

ACA Updates ✂

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Wed 3/20/2024 8:17 AM

To:Kaycee Maas <kmaas@americancanoe.org>



Serving paddlers since 1880



Spring is in the air and the paddling season is beginning to ramp up. While between paddling trips, we hope you are able to enjoy the latest edition of the ACA's Monthly Membership Newsletter!



Georgian Paddlers Protect their Freedom to Float

[ACA Georgia](#) joined forces with Georgia River Network, American Whitewater, and the Georgia Canoeing Association to speak up on behalf of the recreational paddlers of their state and protect their freedom to float! The ACA is currently watching two Georgian bills impacting paddling access.

HB 1172 attempts to secure legal rights for hunting, fishing, and paddling on "navigable" streams, but in the process legally jeopardizes the ability to paddle streams that do not meet Georgia's test of "navigability" which dates back to an 1860's definition for river freight.

HB1397 lists all the streams in Georgia "presumed to be navigable". The public's right to boat on streams not included on this list is uncertain.



Boater's Day at the Georgia State Capitol

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10 Years of Outdoor Alliance

For 10 years, Outdoor Alliance has united the human-powered outdoor recreation community to achieve lasting conservation victories. These victories include protecting millions of acres of public lands, billions in funding for the outdoors, and converting more than 100,000 outdoor enthusiasts into outdoor advocates. Congratulations on 10 years of effective advocacy to our friends at Outdoor Alliance!

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Summer Solstice Sticker Design Contest

Voting for the Summer Solstice Sticker Design Contest closes on March 26! There are 13 fantastic designs to choose from, help us select the winner by voting for your favorite! The winning design will be printed onto die cut stickers and handed out during in person paddling events organized over the ACA Summer Solstice Celebration, June 20-23!



[Vote](#)

One Square Mile of Hope

Help one square mile of hope reclaim their record in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for the largest raft of canoes, kayaks and guide boats all while fundraising for cancer research! On September 14, One Square Mile of Hope will attempt to gather more than 3,150 boats on Fourth Lake at Arrowhead Park in Inlet, New York with the goal of making a difference for those who have been touched by cancer.

[Read More](#)

Scan if Found

Every week, the Coast Guard, states, and other first responders are forced to launch search and rescue missions that don't need to happen, and it hurts their ability to save lives that are truly in danger.

When a paddle, canoe, kayak, raft, or SUP is found adrift, first responders leap into action and begin searching for the owner. Sometimes, there's a person in the water who receives the help they need, but most of the time, it's a simple case of lost gear.

The ACA has partnered with HOST Hawaii and the U.S. Coast Guard to create the "Scan If Found" sticker program. If a watercraft is found drifting, these stickers help first responders identify the owner of watercraft and verify that the owner is safe. The stickers also help people return lost gear to one another through an anonymous messaging system, which helps owners identify their equipment. No account is needed to use this program, just scan a sticker and you're connected. We are excited to offer these stickers to ACA members for free, all you need to do is pay for shipping!

[Get Stickers](#)



ACA Competition Club Feature: Potomac Whitewater Racing Center

This month we are excited to feature the Potomac Whitewater Racing Center (PWRC)! This club, serving the greater D.C. area, has produced numerous Olympians and World Champion medalists. Head Coach, Silvan Poberaj, and Assistant Coach, Tyler Westfall, are excited to welcome paddlers who are new to slalom to the club for the 2024 season! Summer camps, beginning June 24, will act as an introduction to the sport of whitewater kayaking with a specific focus on the discipline of Slalom. These camps will be taught by

some of the top athletes and coaches in the U.S. and completion of this camp will lead to an opportunity to join on of PWRC's year-round training groups suited to each athlete's age and abilities.

What makes PWRC stand out is their commitment to meeting each athlete where they are and providing individualized instruction as much as possible. Kids who learn to paddle from the skilled coaches at PWRC are equipped with the technique and confidence to excel in all their paddling endeavors. Better yet, they will have a great community with whom they can paddle for the rest of their lives. For more information, check out the [Potomac Whitewater Racing Center's website](#) and follow them on [Instagram!](#)

2024 COPAC Slalom Pan American Championships & Olympic Qualifier

The 2024 COPAC Canoe Slalom Pan American Championships & Olympic Qualifier took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, this March 14-17. Three men from the United States competed in the Men's Kayak event: Kaelin Friedenson, Joshua Joseph, and Tyler Westfall, coached by Rafal Smolen. This was the final opportunity to qualify a quota for the United States for the Men's Kayak Slalom event at the Paris Olympics this summer. All three qualified for the final with solid runs, and Kaelin Friedenson put down a great run in the finals that resulted in a second-place finish! To secure an Olympic quota for the Men's Kayak event, a first-place finish was needed, and Pepe Goncalves from Brazil took home the win on his home course. We couldn't be prouder of the heart and determination with which these men raced. Well done, Kaelin, Josh, and Tyler!



Slalom athlete Kaelin Friedenson (left) and coach Rafal Smolen (right)

Fast and Clean

After hundreds of hours of work, Jef Huey has completed the blending of two copies of the original 16mm film version of the iconic Fast and Clean into an Ultra High-Definition Master.

Fast and Clean follows a group of paddlers attempting to make the U.S. Canoe/Kayak Slalom Team and to compete in the 1979 World Championships held in Jonquiere, Canada. This film shines in it's ability to capture the essence of the sport in the late 70's and early 80's and inspire new generations of paddlers.

To celebrate the film, its creators and our sport, the ACA is co-hosting a premiere event. Russ Nichols, the original producer, and many of the folks depicted in the film will be in attendance. The Premiere of the newly restored film, Fast and Clean, will take place Saturday afternoon, May 11 at the AFI Theater in Silver Spring, Maryland. The event will include the showing, a gathering following the premiere, and a silent auction to support current athletes.

[Tickets & More Information](#)



Instructor of the Month: Federico Haffner

This March, we are celebrating Federico Haffner as the ACA Instructor of the Month! Federico calls Buenos Aires, Argentina home, and he is a self-proclaimed devourer of kilometers that never stops paddling!

To meet the high demand for paddling education, Federico founded [C.A.K. \(Centro de Actividades para Kayakistas\)](#). Serving as the director of C.A.K, Federico provides his community with sea kayaking courses, trip reports, free safety and rescue events, and first aid training opportunities. Federico teaches his students the importance of connecting with the water. This enables them to make smart, safe decisions and get the most out of the paddling experience. "Just thinking about exploring the most hidden places makes me feel in a state of constant adrenaline and freedom. You never know who you will inspire."

Bien hecho, Federico! We are glad to have you as part of la familia ACA!



Instructor of the Month, Federico Haffner

[Read More](#)

If you know a truly awesome ACA instructor, [nominate them as future Instructor of the Month!](#)

Helmet Survey

The ACA has a long history of encouraging education instead of regulation and supports safety-oriented initiatives that lead to better educational resources. We believe that accurate and relevant data about paddling accidents is essential both for public policy decisions and to determine what type of education is most appropriate in our communities.

A recent study by Virginia Tech's helmet lab raised questions about the quality of protection afforded by whitewater paddling helmets. However, there is little data available regarding head, neck, and face injuries suffered by paddlers. Completing this survey, which will take less than 10 minutes, will help create a better understanding of the frequency and type of head, face, and neck injuries among paddlers. Even if you don't wear a helmet and have never had a head injury, your input is valuable - knowing that some paddlers don't have head injuries is important information.

The results of this short survey will help the paddling community better influence manufacturers so we can have the best possible equipment. Thanks for helping make that happen!

[Take the Survey](#)

ACA Safety Education & Instruction Council Livestream

Wednesday, April 3 at 7 PM EST is your chance to gain valuable insights from ACA paddlesport education leadership experts as they share their growth-oriented approaches and strategies. Join our panel discussion to gain actionable insights and elevate your paddlesport leadership journey.



Paddlers Tune-In - LIVE - APR 3 - 7:00 PM EST

ACA
PADDLESPORTS

SAFETY, EDUCATION & INSTRUCTION
Get your Questions Answered by ACA Leaders

The image features a group of people in kayaks and canoes on a river, with a large white arrow pointing towards the ACA logo. The background is a scenic view of a river surrounded by trees.

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Sincerely,

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