

# EDDYLINE



Since 1964

NORTHWEST VOYAGEURS CANOE AND KAYAK CLUB



Since 1964

Box 1341, Edmonton, AB T5J 2N2

Internet Address: [www.nwvoyageurs.com](http://www.nwvoyageurs.com)

## Upcoming Events

**January 1  
2008**

### **Membership Renewal**

Memberships are up for renewal as of January 1, 2008  
Please renew as soon as possible—Registration and Waiver Forms can be found on the back on back of this newsletter or online at our website

**Jan 6 (Sun)  
6:45 pm**

### **Whitewater Kayak – Beginner Lessons — Started January 6, 2008**

Session #1 started January 6, 2008 — More information on page 3

**Jan 6 to Apr 13**

### **Kayak Drop-in Sessions on Sundays**

Confederation Pool, 11204-43 Ave. Edmonton.

Keep your skills up while the snow flies! Every Sunday night thru April 13 (except Mar 23), you can practice your paddling skills from 7:45 pm to 8:45 pm. Bring your own boat or use one of the club's. There is a fee \$10 for drop-ins.

PLEASE NOTE: Drop-ins will be restricted to the deep pool as kayak lesson will be ongoing.  
More information on page 3

**Jan 30 (Wed)  
7:30 pm**

### **General Meeting— Guest Speaker—John Wollard—Subject is: The South Saskatchewan ...with a Military Twist**

Northgate Loins Senior Centre—Come join us in the Seminar Room

7524-139 Ave. Edmonton

More information on page 4

**Feb 5 (Tue)  
7:30 pm**

### **Executive Meeting**

Northgate Loins Senior Centre—Seminar Room

7524-139 Ave. Edmonton

The club executive meet to discuss club business. Members are welcome to attend.

**Feb 24 (Sun)  
6:45 pm**

### **Whitewater Kayak – Beginner Lessons — Starts February 24, 2008**

Session #2 starts February 24, 2008 — More information on page 3

**Feb 27 (Wed)  
7:30 pm**

### **General Meeting— Trip Planning Meeting**

Northgate Loins Senior Centre—Seminar Room

7524-139 Ave. Edmonton

Come help trip plan our 2008 paddling season—More information on page 4

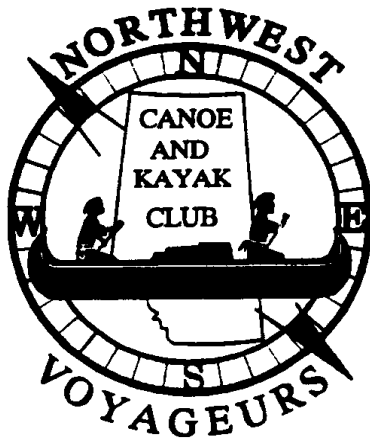
# NWV EXECUTIVE 2008

President	Melvyn Kadyk	484-3563	
*Vice President	Norma Ouellette	444-0263	normao(a)nait.ab.ca
*Treasurer	Michelle Monroe	486-0363	
*Secretary	Pauline Gilmour	483-5265	pauline.gilmour(a)epsb.ca
Membership	Steve Budziszyn	461-3292	
Newsletter	Don Litven	476-7006	don_litven(a)hotmail.com
Website	Ben Coxworth	438-4062	coxworth(a)shaw.ca
*Publicity	Ivan Isop	477-2441	puppydog875(a)phreego.com
Archives	***Vacant*****		
Conservation	***Vacant*****		
*Trip Coordinator	Alan Stewart	487-0607	alkemy(a)ocii.com
*Canoe Coordinator	Norma Ouellette	444-0263	normao(a)nait.ab.ca
*Kayak Coordinator	David Sitar	701-2856	kayak2hell(a)yahoo.ca
*Equipment Manager	David Sitar	701-2856	kayak2hell(a)yahoo.ca
*Social Coordinator	Cindy Davies	963-5288	cindy5288(a)hotmail.com
Member at Large	Kurt Sejr	922-6200	sejr(a>wildroseinternet.ca
*Member at Large	Jack Isop	477-2441	addictivecal(a)hotmail.com

NWV Internet Address: [www.nwvoyageurs.com](http://www.nwvoyageurs.com)

NWV Snail Mail Address: Box 1341, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N2

\* *Indicates new person in position*



Since 1964

## IMPORTANT REMINDER

All of your 2007 NWV memberships  
expired January 1st, 2008

2008 NWV Memberships  
Now Available

**Don't delay, renew today!**

*Registration and Waiver forms are available  
on the back pages of the Eddyline or  
online @ [www.nwvoyageurs.com](http://www.nwvoyageurs.com)*

## General Meeting Attendance

Some of the executive have noticed that the attendance levels have been dropping and would like to change that. If you have ideas or subjects that would be interesting for our Monthly General Meetings, please pass them on to us. We want to know what the membership is interested in and would like to learn about. Please pass on your thoughts to our Social Coordinator Cindy Davies, or one of our other Executives listed at the top of this page. Thanks

## **Whitewater Kayak Lessons** **SPACE STILL AVAILABLE**

Cost and Dates for Sessions:

### **Session #2**

Session is 7 Sundays

**Cost is \$160.00**

Please note: Club membership \$30 for single \$45 for family is NOT included)

**Starts February 24, 2008 thru April 13, 2008**

(Please note: No class March 23, 2008)

**Lessons are from 6:45pm – 8:45pm**

**at Confederation Pool — Edmonton**

( Note: first 30 min. is for dry land training )

#### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

Sessions are limited to 10 students

Register early to reserve your spot

Sessions are limited to club members only

There will be a highly recommended follow up river introduction weekend in the spring

Please contact our Membership Coordinator to become a club member  
Club Registration forms can be found online or at the back of this new sletter

**If Interested, please contact:**

**Ivan Isop 477-2441**

**or by e-mail at:**

**puppydog875@phreego.ca**

## ***Kayak Drop-in Sessions on Sundays***

Confederation Pool,  
11204-43 Ave.  
Edmonton.

Keep your skills up while the snow flies! Every Sunday night thru April 13, (except March 23) you can practice your padding skills from 7:15 pm to 8:45 pm. Bring your own boat or use one of the club's. There is a fee of \$10 for drop-ins.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Drop-ins will be restricted to the deep pool as kayak lesson will be ongoing in the main pool.

## **BLAST FROM THE PAST**

*I found this in one of our newsletters, back in January 1985.*

*I have not tested this myself but it looks interesting and thought I would share it with you.*

*Newsletter Editor, Don Litven*

### RECIPE OF THE MONTH

#### Carrot Burgers \*

250 ml. Each of shredded carrots and cottage cheese

125 ml. Chopped walnuts

1 egg, slightly beaten

250 ml. Dry bread crumbs

30 ml. Chopped onion

15 ml. Chopped parsley

5 ml. Salt

30 ml. Worcestershire sauce

Dry bread crumbs mixed with parmesan cheese to coat.

Combine all ingredients together. Form into patties and coat with bread crumbs. Fry in margarine until browned. Chill and use in place of a sandwich filling. Yield: 6 burgers

\*

Taken from: Darling, L. & Tuzlak, s. The Little Cookbook For The Great Outdoors, p.19.

# GENERAL MEETING GUEST SPEAKER

**John Wollard**  
**The South Saskatchewan.....with a MILITARY TWIST**

**Wednesday**  
**January 30, 2008**  
**7:30 pm**

Northgate Lions Senior Centre  
**7524-139 Ave.**

## TRIP PLANNING

*YES" We are already planning this upcoming years trips!*

*Do you have a trip that you would like to go on?*

*Do you have any suggestions for club outings?*

*We are trying to get a rough schedule together, so please let us know by contacting the Trip Coordinator with your ideas and possible dates for your trip before the planning meeting*

### TRIP PLANNING MEETING

**Wednesday**  
**February 27, 2008**  
**7:30 pm**

Northgate Lions Senior Centre  
**7524-139 Ave.**

*Please contact the Trip Coordinator*  
*Alan Stewart 780-487-0607 or by e-mail*  
*alkemy@ocii.com*

Let us know your thoughts to help us run your Club

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN TERROR

### The Legend of Canada's North Saskatchewan River Monster

One of the defining features of Edmonton, Alberta, is the majestic North Saskatchewan River valley, which twists and turns its way through the city. The river itself has an average width of 980 feet (299 metres), but rarely gets deeper than about six feet (two metres) – hardly the ideal habitat for an aquatic monster. The fact that the Arctic Ocean is over 1,000 miles (1609 km.) downstream further decreases the likelihood of anything truly creepy making its way into the immediate waters. Still, when you're crossing the river via the towering High Level Bridge, it's pretty easy to look down into the green-brown depths and imagine what *might* be lurking at the bottom. The imagination runs even wilder when the river is seen from the seat of a canoe, the water's calm surface occasionally disturbed by mysterious upwellings, as if something big and prehistoric were stirring directly beneath the boat.

It was experiences like these that led to my wondering whether any monster sightings had ever been attributed to my city's river. A bit of searching the less-traveled hallways of the Internet led me to the Alberta Lake Monster Bibliography ([www.ecn.ab.ca/~puppydog/lakemons.htm](http://www.ecn.ab.ca/~puppydog/lakemons.htm)), a listing of water monster-related newspaper articles compiled by Edmonton hobby-cryptozoologist Kevin Stewart. Under the heading "North Saskatchewan River", I was surprised and delighted to find a list of no less than eight articles. All were from either the *Edmonton Journal* or the *Calgary Herald*, two of Canada's most prominent daily papers. The articles spanned a period from 1939 to 1943, and told of sightings of a creature near the town of Rocky Mountain House, 138 miles (222 km.) upstream from Edmonton. This was incredible! It might not have been my town, but at least it was my river. I *had* to find these articles!



Ferry on North Saskatchewan River at Rocky Mountain House, 1946.



Grace Schierholtz

As it turned out, finding them was fairly easy. Within Edmonton's university library system, I found all of the original newspaper articles on microfilm, although only one included the reporter's name. Fortunately, the University of Alberta's Alberta Folklore and Local History Collection also had most of the same pieces in their on-line database (<http://folklore.library.ualberta.ca/>), this time in the form of pages scanned from a typewritten historical book, and the author of all was listed as Grace Schierholtz. Grace, I later learned, was a Rocky Mountain House resident who served as both a field correspondent for the two daily newspapers *and* as editor of the local weekly. Her first article on the monster, from April 1939, bore the headline "Monstrous Ogoopogo Scares Indians at Rocky Mountain House." It involved one Chief Walking Eagle, "the most excited Indian seen hereabouts since the days when they scalped the white man." Walking Eagle had apparently been crossing the river with his horse team and wagon, when a giant creature surfaced immediately

behind him. Schierholtz wrote, "It had horns instead of ears, its eyes were as big as plates, it had no tusks, or trunk, but otherwise, the chief insisted it looked like an elephant." He proceeded to gallop his horses across the river, but later crept back to the bank for a second look. When he approached the creature, "it raised out of the water, made a

## River 'Monster' Sends Swimmers Scrambling

(By Special Correspondent)  
**ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE.**  
 July 24—The Opopogo that has been seen in the North Saskatchewan river here for the past three summers appeared again on Wednesday.  
 Small boys go down every afternoon and evening in swans in the rapids by the river, and in the afternoon several of the boys saw a long object like a log half out of the water, in a pool under the bridge.  
 They went back for another swim in the evening and the object was still there. They ventured to the river's edge and began throwing stones. The "log" raised its life instantly and came plunging through the water towards the shore.  
 The boys stopped the stone and made the top of the river bank in nothing flat. By this

time, the big gray monster was half out of the water, making fouraine noises and thrashing its long tail. The boys stopped for breath at the top of the hill and looked around.  
**WONT LEAVE WATER**  
 Evidently the monster will not come right out of the water, but it stayed a long time, half in and half on the river sand, churning up the water with its tail till it looked like a gyser at work.  
 The boys' description is the same as all others have been of the monster, an ugly gray beast, about 15 feet long, with huge red rimmed eyes and horns, and a wide mouth big enough to swallow a small boy.  
 Indians say it is two years since they last saw the monster, but they insist they saw it in 1839 and 1940.

swishing movement towards him and opened its mouth". Needless to say, Walking Eagle refused to use that particular crossing again, and none of the members of his tribe would even camp near it. Subsequent articles over the next few years told of more of the beast's exploits.

On two occasions, it chased swimmers out of the river. In the first instance, witness Jimmie Richardson described it as being "big as a box car" and colored "gray, with a huge bony head and red eyes." After chasing Jimmie, "The monster was almost at the water's edge, opening and shutting its mouth that could easily have swallowed a teen-age boy." Appropriately enough, the other swimmers that it chased

were indeed boys. One of them described it as huge and gray "with eyes like carlights and an ugly red mouth filled with teeth that could crunch a small boy in a second." In a follow-up article, a game warden suggested that the boys might have seen a giant freshwater ling cod – Perhaps a little unlikely, given that such fish usually only reach a length of about three feet (0.9 meters).

While human quarry always got away, local livestock was a different story. Three years after the monster was a prime suspect in the disappearance of some riverside sheep, local farmer Robert Forbes actually witnessed it snatching one of his calves.

## Farmer Claims River Monster Seized Calf at Rocky Mountain

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE.** — A hurried, fiery-eyed gray beast, his long pointed teeth flashing in the sunlight and his scaly body leaping the water — the famous ogopogo of the Saskatchewan river — has reared its ugly head again, residents say. This time they claim he has snatched a calf from the bank of the Clearwater river and swallowed it whole. The Clearwater flows into the Saskatchewan.  
 Robert Forbes, who farms seven miles south of here, says he saw it take the calf as the animal stood drinking from the river. He saw the big head rise out of the water and grab the calf. He ran to the bank, shouted and threw rocks. He was sure he hit it, but the beast paid no attention and finally disappeared under the water with its prey.  
 This is the first time since 1841 the ogopogo has been seen. Other farmers have lost some stock, but

they did not suspect what was happening until Forbes saw the monster rear up and take his \$50 calf.  
 In other years, the ogopogo has been seen in the Saskatchewan, and this is the first time it has taken to the shallower waters of the Clearwater. Since the incident a few days ago, Farmer Forbes has searched along the bank, thinking the beast might be sunning himself in some shallow pool. Now, he thinks it has gone back to the Saskatchewan river and nearby was on a foraging trip.  
 He says he cannot afford to lose his valuable stock, so that now, he waters them from a well.  
 Mr. Forbes' description of the ogopogo agrees with those given by others who claim they have seen it: 20-foot gray beast; red eyes, horns and a mouth big enough to swallow a small calf or lamb.

## Ogopogo Thought on Loose Again; Dead Sheep Found on River Bank

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE.** — The Opopogo—that so-called river monster which has been the basis for many a tale told in this district—has set tongues wagging again.  
 Seen in the Rocky Mountain district for the past five years, the "sea serpent" has been sighted again. Not only has it been seen, but residents believe it has killed sheep and lambs missing from the farm of R. Martin.  
 Mr. Martin, whose farm is a mile north of town, has been missing sheep for two months and an organized search party discovered the bodies of four partly-devoured sheep on the bank of the North Saskatchewan river.  
 One of the animals had been

freshly killed, and a member of the searching party, in advance of the others, said he saw a huge, gray shape slide into the river as he approached.  
 Other sheep and lambs also have been missed, and farmers along the river report losing calves. They are sure the Opopogo has killed them.  
 Soldiers camped on the river bank an manoeuvres have reported the presence of the river monster. One declared he went down to the river one night and saw a huge beast half-way on the sand. It slid into the water as he approached.  
 Indians, who were the first ones to see the Opopogo when it appeared, have not seen it for several years. They say they never look for it for fear they may see it.

"He saw the big head rise out of the water and grab the calf" proclaimed the *Journal*. "He ran to the bank, shouted and threw rocks. He was sure he hit it, but the beast paid no attention and finally disappeared under the water with its prey [...] Mr. Forbes' description of the ogopogo agrees with those given by others who claim they have seen it: 20-foot grey beast; red eyes, horns and a mouth big enough to swallow a small calf or lamb." The ogopogo was also, rather touchingly, spotted with six babies in tow, and was encountered by a visiting Scottish RAF Pilot-in-Training who was exploring the

riverbank. “He poked at a pile of branches and stumps with a long pole, and was startled ‘when a huge head reared up from the middle of the brush pile’” the *Herald* stated. “He says, ‘the head was at least double the size of any animal head I have ever seen – gray, with huge red-rimmed eyes.’”

It was one of the final articles, however, that really caught my attention. Printed in the *Journal* in October of 1943, it declared “Ogopogo Heads For Edmonton.” A short piece, it stated that the monster had been sighted by hunters near the town of Drayton Valley, just 70 miles (112 km.) upstream from Edmonton. The article hypothesized that the creature was heading for its winter home in Lake Winnipeg (Over 830 miles (1336 km.) downstream!), in which case “the serpent must pass through Edmonton, and hawk-eyed observers might just be able to see him.” Sure, it was likely all just a bunch of 60 year-old baloney, but here was an actual major newspaper suggesting that a water monster might have passed through my city! This was much, much more than I ever thought I’d find when I originally Googled “‘monster’ + ‘north saskatchewan river’.”

Revisiting the Alberta Lake Monster Bibliography, I noticed there were a lot of other articles (*Not* written by Schierholtz) concerning monster sightings in a place called Saddle Lake. As recently as 1984, it turns out, the local native tribal council actually closed boat access to the lake, partially out of fear of the monster. The University of Alberta came and patrolled the lake with a depth sounder, and ultimately a government helicopter was called in for an aerial look-see. And what was the connection to the Rocky Mountain House beast? Saddle Lake is downstream from Edmonton, and is *connected to the river!* Suddenly, it seemed entirely possible that some bizarre critter might have served as the real-life basis for some tall tales in Rocky Mountain House, said Hi to the hunters in Drayton Valley, then swam under the bridges and canoes of Edmonton, and into Saddle Lake.

It was at this point that I decided I needed to contact someone in the town where it all began. It stood to reason that the present editor of *The Mountaineer*, Grace’s old local weekly, might know something about the legend. I emailed him, explaining what I was researching, and he responded the same day.

With his response, the mystery sadly ended.

“The ogopogo sightings were the invention of Grace Schierholtz,” Brian Mazza informed me. “She set out to prove that the upper reaches of the North Saskatchewan River were the spawning ground for the BC [British Columbia] monster... Grace was bound and determined to put Rocky Mountain House on the map. As you see by her clippings, she succeeded.” On one occasion, she went so far as to have a friend throw logs into the river, which she then photographed. “She apparently sent the photos to the editor of one of the papers as ‘proof’ that small ogopogos had been spotted in the river” Brian explained. “The editor returned the photos with a note saying ‘They look suspiciously like logs to me’.”

Angie Edgerton, a Rocky Mountain House resident who knew Grace well, remembers her fondly. “She certainly, shall I say, had a good imagination,” Angie told me. “She could make a good story out of little or nothing... She was a very entertaining person.”

So there it was. Not only had the Rocky Mountain Ogopogo itself never existed, but even its mythology was



*The town of Rocky Mountain House today.*

created and maintained by just one person. Perhaps it's possible that Grace's first article inspired some other peoples' bogus beast sightings, which were then "truthfully" reported in the later pieces, but nothing really supports such a theory. When asked if she thought that other people might have contributed sightings, Angie said, "I hardly think so. I think that [Grace] was the creator." Interestingly, witnesses in four of the articles described the creature in terms of what they thought could fit in its mouth... Perhaps just a coincidence, but more likely an indicator that all those descriptions came from one person's imagination. It's somewhat surprising that the *Journal* and the *Herald* would have ran so many questionable stories about the monster, most of them even on the front page, but the editors probably thought their readers would appreciate hearing about something more fun than World War II. Then as today, the "wouldn't-it-be-nice-to-believe" stories evidently had a way of ducking beneath the editorial radar.

So, for me, the North Saskatchewan now looks just a little bit less... intriguing. An employee of Edmonton's River Valley Authority once told me that there were unofficial accounts from "back in the old days" of 12-foot sturgeons being hauled out of the river, right within the city. Given my recent experience with the ogopogo, I think I'll just take his word for it.

Ben Coxworth



affix to car visor



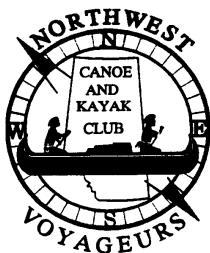
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The Northwest Voyageurs,  
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great big

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Mountain  
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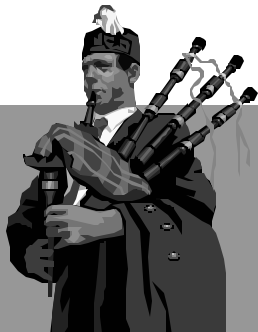
for the wonderful prizes donated for  
this years photo contest



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of ARCA (Alberta Rec-  
reational Canoe Asso-  
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can apply for funds to

for training to become a paddling in-  
structor? Interested?  
For more information please contact  
Kurt Sejr 922-6200

## BAGPIPER FOR HIRE



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IF YOU NEED TO REACH ME  
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## **HELP!!!**

Does anyone out there  
know how to repair a so called

**“Indestructible” Kayak?**  
Ideas, Comments, Interested?

For more information please contact  
our long time member

Kurt Sejr at:

780-922-6200

or

Sejr@wildroseinternet.ca

**Interested in Saturday or  
Mid-Week Day Trips?**

Please contact our Trip Coordinator ASAP,  
so that the trips can be included in the trip schedule

Contact: Alan Stewart 487-0607 or alkemy@ocii.com

## **ARCA Alberta River Guides**

Available through the NWV

*Those of you who have used them in the past  
know how valuable they are!*

*“Great for trip planning your next trip!”*

### **Paddling Map Series Features:**

River access points, campgrounds, facilities,  
distances and descriptions, rapids and riffles,  
shuttle roads, valley topography,  
navigational reference points,  
regional access map, trip examples,  
extensive natural and human history,  
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### **Available Maps include:**

Middle Red Deer River—Novice  
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Middle Bow River—Novice to Novice +  
Milk River—Novice to Intermediate  
North Saskatchewan—Novice + to Intermediate  
Athabasca River—Novice + to Intermediate

For more information please contact:

Kurt Sejr at 780-922-6200  
or sejr@wildroseinternet.ca