



Serving paddlers since 1880



**Hello autumn! Between paddling trips, we hope you are able to enjoy the latest edition of the ACA's Monthly Membership Newsletter!**



### **10 Years of Outdoor Alliance — 10 Impactful Years of Conservation**

This September, the American Canoe Association joined Outdoor Alliance in Washington D.C. to celebrate their 10-year anniversary by meeting with lawmakers and asking them to pass the EXPLORE Act — a bipartisan bill package that will improve outdoor recreation on public lands and waters and includes many key bills that Outdoor Alliance and their partners have helped develop.

Representatives of the ACA joined nearly 80 advocates in over 80 meetings on Capitol Hill with congress members and administration officials in Outdoor Alliance's largest advocacy fly-in to date. Meeting in-person with lawmakers is one of the best ways to keep the issues that are important to paddlers and other outdoor enthusiasts, priorities in congress.

A huge congratulations to Outdoor Alliance on their 10-year anniversary and for 10 impactful years of conservation. By uniting some of the most influential human-powered outdoor recreation advocacy organizations, Outdoor Alliance has become a driving force behind some of the United States' biggest conservation wins. Outdoor Alliance has created something special, and we are excited to be a part of the next 10 years.



*Members of Outdoor Alliance's Grasstops Collective celebrate a successful day of meetings on Capitol Hill.*

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### Scan if Found

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 up to 3 stickers to ACA members for free!

[Get Stickers](#)



### Paris 2024 Witnesses a Stunning Paralympic Debut by Jillian Elwart and a Medal Winning Performance by Blake Haxton

This September 6-8, Blake Haxton and Jillian Elwart raced in the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. Blake’s blazing fast semifinal earned him the Paralympic record for the fastest time in the Men’s Va’a VL2 200m event for about an hour before the Brazilian gold medalist, Fernando Rufino de Paulo then set the new record in the final later that day.

In the final, Blake finished in third place, earning a bronze medal for Team USA, missing out on silver by only 3 hundredths of a second (0.03 seconds) in a hard-fought race against an extremely competitive field. The large and supportive crowd was an exhilarating and welcome change from the Covid impacted Tokyo 2020 Games where Blake took home a silver medal in front of empty stands. After returning home with some new hardware, Blake's focus is set on LA28.

Jillian made her Olympic debut in Paris at 41 years old after taking up the sport in her mid-30s. She finished in a solid third place in Final B in the Women's Va'a VL2 200m event that also debuted for the first time at a Paralympic Games. Jillian found her way to paracanoe as a recreational paddler and hopes with the excitement and momentum of LA28, more athletes will do the same.

The United States are incredibly fortunate to be represented by such a phenomenal team. Please join us in congratulating Blake and Jillian on their incredible achievements and give them your full support as they begin to prepare for LA28!



*PARIS, FRANCE – SEPTEMBER 08: Gold medalist Fernando Rufino de Paulo of Team Brazil (C) silver medalist Igor Alex Tofalini of Team Brazil (L) and bronze medalist Blake Haxton of Team United States pose for a photo with their medals during the medal ceremony for the Men's Va'a Single 200m – VL2 Final A on day eleven of the Paris 2024 Summer Paralympic Games at Vaires-Sur-Marne Nautical Stadium on September 08, 2024 in Paris, France. (Photo by Elsa/Getty Images)*

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## 2024 ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup Ivrea & World Cup Final La Seu

U.S. athletes raced in two canoe slalom world cups this September in Europe, wrapping up the 2024 international racing season. ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup Ivrea was held September 12-15 in Italy and ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup La Seu took place September 19-22 in Spain.



Evy Leibfarth had a strong race in the women's kayak event at the final canoe slalom world cup of the season in La Seu, Spain finishing in third place, only 2 hundredths of a second (0.02 seconds) off the silver medal time put down by Eva Tercelj of Slovenia. Michal Smolen had a great performance in the men's kayak cross event in La Seu qualifying for the semifinal and then placing 8th place overall. Zach Lokken qualified for the semifinal for men's canoe in Ivrea, finishing 18th overall. More event highlights and complete results can be found on the [International Canoe Federation website](#).

U.S. canoe slalom and kayak cross athletes had a great international season this year performing particularly well for being a relatively small team. This is a truly special team and we are excited to ride this wave of momentum into the 2025 season.



*2024 ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup Final La Seu-Women's Kayak Podium*

*Eva Tercelj (left), Maialen Chourraut (center), Evy Leibfarth (right)*

## **2024 Olympic Hopes Regatta**

37 U.S. athletes ages 15-17 years old and 3 coaches traveled to Szeged, Hungary to race in the 2024 Olympic Hopes Regatta. This race is a unique opportunity for athletes to compete with the world's best sprint athletes of their age. This foundation-building program is designed for young athletes who have the drive and potential to achieve success in international competition as they progress to racing in older age-groups, and eventually at the Senior level. Congratulations to all the athletes who raced and thank you to the coaches and parents who's time and support made this a successful trip!



*Members of the U.S. Canoe Sprint OHR Team enjoying some time off the water in Szeged, Hungary.*



### **Instructor of the Month: Dave Bumgarner**

Please join us in congratulating Dave Bumgarner — ACA's Instructor of the Month for September 2024! Dave is an instructor trainer for whitewater kayaking, swiftwater rescue, and packrafting as well as an instructor for whitewater canoeing. Dave also is a member of the ACA Swiftwater Rescue Committee.

Dave is an exemplary instructor and instructor trainer whose impact extends beyond the borders of the United States. Paddling is for everyone, and Dave makes it a priority to ensure his students can learn in safe and fun environments, no matter who they are or where they come from.

Based in Colorado, and the founder and lead instructor for the Gunnison Kayak Program, Dave most often teaches on the Gunnison River near Crested Butte, Colorado. He has also traveled to bring ACA instructor courses to paddlers abroad. He taught the first ACA packraft instructor courses in China and the first ACA swiftwater rescue instructor course in Chile. Dave will be returning to China to run a couple more packraft instructor courses and he highly recommends that ACA instructors expand their reach outside the United States.





*Instructor of the Month — Dave Bumgarner*

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

### Rafting Rendezvous



The ACA has recently introduced an international Raft Guide Certification and is proud to offer this new opportunity in a fun and exciting weekend full of workshops and clinics! This event on October 12-14, 2024 in Oak Hill, West Virginia provides top notch professional development for raft guides and instructors. Hosted on the world-class whitewater of the beautiful New River National Park, this event is the first of it's kind!

- Raft Guide Examiner Endorsement for currently certified ACA Level 4 and 5 Rafting Instructors
- Raft Guide Certifications
- ACA Rafting Instructor Updates

The Rafting Rendezvous costs \$295 and includes 3 meals per day, 3 nights of camping on-site, transportation to and from event sites, and all needed boats and gear.

The ACA Rafting Rendezvous is sponsored by ACE Adventure Resort, NRS, Rocky Mountain Rafts, Hyside, and Sawyer Paddles and Oars.

[Registration & More Information](#)

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Sincerely,

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