



Dragon Bytes

Race on the River News

2016 Issue 2

Editor: Sherry Cheek

May, 2016

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Our Honorary Chair for 2016 Race on the River is:

Dr. Gerry Farrell



Dr. Gerry Farrell has very recently retired as head of the Palliative Care Unit at the New Glasgow's Aberdeen Hospital. Dr. Farrell's model for community palliative care formed Pictou's very first palliative care program. In 2000, the first integrated Palliative Care team of Pictou County was formed and is still thriving today. The program has grown into one of full service, integrating hospital and community care. In this work Dr. Farrell has touched the lives of many citizens in Pictou County and Nova Scotia. Dr. Farrell is also well known for his love of photography and gardening. For more about Dr. Farrell follow these links:

http://www.virtualhospice.ca/en_US/Main+Site+Navigation/Home/For+Professionals/For+Professionals/Take+a+Bow/Dr_+Gerry+Farrell.aspx

or

<http://www.pictouadvocate.com/2015/12/02/picture-perfect-wall-dedicated-to-dr-gerry-farrell/>

New Glasgow Dragon Boat Society Board Of Directors 2016

President: Bob Rogers, **Vice President:** Chris Higdon, **Secretary:** Sherry Cheek, **Treasurer:** Lisa McGrath,

Past-President: Kim MacLaren, **Directors:** Roger Swarbrick, Shirley Murray, Phil Wyman, Terry Richardson, Meghan Brophy, Nikki Parnell, Jillian Greene, Alisha Mombourquette, Dion Antle, Heidi Jamieson-Mills and Sandra DeGruchy



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Race on the River - Where it all Began

Charlottetown, August 2001, a windy day in the harbour was where the Race on the River originated. My wife Mel's breast cancer team, the Women Alike, had just started their race when the wind and the tide had dragged their dragon boat into the shore despite the best effort of the coxswain to steer it on a straight course. The ladies abandoned their race but apart from being wet, were more fortunate than another crew which sank in the harbour having failed to overcome the elements. It was then, that I decided that we in Pictou County could do better, we could stage our own dragon boat festival and so it began.

In New Glasgow, we had the relatively calm East River, the New Glasgow Marina for launching the boats, the Glasgow Square for viewing the races and a supportive community to participate and support the event. With all these advantages we knew that we could succeed in staging the races. Once in New Glasgow, a meeting was held with the Women Alike and they agreed to merge their annual Festival with this idea and so the Race on the River was born. A committee was formed of interested volunteers but where could we get dragon boats from and how would we get them to New Glasgow? We were lucky to find that Sport Nova Scotia had three dragon boats and would rent them to us. We were also fortunate in that a local company, A W Leil Cranes (through its owner, Alison Leil) generously agreed to transport the boats to and from Dartmouth at a very low cost. We were also fortunate in that Sobeys agreed to become the main sponsor of the event and have remained the same to this day.

So we now had the boats and we had a sponsor but who would paddle them? We set out persuading individuals in the various organizations in the community to volunteer to learn to paddle a dragon boat and once again luck was with us in that the community had seen the Women Alike paddling their boat, so it was not something completely foreign. With their assistance and that of the local YMCA practice sessions were held in the Y Pool and eventually we had 33 teams of twenty paddlers in each team totalling over 600 people committed to try their luck in this new venture. People came from local corporate, health, finance and community groups to try paddling in a dragon boat and of course there were the "Breast Cancer professionals" to show them the ropes.

We, of course, needed people to steer the boats and again the Women Alike came through with assistance from their coaches, Crystal Cameron, Angela Adams and Richard Cameron and over 100 volunteers came forward to assist with the event. The Town of New Glasgow assisted with providing docking facilities to launch the boats and the use of Glasgow Square as the venue for spectators to view the races. Sport Nova Scotia supplied the paddles and life jackets and so we were ready to stage the event. We also realized that the event could be used to provide financial support to local charities and so we encouraged the teams to raise funds for two local charities – Women Alike Breast Cancer Support Group, Northumberland Region Special Olympics as well as the Sport Nova Scotia group that had provided us with the boats. With fingers crossed we held our breath for sunny weather and calm water on the river. August 24th 2002 dawned a fine and sunny day almost a year after the unfortunate experience in Charlottetown and so the Race on the River Festival began.

The rest, as they say, is history and now as we approach our 15th anniversary, the event continues to attract individuals to race in dragon boats on the East River and over 10,000 have participated in the races to date. The Festival continues to be supported by many local sponsors and over \$1,500,000 in donations has been raised by the teams for local charities. The event attracts hundreds of spectators to view the races and is a fixture in the Pictou County Festival year. It was started as a health conscious event with the object to have fun on the water and to encourage community participation and continues to be so to this day. Long may it continue.

Paddles Up.

Roger Swarbrick
Teams Chairperson
May 2016





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Volunteer with us!

*If you like fun and excitement...
this event is for you!*

For ages 12 and up, we can find a job for you: on the dock, timing races, running with the results, scoreboard keeping, handing out life jackets and paddles, or just giving breaks to other Volunteers!

Contact: Nikki Parnell at:
nikki1061@hotmail.com
cell#902-759-3815



IMPORTANT DATES: MARK YOUR CALENDARS

June 7 - 7pm Team/Pledge Captains Meeting

July 18th - 21st Practices (sign your team up at the above meeting)

July 21st Pledge Turn In Night-Scotiabank

July 22nd Opening Ceremonies

July 22nd Team Captain's meeting

July 23rd RACE DAY!





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Have Fun with Fundraising



Fundraising can be a bore, a pain and a chore but it does not have to be. We can't all put on a Chase the Ace competition but there are other methods that can be used without too much effort which all the team can be involved.

Bottle Drive

All you need is a van or car in which to collect the bottles and volunteers to visit friends and neighbours to pick up the bottles. To make things interesting have the team members put on last year's costumes or get dressed up as Pirates (this year's Race on the River theme). Don't forget to have a note thanking people for their contributions and try to have a few empty crates to collect the bottles with. Bottles and cans can be pop, beer, whatever and can be delivered to the local recycling depot and the funds collected can offset the cost of the team's registration or count towards the pledge. You are also helping the environment.

Yard Sale

For this you need a yard or yards plus any items that the team members do not need, plus team members to sell the items and of course good weather. (It is very hard to be successful in the rain!!!) It is amazing what people will buy and the cost to you and your team is very small. Again have the team members dress up in the Pirate or other costume or you could have last year's costume and make sure that you have a notice advertising the team and where the funds are going to plus a Thank You sign. Try to start early in the day, no later than 8am, yard sale attendees are always early birds and make sure that you give value for money, remember low prices with many items go a long way towards your target.

Hot Dog Sale

For this you need to persuade your employer or a local grocery store to let you and the team members put on this type of event. (This could require a bit of persuasion). Again the weather has to be good (nobody likes soggy hot dogs) and you need at least one or more BBQs. It is also a bit more costly than the first two as hot dogs, buns and condiments are required to satisfy your customers. Again dress up in costume and have your Race on the River 2016 sign plus a big "Thank You" notice. You also need somebody to cook the hot dogs and serve them to your customers. This event should start around 11am and may need to last until 3 or 4pm so a number of team members will be required to put in an hour's shift but again it could be worthwhile to assist the race fee or the pledge drive.

Washer Toss or Darts Game

This type of an event needs a garden (Washer Toss) or a garage (both) plus washer toss boxes and at least one dartboard (plus Darts). It does require some organisation and you may well have to advertise it to your friends and neighbours in order to encourage participation. Try to keep a small fee to play the game and you will also need prizes so this may not be your first choice in the fundraising list of events. Again have the team members dress up and of course you will need the sign for the Race on the River plus a big Thank you notice. This type of event can be held in the rain, providing you have a garage, and will probably take at least 4 hours thus team members will be needed to put in a shift or two.

Raffle or 50/50

When you get to this type of an event it gets more complicated as a license is needed plus a letter from the Race on the River Society (a letter can be provided) but the license has to come from the Province. It does require more organisation including the printing of tickets or a roll of tickets from the local dollar store and does require going door to door to neighbours and friends for them to buy tickets and can become a bit intimidating when facing a barking dog!! It can raise a lot of money (just ask the Chase the Ace organizers) but is not for the faint hearted and may not be at the top of the list for the team.

Whatever the event, just remember that it can be Fun, so do your best to make it Fun and it will be Fun!
Good luck and Paddles Up! Race on the River 2016 Committee.





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THEME FOR THIS YEAR

This year's theme for our 15th Anniversary is

“PIRATES”

There are prizes for the following:

BEST DRESSED DRUMMER

BEST DRESSED TEAM and

BEST TEAM SPIRIT



For information about *Race on the River*: Roger Swarbrick at: rogersonconsulting@ns.aliantzinc.ca (902)755-1081 or (902)-759-8883 or Sherry Cheek at: Sherry.Cheek@ca.gt.com (902)-752-7070



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Roger Swarbrick

*"What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us;
what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal."
– Albert Pike*

As Race on the River, The Pictou County Dragon Boat Festival gets ready to celebrate its 15th Anniversary this July 22nd and 23rd, I (as a past board member) would like to take a moment to extend my deep thanks and gratitude to a special man, Roger Swarbrick - Founder, Patron and 15 year board member of The Pictou County Dragon Boat Society.

I have been fortunate to have worked through the years with Roger and Race on the River so I have seen firsthand how he brought his idea, this vision he had to hold dragon boat races here in Pictou County to fruition. When we first started in 2001, we never knew if our first race would be our last race or not. We wondered if we would have the support, the funds, the paddlers or the volunteers to have another race the following year. However, after getting to know Roger and seeing first hand his strength and determination, his perseverance, his hard work, his ability to bring people and groups together along with his go get it attitude well he achieved his dream.

Roger would be the first to say that Race on the River belongs to all those who have contributed in some way, large or small, these past fifteen years. Community support has always been at the heart of this great family festival. A festival that was established to raise funds for specific charities while promoting a healthy lifestyle.

I would like to applaud the generous contributions of all the sponsors including the Presenting Sponsor Sobey's, the volunteers, paddlers, pledge donors, concession operators, entertainers, friends and supporters and our community-at-large, for you all share in the success of this great event and its many achievements through these past 15 years.

To Roger Swarbrick, thank you for your vision, your leadership, your passion and your dedication to the Race on the River. Thank you Roger for making a meaningful difference for so many and for a celebrated legacy!

Lesley Sobey

Patron, Race on the River
The Pictou County Dragon Boat Festival
May 16, 2016



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REMINDER: Teams need to be *registered and paid in full by May 31, 2016 to qualify for the \$500 registration fee.* After May 31, 2016 it will be \$600 to register a team.

For more information or to get your team registered, please contact:

Roger Swarbrick: (902)755-1081 or (902)-759-8883 rogersonconsulting@ns.aliantzinc.ca or Sherry Cheek at (902) 752-7070 or Sherry.Cheek@ca.gt.com



INFORMATION

THE EVENT

Race on the River 2016 is a one-and-a half-day festival. Our **15th Annual Dragon Boat Festival** opens Friday night with celebration and entertainment. Races begin Saturday morning. Throughout the day races and off-water activities will entertain spectators and participants along the Riverfront.

Race on the River will once again be held on the East River, just one block from New Glasgow's Downtown shopping area.

HOW TO MAKE UP A TEAM

Race on the River is a participation level event for teams wanting to participate for the fun and excitement of Dragon Boating. **All teams must include at least 8 female paddlers.**

A full Dragon Boat team consists of **24 people: 20 paddlers, 1 drummer, and 3 alternates.** A qualified coxswain is provided by the event. **Minimum age for participation in the Saturday races is 16 years of age.**

Each team must have a designated Team Captain and a Pledge Captain. You may also want to designate a Co-Captain to assist the Team Captain.

For more information contact: **Roger Swarbrick** at: (902)755-1081 or (902)-759-8883 rogersonconsulting@ns.aliantzinc.ca

or **Sherry Cheek** at (902) 752-7070 or Sherry.Cheek@ca.gt.com

TEAM REGISTRATION FORM

Team Name: _____

Organization: _____

Team Captain: _____

e-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing address: _____

Pledge Captain: _____

e-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Mailing address: _____

Non Refundable Entry fee: \$600.00 to be paid by cheque or bank draft only. No Cash Accepted. If registered and paid in FULL by May 31, 2016 you would save addition \$100.

Fee includes one practice session and a minimum of two races. Registration is on a **first paid, first in** basis. **Registration fees go toward operating costs. Each participant is asked to raise at least \$50 in pledges to support our Festival beneficiaries.**

Please make cheques payable to:

New Glasgow Dragon Boat Society

And mail to:

**Attention: Roger Swarbrick
RR#3, New Glasgow, NS B2H 5C6**

For information about *Race on the River*: Roger Swarbrick at: rogersonconsulting@ns.aliantzinc.ca (902)755-1081 or (902)-759-8883 or Sherry Cheek at: Sherry.Cheek@ca.gt.com (902)-752-7070



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Supporting Our Beneficiaries:

Women Alike Breast Cancer Survivors Society helps women living with breast cancer understand that they can lead full, active lives despite the physical limitations imposed by this disease. They are working to improve the quality of life for breast cancer "thrivers", raise public awareness about the disease, and promote and support local Canadian Cancer Societies. The race for a cure continues.



Special Olympics Northern Region's uses sport to assist those with an intellectual disability to become all that they can be - physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. To become accepted, respected and productive members of society. Their mission is to ensure that a full continuum of sport opportunities is available to those with an intellectual disability.

Pictou County Prostate Cancer Support Association has been active for over ten years. The objectives of their Society are: to improve the physical and psychological well-being of men who have or have had re-occurring prostate cancer; to offer support to men and their families; to support prostate cancer research and to promote prostate cancer awareness throughout the Pictou County area.



For more information about the *Race on the River* visit: www.raceontheriver.ca
or join our group on Facebook at:
Race on the River The Pictou County Dragon Boat Festival