



# PADDLE SPLASHES

Canoe & Kayak Committee  
Appalachian Mountain Club  
NY-NoJ Chapter

APRIL 2016



# CONTENTS



**7**



**Are Your Skills  
OUTDATED?**

**6**



**9**

AMC People

**16**

Canoe Consortium

**12**

Liz Pratt

**19**

Book Review

**13**

The Ramapo

**21**

New Trip Leaders

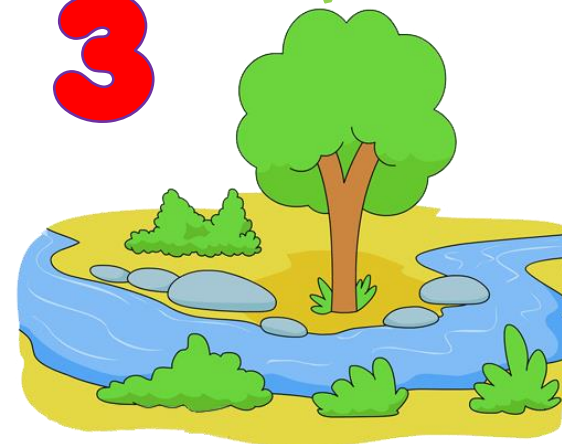


**15**

*Canoe/Kayak  
Photo Contest*

**Esopus**  
update

**3**





# Esopus update

by Marty Plante

Last year, on Sept 6, a teenage girl tragically lost her life on the Esopus. In preparation for their float trip on inner tubes, she and her father were scouting the Shandaken Rural Cemetery DEC put-in when she slipped and was carried into the strainer just 50 yards downstream.

The strainer was formed ten years earlier during the devastating flood of April, 2005, when trees and branches were packed into a sharp bend in the riverbed. Each year, new debris was added to the accumulation. The strainer was a well-known hazard to the paddling community, but was an unrecognized threat to those with

little knowledge of whitewater safety, like the clientele of the local tube-rental agencies. The agencies stopped using this access point many years ago, but it remains popular among others.

New York State's Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) does not actively manage or maintain rivers on the State's Forever Wild lands, taking the position that strainers are to be removed only if they threaten bridges or other infrastructure. The policy is, in part, based on Article XIV of the NYS Constitution which prohibits the removal of trees from the State's Forever Wild land, on which the strainer had been located.

**The New York Army National Guard uses a hydraulic excavator to remove the strainer from the Esopus Creek, near Shandanken, NY, on Oct. 2, 2015. New York Army National Guard photo.**





# Esopus update

A few weeks after the drowning, the participants at the September 2015 meeting of the AWSMP Stream Access and Recreation Working Group explored the possibility of developing a protocol for removing hazardous woody debris. As she so often does, Mother Nature instead took matters into her own hands. Hurricane Joaquin spent much of September making its way up the East Coast. Fearing flood conditions, Gov. Cuomo responded with an emergency declaration and deployed the New York Army National Guard to remove debris from the Esopus and

other rain-soaked streams around the state, citing public safety and the protection of property.

To keep river levels low, the dam release that had been scheduled for October was cancelled without advance warning. Paddlers converged on the put-in for a joint trip by the AMC and the Adirondack Mountain Club, only to find that there would be no paddling on the Esopus that day. And the American Canoe Association's annual slalom race was cancelled for the first time in 35 years.

**— Article XIV —**

“The lands of the state, now owned or hereafter acquired, constituting the forest preserve as now fixed by law, shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold or exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed or destroyed.”

**Esopus Strainer.** Photo from Google Maps.







# Esopus update

For now, the hazard is gone, but the shape of the river virtually insures that a new one will take its place in the future. Last year's cleanup was done as a one-time exception under a state of emergency and does not establish a new policy of ongoing maintenance.

The DEC has reassessed its position and now believes that the State Constitution does not actively prevent the removal of strainers or other debris. The DEC is unlikely to take on the role of maintaining wild rivers, but may support proposals to do so by businesses and outdoor clubs.

Other obstructions remain, such as the big strainer at Cartwheel Hole, a few hundred yards below the cemetery.

Using wording that was mostly provided by Marc, the DEC has installed a sign warning of the danger and urging paddlers and tubers to consider using one of the downstream access points. The sign does not prohibit our access to this section of the Esopus but, as always, making use of it should come with an awareness of the risks and a sense of personal responsibility.



## Marc Hollander

Marc is one of the paddling community's most active advocates. He is co-leader of the Stream Access and Recreation Committee of the Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program (AWSMP), a collaborative program of several city, state, county and other agencies, to protect and manage Esopus Creek and nearby streams and to enhance public access to them. Marc is also liaison to the New York State Dept. of Conservation, coordinating the annual Esopus release schedule with the AMC, the Adirondack Mountain Club, the American Canoe Assoc., and the Town of Shandaken. He represents us at other meetings, such as the Catskill Park Advisory Committee, and he's KCCNY's River Stewardship Leader, advocating for the paddling community for the other rivers on which we play.

# New Storage Rates for **THE BARN**

Subject to availability, privately-owned boats may be stored at The Barn in Pomona, NY. The fee is \$108 for the year, or \$9 per month for those who need only short-term storage. To make arrangements, contact the Quartermaster, Andrew Ludke, at [canoekayak.quartermaster <at> amc-ny.org](mailto:canoekayak.quartermaster@amc-ny.org).

And active trip leaders now get a discount! For each trip you lead or co-lead, you'll get two months' rental for free. To qualify for the discount, the trip must be entered into the AMC's online trip schedule and the trip report must be submitted to the Treasurer.

## **Barn Work Day & Pizza Party**

**Sun, May 15, 2016**

**12pm-4pm**

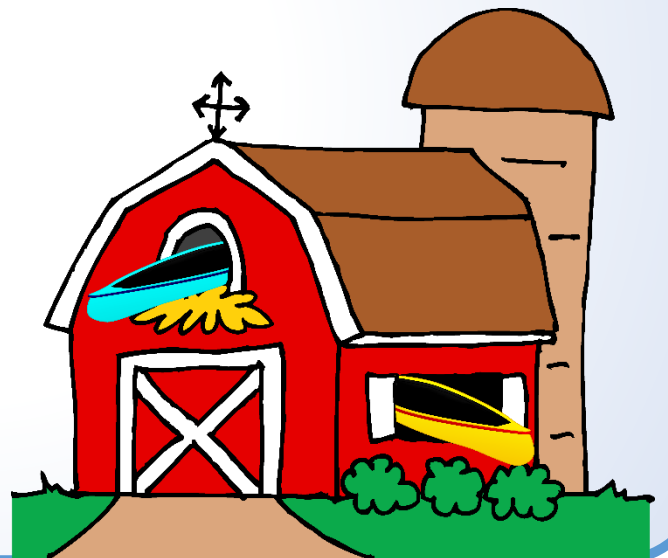
Whether it's for an hour or the day, your help is needed. We'll be repairing and cleaning boats, taking inventory, and sorting PFDs and skirts. No special skills are needed, just your enthusiasm. And appetite - we'll have free pizza at the end of the day!

### **We Need Your Help!**

To register, contact Andrew at [canoekayak.quartermaster](mailto:canoekayak.quartermaster@amc-ny.org)

[<at> amc-ny.org](mailto:canoekayak.quartermaster@amc-ny.org)

or 570-647-5061



# Are You OUTDATED ?

**W**e know. You're already super-careful on the water. What do you need another course for? You already attended a whitewater safety & rescue class, maybe both the beginner *and* advanced classes. Been there, done that, so why press rewind?

Please reconsider. Seriously.

Besides all the fun—swimming in rapids with Butch, role-playing with Marty, solving Wayne's mystery-rescue scenario— there are other reasons.

It only has to happen once, and you'll know why.

There's nothing worse than hearing a victim's scream, and feeling helpless or unsure of how to help.

"It's kind of like being in the middle of a 3-lane highway, with cars rushing by at 80 mph," says expert rescue volunteer Moose Mutlow. He's the guy who opened Yosemite's Merced River for paddlers.

"Do you really want to be standing in the middle of that highway hesitating, looking around for what to do next?"

## S&R QUIZ

- Always tie a rope around a rescuer who enters the water.
- In moving water, try to stand up if the water isn't over your head.
- Ropes are essential safety equipment, if used carefully. For best efficiency, hold at the bite or use at a 90° angle.
- It's better to throw a rope, if nothing else.
- Wear fixed-brim helmets to help fight glare and see clearly.

ANSWERS: No to all.

*Whitewater Safety & Rescue  
July 16, 2016 (Sat)  
Esopus Creek  
(Catskill Mtns, NY)*

*Flatwater Canoe Safety & Rescue  
Aug 20, 2016 2-4pm (Sat)  
AMC Harriman Outdoor Center  
(Rockland County, NY)*



# OUTDATED?

Rescue and Safety courses help you think fast. Take them more than once and you think even faster.

“Look for the job that isn’t being done,” adds Wayne G-man. His popular courses are *not* just for CL4-5 boaters. One woman in a course of his had been on a simpler section of a river when her own boat had gotten pinned, and observers had no idea what to do to help her.

Things can happen. “Multiple little things can go wrong at once, and spiral out of control, and it all goes South very fast,” offered Chris Viani.

The unexpected can happen with even the best prep and training. While practicing setting ropes to un wedge a live victim, flashy river levels rose making things a little too real. “We almost had a real pinning on our hands,” said Jordan Yarus.

Don’t underestimate danger. Don’t overestimate ability.

When’s the last time you practiced using that throwrope?

“There was a time they used to think having ropes in a rescue was just too dangerous,” remarks Henry Schreiber, recalling the days when even helmets weren’t required in whitewater.

“Even now, people don’t realize ropes can make things worse,” Wayne adds. So get a first responder’s confidence. Sign up for one of this season’s safety and rescue courses. It’ll be like playing with friends.

Except when it’s not.





# AMC People

**V**adim is a new leader among our outstanding pool session squad. Taking over from an enormously generous Ara Jingirian, he creates a great way for paddlers old and new to hone their skills and confidence. It helps to have a pool pro who works right there in the labs of the campus at New Jersey Institute of Technology.

You'll find Vadim demonstrating and encouraging rolls and paddles as master coach Butch Futrell oversees instruction and coaching. "It's not just experienced paddlers coming to stay sharp during the winter," Vadim says. "We also get some new paddlers." Some of these come from our new strategy of posting on meetup.com to spread the word about the AMC's pool sessions.

And it's not just a place to work on rolls.

The pool is big enough to work on your strokes, with only a bit of boat bumping.

"We all know the forward stroke is the hardest in whitewater kayaks," Vadim notes. "So the pool sessions let you really get comfortable with control and edging in a safe way."

Vadim's own mercurial rise as a boater led him last year to a successful run on the Dryway section of the Deerfield River.

"It's a really fun section and I hope to do it many times this season," Vadim said. It's a section with legendary stories of epic spills and thrills.

"Sure, it's a bit unforgiving," commented Vadim, "but if you get the line right, it's really not that impossible and a whole lot of fun."

But don't misjudge him. Just because he is among the highest-skilled paddlers in the club, he is infinitely patient and understanding with new learners.

"We have a few very strong paddlers I've seen develop this winter," he noted. "One or two are nearly there to having down a combat-proof roll."

He may be a man of few words, but all of them are encouraging!

## Vadim Stepaniuk







# Klara Marton

One of our newest trip leaders

I started kayaking in college on the Danube, a river that crosses 10 countries in Europe.

As you can see from the first picture, it is a wide river with pretty calm water, so paddling to me meant two things: you have to be strong to paddle upstream and you need to be persistent. Then I took a long break from paddling. A few years ago, however, I attended a couple of introductory AMC canoeing classes with Rich Breton and Loretta Brady. I loved being on the water.

Well, I also learned that the rivers in New York State and in the neighboring areas are not the same as the Danube. On the second picture, I am at the bank of the Housatonic River in Connecticut. My friend and I decided to walk with our boat and watched how the more advanced paddlers went through the rapids underneath the West Cornwall Covered Bridge. We decided to walk because a few weeks earlier we maneuvered our boat into swirling water on the Delaware River. We flipped the boat and bounced on the rocks. I was so worried about the boat that I completely forgot the “people first” rule. I was frantically trying to hold on to the paddle. It was quite a lesson. Fortunately, I lost only my hat and a few layers of skin from my knees.

I have two goals with regards to canoeing for this year. I would like to practice more and improve my skills, and I would like to volunteer to give back to this wonderfully supportive community at AMC.

# AMC People





# Thank You

Thanks to Pool  
Session Coordinator  
**Vadim Stepaniuk** and  
all of the other  
instructors who made  
our pool sessions a  
success:

Butch Futrell  
Olly Gotel  
Jake Lewis  
Andrew LoPinto  
Ara Jingirian  
Monica Juhasz  
Dave Michaels  
Donna Morgan  
Simon Odou  
Carin Tinney  
Suzanne Villegas



Photos by Suzanne Villegas





# Liz Pratt



***Our paddling community honors the loss of one of our esteemed early Canoe Committee Chairs, Liz Pratt. Don and Paul recall how both Dave and Liz— she with her solo early Royalex HD1, outfitted with aluminum thwarts and gunwales— led the club to new standards of whitewater canoeing and gourmet campfire fare.***

I have had the pleasure of being on several canoe trips that Dave and Liz led. They originally lived in Pearl River, NY, just north of the NJ border. After they retired, they moved to Peck Lake in the southern Adirondacks, near Johnstown. On occasion we would use their new house for "camping" when joining any canoe trips they led nearby. Dave was a gourmet cook who would whip up Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast. Liz was an elementary school teacher.

In more recent years, we joined them on one of Dick Bailey's "bare boat" sailing trips in the Caribbean. We all met in St. George, Grenada, and sailed to St. Lucia. Dave, as usual, did all the cooking.

As a new CKC chair, I would often ask preceding chairs for advice, and that included Liz & Dave, who served as Canoe Committee chairs from 1986-87. They often gave me much encouragement.

- Don Getzin

I knew both Liz and Dave Pratt, as well as their son Rob. Dave was a bit of a mentor to me as I began my WW paddling career. He and I earned our Class 4 status whitewater canoe together. Liz was frequently there on most of our AMC paddling trips, always smiling and pleasant to everyone. You always felt welcomed by her whenever you saw her again on any trip. She was never one to put down anyone and always helpful.

Later, when I wanted to try expedition paddling, I couldn't think of any couple that I enjoyed being with more than Dave and Liz. I also knew that they had experience in such trips, so it was without hesitation that I asked them to join us on our first expedition paddling trip. We went to the northern most section of Algonquin Provincial Park for a weeklong trip. It was a success, primarily due to Dave and Liz's experience and guidance and a few new lessons learned. I was always amazed at the stamina of this very small lady. She always carried her share of gear as we trudged between lakes on our portages. One of the portages on that trip was three miles!

Together, they were always a joy to have on any paddling trip. Liz will be missed!

- Paul Edwards

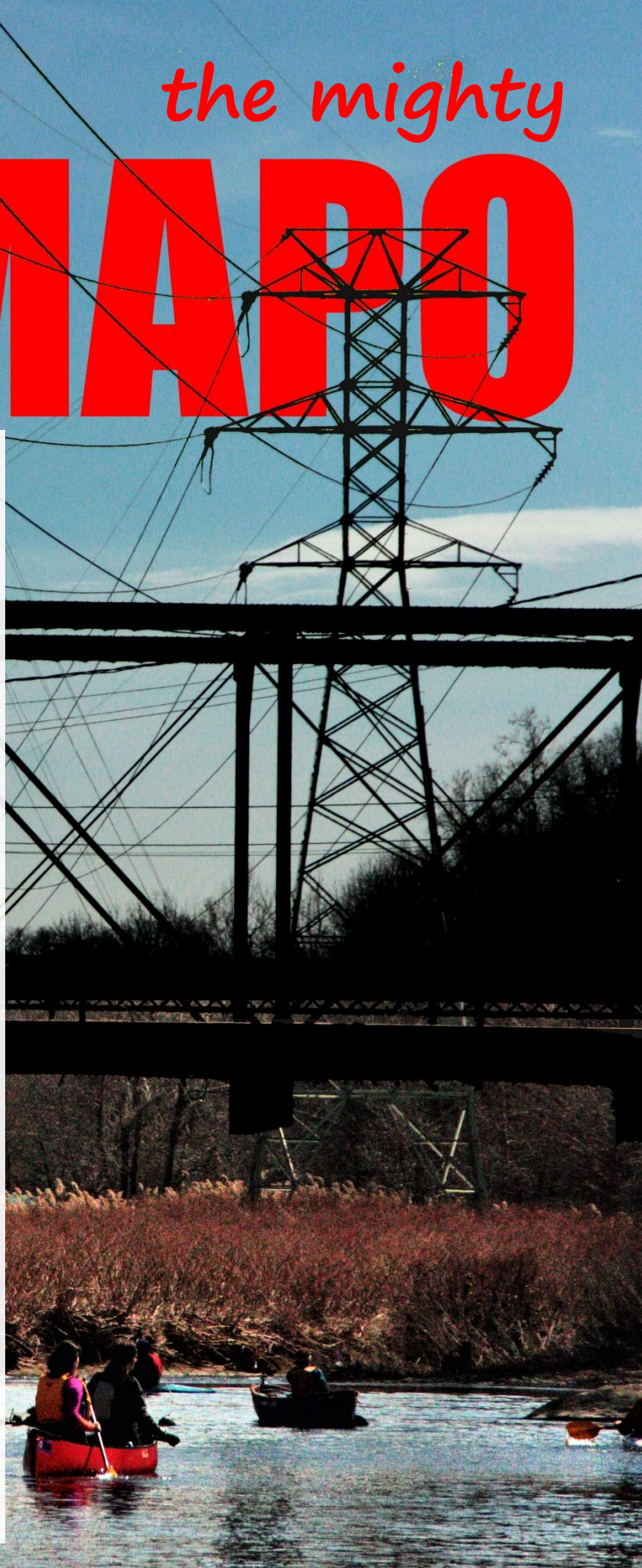


*the mighty*

# RAMAPO

The *Winter That Wasn't* produced perfect March weather for our traditional first trip of the year. A daytime high in the seventies. No snow for the first time in living memory. And no frozen lake to portage around.

But every silver lining has a cloud. The lack of snow brought the river down to walkable levels. The 500 cfs that we enjoyed last year was only 100 cfs this year. Scouting the river on the morning of the trip, leaders Loretta Brady and Klara Marton decided to explore a lower, but unfamiliar, section – from Hillburn to Mahwah – where we found deeper water. Also factories, a NYS Thruway overpass, a railroad trestle, and an inconvenient dam. But we'll be back next year!

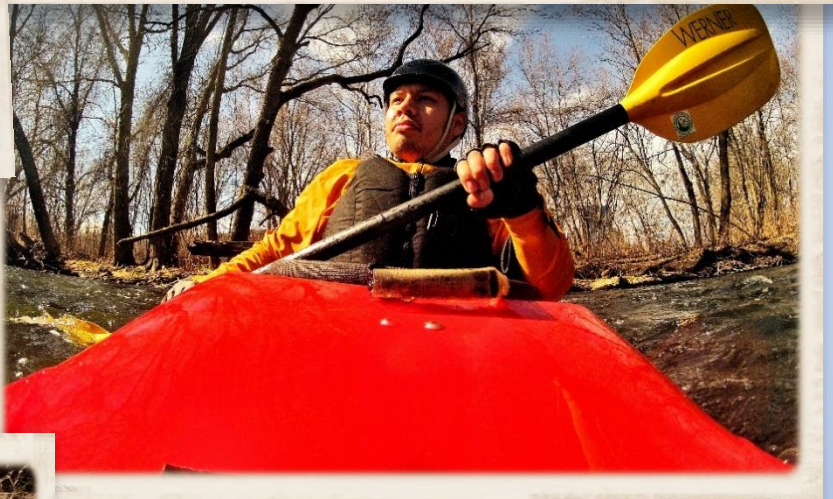




# the mighty **RAMAPO**



**March 12, 2016**





Give Us  
Your  
Best  
Shot...



...and maybe you'll win a calendar

## 2016 Canoe/Kayak Photo Contest

This year, add a camera to your list of paddling gear. Take your best shot and send it to us. We'll select the best of the best and print them in next year's AMC Canoe/Kayak Calendar. Photographers who submit a photo that is selected will receive a free calendar and the admiration of their fellow paddlers.

### *How to Enter:*

Send your photos to [canoekayak.contest@amc-ny.org](mailto:canoekayak.contest@amc-ny.org). Photos should be uncompressed and in original size. For each photo, include the trip or instruction on which it was taken. If you have any questions, please email us.

---

### *Now for the fine print:*

- Contest is open to anyone who participates on a NY-NoJ AMC paddling activity in 2016. AMC membership is not required.
- Photos must be submitted by Nov 1, 2016.
- By submitting a photo in this contest, you grant the AMC nonexclusive, royalty-free rights for reproduction in PaddleSplashes, the 2017 AMC Canoe/Kayak Calendar, and the AMC NY-NoJ website and social media. You will retain all rights to any photographs you submit.
- Multiple photos may be submitted, but a total of three entries will be accepted per photographer.
- Be prepared to provide the AMC with written consent of any recognizable individual who appears in a photograph.
- Photos must have been taken on an official paddling trip or instruction conducted by the NY-NoJ Chapter in 2016
- Photos will be judged on technical merits, artistic qualities and subject matter relevance.
- A maximum of one calendar will be awarded to each photographer, even if multiple photos from that photographer are used in the calendar.
- A panel of judges who are not AMC paddlers will be selected. The entries will be submitted to them without the photographers' names or other identifying information. Just like your parents when you were five years old, the judges' decision is final.
- Winners will be announced and prizes distributed at the 2016 Paddlers' Party. Winners need not be present to receive their prizes.





**I**t's like your gym membership suddenly expanded to let you work out all over town.

It's true! AMC paddlers are now welcomed to join the trips at nearly all the major boating clubs.

While the consortium first formed to recharge the dwindling number of skilled canoeists in the NY/NJ Metro Area, AMC and most other Consortium club trips would welcome kayakers. Just check first to be sure the leaders are prepared and willing. Who

wouldn't want a safety kayaker by your side on a circumnavigation of Manhattan?

"We'll welcome each other on free or cheap trips for a variety of paddling events," said Dan Olson, head of the Sebago Canoe Committee.

Nearly firmed-up are invitations to everything from whitewater instruction and safety to survival camping expertise.

As long as waivers or ACA coverage is in place, among the adventures paddlers will be welcomed to join are:





- Circumnavigate Manhattan in a war canoe, or just explore Hallet's cove
- Join a birding canoe paddle at a wildlife refuge
- A Bronx River flotilla
- Youth Canoe Regatta races
- Family Canoe Adventures

It's not entirely new. For many years, AMC paddlers have enjoyed the company of other club members on shared trips at Sedge Island, Adirondack expeditions, and at moving water instructionals. Last year, the AMC's Outdoor Leadership and Development Committee streamlined the requirements for co-sponsored activities, ensuring that our slate of joint trips will be increased.

All that cross-pollination of paddlers led to the inevitable: a streamlined CONSORTIUM CANOE CALENDAR to announce events, and a systematic agreement to co-list canoe activities among the different groups.

"We're sharing resources and skills, but most of all, leadership," Dan encouraged.

Already signed on are North Brooklyn Boating Club, Long

Island City Community Boat House, and Sebago Canoe and Kayak Club (including both their Harriman Park and Jamaica Bay venues). Ambitious, the Consortium seeks to embrace others: Inwood Boat House and Adirondack Mountain Club paddlers, for starters.

As soon as the CONSORTIUM CANOE CALENDAR dates are firmed up, we will publish it in PaddleSplashes. We are also working to make it accessible to all on the Sebago Canoe Club website. As long as an AMC-trained leader is involved, they'll post on the AMC website, as well.

Soon-to-be posted will be whitewater runs on Esopus Creek, the classic Sedge Island sea kayak weekend, an expert-guided bird tour on a river of rookeries, an August Adirondack high adventure, plus many more activities in the works.



Dan Olson,  
Canoe Consortium Coordinator



# CANOE CONSORTIUM CALENDAR

Month	Week	Sponsor	Activity	Location
Apr	3	AMC	Wallkill River for Birders/Hikers/Boaters	Sussex, NJ
May	1	SCC	Canoe for Birds*	Jamaica Bay, NY
May	2	SCC	Bronx River Flotilla	Bronx River, NY
Jun	2	LICCBH	Open Paddle	Hallet's Cove
Jun	3	NBBC	Industrial History Tour	Newtown Creek, Brooklyn
July	1	SCC	Family Paddling Weekend	Lake Sebago, Harriman SP
July	3	SCC	Intermediate Paddle	Jamaica Bay, NY
July	3	AMC & ADK	Esopus Class 2+ Trip	Catskills, NY
Aug	1	SCC	Family Canoe Trip	Jamaica Bay, NY
Aug	2	AMC	Wilderness Skills Trip	Adirondacks, NY
Aug	3	SCC	Wilderness Skills Trip (multi-day back country)*	Adirondacks, NY
Sept	1	NBBC & LICCBH	Labor Day Open Paddle	War Canoes, Gantry Park
Sept	2	AMC	Canoe Camping	Pine Barrens, NJ

\*Tentative dates, or may be moved to later in Summer or Fall. If interested, email [lorettajbrady@hotmail.com](mailto:lorettajbrady@hotmail.com) for updates.

*Jul 17, Esopus  
(WW 2+)  
Joint AMC/ADK*

*Jan 3-5, Western  
PA Solo Canoe  
Rendezvous*

*Jul 12-17,  
Wooden Canoe  
Assembly*

*Jul 8-10, Intro to Sea  
Kayaking at AMC's  
Knubble Bay Camp*

*Click or tap  
for more info*





The Appalachian Mountain Club

# Book Review

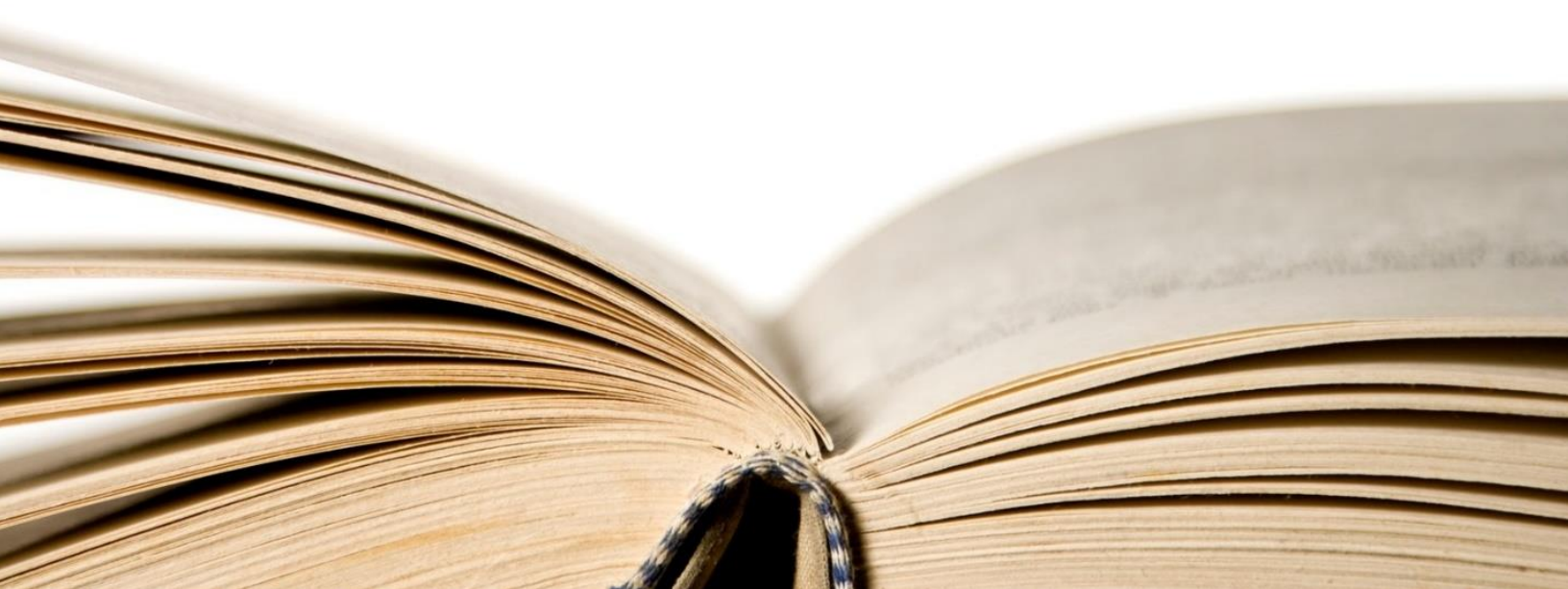
---

by Don Getzin

Any book that starts off with a sketch of a tripping canoe (a Chestnut Prospector?) inside the front cover is, to my mind, off to a good start! From the first page, you are immersed in stories, both historical and personal, about the great pleasures and pains of canoeing across Canada. The point is made that the canoe was the only way that Canada could have been explored and developed. It could not have been traversed by wagon, by horseback, or on

foot. Bill Mason (a rather religious fellow) once said: "God first created the canoe - then he created a country to go with it."

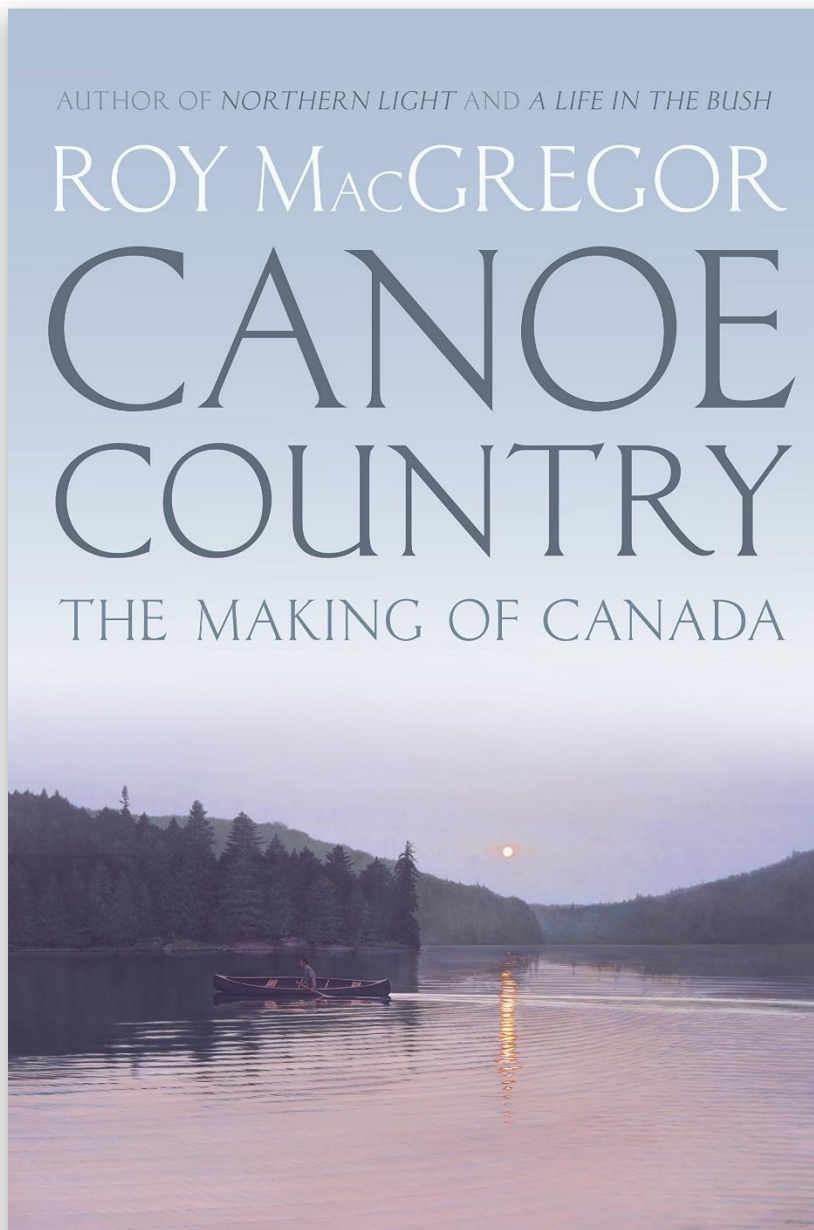
Yes, all the famous canoeists are here: Archie Belaney (Grey Owl), Samuel Champlain, Blair Fraser, Samuel Hearne, Frances Anne Hopkins, David Thompson, Tom Thomson, Les Voyageurs, Alexander Mackenzie, Sigurd Olson (an American!), and, of course Bill & Paul Mason and





Pierre Elliot & Justin Trudeau (now Canada's P.M.). Did you know that a group of about 400 Canadian voyageurs set out up the Nile in canoes in 1885 to

relieve General Charles George "Chinese" Gordon at Khartoum from the Mahdi's siege? (They failed!) This is only one of the fascinating stories to found in this book.



Starting as a Boy Scout in the 1950s, I have paddled some of the rivers and lakes described in this book, and I know the names of almost all the others mentioned. Good friends of mine (R.L. and C.G. - you probably know them!) have paddled many more. I wish that I had the time and physical ability to paddle more of them.

Despite being somewhat jumbled and disorganized, this book is a poetic Canadian love story about the canoe.



# **WELCOME** to our + new trip **LEADERS**

**Justin Bailey**

**Patrick Molloy**

**Meredith Fabian**

**Maciej Narzewski**

**Allan Kossover**

**Simon Odou**

**Andrew Ludke**

**David Shwide**

**Klara Marton**

**Suzanne Villegas**



And many thanks to veteran trip leaders Lenny Grefig and Henry Schreiber for sharing their leadership skills.





On behalf of the AMC NY-NoJ paddlers, thank you for your very generous Legacy Gift from the Estate of Evan Blumenthal. This will greatly benefit the Committee's efforts to welcome paddlers of all abilities. Evan is fondly remembered by many for the comradery he provided on and off the water. His generous gift will help us to share his love of paddling with others.

- *Canoe/Kayak Committee*

*To the Family of  
Evan Blumenthal*

In my very early paddling days with the AMC Canoe Group (no kayaks then) I, weighing 115 pounds, got assigned to the same canoe with Evan Blumenthal, whom, I am guessing, weighed 200. My end was up in the air and hard for me to reach the water, but we managed.

- *Marcia Streat*

I, too remember Evan Blumenthal. He was a brown water paddler in the early to mid 1980s, and definitely held down his end of the boat!! I canoed with him several times, and also rode in Corny King's car along with Evan when Corny drove him back to the St George Hotel in Brooklyn where he lived prior to its renovation & conversion to co-ops. At one time he took a trip to the Galapagos Islands and was enthralled with the wildlife there. He lived very frugally and could not have had much of an estate, so his bequeathment is especially generous.

- *Delores Schmidt*



# 2016 Activity Schedule

Date	Touring Water	Quiet Water	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
April	2-3	Walkill (Sun, 4/3) Brady			Adirondacks Tinney	
	9-10		Oswego (Sat, 4/9) Watters		Leader's Choice (Sat, 4/9) Yin	
			Great Swamp (Sun, 4/10) Schreiber			
	16-17	Pelham Bay Clean-up (Sun, 4/17) McCabe		Bantam/Shepaug Edwards/Brady		
23-24						
Apr 30- May 1						
May	7-8		Wading (Sat, 5/7) Watters			
	14-15	Barn Work Day (Sun, 5/15) Ludke				
	21-22	Hudson (Sun, 5/22) J. Bailey	Paddle/ Camping in Penna. Horowitz			
	28-30 Memorial Day					
Jun 4-5		Basha Kill (Sat, 6/4) Barnes/Fine		Esopus (Sat, 6/4) Brady		
		Delaware /Raritan Canal (Sat, 6/4) Arbuckle				

Sedge Island  
Sea Kayaking  
6/17-19  
Leader:  
Loretta Brady

Deerfest?  
6/17-19  
Leaders:  
Charles &  
Sozanne

Intro Paddling  
Workshops,  
6/24-26:  
→ Canoe  
→ Kayak



# Parting Shots

from the world of  
Cardboard Kayaking

