

INTERNATIONAL BREAST CANCER PADDLERS' COMMISSION



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37 teams create quilt. (Story on **page 2**)

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Quilt to be displayed across Australia

By: Marion Blake,
Dragons Abreast Canberra, Australia



Dragons Abreast Canberra quilt team
Marion Blake, Boerge Alexander, Lee Moyes, Gillian Styles

The Dragons Abreast Australia Unity Quilt was made from squares contributed by each of the 37 Dragons Abreast groups across Australia and launched at the 2013 Dragons Abreast National Convention in Canberra. The beautiful result truly demonstrates the positive strength, depth and diversity of Dragons Abreast.

The squares and DAA have many similarities and united or sewn together are beautiful, dynamic, strong and coordinated; but look closely and you will see that each of these squares are different, with many varied and individual ideas and styles representing us in our different regions across the country.

Some squares are beautifully embroidered or quilted by experienced sewers, others are more naively constructed by less experienced seamstresses, but each is equally effective, representing established DAA groups as well as newer, struggling or starting out groups. The iron or the scissors touched some as they were stretched and pulled into shape, and some melted in the process of uniting the seams. Perhaps this represents us as individual DAA members and groups, some of us a bit damaged and all at a different shape and stage of our journey, but resilient enough to be stretched and challenged and proudly stand

Squares contributed by the following DAA Groups:

ACT: Canberra
New South Wales: Illawarra, Penrith, Byron Bay, Central Coast, Clarence Valley, Coffs Coast, Hunter/Newcastle, Orange, Wagga Wagga, Camden Haven, Dubbo, Merimbula, Sydney
Queensland: Bribie Island, Gold Coast, Mackay, Sunshine Coast, Townsville, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Redcliffe, Bunbury, St George, Mt Warning
Tasmania: Devonport, Hobart, Launceston
South Australia: Adelaide, Port Lincoln
Victoria: Ballarat, Peninsula, Bendigo, Geelong, Gippsland, Melbourne,
Northern Territory: Darwin
Western Australia: Bunbury
DA Canberra Quilt Team
Marion Blake, Boerge Alexander, Lee Moyes, Gillian Styles

under the DAA banner. Like the squares, the convention identified and reinforced the beliefs and philosophies that unite us. And while individually every square or group is beautiful, sewn together they are spectacular!

The quilt team who initiated and planned the quilt project found the process to be a wonderful experience. Maintaining contact with people around the country as they worked on and sometimes agonised over their squares, and then receiving each square in the mail, often carefully wrapped in many layers with a lovely card explaining the meaning was quite moving. What a responsibility in making sure they were kept safe and respected!

And of course our worst nightmare happened. The last of the two squares got lost in the mail following floods in Queensland when bags of wet mail were destroyed. So sadly, after many urgent emails and phone calls, these groups were able to, with great understanding and tolerance, replace their beautiful squares with another just in time to still be included.

The quilt is to be publically displayed and also be available for display by DAA groups across the country.



Steering Committee

Jane Frost	President
Michelle Hanton	Past President
Jo Parry	Vice-President
Jenny Yule	Secretary-Treasurer
Louisa Balderson	Communications Director
Betty Solley	Membership Director

Canada	president@ibcpc.com
Australia	pastpresident@ibcpc.com
Australia	vicepresident@ibcpc.com
Canada	secretarytreasurer@ibcpc.com
Great Britain	communications@ibcpc.com
United States	membership@ibcpc.com



Sarasota's Benderson Park's venue ensures steering ease

By: Paula Jennings,
Pink Dragon Ladies, Tampa Bay, Florida

Along with encouraging teammates to hone their steering skills or merely just giving it a try, we would like to ensure the venue is well protected and planned for just this type of challenge!

Not only is the race course well protected to begin with, the developers have put a lot of thought in how to minimize any breaking water or wakes to ensure calm waters and precision racing conditions. The area where the races will occur is within a harbored pocket of the full-length 2200m waterway. The course for the festival in 2014 will be 500m.

Wave attenuators are an offshore system, which eliminates boat wakes and wind driven waves, and for anyone creating a personal harbor for the protection of their boats and docks, as well as the inherent safety of calm waters.

In addition to the wave attenuators and protected area, we have the addition of October being one of the two most favorable weather months in Florida! Not only is October cooler and less humid, we have left the traditional summer thunderstorms behind! It's like spring in April all over again!

So if you have any reasons you may not be inclined to test your steering abilities, hopefully knowing the venue waters are protected and designed for just this sort of thing, will put your mind at ease. Don't hesitate to learn a new skill, which will benefit your entire team! There is nothing like having your own steer or sweep to see you through practices, drills, the ups and downs of survivorship, and especially race day!



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.ibpc.com and click on the newsletter icon.

Question: What is a good exercise routine for survivors?

Answer: There are some position statements (American College of Sports Medicine) but the specifics of the exercise prescription have yet to be defined and represents a focus of the work we are doing at the University of British Columbia. Several years ago I developed the "Physical Activity Guesslines" for exercise in the breast cancer population and I think they are still useful until more precise information is available.

1. Aerobic activity: mild to moderate intensity (Mild= can easily converse. Moderate= you can carry a conversation but appreciate that you are exercising), 3-5 sessions per week, 20-60 minutes (depends on intensity), any continuous activity- walking, cycling, swimming, paddling etc.

2. Resistance exercises (weight training): Very impor-

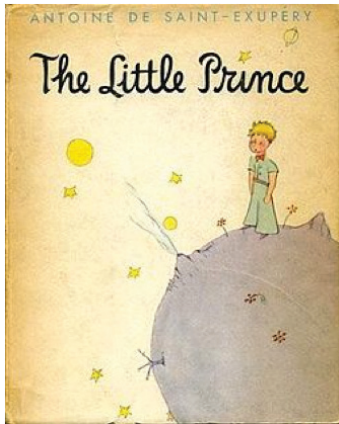
tant to include this. All major muscle groups, 2 sets of 8-12 repetitions, 2-3 sessions per week. If you are unfamiliar with this type of activity it is critical to get some instruction.

3. Proprioceptive exercises: Balancing drills- important for all of us as we get older.

We have studied 'interval training' in a group of women at the gym and found it to be safe and result in significant gains in fitness. The advantage is that it takes much less time than the continuous aerobic activity. An example would be exercising for 1-2 minutes at 80-90% of maximum capacity; recovering for 2 minutes and repeating the interval 4-6 times. This high intensity-short duration physical work requires the use of a heart rate monitor, needs to be introduced carefully and should be supervised at this point in time.

“Starting paddling teams in Latin America is a beautiful challenge.”

By: Adriana Bartoli,
Abreast In A Boat, Vancouver, Canada



Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote the beautiful story “The Little Prince”, which I read when I was a child. One quote I cannot forget and I always believed was true, says, “It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye”. He was right.

Starting breast cancer paddling teams in Latin America is a challenge, a beautiful challenge. I embrace it probably because my first home land is there, but also because I know there are so many ladies who have not experienced the benefit of not feeling alone anymore by paddling together, enjoying new friendships, and building up health.

Particularly, Latin American countries bring extra challenges, as dragon boating is only known in a few of these countries. Puerto Rico has an extensive practice with small dragon boats. Brazil and Chile introduced dragon boating few years ago and the activity is growing. However, in other countries, such as Argentina, dragon

boating is not present as are other canoeing sports but the idea of paddling against breast cancer is welcome with great excitement everywhere.

A group of seven enthusiastic paddlers is forming in my hometown La Plata, Argentina. The group is called “Remeras Rosas” (Pink Paddlers), ladies paddling through life, looking ahead to enjoy a full active life and spreading a message of hope. From Puerto Rico there is a request for help in forming breast cancer paddling teams. In fact, they want to have breast cancer teams in their 2nd Annual Dragon Boat Festival in February 2014. Things are moving in Puerto Rico and Argentina and hopefully will start in Mexico, Brazil and Chile.

Forming teams in these countries seems to be a slow paced task, but it is not impossible. “Impossible” is not in our vocabulary, it does not flow through our veins because we know what a breast cancer paddling team is about as Antoine de Saint-Exupéry would say, it is an essential part of our life, and invisible to the eye.

I know time is crucial and February 1st 2014 is close, however I invite all of you who would like to contribute forming breast cancer teams in Latin America, to participate in the Puerto Rico 2nd Annual Dragon Festival. To participate, please contact IBCPC. Your feedback and ideas to make this possible are welcome.



Adriana Bartoli was born in Argentina to an Italian family and her grandfather was a veteran of WWI. She came to Canada in 2004 with her husband and twin daughters as her husband had work in Vancouver. She is an aeronautical engineer, passionate about airplanes and has worked in the aerospace industry in Italy and Argentina and now Canada.

Adriana was diagnosed with breast cancer in May 2012, after running the Vancouver Sun Run in 68 minutes and feeling healthier than ever. It was an unbelievable shock and she is looking forward to the end of her treatment very soon. When she is not starting dragon boats teams, Adriana enjoys her 26 years of marriage, her family, her professional activity and her sailing, running, swimming and travelling. She enjoys life!

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.



Cathy Prusak

Cathy is a 15 year member of Chemo Savvy Dragon Boat team, in Winnipeg Manitoba, Canada. In that time, Cathy has served in several roles on the board of directors, acted as newsletter editor, paddled, written songs, drummed, steered and found her passion as one of the team coaches.

Cathy's first festival participation was on the "Prairie Partners" composite team at the first gathering of breast cancer teams in Vancouver in 1999. Since then, she has travelled extensively with Chemo Savvy to various dragon boating events in New Zealand, Australia, the U.S, across Canada and to the IDBF Club crews in 2002 in Rome as a member of Internationally Abreast. Cathy was also a proud contributor to the book "How to Ride a Dragon" by Michelle Tocher.

Diagnosed at the age of 33 in 1996, Cathy is driven to take an active role in providing support for women with breast cancer. Combined with her passion for the breast cancer dragon boat movement, coaching the team seemed a natural fit. She feels that there is no greater prize in breast cancer dragon boating than watching the metamorphosis of a woman who goes from breast cancer patient to dragon slayer; fear replaced by confidence and hope.

As a hospital pharmacist, Cathy works in the oncology unit at a community hospital in Winnipeg. Being able to help men and women with all phases of their cancer journeys has become a true gift in her life. She lives in Winnipeg with her husband Marc and four legged hairy son, José (the standard schnauzer).

Cathy is very proud and honoured to take on the role of IBCPC representative to Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Northern Ontario.



Mieke Martin

In 1998 Mieke became a charter member of Bosom Buddies of Nova Scotia, the first dragon boat team for breast cancer survivors in the Atlantic Provinces.

She served on the team's executive in many positions such as treasurer, president, team operations chair and for several years was the team captain.

Mieke was instrumental in planning and organizing Bosom Buddies of NS annual fund raiser "Blueberry Shortcake in an Artful Garden". For the past ten years this fund raiser has been extremely successful, not only in generating funds for the team but also bringing in new members. In addition, this fundraiser created visibility and recognition to the general public about dragon boating for breast cancer survivors.

Mieke is very grateful for discovering dragon boating as it has brought her many lasting friendships and enormous pleasure in the sport, not to mention the feeling of health, wellbeing and the strength she gained through vigorous exercising. Being a very active person, when she isn't paddling in a dragon boat you will find her biking with friends, practicing yoga, tending her garden or creating a new piece of work in her pottery studio.

Mieke was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1985 and we all remember what it felt like to receive that diagnosis for the first time. In 2009 she once again received the news, this time colon cancer. Now she says that every day is a blessing every moment a gift.

As one of six Canadian National Representatives Mieke is enthusiastically taking on her responsibility for the Provinces of Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland.

Italian doctors participate in paddling event

By: Suzanne Bodner
Kingston, Ontario, Canada



Dr Alessandra Fabi (left) and Dr Claudio Botti (right) paddle in the second seat with Rome's Pink Butterflies

In early June, Rome's "Pink Butterflies" invited two prominent Italian doctors to join them for a picnic and a paddle in their dragon boat so that they could experience first-hand the energy and spirit of "La Forza Rosa". Dr. Claudio Botti, a surgeon, and Dr. Alessandra Fabi, a medical oncologist, both specialize in tumours of the breast at the Regina Elena National Cancer Institute in Rome. They both kindly agreed to answer a few questions so that our IBCPC newsletter readers could hear what they have to say about our global breast cancer dragon boat movement and also about the Italian medical community's perspective on the movement ten years after its inception in Italy.

Dr. Fabi commented that she first became aware of Dr. McKenzie's breast cancer dragon boat project from her own patients who themselves were beginning to hear about the exciting phenomenon started by the intrepid Canadian women in 1996. Her first thought? Once again, women were showing that they know how to amaze the world, and with "effetti speciali"!! With their determination and their creativity, a

health problem became an opportunity to shine.

Neither Dr. Fabi nor Dr. Botti has concerns about the sport causing lymphedema, noting that, especially since the advent of the sentinel node biopsy technique, they rarely see cases of severe lymphedema. Dr. Fabi said that none of her patients who do dragon boating have developed any signs of lymphedema.

According to both doctors, the Italian medical community is starting to embrace the idea that physical activity leads not only to general health benefits but that it has an important role to play in both the prevention of breast cancer and its recurrence. But, it seems that there is still much work to be done. Breast cancer dragon boating, they feel, is an excellent vehicle for awareness.

Dr. Fabi and Dr. Botti were both very impressed that dragon boating has facilitated a transformation from ex-patient to amateur athlete among the women, accompanied by a growing sense of self-esteem and a positive hopeful attitude towards the future. And, having seen so many

women go through the same dark tunnel, the doctors are delighted to find that the women have come out on the other side with a renewed sense of play and irrepressible vitality sustained by their sense of being part of a special community. Dr. Botti, who participated in the "Pink Butterfly" ten-year celebration festivities in May, spoke with emotion about his profound experience as he watched the Pink Carnation Ceremony that day: "I still have goose-bumps, and my eyes fill with tears when I remember you all with your paddles held high, with your lovely flowers, and the heartfelt hugs you gave each other when you returned to the dock."

What message would the good doctors have for their new dragon boat friends? "Congratulations on being such wonderful examples of how to turn a challenging situation into a zest for life through your teamwork and the sport you love. And keep on sowing the seeds of your enthusiasm everywhere, for your own benefit, for that of your doctors, and for the whole community!"

"Pagaie Su!" Paddles Up!

UK's six-team composite crew to attend Sarasota

By: Louisa Balderson
Windermere, Northwest England, UK

By now, many teams around the world are completely immersed in preparation for IBCPC's 2014 Participatory Dragon Boat Festival in Sarasota, Florida, USA. In the north west of England, we are in the same boat! Our team, Paddlers for Life (PfL) Windermere, is a vibrant, energetic breast cancer dragonboat paddling team with over 50 survivors and supporters from a wide geographical area. However, unlike some teams attending Sarasota 2014, we are coordinating a UK composite crew making the preparations a bit more complicated!

Paddlers for Life Windermere is in its fifth season, and shares similar goals to many other teams around the world: raising awareness of the benefits of early diagnosis of breast cancer, promoting inclusion and participation irrespective of ability or age, and inspiring others to attend the 2014 celebration of life in Sarasota.

As a founding member of Paddlers for Life, one of my original goals was to gain control somehow over the management of my lymphoedema. However, as a public health nurse by background, my strongest motivation is to make a difference to a person's sense of wellbeing. I no longer work as part of the Windermere PfL Trustee Board, but as a patron undertaking a more strategic responsibility for spreading the remarkable breast cancer dragonboat story!

Part of my duties include contributing to the preparations for Sarasota: delegating responsibilities, organizing travel arrangements, brainstorming fundraising ideas, etc which I'm sure compares with what is happening with every team globally. One of the most exciting events is the ambitious goal made by Emma Herman-Smith, a paddler from Edinburgh, Scotland, to walk 1,000 miles including an Atlantic crossing sponsored by a cargo ship to coincide arrival with the beginning of the Sarasota 2014 event!*

However, while we will be attending the event as a team,

survivors and supporters from affiliated teams are coming together to form the UK composite crew.


This exciting partnership with six teams across the UK will include affiliated teams PfL Scotland SE, PfL Manchester and non-affiliated crew members from Pool of Life Liverpool, Worcester Busters and 'freelance' paddlers from the south of England. Places on the boat were eagerly snapped up as early as July 2013, and is almost full! How well we know one another and the range of paddling experience is varied, but a program of joint training sessions and team building opportunities is being prepared for the next twelve months.

We hope our good will, fun and commitment will bring a beautiful and buoyant UK spirit to the global event! See you at the celebration!



Louisa Balderson speaking at Canada House during Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee

What in the World is Going On?

 **September 14 & 15, 2013 Dublin, Ireland**
Plurabelle Paddlers and Irish Dragon Boat Association third regatta
www.plurabellepaddlers.com

 **October 27, 2013 Darling Harbour, Sydney, Australia**
Dragons Abreast Australia's annual regatta
www.dragonsabreast.com.au

 **November 9, 2013 Key Biscayne, Florida**
Miami International Dragon Boat Festival at the Miami Rowing Club
www.panamdramonboat.com

 **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.

Coming to IBCPC Participatory Festival 2014? Urgent to register.



After being open only four months approximately 100 teams have already registered. If you are considering coming, now is the time to solidify your registration! To ensure comfortably managing the two days of race heats, the potential for closing registration is on the horizon.

HEAD COUNT REQUIRED BY OCTOBER 1, 2013. For planning purposes we need projections from each team on your anticipated head count. This number should include paddlers, steer(s) and drummer(s) up to 26 team members* and your supporters. Please send your head count to registration@sarasotabcs2014festival.org no later than October 1, 2013.

*If you have additional paddlers beyond 26 they can register on or after January 15, 2014 and will pay the standard fee of \$225. We regret we are not able to guarantee accommodating more than your 26 team members at this time as our priority will be to ensure non-crew individual paddlers are able to join us. When we have more information from the head count we may be able to accommodate your extra paddlers who would be put on a composite team.

Registration Payment: The final payment for **Early Bird** registration is due no later than November 1, 2013 and invoicing will be based on your best estimated head count of paddlers, drummers, steers and supporters. Early bird fee is \$200 for each paddler up to 26 and each supporter.

Standard registration balances will be due April 1, 2014 and again invoicing will be based on your estimated head count at \$225 per team member and supporter.

Non-crew individual paddler and partial teams up to 10 paddlers: Registration will open January 15, 2014 for individual or small groups of paddlers who are not affiliated with a team that is registered for the event. If you have a **partial team** planning to attend (6 to 10 paddlers), please contact us now as we already have inquiries about combining partial teams for composite crews. Contact: registration@sarasotabcs2014festival.org

Team Crew Member Registration Forms need to be submitted as soon as paddlers are committed to attend the festival. All team members and supporters must be registered by May 1, 2014 but you are encouraged to register as soon as possible to 'lighten the load' for the Sarasota organizers. Visit www.sarasotabcs2014festival.org and click on the Registration header.

Steers Information: You still have plenty of time to train a steersperson. Remember, all crews need to have a BCS steersperson and drummer to meet the IBCPC requirement. Also, we are creating a steering pool for those teams not bringing their own steersperson. There will be a special incentive for any qualified BCS steersperson who would like to be part of the pool. Please contact committee@ibcpc.com for more information.



Vancouver team helps Rio Tinto Alcan Festival celebrate

In celebration of the 25th Rio Tinto Alcan Dragon Boat Festival June 18, 2013 in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, Abreast In A Boat (AIAB) paddlers were invited to participate in the Opening Ceremonies. Pictured here are eight AIAB members who were on the original team whose first festival was at the Alcan in June 1996. From left to right: Judy Caldwell, Sandra Morris, Pat Cryder, Carol Dale, Jane Frost, Deb Middleton, Brenda Hochachka and Reni Gitschmann.