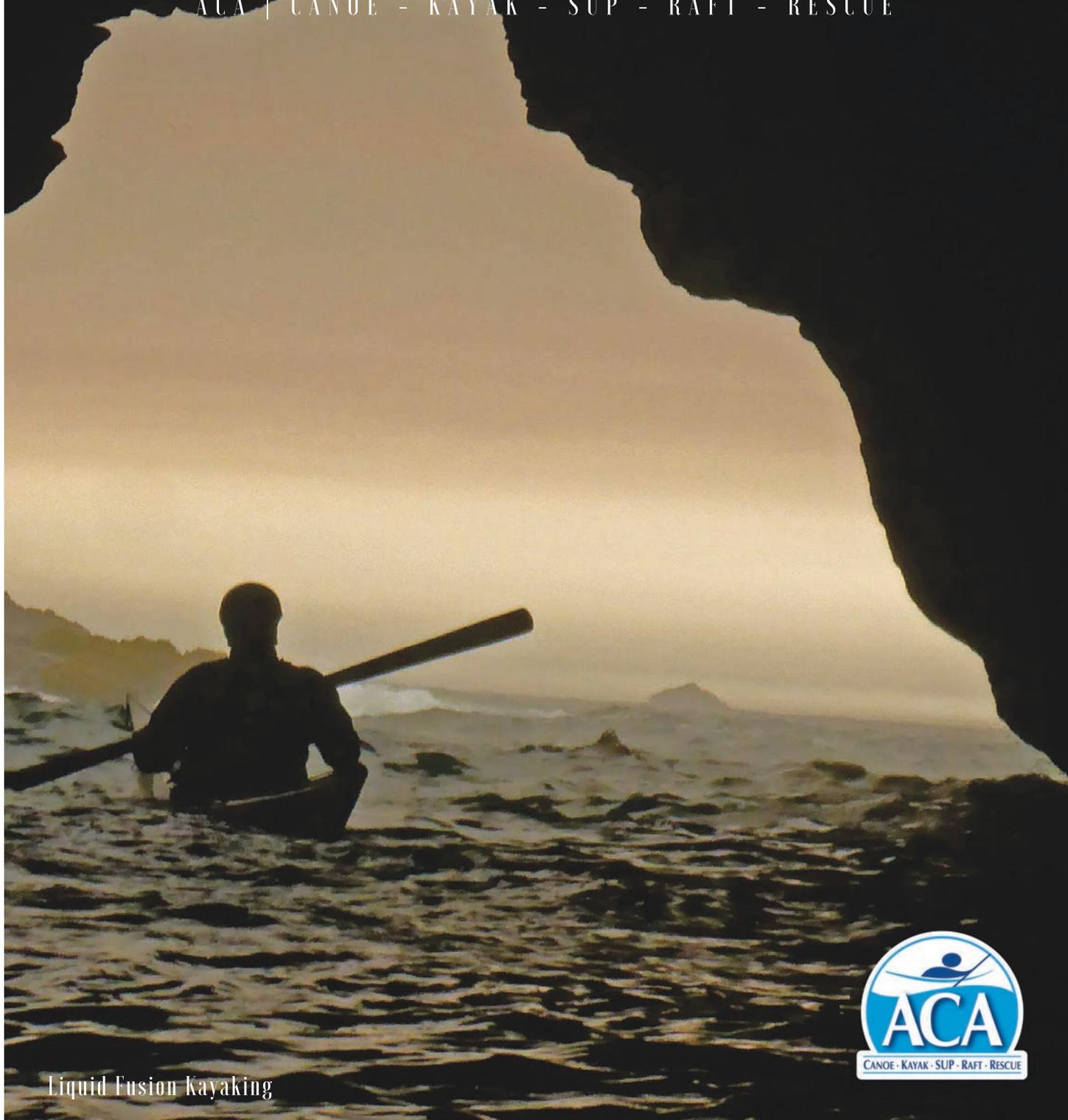


# PADDLE

ACA | CANOE - KAYAK - SUP - RAFT - RESCUE



Liquid Fusion Kayaking

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# Who We Are

Founded in 1880, the American Canoe Association (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 and recreation.

## ACA National Office Staff

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Interim Executive Director	Beth Spilman
SEI Department Manager	Kelsey Bracewell
Membership/State Director Coordinator	Amy Ellis
Membership Coordinator	Michelle Flynn
Sprint National Coach (Development)	Dan Henderson
Compliance & Administrative Manager	Cathlyn Huitt
Sprint National Team Canoe Coach	Aaron Huston
Communications Coordinator	Aaron Mann
Public Policy Chief	Brett Mayer
Insurance Coordinator	LeighAnn Moore
Education & Grant Coordinator	Carrie Schlemmer
Slalom National Team Coach	Rafal Smolen
Sprint National Team Kayak Coach	Zsolt Szadovszki
Finance Manager	Emma Walther

## ACA Board of Directors

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Board President	Robin Pope (NC)
Board Vice President	Trey Knight (FL)
Board Treasurer	John Traendly (GA)
Board Secretary	Stanton Collins (GA)
At-Large Director	William Irving (NC)
At-Large Director	Samuel Fowlkes (NC)
Independent Director	Heather Davis Miller (VT)
Independent Director	Adam Joseph (MD)
Property Management Director	Bill Micks (VA)
Safety Education & Instruction Council	Trey Knight (FL)
Competition Council	Marsh Jones (MN)
Elite Athlete Director - Sprint	Stanton Collins (GA)
Elite Athlete Director - Slalom	Scott Mann (VA)
Elite Athlete Director - Paracanoe	Nikiha Miller (GA)

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[www.americancanoe.org](http://www.americancanoe.org)

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## 2020-2021 SEIC Discipline Committees

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### Safety Education & Instruction Council Executive Committee

Chair - Trey Knight (FL)

Vice Chair - Josh Hall (SC)

Secretary - John Traendly (GA)

Past Chair - Steve Hutton (SC)

### Discipline Committee Chairs

### Other Elected Positions

Universal - Crystal Skahan (NH)

River Canoe - Mike Aronoff (VA)

Touring Canoe - Lynn Dominguez (MI)

River Kayak - Lydia Wing (NC)

Coastal Kayak - John Browning (WI)

Surf Kayak - Sean Morley (CA)

Surfski - Matthew Murphy (TX)

Prone Paddling - Robin Pope (NC)

Safety & Rescue - Sam Fowlkes (NC)

Rafting - Elisha McArthur (CO)

SUP - Anna Levesque (NC)

Intro to Paddling - Beth Wiegandt (VA)

International Rep: Ge Wu (China)

International Rep: Sandra De Ugarte (Peru)

At-Large Rep: Dale Williams (GA)

At-Large Rep: Jefferson Atkins (SC)

Engaged Athlete Rep: Pia Lord (FL)

Engaged Athlete Rep: Heidi Henkel (VT)

## 2020-2021 State Directors

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SD-Patrick Wellner (sdstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

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TX-Bruce Bodson (txstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

VT-Jake Taylor (vtstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

VA-Sarah Beth Dinwiddie (vastatedirector@americancanoe.net)

WA-Brent Roth (wastatedirector@americancanoe.net)

WV-Meghan Roberts (wvstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

WI-Luke Martz (wistatedirector@americancanoe.net)

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# MEMBERSHIP

On behalf of the ACA National Office Staff and the Board of Directors, THANK YOU to all members who took the time to complete our recent member survey. Your replies and comments helped us better understand your interests, concerns, and priorities as members of the ACA and of the paddling community as a whole. We are currently reviewing all the submitted feedback, and we will use it as a foundation upon which to build our strategic plans and future administrative endeavors.



One of our biggest take-aways from the survey results was the need for more frequent communication & updates about what is going on at ACA HQ. While we hope that you continue to enjoy the bi-monthly Paddle eMagazine, we invite you to engage with our new monthly newsletter! Check your email inbox for it each month; you can also find all the stories featured in the newsletter at [www.americancanoe.org/news](http://www.americancanoe.org/news).





## THE ART OF CAMPING AT SUGAR ISLAND

Sugar Island is located in the heart of the Thousand Islands in Gananoque, Ontario Canada, which is an international tourism destination near the St. Lawrence Islands National Park. The 35 acre island is privately owned by the ACA and is available to all members.

The island is rustic, and has no modern amenities. It is a pristine, pure environment with crystal clear water, clean air, beautiful night skies full of stars, and sunsets that are unparalleled anywhere else. Primitive campsites and cabins are available to reserve. ACA members are eligible for two free nights of camping per year!

Getting to Sugar Island is as much of part of your trip as the time spent camping and paddling there. The island is located approximately two miles from the Canadian Mainland. You can paddle out to the island or the great folks at Misty Isles Lodge in Gananoque, Ontario offer a water taxi service to the island.

You are cordially invited to come to Sugar Island to paddle, swim, snorkel, fish, sail, or simply relax. To reserve a campsite, a rustic cabin, or for more information about activities, events, volunteer opportunities, or the annual encampment, please visit:  
[www.americancanoe.org/Sugar\\_Island](http://www.americancanoe.org/Sugar_Island)

# Lake Sebago

The ACA has a beautiful family-oriented camp on Lake Sebago near Sloatsburg, New York. Being only 32 miles from New York City, it is located in scenic Harriman State Park. It has been a facility of the ACA for over seven decades!

You're invited to come stay an afternoon or spend an entire week enjoying one of the dozens of cabins or tent platforms, bonfires & socials at the lodge, picnics at the pavilion, frequent races and regattas, hiking, fishing, paddling, and sailing. [Learn more...](#)



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# EDUCATION



## SAFETY EDUCATION & INSTRUCTION COUNCIL

### CURRICULUM & POLICY UPDATES

What happens at an ACA Safety Education & Instruction Council (SEIC) Meeting?! In the spring of each year, the ACA Office Staff host the SEIC Executive Committee and the SEIC Discipline Committees in Fredericksburg, Virginia - the home of the ACA office.

The Discipline Committees host meetings on Thursday: they speak about the ongoing projects or issues within their committee, plus they outline goals and timelines for upcoming work and programs. On Friday the entire SEIC Board meets to provide updates from all discipline committees, partnering organizations (such as the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, the National Safe Boating Council, the Boy Scouts of America, etc). Individuals or committees who bring forth official motions to change or add to SEIC policy, revise ACA educational curriculum, propose the formation of new work groups, and have discussion about the strategic forward movement of the ACA's educational & outreach mission.

The Spring 2020 SEIC Meeting occurred on Friday, February 21st. During this meeting, five new motions were passed by the SEIC (with subsequent approval by the ACA Board of Directors). It is important that ACA instructors know about these motions and resulting curriculum updates/changes:

#### **Motion 2020-02-21-A – Add Low Brace Turn**

The low brace turn was added to the ACA Level 2: Essentials of Sit-On-Top Kayaking sample skills course outline as well as the instructor criteria; it is already included in the skills assessment outline, thus this motion brings all three documents into alignment in regards to this skill. The details of the curriculum can be found at [www.americancanoe.org/Courses\\_Kayak](http://www.americancanoe.org/Courses_Kayak)

#### **Motion 2020-02-21-B – Eliminating QuickStart and SmartStart**

All ACA Level 1 sample skills course outlines (canoe, kayak, and SUP) have been amended to include sample outlines for a variety of time allotments (8 hours, 4 hours, and 1 hour). These new sample outlines eliminate the need for multiple entry-level course titles, and also provide consistent highlighting of the basic skills and information that all entry level paddlers need to know. Subsequently, the ACA QuickStart and SmartStart curriculum documents have been discontinued. Select your discipline from the list at [www.americancanoe.org/Courses](http://www.americancanoe.org/Courses)

### **Motion 2020-02-21-C – Revised L3, L4 and L5 River Canoe Curricula**

This motion provided for the period revision of the ACA Level 2-5: River Canoeing curriculum documents to include sample skills course outlines, skills assessments, and instructor criteria. Changes made include venue descriptions (course location), flat water maneuvers (National On Water Standards) compliant wording, the updating of solo canoe carving methods, and other small grammatical housekeeping changes. Find the curriculum at [www.americancanoe.org/Courses\\_Canoeing](http://www.americancanoe.org/Courses_Canoeing)

### **Motion 2020-02-21-D – Revised L2-L5 Safety + Rescue Curricula**

The ACA's Safety & Rescue Committee has done a phenomenal and thorough job of reviewing and revising their Level 2-5 curriculum documents to clarify terminology and reflect industry best practices. Find the curriculum documents (with changes italicized within each document) at [www.americancanoe.org/Courses\\_SR](http://www.americancanoe.org/Courses_SR)

### **Motion 2020-02-21-F – CMS Transition & IT Requirements for Instructors**

With the development and launch of the Course Management System (CMS), the SEIC Policy Manual has added chapter 1.F., which mandates the use of the CMS as the sole course reporting platform. The exact wording of the motion is as follows: SEIC business is conducted via electronic communication. All Instructors, Instructor Trainers, and Instructor Trainer Educators must have access to a valid email address and use the Course Management System (CMS) for the submission of all course documentation, i.e., registration, reporting, insurance requests, etc.

The best source of information regarding the specifics of each of these motions are SEIC Meeting minutes and your Discipline Committee Chair. Find the past meeting minutes as well as the SEIC Roster & contact information at [www.americancanoe.org/SEIC](http://www.americancanoe.org/SEIC)

Would you like to be more involved with the development and execution of ACA policy and curriculum? Get more involved with your discipline committee - reach out to the discipline chair about current projects and opportunities to contribute your knowledge and skills!



ACA INSTRUCTORS & TRAINERS

# **COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The ACA Course Management System (CMS) was launched on February 1, 2020. The CMS design and development team has already updated the system with additional user-friendly features and refined several processes such as requesting ACA insurance coverage as well as uploading first aid & CPR credentials.

ACA Instructors, Trainers, and Educators - please visit [www.americancanoe.org/CMS](http://www.americancanoe.org/CMS) to check out the new features! Also - be sure to read the CMS user guides! Technical assistance & administrative contact information is located on the first page of the documents.



# PADDLESPORTS SAFETY FACILITATOR

A paddling safety training and certification program designed for staff from outfitters, guide services, camps, youth groups, and more.

With the recent termination of the American Red Cross Small Craft Safety course, there are large numbers of summer camps, youth organizations, and outfitter & livery businesses that are actively seeking time and cost efficient paddlesports training and certification. The ACA Paddlesport Safety Facilitator (PSF) program is an approved substitute, and been recommended by the American Red Cross as well as other national recreation industry leaders such as the American Camp Association. Here are the answers to some FAQ:

## **What is the Paddlesports Safety Facilitator (PSF) course?**

This program allows for the opportunity for Paddlesport Safety Facilitator Certification in canoeing, kayaking, and/or stand up paddleboarding (SUP). This certification is NOT equivalent to an ACA instructor certification; it is a one-year certification for land-based paddling safety only. The training for this certification includes a base module (non-discipline specific) plus three complementary modules that focus specifically on canoeing, kayaking, and SUP.

## **Who are the target market(s) for the Paddlesports Safety Facilitator program?**

This course is appropriate for the staff of liveries, parks and recreation sites, rental companies, or guide services. The PSF course also is a suitable alternative for the discontinued Small Craft Safety course once offered by the American Red Cross. Therefore, other markets that will use the PSF program include summer camps, youth organizations (such as the YMCA, the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the Boy Scouts of America, and the Girl Scouts of the USA). The course can also be used for any member of the general public that wants to have a comprehensive knowledge base of on-water safety and best practices for enjoyable paddling.

## **Who can teach the PSF course?**

The PSF certification program can be delivered by any ACA Level 3 Instructor (or higher), any ACA Level 1 or 2 Instructor with the PSF Endorsement, or any Instructor Trainer (IT) or Educator (ITE), within their discipline(s) of certification. In order to deliver each of the specific craft modules (canoe, kayak, or SUP), the Instructor, IT, or ITE must be certified or formally assessed within each specific discipline. For example: A currently certified canoeing Instructor Trainer must also hold instructor certification or documented skills assessments in kayaking and SUP in order to deliver all three craft specific modules.

Are you an ACA certified instructor but not sure if you can teach this course, or need more info about coordinating a course in your community? To review the course curriculum documents and review a list of additional guidelines, please visit [www.americancanoe.org/PSF](http://www.americancanoe.org/PSF).

# INTRODUCTION TO PADDLING

L1: CANOEING



L1: STAND UP  
PADDLEBOARD

## L1: KAYAKING

All ACA Level 1 sample skills course outlines (canoe, kayak, and SUP) have been amended to include sample course outlines for a variety of time allotments (8 hours, 4 hours, and 1 hour). These new sample outlines eliminate the need for multiple entry-level course titles and also provide consistent highlighting of the basic skills and information that all entry level paddlers need to know. Subsequently, the ACA QuickStart and SmartStart curriculum documents have been discontinued.

To review the new documents and course outlines, please [click here](#).

Do you have questions about these course curriculum documents, or any other ACA educational materials? The best person to contact is your discipline committee chair.

Learn more about ACA educational committees and their leadership at

[www.americancanoe.org/SEIC](http://www.americancanoe.org/SEIC)

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# STEWARDSHIP & PUBLIC POLICY

**Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act, H.R. 5598**, was introduced by Minnesota's fourth district congressional representative, Betty McCollum. Over the past three years, we provided updates to the ACA membership on the evolution of rolling back protections for the Boundary Waters and the opening of adjacent lands to sulfide ore copper mining. These activities are ultimately a large threat to the Rainy River Watershed, which is home to 20% of the freshwater resources in the U.S. National Forest system. A single mine within the watershed could pollute pristine waters for five hundred years. Take a moment to review some of the direct language from McCollum's bipartisan bill:

*(9) A peer-reviewed study of water quality impacts from 14 operating United States copper sulfide mines found 100 percent of the mines experienced pipeline spills or accidental releases: 13 mines experienced failures of water collection and treatment systems to control contaminated mine seepage resulting in significant negative water quality impacts.*

Scientifically, it is clear that mining within the Rainy River Watershed will harm water quality and, in turn, the paddling experience for those who recreate in the region. Economically, examining a graph of employment by industry in the region since 1970, mining has been on a steady decline, while the services industry (i.e., recreation and paddling related jobs) has tripled in size.

[Click here](#) and scroll to p.5 to see the graphic and a more in-depth discussion of employment opportunities as related to resources in the Boundary Waters.

Take Action! Please click the link below, created through the ACA partnership with the Outdoor Alliance, and let your lawmakers know that you support the protection of the Boundary Waters! Sign the petition to support Representative McCollum's Bill to permanently protect the Boundary Waters and the Rainy River Watershed from sulfide-ore copper mining: [Save America's Most Visited Wilderness!](#)



# CLEAN WATER RULE ROLLBACK

In 1972 the United States passed the Clean Water Act, through which Congress directed the Agencies to protect “navigable waters.” The waters protected by the Clean Water Act depend upon what is defined as a “navigable water.” Traditional definitions of “navigable waters” often were unclear about which waters qualified as “tributaries” and “adjacent waters.” The 2015 Clean Water Rule expanded the traditional definitions of navigable waters by expanding the definitions of tributaries and adjacent waters to include: 1) ephemeral streams: streams that only have physical indicators of flow for certain parts of the year, and 2) adjacent waters: which include wetlands otherwise unconnected to traditional jurisdictional waters. In other words, this was a great change for the paddling community because a significantly larger percentage of waterways in the United States were subject to the Clean Water Act.

Unfortunately, the 2015 Clean Water Rule was not popular with the agricultural industry. The 2015 Clean Water Rule expanded federal reach and ability to regulate waterways, particularly small waterways flowing on private lands. The 2015 Clean Water Rule provided a scientific basis for including tributaries with a significant connection to traditional jurisdictional waters. It is important to know that the Clean Water Act allows for some pollution, but most importantly, it clarifies limits. Expanding the definition of “navigable waters” granted the Environmental Protection Agency a greater ability to prevent agricultural pollution.

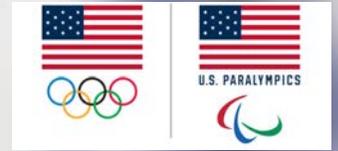
In January 2020, all of this changed again. The definition of “navigable waters” reverted back and now more closely resembles its original definition. There are two main losses. One, ephemeral streams no longer qualify as tributary, and are not regulated by the Clean Water Act. Two, the definition of adjacent wetlands contracted. Since 2015, wetlands were protected in the same manner as lakes and ponds. The only wetlands now protected are those that directly abut to other regulated waterways. In states like Colorado, as many as 68% of their streams may be considered temporary in nature due to their lack of direct abutment to other, larger established waterways. Wetlands like the Prairie Potholes ecosystems in the Dakotas that were protected under the 2015 Clean Water Rule are no longer protected.

Here are some helpful resources if you'd like to learn more:

[2015 Clean Water Rule from Federal Archives](#)

[2020 Navigable Waters Protection Rule: Definition of “Waters of the United States”](#)

# COMPETITION



As we look ahead to a fun and active paddling season, we would like to remind you of the education & training policies required by the U.S. Center for SafeSport. The U.S. Center for SafeSport works collaboratively with the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and ACA to create a healthy, supportive environment for all participants in our sport. As the National Governing Body (NGB) for paddlesports in the U.S., all ACA members should be aware of and follow ACA's SafeSport policies as documented in ACA's SafeSport Handbook.

Furthermore, adult members who have regular contact with or authority over minor (younger than 18) athletes must complete the 90-Minute SafeSport Core online training module. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Adult Competition Member Athletes (18 years and older) traveling to sanctioned national and international competitions
- Officials & Judges
- Coaches
- Professional medical personnel (outside of a hospital or doctor's office setting), including Doctors, Physicians Assistants, Physiologists, Physical Therapists, Massage Therapists, and Psychologists
- Competition Council and Discipline Committees
- Volunteers traveling with teams (domestically & internationally)

If you fall into one of the aforementioned categories and have not yet completed the online SafeSport training, please do so at your earliest convenience. All ACA members are encouraged to participate in the training.

Register here and enter the ACA Access Code: CWDC-RNFK-77PV-KU9J

For those who completed the core training module more than 1 year ago, please complete a 20 minute refresher training module by logging into the training portal on the U.S. Center for SafeSport's home page: [www.safesport.org](http://www.safesport.org). You will not need the access code for the refresher training.

If you have questions, please contact:  
Cathlyn Huitt  
Athlete Safety and Compliance Manager  
[chuitt@americancanoe.org](mailto:chuitt@americancanoe.org)



# Competitions to Watch



**2020 US Olympic Team Trials - Sprint**  
**April 16-19, 2020**  
**Lake Lanier Olympic Park (Gainesville, GA)**

A spot on the 2020 Olympic Team is on the line in Women's C1. In all other categories, athletes will look to qualify for the US National Team to try to qualify additional Olympic quota spots at the 2020 Pan American Canoe Sprint Championships (May 7-10) in Curitiba, Brazil or at the 2020 ICF Canoe Sprint World Cup 2 (May 21-24) in Duisburg, Germany. This event will also be used to select the 2020 Junior and U23 National Teams.

In Paracanoe, athletes will try to qualify for the 2020 National Team with hopes of securing Paralympic quota slots at the 2020 ICF Paracanoe World Championships (May 21-24) in Duisburg, Germany.

**2020 US Olympic Team Trials - Slalom**  
**May 2-3 & May 8-9, 2020**  
**Riversport Rapids (Oklahoma City, OK)**

The overall results after these two events, each composed of two days of competition, will determine which athletes will book their ticket to the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games and who qualifies for the 2020 US Senior National Team. To date, the US has secured Olympic quotas in the men's K1 and women's C1 categories. Prior to the team trials, the US will attempt to qualify a final athlete quota slot in men's C1 at the 2020 Pan American Championships (April 3-5) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The first weekend of competition will also be used to select the 2020 Junior and Under-23 National Teams.

**2020 ICF Wildwater Canoeing World Championships**  
**April 26-30, 2020**  
**Nantahala River (Wesser, NC)**

Athletes from around the world will get a taste of the Great Smokey Mountain hospitality as they make their way to the Western North Carolina for the first Wildwater World Championships held on the Nantahala River.

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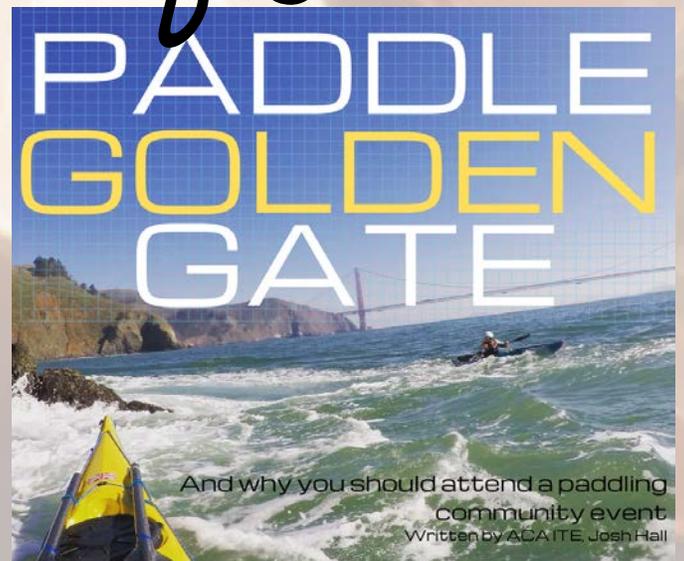
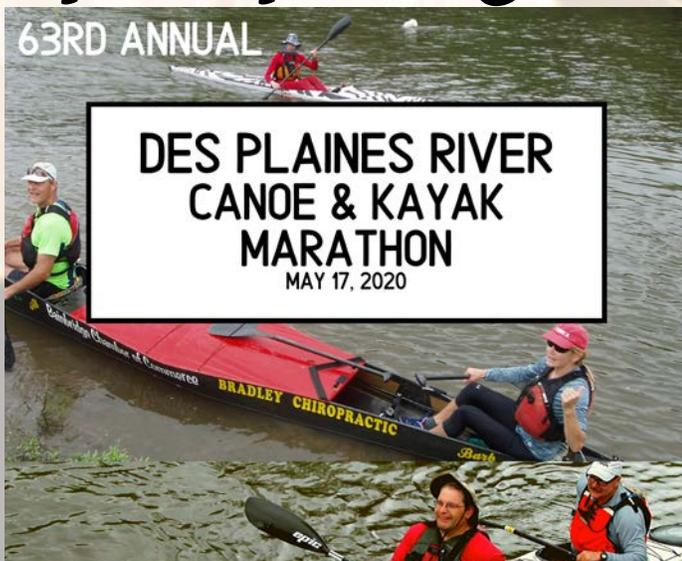
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# RECREATION



*Get Out & Paddle Somewhere New!*

# *Tis The Season of Events*

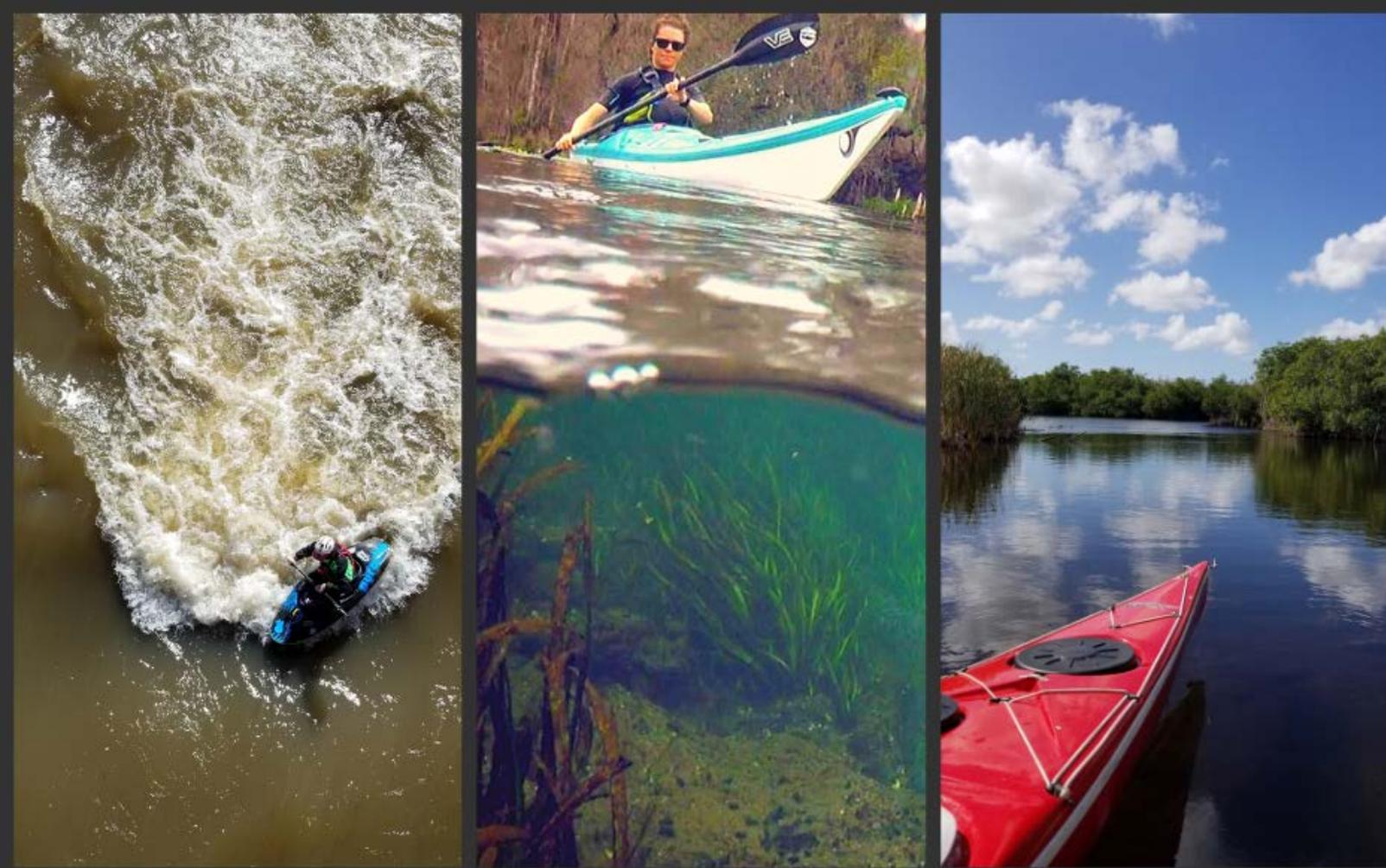




## *Certification Destination - Bahamas!*

When I think about the Bahamas, I visualize people sitting on beaches in a tourist area and sipping on drinks with little umbrellas in them. I had never been there prior to this year and hadn't thought about it as a real destination for myself because I generally prefer remote places with minimal people. However, I would certainly not turn down an opportunity to go there. In January 2020, the opportunity presented itself. It was almost unbelievable when I received the offer from Randi Kruger at Capital City Kayak to go to The Island School in Cape Eleuthera, Bahamas to lead a Level 3 Coastal Kayak Instructor Certification Workshop (ICW) and a Trip Leader Training Program. We had to get the work done in a short window of opportunity between semesters at the school. Randi went down earlier to work with them on skills and rolling before the ICW. When I flew in, I was surprised to find out that the course location was far from the tourist vacation destination I once believed I would be in. It was very remote. The Island School is an incredible institution that promotes student leadership through discovery learning. The campus strives to be sustainable through farming, water conservation, wind and solar power production, and much more. They teach and operate scuba operations in order to facilitate research on nearby reefs. A cafeteria served daily meals that included local cuisine such as Chicken Soupe. Look it up. It was delicious! The students for our course were teachers at the local schools. They take their students on kayak expeditions as a part of the school curriculum; these teachers were already experienced outdoor educators, so as an Instructor Trainer, it made my job easy and enjoyable. They had extensive leadership experience and are all Wilderness First Responders. The group were experienced kayakers with previous training, so they were set up for success. They were an amazing group that embraced the concepts of interactive teaching. Their formal presentations were engaging and their strokes sessions often involved reciprocal teaching techniques and games. The water was beautiful and we encountered lots of wildlife including sea turtle, skates, and sharks! A special thanks to Randi at Capital City Kayak for the opportunity. Overall it was an amazing experience that I am grateful for. I can't wait to go back!

Written by Jeff Atkins, ACA Coastal Kayaking Instructor Trainer



THE BENEFITS OF PADDLING SOUTH FOR THE WINTER

# OFF SEASON ESCAPE

Written by: Lydia Wing  
Program Director, H2o Dreams Paddling School  
Saluda, NC

Most of us can relate to 'burnout:' that feeling when something we used to love, used to daydream about when stuck in traffic or standing in line at the grocery store, something that used to make us feel so alive... just doesn't give us that spark anymore. In the world of paddlesports, seasonal players and industry professionals might resonate with dreaded feelings of burning out on their job, their recreation, their source of fulfillment even more. I know that's true for us as my husband, Chris Wing, and I run a paddling school in Western North Carolina. We realized several years back that the ebb and flow of the seasonality of paddlesports means an on-season and an off-season, and while the arcs of those seasons have changed over time, our dedication to using the off-season as a "reset" has gotten more and more important.

In years past, the comfort of our own home and the often uninviting temperatures in Western North Carolina were making it too easy to defer play and adventure to another time, and we were missing opportunities to reset and get a jump on burning out. This year we changed the plan: Enter Columbus, Georgia. Once a relatively unknown spot on the south Georgia map, Columbus has emerged as a warm(er), predictable, and accessible whitewater wonderland since a dam removal several years ago. An amazing community of paddlers has sprung up around this urban playground, making it easy to connect with paddling partners, find places to stay in town, and enjoy something that the Southeastern US is not very well known for: high-volume, world class whitewater. The unique geology of the Chattahoochee River means big water fun with lower consequence than often found in other high-volume venues, making it the perfect place for Chris and I to base from for a few weeks in early 2020.

The days were simple: walk to the river, play until we're cold/tired/hungry, walk back. Rest, head out again. Our quest to leave winter worries behind was so far successful as our days mostly revolved around linking up with friends on the river and determining where to play that day based on what paddling skills we wanted to work on. But when Columbus experienced a coldsnap in mid-January that rivaled the frigid temperatures we were seeing back home in the mountains, we realized we could do something about it: we packed up, and fled further south.

An exploratory trip to Florida was always part of the plan as we had sea kayaks in tow, the weather just expedited the original plans. Chris and I had never spent any time on the Gulf side of the state, so we decided to head down the coast first, and then slowly work our way back North when we felt like it. Our first stop was in Big Cypress National Preserve, where this "whitewater kayaker by trade" swapped my normal craft for a long, smooth riding sea kayak to explore the Turner River Trail and paddle through mangroves and sawgrass. This was actually my first time spending any concentrated time in a sea kayak, and I immediately appreciated the allure: tons of dry storage for snacks and gear plus fast, efficient paddling meant covering a lot more ground (or river, rather) than I ever could in my whitewater boat. Navigating mangrove trails was only the first challenge of our jaunt on the Turner River: this would also be my first time sharing my river space with an apex predator... alligators! We certainly saw our fair share of modestly sized gators but it was the diverse, lively bird population that I loved the most: ospreys nesting and caring for babies, cormorants, king fishers, herons, egrets, bald eagles, and several I had never seen before and couldn't identify, living peacefully in the mangroves.

Breaking from our norm of whitewater made for one of the highlights of the trip: an eight-mile out and back excursion to Mound Key, an archaeological site in Estero Bay, which required a bit closer attention to tides and navigation, and an early rise to time everything properly. We were on the water before 8am and saw very little motorized traffic as we worked our way out to the key, which afforded us the special opportunity to see a pod of dolphins playing and blowing water very close to our kayaks- a first in my life.

We spent a few more weeks in Columbus taking advantage of high water and big fun before making our return home to Saluda, NC. The trip south had done the trick: new adventures and chances to problem solve made for pure connection with the water, ourselves, and each other. Getting to paddle in new places and in new ways dusted off old passions and refueled a desire for personal improvement and diversifying our skills. Choosing to experience new challenges- be it reading maps and tidal charts or deciding to surf a mammoth wave- during a time when outside noise and stress was minimal allowed us to take personal inventories and identify barriers preventing us from pushing through to new frontiers. While this looked different for each of us, the time away from the familiar while seeking that old flame before it burns out was equally yielding.

Why do we continue to pursue the river? After a few weeks of resetting, I think I have an answer: the power of adventure, the gravity of the unknown, and the spark found only when you catch a glimpse of the primeval.

Want a taste of the Western North Carolina river scene? Find out more about [H2O Dreams Paddling School](#), a premier source of ACA paddling education and instructor certification.



# Where Your Certifications Can Take You



Where can your ACA certifications take you? Pretty much anywhere on earth. When I was young, I read stories of polar exploration and learned of the adventures of Amundson, Scott, Byrd, and Perry. Later, I learned with awe of the incredibly successful “failed” expedition of Earnest Shackelton. While other kids were interested in horses, dogs, and dirt bikes, I was entranced by polar ice and explorers.



As a lifelong kayak guide and coach I also dreamed of going to New Zealand 25 years ago, but couldn't afford the trip unless I could earn my way. I was able to contract myself out to a company in Abel Tasman National Park and began a very eye opening portion of my life. A quarter century later, I sit at the dining table here in Nelson New Zealand with a mate I worked with back then, swapping paddling tales. That trip enabled me to dream bigger about where my kayak could take me and since then it has been a cash positive adventure in Canada, Michigan, Florida, Belize, Honduras, Costa Rica, Patagonia, Alaska, Greenland, Iceland, South Georgia Island, and now Antarctica. Sea kayaks have been my way to explore our planet in a way I could have even imagined.

So...how can you transmogrify a love of paddlesport into these kind of adventures? First, round out your paddling training and experience across disciplines. If you have certifications in one discipline, cross over into another to expand your repertoire. Second, work with as many coaches and mentors as you can. Not only will you learn more tricks and tips, you will gain precious connections to others in paddlesport that give you onramps to your dream trips. I wouldn't have ended up in Antarctica working on an expedition ship without connections. Third, get serious about wilderness medical training and be sure to study and complete accredited training. Fourth, utilize prior knowledge: Speak Spanish or Cantonese? Ski Mountaineering? People management skills? These things count and are useful in a work world of international multi-sport adventures. Lastly, don't be afraid to dream big. The difference between those who read about big adventures and those who live them is simply stepping past the fear and making a plan. Go for it.

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# SPECIAL FEATURES



February  
2020

## Randi Kruger

INSTRUCTOR OF THE MONTH

February 2020's Instructor of the Month is Randi Kruger from Accokeek, Maryland.

The ACA staff had the opportunity to speak with Randi and ask about the role that paddling plays in her life, and how she plans to use her skills and experience to impact others:

*I am a small business owner, combining coastal and river instruction with kayak & gear sales. I paddle full-time. I left my desk job and career behind in 2015 to pursue my passion for water sports, with an overarching goal to have a positive impact on others. I am also a working artist; I collect elements and ideas for my art while I'm paddling on my home river, the Potomac, and the other locations I find myself.*

*As educators and guides, ACA instructors have the opportunity to help people experience the natural world in a safe and low-impact manner. Being on the water helps people enjoy their lives. I can't think of a more positive way I can make an impact on the future, than by spreading happiness now.*



March  
2020

## Brian Davis

INSTRUCTOR OF THE MONTH

March 2020's Instructor of the Month is Brian Davis from Saluda, North Carolina.

*I am a full time whitewater kayak and swiftwater rescue Instructor and have been teaching for 8 years. I primarily teach at H2O Dreams Paddling School in Saluda, NC and as a senior staff member, but also occasionally teach at the U.S. National Whitewater Center in Charlotte, NC.*

*I started paddling as something fun to do and stay cool in the summertime, but I never envisioned it totally taking over my life. I enjoy it so much that I left a corporate job and the city atmosphere to totally immerse myself in kayaking and whitewater. Now I teach kayaking full time and live beside the Green River in the North Carolina mountains.*

*When I first started teaching kayaking, things didn't always go according to plan, and I had to learn to investigate why and where the disconnect was. I started to learn the physics and could better explain the "why." I am still striving to become a better paddler and instructor so as to prevent myself from falling into the trap of complacency. Never stop learning!*



# Marge Cline

## MEMORIAL GRANT

A family rafting trip to West Virginia in the late 1970s hooked Marge "River Mom" Cline on river sports. She became hooked immediately and made it her life's goal to introduce others to the thrill of whitewater. She began teaching others within a few years and became certified by the ACA.

Her passion continued off the water as well; Marge edited the Chicago Whitewater Association newsletter for more than 25 years. She also subscribed to similar newsletters around the country and gathered pertinent news for a publication called Confluence, which connected canoeists and kayakers all throughout the midwest U.S. In 1996, she was inducted into the ACA Hall of Fame as a Legend of Paddling award recipient. In 2000, Marge was named one of 100 Paddlers of the 20th Century by Paddler Magazine.

In 2019, a special grant fund was created to honor Marge and her numerous contributions to paddling: applications were accepted between December 2019 and March 2020 from individuals or non-profit organizations whose goal it is to provide paddlesports opportunities for youth in the Midwest. With over two dozen applications submitted, it was a tough task to select the recipients of the funds. The ACA is proud to announce the recipients of these grant funds for 2020:

The Chicago Voyagers:

*"Our mission is to empower at-risk youth through outdoor experiential adventures that foster healthy relationships and responsible behavior. We focus exclusively on serving predominantly minority, at-risk adolescents - those living in greater Chicago's high need communities. Funding from the Mike & Marge "River Mom" Cline Memorial Grant will support our outdoor adventure therapy program, with emphasis on kayaking and canoeing. These paddling programs are designed to diminish the impact of adverse childhood experiences as well as promote effective communication, emotional regulation, teamwork, and the development of leadership skills."*

River Bend Nature Center:

*"This grant funding will enable us to offer a youth sea kayak camp, which will introduce local children to the exciting world of sea kayaking. Our campers come from an urban demographic and have demonstrated financial need. These youth have limited exposure to nature or recreational activities, and this four day sea kayak camp will not only help them grow their understanding and appreciation for the natural world, but also will provide an opportunity for them to learn about the ecological health of the waterways of the Racine, Wisconsin area."*

Congratulations to both the Chicago Voyagers & the River Bend Nature Center! We can't wait to support your programs which make a big difference in the lives of young paddlers in the Midwest!

# SALT WATER and SPEAR TIPS

The World's First  
Circumnavigation of the Island of New Guinea  
in a Traditional Sailing Canoe



Thor F. Jensen

## Book Review: Salt Water and Spear Tips By Dr. Rob Goodfellow

What do you do if you are a seasoned sea kayaker who dreams about undertaking a world record expedition with social purpose? You sell everything, make out your last Will and Testament, travel to Papua New Guinea, buy a traditional outrigger sailing canoe, and team up with three Milne Bay master canoe sailors. Danish adventure filmmaker Thor F. Jensen did just that. The result – a remarkable expedition book – *Salt Water and Spear Tips: The World's First Circumnavigation of the Island of New Guinea in a Traditional Sailing Canoe*.

The book tells the story of a voyage of some 6,300 kilometers around New Guinea – the second largest island in the world (after Greenland) evading pirates, dodging crocodiles, and surviving near capsizes.

One of the noble purposes of this low-tech adventure was to demonstrate to the people of New Guinea – both Papua New Guinea and Indonesian Papua, that they had everything at hand to make a world record. For much the same reason there were no sponsor stickers on the canoe. Instead, the sides of the craft were decorated with traditional carvings collected from village communities encountered during the voyage: commendable.

On the first day of the journey the canoe almost capsizes. On the second day Jensen falls overboard, which earns him a rebuke from his crew and makes him realize that sailing a tree trunk is a different ballgame than paddling a kayak.

One of the most satisfying things about *Salt Water and Spears Tips* is that everyone learns to work together. And then they have the best sort of adventure – danger, exploration, intrigue, and life lessons – not unlike Mark Twain's tale of life and friendship on the Mississippi River: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Fin*. Like Twain's great American tale there are other considerations for Thor. F. Jensen. His remarkable adventure challenges notions of colonial exploration by giving the people of New Guinea their own voice. And so, many of the sensational stereotypes that often misrepresent modern day New Guinea are challenged and dispelled. In their place the reader discovers a new narrative: a blending of the best of customary tradition and the best of the modern world. For canoers and kayakers alike, *Salt Water and Spear Tips* has all the elements of a great sea journey. But be warned, as you turn the last page, you will have a deep, restless longing to plan your very own high seas expedition – or perhaps just start with a paddle on a placid lake or do a little Mississippi daydreaming.





# Style Canoeing

Written by Charles Burchill

I want to tell you my canoeing story. I grew up in northern lake country with my parents, two older brothers, and a younger sister. The canoe was our utilitarian vehicle – it was used to move things from one place to another, fish, hunt, and travel. It was not a toy; it was the pickup truck in our lives. It was made of wood, built, and maintained with our own hands. It was large enough to fit our whole family, some food staples (rice, flour, maybe a deer), plus our living and shelter needs. It would allow us to go traveling for a month, but small enough to carry one of us across the lake to visit friends for an evening. Living on the water I learned the motion of the canoe from infancy to adulthood. The canoe was a stable platform for many activities of life, it was efficient, quiet, a workhorse; it got the task done. When loaded, it traveled straight with little encouragement, and was completely predictable in any condition. When I grew old enough, I took my place ferrying my parents, family and friends, stuff, across the lake and down the river. Learning was a process of watching others, asking a few careful questions, trial and error – figuring out what worked and what allowed me to paddle for hours and days without getting tired or sore.

There were times that the canoe was just not large enough to carry everything. I would cross the lake with my family and my dad would send me back for a load of equipment, lumber, or other staples. At first, crossing the lake was a task to complete - straight there and back no goofing around. Unloaded, the canoe was like a dry fall leaf that had landed on the water – it skittered randomly across the surface, bobbed like a cork on the waves, and was just unpleasant. I noticed when my dad was out fishing, spending a quiet evening away from us in self-contemplation, he would sit near the middle of the canoe. Trying this out I discovered I had much better control; it felt as if I tamed the beast. Crossing the lake became easier and faster. I discovered by keeling close to the edge I could use the same paddle stroke with the same power as when paddling a loaded canoe. Being near the edge caused the canoe to precariously tip at first, but at some point the canoe seemed to get more stable, and I had even more control. I volunteered as often as I could to run errands, pickup packages, and take messages across the lake. I found that the canoe became much more agile when tilted up on edge, and because I was quick, I could spend a little time exploring on my voyages. When I got older, I took the canoe for longer outings: fishing, checking traps, or, in reality, getting some quiet time. The canoe could be encouraged to spin, and turn, and glide in more ways than I thought possible. The random motion of a skittering leaf became a dance across the lake. Purposeful, but delicate, the motion over the water was intoxicating.

I eventually left the lake and river on my own life's journey. I never forgot the lessons I learned and the feeling of canoe, paddle, and water. Recently I returned to the lake; I arrived early in the morning when the mist was still drifting across the lake, the surface still as glass. I knew my dad continued to make the crossing every morning checking for messages and to pick up any packages. Through the morning mist a canoe came gliding silently into view. It moved gracefully across the water, barely causing a ripple, traveling in loops and spins, maybe a hint of a pause (an exclamation), then continuing in the opposite direction – it was a beautiful dance. When he approached the shore, my stern quiet, my dad winked, and I knew then that we shared the same secret knowledge. I dance in memory of my dad.

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# SPOTLIGHT

ACA MEMBERS DOING GREAT THINGS

## Outfitter, Livery, and Guide Member Spotlight



RicardoSUP is a new ACA Outfitter, Livery, and Guide member - the Oak Harbor based paddling business was started by ACA certified SUP Instructor Ricardo Jobin. He offers some fantastic trips and courses in the Bowman Bay & Deception Pass areas, and his students have raving reviews! Read more about this OLG by [clicking here](#).

## ACA Proschool Spotlight



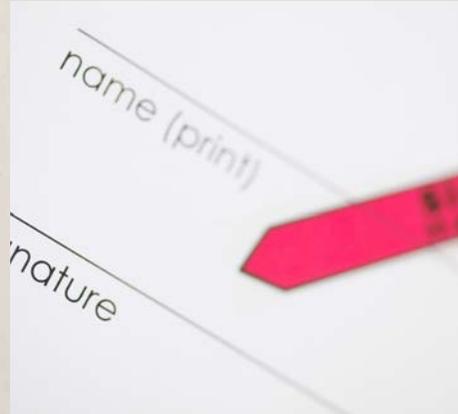
Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission (CCPRC) offers a variety of Canoeing, Stand Up Paddleboard and Kayaking skills classes and trips, including educational outings for beginner to expert paddlers. From day-trips, weekend skills classes, to certification courses, our ACA certified paddling 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. 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.

Visit [www.americancano.org/Find\\_Instruction](http://www.americancano.org/Find_Instruction) to search for Proschools, Outfitters, Instructors, and events near you!

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# INSURANCE



As of Jan. 30, 2020, the ACA insurance department has a new online waiver system available for members participating in a Paddle America Club (PAC) insured event (current members and event members). There are no longer separate online links for Adult & Minor waivers.

We have updated the link on the [ACA PAC webpage](#) and ask that you no longer share the previous links with your current members. For those clubs that have already shared the previous waiver link with your club members, please provide them with the updated link.

We will accept both waivers for the time being as we are transitioning to the new link.

To learn how to manage/verify online waivers for your insured event, please [email the ACA Insurance Coordinator](#) for more details on how to set up this service. There have been no changes to the paper/printable waivers; they are still separate Adult & Minor paper waivers.

While we currently have this online waiver process available for PACs only, we are actively working on a similar system for ACA certified instructors and affiliate organizations. Thanks for your patience as we work on making online waivers available for more of our members!

LeighAnn Moore, Insurance Coordinator  
ACA | Canoe - Kayak - SUP - Raft - Rescue

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*Thank you for reading  
ACA Paddle eMagazine!*

Have some news to share?  
Please [click here](#) to submit content for consideration.