

## CPA Paddler Profile

By Rick Wiebush

**Name:** Rick Wiebush

**Lives in:** Catonsville, MD

**Real job:** (mostly) retired from National Council on Crime and Delinquency. I did consulting work (research, training, planning) with states about child welfare and juvenile justice issues.

**Member of a Piracy?** If yes, which one? Baltimore

**Paddling Buddies:** Jaclin Gilbert, Sonja Pyle, Chuck McMillin, Paul Plowright, Laurie Collins, Shelly Weichelt, Mike Hamilton, Greg Hollingsworth, Tom Malone, Mike Thomas, Mike Ward, Rita Scherping, & Liz Marancik

**Number years paddling:** 15

**Boat usually paddled:** NDK Explorer, black over white, red trim.

**Type paddle used:** Euro, 220

**Do you do any other type of paddling besides sea kayaking?** Some canoeing.

**Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities?** No, I'm totally one dimensional.

**How often do you paddle in summer?** 4x/week

**In winter?** Maybe once or twice a year. Maybe.

**Go to pool sessions?** Yes, Catonsville Y; occasionally Fairlands

**Favorite local paddling location:** Kent Narrows/Eastern Neck area

**Favorite non-local location:** Baja – Sea of Cortez and the Pacific side

**Best paddling trip/experience ever and why:** February 2015 paddling and playing in the rocks and ledges off the Baja coast on the Pacific side. Huge swell crashing on and through rocks; running the white water through caves and narrow chutes; doing (very) rough water rescues; getting hammered by 5-6 foot breaking waves, and holding my own. Frightening, but also totally exhilarating and confidence-building. Great coaching from Jen Kleck and Todd Wright.

**Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why:** the very first time I was in a sea kayak. The instructors showed us how to wet exit on land and we practiced it. After about 10 minutes on the water, I went over after getting hit by a four-inch wave. I totally forgot what I was supposed to do. In fact I never even thought about pulling the spray skirt off. I just panicked and was trying to get my head above water which clearly was not working. I maybe got my eyebrows up out of the water. I was convinced I was going to die and said to myself "well, this is it". After what seemed like an eternity (but was probably 23 seconds), I was so panicked that I actually kicked the spray skirt off with my legs/knees.

**Bucket list trip:** crossing the Bass Strait (between Tasmania and the Australian mainland).

**Any formal training or ACA/BCU certifications?** ACA L3 Instructor Trainer; ACA Open Water Instructor BCU L2 coach; BCU 4\* Leader; ACA L2 Canoe Instructor

**Three things you like most about paddling?** 1. Teaching 2. Paddling in rough water 3. The people I meet here and around the country.

**One thing other people find interesting about me:** that for about 10 years I was going to Australia for work about three times per year, for 2-3 weeks each time. ☹



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Photo by Annica Jansen