



The Nankoweap

by Mike Anderson

In previous issues of *Nature Notes* (Spring 2004) and *Canyon Views* (Summer 2004) I have identified several categories of Grand Canyon's inner-canyon trails and have written more about its Native American trails and routes. In this issue I relate the early history of the Nankoweap Trail, a Native American route improved by European Americans for a specific purpose. Today, the Nankoweap is a remote, rugged, and rewarding backcountry adventure for experienced canyon hikers.

In 1870 John Wesley Powell and Jacob Hamblin, guided by a Southern Paiute leader, Chuarrumpeak, visited Grand Canyon's North Rim in search of routes to the Colorado River; they wanted to cache supplies for Powell's imminent second river trip. Powell had noticed and named the geologic "Great Unconformity" on his first river trip in 1869. Reaching Point Imperial with Hamblin the following year, he once again gazed down upon the tilted Precambrian strata so prominent above Red Canyon but missing, for the most part, downstream.

In November 1882 Powell returned with another geologist, Charles Doolittle Walcott, who was charged with the task of studying the peek-a-boo strata, what we call today the Grand Canyon Series or Supergroup. Walcott would later publish his conclusions in the *Bulletin of the Geological Society of America* (1889), and in 1894, would replace Powell as director of the U.S. Geological Survey, but in the very cold, blustery winter of 1882-83, it was all trailblazing, fieldwork, and frostbite.

Walcott's adventure began at "Caine's Spring," today's Kane Ranch in House

Rock Valley abutting the East Kaibab Monocline. On November 12, Powell, Walcott, and perhaps half a dozen Southern Paiutes, Navajos, and white residents of the Arizona Strip started from the spring for Saddle Mountain, their wagons loaded with tools and supplies; they established a base camp near the Nankoweap trailhead the same day. Building the

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Inscription at a site described by Walcott as a base camp for the winter season. The date is November 1882, the month the camp was established. The initials "J. HA" may have been left by Joseph Hamblin, son of the Mormon trailblazer Jacob Hamblin. NPS photograph by Mathieu Brown

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trail apparently took only two weeks, according to Walcott's journal, which noted that the base camp was moved "down the trail 1200 feet" on November 18, again "down the cañon a mile or more" on November 21, and finally to the Nankoweap drainage bed on November 24. The latter camp would serve through early February as their supply depot.

Walcott needed considerable support to complete his task. Among those who helped were local residents Joseph Hamblin (son of Jacob Hamblin), Brigham Young Jr. (son of the Mormon prophet), John F. Brown, Achilles Brown, and Charles H. Haskell, who ported supplies from Kanab, set up temporary camps, and helped build trails from the Nankoweap Basin south and west as the survey progressed. Others present during the exploration included John R. Stewart (Mormon bishop of Kanab), Daniel Hamblin, Jack Hillers (photographer for Powell's second river expedition), Victor Mindeleff (U.S.G.S. anthropologist),

George W. Shutt, and two "Indians" named Billy Thompson and John. Since many of these men were Mormons, they may have left journals that could reveal greater detail of the season's work than found in Walcott's somewhat sketchy diary.

The newly constructed trails to the south and west of Nankoweap Basin may well have combined with the Nankoweap and Tanner trails to facilitate transport of stolen horses in later years, all of these trails collectively known as the Horsethief Trail. Walcott specifically writes of building trail over the saddle east of Nankoweap Butte to Kwagunt Valley, perhaps the same path used by today's river runners, and establishing a camp in the Kwagunt drainage. He also mentions building an inland trail to Chuar Valley (named for Powell's 1870 guide), but not along the river between Kwagunt and Chuar because the men "failed to find a practicable route." They established two camps in lower Chuar and another in its upper reaches, where Walcott spent much of

December and January, as well as a camp at the mouth of Carbon Creek, a trail and camp atop the Tonto Platform south of Chuar, and a trail within Lava Canyon to its mouth, where they established yet another camp. Walcott writes of continuing downriver along the Tonto Platform to a "long point south of Vishnu's Temple" and finding a route down to the river there. His notes further indicate that he may have traveled as far as Asbestos Canyon, finding another route to the river between Asbestos and Hance Rapid.

There is no doubt that in November 1882, Powell, Walcott, et al., built the Nankoweap Trail atop or near a Native American path from the Esplanade as far as the Nankoweap drainage bottom. The fact that they managed to build eight miles of trail suitable for pack and saddle stock in two weeks strongly suggests that they had a fairly good path to begin with, and spent most of their time widening it to two or three feet, clearing boulders and vegetation, building a few retaining walls at critical points, and perhaps building short sections of new trail to reduce the worst grades. The resultant trail was adequate, if not comfortable, for stock. Walcott writes that he and Powell "rode" down to the river, and that "Satan fell & was badly injured" (I presume Satan was a horse or mule, not one of the Latter-Day Saints). But is today's alignment the same as that of the trail constructed 122 years ago?

P. T. Reilly writes of a mineral rush to the Nankoweap Basin in the late nineteenth century, and, in fact, there are numerous prospecting sites and artifacts found in the lower basin. Prospectors may well have cleared or improved Walcott's trail, but it is unlikely they would have spent time and energy to realign it unless the shipment of ore required a more amenable grade, and there is no record or evidence that these men actually shipped ore. I have found



nothing that suggests others entered the Nankoweap Valley with a reason to reconstruct trail, so I believe today's alignment is original.

On my trip from the top to the bottom of the trail in April 2004 with Mathieu Brown and others working on the park's backcountry management plan, I found, in the Esplanade below the trail-head, dilapidated remnants of a retaining wall made of rubble boulders, lengths of rusted iron, and barbed wire, materials not likely to have been used by NPS trail crews. The Supai Group of sedimentary strata tilts down toward the river in this area, and ledges form perfect five-mile-long ramps for most of the distance to the drainage bottom. Along today's trail in the Supai, I found inscriptions from the early 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, that confirm the upper trail's alignment for at least the past sixty years.

I am less confident of the three-mile segment below Tilted Mesa from the top of the Redwall

down to the creek because it required time and purposeful construction to achieve the relatively gentle grade, more work than seems possible in less than two weeks. Still, there are several remnants of dry-laid rubble retaining walls that appear old, and although records show that the NPS trail crew worked this section about fifteen years ago, these walls are accompanied by blast fractures in the nearby rock. Blasting cliff faces is not a maintenance technique generally employed by NPS crews.

If you are thinking of backpacking the Nankoweap Trail, enjoy its history and magnificent views, but consider that it has had its share of fatalities and near misses over the years. The trail along the Supai is overgrown and boulder strewn, and one small segment is barely twelve inches wide along a nasty drop-off. Below the Redwall it is steep and slippery. There is not a drop of water until reaching the creek eight miles below, and hikers have been known to lose their

way below the Supai. If you make it that far, the several-mile stroll along the creek to the river will make the entire effort worthwhile.

Mike Anderson is the Grand Canyon National Park trails archeologist and the author of several books on the history of the canyon. He thanks Jim Knipmeyer for providing a copy of Charles Walcott's diary.

Above: Although taken from a higher perspective, Young was clearly sketching from some point along the trail. NPS photograph by Mike Anderson

Facing page: Brigham Young Jr.'s 1883 sketch of Nankoweap Butte and the route (center, over saddle) to Kwagunt, Chuar, and other side canyons of the Colorado River. This is possibly the same route as the Horsethief Trail.

GCFI Takes to the Colorado River

by Mike Buchheit

Hance at 5,000 cfs. In Flagstaff java joints, this cryptic phrase would speak volumes to the ubiquitous river-running patrons. In layperson's terms, it means running a very large rapid at dangerously low water. Though not the first watery challenge to greet our October 2004 Grand Canyon Field Institute (GCFI) float trip, it was definitely the most daunting. Hance Rapid is a stinker at any water level, but given the meager release from Glen Canyon Dam, this white-water stretch appeared to be more rock than rapid.

After a lengthy scout for a relatively safe route through the rapid, our six-boat flotilla bobbed breathlessly forward. With surgical precision we tricked and dodged the rapid's legendary obstacles before emerging damp and elated in the choppy water below. While looking back at the ascending staircase of froth, I realized I was only a few short miles from ending my journey at Phantom Ranch, a premature departure that would leave the remaining hundred-plus miles to my twenty-two trip mates.

Already, fresh memories took their first awkward steps, destined to grow old around campfires and

barstools. Many were courtesy of the remarkable instructors with whom I had spent the last eight days: writer Ann Zwinger reading a passage about eagles she had observed years ago on Nankoweap Delta, just a talon or two from our cozy campfire; veteran boatman Dick McCallum recalling his early days rowing for Georgie White in pre-dam Glen and Grand canyons as we slowly floated past the spooky test holes of the abandoned Marble Canyon damsite; geologist Christa Sadler enthusiastically sharing the ancient secrets of fossilized blue-green algae only minutes after treating us to an a cappella rendering of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" in the cathedral-like confines of Carbon Canyon; historian Mike Anderson leading us to an 1889-vintage inscription left by the oarsman Peter Hansbrough in honor of a drowned patron of his exploratory trip, only days before meeting the same fate himself; archaeologist Greg Woodall pointing out ancestral Puebloan grinding holes worn into the living rock at the mouth of North Canyon and the surrounding "grocery store" that sustained them; Gulliver-sized botanist Dan Hall delicately examining fragile native grasses he has worked hard to protect; and Lilliputian-sized

biologist Ally Martinez describing firsthand the park's high-profile attempts to protect humpback chubs, endangered fish that were no doubt fat and happy in the chocolate-brown Little Colorado River that oozed past.

My premature reminiscing of a trip still in progress was halted by an old nemesis—Sockdolager Rapid. This punchy stretch of white water pinched by towering walls of Vishnu Schist had provided some of my wildest rides during trips past. Today it seemed exceptionally ornery. Up ahead, Ally's oar boat crested a monstrous wave, paused briefly, and then disappeared safely on the other side. Good news for her, less so for us in our much-smaller paddle boat.

With Christa shouting commands from the rear, we six paddlers tried to gain enough momentum to meet the approaching wall of water on our terms. On the far side of a roller coaster trough, the wave rose to greet us—its foamy façade devouring my view in every direction. I felt the boat buckle as our



forward progress came to a grinding halt. The wave broke over my head. The river pulled me under, helpless as a rag doll.

Silence. Cold. Motion. Silence. My life jacket finally propelled me back to the surface. Sight and sound joined the fight. Waves crashed in every direction, thrashing me about in the muddy torrent. I laughed, I fretted, I laughed again. Surrounded by the unfamiliar, my psyche tried feverishly to plug in the appropriate emotion. As a boulder glanced against my shin, I settled on elevated concern. The temptation to swim the entire rapid quickly vanished. I spotted our boat, still afloat, and realized with some embarrassment that I was the only swimmer. There was little time to blush however, as I took another chilly wave from behind. The boat reached my position and fellow paddler Stan grabbed my vest and yanked me over the bow. It wasn't graceful, but I was safe for the moment.

Sans paddle, I rode out the remainder of the rapid collapsed on the floor of the boat like a glistening harbor seal, buzzing from a mixture of exhaustion

and adrenaline. Once safely downstream, I endured some well-deserved ribbing from all concerned.

A fellow passenger explained that Sockdolager Rapid was named by John Wesley Powell's men in 1869, using the terminology for a knockout punch, common slang in Powell's day. She went on to explain that John Wilkes Booth shot President Lincoln in Ford's Theater at the very moment this word was uttered on stage. I was too rattled to draw any comparisons between Lincoln's demise and the drubbing I had just withstood. Instead, my mind returned to the river itself, now lapping peacefully at the side tubes of the boat.

It occurred to me that in all my years rafting, hiking, and backpacking in the canyon, I had never spent more than a second or two in the famously frigid river. Its strength and tenacity had either been inferred by its handiwork or channeled through the floor of my watercraft. In particular I have always been a bit skeptical that this river, any river, could carve Grand Canyon in a mere six million years. My morning dip had scoured any

doubts about the river's muscle in this regard. I found myself "back on the horse" for the remaining few miles, paddling through Grapevine and Zoroaster rapids unscathed. After bidding the group farewell at the Phantom Ranch boat beach, I turned uphill on the Bright Angel Trail—a nine-mile affair that would deposit me close to home. My appreciation for the ease with which our flotilla "sliced" through the canyon's assorted rock strata was heightened by a heart-pumping march to the rim.

I was already in my shower about the time the others were running Horn Creek Rapid—another demanding low-water run. At 5,000 cfs, I'm not sure which of us was wetter.

Mike Buchheit is the director of the Grand Canyon Field Institute.

GCFI's 2005 classes are filling quickly. We encourage you to contact us soon if you are planning to join us for your next Grand Canyon learning adventure. Call (866) 471-4435 or visit our Web site at www.grandcanyon.org/fieldinstitute.

Canyon Country Community Lecture Series Schedule

Prescott, January 16, 1:00–3:00 p.m.: Artist and long-time inner-canyon resident Bruce Aiken will discuss the history of Grand Canyon art.

Flagstaff, January 26, 6:30–8:30 p.m.: *Arizona Highways Magazine* photo editor Richard Maack will discuss how to tell compelling stories with engaging photographs.

Flagstaff, February 16, 6:30–8:30 p.m.: Folklorist Hal Cannon will present songs and stories of the Grand Canyon.

Prescott, February 20, 1:00–3:00 p.m.: Grand Canyon Field Institute instructor Sally Underwood will give an overview of the diverse

plant communities found in the park, including their ceremonial and healing uses by indigenous peoples from past to present.

Flagstaff, March 16, 6:30–8:30 p.m.: Oral and public historian Rosemary Diaz will discuss growing up in Flagstaff as the daughter of Mexican American immigrants.

Prescott, March 30, 1:00–3:00 p.m.: Archaeoastronomer Bryan Bates will discuss the centuries-old traditions of several Colorado Plateau American Indian tribes of "reading" celestial objects to determine the timing for such critical societal functions as planting, harvesting, and ceremonial gatherings.

Prescott lectures will be held at Sharlot Hall Museum, 415 W. Gurley (two blocks west of Courthouse Plaza). Space at the Prescott lecture series is limited; please call (928) 445-3122 to inquire about seating. **Flagstaff lectures** will be held at Cline Library, at the intersection of Knoles Drive and McCreary Road on the NAU campus. Parking is available to the west of the library (Lot P13 on Riordan Road). All lectures are free and open to the public. For more information, call GCA at (800) 858-2808 or visit us on the Web at www.grandcanyon.org.

Art as a Medium for Education & Inspiration

by Brad L. Wallis

Art is food for the soul;
life is more than bread alone.

I am proud that the Grand Canyon Association has been a leader in using art as a method for communicating the value of Grand Canyon. Through our continuous exhibits at historic Kolb Studio, our desire to find and reproduce the highest-quality photographs and other artwork in our publications, and our continued partnership with the Jack Dudley Memorial Fund and the Arts for the Parks organization, we strive to use art to invigorate the minds and stir the souls of visitors to this great park.

Many behavioral scientists would concur that people exhibit a wide range of learning preferences and aptitudes, yet by far the predominant learning methodology utilizes visual stimulation. While some learn through tactile methods, and others respond strongly to smell or sounds, the vast majority learn more quickly and are more deeply moved by what they see.

Most resources at Grand Canyon National Park, as with those at many western parks, are visual in nature. Trying to explain the grandeur of

looking out across the landscape from Shoshone Point to a person who had never seen the view would be similar to trying to describe the taste of Wasabi to someone who had never tried it.

With such a visual masterpiece as Grand Canyon at the core of our resources, it is difficult to imagine an educational process about the canyon that did not include visual presentation. As a publisher, the Grand Canyon Association has produced many fine works through the years about the canyon, its people, its animals, and its history. Yet it is the physical rush to the brain from impulses received through the eye that create the involuntary gasp as a first-time visitor approaches the edge of the abyss. In the context of this reality, the visual arts are in a unique position to aid us in educating the populace about the importance of this place.

In some ways, the canyon is a bit shy in sharing her moods with the casual viewer. With an average visit of less than three hours, and with most visitors not returning to the canyon again in their lifetimes, many likely have a fairly narrow

view of what the canyon looks like based solely on the circumstance of conditions when they were here. For those of us who are privileged to live near the canyon, we know that every month, every day, and even every moment, the canyon shows a different mood. The drama of a summer thunderstorm, the colors after a gentle spring rain, a white mantel of newly fallen snow reaching down into the depths—these are all moments in time that most visitors never see. Yet through the skills of those who can capture these elusive slices of time and space and subsequently preserve them to share with others, the true value of the artistic process is revealed. Whether by photographing, painting, or sculpting, the artist conveys the beauty of a particular moment, which otherwise might have eluded the throngs crowding the railings on a busy summer day.

Colors and shapes—the essence of how a place looks and affects our feelings—are engrained in our memories. A talented artist can release those stored images from our subconscious and help us to relive the moment again. At our recent Arts for the Parks exhibit at historic Kolb Studio, I enjoyed viewing a work by the talented



Thea Flannigan, her specialty being highly articulated views of rugged sea coasts. The piece was so well done that in my mind I could actually smell the salt water and hear the sound of waves crashing against the rocks, hearkening back to dim memories of my childhood.

Having worked for more than twenty-five years with not-for-profit organizations dedicated to the support of education and scientific research on public lands, I often think about the concept of leaving a legacy, some method of creating a positive future influence regarding the

resources that I love so dearly. I smile when I think of a beautiful work of original art, hanging on the wall of a historic structure within a national park, that can be enjoyed for many generations to come, educating and inspiring each new set of eyes as the years roll on. I cannot imagine a finer legacy.

Brad L. Wallis is the executive director of the Grand Canyon Association. For more information about the Jack Dudley Memorial Fund, which seeks to further the artistic legacy of Grand Canyon, please visit www.jackdudley.org.

Shoshone Point by Bruce Aiken. The 6-foot by 9-foot painting hangs at GCA's Books & More store at Canyon View Information Plaza.

A Gathering of Members— and Storm Clouds

by Patty Brookins

In 2004 Grand Canyon Association members marked the tenth year that they have gotten together for a period of learning about and communing with the canyon. This past September over 140 members came to the canyon for the festivities, our largest Members' Gathering ever!

We began the weekend with an orientation at the Community Building. Members noticed that the building looked a little abandoned, and it largely was due to a water break during a cold snap last January. (The Community Building is being repaired this winter.) Members divided into groups, tickets in hand, and scattered to various points around the park. We offered an array of fascinating speakers, with the goal of giving members an intimate view of the park they love.

They learned about mules and men from fabled Ron Clayton, former head mule wrangler for Xanterra. Ron has been taking visitors into the canyon for decades, and he has devoted his life to sharing Grand Canyon with many special young individuals. Members were driven to tears by Ron's moving description of leading blind children on the backs of mules into the canyon or of fulfilling a wish of a dying child to see this special place.

Members walked with Henry Karpinski to the main offices of GCA, housed in the park's historic hospital building. On the steps of this beautiful structure, Henry offered his quick wit and vast knowledge of local history to share stories about the park when it was new. Henry focused on the life and work of M. R. Tillotson, the park's first superintendent.

Dave Thayer, aka Canyon Dave, offered a geology talk along the rim. Dave has been leading tours in Grand Canyon for years, and he has a strong background in geology and related sciences. His talk and walking tour were well-received, even though the weather drove us inside later in the day. Dave also led an interesting discussion on the canyon's valuable seeps and springs.

Additionally, members attended a terrific workshop by Native American flute player Scott August. Scott spoke on the origin and construction of the instrument, and he also played for our members during the workshop and at the Sunday lunch.

Other programs included NPS Ranger Marker Marshall discussing condors and the reintroduction program, and a tour of the NPS Museum Collection. Members also had the option of seeing the IMAX movie in Tusayan.

But the highlight of the weekend had to be the presentation of the historic Kolb Brothers' river-running movie, shot in 1911 with the most modern moving-picture equipment available at the time. The movie was interspersed with lantern slide shots and narrated by Emery Kolb. It was a treasure to hear, in Emery's voice, the tales of daring adventures as he and his brother Ellsworth braved the perilous rapids of the Colorado River. You could hear the passion in his voice as he described the areas they were seeing. The showing of this film in the gallery at Kolb Studio marked, to the best of our knowledge, the first time in twenty-eight years that the film has been

presented to the public. It was so well received that we have plans to present community showings at various times throughout the year, and you can be sure that it will be included in a future Members' Gathering agenda.

Rain again dampened our weekend, and showers drove us inside for the Sunday activities. The rain came harder and longer than it had in years, raining continuously on Saturday night for twelve hours. This is the second time in four years that our Members' Gathering has hosted the "end" of the long drought. Quite a few of our sturdier members braved the campground Saturday night, although they ended up struggling against waves of water coming through their tents. Some gave up and slept in their cars. It was truly a sight watching these soggy survivors slosh into the Community Building Sunday morning, but they had smiles on their faces from their adventure and were ready to continue on.

All in all, it was the finest gathering we have ever hosted, and we thank all of our members for allowing us to share this beautiful place. Our members help remind us of our mission to support educational, interpretive, and visitor-service programs at the park, and they give us energy and motivation in our continuing search for new ways to educate and inspire individuals who seek to learn more about Grand Canyon. Please plan to join us next year!

Patty Brookins is the membership coordinator for the Grand Canyon Association.

Facing page, top: GCA Membership Coordinator Patty Brookins addresses hungry members at the Members' Lunch, which was moved indoors due to heavy rain showers. GCA photograph by Todd R. Berger

Facing page, bottom: The Kolb brothers' movie of their 1911-12 river trip attracted quite a crowd to several showings over the weekend. GCA photograph by Todd R. Berger



Canyon Buzz

GCA and Park Activities Since the Last Edition of *Canyon Views*

September 1: Grand Canyon Association, NAU's Cline Library, NAU's Grand Canyon Semester, and the Sharlot Hall Museum announced the fall Canyon Country Community Lecture Series in Flagstaff and Prescott. In Flagstaff, the lecturers included Christa Sadler on fossils of the Colorado Plateau (Sept. 29), Katie Lee reading from her book *Sandstone Seduction* (Oct. 6), and Wayne Ranney on the formation of Grand Canyon (Nov. 17). In Prescott, presenters included Steve Monroe and John Rihs on water sources in the canyon (Oct. 17), Wayne Ranney on the formation of the canyon (Nov. 21), and Andre Potochnik on the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program in a period of Drought (Dec. 19).

September 18–19: GCA members gathered at the South Rim. See Membership Coordinator Patty Brookins' full report on the facing page.

September 19–October 9: Painter William S. Phillips spent time at Grand Canyon as the Fall 2004 North Rim Artist in Residence. Phillips painted landscapes of the canyon during his three-week residency.

October 1: Grand Canyon National Park released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement to Revise the Colorado River Management Plan. The statement can be downloaded at www.nps.gov/grca/crmp. Comments on the statement will be accepted by the park until January 7, 2005.

October 28: The park service closed a portion of the South Kaibab Trail from Cedar Ridge to the Tonto Trail Junction due to significant trail erosion resulting from heavy rainfall. On November 4, the park service also closed the trail from Ooh-Ahh Point to Cedar Ridge. The trail reopened to hikers on November 19 and to mules on November 22.

November 2: "Writing Down the River," an exhibit of stunning photography by Kathleen Jo Ryan accompanied by modern-day and historic journal entries about traveling down the Colorado River in Grand Canyon, opened at Kolb Studio. The exhibit runs through February 20, 2005. Check out the online virtual tour of the exhibit at <http://www.grandcanyon.org/kolb/kolbexhibits.asp>.

November 8–9: The National Park Service and Ball State University broadcast an "electronic field trip" to Grand Canyon followed on the next day by two educational broadcasts about the canyon geared toward classrooms. The shows appeared over the Internet (at www.bsu.edu/efit) and on local PBS and cable stations.

November 21: The U.S. Geological Survey, in cooperation with the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, and Arizona Game and Fish Department, opened Glen Canyon Dam's bypass tubes in an experiment with the goal of stirring up sediment and redistributing it in Grand Canyon. More information about the water release can be found online at www.usbr.gov/uc/envprog/amp and www.nps.gov/grca/media/19nov04.htm.

The Prize



by Bob Audretsch



This has got to be a dream. I am careening down the South Kaibab Trail in the dark, running as fast as I safely can. Clouds enshroud the waning moon. My flashlight illuminates just fifteen to twenty feet of the trail in front of me. The wind is blowing so hard that I must hold down my hat with my free hand. Just that little effort throws me off balance. Not enough, mind you, to cause me to stumble, but enough that I must lean slightly to the right so I will not fall over. Amazingly, the wind picks up even more, whipping up dust off the trail. My mind drifts to a mountaineering story I once heard about a climber who died by simply walking off a 6,000-foot cliff because of the poor visibility. My mind returns to the present, and the nervousness created by thinking of that story pushes me to redouble my vigilance. After all, the drop-offs along this section of the trail are hundreds of feet straight down.

No, this run down the South Kaibab Trail under adverse conditions is not something someone forced me to do, and I am not running to rescue someone. I am running the trail because I choose to. I am an ultramarathon runner—that is, I am attracted to distances longer than 26.2 miles. On

this early November morning, combining an ultrarun with the spectacular scenery of Grand Canyon is what attracts me and several other ultrarunners. We left the South Rim just an hour earlier, and our destination is the North Rim, nearly twenty-one miles away and 6,000 feet above the Colorado River. Then we will turn around and run back down the North Kaibab Trail and back up the South Kaibab Trail, climbing 5,000 feet to return to the South Rim. Our run would total forty-two trail miles and 11,000 feet of elevation gain—even by ultramarathoning standards, this would be a grueling run.

But why do this? Some of us run because “it’s there,” for the challenge. A challenge is merely a test, a reaffirmation that life has fire, vigor, passion. I run because I must feel alive. For me life cannot be passive: I must feel it, I must confront it, I must storm the fortress of life rather than wait for life to sally forth and engage me.

For others, a long trail run is an antidote to the artificiality of modern life. During an extended run, an ultramarathoner often strips off the veneered layers from life. All of the mundane, petty, and superficial

needs are removed to reveal only the most basic necessity: survival. Nothing else matters. And stripping off those artificial layers somehow makes it easier to prioritize the necessities for a run.

How much food and water do I have and will it be enough to last me the thirteen hours I will be running? Is my cache of water for the return run up the South Kaibab Trail hidden sufficiently so no one else will find it? Did I mark the trail near the cache adequately so that I will find it? Is the weather changing? If the weather gets nasty, do I have sufficient rain gear and warm clothing to survive? Do I have the most appropriate running pack, shoes, socks, and hat for today’s temperatures and weather conditions? Are my individual pieces of equipment sufficiently broken in and of high enough quality for the length and difficulty of this run? Am I sufficiently rested and fit enough? Am I illness free?

After I arrange those immediate concerns in my mind, I then review my planning. Was the research for my run adequate? Did I plan my run far enough in advance so that there was plenty of time to assemble all the proper equipment and to

test that equipment? Did I train adequately for the run? Did I conduct my training at the same altitudes, within a similar temperature range, on comparable trail conditions, and with roughly the same elevation gain and loss? Was I able to complete at least one successful dry run?

Later, as I plod up what is perhaps the steepest part of the North Kaibab Trail, I turn around to gaze at the beauty behind me. I am struck by the crispness of the canyon's colors, the clarity of the air, and the distinct symmetry of the trail snaking below me. I feel compelled to gaze at the scene even though another part of me wants to get moving in order to finish my run in under thirteen hours. I start running again, but I stop, turn around, and take in the beautiful scene many more times. At the North Kaibab trailhead, I turn around and head back into the canyon.

Hours pass; greetings are exchanged with other runners on the trail. Finally, I cross the Colorado River again, and the steep climb up the South

Kaibab Trail begins. Earlier in the day I noticed clouds building up in the western sky, even though the weather forecast predicted no precipitation. And within just a few miles of the run's end, a snow squall begins. On comes my rain gear even as I fret over how much snow might hit. As I continue up the trail, I note that no crowd of cheering people will greet me at the top. No trophies, ribbons, or certificates today. In fact, I realize that I will not reach my goal of arriving back at the South Kaibab trailhead in under thirteen hours. No sadness though. There is another goal today. It is unplanned, unspoken, and unwritten—to transcend the mundane, the minor aches and pains, the petty negative thoughts of today. As I reach the last mile of my run I realize today's lesson is one that I have learned on other ultraruns: the journey itself is the reward.

Bob Audretsch is a ranger in the Division of Interpretation at Grand Canyon National Park.

In light of the recent death of a runner in Grand Canyon, Audretsch offers these safety guidelines for long runs or hikes:

- **Train** for your outing. Be able to complete at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of your run or hike (including both mileage *and* elevation gain) before your planned trip in the canyon.
- Know your trail **goals**. Are you at the canyon for a physical challenge? Appreciation?
- Run or hike in small **groups**, never alone.
- **Prepare for the worst**. Plan for your own rescue should a problem arise. Carry a flashlight, a map, a first-aid kit, extra clothing, and a signal mirror.
- Plan carefully how much **water and food** you will need, have it readily available during

your trip, and use it! During particularly strenuous exercise, force yourself to **drink and eat** frequently.

- Test and break in your **equipment, clothing, and footwear** before coming to the canyon.
- **Trail footing** will vary; you may trip, stumble, or even fall during your run or hike. Adjust your pace in difficult sections.
- Always **be courteous** to other trail users: uphill hikers and mules have the right-of-way.
- Know the expected **weather conditions** and prepare accordingly.
- Hike or run early and late, and then **rest during midday**. The inner-canyon heat in the middle of the day can turn an otherwise run-of-the-mill trip into a life-or-death situation.



Ultramarathoner Walter Powell works his way into Grand Canyon. NPS photograph

Facing page: An ultramarathoner negotiates haphazardly strewn boulders along the Colorado River near Hance Rapid. NPS photograph

- **Be knowledgeable** about the canyon and how to travel in it; research your route and desert-hiking peculiarities through books, the Internet, and magazines.
- **Be flexible** about your goals. Be ready to modify your plans, even to turn back, should the weather change for the worse or if the conditions are too difficult—the canyon will be here when you return!
- **Respect the Arizona sun**; wear a hat and rub on generous amounts of sunscreen.
- Leave your **itinerary** with a friend or family member. Tell them who to call if you are not back within a reasonable amount of time after your expected return.

Calendar

In addition to events listed below, please see the lecture schedule on page 5.

January 3: The El Tovar closes for remodeling. The hotel will reopen April 13.

March 1: "Arts for Our Park" opens at Kolb Studio. The exhibit features artwork by children living at Grand Canyon National Park. "Arts for Our Park" runs through March 21.

April 11: "Arts for the Parks" opens at Kolb Studio. The one-of-a-kind exhibit showcases artists who interpret the nation's public lands through painting. The show runs through June 5.

A LOOK AHEAD: UPCOMING GCFI CLASSES

Mar. 11-16: Hermit to Bright Angel Geology Backpack; *Member price: \$455*

Mar. 13-19: Tanner to LCR Geology Backpack; *Member price: \$465*

Apr. 23-30: Hands-On History and Archaeology (Thunder River Backpack); *Member price: \$395*

Call (866) 471-4435 or visit GCFI on the Web at www.grandcanyon.org/fieldinstitute for more information or to enroll.

Winter Wonders from Grand Canyon Association

Writing Down the River: Into the Heart of the Grand Canyon

GCA has just published a paperback edition of Kathleen Jo Ryan's elegant book with works by creative women river runners. Over the course of a summer, fifteen of today's best female writers traveled down the Colorado River through the heart of Grand Canyon and wrote about their experiences for this trailblazing book. Their words are accompanied by Ryan's acclaimed photographs. Paperback, 10" x 9", 134 pages. *Member price: \$16.96 plus S & H*



The Brave Ones

In the fall of 1911, Ellsworth and Emery Kolb began an 1,100-mile journey on the Colorado River, retracing the route of the Powell expedition of 1869 and filming the trip with a new-fangled motion-picture camera. For the first time, the journals the Kolb brothers kept during their historic trip are available to the public through this fascinating book, edited by William C. Suran. Paperback, 6" x 9", 180 pages. *Member price: \$13.56 plus S & H*



**To order or for more information, call
(800) 858-2808 or log on to
www.grandcanyon.org.**



Wildflower Series: Prickly Pear Cactus Poster

GCA has released a signed lithograph of Rick Wheeler's colorful watercolor *Prickly Pear Cactus*, a painting that now resides in GCA's permanent collection. Seen throughout the park, the prickly pear is one of the most recognizable and distinct flowering plants in Grand Canyon. 17" x 12". *Member price: \$16.96 plus S & H*

Canyon Views is published quarterly by the Grand Canyon Association to inform members of association and park activities, as well as of topics related to these activities. Please feel free to suggest subjects of interest and information you would like to see in *Canyon Views*. GCA also welcomes article submissions related to the association and/or park activities. Address all editorial correspondence to Grand Canyon Association, Attn: Todd R. Berger, Managing Editor, PO Box 399, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023; tberger@grandcanyon.org.

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