



Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club

(www.vckc.ca)

"The Paddling Post"

December 2022 Newsletter

The Victoria Canoe and Kayak Club respectfully acknowledges that its activities take place on the traditional territories of the lək'wəṇən peoples, and that the land and waterways' historical relationships 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.

President's Message



What an amazing fall we are having! The night paddles have been wonderful and well-attended thanks to our incredible Directors, and the weather has been cooperating to make them especially memorable.

Looking back on this year I've been so grateful to see that we have been able to resume many of our in-person events. We've had some really fun barbeques at the clubhouse. Last week we had our Christmas Lighted Boat Parade and Potluck, back after a two-year hiatus. Peninsula Paddle for

the Kids was back on the water after two years of being a virtual event. We had a Restart the Gorge race at the clubhouse. Our membership is up substantially over previous years and these events have been very well attended by our new members. Our volunteer instructors made extra time to put on courses for all these new members wanting to get on the water, and the Directors organized many, many evening paddles to give these newly-certified members plenty of practice time to feel confident in our boats. We truly are a special club and the warmth of the many members who come out and volunteer to help others is wonderful to experience.

What's Inside: December 2022

President's Message	1
Beg Canoe Update	2
Canoe Update	5
Dragonboat Update	6
Kayak Update	7
Marathon and Small Boat Update	8
SUP Update	10
From the Editor	12

The Paddling Post

Without these volunteers we wouldn't be able to offer as many events. The Annual General Meeting is coming up on January 26 2023 and there are a number of Executive positions that will be vacant and will need someone to step up and help us. There are always members in the club more than willing to help the Directors so you wouldn't be alone in looking after the program needs. Many of us on the Executive have years of experience to help guide you as you settle in to the role. Even if you are new to the club we encourage you to give it some thought. We are looking for the following positions: Secretary, Big Canoe, Canoe, Outrigger, Safety, House and Grounds, Membership, Newsletter. As always, all positions are open to anyone and will be voted upon at the AGM.

This will likely be my last entry for the newsletter and I wanted to thank everyone for the huge help I have received in my two years as President. It has been an honour to be part of something that brings such joy to so many people. I thank you all for your support through the past two years, some of it difficult, some of it amazing. I'm looking forward to settling into a less busy role in 2023, and having time to plan more social events to get us back to normal. Wishing you the very best of the season and I will see you in the new year.

~ Kim Capson, [President](#)

Big Canoe Update



Big Canoe paddlers are a tough breed. Over the past month, we've been out paddling in every kind of weather. While temperatures dropped, during evening paddles we enjoyed crisp clear nights and made a habit of stopping to stargaze.

In late November, Alan Thomson provided RCABC Instructor training to Sonya McRae, Helene Poulin, and Joe Boyd who were supported by a crew of seasoned Big Canoe paddlers. All participants were engaged in the learning process. Sonya, Joe, and Helene commanded the crew to execute tight figure eights (round a wood pylon) while singing "MORE LEAN" to the tune of

Dolly Parton's Jolene while touching Kawa's gunwales to the water. During the afternoon session, we learned to bridle and tow the Big Canoes, tracking and lining them through the current under the Tillicum Bridge. At the end of the day, Joe opted to take a cold dip in the Gorge, tipping Shawnigan over and waiting for Helene and Sonya to rescue him. Sonya and Helene demonstrated their power-lifting skills, conducting a Big Canoe over tandem rescue - just for fun. Click [Voyageur over Tandem Rescue](#) to watch the video on YouTube!

On November 26th we paddled to Ken Gibbard's cabin on Pier's Island. After one of our paddlers (who shall not be named) lost their car keys – down their pant leg, we set off paddling Munro and Shawnigan along the shore towards the town of Sidney. As we paddled along the

The Paddling Post

shores of Robert's Bay, locals stepped out onto their patios to snap photos and shout cheers of encouragement.



After Ken provided us with a historic tour of the islands en route, we spotted his beautiful little A-frame cabin nestled in the forest and stopped there for lunch. Due to expected winds (increasing to 12 to 19 knots) we hit the water just before 11:30 am and made haste. Conditions remained reasonably calm until we passed Hancock Island and saw 4 to 5 ft white capping waves in Page Passage. Since our crews were very strong, we soldiered on, and Wade and I gained considerable experience sterning in large, powerful waves. I was thankful for my exceptional crew and the guidance and leadership of Ellie James, who shouted encouragement and commands from seat 5. Unbeknownst to me, Jayne, France, Dorathea, and Linda were whooping and hollering as Munro leaped over every wave – they had a blast!

The next day, Helene, Joe, Sonya, and crew met Alan at Pearson College for day 2 of the RCABC instructor training. Mark Wheen, who heads up the Big Canoe program at Pearson, generously allowed us to use the 26 ft cedar strip voyageur canoe, built by his students in 2015. After Alan and Ellie provided a risk analysis of the Piers Island trip, Mark taught us how to tie two Big Canoes together to create a catamaran. After paddling our catamaran to the mouth of Pedder Bay, we spotted humpback whales in the distance, at which point Mark offered us a lift!



After we reached Bentinck Island, Alan challenged Sonya and Helene to lead their crews out into huge rolling waves generated by 24-knot winds. As per Alan's instruction, Helene and Sonya were required to turn the 29 ft voyageur canoes 180 degrees between waves, a maneuver that would require coordination of the entire crew, and timing. If a voyageur were to be caught sideways in a wave trough, capsize would be likely, and the consequences of capsizing in such conditions would be quite serious. Thank goodness Mark brought the rescue

The Paddling Post

boat! Both Helene and Sonya paddled into the big stuff and executed the maneuver successfully. Helene took a cautious approach and her timing was spot on. Sonya's team of adrenaline-seeking junkies, bobbed out in the surf, waiting to catch the perfect wave . . . were suddenly catapulted forward, whooping and hollering, with the bow of the cedar strip canoe plunging forward into the water, stern raised up in the air. Both captains and crews stayed afloat and Mark rewarded us by towing us back into the calm waters of Pedder Bay.



Finally, Big Canoe had a blast and decorated Tillicum for VCKC's Lighted Boat Parade. A BIG thank you to all who came out, and those who donated lights – I promise to return your lights soon! Thanks to dragon boaters Tyler and Carly we have photographic proof. Check out this video montage of the lighted boat parade on YouTube [Holiday Showboating](#).



The Paddling Post

Upcoming Big Canoe events:

Big canoe will be taking a short break over the holidays and back in mid-January!

Big Canoe Volunteer Opportunities:

Big Canoe Director Role – Starting February 2023. Don't pass up the opportunity to take VCKC's incredible Big Canoe program forward into 2023. As Big Canoe Director, you will have the opportunity to liaise with and learn from some of the most experienced canoeists and instructors in B.C.

The Big Canoe program provides paddlers of all ages (and skill levels) the opportunity to paddle on the ocean, flat water, and rivers. Historically the program has participated in Brigades and multi-day trips including the epic 2008 David Thompson Brigade from Rocky Mountain House to Thunder Bay Ontario. Big Canoe wants you! Those interested in learning more about the Big Canoe Program Director role can reach out to me directly at bigcanoe@vckc.ca. I would be more than happy to meet for coffee and tell you more about this amazing opportunity. 😊

Paddle for the Kids –Planning Meeting – Thursday, January 5th @ 6 pm.

Planning for the 42 annual Peninsula Paddle for the Kids Fundraiser is well underway. Those interested in supporting the event as team captains, sterns, and or supporting communications, event planning, etc., are invited to join us for the first planning meeting of the season. During this meeting, the sterner team will review tides/currents, and set dates for practice paddles (e.g., Sooke harbor, race rocks, etc.) and of course the date for the Big Day when we will paddle from Sidney to Victoria! Big Canoe sterners and members who have taken on planning roles will receive an invitation via email. If you wish to volunteer (with planning) and would like to attend, please email BigCanoe@vckc.ca. For more information about Paddle for the Kids check out - [Paddle for the Kids](#).

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

Canoe Update: Year in Review

It hard to believe that four years have passed since I was first elected as Canoe Program Director in 2019. Despite two difficult Covid years, 2022 has been the most successful year yet!

At the end of 2022:

- The club has 383 members that have listed canoeing as an interest; this is an increase of 45 members since 2021 and 93 members since 2020.
- We held 16 canoe courses with 128 participants attending; this is an increase in participants of 50% over last year.



The Paddling Post

- The number of times each Lake water (LW) course was held and the number of registrants in each were: 5 LW1 (63), 4 LW2 (29), 3 LW3 (15), 1 LW4 (4).
- Three Moving Water courses were held, 2 in April and 1 in November for 16 registrants.
- One Ocean Canoeing course was offered in July, with 3 registrants and several paddlers who audited.

Two Moving Water courses were held in April with 10 students and one course in the fall with 6 students.

- One Ocean Canoeing course was offered in July, with 3 new registrants and several paddlers who audited.
- Of the total 126 people that took at least 1 of the 16 courses offered, about half of those people took a more advanced course than LW1.

To be clear, none of these successes would have happened without our wonderful team of canoe instructors who remain passionate about teaching safe paddling to the canoeing community. A huge thank you to all of them! And a big thank you to all the members of the Canoe Program for your enthusiasm and desire to learn how to canoe.

Our two annual canoe events ran successfully.

- The Running of the Cow weekend on the Cowichan River was extra special given that the event was cancelled in 2020 and shortened to a 1-day Running of the Cow-vid in 2021. Good friends, sunshine, a hearty dinner, and beautiful camping spot at Stoltz Pool made for a perfect weekend. Thanks to Joe, Alan and Rick for their help in organizing and leading the way.
- The Remembrance Day Paddle came with sunshine and perfect water levels, often an unusual combination in November. As always, after a brief ceremony at the Burma Memorial Cairn at Stolz Pool, we enjoyed a lovely paddle down the Cowichan to Vimy. Thanks to Rick, Alan and Ellie for leading.

As this is the end of my term as Canoe Director, I leave you with this classic story from Bill Mason, one of Canada's best-known canoeists: "A long time ago, as I sat before my fire on the rocky shore of a northern lake, a canoe appeared out of the mist propelled by an Indian fisherman on his way to tend his nets. The poetry of motion was indescribable. He paddled effortlessly with this whole body, yet he went across that lake and disappeared faster than I would have thought possible. I leaped into my canoe and tried to emulate his technique. I've been trying ever since with less than perfect results. Like riding a horse, you can learn to stay on the horse in a few hours, but it can take a lifetime to look like you belong there."

Happy holidays everyone and best wishes for a very successful new year and lots of paddling!

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

Dragon Boat Update

The Dragonboat group had a great time participating in the VCKC Holiday Lighted Boat Parade and Potluck earlier this month with other club boats and paddlers. Thanks to all who organized

The Paddling Post

the event, brought lights and decorations, and all the yummy potluck food! Happy Holidays paddlers! Wishing everyone all the best for 2023!



Photo credits to Tyler Dashwood and Carly Mobbs

~ Jana Savage, [Dragonboat Director](#)

Kayak Update



November and December have been quiet months for kayaking although we have been out a few times on Wednesday night outings. Almost always the waters have been smooth and the skies clear with the stars shining through and the moon lighting everything up. Wednesday night kayaking is currently not going to restart until after February but if anyone wishes to go out, just send me a message, and depending on the weather we will do that.

The Paddling Post

We had one lone kayaker out on the Gorge for the VCKC light-up the Gorge night who shared the water with Big canoe, OC6, and Dragonboat. Mark did an awesome job decorating his boat.

The VCKC Kayak instructional team got together in early December and decided we will be posting Spring Kayak Training shortly and offering more Basic and Level 1 courses starting in May. All past students of the kayak program can also redo their level at no cost although I would like to have those courses put on a different date if possible than for first-timers.

In the New Year, at the AGM, I have asked for funds to renew and expand the current kayak fleet to make it easier to accommodate differently sized students and so that we can have larger class sizes. This is important because I had many people ask for courses and we were not able to accommodate them due to a lack of boats. Our boats are aging as well with some not suited for teaching but are more appropriate on trips. This renewal process will be spread out over two years and boats that are more maneuverable and comfortable will be purchased along with the accompanying gear. I had wanted to expand the Kayak program as well to include Whitewater kayaking but the costs are too great with the other programs also asking for monies to purchase boats.

It has been a very busy first year for me in the Executive and I look forward to serving in the following year if that is what the club wants at the AGM.

Have a Merry Christmas everyone and a Happy New Year.

~ Wade Martinson, [Kayak Director](#)

Marathon and Small Boat Update: The Year in Pictures



Ron, Sue, Norm, Jan and Jen lining up for an OC6 race in the inner harbour



Restart the Gorge marathon tandem race



Ron and Peter relaxing after the Restart the Gorge races

The Paddling Post



Igor and Darrelle at the Bridges race



Mario and Bon at the Bridges Race



Norm, doing what he loved to do so much.



Marathon paddlers following a memorial paddle for Norm MacDonell



Mario and Ron at Fort Langley



Patience when you set your catch



The Paddling Post

Two new (used) additions to the small boat program



Jordan getting ready for an early morning paddle



. . . And to all a good paddle

See you on the water.

~ Peter Elson, [Marathon and Small Boat Director](#)

Stand Up Paddle (SUP) Board Update



Fellow paddlers and VCKC members!

It's been another good year for the SUP program at VCKC. Things have slowed down on the weekly paddles at the club with the shorter days, but soon enough we will be out there again. If you have some time and inclination over the next few weeks to get out on the water please reach out. Some of my favourite recent holiday memories are when I was able to get out on the

water on a calm, cool winter day with friends and family only to have the water almost all to ourselves.

There is great potential for the program for the coming year, and I hope to get as many people involved as possible. SUP is for everyone so if you even have the slightest interest or a few questions let's get in touch.

My fondest memories from the past year are paddling with my family and friends both new and old. Highlights include listening to live music on the path while having bags of chips passed down to us on the boards to snack on. And on that theme, who could forget dock trick or treating during the Halloween paddle? Of course it's also fun to get out on the rivers and ocean

The Paddling Post

we are so fortunate to have access to. Pictures articulate the fun better than I can, so check out a few of the adventures that 2022 had!

Please take care over the holiday season. I hope you have a chance to reflect on the past year and appreciate the memories you made and that we are able to access some of, if not, the best places to paddle in the world!



Bring on 2023, Happy paddling!

~ James Roorda, [SUP Director](#)

The Paddling Post

From the Editor

Thank you to everyone who provided contributions for this issue; any errors in presentation are mine.

Please note that I will be moving on from my Newsletter Editor role after this issue. Please contact Kim (president@vckc.ca) if you are interested — or know someone who might be interested — in taking over the Newsletter beginning with the January 2023 issue.

~ David Johnson, [Newsletter Editor](#)

Club Contact Information

Officers

President	
Kim Capson	president@vckc.ca
Vice-president	
Jana Savage	vpresident@vckc.ca
Treasurer	
Donna Sainsbury	treasurer@vckc.ca
Secretary	
Katrina White	secretary@vckc.ca
Past President	
<i>vacant</i>	pastpres@vckc.ca

Program Directors

Big Canoe Program	
Elizabeth Martinson	bigcanoe@vckc.ca
Canoe Program	
Louise de Montigny	canoe@vckc.ca
Dragonboat Program	
Jana Savage	dragonboat@vckc.ca
Kayak Program	
Wade Martinson	kayak@vckc.ca
Outrigger Program	
Tony Hopkin	outrigger@vckc.ca
Marathon Canoe Program	
Peter Elson	marathon@vckc.ca
Stand Up Paddle (SUP) Board	
James Roorda	sup@vckc.ca

Other Executive Positions

Education, Standards and Safety	
Britt Kohn	safety@vckc.ca
Membership	
Debi LaHaise	membership@vckc.ca
Clubhouse and Grounds (maintenance)	
Sandy Rattray	clubhouse@vckc.ca
Boat and Locker Storage	
Gord Evans	storage@vckc.ca
Director at Large	
Ellie James	director1@vckc.ca
Lynda Purcell	director2@vckc.ca

Executive Appointed Positions

Newsletter Editor	
David Johnson	newsletter@vckc.ca
Webmaster	
Arthur Caldicott	webmaster@vckc.ca