



The Yakker

Lowcountry Paddlers Club Newsletter

February 2009

FRIDAY, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 13, 14 AND 15

Visit the 27th Annual South East Wildlife Expo

Events and exhibits will take place all over Charleston!

Come watch Dock Dogs compete, celebrate artists and artisans from the Lowcountry and around the world, watch fly fishing, net casting, and retriever demonstrations, and learn about birds of prey and animals from the Busch Wildlife Sanctuary!

It's a great way to spend the day learning about and enhancing your appreciation of Nature's bounty surrounding us here in the Lowcountry.
(There's no club paddle that weekend...what else do you have to do?)

You can find a full calendar of events at www.sewe.com in order to best plan your day—there's a lot to see, and you won't want to miss a thing!

Kayak Rules of the Road

By Scott Szczepaniak

At the last Lowcountry Paddlers meeting, there was some discussion about kayaks and the Rules of the Road. There was some discussion over a recent Sea Kayaker magazine about the same subject. The following is my perspective on the subject...

The "Navigation Rules" are published by the United States Coast Guard. Rule 18 is entitled "Responsibilities Between Vessels." This rule is often referred to the "pecking order." Power-driven vessels shall give way to sailing vessels, sailing vessels shall keep out of the way of a vessel engaged in fishing (not hook and line recreational fishing but towing a net such as a South Carolina shrimp boat), etc. There is no mention of kayaks, canoes, or vessels under oars in Rule 18.

Rule 25 is entitled "Sailing Vessels Underway and Vessels under Oars." This is the closest that the Navigation Rules come in addressing kayaks. The Coast Guard Navigation Center has posted on-line a FAQ dealing with the issue:

"Where do Kayaks and Canoes fit into the Navigation Rules? Neither the International nor Inland Navigation Rules address "kayaks" or "canoes" per se, except in regards to "vessels under oars" in **Rule 25** regarding lights. One could infer that a "vessel under oars" should be treated as a "sailing vessel" since it is permitted to display the same lights as one, but, ultimately the issue of who "gives way" to whom would fall to what would be "required by the ordinary practice of seamen, or by the special circumstances of the case" (**Rule 2**)."

The experienced kayaker often interprets Rule 2 as the "Big and Ugly Rule" also known as the "Rule of Gross Tonnage." These unofficial, but eminently sensible rules mean that if it is bigger or uglier than you and your kayak, stay out of the way!

Some additional practical navigation rules for kayakers:

- ⚓ Avoid paddling in marked navigational channels.
- ⚓ When crossing channels, cross as a group, at right angles to the channel to minimize your time in the channel. Look both ways before crossing.
- ⚓ When navigating in windy tidal creeks, get quickly to one side or the other if you hear a boat engine. Better yet, try to keep to one side or the other at all times.
- ⚓ If you capsize in the path of a container ship in Charleston Harbor, it is proper nautical etiquette to pray. Especially when the ship sounds the danger signal – 5 or more short blasts on the horn.



I often ask the following question during discussions of kayakers' rights of way – "Do you want your tombstone to read 'but I had the right of way'?"

Scott is a former Coast Guardsman and commercial boat captain. He is the managing owner of Sea Kayak Carolina and an American Canoe Association Open Water Coastal Kayak Instructor. He considers himself an expert in Navigational Rules; what do you think? Email him at Scott@SeaKayakCarolina.com.

LOWCOUNTRY PADDLERS
MEETING MINUTES
January 19, 2009

President Todd Beach called the meeting to order and welcomed the 40 club members and guest who were in attendance.

Guest Speaker: Josh Hall is a member of the ACA (American Canoe Association) board of directors and is also the Charleston Country Parks' Outdoor Program Director.

Josh introduced Mark Hamlin, who is the new Outdoor Program Coordinator at the James Island County Park. After introducing Mark, Josh gave an overview of the ACA and how it relates to the Low Country Paddlers. Josh attends ACA meetings at the ACA headquarters in Fredericksburg, Virginia three times a year. The ACA is a member-based, not for profit organization. There are 52 million paddlers in the United States. Rafting and canoeing are tied for the most popular paddling sports but the highest growth rate is in kayaking, which has grown 272 percent since 2004.

The ACA is dedicated to paddle sport education, it supports good stewardship of paddling environments and sanctions recreational events. The ACA was established in 1880, has 50,000 members and represents 300 official clubs in the United States and abroad, and is part of the Outdoor Alliance. In 2007, the ACA sanctioned 1400 events or courses. The ACA has 4000 certified instructors who have taught an estimated 809,000 students. Paddle sports participation is at an all time high and there is a need to expand entry level educators.

The ACA has launched a new look for their website (ipaddleonline.com), which has an abundance of paddling-specific information and offers online courses. Check out their site for more information about the ACA and the benefits of membership.

Josh spoke briefly about the 2009 East Coast Kayak Festival. He said that the Park website for the festival is now live. We should be able to access course descriptions and instructor bios. Erin Guerrero is the volunteer coordinator again this year, and she should be sending out requests for volunteers to help during the festival. Once you have given her the hours you will be working she will enter you into the database, after which you can sign up for classes without having to pay for registration. You will still have to pay for your classes and any meals you sign up for.

Old Business: The minutes of the November 2008 meeting were accepted and approved as printed in the January 2009 newsletter.

Todd thanked everyone who helped at the oyster roast

Treasurer's Report: Michael Condon read the January Treasurer's report. Total receipts were \$4,158.76, total disbursements \$3,466.94 and the previous balance \$1,648.48. New check book balance \$2,340.30. The report was accepted and approved as read.

New Business:

Trip leaders report: Ralph Earhart announced that there will only be one trip scheduled for February. Bill Johnston will lead the Saturday, February 7th trip, which is a good trip for beginners because it is protected from wind and only 6 miles long. Meet at Wadboo landing (Herbert Dennis Landing) on highway 401. Meet at 8:30 and launch at 8:45. See LCP website for more details and listing of trips for the rest of the year. Rain date is Sunday, February 8th.

Announcements: Helon Everett announced that she will be holding another forward stroke clinic at the James Island County Park for those members who are interested in improving their paddling ability. There is no charge for the clinic and the time and date are to be determined. Please contact Helon for more details.

Door prizes were distributed and the meeting adjourned.

Sincerely,
Leslie Maple

First Ocean Paddle

by William Seabrook

I recently had one of those landmark days in my kayaking journey. I left the relative safety of the protected waterways and paddled out into the Atlantic Ocean. I will say, first off, I would have never attempted this without my paddling gurus Scott and Mary Ross at my side, but it was still a day that opened exciting new paddling horizons.

I will always love paddling the quieter waterways of this awesome area, with their unique wildlife and natural beauty. However, I find that when you leave the safety of land and paddle straight out into the Atlantic (on purpose) it is a surreal experience like no other.

The waves were not huge that day, but they were challenging to me. I was able to practice paddling through breaking surf, bracing, and even got to do a little surfing. I accomplished my first true combat roll after a wave knocked me over. I did have to swim once, when I missed my roll, but my winter paddling gear protected me while Scott helped with a rescue.

We finished the day with an ocean paddle back up the beach to our launch site. It's hard for me to describe the feeling of being half a mile offshore with nothing but good friends and my skills with a trusted sea kayak to keep me out of trouble, but suffice to say it was humbling and awe inspiring at the same time. I truly felt at one with my boat as on no other paddle I have done.

While this is not an activity I would recommend for beginners, once your paddling skills develop -- you should be comfortable bracing and have some knowledge of advanced rescue and paddling techniques -- it may well be some of the most fun you can have in a kayak. On top of sheer enjoyment, you will gain personal confidence in your abilities and an appreciation for the ocean's natural beauty and raw power.

(William is a LCP member, a Sea Kayak Carolina staff member and an aspiring ocean paddler.)

WHAT'S
THE
BEST
PICTURE
YOU CAN
TAKE AT
THIS
YEAR'S
SEWE?



Red-Shouldered Hawk, Birds of Prey Tent
SEWE, 2008

2009 LCP Club Officers

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|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| President | Todd Beach |
| Vice-President | Jim Miller |
| Secretary | Leslie Maple |
| Treasurer | Michael Condon |

CHECK OUT THESE UPCOMING EVENTS AT SEA KAYAK CAROLINA:

Thursday, February 5, 6:30 p.m. "Get tied up, or get tied down!"
Charlton DuRant, world explorer, sea kayak guide and coach, and all around neat guy, will present an interactive knot-tying lesson. His focus will be on knots needed for the kayaker. This is part of Sea Kayak Carolina's free winter lecture series. Call (843) 225-7969 to register.

Thursday, February 12, 6:30 p.m. "Introduction to Kayak Navigation"
Learn to interpret maps, charts, tide tables and other resources for planning your kayak adventure. \$20 - Call (843) 225-7969 to register.

Tuesday, March 3; Thursday, March 5, 7:00 p.m. "Kayak Roll Class"
Meets at the St. Andrews Rec. Center in West Ashley. The small class size and expert instructors will enhance your successes in learning to roll sea kayaks. Kayaks, skirts, paddles and gear provided. \$100, limited to six students - Call (843) 225-7969 to register.

Friday, Sunday, Monday, April 3, 5, 6 "ACA IDW/ICE"
This American Canoe Association (ACA) Coastal Kayak Instructor Development Workshop (IDW) and Instructor Certification Exam (ICE) will be offered for certification at Levels 1, 2 & 3. Scott Szczepaniak and Dale Williams will be the Instructor Trainers. Call (843) 225-7969 for more details, pricing and to register.



Lowcountry Paddlers from near and far, in canoes and kayaks of all shapes and sizes, at all skill levels, share the enjoyment found in getting together to appreciate all the abundant natural beauty that surrounds us in South Carolina.

Our meetings, usually held on the third Monday of each month, are informal, open to non-members and guests, and provide a great way to learn about the club and to meet our members. Meetings normally include a guest speaker from 7:00 to 8:00 followed by a short session of club business. Meetings generally conclude by 8:30 p.m.

LCP meetings are held at:
Providence Baptist Church
294 Seven Farms Drive
Daniel Island

**Join us at our next meeting:
February 16th at 7 p.m.**

Contact us by mail:
Lowcountry Paddlers
P.O. Box 13242
Charleston, S.C. 29422

or visit our website:
www.lowcountrypaddlers.net



2nd Spring Paddle Florida Event

We will again be beginning at the Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park in Live Oak, Florida, and finishing at beautiful Manatee Springs State Park in Chiefland. The event will be held during the week of March 19-26, 2009.

We believe we will reach our capacity (200 paddlers), so be sure to send in your registration form before our deadline of March 1st, 2009.

Please visit our website at www.paddleflorida.org for further details. Come join us for Springtime on the Suwannee and always remember to go with the flow!

Submit your contributions for the

February Yakker to Jenelle

by February 25th via email at

lowcountrypaddlers@yahoo.com

NOTE: Copyright law will be upheld, and no anonymous submissions will be considered.

Check Out These (and other!) Great Programs Offered by CCPRC

Canoeing at Caw Caw

Self Guided Canoe Tour

Fee: \$10/per canoe

Relax and enjoy a day paddling historic rice fields. Our knowledgeable staff will update you on wildlife activity and are the unique history of the site. A chaperone is required for participants ages 15 and under*. On-site registration only. For more information, call Caw Caw Interpretive Center at (843) 889-8898.

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| Course # 19609 | Sat | Feb 7 | 10:00am-4:00pm |
| Course # 19610 | Sun | Feb 8 | 10:00am-4:00pm |
| Course # 19611 | Sat | Feb 14 | 10:00am-4:00pm |
| Course # 19612 | Sun | Feb 15 | 10:00am-4:00pm |
| Course # 19613 | Sat | Feb 21 | 10:00am-4:00pm |
| Course # 19614 | Sun | Feb 22 | 10:00am-4:00pm |
| Course # 19615 | Sat | Feb 28 | 10:00am-4:00pm |

Heritage to Habitat Canoe Tour

Fee: \$12/\$10 CCR Discount

Enjoy an interpretive canoe trip and travel back to the age of rice as we paddle through rice fields and canals that now serve as one of the richest wildlife habitats in the Lowcountry.

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| Course # 19421 | Sat | Feb 14 | 1:00pm-3:30pm |
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Wambaw Creek Natural History Canoe Tour

Fee: \$66/\$55 CCR Discount

Paddle in the Francis Marion National Forest with our naturalist and discover the secrets of the mysterious and historic cypress swamps.

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| Course # 19442 | Sat | Feb 21 | 8:00am-5:00pm |
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Kayak Instructional Classes

Intro to Kayak Rolling Class

Fee: \$48/\$40 CCR Discount

The greatest self-rescue tool a kayaker has, rolling also sharpens other boating skills. Small pool classes ensure your comfort throughout the process.

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| Course # 19439 | MWF | Feb 9-13 | 7-9 pm (Mon and Wed) 6:30pm-8:30pm (Fri) |
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Kayak Navigation Clinic

Fee: \$15/\$12 CCR Discount

If you have a hard time staying found when boating, find your way to this classroom session which will explain dead reckoning and declination, differences between charts and maps, and rules of the nautical road.

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| Course # 19454 | Tue | Feb 17 | 6:00pm-8:00pm |
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Early Morning Bird Walks at Caw Caw

Fee: \$5/Free for Gold Pass Holders

Join us on one of our regular bird walk. Our walk through many distinct habitats will allow us to view and discuss a variety of birds, butterflies, and other organisms. Pre-registration is encouraged, but walk-in registrations at Caw Caw are welcome. Meets at: Caw Caw Interpretive Center

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|----------------|-----|--------|----------------|
| Course # 19584 | Sat | Feb 7 | 8:30am-12:00pm |
| Course # 19585 | Wed | Feb 11 | 8:30am-12:00pm |
| Course # 19586 | Sat | Feb 14 | 8:30am-12:00pm |
| Course # 19587 | Wed | Feb 18 | 8:30am-12:00pm |
| Course # 19588 | Sat | Feb 21 | 8:30am-12:00pm |
| Course # 19589 | Wed | Feb 25 | 8:30am-12:00pm |
| Course # 19590 | Sat | Feb 28 | 8:30am-12:00pm |

Seashells of Botany Bay Plantation

Fee: \$15/\$12 CCR Discount

Explore the front beach of SCDNR's newest Wildlife Management Area with a naturalist in search of a variety of shells. We'll learn all about the animals who made them and discover the importance of undisturbed beaches.

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| Course # 19460 | Sat | Feb 28 | 12:00pm-4:00pm |
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**Participants in most classes 15 years old and under must be accompanied by a registered chaperone.*



Pre-registration is required for all programs and some special events.
Please call (843) 795-4FUN or visit www.ccprc.com to register.

