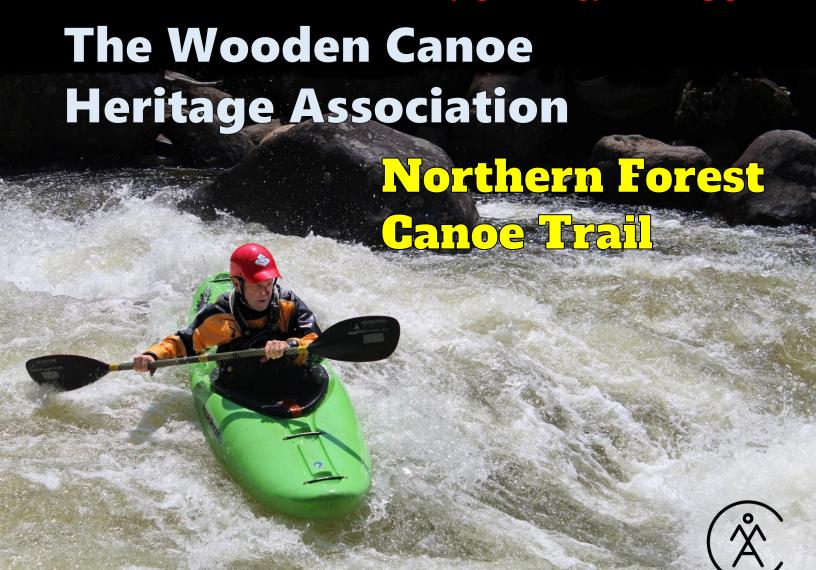
PADDLE SPLASHES

Canoe & Kayak Committee Appalachian Mountain Club NY-NoJ Chapter **OCTOBER 2019**

River Families



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On the Cover: David Michael on the Dryway

River Families:

The Nuclear and Extended Kinds

ecently, a group of summer travelers from AMC NYNJ and NH struck up a conversation along the Androscoggin river banks.

Turns out they were chatting up none other than the authors of two separate esteemed books about the North Forest Canoe Trail, or NFCT. Named by *Outside Magazine* as one of the best national water trails, this "Appalachian Trail Waterway," puts in at our own Adirondacks, dips into Canada, covers 22 rivers and streams, 58 lakes and ponds to conclude at Fort Kent, Maine.

Many break down the trek to achievable annual sections. Gwen Hunter of AMC NH led some of our chapter on just such a jaunt, tripping down the Saranac River and traversing a gusting Lake Champlain. The group triumphed as they inched out of leeward bays to beat a headway through whipping headwinds and three-foot chop. Thankfully, the trip ended with a final lazy leg upon a glass-smooth lake spread with a buttery yellow layer of spruce pollen, at a bumper release this year. Never predictable, these trail adventures.



Loretta Brady patiently waiting for a Lake Champlain ferry to get out of her way. Photo by Marty Plante.

Katina Daanen, author of *The NFCT* Through-Paddler's Companion, told about how another trail-bound group faced a similarly gusty Champlain this year. "But they were through-paddlers who had not planned enough down days for their itinerary."

Excellent point. There is a value to 0 days.

Katina, in fact, wrote her guidebook as a "pay it forward" to lend such sound advice to hopeful NFCT expeditioners.

"I had read past through-paddler blogs looking for more details—and confidence— when planning my own trip. Since the trail was so young, there wasn't a definite resource out there," Katina added.

She seized the opportunity. Now the rest of us have a hand to hold as we wrestle with maps and websites. Ironically, she says, "I became a writer after paddling, something that hadn't been on my radar prior to throughpaddling the NFCT."

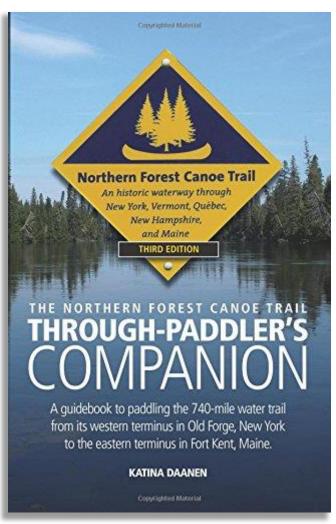
All the paddlers we met on our Champlain trip sang the praises of her guide. Easy to reference, sure, but she also still includes all the blogs and websites she has used. Corroboration aids confidence.

wandered into a presentation about the Northern Forest Canoe Trail at Canoecopia, an annual paddlesport show in Madison, Wisconsin in 2010. By the end of the hour I had decided that I was going to paddle the whole trail the following year—in observation of my 50th birthday. I coordinated six different people to join me during that trip—one of the more logistically challenging thru-paddles to date, which I completed in 53 days. That trip

> proved that I was well-equipped to do more."

Katina met NFCT alumni Laurie Chandler through Facebook. They had both paddled the NFCT in 2011. and since then, have shared more than one portage and hike together.

The two share a quality known well among water people: the thrill of planning to live on the move.



"By nature, I am an organized planner," says Laurie, "devoted to spreadsheets and life unfolding as expected." But multi-week canoe journeys, especially solo ones, she added, "strip away that security and force you to be flexible."

"The NFCT taught me to trust that each challenge would bring forth from somewhere just enough endurance, creativity, and wisdom to get through, often with the aid of caring people," she said.

ne day, tracking upstream on Vermont's Clyde River, unexpectedly, the current surged forcefully. Boat control was a struggle to maintain as she avoided a potentially lethal strainer.

strength and reflexes were weakening," she recalled.

She had to walk across the current. willing courage and commitment with each step. "I knew the bridge take out was close, and then, just like that, I could see it. The utilitarian concrete and metal structure looked beautiful," explained Laurie, "as did the grassy yard that sloped to the water, with the comforting sound of a lawnmower in the distance."

I knew I was flirting with danger.

"I knew I was flirting with danger," she said. "That side of the river was blocked by vigorous whitewater, so I was forced to cross, aware that my



For both Laurie and Katina, the NFCT inspires; its optimism, contagious. The river, and life, go on.

"I like that normal to me can be living and sleeping outside for weeks at a time," says Katina. "I like paddling each day without being deadline driven, without having a place I need to be, except to eventually make it to the end."

This perverse perspective on "vacations" is heard from most NFCT

trekkers syncs with many an explorer in our own chapter. That explains the instant bonding when Katina and Laurie intersected with an AMC group on the banks of the Androscoggin this season.

We all know what it takes to selfnavigate through wind, weather, waves, and wary carries. Type two fun fans all around. No wonder River Families often feel closer than the biological kind.

My story is pretty typical—I grew up on the outskirts of a midwestern city with a creek in my backyard and the freedom to explore it. My family went camping. I had a chance to hike 60 miles of the Appalachian Trail during one spring break when

I was in college and thought I'd have time to do more solo traveling. But then life happened. I got married and raised children and although we went on camping and canoe trips, I was always in charge of everyone and all the planning.

In 2010, I wandered into a presentation about the Northern Forest Canoe Trail at Canoecopia, an annual paddlesport show in Madison, Wisconsin. By the end of the hour I had decided that I was going to paddle the whole trail the following year—in observation of my 50th birthday. I coordinated six different people to join me during that trip—one of the more logistically challenging thru-paddles to date, which I completed in 53 days. That trip proved that I was well-equipped to do more. I've since become an Appalachian Trail 2,000-miler and have solo paddled the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and other canoe trails.

It's hard for me to exactly pinpoint what motivates me to canoe (and hike) long distances. I love the planning and preparation, but it's the idea of a journey—one that requires me to propel myself across hundreds of miles under my own power and surpasses the duration of a standard vacation—that I find the most rewarding. I like that normal to me can be living and sleeping outside for weeks at a time. I like paddling each day without being deadline driven, without having a place I need to be, except to eventually make it to the end.



Laurie Chandler

In the summer of 2015, at age 53, Laurie Chandler became the first woman to solo thrupaddle New England's Northern Forest Canoe Trail. Achieving her improbable dream, to travel 740 miles alone in a small canoe, was by no means certain. Relatively new to wilderness paddling, she encountered challenges—expected and unexpected—that pushed her to the limits of her courage and endurance. Weaving faith, nature, and the abiding goodness of people into a captivating



PaddleSplashes | Aug 2019

Laurie describes the experiences that shaped her the most:

By nature, I am an organized planner, devoted to spreadsheets and life unfolding as expected. Extended canoe journeys, especially solo ones, strip away that security and force you to be flexible. The NFCT taught me to trust that each challenge would bring forth from somewhere just enough endurance, creativity, and wisdom to get through, often with the aid of caring people. This lesson has stayed with me. Tracking upstream one day on Vermont's Clyde River, the current had gained force, flirting with true danger. I remember edging my way around a strainer, wanting to hold the tree for stability, while also wishing to be far away from it! When that side of the blocked river was by vigorous whitewater, I was forced to cross, aware that my strength and reflexes were weakening. Each step became a mental exercise—wedge your foot, test, commit. Thick vegetation choked the shoreline, making retreat impossible. There was no direction to go but forward. I knew the bridge take out was close, and then, just like that, I could see it. The utilitarian concrete and metal structure looked beautiful, as did the grassy yard that sloped to the water, with the comforting sound of a lawnmower in the distance. more, the river and I would both go on.

NORTHERN FOREST CANOE TALES

BY MARY ANN HOAG

Il the Northern Forest Canoe Trail sections are different, whether you are completely isolated in the wilderness or in an area managed by Rangers.

Rangers are very useful for weather updates, animal sightings, and sometimes you just haven't seen another person for several days and are glad for the conversation. One morning, while paddling across Brassua Lake in Maine—which is undeveloped with no car access—Jory and I marveled how anyone does this entire NFCT trip alone.

My canoe partner for this project has more experience than me in the wilderness, both on water and land, and is very self-sufficient.

Two ladies embark on a 740-mile canoe quest.



We agreed to divide our journey into sections over about eleven years, which included skipping sections with a lot of rapids or a 10mile portage, for example.

In the last three years, we seem to have evolved to a daily distance schedule that allowed us to make camp in the afternoon, with time to swim, cook, read and enjoy the setting. When returning to the U.S. from Canada, the customs agent asked if we paddled it backwards, since we had taken so many days. As in all things, there is nothing like experience.

was always worried in the back of my mind about the moving water on these two rivers. In preparation, back in 2015, I started taking the AMC NY-NoJ moving water classes. That led to joining some of the easier whitewater outings with encouragement from my instructtors. I am working my way up slowly with my goal to be comfortable on Class II.

I am grateful for the AMC instructors' interest, skills, patience, teasing, cajoling, encouragement, and good company that has come along with that. They continually push me out of my comfort zone.... about which I have mixed feelings.

I think sometimes about a delightful surprise, 6:30am, standing at the edge of Telos Lake in Maine. Four otters popped up near me. Surprised to see me, they chattered madly among themselves, ducked under together, popped back up, chattered again, then left as quickly as they arrived.



Some Things I Learmed

- I got better at packing my drybags.
- I got more comfortable paddling in the various conditions on the water: in swells, wind, and rain.
- A tarp is handy when preparing dinner and it's worth the extra weight and space in the pack. That took about four years to learn.
- Weather radios are useful to prepare for the next day's paddle. Sometimes, we would get ahead of a predicted afternoon thunderstorm by getting on the water extra early.
- Food preparation was always a slightly competitive sport with my NFCT canoe partner. I upped my game because of that. You can dehydrate almost anything.
- Topo maps are very important to help read the land features and get a better sense of distance. The NFCT maps are small and distances look shorter than they are. It is surprisingly difficult to read land masses from water level...is it a peninsula, the mainland or an island? I remember thinking this on Lower Saranac and trying to locate the eastern outlet to First Pond. We got thoroughly lost twice that I can remember: the Raquette River out of Long Lake, which felt like it was full of oxbows and Flagstaff Lake. Not a coincidence that we did not have topo maps on those trips.
- July is the best month, because you have longer days, allowing time to find your intended campsite. It took an alarmingly long time to locate our campsite on Mooselookmeguntic, due to an incorrect assumption I had made. Some campsites we never found and had to go on to another one.





Conservation, Climate & Community Thursday, September 19, 6-9pm The Loeb Boathouse | Central Park, New York



Conservation, Climate & Community

Thursday, September 19, 6-9pm The Loeb Boathouse | Central Park, New York

Join us for cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, light buffet, and a silent auction to celebrate conservation.



Camilla Nivisson

Newly-rated Class 2 kayaker Camilla Nivison busts a move on the Week of Rivers trip. Photo by Tuckshot.



t the CCC Week of Rivers, Camilla really raised the bar—and both her blades—on the Middle Ocoee, the Upper Pigeon, French Broad 9, and many more.

Yet one of her proudest moments that July 4th week was on the Nantahala. "I set a goal to take on the falls in three different ways," she told us, "and finally nailed all three, not just the racecourse run." Luckily, that wasn't the day of "Bad Idea Theater," or she'd have been dodging pink floating unicorns and other competing pool toys.

In the photo shot here, Camilla punches a hole on the big drop at the Tuckaseegee. Clearly, she enjoys the aggressive rush. Smart, sweet schoolteacher by day; whitewater warrior by weekend.

Wayne Dickert



bonus prize for AMC attendees at Carolina Canoe Club's 50th anniversary Week of Rivers festival: Olympic gold medal slalomer Wayne Dickert coached a canoe stroke clinic.

"Watching his fluid moves live made it seem like dancing among the waves," agreed many participants.

Would you believe Wayne started in a Perception Mirage kayak? Never even aspired to a canoe merit badge in his Bradley County Boy Scout troop. All that changed one day when he felt the leverage and sightlines of a canoe. "I was young and stupid and didn't care that canoeing was harder," Wayne said. "It just felt more natural to me."

While known best for his award-winning instructional books, paddles and boat designs for Dagger, you'll be glad to hear his acclaimed video project, "River Runner's Edge," is available online. WOR attendees forever debate their favorite rivers among the multitude of options—Toe Gorge to the Nolichucky, the Chattooga to the Chattahoochie.

What's Wayne's favorite?

Though the Ocoee, venue of his 1996 Olympic Gold Medal C2 run, is close to his heart, he says his other favorite river is the Tallullah. "It's so beautiful, and the rapids are so fun."

Not to mention his beloved River of Life, the Bryson City church Wayne now leads. Donating over \$1,000 and a tentful of food to his poorest Appalachian families, the week's paddlers out-classed any other boating move by far.

Loretta Brady

t was like a 24-hour driver's road test, 5 days in a row," describes

Loretta Brady, speaking of the recent Instructor Development Workshop and Certification Assessment Course.

Legendary Mike Aranoff (inventor of the heel hook rescue) and Brendan Fitzpatrick hosted the five days on "the island." Considering both directors' draw from their elite athletic world and their experiences as U.S. military veterans, (Mike in Vietnam, Brendan as high-tech Ranger in Afghanistan), it often felt like canoeing boot camp.

Working through torrential rain and near-flood stage rivers, everyone was challenged.

Participants were usually wilderness professionals working as park rangers, Outward Bound staff, or university phys ed chairs. All were permitted to stay the whole course, where each day cements ascending certification from L1 to L4 tandem and solo canoe "instructorhood," but you quickly learned where you stood in your demonstration quality strokes and maneuvers, effective instruction, and swiftwater safety skills.

oretta attended an upgrade and update tandem and solo canoe instructor prep Gap's excellent from Zoar workshop run by Janet Cowey. Eileen Yin joined her to earn her stripes to teach basic whitewater for river canoeing, both tandem and solo. Eileen hopes to run a course soon to upgrade these intro skills. "I can't wait to get a group and show them moves and drills that will give more confidence and fun."

It's a good thing, too. The club's June instructional was filled to capacity.

Loretta on the Week of Rivers trip. Photo by Tuckshot.

A Dam Fine Job:

THE DEERFIELD RIVER AGREEMENT TURNS 25

Twenty-five years ago, hydroelectric companies had few restrictions guiding where they could site dams and when releases would occur. The AMC helped change that.

BY **STEVE HOLT**REPRINTED FROM **AMC OUTDOORS**

or decades, when a power company wanted to build or relicense a hydroelectric dam, it could do so with little outside input about the structure's impact on fish, animals, or recreational users

downstream. The Deerfield River Agreement of 1994, which AMC helped facilitate and which turns 25 this year, changed all that—not just for its namesake watershed, but for rivers across the country.



A paddler navigates through Zoar Gap on the Deerfield River in March 1978. Photo from AMC Library & Archives.

The agreement was the first of its kind in the Northeast and only the third nationally wherein a dam operator and a coalition of stakeholders reached a consensus before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) renewed a dam license.

Dr. Ken Kimball, AMC's recently retired director of research, was a key negotiator in the process. Kimball says success was far from a guarantee when, in 1993, AMC and other public interest groups brought forward a list of environmental and recreational concerns to New England Power Company (NEPCO), whose license for a multisite dam project on the Deerfield River in Vermont and Massachusetts had expired on December 31, 1993. Over the next nine months, the motley crew of anglers, hikers, boaters, environmentalists, public officials, and representatives of the power company worked to hammer out a management plan for the Deerfield that would benefit all parties.

In the agreement signed October 5, 1994, NEPCO pledged to protect more than 18,000 acres of land it owned along the river and to safeguard animal habitats in the watershed. Where water flow previously had stopped or slowed along roughly 12 miles of river, NEPCO committed to minimum water releases, allowing fish to migrate and spawn, anglers to cast their lines, and paddlers o shoot the rapids.

The Deerfield case study became what Kimball calls a "catalyst for a major new trend," serving as a boilerplate for similar dam-relicensing agreements on the Connecticut, Androscoggin, Rapid, Kennebec, and Penobscot rivers in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine.

"The 'water pie' is of a finite size," Kimball says. "Balanced mitigation instead of litigation proved in many cases to be the least expensive way forward, with the most benefits."

Butch Futrell plays on the **Dryway section** of the Deerfield in 2019. Photo by Don Williams.





40th Annual Assembly

his year's Wood Canoe Heritage Association theme was "Centenarian Canoes." The Annual Assembly this summer was again at Paul Smith's College in the northern Adirondacks.

The main lawn is where most of the canoes are displayed. When I arrived, I asked my friend Fitz where I should "park" my 1960s Canadian Chestnut Chum that I had restored last year. There were three rows of canoes already started with about 20 in each row. His remark was "center row is for the 100-year-old canoes, so any other place is good."

After dropping off my canoe, I quickly walked over to the center row and just stared at the many wooden canoes over 100 years. Old Town, EB White and other Maine and northeast canoes were represented.

Centenarian canoes at the Wooden Canoe Heritage Association assembly.

Some were restored like the first day they came out of the factory. The twotone paint jobs were outstanding. The craftsmanship that the canoe builders present was incredible. Words cannot explain it. Some canoes were outfitted with many antique accessories like lanterns, musical instruments, pillows and other items that one would take in the "courting canoes."

here were many activities during the four-day assembly: paddle making, seat caning, Wannigan decorating, paddle lessons for both solo and tandem, art classes, canoe restoration and many others, including activities for the kids. Evening activities included many different speakers from the wood canoe community. Last year in Canada, Becky Mason spoke about her father Bill and his legacy.

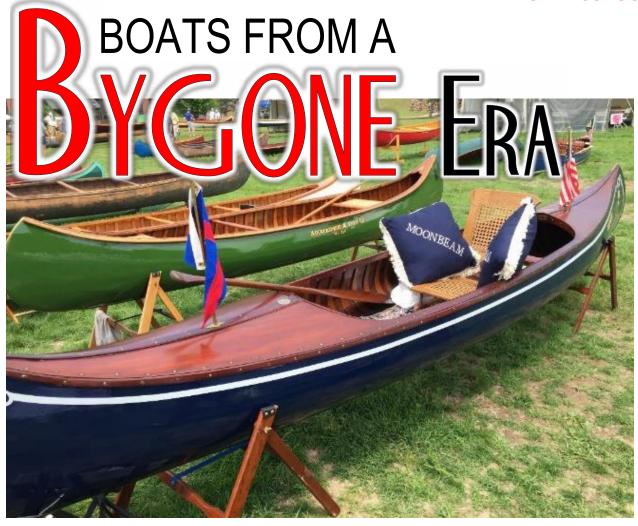
This is all new to me. I began paddling only 10 years ago and knew nothing

about canoes except for the aluminum Grummans I played with when I was a kid. I find the paddling community to be very helpful, giving, caring and lovers of our natural waterways. I have gone from plastic kayaks to Kevlar pack-style boats to Kevlar canoes, going lighter as I age. But then the wood/canvas canoe bug hit me. My current canoe is approximately 65 lbs! How crazy that is but once on the water it paddles so smooth. Of course, when my wife joined me on last year's Fall Foliage AMC trip our maiden voyage made me nervous because of its short 15 ft length and its rounded bottom. But we did stay dry!

I'm so happy to have attended the assembly the last three years. It's wonderful to see and meet people with the skills to create new or restore old wooden canoes. It's an addicting hobby. If you ever get the chance to paddle a wood canoe, you just might find yourself at the next assembly!

Sailing canoes on display.





When aluminum and fiberglass canoes hit the market they turned wood & canvas canoes into relics. But not for WCHA members.

Century-old canoes on the college green. Photo by Dave Shwide.

he 40th Annual Assembly of the Wooden Canoe Heritage Association was held at Paul Smith's College, NY in July 2019. The theme this year was "Centenarian Canoes," or any canoe at least 100 years old. On the college green, more than 35 of these lovely restored centenarians were laid out on display and for inspection, plus over 100 additional restored wooden canoes.

The oldest was perhaps an 1880s Gerrish, clearly showing an intermediate stage in the evolution from birchbark to wood & canvas construction. Two builders dominated the display this year: not surprisingly Old Town and Morris. Since the B. N. Morris factory in Veazie, Maine burned to the ground in 1919 and was never rebuilt, every surviving Morris now ranks as a "Centenarian." An outstanding example of the Morris canoe is "Moonbeam," a long-decked courting canoe with mahogany trim.

ocated on Lower St. Regis Lake, the college is an ideal location for this event, with paddling opportunities on Lower and Upper St. Regis and Spitfire Lakes, or with short portages, access into the St. Regis Canoe Area and to Osgood Pond. For the truly adventurous, Paul Smith's is on the Northern Forest Canoe Trail, leading all the way to Maine. Numerous early morning watching and latenight moon watching trips were completed, and during mid-day it was common to see two or three sailing canoes scudding across the lake.

This canoe was built by its owner for his daughter's wedding. Photo by David Schwide.



The event was attended by over 250 paddlers from as far away as British Columbia, Florida, Washington, Alberta, and the UK-truly a wide-spread and diverse membership of wooden canoe enthusiasts. Paddle carving, hand-caning and a children's program also were going on during the day. Occurring simultaneously was the Adirondack Canoe Symposium, a week of quietwater instruction based on Freestyle techniques.

Aside from these daytime activities, night-time presentations included talks by canoe builder and author Rollin Thurlow, restorer and author Mike Elliott, History of the Adirondacks author Curt Stager, a video retrospective of the past 40 years of the organization compiled by Deborah Gardner, and "Music from the Golden Age of Canoeing" from Tom McCloud.

The event was attended by over 250 paddlers.

Two highlights mark every Assembly: the "Paddle-By," a parade of canoes past the viewing stand of the college Student Center, and the auction. Aside from numerous canoeing-related items being auctioned, several decrepit but restorable wooden canoes had been donated this year and could have been had for next to nothing. Fully restored canoes could be had for a bit more.

Good weather, good friends and great quantities of canoe talk marked this year's Assembly, as always, enticing us back to assemble next year.

Pine Barrens FreeStyle Canoeing Workshop

Oct 18-20, 2019 Medford Lakes, NJ

Obedience Lessons for Your Canoe

Click for **More Information**



WALK-KILL NO LONGER



A Wallkill paddler admiring the local fauna. Photo by Kurt Navratil.

band of boats of every length and size headed out this July to brave the mighty Wallkill. Or perhaps more accurately: the Walk-kill.

It earned this reputation from past years' aborted missions: too dangerous or too trying.

Twice it was due to freakish, highgusting winds. Another abandonment occurred when it was realized they had taken the wrong fork and had stumbled upon-and up and over-dozens of blowdowns in an ELF side creek. (Extremely Low Flow).

There's much to praise in such lazy rivers, where the current sweeps the grass to point you on your way.

There are dozens of wildflowers pearly everlastings, wild geraniums, Queen Anne's lace, cardinal flowers, lily pads. jewel weed and, for such a bright yellow bud, the grossly misnomered pineapple weed.

"Jewel weed cures poison ivy," Fran Schultz reminded us.

Then there's birdage: great blue herons, a circling egret, squawking red tail hawk parents, singing kingfishers and more.

There're still some challenges to be had. Aim between blowdowns. Duck under river-wide trunks.

And if that's not enough fun, there's mud wrestling. Well, slippery banks brought down two of our intrepid paddlers in near face-plant glory. The bog turtles just looked on, shaking their heads.



CLICK HERE TO REGISTER

AMC Fall Gathering

The 2019 Fall Gathering will take place on October 18-20 in Sandwich. MA on Cape Cod.

The fall is a great time to visit the Cape—the leaves start to change, the air turns crisp, and the summer crowds disappear. Discover where the locals hike, bike, and paddle on Cape Cod.



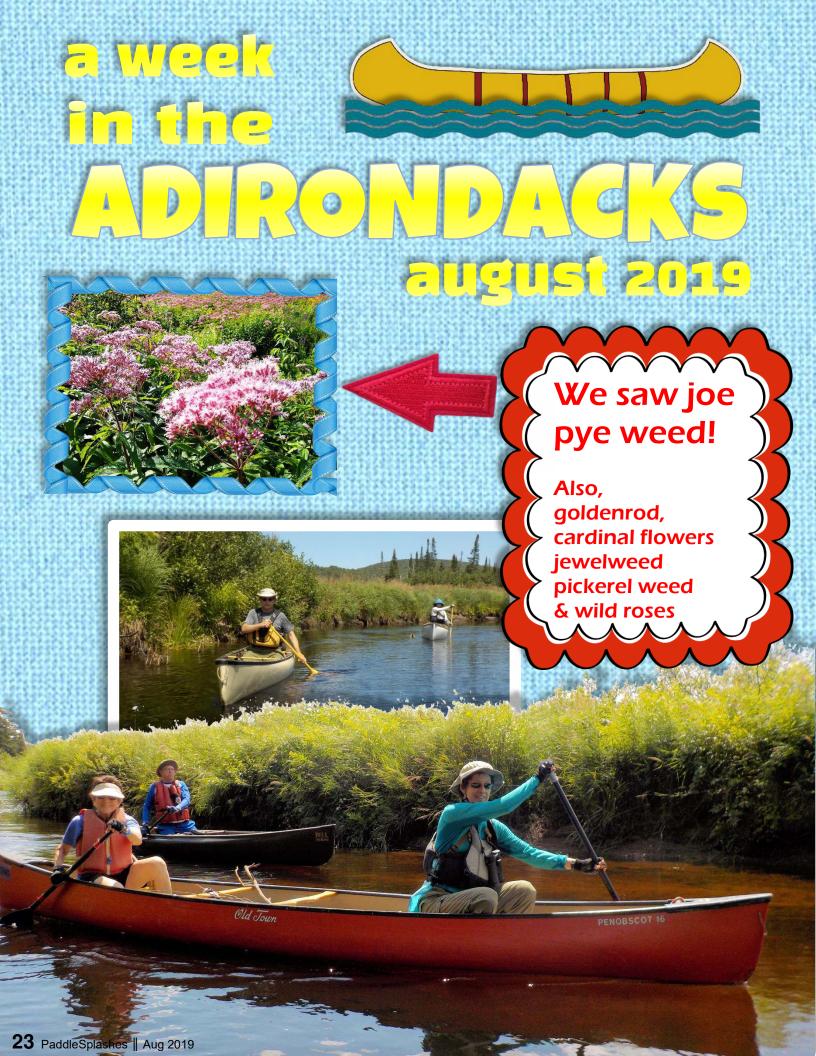
Wilderness First Aid Instruction

Fri-Sun, Sep 13-15, 019

Corman AMC Harriman Outdoor Center

If you play where ambulances can't drive, you need this course.

MORE INFO



PHOTOS BY MARY ANN

We also saw..

hummingbirds great blue herons singing cat bird loons cedar waxwings giant frogs mergansers ...and a trout that tugged Viani's boat

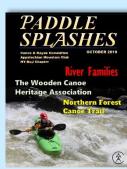




PADDLE SPLASHES

Loretta Brady, Editor Marty Plante, Printer's Devil

PaddleSplashes is published by the Canoe and Kayak Committee Appalachian of the Mountain Club, New York - North Jersey Chapter.



Guidelines for Submissions

Photos are preferred as high-resolution color jpeg files attached to email. Please do not crop, compress, resize or otherwise interfere with them. Contact the editor if you need assistance sending large files. Current and prior issues of PaddleSplashes are available on the Chapter's website http://www.amcat ny.org/paddle-splashes

Send all submissions to:

canoekayak.Newsletter <at> amc-ny.org

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Keep in Touch!









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Don't Forget!



Gauley Fest Sept 19-22, 2019 Sommersville, WV

2019 Activity Schedule						
Date		Quietwater Water / Touring Water	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
August	17-18	Raritan (Sun, Aug 17) Horowitz Raritan (Sun, Aug 18) Horowitz			BAS	
		Learn to Kayak (Fri-Sun, Aug 16-19) <i>Gotel/Michael</i>				
	24-25	Lake Lillinonah & Housatonic River (Sat, Aug 24) <i>Faller</i>			Lehigh (Sat, Aug 24) <i>Grossman</i>	
Aug 31- Sep 1				Esopus <i>Michener</i>		
September	7-8	Raritan (Sat, Sep 7) <i>Horowitz</i>				3
	14-15			En la company		Jiens .
	21-22	Fire Island Canoeing & Clean-Up				
	28-29				and the same	
Oct	5-6	Adirondack Fall Foliage (Fri-Sun, Oct 4-7)		Esopus (Sat, Oct 5)		
		Sedge Islands <i>Hoag/Tiernan</i>		Plante		

DARTING SHOTS

21st century paddling as envisioned in the 20th century.

