

Wildwater Races Sponsored By:

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Rains swell river for clinic
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HUNTINGTON - The recent rains mean this Sunday's paddling clinic, a kind of warm-up run for the upcoming Westfield River Wildwater races, should go as scheduled.

"We will be good to go Sunday," race coordinator Jeffrey M. DeFeo said yesterday.

The first of three such planned clinics was canceled last Sunday due to low water. "But, it came up quite a bit with that rain and it will definitely be doable (this Sunday)" DeFeo said.

Sunday's clinic and a final clinic set for April 15 will both begin 1 p.m. at the state Department of Public Works yard off Route 112.

The races themselves, however, sponsored by The Republican newspaper and set for April 22 and 23, are not dependent on water conditions because the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can raise the water level by releasing water from its flood control dams.

Participants need to show up with the appropriate equipment, including their own canoes or kayaks, DeFeo said. There is no fee or advance registration for the clinics.

This year's races are dedicated to Jurgen G. Igel, a long-time co-chairman of the event with DeFeo, who passed away in July.

The April 22 race, which begins at the state Department of Public Works yard, is eight miles long and is for novice classes. Registration begins at 8 a.m. and the race begins at 10 a.m.

Professionals and experts compete in a 12-mile race that begins April 23 at the base of Knightville Dam, located off Route 112. Registration begins 9:30 a.m. and the race begins at 11 a.m.

For more information, call DeFeo at (413) 354-9684.