

THE YUKON PADDLER

SPRING ISSUE 2002



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President's Message

By Violet Vanhees

Hello everyone, and welcome to another glorious season of paddling. Whatever your self-powered watercraft might be.

As President of the club for this year, I am excited about what all is happening.

If you have not yet been down to see the re-worked Intake on the Yukon River, do drop by. Vern Beebe has taken the lead once again in the work to create a great community recreational site there – with newly designed islands and chutes, a kids pool (when the water level comes up), and city plans to make the adjacent land area an attractive place to come and hang out for families, fishers, boaters, swimmers, and whoever else may wander by.

Eyvi Smith, as part of the preparations for his youth-at-risk raft training program he is going to lead this summer, has scored a shipping container that is now located at the Intake, which will be used for storing the club equipment (boats and gear) once it is fixed up.

Vern Beebe plans to have regular “kid’s drop-in evenings” once a week down at the Intake, starting probably in June. *Parents are expected to stick around and either paddle with their kids or be on shore to help out during these sessions.* There are a lot of amazing kids becoming amazing paddlers around here. Very cool!

The club is expecting to also run its weekly adult/family drop-in nights down at the Intake, like happened last summer. This too will probably start sometime in June – stay tuned for details.

Yannick Bedard has been organizing weekly paddling races from Schwatka Lake up Miles Canyon and back (usually Wednesday evenings) – and any and all self-powered watercraft are most welcome. He would love to see LOTS of participants, so don’t be shy.

The Whitehorse Whitewater Festival (aka the Whitehorse Rodeo, but with more than just rodeo freestyle events) is scheduled for Wednesday July 17 this year. So hone up your skills and get ready to sign up for that – the more the merrier.

Lana van Veen enthusiastically organized a number of rolling lessons and drop-in nights at the pool in May, to help folks get ready for the summer. Pool sessions (rolling, drop-ins, and kayak polo) will start up once again starting in October this year – at the NEW POOL!

And lots more. What the club does is driven by what the members of the club make happen. So, if there is something you would really like to see happen, c’mon out and help make it a reality.

The Club has not yet been able to fill the position of “VP, Canoeing” on the Board. So, if you are keen to see canoeing being well-supported and represented within the club activities, I invite you step forward to take on this Board position. The VP positions are intended to allow that person to focus on making good things happen for that discipline of paddling – so this would be an opportunity to take your vision for canoeing activities within the club and move it forward.

To all of you, I wish you a fun-filled and successful paddling season this summer. We are truly blessed to live in a place as beautiful as the Yukon – may our time on the lakes and rivers let us connect with and celebrate that.

Happy paddling –
Violet van Hees

PADDLE ECUADOR 2002

By Theresa Landman

Paddlers: Micro Nyhof and Mandy Grainger from Australia, Andrew and Ngaire Lawson from New Zealand, Alastair Caddick, Shaun Boughen, Andy Hyde, Bob Daffe and Theresa Landman (The Canucks)

Nine of us paddlers are on are way to Tena, the whitewater mecca of Ecuador. We found a driver who's vehicle used to be an old ambulance. Getting out with all our gear and avoiding the pick pocketing bus- station of Quito was a big relief. About an hour out of Quito, our driver had a perplexed look on his face when the van started losing power up a steep hill. The air conditioning was on but it felt like the heater. Then Alastair noticed fire under his feet in the engine! The smoke was getting thicker so we stopped and rushed out of the van. Bob, Andy and the driver grabbed water to douse the fire, others got the gear out. The whole van was in flames, which got worse when the hood was opened. Bob yelled to get the kayaks, so they cut the ropes and Andrew jumped on top of the van. He went to shove the kayaks off and lost his balance falling on to the road. Good thing he only got scrapes and bruises. The fire eventually died off as the radiator hose burned and the water leaked out. The driver was feeling pretty down because he had no insurance. After an hour wait in the dark we found a ride on a very crowded bus and five hours later we were in Tena.

Time to go Paddling!

The Upper Jondachi is a challenging river, draped in jungle with very steep technical drops. Micro got pinned on a log around the first bend and Andy and Andrew managed to lift him over the log. Bob went on ahead, often perched up high on a rock to show us the line of the next drop. Bob would say something like "paddle hard right, two boofs, cut left and you'll see at the bottom." Alastair and Micro had never done this kind of paddling before and were very impressed by the difficulty of the river. It was getting late and we didn't think we could finish the

river before dark, so we stashed our boats in the jungle and walked out on a trail. When we got back to the river the next day we rinsed our boats well, to make sure all the creepy crawlies were out. But as I was about to get into the kayak I noticed a scorpion walking on my seat! I was freaked and made sure I watched it exit my kayak. We spent another full day of paddling to complete the Upper Jondachi.

After raining hard all night the Upper Misuahali was in flood and Bob, Andy and Micro ran the river. It was a totally different river from a couple of days before, because now it was booming. Places where many rocks were showing were now covered. At one drop, Bob used hand signals and told Andy and Micro "first boof straight, second boof go left". They did this and ended up in a place they dubbed the "white room" where there was no obvious place to paddle but they landed on a tongue of water that shot them around a 90 degree corner and safely through. Micro and Andy both swam that day and each lost a paddle, they got one paddle back from a local kid for \$10US.

One morning Bob went to buy some orange juice, so he grabbed a bottle of OJ and the store clerk said—"You *really* don't want that". It was what they call "allahuasca"; shamans use it for hallucinations and to create visions—just what we needed above a Class 5 rapid.

Loco Locals

Going back to Tena on the local bus was a wild ride. Bus drivers are always competing, so they continually pass each other on narrow roads to be the first to pick up the passengers. Our bus driver looked just like a Columbian drug lord with his black, slicked back hair and shades. We had seen a bus deep down in a ravine, apparently two buses met and swerved to avoid a head on. One bus went over the edge and their bus driver jumped out. He was the only one killed but there were many injured passengers.

Back in Tena we joined in on the 2-week long festival, lots of people were in to spraying water and carnival soap at whoever was into it. When we were heading to the river, a little girl was hiding in the bush and threw a bucket of water at us. She was happy because all the gringos had their windows rolled down.

February 12th is Discovery of the Amazon River holiday and this is the finale of the festival. The streets are crowded; musical bands playing and lots of cheap rum for a dollar a bottle. The next morning when Bob went to buy our lunch there were a lot of passed out bodies on the streets. These people usually had everything stolen including their shoes. Fabian our taxi driver was one of them; he lost \$180 US, his watch and the keys to his truck. The next day a friend of his took us to the river.

Fabian was going to take us to another friends' place who had a boa constrictor and a 4.5-meter long anaconda. His friend usually lets the snakes out in the house on Fridays to eat mice and bugs, but this time both snakes escaped from the house and he hadn't found them back yet!

We went to see the bullfight and after the fight, the locals had a soccer game with the bull. They set up nets and waved their shirts to entice the bull through the goal. The players would often get run over, it was very entertaining.

After the game some locals would go in the ring to challenge the bull. Micro decided to bring his large Bolivian red poncho into the ring. He was careful and decided to stay close to the gate until a local girl convinced him to go in the center of the ring with her. With everyone waving their little shirts, guess what the bull went for? The bull came charging and the local girl let go of the poncho, so the bull went straight for Micro. He got his butt shoved forward by the bull's head but managed to stay afoot and escape out of the ring. The crowd went crazy for Micro and when we were walking downtown people would call out "hey torrero" (bullfighter). Our buddy Micro was now a celebrity!

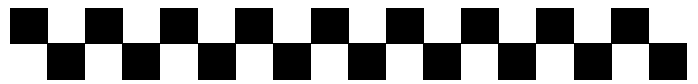
After our trip Micro and Bob became sick. Bob got dengue fever, which gave him a serious fever, chills and bone aches. He became quite dehydrated and had to be hospitalized in Montreal. Micro had similar

symptoms and was hospitalized in Australia but they never did find out, what caused it.

(Micro doing a boof move)



Bob, Andy, Micro, Alastair and Andrew on the Jondachi River



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ROCK THE RIVER UPDATE spot.

Rock the River 2001-2002

The past year, the Rock the River Project (RTR) has made some major progress. In a long-term project, it is sometimes difficult to maintain the excitement and the momentum and this is truly the case with RTR. But, this past year has been very exciting.

The challenges that face this project are many and varied. This is not an ordinary project and for many of the stakeholders involved in the licensing process it was unprecedented. This meant that we had to spend a considerable amount of our energies and money on building confidence in the community that this was a good project. We also needed to create precedents that will allow us to move forward.

Over the years we have learned a considerable amount. This has been a trial and error process and in each trial we have had specific targets that allow us to move to the next level. The area that we are allowed to work in has some significant challenges that go beyond the licensing process, steep sloping river bank and very deep water. We soon released that we needed be more creative and as the authorities became more comfortable with us we were able to expand our experiments.

Last spring we were allowed to place a man made object in the river, this was significant because we need to be able to control the shape of in water structures if we are going to be successful in creating that special wave or hole. The real important part of this, is our ability to work on the intake.

Our biggest barriers to actually being able to do some significant work in the Yukon River have been successfully removed.

- ❖ We have shown that we are not an environmental disaster, on the contrary, we have shown that we are able to enhance fish habitat.
- ❖ We have successfully applied for and received permission to use man made shapes in the river.
- ❖ We have removed tons of concrete, rebar and steel from the Yukon River.
- ❖ We have developed a working partnership with the City of Whitehorse Parks and Recreation Department, and Transportation Department.
- ❖ By cleaning up the industrial wasteland that was the intake we have gained a considerable amount of credibility with the community.

This year we were able to finish the upgrade on the old intake and readjust the beginner channel. We are very happy with the results. Canoes, kayaks and rafts now have a low-water practice area that may well turn out to be a high water fun

This will be the end of phase two, and the beginning of phase three. We have successfully proven that we can work in the Yukon River. We have developed partners and we have the confidence of the authorities and the community. We are in a very good position to develop a phase three of Rock the River. I hope to see you all taking an active role in this.

Vernon Beebe
Director, Rock the River



Erin and Connor Beebe playing at the old City Intake. The ce-



The old City intake before construction of the Whitewater Park.



Vernon Beebe has put in many volunteer hours of hard work for the new Whitewater Park or "Rock the River Project"

RIVER QUEST UPDATE

By Yvonne Harris

The deadline for the 2002 Riverquest is May 31. Current registrations include 2 solo kayaks, 4 double kayaks and 8 tandem canoes and 2 crew boats. There is only local entry to date - William Kleedehn's Limp a Long Racing, but the following teams are expected to enter: Steven Horton and Erin Neufelt, Marcus Waterreus and Jonathan Kerr, Yvonne Harris and Pat McKenna.

We've also heard that Jane Vincent may be in the women's category this year and that a well-known international female paddling team is expected. It is also good to know that Heinz Rodinger, the Austrian who was lost on the race last year, is returning to challenge the solo kayak division. You will find his story in the July edition of the Canoe and Kayak Magazine.

Local teams are training regularly. Some international teams are expected to arrive June 20 and will be invited to train and race with us prior to the big 735 km marathon. Included in our training are the Wednesday sprint races at Schwatka Lake organized by Yannick Bedard.

The race takes off June 27 from Rotary Park. Maybe some Canoe and Kayak members will camp out June 28-29 near Five Finger Rapids as safety boats and have some fun on those great surfing waves.

If interested, call Yvonne 668-7874.

YOUTH PROGRAM



There will be kayaking for youth at the intake on Monday evenings. Organized by Vernon Beebe.

Eyvi Smith and Andy Hyde will be running a rafting program for Youth at Risk on Wednesday Evenings

DOWN RIVER RACES

The flatwater canoeists and kayakers of Whitehorse are trying to develop this competitive sport in the Yukon. This year more people than ever are getting involved in racing. We have been doing weekly 7km races for the past 5 weeks now.

Our first big event will be the Yukon Canoe and Kayak Marathon Cup #1. On Sunday July 7th, paddlers will race from the Marsh lake dam to Schwatka lake, covering a distance of approx. 30km. Sponsors and prizes for the event have yet to be worked out, although Valhalla-Pure, Kanoe People and the Chocalate Claim already signed on as sponsors. Participation is free and possible only for YCKC members, and memberships are available at registration.

The following big event will be the Yukon Canoe and Kayak Marathon Cup #2, on Sunday July 28th. And then, to top it all off, Whitehorse will be hosting the 2002 Yukon Canoe and Kayak Marathon Championships on Sunday August 11th.


Yannick Bedard

WHITEHORSE WHITEWATER RODEO

KAYAK AND CANOE FREESTYLE EVENTS, SLALOM, DOWN RIVER RACE, RAFT FLIPS

See you there!
Contact: Yannick Bedard

July 17, 2002





YCKC EXECUTIVE 2002-2003

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Check out Kayak Yukon web page at
WWW.KAYAK.YK.CA

All the Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club events are posted on this site as well as the latest info

Thanks to Derrick Law for a great job and a very impressive website!

Contact Derrick at: dlaw@kayak.yk.ca to provide any pics,stories news etc. for



Sam Penner having a surfing good time below the dam, in early June



Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club would like to give special thanks to **Kanoe People** for letting us use their sea kayaks free of charge for our clinics.



Next board meeting is July 9 at Sport Yukon 7 pm. All members welcome.

TATSHENSHINI EXPEDITING

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- ◆ a youth program (3 evenings) to introduce youth to paddling
- ◆ lots of club members borrowing boats for a few days at a time over the summer when the boats were not in use for club activities
- ◆ Whitewater Rodeo (for kayaks and canoes) on Wednesday, August 1

Fall/Winter 2001/2002 saw the following activities at Lions Pool:

- ◆ two 6-week kayak polo sessions (with pre-registration required in order to ensure there was adequate funds to pay for the pool rentals, and drop-in's allowed to fill in any space not taken by the pre-registered individuals). These kayak polo sessions covered the pool rental costs and actually made a small amount of extra money, for the first time in several years. Some individuals did not like the pre-registration/ "pay in advance" requirement, but having the pre-registration and making it clear that the pool sessions would be cancelled if not enough people signed up and paid up by the first night to cover costs was supported by enough people to make it happen. Costs were \$60.00 for six nights of games. Drop-ins were \$10 a night.
- ◆ two sessions of formal rolling lessons. These were two evenings each (two successive Friday nights). One set happened in October, one set in January. Participants had to sign up in advance, and it was made clear that the sessions would be cancelled if we did not have enough participants registered to cover pool rental costs. Cost was \$20 a night, with a maximum of 12 people registered per night. Both sessions were a "go" – the October session had a waiting list, and January was nearly full. A whole bunch of club members volunteered to help teach these rolling sessions, which meant that we achieved close to 1:1 instructor:student ratios – this was very valuable and helpful for the participants. THANKS to all the volunteers!

In fact, all of these events required volunteers to organize them and provide support (eg. rescue swimmers at the river, teach skills, referee polo games, etc.). Thanks to everyone who helped out.

In terms of who took part, there were a lot of new

Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club – AGM 2002 Year-End Report re: Kayaking:

It was a busy and good year for the kayak programming aspects of the YCKC.

Summer 2001 saw the following activities:

- ◆ adult kayak drop-ins at the Intake most Thursday evenings
- ◆ kids kayak drop-ins at the Intake most Tuesday evenings (thanks Vern!)
- ◆ several "Intro to Kayaking" weekend workshops taken to the communities (two in Haines Junction, one in Ross River)

paddlers of all ages out this past year, and quite a few people who were returning to paddling and wanting some assistance or company as they worked on their skills and/or confidence. The club gained a lot of new members from people who came out to and took part in these events. This indicates that the activities that were happening were welcoming, accessible, and fun for new people.

Violet van Hees
 VP, Kayaking
 Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club

What Can Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club Offer to Members?

- ◆ Development of a Whitewater Park “Rock the River”
- ◆ Youth Program: an introduction to whitewater kayaking
- ◆ Youth at Risk Program– raft guide training and kayaking
- ◆ Annual Whitewater Rodeo
- ◆ Free use of paddle gear and kayaks
- ◆ Sea kayaking introductory and self-rescue clinics
- ◆ Kayak and Canoe practice rolling sessions in the pool
- ◆ Kayak Water Polo League
- ◆ Drop in sessions at the City Intake, Monday and Thursdays
- ◆ Organized down river races
- ◆ Access of information on trips, clinics, drop ins and all club events through e-mail
- ◆ Promotion of water sports as a family event
- ◆ Newsletters

Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club
2002/03 Membership Application

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ (home) _____ (work)

e-mail (please print clearly): _____

Fees:	Single membership	\$20.00	_____
	Youth membership (17 and under)	\$10.00	_____
	Family membership	\$40.00	_____
	Corporate membership	\$50.00	_____
	One day membership (for Downriver Race, or Rodeo <u>only</u>):	\$5.00	_____
	TOTAL:		_____

Memberships are renewable annually, on April 1st.

WAIVER: I am aware that activities associated with paddling in all its forms take place in a water based environment and involved various risks, dangers and hazards. I waive any and all claims that I have, or may have in the future against the Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club (YCKC) arising out of any aspect of participation in a YCKC workshop or club sponsored activity.

I have read, understood and agreed to the above waiver:

Member # 1 Signature: _____ Date: _____
 Name (please print): _____

Member # 2 Signature: _____ Date: _____
 Name (please print): _____

Parent or legal guardian signature **for any members under age of 18:** _____
 Name of person signing (please print): _____
 date: _____

For more info contact: Violet van Hees, President of YCKC, at 633-3154.