



## Outdoor Recreation Committee offers 'common outdoor adventure' concept

By Rhonda Watters

Battalion Reporter

For those people whose idea of fun is whipping through the white water of the Guadalupe River in a canoe, backpacking through Big Bend National Park, or rock climbing at Perdnales Falls, the MSC Outdoor Recreation Committee might be a club worth looking into.

"To get people into the outdoors is one of our main goals," said Charlie Walter, public relations chairman for the committee. He said Outdoor Rec was originally set up on the "common outdoor adventure" concept, where taking part in the planning and organizing of the adventure is as important as the experience itself.

Every semester, the committee offers various outdoor activities and trips for students, faculty and staff members. Although it is trying to become more of a club this semester by including regular meetings, it has no official members or membership fees, but is open to anyone who wants to participate in any of its programs.

Outdoor Rec offers three activities — canoeing, backpacking and rock climbing — every semester because of their popularity, but has other programs as well. In past semesters it has offered such programs as fishing, wilderness medicine, caving and camping techniques.

As part of its programs, the committee has a series of seminars that are designed to teach the skills involved in each of its activities. After each seminar, and sometimes after a practice run on what was taught, a trip is planned and carried out.

Walter said that teaching outdoor skills is an important part of the program. He said that besides being fun, learning and using the skills helps a person build self-confidence because "you're doing something for yourself" instead of performing for someone else.

Walter said Outdoor Rec is also trying to educate people in personal safety and wise use of the outdoors, to "respect the wilderness and leave it as they found it."

This semester the committee has added some new things to its regular format. On separate dates there will be the regular seminar, a trip, a general meeting and a film or slides of an outdoor adventure.

In addition to the trips related to the seminars, Outdoor Rec also plans other trips. In its cubicle in the MSC the committee has a "Trip Sign-Up Board" where various excursions, some requiring a certain amount of experience, are posted, and people can sign up to go. Walter said the trip board is not limited to organized Outdoor Rec trips, and anyone wanting to arrange a trip of his own is free to use the board to find people interested in going along.

Walter said the cost of most trips, including gas, food and equipment rental, is low. As an example, he said, an average overnight canoe trip to the Guadalupe costs about \$15 to \$20.

The committee also operates an equipment rental service. Tents, sleeping bags, stoves and other equipment can be reserved at the beginning of a week and checked out on Thursday and Friday for weekend and holiday trips.

One of Outdoor Rec's newer activities is an outdoor program designed to include handicapped people. Walter said members of the committee are working with the P. E. department to learn more about the capabilities of the handicapped, and this semester he hopes to have some canoeing, backpacking and rock climbing trips that will include both able-bodied and physically disabled people.

"We're really hoping to expand our programs," Walter said. He added that many of their active participants are graduating, so anyone wanting to get involved in the committee's activities should have plenty of opportunities.



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