

PADDLER

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Newsletter of the Rhode Island Canoe & Kayak Association

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October, 2016

October Club Meeting Upper Missouri River with Paula Bissell Tuesday, October 18, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

At our October Meeting, Paula Bissell will talk about her trip down the Upper Missouri – a river with a rich and interesting history including Lewis and Clark campsites, still-standing homestead buildings, fur trade sites, and steamboat landings.

The Upper Missouri River in Montana is one of the premier canoe trips in the United States. It is part of the National Wild and Scenic River system, and runs for 149 miles through a spectacular canyon that cuts through the prairie country of central Montana.



The White Cliffs on the Missouri River

The meeting will be held at the Jewish Community Center.

Directions to the Jewish Community Center: From Rt. 95 South take Exit 24 and turn left onto Branch Avenue. From Rt. 95 North take Exit 24 and turn right onto Branch Avenue. Go past Benny's. Cross North Main Street and continue up the hill (past Kentucky Fried Chicken). At the top of the hill cross Hope Street and continue one block to the end at Morris Avenue. Go left, then immediately right onto Sessions Street. Go down the hill to Elmgrove Avenue. The Jewish Community Center will be across the street. **Please follow the signs and enter on Elmgrove Avenue and exit on Sessions Street.**

RICKA Movie Night Our Favorite Trips of 2016 November 15th at 7:00 p.m.

At our November Meeting, we'll provide the popcorn as we look back at our favorite paddling trips of 2016.

With over 100 trips scheduled by RICKA this year, it can be tough to pick a favorite, but we'll do just that. Videos and slideshows should be no longer than 10 minutes and advance notice is required. We will have adaptors for connecting Mac and PC laptops to a projector. If anyone would like to show slides, a Kodak Carousel projector can also be available with advance notice.

If you have a story you would like to share, please contact Susan Engleman at sje54@hotmail.com or 508- 353-6411.

Halloween Paddle on the Norton Reservoir

October 30th - meet at 1:00 for a 1:30 launch

Join us for a beautiful paddle on Norton Reservoir and a get together at Lee Parham's waterfront home after the paddle. Bring a dish to share. Trip is suitable for all. Costume or funky hat optional. Contact Lee Parham leeparham@comcast.net for additional information.



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<http://www.facebook.com/RhodeIslandCanoeKayakAssociation>

Whitewater Paddling and Rescue

Whitewater Handbook

By Bruce Lessels

Whitewater kayaking and canoeing have come a long way in the last few years with new gear, new techniques, and new ways to run the river. To start the novice right off, or to polish whitewater skills already acquired, renowned whitewater paddler and instructor Bruce Lessels has created step-by-step lessons for all essential techniques. He surveys safety issues such as managing risk, dealing with hazards, and rescue tools. Equipment choices are also surveyed. An introduction to racing is provided along with advanced techniques of playboating.

Whitewater Rescue Manual

By Charles Walbridge & Wayne Sundmacher Sr.

Regardless of skill, running rivers presents an element of danger. *Whitewater Rescue Manual* presents a tightly focused look at the best, most current techniques for both self-rescue and rescue of others on the river. The authors provide well-reasoned guidance that will teach you when to stay with the boat and when not to; how to retrieve a lost boat; how to swim out of trouble and when not to swim; how to reach a victim by wading, swimming, or using ropes; how to coordinate a rescue effort how to make sure that would-be rescuers don't become victims.

These are just two of the great books and DVD's covering the range of paddling topics that are available in our [collection](#). If you would like to check out these or any other selections, contact Bill Hahn at librarian@ricka.org. Library selections can be mailed to you with a postage paid return mailer provided at no cost to the borrower.

RICKA is an ACA



Paddle America Club

Executive Board:

The next Executive Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 5th at 7:00 p.m. at the [REI Cranston Store](#) 22 Chapel View Boulevard, Cranston. All are welcome to attend.

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The **Paddler** is published monthly except December by the Rhode Island Canoe & Kayak Association, Inc.

Submit your stories to the **PADDLER**

Do you have a story that you could share, a picture, gear review or trip report? **Please consider sending it to the Paddler.** Chances are, there are a lot of people who would really enjoy seeing it.

Don't be shy, please send it along!

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Flushed: My Adventure on the Upper West River

By Norma Sims Roche

It was hard to believe that my kayak and I were about to board the shuttle for the upper West River. After all my lessons and practice, I was stepping up to the next level of whitewater skill. I was about to paddle a Class 3 river.

Our Appalachian Mountain Club group had run the Class 2 section of the West River, and had had a great time. The classes of whitewater are 1 through 6, so 2 is about what an advanced beginner can do. There was one Class 3 rapid on that stretch. Everybody got through it. It was fairly easy to see where you needed to go. I got a little too close to the big hole, but leaned and braced properly and saved myself from a swim.

When we finished, Robin, our leader, said she was going to head upstream and try the Class 3 stretch, and asked if anybody wanted to come along. This was the chance I'd been waiting for.

You've probably seen a kayak doing an Eskimo roll—when the boat capsizes and flips upside down, but the paddler pops it right back up again, thus avoiding either being dragged along with helmet bouncing off the rocks on the stream bed, kaboing, kaboing, kaboing, or bailing out of the boat and swimming through those same rocks, giving the buttocks a similar experience. I didn't have a roll—not for lack of trying, but I just wasn't getting it. But I was pretty good at bracing and balancing, so I figured I'd be OK. And if I swim, I swim. How bad can it be?

The West River dam release happens just once a year in September, and it's a big

event. People come from all over New England, some just to watch, but most to paddle, and you're likely to run into anybody you've ever paddled with. So our time in the shuttle line, standing around in damp, heavy wetsuits, shuffling forward a few steps at a time and dragging kayaks behind us, was spent pleasantly greeting old acquaintances. As a relatively new paddler, I was delighted to recognize and be recognized by a few people. One woman from AMC, who was a much better paddler than I but was also trying the Class 3 stretch for the first time, saw me and grabbed my arms, and we both danced up and down: "We're doing it! We're doing it!"

At the head of the line were two trucks. Each paddler paid the fee and got a wristband, loaded her kayak into one truck, and hopped into the back of the other. When the trucks were full, they headed up the dirt road that led upstream.

"Is that a Dagger Piedra?" I heard a voice say. That was my boat! It's an older model, and there aren't too many left, but it's well thought of as a versatile and forgiving beginner's boat. "Is there a Norma here?" It was Jean from Boston, who'd sold me the Piedra when I started paddling. She'd been ready to move up to something more challenging, but seemed sad to part with her old friend. "Look what it's doing now!" I said. I'd been a little sorry not to be giving it the kinds of adventures she had, but maybe there was hope of that now.

When we reached the put-in and unloaded, I saw Rob, one of my first instructors. "Are you doing this?" he said.

"You bet!" I said. I didn't like his skeptical tone.

"The thing to do here," he said, "is to scout from the waves. Every time you get to the top of a wave, take a look at what's ahead, because there's a lot going on out there and you're not going to see it from the trough."

I nodded solemnly.

"And paddle HARD!"

Well duh, I thought. That was one thing I grasped that a lot of beginners don't: if you're in trouble in whitewater, the worst thing you can do is nothing. If you're exerting any kind of force against the water with the paddle, that will work in favor of keeping you upright. But I had to listen to Rob. He'd earned my respect and thanks many times over.

Robin and I launched our boats and found her friends Wade and Jason, who'd offered to lead us down the river. I'd met them for the first time in the shuttle line. They were both in playboats. There are two basic kinds of whitewater kayaks: river runners and playboats. River runners, like my Piedra, are what the name implies: they go fast and get you through the rapids. Playboats are designed for doing tricks: standing the boat on end, surfing on waves, spinning around. They're a little more maneuverable, but at the cost of some speed and stability, and if you don't know how to handle them, they'll do their tricks when you least expect them to.

My first experience with Rob involved a playboat. I'd had my beginners' lesson and thought I was ready to go on a whitewater trip with AMC, so I borrowed my 15-year-old nephew's Dagger Dominatrix. I didn't know one whitewater kayak from another, but I loved the name. Rob was the trip leader. He looked at the boat, and he looked at me, and he said, "Isn't that sort of an aggressive boat for you?" That boat flipped me into every known trouble spot on the Deerfield River, and Rob had the pleasure of fishing me out each time and trying to explain what I'd done wrong. But I'd come back with the Piedra and, very slowly, developed into a reasonably competent Class 2 paddler.

"Since this is your first run on this stretch, why don't you follow me?" said Jason as he pulled into the current. Soon I was riding up and down over the waves. This was a

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blast! The river was crowded with boats; I had to watch out for them as well as for rocks. Jason was going too slow; I was gaining on him much too fast. I ferried sideways to avoid rear-ending him, but that put my boat at a bad angle to the current, as well as taking me out of the route he was showing me. He was going between two boulders, and I was headed ... oh, SHIT! I swerved and tried to brace as my boat grazed the rock, but too late; the swirl of current behind it flipped me into the cold water.

As my head broke the surface, I tried to hold onto my boat and paddle and line them up as I'd learned to do, but everything was moving too fast. Jason's boat darted toward me, but couldn't catch up with me in the current. A couple of other paddlers called, "Grab my boat!" but by the time I registered their presence, I'd been swept downstream. I'd been trained, as all paddlers should be, to deal with a swim in fast water, so I wasn't in as much trouble as you might be if you fell into a river like that, but I wasn't making much progress toward shore. Every time I saw a relatively quiet eddy at the shoreline I'd kick hard toward it, but would have to give up the effort lest I be swept into the rock below it. I did hit a few rocks—there was no avoiding it. It was only now that I remembered about scouting from the tops of the waves.

Finally I made it into an eddy. There was Rob. Seeing me emerging from the water must have seemed to him like a recurring nightmare.

"Good job getting in here. There's just one problem," he said. "You're on the wrong side of the river. You can't hike downstream on this side."

Jason pulled in. "Why don't you ferry her to the other side?" said Rob.

"Why don't you?" said Jason.

"Pull yourself up on my stern and put your arms around me, really tight," Rob said to me.

I did as he instructed. "Closer!" he said. I wasn't being shy; the loop of my spray skirt was caught on his stern.

Rob paddled across the river with me hanging on. I tried hard to keep from rolling off the boat's small stern and dragging it over with me, and succeeded until we crossed a big wave Rob had to lean hard. I let go and swam the rest of the way to shore.

It was a short walk to where Jason was waiting with my boat. He was sitting in an eddy, with Robin and a dozen or so other onlookers gathered round, some of whom I knew, others who were complete strangers. He'd even emptied the water out for me.

"Thank you so much, everybody!" I said.

"Whaddya think?" said Wade. You want to try again, or you want to hike out?"

"I'll try again if it's OK with you guys," I said. "But I don't want to be a pain."

"Don't worry about it," said Jason. "Let's go."

I explained to him that my faster boat was overtaking his, and said I'd try to stay farther back. And I did for a while. But now he was getting too far ahead, and I couldn't see exactly where he was going. Did he go right through that wave train at that curve, or over to the left more ...

I didn't even get to finish my curse before I was under water. As I emerged, a wave hit my face and I swallowed most of it. My boat and paddle were gone again. I still wasn't scared, but I was frustrated, embarrassed, and yes, a little concerned about my safety. This, I had to admit, was not like running an occasional Class 3 rapid, where you can focus intensely, paddle hard, and a minute later you're in a calm pool at the bottom high-fiving your

friends. This river was going somewhere, and if I couldn't roll up and get back in control, then I was going with it. And this time nobody had seen me go over! They'd all kept going downstream. Maybe Jean would recognize her old boat and realize I was missing.

I finally made it to shore—the correct shore this time—and stumbled onto the bank. There was Jason—where had he come from? "Are you OK?"

I thought so. Though there was a spot on my thigh that I was sure would soon be bright purple.

"I think you'll want to walk out from here," Jason said.

I thought so too.

"You can probably flag down the shuttle," said Robin, who'd materialized with, again, some dozen onlookers, including Rob.

Again, I thanked them all profusely for their help, then dragged my heavy boat up the bank. Alone, I sat by the side of the road and ate my peanut butter sandwich. The first team of shuttle drivers passed without looking me in the eye, and I almost lost it then. There was no way I could carry this thing two miles down the road! But I waved down the next shuttle more aggressively, flashing my wristband to show I'd paid.

I was relating my adventures to a family of spectators who'd also caught the shuttle downstream when a merry truckload of paddlers passed us heading in the other direction. One of them turned around.

"Hey, Norma, how come you're going the wrong way?" It was Glenn, another of the AMC leaders, who knew everyone. I loved that he'd recognized me, but wished it had been for a different reason.

Fighting exhaustion all the way, I loaded my boat on my car, then changed into dry

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clothes under my big towel—another kayaker’s art. Then I walked upstream to the last and most difficult rapid, the Dumplings, to see what I’d missed. I watched people going through, but there wasn’t much joy in it somehow. So I hiked back down again, my thigh throbbing. I walked past the vendor’s booths selling paddling gear at end-of-season bargain prices. I’d been planning to look for a

warm drytop, so I could get out on the river earlier next spring, but why bother? Who knew if I’d ever really use it? I got in my car and drove home, without even stopping for ice cream.

I didn’t sleep well that night. Images of being under water—not pleasant ones—kept crossing my mind. But the next morning, as I looked at the Piedra on the car rack and all my gear drying on the clothesline, and remembered those few

minutes of bouncing through the big waves, the smile came back.

By next year, I thought, I’ll have a roll.

Editor’s note: Norma is a regular whitewater paddler with the [CT Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club](#). She was back on the West River this year, still smiling and working on her roll.

Before you Paddle...

Educate yourself about the area in which you will be paddling, and carry appropriate gear, clothing, water, food, etc. Always check the weather forecast before launching. **YOU ALONE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING THE DECISION TO LAUNCH YOUR BOAT.**

Flatwater Trips

Late changes and cancellations will be posted on the [Flatwater Message Board](#). Please check the board before leaving for any trip. Check [web site](#) for directions and/or GPS coordinates

October 2nd – meet at 11:00 for an 11:30 launch

Palmer River – Rehoboth, MA

Coordinator Henry Dziadosz
Hdziadosz@verizon.net 401-567-0313.

An easy, scenic paddle up the Palmer River. This is a round trip and no shuttle is required. Suitable for all boats and levels of experience. Bring a lunch.

October 8th - meet at 10:00 for a 10:30 shuttle

Pawcatuck River - Bradford to Potter Hill

Coordinators: Mike Vechinsky
M.Vechinsky@att.net 860-271-1586 and Sharon Dragon shdrag1@gmail.com

A beautiful section of the Pawcatuck River with one portage. This 7.5-mile section has plenty of deep water. Suitable for all boats and levels of experience. Bring a lunch.

October 16th - meet at 10:30 at the launch
Neponset River - Signal Hill, Canton, MA

Trip coordinator: Bill Luther
prijon@juno.com

We will put in at Signal Hill - a 150-acre Trustees of Reservations property. This section of the Neponset River twists and turns through forest and wetlands. Suitable for all boats and all levels of experience. Bring a lunch.

October 22nd - meet at 10:00 for the shuttle, 10:30 for the round trip

Charles River - Needham to Wellesley

Trip coordinator Susan Engeleman 508-353-6411 sje54@hotmail.com

Most paddlers have been doing this trip as a round trip of 11.6 miles. There can be a shuttle offered for those that desire just one way. We will lunch/or some will end at Elm Bank in Wellesley. Meet at 10:00 if you need to shuttle. Shuttle will leave at 10:30. Those choosing to do the round trip please meet at 10:30 for an 11:00 launch.

October 30th - meet at 1:00 for a 1:30 launch

Halloween Paddle on the Norton Reservoir

Leader: Lee Parham
leeparham@comcast.net

Join us for a beautiful paddle on Norton Reservoir and a get together at Lee Parham's waterfront home after the paddle. Bring a dish to share. Trip is suitable for all. Costume or funky hat optional.

November 12th – meet at 1:00 for a 1:30 launch (Rain date November 13th)

Annual Turkey Paddle and Dinner

Coordinators: Sharon Dragon
shdrag1@gmail.com or Cheryl Thompson
401-497-5887 or stonefoxfarm@juno.com

We will paddle on Wallum Lake in Douglas State Park with dinner after at the waterfront Lodge Restaurant. [RSVP](#) required by November 5st if you are planning on coming to the restaurant.

Sea Kayak Trips

Sea kayak trips are now be posted on the Show & Go Message Board at:
<http://rickaseakayaking.org/forums/index.php?board=2.0>

RICKA Classifieds

Classified ads free for RICKA members and are printed here on space-available basis. Please see the [website](#) for the complete list.

- **Thule 450 Crossroad Foot Pack** - set of four feet. This is only the four feet for sale, not the bars, accessories or locks. This is the base rack solution for cars with factory rack side rails. I have a new car and these don't fit mine anymore = asking \$75.00. Paula welcomelacefarm@yahoo.com 401-374-0924
- **Valley Q-Boat** - Quill over Quill Q-Boat with black trim. Some spider cracks. Asking \$1000 or B.O. Eric emjohnso3@verizon.net
- **Kokatat front entry GORE-TEX GFER dry suit** with relief zipper and GORE-TEX socks. This suit has been lightly used and is in excellent condition. \$400. Contact Bill Hahn
- **P&H Delphin Kayak 15.5** - a superior all purpose kayak that is very stable, excels at surfing, ocean play, and is a very functional multiday touring boat. Length: 15' 5" with adjustable skeg- \$1150. barachial@icloud.com
- **PRICE REDUCED: NDK Pilgrim** - white/white/navy seam, 15'9" length, 19.7" beam. Versatile sea kayak for small or lean paddler - \$1,600. Contact catherineradcliffe@earthlink.net
- **Old Town Tripper** - this 17" royalex canoe has been stored inside for over 20 years and is in very good condition - asking \$800. Contact 508-808-0530 or jrmiller59@yahoo.com
- **Kokatat Orbit Tour PFD** - Small/Med - \$75. Contact michael.hazeltine@gmail.com
- **FOLBOT "Yukon"** - 13', excellent condition. Spray cover, extra seat, paddle. \$800 OBO. Wakefield area, can deliver to RI buyer - 401-783-2750
- **NRS Flux Drytop** - men's size XL, red with black highlights, latex wrist and neck gaskets. Excellent, like new condition used less than 6 times. Sells new for \$325, yours for \$200. **Henderson 7mm Dive Boot** - men's size 11 fit my size 10 feet with thick socks and drysuit booties with room to spare. Two years old but used less than a dozen times. Sells new for \$95, yours \$45. **Reed Aquatherm Fleece Men's Long Sleeved Top** - black, men's size large. Worn less than 12 times and in good shape. I paid around \$95, yours for \$35. Contact Gerry at sea sherpa kayak dot com
- **Bungee/ Stretch Cord** - all sizes, colors, and styles available. Prices start at \$5.00/spool. Jonathan at 401-447-7973 Jon@marineropeinternational.com
- **Dagger Exodus 168** - red, length 16'-11", width 23.25", weight 60 lbs, cockpit 34" x 19". Bow and stern storage compartments, full rudder system - mint condition. Asking \$789. **Corsica S Whitewater Kayak** - purple, length 10' 7", width 24", weight 39 lbs. Some scratches. Kayak, spray skirt, PFD, carbon fiber paddle - \$389. **Two Dagger Mamba 8.1 Whitewater Kayaks** - your choice of sunrise or yellow. Length 8' 1", width 26.75", weight 47 lb., cockpit 34" x 19". Very little use. Kayak, PFD, helmet, carbon fiber paddle - \$699. Email or call watersedge99@comcast.net 508-944-2539
- **Romany Explorer sea kayak** - fiberglass, 17'6" X. 21.5". **Prijon Hurricane whitewater kayak** with stern air bag. **Kopapa Kiwi kayak** - 8' X 26". Medium dry top & drysuit (needs wrist & ankle gaskets). Large PFD, bilge pump. 3 cockpit covers. 5 paddles and 2 dry bags. Yakima rack w/ locks plus 2 sets of saddles. Extra towers & clips \$1500. Contact goray7ray@gmail.com
- **Werner Carbon Fiber Ikelos paddle** - bent shaft. 215 cm. Only used twice and is in brand new condition -\$350. Contact aikijerry@optonline.net
- **Valley Aquanaut** - plastic, in good condition with built in skeg - \$600. Contact Paul O'Reilly at 401- 640-5052
- **Necky Looksha** - 17' poly model includes Werner carbon paddle, cockpit cover, spray shirt, paddle float, kayak dolly - \$1,200. Call Pat Cosma at 401-480-3508

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