

**National Capital Area Council (NCAC) Aquatics Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**December 18 2013**  
**American Legion Post 177 3939 Oak Street, Fairfax, VA 22030**

**1. Opening:**

Introductions – Mike Meenehan, Aquatics Committee lead, welcomed everyone to the annual December quarterly meeting and shrimpfest. Attendees included Mike Meenehan, Gary Carroll, Carol Cass, Rush Kester, Carl Stout, Tom Ballew, Julia Farr, Norman Laythe, Geoff Dewitt, Andrew Payton, Jim Hayes, Dan Palenscar, and Bill Schoomaker.

The minutes of the September 16 2013 meeting were approved. A current committee roster was distributed along with the Aquatics Committee overview flyer.

**2. NCAC Committee Liaison Reports:**

- a. Camping – In the NCAC Committee structure, the Aquatics Committee reports to the Camping Committee. The focus of their meetings are basically to plan for summer resident camps. Their last meeting was Nov 20. Plans for the USVI Districts do not include a resident camp for next summer. The near-term focus will be on planning a District Day Camp.
- b. Sea Scouting – Tom Ballew will be conducting his annual Sea Scout Lifeguard camp in July at Solomons Island in July 2014.
- c. Enterprise Risk Management – Two scouters have volunteered to help coordinate American Red Cross/NCAC actions as part of the ERM Committee.
- d. Leadership Training – The next big training event is the University of Scouting on February 22 at Hayfield High School in Alexandria. The Cub Scout Leader Pow Wow was held November 16 in Annandale.
- e. Venturing – Carol Cass mentioned the Venturing Phenomenon would be in April. The NCAC Venturing picnic will be June 7. A Powder Horn course will be held in August 2014 at Camp William B. Snyder in Haymarket VA.
- f. Youth Advancement and Recognition – At the Nov 6 meeting we talked about upcoming Canoe Merit Badge Counselor training (the subject of the evening's breakout session).

**3. Aquatics Web Page** – Carol Cass is doing a great job as the aquatics page webmaster. The page is at [www.ncacbsa.org/aquatics](http://www.ncacbsa.org/aquatics). Aquatics activity registration is available online. Carol mentioned the strategic BSA membership effort that will occur in 2014.

**4. Canoeing Merit Badge Counselor Course Planning Discussion** – Several American Canoeing Association Instructors (Andrew Payton and Jim Hayes) joined us for a planning session for the Canoeing MBC course. See the attached report for the results of that working group.

**5. Old Business**

Mile Swim BSA – Chuck Frizzelle conducted Mile Swim BSA sessions in September and October for several Scouts.

BSA Aquatics Task Force Meeting – Dallas, TX Nov 2-3. Some topics worked/announced at the session were: BSA is teaming with ECSI for first aid courses (similar to agreement with the Red Cross), current Lifeguard certification will continue to be a prerequisite for National Camp School Aquatics section in 2014, the PowerPoint slides for the Paddle Craft Safety course have been updated for the 2013 edition of Aquatics Supervision, a moving water component is being planned for the Paddle Craft Safety Course, and the aquatics activities at the 2013 National Jamboree were intended to introduce new activities for BSA Councils to consider. An Aquatics E-newsletter was sent out November 24. Topics included 2013 National Jamboree – Aquatics re-cap, Planning for future jamborees, Stand up paddleboarding award, and Changes to Scuba BSA.

Pow Wow – Was held November 16 at Annandale High School. Two Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat training sessions were conducted for a total of 15 Scout Leaders.

Upcoming 2013 Aquatics Activities – hardcopies of flyers for all the scheduled 2014 NCAC aquatics activities were distributed. Many are available on the Aquatics page. They were available at Pow Wow and will be distributed at the University of Scouting midway display.

Paddle Craft Safety/Swimming and Water Rescue training courses – The next session is January 4 at Camp Snyder. There is one registration so far. The next scheduled course is February 15.

University of Scouting – UoS is an NCAC premier training event that draws 400-600 Scout leaders. Aquatics programming includes an Aquatics Committee midway display, Safe Swim Defense/Safety Afloat class (taught by Tom Ryan), Intro to Scuba (taught by Jim Chaplin) and various Venture boating courses.

CPR for the Professional Rescuer/First Aid – this course will be offered at Camp Snyder on May 3 to support those interested in BSA Lifeguard training for the summer since the CPR/FA portion isn't usually taught as part of the BSA Lifeguard course.

ScubaJam VA – ScubaJam is an annual event held over Labor Day weekend at Lake Rawlins VA. It is a fun-filled scuba weekend that is planned specifically for scout and youth groups. Norman Laythe has volunteered to be the NCAC-ScubaJam promotions coordinator. ScubaJam will be advertizing in upcoming NCAC Scouter Digests and will have a display at the University of Scouting. Carl Stout volunteered to coordinate units needing Dive Professionals for the activity.

Goshen Scout Reservation Aquatics – Gary Carroll updated the group on GSR activities. The two ski boats (a Moomba and Mastercraft) survived their first summer of use at camp. Gary would like to recruit mature Scout leaders to be boat operators for the summer. Dan Palenscar and Bill Schoomaker were at the meeting to talk to Gary about what he is looking for. If you know of any other Scout leaders who might be able to help out, please let us know. Powerboat training would be provided during Senior staff week (two weeks before campers arrive) by Les Baron and Dave Condon. The online Virginia boating safety course would need to be taken by the boat operators. Off-line, Dave has come up with suggested

maintenance procedures for the boats and ideas for dock improvements. GSR staff interviews are being done in early January. Minimum age is 15 for some positions. Gary isn't sure how many Aquatics Directors are returning this summer.

Camp William B. Snyder Aquatics – Numerous aquatics activities are scheduled for Camp Snyder for next year. Procedures have been worked out with Prince William County Parks Authority to use Silver Lake for canoe training. There are several forms that need to be completed in advance. A broken canoe seat has been replaced. Canoe lines need to be replaced. The canoe trailer needs to be registered with Virginia. Geoff Dewitt (new transfer to NCAC, BSA Aquatics Instructor, NER NCS Aquatics Section staffer and former CPO) volunteered to help with Camp Snyder aquatics facilities

## **6. New Business**

The 2014 National Camp School schedule is now available ([www.ncsbsa.org/resources/ncs/](http://www.ncsbsa.org/resources/ncs/)). NCS is where you go to get BSA Aquatics Instructor training. Tom Ryan expressed interest in attending in 2014.

**7. Next Aquatics Committee Meeting** – the next meeting will be Monday, March 17 at the Marriott Scout Service Center in Bethesda MD.

**8. Professional's Minute** – Gary Carroll expressed his thanks for the efforts of all the hard working volunteers on the NCAC Aquatics Committee.

Canoeing Merit Badge Counselor Planning Discussion  
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A planning session was held as a sub-group of the December 18 NCAC Aquatics Committee meeting. American Canoeing Association (ACA) Instructors were invited to the meeting to help plan for the activity. Attendees included: Mike Meenehan (NCAC Aquatics Committee), Andrew Payton (ACA Instructor), and Jim Hayes (ACA Instructor, BSA Troop 1539).

The near-term objective is to help current NCAC Canoeing merit badge counselors (MBCs) transition to meeting the BSA requirement as listed in the 2013 BSA Guide to Advancement (and in the Canoeing Merit Badge pamphlet). The requirement specifies that Canoeing MBCs must have canoeing instructor certification or be approved by local councils after having been trained by an instructor. The way the NCAC Aquatics Committee is going to help current Canoeing MBCs who may not have the formal training is to offer ACA Instructor-led Level 1 assessment sessions so the Canoeing MBC can demonstrate that they have the appropriate skill level to counsel the merit badge with Scouts. This “assessment option” would only be available for the next year or two. After that, prospective MBCs would need to undergo formal ACA (or BSA) instructor training.

The longer-term objective is for NCAC to offer Canoeing MBC training led by ACA canoeing instructors. This course would ideally be developed by experienced ACA Instructors/Scouters who are familiar with both modern canoeing theory and the BSA Canoeing merit badge. This course would be available in the future as acceptable qualification to be registered as a Canoeing Merit Badge Counselor in NCAC.

A purpose of the planning discussion was to make decisions on how to implement the assessment course next year. Some of the decisions that were made are:

- The ACA L1 assessment session can be done in one day
- The maximum number of participants in one session would be 12 for 2 ACA instructors
- The paperwork/form that will be used to document successful completion of the assessment is the ACA Level 1: Introduction to Canoeing Skills Assessment form
- Participants must receive a PASS as final assessment (NEEDS MORE WORK indicates that the participant does not have the acceptable skill level).
- The NCAC Aquatics Committee will promote the assessment sessions through the District Merit Badge Deans who have contact information for their current Canoeing MBCs. Registration (including fee collection) can be set up online at NCAC.
- We can set a session registration deadline so instructors know if there are enough participants interested in a particular scheduled session.
- Some ACA instructors already have access to equipment and locations to conduct the assessment. NCAC Camp William B. Snyder, Haymarket VA (along with Silver Lake Regional Park) can be used to conduct assessment sessions. Camp Snyder also has canoes, life jackets and paddles available.

Budget-related decisions:

- ACA has waived the requirement that ACA L1 assessments can only be done for ACA members based on their cooperative agreement with BSA. This is per Mr. Chris Stec, ACA COO.
- Based on using Camp Snyder facilities and equipment the cost per person would be:  
\$10 – equipment (boat, paddle, lifejacket)  
\$ 5 – NCAC administrative fee  
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\$15 – total registration per person
- If a participants want to furnish their own equipment, the cost would just be \$5.
- If ACA Instructors want to provide the equipment and facilities, they could be reimbursed by NCAC at the rate of \$10 per person.

Next Steps:

The next step is for interested ACA instructors to pick some dates that they would be available to conduct assessment session(s). If you can commit to a date with another instructor that you know, that would be great. We need a minimum of 2 instructors for each session. If you don't have a fellow instructor, I will coordinate putting at least 2 of you together for each session.

If you are an ACA instructor that would like to conduct assessment sessions at locations other than Camp Snyder, please identify the location along with your date(s).

I will coordinate a schedule and circulate for your review before we publish.

Getting your input no later than January 20 2014 will allow us to get the word out to our Scouters in a timely fashion. Thank you for your interest and help in elevating the level of paddle skills for the youth in our National Capital Area Council, BSA.

Your comments or questions about any of this are welcome.

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