



# CENTRAL IOWA PADDLERS

## 2005 Accomplishments

### **Club organization**

- Hosted a planning retreat for board members (include copy of summary)
- Documented best practices for club responsibilities (include copy)
- Adopted club by-laws (include copy)

### **Membership**

- Increased members to 139 - up from 127 in 2004
- Hosted a recruitment table and a camp stove cook-off with judges and prizes at the Canoesport Outfitters Winter Paddling Exposition

### **Communication**

- Published four newsletters and made them available in paper and electronic form
- Maintained a Web site
- Provided bi-weekly event reminders via email

### **Events**

- Led more than 25 paddling trips coordinated by 12 leaders, plus numerous informal paddling trips
- Organized and hosted three winter programs for the Armchair Paddlers Series
- Hosted a weekly paddling event at Grays Lake from May through October

### **Safety**

- Led a paddling trip and provided instruction for beginning paddlers
- Participated in a swift water rescue clinic sponsored by Iowa Whitewater Coalition
- Purchased throw bags and first aid kits for Des Moines and Ames paddling groups

### **Advocacy**

- Conducted a survey of Iowa paddlers
- Gained legislative support for a boat registration fee increase and IDNR support for a water trails program with a coordinator and \$50,000 mini-grant program for 2006 and 2007 (currently participate on the grant review committee)

### **Connection with other groups/efforts**

- Participated in IDNR's Project AWARE
- Participated on the planning committee for the first Iowa Rivers Revival planned in conjunction with Iowa Whitewater Coalition and Iowa Environmental Council
- Wrote and received a federal trails grant for a Skunk River water trails project and hosted work days (Skunk River Paddlers)
- Participated with Whiterock Conservancy in a Middle Raccoon River cleanup
- Supported Izaak Walton League-Des Moines Chapter with a Des Moines River cleanup
- Led numerous other river cleanups

The Board of Directors of Central Iowa Paddlers met for an organizational retreat on Saturday, April 2, at the Garst Farm in rural Guthrie County. Those in attendance were Robin Fortney, Rick Dietz, Greg Vitale, Bob Johannsen, Bill Graham, Lynn Aldridge, John Holzmüller, Nate Hoogeveen and Dave Kraemer. The session was facilitated by Jim Cooper, of Prairie Rivers Resource Conservation and Development.

The retreat was called to discuss how Central Iowa Paddlers can firm up its organizational structure to ensure continuation in the future, and to consider board composition and sustainability.

Discussion addressed what we do as a club, such as how the club provides information and organizes events.

And discussion addressed what we promote as a club, such as not drinking on the water, not littering, and practicing safety. This aspect of the club extends to advocacy and social action, such as through taking a position on the proposal in the Iowa Legislature to increase boat fees and through work on water trail development and improvement and advocacy on removal or modification of low-head dams.

Partnerships with other paddling organizations was identified as important for the club.

Much discussion centered on what sets Central Iowa Paddlers apart from other canoe and kayak clubs. Differences from the Iowa Whitewater Coalition, for example, are that Central Iowa Paddlers is more general in its approach, aimed at new and beginning paddlers, it is regional, and primarily focused on flatwater.

Our overarching purpose, the group agreed, is to get more people paddling.

The group drafted the following statement as a description of what the club does and as a guide for the future. It builds on the club's mission statement, which follows.

From the April 2, 2005, meeting:

“Central Iowa Paddlers is organized to connect people and water. We're a regional club offering information and recreational opportunities through weekly paddle updates and a periodic newsletter. Our emphasis is primarily on accessible rivers and lakes of central Iowa and we encourage new and beginning paddlers. We also seek partnerships with other paddling organizations to help spread an enthusiasm for Iowa's waterways. Though all our efforts, we seek to promote an ethic of safety and care of natural resources.”

Mission statement:

*The Central Iowa Paddlers is an informal group of paddlesport enthusiasts. The mission of the club is to share information, promote recreation opportunities and paddlesport*

*safety, and encourage care of our aquatic resources. The group includes new and experienced paddlers with canoes and kayaks of all kinds*

Submitted June 13, 2005

David Kraemer

Moderator