

**Hello to all of you wonderful volunteers—welcome!**

Thank you for joining us today and for allowing SKABC to show its appreciation for all of you. And thank you, Andrea, for organizing this event.

I am the new president of SKABC. When I first joined, I never would have thought I could be president. Over the years, serving on the social committee and helping out in other executive positions, I realized that we are all simply members who want to keep this amazing organization going. As president, I'm proud to be part of the executive and part of this club. Without all of you—without *us*—this club simply wouldn't exist. I'm truly humbled by the dedication shown, and by the many years some of you have volunteered for SKABC.

I have received so much from this club over the years—learning, community, adventure, fun, friendships, and of course, paddling! I'm sure many of you feel the same. That's why you continue to support SKABC by sharing your time, energy, passion, and knowledge with our members. Today, we honour the dedication you have shown over the past year with this brunch. On behalf of the executive and the membership of SKABC, thank you all.

Each year, we try to recognize volunteers who have “gone above and beyond, in contributing significant time, effort, and energy, to the club for the benefit of all members. This is always a challenge, as there are so many people who give generously to the club and to the kayaking community.

This year, I'm proud to highlight two volunteers who truly deserve this recognition.

The **Silver Paddle Award** is given to a volunteer who has made significant contributions to SKABC as an organization and to its members.

This year's recipient could win on character and attitude alone, but the reasons go far beyond that. From organizing and leading trips like the Harrison River Paddle with friendliness and enthusiasm, to teaching bracing and rolling techniques with patience and a smile, to his memorable culinary offerings on trips—he does it all. Please give a round of applause to **Kapila Jaweera**, this year's Silver Paddle Award winner!

The **Orca Award** is given to a volunteer who has contributed not only to SKABC, but also to the greater sea kayaking community.

Over the years that I've served on the Social Committee, I've been continually amazed by the dedication and sheer amount of work this next volunteer has put into keeping SKABC running smoothly. She has been present at nearly every event. Without her, we wouldn't have the forum where we find trips, sign up for courses, ask questions, view photos, or connect for social events. She is often one of the first to raise her hand when a committee needs to be formed and has served on many of them. Her calm and diplomatic demeanor has been invaluable as part of the executive. And she hosts an amazing crabbing paddle—and cracks crabs like a pro! As webmaster for many years, she has maintained the platform which connects us all.

Taking all of this into consideration, it's impossible not to recognize the impact she has had on SKABC **AND** the broader sea kayaking community. I cannot thank you enough, **Susan Jensen**, for all that you have done for the club and for the kayaking community. Please join me in showing your appreciation for Susan.