



# MaCKRO News

## Message from the Prez

As I sit here and reflect on how my tenure as MaCKRO's President has gone so far, I can't help but get a little discouraged. Within a couple of months of becoming President, I learned that the longtime sponsor of our first two races, the St. George and Passy races, was no longer going to be running the races. After a bit of scrambling, and the very generous Dale Cross stepping forward with a newly formed group, the first two races were scheduled. Then, the pandemic hit.

The last two years have been challenging as we continuously work with race directors to figure out schedules. Thankfully, I have an amazing team around me. They are always willing to step up to the plate. In 2021, we regained a few of the whitewater races: The Sou, Marsh Stream, Kenduskeag, Sandy River Race, Meduxnekeag. Once again, Vice President Dan Baumert offered several flatwater races, including Pushaw Lake, the Maine Flatwater Championship, Ebb Tide, Verona, Sebec Lake. You all don't know how much time and effort Dan puts into this club and I am so appreciative.

I am hoping to add one or two more races to the schedule to go along with the St. George/Oyster River flatwater race. I am hoping they will be south of Augusta to encourage more participation from those of us in the southern part of the state and to show those of you in the northern part of the state the beautiful waterways down here. Stay tuned as I iron out the details.

Another new thing that happened in 2021 was the women's paddle group that was meeting in Orono on Tuesday nights this past summer. I had the opportunity to join them on one of these evenings and was encouraged by the enthusiasm of these women who were new to paddling and hope to see some of them at a race.

Please see the rest of the newsletter for details on a lot of the events and races that happened in 2021, including further details on the women's paddles as well as discussion on what is happening with the Penobscot River Paddling Trail and Orono Paddlers. Also, please note that it has been a number of years since MaCKRO has published a newsletter. I hope to make this a yearly occurrence as it once was.

At the end of it all, my discouragement wanes and I am reminded of all that we have been able to do despite the ongoing pandemic and look forward to even more this year. Please keep an eye on the race schedule as I know of at least one new whitewater race that is being planned for the Millinocket Stream. The MaCKRO website race schedule, [Races & Events – MaCKRO](#), has all the details and status of races planned for 2022.

I hope you are all enjoying the winter sports and hope to see you on the water soon.

**Aili Hartikka**





## 2022 Downriver Point Series Championship

The MaCKRO Whitewater Committee is pleased to announce its plans to revitalize the MaCKRO Whitewater Downriver Point Series, which has been absent from the 2020 & 2021 whitewater racing seasons, owing to the many race cancellations obviously due to the COVID pandemic.

For the 2022 whitewater racing season, MaCKRO's Whitewater Committee remains cognizant of everyone's need to exercise best anti-COVID practices — especially physical distancing — as the pandemic surges into the future.

We realize that some folks wish to race no matter what, but that others, though avid whitewater paddlers, would appreciate being as safe and taking as many precautions as possible insofar as the current pandemic is concerned. For the purposes of this latter contingent, the Whitewater Committee has created a new Whitewater Down River Point Series group — Touring, in which both F14 and F16 canoes can participate as well as the same varieties of kayaks as in former years of the traditional Whitewater Down River Point Series.

Participants in the Whitewater Touring Down River Point Series will be awarded a point for every whitewater race course they begin and complete, regardless of the time it takes to complete the course. The MaCKRO member in Touring who amasses the greatest number of points in his or her class (same classes as the traditional Whitewater Down River Point Series) will be announced as the winner, with second and third places also being recognized. Prizes are yet to be decided.

Those MaCKRO members who wish to compete as traditional racers will be entered in the Whitewater Racing Down River Point Series, with results tabulated and overall standings determined in the same manner as that of pre-pandemic years. Prizes are yet to be decided for this group as well.

Further specifics about MaCKRO's renovated Whitewater Downriver Point Series will follow in the next few weeks leading up to the beginning of the 2022 whitewater paddling season.

Potential Downriver Point Series Races (See [www.mackro.org](http://www.mackro.org) for race details)

St. George – March 26<sup>th</sup>  
Passagassawakeag – April 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Elliot Lamb (Souadabscook) – April 9<sup>th</sup>  
Marsh Stream – April 10<sup>th</sup>  
Kenduskeag – April 16<sup>th</sup>  
Meduxnekeag – April 30<sup>th</sup>

Sandy River – April 30<sup>th</sup>  
Machias River - TBD  
Piscataquis - TBD  
Sebec River - TBD  
Union River - TBD

Thanks and see you on the river!

RW Estela, MaCKRO Whitewater Committee Chair  
Chris Dalton, MaCKRO Whitewater Committee





## 2021 & 2022 Flatwater Point Series Championship

The 2021 Maine Flatwater Paddle Race series consisted of 9 races that included the Sebec 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Pushaw Lake, Maine Flatwater Championship, Tour DiVerona, Ebb Tide Marathon, Saco River, St George/Oyster River, Muskrat Scramble and the Long Pond MDI War Canoe races. A total of 59 different paddlers participated in the nine races which included 47 male and 12 female paddlers. 4 points were given for a 1<sup>st</sup> place class finish, 3 points for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2 points for 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 1 point for participation if not in the top 3 of a class. The top five male and female paddlers in the flatwater series are as follows:

Male: 1) Mark Ranco, 2) Chip Loring, 3) Dan Baumert, 4) Chris Francis, 5) Clayton Cole, Ben Randall

Female: 1) Linda Basilicato, 2) Aili Hartikka, 3) Amy DiFrancesco, 4) Paula Lunt, 5) Roberta McLain, Stacey Foster, Mackenzie Todd, Marcie Berkley, Anita Nugent, Abigail Cureless

The format of the 2022 Flatwater Series point system will be similar to that of the 2021 Flatwater Series, with potentially separate kayak and canoe classes added. See <https://www.mackro.org> for specific race details and final rules. The following are potential races that could be included in the 2022 Flatwater Series:

Sebec Lake - July 4<sup>th</sup>

Pushaw Lake Race - Sunday July 10th

Maine Flatwater Championship - Saturday July 23rd

Tour DiVerona - Saturday August 20<sup>th</sup>

Androscoggin Adventure Festival – August 27th

Orland River Days Race, Orland River - Saturday September 10th

Ebb Tide Marathon - Saturday September 17<sup>th</sup>

War Canoe Race (Long Pond MDI) - October 9<sup>th</sup>

Baskahegan Marathon - TBD

Caribou Recreation Department Aroostook River Race - TBD

Sheepscot River Race - TBD

Saco River Race - TBD

St, George/Oyster River - TBD

Muskrat Scramble - TBD

Flatwater Chairman

Dan Baumert





## News Splashes

### Maine Paddle Race Miles for 2021





## **Awards and Recognition**

### **The Muir the Merrier Award**

The Muir the Merrier for 2021 was awarded to Aili Hartikka. The Muir the Merrier award is presented to the member of the paddling community (not necessarily a racer or even a paddler) that facilitates bringing new participants to our sport.

Aili demonstrated this spirit in spades in 2021. Providing race support by volunteering for timing and organizing, keeping MaCKRO relevant through the pandemic and always in possession of a cheerful, encouraging spirit that epitomizes the slogan engraved on the Muir the Merrier Award: “Paddle For The Fun Of It”

### **President’s Choice Award**

The President’s Choice Award is an award to be given, at the complete discretion of the sitting MaCKRO President, to a paddler who demonstrated during that racing season, a willingness to go outside of their comfort zone in their paddling, showing an improvement in their paddling and racing skills, while also maintaining a positive and upbeat attitude, great sportsmanship and showing up to a lot of races. This year’s President’s Choice Award went to Dan Baumert, who improved a lot paddling his surfski and even using it in one of the races at the Flatwater Nationals, and as we all know, Dan continues to be very active in MaCKRO races and always exhibits great sportsmanship.

### **Chip Loring Featured in Downeast Magazine**

Chip Loring was featured in a special edition of the November 2021 Downeast Magazine that focused on 70 Extraordinary Mainers over 70 years old. Chip is an iconic paddler who is in his seventh decade of paddling and racing in Maine, nationally and internationally. Chip is also an accomplished triathlete having completed the Hawaii Ironman Triathlon. In addition to his athletic skills and accomplishments Chip is well known for his community service and willingness to help others in need. Despite injuries and setbacks Chip always seems to comeback and paddle and race again. Just this past year Chip finished first in his class in the Kenduskeag Stream Canoe Race. Chip was already seen paddling on open sections of Pushaw Stream as early as mid February already getting ready for the 2022 paddle racing season! The full article about Chip in Downeast magazine can be found at the following link; [Penobscot Elder Chip Loring’s Most Important Life Lesson | Down East Magazine](#)

### **Thursday Evening Orono Paddlers race events**

The Thursday evening paddle events were again successful in 2021 at drawing members of the community to paddle on the Stillwater. Attendance varies quite a lot, with some Thursdays showing only the dedicated flatwater racers in attendance and others where those racers are joined by anywhere from 10 to 80 people in the big boats. We remain very reliant on the generosity of the Penobscot River





Keepers (BJ and Mike Maybury, in particular) for the use of their big boats, and on MaCKRO members who continue to volunteer to captain those boats (Peggy McKee, Terry Wescott, Chip Loring, Bucky Owen, and Eric Gallandt, among others). And we thank RW Estella for setting and collecting the turn buoys every week. The Orono Paddlers have every expectation that this program will continue in 2022 on July and August Thursday evenings. See <https://www.mackro.org> for specific race dates and times.

### **Women's Group Paddle**

Linda Basilicato and Mackenzie Todd reported that 8 or 9 women would typically participated. Usually some were faster than others so at times challenging keeping everyone together. Suggested next year to split up into two groups (faster, slower) and use a more variety of boats (i.e. more stable for less experienced paddlers). Still will primarily keep the sessions solely for women as it seems to be less intimidating for new female paddlers to learn with other women and from more experienced women, however, they are considering including men in 2022 especially beginners. Also considering a session at Hirundo Wildlife Refuge.

### **Youth Outreach**

Currently MaCKRO's only youth outreach is associated with making the organization's youth boats and the associated helmets, pfd's, and paddles available to other organizations for use in their programs, of which there are two. One is that the equipment was again borrowed this year by the Maine Canoe Symposium so that youth in attendance can experience those boats in a variety of ways. The other is that Jeff Owen again borrowed the equipment for the Orono Paddlers' Youth Paddle Camps. There are no other youth outreach programs currently being offered through MaCKRO. It is anticipated that these two activities will again be offered in 2022.

### **Swiftwater Rescue Training**

In August, Jeremy Hargreaves, owner of Northeast Whitewater, held a modified swiftwater rescue training for 7 MaCKRO members on the Penobscot River. This was a one-day class (it's normally a two day session) during which Jeremy went over swimming in whitewater, rescue techniques to help those in the water and reading the water. MaCKRO hopes to be able to offer a similar class in 2022 if interest is expressed. Please email Aili Hartikka at [ailih186@gmail.com](mailto:ailih186@gmail.com) if you are indeed interested in taking such a class in 2022.

### **Tuesday Evening Group Training Paddles**

For the past few years there has been a group paddle around Orson Island Tuesday evenings in June, July and August. This is typically a good opportunity to do some friendly group flatwater race training. This is a good opportunity to work on paddling form and get tips and pointers from experienced racers. It is anticipated this will continue in 2022. The group meets at 5:30 at the Old Town Boat ramp on Fourth Street just above the Indian Island bridge. A notice will be sent out when the Tuesday group paddles start up again. Contact Dan Baumert at [djbaumert123@gamil.com](mailto:djbaumert123@gamil.com) for more details.





## Penobscot River Paddling Trail

Currently the Penobscot River Paddling Trail has established five rustic campsites on the main stem of the Penobscot River; Medunkeunk Landing – Lincoln, Riverbilly's Retreat – Argyle, Ketawamkihtek - Old Town, French Island – Old Town, Maple Grove (Penobscot Valley Country Club) – Orono, Penobscot Salmon Club – Brewer.

There are at least three commercial campgrounds along the route as well. This season we expect to add campsites in the Winn area (near Mattawamkeag), at Nibezun near Passadumkeag, and in Orrington. These sites all have a privy or outhouse, a large picnic table, located within 250 ft of the river, first come first served. The sites are lightly used and usually unoccupied. We hope to see use and traffic increase this year. These are carry in carry out, leave no trace campsites.

The unique thing about the trail is the incredibly easy access. Although the campsites are not accessible by road there are many access points to the river all within an easy days paddle of nearby campsites. You can leave a shuttle vehicle in Old Town or Brewer/Bangor and be in Medway within 90 minutes ready to launch on your adventure. Some may choose to start upstream in the East Branch Penobscot. There are many trips that can be planned from 1 day to a week or more. Excellent fishing for bass and other species. Bald eagles are common along with many species of birds and waterfowl. Except for the intermittent class II-III rapids (well known to MaCKRO paddlers) from Old Town to Brewer there are no significant rapids on this whole stretch and only three portages at dams in Medway, Howland and Old Town. The river in this section has a steady 3-5 mph current making travel easy and quick. The water levels are good from April through November. Even high water or low offers decent paddling in a semi wilderness corridor.

PRPT is a 501c3 non-profit corporation. We have been fortunate to win several grants and receive a number of generous donations giving us comfortable finances. Use of the trail is free. Our officers are David Thanhauser- President, Clayton Cole- VP, Cloe Chunn- Secretary, Tom Rutka- Treasurer. We currently have five Board members: Peter Crockett, Linda Basilicato, Rick Henion, Tom Mullin, Phil Gerard. We are looking to add 6-10 board members. Greg Dorr has been immensely helpful in helping us navigate setting up our corporation and addressing various legal questions. I invite you all to visit our website: <https://www.penobscotriverspaddlingtrail.org/> It includes many maps and details about the trail.

**Clayton Cole**





## *Membership*

Needless to say, the pandemic hit our organization pretty hard as it pertains to membership, understandably so. There were 9 members who renewed their membership in 2021 and 4 new members. This was up from 8 renewals in 2020 and no new members. Hopefully that with the whitewater races especially coming back in full force in 2022, people will once again get excited and renew their membership. MaCKRO will be offering a \$100 gift card by drawing to someone who renewed as well as one \$100 gift card to someone who is a new member. The drawing for each of these will happen after the awards ceremony for the Whitewater Series which is typically after the Union River Race. Go to [Membership – MaCKRO](#) for detailed information on how to renew or become a new member.

## *2022 MaCKRO Officers*

President: Aili Hartikka  
Vice President: Dan Baumert  
Treasurer: Mark Risinger  
Secretary: Allisen Risinger  
Whitewater Chairs: R.W. Estella and Chris Dalton  
Flatwater Chair: Dan Baumert  
Membership Chair: Aili Hartikka  
Publicity Chair: Linda Basilicato  
Youth Outreach: Jeff Owen

For more information About MaCKRO go to [MaCKRO – Maine Canoe & Kayak Racing Organization](#)

AND

*Paddle Hard!!!!*

