

Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers (TBSK)

Club History

Revised March 2015

In 1993, our Club started as a district of the Florida Sea Kayaking Association (FSKA). The Florida Sea Kayaking Association at that time was intended to be a state-wide paddling organization with chapters throughout the state. We were the Tampa Bay chapter with a representative on their board – the Tampa Bay Chapter President.

TBSK Is Born

In August 1996, the Tampa Bay chapter wanted to have liability insurance for our Chapter and it's members. This ran counter to the wishes of the FSKA. A steering committee, headed by Tom Mitchell (president of Tampa chapter of the Florida Sea Kayakers Assn at that time), created a charter that would better represent the interests of the Tampa Bay area members and formally turned the Tampa Bay group into a separate club. The Tampa Bay Sea Kayakers club was formed in September, 1996. The purpose of the club is to be actively engaged in the sport of sea kayaking, doing so in the spirit of fellowship, and passing on to others the skills and knowledge gained in the process. A big thanks to the original August 1996 Steering Committee members: Tom Mitchell, Carin Wiseman, Jean Sibbald, Ed Styron, Jean Bruer, Greg Gutierrez, Ann Aldrich, and George Ellis. The FSKA still exists as a Jacksonville area paddling club. When interviewing Jean Sibbald for this history, she emphasized that TBSK would not exist today without the dogged determination of George Ellis. He was a person who could “make things happen” even if he might sometimes brush people with a little roughness.

Our club started with about 20 paddlers who were interested in paddling together and in teaching each other paddling skills to improve themselves. Besides the club charter, the club officers were established along with a monthly newsletter.

1997

President – Lawson Mitchell
Vice President – Ed Styron
Secretary – Doug Freeman
Trip Coordinator – Jean Totz
Membership Coordinator/ Treasurer – Ed Styron
Training/ Safety Coordinator – Tom Greve
Holiday Coordinator – Mary Lacey
Social Activities – Ann Aldrich
Newsletter Editor – Carin Wiserman

Most meetings were held at Suncoast Sea Kayaks in Largo (no longer in business) with Leslie Collins running the business. .

In March, Jim Greenhalgh and some other TBSK folks did a kayak camp on Cayo Costa. Lawson Mitchell lead this trip,

1998

President – Lawson Mitchell until mid 1998, then Kristy Watson

Vice President – Ed Styron

Secretary – Doug Freeman

Treasurer – Dennise Mathis

Trip Coordinator & Training – Jean Totz

Membership Coordinator – Ann Brown

Safety Coordinator – Tom Greve

Social Activities Coordinator – Ann Aldrich

Holiday Party Coordinator – Mary Lacey

Newsletter Editor – Lawson Mitchell

Environmental Coordinator – Ken Hillier

TBSK developed a Sea Kayaking 101 class which taught the basics of sea kayaking. Rolling classes were also taught. Monthly board meetings were held.

In Nov, 1998 TBSK did our first major trip to the lower Florida Keys. We had a number of members, including John Ennis, and we hooked up with Bruce Wacob the author of "Sea Kayaking in the Florida Keys" to do some great sea kayaking.

1999

President – Kristy Watson until May and then Leon Mathis

Vice President – Ed Styron

Secretary – Doug Freeman

Trip Coordinator – Lawson Mitchell

Membership Coordinator/ Treasurer – Dennise Mathis

Training – Bob Backlund

Renewal Chairman – Claudia Hamm

Holiday Party Coordinator – Mary Lacey

Newsletter Editor – Carl Nevarra & Lisa Mular

Environmental Coordinator – Toby Brown

The interest remained in paddling together and teaching each other paddling skills. We offered the Sea Kayak 101 Class. We had monthly board meetings.

In March, 1999 we did our first major trip to Cedar Keys. Jim Greenhalgh headed up this trip which included Kristi, Watson John Ennis, Roger Lanyon, Keith Ryder, and Donna Greemore.

2000

President – Leon Mathis

Vice President – Ed Styron

Secretary – Doug Freeman

Treasurer/ Membership Coordinator – Dennise Mathis

Trip Coordinator – Susan McGovern

Renewal Chairman – Claudia Hamm

Safety Coordinator – Bob Backlund

Holiday Party Coordinator – Mary Lacey

Newsletter Editor – Carl Navarra and Lisa Mular
Environmental Coordinator – Toby Brown

The club offered BCU training and continued with the Sea Kayak 101 classes and roll classes. We continued to paddle and have fun. Regular board meeting were held during the year.

2001

President – Leon Mathis
Vice President – Ed Styron
Secretary – Doug Freeman
Treasurer/ Membership Coordinator – Dennise Mathis
Renewal Chairman – Claudia Hamm
Trip Coordinator - Open
Safety Coordinator – Rob Backlund
Social Activities Coordinator – Kimberlee Reinhardt Lopez
Holiday Party Coordinator – Donna Greemore
Newsletter Editor – Carl Navarra & Lisa Mular
Webmaster – Ed Schessl
Environmental Coordinator – Toby Brown

- Regular board meetings were held at a restaurant during dinner before the general meeting.
- Website was started during this time.

2002 & 2003

President – Open
Vice President - Ed Styron
Treasurer – Lucinda Sewall
Membership Coordinator – Chuck Hindelang
Trip Coordinator – Beverly Paddock
Training - Dennise Mathis
Safety Coordinator – Ed Engel
Activities Coordinator – Donna Greemore
Newsletter Editor – Carl Navarra & Lisa Mular with Hank Brooks taking over in 2003
Webmaster – James Norman

During this period, no one wanted to be president. Ed Styron was a founding member and club vice president and refused to let the club die. He filled the roll of president but refused to accept the title. Accomplishments include:

- New Club T-shirts & caps
- New color recruiting brochures & water proof plastic business cards
- Mid week paddles twice a month
- TBSK Meeting Greeters (BJ Johns & Carol Coates) to welcome new members to our meetings
- Many skills training sessions were held
- Monthly New Member/ Beginner Paddle & Picnic
- Revised & Improved Website with places to paddle and paddle partners features.
- Club Members Survey which gave us many suggestions for Club improvements.
- Revised Newsletter with cartoons & witty sayings
- Support of many community events such as the St. Anthony Triathlon, Hurricane Man Swim, Alafia

River Challenge

2004 & 2005

President – Hank Brooks

Vice President – Ed Styron

Treasurer – Don & Donna Thompson (2004), Kurt Fisher (2005)

Trip Coordinator – Kurt Fisher (2004), Don & Donna Thompson/ Mark Rosendale (2005)

Membership Coordinator – Everett White

Training/ Safety Coordinator – Sonya Bailey

Activities Coordinator – Donna Greemore/ Trina Smith (2004), Kyle Norberg & Tom Handcock (2005)

Newsletter Editor – Hank Brooks

Webmaster – James Norman

During Hank's presidency a number of changes were initiated within the club.

- After much lively debate, a new liability insurance program was established with the U.S. Canoe Assn (ACA insurance was costing too much).
- Our Trip Coordinator (Mark Rosenberg) introduced our Trip Leader training program. With guidance from Russell Farrow, this was developed this into a first class training session.
- Club picnics were formalized so that they occurred each month with the club buying the meat and buns and paddles organized for Easy, Intermediate and Advanced paddlers.
- Solicited members for club officer positions by starting early in the calendar year (July) and asking gently but persistently.
- Formal board meetings were held before each TBSK general meeting. Expanded board to include the Web Master.
- The "places to paddle" section of the web site was improved.
- Introduced "Paddle Buddies" program where each new TBSK member was assigned an experienced TBSKer to acclimate them to the club and paddling.
- Our annual Club Photo Contest was started.
- Support of Community/ Charity Events: Our club provided safety support kayakers for different charity/ community events during the year. Typical of these events are the St. Anthony Triathlon (supports local charity), Hurricane Man Swim (supports swim scholarships), Alafia River Challenge (supports river environment), Tampa Baywatch Race (supports the bay environment).
- All the accomplishments of TBSK were documented and submitted to the American Canoe Assn and TBSK was recognized as the best paddling club in the U.S. in 2005. Hank went to Washington D.C. for the ACA banquet to receive the award.

2006

President – James Norman until mid 2006 and then Hank Brooks

Vice President – Ed Styron

Secretary/ Treasurer – Mary Cummings

Trip Coordinator – Mark Rosendale/ Lynn Snowden

Membership Coordinator – Everett White

Training/ Safety Coordinator – Phyllis and Dave Murphy

Activities Coordinator – Rachel Doran & Betty Dawson

Newsletter Editor – Hank Brooks

Webmaster – James Norman/ Karen Sullivan

James Norman agreed to be president, but after about five months he accepted a job transfer to the West Coast. Hank Brooks was asked to step into his job for the remainder of the year.

2007, 2008, 2009

President – Everett White

Vice President – Ed Styron (2007), Tom Sobocinski (2008 & 2009)

Treasurer – Mary Cummings/ Doug Nettlehorst (2007 & 2008), Ken Kramer (2009)

Trip Coordinator – Kevin Kenny (2007), Henry Bissonnette (2008) Brian Page (2009)

Membership Coordinator – Keith Fowler

Training/ Safety Coordinator – Dave & Phyllis Murphy

Activities Coordinator – Rachel Doran & Betty Dawson (2007 & 2008), Bev Hand (2009)

Newsletter Editor – Hank Brooks (2007), Wes Calhoun (2008 & 2009)

Webmaster – Karen Sullivan

- After serving three years as an outstanding Membership Coordinator for the Club, Everett stepped into the position as president.
- He led TBSK's effort to put on a very successful Florida Paddler Rendezvous for paddlers across the state with over 100 attending.
- TBSK Training Coordinators (Dave and Phyllis Murphy) increased skills training opportunities.
- Wes Calhoun assumed the position of Newsletter Editor in mid 2008.
- In 2008 Ed Styron passed away unexpectedly of a brain aneurism. We initiated the Ed Styron Award for Outstanding Service to honor his memory and long term service to the club – which he refused to let die.
- Ed Styron Award was given to:
 - 2008 Hank Brooks – for improving the organization, services and professionalism of the club
 - 2009 Betty Dawson – for bringing an organized, professional approach to our picnics and annual Christmas party.

2010 & 2011

President – Phil Sheesley

Vice President – Hank Brooks/ John Marek (2010), John Marek (2011)

Secretary/ Treasurer – John Marek/ Eileen Burns (2010), Eileen Burns (2011)

Trip Coordinator – Brian Page (2010), Barbara Thomas/ Jim Galatro (2011)

Membership Coordinator – Keith Fowler (2010), Lois Farrell (2011)

Training/ Safety Coordinator – Dave and Phyllis Murphy

Activities Coordinator – Bev Hand/ Liz Hogrebe (2010), Bev Hand/ Rachel Doran (2011)

Newsletter Editor – Wes Calhoun

Webmaster – Juan Cabero

In late 2009, many members of the club determined that we needed new leadership to work in a cooperative way with our board of directors. Phil had been a long time member of TBSK and has a very professional approach towards managing people. After his election, Phil led the following changes:

- Modified the TBSK Charter to
 - Establish term limits for President, uniform election rules and proxy voting
 - Establish rules for future Charter modification
 - Provide for Board members to place Agenda items
 - Require monthly Board meetings unless both President and VP were to be absent
 - Limit accumulated surplus funds
 - Provide for removal of any officer with 2/3 majority of Board vote
 - Use of common on-line membership data-base

- Require annual Liability Waiver from each member
- Modify duties and responsibilities of officers
- Passed the first Amendment to the Charter to provide for TBSK “Chapters” in outlying areas
- Our web site was improved to allow membership records to be kept on-line and membership dues to be paid on-line.
- Improved/ clarified our liability insurance program with the U.S. Canoe Association
- Modified and standardized the Skills Evaluation Guide to allow paddlers to properly classify their skill levels
- Initiated club support for the “Friends of the Island Parks” (Honeymoon and Caladesi Islands) and the “Friends of the Island Refuges” (Egmont Key) to enhance the Clubs formal support of conservation efforts in these prime paddling areas.
- Revised the Club’s “Trip Leader Guidelines”
- With the assistance of Dave and Phyllis Murphy, the Club’s Training & Safety Coordinators, maintained and enhanced a regular program of paddler training sessions for new and experienced paddlers
- Began process to support a Student Paddling Club at the University of Tampa
- The Ed Styron Award was given to:
 - 2010: Brian Page – For his excellent efforts in communication upcoming trips to members.
 - 2011: Phil Sheesley – For his work at improving communications between board members and for positive changes to the TBSK charter.

2012 thru 2014

President – Jim Greenhalgh

Vice President – Bob Teare

Secretary/ Treasurer – Eileen Burns

Trip Coordinator – Brian Page (2012), Keith Fowler (2013, 2014)

Membership Coordinator – Lois Farrell (2012), Hank Brooks (2013), Mary Cummings (2014)

Training/ Safety Coordinator – John Marek

Activities Coordinator – Bev Hand, Betty Dawson (2012), Susie Evans (2013), Susie Evans, Jeff Guild, (2014)

Newsletter Editor – Wes Calhoun, Outside Contractor, Bryan Katz (2014)

Webmaster – Juan Cubero

During Jim’s presidency, changes within the club included:

- Reorganized and clarified TBSK board policies and posted them on the TBSK website.
- Revised and updated the TBSK Paddling Manual – which primarily describes the roles and responsibilities of our trip leaders and member participants.
- Previously the TBSK charter was amended to allow TBSK to have a chapter in another city. Led the board effort to create the Central Florida Chapter for members based in the Orlando area.
- Reinitiated a Trip Leader Orientation Course for in-house training of TBSK trip leaders.
- Provided general boating safety education with programs on Navigation, Rules, Required Safety Equipment, Marine VHF, GPS, etc.
- Continued and led the week long annual Florida Keys trip in late spring.
- Continued the monthly meeting programs with a wide range of speakers including adventurers, environmentalists, authors, and journalists.
- The Ed Styron Award for outstanding service to TBSK was given to:
 - 2012: Terry Hobbs – For his contributions to the paddling community of training and encouraging adaptive paddlers.

- 2013: (Double Winner) Wes Calhoun for his efforts as the TBSK newsletter editor over the past 6 years and to Bev Hand for her faithful service as a TBSK Activities Coordinator for the past 7 years.
- 2104: Jim Greenhalgh – For his leadership of TBSK over the past three years.