

# Chesapeake Paddler



Publication of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc. Volume 20, Issue 2

March 2010

## In Case You Thought We Stop For Snow



**Bob Pullman and Robert Golden preparing to paddle at Eastern Neck (that ain't sand back there) photo by Ralph Heimlich**

This edition of The Chesapeake Paddler is devoted to all those many paddler who don't quit because of a little snow and ice. Highlighted here are a brace of local winter paddles, a longer-distance trip, and some evidence that folks are out on the water all winter. If you are interested in extending your paddling season into the frosty months, there are some important considerations for cold water paddling. You can learn about them at the CPA website in the brochure we put together a few years ago (see <http://www.cpakayaker.com/downloads/events/flyers/Safety3fold.pdf> ) and on the ACA website at <http://www.americancanoe.org/atf/ct/%7B74254DC2-74B4-446F-92BE-547992272AB7%7D/ColdWaterSurvival.pdf>

## Trip Report: New Year's in the Outer Banks

by Jay Gitomer with help from Rick Wiebush

A few of us went down to Swansboro, NC, to see in the New Year by paddling in the frequently rough waters of Bogue and Beaufort Inlets. We wanted to get away from the snow and freezing temperatures and also to continue the New-Year's-in-the-Outer-Banks tradition started last year by Matt Bowler, Kevin Black and Rick Wiebush. The paddlers included those three plus Kim Neutzling, Jay Gitomer and James Kesterston (from North Carolina). We had the good luck to catch up with Lamar Hudgens on the last day—on dry land, sadly—but Lamar on dry land is better than no Lamar at all.

Most of us stayed at the Waterway Inn, which is on the same property as Lamar's Barrier Islands Kayak shop. The water is right there. It's a paddler-friendly place, with a nice verandah for hanging wet gear. Matt camped at Croatan Park, which is about five minutes away. More on that later.

We put in the first day right off the bulkhead on the property into the White Oak River and were soon paddling among a bunch of little islets. They were covered in bright green marsh grasses, wind-carved white sand hills, and strange gray trees that looked like fingers. We paddled through them, having to portage over some shallows a couple of times, and then



**North Carolina New Year's Paddlers**

(Continued on page 9)

## CLASSIFIEDS

*Ads dated 3 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!*

## Advertising Rates:

We accept display advertising that relates to the interest of our readers. Monthly rates are as follows:

Size	cost	wide x deep (col)
1/8 page	\$20	2.4" x 3.5" (1)
1/4 page	\$32	4.9" x 4.7" (2)
1/2 page	\$50	7.5" x 4.7" (3)
Full page	\$80	7.5" x 9.75" (3)

A 5% discount will be given for ads supplied as electronic files in acceptable formats (i.e. .tif, .gif, .jpeg, bit-map). Email or call for more information and for 10-month discount. See advertising contact in masthead.

Captain C.D. Dollar is a professional kayak guide/outfitter and owner of two kayak/bike shops:

**KI Kayaks** ([www.kikayaks.com](http://www.kikayaks.com)) on Kent Narrows and

**Chester River Bike and Paddle** ([www.chesterriveroutfitters.com](http://www.chesterriveroutfitters.com)).

He is extending an across-the-board 10% discount for CPA members.

And check out his column in the Capital-Gazette and online at

<http://www.cdollaroutdoors.com/>

And check out all the retailers offering discounts to CPA members at

[http://www.cpakayaker.com/member\\_discount.htm](http://www.cpakayaker.com/member_discount.htm)



## SCHEDULE FOR 2008 CHESAPEAKE PADDLER

*Chesapeake Paddler* is published 10 times a year, with combination issues in November/December and January/February. The deadline for submitting copy is usually the 15th of the preceding month as follows:

Issue	Deadline for Copy
April 2010	March 15, 2010
May 2010	April 15, 2010 (TAX DAY)
June 2010	May 15, 2010

Have an idea for an article, or is there information you would like to see in the newsletter? Email Ralph at [news\\_editor@cpakayaker.com](mailto:news_editor@cpakayaker.com) or call at 301-498-0722.

## THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLERS ASSOCIATION

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.

## Officers:

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**Pirate Kings of the North**—Bob Shakeshaft (410 939 0269) and Mike Free (610-565-7563) [pirates\\_north@cpakayaker.com](mailto:pirates_north@cpakayaker.com)

**MEMBERSHIP:** Subscription to the Chesapeake Paddler is included with membership.

**NEW: Membership is now \$10, \$18, \$27, \$35, for 1, 2, 3, and 4 years.** Send checks or changes of membership information to CPA, PO Box 341, Greenbelt, MD 20768. DO NOT send them to the newsletter editors.

**DEADLINES:** Closing date for articles, trip reports, information and advertisements is the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. The editors retain the right to edit or not to print any submitted material. See advertising information in the Classifieds section.

*The Chesapeake Paddler is published monthly, except Nov-Feb and may be reprinted whole or in part if credit is given to this newsletter and any identified author (unless an article is specifically copyrighted), and a courtesy copy is sent to the Managing Editor. The download link or file for the electronic version of this newsletter may not be posted or forwarded to non-members without the express consent of the Coordinator or Managing Editor*

Ah, the winter blues . . . the days are short (but getting longer), the temperatures are much colder, we have had two major blizzards and it seems that the winter is not quite ready to be finished yet, and for many of us, paddling is the farthest thing from our minds (or is it?). However, before you know it, spring will be upon us and with the coming of spring, there will be a great many opportunities to get out on the water and paddle.

Even though winter is still upon us, it does not mean that we cannot think of paddling or prepare ourselves and our kayaks for the upcoming paddling season. So, during these long winter months, it is a good idea to give your boat a good going over and determine if it is in the condition you want it in for the upcoming season. Do the deck lines or bungee cords need replacing? Do you have a hatch cover that is not watertight or foot pegs that do not slide very well? Does your skeg line need to be replaced because it kinks sometimes? If so, now is the time to start working on your boat to put it back in good condition so that you can paddle as soon as you are comfortable with the water and air temperatures.

It is a good time to inspect your paddling gear such as your PFD and sprayskirt for excessive wear as well as paddles, radios, GPS's and your paddling clothing to determine if it is in good clean condition and ready for another season.

Changing topics, the members of the CPA are very busy planning many events for all of us this coming season. Although we had originally scheduled to hold the Maryland Trip Planning meeting and the Special Annual Meeting on February 6, 2010, Mother Nature had other intentions in the form of two feet of snow. The new date for the Maryland Trip Planning Meeting and Special Annual Meeting is Saturday, March 13, 2010 at the Savage Branch of the Howard County Public Library. The Virginia Trip Planning meeting will be held the week before on Sunday, March 7, 2010 at the home of Brian Blankinship in Woodbridge, Virginia. For those who are considering planning or leading a trip, you should come to either or both trip planning meetings. Even if you do not have experience in leading a trip on the water, you can still plan a trip; there are more than enough takers who will lead the on-water portion of the trip.

Aside from the two trip planning meetings scheduled, the CPA already has an impressive number of events planned for the early spring. Check out the CPA calendar <http://www.cpakayaker.com/events.html> for more details, but here is just a sampling of the upcoming events:

- ◆ March 20— SK101 will be held at the West River Center, just South of Annapolis.
- ◆ March 27-28— Wilderness & Remote First Aid Course – this course is being taught by two club members. Check the website for more information on prerequisites and registration.
- ◆ March 27 – Greenland Paddle making workshop. This is being held at the Carderock Recreation Area in Potomac.
- ◆ April 10 —5th Annual Pax River Cleanup. Contact Ralph Heimlich or Chip Walsh for info.
- ◆ April 17 – KIPP 5, paddle number 1 will be held. Contact Marshall Woodruff for more information on location and time.
- ◆ April 23 – 25 – Sea Kayak Skills weekend (aka SK102) – Registration information on [pages 7 and 8](#)

Remember, this is your club and the CPA is a sum of all its members. There are a lot of opportunities for each and every one of us to participate in planning, leading or volunteering for activities and events. Your participation only make the CPA a better club. I hope to see you at the trip planning meetings or another CPA event real soon.



Ed Hershon, Coordinator

### CPA Dates To Date:

- ◆ Virginia Planning Meeting, March 7
- ◆ Rescheduled Special Bylaw and Trip Planning Meeting: March 13
- ◆ SK101: Intro to Sea Kayaking Saturday, March 20 (see [page 7](#))
- ◆ Greenland Paddle Workshop, March 27
- ◆ Wilderness and Remote First Aid Course, March 27-28
- ◆ PAX River Cleanup April 10
- ◆ KIPP 5 paddle number 1, April 17
- ◆ SK102: On-Water Training April 23-25 (see [page 7 and 8](#))
- ◆ Kent Island Rookie Paddle (KIRP): May 22-23
- ◆ 3rd Annual CPA Gear Day: Sunday, June 6
- ◆ Make a note of them in your new 2010 CPA Photo Calendar (see [page 4](#))



## CPA 2010 Virtual Calendar Photo Available

The 2010 CPA Virtual Calendar is now available online at  
<http://troop424.freesevers.com/CPA%20Virtual%20Calendar%202010.pdf>

You can download the .pdf file and print it yourself, or take the file on a thumb drive to Staples, Kinkos, etc. and have them print and bind a nice one on good stock. The file is laid out to print back to back (i.e., the photo for month x is on the back of the page for month x-1).

The full results for all 133 photos can be viewed at  
<http://troop424.freesevers.com/2009%20Voting%20%20Results.pdf>



## Afterthoughts Eastern Neck #1 2010

By Marshall Woodruff



**Marshall catching up photo by Ralph Heimlich**

February 20 was the first in our series of Eastern Neck paddles for 2010. As many of you know, I love to paddle around Eastern Neck Wildlife Refuge, an island below Rock Hall on the Eastern Shore, in all seasons and all weathers. Winter is a great time to paddle, no boat traffic, no bridge traffic, and the water is sort of clear. It is quiet except for the birds: the geese honking, the eagles screeching, the sound of your paddle hitting the water and you are out with your friends, with a smile.

How do you ever plan a paddle in any season? In Winter it is even tougher because there are days you DON'T want to be out there. We just pick a good day and go, I guess for us, it just doesn't matter what the weather is, we are flexible and able to change our plans to accommodate the weather and love to paddle or eat or eat and paddle.

Saturday was our day to paddle and eight paddlers showed up (Bob Pullman, Annette Ramos, Robert Golden, Pat Kennedy, Bill Smith, Rich Pieper, Ralph Heimlich and I). Our summer paddles end up easily with thirty five paddlers! We checked the weather, clear, cold, and windy 15 to 20 mph. Yep that is what it was with gusts. We paddled out of Bogles Wharf onto the Chester River, turning south. The further we went the rougher the water got. Continuous white caps with a sharp wind in our faces.

The paddle split into two groups: fast and scenic paddlers. I was one of the four in the scenic group. It was a tough paddle getting to the southern tip of the Island. I guess we were all blaming it on being out of shape over the Winter, except for Annette. She works out hard and was in good shape. The tourists caught up with the fast group lounging around eating, drinking coffee, and waiting for us. Whew! I realized it wasn't fair for the faster group to wait for us and suggested that they go ahead in a separate group. I wasn't looking forward to more paddling up the Bay against the wind and suggested going back using the wind to surf as much as we could and letting the Island blocking some of the wind.

The whole group did not want to split but wanted to stay together and liked the idea of going back....we were all tired and wanted to take advantage of anything we could. What we thought felt like a twenty five mile paddle turned out to be only seven miles!!!!

As cold as it was (40's) I don't think anyone felt cold, except for the perpetual topic of hands and gloves. Having the right gear proves that. Having the right gear (dry suit, insulating layers, neoprene booties, balaclava, hat, and oh those gloves) from head to toe, you can stay warm and just concentrate and enjoy your paddling. If you are new to paddling, ask some of the older paddlers for recommendations so you are only buying your gear one time, instead of several times to get it right. An example is gloves: At thirty bucks a pop you want them to keep you warm, dry and be able to put them on and take them off with some sort of ease in freezing weather.

I wouldn't miss this Winter paddle for anything. Maybe the big snowfall slowed us down, but this is what kayaking is all about, you, friends, and Nature. I think we really enjoyed each others company all day, from getting ready, through the paddle. Afterward, five of us went to eat at the Harbor Shack on Bayside Avenue. Funny, as soon as we were inside looking out at the water, we were wishing we were back paddling.



**The "fast" group on the beach guzzling coffee photo by Ralph Heimlich**

## A Matter of Perspective

By Bill Upton

If you ever feel a little overdressed when you pull up to a launch site looking like a NASA astronaut while other kayakers are blissfully heading out wearing a t-shirt and their PFD stuck under a bungee, just read *Sea Kayaker – Deep Trouble* (available at <http://www.paddling.net/store/showProduct.html?product=167>). It's a collection of stories of kayaking mistakes, their consequences and lessons learned that will put you in the "be over-prepared" camp of sea kayaking.

A couple stories chronicle kayakers who get into trouble after launching into seemingly calm seas and paddle into conditions beyond their means. In almost every case they didn't check the wind forecast and couldn't see the rough conditions when they decided to launch, either because the wind was blowing offshore or the area was sheltered by a point.

There was a good example of deceptive offshore winds on the Bay this past New Year's weekend. The Thomas Point light data showed steady winds from the Northwest in the upper twenties and gusts in the thirties. My neighborhood in Southern Maryland goes from Bay beachfront up a fairly high hill. From up high, you could see nasty-looking whitecaps all the way to the Eastern shore. But from kayak level on the beach, the Bay looked flat calm (see photos).



Northwest Winds about 30 Kts with gusts above 35 from up on the hill photo by Bill Upton

In *Deep Trouble*, Chris Cunningham, editor of *Sea Kayaker*, warns that when winds are coming off the shore, it can be deceptively calm (p. 151). "From the shore, you may see only the smooth, dark backs of the waves. Because you can't see the white, breaking faces of the waves, the water may appear much less rough than it really is." Many times, we can get away with paddling in the lee, but if you venture farther out or hit an area not as protected by the shore, "the wind can hit hard and fast, even though you may be on fairly



Looking same direction from beach level standing photo by Bill Upton

smooth water. By the time you feel the wind's full force, you may find it difficult to get the kayak turned back toward land." He advises, "before paddling away from shore, across the mouth of a bay, or beyond a point of land, stop and make a thorough assessment of the conditions."

Besides having the right gear, the most important key to safety is developing *good judgment*. And for we paddlers who have a lot to learn, being around expert CPA paddlers who are always willing to share their knowledge is a big benefit – even if it means looking a little odd at the boat launch.

See all photos from that day at <http://picasaweb.google.com/beach.shack2802/2010NewYearSGale#>

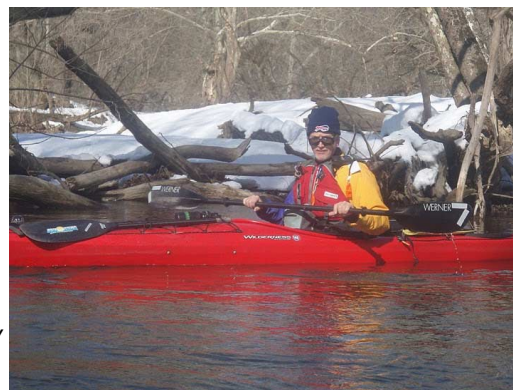
## A Furnace in Winter

By Michael Free



Michael Free photo by Bob Shakeshaft

Bob Shakeshaft and I hit the water at Furnace Bay on February 20, launching from Perryville Park, at the extreme north end of the Bay. Air temperature was about 44° F and water in the 30's. We saw two mature Bald Eagles, an immature Bald Eagle, Blue Heron, hundreds of Tundra Swans, Deer, Penguins (ok they weren't penguins but they looked like little penguins [Ed. Note: they were male Common Merganser in breeding plumage]), different types of ducks, etc.



Bob Shakeshaft photo by Michael Free

More photos at

[http://picasaweb.google.com/ckayag/20100221FurnaceBayWinterPaddle?authkey=Gv1sRgCJj-weydyP\\_TQQ&feat=directlink](http://picasaweb.google.com/ckayag/20100221FurnaceBayWinterPaddle?authkey=Gv1sRgCJj-weydyP_TQQ&feat=directlink)





## Familiar Faces on Maryland Water Trails

Maryland Public Television (MPT) aired an episode of "Outdoors Maryland" on **Tuesday, February 16th at 7:30 PM** having to do with water trails. If you watch, you may see a few familiar kayakers. Filming was done at Smith Island, Nanjemoy Creek, and upper parts of the Potomac River. MPT's blurb is:

**"The Two Percent Solution"** The best way to explore the designated water trails created by the Department of Natural Resources is by Kayak or canoe. Learn where some of these trails are located and how to gain public access to them. "

It will be on TV again and will eventually be posted at <http://www.mpt.org/outdoors>

For more on Maryland water trails, see <http://www.dnr.state.md.us/outdoors/boating.html>

Gina Cicotello

## Y'All Come to CPA's Virginia Planning Meeting

The Virginia trip planning meeting will take place at Brian Blankinship's house in Woodbridge, VA, on March 7, 2010. We will start with a pot luck lunch at 12:00 Noon. There will be plenty of soup, please bring a dish to share. After the meeting we can paddle nearby on the Occoquan. Please RSVP to Brian AT [BayKayaking DOT com](http://BayKayakingDOT.com).



Address:

**11777 Cotton Mill Drive  
Woodbridge, VA 22192**

Directions from I-95

Take the VA-123 N exit, EXIT 160, toward OCCOQUAN/LAKE RIDGE.

Turn SLIGHT RIGHT onto GORDON BLVD/VA-123 N.

Turn LEFT onto VA-641 West OLD BRIDGE RD.

Turn RIGHT onto ANTIETAM RD.

Turn RIGHT onto COTTON MILL DR.

11777 COTTON MILL DR is directly ahead at the end of the court.

If you miss this one, there is a Maryland Planning meeting in conjunction with the Special Annual Meeting, held over from the big Snowstorm on March 13 ([see page 3](#)).



Bob Shakeshaft at Perryville Park (Stump Point) photo by Michael Free



## CPA On-Water Kayak Skills Workshop Coming in April

By Brian Blankinship

Last year was the 11th and final SK102. CPA is starting a new tradition, the CPA Skills Weekend. This year the skills clinic will be held April 23-25 at the same Lake Anna location as the old event. The registration form is on the back of this page, and should be returned as soon as possible. Selections to attend will be made starting March 29th. Here is the schedule:

### **Saturday Morning Session: 9:00-12:00**

**BLOCK 1: Kayak Design, Wet Exit, Basic Strokes**—If you are new to paddling and/or have not had kayaking lessons, discover features separating various kayak designs and their value to you. Learn Wet Exiting, is the most critical kayak skill for safety—a requirement for attending CPA trips. Learn the proper basic strokes will make your paddling much more fun and efficient.

**BLOCK 2: Stroke Improvement, Intermediate Strokes, Bracing**—For those who have been paddling for a year or more and are proficient in basic strokes. Improve your basic strokes to increase your efficiency and form. Learn intermediate strokes such as hanging draw, draw on the move, bow rudder. High and low bracing not only keep you upright but are the foundation of several kayak rolls

**BLOCK 3: Self Rescues, Group Rescues, Towing**—Be able to get yourself and others back into a kayak in deep water. A required safety skill. Become a self sufficient paddler, able to recover from wet exits. Be able to rescue another kayaker who had to exit. Several methods are demonstrated. Learn types of tow systems, methods and how to use them

**BLOCK 4: Greenland Style Paddling**—What is that thin paddle anyway? Advantages of Greenland style paddling. Design of the Greenland paddle. Proper Greenland style strokes

**BLOCK 5: Wing Paddle Technique**—What is a Wing paddle, and what is it for? Design and advantages of the Wing. Proper Wing paddle technique. Additional Performance Paddling tips.

### **Saturday Afternoon Session: 1:00-3:30**

**BLOCK A: Stroke Improvement, Intermediate Strokes, Bracing**—For those who have been paddling for a year or more and are proficient in basic strokes. Improve your basic strokes to increase your efficiency and form. Learn intermediate strokes such as hanging draw, draw on the move, bow rudder. High and low bracing not only keep you upright but are the foundation of several kayak rolls

**BLOCK B: Self Rescues, Group Rescues**—If you took Block 1, this is the best follow up course for new paddlers. Become a self sufficient paddler, able to recover from wet exits, learn importance of floatation. Be able to rescue another kayaker who had to exit. Several methods are demonstrated.

**BLOCK C: Advanced Rescues**—For those proficient in self and group rescues, take it to the next level. How to rescue a boat without floatation that "sank". Techniques to rescue an injured paddler.

**BLOCK D: Rolling**—Only for more advanced paddlers who have strong bracing skills. Capacity is limited, acceptance will be validated. The best form of rescue is to never exit the boat. Classes are 1:1 to 1:3 instructor to student ratio.

## SK 101—Introduction to Sea Kayaking A Winter Workshop

Registration for our one-day seminar on the basics of sea kayaking, SK101 will cease on **Monday, March 1**. Geared to new paddlers, topics include kayak and paddle design, how to choose boats and equipment, basics of safe paddling, dealing with cold water, how to find people to paddle with, where to paddle, and other topics of interest. There will be boats and gear on display, and knowledgeable people available to discuss different aspects of kayaking. Although this event is primarily for the newer paddler, everyone is invited to expand their paddling horizons. You don't need to be a CPA member to attend.

SK101 will be held on Saturday, March 20, 2010 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the West River Center near Annapolis, Maryland. The cost is \$25 and includes a light breakfast, lunch, and reference materials.

Register on the web at <http://www.cpakayaker.com/sk10110.html>

**Contacts:** Gina Cicotello [sk101registration@cpakayaker.com](mailto:sk101registration@cpakayaker.com)

Suzanne Farace [sfarace@verizon.net](mailto:sfarace@verizon.net)

**THE FIRST ANNUAL CPA SKILLS CLINIC, APRIL 23-25, 2010**

This is a Chesapeake Paddlers Association "members only" event.



**Where:** Lake Anna is 2 hours south of Washington DC, between Fredericksburg and Richmond, VA, just west of I-95. The lake is a cooling pond for a nuclear power station so the water is not only very clear—it is heated! The location is private property, where you are welcome to set up your own tent. There are motels nearby for non-campers. Details and directions will be emailed, and are posted on [www.cpakayaker.com/forums](http://www.cpakayaker.com/forums) under Events.

**Cost:** \$35, which covers the cost of the porta-potties, handouts, insurance provided by the American Canoe Association (ACA), and dinner on Saturday night. You will be responsible for all your other meals. You provide your own boat, spray skirt, and PFD. CPA volunteers conduct the free skills clinic. This is not certified instruction.

For questions or to volunteer: Email: [Skills@BayKayaking.com](mailto:Skills@BayKayaking.com).

Registration will be limited and will fill up quickly. See instructions at the bottom of the form. You will be notified by email of acceptance/non-acceptance. For those turned away, checks will be destroyed.

**ALL MUST BE PRE-REGISTERED:** NO NON-REGISTERED GUESTS OR WALK-INS allowed on the grounds.

**SK102 REGISTRATION FORM**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Children 12 and older are accepted, but must take classes with their parent/guardian

If a participant is 12-18 years old, please check here ☐

Were you turned away from SK102 last year for lack of space? Yes / No

Did you attend SK102 last year? Yes / No

Would you like to be included in the event directory? Yes / No

If you are an ACA member, the fee is discounted to \$30. ACA Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

If you prefer a vegetarian option for dinner, please check here ☐

SELECT ONE MORNING AND ONE AFTERNOON BLOCK (see [page 7](#) check the appropriate boxes)

For course descriptions, go to [www.cpakayaker.com](http://www.cpakayaker.com) and look under Special Events, SK102 2009

Morning Session: 9:00-12:00 Saturday

☐ BLOCK 1: Kayak Design, Wet Exit, Basic Strokes

☐ BLOCK 2: Stroke Improvement, Intermediate Strokes, Bracing

☐ BLOCK 3: Self Rescues, Group Rescues, Towing

☐ BLOCK 4: Greenland Style Paddling

☐ BLOCK 5: Wing Paddle Technique

Afternoon Session: 1:00-3:00 Saturday

☐ BLOCK A: Stroke Improvement, Intermediate Strokes, Bracing

☐ BLOCK B: Self Rescues, Group Rescues

☐ BLOCK C: Advanced Rescues

☐ BLOCK D: Rolling

**Sunday Morning Sessions** do not require registration, and will be announced by email and on the web page.

To register: Send this form along with your \$35 (\$30 for American Canoe Association members) check payable to "CPA" to: **Laura Butterbaugh, 829 Chester River Dr., Grasonville, MD 21638**



### North Carolina Winter Paddle (Continued from page 1)

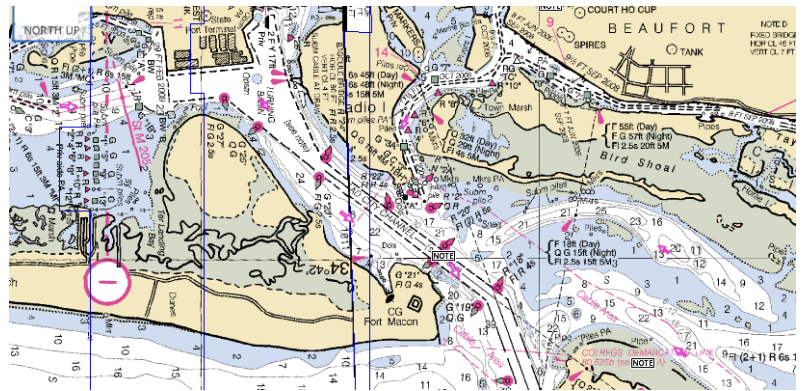
landed on the back side of Bear Island. We carried the boats across the narrow island to the ocean. Bear Island is one of the North Carolina barrier islands that divide the sounds from the Atlantic Ocean.

The air temps that day were about 55° F and the water was about 50° F. There was small surf where we put in on Bear, and larger surf across Bogue inlet off Emerald Isle. Most of us played around in the smaller stuff and then in the confluence where the inlet meets the ocean over a shoal off the NW tip of Bear Island. Matt, of course, made a beeline for the biggest, nastiest waves in sight. After several good hours of surfing and playing around, we headed back through the inlet since the current was now in our favor.



The next day, with air and water temps about the same, we drove about 30 minutes north to Beaufort and put in at Radio Island. It was a short paddle out through Beaufort Inlet to play off Bogue Banks, where the water was pretty busy. The swells were about 4', fast, and lumpy. There was a stone jetty protruding from the beach on Goat Island; to its east, there was fun surf, and to its west was hairy, disorganized and dumping surf. In the inlet proper, on Willis Lump, there were huge, confused waves and a massive zipper. Kevin disappeared along with Matt into the worst/best of it—the big waves. How big is big, you ask? They looked to be about 8', with clapotis shooting twice that high into the air. Matt and Kevin both confirmed that it was some of the roughest water they had ever paddled.

Most of us stayed where it was smaller – 3-4' spilling waves and really good for our purposes. We surfed and played around in the transitional areas. I had a lot of firsts, which thrilled me. At one point, I was smiling so hard my face hurt. Rick asked why I looked like an insane person (not in so many words, but I knew), and I said, "What a great way to end a great year." There is no place I would have rather been or any other bunch of people I would rather have been with on 12/31/09.



That night was New Year's Eve. After dinner, we gathered outside the motel and stood on the waterside looking up through palm trees at the blue moon. Yes, there was wine. And some scotch. And Kahlua. And beer. Somehow, Kevin and Rick brought up the old (late 1950's) Andy Devine show which featured an 18 inch tall rubber talking frog by the name of Froggy the Gremlin. Apparently, Froggy would appear on the set only after being entreated by Andy to "plunk your magic twanger, Froggy". I am not making this up. For those in the group who had never heard of this particular cultural phenomenon, there was intense interest in determining: 1) what exactly a "magic twanger" was; and 2) what precisely was involved in "plunking" it. I'm not sure whether and to what extent these questions were ever answered in a satisfactory manner. However, as you might guess, the subsequent alcohol-fueled discussion spiraled out of control and took a decidedly salacious turn, doubling everyone up in laughter as midnight approached. And that is when Kevin told me that the next day, he and I would be practicing rescues in the ocean.

It's not the ocean I objected to; I've been rescued in the ocean before. It was the temperature. It had plummeted into the mid-40s, and gotten raw and windy. Plus, my gear was all damp. I was dreading it, actually. The next day, everyone returned to real life except Kevin and me. I tried to avoid him all morning, but he knew where my room was and I couldn't pretend to be out—there was no place to go. Plus, my car was there. There was no hiding.

Fortunately, it turned out that Kevin had changed his mind about attempting to drown me. Instead, we put in at the boat launch at Croatan Park and went into protected water and just had a flat paddle up the river. It was really windy, though, so it wasn't that flat, which made it more interesting. We paddled into it for four long miles and then paddled back for four short miles. I was glad to be on the water for the first day of the year; the old saying is to spend New Year's Day doing as you intend to continue. And we did.

Before we left the next day, we had a chance to catch up with Lamar. Lamar is doing something really interesting with the Wounded Warrior Project, which helps servicemen and women who have returned with traumatic mental and physical injuries (<http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/>). What a great way to turn the enjoyment of paddling into meaningful work. He had plenty to say about it, and it was all interesting.



Tangier Sound in November *photo by Bill Upton*

## Inside our March 2010 issue:

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### **The Chesapeake Paddler**

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