

The Chesapeake Paddler



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Marooned on a desert island

How to plan for those summer afternoon storms on the Chesapeake Bay



Monitoring the weather forecast and being prepared with extra clothes and a line to tie down your boat are keys to dealing with the frequent summer “pop-up” thunderstorms on the Bay. Above, the author ready to wait out a sudden storm on the beach at Dobbin Island near the Magothy river.

By Ralph Heimlich

I want to relate to you my experience marooned on a desert island. Okay, it was deserted, but I wasn't marooned. I was stuck on the beach waiting out a thunderstorm.

You should always be aware of the weather forecast in the area you are paddling and avoid paddling when the forecast calls for strong weather fronts to be moving through.

But in the Chesapeake Bay in summer, the forecast is usually “...temperatures in the high 90's, chance of a thunderstorm...” which doesn't give you enough specific information to be very useful. What we call “pop-up”

thunderstorms can happen anywhere in the later afternoon anywhere on the Bay. What should you do if you are caught in one?

Here's what happened to me. I was joining the Pirates of Arundell for a Wednesday evening paddle out of Spriggs Farm Park on the Magothy River, but I was running late. Four paddlers were already geared up and on the beach when I arrived, but I told them not to wait for me and that I'd catch up.

Fifteen minutes later, as I was setting out, the sky started to darken and the wind came up a bit. I paddled out toward Dobbin Island to catch my friends, but the wind

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From the CPA Coordinator

CPA elections and getting to know Kent Island

With September comes the upcoming CPA elections. If you would like to become part of the decision making and give back to the club then consider running for office.

The time commitment is usually minimal since other than the annual meeting and the planning meeting most of the business is done via email. New blood means new ideas.

I am so looking forward to the year of the apocalypse to be over so the regular and new CPA events can occur. I really miss having a full calendar of new and challenging events mixed with some of the old staples that make CPA what it is.

If you have any ideas for new events you would like to see then consider volunteering to lead, you can always ask for a mentor or a fellow paddler to help out. We have many members who would love to help you, CPA has a talent pool that is endless.

One of the events I really miss is the KIPP (Kent Island Practice Paddles). KIPP is one of the old club staples



Bill Smith

created by Marshall Woodruff about 16 years ago, just an idea he had that he followed through with that turned into a major club event.

Marshall will tell you what the first event was like and how it has evolved into what it is today. I went on my first KIPP paddle about seven or eight years ago and was amazed at how it made me a much better paddler.

I have completed the final KIPP three times and have at least paddled with the group part of the season ever since.

KIPP starts in April with an easy “get to know you” paddle and gets a little tougher each month so the increase in distance is gradual. The first year I paddled with KIPP I had serious doubts that I would make the 34.6-mile circumnavigation of Kent Island but when the final KIPP came I was so pumped up I felt like I could have towed someone around the island.

KIPP is not just learning distance and stamina but time is spent learning skills so KIPP is an all-around event that some people would spend a lot of money to achieve if they went to another source. The other plus to KIPP is the friendships/comradery you make with the other

[See Coordinator on page three](#)



The Kent Island Practice Paddles (KIPP) is one of CPA’s most popular events. Members of the 2019 KIPP series including founder Marshall Woodruff, front row, right, and co-leader Jim Zawlocki, back row, right.

[Coordinator, from page two](#)

newbies and old time KIPPER's. The KIPPER's old and new are really a great bunch of people.

Getting to know Kent Island

The other consequence of the KIPP paddles for me is I learned that Kent Island is not just a piece of land you cross on the way to the eastern shore but a great place to visit. The more I got to know Kent Island the more I liked it. I now have a business interest on the island, so I spend several days per week there. Crossing the bay bridge is like crossing into another world. The people are more laid back and friendlier, so it is easy to make new friends.

Kent Island has an interesting history since it is the site of the first English colony in Maryland; founded as a trading post to trade with the local tribes. Founded in 1631, it's the third oldest English settlement in the country behind Jamestown, VA and Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts.

Kent Island is the largest island in the Chesapeake Bay. Prior to the English settlement the island was inhabited for more than 12,000 years by the Matapeake Indian tribe, members of the Algonquian nation.

The area was also home to the Ozinie and Monoponson tribes which visited and traded with the Matapeake and later the English. The English founder, James Claiborne, was from Jamestown, VA so he considered the island as part of Virginia until the state of Maryland claimed it as their own. Virginia disputed that claim until 1776 when it was officially deeded to the state of Maryland.

To get to the island before 1952 you had to catch a ferry and then could jump on a train to destinations around the eastern shore. A train station was located in Stevensville with hardly a sign today that trains ever serviced the island.

The eastern span of the bay bridge was opened in 1952 to two-way traffic and the western or west-bound span opened in 1973. The island has been inhabited by watermen and farmers ever since the early days.

One concerning fact about the island is it is shrinking,



Like much of the Bay's land and history, what was once Bodkin Point on Kent Island is now just a tiny island that is slipping under the waves.

like most waterways in the Bay. I was looking at a chart of Kent Island from 1896 which showed Parsons Point (now Parsons Island, located several hundred yards offshore) and Bodkin Point (now an island about ½ mile offshore).

Parsons Island once belonged to the McCormick spice family (the island is still inhabited and used as a farm) while Bodkin Island is just about nonexistent due to erosion except for a large colony of cormorants making the island smelly and not very appealing.

Both these islands can be easily found after launching from Crab Alley, Kent Narrows or Goodhands Creek with Crab Alley being the closest.

If you ever want to paddle from Kent Island, all Kent Island landings require a Queen Anne's County permit. Permits are \$10.00 per day or \$30.00 per year. Kent Narrows on the east side of the island is an interesting launch since standing waves and strong currents can be encountered in the passage.

Eastern Neck Island is an easy paddle from Kent Narrows with a three-mile crossing or an alternative 50-mile drive from Kent Narrows making it another great paddle opportunity from Kent Island. Eastern Neck Island is a 10-mile circumnavigation so paddling from Kent Narrows would make it a 16-mile round trip.

Hope to see everyone on the water, happy paddling!

Marooned, from page one



A “pop-up” thunderstorm over the Magothy river. While summer thunderstorms are frequent on the Chesapeake Bay, many are localized and short-lived and can be waited out under the right conditions.

picked up from the southeast and I hurried to round the eastern end of the island and get in the lee of the island to reduce my exposure to the wind. Nobody there.

By this time, the weather alert (I usually set the radio to scan channels 16, 69 and the local weather radio channel) had sounded for a large thunderstorm nearly stationary over BWI Airport with strong winds and heavy rains. The sky was getting darker and thunder began to mutter over to the west, upriver on the Magothy.

I decided that, caution being the better part of valor, I would land and see how things developed. Dobbin Island is private, but on the principle of “any port in a storm,” I’d rather face an irate landowner than a thunderstorm on the water. I secured my kayak to a sturdy post (does YOUR boat have a painter?) and pulled out my phone to monitor the radar.

Weather alerts started coming in one after the other for heavy thunderstorms over the Severn, flash flood warnings in Anne Arundel and Howard counties, etc. The alert was supposed to last for 45 minutes. As the sky darkened, thunder rumbled, lightning flashed, and the rain started to fall. I dug out my storm cag and settled in for a drenching (which never really arrived).

As the wind blew through, the water calmed a bit, and off to the west, the storm rolled on toward the north,

mostly bypassing me. Jeff Heneks called on channel 69 and said that the others had come back and wondered about me.

After about an hour, the sky in the south started to lighten and the thunder and lightning receded, so I called Jeff and told him I was leaving the island and heading back to Spriggs Farm. I paddled across without incident, and was glad the others were still there to help me get my boat up the stairs to the parking area.

Some lessons from this little Robinson Crusoe adventure:

- 1) Check the weather before you leave (didn’t help in this situation because this storm wasn’t forecast).
- 2) Be prepared with a VHF radio for weather alerts, a cell phone for radar, a painter on your boat to secure it, and rain gear (even on 90-degree summer days, rain drafted down in thunderstorms from the upper atmosphere can be very cold and will chill you in minutes).
- 3) It is better to be on the beach watching the storm, than be in the storm watching the beach, even somebody’s private beach. In the event, I never saw a soul on the island.
- 4) Never stay home because of a “chance of thunderstorms.” If you do, you’ll never paddle on the Chesapeake in summer!

A peaceful paddle on the Patuxent



The view from Pindell Point on Jug Bay on the Patuxent River. The river provides numerous paddling and kayak camping opportunities in the DC region.

By Paul Fofonoff

After a birthday paddle here in July I returned to one of my favorite areas on the [Patuxent River](#) in August for a slightly longer voyage. Starting at Hills Bridge on Maryland Route 4 (Pennsylvania Ave.), I went downstream to Mt Calvert, continued down the large lake-like Jug Bay and up a tributary, Mattaponi Creek. The creek is beautiful in itself, but it's also home to a large wooden boardwalk that makes for a nice hike.

After launching from Hill's Bridge, I stopped about halfway down Jug Bay at Pindell Point, part of the Jug Bay preserve. I took shelter here last summer during a thunderstorm. Native Americans lived, fished and hunted here nearly 10,000 years ago.

This site is near Pig Point, one of the major archeological sites in Maryland (<https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/bs-md-pig-point-archaeology-20110814-story.html>). There are active archeological digs in the area so please do not disturb them if you happen upon one.

I then stopped at nearby Riggelman campsite, which can be rented from Anne Arundel County (<https://>

www.aacounty.org/services-and-programs/paddle-in-camping). You have to camp on the two platforms, which makes it less attractive, but it is a beautiful location. There is a Port-a-Potty and nearby I found Sweet Pepperbush (*Clethra annifolia*).

I continued down Jug Bay, past Selby's Landing, and then turned into the marshy and meandering Mattaponi Creek. Eventually, you approach trees and a bit of grassy shore and a picnic table at White Oak Landing. There is a large campsite here, frequently used by Boy Scouts and summer campers, but as of publication time Prince Georges County has closed its water trail and other campsites.

I took a break and then walked along dirt roads that are part of the Critical Area Driving Tour which is only open to cars on Sunday afternoons but is open otherwise to hikers and cyclists. The major feature is a boardwalk built for cars, which provides an unusual view of a tidal freshwater marsh. As I walked out, there was a brief and refreshing thundershower. After the thunder ended, I climbed a lookout tower and saw a very low and subdued rainbow.

[See Patuxent on page six](#)

[Patuxent, from page five](#)

The area is home to the yellow-green wild rice, *Zizania aquatica*, an important waterfowl food. It had been grazed down by breeding, nonmigratory Canada Geese, but has recovered, due in part to targeted hunting, and fences which kept out the breeding, molted and temporarily flightless geese. Salt due to rising sea level could hurt this plant in the future.

A shy wading bird, the Sora Rail (I still haven't seen one!!!) depends on the rice for its fall migration, and the recovery of the rice is considered a conservation victory. While I was there, I saw large flocks of Redwing Blackbirds feeding on the rice. Of course, I had to paddle upstream. In the past, beaver dams have blocked the creek, but these seem to have washed away.

After a while, I was above the head of tide, the current was getting stronger and it was 6 PM so it was time to turn around. I went back under the bridge and paddled out to the Patuxent and up Jug Bay. Fortunately, there was a strong incoming tide. As I continued upstream, there was a nice developing sunset.

I got back to Hills Bridge launch site just before sunset, but there was a complication as I passed the fishing dock. I swung out into the river, but nonetheless, a



A hiking trail on Mattaponi creek at White Oak Landing makes for a nice break for birdwatching and discovering plant life.

fishing line got caught in my rudder. I paddled backward to the dock and the fisherman was able to disentangle his lure. I was his biggest catch all day!

I highly recommend the Patuxent and Mattaponi for paddlers, photographers, and naturalists. It's a long paddle from Hills Bridge, about 15 miles round trip, but it's a short paddle from [Selby's Landing](#). I've also led trips from the [Patuxent Riverkeeper's](#) headquarters downstream in Nottingham.

Happy Trails on land and water!

(Note: The Hill's Bridge launch can get very muddy at low tide, plan to leave and arrive back accordingly.)



Heading back to the Hill's Bridge landing just as the sun sets.

Help save public water access in Anne Arundel County

Urgent alert: Submit your General Development Plan comments by Sept. 10, 2020

By Lisa Arrasmith, Chair

The Public Water Access Committee

<https://www.facebook.com/aapwac>

Attention Anne Arundel County residents! We have a September 10, 2020 deadline for comments on the draft Anne Arundel County General Development Plan (GDP). This GDP will set county land use policy for the next 20 years. The draft GDP lacks any mention of public water access, misclassifies our public waterfront parks as Conservation areas to be "(u)sed for conservation purposes in perpetuity" and sets up a Peninsula Privilege that will effectively block basic park improvements for the next 20 years.

If you live in Anne Arundel County, it is urgent that you comment in favor of public water access, against misclassification of our public parks and against Peninsula Privilege. Email addresses and instructions below. (Anyone can comment. The county will pay most attention to county residents, but non-county folks can point out they patronize local businesses when they visit.)

1) Demand public water access, public kayak launches, public boat ramps and public swimming beaches. Eighty percent of the people in Anne Arundel County do not live in waterfront homes or water privileged communities. The county must build public boat ramps and public swimming beaches instead of diverting public tax dollars for private benefit.

Loch Haven, a subdivision next to South River Farm Park, is getting \$129,000 from the county to fix its private community beach. Next door, South River Farm Park gets nothing for public water access improvements. Cape St. Clare is getting \$250,000 from the state Waterway Improvement Fund (WIF) for "beach nourishment" of its private community beach. WIF money comes from big boat excise taxes and is meant for public boat ramps. Anne Arundel County has the most trailered boats and the fewest public boat ramps of all the counties in



Public water access is threatened in a draft General Development Plan in Anne Arundel County. Send in comments by Sept 10. (Photo: Spriggs Farm Park access by Erik Hovland)

Maryland on the Bay. WIF dollars must be spent for new public boat ramps, not private community beaches.

Why, you ask, do kayakers care about public boat ramps and public swimming beaches? Public boat ramps have a little beach on one side for kayaks and public swimming beaches have an area for kayaks. And boat ramps and swimming beaches sometimes have funding sources that aren't available for stand-alone kayak launches.

2) Demand that our public parks be classified as "Public Use" not misclassified as "Conservation" areas. These parks were bought with state Program Open Space (POS) and federal Land and Wildlife Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants. Those grants of public money have public strings - the county must use the land bought with public money for public access.

3) Demand elimination of the proposed Peninsula Privilege, which will block basic improvements to our waterfront parks. Peninsula Privilege gives special traffic protection and special development protection to the most affluent areas of the county. Traffic and

[See Alert on page eight](#)

[Alert, from page seven](#)

development protections should be applied evenly and fairly across the county, instead of giving special privileges to the already privileged.

Please send your comments by Thursday, Sept. 10, 2020 to:

Official GDP comment address: Plan2040@aacounty.org

County Executive Steuart Pittman:
expitt99@aacounty.org

Rec Advisory Board Chair Rudy Brown:
TheRaven52@verizon.net

Rec Advisory Board Member Mike Lofton:
MSL49@aol.com

Please also send your comments to the Anne Arundel County Council members:

District 1 Councilwoman Sarah Lacey:
slacey@aacounty.org

District 2 Councilwoman Allison Pickard:
allison.pickard@aacounty.org

District 3 Councilman Nathan Volke:
nathan.volke@aacounty.org

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andrew.pruski@aacounty.org

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amanda.fiedler@aacounty.org

District 6 Councilwoman Lisa Rodvien:
lisa.rodvien@aacounty.org

District 7 Councilwoman Jessica Haire:
Jessica.Haire@aacounty.org

Remember to include your full name and snail mail address so they know you are a real person and a real constituent. If we stick together, if we act for the public, we will all get to the water together.

It's all of us or none of us, please send in your comments ASAP, thank you!

Help prevent unnecessary search and rescues

CPA has always promoted and provided contact info labels at many CPA events to help prevent unnecessary search and rescue efforts. The following is a added reminder from the [U.S Coast Guard](#):

Did you know?...

For every unmanned paddle craft or unregistered vessel reported (dinghy, small sailboat, etc.), the Coast Guard must assume that a person is missing and in distress. This requires a full-scale search and rescue effort involving Coast Guard personnel, vessels and aircraft, as well as other first responders. The Coast Guard estimates a search team costs an average of about \$113,000 an hour!

The problem...

Most of these errant craft have simply floated away on a rising tide or blown off someone's dock.

The solution...

Vessel owners can help prevent unnecessary and expensive searches with a simple sticker. Put a label on your craft or simply write the owner's name and phone number in a conspicuous place using a waterproof marker. When a vessel is found adrift with contact

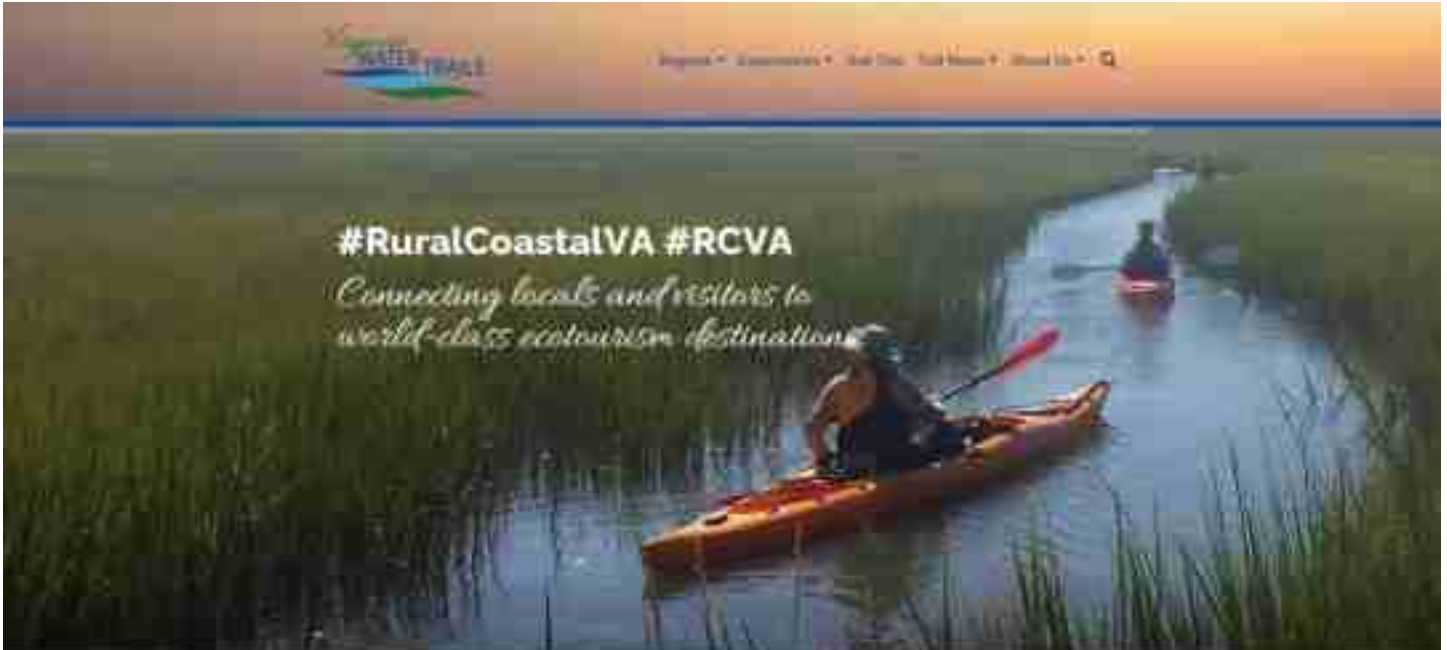


Having a sticker on your boat with your contact information can prevent unnecessary search and rescue efforts if it is found unattended.

information, and the authorities can confirm with a quick phone call that no one is actually in danger, millions of search and rescue dollars and a lot effort will be saved.

To obtain an orange "If Found - Contact" sticker contact your local Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla or Coast Guard Station. The stickers can also be ordered for only the price of postage from paddling.com (look under Signs, Stickers & Decorations).

New website launched for Virginia Water Trails



The Rural Coastal Virginia Alliance has launched a new website to “present unique ecotourism activities and destinations for locals and visitors to easily enjoy.”

By Ralph Heimlich

Lisa Hull, Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator of the Northern Neck Planning District Commission, recently informed the Steering Committee of a new website dedicated to coastal paddling trails in Virginia, <https://virginiawatertrails.org/>.

The new site hosts paddling trail information for three regions: The Northern Neck, encompassing land between the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers, the Middle Neck, land between the Rappahannock and the York Rivers, and Virginia’s Eastern Shore.

While the content between the three interactive maps varies a bit, they generally include paddling routes and

put-ins for trips suitable for paddle craft.

The website also includes a section on Virginia’s Ecotour Guide program, listing certified tour guides in each of the three regions.

A section on Trail Tips includes safety tips, a trip rating guide similar to CPA’s based on distance, wind, waves, and currents, and a section on reducing your environmental footprint through Leave No Trace principles.

The trails may lead you to some new paddling adventures and there are a number of launches that are off the beaten path. Check it out, and let us know if you find it useful.

Share your paddling adventures!

Do you enjoy reading about the paddling adventures, local and distant, of other members? Do you like getting new ideas for paddling trips?

Are you advocating for paddling access or amenities in your area?

Have you pondered questions relating to kayak gear? Variety is the spice of life, and of newsletters.

Please write an article reflecting your thoughts, experiences, and discoveries to share with our paddling community.

We all become a bit wiser and excited to be on the water again. We need your input to make *The Chesapeake Paddler* the best it can be.

Submit stories or ideas to news_editor@cpakayaker.com. We look forward to sharing your story.

Deadline for CPA nominations is October 1

By Ralph Heimlich

This is a reminder that nominations for next year's CPA Officers are open and the deadline is October 1, 2020. This is your opportunity to nominate people who you think will help play an active role over the next club year (November-November) to vote on issues, create fun activities and keep the participation of the club lively through 2021. Nominations can be emailed to our Membership Secretary Sue Stevens at:

membership@cpakayaker.com

The Chesapeake Paddlers Association is a volunteer organization and the people who volunteer the most are the elected officers: The Coordinator, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and the Steering Committee members.

Now is the time to tell us who you think should play an active part in steering the club's activities. As always, in addition to balloting at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, November 1 (if we HAVE an Annual Meeting), you may cast your ballot for CPA officers online. The full



CPA Wants YOU!

descriptions of the officers duties are available in the [CPA Bylaws](#) at www.cpakayaker.com.

When submitting nominations to the Secretary, please copy the person being nominated. Persons nominated should accept or decline their nomination, develop a "Stump Speech" giving their experience and reasons why members should vote for them.

These will be printed in the October issue of *The Chesapeake Paddler* and viewable online. In addition to mail-in ballots and voting at the November Annual Meeting, there will be an online mechanism for voting, and you will

need your CPA member number to authenticate your vote. The votes will be tallied at the Annual Meeting and will determine which individuals will hold which positions for the coming year.

So, throw your paddling hat in the ring, or throw someone else in the ring, but let the best candidates win!

CPA members staying active despite reduced schedule

By Sue Stevens, CPA Membership

Hey CPA Members! Thanks to all of you who are keeping in touch and kayaking despite this year's pause in most CPA activities that would normally fill up our [Meetup Calendar](#).

What is more amazing is this summer's growth of water-loving paddle sports. Just about everyone wants to get outside and on the water, where it is cool, fun, good exercise and easy to maintain a proper social distance (no rescue practicing please!).

You can track a lot of the fun here : <https://www.facebook.com/CPAKayaker/>

Also, if you have friends who are getting interested in getting out on the water let them know about the [CPA Forum](#) pages to buy gear or learn about sea kayaking.

As a reminder, all CPA members have received a 12-month EXTENSION onto their membership due date. If your membership was coming up for renewal, say in January 2020, look for your first reminder email in early January 2021.

If you want to find out more about your own CPA Membership status, please contact us anytime at: membership@cpakayaker.com.

The Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc.

The mission of the Chesapeake Paddlers Association is to provide a way for people to enjoy sea kayaking within the Chesapeake Bay area and to promote safe sea kayaking practices through educating the local sea kayaking community and the interested public.

www.cpakayaker.com

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Monthly rates are as follows:

size	cost	dimensions (col)
1/8 page	\$20	2.4" x 3.5" (1)
1/4 page	\$32	4.9" x 4.7" (2)
1/2 page	\$50	7.5" x 4.7" (3)
Full page	\$80	7.5" x 9.75" (3)

A 5% discount will be given for ads supplied as electronic files in acceptable formats (i.e., .tif, .gif, .jpeg, bit-map). Email news_editor@cpakayaker.com for more information and for a 10-month discount.

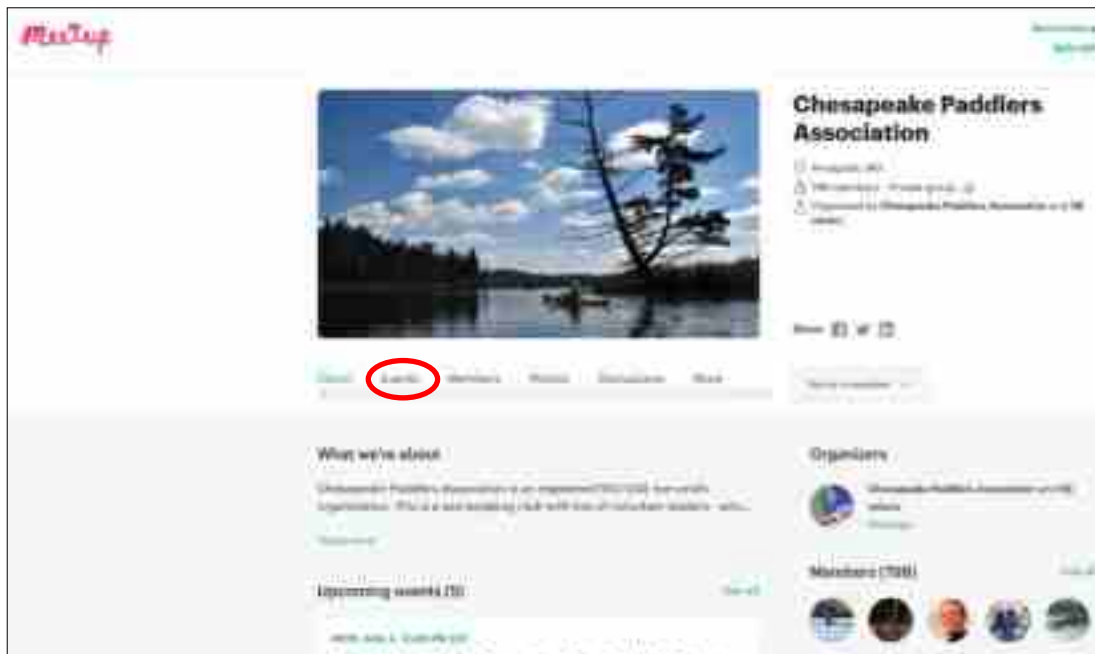
Public service announcements and personal ads to sell kayaks/ accessories are printed at no charge; non-members pay \$10 for three months. Ads dated three months before the date of this issue will be pulled unless a new request is received by the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. And if it has sold... please tell us!

THE CHESAPEAKE PADDLER

The Chesapeake Paddler is published 10 times a year, with combination issues in Nov/Dec and Jan/Feb. The deadline for submitting copy is the 15th of the preceding month. Articles and illustrations (graphics, photos) should be submitted as separate attachments to: news_editor@cpakayaker.com

The newsletter may be reprinted whole or in part if credit is given to this newsletter and any identified author (unless an article is specifically copyrighted), and a courtesy copy is sent to the Editor. The download link or file for the electronic version of this newsletter may not be posted or forwarded to non-members without the express consent of the Coordinator or Editor.

Upcoming CPA events



CPA is currently scheduling some club activities. Due to the rapidly changing environment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, members should refer to the [CPA Meetup page](#) for the latest event information.

Also, all participants should read the [CPA COVID-19 event guidelines](#) before participating in any club activity.

The Chesapeake Paddler

Chesapeake Paddlers Association, Inc.

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REMINDER: Please check your mailing label for your membership expiration date. If you receive the newsletter electronically, you will receive an e-mail reminder prior to your membership expiring; please notify the Secretary for changes to your email address. If your CPA membership has expired, or will expire soon, please send in your dues to: CPA, P.O. Box 341, Greenbelt, MD 20768-0341.