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Spring 2019

The KCCNY Newsletter

The Kayak and Canoe Club of NY is one of the oldest and largest whitewater clubs in the East. KCCNY is a membership-based group open to all of those interested in whitewater paddling and joining paddling trips. There are so many perks of being a part of this club. There are people willing to teach others, trips that go out year-round, pool sessions to learn and improve skills -- and more.

Spring Paddling Has Begun!

Join the KCCNY

Are you a whitewater boater but need a network or want to explore how to become a whitewater boater in a club setting? Joining the KCCNY is easy! Go to <http://kccny.com> head to 'member resources' and click into 'new membership sign up online'. The KCCNY is a group of vibrant individuals of all ages and locations with one thing in common...we love whitewater boating!

Why join the KCCNY? For an affordable membership fee, we coordinate and plan trips to different rivers. This can be dependent on dam or timed releases or just when a river is flowing. Pool sessions are held in the winter/early spring months in Union, NJ. This is to work on learning to roll a kayak, paddling techniques, keep up on skills, and learn ones. Boats are available for learning purposes as needed. People are eager to teach and help others. You become part of a community of people. Opportunities to paddle become more accessible because of this. Leadership positions are also available by coordinating whitewater trips.

New & Goods

What's going on in our whitewater community. Trips, releases, events, etc.

Learn to Kayak Weekend 6/8-9/2019

KCCNY is offering a two - day beginner whitewater kayak class on Saturday, June 8th and Sunday, June 9th. This course is for "first-timers" and other beginners who want to dust off their skills after a long winter! Our instructors are ACA certified and are excited to meet you! Saturday is spent learning and practicing wet exits, paddling techniques, strokes, and Eskimo rolls. On Sunday you get to try out your newly acquired/honed skills on an easy Class I-II stretch of the Lehigh River, at Glen Onoko.

The weekend fee is \$90 - this fee covers ACA event registration and insurance (required by ACA), instruction, and a simple lunch both days. There will be an additional fee (\$30) if you do not bring your own equipment (whitewater kayak with flotation, paddle, helmet, skirt, life jacket required) and want to borrow ours.

You are responsible for finding your own accommodations. Local motels include the Mahoning Inn (610)377-1600, Country Inn & Suites (610) 379-5066, Hampton Inn (610) 377-3400. Local camping includes the Mauch Chunk Lake Park (570)325-3669, the Jim Thorpe Camping Resort (570) 325-2644 and the Hickory Run State Park (888)727-2757.

Contact Jessica Osedach, e-mail: josedach@gmail.com, phone: (718) 490-4496 if you are interested. Indicate whether or not you will require equipment, along with your phone number and e-mail address.

KCCNY membership is not required, but we do encourage you to join if you like the sport and intend to continue paddling. To secure your reservation send the appropriate fee (\$90 or \$120 if you need equipment) as a check made out to KCCNY, to Jessica Osedach, 444 Jersey Ave Apt 3, Jersey City, NJ 07302.

Class size is limited to 10 students and always sells out. Sign up early!

Become a Trip Coordinator – Its easy and there's money and security in it for you!

KCCNY has significant funds available for campground reservations and pre and post trip food and drink. For a few dollars per person just send the receipts to our treasurer. For more significant outlays please discuss with VP/activities coordinator Andy Frey.

By coordinating a trip you not only get to paddle what you want to paddle when you want to paddle it, but you're also insured.

As esteemed past president Ken Voytac explains it: My non lawyer understanding of the glorious litigious world of today.

Ken goes boating with his friends, flips in his favorite class V rapid and comes up with a separated shoulder. Everybody is there to help, and he ends up with expensive reconstructive surgery. Most of that hospital bill is footed by his Couch Potato Insurance Company. They look to limit their expenditures and to recover what they do spend from Ken's paddling buddies! Sure, those folks are all successful, have their own assets and insurance except most standard insurance has an exclusion for all "water related activities". Those friends are left high and dry with no insurance to go up against that mammoth insurance company and prove that they had nothing to do with that injury. The ACA comes to our rescue with liability insurance that is applicable to our sport. All we need do is be a member of the ACA sanctioned whitewater club (KCCNY) and a member of the ACA. When we are on a club sanctioned trip (one that is on the trip schedule) we benefit from that water activity specific liability insurance. All of the procedures we were about to review could be found on the club website under the activities. In order to post a trip, trip coordinators should contact either Ken Voytac (kvoytac@bellatlantic.net), Andy Frey (andrewfrey57@yahoo.com) or Jack Moskowitz (jackmos@optonline.net) no later than the Wednesday before the trip date in order to register it with our club insurance through the American Canoe Association (ACA). Trips can still be posted later than the prior Wednesday but the trip coordinator would have to notify the ACA directly by emailing insurance@americancanoe.org

It is the policy of KCCNY to post coordinator contact information on the website trip schedule. Trip meeting times or places are not posted as participants are to contact the coordinator directly for that information. This allows the coordinator to screen potential participants prior to arrival at the river. The coordinator then has the option to deny participation to a paddler that he or she determines does not have a sufficient skill level to safely paddle the river.

Once at the river, the coordinator determines that all participants have arrived, makes sure that all have active waivers, gets signed waivers, collects a \$5 insurance fee from any ACA non-members and sets up the shuttle. The trip coordinator has no responsibility to lead a trip on the river unless he or she wishes to do so. All participating should be capable of paddling that particular river without input from a leader unless someone has volunteered to perform that duty.

Upon completion of the trip, the coordinator should forward any waivers and insurance fees collected to our treasurer and send an e-mail to insurance@americancanoe.org stating the club name, date and river paddled and that there were no incidents.

All members were encouraged to coordinate trips, whether on class I water or class V. Without trip coordinators there is really not a reason for our club to exist.

The KCCNY held a trip coordinator meeting on Sunday March 31st, immediately following the pool session at the Boys and Girls Club in Union, NJ.

Whitewater Festivals

Deerfield River Festival, North Central Mass, Class 1-4 Fri-Sun June 28-30

A classic northeast paddling extravaganza! The KCCNY has a prime group campsite for the entire festival. Features: class 1 and flatter, class 2 (Fife Brook), class 3 (Zoar Gap) and the class 4 Dryway. Free demo boats, paddles and free skills clinics thru the great folks at Zoar Outdoors KCCNY will be doing a variety of trips throughout the weekend. For the non-paddler it's a beautiful area with biking, hiking... Camping \$15 pp for the weekend and we have the site Thursday-Monday. You can register for camping on the KCCNY website. Hope to see you out there! To see the Dryway and Fife's complete release schedule please visit: <https://www.zoaroutdoor.com/schedule.htm>

WestFest, West River, South Central Vt. Sat-Sun September 21-22

The West River is a beautiful river with lots of play. It is a small festival celebrating whitewater paddling, but is family friendly and can include other activities such as hiking, bike riding and more. Paid shuttle is available and recommended, it costs \$25. The KCCNY has great camping options for this event however it is limited. We have 15 reserved sites by the shuttle that cost \$15/per person. The West River is a 3 mile mostly class 2 run (with one class 3 though the run has some harder lines).

Mongaup Release Schedule

Please contact us if you are interested

The Mongaup is a great way to jump into coordinating trips as it is beginner friendly yet exciting and in close proximity to several areas making it the perfect day trip

5/25/2019	Saturday	11:00 - 15:00	1 Barrel
6/9/2019	Sunday	11:00 - 15:00	1 Barrel
6/22/2019	Saturday	11:00 - 15:00	2 Barrel
7/7/2019	Sunday	11:00 - 15:00	1 Barrel
7/20/2019	Saturday	11:00 - 15:00	2 Barrel
8/4/2019	Sunday	11:00 - 15:00	1 Barrel
8/17/2019	Saturday	11:00 - 15:00	2 Barrel
9/1/2019	Sunday	11:00 - 15:00	1 Barrel
9/14/2019	Saturday	11:00 - 15:00	2 Barrel
9/29/2019	Sunday	11:00 - 15:00	1 Barrel
10/12/2019	Saturday	11:00 - 15:00	2 Barrel
10/27/2019	Sunday	11:00 - 15:00	1 Barrel

KCCNY Summer BBQ Sunday Aug 17th

Where: The take-out of the Mongaup, We'll have class 2+ Mongaup and class 1+ beginner whitewater on the Delaware followed by club sponsored burgers and beverages, and pot luck salads and desserts. Even non paddlers can hang out or watch the fun.

How to Sign Up for a Trip

Upcoming trips are on the KCCNY website. If you have not done a trip before or if our volunteer organization has failed to properly file your wavier, you'll need to sign an ACA waiver which is downloaded from member resources/forms on our website. Contact the coordinator and if you don't know them give them an honest summary of your skills and equipment so they know you are up for the river or, if you are unsure let them know so they can decide...and their decision may depend as much on their skills and the skills of other group members as yours.

Lehigh River Release Dates

Please contact any board member at <http://kccny.com/0/Executiveboard/Executiveboard.aspx> (under member recourses>executive board) or use the contact us link in the footer of our website if you're interested in coordinating. It is a great way to jump into a leadership position!

May: 18, 25, 26/ June: 8,9, 22, 23/ July 6, 7, 20, 21, 27, 28/ Aug: 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 24*, 25*, 31*/ Sept: 1*/ Oct: TBA

Topic of Discussion

You are never too old!

Jo-Ann Durdock

'How I Got Involved in Whitewater'

You are never too old to begin. I was 59 years and 11 months old when I took my first real whitewater run down Fife Brook. I spent most of the day upside down, but I became queen of the t-rescue.

I had done some flat water boating before this, but once I hit moving water, I was hooked. It was a "wow" moment.

Something that is always fascinating is how folks get into whitewater boating. It is such a niche sport, a small community and we all have our unique reasons for why and how we do what we do.

It took me forever to learn to roll.--16 pool sessions, 2 hours each. And I finally came up! So one August 26(I think) 2007, I got into a blue 2Fun on Fife and immediately flipped over in current and swam. The first of many. I got back in the boat and continued.

Twelve years later I am VERY passionate about kayaking and feel that not only do I have a lot to learn, but also I am not too old to still learn. My enthusiasm has taken me on many grand trips. I have been to Chile and Costa Rica to boat, have done the Main Salmon, the Middle Fork Salmon and 100 miles on the Grand Canyon. Adventure continues to await me. To infinity and beyond!!!

Our fellow members share their story.

Dominique's Story

Dominique Melagrano

The thrill of an active lifestyle slipped away from me after a long 2 year stint recovering from multiple knee surgeries due to a torn ACL and meniscus. Spring of 2016, healed as much as I would ever be, there was no longer any reason why I couldn't get moving again. A hazy, warm spring morning led me to a sporting goods store where I received a call that would change my life forever. The voice on the other end of the line asked me if I wanted to come up to a popular stretch of whitewater called the "Dryway" for a weekend of kayaking and camping. "Why not!" I thought to myself while staring at a Ripcurl wetsuit on sale in my exact size. This must be a good sign. I packed up the little bit of gear I was able to piece together and headed off on an adventure that would move me forever towards a lifelong outlet called whitewater kayaking.

The morning of the run I had no idea what I was in for. "Oh, you got this! There are 2 rapids that are a little more advanced in the end but you will be ok" they said. I pulled on my brand new wetsuit, blew up my vessel (a deluxe sea eagle 370), popped on my "skateboarding" helmet, and walked down to the put in. The dam blared sirens warning the release of water that would turn the Dryway into something far different than the eye could see prior to the release. I was intimidated, but the saying "ignorance is bliss" kept me from turning around and walking away. My tandem partner at the time seemed confident, and he was certainly strong. What did I have to lose? "Get in the front" I said. "You will be the power, I will steer us." Surely those few times kayaking on the lake gave me the experience needed to navigate this river. I managed to squeak out "I'm ready", and we proceeded down river through the first rapid, "factory rapid."

We felt great. The boat was forgiving against the rocks we hit, and beginners luck was certainly on our side. Spilt hair, Dunbar, Little Tooth, no problem! This is fun! Then came the Dragons tooth. Ok, a little bigger and faster moving than the others, but we were successful thus far and in our minds there was no reason why we wouldn't be successful here.

We spun around and entered backwards river left. At least we were on the right side avoiding the big hole, right? Wrong. We didn't even need to hit rodeo hole to get bucked out of our boat, marking my 1st whitewater swim. "Hold onto your paddle"...nope! Gone. Downstream. Never to be found again. My head was bobbing up and down through the water, and I was taking breaths of air whenever possible. Growing up as a competitive swimmer meant nothing in this moment. "Let me at least be the hero and retrieve the boat" I think to myself while floating towards the "Labyrinth." My sister cries from the shore "swim into the EDDY!!!" What's an eddy? Oh dear, swim to shore!! My body bounces off a humongous rock center right, and my instincts finally kick in telling me what to do. Just in the nick of time I get there before swimming the final rapid.

Out of breath and pale as a ghost I flop myself onto a dry rock like a seal. My adrenaline was pumping out of my wetsuit, and after I collected myself I thought "woah", then "COOL!" I fortunately caught a ride through the final rapid from a supportive new river friend with room in their blowup, and that was when I experienced my first time bliss of the after run takeout.

Here I am today, 3 years later, a hard boater for almost 2 years & more passionate than ever. New relationships have formed from the immense amount of support on and off the river, and the meaning of "fun" has been leveled up to the heavens.

Thank you, dear caller, in the Spring of 2016.

Lessons from Whitewater Paddling

Neil S. Grossman, Ph.D.

I was paddling "Numbers" a class-IV rapids on the Arkansas River near Buena Vista, CO. I had doubts about one rapid in particular, Number V, and decided not to paddle it. The water bounced all around and roared ferociously. It seemed as if the river flowed into routes that would surely bash you on to rocks chewing up the unsuspecting paddler and boat into tiny bits. I took a pass on these rapids several times but observed others run them successfully. One day I decided to tackle the rapid. I found that the rocks, with the water flowing over and around them, producing all the white foam and thunderous roar, also slowed the speed of the water. There was plenty of time to make the necessary maneuvers to master the rapid. The lesson learned is that our expectations and anxieties may hold us back and create unnecessary blocks to our progress in life. Of course, this has to be balanced with a realistic appraisal of situations, the dangers involved and our abilities. If we are too cautious, we do not try new things and limit ourselves unnecessarily. If we are not sufficiently cautious, we may make reckless decisions.

I am fascinated by the topography of the river, i.e., the three-dimensional aspect of the water's surface. It is like a ski slope, where the skier uses the hills and bumps to help execute turns and move from one part of the slope to another. Paddlers use the hills, bumps and valleys of the river to move around in the water. Maybe the most similar move to skiing is the paddler caving a turn around the side of a wave (hill). Waves in the river are made by water going over rocks, around rocks, and sometimes by the river narrowing. Water flowing over a ledge can form a hole or a pour-over (these are the valleys in our topographical model). A paddler can become stuck in a large hole or pour-over, so these have to be approached with caution. Rivers also have dynamic features that paddlers can use to move in and around the rapid. The dynamics of the river are produced by the relative speed and direction of the water. Yes, actually the water is not always moving downriver. The relative speed of the water changes as the river goes over and around rocks or the river bends. At some points the water may be moving upstream. It is helpful to understand the dynamics of the systems we are involved with and how to interact with them.

There are other lessons learned when paddling. Another river, Mongaup, had a mile-long continuous rapid, with big waves, that was difficult to paddle. While I could paddle this section of the river, I was intimidated by it and always took the easiest and safest route. Over a few summers, paddling on the Fractions Section of the Arkansas and the Taylor (Class III sections of Colorado rivers) my skills had improved and I learned more refined techniques. I was able to paddle rapids with bigger waves, taking less water in my open canoe. (If too much water comes into the canoe it may sink or turn over spilling the paddler into the river.) I could go over waves without them crashing into the canoe. Part of the trick was to paddle almost sideways to the waves, helping the canoe to ride over them. Another aspect had to do with balance – to stay balanced as the waves tossed the canoe around in the water. While remaining in balance, to tilt (nudge) the canoe so the down-stream side grows higher and blocks the approaching wave. Using these motions, the canoe rides safely over the waves. Armed with these skills, I decided to approach the feared rapid differently. Instead of taking the

easy and safe routes, I paddled into the heart of the rapid and bid the undulating water to take its best shot at me. The ride was fantastic. It was as if I could do no wrong. I weaved and bobbed through the waves and around the worst holes and pour-overs with ease. At one point, I was almost tripped-up going around a rock and landed in a small hole. Balance saved me and I paddled out of the hole. Balance is a key element. For it to work well, balance needs to be effortless and reflexive. Tension or anxiety makes us stiff and we are less in balance. Our body should flow and move with the waves as we maintain our balance in an effortless ballet.

Sometimes I realize the river has grabbed the canoe and, in a quick and unexpected move, is trying to turn it over. I instinctively respond and counteract the intent of the river. In other instances, I am caught off guard. By the time I realize what is happening, I am swimming in the water.

I am becoming more aware of the significance of focus. (This is sometimes referred to as “flow” in the psychology literature.) When we have good focus, the “happenings” of the river slow down and more of the key elements are within the scope of our awareness. Here, the paddler seemingly has more time to react and is able to economically make the right moves, instead of frantically scratching at the water with the paddle. Focus is important in most activities.

More recently, I have been working the river as if I am a football broken-field-runner. Constantly changing my flow, darting from one obstacle to another. Going one way and then another. Almost daring the river to catch me. Occasionally it does. But most of the time I am too agile, and I escape from its grip. Just as I change my flow, the river changes too. As the water level becomes higher or lower, or the rocks move during a flood, the rapid becomes different and I have to learn new routes to escape from its grip. It is a never ending series of challenges and lessons.

Just For Fun

Favorite Songs About Whitewater: A Playlist

Music and rivers just go hand in hand. When asked paddlers what their favorite river song is, this is what came up!

Take me to the River- The Talking Heads
 When the Levee Breaks - Led Zeppelin
 Mighty River- Railroad Earth
 Sometimes a River- String Cheese Incident
 Big River- The Grateful Dead
 Green River- Creedence Clearwater Revival
 Black Muddy River- The Grateful Dead
 Black Water- The Doobie Brothers
 Bridge Over Troubled Water- Simon & Garfunkel

Thank you for reading this edition of the KCCNY newsletter! If you have any ideas for the next topic or want to drop me a line email Michelle Melagrano at mgmelagrano@gmail.com

Happy Paddling!

Flora Of River Settings

This Month Meet: Jewelweed



If you have boated during mid to late summer, chances are you have seen this beautiful orange plant flowering on the banks of the river. This widespread and common plant is called jewelweed and loves moist, shady areas.

Jewelweed has a history of use in Native American medicine which we can use today. When applied topically, sap from the stem and leaves is said to relieve itching and pain from a variety of ailments, including hives, poison ivy, and nettles.

The sap has also been shown to have anti-fungal properties and can be used to treat athlete's foot.**

Source: US Dept. of Agriculture; www.usda.gov