

Blazing Paddles

SPRING CLEAN - LIZ MARCELLUS

Upper Nissequogue River Clean Up After a nice warm February...March turned cold and windy. But we got lucky once more on the day of the clean up we had low wind and temps in the low 50's . Considering that the days before and after were very cold with high winds...I'd say we had a perfect



day. The team this year was David Schwide (took the lead), Ray Clarkson (a loyal cleaner upper ..every year !), Karen Farrell and Rhonda Moziy (two first timers). Henry from Caleb Smith State Parks loaded our boats onto the back of his truck and helped us get our boats in the water. The water was swift but very low this year. As a matter of fact..lower than I've ever seen it. The little tributaries were just sand and mud. Therefore we spent quite a bit of time in the first half mile in and out of our boats walking . There were no new

trees down over the river so it was pretty much smooth paddling. One tricky bend in the river with a big tree across it always manages to create a challenge. It's got a few feet chainsawed out in the center to let us through. This spot is exactly why I recommend short boats ! We stopped by the spillway for a short lunch break and to search for otter scat. This has been the spot where we usually see it. Unfortunately, not this year. In case you're wondering what otter scat looks like...it's basically just a small pile of fish scales in a clear-ish film. If you're brave you can sniff it. It's kind of sweet smelling. We saw lots of wildlife on this trip. More than usual I would say. There were dozens of wood ducks. None would pose for my camera...though I will never give up trying ! King fishers, an osprey, and a group of about a dozen great blue herons in Phillips MillPond. Was that a rookery ? Not sure. We gathered up over 50 lbs of garbage ..some of it very, very old. All in all an interesting, fun day with a great group. !

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Message From the President – In Appreciation

The butterfly effect is the concept that small causes can have large effects - a butterfly flapping its wings in South America can affect the weather in Central Park.

Ernest J. Jochen died February 19, 2017 after a long illness. Ernie is often referred to as the godfather of kayaking here on Long Island because he taught and inspired thousands of people to take up the sport over a thirty-something year period. He began by giving lessons in the pond in front of his house in Mastic. Then he branched out to the pool at Brookhaven Lab, where he worked, before moving on to the pools at several LI colleges – Stony Brook University, Farmingdale College, and finally at Hofstra University.

I first met Ernie in the winter of 1982. The previous year I had been thinking of buying a small raft to ride the waves on the Lehigh River in Pennsylvania. But before I did that, I traveled out to White Haven and took a commercial rafting trip with Whitewater Challengers. That was the first time I saw a kayak up close. The guides paddled fast twelve and thirteen foot whitewater boats around our clumsy rafts, shouting out instructions while laughing at our feeble attempts to avoid the worst the Lehigh had to offer. At the lunch stop, one of the guides offered to show us an Eskimo roll for food. I was hooked. Forget the raft! I was going to look into this whitewater kayak thing.



I mentioned my interest to my best friend from high school who worked at Brookhaven Lab. He introduced me to Ernie who worked part time at its indoor pool as a lifeguard. When the pool was closed, he was able to open it and use it for kayak lessons. He charged me \$100 for a dozen private lessons, which sounds cheap today. But a dollar was worth a lot more back then. I was able to buy a custom-made Kevlar whitewater boat from Danny Broadhurst for \$650 then. Today, a good paddle costs almost as much. Even so, I knew I was getting a great deal. One-on-one instruction in a warm pool; it doesn't get much better than that!

The summer after my lessons, Ernie took me up to a Class I/II section of the Housatonic River in Connecticut for my first whitewater experience. He taught me how to ferry across a river, eddy-out behind rocks, and to never lean upstream. Back on the island, he took me out paddling on the creeks and bays near his house. All this for no charge. He never asked me for another dime.

It was on a local paddle that I met another one of his students who became a good friend and my whitewater paddling partner for the next five years. We paddled most of the Class III rivers in PA, CT, and NY during that period. But eventually I grew tired of the long drives on weekends and nervous about the bigger water that my buddy wanted to paddle. So I put my kayak away and took it out only occasionally to paddle the Peconic or Carmans River.

Fast forward to 1999 and someone introduced me to sea kayaking which could be practiced right here in my backyard and was a lot less dangerous. It wasn't long before I bought my first long boat, a seventeen and a half foot Perception Eclipse in Kevlar. Then another friend told me about the Nissequogue Canoe and Kayak Club which I was a member of back in the 80's when it was just known as the Nissequogue Canoe Club. I started attending meetings at the Half Hollow Hills Library, soon got involved with its Board as the Club Liaison, and the rest is history, as they say.

I don't know where I would be today or what I would be doing if I had not started kayaking thirty-five years ago, but I doubt my life would be as fulfilling or as happy. I was introduced to the woman who became my wife by a paddler who is now more like a brother than a friend to me. I've traveled up and down the East Coast and to Greece and Scotland with my kayaking friends. I go out to eat, see movies, bike, and hike with the people I've met through kayaking and the club. Most of my very best friends today are kayakers. Ernie was the butterfly that flapped its wings and changed my life.

Thank you Ernie and goodbye.

Now That I'm Here, Where Am I

Colin Mullen

"Now that I'm here, where am I" is a quote contributed to the "very" late singer of the 1960's and early 70's Janis Joplin. "Now that I'm here where am I" is also the navigational method I employed when I first started kayaking.

As a beginner kayaker, I would paddle across The Great South Bay to Fire Island and establish my location by simply asking someone on the beach "where am I". Once I knew my location, I would then paddle back across the bay in the general direction of my launch site. After re-crossing the bay, I would paddle parallel to the shore until I recognized a familiar landmark, which I then used to determine the direction and approximate distance to my original launch site. Even after I started utilizing a chart to plot my course and a compass to maintain my heading I still ended up employing Janis Joplin's "Now that I'm here, where am I" method to determining my location because I did not comprehend the affects the current and wind had on my kayaks lateral drift. "Now that I'm here, where am I" continued as my main navigational tool until I improved my understanding of currents and I learned to employ the techniques of "time made good" (TMG) and "ferry angles".

"Time made good" (TMG) is a simple mathematical formulae to determine how long it takes a kayaker to travel over a certain distance. The major factors in computing a paddler's TMG over distance is the paddler's average paddling speed, the currents direction, duration and its flow rate (speed). Without wind or current as a factor the average recreational kayaker travels at 3MPH so, their TMG under those conditions is 3MPH. Now, factor in paddling with or assisted by a 2MPH current then the paddler's TMG becomes 5MPH. Adversely, if the same kayaker paddles into or against a 2MPH current then their TMG would only be 1MPH, or worse, imagine them attempting to paddle into a 4MPH current, then their TMG would be negative 1MPH. Obviously it is always better to paddle with the current as opposed to against it. Additionally, it is less likely that anyone will be present on a beach at night or when its foggy so calculating the TMG to your destination is beneficial during times of low visibility to avoid arriving at a vacant beach and asking yourself "Now that I'm here," where the Hell am I?



The typical recreational kayaker does not need to know their precise paddling speed when planning a trip, for us the 3MPH rule is sufficient. However, it is essential to take into consideration the currents direction, speed, and incorporate the necessary navigational tools to compensate for the current.

If you ever paddled across even a moderate sized body of water while maintaining a compass heading but still landed left or right of your intended location it's the result of the directional push the wind and/or current applied on the side of your kayak causing your kayak to drift laterally. The easiest way to explain lateral drift is to think of it as if you are performing a sideslip/hanging draw stroke in your kayak. When performing a sideslip the kayak's bow remains pointed in the same direction while its forward momentum maintained but the kayak simultaneously moves diagonally through the water. Ferry Angles are the navigational techniques a kayaker utilizes to compensate for the lateral drift the wind/current is applying to the side of their kayak when he or she is crossing a body of water. Example: a kayaker would use a ferry angle when paddling across the Great South Bay to Fire Island because the current flows parallel to the shoreline striking the kayak on its side causing it to drift laterally while simultaneously the kayak is moving forward.

There are four methods of Ferry Angles and choosing the appropriate one comes down to the distance of the crossing, the pace of the paddler, the time of the tide cycle and the rate of the currents flow. Most ferry angles require the paddler to offset their kayak's heading by slightly paddling at an angle into the currents flow. For the first, point the kayaks bow at a landmark on the far shore above your destination and select a point on the shore you are leaving from aligning your stern with that landmark. With this imaginary line now set start paddling across keeping the kayaks bow pointed at the far shore landmark while periodically checking the stern. If your kayak drifts down current off this line, pick another bow landmark on the far shore further up from your destination. This is not a good method for extremely long crossings where the ability to see both landmarks might become difficult.



The second method requires lining up two landmarks on the distant shore and keeping them both inline as you paddle across. The obvious advantage with this method over the first is it does not require a paddler to look back over their shoulder.

The third method of using a ferry angle involves paddling parallel to the shoreline into the current before attempting the crossing. This technique takes advantage of back-eddies and the weaker current which flows along the shoreline. When utilizing this third method, paddle straight across or at an angle as the kayak sideslips to its destination.

The last method is a mathematical formula to determine the kayaks offset angle along the lines of the first two but it utilizes calculating a compass bearing. I have never been able to comprehend this mathematical formula, I think it requires a PHD in mathematics but then again I also have problems balancing my checkbook.

Ferry angle= current speed x 60 degrees

Paddling speed,

this formula supposedly works, unless the current's speed exceeds the kayaker's paddling speed (Good luck)

Regardless of which method is used, the kayak's offset angle needs to be sufficient so the current's lateral motion pushes your kayak to your destination or above it. It is always preferable to arrive above your intended destination instead of below it because it is easier to travel down with the current to your destination as opposed to arriving below it and having to paddle back into the current. When calculating your initial ferry angle take into consideration the current is strongest in mid-channel. Avoid using ferry angle when crossing major boat channels, where the object is to get across as quickly as possible.

There is another crossing method but I do not think it qualifies as a true ferry angle. This method involves paddling straight across allowing the currents ebb or flow to push the kayak sideways in one direction and then allowing the changing ebb or flow to push the kayak back onto its original heading.

I oversimplified the explanations and techniques of Time Made Good and Ferry Angels but my goal was simply to introduce them and to demonstrate how currents can have either a positive or a negative effect on a kayak's navigation and performance. The only way to learn these valuable navigational techniques and others is to experiment with them while paddling. However, regrettably regardless of all our planning and efforts sometimes our paddling trips go a little off course but luckily for those occasions there is still Janis's old tided and proven navigational method of paddling up to a beach and asking someone "Now that I'm here, where am I?"

CLIP AND SAVE

4/18—Club meeting 7pm
4/21— Earth Stock—SB University
4/23— Skills Session 2, St. Joseph's College
5/6— Walking Tour Greenwich Village
5/6—Great Swap Patterson, NY 9am
5/6—Dingy Shop Demo Day 10am
5/13— Jamaica Bay Queens
5/20— Connetquot River Paddle 10am
5/21—Huntington Town Safety Fair 10am
5/21—Skills session 3 12pm
6/10— Spring Picnic
6/10— Spring Picnic Skills w/ Chris and Colin
7/30— West Neck Beach Swim Escort
Stay tuned to more events on web
site.....



Greenwich Village Walking Tour

May 6th 11:15 to 3:15
Meeting place; Jackson Park
7th ave. South & Christopher
St.

Join other paddlers for an informative, interesting and fun filled day walking through his toric Greenwich Village

Barry's Events

West Neck Beach Swim Escort

July 30th 7am to 10am

Join a group of dedicated swimmers who compete to raise money for swim lessons at the Huntington Y for youngsters who could not otherwise afford lessons.

Swim Across America

August 5th 6:15 to 9:45

Last year this swim event raised \$700,000 for local cancer research, treatment and education. Some of the funds raised went to Cold Spring Harbor Lab, researchers at Memorial

SWIM
ACROSS AMERICA



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LOGIN CONTACT US FAQ'S ABOUT US HOME

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.



It's the latest thing in innovative canoe design. I call them Portage Pants!

MEETINGS: Members and nonmembers 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 11718