



Serving paddlers since 1880



### Happy Summer Solstice!

We hope that you are able to get on the water with your friends and family during the longest days of the year! ACA members, instructors, athletes, and clubs have rallied to organize over 50 public paddling events in 23 states and 4 different countries! Please join us as we attempt to get as many paddlers on the water as possible during the ACA Summer Solstice Celebration.

Be sure tag us in your solstice paddling photos at [@acapaddlesports](#) on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#), and use the event hashtag, [#ACASummerSolsticeCelebration](#) to be featured!



[Find an Event Near You](#)



## Ask Your Lawmakers to Pass a Recreation Policy Package

In a letter to the Senate this week, Outdoor Alliance, the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, and a broad coalition of over 250 outdoor recreation businesses and organizations called on Senators to pass the EXPLORE Act.

The Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act is a bipartisan package of outdoor recreation policy that takes important steps to expand and improve outdoor recreation opportunities.

The highlights include the Simplifying Outdoor Access for Recreation Act (SOAR) that will improve recreational permitting for outfitters and guides, the Biking on Long Distance Trails Act (BOLT) to identify and create more long-distance bike trails, the Protecting America's Rock Climbing Act (PARC) to safeguard Wilderness climbing, and permanent direction for the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership and FICOR.

The House voted to pass the EXPLORE Act and now the outdoor community can put pressure on the Senate to also pass the package! You can use the form below to thank your House member for passing the bill and to ask your Senators to make the EXPLORE Act law. Please personalize your letter for the greatest effect!

[Learn More & Take Action](#)



## Volunteer HUB

The ACA has introduced a new Volunteer Hub on our website. This Hub offers volunteer opportunities for those interested in getting involved as well as resources for current volunteers! We provide volunteer opportunities nationwide across all paddlesport disciplines, and you can also find connections to local Paddle America Clubs for local volunteering opportunities. Whether your interests are in policy and stewardship, education, finance, competition, or other aspects of Paddlesports, we have a variety of volunteer prospects available.

For any inquiries about specific opportunities, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, MacKenzie Holbrook, at [mholbrook@americancanoe.org](mailto:mholbrook@americancanoe.org). Additionally, you can subscribe to volunteer communications through your ACA member page.

[Learn More](#)

## America's Boating Channel – New Featured Video

Did you know that there is a free streaming channel full of content just for boaters? America's Boating Channel, sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard and produced by United States Power Squadrons, is the official showcase and repository for videos focused on boating safety and boater education.

This week, the ACA's ["Kayak Fishing Minute"](#), a 60 second video with the most important rules to remember while Kayak Fishing, is being featured and can easily be found at the top of the America's Boating Channel website!

Smart TV viewers can watch ACA-produced content and more by subscribing to America's Boating Channel for free on Apple TV, Roku, and FireTV. The best way to access the flagship video service offerings online for free is at [AmericasBoatingChannel.com](https://AmericasBoatingChannel.com).

Viewers can still also subscribe at no charge to America's Boating Channel on YouTube to access the service's original award-winning boating safety and boater education videos.



[Learn More](#)



## 2024 Paris Olympic Games

We are just over a month out from the 2024 Paris Olympic Games! The ACA will be publishing lots of information over the next few weeks on how to watch Canoe/Kayak events in the Olympics, who's competing, and how you can support!

Paddlers will be sure to want to watch the Canoe Slalom and Canoe Sprint events! Lucky for us paddlers, there will be a slalom or sprint event each day of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

Our U.S. Canoe Slalom Olympic Team is made up of two incredible paddlers, Evy Leibfarth and Casey Eichfeld. This will be Evy's second Olympic Games, and she will be making history by becoming the first American woman to compete in three whitewater events — women's canoe, women's kayak, and women's kayak cross. Casey will be competing in his fourth Olympic Games but looks forward to racing in the Olympics for the first time as a father!

Racing for the U.S. Canoe Sprint Olympic Team in the 2024 Paris Olympics will be Nevin Harrison, Jonas Ecker, and Aaron Small. Nevin Harrison became a household name following the 2020 Tokyo Olympics where she became the Olympic Champion in the Women's Canoe Single 200m event. She will compete again in this event and attempt to



defend her title as reigning champion! Jonas and Aaron have qualified for their first Olympic Games after winning the Men's Kayak Double 500m event at the 2024 Pan American Championships this past April. Both Jonas and Aaron will be racing in the Men's Kayak Double 500m event and the Men's Kayak Single 1000m event.

Be sure to follow @acapaddlesports on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) for regular updates! More Olympics hype coming to your inbox soon!

### **U.S. Slalom Athletes Have Been Busy on the World Cup Circuit**

The first three ICF Canoe Slalom World Cups took place this month in Augsburg, Germany; Prague, Czech Republic; and Krakow, Poland. The Women's Team had incredible performances at these events. Evy Leibfarth, who will compete next month in the 2024 Paris Olympics, had a third-place podium at World Cup 1 – Augsburg in the Women's Kayak Cross event. Evy also qualified for the Women's Canoe Final in all three World Cups. Ria Sribar secured her best finish yet in a World Cup event with her third-place finish in the Women's Kayak event at World Cup 3 – Krakow.

[Learn More](#)

### **The 44th Annual Ted Houk Memorial Regatta**

The 44th Annual Ted Houk Memorial Regatta was hosted by the Seattle Canoe and Kayak Club to kick off the summer racing season for Sprint Canoe. 229 paddlers from across the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico raced this June 8-9 on Green Lake, in Seattle, Washington. Congratulations to Gig Harbor Canoe and Kayak Racing Team, who won the regatta.

This was also a Junior National team selection event for the U.S. Junior Worlds Team and Olympic Hopes Team. The senior team also had a strong showing, as athletes are gearing up for U23 World Championships and the 2024 Olympics.



*U.S. Canoe Sprint National Team member Elena Wolgamot racing at the 44th Annual Ted Houk Memorial Regatta.*

*Photo Credit: Schonna Lind-Schenk*



## SUP Competition Committee

The ACA and USA SUP are teaming up to establish a Stand Up Paddling (SUP) Competition Committee! Tasked with a number of vital responsibilities, the newly formed SUP Competition Committee will be selecting the USA Stand Up Paddling (SUP) National Team to represent the United States in ICF (International Canoe Federation) competitions. As Stand Up Paddling (SUP) continues to gain popularity and recognition as a thrilling water sport, the collaboration between ACA and USA SUP signifies a significant step forward in advancing the competitive landscape of paddleboard racing in the United States.

[Learn More](#)

## Upcoming Competition Events

- July 2-7 — [2024 ICF Junior and U23 Canoe Slalom World Championships](#)
- July 17-21 — [2024 ICF Junior and U23 Canoe Sprint World Championships](#)
- July 26 - August 11 — [2024 Paris Olympic Games](#)
- August 28 - September 8 — [2024 Paris Paralympic Games](#)



## Instructor of the Month: Chris Bracamonte

This June, please join us in celebrating our newest Instructor of the Month, Chris Bracamonte! Chris is a Coastal Kayaking Instructor based in Washington State. He most often teaches on the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Washington Coast.

When teaching, Chris has found a lot of success by meeting his students where they are. "Everybody has a different learning style and comes from different backgrounds. When I'm working with new people, I work hard to find common ground and make my teaching methods more relatable. Moments that stand out to me are when I can bridge the gap in their understanding by drawing parallels to their other hobbies or interests."

Chris is well known in the Port Angeles area for his welcoming and inclusive nature. He is such a positive influence on the paddling culture in Port Angeles and we are proud to have him as a leader in the ACA network! His flexible approach to instruction and dedication to sharing the sport with all who are interested are what we love about Chris and why we are excited to be featuring him this month! Well done, Chris!



*Instructor of the Month, Chris Bracamonte*

[Read More](#)

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

### **Pro School Feature: UWC Thailand**

UWC Thailand, is nestled in the serene beauty of Phuket, and as a member of the United World College network, the school has rich history in outdoor and experiential learning. UWC Thailand made a significant stride towards enhancing its own outdoor education programming, by opening its own outdoor education center in 2022, shortly thereafter becoming an ACA Pro School.

What sets UWC Thailand apart is its distinctive approach, with the majority of coaches and instructors comprising passionate teachers from the school itself, which allows the integration of kayaking seamlessly into both the curriculum and extracurricular activities. From kindergarten to Grade 12, students are presented with diverse avenues to explore the outdoors, and kayaking represents a significant opportunity for many of our learners to engage with the natural elements. A standout experience in the program is the immersive 9-day kayaking expedition undertaken by Grade 9 students, where they paddle a significant portion of Phuket coastline, equipped with paddles crafted by their own hands during the design classes in the preceding semester. This journey encapsulates the essence of experiential learning, empowering students with self-reliance, teamwork, and an appreciation for the environment.

UWC Thailand's distinction as an ACA Pro School not only underscores its commitment to outdoor education but also its dedication to fostering well-rounded individuals prepared for



the challenges of the world.



*ACA Pro School, UWC Thailand*

[Learn More](#)

### **ACA Instructor Trainer Julie Munger and ACA Instructor Trainer Educator Mike Mather Receive Prestigious Higgins and Langley Awards**

The ACA is proud to recognize Higgins and Langley Awards recipients, ACA Instructor Trainer Julie Munger and Instructor Trainer Educator Mike Mather - 2024 recipients of the Lifetime Achievement Award and Incident Reward, respectively.

The Higgins and Langley Memorial Awards in Swiftwater Rescue honor outstanding achievement in the technical rescue discipline of swiftwater and flood rescue. They are not heroism awards, but rather recognize preparedness, teamwork, and a job well done, sometimes under extreme conditions, where training is vital to the success of rescue missions, as well as the safety of rescue personnel. This award program is directly supported by International Association of Water Rescue Professionals - IAWRP.

Congratulations Julie and Mike – we are so humbled and honored by your great achievements in the field of swiftwater rescue!

Thank you for reading our monthly newsletter! Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for the latest stories and updates!

Have some news to share? We encourage you to submit your content for consideration using this [Content Submission Form](#).

Sincerely,



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