

# Chesapeake Paddler



Publication of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc., Volume 18, Issue 5

July 2008

## UNEXPECTED BIRTHDAY GIFTS Lessons Learned with a Half Paddle

By Rob Pearlman

Sunday June 1, dawned a gorgeous day - sunny, warm, blue skies, mild breezes, perfect! My 52<sup>nd</sup> birthday. I invited my eighteen-year-old son, Daniel, to join me for what I thought would be a short afternoon paddle. That paddle offered us great gifts, most of which I did not expect. It also caused unnecessary pain for my wife and some close friends.

Many of you have probably heard stories like this before, as have I (I am embarrassed to say). Despite thinking that I take safety seriously, this particular paddle taught me many lessons, some new, some again. These were really simple things that would have made a huge difference, had I paid attention. I've paddled for several years now. Confidence is good. Overconfidence is potentially dangerous.

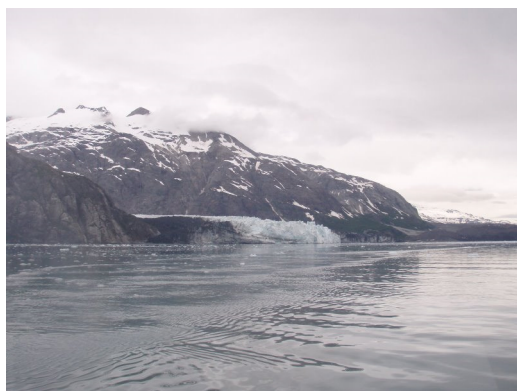
The previous weekend I had paddled alone three miles up the C & O canal from Pennyfield Lock to Violet's Lock, and from there into the Potomac River, and paddled across to the Virginia side. From there I took the canoe trail that parallels the river and then returned me to the main river for a leisurely mile and half downstream back to Pennyfield Lock. Six miles, a couple of hours, easy. I thought it would be fun to do this same route again and assumed we would be back in time for a birthday dinner with friends at 6 p.m.

The day remained glorious as we quietly paddled together. We cruised three miles, passing rocky cliffs and brilliant bunches of wild yellow iris. Soon we heard the din of the "Seneca Breaks," the river-wide rapids near Violet's Lock - we were about halfway through the paddle, still plenty of time to get home by six. We portaged our boats over the lock's bridge, down to the Potomac's banks, reached the Virginia side and entered the "canoe trail." As we exited the canoe trail we were no more than 20 minutes from

*(Continued on page 4)*



Lush canal photo by Rob Pearlman



Glacier Bay photo by Marshall Woodruff

## ALASKA!

By Marshall Woodruff

I have wanted to paddle Alaska for a long time. Why? An Adventure, a challenge, an understanding of Nature, at least a glimpse. I wanted to paddle next to a whale; see an iceberg calving; see wildlife along the water, see nature in a light I have never seen before. I guess I wanted to see how insignificant I really am...to go to the last frontier. An Alaska trip was something I did not want to miss in my lifetime.

Now where? Read, read and read. Try to find people that have paddled in different areas, keeping in mind my main goal of whales and icebergs. Thru emails, I met people who shared their adventures with me. Asking lots of questions, they helped me find answers. Glacier Bay seemed the best spot after reading, looking at the charts and deciding that for my first time out, there were more choices out of Gustavas, at the south end of Glacier Bay, than anywhere else. Gustavas had a starting point, the National Park, where I could camp and put in. There

*(Continued on page 8)*

**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.



Virginia Rail, Fairmount WMA, Big Annessex River Photo by Ralph Heimlich

**SCHEDULE FOR 2008 CHESAPEAKE PADDLER**

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

Issue	Deadline for Copy
August 2008	July 15, 2008
September 2008	August 15, 2008
October 2008	September 15, 2008

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

**THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLERS ASSOCIATION**

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

**Officers:**

**Coordinator**—Dave Biss, 703-241-0036, [coordinator@cpakayaker.com](mailto:coordinator@cpakayaker.com)

**Membership, subscriptions**—Sue Bauer, 410-531-5641, c/o CPA, PO Box 341 Greenbelt, MD 20768, [membership@cpakayaker.com](mailto:membership@cpakayaker.com)

**Secretary**—Sue Bauer, 410-531-5641 [secretary@cpakayaker.com](mailto:secretary@cpakayaker.com)

**Treasurer**—Rich Stevens, 703-527-4882, [treasurer@cpakayaker.com](mailto:treasurer@cpakayaker.com)

**Webmaster/E-Mail List Administrator**—Dave Biss, [webmaster@cpakayaker.com](mailto:webmaster@cpakayaker.com)

**Newsletter Team:**

**Managing Editor/Layout**—Ralph Heimlich, 301-498-0722, [news\\_editor@cpakayaker.com](mailto:news_editor@cpakayaker.com)

**Articles Editor**—Lynn Erwin, [news\\_articles@cpakayaker.com](mailto:news_articles@cpakayaker.com)

**Advertising Coordinator**—vacant, [news\\_advertising@cpakayaker.com](mailto:news_advertising@cpakayaker.com)

**Mailing and Distribution**—Mark Woodside, 301-373-4561, [news\\_distribution@cpakayaker.com](mailto:news_distribution@cpakayaker.com)

**Pirate Groups:**

**Pier 7 Pirate Committee**—Rich Stevens (703-527-4882), Jenny & Greg Welker(301-249-4895), Sue Bauer(410-531-5641), Brent Cogswell [pirates\\_pier7@cpakayaker.com](mailto:pirates_pier7@cpakayaker.com)

**Potomac Pirate King**—Dick Rock, 703-780-6605 [pirates\\_potomac@cpakayaker.com](mailto:pirates_potomac@cpakayaker.com)

**Patuxent Pirate King**—Jenny Plummer-Welker Pirate Captain(410)535-2348/(301)249-4895 [pirates\\_patuxent@cpakayaker.com](mailto:pirates_patuxent@cpakayaker.com);

**Georgetown Pirate Committee**—Cyndi Janetzko, Dave Biss, 703-241-0036; [pirates\\_georgetown@cpakayaker.com](mailto:pirates_georgetown@cpakayaker.com)

**Baltimore Pirate King**—Bob Huber, 410-335-0994, [pirates\\_baltimore@cpakayaker.com](mailto:pirates_baltimore@cpakayaker.com)

**Algonkian Pirate King**—Jeff Walaszek, 703-670-7712, Linda Lewis [pirates\\_algonkian@cpakayaker.com](mailto:pirates_algonkian@cpakayaker.com)

**Sugarloaf Pirate King**—James Higgins 301-460-8022 [pirates\\_sugarloaf@cpakayaker.com](mailto:pirates_sugarloaf@cpakayaker.com)

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

**MEMBERSHIP:** Subscription to the Chesapeake Paddler is included with membership. 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, except Nov-Feb and may be reprinted whole or in part if credit is given to this newsletter and any identified author (unless an article is specifically copyrighted), and a courtesy copy is sent to the Managing Editor.*

## Admiral's Walk



### "Live and Learn" or "Learn from Others"

Kayaking is a sport, and along with the idea of any sport comes the desire to explore. Not the exploring of your environment, but the exploring of yourself. That is what sports are all about; the chance to take things to new heights; whether those "things" are described by you as skills or as knowledge. Some people believe a sport is all about pushing one's self physically to compete with or against other individuals; go faster; go longer; create a new record; go where no one else has been. Some people believe that a sport is about pushing the inner-self; examine nature; studying the design of a new craft; connecting with a new world; knowing yourself better. But however you see a sport, however you

are pushing yourself over the time spent interacting with that sport, you are still moving forward into an unknown adventure.

Whenever you are moving forward into the unknown, you need to be prepared for what you will encounter. Now I agree that more often than not, it is the excitement of what you don't yet know and what you may encounter that is the best draw to continue pushing yourself. Can you go faster than the last guy? Can you understand what you are seeking? But behind all that is the unspoken and undisputed fact that if you don't prepare for the next thing coming and it gets the better of you, then you can go no farther! If you pull a muscle while pushing too fast, you're out! If you swim in ice water while exploring that glassy calm wide bay, you're out! We all hope that when this happens, we are not called out of the game for good; only that we are called out to sit on the side lines for a short period while we think about what went wrong and how we will do it better next time. We all hope that when we get called out, we can say, "Live and Learn."

So that is all and good, and I think it is exciting to be able to say what you learned from your sport. That is what a sport is about. But let's not belittle the *super-significant* fact that any sport can benefit from the ability to "Learn from Others." Can you better prepare for the next thing coming as you push your abilities by looking at what others have done before you? You bet you can!

I went to a lecture by [Charlie Walbridge](#) just the other weekend. He is one of the fathers of whitewater kayaking. He has been a part of kayaking since people have had to design and build their own kayak just to get into the sport. He has made it his profession to examine the safety of the sport; all aspects of the sport, extreme and otherwise. To use one of his examples, he looked closely at when and how extreme kayakers decided to start running waterfalls. How much were they willing to push themselves, and how often did they get injured because of their attempts? Then he moved from the very start of this extreme sport to the present day and showed how participants are taking this challenge to heights that could not have been imagined by those who were there at the start. When asked how they succeed without getting injured or worse, the best enthusiasts today say that they have learned just how to position their body and their boat to best minimize impact. They could describe in detail what they had learned to do and how they had learned to redesign their kayaks to push the sport farther and farther with less and less injury. They admitted that it was done by watching and studying those who came before them.

Well, I am not advocating that you start throwing yourself off of waterfalls after watching others do it, but I am advocating the idea of studying what others have done before you and to apply what you can learn from them to your current sporting activity. No matter how you interpret the sport, kayaking is always going to be a physical activity, and there will always be a certain measure of danger involved. We should all take to heart the idea that we can be better and safer at our chosen sport if we only try to learn from those who have gone before us.

If you want to paddle better then read about paddle strokes and skills or take a lesson. The first thing that you learn in a kayak skills class is to use torso rotation to make your paddling stronger, longer and more controlled. If you want to paddle longer into the winter season, the first thing you'll learn is to dress for the water. If you want to be safer in open water the first thing you'll learn is how to do self re-entries and assisted rescues. If you want to do expedition trips you'll learn to prepare for the unexpected. Now matter how you are trying to improve, whether you want to be faster or safer or more prepared for an accident, then be willing to learn. Be willing to absorb all the knowledge you can about the sport. Learn what others have done before you.

So go get ready for your sport and be ready for that unknown *next-thing* that will come next in your exploration. How can you do this? How can you be ready? Read some of the great kayaking literature on the market; paddle with friends; take a class; leave a float plan with friends; bring extra clothes and food; take a spare paddle; see what others did before you to go farther and be safer in their sport.



We can all help to make our great sport of kayaking more than what it was or what it is now. We can be better, safer, faster, and have more fun. We can do all this by being ready, and by being prepared. If you don't know if you are ready, ask some who has been out paddling before you: "Do you think I'm ready? Have I thought of everything? What did you do?" We can all "Learn from Others" who have been before us and in doing so we can make ourselves and our sport better and safer and always much more fun for everyone.

Dave Biss

**Potomac Swim** (Continued from page 1)

Pennyfield Lock.

We had choices; enter the main portion of the river near the Maryland side or, as I thought I had done the week before, take the road less traveled - a more interesting route between the islands near the Virginia side. With the narrower, more interesting route we had to find the nearby cutover back to the main river and make our return to Pennyfield Lock on the Maryland side. Piece of cake - I did it last week. This time, without the map or GPS, we were running on my now-52-year-old memory banks. (Turns out I was a few megabytes short.)

Daniel and I paddled along with the current. Nobody was in sight. We heard the pre-historic cackle and woomph-woomph-woomph as blue heron winged away each time we approached. After awhile my intuition nagged me. Something was not right. The cutover should have appeared by now. When I checked my watch it was 6 p.m. We were going to be late for dinner - how late, I never imagined.

We debated the possibilities. Head back upstream? Continue downstream to the next cutover? We had no idea how far that might be, or where extreme rapids might lurk. Another alternative was to find a reasonably clear spot where we could portage our boats across the narrow island to the main river - a much shorter route.



So I climbed the muddy river bank up to take a look. The brush was thick and I could see an endless carpet of beautifully green poison ivy. We were in shorts and sandals. Decision made. We would stick to the river and keep looking for portage possibilities. As I prepared to re-enter my kayak after carefully sliding down the muddy bank, I positioned my paddle behind me to help stabilize the boat. All of a sudden, whoooosh! I slipped on the mud, fell on my paddle, and felt and heard a sickening, loud "crack!" Good news - it was not my leg. Bad news - one of my paddle blades had "seceded from the Union." I'm glad I was not alone.

I had a knife that was crucial for the emergency paddle surgery we were about to conduct. I found a stick about the diameter of the shaft and broke it to fit inside both ends of the broken shaft. We cut strong, slender tree roots to use as splints positioned outside the shaft. With no other line available, I cut my rudder cord and used it to coil wrap

around the assembly as tight as possible, tying it off to hold the broken blade in place.

With a broken paddle, upstream was no longer an appealing option. The blade actually held fine going downstream. Possible portage opportunities proved to be unavailable. At 8:15 pm we finally saw the Maryland side of the river and gratefully crossed the main river where the current was even stronger. After checking the Maryland shore there was still no obvious access to the towpath and the canal. How far from our destination we were remained a mystery so we needed to conserve energy. Paddling for five hours and being stressed about the inability to communicate was exhausting. Thank goodness for adrenaline.

The sunset was beautiful as it spread out in the sky and on the river like a fluid painting. We were now paddling hard upstream. We approached some rapids that looked doable. My surgically enhanced paddle was hanging on for dear life. I made a go of the rapids and within seconds my paddle blade was gone. Not only had it "seceded from the Union" but it had now completely deserted. Invoking skills from long ago, I used my now "mono-paddle" like a canoe paddle. My J-stroke actually worked.

The next set of rapids was just too strong. Each attempt upstream quickly became a 180 degree turn for the boats. They reared like racehorses, begging to go downstream with the strong current. We portaged around this one and launched again into flatter water, continuing upstream. At 8:45 pm, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a helmet fly by through the woods - a bicyclist on the towpath! Relief at last! There, in their darkening glory, were the towpath and the canal.

We pulled the kayaks up the steep rocky rise onto the towpath and began paddling again, now in total darkness, still not knowing how far we had to go. A waterproof flashlight that I had stowed in my PFD "just in case" came in handy. We slithered along the canal like many of the animals that emerge at night. At last we heard the sound of water, like a waterfall, and we realized it had to be a lock on the canal, hopefully Pennyfield. Again we pulled the boats out of the water onto the towpath and saw a sign plaque looming in the dark - Pennyfield Lock with a brief written history.

(Continued on page 10)

## CPA Gear Day August 24 at Truxtun Park

You've all been part of those conversations. They happen while we're out paddling, and they happen on the forum and email lists while we're supposed to be working. "Whadda YOU got?" Everyone's curious about each other's gear—boats and paddles, and everything related.

CPA Gear Day will be a new event this year (perhaps the first annual), conceived through lots of those conversations. We decided it's time to stop talking and start showing off! CPA members own a huge variety of kayaks and all the stuff that goes with them. We are a big club, and the solutions for how to outfit yourself and your boat for paddling are as unique and as creative as our nearly 600 members. If you're new to kayaking and working on your shopping list, if you want reviews on some particular piece of equipment, or if you just want to try before you buy, this event is for you.

The more people and "stuff" that shows up, the more fun we'll have. So bring your favorite boats and other gear for show and tell, or just come to see what others have brought. Share your opinions, ask questions, and learn from the collective experience of your fellow club members. Categories of things you might bring or expect to see include:

- ◆ Kayaks (many modern sea kayak designs, hand made kayaks, surf skis, and race boats)
- ◆ Paddles (Euro, Greenland, and wing paddles)
- ◆ Kayak outfitting (seats, foam padding, deck rigging, sails)
- ◆ Navigational devices (GPS units, compasses, charts and maps)
- ◆ Traditions (wooden boats, skin boats, and skinny wooden paddles)
- ◆ Clothing (wetsuits, drysuits, layers, odd bits and pieces)
- ◆ Safety equipment (PFDs, sprayskirts, lighting, locator gizmos)
- ◆ Kayak camping (tents, hammocks, cooking tools)



**Bring ALL your boats!** Photo by Tumeny Yaks



**Greg Welker demonstrating keel strips** photo by Jenny Plummer-Welker

We have reserved the large pavilion at Truxtun Park in Annapolis, a covered area with picnic tables only a short distance from the water. Gear can be spread out in and around the pavilion. When you'd like to demo someone's kayak, please get permission from the owner first, then launch from the sandy beach. Please use courtesy and AVOID THE BOAT RAMP allowing other park visitors to enjoy Spa Creek. Several people have volunteered to present or demonstrate topics of interest during the day. Stay tuned to the CPA Forum for the final agenda.

If you have something particular you'd like to display or share at this event, please contact the organizers. You may very well learn the most from just mingling and talking to people! We will coordinate a gear swap. If you have items you'd like to sell, mark

*(Continued on page 6)*

**CPA Gear Day** *(Continued from page 5)*

them with your name and asking price, and bring them to the swap area. Buyers, please bring cash in small bills. CPA bumper stickers, window decals, and logo gear will be available for purchase as well.

Finally, of course, WE PADDLE TO EAT, so we ask that you bring a dish to share for our pot-luck picnic. By way of suggestion so that we have a well-rounded menu, if your last name begins with:

- A-F, bring some sort of appetizer,
- G-L, a salad of some kind,
- M-S, a main dish,
- T-Z, a dessert.

Grills are available, and dishes and utensils will be provided. All club members are welcome. This is not a commercial event. There is no cost, and no need to register ahead of time. CPA Gear Day will take place on **Sunday, August 24th from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Truxtun Park located at 273 Hilltop Lane, Annapolis, MD 21403 (410-263-7958)**. Drop off gear at the large pavilion near the boat ramp, then park vehicles further back by the restrooms. For more information or to volunteer to help with the event, please **contact Suzanne Farace (410-446-5991 cell) or Gina Cicotello (240-305-0922 cell)**.

## ***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 and loss or damage to boats, gear, or other personal property.

### **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.

## August

Check the calendar at <http://www.cpakayaker.com/events.html>

- Aug 2 (Sat)** **St Georges Island**--Paddle in protected waters as well as on the open Potomac for a 10 mile day trip. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers **Organizer(s):** Led by Mark Woodside (301) 373-4561.
- Aug 2 (Sat)** **Non-CPA Event: Manhattan Island Circumnavigation**--Join some native NY Paddlers on a long day's expedition around Manhattan Island. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers **Organizer(s):** Led by Todd Angerhoffer 202.412.7267. The launch will be at Pier 40 in Manhattan. Unload your gear and then park your car across the street. The launch will be at 7:00 AM SHARP. The group will be paddling against the start of the flood until we round the Battery.
- Aug 3 (Sun)** **Algonkian Island Explorer**--We will paddle out of Algonkian Park, VA on the Potomac River and explore the waters to the north. More information to follow. **Skill Level:** Beginner Paddlers **Organizer(s):** Led by Jesse Aronson 571-334-5242.
- Aug 9 (Sun)** **Kent Island Practice Paddle, KIPP5-'08**--This is the third year for a most unusual paddle. It is a paddle where we have five practice paddles (once a month, from April to August) culminating in a final paddle, in September, where you paddle the distance you have been practicing for. **Skill Level:** Intermediate Paddlers **Organizer(s):** Led by Marshall Woodruff 202 345 0606.
- Aug 15-17 (Fri-Sun)** **[Cancelled due to Surgery] Belle Isle, Virginia, Car Camper**--Camp at Virginia's Belle Isle State Park and paddle venues on the Rappahannock River or Windmill Point on the Bay. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers **Organizer(s):** Led by Bill Dodge 703-201-8636 (cell).
- Aug 23 (Sat)** **Piscataway Creek to Washington Grist Mill- NEW DATE**--Rich is planning this second- year- exploratory paddle across the Potomac River from Piscataway Creek MD past Mt Vernon VA to the newly restored Washington's Grist Mill. This is 16-17 miles round trip- not a beginners trip due to the distance and Potomac River open water crossing. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers. **Organizer(s):** Led by [Sue Bauer](#) 410 531-5641, [Rich Stevens](#) 703.
- Aug 24 (Sun)** **CPA Gear Day-Black Hills Regional Park**--This is the "Gear Day" so many were discussing on the Forum. Gather at Black Hills Regional Park to share experiences with gear and mess around in boats. **Skill Level:** All **Organizer(s):** Led by Suzanne Farace 410-446-5991 Cell, Gina Cicotello 240-305-0922.
- Aug 24 (Sun)** IRON Girl Triathlon swim support--The Iron Girl Triathlon is held annually at Centennial Lake, near Columbia. Over 2000 swimmers participate- and the .8mile swim is their first trial- starting at 6:30 AM. We will provide support for the 15+ waves of all level of swimmers. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers. **Organizer(s):** Led by [Sue Bauer](#) 410 531 5641.
- Aug 30-Sep 6 (Sat-Sat)** **Fifth Annual Loons of the Adirondacks**--Come paddle in the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York. Lakes galore suitable for all levels of paddling will be explored. **Web Site:** [http://web.mac.com/dtmoore/My\\_Site/Welcome.html](http://web.mac.com/dtmoore/My_Site/Welcome.html) **Skill Level:** All Paddlers **Organizer(s):** Led by David Moore 301-704-3262/301-445-3273. This is CPA's fifth annual week long paddle trip in the Adirondack Mountains of New York for paddlers of all levels. Past paddlers have significantly developed both their stamina and their skills during the week. Trip lengths vary from 4-5 miles to over 15 miles. We always plan on a variety of distances to accommodate everyone's preferences.

## September

Check the calendar at <http://www.cpakayaker.com/events.html>

- Sep. 6 (Sat)** **Kent Island Paddle 2008 (KIP-3)**--This may be a practice or the final: Check with Marshall. **Skill Level:** Intermediate Paddlers **Organizer(s):** Led by Marshall Woodruff 202 345 0606.
- Sep. 6 (Sat)** **Mallows Bay Day Paddle**--An Afternoon paddle across the Potomac River to Mallows Bay. More information to follow. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers. **Organizer(s):** Led by Tom Heneghan 703-216-9837.
- Sep. 13 (Sat)** **Non-CPA Event: Wye Island Regatta**--The 12.5 mile race starts at Wye Landing on the Wye East River, 18 miles southeast of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge on Maryland's Eastern Shore and continues around Wye Island. The course is over sheltered estuaries with minimum boat traffic and great scenery. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers.
- Sep. 19-21 (Fri-Sun)** **Tall Pines IV 2008**-- A car camper at a private campground on the upper Virginia Eastern shore. Paddle out of your campsite! Lots of local places to paddle once you are there. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers. **Organizer(s):** Greg Welker and Jenny Plummer-Welker 301-249-4895 [gdwelker@verizon.net](mailto:gdwelker@verizon.net)
- Sep. 20 (Sat)** **KIP Final Paddle**--This is the final paddle in the 2008 Kent Island Circumnavigation Series. On this paddle, we will attempt to paddle around the island. There will be places to take out and return to your cars, if your intent is not to fully circle the island. **Skill Level:** Intermediate Paddlers. **Organizer(s):** Led by Marshall Woodruff 202 345 0606.
- Sep. 26-28 (Fri-Sun)** **Eastern Neck Paddle 4-'08**--The Eastern Neck Refuge, located in Rock Hall, MD, is a 2,285 acre island refuge, a major feeding and resting place for migratory waterfowl. We will circle the Island, paddling along the Chester River and Chesapeake Bay, exploring numerous creeks. **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers. **Organizer(s):** Led by Marshall Woodruff 202 345 0606.
- Sep. 27 (Sat)** **Chestertown Waterfront Festival--NON CPA EVENT** Chestertown Sailfest, boat rides, "survivor" kayak competition, shallow and Washington College crew team race, and CARDBOARD BOAT REGATTA! **Skill Level:** Advanced Beginner Paddlers

For Greenlanders

Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. It sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it too.

Cheryl Wagner

*(Continued from page 1)*

was a small community with people, stores, and gear available if needed. The area is pristine and there are choices of destinations. How would I get there and when? Alaska Airways takes you there easily from the Washington metro. I called the Park Service at Glacier Bay and learned that a good time for the trip is the middle of June. I planned for June 17 to July 1.

Something I never wanted to be was a hostage to outfitters, therefore I wanted a boat I knew and could depend on: a folding boat. The people I know that have the folding boat have them because they do not have adequate space for a conventional boat. Some were the big, wide, open Klepper, and others were the Feathercraft. I just thought of them as a kayak, and did not know what a folding kayak can really do. Dave Isabel made a sensible suggestion, "there are folding boats out there that are just what you want, go look and compare". And I did. First I Googled folding boats and read about them, then I bought Ralf Diaz's "Complete Folding Kayaker". What a door opener to this "new" kind of kayak! Then I talked with Dave Biss and Kingsley Chan, who both have the Feathercraft Khatsalano. Wow, what a yak! Where could I get one? A new one would cost over \$5,000, so the hunt was on. Eventually I found and acquired one. It took awhile for me to become friends with this new kayak. The more I learned about the Khat, the more I liked it, and I was meeting more fellow paddlers that have Khats.

On to other gear. I knew I needed a water purifier, dry bags, and other gear. I needed to get my navigation and paddling skills sharpened. I went to Dave Biss and asked for some help. Winter weekends were spent on the Potomac, rolling, sculling and critiquing my skills. I received my chart to Glacier Bay, and got acquainted with it and started to plan the trip visually. Talking to others, I could now follow their paddle with the chart. Eight months to prep seems like a long time, but it goes fast.

I made lists of gear I would need and gleaned as much info as I could from others that had done the trip. I enjoyed solving this part of the puzzle. My list grew and now I started to categorize my lists. Paddle gear, first aid, clothes, camping gear, emergency stuff and food. The National Park issues "bear canisters" to all campers and paddlers that you must take with you. I couldn't think of the last time I used a bear canister, so I found out that they issue 8"x18" ones. How much food does it take for fourteen days, what is the weight, and where will it go in the Khat? I needed "virtual bear canisters", so I went to Home Depot and picked up some vent pipe cut to 8"x18". I wanted to see how much food I could put in, how much it would weigh and to practice paddling with them on my back deck. The first canister took 8 pounds of food, including 16 days of oat meal, 13 days of dinner and two tuna. I found a way to lash them to the deck behind the cockpit, and was able to make a harness out of strapping and used Velcro.

Dry bags are next. There is a lot of space in the Khat, it is just hard to get the bags through the ribs of the kayak and in the hold area. The tent goes down through the cockpit to the bow with the sleeping bag and mat, water (two large dromedaries) goes behind the cockpit. My food all goes in bear canisters on the deck behind the cockpit. I thought of making dry bags but luck was with me, I found 30 liter Diamond dry bags in the REI Outlet. These were flat, yellow, with a see-through front for \$10 each, what a deal!

Finally, though I would be in the wilderness, I might as well use modern technology as much as possible for safety, so I rented a satellite phone and a EPIRB (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon).



Practice in the Bay photo by Bob Pullman

Whew, next a couple of practice paddles. Cyndi Janetzko had a trip to False Cape, Virginia, in March. This would be the same type of weather I would encounter in Alaska in June. I learned a few lessons on this trip with Dave, Cyndi, Caroline, Nelson and Gina. Pack flat, not thick, and make it small. In the Khat-salano, this is the only way, so, as I packed I would flatten the gear as much as I could. It sort of looked like dehydrated clothes. I numbered each bag and kept a list of contents.

It is amazing how much I "needed": camping gear, clothes [boat/on shore/rain gear], cooking stuff, water purifier, binoculars, books, washing gear. With food, it totaled about 75 pounds. Despite all the articles I read and all the advice I heard about what to take, in reality it was too much. No one ever mentioned the concept of "living in your clothes".

The next test was bad weather. How would the kayak handle in rough water with the weight and the "bear canisters"? In May, perfect test weather hit, and Bob Pullman and I went out to Kent Island and camped. It was a rough day on the Bay, 15-18 mph and real choppy, a perfect test. The Khat handled it well and I was comfortable with the boat. We were finally "friends" and I was ready.

When I left Washington National the plane was three hours late, so I arrived in Juneau and my gear was three hours behind in an-



other plane. I went ahead to Glacier Bay by small plane and arrived at the Lodge. I had planned to camp and take the ship up to a "drop off" area next day. Instead, I faced a long "hang out" in the lobby, but lucked out when two friendly kayakers had space in their room and let me crash. The gear came the next day, so I assembled the Khat and got everything together for the next part of the adventure.

Everyday a boat leaves GB with tourists, hikers, and kayakers to go up the west arm of the Bay. There are two drop off/pick up areas for kayakers, which change yearly. The first was Mt. Wright, just at the mouth of the East section, and the second was Queen, on the West section. The boat continues to Tarr Inlet and comes back down the Bay to GBNP. I was dropped off at Queen.

After the boat left, I stowed the gear and realized, how much stuff I had. It was so easy adding one more piece back in the States: "it's small, it will fit". I am afraid I said this too many times and lost track. So when I paddled off up into Queen Inlet, I suddenly realized I had way too much gear and the boat didn't feel right, but excitement took over.



Gear on Glacier Bay photo by Marshall Woodruff

I paddled up the Inlet about a mile, 200 feet off shore. Something happened (a wave, shifting of the gear, a slip of the paddle) and the yak tipped over. All I knew for sure was that I was on my side. I tried to right myself but as I got up, I went right back down. The balance was off. I had my drysuit on in the 41 degree water, with my Greenland paddle. I could always wet exit and I had my EPIRB on my life jacket along with a marine radio. Dave and I had practiced sculling most of the winter, sitting up, with the boat on its side, and every other way. That practice meant I did not panic, but realized my situation and went through the options and started sculling. Certainly not a fast way to get to shore, and a little tiring, but I just kept it up and made it to shore. I bailed out the boat and moved things around and went back to the drop off spot, paddling 5 feet from shore. I set up camp and hung everything out to dry and started sorting through the gear. I was going to wait for the next day and give back gear to the drop off boat for storage at the Lodge. I was mad at myself because I knew the boat didn't feel right and I should have realized I needed to shed gear. Dumb!

I had cancer of the tonsils nine years ago and I was treated with chemo and radiation. Because of this, I have trouble eating; my main diet is Ensure, oat meal, soft, bland foods but selective. So my next little problem was that I had bought Mountain foods that you just add hot water to and eat. I had practiced this before the trip and it seemed fine. I also brought along some Pita bread for the peanut butter and the packaged tuna. After seeing a number of bears I decided not to even open the tuna, trying to wash the container out and storing the trash in the bear canisters just seemed too inviting. The Pita bread was soaked from the tip over. The bear canisters came with a plastic sleeve and a tie but I didn't tie it tight enough. What I had forgotten about the Mountain food was that I graze all day to make up my food consumption and here I was with a serving for two: It was just too much food to consume at one time.

A trip like this is much different than a casual paddle at home where you have more options about eating. FOOD is FUEL and you have to keep your fuel tank at a 100% on an expedition. Needless to say, my energy level had dipped after a few days. With the sixteen foot tides, lugging your gear and boat above high tide, the huge currents in the bay, and the tides and wind, paddling takes a lot out of you. I soon realized that paddling closer to shore than my usual 200 feet made paddling easier and less depleting. With my fuel down, I camped for a couple of days, regaining my strength with powdered Ensure, oat meal and some of the Mountain food products. My eating habits changed to accommodate the situation.

Another thing I learned was to check, recheck and recheck again. Do I really need this item? I soon found that you live in your clothes, which cuts down quite a bit on gear. Bring what you wear and one change, then wash! On the water I lived in my drysuit. On shore I changed to zipper shorts and a long sleeve shirt and I slept in silks. You have to put your toothpaste, deodorant, etc. away in the bear canisters, along with your trash. For gear and things, you don't have to support the gear shops: We have a club of 600, so borrow and cut your costs!

Was the trip worth it? You bet. It was the trip of a lifetime! I paddled with the icebergs, whales, sea otters. I saw lots of bears, including tiny cubs; eagles a plenty; moose, scary. I had a chance to feel what being alone in the wilderness really feels like. Yes I was  
(Continued on page 10)

**Unexpected Birthday Gift** *(Continued from page 4)*

It was now 9:30 pm, more than three hours past the time we'd intended to be home. We called home and confirmed that we were OK, just as the police were interviewing Barbara and asking her to describe identifying birthmarks and features in case any bodies turned up. What a birthday. Boy did I feel like an idiot. I quickly countered that feeling by focusing on what I had learned. I did do a few things right and they made a big difference. I had brought a flashlight, a knife, water and energy bars, and insect repellent. I was not alone and neither of us was injured. Though humbled, I learned and will be more prepared for the "unexpected" on future paddles.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Always tell someone where you are going

Bring a map and/or a GPS (with extra batteries)

Don't assume you will remember important details

Carry a spare paddle

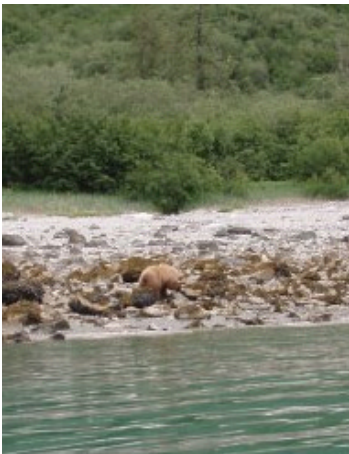
Bring a cell phone or radio (and make sure the batteries are charged or bring extras)

Carry a well equipped first aid kit, and food and water

Carry a flashlight and knife, a repair kit with essentials/ tools, duct tape, etc

Don't assume you won't need any of these things

[Edited by Lynn Erwin]



**There's a bear on shore** photo by Marshall Woodruff

**Alaska** *(Continued from page 9)*

scared at first. Would my first campsite be a bear encounter? As I saw bears along the edge of the water, they just blended in with the adventure, I slept more soundly and I just lived with it. Did being alone bother me? No. There is enough out there to keep you busy between the paddling, setting up camp, looking for water, washing, looking, seeing and feeling the world around you. No radio, TV, people, cars, traffic, news. Silence. But not really—Nature has her own ways of filling the wilderness and I think I found it.

I want to thank Bob Pullman, Dave Biss, Cyndi Janetzko, Dave Isbell, Alison Sigethy, Nelson Labbe, Gail Ferris and many others from CPA and the KIP Paddles, for helping to make this a most successful trip.

My gear: Feathercraft Khatsalano folding kayak, Drysuit-Kokatat, Marmot Swallow tent, Lowrance GPS Expedition with Topo

chip, Epic wing paddle, Wolfgang Brink's Aleut paddle, Patagonia-underwear [better than REI], Marmot Arroyo Goose down sleeping bag with silk liner [double dry bagged], Glacier gloves, divers hood, 2-6 liter MSR Dromedary bags, Snow Peak stove, 30 liter flat Dry Bags, mosquito net for the head, Olympus 720SW along with my camera mount I made for the paddle-worked great, Katadyn Hiker Pro water purifier, marine radio Icom M-88.

Books: "Adventure kayaking trips in Glacier Bay" Don Skillman; "The Only Kayak" by Kim Keaco; "Deep Water Passage" by Ann Linneu; "Spirited Water" by Jennifer Hahn; "Southern Exposure" by Chris Duff; "Keep Australia on Your Left" by Eric Stiller.



**Gets a little cold with the wind off the glacier** photo by Theresa Bear

## Muddy Adventures

By Gina Cicotello

I'm not sure why it is that I've developed a close relationship with mud this paddling season. As I understand it, climate change should, if anything, make the water levels rise, not expose more of the waterway shorelines and bottoms or change their basic consistency. But my adventures in 2008 have been marked by mud encounters that were frustrating, interesting, even instructive.

I spent 4th of July weekend at a friend's family beach house in Delaware. As we took a nature walk through the marsh near the house, picking our way through dense reeds, our path led us into loose mud that caused me to sink knee-deep. So there I was, wriggling and stymied, trying to haul one foot out of the muck while the other foot only sank deeper. And I was wearing flip-flops, so the potential to lose my shoes in the process was very high. Seeing the predicament, my friend offered whatever assistance he could without getting stuck himself. What had fascinated us about that area of the marsh in the first place was its enormous colonies of fiddler crabs, appearing and disappearing from holes in the mud and skittering across its surface. I noticed whenever I paused to reassess my extrication strategy, a regiment from the army of hundreds would start to creep closer. It was like a scene out of a creepy Hitchcock movie. Motivated by marching crabs, I finally extracted one foot - minus the shoe - and reached into the hole with my hand to tug at the Texas. The process worked, but I got covered in slime. By the time we got to the shore to rinse off and continue our walk, my friend couldn't contain his laughter as he brushed off the mud streak where I'd (of course) unconsciously scratched my face.



Fiddlers photo by Gina Cicotello

Later in July on a trip to the Eastern Shore of VA, we launched at high tide from a gravel canoe/kayak launch in Kiptopeke. I paddle with some notorious nature freaks, so we were mesmerized by the beautiful scenery of marsh grasses, wildflowers, shore birds, and trees with the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel visible in the background. We took our time in the winding creeks, making our way out to the shore. After playing for hours in the surf, exhilarated by adrenaline and unusually perfect conditions, we reluctantly made our way back to the creek leading to the put-in site. We should have thought harder when we had trouble even getting to the mouth of the creek, because collectively we either didn't know or didn't remember a better take-out spot within walking distance of our cars. Anyway, the group pressed on, eventually into water so shallow that we had to get out and drag our boats. The creek was now a stinking, black, ugly crevice in the pretty scenery. The creek bed we had to walk along varied in viscosity from firm to horribly soft, shoe-grabbing "suck mud." We cursed our way to the end, and discovered that getting to the spot where we'd haul out required crossing a 20-foot channel of waist-deep dirty water. Most opted to straddle our boats rather than risk one final submersion in the gooey mess.



Gina in the "Suck Muck" photo by Jerry

Mud has presented paddling challenges, and sparked some intellectual questioning and debate. Exploring around Smith Island (MD) this past weekend, we found the flats on the north end of the island were almost unnavigable at low tide. Ironically we watched huge tour boats charging through the marked channel, while we were alternately paddling and poling our way through the mud looking for the water trails. Around the dinner table in Crisfield that evening, we talked about the principles of physics that slow down a kayak in shallow water. Even when the hull isn't scraping the bottom causing friction,

everyone reports noticeable deceleration. Why? There was a lot of conjecture and theorizing over our Mexican food and margaritas, some from knowledgeable engineers, but I'll leave it to you to research and accept the explanation you find the most adequate. (Perhaps post your conclusions in the next newsletter to enlighten us all?)

Mud is Mother Nature's greedy side. I've sacrificed two cameras to the mud gods, thus far. I love the Pentax waterproof cameras because they perform well and fit in a PFD pocket, but they don't float. Last year I dropped the Optio W10 in the Little River heading towards Delaware Bay. The tidal depths there can be 6 feet or more, so we went back at low tide and found no camera, only mud. I kicked myself, replaced the camera, and subsequently last weekend I dropped the Optio W30 near the docks in Ewell on Smith Island (MD). It fell underwater deep enough that there was no hope of retrieval, and I imagine it's embedded in the mud forever. So just yesterday I ordered the new Optio W60, and vow not to take it anywhere until I've corrected its floatational flaws. My plan is to stop at the local boat store for a handful of those foam keychains, attach a string of them to the camera, and test the buoyancy. The camera will look a little silly wearing its own "PFD," but photography is getting to be too expensive a hobby without some precautions. [Editor's note: Cords tied to PFD D rings and gear are called "dummy straps" for a reason.]

I don't quite know how to interpret mud, which has appeared as a theme or frequent literary motif in the story of my summer adventures. It has claimed cameras, stained clothes, stolen shoes, slowed progress, and altered courses. But obviously it hasn't stopped me from kayaking, and it has created many memorable moments. I just hope this fall I won't be writing such filthy, dirty trip reports!



**Chet Wolfe on Winter Harbor, Mathews County, Virginia** *photo by Ralph Heimlich*

## **Inside our July 2008 issue:**

- **Unexpected Birthday Gifts**
- **Alaska!**
- **"Live and Learn" or "Learn from Others"**
- **CPA Gear Day**
- **Muddy Girl Adventure**
- **August and September Calendar**

**The Chesapeake Paddler, Inc.**  
Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc.  
PO Box 341  
Greenbelt, MD 20768

REMINDER: Please check your mailing label or the email you were sent 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.