

# Rush teens meet ambush on peaceful creek

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

RUSH — August 26 will forever be remembered as the date of the Battle of Honeoye Creek.

The placid creek was the scene of a brutal and savage naval engagement last Saturday afternoon between members of St. Joseph's Parish youth group.

The outing started innocently enough, as nine teenagers met youth minister Keith Bock in the parish parking lot around 2 p.m.

After assembling, the students walked down to Honeoye Creek, a short distance from the church on Rush-Lima Road. Some of them commented on their youth group experiences. "It's fun," noted Michelle Deverell, a senior at Rush-Henrietta Senior High School. "I get to meet a lot of kids my age."

Christine Penfound, a sophomore at Mercy High School, said her parents made her join the group two years ago, but that she enjoyed the group's outings now. "We do sort of like field trips," she said.

The students strolled over a bridge and down to the west bank by the dam, and there the youth group prepared to set out in two row boats and two canoes on loan from parishioners. The students conversed unaware that two of their cohorts were planning to turn the "field trip" into a nightmare of aquatic mayhem.

Prior to meeting the rest of the group, Rush-Henrietta juniors Matt Ebersold and



Three of the four boats manned by youth group members and parishioners of St. Joseph's in Rush set out for an excursion down Honeoye Creek on Saturday, Aug. 26.

Bob Bishop Jr. had filled several balloons with the chemical hydrogen dioxide — water.

The mischievous pair secreted the balloons aboard their canoe on which they set out ahead of the others. Their passenger, Tara Mooney, was initially ignorant of the canoe's dangerous cargo. Indeed, her greatest fear was of being drowned, not drenched. "I'm a runner, not a swimmer," commented the Honeoye Falls-Lima High School senior as her companions pushed off from shore.

No photographs exist of the actual battle, since correspondents on the scene assumed that good clean fun was the only thing on the students' minds as they began rowing upstream.

Fortunately, Mooney recalled the incident, though the glee in her voice threw doubt on whether she was merely a bystander.

"It was wonderful," she said. "Matt and Bob had water balloons. We went down river. They went off to the side and pulled (the canoe) over. There was like a little stream ... They hid the water balloons up on shore."

"When they came back and got them, they threw them at the other boats. Everybody got soaking wet."

One of the casualties of the battle was Penfound's copy of William Gouling's *Lord of the Flies*. "We ruined (the book)," Mooney said. "The Lord of the Flies is dead now."

The lord may have died, but his honor was avenged by Keith Henry, a junior at Rush-Henrietta. Henry rowed a boat carrying Sister Marie Clare Stoe, SSND, the parish's religious-education director, and Eileen Mundelein, a parishioner.

Ebersold and Bishop had no respect for the presence of religious or adults on any of the boats, and Henry's vessel was pounded by a fusillade of balloons.

Amazingly, one of the water-filled explosives failed to detonate on impact. Henry retrieved the bomb, and as Ebersold disembarked on the shore by the dam, Henry aimed and fired.

"We finally got them back," Henry said with a laugh.



With the help of Michelle (center) and Cheryl Deverell (right), Christine Penfound secures her life preserver for the journey ahead.



Everyone involved in the youth group's outing — including youth minister Keith Bock (left) — helped to haul the canoes to the creek's edge. Highlights of the trip included an all-out water-balloon war.

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