



# The BCS Dragon Boaters



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## The Midwest BCS List of Teams Grows!

The excitement about BCS dragon boat paddling continues to grow in the Midwest.

We recently learned of another Midwest BCS team from Houston, Texas named "All Hands Abreast" and hope to have a team story about their team in the future. In the meantime, some of those BCS paddlers will be joining with

another Texas BCS team to participate in the 2018 IBCPC Festival in Florence, Italy. What a fun experience this will be for all of them joining up together!

There is also awesome hope of a new BCS team to be formed in the Denver, Colorado area. This is still in the early stages but we've offered to help where we can. There was a

request for fundraising ideas and an e-mail was sent out to the other Midwest BCS Teams with their responses being forwarded onto the contact.

Hopefully, with all of our Midwest assistance and the IBCPC assistance, you'll be able to soon read about this new Midwest BCS team!

## ADBA Annual Meeting, BCS & USDBF

The Annual Meeting of the American Dragon Boat Association (ADBA) Midwest Region was held on Saturday, March 24 at 1:00 p.m. President Ron Hau called the Meeting to Order, Secretary Sue Miller took Member Roll and the Minutes of the 2016 ADBA Annual Meeting were approved. Treasurer John Miller's Report followed and was subsequently approved.

The Breast Cancer Survivor (BCS) Report was presented by ADBA BCS Representative, Cheryl Lychwick. She reported on the addition of another BCS Team of All Hands Abreast from Houston, Texas. There are now 18 Midwest BCS Teams and 2 All Cancer Teams with BCS paddlers on those two teams. She has also been communicating with individuals interested in starting a new BCS team in the Colorado area. Otherwise, the teams have kept busy attending festivals, celebrating Survivor/Team anniversaries,

and continuing to plan and/or attend BCS awareness events.

Cheryl mentioned that the 2018 IBCPC Festival will be in Florence, Italy on July 6-8 with 121 BCS Teams anticipated. As of last report, 15 Midwest BCS Teams will have BCS paddlers attend the Festival as their own team or as paddlers joining with other teams to make up a full boat. This past year, they have all kept busy meeting the deadlines to be a participant in the Festival.

Cheryl also announced that Leslie Smith Hardt, a Midwest BCS Survivor who paddles with Pink Paddling Power of Racine, Wisconsin, will be her Assistant in preparation to become the next ADBA BCS Representative. Cheryl closed her report 'Thanking' the ADBA for their support towards the Midwest BCS Teams.

The United States Dragon Boat Federation (USDBF) Annual Report followed. Linda Donner reported for the open

Officer positions, Mark Kane was elected Vice President I and Ellen Law, Treasurer. Each Region of the USDBF gave their report. Club Crew National Championships (CCNC) were held at Lake Mercer, New Jersey in Sept. 2017; ADBA crews won 5 berths. She also reported on medals/cups at the World Nations Championship in Kunming, China held in October 2017. The USA won 4 Gold, 10 Silver and 25 Bronze medals. IDBF Club Crew World Championships (CCWC) will be held on July 17-22, 2018 in Szeged, Hungary. Our own John Miller of the ADBA will be a Race Official at the event in Hungary!

A PanAm Dragon Boat Federation update stated that Paula Humphries is Vice-President of the Pan Am Federation. Trinidad will be the location of the next PanAm Championships.

(Continued on page 2...)

## ADBA Annual Meeting, BCS & USDBF Reports (Continued)

An International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) update was also given. The IDBF is stepping up drug testing. Also, at the 13<sup>th</sup> World Nations Championship in Kunming, China on October 24, 2017 in a Congress Meeting, it was agreed the International Breast Cancer Paddlers Commission (IBCPC), along with the International Ice Dragon Boat Federation (IIDBF) and other associations, would become associations of the IDBF which would give the IBCPC a seat at the Council table and more rights to a voice on IDBF matters. The Congress also approved a regulation regarding the criteria for entry into IDBF International Breast Cancer events which is: The definition of breast cancer paddler means you must have had a diagnosis of breast cancer and the team must be of 100% breast cancer paddlers which means all crew, including paddlers, drummer and steer, are all breast cancer survivors. In other IDBF business, bids were accepted for France for the 2020 IDBF Club Crew World Championships (CCWC) and the 2021 Hong Kong Worlds.

The USDBF Report also mentioned the Ethics Committee will have a reintroduction of a new Code of Conduct and procedures for filing ethics complaints/grievances; the Executive Committee has been expanded to add a Deputy Chairman; and 5 new Commissions will be added, namely Athletes, Youth, Adaptive Paddle, Women's and Entourage. Barb Michaels, with the ADBA, has been asked to Chair the Entourage Commission.

The ADBA Annual Meeting continued with Barb Michaels reporting on ADBA Regional Growth and Development. It had been approved that a 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President officer position be added to the ADBA Officer's Roster. In brief, this position would be support for competitive athletes; locate Clubs within the Region; and communicate with competitive teams within the Region with support for training, equipment and resources in order to expand the paddling talent pool within the Region. There were no nominations received for this new position prior to the ADBA Annual Meeting. The ADBA will continue to pursue filling this position. If anyone is interested in submitting an application for this position, please contact the ADBA Secretary at [secretary@americandragonboat.org](mailto:secretary@americandragonboat.org).

The Election of ADBA Officers and Directors completed the Agenda. Barb Michaels was elected President and Robin lovino was elected Secretary. There were no nominations received for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President position. Directors At Large elected were Sue Miller, Cheryl Lychwick and Ron Hau. The other current ADBA Officers are Tom Donner, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President and John Miller, Treasurer. The other current Directors At Large are Linda Donner, Heath Miller and Mark Robinson. The ADBA Board consists of the five officers and six "At Large" Directors.

Outgoing President Ron Hau and Secretary Sue Miller were thanked for their many years of service to the ADBA. With no further business or questions, the Annual Meeting adjourned.

## Assistant to ADBA BCS Representative Appointed

Since October, 2014 when I (Cheryl Lychwick) took on the position of IBCPC U.S. National Representative for the Midwest, I realized I was taking on another level of responsibility and may need to pass on my ADBA BCS Representative position to another Midwest BCS volunteer. As a result, I discussed the possibility with the ADBA Officers / Board of an Assistant to my position to help train an individual who could ultimately take over as the next ADBA BCS Representative. I am pleased to announce that after the ADBA Officers / Board reviewed the goals and objectives submitted by Leslie and added them to the agenda of the February ADBA Monthly Meeting, they have unanimously appointed Leslie Smith-Hardt as an Assistant to the ADBA BCS Representative (pictured).



Leslie Smith-Hardt is a Breast Cancer Survivor and an enthusiastic Dragon Boat paddler. She started paddling with the Pink Paddling Power BCS Team of Racine, Wisconsin in 2014. Her paddling experience includes racing at several Midwest, Canadian and other U.S. festivals and helping other BCS teams fill their boats. Through this experience, she has met many welcoming survivors and supporters and acquired many new friends. After participating in BCS races, she enjoys walking around the race venue socializing with other Breast Cancer Survivor Sisters as well as non-BCS paddlers. She is passionate about Breast Cancer awareness and offering support to others.

Leslie's enthusiasm is not only present in a dragon boat as she also enjoys competitive archery/shooting, has multiple black belts in martial arts and is currently training in various other martial arts after maintaining her own studio for 10 years. In her spare time, she enjoys hiking, camping, reading and research work. She has a Science Degree from Texas A & M University, College Station, Texas.

Please "Welcome" Leslie to her new Assistant position if you see her at an upcoming Festival!

## Breast of Friends - Dubuque, Iowa



All decked out to match the theme of "The 80's" for their Festival and have a fun weekend paddling together!

### PADDLE THROUGH IT!

We are Breast of Friends, an all breast cancer survivor dragon boat team, what we call a floating support system. We take the dragon boat motto, "Friendship through Paddling", and ratchet it up to include strong shoulders to lean on, ears to listen, voices to speak encouragement, and hearts to share both joy and fear. Inspired by Canadian Sports Medicine Specialist Dr. Don McKenzie to improve physical ability post-treatment, dragon boating for breast cancer survivors has grown internationally to encourage women to improve physical strength and social well-being through paddling. Our team is joining 100+ other teams in Florence, Italy in July, 2018 at the IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival to paddle through the waters in friendly competition.

As breast cancer survivors, we know that numbers are important. Here are a few:

- 15 – years since Breast of Friends was organized by Susie Freese and Bonnie Bell-Brummer
- 20 – women in our boat, multiplying our strength together
- 1 – the first Midwest dragon boat team that is composed entirely of breast cancer survivors
- 35 – age of our youngest member
- 73 – age of our most mature member
- 280+ – collective years of survival beyond diagnosis
- 3 – states where our members live (Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin)

I'm endlessly amazed at the variety of questions, circumstances, treatment options, and experiences that our members can share. Newly diagnosed and need to talk to someone with similar circumstances? Got it covered. Looking for recommendations for oncology, surgery, specialists? Boy, do we have opinions!

Diagnosis, surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, and seemingly endless scans and lab work. After the blur of treatment, it's a relief to grab a paddle, find a seat in the boat, and pull in rhythm to move that boat smoothly through the water. We sure look different than any other team, but our goals are the same: Paddle through it and Finish Strong! We've all faced things harder than this next race; we've all been alone with our thoughts and fears; and we all understand that we have more strength together as a team than as individuals.

We are Breast of Friends!

Photo and Article Submitted by Jenny

## TEAMSurvivor Madison - Madison, Wisconsin



**TEAMSurvivor Madison was ready, willing and able to participate at the Festival of the Fox in St. Charles, Illinois**

Dragon boating has been an intricate part of our TEAMSurvivor Madison's (TSM) program offerings since 1993. Our 2017 season kicked off with a paddling clinic for our membership with Curt Chiaverotti from Racine Dragon Boat Club. This training gave us a great start to our season.

This past season we participated in races at: St Charles, Illinois; Milwaukee Dragon Boat Festival; and Chicago International Dragon Boat Festival in Arlington Heights, Illinois. The IDBF added an All Cancer Division and TEAMSurvivor Madison was thrilled and honored to be awarded the first trophy as the Chicago International Dragon Boat Festival All Cancer Division 2017 Champions.

TEAMSurvivor Madison provides year-round fitness - fun - friendship offerings to our members. These range from Monday night mashup of various fitness opportunities to organized classes in the fall and spring through UW Health Sports Medicine. Biking and participating in various 5k/10k runs are also part of our team activities. Our members participated in several SBR (Swim Bike Run) all women biking classes and The Alphornman Triathlon in New Glarus, Wisconsin.

One of our fundraising events is Hike and Bike for Hotcakes which is a family friendly biking/hike event ending with an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast!

Our members have also given back to the community by participating in: Sharing the Knowledge (Breast Cancer Recovery), Breathe Free Yogathon (for lung cancer research), UW-Carbone Cancer Center (Cancer Conference), Gilda's Club Run, Madison Susan G. Komen Race For the Cure (with the top fundraising team in the Health Care Division) and Berbee Derby (supporter of the Madison-based Technology Education Fund) to name a few.

In 2018, TEAMSurvivor Madison will participate in the Milwaukee and Chicago Dragon Boat Festivals and possibly the Dubuque Festival in September. Eleven of our members will be joining Fighting Angels Abreast for the IBPCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival in Florence, Italy in July, 2018.

We look forward to our 2018 season!

Photo and Article Submitted by Teresa

## Indy SurviveOars - Indianapolis, Indiana

### 10 Years Strong: Indy SurviveOars Dragon Boat Team Celebrates Throughout Their 2017 Season!

Celebrating our 10 Year Anniversary was an awesome experience for our team, the Indy SurviveOars from Indianapolis, Indiana, the only Breast Cancer Dragon Boat Team in Indiana. True to our mission, through the sport of dragon boat racing, we offer hope, inspiration and camaraderie to Breast Cancer Survivors focusing on health and fitness. We have 65 active members, ranging in age from 28-72.

Our "on the water" season begins with a paddling clinic in May, followed by three practices per week through September, generally filling two boats per practice. Off season we sponsor multiple opportunities for training as well as host social events to include team members unable to actively paddle. We traveled to four races in 2017: Sarasota, Florida; Akron, Ohio; Arlington Heights, Illinois; and West Windsor, New Jersey.

Celebrate we did! We began our 10 Year Anniversary festivities with a regatta; inviting members of other sister Midwest BCS dragon boat teams to join us. We hosted a "Friends and Family Day" to thank our supporters and sponsors and elevated our annual fundraising event to a Gala Celebration. The highlight of our season was a symposium featuring Dr. Don McKenzie. We are inspired by and indebted to Dr. McKenzie for his vision, persistence, passion and leadership of continuing the science behind the sport. Here is a quote he provided to the team:

***"This program is not about cancer, this is about exercise, health and the rest of your life. When we leave the dock, we are paddling away from breast cancer."***

***"This is the essence of breast cancer dragon boat paddling and why we are all in the same boat. It is the first step in building a team and supporting each other. Dragon boat paddling is not easy; it is hard work, technically demanding and requires strength, coordination and fitness. The rewards are many; physical and mental, a connection with the environment and with others of the same spirit. It is not easy, but neither is winning the race against breast cancer." Dr. D. McKenzie***



**What a proud group! Congratulations on your 10 Year Anniversary in 2017!**

Photo and Article Submitted by Elaine

## Dragon Divas - St. Paul, Minnesota



The Dragon Divas are all smiles and enjoying a day of paddling at the Big Blue Festival in La Crosse, Wisconsin. What a fun group!



The "Newbies" got in on the action and fun at the Asian Festival, Lake Phalen. Welcome to the sport of Dragon Boating!



We are the Dragon Divas, the first dragon boat team for breast cancer survivors in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, and we are entering our 13th year! We provide a variety of opportunities for members to connect with other breast cancer survivors in a supportive environment while enhancing our physical, emotional, and spiritual health. We currently have approximately 90 members.

In 2017, we welcomed 7 new members at our first festival of the season in July at Lake Phalen in St. Paul! The Dragon Festival is well loved by our Divas and their friends and families as it is our closest racing destination and our newest paddlers have a chance to show family and friends what this sport is all about. A few weeks later, Dragon Divas took the scenic drive to La Crosse, Wisconsin to enjoy a fun, 90-degree day on the Black River for the Big Blue Festival! July was a packed month! The Great White North International Festival in Chicago, which features a 500M race, provided the next big challenge for the Divas, and we took the Gold in the BCS Division. In August, the Divas traveled to the Minocqua Dragon Boat Festival to finish our official 2017 paddling season.

To prepare for our season, we organized indoor rowing workouts at weRow Fitness Studio, introduced TRX strength training at Urban Iron in Woodbury, as well as spin classes at the YMCA in Shoreview. In addition to training benefits, these offerings gave our members an opportunity to come together socially with fellow breast cancer survivors while deepening connections. We also sponsored a CPR/First Aid training for Dragon Diva members in the Spring and an interactive nutrition seminar in the Fall.

A very exciting 2018 paddling season awaits as 32 of our members will be traveling to Florence, Italy for the IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival for Breast Cancer Survivors. Regionally, we are again looking forward to the Big Blue Dragon Boat Festival in La Crosse, and the Badger Lake Dragon Boat Festival in Fort Dodge, Iowa. And to cap off our season, we are traveling north to Superior, Wisconsin for The Lake Superior Dragon Boat Festival.

We look forward to seeing you on and off the water in 2018!

Photos and Article Submitted by Esti

## Cajun Invasion - Lafayette, Louisiana



**The Cajun Invasion Team took time out for a great team photo while participating in a two day Regatta at Sugar Land, Texas!**

Cajun Invasion Dragon Boat Team's 2017 season was another memorable and successful one with new experiences and solid growth for our team.

We have new great looking race jerseys, unique to our team with a touch of nostalgia to our original ones. We have received many compliments on them and we are very proud of the new look!

Susan G. Komen Race For The Cure Acadiana moved the event to the Sugar Mill Pond in Youngsville, Louisiana on March 25, 2017. Cajun Invasion was invited to bring the Betty Ann, our beautiful boat, and our team to come out for a paddle to demonstrate and to talk about our love for the sport and why we do it.

We did our annual Family Promise of Acadiana charity event in April. We continue to support our Lafayette community with donations to many organizations such as Breast Center of Acadiana, Oncologist Transportation Fund, Miles Perret Cancer Center, and Relay For Life...to mention a few.

In May we participated in the Greater New Orleans International Dragon Boat Festival held in Madisonville, Louisiana. This festival donates and give great support to the Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Centers. We brought home the Gold...always nice to have some new bling to hang with our many other successes over the years.

Cajun Invasion participated in brand new races such as the one in Cleburne, Texas. We will be returning to this festival in June 2018.

One of our biggest challenges was in September at the Big River Paddle Championship on the Mississippi River in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This super cool event is 13 miles with SUPs, Kayaks, Canoes and us---the first ever dragon boat to participate in this race and we did it in 1 hour and 45 minutes, a very respectable time. We dedicated the race to our Texas friends and all affected by Hurricane Harvey that happened the week before. Our Houston dragon boat family had planned to participate but the devastation from Hurricane Harvey changed so many plans and lives.



Please like and follow us on Facebook. Also, visit our new website, [www.cajuninvasion.net](http://www.cajuninvasion.net). There is always information on our activities and schedules. Our first race is in Texarkana, Texas on April 21st.

We expect 2018 will be amazing and filled with more memorable and fun times!

So, paddles up ya'll!

Photos and Article Submitted by Yvonne

## Motor City Dragons – Detroit, Michigan

### Motor City Dragons – Celebrating 5 years – November 9, 2017



Reflecting back on 5 years since Motor City Dragons (MCD) was founded is amazing. We became a 501 c3 charitable organization in 2015. Our third MCD Board of Directors is in office and the Ford Yacht Club is home to our boat, Mustang Patty, and we paddle in the Detroit River.

We've paddled in 18 Festivals in the U.S. and Canada sometimes teaming up with other BCS:

- Wallaceburg, Ontario, Canada: [Sydenham Challenge](#) hosted by Breast Buddies (BCS)
- Akron, Ohio: [Dragons on the Lake Festival](#) hosted by Dragon Dream Team (BCS)
- Lake Orion, Michigan: [Dragons on The Lake Festival](#) supports ACS & The Pink Fund
- Cleveland, Ohio: [Cleveland Dragon Boat Festival](#) supports The Gathering Place
- Toronto, Canada: [GWN Challenge](#) supports The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation
- Chicago, Illinois: [Chicago Dragon Boat Festival](#) supports injured U.S. Military Veterans
- Sarasota, Florida: [2014 IBCPC Participatory Festival](#)

Our team volunteers and supports many breast cancer related organizations:

- [The Pink Fund](#) in multiple ways: [Dancing With The Survivors](#) annual fundraiser. The Pink Fund pays BCS non-medical bills while in active treatment up to 3 months (paid ~\$2.5M of bills).
- Komen Race for the Cure Detroit: T-shirt distribution, runners, and walkers. Four Motor City Dragon members walked the [3-Day](#) 60 mile walk (multiple times) ending at Ford World Headquarters.
- American Cancer Society's [Cattle Barron Ball](#) in Detroit where \$1.5M was raised in one night.
- We spoke twice at the [Quiet Water Symposium](#) in Lansing about dragon boat paddling.

Four of our paddlers have spent a week at a Dragon Boat Training Camp in Florida in April at the Bow Wave & Space Coast Dragon Boat Training Camp in Florida – this is our 5<sup>th</sup> year. One MCD attended camp at U.S. National Team Coach Bob McNamara's March camp in Florida.

[Motor City Dragons](#) is very excited to be able to attend the 2018 IBCPC Participatory Festival in Florence, Italy this July. We have a combined team and **still have 5 open paddling seats & one steerer** so if you know somebody who'd like go, please ask them to **contact Csilla** ([cgutay@ford.com](mailto:cgutay@ford.com)). We have paddlers from Michigan, Nevada, and California and have a Ford Warriors in Pink inspired costume for the Pink Parade.



**Motor City Dragons is all suited up and showing their team spirit at this event!**



**A nice relaxing paddle into the Sunset!**

Photos and Article Submitted by Csilla

## Survivor Sistership - Duluth, Minnesota

Survivor Sistership is still very active since that first Lake Superior Dragon Boat Festival in 2002 for the Duluth/Superior area. Our beginning came about when the Oncology Department at SMDC was asked to find breast cancer survivors for a team. Mary, the wife of Oncologist Dr. James Krook, took the challenge on. She placed an article in the Duluth News Tribune for women to paddle on an all breast cancer dragon boat team. Calls came, a meeting took place and the team was formed. The group of women decided on "The Survivor Sistership" for their team name. Twenty-one survivors in all, twenty to paddle and one for the drummer, with Mary K. as our first Captain. On Saturday, August 24<sup>th</sup> of that year, The Survivor Sistership made her maiden voyage in that first Lake Superior Dragon Boat Race and are still going strong.

The first 5 years at the Lake Superior Dragon Boat Festival, our team was top fundraisers. Raising money for a cause we find very personal came easy for us. We are proud to say that over the past 15 years, the Sistership has raised over \$113,980.00!

Our team members all had one thing in common, Breast Cancer! We became our own support group, also offering support to others along the way. We grew close over time, bonding together like Sisters! Throughout the year we'd gather at homes or restaurants for meetings, social time and just to have fun.

Amongst the good times, there's been sorrow! Eight special and unique ladies lost their battle to breast cancer. One particular Sister's wish was that instead of flowers at her funeral, she would prefer money so her team could get matching life jackets. Our team wears them proudly every year in Tenley's honor.

Seventy-eight (78) ladies, all ages, from all walks of life and all Breast Cancer Survivors, have filled the seats on the Survivor Sistership Team over the past 15 years. Some have been on the team since the beginning, some paddled once, and others that can't paddle stay on the team as Supporters. Every lady adds a special part of themselves to the team.

Over these last 15 years, we've had 9 Captains and 5 Drummers. Margaret W. has been our reigning Drummer for the past 11 years. And, 15 years later, we are still paddling in the Annual Lake Superior Dragon Boat Festival. We've never won the Gold, Silver or Bronze medal, but we have already won the biggest race of our lives, **beating Breast Cancer!**

Article Submitted by Nancy

## *In Memory of...* Carla Ann Barten - September 2, 1969 to March 9, 2018

Carla Ann Barten, 48, peacefully died Tuesday, March 9, 2018, at Israel Family Hospice House in Ames. She was born Sept. 2, 1969, to Jerald and Sarah (Meyer) Barten in Ames, Iowa. Carla grew up in Ankeny, Iowa.

Carla graduated from Ankeny High School in 1988. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from the University of Iowa and a Master's Degree in Social Work from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Carla enjoyed teaching Sociology courses at Des Moines Area Community College empowering and inspiring her students. She enjoyed her meditation group, creating abstract art, playing Scrabble with friends, having fun with her nieces and nephews, and camping with her family and also with her nieces at Threshold Learning Center. She loved spending time with all of her friends. During chemotherapy, she joined the Bliss Cancer Center dragon boat practices at Ada Hayden Lake. On April 17, 2017, Carla reached out to the Life is Bliss Dragon Boat Team stating her Mom had died from Breast Cancer and she was presently receiving chemotherapy for Stage 4 Ovarian Cancer and would like to paddle. Carla would eagerly show up for practice after receiving chemotherapy with a smile but weak.

On February 8, 2018 when Carla found out that Life is Bliss was having their annual luncheon on April 2, 2018, her response was "Thank you for last year's dragon boating adventures. I am now in the Israel Family Hospice House. I will be cheering you on in spirit." Carla's smile will be missed during our dragon boat practices.

Carla's goal in life was to empower the people around her and provide caring support. She found the people in her life a blessing. Carla cultivated an attitude of "Let go, let God" and being grateful for all God had provided her on a daily basis. She found joy in every day and strived for peace and self-acceptance. Carla prays that her loved ones may also count their blessings and find joy in every day.



## *In Memory of... Frances Audrey Arzu' - June 17, 1963 to July 4, 2017*

### **Moment of Silence Tribute (excerpt from Valerie Fraser Speech)**

This moment of silence is to honor the passionate, unstoppable, unchallengeable, unforgettable Frances Audrey Arzu'. Frances exuded a strong spirit! She was truly a "force of nature" wrapped up in a heart of gold.

At the age of 15 in 1978, she left Belize, the home of her birth, for Houston, Texas with her parents and six siblings to create a new life. Her sibling, Charlene was her fraternal twin. Though the transition was difficult, the young Frances would conquer each struggle with grace and tenacity, go on to graduate high school with honors, receiving a BA in Economics and a Law Degree from the University of Miami. She practiced law throughout her life and was a fierce and passionate advocate for her clients, especially the juveniles. She embraced life fully, loved to travel and was an avid scuba diver exploring the diving beauty of Fiji, Bali, Australia and Spain, to name just a few. An undeniable inspirational force that touched you deep, destined to leave her footprint on your heart.

In 2001 the unthinkable happened, Frances' parents were tragically killed in a horrible automobile crash. In their honor, Frances and her siblings would create an educational foundation providing 4 year college scholarships for 5 Belize high school students and leave an enduring legacy of their parents' love of quality education. Frances would be an integral part of the process with interviewing and monitoring each child's progress. This continued to be a great source of pride for her!

Then two short years later in 2003 Frances would be faced with her greatest challenge, she was diagnosed with Stage 2B, ER+ Invasive Ductal Carcinoma. It was terrifying. She was 39, newly married and trying to conceive her first child at the time. She would endure 6 months of an aggressive chemotherapy, 5-FU, Adriamycin and Cytosan, followed by Taxotere, surgery and weeks of radiation, then continue with Arimidex for 3 more years.

Throughout the many ups and downs of her disease Frances continued to set the example for others to follow. She was unstoppable. She ran marathons, took up body building and even climbed the Matterhorn. In her quest to eat healthy and keep active and strong during treatment, she came upon the ancient Chinese sport of "Dragon Boating".



When she learned that breast cancer patients had formed teams of 20 paddlers, a drummer and a steer person in a 40 foot floating "breast cancer dragon boat support group", she was instantly hooked! In 2007 Frances was the Founder, President, Coach of the first Texas year-round, all breast cancer survivor dragon boat team, Pink Phurree, and spearheaded the incredible fundraising effort that was necessary to purchase the team's pink dragon boat. Pink Phurree's mission was to help breast cancer survivors reclaim their lives mentally, physically, spiritually and emotionally. Frances and her team paddled in races throughout the U.S. and Canada. Frances refused to be just "a patient" throughout her 14 year cancer journey, dedicated to being an active participant and her "own best advocate". She challenged her doctors and nurses every step along the way. Along her treatment journey the cancer would eventually become resistant and she became metastatic in 2010. She was placed on a number of SERMs, Afinitor, Faslodex, Xeloda and finally Ibrance, but the cancer continued to progress metastasizing to her lungs.

Throughout her own journey, Frances' mission was to inspire others. There is hardly a breast cancer community or organization in the Greater Houston area that has not come to know Frances. She visited their support groups, participated in many community events and attended many conferences over the years. Her legacy will undoubtedly live on through her many accomplishments.

On July 4, 2017 Frances lost her 14 year struggle to breast cancer. The loss is great, she will remain forever in our hearts. The greater pain is that we shall never know how many more lives would have been touched by this amazing woman, or the impact she certainly would have had in the years to come. She was a tireless, inspirational and selfless advocate for encouraging others through her words and deeds, inspiring others to rise above adversity and thrive!





## IBCPC NEWS & HAPPENINGS

It's hard to believe it has been four years since the last International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission (IBCPC) Participatory Dragon Boat Festival was held in Sarasota, Florida (2014). What a fast-paced world we live in!

In 2018, the event will be held July 6-8 in Florence, Italy, with 121 BCS teams anticipated. Situated near the historic city center, the festival will be held at Cascine Park which is Florence's largest public park with an area of about 240 hectares along the Arno River. As of my most recent count, the following Midwest BCS teams will have either individual teams or paddlers joining other teams to participate: All Hands Abreast, Breast of Friends, Cajun Invasion, Dallas United Pink, Dragon Divas, Fighting Angels Abreast, Indy SurviveOars, Life Is Bliss, Making Waves, Mississippi Sisters, Motor City Dragons, Pink Paddling Power, Pink Phurree, Prairie Dragon Paddlers, TEAMSurvivor Madison and The Breast of Texas. That is awesome and so remarkable...but so is the experience of a Festival with all boats filled with only Breast Cancer Survivors!

While it has been a challenge meeting all the requirements and deadlines associated with a Festival outside the U.S.A., a big THANK YOU and HUGS will be well overdue to those main leaders of each team that have been entering data and keeping in contact with the FIR (Firenze in Rosa) Organizing Committee via the online platform.

Paddlers are reminded to go online to follow updates regarding the festival at [www.florencebcs2018.org](http://www.florencebcs2018.org) or via Facebook at [www.facebook.com/florenceBCSFestival2018/](https://www.facebook.com/florenceBCSFestival2018/). You are also encouraged to order Festival merchandise now to take advantage of special reduced prices at <http://www.florencebcs2018.org/merchandising/>. Items can be picked up at the IBCPC Festival.

Best wishes for safe travels to all attending the 2018 IBCPC Participatory Festival and have a fun-filled stay in Italy while paddling and meeting your "Sisters" from around the world!

## Midwest / Mountain Dragon Boat Events Calendar for 2018!

Be sure to check out any of the Festivals listed below when you are traveling through, or vacationing, in the area.

DATE	PLACE	DATE	PLACE
March 10	New Orleans, LA	July 28	Chicago, IL
March 24 & 25	Tempe, AZ	July 28 & 29	Denver, CO
April 14	Grand Prairie, TX	August 4	Bemidji, MN
April 21	Gulf Port, MS	August 4	Charlevoix, MI
April 21	Texarkana, TX	August 4	Eau Claire, WI
April 28 & 29	Austin, TX	August 4	Fort Madison, IA
May 5	Alexandria, LA	August 11	Milwaukee, WI
May 5	Houston, TX	August 11	Cleveland, OH
May 6	Burlington, IA	August 11	Fort Dodge, IA
May 12	Madisonville, LA	August 11	Starbuck, MN
May 20	Dallas/Fort Worth, TX	August 18	Hamilton, OH
May 21	Columbus, OH	August 18	Sparks, NV
June 2	Chicago, IL	August 18	Minocqua, WI
June 2	Evansville, IN	August 25	Colorado Springs, CO
June 16	Little Rock, AR	August 25	Superior, WI
June 16	South Haven, MI	September 8	La Porte, IN
June 23	Chicago, IL	September 8	Louisville, KY
June 23	Ft. Wayne, IN	September 8 & 9	Dubuque, IA
June 23	St. Louis, MO	September 15	Fort Smith, AR
June 30 & July 1	Celburne, TX	September 15	Sandusky, OH
July 14 & 15	St. Paul, MN	September 16	Lansing, MI
July 21	La Crosse, WI	September 27 to 30	The Woodlands, TX
July 21	Toledo, OH	October 13 & 14	Sugar Land, TX
July 28	Akron, OH	November 3	San Antonio, TX

As of February 13, 2018

Listed above are the dates and places for races. The contact information for each race on the Midwest Race Schedule can be found on the ADBA website at [www.americandragonboat.org](http://www.americandragonboat.org). While there, explore the website for many more ADBA services!

**The Central Region  
(ADBA) Breast Cancer  
Survivors/Supporters**

## **The BCS Dragon Boaters Newsletter**

E-MAIL:  
[bcsdistrict@yahoo.com](mailto:bcsdistrict@yahoo.com)

View the BCS Newsletter  
on the ADBA Website at:

[www.americandragonboat.org](http://www.americandragonboat.org)

Click on "BCS News"

USDBF Website:  
[www.usdbf.org](http://www.usdbf.org)

### ***About Our Newsletter...***

It's for you, the Breast Cancer Survivors and Supporters, to keep up with what is happening in the Midwest. It will also allow the Newsletter to pass along information to the Central Region (Midwest Region ADBA) Breast Cancer Teams from the American Dragon Boat Association (ADBA), the United States Dragon Boat Federation (USDBF) and the International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission (IBCPC).

If you have friends you'd like to encourage to join the sport of Dragon Boating, feel free to mail this newsletter to them. You can include a note on your experiences and what fun it is to paddle

with a great group of Survivors and Supporters! Simply fold the newsletter in half for easy mailing or 'handing off' and address it to your friends!

If you meet a new BCS team at a Midwest festival, tell them about "your" newsletter. We don't want to miss anyone!

We welcome all the Midwest BCS Teams to join our newsletter group and be recognized.

I know each Team has some pretty heart-warming and interesting stories that unfold during racing events or breast cancer awareness activities. Some will make us laugh, some will make us

stare in amazement and some will make us cry. But you're important! Be sure to save those special stories and pictures during the 2018 season with your dragon boat adventures. Your Team Captain, or designated team member, can send pictures and a brief description of your team. Whether it be racing or helping at fundraisers, submit your team story via e-mail to [bcsdistrict@yahoo.com](mailto:bcsdistrict@yahoo.com) to be put in the next newsletter!

**NOTE:** If there are any BCS paddlers not registered for the IBCPC and you still want to be on a team, please let me know as some teams are short paddlers and have room for you! **Thank you!**

