



The Katy Canoe and Kayak Club embarks on adventures and friendships together

KATY CANOE CREW

The Katy Canoe and Kayak Club invites boaters of all skill levels to explore area waterways

Written by Crystal Rawls



Members of the Katy Canoe and Kayak Club (KCKC) have paddled in waters as close as Columbus, a few miles west of Katy, and as far as Turtle Bayou near the gulf. This group of adventurers prove time and again that not all who wander are lost. These Katyites have built an ever-growing group on a common hobby and benefit through travel and friendships.



OUTDOOR ENTHUSIASTS

When life didn't exactly turn out as planned for KCKC founders, Tisha and Philip Matticks, they had a choice: allow disappointment to rob their joy, or make the best of what they already had. They chose the latter and by doing so, created an exciting outlet for Katy outdoor enthusiasts.

"We have sailboats, and I have been paddling for almost 20 years," says Tisha, real estate broker-owner of Manta Ray Enterprises, Inc. and instructor for the Texas Real Estate Commission. "Our inspiration was to get more involved with the community and share our passion of the water and our other outdoor hobbies," she says. "We never had children and instead of being sad and depressed about it, we began to focus on our hobbies and jobs and decided to find a way to bring people together to enjoy life."

Although they were members of the Houston Canoe Club, the couple wanted to create an outdoor group closer to home. "We could not find a water club in Katy, so we would drive to Houston to join others," says Tisha. "We decided to start our own group through a social meet-up website." Today, KCKC boasts nearly 250 members. "We just celebrated our second anniversary," she adds.



UNIQUE CAMARADERIE

Kent Walters, who met Philip and Tisha at the Houston Canoe Club, regularly participates in KCKC activities. "What makes this club special is the camaraderie, which is a direct result of the personalities of the founders and their graciousness and generosity in sharing their time, resources, and experience," Walters says. "It is a genuine pleasure to see each other and spend time getting to know each other as we paddle and at the meetings."

KCKC meets once a month to learn about paddling techniques and area waterways - from Toledo Bend in East Texas to the Rio Grande. Each member pays \$15 per year to participate. "Sometimes we



Celebrating Labor Day weekend with a trip to the Sabine River



Kayaking at Big Bend National Park



The KCKC has grown to 250 members



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even share where they can paddle to demo new kayaks and canoes for free," she says. "Members are more than welcome to invite guests to paddle at our events. The guests do not have to join; we only hope that they do after experiencing a wonderful paddle trip."

No matter how experienced or inexperienced KCKC members may be, everyone learns something new. Sandy Rushworth, a long-time member of the Houston Canoe Club, joined KCKC because of the lighthearted attitude of the group's founders. "We like to go on trips they lead as they are always fun with a 'safety first' attitude," she says. "We have improved our canoeing ability, increased strokes, and learned how to pack and carry a canoe. We also gained skills to help us lead the trip we recently did at Big Bend."

KCKC member Mitch Castro gained an appreciation for water safety through the group. "As an experienced kayaker, I've learned the importance of safety in a group atmosphere and many new locations to paddle," he says. "I really enjoy paddling with this group because they focus on safety, the environment, and are all-inclusive and non-judgmental."

NO REGRETS

Given another chance, Tisha and Philip would have started the group a long time ago. "We have met so many people of all walks of life," says Tisha. "We search for new places to paddle, encourage our members to lead trips and participate in sharing their ideas, and plan to continue as long as our health allows." KM

CRYSTAL RAWLS is a contract administrator at Fluor Corporation and a freelance writer.

KATY CANOE & KAYAK CLUB AT-A-GLANCE

When: Every third Wednesday
of the month

Where: 24630 Kingsland Blvd.

Who: You don't have to be an
experienced paddler to join. All
ages are welcome. Children 18
and under may attend as guests
if accompanied by an adult.

For upcoming paddling excursions,
visit meetup.com and search,
"Katy Canoe & Kayak Club."

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