



Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club
Newsletter
August 2020

Be sure to check the website for information on when courses and activities are scheduled !!!

President's Message

Hello to you All,

What a time we are muddling through! Between Covid, unprecedented financial strategies we are taking in stride as normal, and the seeming unraveling of the political stability to our South; I am glad to say it is possible to do a little Club paddling on the Gorge.

We are coming up to a month since VCKC has started a graduated restart. Many members have taken the one hour Coronavirus Mitigation Orientation; about 150 to date. It is mandatory before resuming any Club activities, you avail yourself of this orientation. If you don't see a time offered on the club calendar, contact a program director or the club secretary.

The Coronavirus is still contagious, with no effective medication or vaccine. It is imperative we follow the mitigation plan we submitted to Saanich. This plan is to increase individual safety as well as the safety of our community. Failing to follow our mitigation strategies puts people at risk and will motivate Saanich to shut down Club activities.

Infection rates are edging upward, on the island and provincially, but if we all follow our plan we should be able to continue club activities as we follow our three main tenets:

- Maintain Physical Distancing
- Hand washing (and associated cleaning)
- Self-isolating when appropriate (this could be when showing signs of illness, returning from traveling, or associating with at risk people)

Each time you enter the club compound or building be sure to put your name and current contact information on the ledger (one located in the compound, the other inside the basement door). This is for your safety and the safety of others, in case contact tracing is necessary.

Please help each other follow our mitigation plan. There are no special dispensations or exceptions. The better we can follow the plan, the longer we get to play.



To celebrate a little of the positive, there has been a real surge of interest in small craft paddling. An overwhelming amount of interest. SUP, Kayak, and Canoe have been swamped with interest for instruction. We have limited instructors to fill the need. I would like to thank the instructors that volunteer their time to help others enter paddling sports. If you have experience and thought about getting more involved at the Instructor level, talk to a program director and see if VCKC can help you move in that direction.

Although the OC6s will likely be sidelined for a while, there has been an interest in the smaller outriggers too. Thanks to Mike and friends some repairs have been made to get some equipment back on the water.

Although the “New Normal” is different and takes a little extra thinking to keep safe, VCKC is making progress in reformatting paddling for fun and fitness. These warm sunny evenings are great for a little paddling on the Gorge. I hope you can check it out for yourself. (If you haven’t yet, it starts with a Corona Mitigation Orientation)

Paddles Up, at last,

~ *Tim Marks, President*

Club Paddles



Our first kayak and canoe day trip after reopening happened on July 19. We had an enthusiastic response to the trip with over 20 members registering. We set a 10 boat limit for the trip which unfortunately left quite a few people on the waitlist.

When we all arrived at Thetis Lake around 9:30am the parking lot was almost full ! We split our group into two and used two different unloading locations on opposite sides of the main swim beach. Without the option of car-pooling we had a lot of vehicles to park. But, luckily we all found spaces. Our two groups got on the water shortly after 10am. 2 canoes and 8 kayaks.

Our two groups came together on the water and together made a leisurely and physically distanced paddle around both lakes, making sure to check out the entire shoreline. There was lots of conversation along the way with new friends being made. In one arm of the larger lake we discovered many turtles sunning on logs. There was also an abundance of frogs jumping from lily pad to lily pad.



After about 7 km of paddling we made it back to the main beach around 12:30pm. Thetis was in full swing on this beautiful day. Many paddle boards and air mattresses occupied the water.

A couple of participants took advantage of the warm water to practice rescue techniques. Then, it was unload and pack up. The borrowed club boats were returned to the clubhouse and scrubbed down.

Thank you to Louise and Raoul for leading this trip with me. And also, thanks to those drivers who were able to transport a club boat on your vehicle. We got 10 boats to Thetis without needing the trailer.

~ Mike Teachman



Big Canoe

Although the big canoes rest easy for now, during this pandemic, I want to take this opportunity to thank you, Fellow paddlers!



Memories of Thompson River in big canoe

I am proud of our VCKC members for raising money in the middle of a pandemic for Paddle for the Kids! This would have been the 39th year for PFTK and our members have done a wonderful job to support Easter Seals, specifically, Camp Shawnigan, which is a camp for persons with disabilities that might not ever experience a camp experience. Our donations have made a very positive difference over the years. In 2020, by May 15th, VCKC members raised **\$6,370!** Well done fellow paddlers!

Canoe Program

Canoe Courses

With a bit of creativity and much social distancing, canoe courses are back.

Since mid-March, the Recreational Canoeing Association of BC (RCABC) was active in developing recommendations for conducting canoe courses that would minimize Covid-19 infection risks. These RCABC Recommendations provide guidance for our instructors about how to teach a course while complying with the requirements and recommendations of the Provincial Public Health Officer; these can be viewed at https://bccanoe.com/images/RCABC_Covid_Recommendations_-_Approved_May_26.pdf

A major obstacle to holding courses over the past months was, of course, the closure of the clubhouse and inability of instructors and participants to access equipment and facilities. We managed to overcome this by finding unused and/or private



Lakewater 1 Course

canoes and equipment and holding the course away from the clubhouse in the beautiful outdoors. Moving Water 1, originally scheduled for mid-March was held June 6th and 7th. Ellie James and Rick Bryan taught a small contingent of enthusiastic paddlers on the Cowichan River.



Moving Water Course

With sunny weather and perfect river levels, good times were had by all.

Lakewater 1, originally scheduled for April 11th, was held on June 27th. Despite the complicated logistics, the course was a success thanks to our outstanding volunteer instructors, Ellie James and Alan Thomson. Two additional Lakewater 1 courses were held on July 5th and 11th with thanks to Alan and Linda Thomson, Joe Boyd and Raoul Wiart. Congratulations to our 28 new paddlers certified for Lakewater 1!

Lakewater 2, originally scheduled for June 14th, was held on July 18th with thanks to Alan Thomson and Dan Walker. Congratulations to our 7 new certified solo paddlers!

New courses are scheduled for September so check the calendar and register soon.

Canoe Bookings

When not scheduled for club events the club canoes are available to VCKC members for personal use on the Gorge Waterway - on the club side of the Tillicum Bridge only. To borrow a canoe, Members must have:

- **successfully completed the RCABC Canoe Lakewater 1** or higher course or have equivalent skills demonstrated to a club canoe instructor.
- **attended the VCKC Covid-19 Protocols Orientation training** to minimize the chance that members might catch or transmit the virus while using the clubhouse and club equipment.

Contact canoebooking@vckc.ca to reserve a canoe for the time you want to paddle. Hours of operations of the Clubhouse and boat storage areas are 7 am to 10 pm. Mention which canoe you would like to use if you have a preference. Please check the club calendar to avoid booking during canoe courses, club daytrips or other club events before requesting a canoe.

Safe paddling everyone!

~Louise de Montigny, Canoe Program Director

Kayak Update



After a short hiatus things are back in full swing, almost. Our current focus is to provide the Paddle Canada Basic Kayak Course so that members can borrow the club kayaks and get back on the water. We have completed two and one more is scheduled for next week. I am also working to schedule additional sessions.



A special thanks goes out to Brian for his willingness to provide two courses over the summer especially considering the modifications needed to comply with COVID protocols.

VCKC has been very lucky over the years to have a number of dedicated skilled volunteers provide this training, however, we now find ourselves in a position where we have only one qualified volunteer. We will be working with some members to build our reserve of instructors, but in the short term will be outsourcing this work. That means that the cost of courses will increase to allow VCKC to secure qualified instructors.

Those members interested in Paddle Canada level 1 course have not been forgotten. Plans are in the work to provide this in the fall. Unfortunately, we do not see offering the Level 2 course any time soon.

Using the event segment of the website, we have developed an ongoing list of members looking for the Basic and Level 1 courses. This list will be used to invite members to courses, as they are arranged. If you want to be included use this link to add your name. [Kayak Course Wait List](#) Once you have completed the Basic Course your registration will be edited, and you will be placed on the list for level 1. Members will be offered courses based on the date that you have registered on the list.

In addition to the Paddle Canada Courses. We are considering offering a variety of skill development workshops that will provide members the opportunity to gain valuable skills and strengthen their paddling techniques. These workshops would be provided by members who have demonstrated ability in the related topics – paddles strokes, rescue techniques , developing a trip plan etc. If you want to volunteer to lead a workshop send an email to kayak@vckc.ca. Workshops will be posted on the calendar and registration required. This is to ensure that the volunteers do not wait at the club for potential participants, but no one was planning to attend.

Under the watchful eye of Mike, we have maintained a fleet of six kayaks for member use. Each kayak has been outfitted with the required safety gear as part of the COVID protocol. The only item not stored with the kayak is the paddle. These remain in the kayak locker. Contact kayakbooking@vckc.ca to arrange to borrow a boat for a course or paddle. If by chance you are planning to take a friend out for a paddle remember that they must sign a VCKC and COVID waiver.

A recent change to the lending protocol now offers members who have Paddle Canada Level 1 Certification to borrow kayaks solo. Keep in mind, however, that safe paddling suggests that paddling with a buddy is always a good idea or at least you should ensure someone is aware that you are going out solo. At this time club kayaks are still only to be used on the club side of Tillicum bridge, unless for a club sanctioned paddle or course.

We are still looking for a volunteer to step up and take on the role of Kayak Director. This position can be shared between two individuals if that works better. Please give this consideration. Without a leader it is difficult plan for

the future and organize the program. I have been lucky to have the support of Mike and Brian over the last few months, however, this can't continue much longer.

~ Susan Logan, Acting Director

Marathon Update

The marathon program re-opened its program bright and early on Saturday July 4th with a great turn-out of most of the "regulars". The first order of business was the COVID-19 orientation session. Everyone was shown the new clubhouse configuration, disinfection bottles, common touch surfaces as well as equipment use and signing-in protocols.



Pre COVID Launching

That done, it was onto the water – COVID style of course. There was an eery difference between the pre-COVID protocols and what we now have to work through (see picture). While there was no lack of comradery, monitoring and limiting the number of people in the clubhouse was, at times, equal parts challenge and frustration as we worked out the safest way to handle boats and retrieve the necessary paddling accessories. But we did it, and many facets of the COVID protocol are now becoming routine.

We are fortunate in the marathon program that physical distancing is built into the boat design and being outdoors, the risk of catching or spreading

COVID is reduced even further. Once back at the clubhouse, staggered exits from the dock were completed (see photos), touch-points were sprayed, boats washed as per usual, and then returned to their designated position in the clubhouse.

The Saturday morning après-paddle coffee and chat ritual took place, not in the clubhouse, but outdoors in the park at Gorge and Admirals Road – all while maintaining physical distancing of course. All the marathon program members have done a great job to adopt the "new normal" and any discomfort or quarrel with details and physical distancing are quickly forgotten once on the water. After all, that's what VCKC is all about – having a good, safe paddle with like-minded friends.



Current Launching

~ Peter Elson, Marathon Director

Outrigger News



The #2 Calmar is out of the water, upside down on the beach. Does anyone know what happened to all the black rubber sheets we had? I have the iakos at home waiting to be refinished. I want to get the other two boats unrigged and upside down as well. This will be a good time to refinish the hulls if needed. Calmar #1 certainly needs it. Does anyone have 50 feet of shop space available?

Does anyone know where I could find the names that were given to the two Calmars? If anyone can suggest when they were named I might be able to find the names in the newsletter. The Mirage looks good with its name, Kaimana, on the hull and I want to do the same for the two Calmars.

The two plastic OC1s are proving to be popular despite their poor condition. Everyone should have received an email inviting them to use these boats and I am looking forward to doing repairs that will make them much better. At present I am taking bookings by email but I expect that will change with use of a "do it yourself" web page for booking in future.

Anyone with questions answers or comments please contact me at outrigger@vckc.ca.

Cheers.

~ Mike.

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