



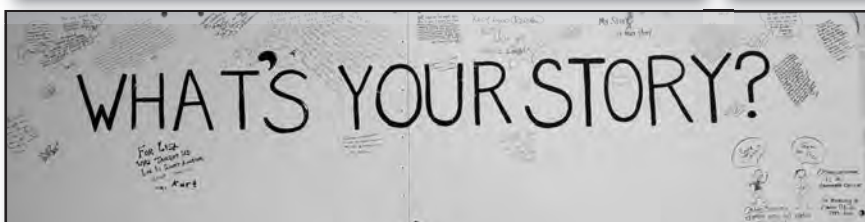
Kiteboarding 4 Cancer has biggest year yet

Huge turnouts and fundraising efforts make 9th annual event a success



Photos by Ben Mitchell

KITEBOARDING 4 CANCER drew some big crowds this past weekend, where people came out to enjoy a number of fun activities and help raise money to fund adventure camps for cancer survivors. Above, kiteboarders take part in Saturday's kite derby, where kites did a total of 3,303 laps around the 3-mile course. At top right, taiko drummers from the One World Taiko group signal the start of Saturday's derby. At middle left, a kiteboarder shows off for spectators at the Event Site; at middle right, one of the "Boards of Hope," auctioned off during the event. At bottom, another kind of board, asking, "What's Your Story?" The board was primarily filled with stories from cancer survivors, those who have benefitted from Kiteboarding 4 Cancer funds, or individuals who have had a loved one(s) suffer from cancer. As of press time, fundraising totals for the event neared \$115,000.



By **BEN MITCHELL**
News staff writer

The dark clouds that gathered Saturday morning failed to dampen the spirits of those who gathered at the Hood River Waterfront to watch the 9th Annual Kiteboarding 4 Cancer kite derby get underway.

Legions of kiteboarders circled on the far side of the Columbia River, then bolted to the Event Site as the derby got underway, racing behind the pilot boat, bolstered by the thunderous sound of Japanese taiko drums pounded by One World Taiko, who opened the event. On that gray morning, the colorful kiteboard sails and shirts of the derby participants stood out more than usual on the Columbia.

By late afternoon at the conclusion of the derby, 225 kiteboarders sailed a total 3,303 laps around the approximately 3-mile course — some racing for the entire six hours of the derby. Event founder and organizer Tonia Farman said it was the most in the event's history and far exceeded last year's tally of around 175 participants.

"The turnout was ridiculous, in a good way. It was way more than last year," she said, adding that there were "a lot more spectators this year" as well.

Farman, who lives in Hood River, began the event in 2007 after her only sibling, Scott, died from acute lymphocytic leukemia. He was only 19 years old. An endurance race, Kiteboarding 4 Cancer (KB4C) is an homage to the long fight those

who are afflicted with cancer often have to face.

All proceeds from the event benefit Athletes 4 Cancer: a nonprofit that offers week-long adventure retreats called Camp Koru for cancer survivors ages 18 to 40. Fundraising efforts allow the camps to be free (minus airfare). The first year, the event raised \$30,000. Last year, the event raised \$112,000. As of Monday night, 2015's KB4C raised nearly \$115,000 — and that hasn't even taken into account employer matches, which usually come in later, Farman reported.

The spirit and many of the activities of the event are the same as previous years, but some changes were made for 2015. Farman said the course was tighter and more exciting, with different buoy placements making for a faster downwind race, "which made it a really exciting spectacle for the Event Site." Farman had arguably one of the best views of all, hovering above the river in a helicopter, with her radio linked up to the PA system so she could offer commentary to spectators from her perch high above the Columbia.

"You can't really see all the chaos that ensues from the Event Site," she said. "I was speechless watching all these kites."

Also new this year was the Never-Ever Kiteboarded-Before race on Sunday, which saw so many participants that "we had to turn people away," Farman noted. Thankfully for the kiteboarding neophytes, the

wind wasn't as strong as it was on Saturday for the derby, where Farman said the wind was averaging a healthy 18-20 m.p.h.

Like in past years, a kickoff party was held outside the Oak Street Pub (previously known as the British Pub), and the Boards of Hope auction occurred throughout Saturday, where event goers could bid on artwork created on recycled surfboard, kiteboards, skateboards, and other items. Music, food, drinks, games and other activities kept people entertained throughout the weekend.

Farman attributed the large turnout, in part due to the outreach done by lead sponsor Patagonia, which drew many people from outside the area this year, she said. But despite the large turnout, KB4C primarily remains a grassroots, local event, with Farman noting that "the community is just so supportive and they give so much, so many volunteers and local business that give their time and services."

And though kiteboarding may seem like the focus of the event, that's not really the case.

"We're getting more people coming to this event for this purpose, for this cause," Farman explained. "People like to come and share their stories about fighting cancer, being impacted by cancer, or healing from cancer."

"It's more of a celebration of life," she added.

DERBY RESULTS

Individual Women (Laps)

- 1) Rachel Callahan (65)
- 2) Carol Bolstad (55)
- 3) Savannah Boersma (47)

Individual Men

- 1) Grom Gorley (78)
- 2) Tony Bolstad (66)
- 3) Tamir Hayman (64)

Individual Foilboarding

- 1) Cynthia Brown (71)

Individual Grom

- 1) Bataya Boersma (51)
- 2) John Michael Harman (49)
- 3) Savannah Boersma (47)

Team Foilboarding

- 1) Ride Engine (Patrick Rebstock, Reed Brady, Sebastien Sutter, Brendan Richards)
- 2) Liquid Force (Brandon Scheid, Julien Fillion, Jason Slezak)
- 3) LP Foils (Drew Christianson, Fred Hope, Mark Ribkoff)

Team Kiteboarding

- 1) Naish / Cabrinha (74)
 - (Naish: Michael Duhaime, Ewan Jaspan, Katie Potter, Jesse Richman)
 - (Cabrinha: Matt Elsasser, James Boulding, Reo Stevens, Damien LeRoy)
- 3) Team OG 2nd Wind Sports (64) (Mark Barnes, Scott Edgar, Pepi Gerald, John Gilman)

Hot temperatures stressing Pacific Northwest fish

Fish and wildlife agencies encourage anglers to focus on warm-water species

By **BEN MITCHELL**
News staff writer

Cooler weather finally returned to the Gorge this past weekend, ending a two-week period where the mercury refused to dip below 90 degrees and on more than one occasion, soared into the triple digits.

And while the return to more typical July temperatures (highs in the low 80s) were undoubtedly welcome for many Gorge residents, the heat wave and low water levels have had negative effects on Pacific Northwest salmon.

Starting at the beginning of the month, multiple fish hatcheries around the Northwest, including ones in the Gorge, began releasing salmon earlier than usual into area rivers due to the high temperatures and low water levels that were stressing salmon. In the Gorge, the Little White Salmon and Willard national fish hatcheries on the Washington side of the Columbia River recently released a total of six million upriver bright salmon a week earlier than usual, anticipating a rise in river temperatures that are already unusually high, and mark the third summer in a row where temperatures are higher than ever, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"As rising temperatures alter our landscapes, we must also pay attention to the way that our riverscapes — the lifeblood of our region — are being altered," said Roy Elicker, assistant regional Director for fisheries in the service's Pacific Region. "Reduced snowpack and warmer weather have changed the aquatic environment and we need to adapt our management."

The warm temperatures can stress fish by making them more susceptible to disease. A couple weeks ago, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife found around 45 "dead or distressed" sockeye salmon in a four-mile stretch of the Deschutes River, beginning at the confluence with the Columbia as well as several dead sockeye from the banks of the Columbia near the confluence. ODFW re-

ported that the fish had died due to a disease called columnaris, "a bacterial infection typically associated with high water temperatures and/or low levels of dissolved oxygen."

The fish were identified as "fin-clipped smolts" that appeared to be from the Columbia and were "bound for other upriver locations who likely swam into the Deschutes in search of cooler water." Rod French, an ODFW fish biologist who works in The Dalles, expressed concerns about the number of fish kills increasing if the Pacific Northwest doesn't see a change in drought conditions.

"These low water levels and high temperatures can be lethal to some fish," he said. "If there is any good news, it's that the native Deschutes redband trout and steelhead are genetically adapted to withstand periods of warmer water."

Earlier this month, the Clackamas and the Willamette rivers reached temperatures of 69 degrees and 80 degrees, respectively, according to Rick Swart, public information officer for ODFW's northwest region. He said those river temperatures are "10 degrees warmer than a year ago." On the Columbia, the temperature at the same time had risen into the mid-70s.

Despite the unusually high temperatures, Swart said he was not aware of any ODFW hatcheries on the Oregon side of the Gorge that has released fish early, noting that "every hatchery is different and has a different set of circumstances and a different set of goals." He did say, however, that the question of whether or not to release fish early is "one that comes up a lot," and hasn't been ruled out. Swart added that ODFW would also consider other options to reduce stress on the fish, such as covering hatchery raceways (an artificial channel used for rearing fish) or increasing the oxygen content of the water by altering its flow into the hatchery.

As a result of the water conditions, fishery managers in Oregon and Washington have altered the daily catch limit for salmon fish-



File photo by Adam Lapierre

CHINOOK SALMON get ready to spawn in the waters of Eagle Creek in this photo taken last October. Unusually high temperatures and low water levels have put stress on salmon and other fish species this summer.

eries "on the Columbia River upstream to the Oregon/Washington border, 17 miles upriver from McNary Dam." The new catch limit holds anglers to one adult chinook salmon per day — whether or not it is marked as a hatchery fish — as part of their overall catch. Since mid-June, anglers have been allowed to catch two adult chinook a day, but were required to release those not marked as a hatchery fish by a missing adipose fin. Ron Roler, Columbia River policy coordinator for WDFW, said the new catch limit is designed to reduce the number of adult summer chinook salmon that are hooked and released.

ODFW reports that the low water levels and high temperatures have been affecting the number of fish anglers have been able to catch, although the agency noted that both summer sockeye and chinook returns have exceeded preseason estimates. Rick Hargrave, ODFW information and education division administrator, said that as conditions deteriorate and fish become more stressed, they "stop biting or retreat to deeper, cooler water where they are harder to catch." ODFW advised anglers to take a number of

steps to reduce stress on the fish during catch-and-release fishing, such as fishing earlier in the day when temperatures are cooler, fishing in high elevation lakes or shaded streams near headwaters, using barbless hooks, and landing the fish quickly. Hargrave also said ODFW is adjusting stocking schedules to put fish in waters that have the best conditions.

Swart also said ODFW has been "focusing on warm water fish and directing people to the warm water fisheries." He said fish species such as walleye and bass "become more active in these warmer waters and they may actually be improved, and that makes them a good alternative to cold water fisheries." He said Henry Hagg Lake in Forest Grove is a "world-class warm water fishery," and ODFW also identified ponds along Interstate 84 near the Hood River/Wasco county line as another good place to fish for warm water species.

For more information regarding regulations and fishing recommendations, go to ODFW's website at www.dfw.state.or.us and look under the "fishing" tab.