

A well intended throw on the Lower Green River Gorge, May 2018.

President's Currents

by Kanako Iwata

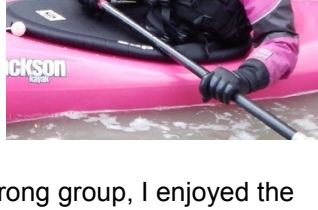
Hope you had a nice Memorial Day weekend! I went on the Naches Valley club trip and ran the Naches, Bumping and American Rivers for the first time. The Upper American was my favorite of the week. It was fast continuous whitewater with non-stop Class 3 action for 3 miles. It was not nearly as "loggy" as the Bumping, and with a strong leader who can boat-scout each corner and a strong group, I enjoyed the run very much, though I didn't have much chance to look at the scenery or take pictures.

Glad to say our Spring Bash was a great success! I had to miss it attending the Swiftwater Rescue class. The class only had 3 students this time, and I had a fun learning some new stuff.

In the early May, I also had a chance to float the beautiful John Day with 5 friends in a raft and 5 kayaks. We ran the section from Clarno to Cottonwood. The whitewater was very limited, but the scenery was spectacular with tall basalt walls.

When you are reading this, I would be on the Middle Fork and the Main Salmon trip I have been dreamed of. I will tell you about it in the next issue!

Happy paddling!



Renewed Membership?

If you haven't renewed your PTCC membership for 2018 do it now. Without renewal, you lose access to the website and CANEWS.

[Renew your membership](#)

Upcoming Trips

[June 23-24 Introduction to River Canoeing Class, I-1+](#)

[June 23: Middle Fork Snoqualmie River Middle](#)

[Middle III+](#)

[June 29—July 4: Methow Valley Northwest Kanufest](#)

[II+ - III+](#)

[June 30: Kid-friendly Leaders Choice](#)

[July 14: 26th Watermelon Seed Spitting Trip I+](#)

[July 21: Yakima River Class II](#)

[July 21 - 22: Hoh River Weekend Class II-II+](#)

[July 22: Middle Sauk River Class III+](#)

[July 28: Upper Skykomish Class II+](#)

Sign up for trips by clicking on the above hyperlinks or the [Events Calendar](#)

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2018 Spring Bash Report

On Sat, May 19th, we held the PTCC Spring Bash at Beaver Lake Park picnic pavilion in Sammamish, WA. We had great weather and great water levels this year and Bash was well attended (approx. 45 people). Once again, the PTCC board and other volunteer members prepared a hardy breakfast for everyone: scrambled eggs, hash browns, breakfast links, coffee, tea, pastries, and oatmeal. After breakfast, we had our annual rescue rope distance and accuracy games, with fierce competition by all. At 11:30, we loaded up and headed out in different groups to run 3 different sections of the Snoqualmie River: Upper Middle Fork, South Fork, and the main stem from Plum Landing to Fall City. The Upper MF group had quite a bit of rain, whereas the other 2 sections were mostly cloudy with warm temps. A big THANK YOU to all the people who volunteered to get up early to help set up and cook breakfast!

Northwest KanuFest on 4th of July Week

Here's the info for this year's Northwest KanuFest

I will leave Seattle on Thursday 6/28. We will be staying at Loup Loup Campground off of Hwy 20 near the summit of Loup Loup pass. The campground is at 4000 feet and can be cool in the evening. I am planning to paddle on Friday if others are there and are keen to paddle. Here's what I propose for the first two days.

For Friday, if the Twisp is running, I'll do that. If not, I'll paddle the McFarland Creek section of the Methow. Either way, to accommodate those driving in that morning, we can meet in the town of Twisp at the bakery which is on Glover Street (you can't miss it – nor would you want to) at 11:00. We'll plan on leaving the bakery by 11:15 so you may want to show up a little earlier. I wouldn't want a large group for the first day if it is on the Twisp as the wood situation may be an unknown at that time. If a lot of people show up on Friday, we can break into groups, but paddlers should have good class III skills until we know if there's any significant wood.

For people arriving on Saturday, anyone who wants to can plan on paddling the McFarland Creek section of the Methow - meeting at the put in at 11:00. The put in is at the McFarland Creek Fishing Access off of Hwy 153. It is easy to find. Look for McFarland Creek Rd and it is upstream of that.

Other paddling options for these and other days will be totally dependent on the group's ability to self-organize. We will have a daily sign-up 'board', where folks can sign up to organize or participate on trips. We will make an effort to have a variety of trips suitable for all paddlers but it may be up to you to organize a trip suitable for your abilities or tastes. To be fair to everyone and limit the amount of last minute scrambling, we are asking organizers and participants to be courteous and commit to their plan by 8:30 the night before.

Paddlers of all crafts are welcome. We will have an official welcoming paddlers meeting at the campground on Saturday night to help get everyone on the same page.

Dave Mainer

Peek-a-Boat

"Peek-a-Boat" is a monthly article where we interview boaters from the club and look inside what gear they carry in their boat on river trips. This month's article is from John Kelly.



I carry what most boaters carry in their boats: extra paddle, throw rope, first aid kit, pin kit. One of the handiest items I carry is a Salamander "Beam Bag": It is a water resistant 8 inch zipper bag that attaches to the foam pillar of my kayak with two shock cords. It is a handy place to securely keep gloves, sun glasses, snacks, sun screen, lip balm and other small items that you want easy zipper access to on the river. While it is advertised as a kayak accessory it can easily be attached securely in many places in a canoe as well.

Classes in 2018

PTCC offers a great set of courses for paddlers of almost all interests and abilities. We have excellent member-instructors who will focus on safety, helping you learn, but most importantly making sure you have a great time on the water.

Need more info? Contact the club training coordinator at training@paddletrails.org

Introduction to Canoeing Rivers: June 23-24

In this 2 day course, come learn about how moving water affects your boat. This is pre-whitewater, so we are covering some of the basics: entering and exiting current, paddle strokes, and being an active group member. Canoes will need to be equipped with some flotation.

Difficulty: Class I – I+

Featured Trip Report

River Safety and Rescue Class

April 21—22, 2018

By Dave Mainer

Club members from Paddle Trails and the Washington Kayak club participated in 2 day the River Safety and Rescue Class on April 21 and 22. The class was taught by Casey Garland who taught us new skills and refreshed some old and forgotten ones. Members from PTCC were Darren Greenhalgh, Jerry Eller, Kathy McGee, Lauren Lesser, Becca Polglase and Dave Mainer.

Most paddlers carrying a throw rope as essential gear but few of us know how to use them well beyond the basics; i.e. rescuing a swimmer and setting up a clothes line at camp. On the first day we learned about what types of ropes are best for different uses. We also learned how ropes can fail and what knots to use so they won't weaken the rope. We learned how to set up z-drags - using carabiners, pulleys and prussik slings to create mechanical advantage - for pulling a pinned boat off of an obstacle. We got lots of hands on, dry land practice with setting up these systems from an easy 3:1 and 4:1 advantage all the way up to 27:1. While it isn't likely most of us would ever have the need for a 27:1 z-drag on our normal outings or have the equipment, it is good to know the concepts.

At the end of day one, we went to the Cedar river we learned different techniques for wading safely in current using paddles, logs, oars and each other for added stability. We also covered swimming techniques, practiced swimming, throwing throw ropes to swimmers (little coils for the second throw) and, as swimmers, how to hold the throw rope after grabbing onto it (the rope goes over the shoulder opposite of where the thrower is). He emphasized that the traditional defensive swimming techniques need to be combined with aggressive, "swim forward" techniques.

On day 2, we practiced setting up mechanical advantage and learned how to set up a tensioned diagonal, which is basically a taught rope running at a greater than 45 degree angle across the river. This acts like a zip line, ferrying a swimmer holding onto a sling attached to the rope while in the current. While setting this up, we experienced how difficult it is to get a rope across fast current. The solution to this, we learned, is to use a messenger line tied to the main rope. The messenger line is a small diameter "parachute" cord which is much easier to pull across the current.

The rescue simulation was super educational. We were to set up tensioned diagonals from river left to river right and then back with the same rope. We quickly realized we didn't have enough rope to go both ways and so once we got the rescuers to river right, we were to pull the rope all the way across and then paddle/tow the messenger line back over to river left. First try failed – the messenger line was too short. Second try failed, the second, longer messenger line was still too short. On the third try we joined the two lines together and elevated the line off the river to reduce drag by running it through a carabiner attached to a tree limb which was brilliant until we discovered that the two lines were joined together with a carabiner. Can you guess what happens when a carabiner tries to slip through another carabiner? It so happened that the person towing the rope was Casey who fortunately had the messenger line attached to his quick release because he came to an abrupt stop about ¾ of the way across the fast current which caused him to flip over and let go of his boat while he pulled the quick release on his tow belt. So now our instructor was swimming down stream after the loose boat. This was a classic example of how easy it is for the rescuer to become the "victim". Just a few lessons learned here:

Small miscalculations can add up to serious consequences. Fortunately, in this scenario the consequences were relatively minor.

Never tie the messenger line or rope onto yourself without a quick release.

Holding the messenger line in your teeth could be an expensive mistake.

We concluded the in the river topics by practicing swimming over a log. Casey demonstrated a new technique which can be used in a last resort scenario when you aren't able to grab on to anything to pull yourself up out of danger. It's hard to explain, but the idea is with your back to the current, push back with your arms, arch your back, get your feet on the upstream side of the log and with your body planing on the surface, walk across the length of the obstruction. We ended day 2 by doing more dry land practice setting up mechanical advantage.

Last, we retired to dry land and sunshine and practiced setting up z-drags again to help imprint this skill in our brains.

Other PaddleTrails Trip Reports are found on the website at:

[Trip Reports](#)