

PADDLE

ACA | Canoe - Kayak - SUP - Raft - Rescue, Volume 2, Issue 2, March 2016

*Instructors of the Month
for February & March*

**How to Join the Fight
Against Marine Debris**

*News From Your ACA
State Directors*

**Whitewater Kayaking
in Bhutan**



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.



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Cover photo

Photographer: Danielle Keil
Location: Lake Pleasant, AZ

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Meet Your ACA Staff

QUESTION OF THE MONTH: What is your favorite paddlecraft and paddling venue?



Wade Blackwood
Executive Director

“Canoe. GA Barrier Islands.”



Candy Patten
Insurance Coordinator

“I love canoeing and exploring new places with our dog Saphira!”



Dave Burden
International Paddlesports Ambassador

“Kayaking to Chatham Vineyards on Virginia’s Eastern Shore.”



Katie Hansen
Membership Coordinator

“I’ll say any, since I haven’t really been out! I’m excited to make favorites.”



Shannon Green
Membership/Insurance Coordinator

“Canoeing in the Ni River Reservoir”



Christopher Stec
Chief Operating Officer

“SUP Surfing at La Jolla, CA.”



Louis Metzger
Public Policy Chief

“Canoeing in the Boundary Waters.”



Amy Ellis
State Director/Membership Coordinator

“Kayaking on the Rappahannock.”



Kelsey Bracewell
SEI Coordinator

“Kayak. Whitewater.”



Chris Raab
Stewardship Director

“SUP. ‘Da’ Jersey Shore.”



Marcel Bieg
Western States Outreach Director & Grant Manager

“Any kind of kayak. Any kind of water.”



Barbara Bendele
Office Manager

“Canoeing in the backwoods of northern Ontario.”



Catharine Lloyd
Communications Coordinator

“Kayaking anywhere in Algonquin Park!”



T.J. Turner
Education & Outreach Coordinator

“Bishop Boards Brushed Carbon Sub Ocho. Folly Beach, SC.”

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Photo by Luke Rovner

STEWARDSHIP



The Problem with Plastics

How to be a Part of the Marine Debris Solution

By Christopher Raab, ACA Stewardship Director

A typical grocery-shopping trip includes leaving a cart of groceries in the aisle while I walk back to the car to get the reusable shopping bags. Old habits die-hard, but it's worth the walk! The Ocean Conservancy reports that 4.8 million tons (MT) of plastics enter the oceans each year, and that figure may actually be as high as 12.7 MT. Much of this marine debris consists of plastics, including single use bags (Jambeck 2015).

Plastics in the ocean do not break down, instead they fragment because of UV exposure and weathering and become

micro plastics. Researchers have documented that plastic marine debris impacts more than 660 species, including human food sources (Cauwenberghe 2014). Whether there is a direct link between micro-plastics in the marine environments and human health is a topic still currently being researched; however, the effects of marine debris upon wildlife is evident. Some animals mistake plastic as food, while others become entangled in the debris, and still more lose critical habitat, such as coral reefs, to plastic marine debris (NOAA 2015).

Many aspects of the marine debris issue are still being researched, but two things are certain: marine debris comes from human sources and marine debris does not remain stationary. Water in the form of storm runoff, stream, rivers, and ocean currents can carry ordinary waste items amazing distances (Vegter 2014). Everyday waste on land will enter waterways and work its way to the ocean. However, ev-

ery level in the journey of marine debris can impact environmental health and beauty. This is why it is so important that we reduce marine debris at its source, the consumer.

We at the ACA encourage all paddlers to volunteer to protect our water resources. The ACA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have partnered through the ACA's Stream to Sea Initiative and Paddle Green

Cleanups to help reduce marine debris in our waters and to provide opportunities for paddlers to be stewardship practitioners.

Together we are organizing marine debris cleanups, providing volunteers with re-useable Paddle Green Bags for clean ups, and tracking marine debris data to improve our understanding of the issue.

NOAA suggests these small everyday steps to fight marine debris (NOAA 2015):

- Try to cut back on the amount of trash you produce
- Opt for reusable items instead of single-use products
- Recycle as much of your trash as you can
- Join local efforts to pick up trash
- Keep streets, sidewalks, parking lots, and storm drains free of trash—they can empty into our oceans and waterways

An easy way to reduce single use plastics is to use reusable shopping bags. They are inexpensive, durable, and hold a higher volume

“Researchers have documented that plastic marine debris impacts more than 66 species, including human food sources.”

than most single use bags. Many local governments have moved to ban the use of single use bags. Weather your area has banned bags or not, you can make a difference by voluntarily switching to reusable shopping bags. Aldo Leopold said, "Voluntary adherence to an ethical code elevates the self-respect of the sportsman, ... voluntary disregard of the code degenerates and depraves him (Leopold 1949).

If you are interested in organizing a marine debris cleanup, the ACA is sponsoring an [Earth Day Weekend cleanup](#). Hosts of an Earth Day cleanup can make a difference in their waterway and could win a weekend of instruction with an ACA Instructor trainer for their circle

of paddlers. Don't forget to use our reusable [Paddle Green Bags](#) for your clean up!

Jambeck. (2015). "Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean." Retrieved 2/5, 2016, from <http://www.oceanconservancy.org/our-work/marine-debris/science-paper-executive.pdf>.

Leopold, A. (1949). A Sand County Almanac. New York, Random House Publishing.

NOAA , (2015). "Reducing the Impact of Marine Debris" Retrieved 2/5, 2016, from <http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/marine-debris>

Van Cauwenberghe and Janssen (2014). "Microplastics in Bivalves cultured for human consumption". Environ. Pollut. 193, 65-70

AC Vegter, et al. "Global research priorities to mitigate plastic pollution impacts on marine wildlife", Endangered Species Research, 2014, 25, 3, 225



Young paddlers participating in a cleanup on the Rappahannock River in Fredericksburg, VA.

Paddle Green Spotlight:

ACA Puerto Rico & Caguas Private School

By Jessica del Valle, ACA Puerto Rico Executive Council Member



Students learn about marine debris in Gurabo, PR.

ACA-Puerto Rico started an education and conservation project of our waterways under the [ACA Stewardship Department](#). This project provided the opportunity to engage and integrate Science, Technology, Arts, Math, History and Values classes.

The program began on February 5, 2016 at Lake Carraizo in Gurabo, Puerto Rico. Each Friday going forward, we will paddle different waterways using our [ACA Paddle Green bags](#) to collect trash. At the end of the paddle, the students will scan the QR code to upload all the info to the ACA's [Track Trash website](#), and they will also have the chance to leave a positive message or drawing for others to read.

We would like to thank the Caguas Private School Administration Office for giving us the opportunity to make this project happen! Thanks also to the parents for their trust and

letting their children participate in this beautiful experience, and to each student of the eighth grade Group Rosa who showed a real commitment, worked hard, and collected over 200 pounds of waste that may have ended up on our beaches.

Students not only accumulated 6.5 hours of community work, they also took home an enriching experience and renewed love for nature. We hope to establish this program in other schools and make it an ongoing program for future generations.

Do you want to implement a Paddle Green program in your community? Connect with the [ACA Stewardship Department](#) today! We'll help you get started.



Students paint signs to inspire others to Paddle Green!

EDUCATION



Photo by Deana Kelley



We are proud to partner with Kokatat to bring you the
ACA Instructor of the Month program.

Do you know an instructor who deserves recognition?

[Nominate them today!](#)

February Instructor of the Month - Tina Fetten

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

Fetten: Everything about it! When I first started paddling, the most exciting and engaging aspects were the physicality of the sport and the beautiful bodies of water I was able to paddle all over NY State and along the east coast. After I earned my certification and began teaching others, it shifted to the community and how everyone was able to paddle at their own level but also as a whole group. It's so exciting to see paddlers of every level come together and build relationships on and off the water-- families, friends and pups all together on the water. It's also very rewarding to see someone who is initially full of fear and doubt and help them realize how strong they are, inside and out, while they discover paddling.

ACA: Approximately how much of your time do you dedicate to paddling (or thinking/training/dreaming about paddling)?

Fetten: After 2 years of recreational paddling on weekends and nights after work, I decided



to launch Southern Tier SUP that runs from May-October (based on Mother Nature) and then in pools in the winter. I also proposed a 2 credit Stand Up Paddle Course for the Health and Wellness Department at Binghamton University and it was accepted. So I am fortunate to teach 40 students a semester all the amazing benefits of Stand Up Paddling, SUP Yoga and SUP bootcamp while sharing my knowledge and experiences of SUP, water safety, adaptive SUP and traveling.

For the past 3 years I have also been a part of

the planning committee for the Cayuga Lakes SUP Cup, a SUP festival in the beautiful Finger-lakes of New York. So, now I think, train and dream of SUP 24 hours a day.

ACA: Can you please describe your activities surrounding SUP Yoga?

Fetten: 3 years ago I earned my first Yoga certification that allowed me to safely offer SUP Yoga on lakes and pools while I continued my yoga education. Each class is designed to meet the needs of all abilities; new to yoga and/or new to SUP.

I create an experience that allows everyone to rock their board at their own level. On the lake everyone is required to go through the SUP intro safety course so that they can safely paddle to the cove and handle any conditions that may arise throughout the session. Then each board is fitted with a 5-8 pound anchor off the back to hold the board in place and

tether their paddles while we practice. There is no experience like practicing on the water surrounded by nature with the occasional bald eagle soaring overhead.

For yoga in the pool, during the winter, we tether the nose and tail of the boards to the lane lines for practice. Though it does not compare to being on a lake, the pool has its own benefits for individuals that want to explore the feeling of balancing on the boards through the yoga practice without investing in the SUP intro safety course or being exposed to the outdoor elements on the lake. Many people have the notion that they will immediately fall in, and by joining me in the pool they realize, if they are fitted with the right equipment, they are stable and able to go through a modified yoga flow without falling in (even though, to me, falling in is the best part)!



March Instructor of the Month - Lynn Dominguez

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

Dominguez: This will have to be a two-part answer. First, as an Instructor Trainer for Canoe Touring I really enjoy the opportunity to mentor, teach, and develop new instructors. Seeing them develop increased confidence in their paddling skills and then being able to translate that skill into excellent teaching and modeling for their students keeps me coming back to instruction each year.

Second, each time that I stand at a put-in to start a kayak or canoe camping trip, I always ask myself why I don't make time to do this more often! It doesn't matter if it is a short, weekend trip on an inland lake or a full-on coastal kayak trip along a wilderness shoreline, it is always exciting to discover what is around the next bend. Balancing canoe and kayak instruction opportunities with trips can make for a very hectic summer and sometimes the trips lose out to the instruction obligations, but I'm always dreaming of another place to go.

ACA: Could you tell us about your interest in freestyle canoeing?

Dominguez: I was introduced to Freestyle canoeing by Tom McKenzie who also mentored me as I worked through the Instructor Trainer process. While he was in Michigan with me during my second Instructor Development Workshop he would show me something – a palm roll, a gimbal, or an axle but wouldn't let me in on the secret of how to do it. It was his



way of getting me involved with the Midwest Canoe Symposium by telling me I would have to come to the symposium to learn Freestyle. So I did, and I was hooked!

I had been a Canoe Touring Instructor at Level 2 since 1995 but I didn't really start Freestyle Canoe until 2006. Now I'm in my solo canoe practicing anytime I can get on the water – usually 2 or 3 times a week. At first I enjoyed Freestyle because it gave me a significant boost in control over my canoe. All of my strokes became more precise and I had much better 'feel' for the paddle and canoe's connection to the water. Learning the Freestyle maneuvers helped my skill development as a paddler in general and specifically as a Canoe Instructor.

Those same Freestyle skills also translated very well into Stand-Up Paddleboard and I've



started to experiment with Freestyle maneuvers on my SUP! Although I didn't start Freestyle Canoe with the intention of moving up to the Level 3 Freestyle Canoe Instructor certification, it seemed kind of inevitable! Then I continued beyond simply learning the maneuvers and two summers ago I started experimenting with Freestyle Canoe and music – those Interpretive Freestyle people can be very persuasive – so I will be doing more with music this year.

ACA: What paddling aspirations do you still have?

Dominguez: I'm not even close to mastering all of the canoe, kayak, and SUP skills I would like to have! I will be working on Freestyle Canoe in tandem canoes this summer to up-

grade my certification. In early April I will be traveling to Baja, Mexico for kayak surf camp and to do some ocean paddling. Plus my SUP skills need lots of work this summer! The Boundary Waters Canoe Wilderness Area or Georgian Bay are two trips I have in the planning stages. But most important is continuing to get more of my college students involved with paddlesports!

To learn more about previous Instructor of the Month award recipients, [click here](#).

Have You Tried the PADDLE READY app yet?

[Download the app for your iPhone](#)

[Download the app for your Android](#)

“Needed this for so long!”

-Margaret Roth

“This free app has some pretty cool features that I can see coming in quite handy. You can check tides, river and surf levels for locations where you are headed, as well as find the closest access to put-ins. Perhaps the coolest feature on the Paddle Ready app is the ability to file a float plan.”

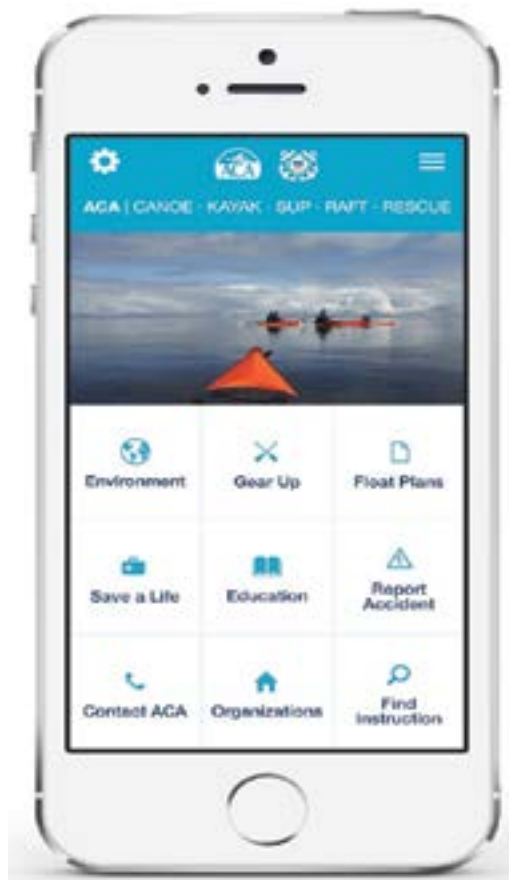
-Tee Clarkson, Richmond Times Dispatch

“I use this app multiple times throughout the week to see what’s going on at my favorite spots”

-Jay Yarborough

**“This app looks sick!
Just downloaded it and
cannot wait to use it!”**

-Alex Mauer



Surf Forecasting

Tide Forecasting

Course Reporting for ACA Instructors

Improved Float Plans

Access Points

Paddle Club Search

Improved ACA Instructor Search

ACA PRO SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT



Ready to launch into a new outdoor activity or advance in one you already enjoy? REI Outdoor School can get you on your way!

We offer beginning to advanced-level classes and outings in kayaking, rock climbing, mountain biking, navigation, snowshoeing, road cycling, backpacking and more. And you don't need a lot of equipment to participate: we provide kayaks, bikes, snowshoes, GPS units and other gear.

Most importantly, our professional instructors are committed to sharing their knowledge and ensuring an enjoyable experience for every participant. Come join us! For more information, [visit our website](#).



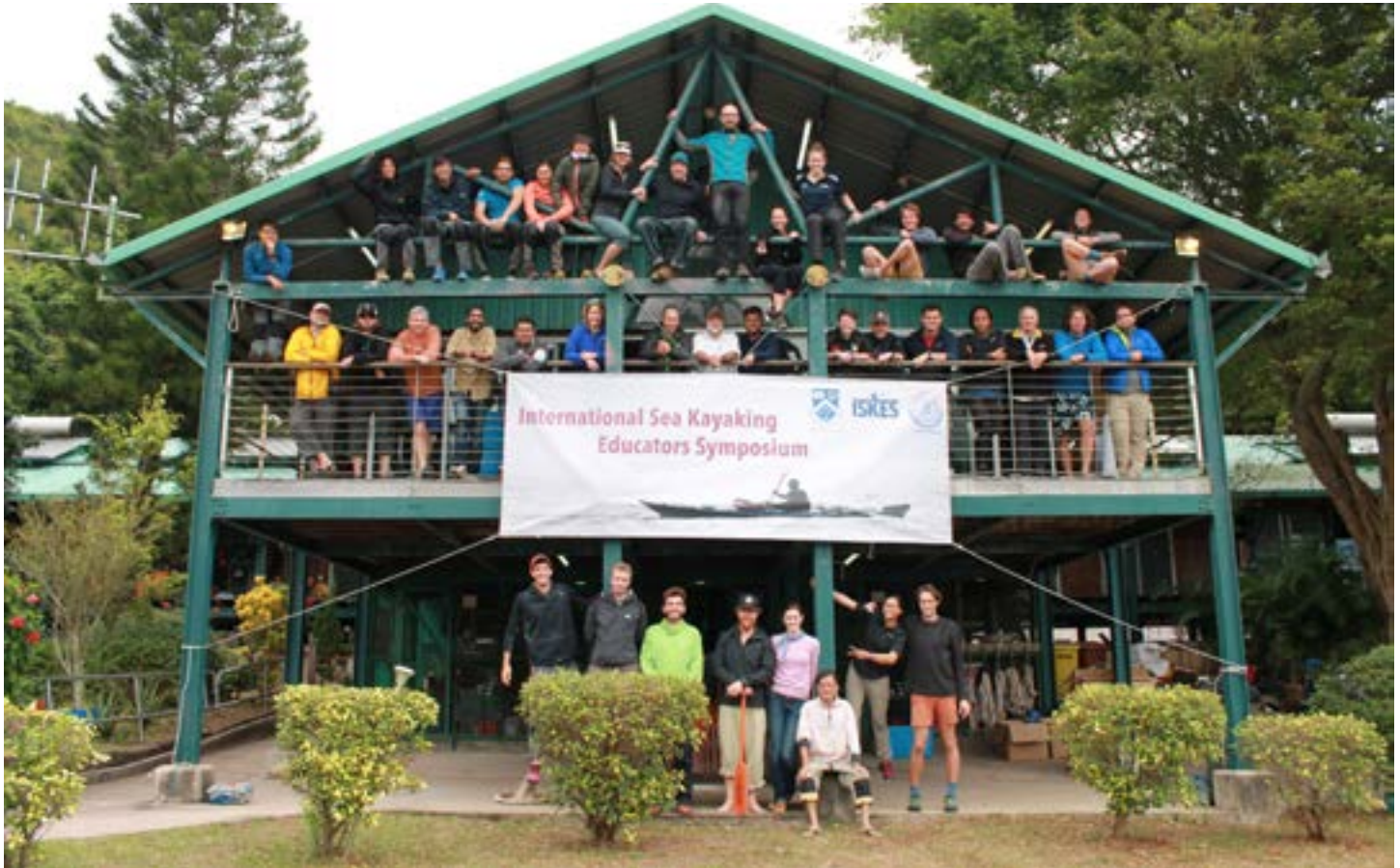
**OUTDOOR
SCHOOL**

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.

Adrift in the Backwater Harbors of Hong Kong

By Jake Taylor, ACA Instructor. Jake Taylor is an avid waterman who has been involved with the ACA for five years as a sea kayak instructor. He enjoys strong coffee, point breaks, and oystercatchers.



Beginnings

The International Sea Kayakers Education Symposium, ISKES for short, has an exceptional maritime ring to it. The idea sprang forth from a partnership between Monash University and Outward Bound Hong Kong, with the question of how can we use sea kayaking as a means to achieve greater educational benefits? When speaking of education, we are using the interpretations from Kurt Hahn, John Dewey, Confucius, and Plato, where education is the process of creating and developing positive citizens that are a benefit to their communities.

Upon my arrival to Hong Kong in January of 2015, I found out about the symposium to be held in December of that year. I was excited and privileged to be in attendance as well as given a chance to present. My mind was scouring a topic that would suit the aim of the symposium. It did not take very long for me to settle on the topic of Core Concepts in paddling, a student centered and playful approach to skill development. The influence of Carl Ladd, Osprey Sea Kayak Adventures, and Todd Wright, St. Michael's College Wilderness Program, over the year prior to my move to Hong Kong, has been very influential

on my approach to teaching and developing paddlers.

Paddling to the symposium at Wong Wan Chau

Stroke after stroke, my blade slices the water as I slowly but surely make steady progress along a steep, rocky coastline. As I continue to paddle against constant force five winds, knowing that once I pass the next rocky headland things will be bigger, much bigger. It isn't very often that I have the time or reason to paddle along this section of Hong Kong coastline. By far, it is the most beautiful and rugged section. Steep cliffs of rhyolitic columns, a very rare formation, allow the swell to double up in size as the energy is reflected off the walls. In certain areas, the pounding of the surf has carved out sea caves and arches. The sound of the waves booming from the walls and round stones cascading over one another echo in my mind.

The rhythm of my blade dipping in and out of the water begins to align with my boat's up and down movements with the swell. I feel as if my breathing and heart rate begin to coalesce, so that all of my movements and being are in time. From my periphery I catch a glimpse of a white-bellied sea eagle soaring above the seas searching for fish. At this moment I truly feel alive and living in the present. My mind is not scouring over endless to do lists, things forgotten from yesterday, or planning for future events. Every muscle, cell, nerve within my body feels awakened and ready.

Upon entering Mirs Bay, the conditions begin to wane as the farther headlands of mainland China shield the local waters near Wong Wan Chau. It is a beautiful place where the volcanic

rock becomes a deep red of sedimentary origins. With each forward stroke, my mind turns more towards the symposium and my session that will be on the first day. I wonder who some of the delegates will be flying in from Europe, North America, and Australasia. As I arrive at dusk the evening before the symposium, I roll out my mat and sleeping bag overlooking the lush green hill sides that extend all of the way to the water.

Running the Session

It's always difficult trying to take a thought, an idea, a concept, from your mind and make it relevant and useful for someone else. You don't want to directly transplant it from your mind to theirs, since it's purpose will just be lost in due time. It makes it even harder when you are doing this for a group of peers, who in some cases may be more knowledgeable and experienced in the field than yourself. Confidence and humility are two traits that need to be balanced to achieve success when undertaking such an endeavor.

Now, presenting at an innovative symposium that looks to broaden the realm of sea kayaking beyond the standard skills and drills, I asked myself why did I choose to conduct a practical skills session? Can the act of teaching technical skills be relevant to the deeper notions of education? A key element for working with youth today, especially in high-density urban communities, is the lack of proprioceptive sense from sedentary lifestyles. Angela Hanscom, founder of Timbernook, has been assisting US schools understand and work to resolve this issue thru outdoor activities. Another element is the decrease, and at times absence, of play with youth and adults. According to psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott, play is essential in creativity and utilizing the whole

personality, which leads to better self-awareness. The last component I attached was the focus on self-mastery of a skill. Anecdotes are not needed to relay the individual benefits of skill mastery, however it is important to note the words of Tim Gallway for those instructing skills, "...remember that it is the experience that teaches you, not the instruction." Teaching sea kayaking, using a core concept approach, can allow you to transfer these skills and attributes on top of the intended purpose of learning to paddle.

For my actual session, brief introductions were conducted along with some background evidence for my claims. I immediately went to work establishing rapport and setting a fun and focused tone. It doesn't matter how great you are if the people you have in a class, course, or trip are unable to form any sense of bond with you. From there, getting on the water as quickly and safely as possible is always a priority. Once out on the water, I set out to provide activities and sessions that would

highlight the core concepts in action. In some cases, an outlandish method. I always find that the more odd and silly the approach, the more likely it will be remembered and practiced. Directing people paddling with blindfolds by using their body rotation. Working on top hand position and balance with someone sitting just behind you on the deck of your kayak. The laughter was contagious. Eventually, as the sun settled behind the hillsides, the time came to depart the water.

The beauty of the Core Concepts, is that it is able to be utilized from the beginner to the advanced paddler. It looks to create an understanding of how to be an efficient paddler using your body, your boat, and your blade. Most of those in attendance at my session have utilized a similar approach thru years of instruction. From the questions and borrowing of my visuals, I felt I was able to provide an understanding that there is potential for deeper educational benefits even thru skills training.

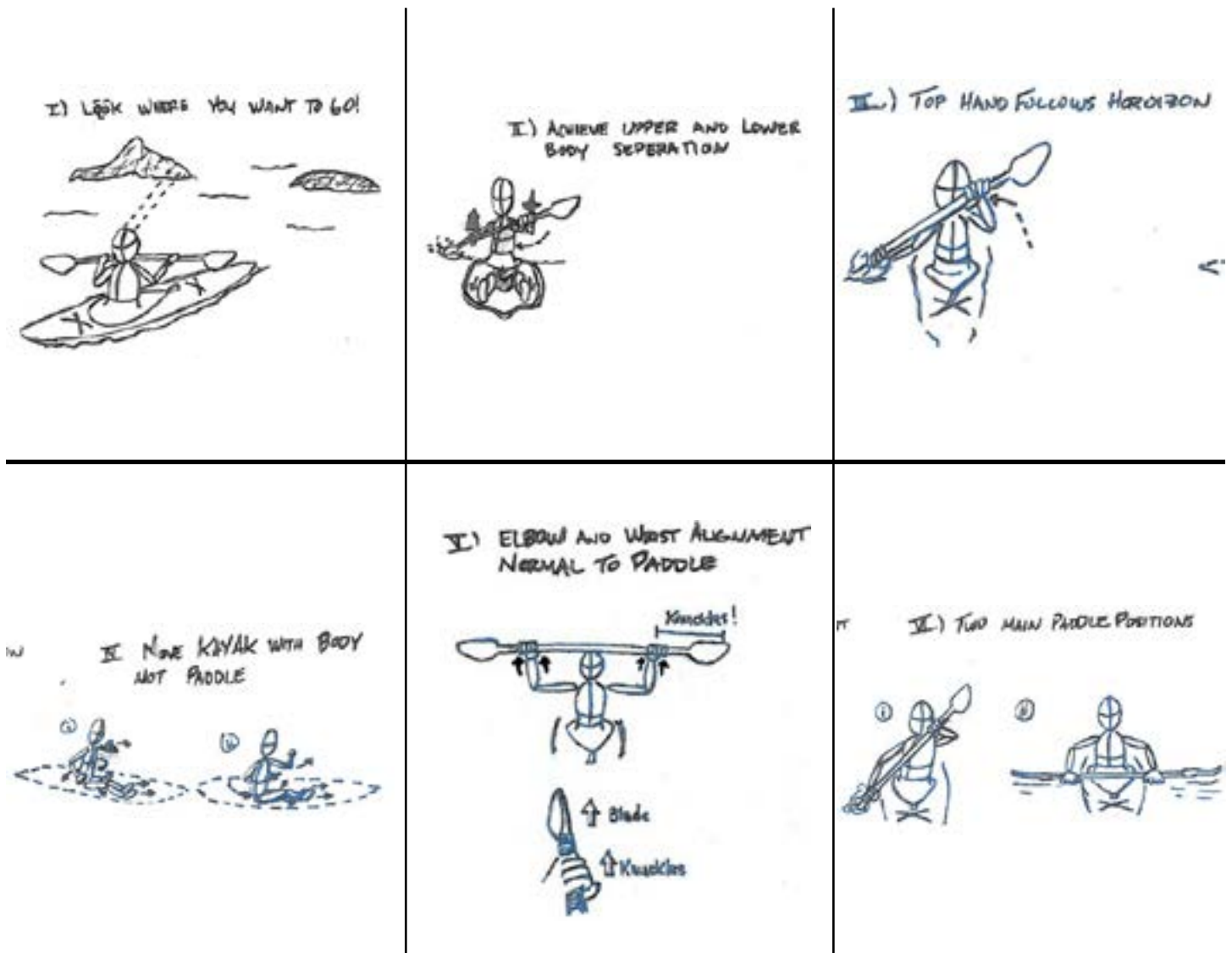


Potential

At the closure of the symposium, a meeting was tabled to discuss the personal findings and developments from the several days spent at Wong Wan Chau and Double Haven Bay. There was an excited, yet somber tone over the group as the topics rearose from slow adventures, creating a sense of place, and unique ways to reduce our impact on the ocean. A prospectus was tentatively discussed for the next symposium in the south-

ern hemisphere's Autumn of 2018. The base location for the event will be Port Albert on the Southern Australian coast. Forty sand barrier islands east of Wilsons Promontory, known as Nooramunga, will host day and overnight paddles. This special group of intertidal islands are home to some of the worlds longest migrating birds, rare species of orchid, and rich aboriginal and settler histories. Go to www.ISKES.org for up to date information.

Core Concept drawings by Jake Taylor, used as part of his session at the symposium:



Paddle Tails

Reflections on people and dogs
who find balance on the water

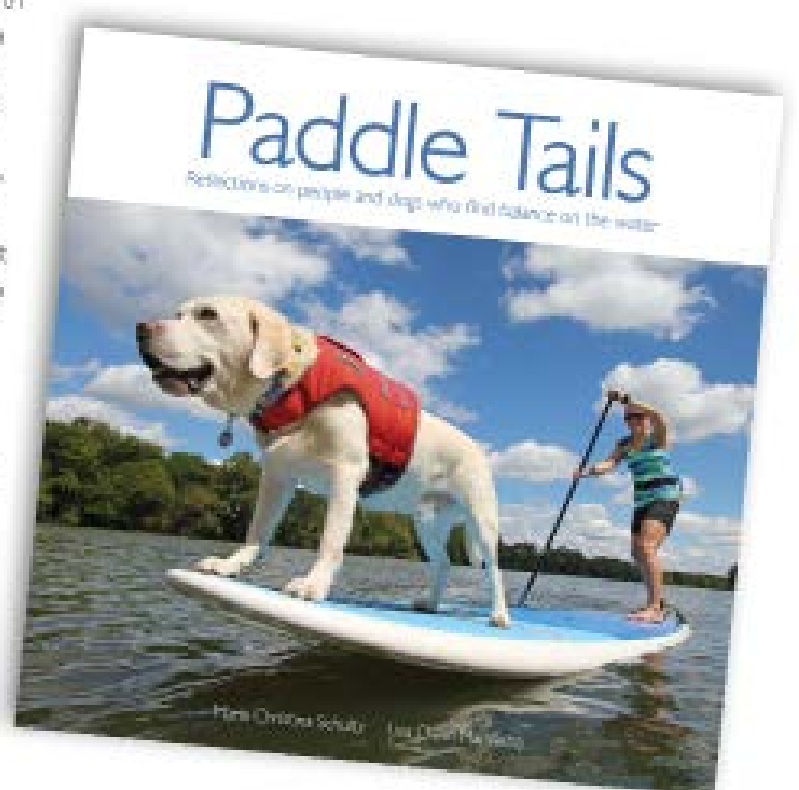


Paddle Tails, a new book by Maria Christina Schultz,
author of *How to SUP With Your Pup*, and Lisa Chinn Marvashti.

Drawn from interviews, meetings, and play dates with dog owners who love to get out on the water with their pets, *Paddle Tails* explores the incredible bond that happens between canine and human on rivers and ponds, and in the wide-open ocean. Some people call it healing. Some say it's changed the way they look at the world. For some, it just makes the load they carry through life a little bit lighter. We hit the road, from Virginia to Florida, from New York to Nevada, to capture their stories.

Meet Finnigin, a shaggy goldenoodle who truly believes he's just one of the kids; Sadie, a boxer who helps her human mom deal with some pretty heavy stuff; Aja, a wound-up chocolate Lab with a fondness for fishing; and more. We even caught up with a sportsman and his Newfoundland, who looks more like a bear than a dog when they paddle together in the Adriatic Sea.

Sometimes the person saved the dog. Sometimes the dog saved the person. Sometimes they're just loving their lives together, especially on the water. Centered on paddle-boarders, canoeists, kayakers, and fishermen, *Paddle Tails* gives you a little of each.



Available in print early 2016 at the ACA e-store

SAVE THE DATES



Look for the ACA booth at...



EAST COAST paddlesports & outdoor FESTIVAL

The ACA will be sponsoring the kids' cardboard canoe race this year!



<https://www.ccprc.com/1542/Charleston-Outdoor-Fest>

Important update for ACA Instructor Trainers

Currently certified ACA Instructors seeking to begin or continue the Instructor Trainer (IT) Application process should check out a **new resource on the ACA website**:

[How to Become an IT](#)

This webpage outlines the revised process, provides registration and application forms, and answers a lot of basic questions about the role and responsibilities of becoming an ACA Instructor Trainer.

Have more questions? Contact the SEI Department at sei@americancanoe.org.

ADAPTIVE



*Paddler Elaine Houston with her service dog Oak III;
photo by Larry Gioia of Dynamic Paddlers.*

Update on Adaptive Grants

The ACA recently selected the following six clubs as recipients of the [Craig H. Neilsen Foundation](#).

Each grant recipient will receive funding to

start or enhance their adaptive programs, and learn how to organize a seasonal or year round adaptive program for their community.



[Stay tuned for more updates on these projects!](#)



News Near You



STATE-BY-STATE

News delivered directly from [ACA State Directors](#) across the USA

Alabama

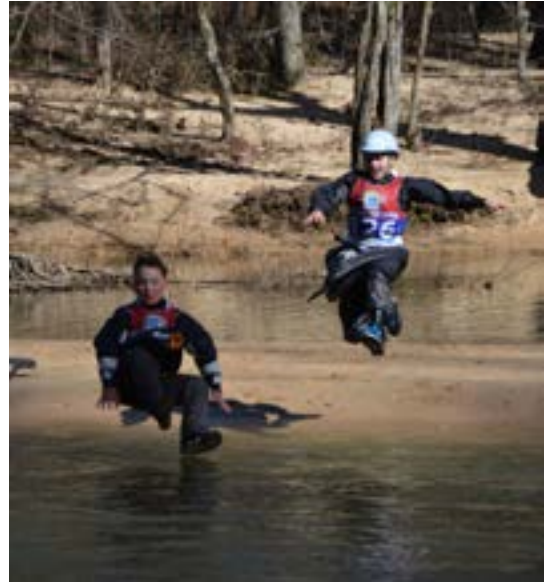
It is canoe and kayak slalom race season in Alabama and the first race, the Locust Fork Invitational, was held on Feb. 5-6. The second race will be on the Mulberry Fork on March 5-6, and the last race, the Locust Fork Classic will be March 19-20. For details visit Alabamacupraces.com. We had visitors from across the southeast including student organizations from Georgia, University of Alabama, UAB and the Nantahala Racing Club. There were more than 120 starts in the first race and we are looking for even more at the next two races.

Contact: Helen Todd

AlStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Alaska

As our mild winter wears on, we're all looking forward to spring (there's flowers in Sitka already and daffodil leaves are up in Kodiak), plans for spring courses are percolating, and summer trips and expeditions loom on all our minds. The new Coastal trip leader courses at level 3 and 4 are likely to get a work out in



Testing out drysuits. Locust Fork Invitational, AL.

Alaska this spring; we're getting inquiries from new tour companies that want their guides to receive trip leader training and assessments.

Contact: Tom Pogson

AkStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Arizona

Check out our newest ACA Outfitter, Clarkdale Paddle Co! If you're looking to get out and paddle along the Verde River, the owners



Tandem touring is a popular pursuit in Alaska. Anton Larsen Bay, Kodiak, Alaska.

Bobby and Scott definitely know where to go! Visit them at www.clarkdalepaddle.com. Looking for something fun this spring? Why not kick off the paddling year with a race along the Verde River!! The Verde River Runoff Race is a great event for paddlers of all skill levels. For more information, visit: <http://vrvno.org/events/verde-river-runoff/>
Contact: Danielle Keil
AZStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Arkansas

“Race the Falls” on the Cossatot River was a huge success for the second year in a row. This ACA race, directly by Doug Webber and Tom Burroughs, continues to grow and attract competitors from multiple states. The 2017 race will take place on the first weekend in January where the Cossatot River has between 3’ & 6’ of water. See the Arkansas Canoe Club, a Paddle Club of America, website for all details.
Contact: Tom Burroughs
AKStateDirector@americancanoe.net

California

California paddlers are off to a great year: The Paddle Golden Gate event had glorious blue-sky weather for sea-kayaking, rock-gardening, and more. Recent storms have put enough snow on the mountains to ensure a reasonably good whitewater year! Looking ahead, the Davenport Surf Competition is approaching quickly, like a big swell moving towards the beach!
Contact: Alexander Morris
CaStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Colorado

Attended Rocky Mountain Sea Kayak Club Winter Bash and spoke briefly about ACA and all the benefits to Paddle America Clubs. They had a great potluck feast on a cold and

snowy afternoon on January 31. Staffed the ACA booth at the Colorado River Outfitters Association Annual Conference and trade show. Several outfitters were interested in checking out ACA insurance and several members spoke about how they couldn’t run their programs without ACA and the insurance program.
Contact: Gregory Skomp
CoStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Florida

The ACA Florida Exec. Council is continuing to work on behalf of the ACA Florida membership with a focus on promotion of paddler access and safety throughout the state. The elected ACA Florida officers are engaging with state and local governments in establishing public policies that impact the paddling community. In addition, the ACA in Florida puts a premium on ACA certified instruction and paddling skills courses. To learn more about courses offered in Florida [click here](#).
Contact: Peggy Phillips
FLStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Idaho

As winter begins to release its hold on us here in Idaho, many are looking forward to a great spring and summer of paddling. Take this opportunity to check your safety gear this winter before you get on the water: lifejackets, helmets, and throw ropes all have a lifespan! Also, if you’re interested in helping out by promoting ACA projects, please reach out to me! My term will be ending in a year, and we need to keep pursuing the ACA’s mission here in Idaho: idstatedirector@americancanoe.net. See you on the river (and lakes!).
Contact: Elliot Jacobs
IdStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Louisiana

On April 2, Louisiana Delta adventures, in association with the ACA and Louisiana State Parks, will present a day-long birding and paddling event at Chemin A Haut State Park, near Bastrop, LA. The event will be led by local birder John Dillon who also does ornithological field surveys for Louisiana State University and the U.S. Geological Survey. For additional information please visit www.louisianadelta-adventures.com or call 318 - 283-0812.

Contact: Ben Sandmel

LaStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Missouri

49th Annual Missouri Whitewater Championships take place March 19-20, 2016, St. Francis River (Class II – III), Millstream Gardens Conservation Area, Fredericktown, MO. Register at <http://missouriwhitewater.org/competition/mwc/>. If you cannot find the information you need, contact the Race Director at racedirector@missouriwhitewater.com. For info on volunteering, contact the Volunteer Coordinator at racevolunteer@missouriwhitewater.org.

Contact: Dave Haessig

MoStateDirector@americancanoe.net

New Jersey

Hello NJ paddlers! Your new executive team, Kerry Pflugh, Lee Murray, John Pagani, Robyn Lowenthal and Jason Parker are very excited to be on board. We have big plans for some fun activities this year. Look for information soon about a June paddling sport event that will include a SUP race. We hope all our members, whether you are a sea kayaker, canoeist, whitewater paddler, angler or SUPer, come out for the event.

Contact: Kerry Pflugh

NJStateDirector@americancanoe.net

New York

We are gearing up for lots of paddling events all over New York State this season - check us out on Facebook to keep up to date! New York has the largest ACA membership in the country and we know there are members out there who would like to be more involved in paddling issues in YOUR great state of New York! We are looking for volunteers to help council members with events, instruction and state park activities. We particularly need someone to help coordinate events. Please contact the NY State Director to volunteer.

Contact: Liane Amaral

NyStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Ohio

The 48th Annual Vermilion River Race is scheduled for April 3, 2016. This is a traditional kickoff paddling event for many Northern Ohio paddlers. They added a SUP division this year so no excuses. If you don't have cold weather gear still come on out and enjoy a fun morning with fellow paddlers and connecting with old and new friends.

Contact: Ryan Pepper

OhStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania boaters are hardy. The only things that stop them are icy waterways or inaccessible takeouts. Roll sessions are very popular this time of year, and we're seeing pools filled with beginning boaters and experts all eagerly awaiting spring!

Contact: Steve Barber

PaStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Puerto Rico

The ACA met with multiple boating related agencies in Puerto Rico at the Office of Nautical Tourism on February 10 to discuss first steps in ways to educate paddlers and

tourists on the island about the benefits and risks associated with kayaking and stand up paddleboarding. ACA State Director Omar Ramos was instrumental in organizing this introductory meeting which brought together the USCG Sector San Juan, the Boating Law Administrator's office, representatives from DNR, the Office of Nautical Tourism, the Navigation Office, and the USCG Auxiliary. Members of the Puerto Rico Executive Council, Jessica del Valle and Jorge Lebron were also in attendance.

Contact: Omar Ramos

PRStateDirector@americancanoe.net

South Carolina

ACA South Carolina kicked off 2016 by sponsoring the 16th Annual Millrace Massacre and Iceman Championships in Columbia, SC. We are currently planning a Level 1 and Level 2 Instructor Update and Symposium to be held in Rock Hill, SC on September 9-11, 2016.

Contact: Ethan Talley, Kyle Thomas

SCStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Washington

Two events coming up. On March 5, the Collegiate Whitewater Open on the Kalama River, Kalama, Washington. On March 12, the Upper Wind River Festival in Carson, Washington.

Contact: Patrick Steehler

WASStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Wisconsin

The Northeast Wisconsin Paddlers (NEWP) 2016 Annual Meeting on January 30 at Legends in De Pere drew 60 people for a business meeting, a fine meal, and fellowship. At the meeting, John Bacon described efforts to have the chain of islands between the tip of Wisconsin's Door Peninsula and the Garden Peninsula in Upper Michigan declared the Grand Traverse Islands National Lakeshore. He



ACA advocates for Safe Boating in Puerto Rico.

described the wealth of lighthouses and historical areas in the island chain and the benefit of uniting recreational areas in two states.

<http://www.GrandTraverseIslands.com>

Contact: Thomas Schrader

WiStateDirector@americancanoe.net

As a national organization, it can be difficult to know about all the paddling issues in every state. That's where the [ACA State Director Program](#) comes in! This volunteer program is designed to close the gap between paddlers on the ground (and water) and the ACA.

If you want to get involved, [reach out](#) to your local ACA State Director, and start improving stewardship, education, and competition in your state today.

For additional information on the ACA State Director Program, please contact Amy Ellis at aellis@americancanoe.org.

MEMBERSHIP



ACA Member Benefit!



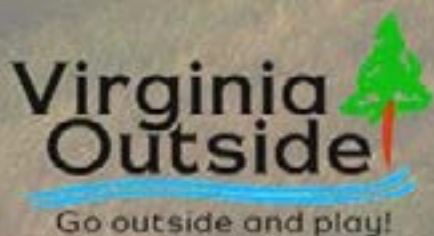
A pair of black Hobie Polarized sunglasses with blue-tinted lenses is resting on a wooden dock. The sunglasses have "HOBIE" printed on the left temple. A teal circular logo is overlaid on the image, featuring the word "Hobie" in a white script font, "POLARIZED" in a white sans-serif font below it, and "DANA POINT, CA | SINCE 1950" in a smaller white sans-serif font at the bottom of the circle. At the bottom of the image, a teal banner contains the text "RECEIVE 20% OFF YOUR HOBIES USING CODE ACA2016" in white, and the ACA logo is in the bottom right corner of the banner.

RECEIVE 20% OFF YOUR HOBIES
USING CODE ACA2016



ACA members,
visit www.hobiepolarized.com and enter promo code
"ACA2016" to receive 20% off your purchase!

ACA Outfitter, Livery & Guide Spotlight



PADDLE FISH

After specializing in youth fishing and kayak camps in Virginia for the last 11 years, we are excited about forming a partnership with ACA to take our programs at [Virginia Outside](#) to the next level under a new name, [Paddle Fish](#).

We believe a kid, a kayak, and a fishing rod sets the stage for a lifetime of activity and understanding of the natural world around them. Our campers learn not only paddling and fishing, but also the threats to both fish and the waters we visit.

Our kayak fishing programs are designed to both teach the beginner kayak angler the skills necessary to be safe and productive on the water as well as to engage the more seasoned

young paddler and angler in new skills and techniques on the water.

With a staff of ACA trained instructors, we will continue to explore the lakes and rivers of Virginia, from the headwaters in the mountains to the Chesapeake Bay, while also embarking on a new journey to the Berkshires region of Massachusetts with much more to follow in the future.

For more information on what we do, visit <http://paddle.fish> or contact Tee Clarkson at tsclarkson@paddle.fish or 804-687-1869.

Find an ACA outfitter near you using our handy [new search tool!](#)

MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



“Top water morning. On this day we launched around 8 am to one of my favorite launches in Galveston Texas, near Louis Bait camp off HWY 45. The wind was favorable for us so I decided to use a Mirrorlure top water she dog. Fishing parallel on a marsh line I was able to catch 4 reds along this stretch of marsh grass. This guy was the biggest at 27”. Fun day in the sun.”

-Tony Keill

Want to see your photo here? Submit your photos to ACA Communications Coordinator, Catharine Lloyd at clloyd@americancanoe.org for a chance to be featured.

The Boundary Waters Need Your Help

By Rachel Garwin, Policy Director of [Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters](#)



Photo by Dave Freeman

The 1.1-million-acre Boundary Waters adjoins with Canada's 1.2-million-acre Quetico Provincial Park to provide a stunning example of a large, intact ecosystem laced with canoe and kayak routes. It supports iconic wildlife like black bear, wolves, moose, bald eagles, and loons. The wilderness also supports people, whether they only visit once or have lived alongside the wilderness for years. Generations have visited the Boundary Waters and other wilderness areas in search of healing, self-knowledge, challenge and personal development.

It can be somewhat shocking, then, to consider the environmental, recreational, and economic impacts of building sulfide-ore copper mines on the edge of the wilderness. Even worse, these proposed mines would be located directly upstream from the Boundary Waters and Quetico. This type of mining has a longstanding [track record of water pollution](#), and routine spills of toxic materials, chemicals and industrial wastewater

are common at these types of mines, even in the United States. In addition to potential water pollution, the proposed underground mine would harm the surrounding landscape through infrastructure footprints, wildlife corridor disruptions, traffic, noise, dust and light. These are only a few of the impacts that the Boundary Waters and the people it supports would experience, of course.

In the face of these threats, the Campaign to Save the Boundary Waters is committed to

Paddlers know Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness as some of the best lakeland paddling in the world. People from across the country and across the world care about the Boundary Waters, especially since it is so accessible to people of a range of abilities, ages, and backgrounds. We routinely hear stories from people we meet all across the country how their first meaningful canoeing trip, their first extended wilderness trip, or the first time they went camping with their family happened in the Boundary Waters.

raising the voices of people who believe the Boundary Waters is too important to risk to sulfide-ore copper mining. Through adventure advocacy efforts like the Paddle to DC, Bike Tour to Save the Boundary Waters, and the ongoing [Year in the Wilderness](#), people who depend on the wilderness have engaged with thousands of people. To date, over 100,000 people have taken at least one action demanding permanent protection of the Boundary Waters.

2016 will be a big year for the Boundary Waters and Quetico. We hope that the US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management collect robust science and public input about whether sulfide-ore copper mining is

an appropriate activity adjacent to the nation's most popular wilderness. Guided by the principles that the Boundary Waters and Quetico are special and beloved places, that sulfide-ore copper mining is a toxic and risky industry, and that future generations deserve to inherit a wilderness as healthy and life-giving as it is today, we will push tirelessly for its permanent protection. We hope you will join the cause by [signing this petition](#) to federal decisionmakers.

To get informed about, and involved with, policy matters affecting paddlers across the country, contact our [Public Policy Chief](#).



Photo by Dave Freeman

COMPETITION

A close-up photograph of a young person wearing a red helmet with 'KRS' on it, a blue jacket, and a red life vest. They are holding a black paddle and are in a red kayak, navigating through white water rapids. The person has a focused expression and is looking slightly to the side. The background is filled with splashing water.

*Photo by Mike Hammond, creator
of Calusa Kids Racing Program*

Ready, Set, Mark Your Calendars!

Don't miss these upcoming races...
(click race name for more info)

Mar 12, 2016

Buffalo Bayou Partnership Regatta
Houston, Texas

April 2, 2016

Gig Harbor Paddlers Cup
Gig Harbor, Washington

May 14, 2016

Bay Bridge Paddle
Annapolis, Maryland

May 14, 2016

CCA Potomac Downriver Race
Potomac, Maryland

June 4, 2016

36th Annual GRWCR
Fredericksburg, Virginia

[CLICK HERE](#) to see the full ACA competition event calendar

USA Canoe/Kayak Update

By Aaron Mann, Director of Communications, USA Canoe/Kayak

Excitement and drama are in the air in the world of Olympic/Paralympic paddlesport as the country's best prepare to lay it all on the line for the chance to represent the U.S. at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil.

Thus far, the U.S. has only secured Olympic quota slots for slalom, but sprint and paracanoe will each have one more opportunity to qualify slots this spring. For the sprint team, they will look to earn Olympic berths in Gainesville, Georgia at the 2016 Pan American Championships, which will serve as the continental Olympic qualification event for the Americas.

Athletes should be familiar with the Pan American Championships venue as it will also be used for their National Team Trials. Meanwhile, the paracanoe team sets their sights on qualifying at the 2016 ICF Paracanoe World Championships in Duisburg, Germany. A top-three finish at this event is needed to earn a spot at the Paralympics.

For slalom, the Olympic selection process began last year at the 2015 ICF Canoe Slalom World Championships. The selection process will conclude after Olympic Team Trials events in Charlotte, North Carolina and Oklahoma

City, Oklahoma. At this point in the game, only Michal Smolen in K1 and Casey Eichfeld in C1 have point advantages coming into the domestic Olympic Team Trials competitions.



Michal Smolen, 2016 Aussie Open

Events to Watch For:

- USA Canoe/Kayak Slalom Olympic Team Trials Event 1 - April 8-9 at the US National Whitewater Center in Charlotte, NC
- U.S. Junior National Slalom Team Trials - April 16-17 at the US National Whitewater Center in Charlotte, NC
- USA Canoe/Kayak Sprint National Team Trials - April 29-30 at the Lake Lanier Olympic Venue in Gainesville, GA
- USA Canoe/Kayak Slalom Olympic Team Trials Event 2 - May 7-8 in Oklahoma City, OK
- 2016 Pan American Championships - May 19-22 at the Lake Lanier Olympic Venue in Gainesville, GA

INTERNATIONAL



Whitewater Kayaking in Bhutan

By Ben Morton, ACA Instructor Trainer Educator



Over the past two years, I have been fortunate enough to work with and be mentored by Mary and Phil DeRiemer. The three of us lead instructional based multi-day whitewater kayak trips on amazing rivers within the U.S. and abroad. Some of these rivers include the Lower Owyhee, Colorado River (Grand Canyon), Middle Fork of the Salmon River, Main Salmon, Rogue River, and amazing rivers throughout Ecuador and Bhutan. It was last summer, during one of our Middle Fork of the Salmon kayak trips, when Phil mentioned to me that he was planning on leading a Class IV-IV+ trip in Bhutan during November, which included a first descent of a remote river in the eastern reaches of Bhutan.

Phil and Mary have been guiding trips in Bhutan since the early 2000's, and they have both experienced many first descents throughout the country. The trip he was planning for November, he said, would likely be the most extensive whitewater kayak trip that he has ever led in Bhutan. So when Phil asked if I

would like to come along and help guide the trip, I did not hesitate to say yes.

Four months after Phil first mentioned the trip to me, I was landing in Paro, Bhutan after 36 hours of flights and layovers (the DeRiemer's recommend a few day layover in Bangkok or Delhi to break up the travel, but I did not have time in my schedule). I arrived a couple of days early and met up with a few long time friends of the DeRiemers to get out on the river and paddle for a day before catching up with Phil, Thilay (another guide on the trip, from Bhutan), and our guests. The day out on the Paro Chu (Chu translates to "river" in Bhutanese) before meeting up with my crew was great. The upper section of the river is a nice "warm up" of class II-III, but once we progressed past the confluence of the Wang Chu things definitely picked up. Below the confluence, the canyon walls got steeper, the water volume doubled, and the rapids got long and complex. This first day of paddling in Bhutan set the tone for what would become an amaz-

ing paddling and cultural trip through Bhutan.

Once I met up with my crew, it was off to the races with a busy itinerary full of traveling, paddling different rivers, and visiting some incredible cultural sights. Throughout the trip we slowly progressed from Paro (on the western side of Bhutan) to Monggar (on the eastern side of the country). As we traveled across Bhutan, we paddled stunningly beautiful rivers that were class III+,IV-IV+. These rivers included the following:

Paro Chu: This is the river I had paddled before I met up with my crew. Starting as class II-III, it flows right through the town of Paro, before the confluence with the Wang Chu, which then in turn flows into a committing, fun class of IV-IV+ run.

Upper Thimphu Chu (upstream of the confluence with the Paro Chu): This was a fun and relatively mellow class III-III+ river. With stunning scenery, it parallels a major road going into Thimphu City, but somehow still manages to feel very remote.

Lower Dang Chu: Offered consistent technical class III+-IV. Enormously fun and reminded me



of the Upper Yough in Maryland.

Mo Chu & Po Chu: Both of these rivers were a stunning color of aqua blue and are both in the Phunaka Valley. Sharing many similar characteristics, both runs carry more volume than any of the rivers we had been on up to this point and had large, fun rapids.

Trongsa Chhu:

"Ema Datshi Section" - While this section of river took over 3 hours of arduous driving to get to from Trongsa, it was absolutely worth it! Fantastic Class IV-IV+ whitewater surrounded by lush jungle, with monkeys swinging from tree to tree on both sides of the river.

"Upper Trongsa" - We decided to paddle a short section of the Upper Trongsa as a bit of a "recovery day" from the long day we previously had and the long drive later that day. The river was mostly consistent class III-III+, which was a great break from the more challenging whitewater we had been paddling up to that point.

Upper Chamkhar Chhu: This was the coldest river we paddled during our trip in Bhutan. Where we kayaked, the Chamkhar Chhu was approximately at 8,000 ft of elevation. As we paddled consistent technical class IV whitewater, we caught the attention of locals from

the small villages nearby, who gathered and waved as we paddled by.

“Middle” Kuri Chhu: As we drove towards Monggar we decided to make a quick stop and paddle “Middle” Kuri Chhu from the bridge down to the dam. This section only offered four or so rapids before the river became flat (above the dam). I found it really fun as the volume of the river made the rapids feel like some of the larger rapids on the New River Gorge; just good plain fun.

“Lower” Kuri Chu into Dangme Chu: This section of river had not been kayaked up to this point. It is hard to describe this section without going into a completely different article, but this is what I will say; The Lower Kuri Chhu offers “clean” and fun Class IV-IV+ whitewater; stunning cliff walls hundreds of feet high at times; and is extremely committing due to its remoteness and lack of accessibility through the canyon. For more specific information about our first descent of the Lower Kuri Chhu please check out Phil DeRiemer’s write up: <https://adventurekayaking.wordpress.com/>

On our last night, as we packed our bags at the hotel in India, I looked at Phil and tried to find the words to summarize my appreciation. The planning, organization, logistical management, river guiding, and non-stop energy

towards sharing his passion for Bhutan with myself and our guests was nothing less than extraordinary. What came out of my mouth was, “great job man.”

In addition to Phil’s awe inspiring work, there were certainly other things that led to such a great trip, which included: A fantastic group of guests; “Explore Bhutan” (the Bhutanese outfitter DeRiemer Adventure Kayaking has always worked with); the Bhutanese guides; Sha Tu our bus driver; and many others. This trip really was one of the best trips of my life, and as I reflect on it some weeks later, I have to pinch myself. It is hard to believe that I was actually in Bhutan and paddled such stunning rivers, experienced a unique and beautiful culture, and made long lasting friendships with many of the Bhutanese I worked with. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that I want to return there to share my passion for Bhutan, its culture, landscape, rivers, and its people with other kayakers and travelers.





SAVE THE DATE

ACA Europe Symposium

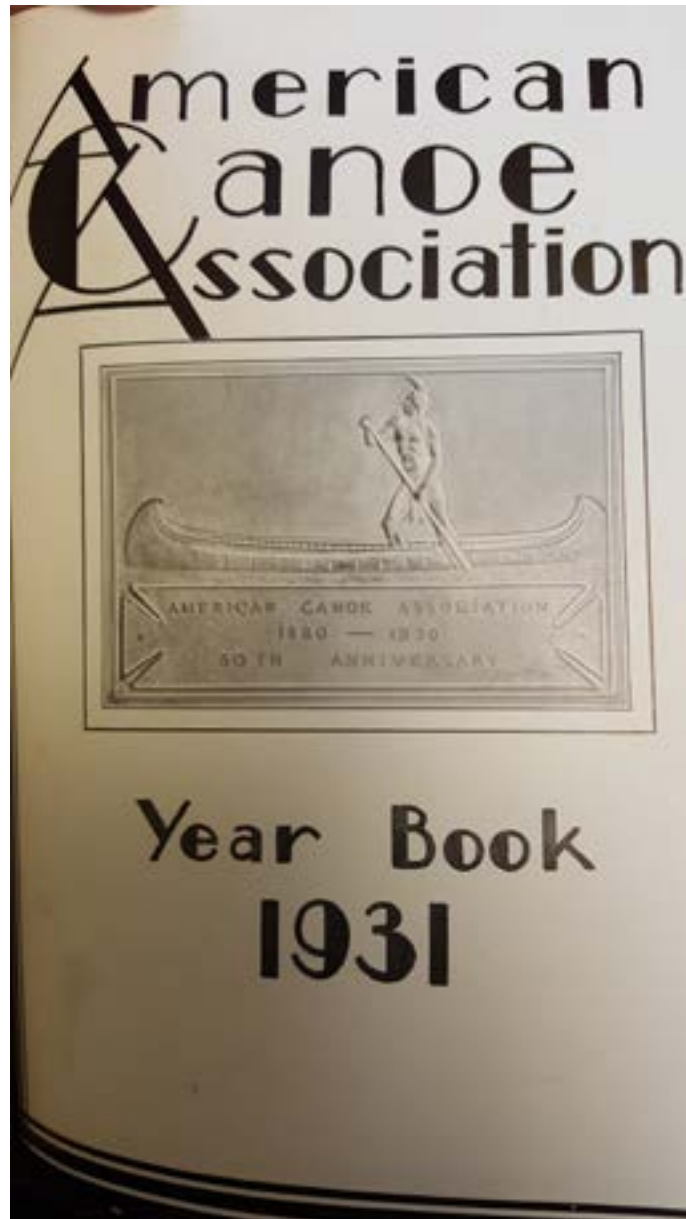
October 14-16, 2016

Vienna, Austria

Hosted by Gerhard Grimm



Paddling History



The First Stand Up Paddlers

Each issue, we'll bring you an interesting paddling photo from the ACA archives.

We hope you enjoy these little glimpses of paddling past.

To learn more about ACA history and the early days of paddlesports, visit:

www.americancanoe.org/History

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