

PADDLE

ACA | Canoe - Kayak - SUP - Raft - Rescue, Volume 2, Issue 6, September 2016

2016 Paralympic

Games in Rio

Exclusive Athlete Interviews

News From Your ACA

State Directors



***Instructors of the Month
for August & September***

Upcoming Competitions

ACA Mission Statement

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



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Stand Up Paddle Industry Association
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Outdoor Alliance for Kids
Hobie Polarized Sunglasses
Association of Outdoor Recreation & Education
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Whitewater Symposium
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Surf Kayak - Nigel Law (GA)

Cover photo

Alana Nichols, Paralympic Athlete

Follow us on...



Meet Your ACA Staff



Wade Blackwood
Executive Director

“Canoe Jousting.”



Christopher Stec
Chief Operating Officer

“The Kayak Playboat Shot Put.”



Candy Patten
Insurance Coordinator

“Kayak Ballet with Dogs.”

If you could make up your own paddling discipline, what would it be?



Dave Burden
International Paddlesports Ambassador

“Kayak Yodeling.”



Amy Ellis
State Director/Membership Coordinator

“Freestyle inner tubing.”



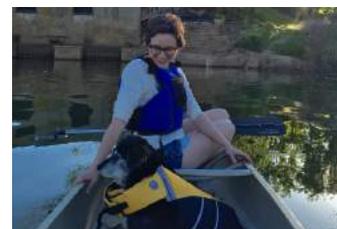
Louis Metzger
Public Policy Chief

“Kayak Seal Launching - with someone else’s boat.”



Kelsey Bracewell
SEI Coordinator

“Raft Gymnastics.”



Catharine Lloyd
Communications Coordinator

“Synchronized SUP.”



Barbara Bendele
Office Manager

“Challenge Canoe Partnering – partner a skilled paddler with someone who faces physical, developmental or emotional challenges in their everyday lives.”



Katie Hansen
Membership Coordinator

“Stand Up... Horse?”



Marcel Bieg
Western States Outreach Director & Grant Manager

“Hover boat, like in Back to the Future but with a kayak!”



T.J. Turner
Education & Outreach Coordinator

“Extreme Backwards Paddling (Multi-discipline).”

www.americancanoe.org/staff

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STEWARDSHIP



Photographer: Lisa Belanger Neal
Featuring: Alexander Neal
Location: Lake Superior, Pictured Rocks
National Lakeshore

Stay Up-To-Date On ACA's Stewardship Initiatives

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

www.americancanoe.org/PublicPolicy



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

www.americancanoe.org/PGEvents



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

www.americancanoe.org/TrackTrash



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

www.americancanoe.org/LNT

Paddle Green Spotlight:

Paddle Potomac! Paddle Shenandoah!

By Nathan Ackerman and Mark Frondorf



[Paddle Potomac! Paddle Shenandoah!](#) was organized by Potomac Riverkeeper Network (PRKN) in partnership with the National Park Service, and timed to coincide with their centennial this year. PRKN works to protect the public's right to clean water in our rivers and streams. We fight polluters to protect the Potomac and Shenandoah, the source of drinking water for millions. Currently we are involved in 17 active suits and are holding Dominion Power accountable for dumping millions of gallons of waste water from their coal ash ponds into a tributary of the Potomac.

We believe the best way to build an appreciation for the river is by experiencing the river. With that in mind, we worked with local outfitters and boathouses to present a dozen events aimed at getting people of all skill levels on the river. While some paddles were free to the public, the ticketed events help support the work we do. The event is an effective way to introduce the public to the organization, and in some cases, to the rivers, as many first time paddlers participated.

From June 8th-19th, several hundred paddlers joined us on outings ranging from overnight

camping and bird-watching to whitewater and moonlight trips. It was our first time organizing an event of this size, so we were thrilled to see a huge turnout and enthusiastic response to the wide variety of experiences we offered.

Q: What was Paddle Potomac! Paddle Shenandoah! and why did PRKN organize it?

A: Paddle Potomac! Paddle Shenandoah! burst on the scene as a twelve-day, twelve paddle event (8-19 June 2016) celebrating the National Park Service's Centennial, our two beautiful rivers, and clean water! We wanted to organize an event where people from all over the watershed - no matter their age, experience, or background - could enjoy our rivers. As a result, over 300 people experienced the most exquisite scenery in the region with our Riverkeepers. Besides the scenery, many of our trips had National Park Service interpretative rangers, explaining the significance and the role the river played in the development of our nation. Harpers Ferry National Park Ranger, David Fox, simply wowed his listeners with his encyclopedic knowledge of the river and its role in the Harpers Ferry area during the Civil War.

Q: What is the mission of PRKN and what are some of the issues you are working on now?

A: Our mission is to protect the Potomac watershed. We do that by holding polluters accountable and promoting the recreational use of our rivers. Our watershed runs from the mountains to the Chesapeake, which means we are challenged with pollution ranging from mining issues to agricultural (algal blooms from nutrient runoff, confined animal feeding

operations, cattle in the river) to municipalities and corporations violating their pollution permits to the dumping of coal ash into the Potomac River.

Q: Describe one of the trips that you led.

A: As the Shenandoah Riverkeeper, I led a mid-week trip on a placid stretch of the Shenandoah that we chose for its birding opportunities. We were literally not a stone's throw from the put-in when one of our paddlers spotted a black snake slithering out onto a branch toward the nest of a ruby throated hummingbird while the hummingbird flitted about the snake trying to stop its advance. Just discovering a hummingbird's nest is an amazing stroke of good fortune. But yet, here we had the hummingbird, her nest, and a black snake as we watched Darwin's "survival of the fittest" play out before our eyes.

How could it get any better? Well, it did. Not even thirty yards upstream, we heard a com-

“We firmly believe that the best stewards of the river are the users and lovers of the river.”



motion and then watched as a young black bear popped his head up and revealed itself on the island. It seemed the bear wanted to get to the mainland, and he must have taken trigonometry in bear high school because he knew the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. He dove directly into the channel we were all floating in and swam straight to shore where he pulled himself out, did a quick shake to dry himself off, and then disappeared into the deep understory of vegetation.

This all happened in the first two minutes of the paddle! It may seem anticlimactic, but throughout the rest of the trip we tallied 44 different bird species, from little cedar waxwings to great blue herons and bald eagles. Everyone departed that day with a better appreciation of our beautiful river system and how we need to protect it for future generations.

Q: Why is stewardship of our rivers so critical?

A: We firmly believe that the best stewards of the river are the users and lovers of the river. We believe that giving people the opportunity to experience the river for themselves will help to kickstart their understanding of these critical natural resources, as they are woven through the cultural, economic, aesthetic and ecological vitality of the region.

Q: What makes our area a particularly great/unique place to get out on the river?

A: When you are on the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, you are paddling a living history of our nation. Thanks to the C&O Canal Park, you see the same views that George Washington did when he ran the river and surveyed it. The same view that Thomas Jefferson did when he sat on his rock at Harpers Ferry and looked downstream and took in its beauty. Both rivers have rough and tumble whitewater, and gentle pools giving one time for quiet contemplation. Both rivers are perfect for paddling, no matter your age or experience.



Recent Paddle Green Policy Action

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's Coastal Plain

To President Obama:

As outdoor industry companies that make and sell products for outdoor recreation and representatives of the human-powered outdoor recreation community, we are writing to encourage you to grant the highest possible protection to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's Coastal Plain, and ensure that its habitat and recreation values are preserved for future generations. Last year, you recommended that Congress protect the Coastal Plain as Wilderness, and we are encouraged to see that legislation to do just that has been introduced into both the House and Senate. If Congress fails to permanently protect the Coastal Plain, we respectfully ask that you use your executive authority to do so.

Read the ACA's recent [policy action letters](#).





Find a job you love

www.americancanoe.org/employment

The ACA Career Center Website is now better than ever!

Use it as a one-stop-shop to find awesome jobs all over the country at places like REI, the U.S. National Whitewater Center, and more. You can even sign up for email notifications so you know when new jobs get posted to the site!

Visit www.americancanoe.org/employment to find your dream job in the outdoor recreation industry today.

Plastics in the Ocean: How They Get There, Their Impacts & Our Solutions



[By NOAA Marine Debris Program](#)

Marine debris is a pervasive problem facing our ocean and Great Lakes. Of all the trash that ends up in these important water bodies, [plastics](#) are the most common. This week, we're exploring the problem of plastics in our ocean and the solutions that are making a difference. To learn more about #OceanPlastics, keep your eye on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [NOAA's Response and Restoration blog](#).

Globally, we are consuming more and more single-use plastic items, but many countries lack the waste infrastructure to process it, resulting in plastic debris entering our waterways. In places where there is good infrastructure, intentional littering or improper disposal may have the same results. Many

people don't think about the way they may be contributing to this waste, such as by throwing a cigarette butt (which is plastic!) on the ground or adding their trash to the top of an overflowing garbage can. Plastics may also be introduced to the marine environment from ocean-based sources such as fishing gear that is lost or abandoned, or from trash washing over the side of a vessel.

So how does plastic trash go from sitting on a sidewalk to becoming marine debris? There are many ways that plastics may be moved throughout the environment. Weather such as rain and wind can move debris into nearby waterbodies. That overflowing trash can? Well, it's not overflowing anymore since the wind swept those extra pieces away. Once



Preventing the creation of marine debris through education and outreach is the ultimate solution. (Photo Credit: Hawaii Wildlife Fund)

debris enters a nearby stream or storm drain, it's often not a long trip before it has arrived at the ocean or a Great Lake.

Unfortunately, once plastic debris is in the marine environment, it's there to stay. Plastic never fully degrades, but instead breaks into smaller and smaller pieces, eventually becoming what we call "microplastics." [Microplastics](#) are small plastic pieces, less than 5 millimeters in size. They can come from those larger plastics breaking apart, or can be manufactured at that size, such as "microbeads" that are sometimes found as exfoliants in products such as facial scrubs or toothpastes.

"People are the cause, but we're the solution, too."

Plastic debris can wreak havoc on the marine environment, with numerous [negative impacts](#). It can harm marine animals by entangling them in debris like derelict nets or plastic 6-pack rings. Animals may accidentally ingest plastics, mistaking them for food. Plastic debris, especially large, heavy derelict fishing nets, can hurt sensitive and important habitats like coral reefs by physically damaging or smothering them. Plastics can also have direct impacts on us, by becoming navigational hazards or by polluting our beaches and driving tourists away from communities that rely on those coastal visitors.

Unfortunately, people are the sole cause of the plastic debris that enters our ocean. But

EDUCATION





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!](#)

August Instructor of the Month - Gil Hidalgo

ACA: Tell us a little about your paddling background.

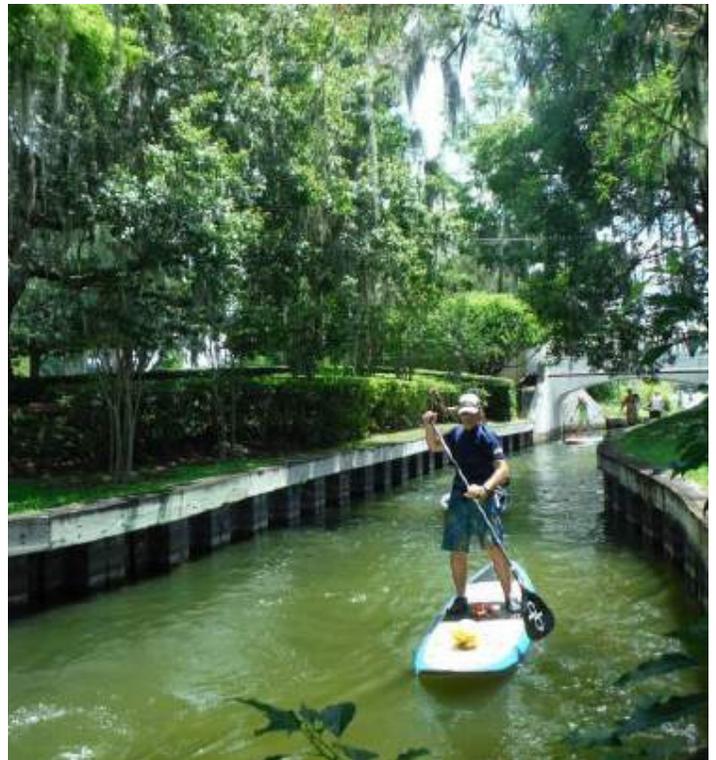
Hidalgo: I grew up surrounded by water. Born in Ponce, Puerto Rico and raised in a US Navy base in south Spain; Charleston, South Carolina; and Puerto Rico, it was inevitable that water would be a big part of my life. From scuba diving to surfing, I was always on the water. I was known to skip college to go fishing regularly. It wasn't until early 2006 when I started kayak fishing that I traded my surfboard, snorkel and motorcycles and eventually, fishing poles, to dedicate all my free time to paddlesports. It's possible one day I will trade my profession of professional photographer and live only to paddle. Paddlesports has become my healthy obsession. The rougher the water the more I enjoy it."

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)?

Hidalgo: This could get me in trouble at home, but it's no secret I try to paddle every week-

end. I travel about 1/3 of the year for work. When I can't paddle, I do watch many of the sea kayak videos while traveling. From Gordon Brown to Nigel Foster and all of the This Is The Sea series, I am always connected to paddling.

ACA: Can you please describe your activities with the paddling community in your town/region?



Hidalgo: I am very active as a volunteer for the Special Olympics Paddle Boarding group. We just finished a 9 week training series where we met every Saturday morning helping these young athletes with intellectual disabilities become paddle board racers. I also love to volunteer in a few youth camps in my area where I teach kayak and canoeing.

ACA: Due to all your personal/professional

traveling, I am sure you have seen and paddled in many places. Are there any places or people with which you still aspire to paddle?

Hidalgo: I have been blessed to have great paddling coaches and friends in my life. There is one coach in particular who keeps tempting me with joining him on his trip from Orlando to Cornwall and putting all my skills to the test. This is likely to happen soon.



September Instructor of the Month - Brooke Johnson

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)?

Johnson: I absolutely love every single aspect about paddling! However if I had to choose one thing, the most exciting and engaging aspect of paddling is that it's something people from a broad variety of abilities and ages can participate in. It's a very simple sport to get involved in, with the entire family or a group of friends. I love the social side of paddling—it's so much more fun with other people! My bachelor's degree is in marine, freshwater, and environmental biology so I'm always looking for new ways to experience the outdoors. When I was first introduced to paddle sports in 2014, I immediately fell in love and haven't looked back since. Now it's one of my personal goals to introduce as many people as I can to this form of recreation in a safe and fun way.



As for my paddling time commitment, I hold two level 1 classes each month at Deerassic Park Education Center—one kayak and one canoe. Whenever possible, I also include canoeing or kayaking with my many summer camps, other large public events, and school field trips. Currently, I unfortunately do not own a boat of my own, though I've recently been spending a significant amount of time trying to find my perfect match.



ACA: Can you please describe your activities with Deerassic Park Education Center programs and events?

Johnson: Deerassic Park Education Center is a 501(c)(3) public charity with a mission for youth outdoor education. As the Educa-



tion Coordinator, it is my job to organize the youth and adult programs here at the park. We do a variety of different types of activities – school field trips, scout merit badges, passport to fishing, hunter education, archery programs, paddle sport classes, and much more! In 2015, over 12,000 youth and their families participated in educational events and programs, focusing on the outdoors, and working to instill a lifelong love and appreciation of all things nature. So far in 2016, there have been about 30 schools attend field trips and around 500 students in canoe or kayak programs here at the Park!

Although Deerassic Park Education Center is located in rural Cambridge, Ohio, many program attendees have never experienced these activities before. Seeing the face of a child light up when they catch a fish for the first time or realize canoeing isn't as scary as they originally thought is easily the most rewarding part of being an environmental educator. It is

thrilling to have a part of introducing the next generation of sportsmen and women to what we hope will turn into a lifelong passion for them.

ACA: Are there any places or people with which you still aspire to paddle? Please describe them.

Johnson; I want to paddle the world! Since I would still consider myself a paddling newbie, I'm always learning and continuing to seek out any opportunities to paddle with more experienced paddlers. Eventually, I am hoping to make it to the Midwest Canoe Symposium and branch out into the world of freestyle, like my former college professor and paddling role model, Molly Gurien.

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

ACA PRO SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

[Coastal Kayak SUP & Sail](#) has been teaching paddlesports for 19 years. They have an ideal teaching location on the Delaware Coast only minutes from Ocean City, Maryland, with conditions from flat, calm and protected bay waters to rough surf, current and everything in between.



Let the professional staff of over 9 ACA certified instructors show you how much fun paddling can be while you learn

at your own pace. Coastal Kayak offers everything from beginner classes and kids camps to Instructor Certification Workshops in both kayaking and stand up paddling. Coastal Kayak staff are experts in the coastal region with over 30 years of paddling the area's waters, which are convenient to Baltimore, DC & Philadelphia. They are one of the few schools authorized by permit to operate at Assateague Island National Seashore! Coastal Kayak also offers all types of kayak rentals including sit-on-tops, recreational and touring kayaks, as well as many different types of paddle boards available to rent right off their bayside beach. In addition Coastal Kayak has been running guided eco-tours since 1997.

Visit www.coastalkayak.com for more information.

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

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

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Paddlecraft Course



The ACA has partnered with the USCG Auxiliary in a unique program called AUXPAD.

There will be opportunities across the country for ACA Instructors to provide kayak skills assessments for local Auxiliarists.

In addition, ACA kayak Instructor Trainers might have increased opportunities to offer L2: EKT ICW's for select groups of Auxiliarists across the U.S.

Learn more at www.americancanoe.org/AUXPAD



New Paddle Smart WebTV Series!



The ACA is proud to introduce the new Paddle Smart WebTV Series. This series was made possible by generous grant funding provided through the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, which is administered by the United States Coast Guard. The goal of this video series is to reduce paddlesport related accidents by providing immediate knowledge through short and focused instructional videos.

Visit www.americancanoe.org/WebTV to view the series.

Are you a beginner that is excited to get on the water for your very first time, or perhaps an intermediate paddler that has never taken any formal paddlesport training? If so, then check this series out! The videos are designed to provide you with the need-to-know information required to make smart decisions and stay safe on the water. You will learn about Stand Up Paddleboarding, Recreational Kayaking and Kayak Fishing and each series consists of 12 episodes that are entertaining and to the point. Now sit back and enjoy the ACA Paddle Smart WebTV Series.





Registration is now available!

Visit www.americancanoe.org/NPC for more information and reserve your spot today.

Highlights of the 2016 National Paddlsports Conference include the following:

Exciting events for paddlers of all experience levels

Family paddling opportunities

High Quality Educational Sessions

Paddle Green (clean up) Events

Instructor Updates

Instructor Trainer Update Workshop

Beginner and advanced navigation classes

Focus on kayaking and SUPs

Kayak Camping Trip

Hiking, fishing, & biking opportunities

And so much more...

New MOU Between ACA & BSA

Sea Scouts is a program of the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) and is organized into units – called “Ships” – comprised of male and female youth ages 14-21 led by adult leaders. Sea Scouting promotes better citizenship and improved members’ boating skills through instruction and practice in water safety, boating skills, outdoor, social, service experiences, and knowledge of our maritime heritage.

The goal of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between ACA and Sea Scouts is to create a mutually beneficial program that would encourage Sea Scout Ships to incorporate paddling into their programs and for ACA leaders to share their occupational expertise and guidance to America’s youth.



The ACA and Sea Scouts will work cooperatively with each other, within the policies, procedures, safety guidelines and regulations of each organization, to establish and nurture Sea Scout Ships so that young adults may grow in character, physical and mental health, citizenship responsibility and with personal growth necessary to achieve their greatest potential.

[Learn more about this partnership.](#)

Important update for ACA Instructor Trainers

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

[How to Become an IT](#)

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

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

ADAPTIVE



Photo by Larry Orsini

Creating Ability's Back-of-Hand Paddle Adaptation



Creating Ability's Back-of-Hand adaptations are designed to relieve the stress of holding the paddle from the fingers and move it to the arms. If the paddler has the ability to grasp the paddle, but lacks endurance or tires easily, this is the correct adaptation. The position is adjustable with a hose clamp, and the arm of the adaptation adjusts up and down easily & quickly with a thumbscrew.

Please visit the Adaptive Paddling section of the [ACA eStore](#) for more information on all of the adaptive equipment available for purchase. Don't forget to login for ACA member pricing!

2016 RIO PARALYMPICS

September 7-18, 2016

23 sports | 528 events | 21 venues | 176 countries

[The 2016 Paralympics are the 15th Summer Paralympic Games.](#)

Paracanoe is making its debut at the 2016 Rio Paralympic Games! Please [tune in](#) and help us cheer on Kelly Allen, Alana Nichols, and Ann Yoshida as they compete on the U.S. Paracanoe Team.

We had the fortune of interviewing these three dedicated and courageous athletes. Read their stories on the following pages, and get ready to be inspired.



KELLY ALLEN



ACA: When did you start paddling?

Allen: Growing up the youngest of four in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, my parents did just about anything to keep us active. They bought our first recreational kayaks when I was in elementary school. Most of our weekends were spent on the icy waters of Lake Michigan, exploring and just splashing around. It wasn't until I was fourteen, and introduced to an event called the Extremity Games, that I was exposed to competitive kayaking. The first year I entered, I was the youngest person in the competition, and if my memory serves me correctly, I was the only female in the kayaking event. As I was up against grown men, (most of which were former military) I felt content with not placing in the top three that year. However, that content did not last long.

The next year, I told my father I wanted to take the competition more seriously and he signed me up for a “learn the forward stroke

class” presented by Brent Reese. I took one lesson and won the Extremity Games, both men's and women's categories, for the next seven years. It was there that I was discovered by Ben Kvanli, a former Olympian who represented Guatemala in Slalom kayak in the '96 Games. He saw me race at the Extremity Games and later found me on Facebook and extended an offer to move to Texas and train for the new event being added to the Paralympic Games, sprint kayak.

ACA: What is your favorite thing about the sport?

Allen: My favorite thing about kayaking is just how adaptable of an activity it is. While training with Ben in Texas, I helped him with his non-profit Veterans Adventure. Twice a week we would take severely wounded men and women—who were recovering at the Center for the Intrepid at the Brook Army Medical Center—for paddles down the San Marcos

River as a form of therapy. Every individual we ran down the river was just beginning to explore the possibilities with their newly altered body. I absolutely loved being able to see the life come back into these soldiers' eyes when we would send them down a rapid or waterfall. These were humans who obviously thrived on adventure, and to accompany them on the water as they rediscovered that sense of adventure is probably one of the most beautiful things I will ever experience in my life.

I also love how diverse the sport is. We can send soldiers down waterfalls, or we could take them and their families on relaxing paddles down a calm river. Kayaking has had such a positive influence on my life; it has taken me around the world and allowed me to make connections with people in a totally unique way.

ACA: Can you describe what your daily training regimen has been like, in prep for the Paralympics? (daily workouts, nutrition, etc.)

Allen: My life has become very routine since moving to Oklahoma City to train with Shaun Caven at the OKC Boathouse District (also the Olympic/Paralympic Training Site). I train twice a day, six days a week. I currently train with a small group of elite able-bodied paddlers under the coaching of Shaun.

Our mornings start at 7 AM on the water. Shaun creates a different training plan every week so our training varies. It can consist of a variety of exercises, such as a 12 kilometer paddle to work on technique and stamina, or doing a couple 200 meter race practices. Every

day on the water is different. We also have gym sessions every Tuesday and Thursday mornings. A typical gym session can last about three hours. Shaun sends out a different gym routine each week, and then we follow each session with about an hour and a half of cardio (mine usually is spent on a stationary bike). Since core strength is a major part of paddling, we also spend a good portion of our workout focusing on that area.

ACA: Besides your physical training, do you have any other practices that keep you mentally and emotionally fit?

Allen: I think kayaking is the thing that mostly keeps me mentally and emotionally fit. I genuinely love being in my boat. I love to

be out on the water surrounded by nature - the river is my happy place. Nothing brings me more joy or peace than watching a beautiful Oklahoma sunset on the river from my boat (I have many Instagram photos to prove this @oneandonehalf)! Kayaking has become such a huge part of my life, and I am extremely grateful that I get to do it every day. When we have a tough training session, I think my teammates get annoyed at me for always having a huge smile of my face. I always try to remind myself how lucky I am to be living this life. Not many people get to call the river their office! I made a promise to myself a long time ago that the second this stops being fun, I am going to retire. Luckily, I don't see that happening for a very long time!

ACA: Can you tell us a bit more about your journey to the Paralympics as a paracanoe athlete—i.e., What were some of the biggest challenges you faced, and some of the victo-



ries you celebrated, along the way?

Allen: Growing up with a disability, I always had to work twice as hard as my peers to keep up. However, kayaking is one of the first sports that allowed me to be competitive with my siblings, and that was a major milestone in my life. Participating in the Extremity Games was something that also changed my life. It was there that I first was able to compete with other adaptive athletes. In 2010, I was one of ten young athletes from across the U.S. asked to participate in a Young Ambassador program provided by the United States Olympic Committee. They gave us a backstage look at the 2010 Winter Paralympic Games in Vancouver in hopes of inspiring us as young athletes to continue towards our goals of making Team USA.

I have won several National Championships, and placed in the top ten the past five years on the world stage at World Cups and World Championships. I take very much pride in all of my athletic accomplishments in this sport.

However, I think I am most influenced by my work with Adaptive Adventures. I have actually decided to further my involvement with this type of work by getting my Bachelor's degree in Outdoor Recreation and Management Leadership. I plan on bringing the joy of kayaking and other adaptive sports to people with all different abilities across the United States.

ACA: Do you have a favorite saying or quote that inspires you on a day to day basis?

Allen: I have a quote that my father says to me before every race. "Paddle hard. Stay Dry." I have no idea where this came from, it just appeared in a text exchange one day and has been a tradition ever since. To me, I take it as 'give it my all and be smart in the process'. It encourages me to be both physically strong as well as mentally—both things I try to improve on every time I get in my boat.

ACA: What are your main goals for Rio in September? How do you define success at the games?

Allen: My main goal for the games? I think the obvious answer would be to bring back some pretty shiny hardware! However, I am just as happy to even be part of this amazing event. Especially this being the debut year for Paracanoe, I take it as such a high honor to be able to represent the United States of America. I have experienced the Paralympics as a spectator once before and that was such a monumental moment in my life; I honestly cannot even imagine what participating in them is going to feel like! The Olympics/ Paralympics is an event that brings the world together over a common love of sport. I am happy and honored to be part of such a beautiful thing!

ALANA NICHOLS



ACA: *When did you start paddling?*

Nichols: I started paddling K1 in the fall of 2014 after learning how to Waveski (sit down surfing with a kayak paddle).

ACA: *What is your favorite thing about the sport?*

Nichols: I love that I get to check out! My cell phone is on the shore, and it's just me and momma nature hangin out!

ACA: *Can you describe what your daily training regimen has been like, in prep for the Paralympics? (daily workouts, nutrition, etc.)*

Nichols: I'm on the water from 6-7 AM, and then again from 5-7 PM doing weights plus a 30 min paddle; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday.

Nutritionally, I continue to keep a clean, high

lean protein and vegetable-based diet. I build in increased carbs closer to competition.

ACA: *Besides your physical training, do you have any other practices that keep you mentally and emotionally fit?*

Nichols: I keep a steady group of girlfriends in my life to keep me sane! I love coffee dates with my friends for my emotional balance. Mentally, I surf twice a week to stay in love with paddling.

ACA: *Can you tell us a bit more about your journey to the Paralympics as a paracanoe athlete—i.e., What were some of the biggest challenges you faced, and some of the victories you celebrated, along the way?*

Nichols: The biggest challenges for me were, 1) equipment, 2) support staff, and 3) financial help.

Equipment: I had to figure out how to adapt my sprint kayak to fit my specific disability. I went through 5 different versions of a bucket seat until I found a position that worked for me.

Support staff/ physical therapy/ coaching: because ParaCanoe kayak is new in the Paralympics, we don't have a lot of resources or experience to draw from. I've been left to figure out how to train for a 200m race by myself. And when I need treatment, both at competitions and at home training, I've had to tap into my community of people willing to help. Thankfully, they are abundant!

Funding: as a smaller sport and newer to the games, we have very little in the way of financial resources. I've paid out of pocket for every paddle competition I've been a part of for the last 2 years.

ACA: Do you have a favorite saying or quote that inspires you on a day to day basis?

Nichols: "Do the best you can with what you have, right now."

ACA: What are your main goals for Rio in September? How do you define success at the games?

"Nothing is keeping me from having the best 200m race of my life."

Nichols: My goal is to compete well. Nothing is keeping me from having

the best 200m race of my life, regardless of how the podium shakes out.

ACA: Is there anything else you would like to share with the paddlesports community?

Nichols: Try sprint kayaking and wave skiing!!! So fun!



ANN YOSHIDA



ACA: When did you start paddling?

Yoshida: Like so many, I started paddling on a recreational basis. I grew up as a surfer, and later when I moved to Utah, Nevada, Korea, and Oregon, waves were hard to come by. I guess you could say, I started paddling more frequently out of the desire for time in and on the water. As a Hawaiian, water time is part of my culture; it's a resource that acts as a healing force, an equalizer, a neutralizer, and an energizer. My thoughts about the ocean also overlap with my attitude toward fresh water. When I am in the water, I feel at home with no fear or inhibitions. I can just be. I used to say the water is the closest place to heaven on earth.

It wasn't until some of my friends asked me to join Purelight Racing as an outrigger canoe paddler at the IVF worlds in 2012, that I found

the excitement of competitive paddling. I started as a team paddler, then quickly moved into the one-man canoe (va'a), and a year and a half ago I also added the kayak.

ACA: What is your favorite thing about the sport?

Yoshida: I love the symmetry of kayaking and the amount of focus that is necessary while in the boat. Unlike the va'a, the kayak is a tippy boat. So I am required to put all of my mental, physical, and emotional blocks aside and just be in the present and focus on the task at hand—that is, to stay upright, with power, speed, and technique.

ACA: Can you describe what your daily training regimen has been like, in prep for the Paralympics? (daily workouts, nutrition, etc.)

Yoshida: I would not be as competitive with-

out an excellent coach. In 2013, I met Stephen Knight and was impressed by the athletes he has helped become competitive (Ashley Thomas, Carol Rodgers, and Wes Hall). They all had three things in common: they could go straight, have fun on the water, and they possessed a desire to build the growing sport. I saw what these athletes had, and I sought out a coach that could teach me to succeed in a similar way.

As you know, paracanoeing is in its infancy, and it is being included in the paralympics for the first time this year. This means that every elite athlete has a role, not only to be physically competitive, but also to have the desire to be a trailblazer and grow the sport.

Stephen had the desire to work with me as I took a year off of work and school to learn the skills to be a competitive athlete and an ambassador of sprint kayaking.

My training is custom to my needs at the time. When I am fatigued, I rest. When I am strong, I hit it. When I need to build endurance, I build endurance and work on technique. When I need speed, I work on speed drills. This is the beauty of a fitting coach, he builds me up and pays close attention to my needs so I peak at the right time, build at the right time, fail at the right time and succeed at the right time.

I recently changed my diet from being vegetable based with some fish to being on a high protein, low processed carb. I'm not strict on my diet, but I have the desire to feed my body for optimal performance. At this stage, I'm keeping things clean and natural with a ton of water.

ACA: Besides your physical training, do you have any other practices that keep you mentally and emotionally fit?

Yoshida: My coach and I believe that the mental training is just as important for preparing for the games. My coach supports me in my decision to regularly attend church as well as practice meditation techniques, such as evocative visualization, mindfulness, and mantras. I think there is a huge difference that visualization provides to an athlete's mental and physical state. I could probably write a book on this subject.

ACA: Can you tell us a bit more about your journey to the Paralympics as a paracanoe athlete—i.e., What were some of the biggest challenges you faced, and some of the victories you celebrated, along the way?

Yoshida: My philosophy is: everything is possible

with the will, equipment, support, and time. As a parathlete, there is a big learning curve on how to paddle. In my case, I am paralyzed from the chest down, making a sport that is heavily weighted in the legs, hips, and torso very difficult for me to learn. Before taking my first stroke, I had to design and build equipment that would work for me.

I utilized my resources and asked fellow paracanoe paddler Vadim Kin to help me design and build a backrest to fit into the kayak and va'a. We spent some time on the water together until he came up with a good design and specs to fit my needs. I broke the unbreakable and he went back to the drawing board to develop something that would work for me. Sitting secure and supported in

“My training is custom to my needs at the time. When I am fatigued, I rest. When I am strong, I hit it.”



Additionally, with these sprint boats being so fragile, I need another person to help carry and drop my boat in the water. I have paddled with many people around the world and I try very hard at making paddling a win-win situation for everyone I paddle with. Quite often, the people I paddle with are training for some paddle race themselves, so working together at a mutual goal helps develop an inspirational and motivational partnership.

ACA: Do you have a favorite saying or quote that inspires you on a day to day basis?

Yoshida: When we focus on being normal, we exclude the possibility of being extraordinary.

Only through getting out of my comfort zone I see miracles happen.

Talents improve by patience of hope and labor of love.

ACA: What are your main goals for Rio in September? How do you define success at the games?

Yoshida: I am going for the gold. I will attain gold through my mind being single to the goal, my body full of strength with quick fluid movement and quick recovery and rest, each cell primed and ready to give all it was created for, and my heart open to joy along the way. I will come out of this experience knowing I have done my best performance.

ACA: Is there anything else you would like to share with the paddlesports community?

Yoshida: Let today be the day you go out and enjoy God's magnificent creations.

the boat is a game changer for someone with my level of injury. There are a ton of levers, torques, forces, timing and flow that go into my ability to stay upright and apply power to the paddle and on the water. I kept an open mind and talked to everyone I could about designs, equipment, and materials to come up with my current seating set up.

Further, access to water is a huge challenge to paddling. Natural environments are proven to be more appealing while engaging in activities among people with disabilities, yet they are also the most inaccessible environments to people. Part of the challenge is to increase accessibility using eco-friendly designs. It takes a team of innovative experts to fulfill both needs of the environment. I enjoy all the places I have paddled and have seen so many great ways to create eco-friendly access to waterways.

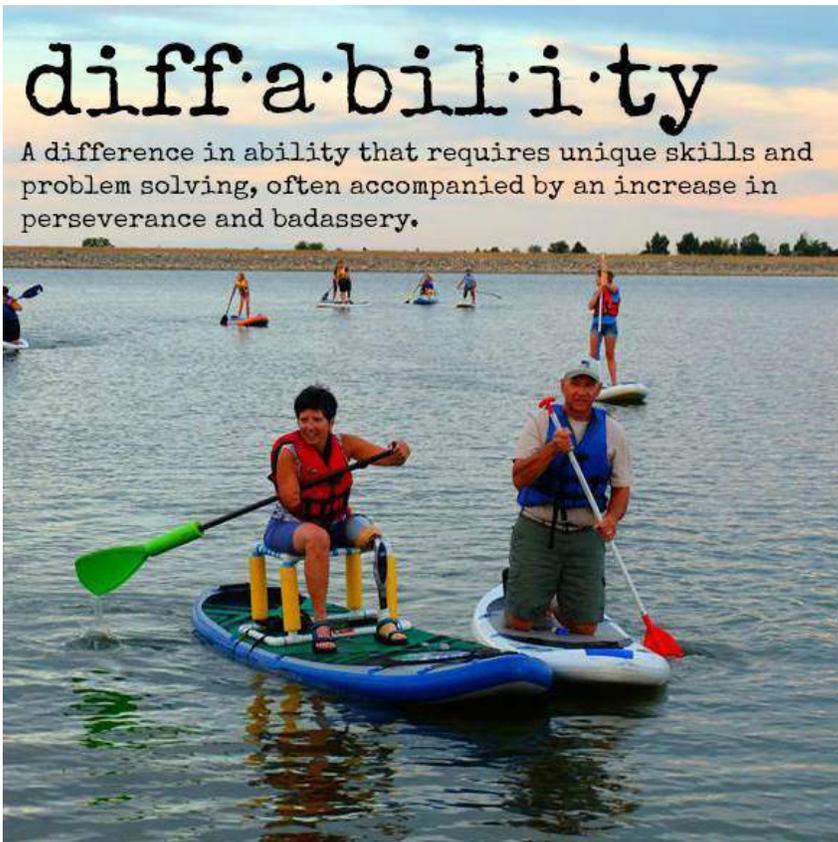
Upcoming Adaptive Paddling Workshops (APWs)

11/13/2016 Hosted by: Adaptive Expeditions

Location: Sausalito, CA

[Link to register](#)

Visit the [Adaptive Event Calendar](#) to stay up to date on APWs happening near you!



News Near You



Photo Credit: XSIGHT/Gail DeMarco
Paddler: ACA SUP instructor Jeff Burton

STATE-BY-STATE

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

DC

The 2016 Potomac Festival, featuring the Great Falls Race & Little Falls Races, has been moved to Aug 28 - Sept 11 this year.

To register: <https://goo.gl/Livz8l>

To volunteer: <http://goo.gl/P5QxOZ>

Contact: Meredith Waters

DCStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Florida

Please plan to join us for Surf Expo September 8-10 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando. Surf Expo is the largest and longest running board sports trade show in the world. This is a Trade Only event which draws buyers from specialty stores around the globe. If you are an outfitter or retailer, this is your one-stop marketplace for the latest products. The ACA will be there, so come visit our booth!

Contact: Peggy Phillips

FLStateDirector@americancanoe.net



ACA South Carolina.

Idaho

As summer winds down here in Idaho, we feel blessed for the many wonderful rivers and lakes to which we have access. The end of summer is a great time to plan or participate in a waterway clean-up. If you have a stretch of river or lake that needs some love, please send me an email; I'd love to assist in putting together an event. Also, my term as State



ACA California.

Director is winding down, and I'd love to turn the position over to someone with energy and enthusiasm for paddlesport. Please be in touch if you're interested in hearing more about the position--I promise this election will be less contentious than the Presidential!

Contact: Elliot Jacobs

IDStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Louisiana

[Teche: A History of Louisiana's Most Famous Bayou](#) by Shane K. Bernard, will be published in October by the University Press of Mississippi. Bernard, a [respected Louisiana historian](#), traces Bayou Teche's geologic evolution (it was once the main channel of the Mississippi); its importance as a trade route for populations including Native Americans, and the French-Canadian emigrants who came to be known as Cajuns; and its decades of neglect, followed by recent, significant restoration. Bernard also chronicles his own 135-mile canoe trip down the Teche.

Contact: Ben Sandmel

LaStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Michigan

The 2016 edition of the Au Sable River Canoe Marathon is now in the books! This year's overall winners of the 120 mile race from Grayling to Lake Huron are Christophe Proulx and Ryan Halstead who barely edged out Andrew Triebold and Jacob DuBois 14:29:26 to 14:29:27! You don't have to be a racer to enjoy Michigan's rivers. We have over 51,438 river miles in the state with 6564 of them designated as Wild and/or Scenic (<https://www.rivers.gov/michigan/php>). Winter's coming so get out and paddle!

Contact: Lynn Dominguez

MiStateDirector@americancanoe.net



ACA New York.

Missouri

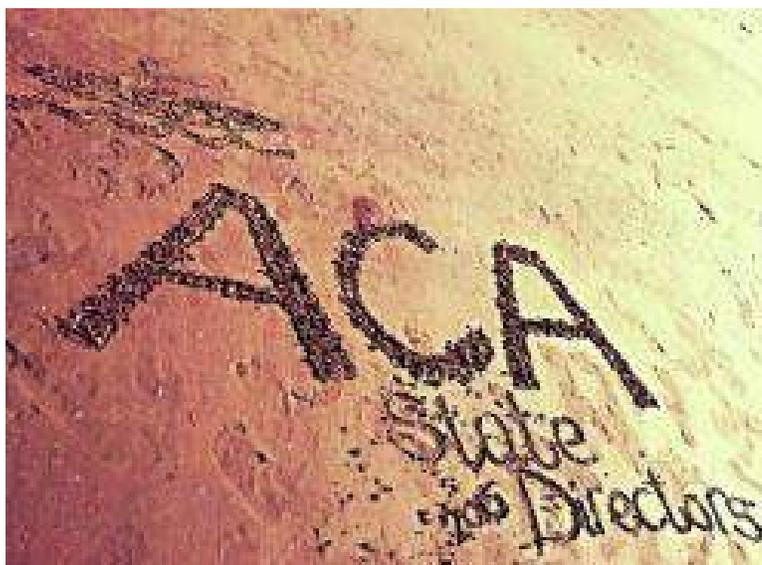
In Missouri, we just finished the MR 340 which is race on the Missouri River from Kansas City to St. Charles. It started on July 9, and there was an 88-hour cut off. There were over 400 boats registered in 10 different divisions. The winning boat was boaty-licious with a winning time of 38 hours and 22 minutes. The Mississippi River Water Trail Association is having a Firecracker Race in West Alton MO Aug 20th. For information go to <http://fire-crackerrace.org>

Contact: Dave Haessig

MoStateDirector@americancanoe.net

New York

We've had a great paddling season in New York! From the Finger Lakes Paddlefest to the Cayuga SUP Cup - the largest freshwater SUP event east of Lake Tahoe - to perfect and pristine class V whitewater on the Stone Valley section of the Racquette River....New York has it all! This weekend, join us at Fair Haven State Park on the mighty Lake Ontario. Check out our [Facebook page](#) for more updates and upcoming events. September brings the Beaver River releases in northern NY - class III-IV whitewater for paddlers and spectators



alike! New York - the BEST place on earth for paddlers!

Contact: Liane Amaral

NYStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Ohio

The first Ohio ACA Rendezvous is taking place at Camp Butler in Peninsula Ohio from September 9th through the 12th during the Midwest Canoe Symposium. Join other ACA Ohio members in classes, paddling, and camaraderie. Classes include instructor updates in kayaking and canoeing, SUP, canoe poling, freestyle canoe and more. Camping at Camp Butler is allowed so sign up on the Midwest Canoe Symposium website.

Contact: Ryan Pepper

OHStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Oklahoma

Athletes from around the United States competed for both sprint and slalom National titles in Oklahoma City's Boathouse District in early August. The 2016 USA Canoe Kayak Sprint National Championships were held on the Oklahoma River, while only a few hundred feet away athletes competed in the USA

Canoe Kayak Slalom Age Group National Championships at the newly constructed RIVERSPORT Rapids Whitewater Park.

Contact: Aasim Saleh

OkStateDirector@americancanoe.net

South Carolina

The ACA South Carolina Executive Council has been active supporters of community stewardship efforts, including promoting and participating in river clean-ups at the Saluda River in Columbia, SC and Swannanoa River in Asheville, NC. Both groups collected hundreds of pounds of garbage from the river and riverbanks. The ACA South Carolina Executive Council is also

continuing to prepare for the L1/L2 Instructor Update & Symposium happening on September 9-11, 2016 in Rock Hill, SC.

Contact: Ethan Talley, Kyle Thomas

SCStateDirector@americancanoe.net

Wisconsin

Wausau, Wisconsin hosted the 2016 ACA Open Canoe Slalom Nationals and North American Championships. Eighty racers came from as far away as Japan to compete in 38 different classes of events to determine the best of the best. The slalom course designed by Michelle Grimm challenged the racers' skill, and the event chairs Pete Steffes and Craig Smerda ensured that the event proceeded smoothly. Brian Scholz and the safety team happily rescued any accidental swimmers. Results can be seen at <http://www.wausauwhite-water.org/eventPage.aspx?pageID=43&parentID=3>

Contact: Thomas Schrader

WIStateDirector@americancanoe.net

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

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

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

www.americancanoe.org/StateDirector



ACA Arizona.



ACA Puerto Rico.

MEMBERSHIP



Photo by Luke Rovner, @KayakHipster

ACA Member Benefit: Discount on Paddling Gear



ACA members receive discounts on all purchases from the [ACA eStore](http://www.americancanoe.org/estore), including awesome gear like our NRS silkweight hoodies, cotton visors, fleece vests, and more. Remember to sign in before purchasing!

www.americancanoe.org/estore

ACA Outfitter, Livery & Guide Spotlight



A D V E N T U R E
ASBURY  **UNIVERSITY**
L E A D E R S H I P

Asbury University Center for Adventure Leadership is a unique outdoor program in its operation and capability. We are equipped to operate a large variety of activities ranging from your typical student-driven events serving our own campus community all the way to customized guiding and instruction for any group or organization in a variety of outdoor settings. Not just a recreational program, but not just an educational program, we are training tomorrow's leaders for the outdoor industry and beyond. We're offering services to the

public at a competitive price with the mission of better exposing everyone we come in contact with to the natural world and the immense opportunity it provides for learning, growth and fun. Give us a call or e-mail today to hear how we can connect with you!

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Trent Ellsworth

859-858-3511ex. 2491

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



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www.motionizeme.com



The New York Times



CANOE & KAYAK

Member Photo of the Month



Eliza Vincent on the James River, Scottsville to Hardware section.

Photo by: Proud dad, Brian Vincent (a.k.a. Vince)

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.

Introducing New Paddling Club Advisory Council



The **Paddle America Club Advisory Council** provides advice and recommendations to the ACA on matters related to enhancing the paddlesports experience for club members and the general public.

The first meeting is scheduled for September 24-25th at the ACA National Office in Fredericksburg, VA.

Learn more at: www.americancanoe.org/PACAdvisoryCouncil

COMPETITION



Ready, Set, Mark Your Calendars!

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

Sept 10, 2016	<u>Interpretive Freestyle Exhibition & Competition</u> Peninsula, Ohio
Sept 7-18, 2016	<u>Paralympic Paddling Events</u> Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Sept 17, 2016	<u>Walnut to Walnut Challenge</u> Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Sept 17, 2016	<u>Riverthon 2016 - The Ohio River Challenge</u> Louisville, Kentucky
Nov 11, 2016	<u>GatorFest Canoe and Kayak Race</u> Columbia, Mississippi

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

USA Canoe/Kayak Update

By Aaron Mann, USACK Communications Director



The **2016 Rio Olympic Games** came and went with the US Olympic Canoe/Kayak Team posting some strong results across the board.

In the slalom events, all boats in all four categories advanced through to the semifinals for the first time since only each country was allowed one boat per Olympic discipline. Leading the charge was three-time Olympian **Casey Eichfeld** who made history as the first American to compete in two disciplines while also overcoming past Olympic disappointment. Eichfeld got things started in C1 where he advanced to his first career Olympic final on his way to an 8th place finish. In C2, Eichfeld and his partner **Devin McEwan** also earned a spot in the Olympic final where they went on to finish 10th.

Michal Smolen, the 2015 World Championships bronze medalist, came to Rio with his eye on another podium in the K1 Men's category. After advancing through the heats, Smolen's Olympic dreams came to an end in the semifinal due to two touches he incurred on his run. In the end, Smolen would finish 13th overall at his first Olympic Games

Making her first Olympic appearance, **Ashley Nee** turned some heads with a blazing run in the K1 Women's preliminary heats. After a strong start to her semifinal run, Nee ran into difficulties on the bottom half of the course, leaving her outside the cut for the final in 14th place.

In the sprint events, veteran **Maggie Hogan**, the lone representative for the United States in the event, took to the water in both the K1 Women's 200m and 500m distances. Beginning in the 200m, Hogan made a push but was unable to advance after finishing 7th in her heat. In her primary Olympic distance, Hogan pressed hard in her initial heat but narrowly missed advancing to her first Olympic semifinal when she finished 6th.

Congratulations to the USA Olympic Canoe/Kayak Team on their performances!

ACA Forms New Partnership with the International Whitewater Hall of Fame



International Whitewater --- HALL OF FAME

The ACA is pleased to announce a new partnership with the International Whitewater Hall of Fame (IWHoF).

“We are excited about this new partnership because it provides implementation assistance and a connection to 30,000 paddlers who are members of ACA to volunteer and help support IWHoF’s efforts,” says IWHoF Board of Governors Chair Risa Shimoda. “For the ACA, it broadens our international outreach and shines a light on a part of the paddlesports community that is very much a part of our foundation,” says ACA Chief Operating Officer Christopher Stec.

“IWHoF has been a great banner-waver for many of the greatest athletes, adventurers, designers and business innovators in paddlesports, and it also advocates heavily for protecting our rivers,” says former inductee Eric Jackson, president of Jackson Kayaks.



(IWHoF) recognizes and honors individuals who have made significant contributions to whitewater related activities. The IWHoF was founded in 2003 by Adventure Sports Center international in McHenry, MD. To date, 39 honorees have been inducted into the Hall of Fame since the first class was inducted in 2005. The honorees of IWHoF hail from these countries:

- Australia
- Czech Republic

The International Whitewater Hall of Fame



- Costa Rica
- France
- Germany
- Luxembourg
- New Zealand
- Great Britain
- Russia
- Slovakia
- United States

We are proud to honor their legacy and those of the dozens of other world class athletes, pioneers, advocates, and explorers from around the world who have been nominated to the Hall of Fame.

The IWHoF is a program of the ACA and its International Paddlesports Partners. The ACA is proud to support these whitewater Advocates, Champions, Explorers and Pioneers.

- Please consider donating to this [worthy cause](#).
- For additional information, please contact IWHoF@americancanoe.org

Learn more about these [whitewater legends](#)...

Make your events easier with online waivers!



If you are an event organizer and interested in using our online waivers as part of your online registration process, please email the [Insurance Coordinator](#) for more details.

INTERNATIONAL



Stand Up Paddle St. John

RETREAT & CERTIFICATION COURSE



Get SUP Certified with BIC SUP Ambassadors in the Virgin Islands!

Join ACA SUP Instructor Trainers Julie Roach & Matt Hite for a two day Level 1 course in the beautiful Caribbean island of St. John. This five day experience in the Virgin Islands will give you the opportunity to become ACA level 1 SUP Certified, participate in additional certification courses, and give you extra time to have fun and explore the remote and tropical island.

WHEN: January 21st-25th, 2017

WHERE: Private Villa in Chocolate Hole, St. John, USVI



INCLUDED: Housing, transportation, SUP board & gear, clinics & classes, ACA L1 Cert. Course

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS: ACA SUP Yoga Endorsement Course, Extend your stay at \$175/night

COST: \$750 Reservation Deposit // \$1,700 Total Per Person // \$1,350 w/o L1 Cert. Course

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SAVE THE DATE

[ACA Europe Paddlesports Symposium](#)

October 14-16, 2016

Vienna, Austria

Hosted by Gerhard Grimm



ACA State Director Conference

December 2-4, 2016

Puerto Rico



REGISTER TODAY



Have You Tried the PADDLE READY app?

[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.”

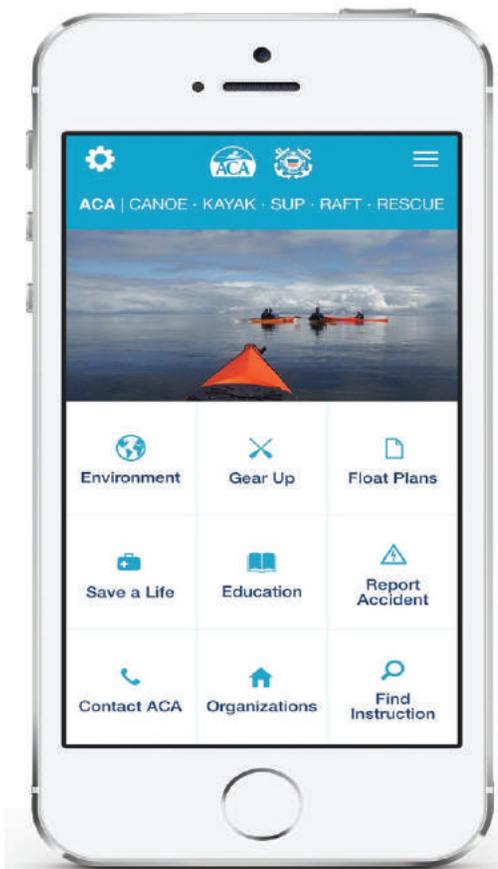
-Tee Clarkson, Richmond Times Dispatch

“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

Paddling History



The U.S. team took a steam ship across the Atlantic to compete in the Berlin Olympic Games in 1936. The old cliché remains true - times have changed; however, it seems the Olympic spirit remains steadfast. [Just like the 1936 athletes, our 2016 U.S. team is well-trained and excited to compete.] The 1936 games represents the first time Canoe and Kayak made the Olympics as a permanent sport.

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

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

www.americancanoe.org/History

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