



Very Special Bulletin

WCC SIGNS 60-YEAR LEASE WITH THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE!

Dear Members,

The Board of Governors is happy to announce that last week, on behalf of the Washington Canoe Club, President Andrew Soles signed a 60-year lease agreement with the National Park Service! This news has been a long time coming.

December 12, 2019, is now a milestone day in the history of our 115-year-old club. Never before has the WCC had a tenure agreement for more than 5 years, and most were 1- or 2-year deals. This was part of the reason that WCC was reluctant to invest heavily in the boathouse rehabilitation. Today our home is secure until 2080!

Finally, we can begin to plan for a future that echoes our historic boathouse's glorious past (see the photos below). While specific amenities are as yet undetermined, experiences to come may include everything from enjoying improved training facilities and easier-to-access indoor boat storage to hot showers in locker rooms to sitting by the fireplace with a drink or coffee to wintertime indoor gatherings! We must now begin the planning and hard work of boathouse rehabilitation, and the necessary fundraising effort that will be needed to make it happen. The lease is a big win for WCC, and with a price-lock for ten years, our initial-term rent is even decreasing!

Over the past several years, WCC has worked tirelessly to explore all options and find the optimal solution to secure WCC's future. As with all negotiations, the agreement does come with some concessions, which will be detailed in full at a special, "all hands" members meeting in the new year. The Board and others closely involved in the lease effort are confident, however, that this deal is the best outcome the club could have achieved.

Congratulations to Andrew, Tom Cooney, Jim Ross, and several other non-board members who worked tirelessly for nearly ten years to drag this deal across the finish line. Sixty years is longer than many of us thought was possible, and we pushed hard to get it (it's actually the statutory lease limit for NPS). We are proud to have secured the club's spot on the Potomac River for many more generations of paddlers. And, after several years of effort by volunteer treasurers Jim Givens, Russ Lazarus, and others, our financial house is in order, and we can confidently take our books to a lending institution.

Planning will begin in January on the next phase of WCC's ongoing story, and there are roles for every WCC member to be involved. Boathouse rehabilitation planning, ground and facilities preparation, and fundraising efforts will soon commence. As a volunteer-driven club, your engagement in the path forward will be essential to us all. Please begin to consider in which effort(s) you will take part. Stay tuned, more information to follow in early 2020.

Lastly, to celebrate this milestone (in a modern, social media manner), we will ask members and friends of WCC worldwide to post to [WCC's public Facebook page](#) a photo of a congratulatory toast to the club on Saturday, December 22 at 6 pm. We will have a public announcement there that you can respond to in the comments section.

Happy Holidays to all members and cheers for the WCC!

– The WCC Board of Governors

(special thanks to Chris Brown for the images below)









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