

Derby City Dragons

Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat Racing Team

Summer 2026

291 Hubbards Lane, Suite 172-238 • Louisville, KY 40207-8203

Vol. 7 No. 1



About Us:

As Louisville's first Dragon Boat Racing team we are proud to be part of the 300+ Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat

Racing teams throughout the world. Our team was founded in March, 2013, as we sought to strengthen our spirits, prove that we weren't defined by our shared diagnosis and support each other in our individual struggles. The Derby City Dragons is a team that welcomes breast cancer survivors, regardless of age, fitness level or previous experience. We share a zest for fun, life, health and sportsmanship, and promise that members will build new lifelong friendships as they "awaken the dragon within themselves!"

For information about our team and to donate to help support our mission, our webpage is:

<http://www.derbycitydragons.org/>

Contact us at:

drbycitydragons@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook at Derby City Dragons - Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boat Team:

[@derbycitydragonsbcsdragonboatteam](#)

HEADS IN THE BOAT!! PADDLES UP!!



My Expectations for 2026

By Susan Plander



When I think of expectations, I think of new beginnings; New Year's Resolutions, Birthdays, Changes that come from losses and/or medical "challenges," and the start of a new dragon boat season.

Every year I make New Year's resolutions which usually are forgotten in a week. Birthday wishes from friends and family are for another year of blessings of which I have been blessed and thankful for. The losses I have had this year have been instrumental in racing the reality of new beginnings as I face life now without my parents. I have been so blessed to have had my dad as long as I had. He used to say to me, when I leaned on him for advice, that one day he wouldn't be here and then asked me what would I do then? I'm still not sure how to answer that question.

Now as far as medical "challenges", it all seems so close and so distant now. But, that terrible thing called Cancer really started my life on a completely new journey that I never expected and lead me in a new direction that has led me to where I am today. No one could have predicted that horrible diagnosis would open the doors that I have been traveling through today.

Which brings me to starting my 12th season of being a part of Derby City Dragons, and the beginnings of our 2026 Dragon Boat season. This year is the IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival in Aix-les-Bains, France. Four years ago, it was announced where this festival would be held and we starting planning. This will be my second international festival in Europe and I am beyond excited. Just pinch me!!

However, I have to remember "Heads in the boat", and get to paddling. Oh, how I love paddling in the boat. There is something special about being out there that calms me and rejuvenates me to face the other parts of my crazy life. And as much as I whine and complain about what may hurt or how tired I am, that feeling I get on the boat can't be diminished.



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Robin's Joke Corner



There are two cats. The first named "OneTwoThree", the other "UnDeuxTrois." Which cat won the swimming race? OneTwoThree because UnDeuxTroisQuatre sank.

DCD Summer Birthdays

June:

Nikki Thornton	06/04
Vicki Fleitz	06/04
Candy Parrack	06/15
Lisa Clemons	06/16
Em Joy	06/23
Dana Robertson	06/29



July:

Margaret Fadeley	07/01
Jeanne Ballard	07/03
Gina Robinson	07/05
Suzanne Childers	07/13
Michelle Hayes	07/19
Sherry Spanyer	07/21
Jessamy Thomison	07/29
Cherie Eplion	07/30

August:

Lisa Orr	08/02
Kathy Schmitt	08/09
Jennifer Tyler	08/21



The best feeling about Dragon Boating is _____.

- ... Camaraderie.
- ... Positivity.
- ... Strength.
- ... Living.
- ... Sisterhood.
- ... Team Support.
- ... Hope.
- ... Uplifting.
- ... Celebration.
- ... Accomplishment.
- ... Thriving.
- ... Family.
- ... Life Changing.
- ... Water Therapy.
- ... Connections.
- ... Memories.
- ... Friendship.
- ... Freedom.



Now, think of your own stories and see if these can bring a new perspectives to your lives. As I wrote these down, I could add moments of each that make me see how much richer dragon boating has made and continues to make my life.

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Counting Down to Aix-les-Bains!

By Claudia Johnson



Did you know that Aix-les-Bains, France, has been a premier destination for wellness, sports, and international competition for centuries? Nestled on the shores of beautiful Lake

Bourget—the largest natural lake in France—this picturesque town will soon welcome dragon boat teams from around the world for the International Dragon Boat Festival

For the Derby City Dragons, this is much more than a race. It is an opportunity to represent Kentuckyiana, our team, and the incredible strength of breast cancer survivors on an international stage. Teams from numerous countries will gather to celebrate athleticism, teamwork, friendship, and the shared spirit that makes dragon boating such a unique sport.

As we prepare for this unforgettable adventure, remember that every practice, every early morning, every paddle stroke, and every act of support from our teammates has helped bring us to this moment. We will not only be competing—we will be sharing our story, building international friendships, and showing the world what it means to be a Derby City Dragon.

Whether you are traveling to France or cheering from home, know that you are part of this journey. Together, we will carry our dragon spirit across the Atlantic and onto the waters of Lake Bourget.

Aix-les-Bains, here we come!

Community Outreach

Our Community Outreach Crew, lead by Sherry S. and Wendy M., has been really busy this year already. We have participated in The Easter Parade, Louisville's Hike, Bike, and Paddle, on Memorial Day, we have fixed dinner for Hildegard House, a local hospice for those in need, and the Kentucky Derby Marathon and Mini-Marathon during the Kentucky Derby Festival.



Dragon Strong Fitness

Congratulations to the 15 "Dragon Strong" peeps for the 2025/2026 off season Fitness Incentive Competition.

- | | |
|-------------|----------|
| Bonnie | Carol |
| Cherie | Cindy W. |
| Claudia | Cristi |
| Ellen | Gail |
| Gina R. | Lisa C. |
| Lisa O. | Mary Kay |
| Michelle H. | Pami |
| Sheila | |



Committee Update – We Need You!

We are currently looking for a Co-Chair for our Team Building Committee! If you're one of those people who always has great ideas for bringing our team together, building camaraderie, strengthening friendships, and creating memorable experiences, now is the perfect time to step up and help lead this committee. We are excited to see the creativity, energy, and vision you can bring to our team's future!

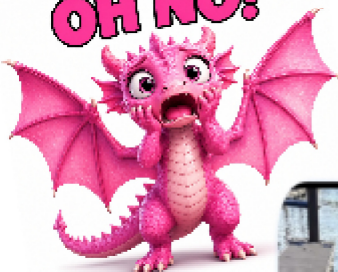
We are also in immediate need of both a Chair and Co-Chair for the Dragon Heart Crew.

The Dragon Heart Crew is responsible for supporting our team at festivals throughout the United States. This includes coordinating our festival tent, merchandise sales, and creating an amazing festival experience for our members and supporters. The possibilities are endless—from team support and spirit activities to new ideas that make our festivals more fun, welcoming, and successful than ever before!

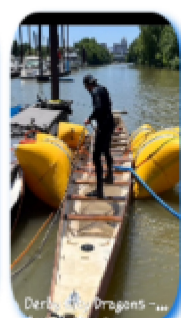
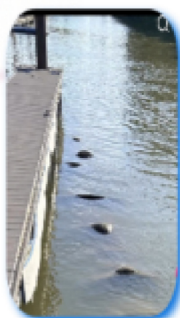
These are wonderful opportunities to get involved, develop leadership skills, make a difference, and help shape the future of Derby City Dragons.

If you are interested in either position, please contact pres@derbycitydragons.org or send Claudia a private message.

OH NO!



Happily not a
Capsize Drill Gone
Wrong!!



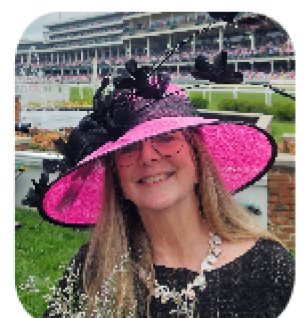
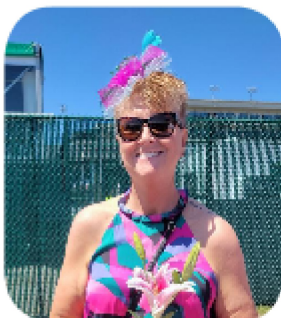
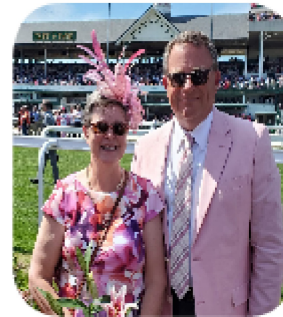
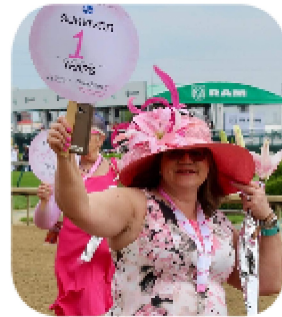
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DCD Participation in the Survivors' Parade at the Kentucky Oaks

The Kentucky Oaks 2026 was held on May 1, 2026. This prestigious race is recognized as America's premier event for 3-year-old fillies. In addition, the 17th Survivors Parade is a moving tradition that celebrates breast and ovarian cancer survivors and encourages those still fighting their cancer battle as they march on Churchill Downs' historic racetrack prior to the running of the Longines Kentucky Oaks. Over the years, many members of the Derby City Dragons have participated in this tradition. What a beautiful day to share the message that there is life after cancer and the importance of awareness and early detection.



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Up-Coming Events

June 25th - Trivia Night Fundraiser - 6:30 at Bearnos, New Albany, IN
July 9th - Bats Game (with DCD Recognition) - 6:35 at Slugger Field
July 23rd - Trivia Night Fundraiser - 6:30 at Bearnos, New Albany, IN

**Dragon Strong 30 min Low Impact Cardio Blast
**Buff Bones / HIIT Workout
**Walking w/ exercise stations
**Abs/Butt/Thighs Workout
** Susie's Pink Pilates (Zoom)
**DCD board meeting
** Tuesday Evening Practices
**Saturday Morning Practices

**** Please check HEJA calendar for dates and times.**

2026 Festivals:

July 18th - Dragons on the Lake, Akron, Ohio
August 24th - 30th - 2026 IBCPC Participatory Dragon Boat Festival Aix-les-Bains, France
October 3rd - Dragon Boat Festival at Lake Jericho, Smithfield, KY
October 10th - Pittsburgh Dragon Boat Festival, Pittsburgh, PA

You Can Help Support Us: Kroger Rewards Program:

Did you register your Kroger Card to link to "Derby City Dragons" Community Rewards program yet?

By doing this, we will receive a percentage each quarter of all money spent at Kroger when you swipe your Kroger Card. Simply register online at krogercommunityrewards.com



The Derby City Dragons wish to Congratulate all of the Winners of Our 2026 Golf Scramble, Swinging for Breast Cancer. We also would also like to express our sincere appreciation to all our participants, donors, sponsors, and volunteers for this year's Scramble. Your continued support helps us keep paddling and spreading our message, one stroke at a time.

1st place: Save Second Base

Kathie Carman
Rosann Williams
Curtis Carman
Anthony Campisano



2nd place: Playing From the Tits

Cameron Brown
Chris Brown
Jackson Bickel
Tilyr Brooks



Highest Score - Stacey Brancato Spirit

Award: 3 Guys & a Gal

Joe Blevens
Casey Alford
Teresa Langebrake
Paul Wagner



And our contest winners:

Jackson Bickel
Carrie Magers
Mike Springer

*Looking forward to seeing you all next year!!
Derby City Dragons 2027
Golf Scramble*