

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





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October 2025









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Cover: Mary Ann Hoag on Browns Tract Inlet during the Adirondack Week of Rivers trip. Photo by Eileen Yin.

Following the Current:

The Journey of a New Trip Leader



This year has been like floating on a river that carried me further than I expected.

I've spent my time on a wide range of trips—calm stretches that let me enjoy the scenery, twisting creeks that demanded my attention, and whitewater that sharpened my skills. Each stroke has felt like progress, not just as a paddler, but as someone preparing to lead others down these same rivers.

Working toward becoming a trip leader has given me a new perspective. It's no longer just about how I move through the water, but how I prepare to guide and encourage others when the river grows difficult. Reading currents, making decisions, managing risk—it all feels like part of a larger test, one I want to pass not only with competence but also with confidence.

Jack cruising on the scenic Ramapo River. Photo by Marty Plante.

ately, I've been thinking about stepping up to a whitewater playboat. The idea excites me—navigating rapids not just to get to the take-out, but for the sheer joy of paddling, for the chance to play in the waves and eddies. It feels like the natural next step.

To improve my skills, I spent this year paddling a wide variety of rivers, with more ambitious plans for the future. I have expeditions laid out ahead like mile markers on a highway: a winter trip down Pine Creek, where the bitter Pennsylvania weather will test my cold-water endurance; the Buffalo River in Arkansas, with its clear turquoise waters and towering bluffs; and the Dumoine River in Quebec,

whose rapids test even seasoned paddlers. These are not just destinations, but milestones in an ongoing journey.

he rivers teach me in ways that books cannot. Each new stretch of water is shaping me, building the paddler and trip leader I hope to become. Each trip, each rapid, each decision on the water is part of the current that carries me forward. The current is moving, and I'm moving with it.

Jack on the Deerfield River. Photo by Chris Bellingham.



How Do You Measure a DREAM Trip?



Photo by Mary Ann Hoag



STORY BY LORETTA BRADY

The number of rapids?
The fuss-to-fun factor?
Wildlife sightings?
The meander/exploration quotient?

Somehow Pine Barrens trips always hit the mark, as did this fall's adventure, led by Mary Ann Hoag.

Always the same-paddling through fairytale-perfect mossy, cedar woods-yet also different.

"The lower angle of the sun this time of year easily illuminates the translucent foliage, making it glow."

The eight paddlers also saw the scars of recent, traumatic fires. But they learned from a local expert that there's hope.

"The back burning strategy you see there," noticed Mark Tiernan, "saved the rest of the forest from burning," he explained, pointing to how all along the riverbank roots and grasses were charred from burning away any litter that could fuel approaching firestorms.

Like a magical dream, the paddlers enjoyed 80-degree weather in mid-September, with plenty of brilliant red cardinal flowers and purple and pink pickerel and Joe-Pye weed still with fresh blooms.

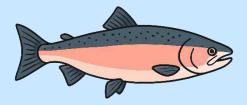
And if that weren't enough, at night, as our weary paddlers slept beneath bowers of hemlock and pine, barred owls called out their lullaby.

REASONS TO LOVE NEW YORK'S WILD SALMON RIVER

Friendly waves and shoots to ferry, surf–and swim in.

We had three canoeists swim while surfing, but they self-rescued to perfection.





Rustic charm: like local Amish with their horse and buggy carts, or fly fishers with their graceful casting, or Stoney and his cozy group campsite,

with the giant trout mural on the bathhouse wall and the pile of broken barbecue grills behind.

Gnarly holes: like Titanic and Washing Machine. This year, Titanic spat out a daring canoeist, but his because play boat's pump kept emptying its vessel, the canoe continued spinning and flipping for five minutes while onlookers drew straws over who would go in after it. Luckily, the hole grew bored of its prey, ejecting it.

Communal reunion: a great chance for all novice paddlers–five this time– to step up while observing the smooth stylings of advanced paddlers: Nancy, Andrea, Kerri, Cameron, Jennifer, Chris Viani, and especially Eric and Simon, who did every move forwards and backwards, and while calling out tips to the newbies.





Get three runs in and still get home Sunday at a reasonable hour.

Pot Luck Bliss: How about peach cobbler in a Dutch oven? Or homemade potato salad? Or sizzling sausages, sauerkraut and beans? Or cumin spiced veggies? And you don't even miss the gluten.

Tanya McCabe

celebration of life was recently attended by several club members to honor the passing of Tanya McCabe. Like the late David Brucas, Tanya was one of the legendary expedition leaders in the AMC. Here are just some of the shared memories from those who knew her well:

Henry Schreiber remembers that Tanya was the one who corralled everyone to register to vote. "I was always plugging my conservation efforts, and she was the one who made me realize that if I registered and voted, it could increase the impact."

Lenny Grefig recalls her fun side, and all the paddlers' parties, especially the singing. "We performed our original songs like *I'm a Terminal Intermediate*, 'The eddy line is fast approaching, I take my time, I end up broaching, I'm a terminal intermediate.'



Linda Polstein remembers how special their Canadian river trips were—especially the three-week expeditions on the Class 3-4 Nahanni River. Tanya and Mike Dalton planned and delegated everything so efficiently and professionally. "Those were some of the most exciting trips. Jill and I begged to be invited."



Kerry O'Brien recalls that Tanya, together with her partner Mike Dalton, led some of the club's most popular brown water paddling trips for decades, from southern New Jersey to the Adirondacks. They also regularly led AMC hikes in New York and New Jersey, joined AMC canoe expeditions across the USA and Canada, and went on paddling and hiking excursions in Europe and in Central and South America.

Tanya was a true earth mother who loved everyone – her family, long-time friends and new faces, the communal camping experience, life – and was loved in return by everyone who met her. She always gave support and encouragement, whether training new paddlers or sitting around the campfire.

In later years, Tanya and Mike hosted regular gatherings of the hundreds of friends they made through the AMC. She was touched to have made such close bonds.

Tanya's warm heart and loving ways will be missed.

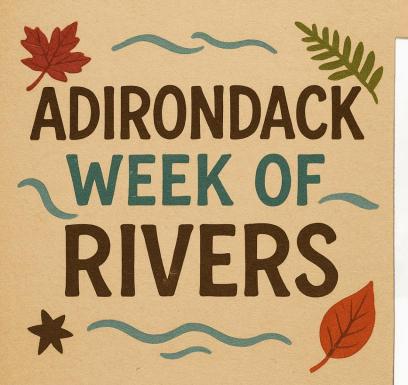
Tanya on her bicycling trip in Germany.



Jill Arbuckle agrees, recalling Tanya's calm and masterful planning during their Nahanni expedition. "Mike knew the river, but Tanya planned everything else, from organizing the food cache that would be dropped off for us midtrip at the falls, to transporting our canoes through the Northwest Territories, so we could just fly in and join them." Tanya must have had the patience of a saint, understanding and supporting all. Even when Jill and Linda flipped and swam the first day out, all was forgiven. Or when the paddler appointed to fish for dinner was exempted from chores, but failed to reel in a catch, she adapted. Besides, after a week he finally caught an Arctic char, never mind that he hooked it just as dinner was finishing up.

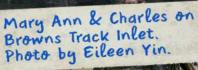
More and more we come to realize that we can't wait for our government to improve the world, we can't expect religion to do it all. What we can expect is that each of us tries to make a better place. Peace and a better place begin with the individual; peace and a better place begin with me and it begins with you.

Tanya McCabe, PaddleSplashes May/June 2005



AUG 9-14, 2025







Eileen cooling off near Jessup River

For this year's Week of Adirondacks Rivers, the paddling was wonderful, providing an excellent opportunity to improve our skills at dragging canoes and kayaks over beaver dams.

Apologies are owed to the beavers for the hard work they will have to do to repair the resulting damage.

Actually a "Week of Adirondack Rivers & Lakes," this seven-day trip was led by Eileen Yin, Mary Ann Hoag, and Charles Michener.

Chris Viani was a key river leader, helping us find our way through labyrinths of weeds and over steep, sharp mammal construction projects.

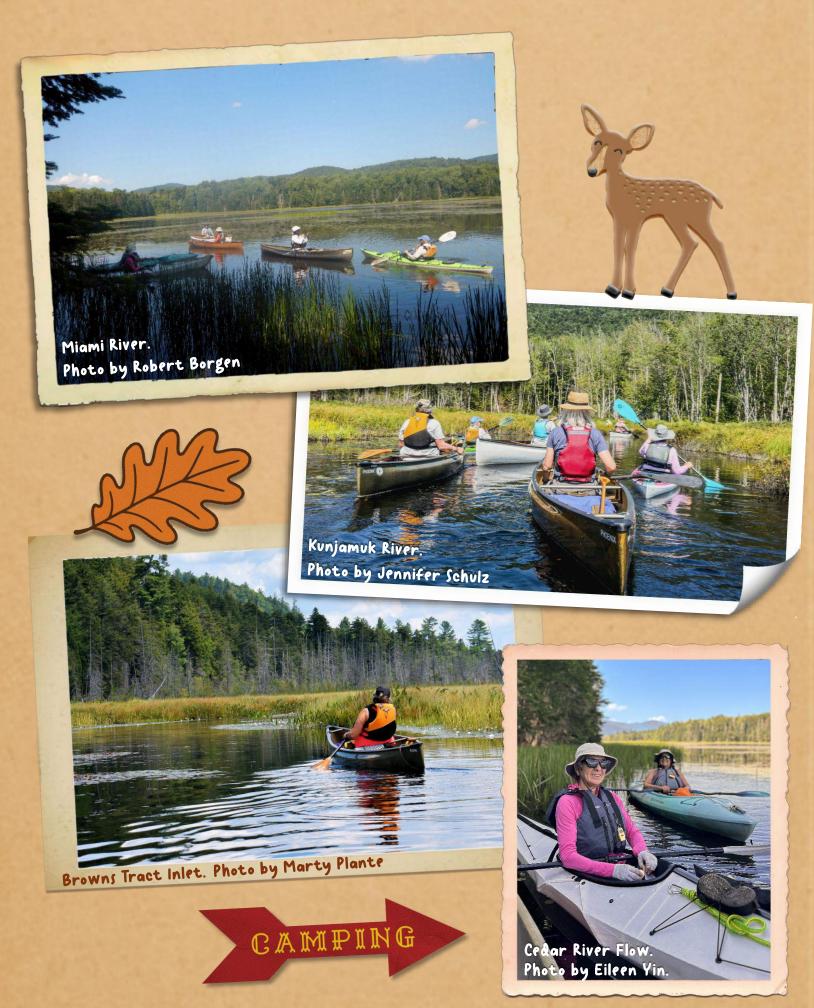
Thanks to all the leaders' hard work, everything ran smoothly. We camped at Lewey Lake Campground and paddled there and at surrounding rivers, lakes and streams, such as the popular Cedar River Flow and the Kunjamuk River, including upstream by Elm Lake.

The dinners, organized by our leaders, were delicious and everyone cheerfully (or at least willingly) helped with the chores. It was a diverse, multi-generational, and congenial group of paddlers, men and women, canoers and kayakers.

Wildlife included great looks at green herons, eagles, loons, and even, a very bold young bear jumping over picnic tables and running behind bushes at the campground.

Good times and good memories were had by all.

Robert Borgen



the

DEERFIELD

june 2-25, 2025



















Our band of three adventurers (Chris Bickford, Rich Cerruto and yours truly) paddled a combination of large and small lakes, twisty creeks and marshes on some of the most beautiful and historic waterways in the southern Adirondacks. Launching in the hamlet of Blue Mountain Lake, we paddled its namesake waterway and spent our first night camped on an island. We spent the week exploring Eagle Lake, the Marion River and Raquette Lake. We entered Browns Tract Inlet then returned to Raquette Lake to further explore its intricate pattern of points, bays, inlets and islands. We concluded our week of adventure with a magnificent hike to the Blue Mountain Fire Tower for a bird's-eye view of the waterways that we had just paddled.

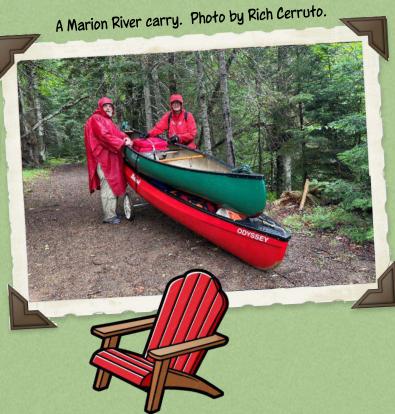
Russ Faller

Adirondack Canoe Camping Aug 26-31



Island campsite on Blue Mtn Lake. Photo by Chris Bickford





we're rounding up the gang for the

AMC PADDLERS' PARTY

Tarrytown,
NY

Sat, Jan 10, 2026



AMC PHOTO CONTEST

NOM OPEN!



Deadline 11/2/2025



CLICK HERE

AMC Annual Volunteer Awards



Volunteers bring AMC's mission to life, often serving as the first point of contact for our outdoor experiences, learning opportunities, and conservation activities. They lead trips, chair committees, manage facilities, maintain websites, edit newsletters, train leaders, plan events, and the list goes on!

Every year AMC recognizes volunteers for their invaluable contributions. If you know someone who is deserving of an award, please submit a nomination by November 20th.

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. Trip photos are always welcome.

Send all submissions to: canoekayak.newsletter <at> amc-ny.org

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LET'S GO SHOPPING!

We need to upgrade our canoe fleet. We're looking for quietwater solo and tandem canoes, and movingwater tandem canoes, in new or gently-used condition. No wooden gunwales or fiberglass, please.

Do you know of an outfitter that's downsizing?

Do you see an offer online? Would you like to join the Canoe Selection Committee? Let Eileen know at

canoekayakchair@ amc-ny.org



Parting Shots

silly shuttles









