

INTERNATIONAL BREAST CANCER PADDLERS' COMMISSION



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Making Strides

By: Jane Frost, IBCPC
Vancouver, B.C. Canada

2013 has flown by and the 2014 IBCPC Sarasota Festival is fast approaching. Registration has been an overwhelming success with 100 teams registered to date. January 15, 2014 registration will open for individual paddlers and small groups of paddlers who are not part of a team coming to the event. We welcome these participants. We anticipate over 4,000 paddlers and supporters painting the charming city of Sarasota a very bright and happy shade of fuchsia.

The co-chairs of the event, Kim Bonomo from Save Our Sisters, Miami and Paula Jennings Pink Dragon Ladies, Tampa Bay have made many organising visits to Sarasota. (You can read a firsthand account of a day in the life of a festival organiser in this newsletter and on our two websites: www.ibcpc.com and www.sarasotabcs-2014festival.org)

One of my highlights this past year has been the recruitment of National Representatives for countries that are IBCPC members. Each of our member teams has been assigned an IBCPC National Representa-

tive who will be liaising with the IBCPC Steering Committee and the member teams. You can find your representative at www.ibcpc.com

An exciting development has been the stirrings of new teams in Central and South America, as well as the continuing growth of teams in Europe. Remeras Rosas is forming in La Plata, Argentina. This team is not yet on the water but they are having a lot of fun planning and partying. There is also interest from Buenos Aires, Puerto Rico and Brazil all thanks to a very enthusiastic member of Abreast In A Boat, Adriana Bartoli, Vancouver, Canada. (See September 2013 Newsletter)

It is such fun to turn on my computer and wonder who I am going to hear from today. One of our newest contacts is "Our Man in Istanbul", Cengiz Unutmaz. IBCPC Secretary Treasurer Jenny Yule and her husband, Ken, were fortunate to meet Cengiz in Istanbul this summer. Another newly-launched team is coming together in Detroit, Michigan, USA under the leadership of Csilla Gutay who keeps me up-to-date on their innovative activities.

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Jane Frost, President of International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission is a Canadian living in Vancouver, British Columbia. She was a member of the first breast cancer dragon boat paddling team when it was established in the city in 1996. Since then she has been an active advocate not only in her own country but also world-wide, of the benefits of paddling. She is making strides as her Annual Report to members illustrates.

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Contact us: newsletter@ibcpc.com

Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Breast-Cancer-Paddlers-Commission/100527470038071>

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Additionally, there is the Israeli doctor who saw the breast cancer dragon boat festival in May 2012 on the Sea of Galilee and wants to start a team in Bucharest, Romania where she now lives. You may also remember the inquiry I had from Serbia. Although this country does not yet have a dragon boat team, they now have the first breast cancer support group in Serbia. And there is recent news from Sandee Thompson, a Canadian woman, now living in Qatar. Sandee is forming a team in this part of the world, a new country member for IBCPC.

I enjoy working on the newsletter as the response is most encouraging. I am pleased to report there were almost 4,000 downloads of the September 2013 issue. Please encourage your team mates, friends and family

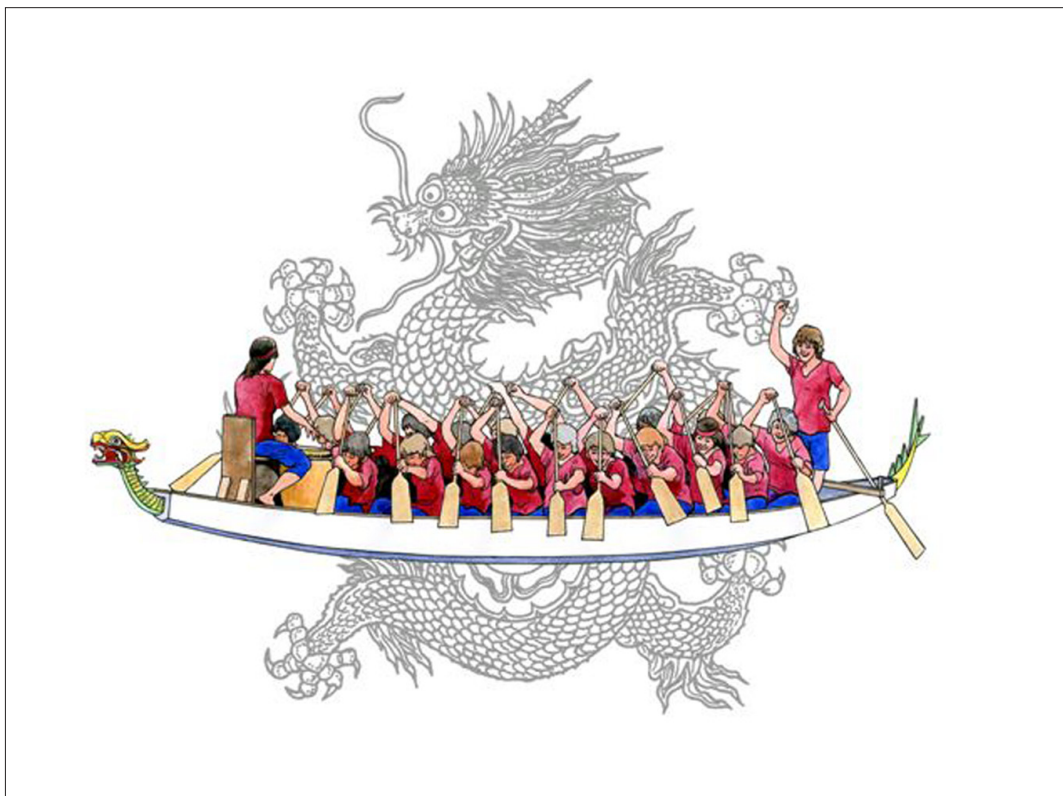
to subscribe by going to www.ibcpc.com. We welcome articles and photos which tell the communities about breast cancer paddlers and what is happening to them in different parts of the world.

To my fellow IBCPC Steering Committee members and their helpers, my sincere thanks for the good work you do to make this organisation successful. And, to you our members, thank you for all you do to support one another and to further our cause of raising awareness about life after a diagnosis of and treatment for breast cancer.

My best wishes for 2014. See you in Sarasota.

Jane Frost

The Perfect Gift



The John Lyman Book Award was granted to Gordon Miller (gordon_miller.ca), Canadian artist and author who generously created this image on the International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission note cards. The award was given in recognition of the excellence of his 2012 book "*Voyages to the New World and Beyond*". This award is presented annually by the North American Society of Oceanic History for a book that makes a significant contribution to the study and understanding of maritime and naval history in North America.

A package of six cards makes a perfect gift for family and friends of breast cancer paddlers. Please send a cheque or money order for \$15 per package to IBCPC, 6062 Macdonald Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V6N 1E3.

“The whole experience can only be described as magical”

By: Jenny Yule,
Abreast In A Boat, Vancouver, BC, Canada



Jenny Yule, in the striped T-shirt, among her Turkish friends two days after leaving Vancouver, Canada in August of this year.

Istanbul, a huge city more than 1500 years old with approximately twenty million people, straddles two continents separated by the Bosphorus. It was there on a glorious summer evening that I had the delight of joining Pembe Lotus, or Pink Lotus, Turkey's first breast cancer dragon boat team, at its practice. This is a new team - it's been paddling since April of this year and in September joined 110 teams in its second dragon boat Festival, the Kurumlararasi Dragon Festivali, for which it was preparing. As we met and despite my not understanding a word of Turkish it was easy to capture the absolute joy and enthusiasm of the team. With the happy chatter of the paddlers and the coach's commands in Turkish we glided out onto the waters of the Golden Horn against the famous backdrop of the Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia and the Topkapi Palace. As the sun set into a magnificent red and the calls to prayer resonated around the Golden Horn the whole experience can only be described as magical.

The inspiration and driving force behind Pembe Lotus is its non-paddling captain Cengiz Unutmaz. He is dedicated to the concept of good health through proper diet and exercise for everyone and particularly for those recovering from cancers of all types. His primary focus is breast cancer survivors. He was supported by Dr Don McKenzie, the Canadian doctor who established, in 1996, the first breast cancer dragon boat team. Cengiz also consulted the American College of Sports

Medicine about dragon boat paddling. His use of the College's fitness programme has won him the support of the medical profession in Istanbul. In addition to his work with Pembe Lotus he has been invited to speak on a medical panel to an eastern European audience about the significance of dragon boat paddling for breast cancer survivors.

To meet the training needs of his paddlers who live in different parts of Istanbul, in fact on different continents, Cengiz has arranged two training centres - one in an oncology clinic on the European side and the other in a private club across the Bosphorus on the Asian side. At the club, under the watchful eye of their trainer, I saw some of the Pembe Lotus team members hard at work on one aspect of their training - their individually computer programmed krankcycle. This stationary bike, "peddled" with one's arms and designed to build upper body, cardio and core strength, is programmed to individual fitness and needs. The bike and the ladies' performance was most impressive. Regular attendance at the training sessions is a requirement of paddling and is approved by the paddlers' doctors.

Cengiz's commitment and vision knows no bounds and the delight and enthusiasm of the team both on and off the water speaks for itself. Both Cengiz and Pembe Lotus are hopeful that some of its paddlers will be able to attend the 2014 IBCPC Participatory Festival in Sarasota.

Dear Dr. Don:

Getting your Questions Answered

Dr Don McKenzie, founder and coach of the first breast cancer dragon boat team, Abreast In A Boat, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada (1996) does a regular column in this newsletter. Please submit your questions by visiting our website: www.ibcpc.com and click on the newsletter icon.



Question: What progress has been made in the study of upper extremity lymphedema in women who have been treated for breast cancer?

Answer: We have come a long way. In the spring of 1996, the original 24 women from Abreast in A Boat volunteered to paddle a dragon boat to demonstrate that repetitive, strenuous, upper body exercise would not cause lymphedema, a potential side-effect of breast cancer treatment that most patients fear. Traditional medi-

cine always errs on the side of conservative treatment; these decisions are often not based on empirical evidence but rather on what seemed to work in the past and was accepted as standard of care. In that era, to exercise during or after treatment was a foreign concept and not recommended- forbidden to women who simply wished to return to a full and active life.

The success of the dragon boat program begged the question 'why didn't these women develop lymphedema?' This initiated a new round of research that investigated lymphatic function and exercise. Our lab at the University of British Columbia, and several others, have been active in this initiative and the literature in this area has grown exponentially. Solid science has given us a better look at how physical activity influences the breast cancer patient and the woman with lymphedema. It is clear that exercise, when performed in a progressive fashion, does not cause lymphedema. Exercises to restore range of motion and strength to the chest wall, shoulder and upper

extremity are beneficial and regular physical activity has effects that extend well beyond cancer. Publications in the top medical journals are beginning to change the way clinicians think about lymphedema. Recently, there was a report in the New England Journal of Medicine on the benefits and safety of resistance exercise in patients with lymphedema. We have come a very long way from False Creek in Vancouver, where the first group of courageous women were prepared to challenge the myth that exercise would result in lymphedema.

In 2013 the thinking regarding physical activity and breast cancer has changed. Exercise programs for women, during chemotherapy, are common and the benefits to the physical and mental health have been repeatedly documented. Lymphedema still occurs and there are important guidelines to follow, but it is not feared the way it was 20 years ago. Those 24 women-among them, Jane Frost, President of IBCPC have opened the door to a new era of health and wellness.

What in the World is Going On?



February 1, 2014 Puerto Rico
Second Annual Puerto Rico Dragon Boat Festival on Lago Cerrillos, Ponce, PR
www.puertoricodragonboat.com



October 19, 2014 Australia
7th Annual Dragons Abreast Australia
Location to be determined
festival@dragonsabreast.org.au



August 27, 2014 Ravenna, Italy
International Dragon Boat Federation
9th Club Crew World Championships
www.idbf.org



October 24-26, 2014, Sarasota, Florida, USA
IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival
www.sarasotabcs2014festival.org

The IBCPC invites teams to post events of interest to paddlers on the above Bulletin Board. To do so email the information to newsletter@ibcpc.com The IBCPC takes no responsibility for events by reason of the posting. Where travel to another country is involved, teams are advised to consult their respective Government's Travel Advisory.

Meet two of Canada's new National Representatives

As new teams join the IBCPC, the Steering Committee is working with these teams to appoint a representative who will liaise between the country's team(s) and the IBCPC. Being active in their respective communities, these individuals will ensure there are good communication channels to and from the IBCPC.



Peggy Hurley

Peggy Hurley is a founding member of the WonderBroads of Windsor Essex County, Ontario. She has served on the executive as Chairperson, Captain, Steer and Coach, and was awarded A Woman of Influence in 2011.

Peg has been involved with the International Dragon Boats for the Cure at their home festival in Tecumseh, Ontario which attracts up to 100 teams from Ontario and the United States. This festival has raised awareness about breast cancer and dragon boating for over 10 years. Over one million dollars has been raised for local breast cancer causes!

Like many, Peg has attended all the IBCPC International events. Being of Irish descent one of Peg's favourite regattas was in Dublin, Ireland where Peg and four Wonderbroads team mates went to help out and participate in the first Irish dragon boat event. She reports that these women literally pick their boats up to put them in the water.

In 1994, at age 31 she received her breast cancer diagnosis. She is happy to say she just celebrated her 50th birthday and is grateful to be passionate about such an inspirational, rewarding sport. The lifelong friendships made are priceless.

Peg works at Chrysler Canada in Windsor "home of the minivan". In her spare time, she enjoys golf, softball and spending time on the family farm with her golden retriever Bradey. Her family are her friends and her friends are her family.

She is honoured to be one of six IBCPC Canadian National Representatives and has responsibility for the following teams: A Breast or Knot, Windsor, Breast Buddies, Sarnia Breast Strokes, Guelph, Dragons Abreast, Toronto, Hope Floats, St. Catharines, Knot A Breast, Hamilton, Rowbust, London and Wonder Broads, Windsor.



Suzanne Bodner

Suzanne founded Chestmates Dragon Boat team in 2002 in Kingston Ontario, Canada when her unbridled enthusiasm to start a team garnered the support of the local breast cancer organization, Breast Cancer Action Kingston (BCAK). Not only did she serve as team captain for the first four years, but she also initiated and organized other programs for BCAK – an annual retreat, an exercise class, and a yoga class for those diagnosed with breast cancer.

Suzanne paddled her heart out with both Chestmates and Canadians Abreast, loving every moment of feeling the power of friendship and the heart-pounding joy of physical activity. However, while travelling in South Africa on an adventure tour after the international Capetown dragon boat festival, Suzanne broke her back in an accident which ended her paddling days. However, the accident also gave her the opportunity to be filled with gratitude for the local and worldwide support she received from her sister dragon boaters after her surgery in South Africa and during her recovery at home in Kingston. Now, she channels her energies into acting as "the history book" and mentor for Chestmates' newbies. Suzanne is also very proud of her work in leading a team of musicians and artists to produce and launch the fundraising CD "Take it Away", the survivor dragon boat song whose lyrics were written by a Chestmates teammate and which is now played at Flower Ceremonies all around the world.

Contributing to the IBCPC newsletter as a writer, editor and translator has been a joy for Suzanne. She is also enthusiastic about and honoured to take on her new role as National Representative for Eastern Ontario. These contributions are her way of saying "thanks" and for staying connected to those who ride the dragon.

She is responsible for the Ontario teams in Ottawa, Bethany, Kingston, Lindsay, Pickering, Amprior, Barrie and Peterborough.

Moving to a different part of the world

By: Sandee Thompson
Doha Dragons, Qatar



The first dragon boat team in Qatar is pictured here in front of Doha on the Persian Gulf. Canadian Sandee Thompson is the only breast cancer survivor on the team and she is going to start a breast cancer dragon boat team as soon as she finds enough survivors.

Doha Dragons, a brand new dragon boat society, and am hoping to form a survivor team once I find some more survivors! I have also agreed to be the 'face' of a breast cancer survivor at my college. We did a week of breast cancer awareness activities including a mini-flashmob, bake sale, speakers and walks around campus.

In Qatar, Dr. Mahasen, at the Qatar Cancer Society, spends her time doing community outreach in schools and businesses. There is a women's hospital that provides workshops on breast self-examinations and clinical exams and mammograms are done at numerous hospitals in the city. You can just walk in and have one done that day! The Qatar Cancer Society, Hyatt Group and Think Pink Qatar all provide volunteer services to survivors including fundraising events, speakers, discussion groups and hospital support for appointments and treatment.

Sandee Thompson is a transplanted dragon boater from the Bosom Buddies, Nova Scotia, Canada. She is currently working at the College of the North Atlantic in Doha, the capital of the State of Qatar.

Living life as a breast cancer survivor can be disconcerting. In order to cope with this new event, we restructure our lives in some way in order to accommodate and beat this demon. My way is to have a good cry and then get deeply involved in whatever is going on.

In Doha, Qatar, despite groups being advertised, you really have to search to find groups related to cancer and people willing to talk about it. I have joined the recently created

20% of all cancers in Qatar are breast cancer and many of those diagnosed have been in the later stages because breast cancer is not openly talked about in Qatar, where modesty and privacy are highly valued. However, there were pink ribbons all over the city this past month and the country's awareness campaign is having an effect on numbers of women being diagnosed earlier. This is huge progress and it can only get better now that the country is on a roll.

Argentina survivors in first stages of organizing



Breast cancer survivors in La Plata, Argentina do not have a dragon boat yet, in fact there are no dragon boats in Argentina, but that has not stopped this crew from planning and partying. A very important endorsement has come to this team, Remeras Rosa from the prestigious organization, Argentine Association of Sport Traumatology. Visit www.aatd.org.ar

The Journey of a Thousand Miles, in the Footsteps of John Muir

By: Emma Herman-Smith
Port Edgar Dragons, River Forth, Scotland



"I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in."
— John Muir

With somewhat more than the fabled 'twist of tea and hunk of bread', I will follow in the footsteps of Scottish-born American naturalist John Muir who, in 1867, walked from Indiana to the Gulf of Mexico on a 'floral pilgrimage'. At Cedar Keys, where he sailed on to Cuba, I will continue on to Sarasota, Florida to take part in the International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission Participatory Dragon Boat Festival - 'A Celebration of Life'.

I shall start my journey in July 2014 by sailing on a cargo ship from Southampton, England, to New York City and then by bus to Jeffersonville, Indiana where I will begin

***Editor's note:** At press time we received news from Emma that her current health will prevent her from undertaking this journey. However, we are publishing her story as we felt readers would like to know about her planned fund-raiser and participation in the Sarasota event.

to follow Muir's route. He was the American conservationist who was a major influence in the formation of the National Parks system including both Yellowstone and Yosemite Parks, and the Sierra Club. My walk will mark the centenary of his death.

Money raised along the way will be shared between the John Muir Trust (the Scottish equivalent of the Sierra Club) and Paddlers for Life United Kingdom, a national network of breast cancer dragon boat teams. Under the Paddlers' umbrella I helped establish Edinburgh's Port Edgar Dragons in 2011.

This will be my first trip to the United States and I shall be photographing, blogging and tweeting every step of the way. As a visual artist focusing on nature, ecology and environment, this documentation will form the basis of a series of art exhibitions beginning in 2015. (www.emma-herman-smith.com)

There is no set trail and most of the walking will be on tarmac, passing through Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia and Florida. This is unlike anything I have done before and I am in full training to ensure the daily 15-25 miles are enjoyable. With the help of local radio, people will be encouraged to walk with me 'an hour or a mile' and I will be strongly reliant on individual kindness and hospitality to help me on my way.

If anyone can help with accommodation, publicity/promotion/sponsorship or a paddling opportunity please email to walking@phonecoop.coop and/or 'Sponsor a Fundraiser' : Emma Herman-Smith : at <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraiser/search.html>

Getting to know us



The International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) is the peak body for dragon boat paddlers worldwide and the IBCPC is a commission of the IDBF. www.ibcpc.com

A Day in the Life of an Event Planner

By: Kim Bonomo,
Save our Sisters, Florida, USA



What a beautiful day it was for the 250-mile drive across Alligator Alley from Miami to Sarasota, the site of the 2014 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival! The purpose of my trip was to check into a myriad of behind-the-scenes details related to the planning of our festival – hotels, transportation, potential sponsors, city logistics, and the race venue itself.

The 2014 festival has brought in an unprecedented number of registered dragon boaters and supporters, all of whom need roofs over their heads. The Committee has had to work on drawing up contracts with almost twice as many hotels as originally planned, and in a much greater radius from the race site. So that morning, I made the rounds, checking out several hotels and their amenities because comfort, safety and access to good food will all contribute to the smiles we are looking forward to seeing next October.

Then on to a meeting with potential sponsors, those

important folks who will help to pay the tens of thousands of dollars of expenses necessary to ensure the anticipated 4000 participants and supporters have a memorably happy experience over the course of the festival. We hope our passionate mission of hope and of increased awareness will convince small and large businesses to take advantage of sponsorship opportunities which will in turn reap them marketing opportunities and economic benefits. Each meeting with a potential sponsor requires detailed individualized preparation, not to mention dogged determination and courage! This one was no exception.

My early afternoon appointment was with the Special Events Department of the City of Sarasota. We spoke about the logistics for the parade and the paddlers' party – police escorts and security, sound and lighting for the stage, food vendors and an army of volunteers to make it all happen. Although some store owners were initially reluctant to close down Main Street on the Saturday evening, when presented with the fact thousands of mostly women with American dollars in their pockets would be eager for some "retail therapy", they assured us they would be ready to welcome us with open arms! And grateful kudos to the Mayor of Peterborough Canada, the site of the 2010 International Festival, for writing a congratulatory letter to the Mayor of Sarasota, helping to pave the way for important cooperation and support from the City.

Finally, came a visit with the management team at our race venue, Nathan Benderson Park, a spectacular first-class rowing facility which will be perfectly adapted to our every dragon boat need. At our meeting, we covered topics such as the placement of the athletes' hospitality tent, the vendor village, and of course, the all-important air-conditioned bathroom trailers. And then there's the Pink Fire Truck.....

All of my official errands done for the day, my head swimming with information, I headed over to Lido Beach to catch the breath-taking sunset, the fine white sand between my toes. I felt satisfied that another few steps had been taken towards realizing the promise of our 2014 Festival logo --- a celebration of "Survivorship and Sisterhood in the Sunshine State".



To register email: registration@sarasotabcs2014festival