

Maine Canoe Symposium

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2011 WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS -FINAL

EVENING PRESENTATIONS BY OUR FEATURED SPEAKERS

The Skills and Thrills of Poling-Lisa DeHart

Join us for a very special Friday night presentation with perennial MCS instructor Lisa DeHart as she takes an in-depth look at Poling.

The Allagash-Maine's Premiere Wilderness Waterway-Gil Gilpatrick

Join Gil as he shares the waterway he knows like few others. Gil has guided hundreds of trips down the Allagash. He's written a book on the history of the river. Saturday night he will entice you with the gem in Maine's backyard. A presentation not to be missed.

ONGOING WORKSHOPS AND DISPLAYS

Traditional Maine Guide Camp and Skills – The Lewises

Displays, demonstrations and discussions of the highly evolved, yet simple and flexible, traditional wilderness travel skills of the Maine Guide. Dave and Lynne will be working with this equipment for each of their workshops, throughout the weekend.

Voyageur Display – Jeff & Lisa DeHart

Stop by throughout the weekend and experience how the early voyageurs camp might have appeared. Voyageur Competition for all who want to participate. Come learn how to start a fire with flint and steel, set a trap and throw a tomahawk. Have fun learning voyageur skills and competing for blanket prizes. Sing songs, paddle canoes and identify animal pelts, at the end every one picks a prize off the blanket according to how they did. Come and learn by doing.

Canoe Restoration and Repair – Dan Eaton

The smallboat shop specializes in the repair and restoration of wood/canvas canoes and small boats. Our work is done with care toward maintaining the quality of materials, skills and techniques of original construction. Stop by and check out the current works in progress

SPECIAL FEATURES FOR 2011

Tribute to Kirk Wipper-Pro Staff

In March, all of canoesport lost a great supporter and dear friend with the passing of Kirk Wipper. Kirk was the founder of the Canadian Canoe Museum, a professor at the University of Toronto, and a recipient of the Order of Canada. We will miss his smile, the twinkle in his eyes, his wry humor and his willingness to share his vast knowledge and love of canoes. Please join us as we celebrate his life through spoken word, and a fitting tribute by canoe.

Canoeing Styles Demonstration – Pro Staff

Our Saturday morning "opening ceremony" provides an overview of the breadth of canoesport, as members of the Pro Staff give brief demonstrations of various paddling and poling styles. Be sure you don't miss this one! For a review of different paddling styles, and the variety of canoe and paddle designs, check out our *Paddling Styles Primer* at the MCS website, available for download at: http://www.maine canoe symposium.org/Paddling_Styles_Primer.pdf

Saturday Evening Campfire-Harry Rock

One of the highlights for many each year is the Saturday evening campfire. Held immediately after the evening program, this evening celebration features stories, camp songs and great memories. Often accompanied by loons, this is a great experience to really appreciate the camaraderie of the Symposium.

Voyageur Canoe Race—all are Welcome

Part of the annual closing ceremonies for the Symposium is the voyageur canoe race, featuring a couple of Winona's beautiful 25-foot wood/canvas "war" canoes. Competition is fierce, rivalries grow with time, and everyone has fun. Come join the fun, cheer the teams and see which captain will earn the Golden Boot.

Introduction to High-Performance Canoes – Jim Lisius and Shawn Burke

Racing has inspired design improvements in modern canoes that make it possible to cruise long distances with ease and comfort. In this workshop we'll show how you can tune your own canoe for performance using sliding seats for trim control, thigh blocks for precise control of lean, and foot braces for paddling power. Then, participants will have an opportunity to try out some high-performance touring and racing hulls to see these features in action. Once you go fast, you can never go back!

The Fourth Annual MCS Canoe-Athlon – Shawn Burke and Monica Schnitger

You've taken all the MCS Workshops, so what do you do now? Strut your stuff! Show off your canoeing and camping skills at the Fourth Annual MCS Canoe-Athlon. Tandem teams will compete in various classes in a mini canoeing adventure race. From Water Site A, you'll first race your canoe around the island, return to shore and tie a bowline knot, hop back into your boat to pole around the docks, then come ashore and accurately toss a throw bag thru a hoop. Fastest time wins, but style is important, too! All are welcome to participate in and cheer what will be an exciting and fun-filled event. Awards will be presented in all classes. Sign-up on-site right before the event. If you're looking to join a team, we'll do our best to match you with a partner.

The Canoe Builders of the Penobscot River Valley-Benson Gray

Benson Gray will give a presentation titled "The Canoe Builders of the Penobscot River Valley." It will start with the native birch-bark builders then move up through the major wood/canvas builders (Gerrish, Thatcher, Morris, Carleton, White, Old Town, Penobscot, etc.) to the more modern materials like molded plywood, fiberglass, vacuum molding (Royalex/ABS), and injection molding. The focus will be on the Old Town Canoe Company since they have been around the longest and have the most information available. The conclusion will cover some of the resources available for researching old canoes. ?

Why an Axe?—Geoff Burke

The axe is one of the oldest tools used by humanity and one of the least understood. In this workshop, we will look at a bit of the history, care of and use of what was called the most important tool in the settling of America. Special attention will be given to using an axe on a canoe trip safely and how this versatile tool can be a life saver.

Horton River Expedition-Mark Hamlin

In the summer of 2010, Mark Hamlin led an arctic canoe expedition for a group of Inuit and Inuvialuit youth from *Canada's Northwest Territories and Nunavut*. Arctic Youth Leadership and the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) partnered to offer this underserved population an amazing opportunity to develop leadership skills while exploring the Horton River; the northern most river on mainland Canada. For 17 days, these students ages 15-19 traveled 360 kilometers through vast tundra, wild canyons, the infamous "smoking hills" and eventually the coast of the Arctic Ocean. On the way, they discovered themselves, each other, and their long standing cultural ties to the land. Most importantly, they began to explore what it will take for them to assume leadership roles in their communities as the Arctic confronts the full force of the economic, political, and environmental stresses of our times.

Stand-Up-Paddling—Mark Hamlin

Mainers have a long tradition of standing up and paddling and poling canoes. Far, far to the west, the Hawaiians have a long tradition of standing up on boards and riding the waves of the ocean. What most may forget is that the Hawaiians are expert canoe paddlers as well having crossed thousands of miles of open ocean in canoes to reach their island homes. It was only a matter of time before someone stood up on a board and used a paddle to go exploring. Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) is one of the fastest growing water sports in the country because of its relatively quick learning curve, excellent core work out, and the fact that it is just way too much FUN. These workshops will introduce participants to the history, equipment, techniques, and safety considerations for those ready to get up off of their butts and do a little hiking on the water.

Perfect Your Paddling Skills With The English Gate-Rory Matchett

If you want to become a better paddler this is one practice exercise that can help you to achieve that goal. The English Gate exercise can help you no matter if you are a beginner, intermediate or expert paddler and it can be used by you and your paddling partner or by you alone. You can develop excellent boat control which will help you in all situations be it whitewater, flatwater, lake travel or river travel. The beauty of the English Gate exercise is that you can do it in a body of water as small as a medium size swimming pool or a small pond therefore you will not have to travel far to find a good practice site. This on-water workshop will allow you to practice the English Gate exercise and receive personal feedback on how you can improve your efficiency, strokes, and boat control.

Building a Wood Strip Canoe—Gil Gilpatrick

This will be a talk with a slide presentation illustrating the building of a cedar strip canoe. Topics will include preliminary steps to get started, preparation of the cedar strips, laying and fitting the strips (building the hull), smoothing up in preparation for fiberglassing, fiberglassing outside and inside, and the woodwork (gunwales, thwarts, etc.). Tips and suggestions will be given along the way and questions are welcome.

ON-LAND WORKSHOPS

When one thinks of a Canoe Symposium, one might assume that it's all on-the-water workshops. At Maine Canoe Symposium, however, we have a rich program of land-based workshops that highlight and explore broader aspects of canoe sport, and we are very proud to be able to offer the following.

Walk on the Wild Side-Mike Shannon

Come and whet your appetite for things wild and natural. Join us as we explore and discover the wild side of this place . . . Camp Winona. Learn to identify common species, sharpen your observational skills and arouse your kinship with all life. The possibilities will surprise and delight you.

Campfire Cooking and Reflector Oven Baking – Dave & Lynne Lewis

A fireside workshop, we will discuss campfire baking with a reflector oven. We will analyze the various designs of available ovens, fire-making strategies, and share some favorite recipes. We use an oven based on models refined by the early 1800's, and would like to share our experiences of baking with such an oven. Typically, we will have a baked dessert and bread each day on our canoe trips, and would like to share our ideas with you.

Essential Knots – Harry Rock

Ever wonder how to properly tie a canoe onto a roof rack so it doesn't fly off and hit the car behind you? Ever wonder how to tie two pieces of rope together? Ever wonder how to shorten and tighten a piece of rope without cutting it? Well, this basic knots class is for you. We will cover the square knot, bowline, half hitches and slipknot as starters with others to be added based on class time. We also cover how to properly position a canoe on a canoe rack and how to tie it down to prevent it from shifting sideways in the wind and even worse, becoming a poor example of an airplane as it leaves your rack in the highway due to being improperly secured. Everyone needs this basic class for tying canoes to cars and docks, and how to tie up tarps and tents. You will have fun and learn a lot as well!

Yoga for Paddlers – Chris Faria

Through the use of conscious breathing, body and mind become calm and aware; from this stillness emerges a deep sense of peace, nourishing the spirit. Join Chris Faria for a period of gentle stretching and flexing, breathing exercises and relaxation techniques. Awareness rather than performance is emphasized in this session. All are welcome, especially beginners. Chris has over 25 years of experience in Yoga, dance and fitness conditioning. Please bring your own mat or foam pad.

Paddle Making – Extended workshop - Caleb Davis

Here's a great opportunity to make your own traditionally shaped canoe paddle. Something you can admire and use for years to come. The action of this paddle using traditional canoeing technique is smoother in the water and less stressful to the paddler than in using a wider bladed paddle. Each participant will select a cherry one piece traditionally shaped blank. All blanks are splined to promote paddle lightness and strength. Instruction, and hand carving and finishing tools are provided (non-electric). It usually takes 7-8 hours to complete. The completed paddle is ready for varnish or polyurethane. The fee is \$80 per paddle

Trip Food Planning, Dehydrating and Packaging-Dave & Lynne Lewis

In this workshop, we'll talk about strategies to convert some of your favorite recipes into canoe-trip-friendly versions, calculate food and recipe quantities so you don't run out of food (or bring too much). We'll also talk about dehydrating different foods, and packaging (using a vacuum sealer) for ease of preparation in the field.

Paddling Maine's Muscongus Bay-Reinhard Zollitsch

A leisurely solo paddle around the entire bay, checking out all the MITA (Maine Island Trail Association) sites as well as revisiting George Waymouth's first landing sites here in 1605.

Fire making with a Community Bow Drill – Ray Reitze and Jenn Reis

Join us in learning the most basic of friction fire techniques: using a bow drill. Fire making by any primitive means can seem like a daunting task. However, with the right know how, simple materials, and patience, it is a skill that will stick with you for life and provide a deep sense of accomplishment. Plus, it really is a good challenge and darn fun to learn. Once mastered, it provides an endless supply of one of the basic necessities of life. Without fire, you cannot cook food, warm yourself, and in some cases keep predators at bay. It is also one of the single biggest moral boosters whether you are camping or trying to survive in an unfortunate situation.

First Aid Skills for Safe Wilderness Travel – Bill Bentley

This will be a discussion on ways to insure better health care for your group when adventuring, whether it's a large group or just your family. Topics covered will include available training opportunities, knowing your group, assessment skills, and better first aid kits.

Trimming a Canoe for Wind, Waves, and Current – Kevin Slater

This workshop will offer guidance and practice in dealing with the hazards caused by wind and waves. Different conditions require making adjustments to your course, equipment and position in the canoe for safety and avoiding fatigue.

Wilderness Photography - Bill Bentley

This workshop is a chance to learn about your camera and how to create an artistic photographic expression of your outdoor experience. **Please bring your camera and a disc or zip drive with some of your outdoor photos to share.** We can all learn from each other.

Setting up Your Canoe for Solo Self-Sufficiency-Reinhard Zollitsch

Everything that goes into planning a solo canoe trip of any length into more or less remote areas, from food to clothing, navigation, safety and general well-being and sanity.

Tree and Plant Identification – Jane Barron

Can you identify Maine's most common foliage species? Camp Winona has an amazing variety. Join Jane for a tree and plant I.D. walk and more.

ON-WATER WORKSHOPS

***NOTE:** The weather in Maine is highly variable and the safety of participants is our priority. In the event of thunder, on-water workshops will be cleared immediately and remain cleared until 30 minutes after the last thunder, in accordance with National Weather Service recommendations. In the event of wind or rough water, workshop leaders may, at their discretion, cancel the on-water session or move it to land. In the event of delayed or cancelled on-water workshops, please visit one of our many on-land offerings.*

Star Gazing/Night Paddle – John Meader

Star Gazing/Night Paddle. Join John (a professional planetarium director for more than 25 years) on a late night paddle after Friday night's presentation. We will paddle out into the lake far enough to get a good open view of the skies. From there, we will raft together, lie back and do some star gazing. Come learn a few early summer constellations, see the visible planets, a shooting star, and perhaps even contemplate the meaning of the universe! The late night paddle will be limited to six boats (twelve people) and contingent upon having clear skies. Everyone bring a flashlight, paddle, and a PFD.

Traditional Solo Paddling – Caleb Davis

If you've ever seen Becky Mason paddle at previous Symposiums and said, "I want to learn how to do that!" this course is for you. Traditional solo is a paddling style seen more commonly in Canada, practiced by such notables as Omer Stringer and Bill Mason. In traditional solo, the paddler kneels amid ship in a tandem canoe, tucks their knees into one side of the hull, and heels the boat to the paddlers side until the gunwale is close to the water. This lifts the bow and stern out of the water, effectively creating a shorter canoe that turns more easily.

Traditional Flat-water Tandem Paddling – Caleb Davis

Tandem paddling is teamwork. Two people working together to accomplish the same goal, move across the water to the same destination at a mutually agreed upon rate of speed. Sounds simple enough? But, why is it that this simple task has the potential to generate so much discourse? Even to the point of breaking up a happily married couple. Communicating and working together will facilitate good tandem paddling, add good technique and the tandem paddlers will glide across the water like a well-oiled machine.

Canoe Sailing – Benson Gray

Before there were any "one-designed" sailboats such as the Sunfish, Sailfish, Butterfly, Laser, etc., the canoe was a boat hull that was easily converted into a sailboat. Back in 1880 the American Canoe Association was founded and its first competitive event was a sailing canoe regatta held at Lake George, NY. This activity has been going on ever since. At the Maine Canoe Symposium I will demonstrate three canoes that have been converted for sailing using a 55 sq. ft. and 75sq. ft. sail, steered either with or without a rudder and in some cases without drilling any holes through the canoe. Weather permitting you will have a chance to sail them, even if you have never sailed before.

All Women's Poling Clinic – Lisa DeHart

In a small class of 5 learn the basics of choosing a boat & pole, where to stand and very basic maneuvering. How to turn right & left, push off nice and straight, how to stop and sideslip. Women teaching women, learn from someone with your sized arms, your upper body strength and plus I know how your brain works! We're not building a rocket ship, just having a blast on the water, so come and play.

Paddle Your Own Canoe – Kim Gass

If you have never paddled your own boat come sample single blade solo canoeing in a boat built for one! When you are solo you are both the master and the mate and the learning comes quickly. If your J stroke isn't working, there is no one else to blame. The workshop is open also to those who have a good J stroke and are working on more advanced Freestyle maneuvers, utilizing weight shift and static strokes. Feel free to bring your own solo boat.

Precision Paddling – Kim Gass

We will explore the use of static strokes to get you close to your portage endings. Learn how to maneuver at slow speeds to get up tight to that shoreline with the pretty plants or get around rocks easily. Static strokes can also make maneuvering on twisty rivers a joy! No heeling (boat tilt) required. Solo boats available; if you would like to bring a tandem, please do!

Freestyle Paddling – Kim Gass

Freestyle canoeing often thought of as canoe ballet on water with its dramatic mysterious turns and sideslips. An art form in itself it has many practical applications for the tripper in that it makes maneuvering effortless; it's nothing more than the application of forces and levers...don't you wish your high school physics course was this fun? We will explore how to make your canoe obey your every command with static strokes, weight shifts and changing the hull shape of the boat. Small solo boats will be available but no matter what the size, if you have a favorite boat, bring it! This session is for the curious paddler who has never sampled freestyle.

Introduction to Paddling for Women – Polly Mahoney and Bonnie Pooley

Polly will go over parts of the paddle, canoe and basic paddling strokes in the bow and stern. We will practice sideslips, turning and paddling in a straight line. Come learn in a supportive environment!

Canoe Stroke Skill Building for Women –Polly Mahoney and Bonnie Pooley

What do you want to learn or improve? Come work on the paddling skills that YOU want to develop. Is there a particular stroke you struggle to perfect? Would you like your paddling style reviewed? A great opportunity to get some individual attention to improve your skills.

Northwoods Paddling – Jane Barron

A variation on the “slicing J” (or “Canadian” stroke in Bill Mason’s lexicon), true Northwoods paddling uses a narrow-bladed beavertail paddle at a fast stroke rate, a slight bob to the torso to engage the abdominal muscles, and a slicing underwater recovery to cover a lot of miles with less effort. And if all that sounds like mumbo jumbo, take the class to learn a traditional paddling stroke used by Maine Guides to Paddle all day, and not get tired. A working knowledge of the J-stroke is helpful.

Modern Poling – Harry Rock

Canoe poling teaches the canoeist what a fun and practical sport poling is for exploring remote streams and rivers. Standing up in a canoe pushing a 12 foot pole is a unique and effective means of moving upstream into inaccessible areas where road access is very limited or non-existent. It is also a wonderful way to enjoy rivers in low water conditions where there is still enough water for the canoe but not deep enough to paddle without pushing off the bottom. This canoe discipline allows the boater to eliminate the need for shuttles as the put-in and the take-out are one in the same on a river or lake. While breaking the rules of never standing up in a canoe, the canoeist quickly learns how easily balance is acquired and that standing is more stable than sitting. The symposium workshop not only covers many shallow water techniques; it also focuses on maneuvering and power strokes in deep water. Proper body positioning in the canoe as well as hand positions on the pole are covered. This a beginner level class so prior poling experience is not required. You are guaranteed to have fun so sign up and become part of a truly "upstanding group" of canoeists who stand tall and carry a big stick!

Introduction to Paddling – Shawn Burke and Monica Schnitger/Bonnie Pooley

One of our most-requested workshops, we are pleased to offer multiple sessions of Intro to Paddling which will give you the basic skills needed to propel a boat where you want it to go. You will learn how to get into and back out of a canoe – and stay dry in the process! You’ll cover the strokes that form the foundation of canoeing. You will learn how to move your boat forward and also how to turn and spin it. Optional topics, selected by the instructors, may include selecting and fitting a PFD, or an introduction to the J-stroke. Even if you’ve paddled a canoe before, the Intro class will help you brush up on what you know before taking a more advanced class, correct a bad habit, or even teach you something new.

Outrigger Canoeing – Reinhard Zollitsch

All you need to know about paddling solo outrigger canoes on the ocean - types, set-up, paddling technique, safety - with brief individual practice sessions.

Recreational Poling-Kevin Silliker

The program will introduce beginners to the art standing in a canoe and controlling its movement and direction with a 12 foot, black spruce pole; in the style of the river guides of Maine and New Brunswick. Topics to be demonstrated and practiced include: stances, grips, balance, turning the boat, propulsion (forward and backward) and stopping. Come surprise yourself with how quickly your comfort and confidence builds when standing in a canoe!

Canoe Safety – Rory Matchett & Kevin Silliker

Come to this clinic to learn or refresh your skills in canoe over canoe rescue, use of throw bags and other canoe safety related items! This is one clinic where you are guaranteed to see some of the pro-staff getting wet in those cool waters of Camp Winona.

Improving your J-stroke – Kevin Slater

Kevin will teach the J stroke and some of its many variations for stern paddlers. Learn about its history and what an effective stroke it is. This on water workshop will give you plenty of practice with the J-stroke and the chance to have your J-stroke critiqued by a pro.

Sit & Switch – Jim & Lisa Lisius

Also known as North American Touring Technique, this is the most efficient style of paddling and the basics are easy to learn. So if you want to go fast, or just further without as much effort, come learn about bent shaft paddles, improved forward stroke dynamics, seated paddling with foot braces, eliminating dragging strokes that slow your momentum, and steering primarily by switching the paddle from one side of the canoe to the other. Teamwork is key, and when you and your partner get this technique down, you will be gliding effortlessly across the water the way life is supposed to be.

Family Voyageur Canoe Paddle with-Jim& Lisa Lisius

All ages welcome to join us as we take out one or two newly restored voyageur canoes for a paddle down Moose Pond. We will take a short coffee/tea/hot chocolate break before heading back to Camp Winona. So take this opportunity to experience the easy flow and comradeship of voyageur canoe travel.

Double Bladed Paddling-Geoff Burke

This workshop is about the sizing, selection and use of a double paddle in a canoe. Double paddles and canoes will be available to try.

MCS Mission Statement

Established in 1986, the Maine Canoe Symposium is a volunteer-run, nonprofit weekend event held annually at Camp Winona on Moose Pond in
Bridgton, Maine.

The Symposium allows participants of all ages to develop an understanding and appreciation of the diversity of North American canoeing heritage and to develop canoeing and related skills through educational workshops, presentations, and hands-on instruction.