

PADDLE SPLASHES



Canoe & Kayak Committee
Appalachian Mountain Club
NY-NoJ Chapter

MARCH 2015

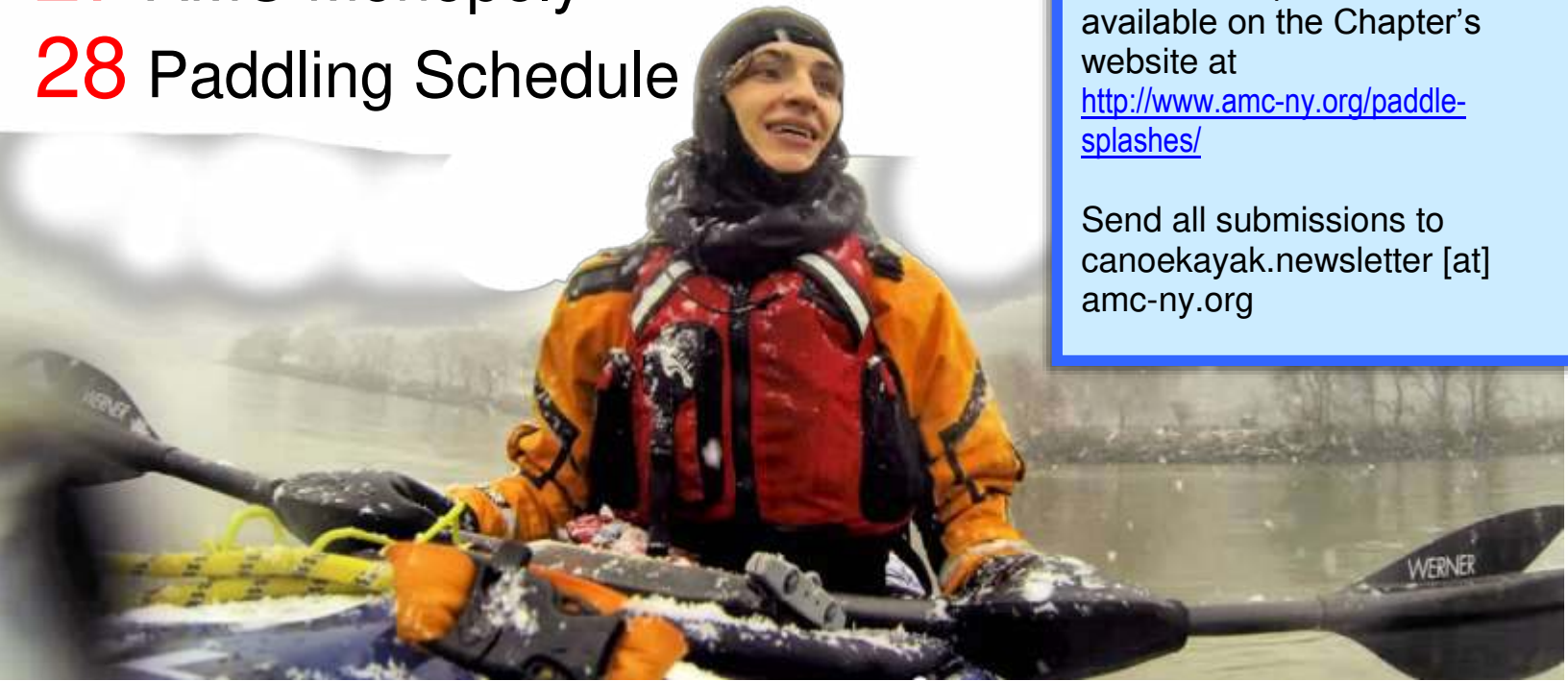
It's Never
Too Late
for that
Right
Paddling
Moment



WHAT'S *inside*



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PADDLE SPLASHES

Loretta Brady, Editor

Marty Plante, Printer's Devil



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Send all submissions to [canoekayak.newsletter \[at\] amc-ny.org](mailto:canoekayak.newsletter@amc-ny.org)



It's Never Too Late for ... *Admired AMC paddler tells of her professional paddling feats in Europe as she ponders her timing and savors* ... that Right Paddling Moment

So where was I?

Oh yes, sure. I was flying over the Alps, heading back home to Milan in 2011. Milan. Not the nicest Italian city, but only an hour from the central Alps. Little did I guess my new friends would have me on every creek in those mountains, making up for all I'd missed in my past six years back in the States.

BY PAMINA VITTA

It's Never Too Late ...

My friends from the Kayak Team Turbigo, KTT, met twice a week on a flat water canal—officially to paddle together, but off the record to hang out and grab dinner at the local take-away.

If you meet the KTT members in the evening, you'll think they are normal, relaxed kayakers. This is not quite true. KTT members are really wild, natural-born explorers who will face any rapid with a huge grin on their faces. Well, not any. It has to be at least class IV or more!

I felt their infectious spirit and warmth.

Day after day I got absorbed in an escalation of kayaking and fun. At the end of the summer I'd entered the Dragorossi team and got sponsored to use the most amazing kayak I've paddled so far: 88. What did I have to do in return? Just show up at some easier rivers and talk up the sport. Really, that's it. Racing?

Who cares about beating a little chronometer when there are so many fantastic rivers out there to explore? And explore, we did.

I took a clinic with “Gene 17” in Norway—one of the best investments in my life. First of all, Simon gave me back a good dose of self-confidence, which I lost somewhere while crossing that ocean to get back home.

The day we went to the Store Ula River, I'd already decided I wouldn't run the famous three ending drops. I thought I was not good enough for drops. Consequences of my mistakes could put rescuers in danger. I just wasn't ready for that ending.





It's Never Too Late ...

Imagine my surprise when at the end of a four hours exercising on all the other drops of the Upper Ula, Simon told me, “Pamina, I want you to show the boys the line. You and Jacob go first.” Jacob Sedivy is an instructor and an amazing pro kayaker from the Czech Republic.

I don't remember the rest of the conversation, just going over the lip of the first drop, following Jacob.

The happiness and relief I felt when landing was beyond words. I had paddled it well. Even if the next drop wasn't perfectly done, I could say, “OK, I'm ready for you.”

That Norway trip opened up my mind. I felt like a different Pamina, although nothing had really changed. It's the adrenaline energy, I guess!

Later I went to Corsica for the first time and fell in love. Corsica is a French island a few hours away from Italy. It's wild, and beautiful, and has plenty of amazing creeks. It's really a special place. I hope to return annually.

Time kept moving on with so many surprises that I couldn't stop thinking –THE BEST IS ALWAYS AHEAD.

Continued on p. 15



an
interview with
Charles
Michener



Charles Michener, entrepreneur, masseuse, and now leader of AMC's canoe instruction program, discusses with Loretta Brady his vision to take paddling courses around the next bend in the river.

“**MEET OLD FRIENDS**
MAKE NEW FRIENDS
PADDLE
repeat”

Isn't it a little intimidating to replace the likes of three giants of Basic Canoe paddling history? Just to be sure you don't throw the baby out with the river water, what are some of their treasured techniques you'll keep in the tradition?

I owe Rich, Lenny and Henry a great debt. They took me under their wing when I first started paddling, as well as asking me to assist with the instruction early on in my paddling career. I would never have considered myself a



an interview with Charles Michener

canoe instructor and still really don't. I just hope that I can impart my joy of boating to new people and help keep them safe on the water. So I will be leaning on what I learned from doing instructionals with them.

Some of the things I will be keeping will be buoy slalom, courses, traffic cop and obviously basic canoe strokes. I hope to add games like tag and follow-the-leader. I have found that when playing a game or going after a desired goal, the brain sometimes forgets to think about what it is trying so hard to learn and just does it!

The other piece is that we focus it as "Introduction to Canoeing and Moving Water." We have selected a more robust piece of river to explore the second day. It's exciting, but still safe in

tandem canoes. This will allow us to focus on moving water skills on the rivers we've used in the past. This is a bit of an experiment but I have a lot of confidence that it will work well.



Lenny & Henry are a dynamic duo who stir up interest every fall with their comic side cracks and delicious side dishes!

Yes, meetups and Internet list groups really challenge AMC to recruit and retain leaders. But how can you leverage Basic Canoe Instruction programs to solve that?

I have thought for a long time a real strength of the AMC is doing the big things: week long trips to Quebec or the Dixie states, and the instructional program. Things like safety and rescue, wilderness first aid. These are things that meetup groups can't touch, but we have been doing year in and year out for ages. I do my part for the



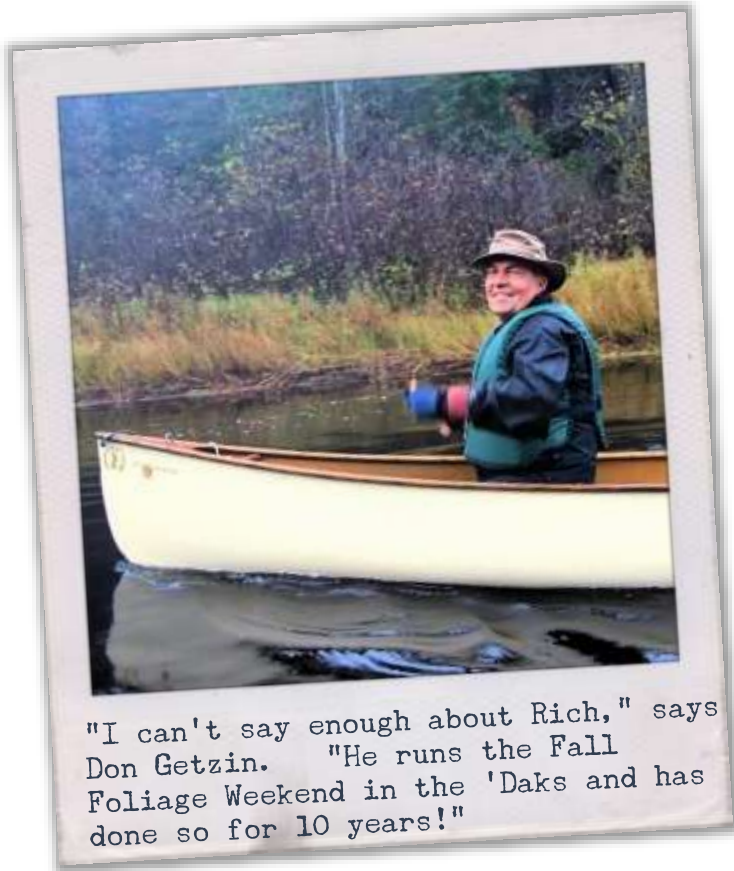
an interview with Charles Michener

Club and the community that helped me so much when I was starting out by leading these instructions. It just seems right.

So right off the bat, we're launching the 1st of this year's two canoe instructionals as a joint party with Butch Futrell and the whitewater kayak course June 12th weekend.

We're camping at Mauch Chunk Lake Park in Pennsylvania. Butch is a great friend and it's always a good time when a big group of students and instructors are together making a great weekend.

Don't you think some people might be put off by roughing it at a camp site as their first introduction to paddling?



A little bit. I am sorry that it might limit the pool of potential students. But on the other hand, if you are

really interested in making paddling part of your life and you don't have basic camping gear, you soon will. I showed up at my first AMC camp with a 20-year old tent that worked fine - till it rained! For those without any outdoor skills in begged, borrowed or stolen gear, you can learn a lot just sitting around a

campfire with AMCs.

You said a second instructional for the year? How would that be different?

Yes, we plan the second instructional for July 10th weekend at High Point State Park. We tried out this location last year with great



an interview with Charles Michener

success in the Fall Instructional. The thought is we will also open up the second day for the 1st group to return as a follow-up. Again, a bit more action on the river and a longer float on the Big D — the mighty Delaware — but hoping again to have all our great, great instructors as coaches and safety boaters: Don Getzin, Fran Schultz, Loretta Brady, Kurt Navratil and the very attractive Chris Viani. We will be working on corralling them to help out!



Don continues to inspire and support Basic Canoe Instruction, always ready to give extra attention to the budding soloist. Whether teaching knots or cracking a joke, he is a tireless coach of new paddlers.



Fran coaches new canoeists on tenting, gear choices, and the comparative advantage of car-topping on a Prius!



Ace canoe instructor Chris Viani mentors new talent Loretta Brady.

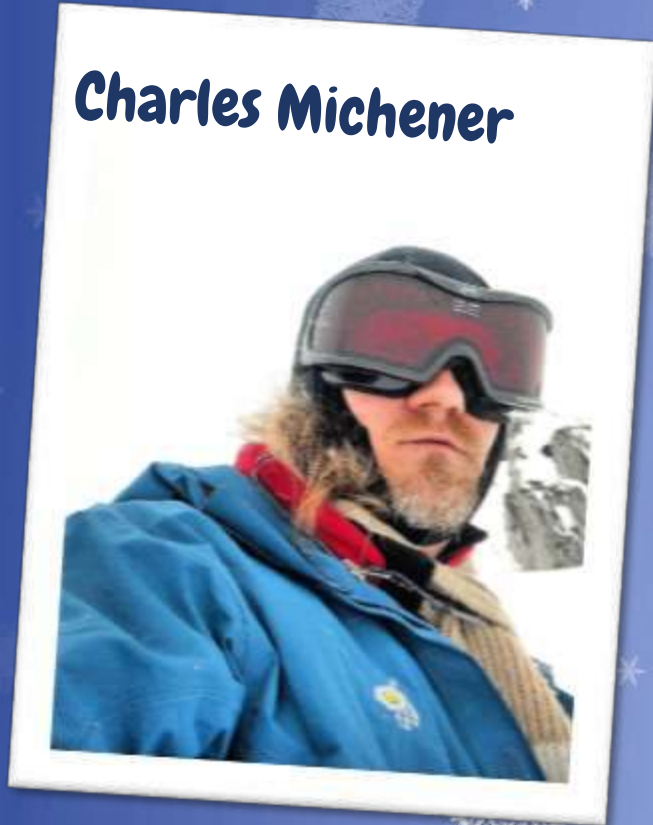
WHAT DO
PADDLERS
DO IN THE
WINTER?



Jill Arbuckle



Marty Plante



Charles Michener

WHAT DO PADDLERS DO IN THE WINTER?

Julie McCoy



“Neither snow nor sleet nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed paddling,” fits Julie McCoy who launches into the wintry Hudson River from her home in Inwood, Manhattan. You may have seen her face at AMC’s Fire Island home, where she guest instructs for the Club. “I’ve gone out on the Hudson River even when ice breaks free and comes down with the ebb, collecting in the eddies.” With the right “kit,” she argues, there’s really no reason to avoid winter rolls, unless you have dinner plans and don’t wanna mess up the hair.

“Now look at this shot. It’s actually snow you see there, in the middle of summer,” says Curt Gellerman, ace guide and storyteller, as fellow boaters pause from skiing to learn of his latest adventures. The Yampa River. The Mountain River. “And there. That was the rapid. I was really hanging on there, watching them take a dump and launch the longest swim I’d ever seen in a remote wilderness expedition.” They made it safely to sure. Then the plans started flying as everyone huddled to plot next year’s trips. Another week of Rivers? Where? This is our season to plan and dream. Thanks to Curt, that night we went to bed with visions of the Canadian arctic dancing in our heads.



Curt Gellerman

WHAT DO PADDLERS DO IN THE WINTER?

“Lots of us cook. And eat. Or just read cookbooks. Even better, we feed our fantasies reading piles of paddling tales. Come on, during one of those mid-trip lulls in cross-boat conversation, what paddler hasn’t imagined being alone there, forging new trade routes to the Shoshone? Some favs: *River of Doubt* by Candice Millard, *Anything Worth Doing* by Jo Deurbrouck, *Death in the Barrens* by George Grinnell. As the spoiler-alert titles promise, there’s serious carnage here.



Loretta Brady



David Brucas



Ara Jingirian

I spend the winter in a rocking chair.



Victoria Butler

WHAT DO PADDLERS DO IN THE WINTER?

This boater headed south of the equator and hiked two of New Zealand's Great Walks... the Milford Track and the Tongariro Northern Circuit. I also paddled the Whanganui River, a fantastic 3-day paddle through a gorge. Interestingly, most people canoe, although I kayaked and had lots of fun jet ferrying.



Eileen Yin



Pamina Vitta

“We exercise! Most injuries to paddlers come because they forget it is truly a sport, and we must be prepared for it. **SHOULDERS:** Using light weights such as light cans or even just potatoes, practice rotator cuff movements. It's easy and can be done everywhere. **ABS:** The myth is that 15 minutes a day will make you thin. You still need to diet. But daily work is essential to give you strength and stability. **HEART:** That resolute inner voice is ruled by the rhythm of your heart. If your heart is stressed, and this happens if it's not trained. It won't be able to help you keep calm.”

Arbuckle

If there were such a thing as an alpha female of a boating pack, that would be Jill Arbuckle. Hands down. Paddles down, too.

Except she is as often an “invisible” leader, shepherding us from behind closed doors --- closed executive doors. Jill is lately stepping down as the Membership Chair on our Chapter’s multi-activity Executive Board. For so many years, she has been silently recording and analyzing our crests and troughs in our fluctuating growth as a club.

For this, we say a huge thank you. But it’s far more. Much more. For many years, Jill was the New Jersey Trails Supervisor for our chapter, responsible

for maintaining some trails in the region. She is pivotal on the NY-NoJ Trail Conference activities and Conservation.

She was a longtime canoe trip leader and instructor, introducing many of our Chapter's members to canoeing. Jill is one of the few Chapter canoe paddlers to be awarded a Class 4 whitewater rating and continues to paddle whitewater rivers. She was also one of the original members of the committee that guided the Mohican Outdoor Center into existence in 1993.

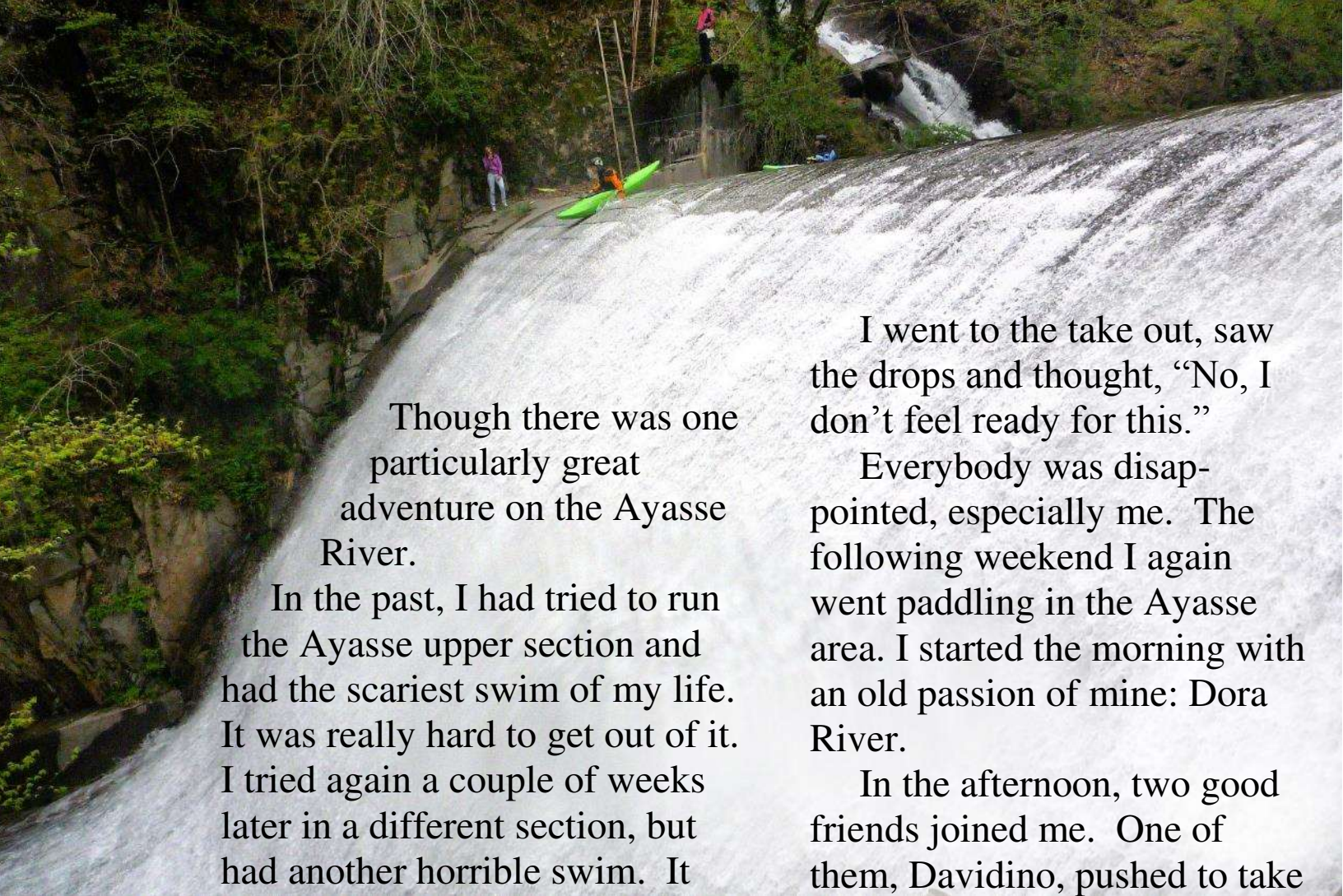
Few know she has stared down wolves and swarming bison herds in Yellowstone’s winter wonderland mountain range. She was a longtime ski trip leader and instructor for the Chapter, often running Chapter ski trips in the Adirondacks and at Mohican Outdoor Center. She once skied up and down Mt. Marcy, the highest peak in NY State, and has led AMC backcountry ski trips to Scandinavia. Ah, but she hates groomed trails. “You feel like a rat in a maze!” she’ll note.

No wonder she is a lifetime member of the AMC, and has been a member of our chapter since 1980. Scotland’s loss is our gain, for sure.



It's Never Too Late . . .

continued from p. 5



Though there was one particularly great adventure on the Ayasse River.

In the past, I had tried to run the Ayasse upper section and had the scariest swim of my life. It was really hard to get out of it. I tried again a couple of weeks later in a different section, but had another horrible swim. It took 20 minutes to rescue my boat from the hole it was stuck in. I thought that would be it: no Ayasse for me.

The following year, I felt that fussy itch....Ayasse.

I really didn't want to paddle it, although the upper part is gorgeous, and the lower section has three amazing, magnificent drops. My friends were pushing me. They organized a trip there on my weekend birthday.

I went to the take out, saw the drops and thought, "No, I don't feel ready for this."

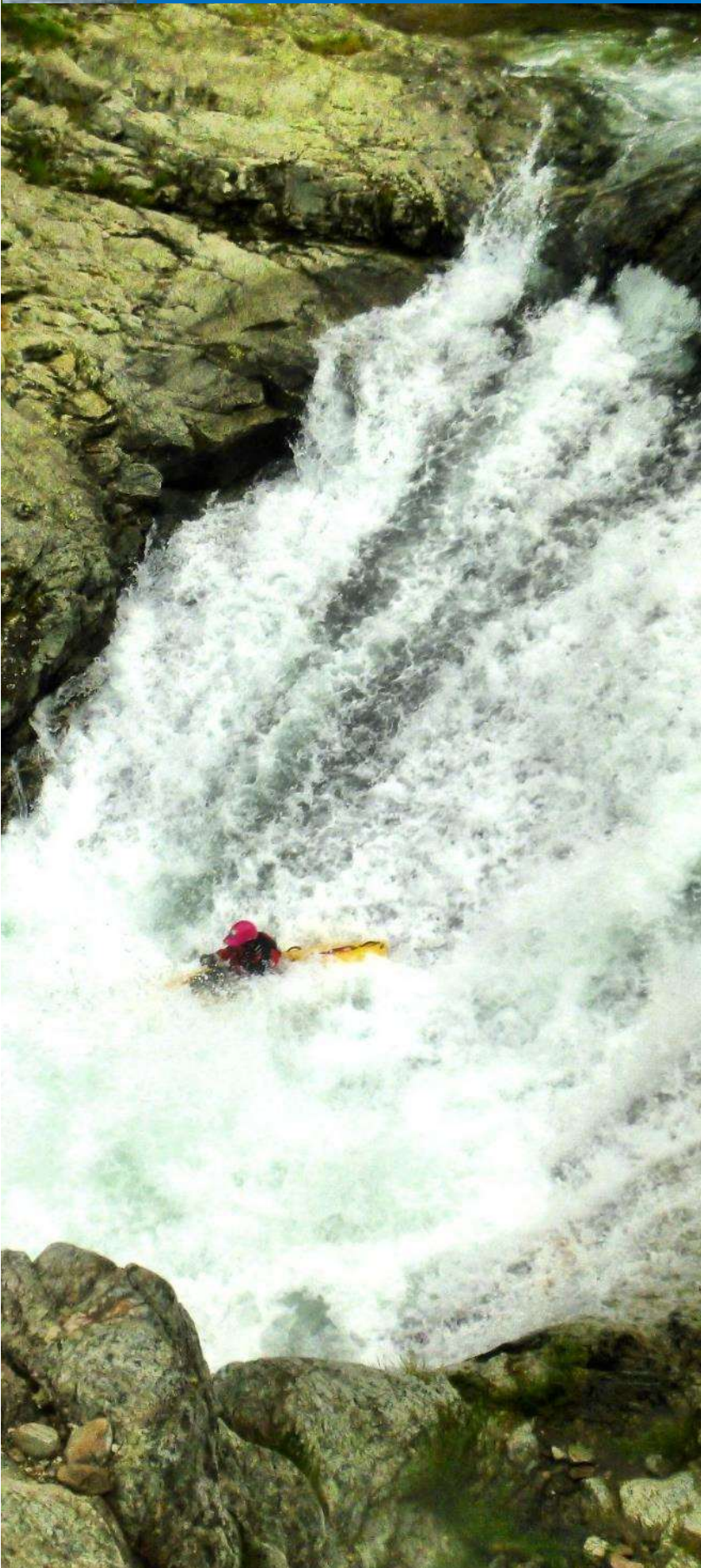
Everybody was disappointed, especially me. The following weekend I again went paddling in the Ayasse area. I started the morning with an old passion of mine: Dora River.

In the afternoon, two good friends joined me. One of them, Davidino, pushed to take me to the Ayasse upper section. I was extremely nervous, but the sun was bright, and Davidino was smiling. It was a smooth, gorgeous run.

Close to sunset, I decided it was time for the drops. Surprisingly enough, I was the most determined! Davidino and Scafo let me decide.

"Holy cow!! It's the perfect day! Let's go!" I said. They are not very hard to convince.

It's Never Too Late ...



It's actually a canyon, so there is no real way to make it truly safe, but my sweetheart and a group of Germans set up safety as best they could. Let's just say they were ready with the phone.

It was getting dark, but in the end we decided I was going first.

I was so ready for it. I can't describe how easy it felt. I remember clearly entering the exact line I chose and putting my paddle where I planned. What I didn't plan was the last stroke halfway over the first drop (I think some 30-40 feet) that allowed me to boof and land perfectly. It came by itself!

No words can describe my state of grace.

The second drop is quite dangerous due to an undercut on the right. Last year a German guy had to be rescued by helicopter because there was no other way to get him out.

Dividino ran the second drop so perfectly. We started screaming for joy at the bottom and tossed our paddles to the sky! The last drop is super easy, so we all made it! Just goes to show you it's never too late to wait for that right moment.

MEET THE COMMITTEE



Kayla Burlew

*Canoe & Kayak
Committee Chair*

I started my kayaking "career" on Butch's instructional in 2007. My father had been kayaking a year or so at that point and had been nagging me to try it. Of course being young, my first thought was "how cool and exciting can this be if my father can do it?" Well, he finally convinced me to go and it was immediate love. Not to mention I met my soon-to-be husband Bill there! Since then, I try to get out as much as I possibly can (basically when work doesn't get in my way)! My favorite rivers are the Dryway and the Yough. The Dryway is a sure thing to get my heart pumping and the Yough is just one of the prettiest rivers I have been on yet! I am class 4R rated and love helping on the instructional each year. I really like helping people find the love for kayaking and letting them know I too was in their shoes once! Kayaking to me is more than the being on the river - it's helping someone on their first run (or second or third), hanging out and exchanging stories around the camp fire, and sharing something that really makes you feel free and alive surrounded by good people!

MEET THE COMMITTEE



Chris Viani



Jordan Yaruss

**Jordan
Yaruss**
Class 4
Coordinator

I'm very proud and honored to be taking over from Chris as Class IV coordinator, especially if I don't have to go to any meetings. In the past, our club has given a Class IV rating to those who don't just have the ability to paddle class IV rivers, but also the willingness, judgment and experience to lead on class IV rivers. I believe upholding that distinction is the most important part I play going forward. Thank you to Chris for his many years of service in what is likely the least demanding role in AMC. I am looking forward to several years of being in close touch with him through almost-constant emails, endless texts, and panicked late-night phone calls as I learn the ropes from a man I just cannot say too many good things about.

NAVIGATION 101:

More planning in Action

BY OLLY GOTEL

In previous issues of PaddleSplashes, I discussed pre-navigation planning and showed how to put it into practice. Let's finish up by showing how the process works for a longer and more exposed crossing from the AMC cabin on Fire Island to Heckscher State Park on Long Island. It's around 10:30-11am on Thursday, June 26th, 2014.



Olly leads the planning session.

NAVIGATION 101:

More planning in Action

CHART

Maptech's Waterproof Chart for Long Island's South Shore, Number 3, Edition 5 (www.maptech.com). We paddled from point A to point B,

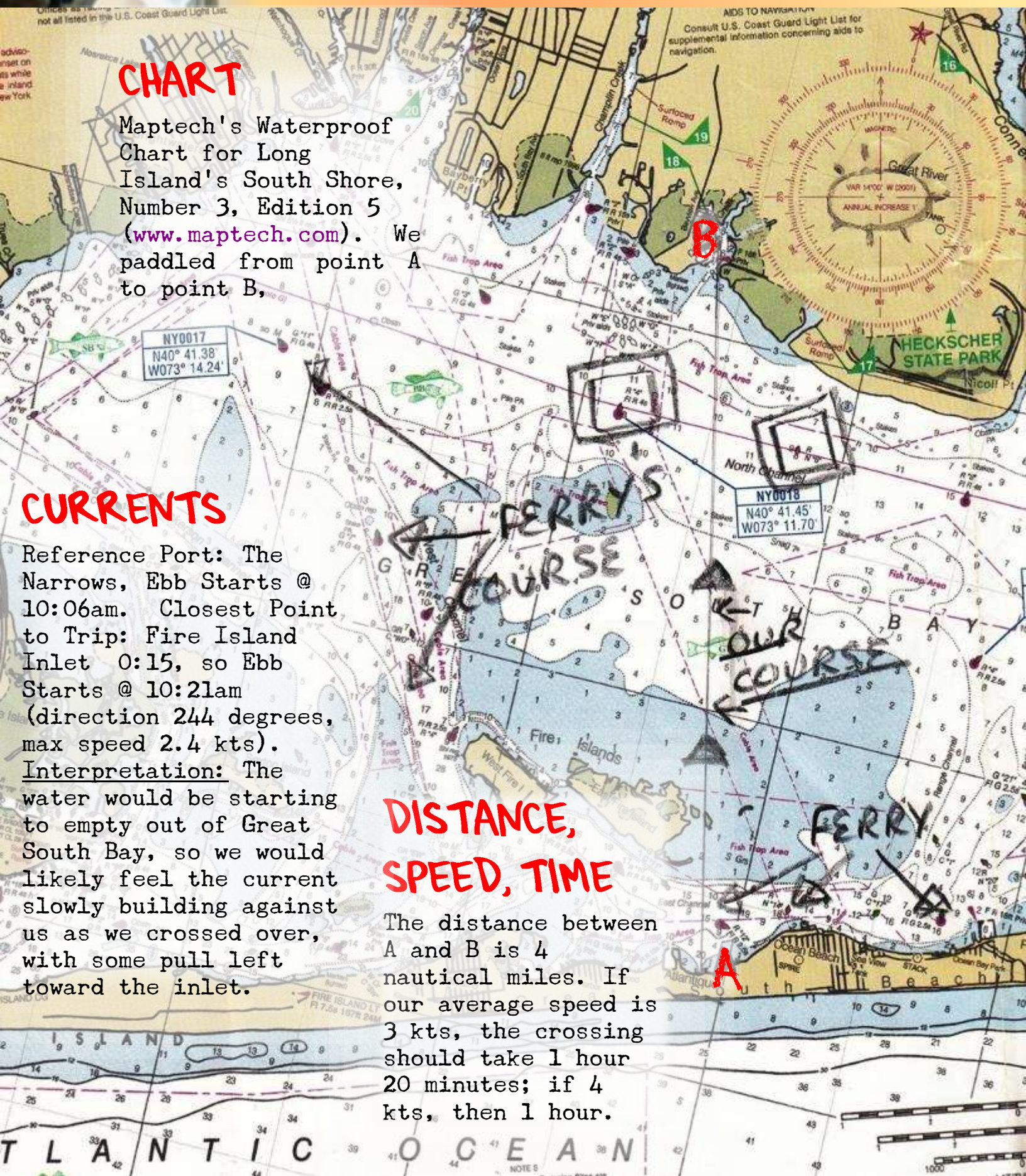
CURRENTS

Reference Port: The Narrows, Ebb Starts @ 10:06am. Closest Point to Trip: Fire Island Inlet 0:15, so Ebb Starts @ 10:21am (direction 244 degrees, max speed 2.4 kts).

Interpretation: The water would be starting to empty out of Great South Bay, so we would likely feel the current slowly building against us as we crossed over, with some pull left toward the inlet.

DISTANCE, SPEED, TIME

The distance between A and B is 4 nautical miles. If our average speed is 3 kts, the crossing should take 1 hour 20 minutes; if 4 kts, then 1 hour.



DIRECTION

Transposing the line from A to B to the chart's compass rose shows 0 or 360 degrees magnetic, so we paddle due north on the compass. Note that the insert chart is old (2001). In the center of its compass rose it says that the variation between Grid North (the chart) and Magnetic North (the direction in which the compass points) is 14 degrees west, and that this variation increases by 1 minute each year. Magnetic north shifts and, if crossing an open ocean, accounting for this could be the difference between life and death! We would make micro adjustments as we eyeballed our destination, as it would be unlikely we would lose land!

MARINE FORECAST

On Thursday morning, ANZ 353 (Fire Island Inlet NY to Moriches Inlet NY out 20 NM) read: "W WINDS 5 TO 10 KT, SEAS 3 TO 4 FT." It also mentioned patchy fog, chance of showers or thunderstorms, visibility 1 NM. While the crossing is protected from the full force of the ocean by a barrier island, the thunderstorms and loss of visibility was a potential concern.

WEATHER

The local weather at Fire Island was forecast as 74-78 degrees, with NW winds at 6 mph. The synoptic chart showed low pressure tracking to the SE. The latter meant that we could be in for some unstable weather (i.e., that thunderstorm). The water temperature was 64 degrees and sunset was at 8:28pm.

HAZARDS & MITIGATION

- 1) Commercial ferries and recreational boaters abound in the Great South Bay. Know the ferry channels, minimize time in them, and be visible and able to communicate.
- 2) Paddlers can get seasick if they focus on a compass. Set visual waypoints to focus on the horizon (passing the Fire Islands on our left at the beginning of the crossing and landing between red buoys #4 and #6 as we finished). Carry ginger for the nauseous.
- 3) The main risk was that chance of thunderstorms - once mid-crossing, there is no hiding from lightning. So, we checked the local radar and watched the cloud formations.

OUTCOME?

There were no thunderstorms and no loss of visibility. We followed our course, ferries did not run us down and no one threw up. This planning may feel overkill here, but it's good to practice the basic process on small journeys before you tackle something more challenging. Even if you know the waters, try this out and get paddling smarter. Sea kayakers share the waters with other boaters, so let's show them that we are not a liability by stopping to take photos while drifting into the middle of their channel or by leaving float plans that make no nautical sense. Dave and I then hope to catch some of you on this year's Fire Island trip, July 21-23, when maybe you can plan and take us on some journeys.

TIDES

Reference Port: Sandy Hook, High Tide @ 8:08am.
Closest Point to Trip: Bay Shore, Watchogue Creek Entrance 2:15, so High Tide @ 10:23am (1 foot rise in tide).

Interpretation: While we should not run aground in the shallows, we needed to watch out for emerging shoals as the height of the water dropped.



WORLD TOUR 2015
REEL PADDLING
FILM FESTIVAL



“**I**t’s the perfect group to hang out with for a great night of paddling rock stars,” toasted one cluster of Manhattan-based sea-kayakers lured to AMC’s Reel Paddling Film Festival back on October 30 this past year.

Correction — that’s AMC’s **Second Annual** Reel Paddling Film Festival. No small accomplishment to forge such a tradition, as the intrepid past Canoe/Kayak Chair Carin Tinney first envisioned this party.

amc’s annual

**REEL
PADDLING
FILM
FESTIVAL**

REEL PADDLING FILM FESTIVAL

“We get a chance to see paddlers at the top of their game. You can’t help but be humbled, and learn a thing or two,” agreed a group from the North Brooklyn Boat Club.

Styling it his way, Rob Holbrook chose to host the event at Brooklyn’s [New York Distilling Company](#), owned by a close paddling buddy and located centrally to pull in loyal friends from Sebago Canoe and Kayak Club based out in Canarsie, plus the North Brooklyn Boat Club, and whoever else planted their eyeballs on his social media alerts.

“The event could not have happened if not for the New York Distilling Company who donated the venue and a few bottles for the raffles---but not to be consumed on park property, mind you,” said Rob.

Other local supporters were Brooklyn Kayak Guides, not to mention the national sponsors of the festival itself: [Kokatat](#), [Blackfeather](#), and the entire province of Ontario, to name a few.

An offshoot of Rapid Media’s 10th annual world tour, the Reel Paddling Film Festivals showcase award winning paddling films from global waters: rivers, to waterfalls, coastlines and glaciers.

The AMC Reel Film Festival

raised well over \$600. But more than that, between Rob’s easy-going banter introducing each pic—wrote his own jokes, he did—the event’s multi-club group gelled stronger than epoxy on a cracked canoe.

“I had remembered AMC from a trip to Fire Island,” said Sebago’s Commodore Walter Lewandowski. “And I was glad to get a chance to talk to Lauren Zondag (Chapter Program Coordinator) and see what kinds of sea kayaking instruction could be done.”



It’s all about the networking. The paddling, too!



The Ratings Committee is delighted to award new Quietwater ratings to the following Chapter paddlers. Congratulations to all:

Irene Alvarez
Tom Amisson
Marta Bautis
Fred Bechtoldt
John Cardillo
Francine Carlini
Roger Dietlin
Mila Kelmenson
Richard Kleinhenz
Klara Marton
Steve Medwid
Donna Nye
Aviva Sakolsky
PJ Salamon
Patricia Salmon
Jane Smalley
Joe Toth
Leigh Toth
David Webber



Congratulations to Dave Michael, our newest Class 4 paddler.



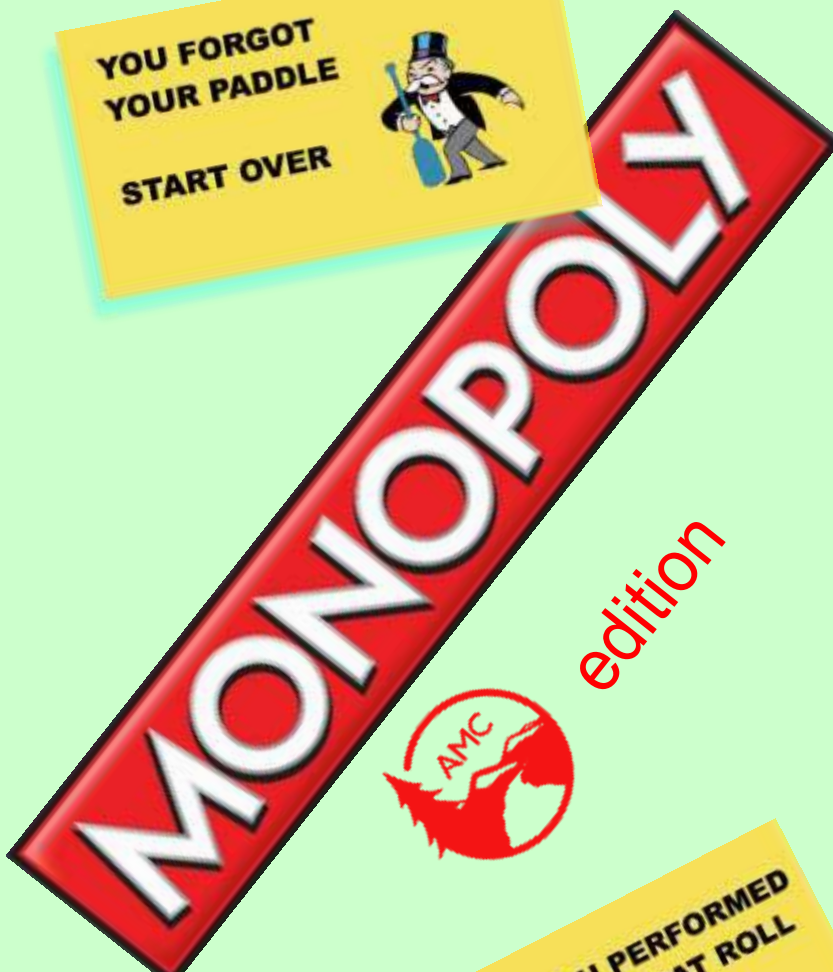

We encourage paddlers to work towards being rated. A rating gives trip leaders not familiar with your skill level a standardized way to assess your appropriateness for a particular trip. To get rated, BEFORE you put on the water, ask a trip leader or other paddler (who has a rating equal to or greater than the river/body of water) to assess your skill during the trip and submit a rating card to our Ratings Chair, Rob Holbrook, at canoekayak.ratings@amc-ny.org. For more information, click [here](#).

Olivia Samantha

IT'S
A
GIRL!

Rob Holbrook and Rachel Wile are the proud parents of new paddling hopeful, Olivia Samantha Wile-Holbrook. Staunchly, they defend their unconventional parenting style. "We start 'em early." That explains why Olivia is the only sub-CL4 paddler with an official rating so far this year. Not yet good at sharing her spotlight.



	1935-1939 The Canoe Committee buys 7 canoes and a trailer in 1937	1940-44 No scheduled trips in 1943-45 due to WW2 gasoline rationing	1945-49 First use of "life vests"		
2010-2015	PaddleSplashes available only online in 2010	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Graphics by Marty Plante</p> </div>			1955-59 NJ trips are cancelled in 1959 due to encephalitis epidemic
2005-09	Sea kayaks are added to the rental fleet in 2005				1960-64 New asbestos oven mitts added to cook kits
2000-04	PFDs now required on all paddling trips				1965-69 
1995-99	Deerfield River Agreement takes effect in 1995, ensuring scheduled WW releases				1970-74 PaddleSplashes is first published in 1972
1990-94	"Canoe Committee" is changed to "Canoe & Kayak Committee"				1985-89 Rental boats are no longer prohibited from running Tarrifville Dam

Jul 21-23
 Mid-Week Sea
 Kayak Clinic @
 Fire Island w/
 Olly & Dave

2015 Activity

		Date	Touring Water	Quiet Water	Class 1	4	Misc
Mar.	28-29			Ramapo (Sat, 3/28) <i>Plante</i>			Pool Sessions (Wed, 3/25)
	4-5						
April	11-12			Oswego (Sat, 3/11) <i>Watters</i>			
	18-19						
	25-26						
May	2-3			Wading (Sat, 5/2) <i>Watters</i>			
	9-10						
	16-17			Basha Kill (Sun, 5/17) <i>Fine/Barnes</i>			
	23-24						

