

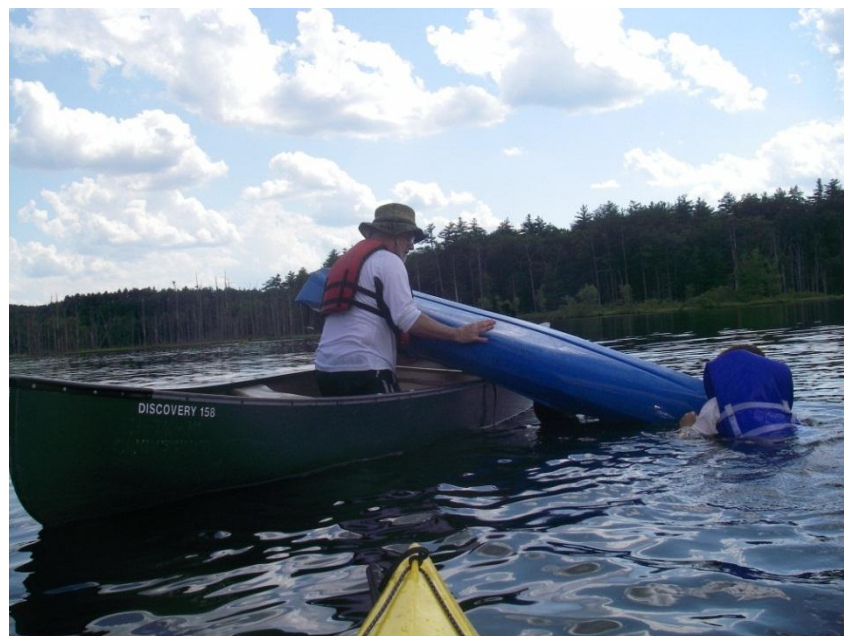
Subject: There was something for everybody.

This year's 'paddling and safety demo' was held in July at Poms Pond in Andover. This was an ideal site because of its ample parking, gently sloping sandy beach, men's and ladies changing area, and tranquil water.

The demonstration started with master instructor Ken Doran showing the people, just about everything they needed to know to paddle a canoe. He started by identifying the parts of the canoe and the different type of strokes that people should know. Ken discussed the different responsibilities and strokes that the person in the bow or stern should know. This gave Dick McCarthy and his two grandsons a great initiation for their first trip.

Frank, Karen, their son Eric and daughter Ellen brought their own canoe. They already were very good paddlers but wanted to learn what to do if their canoe tipped over in the middle of a lake. All were wearing Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) when they purposely turned the canoe over. Bob R then talked them through the process of a 'canoe over canoe' rescue from another boat.

Alice saw this and decided it would be a good idea if she could do the same thing from her kayak. She also purposely tipped over and did a 'kayak over canoe' rescue.



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Ken brought a few 12 foot long poles with him and with these people 'poled' around the edges of the pond. This worked very well in the shallow parts of the pond and would work on a river as well. The funny thing about polling was that once somebody got out into the middle of the pond where the poles wouldn't reach the bottom, the poles still acted as a serviceable paddle. The shape obviously was quite different from a conventional paddle but the surface area was large enough to displace enough water so the boat could be propelled.



I had heard of something called 'gunwale bobbing' and wanted to give it a try. Gunwale bobbing is when you stand up on the gunwales of the canoe, the outer ridges along the sides of the canoe, and then you bounce up and down. Sometimes called the 'kangaroo stroke'. The hardest part about this was getting from the floor of the canoe up onto the gunwales. It was quite tippy. Once I got up on the gunwales I started bobbing up and down. The key to this is to stay close to either end of the canoe. I was surprised at how much it made my legs ache but I was able to propel myself 25 to 50 yards across the pond in a straight line. A problem arose when it was time to turn around and go back. There is no way to turn the canoe around so I had to jump down onto the floor of the canoe and walk to the other

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end of the canoe, turn around and get back up on the gunwales and bob my way back to the starting point. Getting back up on the gunwales the second time is when I lost my balance and fell into the water. Other than getting wet and looking foolish, something I'm very familiar with, there was no problem and I crossed something off my 'bucket list'.



Join us next year.

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