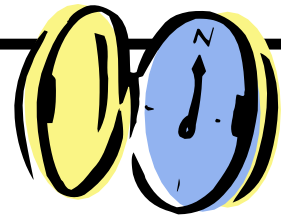


# Compass Navigation, Anyone?

By Deb Knapper



Since starting to kayak a few years ago, I hadn't concerned myself too much with navigation skills. Most of the kayaking I do is on closed lakes and reservoirs here in Colorado, with my husband (who is quite accomplished in navigation skills). But when Dick Dieckman offered to teach introductory compass and navigation at the Paddlefest, I figured it was finally time to sign up and learn this skill!

We began our compass instruction at the table, which would later serve for lunch condiments. For us, it worked perfectly as a map and demonstration table. Dick introduced himself to us and explained his qualification. In his forestry work, he is able to locate nails in a single tree, placed many years ago to mark a location, with just a compass and a map. Needless to say,

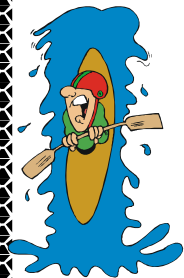
we were all impressed – as we were, too, by the beautiful vintage compass he brought to show us, a keepsake handed down from his boatbuilding father.

Dick explained maps and map reading and the differences between topographic and marine maps. Then he explained how compasses require some “mental math” to make the correction from actual reading to true course. Once we had all practiced taking bearings with compasses Dick provided for us, he then showed us how to triangulate a fix, thus establishing a position. He also stressed the importance of navigating by landmarks as well as bearings and fixes.

After familiarizing ourselves with the compasses, we reviewed the course he had laid out for us on the chart, and

then took to our kayaks to try navigating for ourselves. Dick shepherded us along our course, pointing out the error in our bearings when we tried triangulating from the wrong buoy for the first fix! The generous boat-wake waves made taking bearings problematic: rocking boats and compasses with everything pivoting continually off-line – a good simulation of how it might be on a rough ocean! After a few false starts and some more patient instruction from Dick, we managed to navigate our way over his course to the final “buoy” which is actually misspelled on the marker itself!

Thank you to Dick Dieckman for a great and patient introduction to using maps and compasses. I know we all appreciated his efforts and time!



## Union Chutes Saturday, 12 June

Make your next river trip one of confidence rather than anxiety. Spend 4 hours learning to paddle your boat in moving water. Or practice even if you know how. This is a nicely controlled water flow situation -- but be prepared to capsizel! We will learn ferrying upstream, eddy turns, turning back into moving water, setting into

shore on moving water. Even dropping down a water chute should you choose. Recommended you have Beginner River Skills per RMSKC Skills List available on club website. Join Larry Kline for a 10 am start at Union Ave just 0.6 miles north of Bellevue and west of Santa Fe. Drive into the ball field across from the Waste Mgt facility and turn right to the parking loop. Limited to first 6 paddlers. Please call in advance to put your name on the participants list.  
Larry Kline—303-988-4822.