



The Yakker

Lowcountry Paddlers Club Newsletter

June 2009

From The Prez

Well, here we are in the midst of Spring and looking ahead to the Summer months coming upon us in just a few short weeks. So far, the weather hasn't been too favorable for us paddlers, lots of wind & rain, but we have been able to make our club paddle trips as planned without canceling a single trip.

Spring has also brought us a new little paddler, Saoirse Roisin Kiernan (pronounced Seer-sha Row-sheen) who was born to Jenelle (our LCP Newsletter Editor) & Shawn Kiernan on May 7th, 2009. Congratulations, Shawn & Jenelle...we look forward to meeting her soon!



This Spring the LCP club also added a new event with the 1st 'LCP Photo Contest' which started on April 1st and ended on May 17th. On Monday, May 18th at the LCP club meeting, all the photos submitted for the contest were viewed and voted on by all those attending and the winners were announced at the closing of the meeting. Jim Miller took 1st place in all 3 categories of the contest (Scenic, Wildlife, and Paddling). Jim also ended up with the Grand Prize for 'Best Overall' picture winning a new waterproof, shock proof, dust proof, 10.1 MP digital camera. Congratulations, Jim, and thanks to all of you who competed in the contest. NOTE: We will have another LCP Photo Contest coming up here shortly for pictures taken in the upcoming Summer months. Get your cameras ready and keep an eye out on your e-mail & website for details soon to come!

Last week Ralph Earhart hosted the 'Trip Planning Committee' meeting at his house where we discussed and came up with some fantastic trips for the remaining year. The trips planned are now posted to our website www.lowcountrypaddlers.net on the Club Paddles page. We hope we have chosen some of your favorite places to paddle. We also added some new trips that LCP as a club has not done before. When you get a chance, please take a look at the upcoming paddles and set aside a few dates to join us on a few of your favorite trips.

Last but not least, I cannot believe that a whole year has gone by so fast! Would you believe that it is already time to elect new LCP club officers? At the LCP club meeting on Monday, June 15th, we will be accepting nominations for all the club officer positions (President, Vice President, Treasurer & Secretary). At the July meeting we will vote for those nominated and at the August meeting we will have the "change of command" take place. So here's the deal...if you would like to run for any of the positions by all means, nominate yourself. If you know somebody that you would like to elect for any of the positions, by all means, nominate them. There are a lot of worthy members in the club who would make excellent choices for nominations for all the positions and will make for a tough competition. Please start thinking now about the upcoming elections and let's keep the LCP afloat with good leadership!

Thanks and we'll be seeing you on the water!

Todd

Black Creek Kayak and Canoe Festival

Andy Anderson

While a bunch of you were frolicking in Sparkleberry Swamp on May 2nd, a few of us went a little further afield, and attended the Black Creek Kayak and Canoe Festival in Hartsville, SC, a lovely little town in the Pee Dee region of SC, a dozen or so miles west of Darlington. Black Creek is one of the most scenic and serene waterways I've ever paddled. This festival was billed as having not only the usual festival fare, but was to have assorted kayak races as well. Not wanting to embarrass the locals with our superior boating skills and kayaking prowess, we chose not to enter any of the races, and simply opted to observe and enjoy their efforts. (Maybe it was to avoid **our** embarrassment, I really can't recall now.) Anyway, some of our intrepid explorers camped at Lee State Park, conveniently located midway betwixt Bishopville and Hartsville. Carol and I (due to circumstances beyond my control) ended up *camping* in a Hartsville hotel. Regardless of where we bedded down for the night, we all came together Saturday morning and headed for the festival.

To start the day, we toured Kalmia Gardens and the Thomas Hart House. We strolled through their many botanical gardens and numerous pathways which led eventually to the boardwalk. This well constructed walkway meanders through a forested flood plane and offers periodic views of Black Creek. Surprisingly, we even happened upon a lone kayaker on the creek and stopped to chat. As it turned out, said kayaker was Randy, a member of Catawba Cruisers. After this enjoyable exchange, we headed over to the festival proper.

Upon arrival at Lawton Park we were surprised at the number of activities and at the number of boats available for everyone's use. Naturally Outdoors (a Florence kayaking /camping/biking/outfitter shop) and other vendors had brought over 60 watercraft for attendees to sample. As we approached the lake, the first contingent of racers was coming across the finish line, to the cheers of the assembled spectators. The youth sprint race was somewhat interesting. Due to a lack of youthful racers, only one boat was entered, with three young'uns in it. Not surprisingly, they placed first, second AND third. What a coup! After watching the races, we were overtaken with the munchies and headed over to a BBQ cook-off which was also taking place in Hartsville. We sampled some **very** good pig that day. Then, in keeping with our weekend's healthy eating habits, we were off to Mac's Pride for ice cream and fresh strawberries. YUMMY!

With full bellies, it was back to the festival. We just drifted through the crowds and events for the next couple of hours, taking in all of the action. Michael even took out a sailing kayak for a test drive. I think the boat's owner became a bit distressed when he didn't come back for the better part of an hour. We were all relieved when he did return the guy's boat. Then Den Latham (race organizer and surf kayaker) took us for a tour of the Center Theater, which he manages. The majestic old theater along with the arts building and museum, which he also manages, are the cultural centerpieces of this community. As luck would have it, a dress rehearsal for that evening's performance was in progress during our tour.

We headed back to Lee State Park for some much need rehydration and to reflect upon the day. Michael built us a nice fire so that we could relax and savor the evening. It was encouraging to see representation from Catawba Cruisers, Palmetto Paddlers and Lowcountry Paddlers all attending this event. But it was more encouraging that this event even came to fruition. I know that Den, Jim from the Darlington County tourism board, the gang from Naturally Outdoors, the City of Hartsville and many, many others worked tirelessly to make it happen. For an inaugural offering, it was top notch. The word on the street is they are already planning next year and hope to make it even better. I realize it's a pretty long sloop for just about everyone to drive to Hartsville...from just about anywhere, but it is well worth your time to check it out.



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:
June 15th.

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

or visit our website:
www.lowcountrypaddlers.net



THANK YOU, LCP
for the flowers you sent to us to
welcome Saoirse to the world.
Shawn and Genelle Kiernan

Forty Days...

(Ponderings from Bill Guiffre)

And Forty Nights. By the time you read this, it will have been forty days and forty nights. 960 hours. At an average of 3.5 mph, that is 274 miles. That would be 33 circumnavigations of Sullivan's Island. At six dolphin sightings per trip that would be 198 dolphins, a sea turtle, and a wayward alligator for good measure, 990 Peanut M & M's, 72 of Michele's delicious door-stop cookies, and 132 bites of scrumptious home baked brownies somebody usually brings along.

Forty days (and forty nights) since my last kayak paddle.

For many of us, forty days (and forty nights) between paddles is not uncommon. There are other interests and obligations that get in the way. Many of us prefer to paddle only when it is sunny and warm out. I was like that until recently — partly because I didn't have the proper accessories for winter paddling (look for an article on that subject this coming fall).

But I caught the paddling virus in pandemic proportions last year and have been paddling what seems like at least once per week since. I really doubt I missed two weekends more than once the whole time — even through the winter. It is my sole source of stress relief although there are times when I am challenging myself where kayaking can add stress — usually at those time I look to you paddling next to me, see that you don't look bothered by the pace, the wind, the chop, the waves, the oncoming tide, and I settle down.

I spend my weekdays working in Charlotte and so look forward to coming home on the weekend. For the past forty days (and forty nights), I needed to be in Charlotte, so I tried my best to occupy my weekends with an alternative — hiking. Now there are some nice places to hike in and around Charlotte. But it's just not the same.

The author looking slightly lost for the last 40 days...



Even while I am hiking, I am daydreaming of all the wonderful paddling trips we've done:

It started on New Years Day with a Polar Bear Paddle at Folly Beach followed a few days later by an adventure in balmy (50's) weather to Ion Swamp (where no paddler has gone before). Our club paddles started with a venture in the ACE Basin at Horseshoe Creek. We explored the upper reaches of Wadboo Creek on a frosty Saturday morning. We paddled the middle of the Wando River from Paradise Island past the Wando Terminal at 6 mph to Remley's Point.

We saw the first alligators of the year on the Combahee River on March 21. And saw my first alligator in the ocean at the north end of Bull Island (ok, technically he was 100 feet into the bay from the ocean). That was after we saw a huge mama sea turtle in Bulls Bay coming home to nest. On Easter weekend, five of us ventured out in never-ending wind (that was always blowing straight at us no matter how much the creeks twisted and turned) in the marshes and oyster bed areas off the Folly River. Add to that a show and go trip that got me out in the ocean for the very first time (you know that place with waves and winds and more waves and more wind and no land on one side?). And followed that by actually going back out into the ocean to circumnavigate Sullivan's Island — where I observed just how quick those cargo ships go from being 'way out there' to 'OMG they are huge' beside you in the harbor. Add a few trips with the Charleston meet-up group to Kiawah and Deveaux Bank. Then of course was another fantastic kayak festival. I ended up April (and oyster season) with the first (but not last) "Paddle Meets Eats" show-n-go to Bowens Island Restaurant. And that was just the first four months of the year. There would have been a few other paddles if the weather had cooperated a bit.

So instead I sat in Charlotte during May. I spent a lot of hours examining maps and imagery and charts to come up with trip suggestions for the trip planning committee. Those we don't do as club trips can become show-n-go's for off days. I spent time downloading data for my GPS and printing maps for the June trips. But I missed Sparkleberry and Wee Tee Swamps, Andy Anderson's Spider Lilly trip at Landsford Canal, Otter Island, and Helon Everett's show-n-go circumnavigating Morris Island. How awesome (and challenging) a trip that would have been for me (and was for you who paddled it).

The Givhans Ferry State Park/Edisto River weekend will be my first opportunity in forty days (and forty nights) to get out in a kayak again. Forty days (and forty nights) is way too long to go without any...kayaking. It will all come back to me. Let's see...kayak, paddle, whistle, PFD, Peanut M&M's...everything else is optional.

Oh, and the water is sure to be plenty warm for the start of water blaster season...



(The author looking more at home on the water being water-blasted by club member Michele Powell.)

LOW COUNTRY PADDLERS
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 18, 2009

President Todd Beach called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm and welcomed the 37 club members and 7 guests who were in attendance. Todd also mentioned that the judging of the photographs for the contest would begin right after the business portion of the meeting was concluded. Photographs to be judged were labeled according to category and placed on a table across the back of the sanctuary. Ballots were handed out after the business meeting.

Guest Speaker: Debbie Hill, of Keeper of the Wild, a non-profit organization that serves all of lower South Carolina. Keeper of the Wild rescues and rehabilitates injured and abandoned wildlife. The organization receives no government funding and is all volunteer run, and always in need of more volunteers. Volunteers don't have to be able to care for animals. There are lots of ways to volunteer: the organization needs help with fundraising and website management, in addition to direct care and feeding of animals.

Debbie said she grew up with a love for wildlife. As a teacher, she passes her passion for wildlife on to her students. She teaches that all of life on earth is interdependent. As an example, the sun gives us energy that all living things need. Plants absorb the sun's energy and herbivores take energy from the plants they eat. Debbie went on to explain that this food chain is the web of life, that all things are interconnected, and that all living things have a purpose, making it vital to keep things in balance.

Debbie introduced us to Matilda, a 27-year-old Eastern Box Turtle. Matilda has been a pet her whole life and was given to Keeper of the Wild when the owner could no longer care for her. Since the turtle can not be returned to the wild she is used in teaching programs. Eastern Box Turtles are an endangered species. They are slow to mature and breed but they can live to 130 years old. According to Debbie, box turtles have lost much of their habitat. We must save their habitat if we want to save the species, she said. Keeper of the Wild keeps and cares for all of the animals they receive that can no longer survive in the wild

Debbie also brought a tiny fawn that she called Molly, which had been abandoned. The fawn was one of seven babies that Keeper of the Wild is caring for this spring. The fawns will be returned to the wild as a group when they reach about six months of age. Debbie cautioned us to leave fawns where we find them because they probably haven't been abandoned. Does hide their babies and go off to feed but they always come back. Only assume the mother was killed or has abandoned the fawn if the fawn has been left over night and begins calling out for the mother. Then call Keeper of the Wild to rescue the fawn. Do not try to feed it yourself, Debbie said. Leave it where you found it unless it is in danger. If you see any wild animal, observe it, be still and silent. Never feed a wild animal. If it is injured, observe it, isolate it, and call Keeper of the Wild. Never keep a wild animal as a pet. Debbie reminded everyone to please keep their domestic animals' shots up-to-date. Distemper is rampant in raccoons, she said.

Todd thanked Debbie for her presentation and said the Lowcountry Paddlers Club has made a \$ 50.00 donation to Keeper of the Wild. Members made personal donations into a faux raccoon cap that was passed around. Debbie thanked everyone for their donations of towels, crates, blankets and money. For more information and for phone numbers to call go to their website: www.keeperofthewild.org

Old Business: Todd asked for approval of the April 20, 2009 minutes. They were accepted and approved as printed in the May newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: Michael Condon gave the Treasurer's report and it was accepted and approved as read.

Bank Balance	\$2446.53
Receipts	804.75
Disbursements	927.15
New Balance	2,324.13

New Business: Ralph Earhart announced that the Trips Committee had planned all the trips for the club for the next 6 months. The results will be posted on the website.

June 5th -7th Givhans Ferry State Park campout

June 6th Beginner paddle (*) Givhans to Long Creek. Meet at Givhans at 8:30 for shuttle, launch at 9:00 am. This is an 11 mile paddle.

June 6th Intermediate paddle (**) Good Hope to Martins Ferry. Meet at Hwy 17A and 61 tackle shop, drive to Good Hope and drop off boats and shuttle to Martins Ferry. This is a 12 mile paddle.

June 14th Intermediate paddle (**) Brickyard landing to Ashepoo and Fee Farm Creek. Meet at the BP station in Jacksonboro at 8:30. Low tide at Brickyard landing will be at 9:00 am, just in time for our launch.

Be sure to check out the Low Country Paddler's website for more paddle information. Lowcountrypaddler.net

Announcements: Due to the length of time it took to tally the votes, the winners of the LCP Photography Contest will be posted on the website, and Todd will send out an email announcing the winners.

Respectfully submitted,
Lestie Maple

Spider Lily Paddle

by Andy Anderson

As May rolled around, we again journeyed north to experience the lovely Rocky Shoals Spider Lilies (*Hymenocallis Coronaria*) which grow in profusion among the shoals of the Catawba River near Landsford Canal State Park. Classified as 'rare and endangered' this is one of the largest concentrations of Rocky Shoals Spider Lilies to be found anywhere. The bloom of these lovely flowers lasts one day, replaced by another bloom the following day. When the day of the expedition dawned, we hoped to be greeted by a sea of lovely white blossoms, not just an expanse of stubby green stalks. We planned to launch from Landsford Canal State Park, paddle upriver, swing around a mid-river island, then shoot downstream to the spider lilies to terminate the adventure at the Highway 9 bridge, approximately nine miles. When water levels are low, as they were last year, it can be extremely unnerving and tedious to be continually ricocheting off submerged rocks and having to get lever boats from atop the many shoals every few feet for a couple of miles, and tends to temper any enthusiasm for paddling amongst the shoals. When water levels are high, on the other hand, Class II & III rapids can crop up to treat paddlers traversing those same shoals. Everyone hoped for a happy medium betwixt these two extremes...

Unfortunately, during the run-up to this trip I developed a medical issue which precluded my active participation in the downriver segment of this adventure. (That's polite speak for – I was a hurtin' puppy and I didn't want DNR having to rescue me off the Catawba!) However, Carol immediately stepped forward, took charge of the planning, and lead this expedition in my stead. I still wanted to participate, so I took on the duties of shuttle bunny.

During the afternoon and evening of May 15th our merry paddlers, some from as far away as Charlotte and Columbia, began converging on Chester State Park, where we camped before embarking on our paddle. Folks set about pitching their tents and leveling their motor homes. Don and Leslie brought their new pop-up on its maiden voyage. Some of us even opted for the more structured comforts of local hotels. Regardless of our chosen nocturnal accommodations, an outstanding base of operations was quickly established. Our base camp included views of the lovely 160-acre lake known as Lake Chester, its shores mere feet from the campsites.

We had a nice campfire going Friday evening until a passing shower drove us into our respective homes for the rest of the night. Saturday morning dawned overcast with some light fog blanketing the area. Undeterred, we set off for Landsford Canal. All 14 adventurous souls offloaded boats and related gear for their day on the river. Water levels and flow looked to be much improved over last year. The shuttle was run and then Carol did her prelaunch briefing. The 13 paddlers slid (not so) gracefully into their nimble crafts—the bank was very steep and slick! I will confess to feeling more than a little melancholy as everyone headed their boats upriver to begin their adventure. However, this turn of events gave me the opportunity to explore Landsford Canal, something I'd never taken the time to do before. Anyway, as they began their journey, I wandered around the park for a while and then headed to the observation deck. My hope was that I might be able to capture photos of them as they passed by this point while headed down river. Luckily, my little camera did better than expected at reaching out and finding them amongst the lilies.

For an *on-water perspective* of the day's events, Carol reports:

In my new role as trip leader, I had gathered and attached Andy's accoutrements to my PFD: waterproof camera, walkie-talkie, and GPS. Now, I looked the part and hopefully no one would realize I am a complete "un-techy" who has great difficulty even managing a cell phone. Attempting to show great confidence, I snapped my first on-water pictures and headed upstream to lead the group around the island. As I rounded the corner, the channel seemed much smaller than I remembered. Fortunately, seeing a couple of our paddlers heading right toward me through a short cut caused me to realize I hadn't quite rounded the island yet! Thinking it was probably not good leadership to guide the group right back to our launching point, I quickly altered course with a quick "Sorry, folks!" Now back on track, we rounded the island and off we went into the rapids. There were squeals of delight and a few less enthusiastic utterances heard.

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Spider Lilies
(continued from previous page)

Some of us even got an opportunity to pirouette on the rocks, while others demonstrated their skills by going through the rapids backwards. A few ended up walking their boats through the shallows when they ran out of navigable water. Michael Raines even got to use his ingenious tomato stake ski poles to pry his boat off the rocks. We were having a great time, but had yet to see a single lily. Then suddenly, we smelled them, and soon they appeared in the distance – a huge expanse of flowers sitting in the middle of the river – what a sight! As we approached, they seemed to spread out a bit and appeared like individual bouquets set out for us to paddle through. They were spectacular! After our lovely interlude in the lilies, we were ready for lunch and searched for the huge flat rock described by the ranger. Alas, it remained elusive, so we traveled through few more rapids and then on to the flat water part of our trip. The weather was beautiful: a light breeze, balmy temperatures, blue skies and puffy white clouds – the perfect paddling day – until huge black clouds began to form behind us. We quickly agreed to pass on lunch and paddle our hearts out to beat the storm. The crack of lightning behind us spurred us on to paddle faster. Finally, the take-out bridge came into view, and we redoubled our efforts. When we finally landed, Andy was there with his great smile and helping hands. We were tired; we were hungry, but it had been a great paddle.



Now, back to my shore-based perspective of the report:

My responsibility as shuttle bunny was to meet up with them at the Highway 9 bridge. As ominous black clouds began to form, I paced the boats ramp. Said clouds were accompanied by ever increasing volume of thunder and lightening. Then, around the bend of the river I saw Caren and Carol, paddling for all they were worth. Hot on their heels were the rest of the group **and** the approaching storm. Most quickly made it to the shelter of the bridge and were able to stay out of the rain which followed.

Back in camp an impromptu ceremony was put together by Sally and Michael to recognize Carol for her efforts as a first time trip leader. All felt she had done a great job of it. They then presented me with a Marine guardian care bear to look after me during my travels. This turned out to be an outstanding weekend, even though I never dipped a paddle. I owe that to the great folks who came together and made it all happen and I thank them for an adventure I'll long remember.

LCP Club Officers

President

Todd Beach

Vice-President

Jim Miller

Secretary

Leslie Maple

Treasurer

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Kayak Instruction

Introduction 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. Participants ages 13-15 can register for this course, but must be accompanied by an adult chaperone. Pre-registration required.

Course # 20497 Mon, Wed, Fri Jun 1-5 6:30pm-8:30pm

Introduction to Kayaking

Fee: \$36/\$30 CCR Discount

Let our ACA certified instructors help you learn a new skill comfortably and enjoyably. Using a variety of boats, this entry-level course teaches you basic strokes and skills to have fun on the water! Pre-registration required.

Course # 20543 Sun Jun 7 9:00am-1:00pm

ACA Essentials of Kayak Touring

Fee: \$54/\$45 CCR Discount

This course is designed to teach beginners to paddle sea kayaks safely and enjoyably on lakes, calm protected ocean environments, and other flatwater settings. Boats, equipment, safety, and basic strokes and rescues will be covered. Pre-registration required.

Course # 20558 Sat Jun 13 9:00am-4:00pm

ACA Strokes & Maneuvers Refinement

Fee: \$54/\$45 CCR Discount

Paddling hard and getting nowhere in your kayak? It's time to perfect your technique! Using on-water practice, our ACA certified instructors will assist you in performing your strokes and maneuvers with efficiency, fluidity, and control. Pre-registration required.

Course # 20550 Sun Jun 14 9:00am-4:00pm

Kayak Quickstart

Fee: \$12/\$10 CCR Discount

Come learn about the fun-filled sport of kayaking. During this 2-hour hands-on informal program, our experienced instructors will show you how you can safely enjoy kayaking on protected waters. Pre-registration required.

Course # 20545 Tue Jun 16 6:00pm-8:00pm

ACA Fundamentals of Coastal Kayaking

Fee: \$108/\$90 CCR Discount

ACA certified instructors will cover basic strokes and maneuvers, rescues, navigation, wind, waves, tides, and currents. After an evening of classroom instruction and a day on the water practicing strokes and rescues, you'll plan a short trip. Pre-registration required.

Course # 20541 Thu, Sat-Sun Jun 25-28 7:00pm-9:00pm (Thu)
9:00am-5:00pm (Sat & Sun)

Local Paddling Tours

Folly River Float

Fee: \$36/\$30 CCR Discount

Course # 20520 Thu Jun 4 5:30pm-8:30pm

Botany Bay Sea Kayak Tour

Fee: \$54/\$45 CCR Discount

Course # 20508 Sat Jun 6 9:00am-5:00pm

Heritage to Habitat Canoe Tour

Fee: \$15/\$12 CCR Discount

Course # 20528 Sat Jun 13 9:00am-11:30am

Folly to Kiawah Kayak & Natural History Tour

Fee: \$66/\$55 CCR Discount

Course # 20509 Sat Jun 20 9:00am-5:00pm

Morris Island Lighthouse Kayak Tour

Fee: \$54/\$45 CCR Discount

Course # 20505 Sun Jun 21 9:00am-5:00pm

Caw Caw Sunset/Moonrise Paddle

Fee: \$18/\$15 CCR Discount

Course # 20529 Sat Jun 6 6:30pm-9:00pm



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

