

Paddler Profile: Larry Ichter

by Bob Browning

Lives in: Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County, VA.

Real job: Retired as a civil engineer after 23 years with Fairfax County Government working in charge of roadway design and transportation improvements.

Do you regularly attend a Piracy? Yes, Pirates for Georgetown. After two years, I had attended so often, they asked me to be one of the four captains.

Number of years paddling: Five years.

How did you get involved in sea kayaking? After retirement, I was looking for activities that incorporate fun ways to exercise. I have always enjoyed the water and grew up sailing, so kayaking allowed me another way to get back on the water. In 2011, I attended an Outdoor Expo in McLean. CPA was represented as was Mike Aronoff from Canoe Kayak and Paddle Company. I attended SK101, then bought a used kayak from Mike, went to SK102 and I was on my way.

What boats do you paddle? Jackson Journey, 14', orange, plastic. At times I have wished for a longer faster kayak to keep up with some of the others. I recently bought two Hobie Mirage kayaks (sit-on-top) from someone looking to unload them before moving to California. I plan to get my wife out on the water with one of them.

Rudder or skeg? Neither. I often wished I had a rudder as I often experience a severe weather cocking in my kayak. They make a rudder available but I am too cheap to pay almost \$200 to add one.

Type paddle used: Regular Euro paddle but I am making a Greenland paddle at the CPA workshop this year and am looking forward to using it.

Do you do any other type of paddling besides sea kayaking (e.g., canoe, SUP) Just the Hobie Mirages that I will break out once the water turns warm.

Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities I have a Catalina 22 sailboat that I keep at the local marina. I enjoy hiking and now that I have my National Parks Service Lifetime Senior Pass, I hope to do more.

How often on average do you paddle between May and October? Typically once a week with the Pirates of Georgetown with occasional CPA trips and ones on my own. I am two blocks away from Dogue Creek so I can launch my kayak there and explore down to Washington's Grist Mill or up the Potomac River to Mount Vernon or downstream to Gunston Cove.

Do any winter paddling? No, as I despise the cold water and weather. I have a wet suit but no dry suit that also limits any winter paddling.

Favorite local paddling location: Besides Dogue Creek near my home, Columbia Island Marina. Great location and no launch fees.

Favorite CPA trip you've ever been on and why: Potomac Passage Maker Tour #3 to Mallows Bay. Just exciting seeing the wreckage of all those old boats in Mallows Bay.

Coollest paddling trip you've ever been on anywhere and why ? The Mallows Bay trip.

Scariest/most dangerous trip/experience and why ? We had three kayaks one evening at the Pirates of Georgetown. The weather was looking a bit stormy but we checked the radar and weather updates



Larry Ichter

Photo by Jesse Aronson

and felt the storm was going to pass to the north of us. We headed out up river and got a bit along when the storm rolled in right over us. Heavy rain and lightning. We looked for places along the shore to beach but it was all large riprap and drop offs. We paddled as fast as we could toward the Memorial Bridge and waited out the storm underneath the bridge with heavy lightning for about half an hour.

Future bucket list trip: None involved with kayaking. My wife wants to go to Ireland and Scotland so we will need to schedule that. I love the National Parks and want to visit more of them out west, like Yellowstone, Zion and Bryce.

Three things you like most about paddling? The exercise, exploring new areas not accessible otherwise and just being out on the water.

What do you like about CPA? Organized activities to teach the basics and more, such as SK101 and SK102. The Greenland paddle workshop is great. CPA has so much to offer and you can't beat it for \$10 a year. The members are all so friendly and willing to help out in so many ways.

One unusual, non-paddling thing other people find interesting about you*: I enjoy astronomy and in particular viewing total solar eclipses. I have been to four, seen three as one in Hawaii was clouded out. I am looking forward to viewing the total eclipse in the United States next August and am planning the best location for viewing. I refereed youth soccer for 11 years before moving out of Springfield to a new house and giving it up. ☺

We would like to know about you! Contact Bob Browning if you are interested in a being featured in the Paddler Profile or if you know of someone else he can contact. Contact Bob at: BBBrowning43@verizon.net