

Paddler Profile: John Gibbs

By Bob Browning

Lives in: Alexandria, Virginia

Real job: George Washington's Mount Vernon, Librarian; REI Bailey's Crossroads, Sales

Do you regularly attend a Piracy?
Pirates of the Potomac

Number of years paddling: 14

How did you get involved in sea kayaking? Through working at REI and becoming familiar with kayaks

What boats do you paddle?
Perception Keowee, 10 feet, purple;
Prijon Seayak, 16 feet, red

Rudder or skeg? Rudder

Type of paddle used? Euro

Do you do any other type of paddling besides sea kayaking? No

Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities? Hiking, camping

How often on average do you paddle between May and October?
One to two times a week

Do any winter paddling? No, but I have in the past

Favorite local paddling location? Mattawoman Creek

Favorite CPA trip you've ever been on and why? A Ralph Heimlich camping and paddling trip from Trappe Pond Park, Delaware. I learned about the bad habits I had developed while paddling solo, especially how inefficiently and slowly I was moving through the water relative to faster paddlers. I got towed and had to buy a crab cake sandwich for the tower. But the trip was very interesting, saw lots of new water, and learned some valuable lessons and heard good advice which I took to heart.

Coollest paddling trip you've ever been on anywhere and why? Paddling solo on Penobscot Bay in the vicinity of Camden, Maine. Paddling from Lincolnville to Warren Island State Park and camping out, then finding my launch site after returning across the bay, eventually guided by the sunlight glinting from a car window. Paddling the lakes and ponds around Camden and the harbors of Camden and Rockport.

Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why? One year I decided to paddle solo around islands in the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River area to learn the ins and outs of sea kayaking. I figured



I would be exposed to different water conditions and challenges while circumnavigating islands (Eastern Neck, Tilghman, St. Georges, Wye). Coming out of the passage at the north end of Tilghman Island into the Bay, I hit a patch of rough water, long fetch, and wind (probably an unfavorable tide too). It was my first discomfoting time. I had to trust

both my kayak and my skills and intuition. Worked out fine.

Future bucket list trip(s)? Would love to paddle Key West and the Everglades and the North Carolina coast below Ocracoke

Three things you like most about paddling? The feel of a water-born kayak, seeing nature from the water, and being challenged by adverse conditions

What do you like about CPA? The people, learning from experienced paddlers, and exploring new places to paddle as well as to eat and drink

One unusual, non-paddling thing other people find interesting about you? My obsession with New Orleans and Louisiana music, food, and culture ♣

Do you know a paddler who would make an interesting profile? Contact Bob Browning at: BBBrowning43@verizon.net

Do you enjoy reading of 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. We look forward to your contributions to this publication. ♣