

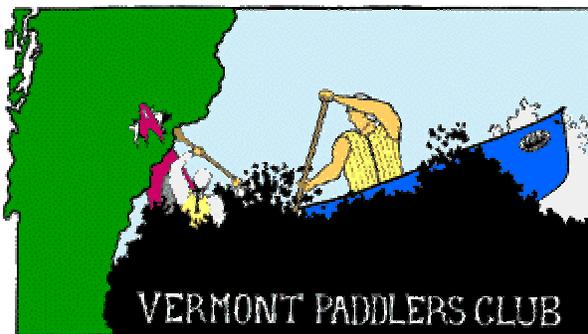
# Bow and Stern



**Newsletter of the Vermont Paddlers Club  
in Partnership with the American Canoe Association**

Volume XXXIII No. 1

March 28, 2007



Go with the flow...

VPC c/o Rich Larsen  
11 Discovery Road  
Essex Junction, VT 05452

Hello again Paddlers!

The spring 2007 paddling season is here! At this time it looks to be an outstanding season approaching for water levels.

Mother Nature has been unpredictable so far this year. In the first week of January, temperatures hit 60 degrees and the rivers were running! Some paddlers even got in a run on a local river (which made the Burlington Free Press) that first weekend of the year. It was looking like a year without a winter, and then the cold and snow came with a vengeance. We got snow, snow, and more snow! The snowpack out there at elevation is still very deep, and should make for excellent spring paddling.

Even after the ice is off the rivers, be careful out there in the early season. Scout the rivers carefully for ice shelves, newly downed trees, and other hazards that may not have been present at the end of last season. Be especially careful of blind corners, which may have been clear last season, the passage may not be clear now.

I'll never forget the time some of us from the VPC went to run the North Branch Lamoille a few years ago. It was considered too high by the majority of the group, so we went off to find something else and ended up at Minister Brook. My patience was wearing thin by the time we were waiting for everyone to suit up and get going. I was in my boat waiting, and decided to just go ahead down to an eddy we had seen from the bridge, which was just above a blind corner. As I sat in that eddy, the voice of my wife rang in my head, telling me that morning just as I was leaving to scout everything. I jumped out of my boat, walked around the corner, and saw a huge tree across the whole brook, with a smaller one below it, and full of branches hanging into the water. It basically looked like an impassable death strainer. That advice may have saved my life that day. I stood there waiving everyone in to the eddy frantically, and we all walked around, the first of many walks around logs on that strainer choked first mile. **SCOUT EARLY AND OFTEN!**

We have a good mix of trips planned for the spring season, and would like even more trips and trip organizers. Trip participation and overall paddling enthusiasm was down at the end of last summer, and the whole fall season. Let's all make a commitment to put paddling first this spring. Join in some trips, and we invite you to organize a trip on your favorite river by submitting your plans to our activities director Dan Beideck ([dan.beideck@vtmednet.org](mailto:dan.beideck@vtmednet.org)). It's an excellent way to meet new people, and expand your base group. Whether whitewater of any skill level or flatwater, whatever your interests are, you will find others in the club with similar interests.

There were a considerable number of people that expressed interest in flatwater trips and events last season. If you are interested in expanding the flatwater base of the VPC, then I invite you to join our Executive Committee as a representative of the flatwater community. We welcome new ideas and events that further the interests of all types of paddling. We are also still looking for a communications director. If putting together this newsletter interests you, contact any of us on the Executive Committee.

Have a safe and fun paddling season, and hope to see you on the River!

James Raboin  
VPC President

## Who's Who in the VPC



### Officers:

- President: [James Raboin](#) 527-8328
- Vice President: [Tony Shaw](#) 879-1655
- Treasurer: [Richard Larsen](#) 878-6828
- Secretary: [Brent Osborne](#) 654-8678

### Directors:

- Activities Dir: [Dan Beideck](#) 655-3980
- Communication Dir:
- Safety and Education Dir: [Norm Staunton](#) 272-4565
- Agent:

### Appointed/Volunteers:

- Paddling School: [Norm Staunton](#) 583-1019
- Conservation Chair: [Jack Daggitt](#) 253-2524
- Webmaster: [Tony Shaw](#) 879-1655
- Publicity Chair: open

### Resources:

- Website: <http://www.vtpaddlers.net>
- National Weather Service: 862-2475

Open - Communications Director

Welcome our newest member of the VPC Executive Committee, Brent Osborne!

Brent is the new club secretary, taking over for Will Bucossi, who is in Montana attending graduate school.

From the Safety and Education Director, Norm Staunton

### **Instructor Clinic**

The VPC invites its current membership to participate in an advanced boater's "Instructor's Clinic." Designed specifically for volunteer instructors of the Novice and Class II Clinics, the Instructor's Clinic will be a review of the clinic curriculums, as well as primer to canoe and kayak instruction in general. The clinic will be held on the Middlesex to Junkyard section of the Winooski, unless water levels dictate a change in plans. All advanced boaters with an interest in skill instruction are welcome to attend. Paddling and safety skill instruction will be reviewed. Please RSVP to Norm Staunton at [telenorm@hotmail.com](mailto:telenorm@hotmail.com) or 272-4565. Clinic will run from 1-5 on Sunday, May 27th, 2007 and will meet at the Middlesex Dam unless a location change is necessary. ACA Membership or a \$10 Event fee applies for this clinic.

### **VPC Annual Novice Clinic Set for June 2 & 3**

Come learn to paddle with the Vermont Paddlers Club on June 2 & 3. This annual event is your opportunity to learn to paddle solo open canoes, tandem open canoes, decked solo canoes, and kayaks, in up to Class II whitewater.

Saturday will be spent learning basic strokes and safety techniques on the Waterbury Reservoir, including wet exits, followed by a practice session at a local Class II rapid. Sunday will consist of coaching on multiple runs of a local Class II river. Specific runs will be dictated by water levels, but all will be easy drives from the Waterbury Reservoir. Most participants graduate the event with skills to competently paddle Class II whitewater.

No experience or gear is necessary to participate, though all paddlers will be required to wear helmets and PFD's. VPC members generously donate their equipment to participants to outfit everyone with boats, paddles, PFD's, helmets, spray skirts, and appropriate clothing. Paddlers who own their own gear are encouraged to bring it, and those seriously pursuing the sport are encouraged to obtain at least a helmet and PFD.

Lunch will be provided each day. Participants traveling from further away are encouraged to find local accommodations. We particularly endorse camping at the Little River State Forest, right on the shores of the Waterbury Reservoir.

Cost of the clinic is \$75 and includes: Equipment, Instruction, Lunch both days, and 1 year VPC membership. Participation is limited to 15 kayakers and 5 canoes.

For more information or to register for the event, contact VPC Safety and Education Director Norm Staunton at [telenorm@hotmail.com](mailto:telenorm@hotmail.com) or 272-4565. Participants are encouraged to enroll in the "Class II" Clinic on June 23 and 24, to further develop their skills.



## **DemoFest Class II Clinic: June 23 & 24**

New Dates for 2007! As a follow up to the Novice Clinic, VPC will be offering a second annual Class II Clinic scheduled this year to coincide with Zoar Outdoors' annual DemoFest on June 23 and 24. So named because it is both held in Class II whitewater, and is the second class in our series of beginner clinics, the "Class II" Clinic will be held on the Deerfield River in Massachusetts. DemoFest brings boat and equipment reps from across the industry right to the Zoar Gap with plenty of demos available for everyone. This a great opportunity for newer boaters to try different boats, talk to reps about deals on boats, and figure out exactly what styles of boats and gear work for them. K1, C1, OC1 and OC2 paddlers who have completed our Novice Clinic or who have basic river skills including wet exits, basic strokes, and eddy turns are welcome to attend.

We will be paddling on the Zoar Gap or Lower Deerfield sections of the river, depending on skill and desire of participants. We will provide boats, paddles, spray skirts, helmets, and PFD's to all who need them, though we encourage all participants to borrow or buy their own equipment. Despite the availability of gear at the DemoFest, everyone should plan to have a full compliment of gear, just so they don't miss out on all the wet fun. Both days will be dedicated to practicing the on and off river skills required to safely run Class II whitewater, as well as taking full advantage of the opportunities at DemoFest to sample gear, discuss boat and equipment design, and help newer paddlers make good gear choices. Participants will be required to sign release forms and to provide their own accommodations and food for the weekend. We suggest camping at the Mohawk Trail State Forest or at Zoar Outdoors, and reserving a tentsite early.

Cost for the weekend event is \$25 to cover club and instructor expenses and VPC membership is required to attend this event as is either ACA Membership or a \$10 Event Fee. Contact VPC Safety and Education Director Norm Staunton at [telenorm@hotmail.com](mailto:telenorm@hotmail.com) or 272-4565 to register or for more information. Participation is limited to 15 boats.

## **Instructors and Gear Needed**

The VPC is seeking instructors, safety boaters, volunteers, shuttle drivers, and loaner gear for our Novice Clinic (June 2 & 3) and DemoFest Class II Clinic (June 23 & 24). If you are interested in volunteering or have boats, paddles, spray skirts, helmets, PFD's or paddling apparel you are willing to loan to the club's freshman membership, please contact VPC Safety and Education Director Norm Staunton at [telenorm@hotmail.com](mailto:telenorm@hotmail.com) or 272-4565. We will also be offering an "Instructor's Clinic" to help newer instructors get sorted out with the clinic curriculums. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

## **Swift Water Rescue Course**

The VPC is again planning to hold a Swift Water Rescue course during the 2007 paddling season. Dates have not yet been set, but keep your eyes out in mailings, email, and the VPC News for more information. Class III paddling skills will be required for this event open to all VPC members. Beyond a roll, Swift Water Rescue skills are by far the most important skills for whitewater paddlers to have. Don't miss this opportunity to develop or refresh the skills needed to keep you and your buds safe on the river.





## Letter from the Activities Director Dan Beideck

I am writing this as we are just slightly half way through our winter pool sessions. They have been well attended to date with a number of the usual suspects as well as a number of new faces in attendance. We have continued to implement more formal rolling lessons to those new to the sport needing some one on one attention. It is particularly gratifying to see our members step up and offer to help in this endeavor as well as seeing some get their first roll! We have one more roll class on March 24<sup>th</sup> followed by two final open pool sessions. Everyone is welcome to come out for any of those three Saturday nights. Last call for tune-ups before the spring paddling season!

Speaking of spring paddling, there should be a tentative spring schedule elsewhere in this issue of the *Bow and Stern*. The schedule printed may have a few gaps in it. Please feel free to suggest a trip or volunteer for any ones listed "TBD". You should refer to the website for the most up to date schedule as changes will be made there as they become known. We had a lot of trips last Spring and good turn out for many of them. I suspect that we will be able to say the same once this spring is finished. Meanwhile, it's not too early to also start thinking about what we should be paddling this summer. I'm hoping to have some weekend trips scheduled around dam releases as well as a number of nearby novice friendly trips around the time that we complete our clinics. Check the club's calendar in a month or two and please consider leading and/or joining these trips.

I mentioned some changes in how club trips would be handled in the last *Bow and Stern*. We have eliminated the "official" and "bootleg" terminology from our trips and all of them are now listed together in one calendar. Some trips will be insured through the ACA and others will not. That option is left up to the leader of the trip. All trips will be equal in the club's mind, however. There have also been some slight changes to the trip submission process. Trips can still be submitted online in a similar fashion as in the past. They will no longer be automatically posted to the website, however. It was felt that allowing anyone with internet access to post VPC trips was a potential liability issue. Also, we hope this change will allow the club to better promote the trips that are posted. Submitted trips before the spring and Summer/Fall seasons will be collected and an appointed person or committee will sort through the suggestions to make up the scheduled. Afterwards, submitted trips will be added if they meet the following criteria:

1. The leader is a VPC member and is capable of safely leading the trip proposed.
2. One of the following conditions is met
  - No other trip is scheduled for the date proposed
  - The difficulty of water is different by 1.5 classes or more from a trip already scheduled for that date.
  - The total number of days involved with the proposed trip is different from an overlapping scheduled trip by 1.5 days or more.
  - The proposed trip or the one it is in conflict with is not in the region.
3. The Board of Directors must approve any trips not meeting these criteria before it is added to the schedule.

# VPC “Goes Electronic”

## From the Webmaster – Tony Shaw

Over the past 12 months the VPC website ([www.vtpaddlers.net](http://www.vtpaddlers.net)) has undergone a major upgrade. It's worth mentioning the 4 aims we set out to accomplish through this effort, and where we stand with each:

### **GOAL #1: KEEP MEMBERS WELL-INFORMED**

Since the early days of the club, communicating with the full membership has been costly and time-consuming. Now, with so many online, we no longer want (or need) to let money and time be barriers to communication. We have gotten better at packaging the events list, the pool session schedule, forsale/wanted items, and other activities/events of interest to paddlers and sending out VPCNews to our ~800 subscribers on a ~weekly basis during the paddling season, and sporadically in the cold/dry months. None of this helps YOU (personally) unless the email address(es) we have in the database for you are accurate. If there is any doubt about that, PLEASE email us ([info@vtpaddlers.net](mailto:info@vtpaddlers.net)).

### **GOAL #2: A WEBSITE THAT IS SECURE, ROBUST, AND LOW-MAINTENANCE**

It has taken a mammoth effort to get us to this point, but we believe the VPC website is more sophisticated and user-friendly than ever. Several sections of the website are now members-only, to help protect your identity from scoundrels who prowl the web. Members paid through 2006 will find their members-only privileges on the website expire April 1, 2007. If you need to renew for 2007, do so promptly! If you did not receive a postcard in January 2007 with your login name and temporary password (or if you have misplaced it), just email us and explain ([info@vtpaddlers.net](mailto:info@vtpaddlers.net)). Website login requires that you use a contemporary web browser WITH COOKIES ENABLED.

The webmaster is desperately seeking an accomplice (or apprentice) - singular or plural - to help with routine maintenance of the website (MySQL/PHP stuff) and to be involved in content development (an energetic “ideas” person, programmer or otherwise). You can pick and choose your level of participation - my email: [boatful@comcast.net](mailto:boatful@comcast.net).

### **GOAL #3: MAKE IT FUN**

It is easier than ever to upload digital photos to the VPC website (members only), and don't be surprised if you see one of your photos highlighted on the homepage! March is Limerick Month, so read 'em, write 'em, and vote for your favorites! We are still developing “member lookup” tools to help members find paddlers who live close by or who share similar paddling interests. One part of your profile is your “Around Vermont in 30 Rivers” list, where you can keep a record of your in-state paddling conquests.

### **GOAL #4: MAKE DAY-TO-DAY WEBSITE OPERATIONS MORE DEMOCRATIC**

The “new” website is replete with password-protected utilities where executive committee members (or others with assigned privileges) can manage and update website content at will. The board really seems to appreciate having their hands “untied” where the website is concerned, and the webmaster is no longer the exclusive gate-keeper for content on the website. As an aside, we need 5 or 6 more members to start attending our board meetings and to consider a nomination for office in the upcoming November 2007 elections. Please ask the president (or anyone else on the board) when and where our next meeting is planned...and please get involved! The VPC can always use your” zip”.

From the Treasurer - Richard Larsen

## TREASURERS REPORT - CALENDAR YEAR 2006

<b>INCOME AND EXPENSES</b>	<b>YEAR 2004</b>	<b>YEAR 2005</b>	<b>YEAR 2006</b>
<b>INITIAL BALANCE</b>	<b>\$1,556.58</b>	<b>\$1,428.95</b>	<b>\$1,324.18</b>
DUES	\$1,214.00	\$1,056.00	\$1,253.00
EVENTS SPONSORSHIP	(\$450.00)	(\$100.00)	(\$200.00)
WEBSITE	(\$300.00)	(\$327.95)	(\$300.00)
INTEREST / BANK FEES	(\$52.85)	(\$47.75)	(\$36.25)
MEETINGS / MAILINGS	(\$960.78)	(\$815.76)	(\$847.39)
ROLLING SESSIONS	\$94.00	(\$150.00)	\$275.67
SAFETY GEAR	\$0.00	(\$103.52)	(\$35.06)
RESCUE CLINIC	\$5.00	\$180.00	\$0.00
NOVICE CLINIC	\$288.00	\$534.21	\$678.00
CLASS 2 CLINIC	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$125.00
T-SHIRTS	\$0.00	\$30.00	\$0.00
BANNER	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$180.20)
NET ACA COST	\$35.00	(\$110.00)	\$0.00
BROCHURES	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$44.57)
LITTLE RIVER WEIR	\$0.00	(\$250.00)	\$0.00
<b>FINAL BALANCE</b>	<b>\$1,428.95</b>	<b>\$1,324.18</b>	<b>\$2,012.38</b>

As reported at the end of 2005, there is no distinction any more among 'general fund', 'safety and education fund', and 'weir fund'. There is only the 'general fund'.

Financials for 2006 reflected very good participation in the novice clinic, the slight dues increase, and a better deal from ACA to recover costs associated with our Paddle America membership. Improved business processes avoided the unplanned losses in roll sessions and Little River Weir activity that caused surprises in late 2004 and 2005.

In general, the club has no need of a large amount in the treasury – we just need about \$1,500 to avoid cash-flow problems, and to buffer us for a year of big surprises, should that occur.

**Submitted by Richard Larsen**

## **Discounts for VPC members!**

Need gear? Support your local retailers and make your VPC Membership pay for itself! The following local retailers offer member discounts. All current VPC members receive 10% off storewide everyday, unless specified otherwise.

**Please bring your ACA card (or a copy of this page) to the store to receive the discount.**

Listed in alphabetical order.

### **1. AJ'S Ski and Sports**

350 Mountain Road, P.O. Box 1545  
Stowe VT 05672  
1-800-226-6257  
Fax :802-253-2562  
[www.ajssports.com](http://www.ajssports.com)

### **2. Canoe Imports**

Dorset Street, S. Burlington, VT 05462  
(802) 651-8760  
(800) 985-2992  
[canoeimports@comcast.net](mailto:canoeimports@comcast.net)

### **3. Clearwater Sports**

4147 Main St.  
Waitsfield, VT 05673  
802.496.2708  
[clearwatersport@madriver.com](mailto:clearwatersport@madriver.com)

### **4. Eastern Mountain Sports**

100 Dorset Street  
South Burlington, VT 05403  
802 – 864-0473  
[www.ems.com](http://www.ems.com) Club day is April 20<sup>th</sup> – 20% off for club members only (15% off boats)

### **5. Mainstream Kayak**

6 Swanton Rd  
St Albans, VT 05478  
802-524-3033

### **6. Still River Outfitters, Inc.**

Windsor, VT  
978-844-0965  
[www.stillriveroutfitters.com](http://www.stillriveroutfitters.com)

### **7. Umiak Outdoor Outfitters**

849 S.Main St, Stowe, VT 05672  
802-253-2317  
[paddle@umiak.com](mailto:paddle@umiak.com)

## **Notices**

### **Winooski welcomes paddlers!**

In the fall of 2006, the VPC was invited to the city of Winooski for their harvest festival. During this successful event, a couple of us ran the Chase mill rapids with a rather large crowd watching. The city was very pleased to have the Winooski River be a part of this event. We are welcome to paddle the Chase mill rapids and access them from the Winooski side of the river. The city has a very nice river walk along the rapids; a nice well marked put in which can be used to paddle the rapids, or flatwater paddle above them. There is also a grassy area at the bottom of the rapids that can be used as a take out. The town is receptive to the idea of putting in a permanent set of stairs to use as a take out. We would like people to use the Winooski side of the river for paddling on or above the Chase mill rapids, and avoid any conflicts with landowners on the Burlington side of the river.

### **VPC Board of Director vacancies:**

We are looking for a communications director. If putting together this newsletter interests you, contact any of the members of the Board of Directors to join in!

We also would like a flatwater paddler on the board to further the club's involvement in flatwater events and interests.

The end of this year will bring another election for the club, so there is opportunity to get involved in any of the board's positions. Now is a great time to get involved!

### **Dues for 2007 are due:**

If you have not paid dues for 2007 yet, please do so. Send payment to Rich Larsen, 11 Discovery Road, Essex Junction, VT 05452. Dues remain \$10/individual, or \$12/family.

### **Summer BBQ July 15<sup>th</sup>:**

The VPC will be hosting another summer get together this summer. It will be on Sunday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, location to be determined. Put it on your calendar! Details will go out on VPC news as the date gets closer.

### **Good-bye and have a great trip Simon and Cheryl:**

Simon Wiles and Cheryl Robinson have been some of the most active paddlers in the area since their arrival from the UK. Their presence will be missed by many. They are headed out for a yearlong paddling trip at the end of this month. Their travels will take them all over the world. Have a fun and safe trip guys!

### **Trips Schedule (Subject to Change)**

The following schedule for the spring whitewater season is what we have compiled to date. There will be changes and adjustments to it, please check the website and VPC news for the latest updates on trip schedules. You may submit additional trips you would like to organize through the website, or by contacting Dan Beideck, 802-655-3980.

**Spring 2007 Trip Schedule (Subject to Change – Please check website for the latest updates)**

Date	Trip	Comments	Class	A C A	Organizer	Phone	Email
<b>April</b>							
<u>1</u>	<u>Lamoille</u>	club "warm up" trip	2	y	Rich Larsen	878-6828	Larsen007@aol.com
<u>7</u>	<u>Huntington</u>		2		Jamie Dolan	453-4658	JDolan05443@yahoo.com
<u>8</u>	<u>Lewis Creek, Upper Mad, or White</u>		2-3	y	Tony Shaw	879-1655	boatful@comcast.net
<u>11</u>	<u>Winooski: Hugo</u>		3		Dan Beideck	655-3980	dan.beideck@vtmednet.org
<u>14</u>	<u>Hancock Branch of White</u>		2	y	Eric Bishop	899-1865	barberic@comcast.net
<u>14</u>	<u>NB Lamoille or Gihon</u>		4	n	Tony Shaw	879-1655	boatful@comcast.net
<u>15</u>	<u>White</u>		2	y	Rich Larsen	878-6828	Larsen007@aol.com
<u>18</u>	<u>Mad</u>		3		Norm Staunton	272-4565	telenorm@hotmail.com
<u>20-22</u>	<u>NH Rivers Weekend</u>	NH Rivers / Joe's Brook	3.4	n	Tony Shaw	879-1655	boatful@comcast.net
<u>21</u>	<u>Upper Lamoille</u>		3	n	Mike Fullerton	456-8701	michaelf@vtlink.net
<u>22</u>	<u>Moose (VT)</u>		3	y	Rich Larsen	878-6828	Larsen007@aol.com
<u>25</u>	<u>Lamoille</u>		2	y	Rich Larsen	878-6828	Larsen007@aol.com
<u>28</u>	<u>Ammonoosuc (NH)</u>		3+	y	Rich Larsen	878-6828	Larsen007@aol.com
<u>28</u>	<u>West</u>		2-3		Brent Osborne	654-8678	bosborne@uvm.edu
<u>29</u>	<u>West</u>		2-3		Brent Osborne	654-8678	bosborne@uvm.edu
<b>May</b>							
<u>2</u>	<u>Mad</u>		3		Jim Poulin	434-2708	jimpoulin1958@yahoo.com
<u>5</u>	<u>Hudson: Indian &amp; Hudson Gorge (NY)</u>		3-4		Rod Wentworth	498-3896	rodsw@comcast.net
<u>6</u>	<u>Hudson: Riparius to Glen</u>		3		Norm Staunton	272-4565	telenorm@hotmail.com
<u>9</u>	<u>Lamoille</u>		2		TBD		
<u>12</u>	<u>Black or White</u>		2		Eve Soutiere	763-3954	resa@ecentral.com
<u>13</u>	<u>TO BE DETERMINED</u>		3-4				
<u>16</u>	<u>Mad</u>		3		Jim Poulin	434-2708	jimpoulin1958@yahoo.com
<u>19</u>	<u>TO BE DETERMINED</u>	lower New Haven if up	3		Brent Osborne	654-8678	bosborne@uvm.edu
<u>20</u>	<u>Little or Winooski</u>		2		Jim Poulin	434-2708	jimpoulin1958@yahoo.com
<u>23</u>	<u>Otter Creek</u>		3		TBD		
<u>26</u>	<u>Lower New Haven</u>		3		Jamie Dolan	453-4658	JDolan_05443@yahoo.com
	Fri Southern VT. Rivers nights		2-3		Craig Carline	483-6455	Craig.carline@verizon.net

The best way to alert other paddlers to downed-tree "strainers" and other "surprise" river hazards is by posting a 'Boater Note' using the VPC Rivers Almanac (<http://localhost/paddle/almanac/index.php>). Boater Notes you flag as safety concerns are signified by  in the Boater Notes list.

Know the Safety Code of American Whitewater: <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Wiki/safety:start>

**DISCLAIMER:** Danger exists for participants in canoeing, kayaking, tubing, and other activities organized or advertised by the Vermont Paddlers Club. Such participation may result in illness or injury due to accidents, the forces of nature, or other causes not foreseeable. Such illness and injury may include disease, strains, sprains, fractures, dislocations, paralysis, and/or death. Possible injuries may cause serious and permanent disability. By your participation in any Vermont Paddlers Club activity you knowingly assume the risks arising out of that activity. In so doing you release, hold harmless and indemnify the Vermont Paddlers Club and its agents, officers and employees from any and all claims and suits for bodily injury, property damage, wrongful death, loss of services or otherwise which may arise out of your participation in canoeing, kayaking, tubing and other activities, whether or not such claims or suits arise from negligent acts or omissions by the organizers and conductors of this activity, their employees or volunteers, another participant, any other person or from any other cause.

## Trip Reports

[CT RVR portion of NFCT](#) Thursday Aug 17, 2006

Character: intermediate WW

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Steve Garanin

Participants: (K1): Steve & Jim Garanin

Section 4: Bloomfield, VT to Maidstone Bridge Drove to Maidstone State Park in just over 3 hours. Actually made good time as there was little traffic and the roads were dry. We arrived around 9:30 am. We checked in and dropped our camping equipment off at the lean-to we will be using for the next 3 nights. We changed into our paddling gear and headed out. The beginning of the first section, 4, was only about 9 miles from our campsite so it didn't take long to get there. I dropped Jim off at the Bloomfield/North Stratford put in at the mouth of the Nulhegan River on the CT River at 10:44 am. Dropped truck at the Maidstone Bridge and biked back.

The first 2 or 3 miles of the CT are very quick to Class I. Nothing very tough, but a nice way to get back in the seeing the water and paddling mode. Neither of us have an opportunity to do other than flat water, so we need to get the rhythm back for this kind of paddling. (Tomorrow we will have quick class I and class II.)

Lots of islands, 6 – 10, until we reached the bendy part of the river. We tried to take the shortest way for this was often the fastest water. One stretch, Horse race, was class I and very wooded and pleasant.

As we worked our way down, we saw the 100-foot esker cliff on the VT side. Quite different from anything we have seen on the CT. Just before it was the Brunswick Springs Brook. Small but pretty with the smell of sulfur in the air. About 5 miles farther down river we passed Paul Stream. This is the outlet stream for Maidstone Lake, where we are staying at the State Park. We saw several Kingfishers, lots of crows, a few ducks and mergansers and many small songbirds.

At one point, I saw an otter scramble up the bank and disappear into the grass. This is the first one we have seen on the CT, though we suspect there are many more.

Where the river opens up and does lots of bends, the banks are lower. Once again, the ubiquitous corn is growing right up to the rivers edge. I would guess that the CT Valley grows more corn than many Midwestern states. We have seen it from Northfield, Ma north to Canaan, VT, some 200 miles.

Approximately 2 miles from the MS bridge, we found an Osprey nest with both parents and most likely, though we could not see them, youngsters. They both flew around as we moved by obviously upset with our passage.

We also found several places where the former bed of Glacial Lake Hitchcock was exposed. The blue-gray clay being laid down in very neat layers ranging from a millimeter to a couple of centimeters. One area had lots of wood sticking out of it. I managed to pluck out a small piece of a branch from approximately 20 feet below the present day field surface. I will try to preserve it and send it to Ed Klekowski for identification and dating.

All in all a good warm-up paddle to get the muscles back in shape. Paddling time: 2:26:11 hour's 11.28 miles. Bike: 33:20 min, 9.5 miles, 17.2 MPH Ave.

Section 5: Maidstone Bridge to Guildhall, VT.

On the water by 8:20 am. This was not a particularly easy put in. The rocks run down to the river, but with no clear path and a bit of current it makes for a bit of adventure. Once in the yaks everything was fine. We missed most of the fog and as a consequence, had plenty of sun for the entire section.

After looking at 4 different maps, I came to the conclusion that no one knows how long this section actually is in miles. I found everything ranging from 10 to 13 miles. If I were to put a number on it, I would say 11 to 12 miles.

I will do a map mileage check to get as close as possible for the record.

As we pulled up to the bridge we saw two beautiful red deer in the farm's field. We took this to be a good omen.

I also had seen a Great Horned Owl on the ride back. There were more Canada Geese than we had seen anywhere else on the river. At least two flocks of 30-40 on different stretches of the river. We also spotted a muskrat crossing the river just as the 7 or 8 loops started. The river wends its way back and forth across the valley for the next couple of miles.

This was our single longest paddle in terms of time and, most likely distance. Given the flat-water nature of the river we were on at this point, it was a relatively slow section.

As we got to, what has now proven to be approximately the 9-mile mark, the river became a "t". We both thought that this was a bit, no, quite strange. After a minute or two of hesitation, we decided to go right, as that is the apparent direction of the minuscule current.

One of the more unusual aspects of this section of the Connecticut River is the multiple opportunities for Vermonter's to see the sun set on New Hampshire. We noted it in several places because the shoreline appeared to change from VT to NH and back with the same side of the kayak never changing. An odd feeling, but kind of interesting in an Escher kind of way. After e completed this section, we wondered why we did not see the Upper Ammonoosuc entering the CT River. Upon checking the detailed maps, we determined that the "t" was where that particular river entered the CT. Given the lack of significant water and the fact that it looked like an oxbow cutoff, we suspect that there will be many paddlers whom will miss it. How a through-paddler, from Old Forge east bound, would fair is beyond me. There was a serious lack of water during Memorial Day and even less now. If not portaging, then you would be doing a significant amount of lining. Even with a light kayak, it would be unpleasant at best.

One other item of note for this section was an island about ¼ mile downriver from the mouth of the Upper Ammonoosuc. Jim stayed to the right of the island in the main part of the river. I decided to venture to the left side. While a bit shallow and gravelly, it was a small diversion, which proved to be worthwhile. Just before the end of the island, I put up a couple of Bald Eagles, one an adult and the other a fledged juvenile. We had not seen any eagles prior to this point, and had earlier in the day remarked on that fact. (We also saw a first and only, Great Blue Heron as well as a cormorant.)

It may have earned me a new Indian name – Two Eagles. I think I like that a lot!

The Wyoming Dam came up short after that, approximately 1.5 miles later. We were able to pull out just before the current became overwhelming and pulled us over the dam. There are steps going up the bank and along a residential fence. We portaged over the road and down the other side to a broad sandy beach looking out on the dam. From where we stood, it looks eminently runnable. At least during times of high water, there appears to be enough water to cushion the kayak from the rocks. However everything I read said to say out of the water at this point. I presume that there are sharp and large items in the water, which prevent an easy and more importantly safe passage. It would be great if they could get in here with a crane or dynamite to open the channel up and allow for paddling over the site.

Paddling: 2:53:25 hour's 11.19 miles

- Steve Garanin

[Home field advantage....NBW](#) Saturday Oct 21, 2006

Character: advanced WW

Water Level: medium low

Organizer: Ryan M

Participants: (K1): Ben, Ty and Ryan

Gauge Info: USGS Flow: 785 cfs; USGS Station: Wrightsville Res.

North Branch Winooski River (NBW), VT

Home field advantage (Huh?)....

So the fall rain gods decided to bless us with some quality flow. Very nice of them to time it for a weekend. Anyway, as I was out and about Friday running errands it was pretty obvious flows were going to shape up to be big for Saturday AM. The post board and phones started that evening to set plans for Saturday. With everything going off on the Large-Marge side of things a safe bet was that the NBW was going to be at a really nice level. An early am visual in Putnamville told true that it was on the high side of runnable. A few other folks were headed to Joe's looking to avoid overly high flows on the usual suspects (New Haven, Gihon, North Branch Lamoille, and the NBW). I almost joined them...Lucky for me and a couple of other folks we didn't because we got to run the NBW at a fun level (well maybe a little low).

Calls came in from Ben and Ty around 8am or so to start setting up plans. I told them that the NBW was pretty high if it was going to be their first time on it, but there were the options of Martin's, Minister, and Hancock to paddle as the NBW dropped out. We all met at my house in Monty-P (the Home-field advantage) around 10:00 am and headed up to the North Branch Winooski watershed. We took a quick look at Martin's and it had dropped out like a rock to almost unrunnable. This was a good sign that the NBW was probably dropping to a moderate level for the guys to bang down it on their virgin run.

A quick scout of the last falls showed that it had dropped off since 530am in the morning but was still at a good level. Off we went for Ben and Ty to have a look at the other roadside drops. Everyone was game to set shuttle and give it a go!!!!

As we put in we were all feeling a little rusty as it has been a couple of months for me and close to that for the other guys since they have been in their boats. Long enough for Ben that an angry spider has taken up residence in his

boat. A quick exit and extrication of the bity buggler and we are off around the bend to the first couple of cursory drops before the first major double drop. Fun easy boofs and slides to warm up and eddy hop. As we come up on the first drop we take a quick scout and we all bounce down and boof cleanly. The scenery and closed in gorge in the early section really lights up the guys.

There are a handful of more smallish drops and rapids leading up to the next substantial drop. This one is pretty straightforward down the right side. It sounds ugly as you slide down the tongue and totally slam-bang off a ledge (autoboof) to go airborne into the pool at the bottom. Actually a very easy drop though. At this point I notice that the water is pretty low and that we are lucky to have gotten on the river when we did. There are some convoluted drops between this drop and the next major one, "the big juicy slide". These little jumbled drops really wreak havoc and present pinning potential at the low level the river is at.

"Here's Johnny"...the big juicy slide. At the level it was on Saturday the run-in is a good III+/IV with one last-chance eddy to bang into to get some composure before dropping in. Saturday provided only one quasi-clean line and Ben



was hell-bent to do it. Both Ty and I walked...A little more water makes for a much softer ride. Ben made it to the eddy at the top and then dug deep and went over the top slightly to the left, but far enough to the left that he pitoned pretty hard 1/2 way down into a flake off the left wall. He stayed upright and finished the drop with a grimace on his face. A quick self-inspection and he was ready to head on down stream to the next series of drops. Under the culvert and around a couple of bends and we come to an 8ft drop. At this level the landing area is pretty shallow and smallish to say the least. Not helping matters is that where you would normally take off from the drop is an obstruction so you have to slow down considerably and sneak in behind it to hit the desired line. Ty went first and banged his way down....I have not mentioned this but he was paddling in an old school playboat - a big one at

that (Wavesport X), but a playboat on a very steep creek. The guy is pretty solid to say the least....So he banged down the drop and paddled on out from it. I was next and got hung up at the edge of the drop and penciled in to the bottom pitoning in for a good jar to the lumbar region. UGH. Ben tried a different approach and banged down it too. The next drop is a slideish left to right spout thingy...the trick is to stay as far to the left as you can and ride it out. Too far right with the wrong angle and you end up back under the curtain and in the recirc. Ben must have felt like he was in a washing machine because he went around 5 times in his boat then another 2 times out of his boat and his boat rode around 6-7 more times on its own. Directly below this is the Double Drop. Ty was down with it, I again felt that there wasn't enough water to run it smoothly and my back was still tender from the above-mentioned drop. Ben was regaining his composure to give it a go. Ty hit it with a full head of steam and boofed the top drop onto the pillow 1/2 way down and then slid it out and went deep at the bottom....very clean. Ben - not so clean. He didn't boof and pitoned off the first drop and flipped completing the remainder of the drop (15 feet) inverted (upside down) into the pool at the bottom, thus rolling up very shook up. Ouch. No worries though we have it on film!!!!

The next little bit is boogie water ranging from lazy to class III. Beautiful none the less. We come to the second to the last drop. This is beautiful drop into a gorged out section with a 5-foot slide at the bottom. The initial drop is close to 12 feet and the bottom has a pretty strong backwash. We all opted to run it in from the right side and boof the last 7 feet. All cleanly done. The slide is a little sticky at the bottom, but easy enough.

More easy water and then the last fall. There were two clean lines running - one along the left wall and the other down the slide in the middle and off into space - make sure to boof!!!! We all decided to bag it. Ben had been worked enough for the day, Ty was cold and me being the old man decided not to push my luck and risk another bad landing on my back.....To be honest we were all pretty darn cold at the time too. So we carried up and out and called it a day. As with every time I'm up in that watershed on the NBW its self or one of its tributaries, boating on my "home-field" is always the best for me. We had the river to ourselves and really got to take it in. What a great day had by all.

- Ryan

Huntington Saturday Jan 6, 2007

Character: novice WW

Water Level: high

Organizer: Tony Shaw

Participants: (K1): Dan Beideck, Jamie Dolan, Rob Farley; (OC1): Andy Meilleur, Tony Shaw

It rained. It poured. It was in the '60's in the first week of January, for crying out loud. Why EVERYONE wasn't out paddling is the real mystery. But, as the saying goes, "He who hesitates...is lost". So, instead, we POUNCED! The Lower New Haven was deemed by Jamie to be too high, so the Huntington was our back up, by consensus. We ran into Ray Ingram and Isaac Annis while leaving vehicles at the Huntington Gorge take-out, and Rob opted to pair up with Ray and Isaac instead and put-in at the Audubon 'horseshoe' to shorten the trip. Meanwhile, Dan, Andy, Jamie, and I went way up above Huntington Center and put-in at the Shaker Mountain Rd. bridge. Our trip lasted several hours, and there were ample opportunities for low-consequence play. I staked my claim to the first swim of



2007, about 3 minutes into the run. And a photo I took of Andy surfing found it's way into the Burlington Free Press later in the month. We all talked about the prospect of paddling each of the 12 months of the year, now that we had January under our belts, but there was no way to foretell the frigid February that lay in store...

- Tony Shaw

Penguin Plunge Saturday Feb 10, 2007

Character: flatwater

Water Level: medium

Organizer: Special Olympics Vermont

Participants: (OC1): Ricky Battistoni,

Marcie Bromley,

Emily Shaw,

Tony Shaw

For several years I've had the notion that the VPC should field a Penguin Plunge team, given that we are all pretty familiar with swimming in cold water, with the expectation that it would be good "exposure" for the club. Finally, in 2007, the necessary momentum was achieved to actually "take the plunge".

The event will be fondly remembered for the \$1100 in donations we raised to benefit Special Olympics Vermont, and being part of the record-breaking \$318,000 raised in total, not to mention the fun we had being in the company of so many zany and slightly unbalanced "head-wetters".



In addition, for me personally it means I get to claim February as my second month of "paddling" in 2007. OK, so I had no boat at the time, but I DO have photos of me IN Lake Champlain and USING my paddle!!

Next year I am sure we can get more VPC'ers to join "Team Frozen Members" and we can double our fund-raising total. rah, Rah, RAH!

- Tony Shaw