

CONNAYAK

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

February 2004

LEAVE NO TRACE

Paul Donoski



I had the opportunity to spend two days on Jewell Island which is 7 miles East of Portland, Maine. This island is used by Leave No Trace for training members to become Leave No Trace educators. LNT is a non-profit organization promoting responsible outdoor recreation. The Maine chapter works closely with the Maine Island Trail Association who monitors Jewell Island for low impact kayak camping. LNT utilizes two traveling trainer teams for their workshops. There is an East and a West Coast team who travel all 48 states providing expertise in Leave No Trace outdoor ethics.

The LNT ethics are defined by seven simple rules relating to outdoor use.

The 1st rule is to Plan Ahead And Prepare.

- Know the regulations and concerns for the area you will visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards and emergencies.
- Schedule your visit to avoid periods of high use.
- Keep your group small. Split larger parties into groups of 4 to 6.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.

The 2nd rule is to Travel And Camp On Durable Surfaces.

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites.

Stay on sandy or gravel areas.

- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
- Avoid trampling mosses and lichens.
- Do not cut or clear vegetation, trees or limbs.
- When leaving a site, restore it to its natural state.

The 3rd rule and hardest is to Dispose Of Waste Properly.

- Solid human waste should be carried off and disposed of on a mainland receptacle. Digging cat-holes to bury waste is not acceptable on islands because soils are shallow and easily eroded. It is illegal to discharge human waste into U.S. waters, including the intertidal zone.
- Pack it in, pack it out. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter – both your own and any you find. Reducing food waste helps prevent animals from becoming attracted to humans as a food source.

The 4th rule is to Leave What You Find.

- Leave rocks, shells, driftwood and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.

The 5th rule is to Minimize Campfire Impacts.

- Use a campstove below the high tide line for cooking. Fires on islands have a high risk of spreading due to changing wind, organic soils and lack of services
 - Where open fires are permitted, use established fire rings. If there is no fire ring, make your fire on sand or use a fire pan. A fire on granite leaves permanent scars.
 - Collect your firewood below the high tide line.
- All fires should be dead out and cleaned up before leaving.



Bill Whitcomb paddling off Outer Island at the Thimbles in December. Photo - Tom Mariarz

Leave No Trace continued

The 6th rule is to Respect Wildlife.

- Please avoid sea bird nesting islands from early April to mid-August. If you are causing birds to leave their nests, you are too close.
- Avoid islands with eagles entirely.
- Seals are easily disturbed. Stay far enough away from ledges or outcroppings with seals to prevent their fleeing into the water.

The 7th rule is to Be Considerate Of Others.

- If there are other people already at a landing site look for a landing some distance away.
- Keep your visual and noise impact low.
- Give way to local fisherman, both at launch sites and on the water.

Each one of us can make a difference with the resources and areas that are important to us. Volunteer for clean up efforts and rehabilitation projects, or organize them yourself. Get involved and let your opinions be known.

WET EXITS

By Terry Poley

Four years ago I sold my 16-foot ski boat and bought a kayak (Old Town Loon 120). I had seen in magazines people fly fishing out of a kayak. I was tired of the maintenance with the boat and too lazy with the up keep of a boat. I had lost my "NEED FOR SPEED" with the boat, and wanted the simple quiet time that the kayak offered.

We vacation in Maine every year. I could hardly wait to take the kayak up to Maine and fish in the ocean. The first day out fishing I caught three strippers with the kayak, it was awesome! My father-in-law was with me that day, fishing from the shore. He was not catching any fish. We decided to hook this line up to the back of the kayak and pull it out past the breakers. It did not help; he still did not catch any fish. That summer I caught all kinds of fish with the kayak, fishing in lakes, ponds, and on the Connecticut River.

The next spring, with encouragement of some of my friends who also have kayaks, we decided to enter some river races for charity. The first race was the Scantic River Spring Splash Race (Enfield, CT). This race is set-up novice or pro class race. I chose the pro class of the race with my other friends. It was very challenging. I even fell out of the kayak a couple of times, but I finished the race. I came in last in my class. The next race we did was the Hockanum River Race (East Hartford, CT). Fell out again, but finished the race, I came in second from last in my class. I was getting better. The third race was the Westfield River Race (Westfield, MA). I came in 16th out of 22 in my class, but I did not fall out this time. I was done for the season as far as racing.

Kayaking has brought a lot of enjoyment to my life. Because my wife also enjoys kayaking, I have since bought a 2nd kayak (Current Designs Pachina) so we both can enjoy spending some quality time together. We have met a bunch of new people who also enjoy kayaking. We have taken trips to Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont, and fall foliage cruises down the Connecticut River.

I have spent a lot of time in and out of my kayak, but mostly in the kayak. I do like being on the water rather than in the water. We have taken classes to learn to Eskimo roll the kayak, but I have not perfected it yet.

Last year I did the Scantic River Spring Splash Race again. This time I came in 3rd place in my class, and I did not fall out of the kayak this time.



At the meeting...

At the January ConnYak meeting, David Leventhal gave an informative and knowledgeable talk on electronic navigation, showing various software programs, their advantages and disadvantages and demonstrated their uses. Although he kept the talk short and to the point, he introduced us to a lot of new ground and covered some of the hardware choices as well.

At the conclusion of the talk, he offered to do a seminar on electronic navigation if we would like. This would cover GPS and other areas of interest. Please contact ConnYak on the board or Wayne if this is something you are interested in and we will put together an evening and location to do this. He volunteered to do this for free although I'm sure we like to reimburse him for his time.

We also showed the Greg Stamer video which was shot from his visit with us during the summer of 02.

If you have any ideas about programs, lecturers or anything paddle related, please contact the club and we'll do what we can to get it done.

Upcoming events...

Tamsin Venn - publisher and former editor of Atlantic Coastal Kayaker magazine will be visiting ConnYak in May for a slide show and talk. She is the author of "Paddling the Coast of New England" and "Paddling the Chesapeake Bay". She has many years of experience in paddling and camping in Maine, other New England areas and Canada as well.

VHF Radio Class

Saturday, February 21st, 2004

As of this printing, there's still room for a few people in the VHF Radio Class. The minimum of 10 people has been filled.

Location: The Community Room at the Brainard Library in Haddam, CT.

Time: 10am to 2pm.

Cost: \$45 per person

Maximum class size: 20 participants.

Instructor: Adam Bolonsky (Adam taught the Navigation class in 2003, and the GPS class in 2002)

Iceland Expedition 2003:

*A Slide Show & Talk by Chris Duff
Presented by North Cove Outfitters.*

Tuesday, March 23 at 7:00 pm
the Old Saybrook Middle School

North Cove Outfitters, Inc. and Werner Paddles proudly presents "Iceland Expedition 2003", a slide show presentation by expedition kayaker Chris Duff on his circumnavigation of Iceland, the island of fire and ice.

Chris Duff, seasoned adventurer and author, will be presenting a slide show and sharing his insights and challenges on his recent circumnavigation of uniquely wild and beautiful Iceland. Chris was joined by two other sea kayakers from the Pacific Northwest for the 1,500 mile expedition that took 10 weeks to complete. With the largest population of sea birds in the world, glaciers, coastal deserts, fiords, and some of the friendliest people you could find on the planet, Iceland is a paddler's paradise.

Their goal was to explore the Icelandic history, coastline and culture with the spirit of sea adventurers, and in the process, to become the first American team of two men and one woman to complete the circumnavigation. The Icelandic waters are some of the most challenging in the northern hemisphere, with high northwest winds and associated seas. Miles of cliffs along the northwest quadrant of the coastline made for committed long distance paddling. Steep gravel beaches on the south coast made surf landings unavoidable. In addition, the extremely cold water increased the physical challenge faced by these skilled paddlers.

Chris Duff is known for his solo circumnavigations of the United Kingdom, Ireland and the south island of New Zealand. He is a highly rated British Canoe Union paddler and coach, as well as an accomplished author. He is also known for his deep connection to the land and people of the wild places he paddles and is an illuminating speaker.

Tickets are \$5.00 and may be purchased in advance at North Cove Outfitters.

All profits will be donated to Save The Long Island Sound fund.

Self Test for Kayaking Safety (Recreational Kayaks)

By Michael Gray

Just so we're on the same page, I'm going to define recreational kayaks as those that are less than 14 feet in length that are made for calm water, near shore usage. They may not have hatches, bulkheads or a rudder and may have a large open cockpit. Generally speaking they have inadequate flotation to be paddled ashore when they are swamped - they'll float if flooded, but will sink if they are trying to support your weight as well.

Facts:

They make up the largest share of the kayaking market. Consumers buying these types of kayaks often leave the store with the least amount of safety education.

Usage: Again, the designers of these types of kayaks really didn't intend them to be used for expeditions, open-water crossings and conditions more appropriate to "touring or coastal" kayaks. They were meant for a variety of calm water situations on gentle rivers and lakes during mild weather. They're inexpensive for the most part, have a comforting degree of initial stability and can be handled by most anyone. Rescues in them are simple if they are in their intended use category - if you fall out, stand up or swim to the near shore dragging the boat with you. They are extremely difficult to empty and re-enter from the water, even by very experienced rescuers. A deep water rescue of a recreational kayak even by a skilled sea kayaker can land everyone in the water and you'd better hope they're all dressed for immersion.

The Test: Can I swim to shore in the clothes I'm wearing in this environment? Can I get help quickly once I'm on that shore? Am I equipped to get myself warm once I'm there?

If the answer is "no" to any of these, then you should adjust what you're about to do until you can answer "yes" to all of them. If you can't get a "yes", don't do it.

A warm day in winter or in early Spring, when the water is still dangerously cold is when these questions are often ignored leading to potential catastrophe. Every paddling mishap started with the paddler thinking he/she was safe. Paddle Wisely!



EVENTS



WINTER POOL SESSIONS

FEB. 1 & 8

ConnYak pool sessions run for four hours - 9 am to 1 pm at Sheehan High School pool in Wallingford. If you arrive at 9, you will have help with your boat - however, you can come and go as you please. This is open pool time for practice. The fee is \$10 for each session payable at the door by cash or check made to ConnYak. You may pay for one or more sessions with one check if you want. Please bring cash in an envelope with your name on it.

Although the pool is heated, wear a farmer john or some type of in-the-water apparel because you can get chilled if the water is a few degrees cooler than expected. We always request that they raise the temperature a bit for us.

Directions: Exit 15 Rt. 91. Rt 68 W. past intersections of Rt 15 & Rt 150. Take fourth left on to Hope Hill Road which is at the light. Sheehan High School is 1/4 mile on the Rt.

FEBRUARY MEETING

WED 18, 6:30, WALLINGFORD PARK & REC

KEN FINK

Sea Kayak Guru will be making a brief presentation for the 2004 Maine Sea Kayak Symposium at the February 18th ConnYak Meeting. Ken Fink started the entire concept of a kayak symposium years ago with the L.L. Bean Symposium. The Maine Sea Kayak Symposium is being run in hopes of establishing a real NE sea kayaking community. The 2003 event and it was uniformly excellent. I urge one and all to seriously consider making the trip to the 2004 symposium in Castine ME in July.

An informed and lively discussion of many unrelated sea kayak topics is bound to follow. Ken is an interesting guy with years of kayaking background and paddling adventures.

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.

CLASSIFIED

Drysuit for Sale: The Barefoot Company drysuit, men's large, blue, used 3 times, cost \$400, asking \$250. Call Chris 860-989-1918.

NECKY LOOKSHA IV FOR SALE 17' x 22" 62lbs ALMOST NEW \$900 mmarkb@msn.com

Lessons Learned -

While laying face down on the back deck of my kayak I get careless and put pressure on the oval back hatch cover with my elbow or hand. This causes the cover to collapse into the back hatch compartment. The cover has a safety line preventing it's lose but I have to stop my reentry to reattach it. Once in the cockpit you cannot reach the back hatch cover. A hard or Valley cover which is stiffer is not as susceptible to collapse.

Solution:

The easiest way to improve the resistance of the cover against collapsing is to add a 3/8" bungee cord ring about 1 1/4" less in length than the perimeter of the outside cover

groove. My hatch cover inside groove perimeter measures 49". I made my bungee ring 47 3/4". This enhancement is what Current Designs does with their rubber hatch covers.

Unfortunately my bungee ring was inside my hatch compartment during this and not on the cover where it belonged. The cowboy style reentry places you well forward of the rear hatch negating any chance of collapsing it. - Paul Donoski

Banff Film Festival

The Banff Film Festival is a series of award winning films on various outdoor sports activities.

Feb 26 - Glastonbury
Feb 28 - Old Saybrook
Feb 29- New London
March 1 - New Haven

Sponsorship raffle tickets are ongoing for Cheri's trip to the Greenland Rolling Championships. Available at pool sessions, meetings, events or by mail to me at PO Box 350, Moodus, CT 06469 (receipts will not be sent, to save on postage). Tickets are \$3.00 or 2 for \$5.00. -Joy McNeil

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 check to:

ConnYak c/o Wayne Smith
680 Browns Road, Storrs, CT 06268-2717
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.

ConnYak Over-Dues

On the newsletter you receive, your due-date is on your label. If you fall behind with your dues, you get two months of newsletters which are stamped "over due" and then get cut off the list of active members.

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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