



Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club Newsletter

Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club
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March 2011

Paddle for the Kids Practice Begins



Photos: Wendy Clapp

Clubhouse News

The latest news around the clubhouse is regarding the controversy over members paddling on Colquitz Creek. We have received numerous complaints of paddlers disturbing the wildlife on the narrows of the creek estuary.

I would like to remind all members of our current VCKC policy: "There is to be NO Disturbance to wildlife and their habitats along the Gorge."

The club is currently in discussion with concerned groups in the Gorge Community. Until these discussions are complete and new policies are drafted, please do not add to the controversy. I will ask that the outriggers canoes avoid Colquitz Creek all together.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Bon Lee
President, VCKC



Paddles (Photo: Wendy Clapp)

Dragon boat News

We are already off to a big start this year. The teams for this year are filling rapidly so get your paddler survey in quickly. The survey is available on the VCKC website.

Upcoming events:

A. March 9 at 7:00 pm is the next Dragon boat program general meeting. We will be unveiling the tentative team rosters at that time;

B. On Saturday and Sunday, April 9 and 10, we

are hosting a series of stroke clinics—4 half day sessions—put on by the Gorging Dragons. There will be filming and paddlers will get to use an electronic paddle. With these tools we can all find ways to improve our technique. The cost is unknown at this time but it will be minimal. Registration information is unknown at this time but it will be posted on the VCKC website when available. The organizers have guaranteed ten spots for the Sunday sessions for VCKC paddlers. This does not limit the number of paddlers who can attend but does reserve some slots for us. Once the info is out, the sooner you register the greater your chance of making it to one of the sessions. Some of our coaches will be trained on the use of the electronic paddle and we will have access so that we may also put on our own clinics if time and interest merit;

C. We are hoping to get our boats in the water March 12. Once the hulls are painted, the boats must be put in the water. We will need help from all teams to make this happen.

I would like to thank your Dragon boat committee for all of the hard work they have done already this year in preparing rosters and massive amounts of documentation.

Brian Clark
Director
VCKC Dragon Boat Program



Canoe Program Report

As I write this, it is the day before the February Canoe/Kayak Meeting and I'm sure it will be another wonderful gathering with lots of news to tell you about and a great presentation from Dan Walker and Tom Staebell on their Kootenay River trip. Looking forward to seeing you all.

News

The Annual Recreational Canoeing Association of British Columbia paddling conference and AGM is coming up the weekend of March 4-6 at Affinity Guest House in Duncan, B.C. All paddlers are welcome, and I've sent out a message to everyone on the canoe email list with all the details (thanks, Jean!). To vote at the AGM, you need to be a member of RCABC. You can become a member by visiting the RCABC website at www.bccanoe.com. Non members are welcome to attend any of the paddling events throughout the weekend including runs on the Chemainus and Cowichan Rivers.

Courses

Registration is looking good for the Lakewater Basic Tandem and Basic Solo courses to be held Sunday, March 20 and Sunday, March 27 respectively. A couple of folks have expressed interest in the Moving Water Tandem Course April 2-3 but we could do with more students for this one.

Similarly we'd love to hear from a few more who'd like to take the Lakewater Advanced Tandem and Solo courses scheduled for April 16-17. It's not too late to get in on any of these courses, please contact me at canoe@vckc.ca to get on the lists. And please let anyone you know out there in your network who you really think needs to get some canoe skills and get out there!

Please note the following date change: we had previously announced an Ocean Paddling course for later May, but the paddling portion of this course will now take place during the Frost Free Weekend Paddling Trip on May 6-8 or May 7-9. This excellent course teaches you how to safely get out on the ocean that surrounds us in a canoe; how to read tides and currents as well as basic navigation skills.

An email has already gone out to the club about this course so this is a reminder that if you'd like to learn how to use a VHF radio, this valuable skill is being taught in a series of Thursday evenings in March at the clubhouse.

Trips

We will announce if there are any March day paddles on moving or flat water at the meeting. The previously scheduled Flatwater trip for March 20 is likely being postponed due to a club event for St. Patrick's Day on the same afternoon - details elsewhere in the newsletter!

Next Canoe/Kayak Meeting will be held on March 21 at 7:30 pm

My plan is to ask attendees for input at the February Meeting as to what they'd like me to pursue for the next few months. I can bring in speakers on topics of interest; have current members contribute their expertise on an aspect of canoeing and/or kayaking; show an interesting video or have folks present a slide show and talk about their adventures in paddle tripping. Have a think about what you'd like to see, and let me know.

Happy Paddling
Yasmin Rampuri
Canoe Program Director



Next General Meeting
Tuesday, March 1, 2011

Guest speaker will be [Frank Whitney](#), emeritus, Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Frank will talk about how climate may be affecting habitat in the subarctic Pacific.

The subarctic Pacific Ocean has become more stratified in recent decades which is reducing the amount of oxygen being mixed into its interior waters. Oxygen levels are already low below 300-400 meters. Thus any reduction in supply will affect habitat of organisms living below the upper ocean mixed layer.

Both off the B.C. and Japanese coast, deep habitat for groundfish is being lost due to hypoxia (oxygen levels low enough to create stress in marine organisms). A simple prediction suggests as much as half the depth range now used by groundfish between California and Alaska could be lost over the next 40 years.

Frank Whitney has worked in oceanography on the B.C. coast since 1969, following a BSc in Chemistry from the University of British Columbia. From 1978 to 2006, he worked for Fisheries and Oceans Canada, carrying out pollution studies in coastal waters of Canada and China, then leading the Line P monitoring program for 17 years. Line P surveys extend 1400 km into the Gulf of Alaska, monitoring ocean change. This program provides the best data set for understanding change in the open (away from shore) subarctic Pacific and is commonly cited by scientists trying to understand impacts of global warming and other climate changes on these waters. Frank retired from DFO in 2006 and carries on with hobby research.

Canoe/Kayak Trips

Due to the voyageur canoe practice trips for the Paddle For The Kids on March 26, there will only be one club flatwater paddle in March. Canoeists and kayakers who want to get out on the water but like to go with a group, why not take part in the Paddle For The Kids? No experience of paddling in a voyageur (or other type of) canoe is needed. You will be paddling with other club members, the outings are social and the fund-raising is for a good purpose - the Lions Society Camp Shawnigan for Kids with Disabilities. See the notices in this and the two past Newsletters

Saturday, March 12 - Weather permitting (and the odds are it won't) I would like to attempt a paddle from Port Renfrew to Sombrio Beach. This is a 10 nautical mile stretch of exposed coastline with few opportunities to stop en route, so it is very dependent on the sea being fairly calm.

Canoe Courses

For more information or to register for any of the following courses, please contact Yasmin at canoe@vckc.ca. Your VCKC membership dues for 2011 must be paid in full order to register for any club courses below. You can join online at www.vckc.ca. An Individual membership is \$40; Family \$60.

Lake Water Basic Tandem and Solo

This special course is for anyone who is available during the day and for anyone who wants to benefit from taking this instruction over a longer period of time. It will take place for seven (7) weeks during Jean Chandler's enormously helpful Tuesday morning stroke practice sessions.

Tuesdays 8:30 am to 12:00 pm

This course was to start February 22 but if you are interested, please let me know.

Lake Water Basic Tandem and Solo (Level 1&2)

Sunday, March 20 (Tandem)

Sunday, March 27 (Solo)

Moving Water Tandem (possible concurrent Solo Course, if there is interest)

Saturday & Sunday, April 2 & 3

Lake Water Advanced Tandem and Solo (Level 3 & 4)

Saturday, April 16 (Tandem Level 3)

Sunday, April 17 (Solo Level 4)

We have also set dates for another round of Lake Water Basic Tandem and Solo, and Advanced Tandem and Solo in late May/early June.

Ocean Paddling Course

The three evening session will be held on Tuesday, April 26 and Thursday, April 28 and Monday, May 1. The tripping part of the course will be held May 6 - 8 to coincide with the Frost free-weekend camping trip. The course will be taught by Jay Crowley and Alan Thomson.

If you are interested in taking this canoeing course, please contact Alan Thomson 250-592-4170, 3135thom@islandnet.com. Cost is \$100; cost of charts and other equipment—compass, dividers, etc.—is not included.

Canoe Poling

If there is interest, a course has been proposed for late June, late July or early September on canoe poling. Please email Tom Staebell at thestaebellfamily@shaw.ca if you are interested in this course.

Instructors

We have some potential instructors or current ones interested in re-certifying. If this describes you, please contact Ellie James, our master instructor, directly at ejames@bgcvic.org. Some dates have been proposed, and we are hoping to have enough interest to certify some new Lake Water Instructors.

Costs:

\$25 for each Lake Water course (or \$50 for the Lake Water Basic Tandem and Solo which we encourage all paddlers to take together). In addition to the course cost, Lake Water Basic students may have to pay \$10 each to cover the costs of pool rental.

Moving Water course fees are \$150 per weekend and include the use of a club canoe and transportation costs.

Club Canoe Trips - Advance Notices

(Emails will go out for any Moving Water or Flat Water day trips we are able to schedule in the nearer future. Watch your email inbox!)

Frost Free Weekend Camping Trip:

This trip is traditionally held on the Mother's Day weekend (May 6-8). This has in the past been a 3 day/2 night trip and we propose to do the same again if members are willing to take the extra day off work (Friday or Monday, whatever suits).

Running of the Cows:

The 10th annual running of the Cowichan River from Lake to Bay is scheduled for April 30th/May 1st—put it in your diaries. More details in a future newsletter. Tom Staebell and Alan Thomson are the contacts.

Up Island Paddling Weekend:

Currently scheduled for June 11/12. Destination TBA.

Voyageur Program

The practices for the Paddle For The Kids on Saturday, March 26 are well underway. On Saturday, February 5, we paddled 4 voyageur canoes with 29 paddlers down into Victoria Harbour, round West Bay and back to Spinnakers for brunch—thank you Spinnakers! Then out into the open waters and more wind. We paddled round to Fleming Beach, then turned around and went back up to the Clubhouse. No rain, intervals of sun and the pleasure of working our way behind as many docks, moored boats and other obstacles as we could—always a challenge in the big canoes but good practice for manoeuvring and in building team spirit. After the paddle, a number of members helped to prepare the two trailers and to level the racks in the compound. Thanks to you all.

On Sunday February 13, we had a good paddle on Shawnigan Lake. For the three paddlers who had been out the day before on the club flatwater paddle, this day was a welcome change from the incessant rain of Saturday. We were joined by a crew from the Victoria Youth Paddling Club, all of them paddling a voyageur for the first time. They did very well and enjoyed the trip round the lake. We lunched at Memory Island

provincial park and also stopped to look at the Lion's Society Camp Shawnigan buildings where the money we raise on March 26 will go.

Thanks to Joe and Paul who arranged for the VYPC team to take part, and to Dale for towing the big trailer.

On Saturday February 19, Joe led a three boat trip round Sooke Basin. A beautiful, sunny day with enough wind to keep it cool in the shade or when not paddling. The rounding of Billings Spit against the current and with the waves created by the head wind gave everyone plenty of exercise, as did the paddle up the river and then back to the put-in—also against the wind. It is a pity more paddlers didn't join in this practice—we don't always get such nice days. But here's hoping we get lucky again for the next four practices and especially on March 26 for the Paddle itself.

Over 30 Club members have turned out for the first three practice paddles so there is plenty room for more members to take part.

The rest of the schedule is as follows:

Sunday February 27 - Finlayson Arm

Saturday March 5 - Maple Bay/Cowichan Bay

Sunday March 13 - Mill Bay/Cowichan bay

Saturday March 19 - Sidney Island or Portland
and Rum Islands

Saturday March 26 - The Paddle

And if you can't take part in the Paddle, you can sponsor club members who do so. This is an important event in the club's community activities. It not only helps to fund children attending Camp Shawnigan but it also helps us keep the goodwill of Saanich Municipality, owners of our Clubhouse.

If you have any questions, contact me at voyageur@vckc.ca or by phone at 250-592-4170.

Alan Thomson
Voyageur Program Director

Trip Report By Paddle and Boot to the Chemainus River

The advertised trip for February 12 was a paddle to the Chemainus River estuary. This is a trip the club has done a number of times before, using a variety of approaches. There is no public road access to the Chemainus River delta; the closest launch points are in Chemainus; Crofton, and from the bridge over the river a kilometre or so upstream. With a high tide, the delta's mud flats, between the Shoal Islands and the main island can be paddled without fear of getting grounded in the very slippery mud and ooze. On one occasion, we went up Bonnell Creek nearly to the highway when the tide was high; on another, we paddled behind Mainguy Island and up the north-western arm of the river.



This year, the high tide was at 9.20 am and the long paddle from Chemainus wouldn't get us into the delta until well after that. We once paddled down the river from the bridge but it is a risky approach from flatwater paddlers—lots of log jams and a fair current makes manoeuvring difficult for those without river skills. So, Crofton it was.

We left the Clubhouse at 8:05 am under a cloudy sky reaching Crofton about 9 am, by which time it was raining with a gentle wind from the southeast. The launch was carried out in moderately heavy rain and it didn't stop for the rest of the trip. Round the Catalyst pulp and paper mill with its huge piles of sawdust. Nice smell of cedar until we got upwind of the plant and the smell of the chemical processes took over. We headed in to the Vancouver Island shore and headed for the delta. As we had found before, we could paddle up an interesting little water course that twists and turns tightly for some 10 minutes up a small valley to the south of the main delta.

After that, we went up the river a little to a point where we could stop and eat our lunches under a cedar that offered a little protection from the rain. Wet, wet, wet - everyone was wet except Bon and Susan in their pretty dry tops—the rest of us had leaky Gore-tex or worse. The plan had been to go up a little further to where we could turn right and follow the northwest arm downstream to behind Mainguy Island and then back by the Shoal Islands but it was wet and cold enough to alter that plan and head back the way we came.

As forecast, the wind had risen, and we had to head straight into it to get back to the causeway. In the conditions, Duane and André did very well in their solo canoes. Once at the causeway, some canoes poked their bows round the corner to go under the bridge and head into Osborne Bay.

Interesting to watch. Those canoes with spraydecks swelled up and were gently but firmly blown backwards! The wind was funnelling under the bridge, making it very hard to get through. We could probably have lined round into the bay proper but there were quite few whitecaps and we knew there were no landing places before reaching the ramp about three-quarters of a nautical mile ahead.

Discretion was the order the day, so we headed into a little bay beside the causeway and landed. Very slippery mud for canoe hauling, eh Maris?

We walked up the dirt road and into the Catalyst plant. Security looked at us askance, but agreed that we could walk out and return with our vehicles to pick up our canoes. A wet three kilometres back to Crofton and then back to load the canoes. By then, the tide had gone out many metres which would have made landing very hard due to the appalling footing. By 3 pm, we were in the Brass Bell in Crofton, steaming the place up and drying/warming ourselves up. It doesn't serve rum toddies - 'This is Crofton, lady' said the server.

Congratulations to the hardy paddlers who came out on a wet, cold and windy day. I can recall one equally wet and windy paddle four years ago but it was to Esquimalt Lagoon and only lasted about an hour. So well done Bon and Susan, Herb and Bob, André, Damien (a first timer!), Duane, Maris, John and Brenda. I am sure it will be drier in 2012.

Radio Operator's Certification Course (VHF radios)

This course is a joint offering by the South Island Sea Kayaking Association ([SISKA](#)) and the Victoria Canoe & Kayak Club (VCKC).

Do you want to learn how to use a VHF radio when out paddling? If so, you should take this course. Not only is it very useful, it leads to getting your Restricted Operator's Certificate (Marine)—aka ROC—which is a legal requirement if you use a radio on the water. You don't need to have a radio to take this course.

WHAT: A three (3) evening course leading to the Restricted Operator's Certificate (Maritime);

WHEN: The course will be held on Thursday evenings - March 3, 10 and 17, starting at 7:15 pm.

WHERE: The VCKC Clubhouse, 355 Gorge Road W.;

FOR WHOM: Anyone who has a VHF radio but does not hold a licence;

Anyone holding a pre-digital licence (i.e. no Digital selective Calling [DSC] endorsement on their licence);

Anyone who does not have a radio but may want/need to use one in an emergency;

Anyone who has a boat with a radio and wants to learn how to use it properly;

BY WHOM: The course will be taught by Greg Diemert and Phil Miles of the Canadian Power Squadron;

HOW MUCH: The cost of the course is \$65. This includes the course manual, a CD of notes and test questions, the registration and the certificate itself;

REGISTRATION: It will help if you let me know ahead of the course that you are interested (Alan Thomson, 3135thom@islandnet.com or 250-592-4170) but you can register and pay on the first night of the course. Cash or cheques only.

The course consists of two (2) nights of classes and one night for the exam. If you want to study the manual ahead of the course, you can get the manual from Greg Diemert at Ensign Chrysler, 1061 Yates Street. Pick up from Greg at Ensign Monday/Tuesday 8:30 to 3:30 pm; Wednesday 12:30 to 6:30; Thursday/Friday 8:30 to

3:30. Or phone 250 386 2411.

NOTES

1. If you already have a Restricted Operator's licence but without the Digital Selective Calling endorsement, it is recommended that you take the full course;

2. If you have the full licence already, but would like a refresher, it may be possible for you to sit in on the first two nights of the course. It will depend on student numbers. If there isn't room on the course, an additional night (March 24th) has been reserved for a stand-alone refresher course.



Kayak Program

Don't forget the March Pool session at the Crystal Pool. First Sunday of the month. March 6 for March. The time slot runs from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. But they let us in at 6:15.

The pool folks want us to bring clean boats—reasonable and obvious. However, Linda Hall picked up a club boat and when she got it on to the pool deck she found debris in the cockpit area! We should be doing better than that.

If you are to use club boats, please consider the next paddler, and stow it away clean, and ready to go.

The February pool time was filled but not crowded. Lots of paddlers there from various clubs having a wide cross section of skills and, I believe, all ready to give aid to another paddler. A great session.

Remember, you have to register yourself at this point. Cost is \$10+\$1.20 HST, for a total of \$11.20. If you wish a club boat, you need to get in contact with Susan Zedel szedel@shaw.ca, and you are responsible for the transportation of the boat.

Hope to see some of you there

Herb Stark
Kayak Program Director

VCKC Executive

President		Voyageur Program	
Bon Lee	477-1381	Alan Thomson	592-4170
Vice President		Marathon Canoe Program	
Mavis Pillar.....	778-430-4390	Ron Williams	592-6456
Treasurer		Education, Safety & Standards	
Linda Thomson	592-4170	Doug Linton	727-0216
Secretary		Membership	
Marie Lansdowne.....	email	Maris Ratel	email
Past President		Clubhouse & Grounds	
Linda Thomson.....	592-4170	Sandy Rattray ..	386-9144
Program Directors		Directors-at-Large	
Canoe Program		Michael Fox	391-0160
Yasmin Rampuri	655-4859 email	Wendy Clapp ..	email
Kayak Program		Diane Nishimura (Soc.) ..	383-3080
Herb Stark	email	Elizabeth Hoffpauir	email
Dragon Boat Program		Ron Crabtree	email
Brian Clark	email	Executive Volunteer Positions	598-9488
Outrigger Program		Harold Gillis (Newsletter)	
Dave Schweitzer	email	Doug Magnuson (Boat & Locker Storage)	email



Traffic Jam – Chemainus Delta