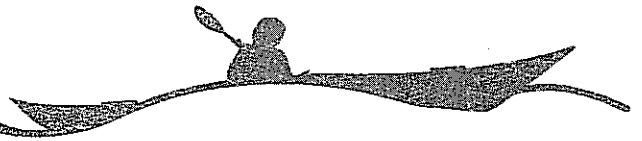


CONN YAK



CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

November 2004

ConnYak enters the digital age once again

By Jay Babina

It was quite a few years ago when ConnYak initiated a web site. We grew on a world-wide basis and our bulletin board became a great area to exchange information about paddling issues and the announcement of events. However, our newsletter stayed on paper for a few reasons. The main reason was "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". Well... it finally broke.

We reported in the newsletter and on the bulletin board about the struggles to get volunteers to do the stamping and folding. Then we went to a mailing service with surprisingly poor results. Because it's third class, some members were receiving it 8-10 days after mailing, all to the tune of approximately \$350 a month which totals to \$4230. a year. Meanwhile, one person was doing the entire process and after 12 years decided that a web based PDF file newsletter would elevate costs, production problems, increase quality and delivery.

On the down side, many people like getting a piece of paper that they can

read and keep for reference.

All these issues were posted on the BB and mentioned in the September newsletter. They were also discussed for the past three months by those who were active on the bulletin board. The overwhelming opinion was that moving over to a web based newsletter would be a timely and good choice. Once again, at the core of this is me, who does all the work and got no offers or solutions to alleviate all the running around to get it printed and distributed.

At the meeting:

The issue was discussed among the 23 members who arrived with the overwhelming consensus in favor of going over to a web based newsletter. It passed almost unanimously with one person against it. It also has to be noted that ConnYak is an all volunteer army. Things only get done when someone is willing to do them. All the ideas in the world won't become reality if there's nobody to do it.

I'm happy to produce the newsletter and am looking forward to a full color version with no restrictions on page count or visual content. The PDF format allows you to download it on any computer. All computers come with Adobe Acrobat reader and if you have an old one, you can download it for free. Do a search for "Acrobat" if you are not sure about your computer. On a dial up connection, it will take 1-2 minutes to download and you can easily print it in black or color or... you can just print the events page if that's all you want.

The money we save will be put towards a full-color ConnYak brochure that we can use as a hand-out at various functions. We can also print other things like information on hypothermia. Further monetary gains will allow us to bring in more guest speakers where we can pay for their transportation if necessary. Plus, our club newsletter will now be shared by a world-wide audience.

Many have asked about the newsletter

Continued on next page

Slide Show/Talk

2004 Greenland National
Kayaking Competition
with Cheri Perry

Thursday, November 4

at North Cove Outfitters 6:30-8:00

Tickets are \$5.00.

Proceeds go to Cheri.

LIMITED SEATING

Call 388-6585 for advance ticket
sales and to reserve your seat.

Tickets available at
N. Cove Outfitters



35 paddlers arrived to support the Tommy Fund at the annual donation paddle.

Notes from the meeting...

being the drawing card for the club. ConnYak offers pool sessions for members and we will pass along discounts on lectures and clinics to members. ConnYak does a lot of good things for paddlers that cost money. Pool sessions, talks, picnics, donations to worthwhile causes, T's & hats, web site, rescue clinic (permits). We offer paddles of various difficulty ratings to all paddlers and promote safety and education. Paddlers join our club because it's a worthwhile organization to belong to if you're a paddler, even if we share our opportunities with the public at large. Our newsletter is a just a further extension of that shairing of information.

Bill Anthony brought up the idea of "launch site sponsorship". ConnYak could consider "adopting" one or more state launch sites that we commonly use. Our involvement would be in helping to keep the areas clean. Barn Island and Great Island were specifically discussed. We would like to improve the Barn Island launch for paddlers and could offer our physical services if it could be handled without too much red tape. Wayne will be discussing this with the DEP over the coming months.

It was also decided by vote that the club will continue its long-standing policy of providing CLUB MEMBERS with club rosters upon request. The roster will include names, addresses, and telephone contact information only of all members. The preferred method is an Excel spreadsheet sent via email. For those of you who are new to the club, we used to mail a yearly roster to all members, which also included email addresses. We have since scaled that back to providing them only when requested by members, and for now, we will not include email addresses due to concerns about SPAM.

Rusty will be contacting Nick Deslyn about the long over-due set of Kokatat neck and wrist seal jigs that were offered to us last winter. Maybe we'll have to take him out to dinner again with the money we saved on the newsletter.

More New Additions to the ConnYak Library

By Brooks Martyn

Nearly a decade ago when I participated in my first ConnYak outing, I remember seeing two men in the group who were using funny looking sticks for paddles. Everyone else sported the customary Euro paddles. On a recent club outing, nearly everyone in the sizeable group was using the funny-looking sticks and there were only two or three Euro paddles present. I thought to myself, "What are they holding out for? When are they going to see the light?" Things Greenlandic appear to be of interest to many within our group, as evidenced by the mass rolling sessions that take place at picnics and gatherings. Perhaps Gail Ferris' hauntingly beautiful slides of Greenland, presented several years ago, and of late, Cheri Perry's triumphant return from the West Greenland World Championship has fueled this interest. The library has added three new must-read volumes, a brief summary of which appears below.

THIS COLD HEAVEN by Gretel Ehrlich, 384 pages, no photographs. This is the idyllic tale of an American woman's love affair with all that is Greenlandic. Ms. Ehrlich chronicles her adventures in the land of ice from 1993 to 1999. Interspersed with the telling of her travels and relationships is an insightful and delightful retelling of the history and folklore of the Inuit. For those who wish to view the Inuit through rose-tinted eye protection, this book is a must read.

GREENLAND EXPEDITION Where Ice is Born, by Lonnie Dupre, 157 pages of exquisite color photographs. This photo journal, by Minnesota native Lonnie Dupre and his companion John Hoelscher, documents their attempt to circumnavigate the island of Greenland utilizing non-motorized transport. The trip, by dog sled, tandem kayak, and single kayak, began in 1997 and spanned a 3 1/2 year period, covering 3,200 miles.

The book contains interesting sidebars on Arctic survival skills and little or no commentary on the plight of the Inuit.

ARCTIC CROSSING, by Jonathan Waterman, 331 pages, color and black and white photos, plus "native" drawings. Over a two-year period, commencing in 1997, the author attempted to travel the Northwest Passage. He made his 2,200-mile trip by kayak, on foot, by dogsled and skis, and by sail boat. Waterman's narration progresses on two levels: he relates the history, mythology, and travail of the Inuit and intertwines it with his own experience of the Arctic. Jonathan revels in the isolation and grandeur of the wilderness yet must reluctantly rely on human interaction in the settlements for his survival. With incisiveness and candor, he relates the past with the conditions and attitudes that he encounters during his journey. Open distrust of and contempt for the white man, rampant substance abuse, and an AIDS epidemic among the Inuit are a few of the societal ills that he addresses. In the end, Waterman achieves his vision quest: he sees the mythical flight of the polar bear. A must read for those who are enthralled by all things Inuit.

The ConnYak Library is available to all club members. The library has a significant holding of books and videos which may be accessed at club functions or by contacting the librarian, Claudine Smith, on the Website. In addition, club members may purchase kayak-related books and videos and be reimbursed for them out of club funds.

COLD WATER TALK

Most of you already know about dressing for immersion but it can't be said enough. North Cove Outfitters is holding a workshop on 11/10 from 6:30-8pm, lead by Middlesex Hospital paramedic and fellow paddler Brad Fowler. A great way to spend a weekday evening. Learn and ask questions in an informal setting. The Kokatat rep will also be there to talk about the clothing options and answer questions.

Call North Cove to reserve a seat
860-388-6585

To download Acrobat Reader -
<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

To the Editor:

I had to write to comment on the situation with regard to inexpensive, recreational kayaks. This group represents the fastest growing segment of paddle sports. Sales far surpass that of all other segments of paddling combined. Other areas of paddle sports need to find ways to accommodate their existence because they are not going a way.

That said, I am also fully aware of their inherent limitations as a watercraft and the difficulties encountered when attempting to impress upon their owners that these boats aren't always appropriate. They have often been sold as an all-around craft that can do anything. Left out of that statement is, in the nature of most things that purport to do everything, the fact that they do nothing very well.

ConnYak members have certainly encountered them in salt water under conditions that clearly were marginal at best and perhaps beyond marginal. I have also encountered them in both white water and tripping situations for which they were equally unsuitable.

The difficulty I perceive is that the more aware members of the paddling community tend to discount or denigrate a very large and growing portion of our population. There are a hell of a lot more of them than there are of us. And often, issues will arise wherein sheer force of numbers is important (dealing with legislators and regulators perhaps?).

The policy I would like us to adopt, both ConnYak as an organization and each of us as individuals, is one I can best describe as "embrace and educate". They need to be welcomed to our community – ultimately, they are one of us. Certainly they need to be educated, but that education will be more likely to take place after they know we welcome their presence on the water. Perhaps if they know we think they belong, they will be more accepting of suggestions with regard to conditions or venue. We can always find ways to suggest alternatives – "this place may be a bit hazardous – but have you seen such & such – it is at least as pretty as this and there is less wind". Certainly we will encounter resistance from some, but

there will also be some who see that as wisdom, not criticism and gladly take the advice. I have found that very often, bringing up the wind issue resonates because the craft they are paddling is generally difficult to manage in wind without growing levels of frustration.

Another thought would be to actually form a recreational kayak group within ConnYak and begin to recruit memberships from this segment of the population. Trips selected for these craft would develop and safety awareness would grow simply by osmosis. Kind of an extension of the "embrace and educate" concept to the group level and dynamic as opposed to the individual level. I am fully aware that there is a significant segment of the recreational kayak population that will not be amenable to any approach that we can devise, but that certainly is not universal. I still remember (back in the days when I lived in Connecticut and did a fair amount of varied duties for a retailer) numerous inquiries from people who had purchased recreational kayaks about finding groups to paddle with, how they could learn more, where they could go safely and so on. There wasn't much response available beyond "take a lesson". A lesson can help a lot with the technical skills involved with paddling, but it does very little to develop the judgment necessary to assess the conditions as they are encountered.

The most difficult and important decision a paddler will ever make is the choice to NOT paddle – either to stay off the water or to turn back. ConnYak and groups like it can help even recreational paddlers develop the knowledge base needed to make that decision.

Thanks for listening,

- Jeff Dionne-Dickson

Unfortunately, good ideas need good people to become a reality. If someone wants to start something like you suggest, they are most welcome to do so and can use our bulletin board and newsletter to schedule any paddles, events or notices with our full encouragement. The fact that we require a PFD (to be worn) a sprayskirt, and that the boat has flotation, says something about our intention in raising the awareness of all paddlers.

-JB

EVENTS



HADDAM MEADOWS

Sat., Nov. 6 10:AM - pack lunch

THIMBLES - BRANFORD

Sat., Nov. 13 10:AM - pack lunch
Launch at Stony Creek - morning paddle
and lunch at the market or pack lunch and
land on shell beach. Group can divide.

NORWALK ISLANDS

Sat., Nov. 20 10:AM - pack lunch
Launch at Calf Pasture Beach.
Check BB for details

NOV. CONNYAK MEETING

NOV 17 - 6:30 - COLD WATER APPAREL

Bring you favorite special items and share
them and your cold water experiences
with other paddlers.

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.

Send them to Greenland 2005 Calendars

*Experience the beauty of
Greenland every day in 2005!*

This calendar's stunning images, taken by the talented David Kinney during the Greenland National Kayaking Championships, will enhance your home or office...and makes a great gift. Proceeds from the sale of these calendars will be used exclusively to provide financial assistance to US competitors to attend next year's event.

Calendars are \$24.95 (plus \$1.75 postage). They are available at ConnYak meetings or from Cheri Perry.

or...Mail in your payment to:

Send Them To Greenland,
981 Ridge Road, Brick, NJ 08724
Telephone: 732.785.1947
Fax: 603.761.8238



CLASSIFIED

Necky Elaho touring kayak. Kevlar-3 hatches, Smart Track rudder. Exc. 1 year old \$2100. 860-307-4212 cmontgomery3@cs.com.

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

Current Designs Solstice GT 17'7", Neo skirt medium, Ex cond. \$2400 860-875-7052

Wilderness Systems Shenai kevlar kayak red/white good condition with spray skrit weight 45# and 17' 4" long \$1475 phone 860-267-8194

Betsie Bay Aral for sale. 18 ft. long x 20"., 35 lbs., rare mahogany deck, 1 yr. old, mini. Paid \$3800. Sale Price \$3000. Also, Greenland Tuliek - Med - Black - new, wrong size for me. \$250. Tom 413-593-6167

Janautica Anadyr - 17'6", Fiberglass, blue/white, day hatch, excellent condition, \$900.00. (203) 949-8647.

Old Town Tripper canoe. 17' 2" , cane seats. Green Royalex, 80 lbs, 1,100 lbs good capacity for white water. \$750.00. 860-442-2995 osprey@myeastern.com



T-shirts for Articles

Authors of articles for the newsletter get a free T-shirt.

Current Designs Caribou S - Kevlar, yellow/white, compass, skeg. Used one season. \$2,400. (860) 436 - 4507.

P & H Serius, medium volume, blue/white, great shape, \$1500. 860-669-4909

Wilderness Poquito - Glass - 12'4" x 19" VCP day hatch new condition \$700 860-651-4520 or wwpratt@earthlink.net

Necky Arluk III - Glass, white, w/maroon trim. \$1200 or best offer. 203-426-9957

Wilderness Systems Pungo recreational kayak, 12'x29", large cockpit , spray skirt, cockpit cover, excellent condition. Stable platform for photography, fishing, etc. \$350. Call Brooks, (860) 651-4367.

Please contact the Newsletter when classified items are sold. Also check the classified section on our web site.

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
85 School St, Coventry, CT 06238

WEBSITE / BULLETIN BOARD: WWW.CONNYAK.ORG

Watch the bulletin board for impromptu paddles posted by members.

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 labeled "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



NEW HAVEN CT 06504-1070
PO Box 1070
RUSSELL NORTON
T3 P1



560 Browns Road, Storrs, CT 06268-2717

CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS

ConnYak



STANDARD
PRESORT
US POSTAGE PAID
NEW HAVEN CT
PERMIT# 415