

PADDLE SPLASHES

JULY 2015

Canoe & Kayak Committee
Appalachian Mountain Club
NY-NoJ Chapter



contents



PADDLE SPLASHES

Loretta Brady, Editor

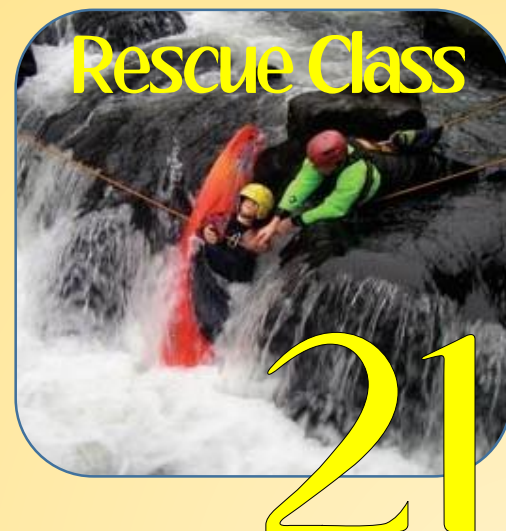
Marty Plante, Printer's Devil



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<http://www.amc-ny.org/paddle-splashes/>

Send all submissions to canoe kayak.newsletter [at] amc-ny.org



LEADING LEADERS

TELL ALL



Julie McCoy near the GWB

We rounded up a few of our more experienced trip planners for sea, white and quiet waters and asked them to dish on the unexpected rewards of trip leading.

The answers were surprising.

- *Timothy Watters — canoe and hiking leader since he was 16;*
- *David Rosenfeld — expeditioner in sailing, back-country skiing and whitewater trips;*
- *Julie McCoy — BCU Level 3 sea kayak leader and instructor at Fire Island, Sedge Island, Staten Island and Manhattan!*



LEADING LEADERS

PS: Recently, AMC has ramped up its leadership appreciation with more awards, swag and gear gifts, and celebratory dinners. What would you say are the greatest invisible rewards of leading trips?

TIM: I've been a leader of hikes and paddles since I was 16. It's just something I came to do naturally. I was always getting asked to lead.

There's been so many great things about it. First of all, you get to pick the places you go and have people to share it with. The older you get, the harder it is to get friends to join you on trips. Here is a chance to instantly pull together a group of like-minded people and have an adventure.

JULIE: I love the challenge of planning and navigating trips, even overnight camping with sea kayaks. I want to be the one who double checks the tide tables, winds, and rest stops. That way I know I'll have a relaxing trip.

PS: And your favorite trips to lead?

JULIE: Sedge Island was a keeper. But we also can paddle right here in the city. Imagine looking back at the NYC skyline from your sea kayak. We've got the Hudson River all around us year-round to paddle.

TIM: Lately we see a lot more of combination hiking and paddling, which is really great. There's something about long walks and how you get to talking about all kinds of special things. Overnight trips really get you to bond with everyone, even though they're harder to plan and run, they are much more rewarding.

Almost anywhere in the Adirondacks is terrific. It feels so remote. Like the Raquette River, with all the environmental variety and changing water formations along the way.

PS: Right. Some of the most beautiful camping sites with gorgeous sunset views ever are there. And if you lead the trip, you can farm out the gear so you don't have to carry it all.

Tim Watters in the Adirondacks.
Photo by Paul Schnaittacher.



LEADING LEADERS

DAVID: The Southern Rivers trips, hands down. It's great when leaders revive favorite traditional trips. Makes it easy for leaders, too. Sedge is a great example, and the Esopus Creek weekends. But New Boston is a terrific regional gathering, too. Then there's the Salmon River trip getting revived this summer. The salmon sometimes swim right by you.

PS: *Some may be scared off from leadership, imagining it is too much like "work." What do you say to that?*

TIM: You get better at delegating. It's a community, after all. Making the meals

can be overwhelming. There are people to guide you through how to do that, or divide it up and get a pot luck plan going.

The other thing to consider is all the things that can happen. But again, you're in it together. There was a time, even on a quiet water trip, when one man wound up having a heart attack later. He hadn't listened to my advice to get through one bit of current flow, overturned, and pinned his boat. Somehow in shoving his boat to unpin it, he must have exerted himself a bit too much. That really makes you think differently about everything to notice while being a leader.



David on Esopus Creek.
Photo by Marty Plante.



LEADING LEADERS

DAVID: Definitely get someone to work with you. It's more fun. You can do good cop/bad cop: one is the rule enforcer, the other holds a hand or two.

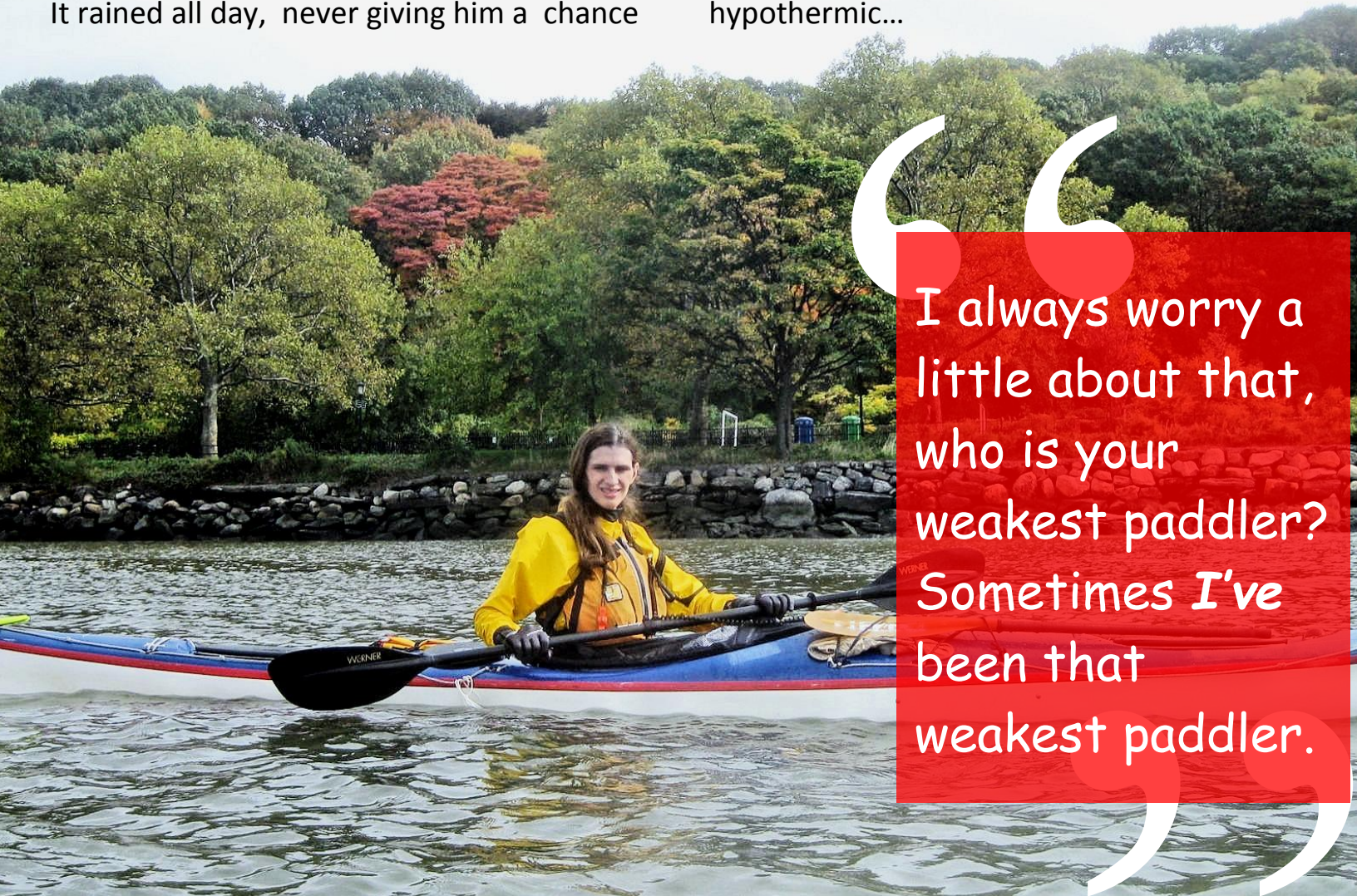
***PS:** There are some pretty funny unplanned incidents that leaders share—the kind of crazy-crisis that bonds the group— like needing a ladder at the take out. Or when boats split around an island and one disappears, with only a floating hat arriving at the rendezvous. Do you have any near misses that made a trip more thrilling than first expected?*

TIM: I once had a boy who had worn all the wrong cotton clothes, despite our briefing. It rained all day, never giving him a chance

to dry. We finally got to camp, and we're all setting up when I suddenly noticed he wasn't around. We found him balled up in three inches of water, asleep in his tent. I'm sure if we hadn't gotten him out of there, changed and tucked between two warm bodies in a pup tent, he wouldn't have made it.

JULIE: I always worry a little about that, who is your weakest paddler? Sometimes I've been that weakest paddler. Makes you appreciate that someone watches out.

TIM: That's why I say, always watch out for the quiet ones. They say, "I'm fine," but really they can be dehydrated, or near-hypothermic...



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LEADING LEADERS

But you know it's always great, though, to have new people on a trip. Even kids. You know, I may have hiked or paddled a certain stretch a hundred times. Then, some new participant notices something—some new plant, a certain shape of the mountains—and I'm rewarded by sharing even more beauty than I'd first seen.

DAVID: Or just needing a support paddler for awhile. But it's a mistake to do too much for them. When they capsize and swim, they've gotta grab their paddle and swim with their boat. Don't let them get too dependent on the leaders to do everything for them.

JULIE: Still, there are times you may have to tow someone. It can feel like the paddle of shame.

***PS:** So we do it with dignity.*

Tim relaxes after a trip



MYTHBUSTERS

amc's
new
outdoor
center
at

HARRIMAN

Rumors have been floating for some time about AMC's new territory in Harriman State Park. It's now official. The Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC) invited AMC to open a new 64-acre outdoor program center in summer 2016.

MYTHBUSTERS

Investing more than \$1 million to renovate a former youth camp on Breakneck Pond, AMC plans to launch a variety of programs for paddlers and hikers who get to stay at this full-service campground

AMC was chosen by PIPC for its strength in connecting people to the outdoors and its strong record of conservation in the area. “AMC is excited to enter into

a long-term partnership with PIPC and New York State Parks,” said John Judge, AMC President and CEO, noting how all partners will share their expertise for a growing impact in the greater New York area.

Still, with building beginning this summer, speculations persist. What does it all mean for the CKC of NY-NoJ? Let’s field a few here.



MYTH #1

Isn't swimming banned in Harriman's lakes?

WRONG. Besides the lifeguarded public beaches at Lakes Welch and Lake Tiorati, visitors can and do enjoy the “swimming holes” of Harriman every day in the warm months of summer, just on their own.

MYTHBUSTERS



MYTH #2

Heard it's gonna be all Teen Youth Program activities. Not much for the rest of us.

WRONG AGAIN. There will be a big push for Teen Leadership programs, since they develop our next generation of paddlers, but all of the chapter committees are brainstorming ideas for using the facility to our advantage. Think of it: store a whole bunch of boats for canoe, whitewater and sea kayak practice. Do hike-n-paddle outings. Safety-and-rescue practice. The potential is up to us.

MYTH #3

Great. But it's not that easy for car-less people from the boroughs.



NOPE. The AMC will provide a shuttle service to nearby train stations, allowing visitors to use public transportation.

MYTHBUSTERS

MYTH #4

Yeah, ok, but the park is closed most of the year, isn't it?



NOT QUITE. The park is open year round. There's no official gate that closes, and no hours of operation. The lean-tos along the trails are open all the time, and lakes may be fished at night from shore. You can ski almost anywhere there's snow. Some amenities — like the beaches, some roadways, and the gates to access roads — close during the winter.

MYTH #5

This may get pricey, glamping and all that.



NOT SO MUCH. The camp already has a range of camping options: tent platforms, group sites, 3-sided lean-tos. Cabins and a self-service kitchen will be improved for those who choose that option. But all the redesign goals aim at preserving the wild, undeveloped nature of this area.



**Proposed AMC
Program Center
on Breakneck
Pond in Harriman
State Park.**

Illustration by LDA
Architecture &
Interiors.

MYTH #6

But isn't it hard to get
a parking spot in the summer?

NOT FOR US. The AMC's camp will
have its own parking area, so we won't
be competing with everyone else for
limited public parking.



Daniel Soszynski (right), Membership and Volunteer Coordinator from AMC's Boston headquarters, and Eric Sleeper (center), an AMC member from the Del. Valley chapter, promoting the AMC to a PaddleSport visitor. Photo by Linda Mayerik.



Thanks

Thanks to the volunteers who represented the AMC at Paddlesport 2015. Your hard work made a bigger impact than you realize.

Mary Ellen Cuneo
Trudy Heinrichs
Ian Kindle
Linda Mayerik

Adrian Noble
Paul Serdiuk
Eric Sleeper
Daniel Soszynski



Sedge Island

BY SHERI YOUNG

We are relatively new to the sport of kayaking: we've "dabbled" in it for years, but only just recently purchased recreational boats for our own use. And even then, we haven't kayaked as much as we've liked. Life gets in the way sometimes!

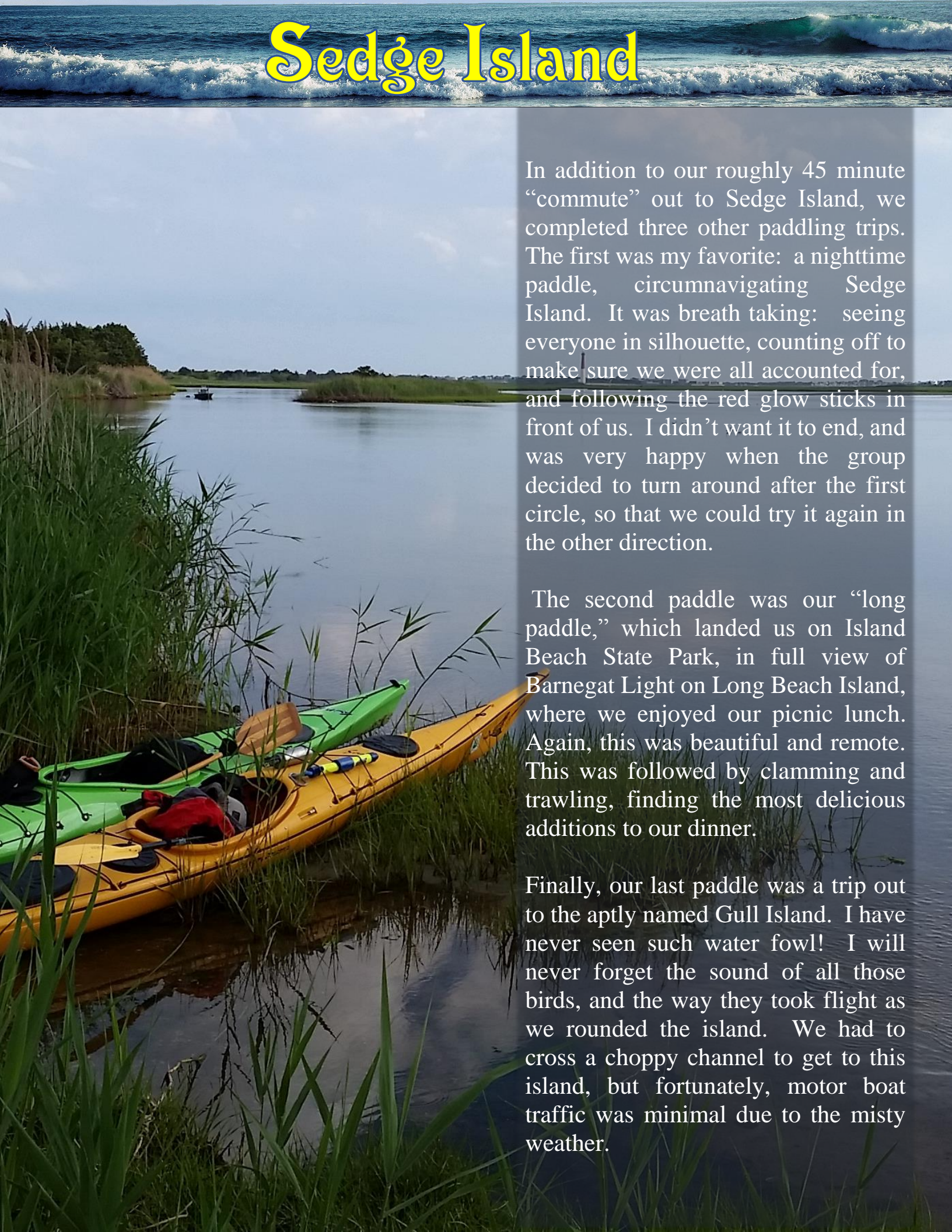
So we were a little hesitant when we were invited to participate in the annual trip to Sedge Island by some very experienced kayakers. Would we be able to keep up? Would our arms get tired? Would we enjoy ourselves?

But the minute we unloaded our kayaks at the drop off point on Island Beach State Park, our fears dissolved, simply because of the incredible beauty of our surroundings. It was hard to believe we were still in the most densely populated state in the country. Instead, we felt as if we were the only folks on earth.

where
kayaking
is a shore
thing



Sedge Island



In addition to our roughly 45 minute “commute” out to Sedge Island, we completed three other paddling trips. The first was my favorite: a nighttime paddle, circumnavigating Sedge Island. It was breath taking: seeing everyone in silhouette, counting off to make sure we were all accounted for, and following the red glow sticks in front of us. I didn’t want it to end, and was very happy when the group decided to turn around after the first circle, so that we could try it again in the other direction.

The second paddle was our “long paddle,” which landed us on Island Beach State Park, in full view of Barnegat Light on Long Beach Island, where we enjoyed our picnic lunch. Again, this was beautiful and remote. This was followed by clamming and trawling, finding the most delicious additions to our dinner.

Finally, our last paddle was a trip out to the aptly named Gull Island. I have never seen such water fowl! I will never forget the sound of all those birds, and the way they took flight as we rounded the island. We had to cross a choppy channel to get to this island, but fortunately, motor boat traffic was minimal due to the misty weather.

Sedge Island

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What did we take away from this trip? I think the message of conservation from our young guides will stick with us for a long time. It has made us reconsider many things that suburban life lets us take for granted: water and energy use, reducing our carbon footprint, recycling, composting, and eating local. We left with a new appreciation of our coastal environment, and can't wait to get back out on our kayaks again!



Suzanne Villegas taking a post-trip nap while waiting for the shuttle.
Photo by Eileen Yin.



“Expeditions are one of the things we do best,” Charles Michener once noted. “That and AMC instructionals.”

Week of Southern Rivers 2015:

Where the “*Southern*”
is Optional

So it’s not too surprising that this year’s traditional season-launcher week of rivers was a blend of both. Aiming for mostly Class 2+/3 rivers, this year’s trippers were primarily canoeists and “climbers”—paddlers yearning to step up.

Leader Eileen Yin aimed the expedition to cover as many miles of scenic, “delightful” Class 2 runs as she could.

“I’d forgotten how relaxing and just varied and delightful Class 2+ and 3 rivers can be.” She inspired boat loads of confidence to get Loretta Brady out in front as a debut river-reading leader even on unfamiliar new runs and even on the blow-down laden Nescopeck River.

Eileen was ably assisted by whitewater kayaker and “escort-boater” David Rosenfeld. Together, they helped Suzanne Villegas ascend to Class 2 proficiency, subsequently confirmed by a perfect run through Zoar Gap.

Southern Rivers 2015

But the trip would not have happened if it weren't for the anchor paddler, Don Getzin. Adept at shuttling to find the most scenic take-outs and scouting out the best dinner venues, he gave added panache to each evening of the adventure.



More than that, his signature tag to mark the take outs—various brightly colored boxers or briefs that served equally well as a vandal repellent—were a clear welcome beacon as the paddlers found their way safely at the end of each run.

Participants started at two points: one in North Carolina, paddling with a friend there, and the others on a Class 2/2+ section of the Cheat River. North Carolina's Tuckasegee and Oconaluftee in the Great Smoky Mountains are great favorites. By the third day, after torrential rains, the Tuckasegee was a whole different personality, providing a great lesson about how *not* to take

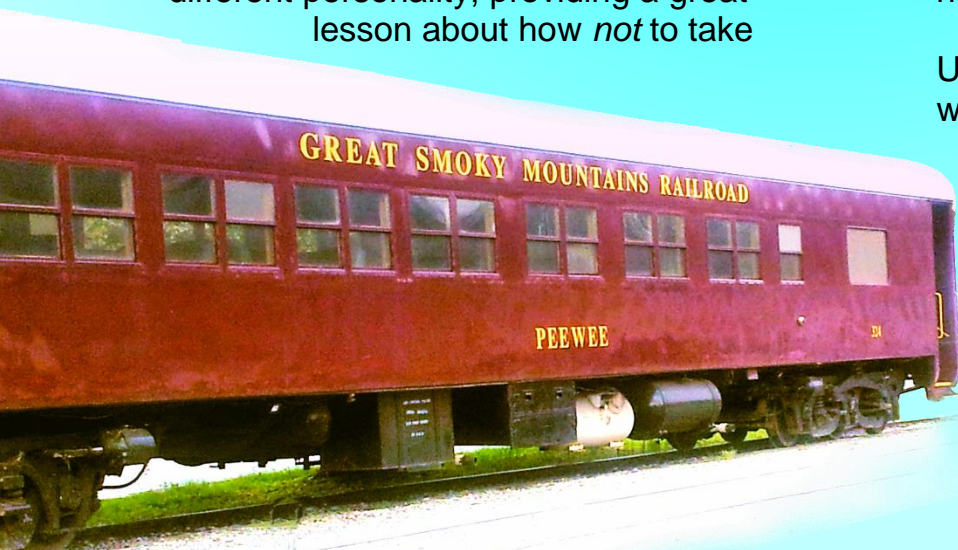
prior river knowledge for granted. You truly can't step into the same river twice.

The paddlers joined together in their own confluence by the Cassleman River near Ohio/Pennsylvania borders.

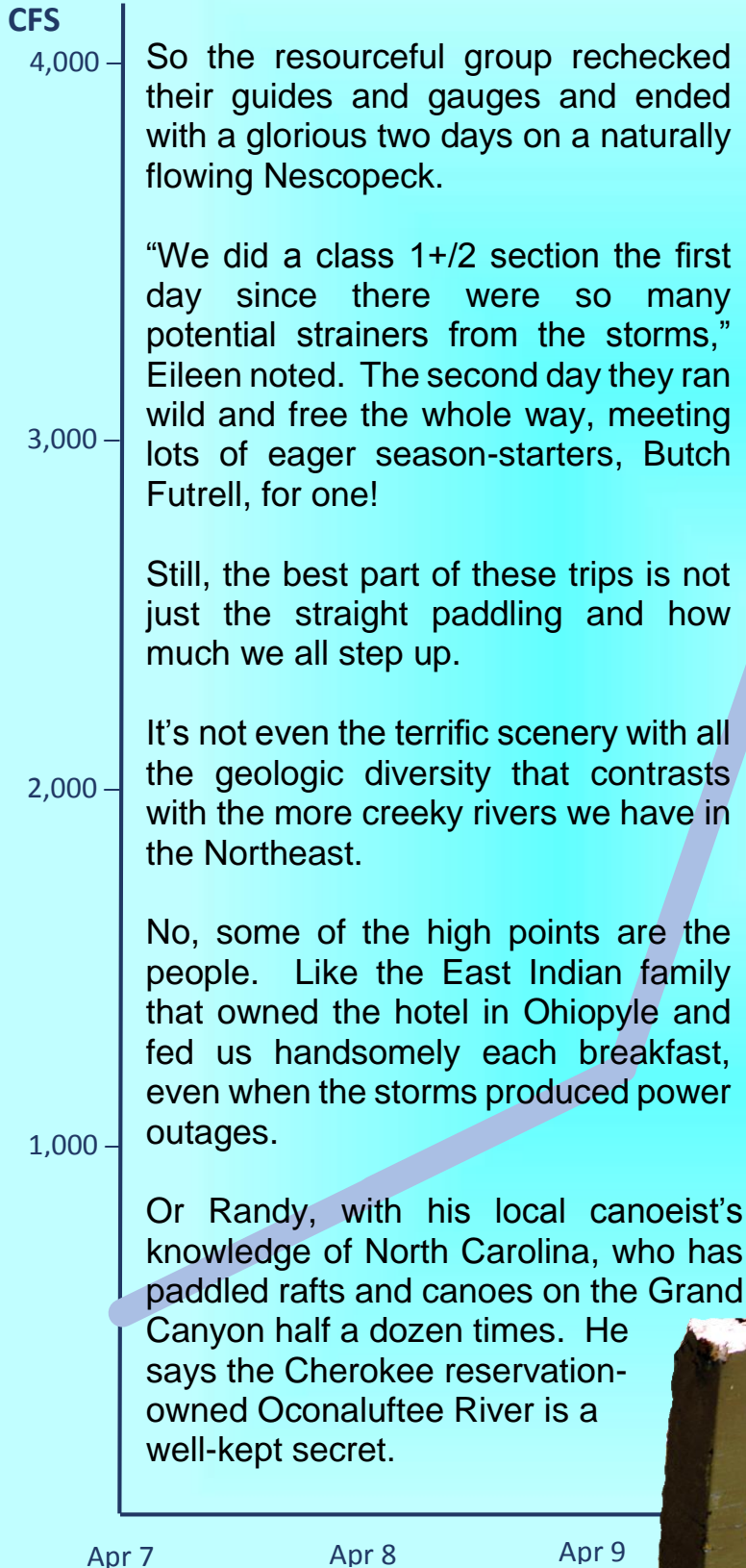
The boaters enjoyed three different stretches there on three different days, each section with a character all its own. But suddenly, overnight, the flow tripled and went off the charts for any safely navigable level.

Unexpectedly, the week of rivers was a week of floods. At the whim of the weather, our fearless paddlers quickly recalculated plans to shift course when rivers overtopped themselves. It was a lesson in comparing river gauge tables and local knowledge to plot the next destination.

"There have been years where the week of Southern Rivers wound up in the Hudson," recalled Don.



Southern Rivers 2015



So the resourceful group rechecked their guides and gauges and ended with a glorious two days on a naturally flowing Nescopeck.

“We did a class 1+2 section the first day since there were so many potential strainers from the storms,” Eileen noted. The second day they ran wild and free the whole way, meeting lots of eager season-starters, Butch Futrell, for one!

Still, the best part of these trips is not just the straight paddling and how much we all step up.

It’s not even the terrific scenery with all the geologic diversity that contrasts with the more creekly rivers we have in the Northeast.

No, some of the high points are the people. Like the East Indian family that owned the hotel in Ohiopyle and fed us handsomely each breakfast, even when the storms produced power outages.

Or Randy, with his local canoeist’s knowledge of North Carolina, who has paddled rafts and canoes on the Grand Canyon half a dozen times. He says the Cherokee reservation-owned Oconaluftee River is a well-kept secret.

“A lot of people don’t know about this treasure of a river, but I’m in no rush to post a review on the paddler blogs.” Still, he would never attempt it when it floods, and that can happen more than you think, especially with the weather we had that week.

Or the ultra-patriotic businesses you find in these rural zones, where owners proudly post “We hire American” on their glass doors. One that we spoke to was a granola-crunching eco-blogger who meant nothing anti-immigrant at all. He just really likes to hire American war veterans.

“There were so many more rivers we heard about and were dying to try, like the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania, Pine Creek,” Eileen noted. “The weather just wasn’t on our side.”


But that gives us a goal for next time.

Cassleman River Gauge
Apr 7-13, 2015



THE AMC WANTS YOU! to VOLUNTEER



 You've spent years honing your paddling skills until you can glide arrow-straight across a lake, combat roll in the roughest water and sidesurf the gnarliest hole. Now it's time to share those skills.

The Chapter needs instructors and trip leaders for all activities – whitewater, flatwater and sea kayaking – and at all levels. Even if you're able to spend only a single day a year helping out, we can use your assistance. You don't need expert paddling skills - just a desire to help others get started on their way to a lifetime of canoeing or kayaking.

You needn't gain formal certification as a paddling instructor to help teach an AMC workshop, but one of the best ways to gain confidence is to take an instructor certification workshop offered by the [American Canoe Association](#). These start with a review of paddling technique, then cover presentation skills. You'll learn how to evaluate and correct the paddling mistakes of novice boaters, while improving your own skills. After getting your certification (and an impressive patch for your PFD), volunteer to help with one of our Chapter's workshops as an assistant instructor. Before you know it, you'll be one of the AMC's veteran instructors.



THE AMC WANTS YOU!

Be an Instructor

Members of our Chapter who become certified by the American Canoe Assoc., the British Canoe Union, the Canadian Recreational Canoe Assoc., or other recognized paddling organization, are eligible for a 60% refund of the workshop fee, up to a \$350 rebate. The refund is awarded to instructors who agree to teach for our Chapter and is payable upon completion of their first AMC instruction.

Be a Leader

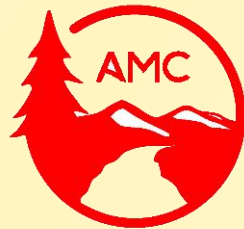
Want to lead AMC trips? In November, Lenny and Henry will conduct a Trip Leaders Workshop for our paddlers that will answer all of your questions and certify you as an AMC Trip Leader. Keep an eye on our schedule.

Be Appreciated

Trip leaders and instructors who have led a trip or instructed at a workshop three or more times in 2014-15 will get a valuable gift. Official AMC trips and instructions qualify, but not pool sessions or bootlegs.

Gifts may include throw-ropes, PFDs or breakdown paddles. What will it be? Lead three trips and find out.

Hone your whitewater safety & rescue skills on Esopus Creek.



Workshop conducted by Potomac River Outfitters.



Save the Date
SWIFTWATER RESCUE CLASS
AUG 8-9, 2015



This workshop is open to all and will be run "at cost." Participants pay the actual cost of camping, food and instruction, with no additional paddler fees or other charges.

- A 25% discount will be given to current AMC members. Not a member? Click [here](#).
- A 50% discount will be given to all active AMC NY-NoJ whitewater trip leaders. To qualify, you must have been the trip leader of record on at least one trip of Class 2 or higher in 2014-15 for the Chapter and must be a current AMC member.

Register [here](#).

Questions? Contact Rich Dabal at rdabal10@hotmail.com

2015 Activity Schedule

| Date | Touring / Quiet Water | Class 1 | Class 2 | Class 3 | Class 4 |
|--------|-----------------------|--|---|--|---|
| July | 4-5 |  | | Yough Lewis | |
| | | | | Savage Tinney/David/Gotel | |
| | | Salmon Brady | | | |
| July | 11-12 | Basic Canoe Instruction Michener/ Brady | Fifebrook Gotel/ Tinney/ Handworth | Dryway Gotel/ Tinney/ Handworth | |
| July | 18-19 |  | | | Maine Wilderness (Jul16-19) Tinney |
| August | 25-26 | | Adirondacks Plante/Gotel | Adirondacks Plante/Gotel | |
| | 1-2 | Oswegatchie Brady | | | |
| | | Poconos Horowitz | | | |
| | 9-10 | | Advanced WW Safety & Rescue Dabal | | |
| | 16-17 | | | | |
| | 23-24 | | | | |
| 30-31 | | | | | |

Aug 4-6
Mid-Week Kayaking
@
Fire Island

Jul 9-13
**ADIRONDACK
CANOE
SYMPOSIUM**

