



NEWS RELEASE

Unleashing the Dragon

Avalon Dragon Boating announces new breast cancer survivor initiative

St. John's NL, October 30, 2006 – A powerful new initiative for breast cancer survivors was announced in St. John's today. Avalon Dragon Boating, a new not-for-profit group, announced it will be starting the first dragon boating team, for survivors, in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Dragon boat teams are made up of 22 people: 20 paddlers, a drummer and a steersperson. Many dragon boat festivals take place throughout Canada each summer and invariably you will find at least one breast cancer survivor team racing to the finish line. At present, there are over 30 survivor teams in Canada.

“Dragon boating provides health and healing for everyone living with breast cancer who is feeling they have lost control of their lives or that they lack the physical or emotional strength to get well again,” said committee member Gerry Rogers. “This initiative will allow breast cancer survivors to experience the well being and camaraderie that comes with being physically active through dragon boating. Every member of the team will also be a source of hope and inspiration to those who are starting their cancer journey.”

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Studies show that breast cancer survivors who participate in dragon boat racing experience considerable physical and psychological benefits. Avalon Dragon Boating is starting the dragon boat team to provide breast cancer survivors with an opportunity to regain control of their lives; to increase their fitness levels and general well being and to develop a strong support group. These benefits will make a real difference to the health and quality of life of breast cancer survivors in NL.

“Currently, there are no exercise programs, like dragon boating, specifically targeting individuals with a history of breast cancer or lymphedema. Avalon Dragon Boating will demonstrate that people living with breast cancer can lead full, active lives,” said Committee Chair Julie Bettney. “We want survivors, their families and medical professionals to understand of lymphedema and the importance of regular exercise in its prevention and management.”

For more information regarding dragon boating, breast cancer or lymphedema visit the Avalon Dragon Boating website at www.avalondragonboating.com.

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