

## CanoeSki Spring News -- April 2005

Greetings to Everyone!

**A** blast of hot air hit Saskatoon a little over a week ago and drove the ice off the South Saskatchewan River. Paddlers are getting back on the water. Prairie crocuses are poking up along the City's Meewasin Trail. Pelican Watch contestants are keeping a close eye on the weir for signs of the first early-bird pelican to land. All signs point to spring's arrival and time to launch a new canoeing season!

**CanoeSki** is launching the season with a replay of a canoeing-related activity: our navigation course taking place in the "wilds" around Saskatoon. This *almost* new program was a rip-roarin' success last year, so it's coming again in mid-May. The GPS has not made the map & compass obsolete, only more intriguing. If you want to get in on the intrigue, follow the link in What's New on the CanoeSki site. Next in the spring line-up are time-tested canoeing lessons starting at the beginning of June. It's a great opportunity to pick up some paddling tips to make your summer canoe trip more enjoyable!

**So** what is really new? Saskatchewan's centennial is and an ambitious group of paddlers are celebrating in historic canoeing style. CanoeSki is helping sponsor the Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society's team in the Centennial Canoe Quest -- a 31-team, 1000 km marathon race down the Churchill River in fur trade style voyageur canoes.

**Speaking** of the Churchill River, a not so new threat is becoming increasingly imminent -- logging in the watershed with no protection for the river in place. This is an abhorrent prospect, indeed, a potential desecration of one of the most significant and most beautiful heritage waterways in the world. Read more about the problems with land use planning in the north and the Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society's Churchill River Campaign.

**On** a positive note, a couple of delightful stories about canoeing the Churchill River came out of the Women & Waves tour last August. The one by Saskatoon journalist Amy Jo Ehman first appeared as a full page spread in the Saskatoon Star Phoenix. The story by Gail Streberg, a Camrose nurse, is debuting on the CanoeSki forum -- *Canoeing Tales of Discovery*.

Best wishes to everyone for a fine paddling season in a Province that has a lot to celebrate!

Cliff Speer

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