

PADDLE

ACA | Canoe - Kayak - SUP - Raft - Rescue, Volume 2, Issue 1, January 2016

**Why Microbeads Are a
Major Problem**

**Cut, Bruised & Happy:
Gratitude for the Sport**

**ACA Safety & Education
Curriculum Updates**



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.



NATIONAL STAFF

Wade Blackwood - Executive Director
Chris Stec - Chief Operating Officer
Amy Ellis - State Director/Membership Coord.
Candy Patten - Insurance Coordinator
Katie Hansen - Membership Coordinator
Shannon Green - Membership/Insurance Coord.
Catharine Lloyd - Communications Coordinator
Kelsey Bracewell - SEI Coordinator
Marcel Bieg - Western States Outreach Director
Barbara Bendele - Office Manager
T.J. Turner - Education & Outreach Coordinator
Dave Burden - Intl. Paddlesports Ambassador
Chris Raab - Stewardship Director

MS - Brian Ramsey
MO - Dave Haessig
MT - Alex Bergeron
NE - Jordan Messerer
NV - Vacant
NH - Marty Pritchard
NJ - Kerry Pflugh
NM - Christine Mollo
NY - Liane Amaral
NC - Daniel Morris
ND - Clarence Bina
OH - Ryan Pepper
OK - Aasim Saleh
OR - Cheri Holman
PA - Steve Barber
PR - Omar Ramos
RI - Vacant
SC - Ethan Talley, Kyle Thomas
SD - Steven Dahlmeier
TN - Jessica Beckett
TX - Lorraine McPhee
UT - Anthony Monson
VA - Chris Misener
VI - David Paradise
VT - Nathan Lavery
WA - Patrick Steehler
WV - Melanie Seiler
WI - Thomas Schrader
WY - Mark Hamlin

Safety & Rescue - Sam Fowlkes (NC)
Safety & Rescue - Charlie Walbridge (WV)
Rafting - Jim Virgin (WA)
Adaptive Paddling - Joe Moore (SC)
Intro to Paddling - Mike Aronoff (VA)
Stand Up Paddleboard - Josh Hall (SC)

Institutional Members

SEIC Chair Appointment - Gordon Dayton (CT)
BoD Appointment - Larry Ausley (NC)

Liaison Members

USCG-SEIC Liaison - Wayne Stacey (DC)
BSA Liaison - Keith Christopher (TX)

PARTNERS

Subaru - Official Vehicle of the ACA
L.L. Bean
Rapid Media
MTI Adventurewear
Kokatat
Werner Paddles
Stand Up Paddle Industry Association
USA Canoe/Kayak
BSA Aquatics Taskforce
NOAA Marine Debris Program
U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety
National Safe Boating Council
Outdoor Alliance
Outdoor Alliance for Kids
Hobie Polarized Sunglasses
Association of Outdoor Recreation & Education
International Whitewater Hall of Fame
Whitewater Symposium
Leave No Trace
National Association of State Boating Law Administrators
Western States Boating Administrators Association
Polynesian Voyaging Society

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

Anne Maleady - President (MA)
TBD - Vice President
Peter Sloan - Treasurer (CO)
Robin Pope - Secretary (NC)
Judge Charles Strauss - At-Large (VA)
Jerry Dunne - At-Large (NY)

Board Members

Colin Trost (VA)
Roby Hackney (VA)
Bill Micks (VA)
Kirk Havens (VA)
Andrew Tush (VA)
Steve Hutton (SC)
Bill Banholzer (SC)
Wayne Stacey - USCG liaison (MD)
Robert Cassar - Sugar Isl. liaison (PA)

STATE DIRECTORS

AL - Helen Todd
AK - Tom Pogson
AZ - Danielle Keil
AR - Tom Burroughs
CA - Alexander Morris
CO - Gregory Skomp
CT - Elizabeth O'Connor
DE - Clarke Greene
DC - Meredith Waters
FL - Peggy Phillips
GA - John Traendly
HI - Indar Lange
ID - Elliot Jacobs
IL - Lenore Sobota
IN - Joe Rozsaheqyi
IA - Vacant
KS - Vacant
KY - Nathan Depenbrock
LA - Ben Sandmel
ME - Randy Smith
MD - Bob Cianflone
MA - Samuel Gaughan
MI - Lynn Dominguez
MN - David Englund, Bridget O'Boyle

SAFETY, EDUCATION & INSTRUCTION

COUNCIL (SEIC)

SEIC Officers

Chair - Steve Hutton (SC)
Vice Chair - Rusty Cooper (AL)
Secretary - Becky Molina (LA)
Past Chair - Robin Pope (NC)

Division Instruction Facilitators

Atlantic - Elizabeth O'Connor
Dixie - Aaron Peeler
Middle States - Greg Mallet-Prevost, Mike Aronoff, & Greg Velzy
Midwest - Tom Lindblade & Randy Carlson
New England - Jackie Peppe
Northern NY - Laura Liebel
Red River - Patti Carothers
SW Ohio - John Slocum
NW Ohio - Chris Lewis
Chair & NE Ohio - John MacDonald
Northwest - Steve Scherrer
European Division - Gerhard Grimm
California - Marce Wise

Committee Chairs

Touring Canoe - Jeff Liebel (NY)
River Canoe - Beth Wiegandt (VA)
River Kayak - Larry Ausely (NC)
Coastal Kayak - John Browning (WI)
Canoe Sailing - Larry Haff (MA)
Surf Kayak - Nigel Law (GA)

Cover photo

Photographer: Darren Bush
Location: Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

Follow us on...



Meet Your ACA Staff

QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

What are you looking forward to most about the 2016 ACA National Paddlesports Conference in Sausalito, CA?



Wade Blackwood
Executive Director

“Biking over the Golden Gate Bridge.”



Dave Burden
International Paddlesports Ambassador

“Listening for the elusive Humming Toadfish as we paddle around the iconic houseboats of Sausalito”



Amy Ellis
State Director/Membership Coordinator

“I would like to check out Sausalito’s floating homes community”



Marcel Bieg
Western States Outreach Director & Grant Manager

“Paddling and hanging in the San Fran area.”



Katie Hansen
Membership Coordinator

“I’m looking forward to catching up with our members.”



Barbara Bendele
Office Manager

“Matching up some faces with names from the west coast!”



Kelsey Bracewell
SEI Coordinator

“I’m looking forward to meeting some of our west coast instructors, trainers, and educators that I haven’t had the opportunity to meet before!”



Catharine Lloyd
Communications Coordinator

“Sadly I won’t be there, but I’m looking forward to hearing stories & seeing photos!”



Candy Patten
Insurance Coordinator

“I always love going home to California!”



Shannon Green
Membership/Insurance Coordinator

“Meeting some sea lions!”



Christopher Stec
Chief Operating Officer

“Paddling around Alcatraz.”



Chris Raab
Stewardship Director

“Getting out to paddle for a day near Mendocino and also around the bay area.”



T.J. Turner
Education & Outreach Coordinator

“Seeing the Golden Gate Bridge!”

Table of Contents

Stewardship

- 6 Why Microbeads Are a Major Problem, *by Nicole Baker*
- 8 Paddle Green Spotlight
- 19 Paddle Tails: New Book by *SUP With Your Pup* author Maria Schultz
- 20 Video: Stories of Survival

Education

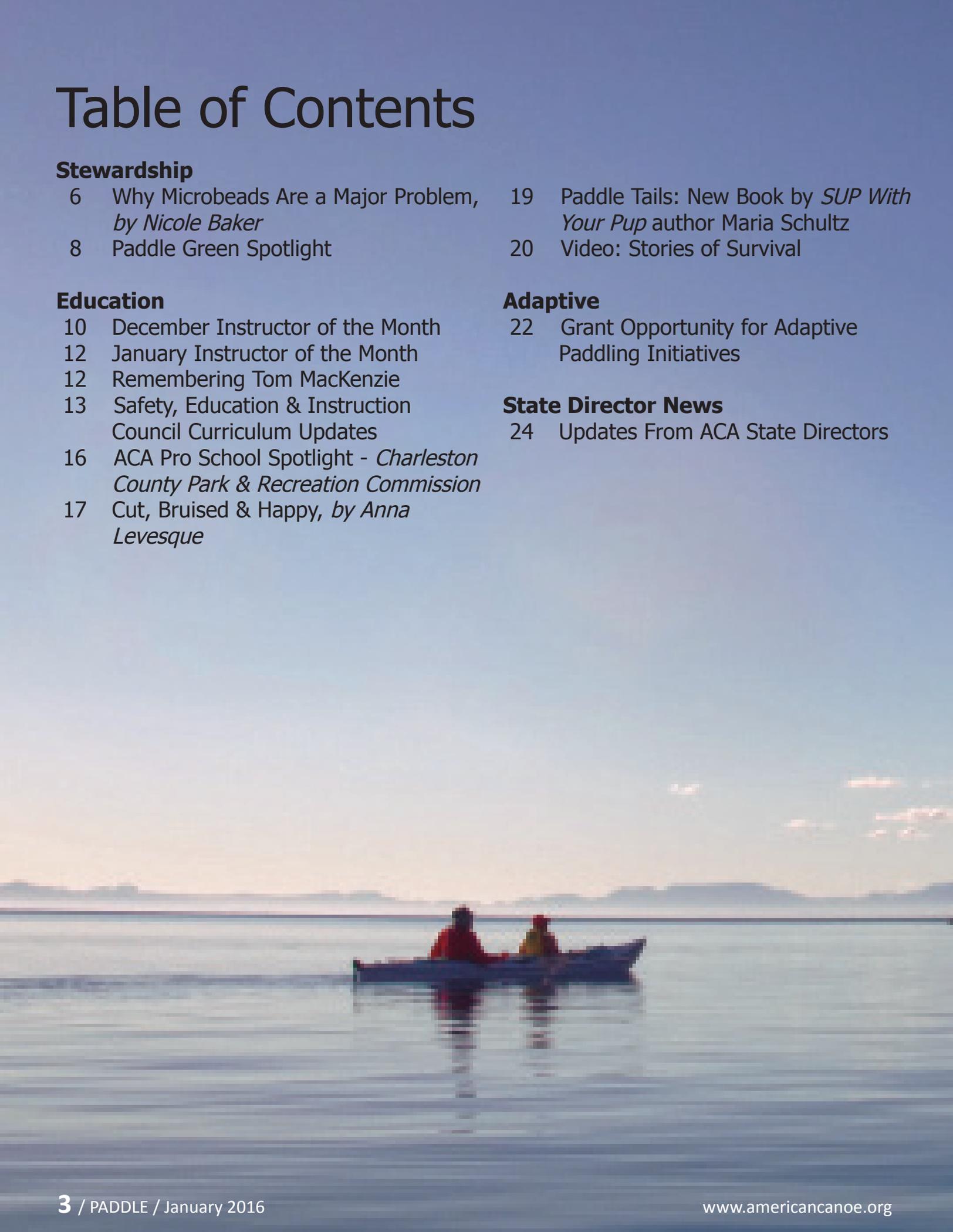
- 10 December Instructor of the Month
- 12 January Instructor of the Month
- 12 Remembering Tom MacKenzie
- 13 Safety, Education & Instruction Council Curriculum Updates
- 16 ACA Pro School Spotlight - *Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission*
- 17 Cut, Bruised & Happy, *by Anna Levesque*

Adaptive

- 22 Grant Opportunity for Adaptive Paddling Initiatives

State Director News

- 24 Updates From ACA State Directors



Membership

- 29 Featured ACA Member Benefit,
Free Rapid Media Subscription
- 30 ACA Outfitter spotlight -
Alaska Kayak School
- 31 Member Photo of the Month
- 32 Charleston Beckons

Competition

- 35 Events Coming Up
- 36 USA Canoe/Kayak Update

Paddling History

- 37 1948 Olympics
- 38 Remembering Friend and Paddling
Legend, Larry Zuk

Photo by Darren Bush

STEWARDSHIP



Why Microbeads are a Major Problem & How One Group is Working for Change

By Nicole Baker of Plastic Tides.

Plastic Tides was one of the ACA's 2015 [Club Fostered Stewardship Grant Award](#) Winners.

A 240 mile journey is finally complete. Though this may not seem like a long distance by car, think about doing it on a paddleboard. Then consider attempting it during November in upstate NY. This feat is what Christian Shaw and Gordon Middleton completed on November 19th, 2015, after a polar vortex of winter weather halted their journey in 2014. They came back with a vengeance, and renewed determination, to raise awareness about microbead pollution in the Finger Lakes, Great Lakes, and other waterways of their home state.

This journey started as a way to draw attention to the issue of plastic pollution, and more specifically microplastics and microbeads. In spring 2014, a pending bill in the NYS Legislature was passed overwhelmingly in the Assembly, but shelved and refused to be voted on in the Senate. Even after the 2014 Plastic Tides expedition, which resulted in their film *The Canal*, and a growing body of microbead



research in NYS; history repeated itself again in 2015 as the bill failed to make the Senate floor. This provoked Gordon and Christian, in collaboration with their Plastic Tides Jr Ambassador summer program, to work fervently to pass the legislation, this time through a more grassroots approach. One by one: Erie, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Suffolk, Albany and finally their home county of Tompkins passed their own bans, the strongest legislation ever, on products containing plastic microbeads. If the state wouldn't hear their voice, maybe smaller local governments would. And they did. The evidence found right here in New York State was too strong for local governments to ignore, especially after the issue was taken up by a group of Middle and High School students whom, after becoming Plastic Tides Jr. Ambassadors, contacted the local legislature themselves.

Leading the science behind microbeads, Dr. Sam Mason from SUNY Fredonia with cooperation from the NYS AG Office had published



findings about microplastics in the Great Lakes and wastewater treatment systems statewide. She found 75% of the pollution in the Great Lakes is from microplastics; pieces you can't see that come from the photodegradation of plastic bags, toothbrushes, and other debris. Twenty percent of this total microplastic pollution is microbeads. These microbeads were found in the effluent from 75% of wastewater treatment plants (n=44) sampled around NY. Plastic Tides had done their own sampling on their first go-round of their Erie Canal trip; finding microbeads in Cayuga Lake, Oneida Lake, the Erie Canal and Mohawk River, and becoming the first group to find microbeads in inland waterways. Microbeads concentrate pollutants, get ingested by animals ranging in size from plankton and mussels to birds and fish, and eventually make it up the food chain to humans. They also leach chemicals known to be endocrine disruptors which are not remediated at the treatment plants.

Common questions we get when talking about this issue include, "why don't we just make smaller filters at the treatment plants?" and "why do we even care about this?" Our response to these questions is this: usually when we try to use technology to mitigate

systemic problems it can cause separate but equal problems, and can be extremely expensive. While microbeads have not been proven to be harmful, why is the burden of proof on the consumer? Shouldn't it be the industry's responsibility to prove that they are safe for us to use?

If you are inspired by this article, please follow Plastic Tides on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and on their website plasticides.org.

Coming up on their radar is a cross country trip to raise awareness about single use plastics culminating in a documentary, and their annual SUP race around Bermuda, situated smack in the middle of the Mid Atlantic Gyre.

Be sure to also follow the progress of the [Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015](#), a recently passed nationwide ban on cosmetics that contain synthetic plastic microbeads.

For more information on the ACA's efforts to combat all types of marine debris, please visit: www.americancanoe.org/streamtosea





Paddle Green Spotlight:



KAYAK
NEW MEXICO



Kayak New Mexico, Inc. builds courage, confidence, and character, one stroke at a time, through adaptive kayaking programs for people with physical or developmental disabilities, or life--threatening medical conditions.

This year for the first time, Kayak New Mexico's volunteers cleaned up the river of trash. On a cold November morning, 13 volunteers collected 1,457 pounds of trash. The Mid Rio Grande Conservancy District was kind enough to allow us access to the Algodones Dam area. The parking lot we normally use for river access contained 1,113 pounds of garbage (recyclables included).

We then drove our kayaks, rafts, SUPs, and canoes down to the river's edge and picked up another 172 pounds of garbage. Our six--mile river trip netted us another 85 pounds, and our normal take out location netted our final 87 pounds of garbage. The total pounds of recyclable material collected were 321 pounds.

Waste Management of New Mexico provided us with two dumpsters at the Algodones, NM parking lot and the North Face provided our volunteers with "swag."

Sponsors included: New Mexico Kayak Instruction; Waste Management of New Mexico; Frank's Supply; and Smith's Food.

Volunteers included employees of New Mexico Kayak Instruction and the North Face, and members of the Greater Albuquerque/Santa Fe Kayak Meetup Group and Adobe Whitewater Club.

Now that we've got one "river clean-up" under our belt, we plan on cleaning up different portions of the Rio Grande every quarter. We'll record how much trash we pick up in the ACA's national database. We love our Rio Grande and want to help keep it clean.

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!](#)

December Instructor of the Month - Jeff Adler

ACA: What aspect of paddling is the most exciting and engaging to you? Approximately how much of your time do you dedicate to paddling (or thinking/training/dreaming about paddling)?

Adler: Truthfully, everything about paddling is exciting to me. I spend a great amount of time thinking and planning how I can make paddling and coaching a larger part of my life. I have been paddling since '98 and coaching for about 3 years, and the coaching has fueled my addiction. I find the greatest thrill in coaching is helping paddlers of all levels improve their skills. There is no better feeling than seeing the smiles that happen when a student obtains a skill that they have been trying to master. And knowing that I've now been able to make their paddling experience more fun and enjoyable and most importantly more safe is the greatest reward of being an instructor. Being a newer instructor, I still have fresh in my memory the feeling of being challenged and then having someone be there for me to help me to move to the next level. I keep this in mind every time I'm on the water. My goal is to be able to make that difference for ev-



ery person I coach. Whether the step is small or large, I remember that it is the paddler's needs that guide the instruction. I am grateful for every opportunity I have to coach, and I learn something from every encounter I have on the water! I have been influenced by some great instructors and hope to pay it forward and pass on these skills and love of the water.

ACA: Can you please describe the various symposiums of which you are a part? What is educational, fun, valuable, and exciting about these type of events?

Adler: To date I've coached at the Door County Sea Kayak Symposium and the Great Lakes Sea Kayak symposium. These are both amazing events that emphasize community, skills instruction and tours. As an instructor, my goal is to make the skills courses fun and the tours educational with skill building. The community aspect of the symposiums are amazing and I have made friends that will be lifelong. This is where I met my mentors and many great instructors and paddlers. Myself and others return yearly and it's like a family! They create a great atmosphere to spend time with like-minded paddlers and advance ones skills in a short period of time. There are some fantastic symposiums in the Great Lakes that will challenge paddlers of all skill levels and many others coast to coast. I love being part of these events and would like to be involved in more.

Adler: Paddling in the Great Lakes is often overlooked. These are truly inland seas and provide an incredible environment to play and coach! Paddling these waters demand the same care and respect as one would have on the coasts. When the Gales arrive, the lakes provide swells and surf that can equal the challenge of paddling the coasts. The wind driven waves have a period that is much shorter than in the ocean and this provides an added challenge. This is when the fun really begins! Winter paddling adds further complexity, but has its own rewards. The paddling around Wisconsin offers endless possibilities and amazing surroundings to paddle through. There are many talented paddlers and coaches in the Great Lakes and around Wisconsin, as well as many others who return yearly for the symposiums. I feel blessed to have many of them as friends, mentors and coaches.

ACA: What is the most challenging (and most rewarding) part about paddling in WI?



January Instructor of the Month - Travis Reid

ACA: What aspect of paddling is the most exciting and engaging to you? Approximately how much of your time do you dedicate to paddling (or thinking/training/dreaming about paddling)?

Reid: I really enjoy rafting. Having all your gear in your raft on an expedition trip is one of the most fun parts of rafting. Let the raft do all the heavy work and go on lightweight side hikes. I try to spend more time on the water than off the water. There is nothing more peaceful than sleeping next to the river. I also enjoy teaching water rescue courses. Teaching people to work with the river, use simple rescue techniques, use simple rope systems and to break complex situations into smaller, more manageable pieces is rewarding and fun. The worst day on the river is better than the best day behind a desk!

ACA: Can you please highlight your rafting and SWR instruction? You are one of our most active rafting instructors, and your stories from the big rivers out west would be a great thing to share!

Reid: The Swiftwater and River Rescue courses have been very well received. My business partner, Michael Ahmuty, and I started River-Stone Adventures LLC and Oregon Rescue LLC and have trained rafters, guides, outfitters, river researchers, fire fighters, SAR teams and military special forces in simple to more advanced rescue techniques. I also like teaching rafting and helping people to enjoy and protect our rivers. Our Guide School and Adaptive Rafting programs have been especially re-



warding by sharing the river with people that might not otherwise get to play on the river. The Western US has so many great rivers to enjoy, from creeks that only flow occasionally to the stomping, bigger rivers. Get outside and go play on the river!

ACA: What aspirations do you still have, in regards to personal and business related paddling pursuits?

Reid: I am just beginning! I'm only 45 years old and have so much knowledge to share and even more to learn. I enjoy teaching and helping people to 'think outside the box' and apply simple techniques to river rescue. Your brain is the most powerful rescue tool in your rescue 'bag of tricks.' I am looking forward to returning to Nicaragua to train the firefighters abroad and to learning from other instructors in the river, rope and wilderness rescue fields.

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

Safety, Education & Instruction Council Curriculum Changes



In October 2015, the SEIC and the ACA Board of Directors voted to approve a variety of curriculum and policy changes that affect all ACA instructors, trainers, and educators.

Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC)

Changes have been made to the ACA's Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC), which outlines the new and revised essential requirements for each ACA paddling program participant. The new EEC can be found on any ACA curriculum course outline, and online, [here](#).

Revised IT Certification Process

The IT Certification Process has been revised to include new mentoring opportunities as well as an online course, designed to assist IT aspirants with the common issues and ques-

tions associated with obtaining one of ACA's highest levels of certification. The changes to this process can be found in the [SEIC Policy Manual](#), and on the new ACA website section, "[Become an Instructor Trainer](#)."

Course Ratios

The SEIC Policy Manual has cleared up some previous ambiguity surrounding course ratio maximums and minimums. Skills course ratios are not to exceed those outlined on each sample skills course or assessment course outline. Please refer to your [discipline curriculum documents](#) for further clarification. Similarly, more details have been added in regards to certification course maximums, IT Candidate lead-teach credit, and IT continuation. You can find these changes in the [SEIC Policy Manual](#)

River Kayak Committee

The River Kayaking Committee has introduced a new tool for dedicated ACA River Kayaking Instructors: an instructor update course outline. This outline provides an overview of topics covered during the required instructor update (which is part of the ACA [recertification requirements](#)), and can assist instructors as they prepare to update their certifications.

Coastal Kayak Committee

The Coastal Kayaking Committee implemented a variety of new policies, which include prerequisites for [Level 3](#) and [Level 4](#) Coastal Kayaking Instructor Candidates, as well as developing and initializing brand new [Coastal Kayak Trip Leading assessments](#).

Prone Paddling

SEIC and the ACA Board of Directors approved the creation of a Prone Paddling discipline to complement the existing ACA disciplines of Canoeing, Kayaking, SUP, Rafting, Safety & Rescue, and Adaptive Paddling. An accompanying Prone Paddling discipline committee is forming for the purpose of implementing the Level 1-3 curriculum (as approved at the SEIC

meeting), as well as to further develop new curriculum and initiatives to continually improve the ACA's national instruction program. Information about this new discipline may visit the curriculum page, [here](#).

Safety & Rescue Committee

The ACA's Safety & Rescue Committee has spent considerable time and energy reviewing the existing Safety & Rescue curriculum this year, and has further developed the curriculum to best reflect advances in the field, including new practices, terminology, and resources. You can view these updated skills course, assessment course, and instructor criteria documents online at the ACA website, [here](#).

Instructor Certification Audit

Lastly, as the 2015 paddling season comes to a close, the SEI Department is finishing the 2015 Instructor Audit. Recertification cards have already been mailed to those who met the recertification requirements. Didn't get a card? Not sure if you recertified? Need an [extension](#) on your certification? Contact the [SEI Department](#) if you have any concerns about your ACA Instructor Certifications.



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.”

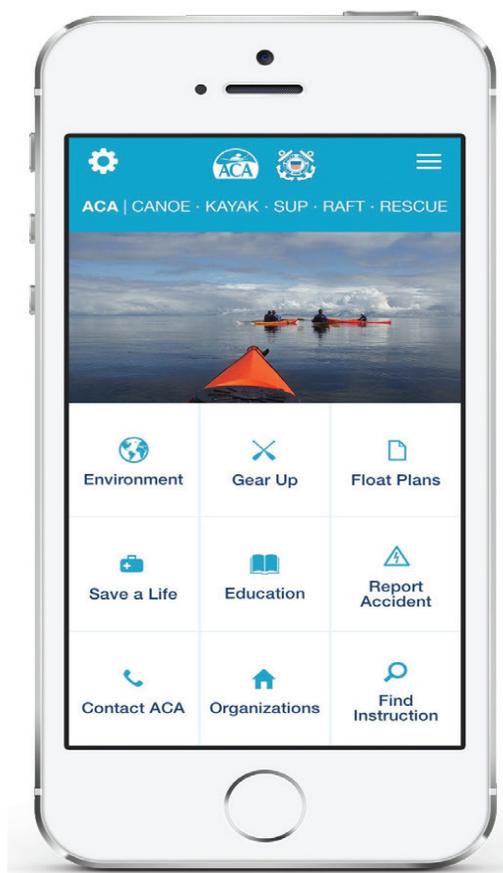
-Tee Clarkson, Richmond Times Dispatch

“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



Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission (CCPRC) offers a variety of Canoeing, Stand Up Paddleboard and Kayaking skills classes and trips, including educational outings for beginner to expert paddlers.

From day-trips, weekend skills classes, to certification courses, our ACA certified paddling instructors and trainers focus on safety and fun. Learn the essentials needed to make your paddling experience an enjoyable one from our friendly and knowledgeable instructors.

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.

Serving over 25,000 individuals of all ages and abilities annually, our Outdoor Adventure Program is the first of its kind to be accredited by the Association for Experiential Education. CCPRC also brings you the East Coast Paddlesport & Outdoor Festival every April.

To learn more, visit ccprc.com or connect with CCPRC on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ccprc).

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

Cut, Bruised & Happy

By Anna Levesque. Anna is the founder/director of [Girls at Play](#) and Mind Body Paddle and has taught thousands of paddlers in the US, Canada, Mexico, Chile and Costa Rica. She is an ACA L4 Whitewater Kayak Instructor Trainer, and an ACA L2 Essentials of SUP Instructor Trainer .



“I wish I had started kayaking sooner,” is something I hear from my students who are in their 40s, 50s and 60s. Usually said with a heavy dose of disappointment and often because of a swim or some other challenge that arises on the path of learning. I get it. There is a feeling that if only we had started earlier it wouldn't be so difficult. As we get older, our bodies recover a little more slowly and we perhaps don't have the same range of motion or strength that we did when we were younger. Or perhaps we feel the strongest we've ever been and our mental approach is different – a little more conservative and restrained. There is definitely a contrast between a group of fearless kids zipping by a group of older paddlers checking out the rapid. Not that fear doesn't happen at all ages,

but I know for myself, as I've gotten older I've gotten a little more conservative in my paddling.

Since I started paddling in my late teens/early twenties I had never had that feeling of wishing I had started sooner, until I learned how to SUP surf this year. This new sport hooked me with the fun, the challenge and the sweet feeling of riding a wave. During a week spent in Florida at the BIC SUP ambassador summit, I went out every day whether the waves were choppy or good. Some days I got beat down trying to get out past the break expending a lot of energy and getting swirled around with my board tugging at my ankle. On one wipe out off a wave the fin of my board slashed my bathing suit open and gave me a small lacera-



tion on my butt. The board made contact with my face and head a few times – lightly thank goodness. Every time I would emerge from the ocean I would have cuts and bruises, but I was stoked to be out there because, regardless of all of that, it was really, really fun.

About a month later, I took a trip to Folly Beach, SC to feed my newfound passion and as I was struggling to paddle out one morning I realized I was having the thought that had I started earlier it would be easier. Then I looked around at the sun rising over the water and took a moment to feel the ocean pulsing underneath my board and what came up was a deep feeling of gratitude for having the opportunity to be exactly where I was. How cool is it to learn a new sport at 41 and to feel so energized and passionate? And not just that, but to have the opportunity to paddle with great paddle surfers who are also fantastic instructors, to have the time and resources to take a trip to the beach and have the physical robustness to be out there. These are things that some people never get to experience in their entire lives. My path through life is perfect just as it is and focusing on gratitude for the

“Focusing on gratitude for the opportunity, instead of wishing for something different, turned the moment from suffering to stoke.”

opportunity, instead of wishing for something different, turned the moment from suffering to stoke.

I would rather be 41, cut, bruised and happy SUP surfing than give up the amazing experiences that have made up my life until now. The sport brings me joy, passion, freedom and adventure that lights me up when I’m out there. This energy transfers to my whitewater kayaking, to my work and to the rest of my life. It feeds my vitality. I’ll never be a pro surf-

er and may never even get proficient at the sport, but that doesn’t matter because at the end of my life the level of proficiency won’t matter as much as the level of joy that

it brought me. So for those of you who are a little older and find yourselves feeling disappointed that you didn’t learn how to paddle earlier, take a moment to express gratitude for the opportunity to be out there and let the joy, fun and excitement feed you. It’ll make your experience a whole lot more fun and you’ll inspire those around you with your awesomeness.

Paddle Tails

Reflections on people and dogs
who find balance on the water

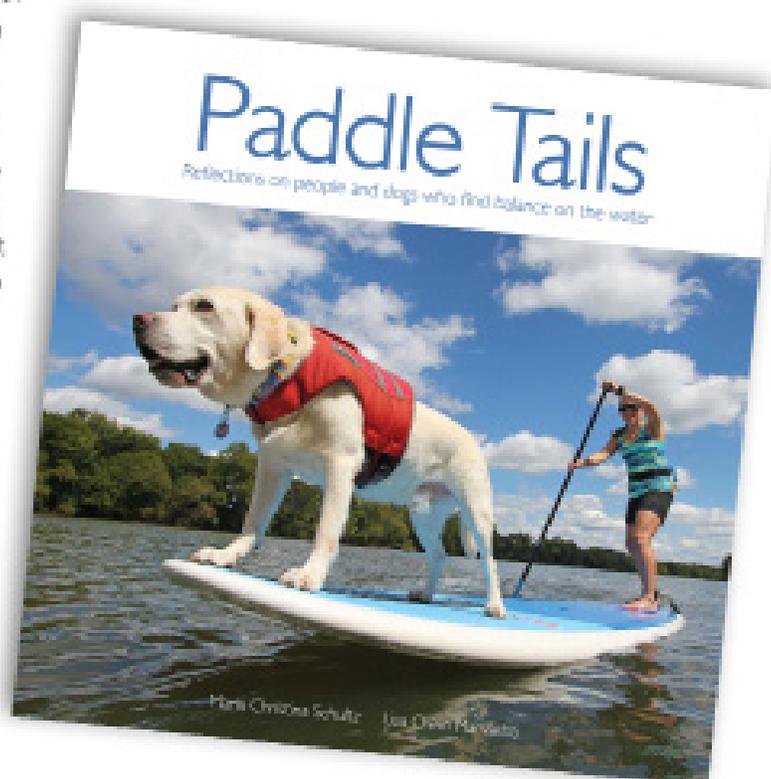


Paddle Tails, a new book by Maria Christina Schultz, author of *How to SUP With Your Pup*, and Lisa Chinn Marvashti.

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 goldendoodle 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

In Case You Missed It: *Stories of Survival*

In partnership with the talented folks at Anzovin Studio and the U.S. Coast Guard, the ACA has created an animated memoir-style film that confronts some of the challenging situations that even experienced paddlers face. We are excited to announce the release of *Stories of Survival*.

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch the video on our YouTube channel.

You can also help spread the word about safe paddling by sharing the video with your friends, family, and the rest of your network.



ADAPTIVE



Update on Adaptive Grants

As part of our USACK / ACA partnership, we have recently applied for and received [two grants](#) targeted specifically for individuals with disabilities including one grant that has an elite level Paracanoe competition focus.

From a strong pool of applicant clubs, the following six were chosen as beneficiaries of the Craig H. Neilsen grant:

- Sebago Canoe Club (New York)
- Bridge II Sports (North Carolina)
- University of Central Oklahoma (Oklahoma)
- Ohio Adaptive Adventure Sports Coalition (Ohio)
- Cascade Canoe & Kayak Racing Team (Washington)
- Nantahala Racing Club (North Carolina)

The Craig H. Neilsen grant is intended to empower clubs to bring more individuals with Spinal Cord Injuries (SCI) into the sport of kayaking, and, ultimately, to compete in elite Paracanoe racing. The grant's intent focuses

on exposing new paddlers to the sport of kayaking, not refinement of existing competitors.

Each of six selected clubs will receive a range of adaptive paddling equipment. Equipment will be chosen to advance the club's ability to bring new paddlers with SCI into the sport. Each club will also receive an ACA Adaptive Paddling Workshop (APW). Since 1991, APW have been the gold standard adaptive paddling instructor credentialing program.

Lanier Canoe and Kayak Club and Town of Quantico, Virginia are the two named beneficiaries of the Department of Veteran Affairs Grant. The VA grant will provide a day of ACA adaptive paddling training and a day of USACK's Racer Quest talent identification training to each beneficiary club. In addition to these trainings, each program will receive significant equipment, including entry level adaptive paddling equipment as well as multiple Paracanoe and Vipers.



News Near You



STATE-BY-STATE

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

Alabama

Paddle America Clubs and ACA members are busy in preparation for our Alabama Cup Racing Series! Mark your calendars and please consider coming to the north Birmingham area for one or all of these whitewater slalom races: Locust Fork Invitational – Feb. 6 & 7; Mulberry Fork Canoe & Kayak – March 5 & 6; and Locust Fork Whitewater Classic – March 19 & 20. Visit www.alabamacupraces.com for registration details and directions.

Contact: Helen Todd

AlStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Alaska

Alaska - Several coastal ICWs (level 3 and 4) and Paddle Fun Day were hosted this year, and the Alaska Kayak School gears up to participate in a one of a kind sea kayak based marine debris cleanup of 60 miles of shoreline of Shuyak Island State Park in the Kodiak Archipelago. New level 3 and 4 coastal instructors really add a lot to the options for taking ACA coastal training and assessment courses. Skilled sea kayakers are needed as volunteers to help on the Kodiak cleanup. Contact alaskakayakschool@gmail.com for an application.

Contact: Tom Pogson

AlStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Arizona

Still looking for a New Year's Resolution? Start 2016 right by becoming a certified ACA Instructor! We're working hard to bring in Trainers to hold classes in various disciplines, making it easier to become certified/ re-certify! Email State Director Danielle for more details.

Contact: Danielle Keil

AZStateDirector@americancanoe.net

California

In California, we're planning an Adaptive Paddling workshop/class for 2016. Contact Anthea Raymond (anthea.raymond@gmail.com) for more info. As the year winds down, big swells are making for very spirited ocean paddling. The Davenport Surf Classic saw huge waves and burly kayak and SUP surfing! Meanwhile, the multi-year drought in California has lowered reservoir levels enough that certain river runs are viable again, including the classic Camp 9 run on the Stanislaus River. Go to ACA CA's Facebook page for more!

Contact: Alexander Morris

CaStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Colorado

The 2016 Colorado calendar is taking shape and here are some items to mark already: April 23 - South Platte River Cleanup, Denver, CO. May 21-22 - Colorado Whitewater Training Camp, Cotopaxi, CO (their 2016 indoor instruction calendar is on the Web site at www.coloradowhitewater.org). May 27-30 - CKS PaddleFest, Buena Vista, CO. June 16-19 - FIBArk, Buena Vista, CO

Contact: Gregory Skomp

CoStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Florida

Please be on the lookout for a survey that will be emailed to ACA members in Florida during January. By participating in the survey, you'll have a voice during the discussions of the Non-Motorized Boat Working Group. The January survey will focus on our current topic of Access for our paddlers. Please help us represent you by returning your survey promptly. And, please share the importance of ACA

membership within your paddling community.

Contact: Peggy Phillips

FIStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Georgia

The Georgia State Director, in cooperation with the Outdoor Recreation program at the Georgia Institute of Technology, will again sponsor five students for a five day Instructor Certification Workshop on Tybee Island in May 2016. The intent of this program is to encourage paddling safety and leadership among college students.

Contact: John Traendly

GaStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Idaho

Idaho is under a blanket of snow. However, the days are getting longer and our solid early season snowpack portends full lakes and a long river paddling season. This spring, it is checking out and supporting our Paddle America Club in Idaho, "Idaho River Kids," which takes Idaho students out on the Payette river with the help of the ACA Insurance. Interested in starting something similar? I can help! Also, I'm still looking for paddlers and ACA members to join the executive council.

Contact: Elliot Jacobs

IdStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Louisiana

Hardy Louisiana paddlers are looking forward to fall 2016 when a grueling 410 mile race, known as the 410 de Louisiane, will traverse the state from its northwest corner, in Shreveport, to the southern coastline at the Gulf of Mexico, via the Red River and Bayou Teche. Possible plans for expansion may include a stretch of the Ouachita River. More information at <http://www.louisianadeltaadventures.com/> and www.tourduteche.com/

Contact: Ben Sandmel

LaStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Maryland

State Director Bob Cianflone provided input and has testified on the proposal to designate Mallows Bay as a new national Marine Sanctuary, the only one in the nation accessible solely by paddle boats such as kayaks and canoes. In his written testimony, he urged NOAA to make Mallows Bay a maritime heritage area and waterscape paddling location, so that paddlers can observe rare and threatened fish and wildlife in one of the most ecologically fragile and historically important marine habitats in the nation.

Contact: Bob Cianflone

MdStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Mississippi

Registration for the 9.5 mile Battle on the Bayou in Ocean Springs, MS opens Jan 1. Register at BattleOnTheBayou.com

Contact: Brian Ramsey

MsStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Missouri

The 2016 49th annual Missouri Whitewater Championship will be March 19th and 20th. Competitors from all over the nation have participated in past years so all are welcome. For more information go to <http://missouriwhitewater.org/competition/mwc/>

Contact: Dave Haessig

MoStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Nebraska

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln School of Landscape Architecture presented "A Prototype for the State River Trail System: The Elkhorn River" to the Nebraska Game and Parks and other state and local agencies. The goal of the presentation was to help provide a vision on how the Game and Parks state could

update and further invest in the existing river trails in the state. The presentation included research in economic development, bank stabilization projects, site studies for possible access points, tying the river trails to other recreation opportunities that exist in the area and website design idea. Meetings are currently being scheduled on how to move these ideas forward.

Contact: Jordan Messerer

NeStateDirector@americancanoe.net

New Jersey

ACA New Jersey's State Director position is currently available and the state is seeking volunteers. If interested, please contact Amy Ellis.

Contact: Amy Ellis, State Director Coordinator
aellis@americancanoe.org

New York

Winter paddling is upon us! New York Paddlers don't stop. You'll find us on coastal waters, on our SUP boards and even in white-water! We are beginning to plan an ACA Instructor Rendezvous for spring 2016, so stay tuned for more information, and check out our ACA-NY Facebook page for updates like instruction opportunities and winter time pool sessions.

Contact: Liane Amaral

NyStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Ohio

Don't let Ohio's frozen waters stop you from increasing your paddling skills. Many paddling groups, colleges, and universities hold indoor pool roll sessions and often times play some kayak football. If you need help finding one of these sessions please contact your State Council and we'll point you in the right direction.

Contact: Ryan Pepper

OhStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Oklahoma

After a banner paddling year, the search continues for passionate paddle sport leaders around the state of Oklahoma who would be interested in joining the Oklahoma State Director Executive Council to assist in broadening paddling education and opportunities around the state. New to paddling? Roll for the first time this winter and be ready for RIVERSPORT Rapids by participating in local pool sessions offered in the OKC metro area with an ACA certified instructor.

Contact: Aasim Saleh

OkStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Oregon

With torrential downpours flooding most rivers in Oregon, pool classes are a welcoming venue. Team River Runner and Oregon Adaptive Sports partnered together to kick off a co-op class of Vets, disabled paddlers, and beginning group of kid kayakers. ACA Oregon hosted an Instagram Clinic and we are looking forward to new social media adventures in this top platform. More pool classes and Instagram workshops to come in January.

Contact: Cheri Holman

OrStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Pennsylvania

Charged up after the recent state directors conference, it's time for roll sessions indoors, and clubs are busy organizing pool sessions. The weather has been very mild, so we've been taking advantage and whitewater boating into December. Our paddlers are asking Santa for drysuits, pogies and creek boats. Happy Holidays from Pennsylvania.

Contact: Steve Barber

PaStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Puerto Rico

On December 5th, ACA-PR along with Paddle Paradise PR, Advance and Amateur SUP, and Team Barba hosted the SUP @ the lake event. The purpose was to get paddlers from every club, shop and general paddling community together for a Christmas paddling party, networking and get more paddlers to know about the ACA. "Promoting the ACA one paddler at a time."

Contact: Omar Ramos

PRStateDirector@americancanoe.net

South Carolina

ACA South Carolina attended the last MS Society event in partnership with Joe Moore, to discuss adaptive paddling and demoing adaptive boats. Also, Charleston, SC recently hosted the ACA Annual Instructor Trainer Conference, featuring South Carolina's Foothills Paddling Club receiving the 2015 Stroke of Achievement Award.

Contact: Ethan Talley, Kyle Thomas

SCStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Tennessee

I'm Jessie Beckett and I just became the State Director for Tennessee. 2016 is going to be another awesome year starting in January with a Nashville chapter of Team River Runner getting rolling. Along with a focus on Adaptive Paddling, TSRA and TVCC paddling schools are on the calendar, along with Swift Water Rescue and Basic River Rescue courses. Paddle Adventures Unlimited will host their third annual Paddlefest, and World Kayak will host its 2016 Muddy Rivers Festival. TSRA will be focusing on more waterway access builds along with their strong focus on conservation.

Contact: Jessie Beckett

TnStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Wisconsin

Wisconsin paddlers are enjoying late season paddling. Trading in snow shovels for kayaks, kayakers have been spotted on Green Bay, Lake Winnebago, and Lake Michigan. White-water enthusiasts have had their pick of rivers due to the recent deluge of rain. This will be the last gasp before spring thaw.

Contact: Thomas Schrader

WiStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Vermont

Planning is underway for the 2016 paddling season. The ACA affiliated Vermont Paddlers Club is considering offering winter pool sessions so you can practice your roll in a supportive and ice-free environment. Stay tuned to www.vt.paddlers.net for updates and information.

Contact: Nathan Lavery

VtStateDirector@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!



Free Rapid Media Subscription!

When you join the ACA, or renew your membership, you get a free print or digital subscription to your choice of one of the following Rapid Media Titles:

Adventure Kayak
Canoeroots
Rapid
Kayak Angler

[Click here](#) to learn more about this and other ACA member benefits!



ACA Outfitter, Livery & Guide Spotlight



Alaska Kayak School

Since 1999, the Alaska Kayak School offered expedition support and ran guided adventures for skilled sea paddlers, and we also offered ACA and BCU courses from our base on the Kenai Peninsula in Homer, Alaska. In 2012, we moved our base to Kodiak Island, where sea kayaking has been an important part of the culture for 7,000 years.

Since we moved to Kodiak in 2012 we've continued teaching courses and done a little guiding, but in 2015 our world changed. The Alaska Kayak School has been given the opportunity to work in partnership with Island Trails Network, NOAA, and the State of Alaska to conduct a sea kayak based marine debris clean up and removal from 60 miles of shoreline of Shuyak Island State Park from June to September 2016. Shuyak is a scenic state park that has been heavily impacted by marine debris pollution and is the easternmost large island of the Kodiak Archipelago. We're looking for volunteer sea kayakers with level 3-4 skills that have two weeks to spend helping us with the clean up. The ACA is one of our partners and has provided outreach on the clean

up and will provide some clean up supplies in the form of Green Bags we can use to collect debris from Shuyak.

We're proud to be able to convert 20 years of paddling into an environmental action that may pave the way for future sea kayak based clean ups of remote shorelines in Alaska. If you're interested in participating in a marine debris cleanup of a remote and scenic island in Alaska for two weeks next summer, send me your email address and I'll send you some more information, alaskakayakschool@gmail.com.

The Alaska Kayak School continues to offer ACA skills, leadership and instructor development programs from our base on Kodiak, and we are available to travel to teach coastal kayaking training and assessment skills, leadership and instructor courses in Alaska. Please feel free to contact us for more information.

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

MEMBER PHOTO OF THE MONTH



“Edgar and Gryphon really miss getting out in their boats! In 5 months, we’ll all be paddling again!”
- Sheila Goss

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.

Charleston Beckons

By Ali Akhyari, ACA Instructor & Outdoor Recreation Specialist at Charleston County Parks



It is becoming an increasingly well-known and agreed upon fact that Charleston, SC is a fantastic place to visit. Founded in 1670, there's no denying the architectural and Southern charm associated with historic Charleston, and there is a cornucopia of reasons to visit. The food is enlightening. Accommodations are wonderful. The people are friendly. It is historically relevant. There is so much to do.

If you're a paddler, though, there is no question why you should visit this semi-tropical, coastal town with harbor, marsh and island paddling options where you're almost guaranteed to share the water with some dolphins. The real question is more about when to come. The easy answer in 2016 is April 15-17, during the 26th annual Charleston Outdoor Festival.

Previously known as the East Coast Canoe and Kayak Festival, the Charleston Outdoor Festi-

val is one the largest festivals and kayak symposiums of its kind on the Eastern Seaboard. Over the years, the festival has expanded to include other outdoor adventure disciplines including mountain biking, rock climbing, archery and more. It even operates in conjunction with sanctioned USA Climbing and PDGA Disc Golf competitions. The Charleston Outdoor Festival provides a venue for outdoor adventure enthusiasts to participate in workshops, compete, meet with vendors, explore gear, socialize, paddle with others and purchase equipment at special discounts. All the while, it continues to honor its original symposium roots for the kayakers and other paddlers who continue to make the event great.

The festival is well-known for attracting quality instructors from around the world to teach a myriad of fascinating courses throughout the weekend. For example, this past year you could learn navigation from Ken Fink, the

originator of the symposium concept. You could have gotten some tips about short-boat surfing from US National Surf Kayak Champion, Spencer Cooke. Nigel Dennis could have gotten you more comfortable sea kayaking in tidal currents. You could have learned about Combat Rolling with the “Man in Black” himself, Dubside.

But don't worry if you missed it. These are just a few of the regulars who join us every spring for a celebration of all things paddling as the world is in rebirth here in Charleston. Additionally, there's always an abundance of boats and equipment to try, and to purchase with special pre-season pricing from local retailers and international brand representatives. There are also plenty of opportunities to get on the water and experience Charleston with seasoned professionals. It doesn't hurt to have the Atlantic Ocean as your backdrop, supporting the natural beauty of planet earth in and around 32°46'N, 79°55'W as we spin through an eternal universe.

Of course, this is a festival, which means lots of additional activities to try, like archery and mountain biking. It means music, food and drinks. Consequently, because this is the

Charleston Outdoor Festival, it also means rubbing elbows with fellow outdoor and nature enthusiasts.

If you're looking for a time to enjoy Charleston as a paddler of any discipline, there really isn't a bad time to visit. However, the Charleston Outdoor Festival, featuring the East Coast Kayak Symposium and other offerings is not to be missed. This year's festival will be held April 15-17 at James Island County Park. While there are a variety of accommodations from beachside B&Bs to 5-star downtown hotels, you can also camp at the park itself which neighbors a salt marsh and is fed by the Stono River.

The “number 1 small city in America”, according to *Conde Nast and Travel + Leisure*, is waiting to put a smile on your face and a wake behind your vessel. We hope to see ya'll soon.

For more information about visiting or paddling in Charleston, please see the following resources:

- [Charleston County Parks & Recreation Commission](#)
- [Charleston Visitors Bureau](#)



COMPETITION



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

May 7, 2016

North Carolina Paddle Festival
Swansboro, North Carolina

June 4, 2016

36th Annual GRWCR
Fredericksburg, Virginia

July 6, 2016

Penobscot River Whitewater Nationals
Old Town, Maine

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

USA Canoe/Kayak Update

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



Olympic Update

Slalom

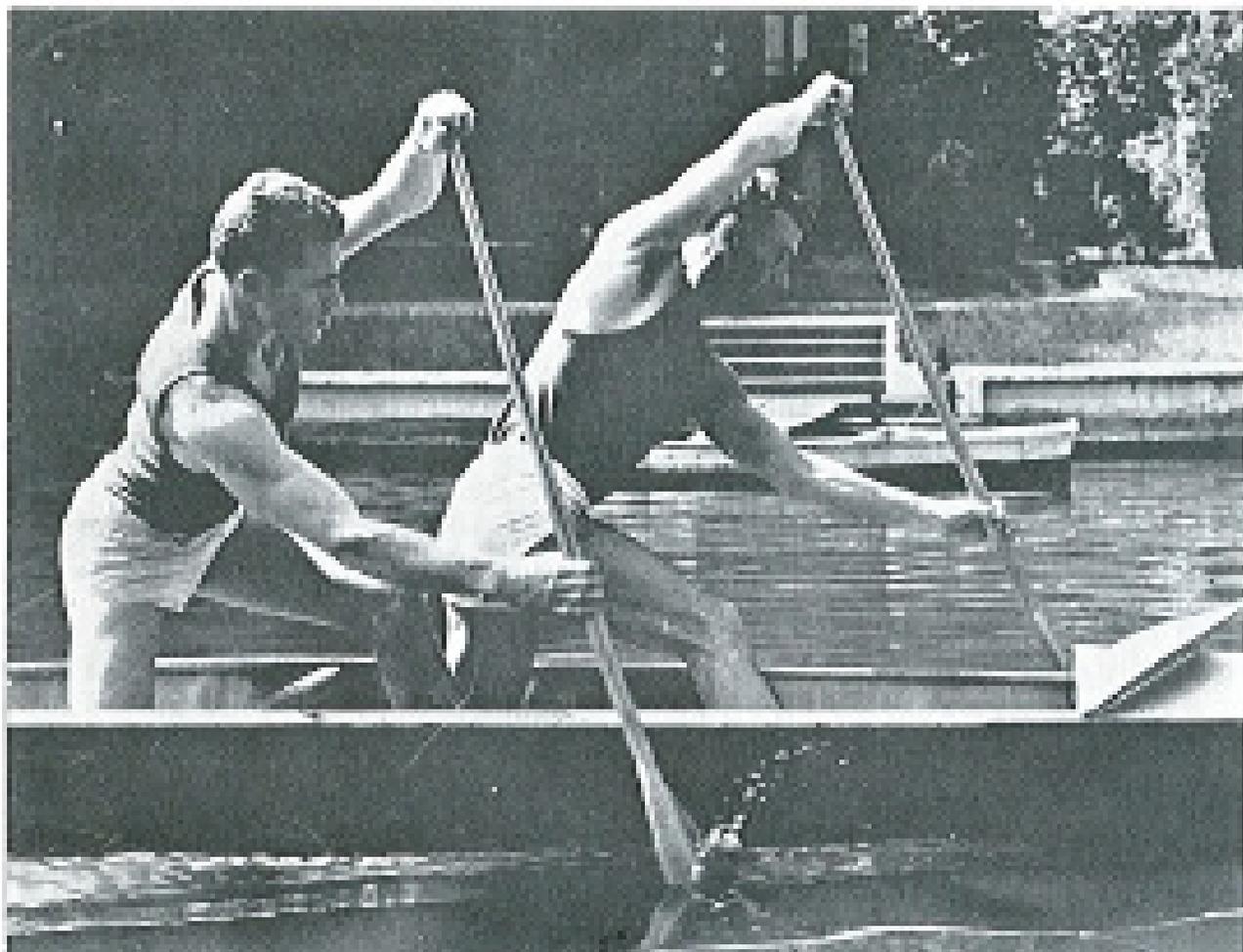
After strong performances at the 2015 Pan American Games and the 2015 ICF Canoe Slalom World Championships, the US is poised to send a full, four-boat team to the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. Three races will be used to select the 2016 Olympic Team: World Championships and two domestic Olympic Team Trials races in Charlotte, NC and Oklahoma City, OK.

Riding his medal-winning performance at World Championships, Michal Smolen has a commanding lead in the selection process for men's kayak. After finishing 4th at World Championships, two-time Olympian Casey Eichfeld has positioned himself well to qualify for his third straight Olympic Games.

Sprint

Uncertainty surrounds the 2016 US Sprint Team after they were unable to qualify any Olympic quota spots at the 2015 ICF Canoe Sprint World Championships. Following their team trials, sprint athletes will have one final opportunity to qualify spots for Rio 2016 this May at the Continental Olympic Qualification Event in Lake Lanier, Georgia.

Paddling History



*Stephen Lysak and Stephen Macknowski - Gold Medal
C-2 1948 Olympics.*

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



Remembering Larry Zuk 1923-2015 *by Marilyn Vogel*

At the opening of the ACA Annual Encampment, Larry Zuk always said, “Remember those who went before you, and the work they did.”

Despite the rumors, Larry did not invent the canoe or sailing a canoe or buy Sugar Island from the Native Americans. Like many canoe sailors he started in flatwater racing, now called “sprint” racing, went on to whitewater racing, paddling trips, and then settled into sailing a canoe. He was a ground camper at Sugar Island all his life; Lake Sebago was his second home for much of his life.

As a young man after his navy service in World War II, he started the Colorado Whitewater Association in 1954. He took time out of his busy schedule to form the Rocky Mountain Division of the ACA. He went on to become Commodore of the ACA from 1975-1976. As a dedicated ACA leader who provided much service to Canoesport, he was the 2012 recipient of the prestigious ACA Legend of Paddling Award.

Known for wooden boats he designed and built, instruction and racing, he also wrote extensively about the history of racing and canoeing sailing. When you see the popular cruising ACA sail, a Dragonfly canoe, the instructions to build a simple rig to sail a canoe, remember Larry Zuk. He left the ACA and Canoesport a better place.



Built to take you to the place you've never been.



Remember Fun? The all-new 2015 Outback® brings it all back. Symmetrical All-Wheel Drive with X-MODE™ has the capability to take you almost anywhere. At 33 mpg*, it's the most fuel-efficient midsize crossover in America*. It's what your adventurous side has been waiting for. **Love. It's what makes a Subaru, a Subaru.**

 **SUBARU**
Confidence in Motion



Subaru is a proud partner of the American Canoe Association.
Learn more at subaru.com/partners.

*Subaru 2015 EPA 24/33/44 mpg city/hwy/combined. EPA-estimated fuel economy for 2015 Subaru Outback. Excludes taxes, title, license, and dealer fees. Actual mileage may vary. Always use proper technique and safety for 2015 model. ©2014 Subaru of America, Inc. All rights reserved. Subaru of America, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Subaru of America, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Subaru of America, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Subaru of America, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer.