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Dragon Divas

HELPING BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS THRIVE THROUGH THE SPORT OF DRAGON BOAT PADDLING

From the Chair: Another Grateful Year!

The Dragon Divas celebrated another great year in 2016. We welcomed new members and sadly, said goodbye to a courageous long time member. Through the generous donations of our donors and supporters we were able to participate in five dragon boat festivals and brought home wonderful memories and medals!

To keep us fit, healthy, and connected with Divas when we are not on the water, the **Training Crew** offered off-season fitness through weRow and Zumba classes.

We christened our new boat, Blue. Now owning Blue and Nessie, we can provide more Divas an opportunity to be on the water.

Throughout the year, both on and off the water, and always close to our hearts is **our mission** to embrace newly diagnosed breast cancer survivors, support and encourage many of our Divas who

continue to fight the battle, and honor those who have died from the disease.

Our **Communications Crew** works diligently throughout the year to share our mission through public speaking events and outreach programs. This outreach impacts the lives of not only survivors but also those who know and love a breast cancer survivor.

Our **Fundraising Crew** did another phenomenal job raising funds by providing members, friends, family and the community at large a variety of ways to support our organization. These donations allow us to fulfill our mission to demonstrate that a full and active life is possible following the diagnosis of breast cancer.

Our **Grounds Crew** again embraced their commitment to support and enhance the emotional and spiritual well-being of our members, and keep our organization grounded in fostering unity, teamwork, respect and resilience.

Workshops provided to Divas were Mindfulness Meditation and Well-Being. This crew also organized opportunities for Divas to volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House and Feed My Starving Children, as well as collect winter clothing for children in need, and organize new member brunches and membership potlucks.

While many reasons exist to call the past year a tremendous one, the priority measure of success remains providing breast cancer awareness to the community, and support and compassion to breast cancer survivors. We have grown from 8 members in 2006 to 90 members in 2016. **Lives do change when Divas come together to share our support, laughter and compassion on and off the boat.**

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, treasures or talent to our wonderful organization.

Kathy Jordan, Board Chair





Mission

The mission of the Dragon Divas is to demonstrate that a full and active life is possible following the diagnosis of breast cancer.

The organization provides an opportunity for members to connect with other breast cancer survivors in a supportive environment to enhance their physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

The Dragon Divas are dedicated to promoting the early detection of breast cancer and raising awareness in the community of the importance of physical fitness in fighting this disease.

Through our message and actions, the Dragon Divas honor the memory of those who have died from the disease and the blessings they have bestowed on our survivorship.

Welcome to this Circle

welcome to this circle
where love and
grace abound

we honor your journey and
wherever you are bound
we will walk beside you,



Core Values

SUPPORT

We are dedicated to helping survivors attain their personal wellbeing in body and spirit. We support and encourage each other's journey through mentorship and our unique camaraderie.

HEALTH

We emphasize the benefits of exercise in living longer and thriving following a diagnosis of breast cancer and demonstrate how to live a life without limits following the diagnosis.

AWARENESS

We promote awareness in the wider community about the importance of early detection and the benefits of an active lifestyle in fighting this disease.

COURAGE

We empower survivors to thrive as the strongest and most courageous versions of themselves in the boat and in their communities.

HOPE

We embrace hope that a cure will be realized within our lifetimes. Until then, we practice active, healthy lifestyles to promote longevity and counteract the risks of recurrence.

HONESTY

We conduct ourselves with authenticity tempered by compassion in the spirit of love.

TEAMWORK

We pull together as a team to live our values and attain our goals.

RESILIENCE

We face difficulty and adversity with courage, resolve, and unwavering integrity.

SPORTSMANSHIP

We demonstrate our spirit by being gracious in victory and defeat.

OUTREACH

Our community outreach programs promote awareness, early detection, and the importance of physical exercise.

REMEMBRANCE

We honor those who have gone before us for what they have taught us about living with and dying from this disease, and what their journey has taught our physicians and researchers about curing this disease.



WHY DRAGON BOAT RACING?

Dragon boat racing has been an honored tradition in Asian communities for more than 2000 years. The dragon symbolizes protection from evil and disease. Our boats are vessels of serenity and healing.

Dragon boat racing became an inspiration for breast cancer survivors through the courageous work of a group of breast cancer survivors in Vancouver BC, with Dr. Don Mackenzie. They used this ancient sport to prove they could exercise vigorously without adverse effects. Today, there are more than 140 breast cancer support dragon boat teams internationally.

Communications Crew

The Communications Crew prepares **print materials** for the Dragon Divas, including the annual report, marketing brochures and our Dragon Diva business cards. The annual report combines year-end reports from each of our eight crews, the board chair, a statement of assets, and a list of our donors and supporters. This annual report is shared with potential sponsors and donors, and is required to maintain our tax status as a 501(c)3.

Our marketing brochures and business cards are distributed to Twin Cities cancer centers and at festivals and other outreach events. Our crew maintains the **content of the Dragon Divas MN website**, and the **Yahoo** site which provides updates for Diva activities, practices, etc. Communication crew members monitor and contribute to the **Diva Facebook page**, and we empower other members to contribute to social media outlets.

During 2016, our crew participated in three **outreach events**: the HealthEast Breast Cancer Support Group at St. John's Hospital in Maplewood, a presentation for "Wellness Wednesday" at Macalester College, St. Paul, and a Health and Wellness Fair hosted by Skyway Fitness, St. Paul.

Nancy Reichow and Esti Koen, Communications Crew Co-Sterns



FUNdraising Crew

The FUNdraising Crew is responsible for raising funds to support the Dragon Divas' mission. Several different events took place in 2016.

In April the Dragon Divas partnered with Costa Farm and Greenhouse in White Bear Lake and held a **plant sale**. Choices included a variety of hanging baskets and flower tubs. The plants proved to be a big hit as this sale raised almost \$1,856. We plan to do this again in 2017.

Our annual **Paddles Up! Event** was held on Sunday, May 6th at Jimmy's Event Center in Vadnais Heights. The monetary and in-kind donations from individuals and businesses exceeded our expectations. Nessie, our dragon boat, was on display and was full of Diva Dots that were quickly bought by attendees. New this year was a 50-50 raffle. Tickets were sold and when enough were sold, a lucky ticket was drawn where the winner received half of the pot and the Dragon Divas received the other half. This year's event netted over \$13,500 from a combination of donations, door sales, raffle tickets, beverages, Diva Dots, and silent auction. The Party Guy Entertainment provided music for this fun event while guests enjoyed the taco buffet.

Dungeon Strength and Conditioning in Vadnais Heights hosted a **November fundraiser** for the Dragon Divas again this year where members, families, and friends worked out and raised \$1,300.

Training Crew

What a year 2016 was for the Dragon Divas and the Training Crew! **We welcomed our new boat, Blue**, which allowed us to double our practice capacity, accommodating up to 40 paddling members per practice session. With our growing membership, we were fortunate to also **expand our coaching staff to two**. Having two boats also afforded us a litany of new practice opportunities for our paddlers and steers such as observing each other performing technique drills, racing side by side, working on overcoming another boat's wake and even having some friendly competition with a dragon boat tug o' war!

After putting on our **Spring Training Camp in May** to kick off our paddling season, the Training Crew collaborated with the Grounds Crew to host a couple of our most beloved events throughout our summer season, a mixed practice and potluck. The mixed practice brings paddlers of all levels together in one boat followed by a potluck; a welcome feast of good food for our bodies and camaraderie for our souls.

In addition to offering the ever-popular **Zumba workouts** on Sundays we introduced a new **off-season training opportunity** and wonderful partnership with weRow, a local gym featuring team-based indoor rowing workouts. Our members packed the Saturday classes held exclusively for Divas and celebrated personal and team fitness victories as we rocketed across finish lines earning gold in Chicago and silver in Madison, to name only a couple.

The Training Crew also proudly sponsored a **CPR/First Aid training** for 14 Dragon Diva members in the Spring. We hope to continue offering this training each year so all of our members have an opportunity to learn these life-saving skills.

The training opportunities we offer to our membership are made possible largely through donations to the Dragon Diva organization. We are ever grateful and proud to live our mission of promoting the benefits of physical fitness in the fight against breast cancer.

Jen Thorup, Training Crew Stern

The Dragon Divas participated in the GiveMN.org **Give to the Max Day** held on November 2016. This innovative online fundraiser encourages friends and family from all over to donate to the Dragon Divas during a 24 hour period. Donors this year were given the opportunity to pay the GiveMN.org processing fee thus helping the Dragon Divas keep more of the \$2,100 in donations.

New this year was a Thirty-one Gifts fundraiser. This **online fundraiser** offered large tote bags for sale with a portion of the sale going to the Dragon Divas. Several new owners are sporting new tote bags and the Divas received a \$200 donation from the sales.

We received a generous **donation** of \$2,551.75 from Ohio National Financial. Allina donated \$300. \$120 was raised through **merchandise sales**. Funds were also raised through Good Shop (not available at this time) and Amazon Smile. Also **donations** were given by various generous donors.

The FUNdraising crew was also responsible for ordering and selling various **Diva wear** – racing shirts, pullovers, life jackets, etc.

Terri Schultz, FUNdraising Crew Stern

Equipment Crew

The equipment crew is responsible for purchasing, maintaining, repairing and storing the team equipment including but not limited to boats, lifts, jackets and paddles. This past season was the first with the responsibility of **caring for two boats, Nessie and Blue**. This required finding dock space for Blue for the paddling season and figuring out a system to get two boats over to the beach for practice when two boats were needed and returning them both at the end of practice and getting them covered.

This spring we efficiently retrieved both boats from Colleen's and, after officially **christening Blue**, we got both boats in the water with Nessie on her lift at Mare's dock and Blue at the floating dock owned by Mare's neighbor. With some reoccurring issues with the covers and the difficulty of navigating Nessie's cover and ensuring enough volunteers to take out and put back the boats after practice this set up worked well and Blue was successfully inducted into our fleet. At the end of this season **both boats were cleaned** (top to bottom literally) and with the help of many Divas and Divos the boats were safely **placed into winter storage** once again at Colleen's. This year the OC2 was left out at Mare's for Divas to use late in the season and hopefully early next season and will be stored at Mare's for the winter.

This season a number of Divas bought their own life jackets. This allowed us to **establish a check out system** to allow Divas who do not own their own jackets to check out a team jacket for the season assuming the responsibility for cleaning it and returning it at the end of the season. About 8 Divas took advantage of this system.

Before next paddling season the equipment crew will be looking at a number of issues. Foremost is purchasing a **new cover** for Nessie that is similar to Blue's cover and hopefully easier to take off and on during the season. Another issue is finding a place over the winter to do some very **necessary maintenance** work on Nessie who is showing some wear and tear and to repair Blue. Looking into the future the crew will continue to discuss whether it might be **time to find a new place to dock the boats** for the paddling season, and what and where that might be. After so many years at Mare's it might be time to give Mare's family a break.

Katie Cavanor and Pat Donlin, Equipment Crew Co-Sterns

Festivals & Events

The Dragon Divas had a great season of camaraderie and racing! Our first festival of the season was the **Capital Lakes Dragon Fest in Madison, WI**, where a mixed team of Harmony and Spirit competed. The Divas took Bronze in the BCS division, but the highlight of the day was the Survivor Ceremony with the other BCS teams. These ceremonies celebrate life and honor those who have passed.

The **Asian Festival** in St. Paul is the local festival where new and newer Divas show family and friends what dragon boating is all about!

We also attended the **Great White North Festival in Chicago, IL**, and **Badger Lake DB Fest in Fort Dodge, IA**, where we took Gold in the BCS divisions.

Two Diva teams participated in **Superior, WI**, for our final festival of the season. Both teams participated in the more competitive women's division and finished admirably.

Margie Kron, Festivals and Events Crew Stern

Membership

The Membership Crew strives to make joining our team effortless. We do this by making necessary forms accessible to our members and through clear communications about member requirements.

Current member information is maintained in a database. The database is used, in part, to provide an up-to-date **photo directory** for members, and to provide coaches with **emergency contact** information for active members each paddling season.

Our crew also assists new members with all aspects of joining the team, including the **assigning of mentors** to all new Divas. Mentoring is a crucial part of the membership process and helps our newest members prepare to become Dragon Divas. **Twenty-two new members** were matched to mentors in 2016. Currently, we have **90 active members** from all over the Metropolitan area and Wisconsin. We receive numerous inquiries from breast cancer survivors and respond to each individually throughout the year.

Membership and registration forms provided by our crew include membership registration information, emergency contact, waiver, medical clearance, and scholarship forms. Our vital documents that require yearly review and updating are provided to members through our **online registration site**. First piloted in 2016, our complete SportsEngine online registration process will be fully implemented for our 2017 paddling season! We also provide **downloadable** medical clearance and scholarship forms through our member-only website.

Joan Miller and Leah Driscoll de Gomez, Membership Crew Co-Sterns



Grounds Crew

The Grounds Crew is committed to support and enhance the emotional and spiritual **well-being** of our members, maintain **healthy group norms**, be leaders of **positive change** and work towards keeping the organization **grounded in its mission**.

We are unique in that we rotate people annually and make a minimum one year commitment to serve on this crew. With the help of Julie Sampson, at Innovative Growth, the members work together annually to comprise a list of behaviors they commit to in making our group successful.

This past season with our crew of 13, we showed how thankful we were to have each other and the value of keeping our organization healthy and positive. This crew's purpose is to have the voices of our members speak into **the ways we build Unity, Teamwork, Respect, and Resilience**. We **celebrate** our members, our successes, and **foster togetherness**. We do this by coordinating community activities, in-house seminars and gatherings, and promoting positive environments.

Our activities included **two in-house retreats**; one on Mindfulness Meditation and one on Well-Being. We also did **community services** with the Ronald McDonald House and Feed My Starving Children. We **collected winter clothing** for a school in need of recess attire. We **organized newbie brunches and membership potlucks**. We also lead the gathering of all members at the lake to bless our Season 11 and to celebrate, christen, and launch the newest member of our fleet: Blue.

Gayle Adair and Mary Skrypek, Grounds Crew Co-Sterns

Finance Crew

The Dragon Divas ended 2016 with total assets and equity of \$62,066 which represented an increase of \$5,722 over 2015. The **investment in a new boat “Blue”** in 2015 was enjoyed by many Divas at practices as we were able to practice races and receive one-on-one steer training from Coach Megan.

We continue to receive **generous donations** both in cash and in-kind from our supporters including Divas and their families. Comprehensive Financial Resources Inc. (Gary Livingston) again supported us with a donation of \$2,552. Dungeon Strength & Conditioning again held a workout in 2016 to raise funds for the Dragon Divas. We received \$1,300 in early January 2017 from this fun event (not included in the 2016 financials). The Divas also received an anonymous cash donation of \$1,000.

The Dragon Divas are looking forward to the **International Breast Cancer Paddlers Commission Dragon Boat Festival** in Florence, Italy in July, 2018. All fundraising for this event will be separate from our ongoing annual fundraising and we look forward to representing the Dragon Divas well in Italy.

Pam Baker, Finance Crew Stern

2016 Festivals

- Jun:** Capital Lakes Dragon Fest, Madison, WI
- Jul:** Asian Festival on Lake Phalen, St. Paul, MN
- Jul:** Great White North Festival in Chicago, IL
- Aug:** Badger Lake Dragon Boat Fest in Fort Dodge, IA
- Aug:** Lake Superior Dragon Boat Festival, Superior, WI



Outreach Activities

- HealthEast Breast Cancer Support Group, St. John’s Hospital, Maplewood
- “Wellness Wednesday” at Macalester College, St. Paul
- Health and Wellness Fair hosted by Skyway Fitness, St. Paul
- Cooks for Kids, Ronald McDonald House, Minneapolis
- Feed My Starving Children, Eagan
- Collected children’s winter coats, “recess attire” for students in need
- Cancer walks

Finance

Dragon Divas Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2016

Assets

Current Assets

Cash	\$42,227
Clothing and Apparel	<u>749</u>
Total Current Assets	\$42,976

Other Assets

Dragon Boat, Cover & Trailer	\$21,716
Dragon Boat & Cover	11,254
OC-2	1,500
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(15,380)</u>
Total Other Assets	\$19,090

Total Assets \$62,066

Liabilities and Unrestricted

Net Assets

Liabilities	\$ 0
Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>62,066</u>

Total Liabilities & Net Assets \$62,066

Revenue

Contributions	\$5,372
Dues	3,900
Interest	6
Earned Income	<u>19,540</u>
Total Revenue	\$28,818

Expense

Depreciation Expenses	\$ 3,240
Program Expenses	12,911
Supporting Expenses	<u>6,945</u>
Total Expense	\$23,096

Change in Net Assets \$5,722

Dragon Divas of St. Paul, Minnesota is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization



Donors

Cash Contributions \$1,000 or more

Comprehensive Financial Resources, Inc.
Dungeon Strength & Conditioning (received in 2017)
Ohio National Financial Services
Anonymous

\$500 to \$1000

Peter Funnell

\$100-\$499

Allina Health System
Anonymous
Anonymous - Toward Scholarships
Katie Cavanor
Julie Christensen
Jim Colten
Community Shares of MN
Michael Driscoll
First State Bank and Trust
Lucy Mathews Heegaard
Kathy Jordan
Mary Knudsen
Marjorie Kron

Ione and Gary Livingston
Donald Marsh
Morgan Stanley - Matching Donations
Tamara Peterson
Jill Pritchard-Scott
Renee Schoumaker
Patrick and Lynne Schriver-Sheedy
Carol Sheehy
Mary Skrypek
Sandra Sorenson
Thirty-One Gifts
Patricia Welch

\$10-\$99

Amazon Smile Foundation
Pamela Baker
Peggy Biernat
Scott Borchert
Wilbur and Barbara Cant
Robert and Kathryn Carter
Daugherty
Laurie Ducharme
John Feigal
Julie Frakes
Thom and Ginny Green
Tammy Helminski
Kris Hogquist
Barbra Huelsman
Carolyn Jacobs
Leroy and Betty Kalla
Craig and Jill Klausung
Emily Knight
Susan Kozarek
Karen Krueger
Laurie Kuduk

Melissa Lallak
Stacy Livingston
Mary Macdonald-Hatcher
Shirley Mandel
Dale Mettenberg
Lorrie Morrison
Maggie Nitti
Baiba Olinger
Nancy Reichow
Andy Rollwagen
Sandra Rosenberg
David Schempp
Terri Schultz
Jeannie Schwartz
Lawrence Shomion
Miriam Shook
Christene Sirois Kron
Conrad Soderholm
Judith Trudel
Jennifer Vitale
Heather Wright

Supporters

Gayle Adair
Capitol Beverage Sales
Costa Farm and Greenhouse
Lynne Blomquist
Lucy Pam Bloomberg
Yvonne Budimlija
Cabelli By Kelly
Carlson Chiropractic
Cub Foods
Dairy Queen
Rosemarie Donlin
John DuCharme
Cindi Fitch
Flicker Meats
Julie Frakes
Matt Frakes
Sarah Frakes
Leah Gordon
Lois Ann Helgeson
Mandy Hyatt
Rebecca Jaspers - Leeann Chin
Pam Jette
Jimmy's Event Center
Gia Johnston
Joe's Sporting Goods
Megan Kress
Karen Krueger
Lake Elmo Inn
Jill Laszewski
Sheila Ludden
Carrie Lyles
Northern Vineyards
Shirley Mandel
Joan Miller
Paddle North
Duzdee Ryan
Pat Schilling
Schmitt Brewery
Terri Schultz
Father Greg Skrypek
Danny Scherer
Sport NGIN
Ron Soppeland
Target Stores
Tina Cornelius - Independent Scentsy
Mary Toombs
The Party Guy Entertainment
Twin City Provisions
WA Frost and Company
Ways To Wellness
weRow
Jane Whitney
The YMCA
Michelle Zubert



Dragon Divas Board 2016

Founder

Mary Skrypek

Medical Advisor

Dr. Sandra K. Rosenberg

Officers

Kathy Jordan, Chair
Gayle Adair, Vice Chair
Pam Baker, Treasurer
Pat Donlin, Secretary

At Large Members

Katie Cavanor
Cindy Fitch
Jill Laszewski
Ione Livingston
Sheila Ludden

<http://www.dragondivasmn.org> | <https://www.facebook.com/DragonDivas> | St. Paul, MN

Dragon Divas
c/o Mary Skrypek
305 Harbor Lane
Shoreview MN 55126

