

# *Blazing Paddles*

## **Winter Edition**

### *Message or Ramblings from our President*

Steve Berner

I'm sitting here, and it's 20 degrees outside. Not exactly the kind of weather that makes you want to go kayaking. Don't get me wrong. I like to kayak in the winter; everything is so different on the water in the winter. The tall marsh grass is golden brown instead of green. There are no motor boats on the water to interrupt the silence. It's the only time of the year I see the northern harrier on Long Island, floating above the marsh looking for a meal of voles, mice, or small birds. It's also the only time of year to spot a snowy owl vacationing for the winter. Just a beautiful time to be on the water! However, since I detest the extreme cold weather we've been having, I have yet to get out for a paddle! Thankfully, winter doesn't last forever. It's supposed to get up to the upper 40's this weekend. Maybe, I'll get out there soon. But, if not, our first pool session is only two months away and with it a chance to practice my skills again. Soon after that, the warm weather will return and kayaking will become a more comfortable activity again.

In the meantime, we have events like the Welcome to the New Year Party attended by seventy-five of our members on January 13. Originally our Annual Holiday Party was scheduled for December 9, but snow postponed it. Because it was such a success, the Executive Council is looking into having future End-of-the-Year parties in January. Next year, it would be January 5th or 12th.



## In this Issue

I always believed he was at least ten to fifteen years younger than his actual age. He volunteered to help the club in so many ways, but the enduring image I have of Ray in the pool, teaching newbies how to properly exit a kayak while hanging upside down in the water and how to get back into the boat quickly (wet exits/self-rescues). For that reason, I thought it was apropos that this year's Ray Smith Award went to Tom Auer and Mike Matty. These two gentlemen have taken it upon themselves to train with outside experts and then return to share that knowledge with club members at almost every skills' session.

The club owes them a huge debt of gratitude. The final honor, The Ken Fink Award for Lifetime Achievement, was given to John Giuffre.

John has been a member of the club for at least twenty years and for all that time has volunteered his services in so many different ways to help our club to flourish and grow. He's held almost every position there is in the club, including presently serving on the Election Committee, the Ray Smith Memorial Scholarship Committee, and as one of the five members of the Board of Directors. This recognition is

long overdue. Of course, the best way to stay connected to the Long Island Paddlers and the kayaking community is to attend our monthly meetings on the third Tuesday of every month at the Bay Shore Brightwaters Public Library from 6:55 – 8:55. We always have an interesting program, and it's a great place to hang out with your paddling friends when you can't be on the water.



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## **Paddles & Their Storage    Colin Mullen (LIPS) Dec. 26, 2017**

Purchasing a canoe or kayak along with all the necessary safety gear is an expensive undertaking, so most paddler's avoid the additional expense of purchasing nonessential paddling equipment, like a spare paddle. And at first, a spare paddle might appear as just another expensive piece of nonessential paddling equipment but that is only until you or someone else breaks or loses their primary paddle on a trip or until someone shows up at the launch site having forgotten his or her paddles'. Therefore, in my opinion every canoeist and kayaker should eventually acquire a spare paddle.

The question is what is the best way to store our paddles? They can simply be leaned against a garage wall but eventually an abrasive concrete floor will damage their blades. An overhead horizontal storage rack will keep paddles out of the way but these racks have drawbacks. First two-piece paddles should be stored vertically so any water inside their shafts will drain and in my case each time I attempted to take a paddle from our overhead rack it resulted in a cascade of falling paddles, finally I decided I had to come up with a better way of storing our paddles. I wanted a way of storing our paddles so they would hang vertically, be easily assessable and out of our way. My solution was in pieces of a scrap 2"x6", 2"x3" lumber, and a leftover section of 1 1/2" PVC plastic pipe.

First I attached the scrap 2"x6"x34" lumber to studs in our kayak shed.

My next step was to cut the 2"x3" lumber along with 1 1/2" plastic pipe into approximately After cutting the plastic pipe into sections, I drilled four holes into it.

On one side, I drilled two large holes one above the other lengthwise and on the opposite side, I drilled two smaller holes the same way one above the other and directly opposite the two larger holes.

With the wood and plastic section now cut, I started to assemble them onto the 2"x6".

First I attached a section of plastic pipe by placing two screws through the larger holes and into the two smaller holes opposite them which I then drilled into the 2"x6" lumber. I then placed a section of the 2"x3" lumber alongside the plastic pipe and nailed it to the 2"x6". I alternated this pattern until I reached the end of the 2"x6". With this complete I then went back and attached additional PVC plastic pipe to the 2"x3"s with screws. To accommodate my bent shaft paddles I cut out a section of the plastic pipe so the paddle shafts would gently slide or snap into place. Once I had the entire rack assembled, I put waterproof silicone over each of the screw heads inside of the PVC plastic pipe so the screws would not scratch the shafts of our paddles. The result is we now have seven paddles stored, neatly out of the way in less than 34 inches and any water remaining inside the paddles shafts will drain out.

Unfortunately, I ran out of room on this rack for all our two-piece paddles but that is ok I will just make another rack. I will place the second rack higher on the wall so it can also accommodate our longer one-piece paddles. To hold the paddles on this second rack in place I will cut out sections of the PVC pipe just as I had done on the first rack for my bent shaft paddles.



# Holiday Party



## Just another Fun & Rough Day in the Surf

Colin Mullen (LIPS) Dec. 23, 2017

One afternoon in late October, Robin and I kayaked out to the old inlet in Moriches to play in its surf. It might not have been the smartest paddle I have ever planned and it definitely was not the right time or even the right day for us to be paddling there. The local weather station forecasted winds from the southeast at 10-12 mph with the ocean having an average wave height of 2.5 feet. However, their predictions were slightly off, for the wind turned out to be closer to 18 MPH, with higher gusts and the ocean's waves were higher than predicted. As it turned out the only accurate information we possessed was the current would be going out of the inlet when we arrived.

It was not hard to paddle out through the incoming shore braking waves and once past them we were able to get some nice long ride from the waves passing over the sandbar at the mouth of the inlet. However, that was before Robin unexpectedly capsized. Robin is an extremely skilled and gifted paddler who I trust to come to my aid no matter what circumstances my stupidity manages to get me into so I was surprised when she decided to change our system and capsized. My momentary surprise at Robin's capsizing turned into the realization that it only occurred due to the unpredictable wave action caused by the shoaling effect of the sandbar. Simply put, shoaling occurs because of the displacement of water upwards as waves travel over a submerged object such as a sandbar or reef. The result of shoaling is an increase in a wave's height, accompanied by a reduction in the distance between waves. Additionally, shoaling often-causes waves to refract, meaning they will change direction and bounce back traveling in the opposite direction. One of the major problems when dealing with refractive waves is as one wave is incoming another is simultaneously going outbound, causing treacherous conditions for both manually powered and motorized boats alike. Along with the multitude of problems we faced caused by the shoaling effects of the sandbar, the wind traveling in the opposite direction to the current and a number of other environmental conditions, nothing could have prevented Robin, I or any other paddler from capsizing under those same circumstances.

Robin held fast to her kayak and paddle after she capsized and she almost succeed in performing a scramble self rescue before an oncoming wave sent her and her kayak flying up over its crest. Unfortunately, I was not in position to assist Robin before that wave sent her soaring up into the air. Not only was I unable to help Robin as she attempted her scramble rescue but the breaking waves were so rough and coming in so close to each other for the first time I felt could not safely attempt a T-rescue.



I was not wearing my tow belt, having conveniently stored it in my kayak's day hatch but if I were wearing it this would have been a simple rescue. Lacking a tow belt I proceeded to the next best option and managed to hook up the short towline Robin had attached to her kayak just forward of its cockpit. I hooked up the short tow in hopes of preventing Robin and her kayak from drifting further out with the current and with the anticipation of towing both Robin and her kayak simultaneously to shore. However, seconds after I hooked up the short towline a wave crested and broke atop Robin's kayak and in a froth of white water, the wave drove Robin's kayak underwater. I was bracing into the wave as I should but once the wave pushed Robin's kayak underwater attached by the short towline I capsized. Capsized, I along with the two kayaks tumbled and rolled within the white foam of the breaking wave. As I tumbled, I could see sand, then green water followed by a mixture of white foam and bubbles. Fearing I might become entangled in the towline or possibly slammed between the two kayaks, I performed a wet exist. As Robin had done when she previously capsized, I also held tight to my kayak and paddle. Coming to the surface, Robin discovered that the force of the wave pulled the bungee cord that held our kayaks together from my kayak's deck. As Robin's kayak drifted off, we both had to contend with struggling against the outgoing tide and a strong riptide to reach shore while additionally hampered by pulling my water-filled kayak.

Once we reach shore, I dumped the water from my kayak as Robin retrieved my tow belt from my kayak's day hatch. With my tow belt now secured around my waist together, we re-launched my kayak back into the surf zone. Once again, I paddled through the first set of shore breaking waves. I then paddled approximately 75 yards or less from shore, which brought me passed and left of Robin's unoccupied drifting kayak. My plan once in position was to catch a wave back towards shore and ride it to the other kayak. I figured I had only one chance in retrieving the drifting kayak and if I failed it meant letting it drift off out to sea and possibly Ireland or Spain. I managed to catch the perfect wave and it brought me right to the drifting kayak, my kayak's bow striking the overturned kayak at its skeg box, it was just pure luck. I turned the two kayaks parallel to each other and edged my kayak onto the other while I lay across its hull holding them together just as a wave struck.

Fortunately, by placing the unoccupied, capsized kayak on the ocean side and into the path of the oncoming wave and leaning across its hull for support, I stayed upright. It was both a fun and rough day playing in the surf and I have to remember to thank Robin again for unquestionably the best day of kayaking I had all season. However, I have to admit I do prefer our old system where Robin stays upright which allows me to wonder off and engage in an infinite number of stupid paddling antics confident that Robin will come to my aid whenever I go a bit too far.

Once this wave passed, I flipped the capsized kayak upright, attached the long tow-line from my tow-belt to it and paddled both kayaks back to shore. Upon reaching shore, I found my gopro camera was hanging limply alongside my kayak by the single line, which attaches it to my deck line. The force of the wave(s) had torn the adhesive pad on my gopro camera from my kayak's deck. Now, I have been in some nasty waves before but none of them ever managed to separate my gopro camera's adhesive pad from my kayak's deck.

Probably the most amazing thing about the entire experience aside from Robin's decision to change our working system was once we were both on shore as Robin sipped her hot tea; I reached into my PFD's pocket and pulled out my Ziploc sandwich bag and to my surprise my sandwich was still completely dry! Not one drop of water entered my Ziploc sandwich bag despite the bag spending so much time submerged in water. That was completely amazing to me, how could my sandwich pos-

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### *Upcoming Picnics*

- Spring Picnic- Sat. June 9, Centerport Beach/Picnic Area***
- Fall BBQ- Sat. September 8, Indian Island Park***



## ***THE CLUB STORE***

When you're looking to buy the following items or that money is just burning a hole in your wallet.....there's no need to make an extra trip or go traveling anywhere other than to our monthly meetings.

If there's time, these items will be on sale before the start of our General meetings, otherwise you can start shopping as soon as the meeting program is over.

For your shopping pleasure, our store is stocked with:

303 Cleaner	(\$12)	Works great on more than just your kayak
Croakies	(\$ 5)	You won't lose another pair of glasses
Hats	(\$13)	Heavy weight. Logo on front & Long Island Paddlers on back
	(\$10)	Light weight. Long Island Paddlers embroidered on front
Horns	(\$6)	Don't leave shore without one...works great
Lights	(\$20)	A must have for night kayaking
Shirts	(\$25)	Long sleeved with logo..keeps you warm or keeps you cool
T-Shirts (Men)	(\$8)	You can't beat this price for great t-shirts. Comes in several colors and sizes with club logo.
T-Shirts (Ladies)	(\$8)	Special colors and v-neck shirts with club logo for the ladies.
Decals	(\$1)	Club logo decals – looks great on your kayak and a great advertising for the club
Fleece Jackets	(\$26)	Individually ordered – pick your size & color.

AND, for your reading pleasure we have the following BOOKS

Inside Passage	(\$15)
Canoeing the Peconic	(\$1)
Exploring East End	(\$12)
Paddling LI	(\$10)
Fearless	(\$12)
Canoeing & Kayaking	(\$10)
A Dip In The Ocean	(\$12)
More Deep Trouble	(\$10)

We also have a limited supply of FREE Coast Guard ID stickers for your kayak.

*CLIP AND SAVE*



2-18 Club Meeting, Nesting Eagles on LI

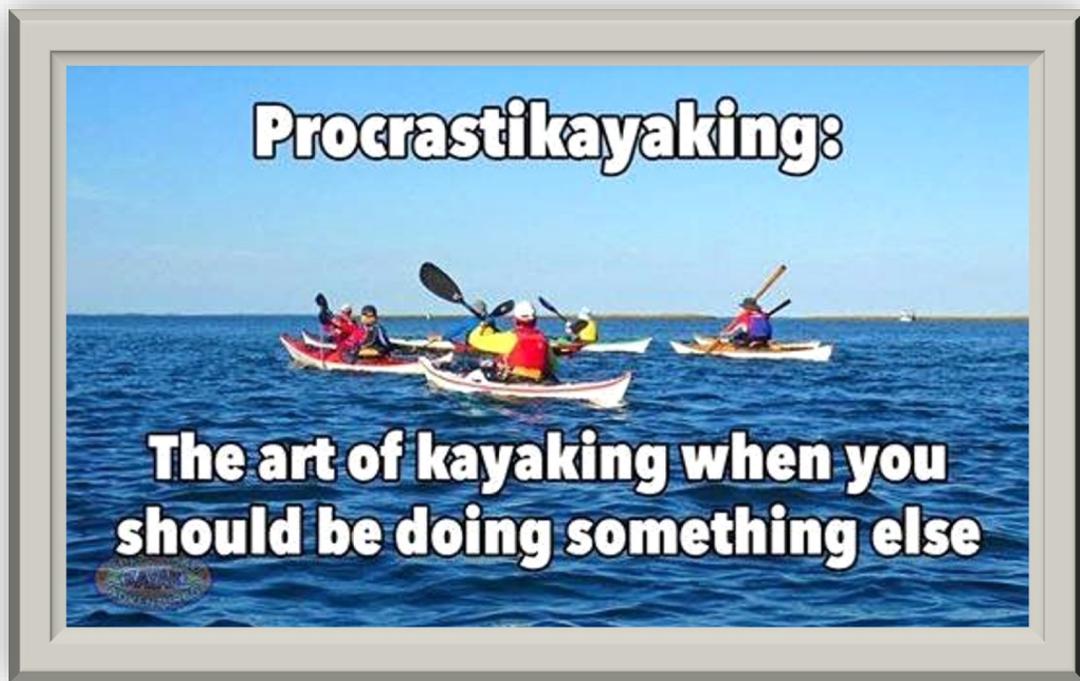
3-18 New/Old Inlet

3/18/18 Pool Skills Session

4/22/18 Pool Skills session

5/6/18 Pool Skills Session

6/9/18 Spring Picnic



# F.Y.I.

**Pool Skill Sessions:**

3/18

4/22

5/6

**Holiday Party will now be in January and will now be the: 'New Years Party'**

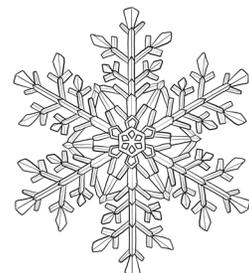
**Upper Nissequogue  
Spring Cleanup  
March 4—See Liz**

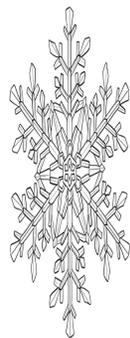
**Plum Island Tour  
coming this  
spring  
See Liz M**

***Upcoming Meetings:***

**February: Nesting Eagles on LI (Marry Lamont)**

**March: New/Old Inlet (Kaetlyn Jackson)**





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AND THAT'S PRETTY CLOSE

**DISCLAIMER:**  
The views expressed in this newsletter are strictly those of their respective authors. Information offered on any topic should not be assumed to be authoritative or complete.

**MEETINGS:** Members and non-members are always welcome at our monthly meetings. We meet the third Tuesday of each month. We meet from 7 to 9 PM at: Brightwaters Public Library 1 South Country Road Brightwaters, NY