

SCKC EDDY LINE

Newsletter of the Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club **APRIL 2016**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Stan Mrzygod

Having received this quarterly Eddy Line it is certain that you renewed your SCKC membership for 2016. Thank you for your support!

We have an exciting year of paddling and various events planned just for you. El Nino continues to cooperate and we hope the wet trend continues into summer. Another item, also beyond our control, is the closure of the Spokane River in the vicinity of the Sullivan Bridge construction project. Please find another segment of the river to paddle as the danger there is very real!

Kudos to whitewater coordinator Bucky Sturgeon, VP Barb Kowalski, and Dennis Andrew for managing the free roll sessions at the Valley YMCA. The turnout was exceptional. Thanks to all who donated to offset the pool rental fee.

Lynn Mrzygod threw an awesome "Trip Planning" pizza party at the March general meeting. Take a look at the schedule of upcoming trips on the SCKC website and plan to attend some of them this year, or better still, offer a trip of your own.

Accolades continue unabated, now focusing on our safety and instruction coordinator Jerry Cesaratto. In addition to organizing instructional clinics for 2016, Jerry has accepted a position on the Washington State Paddlesports Advisory Committee. He will be traveling to Tacoma several times this year to lend his vast experience to improving paddling safety and other topics at the state level. Way to go, Jerry!

So, what's coming up in the next three months?
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WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS FOR PADDLERS

By Darrell Libby



Longtime SCKC member Darrell Libby had one of the first digital cameras on the market, which he carried in a Tupperware container when on the water. He's a self-taught photographer with a particular interest in wildlife, and when not paddling, he keeps technology devices working for Spokane Public Schools. See more of Darrell's pictures throughout this issue.

Many of you have seen my pictures in the Eddy Line or on the club brochure. I hope to dispel the rumor that I am any kind of photography genius by sharing some of my thoughts on paddling and taking good photos. This is a good time of year to get your camera out and practice taking photos before you get on the water. Photography does not have to be expensive. Let's get started with what you will need.

ATTITUDE: Every time you go paddling expect to see something wonderful. You will not be disappointed. Take this mindset with you any

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WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY *cont. from page 1*

time you go out. If you haven't seen something amazing, you are not ready to go home. No camera needed!

CAMERA: Digital camera with a built-in lens of 12X or greater optical zoom. You will need the zoom to photograph wildlife without invading their comfort zone. My favorite camera is a camera you can purchase from eBay for less than \$100; at \$50 to \$100 it is not a tragedy if it is lost overboard. Don't over think getting your first "prosumer" long zoom camera. Prosumer is shorthand for the class of camera between Point and Shoot and Digital SLR. This type of camera offers lots of features in a small package.

WATERPROOF CASE: Your camera will need to be protected from the water below and from above. A hard shell case like the Pelican or Otter Box is waterproof, floats and can't be crushed by all the gear packed in a car or boat. If possible take your camera to the store to confirm it will fit the case you want and is easy to open/close. Keep a lens cloth in the case to clean or clear a lens with moisture on it.

WILDLIFE: There is only one rule of wildlife photography and that is to respect the wildlife. No photo is worth disturbing their habits or habitat. Turn off any setting on your camera that makes noise. Ask photographers where they have taken pictures you like. If it was good enough to share, they will probably know exactly the date, time and place.



BE PREPARED: Most wildlife sightings are fleeting so have your camera ready. Some birds and insects are predictable. You can be ready

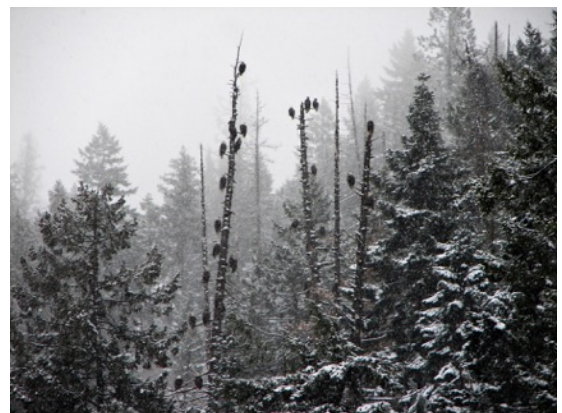
for them by pre-focusing on the branch you see them returning to after snatching their next bug out of the sky. Know your camera's settings so when the moment you see something amazing you can capture it without having to figure out how.



MACRO WILDLIFE: Your camera will have a flower-shaped setting. Read your camera's manual to see how close your lens can be to your subject to take a clear picture. When the wasps swarm into camp while you are doing the dishes, this setting will make them look as big as a buffalo. Don't miss the chance to photograph the type of wildlife that loves human interaction.

Be sure to save your photos when you get home in a couple of different back-up locations. I re-lived many trips finding photos to include here. Paddlers may be on the same trip but it is a different trip for each person.

Thanks to all who could have paddled farther while I loitered taking photos.



Eagles south shore Lake Coeur d'Alene

BOATING CLINIC REGISTRATIONS OPEN, CLASSES BEGIN SOON



Each summer Spokane Canoe and Paddle Club offers members a variety of skill-building clinics. Cost is much lower than from commercial outfits (the new recreational kayaking class is free), and registration is now open. The schedule includes:

- Solo/Tandem Canoe, flat water, May 14
- Solo/Tandem Canoe, moving water, June 11-12
- Sea Kayak, July 20, 23-24
- Recreational Kayaking, May 24 and June 14

Full information including course descriptions, requirements and deadlines can be found on the SCKC website at <http://www.sckc.ws/#!/clinics/cfvq>. You can register and pay on the site as well.



What's on the Calendar?

See the SCKC website calendar for full details, plus events listed after deadline.

<http://www.sckc.ws/#!/calendar/cee5>

EVENTS

April 13: REEL Film Festival

April 25: (General Meeting) Members-only field trip concerning the geology, politics, threats and challenges to our aquifer, sole source of Spokane's drinking water.

May 21: Volunteers needed in boats to support swimmers at the Troika Triathlon.

June 3: Water to Wine, an auction at Arbor Crest benefitting Spokane River Forum.

PADDLING

April 13 & 27: Extended flat water paddle*

April 23 & 24: Winchester Wasteway overnight

May 11 & 25: Extended flat water paddle*

May 14: Flat Water Canoe Clinic

May 20-22: Yakima Adventure weekend (paddling, biking, and wine tasting)

May 24: Recreational Kayak Clinic

June 8 & 22: Extended flat water paddle*

June 11-12: Moving Water Canoe Clinic

June 14: Recreational Kayak Clinic

*EXTENDED PADDLES are a new offering this year: Afternoon flat water sessions of 2-3 hours for kayak and canoe paddlers with some experience. Participants should have appropriate gear and clothing and be able to sustain a speed of 3-4 mph. These paddles are not SCKC-led and participants paddle at their own risk. We may stop for dinner afterwards.



REEL Paddle Film Festival
World class paddling films touring to Canada, the United States and around the world.

Wednesday, APRIL 13, 7:00 pm
Mountain Gear Headquarters

Inspiration to explore rivers, lakes and oceans, push physical and emotional extremes, embrace the lifestyle and appreciate the heritage of the wild places we paddle.

TICKETS \$10

MEET PAUL FISH, OWNER OF MOUNTAIN GEAR

By Jim Harrison



Over the years, Mountain Gear and its owner Paul Fish have become an institution with the Spokane area's large outdoor community. There are not many outdoor related events where Mountain Gear personnel or Paul are not present. Whenever there is a

need, it seems Paul and his business are there, ready to help. Recently, Paul spoke at the Public Lands Rally that was held in front of the downtown courthouse.

Paul founded Mountain Gear in 1979. At its inception, the company was located in Bellingham and was a custom designer manufacturer specializing in handmade backpacks. Mountain Gear moved to Spokane in 1983, and over time the focus of the company shifted from manufacturing to retail. In addition to its brick and mortar store, a nationwide catalogue and the Omni channel Web Business were added.

The company first mailed a catalog in 1993 and developed its first website in 1995. In 2001 Mountain Gear acquired MountainWoman.com, one of the first women's-specific outdoor websites. In 2003 it acquired Shoreline Mountain Products, a web-based retailer specializing in rock climbing equipment. MountainWoman.com has since been updated and rolled into the Devi Outdoor catalog and DeviOutdoor.com website. Shoreline was discontinued as an independent website and catalog a few years after the acquisition.

Mountain Gear moved into a renovated, 112,000-square-foot (10,400 m²), environmentally sustainable distribution center and corporate headquarters in 2007 and continues to thrive with the support of dedicated outdoor customers all around the country. The Spokane region still is the largest market.

Paul has two kids. His son Whitney is an active white water paddler and mathematician, and daughter Laurel is a casual canoeist and flat

water paddler. Paul seems to like it all: kayak, SUP and canoes. He also loves ocean kayaking and has done some long tours in the San Juan's Gulf islands. Paul said he really enjoys the changing landscape of many of our local waterways, but the Little Spokane has a special place in his heart. It changes every season and is such a beautiful paddle any month of the year.

Paul's other hobbies include rock climbing, mountaineering, backpacking, and road and mountain biking. He has built a few bamboo bike frames, too. His bucket list includes running the Grand Canyon in a dory and kayaking around the Galapagos.

It sounds like Paul is as busy away from work as he is at Mountain Gear. With all he has going on around here, hopefully we will have Paul in our community for a long time.

MOUNTAIN GEAR DESERVES HEARTY THANKS

By Bonnie Mandel

Many of you recognize Mountain Gear as the place to shop for your outdoor gear and as the sponsor of the Banff Film Festival in Spokane. But in addition, you should know that Mountain Gear is a generous supporter of the Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club. The not-so-brief list below shows the many ways this partner helps our club.

- Free indoor winter storage of voyager canoe and trailer
- Use of corporate office facility for monthly general membership and paddle board meetings, as well as providing space for the upcoming REEL Film Festival
- Support of annual SCKC sponsored "Paddle, Splash & Play" event. This includes free use of SUPs, kayaks, paddles, PFD's and a Mountain Gear employee to help onsite; this is a \$1,050 value
- Storage of SCKC library, meeting supplies and audio/visual systems
- Generous discounts and free merchandise for club drawings

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MOUNTAIN GEAR *continued from page 4*

- Advertising club events
- Inclusion of SCKC members in the annual "Customer Appreciation" social
- Offering discounts to new, first-time SCKC members

Thank you Mountain Gear, your support is truly appreciated. We would like to give special shout outs to the following Mountain Gear staff whose help has been invaluable.

- Paul Fish, Owner
- John Schwartz, Retail Store Manager
- Phil Bridgers, Events & Public Relations
- Ben Albrecht, Operations

SCKC WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Rich Alledredge and Judy Meuth
Terrance Bonney
Scot Boyd
Glen and Judy Cochran
Galen Chamberlain
Rod Coddington
Burr Crossley
Doug Daehlin
Joleen Daehlin
Rex Dalrymple
Samuel and Nick Ewell
Jared Gardin
Brittany Garwood
Mark Hixson
Sheri Urann and Jace Bylenga
Montana and Jalissa Killpack
Vickie Locken
Sunni Mace
Joel Metcalfe
Ellen and Thomas Miller
James Miron
June Negovan
Steven Pugh
Adam Schoenthal
Norm Smith
Cary Smith
Zoe Vincent

SPOKANE RIVER FORUM IS ENGINE THAT COULD

By Andy Dunau



The Spokane River Forum is a non-profit organization that likes to think of itself like the choo choo train from the children's story "The Little Train That Could."

Begun in 2008, the Forum dedicates itself to creating materials, events and activities to promote regional dialogs for sustaining a healthy river system while meeting the needs of a growing population. In a world and river system with ever increasing interests and strains, the Forum advocates for engaging individuals, groups, agencies and tribes in discussions of what's possible and nudging them to make it so. Like the parable from the children's story, the value of optimism and hard work drives their thinking and activities.

Forum achievements and partnerships show the value of the story's mantra, "I think I can, I think I can." The web site, www.spokaneriver.net, had 89,500 unique page views in 2015. Of this, the popular Spokane Water Trail, www.spokanewatertrail.org, had over 30,000 unique page views. In addition to opening up and restoring access, a new generation of paddlers and anglers are finding out about the river, safety messages, outfitters and other resources from this interactive site.

The Forum's Spokane River e-news bulletins (distributed to over 3,000 people monthly), Facebook page (over 1,250 likes), Meet Me at the River program (over 750 participants), Conference (over 300 people attend), EnviroStars (over 75 local businesses participate) and waste directory, public meetings, and development/distribution of print materials has made the Forum a regular presence in the lives of many.

The Spokane Canoe & Kayak Club (SCKC) has helped the Forum with access projects at Mirabeau, Barker Road and Division Street Bridge, provided volunteers for cleanup and restoration, and helped sponsor development of the Spokane Water Trail web site. Leveraging

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SPOKANE RIVER FORUM *continued from page 5*

the club's resources and commitment with that of others is bringing highly desired projects to fruition by adding fuel to the Little Train That Could.

Another core philosophy of the Forum is the importance of individual efforts to meet long term restoration and protection needs. The Forum sees empowerment as more than advocacy and writing a check. They develop activities for people to do something directly positive. River cleanup and restoration efforts through partnerships with SCKC, Spokane Conservation District, Riverside State Park, the Northwest Whitewater Association, Lands Council, Riverkeeper and others are examples.

The year 2016 is shaping up to be another great and active year for the Forum. The annual conference took place March 23–24 in Coeur d'Alene. The river access at Islands Trailhead (just downstream from Plante's Ferry) is under construction. Volunteers are beginning the riparian restoration process at Islands in March.

A new event the Forum has conjured is called Water to Wine, an auction at Arbor Crest June 3rd. Proceeds will go to support increasing and improving Spokane River recreational access, habitat and shoreline restoration projects, cleanup activities, and community outreach. You're invited to join guests in raising your glass to the river as you enjoy an exciting auction, hors d'oeuvres, wine, live music and more. Buy your tickets at www.spokaneriver.net/water-to-wine.

The Forum is also partnering with Arbor Crest on the bottling and offering of Spokane River Red. The wine is a proprietary red blend made exclusively with the finest Columbia Valley grapes. As it unfolds and lingers on the palate, think of the rich abundance we each enjoy from the Spokane River connecting our communities. You can purchase by the bottle or by the case by going to the Water to Wine web site.

As spring cleaning arrives, you are encouraged to go to the Forum's Spokane Waste Directory web site. Here you'll find an interactive site that helps dispose of waste properly, thus keeping it out of the river and aquifer system.

Introduced in 2015 with eight partners, it's become a leading online resource helping individuals and small businesses dispose of unwanted materials in an environmentally safe way.

By June, the Forum expects to launch its new web site. The design will make finding and taking action on information and resources easier than ever.

Turning our attention to summer, expect to see the Treatment Plant restoration come to fruition. And keep your eyes open for announcements of new access opportunities being planned in other locations. The Forum is also hoping to sneak in some of their popular Meet Me at the River paddles. Through it all, they'll keep us posted on a range of Spokane River news through River eNews. If you haven't signed up, go to www.spokaneriver.net and click on River eNews.

Last year, the Forum worked with partners to sponsor Fall in Love with the River Month in September. This is a combination of events celebrating the river, and helping with cleanup and plantings. Very popular, the Forum hopes to do it again.

The Forum is always looking for volunteers. To put your name on the list of those that may be available to help, go to www.spokaneriver.net/volunteer.



Great Horned Owl, by Darrell Libby



Trip Report

WINTER COMBAT CANOEING: TWO CREEKS

By Stan Mrzygod

kom-bat kuh-noo-ing, action verb, def. the act of carrying, dragging, poling and occasionally paddling a canoe along obscure, seasonally flowing and seldom navigated waterways in the pursuit of adventure.

This year's sampling included Upper Crab Creek northwest of Tokio, WA and Pine Creek between Rosalia, WA and Malden, WA. Combatants included veterans Tom Buerke, his dog Elliott and me.

Precise timing is everything as these drainages are small in area and the runoff surges endure only a matter of days per year, if at all. Exacerbating the timing challenge this year was fact that the drought-parched earth was eagerly drinking in snowmelt water to slake its intense thirst after a hot, dry summer. Consequently, scant water was materializing in the Columbia Plateau tributaries.



Crab Creek shallows

Our first engagement was on Crab Creek in late January with three employees from the Bureau of Land Management. Two of them, a hydrologist and a biologist, crewed the bows of

our canoes while the third employee, a public relations specialist, immortalized the affair with stills and video at the beginning and conclusion of the eight-mile trip. The BLM's objectives were to survey streamside habitat in the riparian zone while pleasantly gliding down the creek with the ease and comfort afforded by our tandem canoes.

As these forays sometimes turn out, Mother Nature sees fit to intervene. After a couple miles of good goin', Crab Creek began disappearing into the muddy and basalt rock-choked streambed! The anticipated ease and comfort transitioned to more frequent and longer stretches of honest-to-gosh "combat canoeing". As fatigue set in, Tom and I were treated to longer and more frequent explanations regarding flora and fauna along the route of travel by our BLM comrades at arms. We learned much but arrived at the take-out much later than planned. Go YouTube at https://youtu.be/T_rX9r_CnEU to see the video posted by Jeff Clark of the Spokane office of the BLM.



Tom lining through a rock garden on Pine Creek

Our next campaign was two weeks later on Pine Creek. Tom, Elliott the dog and I launched from the Rosalia City Park in frosty 27 degree temperatures. The weather forecast promised 55 degrees, cloudless skies, and calm winds. The weather service delivered! This creek roughly follows the John Wayne Trail and passes through

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TRIP REPORT *continued from page 7*

picturesque Palouse landscape. Lack of water again plagued us but the scenery, frequent wildlife sightings and solitude more than made up for what little slogging and portaging that we endured during the 13-mile expedition. The corners were frequent, tight and demanded impeccable crew coordination. Much to our surprise and delight we somehow negotiated seemingly un-navigable shallows, hairpin turns and abrupt ledges without a single upset. There were a number of groundings in the braided shallows and a few exciting situations but that's combat canoeing! Occasional deeply channelized segments allowed for some relaxed paddling.

In their own way, each of the trips was unique and satisfying. (And we escaped dunkings in some pretty cold water!) Unfortunately, with all the lowland snow gone, we will have to truly get lucky to catch another session of exciting creek paddling this season.



Ghostly canoeists reflected on a bridge

PRESIDENT'S REPORT *continued from page 1*

Here are some highlights from our website:

There are **TWO film festivals** in April! The first is the SCKC-REEL Film Festival on April 13 and the Spokane River Keeper Fest on April 28, with good films and **good beer**. Each event supports a worthwhile cause. Go to both!

April's general membership meeting on the 25th will be a unique **members-only tour of the Spokane County Regional Water Reclamation**

Facility. In addition to an interpretive walking tour of the facility, an in-depth lecture on the hydrology, policies, and politics of the water in our region will be presented. Learn about the possible future outcomes for surface and sub-surface water locally, trends relating to the Spokane and Little Spokane Rivers and our sole-source aquifer. Come dressed for any weather, no shorts, skirts, or open-toed shoes please.

Various **instructional clinics**, plus volunteer opportunities to provide **safety swimmer support**, will take place in May. The first is the Troika on May 21st. Volunteering will gain donation money for SCKC, always a real good thing! Another safety-watch for the Medical Lake Trail Days triathlon takes place June 18.

You are also invited to the **grand opening of The Islands River Access** below the Riblet Mansion/Arbor Crest Winery on June 3rd.

All of these events and activities are made possible through the efforts of your club's dedicated Paddle Board members. SCKC is solidly engaged with a multitude of sponsors and partners to ensure a full-court press on many diverse fronts to promote access, conservation, instruction, safety, outings, and camaraderie. Encourage other paddlers to join, so SCKC can continue to grow and to promote our sport. Have a safe and satisfying paddling season!

SCKC

Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club

The Eddy Line

, newsletter of the Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club, is published quarterly on the first of January, April, July and October. Deadline for submissions is one month prior to publication.

Articles, trip reports, and notices are encouraged. Photographs should be high resolution jpegs with descriptive titles. No anonymous submissions.

Submit all materials to
bodied50735@mypacks.net

Views expressed are solely those of the author, not official views of SCKC.

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PRODUCTION EDITOR: Hulda Bridgeman

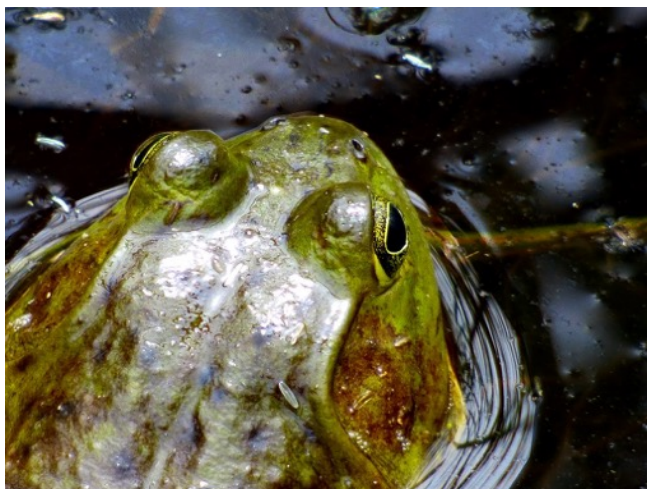
GALLERY: More photos by Darrell Libby



American Dipper



Eagle, Spokane River



Frog, Liberty Lake



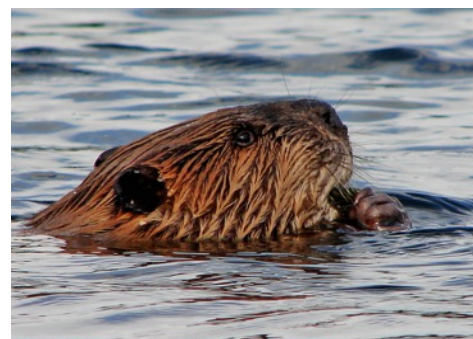
Eagle playing, Slocan Lake



Great Blue Heron, Spokane River



Common terns, Snake River



Beaver, Upper Priest Lake