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Bayou Teche is a recreational paradise
We just need to keep cleaning it up

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By Ken Grissom
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BAYOU TECHE – Whether its in a canoe or on a party barge – or one day, hopefully, on inner tubes like the pair of bold adventurers shown here – this under-utilized waterway has the makings of a cruiser’s paradise. A decent current much of the time, some world-class places to eat and drink, and beautiful scenery, alternating between dark green jungle to garden-like lawns framing beautiful country homes.

And, unfortunately, still punctuated with illegal trash piles and litter that finds its way down from ditches and gutters.

The good news is that visible progress is being made. Another grassroots bayou cleanup was held Saturday (May 9), a month and a week after the inaugural one on March 28, and the growing gang of volunteers found the banks still relatively clean. Even better news is that at least one of the illegal trash piles on the bank had been cleaned up.

And maybe the most hopeful sight of all was the St. Martin Sheriff’s Office and the St. Landry Sheriff’s Office, both with their rescue and recovery boats working on the thick raft of trash all but blocking navigation under the bridge at the parish line.

Kristen Kordecki, watershed coordinator for Acadiana Resource Conservation and Development Council, said she and her crew were hailed with an attaboy from a fisherman on the bank, and later she got an e-mail from a guy in Parks who said he staged his own cleanup on his stretch of the bayou – all evidence that a new clean-bayou ethos might be catching on.

We need it to catch on all the way up to Washington, La., and all the way down to Berwick, on the Atchafalaya River. If we can put our best foot forward for the big canoe race next year, people will come back just to visit. The word will spread. Bayou Teche, which, as volunteer Jimmy Akers says has gone from being the main highway of commerce to a forsaken drainage canal, will come back as an avenue of recreation and leisure – and an economic resource for Teche Country towns and cities ready made for tourism.



The future of Bayou Teche?
These bold adventurers float blithely by NuNu’s in Arnaudville.
Kristen Kordecki

