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Canadian Festival Raises Record Funds

Every June since 2001, Peterborough's Dragon Boat Festival (PDBF), a signature community event, has raised funds for the Peterborough Regional Health Centre's (PRHC) cancer care program. This major fundraiser has focused on donations to support the hospital's Breast Assessment Centre.

There was much cheering heard on October 6, 2016 during a media event held at the hospital when Festival organizers revealed that \$196,468.50 was raised by the Festival held on June 11, 2016.

Hospital staff and members of Survivors Abreast were on hand to help celebrate along with the Festival's Dragon mascot who delivered the "big" cheque. <u>https://vimeo.com/185860511</u>

There was even more joyous shouting as the 2016 PDBF Festival Chair, **Debbie Keay**, announced that not only had the 2016 Festival fundraising total surpassed the previous year by 20%,

it brought their 16-year total to just shy of \$3 million (\$2,991,636.69). same standard views and compression but the mammography machine moves through an arc during the exposure, acquiring 15 separate images instead of just one and all with minimal increase in radiation dose. The radiologist can then scroll through multiple images, allowing us to "see through" overlapping tissues. This is particularly useful in certain subsets of women, particularly those with dense breasts. Studies have shown that it will not only decrease the need to recall patient for a follow up mammogram, thus reducing anxiety for patients, it can also increase cancer detection rates. Our team of breast imagers at PRHC feels the introduction of tomosynthesis will best serve the women of our community and that the technology should be included when our three mammogram units are replaced," Dr. Harvey said.

"It's being used more and more frequently as a screening

tool for breast cancer. It is basically a more in-depth form

of mammography where the images are acquired with the

Debbie proudly presented the "big" cheque to **Lesley Heighway**, President and CEO of the PRHC Foundation.

"Breast cancer screening saves lives," Heighway said. "Thanks to this incredible contribution, we're just over one third of the way to funding three new full field digital mammography machines for PRHC's Breast Assessment Centre, a \$1.9 million investment that will help PRHC take advantage of new innovations in breast cancer screening, and keep the Breast Assessment Centre state-of-the-art."

Dr. Sarah Harvie, PRHC Interim Chief of Radiology, recently wrote about an emerging diagnostic technology called 3D mammography or tomosynthesis.

Members of Survivors Abreast with festival chair Debbie Keay (far left), incoming Festival co-chairs, Michelle Thornton and Carol Mutton (2nd and 3rd far right kneeling), CEO/President of the Hospital Foundation, Lesley Heighway (2nd far right standing) and Hospital CEO/President Peter McLaughlin, in the back.



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As I See It is a new feature in the IBCPC Newsletter. Designed for paddlers to express their views on issues they see as relevant to our membership, it provides a forum for the candid, unedited exchange of your opinions. If you have points-ofview you wish to express we would welcome hearing from you or if you have comments on either of these two topics please respond to committee@ibcpc.com.

By **Dr Don McKenzie**, *Professor & Director Division of Sport and Exercise, Faculty of Medicine University of British Columbia*, Vancouver, Canada

It is hard to believe that it is over 20 years since 24 women breast cancer survivors stepped into a dragon boat and changed the way the world views this disease. Beginning with this one group, the initial growth in teams and location was fragmented and driven by individual groups of women with passion and drive, who saw the value in the creation of teams and participation in festivals. It was the development of the International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission that has provided the needed structure and leadership.

So where are we in 2017? Based on the membership in the IBCPC, there are teams in almost 200 locations in 6 continents. This is impressive growth that continues each year. Looking at the IBCPC website, it contains a wealth of information and a glance at the map of the worldwide membership is awe-inspiring. Plans for the 2018 IBCPC Participatory Festival in Florence Italy are well underway and that promises to be a treasured experience following in the footsteps of Vancouver. Calou

rience following in the footsteps of Vancouver, Caloundra, Peterborough and Sarasota. It is something to plan for; if you have not been to one of these events it is the Festival that you will not want to miss.

From the medical corner it is rewarding to see there are research groups that have used dragon boat teams as subjects to study a variety of outcome measures. From molecular changes to quality of life, these papers show that dragon boat paddling has a very positive effect on survivors.

In my opinion, the Outreach programs sponsored by the IBCPC are critical to expansion in parts of the world that,

for a variety or reasons, have not engaged. On a recent visit to Argentina I was very impressed when I heard a speech by a senior oncologist/surgeon who admitted that it was time to acknowledge that progress had been made regarding the issue of lymphedema following breast cancer treatment and that exercise was to be encouraged! Wow, music to my ears! Colleagues long ago told me that it would take decades to change traditional medical thinking and it appears they may be correct.

"From molecular changes to quality of life, these papers show that dragon boat paddling has a very positive effect on survivors."

– DR DON McKENZIE

There are still places where the diagnosis of breast cancer is seen as a failure, an embarrassment, something to be hidden. This is where the passion and energy of the IBCPC needs to be directed. Who can argue with a group of breast cancer survivors paddling vigorously on the water demonstrating they can live full and active lives? Most countries have canoe clubs affiliat-

ed with an international governing body

(International Dragon Boat Federation +/or International Canoe Federation) and this is where the connection with sport can be made. The medical contact can also be made through a cancer clinic or agency, which should open the door to the Outreach programs. These are important programs; there are areas where teams will not or can not develop spontaneously and need the guidance that only the IBCPC can provide.

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Gordon Miller, renowned maritime artist and author, donated the art work used in this "As I See It" feature.



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By JANE FROST,

President, IBCPC

Vancouver, Canada

Reading an article on the motivation of dragon boat paddlers I started asking myself what motivates our breast cancer paddlers? The article explained there are two kinds of motivation: intrinsic, motivated by internal things and extrinsic, motivated by external things. The author went on to say that some paddlers are in it for the glory and the medals. Those are my words not hers and others are in it for themselves and their team mates; to make them stronger fitter paddlers and to contribute as a team member. One of the challenges of being a breast cancer paddler is that generally we are older than the average paddler and many of us have had invasive upper body treatment that may have compromised our bodies. Looking to Florence and the 2018 IBCPC Participatory Festival I am reminded it is a participatory festival and as such all different fitness levels are anticipated to attend. The winner will not be a world champion; it is not a world championship event.

We each need to be conscious that everyone who participates is a winner. Dr Don McKenzie, the doctor who initiated this movement, talks about the fact we are winners just making it to the start line and I think he is right. Our race is against breast cancer. We all get medals because we are in that race, proudly spurred on by family and friends. If a team wants to compete in a world championship they have the opportunity to do so by participating in the International Dragon Boat Federation World Club Crew Championships the next one to be held in Szeged, Hungary in July 2018. (date to be confirmed)



First UK team thriving after 12 years

By CHRISTINE BECKWITH, Chairperson

Pool of Life

Liverpool, Great Britain

Hello from Liverpool! We are *Pool of Life*, a registered charity and we were the first breast cancer survivor dragon boat team in the United Kingdom. Twelve years later we are still going strong! We were set up in 2004 by **Eve Elliot Pearson** who is a breast cancer survivor. Eve was in Philadelphia, USA at a five day dragon boat event with Amathus Dragon Boat Club when she heard lots of singing and laughing. She went to investigate and came across her first pink dragon boat team....*Pink Phoenix* from Portland, USA then another, *Chemo Savvy* from Winnipeg, Canada! Eve watched these women race with smiles and joy on their faces and knew we needed this back in Liverpool. It took some time but on October 31, 2004 *Pool of Life* was launched. Each May bank holiday we hold an annual dragon boat festival called Dragons & Flowers. Up to 20 teams of novice paddlers from local schools, hospitals, companies and friends and family come together to compete for various trophies. It takes a lot of planning and effort to make this festival happen and we are assisted by paddlers and coaches from Amathus who provide the helms, safety boats, marshalls and their expertise.

It is an exciting day and the competition is fierce! Teams come in fancy dress and every year the standard is extremely high. Last year we had our very first International team take part, *Donegal Dragons* from Donegal, Ireland. The money we raise from this festival is divided between ourselves and other charities that are chosen by members of the team. Some of the charities we have raised money for in the past are Breast Cancer Care, Water Aid, Halton Haven Hospice, The Teenage Cancer Trust, Prostate Cancer UK. We are currently planning our 6th festival which will take place on Monday 1st May 2017.

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Anniversary Celebrations

As the years float past breast cancer dragon boat teams around the world are celebrating their individual milestones. Here are some events teams are under taking in celebration of their paddling adventures. Please submit any of your special plans to <u>committee@ibcpc.com</u>



Save Our Sisters (SOS), Miami Florida

SOS will proudly celebrate 10 years of survivorship, sisterhood and breast cancer health in 2017. They will host the Dragon Boat Miami races on April 8, 2017 in the calm waters of Key Biscayne, at the renown Miami Marine Stadium. The organisers are anticipating over 30 teams, corporate and community as well as eight breast cancer teams with representatives from all the Florida breast cancer teams.





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Chemo Savvy, Winnipeg, Canada
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The slogan for the year is *Chemo Savvy - 20 Years - Celebrating an Attitude of Gratitude*. Many of their activities and messages are about who has helped them along the way. With the help of some alumni members they are attempting to reach all former members of *Chemo Savvy* and bring them into the fold for this year's celebrations.

February 13th was their Big Kick-off. The Manitoba Legislative building was lit up in pink. The Minister of Sport threw the switch with *Chemo Savvy* members, friends and family in attendance. In the summer a prominent flower bed will be planted on the lawn of the legislature in honour of *Chemo Savvy*'s 20th.

Vancouver, Canada's Women's Festival. They explored the idea of a "big" destination for the year. What they decided is that they wanted to go back to where this breast cancer dragon boat movement started and to express their gratitude to *Abreast in A Boat* (AIAB) for their initiative in beginning this movement. Two crews will be making the trip and AIAB is making plans to entertain them after the Women's Festival in May in the waters of False Creek Vancouver where this paddling began twenty two years ago.

Chemo Savvy is planning some special moments at the Manitoba Dragon Boat Festival from which they hope to raise \$20,000 which will be donated to Cancer Care Manitoba. They are going to hold a family picnic, produce their second book on their second decade of paddling and are considering an art show in the fall that will showcase hand painted paddles from each of the team members.



Dragon Dream Team (DDT), Akron Ohio, USA

DDT is Ohio's first and only all breast cancer survivor dragon boat team. Since part of their mission is to "celebrate great, active life after breast cancer, they decided to celebrate ten active paddling seasons!" They designed a special logo for the year which they are using to promote their annual *Breast* of *Friends* Gala in April and community Dragons on the Lake Dragon Boat Festival on July 8, 2017.

The *Dragon Dream Team* is also honoring it founders; 86 year old survivor, **Jessica Mader** and **Douglas Wagner**, the doctor Jessica convinced to buy her a dragon boat so she could start her own team. They also purchased their third dragon boat that will help them welcome even more survivor sisters and share the hope and camaraderie of dragon boat paddling.

DDT is proud of the many lives they have touched in their 10 years and look forward to continuing their support of each other and to a community of survivors through their **Boat-loads of Hope** outreach. This program has DDT members de-

livering a dragon boat embroidered silk pashmina and their message of encouragement to newly diagnosed survivors in hospitals and cancer centers throughout northeast Ohio.



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Anniversary Celebrations

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Dragons Abreast Australia (DAA)

DA<mark>A started i</mark>ts journey in 1998 when the

first survivor paddlers took to the water in Darwin. New groups followed quickly in Canberra and Brisbane. The ABC TV program, Australian Story, aired a story about DAA in 2004. This national program spread the message about the health benefits and life changing comradery of dragon boat paddling to all parts of Australia and more groups were born. There are currently 32 *Dragons Abreast* groups around Australia.

In 2007 DAA took a leap of faith and held their first *Dragons Abreast* Festival in Sydney's beautiful Darling Harbour. It was a fun competition to draw attention to the issue of breast cancer and the fact survivors can enjoy a great quality of life. The paddlers wanted to show the medical professionals it was a good idea for their patients to become involved in dragon boat racing, so what better way than to actually get them physically into the boat and experience first-hand what this paddling was all about. And so, they converted them to be *Dragons Abreast* missionaries. The medical personnel had a wonderful time, but best of all, they now recommend it to their patients because they've tried it themselves.

2017 marks the 10th anniversary of their Festival in Darling Harbour scheduled for October 21, 2017. DAA is very proud of the positive messages that have been generated by sharing the sport of dragon boating and the stories of breast cancer survivors. It was the determination of a few amazing breast cancer survivors to share the health benefits of dragon boating that started a movement that has stood the test of time and has spread across Australia.

Follow our Festival on f Facebook or Twitter or visit the Dragons Abreast Australia website for more information.



Dragons Abreast (DA), Toronto, Canada

DA is celebrating its 20th anniversary Sept 8 - 10 - first with a gala evening at one of Toronto's nicest dance places, Palais Royale, and then at the Great White North International Dragon Boat Festival which DA consider their home venue.

Also in recognition of their 20 Years and the 150th Anniversary of the founding of Canada, *Dragons Abreast* is going to participate in the week long, 93 km paddle on the Rideau Canal arriving in Ottawa for July 1 celebrations. This event is a fundraiser for Gilda's Club Greater Toronto, a social and emotional support organisation for people living with cancer and their families and friends.

Capsized boat provides lesson in safety

A reminder to us all. A dragon boat capsized and 22 people spilled into the water at Tauranga Harbour on the North Island of New Zealand early in February.

"We had checked the marine forecast and there didn't appear to be white caps but when we got into the channel we got hit with a couple of big gusts of wind, which created a sizable swell and water flowed into the dragon boat and it capsized reported **Colleen Harris**, *Bay of Plenty* Dragon Boat President.

She went on to say "The moment we got further out in the channel I made the decision to turn back, but the swell came over the top of the boat and swamped us. All the crew were wearing life jackets. They followed procedure where we have everybody partnered up before we leave, and everybody hung onto the dragon boat. We were in the water about five minutes before a fishing boat and another wonderful vessel came and picked us all up."

The tide had taken the paddlers clinging to their boat about 100 meters. Once the paddlers were safely on the rescue boats one of the boats went after the dragon boat which had

floated a good 300 meters by the time it was secured.

Meri Gibson, IBCPC Vice President from Christchurch, New Zealand commented when she heard the story that New Zealand maritime law does not require life jackets but the New Zealand Dragon Boat Federation makes the wearing of flotation devises mandatory for all dragon boat paddlers.

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Patience and perseverance in Austria



By SVENJA FRANKE-BRUHN

Vienna Pink Dragons Austria

When we, my friend Nina Kerres and I formed the Vienna Pink Dragons (VPD) almost two years ago, we immediately realized that getting enthusiastic breast cancer survivors on board would not be an easy task.

In addition to the taboos around breast cancer, the idea of being proactive and responsible for one's own health after diagnosis and treatment is still relatively new in Austria. A paradigm shift took place only a few years ago, and now doctors recommend survivors to walk, swim or do yoga. However, dragon boating still rarely appears on their radar screens and latest research

about the benefits of repetitive upper body movement, such as paddling or nordic walking, does not always appear to be integrated into mainstream advice.

Things are also quite strictly regulated here in Austria, even when it comes to putting up leaflets for display in hospitals, which usually requires approval by various committees.

Despite all our efforts, 2015 brought us only two new VPD's, and so we explored other options. We established a very good relationship with Europa Donna Austria an organization that focusses on supporting women who have been diagnosed.

We also highly appreciate the excellent support provided by **Professor Richard Crevenna** from the Oncology Rehabilitation Centre at the Vienna General Hospital, who has supported our plans right from the start and never tires of emphasing the benefits of dragon boating in his many presentations at medical congresses and conferences. He even had a short film produced featuring

"Most importantly, we will see the introduction of a breast cancer category at a dragon boat event in Vienna, the Drachenboot Cup June 10, 2017."





Nina Kerres (left) and Svenja Franke-Bruhn have been working together for two years to raise awareness of the benefits of dragon boat paddling for Austrian people diagnosed with breast cancer. They are planning the first breast cancer race for the Drachenboot Cup Ost June 10, 2017.

our team in a program about oncology rehabilitation on Austrian television.

The year 2017 will see a number of exciting initiatives. Jointly with Europa Donna Austria we will repeat our successful come-and-try event for all interested women (and men) in Vienna. We will continue spreading the word with leaflets, talks, presentations, articles in the press and of course networking with other pink

paddling teams. Most importantly, we will see the introduction of a breast cancer category at a dragon boat event in Vienna, the Drachenboot Cup Ost, June 2017.

We are confident the combination of these activities will continue to raise the awareness in Austria that dragon boating is a joyful and safe way to enjoy a good and active life after diagnosis. Patience and perseverance will help us continue towards our dream of having a full team one day.

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The luck o' the Wonderbroads

By LYNN CHAPPELL

Wonderbroads

Windsor and Essex County, Canada

St Patrick's Day has special meaning for the *Wonderbroads* of Windsor and Essex County, Canada this year. Our International registration to participate in the Dublin Festival, sponsored by the Hong Kong Trade and Economics Office in Dublin has been accepted and we are anxiously counting the days until September 9^{th 2} 2017. March 17th will find us decked out in green and showcasing our boat as we share Dublin plans with friends and supporters.

A few members of our team visited Dublin in August, 2011 to paddle in the first Grand Canal Dock Dragon Boat Festival. They came home in awe of the strength, determination and camraderie of the *Plurabelle Paddlers*. These women shrugged off the great effort made every practice as they launch, paddle and store their boats.

The *Wonderbroad* team was formed in 2003. It has 50 active members. Our membership is varied in both age and experience but like all breast cancer paddlers, we strive to celebrate life and maximize wellness through dragon boat paddling.



The 2017 season will start in April as soon as the ice clears from Lake St. Clair. From that point on, our team will train and practice to be worthy competitors for the participating teams at the Dublin Regatta.

We agree with the famous saying "If you are lucky enough to be Irish... you are lucky enough" but we have our own twist "If you are lucky enough to participate in the Hong Kong Dublin Dragon Boat Regatta... you are lucky indeed!

The *Wonderbroads* feel lucky and blessed. See you in Dublin if you're lucky enough.

Hong Kong Festival adds breast cancer division

By MERI GIBSON, IBCPC Vice President

Abreast of Life Christchurch, New Zealand

Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival, originally Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Regatta, is one of the earliest of its kind and possibly the most representative international dragon boat race events in the world. Held every summer on the weekend after the Dragon Boat Festival Day, it is party time with exciting races, live music, and a few beers under the iconic skyline of Victoria Harbour.

Hong Kong International Dragon Boat Races were first held in 1976 and organized by the Hong Kong Tourist Association (now Hong Kong Tourism Board) in Shau Kei Wan Typhoon Shelter. Other than the nine Hong Kong fishermen teams, a Japanese fishermen team from Nagasaki was also invited to participate in the races. Nobody could have guessed this humble event would go on to spark worldwide interest in dragon boat racing and transform this ancient Chinese folk ritual into a modern international sport. In 2016, around 4,000 athletes representing 15 countries and regions competed. The carnival atmosphere draws thousands of spectators to the stunning Victoria Harbour.

For the last few years the organizers have tried to entice breast cancer survivor teams to



compete, with little luck. They have this year added a cancer survivor division and the stars must have aligned as a number of breast cancer survivor teams are going to participate.

Dragons Abreast Hong Kong founded in 2006 and supported by the Hong Kong Cancer Fund is looking forward to welcoming Abreast of Life, Christchurch, New Zealand, the current New Zealand Breast Cancer Survivor champions and also silver and bronze medalist champions at the 2016 Club Crew World Championships (CCWC) Adelaide, Australia. Boobops, Tauranga, New Zealand who have been past New Zealand champions and rank in the top three New Zealand breast cancer teams will also be going. And, it will be great to paddle alongside the composite team from Melbourne, Australia paddling under the Dambusters banner. It is hoped Pink Paddlers, Singapore who also paddled at the CCWC, will be attending.

INTERNATIONAL BREAST CANCER PADDLERS' COMMISSION

Looking for accommodation at the IBCPC Florence Festival?

2018 IBCPC PARTICIPATORY DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL FLORENCE ITALY



By **LUCIA DE RANIERI**, *President* 2018 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Festival, Florence, Italy

The opening in January of standard registration was a great success. In only a few weeks, many of the open slots were filled, reaching 90 teams registered by mid-February. Teams are coming from around the world: Australia, Canada, USA, Italy, New Zealand, UK, Ireland, Italy and Germany. Additionally, some younger teams from Austria and France have also registered, and brand new teams from Hong Kong and Brazil are now accredited. The 2018 IBCPC Florence Festival promises to be literally a global event, demonstrating how the movement of breast cancer dragon boat teams has spread throughout the world. This is due to the strength and courage of the many people who participate in dragon boating and who commit to and share their joys, fears and enthusiasm for the sport and for life.

The accommodations offered by the Festival's official partner have also had great interest and success. We have accommodations reserved for our participants at all price ranges and always of excellent quality that surely will satisfy everyone's needs. For any information on accommodations you can write directly to the following e-mail address: <u>festival2018@enicbooking.com</u>, and visit the official link of <u>http://www.enicbooking.com/</u> <u>dragonboat/index.php?ling=e</u> bookings, on the Festival website, <u>www.</u> <u>florencebcs2018.org</u> You will be able to find the type of accommodations you are looking for, and for those who book through the website, there is the possibility of even more opportunities and services in the future.

What in the world is going on?



Miami, Florida, **USA**, April 8, 2017 Miami Marine Stadium, Key Biscayne *Save our Sisters* celebrates 10 years



Melbourne, Australia, April 29 & 30, 2017 *Dragons Abreast* Annual Convention Fun paddle and BBQ hosted by *DA Melbourne* www.dragonsabreast.com.au



Vienna, Austria, June 10, 2017 Vienna City Beach Club, Neue Donau First breast cancer division, 50% reduced registration fee info@pinkpaddling.at



Fort Dodge, Iowa, USA, August 11 & 12, 2017 Badger Lake Kennedy Park Dragon Boat Bash http://www.badgerlakedragonboating.com



Dublin, Ireland, September 9 & 10, 2017 Hong Kong Dublin Dragon Boat Festival In conjunction with *Plurabelle Paddlers* www.dragonboat.ie





Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, October 14th, 2017 The Rose Regatta, Lake Las Vegas Free for breast cancer teams www.RoseRegatta.org



Florence, Italy, July 6 – 8, 2018 IBCPC Participatory Festival www.florencebcs2018.org

The IBCPC invites teams to post events of interest to paddlers on the above Bulletin Board. To do so email the information to <u>newsletter@ibcpc.com</u>. 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.

PROVISO The information published in this newsletter is provided to us by the named authors, sources and other third parties and while we believe the information to be reliable we have not fully investigated all such information and we can not accept responsibility for the truth or accuracy of the same. Accordingly, International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission and those associated with the Commission and Jane Frost, IBCPC President, disclaim responsibility for the truth and accuracy of the information in this newsletter:



IBCPC is a commission of the International Dragon Boat Federation

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Website launched



Early March this year saw the launch of the new IBCPC website. Carol Mutton, IBCPC Director of Communications worked closely with Michael Wong of the Vancouver firm of Hamazaki Wong Marketing Group and Nick Harrison, the IBCPC webmaster from the United Kingdom.

Both gentlemen, interestingly have connections with dragon boat paddling. Michael's company is one of the founding partners of the Vancouver International Dragon Boat Festival, one of Canada's first, in 1986 and now one of the country's largest. Nick's wife Carol's diagnosis of breast cancer introduced the couple to *Paddlers for Life*, Windermere and Nick continues to support the movement in memory of Carol.

The IBCPC Steering Committee is grateful to Carol, Michael and Nick for their enormous efforts on our behalf. Visit <u>www.ibcpc.com</u>