



Notes from the meeting...

Our meeting with Eleanor Mariani from the DEP and Al Johnson from the Coast Guard were very informative. Eleanor with help from Allen Ames gave a Power Point presentation which profiled the many diverse things that the DEP is involved with. The topic that's on everybody's mind was answered with "we have no intentions of registration at this time".

The DEP has a presentation on paddling safety and offers it to the public although the main problem seems to be making paddlers, especially those who just purchased a boat aware of it. They seem to be still quite convinced that the "safe boaters" course is a good solution to the problem of improving paddlesport safety.

Several members questioned the validity of that particular course as far as educating paddlers. It seems a little

continued >>

Minimum Daily Requirements

by Wayne Smith

In recent months, there has been a lot of talk about paddling safety here in Connecticut and also in other states. While most of it here is aimed at allowing the state to take more of your money (Registration), the topic itself is a valid one, and also one of the main reasons that paddling clubs exist. So, it can't hurt for us to give you the club's perspective on the topic every so often.

Connecticut requires that non-motorized boaters WEAR their PFD from October 1 to May 30. The rest of the year, it simply has to be on board and easily accessible. All boaters must have an audible signaling device. A whistle is generally considered adequate. And for night paddling, a single white light that is visible for 360 degrees is required. There are no other requirements.

The US Coast Guard requires only that you have an accessible PFD, a marine whistle or other equivalent sound producing device, and a single white light and approved visual distress signals if operating after dark. The US Coast Guard boating safety site: <http://www.uscgboating.org> has all the information you need on federal and state regulations.

ConnYak requires that you wear your PFD at all times, that you use a sprayskirt on non-sit on top kayaks, and that you be able to demonstrate a wet exit upon request. We require helmets for paddles where surfing is the primary purpose of

the paddle. We also require that you know the basics of channel markers and boating channels. Considering some of the conditions and places we as sea kayakers go, the minimum required safety gear is woefully inadequate in an emergency. Here's a list of what I would consider the bare minimum I would ever paddle with in salt water (Ones with * are attached to my PFD so that I will always have them, even if I get separated from my boat):

- Whistle*
- Horn
 - (Compressed air or breath powered)*
- Signal Mirror*
- Flaregun with at least 3 shells,
 - ... or minimum of 3 tube style flares
- Emergency Strobe*
- Waterproof light with extra batteries
- Reflective patches on my PFD*
- Bilge pump
- Paddle float
- Immersion clothing
 - (when water temps dictate)

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A calm winter's day on the southern side of Fisher's Island. Photo Carl Tjerandsen

Minimum requirements...

- Spare paddle
- Knife*
- Multi tool
- Duct tape²
- Floatation
(Bulkheads fore and aft in boat,
or float bags otherwise)
- Towline
- Self and assisted rescue skills
- First aid kit

I personally also carry a VHF radio, waterproof matches, dry clothes and a backpacking stove (in cool weather), neoprene hood, spare sprayskirt, compass, GPS, rope, and a chart if I'm paddling somewhere new. Now those of you who have helped me carry my boat know why my Canadian boat feels as heavy as a British one.....

The uses for most of these items should be apparent to the reader. Relying on just one signaling device is not good practice. Whistles are not very loud and are affected by the wind. Flares can only be used in life threatening situations. Compressed air horns sometimes lose their pressure. In short, anything can break or malfunction, or may not be appropriate in certain situations. So, carry backups. Your life is much more valuable than the few dollars you would need to spend on several basics.

Being able to empty and re-enter your boat is essential in a capsized situation. The preferred self rescue is a roll, but since many people don't know how, or have never performed a roll in real conditions, self and assisted rescues are basic skills you need to know. You may be cold and wet at this point, and may have lost your primary paddle and put a hole in your boat. You could be injured and require first aid, a tow to shore, or evacuation by the Coast Guard. This worst case scenario can happen to any of us in the blink of an eye, and may require the use several of the items I've listed above.

If you were just in compliance with the minimum state or federal requirements, you'd be in a very bad situation, instead of one that could be dealt with. Think about it. Your best defenses are good equipment that you know how to use, good paddling skills, good judgement and preferably, paddling partners. Adequate skills and good judgement can help you avoid ever having to use your safety gear. And that should be the ultimate goal.



-WS

Notes from the meeting...

confusing that they are not pushing their own paddlesports course at the retail outlets more than they have and seem to clutch on to the "Safe Boating" course. Whether or not any course will keep a foolhardy and overconfident paddler from testing their courage in cold and rough conditions is something that will never be proven, however education about PFD's and Hypothermia has to be promoted to the new paddlers.

If we could come up with a way of helping the DEP get their course information into the hands of the new paddler at the birthplace (the retail outlets), it would help everyone concerned. Maybe a poster with a course schedule or a free pass to the course with a gift attached upon completion? I think we could help but really don't have the clout that the DEP has in representing themselves. The DEP needs an official rep that visits the stores regularly and keeps their educational program alive and active and right in the face of the new kayak buyer as well as maintaining a relationship with the store owners.

As connected and well informed as most ConnYak members are, I don't think there was a person in the room, including the 2 store representatives who knew where or when the next DEP Paddlesports Course is being given. There's also 4 paddling clubs in CT that do not get any of this information. The people who sell paddle boats should know where to direct the new buyer and have hand-out information readily available for them or even have it attached to the kayaks. If a DEP representative asked the retailers to do this, it would get done. We would certainly post the schedule on our website and pass along the info to any new paddlers.

Eleanor was very friendly and made many points about their work and concern for launch facilities for paddlesports, environmental issues and making CT a good place for all who use the water.

Working along with Eleanor and the DEP is a group called the "Connecticut Boating Advisory Council" which consists of various boating interest groups such as Ct. Marine Trades Assn, Coalition of Ct. Sportsmen, Ct. Bass Federation, Ct. Charter Fishing/Party Association, Fairfield County Commodores Assn. US Coast Guard Auxiliary, US Power Squadron, PWC industry and more. Jean Trapani will be our paddlesports representative on that group.

Al Johnson from the Coast Guard followed with a presentation and showed some stats on paddle sports deaths, and talked about getting programs going such as the "Paddle Smart wear your PFD" campaign that they put together. He himself is a paddler and is very interested in communal efforts toward safety with groups like ours as well as many of the outfitters throughout New England. It was

surprising that a lot of the money for these programs comes from private donations and not the Federal Government. If you didn't attend the meeting, you missed out on the free (double barrel) whistle from the CG.

Al is as mellow as it gets and really wants to do whatever he can to keep the needless kayak and canoe deaths off the charts. He sighted the typical guys going out in a canoe to go fishing in early spring on a calm lake and the canoe overturns because someone does something foolish like standing up - and with no protective clothing or PFD's on, they drown. It seems so obvious and senseless, but according to the DEP, it's an almost predictable event every Spring.

I know we will maintain a constructive relationship with both the DEP and Al Johnson. We'll make sure they are always aware of our own efforts to push safety for paddlers with any of our programs and offer any suggestions we can in implementing their attempts to get their paddlesports program in the hands of the new paddlers.

We owe thanks to Nick Shade who was instrumental in putting this long overdue, informative meeting together.

- Jay Babina

Group Trips Needed - If you want to list a paddle for the season contact the club or newsletter. We need more paddles to alleviate any overcrowding. To list it does not mean you're responsible or even the leader (unless you want to). We need paddlers who want to share a paddle with friends at a favorite location. You don't even have to arrive if something comes up. We will also be leaving weeks open for individuals.

2ND ANNUAL NORTHERN CT RIVER CAMP OUT - July 26, 27 -

Meet at Vernon Dam I-91 to rt 142 in southern Vermont at approximately 9:00 to drop off kayaks and gear. Drivers will take their cars down to Barton Cove camp ground in Northfield MA to catch the shuttle back up to the launch site.

We will leave Vernon Dam approx 11:30 and paddle down stream 11 miles to Munn's Ferry camp ground. Swimming and rolling area, Fire wood, Latrine and water are provided. Continue down stream 11 miles Sunday to Barton's cove to the Cars. This is a beautiful undeveloped section of the river.

Fee's: The \$25 dollar camping fee will be split between the participants, and \$10 per person fee for the shuttle. Trip is limited to 8 people.

RSVP to - David Cornell 860-875-4981

The Connyak message board

By David Fasulo

For many years my primary sport was rock climbing and I used message boards, such as rec.climbing or gunks.com, as a source of information. In the climbing world, getting key pieces of information on rock climbs, known as "beta", can literally save your life. As my passion seems to be shifting towards kayaking, I seem to be getting and sharing information from Connyak's message board with more frequency. The message board, along with the newsletter, helps to keep paddlers out of harms way. As an added bonus, the message board can also be a venue to share information that many paddlers enjoy reading and seeing.

Some message boards get minimal use and do little to inform or entertain the web surfer; or to assist the person looking for a quick diversion while opening and responding to e-mail. From what I have observed, the Connyak board seems to inspire a fair amount of interaction and does not suffer from stale topics. This section of the website provides information on upcoming and last minute paddles, as well as advice on kayaks, equipment, and skills. The board also hosts some entertaining banter that has included Euro vs Greenland paddle debates, sveal hunts, irate swans, foul smelling neoprene, visions of waste containers in Baja, and turning a circumnavigation into a circumcision.

During a winter circumnavigation of Fisher's Island Carl Tjerandsen mentioned a web site (www.PhotoShare.co.nz) and asked my opinion about sharing some photos of our day on the water. I think he was a bit uncertain because he had the mindset that showing photos of our experience would be somewhat "boastful". My experiences in the climbing world taught me that sharing trip reports can inform, entertain, and open up dialogue for paddlers who have technical questions. Carl started posting pictures of trips, and a lighthouse quiz, that really added to the depth of the message board. Is Carl boasting? If you paddle with Carl, you will realize that he has a love for the sport and enjoys sharing his enthusiasm with others. Carl, please keep the photos coming.

Sharing trip reports is a custom that I think should be encouraged on the Connyak board. In fact, some message boards (gunks.com) have a special section of their message board devoted just to trip reports. If you have had a special day on the water share your story, and if possible pictures, with your fellow paddlers. Sharing your experience will inspire others and continue to build our kayaking community.

Annual Seldon Island Campout and Paddle

Saturday & Sunday, May 17, 18
Launch - Goodspeed Landing 10:00 a.m.
(behind the Goodspeed Opera House)

Non-Campers will do a day paddle with lunch at Seldon Island. Camping will be at the site called Spring Ledge which can accommodate approximately thirteen people. Spring Ledge is located on the Connecticut River side of Seldon Island. This is island camping so people must bring their own food and water. As always the campout is a good time.

Anyone interested in camping should e-mail DHHISCOX@aol.com or call Dave Hiscocks at 860-633-7254.

Fundraiser Sea Kayak Paddle

Saturday, June 7

Hole in the Wall Beach in East Lyme, CT.

Experienced paddlers will be launching at 10:00am; beginning paddlers are encouraged to launch at 10:30am. Event money goes to the Tommy Fund, an organization based out of Yale New Haven Children's Hospital to benefit children with cancer.

All Tommy Fund moneys go directly to research and to provide support for children and families. There's also a "Wipe Out" Walkathon at East Lyme High School that day. A \$5.00 donation to the Tommy Fund is requested the day of the event. BYO Kayak For last minute updates, check the CONNYAK message board at Connyak.org

Directions: Hole in the Wall Beach, East Lyme, CT: I-95 to exit 72 (Rocky Neck State Park in East Lyme). Left at light on route 156 East. Travel 2.7 miles and take a right on Baptist Lane (McDonalds across the street). Large dirt parking lot with kayak launch on the other side of the very obvious hole in the wall.

I'm considering a rolling demo and/or rescue demo. Suggestions/volunteers? Contact: David Fasulo david.fasulo@SNET.Net

EVENTS



CONNYAK TALK / MEETING

(OUR LAST GENERAL MEETING UNTIL THE FALL)

Michele Sorensen

"Everything you wanted to know about Paddies"

May 13 - 7:00 PM

at Westport Public Library

Curious about all the paddle options available - carbonfibre, Greenland, wing, bent shaft? Ready to buy a really good paddle? In the market for a spare paddle? This presentation is targeted to beginner through intermediate paddlers. Learn the proper way to hold your paddle, all its parts, what they're made of and why, how to judge durability and performance, how to size for you. Michele Sorensen is a ACA kayak instructor and operator of the year-round kayak guide and instruction service Kayak Adventure LLC.

Directions: Westport Public Library

I-95: Take exit 17 - Westport, Saugatuck Avenue. At the foot of the ramp turn left (north) and follow Saugatuck Avenue to route 1. Turn right and take the bridge over the Saugatuck River. The library is on the right as soon as you cross the bridge. The meeting is downstairs in the McManus Room.

Paddles

FOUR MILE RIVER - OLD LYME

SAT. MAY 10

Lunch paddle - Launch at 10 AM

SELDON ISLAND CAMP / PADDLE

SAT. & SUN. MAY 17, 18

Lunch paddle for non-campers. Launch at 10 AM - Behind Goodspeed.

MYSTIC

SAT. MAY 24

Lunch paddle - Launch at 10 AM
Either launch site and meet in front of the old ships at 10 am.

CHECK THE CONNYAK BB

More optional paddles are reguarly listed on the bulletin board - ConnYak.org

CLASSIFIED

NORDKAPP HM good condition. Day hatch, rear oval hatch, canvas storage bag, compass. Orang / white \$1500 860-633 7254

16'x 22" Yellow/White Dagger 'Meridian SK' f/g kayak with skeg, 2 hatches, Nexus Type 85 Compass, spray skirt, f/g paddle, Milford, CT \$1850 203.877.8493 'clayluce@hotmail.com'

FOR SALE - Janautica "ANADYR" Sea Kayak 17.5'X 21.25' Adjustable seat and footpegs, 2 hatches, bulkheads, rigging etc. Designed for speed and rough water. See Mfg. webpage for complete specs. www.splashdance.com \$1845- free delivery in CT. E-mail ritey@lycos.com or call 917 567 9430

Necky Tormae 15' Kevlar w/rudder, carbon paddle, spray skirt, Yakama rack and saddles \$1300. ail. Must sell - Moving 203-458-2362

Skin on Frame - Baidarka- brand new- (back problems) Willow Kayaks, only 29 pounds, 18'x 21", 8" depth to shear, skeg, very fast, Rye NY, \$1950 or best offer. 914 698 8354 or sd.a@att.net

Perception Pirouette white water/surf boat for sale. Paddle, helmet, cockpit cover, air bags. Very good condition. Asking \$300. Call (860) 653-5899.

**Please contact the Newsletter
when items are sold.**

PADDLESPO RTS DEMO WEEKEND

Sat. & Sun. May 3rd & 4th

Sponsored by North Cove Outfitters
Natl. Champion freestyle canoeists Karen Knight
and Bob Foote - seminars and demos.
Camp Hazen YMCA (Cedar Lake) Chester Ct.
For information and directions call:
860-388-6585 or www.northcove.com

T-shirt weather is coming

Get yours for free by writing an article for the ConnYak newsletter. Nothing gets refused, even lies.

ConnYak Policy Statement

We do not take ads, list sales, items or services other than member classifieds. We do list opportunities, such as demonstrations, symposiums, free classes, demo-days and will post the phone and email or website for those opportunities. Our goal is to stay free of endorsements and maintain a total friendship with all businesses, clubs and instructors having to do with our sport.

We can't post your event if we don't know about it. Please stay in touch!

TO JOIN CONN YAK...

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

T-SHIRTS FOR ARTICLES

Authors of articles for the newsletter get a free T-shirt. If you have written an article and haven't recieved you T-shirt, please speak up at one of the paddles. The club officers usually have them at the paddles.

**Check the bulletin board fo impromptu
trips listed by members -
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 203-461-1136



ConnYak

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

P.O. Box 197, Ellington, CT 06029