

Orcas Island Rowing Club Newsletter

Happy Holidays From OIR

The Orcas Island Rowing team would like to wish you all a happy holiday season and the very best wishes for the New Year.

Please Join Us For Our Dinner

We are holding our annual OIR club dinner on Friday, January 20th at the Camp Orkila Lodge. Mark your calendar!

It will be bigger, better and above all, more fun! More people! More entertainment! And we will be serving alcohol this time.

Due to the earlier date of this event, we need folks to sign up early, so please make your reservations by Christmas. See the included holiday greeting page for info on how to make a reservation or go to our web site: www.orcasislandrowing.org.

Do The Plunge

One of OIR's most spectacular and thrilling events is the annual Polar Bear Plunge. This year, as always, it will happen promptly at 11:00 a.m. on New Years Day at Cascade Lake swim area.



Illustration 1: The 2011 Plunge shot from the Water by Marten Jager

It's a fantastic adventure and a great way to share the New Year. We guarantee you will feel rejuvenated after doing it. It's a truly great investment in time when they can be hard to come by! So be there and do it for your self.

In case you need another excuse, or maybe your family needs a reason to come with you, we will also be serving a pancake breakfast right after the plunge. There is a large shelter with a big open fireplace. It will be a fine, warm and tasty place to bathe in the after-glow of the Plunge and chat with friends on the first morning of 2012.

See Us At Island Market

Interested in pre-purchasing our 2012 Polar Bear Plunge Tee Shirts? Our junior crew team will be braving the elements outside Island Market in Eastsound the two weekends before Christmas. This years tee shirt theme is "Frozen in Time" with art by our captain, Max Blackadar.

The crew will also be happy to sell you tickets to the dinner or take donations, as well as talk to you about anything 'crew'. They are a great bunch of kids! So be sure to stop by just to say "hi" and chat. They will be outside the Market Friday Dec. 16th (3 to 5), Sunday Dec. 18th (10 to 1) and Friday Dec. 23rd (10 to 1). That's where you can get that last minute present!

Fall Was A Cool Season

Fall was cool. Short and sweet it's only 8 weeks long. Our home head race, "The Headless Head", was the most fun and the best rowing family get-together it's ever been.

For many of the other races we had to get by without so much help from Tina Brown and Mike Reid. We went to two away regattas without Mike who usually drives the boat trailer and checks all the gear. And Tina was gone for one of the away regattas and a lot of the practices. But we pulled through and we will have a greater depth of coaching experience going forward. But it sure made us appreciate having those guys around!

Spring Will Be Hot

Last Spring brought together a small but unusually strong junior crew team, and it showed. The whole NW region and beyond took note and recognized our strong performance. Some of our crew were invited to participate in a special training camp for juniors with potential to row in international competition. Our tiny team took home a 'boat load' of medals and trophies from Regionals and we had as many rowers qualify for Nationals as in the entire history of the club. And amazingly we had one rower, Jake Zier, qualify in two different events.

We didn't go to Nationals because of families that wanted to attend high school graduation together and a shortage of funds to finance the trip. But guess what!? We will be even stronger this coming Spring season. So if we focus and do our best it will be truly something to behold! Stay tuned!

We Need a New Quad

There has always been a disconnect between the quad events in the NW and those raced in the rest of the country. In other regions and at Nationals, varsity rowers race in 'straight' or 'coxless' quads where there are four rowers and no coxswain. The bow rower must look over his or her

shoulder and steer. While in the NW crews row coxed quads. Well, that disconnect is to be fixed. Starting in Spring 2013 the NW varsity rowers will race straight quads. So OIR is planning to trade in one of our older coxed quad shells and buy a new straight quad. It will be a 'convertible' boat which can also be rigged as a four (sweep rowing). Given our potential for such a strong crew in the spring of 2012 we would really like to be able to buy that new quad near the beginning of this coming spring season. Who knows? We may get to take it to Nationals!

We Need Bigger Oars

We have in the past bought oars that are a good fit for smaller size and beginning rowers. But for stronger rowers who can apply more force, bigger blades and/or longer oars allow for more force to be applied without the blades 'slipping' in the water and wasting some of that applied force. The latest oars available have significantly larger blade area. Another way to get the same effect is to use longer oars. So we would like to buy two or maybe four sets of sculling oars to accommodate some of our stronger/taller rowers.

Captain's Corner

by Max Blackadar

The two crew seasons of 2011 were simply wonderful. Starting with the cold mornings of early spring, we received a handful of talented new novices. The three novices and the existing ten varsity members comprised our small spring team of just over a dozen. While we were a small team we were not without great strength. Our first regatta of the season with Bainbridge and Vashon Islands at the "All Island Regatta" yielded a number of first place finishes for those who dared to brave the rainy and turbulent Eagle Harbor near the Bainbridge ferry terminal.

After a very breezy Brentwood international regatta on Mill Bay, British Columbia, our spring team shone brightly at the yearly NW Regional regatta on Vancouver Lake in Vancouver, WA. Having previously qualified just two boats to nationals in our team's 14-year history, a record breaking three boats qualified for national competition in that single regatta! While we didn't send anyone to race at nationals because of financial and schedule conflict reasons, we intend to send even more boats next year.

After a teary farewell to our one senior and co-captain Jacq Zier, the spring season was over.

The OIR spring season performance could not have been achieved without the high level of dedication that we feel so lucky to have from our coaches. One coach in particular we would like to recognize is Sylvia Yang. While managing a teaching position at our local high school and earning a PhD in marine biology Sylvia still managed to attend at least three of our early morning practices each week. Unfortunately for us, we had to bid her farewell, as a great 'post doc' position was offered to her in California upon receiving her degree. We wish her the best of luck and thank her along with all the other coaches for what they do for us.

With beautiful summer-like weather, the small six-member fall team took to the water in mid-September. Two new novices joined on for the fall season and have grown to become excellent

rowers. They will be exciting to watch come next spring season. Our first regatta, the Fremont 4-Miler, took place through the Ballard cut and around Lake Union in Seattle. Unfortunately while great weather prevailed over the regatta, we couldn't equal the great results we had been hoping for. We were not deterred however, as we entered into our second and final away regatta of the season, The Head of the Lake. The novices rowed brilliantly in a mixed quad with a couple of our masters rowers and an ex-team-member/captain working as their coxswain. With some of the most beautiful weather that regatta has ever seen we were able to row our way to some better than expected results and a satisfying conclusion to the year in rowing.

Now that crew is over for the year, we hope you can join us in the New Year's Day Polar Bear Plunge and attend our annual dinner that is set to take place on January 20th.

Thank you

from Captain Max Blackadar and the entire Orcas Island crew team!

Preliminary Calendar For 2012

- January 1st : Polar Bear Plunge @ 11:00 a.m. @ Cascade Lake
- January 20th : Annual OIR cub dinner Friday with Happy Hour beginning @ 5 @ Camp Orkila
- February 7th winter workouts begin: Tuesday, Thursday & Saturdays
- February 25th : 1st official day of Spring season with water practice @ 7:30 a.m.
- March 10th IMIRF (Island Madness Indoor Rowing Fest)
- March 24th-25th All Islands Regatta at Vashon Island
- April 7th @ home Alumni Regatta on Cascade Lake
- April 15th NW Sculling Regatta at Lake Stevens
- April 27th-29th Brentwood Regatta at Mill Bay, BC
- May 4th-5th 24 Hour Row at Island Market
- May 18th-20th NW Regionals at Vancouver Lake
- June 8th-10th US Nationals at Oak Ridge, Tennessee

For junior rowing information: contact Tina Brown at tinabrown@rockisland.com or 376.7677

For information about the club dinner or adult rowing memberships or classes: contact Martin Taylor at martin@ocasdigirati.com or 376.6935

Checks for dinner reservations or donations to : OIRA c/o Martin Taylor
455 Eastsound Shores Road
Eastsound, WA, 98245