

## NORTH ATLANTIC CANOE &amp; KAYAK



# NACK



## NEWSLETTER

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**North Atlantic Canoe & Kayak, Inc.** is a Long Island, New York based kayaking club. It's an **American Canoe Association (ACA) Paddle America Club** and a **NYS not-for-profit corporation** serving **Long Island and the Northeast**. NACK was formed to promote ongoing education in safe and responsible canoeing and kayaking for paddlers of all skill levels on the rivers, lakes and coastal waters of the northeastern United States. We seek paddling safety, adventure and fellowship. We meet monthly on the water or land, have trips, and many learning opportunities. Paddle our site at [www.get-the-NACK.org](http://www.get-the-NACK.org) for History, Schedules, NACK Training, Navigation & Planning Resources, Membership, Photo Gallery, Library, Friends of NACK, Documents & Forms, Past Newsletters, Links, trips, activities and more.

“When asked for advice on choosing a kayak, one experienced paddler said he has yet to find the right sea kayak – he has 10 years of paddling kayaks and his family has owned seven boats. The lesson here is not to expect a perfect solution but to decide on the best compromise. \*\*\*

Historically, the modern kayak can be traced to two Eskimo building traditions: the Northern Canadian and Greenland single seat skin boats used by the Inuits for hunting, fishing, and traveling; and the Aleutian *bardarka* modified by Russian fur traders to transport their loot up and down the coast. Broadly speaking, the Inuit boats led to fast, narrow, low-volume, tippy kayaks; and the *bardarka* to slower, wider, high-volume, stable kayaks, with many variations in between.”

From the Introduction to  
*Sea Kayaking Along The Mid-Atlantic Coast* — 1994 Tamsim Venn  
Appalachian Mountain Club Books

There is only one thing more painful than learning from experience and that is not learning from experience. – ARCHIBALD MCLEISCH



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### Presidents Message

Happy New Year to everyone. We have had a very tumultuous year ending and I am hoping we can get things back to what is normal or what we want to be normal.

We were able to get the cold water peer practice in and all those who attended had a great time. We also had a wonderful December meeting with Mike Bottini and his educational slide show.

We are planning a New Year's Day paddle in Riverhead. I hope to see you there, contact Colin to make arrangements.

January 12<sup>th</sup> Saturday, starts our pool practices. If you have not already signed up contact Ann K. there are still spaces available.

January 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday is our awards dinner. Renee has planned another great event and I am looking forward to getting together with all our members.

This time of year actual paddle time is low but it is a great time to review your accomplishments from last year and start planning for the spring. Our monthly meetings will have various educational segments so we can all be ready for the warmer weather. Dates and topic will be announced as soon as the arrangements have been made.

Bob H. will be spearheading our new mentor program. All new members and prospective members will have a member as a resource to get fully acquainted with NACK, so please contact Bob and sign up to be a mentor. If you are a new member and are still treading water please contact Bob and he will get you a mentor.

For all those who are planning to paddle during the cold weather please, "Be Prepared" for full immersion, things happen fast and even faster in cold water.

See you on the water,

***John Weickert, Jr.***

John Weickert, Jr.

President

[Bluek@weickert.com](mailto:Bluek@weickert.com) b.718-706-0707 c.917-681-0749

# NACK Post Holiday Dinner



## NACK Awards Post Holiday Dinner

It's a New Year and time to celebrate NACK!

**Sunday, January 13th, 5:30pm**

Irish Coffee Pub, 131 Carlton Avenue, East Islip, NY 11730  
Dinner is \$34.90 per person excluding tax and gratuities. Cash bar.

Please register with Renée Levine to reserve a place.  
(516) 829 -9792 • [reneesl@verizon.net](mailto:reneesl@verizon.net)



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## Winter 2013 - 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter

- ☛ **January 1<sup>st</sup> New Years Paddle (S) (L2)**
  - Moose Lodge in Riverhead 11 Am Launch
  - Dry Suit or wet suit mandatory
  - Contact Colin M. [colin82abn@optonline.net](mailto:colin82abn@optonline.net) for details
  
- ☛ **POOL PRACTICE (NR) (S)**
  - Dates 1/12,1/19, 2/2, 2/9, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9, & 3/16
  - All on **Saturdays** 1:30- 3:30 PM All boats must be CLEAN.
  - Contact Ann K. - [akaiser@optonline.net](mailto:akaiser@optonline.net)
  - Training - Doug F. And Dan T.
  - Other instruction is available, Please contact Colin for all training requests  
[colin82abn@optonline.net](mailto:colin82abn@optonline.net)
  
- ☛ **January 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday (S) Meeting/Dinner**
  - Irish Coffee Pub 131 Carlton Avenue E. Islip, NY 11730
  - 5:30 PM Dinner and Presentation of Awards
  - Contact Renee L. - 516-829-9792

(S) ACA Sanctioned Activity  
 (NS) NACK Non-Sanctioned Activity  
 (FW) Flat-water (ACA L1)  
 (AFW) Adv. Flat-water (ACA L2)

(IC) Inner Coastal (ACA L3)  
 (OW) Open Water (ACA L4)  
 (AOW) Advanced Open Water (ACA L5)  
 (NR) Non-Rated Skill Level  
 Highlighted are new events added



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## NACK Winter Pool

NACK winter pool practice sessions -- a great way to get ready for the 2013 season. We do not yet have a final contract with Suffolk County Community College, Grant Campus in Brentwood. The contract is dependent on paid in advance subscriptions for 8 sessions.

Your reservation with a check MUST be in by December 1st. We need a minimum of 12 eight week subscriptions in order to cover the cost of the pool. Members can share a subscription. Work that out among yourselves and then let Ann Kaiser know your arrangement. Members, friends and other interested paddlers may access the pool on the dates indicated for practice sessions or lessons based on the fees given below, if space permits.

**Dates:** Saturdays from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm on the following dates:

1/12, 1/19, 1/26, 2/2, 2/9, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9

**Participation Rates:** Pool sessions have become exceptionally expensive and the Suffolk Pool is no exception. We have worked hard to keep costs favorable and to let as many paddlers participate as possible. These are the same rates as last year.

Item	NACK Members	Non-NACK Members	
		ACA Members	Non-ACA Members*
8-Session Package	\$225	\$240	\$280
Single Session (ea)	\$35	\$45	\$50

\* An additional event fee is required for all non-ACA members.

**Reservations:** Space is limited. The 8 session subscription will be on a first come first served basis. We will make every effort to accommodate all those interested. However in the interest of safety we must place restrictions on the maximum number of boats of various types based on their size and the available space in each session. Please register early to reserve space for your desired craft if you are doing a single session. Contact information for a single session will be sent out shortly before the pool sessions. For the 8 session reservation or any questions call Ann at 631-286-8782 or email at [akaiser@optonline.net](mailto:akaiser@optonline.net).

You may use 2 NACK bucks towards an 8 session subscription.

Your ACA Membership must be up to date and on file with the membership chairperson- Ann Kaiser.

**ACA Instruction Available (added fees):** All Instructors must be ACA Certified.

NACK INSTRUCTORS:

Roy Baillard L2, Gordon Dayton L4 & L2 Canoe, Dara Fee L2, Buddy Ficarelli L3, Doug Ford L3, Maria Hampson L2, Ann Kaiser L3, Steve McDonald L3, Colin Mullen L3, Elizabeth O'Connor L4 IT, Dan Troup L3, John Weickert L3.

Contact information can be found on the Members Only page.

**Pool Practice Rules:**

1. We practice "Leave No Trace". All boats must be visibly clean inside and out.
2. Use of PFD's is required except in special circumstances.
3. There will be no "seal-launching" or "seal-landing" at the edge of the pool.

**Recommended Gear:** you may want to bring nose clips, swim goggles, rescue gear, wetsuit, towel, lock, drinking water in plastic container

**Directions:** at LIE exit 53, take Wicks Road south ½-mile. The SCCC entrance is on the right. Make a left at the stop sign and make the first right, the main building will be on your left. Continue to the back of the building, we are allowed to use the rear entrance to unload kayaks and park. More information about parking will be sent before the pool sessions begin.

## Getting the most from Kayak Pool Sessions

By Steve M

**Getting the most out of pool sessions.** Pool time is expensive, so you will want to make much of the opportunity. Here's my list of 10. I'm sure there's more. Your input and comments are welcome.

**1 Arrive early with a super clean kayak.** You will need time to unload and move boats, check in, get changed, etc.

**2 Take some time to warm up.** You should stretch and limber up and maybe do a few yoga poses.

**3 Plan your activities.** Not just rolling, ten minutes of trying to roll can be exhausting. Review your wet exit especially if you have a new or different boat or equipment. In between try something different like a balance brace. Have some alternatives, a plan B, to make the most of your time.

**4 Make an equipment checklist.** Nothing like getting to the pool without a paddle! You might not need sunscreen but you'll probably need a PFD, spray skirt, nose plugs and goggles, lock for your locker and a towel to dry off. And don't forget water to drink. Strenuous activity can easily cause you to become dehydrated.

**5 Try something different.** If you ask, most paddlers are willing to let you try their kayak, paddle or PFD.

**6 Team up with another paddler.** Wet exits and dumping water from your boat is exhausting and time consuming. Safety considerations aside, peer practice can be very rewarding.

**7 Take photos and video.** There's nothing like seeing yourself doing something. When learning to roll I was shocked to see my position under water. There I was, sitting bolt upright instead of set-up, curled upward to the water surface. No way that's going to work.

**8 Seek instruction if available.** An experienced instructor will often be able to give pointers to help improve skills and avoid common mistakes. We often think we're doing something right when a trained observer can see that we're not doing what we think we are doing.

**9 Did I mention arrive early?** See #1

**10 Most important, have fun and enjoy the clean, warm water! And no jellyfish.**

# Parlez-vous Kayak?

(Do you speak kayak?)

by Bob Horchler

It was September and I was on a tour in France. Whenever I traveled near a body of water, I looked for kayaks.

At Versailles, in the lake a mile from the castle, I spotted row boats. There was hope. In the body of water outside Claude Monet's house, now a museum, I spotted a canoe. A little more hope. Then, day after day, none.

I didn't look for any kayaks in the waters near Omaha Beach; that area is too reverent for me to even think for a second about play. I did think of boats there, but only those involved in the liberation of France.

More travel, more bodies of water, no kayaks.

Then as we were walking to our hotel in San Malo (northern France), I spotted something in the bay. A red boat? No. As I got closer, I saw it was a group of about 10 kayakers playing in the water. They were wearing wetsuits and sprayskirts, and riding the tiny waves of the bay. One of them tipped over in the shallows. Been there, done that. But what's that on the top of their heads? Ahhh...they were all wearing helmets. They appeared to be warming up to go rock hopping!

I frequently read kayak articles and watch kayak videos on rock hopping, and I long for the day when I will do it. Here, as we were walking to our hotel, I was watching what appeared to be a kayak club leave the bay and paddle into the English Channel to play in the rocks.

I imagined joining them. My abilities looked similar to theirs. If we were checked into our hotel already, I would have thrown on my bathing suit and neoprene kayak socks, begged off the walking city tour, and run down to the beach.

I practiced my French for a couple of months before the trip, and had become reasonably adept at the basics. I knew all the pleasantries, and how to order wine, cheese, desserts and request the check. I wondered how I could explain to the club that I am an ACA level II kayaker and request they let me join them (that's if the nearby kayak shop would rent me a kayak, paddle, wetsuit, PFD, paddle float and to top it all off, a helmet).

If after saying, "Bonjour, parlez-vous anglais", they answered Non, I would have been dead in the water; however, I instead imagined they answered Oui and the ensuing fun rock hopping with them.

The next night, from our opened second floor window overlooking San Malo Bay and the English Channel, we saw a couple of kayakers returning from a trip. We took photos of them as they paddled under a double rainbow. Oh là là.

The tide changes from low to high every six hours there, just like on Long Island. However, the tidal range there is in the neighborhood of 14 feet, so it is a lot more dramatic. We actually got to have fun in the bay for a few minutes the day before we left this area. We walked out on bone dry sand a few hundred feet to a castle like building. Just minutes later, I turned around and saw the incoming tide had already covered the dry sand. We removed our socks and shoes, rolled up our pants and gleefully waded to shore through nearly a foot of water. I would have given anything, to have my kayak with me!



*Rock Hopping French Kayakers*

Photo courtesy of Bob Horchler

Gary Fortcher  
ADK 90 Miler Canoe Classic

## ADIRONDACK CANOE CLASSIC

### “THE 90-MILER”

**Old Forge to Saranac Lake - September 7, 8 and 9, 2012**

**(A Weekend Adventure on Flat Water)**

The Adirondack Canoe Classic, hosted by the Central Adirondack Association, The NYS DEC and the Adirondack Watershed Alliance, is a three-day, 90 mile journey through the heart of the Adirondack Mountain Forest Preserve from Old Forge to Saranac Lake. This annual fall event follows the same routes traveled by the region's early settlers and guides. This chain of lakes, rivers and carries is known as the original “Highways of the Adirondacks” and more recently as the first leg of the Northern Forest Canoe Trail.

The “90-Miler” offers a singular opportunity for canoe racers to test their skill and endurance on a challenging course, and for recreational paddlers to experience adventure and friendly competition amid some of the most beautiful scenery around!

This year was the 30th Annual running of this event.

As a very frequent visitor to the Adirondacks, I have known about the 90-Miler and read about it, but never witnessed it. It has intrigued me. It was slowly pulling me in. I decided to give it a run. In January, 2012, I solicited an out of state friend as a paddling partner, who before I even finished my sentence, replied, “sounds like you really want to do this...I'll do it with you”. Soon thereafter I solicited a Pit crew person. The table was being set. The key now was to get into the race. You do not want to be expending money preparing for a race you may not get into. You see, there are only 275 boats allowed to register. Applications must be obtained from the race organizers via regular US mail (there is one mass mailing) and returned to the race organizers by a specified date. The first 275 applications are in. It's a first come first served basis. Since the vast majority of racers are local to the north country, we decided to overnight our application to collapse the time-frame as best we could to increase our odds of making the cut. Once we were notified that we were accepted we put the final touches on our plan. Flights, lodging, meals, equipment, food, clothing and supplies all needed to be detailed out on lists. Lists for the cabin, the boat, personal stuff, personal race stuff and time lines for when to leave, arrive, register, etc. Eliminate as many snafu's as possible. Details, details details. Create your lists and check them twice. We had a plan, documented the plan and executed from that plan. All went according to plan. It was quite a wild long weekend. We were a three person team; myself and two friends, Ken and Van. Ken and I were the paddlers in our C2; a rented 18' Wenonah kevlar canoe. A great part of renting the canoe from one of the major organizers, “Mac's Canoe Livery” of Lake Clear, was that they included in the rental price the transporting of the canoe from the finish at each day's end, to the start of the next day's leg. That was one headache we did not have to deal with. We would simply arrive, find our boat and get ready. Van was our pit crew. He would supply us at the accessible carries with nutrition and supplies as needed. We created a Pit crew kit box which included everything we thought we would possibly need. Van also printed out maps of the course, which we reviewed each night, took over 500

photos of the race and shuttled us to and from daily starting and finish points and our prearranged lodging base. Ken flew into Long Island from Colorado and brought his carbon fiber canoe paddles and GPS units with him. We were a good cohesive team.

I selected a central point for our home base - Long Lake. The place we rented was a cabin at the Shamrock Motel and had a beautiful west view looking across the lake. Sunsets were outstanding. We stayed here Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The place was great, but if I was to do it again I would rent a place closer to the starting point of each day instead. This alone would give a person an additional hour of sleep each morning and greatly reduce the miles needed to be driven.

We arrived at Long Lake at noon on Thursday because race registration was between 4 and 10 p.m. in Old Forge. After we unpacked, we explored the property, sat on the beach and generally whittled away the early afternoon. Then we drove 40 miles to Old Forge, registered, grabbed some dinner at a local tavern and drove 40 miles back to the motel. Then drove 40 miles back at 6 am for a 7:30 am paddlers meeting. So, you see what I mean, a central lodging point is not as efficient as I had thought it would be. A better plan would have been to spend one night in each of Old Forge, Long Lake and Tupper Lake. Next time.



### Day one.

On day one, after the paddlers' meeting where topics consisted of issues of the day's course, safety, mandatory invasive species inspection areas, etiquette, litter, passing and cut-off times are discussed, we fitted our boat up. We affixed GPS units to the front of the bow and stern paddler positions with duct tape so we could keep track of our current and average speed and time. We also padded our seats and the gunnels. For the seats we used basic paddler pads and fastened with duct tape. For the gunnels we used hot water pipe insulation tubes and fastened with duct tape. The reason for the seat cushion is obvious. Seven hours a day on your butt. Enough said. The gunnel wrap is to protect the outside of your lower leg from the constant friction during the task of paddling hard. Once the boat was fitted, we took her out on the water for a little coordinated paddling and stroke practice. We knew that brace strokes from the bow were going to be very important on the tight winding river sections of the

course. We focused on them. We only had time to practice for about 20 minutes but it was also important for this reason - Ken and I haven't seen each other for 25 years so we needed to at least put our paddles in the water from the same boat for at least a few minutes before the race. It was only right. Now I was going to sit in a canoe with him for up to seven hours a day for three days. What was I thinking? All kidding aside, I had the time of my life. We had many long silent periods of simply grinding through the water but we also reminisced and joked and laughed a lot. It was a wonderful time with a purpose.

The 90-Miler is a three day stage race with about 20 classes of Canoes, Guide-boats and Kayaks. Each class is assigned to a wave. There were 10 waves. The waves start the race at 15 minute intervals. The least experienced waves will start the race first (it'll take them the longest to finish the day's course). This becomes important because you must pass specific points by certain cut-off times or you receive a DNF (did not finish) for that leg of the race.

Day one starts at Old Forge on Old Forge Pond. From there you paddle and carry through the Fulton Chain of Lakes; and then continue on to Raquette Lake, The Marion River and the Eckford Chain of Lakes ending in Blue Mountain Lake. Distance: 35 miles. Carries: Four (3.5 miles total).

Day one is the toughest day of the race. It's the longest and it has the most carries in number and length. It's also the toughest because everyone is fresh and pumped up so the start (actually all of the starts were this way) was fast and furious for a sustained period of time.

We had a final shoreline meeting with Van, put on our camelbacks, got in our boat and advanced to the startup line between the two large red buoys and waited for the roll call of boat numbers. We were boat number 241. We entered the race in the C2, Men, Veteran, class. In this case "veteran" means 60 years and up. The old guys. Ken is 62 and I'm 63. There were seven other boats in our class. We were all in wave nine as were the C2 Amateurs (the young guys - everyone under 60 that wasn't recreational - the serious paddlers). I would say there were about 50 to 75 boats in our wave. So here we were in the Adirondacks, with people who paddle to go to work. We thought we could keep up with them. Seriously. We would come to understand that we were clearly delusional.

With a 15 second warning, the start horn blew. There was an instant transition from quiet water noise, where you could here people whispering, to more noise than in a swimming pool of splashing children. Paddles smacking water. Paddles smacking paddles. Paddles smacking boats. Boats smashing boats. Yells and hollars. Counts for cadence. Hut calls. Plenty of hut's. As this long line of boats between the two red buoys merged tighter and tighter fighting and jockeying for position and to make it into the narrowing channel ahead to advance to First Lake, the initial capsized of the day took place. The paddlers were fine; no assistance was needed. We all stayed focused, kept our heads down, dug in a good catch and plowed forward, released and did it again. And again and again. Very fast. All through this channel, for about 1.5 miles, residents, friends and family members were on their decks, docks, boats and yards cheering everyone on. It was inspiring, beautiful and just down right fun to see and be a part of.

By the time we got to First Lake the field was set. Eventually, this fast pace slowed ever so slightly and the field thinned and stretched out. Leaders were identified and all others followed as best they could. Over time endurance would be the major cause of attrition. You could see it happening in front of you. You could identify a target and work to overtake them. Then get back into a reasonable strong pace for a while, to recover from your

efforts and then advance again. Sometimes you were the target. This went on all day. Remember, there were plenty of boats in front of us and another wave behind us.

The first carry of the day was between Fifth Lake and Sixth Lake (about a half mile - mostly up hill). Carries are, when well timed, a thing of beauty. You approach the shore fast and time your exit so that you are out in the water lifting your boat and advancing forward in one fluid motion. I can't say that was exactly us, but in my mind, that was us. We also had a few grunts and groans. Here's what I have to say about carries...You are glad to be out of the boat, but then, you are glad to be back in the boat. It's an awkward item to be carrying around.

Van met us at the road crossing just before Sixth Lake and handed us some nutrition which we drank down quickly as we continued to move forward. We all spoke briefly at the put-in to Sixth Lake and we were off again. More open Lake water.

The second carry of the day came at the end of Seventh Lake. It was a long carry through a campground. Sometimes we carried the boat at our sides by one hand. More often we carried the boat up-right on our shoulders between our shoulder and our neck, switching shoulders frequently while constantly moving forward. Ken using one shoulder and me using the opposite shoulder. We would mix it up as necessary as fatigue set in. Can't wait to get back in this boat.

Across Eighth Lake and before the Brown's Tract (a very winding section of narrow water complete with beaver dams), a 2.5 mile technical section that required paddling skill and timing came our third carry of the day. Again Van was at the trail handing us more nutrition to get us through the day. We spoke briefly and departed for the Brown's Tract. Van departed too. We'll next see him at the finish at Blue Mountain Lake beach.

The Brown's Tract was challenging but it was also a great mind diversion in that you had to stay so focused to be able to negotiate the twists and turns of this river section. It was extremely narrow with hair-pin turns. This required good front brace technique, timing and coordination of paddle strokes for efficiency. We handled this section well with minimal errors and gained ground by passing several other boats.

The Brown's Tract connects with Raquette Lake. The cut-off time to reach Raquette lake was 3:00 pm. We made the cut-off. We paddled across Raquette Lake into a section called St. Huberts Lake and into the Marion River. These rivers, the Brown's Tract and the Marion River are not raging, flowing rivers. They are very small with little or no current. If you stop paddling your boat will stop dead in the water. This race is referred to as a flat water race for that reason. You never want to lose your forward momentum. You keep paddling always. It takes each man about 50,000 paddle strokes to complete this race. It's three busy days.

The fourth carry of the day is at the end of the Marion River through privately owned land. Because it is privately owned, only paddlers are allowed in. No pit crews. The cut-off time to reach the end of this carry is 4:30 pm. We made this cut-off.

Marion connects to Utowana Lake. I jokingly renamed this lake "Idon'twanadothisanymore" lake. There is a channel connecting Utowana Lake to Eagle Lake and another channel connecting Eagle Lake to Blue Mountain Lake. We ended at the finish line red buoys at the Blue Mountain Beach. Distance: 35 miles. Time: 7 hours and

41 minutes. Considering this included the 3.5 miles of carries we averaged about 13.17 minute miles, and average speed of about 4.6 miles per hour.

Tired, beat up and sore, we recovered for a bit on the beach then drove to Long Lake (about 5 miles or so) for some cold beer and a hot dinner.

Part of our plan was to remove the necessity of having to prepare dinner at the end of the night. Our wives (mine, Kathleen and Van's, Debi) were kind enough to prepare two trays of food for us to just stick in the over and heat up. This was a very good idea. We were much too tired to have to deal with preparing a meal from scratch. So we ate, debriefed and rehashed the day and shared our boat laughs with Van. We then planned our next day and went to bed early. Tomorrow will be another long day and the weather is taking a nose dive.

### **Day two.**

Day two's start was directly across the lake from where we were staying. A short 10 minute drive over the Long Lake Bridge and we were there.

Today's course starts at Bissell's property on Long Lake; paddle down Long Lake and into the Raquette River; Continue on to the carry around the Raquette Falls; then continue on the Raquette to a finish at "the Crusher" the NYS Raquette River Boat Launch on Routes 3 & 30 about 5 miles east of the village of Tupper Lake. Distance: 30 miles. Carries: One (1.25 miles up and over and down - difficult terrain)

It was Saturday, September 8th and the same weather system that brought tornadoes to LI was rapidly moving into the area. We had an 8 am paddlers meeting and today's focus was on the weather and safety. High winds, heavy rain and thunderstorms were expected. Lifejackets were to be mandatorily worn today. It was also suggested that all racers stay as close to the right side of the lake as possible to (1) be closer to shore in the event of a capsize, (2) to take advantage of the wind block provided by the tree line, and (3) to be able to get off of the water in the event of thunder and lightning. It was not raining yet but conditions were degrading quickly. No one wanted to cancel the race but they would if necessary. The hope was to get everyone off of Long Lake and into the safety of the river before that was required.

It took a lot of effort to simply hold our position on the starting line during roll call.

When the horn blew for our wave it was still not raining but the wind had kicked up and was coming from our rear starboard side. We had lined up 4 boats out from the right side of the lake as we had hoped. This position would not be the fastest line up the lake but it would be the safest. The rain began about five minutes in but not hard. The wind however was a problem. We had about 12 miles to paddle up Long Lake and the lake was like the Great South Bay on a stormy day. There were 2-3 foot swells and white caps. It was very nasty and difficult to control the boat in the following sea condition. In addition, we needed to be very careful around any outcropping of rock near the shore points. We could easily get sucked into a bad, unforgiving situation very quickly. Our main focus was to stay up right and maintain our speed as best as we could from there. As things happen, and they happen fast in those conditions, we capsized once. It happened fast. We caught the boat as we were dumped out but managed to keep it from turning over completely. We never lost anything out of the boat. We were in water that we could stand up in so we got to even shallower water quickly, dumped what water was in the boat and got

back in and proceeded on. It was a physically and mentally exhausting negotiating the lake this day. Once we got to the end we stopped briefly in the muck at the head of the river just to catch our breath. We had made the 1:00 cut-off time. When we looked back up the lake into the wind it looked incredibly bad. Lot's of white caps snapping across the water. Pretty amazing site. Just up river from us was a solo gentleman who damaged his shoulder. Help was being summoned for him.

Twenty-six boats capsized this day and did not recover. Each received a DNF for the day. The vast majority of these boats were not near the shore as suggested. It was a tough day on Long Lake. I was told it was one on the worst that they had ever had to contend with. Thank god for the many volunteers and DEC employees who monitor the course waterways and assist with rescues when needed. They were busy this day.

The Raquette River at this point is a very pretty place. It's about 10-20 yards wide in spots and meanders. Nothing like the tight turns of the Brown's Tract or the Marion River. Much gentler. Usually. But it was beautiful in a very secluded deep woods kind of way. Then the rain came. It rained hard and it was driving into us. By the time we got to the Raquette Falls carry we had a good six inches of water in the boat. It was just amazing how hard it rained in a short period of time.

The carry at the Raquette Falls was a very steep incline made even more difficult due to the rocks and roots along the trail. We were able to pass a few people on the trail. Many people use wheels to assist with carries. Wheels do you no good on this carry in a number of sections - most of the carry. The race rule is as follows; you can use wheels whenever you want to. However, if you use wheels, you must carry them in the boat for all three days. It's a good rule. We did not use wheels and we were used to not using them. Those that were not used to a carry without wheels struggled a little harder than usual. At the end of this carry, as we passed by, there was a medical tent set up and the EMT's were tending to a guy that was complaining of chest pains. We later learned that he recovered fine but dropped out as a precaution.



The second half of the Raquette River was extremely remote. It also had a lot of secondary waterways you could turn down. To be familiar with these waterways is truly a benefit. We took a wrong turn once and recovered and backtracked to the assigned course but that cost us about 15 minutes. It's so remote in this section you don't want to leave but the day was slipping away. We pressed on. Six miles past the carry we came to the Stoney Creek pit stop area. The temperature was dropping rapidly, we were soaked and it was still raining and

windy. Hypothermia was a concern. We had lost track of the time and when we stopped for some nutrition we learned, from Van, we were very close to missing our cut-off time at the Axton Landing cut-off point. We needed to get up river about 2 miles in about 5 minutes or thereabouts. There was no way we could sprint that fast. We panicked, jumped back in the boat and paddled hard, sprinted really, as fast as we could until we got there. Once there the time-keeper told us we had made it with 2 minutes to spare...so someones watch was off but all things considered, it was close. But the sprint had warmed us up a bit. We continued up river and on past Trombley's Landing and ultimately to the finish at "The Crusher". Distance: 30 miles. Time: 7 hour 1 minute. Considering this included the 1.25 miles of carry we averaged about 14.03 minute miles, and average speed of about 4.29 miles per hour. The weather took its toll but we held our own. This day wasn't given to us, we worked for each inch. It was a very tough day.

Again, tired, beat up and sore, the dropping temperature and wet conditions had us chilling down rapidly. We were both shivering. We quickly got back to our car and got the heat cranked up. On the way back to the cabin we stopped for some beer and snack food and then proceeded to the cabin for dinner. It was real nice to get out of all the cold wet clothing and gear. The cabin had a great heating system. A much better choice than a tent. The weather would improve on Sunday.

### **Day Three.**

The start of day three begins at the Fish Creek Campground; paddle down the Upper Saranac Lake and carry to Middle Saranac Lake; and then paddle across Middle Saranac Lake and into the Saranac River, carrying around the Upper State Locks. Continue into Lower Saranac Lake and into another section of the Saranac River; carry around the Lower State Locks; and then continue across Oseetah Lake and Lake Flower to finish the race at River Front Park in Saranac Lake Village. Distance: 25 miles. Carries: three (one half mile total).

It was a nice clear day and a crisp morning. After a hearty breakfast, we got our gear together, packed up and left the cabin for Fish Creek Campground. Many paddlers camped there for the entire weekend, others just the previous night. I was glad to have had a regular bed, a heated cabin and an oven to cook with. Especially last night.

An announcement was made at the paddlers meeting that if anyone wanted to change classes now was the time to do it. We were no where near contention in C2, Mens, Veterans class. Those guys were all very experienced racers. They blew us away.

We decided we would change classes to get in an earlier starting wave to get finished earlier. After all our post-race free food was waiting for us at the finish line. They moved us into the open touring class and we started day three in wave one. Our time would still be tracked. That worked well for us.

Only one of the carries on this day was accessible to the pit crews so we carried additional nutrition in the pockets of the life vests. Van met up with us at the Bartlett Carry, the first and longest of the three carries.

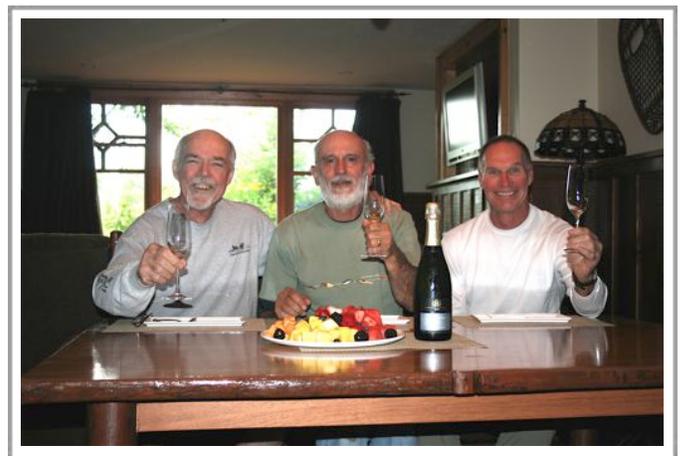
The start of day three was hairy because so many people changed classes that our wave now had every type of boat imaginable in it. We had to contend with many C4's in this wave and they kick up a big wake, especially at the start.

At the horn, things were again fast and furious as we headed for the point where every boat would make a sharp right and then get into open water. The pace was fast and the right hand turn was ugly as many boats knocked into one another in the congestion. Things started to ease up after that as boats began to string out, getting some distance between them. We headed down Upper Saranac to the next carry.

Bartlett's Carry is a great carry because it is mostly over a paved road but also because there is the infamous bag pipe player in traditional costume providing his music for everyone to enjoy as they pass on by. I believe he has been a fixture at this event for a long time - perhaps every year - all 30. I have seen him many times in youtube videos of the race in pervious years. We put-in at Middle Saranac Lake.

The paddle across Middle Saranac Lake was open and relatively short but the Saranac River at the Upper Lock was winding and heavily cautioned with channel markers because of the water hazards (rocks and tree stumps) and good paddling skills will assist you with the many twists and turns. The lock itself was easy to cross. Just a big rock outcropping about 50 yards wide at best. Quick out and back in. Then more river work and then into Lower Saranac Lake. About half way up the lake you make another right into another section of the Saranac River. This section is also heavily marked with channel markers and just as difficult to negotiate. At the end of the river is the Lower Lock. This lock is a little more difficult to carry around. The take out and the put in are both rough around the edges. The water is deep and there are stumps in the water. Very easy to lose your footing. Once on land the carry is up a short but steep natural embankment, over the lock about 600 feet and down another steep natural embankment. Once through this lock it is open lake water on Osetah Lake and then Lake Flower to the finish of the race.

The approach to River Front Park in Saranac Lake Village was festive looking from a distance as we approached. There were thousands of people, small tents and large tents and many boats up on the shore. We approached the red buoy finish line and were greeted with cheers and applause and an announcement by the organizers as to who we were and where we were from and, in our case, because we are from out of the area, a welcome to Saranac. Distance: 25 miles. Time: 4 hours 30 minutes. Considering this included the one half mile of carries we averaged about 10.8 minute miles, and an average speed of about 5.55 miles per hour.



## In Summary

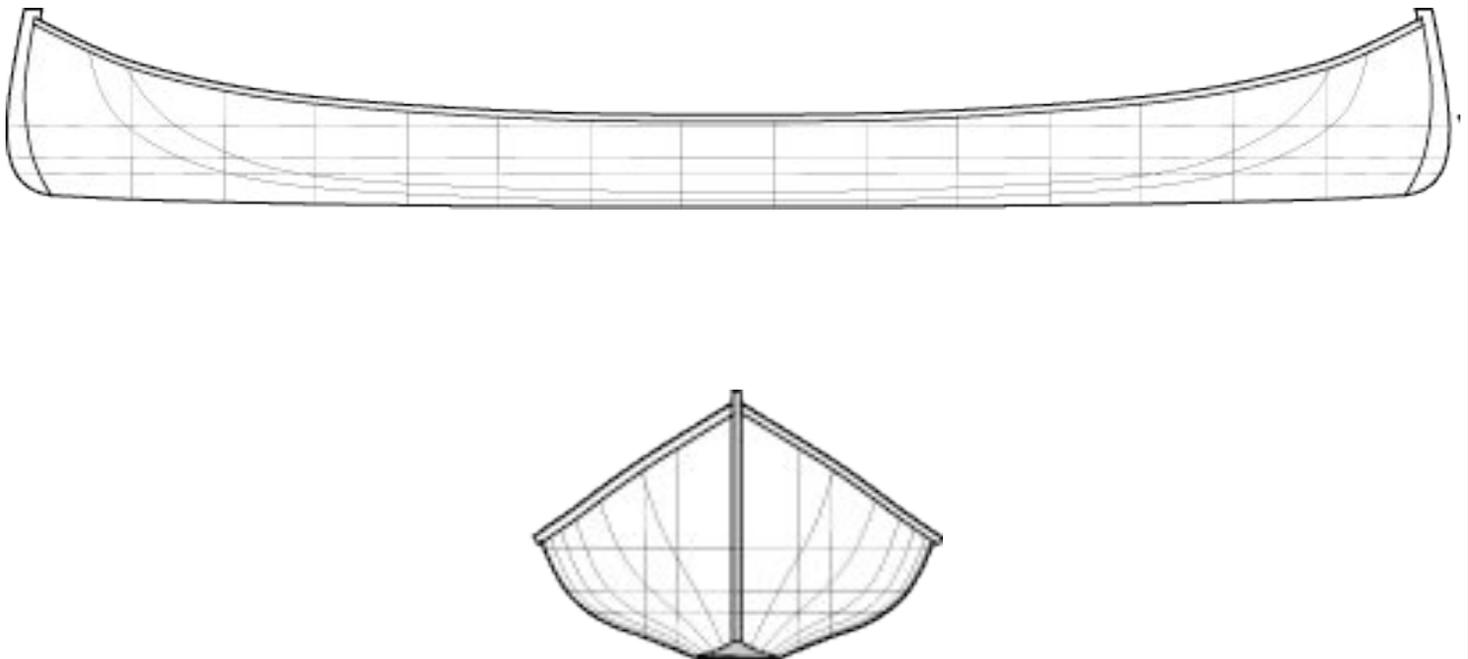
Distance: 90 miles. Time 19 hours 12 minutes. Considering this included a total of 5.25 miles of carries we averaged about 12.8 minute miles, and an average speed of about 4.69 miles per hour.

With the race now behind us we relaxed, still tired, beat-up and sore, at River Front Park and enjoyed the post race meal with all of the other paddlers and their friends and families. But the tiredness and soreness was easier to handle this time. We were done. It was challenging and it was exciting. We were satisfied with our accomplishment. There was also an awards ceremony for class winners and other special recognition awards.

I would be remiss if I did not mention how wonderful the entire Adirondack community was during this event. The volunteers and the State employees and the race organizers did a terrific job with a very large and complex event involving a lot of territory, much of it very remote. They always do. It was a beautiful final day. It was a great experience for Van, Ken and myself. We were able to bond in a very special way.

After the after-race events wound down, we traveled up the road and spent Sunday night at the Whiteface Lodge in Lake Placid. While there we were greeted with a mixed fruit platter and a bottle of Champagne - a congratulatory surprise from our wives, Kathleen and Debi. It was a perfect ending to a long weekend adventure accomplished by and shared with the best of friends.

It doesn't really get any better than that.



## Kayaking on Lake Powell 2012

Colin Mullen December, 2012

On September 29, 2012 Dara and I traveled to Page Arizona to kayak and camp on Lake Powell. Like always Dara made all the arrangements for our trip. She arranged all the flight reservations, the car rental, hotel reservations, kayak rentals as well as the services of two guides and everything else that would be needed. All I needed to do was pack some kayaking gear which was not being supplied, clean underwear and show up.

Lake Powell is a 186 mile long manmade lake encompassing parts of both Arizona and Utah. The majority of Powell Lake is located in Utah. It has a shore line of over 1,960 miles and is reported to have a maximum depth of 500 feet. Lake Powell was created by the building of the Glen Canyon hydroelectric Dam which feeds into the Colorado River. The water is crystal clear and that combined with its calm flat surface makes for an amazing mirror like surface the likes of which Dara and I have never seen. The water surface is so mirror like that pictures taken of the water's surface with the canyon walls in the background reflecting onto the water when turned upside down are almost identical to being right side up.



Another amazing and unique feature of Powell Lake is its aquatic life. Along with the fish one would expect to find in fresh water lakes are striped bass. Yes, in a fresh water lake at an elevation of 4,300 feet is a thriving population of striped bass, the same salt water game fish that migrate along the Atlantic Ocean's coast line.

At 9:30 AM on Sunday, September 30, 2012 Dara and I along with two women from Florida (Jill and Mary) met our guides Joe and Sean at the Stateline Launch Ramp. The ramp is appropriately named since it is the dividing line between Arizona and Utah. Our guides had transported a pontoon boat along with kayaks to the launch site prior to our arrival. The six of us climbed onto the pontoon boat and travel 20 miles up Lake Powell.



At the end of our two hour trip we entered a small cove and Joe ran the pontoon boat up onto a sandy beach which was to serve as our home for the night. We all assisted in taking the kayaks off the top of the pontoon boat, ate lunch and then Jill, Mary, Dara and I were given the opportunity to go paddling. We were directed to paddle down a specific canyon and Joe and Sean would catch up to us after they unloaded the remaining equipment from the boat. We paddled approximately three quarters of a mile when the canyon ran into a dead end and we turned back. About half way back to camp Joe and Sean joined us. Joe now assumed the lead and we kayaked through a series of winding canyons.

I now understood why we were sent down a dead-end canyon, for it would have been extremely difficult for us to find our way back to the launch site if we ventured out onto the lake and into one of its numerous canyons without a guide. Paddling through canyons walls reaching hundred's feet above the water's surface and with every rock formation being indistinguishable from the next did not leave me with defined reference points to use for back tracking. Rock formations entered the water from every angle. What would appear to be an impassable solid mountain in front of us at a distance would suddenly open up to a great expanse of the lake's surface once we got closer. Where it appeared there would be a large bend in the lake around an out cropping of rocks would suddenly dead end once we reached it.



This was no place for amateurs to go exploring. Even if I possessed a map or chart of the area I would have been confused as to our location. There was a large distinguishable mountain directly across from our campsite but being confined inside of the canyons walls I could not always see it seated in a kayak. When I could see the mountain and use it as a reference point to reach it without guidance would have required me to paddle down a dozen dead end canyons and backtrack before reaching it.

This trip was designed as both a kayaking and hiking trip so after three miles of paddling we landed our kayaks where a slow running stream feeds into the lake. The entrance of the stream bed at the landing site was the size of a living room but as we progressed it quickly turned into a narrow slot canyon. At some locations the canyon was so narrow we needed to turn sideways to continue. In some sections we would be walking ankle deep in running water then in a few steps the stream bed would be dry sand, the water having been absorbed into the sand and running beneath its surface. At times we would be dropping into waist deep pools of cold mountain water or climbing over boulders which were deposited by fast moving water when the snow melted in the mountains. The only thing that was a constant was the hundred foot height of the canyon walls on each side of us. There is an eerie feeling being in a cold, shadowy, narrow slot canyon and looking up at the towering vertical walls, knowing there is no place to go if a rock was to fall. There is no climbing out. The only way out is to either go back the way you entered or maybe by going forward. For us the decision of when to turn back came when we reached a stagnate pool of black water of unknown depth. No one volunteered to drop into that stagnate pool to find out just how deep or cold it was so we reversed direction and returned to our beached kayaks along the same trail we entered.

Joe and Sean had been leading beginner kayakers in sit on top kayaks all season. We were the first group of experienced kayakers, and the first group to use sea kayaks, this resulted in us traveling much faster and further from camp than Joe and Sean realized. This was evident by the setting sun and how many times they repeated "camp should be just around the next bend" and how many times Joe paddled around an out cropping of rocks and reappeared after discovering the pontoon boat was not anchored at that location.

We paddled into camp just as the sun was setting and the view was incredible. As the shadows started to fall on one side of the canyon's walls turning them into shades of gray the other side was lit up in magnificent shades of bright reds and oranges.



Once back at our campsite Joe and Sean gave us the option of sleeping in two person tents or on cots under the open sky. We all elected to sleep on the cots. Joe and Sean prepared our dinner as we selected our locations to spend the night, assembled our cots and fluffed up our sleeping bags.

With all our sleeping arrangements completed we sat down to an excellent dinner. One of the women from Florida commented on the quality of Joe and Sean's chef like meal under such primitive conditions. As Joe and Sean explained it there are so many outfitters to choose from clients will often choose by the quality of the meals being served so guide companies only employ guides that can prepare quality meals. They said they work from April to October as Colorado River and Lake Powell guides and once the season's over they find work as restaurant cooks to improve their skills. With dinner now over everyone started to wander off to their selected sleeping locations.

Dara could not have book this trip for a better time of the year or better time of the month. The days were in the mid 80's the nights were cool but not real cold, there was no humidity or rain in the forecast. Just as the sun was setting behind the horizon and we were turning in for the night a brilliant full moon started to rise. There would be no need for any artificial lighting this night.



On Monday, October 1 we awoke to a beautiful crisp fall morning and the smell of breakfast being prepared. After a pleasant breakfast we loaded the pontoon boat with the kayaks and set off back down Lake Powell. After an hour's traveling, Joe once again beached the boat up onto a sandy beach. We unloaded the kayaks and again with Joe in the lead our little group paddled on the crystal clear flat water of Lake Powell.

We paddled through a series of winding tranquil canyons on mirror like glass water. After approximately three and a half miles of paddling the water course ended in another slot canyon. This canyon's opening was much smaller than the grand living room size canyon of the day before but just as majestic. We beached the kayaks and started the winding walk through the incased slot canyon. Unlike the day before this canyons surface was dry, no ankle deep water to walk through or dropping into cold pools of water, just a pleasant sandy surface to walk

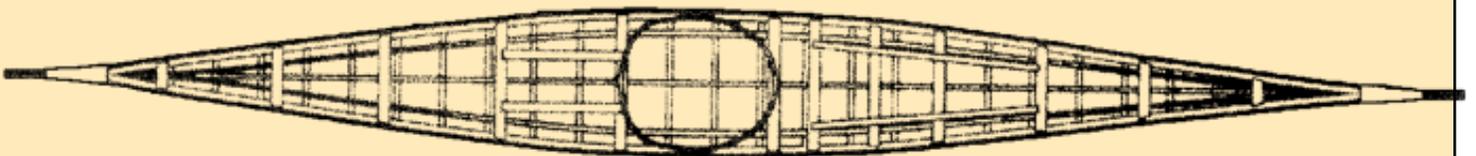
on. We traveled about forty-five minutes through the three foot wide canyon when our path was once more blocked.

This time it was not a stagnant pool of black water which blocked our path but a small eighteen inch rattlesnake. It was just sitting there all curled up under a

small ledge resting in the shade waiting for some small rodent or other creature to wander into the reach of its fangs. It was so perfectly camouflaged matching the coloring of the sand that it was almost impossible to see. My first thought, which I did not express, was just jump over it. But once I witnessed its aggressive nature I thought better of my initial idea. There were six people in our group, each of us being a more than hundred times larger than this little rattlesnake and we walked almost up to it and it refused to retreat. It claimed it territory and was going to remain there. If anything or anyone was going to retreat it would be us. With our hike blocked by this tenacious little snake we reversed our direction and returned to our kayaks. We paddled back out through the impressive winding canyons and returned to the pontoon boat.

We enjoyed a nice lunch, loaded the kayaks on the pontoon boat and returned to the State Line Boat Launch site, our trip ended, where it began.

We landed by pontoon boat or kayak on four different sandy beaches during our two day paddling and hiking trip. Our trip was during the closing days of the boating and hiking season on Powell Lake. There were hundreds of footprints at each landing site and hiking trail but not one piece of litter. During our two day stay on Powell Lake we practiced the principles of the Leave No Trace as obviously had everyone which preceded us. What a beautiful place this country's, trails and waterways would be if everyone had the consideration of their fellow paddler, hiker, etc., in mind and made that little effort and commitment to practice the principles of Leave No Trace.



## Wind and Waves

Over the years Dara and I have canoed or kayaked in various states and numerous locations within those states; we have paddled on lakes, rivers, bays, sounds and ocean waters. We have canoed on some of the lakes and rivers in most of the New England states; we also canoed in New Jersey, upstate New York and Long Island. During my days in the service I also canoed a number of rivers and lakes in North Carolina.

Dara and I have kayaked in the Florida Keys from the Atlantic Ocean through the inland waters to the Gulf of Mexico. We have kayaked the coastal regions of New England, including part of the Maine Water Trail. We have kayaked the coastal waters of Washington State almost to Canada, along with the inland waterways and bays of Delaware, Maryland, Arizona and Utah. Over the years we have literally paddled hundreds of miles and one thing has become overly apparent, people in states outside of New York have a much better respect for their waterways, environment and their fellow paddlers. The exception in New York State is sections of upstate New York, there people still respect the environment and have consideration for others. It is as if people of lower New York including Long Island have never heard of the principles of "Leave No Trace" or if they have they obviously just don't care, for our waterways are a cesspool of garbage.

I can't recall seeing one piece of litter on the waterways or highways of Washington State, Arizona or Utah. The waterways of the New England states were void of litter, as for Delaware and Maryland I would consider their waterways

pristine when compared to the litter which floats on the waters and collects on the banks of lower New York and Long Island.

Ask anyone who has paddle the Carmen's River with me in the spring my kayak returns looking like a mini garbage barge loaded with fishing line, food wrappers and water bottle others have discarded. I don't know why but down state New Yorker's including Long Islander's appear to be the largest group of litterers in the country? Compared to the other states Dara and I have visited down state New York and Long Island seem to hold the record for the most litter on our waterways and highways.

Maybe all the trash and garbage on New York's and Long Island's waterways is not litter from New Yorker's alone. Maybe it also litter from all the coastal regions of the New England states, the west coast states and all the other coastal states in the U.S. combined which just floats to lower New York and Long Island. Yes that must be it! New Yorkers alone could not possible produce that much garbage on our waterways without assistance.

Our waterways will never hold the unspoiled beauty they once possessed before the Europe explorers sailed upon them. But, through individual effort and education just maybe we can reduce the amount of litter which floats upon our waterways making them a little more picturesque and enjoyable to paddle on, before the Leave No Trace organization changes or modifies its slogan to read "Leave No Trace; New Yorkers exempt."

**Derick Hutchinson** died on October 10, 2012, at his home in South Shields, England. He was 79. The cause was cancer, said his friend Wayne Horodowich, the founder of the University of Sea Kayaking and according to an obituary in the New York Times on November 12, 2012, by Douglas Martin. Derek Hutchinson was an instructor, writer, boat designer, free spirit and voyager. He became involved in sea kayaking in the 1960s, when he took a one-day kayaking course in a swimming pool and was enthralled. People were beginning to see sporting possibilities in the vessels Eskimos had long regarded as primary transportation. As an instructor he taught safe, efficient techniques, first in Britain and then around the world. He wrote more than a dozen books and added poetry and art into the sport. He was considered by many as the "Sea Daddy" of present day sea kayaking. In 1976 Mr. Hutchinson wrote and illustrated "Sea Canoeing," which was later retitled "The Complete Book of Sea Kayaking." Translated into several languages and now in its fifth printing, it became regarded as a bible for the sport. "Hold your paddle like a fairy holds her wand, not how a witch holds her broomstick!" he told his pupils. He had firm opinions. For example, he asserted that the length of a kayak should be no more than 16 feet, 10 inches. When asked to explain this by a dubious kayak designer, he said that his garage was 17 feet long. Mr. Hutchinson's wife, Helene, died in 2004. He is survived by his partner, Maureen Cook; his sons, Clive and Graham; his daughter, Fiona; six grandchildren: and one great-grandchild. We will all miss him but his work and legacy carry on in the sport of kayaking.

## **Peer Practices, Winter Pool, Instructional Events, Assessments, Paddles and More**

**Peer Practices** held in 2012 are over. Next year they will be available every Monday starting in early May. They are free sessions for NACK members to get together (starting at about 6:00 p.m.) to practice paddling until the days get too short. These sessions are great to learn a little or a lot about paddling. NACK makes it really easy for kayakers to learn and paddle by holding these sessions. They are not instructional events. They are times to paddle around, have fun and gain confidence with experienced paddlers nearby.

**Winter Pool 2013** (updated schedule) is in January, February and early March at Suffolk County Community College in Brentwood, L. I. You can bring your clean kayaks and practice strokes, wet exits, rolls, etc. Suffolk Community College is having a meet on 1/26 and therefore we cannot use the pool on that day. The pool sessions have been extended until **March 16**. The dates for 2013 are on Saturdays from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM on the following dates: 1/12, 1/19, 2/2, 2/9, 2/23, 3/2, 3/9, 3/16.

**Instructional Events** are also given by NACK throughout the year at reduced cost with ACA certified instructors. Fees paid at these events go to the NACK treasury.

**Assessments** are one free per year.

**Paddles** are held throughout the year that are organized by members. Check our website, newsletters and schedules. It's hard to keep up with all that is going on.

**Monthly meetings please** see pages 32.



## Safety

Reprinted from *Atlantic Coastal Kayaker*, Volume 21, Number 5

# Small Craft Communication: From a Kayak, SUP, Canoe...

by Gordon Dayton and Elizabeth O'Connor-Dayton

Whether you are a novice or a pro, there are all sorts of good reasons to be capable of on-water communication. Even if you don't plan to go far or if your goal is to get away from it all, you may need to have someone in your corner if you get into trouble. Since it is rare to find a pay phone, cell tower, or hot spot off shore, let's consider some marine-specific techniques for getting aid.

Maybe the first consideration is to avoid trouble by being seen. Getting attention is the key hurdle. Paddlers are not very high off the water so it is harder for us to see and be seen. If there are waves or swells, this can be more difficult. The table below shows "sight distance" under ideal calm conditions, but it is easy to get swells along the coast or even a large lake that could obscure most paddlers periodically. Add some haze or fog to the picture and the problem is magnified. Finally, someone has to actually be looking in your direction so that you can be seen.

Line of Sight Distance on Water	
Height over water (ft)	Sight Distance (nm)
1.0	1.2
2.0	1.7
3.0	2.0
4.0	2.3
5.0	2.6
10	3.7
15	4.5
20	5.2
30	6.4

Sight Distance = 1.17 x (height above water)<sup>1.5</sup>  
 Sight distances add. If you are 3 ft off the water, you can just see a 20-ft mast when it is 7.2 miles away.

The best way for a paddler to increase the chance of being seen is to wear bright clothing and choose a brightly colored boat and PFD. Adding reflective tape to your PFD, boat and paddle tips is a great idea, especially at night.

**Manual Communication:** This is where you get someone's attention and then use

visual or audible signals to communicate. The US Coast Guard recommends we carry incendiary signal flares. But flares that are easily accessible, deployable and dependable for paddlers are a challenge. At best, they work for a minute or two if chosen well and used correctly (ref-1. References are on page 24). A simple signal mirror is reliable and effective if the sun is out (an old CD could substitute in a pinch) and fairly easy to use (ref-2). In fog, the USCG recommends a horn which is sounded regularly. There are tiny canned air horns for paddlers and also some pretty loud whistles. A whistle is a required on-water tool for signaling your group and passersby, but be sure to choose one that is "pea-less."

At night, a flashing white light (strobe) is an effective distress signal, but prohibited unless it's a real emergency. There are some great on-line sources for general safety equipment (refs 3-5), but I try to locate and patronize my local paddle shop for most equipment. For a few dollars more, I get the advantage of meeting and trading information with local experts and other paddlers, including advice use of equipment.



Image source: *USCG Navigation Rules*, 25 - *Vessel Under Oars*

Just to be seen at night, small craft (kayaks, canoes, sit-on-tops, rowboats, etc.) are required by the USCG to: "have ready at hand an electric torch or lighted lantern showing a white light which shall be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision."

Small craft can also follow sailboat guidelines, using a fixed stern light (white) or red and green deck lights. Be careful in choosing these as bright lights reduce your night vision and red/green running lights might confuse you with a larger craft.

Most visuals are fine for avoiding collision, but not so great for getting attention. A better option is a "laser flare" such as those available from a couple of manufacturers (ref-6,7). The electronic rescue flares are waterproof (though not submersible) and visible for up to 20 miles line of sight. They are pricey (around \$100) but much more effective and reliable than incendiaries with proper use and care (ref-8). One caution: most craft do not appreciate being "targeted" by a laser - so ensure you really need one as you are likely to get attention. Also, remember it is a federal offense to point a laser at aircraft.

Real communication using visual signals is limited unless you and your partner know Morse code (most boaters know "SOS"). It's a good idea for your group to agree on some basic hand and paddle signals before you launch (ref-9-11). In a pinch, to get a stranger's attention and convey that you need help may be all you can hope for. To convey detailed information, you need something more sophisticated.

**Electronic Communication:** This refers to all sorts of modern communication methods. Probably the easiest way to provide for on-water communications is to grab your cell phone. However, unless you happen to have one of the few models that are waterproof, it needs to be in a sealed container or dry-bag which makes it hard to operate.

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### Reprinted from Atlantic Coastal Kayaker, Volume 21, Number 5

How would we use a cell phone to call for help? Even if you can get a signal off-shore which is "iffy," 911 is for land use only - 911 centers require a street address to send help. Do you have the phone number of the US Coast Guard? Harbor Patrol? Tow boat service? Are they equipped to locate you via your phone GPS? If not, can you provide an accurate location? Better program them under speed dial if this is your plan.

The ideal tool for on-water communications is the VHF Marine Radio, since the Coast Guard is on call 24/7 and can triangulate your signal. Prices on hand-held models have dropped making them much more affordable for the small craft, and many come equipped with great features. You could pay as little as \$100 for a pair of radios, but we recommend basic features that put you in the range of \$100 to \$200 per unit. Our units happen to be made by ICom, but there are a number of good manufacturers to choose from (refs 13-17)

You will want to be able to monitor the marine weather channels. These channels give 24-hour weather and are critical for small craft whose future can be decided by an unexpected squall. Hard to believe, but not all are submersible, so make sure that yours is and look for a three-year warranty. A nice feature that is now more common is floatability. To achieve this, you have to reduce weight, which compromises battery size and talk time. Amazingly a few models can do both and still stay in the price range I quote. If you can't find a floatable you like, make sure your radio is well leashed. Finally, check on the price of replacement rechargeable batteries for your unit and whether it has single use batteries as a backup.

These are some key aspects to look for on some of the popular on-line review sites (ref-17, 18). After this I would also direct your attention to some added features, like channel lock and scanning, ac and dc charging, water clearing, etc. You may value some rarer/pricier features like on-board GPS for navigation or Bluetooth pairing to answer a cell phone stored on the boat.

Hopefully I have sold you on a VHF



Author's PFD showing communications gear carried on the water. Note all items are tethered to prevent loss.

#### Sample Marine Radio Communication Channel 16

**BK:** *Mayday, Mayday, Mayday. This is blue kayak, blue kayak, blue kayak. (Repeated until answered.)*

**USCG:** *This is US Coast Guard Dispatch receiving you blue kayak, what is the nature of your problem? Over.*

**BK:** *I am paddling with a partner about a mile south of Cape Horn. My partner flipped his kayak and I cannot get him back in. The boat has drifted away but I am helping him hold onto my boat. He is 62 years old, has a heart condition and cannot swim well, but I managed to get his life jacket on him.*

**USCG:** *Blue kayak, our radio triangulation shows you east-southeast of Cape Ann on the New Jersey Coast 2.2 miles from Cape Ann light on a bearing of 110 degrees magnetic. Is this correct? Over.*

**BK:** *Oh ... yeah, that's probably right, sorry...*

**USCG:** *Very good blue kayak, cruiser Horizon is in your area and should be on scene in about 5 minutes. Can you hold on until then? Over.*

**BK:** *OK that should work Coast Guard; and thanks! ... uh, Over*

**USCG:** *We will continue to monitor on channel 16 until help arrives. Over and out.*

radio as a basic tool. To get your operating details: "read the friendly manual." Here are some pointers on use:

1. Monitor channel 16 (emergency)
2. Monitor a local weather channel
3. A scanning feature can do both
4. Use 16 only for emergency.
5. Keep communications to necessary subjects. If you are coordinating your group, go to an unused channel.
6. Keep transmissions clear and brief in order to be understood.

Note some features of this conversation:

1. The kayaker is reporting distress and maintains the call until answered. If disaster is not imminent the call should be "Pan-pan" instead of "Mayday."
2. He is repeating the call and his boat identification in order to be effectively heard and understood.
3. He is using color and type to identify his craft (what rescuers will look for) and describes his party and position on the water.
4. The USCG now has the ability to triangulate radio signals to confirm position. Boaters often get their position wrong.
5. Apparently the victim was not wearing a PFD. Getting a PFD while floating is very difficult. All paddlers should wear their PFD while on the water.

For more information on marine radio communications, see ref-19.

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Elizabeth O'Connor-Dayton and Gordon Dayton demonstrate VHF use during Safe Boating Week in Stratford, Ct., May 21, 2012. (John Kovach Photo). Image Source: Stratford Star.

Another piece of gear, more popular with professional boaters is the EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) or PLB (Personal Locator Buoy). These satellite communication devices are more costly. They are more usual for the expedition paddler who intends to spend time on the open ocean far from shore, perhaps during multiday paddles. If you are interested there is much more information on the web (ref-20).

#### Care of Electronics:

All marine electronics from the humble flashlight to more sophisticated and expensive equipment benefit from a wash to remove saltwater followed by air drying and dry storage between trips. I have lost submersible electronics that I thought were "safely" stored in a dry bag. Actually if moisture enters a sealed bag or box, this environment offers an immense challenge to even submersible electronics.

#### Communication Ethics:

Paddling is a vehicle to "get away" from our busy world, at least for most of us. Spending

that time talking on a cell phone, or listening to canned music can divorce you from the experience and irritate your companions. Electronic devices can act the same way in boats as in cars if misused, diverting your attention from your environment and thereby reducing your safety. It is best to keep use of electronic devices to a necessary minimum to enhance the pleasure of the experience for yourself and others. Never use emergency signal devices as toys and practice with them only under controlled conditions.

#### In Conclusion:

The most important thing about paddling a small craft is to have fun. We never expect or want to have a problem. Planning for good communication is a great way to prevent a problem from turning into a tragedy. Happy paddling!

*Gordon Dayton is an ACA L4 Open Water Coastal Kayak Instructor working with his wife Elizabeth O'Connor, an ACA L4 Instructor Trainer and CEO of Changing Tides PaddleCraft. They provide paddling*

*instruction to Connecticut and southern New York – learn more at [www.CTPaddle-Craft.com](http://www.CTPaddle-Craft.com). Gordon currently serves on the Board of Directors of the American Canoe Association [www.AmericanCanoe.com](http://www.AmericanCanoe.com).*

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From the ACA website

## Be Prepared - Cold Water Can KILL!

Cold Water is extremely dangerous. It quickly robs the body of its strength, diminishes coordination and impairs judgment. **Immersion in water as warm as 50 to 60 degrees can initiate what has been called "Cold Water Shock."**

When a paddler capsizes and is suddenly immersed in cold water, the body's first reflexive action is to gasp for air, followed by increased heart rate, blood pressure and disorientation. The immersion can even lead to cardiac arrest. Without proper equipment and apparel, the body can become incapacitated in just a few minutes. Without a lifejacket, this is a very dangerous and often fatal combination. When paddling where the water temperature is 60 degrees Fahrenheit or colder, a **wetsuit** is a must and a **drysuit** is highly recommended and preferred.

Cold water or cold weather can also lead to dangerous hypothermia. Hypothermia occurs when exposure to the elements prohibits the body from reheating and maintaining its core temperature. Typical symptoms of hypothermia include shivering, impaired judgment, clumsiness, loss of dexterity and slurred speech.

Planning and Prevention are the best methods to avoid potentially life-threatening situations:

*Plan your trip and "think smart"* - Know the water temperature and weather forecast before you set out.

*Fuel Your Body* - Keep your body well fueled with high carbohydrate foods and lots of water.

*Insulate Your Body* - **Simply said, you should dress for immersion in cold water.**

- Avoid wearing cotton clothing when paddling in cool temperatures.
- Dress in layers using synthetic fabrics such as polyester fleece to prevent getting overheated or chilled from perspiration.
- Carry a waterproof jacket designed for splash and/or rain protection.
- Anytime the water temperature is less than 60 degrees Fahrenheit, wear specialized insulating clothing (wetsuit or drysuit) capable of protecting you while in the water.
- Keep in mind that the warmth and comfort range of a dry suit can be flexible based on the clothing worn underneath it.
- Wear a warm hat that will stay on your head in the water. A fleece-lined skullcap or diver's hat is ideal. Don't forget your feet and hands.
- Have spare, dry clothing and store in a sealed dry bag while on the water.

*Watch Out for Your Group* - Know your emotional and physical limitations. Group members need to constantly assess the behavior of others in their group. Look for changes in behavior, withdrawal, sluggishness, talking less or a member not eating enough. These are all symptoms of fatigue and may suggest a problem that the group needs to address.

## A QUICK GUIDE TO THE WORK CREDIT/NACK BUCK SYSTEM

Revised 9-27-2010

As part of the membership responsibilities all members are asked to donate 10 work hours to NACK each year. These hours can be fulfilled by being elected as club officer, appointment as a committee chairperson, volunteering on any of the committees, or helping out at outreach events. See the full Work Policy on the web site for detailed job descriptions and work credit given. Go to [www.getthenack.org](http://www.getthenack.org) click on Docs and Forms, scroll to the button that says NACK Work Policy and click on it. If you're unsure who to contact to volunteer for a position call or e-mail any member of the executive committee or the board.

For every 10 hours over the 10 required hours a "NACK Buck" is deposited to your work account. Each NACK Buck currently has a credit value of \$25 towards NACK approved training. To get work credits and earn NACK Bucks YOU MUST REPORT YOUR WORK HOURS.

To report your work hours send an e-mail to the work committee chairperson (see page 2) stating the activity, the date and the number of hours. The email needs to be sent within two months of contributing the work hours. Submissions of work hours received more than two months after service will not be counted.

### **NACK approved and sponsored training:**

To redeem your NACK bucks print out a copy of the NACK Buck Redemption form from the Docs & Forms section of the website. Mail or scan a copy of the completed form to the treasurer, who will get the approval from the work chair.

### **For non-sponsored training:**

It is required to fill out this form well before the proposed training session as the required approvals may take two weeks or more, as you must get the additional signatures as outlined in the work policy. The signatures can be by email notes and attached to the form.

You must show proof that you completed the course to the treasurer to receive your NACK Bucks

Your membership must be current, your work commitment must be up to date, and there must be sufficient coverage in the Training Fund as outlined in the work policy.

To streamline the approval process, all NACK training will have the maximum number of allowable NACK bucks that can be used listed with the training. The amount of allowable NACK bucks must be approved by the board prior to the posting of the training. After the member completes the course the only approval that will be needed is by the work chairperson and the treasurer following the current work guidelines.



## **NACK** Monthly Meetings:

Please see our schedules for meetings, assessments, winter pool, training, peer practices, and events or contact any director, officer or committee member listed on page 2 of this newsletter. If you are thinking about joining our club or, if you would like to come and see what paddling is about, attend a meeting, peer practice, winter pool or event. Contact any director, officer or committee member on page 2 for information. More details and directions are contained on our **web site** at [www.get-the-NACK.org](http://www.get-the-NACK.org). Please always check our current newsletter (quarterly) & website for the locations, dates and goings on. During warmer weather, we hold our monthly meetings on the water. Our **e-mail** is [info@get-the-NACK.org](mailto:info@get-the-NACK.org). The Winter Schedule is on page 4. **Updates** will be on our web site as the schedule gets revised. Hope to see you at a meeting or event and on the water.

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Please send your articles, stories, tips, photographs, etc., to

Hal M @ [halmcl@mac.com](mailto:halmcl@mac.com)

Tell some friends about NACK. Joining NACK gives one a new perspective on life.

# NORTH ATLANTIC CANOE & KAYAK



Rolling – Winter Pool – Photo Courtesy of Steve M

## The Idea of NACK

NACK came about from recognition that Long Island and the Northeast have amazing natural resources for a variety of types of paddling and a wide range of interests and skills among the population. NACK was founded by a group of highly trained local instructors with a diversity of certification backgrounds including the American Canoe Association, the British Canoe Union and the American Red Cross. All had a desire to bring the fundamentals of paddling safety to the community at large as well as provide for a program of continuous improvement in skills for paddlers at all levels. In the-spring of 2005 the founding directors and leaders of NACK founded a NYS not-for-profit paddling organization dedicated to training, safety, adventure

and fellowship. They began working to formulate the basic tenets of what is now a premier paddling club. In the Charter the stated purposes for which NACK has been formed are educational and literary. Specifically: *"NACK will promote ongoing education in safe and responsible canoeing and kayaking for paddlers of all skill levels on the rivers, lakes and coastal waters of the Northeastern United States."* Over the years NACK has evolved into a preeminent paddling club whose members live from NYC to the Hamptons and beyond. Our member's paddling interests and skill levels go from beginner to expert and are as diverse and wide spread as the areas where we live.

## Interested in Paddling Safely – Come to a NACK Event

- Association with some of the best, most active paddlers in northeast USA
- Free assessment of your paddling skills
- Discounted training by ACA Instructors
- Notification of paddling opportunities
- NYS not-for-profit corporation
- Service & Community Outreach
- Library of books, DVDs and tapes
- Modern web presence & message board
- Peer practice, meetings and training
- Paddling trips
- Increase your confidence and knowledge
- Protect the Environment
- Resource & voice for paddlers
- Discounts at some retailers
- Individuals, families, clubs and businesses
- Learn and grow in a year-round sport
- Learn and grow in a lifetime sport
- [www.get-the-NACK.org](http://www.get-the-NACK.org)

### Training

*Skill is the elastic in the system. When conditions worsen, having a reserve of skill makes the difference between terror and excitement. Top Tips for Coaches 2002*

### Safety

*If the first time you rely on a skill is in a survival situation and you find you have not mastered it — then what?*

Top Tips for Coaches 2002

### Adventure & Fellowship

*If you never paddle with those better than you, you never improve.*

NACK Training Director  
Elizabeth O'Connor 2005