

## CPA Paddler Profile ~ Tom Hunt

Interview by Rick Wiebush

**Name:** Tom Hunt

**Lives in:** Lancaster, Pennsylvania

**Real job:** Network Administrator for Pennsylvania Judiciary

**Member of a Piracy?** Yes, with Rick's help I've started the Pirates of "The Lakes", which is the first venture into Pennsylvania for the CPA.

**Paddling Buddies:** Until about a year ago I paddled pretty exclusively with Fran or alone. In the last year I've paddled regularly with Sandy Bixler and Dave Bronson, and we've got a fairly committed group of seven that have gotten together since April 2013 for the pirate night paddle.

**Number years paddling:** 5 ½

**How did you get involved in kayaking?** It was really Fran's idea, I was an avid cyclist, runner, but when a medical issue sidelined Fran from those activities, we tried kayaking as an activity we could do together. When vacationing in Maine years ago, we took a few half day tours, and we really enjoyed it. We bought a 13 foot tandem that became too much to handle loading and unloading, so we test drove some 14 singles, and the rest is history.

**How did you learn to sea kayak?** When we decided to buy our first singles, we made the commitment that if we are doing this, we're going to take lessons. It started with our local outfitter's five hour crash course and has snowballed into getting professional instruction every season.

**Any formal training or ACA/BCU certifications:** No certs, but I've had formal training every season from some excellent instructors. I used to do all types of racing, triathlon, bicycle, running, and for years I was a martial arts instructor and competitor so the technical challenge of sea kayaking was a natural attraction. This season I'm going for the BCU 3 star sea award (wish me luck) so that I can take the more advanced training in the fall.

**Boat usually paddled:** I have but one tool right now, NDK Romany Classic, 16 feet, quill/white. But if I can ever find one to test paddle, I'm buying one of the following two boats, Tiderace Xcite Carbon or Boreal Vaag Carbon.

**Type paddle used:** Werner Performance Core Cyprus and Ikelos / 210 cm

**Do you do any other type of paddling besides sea kayaking?** Used to canoe but that's very seldom anymore.

**Do you regularly do any other outdoor activities?** I still run and bike pretty regularly. I used to compete in triathlons, running and cycling races but now I use it just to keep fit for the kayak. When I have the chance, I still love to hike, the more rugged the better.

**How often do you paddle in summer?** Three days are about all I can squeeze in.

**Do any winter paddling?** Yes, anything not frozen solid is fair game.

**Go to pool sessions?** No, unless you're talking about billiards...(ba-dum-tssshhh!)

**Favorite local paddling location:** Our closest water, 30 minutes away, is the mighty Susquehanna, and it offers enough variety that it's never boring. We've got rapids, rock gardens and open water, and a nationally recognized bird area, just no tides or swells.

**Favorite non-local location:** Anywhere things can get lumpy and bumpy, for convenience the Chesapeake Bay offers a lot. I really enjoyed the Adirondacks, the Barrier Islands, North Carolina, and Maine.

**Best paddling trip/experience ever and why:** It would have to be our trip to the Adirondacks. We don't camp anymore, but we had a home base in Old Forge. The warmest spring temps they had in a long time, and we had the place to ourselves, very relaxing and beautiful paddling. We did the Fulton chain of lakes.

**Bucket list trips:** The Great Lakes for the Gale Storm Gathering, Long Island Sound for the rough water, San Francisco for the Golden Gate Sea Kayak Symposium, Tybee Island, Georgia, actually anywhere I can paddle with others that enjoy the same challenges.

**Three things you like most about paddling?** The ever changing environment, water you paddle on every day is never the same two days in a row, and the technical challenge of learning and refining my paddling skills so that I can venture into more challenging conditions. Just plain being outside, the only thing that would keep me off the water is lightning.

**What do you like about CPA?** It was the CPA's focus on safety that prompted me to join; I used the club's policies as a guideline well before becoming a member.

**One thing other people find interesting about you:** I have a pretty extensive collection of Blues music, mostly from the 40's – 60's, well over 200 CD's that include almost every recording Blues legends like Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and Sonny Boy Williamson ever recorded.



**Tom Hunt along the Susquehanna**  
Photograph by Fran Arnott