

Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network Newsletter

Volume 1, Number 2
November 1992



We have had a splashing start with a growing membership (currently at 36), an active newsline, monthly meetings, several trips and more to come this winter. Thanks to all members for your support and for making this happen.

Thanks especially to Jack Flanagan for getting us started and putting together our first newsletter which is still drawing in new memberships weekly; to David Sanford for the use of his office space for meetings; to Bill Ridlon, Treasurer, for handling our finances; to Jennifer Begel, Martha McCluskey and Tom Bergh for information and advice on liability issues; to Ted Myers for xeroxing the newsletters; to Judith Mulligan for handling memberships; to Rob Travis for loaning us his answering machine; to Albert Kolodgi for allowing me to twist his arm into agreeing to show his Newfoundland slides at our October meeting (They were great!); to Jeff Wescott for adopting us an island (more on that later) and for faithfully participating in all our meetings; to Lee Bumsted for hosting planning meetings and for her overall enthusiasm; to Chris Robinson for carefully proofreading this newsletter. Many thanks, also, to all of you who contributed to this newsletter. Please understand that, as editor of this publication, I had to make some revisions, mainly for purposes of space.

bc



What's Happening ? (Call the Newsline for updates)

***** 874-2640 *****

Thursday, December 10, 7:00 PM

Planning Meeting at Barbara Carter's in Portland / RSUP 772-7750

Friday, December 11, 6:30 PM

Network Potluck at Mike Detscher's in Freeport / RSUP 865-9301

Sunday, January 10, 10 AM 'til Noon

Open House/Pool Session at the YWCA, Spring St., Portland

(more info on this under "Pool Sessions")

Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays throughout the winter

David Sanford is interested in paddling / 767-7135

What's Not Happening?

Thanksgiving Morning, 9:00 AM at South Freeport Town Dock

Jeff Wescott regrets that he will not be paddling Thanksgiving morning as announced at the October meeting. He will be out of town. Of course others may wish to gather there anyway to paddle thankfully.

SMSKN MEMBERS BECOME "PARENTS"

Stewards, that is, to an island on the Maine Island Trail. We agreed at our last Network meeting to adopt an island in Muscongus Bay. Jeff Wescott met with Karen Stimson, Trail Keeper for the Maine Island Trail Association, and Crow was the island of choice. The purpose of MITA's Adopt-An-Island program is to assure that each island on the trail has at least one steward to visit it, monitor its use, help keep it in good shape and report to the MITA office any pertinent needs or observations. We will have more information on Crow/Muscongus and the Adopt-An-Island program in the spring newsletter.

The Maine Island Trail Association is a worthwhile organization to join if you treasure the Maine coast. MITA offers valuable information and many opportunities for involvement in the preservation of the islands. (See Membership Application on last page)

Pool Sessions

Michael Morrison recommended the YWCA pool for winter practice sessions. He and Amy Tchao have rented the pool in the past and found Tom Dougherty, Director of Recreation, enthusiastic about kayakers using the pool. I spoke with Tom, and he is interested in helping us set up pool times. The pool is easily accessible; a car can pull right up to the door into the pool area. There is room for 3 sea kayaks and 2 river kayaks in the pool at one time.

Availability: Weeknights 8:30-10:30 PM OR Saturday and Sunday mornings/afternoons

Cost: \$40./hr or \$50. for 2 hours (This is for the pool, NOT per person)

Reservations: Call Tom one week before the date desired -- 874-1130.

On Sunday, January 10, 10AM to Noon, the Network has reserved the pool for an Open House. There will be both river and sea kayaks available for use. This will be an opportunity for members to come check out the pool, to meet other members, to practice some skills or just to watch. Locker rooms with saunas will also be available. Donations, to help defray the cost of the rental, will gratefully be accepted.

Here are some organizations offering classes in paddling skills, rescue techniques and rolling. What a great way to improve/increase your skills this winter. Why not get some training and then schedule some pool sessions at the Y to practice what you've learned?

Maine Island Kayaking Co., Peaks Island, 766-2373

H2Outfitters, Orr's Island, 833-5257

L.L. Bean Discovery Program, 865-4761 ext. 7800

HELP ! We need you.

Call Barbara Carter, 772-7750, if you can help with any of the following:

*Organizing the Open House at the Y on January 10

*Graphics for the newsletters

*Planning a club event for February

*Items for publication in the next newsletter (trip stories, book reviews, articles of interest etc.)

PADDLING TALES

Labor Day Weekend on Casco Bay

Bill Ridlon

I awoke Labor Day morning on Whaleboat Island. We'd had two days of good paddling through Casco Bay, and I was looking forward to a fine late summer day for our return trip to Portland. I looked out of my tent and saw....fog. I turned on the weather radio - no mention of major fog banks. I couldn't see Harpswell or any of the surrounding islands. So much for a leisurely paddle back to East End Beach.

The trip had started so differently. Three days earlier David Eaton, from the Boston Sea Kayak Club, and I had planned our three-day trip after connecting through the Network News Line. We met at East End Beach in Portland and launched by mid-morning on Saturday. By mid-afternoon we landed on the north side of the Punch Bowl on Jewell Island. We explored the observation towers and tunnels on the island returning to the Punch Bowl to camp for the night.

Sunday dawned somewhat cloudy. By 9:30 we shot out into the surf and headed north to Eagle Island through a calm sea. Eagle is a state-managed island that is the former home of Admiral Peary. The house exhibits much memorabilia from Peary's Arctic trips. Peary's house and the rest of the island kept us entertained for the balance of the morning.

After lunch it was an easy paddle to Whaleboat Island, a long thin island off the western side of Harpswell. We arrived to find the owner mowing the center of the island. We found that he was very friendly and allowed low impact camping. After setting up our tents we paddled to Harpswell for supper at the Dolphin Restaurant. We returned to Whaleboat for a pleasant evening under the stars, a half moon and the glow of lights from Portland, Freeport and Brunswick.

When Monday dawned cool and foggy we had to evaluate our options for returning safely. David and I plotted our course back to Portland, from island to island, by writing compass headings on the map for each leg of our trip. Fortunately David had done this before, and I took comfort in that knowledge... until we plotted our heading from Stockman Island to a red navigational buoy. That worried me. I thought we could find an island in the fog without being right on our heading, but a buoy? We'd better be accurate!

Shortly, bearings were plotted, equipment was stowed and off we went into the fog. Visibility varied between one quarter and half a mile so traveling south along Whaleboat was simple. But then it came time to take the leap (of faith) across Broad Sound to Stockman. We started off on our first heading. Fifteen minutes passed - no island. Twenty minutes - no island. Had I gotten the heading wrong? Was David not keeping us on the right heading? If we veered too far to the west we'd hit Great Chebeague Island. But would we know it? I wasn't sure. If we veered too far south we'd probably come upon an island - Bangs, Stave, Ministerial, maybe even Cliff. But how would we know which one? Finally David announced what I'd been anxiously waiting for, "I think I see it". Sure enough, there was an island off to our right. It had the right shape and characteristics to be Stockman. I was still worried though. The next mark was the red buoy.

Then we started to get lucky; the fog lifted a bit, and there was the buoy jut ahead of us. It got easy then. We headed down the eastern shore of Chebeague, across to Little Chebeague and down into Hussey Sound between Long and Peaks Islands where we broke out of the fog for good.

It had been a successful trip. As we paddled in to East End Beach I was ready to start planning the next one!

Island Clean Up / Coast Week -- October 4

Jeff Wescott

Sunny, 50 degrees F., winds out of the NNW at 10-15 knots. Five of us departed Cousins Island at 9:45 AM and headed for Basket Island. A little problem was had with the phenomenon of weathercocking, but not so bad as to stop us in the pursuit of garbage.

After landing on the west side beach the first priority was taken care of -- FOOD. Then we split up and collected four bags of "sea stuff" leaving behind a couple nice hunks of lumber. Dunkin' Doughnuts' "The Big One" seemed to be the coffee cup of choice to throw overboard. Then we discussed the strong winds on the crossing over to Little Chebeague Island. After tossing around our options, we decided to all go together.

We coasted over to Little Chebeague with the wind at our backs and proceeded to walk the entire perimeter of the island finding most of the junk in the coves of the W-SW sides of the island. Later we found out that MITA had been there the previous day; that was why it was so clean. However, we did manage to collect three more bags.

The paddle back was the hardest part of the whole trip because of the good ol' wind. We all agreed the stretch from the tip of Cousins back to the bridge seemed to take forever. Total trip distance -- 8.0 nautical miles.

Thank yous were passed along from the folks at MITA. I, also, would like to thank all of you who came along.

Columbus Day Weekend at Mooselookmeguntic Lake

Barbara Carter

Three of us* braved the stormy weather, determined to view the fiery foliage under a full moon. Sunday afternoon was quite remarkable on the lake. After setting up our Arabian Knights' tent structure on the shore of Mooselookmeguntic, we launched for an exploration. Students Island, off the south shore of the lake, was beautiful, with hemlock forests, beaches, birches and a grassy knoll from which to watch the sunset. Campsites were plentiful there, with firepits and privies. We'd like to reserve a couple of sites for a group outing sometime next summer. As we left Students behind us, heading across the lake, the sinking sun lit the leaves afire, one of those unforgettable sights which reminds you why you are here.

We saw only one other person all afternoon, another kayaker, whose family owns a cottage on the lake. He informed us that, even in the summer, the lake is fairly quiet, and we were the only other kayakers he'd ever seen there.

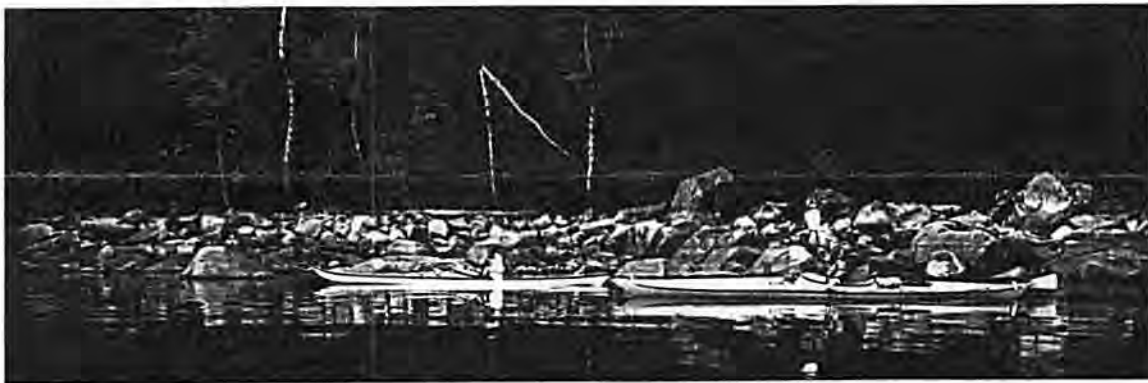
A raucous splashing and strange "laughter" in the center of the lake caught our attention. An investigation led us to a rather large gathering of loons (30 or more) who appeared to be having their annual fall conference before departure to the sea for the winter.

After returning to our "camp" a rather thick cloud cover formed which would surely conceal the moon from our view. A chill set in, and we donned several more layers of clothing before cooking dinner. Early to bed it was for this threesome. No sooner were the dishes dry, all the gear tucked away and three pooped campers snug in their sleeping bags than it began to rain. It rained all night and the following day.

One of us awoke feeling quite miserable with a fever. That cinched it; we were going home. On our way to Rangeley for breakfast we nearly lost one of the boats; it was hanging off the side of the truck, one end six inches from the ground, when it was spotted through the rearview mirror. After an hour of intensive engineering in retying the boats, we were on our way back to Portland.

The trip was a success despite the rain, the fever and the obscured moon; we paddled among beautiful fall colors, conferred with the loons and traveled in good company.

*Chris Robinson, Bill Ridlon and I



Joint Paddle with the Boston Sea Kayak Club -- October 24

Albert Kolodgi

As I left home I could tell that the weather was ready to do something. After driving only a mile, the rain started spattering my wind shield. When I reached East End Beach, I saw an unfamiliar kayaker waiting in his truck. Within 5 minutes, there were seven of us gathered, sharing introductions and smiles under a darkening, rain-filled sky. We made light of the weather as we headed for the northern tip of Great Diamond Island. On the way, I realized that only Rob Travis and I were from Maine; the rest were "from away". I was hoping that they weren't thinking we Mainers are wimps!

We continued around Great Diamond and crossed to the northern tip of Peaks Island. We skirted the shore to the yachting club, where we stopped to pick from the three varieties of apple trees that grow there. Some nibbled and sampled, while one person picked about 5 pounds; I knew that my kayak would handle better with a fruit ballast. Next, we headed for Jones' Landing Restaurant as the wind and rain picked up...yes, a head wind. Once again, we didn't mind, although I thought I heard some unrepeatable comments about the weather. The rest worked to maintain their cheerful smiles.

We all grabbed our paddles with a passionate grip and pushed on. Soon we were walking into the restaurant where we were met with interesting looks as we dripped and slogged our way to our table. We quietly ordered hot food and drinks (of course, being old salts, we all had fish chowder). As we were about to head back, two of us who apparently enjoy ferries decided to return by one. [Ed. note: remember what they say about discretion and valor...] Since the rest of us didn't enjoy ferries that much, we with our boundless energy flexed our egos and rounded House Island, stopped at Fort Gorges, then returned to East End Beach. We were greeted by Barb who talked to us through the window of her heated car. [Ed. note: offering a cozy home and hot tea only blocks away]

Despite the weather, I truly think a good time was had by all, and I hope that we can share more paddling with the Boston Sea Kayak Club.

Network Trip Paddling Guidelines

At our September meeting we had a discussion on paddling safety. We generated a list of what is advised for each Network trip. The following equipment is advised for your individual safety as well as for that of the entire group. Additionally, because we are a network with membership, the issue of liability must be considered. It is imperative that we do everything possible before setting out on the water to ensure a safe trip. Good judgement is our best protection. So here it is.

***Each paddler is responsible for his/her own safety and assumes full responsibility for the risks of kayaking and for individually judging his/her own abilities and experience. Self rescue skills are essential. Do not count on being saved by someone else.**

***Tide and weather information should be known before launching.**

***A float plan should be discussed among the group before launching. This may include destinations, compass readings, whistle signals and how the group is going to paddle (buddy system, small groups, a leader and a sweep etc.).**

***It is every member of the group's responsibility to consider these guidelines and make prudent choices.**

Advised equipment for each paddler:

PFD	pump
sprayskirt	compass
paddle float	flares
proper flotation	whistle
wetsuit or drysuit	spare paddle
water-proof light	water
complete change of clothes	reflective tape on boat, paddle and PFD

Advised equipment per every 6 paddlers:

chart (advisable for everyone to have at least a xerox copy)
first aid kit
tow line
weather/VHF radio
strobe light

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Good judgement may be our best protection, but here's more on that subject from Ted Myers...

I'm sitting at my desk, and in front of me is a pile of papers pertaining to a subject none of us like to talk about.... **LIABILITY.** With the ever increasing number of lawyers and willingness to file lawsuits over issues of negligence, it's something we could ignore, but shouldn't. We, therefore, have sought legal information and advice. Three members who are attorneys (and one a professional guide) have generously taken the time to talk with the planning committee about this issue.

It comes down to this: Yes, there is a potential liability risk to all members in the event of an accident (worst-case scenario), but there are three levels of protection that can be taken. One is the use of a waiver form for members and trip participants to sign, which results in one surrendering (theoretically) any right to sue; this is the easiest, and a form is being developed at this time. The second level of protection is incorporation, which sounds like a big--and expensive-- deal, but really isn't; the planning committee is looking into this for 1993. The last level of protection is purchasing liability insurance for the members; this *is* a big and expensive deal, and is not being considered at this time.

So, that's where we are with things right now. The waiver form should be available for consideration at the next planning meeting on Thursday, December 10. Anyone is welcome to attend; they are always open meetings for all members who want to participate.

## LOGO CONTEST

Come on you artists out there, we need your creativity. Bring your entries to the Potluck in December, and we'll pick one in time for the next newsletter.

*The next newsletter?* Yes, we will have one out in January.

Deadline for entries will be January 10,

**Mail to:** Barbara Carter, 7 Gilbert Lane, Portland, ME 04101

## What Else is Happening?

**Boston Sea Kayak Club's monthly trips -- Saturdays, 11AM launchings**  
We are welcome. Call Jim Duff for more details / directions -- (617-224-0032)

November 21, Hingham Harbor, MA  
December 12, Stone Pier, West Gloucester, MA  
January 16, Pavilion Beach, Ipswich, MA



**Classifieds** \*\*Classified ads are free to members.\*\*

**FOR SALE** (Call Tom Bergh, Maine Island Kayaking Co., 766-2373)

### **Kayaks**

Skerrey by Valley Canoe Products. Fiberglass, 1 yr. old, pump, large stern hatch, retrac. skeg. 17' x 23". Green. \$1,350.

Arluk III. Kevlar/glass. Large cockpit, rudder, large hatches, 18' x 23 & 1/2". 2 yrs. old. Tan and green. \$1,650.

Seda Viking. Fiberglass, 3 yrs. old, 16.5' x 25", flat bottomed, stable, rudder. Red and white. \$750.

Seda Swift. Fiberglass, 3 yrs. old, 17' x 24", flat bottomed, large cockpit but low deck so fits women better, rudder. \$950.

### **Gear**

Assorted Northwest River Systems, Farmer John Wetsuits. \$50.

Rim sea kayak paddles. Feathered. 224-228 cm. \$40.

## MEMBERSHIP

The Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network is an informal association of paddlers interested in connecting with others who enjoy the sport of sea kayaking. Our purpose is to have fun while, at the same time, promoting safe and responsible practices. Each member is responsible for his/her own safety and well-being at all times when participating in group events. When taking part in activities organized through the Network, all participants agree to individually assume full responsibility for the risks of kayaking and for individually judging their own abilities and experience.

Dues are now \$7.00 for membership through May, at which time all memberships will be up for renewal.

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Membership Information Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network


Name: _____ Address: _____
 Town: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone(home): _____ (work): _____

Do you wish to have your phone number(s) listed on membership list?

Please describe your experience level and tell how far you might paddle on a typical day trip:

Please make checks for \$7.00 payable to the Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network and mail to:
 Bill Ridlon; PO Box 7442, DTS; Portland, ME 04112

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 Here are some more good ways to spend your \$.

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| <br><b>MAINE ISLAND TRAIL<br/>                 ASSOCIATION</b><br>Help Preserve — and Enjoy — Maine's Islands                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Maine Island Trail Association Membership Application</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> Please enroll me as a member in MITA. Benefits include the annual Guidebook, the Island Trail Newsletter, bimonthly Island News, invitation to all conferences. Cost: \$35 annually. Your contribution is tax deductible.<br><input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> MASTERCARD    EXP. _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> Check (payable to MITA) |
| The Maine Island Trail is a 325-mile-long small-boat waterway that winds among some of Maine's most spectacular coastal scenery. The route alone makes it a recreational asset of the highest quality, but the Maine Island Trail is more than that...<br><br>By promoting a high standard of stewardship among all users through education, outreach, publications, and volunteer service, the Maine Island Trail Association and its members help preserve Maine's wealth of pristine, wild islands for generations to come.<br><br>Membership begins at \$35, and members receive an annual Guidebook on low impact use, newsletters, and meet through events and conferences. To learn more about the Maine Island Trail Association, a division of the Island Institute, write MITA, 60 Ocean Street, Rockland, ME 04841, or call (207) 594-9209. | Please mail to:<br>Maine Island Trail Association, 60 Ocean St., Rockland, ME 04841<br>Name _____<br>Street _____<br>City _____ State ____ Zip _____<br>Telephone (    ) _____<br><br>With an annual gift of \$100 a business is considered a corporate member of MITA.                                                                                                                                                                                   |

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