

Keel-hauler's Ka-news

FEBRUARY, 2026



President's Message From Robin Shell

I hope everyone had a wonderful new year. Personally, I was very sick, so I was plagued with jealousy as I watched my friends boat so many various rivers while I just dreamt of kayaking.

We have had a great turnout with pool sessions to keep those skills sharp. Lake Meyers has been very popular. And while we tried to keep our second Cuyahoga Falls session, snowmageddon had me cancel it.

This next portion of my submission this month was co-authored by our Secretary, Meesh.

As we settle into 2026, it has become apparent to the Board that the budget as approved at the annual meeting worked on inaccurate assumed income. Lower-than-expected membership renewal numbers (a consequence of much of our membership paying for two years during 2024 and transactional fees) have resulted in fewer available funds. After robust discussion and examining several options, your Board has made the following adjustments going forward.

1. Annual budgets will be created based on the end of fiscal year balance, removing the guesswork associated with assumed income to support planned expenditures.
2. Adjusting our FY 2026 budget to stay within our means by cutting conservation and access fees for a corrective year, with the intention of returning to our former conservation donation levels in 2027. A Board vote limited conservation donations to the following for 2026:

2026 Budget	Group
400	American Whitewater
50	Rose Point
500	Friends of the Cheat
650	Benscreek/Stonycreek
1600	TOTAL

We have also approved a slip fest budget of \$3,000 (inadvertently omitted from the October meeting).

Water conservation projects and improved river access remain a top priority for our club, and the Board values sustainability with respect to environmental causes and fiscal responsibility. We continue to look for ways to add value to our members through meaningful trips, mentorship, community, safety events, festivals and conservation.

We look forward to seeing you on the river.

Robin Shell, President, 216-482-6100

Veep's Views By Jacki Zevenbergen

I am happy to announce that several members have stepped up to organize events! A few have already given me dates; some are checking their schedules to see what date works for them and some members with a lot of experience have agreed to become organizer mentors. We still have many open weekends without an organized trip. It's time to put all the safety training and pool practice to good use!

Organizing isn't about "leading" members down a river. It's about getting the right people together to support the trip, setting a meetup time and place, and making sure you have the information you need to plan the shuttle. The trip organizer has the right to determine if, or how many, step-up boaters they will allow on their trip and what type of gear is required. They can require cold weather gear if they decide it is necessary. No organizer is expected to accept a boater who does not have the skill or equipment to be an asset to the crew. Charlie Duffy does a great job of going over tips for trip management in his scenarios class! Trip organizers usually let people know where they are camping in case participants want to choose the same place. If you're doing a day trip you may want to invite your

participants out to eat after you paddle. If you're organizing a trip for the first time, the organizer mentors can answer your questions about any of the organizer's responsibilities.

A common question: How do I plan a trip if I don't know what the level will be? Organizer mentors can offer suggestions for high or low water level alternative rivers and times of the year when success is likely. An unexpected water bump can offer all kinds of exciting opportunities for a comparable run-in a nearby watershed (think unicorn).

I would love to see all class 2/3 boaters give back to the club by organizing at least one class 2 trip. If you're fully competent in class 4, please offer to lead a class 3 trip. It's not just paying it forward - organizing a trip can give you a chance to watch how experienced boaters handle a variety of situations on the river. If you're always reaching for a PFD, you may not have the chance to learn how to do those class 4 moves on class 2 or 3 rivers.

Please look over the updated trip schedule in this newsletter and contact me at vpkeelhaulers@gmail.com to volunteer to organize a trip. I would really appreciate volunteers for March and April trips. Pre-scheduling trips will allow members to request time off work in advance. BONUS - If you volunteer to be a trip leader you can control the date!

See you on the river,

Jacki

**Keel-hauler Treasurer's Report
January 31, 2025
From Michael Duvall**

Checking \$8590.79

**Raid Erie
Free Annual Event
July 31st-August 2, 2026**

[RAID ERIE](#) is a free annual community event. The organizers are working to build community through paddle/row/sail small craft events in the Lake Erie region.

Check out the website: <https://www.raiderie.net/>

Slip Fest
April 17th -19th, 2026
Registration is now open!

Join us at **↑ SLIP ↑**
 FEST **APRIL**
 17-19th



More information and sign up here: [Slip Fest — Keel-Haulers Canoe Club](#)

Get ready to paddle hard, play harder, and celebrate the wild spirit of whitewater at Slip Fest 2026! Join us this April at McConnells Mill State Park, Pennsylvania, for an **action-packed weekend of whitewater racing, camping, vendors, and gear raffles.**

Whether you're a racer, paddler, or outdoor enthusiast, this festival is the perfect way to kick off the spring paddling season. Don't miss the excitement, community, and adventure—mark your calendars now for Slip Fest 2026!

[For quick updates follow our Facebook page](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

100% of our profits from the festival, raffles, merch sales and race registration go towards river safety, access, members river classes and conservation?

Learn more about our impact here!

FRIDAY EVENING

Potluck dinner featuring a main dish provided by Keel-haulers, and a community bonfire.

SATURDAY

Whitewater race on Lower Slippery Rock Creek, breakfast and dinner available, gear raffles with the award ceremony, and a community bonfire.

SUNDAY

Independent whitewater trips on Upper and Lower Slippery Rock Creek & other local rivers.

The Race: Saturday, April 18th, 2026, on Lower Slippery Rock Creek (As conditions seem fit)

The race will take place on Lower Slippery Rock Creek, between Eckert Bridge and Harris Bridge. The race course takes place on a [Class II Whitewater section as defined by American Whitewater](#), recommended for experienced paddlers. Race classes are available for kayaks, canoes, rafts, and SUPs. The safety team will be placed throughout the course at major rapids.

Proposed 2026 Trip Schedule By Jacki Zevenbergen

Please review this proposed schedule and reach out to me or Cliff to volunteer to organize at least 1 trip during 2026. We could especially use organizers for pre-planned, weekend Slip, LOYO and Stony trips. In addition to myself and Cliff, there are plenty of members who will mentor you through the trip organizer process if you are new to organizing. Please pay it forward to the club for the support you received as a new boater or the subsidized training you received from the club.

Jacki vpkeelhaulers@gmail.com

Cliff cwire64@sbcglobal.net

Month	Date(s)	event	River Rating	Organizer	contact info
Feb	7	Little Miami Downriver Race		Eric Bartl	
March	21 & 22	Tohican Release Tentative			
March	21 & 22	Slipping into Spring	13-21	Jacki Z	
March	28,29	Slip (Connie backup)	13-21	Bob Koenig	
April	4,5	Stony Release 1	21		
April	4,5	North Branch Potomac Release 1	18		
April	11,12	Slip	13-21	Mike Gillam	
April	17-19	Slipfest	13-21	Rachel Faber	
April		Cheat and Potomac South Branch Watersheds - Casselman, Dry Fork, Upper Big Sandy or Little Sandy	18		
April	3rd sat	Upper Yough Release Tentative	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
April		Middle Fork and Tygert	29	Expert level - needs organizer	
April	24	Scenarios class		Duffy - Full	
April	4th sat	Upper Yough Release Tentative	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
April	25	Mad Hatters Race		Lake Metroparks	
April	25	Cuyahoga Falls Kayak Fest	28		
April	25?	Cheat Canyon Paddle (Sat) and Race Clinic (Sun) WV	26	Expert level - needs organizer	
May	1st fri,sat,Mon	Upper Yough	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
May	1-3	Cheat Fest and Race (include Narrows or similar trip?)	18-26	Laura V	
May	2,3	Stony Release	21		
May	2,3	N BR Potomac Release	18	Mike Bailey	
May		Slip	13-21		
May		Cheat Narrows (WV) or Casselman (PA)	18		
May	8 & 11	Upper Yough Release Tentative	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
May	9	Grand River	6	Mark Spang	
May		Cheat and Potomac South Branch Watersheds - Casselman, Dry Fork, Upper Big Sandy or Little Sandy	21		
May	15	Upper Yough Release Tentative	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
May		Slip	13-21		
May		Cheat Narrows (WV) or Casselman (PA)	18		
May		Intro to Cheat Canyon	26		
May		Slip	13-21		

May	15-17	Stony Rendezvous	21		
May	16	NEO Ohio Outdoor Adventure Fest		Tim Eberling	
May	16,17	N BR Potomac Release (Dries)	18	Cliff Wire	
May		Loyo	23		
May	23	Stony Release Memorial Day Weekend	21		
May	24,25	Upper Yough Release Tentative	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
May		Slip	13-21		
May	30,31	Stony Release	21		
May		LOYO	23		
June		Wednesdays on the Water (Lock 29 beginner WW)	11	Doug Waltman	
June	6	Savage	26	Expert level - needs organizer	
June	6, 7	TRPC Slip Clinic (to be confirmed)		TRPC	
June		Cheat Canyon	26		
June		Cheat Narrows (WV) or Casselman (PA)	18		
June	5 & 8	Upper Yough (all Fri and Monday plus last 2 Saturdays)	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
June	13,14	Stony Release	21		
June		Rescue rodeo			
June		New River Dries	32		
June		Upper New			
June		New River Gorge	26	Expert level - needs organizer	
June	27,28	Stony Release			
June , July	27-4	Week of Rivers CCC (NC)		Jacki Z	
July	5	Savage	26	Expert level - needs organizer	
July		Wednesdays on the Water (Lock 29 beginner WW)	11	Doug Waltman	
July		Cheat Canyon	26	Expert level - needs organizer	
July		Cheat Narrows (WV) or Casselman (PA)	18		
July	17-18	Blazing Paddles		Tim Eberling	
July		Upper Yough (All Mon, Fri, Sat) ?	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
July	11,12 & 25,26	Stony Release	21		
July	19	LOYO	23	Dave Roush	
July		Middle Yough	12		
July		Upper New			
July		New River Gorge	26	Expert level - needs organizer	

July	25,26	LOYO	23	Matt Fredmonsky - tentative may be following week	
August		Wednesdays on the Water (Lock 29 beginner WW)	11	Doug Waltman	
August	1,2	Turkey Bash (to be confirmed)		TRPC	
August		Upper Yough (All Mon, Fri, Sat) ?	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
August	8,9, 22,23	Stony Release	21	Not likely to have water	
August	8,9 or 15,16?	Upper New			
August	8,9 or 15,16?	New River Gorge	26		
August	8,9 or 15,16?	Summer Picnic OhioPyle (tentative)			
August	8,9 or 15,16?	LOYO	23		
August	8,9 or 15,16?	Middle Yough	12		
August	15	Whiskey Island Paddle fest			
August	22,23	LOYO	23	Dave Roush	
August	22,23	Middle Yough	12		
August	22,23	Upper New			
August	22,23	New River Gorge	26	Expert level - needs organizer	
September		Wednesdays on the Water (Lock 29 beginner WW)	11	Doug Waltman	
September		Upper Yough (all Fri and Monday plus first 2 saturdays)	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	5,6	Upper Gauley	33	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	5,6	Lower Gauley	27	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	5,6,19,20	Stony Release	21		
September	12,13	Upper Gauley	33	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	12,13	Lower Gauley	27	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	12,13	LOYO	23		
September	12,13	Middle Yough	12		
September	18-20	Upper New			
September	18-20	New River Gorge	26	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	18-20	Upper Gauley	33	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	18-20	Lower Gauley	27	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	18-20?	Gauley Fest			
September	26	Savage	26	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	26,27	Upper New			
September	26,27	New River Gorge	26	Expert level - needs organizer	

September	26,27	Upper Gauley	33	Expert level - needs organizer	
September	26,27	Lower Gauley	27	Expert level - needs organizer	
October		Upper Yough (first 2 Fri and Monday plus first saturday)	32	Expert level - needs organizer	
October	3,4,17,18	Stony Release	21		
October		Slip			
October		Annual Election			
October	10,11	Fall Colors Trip - WV (Gauley, NRG, Upper New)		Harlie and Seth	
October	12	Holiday Paddle			
October		LOYO	23		
October		Middle Yough	12		
October	17,18?	Upper New			
October	18	New River Gorge - Bridge Day	26	No Club Trip	
October	17,18	Upper Gauley	33	Expert level - needs organizer	
October	17,18	Lower Gauley	27	Expert level - needs organizer	
October		Slip			
November	7,8	Tohican Release		Doug Waltman with Lehigh Club	
November		LOYO	23		
November		Slip	13-21		
November		Holiday Party			
	Future ideas				
March		New River Dries	30	Expert level - needs organizer	
April	3-6	Spring Break TN, NC, WV	22-32		
April		Tallulah - Cheoah GA, NC	30-34	Expert level - needs organizer	

Roll Sessions
Roll Sessions, Clinics, and Practice — Keel-Haulers
Canoe Club

Preregistration is required at most of these sessions. Go to the above link to sign up.

Lake Meyers YMCA



UPDATED 9/19/25

POOL SESSIONS
MEYERS LAKE YMCA
1333 North Park Ave NW
Canton, OH 44708

Sundays, 9-11am

November 9, 23
December 7, 21
January 4, 18
February 1, 15

Equipment and Logistics:

All incoming kayaks must be very clean. Please remove airbags or anything else that may hold debris when cleaning the boat. We reserve the right to turn a dirty kayak away. We will enter via the maintenance area.

Need Equipment?

The club MAY have some equipment and can help outfit anyone who needs gear, but you must ask in advance. (Use the note option when registering.)

Need Help?

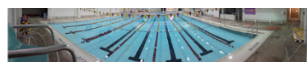
Are you interested in learning basic kayaking skills? The club will have a presence at every session and will be more than happy to work with any paddler who requests help.



Price:
The cost for each pool session is
\$12 per person (members)
\$15 per person (non-members)
Family is welcome to come watch for free
if they are not getting in the pool.



Lakewood High School



UPDATED 8/5/25

POOL SESSIONS
LAKEWOOD HIGH SCHOOL
14100 Franklin Blvd, Lakewood

Saturdays, 3pm to 5pm

December 6
January 3
February 10
February 21
February 28

Equipment and Logistics:

Kayakers cannot enter the building until 2:50 PM. All participants must shower and be completely out of the building by 5:15pm. All kayaks and gear must be completely clean, inside & out. Please remember helmets are required. Please use Door #15.

Price:

This pool is limited to 20 kayaks. The cost for each pool session is \$8 (pre-registered), \$10 (exact change) at the door. recreation@lakewoodcityschools.org

For more information, Phone: (216) 529-4581 recreation@lakewoodcityschools.org



February Trips and Events Calendar of Events — Keel-Haulers Canoe Club

1 FEB, SUN

9 – 11am, Meyers Lake YMCA Pool Sessions, 1333 N Park Ave NW, Canton, OH 44708-3081

7 FEB, SAT

10 – 11am, Little Miami Downriver Race, 5:30 – 7:30pm, 118 Main Street, Milford, OH 45150
[Little Miami Downriver Race, Roads Rivers and Trails, Milford, 7 February 2026 | AllEvents](#)

15 FEB, SUN

9 – 11am, Meyers Lake YMCA Pool Sessions, 1333 N Park Ave NW, Canton, OH 44708-3081

18 FEB, WED

5:30 – 7pm, Paddler Happy Hour, DVD Brew, [Paddler Happy Hour | Facebook](#)

21 & 22 MAR, SAT

All day, Slip into Spring (Day 1/2), McConnells Mill State Park
[Paddler Happy Hour | Facebook](#)

2025-2026 Club Officers

President:	Robin Shell	Clevelandkeelhaulers@gmail.com
VP:	Jacki Zevenbergen	VPkeelhaulers@gmail.com
Secretary:	Meesh Crum	
Treasurer:	Michael Duvall	

Meetings: Approximately 4 meetings per year. Please check the website for the next meeting time and location.

Membership: \$20 per year. Membership Chairman: Rachel Faber, membershipkeelhauler@gmail.com
New memberships, renewals, change in address or phone, mail to the Treasurer: Keel-hauler Canoe Club, 2215 Atkins Ave, Lakewood, OH 44107.

Any opinions, views or recommendations expressed in the articles in this Newsletter are those of the article's author. Printing these articles in no way implies approval or advocacy of any of the opinions, views or recommendations by the Keel-Haulers Canoe Club or any of its Officers, editor, or members. Water sports are a potentially dangerous activity. Keel-Haulers Canoe Club recommends and encourages all of its members and others to abide by all laws, regulations and recommended practices when engaging in such activity. Each member is responsible for assessing her/his own abilities and for not engaging in activities which are beyond those limits. Members assume any and all risk when choosing to participate in any activity and the Keel-Haulers Canoe Club is not responsible for any damage resulting from such participation.

KHCC WEB PAGE URL: www.keelhauler.com

Please consider writing a trip report, an article, or sending a photo for the next newsletter! The deadline for the **MARCH 2026 issue of the newsletter is **2/23/2026**. Please send articles and/or pictures to: Kelly Miller at peetzaguy@aol.com.**

Keel-Hauler Ka-news

FEBRUARY 2026

Kelly Miller, Editor

