

Surge!!

Newsletter of the Friends of Williamsburg Rowing
a not-for-profit 501(c) corporation, organized for charitable purposes

August 2011 Edition

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Welcome to Surge!!

Welcome to the August 2011 edition of *Surge!!*, the newsletter of The Friends of Williamsburg Rowing (FWR), a qualified 501(c)(3) organization. FWR was formed as a booster organization for the William and Mary Rowing Club (WMRC), but since its inception, the mission of the FWR has grown to include furthering the sport of rowing in the Williamsburg/James City County area by supporting both WMRC and the Williamsburg Boat Club (WBC), which was established in 2003. FWR also operates the WMRC Alumni Organization.

Boathouse Update

WMRC's greatest need for many years has been a Boathouse that it can call 'home'. For the past three years the team's executive board and Coach Nathan Walker have been diligently working towards realizing this long term goal through countless hours of planning, discussing and coordinating. Thanks to support from James City County and the tireless efforts of Linda Knight and the Rec Sports Department at the College this dream appears close to becoming reality. The boathouse has been purchased and materials are awaiting construction on the rowing site inside the Chickahominy Riverfront Park. FWR purchased the boathouse and made a deposit towards construction using donations to the Boathouse Fund. Thanks to all these donations and the continued support of our "Friends" we have substantially all of the money on hand to complete construction. We estimate that we only need another \$5,000 to cover the remaining cost of the concrete pad for the house and miscellaneous expenses related to outfitting the house with racks, shelves, etc. So, to help us realize this grand dream of ours, please donate to the boathouse fund by submitting your donation along with the included donation form or visiting www.williamsburgrowing.org/donate.php.

In order to raise funds for the Boathouse, William and Mary Rowing and FWR will be raffling off the naming rights to the Boathouse, in addition to other prizes. For every \$100 donated to the team, each individual or business will receive one raffle ticket. Additionally, all those that donate \$100 or more will get their names on a plaque in the new Boathouse as a supporter at one of the various levels below:

- Bronze Medal Supporter - Over \$100
- Silver Medal Supporter - Over \$300
- Gold Medal Supporter - Over \$1,000

To celebrate the donors who have made contributions so far, the listing of gold, silver, and bronze supporters is presented on the following page.

Groundbreaking on the Boathouse occurred August 8, 2011 and construction is moving extremely fast. The building will be completed soon with concrete and electrical work to be done next. Watch online for updates on construction progress.

We plan on holding a dedication ceremony including a weekend chock full of festivities celebrating the history of William and Mary Rowing, as well as the new boathouse October 1, 2011. Please put this weekend on your calendars, and stay tuned for more information.

For more information on the raffle (including prizes to be drawn and the most current list of supporters) or the boathouse itself, visit the WMRC website at www.wmrowing.org/boathouse.

Become a Fan of FWR on Facebook!

FWR's facebook page is where we post updates, pictures, and link around to what's going on in the world of Williamsburg rowing. Becoming a fan will add us to your newsfeed and will keep you in the loop on what we're up to. Looking forward to seeing you all as fans! Check out our page at the following link:

www.facebook.com/williamsburgrowing

Officers and Directors

President – Mark Miller '08

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Vice President – T.J. Wallin

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Director – Beth Magill, '06

(703) 402-1898 e-mail: eamagill@gmail.com

Director – Bob Morrison (WBC)

(757) 565-7946 e-mail: bobmorrison77@gmail.com

Director – Erin Dunlop '06

(301) 580-6914 e-mail: erindunlop@gmail.com

Director – Justin De Benedictis-Kessner '11

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Director – Sean Blaney '06

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Director – Steven Woodward '05

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Gold Medal Supporters (\$1,000+)

- Carl Tack
- Friends of Williamsburg Rowing
- Michael Maddocks
- Triad Electronics Services, Inc.
- Bob Morrison
- Stan Lewis
- Travis Moore
- Dr. Charles Ehrlich
- Deborah Williams
- Kelly and Cindy Crace
- Kent and Leslie Voges
- Mark Miller
- Matt Connell
- Beth Magill
- Sean Gillick

Silver Medal Supporters (\$300+)

- Matthew D. Kutyna
- Lucy Hansen, Tessa Hansen, Grace Taylor Hansen
- Mary Dillon
- Tina de Benedictis
- Travis Nels
- Mark and Gretchen McMinimy
- The Cooley Family
- Meredith Foltz
- Matt Fiordaliso
- The Nolan Family
- Edward Dillon
- Gregory Bryan Smith Jr
- Tamara Wamsley
- Geoffrey and Elizabeth Hauck
- Mary Elizabeth Holt
- Justin De Benedictis-Kessner

Bronze Medal Supporters (\$100+)

- Bonnie Kresky
- Pete Kresky
- Debbie Bennett
- Tom Bennett
- Fairfax HS 2008 MLW4+ (Anthony, Brian, Haden, Justin, Luke)
- James Hall
- Tamara Glaser
- Patricia Finch
- Robert Finch
- Darcey Arnold
- Sarah Moore
- Peter Chase
- David Wilson
- Sean Blaney
- Susan Magill
- Richard Woodward
- Syam Tadavarthy
- Caroline Williams
- Chantal McDaniel
- Sarah Stafford
- Don Mann
- Gary Davis
- Vicki, Arthur, and David Sperry
- Sheila and Kevin Wallin
- Gail Fiordaliso
- Mary Lewis
- Marisa Guarinello
- Matt and Victoria Colbert
- Lee Fehrenkamp
- Paul Herzfeld
- Liesl Voges
- William Cornock
- Cara Sisson
- Theodore Wojtech
- Louise Lewis
- Welby Fairlie
- Richard and Barbara McGinty
- JT Blau
- Tracy Hollingsworth
- Victoria Dyer

It's not too late to add yourself to this list by making a donation to the Boathouse Fund! All donors who make donations prior to the dedication ceremony (October 1, 2011) will be included in the final supporter listing. Already a supporter? Make an additional donation and move yourself up to the next tier of supporters!

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Learning to row, learning to coach

Every day for four years my oar moved with the guidance and critique of a coach or coxswain. My body angle, handle height, and catch timing was under scrutiny. Every day there was someone to tell me what to do, where I could improve and how to fix my stroke. All I had to do was listen, follow directions and do it again – almost without thinking. After those four years, I simply knew how to row. I knew how to hold my hands through the recovery, how to back my blade in at the catch, how to finish with the person in front of me, and how to pull through the water with the right blade depth. I *knew* how to row, but this past fall a new and daunting challenge awaited me. As the new novice men's assistant coach could I *teach* a group of young William & Mary students to row?

A lot of rowing is just doing it—over and over and over again. Practice something a hundred times in rowing and you still might not have the hang of it. Practice it thousands of times over 4 years and you might be able to get it down. Eventually, at some point, over the seemingly endless repetitions, rowing becomes second nature. You stop thinking about how to do it and your subconscious takes over. It becomes like riding a bike where if someone were to ask you right now how to do row or ride you'd probably answer, "I don't know, you just do it." That was my initial thought early last fall when getting out on the water for the first time. Rowing aside, even simple tasks like getting the boat from the racks to the dock and into the water seemed like an arduous process. Once on the water those eight novice guys looked blankly at me for instruction, like deer in headlights. I had to learn to teach them everything, and whatever I said went. I would explain a drill and let them start—only to stop them a few strokes later, oars all over the place, because apparently my instructions weren't clear enough. Watching them learn to row, every step of the way, I felt like I was learning the sport all over again.

Pausing for a few seconds each time a question came up, sorting out a clear answer in my head, became a usual thing for me. For the first time I was the one giving instructions, creating workouts, and teaching proper technique. I tried to remember back to my novice years in order to re-enact some of what my former coach, Rob Montague, taught me. What drills did we do? What workouts had we done? What splits were we pulling on the erg as novice? After talking to the other coaches and old rowing buddies, slowly, a lot of what I had lost started to come back as we prepared for the fall races.

But the real test of whether I had actually taught my group of novice anything came in the spring season, after a season of 5k races and a long winter training regimen.

After the usual thinning out of rowers at the end of the fall season I had right around 8 guys for the novice team. Our first two races, duels against Fordham and Liberty, respectively, showed the first inkling of both their skills, and mine: they won both races, with a good margin of open water in the Liberty duel. Knowing that at least the 8 could row across the finish line, we set sights on our first race at the Occoquan.

After a few mishaps I was forced to prioritize a 4+ for the Occoquan Sprints—a race with a lot more competitors, and the first real test in the spring season. On race day, I was sitting in the stands nervously awaiting my guys to come down the race course. It also didn't help that I had several of my close rowing friends from college come with me to watch. I fought horrible images of my boat catching a crab, finishing last, and looking terrible. I was more nervous in that moment than I had been when racing myself. Finally the novice 4+ event started coming down the race course. At first I couldn't tell who was in the lead, but it looked like our boat was ahead – minutes later, not only were my guys ahead, but they had open water and rowed by the grandstands with a dominant lead. A huge sense of accomplishment rushed over me and I jumped up to run back to the dock (if you've been at the Occoquan, which most of you have, you know how far away that is) to see them get off of the water.

So, apparently I *had* taught this group of young men how to row. It wasn't perfect or pretty rowing by any means, but they managed to cross the finish line in first place four times this past spring. In our toughest races, they finished 7th at the SIRA regatta in Oak Ridge, TN and even advanced to the semi-finals at the Dad Vail regatta. All in all, it was a successful season for all of us. They now know how to row (or at least have a better idea!), and I got my introduction to a whole new world of rowing—coaching.

- Mark Miller, '08
President, FWR
WMRC Novice Men's Coach

Mark took over the helm of FWR in April of 2011. This is another notch in Mark's belt and contributes to the lasting impression he has left and will leave on Williamsburg rowing. Prior to starting his coaching career at W&M, Mark was a four-year WMRC rower (including three years in the top men's boat) and spent one year as the Club's President.

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William & Mary Rowing Club

Greetings from Coach Walker! This is my third season at the helm of the William and Mary Rowing Program, and I am excited to continue to be a part of such a dynamic team. The student-athletes and alumni of WMRC are second to none, and I hope after reading about the team's latest achievements you are as proud of the rowers as I am. Their continued commitment to the team's growth and success, both on and off the water, make the Chickahominy an exciting place to be, even at 5:30am on a dark and cold March morning.

This past summer the team hosted its second annual week long high school summer rowing camp. Thanks to the help of William and Mary Rowing volunteers, the event was a smashing success. In its first year of existence in the summer of '09 the camp had close to 80 rowers/coxswains attend the three separate weeks of rowing camp. This past summer saw an increase to close to 100 campers, spread out over four weeks of camp. This coming summer we hope to host 120 campers over three weeks of rowing camp. The camp has become the largest fundraiser for WMRC, and not only does it bring in much needed revenue to our program, but it also introduces a number of high school rowers to The College of William and Mary as well as to our rowing program and its rowers.

Last spring the executive board and I got together and decided that due to the growth of both the men's and women's teams, it would be in the club's best interest to create a second varsity coaching position, so each gender would have a dedicated coach. We drafted new varsity coaching contracts and created a director of position to address both the team's increasing need for coaching and oversight, as well as to create a coaching pay structure based upon the number of athletes currently on the team. We believe this will help us attract and retain top coaching talent at W&M. After the change in coaching structure, I became the Director of Rowing and Varsity Men's Coach, and we posted an advertisement on row2k.com for a varsity women's coach. We received dozens of applications, and after picking and interviewing a select few, the executive board and I hired Travis Hall as the new Varsity Women's Coach. Later on, we also hired Novice Coaches Mackenzie Brown and Mark Miller (former WMRC President) to help lead the Tribe athletes to continued greatness. Read all about our coaching additions at: www.wmrowing.org/team-2/coaches.

This past fall the team made it a goal to recruit and retain as many rowers as possible. We put 'boats on campus', and generally made a nuisance of ourselves for the first week of classes. The result was that the team recruited over ninety people for the fall semester! It was a joy and a challenge to coach that large of a team, and the numbers bode well for the future of WMRC. This fall the team competed at the Beaver Dam Head Race, Occoquan Challenge, Occoquan Chase, Head of the Charles, and Head of the Occoquan. The team was quite successful, and the results can be seen online at: www.wmrowing.org/news.

Winter came naturally after the fall and with it a return to the ergs in the Rec Center. The team hit indoor training hard, but with an intense and unforgiving work load lacking the aesthetic wonders of the Chickahominy, inevitably comes attrition. The size of the team dwindled over the course of winter to where it ended the season, at about 60 rowers. However, much like metal is hardened through a forge's fire, so too are rowers strengthened by the many intense erg workouts of winter, showcased at the team's third annual Colonial Erg Sprints: www.wmrowing.org/erg-sprints. And just when it seems like winter will never end, Spring Break arrives, and with it the team returns to the water. This spring the team stayed on campus to train during two-a-day practices, in order to prepare for the coming spring races, culminating with a varsity/novice race. The following week, Fordham University arrived to train at our rowing site during their spring break. Fordham's women are a successful varsity team, and their men are club but also very successful, placing 3rd in the Heavy Varsity 8+ at Vails a year ago. At the end of the week of training we kicked off spring racing with a scrimmage between the two teams, and William and Mary performed very well. In fact, the novice men and novice women's 8+ beat their Fordham counterparts, and the varsity men's 8+ lost by just a few seats.

The spring race season continued with a duel against Liberty University and races at the Occoquan Sprints, SIRAs, Rockett's Landing Sprints and Dad Vails. Highlights include a clean sweep against Liberty University and the novice women's 4+ had an extremely successful season with a second place finish at SIRAs and a fourth place finish at Dad Vails. For more information on our spring race results, visit our website www.wmrowing.org.

Yours in Tribe Pride,

Nathan Walker
Director of Rowing

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WMRC Executive Board

The William and Mary Rowing Club has been constantly active in recent years. Despite being as low as 30 members five years ago, the club burgeoned to over 80 rowers during recent fall seasons. The club's fleet of shells has been renewed by the acquisition of seven boats in the past two years to accommodate a larger team and sustain our performance on the river. Years of work to build a boathouse are on the cusp of fruition. As you may or may not know, this success continues to rest in the hands of the student-run Executive Board. Recently the Board has implemented necessary changes and formalized vital processes to the program to sustain long term growth.

Even with the economic downturn, WMRC has recently prospered financially. This success, in part, can be attributed to the creation of a new executive board position specifically for that purpose. The traditional role of Vice President of Fundraising has been split into two distinct offices: "Individual" Fundraising and "Team" Fundraising. This change was implemented when it was noted that the *Work Weekends* (the most successful fundraiser by which rowers rake leaves and perform odd jobs in the community to meet their individual fundraising obligations) was too time consuming to allow the previous Vice President of Fundraising to plan successful team wide fundraisers. Splitting the office has benefited both aspects of fundraising. Individual Fundraising has since grown, with more *Work Weekend* requests being filled, lightening the financial burden on the rowers who choose to volunteer. The office of Team Fundraising led to numerous new fundraising campaigns, the most successful being the Summer Rowing Camp held at the College. This week long camp, held three to four times throughout the summer, brings over a hundred high school rowers to the Chickahominy River. Besides being incredibly profitable, this program helps introduce potential future rowers to the Club and should lead to a stronger crop of freshmen rowers in the future.

The financial obligations of the individual rowers have also been formalized through the Treasurer's creation of a Financial Agreement Form, which every rower must sign. This agreement helps clarify the financial commitment each rower makes to the Club. This contractual obligation allows the team to keep track of its members and receive dues in a timely manner. Moreover, the financial commitments the rowers must make have increased in recent years.

Currently all rowers, including novice and coxswains, must pay \$325 in dues and fundraise \$200 each semester. These changes in the financial obligations of the individual rowers were made in order to allow for improvements in the coaching staff to occur (as outlined by Nathan Walker in his update on the previous page). We believe the rower's get their money's worth through additional coaching and water time and continue to offer them the opportunity to offset their dues through individual fundraising above and beyond the required amount. To the extent you're interested in helping to defray these costs for the team's rowers, consider making a donation designated to WMRC using the attached donation form.

Coaches at William and Mary have often been overworked and underpaid, resulting in understandably high turnover. In order to correct this problem, the Executive Board has made alterations to the coaching contract. The new coaching contracts are structured to have pay scales based on squad size. Thus, the coaches are compensated if the team grows and they become responsible for instructing more athletes. This change rewards our coaches who grow the program with competitive salaries. The Financial Agreements mentioned previously permit the Executive Board to have an accurate dollar value attributable to each of the members on the team. With this insight, the Board was able to hire another head coach as well as another assistant coach. Now each squad (Varsity Men, Novice Men, Varsity Women, and Novice Women) receive tailored and focused instruction from their own dedicated coach. To prevent an overlap of job duties, one of the varsity coaches will maintain the administrative duties of our previous head coaches by taking on the role of Program Director or Director of Rowing.

The outstanding students who comprise the Executive Board have demonstrated amazing foresight and made the necessary changes to continue the growth of the program. When you combine all of these changes with the years of work previously invested by past board members, coaches and parents, William and Mary Rowing Club can attract and keep more qualified coaches, receive more instruction at practice, and afford to buy and maintain the expensive equipment the sport requires. Looking forward, William and Mary Rowing should enjoy many future seasons of success.

- TJ Wallin
Vice President, FWR

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Williamsburg Boat Club Update

Williamsburg Boat Club has had a successful year. During the winter months our members met at the William & Mary student rec center for erg training to keep in shape. We held our annual meeting at Bakers Crust in November attended by about 17 members and continue to have monthly happy hours to get together off the river. The Club currently has about 30 active members with 12 very active rowers. Members have the option to scull, sweep or a combination.

WBC held its annual learn to row class on May 7, 2011 with a strong interest in the class and another new crop of potential rowers getting introduced to the sport. It's never too late to get started rowing or to get back into the sport so if you're in Williamsburg check us out at: www.williamsburgboatclub.org.

WBC looks forward to future local regattas during the remainder season and towards continued growth of our Club and the sport in Williamsburg.

Class Notes

We're constantly looking to catch up with Friends and Alums. Have you moved, changed jobs, or done anything else of note recently? If so, send us a note about what's happening in your life for publication in *Surge!!* during 2011-2012. Send your note to anthea.medyn@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you!

Rowing Memories and Photos

Take the time to write down your rowing memory and share it with us so that it can be published in an upcoming *Surge!!*. Send your memory to Anthea Medyn at anthea.medyn@gmail.com and help us all remember Williamsburg rowing.

We're also looking to compile pictures from past seasons to make sure these are available for us all to share. Email Anthea at the address listed above to coordinate sharing your photos with us.

Send Us Your E-mail Address

We are continually updating our database to keep all past, current and future "Friends" informed on the happenings of rowing in the Williamsburg area. If you would like to receive future issues of *Surge!!* as well as other periodic updates by e-mail, please send an e-mail to erindunlop@gmail.com.

Treasurer's Report

Thanks to the momentum of the boathouse project and the supporters listed on page 2, we have continued to have financial success through 2010 and into 2011. During 2010 we raised over \$18,000 including \$13,000 for the boathouse. In addition we facilitated WMRC's most recent summer camp which is a significant revenue generator for the team and expands their network throughout the school by also bringing in revenue for the College's conference services and food service departments during otherwise slower summer months.

In 2011 we're hoping to beat our 2010 numbers and so far have raised approximately \$8,000 just past halfway through the year. As mentioned in our boathouse update, we're looking for a few thousand dollars more to finish out our boathouse fundraising which will covers things such as racks and parts to stock up the boathouse. Consider making a donation today and have your status memorialized on the Gold, Silver and Bronze plaques which will hang in the boathouse. We will accept boathouse donations to be included on these plaques through October 1, 2011 which will be the dedication ceremony however donations after September 24, 2011 will no longer be included in the raffle to be held. One big change in 2011 is that we've started making some significant disbursements including \$20,000 for the purchase of the boathouse building and just recently another \$10,000 for the actual construction of the boathouse.

Subscription donations have waxed and waned over the past year, but they continue to be integral to our monthly operations. We are up to twelve subscribers which contributed over \$250 in the most recent month. This may not sound like much, but is a great improvement over our approximate \$150 monthly take last year at this time and hopefully will continue growing at the current pace. Please consider signing up as a new subscriber for as little as \$5 per month. That's as little as one trip to Starbucks or a drink at happy hour (depending on your location). This small sacrifice could go a long way to furthering the goals and ambitions of Williamsburg Rowing. The most elite subscribers contribute as much as \$50 per month (\$50.01 for the ultimate subscriber) and continue to live their commitment to WMRC. If you're interested in becoming a subscriber, check out our website at www.williamsburgrowing.org/donate or email me at treasurer@williamsburgrowing.org if you have any questions.

I look forward to the final push on our boathouse donations, and ask that you think of us for your year-end tax deductible donations.

- Travis Moore
Treasurer, FWR

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Levels:	Contribution Amount	Designation:
Benefactor \$500	_____	_____% FWR General Fund
Patron \$300		_____% William and Mary Rowing Club
Sponsor \$150		_____% Williamsburg Boat Club
Member \$50		_____% Boathouse Fund
		_____% Other _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Are you a resident of Williamsburg or James City County? Yes No

Would you like more information about the Williamsburg Boat Club? Yes No

Are you a W&M Graduate? Yes No Graduation year: _____

Former crew member? Yes No Years _____

Are you a parent/relative of crew member? Yes No

Student _____ Graduation _____

The name/address or other information above is new or corrected: Yes No

I / we wish to remain anonymous: Yes No

Return this form and check payable to "Friends of Williamsburg Rowing" to:

Friends of Williamsburg Rowing
PO Box 2276
Springfield, VA 22153-2276

Or donate online at: <http://www.williamsburgrowing.org/donate>. You can choose to pay by credit card, debit card, or PayPal.

Friends of Williamsburg Rowing is a non-profit organization incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and is exempt from Federal income taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donors may deduct contributions as provided in section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.



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