

The Sport of Rowing

Everything else is just a game!

Crew is the sport of rowing. Crew races, called regattas, are among the most physically demanding and beautiful events in all of sports. West Potomac Crew includes a men's team and a women's team. Rowers are characterized by their great mental toughness and astounding physical ability. These qualities rarely come naturally, but are developed with practice and coaching. No experience is required; we'll teach all of the skills that are needed. All that's required is desire. Virtually all new rowers have no experience at competitive rowing, but many have a background in other sports like swimming, track, cycling, football or field hockey.

Crew at West Potomac is a Varsity spring sport with both the men's and the women's team each electing a Senior Captain, and a Junior Captain. We compete locally against more than 40 local high schools and typically travel to post season regattas to race against 180 other schools from Canada to Florida, and as far as the Midwest and Southwest. The team has been competitive since beginning in 1968 as the Ft. Hunt High School Crew Team. Recent achievements include qualifying a men's and a women's boat for Nationals and the Men's team winning the Virginia Division II championship in 2008. In 2013, the Lightweight Women's four placed second in the Virginia Scholastic Championships and, along with the Lightweight Men and Junior Women's Four, competed at Nationals.

Within both the Men's and Women's teams there are multiple categories in which we compete against other schools in local and national level regattas. Teams may compete in various categories, including First Varsity, Second (and subsequent) boats, Junior, Lightweight, Freshman and Novice. Athletes typically compete in Eight or Four person sweep boats (one oar per rower), but may also compete in sculling boats – quads (four person), doubles (two person) or as single scullers. Sculling is rowing with two oars per person. Only lightweight boats have weight requirements. The coaching staff determines the best mix of rowers for the various categories of competition to ensure competitive boats and the best experience for our rowers.

In addition to rowers, we have a position in the Eights and Fours called the "coxswain." Coxswains are the drivers and commanders of each boat. They call out commands to the rowers, and execute race strategies and tactics.

Competitive rowing boats are called "shells." Shells are made from a combination of space-age carbon fiber composites and fiberglass. Eight-person rowing shells are approximately 60 feet long and 2 feet wide. Each rower has a carbon fiber or fiberglass oar (or oars) and sits on a sliding seat facing backwards. The cox (coxswain) faces forward and calls out commands through the "cox-box," a small amplified speaker system installed in the boat. The Virginia Scholastic Rowing association (VASRA) is the umbrella organization under which our school rows. Formed in 1978 as the Northern Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association (NVSRA) to organize the Northern Virginia Championships, VASRA is the governing body for all high school racing in Northern Virginia area.

The West Potomac Crew

West Potomac Crew includes the participation of the athletes, the coaches, the boosters and the school. Although West Potomac High School is proud of the rowing program and its victories, the Fairfax County Public School system does not support the team financially. The athletes, coaches, and boosters all must dedicate considerable time and effort to make this sport team

possible.

The Athletes

Our athletes row many hours, tone their muscles and sharpen their minds. They are goal-oriented, focused students who succeed in their sport, in their studies, and in life. Crew builds character and teaches self-discipline, teamwork, and time management. In spite of the time commitment, many crew members improve their grades during rowing season. The Crew Team typically has the highest percentage of spring “athlete-scholars” (athlete with 3.5 or higher GPA) of any team at West Potomac.

Many colleges have rowing programs, but since few high schools have crew teams, college coaches are challenged to recruit skilled high school athletes. The West Potomac coaches are in contact with over 100 colleges through their crew programs. Some colleges offer scholarships for crew athletes and the college coaches can arrange campus visits. Applicants should investigate NCAA requirements before visiting any college campus. The necessary information and/or forms are available in the West Potomac Career Center. **The Boosters**

The financial and administrative support for the team is provided by the West Potomac Crew Boosters (WPCB) - the parents of all the rowers and coxswains. This group allows the crew to compete by raising funds and organizing all of the administrative duties that are part of a competitive Varsity sport. Members of the boosters contribute the time, hard work, and resources necessary to purchase and maintain equipment, purchase insurance, and keep up with boathouse rental and maintenance, and provide minimal honoraria for our coaches. The annual crew team expenses are approximately \$100,000. Some of the money comes from crew fees; however, the majority is collected from donations and community fundraising projects. We are extremely grateful to members of our community and in particular to the Fort Hunt Sportsmen who have been so generous over the years.

The continuation of the Crew Team is dependent upon each family stepping forward to help. Crew is a family experience, and each family is expected to support the boosters and participate in annual fundraisers. WPCB has a very strong tradition of family volunteering and there are ample opportunities through the year. All crew parents are welcome to attend the monthly board meetings. You may contact the Booster President (President@wpcrow.org) for the date and location of the next meeting.

A Brief History of West Potomac Crew

West Potomac High School Crew began when Fort Hunt and Groveton High Schools were merged into West Potomac High School in 1985. Fort Hunt Crew started rowing in 1968. At that time, there were only four other local high school crews: Washington-Lee, Jeb Stuart, George Washington and Hammond High School. (George Washington and Hammond High School later combined the programs into T.C. Williams High School.) Today there are over 40 local high school crews rowing in the metropolitan Washington DC area.

In the 1970's, every crew rowed on the Potomac River. Fort Hunt Crew moved to the Occoquan in 1980. In 1973, Fort Hunt won their first national title. This was accomplished in a two-oared boat, the Charles Little, named after the assistant coach (who later became head coach) from 1975 – 1977. Coach Little returned as Head Coach of West Potomac Crew in 1985 where he remained through 1997. In 2003, in recognition of his long years of service and support for the program, he was made an honorary member of West Potomac Crew Boosters.

Women's crew began at Fort Hunt in 1977. The small crew won the four-oared event at the national championships in 1978. The West Potomac women's crew won the first regular season

varsity 8 race in 1990. This was repeated in 1991. In 1991, the women's team won the Northern Virginia championships in the four oared event, and the varsity quad event. 1991 was the first year to include sculling (rowing with two oars.) West Potomac crew dominated the local sculling competition, winning the first medals for West Potomac at the Stotesbury Cup Regatta in the women's double event.

The program continued with a history of competitive successes through the 1990's and in 2003, the men's crew won first place at the National Championships in the four oared event. The same year, the same boat won the NCASRA Championships, and the Virginia State Championship. Also in 2003, the women's varsity four won the Virginia State Championship.

In 2004, the men's varsity four continued their pattern of success in taking silver medals in both the Virginia State Championship and the National Championship. In 2005, the men's varsity four won the Virginia State Championships and were finalists in both the Stotesbury Cup Regatta and National Championships. The 2005 freshmen women took second in the Virginia State Championships. The 2006 men's varsity four placed fourth at the National Championships. In 2008, West Potomac Men's team won the Division II championship for the first time. This is a big accomplishment and is the equivalent to the men's team winning the state championship. West Potomac crew, alumni and supporters have reason to be proud of the team's racing history and most recent competitive accomplishments.

Student Eligibility Requirements

Any West Potomac student can participate in crew, provided that certain scholastic requirements are met. Coaches are interested in dedicated, hard-working, competitive students for rowers. We also seek the same qualities, along with small size, for coxswains. All students desiring to participate are welcome; no experience is necessary. Very few members know how to row before joining crew. Rowing is not a "natural" sport; it is a learned sport that is perfected with time. Nothing they have done in the past has truly prepared a student for the unique muscle coordination that is required for rowing. Anyone with dedication and enough practice can row. The result will be the best physical condition you've ever been in, increased confidence, and new friends bonded by the rigors of the sport.

There is no opportunity in the sport of crew to be a superstar. You can't row faster than everyone else in the boat, and no one outside the boat can tell who the most important member in a winning boat is. Rowing is both the most anonymous, and the most team-oriented sport. Each rower is challenging themselves to perform their personal best and work in sync with the other crew members. The composite affect of each of the crew members is the graceful beauty of a powerful and fast boat.

The requirements for a student to participate on the crew team are eligible grade status, the ability to swim, and the commitment necessary for a Varsity boat. Before a crew member is allowed on the water the Virginia High School League physical, permission slips, swim test certification and team agreement must be completed. Dues must also be paid in full.

Eligible Grade Status

During the spring rowing season, crew members must be enrolled in five or more classes and must have passed at least five courses the previous fall/winter semester.

Sports Physicals

A Virginia High School League Sports Physical signed by a doctor must be filed with the

coaches. The examination must have been completed after May 1 of the previous school year. Physicals must be completed prior to participating in winter training and are required prior to any on-the-water practices. **Forms are available from the West Potomac Activities Director's office, or online at www.wpcrow.org under forms.**

Swim Tests

The novice swim test for new rowers is mandatory. No one can row without passing the novice swim test. The only exception made to this mandatory test is for rowers who have been members of the West Potomac swim team during the immediately preceding season. **A safety swim test for novice athletes is also mandatory and is performed each year.** Swim tests are scheduled at the Mount Vernon Recreation Center in early February, prior to the first on-water practice of the season.

Permission Forms and Membership Form

Parents of team members (or team members 18 years old) must complete liability waivers and emergency care cards prior to the first spring practice. Parents of team members participating in winter training must complete emergency care cards prior to attendance at winter practice. Parents must sign the West Potomac Crew (Team Member) Membership Form. By signing the form, the parent and rower are agreeing to pay the dues and to fulfill the volunteer obligation. The Volunteer Obligation Policy spells out the requirements from each family: regatta volunteering, shifts at wreath selling, and participation in other WPCB fundraising events and/or operations, and agreement to pay all dues and expenses that are necessary for the competitive athlete. The participation agreement also includes the athlete agreement to comply with the team expectations and rules document established by the WP coaching staff as well as crew board policies. Prior to a team member's participation in out-of-town regattas, all permission forms and liability waivers must be completed by parents of the rower.

Expenses

The annual dues for each crew member for the 2013-2014 season are \$755 plus volunteer time (see Volunteer Obligation Policy). In families with more than one crew member, dues are reduced by \$50 for each additional member. Each athlete must also purchase the required competition uniform; the cost is about \$130. Those athletes chosen to participate in the post-season out-of-town regattas will also need to cover most of the food, transportation, and lodging costs associated with those particular regattas. If the total expenses are more than your family can pay at one time, the Treasurer will work with you to set up other financial options. Families should also be aware that a financial hardship waiver of the dues is available. This matter may be discussed in confidence with the Vice-President of Administration or Booster President.

Dues for the 2013-2014 season are payable in a maximum of three installments. A minimum payment of \$200 must be paid at the beginning of winter conditioning for all participating athletes. In order to include rowers in winter training for insurance and other reasons, they must be paid members of WPCB. A second payment of \$300 (\$500 for athletes NOT participating in Winter Conditioning) is due by February 17, 2014. Final payment of the balance (\$255) is required by March 17, 2014, which is just before the first regatta. **The policy for refunds due to discontinuance is as follows: refunds of 80% of the dues paid will be made for discontinuance if requested before February 25. This covers the club's costs of winter training. Refund requests after February 25 will be made on a daily pro-rata basis up**

through April 15, after which no refunds are available. Requests for discontinuance are made by the rower contacting the Head Coach. Afterwards, club points of contact for discontinuance are the Vice President of Administration or the Treasurer.

Volunteer Obligation Policy

Each crew family is required to:

1. Participate in two wreath sale shifts
 2. Participate in any combination of four operations or fundraising events
 3. Volunteer for a VASRA duty at one regatta
 4. Volunteer to coordinate the hospitality tent for one regatta (Partner with 2-3 additional families to transport hospitality gear to and from regatta, set-up, maintain food and drink throughout regatta, and clean-up.).
 5. Coordinate/co-coordinate one fundraising, operations, or membership/administration duty. Go to www.wpcrow.org for list of fundraising, operations or membership/administration duties under Fees/Volunteer (Volunteer Obligation Policy link).
- * First year crew families are only required to participate in any combination of two operations or fundraising events. Also, first year crew families are only required to assist a coordinator or co-coordinator of one fundraising, operations, or membership/administration duty.
 - * Families of WPCB Board members are exempt from the requirements of this policy.
 - * The coordination of additional pre-approved fund raising efforts may fulfill requirement 5.
 - * Any family not fulfilling all requirements of the WPCB Volunteer Policy by July 1st will be assessed a \$250 dues supplement that will be due on July 1st. Any family that is not able to coordinate/co-coordinate one fundraising, operations, or membership/administration duty (requirement 5), but completes all other requirements will be assessed a \$100 dues supplement.
 - * Tracking of volunteer participation will be done by board members according to areas of responsibility assigned in the WPCB bylaws. For example, fundraising participation will be tracked by the Vice President of Ways and Means, work day participation will be tracked by the Vice President of Operations, etc.

Cut or Release Policies

The sport of rowing requires robust logistic support and oversight to ensure safety, training opportunity, and training quality. Equipment, coaches, coaching time, training time, and athlete (rower or coxswain) ability must all be carefully managed

Athletes may be released at any time for poor attitude, poor behavior or lack of attendance. Athletes who are released or who voluntarily quit will receive a pro-rated refund in accordance with the WPCB refund policy.

Training Schedule

Fall Season

Crew is a spring sport, with specified dates before and after which we are not allowed to practice as a school team.

Nonetheless rowers are able to participate in various summer and fall rowing programs offered in our area. Please check with the coaches for recommendations if you're interested.

Winter Conditioning

Winter conditioning is an important factor in preparing for the rowing season. Beginning in mid-November to early December, the team has a weight training and aerobic fitness program at West Potomac High School. This simple but effective physical training plan, supervised by the coaches, is designed to physically prepare the body for the spring season by developing body mass and strength; increasing flexibility; strengthening connective tissue in joints; and increasing cardiovascular fitness. In addition the team builds discipline, teamwork, and team spirit. While winter training is not required, it is highly encouraged.

Spring Season

The Spring Season begins in February. Practices are held regardless of weather, unless school and/or school activities are canceled. If ice on the water or severe weather prevents the team from rowing, workouts will be moved from National Harbor to West Potomac.

Attendance at all practices is required and expected in the spring season, with timely communication to coaches when exceptions are requested. Practices are held Monday through Friday afternoons, Saturday mornings, and every day (extended sessions) during Spring Break. Please note that those who miss these required practices will find themselves at a disadvantage in gaining a seat in a well-performing boat. If an athlete must miss practice, it is very important to inform the coaches well ahead of time, since all rowers in the same boat depend on each other to have a complete boat. Missing a practice is not only a disadvantage to the missing person, but is a hardship on the remaining rowers in that person's regular boat.

The team expects athletes to participate in essential activities outside of practice, such as moving and washing boats, and helping with site preparation and equipment maintenance.

Regattas

Regattas are scheduled on Saturdays beginning in late March. Once the race schedule for a particular regatta is set, usually no later than Friday morning prior to the Saturday regatta, an email will be sent with pertinent information via the WePo Crew Yahoo Group. If you are not a member of this Group, please contact the VP of Administration (email: vpadmin@wpcrow.org).

Most regattas begin at 9:00 A.M. and continue through mid-afternoon. Crew members are given approximate times of each event before race day. The team members are required to arrive at the race site much earlier than their race time, as directed by their coaches, to unload the trailer of ALL boats racing that day, rig boats, and warm up prior to their race. Most regattas require that coxswains attend a required meeting 60-90 minutes prior to the regatta start time; if they do not attend they will not be allowed to race.

Each boat launches approximately 50 minutes before race time. Team members are required to stay after their races to cheer for the other West Potomac boats and to ensure that all

equipment is made ready for transportation back to our practice facility. Team members should not leave until released by their coach. Families requesting an exception to projected arrival or dismissal times should contact the coach as soon as possible, preferably well in advance of race day.

The Race

Crews are expected to be in the marshalling area 10 minutes before the race and at their starting stations two minutes before the scheduled start time. If a crew is late to the starting line, it is considered a false start. Once the boats are locked on the starting platforms, a judge supervises the alignment process, and when all the crews are even, the judge raises a red flag. Crews may break the plane of the starting line when the starter gives the starting commands and begins to drop the flag. False starts occur when a crew moves across the start line before the red flag is dropped. Any crew that receives two false starts will be excluded from the race. Once the race begins, the referee follows in a launch.

The standard high school racing distance is 1500 meters. Up to six shells race against each other in their separate designated lanes, which may be marked by buoys. Each race lasts from 4 to 8 1/2 minutes depending on the boat class, weather conditions, water current, and the physical condition and experience of the rowers.

Spectators

Spectators should bring sunglasses, sunscreen, several light layers of clothing (preferably something "West Potomac" blue), an umbrella, binoculars, money for the concession stands, and a paperback book. For regattas at Sandy Run on the Occoquan River, there will be a parking fee of approximately \$20. Remember to wear comfortable shoes as there is a long hilly, wooded path to Sandy Run's finish line. Alternatively, you can ride a shuttle van to and from the upper parking lot to the finish line for a nominal fee (\$2 each way).

Regatta Volunteers

The VASRA runs the regattas and each school is required to provide volunteer assistance to help operate the regatta. Schools receive a fine if their volunteers are no-shows. Volunteer opportunities include shuttle boat driver, judge boat driver, line judge, snack bar attendant, and parking lot attendant. Some of the more exciting volunteer opportunities, such as boat driving, require training, which is provided through the Crew Boosters. **Each West Potomac crew family is expected to volunteer for 2 regatta jobs during the season.**

Scheduled Regattas

Scheduled regattas may include the Charlie Butt Regatta on the Potomac River in Georgetown, and the Polar Bear, Smokey Jacobs, and Ted Phoenix Regattas on the Occoquan. Regattas may also include out of town venues such as Mathews, Virginia. Some regattas involve two or three high school teams only and are considered dual or tri-meet events. Rules and regulations on specific regattas are available through the sponsoring organization. Most of our crews compete in the Virginia Scholastic Rowing Championships (States), and many of our athletes compete in the Stotesbury Cup Regatta, and for the boats that qualify, the Scholastic National Regatta.

The Stotesbury Cup Regatta, the oldest U.S. high school regatta, is held in Philadelphia on the Schuylkill River. More than 150 schools with 5000+ rowers participate in Friday and Saturday events, one weekend in May. The coaches select Varsity crews to participate that match categories presented in the regatta. Their decision is also based on regular season

performance and the results of the Virginia Scholastic Rowing Championships (States). The Scholastic Rowing Association of American Championship (Nationals) is held at varying locations the last weekend in May. Participants are required to cover most of the additional costs of these out of town regattas. Attendance at these post season regattas is encouraged, but not required, in light of the additional expense.

Transportation

Transportation to Practice

Transportation to and from practice is the responsibility of each crew member. Team members often carpool. Carpools are arranged individually between families. We will provide a roster to crew families in early February so that they can make carpool arrangements. We may also include time at the General Membership meeting for families to connect on carpools.

Transportation to the Regattas

Transportation to and from the regattas is the responsibility of each crew member. Directions to all VASRA regatta sites can be found in the appendices to this handbook or online at: <http://www.vasra.org/Directions.html>

Note that all the revenue from parking at the Sandy Run site (up to \$20 per car) is divided between the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority and VASRA, the organization that conducts the regattas, as mutually agreed. The amount paid to the Park Authority assists in park operations and maintenance to the park facility. VASRA applies its share of the revenue to operations and maintenance of the organization. Everyone, including VASRA volunteers, is subject to parking fees.

Safety Considerations

A safety plan has been designed to provide the coaching staff with specific guidelines to ensure the safety of all crew team members both on land and in the water. Safe handling of crew equipment as well as the management of the athletes at practice and at regattas follows criteria that have been established by the rules and regulations of local and federal authorities, and rowing organizations such as US Rowing, VASRA and others in addition to WPCB policies. All athletes are required to attend safety sessions, pass required safety and swim tests and agree in writing, to follow all rules and regulations of the coaching staff, including rules regarding behavior deemed detrimental to the activities of the crew team.

The coaching staff manages the athletes both on and off the water at practices and regattas. Should weather conditions or other safety concerns arise; the coaching staff will take necessary precautions to limit possible risk to the students. Students are informed of changes in practice schedules through school announcements at WPHS prior to dismissal.

Parents are an integral component to the WPCB safety plan, providing transportation of students as indicated. The coaching staff provides oversight for students during practices at WPHS and/or at practice site locations. All WPCB policies regarding the supervision of students at practice and during chartered transportation follow FCPS guidelines.

West Potomac Sports Letters

A varsity letter, varsity participation award, junior varsity award, or freshmen participation award is given in recognition of an athlete's skill and performance during a single season. Skill is demonstrated by the athlete earning a position, as a rower or a coxswain, in the appropriate level boat. Performance is demonstrated through participation in competition, as well as behavior and actions on and off the water during the season. In all cases, the athlete must finish the season in good standing, to include any selection and participation in post season regattas.

Varsity Letter

Varsity letters are awarded to members of the team that are selected for the Men's or Women's Varsity boats (1st Eight or Four, Lightweight Eight or Four when there is no Varsity 1st Eight or 1st Four and/or Junior Eight or Four when there is no Varsity 1st Eight or 1st Four). If at some time after the 3rd regatta of the season a 1st (Varsity) Eight is broken up into 1st (Varsity) Four and a 2nd, Junior or Lightweight Four, these athletes may still receive a letter at the end of the season. If a 1st (Varsity) Eight is broken up into fours at or before the 3rd regatta or scrimmage then a letter is not guaranteed.

Should a member of a Men's or Women's Varsity boat be removed from one of these boats and placed in a lower boat at any time before the last five events of the regatta season including the post season regattas, Stotesbury Cup and the SRAA Nationals, they may or may not receive a letter depending on the circumstance.

Recognizing the dedication and discipline crew demands, a varsity letter may be awarded to a graduating senior who has participated in crew for at least two years, but has not met the achievement criteria. In addition, an athlete or boat may be awarded letters for outstanding performance in a VASRA Championship event (1st Eight, Four, Quad, Double, Single, 2nd Eight or Four, Lightweight 8 or Four) or its equivalent, as deemed appropriate by the Head Coach.

Varsity Participation Award

A varsity participation award may be awarded to any athlete or boat when performance, commitment, and attitude are of such that they do not meet the criteria for a letter, but their accomplishments are beyond the expected goals for the season. As deemed appropriate by the Head Coach

Junior Varsity Award

Junior varsity awards are normally awarded to novice athletes and boats. (A novice in crew is defined as a rower regardless of age or grade that has not competed in a high school rowing competition before joining their current team.) Since rowing in VASRA does not recognize nor have junior varsity events like many other sports do, and since other sports do not have Novice

events, West Potomac Crew chooses to award novice athletes and boats the junior varsity award, as deemed appropriate by the Head Coach.

Freshmen Participation Award

The freshmen participation award is given to athletes who row in either the Men's or Women's Freshmen Eight should the team field one of these boats in any given year, as deemed appropriate by the Head Coach.

All awards are coaching decisions only and are at the discretion of the Head Coach with input from Lead and assistant coaches, taking into account a number of criteria including, but not limited to participation, performance, skill level, commitment, and attitude.

Crew award winners are recognized at West Potomac's Spring Athletic Awards Dinner which is normally scheduled during the first week in June for the School special awards (e.g. MVP, Coaches Award, Scholar Athlete, etc). Letters, participation certificates, and Team special awards (e.g. Sportsman Award, Outstanding Freshmen Award, etc.) are presented at the team end of the season party normally held the first or second weekend in June.

Uniforms and Other Attire

For competitions, rowers are required to wear the team uniform. Uniforms cost around \$130, and are ordered in early February. Other optional team items, such as sweatpants, sweat shirts, jackets and various T-shirts are also available for purchase. For practice early in the season, layers work best: a T-shirt under a sweatshirt and thermal underwear or Lycra tights under shorts and sweat pants. A windbreaker, wool socks, and a wool hat are important. For rain, a waterproof layer is essential. Rowers should take extra clothes for changing after practice.

The Social Side

Boosters

The social side of crew offers opportunities for rowers and parents to get to know the coaches, the booster officers, and each other. Parents and rowers meet at potluck dinners or picnics in the fall, in February to open the season, and in June. These booster meetings provide the chance to ask questions, receive information, and sample wonderful food! In addition, the many volunteering opportunities for fundraising events and club operations provide a forum to meet and socialize with other rower parents, (volunteering is more fun than work).

Crew parents typically create a WePo spectator group at the regattas sharing binoculars, programs and opinions on the races. Wear your team colors!

Boat Dinners

Traditionally, rowers precede each race with a team or boat dinner. On a rotational basis, parents volunteer to host a Friday night pasta party for their students' boat before each Saturday regatta. The members of the boat attend the party after Friday's practice. Count on 8 to 12 rowers attending. A simple and energizing meal will include pasta, salad, bread, and beverage. These parties provide an opportunity for a boat crew to bond together and build

team spirit.

Fundraisers

WP Crew does not receive any funding from Fairfax County or from West Potomac High School. The annual dues only begin to cover the team's financial needs. In order to meet our team's annual budget of approximately \$100,000, it's necessary for us all to get involved with fundraising. Fundraising is done primarily in the fall and winter so that the team can focus on racing in the spring. Several of our many potential sources of income are described below.

Grocery e-Scrip

Please enroll in Safeway's e-scrip program (or similar programs from other merchants where a percentage of your receipts are donated to a cause of one's choosing); you painlessly donate to the team each time you shop. Qualifying purchases made between October and May each year will be credited to WPCB. Go to escrip.com and look for "West Potomac Crew Boosters; Group ID: 149869798."

Fall Mum Sale

Each fall at back-to-school night, the team sells beautiful fall mum plants to kick start our fundraising season.

Combined Federal Campaign

West Potomac Crew's Combined Federal Campaign # is 29561 and will be in place for the 2014-2015 crew season.

Holiday Wreath and Garland Sales

The wreath and garland sales begin the weekend after Thanksgiving and continue until Christmas. We sell a variety of wreaths and garlands. Our primary site is at Carl Sandburg Middle School, alongside the Wolverine Athletic Boosters' tree sales lot. We also have sales at Hollin Hills. Every crew family is expected to volunteer for at least two shifts. It's a great way to kick off the Holiday Season, surrounded by wreaths, Christmas trees and friends.

Tag Day

Tag Day is designed as a day to inform the community of the activities of the West Potomac Crew team. Teams of rowers go door-to-door in designated neighborhoods, providing a schedule (the "Tag") of this spring's Crew regattas. This event provides athletes an opportunity to collect donations for the team and to build community awareness for the crew team events. Following Tag Day activities there is often pizza for all the participants.

Write To Row

In December, the team solicits the local business community for tax-deductible donations through a letter writing campaign

Erg-a-thon

In January the team participates in an “erg-a-thon” which is similar to a walk-a-thon except, rather than walking for a cause, they are putting the skills and strength they gathered during winter conditioning on the ergometers (rowing machines) to the test. The rowers use Crowdfunding to solicit donations from family and friends starting in December.

Student Fundraisers

The students have participated in several fundraisers including car washes, and more. We're open to any fund raising activities which may present themselves during the course of the year.

Rowing Shells and Equipment

The boats, or shells, are of two types and reflect the forms of rowing- sweep rowing and sculling. In sweep rowing, each rower handles a single oar about 12.5 feet long and in sculling a rower uses two oars, each about 9.5 feet long. The word "shell" is used in reference to the boats because the hull is only about 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick to make it as light as possible. These shells are long and as narrow as possible. The subtypes of rowing shells are classified according to the number of rowers in the shell.

Sweep Boats – Each rower uses one oar.

(2+) Coxed Pair- Two sweep rowers with a coxswain.

(2-) Coxless Pair- Two sweep rowers without a coxswain.

(4-) Coxless Four or Straight Four- Four sweep rowers without a coxswain.

(West Potomac does not row pairs or Straight Fours.)

(4+) Coxed Four- Four sweep rowers with a coxswain.

(8+) Eight sweep rowers with a coxswain. (The eight always has a coxswain.)

The normal configuration of a sweep boat has oars alternating between starboard and port sides of the boat.

Sculling Boats – Each rower uses two oars.

(1X) Single- One rower, called a sculler.

(2X) Double- Two scullers.

(4X) Quadruple or Quad- Four scullers.

The eight-oared shells are sixty feet long, only two feet wide, and weigh about 230 pounds or less. Single sculling boats are about 26 feet long, less than a foot wide, and can weigh as little as 30 pounds.

The Coxswain

The shell is commanded by the coxswain (pronounced cox'n). This is the oarless athlete, who looks toward the finish line, usually sitting in the rear (stern) of the shell. The coxswain manages the rowers during practices and races, gives the commands that keep the boat pulling together in unison, and steers the boat using a rudder. The coxswain, or "cox," is in complete control of the movement of the shell on and off the water.

The Rowers

The rowers sit in a line down the center of the shell, with their backs to the direction the shell is moving. Power is generated using a blended sequence of the rowers' leg, back, and arm muscles. Each rower sits on a sliding seat with wheels on a track, called the slide. Each oar is

held in a U-shaped swivel, called an oarlock, mounted on a metal pin at the end of a rigger. The rowers' feet are secured in adjustable brackets, called foot stretchers.

Timing must be excellent in a good crew. All the oarsmen must hit their catches simultaneously – that is, the blades of all the oars must enter the water at the same time. Similarly, the pull through (the portion of the stroke while the blades are in the water) and the finish of the stroke must be performed in unison.

To the spectator, the achievement of perfect synchronization appears easy. However, these movements must be done with such rhythm and control that the rower never checks the forward momentum of the boat. Rowing should be a continuous, fluid motion.

The whole body is involved in moving the shell through the water. Although rowing looks like an upper-body sport, strong legs are really more important. The rower begins at "rest" with legs fully extended and the oar blades immersed in the water, almost perpendicular to the surface. The rower must slide forward to the front end of the slide; reach out with the oar and make the catch; apply pressure, first with the legs and back, driving the seat backwards on the slide, finish the stroke with a full body swing, and draw the arms into the body; flip the wrists and push the oar handle from the body in a single motion to bring the blade into the water; and slide forward to begin a new stroke.

Rowing Terminology

Release - A sharp downward and away motion of the hand, which serves to remove the oar blade from the water. As the blades are brought out of the water, they should move horizontally at the same height, just above the water.

Feathering - The turning of the oar blade from a position perpendicular to the surface of the water to a position parallel to the water, in conjunction with the release.

Recovery - The part of the rowing cycle from the release up to and including the catch, where the blade enters the water.

Squaring - A gradual rolling of the oar blade from a position parallel to the water's surface to a position almost perpendicular to the surface, in conjunction with the recovery.

Catch - An upward motion of the arms causes the blade to enter the water. The catch should occur at the very end of the recovery, when the hands are as far ahead of the rower as possible. The blade must be fully squared at the catch. A lot of splash means the oars aren't entering the water correctly.

Drive - The rower applies power to the oar, with a leg drive, then the back, and finally the arms.

Finish - The last part of the drive where the power comes from the rower's back and arms.

Layback - The amount of backward lean of the rower's body at the end of the finish.

Rating (Stroke Rating) - The number of strokes per minute. Stroke rates vary from boat to boat, depending on the number of rowers and size of the athletes.

Ratio - The ratio of recovery time to drive time.

Set (Set of the Boat) - The form or carriage of the shell and the rowers that establishes stability.

Seat Positions in Eights and Fours

Seat #8 (or #4 in a Four) - Known as the “Stroke” position. The rower with the smoothest stroke and the most competitive fire leads the rhythm of the boat and sets the stroke length and cadence. The stroke sits nearest the stern and provides information about trailing boats to the coxswain in Eight boats and stern-coxed Fours.

Seat #7 (or #3) - This rower leads the starboard side. The 7-man must mimic the movement of the “stroke's” body. It is essential that the stroke and the 7-man put their oars in at the same time and take them out simultaneously.

Seat #6 - The 6-man is often one of the largest and/or strongest rowers in the boat. The 6-man, 5-man, 4-man, and 3-man of an Eight, called the middle four (or engine room), provide the power for the boat. The center of the boat is most stable, so small movements of the hands or body will have less effect on the setup of the boat. The middle four must swing together as a group, using as much power from their legs as possible.

Seat #5 - The 5-man is usually the strongest rower on the starboard side of the boat. This is the most stable seat, as the 5-man sits over the center of the boat.

Seat #4 - This position is also filled by one of the strongest rowers in the boat. The weight and slope of the boat puts the 6-man, the 5-man, and the 4-man closest to the water level.

Seats #2 and 3 - These rowers add strength and support the task of rowing.

Seat #1 - Also known as the “bow man”, is the rower with the most balance and control. The bow man provides information about trailing boats to the coxswain in bow-coxed Fours and is the oarsman who is directly involved with steering of coxless boats.

Equipment Terminology

Blades - The wide flat section of the oar at the head of the shaft. West Potomac's blades are royal blue with three diagonal white stripes.

Bow - The front end of the shell.

Button (Collar) - A plastic or metal fitting tightened on the oar to keep it from slipping through the oarlock.

Ergometer (Erg) - A rowing exercise machine that simulates the physical demands of rowing.

Foot Stretchers - The adjustable brackets in a shell to which the rower's feet are secured in a shoe or clog.

Gunwale (Gunnel) - The top section of the sides of a shell, onto which the riggers are connected with bolts.

Hatchets - A relatively new design of oar blades with a larger surface area under the water than the standard blades.

Keel - The center line of the boat.

Oarlock - A U-shaped swivel, mounted on a metal pin at the end of a rigger, which holds the oar in its place.

Pitch - The angle between a line perpendicular to the water's surface and the blade, on the drive when the blade is "squared."

Port - The left side of the shell when facing the bow.

Rigger (Outrigger) - A device, bolted to the body of the shell, which connects the oarlock to the shell.

Rigging - The adjustments of accessories (riggers, foot stretchers, oars, etc.) in and on the shell. Examples of rigging adjustments are the height of the rigger, location of the foot stretchers, location and height of the oarlocks, location of the button, and the pitch of the blade.

Rudder - The steering device at the stern, connected to cables, called tiller ropes, which are used by the coxswain to steer the shell.

Scull - An oar used in a sculling shell, the shell itself, or the act of rowing a sculling shell.

Shell - The special racing boats made of fiberglass or lightweight wood used in crew.

Skeg (Fin) - A small fin located along the stern of the hull to stabilize the shell.

Slide - The track on which the seat moves.

Slings (Boat Slings) - The collapsible, portable frames with straps where a shell can be placed temporarily.

Starboard - The right side of the shell when facing the bow.

Stern - The rear end of the shell.

Technical Difficulties

Check – Any abrupt deceleration of the shell caused by some uncontrolled motion within the shell.

Crab – A problem encountered when a rower's oar gets "stuck" in the water, caused by improper squaring or feathering.

Jumping the Slide – A problem encountered by a rower when the seat becomes derailed from the track during the rowing cycle.

Missing Water (Rowing into the Catch) – The rower starts the drive before the catch has been completed.

Skying – The fault of carrying the hands too low during the recovery, resulting in the blade being too high off the water's surface.

The West Potomac Crew Boosters

Purpose and Organization

The West Potomac Crew Boosters is an organization in Fairfax County, incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia as a non-profit entity. The purpose of the West Potomac Crew Boosters as accorded by the Constitution and By-Laws (C&BL) is to provide necessary leadership, education, training, financial aid, assistance, and encouragement, in cooperation with the public school officials of Fairfax County, for the support of the rowing crews of West Potomac High School. The Crew Boosters is comprised of regular members, honorary members and coaches and is governed by the Board of Directors.

Membership

Regular membership is open to any individual or family who has expressed or demonstrated an interest in the welfare of the West Potomac High School Crews, is current in payment of dues, and has agreed to support the organization and to abide by the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws and decisions of the officers. Honorary membership may be conferred upon any individual who, having made an outstanding contribution to Fort Hunt High School or West Potomac High School Crew, has been proposed and voted on by the Board of Directors.

Board of Directors

There are seven members of the Board of Directors of the Corporation and include the six officers (President, Vice President for Ways and Means, Vice President for Administration, Vice President of Operations, Treasurer, and Secretary) and one Member-at-Large. The Constitution and By-Laws do not specify Board member duties, except as officers of the Corporation, though it does specify certain duties and responsibilities of "the Board" as a whole. One of the most important roles that goes along with being a member of the Board of Directors is the implied Board member role, which includes consultation, consideration, discussion, weighing, and voting on issues before the Board.

Crew Team Positions

Club President

Open to juniors and seniors, should be a member of the team for at least one full season, preferably two seasons.

Senior Captains – Men and Women

Open to all seniors, must be a member of the team for at least two full seasons. Runs workouts and assists coaches, booster board, and parent coordinators. Other required duties as assigned.

Junior Captains – Men and Women

Open to all juniors, must be a member of the team for at least one full season. Runs workouts and assists coaches, booster board and parent coordinators. Other required duties as assigned.

All of these positions require:

- Strong leadership, organizational skills and public speaking qualities.
- Focused and dedicated athlete, both on and off the water (an in the off season).
- Ability to effectively communicate with athletes, parents and coaching staff, as well as members of the West Potomac Crew Boosters organization.
- Approachable, level-headed, even tempered. Willing to listen to thoughts and opinions of teammates and be able to take these issues to the coaches.
- Dedicated to positively contributing to a competitive and successful rowing program.
- Supports the team's rules, expectations and policies.
- Required work for the board and coaching staff throughout the year. These positions are not just running workouts, you support the entire team.
- Responsive to requests of your time.
- Additional time and attention above and beyond workouts and practices. Will be active members of the team representing all teammates, the school and the boosters.