



# International Breast Cancer PADDLERS' COMMISSION

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 3 NOVEMBER 2016



*Quelle année*



**What a Year!**



*Was für ein Jahr*



*Che un anno*



**Flamenco Rosa**  
Primer Equipo de BCS  
(Supervivientes de Cáncer de Mama)  
de España

*Qué año*



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# What a year!

What a progressive year the IBCPC has achieved. As your president let me proudly share some of the advancements the Commission has made thanks to various enthusiastic, hard working individuals.

**Membership.** Under the leadership of **Cecilia Picchi**, our European Representative and member of the *Florence Dragon Lady* team and **Adriana Bartoli**, our Latin and South American Representative and member of *Abreast In A Boat*, Vancouver, Canada the number of our member teams has grown significantly. Once Cecilia was on the job she began discovering teams throughout Europe who were already paddling in their respective locations. She then doggedly made contact with them and encouraged the formation of new teams. We now have member teams from Spain, Austria, Germany, Belgium and France.

Adriana took a slightly different approach. She is from Argentina and with her enthusiasm safely tucked into her heart she began raising awareness about breast cancer paddling during her South American adventures. It was not long before she had created enthusiasm in Argentina and Brazil. This past year she led two trips to South America, one to Argentina in February and the second to Brazil in October. Now we have teams in both countries and the numbers are growing each day. What a difference these individuals have made to the world of breast cancer paddling.

We can now boast teams on six continents and in twenty countries.

**IBCP Trust Established.** On another front the IBCPC Steering Committee has established the IBCPC Trust, a legal entity registered as a non-profit society in British Columbia Canada. This entity will give the Commission the platform to begin sponsorship activities across the globe. It also bodes well for the future of our organisation as it gives confidence and structure to the Commission. Elections for new officers will take place at the Third Congress to be held at the IBCPC Participatory Festival in Florence, Italy, 2018. Individuals in all countries are urged to indicate their interest in becoming a director of the Commission.

**Succession planning.** This is an important component in the long term goals of the Commission and members of the Steering Committee are committed to ensuring there is continuity and expertise in the new directors. The Steering Committee fosters new directors by including them in our regular skype calls. Please contact me at [president@ibcpc.com](mailto:president@ibcpc.com) if you are



ALISTAIR EAGLE PHOTOGRAPHY

**Jane Frost** has served as elected President of International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission since its inception in 2010. A Canadian who resides in Vancouver, B.C., she is seen here in front of the city's Museum of Anthropology exhibit of West Coast aboriginal totem art.

interested in joining this group of dedicated individuals.

**New IBCPC Website.** On the communication front you can expect to see a new website soon for the IBCPC. We are grateful to Hamazaki Wong, a specialty marketing firm in Vancouver for working with us to accomplish this new look for the Commission. A special thanks to **Carol Mutton**, IBCPC Director of Communications, Peterborough, Canada and **Nick Harrison**, IBCPC Webmaster from the Lake District in Great Britain for their hard work and expertise in making the website a success.

*Continued on page 3*

**2018 Florence Festival.** So much interest. So much excitement. Early Bird Registration was filled in the first few days and registration is now closed until January. Don't worry there remains lots of space for more teams so do get busy rounding up your paddlers.

**IBCPC Congress** At both Congresses; Peterborough, Canada, 2010 and Sarasota, USA, 2014 we had a debate about the definition of a paddler and it was resolved that "**Paddler**" means a person who has been diagnosed with breast cancer and who is one member of a Crew and includes the Crew's drummer and the steersperson. Since the first Festival in Vancouver, Canada, 2005 we require each participant to be a person diagnosed with breast cancer. We need to remain true to this principle as our festivals are visual representations of the power of exercise/paddling in the treatment for this dreaded disease. And, paddling

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."*

— MARGARET MEAD

Paddles up and take it away. 

because most of us have had invasive treatment, surgery and/or radiation, which can have compromised our upper bodies.

To my fellow Steering Committee Directors, I send you my joyous thanks for a year of hard work and reward. You are an outstanding group of individuals whose dedication to the Commission is making it a world-leader in rehabilitation for those who have survived the trauma of breast cancer. And, to you our member teams, thank you for your support and enthusiasm for our mission and for all you do to spread our message; there is life after a diagnosis of breast cancer and it can be a full and active one especially if you paddle!

# Dr. Don and Kim Bonomo star in Florida

**Dr. Don McKenzie**, founder and coach of the first breast cancer dragon boat team *Abreast in a Boat*, Vancouver, Canada and **Kim Bonomo**, of *Save Our Sisters*, Miami, Florida and a member of the IBCPC Steering Committee, specifically helping with future festivals (2018) and new team development, were keynote speakers at the Miami YMCA.

Addressing approximately 400 people, they emphasized the importance of promoting breast health awareness and the benefits of exercise and nutrition in one's life. To add further drama their talks were given while standing in front of a pink dragon boat.

Dr. Don also spoke to another gathering at a YMCA just north of Miami where a sister team from Palm Beach County had **Debbie Brooks** also as a speaker. It attracted a new team under development in Broward County in the south Florida area. This brings to 10 the number of teams in the state.

To further celebrate Dr. Don's South Florida visit, the Miami team hosted one of their annual events called "Professional Day". For the event they invited doctors, technicians,



therapists and any breast cancer affiliated medical person to come out and have the dragon boat experience. Dr. Don informed the 30 professionals on how this got started and on the vast benefits of breast cancer paddling. **Dr. Christopher Low** was a special guest as well. He introduced the medical professionals to a new surgery for lymphatic system transplant which Dr. Low performs in South Florida. 

Please contact Kim at [KKbonomo@aol.com](mailto:KKbonomo@aol.com) if you want more information on how to run events like these.

# Qatar Team doubles its size

By SANDEE THOMPSON

*Doha Wireless Warriors*

Doha, Qatar

We are coming up on our two year anniversary this November and we have grown to more than double the size. The team is open to survivors of breast cancer, but also other cancers. We currently have survivors of thyroid, colon, cervical, uterine and breast cancer on the team. Our team has also grown because we are open to all supporters joining us too. Many work in the health field or are university students or have heard about us from newspaper or magazine articles. The team varies in age (19 to mid-60's), employment (students, house wives, life coaches, airline workers, teachers, business owners etc.) and nationality (Canadian, Egyptian, Jordanian, Palestinian, Philippian, American, Australian, British, South African, Iraqi, Lebanese) ...we run the gamut.

I think our growth is partially because we run the group on a pay-as-you-go/as-you-can basis, with all proceeds going to help the team who owns the boat when they need repairs or to pay for new jackets and paddles. We are open to all who wish to come and try us out, provide opportunities for members to learn to steer or coach and we just want to spread dragon boating joy! We have started doing social activities together, like picnics in the dunes, and often go out for coffee or breakfast after our practices.

Because we are a mixed group of people and I want to ensure I never offend anyone, we stop in the middle of the bay for a minute during every practice to pause and reflect on what



brought us to the boat, to send love and light to any we know who might need it and to be grateful that we are alive and paddling in salt water while living in the middle of a desert. It is always an emotional moment as, for example, we have had a number of new members recently join us whose mothers are battling breast cancer. It is a place of support and love and we all feel it. Whenever anyone joins us for a paddle, they leave feeling energized but also a bit reflective, I think.

We participated in our first mock race last month and will be participating in another at the end of the month to round off Breast Cancer Awareness month. I have no idea how we did in any of the heats last month, which might seem unusual for the head coach to admit, but my aims are to ensure everyone enjoys themselves and grows from their experience with us and that we all get, or continue to be, strong. Winning a race is certainly a future aim, but for now, we are happy to be winning the race called 'life'.

And finally, the best news of all. We have found a sponsor who wishes to buy us a boat! We are currently negotiating with the Qatar Dragon Boat Federation, of which we are one of seven members, to decide on whether there is room for our purchase on the beach at Katara here in Qatar. We hope so as it would be great to have a pink boat alongside all the other ones. Pink boat, pink jackets and pink wigs whenever we race. Yep...the breast cancer team is making itself known in Qatar. 

## Brazil's Favio Pavia mentors teams

By ADRIANA BARTOLI

*Latin and South American Representative*

Vancouver, Canada

During the last six months, two new words have broadened my vocabulary: IMUA, which in Spanish means moving forward with energy and KA ORA, which means life in Maori. KA ORA is the name of the breast cancer dragon boat category in Brazil. It was also chosen as the name of the first dragon boat festival. Held in Santos during the weekend of October 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, it was attended by **Dr. Don McKenzie**, founder and coach of the first breast cancer dragon boat team, *Abreast In A Boat*, Vancouver, Canada, 1996, **Meri Gibson**, IBCPC Vice-President, Christchurch, New Zealand and myself.

As time for the Festival approached, the plan quickly changed

as more paddlers wanted to join us; survivors from Salvador and Paulo Afonso (Bahia) and supporters interested in starting teams in Ilhabela (Sao Paulo) and Vitoria (Spirito Santo).

*From the left: Fabio Paiva, Marilia Filgueira, Marcos Rodrigues, Dr. Don, Meri Gibson, Cleusa Alonso, Adriana Bartoli*



Prior to the Festival Dr. Don presented the benefits of the physical activity through dragon boating at Universidad Federal de Sao Paulo (UNIFESP) and at Jean Piaget high school. On Friday evening, Dr. Don spoke at the “Dragon Boat Paddling is Medicine” conference to an audience of four hundred people. Saturday was dedicated to the dragon boat clinic, which taught theory in the morning and paddling in the afternoon.

Sunday was the BIG day; the symbolic regatta! The idea for the regatta was to have an easy paddle and a relaxed competition. The relaxed atmosphere could be felt while we were paddling to the start line. After the “GO!”, the adrenaline was on board and these ladies were challenging themselves. The teams were feeling stronger and their energy was overflowing. They are an inspiration to their communities.

A Flower Ceremony took place and the Flag of Hope was planted once more in South America; for the first time in Santos, Brazil. It was magic.

There aren't enough ways to express gratitude to the person who made this special weekend possible. **Fabio Paiva** is a canoeing and kayaking sports man, who has won many Brazilian and South American championships. He is responsible for introducing sea kayaks, outrigger canoes and dragon boats to Brazil. If that wasn't enough, he is an exceptional person who wants to give back to his country. Fabio was part of the Argentina Outreach in February 2016 and he was moved by the event. Since then we worked together with a wonderful team of his friends, **Marcos Rodrigues** and **Cleusa Alonso**, to share the message of hope in Brazil.

Argentina was the spark for KA ORA in Santos, which now has become the spark for the rest of Brazil through extensive media coverage. With the success of KA ORA, Brazil will become an inspiration in forming more breast cancer dragon boat teams in other countries of South and Central America. Our passion will do the rest. 

# Irish Festival attracts International Teams

By **SUSAN ROWE**

Irish National Representative

*Plurabelle Paddlers*

Dublin, Ireland

‘Dublin, Ireland’s Grand Canal Dock was the venue for the sixth Irish Dragon Boat Festival sponsored, this year, by the Hong Kong Trade and Economics Office in Dublin. Held during the weekend of September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> 2016, it attracted eight international teams from as far away as Canada, the USA, Germany and Austria. Twenty-five teams took part each day in the event. In addition, Irish club teams and novice teams also participated. It was a great success and a source of pride for the organizers, the Irish Dragon Boat Association and the *Plurabelle Paddlers* that teams would travel from so far away to paddle in Dublin.

We also welcomed the two newest BCS teams to Dublin regatta – *Graine Mhaol* from Castlebar Co Mayo and the *Nore Dragon Paddlers* - KACC from Kilkenny City.

*Graine Mhaol* was established in July 2015 by **Louise Killeen**. This followed a visit by Louise to the *Plurabelle Paddlers* in Dublin to find out what was involved in getting the sport up and running. They started off with 45 women and are now looking to purchase a second boat to extend their membership to non cancer members. Dragon boating is a new and minority sport in Ireland so it's great that they're introducing as many people to the sport as possible. They train twice weekly on Lough Lannagh during the summer months.



*Inset: Plurabelle Paddlers huddle at the September Regatta. Above: The crew hard at practice*

The *Nore Dragon Paddlers* – KACC had their maiden voyage in May 2016. This came after an initial idea in 2015 by an MLD physiotherapist in Kilkenny to establish a club. They purchased two boats from a local businessman and with the help of Kilkenny Aqua Canoe Club and much fundraising they're now up and running. Four women from Kilkenny, **Paula Fleming, Fiona Wallace, Anne Smart and Mary Treacy** trained with the *Suir Dragon Paddlers* in Clonmel in early 2016 until they were able to paddle in Kilkenny. They currently have 27 members and train on Saturday mornings over the winter months.

Ireland now has eight breast cancer paddling teams and many are talking about going to Florence in 2018 either as a full team or as composite teams. 

# Russia seeks help in forming first team

By MARIAGRAZIA PUNZO

Italian National Representative

Rome, Italy

In September I went to Moscow with the Master Italian National Team to take part in the International Canoe Federation (ICF) World Dragon Boat Championship. It was the first time I participated in a world championship as an athlete of a national team, preceded only by my participation in the ICF European Dragon Boat Championship, which was held in Italy. My previous international experiences have always been as a breast cancer paddler, in Canada in 2010 and in Florida in 2014 for the IBCPC International Festivals.

Our IBCPC Festivals are characterized by an abundance of the color pink, in all its shades. I saw women of all ages hugging each other and getting on the boats holding their paddles, with smiles on their faces. I was part of a pink wave, full of life and energy. I experienced very strong emotions, not only because of the races, but mostly because we were all there, unified by an event that has changed our lives and by the passion for the dragon boat, which has managed to transform our common pain into something unique.

At the Olympic Racing Course "Krylatskoe" in Moscow, I have seen athletes wearing uniforms in all the possible colors, but the reference for me was the blue of Italy, my homeland. Every race was full of concentration, adrenaline and explosive energy. I have rejoiced and suffered with my teammates, all united to give our best and be competitive in a world championship that saw Russia earn 32 medals, beating strong and well-motivated nations. The emotions were very strong, but different from the ones felt during our festivals, where hugs are never only shared with one's teammates.

I have shared a boat with professional and well-trained athletes and I feel honored for the opportunity to do that. I have won a silver medal and 3 bronze medals. It felt like a dream come true. A bad experience can turn into something amazing. I have a pink family spread around the world and I have won a world championship. Impossible? Definitely not!

Russia is a country that does not have a breast cancer team. Being present in Moscow has proved to be a unique opportunity



to meet the right people for our message to be heard, plant a seed that could eventually result in the formation of a team. It was pleasantly surprising to find our movement is known in Russia. I have talked to the president of a club from Moscow, who ended up being interested in our activity and willing to host and train breast cancer survivors. In order to do that, he needs our help in spreading the word in hospitals and among doctors, allowing the involvement of women and bringing them to his club to paddle. My hope is that soon Russia will give women the possibility to live the emotions that we live when we share a boat, when we hug because we are happy to have shared something that only those who practice this sport can truly understand and that we savor even more profoundly. 

Betty Solley, IBCPC Membership Director reports the IBCPC has 188 member teams from 20 countries. The latest teams to join are:



**Brazil:**  
Canomama, Brasilia



**Canada:**  
Dragons of Hope, Thunder Bay, Ontario  
Dragon Flyers, Wellington, Ontario  
Pink Piston Paddlers, Salmon Arm, BC



**France:**  
Dragonettes Toulousaines,  
Muret, Garonne

# As I see it

New feature allows you to speak up

*As I See It is a new feature in the IBCPC Newsletter. Designed for paddlers to express their views on issues they see as relevant to our membership, it provides a forum for the candid, unedited exchange of your opinions. If you have points-of-view you wish to express we would welcome hearing from you or if you have comments on either of these two topics please respond to [committee@ibcpc.com](mailto:committee@ibcpc.com).*



From **Carol Mutton**  
*Survivors Abreast*  
Peterborough, Canada  
IBCPC Director of Communications

As excitement mounts for Florence in July 2018, a challenge for some teams will be deciding on a selection process for the 26-paddler limit for the team roster. *Survivors Abreast* of Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, decided to get an early start on tackling this.

At one of our earlier meetings, the team had an opportunity to discuss options for selection. Following the meeting, the boat captain sent out an email asking for ideas and their first choice option along with their rationale. Based on a review of that feedback and further discussion by the paddling/fitness committee and the board, the following proposal was put to a vote by the team and was carried. The motion was that the selection be made based on a calculation of points as follows:

- a. Assign 1 point for paddling at regattas.
- b. Continue awarding 1 point for every practice.
- c. Award 1 point for attendance at team meetings.  
We need team participation and engagement at the organizational level as well as at athletics. (New)
- d. If injured and unable to paddle and, as long as the injury will not be aggravated, award 1 point for coming to practice and participating in the warm up, walking or running, and then the cool down.

As background, a point system has been in place for several years and is familiar to, and accepted by, team members. It has been used frequently when there has been a need for paddlers to “sit out races” at festivals we attend.

From **Linda Kuska**  
*Rowbust*  
London, Ontario  
BCS Development Committee Chair for Dragon Boat Canada

I have a question regarding upcoming International Participatory event in Florence, Italy.

The mandate of this event is that it is an **International Non-Competitive Participatory** event targeting Breast Cancer Survivor teams who engage in Dragon Boat activities as a post-operative rehabilitation.

In 2010, Peterborough did it perfectly by not announcing the “winning” teams but celebrated everyone who participated as winners.

There were many upset people in Sarasota when the “winning” teams were announced. That is NOT what should be promoted and celebrated at this Non-Competitive Participatory Festival.

I am hoping the organizers of the Florence festival will not be announcing the 1st, 2nd, 3rd place “winners” of the festival because we are all “winners” by participating in this event.

If teams want an increased level of competition then they should be competing at the Club Crew World Championships which will be held in Hungary, around the same time as Florence so the BCS teams can do both events.

I hope the organizers of the Florence event will recognize the true spirit of the Participatory event and celebrate it the way it should be celebrated by promoting inclusiveness.

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**Gordon Miller**, renowned maritime artist and author, donated the dragon boat sketch to be used on note cards sold in support of IBCPC's mission.



**Hong Kong:**  
Pink Power, Hong Kong



**Ireland:**  
*Nore Dragon Paddlers – KACC, Kilkenny*  
*Waterford Dragon Warriors, Waterford*



**Italy:**  
*U.G.O. – Unite Garregiamo Ovunque,*  
Padova

# "this crazy pink paddling thing we do..."



By **KIM BONOMO**  
*Save Our Sisters (SOS)*  
Miami, Florida

Dear Pink Paddling World,

Kim Bonomo here. I have recovered from organizing the 2014 Sarasota Festival held in Florida. It's been two years now since that magical event.

The three-year journey of planning and then executing the event with our organising committee was worth all the blood sweat and tears that it took. I could not be more proud and happy with the outcome. All of your comments and accolades were so wonderful to hear. Thank you.

At first, after the event I was anxious to get my life back to some normalcy. My husband, family, business and my Miami BCS team had all taken back burner for about three years. So, I jumped back into my old way of life. However, I soon realized there is no normalcy for me. Pink paddling is my normalcy.

Soon after the Sarasota 2014 event I got a call from **Jane Frost** asking if I would be part of the IBCPC Steering Committee. (In spite of my announcement at the Closing Ceremony I wanted everyone to lose my name and number, obviously she did not get the memo). So I joined the ranks of the IBCPC

Steering Committee specifically helping with the next IBCPC participatory festival in Florence Italy 2018 and new team development.

Of course October brings an endless run of events, walk, runs, seminars, and appearances at high schools and clubs. These are designed to remind women to get their mammograms. The focus of the information is a reminder to the next generation to realize that exercise and nutrition are key components to a healthy, long and happy life.

*Save Our Sisters* will proudly celebrate 10 years of survivorship, sisterhood and breast cancer health in 2017! To commemorate this milestone, *SOS* will host the Dragon Boat Miami races on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017, in the calm basin waters of Key Biscayne, at the renowned Miami Marine Stadium. We are planning a BCS mini Camp from Wednesday, April 5 to Friday, April 7. World class coaches from USA and Canada are coming so visit our web site for more details. [www.dragonboat.miami](http://www.dragonboat.miami)

I am dedicated to this crazy pink paddling thing we do. It has changed my life. I now look at my breast cancer as a blessing, it was a gift. A gift that was wrapped in sandpaper. It just took me a little while to smooth it out, unwrap it and then use my precious present.

Pink paddles up.  
See you in Florence.

## What in the world is going on?



**Canterbury, New Zealand**, January 22, 2017  
Akaroa Super 12, Akaroa, Banks Peninsula

**Auckland, New Zealand**, March 18, 2017  
Regional Championships, Lake Pupuke

**Ashburton, New Zealand**, March 25, 2017  
South Island Championships, Lake Hood, Ashburton



**Miami, Florida, USA**, April 8, 2017  
Miami Marine Stadium, Key Biscayne  
Save Our Sisters celebrates 10 years of paddling



**Melbourne, Australia**, April 29 & 30, 2017  
Dragons Abreast Annual Convention  
Fun paddle and BBQ hosted by DA Melbourne  
[www.dragonsabreast.com.au](http://www.dragonsabreast.com.au)



**Vienna, Austria**, June 10, 2017  
Vienna City Beach Club, Neue Donau  
First breast cancer division,  
50% reduced registration fee  
[info@pinkpaddling.at](mailto:info@pinkpaddling.at)



**Toronto, Canada**, September 9 & 10, 2017  
Great White North, Marilyn Bell Park  
Free breast cancer division  
In conjunction with Dragons Abreast  
Toronto's 20th Gala Celebration  
[www.dragonsabreast.ca](http://www.dragonsabreast.ca)



**Florence, Italy**, July 6 – 8, 2018  
IBCP Participatory Festival  
**Registration will reopen January 2017**  
[www.florencebcs2018.org](http://www.florencebcs2018.org)

The IBCPC invites teams to post events of interest to paddlers on the above Bulletin Board. To do so email the information to [newsletter@ibcpc.com](mailto:newsletter@ibcpc.com). The IBCPC takes no responsibility for events by reason of the posting. Where travel to another country is involved, teams are advised to consult their respective Government's Travel Advisory.

**PROVISO** The information published in this newsletter is provided to us by the named authors, sources and other third parties and while we believe the information to be reliable we have not fully investigated all such information and we can not accept responsibility for the truth or accuracy of the same. Accordingly, International Breast Cancer Paddlers' Commission and those associated with the Commission and Jane Frost, IBCPC President, disclaim responsibility for the truth and accuracy of the information in this newsletter.

  
**International Breast Cancer  
PADDLERS' COMMISSION**



IBCP is a commission of the  
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