

The Chesapeake Paddler



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Spring has sprung and the paddling looks exceptionally fine

Imaginative offerings, new sign-up system point to dynamic season ahead

By Lois Wyatt

Driving through heavy rain to Severna Park, 29 dedicated members met to compile an array of paddling possibilities for CPA's 2017 season. They gathered at Manhattan Beach Community Center to lay out a grand calendar of diverse offerings, something for everyone. Do you have a friend tempted to become more active in kayaking? On March 11, **SK101** offers a day rich with information to educate consumers expecting to shop soon for the right boat and appropriate equipment, both novices to the sport and those contemplating a change. Returning for its twelfth year, the **KIPP series** begins April 8, followed by monthly sessions through the summer, with two dates in September. If interested, be sure to join the program at its beginning to build your skills and endurance. June 3 combines **Gear Day** and skills practice at Truxton Park, Annapolis. To join the **Kayak Rodeo** slated for July, you will need to perfect your cow-person reentry. Beyond these and other special events, a number of day and overnight trips are already listed for most weekends from May to October with many more to follow. Stay tuned. The calendar will also continue to list non-CPA events of potential interest.

The new website has incorporated the Meetup platform as the primary way of signing up for a trip, responding to screening questions, and receiving information from the trip leader. Please be patient if the leader seems a bit challenged by Meetup. S/he may choose another avenue for further communication or appreciate your polite insight as to how to manage the process better. Check the calendar early and often to catch the events that appeal to you and fit your schedule.



Time to break out your gear. CPA trip planners have outdone themselves in creating a calendar of tempting paddles. So dust it off, tune it up, and get on the water!

Photo/Kevin Lawrence

Meetup streamlines trip planning

Robust platform enhances process, awaits paddlers

Change is hard. But it often results in new opportunities and improved efficiency. This is certainly the case with CPA's move to Meetup for scheduling trips and events.

In case you missed the memo, trip and event scheduling is now handled through the CPA Meetup group, and the CPA Meetup Calendar now constitutes the official club calendar. You must join CPA Meetup to view the CPA Meetup calendar and to sign up for trips and events. You may opt to have new paddling opportunities pushed to you via email or text as they become available.



Haven't gotten around to it? You are not alone: More than half of CPA members have yet to join CPA Meetup. But the paddling season is around the corner, and trips for every skill level await. So just do it. Here's how: (1) Create a Meetup account at <http://www.meetup.com>; (2) Join CPA Meetup (group); (3) View astounding array of member-led trips on [CPA Meetup Calendar](#); (4) Sign up for a trip or event. Happy paddling!

THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

The mission of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association is to provide a way for people to enjoy sea kayaking within the Chesapeake Bay area and to promote safe sea kayaking practices through educating the local sea kayaking community and the interested public.

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Public service announcement and personal ads to sell kayaks/ accessories are printed at no charge; non-members pay \$10 for 3 months. Ads dated three months before the date of this issue will be pulled unless a new request is received by the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. And if it has sold...tell us!

THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLER

The Chesapeake Paddler is published 10 times a year, with combination issues in Nov/Dec and Jan/Feb. The deadline for submitting copy is the 15th of the preceding month. Have an idea for an article, or is there information you would like to see in the newsletter?

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News From the CPA Coordinator - Bill Smith

In January, CPA sponsored a cold water clinic presented by Moulton Avery. This clinic was very informative and eye-opening instruction; he dug deeply into the subject of cold water shock. This was my third



time attending the clinic. One thing that struck me was that Moulton barely touches on hypothermia because in reality after cold water shock, you probably won't live long enough to get hypothermia. In theory both are dangerous, but hypothermia is secondary to cold water shock because cold water shock is immediate while hypothermia can take 30 minutes to develop. I have been in paddling clubs continuously for over 30 years, sat through many training clinics, including ACA instructor certification and swift-water rescue, but do not recall ever hearing the term cold water shock, only discussions on hypothermia. I believe every paddler, even if you consider yourself a fair weather paddler or 'summer paddler only,' should take the time either to attend the clinic or at least to visit the website. MOST paddlers who get into trouble are paddling in spring when the air is warm and the water is below the acceptable limit.

THIS IS NOT LIMITED TO WINTER PADDLERS!

www.coldwatersafety.org

Thinking back, I believe I encountered cold water shock but didn't know what it was. I was paddling Laurel Hill Creek on Laurel Mountain in western Pennsylvania with two friends, Tom and Charlie, in the late 1980s. The creek is a gorgeous white water stream, and we all were paddling solo, white-water play boats. After a long cold snap with temperatures well below freezing and even below zero on a few days, that day was warm, about 50 degrees and sunny. The air was warm but the water was frigid--about 35 degrees with sheets of ice piled on the shore at sharp turns in the river. The three of us had on all our safety gear, including dry suits, PFDs, helmets, and throw bags.

We had just dropped through a rapid into a calm pool, but with fast current, I was just ahead of Tom when I heard him scream. I turned to find him in the water. I paddled to him quickly and told him to grab the back of my boat and I would paddle him to shore. He was in the water with his hands to his sides and told me he couldn't--at this point he had been in the water about 30 seconds and was totally helpless. I again told him to grab my GD boat or I couldn't help him,

but he was totally unresponsive. I finally had to grab his PFD and hold on while Charlie bulldozed my boat to shore with Tom in tow. About the time we reached shore, Charlie flipped but quickly self-rescued while I continued to help Tom out of the water. I gave Tom a thermos of hot tea and told him to start walking. Charlie followed Tom on shore while I started a long trek to retrieve his boat which had a quarter mile head start in fast current. Retrieving his boat was a two-plus mile hard paddle (which is another story). By the time Tom reached his boat, he was warm and acting fairly normal, but he was visibly shaken.

Thinking back, I believe Tom went into cold water shock because he was totally helpless, incoherent, and out of it--this was after about 45 seconds in the water. He seemed to recover quickly once he started walking and drinking hot liquids. Tom was wearing a dry suit but probably had on very little underneath since it was such a warm day--he had dressed for the air and not the water temperature. Tom was completely traumatized and shortly afterward sold all of his paddling gear and gave up the sport.

The point of this story is to do the research and be prepared for cold water. The greatest danger is a warm day with frigid water

The greatest danger is a warm day with frigid water temps.

temps. The clothing you wear and the precautions you take make the difference between having a pleasant paddle or experiencing cold water shock or hypothermia. I have to admit that I was poorly trained for the

type of paddling I was doing, but that is all that was available back then. I remember many trainers used the ACA rule that if the water and air temperature added together was less than 120 or 130 degrees, then you needed to wear a dry or wet suit, but many paddlers gave pushback, even in very cold water. Thinking back, this rule is ridiculous--the only way it sort of works is on a very cold day with very warm water.

Paddle on, but be safe--

Bill Smith

Paddler Profile: Rob Pearlman

Interview by Bob Browning

Lives in: Garrett Park, MD

Real job: Head of Global Real Estate & Facilities Management for the International Finance Corporation (IFC), part of the World Bank Group.

Member Do you Regularly Attend a Piracy? Yes, Pirates of Georgetown and I am one of four Pirate Captains.

Number of years paddling: Fifteen

How did you get involved in sea kayaking? We had next door neighbors who kayaked and canoed. It sounded fun and looked interesting. But with a young child, spare time was limited. In 2000, our neighbors moved to Franklin, Maine, just north of Acadia National Park. The following summer we visited them and went paddling in the Mount Desert Narrows. They took us on a night paddle with headlights, and several day paddles in real sea kayaks. Hanging out in Taunton Bay around some rocks, harbor seals began to pop up all around us, checking us out. We checked them out as the sun set. It was . . . mesmerizing. We were hooked.

What boats do you paddle? Epic 18x Sport, White – 18', CLC Petrel (strip built by hand), Natural light cedar - 17'

Rudder or skeg? Epic – rudder, Petrel - skeg

Type paddle used: Greenland. Even with my Epic – everybody laughs, but I don't care.

Do you do any other type of paddling besides sea kayaking: Rarely. I want to try SUP and I have canoed, but always come back to kayaking for the "precision" feel.

Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities: Downhill skiing, cross country skiing, telemark skiing, ice skating, hiking, camping, bicycling, drinking.

How often on average do you paddle in summer? 2-3 times per week.

Do any winter paddling? Occasionally – but generally, I'd rather ski or hike in winter.

Favorite local paddling location: Rocky Gorge Reservoir. It feels like being in a western national park.

Favorite CPA trip you've ever been on and why: A number of years ago, I did a small group four-day trip led by Peter Henry and Brian Blankenship. Chrisfield to Smith Island to Tangier Island to Cow Point (I think). We had a variety of conditions, ate Smith Island Cake, paddled with cownose rays to Tangier, ate awesome crab cakes on



Photo: Daniel Pearlman

Tangier Island, camped on the beach at Cow Point, and on our last day in gleaming sunshine, paddled with dolphin back to Chrisfield.

Coollest paddling trip you've ever been on anywhere Best paddling trip/experience ever and why: A small group kayak camper in the Adirondacks for about 5 days of perfect weather in an always spectacular place. The fun included harvesting fresh water mussels for dinner, viewing Milky Way vistas in crystal clear skies each night, lying on our own little beach, listening to howling coyotes, kayak exploring, and perfect sleeping weather without 7 am wakeup calls. We laughed till our sides split about whatever. The camaraderie of a well-oiled (in more ways than one) team was highly satisfying and magical.

Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why : Supporting what was to be an all-night swim in Lake George off of a pontoon boat this past fall. This was a marathon swim event that should never have been started due to the conditions; full overcast on the night of a full moon, swim direction heading into 20 – 25 mph winds, very rough water, and swim organizers & motor boaters with limited

[Continued on page 6](#)

Do you know a paddler who would make an interesting profile? Contact Bob Browning at: BBBrowning43@verizon.net

Right of Way on the High Seas

Do you know the regulations? Staring down an oil tanker is no time for testing nautical myths

By Rich Stevens © 2017

Last summer when I was volunteering as a safety boater for EMS's Demo Day at Truxton Park, I overheard one of the tour leaders of the adjacent kayak touring company (you can always tell the leaders because they are the only ones not wearing PFDs) tell his tour group "Don't worry about boat traffic; kayaks have right of way." He then proceeded



with his group down the middle of the channel. I have heard similar pronouncements before, including at least twice in the last year in *Atlantic Coastal Kayaker* magazine, where the authors stated this is in the rules as written by the United State Coast Guard (USCG).

Do the navigation rules of the road, in fact, state that power vessels must yield right of way to non-motorized vessels? Awhile back I studied the Rules of Navigation or COLREGS rather thoroughly to determine how they applied to kayaks. The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 (COLREGS) are published by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Among many other things, they set out the "rules of the road," or navigation rules to be followed by ships and other vessels at sea, to prevent collisions between two or more vessels. This is the basis of the rules followed by all nations, as well as the USCG and pretty much all US states and local jurisdictions. Different localities may have additional regulations. The overarching basis for the rules of navigation states that anyone operating a vessel is obliged to do whatever is necessary to avoid a collision. It enumerates the basic rules and a very extensive list of special conditions and exceptions that determine who has right of way, a term that the USCG doesn't like. A commonly held misconception concerning the rules of marine navigation is that by following specific rules, a vessel can gain certain "rights of way" over other vessels. No vessel ever has absolute "right of way" over other vessels. Rather, there can be a "give way" (burdened) vessel and a "stand on" (privileged) vessel, or there may be two or more give way vessels with no stand on vessel. In maritime accident investigations, blame is not always absolute, but apportioned in percentages as to who is at fault.

The rules of navigation are long and complex, but unless I've missed something, kayaks, SUPs (yes, the USCG considers SUPs to be

vessels), canoes, boats under oars, and other non-motorized craft are classified simply as vessels as far as the COLREGS are concerned. The word "vessel" includes every description of water craft, and all are subject to the COLREGS. A kayak has no more precedence or right of way than a bass boat, cabin cruiser, or oil tanker. The most usual exception for common vessels is a sail boat. Sail boats, when under sail, are considered to be constrained by maneuverability, as they are limited by the prevailing winds. Therefore, they have right of way in most,

but not all, situations.

As for kayaks or other non-motorized vessels, they are actually less likely to be given precedence over larger motorized vessels in situations where these larger vessels are constrained by their very size or by draft or maneuverability, such as in a narrow channel or a crowded marina. The primary exceptions granted to kayaks and other small non-motorized vessels are for such things as required lights, daytime distress signals, and other safety equipment requirements.

Although I've heard from a number of sources that boats under oars have precedence over motorized vessels, my conclusion is that it is a very dangerous nautical myth. If one wants to follow an unofficial rule, the "law of tonnage" might be a good one. It basically states that if you want to challenge a much larger vessel for right of way, you might be right, but the result may not be at all to your liking.

For best practices and to be considerate of other boats when kayaking, try to stay out of main boat channels when possible, especially if the channel is narrow. These are not good places to take a break or practice rolling or rescues. Cross channels by the shortest path. When another vessel is approaching, avoid sudden changes in speed or direction. Give larger vessels a wide berth, especially in crowded areas such as marinas. You are generally much more maneuverable than they are. Give boats that are fishing or working traps or trotlines a wide berth. If traveling in a group in areas with heavy boat traffic or in a constricted waterway, stay close together and don't create an obstacle course for other boaters. Be alert for other boats that may not see you, for whatever reason. Operators of larger vessels are not always watching for something as small as a kayak. Above all, use common sense.

[Paddler Profile, continued](#)

understanding of the danger to kayakers as well as swimmers. Three of us kayakers were spelling each other to support our swimmer with the assistance of the motor pontoon boat. I had just gotten back on the water when the motor boat took off to find the swimmer. I was alone. It was pitch black and I was completely blind. No moon, no boat with guiding light. 2' swells from all directions, and 25 mph winds tossing me around. I had to balance and brace completely by feel. Great experience, but only the second time kayaking, I actually felt I could die! Very scary. The race was called within 10 minutes and all worked out.

Bucket list trip(s): Kayak camping in Alaska, paddling on Lake Victoria in Africa, paddling the entire length (to the extent possible) of both the Hudson River and the Delaware River, Nova Scotia, Baja, and on and on.

Three things you like most about paddling? 1) Having a crew of gear head friends who never tire of talking about problem-solving the technology of kayaking, 2) There is always more to learn and opportunities to improve skills. 3) Being in nature and getting to many places that would otherwise be inaccessible.

What do you like about CPA? Sharing similar interests with so many others.

One unusual, non-paddling thing other people find interesting about you: I love eating sea urchin.



Photo: Ralph Heimlich

Applying glue to the deck seam is a sticky business.

Does this skirt make my boat look fat?

Paddlers fashion seaworthy spray skirts

By Ralph Heimlich

On January 29 and February 11, three CPA members and their instructor went through all the steps for making their own kayak spray skirts. The workshop, one of several dating back to 2009, uses the method and instructions developed by Duane (Roll or Drown) Strosaker, a West coast paddler who has designed and built kayaks, skirts, and other gear (http://aceheimlich.com/CPA/Making%20a%20Spray%20Skirt_Duane%20Strosaker.pdf). These skirts have no sewn seams to leak except the sewing of the bungee to the edge of the skirt and are custom fitted to your boat.

CPA members Sue Sierke, Christine Riegel, and Sam Jackson each made a 3 mm neoprene skirt and a second, lighter one-sided neoprene skirt or cockpit cover. The first session was to cut out the plywood deck forms and aluminum flashing tunnel form, cut the neoprene pieces and bungee, join the bungee, and set it up for sewing. Participants then took the deck home to complete the sewing (using a Speedy Stitcher hand sewing awl). In the second session, the tunnel ends were glued together and bar-tacked, the tunnel glued to the deck, and the seams sealed with Melco iron-on tape, if desired. Pieces for the cockpit covers were cut out and set up for sewing on the participant's time.

The handsome, hand-made skirts cost about \$25 for materials, and a lot of participant labor, but the results seemed to be worth it. Look for them on the water and think about building your own next winter.



You are invited to submit photographs and articles for consideration by *The Chesapeake Paddler*.

Mail to:
news_editor@cpakayaker.com

Photo: Ben Stephenson/[Creative Commons](#)

Upcoming Events

March 11	SK101 Intro to Sea Kayaking West River, MD	Workshop for beginners and budding kayakers to learn about kayak design choices and related equipment. Light breakfast and lunch included in \$25 registration fee. For information, mail-to:sk101.cpa@gmail.com.
April 8	Kipp #1 Kent Island, MD	First of monthly group meetings to help paddlers build skills and get in shape and prepare for the personal distance challenge paddle in September.
April 21-23	Non-CPA Event: East Coast Paddlesports Symposium Charleston, SC	The symposium is a 3-day immersion in the history, technique, hands-on experience, and fun of kayaking, canoeing, SUP, and more.
April 29- May 7	Non-CPA Event: Sails Angels Spring Gathering with excellent sailing on the Pocomoke sound.	This is a week-long event of tent or cabin camping at Tall Pines Campground on the Virginia eastern shore
May 1	Corsica River	Paddle the Corsica River and tributaries on protected and semi protected waters.
May 3	Pirates of Arundell Galesville Wharf	Opening paddle of Arundell Pirates' 2017 season.
May 5-7	SK 102 Lake Anna, VA	A full weekend of on-water instruction in basic strokes, self- and group-rescues, Greenland paddling, intermediate strokes, intermediate rescues, and other topics.
May 8	Battle Creek	Battle Creek is a tributary of the Patuxent south of Benedict, MD which terminates in a cypress swamp. Will high tide get us past the strainers to reach the cypresses?

For the most up-to-date listings, visit the [CPA Meetup Calendar](#).

Have you registered for Sea Kayaking 102?

Annual weekend of skills instruction, camping is set for May 5-7 on Lake Anna

Looking for a weekend filled with purpose and fun? Look no further than **SK102** for great instruction and a whole weekend of fun with like-minded folks. Basic strokes and wet exits, intermediate strokes and bracing, self rescues, group rescues, advanced rescues, and much more. All this at the bargain price of \$60! Whether you are new to kayaking or interested in techniques to raise your paddling and safety skills to the next level, SK102 is an opportunity you do not want to miss. Registration is open until March 20. For details and to register, visit the [SK102 Eventbrite page](#).



SK102 participants benefit from learning in the clear, warm waters of Lake Anna, located near Mineral, VA.

The Chesapeake Paddler

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