

PRESS RELEASE

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BSA Troop 455 and the Chickasaw Council proudly announce the temporary exhibit of the kayak *Double Helix* at Bass Pro Shops at the Memphis Pyramid until January 2018. We invite you to an official unveiling at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, November 14th, being held in the store's main entrance.

This one-of-a-kind kayak was the flagship for the longest non-stop paddling race in history called the 2001 Great Mississippi River Race for Rett Syndrome (www.dreamkeeper.org). The *Double Helix* holds the unofficial time record for a kayak and is the longest craft to run the entire 2,500 miles of the Mississippi River.

Both Scouting and Memphis share deep connections with those racing the Mississippi River. From 1937 to 1978, Memphians and Eagle Scouts Joe Tagg, Gerald Capers and Charles Saunders held the first Guinness World Record for running the river. The builder and co-racer of the record holding *Double Helix*, Clark Eid, is an Eagle Scout currently working at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. In a second charity event held in 2003, Clark with partner Bob Bradford-a former Scoutmaster-set the current Guinness World Record for the fastest time to paddle the Mississippi River at 18 days, 4 hours and 51 minutes. Troop 455 will highlight these and other civic connections through three Eagle Scout projects over the next year.

The *Double Helix* was designed as a functional piece of art to heighten awareness of a rare disease. Constructed of over 100 different woods and aerospace materials, it features a rose vine with 120 roses wrapping around the hull made from several thousand pieces of wood veneers. This mural closely mimics real DNA and can be deciphered to read "Amanda's Dream Keeper" (Clark's daughter) which prompted Nobel Laureates Watson and Crick to sign the craft. Further details that attract attention include a GPS holder made with woods from Jacques-Yves Cousteau's *Calypso*, a compass ring using woods from the *La Amistad* replica in Steven Spielberg's 1997 movie, and a submersible sleeping pod used for the 24/7 ultra-marathon race.

The *Double Helix* is in the process of being relocated from the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, where it was on display for 10 years, to its new home in Memphis. The craft will be on temporary exhibit throughout the city while a decision for its permanent display location is finalized.

