



## Welcome to the ACA's Monthly Newsletter!

January 2023



**Seeking Feedback on the Strategic Plan:** As both a national non-profit organization and the National Governing Body for Olympic Sport in the U.S., the ACA is uniquely positioned to advance paddlesports. To bring focus to our future work, we are finalizing our 5-year Strategic Plan. The overarching purpose of the plan is to save lives through the promotion of safe paddling practices, fun, inclusivity, community, stewardship, and excellence in instruction and competition.

This survey is about the DRAFT ACA Strategic Plan for 2023-2028 and is the second opportunity to “have your say!” We received over 1,000 specific comments regarding the first Strategic Plan draft. Each comment was considered, resulting in significant revisions and the addition of Key Performance Indicators for each goal. For this second draft, we welcome your continued input, and we seek honest and specific suggestions and guidance.

We deeply value your feedback and ask that you please find time before January 31 to fill out [this survey](#) so we can put the plan into action as soon as possible!

**The L.L.Bean Club Fostered Community Grant Program is Back:** Since 2002, the ACA has partnered with L.L.Bean to sponsor the Club Fostered Stewardship Program, which was refocused in 2021 as the Club Fostered Community Grant Program. This program provides grant funding to paddling clubs and organizations that implement projects and events on their local waterways.

ACA member non-profit organizations, clubs, and volunteer groups are invited to apply for funding for their ongoing activities, projects, and programs which illustrate substantial and quantifiable efforts at inviting and including a diversity of new community members. The goal of these intentional efforts to invite diversity into established club events and programs creates a welcoming environment for new paddlers to get involved and the opportunity to create lifelong connections to their local waterways and to the larger paddling community.

To read more about this opportunity and to apply, please click [here](#). Please note that the application deadline is March 1, 2023.



*Take advantage of this incredible member benefit and opportunity to make a difference in your paddling community, apply today!*

**Marge “River Mom” Cline Memorial Grant is accepting applications:** In honor of Marge "River Mom" and her son Mike, the ACA is pleased to continue the annual Marge Cline Memorial Grant Program as a member benefit. Each year, the ACA will grant up to \$1,000.00 to individuals or non-profit organizations who provide meaningful paddlesports opportunities for youth in the Midwest.

Funding applications are being accepted from January 4th until February 15th, 2023. We welcome applications from individuals and non-profit organizations based in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, or Wisconsin.

[Visit our website](#) to review the eligibility criteria, project timelines, and past recipients of this grant. Click [here](#) to apply!

**Accessibility Improvements to the ACA Website:** In our ongoing effort to extend paddlesports opportunities to everyone, our website is now translated into Chinese (Simplified), German, and Spanish! At the top of the homepage on the ACA website, look for a tab that says, “Select Language” and use the drop-down menu to select your preferred option.



*Preview our home page in spanish! Check out the menu bar at the top to switch between the four languages most commonly used by our members.*

**Last Call for State Director Election Voting:** We are dedicated to the continuation of our State Director Program! These volunteer ambassadors represent the interests of paddlers in your state by promoting stewardship, safety and education, competition, and community. Support paddlers by voting for your ACA State Director today!

You must be 18 years or older and a current ACA member to vote. The last day to cast your vote is January 27th; don't miss this opportunity and click [here](#) to vote today.

**Insurance Request & Reporting guidance for Paddle America Clubs (PACs):** We are pleased to announce the first video tutorial made for ACA PACs and Affiliate organizations who wish to utilize the ACA's on-water insurance program. [This video](#) addresses navigation of the insurance section of the ACA website, the insurance/coverage request form, the event reporting form, and a few other resources we've made to help you answer common questions.

## ACA Paddle America Club

Insurance Request & Reporting Tutorial Video



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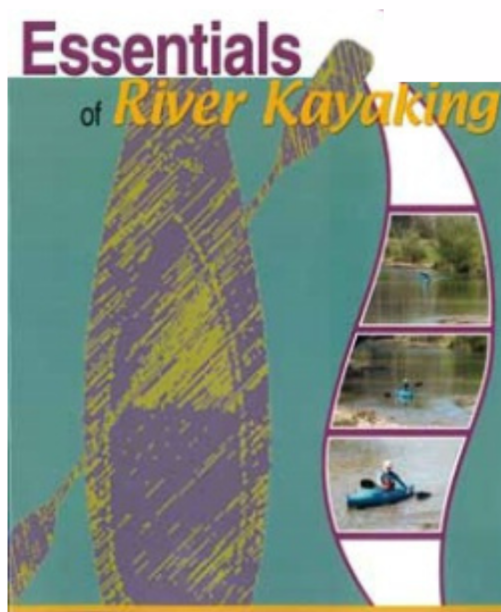
- 0:00 - Introduction**
- 1:05 - Request Form**
- 6:45 - Report Form**
- 9:30 - Additional Resources**
- 10:45 - End of Video**



*Click the image about to be redirected to our YouTube channel where you can learn how to use the ACA's on-water insurance program!*

**E-Store Special:** The ACA's Essentials of River Kayaking book is FREE to members for the next 3 weeks. This book covers real life paddling scenarios, vital information about kayaking safety, illustrations, and photographs of gear, boats, strokes, maneuvers, and rescue techniques. Log in to your ACA account to receive the discount and all you will need to pay is shipping!

Head over to our [e-store](#) to get a copy!



*Get your free copy of the ACA's Essentials of River Kayaking free today! Just click on the cover to go to our e-store, pay shipping, and we will send it straight to your front door!*



**Instructor of the Month:** For the month of January, we are celebrating Andy Lex, our first Instructor of the Month for the new year! Andy stands out because of his outstanding teaching skills and capacity for building meaningful relationships with his students, peers, and fellow paddlers. An instructor who works with Andy commented, “Andy always has such a great presence with people, connecting in all the ways that matter... In addition to being a rad boater with a broad and well-rounded skill set, he values teaching skills, and it shows in (the way) he talks about helping students and instructors alike to gain new skills and refine existing ones.”

Andy currently holds ACA Level 4 certifications in Whitewater Kayaking, Swiftwater Rescue, and River Stand Up Paddleboarding. In the summers, Andy works at Rendezvous River Sports & the Jackson Hole Kayak School (JHKS), where he was inspired by the caliber of paddling instruction that they delivered. To learn more about Andy's transition from learning to paddle to delivering top



tier paddlesports education across multiple disciplines, click [here](#) to read his full Instructor of the Month profile.

Thank you, Andy, for sharing your wisdom, experience, and good vibes with the ACA and the paddling community. We are grateful for your time, insight, and continued dedication to the promotion of paddling education!

If you know a truly awesome ACA instructor, follow [this link](#) to nominate them as future Instructor of the Month. Not only can your favorite instructor be featured in our newsletter and on the website, but they will receive a limited-edition ACA Instructor of the Month hat!



*ACA Instructor of the Month, Andy Lex!*

**SEIC Newsletter:** Instructors, keep an eye out for the monthly SEIC Newsletter! This email correspondence includes instructor specific information about curriculum updates, dates of upcoming SEIC meetings, special deals and offers, helpful tips about using the CMS, and other valuable resources and communications.

**LAST CALL Notice for Certification Extensions:** For instructors whose certifications recently expired at the end of 2022, the SEIC Board and ACA staff would like to offer you one more month to request an administrative extension. For instructors who have already received one administrative extension, you are welcome to apply for a secondary extension in this special circumstance. To request the extension, you'll need to watch [this brief video](#) and answer three questions in [this special extension form](#).



*Whether you need an extension or not, these tips for instructors is beneficial to anyone who wants to be a better instructor!*



**National Girls & Women in Sports Day:** February 1 is National Girls & Women in Sports Day (NGWSD)! Join the Women's Sports Foundation next Wednesday as they celebrate NGWSD! To access free resources, read the stories of girls and women in sports, and check out their map of event celebrating NGWSD, go to the NGWSD page on the Women's Sports Foundation linked [here](#).



*See a pin near you? Click on the map to see what events are being held in your state to celebrate National Girl's and Women in Sports Day!*

# Stewardship & Public Policy

We'd like to take this opportunity to highlight one of our valuable Stewardship Partners, Leave No Trace (LNT)! We are proud to embrace the seven principles of LNT and incorporate them into our paddling curricula and programs. Want to learn more about these principles? LNT offers [this free online awareness course and pledge](#) to help protect the outdoor spaces we love.

LNT also offers a [youth-friendly course](#) that comes with a certificate of completion!

Thank you for reading our monthly newsletter! You can find the latest stories and updates from the ACA at [americancanoe.org/news](http://americancanoe.org/news).

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

Sincerely,

ACA National Office Staff

ACA | Canoe - Kayak - SUP - Raft -  
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