
Pickering Rouge Canoe Club

PRCC NEWS



October 2024



The Summer Programs - a Big Hit!

Camp was an absolute blast this summer. We changed location to the Glen Rouge campsite and were nervous about whether water levels would be high enough for paddling, especially in August. But the large rainfall ensured river levels were fine, even to the point that water currents were too strong on some days. While this meant no paddling, the coaches quickly refocused and played a ton of games.

Camp was close to capacity with just shy of 300 campers. Kids left with huge smiles on their faces... Sad ones usually came on their last day as they didn't want the fun to end.

The **Bantam** and **Intro to Sprint** programs were also almost full for the summer with 17 Bantams and 34 athletes in Intro to Sprint. The kids experienced two fun regattas that showed them the excitement of competing against other Canoe Clubs. Many families asked to have more regattas next year! So, we will look into attending both fun and qualifying regattas for 2025.

The **Leaders in Training (LIT)** program was a huge success! This program maxed out participants every session. LITs aged 14 to 16 earned volunteer hours while learning how to become a coach both on water and on land. The cost was cut to reflect the volunteer component. At the end of their session,

the participants earned 80 volunteer hours for their high school diploma. In the past, LITs have been hired as PRCC summer coaches and counsellors.

Camp was such a success that many families asked for a **Fall Bantam** program. Our aim was to have at least 5 participants to run the program.... well, we had 18 kids sign up and parents were still asking for more spots. Our beginner paddlers who quickly learned new skills!

A big part of our success this year was new equipment, wonderful coaches, and Camp Director Kathy, who took her volunteer role seriously by actively participating in the day to day management of Camp and Bantam. Kathy ensured that we had a tent to house the kids in on rainy days as well as new SUPs and boats, and that our old boats were all properly repaired. Our Camp and Bantam coaches and leads were amazing at providing a fun environment that kept the kids safe and busy. Finally, site coordinator Ashley Nearing made the summer programs organized and running in tip top shape.

We are now planning our spring programs!

Heartfelt Gratitude

PRCC operates on the dedication of volunteers. A special thanks goes out to **Hugh Wilson** who spent many hours repairing and rebuilding PRCC's sprint boats in preparation for the summer season. Hugh fixes our boats for free and gets donations of materials from various contacts. As we have learned, duct tape does not constitute a repair. We promise Hugh, no more duct tape!



A big thank you to **Parks Canada** who provides PRCC with the Glen Rouge site, including the containers for housing our boats and equipment. They also partnered with PRCC in our summer programming to provide the quality visitor experience and learn to camp sessions. We look forward to working with Parks Canada to get back to Rouge Beach once construction has been completed, and ultimately to our own PRCC clubhouse!

After PRCC lost its site on the spit on Frenchman's Bay in Pickering, **Bryan Skitch** allowed us to use his property for our high performance program. What was to be a temporary solution stretched into years. Thank you Bryan for all your work in keeping us on the Bay and for maintaining and storing our safety boats. Hopefully, we will be back in Pickering someday soon.

Our appreciation goes out to parents **Charles Demore** and **Aaron Swanson** who pulled the boat trailer this summer so that our Bantams could compete at regattas. Finally, thank you to all who helped clean up our Glen Rouge site on September 21. Volunteers covered racks with carpet, built new racks, organized the boats and got rid of old garbage boats. We now have room for new boats!

2024 PRCC Stats At A Glance

- 64 voting members
- 8 Board Directors
- 346 total participants this summer
- 5 Camp coaches, 4 Bantam coaches, 3 Leads
- 192 pillowcases sold for tie dye
- \$1,000 made by selling freezies and pillowcases
- 5 Fall Bantam coaches and 18 happy Fall Bantams



What is ONCA and Why Should I Care?

ONCA is Ontario's Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. As an incorporated non-profit organization, PRCC must comply with the updated ONCA by October 18, 2024. ONCA guides how nonprofits are created, governed and dissolved. As a result of ONCA, PRCC has updated its by-laws and will be holding a **Special Meeting on October 16** for members to accept the new by-laws and pass a resolution to conduct an engagement review by an independent certified public accountant as part of PRCC's financial requirements. All members of PRCC would have received an email to invite them to the meeting, along with the resolutions and new by-laws. It is important for members to attend the meeting or to vote through email to ensure that PRCC functions properly and effectively.



When is PRCC's Annual Meeting?

Normally PRCC would have its annual meeting on the second Wednesday of November. To be compliant with ONCA, we must have final financial statements and an engagement review or audit to present to the membership. As a result, the annual meeting will be held once all financial documentation has been completed, likely in January. PRCC's fiscal year-end is October 31 and we must provide the accountants with sufficient time to complete the review. Members will be electing three to fifteen Board Directors at the annual meeting. Please consider volunteering your time to PRCC by sitting on the Board. Be a part of our future.

Meet the PRCC Board

The PRCC Board of Directors is made up of dedicated volunteers who manage and direct the organization. Without these volunteers, there would be no PRCC.

Ashley Barich - Acting Commodore

As the new Commodore as of August, Ashley is rejoining the board to rebuild PRCC and get us back on Frenchman's Bay in Pickering. She is dedicated to securing the future of paddling for the youth of Pickering/Scarborough. Outside of her PRCC volunteering, Ashley is the proud mom of Brooke (age 23), Cameron (21) and Eric (19), who are all former paddlers and current coaches with PRCC. The whole family, including husband Dean, is volunteering with the club. In her busy work life, Ashley is an Insurance Claims Professional, specializing in commercial liability claims.



Nilus Rubanathan - Treasurer

Nilus is in his second year as Treasurer of PRCC. He got to know the club during the Covid years while participating in the Solo Paddling Together program. He is the father of two young daughters (future paddlers?) and works as the Director of Finance at the Salvation Army Territorial Headquarters.



Mary-Anne Pietrusiak - Acting Secretary

Mary-Anne is no stranger to PRCC, joining the Board in 2016 and serving in many roles since, including Commodore for four years. Her twin sons, James and William Mann, started as Bantams in 2013, trained in high performance and worked as coaches for PRCC. James is now Head Coach for the Sudbury Canoe Club. William continues to help out PRCC in different capacities. Husband Garth mostly grumbles about the time demands of the club. Mary-Anne is a retired epidemiologist and manager from Durham Region Health Department. She is committed to ensuring PRCC succeeds despite its many challenges. Her focus this year has been rewriting the club's by-laws to ensure we are compliant with ONCA.



Nicole Fortin - Past Past Commodore

Nicole was Commodore for three years starting in the fall of 2021. During this time, PRCC navigated the challenges of Covid and the closure of Rouge Beach for construction in 2022. Her sons Jonah and Isaac participated in the Bantam and High Performance programs. Jonah now paddles for Balmy Beach and Isaac now runs competitively. Nicole is an avid runner and works as a chartered accountant.



Jason Shankaran - Past Commodore

Jason was brand new to the world of paddling when he was asked to join the PRCC Board as Commodore. His son Gabriel had just started the Bantam program that summer and was so enthusiastic about paddling that Jason felt he had to jump right in. He appreciated the support of past Commodores Nicole and Mary-Anne. Jason works as a Detective Sergeant for the Toronto Police Service, a demanding job at the best of times. After nine months as Commodore, a job promotion made it impossible to dedicate sufficient time to the volunteer position. He is thankful that Ashley stepped up to the role. Along with his son, Jason is a proud dad to daughter Bella.



Michael Douglass - Registrar

After two years as Registrar, Mike has learned all the intricacies of creating and running PRCC's program registrations. The switch from Sportical to RAMP has proven challenging but beneficial overall. Mike's son, Jasper, has paddled as a high-performance athlete since 2019. Although he no longer trains and competes in the sport, he worked for PRCC as a Bantam coach in the summer and fall and remains connected to paddling. Mike works as a financial analyst in the tech sector.



Kathy Sparks - Camp Director

Although this was Kathy's first year on the Board, she has lots of experience with the club. She is a mother of 4 kids who grew up with PRCC. Her oldest, Victoria (27), got the family hooked while she kayaked for the club. But her second daughter Mackenzie (23) was the one who loved canoeing the most. Mackenzie was a member of Team Ontario and competed at 7 National regattas as a PRCC athlete. Jacob (21), Kathy's eldest son, didn't find that passion for the club but attended bantam summer camp every summer until age 15. Lucas (11) is currently in the Bantam program and is enjoying canoeing like his older sister but also likes to kayak in the orca. Husband Jamie served on the PRCC Board for years. Kathy's full-time job is a labour and delivery nurse in Ajax. She works shifts and is often seen on her days off at the club assisting the coaches or even getting in the water and coaching our beginner athletes.



Elsa Mihotic - Former Secretary

Elsa served as PRCC Secretary for close to three years, recently relinquishing the role to Mary-Anne due to time constraints. She was PRCC's volunteer coordinator and became very good at finding the required volunteers for regattas and other events. Elsa is also secretary to Canoe Kayak Western Ontario Division (WOD). Elsa's daughter Audrey has been a high performance athlete for the past two years and now paddles for Balmy Beach. Elsa works for the Toronto Catholic School Board as a Mentor Teacher.



Have Questions?

You can reach PRCC by emailing info@pickeringrouge.ca or phoning our new number at 647-947-5556. You can also reach out to the Commodore directly at ashley.barich@pickeringrouge.ca.

