

Chesapeake Paddler



Publication of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Volume 15, Issue 5

June 2005

Assateague Kayak Camper

Ralph Heimlich

Nine intrepid campers and I went to Assateague early to avoid the bugs, but forgot about the weird long winter of 2005. The weather was actually better than forecast, but it was an object lesson in the need to be adaptable and go with the flow. Four of us (Ron Barnett, Marshall Woodruff, Dan Hoke and I) arrived about noon on Friday under lowering skies and a rainy, windy forecast. We quickly pitched camp at Bayside Loop B and launched off the beach behind site 34.

We enjoyed a quick paddle north up to the bridge and then back down on the outside of a small "bird" island. Rain and wind failed to materialize, so we greeted the other arrivals and got the chicken "stoup" on the stove to feed everyone. Dick Rock, Saki (Alan) Sakakihara, Brent Cogswell, and Debbie Hoffbeck sifted in as the evening deepened, but no rain. Our final arrival was a paddler new to the area, but rich in West Coast experience: Ellen Stefaniak who came down from Richmond and up from Norfolk. We had a lively evening and periodically listened to the forecast, which kept getting worse over time. I offered some historical marshmallows left over from previous trips, but



after the first few, it was a tough sell.

Only a misting rain early Saturday morning, but the dawn brought in Greg Welker, our final paddler. The forecast called for rain, winds 15-20 knots and gusting to 30, and afternoon thunderstorms. After much discussion, we decided on safe over sorry and hatched a plan to paddle more protected waters inland with the possibility of paddling down the bay on Sunday, which was forecast to be milder. After renewing our lease on the campsites, we caravanned

over to Snow Hill (or further, for those who are sign challenged!) and launched from the Pocomoke Outfitter dock to paddle up the Pocomoke.

The "Poke" is a little bit of Southern Bayou in Maryland, and its meandering turns revealed spring-green bald cypress leafing out, sweet bay laurels, highbush blueberry, and a few very gaudy flowering pink bushes we couldn't identify (see below for what I think we found). Many birds were calling and flitting, but difficult to see. I could

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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.

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

FOR SALE

1995 Klepper Quattro Tandem Folding Kayak. Olive Green top. Great condition. Used only few times and kept indoors. Moving out of town for a long-term assignment. Price: \$3,000 or negotiable. Boat is located in Arlington, VA. Contact John McNamara at 540-729-2121 or at darmacusaf@comcast.net

Kevlar Double "Explorer" by Northwest Kayaks, good as new, emerald green over white. 18' x 6", approx. 72 lbs. \$1,895. Fred Von Karls 410-974-1600

WANTED: Chesapeake Paddler Newsletter Editor

Volunteer, work with a great group of people, learn about kayaking & use your writing and editing skills.

For more information, call Danielle: 703-517-6073

SCHEDULE FOR 2005 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
July 2005	June 15, 2005
August 2005	July 15, 2005
September 2005	August 15, 2005

Have an idea for an article, or is there information you would like to see in the newsletter? Email Danielle at news_editor@cpakayaker.com or call her at 703-517-6073.

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—Barry Marsh, 410-728-4016, coordinator@cpakayaker.com

Membership, subscriptions—Steve Lindeman, 410-827-7871, PO Box 341, Greenbelt, MD 20768, membership@cpakayaker.com

Secretary—Steve Lindeman, 410-827-7871 secretary@cpakayaker.com

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

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

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Advertising Coordinator—James Song, 703-375-4754, news_advertising@cpakayaker.com

Mailing and Distribution—Rob and Jackie Castle, news_distribution@cpakayaker.com

Pirate Groups:

Pier 7 Pirate Committee—Rob & Jackie Castle, Brent Cogswell, Greg Welker, pirates_pier7@cpakayaker.com

Potomac Pirate King—Dick Rock, 703-780-6605 pirates_potomac@cpakayaker.com

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

Georgetown Pirate Committee—Cyndi Janetzko, 703-241-0036; Dave Biss, 703-241-0036; David Moore, 301-445-3273; pirates_georgetown@cpakayaker.com

Baltimore Pirate King—Bob Huber, 410-335-0994, pirates_baltimore@cpakayaker.com

Algonkian Pirate King—Jeff Walaszek, 703-670-7712, pirates_algonkian@cpakayaker.com

Sugarloaf Pirate Queen—Deb McKenzie, 240-601-1440, pirates_sugarloaf@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

Thank You!

By Barry Marsh

The CPA has always relied on our members to manage our association, provide skills training, organize and lead trips and events, and perform a huge number of other duties that help our 600+ member association run as smoothly as it does. Last year, the officers and Steering Committee started a program to formally recognize our many volunteers who give their time to support the CPA. As a visible reminder of our members' volunteer spirit, we designed seven small, kayak-shaped patches, called "rockers," to award members who have helped the CPA. Each of the seven rockers has wording stitched on it to indicate roles our members have performed:

INSTRUCTOR: For our members who have taught others at classes and skills sessions.

PIRATE CAPTAIN: For our Pirate Queens and Kings.

SAFETY BOAT: For our members who have acted as "safety boats" at kayak demo days.

STEERING COMMITTEE: For our elected club officers and Steering Committee members.

SWIM SUPPORT: For our members who have provided on-water support at local swims.

TRIP LEADER: For our members who have led official CPA trips.

VOLUNTEER: For our members who have helped in a variety of other invaluable ways.

A member can earn each rocker once, although many members have performed the same "rocker-worthy" duties several times over. A few of our members have earned every rocker! Members have found some great ways to display their rockers - sewing or ironing them onto their jackets, PFDs, and hats - check out the pictures!

The following members each deserve our heartfelt thanks and a CPA rocker for helping the CPA between late 2004 and the end of May 2005. Officers, Steering Committee members, Pirate Kings and Queens, and event organizers will award members their rockers at CPA events such as the Piracies, trips, SK102, and swim supports. We'll continue to award rockers as the year progresses, and we'll regularly publish the names of our volunteers and list what they've done in the Chesapeake Paddler.

Here they are - Thanks!

INSTRUCTOR:

- Jesse Aronson (SK102)
- Alan Avery (SK102)
- Wendy Baker-Davis (SK102)
- Dave Biss (SK102 and Swim Support Training Class)
- Kevin Black (SK102)
- Brian Blankinship (SK102 and Trip Leader Training Class)
- Steve Fleming (SK102)
- Brian Houston (SK102)
- Cyndi Janetzko (SK102 and Swim Support Training Class)
- Marcus Koenan (SK102)
- Nelson Labbe (SK102 and Greenland Paddle Making Classes I and II)
- Steve Lindeman (SK102)
- Zak Mettger (SK102)
- David Moore (SK102)
- Gar Robbins (SK102)
- Fay Shamanski (SK102)

- James Song (SK102)
- Al Staats (SK102)
- Yvonne Thayer (SK102)
- Mike Vandamm (SK102)
- Greg Welker (SK102 and Kayak Camping Class)



Rob Castle

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Thank you!*cont. from Page 3*

*Jenny
Plummer-
Welker*

PIRATE CAPTAIN:

- Alan Avery (Pier 7)
- Dave Biss (Georgetown)
- Jackie Castle (Pier 7)
- Rob Castle (Pier 7)
- Brent Cogswell (Pier 7)
- Bob Huber (Baltimore)
- Cyndi Janetzko (Georgetown)
- Barry Marsh (Baltimore)
- Deb McKenzie (Sugarloaf)
- David Moore (Georgetown)
- Beth Payne (Dakar)
- Don Polakovics (Patuxent)
- Dick Rock (Potomac)
- James Song (Algonkian)
- Jeff Walaszek (Algonkian)
- Greg Welker (Pier 7)
- Dan Wells (Patuxent)

STEERING COMMITTEE:

- Alan Avery (SC Member)
- Dave Biss (SC Member)
- John Blackburn (Treasurer)
- Brian Blankinship (SC Member)
- Cyndi Janetzko (SC Member)
- Steve Lindeman (Secretary)
- Barry Marsh (Coordinator)
- Rich Stevens (SC Member)
- Yvonne Thayer (SC Member)

TRIP LEADER:

- Sue Bauer (Triadelphia and Rocky Gorge Memorial Day)
- Jackie Castle (Triadelphia)
- Rob Castle (Triadelphia)
- Ralph Heimlich (Assateague Kayak Kamper)
- Rich Stevens (Rocky Gorge Memorial Day)
- Yvonne Thayer (Cherry Blossom)
- Robert Woodard (Mason Neck First Timer)

SAFETY BOAT:

- Brian Blankinship (Springriver Demo Days)
- Brent Cogswell (Springriver Demo Days)
- Bill Dodge (CLC OkoumeFest)
- Lee Gardner (Springriver Demo Days)
- Bob Gasser (Springriver Demo Days)
- Ralph Heimlich (CLC OkoumeFest and Springriver Demo Days)
- Dave Isbell (Springriver Demo Days)
- Steven Kim (Springriver Demo Days)
- Caroline Labbe (Springriver Demo Days)
- Angelo Maggi (Springriver Demo Days)
- David Shames (Springriver Demo Days)
- Al Staats (Springriver Demo Days)
- Mike Vandamm (Springriver Demo Days)
- Greg Welker (Springriver Demo Days)
- Marshall Woodruff (Springriver Demo Days)
- Mark Woodside (Springriver Demo Days)
- Jim Zawlocki (Springriver Demo Days)

SWIM SUPPORT:

- Bob Huber (2005 Save the Patapsco, Hon IV Swim)
- Barry Marsh (2005 Save the Patapsco, Hon IV Swim)
- John McKeever (2005 Save the Patapsco, Hon IV Swim)



*Rockers on
Barry's Hat*

Thank you!

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VOLUNTEER:

- Todd Angerhofer (Jack's Boathouse Cleanup)
- Jesse Aronson (Jack's Boathouse Cleanup)
- Alan Avery (Springriver Demo Days management, Pier 7 boathouse operation, Bay Swim support management, and hosting the CPA Holiday Party)
- Sue Bauer (Annual Meeting setup)
- Jennifer Bine (Jack's Boathouse Cleanup)
- Dave Biss (Bay Swim support management, EMS Demo Day management, and hosting the VA Trip/Event Planning Meeting)
- Brian Blankinship (SK102 management)
- Laura Butterbaugh (SK102 management)
- Jackie Castle ([Chesapeake Paddler](#) Mailing & Distribution)
- Rob Castle ([Chesapeake Paddler](#) Mailing & Distribution)
- David Compton (SK102 hosting and management)
- Tom Crabill ([Chesapeake Paddler](#) Articles Editor)
- Barbara Foley (CPA Webmaster)
- Ralph Heimlich (Patuxent River Cleanup Day)
- Tom Heneghan (for manning our Springriver Demo Days table)
- Susan Hicks (Jack's Boathouse Cleanup)
- Cyndi Janetzko (for Bay Swim support management, coordinating the Jack's Boathouse Cleanup Day, and hosting the VA Trip/Event Planning Meeting)
- Ed Johnson (for manning our Springriver Demo Days table)
- Nelson Labbe (for founding the CPA Library)
- Carolyn Lee (for manning our Springriver Demo Days table)
- Mark Woodside (for organizing the Skills for Safe Trips class)
- Teresa Pendleton (SK102 hosting and management)
- Danielle Ring ([Chesapeake Paddler](#) Editor)
- James Song ([Chesapeake Paddler](#) Advertising Coordinator)
- Joan Spinner (Fairland Aquatic Center pool sessions)
- Al Staats (Jack's Boathouse Cleanup)
- Yvonne Thayer (for co-founding the CPA Library and coordinating the Jack's Boathouse Cleanup Day)
- Andy Vaart (for logo gear setup and new member patch distribution)
- Cheryl Wagner (Potomac Swim support management)
- Jeff Walaszek (Potomac River Cleanup Day)
- Chip Walsh (Patuxent River Cleanup Day)
- Greg Welker (Pier 7 boathouse operation)
- Marshall Woodruff (for manning our EMS Demo Day)
- Mark Woodside (for organizing the Skills for Safe Trips class)

(We regret if we've missed naming any of our volunteers in this list. Please let me know if you know of a member you think deserves the CPA's thanks and a rocker for his or her efforts, and we'll make sure they get the recognition they deserve.)

Of course, the best way we can recognize our many volunteers is to offer them our most sincere thanks. **THANK YOU** - the CPA would not be the amazing organization it is without your tireless help!

Keep up the great work, and see ya on the water!

Barry
2005 CPA Coordinator



Rockers on John Blackburn's PFD

Okoume Fest 2004

By Chip Walsh

This is a report on an event I attended in 2004 and one which I left shaking my head in amazement over my discovery of a new category of "paddlers," a group I dubbed wood boat geeks. These folks look at kayaks and kayaking in a much different way than I do. And in a much different way than most of the CPA folks I have met, too. Put simply, the difference is they are more interested in the boats and the building of the boats than they are in paddling. CPA members I have met may love their boats, but they love them as an ingredient in their paddling passion. At OkoumeFest, I'd say it's about the boats and boat building, rather than the paddling.

Less you think I look down on the wood boat geeks, let me confess my own affair with a wood boat. It happened over this past winter with a twenty-foot wood canoe. I had enjoyed paddling her, but she needed work. I tried to keep my distance. Friends interceded and when January rolled around, this hag of a canoe came into my workshop. The look and feel of wood appeal to most people, and by telling you I have a workshop I may give away my own inclination. Except I don't love wood in my boats, where I want maintenance-free materials. Yet as I sanded, filled, patched, epoxyed, sanded some more, varnished, and sanded some more, love for this wood boat started to grow. My hands ran

over the curves of her hull and explored every nook and cranny of her planks and ribs. She was cut from clear northern white cedar, and every inch of wood in her twenty-foot hull spoke of craftsmanship which her builder's son had characterized to me as "art from the time the tree left the stump to the finished canoe." Through dozens and dozens of hours of the refinishing work, I had plenty of time to contemplate the art and the beauty, time in which an emotional bond took hold. The boat has a whitewater racing pedigree and the scars to prove it, yet I don't know if I will ever have the nerve to launch her in a rocky river. I guess I'm a wood boat geek--caring more about the boat than about the paddling.

Enough about me and the canoe--this is a "trip report" on OkoumeFest 2004. In case you haven't heard of it, as I had not, I'll tell you up front that OkoumeFest is a commercial celebration and promotion sponsored by Chesapeake Light Craft, or CLC. As commercially sponsored events go, the CLC presence is low-key and they put on a nice little event dominated by wood boats and the people that build them. Before attending, I incorrectly supposed Okoume was an Indian word, rather than the principal building material in CLC craft. Okoume is the mahogany plywood that gives CLC and other wood boats their attractive, wood grain

appearance.

Last year's OkoumeFest was June 4-6, at YWCA's Camp Letts on the Rhodes River in Edgewater, Maryland. Thunder and lightning had roared over the night of June 4. The rain had come in sheets and would continue off and on through most of Saturday, June 5. A muddy stream was out of its banks and flowing across Mayo Road as I drove to Camp Letts. I was, for once, an early arrival. I wandered around Camp Letts looking for signs of life. Gradually, a few soggy people began to straggle in. Most of the early arrivals were from out of town and my first set of arched eyebrows came when I learned people had camped overnight at Camp Letts. "Kayaking dead-heads" was my initial thought. There was a lot of small talk about the ferocity of the previous night's weather.

I began introducing myself. The first people I met spoke limited English, having come to the festival from Japan. My eyebrows arched again. By the time the organizers rolled in with a small caravan of vans and boat trailers I had met people from Utah, Tennessee, upstate New York, North Carolina, Florida and Connecticut. These were the "wood boat geeks." For these people, it's about the boats and the boat building and the paddling is secondary. They talk about subjects like how to make epoxy fillets light and strong, the merits of different brands of 2000-grit,

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Weekly Pirates Paddling

For more details, check out the CPA website and user forums at 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 the first left after crossing the bridge. Follow road to Pier 7 Marina. Contact: Alan Avery, 410-856-3299 or pirates_pier7@cpakayaker.com.

Note: Pier 7 kayak launching is free on Wednesday only. All other times there is a \$10 launch fee per kayak if launching from the beach.

Pirates of the Potomac

Wednesday nights, 5 PM. Belle Haven Marina. \$3 launch fee. Seasonal passes \$45. Directions: From Alexandria, VA, take the Mount 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@cpakayaker.com. In case of inclement weather, call Bellhaven Marina at 703-768-0018 after 3:30 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, Dave Biss 703-241-0036 or Cyndi Janetzko 703-241-0036. Or on the web at pirates_georgetown@cpakayaker.com; <http://www.jacksboathouse.com/POG>

Pirates of Sugarloaf

Tuesday nights, arrive 5:15 PM. Recreational paddling at Black Hill Regional Park in Germantown, Maryland. Daily permit fee of \$5 paid at boat ramp; seasonal permit is \$55. Contact Deb McKenzie, 240-601-1440, pirates_sugarloaf@cpakayaker.com

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 Bob Huber, (410) 335-0994 or pirates_baltimore@cpakayaker.com.

Pirates of Algonkian (upper Potomac)

Wednesday evenings, 6:00 PM until sunset. Upper Potomac and the various Northern Virginia Regional Parks. Our primary launch points will be Algonkian Regional Park and Fountainhead Regional Park. Other occasional launch sites will include Bull Run Marina, Occoquan Regional Park, Pohick Bay Regional Park ... and maybe even Mason Neck. Check out the Algonkian Pirates Discussion Forum for current info and plans. Contact: Jeff Walaszek, 703-670-7712, pirates_algonkian@cpakayaker.com

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identify the “zweet-zweetzweet” of the prothonotary warbler, but couldn’t see one.

We met the outfitter’s expedition coming down from Porter’s Crossing at lunch time, and waved to them as they passed in their canoes and single and tandem rec boats. We stopped at a small landing and pulled the boats out on a grassed road, walked up to a clearing and sat down for our lunch. Very nice to stretch the legs as there are not too many places to get out on the Pocomoke. Not many takers for my fossil marshmallows, but we finally managed to eliminate one bag! After re-launching with only one small slip up (a half-capsize?), we continued upriver in an increasingly tight and twisty channel, with the current becoming more noticeable as we left the tidal area behind. We passed under the bridge at Porter’s Crossing and pulled left to avoid some local’s fishing lines.

More and more blowdowns and snags made it harder to progress, and a couple hundred yards upriver from the bridge we turned around and began a faster descent. As the river broadened out, the wind picked up in the treetops, and we knew we’d made the right decision. Even without rain, that Southwest wind on Sinepuxent Bay would have been difficult to deal with. The wind made for some tough stretches of paddling even on the sheltered Pocomoke. It did drive the birds down from the

treetops and we finally got to see some of the bright yellow Prothonotary Warblers.

We arrived back at Snow Hill, and after hauling out and packing up, headed back to camp. Still not much rain, which let us get our gear stowed and ourselves cleaned up. The feast commenced and many delicious camp recipes were brought forth (stroganoff, jamaican jerk chicken, sausage and spaghetti, lemon broccoli chicken cous cous, Saki’s MRE’s (yummm!) etc.). Much good spirits as well, since everybody stopped somewhere on the way back and stocked up. After dinner, we had another campfire (stopped and bought wood this time, instead of road-side scrounging courtesy of Dan). Trotted out the prehistoric marshmallows one more time, but very few takers. Most hit the hay fairly early, but a stalwart trio (Ellen, Dan and

Brent) stayed up comparing notes on single-malt whiskies. Ellen reportedly took a late-night hike—way too much energy in the younger generation!

Sunday morning failed to bring the rosy forecast described by the Weather Service. So we quickly bagged half-baked plans for a paddle on Sinepuxent Bay in favor of more sheltered environs inland. The crew was reduced in number as Dick Rock, Saki, Debbie, and Brent decided to head for the barn. Ellen, Greg, Dan, Marshall, Ron and I set out for Barren Creek near Mardella Springs (how many cutsey ways can YOU combine Maryland, Delaware and Virginia?) on the way home.

After negotiating the curious local habit of parking right in the travel lanes, we arrived at

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Prothonotary warbler

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the public launch site and eventually got on the water under what was now a beautiful blue and sunny sky. Barren Creek is high-banked and surprisingly undeveloped as yet.

Greg noted a few new houses along the way since his last trip, but it was suitably wild and bucolic while being mostly sheltered from the 15-20 knot winds out of the west-northwest.

We eventually left the sheltering woods and emerged onto marsh to the accompaniment of staccato gunfire. Hard to hold up your hands convincingly when they are full of paddle, but we eventually figured out it was a shooting range. The wind in our teeth, we fought our way down to Barren's embouchure with the Nanticoke, but hung back since the bigger river looked quite choppy. We started back to the soothing sounds of full auto weapons fire and pulled out for lunch at the edge of a field of

winter wheat just coming into head. Had we lingered longer in the sun, we might well have been grounded by the receding tide, but we made it back afloat and proceeded upriver to the launch. Weary paddlers loaded up after a 12-mile round trip (we misread the guidebook, thinking it was but 6).

All in all, an object lesson in the need to be flexible and adaptable to get the best possible out of a weekend's expedition despite changing weather and expectations. We had three good days of paddling--very different than planned--but satisfying, nonetheless.

P.S. After I got home and showered, I discovered about 8 tick bites with 4 deer ticks still attached. Gotta love those little sika-elk critters! My doctor did a preemptive strike with 200 mg of doxycillin to keep Lyme disease at bay. Hope it works.



Piedmont Azalea



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wet/dry sandpaper, and whether slow setting hardener makes resin stronger. But as a paddling geek, I had a hard time understanding why a recurring topic was what boat they are planning to build next, when they may not have even paddled their current boat.

A second category of people that come to the festival are folks that just want to try out a kayak. Some were thinking of building a CLC, and others just want to try kayaking. A third category was everybody not in the first two categories. These were mostly CLC staff, vendors, and a few folks like Greg Welker, Jenny Plummer and myself. I think the weather held down the number of day visitors, and that there were fewer than a hundred people attending the festival at any one time.

Eventually, the CLC organizers caucused with our CPA trip leader and volunteer safety boaters. The schedule for the morning called for boat test drives. People who had come to try boats and curious wood geeks had the opportunity to take out any of the fleet of craft the CLC people had on hand. CLC and CPA agreed on a perimeter for the boat testing. The plan was for our small group of volunteers to encourage the boat testers to stay within a limited area of the Rhodes River, and to assist any of the demo paddlers that needed help. A number of the wood geeks had hauled their newly built kayaks to the Fest for maiden floats. I was particularly concerned about a father/son wood geek team that

planned to launch the tandem kayak they had built for its maiden voyage. Coordinating a tandem can be challenging and this duo had told me that neither of them had ever paddled a kayak.

The weather remained interesting--about 65 degrees and an 18 mph wind, which intensified from time to time with approaching sheets of rain. Between bouts of pounding rain, we had periods of drizzle and moments of near sunshine.

The boats at Okoumefest are things of beauty, especially those brought by the festers. I wanted to take some pictures but the weather was so bad I never got the camera out. It was obvious that some of these people had spent hundreds of hours finishing their boats, and it was a pleasure to see all those beautiful boats lined up on the grass.

I kept running into one man who had built a boat as a gift to his dad. The father had paddled the boat once or twice, but then his health deteriorated and he passed, leaving the boat back in the hands of the builder/son. The fellow planned on paddling it for the first time that day. The boat was a beauty of a stitch and glued canoe, and I sensed that he was stressed about putting it in the water.

The daunting weather held back the number of paddlers taking boat demos. Greg Welker held an impromptu stroke and rolling demo that received a nice round of applause from attendees. I took a couple of the CLC

factory's boats out to test. They are amazingly light and paddled very nicely. CLC's North Bay has lines very similar to my Azul, and I was surprised that it felt much lighter. Their Artic Hawk model was also quite light and fun to paddle. It was interesting to see how the different hull shapes worked on the water.

Several of the demo boaters capsized and our team of safety boaters assisted them. The father-son pair in the tandem defied my expectation and paddled about in perfect coordination. But they didn't stay out long. I had the feeling they wanted to call it quits while they were ahead and not get the boat too wet. I passed the man with his deceased father's boat repeatedly during the day, and as far as I know, he never launched it. He had, however, picked out the next boat he was planning to build.

I found OkoumeFest to be an interesting and fun experience. I got to paddle a couple different boats and met a lot of interesting people. It's not much of a paddling event, but I recommend attending OkoumeFest if you'd like to experience paddling in different hull shapes or if you'd like to talk with people about building or finishing wood boats. For more information, check CLC's web site at www.clcboats.com. You can tell them a wood boat geek recommended it.

CPA Trip Requirements and Ratings

All 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 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, 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 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 groups paddling skills.

Intermediate Paddlers: Participants 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 trips 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.

June

- 4 (Sat) Sasafrass River Day Paddle (*Beginner*) Rich Stevens (703) 527-4882
- 4 (Sat) 2005 Potomac River Swim (*Advanced Beginner*) Cheryl Wagner (202) 387-2361
- 9 (Thu) Kayak Camping Class (*All*) Greg Welker (301) 249-4895
- 10-12 (Fri-Sun) Point Lookout MD Car Camper (*Beginner*) Bill Dodge (703) 979-5837
- 12 (Sun) Great Chesapeake Bay Swim (*Advanced Beginner*) Dave Biss & Cyndi Janetzko (703) 241-0036
- 17-19 (Fri-Sun) No Octane Regatta (*All*) Adirondack Museum
- 18 (Sat) Paddle for the Cure (*All*) Hal Ashman (410) 335-5352
- 18 (Sat) 14th Annual Swim for Life (*Advanced Beginner*) Alan Avery (410) 956-3299 & Steve Sharkey (410) 758-8756
- 22 (Wed) Kayak Camping — Food (*All*) Greg Welker (301) 249-4895
- 26 (Sun) Baltimore Harbor (*Advanced Beginner*) Barry Marsh (410) 728-4016

July

- 4 (Mon) July 4th Paddle and Picnic (*Beginner*) Yvonne Thayer (202) 537-1435
- 8 (Fri) New Point Comfort Car Camper (*Beginner*) Bill Dodge (703) 979-5837
- 9 (Sat) Miles River Day Paddle (*Beginner*) Rich Stevens (703) 527-4882
- 10 (Sun) Safety and Rescues (*Beginner*) Dave Biss & Cyndi Janetzko (703) 241-0036
- 16 (Sat) Rec Boat Safety Training (*Beginner*) Ralph Heimlich
- 16 (Sat) Triadelphia Reservoir Day Paddle (*Beginner*) Rich Stevens (703) 527-4882
- 19 (Sun) Fountainhead to Bull Run (*Advanced Beginner*) Tina Ray (571) 213-4634
- 23 (Sat) Dundee Creek & Gunpowder River (*Intermediate*) Barry Marsh (410) 728-4016
- 31 (Sun) Pohick to Pomonkey (*Advanced Beginner*) Tina Ray (571) 213-4634

Up the Creek

By Lucy Mitchell

In the pursuit of paddling, I've discovered many other diverse interests: tree identification, making small and large gear gadgets, nature photography, navigation and maps and bird scouting.

The payoff for hours of kayak bird watching and for purchasing water proof binoculars came on Sunday, May 14 at the T. Howard Duckett Watershed, west of Brown's Bridge Road. The trip was Plan C for an unpredictable weather weekend. Also, the route was a last-minute diversion from the original plan to paddle a longer trip east of the bridge.

I took my Old Yella kayak—the first in a fleet of 3. It is a yellow Perception Acadia, great for exploration of narrow, rocky creeks. Me, my brother and two friends put in on the north side of the bridge. This area is very swampy and muddy but a nice start through some submerged trees. The water level in the reservoir was as high as I have ever seen it, enabling us to navigate quite far up the creek.

The weather was perfect, though storms were predicted for the late afternoon. A better day could not have been ordered. Proceeding northwest, I had hoped and expected to encounter some beavers I had seen last year. I was anxious to have them slap

their tails at me and then dive under the water. But although there was evidence of beaver activity, we saw no actual beavers.

Very soon, maybe a quarter mile or so, we did see two Bald Eagles circling overhead. This was the first time I've seen Bald Eagles in that region. Their white heads and tails were quite striking against the blue sky. Further along we saw the usual—though nonetheless appreciated—kingfishers, great blue herons, Canada geese, mallards and turtles.

I'm sure most of you have heard the story of how a kayaker in the swamps of Arkansas sighted a bird previously believed to be extinct: the Ivory Billed Woodpecker. The Pileated Woodpecker resembles the Ivory Billed and I must admit I felt a thrill I can only guess resembled the Arkansas paddler's experience when I saw three Pileated Woodpeckers. Two were circling the base of a tree in a dancing fashion and one was deeper in the woods. My brother spotted them first and motioned for the rest of us to approach with caution. We were able to get quite close; with binoculars, the scene was surreal and spiritual. I used to live in that area and many years ago saw a

Pileated in our back yard digging for food in an old oak stump. At that time I knew nothing of a Pileated Woodpecker and thought I was seeing an escaped tropical bird – they are so large and colorful and their call so wild and raucous. I never expected to see another.

It was difficult to leave their site and I did mark the spot on my GPS should anyone care to scout them out. I probably will return with a camera. With the fluctuations in water level on the reservoir, it might not be possible to navigate to the spot. It might require some hiking or slogging.

We continued our paddle, encountering a few small rapids where we got out and dragged our kayaks. On the way back, we explored two smaller creeks and another stand of swampy, submerged trees. In the swampy area we saw a green heron; it actually appears more blue, a very colorful but much smaller heron than the great blue.

Our total trip up the creek and back was 3.2 statute miles, so we were probably able to go about 1.5 miles upstream. We concluded our day with a great Mexican meal and a brew or few at El Azteca in Clarksville.



Assateague Kayak Camper

Inside our June 2005 issue:

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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.