



W.A.K.E.

WHATCOM ASSOCIATION OF KAYAK ENTHUSIASTS



February 2006

Volume 25 Issue 2

FEBRUARY 21, WAKE MEETING FEATURING:

BROMLEY HENNINGSEN—LEAVE NO TRACE KAYAK CAMPING

DOWNTOWN BELLINGHAM LIBRARY

DOORS OPEN 7:00 MEETING STARTS 7:30

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

By Ted Ullman

Well it's good being back in the northwest after a rugged vacation in the southwest with it's blue skies and unseasonably warm temperatures. I finally was able to bring some of the sunshine up north this second week of February.

This is my third year on the WAKE board and as usual I really am enjoying the company and energy I find with the 2006 board. It is a pleasant, diverse, and hard working group of folks with the common interest of kayaking. I hope this new year is filled with paddling adventures that are fun, enjoyable and that the WAKE club and its resources can help you with your paddling goals.

I'm looking forward to our Feb 21st general meeting with our speaker, Bromley Henningsen giving a "Leave no trace kayak camping" presentation. Bromley, a Missoula native, is working for Washington Water Trails Association as a Vista volunteer.

In the last newsletter Norm Nielsen outlined much of the year's plans. A few additions: We will be having an "easy paddle" on the first Saturday of each month starting March 4.th We will be meeting for this paddle at Bloedel Donovan at 9:00. These will be WAKE member's events, gaining confidence and experience will be the goals.

There will be an outdoor sports Expo on April 15th and we will have a table promoting WAKE. It looks like it will be a good event with a lot of kayak related vendors and activities. <http://www.whatcomoutdoorexpo.com/> If anyone would like to take a shift volunteering at our table please contact Norm Nielsen at 647-2531 or nordicnorm@comcast.net if you'd like to volunteer.

J.T. of Island Outfitters is teaming up with the Evergreen Aids Foundation put on the first annual AIDS/HIV awareness paddleathon in Anacortes, scheduled for June 17th. J. T, guarantees it will be a great event for kayakers from all over Washington, put it on your calendar.

I want to give a special thanks to Janet Miller-Tingley for doing a superb job on the WAKE newsletter. She has made the web based newsletter especially interesting with a raft of great color pictures.

We will be asking the membership to vote to approve a \$5 extra charge for those members wish to have the paper newsletter sent to them by mail as it is one of the club's largest expenses. Try to check out the one on the web, you'll like it. Looking forward to seeing you at the WAKE meeting.

WAKE LOOKS FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE.

WAKE'S MISSION STATEMENT:

TO FURTHER THE ENJOYMENT, KNOWLEDGE AND SAFETY OF KAYAKING BY PROVIDING TRAINING AND A WIDE VARIETY OF TRIPS AND SOCIAL EVENTS TO OUR MEMBERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

"NO ONE GOES HUNGRY ON A WAKE TRIP"

TRAINING & EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

By Dawn Groves

The WAKE newsletter will include a new regular column called Equipment Maintenance. Written by Dawn Groves, this short feature will cover a variety of maintenance suggestions to keep your paddling gear in good condition. February's topic is drysuits. March will cover wetsuits. Feel free to email your favorite maintenance tips and tricks to dawn@dawngroves.com.

Body Boat and Blade May Training

WAKE is sponsoring two Body Boat and Blade trainings in May. You can reserve a space on May 13th or 14th. 9 AM to around 4 PM. Both trainings will cover the same general information. Cost is \$55 per person, 9 to 4 at Lake Padden.

Shawna and Leon are, quite literally, world famous paddling instructors and adventurers. Not only can they handle virtually every type of kayaking environment and condition, they are also precise, confident, entertaining teachers. (You can read more about them on their website, www.bodyboatblade.com.) Class size is limited to 10 students with two instructors. Strokes and edging will be covered, as well as boat comfort and control, rescue and safety. Plan on getting wet and having fun doing it. Bring your lunch with you.

If you've never taken training with BBB, this is a fantastic opportunity to do so at a great price. These trainings should be mandatory for folks who haven't taken formal paddling classes, but experienced paddlers will derive benefit as well.

Please reserve early; several folks have already contacted me about it. Your place will be held as soon as I receive your fee. I'll also start a waiting list for people who don't make the deadline. Priority is given the WAKE members so if you're not a member yet, its time to join.

Write checks to WAKE, 822 S. Hills Drive, Bellingham, WA 98229. Please include the names of the students being registered, a mailing address, and a contact phone number and email address. I'll email you when I receive your check(s) and for those who are registered, I'll email details about the location, time, etc. in early May.

PLEASE JOIN
WAKE'S WEB EDITION
OF OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER...

Take Good Care of Your Drysuit

Drysuits are perfect for our cold water environment up here in the Northwest. Unlike wetsuits that heat a thin film of water between the neoprene and your skin (that first dip really wakes you up!), drysuits keep you completely dry. They do so by the use of waterproof fabric such as Gore-Tex, and the placement of fitted latex gaskets at the neck and wrists.

As with most high-quality safety gear, drysuits aren't cheap. Still, once the pain of initial purchase is passed (big ouch), drysuits last forever with proper care. Here are a few suggestions for their maintenance.

- Hang them up after each use and rinse gaskets with fresh water.
- Keep zippers open and unzipped (not folded over) during storage. Use a crayon-like wax such as McNett Zip Care to maintain good action. Don't use too much or it will trap grit and dirt, shortening the life of the zipper.
- Store drysuits in areas of low moisture and away from temperature extremes. Never store them damp. Also avoid storing them for long periods in areas of bright sunlight as the UV can be damaging.
- Avoid wearing sun block until after you don the drysuit. Sun block and insect repellent shorten the lifespan of the gaskets.
- Wipe the gaskets once a month or more using 303 Protectant, even during the months when you don't use the suit. It keeps the latex from cracking and helps the gaskets slip easily over your skin. When the gaskets don't slip well, you need to reapply 303.
- Keep a gasket replacement kit on hand when you travel distances or overnight. Include Aqua Seal and a patch kit so you can quickly repair small tears or pin holes if they occur.

By following the above suggestions, your drysuit will provide years of good service and lots of safe paddling in all weather conditions.

DNR NRCA LUMMI ISLAND SUMMARY 2005

By Lisa Wallis

The Lummi Island Natural Resource Conservation Area continued to thrive through 2005. The site remained intact without significant problems last year. No major work projects were required. The only concern was that of the men's bathroom being somewhat full and even smelly during the hotter month or two of summer.

Here are the volume of self registered campers for the past year along with some of their written comments:

- January – one row boat from North Carolina. Very enthusiastic- “this is unbelievable!”
- February – 19 visitors, 2 campers, “blue skies, calm seas”
- March – 19 visitors, 5 camp nights reported. Lisa states: “My own group was weathered in for an extra night due to a gale wind, so we camped for a total of two nights. It was great. The site is situated perfectly to protect campers from storms.”
- April – 15 visitors. “There were a dozen people here who didn't register”, “Great job WAKE! Many thanks!” “Beautiful spot” “WAKE is doing a wonderful job, thanks to all of you at WAKE!”
- May – 34 visitors, 12 camp nights, “don't close, would pay to use site”, “trails overgrown” “great spot, keep up the good work”, “depend on spot for sanity”, “best outhouse in USA – million dollar view”, “WAKE rocks”, “men's toilet is pretty full”, “sat out wind for two days”, “wild rose and fireweed”
- June – 22 visitors. 3 camp nights. “this is still one of the gems in western Washington”.
- July – 103 visitors, 17 reported camp nights. “Gorgeous”, “Keep this camper friendly”, “this place rocks”, “Peace out”, “Kayak forever”, “Very impressed with how well maintained the toilet sties, very rare”, “bioluminescence should qualify this as a national monument”, “very valuable site, only place we can launch from Bellingham and do an overnighner”, “the ideal fantasy”.
- August – 53 visitors, 12 reported camp nights. “crabbing”, “WAKE is great”, “wonderful site! Made out whole trip!”
- September – 46 visitors – 5 camp nights. “I love it. So secluded.” “well maintained”, “we like this place”, “thanks WAKE, this DNR is a local treasure”, “thanks to all who maintain this place”, “sick rat at camp”.
- October – 22 visitors – 3 camp nights. “out zippin around”
- November – 2 visitors, 2 kayaks, 2 nights
- December – 2 visitors, 2 kayaks, 1 night
- **A total 338 visitors registered.**

WORK PARTIES FOR 2006

- I personally visited the site five times in 2005 with various work parties. The site was easy to maintain this year with no major repairs needed as in past years. Hummingbirds, immature and old bald eagles, seals, gulls, lots of waterfowl and sea creatures. It was all good. My estimated volunteer time was 100 hours last year. It was all great!
- Other work parties: We do not have good compliance with signing in for hours spent volunteering. A combination of free spirited volunteerism, modesty, and laziness I suspect. I hear from volunteers visiting the site at least twice a month. I estimate volunteer hours from last year at over 500 hours, which includes travel time, work time, preparation and administration time by various volunteers.



Island Outfitters

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DAY TRIPS TO PARADISE: GENE DAVIS TELLS ALL

By John Groves

Slide photos revealed sea cliffs sculpted into caves like toothless mouths, tunneled as if by giant termites, and shredded away like decaying lace. "For me, these sandstone cliffs are the biggest draw at Wildcat Cove. You have to paddle close to shore to really appreciate them."

The speaker was Gene Davis, a long-time WAKE member who has kayaked in this area for 20 years. The sculpted cliffs are one of many marvels within day-trip distance of Bellingham, which was the theme of Gene's presentation at the W.A. K.E. meeting Tuesday, November 1, 2005. Gene was a last minute substitution for the scheduled speaker, and like many another understudy, stole the show. Also an accomplished photographer, he accompanied his talk with spectacular slide photos of our unique paddling paradise.

Gene's first put-in recommendation was Semiahmoo, just south of the U.S.-Canadian border crossing. An aerial shot showed Blaine Marina and Semiahmoo, two spits of land enclosing Drayton Harbor. "Semiahmoo and Blaine Marina are great places to launch. There is a county parking area at the south end of Semiahmoo spit. Blaine marina, across the harbor, is another good launch area, with a boat launch ramp and lots of parking. Both of these locations require a county parking permit. But I've never heard of it being enforced." Photos revealed Drayton Harbor, which Gene says is sheltered and has lots of wildlife, including a sea lion colony.

Semiahmoo is across the bay from the Canadian beach town of White Rock. "If you go ashore in Canada, be sure you telephone Canadian Customs and report in," Gene said. "But as long as you don't get out of your boat or fish in Canadian waters, you're okay."

Moving south, Gene's next location was Lake Terrell, near Ferndale. "It's a beautiful lake with lots of birds and other wildlife." A photo showed a placid blue lake, ringed by trees and rushes. Gene said, "This is duck-hunting season, not a good time to visit Lake Terrell. The best time is the Spring. But it's always spectacular." He warned that Lake Terrell is a state park, and they tend to be strict about parking rules. "You can buy a state park parking permit at any licensing outlet for fifty bucks. It can save you a lot of hassle."

Bellingham has several good launch sites. "Fairhaven Boat Works is a good place to put in. But it's adjacent to a dry dock which can sometimes cause dangerous rebounding waves." A much calmer put-in can be found at the Squalicum Harbor boat launch ramp, the traditional launch point for W.A.K.E.'s New Year's Day paddle. Another good access to the harbor,



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according to Gene, is Boulevard Park at the foot of Cornwall Street. But there have been reports of numerous car break-ins here, so Gene advises kayakers not to leave anything valuable in their cars.

South of Bellingham is Mud Bay, accessible from Chuckanut Highway. "Mud Bay is a good launch site at high tide. But it is subject to extreme tidal exposure, which means a long hike through the mud if you plan wrong." A much better put-in site is Larabee County Park at Wildcat Cove, several miles farther south along Chuckanut Highway. "Larabee Park has a boat ramp, plus a picnic area and public restrooms." But such an ideal site is not without drawbacks. There have been twenty-nine break-ins reported this year. Gene's words to the wise: "If you can't take it with you in the kayak, don't bring it." Thieves aside, Gene claimed that Wildcat Cove offers many activities, including the sandstone sea sculptures described earlier. "You can also land on Chuckanut Island. It's a beautiful little wooded island that is owned by the Nature Conservancy." At low tide, Gene said, a large variety of sea life is visible in the shallow water. He suggested wearing polarized sunglasses, which filter out the water's glare.

Baker Lake is another location within day-trip range. "Go east on Highway 20 to the Baker Lake turn-off." Photos showed a beautiful blue lake, ringed by evergreens, with Mt. Baker in the background. "It's beautiful any season, but in Summer there are too many jet skis and power boats. It's fantastic in Winter. You might have to hike a ways through the snow to launch, but it's well worth the trouble."

The Skagit Delta is another great paddling location, according to Gene, beautiful and full of game. "It's surprising how close you can get to animals when you're in a kayak." Gene proved his point with photos of deer and birds. "Be sure to go when the tide is in," Gene warned, "and take a GPS. It's easy to get lost among the channels and islands." The best time to visit is in Spring when the snow geese are in residence.

One of the best day-trips available is Yellow Island. It means a ferry ride to Orcas Island, then a crossing from Deer Harbor. Yellow Island is owned by the Nature Conservancy, and you have to make reservations well in advance. The best time to visit is in Spring, when the hills and meadows are covered with flowers. It's truly spectacular. "A good way to visit Yellow Island is when you're camping at Jones Island. It's about a thirty-minute paddle." Photos showed Jones Island, an idyllic location with good beaches and craggy cliffs. "This is a great place to camp. But watch out for these guys." A slide revealed a fat raccoon staring insolently at the camera. "Raccoons will get into anything that smells like food."

Gene concluded with the following story: "I saw these folks setting up a big family tent. After a while a deer wandered by. The whole family grabbed their cameras and went after the deer. As soon as they were gone, a raccoon snuck into the tent and came out with an apple. It dropped the apple outside the tent, then went back in. A bit later the raccoon came out and ran off with a bag of cookies. Then the deer wandered back to the tent and ate the apple." Lest anyone disbelieve his story, Gene's next photo was of a deer and a raccoon together, like Butch and Sundance.

After Gene's presentation, club members generally standing, and that with so much beauty and adven-



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agreed that Gene's photos and commentary were out-
ture so close at hand, why were we all sitting here?

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“SEEKING THE SPIRIT”

By Janet Miller-Tingley

VERY PLEASSED TO BE WAKE’S NEWSLETTER EDITOR FOR “2006.”

Folks who enjoy participating in sports around here will soon be able to see, share, and purchase their photos on my website at www.wolfwomanphotographics.com

WOLF WOMAN PHOTO GRAPHICS specializes in shooting the sport that shows the best of you.

Easy Paddles: Fun in Flat Water

By Dawn Groves

March 4th & April Fools Day, Wake will be sponsoring monthly Easy Paddles, usually on the first Saturday or Sunday of the month. These will be morning paddles in protected areas typically known for easy paddling conditions. If you’re a beginner or you’ve been a little sensitive about going out into the sound, this is a pleasant way to get your arms back into motion. On April 1st we’ll meet at the Blaine Marina boat ramp, ready to paddle at 9 AM. Drayton Harbor is a premier coastal bird-

ing site so pack binoculars; maybe we’ll get lucky. Please email me (dawn@dawngroves.com) if you plan to join us. No pressure, I just want to have a ballpark idea of how many cookies to bring. ☺

Directions to Blaine Marina Boat Ramp:

From I-5, exit at #276 just before the Canadian border. Go left under the freeway and bear right on Marine Drive. The launch ramp is on the left. Please bring a signed trip waiver. (Extra trip waivers will be available at the put-in.) You can download a trip waiver from the WAKE website at www.wakekayak.org. WAKE members only. Dawn Groves, trip initiator dawn@dawngroves.com



WAKE CALENDAR OF EVENTS *& other items of interest.*

WAKE VOYAGES REQUIRE A SIGNED TRIP RELEASE FORM AT LAUNCH.

TRIP RELEASE FORMS CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM www.wakekayak.org

WE REQUEST YOU TO BE A CURRENT WAKE MEMBER TO JOIN IN WAKE PADDLING EVENTS.

EVERY SATURDAY: Short paddles in the Bellingham area, beginners are always welcome. Destinations are determined by the skill level and interest of whomever shows up, and of course - by our weather.

THIS IS NOT A WAKE SPONSORED EVENT - Meets at Sehome Village Starbucks @ 9:00AM.

FEBRUARY 22 - MARCH 1, 2006 - WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER COURSE OF WILDERNESS MEDICINE

Details at: www.skamokawakayak.com

MARCH 4 — WAKE EASY PADDLE: BLOEDEL-DONOVAN PARK 9:AM

APRIL 1—WAKE EASY PADDLE: DRAYTON HARBOR—BLAINE MARINA BOAT RAMP 9:AM

APRIL 15 — WHATCOM OUTDOOR EXPO: BLOEDEL-DONOVAN PARK—Details at www.whatcomoutdoorexpo.com

APRIL 30 — DIRTY DAN CHALLENGE REGATTA: FAIRHAVEN—Details at www.fairhaven.com/annual/dirtydandays/2006.html#rowing.

MAY 6 — WAKE SWAP MEET/DEMO DAY: BLOEDEL-DONOVAN PARK— Equipment for sale & trade—new & used.

MAY 7— WAKE EASY PADDLE: Information forthcoming in next newsletter.

MAY 13 & 14 - BODY BOAT & BLADE TRAINING: LAKE PADDEN 9:AM TO 4:PM—You can reserve a space on May 13th or 14th. Both trainings will cover the same general information. Cost is \$55 per person.

JUNE 17 — EVERGREEN AIDS FOUNDATION 2006 BENEFIT PADDLE: Information forthcoming.

JUNE 24 — WAKE MINI SYMPOSIUM: Information forthcoming.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES—ANACORTES

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Janet Miller-T.	VP Newsletter Editor	360-393-2207	wolfwomanphoto@earthlink.net
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Dawn Groves	Training Coordinator/ Speaker Scheduler	360-738-3617	dawn@dawngroves.com

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WAKE

Whatcom Association of Kayak Enthusiasts
P.O. Box 1952
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