

PROPOSED REGISTRATION OF PADDLE BOATS BILL FOUGHT DOWN BY CT PADDLERS!

Fortunately... Jean Trapani was alerted about the proposed bill No. 5164 which would require paddle boats under 19 1/2 ' and all oar and paddle powered boats to be registered by the state. The Bill was sponsored by Branford State Representative Peter Panaroni and it's public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday 2-15-02 without a lot of notice.

Through networking, the word went out and we were able to attend the hearing and voice our concerns and discontent. The bill was dropped after the hearing.

"I owe much thanks to a new paddler, Gregg Miller, who informed me via e-mail about this last Friday morning (he just happened upon it), and to Diane Worden who spent large amounts of time over the weekend contacting lots of folks." ... Jean Trapani

**Raised Bill No. 5164
February Session, 2002 LCO No. 749
Referred to Committee on Transportation
Introduced by: (TRA)**

AN ACT REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION OF CERTAIN VESSELS.

**Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:
This act shall take effect as follows:**

Section 1 July 1, 2002

Statement of Purpose:

To require the registration of all vessels less than nineteen and one-half feet in length which are not motorboats and all vessels propelled only by oars or paddles.



"Maintaining our freedoms" An overview by Wayne Smith

A contingent of 17 individuals, including myself, the owner of the Small Boat Shop in Norwalk, the owner of Collinsville Canoe & Kayak, the CT River oar and paddle club, and a lobbyist from the CT Sportsmen's association (Who was awesome), the Appalachian Mountain Club, the Paddler's Network, ConnYak as well as other concerned and dedicated paddlers attended the public hearing. Thank you one and all!!!!!!!

I'll say it as politely as I can -- the bill was a total travesty. It was introduced by Rep Peter Panaroni of Branford. When the committee realized that we were all intent on speaking, Rep Panaroni told us that it was a "Homeland Security" issue, and was shocked that so many of us showed. He then asked if we would leave if he dropped or modified the bill. We said "no". Sen Ciotto (co-chair) then asked if we would appoint 3 representatives to speak for all. We said "no", and made it clear we were not leaving until all had spoken. One other member of the committee, Rep. Peter Metz of Madison, came to our defense, and said we all had the right to be heard. Sen Ciotto agreed, albeit reluctantly.

Rep Panaroni explained that there were residents of the Thimble Islands who were concerned that terrorists would land on their property in kayaks, and blow up their multi-million dollar homes, and that forcing us all to register our boats would somehow stop that from happening. Dave Sinish of Collinsville Canoe replied that the truck that tried to blow up the WTC in 1993 was legally registered. So was the truck that Timmy McVeigh used in Oklahoma City, and all 3 planes that were used on Sept 11th were, too. So, what is the point? No answer.

Many other issues such as multiple boats, boat building, children's boats, scouts, rentals, out-of-state paddlers, tourism loss, encouraging healthy non-polluting activities etc. all added up in describing the total senseless outcome the bill would create.

I gave my speech, as did everyone else, and Jay Babina went last, and laid it all on the table in plain english. "The bill is based on paranoia and the need to control". Rep. Panaroni got defensive, and then changed his reason to "We need to be able to find out who did it, and registration will allow that". That's a small solace to the families, since the deed is done - as crazy as that fantasy sounds.

He then asked us if we would accept a watered-down version of the bill. The unanimous answer was "no compromises". The co-chairs of the committee asked us how we were able to get so many people on short notice, and we said "the internet". They didn't seem surprised. The co-chairs also seemed to agree with us after about the first hour of testimony.

Jay and Phil Babina ran into one of the Senators on the committee later, who told them "It's dead", and commended us on our presentation and mentioned that we were losing freedoms all the time.

I get the impression that Rep. Panaroni isn't through with us yet. We need to keep him and this topic under the microscope, and show up in

Registration continued.

numbers any time this happens again. And I'm saddened to say I believe it will, and sooner than we think. I have since been in contact with the American Canoe Association and American Whitewater, and both organizations are ready to assist us if we need them.

Thank you all who showed, and may we be able to double that number if we have to do this again! And we all owe Jean Trapani our deepest gratitude for sounding the alarm, and to Dennis McNeil and Diane Worden for doing so much legwork for us.

Warmest regards,
Wayne Smith
President, ConnYak



CHEATER

kayaks and paddles

by Brooks Martyn

The Great American Dream states that success can be obtained by anyone who diligently pursues a goal.

I had begun to seriously doubt this premise when, after five seasons of paddling, I had not developed a reliable Eskimo roll. Not that I hadn't tried: despite having spent several hundred dollars for lessons plus numerous freebies from the club gurus, my efforts all produced the same response from the instructors, "Everything looks good, Brooks, just keep trying and eventually you'll get it". Being a no-roller in a club populated with Greenland wannabes can have a very negative effect on one's self-esteem. To add insult to injury, many of the kids in the church-sponsored

youth group that I led, developed good rolls after only three pool sessions.

The first ray of hope appeared one day while paddling at the Thimbles when Bill Whitcomb, my paddle partner, and I happened upon CONNYAKER Bobby Curtis in the most unusual kayak that I had ever seen. The front of the boat looked normal, but from the cockpit back it looked like it was about to sink. Bobby explained to us that it was a Chesapeake Light Craft (CLC) North Bay that he had modified to make it easier to roll. He then proceeded to put on a demonstration of effortless rolls and braces. Several months later articles appeared in Sea Kayaker magazine and Atlantic Coastal Kayaker that explained how the West Greenlanders use kayaks with very low freeboard aft of the cockpit for their rolling competitions. This hull configuration allows the paddler to put his/her body close to the longitudinal axis of the boat and allows it to rotate with little effort on the part of the paddler.

My buddy Bill immediately bought a set of plans from CLC and proceeded to build his own version of the North Bay, despite my comment that it was presumptuous for an amateur to modify a professional design. He built his boat with a rear deck even lower than Bobby's and it rolled like a jet plane. He soon became proficient in doing paddle and balance braces as well as a variety of other Greenland rolls, much to my envy. I finally succumbed to his urgings and tried the boat myself. Bingo! First time ever, I did a perfect paddle brace, first to the left, my on side, then to the right. No problem. Rolls? I effortlessly popped them off. What a boost to my badly damaged self-confidence; I immediately began construction of my very own cheater boat. If you can identify with my frustrations and want to build your own boat, please consider what we have learned about the North Bay. The easiest way to build the boat is to loft the panels from

the dimensions given on the plans directly onto strips of plywood. To do this, four points are chosen on the side panel: the tip of the bow and stern, the area where your feet will go, and the point where the rear edge of the cockpit joins the aft deck. At the point where the rear edge of the cockpit attaches to the hull, lower the lofting dimension given on the plans by however much you wish to modify it. I lowered mine by 2". Then, using a long batten, fair in the line from the bow to the stern marks, using your new low point. Lofting a boat like this is very easy and takes little time. The North Bay, by CLC's admission, has a design flaw that makes it point up into the wind in any kind of a breeze and broach in following seas. Their recommendation to correct this condition is to install a retractable or a fixed skeg. Bobby Curtis has subsequently designed and built a low-volume rolling kayak, the Sea Spirit, which has none of these problems and for which he sells plans.

During my futile quest for a roll, I tried attaching various flotation devices to the paddle. I found that slabs of foam and inflatable bags were either cumbersome or didn't stay on the paddle well. After watching the videos 1st Roll and Rolling With Maligiaq, I came to realize that the paddle is not a great sky hook with which to pull oneself upright; its function is to initiate momentum and provide the final lift to complete the roll or a bit more flotation to assist the brace. Of equal or greater importance are the sequence of movements and the position of the body with respect to the longitudinal axis of the boat. But having that extra bit of flotation is a luxury, especially in the early phases of learning. Bill put his inventive genius to work and soon produced a paddle made of balsa wood, laminated with carbon fiber and cedar for strength. His feather-light paddle resembles a traditional Greenland design, in that it has a thick loom, or shaft, that fills the hand and rather fat blades. But boy, does it float! Equipped with the videos mentioned above, a cheater boat and a cheater paddle, I maintain that anybody can learn to roll. The club has many talented people who are more than willing to assist beginners or no-rollers like me: just make your wants known. But you've got to attend the meetings, go to the pool sessions, and attend the clinics in order to achieve the dream.



Tom Maziarz's "cheater" low volume Greenland skin boat.

In the Heart of Ski Country

By Paul Holmes

As a kayaker who is on water at least twice a week for eight months a year and as a skier who skis sixty plus days at Killington each winter, late fall and spring can be a time of conflicting desires. If you are caught in a state of such confused loyalties and you would like the experience of engaging in both activities conveniently on the same day, here is a suggestion.

In Vermont, east of Rutland and west of the Killington and the Pico ski areas is a secluded mountain lake tucked in a valley of the Green Mountains. The lake, known as the Chittenden Reservoir, can be accessed after just a few minutes drive from Vermont Rt. 4. From Route 4, turn onto Meadow Lake Drive at The Sugar and Spice Restaurant (a great place for breakfast). Follow Meadow Lake Road to the end and turn right on to Chittenden Dam Road. After a few miles and as you approach the Chittenden Dam, turn right onto a dirt road that leads to a large parking area and boat ramp.

The lake is pristine. Near the dam you will find a few summer homes, and on the distant hills to the west you will see the Mountain Top Inn and a community of homes. Other than those signs of civilization, your surroundings on the lake will make you think you are on a wilderness body of water. A predominately rocky shoreline and densely forested hills will convince you that you have completely escaped the hustle and bustle of Rutland and the local ski resorts. This feeling can be reinforced by the presence of all sorts of ducks, occasional loons, several beaver lodges, moose tracks on marshy shores, and if you are lucky, the sight of a bald eagle or two. Once you paddle beyond sight of the dam, the only sign of civilization is the view of the Pico ski area in the distance.

The lake is comma shaped, and from the ramp at the dam one only sees about a third of the lake. DeLorme's Vermont Gazetteer reports that the lake is 674 acres, and a fast paced paddle time around the lake indicates a perimeter of about five miles. The shore is quite irregular with numerous small coves and two large bays. As you explore a shore route, you will find many take out points, most of which are suitable to stretch your legs and have a bite to eat. There are several takeouts which have been

used as campsites, however, the sign at the ramp prohibits overnight camping. During the summer I have occasionally encountered folks who must have "overlooked" reading the sign.

At the far end of the lake there is a deep cove with a small dam. The dam holds back the waters of a smaller shallow lake called Leffert's Pond. You might find this pond worth exploring after a short portage. There is also a hiking trail which crosses the dam and is part of the Catamount Trail, a cross-country ski trail which extends from the Massachusetts-Vermont border to the Canadian border.

For those paddlers who are familiar with skiing, you know that Killington has a reputation for early season and late spring skiing. Ice generally does not arrive until early December, and ice out can take place in mid April, both of which are times when alpine skiing is under way at Killington. Obviously, at these times of year the water temperature is dangerous, and appropriate dress and gear are essential. For those looking for a challenging water surface, on windy days the configuration of the surrounding mountains combined with the right fetch can make for two foot waves, generally at the southern end.

Much to the chagrin of the regulars who paddle Chittenden Reservoir during the summer, the horsepower and speed restrictions on the lake have been relaxed during recent years. For the first time this summer I was disappointed to see a water skier, but only once. In general, those who use the lake are respectful of the lake and to those who enjoy it.

I can assure you that if there is snow on the hills, a paddler can explore this jewel of a lake literally by themselves. Skiing to early afternoon at Killington followed by a paddle on a snow-ringed lake such at the Chittenden Reservoir is a wonderful experience. I highly recommend it.

For information on the status of the ice on Chittenden and the ski conditions at Killington, send inquiries to Paul at pleaholmes@worldnet.att.net.

Nova Scotia Trip - May 18. Contact Brooks Martyn for details, discounts. (860) 653-5899 or martynbw@aol.com

Free lecture

All at North Cove Outfitters - Saybrook

6:45 - 8 pm

Kayak & Canoe trekking

Tuesday, Mar 12

Check the bulletin board for other impromptu trips listed by members - www.connyak.org

EVENTS



THIMBLE ISLANDS-BRANFORD

SATURDAY, MARCH 9

Morning paddle - back for lunch. 2+ hr. paddle or break off for lunch.

In the water by 10. Be on your best behavior.

Exit 56 off Rt. 95. Head (south) toward water. Go straight across at the stop sign, under RR bridge into Stoney Creek. Street parking only. Drysuits and wetsuits in March and April.

GREAT ISLAND - LYME

SATURDAY, MARCH 16- 10 AM.

Paddle around Great Island - Lunch or no lunch your option.

Directions: I-95 to exit 70. go south on rt. 156 (Shore Road) approx. 2 miles to Smith's Neck Road (boat launch sign on the Rt.) Follow it to the end - to the launch ramp.

connYak Meeting

Wed. March 20

General discussion on events, paddles, upholding our freedoms.

7:00 WALLINGFORD PARK AND RECREATION

DIRECTIONS TO WALLINGFORD 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.

Cricket Greenland paddle (new \$220). Has a well done splint. \$50. Guaranteed to never break. 203-481-3221

Derek Hutchinson Toksook paddle. (new-never in water) 230 w/90 degree feather (can be changed). New \$330 now \$275 or best offer. 860-561-4415 work 860-635-1979 email: bobyak2@aol.com

Prijon Sea Gull 16' 6" x 24" Fiber glass touring kayak. Compass and deck-mounted bilge pump, Rudder, \$1,350.00 / OBO. 860.767.1728. Email: Kayaker@KayakForFun.com

Dry-suit, Kokatat "Meridian" men's medium. \$150. Dry-tops. Stohlquist. One new, one used. \$100 & \$65. Both mens medium. Tom 413-593-6167.

Old Town Castine Kayak 14 foot beginners kayak. red, 2 hatches, with paddle and skirt. \$600. 860-985-6893

Perception Shadow--poly,rudder, blue/smoke, used one season, stored indoors. \$900 E-Mail J.Hegg@attbi.com.

Valley Skerray, Fiberglass, Blue over White, with skeg and Chimp Pump. Great condition! \$1700 203-854-9713 brianenichols@aol.com

Please contact the Newsletter when items are sold.

From under the Xmas Tree by Don Milnes

Well another year passed without Santa delivering the 10-pound, super composite, self rolling kayak I have been wishing for (Hey, I've been good) but the paddling gift I did get may just be better. "Tidewaters of the Connecticut River, An Explorers Guide to Hidden coves and Marshes," presents a look at our largest local river that you will not want to be without. This book represents the work of a number of authors and experts, covering the river from Salmon Cove in East Haddam to Great Island at the river's mouth. This is not a kayaking book, but a book written with small boaters, and especially paddlers in mind. For example, when discussing Salmon Creek you will be cautioned to check wind direction and strength and then a suggestion for a somewhat protected paddling route is offered.

This book is divided into two large sections, the first an overview and the second part is a guidebook. The overview, with chapter titles such as "Geology," "Prehistory and History," and "Birds" among others; provides an overall geological look at the river as it is today, and where to look for examples of these forces of creation. Through the discussions of the history and prehistory, you will also gain insight into today's river. While reading about the vegetation, birds, fish and all the life that are part of the river, I began wondering what I've been looking at as I was paddling around all these years.

My favorite section is undeniably the twelve descriptive chapters that each focus on a part of the river. These sections will tell you the best launch site for your destination and give distance as well as possible paddling conditions. Once you're on the water, the chapters function as a guidebook telling what to look for along the way. You will read historical notes tied to the area you are passing through and if you can bring yourself to write in the book, there are pages to record your observations at the end of each section.

This book is filled with photographs, prints and charts. It would look great on your coffee table, although it could easily find a place in your boat. You may have to look around to find a copy (North Cove Outfitters in Old Saybrook is one source), but it is worth the effort.

*Note: The ISBN number is 0-9712341-0-8 and the publisher is River's End Press in Essex Connecticut

Urban Eskimo Kayaking Classes
Mike Falconeri 203-284-9212
www.uekayaking.com

Instructors: Fern Usen, *BCU Coach and ACA Certified* and Donald White.
Call 860-643-8303 email: fernusen@aol.com

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:

ConnYak, P.O. Box 197, Ellington, CT 06029

E-MAIL: CONNYAK@CONNYAK.ORG

WEBSITE / BULLETIN BOARD: WWW.CONNYAK.ORG

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



ConnYak
CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

P.O. Box 197, Ellington, CT 06029