

SOUTHERN MAINE

SEA KAYAKING NETWORK

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 4794 ° Portland, Maine ° 04112 ° May 1998

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

Notes from El Presidente

by Lee Bumsted

Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network members will be able to look forward to a great selection of group paddling trips this spring and summer, thanks to....SMSKN members! As you'll see on the enclosed calendars, many network members have already signed up to act as trip coordinators for paddles in May, June, and July. Trips are starting from some of our tried and true favorite put-ins, as well as from some brand new locations.

The reason we have this extensive selection of trips is because, at our April 6th general membership meeting, a number of members volunteered to either coordinate trips planned by the board of directors or offered up their own suggestions of great destinations. Hats off to all of you who are contributing to the success of our network by volunteering to be trip coordinators!! We all really appreciate your help. If you didn't get to sign up to coordinate a trip yet, there will be more chances!

At our May 18th meeting at the L.L. Bean retail store, we'll be looking for help setting up our August and September calendars, and filling in a few open spots in the earlier calendars. If you are unable to attend the meeting, but would like to sign up to run either an "unclaimed" planned trip or one of your own devising, please call Mark Daniele, our calendar keeper (865-9558).

If you haven't coordinated a trip before, please try to attend the May meeting, as we'll do a review of tips to make trips run smoothly. If you can't attend, please feel free to call me (799-1855) or one of the other board members prior to your first trip with any questions.

The board of directors election was held at the April meeting. I know you all are waiting with baited breath for the results....no, actually, I know you aren't, since all the positions were uncontested. But please welcome Bob Murray as our newest board member-at-large. He takes over for Marcia Feller. Thanks, Marcia, for your help

the past couple of years and for the wonderful potluck suppers you and Bob keep hosting! In other election news, Jon Swan takes over as secretary, and Mark Daniele is filling Jon's member-at-large spot. Dorry Shaw continues as treasurer, Cynde Clark as a member-at-large, and I'll still answer to "el presidente."

Speaking of the board of directors, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the board, as well as membership chair Bill Ridlon and newsletter editor Debra Nichols. They've been an enormous help to the network (and to me!) planning meetings, pool sessions, house rentals, the gear swap, and the paddling schedule. They do an outstanding job behind the scenes, whether it be tracking our finances or our members, sending out information to new members, or editing, producing, and mailing our newsletters and calendars. Thanks everyone!



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Letter From the Editor

A new season, and a new newsletter. My calendar is already full of trips for the '98 paddling season. Hope your season's paddling plans will include some of the destinations listed in this issue.

While driving to Portland last month, I tuned in a radio talk show that was interviewing Derek C. Hutchinson, author of *The Complete Book of Sea Kayaking*, among other books. He was visiting Maine and would be making a stop at Eastern Mountain Sports for a book signing the following Saturday.

I imagined showing up and having to nudge my way through the masses of local paddlers to get a minute with the man to ask... what? What one question could I ask that would interest the SMSKN readers? I pictured others trying to get the man's attention, asking *their* questions. Well, I needn't have worried. I arrived 15 minutes early only to find an almost empty EMS!

By the time Mr. Hutchinson came out to the book signing table, I was still the only paddler in the store! I introduced myself and asked if I might ask him a few questions for the SMSKN newsletter. He said he would be delighted. The first subject I was interested in was rolling.

"What's the best way to learn how to roll a kayak?" It seemed like a simple question to me. Well, Derek spent about 45 minutes showing me, with a paddle, 2 techniques to try at the upcoming pool session. He reviewed and explained them until he was sure I would be able to handle it. No one else came around the whole time. Finally another kayaker did come in and I turned Derek over to him.

The interview never went beyond that one question! Hopefully I will be able to roll my boat after this adventure! This man was charming, entertaining and gracious. I hope he will return to the area again soon. Next time maybe I'll get some of the other questions answered.

There are so many trips planned for the season, I am sure I will get to meet many of you over the summer. You'll know me by the note pad and pencil tucked into my PFD! If you see me coming, look out! You may be asked to write up a brief report of the day's activities for an upcoming issue of the newsletter.

Boat Repair Session

by Jon Swan

There was an early taste of spring weather on February 28th as eight SMSKN members met Sandy Martin and his staff at Lincoln Canoe and Kayak (located in Freeport at the end of Staples Point Road, by Winslow Park) for a look at how composite kayaks are molded and repaired. We saw the process of resin infusion on a kayak being built using a vacuum bag over the mold. This process results in a light weight boat since it uses only the minimum amount of resin needed to saturate the fiberglass or kevlar cloth.

Sandy also demonstrated some repairs of holes and scratches on fiberglass boats. We gained a number of practical tips for doing similar repairs at home. The techniques were so well explained, I think I will be able to try them myself.

If this opportunity ever comes up again, I recommend that you sign up at once. Thanks again to Sandy and the crew.

Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network Officers May 98-99

President

LEE BUMSTED 799-1855

Treasurer

DORRY SHAW 798-7915

Secretary

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The newsline is available
24 hours a day.

Call for updates on events.



PaddleWise...a new listserver

contributed by Ralph Diaz

If you are seeking good discussions and information on-line, you should sign on to an e-mail mailing list or listserver. Listservers offer some advantages to paddlers, experienced and novice alike. It is where you can ask about opinions on equipment or pick up safety and paddling tips. One of the best is also the newest, PaddleWise.

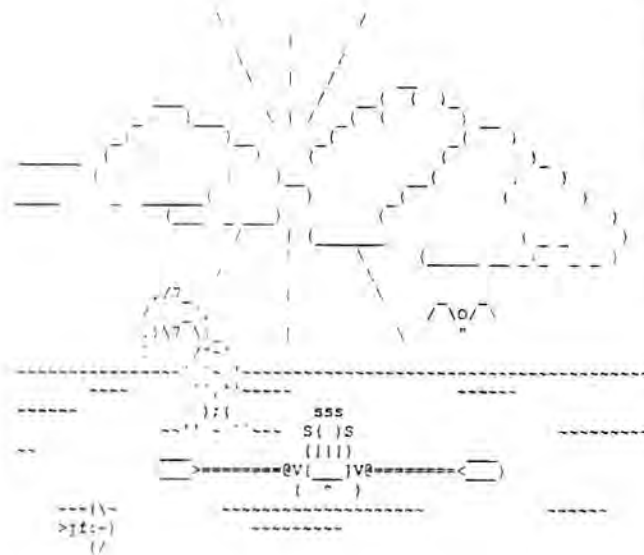
PaddleWise is a semi-moderated e-mail list that has lively, informative discussions on a number of paddling topics. It is international in scope and came about specifically to encourage a climate for useful interchange without the rancor and flaming that marred another list.

PaddleWise is the creation of Jackie Fenton, who is well known on the Net for her ASCII art on kayaking themes. The suffix "-wise" reminds subscribers that it is meant for paddling subjects but it also sets the lists theme, i.e. to help subscribers to paddle wise or wisely. And that is, indeed, what it has been doing. A number of subjects have been aired out with lots of insights and provocative thoughts including the uses of certain safety equipment, the judgment that goes into making some tough choices on dicier trips, issues of waivers and liability, winter paddling gear, etc.

To subscribe send e-mail to: PaddleWise-request@lists.intelnet.net with the word: *subscribe* in the body of the text. PaddleWise has a website with a growing archive of paddling articles on such subjects as those mentioned above: <http://www.gasp-seakayak.org/paddlewise>.

Catch from the 'Net

caught by Bill Ridlon



© Jackie Fenton
jackie@intelnet.net

Hot Showers!

Maine Coast Lodgings for Kayakers and Sailors

"If you are cruising the Maine coast and like the paddling, but would prefer to forgo sleeping bags and freeze-dried food in favor of cozy beds and full-course meals, Lee Bumsted's book provides thorough descriptions of shore-side lodgings. Imagine how much lighter your kayak would be if you replaced your camping gear with a credit card!"

-- From *Sea Kayaker* magazine, October, 1997

In *Hot Showers! Maine Coast Lodgings for Kayakers and Sailors*, you'll find:

- 135 mainland lodgings, ranging from snug bed and breakfasts to grand waterfront inns
- 20 lodgings on 9 offshore islands
- 28 coastal campgrounds providing water access
- Launch ramp and boatyard listings
- Trip-planning tips, mainland and offshore points of interest

To get your own copy of *Hot Showers!*, see Lee or call her at 799-1855, call *Andenreed Press* toll free at 888-315-

*"The gods do not subtract from man's allotted time,
the hours spent in paddling."*

revised proverb

Equipment Report*author withheld by request*

"Lady J" "This unique device allows women to urinate with a minimum amount of exposure. Designed for situations where restroom facilities are unavailable... Reusable. Price: \$6.99."

Thus read the catalog description in Campmor, (a catalog available by writing: P O Box 700-H, Saddle River, NJ 07458-0700.)

I was skeptical, but it was a gift so I decided to experiment with the thing. I have often been a mile from an island and felt the call of nature (maybe it's like dogs & fire hydrants...). I found by pulling the crotch of my bathing suit or shorts to one side, and combining the **"Lady J"** with the **"Portable Urinal"** (also sold by Campmor) I could "relieve" myself, in my boat, without anyone knowing what I was doing! (other than the fact that I had, momentarily stopped paddling for a few minutes).

Definitely something to try.

Survey Results*by Lee Bumsted*

Thanks to all of you who took the time to reply to our short member survey in April. The responses will help us as we plan our upcoming trips and events. Fully 30% of you answered our five questions. The tallies for the three multiple choice questions seem to indicate that about half of us like to island hop on nice days and half are happy cruising in winds of 10-20 knots in most kinds of weather. Many of us are interested in becoming more proficient in rescues, rolling, rough water paddling, navigation, paddling strokes, and trip leadership.

When asked for our favorite SMSKN event, we responded with 15 different answers. The event receiving the most votes, interestingly enough, centers on food and socializing: our potluck suppers! Other events receiving more than one mention were the Pumpkin Hunt, slide shows, the Stonington house rentals, and trips to Mooselookmeguntic and Monhegan.

The question asking for activities we'd like the network to host brought an even more varied set of replies. Twelve suggestions were for trips, with destinations ranging from Matinicus to Boston Harbor. The most original trip suggestion was for a catered island picnic (there's that food concept again!). Fifteen ideas were for instruction: 7 for on-water skills sessions, 2 for pool sessions, and 6 for talks on subjects including group paddling protocols, weather, foraging, and navigation.

SO MANY ISLANDS...

There are still a couple of openings in the Deer Isle House Rentals for the weeks of June 13-20 and 20-27.

We always have a great time up there and incredible paddling. Blue Hill, Acadia & Stonington are fun to explore.

Cost per week per person is \$110-\$125.

Call Dorry Shaw (798-7915) or Jon Swan (777-3626) FMI.

The houses are at the waters' edge and you can paddle out to the islands right from your doorstep or laze around on the porch with a mug of coffee or glass of wine.



Ever get a little seasick on the water?
Try sucking on a piece of candied ginger.

What's Happening?

Call the Newsline anytime for updates: 874-2640

Refer to the enclosed calendars for May, June, and July for a complete schedule of events with contact names and phone numbers. Here are some upcoming events which required more space to describe, or which come after July:

Saturday, May 16, 10:00 AM. **Potluck Lunch and Gear Sale.** Location: Cynde Clark's house in Freeport. New and used kayak and camping gear for sale. Bring outdoor equipment you no longer use and a dish to share. Lunch will be at noon. Gear can be dropped off prior to the sale by arrangement with Cynde. Directions: From Route 1, turn onto the South Freeport Road at the Big Freeport Indian. Continue 1.2 miles, Cynde's house is on the left, at the corner with Cheehawk Lane. FMI call Cynde at 865-3603.

Saturday, May 16, 7:30-9:30 PM. **Pool Session.** Portland YWCA. Bring your kayak and do a spring skills tune-up in the luxury of warm water! Free to members. Call Jon Swan (777-3626) to sign-up; please let him know if you'll be bringing your boat. Directions: On Spring Street across from the Holiday Inn by the Bay.

Monday, May 18, 7:00-9:00 PM. **General Membership Meeting.** Location: L.L. Bean Retail Store in Freeport, in the Outdoor Discovery Room upstairs from the boating department. We'll plan our August and September paddling calendar, and add some more trips for earlier in the summer. We'll review tips for trip coordinators and show a kayaking skills video.

Friday, May 22 through Monday, May 25. **Mount Desert Camping Trip.** Jon Swan (777-3626) will be coordinating the Memorial Day weekend trip to Somes Sound View Campground again this year. While reservations at the campground are probably not necessary, if you'd like to call to get a spot in advance, the owners' off-season number is 244-5452. The campground has access to Somes Sound, and there are several other put-ins in the vicinity.

June: **Stonington House Rentals.** We have reserved two houses with direct water access in Stonington. This is a fabulous paddling area! Call Dorry Shaw at 798-7915 or Jon Swan at 777-3626 for more information or to reserve one of the remaining spaces.

Friday, July 24 through Sunday, July 26. **Monhegan Island Trip.** Bill Ridlon is the contact for this trip, which features a two-night stay at an inn or B&B on Monhegan. Accommodations fill quickly in July, so make your plans early. This trip includes a 5-mile stretch of open ocean and conditions can be quite rough. Call Bill for more information (799-5161).

Saturday, August 8. **Pemaquid Area Paddle.** Elizabeth Ehrenfeld is coordinating this trip, call her for more information (781-3543).

Saturday, August 15, 10:00 AM. **Bethel Point, Cundy's Harbor.** Contact Lee Bumsted for more information (799-1855).

Saturday, September 5 through Monday, September 7. **Deer Isle Camping Trip.** Call Jon Swan FMI (777-3626).

Saturday, September 19 - Sunday, September 20. **Jewell Island Camping Trip.** Call Bill Ridlon FMI (799-5161).

Do you have a friend who loves to paddle but they don't belong to the Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network? Why not introduce them to the network by sharing your newsletter, inviting them to join one of our meetings or one of the great paddles we'll be having this summer? (There is a membership form on page 11 of this issue.)

My Friends & I Make a Splash (part 2)

by Todd

When first we met our friends (Todd, Buffy, Tiff & Brad), they had just taken up that exciting sport of sea kayaking. Here we join them about to put in for the first time.

Looking absolutely fab in our tailored dry suits, we psyched ourselves to take on Mother Nature.

Entering the boats, the very first thing we learned was while having a slender boat turns heads, slender boats turn over very easily. After we realized it was not humanly possible to keep these boats upright, we spent more money still on inflatable outriggers. This solved the problem.

We readied to push off, knowing we'd be getting more excitement than any one group of highly intelligent, good looking and ridiculously sophisticated people could hope for.

We elected to paddle to an island half mile off the shore. Fortunately we had taken a navigation course to prepare us for this trip. It was a very expensive course, so we know it was a good one.

We spent just under two hours studying the chart, doing the dead reckoning (we hate the use of the word "dead") and then warmed up the LORAN and Global Nav systems.

We "put in", (a kayaking term for getting started); we figured it best to become accustomed to using the nomenclature, in part to give an indication to others of our being veteran "old salts" (another mariner term).

As I was saying, we put in and, using our LORAN, pointed our boats toward the island. After forty-five minutes of paddling we came to understand why it took a particularly sturdy lot to participate in this sport. Here we were, only half way to the island and nearly exhausted. We "rafted up" for a pow wow, to discuss whether or not we should continue to the far side of the island as planned, or get on the VHF and get somebody to tow us the remainder of the way.

We all agreed it would be best if we called to have somebody with a power boat relieve us of this torture. Tiff (Tiffany) reached into her cockpit and removed her VHF radio still in its original wrapper. Unfortunately nobody told us these radios didn't come with batteries ... meaning none of our radios were usable.

Thinking it would be a poor show to fail to finish our first assault on the wild ocean, we pressed on, determined to not let Mother Nature beat us.

Finally reaching our destination, we rafted up to congratulate each other on our accomplishment. We floated there admiring our achievement. Our objective was off to our left and on our right was another lovely island; one we may consider attempting to reach when perhaps we're equipped for a longer stay on the water.

As we were nearly finished congratulating ourselves Brad called out "Hey look, there's another group of kayakers out here and there's a lot of 'em!"

Seeing this large group, I initially thought it would be fun to meet up with another group which appeared to be as adventuresome as we, though we all seemed to agree instantly that there was something ominous about this lot.

While we were discussing how we were going to handle this unexpected intrusion, it was Tiffany (Tiff) who called our attention to a flashing light coming from the lead kayak in the approaching group.

Buffy cried out excitedly, "That's an Aldis Lamp they're flashing at us!" Buffy undoubtedly recognized it from her experience in the Navy, having served in the Royal Navy Special Forces.

We were all happy for her; originally she had signed on because she liked the sexy and dangerous appearance the black beret and Uzi gave her. After spending some time there, and realizing how much fun blowing up

things could be, she thought it was the place for her. [She received so much satisfaction from this duty, she opted for a second tour, when her first was finished.]

Her comrades nicknamed her "Blood and Guts Buffy". She never wanted to leave the service, but she felt she had become too ruthless.

Every now and then, when we were over for afternoon tea, she would bring out her scrap book and show off the many decorations she had received for her bravery on raids into enemy territories.

Tiffany (Tiff) turned to Buffy and asked "What are they telling us?"

"They're saying 'heave to and prepare to be boarded, you are outnumbered and we have you surrounded'".

"Surrounded?" cried Tiff (Tiffany). She quickly looked back over her shoulder to see an equally large group of very dark kayaks, closing in from behind.

Immediately panic set in; somebody yelled, "Make haste friends, our lives may depend on how quickly we can depart!!"

With that, paddles started flailing, water splashing and boats running into one another.

All this activity stopped when we heard a loud report and there was a splash in the water off our bows (bow means front of boat). Not knowing what else to do, we dropped our lovely wooden paddles and put our hands up in the air, intense fear running through us. Our fear was heightened as they drew nearer, as we could see they were wearing black hooded wet-suits.

Just as they came close enough for us to distinguish their features, Brad let out a scream and fainted and Tiffany (Tiff) started to giggle uncontrollably.

I was confused by how two people can have such contrasting responses to the same stimuli, but

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

nonetheless thought about taking care of poor Brad; who fortunately didn't need to worry about capsizing, as the inflatable sponsons made it impossible for the boat to flip. I grabbed my jump bag and got over to Brad as quickly as I could. I hadn't used my emergency medical training since I parachuted behind enemy lines as a medic a few years back; as part of a special detachment in one of our country's clandestine wars.

I quickly deduced Brad was suffering from psychogenic shock and when I looked round I was able to understand why. I'm sure his time as an advanced forward scout in Vietnam didn't ready him to handle a sight like this. It was certainly all I could do to maintain my composure and not lose my sustenance.

Brad was beginning to come to, and as he regained consciousness he muttered "Th... th... they...

they're seals, aren't they?"

While still frightened, Buffy couldn't help but comment on how their sleek black boats reminded her of the fun days, back in the service.

Tiff (Tiffany) began regaining her composure and looked at me and asked, "What do you think they want?"

I admitted to being as perplexed as she, but my bigger question was, how could a seal ever manage to paddle a boat? After all, they don't have arms for holding the paddle, they only have some silly flipper things.

Between our discussing the situation and Brad's fainting, the seals had managed to maneuver their boats into a circle around us, with all their bows (front of boats) pointing at us. Each of the boats was personalized with artwork, fairly primitive images depicting great victories of the seals in battle.

As if this artwork wasn't intimidating enough, they were grunting and

barking at one another in a manner which scared the bejesus out of everybody.

Here we were, looking at a group of animals which had taken the psychological advantage on us by combining ruthless efficiency, fear inducing artwork, intimidating barks and a murderous look in their evil eyes. As though this wasn't enough, hundreds of them started popping their heads out of the water around us.

Sensing death to be imminent, I took a moment to reflect on what brought us to this position ... a notion by Tiffany (Tiff)!

Prior to this moment we had always trusted Tiff (Tiffany) as she tended to be the more sedate and level-headed one in our group.

To be continued in the fall

Secretary's Report

by Mark Daniele

Since the last newsletter, we've had two meetings, a kayak repair clinic, and a potluck supper.

At the February meeting, Ken Fink presented a great slide show on his kayaking trips to Labrador, Hudson Bay, Newfoundland, and Iceland. Sandy Martin gave us a practical demonstration of how to do gelcoat repairs at the clinic he held at his shop later that month. Marcia Feller and Bob Murray hosted a potluck at their house on Cousin's Island in March, which featured a scrumptious array of food. (The conversation was good too!)

The April meeting was extremely productive, with elections held and trips for the summer organized. The meeting wasn't all business though, as we watched clips of kayaking in Hudson Bay in the 1920's, from the film "Nanook of the North." Everyone especially enjoyed the scene showing how Nanook's whole family fit into or on top of his kayak, and the section on Nanook's fishing techniques. We conveniently lacked the time necessary to show the walrus



"A man who is not afraid of the sea will soon be drowned, he said, for he will be going out on a day he shouldn't. But we do be afraid of the sea and we do only be drowned now and again."

John Millington Synge The Aran Islands

Trip Ideas Seeking Coordinators

Here are some of the trips we have tentatively planned for June and July that are in need of coordinators. Please come to the May 18th meeting to sign up to coordinate any that interest you, or call our calendar czar, Mark Daniele, at 865-9558. Thanks!

- New Meadows River
- Sebago Lake Picnic, Paddle, and Rescue Practice
- Lookout Point, first Sunday of the month - July 5
- Bethel Point Pot Luck Lunch, last Saturday of the month - July 25
- Kettle Cove or other put-in, Wednesday night paddle - July 29

Here are some of the trips we are thinking of for August and September. Be sure to let us know if you'd like to be the coordinator for any of them.

- Wednesday evening paddles
- Full moon paddles
- First Sunday of the month at Lookout Point, Harpswell
- Biddeford Pool
- Portsmouth Harbor
- Muscongus Bay overnight camping trip
- Potluck Lunch and Paddle on Merrymeeting Bay
- Mooselookmeguntic overnight camping trip