

Volume 5, Issue 4 | July 2019

PADDLE

ACA | Canoe - Kayak - SUP - Raft - Rescue

Inspiring the Next Generation of Paddlers

ACA Under New Leadership

Volunteers Pitch in to Clean Waterways

Instructors of the Month



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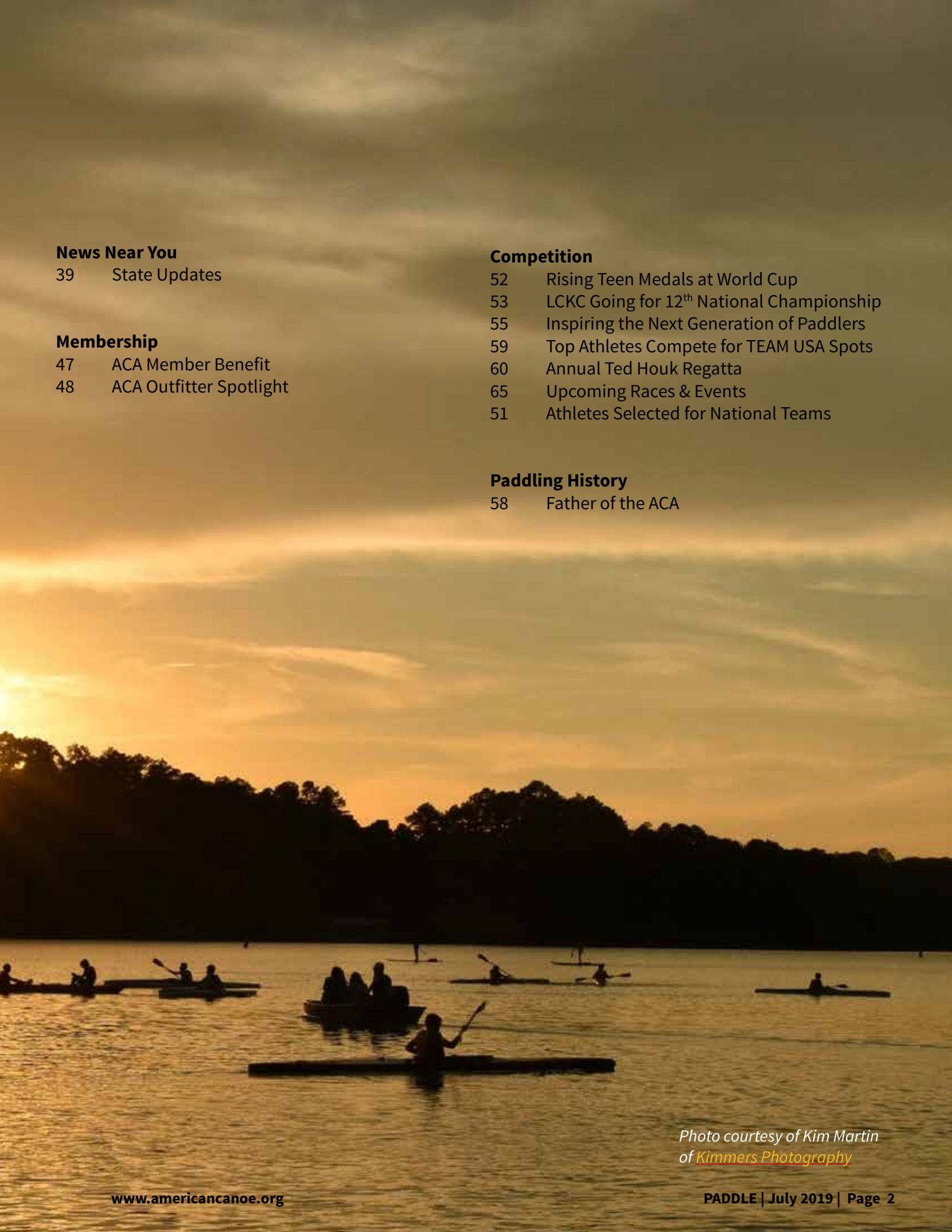
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*Photo courtesy of Kim Martin
of [Kimmers Photography](#)*



NATIONAL STAFF

Beth Spilman - Interim Executive Director
Marcel Bieg - Western States Outreach Director
JD Martin - Financial Coordinator
Kelsey Bracewell - SEI Manager
Dave Burden - International Paddlesports Ambassador
Amy Ellis - State Director/Membership Coordinator
Michelle Flynn - Membership Coordinator
Kimberly Jenkins - Paddle eMagazine Editor
Brett Mayer - Public Policy Chief
LeighAnn Moore - Insurance Coordinator
Chris Mulrow - Social Media Coordinator
Carrie Schlemmer - Education & Grant Coordinator

COMPETITION DEPARTMENT

Morgan House - High Performance & Competition Coordinator
Rafal Smolen - Slalom National Team Coach
Chris Barlow - Sprint High Performance Manager
Zsolt Szadovszki - Sprint National Team Kayak Coach
Aaron Huston - Sprint National Team Canoe Coach
Shannon Moore - Paracanoe High Performance Manager
Vacant - Slalom High Performance Manager

Cover photo

A paddler enjoys a summer sunset while kayaking in Ockway Bay in Mashpee, Massachusetts.

Photo by Mike Morrison, owner and guide, RideAway Adventures

Follow us on...



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

President - **Robin Pope (NC)**
Vice President - Lili Colby (MA)
Treasurer - Trey Knight (TN)
Secretary - Stanton Collings (GA)

Board Members

**Terms expire at the annual meeting of the year listed*

At-Large Directors

- William Irving (North Carolina - 2019)
- Lili Colby (Massachusetts - 2019)
- Robin Pope (North Carolina - 2018)
- Sam Fowlkes (North Carolina - 2020)

Independent Directors

- Jeff Rouse (Virginia - 2019)
- *Vacant* (2019)
- Bill Medlin (North Carolina - 2020)

Affiliated Organizations Director

- Kirk Havens (Virginia)

Property Management Committee

- Bill Micks (Virginia - 2020)

Safety Education & Instruction Council

- Trey Knight (Tennessee - 2019)

Competition Council

- Marsh Jones (Minnesota - 2019)

Elite Athlete Directors

- Slalom - Scott Mann (Virginia - 2019)
- Sprint - Stanton Collins (Georgia - 2019)
- Paracanoe - Nik Miller (Georgia - 2019)

Immediate Past President

- Peter Sloan (North Carolina)

Liaison Members (non-voting)

- Scott Andrews - Sugar Island (Maine)

Ex-Officio (non-voting)

- Beth Spilman - ACA Interim Executive Director (Virginia)

ACA Mission Statement

Founded in 1880, the ACA is a national nonprofit organization serving the broader paddling public by providing education related to all aspects of paddling; stewardship support to help protect paddling environments; and sanctioning of programs and events to promote paddlesport competition, exploration and recreation.

SAFETY, EDUCATION & INSTRUCTION COUNCIL (SEIC)

- Chair - Trey Knight (TN)
- Vice Chair - Josh Hall (SC)
- Secretary - John Traendly (GA)
- Past Chair - Steve Hutton (SC)

Committee Chairs

- Universal Paddling - John McDonald (OH)
- Coastal Kayak - John Browning (WI)
- Intro to Paddling - Beth Weigandt (VA)
- Prone Kayaking - Adam Masters (NC)
- Rafting - Elisha Lynn McArthur (CO)
- River Canoe - Greg Wolfe (OH)
- River Kayak - Kyle Thomas (WA)
- Safety & Rescue - Sam Fowlkes (NC)
- Stand Up Paddleboard - *Vacant*
- Surf Kayak - Sean Morley (CA)
- Surfski - Chuck Conley (VA)
- Touring Canoe - Molly Gurien (OH)

Liaison Members

- Boy Scouts of America - Rob Kolb (TX)
- USCG - Tom Dardis (DC)
- USCG Auxiliary - Don Goff (MD)

COMPETITION COUNCIL

- Chair: Marsh Jones - Sprint
- Vice Chair: *Vacant*
- Secretary: Risa Shimoda - Freestyle

2017-19 STATE DIRECTORS

AL - <i>Available</i>	NE - Jordan Messerer
AK - Levi Hogan	NV - Jonathan Riezman
AZ - Andrew Huff	NH - Paul Berry
AR - Rob Moody	NJ - Paul Serdiuk
CA - Jamie Eubanks	NM - Robert Levin
CO - Lynne Carpenter	NY - Mike Cavanaugh
CT - <i>Available</i>	NC - Doug Stager
DE - Chris Beckman	ND - Matthew Sherrard
DC - Meredith Waters	OH - Christine Cancian
FL - Wayne Douchkoff	OK - Clark Miller
GA - Laura Clower	OR - Salmon "Sam" Norgaard-Stroich
HI - <i>Available</i>	PA - Joel Johnston
ID - Zac Mason	PR - Omar Ramos
IL - Jennifer Hahn	RI - Mark Allio
IN - Joyce Hayes	SC - Jefferson Atkins
IA - Jennifer Kammeyer	SD - Patrick Wellner
KS - Jay Jeffrey	TN - Andrea White
KY - Gerry James	TX - Bruce Bodson
LA - <i>Available</i>	UT - <i>Available</i>
ME - <i>Available</i>	VT - Jake Taylor
MD - Paula Hubbard	VI - <i>Available</i>
MA - Mike Morrison	VA - SarahBeth Dinwiddie
MI - Michael Gray	WA - Brent Roth
MN - <i>Available</i>	WV - Meghan Roberts
MS - Kelly McGinnis	WI - Luke Martz
MO - Perry Whitaker	WY - <i>Available</i>
MT - Branchley "Lee" Beers	

For information about the State Director Program, please contact [Amy Ellis](#) at the ACA National Office.

MEET YOUR

How would you spend \$1 MILLION??



Beth Spilman

Interim Executive Director

If I had a million dollars, I would give it to the ACA to advance our mission.



Brett Mayer

Public Policy Chief

I'd set up a college accounts for each of my children, take a nice family vacation, and save the rest.



LeighAnn Moore

Insurance Coordinator

Pay off bills, give to charity, and invest the rest.



Chris Muldrow

Social Media Coordinator

I'd pay off the mortgage, make sure the kids' college accounts were full, make a donation to Friends of the Rappahannock, and use the rest of the million to buy a fleet of old Perception Pirouettes and Torrents.



Amy Ellis

State Director/Membership Coordinator

I would invest some of the money, donate some of the money to my favorite animal rescue organizations, pay off my mortgage, and travel the world.



Marcel Bieg

Western States Outreach Director & Grant Manager

Unfortunately I would pay off things like my house and put money aside for my daughter's school and retirement. The rest would be invested in the hopes of continuing to make it last.

ACA STAFF

www.americancanoe.org/staff



Zsolt Szadovszki

Sprint National Team Kayak
Coach

Travel



Carrie Schlemmer

Education & Grant Coordinator

I would spend \$1 million on a house in the mountains and then save the rest!



Kelsey Bracewell

SEI Manager

I'd renovate my kitchen & bathroom, go grocery shopping, then donate the rest



Rafal Smolen

Slalom National Team Coach

Spend two years traveling to 150 countries and visit every UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Chris Barlow

Sprint High Performance Manager

I would spend a million dollars by paying our ACA Sprint coaches a decent salary and pay international travel expenses for our top sprint athletes.

I'd also buy a fleet of boats to keep in Europe for all the international regattas held there.



(Continued on page 7)



Making the World a Better Place to Paddle! Since 1880.



Michelle Flynn
Membership Coordinator

With \$1 million I would be obnoxiously practical, I think. I would stow away half for retirement in an account of some kind that I couldn't touch for 20 years. The other \$500,000 would be spent on a trip out west to see the Grand Canyon, Redwood trees, and Yosemite National Park; a trip to Europe to see bits of Ireland and Italy; and just a little for my 2 kids for down payments on their first homes. The last of it I would do a little maintenance on our home. Nothing to lavish. Actually, if we are being honest here, I bet I would skip the Europe trip.



Shannon Moore
Paracanoe High Performance Manager
Buy investment properties



Dave Burden
International Paddlesports Ambassador
Slowly



Aaron Huston
Sprint National Team Canoe Coach
I'd invest most of it and use the rest to pay off bills.



Kimberly Jenkins
Paddle eMagazine Editor
I'd pay off our mortgage, set aside little money for our nieces, donate to my favorite charities, and then TRAVEL!



JD Martin
Financial Coordinator

I'd pay off the mortgage and I'd make some charitable contributions. I'd have a hard time spending a million dollars, though.

ACA under new leadership

The ACA Board of Directors regretfully announces the departure of Executive Director Wade Blackwood. Blackwood has been with the ACA for more than a decade, serving initially as chief financial officer before becoming the executive director. We appreciate his service to the ACA and the paddle-sports community and wish him well in the future.

On May 29, 2019, the Board appointed Beth Spilman of Richmond, Virginia, to serve as interim executive director while the ACA undertakes a search for a new permanent leader.

Spilman brings a wealth of experience in leadership, management and strategic planning, in both nonprofit and for-profit sectors. She is a graduate of the University of Virginia and earned an MBA from UVA's Darden School of Business. She has spent most of her career as a marketing and operations



executive with financial services firms, including American Financial Group and General Motors Acceptance Corporation.

Most recently, she spent 10 years leading a privately held mortgage bank through a period of explosive growth. Her work in the nonprofit sector includes serving on the University of Virginia Physicians

Group Board of Directors, the UVA Jefferson Scholars National and Regional Selection Committees, the University of the South: Sewanee Parents Council, and the Garden Club of America's 2020 Annual Meeting Committee.

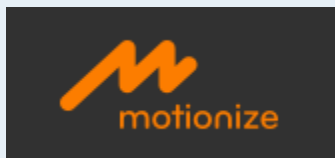
"It's an honor to be entrusted with this responsibility. I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with ACA's dedicated staff, passionate volunteers and a wide range of partner organizations to help ACA continue its mission of improving Education, Stewardship, Competition and Recreation for the paddle-sports community," Spilman said.

"I am proud to lead such a venerable and vibrant organization, and I am excited to chart a course for ACA's future."

Please join the ACA's Board and staff in welcoming Spilman to the ACA family.

PARTNERS

We are grateful to these organizations and companies for their significant commitment to help us achieve our mission and goals.



Partnership Opportunities

If you would like to align your business with the nation's oldest paddlesports organization, please [click here](#) for partnership opportunities with the ACA.

Have you checked out our **paddle app game** for kids?

Paddle Quest is an animated, family-friendly way to spread the fun and excitement of paddling with children (and adults, too)! The game is the newest addition to the ACA's ongoing campaign to develop, produce, and disseminate a wide range of safety, education, and instructional programs.

With the world's young and aspiring paddlers in mind, the content of this game is not only fun, but it provides an engaging way introduce paddling safety and trip planning concepts to help make future paddling trips enjoyable for the entire family!

Visit the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#) to download the FREE Paddle Quest app today!



Download & Play Now!



Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.



STEWARDSHIP & POLICY



Paddle Green Spotlight



ACA announces 2019 Club Fostered Stewardship grant recipients

Since 2002, the ACA has partnered with L.L. Bean to sponsor the [Club Fostered Stewardship Program](#). The CFS Program provides small grants to local and regional paddling clubs and organizations to assist with and enhance volunteer-driven waterways stewardship activities.

Many of the stewardship needs of our nation's waters are best addressed at the local and regional level. Paddling clubs and watershed organizations are in an ideal position to lead these efforts. These paddlers tend to care deeply about their local waterways and are often willing to volunteer their time and energy to help improve the places they enjoy.

Some clubs operate successful stewardship programs on their own. Others need a little help. That is why L.L. Bean and the ACA have teamed up to sponsor the CFS Program. In many instances, CFS grants make projects possible when they would otherwise be impossible. In addition, through administering this program, the ACA can collect and share information on proven approaches to volunteer stewardship projects.

CFS continues to provide this support in 2018 and has awarded grants to the following 13 clubs:

- Boardman River Clean Sweep
- Clinton River Watershed Council
- Guardians of the West Fork River Watershed
- Louisville Area Canoe & Kayak
- Northern Forest Canoe Trail
- Paddles 4 Conservation
- Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy
- Sugar Island
- Team River Runner
- Tennessee Scenic River Association
- Tennessee Valley Canoe Club
- Upper Oconee Watershed Network
- Vermont River Conservancy

Beginning with this issue, the efforts of 2019 CFS grant recipients will be featured in *Paddle* eMagazine. Please read the next installment of our recipient summaries on the next four pages.

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Louisville Area Canoe and Kayak Club

The [Louisville Area Canoe and Kayak](#) (LACK) club is an informal group of kayakers in Kentucky. The group conducts cleanups of Harrods and Beargrass creeks. In 2018, the club helped with five cleanups involving 20-30 paddlers combined). Some events were only for club members and volunteers, while others included members of the Beargrass Creek Alliance and local youth groups. A local canoe and kayak outfitter offers free rentals to volunteers who want to participate but do not own kayaks.

Since Harrods Creek is such a popular recreational waterway, most of the group's past focus has been there. However, Beargrass Creek is in rather poor shape and needs much attention. During previous cleanups, large and hazardous items were discovered, including a 50-gallon drum of windshield washing fluid, a submerged picnic table, and several tires and rims. Because of its poor appearance, many paddlers avoid Beargrass Creek as a recreational waterway.

Another area in need of attention is Towhead Island, which is near Beargrass Creek on the Ohio River. Previously, the island was used by a local company for barge parking. That company is no longer in business and occupancy has returned to the City of Louisville. The island is a great location for bird watching and community members are working to rid the island of invasive species and to construct an observation deck for public use. Cleanups for Towhead Island will be combined with the Beargrass Creek cleanups if enough volunteers can be arranged.

Cleanup event sponsor, Troy Eskridge, is a high school teacher at Atherton High School. He uses the events to discuss the importance of water conservation with students. The school where he teaches has been certified as a full IB school. Part of the certification includes mandatory community service for all students. Eskridge has been involving urban high school students, most of whom have never been on the water, in the waterway cleanups.

His goal is to conduct at least three cleanups this summer. He's already completed one cleanup at Beargrass Creek. Several students from Atherton High School helped and the group collected a lot of trash that day. A second cleanup took place at Harrods Creek. This event was organized in conjunction with the Louisville Area Canoe and Kayak club.

"Harrods Creek was in better shape than Beargrass. We had 12 people participate, many who had never been on the water before. Louisville Kayak Company donated free kayak rentals to those who participated in the cleanup," said Eskridge.

Prior to kicking off one cleanup, volunteers gathered at the Louisville Community Boat House. Guest speakers from Kentucky Waterways Alliance and Beargrass Creek Alliance spoke to them about the importance of urban waterways and the role of Beargrass Creek as a recreational waterway. A discussion followed covering water safety and how to work together in the voyager canoes.



"Our next cleanup is on July 17. We will be focusing on Beargrass Creek, and members of LACK and the Kentucky Waterways Alliance will be participating," he added.



Paddlers for Conservation-Kayak and Canoe Club

The [Paddlers for Conservation – Kayak and Canoe Club](#) is a non-profit 501(c)3, volunteer-based organization dedicated to promoting paddling, education and conservation. Their mission is to restore and enhance the Tippecanoe River and Kosciusko County lakes and streams through hands-on environmental stewardship in order to preserve rivers, lakes and streams for the future.

The group aims to bring the community together through various cleanup projects and organizing family fun float trips which will foster a healthier environment and instill positive friendships among members and the community.

The 2019 P4C Tippecanoe River Watershed Stewardship Campaign is a volunteer-based project aimed at recruiting new paddling members to promote the Tippecanoe River by engaging students from the Warsaw (Indiana) Washington Elementary Science, Technology,

Engineering, and Math (STEM) Academy. Following a student float trip organized by P4C in October 2016, the group decided to collaborate with the STEM Academy to create an educational partnership to bring more than 50-100 students and parents to the organization's river cleanup days and family float trips on the Tippecanoe River located in Kosciusko County, Indiana.

The project began at the headwaters of the Tippecanoe River downstream of Lake Tippecanoe located near Oswego, Indiana, and continues through Kosciusko County downstream to the Indiana State Road 19 bridge located south of Etna Green, Indiana. The project involves more than 30 miles of river cleanup, environmentally sensitive woody debris removal, educational programming on water quality (including measurements for water temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, measurements of biotic integrity, and introducing students and their parents to the joys of

paddling one of the most beautiful rivers in all of Indiana. The project started May 25, 2019, and will run through October 2019.

The CFS grant funds enables the group to help organize equipment (trucks, buses, canoes, kayaks, trailers, paddles, life jackets, safety throw ropes, etc.) to be able to bring the students to the river in 2019. CFS grant funds also assist in the purchase of additional safety equipment that will be required to equip our volunteers. The CFS grant monies are positively benefiting the local community by making it possible for P4C to introduce paddling sports to more than 50-100 students/parents from the Warsaw Washington Elementary STEM Academy in the summer of 2019.

“We hope our project will foster an awareness and leading to a lifelong appreciation for not only the Tippecanoe River but for all our resources no matter where we live,” said P4C President Ed Roberts.

(Continued on page 15)





Tennessee Valley Canoe Club

The [Tennessee Valley Canoe Club](#) is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(7) organization based in Chattanooga with over 1000 active members. TVCC brings together those interested in canoeing, kayaking and related activities; increases the knowledge, safety and appreciation of paddlesports for those who are interested; and supports conservation and preservation of recreational waterways. The club provides free high-quality programming, instruction, and Swift Water Rescue training to its members.

The club actively maintains and preserves waterways through a robust conservation program. Members provide safety for local events like Ironman Triathlons, the annual Girl Scout Raft Races, and the Big Brother/Big Sister Raft Day on the Hiwassee River. TVCC also hosts the annual Ocoee River Race supporting military veterans of Team River Runner Chattanooga and is the local co-host of the internationally renowned World Tour Paddling Film Festival benefiting TenneSEA's Kids 4 Clean Water.

This spring, TVCC volunteers began conducting creek maintenance to remove hazards, trash, and debris from the most popular paddling creeks in the Tennessee River Valley. This includes approximately 75 miles of navigable waterways on five creeks that flow into the Tennessee River, all within a one-hour drive of Chattanooga. Additionally, 20 access points to these creeks are being cleaned and improved. Over the last five years TVCC has gradually expanded its creek maintenance efforts from roughly 10 miles of river in 2014 to 62 miles in 2018. The goal for 2019 is 75 miles with the addition of 13 miles on the Sequatchie River to open a new paddling opportunity for local enthusiasts.

Scout teams consisting of at least two experienced river maintenance paddlers first survey the creeks to identify and assess blockages and determine the level of effort needed. Next, a detailed work plan is established and the broader volunteer team assembled. Creeks are worked in sections of about 5 miles. The primary focus is removing large blockages caused by downed trees

followed by the removal of tires, trash and general garbage.

Work party teams are trained and led by experienced scout team members. Each general volunteer is provided with a long-sleeve T-shirt, gloves, and eye protection but asked to provide their own boat, hand saws, clippers, shovels, and other appropriate gear for the planned work. The plan calls for establishing a pool of about 20 volunteers who are asked to contribute 2 trips per month during the project period.

CFS funding was used to purchase a new chain saw for the project. TVCC owns 5 saws but has experienced high failure rates and theft in recent years. Funds are also being used to keep chains maintained; purchase safety gear for volunteers including eyewear, gloves, and long-sleeved shirts (approximately 25 shirts); and purchase additional gear for removing large debris (come-alongs). Some funds are being used to pay trash disposal fees and to provide awards to volunteers who provide extraordinary service to the project.





Upper Oconee Water Trails

The [Upper Oconee Watershed Network](http://www.UOWN.org) (UOWN) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization based in Athens, Georgia. It was formed in January 2000 in response to citizen concern about the region's rapid growth and its impact to local streams and rivers. Their mission is to protect water resources in the Upper Oconee watershed and improve stream health through community-based advocacy, monitoring, education, and recreation.

In 2011, UOWN received seed money from Georgia River Network to develop a water trail on the Oconee River. UOWN created a subcommittee – the Upper Oconee Water Trail (UOWT) – to guide this effort. The committee includes stakeholders from community organizations dedicated to providing ecological and economic benefits to the region. An important goal of this committee is to involve local citizenry in river cleanup events.

In September 2017, UOWT partnered with Athens Clarke County Department of Leisure Services to complete their first cleanup on the North Oconee River. Volunteers were secured through Rivers Alive, an annual community event that places cleanup teams along streams and river corridors, but not actually on the river.

To enhance the community's efforts, UOWT's goal was to get people on the water as part of this effort. ACC Leisure Services provided 16 kayaks and 8 canoes for the cleanup. Kayaks navigated tight spaces and collected trash from strainers. UOWT deployed canoes to haul the trash, especially large pieces such as tires. The canoes also permitted the volunteers to sort recycling from trash.

The cleanup was highly successful, due in large part to being on the

water, rather than just alongside. The River's Alive Project removed 3.1 tons of trash, 1 ton of recycling, and 150 tires. The UOWT committee received positive feedback from the River's Alive Committee and encouraged us to establish a goal of completing regular cleanups in subsequent years. The network has completed additional river cleanups, partnering with Bag the Bag, Athens Area Paddlers, and Keep Athens-Clarke Clean and Beautiful. Based on feedback from paddlers UOWN has identified river sections in desperate need of trash removal.

To facilitate these cleanup efforts, the group applied for and received a CFS grant to purchase equipment and supplies, including a chainsaw, grabbers, clippers, loppers, gloves, and trash bags. These items will greatly help volunteers to more efficiently gather the trash and remove debris from the river.



Taking out the trash

By Marcel Bieg, ACA Western States Outreach Director and Grant Manager



Volunteers in Oregon have been busy this spring with stream and river cleanups.

On May 9, 10 volunteers performed a much-needed river cleanup on a small section of Mary's River near Corvallis, Oregon. Unfortunately, we barely made a dent and will be working on that section a bunch into the future.

May 14 was a rainy day in Oregon, but 11 brave volunteers headed out onto the Willamette River to take part in the monthly Trashy Tuesday River Cleanup. Two drift boats, two rafts and an IK tackled the trash that had been deposited along the river from recent high water and illegal dumping. Overall, the team picked up more than 12 cubic yards of trash from along the river corridor, directly helping with the health of the river and the local community.

A dozen Eugene-Springfield River Guardians volunteers came out in full force June 11 to clean the urban waterfront for June's Trashy Tuesday. Approximately four yards of trash was collected, including a unicorn with wings and a massive couch, devoid of anything comfortable to sit on.

One volunteer is a local artist who will be reusing trash removed during Trashy Tuesdays to develop an interactive art project at the Willamette River Festival on August 24. Objects will be woven into a planter sculpture that will be installed along the West Bank Greenway and filled with native plants.

The River Guardians welcomed six brand-new faces to our team along with the owner of [Plank Town Brewing Company](#) in Springfield. A beautiful home built wood drift boat was also brought by another new set of volunteers to brace the harsh reality of river cleanups. Homeless advocates from Hope on Wheels also attended to help navigate communication with occupied camps.

While we had hoped to see less debris deposited on the shoreline, there has been an increase in the Lane County homeless population by nearly 32%. As a result, the number of established camps on the riverbank has quadrupled since last year at this time. There are huge piles of garbage between camps where “dump zones” appear to be springing up without any resources for sanitation. Additionally, abandoned camps in more remote areas not easily accessible from the bike path are prone to high-water events when the dams are released, creating an enormous hazard of very heavy bedding, clothing, and disintegrating polyester stuffing. Needles, feces, propane, paint, aerosol cans, and cleaners are also often found in or right next to the water.

Thanks to our staff and volunteers who regularly monitor and help clean up these areas, many folks from these camps were engaged in helping us clean up the garbage, even if it wasn't theirs. We left bags, gloves, a sharps container, and even a set of pickers, with a few different campers, who actually requested these resources so they could be empowered to help clean up their own environment.

We are proud of the efforts of our River Guardians Program to engage people from all backgrounds and housing situations, while helping to instill a growing ethic of stewardship and reconnection to the larger community.

Sadly, these river cleanups are needed on nearly every river across our country, not only to keep our local waterways healthy and clean but to stop this trash from entering our oceans. I dream of the day when we can plan a river cleanup and not find a single piece of trash. To get involved in cleanups in your area, please contact your local paddling club or ACA State Director and ask about planned cleanups.



Michigan's Grand River gets a grand cleaning

On May 23, several volunteers took to Michigan's Grand River for the first cleanup of the summer.

Representatives from the ACA, the Eaton Rapids Medical Center, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Eaton County Sheriff's Office, the Eaton Rapids High School, the Greyhound Performance

partment of Natural Resources, the Eaton County Sheriff's Office, the Ingham County Parks Department, the Eaton Rapids Public Schools and the Eaton Rapids Medical Center. We cleaned 3.1 miles of river. We counted in excess of 400

The cleanup was topped off with a much-appreciated lunch supplied by Chef Dan and the Eaton Rapids Craft Company.

"I would like to thank and recognize our sponsors: Athletico, the Eaton Rapids Downtown Development Authority, the City of Eaton Rapids, the American Canoe Association and the



Academy and the Ingham County Parks Department picked up trash, counted turtles, took water samples, collected invertebrates and had a great time on the water.

"We boated 25 paddlers including myself, ACA Instructor Dave Ford, four members of the Michigan De-

turtles. We tested the water quality of our river and did an invertebrate collection and evaluation. 'No trace' was the phrase of the day," said ACA Instructor Paul Malewski.

Eaton Rapids Public Schools," said Malewski. "We rocked it with both community and corporate support."

EWG monitors expected surge in toxic algae blooms

Map of known algae outbreaks is best source to track growing nationwide hazard

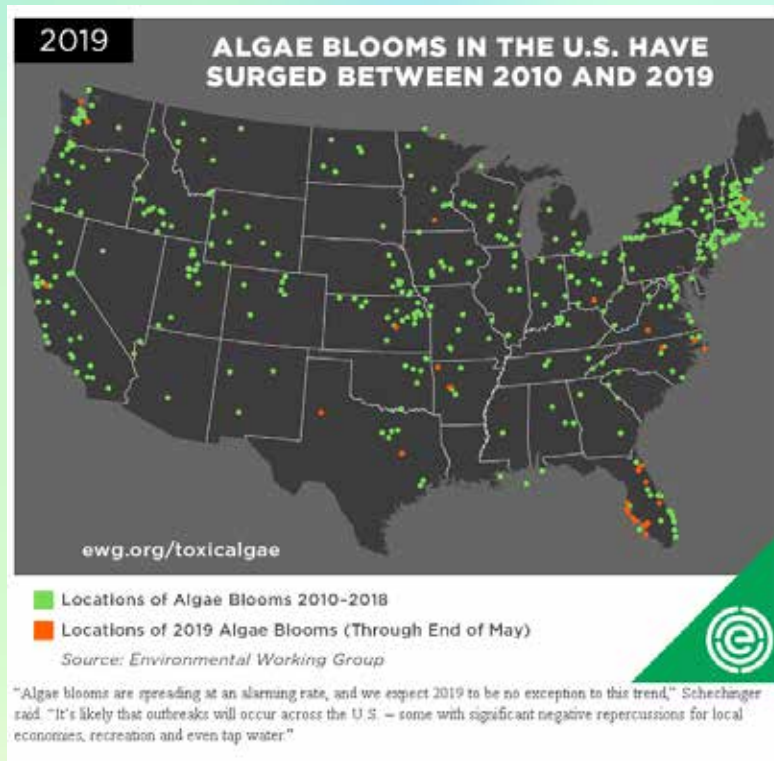
With peak toxic algae bloom season underway, the Environmental Working Group is releasing [an updated map of all algae outbreaks reported](#) in the U.S. since 2010. In coming months, the map will be updated weekly, providing comprehensive tracking of this growing nationwide hazard.

Algae blooms are an epidemic, polluting lakes and other waterways, including many used as sources for drinking water, as a [2018 EWG report](#) revealed. They tend to thrive when water is warmer, usually from May through October, but can occur anytime, and EWG's investigations reveal that out-of-season blooms [are becoming more common](#).

"No federal agency publicly tracks algae blooms, so we are trying to fill the gap," said Anne Weir Schechinger, EWG senior economic analyst. "It's imperative that the public understand the threat and what they can do about it."

Algae outbreaks occur when bacteria-laden fertilizer and [manure](#) from farms run off into waterways, triggering the growth of a thick, blue-green goop on the water's surface – not technically algae but microscopic single-celled organisms called cyanobacteria. Not all blooms are toxic, but those that are [produce cyanotoxins](#) like microcystins and other poisons.

EWG's [analysis](#) found that, between 2010 and May 2019, 550 algae blooms were reported in waterways in 47 states. Last year, the 256 outbreaks in 39 states



were more than twice the number reported in 2017, and a staggering increase from 2010, with three outbreaks reported in three states.

"Algae blooms are spreading at an alarming rate, and we expect 2019 to be no exception to this trend," Schechinger said. "It's likely that outbreaks will occur across the U.S. – some with significant negative repercussions for local economies, recreation and even tap water."

Toxic algae blooms can [seriously harm human health](#). Short-term exposure can cause sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and liver damage. Long-term exposure can lead to sperm damage, liver failure and even cancer.

Toxic algae blooms can also harm animals. In 2015, the East Bay Park District near San Francisco closed five lakes after [three dogs died](#). A dog has [already died](#) this spring, in Anderson Lake in Washington. Algae blooms have also caused massive fish die-offs and harmed other marine life.

EWG [provides tips](#) about how to avoid being poisoned by a toxic algae bloom and [suggestions for policymakers](#) on how to address the problem.

Besides the weekly map update, EWG will share a "Bloom of the Week" on social media. EWG's work on algae blooms can be accessed [here](#), including [satellite photos](#) of algae blooms.

Stay up to date on ACA's stewardship initiatives

Interested in the political process? Check out some of the **local and regional policy letters** the ACA has submitted on behalf of paddlers:

www.americancanoe.org/PublicPolicy



Want to help your local waterway? Watch these videos from fellow paddlers at their **Paddle Green Events**:

www.americancanoe.org/PGEvents



How much is there? Where does it come from? Help the ACA and NOAA **'Track Trash'** and clean up your local waterway in the process! Learn how to participate:

www.americancanoe.org/TrackTrash



How do the **7 Principles of Leave No Trace** apply to river corridors? Learn more at:

www.americancanoe.org/LNT

EDUCATION



February Instructor of the Month



Bernie Rupe

What aspect of paddling is the most exciting and engaging to you?

I love teaching kids how to paddle for the first time. It is great to see them go from apprehensive to stepping into the boat and finishing with a big smile because they just learned how to canoe.

Please describe the role that paddling plays in your personal and professional life.

I am executive director for Chicago Voyagers. We work with at-risk youth, giving them opportunities they would never have had. We introduce hundreds of kids to paddling each year. Some even get to experience wilderness canoeing in places such as the Boundary Waters. Paddling is perfect for building confidence and learning how to work together. I also love to paddle personally – river trips and my annual week-long trip into the Florida Everglades are my favorites.

Would you please say a few words about your experience with the ACA youth program from last summer?



We have a blast taking a group of immigrant youth onto Busse Lake in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. Last summer, we had kids were from places like Africa and the Middle East. The kids learned how to canoe or kayak in addition to participating in experiential learning activities. It was great to see them leave energized.



March Instructor of the Month

Jennifer Yearley



Jennifer Yearley specializes in individualized coaching and mentoring to help students reach their personal goals, with a particular focus on empowerment, inspiration, and long-term development. She travels extensively, teaching and training on both the east and west coasts of North America.

Jennifer sees her own personal road as being one of ongoing continuous development, both as a paddler and as a teacher – a philosophy that frames all aspects of her work with her students. She teaches with her company, Paddle Towards It, as well as with the River and Ocean Paddlesports Coaching Collective.



What aspect of paddling is the most exciting and engaging to you?

The environment that paddling presents for fully present-in-the-moment development of physical skills; for facing and overcoming fear; for raw engagement with the

beauty and power of nature; and for deep and abiding training in humility, is like nothing else I've ever come across. These days my own personal practice is focused heavily on surf kayaking, but I can get just as focused and engaged working on fine details of strokes and rolls on flat water with my sea kayak or practicing techniques on my SUP or in my river kayaks.

What role does paddling play in your life?

When I'm not paddling, or planning to paddle, or planning a class, or teaching a class, I run a busy research lab. Paddling keeps me engaged with real and direct experience with the physical world. It's hard to get too agitated by the manufactured stresses of modern society when you spend much of your time out exper-

riencing the real world, developing your ability to interact directly with your physical environment.

Please say a few words about your favorite paddling memory.

The paddling memories that stand out most strongly to me all involve facing down and overcoming fear. Whether it has been handling big tide races, dealing with intimidating surf, managing rapids that were at the upper end of my skill level, or dealing with long committing open crossings, these are the experiences that have really affected me. Coming through environments like these, facing down fears and handling

them competently, is extremely empowering. This is something I try to share with my students. I teach in a lot of environments where people can feel intimidated. I know what it is to be afraid, and I know how awesome it is to come out the other side, having built the skills and confidence to handle what you are faced with. I try to help shepherd people through that.

ACA FILMS NEW SAFETY VIDEOS

By Marcel Bieg, ACA Western States Outreach Director and Grant Manager

The ACA team is working with the Oregon State Marine Board and Law Enforcement to film a video series called “Reducing Conflicts on Multi-Use Waterways.” The project is made possible by grant funding provided through the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, which is administered by the United States Coast Guard.

The series will consist of three episodes running 3-5 minutes. These videos will be the latest installment in the ACA’s online Paddle Smart WebTV series, which currently consists of 77 videos. The goal of this video series is to reduce paddlesports related accidents by providing immediate knowledge through short and focused instructional videos.



Oregon city integrates PADDLESPORTS EDUCATION into curriculum



Marcel Bieg, ACA Western States Outreach Director and Grant Manager, recently conducted an Instructor Certification Workshop for the Oregon Outdoor School Program for the City of Eugene.



This was the last step in helping the city integrate the ACA into the Oregon Outdoor School Program curriculum and instruction.

“We had 10 Instructor Candidates with varying levels of skill and experience. We ended up certifying 6 of them and the others were continued to various levels pending some work on their part,” said Bieg.



Coos Bay draws crowd with paddle event, film screening

By Marcel Bieg, ACA Western States Outreach Director and Grant Manager

Coos Bay is the largest city on the Oregon coast and boasts the largest bay on the Pacific coast between San Francisco and Seattle. Coos Bay has a long Native American history spanning thousands of years before becoming the center for commerce along the Oregon

coast in modern times. Today it has a population of about 16,000 with an additional 12,000 in neighboring towns and villages.

What is less known about Coos Bay is that it's a fantastic paddling and surfing destination and has several recreational opportunities unique to the Oregon coast. The paddling and surfing community in Coos Bay has been steadily growing and is now to the point where several businesses decided it was time to take the next step in establishing Coos Bay as a "paddlers' destination" by creating a local event for pad-

dlers and surfers. I was invited to represent the ACA and was incredibly impressed with what I found.

The inaugural year of any event always contains many unknowns; organizers are never sure if the event will spread its wings and fly or fall flat on its face. The plan was to bring the [World Tour Paddling Film Festival](#) into Coos Bay and premier it the evening of Saturday, April 27 while kicking off the day with a fun community paddle through the Slough area of the Bay. The hope was to get 30 people to show up and purchase tickets as the event would then at least cover the theater cost for the film screening.

As I pulled up to the boat ramp I was amazed at the spectacle in front of me, kayaks, canoes and SUPs filled the small bay while a Coast Guard Auxiliary boat meandered through the crowd and a Coast Guard Helicopter circled overhead. FM 105.9 «The Legend» local radio station was on hand blasting tunes. Over 50 paddlecraft had shown up, many of which were tandems or multi-person canoes. The mob paddled into the slough navigating around docks, barges and pillars against the ebbing tide while harbor seals surfaced nearby. The sun was out and the wind came at a manageable pace. All in all, the paddle was wonderful and carnage free.

We returned to the boat ramp after a few hours and loaded gear into personal and business vehi-



cles. Several participants visited the event host, 7 Devils Brewery located in downtown Coos Bay for some tasty beverages and locally sourced meals. The scene was fun with everyone chatting and swapping stories of the day's adventures, past mishaps and future plans.

At 2 o'clock the event sponsors headed to the theater to begin the setup process.

The hosts included 7 Devils Brewery, South Coast Tours, Oregon Coast Kayak, and the Surfrider Foundation, which had received all the proceeds from the event. Sponsors included the Coos Watershed Association, Coos Bay Boat Building Center, Coquille Watershed Association, South Slough National Estuary Research Reserve and, of course, the ACA. Twelve films were chosen by the host organizations and each sponsor was allotted 5 minutes between films to present their organization and draw for the next door prize of awesome gear or gift certificates donated by local businesses. Not only was the film screening incredibly entertaining but it was also very educational and showed the passion and excitement of the local paddling and surfing community.

Overall, the event went off without a hitch. Over 100 tickets were sold, smashing the expected turnout and providing funding for much needed projects based in conservation and education.



What is the Reel Paddling Film Festival?

Rapid Media's annual Reel Paddling Film Festival showcases the world's best paddling films to audiences in Canada, United States and around the world.

The festival inspires more people to explore rivers, lakes and oceans, push physical and emotional extremes, embrace the lifestyle and appreciate the heritage of the wild places we paddle.

The Reel Paddling Film Festival is a film contest awarding winning films in 10 categories. The winners and other shortlisted films are toured to more than 100 cities around the world, screening for an audience of more than 25,000 outdoor adventure enthusiasts and their friends and families.

The World Tour kicked off early February. To find a screening near you, please visit www.paddlingfilmfestival.com/world-tour.html.



Boating in Boston

[Boating in Boston](#) features gorgeous boathouses all across the greater Boston area waiting to launch you on your next kayaking, canoeing, sailing or paddleboarding adventure. They offer adult sailing, kayak, stand-up paddleboard, and canoe classes for all skill levels as well as youth sailing day camps. Their experienced, friendly instructors teach all lessons in a fun, safe environment.

For more breathtaking water fun, join them for a unique scenic sunrise or sunset kayak tour and take in the Boston skyline as you've never seen it before. There's so much for you, your family and your friends to enjoy! Be sure to check out their value-packed Season Passes that make it even easier for you to enjoy your favorite boating activities all summer long!



ACA Pro Schools are some of the best organizations across the country to find top quality ACA-certified instruction. Plus, current ACA members receive discounts on certain Pro School instructional programs.

Please visit www.americancanoe.org/ProSchools to find a Pro School near you.

ACA delivers river safety workshop in Oregon

Willamette Riverkeeper teamed up with the ACA to present the ACA River Safety and Rescue Workshop earlier this spring. This course was designed for the Willamette Riverkeeper - River Guardian on-water guides and river cleanup volunteers. It focused on skills and techniques critical to performing those specific roles.

Participants learned how to recognize and avoid common river hazards, self-rescue techniques, and simple rescues of paddlers in distress. Emphasis was placed on both personal safety and simple, commonly used skills. Fundamental techniques for dealing with hazards that carry greater risks for both victim and rescuer, such as entrapments, and pins, also were taught. This course was aimed at river travelers interested in learning fundamental river rescue skills.



My reflections on the 2018 Adirondack Canoe Symposium

By Don Hammen

I decided to devote 2018 to improve my paddling skills. Among the motivations was to more gracefully section paddle the Northern Forest Canoe Trail.

While searching for options to improve my paddling skills, I 'discovered' YouTube videos of amazing Canadian and Freestyle paddling. Paddling artistry by experts such as Bill Mason, Rolf Kraiker, Marc Ornstein, Becky Mason, and Karen Knight inspired me to seek out instruction in these disciplines.

I found the most incredibly perfect opportunity to begin developing these skills at the 2018 [Adirondack Canoe Symposium](#) (ACS) held on the lovely campus of Paul Smith's College on the northern shore of Lower St. Regis Lake in the Adirondacks of New York.

Robyn Lowenthal coordinated the symposium and made it special.



Why was it so perfect? The setting, the beautiful weather, the outstanding expert instruction, and – most of all – the generous, caring, and fun people who organized, hosted, instructed, and participated in this event. The people made it an enjoyable experience.

The first two lessons I had were with Marc Ornstein and Rolf Kraiker. These were two of the amazing paddlers whose YouTube videos inspired me to seek out instruction in Freestyle and Canadian style paddling. How could this have happened? Are you kidding me? And they turned out to be generous, patient, and fun instructors. Yes, this really was perfect!

Could it get any better? Well, actually, yes it could, and it did.

It turns out that all the instructors are truly expert and very skilled at

teaching people how to improve their paddling abilities, especially people just getting introduced to Freestyle and Canadian style techniques. These people have refined their teaching strategies over the years to where they have made it an efficient, logical, fun, and effective process for everyone. They all truly seem to be more excited than the student when a student "gets it." Yes, it really was perfect for me.

So what did I learn?

For beginners, people new to Freestyle, the instruction starts with shoring up your on-side forward stroke along with refining your correcting stroke, typically a J in Freestyle. On-side sweeps, slips, sculls, and reverse strokes came next. Next came an introduction to the on-side forward quadrant strokes: Axle, Post, Christie, and Wedge. The Canadian style instruction also focused on shoring up the forward stroke with more explanation and demonstration of the correction options eventually leading up to an introduction to the guide stroke. In addition, the all-purpose sweep and scull strokes were demonstrated in ways to show how they are kind-of the Swiss army knives of strokes for fine boat control.

I also was taught some tips on handling wind and waves by none other than Charlie Wilson. I hadn't mentioned it, but I have been researching and shopping for a solo canoe. There was one name that constantly

Author Don Hammen tries out some of the new skills he learned at the event.



appeared in my search ... Charlie Wilson. This is another freestyle champion paddler, instructor, author, principle partner in multiple canoe building businesses and conceptualizer of several of the finest solo canoes ever designed and made. Charlie, his blustery personality, expert instruction, and generosity are having a lasting positive impression on me. Yet another reason why this event was perfect for me.

And, there's more. An exhibition is part of the ACS event. This is where everyone – most notably the experts – get to show off what they can do. All the exhibitions were excellent. However, I can't help but to drop some more names ... and gush over Bob and Elaine Mravetz and how impressively skilled they are. Marc Ornstein was amazing, as always, and other standouts include

Tim Burris and Ron Young. Along with all the other exhibitors, they were all really inspirational. Even if in a very small way, I'd love to be able to do what they can do. Perhaps, it's perfect motivation to get out and practice?

Of course, it's impossible to name everyone. But there was one other person who made a big impression on me – Robyn Lowenthal. Robyn coordinated the event and made it special. She was thoughtful and took extra time before the event to make sure I selected the classes that would benefit me the most. What a gem!

I was provided a lot of material and encouragement to go forth

and practice to become a more proficient paddler. While progress sometimes seems frustratingly slow, it is coming along, and I have clearly seen my skills improve a lot since my instruction at the ACS. I'm still amazed at having the opportunity to meet so many of the most talented people in the Freestyle community and experience their expertise, but even more, their welcoming and encouraging spirit. What a memorable experience it was. It's not an exaggeration to say ACS-2018 was perfect for me.

Editor's Note: This article was originally published on the Freestyle Canoeing website, at <http://freestylecanoeing.com/my-reflections-on-acs-2018/>.

Upcoming FreeStyle Canoe Events

July 18-21

[Adirondack Canoe Symposium](#)

Paul Smith's College, Paul Smith, New York

September 6-8

Midwest Canoe Symposium

Camp Butler, Pennsylvania, Ohio

October 18-20

Pine Barrens Functional Canoe Workshop

Camp Ockanickon, Medford, New Jersey





UNIVERSAL

Upcoming Universal Paddling Workshops

September 19-22

[Adaptive Paddling Workshop](#)
Big Bay, Michigan

October 1-3

Adaptive Paddling Workshop
Richmond, Virginia

October 7-9

Advanced Communciations Workshop
Richmond, Virginia

Visit the [Universal Event Calendar](#)
to stay up-to-date on workshops
happening near you!



ACA updates Universal Program

Adaptive Paddling and new Advanced Communications endorsements now included

By Joe Moore, J.D., LL.M., Executive Director, Adaptive Expeditions

Since 1990 the ACA has led adaptive paddlesports instructor development across the world. During the past 29 years, thousands of paddlers with physical disabilities have benefited from the ACA Adaptive Paddling Program. However, the physical disabilities addressed by adaptive sport programs represent only a fraction of the entire group of people with disabilities who would love to make paddlesports a part of their lives.

Many other disability types exist, including sensory disabilities, such as vision impairments and blindness, hearing impairments and deafness, and speech and language impairments. People who have sensory disabilities need instructors trained to apply advanced communication strategies for successful learning to occur. Instructors who have learned specialized

teaching methods may add significantly to this population's success with paddlesports.

Recognizing the need to differentiate educational strategies for differing types of disabilities, the ACA has adopted a broader program heading that can include multiple instructor endorsement curricula, each specifically tailored to empower instructors with the different skillsets needed to address various categories of disabilities.

Under the new Universal Paddling Program heading, the Adaptive Paddling Program will continue to address the needs of instructors who hope to seamlessly integrate paddlers with any type of physical disability into programs. No changes have been made to the content and approach of the ACA Adaptive Paddling Program – this

program now has a complementary program to address other populations who need specialized resources to enjoy paddling.

In 2016 Adaptive Expeditions partnered with Disabled Sports USA to write a U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs grant application for funding to develop the new ACA Endorsement curriculum that would empower instructors to seamlessly incorporate individuals with sensory disabilities and/or communication barriers into paddlesports programs. In mid-2017, subject matter experts from around the U.S. were chosen through a competitive application process to participate in a curriculum development process.

In May 2018, that curriculum development process concluded with a 3-day, 4-night summit at the beachfront Barrier Island Educa-



In May 2018, several instructors participated in a curriculum development summit for the new Advanced Communications Instructor Endorsement.



tional Center at Camp St. Christopher, Seabrook Island, South Carolina. The ACA approved the new Advanced Communications Instructor Endorsement at the March 2019 Board of Directors meeting.

The new ACA Advanced Communications Endorsement was designed to convey the most effective strategies for teaching and learning, risk assessment and management, and effective facilitation of on-water group dynamics for paddlesports programs that include individuals who have vision impairment or blindness, hearing impairment or deafness, as well as speech, language, perceptual impacts, and communication barriers from Acquired Brain Injuries (ABI), such as, stroke, brain tumor, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), etc. All of these disability types require

that instructors apply advanced communication strategies to enable successful participation and learning. The first Advanced Communications Workshops (ACWs) will be offered summer and fall of 2019.

Adaptive Expeditions will offer a 2.5-day APW as well as a 3-day ACW on either side of the 2019 ACA Instructor Trainer Conference being held October 4-6 in Richmond, Virginia. Details can be found online at www.americancanoe.org/2019ITConf.

Course Overview

Workshops provide a basic understanding of disabilities that affect communication and provides a toolbox of knowledge, techniques and strategies to enable successful integration. Current ACA Instructors will earn the Advanced Communications Endorsement upon successful completion. All others ACA members, who are not certified ACA instructors, will earn a Certificate of Completion upon successful demonstration of all endorsement criteria.

Course Prerequisites:

- Be a current certified ACA Paddling Instructor at Level 1 or above (for Endorsement)
- Be a current ACA Member (for Certificate of Completion)



During the summit, instructors donned special goggles to replicate the vision impairments that some students may have.



Universal Paddling Seat opens paddling to everyone



[Creating Ability](#)'s Universal Paddling Seat for Canoes was designed with one purpose in mind: to open the sport of paddling to everyone. Regardless of the level of support needed, the seat provides as much or as little support as a paddler needs.

The back structure consists of pelvic, lateral, lumbar, and upper-back supports. The back has several vertical adjustments to fit different torso lengths and types. The upper unit (the upper-back rest and laterals) can be adjusted independently or removed completely, for those who don't need the high-level support.

Please visit the Adaptive Paddling section of the [ACA eStore](#) for more information on all of the adaptive equipment available for purchase.

Don't forget to log in for ACA member pricing!

NEWS NEAR YOU

Sarah Burt photo



State Updates

California

There's a lot going on across the state of California. ACA California is continuing its support of the developing Owens River Water Trail. Project Manager Larry Freilich has requested we write another letter of support, this time in connection with the state-level environmental impact report. He is keeping us apprised of the ideal timing and language for the letter. We expect to complete that in Fall 2019. The Friends of the Inyo River are making a documentary in support of the project, which will require extensive removal of invasive plants.

The California council also contributed to a successful California Safe Boating Day on Mission Bay. ACA-certified Paddle Instructors Stevie-Nicole Hasty and Mackenzie Hooper facilitated two free SUP Safety Clinics and represented the ACA with an info table. The U.S. Coast Guard was present to remind people of the importance of wearing a life jacket and they gave out a lot of free life jackets. Together, everyone made quite an impact and over 150 people are now aware of the ACA and its contributions to the world of paddling. San Diego also hosted a paddle green event in April that yielded nearly 50 pounds of trash!

Save the Date!

September 14, 2019, the [California Women's Watersport Collective](#) will host a "celebration" on the South Fork of the American River. As part of that they will host two Down River races on the Chili Bar (3+) and Cottonwood to Greenwood (Class 2) sections of that river. ACA Cali is negotiating a co-sponsorship with the race and related events. We recently honored this group's founder Melissa DeMarie with one of our inaugural Paddle Heroes awards.

Jamie Eubanks, castatedirector@americancanoe.net



A paddler on Owens River. Inyo County Water Department photo





Indiana

Spring kicks off stewardship and safety efforts in Indiana with the dedication of a new portage trail around the Waterworks low-head dam on the Wildcat Creek. The portage was created on land purchased by the Niches Land Trust and built by the Wildcat Guardians.

The Voyageur Program of the Crossroads of America Council of the Boy Scouts of America held its Adult Leadership Training Program in May. The program's origin dates back to the 1960s and offers four days of on-water training for adults. The program recently opened its educational program to the public. The skilled staff includes a combined background of ACA-certified instructors and BSA High Adventure Leaders who have logged more than 200 treks to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and the Northern Tier, as well as countless canoe trips in Indiana and the Midwest. Voyageur is launching an all-new Youth Program this fall. Indiana is excited to announce its ACA membership drive for 2019. The executive council for Indiana has stepped up efforts to promote the new Hang-Tag Program and is partnering with local liveries and outfitters to offer the added value of ACA memberships in a dual-branded event.

Northwest Indiana Paddling Association President Dan Plath and his son Eric check out the Voyageur Program's offerings.



Indiana offers a new ACA Facebook page where the community can get updated on Indiana Happenings. The page often features activities of the Indiana Paddle America Club members, which include the East Race Whitewater Kayak Club, Hoosier Canoe and Kayak Club, and the Northwest Indiana Paddling Association.

Joyce Hayes, instatedirector@americancanoe.net

Maryland



Paddling in the fog from Annapolis Harbor. Paula M. Hubbard photo

Maryland has incredible resources for paddling. River kayakers play in the rapids of the Potomac River (shared with Virginia). Reservoirs, creeks and flatwater rivers are suitable for recreational kayaks and paddleboards. For the more adventuresome, we have the open waters of the Chesapeake Bay. Many of the Maryland State Parks provide excellent camping facilities and water access. More information is available here: <http://dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/Pages/default.aspx>. Our area also has many paddling clubs, instructors, and groups interested in all water sports. I encourage everyone, in state or visitors to explore paddling in Maryland.

Paula Hubbard, mdstatedirector@americancanoe.net

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Massachusetts

Responsible paddling in our changing oceans

Cape Cod has always been a paddlers' paradise with hundreds of miles of coastline, beautiful tidal flats, and breathtaking bays. Over the last five years we have had an increased presence of the Atlantic White Shark in the waters off Cape Cod due to warming waters and early season seal migration. The focus of keeping paddlers and beachgoers safe on Cape Cod has become a major topic prior to the summertime crowds pouring into Cape Cod.

Having this apex predator in our waters just highlights the health of our ecosystem and demonstrates that Cape Cod is a wild place. It is an amazing destination for all paddlers if we treat the ocean with the respect and caution it has always deserved. These are some steadfast rules to stay safe on the water in regard to avoiding interactions with the Atlantic White Shark.

- If there has been reported shark or seal activity in an area, don't paddle there!
- Avoid areas where there are seals. Some kayakers and paddleboarders are drawn to get up close and personal with packs of seals, but these animals are a major food source for the Atlantic White Shark and they pose a serious risk themselves if they feel threatened.

- Stick to areas that are shallow, such as tidal flats, estuaries, creeks and small bays. Sharks, like any other animal, always prefer to stay in areas where they can escape easily if threatened. These shallow areas are unappealing to sharks because they cannot have room to navigate comfortably and will feel trapped.
- If you decide to navigate into the open ocean off coastlines, do so with a group. Sharks prefer to pursue solo prey, so don't isolate yourself. Having a paddle buddy should always be a priority when paddling.
- Avoid areas where there is active fishing or bait in the water.
- Avoid paddling in open ocean off the coastline at night, dawn or dusk when sharks in general are more active.

Paddling amazing places anywhere in the world always carries a responsibility such as having the right equipment, being familiar with the area you are paddling, and being aware of existing conditions. The presence of the white shark is no different than any other risks that are always present, and as long as paddlers are making responsible decisions the Cape is a place that every water enthusiast should experience!

Mike Morrison, mastatedirector@americancanoe.net

North Carolina

ACA – North Carolina is working with the U.S. Forest Service on a project to remove graffiti from rocks on riverbanks and in the rivers. Spearheaded by ACA NC State Director Board member Jack Henderson, this ambitious project could be a major game changer in the battle against graffiti. The details are still being worked out with all of the agencies involved. Stay tuned for more information as it comes available.



In other news, the Carolina Canoe Club, an ACA Paddle America Club, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year during CCC's Annual Week Of Rivers. Week of Rivers began June 28 and runs through July 7 in Bryson City, North Carolina.

In addition to the celebration, CCC will be giving back to the community in the form of a food drive for Restoration House, a local charity run by former Olympic Paddler Wayne Dickert and a project with the Swain County Health Department. Also, on July 1, the CCC, in association with Swain Clean, will be doing a river clean up on a section of the Tuckasegee River.

I wish everyone a safe and fun paddling season this summer!

Doug Stager, ncstatedirector@americancanoe.net

Oregon

Following some record spring runoff and flooding, the swollen rivers have subsided, and paddling is in full swing! Many of our rivers will benefit greatly from the large snowpack Oregon state is still experiencing. The Willamette River Keeper River Guardians are working hard cleaning up our water ways – with your help, too! Trashy Tuesdays (Eugene/Springfield) and Trashy Thursdays (Corvallis) meet in the morning and spend a few hours cleaning up the banks of the Willamette River. Register here for Eugene: <https://conta.cc/2YLZxUY>; and here for Corvallis: <https://conta.cc/2wqvjLe>. Contact Michelle Emmons at michelle@willametteriverkeeper.org or text (541) 913-4318 for more info.

Interested in lessons, trips, rentals or camps for kids? Check out these resources in your area:

- Bend: Tumalo Creek Kayak & Canoe (rentals, sales, trips, classes): <https://tumalocreek.com/>
- Eugene: City of Eugene Recreation Department, River House Outdoor Center (kids paddling camps and adult classes): www.eugene-or.gov/749/Outdoor
- Eugene: Oregon Paddle Sports (sales, rentals, trips, classes) www.oregonpaddlesports.com/

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- Portland: Portland Kayak Company (trips and rentals): <https://portlandkayak.com/>
- Oregon City/Santiam/West Linn: eNRG Kayaking (Sales, rentals, trips and classes): <http://enrgkayaking.com/>

Coming up later in the summer, Paddle Oregon will be happening August 12-16. Join the Willamette River Keeper for five sun-ripened days dreaming our way down the magnificent upper Willamette alongside friends and family. It's here you'll experience the river in a markedly different way, with spectacular meals, entertainment, unrestrained giggling, the legendary wine/beer selection and more memories than five mere days really deserve to make. It's not only become a tradition of sorts but a Northwest rite-of-passage. <https://paddleoregon.org/>

The third annual [Willamette River Festival](#) will be happening August 24 this year, in Alton Baker Park along the banks of the Willamette River in Eugene and Springfield, Oregon. There will be an upriver, downriver race, free demo boats in the canoe canal, tours of the area, booths, and a focus on highlighting the Whilamut Natural Area honoring the Kalapuya native community in the past, and today.

Salmon Norgaard-Stroich, orstatedirector@americancanoe.net

Puerto Rico

ACA-Puerto Rico teamed up with [Stand Up Paddle Industry Association](#) to bring the Learn to SUP days. On June 8 the first of three events in Puerto Rico took place at [Paddle Paradise PR & Outdoor Center](#). Over 20 beginners were taught to SUP by ACA-certified instructors through this SUPIA initiative. The next two events will be held Sept. 14 with our friends from The SUP Shack Ponce, PR, and Dec. 14 with our friends from SUP Action in San Juan, PR. Thanks to SUPIA and the ACA for your support and trust!

Omar Ramos, prstatedirector@americancanoe.net





Rhode Island

Some noteworthy upcoming events include:

- 7/13 – 9th Annual Waterman Eco-Challenge, Narragansett, RI
SUP, Kayak, Swim

Sponsored by Narragansett Parks & Recreation alongside Narragansett Surf Rescue and Raw Elements USA. This event features a safe, fun-filled day at the beach packed with a 3-mile open ocean paddle race (SUP, prone, kayak), 1-mile ocean swim race, interactive sponsor tents with giveaways, raffles and ocean/sun safety education.

- \$40 registration fee for 3-mile ocean paddle
- Co-ed (Men, Women categories)
- Life jacket and board rentals available on site
- For more information and to register, please visit www.rawelementsusa.com/collections/waterman-eco-challenge.
- 7/27 – 43rd Annual Save the Bay Swim, Jamestown, RI
SUP, Kayak, Swim

Join the Save The Bay Safety Squad (Kayak or SUP) or compete with a swimmer (\$50 donation) as we help Save The Bay's [largest fundraiser](#) and celebrate our mutual vision of a swimmable, fishable, healthy, and accessible Bay for everyone. The Safety Squad is a group of trained and experienced kayakers and stand-up paddleboarders who act as an additional safety layer around swimmers and kayakers. Safety Squad members watch for swimmers who may need assistance and serve as extra eyes on the water.

Requirements:

- Must be a very experienced and seasoned kayaker or stand-up paddleboarder.
- Must provide your own kayak/board and safety equipment (flotation, etc.).
- Attend an orientation session in Newport (7/10) or Providence (7/11). This is not mandatory, but it is highly recommended for new volunteers. The Safety Squad group will rendezvous in Jamestown, paddle the 1.7 miles crossing to Newport, and return to the Jamestown side escorting swimmers.
- For more info, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/yyb7nngo>.
- 8/17 – Annual Ocean Access Paddle, Newport (Goat Island)
SUP

Clean Ocean Access fundraiser to raise awareness about clean water and shoreline access. The second Paddle for Access is a 3-mile or 6-mile SUP race around Goat Island in Newport celebrating ongoing work to protect and preserve shoreline access and related issues, including erosion, sea-level rise, invasive species and long-term shoreline planning. Rendezvous at Newport Shipyard for registration. Those more ambitious can elect for the 6-mile course. You must provide your own kayak/board and safety equipment (flotation, etc.). Rentals available at Island Sea & Surf in Middletown. Registration fee donation is \$55. For more information, please see www.cleanoceanaccess.org/paddle-for-access.

For additional info on any of these events contact Mark at shinnen108@gmail.com.

Mark Allio, ristatesirector@americancanoe.net

(Continued on page 45)



Participants at the start of the 72-mile South Dakota Kayak Challenge. Sarah Burtt photo

South Dakota

The penultimate South Dakota Kayak Challenge took place May 25. The SDKC is a 72-mile kayak/canoe/SUP race from Yankton, South Dakota, to South Sioux City, Nebraska, on the Missouri River. This was the ninth race held (cancelled in 2011 due to flooding) and the highest water for the race. Gavin's Point Dam was releasing at 60 kcfs and the gage near Sioux City was at 90 kcfs. This led to many new records. The new overall course record and Men's Tandem Record is 7 hours, 14 minutes by Braxton Carter (Gastonia, NC) and Jim Pechous (Lombard, IL). More results and records can be found online at www.sdkayakchallenge.org.

Patrick Wellner, sdstatedirector@americancanoe.net

Vermont

Over the winter, Vermont received a lot of snowfall, and the winter seemed to hang on for longer than usual. This brought flooding to many of the rivers, and Lake Champlain, with plenty of cold water. Now that the air and water are warming up, paddling season is open in the Green Mountain State. Vermont is generally known for its mountains and winter sports, however there are a variety of scenic, challenging, and recreational paddling venues. These range from white water runs such as the Mad River, open water on Lake Champlain, and meandering river sections on the lower Lamoille River.

For those interested in learning or developing their paddling skills, education courses are popping up around the Burlington area for canoeing, river kayaking, and kayak touring. Saint Michael's College is hosting a variety of instructional courses at the start of the summer. Outfitters, guiding services, and paddling clubs are providing recreational opportunities. There are several competitions and events, such as the Stand Up for the Lake (August 3).

ACA – Vermont is looking to increase its collaboration and presence with paddling groups and events. Please contact vtstatedirector@americancanoe.net to pass along ideas and contacts. Hope to see you out on the water!

Jake Taylor, vtstatedirector@americancanoe.net



MEMBERSHIP



ACA MEMBER BENEFIT



Pumped Up SUP Inflatable Paddleboard Superstore

The Pumped Up Sup Team comprises stand up paddling experts and enthusiasts who have turned their obsession with locating, sourcing and testing the best in stand up paddle gear into a retail operation, with an informational emphasis.

They have tested and used every item they sell and enjoy sharing what they have learned about the equipment with shoppers who are either new to the sport or want to take their equipment to a higher level.

- o Online superstore specializing in inflatable stand up paddleboards to all 50 states
- o Owned and operated by a certified ACA SUP Instructor
- o Carry only top shelf brands such as Starboard, Werner, and Earth River SUP
- o 15% discount for all ACA members
- o Enhanced prodeals for ACA certified instructors - up to 35% off select brands
- o Contact the [SEI Department](#) for discount codes and ordering information



For more information on member benefits, please visit www.americancanoe.org/Benefits.

ACA OUTFITTER, LIVERY & GUIDE SPOTLIGHT



[eNRG Kayaking](#) is one of the top paddling schools in the Northwest. We buy, sell, and rent canoes, kayaks, rafts, SUPs and associated equipment in Oregon. Founded by extreme kayak champion Sam Drevo, our staff consists of Olympic champions, river rescue experts, American Canoe Association (ACA) instructor trainers, and many dedicated and certified instructors.

Founded as an evolution of the Lewis & Clark College Paddling Club in Portland Oregon, we specialize in beginner instruction, kayak instructor training, and swiftwater rescue / safety instruction. In 2011, we moved our shop from SE Portland to an on-water location in Oregon City at the confluence of the Clackamas and Willamette River. We created the ever popular Willamette Falls Kayak Tour (our signature trip) in Oregon City embracing the rich history of the Willamette Falls and Oregon City.



Find an ACA outfitter near you using the convenient [search tool](#) on our website!

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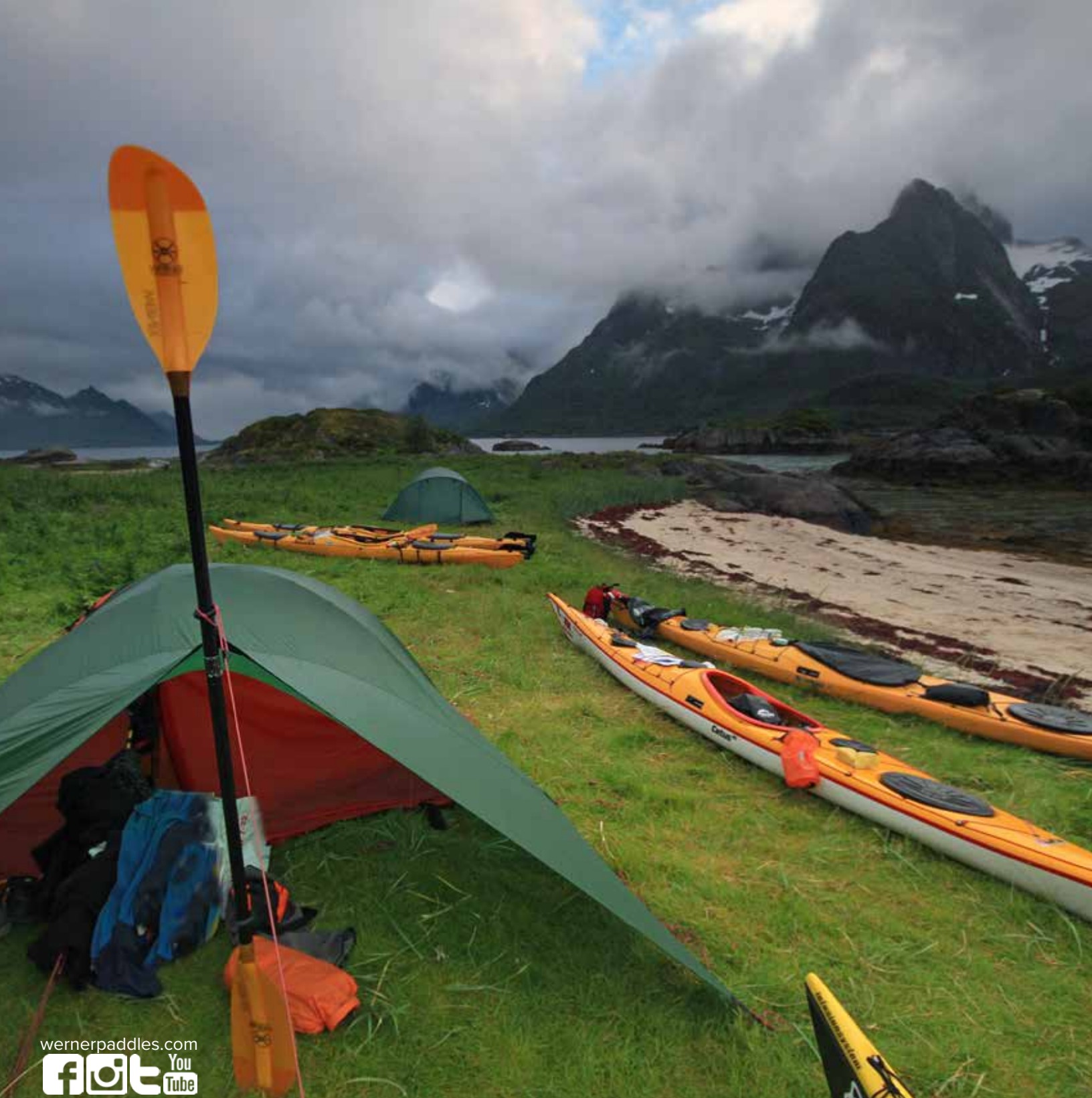
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Healthy Waters, helping to protect the places we all paddle.



COMPETITION



Photo courtesy of Kim Martin
of *Kimmers Photography*

Rising teen Evy Leibfarth makes history

Evy Leibfarth, a 15-year-old athlete from Bryson City, North Carolina, recently made history. In just her second world cup competition ever, she became the youngest woman to medal at an International Canoe Federation senior World Cup when she earned a bronze medal June 30 at the slalom world cup in women's canoe in Ljubljana, Slovenia

Competing in the women's canoe singles final, the 2020 Olympic finished in 110.69, just 7.73 seconds behind gold medlist Jessica Fox, 25, who is a two-time Olympic medalist and nine-time world champion from Australia. Viktoria Wolffhardt of Austria, a three-time world medalist, took silver in 104.22 seconds.

"I feel pretty proud of my runs. I didn't really feel nervous. I've just been trying to treat it like another race, because you race like you train," said Leibfarth.

Leibfarth has been well known in the U.S. paddling community for some time. In April 2018, she won both the junior women's and women's kayak races and was second in women's canoe at the U.S. Slalom Team Trials to earn a spot on the national team, despite being too young to compete. She's also won in both kayak and canoe at the national championships and other major races throughout the country.

Leibfarth's ultimate goal is to compete at the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.



LCKC going for 12th National Championship

This summer, as you pass over Clarks Bridge Road, with the morning sun glinting off Lake Lanier, you may see the silhouettes of canoers and kayakers gliding across the water. These paddlers, from [Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club](#) (LCKC), are up every day with the sun to train, sweat, and paddle their way to a 12th National Championship title. What makes this so special is that this year the nation's best flat-water sprint paddlers are returning to Georgia.

LCKC is hosting the ACA's [2019 Sprint and Paracanoe National Championships](#) in August. This is the 11th time the club has hosted the event and the first time since 2014.

Three hundred and fifty athletes from across the United States will

travel to Gainesville in August to compete for a coveted spot on the podium. The event will again bring families and paddling fans from across the United States to the region.

The National Championships offer another great opportunity for LCKC, [Lake Lanier Olympic Park](#), and [Gainesville](#) to host a major sporting competition on home waters. "We hope to follow up on the success of the [World Dragon Boat Championships](#), which were held here last fall," states LCKC President Blair Hickerson.

[Zsolt Szadovski](#), a former Hungarian National Team kayaker and silver medalist in the 1998 World Championships, is the new head coach of LCKC and the U.S. National Team Coach for Kayak. He's

excited about hosting the nation's top sprint event at Lanier. "We will be ready!" says Coach Zsolt.

Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club is a living legacy of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. Founded in 1994, the club has introduced the sport of sprint canoe and kayak to hundreds, if not thousands, of children – including the young and the young at heart. In addition to sprint canoe and kayak, the club offers programs and events in dragon boating, recreational paddling, and stand up paddleboarding.

LCKC has already qualified one athlete for the Olympics. [Tim Hornsby](#), who started paddling after watching the 1996 Olympic Games, competed for Team USA in the 2012 London Games. And numerous other LCKC sprint and





dragon boat athletes have competed and medaled in national and international competitions for Team USA over the history of the club.

“We look forward to welcoming the sprint community back to Gainesville,” says Hickerson. “It’s going to be a great week!”

For more information about the programs, events and activities offered by LCKC, please visit the program’s [website](#).

Photos courtesy of Kim Martin of [Kimmers Photography](#)



2019 ACA SPRINT NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Welcome to Georgia!

Lanier Canoe and Kayak Team, Lake Lanier Olympic Park, & the City of Gainesville welcome Athletes, Families, & Friends back to Gainesville for the 2019 ACA Sprint & Paracanoe National Championships!

Wondering what to pack? Lanier Canoe and Kayak Team has you covered.

Here are the Top Three items on their suggested packing list:

1. **Sunscreen.** Apply early. Race. Repeat! The average temperature in Gainesville, Georgia is 87 degrees in August. Expect warm, sunny days with possible afternoon thunderstorms.
2. **A Reusable Water Bottle.** Check out [Team USA’s Nutrition Guide](#) for essential information about staying hydrated and fueling before, during, and after competition.
3. **Your Appetite.** With so many great restaurants in and around Gainesville, you won’t go hungry! Check out the City of Gainesville’s [Visitor’s Guide](#) for a list of restaurants, shops, and fun things to do.

Shelley Oates-Wilding:

Inspiring the Next Generation of Paddlers

By Stephanie Schlitz

When a devastating knee injury forced her retirement from [netball](#) at the [Australian Institute of Sport](#) at age 24, Shelley Oates-Wilding wasn't sidelined for long. While recovering from surgery, she watched the 1988 Olympic Games on television and was inspired by Australian [Steve Wood](#), who with his teammates placed fourth in the men's K4 that year¹.

Four months later, she was in a racing kayak, competing for a spot on the Australian women's team. Believing that limits come from within, Shelley viewed her injury as an opportunity, set her mind on a goal, trained through pain to achieve it, and surged to the top.

There's little, it seems, that could take Shelley out of sports. She's a lifelong athlete with so many accomplishments that competing and winning are simply a part of her landscape.

1 Author's Note: Steve Wood became Shelley's coach shortly after the 1988 Olympic Games, and he and his teammates went on to earn a Bronze Medal for Australia in the 1992 Olympic Games. Though Steve died at just 34 years of age, his legacy lives on in his son, who paddles for the Australian Olympic Team and to whom Shelley is godmother.



Shelley Oates-Wilding with two young athletes. Photo courtesy Oates-Wilding

And though she's a two-time [Australian Olympian in the Women's K4 500m](#), a ten-time top 10 finisher in the flatwater sprint World Championships, a multi-year Outrigger World Champion, and a [Surf Lifesaving World Champion](#), her focus isn't on winning. It's on living her best life and on making a positive impact on every person she meets.

When we sat down at [Team USA Sprint Trials](#) in Oklahoma City in April to discuss coaching, parenting, competing, and what's next for Shelley Oates-Wilding, our hour-long conversation breezily extended to three. It was just that much fun. Below are a few highlights.

Coaching

Born and raised in New South Wales, Shelley began her career as a track and field athlete in Australia's

competitive sports environment, where "everyone trains before and after school," even very young athletes. But, as fate would have it, her birthday is on the Fourth of July, so it seems only fitting that she's become one of the most influential sprint coaches in the U.S.

When I asked her about her path from athlete to coach, she explained that her decision to be a positive force in the lives of others was influenced early by loss. Her brother was killed in an automobile accident at the age of 21. She lost her father to cancer three years later.

"We're all going to die," she told me. "What you do with your life makes no difference to anyone unless you give it purpose. When I lost my brother and my father, I decided that my purpose was to make a difference in the next generation."

As head coach and founder of [Ikaika Hawaii and the Waterman's Program](#), that's exactly what she's doing. Based at the [Waikiki Yacht Club](#) in Honolulu, Shelley's racing, paddlesports, and coach education programs are grounded in three pillars: safety, fun, and learning. Their guiding force is her ASPIRE philosophy, through which she teaches positive Attitude, Sportsmanship, Perseverance, Individual responsibility, Respect, and Enjoyment.

Sixteen-year-old Kali Oates-Wilding, who's following in her moth-

er's footsteps and will represent Team USA in women's kayak at the [2019 Junior World Championships](#), shared that "every Ikaika athlete can tell you what each letter in the ASPIRE philosophy stands for and why it's important."

"My mom teaches us to have a champion mindset on and off the water. She helps us to realize that any opportunity to give back and make others' lives better is an opportunity that will benefit us as well as those around us."

With a degree in education and a background in teaching, it's not surprising that Shelley approaches coaching with the same passion and insight she brings to a traditional classroom. And her visionary approach is advancing paddlesports across Hawaii.

Her Waterman's Program introduces youth to paddling as early as age 7, and during the summer, she runs a STEAM program for youths ages 7-14. After paddling and learning ocean safety and rescue skills in the morning, STEAMers stay on for science, technology, engineering, art, and math games and activities in the afternoon.

By age 10, kids can join Ikaika and begin racing competitively. Because surfski is a school sport in Hawaii beginning at age 15, Shelley's programs feed into the school teams, and her athletes have opportunities



Oates-Wilding with athletes at the 2018 Sprint National Championships.
Photo courtesy Oates-Wilding

to train and race with Ikaika locally, nationally, and internationally as well as at school.

Her goal is simple: "Teach kids about themselves and how wonderful it is to share what they learn and accomplish." Through kayak, she believes, "kids can learn everything they want to know."

The Benefits of Competition

Ikaika is distinct in its approach to educating parents and kids on the benefits of competition. From their earliest moments on the water, kids are taught to enjoy racing and to support and push one another.

Nearly all Ikaika paddlers use a GPS to track their times and to set goals to surpass their own past per-

formance. Awards are given for personal bests rather than finish place because, as Shelley explained, "every race is against yourself."

"You cannot change anyone else. You can only change yourself. Other athletes are only there to help you be your best. Competing with them helps you achieve it."

When we discussed why some kids leave paddling, she shared that in her experience, kids exit sports when they're not getting what they need. "They may not be getting enough accolades for a job well done. They may not be getting enough social engagement. Sometimes it's too painful at home

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Participants in Ikaika's 2019 STEAM Program. Photo courtesy Oates-Wilding.

because parents are either pushing them too hard or aren't supporting them enough."

She acknowledged that "paddling has just as big a learning curve for parents as it does for kids." However, she is confident that parents, caretakers, and coaches can help address all of these concerns. "When parents get or stay fit while their kids are training – they can jump on an SUP or OC1, or go for a walk or run – their kids are more likely to stay involved."

Parenting Athletes

As a single "mum" to two competitive paddlers – her 21-year-old son Kai is a collegiate-level rower as well as a kayaker like Kali – Shelley understands the joys and challenges of raising athletes.

Her advice to parents: "If you want your children to succeed, uplift them every chance you get. Getting kids to be their best comes from helping them feel good and from removing limitations. Every word

you say to your child must be positive. And every word you say about your child must be positive."

"Coaches aren't there to fix kids," she continued. "We don't need to. Every child is already fantastic. If you don't see that in your own child, look harder."

International Competition and Community-Building

In 2018, when she coached Team USA's U17 canoe and kayak athletes at the [Olympic Hopes Regatta](#) in Poland, she recognized that American athletes were disadvantaged. Why?

"Because we limit them. We don't believe our kids are competitive outside the U.S. That needs to change," she responded. "In Europe, kids race all time, every week, so racing and competition are a part of their training."

She encourages athletes who want to excel internationally to spend a summer in Europe training and racing, meeting other athletes, and

embracing the paddling community. "And if they don't return home with at least a few new friends, they haven't worked hard enough!" she said.

And she means it. Ikaika is well-known among paddlers for community-building, clothes swapping, and the *aloha* spirit. Scoring an Ikaika T-shirt or sticker at a race is a win in and of itself.

She also echoed what top canoe and kayak athletes like [Ian Ross](#) have pointed out, "For athletes to succeed, coaches need to work together. There is no alternative."

National Team Selection

Because our conversation took place during trials, it turned naturally toward the upcoming events and the Team USA selection process. She emphasized that team selection is extremely important.

"The process should be really black and white, and athletes must be expected to perform on race day. No exceptions. They need to learn

that you have to do what it takes to make the team. If you didn't perform on race day, you find out that someone else was better than you that day. Maybe next time you will come in first."

"I've made teams. I've missed teams," she went on. "There is always another opportunity."

"At the Olympics, unless you have people coming in second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth, you're not going to have a gold medalist. And unless you have all these people in the world trying to make it to the Olympics, you're not going to have Olympians."

To athletes she counsels, "Enjoy yourself. And don't *expect*. Dream about your limitless potential. Plan... And go make it happen."

Why did you want to compete in the Olympic Games?

"My father taught me that I could do anything I wanted, so I believed I was limitless, that the only limits come from within."

After the birth of her son Kai, she had just 1,000 days to train for her second Olympics, the 2000 Games in Sydney. She set a rigorous training schedule, practiced solo at Manly Beach, balanced nursing an infant alongside workouts – refusing to compromise on either parenting or training.

By 1999, Shelley was the Australian National Champion in the women's K1 200m and took fourth at the World Championships. When her



A bronze plaque at Australia's Manly Pathway of Olympians honors Oates-Wilding.

son, Kai, was just 3 years old, Shelley and her teammates represented Australia in the K4 500m at the 2000 Olympic Games.

"It is always so amazing to go to a race," she recalled, "like the World Championships or the K4 in the Olympics – and to know what time you want to achieve, that you're there with people you trust and love, and that you've all had a ridiculous journey to get there, but you've made it, and you love it."

Strength and Perseverance

The Hawaiian term *ikaika* is deeply symbolic to Shelley. Its meaning, "strength and perseverance," expresses what enabled her to define her early injury and loss as oppor-

tunities, to make the journey from Australia to the U.S. with two young children, and to build a highly successful paddling program from the ground up in Hawaii.

As our conversation came to a close, she grew quietly serious. "People need to feel good enough and confident enough to expand. Through Ikaika, I want to transcend the inequities that continue to exist, especially for women, and to prove that there are great things about being a woman."

She added that, today, in Honolulu, she's living on a volcano in the middle of the ocean – in paradise. "Why not?" she finished. "We're only here for a short time. We should have a good time. And every day, each one of us can choose to live our best life."

By the way, mark your calendar. On July 4, 2055, when Shelley Oates-Wilding turns 90, she's having a party. "It's going to be absolutely fantastic!" she assured me. And everyone is invited.

Oates-Wilding with athletes at the 2019 Team USA Sprint Trials. Stephanie Schlitz photo



Top athletes compete for spots on Team USA

Article and photos by Stephanie Schlitz

On the course at [Riversport Oklahoma City](#) for the first time was women's senior kayaker No-elani Rachel Min. A year ago, the 23-year-old ended her boxing career and moved from Oahu, Hawaii, to Gainesville, Georgia, to train with Sprint National Team Kayak Coach [Zsolt Szadovszki](#).

Min has always aspired to be an Olympian, and like many of the athletes competing for spots on Team USA at [Trials](#) in April, she's willing to make considerable sacrifices to get there. Upon arrival in Gainesville, Min spent three weeks living out of her car when housing plans fell through. A fighter by nature as well as by training, she was undeterred, se-

cured alternative arrangements, and hit the water.

"I'm getting faster," she told me. "Every day."

Min is just one of a new crop of up-and-coming sprinters who are transforming the canoe and kayak landscape across the U.S.

"This was my first Team USA Trials event as a canoeist," said Lia Gaetano. "The [Devon Boathouse](#) is a gorgeous venue and a treat to race at. It's one of the few racecourses in the U.S. with a full start-gate set-up."

Like Min, Gaetano was drawn to paddling later than many of her competitors. A collegiate volleyball

player and Cornell University graduate, Gaetano relocated to Bothell, Washington, to train with [Cascade Canoe and Kayak Racing Team](#).

"I've been there for a year and a half," she said. "I work nights and weekends because we're on the water year-round perfecting technique and building a solid fitness base."

Gaetano's first goal for trials was to beat her race times from the 2018 National Championships. Her second was to qualify for the Team USA Canoe Training Camp in Gig Harbor this summer. She achieved both, setting a personal record with her third-place finish in the 500m, which qualified her for the training camp and for a spot on the World Championship Team.

"Women's canoe continues to grow," observed Gaetano. "From my limited time in the sport, it's increasingly competitive with every regatta."

Top canoeist [Nevin Harrison](#), who swept the Junior and Senior Women's events, agreed, stating, "It was awesome to see the great competition the United States had at trials this year!"

Harrison, who at 16 is already the U.S. record holder in Women's Canoe 200m, 500m, and 1000m distances, is a prodigy in the sport. She won three gold medals and one sil-

Augustus Cook, Ashby Bodine, and Colin McMullen following a close finish in the Junior Men's K1 500m.



ver at the Olympic Hopes Regatta in 2017 and 2018 and will represent Team USA at the [Pan American Games](#) in July/August. She'll compete at the [Senior World Championships](#) with Gaetano and others a few weeks later.



Lydia Keefe Sampson, Nevin Harrison, and Lia Gaetano on the podium at Trials.

“I’m super excited to represent the U.S. at the Pan Ams in Peru!” she said. “And I’m really pumped for my Senior World Championships C2 with [Lydia Keefe Sampson](#). We’re going to be training hard all summer in preparation. The women’s canoe from the States are getting really strong, and I’m hopeful for the future as the [Olympic](#) year approaches.”

In the Senior Men’s Kayak division, [San Diego Canoe and Kayak Team](#) (SDCKT) dominated the 1000m race. [Nate Errez](#), who podiumed in the 1000m and 500m, commented, “My training group knew we had to show up fit and ready to race, so we worked hard during the months leading up – lots of endurance and speed work. I was very happy with how the San Diego Senior Men’s Kayak squad raced in the 1000m, claiming the top four spots.”

“For the next eight weeks, we are basically going to do a mini cycle of endurance work and then get back to speed work again.”

Pennsylvanian [Jesse Lishchuk](#), who was the top finisher in the Senior Men’s Kayak 1000m, crossed the country nearly a year ago to train with Errez and his teammates.

(Author's Note: Follow Jesse and his training partners from SDCKT on [Instagram](#) at [@jesse_lich](#).)

“And I’m very excited to have qualified for the Pan American Games!”

When asked about training plans for the Games, Errez explained,

“It’s been a great experience,” he stated. “The commitment to consistency and hard work is an un-

(Continued on page 61)

Ryan Grady, Ian Ross, and Kenny Kasperbauer at the finish of the Senior Men's C1 1000 final.



derlying theme with SDCKT. Our group of high-performance athletes is training to represent our country and club on an international scale. We bring our own individual capacity for improvement to every workout, and we train together to bring out the best in each other.”

In other standout performances, Senior Men’s canoeist [Ian Ross](#) continued his reign as undefeated champion, while [Edward Surles](#) broke onto the scene to win both Junior Men’s races. Host team [Oklahoma City’s](#) Augustus Cook, who swept the 1000m and 500m Junior Men’s Kayak events at the 2018 National Championships, extended his winning streak, capturing gold in the 200m as well as the 500m and 1000m.

Kali Wilding of [Ikaika](#) won the Junior Women’s Kayak events, while [Samantha Barlow](#), [Kaitlyn McElroy](#), and [Elena Wolgamot](#) captured the top three spots in the Senior Women’s Kayak division.

What inspires these athletes to train and race as hard as they can? “A passion to race,” said Errez.

At the “Future of the Sport” meeting held during the weekend-long competition, National Team Coach Szadovszki noted, “The U.S. is a special, unique country, but it is big, and this is a challenge at times.”



Nate Errez podiumed in the 1000m and 500m.

When the discussion turned to supporting talented, highly motivated athletes like Errez and others, there was strong consensus. “After high school, athletes need a path to continue paddling, and coaches and clubs need to work together to make this happen,” emphasized Szadovszki.

“We also need a system for motivating younger athletes to continue paddling,” he said, a point echoed by the coaches, officials, athletes, and supporters in attendance.

“American paddling clubs need to think not only about what’s best for them, but about what’s best for all athletes,” he finished.

“We have great potential,” stated race official Scotty Greifenberger,

who has been involved in the international paddling community for nearly 50 years. “The United States is in a position to grow, and it’s really important for the international sport of canoe and kayak for us to do so.”

“We need media coverage. We need to create paths from recreational to competitive paddling. And we need to host international competitions. If we can do these things, our sport and our athletes will have a very bright future.”

Team USA Trials results are available [here](#). A list of the athletes representing Team USA at the Pan American Games, Junior World Championships, and Senior World Championships is available [here](#).

ACA supports Whitewater Slalom

The ACA has set a goal of raising \$100,000 to support the development and promotion of whitewater slalom in the United States. The funding will directly support development initiatives with slalom paddling clubs around the country.

The ACA is glad to be able to support the athletes and clubs across the United States as they strive for excellence at the national and international levels.

Thank you to those who have already supported this cause. It is because of ACA members like you that our athletes will have the best opportunity to stand on top of the podium at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Please consider [supporting the program today.](#)



Friendly competition, fierce rivalry define 40th Annual Ted Houk Regatta

By Tyrean Martinson and Stephanie Schlitz

Twenty-one teams and over 265 paddlers – from beginners to athletes making a bid for the 2020 Olympics – competed at the 40th annual [Ted Houk Memorial Regatta](#) in June. Athletes traveled from across the continental U.S., Canada, and Hawaii to race on Green Lake in Seattle, weathering wind, rain, and sun to compete in the hotly contested 500m and 1000m races.

Recognized as the West Coast's largest flatwater sprint event, the regatta drew nearly as many athletes

as the 2018 Sprint National Championships, and host team [Seattle Canoe and Kayak Club](#) (SCKC) organized an army of volunteers to help. Event sponsor [Nelo USA](#) was also on site to provide [expert advice](#), demos, and lessons.

Many of this year's participants will go on to race in their countries' respective national championships. Elite juvenile, junior, and senior paddlers will compete at upcoming [International Canoe Federation](#) events, including the Olym-

pic Hopes Regatta, Junior Worlds, U23 Worlds, Open Worlds, and the Pan-American Games.

Junior men's kayaker [Jonas Ecker](#), who paddles with [Bellingham Canoe Kayak Sprint Team](#) and is a top contender for a national title at the 2019 Sprint National Championships in August, commented, "Ted Houk has always been one of my favorite events of the season. I love the friendly competition that builds when athletes from across North America come to compete."

Caddell, Anacleto-Black, Ecker, and Bodine paddle to victory in the Junior Men's K4 1000m. Schonna Lind-Schenk photo





Helene Fowler Houk and Doug Ritchie. Mrs. Houk holds the paddle presented to Ted Houk by the ACA. Stephanie Schlitz photo

“This year was by far the most competitive in recent memory, with a large number of past and present U.S. and Canadian National Team members on the start line,” he added.

“In my opinion,” Ecker continued, “Junior Men’s kayak had the most highly competitive field. Lining up were the entirety of the 2018 Olympic Hopes team for men’s kayak as well as a majority of the athletes selected for the 2019 Junior World Championships. All of us knew that no race would be an easy finish. In every single final, there was a solid group of top five paddlers, including myself, who vied for podium spots. In any race, it could have ended in any order.”

“A strong group of athletes,” finished Ecker, “always makes for the best competition.”

According to SCKC Coach Doug Ritchie, “This year’s attendance was the largest in memory. It is without a doubt,” he added, “the high level of competition that attracts racers from so far. SCKC’s own paddlers have been on the water five days a week – in addition to other training – in preparation.”

Ted Houk, a Seattle physician and avid paddler, started SCKC in 1969. The inaugural Ted Houk Regatta was held a decade later in 1979 and has continued every year since. In line with Ted Houk’s goal to [“use competitive paddling to interest young minds and bodies in health and the outdoors, and to strive for Olympic-level](#)

About the Contributors

Writer Tyrean Martinson is the parent of Trisha and Anna Martinson, who paddle for Gig Harbor Canoe & Kayak Racing Team.

Photographer Schonna Lind-Schenk is the parent of Vaughn Schenk, who paddles for Seattle Canoe and Kayak Club.

[skill](#),” the regatta encourages beginners to test their ability in racing boats and challenges world-class athletes to exceed personal bests.

Helene Fowler Houk, daughter of the event’s founder, watched the races with her children in celebration of her father’s legacy. Her daughter, Erika Houk Larimer – Ted Houk’s granddaughter – expressed the family’s appreciation to the paddling community. “This event means so much to us,” she remarked. “Thank you!”

For SCKC, “It’s an honor to host the regatta,” said Ritchie. “The continued efforts of local coaches, volunteers, and the ongoing support from the City of Seattle are what make this race possible. We look forward to number 50!”

A complete list of participating clubs and athletes, as well as race results, is available [here](#).



Ready, Set, Mark Your Calendars!

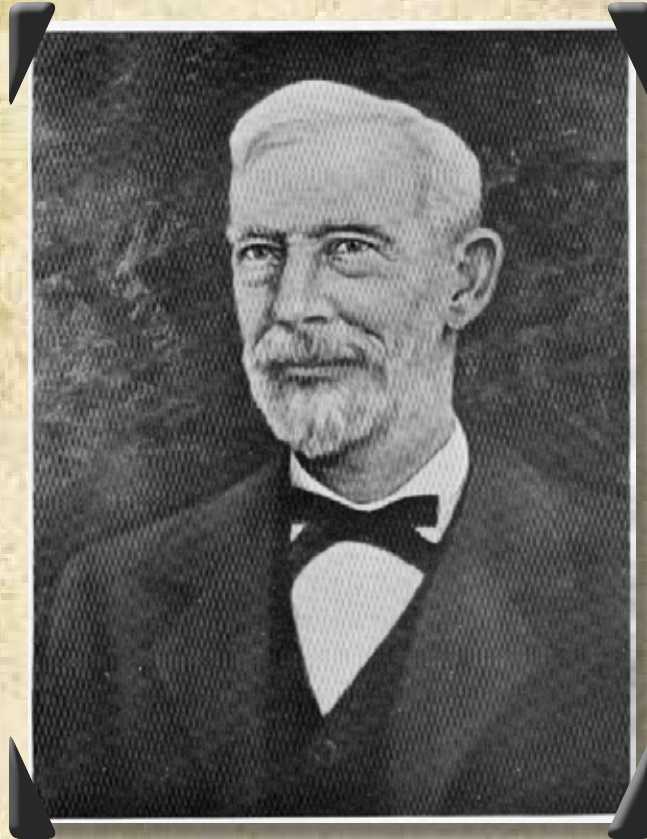
Don't miss these upcoming races...

(Click race name for more info)

July 13	Waterman Eco-Challenge Narragansett, Rhode Island
August 7-10	2019 ACA Sprint National Championships Gainesville, Georgia
August 10	LBTBP Pick Your Poison Five-Miler (plus 1.25-mile races) Brant Beach, New Jersey
August 17	Paddle Ocean Access SUP Race Around Goat Island Newport, Rhode Island
August 21-25	2019 ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships Szeged, Hungary
August 21-24	2019 ICF Paracanoe World Championships Szeged, Hungary
Aug. 30-Sept. 1	2019 ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup 4 Markkleeberg, Germany
September 6-8	2019 ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup Final Prague, Czech Republic
September 12-15	2019 ICF World Dragon Boat Club Crew Championships Kiev, Ukraine
September 12-15	2019 Paracanoe Paralympic Test Event Tokyo, Japan
September 25-29	2019 ICF Canoe Slalom World Championships La Seu d'Urgell, Spain
October 10-13	2019 Canoe Marathon Masters World Cup Shaoxing, China

Paddling History

Nathaniel Holmes Bishop



Nathaniel Bishop was an explorer, canoeist, writer, horticulturist and philanthropist. He is often referred to as the father of the ACA. He issued the invitation to canoeists from all over the U.S. and Canada to meet at Lake George in August 1880, when formal rules were adopted and officers elected for the organization.

*Each issue, we'll bring you an interesting paddling photo from the ACA archives.
We hope you enjoy these little glimpses of paddling history.*

*Making the World a Better Place to Paddle!
Since 1880.*

