

DragonTales

Winter 2002

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A Publication of DragonSports USA



From the Bow of the Boat

Gloria Jones, President

DragonSports USA Annual Business meeting was held at The Old Market Pub & Brewery on February 11th. We presented the new board officers for 2002. Joel Shilling accepted the nomination and election for PDBA Presidents Chair replacing Jeff Campbell. Kim Ketcham and Jeff Campbell were featured guests providing news and information about out-of-town racing opportunities by connecting with the PDBA, USDBF, and IDBF.

Our Summer Regatta will be held July 20th. Contact Dan Winkler at dawinkler@worldnet.att.net. The Summer Regatta will also be hosting the PDBA Regional Championship Race. This will provide traveling teams to gear up for the Nationals to be held in August. Our Fall Regatta will be held September 7th and Jim Evans will be the contact.

DragonSports is finalizing the purchase of two six-sixteen boats from Canada. This will give the club a set of four matched boats for use at our Regattas.

Many teams are preparing for the PKSCA Race this June. You can email pkscaracedirector@hotmail.com for more information and team applications. Captains meetings are presently underway. If your team would like to schedule practice sessions in February and March please contact Marilyn Adair at 503-246-7277 or marilyndan@attbi.com. One hour time slots can be reserved.

There may be race opportunities for teams on July 4th in Kennewick, Washington. The Kennewick Chamber of Commerce is excited

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PDBA Year in Review

Jeff Campbell

The past few years have been very exciting for dragon boat racing in the US, a trend, which I am confident, will continue into the future. Congratulations to Dr. Joel Shilling who has succeeded me as President of the Pacific Dragon Boat Association. I also extend congratulations to Gloria Jones who was reelected Vice-President, Hans Wu who was reelected Treasurer, and Beethoven Cheng who was also reelected as Secretary. As many of you know I have been active in the dragon boating community for some time now. I have been honored to serve on the Board of Directors of clubs, regional associations, and the United States Dragon Boat Federation (USDBF), which is the governing body for dragon boating in the U.S. I am going to try and take a year off from the sport to spend time with my family. What I'm really doing is checking my paddling addiction level, so if you see me out on the water you know I just couldn't stand it any longer. I still haven't broken a paddle, so there is always something left for me to do in the sport! *Hey, tiller's can break stuff too!*

2001 was a very busy year for PDBA members. Successful races were held in Long Beach, California, SF Bay Area (two races), Portland (two races), and the PDBA helped organize a new race in Kent, Washington. The PDBA held it's Regional Championship race in Oakland with the winners advancing to race in the 2002 World Club Crew Championships in Rome, Italy. Two Portland clubs, Wasabi and Kai Ikaika, qualified, as did the Bay Area Dragons (BAD). These clubs will make up one third of the USA contingent and compete against the best clubs from Asia, Europe, Africa, and the South Pacific.

In 2001 the World Dragon Boat Racing Championships were hosted by the USA. The event in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was spectacular and the PDBA was well represented. Members from Dragon Sports, Pink Phoenix, Kai Ikaika, Sunset High school, and others joined with Wasabi Paddling Club to send 5 complete crews to the World Championships. You may see some proud paddlers wearing USA paddling jackets around the dock; congratulate and thank them for representing the West, they all deserve it!

The qualifications for World Championships occur at the US National Championships, which are held every two years. In preparation for the 2003 World Championships, the US Nationals will be held this August in Oakland. Paddlers will compete in Oakland for the right to join the national crew, Team USA. This is an official USDBF sanctioned event and all participants must be members of one of the regional organizations. There are three divisions of competition: Premier, Junior, and Senior. Within each division there are three classes of racing: Open, Women, and Mixed. Standard distances of 1000m, 500m, and 250m are used. Nine different crews will make up Team USA that will travel to Shanghai, China for the 5th World Dragon Boat

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What's Inside...

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2001 Christmas Caroling Survey and Recap

Member Interview with Liz Towill

Promoting fitness and friend

DragonSports USA Open Practices

Mon., Wed., and Fri. 9:00 AM
Tuesday and Thursday 6:30 PM
Saturday 8:00 AM

All evening practices should use lights.

Notice: Be considerate to other teams by bringing the boats in 5 minutes before your practice ends.

Mail checks for dues/new memberships to:

Joel Shilling
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Visit our website at: www.dragonsports.org or
check out our yahoogroups at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DragonSportsUSA>

Board Members/Officers

President • Gloria Jones
Vice President • Jim Evans
Treasurer • Joel Shilling
Marilyn Adair
John Myers

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carol@battan.com

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about the sport of dragon boat racing and would like a competitive or exhibition race held on the Holiday. DragonSports is exploring the possibility of assisting them, if our local teams can get behind this effort. They are offering prize incentives to the winning team or teams. Keep tuned to our web page and yahoogroups for more information.

Our open club practice sessions continue right through the winter. They are held on Mon., Wed., and Fri. at 9:00 AM, Tues./Thur. at 6:30 PM, and Sat. 8 AM. The evening practice sessions were adjusted to accommodate our paddling membership. We encourage all coaches/callers, and tillers to lead an open club practice session. Qualified callers and tillers may volunteer for one or more sessions per month by calling Liz Towill at 503-288-3654 or email at lizzer@teleport.com.

Stay connected and informed with our membership activities. We ask that any email, phone, and address changes be submitted to Kathy Shimizu at 503-650-6927 or kathyshimizu@yahoo.com.

From PDBA... continued from page 1

Championships. This is a great opportunity for local teams to try the next level of sport racing. If your team is not currently a member of the PDBA and you would like more information, contact any of the PDBA officers or members.

Finally, I want to thank each of you for your dedication to the sport of dragon boat racing. Crews in Portland paddle year-round in some pretty miserable conditions. Cold and wet in the winter and wet and cold in the summer (except for that one day in June, which brings out every power boat and personal watercraft in a three county area)! Your dedication is paying off. The sport is growing and is being marketed as a potential Olympic sport in 2008! Who knows, maybe then we'll get some coverage in the Sports section!

False Creek Racing Canoe Club (FCRCC) Dragon Boat Conference Feb. 1-3, Vancouver, B.C.

A report from under the Granville Bridge
Gary Fuka

This three day conference held on vibrant Granville Island in the heart of Vancouver offered a wide cross section of topics for everything dragon boating. Technique, tactics, training, steering, coaching, testing, psychology, video and technology were among the topics covered. Coaches, paddlers, steerspersons, officials, and race directors alike had great opportunity to learn and share experiences.

A little about FCRCC... This highly competitive club is involved in outrigger, canoe, kayak, and dragon boat paddling and has about 1600 members. About thirty dragon boat teams are affiliated with FCRCC. A related geography note is that False Creek is the saltwater inlet from Vancouver Bay where the club practices and the yearly Alcan Dragon Boat Festival is held.

The conference offered a choice of two or three sessions at a time, with typical classes that I attended ranging from about 30-40 attendees.

Sprinkled liberally throughout the classes were many familiar Portland dragon boaters. My fellow Hampton Woods travelers and I spotted members of Civil Serpents, Multnomah Flatwater/What's The Catch, Dragonflies, Wasabi, and Kai Ikaika. Many of us went out paddling or steering in the on-the-water coaching sessions. The dry and bright day was perfect for paddling amidst the panorama of the freshly snow covered mountains that frame Vancouver.

Look for some of the Portland teams out practicing the new findings on the Willamette near you.

Friendship through paddle sports

Liz Towill – A Warm Aloha for Callers and Tillers

Shirley Ewart

Liz Towill, Dragon Sports USA's new coordinator of open practice callers and tillers, brings to the job two wonderful attributes of her native Hawaii: The spirit of "aloha", or friendliness and of "kokua", or helpfulness. These characteristics will certainly ease her ability to beg, persuade, and cajole people to serve as the callers and tillers essential in running weekly open club practices.

Liz, who was born and raised on Oahu, Hawaii, came to Portland in 1981 to attend Lewis and Clark College. She graduated in 1985 with a Bachelor's degree in English and teaching. Later she earned a MSW in Social work at PSU. After teaching for a time in Portland Public Schools, Liz worked for the Women's Crisis Line and later for the Mid Willamette Jobs Council in McMinnville. Often as she crossed the Willamette on the way to her job, she would notice the Kaohsiung dragon boats on the river, and wondered how one got to paddle such a beautiful vessel.

After accepting a position as Career Services Coordinator at Portland Community College, Liz was delighted to receive an email from Fran Palk who invited staff members to join students on the dragon boat team. Liz turned up for practice and was hooked. In 1999, seeking to paddle year-round, she switched to Stumptown Paddlers where she currently enjoys both paddling and calling. In 2000, she also coached the PCC team.

True to her Hawaiian background, Liz likes to swim. Two years ago she organized the Stumptown Dog Paddlers to take part in the Labor Day swim across the Columbia at Hood River. An avid gardener, a great cook, and an enthusiastic hiker, she is also an accomplished seamstress who has made paddle bags for several fellow "Stumpies".

Liz lives in the Grant Park neighborhood with "Buster" her smooth haired fox terrier and "Clio", a black and white cat. Working as a counsellor at the Serendipity School for emotionally challenged teenagers, she collects samples of adolescent humor, terrible jokes which, when passed on to the captive audience of Stumptown paddlers, inevitably elicit groans. But the paddlers know this is just Liz's way of lightening up practice.

In anticipating the challenges of her new DragonSports USA position, Liz offers a special plea: If you have had experience calling or tilling, please volunteer to help at open practice. Without both a tiller and a caller, no dragon boat can leave its mooring, and a whole crew will have come down to the dock in vain. We all need your "kokua" to keep those dragons racing.

2001 Christmas Caroling Success

S.M. Dron

DragonSports members and a few who weren't joined together in DSUSA record numbers to paddle the icy waters of the Willamette River on Tuesday, December 11th for the annual Christmas Ships Caroling event. Ninety-eight warmly clad people met at the dock, clutching paddles, song sheets, flashlights, and holiday paraphernalia, clambered onto the boats and pushed off to meet up with the 45th Annual Christmas Ships Parade. Many joined in the watery Christmas carol sing-a-long; while a few just listened and paddled as they glided on the dark water along side the brightly decorated ships.

When singing time was done, paddlers moved the party to Mazzi's for fabulous food, drink, and warmth. More sing-a-long and entertainment were had while door prizes like hats, DSUSA patches, free paddling gift certificates, and the grand prize of a new paddle were given out through out the evening.

In early January a survey was sent out to those who attended. Our hopes were confirmed when we heard back that overall, everyone had a great time. "This was the best caroling so far;" offered Mary Milestone, "I had a great time. Everyone else I talked with also had a ball". Katherine Applegate said, "It was a great experience; almost magical out on the river".

There was, of course, some input for areas of improvement, which was an important reason for the survey in the first place. One paddler recommends, "Perhaps Silent Night is a bit too sweet for such a bunch of rowdy paddlers. Besides, it is really hard to sing 3/4 time and paddle 4/4"! The suggestion was also made that; "A better area to go caroling in would be nice. It was a lot of work for so little being seen by the public". We appreciated respondent's willingness to share their input and the Christmas Ships Caroling Committee will evaluate all suggestions. But in the end, everyone who responded said they would definitely be back next year.

Paddler Tom Achor said, "I thought this was a goofy and fun event. I hope it doesn't get taken TOO seriously, despite the survey"! And we couldn't agree more! But when an event grows as much as this one has, advance planning behind the scenes is imperative. For example, last year was the first time, working directly with the Christmas Ships Parade coordinator in advance. If you have any input you would like to offer or would be interested in joining the steering committee for the 2002 event, please contact DSUSA at 503-639-2799 x2 or DragonSports@att.net.

2002 Awakening the Dragon Ceremony

Join the festivities on:

April 6th at 12:00 PM

Waterfront Park at RiverPlace

Sponsored by the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association

Christmas Caroling a Cooperative Effort

Gloria Jones

I would personally like to thank each and everyone that helped make our annual Christmas Ships Caroling event a bright highlight last year.

Jim Evans trailered the 2 boats donated by Wasabi Paddling for this event down to Willamette Park. Stumptown and a collection of DSUSA members moved the boats down to RiverPlace for this annual event. Dewey Gault, Mike Glowa, Dan Schenk, along with several others headed up the boat decorating. Joel Shilling the founder of DSUSA was once again at the keyboard and bullhorn on one boat. Glenn Weybright, Leroy Santiago, Dana Nelson, and myself led the carols in our boats. Debbie Bunch, Dan Winkler, John Myers, and Roger Williams steered us safely down the river. Roger was decked out in a Santa Suit complete with white hair and beard. Shawna Dron and Leroy Santiago took charge of the caroling at Mazzi's. Joe Swaney and Leroy accompanied on

guitar. The Golden Dragons paddled one boat back to Willamette Park the following morning. The second boat was paddled back by the Thursday night open club practice of 7 courageous people (Shirley Ewart, Sue Fisher, Gloria Jones, Rosey Shammasian, Dave Hedrick, Gary Fuka and Ron Kay the tiller) on a very stormy evening. Thanks to a multitude of volunteers, we were able to create this memorable event for our club membership.


DragonSports USA thanks Carol Battan for setting up DSUSA yahoogroups. One way we can **stay connected** is by signing up at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/DragonSportsUSA>, to receive electronic messages from the club and paddling friends. All messages sent are monitored by Carol Battan to keep the quality and integrity of this connection.

Help us continue to develop and build our membership services by sharing your ideas with the board. We at DragonSports USA, Inc. will continue providing "fitness and friendship through paddle sports".

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2002 Dragon Boat Races

PKSCA Dragon Boat Races Portland, OR pkscaracedirector@hotmail.com	June 8-9
DragonSports USA Vancouver Lake Summer Regatta PDBA Regional Championship Race dawinkler@worldnet.att.net	July 20
Long Beach Dragon Boat Championship Long Beach, CA info@dragonfestival.com	July 27-28
Hawaii Dragon Boat Festival Honolulu, HI dragon@chinatownhi.com	Aug. 3-4
US National Dragon Boat Race Oakland, CA sgee@worldnet.att.net	Aug. 8-9
6th Annual California Int'l Dragon Boat Festival Oakland, CA sgee@worldnet.att.net	Aug. 10-11
DragonSports USA Vancouver Lake Fall Regatta jeva8423@aol.com	Sept. 7
CDBA Festival Lake Merced, San Francisco, CA hanswu@aol.com	Sept. 28-29

For a more complete listing of 2002 Racing Events, please log onto:
www.battan.com/pdba/calendar