

October 2015

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The Eddy Line

SCKC
Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club

Presidents Message by Stan Mrzygod

I can hardly believe that I am writing to you in the final quarter edition of the 2015 Eddy Line. Where has the year disappeared to? Regardless, what a year it has been! The forecasted drought produced low flows and forest fires which resulted in many trip disruptions. Thanks to all members who coordinated, participated and endured through these uncertainties in our scheduled trips, and the Wednesday and Thursday Night Paddles.

Accomplishments; SCKC has had many this season. I know that I will miss a few but here goes: We revamped our newsletter transitioning from a monthly to a quarterly release. "E-mail Blasts" were incorporated to emphasize key events and the SCKC website was overhauled into a fresh and efficient format. Our Access and Conservation Coordinators networked on multiple occasions with other river interests at conferences, workshops, exhibitions and city hall meetings. The "free to members" annual indoor roll sessions at the Valley YMCA were well attended, as were most of the instructional clinics. The trip planning pizza party was a success. SCKC volunteers provided swimmer safety monitoring at three local triathlons earning a \$300 donation from Troika. SCKC acquired its first ever Club boat, a 22 foot Clipper

"Mariner" voyager canoe with trailer and support equipment. Several crew orientation sessions were conducted in the voyager as well as participation in "Spokatopia" where novice paddlers took part in voyager "excursions" on the Spokane River. The annual "Paddle, Splash & Play" was a smash hit, more than doubling in size as compared to previous years. Nearly 180 children, adolescents and parents were introduced to our chosen sport. The voyager was there, also, getting about 60 new people out on the water. For the first time in a couple of decades we offered "Club Gear", in the way of tee shirt sales. SCKC was involved with river clean-ups on the Big and Little Spokane Rivers. We continue to cement our relationships with other like-minded organizations such as the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department, the Spokane River Keeper, Mountain Gear, and the Spokane River Forum, AVISTA Utilities, Saint George's School, Riverside state Park, Team River Runner, City and County governments, Out There Monthly, the Spokesman-Review and the Inlander newspapers. These relationships are beneficial to all. Lastly, Club membership numbers remain strong.

All these accomplishments take leadership, vision and effort. Fortunately our Club

has dedicated board members and volunteers to develop our programs and activities towards fruition. When you look at the roster of SCKC Paddle Board members you are looking at a powerful and well-oiled machine firing on all 14 cylinders! Each and every one of them, without exception has made my last 15 months as president a pleasure. I thank them and the next time you encounter a board member you should thank them also.

This leads me to the "looking forward" segment of my words to you. We are anticipating loss of some key board members through normal attrition. Some have served for many terms and we thank them for their dedication to SCKC. As a minimum, we will need to find a new Treasurer and to fill the Vice President position just to maintain our momentum. I anticipate other board openings also. Your Club is in need of fresh faces and new ideas to remain relevant in the future. Are you this person? If you think you are, (and you probably are), contact me before the elections that take place during the October 26th meeting, please! There is a place for you on a winning team.

Moving on, check the calendar for the last few upcoming trips, the Fall/Winter meeting schedule, and what is being presented.

San Juan Island Trip by Tom Henderson

The San Juan Islands once again provided our paddlers with incredible scenery, active wildlife, and, for this trip, beautiful weather. The paddle started on Friday, July 31st, about 5pm, from Jensen Bay (E side of San Juan Is.), with Tim Ahern, Matthew Davidson, and Tom Henderson.

Matthew heard that Blind Island (N side of Shaw Is.), our original destination for the night, was full, so we cut our trip short and stayed the night at Turn Island State Park (E side of San Juan Is). With only one other group camping there, it was very comfortable. We did have to hang our food up due to the numerous brazen raccoons. They were all over the campsite and the kayaks, but did no damage. From our campsite we could see the amazing sunset, and the rising of the blue moon.

We left Turn Island around 10am Saturday morning, paddling towards Jones Island (SW corner of Orcas Is.). The weather once again cooperated. We made a few stops along the way to just take in being in the San Juans. The currents made the paddle a breeze. When we arrived at Jones Island, it was nothing like Turn Island. There were already several kayaks on shore from Youth Church Groups. We scooped up a great campsite before several other groups arrived. Despite the numerous kids at the

campground, it was a quite night. Tim enjoyed talking to the groups arriving in large canoes, similar the SCKC canoe. We again were visited by the “commando” raccoons, and deer that walked right into camp begging.

On Sunday, we started for Jensen Bay around 8am. The water was mirror smooth, no boats. We detoured around Brown Island near Friday Harbor, and enjoyed seeing how the other half lives.

The reservation system for the Ferries seems to be working. Everyone was comfortable with it. The success of this trip assures another trip is in the works.

Brock Salzman, a new member, is looking for paddlers to join an overnight trip to Banks Lake in October.

He says all are welcome for an easy one mile paddle to a secluded campsite with many options for paddling and hiking from there.

*Contact Brock at
abrockstar@hotmail.com*



Matt and Tim at Turn Island and Jones Island



Member Profile: Tom Henderson by Jim Harrison

I have been married to Virginia for 36 years. I have a son, Ben, 30 years old, and a daughter, Allyssa, 27 years old. I am retired from Spokane County, after 35 years.

My father was in the Air Force, so I'm from everywhere. I went to Washington State University, and met my wife there. She is from Reardan, WA. So after spending six years on the coast after graduation from WSU, we came back to Reardan.

I've been paddling for about three years. I have a family friend that lives in the San Juans. I watched kayakers there for years. My daughter tried kayaking with a friend and said it was something I would like. She was right. I took a Spokane Parks and Rec kayaking class, then bought a used Dagger Apostle kayak. A few trips to the coast and I knew I needed a little more instruction. I took the Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club sea kayaking class last year.

My kayaking has been on local lakes, and the Washington coast. It's tough to pick out a favorite experience. My favorite single day experience was in the San Juans. My son Ben, daughter Allyssa, and son-in-law Mike paddled out of Roche Harbor for some whale watching. The weather was beautiful, and the water was flat. The Orcas were all over us. We

simply paddled out and floated, and the whales came to us. I spent more time with my jaw open in amazement than I did taking pictures. I had recently retired, so the kids found a good spot on shore and we celebrated my retirement (growlers from a microbrew in Wallace ID, sausage, crackers and cheese). We paddled back to Roche, and my wife drove us all home. A great time.

My favorite multi-day trip was also in the San Juans, with my son Ben. Five days of just paddling around in beautiful weather. It was during the week, so the boat traffic was minimal, and so were the crowds. We saw so many seals, eagles, dolphins, raccoons, deer, etc. I think we would still be out there if my son didn't have to go back to work.

I have several other hobbies besides paddling. I've been a SCUBA diver for 38 years. I did considerable rescue work, and was a Corporate Trainer for Dive Rescue International. I'm also a member of the Spokane Mountaineers, and backpack with that club. I used to climb mountains, but that hasn't happened since the kids left home. I also enjoy bike riding (road), woodworking, snowskiing and RV camping with my wife. I also volunteer at SCRAPS. I've always loved dogs, so it's a natural.

The first item on my paddling bucket list would be kayaking with the icebergs in Alaska. I enjoy winter camping, so paddling around icebergs and winter camping in Alaska would be a great combination.

Virginia and I are looking forward to meeting some other paddlers and new paddling adventures, now that we have joined SCKC.



Tom has been a scuba diver for 38 years and has done rescue work. He was a corporate trainer for Dive Rescue International.

7th Annual Tacoma Creek Interpretive Paddle by S. Mrzygod



Above: Ray Entz gives his cultural presentation in Manresa Grotto

Below: Barbara Kowalski's new move



A careful study of my past image files verified the fact that this was indeed the seventh running of the TCIP. Further examination of the electronically archived images dating back to 2009 revealed a kaleidoscope of faces, paddlecraft, and paddling conditions. Each of the previous outings was unique in some way. Past trips featured dense smoke from forest fires, visitations from the mythical and mischievous Ogoogo, (resulting in upsets), record high water levels and other memorable incidents. The 2015 edition of the TCIP provided its own list of notable occurrences. For the first time ever, it rained! Secondly, the Pend Oreille River was experiencing near record low flows. Significantly more American White Pelicans were observed, many dozens of them! As another “first”, participants were treated to an extremely informative presentation from Ray Entz, the Wildlife and Cultural Resources Director for the

Kalispel Tribe. He described the cultural significance of Manresa Grotto and pointed out symbols that the Native People had carved in the soft, conglomerate walls of the grotto. Multiple grooves from the sharpening of root-digging sticks were highlighted also. Ray mentioned that the Kalispels, a tribe of only 450 register members, now employ 2200 people to manage their gaming operations and 300 people their tribal governmental functions! Stan gave his usual talk on the geology of the Pend Oreille River Valley, past, present and future. Escorting the SCKC flotilla were a pair of devoted members from the Pend Oreille Public Utility District. Dennis Schult provided wildlife commentary while Marty Robinson filled us in on water quality and environmental aspects which the utility is involved in. Marty showed up for his seventh straight TCIP, even though he retired from

POPUD last winter. Talk about dedication! Barb Kowalski amazed everyone by demonstrating a new and ingenious ferrying technique. And this was *before* anyone had indulged in Dennis’s home brewed beer! (See image.) After the take-out most SCKC paddlers, now a trifle soggy from the rain, took advantage of Dennis’s generous offer to host a pot luck BBQ dinner on his deck overlooking the idyllic and slow flowing Pend Oreille River. The food, drink, camaraderie and scenery were absolutely spectacular! Another unique TCIP in the books! This year’s SCKC participants were: Tom Henderson, Robin Carlson, Jim and Bea Harrison, Bruce Wachtler, Barb Kowalski and guest Cathy Warzon. Stan coordinated the event and manned the grill.

Downtown River Access a Reality by Andy Dunau



The Voyager Canoe at downtown access

On a bright, sunny August day SCKC joined with others in the community to celebrate opening of the Downtown Spokane River Access. Located beneath Division Street Bridge, it fits in seamlessly with the Centennial Trail and landscaping of the recently expanded Spokane Convention Center. Stan and Lynn Mrzygod helped with the festivities by inviting club members and friends such as council woman Amber Waldref for a paddle in the club voyager canoe.

“It’s exciting to give people another way to access and celebrate the Spokane River,” said Mayor Condon. “The City is committed to embracing and protecting our greatest natural resource. You see this in plans for the new Riverfront Park, through river cleanup efforts and through other river celebration events happening in September.” Andy Dunau, Executive Director of the Spokane River Forum provides some additional perspective. “It took about 3 years to build a coalition of the willing,

assemble the funding and get an ordinance change done; 1 year to make it through permitting; and six weeks to build. Without the ongoing advocacy of SCKC, important projects like this don’t get done. The Forum really appreciates the persistence and support of the paddling community.”

The access is already being actively used, and in September Spokane Parks and Recreation will begin offering SUP tours. Plans are also underway to try and begin offering rentals in 2016.

Z Canyon Overnight Trip by Jim Harrison

Bea and I were excited about our first paddle on the Pend Oreille River at Z Canyon and looking forward to seeing Pee Wee Falls and the famed rock formations and caves along the river.

On Saturday morning, September 12, 2015, our enthusiastic group of 10 arrived at the Boundary Dam boat ramp. Stan, Lynn, Bonnie and Jeff brought the new voyager canoe for her maiden camping excursion. The big boat is an attention-getter and everyone stared as Stan backed the trailer down the ramp. We had the voyager, two tandem canoes, one single canoe and one kayak to make up our flotilla. While the voyager and Bruce in his solo canoe headed upriver to find the camping site, the rest of us paddled over to Pee Wee falls to take pictures and see how close we would dare get to the falls. For a number of us it was our first trip on this stretch of the Pend Oreille and after hearing how beautiful this section of river is, we surely weren't disappointed. At 200 feet, Pee wee falls is amazing and to be able to paddle up and under it was very special. The scenery as we paddled to our campsite was spectacular. Bea and I are relatively new to this part of the world and

although we have been trying to paddle as many places as we can, this section of the P. O. is probably the prettiest river we have run across so far.

We camped at the BLM Recreation Site, one of the campsites on the Pend Oreille River trail map. Luckily we could get this site since apparently few of the other sites could comfortably accommodate a group as large as ours. This site is located on a narrow channel on the west side as the river splits around an island. The channel is shallow and contains aquatic vegetation, which kept the powerboats out and provided a degree of solitude we wouldn't have had on the main channel. It was quiet, as it was far enough away from highways to get no traffic noises. There were warning signs about bears and mountain lions, but we encountered no wildlife, other than a few birds. Everyone secured their food away from the tents and some of us carried bear spray.

After setting up camp, the more industrious members of our crew took the voyager for an excursion farther up river to Z Canyon and The Narrows. Stan provided geological interpretation of

this fascinating area. The rest of us hung back at camp and relaxed and fished. Saturday night, the stars were amazingly bright and we were on the lookout for the aurora borealis, which had been reported, but did not occur that night. We did not have a campfire, due to the dry weather restrictions, but, we enjoyed lots of storytelling from Stan, Pierre and Kenny, some of it perhaps actually true. On Sunday morning Brian and Colleen showed up in their kayaks. After visiting they headed upstream to see what the river looked like at such a low water level.

As we headed back to the boat ramp on Sunday we stopped and explored a small cave on the river which some of us paddled into. There was one more picture taking session at the falls before we loaded up. We all headed back to Spokane after stopping in Metaline Falls for lunch.

It was a great trip with a great bunch of folks. I encourage anyone who hasn't paddled this section of the Pend Oreille to do so. It's a special place, but make sure you bring your camera. Thanks to Bonnie and Pierre for setting up this trip.



Ducking low was necessary to canoe into this cave



Threading the needle



Happy paddling team in the Voyager!



Fabulous group campsite

Spokane River Cleanup East of Downtown by Stan Mrzygod

“The water will be cold”, my snorkeling partner Tom Buerke informed me. Forewarned, (but hoping it was not so), I gingerly entered the river at the Hamilton Street I-90 bridge well covered, head to foot, with multiple layers of neoprene, with the augmentation of a paddling jacket dry top, just-in-case. Tom was absolutely correct, as usual. I intend to write an article in the Eddy Line about the insidious onset of late summer hypothermia at a future date.

Tom and I volunteered on behalf of SCKC to assist in a river bed rubbish retrieval operation. We would employ our snorkeling skills to locate and mark articles of submerged debris between the Hamilton Street and the Division Street Bridges. In the week following our sweep SCUBA divers with a winch equipped floating platform would zero in on our markers and remove the objects. Funding for the diving contractor originated

from the City of Spokane. Other team members included the organizer, Spokane Riverkeeper Jerry White, and his paddling partner, Jules. Ryan Griffith and Andrew from the City of Spokane Parks & Recreation Department would drop marker buoys where Tom and I detected debris.

The variety and quantity of discarded items was staggering. We exhausted our marker buoys just short of the Don Kardong Bridge and had to send for more! Rivers were the nations dumping grounds until the Clean Water Act of 1972 turned things around. Thank you Richard Nixon! (FYI, SCKC was founded in 1971).

What did we locate in the murky depths? There were modern day items such as shopping carts, bicycles, folding chairs, traffic cones, sandwich boards, large hoops of electrical wiring, metal cylinders and drums, cast iron grates and automobile wheels. There were “antiques” down there also, possibly dating a century in the past such as a collection of

porcelain, claw foot bath tubs placed side by side in 15 feet of water, wood and metal spoked farm implement and wagon wheels, street car rails and a riveted, metal banded trunk. Jimmie Hoffa was not encountered, fortunately.

Since we ran out of markers again as we approached the Division Street Bridge we called it a day. An hour and a half in that cold water was plenty invigorating and the SCUBA folks would have plenty to do besides. Even with the air temperature at 78 degrees and the sun shining intensely, Tom admitted to me later, “I drove home with the heater on.” Even after a long, warm shower it took a few hours for my toes to finally feel normal. You have to wonder how much money those claw foot tubs would fetch. Although it was fun, I’m not going back any time soon to find out!



Welcome New Members !

Aleksei Usov, Cheryl & Norm Miller, Nils & Chris Ohlsen, Jeff Mikesell, Monica Fries & family, Michael Baker, Donna Manning, Kim & Ania Mrzygod, Sandra O’Conner, Mike Rosenberg, Margie Heller, Jim & Six Fowler, Holly Wiebe, Rory French, Deborah Olmsted, Pat Munts, Maureen Cunningham, Steve Welch, Bruce Wachtler, James Harrison & Lauren Benz, John Trombold



Eddy Line

The Eddy Line is published quarterly by the Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club. Editorial submissions, trip reports, or other items are highly encouraged.

Email copy to Editor, Bonnie Mandel, at bodied50735@mypacks.net

We need to hear from you!

You determine the content of the newsletter with your submissions.

Anonymous submissions are not permitted.

Views expressed in the Eddy Line are the sole responsibility of the author and are not necessarily the official views of the SCKC.

Meetings

General Membership meetings are held 7 pm the fourth Monday of the month, October through April.

Paddle Board meetings are at 6:45 pm the 1st Monday of the month October through April; **All Members are welcome.**

All meetings are held at Mt. Gear Corporate Office
6021 E. Mansfield, Spokane,

See you on the water during the paddling season.

Membership

Dues are \$25.00 per household per calendar year. To join or renew send your check/money order and your completed application and signed USCA waiver to:

Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club, P.O. Box 819, Spokane, WA 99210

Online renewal is available.

Inquiries

Piercedeb52@gmail.com

Affiliation

The Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club is an organizational member of American Whitewater.

www.sckc.ws

www.facebook.com/#!/groups/72984633733441/

Upcoming Events

General Membership meetings

October 26
November 23
January 25

Paddle Board meetings

October 5
November 2
December 7

Special Events

Tell us about some by posting on the SCKC Facebook page!
www.facebook.com/#!/groups/72984633733441/

2015 Trip and Class Schedules are posted on the SCKC website and updated as needed. Please use the website as your "go to" resource for event information and schedules. New events are added as they arise. All events are dependent on weather and water conditions and could be subject to change.

Paddling:

October 7, 14, 21, 28: 2 pm whitewater paddle
November 4: 2 pm whitewater paddle

Photo Credits:

San Juan Islands courtesy Tom Henderson

Tacoma Creek courtesy of Stan Mrzygod

Downtown Access courtesy of Andy Dunau

Z Canyon courtesy of Stan Mrzygod, Bea Harrison & Pierre Finch