

PADDLE SPLASHES



October 2015

Canoe & Kayak Committee
Appalachian Mountain Club
NY-NoJ Chapter



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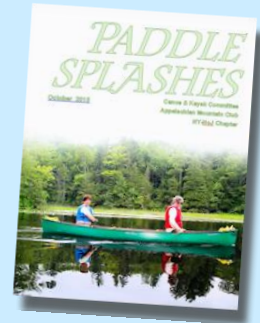
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PADDLE SPLASHES

Loretta Brady, Editor
Marty Plante, Printer's Devil



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

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



TAKE ME TO the RIVER

No one is born knowing how to lead paddling trips. Leaders are made.

They grow with the flow.

There's nothing like leadership to boost confidence. Our main confidence-builders, Henry Schreiber and Lenny Grefig, offer another chance this fall for more members to qualify as much-needed, future trip leaders.



Photo by Kurt Navratil

TAKE ME TO the RIVER



Reflections from a Leader of Leaders

Those of you who know me know that in addition to being involved with the AMC in many different ways, from being a long-time trip leader to being a member of the Club's Board of Directors. I also travel a lot. My most recent trip was a road trip to Alaska and back, taking almost three months. It really was several different trips: in the lower 48, Canada, Alaska, and each of those had sub-trips.

There were so many wonderful moments (seeing a bear and her three cubs running across a road) and places; it is hard to pick out one that stood above all the rest of the trip.

I especially enjoyed camping for five days in the Arctic by the Continental Divide between the Pacific Ocean and the Arctic Ocean. "Wow – I'm really here above the Arctic Circle in Gates of the Arctic National Park – no roads, no trails, no campgrounds. Just tundra, grizzly bears, migrating caribou, lakes, snow, mountains!"

Snow in August! Only 14 degrees the morning a float plane flew us out of our camp.

"I'd been to another canoe club based in the city and felt like the leaders didn't even know me," said one new member who asked to remain anonymous. "I could have dropped off the trip and I don't think they would even have noticed."

It's a tale many of us have heard before. And it's the main reason we will always need paddling clubs: good clubs, that is, with well-trained leaders.

Few may realize the Leadership Training Workshop is open to all paddlers. You don't have to be committed to being a CKC leader to attend. Come by for the free course. Most figure out that trip leading is just a natural step we river-folk take.

You don't need to go to Alaska to see bears – just lead a trip on the Deerfield or Esopus, where bears are sighted quite frequently. On the Deerfield, one trip participant learned just how strong a bear is by leaving a car window slightly open with Krispy Kreme donuts on the front seat. He no longer has a passenger side door. One Esopus participant learned how dexterous a bear can be when a cooler was opened, a container of ice cream eaten and a jar of mayonnaise licked clean without the paper container destroyed or the glass jar broken. Yes, it can be exciting to be a trip leader!

Lenny Grefig

TAKE ME TO the RIVER



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To say Lenny and Henry “speak from experience” means they they cull from decades of stories as



Henry Schreiber in Alaska, on the Continental Divide.

CKC Committee Chairs, as paddling, rescue and water safety instructors, and as advisors for Club-wide outdoor leadership development. Their lively anecdotes and discussion reveal how to make trip leading easy.

During their combined years of experience, they’ve mentored champions. That list would swallow all our column inches, and consist of some of the Club’s biggest contributors, like Carin Tinney—former CKC Chair and now one of the rare Level 4 ACA-Certified Whitewater instructors.

A list of the trips Henry and Lenny have led reads like a comprehensive guide to the best river rides in the Northeast. Their river resumes would fill this issue, including such classics as the Esopus Creek, the Housatonic, multiple fun sections of the Farmington, and of course tripping up and down the mighty Delaware.

Plus, the workshop shows you time-saving tips like archived trip descriptions, shared dope sheets, a Leaders’ Checklist Carin posted on our Leaders’ Corner, and a consolidating spreadsheet of all your trip participants that Dave Brucas developed.

People become paddle leaders for various reasons. Some do it to “give back” to the

TAKE ME TO the RIVER



organization that has provided such great outdoor recreational opportunities.

Some do it because they have ideas about how a trip should be run. Some do it because, well, they just like to be leaders.

“At first some participants think trip leading is very difficult and time-consuming, similar to taking on another job, only this one unpaid,” observed Lenny.

“But we show that it is not that difficult, that there are multiple resources available, that no one needs to re-create the wheel, and that trip leading really is lots of fun,” she said

Plus, it’s still a team effort.

“First-time leaders never ‘go it alone’, they are always paired with an experienced trip leader,” Lenny added. Whatever your reason, come to the

workshop. Share your questions, concerns, or ideas about outdoor trip leading.

The Chapter and Club offer several courses appropriate for leaders. Especially recommend for paddlers is Wilderness First Aid (WFA). Taught by chapter members who are paddlers, hikers, backpackers, but also Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), the course follows a nationally recognized WFA curriculum. The next WFA course given by the Chapter will be held December 5-6.

The Canoe/Kayak Leadership Training Workshop will be held on Saturday, November 14 at the AMC office in Manhattan from 10:00 a.m. to about 3:30 p.m. Not only is there no charge; the pizza lunch is included, too.

To register for the Canoe/Kayak Leadership Training workshop click or tap [here](#), then on *Register Now*.



Lenny on the mighty Ramapo.
Photo by
Marty Plante.

24 HOURS

Whitewater Canoe Instruction Follow-Up Trip

9:30

AM

Finding Your Tribe
Without Reliable Cell
Service



Eager to apply their new whitewater skills, some students logged three car-pooling hours to land at this robust section of the Delaware: Staircase Rapids through the legendary Mongaup wave train.

A month ago, they had come to us with a wide range of river-running experience. Some had led the Boy Scouts on quiet water classics in the Adirondacks. Others had never before seen an eddy. (Who's he?) And now here they were—our AMC canoe graduating class of 2015—hungry to step up with any partner, in bow or stern.

Tandems are usually mocked as the “divorce boat,” but for us they breed multiple happy partnerships.

Nevertheless, at the put-in we've scheduled drills to practice swimming to shore while firmly grasping your paddle.

Just in case.

BY LORETTA BRADY

24 HOURS

**Something Old,
Something New,
Something Borrowed,
Something Blew Away**

10:45

AM

Photo by **Leyre Areizaga**

It never ceases to amaze me.

How generous is the communal spirit of sharing.

Students selected items from an assortment loaned by the volunteer instructors. Surplus personal flotation devices, old and new spray tops, spare tandems and solo boats, and of course paddles of every material.

Around the circle at the safety talk, our student squad looked laughably mismatched. A clash of colors.

Personal lending avoids that morning stop at the barn to scoop up rental gear. Still, it's sure good to know it's there when we need it.

Only one loaner item came back a bit worse-for-wear. It wasn't because anyone flipped in a rapid and "yard sale." No, the wind got hold of a hat and raked it through the river mud.

"Leave no trace" in nature should work both ways.



24 HOURS

The river's natural flow is low today. We planned a two-day paddle weekend so all the instructors and safety boaters could enjoy the adjacent Mongaup River where the dam release cranks up the cubic-foot water flow for a more challenging Class II+ run.

Helmets are not optional.

But today, without the fear factor of stronger, higher CFS measures, there is more time for the students to test out how to "read" the river independently of the instructors. They plot a line. Ferry over to ledge drops. Maneuver in and out of center stream eddies. The students are playing hard, working every feature. Some tandem boats even capture a wave and surf it, bouncing and riding in place.

A miracle of physics.

Just when we're starting to feel almighty, a swarm of juvenile mergansers explode up out of the water. As if chased by a predator, their webbed feet churn to race 100 yards upstream on *top* of the surface. With wings not-yet-ready-for-flight, they splash up a wave train as they go.

Now *that's* a neat trick.

1:00 PM

Birds of a Feather Paddle Together



Photo by Leyre Areizaga

24 HOURS



Photo by **Loretta Brady**

9:30 PM

Of Happy Hours and Fireside Chats



Photo by **Leyre Areizaga**

Relief as we land safely at the take-out. A tailgate Happy Hour lets us celebrate our new confidence.

We giddily plot next trips.

No goal seems too high to reach. No paddling problem can't be solved.

Except for one. We have a watermelon, but only Leatherman knives. We harvest the power of the group's combined resources. Someone has a saw, useful to cut away blown down trees that often block a river run. Why not?

The spirited sharing continues. Students are invited to camp overnight, even if they must pass on the second day's Class II+ trip.

Soon, though.

Our good cheer is infectious. Another camping group shares their glowing coals so we can quick-start our campfire fun. It helps that some of us had been chatting a bit with them in their native Spanish language.

Then it strikes us. NY-North Jersey is quite an international chapter. We look around the fire ring and start counting. In this group that spans three generations of club eras, we collectively represent three diverse faiths, speak four languages fluently, and were born or have lived in seven countries spanning three continents: Hungary, Spain, Great Britain, Malawi, Singapore and China.

The secret to world peace?

Eat. Play with Paddles. Love. Repeat.

24 HOURS

8:30 AM

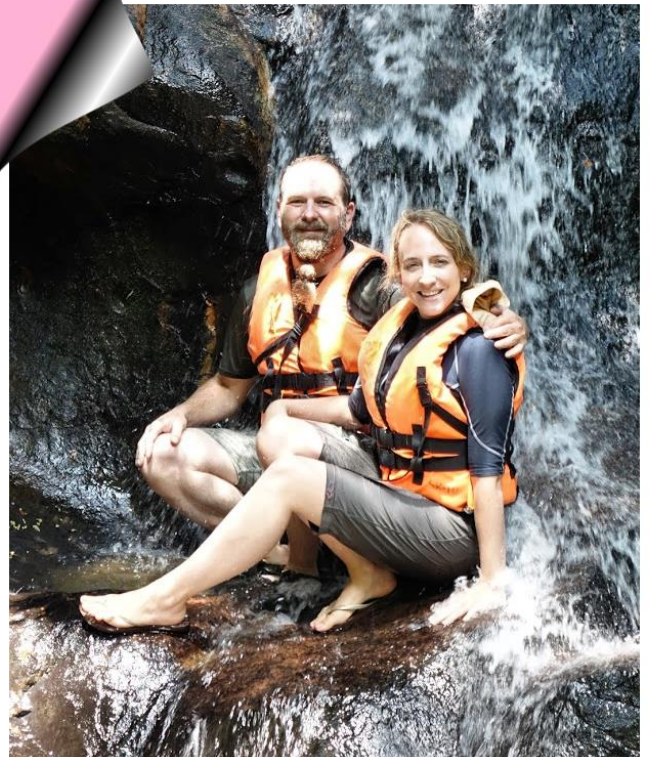
We rounded up more members for a Double-Barrel Mongaup Run. The 24th hour was indeed a “Happy Hour.”



Congratulations to Andrew & Meredith

There must be something in the water. Yet another AMC paddling couple vows to tie the knot. Yep, they met through AMC paddling events, but took it much farther. Much, much farther. To Rwanda. Then to Borneo. The happy couple appears here during the recent vacation that inspired the engagement proposal. Many happy wishes to you from us all.

Is anyone keeping count of these dangerous liaisons? Submit your list of paddling-inspired nuptials to PaddleSplashes and win.



Congratulations *to* *Jennifer & Andrew*

Warmest wishes from the AMC paddling community on the occasion of the marriage of Jennifer Koermer and Andrew Douglas. In fact, OhioPyle's whole paddling community may have borne witness if they happened to glance over at a grove of Pine Trees beside the Youghioghny Falls. There they would have spied, outfitted in neoprene dress and tux, the newly-joined husband and wife. May they reap all emotional and economic benefits such unions bring and may no actuary rend them asunder.



Photo by David Rosenfeld

Loretta Brady
on the
Sacandaga.
July 2015



We Don't Remember Dates -
We Remember Moments.

- Cesare Pavese



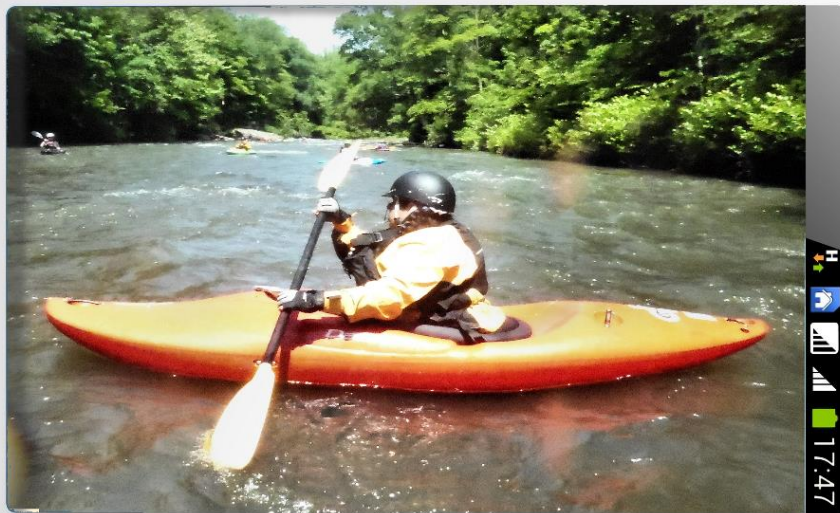
Tom McArdle on
the Del + Raritan
Canal. June 2015.

Photo by Bon Chiu.

...We Remember Moments.

Jill Arbuckle on the
Del + Raritan Canal.
June 2015.

Photo by Bon Chiu.



Suzanne
Villegas on
the Esopus.
June 2015.
Photo by Marty Plante.

...We Remember Moments.

+



Dee does the hard work while
PA Jim grabs a gunwale on their
Shredder at the Yough.



Esopus Creek Release Ends Abruptly After Tragic Accident

story & photos by **Suzanne Villegas**

Say the word Esopus and seasoned boaters will go quiet. Some refuse to paddle it any longer.

Paddlers this Labor Day weekend didn't have a choice. Authorities shut down the release at the end of day 1 when a 14-year old tuber and her dad were swept into blowdowns at the Angler's Access put-in. After a full-day's search, safety teams reunited the child's body to a grieving father.

Esopus Creek, the class II+ trip in Shandaken, New York, near Woodstock, reportedly earned its name "High Banks" from the local Native American Lenape.

AMC's five canoeists and three kayakers arranged to run the creek from top to bottom. That first day, we ran it from the campground to Boiceville, then got an upper run in from the Route 20 bridge in Phoenicia back again to our campsite. Throughout the trip, numerous sirens were heard all day. Helicopters passed repeatedly up and down stream while a great blue heron and eagle flew below.

My swims were all on non-technical areas, mostly just a wobble and a dive in. Still afraid of trying a combat roll, in this year 3 of my paddling tenure. In 1978, I lost my two best friends, twin 14-year-olds, on a river. Although my heart and head know fear, I choose to not give in, but



take that love of them and water and paddling with me. Having recently invested in a lime green Mamba 8.0 and a powerhouse bent shaft paddle, am also trying hard to hang on to them when I swim, or face the financial aspects of replacements.

Rumors grew about the accident as Master Chef Viani grilled up steaks, corn on the cob, and potatoes. Ignorant of the news, we feasted on brownies, pie, salad and way too many good laughs at the expense of our tenting neighbor, “the world’s foremost authority on squirrel hunting.” Oh, the things we learned from his self-proclaimed notoriety: squirrel hunting laws (e.g. you can only shoot a maximum of 6 per day), squirrel meat recipes, and least we forget, the revenue is in the tails – used to tie flies for fishing.

Sunday morning at the cemetery put-in, many paddlers (AMC, ADK, etc., etc.) converged, only to find no water being released. Scouting the area on foot, the rescue attempts were evident by ropes and rafts still tied up to the strainer, marking the location and the valiant efforts of Ulster County rescue personnel. With respectful thoughts of this and past tragedies, for Larry and Jordyn’s family, we shuttled west toward the Callicoon River, only to find it dry. Resuming shuttle north to Skinners Falls, we put in and enjoyed an afternoon of flat water paddling.

Perhaps it was a quiet signal to remember the beauty of friends on the water.



CONGRATS TO CARIN!

The AMC's newest
ACA-Certified
Paddling Instructor

It's funny, I was going to try to keep this a bit to myself for a while until I figured out what I wanted to do with it. But heck, the universe had other plans! It's all good, so gotta go with the flow.

The course I completed was the American Canoe Association Level 4 Kayak Instructor Certification Workshop. Achieving L4 means that I could teach students on class 3 (and under) whitewater. The class was taught by Dave Kessmann. Classroom work was in Friendsville, MD and river work was on the Lower Yough. It was five days over the course of two weekends in August and September.

L4 certification is the highest certification level you can get at once. Carin got this all done in one training session. She's worked very hard over the previous years and this outcome shows just how good she has become. I believe that no one else taking the course with her made it to L4.

David Bruceas

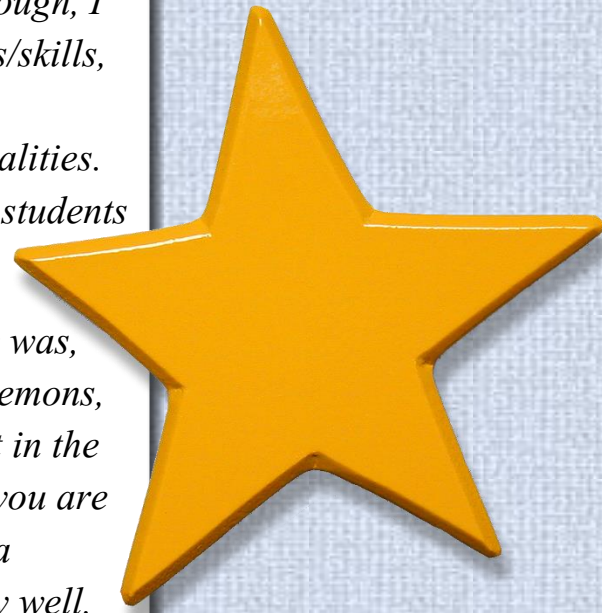


So to pass, I had to reach this elusive L4 standard which is never really described in exact detail. In retrospect, though, I see it as a combination of demonstration quality strokes/skills, situational awareness, river safety, group management, leadership and the ability to use different teaching modalities. It is also the ability to observe and provide feedback to students on their strokes, skills and body mechanics.

I think the most challenging aspect of the course for me was, like in any whitewater situation, managing your head demons, the ones that make you question what you know and get in the way of optimal performance. At the same time though, you are constantly being evaluated... so the anxiety is based in a reality. What I learned after a while, I was taught really well, and while a few tweaks were needed to achieve demonstration quality strokes, I had a solid base from which to work and play.

I honestly don't know if I could say any of it was fun. We were literally up and learning from 8:30 each morning to midnight on some nights. When we ended at 9 pm one night, I thought Dave was going to wake us up at 1am to watch videos.

I'm really glad I took the course far from home as it made it easier to be a learner; there were no expectations connected to my success or failure.



Meet the Committee!

Andrew Ludke - Quartermaster

When we join a boat club, we are greedy. We want to learn skills from all the experienced people around us. We watch their every move. We hope to absorb their confidence and calm. We listen to every story, the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Andrew humbly mentors and models his paddler stylings every season. “I have received so much enjoyment and encouragement from the AMC and fellow paddlers. I'm looking forward to contributing to the ongoing success of the club in this small way.”

He's famous for pulling into a campsite with his adorable teardrop camper trailer and rustling us up a gourmet dinner from the self-contained efficiency kitchen in its trunk.

He even taught his dad to step up to whitewater boating, sharing an AMC expedition on the Grand Canyon's Colorado River with him.



Meet the Committee!



And now we will greedily benefit from his boat handling skills on dry land. He comes super-qualified to do so.

Whether it's roofs and shingles, automated stereo sound systems, or chicken broods on his multi-acre homestead, Andrew's resourceful mind fixes them all.

As new quartermaster, Andrew will spearhead fleet repairs and help make all our barn equipment more helpful.

"We'll be doing an inventory to make sure we know what resources are available to the group," Andrew noted. "At this point we know we are in need of flotation (Air bags), but I'm sure that after a thorough review other needs will be identified," he said.

So in between his expeditions to hug silverback gorillas in Rwanda or friendly orangutans in Borneo, get a chance to meet and thank Andrew for all his generous support.

Barn Work Day & Pizza Party

Sat, Oct. 24
12pm-4pm

Whether it's for an hour or the day, your help is needed. We'll be repairing and cleaning boats, taking inventory, and sorting PFDs and skirts. No special skills are needed, just your enthusiasm. And appetite - we'll have free pizza at the end of the day.

We Need Your Help!

To register, contact Andrew at canoekayak.quartermaster@amc-ny.org or 570-647-5061



what's a Rating?

...and why do I need one?

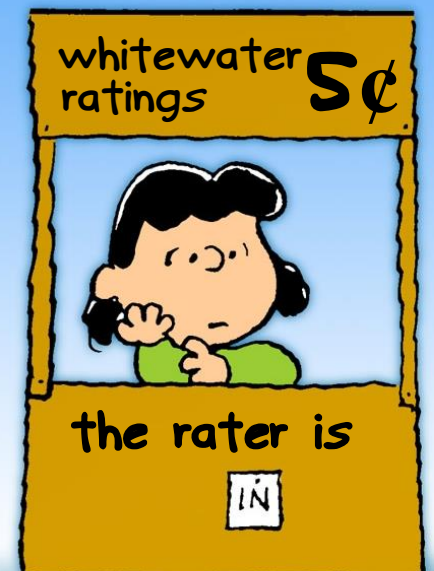
"I've been paddling whitewater for 15 years," the new AMC member proudly says as he's about to begin his first trip with the club. "And I just got back from a week of instruction at Nantahala Outdoor Center."

Launching his kayak into the class 3 rapid with the other paddlers, the new member floats past the large eddy that the leader told everyone to meet in, then continues downstream, blowing past the play spots, oblivious to the rest of the group. It seems like an eternity before the other paddlers catch up to him.

"Why didn't you make the eddy turn?" asks the trip leader.

"What's an eddy turn?" replies the new member.

With over 300 paddlers joining our trips each year, it's impossible for the trip leaders to personally know everyone's paddling ability, as illustrated by the above true story. Like most of the other AMC chapters, we use a peer review process where we rate each other's skill. When a rated paddler registers for a trip, the leader doesn't have to rely on the self-evaluation of each participant, but instead has the collective opinion of several fellow AMC paddlers.





what's a **Rating?**

Novice paddlers are given a quietwater (QW) rating. More experienced paddlers are rated from Class 1 to 4 for whitewater, and Level 1 to 4 for touring water. In general, a paddler may register for any trip at or below his rating.

When a trip leader has a sufficient number of experienced paddlers, he or she may accept some paddlers at a lower rating level. You're encouraged to make an effort to go on more difficult trips - that's how you improve your skills - but your acceptance will always be at the discretion of the trip leader. The observer and the venue must have the same or higher rating as the one you are trying to achieve. For

example, if you're working on a Class 3 rating, you'll need to be observed on Class 3 or 4 rivers by Class 3 or 4 observers.

To get a rating, just ask someone with the appropriate rating to submit a rating card for you. The observer can complete an official rating card, found [here](#), and send it by e-mail to the Ratings Coordinator at [canoekayak.ratings\(at\)amc-ny.org](mailto:canoekayak.ratings(at)amc-ny.org), or just send an e-mail describing the candidate's paddling ability. For whitewater ratings of Class 2 or higher, you'll also need to have taken safety & rescue instruction. The course may be conducted by our own chapter or another qualified organization.



Congratulations

I'm very pleased to announce that Dave Michael and Olly Gotel have earned our chapter's Touring Water 4 rating.

Olly and Dave fulfilled the British Canoe Union's 4 Star Sea Kayak requirements almost 10 years ago. Since then, they have paddled the course of the Hudson, circumnavigated Staten Island and Long Island, and looped Manhattan over 50 times. They have played in the tidal races of Wales, negotiated the tricky currents of Northern California, hopped over the rock gardens of the British Channel Islands, surfed along the US East Coast, and relied on their planning and compass skills to get them across open waters and under dark skies.

Kayla

SEA KAYAKING update

The NY/NoJ AMC has an active whitewater community, but what happened to its sea kayakers?

Do you have a sea kayak in your yard that you are itching to get on the water? Do you seek the spray of salt water?

Our local multi-boaters, Olly Gotel and Dave Michael, want to know if members have interest in participating in sea kayaking trips and/or skill sessions. If you do, please contact them and let them know: (1) what boat you have, (2) where you and your boat are located, and (3) a self-assessment of your current skills and experience. If there is sufficient interest, they will kick-start some sea kayaking activities next year.

Dave and Olly are busy developing a revised set of ratings criteria for our touring water paddlers.

Contact them at olly@gotel.net



travels with *Connie*



Finding life after paddling. Since I love the outdoors, moving away from whitewater kayaking was an opportunity to try something new - mountain biking - and I am so glad I did!

I met my husband Jim at a mountain biking festival. Since retiring, we have been living full-time in our “mobile mountain bike garage with sleeping quarters,” traveling across the country, riding epic and not so epic trails. Some of our favorite rides are on old home territory in the NJ/PA area: The Tourne, Allaire SP, and Nock-amixon. Unforgettable riding trips have been to Moab, UT, Bend, OR, and Palo Duro, in Texas our new home state.

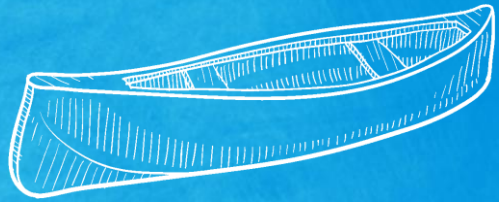
The scenery of this country is mesmerizing, from the ancient slickrock and redrock vistas to the overhanging tunnels of old-growth evergreen forests in the Pacific Northwest. Frequently, the riding trails wind bumpily along old favorite rivers, so I can enjoy both, seeing the river from a distance and peddling the trail. Plus, the frequent club camp-outs allow us to keep up with the AMC gang as they follow the river release schedules.

There is life without paddling, but sometimes the two exist together. I miss the smiley wet river faces - but, I'll see you on the trail.

Connie Farley



October 16-18, 2015



PINE BARRENS FREESTYLE CANOE SYMPOSIUM



OBEDIENCE LESSONS
FOR YOUR CANOE

FRI NITE & SAT: INSTRUCTION

SUN: PRACTICE YOUR NEW
SKILLS ON THE BATSTO RIVER
TRIP



CONDUCTED
BY:



LESSONS
PADDLING EFFICIENCY
RIVER READING
BOAT CONTROL

CLICK HERE





Dear PaddleSplashes:

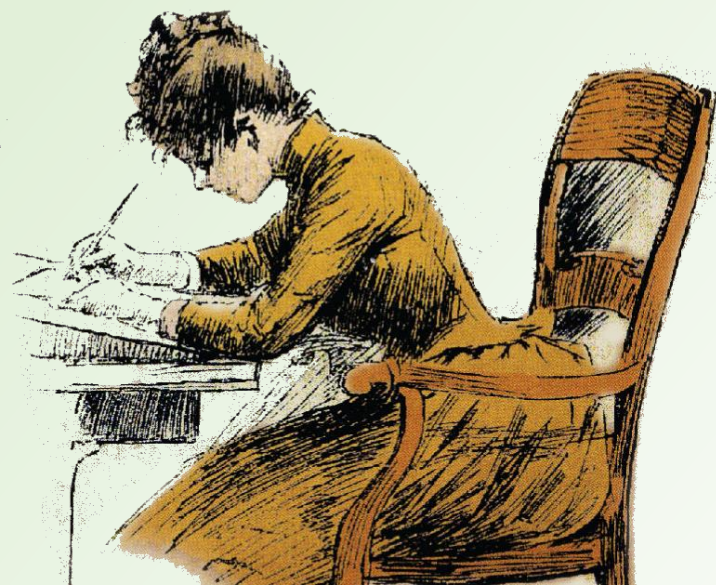
Regarding the feature about Harriman Park in the July issue of Paddle Splashes, it's not a myth that swimming is illegal in most lakes in Harriman. Just because people do it does not make it legal. It is irresponsible to suggest otherwise. Park rangers have been known to issue citations for illegal swimming in Harriman.

I am aware there are legal, private swimming areas within Harriman (besides the two public ones) and that AMC wants to have one.

Sheldon Luberoff

Editor:

Well noted. The AMC Harriman site at this very moment is working out the regulation swimming area skirts, life guard plan, and other final points. We are the only camp on the pond who can make swimming official.



Parting Shot

Images from the esoteric world of pumpkin paddling.

