

CONNAYAK

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

December 2002

My kayak glided through the last of the early morning mist over a mirror-smooth wilderness lake, the only sounds we made were the gentle gurgle of the bow wave and the drip from the paddle onto the spray deck. Somewhere ahead, a pair of loons gave their haunting echo calls. Suddenly a beaver slapped and from the corner of my eye I saw it disappear in a roil of water. Later, on the way back to the campsite, a moose, grazing in the shallows, jerked its head my way, a lily pad dangling foolishly from its antlers. Sound like a fantasy paddle? Well, it is. I've encountered all of these things at one time or another on late spring or early autumn trips here in the Northeast. My dream is to find a body of water totally untouched by man, free from the noise of civilization, where all of these things can be experienced during one trip. I'm coming to the conclusion that my dream will remain just that, a dream. Maine's remote Aziscohos Lake, 19 miles long, is ringed at both ends and along the east shore by cabins. Nearby Umbagog Lake almost met the devoid of civilization criterion- alas, while paddling out of it into the Androscoggin River, I spied a vacationer's cabin set back in the woods! Across the river, through a long grassy tunnel, lies a magic marsh. Thousands of acres of grass and waterways, ringed by majestic mountains, inspired a sense of tranquility and awe. Overhead, jet liners roared

THE ADIRONDACK'S CRANBERRY LAKE UNSPOILED WILDERNESS?

By Brooks Martyn

back and forth through their corridor in the sky. Disappointed, I later searched the Appalachian Mountain Club's book Quiet Water Canoe Guide- New York, looking for my unspoiled lake. There I found Cranberry Lake, third largest in the state, billed as having only minimal encroachment of civilization. The 5-mile long lake, which resembles a Rorschach inkblot, is surrounded by 24,111 acres of undeveloped forest. Three-quarters of its 51 miles of shoreline is owned or controlled by the State. At the northern end of the lake is a state-run campground with 173 campsites, with an additional 46 primitive campsites sprinkled along the shoreline and on several of the small islands that dot the lake. Eureka! I convinced fellow CONNYAK member Bill Knose to do a 5-day car camping trip with me in mid-September. The phrase "minimal encroachment of civilization" had us both hooked. What we found in reality is what probably exists throughout the Northeast United States. The main campground at Cranberry Lake is laid out as a series of loops along the shore. Each loop has its own flush toilet facility and water spigot. There is a central shower building and recycling facility. A few of the campsites have small stone

breakwaters; the one we chose had a sandy beach from which we launched the kayaks. The whole facility was spotlessly clean and, because of the season, there were NO BUGS AND VERY FEW PEOPLE. The locals told us that this year had been the worst in memory for black flies and deer flies, which came in May and didn't leave until mid-July. The park ranger confided in us that September and October are his favorite months and that jet skis and dog fights were his biggest problems from July 4 to Labor Day. During our 3 days of paddling the lake, Bill and I saw 2 other kayakers, 3 or 4 small aluminum fishing boats, and one jet ski. We also observed that this "unspoiled wilderness" lake was well marked with navigational buoys, some of which were lit at night. These markers are there for good reason. In 1867 a log crib dam was built across the lake's effluent river, thus doubling its size to that of the present. The lake is studded with huge rotting tree stumps, fallen trunks, and massive boulders, some visible and some lurking just below the surface of the dark brown water. As we explored the many bays and inlets to the lake we were shocked at the large number of small private cabins with their obligatory docks that line the shores and islands. The majority of them look as though they have not been used for a long time. Access to all of them is by water only, hence the elaborate system of navigational aids. While returning from our first day's exploration of the

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Bill Whitcomb at the Greg Stamer Demonstration (paddle behind back pose) Photo - Tom Maziarz

Bear Mountain Swamp, a truly uninhabited and unspoiled wilderness area, Bill and I stumbled upon a half-dozen decrepit house boats pinned by large pilings to the bank of the remote Brandy Brook Flow. We paddled about 5 hours each day, averaging 12 miles per day as we explored every nook and cranny of the lake. A USGS topographic map and Bill's GPS saved us many wasted miles, as it is easy to get disoriented among the many bays and flows. On our last day we car topped the boats to the south tip of the lake and launched from the tiny, pristine town of Wanakena. We paddled down the influent run of the Oswegatchie River, past the beautiful new State Forest Ranger School, and out into the lake. While paddling toward Joe Indian Island, our lunch stop, Bill called out "Look at that cottage built out in the water!" Closer inspection revealed that we were passing Shanty Rock Bay and the cottage was in fact a huge, angular granite boulder the exact size and shape of the omnipresent shanties along the shore. And every day and into the evening we were subjected to the overhead roar of invisible jet fighter planes operated in the afterburner mode. We arrived at Cranberry Lake on the tail end of a rainstorm and enjoyed 3 days of bug-free paddling and camping in absolutely gorgeous surroundings. Evenings, after supper dishes were done, we sat in front of a blazing campfire and shared our life adventures. Why am I telling you this? Because on this trip I learned some fundamental life values: appreciate beauty where you find it, absorb tranquility whenever it is presented. It's OK to pursue an ideal, but don't ignore reality in the process. For many of us Cranberry Lake in September may be as good as it ever gets.

*Our deepest sympathy to the family
and friends of Thomas Casey
of East Haven*

- ConnYak -



2002

Well, we've come to the end of another year, and it was a very eventful one for ConnYak. I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did, and here's hoping that 2003 is even better!

With that said, I'd like to take up a bit of newsletter space to thank everyone who made the last 12 months so great. We are now a large club, with over 400 current members, and are completely dependent on volunteer efforts for our success. Volunteering is not always easy or convenient, but I'm constantly amazed at the passion with which many of the following people stepped up to contribute to the club:

First, to the ConnYak officers, my sincerest appreciation for all your efforts and dedication. Vice President Phil Warner, Treasurer Dick Gamble, Newsletter Editor Jay Babina, and Librarian Jon Sweeton --- you guys are the best! It has been a pleasure working with you all in the past year, and I look forward to more good things in the coming year. Keep up the good work!

Our wonderful guests in 2002:

Gail Ferris - Paddling in the Arctic presentation: Adam Bolonsky - GPS Navigation class: Greg Stamer - Greenland paddling demo, skills classes, and Greenland Championships presentation.

Thanks to individuals who made significant contributions to the club:

Past President Ed Milnes, who helped make my transition into the President's chair about as easy as it gets.

Bobby Curtis, our webmaster, who has done an absolutely awesome job with the club website. The evolution that the site has undergone in the past year has been difficult at times, and Bobby guided it along it's path with a clear vision.

Nick Schade, who bailed us all out when our internet service stopped supporting our old bulletin board format. Nick recommended our new software, and worked with Bobby to get a far superior bulletin board up and running within days.

Jean Trapani and Diane Worden, who discovered the Legislature's attempt to

force us to register our boats, and got the word out so that we could organize and be heard in Hartford.

Dean Bertoldi, who secures meeting facilities and pool rentals for the club in Wallingford every year, and also is an influential voice in club affairs.

Dick Gamble, who secures the Essex Town Hall for presentations, and large meetings.

Sheldon Penn, who contributes so much to the club, not only as the supplier of club logo clothing, but also as a paddle coordinator, and enthusiastic presence at club events.

Tom Maziarz, who has shot and shared so many photos of ConnYak events that he keeps several photo labs in business.

Dave Hiscocks, who sets up the yearly Selden Island campout. Despite having to deal with horrendous weather and one nasty swan this year, he managed to still lead a great trip.

Paul Donoski, who took charge of getting Adam Bolonsky to come down and teach a GPS navigation class that was top-notch.

The Friends of Outer Island, who have made access to the island a reality for paddlers.

Jay Babina, Dick Gamble, Rusty Norton, Don Milnes, Cheryl Barnaba, and Paul Donoski who get the newsletters in the mail to everyone monthly.

Dennis and Joy Mc Neil, who lent one of their boats to Greg Stamer for a weekend to do his demo and class (Did you have him autograph it? --- I would have!), and also for their generous donation of the gas grill for the club picnic.

Bill Anthony, who proposed and co-wrote the paddling etiquette publication that ConnYak will be distributing to outfitters and other clubs.

Kate Powers, Peter Strand and Jon Tobiassen, who volunteered to help with the rescue clinic.

And, especially to the people who whose contributions may not be apparent, but are among the most important: those who contributed articles to the club newsletter and all those who attended a club meeting and those who coordinated a scheduled event, or set up a paddle over the bulletin board --- you made it all happen!

Everyone who helped out with providing safety at various outfitter demo days.

And those who brought food to the

club picnic, and made it such a fun time! Beth... you can bring salmon every year!

Everyone who attended any of the club's activities, and made them such a good time, I thank you as well! You're the reason ConnYak exists.

Thanks to one and all, and safe and fun paddling in 2003!

- Wayne Smith
President, ConnYak

PADDLERS ETIQUETTE CAMPAIGN

During the late summer, Bill Anthony had an unpleasant experience at the Great Island Boat Launch that initiated the "Paddlers Etiquette" sheet you received. While addressing some concerns, we took full advantage of the opportunity to add needed information about navigation, right-of-way, wildlife and other basic kayaking safety issues that seems to be lacking with many new recreational paddlers.

As a sport with an enormous growth rate, our relationship with the boating community is of prime importance since we not only share the waterways but the launch areas as well.

Our intention is to ask the kayaking stores, instructors and guides to give them out freely and include one with each sale of a paddling craft that goes out the door. If new paddlers start out with basic information about our waterways along with some helpful information on etiquette at launch sites and basic courtesy with the boating community, it will only help all of us in the long run.

We printed 1500 and will gladly print more as they are needed. We will also distribute them to yacht clubs and any outdoor activities clubs where paddle craft are used as well as other kayaking clubs.

Feel free to make copies or we can supply them if you have a function where you would like to hand them out. We can also furnish PDF files that are both Mac and PC compatible to any organization who would like to print some or perhaps, use it as a foundation and add to it. Our prime goal is getting the information out to paddlers, not credit for it's creation.

IT'S COLD WATER SEASON AGAIN

by Wayne Smith

For many people, it is the end of the paddling season. But for a few hardy souls, it just means it's time to put on the drysuit, and continue having fun.

Cold water is not to be taken lightly, as most of you know. It can kill you in a matter of minutes if you're not properly protected. Even a wetsuit isn't really enough protection this time of year, because you have the issue of cold shock to deal with, which is not an issue with a properly used drysuit. I've taken a swim in 35 degree water in a farmer john while paddling, and I can tell you from experience that it's not fun at all. I can swim in my drysuit in the middle of February, and be perfectly comfortable.

As always, ConnYak does not schedule club paddles after November. We'll start scheduling again in late March, or early April. Feel free to use the bulletin board to schedule your own pick-up trips if you're a winter paddler. Keep in mind that these trips are NOT sanctioned by ConnYak.

If you do venture out this winter, please consider adding the following gear to your kit:

- Complete extra set of dry clothes and towel (Fleece, polypro, wool)
- Backpacking stove & cookset
- Chemical handwarmers
- Neoprene skull cap or diver's hood
- 2 pair of gloves - (One to wear & one spare)
- Bivy shelter
- VHF radio or cellphone - (VHF being far superior)
- Spare paddle

And also, be conservative with go / no-go decisions: The same conditions in July that are good fun are potentially deadly in January. Be absolutely certain you can handle the conditions before you launch. If you're not sure, go skiing instead. We want to paddle with you again next year!

For those of you whose season is over, I hope you enjoyed it. I will hopefully see you at meetings or the pool sessions, or I'll see you in the spring! And for those who will continue paddling, I'll see you all on the water very soon!



CONNYPAK MEETING

Wednesday, Dec. 18 - 7:00
WALLINGFORD PARK AND RECREATION
(ALL MEETINGS ARE NOW AT 6:30)

"Meet at the Beach" Video

Will be shown at the meeting. 1/2 hr. video of this years boat builders meet and (of course) rolling performances

DIRECTIONS TO WALLINGFORD PARK & REC.

Exit 15 (Rt 68) off I-91 in Wallingford. West on Rt. 68. (toward Wallingford) Approx. 3/4 mile take a right at the Fire Station (Barnes Road at the light). Take your first Rt. off Barnes on to Fairfield Blvd. Wallingford Park & Rec. is the 2nd building on the left up the hill.

Greenland Paddle Making

Winter is a great time to build a paddle or even a kayak.

... from our Bulletin board.

Wayne Smith replies:

Check out the links at

<http://www.qajaqusa.org> There's a link to Chuck Holst's G. paddle article.

I have a page on making them at:

<http://pages.cthome.net/wsmith16/greenland.html>

fm replies:

I took a great one day kayak paddle making class at Mystic Seaport.

http://www.mysticseaport.org/source/show_course.cfm?mcourse=31&mkind=participate

home page - www.mysticseaport.org
888-95SEAPORT

MYSTIC SEAPORT CLASSES - MARK STARR

Greenland Skin Kayak Making

January 10-12 & 17-19, May 2-4 & 9-11,
July 11-13 & 18-20, Sept. 12-14 & 19-21

Greenland paddle Making

February 22, May 31, August 2,
October 11

Building a strip-built kayak

March 15-29 (rough dates at this point-final amount of days still to be worked out) - instructor - **Nick Schade**

Mystic (Mark Starr) is also working on a possible traditional boat event for next year.

home page - www.mysticseaport.org
or - 888-95SEAPORT

CLASSIFIED

Dry-tops. Stohlquist. One new, one used. \$100 & \$65. Both mens medium. Tom 413-593-6167.

Old Town Castine Kayak 14' beginners kayak. red, 2 hatches, paddle and skirt. \$600. 860-985-6893

Valley Skerray, Fiberglass, Blue over White, with skeg and Chimp Pump. Great condition! \$1700 203-854-9713 brianenichols@aol.com

Valley Skerray XL, Fiberglass, Turquoise over white, with skeg, two hatches, chimp pump, and compass. \$1795. Contact (203) 840-0156.

Aquaterra Double - Gemini, poly, tandem, wide beam, great for the kids or lake. Asking \$600.00 or best offer. Call 860-388-2464 Sharon.

Old Town Nantucket - 1 year old - \$500.00 yellow poly, rudder, thigh braces, adjustable hip pads Pete 860-749-0471

Impex Montauk, Fiberglass, \$1800 includes Skirt and compass. Call Bill - 860-535-4473

NORDKAPP HM good condition. Day hatch, rear oval hatch, canvas storage bag, compass. Orang / white \$1600 860-633 7254.

North Shore Freewater Trek fiberglass sea kayak. 16 ft 22 in, 45 lbs. Great for small to medium paddler. \$1000. (203) 853-2909 or email sryan@lww.com.

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 81850 203.877.8493 'clayluce@hotmail.com'

Two Werner paddles for sale; one left hand control San Juan and one right hand control Camano. Both in Fiberglass. \$175.00 each. Call 203 226 9674 days or 203 454 2278 eves.

Wilderness Systems Shenai, Red over white, Kevlar. Very light, fast boat. \$1400.00. Phone 203-270-9134

Perception Pirouette White Water kayak: Float bags, \$450 B/O. 860-613-0622 or Bkahunas@snet.net

VCP Nordkapp HMC Golden Yellow deck/White hull, oval stern hatch, \$1000.00 also Dagger Outburst Surf/playboat, red, bow & stern airbags, \$700.00. Call Don 860-643-1609, Email:nordkappdg@aol.com.

GPS -Garmin eTrex Vista (eTrex best model) 24MB open memory, barometric altimeter, electroic compass, basemap with Nav Aids. incl. instruction video. \$300. (203) 265-0169 lathrop@cttel.net

Necky Kayook single kayak with spray skirt and paddle. Neoprene hatch covers. \$450.00 203-544-0555 ext.15

Dagger Animis white water kayak. Great beginner boat. \$350.00 \$450.00 203-544-0555 ext.15

Tandem wooden kayak. 18 feet long. \$750.00 \$450.00 203-544-0555 ext.15

Please contact the Newsletter when items are sold.

Pool Sessions

Pool sessions run every Sunday in Jan. and the first two in Feb. 9 am - 1 pm at the Wallingford High School Pool. Practice rolls, rescues, anything you want. Fee \$10 - more information in the Jan. Newsletter

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.

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 203-481-1136



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