



Making Waves

The LWRC
Quarterly
Newsletter

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U.S. Masters Nationals in Oakland, California, August 16 - 19

LWRC rowers medaled in five events at Masters Nationals. Special congratulations to Cody Jenkins for taking gold in the Men's Open A single! Plus, all four Moms medaled, taking home the Efficiency Trophy!

*This year, for the first time, USRA honored those rowers 80 and older who participated in Nationals. **Barbara Smith**, lower right, was one of 13 "octos" recognized.*

Cody Jenkins (below) won gold in the men's A single.

(Photo courtesy of Cody Jenkins)

Dale Peschel, Roberta Scholz (upper right).



Martha's Moms

Moms Shine at Nationals

Heads up, all current and future Martha's Moms! Start planning now to compete next August at the U.S. Masters Nationals Championship Regatta in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Why? Because the Moms will be gunning to defend the newly won *Efficiency Trophy* from last month's Nationals on Lake Merritt in Oakland.

The *what* trophy? This trophy is awarded to the rowing club with the highest percentage of gold, silver, and bronze medals per number of competitors racing in boats comprised exclusively of rowers from the same club or team. Four Moms earned the most points per competitor in club boats: **Tory Laughlin-Taylor, Wispy Runde, Barbara Smith, and Julie Smith**. They all medaled in composite boats, too. In addition, Barb, along with 12 other octogenarians racing at Nationals this year, was honored by US Rowing on the awards stage.

The Moms' golds in three races plus silvers in two races totaled 64 points. Larger clubs earned more points overall, but with more competitors were deemed less efficient. (Sammamish Rowing Association's 43 competitors earned 623 points and won the Club Trophy for most points.) **James Rawson**, national events and West Coast program manager for USRA, explains that the idea behind the seven-year-old Efficiency Trophy is to make the regat-

ta's awards more inclusive of all sizes of clubs or teams and unaffiliated competitors. He adds, "It's not always just about how the bigger programs do at Nationals. We appreciate who's doing the most with every stroke at every race."

Rawson says this year's regatta was the largest Nationals held outside the mid-Atlantic region, where rowing clubs are more concentrated and entries more numerous. With a total of 83 teams/clubs and 1,630 entries, this year's regatta was probably the third-largest Nationals overall and a "major success," he adds. Fans whooped it up watching races from the drone's-eye view on the Jumbotron which, Rawson says, appeared for the first time at Masters Nationals.

Says Tory, "Nationals was a great experience: a very well-run regatta and a lovely setting, highlighting the strength of the West Coast rowing community while attracting the strongest committed rowers from across the country. The best thing about it was the high quality of the competition, which led to really fun races. We had to battle for every win! The complementary benefit was getting to meet rowers from around the country and building connections by



Efficiency Trophy, U.S. Masters Nationals

Martha's Moms, *continued*



Left to right: Tory Laughlin-Taylor, Barbara Smith, Julie Smith, Wispy Runde

racing with and against each other. I now feel way more connected to places and clubs that were before just a place on a map in my mind.”

Barb adds, “When you go to Nationals, it really opens your eyes to the wide world of rowing. It gives you an idea of how big this sport is.” Barb also thinks rowing at Nationals is good for building confidence. “You

find out you’re better than or equal to other people.”

The Moms enjoyed the race venue in vibrant Oakland, the only city in the United States with a saltwater lake. Notably, the Moms were connected to the lake long before the regatta. Lewis May, father of team member **Ann Van-**

dor, was instrumental in cleaning up a sorely polluted Lake Merritt and in providing the Necklace of Lights, more than 4,000 lights strung along 126 lampposts encircling the 3.4-mile circumference of Lake Merritt. May co-founded Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation in 1980.

As Wispy advises, “Think about next year, because we had so much fun. The competition is very good, and it’s beneficial to have a training goal such as Nationals.”

—Julie Smith

**Take advantage of
the espresso machine!**

**It’s in the meeting room
at the top of the stairs.**



New Shoes on the Dock

Amy McGhee Heads West



Amy McGhee grew up on Plum Island, Massachusetts, as the youngest of eight children. After graduating from Wachusett Regional High School in Holden, Massachusetts, she enrolled at George Washington University in Washington, DC, where she studied Chinese language and literature. As a sophomore, during a swim class, she noticed a coach teaching rowing in a poolside box with a cut-out oar. Because she was staring, the coach commented, “You look like you want to learn to row.” She admitted she did, so he told her to show up for practice the next morning. That was the beginning of her extensive rowing career. At George Washington, she rowed lightweight stroke seat and was named MVP her senior year. As a junior, she took a break from rowing and studied in Taiwan.

After college graduation in 1988, Amy rowed for Riverside Boat Club in Cambridge in a lightweight development program. Arriving in Seattle in 1992 for UW graduate school

studies in classical Chinese literature, she joined Seattle Rowing Club, a group of lightweight women who rowed out of several locations, including the newly built Pocock Center. Amy bought a single in 1995 and joined LWRC when it was still at the small boathouse near our wherry dock. She rowed under **Frank Cunningham** with other masters women.

In 1998, Amy moved to Berkeley, remaining there for six years. At first, she rowed at nearby Lake Merritt in eights and fours, then transitioned to small boats at Berkeley Rowing Club. Upon her return to Seattle, she joined the mixed masters under **John Tytus**. Last year, Amy took a break from rowing to work on finishing her PhD. This past spring, she returned to LWRC to train with a group of women competing for entry in the Opening Day races. Then came Regionals Boot Camp and Regionals.

Amy has been married for 20 years to Rolf Gersonde. They live in North Bend and have a 12-year-old daughter, Kaylie. Rolf works in the Cedar River Watershed for the City of Seattle.

—Joani Harr



Mew Shoes on the Dock!

Have you ever seen someone walk into a totally new environment and look completely at home? We have a new member at LWRC, and from the moment he appeared in the boathouse, he acted like he owned the place. He casually strolled up one bay and down another, checking out all the fabulous equipment—sizing up the shells, looking at the oars, and knowing exactly where he would land. I have no idea how he got introduced to LWRC, but he is now a regular, not only in the bays but also walking up the stairs and hanging around the upper floors. And, while he doesn't seem to work out very much, he certainly likes hanging out a lot. I haven't asked, but I'm pretty sure he lives in the neighborhood.

He seems to fit in well with any of the various programs

at the club. He hangs out with the masters in the early mornings but is often around in the afternoon as well. And he has made himself right at home with the new programs at LWRC as well. He was last seen schmoozing with all the young rowers during the introductory open house for Holy Names Academy rowers and parents on Sunday, actually cuddling up to a group of them. What a guy!

Who is this cool cat? Go to this website for a hint: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSaDPc1Cs5U>. Still not sure? Read on.

This fellow does have one problem, though—he doesn't pay attention to any of our posted signs. In fact, he parks himself just about anywhere he wants. Should someone have a word with him? In case you haven't recognized him yet, [go to p. 14!](#)



Regionals

LWRC rowers showed their stuff at the Northwest Masters Regional Championships, held June 22 through June 24 at Vancouver Lake, Washington.



Above: Mixed quad: Helen, Alex, Dale, Roberta. Below: Mixed coxed four (Roberta, John, Helen, Alex, Brooke). Left: Matthias and Jordan fine-tune the rigging.



Regionals, continued



Top: Rachel, Amy,
Stephanie know how
to have a good time.
Bottom: Rachel, Helen,
Christian

Editor's Note



Perhaps you've noticed a new member hanging out at the boathouse, even though his rowing skills aren't quite up to snuff. **Dale Peschel** explains on [page 5](#).

On a more serious note, **Amy McGhee** shares her journey through illness and recovery after returning to rowing. Many of us have successfully fought back against illness and disability, buoyed by our passion for the sport. Her inspiring story begins on [page 8](#).

If you've ever wondered how coaches become coaches, **Teri Thomson Randall** leads us through the paces. She also describes how we teach Learn to Row at LWRC, thanks to the dedicated efforts of coaches and volunteers. Read more on [page 11](#).

—**Roberta Scholz**

Designer's Note

Making Waves is meant to be read on-screen. Printable on letter-size paper at 94% size, it is laid out in monitor proportions (landscape), text is large, and underlined links are live. Use the [full-screen setting](#) in Adobe Acrobat Reader for the most legible view.



—**Suze Woolf**

*Feeling
powerful
is the gift
that
rowing
has given
me...*



Rowing as Medicine

In our youth, we often visualize our future as a continuum of good health and strength. As we navigate the head race that is Life, we encounter twists and turns, snags, fickle currents, and other obstacles that seem insurmountable. When a health crisis strikes, we often fear that we will no longer be able to pursue this beloved sport with the passion that keeps us fit both physically and mentally. Here, Amy McGhee describes her journey.

Like many rowers, I discovered my passion in college. My curiosity was piqued when my sister, 14 years my senior, went back to finish her undergraduate studies while I was taking a year off after my freshman year studying computer systems engineering at UMass. Judy learned to row on Lake Quinsigamond for Clark College in Worcester, Massachusetts. That was in 1985.

The leaves were brilliant hues of red, orange, and yellow. The air was crisp and the crowd small, yet engaged—lining the shores, positioning themselves for the best view of the finish at Regatta Point in Quinsigamond State Park. Crews were getting their last-minute directions from coaches. I was excited by the athletes' preparations. Their focus was intense.

Watching my sister's novice crew finish the race battling for a place felt anticlimactic. It did not move me much. Yet,

as I hung around waiting for her to finish up, after the boat was put away, I listened in on the team's summary with the coach. The athletes described their struggles and successes with such passion, I felt their fanaticism. I was intrigued. I wanted to feel the power they displayed with their sweaty tee shirts and blistered butts.

I forgot all about that desire as I changed my life, road-tripped across the country, and accepted a place at the George Washington University, studying International Affairs and Chinese. To right a childhood wrong of not having learned to swim properly, I signed up for beginning swimming. On Day Two, working on the basic dive from one end of the pool deck, I noticed at the other end of the pool a deep voice booming from a man with oversized quads.

After class ended, I lingered, creeping toward his end of the pool and the poolside rowing box with its cut-out oar extended into the water. I thought I was being discreet until I heard a bellow: "Looks like you want to learn to row?!"

Startled, I walked closer and said, "Yes, I do."

"Show up at the boathouse tomorrow afternoon at 3:30," he commanded.

"Okay," I said, not even knowing where on the Potomac the boathouse was located. I found out and showed up the next day. And on so many other days since then, I have shown up. It was the best "yes" I have ever given—besides

**Rowing as
Medicine,
continued**

***I took a year
off from
rowing....
My spirit
suffered.***

to my husband and marriage and to the judge at my daughter's adoption hearing.

Feeling powerful is the gift that rowing has given me over the 33 years since that day in 1985. A victim of childhood sexual abuse, I have always struggled with my body, its purpose, and my power. When I rowed lightweight in college and went down to 124 pounds and 8.5 percent body fat, I felt powerful. When my sister asked me whether I would choose to have more muscles or be more attractive, the choice was easy. I told her that I believed more muscles made me more attractive. At Nationals in 1990, because of my shaved head and prominent musculature, a small child asked me whether I was a man or a woman. I felt powerful in my negation of standard female beauty.

As I aged, I continued to enjoy the strength and endurance that rowing built into my body. But about six years ago, I started to experience more than the usual pain in my female parts. I suffered for many years from a painful condition called endometriosis, the abnormal growth of uterine endometrial cells outside the uterus.

So my rowing time declined and I gained weight, making it less and less possible to feel that same sense of power in my body while rowing. After enduring this for about five years, I was then diagnosed with hyperplasia of the endometrial lining of the uterus. Hyperplasia, excess growth of the cells of an organ or tissue, is often an initial stage in the development of cancer.

Bad news. Endometrial cancer, the most common cancer of the reproductive organs, is one of the top four cancers for women. Whether due to genetics or because I hadn't enjoyed pregnancy in my lifetime, a cancerous

growth appeared in my uterine lining and was found two years ago. At times, I believe that this cell growth was possibly triggered by that early childhood trauma and the pain I stuffed down into my core. Fortunately, I was able to have the tumor and a few of my lymph nodes removed five weeks later, in December 2016. The biopsy of the nodes was clean, meaning the cancer had not spread outside the uterine wall.

Good news. Survival rates are high. The National Institute of Health says 82 percent of women are still alive at five years after diagnosis. Since obesity is a known risk factor, research has been conducted to determine whether improved fitness can improve survivability. The research that I've found is not conclusive in this regard. However, it is clear that improved physical strength increases overall well-being after a cancer diagnosis.

The pain and sadness I felt with the diagnosis, surgery, and recovery drove me to heal other parts of my history. So, I took a year off from rowing to focus on that. It was my longest time away from the sport. My spirit suffered. I can say now with hindsight that ***rowing strengthens my quality of life.*** Competing with a regular group of teammates supports that overall health and happiness.

This spring I took the challenge to compete for a seat in the LWRC Opening Day eight. **KC Dietz** as coach and the group of young athletes who raced and won that event treated this old upstart with welcoming grace. I didn't make the boat, but I won back my feeling of power, day by day and practice by practice, thanks to a combination of hard physical work, facing my fears, and savoring the coach's and team's support and laughter. I moved on to

**Rowing as
Medicine,
continued**

**Medals
mean a lot
more now...**

the boot camp for NW Regionals and headed down to Vancouver to compete in three races. I enjoyed much laughter and even left Vancouver with a silver and a bronze. Medals mean a lot more now than they ever did before my cancer. Now, they are a visual reward for my devotion to rowing. This sport, with its focus on being part of a team working together, has given me power—and the beauty that can penetrate my illness and whatever else might float into my lane down this course I row through life.

—Amy McGhee



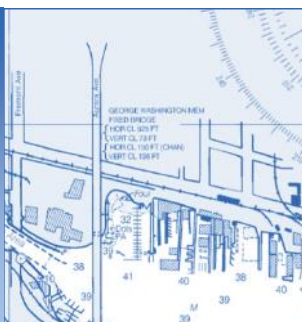
Mixed eight at Regionals: **Amy** is third from right.

Check out our programs!

<http://lakewashingtonrowing.com/home/programs>

**Harbor Patrol
206-684-4071**

**The number is
posted on the
bulletin board in
the boathouse.**



Calling All Artists

To our talented artists and photographers: We'd like to feature your work. Please share your creations with us!
lwrnewsletter@comcast.net

From Bow Seat to Coach's Launch:

One Rower's Path to Coaching Certification

It's not unusual for rowers who have become smitten with the sport to consider coaching as a natural extension of their love affair, and to pay it forward. I got to that point about a year ago, feeling so aware of—and grateful for—the many ways that rowing had enriched my life that I wanted to help make that experience possible for others.

USRowing offers three levels of certification:

- **Level 1** Learn to Row/Rowing Instructor (for candidates with minimal knowledge of rowing)
- **Level 2** Foundation Coach
- **Level 3** Advance Performance Coach + Program Directors

I began with Level 2, a two-day program offered by USRowing about a dozen times a year in various cities, including Seattle. For scheduling reasons, I took my training in Portland under Rose City Rowing coach **Nick**

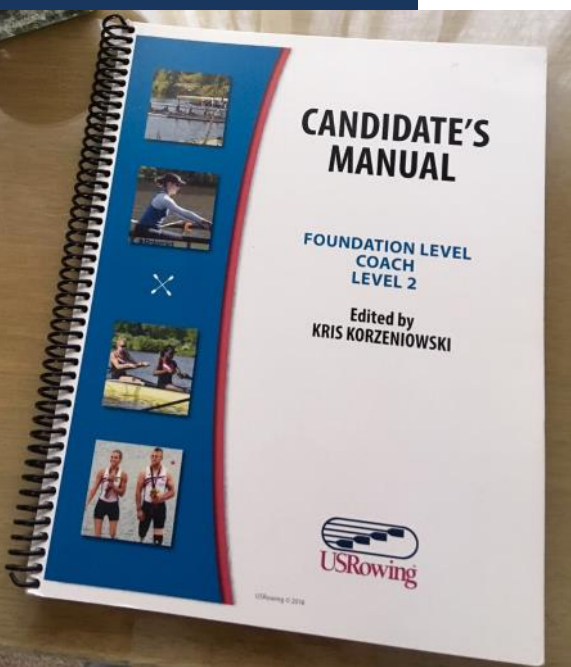
Haley. Candidates are given a 186-page manual to study in the weeks prior to the training, as well as a rigging exercise. A written exam is given at the end of the weekend.

The manual opens with a module on Coaching Philosophy, including sections on “Positive Coaching” and “The Changing Face of Rowing.” The latter addresses the

need for greater diversity in the sport and ways to create a more welcoming, inclusive rowing program. By placing these topics first, USRowing is signaling its priorities for rowing programs around the country. The rest of the manual provides in-depth content on Safety, Learning and Teaching, Rowing Technique, Rigging, Rowing Physiology, and Basic Training Methodology.

In addition to passing the exam, candidates for Level 2 certification must become certified in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and must pass their state's boating education course. Candidates must also pass USRowing's online SafeSport training aimed at eliminating any forms of sexual misconduct, emotional misconduct, physical misconduct, bullying, harassment, and hazing in our sport. The training complies with the United States Olympic Committee's Center for SafeSport and is required by USRA for all individuals, whether coaching staff or volunteers, who work with youth.

My training culminated in a 32-hour mentorship under experienced coaches (a minimum of 20 hours is required). This was my favorite part of the process, when I got to observe coaches teaching the rowing technique and to learn about safety and workouts. Several fantastic coaches graciously provided this practical, applied part of my training: **Rachel Ward**, who coaches Seattle Preparatory School's rowing program out of the College Club boathouse; LWRC Learn-to-Row (LTR) coach **Teddi**



**From Bow
Seat,
continued**

McGuire; and LWRC coach **KC Dietz** while she prepared the experienced LWRC masters for Regionals.

From there, LWRC has continued to support my development as a coach, first as an assistant LTR coach working with **Amy Hildebrandt** and **Meghan Ricci** and then as a solo LTR coach, allowing me to draw upon the deep knowledge at the boathouse as needed.

After all this, I've just scratched the surface. The process has made me more curious, more open. The smiles I see when our LTR students step out of the boat make me happy, too. And though I'm not sure that I've become a better rower, I've become more observant—and more insightful about the boat that I'm in. The love affair continues.

*—Teri Thomson Randall
LTR instructor and
novice/intermediate sculling coach*



(Peter Kaczowski photo)



(Helen Newman photos)

LTR VOLUNTEERS



LWRC sincerely thanks the following volunteers who contributed to the success of our Learn-to-Row program this spring and summer.

- Liz Caluori
- Pati Casebolt
- Carolyn Fletcher
- Gavin Gregory
- Angela Holroyd
- Helen Newman
- Callie Neylan
- Megan Northey
- Jasper O'Leary
- Angie Ong
- Joel Osborn
- Jackson Turvey
- Jon Turvey
- Pauline Woodman
- Linnaea Wright

Left: LTR Express students prepare to launch the Lethocerus.

Pass the Word

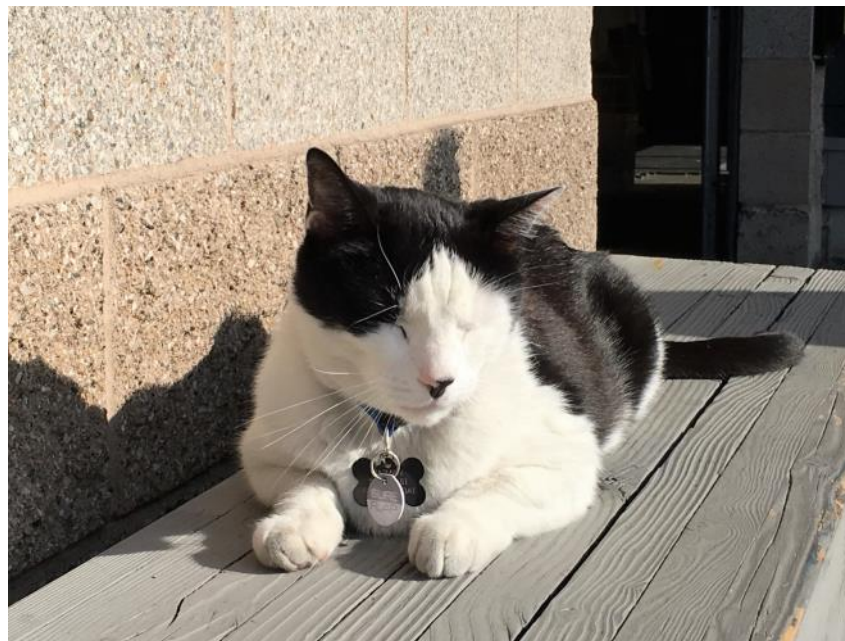
Has an LWRC member done something worth recognizing, on or off the water? Help us share the news! lwrnewsletter@comcast.net.



Mew Shoes, continued from p. 5

Now, isn't that a picture of someone pleased with himself? Ah, yes, life is good! Oh, yeah—and his name really is . . . **BATMAN!**

—Dale Peschel



Batman's tags identify him as belonging to the Doc Freeman Building, just down the road and kitty-corner (hah-hah) from our boathouse.

The Zen Master of Rowing says,
"Rowing is life: We see clearly where
we've been but have no idea where
we're going."