

### **Editor's Comments**

## Welcome back to "The Catch", better late than never.

This month's Catch is a little behind presstime, as I returned from a week's holiday and was hoping those that missed the deadline for submssions would have had some extra time to produce an article. The Catch is not a newsletter to highlight only one area of the Club. Unfortunately, I only have limited information from Canal Dragons.

When I volunteered to help produce this newsletter, I reflected back on previous issues and realized it is about sharing the good news of SNCC, for all of its programs. It is meant to celebrate accomplishments, provide updates on initiatives, and promote upcoming events and maybe even provide a brief moment of escape and respite. I promised myself to keep things lighthearted. For the most part, that is what will follow. I have no hidden agenda, and I will not allow anyone to question my integrity or assume there is censorship. I have learned a great deal after one publication.

Therefore, I will be publishing this edition with the exact words provided by the authors.

Last issue, I made the error of omitting the words "Head", and "Canoe/Kayak" in Coach Brenda's article referencing Coach Ozturk's title, as well as not verifying the earnings of the Hope Floats Challenge. I am not in the position to police anyone's version of facts or the validity of all the facts. I trust people to be accurate and honest, and, quite frankly, the job doesn't pay enough, lol!

I hope that future additions will be informative and provide the uplifting information we deserve from all aspects of SNCC.

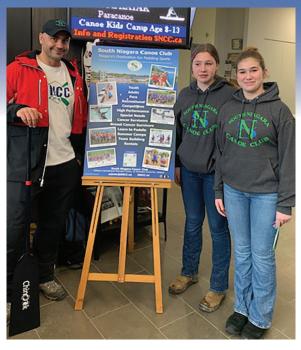
Catch you next time! Anne Marie Ciancio













### Family Fun at the Meridian Centre, Pelham

On Family Day, February 19, 2024, SNCC was able to showcase our own paddling family, with information being shared with the public about our dragon boat and canoe/kayak programs. This event was a great way to advertise our club programs for free. People were met with the friendly smiles of club members and they walked away with handouts, and knowing more about how to become involved in the SNCC family.

Catch the fightights ...

Learn and hear about our programs and general information in the newly added sections to *The Catch*. Submit information to Anne Marie Ciancio annemarieciancio@gmail.com before the third week of each month. There's a whole lot going on in our club...

Commodore's Comments
1st ViceCommodore's Comments
2nd Vice Commodore's Comments

**The Biz**What's Going On - Events/Fundraising - etc. **Good to Know**Articles members have submitted

**Getting to Know You** 

Articles submitted by members, about members

### **Volunteer Vitality**

National Volunteer Week is April 14-20, 2024 and the theme is "Every Moment Matters." This phrase emphasizes the importance of every volunteer and their contributions. Volunteers play a vital role in the inclusivity, strength, and well-being of our communities. By sharing their time, skills, empathy, and creativity, they contribute exponentially to the quality of life we all strive for.

Let's recognize and celebrate the impact of each and every volunteer from coast to coast to coast. Now more than ever, **Every Moment Matters**.

As a non-profit sports organization, SNCC relies on its many volunteers to perform everyday tasks such as paying the bills and taking out the garbage and recycling. Without volunteers, SNCC would not still be a presence in Niagara after fifteen years.

Volunteers serve on the Board of Directors. The Canal Dragons Executive are all volunteers.

During the summer, the Welland International Flatwater Centre hosts many events that require volunteers. Some of those events will pay a stipend to SNCC in appreciation for the volunteer help. This winter was the first time the City of Welland had hot beverage warming stations that were operated by SNCC volunteers. SNCC received a stipend for that work as well.

Volunteering at a Charity Bingo shift at Delta City Bingo in Welland will also result in revenue for SNCC. It's light work for a 2.5 hour shift that results in about \$1000 for SNCC. With two shifts a month, that could be about \$24,000 for SNCC in revenue during the course of a year.

People volunteer in many ways for SNCC. Some bail dragon boats before practice or secure the dragon boats to the docks after practice, and some help out at promotional or fundraiser events for SNCC.

A new program is being implemented at SNCC to encourage volunteerism at the club. At registration time, all members (or each family membership) will provide SNCC with a post-dated cheque for \$100 as a promise to complete 5 hours of volunteer work for SNCC. Once your volunteer hours are complete, your cheque will be returned to you. If you do not complete 5 hours over the course of the membership year (May 1 to April 30), then your cheque will be cashed. Marilyn Abbs has agreed to be Volunteer Coordinator again this year. By the way, if you are interested in helping Marilyn coordinate volunteers, that can also count as your volunteer hours. Marilyn can also help you get training for volunteering at Delta City Bingo.

I am grateful for being part of the SNCC family and knowing that part of what makes this family so wonderful is that we have an excellent group of members who are also volunteers.



### **First Vice Commodore Canoe/Kayak**

### **Michelle Lowry**

### **Words from Vice Commodore in Canoe and Kayak**

February has been a great month for SNCC.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered, donated and attended our first ever Trivia night, it was a great success. Thank you to Kathleen Reardon and Jessica Konert for everything they did to spearhead this incredible event! What a wonderful way to showcase how all members of SNCC come together.

Winter training continues at full strength, please be sure to follow SNCC on Instagram and Facebook as it highlights some of the training strategies Öztürk is using. Behind the scenes we are preparing for an incredible on the water season in not only U14/ U16, Masters, Para and High Performance; but, also a new Special Olympics programme.

This year will be wonderful for SNCC as our course will be hosting the Canadian Sprint Nationals in August.



South Niagara Canoe Club

### **Summer Camps**

This summer we are looking forward to hosting fun filled weeks of on-water activities for campers aged 8- 13. Camps run from July 2 to August 30.

We provide a safe environment for opportunities to try paddleboarding, dragon boating as well as canoe and kayaking.

Before and after care are available as well. We have wonderful activities planned for both on and off the water. Please visit our website to learn more!

We will be also running our sprint racing camp again this summer. It will be five weeks of opportunities to learn and excell in the areas of sprint canoe and kayaking in single and crew boats. Paddlers will be provided opportunities to showcase their skills in local and Ontario regattas. Before and after care is included in youth racing camp registration.

Both camps provide lots of fun both on and off the water with opportunities to increase your core strength, balance and paddling skills as well as create friendships with fellow paddlers.



**Second Vice Commodore Dragon Boat** 

**Mark Swan** 



## Coach's Corner

### Canoe/Kayak submitted by Coach Öztürk Kuru

Coach Öztürk explains the programming.

### Hello from a wonderful February!

We have done some functional training for the core, which we need to have for the importance of power transfer in an unstable environment, is specially applied to all athletes one day a week. These exercises on the Swiss ball allow athletes to have fun and improve their ability to generate power in an unstable environment.

A February full of tests; we performed the bench press and bench pull 2' repetition tests, which are included in the CKC calendar every year, and strength continuity measurements of the athletes. We also carried out the maximum 2000 meter tests of the athletes through Row Erg, where we train twice a week and where I could get all the feedback on the monitor about aerobic capacity.

Before the start of the spring, submax weight training to increase maximum strength continues and it has started to be observed that the submax weights lifted by the athletes have increased.







Of course, after all these intense workouts, no workout is complete without stretching. Stretching after every workout is essential both to prevent injuries and to speed up recovery.

It is a February in which everything went perfectly, happy athletes and a happy coach.











# Coach's Corner

### **Dragon Boat** submitted by Coach Brenda Arndt

What have I been up to, and why did the Vice Commodore Dragon Boat name me as Head Coach Dragon Boat? Well, I can't speak for Mark, but I am grateful for the recognition of my hard work and accomplishments as a leader at SNCC.

In 2018 when I took on the role of Vice Commodore Dragon boat there were 64 dragon boat members. By the onset of the pandemic, SNCC had 96 dragon boat members. SNCC lost 70 paddlers, and all but one DB coach during the pandemic.

Dragon Boat(DB) at South Niagara Canoe Club(SNCC) changed suddenly with the onset of the Pandemic in 2020. The challenges seemed overwhelming at the time, but the grow grant implementation committee and a handful of volunteers from the dragon boat membership were up for the challenge and the evolution of Dragon Boat began. With no other volunteers willing to do so during a pandemic, I took on all the tasks of Manager and Head Coach for all the Dragon Boat crews as we got back on the water in 2021.

We had a lot of work to do. In 2019 I had stepped up to Commodore and Mark Swan became Vice Commodore Dragon Boat in 2020. Under our leadership, we secured the grant for Hope Floats, we recruited DB coaches and paddlers to the club. We recruited members to take the Dragon Boat Canada (DBC) steering course, the DBC Level I Dragon Boat Community Crew Coaching course, the DBC Level II Competitive Dragon Boat course, and the Alkame Drumming course all paid for by the Hope Floats Grow Grant (now over). We brought the Special Needs crew from an outside rental to a fully volunteer driven crew under the Canal Dragons umbrella. We included Cancer Survivors to the Hope Floats crew and started a Paradragon crew. We purchased two new Dragon Boats and six OC1's.

Today Canal Dragons members are comprised of only one DB coach and 26 dragon boat paddlers from pre-pandemic days, and approximately 90 dragon boat paddlers that joined SNCC post pandemic. 12 Canal Dragons paddlers have earned the DBC Community teams Level I DB coach certification and 2 have earned the DBC Level II Competitive DB coach certification.

I had taken the Level I course in 2017 and a home-grown steering course in 2018. As Canal Dragons grew and many members developed their skills and competitive nature, the club needed competitive dragon boat coaches and steers. I had coached and steered for SNCC non-competitive crews, rentals and team building for 5 years. I decided to commit to coaching competitive crews and took the DBC Level II Competitive Dragon Boat course in November 2022, which ignited a passion for coaching that I didn't know I had. I have taken 13 NCCP coaching courses and continue my education through NCCP on an ongoing basis. May 2023, along with 10 other members, I took the DBC Steering Certification course.

In 2023, for the first time Canal Dragons had opportunity to compete in the Canadian Dragon Boat Championships, and 70 paddlers stepped up to the plate for the experience. The BCP and Senior C women's crew lost their steers with six weeks to go before the competition. I had a decision to make, either step up to steer in competitions, or pull both teams from the Canadian DB Championships. Throughout the next six weeks, I took every opportunity to steer with other crews to hone my skills enough to steer in the 2023 Canadian Dragon Boat Champion-

ships, where the BCP crew earned a bronze medal and a subsequent invitation to represent at the CCWC's.

In November 2023, Margaret and Remo Battista stepped up to the plate to take on Management of Canal Dragons crews to free me up allowing me to focus on coaching.

I saw an opportunity to continue to develop my coaching and steering skills and I went for it. I approached Scott Murray, the owner operator of Alkame Dragon Boat Services, Head Coach of Pickering Dragon Boat Club (PDBC) and the President of Dragon Boat Canada and asked him if he would be my mentor. Nothing ventured, nothing gained, right? Scott is ranked among the best Dragon Boat coaches in the World and has not only brought many PDBC crews to gold medals at the CCWC's but as a National Team Coach has brought Canada to many gold medals at the World's.

To my delight and surprise, Scott accepted my request. Since November 2023, I have been attending the PDBC Senior C Women's Performance crew's Sunday morning practices as Scott's mentee. I will continue to do so throughout 2024. In April 2024, I will be attending the Florida camp as a mentee, both to advance my coaching and my steering skills.

Scott has said I may continue as his mentee until our Senior C women beat his Senior C women. What do you say? Challenge accepted?

Every week I learn, develop, and hone my skills in Pickering and four sessions a week I continue to hone them at home. Along with me, Canal Dragons that have been attending Winter Training have made leaps and bounds this winter in their skills, fitness, and strength.

I am sure the Winter Training group join me in challenging every Canal Dragon to come on out to Winter Training, (there is one month left), and sign up for on-water training as soon as it is available. Let's show everyone what Canal Dragon's can do this year on the water!

We've come a long way, and we aren't finished yet!

2024 will see the first Canal Dragons Performance crew(s) hit the water, and the first Canal Dragons crew to compete in the Club Crew World Championships (CCWC).

I am proud of the commitment and hard work our athletes are demonstrating and am looking forward to seeing the results throughout the 2024 on water season.

We anticipate an outstanding on water 2024!

Paddles UP



### And from some of the crew . .

submitted by attendees of winter paddling dragonboat

"I have found the winter training to be invaluable. I like that it combines paddling in the tank with specific exercises to strengthen our bodies to prepare for the boats entering the water . It's also a great way to get to know one another; it's great team-building".

- Valerie Sadler

"I really enjoy Winter Training! SNCC has an amazing facility! When we start a new season each spring, I feel prepared and ready for on the water training, because of our coaches expertise in the tank and gym."

Ann Reid

"The Winter Training for 2024 marks for me a one year anniversary from when I first attended the club on January 6, 2023. I have had to be patient with myself to overcome a number of medical issues over the past couple of years and have found that the Winter Training program serves to meet the challenge of helping me to push my limits in the areas I am capable of working on. The Winter Program is the gateway to Dragon Boat Racing and for anyone attending the facility, viewing the equipment and participating with the hands-on experience of paddling in a tank/pool (simulating on-water training) it only adds to the spectacular view of the racing course (just outside the full windows)."

– Paul Apostolon

"I love the winter training program! It is a great opportunity to focus on improving our stroke and learning any new techniques we want to implement before we get on the water in the Spring. The split of gym time and tank time is incredibly beneficial, and we are so lucky to have this option during the off-season.

Jamie Mereweather









"I have always bugged teammates at the end of summer to join winter training.

This is because it is easier to do focused training in the paddling pool:

- paddling feels heavier on the pool compared to paddling on the canal on a 20-person boat, and this is good in developing your paddling muscles
- a paddler can focus on the sections of the stroke that need to be worked on, eg, the catch, the return, the angle of entry, breathing, etc, unlike on a dragonboat during summer, practices, our coach already has specific training planned for that session.(I am working on stronger pull at the second half of the stroke)
- winter is also a great time to develop a paddler's opposite side

\_\_\_\_\_ Marge

"In my opinion, the first month and a half of winter training has been great. The step by step dissection of the stroke has been very informative in improving my stroke. The circuit training part is definitely building my strength and endurance, and I can feel the improvement already.

I can't wait until March to see how much I can improve my stroke and strength."

----- Heather

"Winter Training 2024 has been an eye opener on my own physical strength and cardio. Since December, I can already see increases in strength and cardio, and I am excited to see my end result in March. Probably the most important aspect has been the stoke modification, even if slight. It took me at least 4-5 practices in the tank to get the hang of it. Even though only a slight change, I can feel it is a more powerful stroke. I believe being in the tank, with the mirrors and clear water to see how the paddle is to remain straight longer could only have been achieved in winter training. I am not sure if the concept and additional assistance I received could be achieved in the boat on the water. Being a visual person, I needed to see the stroke in full, to grasp the concept.

Winter training is going to make me a more effective and stronger paddler for the team."

— Karen

" find the coaching very good....well organised practices.... explain and demonstrate well. The team communication is excellent...the emails, forms, etc.

I enjoy the friendly, supportive atmosphere of the workouts which is a reflection of the way the practices are organized and carried out.

Thanks for all you do Brenda.

· Lynda

What's going on at SNCC - business, fundraising, planning, etc. It's one for all and all for one. Supporting each other makes us a better club.







## SNCC's SMARTIES

top left: First place winners above: Second place winners

(Dragonboat coach Jan Corbett and her family)

left: Third place winners below: Jessica Konert



submitted by Anne Marie Ciancio

On February 9, 2024, SNCC held it's first Trivia Night at the Welland Legion.

It was a night filled with laughter, fun, pizza, drinks, and prizes. Knowledge was at the forefront, well...my table had lots of laughs.

At the end of the night, the top three teams were awarded \$200, \$120, and \$80, respectively. During intermission, a "mini" paddling trivia was hosted by Alan Wright. This brought out the truly competitive side of the tables.

After all, we were playing for chocolate bars!





OF YOUR CLUB

### **CONTINUING**

## SW22 OF YOUR CLUB

Oh What a Night! Feb 9, 2024 Trivia Night

A huge thank you goes out to our trivia hosts Michael and Scott Yurenko, the audiovisual team of Lathen Martin and Teagan Reardon, all of the volunteers, both in front and behind the scenes, the prize donors, and the organizers, Kathleen Reardon, Jessica Konert, and Barb Perry.



Lathen Martin and Teagan Reardon



Kathleen Reardon welcomes and explains the evening



Barb Gahn and guests



Kathleen Lowry and Jessica Konert draw the door prizes



Linda Emslie and guests



Second from left is new master paddler Hannah Nazar and guests





The Legion was decorated with lots of SNCC garb



Co-workers of Kathleen Reardon from St. Catharines Hospital, Rehabilitation Department and some are significant others/partners, and friends.



Top left and around: Jonothan Barrett, friend, Sarah Lowry, Kathleen Lowry, friend, friend, Casey Konert, Izzy Konert, friend.





## Jetting to Know Jow Marilyn Abbs - Registrar

### **Meet The Registrar – Marilyn Abbs**

Hey all, I am your Club Registrar as well as your Charity Bingo Lead, and WIFC Stipend Events Coordinator – oh yeah, and now also the Board of Directors Secretary.

Fun times indeed!

Way back in 2015, my husband and I moved to Niagara Region from Toronto. We left a place of 3.1 million people to 31,000, and we don't regret that part of it.

One of the first things we ever saw up close, was a rowing event being held on the South Course. He was not a fan of that, as we did not know anyone, or what everyone was screaming about. My experience of having volunteered at the WIFC since then, I now know what all the screaming is about! We both were winter sportspeople as he used to play hockey, and I used to play ringette. (I played sledge hockey for about 3 years with a Niagara team from 2015 to 2018 until my back said no more of that). It was through a friend who was participating in a Learn To Play sledge group, that I found out about a new programme being created at South Niagara Canoe Club, called PaddleAll. I was really excited as I had used a little plastic kayak ('Pelican' Cdn Tire Special) at a cottage and loved it! I could really bomb around in that little thing.

So in June of 2017, I went to the inaugural "Paracanoe/Paddle-All Try It" event. It was being held over two days (Sat & Sun). So I was on the water with two athletes from Balmy Beach Canoe Club, and the Coaches. What an adventure that was. I got put into a Sprint Kayak! That thing is over 14 ft long! I very quickly found out that I should not turn my head to "listen". That resulted in me dumping out unexpectedly at least three times. Its okay, I had a very bulky PFD on, and I float like a cork anyways.

Since then, I have competed in local, Regional, Provincial and National and CanMas (across Canada) events, representing SNCC in the Open Category of Paracanoe, in both styles of boats – Kayak and Va'a. The most recent Canadian Nationals and CanMas was my most productive – eight races, six medals. Three medals in the Nationals one of each colour: Gold in 200m Va'a (new personal best (PB) 1:35.539), Silver in 500m Va'a (PB 4:28.822), Bronze in 500m K1 (3:30.300). For CanMas, which is the Cdn Masters Championships Bronze in Open K1 Para (1:33), Silver in Open Va'a Para (2:02) and an age category race (45-64 y/o) that saw me score a Silver in Va'a/OC1 in 1:36 against a legend in Sprint Canoe, LA Schmidt. We literally laughed the whole way down the course. The wind was not our friend!

Before this past season ended,I had mentioned to several people that I would really love to start a true "PaddleAll Programme for Special Olympians", as we were going to be hosting Nationals in 2024. I know that you don't always develop people into racing addicts like me right away, but that didn't matter. If we got at least one, that would be awesome, but it is more for the love of getting out on the water and pushing yourself to snag that next new PB!

Well I found out recently that we got my wish granted through the "Boats For All Campaign" from Canoe Kayak Canada. It is a grant that helps you buy some boats, pay for the Coaching and other equipment, so that you can run an eight week programme (July & August), and support an underserved community of people, with the goal being to introduce them to the joy of Kayaking, and if they are interested, to enter some races (optional).

So in a nutshell, that is how SNCC turned me into an Open Para athlete in 2017, and I haven't looked back. My next Challenge is to possibly become an Assistant Coach/Instructor for both the PaddleAll & Para programmes.

Wish me luck!



Marilyn Abbs



### **Paddling the Fast and Furious K-4**

submitted by Alan Wright



This photo from the Balmy Beach Canoe Club digital archives pictures their doubleblade four crew from 1947. Proper kayaks were introduced to the Canadian racing scene in the 1950's.

Whether a first-time spectator at a canoe-kayak regatta or a veteran aficionado of sprint paddling, K-4 races always impress the onlooker for many reasons. The four-seat kayak is a sleek racer 11 metres long designed for speed, covering 200 metres in a world record time of 29 seconds!

When Canada led a group of athletes to introduce the world to the sport of canoe racing at the 1924 Olympics, kayaks were not part of the equipment transported to the site just outside Paris. Instead, paddlers used doubled blade paddles seated in the same canoes they used for regular single blade foursomes. In fact, kayaks with covered hulls and cockpits only came into use internationally in the 1950s. Over the last 75 years manufacturers around the world have made many improvements to the racing kayaks, and they have become lighter and faster, not to mention 'more tippy' for the beginner.



Former SNCC Head Coach KC Fraser (seat 4) won two Gold Medals in PanAm Games competitions and raced in the Finals in the Olympics in K-4. (Photo: Rio Olympics 2016)

The South Niagara Canoe Club has four K-4s. The various designs can accommodate young beginners, adults, and Masters, as well as high performance athletes.

Look for these fascinating kayaks racing in the Olympics and on our WIFC course as Welland hosts regattas this summer, including the Western Ontario Division (WOD) Championships, the Canoe Kayak Canada Championships, and the Canadian Masters Championships (CANMAS): I am sure you will be impressed!



SNCC Head Coach Öztürk Kuru (seat 4) collected many national championship medals in his native Turkey and competed in international events in some 20 countries over several years in the K-4. (Photo: World Cup in Denmark 2015)



Under expert coaching, young SNCC paddlers quickly learn the skills required to propel a K-4 at our Kids and Racing Camps and enjoy the excitement of competing at summer regattas. Pictured here are Joe, Hudson, Kathleen and Casey after a race on our WIFC course.

# good to know.



### Breast Cancer Survivor Paddlers

### It's time to start planning for the IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival 2026

**Where:** Aix-les Bains, France, in the French Alps **When:** August 24- August 30, 2026

If you are interested in participating or want more information, please direct responses to Brenda Arndt.

Keep an eye out for upcoming Hope Floats meeting.

Hope Floats, in lane 3 finishing first in their division final at the 2018 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival, Florence, Italy.





### **South Niagara Canoe Club**

NIAGARA'S DESTINATION FOR PADDLING SPORTS
Welland International Flatwater Centre, 16 Townline Tunnel Rd., Welland, ON info@sncc.ca SNCC.ca

South Niagara Canoe Club (SNCC) is a board directed, not-for-profit, incorporated amateur sports organization founded in 2008. SNCC Board of Directors are volunteers and serve without remuneration. If you would like to join the Board of Directors, please download and complete the form from our website.

### **EXECUTIVE OFFICERS | SERVING SINCE**

COMMODORE - Kathleen Reardon | January 2023 VICE-COMMODORE CANOE KAYAK - Michelle Lowry | January 2023 VICE-COMMODORE DRAGON BOAT - Mark Swan | March 2020

TREASURER - Collin Bell | January 2024 SECRETARY - Barb Perry | September 2023 REGISTRAR - Marilyn Abbs | February 2023

At the time of release this Newsletter has been produced with information provided by the sources.

#### **DIRECTORS AT LARGE | SERVING SINCE**

Carolyn Swan | November 2018 Marie-Jeanne Monette | April 2023 Anne-Marie Ciancio | September 2023 Jo Feekery | September 2023 Linda Bell | November 2023

#### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Brenda Arndt - Hope Floats Challenge Committee Kathleen Reardon - Club-wide Fundraising Committee Marilyn Abbs - Volunteer Committee

### **SAFETY OFFICER**

Glenna Landry

