

# *PADDLE* **Apr** *SPLASHES* **2022**

Appalachian Mountain Club, New York-North Jersey Chapter  
Canoe & Kayak Committee

**We're  
Back!**

**SHOULDER  
SEASON  
PADDLING**



**Maine Guides**



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**Cover:** Tova Klein on this year's Ramapo River trip. Photo by Marty Plante.

# Do you have what it takes to be a Maine Guide?

**I**t was on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of our journey through the wild paradise of the St. John River when my guide had a cardiac moment.

Even the illustrious Maine Professional Guides Association (MPGA) can't fix stupid.

And let me admit, it was all my fault.

We were approaching a river section with the bland but accurate name of Big Rapid, a three-mile gauntlet of boulders and chutes. There were five of us in four canoes, mine more a barge—a tandem 16-foot Discovery reversed to ride as solo, then stuffed with 200 pounds of iron skillet and ammo boxes.

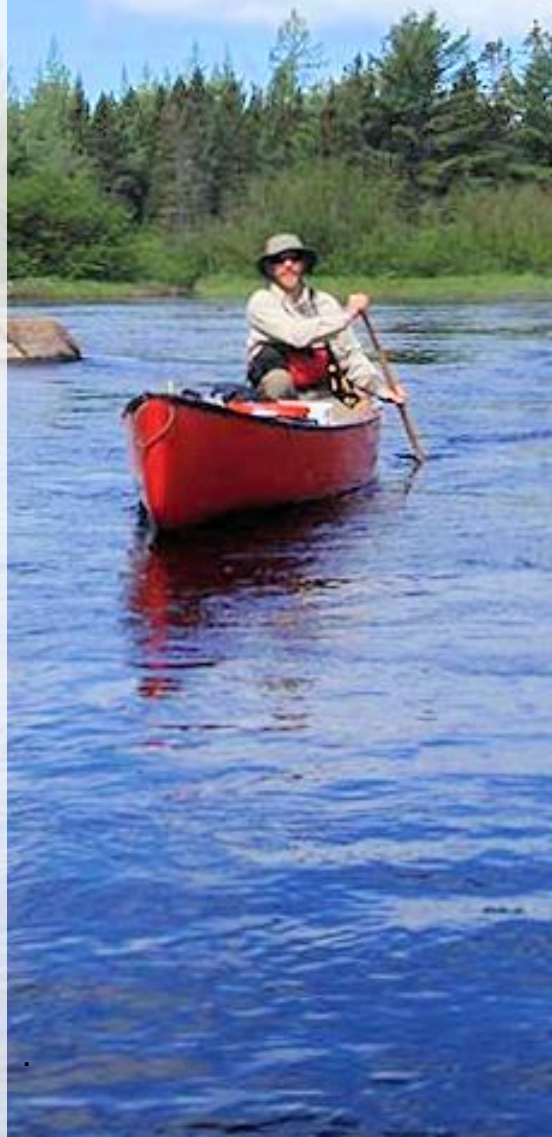
That might've been my first mistake: overselling

my experience to solo canoe down 100 miles of spring flow river that's just 10 degrees above freezing.

I always approach guided expeditions as a school, raising the bar with each trip—tandem to solo, more rapids, more volume, more remote. I pick outfitters who coach both whitewater moves and survival camping. This time I sought the best, the 100-year tradition of MPGA. I found it at Smoking Rivers Canoe Expeditions. Nationally, Maine Guides are the Olympians of outdoor tripping. Of those who apply, 60% fail certification, not including graduates of the state's guiding schools.

The first rigorously tested and officially registered Maine Guide was a lady, Cornelia "Fly Rod" Crosby in 1897, famed for catching 200 trout in one day. But

STORY BY  
**LORETTA BRADY**  
PHOTOS BY  
**SMOKING RIVER  
EXPEDITIONS**



**A happy client on the St. John River.**



the legacy of expertise to lead a party “through woods, over mountains, down streams taking all precautions for safety and [be] a good cook,” Chief Henry Red Eagle recalled in 1950, is an honor first belonging to the Wabanki tribes.

As Henry David Thoreau grew to know these leaders and their language, he said their ways in this magical wilderness “reveal another and wholly new life to us as far from us as heaven is.” So I can be forgiven my ambitiousness to know this world, too.

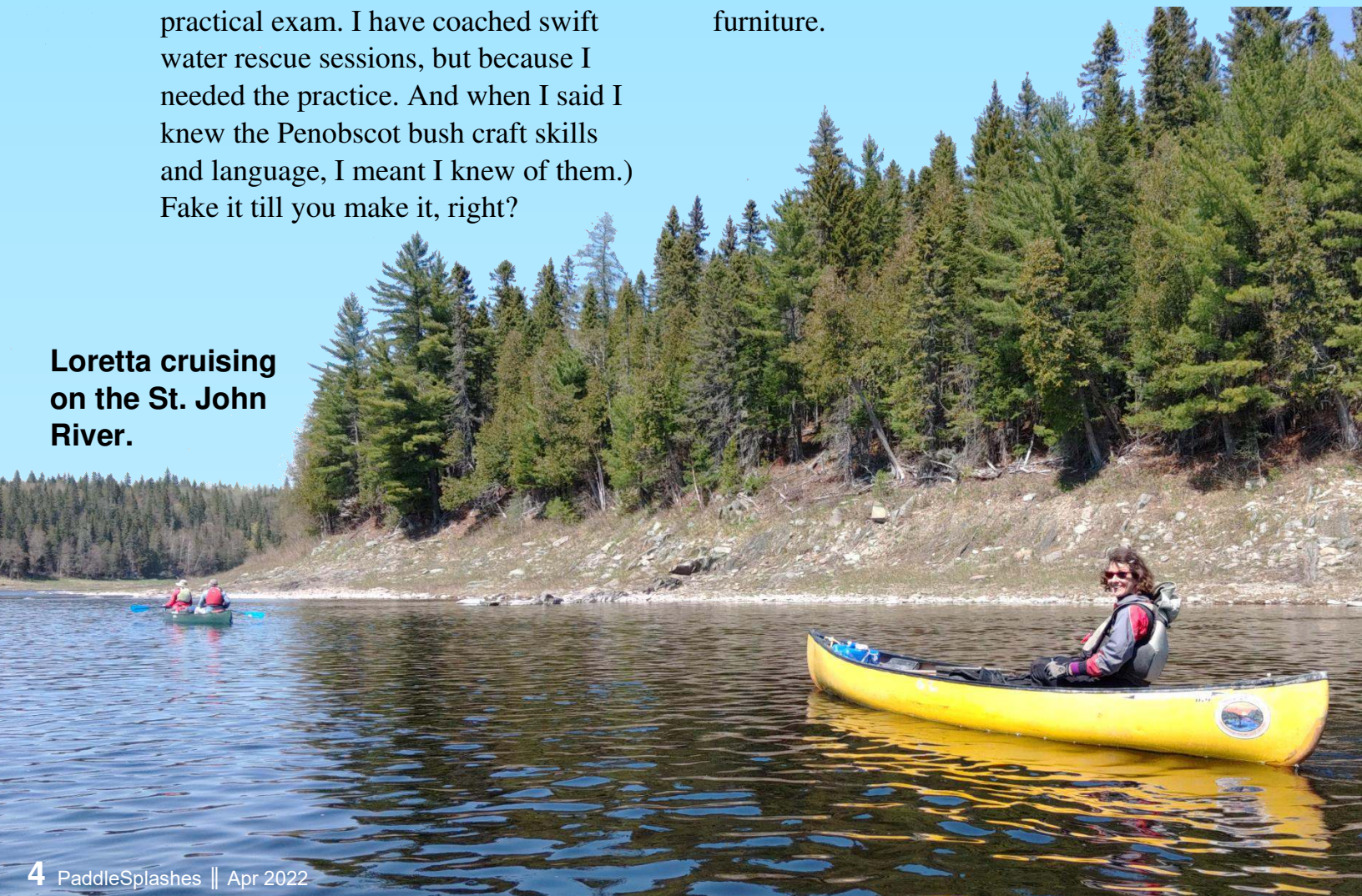
I guess I had padded my application experience narrative a bit. (But I did take AMC’s Wilderness First Aid twice because, well, I’d failed the practical exam. I have coached swift water rescue sessions, but because I needed the practice. And when I said I knew the Penobscot bush craft skills and language, I meant I knew of them.) Fake it till you make it, right?

The first day, they had to pry me off a rock. Good thing leaning into the boulder was easier when you’re hauling a piano.

All the while the two guides, Jason Cross and Dan Flaminni, glided nimbly through the rock garden with their massive setting poles. For not only was Jason a third generation Master Maine Guide, and Dan a masterful lifelong canoeist-then-director of the Boy Scouts of America’s Maine High Adventure program, but both were medaled national canoe racers.

It was obvious they’d grown up in a canoe. For Dan, the forest is his furniture.

**Loretta cruising  
on the St. John  
River.**





“Forget all that sporty play boat paddling you do, for now you need to pry like this,” Jason demoed.

The next day, I battled a wind so strong I kept scudding sideways. Only after Jason added another 40-pound sack to the bow did slow progress resume. Yet every day, both the river and I grew in force. And every night, I played out my fantasy that I was one of the MPGA team:

- foraged and cut wood
- hauled water up steep paths
- pitched a stealth campsite sheltered from the night’s icy frost
- spotted the cow moose swimming then prancing up into brambles
- tracked a moose yearling by noting hoof prints, nib sticks, and where it made water
- baked homemade cakes and cornbread in an iron box (Dutch oven)
- cooked in the rain with a giant skillet as a “roof,” then a lid, to protect the soufflé
- traced the damage from ice out-gauges and dead fall five feet up on the banks!
- spotted the rusted 19th-century mystery antiques road show, hidden among tall grasses of the abandoned Seven Islands homesteads

Click to Learn More



Okay, maybe I only did the first three. Yet the most amazing thing I learned from them took me by surprise. In eight days with these special guides, I felt what it meant to really live in the wild—peacefully, intimately. Spring waters overflowed. That drumming grouse sang his love songs for our humble crew. Those changing clouds were talking to us, telling us what weather to expect.

Henry David nailed it. This is indeed “another and wholly new life to us” similar to, but “as far from us as heaven is.”

Oh, and of course they had my back on Big Rapid. As I turned the sharp corner, a howling gust of wind stopped me dead in my tracks. I’d never been on such pumping waves, paddling with all my might, yet standing still! Blinded by panic, I let an eddy grab me, and lost my line. But there were Jason and Dan, pointing the way and cheering me on.

When I grow up, I want to be just like them.



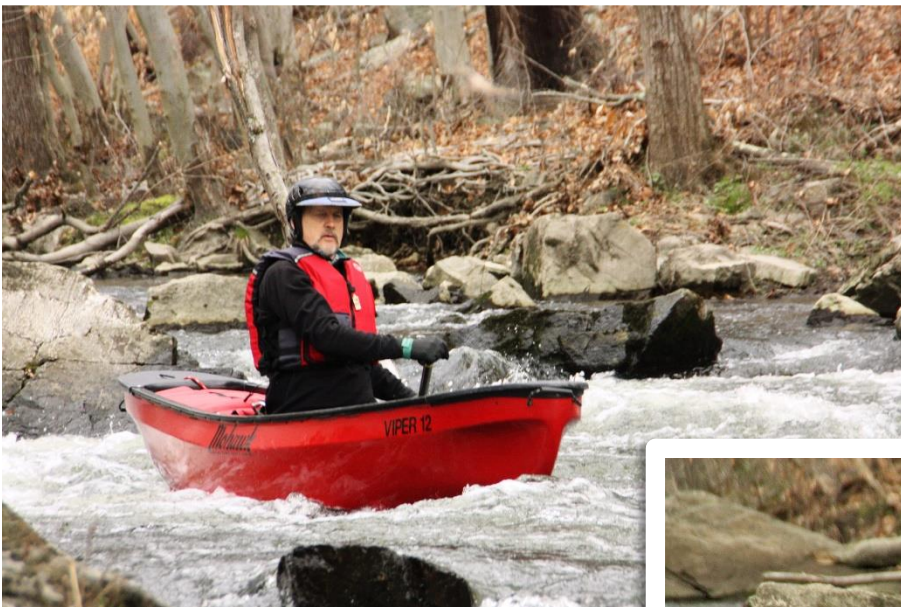
# The Ramapo River

## Apr 16, 2022

We always expect the unexpected on the Ramapo and our recent trip was no exception. Instead of our usual March trip, this year's adventure was scheduled for mid-April. No frozen lake to portage around. No shivering while we ate lunch. We were accompanied by the usual menagerie: four whitetail deer, one bear cub, several great blue herons, and no mosquitoes. But nothing is ever perfect. There were a few swims, some annoying strainers, an unexpected climb up a small mountain with a fleet of boats, and a complex shuttle. But lots of smiles!









# Shouldering the Shoulder Season

BY LORETTA BRADY

**W**inter months, you're apt to find the avid paddler crouched above a keyboard, plotting upcoming adventures. Especially our flock.

Visions of permits dance in Sozanne's head.

Eileen weighs options for an Allagash escape.

Don mulls over his menu of streams for the famed Week of Adirondack Rivers.

Charles and Gwen replay YouTube links for their month-long Arctic quest along the Horton.

Russ maps out campsites to match his epic routes to Wappingers Falls and a secret wild Hudson island.

And with a suspense rivalling the selection of the Court's 9<sup>th</sup> Supreme Court Justice, many can't wait to hear where Curt will launch this year—and whether there's room in his pack canoe for them?

But paddling season doesn't end in the winter or shoulder seasons, Curt reminds us, "Just pick the warmer days! There have been plenty this season," he encourages.

**T**he Pine Barrens has always been a club tradition off-season and was especially popular these past months. Let's hope it continues to lure out-of-towners as it has: Potomac's new leaders-in-training, and AMC members from other states, even as far-flung as New Hampshire.

"Heading out tomorrow for the Wading River!" Curt invites. What, now, would that make his 10<sup>th</sup> Barrens trip this year?

Makes you feel a bit lazy, that dude



**Curt Gellerman on a shoulder season trip to the Opalescent River in the Adirondacks.** Photo by Marty Plante.





**Thanks to all of our 2021 trip  
leaders, paddling instructors  
and other volunteers. You  
made it a great year!**

Susan Allen  
Glen Barnes  
Richard Batiuk  
Loretta Brady  
Rich Breton  
Milana Buslovsky  
Oleg Buslovsky  
Paul Edwards  
Russ Faller  
Steve Ferder  
Elana Fine  
Butch Futrell  
Frank Gallo

Curt Gellerman  
Don Getzin  
Lenny Grefig  
Neil Grossman  
Mary Ann Hoag  
Brian Horowitz  
Jennifer Koermer  
Cath Kraft  
Michel Leroy  
Klara Marton  
Charles Michener  
Camilla Nivison  
Jim Om

Marty Plante  
Anthony Reynolds  
David Rosenfeld  
Sam Perry  
Henry Schreiber  
Ivan Schwartz  
Sozanne Solmaz  
Marie Stephens  
Mark Tiernan  
Helga Trocha  
Chris Viani  
Tim Watters  
Eileen Yin

PS





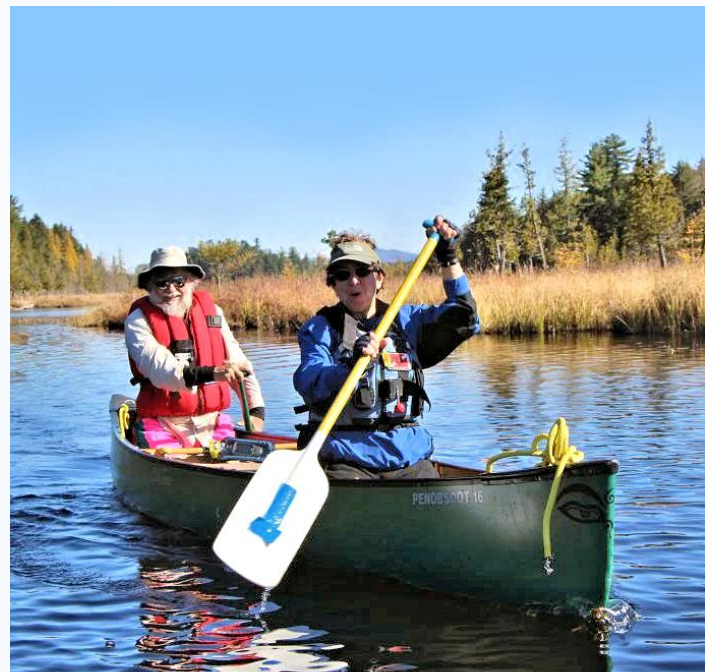
*Congratulations*

**Congratulations to all  
who completed our  
Canoe/Kayak Committee's  
Leadership Training Program:**

Michael Ahern (Delaware Valley)  
Mark Lidd Mark (Potomac)  
Meave Sheehan (NY-NoJ)  
Melissa Spooner (NY-NoJ)  
Ram Tripathi (NY-NoJ)  
Bev Wind-Wild (NY-NoJ)

**And a big Thanks! to  
our Leader-Trainers,**

Lenny Grefig  
Henry Schreiber





## Bev Wind-Wild

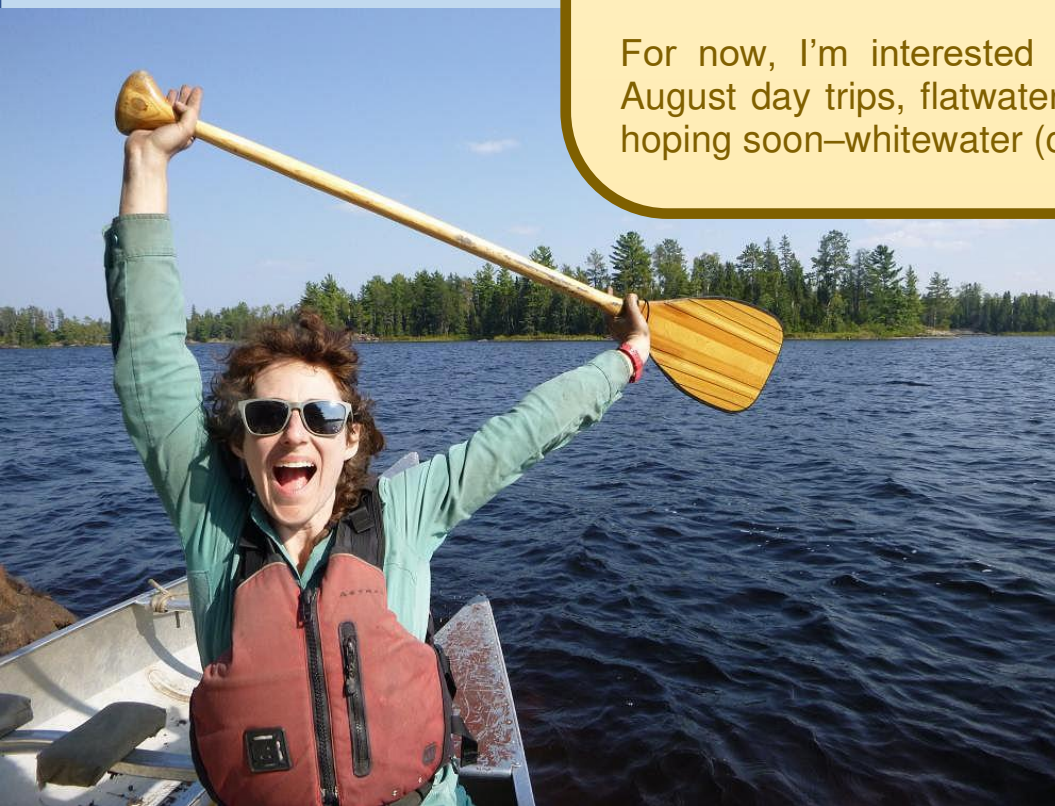
I'm a canoeist—no closed boats for me, thanks.

I've led dozens of flatwater canoe expeditions in the Boundary Waters of Minnesota, am comfortable with all elements of teaching canoe paddle strokes, managing a group, doing canoe rescues, navigation, and all that. I would be happy to lead a few flatwater trips as my experience with rapids develops.

I'm more interested in eventually leading whitewater trips, but need to build more skills first. I have about 20 days' worth of class II/III tandem canoe paddling under my belt from 15-20 years ago as a participant/trainee, but have never led a whitewater trip. I hope to become proficient in swift water rescue techniques, along with solo whitewater paddling. I'm looking forward to learning and experiencing all of this with the AMC clinics and trips.

Since I'm new to the area, AMC will also help me learn more about the regional rivers.

For now, I'm interested in leading May through August day trips, flatwater, but even more so—and hoping soon—whitewater (class II).



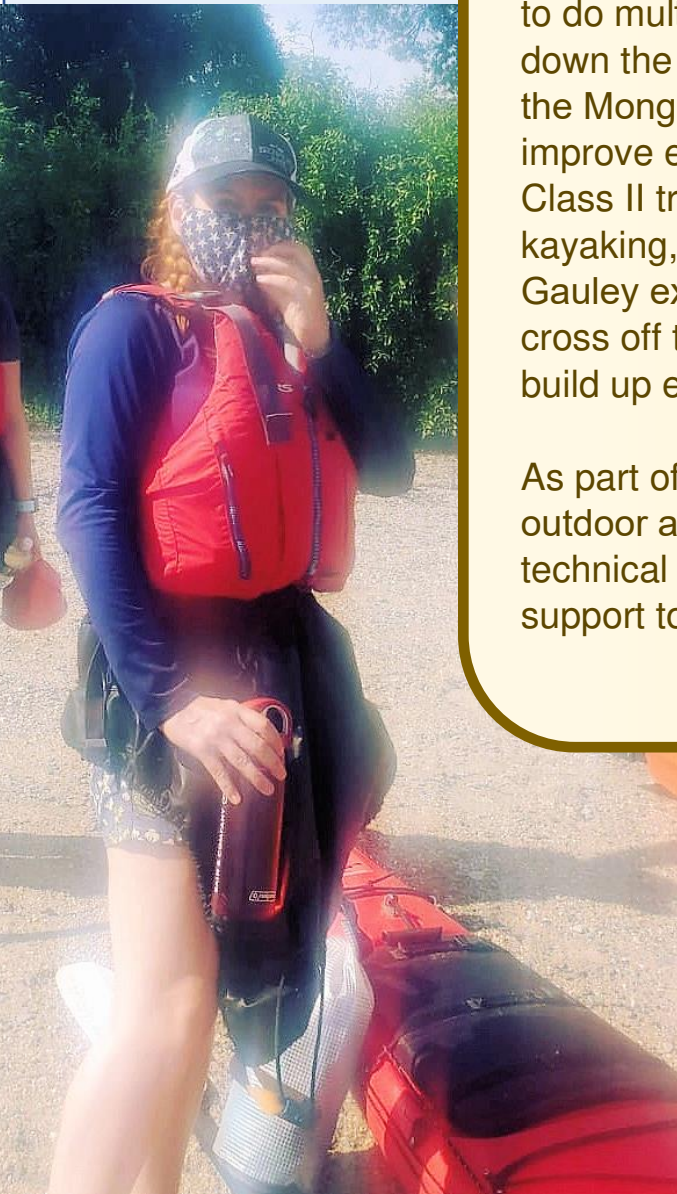


## Melissa Spooner

I've always loved being on the water. I'm also a bit of an adrenaline junkie. Add the two together and it's surprising that it took me so long to find the sport of whitewater kayaking. However, on rafting trip down the Zambezi River, I was fortunate to see some crazy kayakers playing in the monster waves. I knew I had to try it out for myself.

Last summer, I bought my first whitewater kayak (a classic Dagger RPM) and really started putting my beginner kayaking skills to the test. I was lucky enough to do multiple trips down the Lehigh, a memorable trip down the Lackawaxen, and an exciting first run down the Mongaup on a double barrel release. I'm hoping to improve even more this summer and get some more Class II trips under my belt. In addition to whitewater kayaking, I still love whitewater rafting. After an amazing Gauley experience last fall, this season I'm hoping to cross off the Dead River, Youghiogheny River, and if I build up enough courage, Gore Canyon.

As part of the AMC, I love encouraging others to try outdoor activities. Even if I can't teach a lot of the technical kayaking skills yet, I can offer lots of moral support to new kayakers!





## Ram Tripathi

I hope to provide beginner whitewater kayakers with the fundamental skills to begin kayaking on Class I and II whitewater.



*Typically humble, never one to brag, Ram will serve as one of our key lead instructors in our expanding clinics. We're lucky to have him, along with David Rosenfeld, to fill out our team—especially when he regularly hops hemispheres visiting family, and actively developing local communities there, too.*


*We first recognized Ram's gifts on our trips on Esopus Creek, where he helped advance paddlers in multiple ways—unpinning being just one of them! He generously embraced our offer to spearhead a training run for novice AMC and KCCNY boaters on a surprisingly feisty Lackawaxan that day. We all came away better boaters—and people—thanks to his part on the dream team of Neil Grossman, Mary Ann Hoag, Steve McLuckie, and David Rosenfeld that day.*

*- Loretta*





# Meet the New Chair: Brian Horowitz

A man with a beard and sunglasses, wearing a red jacket and a blue life vest, is kayaking on a calm lake. He is holding a black paddle. The kayak is yellow with black straps. In the background, there is a forested shoreline with some buildings and other kayakers in the distance.

It's an honor to be the new Chair of the AMC's New York-North Jersey paddlers. The past two years have been challenging, but as the pandemic winds down I'm looking forward to our paddling program returning to its previous breadth. Hope to see you on the water soon.

A person wearing a helmet and a life vest is rafting down a river. The raft is blue and yellow. The water is turbulent with white rapids. The background shows a forested riverbank.

**Deerfield Fest**  
**Charlemont, MA**  
**Aug 6-7, 2022**

**Learn  
More**



# WE'RE BACK!

BY LORETTA BRADY

**W**e've been startled by a gust of inquiries for river boating lessons. Accordingly, we'll soon inflate more airbags while we inflate our course offerings.

Now—more than ever—we need experienced paddlers to join the graduating classes on the 2<sup>nd</sup> river day and subsequent follow-up trips.

Honestly, the rewards outweigh the road miles.

“We used to hold two beginner whitewater courses a year, and even skills clinics, but the interest fell off,” Butch recalled.

So what's up? Why the spike?

“My goals for the course,” responded one applicant, “are to meet others who love paddling and exploring, and to have the skills to go on more kinds of trips.” Also inflated is the caliber of students attending. Among the pool is a former

Outward Bound guide, an AMC hiking leader, and a veteran paddling leader looking to rapidly refresh his moving-water skills.

Among our teaching/coaching team, we're excited by new talents. Ram Tripathi—a long recognized asset on many of our whitewater trips—will generously share his time to groom new kayakers.

**T**hen, witnessing her magical people and paddling skills, we're thrilled that Melissa Spooner—a former student with Butch—accepted our invitation to pursue an instructor certification path to future service.

Yep, it may be humble bragging, but though there's a high demand—a rising tide of interest—generous CKC paddlers are rising to the occasion.

We would love to see even more of you, and strengthen our embrace of this swelling, swell community.



Click to learn more

**Build a Wee Lassie Canoe**  
Adirondack Folk School  
Lake George, NY



Classes in May, Jul & Sep

**Wilderness  
FIRST AID**



Fri-Sun, May 20-22, 2022  
Corman AMC Outdoor Center  
Harriman State Park, NY

**Kayak Instruction  
for  
beginners**



Fri-Sun,  
Jun 3-5, 2022  
Lehigh River, PA

**Moving Water Canoe  
instruction for beginners**



Fri-Sun,  
Jun 3-5, 2022  
High Point State Park, NJ

**Moving Water Canoe  
Instruction**



Fri-Sun,  
Jun 17-19, 2022  
Lehigh River, PA

**Whitewater Kayak Instruction**  
Fri-Sun, Jun 17-19, 2022  
Delaware River





STORY BY LORETTA BRADY  
PHOTOS BY EV DAVILA-GIBSON

# PADDLERS PICNIC

## The Party That Never Ends

**Sometimes necessity is the mother of invention.  
Sometimes it's just a pain.**

With mutant strains of COVID still running amok, the Chapter held its traditional holiday gathering in the great outdoors at Van Cortlandt Park in “upstate Manhattan.”

Nearly 30 revelers hiked the wooded ponds, greeted the wood ducks, then gathered “campfire style” for a barbeque potluck.





As the sun set, a hardy group packed gear urban style—in a random shopping cart found in the woods—then headed to a pub across the street, masked, of course.

“It’s always great to see people here from all different ages, veteran and brand-new members gathering at this party,” Mary Ann Hoag noted.

In fact, two new millennials joined us on the spot that day.

After noting a chatty, laughing group of hikers passing by, a young man inquired who we were. Hearing Susan Allen reveal our origin story, he asked if he and his wife could join the club.

“Of course! Why don’t you come crash the picnic, now, too?” welcomed Susan.

Which explains how it came to pass that two young neurology residents newly joined our fold.

The highlight for many were the recognition awards. A lengthy list was honored for valiantly running trips throughout these uncertain times. Each received a book matched especially to their unique passions. We also gifted David Michael an emergency sea kayak light—since we all know he lacks for gear (not!)

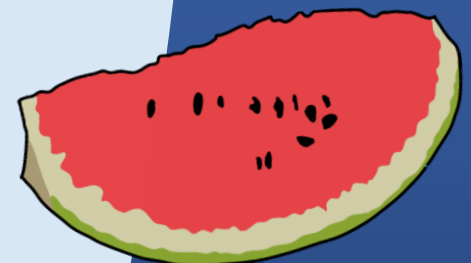
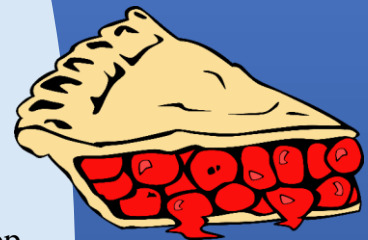
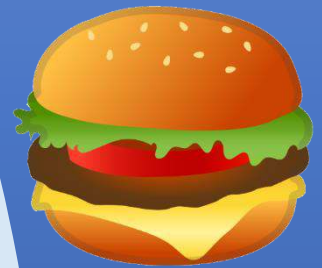
We toasted our new enthusiastic chair, Brian Horowitz, and hailed our treasured past chair, Charles Michener, with our gifts and love.

One special item for Charles was a Whitney Loop t-shirt. It maps the challenging loop of this iconic Adirondack canoe route. This way, we’ll never lose him there.

His loss as our chair pains us enough.

Long live the new chair!

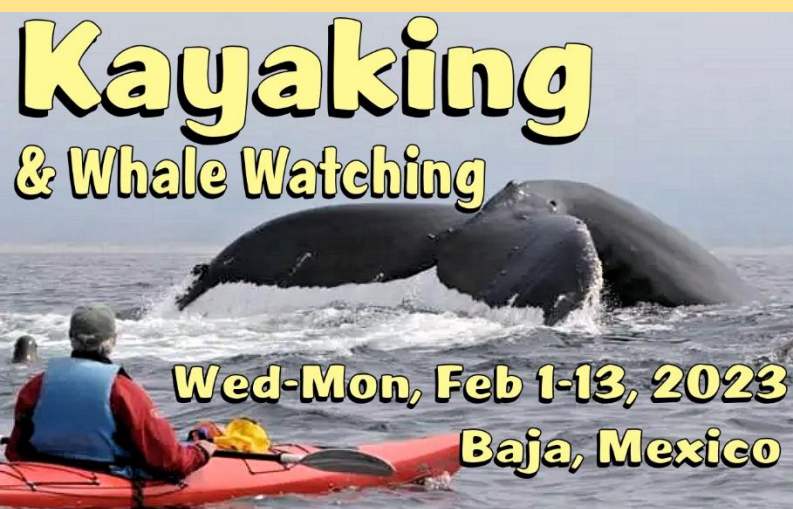
**Klara Marton and Mary Ann Hoag on the hike.**





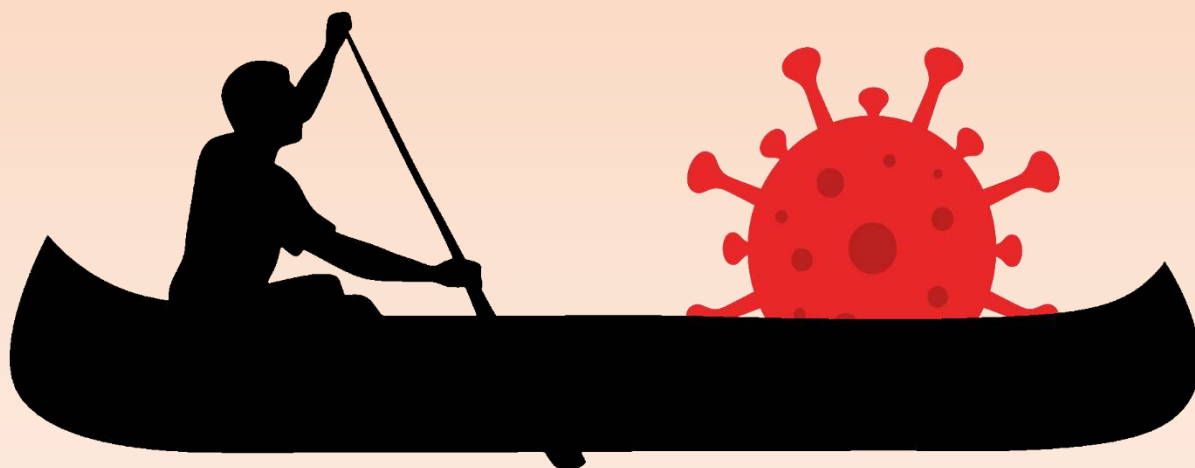
# What's Going On?

Click a box to find out!





# Boating with Covid



As of December 1, 2021 AMC requires volunteers be vaccinated or receive a negative PCR test within 72 hours of the start of an event. AMC relies on the honor system for compliance. Participants may be required to wear masks, provide proof of vaccination, or in the alternative a current (within 72 hours) negative PCR test as a condition of attending this event. For your personal safety, you should expect to be in the presence of vaccinated and unvaccinated people in all AMC settings and should make choices about participating accordingly.

## ***PADDLE SPLASHES***

**Loretta Brady, Editor**

Marty Plante, Printer's Devil

PaddleSplashes is published by the Canoe and Kayak Committee of the Appalachian Mountain Club, New York–North Jersey Chapter.

### **Guidelines for Submissions**

Photos are preferred as high-resolution color jpeg files attached to email. Please do not crop, compress, resize or otherwise interfere with them.

### **Send all submissions to:**

canoekayak.Newsletter <at> amc-ny.org

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past issues of  
***PADDLE SPLASHES*****



## Dude, Where's my Boat?

We'll be clearing out the Barn of surplus canoes and kayaks. If you've been storing a private boat there and haven't made arrangements to do so, please contact the Canoe/Kayak Treasurer at

[canoekayak.treasurer@amc-ny.org](mailto:canoekayak.treasurer@amc-ny.org)



## Barn Work Day

Rockland County, NY

Sat, May 7, 2022

Whether it's for an hour or the afternoon, your help is needed. We'll be repairing and cleaning boats, taking inventory, and sorting PFDs and skirts. No special skills are needed, just your enthusiasm.

**Learn  
More**





## 2022 Activity Schedule

Date		Quiet Water	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3
April	16-17		Ramapo (Sat, 4/16) <i>Plante</i>	Farmington at Collinsville (Sat, 4/16) <i>Grossman/ Edwards</i>	
	23-24	Great Swamp (Sat, 4/23) <i>Schreiber/Grefig</i>			
		Pine Barrens (Sat, 4/23) <i>Watters</i>			
Apr 30 – May 1		Pine Barrens Expedition (4/27-30) <i>Michener</i>		Mongaup (Sun, 5/1) <i>Grossman</i>	
May	7-8	Barn Work Day, <i>Michener</i>			
		Canoe/Kayak Trip Leader Workshop (online) <i>Schreiber/Grefig</i>			
	Oswego (Sat, 5/7) <i>Watters</i>		Farmington at Tariffville (Sat, 5/7) <i>Grossman/ Edwards</i>		
	14-15				
	21-22				
	28-29				
June	4-5	Mullica Family Trip (6/3-5) <i>Watters</i>	Canoe Instruction (6/3-5) <i>Brady/ Michener</i>	Esopus (Sat, 6/4) <i>Plante</i>	
			Kayak Instruction (6/3-5) <i>Futrell</i>		



# Parting Shots: Watercraft Weddings

