



Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

Newsletter

October 2019

Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club 355 Gorge Road West Victoria, B.C. V9A 1M9
Phone: 250-590-8193 (Info only) Website: www.vckc.ca

Dates to Remember

- October 26 – Basic Kayak Course
- November 2- **Fall Cleanup**
- November 5 – General Meeting

Be sure to check the website for information on the various courses and activities planned over the fall!!!

President's Message



Well, the first days of Fall sure came with a vengeance. I know my cedar trees are liking the rain and so are the river paddlers. Time to dig out the Gortex. It is also time to reflect on VCKC present and future needs. Please read through the following to see what the executive is thinking about to better meet the needs of our paddling community.

The general meeting October 1 will be an update on the three major projects currently underway at the club and a discussion of the four ideas listed below, lettered A,B,C,D (regular meetings, private storage, equipment access, and a seventh paddling program). I hope you can come out and be a part of the meeting.

The club is currently working through three major projects; 1) a financial review and forward plan, 2) an overhaul of our storage facilities, 3) a dock expansion. To guide us through these projects and into the future I came up with five fundamental values that I believe have been, or should be, considered in planning for the future and how we spend our time and money. These five keys are to keep VCKC relevant to our community's needs, enabling a future for VCKC into the decades ahead.

- √ Strive to be relevant to the needs of our community. As much as possible work at gearing program activities to younger memberships.
- √ Keep teaching paddling skills to beginners. Keep trying to raise the skills of all paddlers.
- √ Maintain a level of fun and community within the club (and outside the club).
- √ Keep club facilities in good order. Provide equal access to club facilities. Keep club facilities current to meet the needs of our community.
- √ Keep club paddling equipment in good order. Provide equal access to club paddling equipment. Keep the types of paddling equipment available that will meet the needs of our community.

I doubt any of these five points are seen as radical departures of what we are all comfortable with. Indeed, I think we do a pretty good job of them and in large part, that is how we have 50 years of success.

I have a few suggestions for how VCKC might make some slight changes to improve our club. Hopefully the changes will help VCKC change with the times. They are not suggested as a package; some ideas might be good, others not so.

#A Stop having our regular general monthly meetings. Attendance is very low and getting lower. This tells me we are not doing anything at these meetings people care about. Some years ago the monthly meetings were where you would meet up with like-minded paddlers and set plans for the month. The computer age has filled some of the meet up need. Program meetings can better target people's interest but currently a successful program meeting reduces the general meetings attendance.

Parties and events are better attended than the monthly meetings.

So, I suggest:

- Promoting program meetings that are open to anyone, hopefully advertised in the newsletter. Programs would only have meetings when it makes sense. There is no need to create monthly program meetings.
- Promote general celebrations/meetings such as June barbecue (solstice paddle), September barbecue, Christmas light parade/party.
- Promote AGM in January to elect executive and communicate with members.

A suggested calendar might be:

- January: Second Tuesday AGM
- March: Second Tuesday, a mini presentation by each program to advertise and show off what they do through the year.
- June: Closest Friday to solstice, evening paddle and Barbecue
- September: Second Tuesday, welcome back Barbecue
- December: Second Saturday, lighted boat paddle and party

#B Private Storage

Our current private boat storage provides a few lucky members very reasonably priced storage. Without equal access we are violating goal #4 above and equally as important, our Landlord has mandated we make a change to this inequality. We must show we are making steps in this direction at our next lease renewal.

We also have had some individuals renting lockers. This too is not equally accessible and will need to be rectified. (As I have mentioned before I believe the best solution is to reclaim the upstairs room as usable meeting space and provide free day use locker space in the basement. When the new compound storage is completed the basement can be retooled to better suit the club's needs.)

#C Allow greater access to club equipment.

Much of this proposal has been a common practice through the years but as far as I know on a haphazard, informal way. I propose a more formal policy that will provide greater and more equitable use of club equipment and possibly increase the number of instructors and increase members taught to a higher skill level.

Currently individual use of club equipment is limited to the Upper Gorge. **I propose members be allowed to take club equipment anywhere they want to paddle!** I know this sounds crazy, but I have a few caveats that might make it work for the club and individual members.

- you must have the approval of the program director and it cannot interfere with club programs.
- to take boats farther away than the Upper Gorge you must not be using them for profit.
- You must have in Instructor Certification for the type of boat you are borrowing.
- You can't exceed the Instructor/student ratio of your certification.
- You must be using the equipment in accordance with your certification e.g. Lakewater, Ocean, etc.

My reasoning here is:

- as more and more people find their living arrangements do not allow storage of large paddle craft, club's equipment could fill the need. (This helps address club's storage issues.)
- as costs rise, using club equipment is economical for young families and individuals.
- Requiring individual borrowers to be Instructor trained, raises the skill level of the individual and as they paddle with their friends and others they will naturally be increasing the skill level of others. This scenario is the perfect place for leadership development. (This helps address #2 above.)
- Our policy already provides financial assistance to anyone seeking to obtain Instructor certification. (This helps address equal access, #4,#5 above)
- Hopefully there is a fun factor in all this, taking trips hither and yon. (#3 above)
- This is not as unusual an idea as might first appear. Through the years, individuals that have attained a level of skill and leadership have used club equipment for personal trips. This is just making the option known and available to anyone wanting to take advantage of this sort of thing.

#D Add SUP program

To keep current with the greater paddling community, thereby meeting the needs of a younger paddling demographic, I suggest adding a seventh paddling program.

Possible repercussions:

- reach a younger, next generation VCKC member.
- increased club expenses. (This is not unique. The club, in recent years, spent money to train kayak instructors in hope of building the program. We have recently spent money to rebuild a Dragon Boat program. We spend money very well.)
- increase SUP paddler skill level.
- provide social, fitness and paddling opportunity.
- increase pressure on club facilities including storage.
- more club equipment to repair

In summary, there are four items here. Obviously, I think they have merit. I think they are mostly small tweaks to a system that has served VCKC well for years. I would like you to consider each point and you can bring your comments to the general meeting, October 1 or send an email to the president@vckc.ca and copy your program director. Some of these ideas I believe will increase expenses, others might increase responsibilities of program directors, some might do both. People are expecting to hear about possible changes at the October general meeting. We will talk about our new Financial Plan, our new Storage plans outside, and our plans for the dock expansion. I would also like to talk about these ideas at the general meeting.

You can email me or save it for Tuesday.

Cheers

~ Tim Marks, President

Mark your calendar Saturday November 2nd at 9:00am for the Fall Club Cleanup !!!!

~Sandy Rattray

Big Canoe News

August 24 & 25, we had 12 VCKC paddlers gathered for the annual Thompson River paddle from Savona to Ashcroft. Two big canoes (Tillicum and Canada) along with Alan & Linda Thomson in their tandem, joined the Kamloops group (two big canoes with Darryl Spencer and paddlers). Warm water with big river features are the draw for paddling this river. Saturday brought David Dorosz giving solid advice at the river's edge while the lengthy shuttle was taking place. (Thanks to Alan T. and Helene P. for all the shuttles!) David led the crew in Tillicum (Julie-Anne, Leigh & Phil B, Pam & Laura), while Jim B. was stern in Canada, (Tim coached from the bow and Pat EB and Mary were crew). An exciting run from Savona to Juniper Beach campground for lunch; then an afternoon paddle against the wind for parts of the adventure to Ashcroft comprised the afternoon. A short carry of heavy big canoes up the riverbank ended the first day (with a visit to the local pub).



Launch at Savona



Looking up from Black Canyon

The next day we tried something different. Two tandems with the Thomson's and Spencer's and Canada with Jim & Pat and Tim & Mary headed down a new section for us, Ashcroft through the Black Canyon and beyond. With some exciting ferries and eddy turns, Canada snapped through tremendous water. The black canyon was calm and beautiful. All the excitement happened before entering the canyon to allow time to enjoy the high cathedral-like rock walls of the canyon.

There was wild water to enjoy and good company both days. After all, community is what big canoes are all about. It takes a team to paddle a big canoe! Next year we're thinking of new plans for the Thompson. It might be a good idea for interested paddlers to do a moving water course this fall or next spring if you've never done whitewater paddling. We hope to make it a three or four day paddle. The cost is high to transport our big canoes to the mainland, so we're hoping to get more paddling opportunities for our participants. We aim for the weekend before labour day most years. We hope to have plans in place early and will let you know once confirmed.

Other big canoe news this fall will see our associate members in action on the water and in the clubhouse throughout the fall. See the club calendar for dates the big canoes are in use.

If you have any big canoe questions you can email me at voyageur@vckc.ca.

Paddles Up!!

~ Mary Marks, Big Canoe Director

Paddle for Health

On Sept. 7, 2019, VCKC participated in Paddle for Health, a fundraiser for the Island Kids Cancer Association which supports Island families living with the challenge of childhood cancers. Before the event, Roy Scully organized the transportation of the big boats, Tillicum and Canada, with all auxiliary equipment. Joe Boyd and myself, Ellie James, volunteered as stern paddlers to give participants an opportunity to paddle in big boats. Each of the paddlers were expected to raise funds for the opportunity to participate in the event.



We launched from Willows Beach for a beautiful morning of relaxed paddling past Cattle Point into Cadboro Bay to Gyro Beach. There, we paused for a rest and snack before paddling back. The big boats were part of a magnificent convoy of kayaks, tandem canoes, SUPs, outriggers and more. There were many novice paddlers, but they felt safe because of the experienced safety leaders who accompanied us in their kayaks.

I found the event rewarding as I enjoyed the paddling as well reconnecting with old paddling friends and meeting many new participants. Throughout

the day we promoted VCKC membership and all of its benefits.

Altogether, Paddle for Health raised \$23,500. We were proud to have VCKC be a part of this worthwhile cause and would like to thank the participants who assisted unloading and loading boats before and after the event.

~ Ellie James

Dragon Boat Program Update



Even with Summer winding down, The Dragonboat Program continues! If you're interesting in joining us for some paddling, we're continuing to hold practices weekly on Wednesdays 5:45-7:30pm. Please contact us to learn more and get put on our contact list at dragonboat@vckc.ca

Paddles Up!!

~ Jana Savage, Dragon Boat Director



Close finish at VDBF

Kayak Program Update

VCKC Newsletter October 2019

September has been a month of planning and organizing for the fall and winter program. We had an instructor meeting to determine the capacity for delivering more training and clinics through the fall and winter.

Thanks to our generous volunteers we have managed to secure two more Sea Kayak Basic courses for the fall (October 26 and November 23). These courses are being offered first to the few on earlier waiting lists that couldn't make the June courses. An email will be sent when registration is open for others.

Mike Teachman is leading a trip October 6th to Sooke Basin. There was lots of interest in this paddle, so we expanded the offering with the final participant count of 17 or 18 members paddling in 12 kayaks and 3 canoes.

By the time the newsletter is published we will have had a fall kayak member meeting to discuss the plans for the fall and winter including courses, pool sessions, trips. I hope you were able to come out.

I am seeking volunteers for the kayak program administration and planning social activities. The more people who get involved the more events we can run and more fun can be had. Please send me an email if you'd like to help out.

Happy paddling!

~Karen Thrussell, Kayak Program Director

Outrigger Update

From what I have heard it was another good summer of paddling in the outrigger section. At least two boats were on the water on most days. Wind and summer vacations meant that crews sometime postponed or cancelled, but all reports are that it was a successful season. These are some highlights

Sue's picnic trip

The time on Cadboro Bay is a highlight for many Outriggers. Sue MacPherson's team has a picnic on Discovery Island

as part of their annual routine. This year was no exception. Late in the summer, the group, ably sterned by Mike Wheatley, found a window between the wind and current barriers that make this trip so interesting, and made their way over for a picnic paddle. By all accounts a good time was had by all



Picture by Sue MacPherson
Carrie Abbot, Pete Flagg, Fran Tisot, Raj Deepak and Mike Wheatly

Return of Boat to Gorge



Well summer has officially ended and in recognition the boat from Cadboro Bay was moved back to the Gorge on Saturday. As usual Malcolm Warrington spent numerous hours studying tides, currents and weather forecasts. He got it right and team had a long but enjoyable paddle. their GPS tracked 19.8 kms over 2hrs 20m ,, with an av 7.8 kmph The move from Cadboro Bay to VCKC is not a trivial task, and a big thanks go out to Malcolm Warrington, Michael Shannon, Linda Nimshom, Kevin Stewart, Bruce Porter, and Catherine MacKellar

RIP Outrigger canoe-2

It is not well known to most VCKC members; but VCKC has a two person outrigger. This boat is much more delicate than our more robust six person boats, and the time has likely come when it is to be taken out of commission. Those who used this boat, myself included enjoyed the experience, but all things must end. RIP OC 2. Please come forward, if you are interested in resurrecting this part of the OC program.

Wake Up the Gorge 2020

Our annual Outrigger race has dates of April 4 for outrigger sprints and April 5 for small boats. Stay tune for more information.

Races



VCKC is not known for racing outside of the Marathon program. Having said that, four teams are registered for the "Bridges" OC race October 5.

<http://orpc.ca/content/index.php/2018/08/30/announcing-bridges-race-2018/>

Please come out and cheer for VCKC in this fun event

In other racing news, on September 21 Darcy Graham and team wolf-pack, placed first in the Sproat Lake - Battleship Iron Outrigger race at the Sproat Lake Canoe club. The Club Mirage was trailered by Ocean River Canoe Club to the Port Alberni Site.

Congratulations Wolfpack!

Fortunately, not much happens to OC paddlers beyond getting wet. However, this summer, a routine huli turned into a potential drowning. During a planned huli, one veteran paddler had their legs tangled in some rope attached to the outrigger and was forced under the boat when the OC was righted. The quick actions of their teammates meant that this was just a traumatic experience, but with no injury. Long ropes are not to be attached the boats, and mooring lines should also be left at the dock.



~ Anthony Hopkin, Outrigger Director

Boat Storage Newsletter Report



Renovations on the compound have started. The new gate has been installed and one of the canoe racks demolished. Saanich has now given us the full go ahead for the project, so we expect to start work on the new canoe storage shed in early October.

The future of private member boat storage is a little murky. Saanich, after a reasonable time period, wants the storage of private boats on public property (the VCKC Clubhouse and Compound) to end. VCKC Executive will of course make a strong case for private member-boat storage. However, with the construction of the new boat storage sheds, we also want to bring member-boat storage more in line with Club policy and guidelines.

Currently Club boat-storage policy requires the following:

VCKC Newsletter October 2019

- membership in good standing
- stored boats to be under a length “normally paddled by two persons”
- regular use of stored boat(s), i.e. at least monthly use
- wait-listing of applicants.

The following recommendations will be submitted to Executive for review:

1. Some boat storage should continue to be allocated for members in good standing
2. All stored boats (member-boats and Club boats) must be in good condition and safe for use
3. Members must make a good faith effort to regularly use their stored boats
4. No storage will be allotted for seldom used family heirlooms or museum pieces
5. VCKC should consider alternatives to the first come, first serve system of storage allocation, e.g. Lottery system with fixed term.
6. Under the 2020 fee structure, Storage fees will be raised to \$120/year for outdoor storage. VCKC will try to move all member-boats to outside racks.
7. VCKC should consider forming a committee of interested members to investigate and pursue new boat storage options in the greater Victoria area.

I regularly get requests for boat storage. It seems that a lot of people have boats but no place to store them. It would be beneficial to the local paddling community if the Club could help find ways to mitigate this boat storage problem.

~ Dan Walker, VCKC Storage Director



Many of you know about the [BC Marine Trails Network Association](#) and their mission to create a network of marine trails on our coast. The work to complete this vision, preserving public access to public sites for paddlers and small boats from Victoria to the Alaska border, includes 12 paddling clubs (including **Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club**), First Nations, industry groups, and multiple levels of government.

The BCMT organization is now poised to move to a new level of activity in 2020. Volunteers with IT skills are now needed to help roll out new digital tools. If you have web skills (experience with Joomla! CMS would be great), you are needed sooner than later. If you have worked with Content Management Systems, but not Joomla!, we can train you.

If you want to volunteer with BC Marine Trails, please complete an online application:

<https://bcmt.knack.com/trail-management#volunteer-public-form/>

~ Karen Thrussell, BC Marine Trails Club Rep

Club Contact Information

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