



Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club
(www.vckc.ca)

"The Paddling Post" March 2022 Newsletter

The Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club respectfully acknowledges that its activities take place on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen peoples, and that the land and waterways' historical relationship with the Songhees and Esquimalt peoples have existed since time immemorial. The Club is committed to taking meaningful action to build respectful and reciprocal relations with the Songhees and Esquimalt peoples on whose land and waterways club members have the privilege of living, working, and playing.

President's Message

We have had a couple of very good weeks getting club activities back to normal. On March 8 we had our first in-person Executive meeting in two years. It was really nice to be back in the clubhouse, setting up the tables, using the projector, chatting in small groups, so much fun!



Just before that we had the Peninsula Paddle for the Kids kick-off, also in person, with a lunch in the clubhouse afterwards. It was nice to see the big canoes in front of the clubhouse, ready to take with us on our practice sessions! So great to be getting back to normal. More information in the Big Canoe section later in the newsletter.

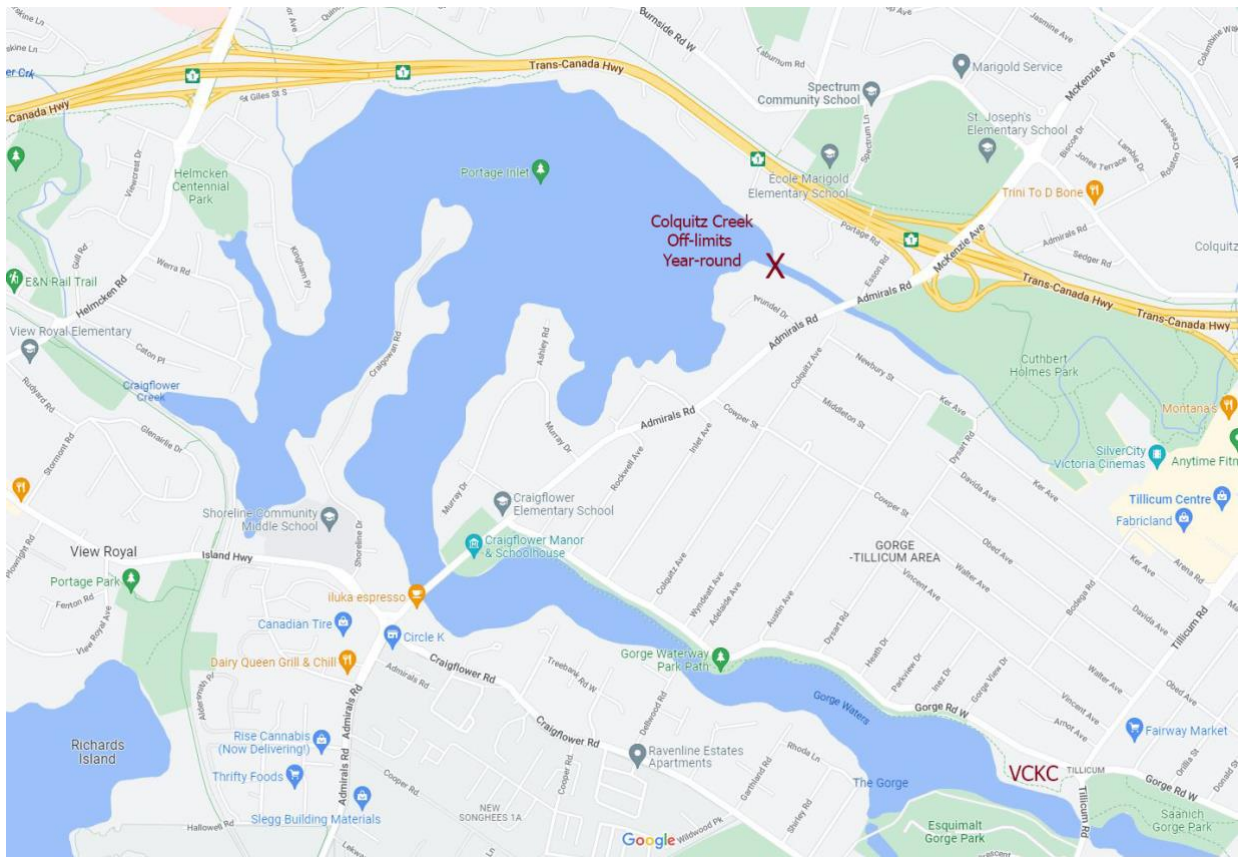
This week came the announcement that masks will no longer be required in most settings and vaccine cards will likely be phased out in early April. Watch the website for updates to our COVID plans.

Our General Meetings are back this year now that we can meet in person. The first one will be March 17, which is the 2nd anniversary of the day we called an emergency Executive meeting to discuss this new virus sweeping the world, when we made the very sad decision to shut the club down. It is SO nice to come back to the clubhouse on that date, this time to celebrate getting together in person. Look for more information under Dragon Boat later in the newsletter.

The Paddling Post



We've had a few reports of an OC6 and a couple of club canoes in Colquitz Creek. There may be new members who are unaware where this is. I've marked it on the map and wanted to remind everyone that Colquitz Creek is off-limits year-round. There is a sign on the bridge that says "Do Not Enter". Please be mindful of the rules that help us be good stewards of the environment in which we are privileged to paddle.



The coming time change means we'll have more light in the evening and our Wednesday evening paddles will last a bit longer. As the programs ramp up I'm looking forward to seeing everyone around the clubhouse and out on the water!

Paddles up!

~ Kim Capson, [President](#)

The Paddling Post

Treasurer Election

We have found a new club Treasurer! Please join us online for a very quick meeting as we consider nominee Donna Sainsbury. As always, nominations are open from the floor.

When: Tuesday, March 15th, 7:00 PM

Where: Online via Zoom

Please register to participate here: <https://www.vckc.ca/event-4707130>.

Big Canoe Update

Hello Fellow Paddlers!

February 2022 was an exciting month for Big Canoe. Thanks to our sterners Alan Thomson, Ellie James, Joe Boyd, Ken Gibbard, Sandy Rattray, Jim Brackett, Ron Williams and Stephen Calderwood, who have generously donated their time and skills, we were able to re-start the Big Canoe program, and launch Peninsula Paddle for the Kids (PPFTK) fundraiser for Easter Seals.

On Sunday March 6th the clubhouse was bursting with excitement as experienced paddlers and



new club members gathered to learn more about the program, upcoming practices and the final BIG DAY paddle scheduled for April 3rd. We worked together as a team carrying *Tillicum*, *Munro* and *Shawnigan* down to the shore, launched our canoes and practice our switches. We paddled into Portage inlet, later returning to play in the gentle current above the Tillicum bridge as captured on video:

- [Paddlers in Motion - Portage Inlet, March 6, 2022](#)
- [PPFTK - Kick Off 2022 - Tillicum Bridge](#)

Later our sterns Alan, Ellie, and Joe convinced me to partake in a capsize and recovery, which was quite entertaining. Believe it or not, the effort required to bail out the boat kept me warm in my farmer jane wet suit. Check it out: [PPFTK Big Canoe Capsize and Recovery](#).

The Paddling Post

To date we have raised \$830 for PPFTK. Not bad for our first week! I hope all of you will



participate virtually (walk, run, bike, paddle) or join the Big Canoe crew for Wednesday (night) and Sunday PPFTK paddles. For more information regarding how you can participate in Big Canoe PPFTK and/or the Virtual PPFTK Fundraiser check out our PPFTK page: [Paddle for the Kids](#) and log on to the Easter Seals website to [Create Your Own Fundraising Page](#) to collect donations. For those who require help setting up

Fundraising pages — Jana Savage will be providing an online tutorial directly after the [Treasurer Election](#) hosted on Zoom on Tuesday, March 15th.

Finally, Alan Thomson has offered to teach a Big Canoe Stern Course on April 24, 2022. This course is available to all paddlers with RCABC lake water one certification. The event can be found on the Big Canoe calendar, and all those interested are encouraged to contact me directly at bigcanoe@vckc.ca.

~ Elizabeth Martinson, [Big Canoe Director](#)

Canoe Update

Are you ready for your best paddling season ever? The Canoe Program has a range of canoe



courses that can help you achieve your paddling goals. We have multiple Lakewater courses from Basic Tandem to Advanced Solo, as well as 2 Moving Water courses and Ocean Canoeing, all ready for registration. Some of these courses require prerequisites and these are found in the course descriptions. Check the canoe calendar to see what's available and sign up soon to avoid disappointment. Make this your best paddling year ever!

Do you have a Family Membership with young children? Do you want some help teaching them to paddle? We are considering running a Family course that will help parents and children learn to paddle safely. I have no details at this time, but if you are interested, please send me a note!

The Annual Running of the Cow will be held the second weekend of May. This fun, multi-day event will commence on the morning of Saturday, May 7th from Cowichan Lake and finish the afternoon of Sunday, May 8th at Duncan. Tent camping will be available exclusively for use by VCKC at the Stoltz Pool Day-Use site on both Friday and Saturday nights. Dinner will be provided

The Paddling Post

for all our participants and volunteers. The event is free, but you must have successfully passed the Moving Water course to paddle. For more information and to register, please check the Canoe Calendar.

Save the date! For those of you who missed my Yukon River presentation last year, I will be



doing a repeat, in-person presentation on May 17th as part of the newly resurrected General Meetings. The Yukon River is the fifth longest river in North America, flowing nearly 3000 kms from Northern B.C. to the Bering Sea through some of the most beautiful wilderness that the north has to offer. More interestingly, the Yukon River was a major route into the Klondike Goldfields during the gold rush of 1897-99 and historic sites and artifacts abound. In August 2020, with the Yukon borders closed to all except B.C. residents, I completed my long-anticipated

Yukon quest – paddling over 700 km from Whitehorse to Dawson City. If you are interested, please register for this event through the club calendar page.

Happy paddling everyone!

~ Louise de Montigny, [Canoe Director](#)

Dragon Boat Update

It's finally just about time! Come out to the club's 1st in-person General Meeting in two years this up-coming Thursday, March 17th — to find out more about our plans for dragon boat this season. Please arrive for 6pm — we'll put the boat in the water, then socialize and share our presentation with a Q&A. There will also be a presentation from our SUP Program Director — so many paddling activities available here at VCKC!

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or interest.

~ Jana Savage, [Dragonboat Director](#)

The Paddling Post

Marathon Update: Wings Over the Gorge

From the [Gorge Waterway Initiative](#): One of the most visible and delightful aspects of walking



American Wigeon by Marie O'Shaughnessy

along the shoreline or paddling through the Gorge Waterway and Portage Inlet is the birds. The abundance and diversity of birds in this Migratory Bird Sanctuary is a result of being on the Pacific Flyway, a major migration route on the West Coast, and because of the variety of habitats available.

Most people are probably not aware that all the tidal waters of the Gorge Waterway and Portage Inlet are part of the Victoria Harbour Migratory Bird Sanctuary. The sanctuary, established in 1923, recognizes that this area has significant habitat for migratory birds.

There are two areas where birds are found in great abundance throughout the year:

- Northwestern portion of Portage Inlet from the mouth of Craigflower Creek to Christie Point, and
- Upper Gorge Waterway from Admirals Road bridge to the "narrows."

People can do many things to help those birds that call the Gorge "home." Boaters, kayakers and hikers should be aware of birds on the water or shore and avoid disturbing them especially when they are feeding or nesting. It is best to observe birds and wildlife from a distance and avoid any human contact. If wildlife behaviour changes as you approach, you are getting too close.

Additional "Wings Over the Gorge" information available at:

<https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/initiatives-pdf/gwi-pdf/infosheets/birds-on-the-gorge.pdf>.

~ Peter Elson, [Marathon Director](#)

Stand Up Paddle Board (SUP) Update

Greetings fellow paddlers!

Welcome back to March and back to daylight savings. It's exciting to feel like we're on the precipice of an exciting spring and summer season of paddling!

I don't want to tempt fate, but this time it feels a bit different and I'm hopeful for the coming year of SUP at VCKC. It's been a crazy couple of years since the SUP program launched and it

The Paddling Post

should go without saying that there have been much bigger things to worry about than a new paddling program. Hopefully this year we have a (mostly) clear path to take the SUP program to its potential!

In order to make the program a success we need people, so no matter if you're a veteran paddler or have never been on the water before there is a SUP for you. Please reach out to me to set something up: sup@vckc.ca.

We've been out on the water regularly on Wednesday nights. Bring a light, like a headlamp or a bike light, and join us on the water, just send me an email to book a board. I'm happy to organize intro sessions for anyone starting out and soon we will offer PaddleCanada courses. One of my most fulfilling paddling experiences was building up to my first race and there will be lots of opportunities for this during the (s)upcoming season. Again, please reach out to me if this is of interest and we can pick an event to build up to and start a training program.

I say this again and again, SUP is for everyone and SUP is for everywhere. It's all out there waiting for you, let's get out there and discover!

Happy paddling!

~ James Roorda, [SUP Director](#)

Clubhouse Update: Spring Cleanup April 30th

The annual spring cleanup is set for Saturday morning April 30th. Please bring yourself and whatever house or grounds cleanup materials or tools you may have available and spend some time helping keep the old house looking good. Thanks.

~ Sandy Rattray, [Clubhouse Director](#)

From the Editor

We'll have "sprung forward" by the time you're reading this. I'm especially appreciative of the promise of a new beginning this spring.

Thanks to everyone who provided contributions for this issue. Any errors in presentation though are mine. Please let me know if you have any suggestions for improvement or something new you'd like to see in the newsletter.

~ David Johnson, [Newsletter Editor](#)

The Paddling Post

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