

## No Hands Pumping

*The Electric Bilge Pump by Paul Donoski*

I know my bracing skills and a bomb-proof roll should keep my skirt on and keep the cockpit pump on the deck in rough conditions. Guess what? I am not there yet. Even though I just returned from the Far East I haven't found that monkey that loves paddling and can operate the cockpit pump. If conditions are rough enough in the first place to cause a capsizet than how do you operate a cockpit pump with your hands once you are back in your boat without going over again? You can use the paddle float as an outrigger while you pump but that isn't as good as two hands on your paddle. This is where an electric bilge pump comes into play. It doesn't require a two mile extension cord or solar panel deck. A small 12 volt battery operated bilge pump can move several gallons of water per minute.

I can't take credit for this idea. I first read about it in an article by Rob Hair of Michigan. The principle elements for an installation are the following.

Atwood Bilge Pump \$13, ON/OFF Toggle Switch \$10, Rubber Switch Cover, Thru Hull Discharge Fitting, Bilge Pump Hose, 250 Plastic Bottle (All from boating store) Sub-C Ni-Cad Batteries & Charging Transformer \$27 - (from Digi-Key) Discharge Lamp, Lamp Socket (Auto supply) The total cost of parts will run you just under \$100.

You will also need some #6 or #8 stainless steel screws and nuts, insulated 18 gauge wire, crimp type electrical connectors, electrical tape, RTV sealant and closed cell foam material. West Marine is a widespread retailer for boating supplies. Digi-

Key is a mail order electrical catalog retailer. NAPA is a local automotive supply retailer. You can simplify your efforts by buying a kit from Rob Hair at e-mail (Rh7052@aol.com).

The first step before committing to a pump installation is to survey your kayak to make sure it will accommodate the pump and accessories. Your kayak should have at least four inches of space front to back behind the seat to mount the Attwood pump. The kayak should also have a watertight stern or day hatch for mounting the ON/OFF switch and battery pack. Every installation requires some drilling, filing and sealing. Plastic kayaks are the easiest to work with. Composite hulls especially Kevlar or carbon type are more difficult. These materials and gel coats will chip and crack when drilling, filing or cutting unless you use techniques like reversing the drill rotation to start the hole. The electrical connections are pretty straight forward between the pump, switch and battery pack. If in doubt consult with a friendly electrician or handy do-it-yourself person. Use generous amounts of RTV sealant around wire thru holes, screws and the switch mounting. The lamp and lamp socket serve as a means to discharge the battery pack several times a year. This prolongs battery life. Ni-Cad batteries have to be completely discharged and recharged periodically for optimum performance.

For my own kayak installation I chose to handle the battery pack differently. Since I had prior experience with battery operated appliances and tools I decided to use a Black & Decker Versa Pak battery design. This design employs separate Ni-

*continued*

## Two Piece Drysuit

The terms "dressing for immersion" and "paddling in comfort" are not usually complimentary when the water temperature is low and the air temperature is significantly higher. A dry suit is just part of a system which extends for a relatively short time a person's ability to withstand immersion in cold water. The comfort of a dry suit is really a relative term; one must consider the discomfort of being in the cold water without it, not how comfortable they feel sitting in a dry boat in the bright sun.

I have chosen a system that works well, is less expensive, and allows more versatility than the commonly seen one piece dry suit. I use a two piece suit. The Kokatat Wave dry top has neoprene gaskets at the neck and wrists and is made of **breathable Gortex fabric** which allows the escape of some sweat while presenting a waterproof barrier to the sea. The Whirlpool dry bottom is in the form of a bib overall with neoprene cuffs and is **not** breathable fabric. Either part can be worn independent of the other which means I can wear the drytop for rolling practice in the summer. They mate together at the chest with a labyrinth seal which is folded together much like a dry bag top. This seal does not leak. My underlayment system consists of polypropylene long johns, fleece trousers and jacket, topped by the two piece dry suit.

The key to staying comfortable is the wicking underlayering long johns and, when necessary, the fleece, which absorbs body moisture and adds insulation. Mine are always wringing wet when I undress but I remain comfortable while paddling.

Judging from the groans and complaints coming from those who wear the more popular one piece suits, the two piece unit is relatively easier to put on and take off. My Kokatat suit, which is half Gortex, cost well under \$500; I am very satisfied with it. It's less money because the waterproof zipper on the one piece suits adds over \$100. Since most of the heat that's generated during paddling, comes from the torso, Gortex pants are not really necessary which also adds to the savings. The other advantage of approaching the system this way, is that you can buy the jacket first and dry pants later when you feel like spending the additional money for the second half.

*- Brooks Martyn*



Heading up the East River in Madison - photo, Tom Maziarz

Cad battery sticks rated at 3.6 VDC each. By combining four Versa Pak sticks into a plastic battery jar I achieved a battery pack of 14.4 volts for the Attwood pump. This combination will pump a steady flow of water out of my cockpit for over 15 minutes. The Versa Pak battery sticks are easily removed from the jar for recharging on my work bench at home. I also have spare sticks charged and ready when I suspect my kayak batteries may be getting low. I can also easily perform routine discharges of these batteries in one of the Versa Pak cordless tools I own. There is one significant disadvantage to my Versa Pak battery design. It is cost. The Versa Pak batteries and charging stand add \$40 to \$60 to the installation package. In addition to the batteries and charging stand you need the proper battery receptors for installation of the sticks into the battery jar.

Difficulties aside this Versa Pak design is clean and low maintenance. I chose to mount my battery pack in the stern hatch compartment rather than sacrifice space in the smaller day hatch compartment.

With the battery pack out of the way you now have to decide how you want to handle the discharge hose from the pump. You can drill a hole thru the kayak deck or side hull somewhere behind the cockpit. Assemble a " " thru hull fitting to the hole and attach the flexible discharge hose. To prevent water from entering the fitting from breaking waves and chop you can plug the fitting hole with a simple rubber sink drain stopper. I couldn't bring myself to poking another hole in my Kevlar hull. So I just leave enough extra hose behind my seat to flop the hose outside the cockpit when pumping. I haven't found this to be too inconvenient or difficult a maneuver when underway.

One good refinement for the deck-mounted toggle switch is a plastic or teak surround shaped to protect the switch from accidental contact during paddling or rescue maneuvers. I made mine from a solid piece of plastic shaped to a max height of the toggle and sloped down to the surrounding deck surface like a tear drop. This way foreign items can slid up over the switch similar to recessed deck fittings. This switch protector is cemented to the deck surface.

The actual installation of the pump, switch and battery pack is no more than an hour or two. Collecting and preparing the components will take two or three times that long unless you buy one of the kits. For me designing my own installation was the best part. If you decide to add a electric pump to your boat hopefully you never have to use it, but if you do you will never be without one again. In good boy scout tradition no matter how confident I am with the electric pump I still keep a hand pump on my deck.

I would be more than willing to assist

anyone with installation tips. Look me up at one of the Connyak paddles, leave me a message on the Bulletin Board or call me at home (860-669-8125).

## connyak Pool sessions

Our winter pool sessions start on Sundays Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28 and Feb 4 & 11.- 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Sheehan High School in Wallingford. The cost is \$10 per session.

Last year the paperwork was an absolute nightmare with our pre-registration idea and limiting the number of paddlers. Plumbing problems at the pool and re-scheduled dates made a stressful book-keeping chore even worse. Dick Gamble carried the brunt of this chore single handed and surprisingly, didn't want to do it again this year.

After a lot of debating and discussion, we decided that we will not have a limitation or preregistration of paddlers. You can come when you want. We do realize that it can get crowded and we will face that music as it occurs. We will have to rely on the democratic nature of the members to consider one another. It will not be first come, first served or a race to get in the pool first. If a small amount of paddlers arrive, we can all use the pool at one time. If we have a large amount, we will draw names from a hat as to who goes in first and will keep people who arrived together in the same group. We also may not be able to get all the kayaks into the pool area at once. With 4 hours of pool time, very few paddlers actually stay in more than 45 minutes at a time - and most of the time we sit around chatting and eating bagels. If you want to arrive at 12 noon rather than 9, that's fine and may actually help matters.

If your idea is to practice for two hours and go home at 11:00 - please don't be surprised if it doesn't work out that way. We'll do the best we can to accommodate everyone as fairly as possible. Just remember, everyone wants to get in the pool right away but some may just have to be patient..

Our pool sessions are for practice and for ConnYak members only. These are not ConnYak supplied lessons. There's always people quite willing to help one another and if you have a member that will teach you, please make that arrangement in advance - don't make it an assumption.

Although it's supposed to be a heated pool, it's often debatable. Wear a Farmer John or whatever you have to keep warm and goggles etc. for the Chlorine.

## cheap Gifts

Need a good cheap gift for the holidays? ConnYak T's (\$5), Hats (\$8) and the new fleece vests (\$25) will make any paddler your friend forever.

## It's no tale without a gale

Generally, conditions at Bluff Point are conducive to care-free paddling; but ConnYak trips to this destination in early spring or late fall in past years seem to elicit exceptional wind conditions. Besides myself, two other paddlers (John Lathrop and John Flynn) met on October 21 in the parking area for a trip to Bluff Point. (*See capsized article - the same day*)

The tide was still coming in and was close to high tide. It was a little windy, but made for an easy paddle downwind. We first felt the full force of the wind as we approached the connection to the western inlet near Pine Island. We saw another paddler (keowee) who looked like he was having trouble and went over to investigate. I asked him how things were going as a small open power boat, with the engine cover removed, full of camping gear and two others approached, belching blue smoke and backfiring. "Crappy" was the reply as he scrambled with soaked work boots and jeans over the aluminum gunwale, maintaining a grip on the bow line to the keowee. The boat sputtered away into the wind; no other words were exchanged.

The small gap between the sand spit and Pine Island was underwater and we crossed to the lee to get out of the wind. In the sheltered calm we could feel a gentle swell. As we regrouped we agreed that the Dumplings were out, but that we should at least get to Bluff Point. With the wind, we would probably only take about 15 minutes to get there. The main concern was getting back. We set off on a ferry angle to land at the base of the Bluff. The beach was very steep and a quick exit was necessary because the wind derived sets were hitting quickly. We walked up to the top of the Bluff to check things out. The winds were blowing out of the NW at about 25-30 with gusts to 40-50. It looked like we were going to paddle back into a headwind. We decided not to eat lunch because of the anticipated exercise. We launched off the beach and headed back. In the lee of the sand spit the wind wasn't too bad; however, John (Lathrop) had used a large arc after launching and found the offshore waters to be pretty tough to make headway in. We rested in the lee of the spit just before the narrow channel back into the estuary. Around the spit the winds were howling - the tide had turned and now we had to fight an outgoing tide in the narrow channel.

Everyone commented that when they hit the channel they felt like they had stalled. After paddling as hard as we could, we made some progress up the channel and then tucked into the lee of some small bushes to rest in the grass. The rest of the way up was a series of sprints across the open water through wind and spray and then rests in the lee of whatever we could

find.

After leaving at ten we were back by 1230. We packed up and then ate lunch in John's Isuzu. We couldn't hear the wind while eating but were quickly reminded of how strong it was when John had to push his door open as he got out to get his weather radio.

No capsizes, everyone got back, no gear was lost. A success! Although rated intermediate, this trip was considered advanced intermediate. A good day to learn about clothing selection, wind, maintaining ferry angles, skeg use, and energy conservation. A late-season Bluff Point paddle once again lives up to its history and provides a good story.

- Phil Warner

*NOTE TO NEWER MEMBERS: We usually paddle Bluff Point State Park in the fall for it's built-in wind protection and every year it turns into hurricane conditions no matter what day we choose.*

## capsize at the Thimbles

Evan Goodenow - New Haven Register - Sun Oct. 22

Gale force winds and choppy seas blamed for causing maritime mishaps in Branford.

In Branford, authorities reported a kayak piloted by Christian Olrik, 36, of Westport capsized shortly after 1 p.m. after currents forced him off-course from a trip around the Thimble Islands.

After capsizing, Olrik was able to swim to a nearby island where he was rescued by a vessel piloted by Branford first selectman Anthony DaRos.

Two other kayakers who were accompanying Olrik were able to land on Little Pumpkin Island in Branford and were picked up by boat.

"The wind just took him and spun him around. Kayakers should look at conditions before they go out." - Deputy Fire Chief, Bill Pepe.

Olrik wasn't seriously injured authorities said. The Coast Guard assisted in the rescue efforts.

*Five of us arrived to paddle the Thimbles that morning and abandoned the location for a paddle on the Branford River instead. When we walked out on the dock, to feel the wind, our clothes were flapping violently. According to official records, it blew at 30 mph with gusts to 52. 30 mph is about the limit for a strong paddler - and that's really working to make any progress at all. A witness at the launch ramp, said he couldn't believe they were launching in those conditions and figured they were very advanced kayakers.- JB*



## connYak Meeting

Wed. December 14 - 7:00

WALLINGFORD PARK AND RECREATION

### General Meeting - Cold Water Forum

Bring anything unusual as far as clothing you would like to share and talk about for winter paddling. We will discuss dry suit seal replacement etc., general business and plans for 2001.

#### DIRECTIONS TO PARK & REC.

Exit 15 (Rt 68) off I-91 in Wallingford. West on Rt. 68. (toward Wallingford) Approx. 3/4 mile take a right at the Fire Station (Barnes Road at the light). Take your first Rt. off Barnes on to Fairfield Blvd. Wallingford Park & Rec. is the 2nd building on the left up the hill.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Nomination for officers to be submitted in Dec. by mail or at the Jan. meeting when elections will take place. You can nominate yourself or any willing candidate for any position. If you would like to help the club in any way, please say so. Any office is up for new personnel if you're interested although all officers are willing to maintain their positions.

The current ConnYak officers are:

Ed Milnes - *President*

Phil Warner - *Vice President*

Dick Gamble - *Treasurer*

Jay Babina - *Secretary / Newsletter*

## It's been a good year!

For those who partake in the paddles and events, we certainly had a great year. With lots of nice warm days and diversified trips run every weekend by various members, we did a lot. The picnic turned out to be spectacular and with our membership soaring beyond 460, the club is health to say the least. ConnYak doesn't run by itself and we owe a bit of gratitude to the members who ran trips and furnished other services.

Thanks to Clark Bowlen, Nora Galvin, Dave Hiscocks, Sheldon Penn, Wayne Smith, and the club officers for running paddles.

Tom Maziarz for generously shooting photos and always furnishing prints to the members. Dean Bertoldi for acquiring our meeting place and the pool. John Sweeton and Joe Tota for help with the picnic. Gail Ferris for her lecture on paddling Greenland and Don Milnes and others who help each month stamping the newsletter. Thanks to Nora Galvin for starting our library which will be taken over this year by John Sweeton.

It a real joy to meet so many friends on the water and share a sport that we all have a passion for. We certainly learn a lot from each other and have a great sense of camaraderie the club. JB



## DECEMBER PADDLE

### LT. RIVER - LYME

SATURDAY, DEC. 11 - 10:00 AM

Morning paddle on the Lt. River. Back by lunch time.

#### DIRECTIONS

I-95 to exit 70. go south on rt. 156 (Shore Road) approx. 1 mile there's a bridge over the Lt. River. The launch area is to the right and before the bridge.

**Note: All paddlers are responsible for their own safety, including dressing for immersion. You must wear a CG approved PFD and a spray skirt. The boat and equipment must meet CG requirements, including an appropriate signaling device. Beginners must have taken a basic course and be proficient in performing a wet exit, paddle float re-entry and carry a pump. Kayaks without bulkheads should have floatation installed. (always carry extra dry clothes, food and water) Paddlers are expected to show a sense of awareness as far as staying with the group.**

**Check the bulletin board for other impromptu trips listed by members - [www.connvak.org](http://www.connvak.org)**

## WINTER POOL SESSIONS

SUNDAYS: JAN. 7, 14, 21, 28, FEB. 4, 11

The fee is \$10 for each session payable at the door by cash or check made to ConnYak. Please bring cash in an envelope with your name on it.

**Directions: Exit 15 Rt. 91. Rt 68 W. past intersections of Rt 15 & Rt 150. Take fourth left on to Hope Hill Road which is at the light. Sheehan High School is 1/4 mile on the Rt.**

## INSTRUCTION

Greenland style paddling and rolling. BCU Coach and ACA Certified Greenland Style instructor Fern Usen can be contacted at fernusen@aol.com for private or groups.

## Kayaker Cards

Cards with Sea Kayaking scenes for notes or holidays available from Mel Tulin. They will be at the Dec. meeting on sale. [www.cardsbymel.com](http://www.cardsbymel.com)

## T's for articles

T-shirts for newsletter contributions. Mention size when you submit articles.

## CONNYPAK MESSAGE SYSTEM (203) 603-4615

Information regarding events, trip schedule updates, cancellations, changes etc. will be heard at this number.



# CLASSIFIED

Wilderness Systems Alto with rudder. Yellow Skirt and floatation bags. \$650/obo. Call (203) 457-9983.

Kayook plus with rudder. 8 months old, like new, \$900.00. 860-526-1410, 860-663-2069

Ocean Kayak Frenzy with backrest-1 year old \$325 and Ocean Kayak Yak-Board \$250. 203-235-6721 after 6

Current Designs Slipstream 16' X 22", Glass, one year old. Day hatch, skeg-spray skirt. \$2,000. Men's XL Gore-Tex drytop, one year old, \$250. Call 203-256-1913

Diriego, 17.5' Sea Kayak, Kevlar/Fiberglass w/wood trim & rudder. \$1,200.00 203-734-4452 kck@ashcreek.net

Nautraid One Expedition (foldable) 15'3" red & black \$1800. or best offer. 860-521-6070

Solstice GT, Current Designs. Fiberglass, red over white. Used 2 seasons. (203) 855-9707, \$1700.

Necky Arluk 1.9 kevlar 17'x22" 45lbs new in 1996 ex. condition. Call 203 656-0946. mmarkb@juno.com

Touring/Surfing Sea Kayak: Sun Maximum Velocity 13' x, 25" in Xytec \$675. SurfKayakers@aol.com

Daggar Meridian Kevlar 43 lbs. 16' x 22". Yellow / white \$1600. (860) 388-4991, dmiller04@snet.net

Wilderness Systems Pamlico double-2 person \$500. Jim 203- 345-0090

THULE Complete Roof Rack 444 (for VW Golf & Jetta) Used for 1 yr. Asking 110.00 kduffy2000@aol.com

DRYTOP - BomberGear breathable drytop (S)-(New) \$150. 860-643-8303 - fernusen@aol.com

Wilderness Systems Tchaika, fiberglass w/rudder, neoprene sprayskirt yellow/white used 4 times. \$1,500 (203)483-7705.

P&H Sirius(s) Chinese Red / White, skeg - \$1650, 1997 in excellent condition. Call 860 767 0696.

Sealution, kevlar, yellow on white, compass, rudder \$1400 firm sd.a@att.net or 914 698 8354, Rye, NY

Red Perception Spectrum Expedition \$549. Exc cond. Yellow Perception Keowee 2 with spray skirt for \$499. 860 434-9785 or ckayakers@worldnet.att.net

2000 Necky Looksha Sport - expedition - front/rear bulkheads & rudder 14' 4" x 22.5" red polymer \$850 1-860-434-0221 or dwc@99main.com

Necky Looksha kayak-poly. 17 ft. two neoprene hatches, bulkheads, rudder, skirt. \$700. 914-967-3164

Necky Tesla-NM, Used Once. 17', Kevlar, Mango / white, blue trim, large cockpit, rudder, Ckpt. cover. Two Werner paddles. \$2,500. 1-860-526-3344

Two piece 220 cm Lendal crankshaft paddle : Carbon 1F Archipelago blades New \$340 - slightly used at \$240. . oldphoto@connix.com / (203) 281-0066

Wilderness Systems Pamlico double-2 person \$500. Jim 203- 345-0090

1999 Current Designs Kevlar Extreme, red/white compass & spray skirt. 21"x 18'10" \$2,300. 203 226 9674 days, 203 454 2278 eves, petermgreen@hotmail.com

Sealution, kevlar, yellow on white, compass, rudder \$1400 firm sd.a@att.net or 914 698 8354, Rye, NY

Boreal Ellesmere, used one season, Yellow over Yellow, Kevlar, day hatch, drop-down skeg, \$2700 new \$2195.

E-mail ckayaker01@mindspring.com tel 203-481-1881.

17 Boreal Alvik w/ Spray Skirt Fiberglass, yellow over white. Rudder and two hatches. \$1875. 203-393-1461 or email: pleaholmes@worldnet.att.net.

## KAYAKING CLASSES

Urban Eskimo Kayaking

Mike Falconeri / Nancy Lovelace

Skills Workshops: Dec 2

Safety & Rescue: Dec 3

Rolling: Dec 16 & 17

Sheehan High School pool in Wallingford

Call for specifics - Nancy at 860 228 0105

Send newsletter articles or classifieds to:

Jay Babina e-mail: jbabina@snet.net

7 Jeffrey Lane, Branford, CT 06405

203-481-3221 Fax 203-481-1136

## TO JOIN CONNYAK...

ConnYak is a non profit club that is open to all paddlers interested in sea kayaking from any location. ConnYak annual membership fee is \$15. Membership includes monthly newsletter, paddles, functions etc.

Send inquiries to: Ed Milnes

35 Hampton Park, Branford, CT 06405

E-MAIL: [CONNYAK@CONNYAK.ORG](mailto:CONNYAK@CONNYAK.ORG)

WEBSITE / BULLETIN BOARD: [WWW.CONNYAK.ORG](http://WWW.CONNYAK.ORG)

Please contact the Newsletter when items are sold.



c/o Ed Milnes 35 Hampton Park  
Branford, CT 06405