

# PADDLE SPLASHES

AMC NY-NoJ Chapter, Canoe and Kayak Committee

September/October 2006

## The Albany River

By: Bob and Phyllis Lindquist

No, it's not in New York! This river is located in Northern Ontario, Canada. The Albany was an historic trade route between Osnamburgh House to James Bay. Six friends, Lois Gessner, Ron Mamaczek, Phil Ritchie, Denise Zymbricki, Bob and I along with two guides, Matt Culham and Neill Stewart from Canoe Frontiers located at Pickle Lake, Ontario, guided us on the expedition down the Albany River in late August of this year.



We drove to the put in of the Albany River located on Route 599, south of Pickle Lake, and began our trip. Each day we had our breakfast, packed up the camp, loaded the canoes with gear and paddled down the river to our next destination. The river was fun to paddle, it included some flat water, Class 1 and 2 rapids. We worked our way through rock gardens and down drops, most of which we ran with a fully loaded boat. Some days we just meandered down the river with its twists and turns. Our only portages were around the Falls. The level was fairly low for the Albany, but there was plenty of current. Had it been at its normal level, it would have been a very challenging expedition trip. However, it would be a fun whitewater run. This level of river made the fishing better. In fact, the fishing was excellent. Bob, Ron and Matt caught Walleye, Northern Pike and Brook Trout which we enjoyed for breakfast, lunch and dinner often.

The weather was just beautiful, the only rain that we had was one shower during the night. Our days were clear and sunny. The river was warm enough for a swim and bath. In fact, one day we were having a cannonball contest, jumping into the river at Snake Falls.

Our guides, Matt and Neill fed us well and we had fresh baked bread and/or scones almost everyday.

The Albany is lined with Black Spruce, Birch, Aspen, Balsam Fir and many other conifers. Some wild flowers like asters and fireweed are still in bloom. The leaves were beginning to turn golden toward the end of our trip.

We had many short paddle days and one long day of 35 kilometers. We camped at a beach site and enjoyed the next day off—relaxing, fishing, swimming, reading. That afternoon a bush pilot landed a pontoon plane on the lake and brought another group of paddlers to that location, and provided us with a fresh supply of wine.

We camped along the Upper and Lower Eskokawa Fall and listened to the roar of the water falling over the falls, it lulled us to sleep at night.



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## The Albany River (continued from page 1)

While at the Upper Eskokawa Falls campsite, two seakayaers portaged through. These young men had biked across Canada and were each paddling a seakayak back. Their trip was being recorded for the youth of Canada in a effort to promote outdoor sports.

One extraordinary night while camped on a beach site, we witnessed Northern Lights—they appeared like spotlights and drapes shimmering across the sky. What a treat! The sky was a blaze with white lights and stars! As Robert Service said, “You’ve never seen such a sight in your life until you’ve seen the Northern Lights.”

During our paddle down the river, we spotted moose, eagles, osprey, many beaver lodges, and bear and wolf tracks appeared on the beaches.

After 12 days in the wilderness, we paddled to Howell Lake for a pick up by the pontoon plane. Eight paddlers, four canoes, and all the gear was loaded on the plane and we flew up the river to Pickle Lake.

It was a great trip, and we would highly recommend this trip to anyone interested in expedition canoeing.



### Boating on Lake Titicaca, Bolivia: the Old and the New!

Submitted by Don Getzin. This photo was taken at the Bolivian factory on the shores of Lake Titicaca that makes traditional reed boats. It was at this factory that parts of Thor Heyerdahl's boats *Kon Tiki* and *Ra II* were built.



Picture taken by Si Pae's daughter, Debbie,  
of a display in front of Lincoln Center.

## Notices

### Reminder: Secure your Valuables

Not everyone is as good or honest as AMC members. Please remember when parking cars for a paddling trip, to hide your valuables out of site. Some paddlers divide their valuables, stashing cash in one spot and credit cards in another. Regardless of your system, please don't tempt fate or thieves.

There was a recent incident in the Glen Onoko parking lot on the Lehigh River where three cars were broken into and property stolen. Don't be another victim.

### Letter to Kurt Navartil

“I looked a little odd going to my job interview Monday in a skirt with cuts and bruises all over my shins, but I had so much fun this weekend, I didn't care. The safety crew is awesome Kurt! I want to thank all the guides as well. The trip this weekend was way beyond what I expected in terms of all the great instruction, personal help, caring, patience and, of course, fun! You have all elevated my opinion of the AMC as a superb organization. I had a blast and want to get back out there ASAP. I'm seriously considering this weekend, and if not, then maybe the Deerfield trip if I can get back to NJ at a decent hour on Sunday...”

“It was great meeting everyone and I appreciate all the support and friendliness. Knowing the AMC is there and has such great people makes the idea of staying in NJ bearable.”

*Priscilla*

# What if They Had a Boat Demo Day and Nobody Came?

June 24, 2006

By: Marty Plante

## Boat Demo Day Volunteers

Jill Arbuckle  
Carter Bland  
Robin Bland  
Victoria Butler  
Mike Dalton  
Tanya McCabe  
Andrew Douglas  
Connie Farley  
Fred Feingold  
Steve Ferder  
Mike Fitzpatrick  
Butch Futrell  
Lois Gessner  
Lenny Grefig  
Ara Jingirian  
Jennifer Koermer  
Cath Kraft  
Bob Lindquist  
Phyllis Lindquist  
Charles Michener  
Kurt Navratil  
Si Pae  
Marty Plante  
David Rosenfeld  
Henry Schreiber  
Mark Tiernan  
Tom Trevor

This year's Boat Demo Day was almost a washout - literally. The forecast was for steady rain throughout the day, with occasional thunderstorms. Most of the northeast was hammered that day, with flood warnings issued for the NYC metro area throughout the weekend. When the volunteers gathered at The Barn at 7:30 that morning, we debated whether we should cancel our plans. Since the event had been advertised, somewhat optimistically, as 'rain or shine,' we decided to make the effort. Several non-boating AMC members had phoned or e-mailed the previous night to say that they were looking forward to it, despite the forecast, and asked if the event was still on. Not wanting to disappoint them, we loaded up our cars for the trip to Croton Point Park.

The 200-300 participants that we customarily host were reduced to about 40. Considering the handicap the weather threw at us, the event was still a resounding success. Although none of the participants, other than our own volunteers, had paddling clothes, they were enthusiastically test-driving our boats nearly continuously from our opening at 10am until we closed up shop at 4pm. Many mentioned that they had traveled a great distance specifically for the event. Some simply wanted to know more about canoeing and kayaking; others were planning to buy a boat and wanted to learn of the different types. Several participants asked about registering for our upcoming instructions and four of them joined the AMC on the spot. The Demo Day was even captured by a New York Times photographer, giving Carter Bland his 15 minutes of fame.

A big **Thanks!** to everyone who helped schlep the boats, set up the displays and direct the "crowds."

Carter Bland helps a new sea kayaker get started.



## Meet Our Paddlers

(A new opportunity to get to know paddlers in our Club, read about them in *Paddle Splashes*. If you would like to be featured, please send a write up and picture to [phyllisindquist@worldlynx.net](mailto:phyllisindquist@worldlynx.net).)

### Joe Sklar

Are there any similarities between two of my favorite sports, whitewater paddling and chess? The differences are obvious; one is an outdoor physically strenuous activity while the other is an indoor board game which involves no physical exertion.

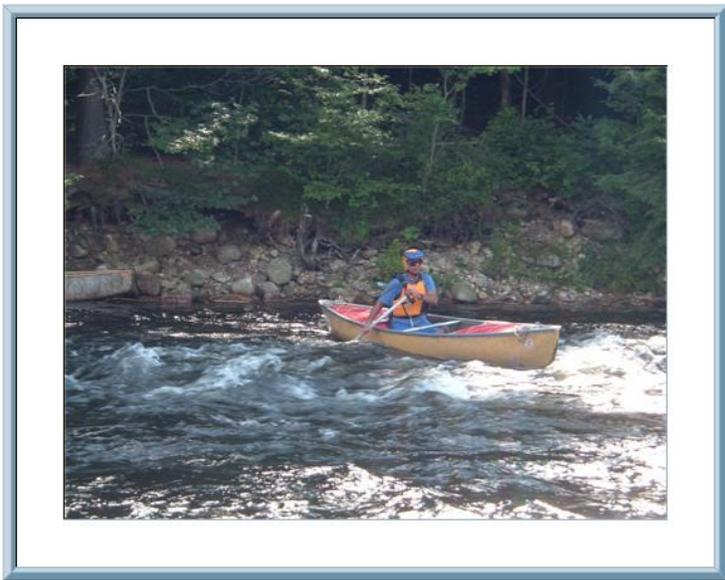
Chess is a game of planning and strategy. If you miscalculate or plan badly, you face the consequences. This can mean anything from falling slightly behind in the game, losing a pawn or a piece, or even losing the game. Sometimes, however, if you are lucky, your opponent fails to see your poor move and you don't suffer for it. In paddling a mistake can have no consequences or be serious. You may just miss the eddy and steel your resolve to make the next eddy turn, or get pinned on a rock, only to shimmy yourself free. On the other hand, after a miscalculation involving the speed of the water, the location of a rock and your ability to make a few nicely placed strokes, you may find that you are not in your nice dry canoe but swimming downstream.

Time is of the essence in both sports. In chess, if you miss the chance to make a good move that will result in winning material, chances are your opponent will see his error on his next turn and the opportunity will no longer be there. Paddling is much the same. If you are paddling hard for the eddy, when there is a cost to missing it, such as getting pinned between two rocks with a strong current holding the canoe there, you must put in that last forward stroke to get you into the eddy or you are toast.

If you make that air brace with a prayer, instead of a real brace with your paddle, you may watch your canoe float downstream without you and hope that nobody is shooting a video of you at your finest. In tournament chess you are required to write down your moves and players are always walking around and watching other games. Nobody is allowed to talk during the game but afterwards some people feel free to point out your missed opportunity or blunder. You can't even argue the point. It's all there on your

score sheet. It's almost like after you've capsized and nobody really has to point out that you made a mistake. Just being in the water says it all. In chess you can be too aggressive or too passive. If you're too aggressive the other player can slowly develop his pieces and attack you when you aren't able to defend adequately; too passive and your opponent mounts his attack and proceeds to crush you. In paddling if you are too aggressive you wind up learning to be a good swimmer, too passive and you miss all those beautiful eddy turns, and surfing waves.

Both sports require thinking. In chess I wonder if any of my pieces are in danger. How did my opponent's last move change things? What is his plan and what is my plan? What forcing moves, checks or captures, can I make? What pieces need to be defended more? What squares need to be protected to keep an enemy piece out? How can my next move solve all my problems? The list goes on. Paddling usually does not involve so many decisions at once but there are times in every white water trip when it does. My plan to run the rapid was so carefully



thought out but I missed that first crucial eddy turn. A new plan must be put into effect immediately. Should I try for another eddy or make a straight run of it? All of a sudden another boat has blocked the only channel that I originally thought was runnable. What now? Do I have the ability to stop and help that paddler in the water or is the rapid so pushy and strong that there will be two paddlers, in the water, making the situation much worse than it was? The river won't wait. What should I do, bail or paddle when the canoe is very full of water and swaying first to one side and then the other as I attempt to negotiate the rapid? The river won't be forgiving if I make a mistake on this one.

At the end of the chess game - win, lose or draw - I've had a good time and learned a lesson or two. I'm determined to do better in my next game and not repeat the mistakes I made in this one. Need I make the comparison with paddling?

## Meet Our Paddlers

### Herb Stermer

For me it all started in a log cabin, or was it in Brooklyn? Well, jumping ahead 40 years, paddling for me began with flatwater. My first boat in the 80's was a cheap inflatable kayak, which I paddled mainly on Adirondack lakes while on family vacations. In 1987, I purchased my first flat water canoe, and from then on I was hooked. Using the trial and error self-taught method, I paddled whenever I could.

In 1997, with a guide book in hand, Steve Ferder and I scouted some of Connecticut's whitewater rivers. It was then we both realized if we were actually going to try paddling whitewater, we were in serious need of help. That's when we heard about this club (AMC) that taught open boat whitewater paddling. I joined that year, but it took a couple of years to get on the river more than once or twice a year with the AMC.



Steve and I, using rentals from the club, paddled tandem for a year or so. Then together, we purchased our first and only whitewater tandem canoe. We put that boat on the water twice, before Steve picked up a solo whitewater boat, forcing me to do the same. It's been solo ever since.

At some point, I was talked into taking a temporary position on the Canoe & Kayak Committee, where I lasted only a short time (7 years).

Along the way, I've paddled some great rivers from Canada to Georgia, and made many friends. As long as the body holds together, I plan on paddling for many years to come.

One note: Ferder and I still own that tandem, which we now take out once or twice a year for some Tandemonium. We still argue over whose end of the boat is banged up the most. Umm, but since the boat is kept in my garage, and possession is 9/10's the law.....

My lies...uh, bio.

*Herb*

## Chris Viani is Awarded a Class 4 Rating



*Congratulations to Chris Viani!!!*

*Chris was recently rated a Class 4 paddler by his peers, the Class 4 paddlers in our Chapter.*

*Chris paddles an open solo boat and has been working diligently at taking his paddling skills to new and better levels.*

*He paddles as often as he can, and seeks the more challenging rivers.*

# Survival Skills for Whitewater Canoeing, Family Therapy, etc.

## By: Neil Grossman

My skills had dulled and I decided to sharpen them by taking a two-day workshop. I knew the techniques but found myself thinking rather than moving instinctively.

Early in my training, I learned to go with the flow of the system - not to resist overpowering forces and become locked into power struggles. Then, at an opportune time, deflect the momentum so the energy redirects and takes you to a different place in the system. Before learning this, I would go into action like a brave warrior, taking on all comers, only to find hopelessly outnumbered, chewed up and spit out without a moment's hesitation.

A slightly more complex rule involved using moments of calm to regroup and punctuate various segments of action. Later, I learned to use these calm moments to change direction before opposing forces had time to regroup and oppose me. I occasionally became stuck. Colleagues advised that when going with the flow you also must have your own momentum and be slightly ahead of the system anticipating its movements. Then you can burst through a trap before it grabs you or change direction to avoid it.

The workshop was terrific - - things started to come together. I began intuitively to make new moves. While most involved joining, the workshop encouraged me to focus my attention, gather my resources, and be ready to make bold moves. Being consistent without being predictable gave me a different type of leverage. I was still part of the system but not bound by its original structure and boundaries which can be expanded and changed. Sometimes it works best if the system is confused - - doesn't know exactly where I am or where I am going. It's an incredible experience to join powerful forces, move with them, and then in quick decisive actions, redirect them, and thus change the system.

Less some of you become uneasy and worry these moves might be radical, foolhardy or risky, let me reassure you that I am basically conservative, have had years of training, and went to the workshop to learn under controlled circumstances.

Remember, the system is usually stronger than you. The best approach is to remain neutral, be respectful, join the system and be curious about it. In the workshop, I learned to 1) keep a sharp focus, 2) combine a planned strategy with intuitive moves and 3) when necessary make quick, decisive moves that momentarily oppose the flow of the system. These moves are usually made between periods of joining.

The weekend was wonderful. I only capsized once, on the second day. I saw it coming; I tried to keep right side up but couldn't. I was back and moving along without a moment's hesitation. I began to use this knowledge of systems with difficult families. For example, a father told me that his son's situation was hopeless (the identified patient), implying that there wasn't a need for therapy. I agreed with him and we spoke about the hopelessness he saw. This became the theme for the session. Later, I spoke about the seriousness of a hopeless situation. And then I switched again, asking them to envision the son 10 or 15 years from now. Slowly the family began to talk about the hopelessness they all felt. Toward the end of the session, I agreed with the father's idea that the son was hopeless but I was more concerned with the desperate state of the family. Only after attending to that could we deal with the hopeless situation of the son.

In another family, the identified patient (a 14 year old daughter) hadn't been in school for two years. In the midst of the initial session, she stated that everyone was wrong. She didn't have school phobia, she had world phobia. She was afraid of everything in the world outside of her house. I agreed with this definition, remaining neutral, not trying to change them, but yet being curious about this family and using questions to redirect the way they experienced themselves. The family described how guilty they felt after physically trying to force the issue. But yet, some moments later, they supported her staying home and reminded her of how upset she was when teased by the kids at school. I remember telling myself that this was a difficult family to work with, taking a deep breath and plunging ahead into the white water.

*Neil Grossman is a family psychologist who practices on Long Island.*

# Take a Peek at Glorious Antarctica and the Beagle Channel!

## Part 3

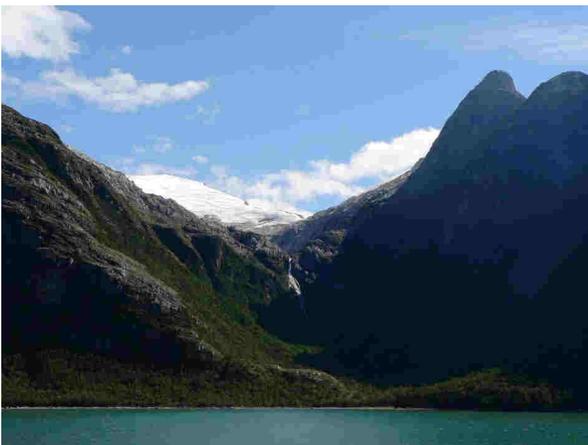
By: Anne Bailey

The temperature warmed as we proceeded north and west, weaving through the islands off the southwestern mountains of Tierra del Fuego. On the previously very cool and drafty upper Sun Deck (where we chose to eat our breakfast and lunch everyday so as to be close to the scenery and viewing decks) we watched as the domed, see-through roof retracted and disappeared. Umbrellas sprouted over the tables like a crop of green mushrooms, and we viewed the surrounding mountaintops and glaciers in the open air, as we lunched.



As we cruised through this majestic scenery, the days were imbued with an overriding sense of the unexplored. We viewed miles and miles of land and water with absolutely no sign of human habitation or activity (other than us and one other small cruise ship that passed us in one of the fiords).

There is no access, except by boat, to this part of the world - and apparently there are very few of



those. Passing through this wonderland, the stillness of the landscape seemed palpable - it was truly a spiritual experience.

Our awesome day in the Beagle Channel came to an end - a lifetime's worth of scenery packed into a single day - and the ship picked up steam to head inland into the Strait of Magellan to the port city of Punta Arenas, arriving there at 7 AM the following morning.

This is the largest city in the world at this degree of southern latitude (54° south, pop. 115,000) and has the best and largest port for thousands of miles, attracting many fishing vessels, naval vessels, and cruise ships. The Strait of Magellan separates mainland South America from Tierra del Fuego and serves as a calm, often foggy, inland passage connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.



Our day in Punta Arenas was drizzly (LUCKY - no scenery to miss!!) and some of us took a bus trip to visit a well known penguin preserve in that area - yes, it's hard to get enough of this fascinating and fun-to-watch creature! This rookery of Magellanic penguins was quite different from those we saw in Antarctica. Rather than nesting on rocks, they raise their young in burrows dug into the sandy ground of the nearby meadows. They were fun to watch, marching in determined little groups as they headed inland from the sea to their burrows. As we walked along the boardwalks of the preserve, amidst the squealing and squeaking, an occasional long, loud H-O-O-ONK pierced the air, one or another adult penguin proclaiming its turf.

# Hold the Date for the Paddlers Party!

*The honour of your presence is requested at the annual*

*AMC Paddlers Party*

*Sat., December 9*

*at 2 o'clock in the afternoon*

*American Legion Hall Post 170*

*33 West Passaic Street,*

*Rochelle Park, NJ*

*\$10 p.p. with dish*

*\$20 without*

*Driving directions on page 10*

*RSVP by Nov 27 to:*

*AMC Paddlers' Party*

*% Marty Plante*

*162 N. Walnut Street*

*Ridgewood, NJ 07450-3221*



I have enclosed \$\_\_\_\_\_ for ticket(s)

for \_\_\_\_\_ person(s).

The name(s) to appear on the name tag(s) are:

---

---

My phone number is

---

My email address is

---

\_\_\_\_ I will pay \$20 and enjoy the homemade food prepared by others

\_\_\_\_ I will pay \$10 and bring the following home cooked dish(es) (BE SPECIFIC)

---

---

I want to help and can be available

\_\_\_\_\_ before the party

\_\_\_\_\_ during the party

\_\_\_\_\_ at the end of the party

# Activity Schedule

	Date	Sea Kayak	Flatwater/ Brownwater	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Instruction /Misc	
October	7-8	Fri-Mon: Adirondack Foliage Canoe/Kayak Camping Trip <i>Breton</i>		Sun: Upper Delaware <i>Navratil /</i>	Deerfield @ Fifebrook <i>Viani</i>		Deerfield @ Monroe Bridge <i>Viani</i>		
		Fri-Mon: L1,2 Sedge Island <i>Collins</i>	Maurice & Menantico <i>Chasnow/McCabe</i>		<i>Dougherty</i>				
	14-15	L3,4 Cape May & Great Bay <i>Raab</i>	Sat: Walkill <i>Arbuckle</i>		New Boston <i>Rosenfeld</i>				
					Lehigh <i>Lindquist</i>				
	21-22	Sat: Cedar Pond & Minnisceongo <i>Trevor</i>			New Boston <i>Fitzpatrick</i>				
28-29			Sat: Delaware <i>Dougherty</i>	Sat or Sun: Almost Halloween Whitewater <i>Tiernan/Farley</i>					
November	4-5					Tohickon <i>Robson</i>			
	11-12	Sun: L2 Hudson <i>Bland</i>							
	18-19	Sun: Forsythe Wildlife Area <i>Raab</i>						Sat: Paddle-making Workshop <i>Raab</i>	
	25-26								
December	2-3								
	9-10	Sat: Paddlers' Party							

## Words of Wisdom Shared with Us

By: Mike Dalton

*The following are excerpts from "Ploughman of the Moon," an autobiography by Robert Service. It was written about a river trip he took from Athabasca in Alberta, Canada to Dawson in the Yukon Territory. It took place about 1915. The rivers covered were the Athabasca, Slave, Mackenzie, Peel, Rat, Bell, Porcupine and Yukon. Some of it was done on river barges, steamboat, flatboat and canoe. The Peel and Rat were done going upstream and when they ran out of water, they had to portage the flatboat, canoe and all their gear over the Continental Divide to the headwaters of the Bell. The excerpts are from that portion of the trip that was done by canoe.*

"In paddling there is always a tendency to think the other fellow is not putting as much into it as you are. It's so easy to let the blade slip through the water. I've even done it myself.

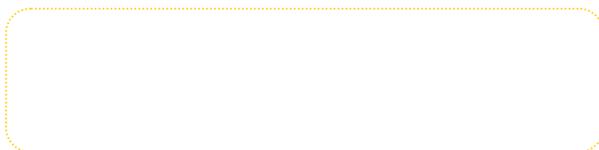
"But sitting in the bow of a canoe slipping down a strange stream is a joy hard to match. Especially if the river has a good current, is narrow and deep, and turns corners every few hundred yards. One looks ahead with expectation, if not with excitement, there was a mother duck with a swarm of ducklings that kept in front of us for miles, chattering and protesting. She had not the sense to draw into the side, but sought safety round

the first bend. So presently, when we rounded the corner, there she was protesting our passage as if she owned the river. Only the coming of night relieved the situation."

*The canoe had been bought from an Indian who had made it out of birch bark. The following was written after running a set of rapids on the Bell River. Coquette is the name he gave to the canoe.*

"This was the state of affairs when I hauled Coquette on the bank and emptied a few gallons of water out of her. None of my food was spoiled; the flour had caked on the outside of the sacks, keeping it dry; while my dunnage bag was so well water-proofed my clothes were not even damp, but the canoe had been badly strained and was leaking at many seams. I spent two hours, doctoring it. This was done with resin chewed in the mouth and applied to the leak. I went over every seam, inch by inch, sucking vigorously. If I drew in any air, I plastered gum over the place till suction was no longer possible. The gum soon hardened and the mend was made. I liked this job so much that I often wished my canoe would leak so that I could show my skill in repairing it."

Appalachian Mountain Club  
NY-NoJ Chapter Canoe & Kayak Committee  
Editor: Phyllis Lindquist  
396 Potomac Drive  
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920



**Submission for next issue:** Send in your articles, and share your canoeing/kayaking experiences and information in the next issue of *Paddle Splashes* due on Nov 1, 2006. Please send as an e-mail message to: [phyllislindquist@worldlynx.net](mailto:phyllislindquist@worldlynx.net). My sincere thanks to everyone who has submitted articles and information.

## *Directions to Paddlers' Party*

### **From Garden State Parkway Northbound:**

Exit 160. At bottom of ramp turn right. Continue through 3 traffic lights. Post 170 will be on the right before the next light.

### **From Garden State Parkway Southbound:**

Exit 163, Route 17 south. Follow directions for Rt 17 Southbound.

### **From Route 80 Eastbound:**

Exit at Garden State Parkway North. Follow directions for GSP Northbound.

### **From Route 80 Westbound:**

Exit at Route 17 North. Follow directions for Rt 17 Northbound.

### **From Route 17 Northbound:**

Exit at Maywood/Rochelle Park (E.Passaic St/W. Passaic St. just after Outback Steakhouse). Turn left at bottom of ramp. Post is on left side just after the first traffic light.

### **From Route 17 Southbound:**

Immediately after the Garden State Plaza (shopping mall) take the first exit for Farview Avenue. At second traffic light turn right onto W. Passaic St. Post 170 is on left.

### **From Route 4/Route 208 Eastbound:**

Exit onto Route 17 South. Follow directions for Rt. 17 southbound.

### **From Route 4 Westbound:**

Exit onto Route 17 South. Follow directions for Rt. 17 southbound.