragile and fleeting, so you must make the best of it daily.

Mad Dog did that and I shall also.

Mark River

### - - - Quapaw 24 Big Paddle - - -

Sunday morning on the River Wey in Surrey, England, a big group of paddlers with the [#Quapaw24BigPaddle](#) finished up their 24 hour adventure in support of Quapaw Canoe Company! Inspired by the outdoor leader Dave Cornthwaite, Chris Barnes, Andy McLean, David Ardill, Tamsin Shakespeare, and a host of others from over the Atlantic made a 24-hour marathon paddle on their River Wey in our behalf. We are deeply touched by this show of compassion for our losses in the Sunflower River Flood of March 2016. We at Quapaw Canoe Company are humbled and inspired by this act of strength and generosity from [Chris Barnes](#) and [Andy McLean](#). You guys are helping us get back on our feet. We hope in some way... that further on down the river of time... that our work will help others find rejuvenation in the wilderness... what goes around comes around!

We are approaching our **May 9th deadline** for this fundraising effort. You too can join our English/Kiwi/Aussie friends and share your support for the cause, by giving here: <https://www.generosity.com/emerg.../quapaw-canoe-flood-recovery>

For more photos of the Lower Miss and more reading, go to [www.rivergator.org](http://www.rivergator.org)

The Lower Mississippi River Dispatch

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