

The Chesapeake Paddler



Publication of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Volume 14, Issue 4

May 2004

The Birthday Paddle

by James Song

Since 1998 it has been my custom to go paddling on my birthday. It's a great way reflect on the past year as well as anticipate the coming year. My birthday paddle has always been a solo paddle. I enjoy being alone on water. It seems like I have the entire river to myself for that single day. The fact that my birthday is in March when the water temperature of the Potomac River and its tributaries is around 50 degrees helps achieve this tranquility. But this year I wanted to share the water with someone. So I asked two of my best paddling

buddies, Tom and Alison, to join me.

I must confess I don't prepare well for paddling. I am terrible about packing lunch or carrying water or even safety gear. Basically, my hatches are empty when I go out for a paddle. But Tom and Alison are thorough about bringing necessary provisions like food, water, extra clothing, coffee, tea, towbelt, etc. In fact, Alison knows me so well that she automatically packed lunch for all of us. We headed south to our launching

destination, Pohick Bay Regional Park in Lorton, Virginia.

Pohick Bay Regional Park is a pooling point for most of the running creeks in northern Virginia across from the nation's capital. Pohick Bay feeds into the Potomac River just 20 miles south of Washington, DC, and is managed by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (www.NVRPA.org). It is one of our favorite and frequently visited sites in the area.

As we unloaded our boats, the wind picked up and little chops on the river began to show. The weather was already threatening, with possible rain in the forecast. Alison and I quickly portaged the boats to the gravel beach and changed into our drysuits. Tom was having problems with his inner layer, drytop, drybib, and his tuilik. A Greenland-style paddler, Tom built his own 17-foot skin-on-frame kayak. I chuckled as he tried to pull the tuilik over his head. I would have laughed harder if I hadn't made a foolish mistake of my own.

Remember I mentioned I don't prepare well for paddling? Well, I



Alison . . . holding the birthday paddle? No, testing the water depth.

Continued on page 6

CPA Pool Sessions

These are open sessions, not lessons. You must bring your own boat and gear.

Where: Fairland Aquatic Center,
Burtonsville, MD

Dates: Saturdays through May
29, 2004

Time: 4-5:50 PM and 5:50-7:45
PM

Fee: \$7 per person. Pay at
FAC door (pool level)

Required:

- a. Boats/gear clear of leaves, mud, grass, etc.
- b. A reservation.

To get a reservation, email Jspinner2@peoplepc.com (email preferred) or call 301-559-3345 by the Thursday prior to the session; leave a message with the following information:

- a. your name
- b. phone number
- c. date of session
- d. time slot
- e. number of boats
- f. type of boats (WW or sea kayak). Pool holds more WW boats than sea kayaks.

You'll receive a reservation number. If you do not receive a reservation number, you do NOT have a reservation. Reservations will not be accepted more than 2 weeks in advance.

Directions: Take your best route to I-95 between Baltimore and Washington. Exit at MD-198 West. Turn left at 2nd light, Old Gunpowder Road. The pool is about a half mile down on the right. Boat entrance is around to the left side of the building.

Last session: May 29, 2004

SCHEDULE FOR 2004 CHESAPEAKE PADDLER

The 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
June 2004	May 15, 2004
July 2004	June 15, 2004
August 2004	July 15, 2004
September 2004	August 15, 2004
October 2004	September 15, 2004
Nov/Dec2004	November 15, 2004

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.

Steering Committee:

Coordinator—Brian Blankinship,
coordinator@cpakayaker.com

Membership, subscriptions—Steve Lindeman, PO Box 341, Greenbelt, MD 20768, membership@cpakayaker.com

Secretary—Steve Lindeman,
secretary@cpakayaker.com

Treasurer—John Blackburn, 301-587-7142,
treasurer@cpakayaker.com

Webmaster/E-Mail List Administrator—
Barbara Foley, webmaster@cpakayaker.com

Newsletter Team:

Managing Editor/Layout—Bernadette Knoblauch, news_editor@cpakayaker.com

Articles Editor—Thomas Crabill,
news_articles@cpakayaker.com

Advertising Coordinator—James Song,
news_advertising@cpakayaker.com

Mailing and Distribution—Andres Vaart,
news_distribution@cpakayaker.com

Pirate Groups:

Pier 7 Pirate King—Alan Avery, 410-956-3299, pirates_pier7@cpakayaker.com

Potomac Pirate King—Dick Rock, 703-780-6605

Patuxent Pirate King—Dan Wells 410-414-2660, pirates_patuxent@cpakayaker.com; Don Polakovics, 301-866-0437, pirates_patuxent2@cpakayaker.com

Georgetown Pirate Queens—Cyndi Janetzko, 703-276-2728; Dave Biss, 703-276-2728; David Moore, 301-445-3273; pirates_georgetown@cpakayaker.com

Baltimore Pirate King—Barry Marsh, 410-728-4016, pirates_baltimore@cpakayaker.com

Algonkian Pirate King—James Song, 703-375-4754, pirates_algonkian@cpakayaker.com

MEMBERSHIP: Subscription to *The Chesapeake Paddler* is 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.

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.

Coordinator's Column

It's boat demo season again, which means we will have lots of new members signing up. I met leaders of a few other local clubs at the demo day May 1, and all of us reported large numbers of club members. This particular demo day was mostly recreation and sit-on-top boats, which is the fastest growing market. There will be lots of paddlers who can use the kind of safe paddling knowledge we can provide.

For those who just joined CPA, welcome to a great association.

I hope you take advantage of all we have to offer. Check out the calendar, updated most frequently on the website, to see all the different levels of trips. There are also a number of training events both more formal like the rolling and rescue sessions, and spontaneous like the "rolling hole" at Pier 7 where all sorts of skills are learned.

Most of all, you have joined an association of great people who love to paddle and love to help those learning more about

paddling. Take the opportunity to ask about gear, or try each other's boats. Find new friends to paddle with out of the roughly 600 members and arrange peer paddles. CPA is a great way to increase your skills to become a safe, capable paddler.

Welcome to a wonderful sport!

Brian Blankinship

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:

Display advertising will be accepted that relates to the concerns and interests of our readers. Monthly rates for advertising 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.

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

FOR SALE

Thule bicycle attachment for sale. Lightly used, \$30 obo. Lou Lieb, llieb@att.net, 202-723-5909. (7/04)

Necky Kyook Exp., Poly. 15' x 25", 60 lb, w/rudder, yellow. F/R hatch. Stable; great for touring. Excellent condition. \$750 firm. Doug Hill, dhxctry@aol.com, 703-319-9092. (7/04)

Eddyline Merlin XT, 15' x 23", 46 lb, carbonlite, yellow/white, like new, high-volume storage. 1999 list \$1800; asking \$1000, Bernadette Knoblauch, knobbee@aol.com, 703-758-9499. (7/04)

PADDLIN' PLACES

compiled by Ralph Heimlich

Susquehanna River Trips

Lee Laskowski: I've paddled the Susquehanna River from Windsor, NY, to Havre de Grace, MD, along the east branch and main stem, and from Garmans-town (about 35 mi NW of Altoona) to Sunbury, PA (where the west branch joins the main stem). In my opinion the best section is between Shawville (4 mi N of I-80 on SR 970) and Renovo (on SR 120), PA, on the west branch. This is a 70-mile stretch without a road along either side. A very good guide is *Keystone Canoeing* by Edward Gertler. **Ralph Heimlich**, who paddled this stretch from the Karthaus bridge on SR 879, notes that this crystal clear water is completely abiotic from acid mine drainage—pretty, but dead. **Christine Bond** noted that there are some beautiful areas north of Harrisburg, PA. If you are interested in camping, an area on the West Branch has camps set up. If you do not camp, there are many motels along the way. **Thomas Milani** contributed the following links:

http://www.susquehannaheritage.net/water_trail_map_and_guide.htm
http://sites.state.pa.us/PA_Exec/Fish_Boat/watertrails/trailindex.htm

Spring Up the Patuxent River

Chip Walsh: There are several good launching spots on the Patuxent between Laurel and

Route 50, but this area is littered with strainers. The area around Governors Bridge is one of the few where there is open river but it doesn't last long. **Charlie Duffy** and I paddled down the main stem to Route 3 in June 2003 and found the mile above Route 3 flooded due to a large amount of water coming down the Little Patuxent. This made for interesting paddling because we could paddle around most all the obstacles, often paddling well off the river through the woods. I assumed the flow under the bridge was dangerous and stayed away from it. But you could make an interesting paddle out of that when the water is high. Check the USGS gauges for the Patuxent near Laurel and Little Patuxent at Savage. The dam dudes at WSSC regulate the flow at Laurel, and only rarely let significant water down the main stem of the river. So most of the time, it is the Little Patuxent that kicks in the water. Only 1000 cfs at Savage may be enough. Allow a half day or a day for the water to get down to Route 3. The USGS pages are at:

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/uv/?site_no=01594000&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060,00062,00054 for Savage and the main USGS page for Maryland River gauges is <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/md/nwis/current?type=flow>

When the flow is 3000 cfs at Bowie, the water level at Queen

Anne's canoe launch (south of Route 214) will be 3 to 5 feet higher than normal. The dock will be under water and the river will be lapping at the foot of the access road. Attaining upriver will be arduous. If the water level were to rise by a similar amount at Bowie, I suspect you could boat from Route 3 to Queen Anne's and get over or around the normal obstacles. Paddlers need to exercise great caution because rivers in flood are full of huge risks. There is normally little unobstructed paddling between the Duckett Reservoir and Queen Annes Bridge. If you don't mind the mud and scratches from dragging over or around ten or twenty strainers, you could be rewarded with a day in a surprisingly secluded and wild setting. By and large, it is the same on the Middle and Little Patuxent, except you're adding in some whitewater sections.

Ralph Heimlich adds that paddling the flatwater of the Howard T. Duckett and Rocky Gorge Reservoirs operated by WSSC is an exception to Chip's rules about the upper Patuxent system. Each paddler needs a use permit (\$3/day or \$30/season from the WSSC HQ at the "log cabin" on Brighton Dam Road). Spring paddling is pretty with wild cherry, mountain laurel, and azalea in bloom and the shad running.

Continued from page 4

Woody's Geo Paddle

Techno paddler *Robert "Woody" Woodard* has developed a couple of web-based tools for reconnoitering paddling places. One is called "Geo Paddle," which allows you to zoom down from a large Bay map to an area-wide air photo, then to a highly detailed air photo of a specific point. It can be accessed online at:

<http://www.kayaktrips.net/geo/>

There are now about 15,000 waypoints in the database. The map with waypoints can be fine tuned by clicking the N,S,E, or W letters on the map. Once you have an area you'd like to keep, you can bookmark the main Bay map with the x & y parameters in the URL.

For example:

<http://www.kayaktrips.net/geo/index.php?x=128&y=314>

... is Mallows Bay. You can email these URLs to your kayaking buds to have a frame of reference for an upcoming paddle. If you would like specific waypoints added to the database, email Woody (woody@kayaktrips.net) the latitude, longitude (in DD.ddddd format) and a short description. Folks having problems seeing a second window open when clicking in the map may need to temporarily disable any popup blocking software you have running. A second online tool is the "Geo Tide Finder," which gives a

complete tide prediction for many points. You can change the date by scrolling down through the output screen and changing it. It's at:

<http://www.kayaktrips.net/geo/xtide/>

Potomac River up the Anacostia River

Joy Hecht described this trip. It's about 8 miles from the Gravelly Point put-in just upstream from National Airport to Bladensburg. It's a nice paddle, though a bit weather-dependent. A lot of urban runoff goes into the Anacostia, and if there's been a heavy rain the day before, the river can be awash in trash. There is lots of bird life, and mostly parks along the river upstream of Anacostia Park (Pennsylvania Avenue bridge). There isn't any place to land at Haines Point, if you want to stop and have a break. You can land at Anacostia Park, or under the 11th Street Bridge on the west side of the river in the same general area as Anacostia Park. A Dragon boat crew launches from under the bridge, so there must be a dock you could use to land a kayak. Anacostia Park has boat ramps and bathrooms—not close to the ramps. But DON'T try to take the channel on the west side of Children's Island, just upstream from Anacostia Park. Stick to the wider river. I speak from experience: Several years ago I had a rather close encounter with Anacostia mud

and a traveling carnival because I took that channel.

Chip Walsh responded that people talk about the Anacostia being a trashy river, but it can be quite nice. On the Bladensburg end it looks wild and you will see lots of wildlife. However, a recent report cited something like a third of the fish have tumors from nonpoint, chemical /road runoff. Then you have trains and planes rattling over your head, parks, stadiums, monuments, etc. to look at...lots of variety. The river is tidal all the way to Bladensburg, and with proper timing you can go either direction with the current. An example of our impact on the planet is that Bladensburg was once a 40-foot deep seaport. Soil erosion has clogged the channel over the last 200 years. Check the tides before you go. I've had to drag my boat through there at low tide. The cut-through under Benning Road may be open now. It was blocked for a long time by construction of the bridge there. Don't go in there without at least a half tide, preferably rising. You can't make it on the end of the tide. This cut leads you between Children's Island and RFK Stadium. It is an interesting area with several defunct foot bridges and beds of plants through which somebody maintains a passage/channel. Watch out for the dinner-cruise boats on the Potomac. For as big as they are, they don't make much noise, and I've been surprised by them coming up from behind.

Continued from page 1

forgot to bring the PFD and the sprayskirt for my boat. As I frantically searched my trunk for those two important items, Tom tossed me his PFD and suggested that I should be able to paddle without the skirt.

After checking time, temperature, and equipment, we hit the water. We paddled along the northwest shoreline toward the mouth of Pohick Creek. A flock of gulls circled above to check us out but soon lost interest.

As we approached the mouth of the creek the water level became shallower. This part of the river is tidal and we assumed that it was a low tide. But it was unusually low even for low tide. Alison dipped her blade into the water vertically to check the depth. The water did not even cover the length of her blade before it got stuck in a 6 inches of muddy silt. The water was so shallow that we got stuck a few times before we made it to the main body of the creek. "Anybody want to roll?" I joked.

As we made our way through the creek, we began to notice the devastation that Hurricane Isabel had caused along the shoreline last September. Hundred-year-old trees were completely uprooted or snapped like toothpicks, blocking the water's path. Almost all of the manmade platforms for osprey nests were completely destroyed or under water. The natural nesting sites did not fare any better. The storm had washed away an entire known beaver lodge. Certain sections of the river's tributaries were completely rerouted or had disappeared. It was a complete

disaster. I didn't think any living creature could have survived.

Maybe not. As we moved further along the creek, a flock of at least 10 or 12 great blue herons lined the north side of the creek, surveying the shallow ends for a quick meal. A great welcoming committee to the outside tourists, they looked very healthy and were unfazed by our edging presence.

new nest. A second pair was settling on a new nest over a dead tree located just north of the creek. I joked that they were probably debating how expensive the neighborhood is. Ospreys are predatory birds that migrate to the south during the winter months. They feed exclusively on small freshwater fish and are very territorial. As members of the hawk family, males are smaller than females, but do all the hunting and nest building. They



Picking a path down Pohick Creek.

With their slender bodies and wide wingspans, great blue herons are beautiful to watch. They are ferocious hunters of small fish but they do not migrate.

As we got closer, a couple of them squawked and flew right over our heads. I felt reassured that the creek and the surrounding natural settings were not destroyed but merely changed for future adaptation.

I became more assured when I saw a pair of ospreys searching for a

usually return to the same nesting sites and are known to stay with the same mating partner.

The most impressive sight was the family of bald eagles sitting on a treetop surveying the land for a new breeding season. I screamed "binocular time" like a birding geek and pulled out my waterproof binoculars for a closer look. One healthy adult bald eagle sat by the center of the tree. Its defined white head and tail seemed extra white as if to show off its pride.

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

Its black and white coat almost glowed over the misty sky of a gray day. Just above the adult eagle, two juveniles perched on a treetop. With their full brown coat with gray and white short stripes, they watched their parents' lead. It was truly an awesome sight.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the bald eagle population in the Potomac River area suffered heavy declines due to severe water

debris were routinely picked up by the local citizens to clean the river.

The effort has mostly worked. The river gradually showed improvement from the prior years. Then the bald eagles started to return. Last year, the National Park Service reported 13 pairs of bald eagles nesting in the Potomac region—a remarkable turn from just over two decades ago.



Tom, wedged in tight.

pollution—the birds died from eating diseased fish. For several years, no sightings of bald eagles were reported in the region.

It wasn't until the 1990s that conservation efforts made an impact on bringing back the symbol of America. Local and regional nonprofit organizations teamed with governmental agencies to clean up the river. Strict water standards were set and enforced. Polluters were penalized with severe fines. Trash and

We "ooh"-ed and "ahh"-ed as we shared the binoculars. With much regret, we shoved off and paddled farther up the creek. The current moved faster as we moved farther into the meandering and narrowing sections of the creek. Passage became difficult with faster moving waters coupled with fallen trees partially blocking the way. Several times we had to be creative and "rhumba" through a fallen tree.

With her shorter boat and Euro paddle, Alison moved more easily

through the fast moving water sections. Tom and I, on the other hand, began to have problems with our longer boats and Greenland paddles. Several times we were pushed back by the gushing water.

After stopping for lunch at a small gravel beach, we headed down river. Alison joked that we'd be floating rather than paddling down with such a fast current. But the paddling was not easy. Some sections of the creek were narrow. And with the fast current it was easy for us to spin. Tom got stuck across the creek. His bow and stern were firmly embedded into a muddy shoreline. He tried to swing his boat but it wouldn't budge. Alison tried to push his bow with hers but it pushed his boat further into the mud.

After freeing Tom's boat we glided down the creek, making record time. Weather began to break up as we passed the shallow mouth of the creek. The winds calmed down. Even the sun was beginning to shine its face over the clouds.

I always hope to find some meaning to my life during my birthday paddle . . . an enlightenment so to speak. I am always disappointed when I don't find it. But maybe the result is not what I should be looking for. I spent a great day enjoying my beloved activity with people who are dear to me. Alison hugged me again to congratulate me on my birthday. Then I realized the enlightenment of my birthday paddle. It is not finding what you are looking for, but rather cherishing what you find.

Pilgrimage to the Source of the Patuxent

By Chip Walsh

“The Patuxent River is the longest river flowing entirely within the borders of Maryland. It winds 110 miles from its source at Parr’s Ridge in Carroll County, down past the fall line where it turns salty and tidal, broadening to three miles. At Drum Point in Calvert County, the Patuxent empties into the Chesapeake Bay.” —Maryland DNR Web

Most of us who sea kayak in Maryland will eventually discover the charms of the Patuxent River.

Within a 60-mile stretch, it offers the paddler a variety of experiences from Bay-like paddling on a miles-wide, expansive tidal body, to the meandering stretches of tidal, estuarine marshes culminating at Jug Bay, to the narrow, tree shrouded, flowing fresh water stretch around Queen Annes Bridge. Then there are the Duckett and Tridelphia resevoirs, offering the paddler a fresh water lake experience in the heart of the Baltimore-Washington corridor.

And the tree-choked, 20-mile stretch between the resevoirs and Queen Annes offer the hardy, adventuresome paddler a wilderness experience right in the middle of the megalopolis. One of

the reasons I am so fond of this river is because it offers so many different faces over a relatively short distance.

The idea of finding the river’s source occurred to me one day while paddling an open-water stretch between Benedict and Broomes Island. I was reflecting

corners of four counties converge at one spot. I say almost useless, because the Patuxent is the border between Montgomery and Howard Counties, and you can find Parr’s Ridge by tracing the county lines to the little, pointy northeastern tip of Montgomery County. Another fact I find interesting is that the Patapsco River forms the northern border of Howard County, and its source is also Parr’s Spring, on the north side of Parr’s Ridge.

Based on my research, I planned to find the source of the Patuxent by driving south from Mt. Airy on Route 27 (Ridge Road) to the Montgomery County line, which is the Patuxent, and then walking up the creek bed until it ended, which I thought would be from 1 to 2 miles.

The State of Maryland has done a wonderful thing in buying up much of the property the Patuxent runs by and I had hoped to find some parkland at Parr’s Ridge.

Driving south along Route 27, I recognized the geography from the topo maps. The ravine where I expected to find the Patuxent was obvious. And it was just as obvious there wasn’t going to be any easy public access into the ravine. I figured I could walk the stream bed from Route 27 if need be, but there didn’t even appear to



Eureka! Chip Walsh at the source of the Patuxent

on how different the River is in comparison to the sections north of Benedict. You know how thoughts pop into your head while paddling a long open stretch?

Well, this time the thought was “what’s 110 miles up there, at the source on Parr’s Ridge?”

Some Internet searches and message board traffic revealed Parr’s Ridge is just south of Mount Airy, Maryland. A curious and almost useless piece of trivia is that Parr’s Ridge is the only spot in Maryland where the

Continued on page 9

Continued from page 8

be a decent spot to leave a car along Route 27.

Instead, I pulled into Lu and Joe's Restaurant and Lounge at 1024 Ridge Road. I thought to leave my car at this bar/liquor store, and walk back down the road to the "river," and I have to put river in quotes because it doesn't look anything like the river most of us know. Before heading out, I recalled the words of Roger Corbett, a paddling mentor, who used to preach "become a customer; it changes the relationship." I went in the bar and ordered a drink from an Asian man named Sam. I asked if the owner was in and was surprised and disappointed to learn Sam was the owner (then who are Lu and Joe?). The disappointment was because I didn't expect Sam to know much about the area or the river, but I asked anyway. I received another diversity lesson, because Sam **did** know. Further, Sam's 5-acre property extended back to the county line, and he invited me to walk it. He may have been a little confused by my asking about a "river," which was understandable once I found the little trickle of Patuxent in the shiggy-filled woods.

There really isn't a single source. Rather the stream braids off at numerous points into ever smaller trickles. It was very difficult to walk along the stream bed due to the thick growths of shiggy, and I made slow progress. A quarter mile up the ravine I could see a farm field to the north and I made my way into the field and walked parallel to the ravine for about another quarter mile. When I went

back into the ravine, it was dry, so I headed back into the shiggy and picked my way down the ravine until I found where the water was trickling out of the ground, from among rocks and gravel. There was a lot of green grass and moss, the water flowing from the ground must be warm enough to keep the spot from freezing. I estimated there was probably a gallon a minute coming out of the ground, not enough to feed the flow in the river behind Lu and Joe's. The rocks are white igneous granite or quartz, quite different from the shark-tooth sedimentary layer we see on the southern stretches of the Patuxent. I looked around some more and found lots of these springs at different spots on the ridge. There must be at least twenty in the mile or so of the ravine I explored. My uninformed guess is that there is a layer of loose or porous rock (an aquifer) in Parr's Ridge, and at various spots where it is exposed, water flows from the ground and begins the Patuxent.

More and more tiny rivulets join the stream and within a mile, there is enough flow that the stream has cut itself into a meandering gully.

It was gratifying to have gone out and found the source of the river, but very underwhelming. The river there was indistinguishable from the little streams and gulleys we find all through the woods of central Maryland. Only when contrasted to the miles-wide sections we kayak is it impressive to think "so, this is where it all begins."

Volunteers Needed

- **Saturday, June 5**—At least 3 expert paddlers for a safety team at OkumeFest, Camp Letts, Edgewater, 9AM-5PM. CLC will supply cool orange hats, tee-shirts AND lunch. Contact: Jeff Moorman, CLC, 410-267-0137, x12.

Support kayakers needed for the following fundraisers:

- **Sunday, May 23**—Save the Patapsco, Hon III Swim Support (4 mi). This is Joe Stewart's third swim to raise funds for the health and protection of the Patapsco River (Baltimore Harbor). Intermediate level Paddlers. Contact: [Barry Marsh](mailto:Barry.Marsh), 410-728-4016.
- **Saturday, June 5**—Potomac River Swim (7.5 mi). Proceeds go to environmental organizations. Contact: Cheryl Wagner, 202-387-2361, cherylw@crosslink.net. Or see <http://www.crosslink.net/~cherylw/pr2004i.htm>
- **Sunday, June 13**—Dodge Great Chesapeake Bay Swim and One Mile Swim need experienced escort kayakers. Bay Swim contact: Mike Vandamm (301/345-6324; michael.j.vandamm@usps.gov); One-mile Swim contact: Ron Casterline, 800-336-6637 (o), 301-218-4041 (h), rcasterline@erols.com
- **Saturday, June 19**—Swim for Life (5 mi). Proceeds go to HIV/AIDS and the Chester River Association. Contact: Steve Sharkey, 410-758-8756, stevesharkey@verizon.net.

Weekly Pirates Paddling

CHECK THE STARTING DATES FOR EACH GROUP ON THE CPA WEBSITE:
<http://www.cpakayaker.com>

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 south, over the South River. Take first left after crossing the bridge. Follow road to Pier 7 Marina. Contact: Alan Avery, 410-856-3299 or pirates_pier7@cpakayker.com.



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

Pirates of the Potomac

Tuesday nights, 5 PM. Belle Haven Marina. \$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, 703-780-6605 or pirates_potomac@cpakayker.com. In case of inclement weather, call Belle Haven Marina, 703-768-0018 after 3:30 PM to confirm launch cancelled.

Pirates of the Patuxent

Thursday nights, arrive 5-6 PM. Free parking on the right, just north of the boardwalk across from Our Lady Star of the Sea Church. Contact: Dan Wells, 410-414-2660 or pirates_patuxent@cpakayaker.com; (alternate) Don Polakovics, 301-866-0437, pirates_patuxent2@cpakayaker.com.

Pirates of Georgetown

Thursday nights, arrive between 6-6:30 PM. Jack's Boats (202-337-9642), 3500 K Street, NW in the Georgetown area of Washington, DC under the Whitehurst Freeway. Plenty of parking. Rental kayaks available. Contact: David Moore, 301-445-3273 or pirates_georgetown@cpakayaker.com; <http://www.jacksboathouse.com/POG>.

Pirates of Baltimore (the roving Piracy!)

1st, 3rd, and 5th Tuesdays at Canton Waterfront Park, 3001 Boston St., Baltimore; 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at Rocky Point Park, Essex, MD. Meet at 5:30 PM for paddling and skills practice and to meet other paddlers. PFDs, sprayskirts, and a waterproof light required. Contact Barry Marsh, 410-728-4016 or 703-837-3017.

Pirates of Algonkian (upper Potomac)

Begins at Algonkian on May 11. Begins at Fountainhead on May 18. Tuesday nights, 6 PM until sunset. Paddlers from VA and MD paddle along the upper Potomac shores. We raid unsuspecting canoes and fishermen for food, drink, and catch-of-the-day. AAARRRRG! We also portage and paddle down along the C&O Canal. We often explore Seneca Creek and elongated islands as well as practice skills, rescues, and rolling workshops. Two launch points: Algonkian Regional Park in Sterling, VA, and Fountainhead Regional Park in Clifton, VA. Contact: James Song, james.song@verizon.com or tsongus@yahoo.com or 703-375-4754.

CPA Trip Requirements and Ratings

CPA trips are organized by and for members of the club. When you participate, please remember that trip leaders are "hosts," not professional guides, but you must be willing to follow their instructions. They are neither necessarily trained in first aid or CPR, nor do they always carry first aid equipment of 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, you must contact the leader in advance.

REQUIREMENTS:

Equipment: While on the water, all paddlers must wear PFDs, spray skirts,

and clothes appropriate to the water temperature. Boats must have water-tight bulkheads or flotation devices to prevent the kayak from swamping when capsized. All paddlers must have, and know how to use, a pump, paddle float, and whistle. On the day of the trip, leaders may refuse to admit participants for noncompliance with any of these requirements, so if you are not sure, discuss it with the leader in advance!

Waivers: All participants in CPA-sponsored trips and events must sign legal release forms each time before setting out on the water. Only one release per season is needed for regularly scheduled events (e.g., the weekly activities of the "pirates"). The legal release absolves all participating CPA members from legal liability for the injury or death of a fellow participant.

RATINGS:

First Timers: Participants have never paddled before. No prior skills needed.

Beginners: Participants have paddled some, taken classes, or have been on short (up to 4-mile) trips and can do a wet exit and paddle float re-entry.

Advanced Beginners: Participants 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: Participants 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.

CALENDAR

Participants in CPA events must read and comply with the statement of CPA trip requirements and ratings.

Please contact the trip leaders in advance, even if you are familiar with the area being paddled. They need contact information in case of changes, and there may be space limitations or other trip restrictions.

The latest information about CPA trips is at www.cpakayaker.com.

MAY

7-8 (Fri-Sat) Spring River Demo Day. (All)

8 (Sat) Dundee Creek, Gunpowder Falls State Park, to Pooles Island (Intermediate). Barry Marsh. 14mi

14-16 (Fri-Sun) SK102 (First Timer)

14-16 (Fri-Sun) Nassawango Creek, off Pocomoke. Car Camping (Beginner). Ralph Heimlich, 301-498-0918, heimlichfamily@comcast.net

22-23 (Sat-Sun) Middle Potomac (Beginner). Chip Walsh (need leader)

23 (Sun) Patapsco Swim (Intermediate). Joe Stewart

30 (Sun) Rocky Gorge Memorial Paddle (Beginner). David Moore, Ralph Heimlich, Alt. 8 mi.

JUNE

2 (Wed) Kayak Camping Class, Pier 7 (All). Greg Welker/Jenny Plummer-Welker

4-6 (Fri-Sun) Point Lookout Car Camping (Beginner). Bill Dodge

4-6 (Fri-Sun) CLC OkumeFest, Camp Letts, Edgewater MD. (All) Camping available Friday and Saturday nights. Open house at Chesapeake Light Craft, 1805 George Ave., Annapolis, Friday, 2- 5PM.

5 (Sat) Potomac River Swim (Advanced Beginner). Cheryl Wagner (see website). 7mi. Kayak support needed.

12 (Sat) - First Annual Paddle for the Cure (Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation), Gunpowder Falls (MD) State Park, 8AM-2PM. (All) 410-335-5352 or www.ultimatewatersports.com

12-13 (Sat-Sun) Chicamuxen Creek (Charles County) paddle and camp (Advanced Beginner). Greg Welker. 8nm/day

13 (Sun) Dodge Great Chesapeake Bay Swim and One Mile Swim need escort kayakers (Advanced Beginner). Mike Vandamm (301/345-6324; michael.j.vandamm@usps.gov); one-mile swim support, contact: Ron Casterline, 800-336-6637 (o), 301-218-4041 (h), r-gcasterline@erols.com

19 (Sat) Parent/Kid Paddle, Location TBD. (First Timer). Jesse Aronson/Anna Popov

20 (Sun) Calvert Cliffs, from Flag Pond to Cove Pt. (Intermediate). Barry Marsh. Parking lot is 1/2 mile from beach; kayak carts are a must! 12nm

Inside our May issue:

- *The Birthday Paddle*
- *Paddlin' Places*
- *The Source of the Patuxent*
- *Volunteer Opportunities*

The Chesapeake Paddler

Chesapeake Paddlers Association
PO Box 341
Greenbelt, MD 20768

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