

# SEBAGO CANOE CLUB E B L A D E

The official electronic newsletter of the Sebago Canoe Club in Brooklyn, NY kayaking, canoeing, sailing, racing, rowing December 2009 Vol. 76, Issue 2

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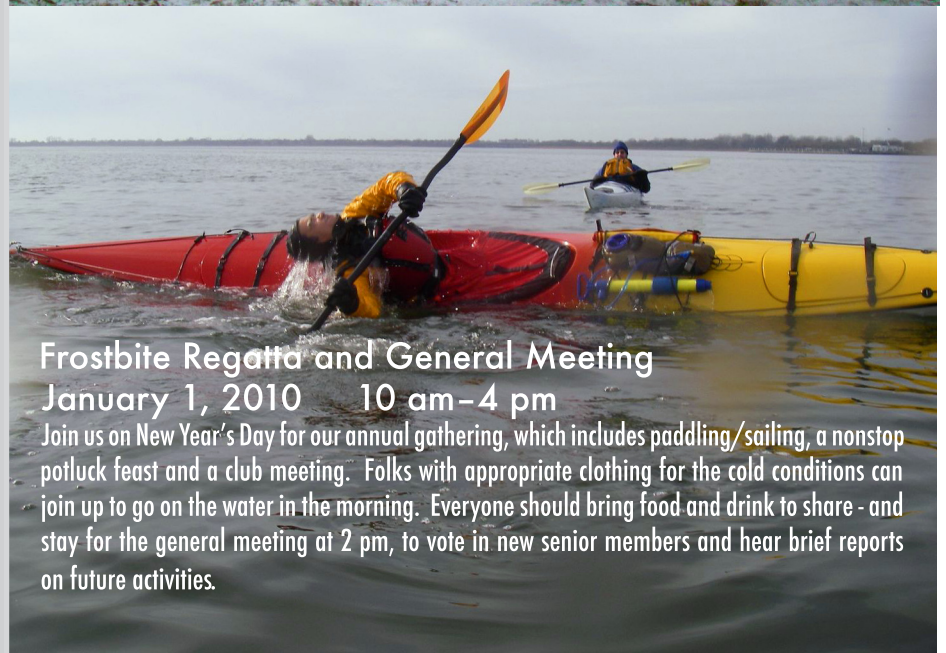
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## COMMODORES REPORT

By John Wright



Admittedly, I'm a bit weird. There's something about our Sebago work days that make them one of my fondest experiences at Sebago. Don't get me wrong. I love the paddling, the exploration of new waters, the invigorating workouts, the group support, the relief from our concrete structures and grid environment by the open sky and irregular shoreline of the Bay. But I was committed to Sebago as much by Phil Giller's barn raising projects as I was by the training opportunities and trip activity of the Sea Kayak Committee. There is something about our club camaraderie when faced with a construction project to accomplish, a youth group to guide out on the water for the first time, an Open Paddle to welcome, that make ours a different sort of association. Sure, we are a social club, but we do a lot more than just chatter and chow down as we hang out around the clubhouse. Our members work, and work hard. The results show in the appearance of our piece of New York City Parks, in the installation of the new dock and ramp, in the way our facilities function to serve a broad range of human-powered boating enthusiasm. We have every reason to be proud of the achievements of this recreational cooperative.

Now we enter the "off season", but it is anything but hibernation. Pool sessions continue through the dark and cold months, planning sessions lay out a calendar for the summer of 2010, boat maintenance goes on in preparation for the heavy usage of the Open Paddles, background support continues in all the management obligations of grant writing, tax filing, membership billing, charities reporting, accounting updates, not to forget member training for first aid, safety, boat handling and skill building.

So a big thanks to all for making it possible to survive, and thrive, as we move forward into the next decade.

And that brings me to the next theme of this message. Where do we want to be in the next several years? Another hundred members larger? Enjoying fully completed facilities with showers and sanitation services, a clubhouse with kitchen, a boathouse with proper storage for all types of craft? Hosting a complete schedule of training and program activity in all the variations of human-powered boating? What will it take to move ahead on any of these objectives, and what is the obligation taken on to maintain them? Whether in human capital or increased dollar income, growth, or even maintaining our current program, will require a high level of shared personal investment. What's on your wish list, and what will it take to get there? Let us hear from all of you, push your Board a bit, and see where we can move ahead together.

### NAMES FOR SENIOR MEMBERSHIP:

Don Campbell  
Blake Strasser  
Victoria Moss  
John Harris

## SEA KAYAK COMMITTEE REPORT

By Walter Lewandowski

Wow! What a year it has been for the Kayak Committee and Sebago as a whole. So much activity and so many changes. We have more paddlers, did more trips, offered more youth paddles and more varied instruction opportunities than ever before. Thank you to all the members whose efforts made this past season possible.

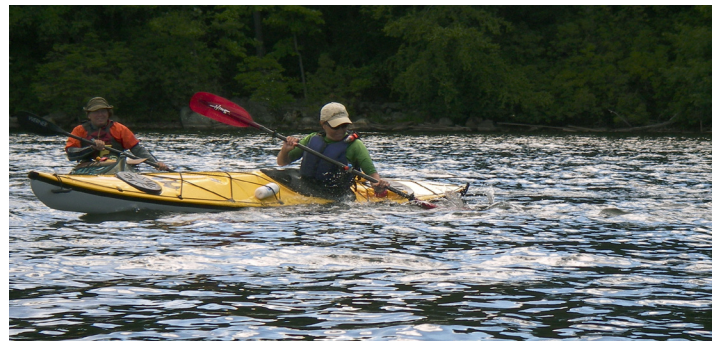
Many may not know that I am now the Kayak Committee Chairperson. I would like to thank and congratulate Jerry Dunne for his wonderful tenure as the kayak committee chair. Much of the growth in club-sponsored opportunities for paddlers is due to Jerry's leadership. Jerry will continue to coordinate our instructional programs, and offer his instructional paddles at the lake.

The club now has a group of instructors certified by the ACA to teach all levels of paddlers from novice to coastal open water. Take advantage of this club benefit this winter by attending some of Sebago's indoor pool sessions. Each session has at least two ACA instructors in attendance. A warm, clean pool is the perfect environment for learning some of kayaking's more advanced skills, such as rescues, bracing and rolling. Contact Stevie McAllister at [brooklynkayak@gmail.com](mailto:brooklynkayak@gmail.com) for more info. This spring, plan to take some lessons from Sebago's in-house ACA instructors in the waters of Jamaica Bay and Lake Sebago to learn to paddle more safely and efficiently.

Watch out for our winter seal paddles this January and February to see our seasonal visitors from the North. Don't forget about the Frostbite Regatta, which takes place New Year's Day before the General Meeting. Both paddles will require drysuits and appropriate recovery skills to participate.

We should all be aware that we have come to the cold water season and should exercise care when making our paddle plans. Dress appropriately for the conditions, which this time of year means a drysuit. Also remember, as early spring starts to warm the air temperatures the water is still cold. This becomes at least wetsuit and paddletop weather. Check out the excellent Atlantic Kayak Tours website expert center, "Dressing for Paddle Conditions" and other instruction information at <http://www.atlantickayaktours.com/pages/expertcenter/how-to-dress/How-to-Dress-1.shtml>

The kayak committee is made up of you, our Sebago kayakers. Your input counts. To keep our committee's activities fresh, fun and exciting please let me know of any ideas or wishes you have for our paddling program. Many of you see me around the club, and I can be reached by email at [kayaking@sebagocanooclub.org](mailto:kayaking@sebagocanooclub.org)



## CRUISING COMMITTEE REPORT

By Tony Pignatello



What a great year to join Sebago! Many of the new members who joined this year really got into the swing of things very quickly. Their enthusiasm and selflessness made our job a delight.

We were able to go on some interesting trips. From the rocky coast of Stonington, Maine to the sandy beaches of Fire Island, we had a ball. In Stonington, we rented a cabin, took our boats from the cars and didn't put them back until it was time to leave. We took various trips every day, the longest being a seventeen-mile trip to Isle au Haut. When we got back, the local gossip revolved around the crazy people from Brooklyn who made the trip to Isle au Haut. I guess one of the other Brooklyn clubs was vacationing there also. We also went to an island with a rock quarry that formed a freshwater pool which we used to swim before lunch. At night, we ate and drank well, were entertained by our personal poet (Denis Sivack) and visited an opera house built in 1905. (Who said Brooklyn lacks culture?)

Our Cold Spring trip was picture perfect. We took eighteen members with various skill levels on a fifteen-mile trip without breaking into a sweat. We saw a Revolutionary War fort, a zoo, and a waterfall.

The Fire Island trip featured a primeval forest, a four-mile crossing and perfect weather. We ran out of daylight, but we could have stayed a couple more hours. It was magical.

The cruisers don't like to rest on our laurels. We want next year to be even better. In January, we plan to visit the seals at Jones Beach and in early spring we hope to do a rafting trip at the mouth of the Hudson River.

Walter and I want to thank Elizabeth Green, Joan Byron, and Beth Eller for volunteering to assist us in putting the program together. We also invite all of you to join us in putting together next year's program. Have a great holiday and we hope to see you at the Frostbite Regatta.





# SEBAGO CANOE CLUB'S FLUSHING MEADOWS CORONA PARK AQUATIC CENTER POOL SESSIONS-2010

By Stevie McAllister

Sebago Canoe Club is proud to announce the start of our winter kayak instruction program at the Aquatic Center in Flushing Meadows Park (next to Citifield). An easy walk from the #7 train, or free parking is available.

It is open to all; club membership is not required.

The sessions will take place almost every Sunday from 9 am to 11 am, starting January 10, 2010, and will run until the middle of April.

No long-term commitment; RSVP and pay weekly as you use the program.

Sebago offers the only program that allows full-sized sea kayaks in the pool. Other kayaks will probably be there as well. Our program usually has at least two ACA-certified coaches each week.

The program is for people who have never been in a kayak or are new to kayaking and those who just want to sharpen their skills or learn to roll. Many sessions will have use of the diving area for those experienced kayakers who just want to practice. This is especially good for practicing rescues.

*For the beginner:* learn how to do a wet exit, learn a self-rescue with a paddle float, learn how to edge your boat.

*For the intermediate paddler:* sharpen your bracing skills, learn how to scull, learn advanced self-rescue techniques and begin to master a roll.

*For the more advanced:* perfect your roll on both sides, practice your balance braces and finally learn to roll without a paddle.

Have more fun and be safe the first time you get back into the water this spring.

**Space is limited and reservations will be taken every week. You must RSVP!!!**

Boats, paddles, PFD's and all equipment provided if needed. (See cost below.)

Swim caps are required for all participants. If you have one, bring it. If not, one will be provided.

## SESSION COSTS

**If you bring and share a boat \$20.00**

**Without a boat \$25.00**

**Non-ACA members will pay a one-time insurance fee of \$10.00** which will cover your insurance for all sessions.

We'll be washing the boats out thoroughly before they get in the pool. A hose will be provided.

For those meeting at the Sebago Canoe Club to load boats and carpool, we will meet at 7:30 am. Others meet at the rear of the pool before 8:30 am to help move/prep boats and get ready for our time slot. PLEASE be early; late arrival takes precious time away from others.

Reservations or questions? Contact Steve McAllister, preferably via email, at [brooklynkayak@gmail.com](mailto:brooklynkayak@gmail.com). If email is not an option, call 917 496 1523.

Info about the pool:

[http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub\\_about/parks\\_divisions/capital/parks/flushing\\_meadows\\_corona\\_park\\_pool\\_rink.html](http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_divisions/capital/parks/flushing_meadows_corona_park_pool_rink.html)

Directions. Be aware that we enter from the rear:

[http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub\\_about/parks\\_divisions/capital/parks/flushing\\_meadows\\_corona\\_park\\_pool\\_directions.html](http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_about/parks_divisions/capital/parks/flushing_meadows_corona_park_pool_directions.html)

Thanks to Dorothy Lewandowski for this opportunity.



# SAILING COMMITTEE REPORT

By Holly Sears and Jim Luton

What a great 2009 sailing season! We started out with some early sailing in April, followed by our first ever Laser Regatta in May. Our class in June was a great one. (Every year, Jim says this is the best class ever - and it was). We had numerous sailors join our ranks this year - I believe more than we have ever had in a single season. The club boats were used to capacity for each of our monthly cruises and we even set a record of thirteen boats for one cruise. Typically, our last scheduled event is the Sebago Cup in September. This year, in this cruising-style race we had a record number of participants, with Tracy Kornrich winning best overall and the Laser class, and John Decker winning the Sunfish class. (Congrats Tracy and John!) We finished up the season by adding an extra race series for the last three Sundays in October.

Next year, we plan to host a Laser Regatta for District 8 again (and perhaps as the Empire State Games qualifier for NYC). And, along with our usual events (the annual sailing class for members, monthly summer cruises, and weekly race schedule) we hope to add at least a couple of events for our members with kids. Perhaps some two-in-a-boat racing or shuttle course racing. The new club safety boat will expand the type and the quality of the events we can sponsor. And, we plan to do more advanced training for our beginner and intermediate sailors.

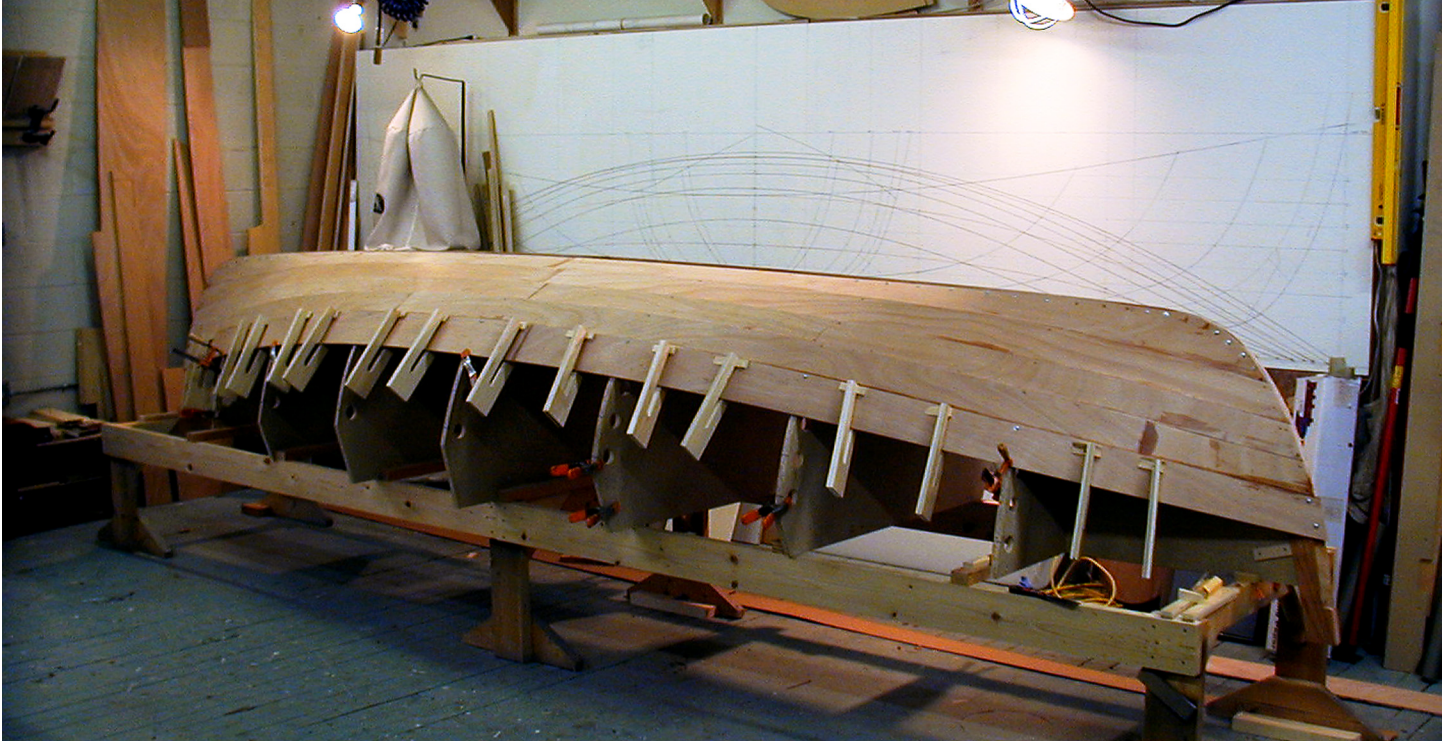
If you're a club member and you're interested in learning to sail a Sunfish, look for our annual two-day sailing class in June. We have limited enrollment and the class often fills months in advance of the date. The Sebago sailors will have at least one meeting to work out our 2010 schedule in January and perhaps do some off-season learning. Boat and equipment maintenance for the new season will be scheduled in the early spring and will be led by John Decker and Don Campbell. (During the last workday this fall, all boats were checked for necessary repairs and leaks. Thanks to all the sailors who helped.) If you want to get your work requirement for the next season completed early, look out for these sailboat maintenance work days.

We're looking forward to the 2010 season and if you have a drysuit - keep on sailing! We hope to see everyone on New Year's Day at the Frostbite Regatta.



# THE MATINICUS ISLAND DOUBLE ENDER – PART THREE

By Jim Luton



Plank 5 is hung. Note clothespin lap clamps

Well, I should have been planked up, flipped over, and well into the interior by now, but I have been very busy elsewhere for the past six months with work and sailing, not to mention the time spent re-powering the Boston Whaler; all good things though, and all necessary.

By the end of the last article (Blade, May '09), I had the garboard planks hung. They were difficult, ornery things to twist into place and fasten, but as they are typically the most difficult of the seven pairs of planks to hang, things will get easier as I plank around the bilge and up the topsides. In that article, I also described lining off the remaining planks with battens tacked around the molds. This told me the width of each plank at each station, but not the true shape of the plank laid out flat on the planking stock. First though, the garboards, (and each subsequent plank as well in their turn), must be beveled at the laps so that the next plank has a place to land, and will lie flat to the next mark on the mold. Lapstrake planks are like facets cut into the round shape of the boat, and each plank overlaps the one below it by a set amount (3/4" in this case). The bevels are cut with a block plane, and checked frequently with a straight edge against each mold. Also, gains must be cut into the extreme ends (called *hood ends*) of each plank so that the edge of the next plank disappears, or lies flush with the one below. I like to use rabbeted gains, possible only with glued laps in plywood. Solid wood planking would have to be treated differently, because the wood would split along the weakened rabbet line.

To find the shape of the next plank, a pattern board is bent around the molds, making sure to overlap the bevel planed onto the previous plank. Care must be taken not to *edge set* the pattern board. It must lie perfectly flat at each mold, or the plank shape will be off when the pattern springs back. Any attempt to force an untrue plank edgewise



Each lap is beveled and checked against the mold with a straight edge to the line indicating the top edge of the next plank.

will create a *bunch* or wrinkle in the plank, and no amount of coaxing will lay it flat. The pattern is marked from underneath at each mold, and along the upper edge of the plank above (below really, the boat is upside down), then removed, laid on the planking stock, and all of the information transferred. I like to play it safe, cutting outside of the lines by 1/4" or so and putting the actual plank on the boat for final marking. I use a single, washer-head screw through the lap at each mold. This guarantees that the plank will go back on the boat in the exact same place when the glue is on. I then take the plank off again, cut the scarf, sand the inside, and mask off below the lap lines with tape to keep the epoxy drips at bay.

The plank is glued and screwed to the stem and along the length of the land to the plank below. I use simple *clothespin* type lap clamps to squeeze the planks together between molds. If the bevels are right, and the previous plank is fair, then light pressure is all that is needed to bring the mating surfaces together. The plank's twin is hung on the other side of the boat, then another plank is patterned and gotten out. There develops a rhythm: bevel the lands, cut the gains, pattern the plank, cut it out and glue it on. One thing that I noticed, at about plank four, was that I was getting a little unfairness in the region of the scarf, due to fairing only one half (either forward or aft) at a time. I decided then that I would be better off scarfing up long lengths of ply, and laying out the entire plank at once. By doing that, I was able to fair out a small hump in the run of plank five, letting my batten sweep the entire length of the boat. Plank five is what transitions the turn of the bilge to the topsides, and is the straightest plank on the boat, showing only taper fore and aft. I also decided to hot-glue up lengths of cardboard to use as patterns. By plank five, most of the twist is gone from the shape, and cardboard lays nicely on the molds, being simply push-pinned on and marked out.

As I write this, I am hanging plank six, which will leave only the sheer plank to go! I will still need to fit the outside keel and stem aprons before I flip her over. And it would pay also to do some initial fairing and sanding. I'm really hoping to see her right side up by Christmas! Next time we'll look at framing her up, installing the centerboard trunk, and fitting the interior.

A rabbeted gain is cut into the end of each plank



A cardboard pattern laid out on the planking stock.

Birdseye view shows off this shapely double-ended hull.





On Thursday, September 10, 2009, a group of Sebago paddlers drove east to Hither Hills campgrounds in Montauk. We were embarking on leg three of our five-year plan to paddle around Long Island. In 2007, we'd paddled from the Sebago clubhouse to Smith Point over three days. In '08, we paddled from Smith Point to Georgica Beach in East Hampton. This year, we set out to pick up where we'd left off and round Montauk Point.

The group includes a ground support team of John Wright driving the trailer and Linda Peterson with son Cody in their van. The paddlers include Pete Peterson, Mihn Nguyen, Bonnie Aldinger, Ilene Levenson, Stevie McAllister, John Huntington, George Sullivan, Tom Anderson and myself.

John W. drove out early with the trailer of boats and camping gear, assisted by Tom, George and John H. The wind was blowing hard from the east and they did a remarkable job of setting up our tents and securing our campsites. By the time the rest of us arrived, night had fallen and the rain had begun. We were glad to find our tents dry and ready for us to crawl into.

Friday morning, the east wind was a steady twenty knots with gusts to thirty. Paddling in the ocean was out of the question. We drove to Montauk Harbor to check the conditions there. We thought of paddling east with the wind behind us, but the conditions in the bay were much

too rough for the group. Back in town, we had a wonderful breakfast at a local diner. We spent much of the morning erecting a large tarp over our group tent and picnic table. With a raging wind and intermittent rain, most of us decided to make the best of it and went bowling in East Hampton. We formed two teams and had a blast bowling and tipping a few pitchers of beer. By dinner time, the wind and rain had eased off. George put up a set of horseshoes, which was a fun pastime while the dinner was grilling.

Saturday morning, we had a quick breakfast and headed back to Montauk Harbor to launch. The ocean was still rough, so we decided to paddle east in Gardiner's Bay where the waters were a little tamer. We had following seas and made good progress.

South of Gardiner's Island is a small spit called Cartwright Island. The action of the water was dramatic as we passed through a shallow passage there. Ultimately, we paddled to Cedar Point where John and Linda and Cody met us with the vehicles. That night we had a lobster feast at the campsite and planned our next day's trip.

Sunday, we woke to find the ocean finally calming down. We returned to the same launch spot in Montauk Harbor and headed out to round the point. It was 6 am and fishing boats were pouring out of the marinas and heading to the point. We all felt great to be out. It was very exciting to round the point. The convergence of water from the Sound



**"THE UTTERMOST  
PART OF THE EARTH"  
[Lucas Bridges, explorer, 1884]**

*By Marcus Demuth*

On December 16, 2009, Sebago member Marcus Demuth and Pier 66 Boathouse paddler Biff Wruszek will set out to the southernmost tip of Patagonia to attempt the first circumnavigation of Isla Grande Tierra del Fuego, South America's largest island. The expedition will raise funds and awareness, and collect gently used paddling gear for Achilles, a New York-based nonprofit, that enables people with all types of disabilities to participate in mainstream athletics.

Starting at the southernmost city in the world, Ushuaia, Argentina, Marcus and Biff will complete the one thousand-mile trip in an anti-clockwise direction, in one of the harshest maritime climates in the world. The Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego Pilot book describes the coastline as "without exaggeration, one of the toughest a yacht is likely to meet." Nevertheless, fueled by the prospect of experiencing the beauty of the one hundred-mile wide Cordillera Darwin, the abundant maritime wildlife, and the charm of the very few people living in this remote region, Marcus and Biff are confident the expedition will not only be a success, but also the most intense trip of their lives.

[www.tierradelfuego2010.com](http://www.tierradelfuego2010.com)

meeting the ocean make the water very lively. The tall cliffs that follow the lighthouse are stunningly beautiful. Huge mansions are perched along the crest line, making every effort to fend off the progressive erosion. Our plan was to paddle west down the beach to East Hampton where we'd left off the year before. After a mid-morning break on the beach we continued on and soon found ourselves surrounded by schools of dolphin. The water was very calm then and the dolphins frolicked around our boats for nearly an hour. We were all delighted by this beautiful spectacle.

As we continued down the beach, the wind picked up and our speed slowed down. It became clear that we wouldn't make it all the way to East Hampton, where we'd left off the year before. We ended up landing about eight miles short of our mark. It was a hard call to pull out short of the mark, but it would have been foolish to continue on and to land at night in the dark. We can always make up that distance next year. After all, we're not on a race. If we set any record it will be for the longest (and most fun) circumnavigation of Long Island. Thanks again to John and Linda for the ground support which made it all possible.

# KAYAKING THROUGH LOCK 17, ONCE THE WORLD'S HIGHEST LIFT LOCK

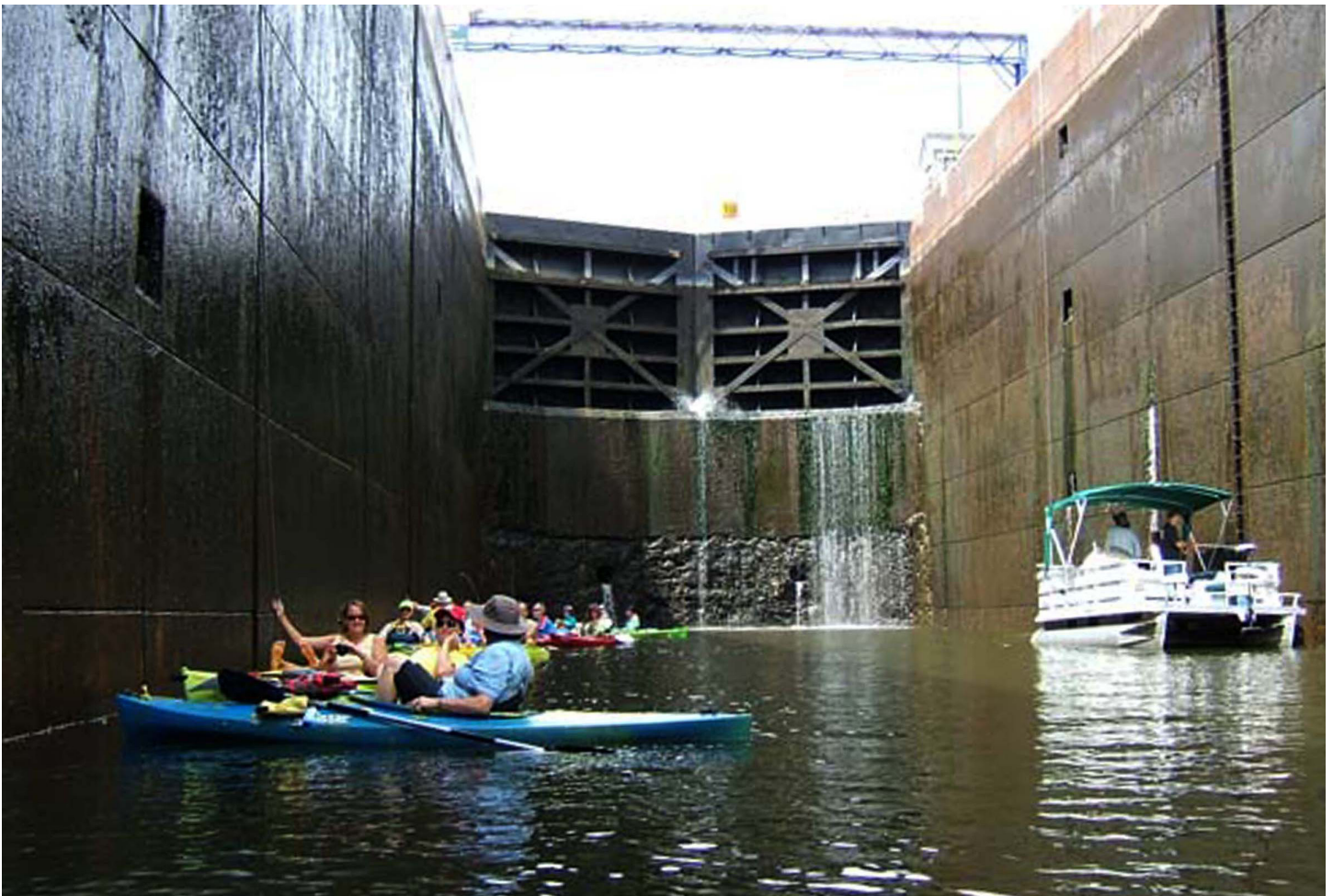
By Denis Sivack

The ocean-going Sebago Club members have probably also spent paddle time on rivers and lakes, but how many have gone through canal lift locks or, better yet, the lock that is the highest in the Western Hemisphere and once was the world's tallest? It is a forty-foot-high lock. And where is it? It is Lock 17 in Little Falls, New York, a town halfway between New York and Buffalo, seventy miles west of Albany. As part of the Erie Canal system, it is a part of the history of the gateway to the West that helped to make New York City a major commercial port city. That is where I grew up and, in a very real manner of speaking, it is the backyard of my boyhood years.

As kids, we would hike the railroad tracks running parallel to the Barge Canal and Mohawk River, crossing a high trestle (like the one the boys cross in *Stand By Me*) which has long since been torn down, and we would go down to the lock and watch the barges tie up and pass through. I don't recall pleasure boats along the waterway in those days. We saw working barges. In the summer after sixth grade, several of us biked down to the lock, mingled with the bargemen, got on our bikes and rode south of the river along Route 5S and west to the next lock, faster than the barges could get there, to greet the same bargemen. That was the summer in which we continued from that lock to the next town, Herkimer, crossed over the river on our bikes, and continued back to Little Falls along Route 5.



It wasn't until the summer of 2009 that I actually went through Lock 17, and this time it was in a kayak, during my hometown's annual Canal Days in August. The launch was from Rotary Park Marina, a municipal marina and part of the town. We paddled east, and after a short distance had Moss Island on our left as we entered the lock, and rafted up while holding on to ropes along the lock wall. The lock chamber at

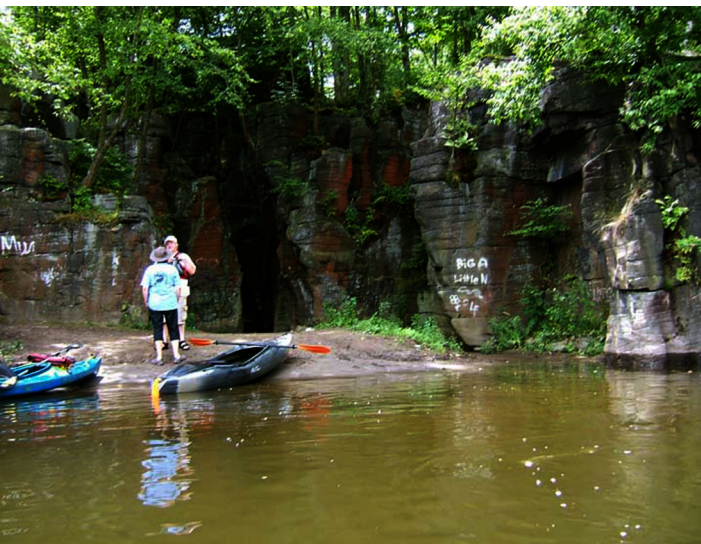


CAPTIONS: previous page top - Eastbound Tie Up, previous page bottom - Eastbound Holding, this page (top to bottom, left to right) - Eastbound Discharge, Train Ahead, Pothole #1, Pothole #2, River Falls Near Lock, on page 13 - Re Entry Westbound, on page 14 - Re Entry Westbound



this point would release the water and take us from a higher to a lower location. Photos taken from the water level show a highway overpass just below the lock gates, and also a passing train at a higher level in front of us. At this point, we are paddling along the river bed with the base of Moss Island to our left in these photographs. The island has numerous potholes of considerable geologic significance, having been formed by swirling water and stones relating to Ice Age activities. The tall, vertical potholes can be seen in two of the photos included here. In one photo, you will note a bare shore area where two kayakers have landed. That “shore” area is accessible from the upper level of Moss Island. Generations of kids have ventured to this shore by land from the upper level to swim in the river. The upper levels of Moss Island have rock formations to which people travel from all over to rock climb. (I may do a separate article on that area alone.)

We did not go much further east on this trip, since the focus was on going through the lock and exploring the immediate area. On our return, we entered the lock heading west, while the water level rose, bringing us up to the level above us. Careful observation of the photographs will show the water at various levels below the gate, and will also show the gates as they have opened. For this trip, brag rights came not from the horizontal distance covered but from the forty-foot drop and rise along which we were carried







EBlade:

*Thanks to Editor: Beth Bloedow, Designer: Holly Sears, and John Wright, Joan Byron, Bonnie Aldinger and all contributors.*

*All content in this issue is from individual contributors and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Sebago Canoe Club.*

*Next Issue: May 2010*

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Jim Luton

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