

International Paddle to White Rock

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(This trip was just days after the World Trade Center attack) I recently had the pleasure of paddling with an older friend who turned to the age of 75 on our trip to the Broken Group off of Vancouver Island. He seemed to spend much of his time just thinking and contemplating. He seemed particularly interested in what made the world wag and what wagged it. He wanted to answer the questions of "how do we learn" and "why" do we do the things that we do.

"Why are we here together?" "What is relevant about this paddle today?" "What is beautiful and why?" These were just some of our mentor's many questions put to us younger paddlers. We enjoyed a blissful time of "nature and spirits". I was moved by how our dear friend would share his emotions and thoughts and wisdom. What a treasure!

We returned from this beautiful trip to world tragedy. The surreal disasters of the Pentagon and the World Trade Center bombarded the news. The peacefulness of nine days of camping and paddling was heavily over-shadowed by gloom, despair and fear.

As such, the WAKE international crossing from the United States to Canada almost didn't take place. In the end, it took on extra meaning for all of us who participated.

We did paddle from the United States' soil to White Rock, B.C. We were greeted by six of our Canadian friends who had paddled from White Rock to the U.S. border. This in itself was very moving. These very special folks escorted us to Canada. In all, we had sixteen paddlers who participated.

In our thoughts we celebrated our free border with Canada. We thanked Canada for their great support during the U.S. tragedy. We celebrated doing what we love - kayaking. We celebrated being with our Canadian friends. We celebrated the quick hassle free crossing. We celebrated great weather and nature. And then we celebrated some great food at Trolls restaurant in White Rock.

The White Rock trip this year was beautiful. I thank all who participated. Long live our free borders and freedom everywhere!