

West Michigan Coastal Kayaker



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

WMCKA wmcka.org
WEST MICHIGAN COASTAL KAYAKERS ASSOCIATION

The Newsletter of the
West Michigan
Coastal Kayaker's Association

Summer 2007

First Roll!

By Jim Mulder

At age 13, Cassie had been looking forward to Symposium 07 ever since last year when she met for the first time, other kayakers close to her own age.

When she discovered that she could bring a friend the anticipation grew.

I wanted the experience to be something that would be a lasting memory, so we talked about working on her first roll at Symposium. I had only dim hopes that we might be successful in the short time we might have to actually practice.

With boat demos being my main chore for the weekend, we waited until Saturday late in the day to begin practice. The purchase of her first dry top from Neptune's Treasures was a key in getting her in the water to practice that day.

Starting with a recap of previous bracing work,(much of which was offered by club members at one of the events

last year) we went further and further into the water. Recoveries were coming along nicely. Next full submersion of the head.....recovery with a sweep was bit tougher, but I got my first peak at a determined young lady. Then, full upside-down, on side recovery with my assistance. Next less assistance, then less then..... breakthrough, full capsized on side recovery!

We has been in the water over an hour at this point so I thought great work, were outa here.

Not so fast bucco! We ARE doing a roll today.

Well going over off side is very disorienting as many of us know. It was almost like starting over. Repeatedly the paddle was everywhere but in the set up position. I was sure we were done

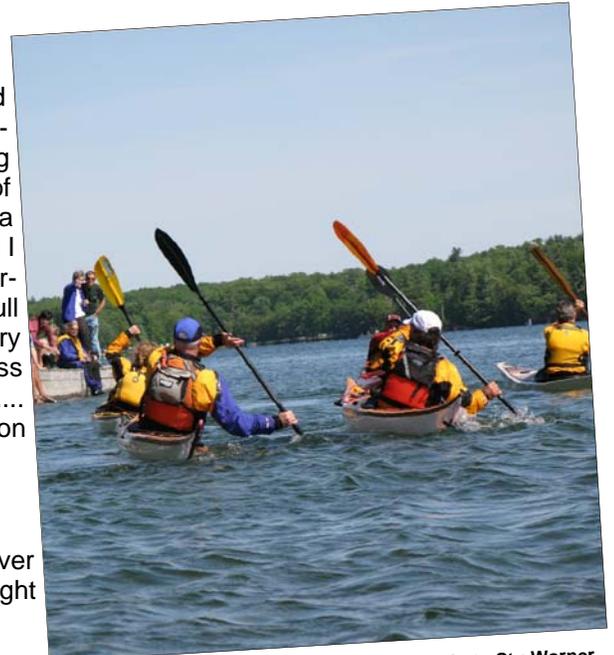


Photo Stu Warner

Put your right paddle in and shake it all about!

soon. That is when I got an up front close look at one very determined young lady. Try after try came out poorly. (Did I mention that I am not an instructor?) Fortunately Lori S. was

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Jon Turk takes time out to talk to a symposium participant.

Photo Paul Bacon

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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
Late Spring Newsletter
need to be received before:**

September 10th, 2007

The Presidents View from the Bay

By Al Anderson, WMCKA President



The 2007 Frankfort Paddling Weekend was lightly attended but well enjoyed. The weather was beautiful throughout. Betz and I had musical obligations in town on Friday and Saturday nights, so we were pretty well whipped by Sunday. This year's paddling included a tour of Betsie Bay's marinas, a lunch at the Frankfort Harbor Beach and a jaunt by some up the Betsie River into the marshland. Betsie and I had to leave before the ceremonial Twinkie had been completely incinerated, but we were assured that the rite was properly carried out. Special thanks to Phil and Kathy for once again extending hospitality to all of us.

Speaking of the Twinkie, some of the older members may remember John Landreville, who was the original procurer of Twinkies (by the case!) for WMCKA events. He was also a pivotal figure in getting Michigan's canoe and kayak registration law overturned back in the late 1980's. John has been practicing law in the Houghton area for

several years, so he has been out of the WMCKA loop a while. John is currently battling metastatic malignant melanoma, a real uphill fight. Please member John in your thoughts and prayers.

We've reached that time of summer, here in our little village, where many of the locals eagerly anticipate the i pending exodus of summerfolk. It is really quite an intense experience for operators of small businesses to make 75% of their entire year's income in a six to eight week period. Nerves around town are frayed. I always notice about this time that locals who are normally on, at best, a nodding acquaintance now greet each other warmly, like old friends bumping into each other in a faraway place. Every local feels a kinship with his neighbor as they share the commonality of simply wanting things to settle back into a more sane pace. It's the reason most of us live up here.

Al



Jim Tibenski demonstrates kayaking karate?.

Photo courtesy Mike Winegard

Women... Men... Consenting Kayaks... Again

By Deborah Delorenzo

Got your attention? The acronym for this provocative phrase is WMCKA, the Western Michigan Coastal Kayakers Association, hosting the 18th annual symposium over the Memorial Day weekend at Camp Pandalouan. For returning kayakers this is a homecoming to a full sized Boy Scout camp on the sandy shore of Big Blue Lake, complete with cabins, showers, a large decked meeting lodge and open field for campers—all clustered around some fine, clean sandy-bottomed lakeshore. For a first timer like myself, it offered equal parts kayak festival, kayak class and the high holiday spirits of three days devoted to kayaking.

The camp is located about 13 miles northeast of Muskegon, about 192 miles from Ann Arbor. This I should know. Me, the Matrix, and Hot Sauce cruised over a surprisingly smooth and open I-96. We got lost in the final 7 miles in the woody darkness in what I learned was the iconic first timer's arrival.

After that (and sleeping on the ground beneath the cloud- veiled stars at 1 a.m) it was easy to find everything:

classes on the water, classes on land, the dinner bell which announced three wholesome and filling meals per day on Saturday and Sunday, and breakfast on breakaway Monday. My personal favorite was the yogurt bar with the impeccable fresh fruit and crunchy granola. After day one I brought my own stainless steel mug and so was able to fuel in caffeine more easily and ecologically.

Help was always a few steps away via redshirted WMCKA staff approachable with any question and pinkhatted safety kayakers patrolling the demo area in their boats. There were about 200 people attending, including 40 newcomers like myself (who were officially greeted with fist pumps and loud whoops when we were acknowledged) and about 30 children for the sold-out kids program. At the

end of this session each child received a certificate of award from WMCKA, no doubt the first of many achievements for what will be an incredible group of next-gen kayakers.

The classes on land were appropriately slotted after those big meals: among them navigation, knot tying, boat repair, hypothermia, coastal paddling spots, paddle dress, norovirus, wilderness medicine, cockpit outfitting and gourmet paddling cuisine. Wearing my full paddling outfit (tastefully coordinated in blue, black & gray) I stopped by the paddling dress class. Someone asked if I was the class



Deborah and "Hot Sauce"

Photo Paul Bacon

model, kidding. I think. All fun. The cockpit outfitting class by Patrick of Riverside Kayak Connection was perhaps the most hands on class & must have spurred the sudden and unprecedented run on minicell the following week.

Classes on the water honed all skills from entering and exiting, through strokes, bracing, balance, rescues, towing and more, with the most basic recreational and advanced moves for each. Both Euro and Traditional classes were offered in strokes, as was a "by women, for women" class. Open sessions were offered where an instructor would work with you on any skill (or lack of same).

If too many choices at this bountiful buffet compelled a paddler to miss a particular class session, it was almost

always offered the next day. Happily, I caught "How to Play in Your Boat" the second time around. The instructor, Laurie of Black Parrots, had us whirling around, feet and legs out of the cockpit, climbing forward to kiss the bow toggle, and some of us even stood up in our kayaks! For sheer fun and incredible feats my hands down (and most wet) favorite class.

Besides ogling others' kayaks and answering queries about my own (my Fuego was the only North Shore kayak), there was ample opportunity every day to demo the finest and newest offerings from Valley, P&H, Current Designs, and NDK and of course Betsie Bay (which has a cult following on Michigan's left coast) It was like test driving Ferraris and Porsches. Santa, or any available sugardaddy, please bring me a CD Suka for Christmas, any color will do, 'k?

Highlights just to touch on:

The beauty and pace of the Night Paddle with 80 kayaks and an innumerable number of glowsticks, some in weird places, the hilarious Kayak Rodeo (or, how to race your kayak six utterly ridiculous ways for fame and no fortune), the four way tie in the rolling contest (8 complete rolls in 20 seconds). Someone at the event told me "we used to let 'em go for a minute, but then people started puking." The kids also treated us to three person "chariot races" one riding bravely astride two parallel kayaks.

Last came the final morning's paddle led by Doug, called "Putting it all Together" which sprung many real life emergencies and options on us. We had to think and paddle at the same time, then paddle some more. A number of people had the privilege of being selected and then "fired" as group leaders. We also paddled past a bald eagle's nest. The eagles remained neutral on the choice of group leaders.

Saturday night's featured speaker was

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Kayak for Light 2007

By Sherry Gordon (Sight Impaired Participant)

On Saturday, July 7, yes, 7/7/07!, a group of avid kayakers gathered at Ramona Park—just south of Kalamazoo, for a day of fun and excitement!

The event is called Kayak for Light and is a very popular activity—where the West Michigan Coastal Kayakers' Association and Lee's Fun and Adventure Shop—a business in Portage—put on a day of kayaking for persons who are blind or visually impaired. All equipment, including kayaks and personal flotation devices, are provided. Although our group was smaller than in previous years, we had a blast! The weather was perfect and the event was great.

There were approximately 25 kayaks that Lee's and WMCKA provided—the beach looked like it had been invaded by kayaks! For those persons who were new to kayaking, instruction was provided. There was also a tandem kayak—a kayak "built for two". You do not go too fast in the tandem kayak, but it is very stable and fun! For the more adventuresome kayakers, there were river kayaks and several racing kayaks available.

A yummy lunch was provided. Hot dogs always taste great when grilled by the lakefront. Thanks to the WMCKA for providing the food and snacks! Many, many thanks to Bill and Anne Keith for their excellent organization of such a great event!

There were many pictures taken—even Company, Sherry Gordon's Leader Dog enjoyed the festivities! See the web site: www.msfl.org to view pictures of the event! We also



Photo courtesy Gary Goodsell

A K4L Guide does a fit & safety check before launching.

encourage you to check the web site for the 2008 dates for both the Michigan Ski for Light and for the Kayak for Light event! Both are excellent opportunities for recreational and leisure development for persons who are blind or visually impaired.



Sherry and Company

Photo courtesy Gary Goodsell

Neptune's Treasures & Symposium 2007

By Jack Keyes

Well the day started out well, my favorite team on the Americas' Cup - Team New Zealand started in the lead on race five against Team Swiss. Then disaster as a spinnaker ripped in half. Leading to a complete blowout. Now the Swiss are 26 seconds ahead. This just goes to show you that it is important no matter what you do on the water that you keep your equipment in excellent shape and inspect it before each outing. If something goes wrong don't panic as it will only compound the problem. On the second spinnaker set the kiwis didn't secure the bottom and the spinnaker became a flag and on the third set they rushed it and the spinnaker wrapped around a stay. Wooops. I enjoy the sport because it gives a country less than the size of the state of Rhode Island a chance to beat the world in one of the most expensive and technical races in the world.

This morning I also just finished reading one of the most interesting articles I have ever read in my life. Please take the time to read Jamestown The Real Story in the May edition of the National

Geographic {WOW} this article will totally change how you view the history of colonial America.

Another year of hunting for treasures at symposium has come and gone. This year was a record year for boat sales; as well as total items sold. More members as well as the general public are coming to look and are remembering to bring their cash and checks. We also had a record amount donated to the club by members who sold items. I mentioned to the sales reps that didn't bring items to sell that we did sell almost all of the samples of the ones that did drop off items. So hopefully we will have as good or better a selection of gear for next year.

Winnie and I had a wonderful time. We learned some new things, made some new friends, and visited with old ones. We will be back next year and hope to bring some of the grandchildren.

I was so busy this year that I almost didn't have time to take pictures, but I got some great ones. **I am making a**

DVD of all of my pictures; a project that I hope to have done by the end of Aug.. It will be available at the next symposium for \$20.00; if you wish a copy before then send me a check for \$25.00 and I will mail you one. I am at Jack Keyes - 9856 S. Perrins Landing, Traverse City, Michigan. 49684.. Don't forget to include a return address.

I paddled out on Lake Leelanau with Winnie on a calm morning the other day and the zebra mussels have changed the habitat so much that you can see sixty feet down to the bottom. I saw fish suspended at forty and fifty feet. You don't need a fish finder any more. Well, paddle safe and practice what you learn, then pass it on. Hope to see you my friends at some of the summer and fall outings. Jack and Winnie Keyes.

St. Joseph Island Paddlers Rendezvous

Gary Dekock is again hosting the St. Joseph Island Paddlers Rendezvous the weekend of September 13-16, 2007. It is about a 6 hour drive from Grand Rapids. For an idea of what goes on you can take a look at details of last year's event at:

[Http://www.voyageurtrail.ca/paddling.html#ppschedule](http://www.voyageurtrail.ca/paddling.html#ppschedule)

Gary says: We plan to do day trips of about 15 miles per day. I am expecting about 40 paddlers to participate this year.

Anyone interested in this year's rendezvous can call me at 616.791.9490 or send an email to gdekock@gmail.com



Symposium 07 - Kayak Rodeo.

Photo Steve Muntz

Support Help Wanted

I'm looking for one (or two) experienced kayakers who might be in the Mackinac Straits area over the Labor Day Weekend.

I am one of a group of 50 swimmers that will be swimming the Straits on Labor day in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Mackinac Bridge. [Are there] any adventurous souls in [WMCKA] that would be willing to accompany me on my swim across the Straits? To belay any fears you or anyone else might have, I have already swam across the Straits....September 15, 2006.

At that time I had a kayaker from the area that accompanied me as my "point man" and I had a boat as SAG. Any help you could offer in getting the word out would be sincerely appreciated.

Jeffrey L. Lounds
loundsj@msu.edu
517-355-8500 work
517-712-8525 cell

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

Pyranha Prozone — whitewater kayak with skirt, paddle, helmet, float bags and cockpit cover, \$600.
Dagger Redline — whitewater kayak, \$300.
Wilderness Systems Kaos — sit on top surf kayak with tri fins, back band, thigh straps, paddle and day hatch, \$400.
Snap Dragon sea kayak spray skirt — Neoprene skirt with adjustable nylon tunnel. Size large skirt with size medium tunnel. \$80.
Adventure Technology AT3 edge bent shaft white water paddle, 194 cm. \$200. Contact Brian at bmoon@miller-davis.com

Kokatat dry tops (2) — Gore-Tex, one sz. small, and one sz. med. (unisex), \$65 each. **NRS Hydroskin long-sleeve top and long pants**, size mens M, \$15 each. 2 sets **Yakima Mako saddles and cartop bars**, \$30. **Assorted dry bags**, \$5 each. Email Bill or Anne at elfman@netonecom.net or phone 231-779-4349.

Betsie Bay Valkyrie— Wood/epoxy, good condition. One of Doug Van Doren's personal kayaks. Asking \$2,100. Contact Doug at: 616.452.5357, or email: dvdoren@aol.com

Upcoming WMCKA Events – In Detail

September 14-16 – Platte River End O' Summer Gathering on page 7.

This event, usually blessed with lovely summer weather, is generally held in Mid-September to coincide with the salmon running up the Platte River.

Most people stay at the Platte River Campground, located on the southern portion of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Park. Camp reservations can be made by calling 1-800-365-CAMP or online at www.nps.gov/slbe/camp_res.htm

On Saturday morning, paddlers gather at the Big Platte Lake launch site, located on Arborvitae Road, about ½ mile east of M-22, and just south of the river. After crossing Big Platte Lake, participants float down the Platte River, observing the salmon swimming up-river. Upon arriving at the mouth of the Platte River at Lake Michigan, some paddlers continue out onto the lake, and others enjoy the beach. Bring a sack lunch, which will be consumed somewhere along the river at one of the numerous put-in spots.

On Saturday evening, most people get together and go into either Empire or Glen Arbor for dinner. After dinner, there is usually a campfire and story-swapping back at the campground.

Directions: The Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Campground is located along M-22, approximately 22 miles west of Traverse City and along the Platte River. There are two campgrounds in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, but most paddlers stay at the Platte River Campground, which is closest to Big Platte Lake and the paddle the next day. For further information, contact any WMCKA Officer or Board member listed

September 21-23 — Wind, Waves, & Wine

This is the second annual Flotnar, /(Old Norse Word for seafarer)/ assembly. The gang will converge on Wilderness State Park to paddle Lake Michigan, take on the wind, the waves, and camp at the State Park. Make your reservations today. Please note: this is an open water outing with cold water, and possibility for high wind and waves, dress for immersion, and be prepared to get wet.

An attempt will be made at a communal meal in the proverbial mead hall on Saturday Night. So bring out that special back-country recipe to impress your friends and frighten your enemies. If you have questions email: keith.wikle@wmcka.org

October 5-7 — Annual Meeting and Paddling Weekend.

The annual meeting and paddling weekend is generally held the second weekend of October at the Northern Exposure Campground. The campground is located on the Hodenpyle Dam, which is on the Manistee River. The Hodenpyle Dam is approximately 6 miles long and about a mile wide. It is surrounded by beautiful pine and hardwood forests. The dam waters are clean and clear. In addition to paddling on the dam, there is an opportunity to paddle on the Manistee River above

or below the dam. This would be an option in the event of extremely windy or inclement weather. For anyone interested in paddling on Lake Michigan, it is approximately 25 minutes to a launch site.

The campground itself will have numerous open sites. During October, very few other campers will be found at Northern Exposure. The campground manager has reserved an entire section of the campground exclusively for the WMCKA event. Each site has piped-in water and electric. There will be reduced rates to WMCKA members, and both tent and RV sites are available. There are excellent launch opportunities at every single waterfront site. This campground has newly paved black-top access roads, and numerous hiking trails on the camp property, as well as access to the North Country trail nearby. The campground management is extremely friendly, and educated by our esteemed member, Lynn Dominguez.

On Saturday evening, WMCKA will provide a main course for dinner for a donation, and attendees are requested to bring a side dish, such as salads, potatoes, vegetables, or desserts.

Although there should be no problem with last-minute arrivals, campground management recommends calling ahead for reservations and using the WMCKA name to ensure that everyone is in the same area. Normally, there is a \$4 fee for day visitors, BUT this fee has been waived for the WMCKA event. There are no parking restrictions at Northern Exposure, so we should have no problem accommodating any day visitors.

See the full schedule on the back page!

First Roll / Mulder

(Continued from page 1)

instructing nearby and I picked up a tip from listening to her. Not long after that, we got the paddle in the right spot and a graceful layback roll happened. Of course that wasn't good enough, several more put the icing on the cake and a tired end to long practice session.

That day will live forever in our memories, first roll with a traditional paddle..... but dad, what about a Euro-paddle? Here we go again, look for a new contestant in the roll competition next year.

He wove a cosmic net of low technology and high spiritual advancement - a quest of the mind and heart - and hinted of a future book based on his journeys back to eastern Siberia and a female shaman named Moolynaut. He autographed my personal copy of In the Wake of the Jomon - "It's all about our passions, our ancestors, and our love for the planet." Not surprisingly, all the books he brought sold out.

Sunday night kicked off with a wine and cheese party, a prelude to the dancing later and a fine excuse for high spirited people to work on their hip snaps and related moves. The band, *Betsie Bay & Pocket Change*, is the alter ego of the founders of Betsie Bay Kayaks (Al and Betsie Anderson). Backed by some locked down, talented players on organ, drums, bass and guitar, Betsie delivered absolutely melt-down vocals covering everyone from Janis Joplin to Melissa Etheridge to Sly Stone. Dozens of dancing dervishes held sway for five hours. Not much sleep in the cabins that night.

Perhaps my best and most beloved image of the entire symposium was 5:30 a.m. Saturday. The patter of raindrops raised me from peaceful sleep on the ground. With some urgency I erected my tent. Now more alert, I thought it was a good time to walk to my car and bring the kayak down and unload while all was quiet and access to the shoreline easy.

I admit to being a bit whiffed doing this

on four hours sleep. A very kind man named Jim (who I saw later that day as the rep for NDK seakayaks) helped me unload my boat. Having set Hot Sauce on the sand, I now had time for myself.

There was total peace on the calm, faintly sunstriped water, shimmering back into the air and finding its way inside me. Yet there was a counterbalancing energy and urgency. On the sandy beach some 200 kayaks of every description were poised, all with slender bows pointed to the water like the noses of expectant racehorses on the dawn of Kentucky Derby day. It was a beautiful balance of action about to be realized and the persistent tranquility of grace, like a finely designed seakayak itself.

If I had come 192 miles not knowing what to expect or what I would find, before me was the proof of so many people who shared the passion and who were here making it the center of their lives for a few days... if we were insanely keen on paddling, well, it was a shared insanity, and a beautiful one.

WMCKA / De Lorenzo

(Continued from page 3)

the enigmatic yet approachable Jon Turk, a modern day shaman, in addition to being the scientist/adventurer who recreated the ancient Jomons' paddle from their homelands in Japan through the eastern Siberian islands and across the Bering Straits. In modern terms he paddled in two stages in two years from Japan to Gambell, Alaska beginning in spring of 2005. Indeed this would be one of the ten greatest modern sea kayaking voyages of the modern era, as it has been fittingly described.

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.

Aug-07

2007 Event Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
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
Nov-March	Pool Sessions (TBA)
April 26-28	Spring Meeting (Ludington SP)

**Not receiving regular
WMCKA email updates?**

Send your **current** email address to:
karl.geisel@wmcka.org



Anne K finds out why an Inuit paddle is not the paddle of choice for a surf ski.

Photo courtesy Mike Winegard

c/o Karl Geisel
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