

# The Chesapeake Paddler



Publication of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Volume 12, Issue 6

August 2002

## My Fourth of July Paddle

By Oona Pilot

On July 4th a group of paddlers, following Woody's excellent instructions, kayaked from Alexandria, Va., to just above the 14th Street Bridge. From there we had a first-class, front-row view of the fireworks!

Six of us — Barry, Bernadette, Steven, Patrick, Dina and Oona — put in just behind Atlantic Canoe and Kayak's store in Alexandria. There was plenty of street parking available, so we parked next to the ACK store. We carted our boats across the railroad tracks and down a path to a park next to the water. The distance we traveled, about 100 yards, was exactly as Woody had described it.

One of our paddlers had a Foldbot, and it took some time to put together. Once it was assembled, we launched around 7 pm. Although it was evening, the weather was still hot, but there was a nice breeze on the river, and as the sun went down things cooled off nicely.

We launched next to a power plant, so the water was very warm on the first part of our trip. We paddled through the plant discharge, past the sailboat marina, and up towards National Airport. Along the way we had great views of jets coming in to land. They were directly overhead

—what a blast! Patrick took some very cool photos.

We continued past National, keeping a safe 150 feet offshore. Security at the airport was tight, so we saw lots of police boats and helicopters.

After the airport we hit a very congested part of the river. There were powerboats galore, and—worse yet—jet skis on steroids! Fortunately the police

from all the powerboat wakes. We did a bit of surfing one or two times on those swells!

As soon as we cleared the bridge, there was an oasis of powerboat-free space! Police boats were keeping them penned in, 200 feet from the right and left shores. So we had plenty of open water to play in!

We paddled until we were directly in front of the monument. The police told us to either put on our lights or get off the river. So we shone our lights and



boats reined these jerks in, and we were free to paddle close to the shore up to the 14th Street Bridge.

Conditions were choppy, with a very large and constant swell—probably

rafted up to watch the show. It was awesome! My favorites were the little smiley faces made from circles and stars. And those cool 3D ones... and the white streamers...and...well, all of it!

(Continued on page 3)

# A Thank You Letter from the Mother of a Chesapeake Bay Swim Participant

Michael Vandamm received the following letter from the mother of one of the swimmers in the Chesapeake Bay Swim event. Although the letter was addressed to him as the organizer of the kayak support team, he thought that the author intended it for wider circulation. So we present it here for everyone who helped with the event...

Dear Mr. Vandamm:

My 15-year old daughter, Ally St. Claire, competed in the Chesapeake

Bay Swim on June 16, 2002. It was her first open water swim and she was seeded in the first heat.

[Editor's Note: The nearly 600 swimmers started in 2 waves, 15 minutes apart, with the slower swimmers assigned to the first wave.]

Based on her speed, it would have been more appropriate for her to swim in the faster second heat. Because she was ahead of almost everyone else, she was swimming alone through most of the race.

A wonderful volunteer in a yellow

kayak helped her tremendously, answering her questions, and guiding her on the swim. Most importantly, the kayaker let her know she was not alone and helped her finish a "very scary" race.

I wanted to pass along my heartfelt thanks to this kayaker and to all the others who made such a tremendous difference to the swimmers.

Thank you,

Laura St. Claire

## Please report....

sightings of dead, injured, netbound or stranded whales, dolphins, or sea turtles to the following telephone number: (757) 437-6159.

This is the Virginia Marine Science Museum Stranding Emergency number and will be followed up within 24 hours by rescue crews.

*As you may know, humpback and fin whales are at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. Bottlenose dolphins are throughout, seals are present at certain times of the year, as are sea turtles.*

*ALL sea turtles are threatened now with possible extinction (IUCN red list), even though sea turtles have lived on earth since before the dinosaurs (about 400 million years.)*

## THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLERS ASSOCIATION

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

### Steering Committee:

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**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, approximately March-December 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.*

**MEMBERSHIP:** Subscriptions to The Chesapeake Paddler are included with membership. Membership is \$10/year or \$20/2 years. Send checks or changes of membership information to: CPA, PO Box 341, Greenbelt, MD 20768. DO NOT send them to the newsletter editors.

# My Fourth of July Paddle

*(Continued from page 1)*

We didn't see the kayakers that launched from Jack's, so we figured they were

Water conditions were less choppy on the way back, but there was more of a following swell. It's hard to see waves and to prepare for them at night. They

first in his plastic boat, and found a relatively rock-free area for the rest of us. He guided us in, one at a time, by signaling with his flashlight. We got a bit muddy and wet, but it was well worth it. Sorry about that white T-shirt, Bernadette!

After landing, we packed up in the dark. Most of us had stowed our boat carts in our yaks, so it was easy to haul the boats up the hill to our cars. Taking the Folboat apart took some time, but besides that we packed up quickly.

Steven had thoughtfully brought a cooler of soft drinks, which we guzzled before leaving. Thanks many times over for those ice cold drinks, Steven! They really hit the spot!

All told, we paddled 7.5 miles. It took us about 2 hours to go out and 1.5 hours to return. I made it home by midnight, as planned. I'd encourage anyone

who wants to paddle the Potomac to consider this launch area.

Thanks again to Woody for giving us the idea!



higher up the river, closer to the Memorial Bridge. We hope their view was as good as ours!

After the show, the police boat came back and told us, "In 20 minutes, all these boats will be leaving. You'd better get moving now!" So we shoved off at 9:30 pm, paddling back to the launch spot.

The return trip was an experience in night paddling. It was only my second night paddle, and it was the first for some of the others. We had a great time!

We stuck close to the shore, keeping fairly close together. Nobody bothered us, but one powerboat came to check us out. Someone aboard yelled, "Kayakers! You're <expletive> insane!" as the boat blew past us. Wonder if they had enough beer? I guess our reflective tape, PFDs, skirts and lights worked! We must have been visible as a collective group.

Besides the motorboat, at one point we got spotlighted! That was pretty funny. I think we were making National Airport security a bit twitchy...

can take you by surprise, because they sneak up from behind you in the dark.

Clearing the airport, the only tricky bit was landing on the beach and avoiding the rocks in the dark. Barry landed



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at [www.CPAkayaker.com](http://www.CPAkayaker.com).

# Requirements for Light and Sound Signals

By Brian Blankinship

In my last article, “The Rules of the Nautical Road,” I discussed sections of the Inland Navigation Rules that apply to kayaks. You may recall that the Inland Rules are based on the International Regulations for Prevention of Collisions at Sea 1972 (abbreviated as “72COLREGS”). In our area, the 72 COLREGS apply on the ocean and the Inland Rules apply everywhere else. This month I’ll describe what the Inland Rules have to say about light and sound signals.

## Inland Rules, Part C—Lights and Shapes

From sunset to sunrise, or in conditions of restricted visibility, kayaks must carry a white light that is bright enough to prevent a collision with another craft. A picture in the book of regulations shows that the light should illuminate your own boat and not point towards approaching vessels.

To enhance safety, kayaks may also display red/green sidelights and a white, 360-degree stern light.

## Inland Rules, Part D—Sound and Light Signals

### Rule 33 -- Equipment for Sound Signals.

Kayaks must carry a whistle, horn, or other device that those in other vessels can hear in time to avoid a collision. There are no audible distance requirements for boats under 12 meters long, but I strongly recommend a Fox 40 or Storm whistle or a horn.

### Rule 34 -- Maneuvering and Warning Signals.

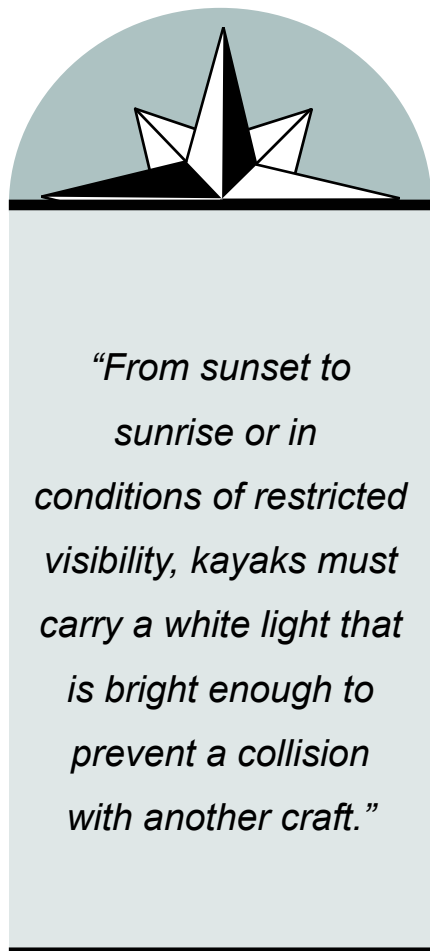
The Inland Rules describe accepted sound signals that apply on the water. They are as follows:  
One short (a second long) blast: “You will be on my left.”

Two short blasts: “You will be on my right.”

Three short blasts: “I am going backward.”

If another vessel sounds one of these signals, you can reply by returning the same signal. But if you disagree with the other craft, sound the danger signal: five short blasts to indicate confusion or danger on your part.

Finally, if you ever hear a long blast from around a corner, return a long blast yourself and watch out!



**Rule 35 -- Sound Signals in Restricted Visibility.** In reduced visibility, sound one 4-6 second blast on your whistle or horn every two minutes or less.

**Rule 36 -- Signals to Attract Attention.** You can use a whistle, horn, or light to attract someone’s attention. Such signals must not appear as navigation signals to other vessels, however.

**Rule 37 -- Distress Signals and Annex IV 33 CFR 87 Distress Signals.** Kayaks are not required to carry daytime distress signals.

*Comment:* Although the Inland Rules do not require it, I would recommend that you carry at least one daytime distress signal. Here are some effective examples:

- S-O-S (...---...), in Morse Code, flashed by a mirror or other means.
- The spoken word “Mayday” on a VHF radio.
- A signal that emits orange-colored smoke.
- Slowly and repeatedly raising and lowering your outstretched arms or paddle.

*Never use a distress signal unless you are signaling an emergency!*

The Inland Rules require that from sunset to sunrise, kayaks must carry distress signals that are visible at night. This rule applies to bodies of water that lead to the ocean, where the water is two miles wide or wider. This includes the entire Chesapeake Bay and sections of adjoining rivers that are at least two miles wide.

*Nighttime Distress Signals Appropriate for Kayaks:*

Rockets, parachute flares, or shells that throw red stars. If you carry flares, the Inland Rules require that you have at least three. When signaling for help, launch one signal at a time at short intervals.

Remember that flares expire after three years!

A white strobe that flashes at regular intervals, from 50 to 70 times per minute. Unless the strobe automatically flashes “SOS,” it does not meet the requirements of Rule 37. Non-SOS strobe lights are valid distress signals for sections of

(Continued on page 5)

# Requirements for Light and Sound Signals

(Continued from page 4)

inland rivers that are less than two miles wide. This includes much of the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers.

*Comment:* Flares are good for signaling distress over a distance. I recommend that you also carry a strobe to show your exact location once a rescue party is looking for you. Of course, a VHF radio would be even better.

## Other Kayak Regulations

There is a separate law that requires you to have a USCG approved personal floatation device (PFD) onboard. CPA rules require that all participants in club events wear a PFD and a spray skirt.

## In Summary...

*Rules on Light:* The Inland Rules do not require that you carry daytime distress signals, but I would recommend it. At night you must carry a white light that is bright enough to prevent a collision with another craft.


On waters leading to the ocean that are at least two miles wide, you must carry distress signals that are visible at night. This rule applies only from sunset to sunrise. Appropriate nighttime distress signals include rockets, parachute flares, shells that throw red stars, and strobes. If you carry flares, you must have at least three.

*Rules on Sound:* Kayaks must carry a whistle, horn or other device that those in other vessels can hear in time to avoid a collision. In reduced visibility, sound one 4-6 second blast on your whistle or horn every two minutes or less.

*Other Rules:* You must have a USCG approved personal floatation device (PFD) onboard. The CPA also requires that you wear a spray skirt and have a paddle float on club-sponsored trips.

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# Monkey Island Expedition

By Mike Aronoff

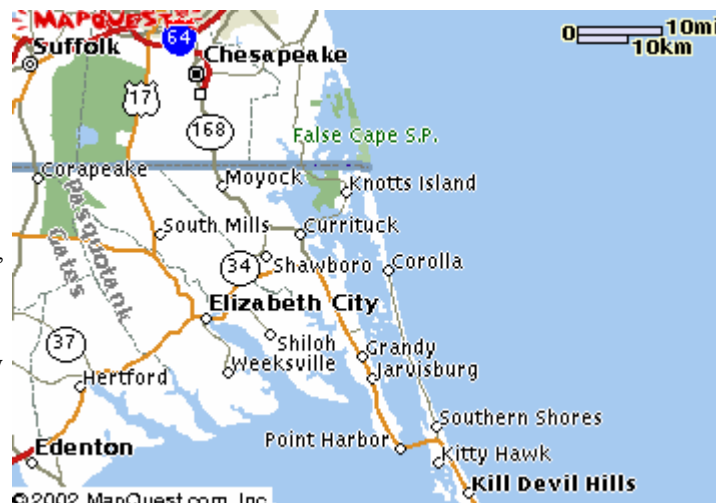
Recently I visited North Carolina's Outer Banks, scouting trips for a small group I'm planning to take into the area this fall and next spring. To help me, I used Pam Malec's *Guide to Sea Kayaking in North Carolina*, which describes 35 different kayaking trips you can make throughout the state.

On this expedition I tried Malec's first trip, which goes from Whale Head Bay to Monkey Island. This area is in the northern end of Currituck Sound, north of Corolla, North Carolina. The *Guide* lists this trip as being from 7 to 8.5 miles long, but it seemed a lot longer on the day I paddled. I had to contend with 15-knot winds and the two to three foot waves they created.

My experience was nothing unusual, as winds are often a factor in this part of Currituck Sound. The south-to-north fetch exceeds 20 miles, and high winds can sometimes blow the water completely out of the Sound. That's because the water is seldom over five feet deep, even under normal conditions.

Winds and shallow water notwithstanding, the route I followed courses through some beautiful marshes and great scenery. Wildlife, which is abundant along the way includes otters,

deer, nutria, and many types of birds. The best time to paddle is in the morning—animals are most active early in the day,



Map by [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)  
(Continued on page 7)



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## Kayak and Fly-Fishing Instructors

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# Monkey Island Expedition

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and evening thunderstorms are common in the area.

## My Trip

I launched at 8 am from the Whale Head Club, which has a very user-friendly ramp and plenty of parking nearby. From the launch I paddled north to Jones Point for about a nautical mile and then headed northwest to Mary's Island for another mile, where I rested in the lee.

After paddling around Mary's Island for a bit, I struck out for Monkey Island, which is about 1.5 miles away. The waves along the stretch of open water between the islands were the largest I encountered on

the trip. They rose to about three feet, but dealing with them wasn't too difficult because they were consistent. At first I had to paddle in a beam sea, then a following sea. On the return trip I hit the waves head-on.

All in all, navigating the waters between Mary's and Monkey Islands provided a great skill-building exercise. As a bonus, I saw hundreds of egrets and many other types of birds and critters.

On returning to Whale Head Bay I saw two sea kayaks in the launch area. The folks were just paddling around without spray skirts and had no intention of venturing out. The only other vessel I saw at the launch was a powerboat, and that was well over a mile away.

## Final Thoughts...

The trip from Whale Head Bay to Monkey Island is a worthwhile paddle in all respects. It took me 2.5 hours of almost steady paddling. I never left my boat, and I only took three rest stops of five minutes each. I also took some time to watch the many egrets at Monkey Island. For a group outing, I would allow at least four hours so everyone can enjoy the resources.

Later on I'll be returning to the area to explore further, with my camera and hopefully some company. If you're ever on the Outer Banks and have intermediate skills, don't miss this paddle!

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# Classifieds



## Check your ad!!

Ads dated three months prior to the date of this issue will be pulled unless a new request is received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the next issue. **And if it has sold, tell us!!!!**

## Advertising Rates

ADVERTISING: Display advertising will be accepted if it relates to the concerns and interests of our readers. Monthly rates for advertising are as follows:

size: cost width depth (col)

1/8 page; \$20 2.4" X 3.5" (1)

¼ page; \$32 4.9" X 4.7" (2)

½ 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, bitmap). Email or call for more information and for 10-month discount. See advertising contact in masthead.

Public service announcement and personal ads to sell personal kayaks and accessories are printed for members at no charge; non-members pay \$10 for 3 months.

## FOR SALE

**Arluk III Kayak.** fiberglass, 18' by 23 1/2 inches, compass, rudder, cockpit cover, skirt, paddle \$1,250. Dick Bridge 302/875-0879 [dickjo@dmv.com](mailto:dickjo@dmv.com) (08/02)

**Private Sea Kayak Instruction** by ACA Certified Instructors. Contact James at 703.470.7343 or at [tsongus@yahoo.com](mailto:tsongus@yahoo.com) (08/02).

**Hyside Padillac II,** ducky, inflatable whitewater, self-bailer, tandem 11'11"X40" premium foot pump, bow bag, 2 thwarts, \$450. Call Fred, 703-360-0670 (05/02).

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Please make yourself aware of the minimum safety requirements to participate with CPA on the water events. They will be enforced. See page 9.

Please be sure to contact the trip leaders, even if you are totally familiar with the area being paddled. They need to have contact information in case of changes and there may be space limitations.

## AUGUST

**August 3 (Saturday)** First Annual CLC Chester River Kayak/Canoe Race as part

### Current Designs Solstice SS and ST.

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Mad River "Eclipse" 16' Canoe (Blue Royalex with wooden gunwales, cane seats).

2 Canoe Paddles (Voyageur wooden bent shaft—lightweight and beautiful) \$800 for all. Barely used.

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—Type III Adult lifejackets—comfortable water ski vest style \$15 each.

Contact: Wendy Baker Davis or Les Baker. Email: [w\\_davis@fandm.edu](mailto:w_davis@fandm.edu) or call (717) 293-1086 . (07/02).

## WANTED

**Wanted: Ocean Kayak Sprinter** with rudder. New or used. NO SUBSTITUTES. Contact: Saki email" [saki@radix.net](mailto:saki@radix.net) home phone: 410-242-4739 work phone: 301-688-0308

of Rock Hall Yacht Club's All-Paddle Day. Register the day of the race between 9AM and noon; there is no entry fee.

**August 4 (Sunday): Advanced Beginner to Intermediate Trip.** Circumnavigation of Wye Island. 14 miles. For more information or to sign up, contact Cyndi Janetzko via email at [janetzko@igc.org](mailto:janetzko@igc.org) or Dave Biss at [bissd@erols.com](mailto:bissd@erols.com). By phone we can be reached at 703.276.2728 (evening) or 301.240.4659 (day).

**August 10 (Saturday): Advanced Beginner Trip.** St. Mary's River. Includes a water view of the Ark and the Dove. Approximate distance 14-15 miles with a lunch stop halfway. Limited size. RSVP with David Moore to register for the trip (301-445-3273), [dtmoore@clark.net](mailto:dtmoore@clark.net). Please include/leave your telephone number.

**August 17-18 (Saturday—Sunday):** St. Clements island, kayak camping trip, ADC chart 23, paddle to St. Clements Island to camp there. More details to come.

**August 22 (Thursday): Full Moon**

## SEPTEMBER

**September 14 (Saturday):** Wye Island Regatta, 8.30 am. (12 mile race). Competitive categories include all kinds of single and double kayaks, or any person powered boat for all ages. Info and entry forms: Rod Beach 410-269-0985 or [RBeach1912@aol.com](mailto:RBeach1912@aol.com). Online info: [www.annapolisrowingclub.com](http://www.annapolisrowingclub.com).

**September 21 (Saturday): Full Moon**

**September 28 – 29 (Saturday – Sunday):** Chichominy River, car camping, ADC chart 32, more details to come.

## OCTOBER

**October 4-6 (Fri-Sun): Delmarva Paddlers Retreat.** Lewes Delaware. An all Greenland event. Contact Robin Snow at [anorak@comcast.com](mailto:anorak@comcast.com) or 215 487-7225 for info.

**October 21 (Monday): Full Moon**

## NOVEMBER

**November 2-3 (Saturday – Sunday):** Point Lookout, car camping, more details to come.

**November 21 (Tuesday): Full Moon**



## A WORD ABOUT TRIPS & RATINGS

CPA Trips are organized by members of the club for members of the club. When you participate in them, please remember a few things: trip leaders are “hosts,” not professional guides. They are not necessarily trained in first aid or CPR and do not always carry first aid equipment or safety devices for your use.

***You, and you alone, are responsible for your personal safety.***

Trip leaders will pre-screen all participants for skills, equipment, and willingness to abide by club rules and policies. If you wish to join a trip, please contact the leader in advance.

While on the water, all paddlers must wear PFDs, spray skirts, and clothes appropriate to the water temperature. Boats must have watertight bulkheads or flotation to prevent the kayak from swamping when capsized. All paddlers must have, and know how to use, a pump and paddle float. On the day of the trip, leaders may refuse to admit participants for non-compliance with any of these, so if you are not sure, discuss it with the leader in advance!

All paddlers must sign a CPA waiver of liability. For the safety of the group as a whole, trip participants must agree to abide by club policies and rules and to follow instructions of the trip leader.

### Trip Ratings

**First Timers:** for those who have never paddled before.

**Beginners:** for those who have paddled some, taken classes, or been on short (up to 4-mile) trips and are able to do a wet exit and paddle float re-entry.

**Advanced Beginners:** for those who have been on longer trips (up to 10 miles, full day outings), have some experience with varying conditions such as winds and waves, and have good rescue and group-paddling skills.

**Intermediate Paddlers:** for those who are comfortable on longer trips (more than 10 miles), can maintain a steady pace for extended periods, are comfortable with open water crossings of 2+ miles, can handle a variety of water conditions, and have strong self- and group-rescue skills.

## Weekly Pirates Paddling

### *Pirates at Pier 7\**

Wednesday nights, arrive 4-6 PM. Paddling, rolling, rescue practice, boat fitting, BBQs, and hanging out with other paddlers. (PFDs required.) Directions: Take US-50 west toward Annapolis. Exit onto MD-665. Exit onto MD-2 southbound. Continue on MD-2 south over the South River. Take the first left after crossing the bridge. Follow the road to Pier 7 Marina. Contact: Alan Avery at 410-956-3299 or aandsavery@yahoo.com.



### *Pirates of the Potomac*

Tuesday evenings, 5 PM. \$3 launch fee. Seasonal passes \$45. Directions: From Alexandria, VA, take the Mt. Vernon Parkway 1.3 miles south of the Beltway, then left and straight into the marina. Contact: Dick Rock if you are coming at 703-780-6605, dick.rock@att.net. In case of inclement weather, call Belle Haven Marina at 703-758-0018 after 3:30 PM to confirm launch cancelled.

### *Pirates of the Patuxent*

Thursday evenings, arrive 5-6 PM and free parking on the right, just north of the boardwalk across from Our Lady Star of the Sea Church. Contact: Don Polakovics 301-866-0437 or doooobrd@erols.com; or Jennifer Elmore at 301-862-2398 or JSElmore@erols.com.

### *Pirates of Georgetown*

**(check website to keep informed)**

Thursday evenings, 6:30 PM. Plenty of parking. Home port, the dock at Jack's Boats (202-337-9642), is located in Georgetown, Washington DC under the Whitehurst Freeway at 3500 K Street, NW. Rental kayaks are available. Contact: David Moore 301-445-3273 or dtmoore@clark.net, website: <http://www.scienceappliance.com/pirates>

**\*Notice re: Pier 7, Annapolis, MD: kayak launching is free on Wednesdays only. All other times there is a \$5 launch fee, even if launching from the beach.**

**CPA Policy Re Trip Waivers:** It is CPA's policy to require that all participants in CPA-sponsored trips and events sign legal release forms before setting out on the water. Trip leaders and “event organizers” are responsible for obtaining blank release forms from the

### Minimum Required Safety Equipment for CPA Trips

The minimum safety gear for participating in a club trip is (beyond a kayak and paddle) as follows: Personal flotation device (PFD), paddle float, bilge pump, spray skirt, water tight bulkheads or flotation bags (to prevent kayak from sinking when capsized).

***You and you alone are responsible for your personal safety.***

Coordinator, for securing signatures from participants, and for returning the signed forms to the Coordinator for safekeeping. A fresh signature must be obtained for each separate trip or event, except that only one release per season is required for regularly scheduled events such as the weekly activities of the “pirates” at Pier 7 and other venues. The legal release absolves all participating CPA members from legal liability for the injury or death of a fellow participant and allows us to continue to organize and participate in group activities without undue fear of incurring personal legal liability.



*Inside:*

- An Independence Day Trip Report*
  - Paddling the Outer Banks*
  - Requirements for light and sound signals*
- ...and more!*



## **The Chesapeake Paddler**

Chesapeake Paddlers Association  
P.O.Box 341  
Greenbelt, MD 20768

REMINDER: Please check your mailing label for your expiration date. If your Chesapeake Paddlers Association membership has expired, or will expire soon, please send in your dues. **\*\*SEE BOX ON PAGE 2 FOR ADDRESS\*\***