

West Michigan Coastal Kayaker



The Newsletter of the
West Michigan
Coastal Kayaker's Association

March-April 2005

Volume 10 Number 2

WMCKA Symposium Turns Sweet 16!

The 2005 WMCKA Symposium will take place on Memorial Day Weekend, May 27th-30th.



Justine Curgenven will be the featured speaker at this years WMCKA Symposium

Photo courtesy CackleTV.com

This year WMCKA will host Justine Curgenven, film maker and expedition paddler. Justine is the awe-inspiring author behind the hit action sea kayaking DVD "This Is The Sea". Justine has paddled extensively in England, Iceland, Wales, Kamchatka and now Tasmania.

If you need a copy of the Symposium Brochure, go to www.wmcka.org, or contact any of the WMCKA Board members listed on page 3.

To learn more about Justine Curgenven please visit, CackleTV.com. Justine will be sharing her excitement for kayaking and the outdoors with

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Symposium participants. Justine will be instructing all weekend and sharing a film presentation Saturday Evening. She will be instructing throughout the Symposium weekend.

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ACA Changes Effect WMCKA Dues

By John VanWyk

Since 1997 we have insured our symposium through the American Canoe Association (ACA). Our insurance was paid for through WMCKA/ ACA dual memberships and a \$5 per non-member event charge.

Unfortunately the ACA underwriter will no longer insure water-sports events. After a long search, ACA has gotten a new underwriter but of course the price was much higher. We are now charged \$5 per year for each member and \$10 non-member event charge. With this new insurance program all our events are covered, not just the symposium. We will ask all members to sign a waiver at their first event. Non-member costs for special events will be included in event prices. There still will be no fees for Ludington, Twinkie or the Platte.

For many years our dues have not provided enough funds to cover operating expenses, printing and mailing costs. We have relied on symposium profits to cover the deficit



The ACA in Michigan Where we are, and where we want to go.

By Nancy Thornton, Michigan Representative to ACA Midwest Division

I have a disease that, for lack of any other name, I'll call 'chronic volunteerism.' This disease rears its head on at least an annual basis and, in the fall of 2003, it struck again when I assumed the volunteer position within our 11-state ACA Midwest Division to act as a State Representative.

Unless we become personally involved in an organization, it's difficult to understand the specifics of its staffing, leadership, funding etc. It is also easy to begin wondering what our dues support, especially in the absence of a tangible, local presence. Hopefully, through this article, I can help bridge that knowledge gap.

1. ACA is the oldest member-based paddlesport recreation and conservation association in the United States – celebrating 125 years! The organization is focused in 3 areas: Education, Recreation and Stewardship. There are approximately 50,000 members (950 in Michigan) and over 4,000 instructors (80 in Michigan). The association has a

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The View from the Presidents Corner

By Al Anderson

Spring has sprung, at least on the calendar. For us non-polar bear types, it's time to start thinking about pulling the paddling gear out of mothballs or even doing a little shopping for some new cool-weather kayaking comfies. Betz and I recently participated in the Quiet-water Symposium in East Lansing and, judging by the turnout, interest in paddlsports continues to grow. I'm looking forward to Memorial Weekend for our own extravaganza with the hope that spring will have arrived on the weather front as well. It seems we're about due for a nice warm, dry symposium weekend.

I'm really looking forward to the 2005 paddling season. It seems that the

more technology they come up with to "free" us from the drudgery of day-to-day life, the more we're weighed down with the essentials of "staying connected". One of the things I find myself enjoying about paddling is not having to listen to somebody five feet away yelling ("Can you hear me now?!") into a cell phone the size of a pack of gum. As I glide along, drinking in the sounds of nature (the breeze, insects, the distant call of birds), I'm blissfully free of the rattle, buzz, hum, or worst, the electronic chirping of the theme from "Star Wars" on somebody's #*(^&% cell phone. "Connecting" with nature will improve your outlook much better than being electronically tethered to the matrix.



The 2005 Chili Confluence is scheduled for Ludington State Park April 29-May 1. This com-

mingling of dozens of home-made stew recipes is always interesting, if not downright scrumptious. The paddling usually isn't too bad either. Bring plenty of cold weather wet-gear and warm, dry clothes. Oh, and if you'd like to leave the laptop, PDA, pager and cell at home, I know at least on old curmudgeon who will appreciate it. See ya there!



Birds Chirping + Icicles Melting + Muddy Dogs =???

By Lynn Dominguez - Symposium Chair

The Red-winged Blackbirds are back in my marsh, bare ground is starting to show around the house, and my 7-month-old Golden Retriever puppies are covered in stinky mud - what do all these things added together equal?? Spring is here!! Of course that also means the 16th Annual WMCKA Symposium on Memorial Day Weekend at Camp Pentalouan near Muskegon, is right around the corner. For this edition of the symposium, the planning committee has a slate of guest speakers and instructors lined up, some new classes planned, and a great new t-shirt design that is sure to become a limited edition. All we need now is all of you to join us!! (Maybe some sun and warm weather would be nice, too!)

This year our featured Guest Speaker/Instructor is Justine Curgenvin who is flying in from England. She is a film-maker and expedition paddler with a hit DVD entitled *This is the Sea*. In addition, Ken Fink, Doug VanDoren, Ron Smith, and Laurie Levknecht lead our returning group of ACA/BCU certified instructors. We will again offer our recreational kayak classes for paddlers with wider, shorter

kayaks; traditional and modern paddling techniques; rolling instruction; Neptune's Treasures (a yard sale for used gear and kayaks); and a kayak rodeo (that can't possibly be rained out again...can it?). Back by popular demand, for the second year in a row are Betsy Baye and Groove Engine to play for us on Sunday night.

So, I'm sure none of you want to miss out on the family atmosphere, excellent



Katie and Mary practice low bracing skills at last year's symposium.

Photo by Jack Keyes

instruction, and rocking good time of the symposium. The registration brochure has been mailed to all current members of WMCKA and to local paddle shops; it is also posted on the website (www.wmcka.org). This year we have included a PayPal option to take on-line registrations with credit cards. If you would like to register this way, we suggest you make a copy of the registration brochure and use that to help you make option selections. Please be sure to pass along the symposium information to friends and fam-

ily that may be interested in joining us on Memorial Day Weekend!! If you happen to find a paddle shop that doesn't have our brochures, contact me at: domin1LA@cmich.edu with their address and I will get some sent to them. Don't wait, registrations are already coming in, make plans now to join us Memorial Day weekend!

*Note-if you were an instructor in past years at the symposium, but did not receive the instructor information from Laurie Levknecht this year, please contact her at: kayaklaurie@msn.com

I hope to see all of you on Memorial Day Weekend!! But right now I have to go wash mud off the puppies and start dryland canoe training with them so they actually stay in the canoe rather than swimming alongside!! On the other hand, I think that sorting out my kayaking gear would be even more fun!

Lynn
Lynn Dominguez, WMCKA Symposium Chair

Hola! from Ecuador!

By Adriene Levknecht

1/28/2005

Hey everyone-

Everything in Tena Ecuador has been quite low octane stuff. Especially after our unplanned night out in the jungle off of the river called the Miswahi. Everyone is really worn out from that but we are all getting over it pretty fast. Orion and Tom have been really sick for the last few days but they are hanging in there, they were the ones that did the most work.

The weather here is amazing and I would come here just to bask in the sun and take in the high humidity not to paddle though. the rivers aren't quite up to par after being on the Zambezi and the White Nile for 2 months. But everything is going

basically as planned and we leave next week for Santo Domingo and some new rivers. Compared to Tena, Santo Domingo is exactly like Tena except on the West side of the Andes so we will have a good 2 day drive over there, but we get our own bus so it wont be that bad.

The place that we are staying, Hostal Villa Benna, is so awesome its kind of on the outside of the city so it is relatively quiet at night and we all get our own beds, and the three girls are all sharing a room. The lady

that runs it, Norma, speaks no English but the food that she makes every day is absolutely amazing and we all look forward to eating her meals (when we aren't sick). Our Spanish is getting better and better by the day and Orion is an awesome guy to have here and he is a great Spanish teacher. Mindy the other new teacher teaches me Chemistry and she is great, she goes to swim with me in the river during morning workout and we have a lot of things in common, she's awesome.

Well I think that is basically all from the field, everyone is mostly healthy other than Tom and Orion and I hope that they get better soon and also that no one else gets sick. Hope all is going well wherever you all are. Talk to you soon.



3/5/2005

Yea, that's right we are at the beach in Canoa, Ecuador the most cute town ever known to man. We rolled in here 2 weeks ago and every day has been spent going to school, eating, sleeping and kayaking in the crystal blue water and getting tan of course. Its like our little paradise here and everyone is happy, healthy and energetic abut being here. We leave for small world which is up in the mountains at 6000 feet, it should be cold but we hear that the rivers are awesome and worth the cold.

Kayaking here has made my kayaking skills so much better and my rolls and down-river moves on the breaking waves are awesome Everyone is healthy and good, there are the occasional cuts on the feet from rocks and such but nothing life threatening. I really have nothing else to say just that this is what i live for, to sit on the beach watching the blue waves break an then go paddling for like 3 hours during the always amazing sunsets

hope everyone is happy and healthy have a nice day!

3/36/05

So this will be my final email from Ecuador as we leave on Monday morning. For the last 2 weeks we were up at 7000 feet traveling on the Quios river and paddling our lives away while still having school every day. we stayed as this place called small world and i would say it was a very small world there. we saw no traces of any tourists for almost a whole month (coming from the beach and then that). we had many days where we spent the day paddling with locals and practicing our Spanish more than we expected. before we left small world we had a great day teaching some very daring locals how to roll and some just how to take `paddle strokes. After that we had lunch with the town that we were in called Bon Bon. Then as our community service we gladly planted 250 trees for the nature reserve to be born.

On the final night in small world we had a group of locals come and play Ecuadorian music for us and we had a few kids even play the guitar with them.

We are now in Quito and we spent the last day and half in a huge market about 2 hours outside of Quito called Odevalo. you could seriously walk around in this market and not see one thing American and the other thing bout it was that you could walk around in it for days and still not see everything. it was an amazing experience to have to speak Spanish to everyone and barter for prices of course.

We are all ready to go home, the flight out of Quito leaves on Monday gladly. this has been a long trip and everyone is ready to be home with their families for a week before we go off again to the west coast. :-)

Peace, love,

Adriene

WMCKA Dues Change	
Effective April, 2005 dues will be:	
WMCKA	\$15
WMCKA Family (New)	\$20
WMCKA/ACA	\$35
WMCKA/ACA Family	\$45
For more information see page 1.	



WMCKA members discuss prismatic coefficients over bowls of chili at last years conflu-

Photo by Jack Keyes

WMCKA Board of Directors			
Title	Name	Phone	Email
President	Al Anderson	(231) 352-7774	bbkayak@betsievalley.net
Vice Pres.	Steven Adsmond	(231) 924-3719	adsmond@comcast.net
Secretary	Julie Stevens	(989) 828-576	steven49@msu.edu
Treasurer	Frits Kwant	(616) 956-6125	frits@iserv.net
At Large 1	John Van Wyk	(616) 669-1565	jjvw@earthlink.net
At Large 2	Keith Wikle	(269) 657-6763	kjwikle@turtleneck.net
At Large 3	Fred McConkey	(616) 396-5036	fmconkey@macatawa.com
WMCKA Non Board Positions			
Symp Co-Chair	Lynn Dominguez	(517) 669-1565	dominla@cmich.edu
Symp Co-Chair	Laurie Levknecht	(616)123-1234	kayaklaurie@aol.com
Web Guy	Keith Wikle	(269) 657-6763	kjwikle@turtleneck.net
Newsletter	Karl Geisel	(616) 452-3239	karl.geisel@wmcka.org

WMCKA Dues Change

(Continued from page 1)

and enable our dues to stay the same for more than 10 years. But as costs go up and now the new insurance fees, we can't count on the symposium to keep covering the difference.

Our board has decided we need to raise our dues \$5 to cover the new expenses. Membership is still cheap! A full year for less than the price of dinner and a movie. Non ACA members going to just two events could save enough to pay for their dual membership and get *Paddler Magazine* for free.

Effective 4-1-2005 the new dues will be:

WMCKA	\$15
WMCKA Family (New)...	\$20
WMCKA/ACA.....	\$35
WMCKA/ACA Family	\$45

Dual memberships receive newsletter and *Paddler* magazine. Dual membership renewals will be billed by ACA as well.

If you have any questions regarding the club's association with ACA, Visit the ACA at www.acanet.org, call John VanWyk (616)669-1565 or e-mail him at: jjvw@earthlink.net. Event organizers can get instructions and forms from John.



Symposium

(Continued from page 1)

The focus of our symposium will be on beginning and intermediate kayakers. There will be on-water and land-based classes for both Euro and traditional paddlers. We will have ACA and BCU certified instructors. We will offer all levels of instruction with the traditional paddle from forward stroke, to rescues, rolling and bracing.

If you have any further questions regarding Symposium, email, symposium@wmcka.org. Or you can post at the WMCKA Forums.



Enjoying a quiet sunset on Lake Michigan at the end of a hectic day.

Photo by Karl Geisel

ACA Update

(Continued from page 1)

- paid staff of 15 – 20 individuals in the greater Washington, D.C. area.
- Michigan is one of 11 states in the 'Midwest Division,' the associations' largest Division. We are virtually tied with Illinois as the largest membership state. The Division has elected officers, as well as a number of committee chairs and state representatives. *There is no funding that flows from ACA National to the Division or State level, and all local work is accomplished through the generosity of other 'diseased' volunteers.*
 - ACA National is going through understandable growth pains; its expansion from 5,000 to 50,000 members is very recent. That kind of growth has its disadvantages - the inability to communicate with its members, within a governance structure that reflects a legacy organization, is at the top of the list.
 - ACA recognizes there are problems and is working towards viable solutions. Expanded electronic communications is at the top of the list. Re-introducing a newsletter, now known as *American Paddler*, is another improvement. Going forward, the newsletter will include 4 pages devoted to our local news (Midwest Division). For those of you that have been around for a while, this will replace 'Pole & Paddle,' the previous Division newsletter.
 - Our Division website (www.midwestaca.org) is only as good as the content supplied to our webmaster and, in the past couple years, it's been stagnant because no one was contributing. I am helping to change that, but can't promise miracles. In the meantime I've created an on-line location to publish information that has statewide implications. This site is also a repository for other valuable information, such as links to local and regional clubs, associations, major events. Please join me at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MichiganACA>
- The ACA is a well-intended organization that, in many ways, serves us well. However, with its current structure, it's nearly impossible for it to be actively engaged at the state level in programs that impact us as paddlers. Because of this reality, I am also investigating the pros and cons of establishing a statewide non-profit for paddlesports. I'm creating an advisory team of interested parties. If you're curious, call me or write at (231) 263-7838 or nthornton@centos.net

Event Calendar

April 29-May 1

**WMCKA – Spring Chili Confluence
Ludington State Park**

Bring your favorite pre-cooked **Chili** recipe. On Saturday night add it to the bubbling communal cauldron with other WMCKA chefs. No two bowls are quite the same, but each bite is guaranteed delicious! Paddle groups explore Hamlin Lake and Lake Michigan at various times Friday evening through Sunday afternoon.

May 27-30

WMCKA – 15th Annual WMCKA Symposium

Definitely a “Must Do” Event. Two full days of classes. Great Instructor/Student ratio. Great slides of great places to paddle. See elsewhere in this newsletter for more information.

July 1-5

Camp Doug Smith

This is your chance to see fireworks “up close and personal” as the camp is the location for the local fireworks display. Located on the NW end of Hamlin Lake, this is your chance to see this lake from the side opposite from Ludington State Park.

Kayak for Light

Ramona Park – Kalamazoo

Assist sight impaired individuals experience the sport that you’ve come to know and love. You may just find yourself getting more out of this event than they do!

September 16-18

Paddle with the Salmon @ Platte River

Saturday’s trip down the Platte River is one of the oddest experiences you’ll have in a kayak. Watch hundreds of salmon swimming upstream as you take a leisurely trip down the river.

October 7-9

**WMCKA – Fall Stew Confluence
Ludington State Park**

Bring your favorite pre-cooked **Stew** recipe. On Saturday night add it to the bubbling communal cauldron with other WMCKA chefs. No two bowls are quite the same, but each bite is guaranteed delicious! Paddle groups explore Hamlin Lake and Lake Michigan at various times Friday evening through Sunday afternoon.

Visit WMCKA On-line at:
www.wmcka.org

Club Information	Kayaking Links
Membership Information	Symposium Information
Event Calendar	On-Line Registration
	Photo Galleries

To post and/or read about
paddling opportunities
from other WMCKA members
visit the Forums/Message Board at
www.wmcka.org

SUBMISSIONS

Articles, photos, trip reports, announcements for trips or any other materials relating to kayaking or the environment are welcome for submission. Electronic media is preferred (plain text, or MS Word format please). Materials are subject to editing.

Send to: karl.geisel@wmcka.org

July 9



WMCKA Membership Form

- Address change only
- New Member
- Renewal

Select a Membership option:

- WMCKA Individual (\$15/yr)
- WMCKA Family (\$20/yr)
- WMCKA & ACA Individual (\$35/yr)
- WMCKA & ACA Family (\$45/yr)
(Dual WMCKA/ACA Memberships
Include 1 year of Paddler Magazine)

Please make checks payable to WMCKA.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

- I would like my name, phone # and e-mail address included in the WMCKA membership directory sent to members each year.

Mail To: WMCKA
c/o Karl Geisel
1900 Clearbrook SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49508

A word about WMCKA events

These events are gatherings of paddlers who share an interest in kayaking and spending social time together. They are open to all interested individuals of any (or no) skill level. There are no leaders, lifeguards, or anyone else responsible the safety of those who choose to participate. Everyone is responsible for his/her own safety and is expected to use common sense and good judgement both on and off the water. Neither WMCKA nor any of its individual members can be responsible for the safety of those attending club events.

Jun-05

Classified Ads

Non-commercial "For Sale" and "Wanted" ads are available for WMCKA members and other area clubs. Each ad will appear for two issues unless the individual placing the ad notifies the editor otherwise. Ads should be submitted in electronic format to the editor at:
karl.geisel@wmcka.org

Blue Heron racing kayak made by Eddyline. Very good condition. \$795 or may consider a trade for a Sunfish or similar small sail boat or two person sea kayak. Contact: Rich at 269-646-3229.

Cascade. Kayak Ultra-light 37 lbs. 14'6"x26"x15" Yellow over White. All equipment – value \$3,000 – Offer. Grand Rapids, Mich – Contact: Paul 616-706-7771

CLC North Bay, 18.5'x20", 8" Beckson pry out hatches, epoxy white paint on hull and clear coat on deck, safety lines, 47 lbs, foam padded knee, seat and hip areas, compass, bulkheads front and rear with neoprene spray skirt and keyhole cockpit. Very carefully built and used little. \$1200 OBO. Boat is in Lake Isabella, 15 miles west of Mt. Pleasant. Call 616-292-5070 for questions on the boat and ask for Scott. Call 989-644-6655 to see the boat ask for Jim.

CLC West River 180, never been paddled, deck needs varnish, \$1200, call Jim at (269) 349-3642

Perception Phat for \$425. Contact Rich at 269-646-3229.

c/o Karl Geisel
1900 Clearbrook SE
Grand Rapids MI 49508

