



## Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

# “The Paddling Post”

March 2024

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 W̱SÁNEĆ 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 W̱SÁNEĆ peoples on whose land and waterways club members have the privilege of living.

### President’s Message

The flurry of activity around the clubhouse over recent weeks with PFTK Practices, Canoe Courses and plans well under-way for Wake Up the Gorge and Stormin' Norman Races mean Spring is in the air. Thank you to those members who have stepped forward to volunteer for helping run PFTK and WUTG so far! We're continuing work on updating club volunteering categories (for membership profiles) to better capture member engagement, this work is just being finalized and will roll-out to members soon!

As we continue our work around making VCKC a more welcoming and inclusive space for all, I have discovered an excellent FREE webinar being promoted by [ViaSport BC - Bystander Intervention In Sport](#). I'd like to encourage all members to register to attend, it's a free online 6-7:30pm webinar happening Wed. March 27.

Link is - [HERE](#)

*Introduction - Safety in sport means environments on and off the field, offices, and boardrooms are all physically safe, while being inclusive, psychologically and culturally safe. To contribute to a positive culture, we can all improve our communication skills, and also feel empowered to do something when conflict arises.*

*We all have a responsibility to create a safe environment, but we often don't know what to do when faced with a situation that may compromise our own safety. Bystander intervention gives individuals tools to intervene the next time they witness harmful behaviour in the sports community. The training will equip you with five strategies for intervention so you leave feeling more prepared to intervene successfully and safely. When we intervene, we don't just minimize the impact on the person being harmed. We also start to shift the culture towards one that prioritizes respectful sport experiences that are safe for everyone. Alone we can't shift the culture — but together — our actions matter.*

I'm looking forward to getting back on the water with the dragonboat team practices restarting next week. See you on the water!

Paddles Up!

~ Jana Savage, President

## Event Updates

### Craigflower Creek Paddling – Nesting Season

As we move into nesting season on Craigflower Creek we request that our paddlers stay out of the creek to give the birds the space they deserve. We are extremely lucky to get to enjoy our Nature in the City, paddling on a migratory bird sanctuary. Thank you.

### Monthly General Meeting / Social Event

The monthly social meetings continue with Joe Boyd speaking about all things Big Canoe on April 2 at 7pm at the VCKC clubhouse. Joe will cover Paddle for the Kids as well as other interesting topics. Ken Gibbard will again be showing a few slides of past club trips after Joe's presentation. New members are welcome to come early at 6:30 to have their questions answered and get a tour of the clubhouse and grounds if they would like.

Are there any topics you'd like to see covered at the monthly socials? Is anyone interested in helping plan social events? Any suggestions on how we could make the socials better? Feel free to email me, Kim Capson, at [pastpres@vckc.ca](mailto:pastpres@vckc.ca). It's nice to be getting back together on a regular basis. See you on the water! Kim

### Songhees Nation Welcome the Herring Home



This weekend, on Saturday March 23 Songhees Nation Marine Team is hosting a Songhees community-focused event.

They will be laying branch structures in protected areas of the Gorge Waterway in hopes that the herring begin to recognize these structures and utilize them (they have been laying the structures in various protected bays around Victoria as well). You might notice their marked structures.

*Here is a photo provided by Lexi of a herring ball forming for reference.*

**If you DO notice any signs of spawning activity or bait balls** the Songhees Nation Marine Team have asked that we take photos and contact them to report the sighting immediately.

Contact Person is Lexi Kosmides - [Lexi.Kosmides@songheesnation.com](mailto:Lexi.Kosmides@songheesnation.com)

### SUP and Kayak Safety Support for The Ironman Event at Elk Lake in May

Interested Members are invited to sign up for a shift to provide SUP or Kayak safety support, if we sign up from VCKC the club is then eligible to apply for grants.

Sign up here: <https://ironman.volunteerlocal.com/volunteer/?id=75578>

If you have any questions please reach out to James Roorda, SUP Director, [sup@vckc.ca](mailto:sup@vckc.ca)

## **VCKC Safety Day- May 25<sup>th</sup> – Mark your calendar!**

We want to make safety day fun, educational and practical. Different programs will be practicing rescues and we also hope to offer short safety sessions.

### **Surfrider's Blue Water Task Force Update**

There have been a number of water quality samples collected by Surfrider Volunteers over the past month. Generally they have been okay, despite all the rain. The recent samples collected from the Upper and Lower Gorge have been below the “High Bacteria” Levels (as determined by the Provincial Ministry of Environment). That being said there have also been a few persistent “High Bacteria” samples collected at Caddy Bay and Willows, so be cautious when paddling on the Haro Strait (wash hands and try not to ingest the water). Take care and have fun out there!

Using this link you can always check the recent stats for water quality on the upper gorge and a number of other spots around Southern Vancouver Island and beyond: <https://bwtf.surfrider.org/explore/41/473>

*James Roorda, SUP Director*

## **Call for Volunteers**

*VCKC relies on the volunteer contribution of its members for all activities. Members are asked to contribute a minimum of 10 volunteer hours per year. Volunteer opportunities will be posted in this section of the newsletter from time to time and occasionally program directors will send out emails requesting volunteer support for events. Your active participation contributes to the health and well-being of your paddling club – please watch these spaces for opportunities which appeal to you as a volunteer.*

**VOLUNTEERS FOR SAFETY DAY** We are looking for volunteers who have expertise/experience in different paddling safety issues to do an hour or so session for the public and members. Topics may be anything connected to paddling and safety from First Aid, waterproofing, knots or planning trips. Please contact Ellie James at [safety@vckc.ca](mailto:safety@vckc.ca) or text 250-885-8030 if you would like to offer your skills in this area.

### **Canoe Update**

**RUNNING OF THE COW** May 4th & 5th - This popular annual two day paddle and campout event is coming up. The campout is for all club members and guests but if you are paddling the river you must have a minimum Moving Water Basic Tandem certification or equivalent.

For more details you can click on May 4 in the club calendar. Please register with the canoe director if you plan to attend including: which days you will be paddling; car pooling; will you be camping; if you need a club canoe and gear; will you need to be paired; can you help with the shuttle or tow the trailer; arrange the club shelter and whatever else you may think of. Everyone bring something for the potluck supper on Saturday evening and let me know if you would like to bring a pot of your special family meal for the group. The camping area has been booked by Big Canoe Director and co organizer of the ROTC Joe Boyd.

The club will *not* be paddling Marie Canyon but I will put interested parties in touch with each other to organize an ad hoc paddle so let me know when registering. An email will be sent a week before the event with more detail. The two river sections will be scouted prior to the paddles and any experienced paddlers are welcome on those voyages.

**CANOE LAKEWATER INSTRUCTOR COURSE** - An instructor course is planned and members who are considering jumping up to next level are encouraged to contact David Dorosz or Ellie James for details. Interested paddlers should be competent in all levels of Lakewater Courses. If you teach for the club we will compensate you for a portion of your expenses when you become active on the courses.

**CANOE COURSES** - are continuing so have a look on the calendar to see what is available. Some weekends have been left open for new and overflow courses so let me know what you would like to see happen.

See you out there  
 ~ James McBeath, Canoe Program Director

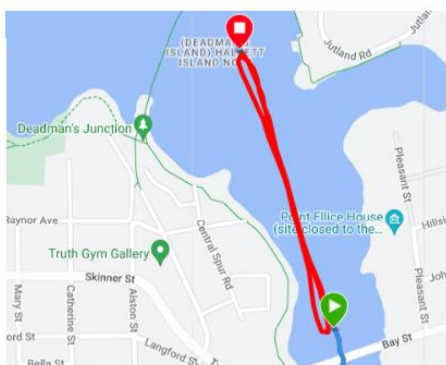
## Outrigger Update

The piece below was written by Mario deSantis on his 1st OC6 sprint race at age 83. Another is Chum, only her 3<sup>rd</sup> time in an OC6. Just shows that it's never too late to start paddling and develop a love for racing. See you at WUTG.

### 2024 FGPC Kan U Hakit 1500M OC6 Sprints March 3, 2024

#### 1500m OC6 Sprint Race with Buoy Turns

FGPC Club  
 115-2940 Jutland Rd, Victoria, BC



Our club participated in these sprints under the name “VCKC Mixed Team Mario”. Our crew was composed of #1 Susan, #2 Jennifer, #3 Peter, #4 Mario, #5 Chum, #6 Bon.

The organization of the event was excellent. Every club had its own tent, warm food was available, the times were promptly displayed after each race, and the staff was affable and ready to help. Our compliments to FGPC club for hosting a well attended event.

We raced two heats, the first started at 9:00am, the second at 12:15pm.

We were happy about our races; our overall times were good considering that our crew was possibly the oldest among the participants.



In today's races there were crews in their twenties and a crew like ours with an average age over 70. We all win when we participate in a race, however, in order to make the races a bit more challenging, it might be better to designate age categories. The crews would be allocated to the age categories in accordance with the average age of each crew. This change would potentially affect more participants in future (local) races while at the same time allow fairer competitions among the crews. By Mario DeSantis

~ Bon Lee & Marianne Pilon, Co-Directors

## Safety Update



### SAFETY KIT RE-ORG.

The Safety Committee is trying to simplify and update the First Aid Kits available at the Clubhouse.

The Clubhouse First Aid Station is on the wall inside the basement door on the right hand side.

The small Common First Aid case with handle, in the white wooden First Aid box, can be taken out to events and is for Common Bandaid First Aid issues.



If there is a serious first aid issue please document it using a VCKC Incident Report Form, found inside the new, metal First Aid Cabinet, which contains sterile wound dressings, antiseptic wipes, tweezers, tape, eye wash cup, etc.

The additional First Aid kit in the orange dry bag hanging under the stairs is for taking on on-water events or Club trips.

*Collaboration & photo credit: Mike Stacey*

**VCKC Safety Day- May 25<sup>th</sup>** – We want to make safety day fun, educational and practical. Different programs will be practicing rescues and we also hope to offer short safety sessions. We are looking for volunteers to support or provide Safety Day programming – please see the call for volunteers above.

~ Ellie James, Education, Standards & Safety

## Big Canoe Update

Big Canoe Paddle in Maple Bay on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.



*Photo credit: John van den Henkel at Maple Bay Yacht Club.*

At time of writing, **Paddle for the Kids** (PFTK) is in its final stages of preparation for the **March 23<sup>rd</sup>** main event – a 75-km relay paddle from Brentwood Bay to the VCKC clubhouse. This is our 43<sup>rd</sup> relay ‘paddle-athon’ to raise money for [Easter Seals Camp Shawnigan](#) for children with disabilities.

This year 28 paddlers have committed to complete the journey on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. We have been out on the water every week since February 4<sup>th</sup> to prepare, build skills, and get into shape. It is always rewarding at this point in the season to see how well the teams are doing. Those cold wet miles get easier every week. We will be in fine shape for the big day!

VCKC has been supporting Camp Shawnigan for more than 40 years. This is also a program that brings our club together for a good cause, with opportunities for new and experienced paddlers alike. [Please consider donating to Paddle for the Kids 2024.](#)

While PFTK is a core part of the Big Canoe Program, there are many other Big Canoe opportunities throughout the rest of the year, including:

- Canada Day Celebrations – Big Canoe rides to the public
- Thompson River trip (Savona to Ashcroft) – September 6 to 8, 2024
- Butchart Garden Fireworks from Todd Inlet (date to be announced)

There are other possibilities, depending on interest and available leaders. If you would like to lead planning of a Big Canoe camping trip, or day trip, please contact [BigCanoe@vckc.ca](mailto:BigCanoe@vckc.ca).

In other news, the Paddle Canada Intermediate Big Canoe Leader course was put on by **Ellie James** and **Alan Thomson** on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Six candidates took part, and they were all successful. This course is offered by the club based on demand. If you are interested in Big Canoe leadership, or steering a large boat, please contact the director at [BigCanoe@vckc.ca](mailto:BigCanoe@vckc.ca).

*~ Joe Boyd, Big Canoe Program*

## **SUP Update**

I hope everyone is well and gearing up for an exciting spring paddling season. I'm really looking forward to some warmer, longer days and improved evening paddling conditions. It has not been my best recent winter paddling season, life seems to constantly get in the way of getting on the water, and my paddle muscles are atrophying. My goal is to re-prioritize paddling in the next few months and try and get some strength and my sea-legs back. Ideally, I can build up to some big summer trips on the Salish Sea, are you with me?

If so, I'm going to resume the weekly evening paddles in April. Please reach out via email if you are interested in joining. It may be too ambitious, but I'd personally like to re-start doing some sunrise paddles. It's hard to tell my bed I've had enough early in the morning, but it has always been worth it to see the sun rise over the mainland. (I often paddle close to home near PKOLS if I can drag myself out in the morning) I hope to see you soon and lots on the water. Lets get after it! Happy paddling!

*~ James Roorda, SUP Director*

## **Dragonboat Update**

The dragon boat program is excited to be resuming regular evening practices at the end of March. The VCKC Dragon Flyers are recruiting and we are having a learn to paddle event on Sunday March 24th at 10am. If you are interested in learning more about dragon boat come and join us! You can register for the event through the club website.

*~ Hannah Griffiths, Dragonboat Program*

## Marathon and Small Boats Update

For more information see club calendar.

~ Rob Sainsbury, Marathon and Small Boats Director

## Kayak Update

~ The Kayak Program is seeking a Program Director, please contact the club President if you are interested in learning more about this position.

**Deadline for submission to April Newsletter:- end of day Saturday April 13<sup>th</sup> .**

Please identify as “newsletter submission” in the subject line and send to [newsletter@vckc.ca](mailto:newsletter@vckc.ca) .

If photographs are part of your submission include photographer credit information.

## Club Contact Information

### Officers

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