

MEMBERS' TRIP GUIDE
Hole In The Wall Paddling Club
Contributed by Terry Gowler.

As a refresher, I'd like to offer up a review of what it means to be a good trip participant when going on a paddle.

Make A Commitment. If you say you will attend a trip, don't back out at the last minute or worse be a no show. Trip originators are unpaid volunteers and this is their personal time they're giving to the club. It's their playtime and it should be fun and not work. If you do have another commitment come up, notify the trip originator right away. Don't leave them and the rest of the group scratching their heads wondering if you are late or a no show.

Be Honest About Your Abilities. When talking to the trip originator your safety is their priority so be honest about your abilities. Ask questions about conditions, clothing and equipment. By being honest, together you can see if the trip is right up your alley or maybe not quite right due to your skill level, gear or attire. The trip originator just wants it to be a safe and pleasurable experience. This communication applies before the trip and also on the water. Don't be afraid to speak up and voice your concerns. Again your safety and enjoyment is their priority. If you feel uncomfortable with the agenda, sea conditions or have a health problem say something either privately to the originator or to the group. If you say nothing then the assumption is everyone is fine. Remember if the trip looks like it's more than you can handle, well it's OK to bail out or lobby for a change, we've all done it at some time.

Have a checklist. This makes sure you didn't forget that paddle, spray skirt, paddle float, gastronomic goodies to share or, God forbid, your Lunch!

Be On Time. (or even early). Time and tide wait for no man. The time set is the time you and your boat should be ready to hit the water. It's the time the when the trip originator will do a head count, review the trip and assess the group and any concerns. Being early will give you time to meet others in the group and to lend a hand to help others with their boats and gear.

Know Your Rescues. Know how to rescue yourself and to assist others in a rescue. A rescuer is always a welcome addition and instantly a hero & immensely popular! Besides knowing your rescues, also look out for others in the group. Look for signs of sunburn, fatigue, seasickness or dehydration and help out when you can. The trip originators can't be everywhere at once.

Respect the Groups' Decision. Go with the flow and don't strike out on your own. After all, the reason we paddle together is to enjoy each other's company and support each other in case of a mishap. (and to share goodies mentioned above)

Don't Forget To Thank The Originator. They have given their time, organized the trip, fielded phone calls and answered e-mails and tried their best to make it a good time. Showering them with chocolate or beer (no not a beer shower) wine or other goodies is OK too!