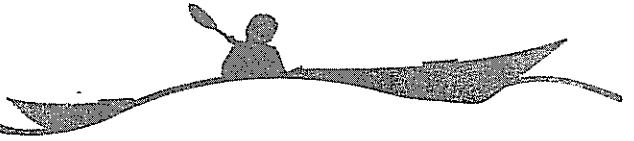


# CONNAYAK



C O N N E C T I C U T S E A K A Y A K E R S

August 1999

## Woods Hole-Marthas Vineyard-Muskeaget Island Nantucket & Harwich Port

Friday, May 21 to Sunday, May 23, 1999

Kayakers: Karen Duffy, Bob Elron, Mike Falconeri,  
Jay Thomas, Phil Warner

*"No! Don't go out there today  
in kayaks. It is not a good idea.  
Maybe try tomorrow."*

*This was the Harbor Master's suggestion as  
we describe our planned trip and ask to leave  
a vehicle in his parking lot until Sunday.*

## 55 MILES by Karen Duffy

Gazing out at the ocean, I hear gusty winds and see gray skies, plus it's chilly. I wonder how choppy the water is out there? His dissuasion almost makes me fret but Mike and Phil's explanation of last year's course gives a certain confidence. Besides, the weather predictions sound favorable for the weekend. The man offering concerns is a sailing instructor and I think some people can't comprehend the sea-worthiness of a kayak.

Now that the vehicle situation was well organized we begin creating a maximum load for Phil's Volvo. I wish we had a photo: 3 Nordkapps stacked and securely strapped (those dog bone shaped racks are key), gear piled up tightly inside, and just enough space for the three of us. Traveling onward to Woods Hole we arrive happy to see the bright sun with clear skies and calm water. Bob and Jay are glad to finally see us and are prepared to launch. We're all together now and I'm sensing the excitement of this day's arrival after the extensive planning and anticipation over the past few months.

Next, this is the moment when "How to Pack Your Yak" comes into play. Bringing only the basic necessities for three days, it still amazes me to see how so many items fit perfectly inside the compartments. The course is being discussed before launching. This is my first kayaking with camping adventure so I must admit there are a few qualms. Nevertheless, my aspiration will help me to "Just Do It!". Confidence must remain with me. I've been through Mike's Urban Eskimo Kayaking courses along with some of his advanced training. Last month we paddled to Fishers Island

then back to Barn Island under 25+mph winds, strong currents, and lots of big waves. This challenge taught me the importance of focusing on your bearing and effective strokes so that you don't tire out before completion. The past few weeks have included cross training and getting out in the kayak as often as possible. I also realize this trip is a unique opportunity; to have the chance to practice newly learned skills, to be joining these experienced paddlers, and visit beautiful places for the first time. I embark knowing there is more to be learned and practiced.



Five of us are in our kayaks heading toward Marthas Vineyard with vibrant blue skies, warming sun, and the aquamarine surface beneath us provides an intoxicating atmosphere. The tide is going out and the wind is at our backs. One of the new feelings for me is having a (heavier) packed kayak around me. It makes it more stable however I do sense the weight difference as I paddle. We land at Oak Bluffs in less than 2 hours. Time to snack then walk around (wearing booties) and make our way to the coffee shop where Mike loves to get his choco-

Thursday, August: 19 - 7 pm.

Essex Town Hall

## Derek Hutchinson

Lecture "North Sea Crossing"

Derek Hutchinson is considered the father of modern sea kayaking and is the founder and head coach of the British Canoe Union. More than twenty five years ago, Derek led the first successful crossing of the North Sea in single kayaks. He is the largest selling author of sea kayaking books (9), exceeding in sales the total volume of all other sea kayaking authors combined. His book on Eskimo Rolling is considered one of the bibles of the sport, and he has just released a book on Expedition Kayaking. Derek's kayak designs include the Orion, Reiver, Naiad, Baidarka, Outlander, Sirius, Icefloe, Dawn Treader, and some models by Current Designs. (Slipstream & Gulfstream)

*Derek is a very colorful and informative speaker. If you're up for a lot of information, experiences and humor, this is a presentation you don't want to miss.*

### DIRECTIONS TO THE ESSEX TOWN HALL

Approaching from the North on Route 9, take Exit 3. At the end of the exit ramp, turn left and go under the Route 9 bridge to the light. Turn left at this light on to West Avenue.

Approaching from the South on Route 9, take Exit 3. At the end of the exit ramp turn left and go to the light. Turn right at this light on to West Avenue.

The Town Hall is about a third of a mile up the hill on the left at the corner of West Avenue and Grove Street. Turn left on Grove Street - parking is in the back of the building.

late covered espresso beans. The Vineyard seems like a great place to stay for a while but we want to get back in our boats to make our way over to Muskeaget Island to take in the sunset, set up camp, and enjoy dinner. Paddling along, we're singing songs, laughing & joking, and watching the loons nearby as they make those interesting cries in between their long dives. Sometimes Phil would shout, "Blowhole", then all of us (or maybe just me) would search for it. Even though I'm having fun, I feel fatigue as I realize my strength won't endure when I fail to put my whole

body into the strokes. I'm trying to break away from the bad habit of using the arm muscles dominantly. We approach shoals and the choppy water adds a little variety. A 4-knot current is beneath us as we hug the shore of Muskeget Island. I see the colors of the sun setting into the sea and I feel transported. We've finally landed! (21 miles today)

It is late night with the brilliant stars and glowing moon above. I'm resting on this peaceful island as my thoughts are playing on a variety of possible situations. I think of what is done in an event when exhaustion, sea-sickness, hypothermia, or dehydration affects a paddler while taking on a long crossing. Everyone should know that emergency situations can arise at any moment and in any conditions. Being prepared is having the ability to rescue one another in any of Mother Nature's occurrences, knowing vital signs of the human body, and being able to aid a person's stressed senses with genuine and effective methods. Can you imagine such a scenario? So anytime a trip such as this one is planned, it is best to have another paddler along who is proficient in these skills. These are just some thoughts I keep in mind when I go paddling.

Seals are making a groaning sound from their temporary home not more than a mile away. We all hear them as we lay to rest our tired bodies. We will glide over to the rocky isle in the morning and watch them. Good night!

The morning presents another gorgeous day to kayak! Time to stretch, eat, break camp, and launch. By the way, this place is great for interesting beachcombing. We say goodbye for now to this desolate and naturally beautiful island. On the water again it is 10:30 and we're heading over toward the seals. It is fascinating to watch so many of them curiously wiggling off their rocks into the ocean to observe us as well. We remain silent while communing with these cute sea lovers. Like torpedoes, they dart through the clear blue-green water beneath me. I love this journey!

Paddling on, Nantucket is now about 8 miles away. The elegance of 5 equal hull speeds traveling side by side for miles while singing songs together and telling stories is a living memory for me. This day is perfect! The time I have in silence, like when I fall behind, I think about some important factors in sea kayaking such as knowing the tides, understanding ocean currents, weather patterns, and knowing points on land then observing their appearance as you head toward them. So many details to keep in mind! There are always boaters to be aware of. Some of them move in and out of the harbor that we are heading into and we can play in their wakes.

I approach our landing spot feeling proud of another accomplishment for this weekend adventure.

Bob and Jay scheduled a returning ferry ride so we'll engage in a brief celebration before they leave. We meet up with Joe Dunn and his girlfriend Martha. The laughs and good times on Nantucket continue up until the morning of the return trip to Harwich Port.

I must admit that thinking about how long we'll be paddling is daunting. Phil and Mike discuss all of today's favorable conditions with the wind and wave direction to help us along. Could I do this 26 mile paddle successfully? My intentions are to find that rhythm and enjoy the day.

The time is 8:00. After a raisin bagel and quick good-byes, the three of us are in our kayaks ready for today's voyage. This is the fourth consecutive day of kayaking in which I've needed just a paddling jacket over nylon/polyester pants and tank. I'm lucky the water is not as rough as I imagined for this trip. Knowing the reality of this long haul, only 13 or 15 miles have passed and for me I feel it is a bit of a struggle now.

This nagging bladder situation doesn't help. It is so unpleasant but I have to put the less-desirables out of my mind and simply get comfortable. Not seeing land for a long time as we go this distance is a new experience and I've acquired a unique appreciation for the sea.

We're keeping a 30 degree course but somehow I'm letting these following waves shift me on a 60 degree course. I think they're going to go 26 miles today and I'll total 30 adding in all my corrections! Mike notices my useless frustration so he coaches me along by reminding me to stay loose and relaxed while looking all around me to take pleasure from the entire scenery and only think of positive things. It helps me to do just that, however I'm now extremely exhausted and wishing every stroke would be my last. I move along as best as I possibly can for a while. There's 5 miles remaining with a dark gray storm front threatening us from behind.

I now understand and agree that Mike must tow me since it's the only way of making it to shore soon. My worthless strokes were getting me nowhere. My task is to just use the paddle as a rudder to stay behind his kayak. Dragging behind, I am feeling crushed and crying aloud while my vitality is stripped away. How did I become so weak?

Our speed increased from 3 knots to over 4 knots according to Phil's GPS. They are so patient for making adjustments in their paddling to accommodate my situation. The head games are the worst enemy! About twenty minutes have gone by. Convincingly, I paddle up to Mike now sure of my ability

to dig deep to find more energy. The rest helped a lot so I'm taken off the rope to be nursed in while hearing Phil and Mike's "Focus on your bearing" and other tips for encouragement. The repeated quote "Only twenty more minutes to go" was derived from this weekend's comedy.

Harwich Port is directly in front of us thanks to their accurate navigation. I realize my perception simply needed to change because right now I'm not even thinking of the fatigue. I will strictly answer this rise of determination to paddle my kayak to the very end using all my devices. We've been planted in our boats for 8 hours now!

Just before the storm, we're effortlessly entering the harbor and my face hurts from smiling so much. What a relief to be landing now! This gratification is a gift of personal fulfillment to always hold onto. I made it! I learned a great deal from this tremendous experience. Much praise is due to both Phil and especially Mike for their supportive assistance throughout this entire journey.

After 8 hours inside the kayak, standing up feels strange. We have the opportunity to use the marina's facilities before we pack up and leave. I float over to the building. I go right into the handicap shower stall fully clothed, turn on the hot water, melt into my lap while seated on the bench, and collapse for a brief meditation. This moment is a simple yet glorious luxury for me. This adventure has left me speechless in disbelief of my accomplishment.

Please Note: I'd like to stress the point that it takes specific knowledge and valuable experience to undertake this type of trip. It is my experiential advice to truly have accurate self-knowledge of your ability and level of skill when choosing paddle trips. Although I've only been paddling for one year, I've had to spend time challenging myself with intense lessons from an expert kayaker. Through repetition of skills I'm learning that to excel at kayaking it is a constant work in progress.

Just after the final tug on the last boat strap, the rain poured down the very moment we hop inside Mike's truck. Good timing! Next mission: We need to go relax, eat a nice hot pizza pie, then find dessert! (The perfect ending.)

Thank you for joining me on this trip through my story. All of us share the passion of adding to the collection of stimulating experiences out in the elements of natural existence. It is my wish that kayaking may continue to give new life to your sense of adventure and foster a life-long discovery.

My deepest appreciation goes out to UEK - Thank You for Believing!

*In the Spirit of Kayaking, - Karen Duffy*

## CONNYPAK LIBRARY

This is the list of new items with the ACA commentary for each. I've viewed the Cold video, and it covers everything that the fellow wrote about in this month's newsletter—especially slowdown of logical thinking. I would be surprised if he had actually made it to shore if he had not been rescued. We definitely want to show it at a meeting.

I have also seen most of the Performance Kayaking, Basics video and highly recommend it, too. It has great underwater shots of wet exit and rolling. It covers a wealth of topics and is a great overall kayaking information resource—J-leans for turning, bracing, navigation, rescues. I give it two thumbs up.

### BOOKS

*Canoeing and Kayaking Instruction Manual*, 1987, by Laurie Gullion. For both canoeing and kayaking, flatwater & whitewater, this text has set the standard for technical paddling instruction.

*Canoeing and Kayaking for Persons with Physical Disabilities Instruction Manual*, 1990, by Anne Wortham Webre and Janet Zeller. Assuming a basic knowledge of paddling, this manual explores the methods of instruction and equipment adaptations appropriate for paddlers with physical disabilities.

*Kayaking*, 1995, by Kent Ford, Outdoor Pursuits Series. The ACA's national instruction program recommends this beautifully photographed, clearly illustrated, and well-written book for beginning students in both whitewater and coastal kayaking.

*The ACA's Knots for Paddlers*, 1995, by Charlie Walbridge. From rooftop tie-downs to river rescues, Walbridge brings his safety and rescue experience to bear on the most useful river knots and how to tie them.

*Paddle America*, Third Edition, 1996, by Nick and David Shears. The comprehensive state-by-state guide to outfitters, liveries, rental organizations, and paddling spots that we use in the ACA office to answer queries about where to paddle.

### VIDEOS

*Cold, Wet and Alive* (22 min) An internationally acclaimed collaboration between the ACA and filmmaker Russ Nichols, this video follows a group of early season paddlers down a cold-water stream and documents their encounter with the silent killer hypothermia. Recommended for all paddlers,

especially those who push the limits of the paddling season

*Performance Kayaking: The Basics and Beyond* A comprehensive, indexed reference for both beginning and experienced paddlers, with clear demonstrations of strokes, rescue, basic navigation, and general knowledge. Provides an excellent overview of the diversity of sea kayaking - Nora Galvin

*Please contact Nora if you want to take out any books or videos. They will also be at our meetings which resume in the Fall. You can borrow them for free.*  
galvinn@bmg.com 860-704-8397

Hi Folks, Just a quick note to keep you up to date on the club. I remember thinking in January that we would surely hit the three hundred mark by summers end, ...well we did! Our membership now stands at 331 and growing! It's also time to start thinking about the Fall/Winter meetings starting in Oct. Any suggestions as always are welcome; perhaps someone has a slide show they would like to share? We are also updating the paddle schedule on the website accurately for the upcoming month so check it out. We have also added a link to Northeast Paddlers Message Board; this is an excellent resource for all aspects of paddling so, check it out as well. Hope to see you on the water - Ed Milnes

## CONNYPAK MESSAGE SYSTEM (203) 603-4615

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

### Note:

All paddlers on ConnYak trips must wear the appropriate CG approved Personal Flotation Device and wear a spray skirt. The boat and equipment must meet CG requirements, including a signaling device (whistle or horn). All paddlers are responsible for their own safety, including dressing for immersion. 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)



## AUGUST SCHEDULE

14th - Stonnington/RI - Coastal  
14th - Lyme - Coastal  
28th - Guilford - coastal

### BARN ISLAND -

SATURDAY, AUG. 14 - STONNINGTON

Paddle to Watch Hill Harbor to Napatree Point with lunch on Sandy Point.

Pack lunch. Launch at 10 a.m.

### DIRECTIONS -

I-95 to exit 91 in Stonnington. At the end of the exit ramp, continue straight across on to the road in front of the ramp. Take your 3rd rt. on to Farm Home Rd. and continue until you hit Rt 1. Take a rt. and a left at the light. Take your first immediate rt. off that to the Barn Island Launch. In the water by 10:00 a.m.

### FOUR MILE RIVER - LYME

AUG. 21 COASTAL PADDLE

Rocky area with islands.

### DIRECTIONS -

I-95 to exit 71, go south on Four Mile River Road (about 0.7 mile) to Rt. 156, turn right, short distance to the sign for boat launch (Oakridge Drive) to the left, take next right to the launch area. (pack lunch)  
In the water by 10:00 a.m. (pack a lunch)

### GUILFORD / THIMBLES

SATURDAY AUG. 28 - GUILFORD

JOSHUA COVE LAUNCH

In the water by 10:00. Paddle around the thimbles with lunch at Shell Beach Cove then around Schems Head area.

### DIRECTIONS -

Exit 56, I-95. Head towards Thimbles. Left at stop sign on 146 until the next stop sign. (3 - miles). Take a right. 1/2 mile bear right at the (V). First right on Old Schems Head Rd. and next Rt. on Trolley Lane. Launch is at the end.

All itineraries can change due to conditions.

### PADDLING THIMBLE ISLANDS

It's been asked when launching at Stoney Creek in Branford, to cross the channel right away and proceed down the right side of the channel to avoid being near the tour boats. You can cross at the first green can if you want to head East.

## CLASSIFIED

Feathercraft K1 Expedition Single (foldable kayak) 15' 11" x 25", costs \$ 3850.00 sacrifice \$3000.00. Never in the water. 203-772-3174.

Sealution—Kevlar w/rudder, blue/white. Includes Werner paddle, Spray Skirt, Bilge pump, Paddle float, Yakima saddles. \$1500. 860-485-9173

Primex kayak cart. Paid \$119, asking \$80. Used twice. 203 426-8286

Necky Looksha IV - Kevlar, 43lbs, 16'6" x 22". Blue/white-yellow hatch covers. Exc. cond. \$1700. Day (860) 243-7711 or Evenings (860) 496-8784.

Yakima rack system. Includes 3- 58" bars with 6 raingutter towers including locks. \$130. (860) 439-0882

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

Necky Looksha IV, 4 Yrs old. Plastic. Rudder, Bulkheads, hatches. \$875. 203-481-1881.

Wilderness Systems Pamlico: 14'9", red. Double or single seat kayak, skirt. \$700. 860-684-6168 or lynes@uconnvm.uconn.edu. ecky

P&H Capella, new Sept. 98, yellow, new condition, \$1,150. quality poly kayak. 401-596-4482

Canoe, Bell NorthStar, Kevlar/Carbon, 16'6" by 34 1/2" center seat, 2 paddles. used twice. \$1,450. 401-596-4482

Necky Looksha Sport, 14' 4" x 22.5", rudder, bulkheads, hatches, granite color. \$800. 860-537-1157

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

Malone Greenlander paddle & storm paddle. New. \$150. ea. 413-593-6167

Necky Santa Cruz, bulkheads, spray skirt, very stable, paid \$700. sell for \$495. 860-827-1111

Dagger Transition, whitewater boat, red, airbags, bulkhead footrest, nose cone, a bit fuzzy but rock solid \$400W (860) 441-8416 H (860) 535-8416

Wold Ski Custom Terminator, Surf Kayak, Kevlar, 29 lbs, green over yellow, will do fantastic things in the waves. \$500 W (860) 441-8416 H (860) 535-8416

Serratus sm/med Pro PFD yellow/orange. 1 rear/3 front pockets - \$75.00, sm ExtraSport PFD - \$25.00, BetsieBay Kayak Greenland Paddle - \$95.00. Call 860-529-4612 6pm-9pm.

Necky Nootka - 22' tandem sea kayak, double hatches, kevlar, brand new. Cost \$3500. will sacrifice for \$2500.00 Call 860-456-0558.

Blue aquaterra keowee. Good condition. Second child seat. Stable. \$295. Call 453-2870.

Send newsletter articles or classifieds to:  
Jay Babina e-mail: jbabina@snet.net  
7 Jeffrey Lane, N. Branford, CT 06471  
203-481-3221 Fax 203-481-1136

## KAYAK SKILLS & ROLLING

Urban Eskimo Kayaking - Mike Falconeri  
*Skills Workshops, Eskimo Rolling, Safety & Rescue throughout July.*  
Call for specifics - Mike at 203-284-9212

## 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. Members can join the ACA with a club discount for \$15 which entitles you to full insurance coverage on trips as well as a full subscription to PADDLER Magazine. (a \$15 subscription)

Send inquiries to: Ed Milnes  
35 Hampton Park, Branford, CT 06405  
e-mail: Connyak@mindspring.com

Website: mindspring.com/~connyak

Please contact the Newsletter when items are sold.



# ConnYak

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

c/o Ed Milnes  
35 Hampton Park  
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