

Summer 2020

Washington Canoe Club

CURRENTS

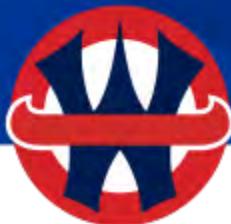


Photo by Bill Woodruff

Hi everyone and welcome to our summer issue of *Currents*! Your intrepid newsletter team has once again pulled out all the stops to get this newsletter to your inbox.

In this issue, we have lots of great content:

- An article about the health benefits of nature immersion by Dawn Nunziato
- A humorous history and explanation of the “beer fridge” by Bill Woodruff
- A piece on Who Really Rules the Potomac — Kayakers or Rowers? by Stephen Weiss
- A special welcome and shout-out to new members
- A fascinating insight into the *original* sport of paddleboarding by Kathy Summers
- A shout-out to Bill Woodruff for completing 1000 miles of paddling already this year
- A much-needed invitation to online yoga for paddlers offered by Andrea Browning
- An invitation to the “Lack-burn” Challenge and virtual Waterman's Challenge by Nate Day
- An insightful historical piece inviting us to closely examine a 1940s era picture of the Club by resident historian Chris Brown
- and many other important posts and announcements to help us stay connected and inspired.

We encourage you to volunteer for one of WCC's many committees, if you haven't already. And we extend our heartfelt thanks to those of you who are the Club's core volunteers!

If you'd like to join our newsletter team or have a contribution idea, just shoot us an email at WashCanoeClubCurrents@gmail.com.

Stay well everyone!

News and Information

Reminder: If and when you visit the Club, please be mindful of the rules currently in place during the COVID-19 emergency. The rules (and related updates) are available on the [website](#).

Paddling as Your Pathway to Greater Health and Happiness

by Dawn Nunziato



Common Merganser (female and chicks) — photo from eBird website

You know you always feel better when you paddle – because the exercise makes you feel good *and* is good for you. But did you know that there are also measurable health benefits from experiencing and observing nature and focusing your attention on your natural surroundings? Recent studies suggest that exposure to nature improves our health and well-being in a variety of ways. A large body of research has documented the positive impacts of nature on our physical, psychological, and emotional life, including on our brains, bodies, feelings, thought processes, and social interactions. This research confirms what we intuitively know – that experiencing nature leads to a cascade of positive emotions, calms our nervous systems, helps us to cultivate “greater openness, creativity, connection, generosity, and resilience,” and enhances emotions such as “[awe](#), wonder,

[gratitude](#), and reverence — all positive emotions known to lead to increased well-being and physical health,” as The Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley [explains](#). In addition, recent [studies](#) cited by the Center demonstrate that different kinds of nature immersion – including appreciation of flora and fauna in our natural environments – lead to “reduced stress, easier recovery from illness, better physical well-being, and behavioral changes that improve mood and general well-being.”

Especially in the context of the stress of the pandemic, I have benefited from exposure to the fauna on the Potomac, including by taking the time to appreciate our remarkable waterfowl. A recent paddle led to a lovely sighting of a [Merganser](#) mother and her eight chicks (pictured above), who were paddling themselves, near the Maryland side upstream from the Club. Another paddle near Fletchers introduced me to a [loon](#) and to a [wood duck](#) mother and her chicks (see picture below). And I have also appreciated sightings of our frequent companions – the [cormorants](#), [great blue herons](#), [great egrets](#), and [ospreys](#), among others.

My interest in learning more about our paddling companions led me to the eBird project, managed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, one of the world’s largest biodiversity-related citizen science projects – which lists [Fletcher’s Cove](#) and our neighbor the [Potomac Boat Club](#) as hotspots for birding and bird tracking. Birding Buddies also has a wonderful collection of pictures of our waterfowl companions, including those sighted at [Fletcher’s](#) – as does the Audubon Society’s Field Guide online (with more on [Mergansers](#), for example).

So, who have you been paddling with recently? Shoot me an email and let me know. Pictures appreciated! ~ dnunziato@law.gwu.edu



Wood Duck (female and chicks) — photo from eBird website

The Beer Fridge

An interview with Augustus “Augie” del Corona, Chairman of the WCC Beer Fridge Committee

by Bill Woodruff



In response to a diminishing number of requests, the WCC Historical Society recently conducted an in-depth interview with Canoe Club legend Augie del Corona. In this interview, Mr. del Corona gave us answers to a number of seldom-asked questions about the Beer Fridge, and along the way he shared a sampling of the insights, hindsight's, and oversights that have guided the operation of the Beer Fridge since the Canoe Club was founded in 1904.

Part One

CC (Canoe Club): *Good evening Mr. Corona, thank you for sharing your time and knowledge to share some Beer Fridge history with the membership.*

ADC (Augie del Corona): *You're quite welcome, I am always happy to misinform the membership, and to share some history regarding the only thing most members care about. Can I buy you a beer?*

CC: *Sure, I'll have a Black and Tan, thanks. But Augie, you mentioned some history regarding "the only thing most members care about." You know that we're here to talk about the Beer Fridge, right?*

ADC: *Yeah, what's your point?*

CC: *Well, meaning you no disrespect, but you know this is a CANOE club, right? I mean, just look at the notes for this interview – see, when I ask you questions, it refers to me as "CC," for "Canoe Club."*

ADC: *OK, Mr. Smartypants, how long have you been a member? Were you a member in 1904? Tell me, were ya?*

CC: *Well, no, but what's that got to do with . . .*

ADC: *Let me give you a little bit of history here: This place has always been about the*

beer. Always. In fact, it was founded in 1904, when those wine-drinking socialites at the Potomac Boat Club took offense at the often-unseemly behavior of a contingent of beer-drinkers who had begun to infiltrate their boathouse. PBC instituted a “no-fun” rule that prohibited beer, bad jokes, and inappropriate behavior. The beer-drinkers assumed (incorrectly, it turns out) that the “no-fun” rule itself was just a bad joke, and they proceeded to celebrate the new “rule” with a massive blowout of a party that involved copious quantities of beer, canoe-jousting, loud music, and bad jokes.

CC: *So, what happened?*

ADC: Well, the no-fun Mafia at PBC put on their powdered wigs, black robes, and got their wine glasses out; and they held a series of secret hearings during which all of the violators of the “no-fun” rule were ex-communicated. Later, after an open membership meeting at PBC that consisted largely of foul language, and arguments about whether the fun wing of PBC was actually getting kicked out, or whether they were choosing to leave voluntarily, the former PBC beer-drinkers moved upstream to establish their own club as far away from PBC as they could get.

CC: *Uh, Augie, you said they wanted to get as far away from PBC as they could get – you know that the Canoe Club is only about 100 yards away from PBC, right?*

ADC: Yeah, well there was a bit of drinking at the aforesaid meeting; so that was about as far as the beer guys could crawl on that particular evening. And that is how this Club came to be established where it is right now.

CC: *Well, that is an interesting bit of history, but surely you would recognize that a key aspect of the “Canoe Club” is that, from the very start, we have had, and paddled canoes, right?*

ADC: Ah! Yet another common misconception! In fact, canoes only became a part of this story after the (formerly) PBC fun people sobered up, which was several years later.

CC: *Augie, that’s not exactly my understanding of the history of . . .*

ADC: Hey, are you going to ask me about the history, or are you going to *tell* me the history. You can’t do both.

CC: *Sorry, Augie. So, if there were no canoes, how did this place come to be called the “Canoe Club?”*

ADC: Good question. Another common misunderstanding is that this was always the “Washington Canoe Club.” That historical tidbit is a complete fiction. In actual fact, it was originally the “Washington Beer Club.” From the outset, they did have one small canoe that they would fill with ice to keep the beer cold, because cheap Styrofoam ice chests had not yet been invented, but that was about it. To illustrate this point -- You may have noticed that in the mural around the ceiling in the grill room, there are only a couple of canoes, but darn near everyone has a mug of beer. Or two. Shoot, the piano player has four.

CC: *So, how and when did this place come to be known as the Washington Canoe Club?*

ADC: Prohibition. It was all about Prohibition, and needing a cover story. Back in the Prohibition days, the Washington Beer Club was quite popular, because the beer house (now, commonly referred to as a “boat house”) was built out over the water. It is a little-known fact that the beer house was built out over the water to make it really hard for police to raid the place. The Beer Club didn’t think of the water as a river; the Beer Club thought of it as a moat! Shoot, the entrance to the Club was on the second floor, which was connected to the C&O canal path by a drawbridge. When Prohibition became law, the beer club change its name to the Washington *Canoe* Club to *look* legit; but the drawbridge was raised most of the time, suggesting to many Prohibitionists that some untoward behavior might be afoot. During this period, some of the members even kicked in a few bucks to buy another canoe. Members would take turns paddling back and forth in front of the beerhouse (now, euphemistically referred to as a “boathouse”) to make it look like the members actually cared about boats.

CC: *Still, you have to admit that the canoe thing kind of caught on.*

ADC: Oh boy howdy did it ever catch on! Stories started circulating about moonlit summer nights out on the river in the club canoe, and pretty soon everyone wanted their own canoe. It kind of got out of control. But it is still important to remember that while canoes are nice, this place is still all about the beer.

CC: *Well, that is quite a history, Augie, so you’re saying this place had a Beer Fridge from the very start.*

ADC: Sort of. To be more precise, the Club had *beer* from the very start. In actual fact, while the ice-maker refrigerator was invented in the early 1800’s, the kind of refrigerator available for bars and home use was not invented until 1913. So, for a few years, the Beer Club had beer, but did not have a “beer fridge.”

CC: *Well, that has been a wonderful history lesson Mr. Corona, thanks. Now could you tell us a little bit about how the Canoe Club runs the current Beer Fridge?*

Above, we shared part one of an interview conducted by the WCC Historical Society with Augustus (“Augie”) del Corona, the Chairman of the WCC Beer Fridge Committee. Part One of the interview consisted largely of an historical account of how beer was the blood that flowed through the veins of the early Canoe Club, and how it was the love of beer that made WCC great. Part two of the interview focuses more on the present-day operation of the Beer Fridge, with a few reminders of how each member can help keep the tappers running smoothly.

Part Two

CC: *Well, that has been a wonderful history lesson Mr. Corona, thanks. Now could you tell us a little bit about how the Canoe Club runs the current Beer Fridge?*

ADC: Cut the “Mr. Corona” crap – just call me Augie. Would you like another Black and Tan?

CC: *Sorry, Augie, and sure, I’ll have another, thanks.*

ADC: So the first thing to understand is that the Canoe Club does not run the Beer

Fridge. The Beer Fridge is not, in any way, shape, or form an official function of the Canoe Club. The Beer Fridge is actually a sort of a cooperative thing for the convenience of members who choose to participate.

CC: *That's interesting. So, if the Canoe Club itself doesn't pay for all of that free beer, who does?*

ADC: Well first of all, the beer is not free. Look, this is basic economics 101: As Milton Friedman famously said, "There is no such thing as free beer."

CC: *Uh, actually, I think Milton Friedman said, "There is no such thing as a free lunch."*

ADC: Yeah, same thing, depending on what you're having for lunch. Anyway, there have been a number of people who seem to think the beer in the Beer Fridge is free. It is not. The way it works is simple: If you want a beer, you put in a dollar; you put in a dollar and you get a beer.

CC: *A dollar? That's all?*

ADC: Yep, just a buck a beer. The Beer Fridge Committee collects the money, and makes regular runs to make sure the Beer Fridge is stocked and ready to go. Where else can you get bottled beer for a dollar, and take it 30 feet to an Adirondack chair on the water? We think that's a pretty good deal.

CC: *That sounds great. What does the Beer Fridge Committee do with the profits?*

ADC: Profits? Did you miss the part about bottle beer for a dollar? On the honor system, no less? Buddy, if profits were dynamite, I wouldn't have enough to blow my nose.

CC: *Yeah, sorry about that. So, if a member wants a beer, where do they put their money?*

ADC: There are two choices. There used to be a little blue box inside the door to the fridge; someone broke into the boathouse about a year ago and stole the blue box, we have replaced it with a black plastic file card box that is on the bottom shelf inside the door of the Beer Fridge itself. The alternative is a black box on the wall above the Beer Fridge. The outside of the black box is marked, "Chisum's Till," in memory of Chisum McAvoy, who ran the Beer Fridge for many years. You can just drop your dollar into the slot in the top of that box.

CC: *What if a member doesn't have change?*

ADC: Did I mention that this is on the honor system? If you want a beer, and you don't have change, just get a beer, and make it up the next time you come. Or if you want 3 beers, and all you have is a five dollar bill, put the five in the box, and the Beer Fridge owes you a couple of beers for the next time you're there.

CC: *But, doesn't that make your bookkeeping difficult.*

ADC: Nice try, wise guy.

CC: *Seriously, how well does this work on the honor system?*

ADC: Mostly, it works fairly well. There have been times when there was more beer going out than there was money coming in; on those occasions, the members of the Beer Fridge Committee have had to kick in a little bit, out of pocket. Mostly, though, it runs pretty well.

CC: *I've noticed that, most of the time, the Beer Fridge stocks Yuengling; is there a reason for that?*

ADC: Well, there are actually three reasons. First, Chisum McAvoy, who ran the Beer Fridge for years, liked Yuengling and that's what he bought; so there is a bit of tradition here. Second, Yuengling is, shall we say, *affordable*. The Beer Fridge is still operating at a \$1/beer level, which is pretty remarkable in this day and age. If we were stocking Omegang, Port City, Ubu or something like that, we would be much more expensive. And Third, the members of the Beer Fridge Committee do regular taste testings of various brands, and Yuengling – especially Black and Tan – is consistently voted as one of our favorites.

CC: *If you don't mind my asking, how much does the Beer Fridge make?*

ADC: On average, it makes just a little bit less than nothing. Regular canned Yuengling by the case costs about 95 cents a can at current prices; the Beer Fridge loses about 15 cents a bottle on Black and Tan. So, if the honor system is working, and everyone puts a buck in for every beer they take out, the Beer Fridge will come out about \$1.20 ahead for every case of Yuengling Lager, and will come out about \$3.60 in the red for every case of Black and Tan.

CC: *How has the bottom line worked out over the past several years?*

ADC: First, I would like to point out that in, most places, things that are run on the honor system tend to not do well. I am proud to say that the Canoe Club is not one of those places. Contributions to the Beer Fridge have generally kept with the cost of buying more beer. This is especially surprising, given that some new members have really thought that it was free beer. Things have mostly been balanced out because some of our members make it a point to occasionally throw a few extra bucks in the till, just to keep the balance sheet in the black.

CC: *That brings up an important point: What can members do to help the Beer Fridge operation overall, and to ensure that it is a sustainable effort?*

ADC: I'm glad you asked! Basically, there are three ways that members can ensure that the Beer Fridge stays in business:

1. First, if you take a beer out, put a dollar in. Really, try to not absent-mindedly drink the fridge dry without kicking in the appropriate amount of money.
2. If you are not sure, put in a little extra. It is easy to have a few with friends, and forget how many beers you took out of the fridge. If you think you had 6-8 beers, but you're not sure, go ahead and put a \$10 bill in. Or go down to Mr. Smith's and pay almost that much for each beer.
3. And you can always put your leftover beer in the Beer Fridge. If you bring your own beer to the Canoe Club, feel free to leave your leftovers in the Beer Fridge. That is an extra buck per beer when someone else pays a dollar for your leftover beer.

CC: *What if a member just wants to keep their own beer cold, and the big (Club) fridge is*

full? Is it OK to put your own beer in the Beer Fridge?

ADC: Well sort of yes; sort of no. There are two simple rules for the Beer Fridge:

1. If you take a beer out, you put a dollar in. It doesn't matter how the beer got into the Fridge, it doesn't matter who put it there – if you take a beer out, you put a dollar in.
2. Anything/everything in the Beer Fridge is for sale. Everything is priced at one dollar.

Now think about what those two rules mean, if you put your own beer in the Beer Fridge. If you think about those two rules together, it should be clear that if you come to the Club and put a six-pack in the Beer Fridge, every time you come back later and take one of those beers out, you have to put a dollar in. Also, when you put a few bottles of your super-duper, trendy, \$12/bottle yuppie beer in the Beer Fridge; if someone else comes along and sees your super beer in there, they are free to put a dollar in the till and take your yuppie beer at a discount.

CC: *That's crazy! You're saying someone can take my expensive microbrew for a dollar?*

ADC: Well, technically, once you put it in the Beer Fridge, it's not yours anymore.

CC: *OK, so what if I just take a beer out of the Beer Fridge, and I don't put a dollar in?*

ADC: The first time we may accept that it is an honest mistake. Maybe even twice. But three or more times, and we will probably send the Beer Mafia to pay you a visit.

CC: *The Beer Mafia?? Is there really such a thing??*

ADC: Maybe yes, maybe no. Just do the right thing, and you don't have to worry about it.

CC: *OK just a couple of more questions: First of all, who is actually on the Beer Fridge Committee?*

ADC: It's a secret. Why do you need to know?

CC: *Hey, it's just a question. I just thought it would be good to know who is making the rules, and picking the beer, etc.*

ADC: Don't worry about it. It's a secret. Just go open the door anytime you want, put in a dollar, get a beer, and don't worry about it. Be happy.

CC: *Well, what if a member wants to be on the Beer Fridge Committee? Is this an elective thing, like the President, Vice-President, and the Board of Governors?*

ADC: Don't call us, we'll call you. It's a secret. Remember what I was telling you about the Beer Mafia? Fuggedaboutit.

Post Script

WCC President Andrew Soles reports: *"Long before there was a Beer Fridge, there was a soda machine at WCC whose offerings normally included National Bohemian beer, at the bargain price of \$.50 per beer. We eventually had to get rid of the soda machine and we moved to a beer fridge, which has raised prices but perhaps improved the offerings."*



Who Really Rules the Potomac?

by Stephen Weiss

In the animal kingdom, the debate has raged for years: Who is the king of the jungle? There are numerous YouTube videos of heated battles: Lion v. Tiger, Hyena v. Giraffe, Hippo v. Crocodile. On the Potomac River that question remains unsettled. Who is the king of the river: Rower or Paddler?

Both rower and paddler have powerful upper bodies. The edge here might go to the paddler whose rotating torso drives the paddle blade through the water at 95 + strokes per minute. Both rower and paddler have strong lower bodies and legs which initiate the stroke by providing full body leverage. The advantage might go here to the rower whose rowing stroke depends on the leg power and a sliding seat in the boat to drive the pull of a 12 foot oar leveraged in an outrigger oarlock through the water at upwards of 40+ strokes per minute. Both of these types of boats – the K1 and the single scull 1x – take a considerable amount of practice and energy to stay upright and to move efficiently. And then there is direction. Rowers face backwards and paddlers face forwards. Clear advantage in the paddling boat here, hands down!

The Olympic Rowing distance is 2000 meters, which takes the single scull rower around 7 minutes to complete. The Olympic kayak events are 200, 500, and 1000 meters. So clearly paddling is more the sprint sport than rowing, where often racing boats that try to sprint too early in the race find they have run out of gas before the finish line.

Both clubs – The Potomac Boat Club and the Washington Canoe Club – have proud traditions, but as far as my memory is concerned, have never squared off officially against one another on the water until now. Several members of the "Butchers" – the masters sprint team at WCC – have issued a challenge to members of the Potomac Boat Club. It's time to see who is the King of the Jungle here on the Potomac River. In a summer of no racing, this informal event scheduled for sometime in the fall proposes to pit Potomac single scullers against WCC kayak racers in two race distance events – the 200 meters and the 500 meters sprints. **Let's go WCC! Game on!**

In anticipation of the challenge, check out these two videos of Row v. Paddle match-ups:

[Australia](#)

[Paris](#)



Welcome New Members

WCC welcomed over 17 new members in June and July!



Meet **Chris Maloy!** Chris started kayaking to fish and to exercise, which he and his wife have been doing for about 15+ years in Long Island Sound. He has also done some ocean kayaking, but his main interest is in kayak fishing, and simply being out on the water. He reports that he gets “a very different perspective on life and the world when I'm out there in my boat, and I'd rather be outside than inside.” He is interested in the Building Maintenance/Grounds, Community Outreach, and Membership committees. Welcome, Chris!

Meet **Noah Marble!** Noah is a former outrigger paddler with Marina Del Rey in Los Angeles. He reports that he has



“been away from the water for a while and excited to be back paddling!” He is interested in the Building Restoration Committee. Welcome, Noah!



Meet the “new” **Chris Brown** (not to be confused with longtime WCC member and historian Chris Brown)! Chris has been a surfer and SUP enthusiast for over 20 years. He reports that most of his paddling “consists of regular SUP paddling near WCC and river SUP surfing further north.” He is interested in the Fundraising, Community Outreach, and Membership Committees. Welcome, (new) Chris Brown!

Meet **Michael Molnar**! Michael is a leisure paddler who reports: “I started paddling a sea kayak which I stored at Buzzards point, made my way north to Thompson's and am spending my golden years at WCC.” He is interested in the Fundraising and Community Outreach Committees.



Weeknight Laid Back Casual Paddles

Several new members have expressed interest in joining a weekly novice canoe/kayak paddling group (similar to the novice outrigger night), giving emerging new paddlers an opportunity to trial various club boats and learn paddling techniques. If anyone is interested in leading some recreational paddles [contact us](#). Stay tuned for more information as this program develops.



“Are You OK? Did You Lose Your Paddle?!”

By Kathy Summers

These are the very thoughtful and much appreciated questions you are likely to hear a lot if you – like me – take up Paddleboarding. No, not Stand Up Paddleboarding, but the *original* Paddleboarding, which is done lying on your belly (prone) or kneeling, with only your hands as paddles. This is not a new sport; in fact, it is very popular in Hawaii, California, and Australia, and is catching on in other places around the country and globe.



Paddleboarding has a deep history within the water cultures around the world, but as a competitive



...sport it began in the late 1920's. In a perfect world, you are paddling into and then gliding down the swells on the ocean between islands or along the shoreline outside the break, but if there is no ocean, no swells and no wind, you can still do it and find joy in the intimate interaction with the water you are on. Joe Bark, whose team I have been a part of for the last 5 years, is a legendary "shaper" and a huge part of the

resurgence in the popularity of prone Paddleboarding. He has been encouraging me to include paddleboarding in my training, but I had been resistant to doing so because I live on an urban river and I didn't expect to like Paddleboarding on any water other than the Pacific Ocean. All changed a few weeks ago when I decided to give it a go here in DC – and I love it. I am not the only one at the WCC with "prone fever," nor am I the first. Denis Crean has been paddling a prone Bark in the Potomac for longer than I have known him (over 10 years) and Marc Contrell has a custom board that Joe made for him earlier this year.

I think you can expect to see more and more prone paddlers as time goes on. It provides excellent cross training opportunities especially for SUP, Outrigger, and surfing, and – believe it or not – it is very relaxing. It takes some time for your muscles to get used to the positions, but once you get over that hump, it really is unlike anything else I have done – a vigorous workout and relaxing experience all together. So please keep an eye out for us – we know we are hard to see. If you are interested in getting a prone board for the club, please let me know. I think a 14' would be a great addition to our quiver of club boards and if there is interest, I will work on making it happen.



See you on the water,
Kathy Summers

The WCC Applauds Bill Woodruff — 1st Member to Paddle 1000 Miles in 2020!



You read it right! Bill "Woodie" Woodruff has logged over 1000 miles paddling through heat, sun, rain, and COVID, since the start of the year. Spurred on by the Paddle Fit Challenge, WCC's inaugural 1000 mile paddling contest launched this year, Bill proved he was up to the test. And, as if this accomplishment isn't enough, rumor has it Bill is set on paddling 2000 miles in 2020. Paddle on Bill, you're an inspiration to us all!

Thinking you too can paddle 1000 in 2020? Maybe you still

can. To register: Sign up in the book outside the weight room and track your mileage on the pages provided. Any paddle powered craft of your choice is fine (SUP, OC, canoe, kayak, etc. or a combination). Mileage paddled off-site also counts. If you have further questions, email: PaddleFitWCC@gmail.com

Online Yoga for Paddlers ~ Offered by Andrea Browning

WCC member Andrea Browning is offering online yoga through Yoga District every Sunday from 9:00 - 10:15 a.m. The class is "Yoga Level 1.5 - 2" and is essentially for all levels (except total newbies). In her classes, Andrea focuses on stability, strength, and mobility, with an overlay of mindfulness practice. Registration is at www.yogadistrict.com. Class is about \$11 + tax. Once you register, you'll get an email with Zoom login details.



Yoga District provides a lot of great offerings for our community, including free outreach yoga classes at public libraries and other places (in non-Covid times).

Please feel free to reach out to Andrea at 202-413-7242 or andibrowning@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Team Announcements

WCC Coaches: Kelly Rhodes (Women's Outrigger), Nate Day (Men's Outrigger), Joe Cafferata (Novice Outrigger), Kathleen McNamee (Junior's), TBD (Master's Kayak) and Kathy Summers (SUP)

Lack-burn Challenge (8/1-8/9) and virtual Waterman's Challenge (7/24-8/9)

By Nate Day

There are two virtual races with windows open this weekend and next -- the Lack-burn Challenge (20 miles or 10 miles) and POCC's virtual Waterman's Challenge (9 miles) (POCC just extended their window to include the original race date).

Announcing the very first and hopefully only ever "Lack-burn", the third "race" in the 2020 non-racing season!

July is over. By now, in a normal year, the Cape Ann Rowing Club would have hosted Blackburn, a 20-mile circumnavigation of Cape Ann on the north shore of Massachusetts.

It didn't happen this summer (though a few people up in Gloucester did the paddle on their own), so I propose we run "Lack-burn" this weekend instead. While it won't be a regular race, hopefully it can provide an opportunity for folks to stay together while apart, get some exercise and competition, have some fun, and raise a little money for charity. Here's how it will work...

Lack-burn will be a 20-mile virtual race (with a 10-mile course for SUP, running, rec kayak, and anyone else who is not up for 20 miles). There will be awards in all divisions at both distances for all water-, land-, and basement-based forms of human-powered locomotion: OC1, OC2 (multi-household pairs okay, at least in DC), SUP, surf ski, sprint kayak, sprint canoe, sea kayak, rec kayak, C1, C2 (see multi-household note), paddle erg, rowing erg, running on foot, road bike, mountain bike, stationary bike, Rollerblades, NordicTrack, snowshoe, pedal-powered ultralight aircraft...

Here's how you enter and compete:

1. Either this Saturday or Sunday (8/1-2), do 20 miles (or 10) as fast as you can via human-powered transport on what you judge to be a fair course. Time yourself. The race window will stay open through the weekend of 8/8 and 8/9. No one will know if you double-dip with [Philly Outrigger's Waterman's Challenge](#)
2. If you wish, make a donation to Jose Andres' [World Central Kitchen](#), the [Capital Area Food Bank](#), or a similar charity of your choice, or convince others to do the same in your name -- this in lieu of a race entry fee (see "Adjusted Time" below for an added incentive to give and recruit others to donate in your name). As of this writing, the federal emergency unemployment benefit lapses at the end of this week, meaning many folks in our country will be in need of food support. Please consider a donation -- the first two virtual races in this series have raised nearly \$4,000 for charity -- let's see if we can add substantially to that total this weekend!
3. Submit your name, gender affiliation (open, women's, or mixed), age class (junior, open, masters, senior masters, golden masters, platinum masters), division (see above), donation amount (if any), and time via [this Google form](#). Note: if you are in a 2-person craft, please select the age group for which both members of your crew are eligible.

If you would like to race from WCC, see below for the course. If you're racing on the water, team up with folks around you who are approximately your speed to pace and race each other!

The course from WCC is as follows: downstream from WCC club seal on the DC side of Roosevelt Island to the red #89 channel buoy 1.5 miles south of Wilson Bridge, returning to WCC via the Roosevelt Island cut.

Hit hard and stay safe (you participate at your own risk). Bring fluids and calories if you are going 20 miles. I look forward to not seeing all of you on the water next weekend, but to receiving your race information and times. I do look forward to seeing all of you on the water in the hopefully not-too-distant future. See below for added competitive wrinkles.

This all sounds simple enough -- isn't there some way we could complicate this to make it more fun and confusing? — *But of course!* There are three ways race times will be evaluated:

1. **Course time** against other competitors in the same division, age, etc.
2. **Adjusted time** against other competitors in the same division, age, etc.

3. **Grand Sweepstakes** against all other competitors across all divisions within the same gender affiliation.

Course time — how long it took the competitor to complete the course

Adjusted time — one minute will be subtracted from your time for every \$10 you donate or raise for Jose Andres' World Central Kitchen, the Capital Area Food Bank, or a similar charity -- again, this is instead of a race entry fee. Proof of donation not required, just truthfully attest to your fundraising amount when submitting your name, time, and other info when you submit your other registration info to the Google form (see above).

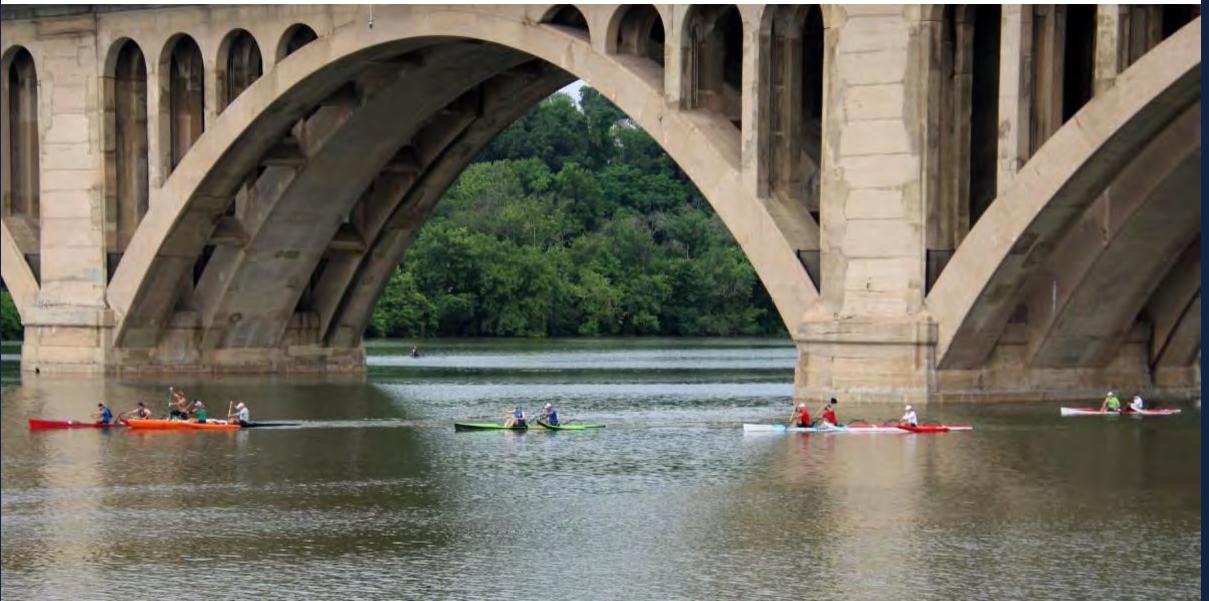
Grand Sweepstakes — adjusted times from all divisions, age classes, etc. will be stacked up against each other using the conversion chart (see below) to produce Grand Sweepstakes Lack-burn first, second, and third place winners.

Grand Sweepstakes Time Conversions (this is FYI; please submit your course time only and the race director's daughter, age 9, will perform the conversion calculations -- conversion calculations are somewhat arbitrary and capricious and may not be completely fair -- not unlike life)

If you are racing...

- OC1, standard/marathon C2, sea kayak: no time adjustment made
- sprint C1, paddle erg: 11:15 will be *added* to your time
- OC2, sprint kayak, sprint C2, solo surf ski, running: 33:20 *added*
- K2 (sprint or ski), rowing erg: 55:20 *added*
- mountain bike: 110:40 minutes *added*
- road bike, stationary bike: 144 minutes *added*
- SUP, rec kayak: 66:40 minutes will be *subtracted* from your time OR paddle a 10-mile course instead of 20 (please self-report)
- marathon C1: 22:10 *subtracted*
- other: make Nate an offer

Here are details and registration for the [Waterman's Challenge](#).





The photos above are of June's NON-umental virtual race and were taken by Bonnie Havens. Thanks Bonnie!

WCC History

A “Typical” Summer Scene at WCC

By WCC Club Historian Chris Brown

So many historic photos of the WCC raise questions and tell unexpected stories. In this photo from a 1946 *National Geographic* magazine article, you see what appears to be a typical summer afternoon at the club: a large crowd lounging on the docks and ramps, swimming from a float, launching their craft: traditional wood-and-canvas canoes and the all-wood racing craft. Note that the boathouse is in its original position, on piles over the river (an arrangement that continued until 1970). But look carefully. Tied up in the foreground is an aluminum canoe, probably one of the earliest craft that Grumman Aircraft had begun manufacturing as World War II wound down; these strong, relatively lightweight boats became the most popular canoes in America for the following two decades. And the biggest surprise: a Harbor Police cruiser is tied up at the dock, and two officers are “talking things over” with a few club members. One can only imagine what club shenanigans brought the law to the WCC dock!





Club Operations and Maintenance

New! Elite Athlete Extraction Contraption

Several members of WCC requested that the House Committee consider a way to make it easier for members or guests with mobility challenges to enter and exit boats on our docks. Dan Havens, Mark Baird, and Jim Ross were able to design and build such a device on the upstream end of the docks. They have anointed this device the "*Elite Athlete Extraction Contraption*" and any form of paddler, any age or size, with mobility challenges may use it. Initial feedback seems positive. Enjoy!

Thank you Dan, Mark and Jim! The Club is grateful for your service!



Where are the Waivers?



In an effort to keep the foyer tidy (we can dream, can't we?), the 2020 paper waivers have been moved to a binder on the shelves just outside the weight room. Remember that all guests need to sign a waiver. Plan ahead and have your guests fill out the waiver online (WashingtonCanoeClub.org/waiver) so you can spend your time on the water instead of filling out forms.

Parking

Parking at WCC is very limited and strictly for use by **members only** on a first come, first served basis. Here are a few reminders of our parking policy so we can keep things orderly in the lot and continue to be good stewards of the property.

- Members must display a WCC sticker or magnet on their cars and park only within the Designated Parking Area. (See diagram of Designated Parking Area below.)
- Overnight parking, guest parking, and parking outside designated parking areas is prohibited and cars will be towed at the owner's expense.
- The downstream boundary of our parking area is marked by two large trees on each side of the road as you enter the club grounds.
- Double park on the river side and pull your vehicle in far enough so someone else can park behind you.
- Do not block the entrance to the 4 upstream spaces by the pull-up bars.
- If you park behind someone, leave your car key on the key board (located in the weight room).
- Tuesday morning is trash pick up, so no single car parking in front of the dumpsters.

If you need a sticker for your car, please contact membership@washingtoncanoeclub.org

If your car is towed, contact the Park Police at (202) 617-7310 or (202) 619-7300 for retrieval information.

Guests can park along the street outside of the NPS locked gate or in one of the many lots in the Georgetown waterfront. Information can be found on the [Georgetown parking site](#).

DESIGNATED PARKING AREA

Boundary
Trees

Mitch M.
Memorial

Don't Block
Upstream





Remember to Secure Your Valuables

Please do not store your bikes or other valuables overnight at the Club, as thefts have recently occurred.

THANK YOU to all club volunteers

If you have an idea for a contribution to the next issue of *Currents*, please reach out to one of your newsletter team members:

[Catherine Melquist](#), [Dawn Nunziato](#), or [Gloria Vestal](#)

