



Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

"The Paddling Post"

December 2023

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, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples have existed since time immemorial. The Club is committed to taking meaningful action to build respectful and reciprocal relations with the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples on whose land and waterways club members have the privilege of living, working, and playing.



Winter Solstice Light Up Paddle Parade and Potluck

Photo credit: Walter Bermudez

President's Message

Happy Holidays Paddlers! As this year draws to a close, I'm amazed at how quickly it's flown by. As I write this, I'm looking forward to our Light Up Parade Paddle and Potluck night in a few days. As YOU read this, it will already have come and gone, another successful social event I'm sure! Please check out the event photos and info here in the newsletter. More social events, bringing members back together even more, is a focus for next year - so stay tuned to your emails and the club calendar for details!

By now you've received a reminder that it's time to renew your membership for next year. Don't forget to do so. Our AGM is right around the corner on January 27th. Only current members are entitled to vote at the AGM, so don't delay. When you receive the AGM package please take the time to look through it, and if you have any questions about the content let me know - there's no need to wait until the AGM to ask questions.

This last month the Executive has been busy with preparations for 2024 and Program Directors have put together year end reports and budget requests for next year. I want to thank everyone that's worked hard to bring year-end through to the finish line, it truly takes a village! I wish everyone a peaceful, relaxing and joyous holiday season. And calm waters if you are lucky enough to get some paddling in (unless you are seeking white water, then enjoy!).

Paddles Up!

~ Jana Savage, President

Event Updates



Photo credit James Roorda

Our Winter Solstice Light Up Paddle Parade and Potluck was a success, thank you to everyone that came out! Included in the parade was Big Canoe Tillicum, an OC6, 3 kayaks, a canoe, a SUP and the small Dragonboat (6 out of 7 paddling programs participating!). We received many holiday greeting cheers from neighbours along the Gorge sidewalks, homes along the waters edge and the Craigflower Bridge. It was a beautiful clear night on the water. After paddling up to the bridge and back many members stayed to enjoy some holiday cheer and a potluck meal at the clubhouse. A great time was had by all. Happy Holidays Paddlers!
Jana Savage



Photo credit Meghan McAlister

Blue Water Task Force (Surfrider Water Quality Testing Program) update:

There have been a few samples collected in the past month between VCKC (Upper Gorge) and Banfield Park (Selkirk Water). Most of the results have been within the “low bacteria” range, but the sample collected from Selkirk Water on December 10th was found to have “high bacteria” levels. This water sample was collected after a couple of days of heavy rain (when water quality seems to deteriorate).

This reinforces the need to take pause and evaluate the water quality when we go out for a paddle after we receive a lot of precipitation. Fortunately the sample for the same location from December 17th displays “low bacteria” and the effects of heavy rain seem to typically persist for only a few of the following tidal cycles.

~ James Roorda, SUP Director

Marathon and Small Boats Update



Wake up the Gorge Participants enjoy lunch

Highlights for the Marathon and Small Boats Program in 2023 included co-organizing “Wake Up the Gorge” in May together with the Outrigger Program and the launch of a highly successful OC1 orientation course. Participants in the marathon program take advantage of participating in races when the opportunity arises, and several local and mainland races saw participation by VCKC paddlers. 2023 also saw the purchase of three more OC1s. There are plans in 2023 to purchase two more used OC1s for club use.

Norm MacDonell



Norm MacDonell

In 2023 Norm MacDonell was inducted into the Canadian Outrigger Hall of Fame. The ceremony took place in November. Here is a link to the Hall of Fame- <https://www.canadianoutrigger.ca/community-2/canadian-outrigger-hall-of-fame/> The annual Paddle for Norm will take place on April 20th, 2024.

Marathon Program



Men's Crew (WUTG – 2023)



Mixed Crew (WUTG – 2023)

The marathon program is a year-round program that attracts a dedicated group of experienced and skilled paddlers. At the same time, there is an on-going capacity to welcome new members, particularly those who wish to cross-train with other activities such as outrigger paddling. The program also periodically welcomes visiting paddlers from other clubs and provinces. The marathon program officially operates four times a week (Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, Sunday @ 8am). The marathon program entered two OC6 teams in WUTG and several participated in the small boat race.

The marathon program benefits from extensive self-instruction from highly trained and experienced paddlers. The focus is on real-time on-water instruction.

OC1 Orientation Program



OC1 Orientation course #1 participants and instructors



OC1 Orientation course #2 participants and instructors



OC1 Orientation course #3 participants and instructors

An OC1 orientation program was introduced on a pilot basis this year. It was so popular that three courses with eight participants in each program were conducted. Three-four instructors provided guidance (Bon Lee, Rob Sainsbury, Jan Urban and Ron Williams).

A post-course BBQ was hosted to provide participants with a chance to debrief and connect with each other.

More OC1 orientation courses are planned for 2024, as are some pre-WUTG paddling training sessions and dedicated huli training.

Marathon Year-end



Marathon Year-end Potluck lunch

Marathon Year-end

On November 25th the marathon program hosted a pot luck lunch for all our regular paddlers and a few special guests. It was a great time to share food, stories and good times.

After four years, this is also the end of my term as Marathon and Small Boats director, and I will not be seeking re-election. I've learned a lot, both on and off the water, and it's been a privilege to serve the club and my fellow marathon paddlers.

As I like to say, "See you on the water"

Peter Elson,
Marathon and Small Boats Director

Big Canoe Update

Save the Date!

The 2024 Paddle for the Kids will be held on **Saturday March 23, 2024**. This is VCKC's annual charity fundraiser for Easter Seals Camp Shawnigan. Practices will be held on Saturdays and Sundays over 7 weeks starting Sunday February 4. Check the February Newsletter for details. A Planning meeting will be held at the clubhouse on **Thursday January 4** at 7pm.



It's official: VCKC has placed an order for a new 29-foot Langley Big Canoe. This was an approved capital budget item for 2023. Glad we were able to place the order before we meet again at the AGM.

A Big Canoe Intermediate Sterner course was held on November 5th. Eight club members took the course. Everyone did so well, they were asking for more.

Alan Thomson gave a presentation on the basics of Big Canoe trip planning. There was a lot to pack in in 90 minutes, but it gave new leaders a greater sense of all to think of when heading out onto the ocean with large groups of paddlers.

Based on initial feedback, we will plan more of these classroom style learning sessions in 2024.

An Advanced Big Canoe sterner course will likely be scheduled for a weekend day in January.

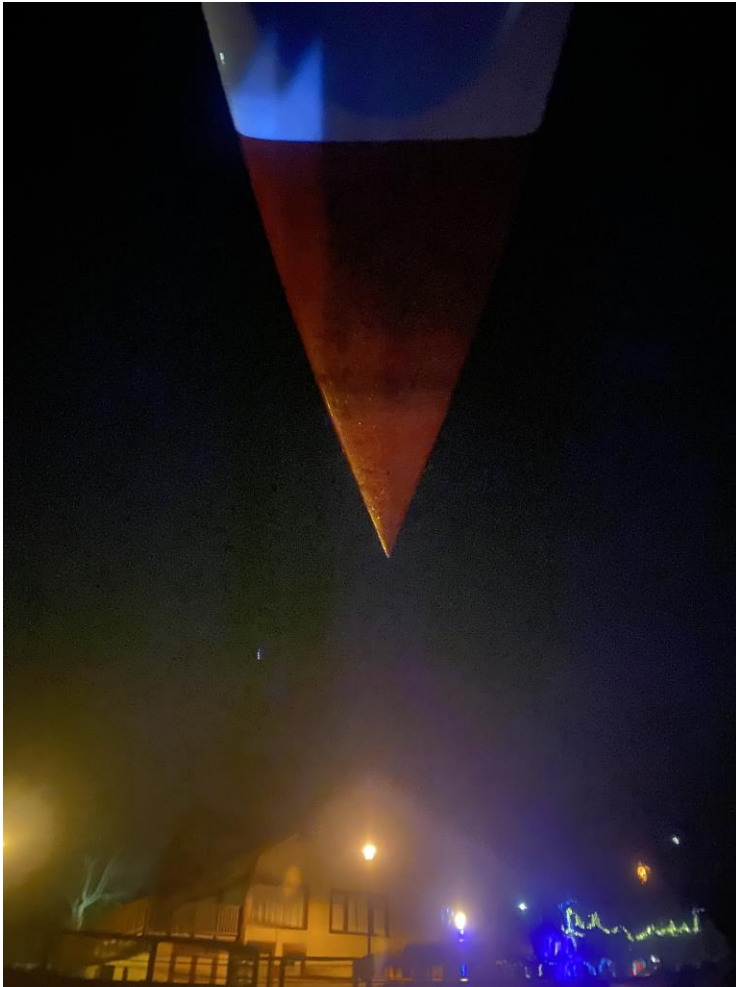
~ Joe Boyd, Big Canoe Program

SUP Update

Another year of paddling! Thanks to everyone who got involved with the paddleboard program in 2023! It was great to paddle with friends new and old throughout the year. The weekly paddles have slowed down with the shorter, wetter days recently. That will start to pick up again in early 2024. And besides, we're right in the middle of surf season now. Hope to see you in the swells.



Photo credit James Roorda



*Inverted reflection of the club house from a board
Photo credit James Roorda*

Happy paddling!
~ James Roorda, SUP Director

House and Grounds Update

2023 was my first partial year as House and Grounds Director and it has been interesting to say the least. Already holding another director position, I hadn't initially considered the role but Alan Thompson approached me and said that he was interested in taking on the majority of the heavy lifting if I was interested in handling the executive side of things. Since I'm already at the executive meetings anyways and Storage has many overlapping areas with House and Grounds, it seemed like a good fit. Getting up to speed with all the things this old clubhouse needs to keep looking and operating it's best for another year was a task in itself. With the help of Sandy (past director), Alan and I compiled an initial task and possible project list. This list got long very quickly! Many of these items are yearly maintenance items while others are longer term larger projects.

The program has some awesome new equipment that is open to everyone to use. Please reach out if you would like to set up a paddle.

One of my goals for the coming year is to get more people actively involved as leaders in the program. This can only improve the program and contribute to the overarching goal of getting more people (safely) on the water!

From my paddle family to yours, have a safe and restful holiday season. Take care and I hope to see you out on the water soon.



After the Fall Clean-up – So tidy!

Larger projects actively being pursued or quoted:

- Wood floor refinishing or if that is not possible then a floor replacement
- New and modified gutters, downspouts and gutter leaf guards
- Additional lighting in the basement and under the deck

As some of these larger projects can affect the look and character of the building, we will be consulting with Saanich and the executive before any final decisions or work is undertaken.

A few things that have happened since September:

- Fall Clean-up (thanks for everyone's help)
- Moss removal from most of the roof
- Clubhouse curtain dry cleaning
- Replacement of rotten deck balusters
- Apartment stair treads replaced
- Front door lock replaced
- Sticky combination locks lubricated or replaced
- New wheels for hose cart
- Traction strips added to the front steps
- Conversion of clubhouse light bulbs to LED
- Fixed skewed wheels on compound gate
- Furnace filter changed
- Smoke detector batteries changed
- New door mats
- Tarp to cover BBQ
- New range installed (more on that below)
- Other small things....

Clubhouse Range:

If you have been upstairs in the clubhouse recently you may have noticed the old green range is missing and has been replaced with a new white range. The oven element in the old one stopped working and repairs were unsuccessful. It was decided that because of its advanced age it didn't make sense to try and get it fixed. The new range is a basic (old school) coil top without many features, but it should give us 10 years plus of trouble free operation. Fingers crossed!

Clubhouse Issues:

If you notice something around the clubhouse that is broken or otherwise amiss, please don't hesitate to contact me at clubhouse@vckc.ca. I may already know about it, or I may not. It's no bother for me to answer your email either way. Many times, I meet club members who tell me that they have been dealing with something that has been broken for many months but no one has mentioned it to me.

Donations:

If you have an item, whatever that item may be, you think the club could use it and you are considering donating it to the club, please consult with a member of the executive before just dropping it off in the clubhouse. We are constantly finding items that are not owned by the club and if it's not something that we need or could use then we must spend time to dispose or donate the item. We may well accept your donation or not but we appreciate you asking first.

Lost and Found:

The lost and found bin was emptied in early October and it's filling up again. Please check in the bin if you are looking for a lost item.

Clubhouse Temperature:

Please remember to reduce the thermostat temperature if you are the last person in the clubhouse but don't set it too low. If we have a cold snap we don't want the pipes to freeze and the basement is always full of wet gear trying to dry out. Signage near the thermostat now indicates the minimum temperature should be 16 degrees. Please don't set the temperature lower than this. Thanks!

~ Gord Evans, House and Grounds Director

Storage Update



The new Big Canoe program locker has now been installed next to the Canoe and Marathon lockers. It fit nicely in the space, cleared the heating duct and still has room next to it for a smaller SUP program locker, which will be purchased before the year end.

A large commercial style metal storage rack with multiple shelves was also purchased for the upstairs bedroom. Three lockers will be removed from the bedroom and replaced with the rack. This combined with storage totes will give more storage organization and utilize the space more efficiently.

Big Canoe program locker on the left

As the various programs buy/sell watercraft or purchase new gear the storage requirements change continuously or need to be modified.



Improvements and expanded capacity planned

~ Gord Evans, Storage Director

A few storage tasks on the horizon include:

- Replace the current PFD racks with 1 1/16" hardwood dowels. They will be approx. 4 inches longer than the current ones to allow more PFDs per dowel. Several new dowels will be added to the adjacent support post for increased throw bag drying capacity.
- Adding PFD storage to one wall of the upstairs bedroom (hardwood dowels).
- Expanded SUP storage racks under the deck. The Chestnut wood canvas canoe was moved into the compound under cover and tarped to make room for this future expansion.
- Installing three paddle racks in the Kayak program locker.
- Adding saddles and carpet to the OC1 outdoor racks.
- Modifying the outdoor storage rack (right side of D) to accommodate two new OC1's that don't disassemble easily (lashed together).
- Re-numbering and application of VCKC decals to Marathon, Kayak and SUP watercraft.

Kayak Update



Another year of paddling was enjoyed!

We instructed courses this last Spring with many planned for the coming Spring and possibly the Fall of 2024, depending on the demand and availability of instructors. We always want to remember that training courses do not happen in the Summer season so please plan to attend training early to assure yourself a spot. We now can train larger numbers of students at a time with the purchase of 5 new kayaks and hopefully the purchase of another kayak to green out older kayaks that we cannot repair. It is yet to be decided which older kayaks will be sold as they are removed from the club to make space.



We have numerous paddles on the Gorge and on Wednesdays and we are gradually increasing our leaders who will volunteer to lead trips for the club next year. If you are interested in becoming a leader please contact me. Leaders can plan trips off the Gorge as per their experience level and comfort. We are in dire need of a leader base for the kayak and canoe programs. Please be patient as we groom new leaders and please support them. Without volunteers, the club doesn't run well to serve our members which is increasing and putting high demand on the few that do volunteer, leading sometimes to burnout.

Almost every week a dedicated group of paddlers collect garbage from our waters and I congratulate all that contribute to this but especially, Cindy Dunphy and Elizabeth D'Eramo for being leaders of what affectionately I call the Trash Panda Brigade. If they put on an event to pick up trash I highly recommend booking a kayak and joining them. If you take a kayak off the Gorge to join them you must have your paddling gear and appropriate training to paddle with this group, at their approval. Plastic kayaks can easily be damaged by carrying them on a vehicle inappropriately so further training may be necessary to take a kayak out. Feel free to contact me in regard to this.

First Aid Training, Marine Radio Operator training, and training in other areas will be put on the club calendar so be sure to check the calendar regularly or contact me if you are interested in any specific training or courses. New training on how to carry canoes and kayaks on a vehicle and have them stay on while not damaging them will also be done for those who are unsure or wish to learn the different ways you can do it without breaking the bank.

So as this year ends I hope to see many of you out there.

Hoping you all have a great New Year in 2024,

~ Wade Martinson, Kayak Director / Instructor

Dragonboat Update

The Dragonboat Program has continued in a reduced capacity over this Fall and Winter with some paddling and dryland workout sessions. Please reach out if you'd like to get involved in the dragonboat program in the New Year. Race Season is right around the corner!

Happy Paddling!

~ Hannah Griffiths, Dragonboat Director

Outrigger Update

See website for more information on the Outrigger Program.

~ Graham Hayes, Director

Canoe Update

See website for more information.

~ James McBeath, Director

Deadline for submissions to January Newsletter:- end of day Saturday January 13th
Please identify as “newsletter submission” in the subject line and send to newsletter@vckc.ca.

Club Contact Information

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Peter Elson
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James Roorda

Other Executive Positions

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Gord Evans
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Gord Evans
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