



Spring 2024
www.porpa.org

Pend Oreille Rowing & Paddling Association

3rd Annual PORPA Sprints continues it's success in 2023!

The 3rd Annual PORPA Sprints on the Priest River was a blast! Kayaks, paddleboards, canoes, and rowing shells raced up and down the Priest River in front of beach spectators on a lovely sunny day in August. PORPA is grateful for our sponsors and donors (Kalispel Tribe Giving Fund, Aerocet, Expect-A-Lot Signs, The Eagles Nest Motel, Selkirk Ace Hardware, Priest Gardens, Ivory Dental, Synergy Design and others) for providing funds and in-kind donations that resulted in free registration and t-shirts for all youth and helped purchase items for our free BBQ lunch following the event. 2023 saw about 20% increased participation from the prior year (about 100 entries). Kids participated in greater numbers in all events. Bonner County fire department and many volunteers are the reason the event was so successful, fun, and safe! Six local media outlets covered the event, helping spread the word about this celebration of non-motorized boating on the beautiful Priest River.

In 2024, in order to complete the Sprints a little earlier in the day and provide more opportunities for youth, adults and rowers will be limited to two events. PORPA will also have some youth kayaks to lend to kids who do not have their own equipment. **The event is scheduled for Saturday, August 3rd at the Mudhole.** Save the date and spread the word to your friends and family, we would like to have at least 10 more youth participate in 2024. More information will be available at www.PORPA.org.



Family Day!

Family Day 2023 was a success! Adding four new rowers to the world, the Merrill family, Caroline, Clint, Hannah and Max along with Max's friend Kohta showed up at 8:00 a.m. They began with the on-land session of introduction to rowing and then proceeded with practicing the learned techniques at the Mudhole. With great excitement, Caroline, Hannah, Kohta and Max rowed the Quad with Okju as cox/coach. Clint got on the stern seat of the Seashell with Erwin as bow/coach. All new rowers practiced the sequences learned on the erg just an hour earlier and eventually managed to get some good

strokes in. The weather and air quality cooperated and we all had great fun. Guy joined in with his canoe and enjoyed paddling along with the quad in the marsh during the early part of the lesson. After an hour of training& practicing, most were mentally exhausted due to the concentration required to get that sequence right. It was good to watch the progress of such a gifted group of athletes. Afterwards we had our fill of well-deserved quesadillas and booster drinks that 'give you wings'. This event was a great experience and definitely an event that should be a yearly PORPA tradition.

Dues Renewal Deadline: May 31

Family Rowing	\$300
Individual Rowing	\$200
Junior Rowing	\$65
Social/Paddling Membership	\$20

Renew your dues online at: www.porpa.org under the Membership and Schedule Registration tab. Please be sure to verify email address when renewing.

Board Member Contact Info:

Gayne Sears - <i>President</i>	president@porpa.org
Erwin Muller - <i>Secretary/Treasurer</i>	secretary@porpa.org
Cat Trimmingham - <i>Safety Officer</i>	safety@porpa.org
Sheila Thomas - <i>Assistant Treasurer</i>	sheila@synergystudio.net
Guy Thomas - <i>Advisor</i>	



Warren Foersch Award

The Warren Foersch Award was introduced in 2019 to honor our now departed friend Warren Foersch in recognition of his spirit of prevailing against all odds with never ending optimism and commitment. The selection process takes into consideration what the member has done for the benefit of our organization, the improvement of the personal technique or performance and the added value to the sport of rowing. The process for the Warren Foersch Award for 2023 was a somewhat lengthy one since there are now more members in the selection committee and we had many wonderful candidates.



2023 Warren Foersch award goes to Doug Coats. Doug has been involved in human powered water sports (Sea-kayaking, Dragon boats) for several years and rowed on an erg for more than 30 years. Four years ago (bloody hands and all from practicing non-stop in the rain) he finally got on a single. Since then, Doug has joined PORPA, has participated in many of our sessions and entered both Sprints with multiple crafts. He has worked very hard to improve on his technique both sculling and sweeping. As valued volunteer, he helped with boat storage, assisted with Sprints setup, placing & retrieving buoys and helped with general equipment maintenance. His energy is endless and attitude is contagious so much that he convinced Darla (another new PORPA member) to join and compete with him and by herself at the Sprints.

Congratulations Doug and thank you very much for your efforts and dedication.



Boat Maintenance and Annual Meeting June 8&9

Lets get this season started! Maintenance and team building will begin the morning of June 8th with cleaning, prep and inspection of boats and equipment. Later we will set up racks and move boats. Two full days are required unless we get enough people to do it in only one day. Sunday, June 9th continues with seasonal set up and annual meeting at noon before the season opening bbq and potluck.

For more information: [Erwin Muller secretary@PORPA.org](mailto:Erwin.Muller@PORPA.org)



Welcome New Safety Officer - Cat Trimmingham!

Erwin will be assisting Cat in the development of safety policy and standards as well as being in charge of Swim and Flip testing, monitoring & reporting safety issues. Welcome aboard Cat! safety_officer@porpa.org

Contact Cat to schedule yearly swim and flip testing.

“There is no strength Without unity”



Youth Kayaks

PORPA has acquired two youth sit-upon kayaks for loan to members. Please contact Gayne Sears at least 24 hours in advance to reserve, as we will not be leaving them at the Mudhole or Riley Creek due to potential for theft. Families will need to bring their own youth life jacket or borrow one from the Corps of Engineers at the boat ramp.



Promotions Director and Assistant Treasurer needed

After several years of service to PORPA, Assistant Treasurer and Director of Promotions, Sheila Thomas is retiring to focus on some exciting, new personal goals in 2025. *"Words cannot express the happiness in my heart to see how PORPA has grown, changed and improved since I started in 2018, says Sheila."* It has been such a great honor to work with Gayne, Erwin, and past board members. My PORPA journey has been a fun and rewarding learning experience." Sheila will continue through the 2024 season and continue to support and train anyone who wishes to be a part of the PORPA Board and Sprints promotions.

Sheila Thomas, Assistant Treasurer - PORPA Board of Directors
Email: Sheila@synergystudio.net, Cell: 509.499.5414

PORPA's 10th Anniversary Celebration

Save the date! July 13th, 2024

July 13 is the 10th year anniversary of PORPA's maiden row from Thama Shores to the summer home in 2014, Riley Creek. We will be celebrating with a social gathering, naming and dedicating last years' new boats More details to come in a 10th Anniversary Edition supplement to the newsletter.

Water Safety and Swim

PORPA is excited to report that our partnership with the Sandpoint Long Bridge Swim Association (LBS) to provide free water safety/swim lessons to kids in the Priest River/Oldtown/Newport area is highly successful! LBS provides the funding for instructors and liability insurance, and consults on curriculum; and PORPA provides marketing, instructor oversight, and coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers. Fifty kids ages 1-15, gained valuable water safety skills in August of 2023 at the Mudhole. Parents and caregivers commented over and over how much they appreciated the water safety program since there was nothing else available in the area. Kids were excited to be involved and told us how much they learned at every session.

Parents of 1-4 year olds saw their kids start out wary of the water and end up putting their face in the water and blowing bubbles! In 2024, PORPA and LBS have invested in developing a website to provide more timely registration and information sharing and we are pleased to announce that there are over 50 interested families to date. We are thankful that lead swim instructor Sean Bostrom was able to develop the website and will again provide leadership and coaching to the assistant swim instructors. PORPA, LBS, and the Army Corps of Engineers are proud to offer this life saving program to families.

More information: www.priestriver swimlessons.com.





PORPA acknowledges that we are in the homelands of the Kalispel people. We offer our respect for their history and culture, and for their wisdom in caring for this place for the generations to come.

Welcome New PORPA Members!

Judy & Mark Chapman - Judy, a 76-year-old grandmother, is a Montana native that moved to Idaho in 2020 to be close family. She retired from 35 years of work at a medical facility in Missoula MT, and 15 years of business ownership. Favorite hobbies include gardening, knitting, crocheting and sewing. She has walked several half-marathons and for the last two years has been building a house with husband Mark.

Mark was born in Wyoming and graduated from U of WY. He worked for Grand Tetons National Park for five summers as a Back Country Mountaineer and received Red Cross Life Saving Certification in 1971. Rowing white water and building boats was a pastime until 1990 when he met and married Judy.

Justin Clarke - Justin grew up in Southern California participating in water activities as a young boy in the 80's. These activities include Sabot Sailing, Junior Lifeguards, Boogie boarding, Sail & Power Boating and Jet Skiing. After graduating from the California Maritime Academy in 1999 he enjoyed rowing on the crew team and racing sailboats in college. Justin is medically retired as a Long shore Crane Mechanic and recently relocated to Priest River with his wife. He is looking forward to being part of PORPA and being involved in the North Idaho community.

Gwen Welch - Gwen was raised in eastern WA (farming area near Spokane) then lived in Seattle area for many years then returned to Spokane in 2015. She began rowing after seeing these "really long boats" every morning while driving to work between Renton and Seattle. Deciding to find out what it was all about, she took a class on Lake Union and then she was hooked. She joined Renton Rowing, Mount Baker Rowing and spent a lot of time rowing, sailing and hiking. After moving back to Spokane in, she joined SRRA (Spokane River Rowing Association) became acquainted with this great club in eastern WA that provided some of the best coaching she had received. During COVID, she rowed on her own single on the Pend Oreille River but now is ready to get back into some group fun.

Darla Wessel - Darla joined PORPA as a new member late last summer. Doug Coats was her inspiration. They practiced and rowed a double in the PORPA Sprints. Darla also competed in the single. She lives in Coeur d' Alene and enjoys kayaking and paddle boarding on Hayden Lake. Rowing is a new adventure for her and she looks forward to improving her stroke and is very thankful that Doug is such a patient teammate.

Cat Trimmingham (New Safety Officer) - Cat and her husband moved to northeast Washington in 2021, and currently live in Lone. She rowed for four years at Humboldt State University as a walk-on athlete in 2011. Her experience includes a year in the coxswain's seat after breaking her arm but mostly rowed in bow on the port side. Relatively new to sculling she is slowly figuring it out and enjoying the challenge.

Allison Zimmerman - Allison attended the University of Tampa from 2003 - 2007, rowing all four years and graduating with a degree in International Business and Economics. Since graduating, Allison has continued to row at clubs in NC, NJ, Wenatchee WA and St. John's Newfoundland, having competed at big races such as the Head of the Charles, Dad Vails and the historic Royal St. John's Regatta. She currently lives just south of Newport WA on a small ranch where she keeps her horses, and rows her single on Eloika Lake.

Mudhole Closure

PORPA's partner, the US Army Corps of Engineers have informed us that the Priest River Recreation Area, "The Mudhole" is being repaved, including installing new road base and asphalt. Construction began in April and is expected to continue through mid-July. The Corps is also refurbishing several campsites during the closure. During construction there will be no public access to the Mudhole. PORPA and the Corps staff have agreed to shift our rowing activities to the Riley Creek day use area in LaCleda, ID until the Mudhole reopens. PORPA Directors hope to know more specifics in early June and will share information with members at the annual boat maintenance days and assembly on June 8 and 9. Ironically, during PORPA's 10th anniversary of operations, we will be rowing out of the Riley Creek site, just like we did ten years ago! PORPA and the Corps are hopeful we can hold the PORPA Sprints at the Mudhole on Saturday 3 August as planned.

Preorder your PORPA tshirts!



T-shirts, hats, visors and other Porpa gear are available for sale. Contact: secretary@porpa.org for more information.

PORPA extends our gratitude and appreciation to Axel Images (Priest River, ID) for many of these spectacular photographs and Synergy Design Studio, Inc. (Newport, WA) for producing this newsletter and Porpa logos.

