

EDDY LINES

October 2010

A PUBLICATION OF GREAT LAKES PADDLERS, SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN'S CANOE & KAYAK CLUB



I strongly believe there is no better way to see and experience our world than from the seat of a kayak.

Steve Lutsch



Steve, Ingrid and Peter exploring Venice by kayak.

Photos courtesy of Rene Seindal

See story on page 2



Election of club officers for 2011 will take place at the November meeting. Please send your nominations to Jamie Myles at president@greatlakespaddlers.org

**Next GLP Meeting
November 9, 2010 at 6:30 pm
Big Bear Lodge
25253 Telegraph Rd.
Flat Rock, MI 48134
734 732-6600**



Inside:

- Experience Venice Page 2
- GLP Camping Weekend Page 4
- Club Calendar & Upcoming Events Page 5
- Beaufort Wind Scale Page 6
- WECCC News & GLP Membership Page 7

An Extraordinarily Unique Way to Experience Venice

By Steve Lutsch

Almost three decades ago I was seated on a wild and remote Lake Superior beach in Canada under a night sky so clear and filled with millions upon millions of stars that seemed so near one could imagine touching them simply by reaching up. I was out enjoying a wilderness coastal kayak adventure with several friends. Somehow on that night under that sky the conversation touched upon our wish lists of exotic destinations each of us would like to kayak.

A theme became obvious as names of places began to flow like the countless clear streams that spill into Superior itself. Each of us rattled off place names of dream kayak destinations. The theme was obviously directed toward wilderness place names with much enthusiasm, discussion and general approval until I looked up to the heavens and contemplated Venice. "Venice Italy would certainly be an interesting place to kayak", I declared. Just about thirty years on, the idea of kayaking Venice finally afforded exploration. Circumstances had opened opportunities to seriously look into the idea. My sister-in-law had married an Austrian and now resided in Vienna. We had planned to visit. Looking at a map I could see Venice, (at least by Canadian standards) was not that far away. My rational explained to my wife Ingrid was that she could enjoy a nice visit with her sister and I would set off to kayak Venice and tick-off another box on my wish list.

I still remember her response; "you are not going to Venice without me!" The good news; Venice was now part of our travel plan. Having a kayak shipped to Venice was considered. I even rationalized selling it when my holiday was complete. I also went online in search of Italian kayak clubs in the hope that a kayak rental could be arranged. In the end it was Ingrid that saved the day. In the e-mail she sends me from her office, she simply says; "here you go, check this out". The e-mail included this link, www.venicekayak.com



Photos courtesy of Rene Seindal

Our guide, Rene, greets us in the lobby of Hotel Helvetia, (hotel Switzerland) on the Lido. The Lido is one of the islands that form the 'Laguna Veneta'. We have booked this hotel to be near his land base for kayak tours of Venice and the lagoon islands. His base is inside the gate of Camping San Nicolo' about 25 minutes walk from our hotel. As we discussed an itinerary for the next week I became confident in dealing with Rene. He explained he offers a service to kayakers. He also made it clear some of the waterways in and around the city may not be suitable for novice paddlers. When I ask about his fleet of kayaks he warns that participants should know and understand boat control. "None of my kayaks have rudders," he declares. "We often paddle in such tight quarters in some of the canals and need to quickly laterally draw ourselves into a tight nook or against a wall. The maneuvers required render any rudder useless". I liked Rene immediately!

The parameters of the channels surrounding Venice are marked by log posts that have been driven into the lagoon bed on either side of the dredged channel instead of floating channel markers that we would expect here in North America. A 'bricola' is the name given to a post used in this fashion. Around Venice and across the lagoon they are often pounded in as groups of three 'bricole'. Some are lighted to aid



night navigation and some are not. Bricola seen along the Grand Canal and within the city canal system may be familiar to anyone that has seen a Venetian photo image. Most of these bricola are ornately painted, often striped and spiraled with many distinctive colours and patterns.

Boat traffic is intense. Remember, everything here moves by water! 'Vaporetti', which are the fleet of city boats used as virtual floating public bus transit are prolific. Taxi boats zip along in every direction. Within this mix include cargo and service barges, full size cruise ships and private vessels of every description, not to mention countless gondolas, traghetti, and other rowing craft. What I witness is choreographed chaos! The sea state is confused and waves, some surprisingly big come at you from every direction.

Along the shore you learn quickly that wave energy does not wash out like it would onto a beach. Waves here, and there are many, reflect and bounce back off the walls that define the shore of this city and create very erratic conditions. You get reminded this is salt water often along this very busy waterway. The ride can be wet and a splash to the face clearly denotes a salinity of over 3% in Venice's lagoon.

Venice is called 'La Serenissima', (the most serene) and within just a few days we fall under the spell of her charm.

Continued on page 3

An Extraordinarily Unique Way to Experience Venice

Continued from page 2 - By Steve Lutsch

Offshore from San Marco and its famous Piazza a floating 'boom' has been installed to dissipate the wave energy. This area is a huge staging location for 'Gondola's'. The entrance to the canal that leads under the 'Ponte dei Sospiri' (Bridge of Sighs) is located to the right side of this protected water. The Bridge of Sighs is in the second year of a three-year preservation project. Preservation work is an ongoing thing throughout this heritage rich city. Scaffolding must always be enshrouded in screen to protect people from falling material. Often this screen is used for advertising. Rene explains that the preservation work is necessary and that the Mayor of Venice is correct in stating that it is better to lose a historic building or bridge to a few years under scaffolding and screen than to lose the structure forever. Rene explains there has been a local uproar about the advertising. He tells of a civic meeting when opponents confronted the Mayor. Rene smiles and tells how the Mayor carried the day by agreeing with the anti commercial proponents that the advertising is indeed ugly. The Mayor simply said he would remove the advertising from the Bridge of Sighs if they provide the 'Three Million Euros per month in revenue the advertising provides to the city for restoration projects'.

From the first moments of entering the labyrinth of canals within the city I understood I had made a wonderful decision in experiencing the countless treasures that would reveal themselves. I truly believe there is no better way to experience our world than from the seat of a kayak. This city was born from water. Since its inception the facades of the grand buildings and homes had been constructed to face the water. The walkways that lace through Venice, some not wide enough to open an umbrella had been intended for the poor and to service the back doors of buildings. Opulent foyers of every structure of importance and wealth faced the water. Efforts have been made out of necessity for tourism over the past century to address this fact. Shop windows and restaurants have swung to the side of foot traffic and today these back walkways are crammed with tourists. Only when someone hires the service of a 'Gondola' are they allowed to experience the true Venice but even then 'just'. I have priced out some costs and find wide ranges depending on the area of the city. Generally, costs can run from fifty Euros per half hour per person and up. I have seen seven and ten patrons in one gondola. The reality offers a charming ride but in the timeframe of a gondola tour one will only get to experience a tiny fraction of the dream that is Venice. Exploring Venice as I did with a kayak I often averaged over 20 kilometers a day and in the end experienced every canal. The first time I kayaked under the Rialto Bridge I was mesmerized. Indeed this city held a glorious and rich past.

Each day we would stop for lunch and a cool drink at some location near a Campo that always seemed to host a Church or Basilica and an assortment of café's. The kayaks always drew a crowd. That first lunch stop will always be significant in my memory. We kayaked into the insanely busy Canale della Giudecca separating the island of Giudecca from the rest of the city. The tide was out and the waves were big, crazy and erratic. The choreographed chaos had simply become madness inside this waterway and we had a lot of fun playing in the mix. I had never seen so many boats moving about in one area before. There was a café that Rene wanted to stop at on the Giudecca shore near the Ponte Piccolo but the waves crashed against the wall violently. We kayaked into a canal under the Piccolo footbridge and found a sheltered take-out on a quiet canal named Rio della Pallada. When we pulled our kayaks from the water an old man came out of his home to greet us. He had a keen interest in the kayaks. He is 93-years old, has lived in this house all his adult life and once was a fisherman. When Rene explained I had traveled from Canada just to explore his city in these little kayaks the old gentleman invited us into his home. On the wall of his main living quarters are many black and white framed photos of his life, family and world. He points out an old wood bridge that had been the precursor of the concrete structure that has replaced it in the canal in front of his home. He directs our attention to pictures of his old rowing boat with himself as a young man standing next to it right about at the location our kayaks rest now. He has never traveled far from his home. His world was Venice and the lagoon and I have never seen a more content and relaxed man. La Serenissima is also a state of mind.

On the day of our family kayak tour led by Rene we shared the time in the company of two other Canadians and one fellow from the U.K. It was a nice group. Being under 14 years of age and to his chagrin Peter was ushered into a tandem kayak with his mother. A competent young kayaker Peter has five kayaks of his own back home but 'rules are rules' and he understood. Having seen some of the canals of the day's itinerary during previous outings I took the role of sweep and enjoyed everyone's reaction. The weather was perfect. In all we kayaked 17.3km that day and witnessed treasures I could never tire of. The Rialto was a hit as was the amazing canal tunnel under the Santo Stefano Church that is too low for gondolas to pass under. Everyone on the water and along the shore was fascinated with our kayaks. I feel it safe to proclaim we are part of thousands of holiday photos. It was a wonderful family experience none of us will ever forget.

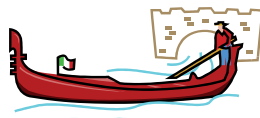
Venice Kayak offers a night paddle to experience another perspective of La Serenissima. I could not pass that up. On the day of the night paddle I was also invited to join Rene for an afternoon tour with a British Journalist doing a story about Rene's unique 'Kayak Venice' concept seeing I had the same idea.

With headlamps and white chemical light tubes fixed we set out toward the Canal Grande. Darkness brings a hushed quiet to this city.

Voices travel clearly over the still canals. Boat traffic is but a fraction of daylight activity.

On the Canal Grande vaporetti run the night service but much reduced in number from the daytime public transit rush. Taxies transport their fares but at a slower speed. Gondolas carry couples in an unmatched romantic setting in the spirit of 'Amore'.

Sometime after 11:00pm we kayak under the Rialto Bridge again. I remember asking myself how many times I had paddled under this wonder, seven – eight? It did not matter anymore. I felt so fortunate for just being here. Venice is wonderful. Choosing to experience it while kayaking afforded the privilege of being part of that tiny minority who come away with a more fulfilling grasp of just how amazingly special this place is.



Steve Lutsch

GLP Camping Weekend on the Pine

By Alexis Linder

A lively band of paddlers assembled at the Peterson Bridge Campground near Wellston, MI for the 4th Annual Campout Weekend on the Pine and Péré Marquette Rivers. People arrived Friday afternoon and evening. Bill Dunphy was our “anchor” site having arrived first after a sojourn in the Upper Peninsula.

The Peterson Bridge campground is delightful with large wooded sites bordering a curvy paved access road in. The more robust camper has a choice of sites down near the river banks for only five or six dollars per night, but you need to carry your kit down the hill to set up (no auto access there) and then back up when you pack up to leave. We all opted for the upper sites (there were 18) and car camped. It was the cleanest campground I have ever visited – hosted by a very friendly retired couple.

Saturday morning we woke to steady rain, but Kim Harper’s radar report on her mobile phone assured us that by delaying just a couple hours we could have a pleasant sunny paddle in just a couple hours. We all kicked back to relax or work on other projects we’d brought along, i.e. Cathy Myles worked on a beautiful beaded necklace, and Sharon showed off the socks she is knitting. We gathered at Sharon and Tom’s campsite under their tarp wearing our rain gear and had fun visiting while waiting out the weather.

After the short delay we began the ferrying of cars & boats. We put in at Elm Flats on the Pine River and paddled down to Peterson Bridge, about 12 miles distant. The Pine is a very clean and brisk river. It is spring fed and consequently only about 50 degrees. Because the current carried us along quite swiftly we needed to pay pretty close attention to the river as there were a number of hazards and plenty of twists and turns. “Surprise” rocks here and there made for some exciting moments if they caught you unaware. John Scislowicz actually said he actually “got some air” off one rock and it was more like riding a mountain bike than paddling. One person quite unexpectedly became a member of the Pine River Swim Team. The required change of clothes made the balance of the trip more comfy though. The river passes through beautiful forest, mainly pines and is fragrant and very lovely.

Saturday night we had a great communal meal and hours around a warming bonfire with fun chat among participants. We brought things to pass as well as other food so we all got pretty stuffed after our day out of doors. John made spam kebobs (a tribute of Bob Dick maybe?) as well as a new version of s’mores which he called Mexican S’mores. You roll chopped Snickers bars with a couple tablespoons of coconut and some chocolate in a flour tortilla and grill to melt the goodies and brown the tortilla. Marshmallows are optional. We all loved ‘em.

Another popular topic was potential bear problems. Once again, John said he wasn’t worried because he brought cans of tuna fish to set by other people’s tents, so the bears would leave him alone. He was only kidding.

The stars that night were amazing and we heard an owl as he traveled and called passing thru the campground before dawn. We woke to clear weather and looked forward to our second paddle of the weekend. We broke camp and headed down the road early Sunday morning.

A delicious breakfast on the road down to Baldwin fortified us for Sunday’s paddle. We did the usual shuttling of cars and began our paddle on the Péré Marquette at Bowman Bridge and took out at Sulak Landing approximately 10+ miles distant. This river is a first class trout and salmon river. Once again the current assisted our progress and made for a fascinating view as the water was mostly very clear and clean and the bottom varied in composition from sandy mud to gravel or rocks, often submerged tree trunks and logs, beautiful waving seaweed, and occasionally large rocks but less treacherous than the Pine River. We had a chance to visit more as we paddled and enjoy the scenery including early color on the trees and varied terrain, sometimes wooded, other times open pasture-type land. We saw more fishermen, some in traditional river boats. A number of very large fish were swimming upstream near our boats if you watched carefully you could see their dark shadow coursing upstream. At one bend there was a fish resting on a sandbar in the river and my guess is that it was spawning based on it’s posture and location. The dorsal fin protruding above the water and the fish pointed upstream.

We finished up in the early afternoon after a great paddle and stop for snacks, especially Kim’s amazing chocolate chunk cookies, and said our goodbyes as we helped each other load up boats and gear to begin our journey home.

It was a fun weekend. Jamie knew the area and also had a book called [Canoeing Michigan Rivers](#) which he kindly shared with anyone who wanted to peek. Very important to do research before you go. For instance, both these rivers require permits basically from May to Mid-September in order to limit the use and control crowds. The campground had plenty of sites, but it was closing the gate for the season on Sunday, so again if you didn’t check ahead you could have had a problem. The companionship and camaraderie were great. Fun chance to get to know our members better and enjoy a shared passion for paddling. *Alexis Linder*

Upcoming Events

GLP Day After Thanksgiving Day Paddle

November 26, 2010

Location: Brighton, MI

Skill Level: Intermediate, Difficulty: Moderate

Meet time: 11:00 am

Paddle on the Huron River through scenic Island Lake Recreation Area. State park annual sticker (\$24, \$6 seniors) or daily pass (\$6) or new park passport required for park entry. Please bring a dish to pass for potluck lunch. This is a cold water paddle, bring a complete change of clothes in a dry bag. No children or pets please. Please let Kim know what you will be bringing for the potluck lunch when you RSVP.

Contact: Kim Harper at kech527@yahoo.com or 734 289-3410



GLP Holiday Gathering

December 11, 2010

Location: Ann Arbor, MI

Meet time: 6:00 pm

Enjoy the camaraderie of fellow paddlers at a potluck dinner at the Myles' home. Please bring a dish to pass, a white elephant gift to exchange and your singing voice! Please RSVP.

Contact: Cathy Myles at cathymyles@hotmail.com or 734 786-8424.



GLP New Year's Day Paddle

Location: Belleville, MI

Skill Level: Intermediate,

Difficulty: Moderate

Meet time: 12:00 pm

Put in at North Fishing Site in Lower Huron Metropark and take out at South Fishing Site. This is a cold water paddle. Dress appropriately, always wear a PFD, and bring a full change of clothes in a dry bag. No children or pets please. A Metropark annual sticker (\$25, \$15 Seniors) or day pass (\$6) is required for park entry. Meal afterwards at Applebee's Restaurant, 10526 Belleville Rd., Belleville, MI 48111. Come for a meal or to be a shuttle bunny if you are not paddling.

Contact: Linda Kortesoja at ljkwater@mi.rr.com or 734 542-0271.



Event Calendar

November 2010

11/09/10 GLP Meeting

11/26/10 GLP - Day After Thanksgiving Day Paddle

December 2010

12/11/10 GLP - Holiday Gathering

January 2011

01/01/11 GLP - New Year's Day Paddle

01/11/11 GLP Meeting

February 2011

02/5/11 GLP - Cross Country Ski Event

March 2011

03/08/11 GLP Meeting

03/19/11 GLP - St. Paddy's Day Paddle & Potluck



We haven't gotten one bite all day..

TRIP NOTIFICATION

It is essential that you notify the trip leader that you plan to paddle with them. Trip leaders are listed on the website and in the paddle details in the Eddy Lines.

Please let your leaders know your skill level and equipment. If no notification is received the trip leader will assume that they are alone and may decide to go paddle solo in some other more convenient spot. If you show up at a put-in and no one is there you may want to try and remember if you notified them of your intentions.

Information is subject to change!

Details as they become available and may be on the Great Lakes Paddlers' Website Calendar and in past issues of the Eddy Lines.

Beaufort Wind Scale

This copy of the Beaufort Wind Scale is provided by the British Canoe Union, (BCU).

Force; Speed; Description; Sea Condition; Sea State (Knots)

| | | | | |
|---|-------|-----------------|--|--------|
| 0 | 0-1 | calm | like a mirror | smooth |
| 1 | 1-3 | light air | ripples like scales | calm |
| 2 | 4-6 | light breeze | small wavelets, glassy crests, not breaking | calm |
| 3 | 7-10 | gentle breeze | large wavelets, crests begin to break, glassy foam | calm |
| 4 | 11-16 | moderate breeze | small waves, becoming longer, fairly frequent white horses | slight |

The BCU sea proficiency test assesses an individual's ability to operate in up to force 4 winds. Under their terminology, a proficient paddler is one who can paddle safely as a member of a group within such wind speed.

| | | | | |
|---|-------|---------------|--|--------------|
| 5 | 17-21 | fresh breeze | moderate waves, more pronounced long form, many white horses, possible spray | moderate |
| 6 | 22-27 | strong breeze | large waves begin to form, white crests everywhere. Probably some spray | rather rough |
| 7 | 28-33 | near gale | sea heaps up with white foam from breaking waves | rather rough |
| 8 | 34-40 | gale | moderate high waves of greater length, much foam | rough |
| 9 | 41-47 | strong gale | high waves, dense foam streaks along the direction of wind | very rough |

Force 8 is a sensible upper limit for most paddlers on open water. Remember that it may take 2 days for the sea state to reach its maximum, so conditions in force 8 can vary a lot.

| | | | | |
|----|-------|--------------|--|--|
| 10 | 48-55 | storm | | |
| 11 | 55-65 | severe storm | | |
| 12 | 67+ | hurricane | | |

Classified Ads

Necky Alsek Kayak, polyethylene, 14 foot long, 24 inches wide with a rudder. 2 hatches and bulkheads. It tracks well and turns even better. Excellent condition, has always been stored indoors. \$900.

Contact: Mary at jrtheaven@netzero.net or 734 751-5527 Cell, or 734 461-0299 Home.

Wilderness Systems Alto Kayak. 15 foot Greenland style kayak with stern hatch and bulkhead, thigh braces in polyethylene. Light blue color. Nice boat for the river, great for a smaller person. \$500.00, excellent condition. Contact: Mary at jrtheaven@netzero.net or 734 751-5527 Cell, or 734 461-0299 Home.

Michicraft aluminum canoe. 16' x 35", 90 lbs. **Now only \$199.00.** Great for the cottage. Contact: Wally Smith at wsmith365@comcast.net or 248 937-1805.

GLP Logo Merchandise

GLP Logo Merchandise is available to purchase through the club website at www.greatlakespaddlers.org. Just click on the merchandise link on the left side of the page to be directed to online ordering. Now offering 15% off the regular low Prices through November 30th! Use coupon code ITSFALL when ordering.



Club T-Shirts:

We still have a few older style GLP Club T-Shirts for sale. Cost: \$15 each.

Sizes are as follows:
M or XXL

Contact Bill Dunphy at canubill@comcast.net or 734 981-3044



Welcome New Members!

William Kantor

Henry Marschner

John Martens



Windsor Essex County Canoe Club News



Beautiful windswept islands dot the Georgian Bay Islands National Park

Seven kayakers enjoyed a three day weekend, June 25-28, 2010 touring around Beausoleil Island in the Georgian Bay. We put in at Honey Harbour and paddled to our base camp at Honeymoon Bay. Yes, included on the trip were requisite newlyweds. Saturday morning, we hiked trails on the island in the rain and in the afternoon we did a group paddle. On Sunday morning we escorted the newlyweds to the take out and the five remaining paddled the rest of the way around the island back to base camp. Paddling in the main boat channel felt like being on the 400 highway series. The islands with cottages are just so picturesque and the smooth granite rocks and wonderful for exploring and relaxing. We had great company and had a most enjoyable time. We'd like to give special thanks to Bob Aylesworth for organizing this trip, his first of many this summer.

Robert & Sharon DeYoung



Membership Renewal

No tricks, only treats!

Why should you treat yourself to a GLP membership renewal in January?



- Fun events
- Paddling clinics and safety instruction
- Meet new people
- Member informal paddles
- Calendar of area activities
- Monthly meetings and newsletter
- Free classified ads

A great value for your membership dollar!



Fill out the renewal form on page 8 and send it in or use the handy PayPal feature on the club website at www.greatlakespaddlers.org/join/join.htm

Dues received the last quarter of the year are credited for 2011

Michigan Recreation Passport



Beginning Oct. 1, the \$10 Recreation Passport replaces the state park sticker for access into all state parks, recreation areas and boat launches. To get the Recreation Passport, Michigan residents can check "YES" on their license plate renewal forms. The Recreation Passport also helps preserve forest campgrounds and trails, historic and cultural sites in state parks, and local parks.

Where can \$10 take you?

Visit www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport for more information.

Metropark Appreciation Days

Enjoy free park entry and free boat launching at your favorite Metropark during "Appreciation Days."

Veterans Day – November 11, 2010

Thanksgiving Holiday – November 25 & 26, 2010



Canoe tour at Oakwoods Metropark Nature Center

