

SOUTHERN MAINE

SEA KAYAKING NETWORK

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 4794 Portland, Maine 04112 January 1997

MISSION STATEMENT

The Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network is an association of paddlers interested in connecting with others who enjoy the sport of sea kayaking. Our purpose is to promote safe and responsible practices and, at the same time, have fun.

EXPAND
YOUR
KAYAKING
HORIZONS

From the President's Desk

by Jon Swan

Hello Paddlers'

The holidays are passed and I am starting to think about the upcoming paddling season. There are so many possibilities that I sometimes don't know where to begin. The network's board is starting to get together activities to kick off the new year. Among other things, we are working on pool sessions, slide shows, and trips.

Our next general membership meeting will take place on February 18th at Norumbega Outfitters. The meeting will be at 7 P.M. The speaker, Olaf Malver, is the Sea Kayaking manager for Mountain Travel Sobek, a California-based adventure travel company. Mr. Malver has kayaked in world wide locations as well as climbed more than 200 mountains. His slide talk promises to be a cure for mid winter blues.

Note on your calendars that Marcia Feller will be hosting a pot luck dinner on Saturday, March 1st. More details will be available at the meeting and on the newslines.

Every year at this time the call goes out for nominations for the April election of new board officers. There are six offices; president, treasurer, secretary, and three members-at-large. The new board will take office in May; the current board welcomes the participation of new faces.

The board would like to have a full slate of activities planned in advance of the warm weather season. Our goal is to have at least one activity every weekend; both Saturday and Sunday events would be better, and it would be ideal to have some mid-week items as well. If you have an

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Remembering Last Summer. . .

by Debra Nichols

July 3, 1996

The phone call went something like this:

"Did you listen to the weather?"

"We're going"

"But the weather man said..."

"We're going."

So at 2:30 we pulled out of S. Portland, Maine and headed for Camden in a dense and ominous fog. The rain didn't start until 9:00. At least we were in the tent. It came down in buckets. Thursday dawned still in a fog. After 2

hours at the Laundromat, we headed, optimistically, for our put-in at Naskeag Point. I couldn't believe there was an outfitter there about to take off with two folks from "away". We could not see 25' ahead of us, but we know what the ocean looks like and with a four day paddle planned, it didn't matter if we spent the first day fogged in. But to take a "4-hour kayak tour of the beautiful Maine coast" in that stuff, just didn't make sense. Oh well.

We did well getting to the end of the Point, then started navigating by compass to point "B", which was a success. We could see a lobster buoy or two as we went along, but even though we were near a number of islands, nothing else was visible. On our second compass setting, we expected to reach Sheep Island in 10 minutes. After 20 we became concerned. Momentarily, the fog thinned and we did see land off to our right,

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Letter from the Editor

by Debra Nichols

It's a new year and a time for new beginnings. As Nikki Kayser steps down from this job & passes the pencil to me, I am in awe of what she has accomplished. Editing this (perhaps any) newsletter, is a real "hurry-up-and-wait" process, or maybe, better put, "wait-and-hurry-up".

On behalf of the SMSKN board, I would like to thank Nikki for all she has done this past year. I hope to follow in her footsteps and provide the network with an informative, creative, and interesting collection of writings.

The newsletter is for us and about us. It is a place to share the kayak adventures we've had, a place to catch up on the meetings we couldn't attend, the place to find out what's on the internet that pertains to kayaking. We are adding some new things and changing some of the regular columns.

In this publication you'll find "The Catch From The Net" by Bill Ridlon. He is a subscriber to Wavelength, a list server for yakers on line. There is a wealth of good information to be mined from the mountain of chat that goes on. Bill has gleaned the

the best of it to pass on to you.

Lee Bumsted, SMSKN librarian, will be giving us a review of new books the network has acquired.

Mark Daniele will let you know what went on at the meetings you haven't been able to attend.

Steve Winter will tempt & inspire you to broaden your kayaking experiences by reporting on some of the interesting places described in "The Box".

And, finally, you the readers & paddlers, will be sending some reports about where you have gone & what you have learned.

If you have a favorite kayak tip, a great recipe, or even a question we can research for you, please get in touch.

I hope you will enjoy what we have put together for you. Here's to a great new year.

See you on the water.



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Founded in 1992

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The newsline is available 24 hours a day.

From the President's Desk (Continued from pg # 1)

activity in mind, please share it with one of the board members. If you are willing to lead a trip, we will include it in the schedules that are to be mailed in the upcoming months. The next newsletter in March or April should have the first of the season's schedules.

Once again, we are planning an extended stay in the Deer Isle area. We already have a house reserved for two weeks starting on June 14th. The house can accommodate up to five people at a time. We anticipate that week-long shares will be about \$100 per person. Due to strong preliminary interest, I am trying to arrange for a second waterfront house for the same time period. We will have a sign up sheet for both houses available at the 2/18/97 meeting. As before, we will operate on a first come, first serve basis. The people on the top of the list will be asked to place a deposit to reserve their space. If you are interested, more information will be available at the meeting, or you may contact me directly. We hope to have all arrangements made by March.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at the upcoming meeting and at Marcia's pot-luck dinner.

The new year promises to be full of adventures. Let's all work together to make it the best and safest paddling season yet.

Jon Swan

Bits and Pieces

A Pool Session?

On Saturday April 5th SMSKN will be hosting a pool session at the YWCA in Portland. We have reserved the facility from 7:30PM to 9:30PM and hope to see many of you there. If you don't have your boat out of storage yet, NO PROBLEM! A few white water boats will be on hand for rolling practice and some sea boats will be there for rescue work. A pre-pool snack will be arranged at a Portland eatery if people are interested.



Book Reviews

by Lee Burnsted

The SMSKN library continues to grow! We have two recent additions. Bill Ridlon donated his copy of *My Old Man and the Sea: A Father and Son Sail Around Cape Horn*. This exciting tale of sailing 17,000 miles is told in the alternating voices of authors David and Daniel Hays. The boat they are sailing is all of 25 feet, and is one they built themselves. They tell of the personal and sailing challenges they face, living in close quarters for nearly a year.

The Network recently purchased *Fundamentals of Kayak Navigation* by David Burch, to fill a hole in our collection. As Burch points out,

kayakers face challenges different from other mariners because of our boats' small size and susceptibility to tides, currents, and wind, so it's wise to learn about kayak-specific navigation. Burch's thorough book covers such topics as selecting and reading nautical charts, compass use, wind effects on boat speed, determining your location, using navigation electronics, predicting tide and current effects, and choosing landing sites. He discusses navigating in traffic, night, and fog. There's much more to kayaking than knowing how to paddle and roll!

CHANGES

The Board of Directors has decided to include e-mail addresses and boat types on the phone list in the newsletter. This decision is reflected in this newsletter and in the membership application/renewal form. If you would like your e-mail address and/or boat listed in the next newsletter, please contact Bill Ridlon at outdoors@biddeford.com.



Holiday Get-Together

On December 8th a potluck was held at Mark Daniele's house in Freeport. Over a dozen people attended the event and dined on an impressive variety of dishes. The selections ranged from homemade beer to a chocolate dessert that would be worth rolling a boat in ice water to get to (fortunately we didn't have to). Hopefully more members will hold potlucks in the future so we will remain a well fed organization.



compiled & edited by Bill Ridlon

CATCH FROM THE NET

Here are a few hints to add to your list:

To keep neoprene and other gear smelling fresh, add a drop of your favorite shampoo (sans conditioner) to the wash water. . . . Try drying your wetsuit in your home drier at low for 5 min., or air fluff for longer. . . . If you don't like the plastic taste of the water in your bottle, try adding a squeeze of fresh lemon juice. Warning. Do not insert an entire lemon wedge. They can be difficult to remove. . . . Store milk jugs filled with water and a dish pan or bucket in your car. Park in the sun. After a paddle you can rinse the salt water from your tired limbs using the sun warmed water and a sponge. Keep a tube of lip protector in your PFD pocket. Use it often so you can comfortably eat Mexican or Indian food after paddling. . . . When your fiberglass kayak starts to look scruffy, polish it up with car wax. . . . Use acetone soaked towel to remove unsightly residual duct tape adhesive from your fiberglass kayak. . . . Restore colorful glory of gelcoat with 3M pads and liquid rubbing compound. . . . Periodically check deck bungies, toggle cords, and rudder cables for wear. Replace and tighten when necessary. . . . Store your tube of Aquaseal in the freezer (away from the cake frosting) to prevent hardening. Allow 15 min. to thaw. Do not microwave. . . . It's easier to put on and take off your neoprene booties if you wear thin polypro socks. More comfortable, too, and perhaps less smelly. . . . Keep a cooler of snacks, soft drinks, & chocolate in the trunk of your car. Hand out the food and drinks to all after a paddle.

from Barbara Kossy Richmond, California: Gateway to Marin bkossy@jgc.opc.org

. . . and condensed from "Whales on the Net":

Those helium balloons that are such an exciting part of many celebrations look like jelly fish to many sea creatures, once the balloon has come to rest in the ocean. If ingested, it can cause intestinal blockage and result in certain death. Other dangerous items to watch for and clean up are cellophane wrappers and garbage bags.

Remembering Last Summer. . . (Continued from page #1)

but there was a house on it -- this was not good. We paddled along the shore line until we could align chart and land and realized we had missed our target and had been headed out to sea! Fortunately the fog stayed thin long enough for us to find our way to Sheep without any other complications.

This new MITA (Maine Island Trail Association) island is a delight, even in the damp fog. The trees dripped constantly, but the rain had finally stopped. The rest of the day we watched the fog lift and close in repeatedly. Although it was the 4th, it was too cloudy for fireworks.

Friday AM still looked dismal, but hey, we were on vacation, and, as I said before, we're accustomed to weather like this in Maine. So we set off for Steve's Island just north of Isle Au Haut. The weather cleared as we went along and the passing islands gradually changed from misty outlines to identifiable land masses. We paddled past Lazy Gut and then out around Saddleback, Phoebe and Enchanted. At the end of the 3 hours, we saw fog begin devouring distant islands once again. One island after another dissolved into a gray bank. By the time we were at Wreck Island, Steve's was completely gone. Bill said, "It should be right ahead, you hold back and watch Wreck and keep an eye on me, I'll paddle ahead, I should be able to see Steve's in a minute."

Well, that was the freakiest moment of the trip. With the fog thickening, I could only imagine looking back at Wreck and then turning around to find my partner had been swallowed up in the mist. No problem, though, by the time the thoughts were out, he had spotted our destination. We set up camp and settled in.

Saturday morning started with a small craft advisory, winds gusting up to 30 knots, 3-6 foot seas...great! But the day was clear, we could see for miles. We decided to cancel our planned hike on Isle Au Haut and head towards Deer Isle where there was more protection. A good choice as the wind was whippin'!

We reached the second Sheep Island (between Sunshine and Whitmore Neck) an hour later. With the wind pushing us along, it was a fast paddle. After some exploration, we found a great spot to set up the tent, out of the wind and somewhat protected from the threatening thunder storm. Again, the dark weather passed so we decided to hike the perimeter of this 45 acre island. As darkness fell, we took another stroll. The weather was finally feeling like summer. A warm dry breeze was keeping the mosquitoes away and drying the mildew from between our toes. A flash in the distance caught our attention. Finally, the much hoped for FIREWORKS! It was great! They must have been in Vinalhaven judging from the lack of sound. We sat at the top of a ledge and enjoyed watching for 20 minutes. Just as they were having the grand finale, Stonington began its display. For another 20 minutes we were awed by the celebration of America's birth. This time we were close enough to hear the muffled booming followed by an echo as the noise bounced off the islands.

Sunday dawned bright and clear. This was one of those days paddlers dream of. The return trip to Naskeag was as beautiful as can be imagined. We set course for Shabby Island and then swung back towards the mainland. We saw star fish crowded on rocks below the surface of the water, we saw baby seals lounging in the sun, we saw blue sky and a panorama of islands. All too soon we saw the Point. Once, we circled to see everything again, then entered the cove where we had parked. And before we had left the parking lot, we were talking about "next time....."

shirts T-Shirts T-Shirts T-Shirts
T-SHIRTS are still available. T-shirts in sizes large and extra large are left. The colors are Ash (grey), Natural, and Stone Washed Blue. Cost is \$12 each or two for \$20. Available from Jon Swan or at any meeting or pot-luck. Hurry since quantities are limited.

NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS ARE NEEDED

If you, or someone you know, is interested in serving as president, treasurer, secretary, or member-at-large of the network, contact any current officer or mail the nomination to the SMSKN mailbox listed on the cover of the newsletter by March 31.