

West Michigan Coastal Kayaker



WMCKA is affiliated with the ACA through it's Paddle America program



The Newsletter of the
West Michigan
Coastal Kayaker's Association

Winter 2007

Jon Turk to speak at Symposium

By Frits Kwant and Karl Geisel



Jon Turk

Photo from www.jonturk.net

Jon Turk has been selected as the Guest Speaker/Instructor for the 18th Annual WMCKA Sea Kayak Symposium at Camp Pentalouan at Big Blue Lake.

Outside magazine has called Jon Turk "one of today's boldest, most inquisitive, and most articulate adventurers." He is also a truly eclectic adventurer, Jon has climbed mountains, skied all over the world, kayaked the Straits of Magellan, around Cape Horn, and from Ellesmere Island near Greenland to the American air-force base at Thule. His 3,000 mile sailing-kayak passage from Japan to Alaska was rated by Paddler Magazine as one of the "10 All-Time Greatest Sea Kayak Expeditions". He has rowboated the Northwest Passage, mountain biked across the Mongolian Gobi and dogsledded across Baffin Island. In 2005 his beloved wife Chris was killed in an avalanche on Mt Tom. He has been called an "extreme adventurer" and written numerous articles in SeaKayaker, Paddler, Sailing, American Alpine Journal, Rock and Ice, and other magazines. He is the author of two adventure/travel books, *In the Wake of the Jomon* and *Cold Oceans*.

The 18th Annual WMCKA Sea Kayak Symposium will be held this year from May 25-28. Flyers will go out shortly with details. You can also check out details at www.WMCKA.org!

Ludington in the Springtime

By Karl Geisel

After several intense brainstorming sessions and the lack of alternative locations that would serve the dozens of WMCKA faithful, the WMCKA Board of Directors decided to leave the Spring WMCKA gathering at Ludington State Park.

A survey conducted last fall showed that many people would be open to trying a different setting, but just as many felt that the State Park had much to offer the diverse membership of WMCKA. You have Lake Michigan, Hamlin Lake and the Big Sable river all in one location. This gives almost everyone a chance to do what they want and perhaps try something different.

This years Spring Confluence will take place April 27-29 at Ludington State Park. Most activities happen on Saturday. For more information check out the Events section at WMCKA.org or call any Board Member.

Reservations for camping can be made via phone at 1-800-4447-2757 or on the web at: www.midnrreservations.com/campgrounds/index.cfm (Preferred sites are in the Beechwood Loop #s 263-268 & 290-305).

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Too Much Sun is Deadly

By Jack Keyes

It is what we love that can get us. I am becoming of the belief that too much of anything can cause damage. I have been a sun worshiper for as long as I can remember. Being outdoors swimming, skiing, hunting, fishing, riding horses, cycling, canoeing, kayaking, working, and playing was what I have done for as long as I can remember. I worked my first paying jobs in the late fifties as a lumberjack and doing outdoor maintenance. In the sixties I worked for the City of Traverse City Parks and Recreation Department as a lifeguard in the summer and a ski patrolman in the winter.

As a child and teen I used only the best skin care products; baby oil and iodine. As a lifeguard we used a one quart pump fly sprayer to apply it. I'm a light skinned Scandinavian and I would literally shed my skin at least twice a year. By the end of the summer I was a dark brown in color with white sun bleached hair.

Last spring I noticed a mole on my face change color and grow into an irregular shape. Due to a family history of cancer I was worried and my wife told me to go to the doctor. Since the



Jack getting ready to paddle December '06

Photo Courtesy Jack Keyes

mole was large and on my face I ended up at a plastic surgeon where the mole was removed and sent for a biopsy

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A Sea Kayaker's Resolution

By Eric Soares

Editors Note: Eric Soares is a co-founder of and commander in the Tsunami Rangers ocean adventure kayak team, which is known for exploring surf zones, rock gardens, and sea caves on the exposed Pacific Northwest Coast. The Tsunami Rangers started in 1985 and sponsored the infamous Sea Gypsy Race at Miramar Beach for 20 years. Eric was the instigator and organizer of the race.

Whether we see colored flags, or hear bells and gongs, we need to be willing to heed those signals which tell us its just not the time or place for us to paddle.

This article was first published in the Bay Area Sea Kayak Newsletter and is reprinted here with Eric's permission.

When I first started surf kayaking in 1980 off the Santa Barbara coast in southern California, I did it alone, several times a week, rain or shine. It was fun. I knew no boaters there, and the board surfers wouldn't have me. It wasn't until I moved to San Francisco in 1983 and met up with my boyhood friend Jim Kakuk did I get to experience the joy of sharing ocean whitewater adventure with another intrepid soul. Together we ventured out to the serrated cliffs and

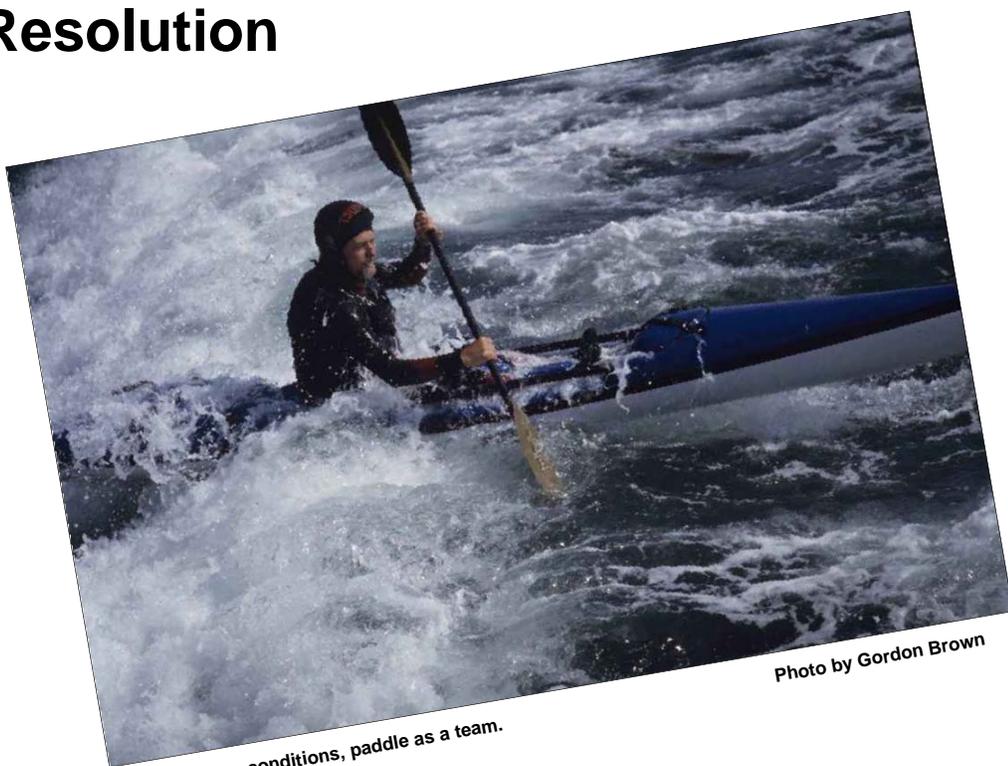


Photo by Gordon Brown

rocks in dangerous conditions, paddle as a team. that comprise Pedro Point. We created the Tsunami Rangers in 1984 so we could more safely do dangerous sea activities such as surfing, entering sea caves, paddling in rock gardens, venturing out on storm waves, and exploring the exquisite northern California coast in detail. So far the team idea has worked out pretty well. We have always been there to

save each other's butts when things went wrong.

Though I usually go out with others, sometimes I enjoy paddling alone. In 1985, I paddled solo for a week down the Lost Coast. I loved having this beautiful coastline all to myself. It was great, up until I stumbled upon awesome

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Getting ready to launch at K4L 2006

File Photo

Co-Chair(s) Needed By Kayak For Light

By Anne Keith

This year's Kayak for Light is scheduled for July 7, 2007, from 10 am to 4 pm, and we are already looking forward to it. However, we would very much like to have one or two people work with us as co-chairperson(s) of this really great event. Many of you have worked with us for one or more years, and many have indicated an interest in the event, so we hope some of you may be interested in helping us out. If you would like more information about what a co-chairperson's job would entail, contact us at elfman@netonecom.net or call Bill or Anne at 231-779-4349.

Thanks in advance for considering this volunteer position.

Bill and Anne Keith

Soares

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Cape Mendocino during big waves and a northeasterly gale that would not allow me to turn back once I approached the cape from the north. With some skill and a bit of luck I zoomed through the cape without a fuss. A little bell tinkled in the back of my mind, warning me of the danger of being caught alone in a bad situation. But I was young and strong, so I thought no more of it.

In 2005, over a year after my aorta surgeries, I was paddling at Pillar Point with my wife Nancy and some friends. The waves were big but coming in slowly, so I vectored through the surf out to Maverick's to watch the towering waves break right in front of me. For some reason no one else wanted to go out there with me. There I was, sitting on the edge of the Maverick break, minding my own business, when suddenly I went blind. Because of my blood pressure medicine, this occasionally happens when I stop moving after vigorous activity (note: my cardiologist knows all about this weird symptom—all hail modern pharmaceuticals!). It was disconcerting and inconvenient to lose my sight in such a dangerous spot. I concentrated on staying put and not drifting into the

break or toward the rocks. After five minutes, my vision returned, and I astutely paddled back to the group in the safer waters. A cowbell clanged around in my head, warning me of the danger of being caught alone in a bad situation. I thought, "Holy Shibooty! This is not safe."

The clincher came a couple of months ago when my friend Misha Dynnikov, a superb athlete, died while snorkeling alone in Hawaii. Snorkeling! When I heard the news, gongs reverberated through my brain. I couldn't help but

wonder if he might be alive today if only someone had been there to assist him when things went awry. Right then I vowed never to paddle alone.

That's now my 2007 resolution: ***In potentially dangerous situations, do not paddle alone!*** For me, *potentially dangerous* includes surfing, paddling in the middle of San Francisco Bay, kayaking on the open ocean, anything other than a pond or flatwater harbor on a windless day. For a guy like me, with a

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In dangerous conditions, paddle as a team.

Photo by Gordon Brown

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SUBMISSIONS

Articles, photos, trip reports, announcements for trips or any other materials relating to kayaking 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

**Submissions for the
Spring WMCKA Newsletter
need to be received before:**

April 7, 2007

Soares

(Continued from page 3)

known medical condition, it just makes sense. But perhaps this is also a good idea for the Bad Boys and Gnarly Grrls of BASK. Anything can happen. A shark can attack, you can get stung by a jellyfish, get slammed extra hard by a wave, or get a cramp or sea sick, or hypothermic, or exhausted, lost, faint, scared—you name it. Why take unnecessary risk? Clubs such as BASK were formed so paddlers could kayak together and watch each other's backs and take care of each other.

The taking care of each other part is essential. Years ago a group of us were paddling at Pillar Point on a very windy day. Then one of us noticed that our

friend Haruo Hasegawa was no longer in the surf line-up. We immediately stopped surfing, fanned out, and swept along the wind path until we found Haruo swimming feebly south of the breakwater, sans boat. We rescued him and all was well. I hate to think what might have happened had we not been paying attention and looking out for each other.

So, in 2007, please join me in vowing to never paddle alone on the mighty sea, and to instead go out with trustworthy boaters who will earnestly be there for each other. Together, we can do this.



In dangerous conditions, paddle as a team.

Photo by Gordon Brown

Keyes

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report. The results stated that the mole was a malignant melanoma caused by sun damage to my skin. I had a pet scan performed on my whole body and was sent to a cancer treatment center specializing in melanoma. They recommended additional surgery and removal of the two closest lymph glands to the site. This was done in the fall and all tests came back negative. I next informed all my family members to have regular skin checkups as they are 300% more likely to develop skin cancer.

I am presently on the slip, slop, and slap

treatment schedule. If I go outside I slip on a shirt, slop on some SPF 40 or better, and slap a hat on my head. I'm OK, but I want you to be too. Stay out of tanning booths and use the slip, slop, and slap method to stay healthy. **Pass the word.**

PS: Remember to bring cash and goods for Neptune's Treasures at the symposium this spring. Things are cold but I paddled into late December. See enclosed photo.

Upcoming WMCKA Events – In Detail

Winter Pool Sessions

The remaining WMCKA Pool Sessions will be held on March 3, 17, at the Grandville Middle School (address below) on the following Saturdays from 3-5 PM.

Rates are:

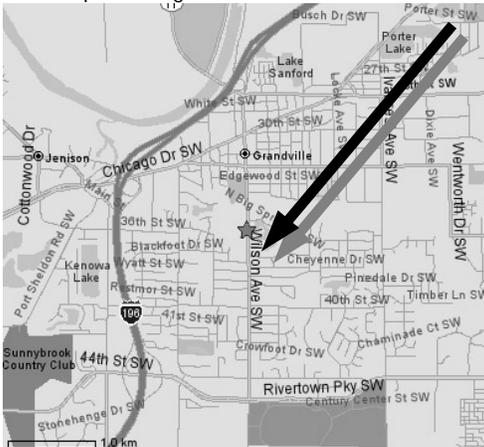
- WMCKA/ACA Members \$10.00
- WMCKA, non ACA \$15.00
- Non WMCKA members \$20.00

Formal instruction may be available this year for an additional charge. You must sign up in advance – contact Karl Geisel at karl.geisel@wmcka.org.

Grandville Middle School is located at:

3535 Wilson SW
Grandville MI 49418

Map Showing Grandville Middle School



The entrance to the pool is at the rear (NW corner, near the football field) of building next to the athletic field.

Please clean your boat thoroughly before leaving home. Boats that are not free of dirt, sand, leaves and other debris will not be allowed in the pool!!

Quietwater Symposium

Where: East Lansing (The Pavilion for Livestock and Agriculture Education)

When: March 3, 9AM-6PM

This is not a WMCKA event, but WMCKA will be there as part of the best collection of outdoor activities in Michigan. Go to <http://qws.homestead.com/QWS2007.html> for more info.

Spring Confluence

Where: Ludington State Park
When: April 27-29

The 2007 Spring Confluence - April 27-29 - at Ludington State Park (preferred sites are 263-268 & 290-305).

Most attendees camp at the park (although some stay at motels in town and just join the group for paddling and meals). The group tends to congregate somewhere in the middle section of the Beechwood campground. Look for a site with the "WMCKA" white awning or ask anyone with a kayak on their vehicle or

campsite.

We usually put in Saturday morning around 10:00 am by the south end of the boardwalk on Lost Lake. In years past we paddled as a group to the dunes at the north end of Hamlin lake, then backtracked for lunch in the protected cove. After lunch the group can break up into smaller groups, depending on paddling interest and skill: those who want to continue on or return to Lost Lake, or venture out to Lake Michigan.

The new Spring menu will consist of bratwurst and buns, sauerkraut and garlic mashed potatoes as the starting-off point. WMCKA is requesting a \$5.00 donation per person for the brats, buns, etc. If they wish, members are asked to bring side dishes of salads, vegetables or desserts to complement the main menu. Lederhosen are optional.

We look forward to seeing old and new friends at Ludington State Park for the spring WMCKA paddling event.

Symposium 2007

Where: Camp Pentalouan / Big Blue Lake – Muskegon County
When: May 25-28

See Page 1 of this newsletter for more Information!

WMCKA Membership Form

- Address change
- New Member
- Renewal

Please select a Membership option:

- WMCKA Individual (\$15/yr)
- WMCKA Family (\$20/yr)
- WMCKA & ACA Individual (\$45/yr)
- WMCKA & ACA Family (\$60/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.

Feb-07

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

Betsie Bay Valkyrie - 3 years old. Pristine condition. Asking \$2900. Also, misc. gear and kayak cradles. Contact Bill or Anne at 231-779-4349 or email: elfman@netonecom.net

Folbot Expedition Greenland II – Folding tandem kayak. Excellent condition, lots of extras. Asking \$1,200. Contact Vikki at 248.666.2224 or vmaks@comcast.net for more details.

Truck Xtender - Fits standard 2" trailer hitch receiver. Allows carrying kayak on topless pickup, quick on/off. Cost \$120 new, \$75 obo. Al Anderson, 231.352.7774

2007 WMCKA Event Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
3/3	Pool Session
3/17	Pool Session
4/27-29	Spring Confluence
5/25-28	2007 WMCKA Symposium
7/7	Kayak for Light
8/3-5	Twinkie Conflagration
9/14-16	End-o-Summer Weekend
9/21-23	Wind, Waves & Wine
10/5-7	WMCKA Annual Meeting

FOUND!!

Shrek key chain at last year's Symposium at Blue Lake.
Contact Steve Adsmond to identify further and claim!
231.924.3719 or adsmond@comcast.net

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

