



Dragonflyers of Michigan Newsletter

April 2025

A Message from our President

Dear Dragonflyers,

The dock is in the water, the boat is about to be launched, and the start of the dragon boat season will begin in a couple of weeks! I am excited to join everyone on the water and welcome new paddlers! I hope you are actively recruiting friends, colleagues, neighbors, gym partners, and others who might be curious about dragon boating. There will be the opportunity for everyone to have a seat in our boat as we have added a second practice for the month of May, so invite others to join us. I look forward to seeing you on the water soon! Paddles up!

- Ginger

2025 Board Members

President – Ginger Martz

Vice President – LouAnn Stark-Dykema

Secretary – Sarynna Lopez-Meza

Treasurer – Jane Roy

At-Large Member – David Torgoff

At Large Member – Sophia Uldriks

Past-President – Julie Sinclair

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Update on the 2025 Winter Activities

Quiet Adventures Symposium

On Saturday, **March 1, 2025**, Dragonflyers had a table at the Quiet Adventure Symposium. This was a great way to share the sport of dragon boating with outdoor enthusiasts. We had photos and videos to show people; flyers and information about our 2025 season and how to contact us. We decorated our table with the dragon head and tail from the boat and some of our colorful paddles.



Dragon Boat Erg Training

In January, February, and March 2025, 64 erg training sessions were held for 12 Dragonflyers paddlers. Coaches Ckat and Ellen provided these one-hour training sessions with workouts uniquely specific to each paddler's abilities. Additionally, we had each person work on paddling both sides of the erg/boat. We hope more people will take advantage of this training next year.

Dock Launched

The dock was installed on April 13th. Thank you to everyone who showed up to help. Many hands make light work.



Upcoming Events

Boat in the water

The Boat will be launched on Saturday, April 19th at 11:00am. If you would like to help, please add your name to the Attendance Tracker under this activity, or contact Erin at Dragonflyersofmi@gmail.com.

A Look Ahead to the 2025 Paddling Season

Practice Days / Time:

Practices will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays, beginning April 29th for returning paddlers only, and May 6th for everyone. We paddle until October 16th.

The time in May will be 5:45 to 7:00 PM for Skills and Technique and 7:00 to 8:15PM for Endurance and Conditioning.

Location:

1284 N. Cedar St.; Mason, MI

Off Cedar St between Holt and Mason.

Watch your email for information regarding parking for May

Cost: Membership fee for all paddlers is \$50 for the year. Paddling fee for 2025 is \$425, which includes 24 weeks of paddling, three dragon boat races (see below) and much more.

For new paddlers, we offer three 8-week sessions for a cost of \$140 per session.

The sessions are May 6 to June 26; July 1 to August 21; and August 26 to October 16.

You may sign up for any or all of the sessions.

Need-based scholarships are available.

Races:

**July 19, 2025 - Dragons on the Lake
at Portage Lakes (Akron), Ohio**



**August 2, 2025 –
Fort Wayne Dragon Boat Races
at Promenade Park in Fort Wayne, Indiana**

**September 14, 2025 -
Capital City Dragon Boat Race
Grand River Park in Lansing, Michigan**



We are looking for a race captain for each of our three races. Please see additional information on page 11.

Recreational Paddles:

Recreational Paddles are offered on

Sunday, May 18, 2025 4:00 to 5:30pm

Saturday, June 7, 2025 10:30 to 12:00 noon

Saturday, July 12, 2025 10:30 to 12:00 noon

Sunday, August 17, 2025 4:00 to 5:30pm

Sunday, September 21, 2025 4:00 to 5:30pm

Any one 14 years and older are invited to join us. Cost is \$5

Volunteer Opportunities

Dragonflyers has a wonderful, but small, group of people who help us get things done. Have you ever wondered how or who does something? Here is your chance to get involved. We are looking for people to join our committees. You do not need to be a paddler to join our committees, just someone who is interested in helping our organization function and grow.

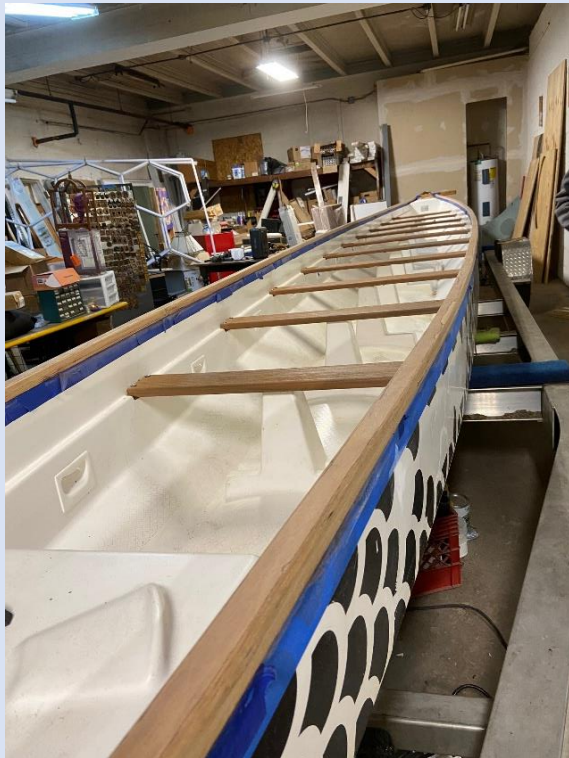
We have the following committees:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| ❖ Membership | ❖ Social Media & Website/IT |
| ❖ Fundraising | ❖ Election/Nomination |
| ❖ Finance | ❖ Safety |
| ❖ Social Activity | ❖ Race |
| ❖ Maintenance | |

Please contact Ginger at Dragonflyersofmi@gmail.com if you are interested in joining a committee or contact the committee chairperson shown on page 11.

From the Maintenance Shed

The maintenance committee had a busy winter! We were very fortunate to have a heated shop to work in. (Thank you, Sophia!) Typical with many projects, things took longer than expected. The benches couldn't be refinished due to dry rot, so new ones were fabricated out of composite deck boards.



New benches and gunwales ready to be repainted



Oar lock dismantled for refinishing

The Blue Heron also has repaired and repainted gunwales, a refinished oar lock, patched gel coat, and new drain plugs.

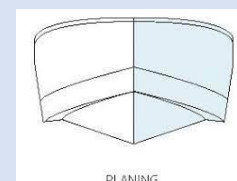
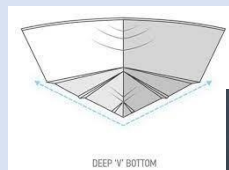
Thank you to all the volunteers that made the trip to help us flip the boat to accomplish our work!

Looking forward to seeing everyone in the boat soon.

Erin – Maintenance Committee Chairperson

Dragonboat trivia from the Maintenance Shed:

1. What kind of wood are the gunwales made of?
 - a. Mahogany
 - b. Oak
 - c. Teak
 - d. Spruce
2. How much does the Blue Heron weigh?
 - a. 1500 pounds
 - b. 550 pounds
 - c. 400 pounds
 - d. 1000 pounds
3. How long is the Blue Heron?
 - a. 40 feet
 - b. 35 feet
 - c. 42 feet
 - d. 38 feet
4. What hull type is the Blue Heron?
 - a. Deep "V"
 - b. Round bottom
 - c. Multi Chine
 - d. Planing



Answers: 1-d; 2-b; 3-a; 4-c

A Report from the Social Activities Committee

Hello Fellow Paddlers!

I'm Mary Guerriero and I believe that we are not only a team, but a dragon boat family. I'm all about having fun on the water and off and getting to know one another beyond staring at someone's back in the boat!

To that end, the goal is to schedule a social event each month. In March we enjoyed a craft day at Andrea's, decorating small bird houses.



April's plan is an axe throwing outing on **Friday, April 18th**. More details to come. In May, I welcome one and all to my house for a potluck and games on **Friday, May 9th**.

June will bring the chance to take a birding walk with Julie and Samantha, our own bird nerds! That will be on **Saturday, June 14th**.

During the summer, the weather permitting, there will be pickleball, and kayaking and paddle board events.

In September or October, a bonfire will be planned.

I am wide open to ideas, suggestions, or help planning events. Text me.

Mary G – Social Activities Chair

A Report from the Fundraising Committee

The Dragonflyers' fundraising committee is now in its third year. In 2024, Dragonflyers held a successful yard sale, received sponsorships and donations, and also received a Call Sam Cares grant. Such funds allowed the organization to designate funds again this year for paddling scholarships and to move forward with the purchase of a new shed for our boating gear.

This year the committee is learning to work with fundraising software called GiveButter, which will expand our ability to do outreach and track our efforts. In addition to seeking sponsors, the committee is tentatively planning an online silent auction. More details to be shared as plans are set. Additionally, team members continue to seek and apply for a variety of grants not only for funds but for supplies. A big shout out to the committee – Ginger, Rachel, Bess, and Joyce.

Julie Sinclair, Fundraising Committee Chair

Dragonflyers' Donors

Dragonflyers would like to recognize and thank our donors and sponsors. Through their contributions, Dragonflyers is working towards our goal of multi-generational comradery, team building, healthy exercise programs, and education regarding the technique and wellness features of dragon boating. Proceeds from donors and sponsors also supported charitable racing for a women's center, the arts, and cancer programs.

Capital Region Community Foundation (Guerriero Family)

Sam Bernstein's: Call Sam Cares

Ellen Lurie & Virginia Martz

Mary & Rich Kimball

Joyce Ochowicz

Samantha Caughlin

Judy Linn

A Report from the Membership Committee

The name of the game for the membership committee this year is GROWTH (with a bit of organization included).

Andrea, LouAnn, and Bess have been working to get our documents organized, so that we can more efficiently reach out to the many groups of people who are already members, have shown interest in becoming members, want to join us for our recreational paddles, or want more information about the sport of Dragon Boating. The number of people on our full contact list has reached over 200!

One of the concerns in having people fill out a paper form at an event or recreational paddle is that many times the penmanship on the forms people fill out is illegible. This means that we often get emails that bounce back, making that number of contacts shrink. We are working to create an electronic form so that people do not have to fight with pens with low ink, crazy wind, small spaces to enter information and our ability to read what was written. We have one iPad ready to be donated for use. If anyone else has one they are not using and would want to donate it to the Dragonflyers, it would be greatly appreciated.

With GROWTH comes opportunities. Increased membership dues will allow the organization to increase paddling opportunities. Keep an eye out or look back for the email about increased practice sessions. We are really excited about this!

We want to remind all committed paddlers to complete the Membership Survey as soon as possible, if you have not already done so. This will ensure you receive the correct emails and give you access to the Attendance Tracker for 2025.

Remember that feeling you had when you first tried out the sport of Dragon Boating? Recall when you got hooked enough to purchase your own equipment. Can you remember the first time you practiced a race start? Or your first race high? Let's get out there and share that excitement with others. Bring a friend to one of our open houses (remember to let the coaches know you will have someone with you) or bring a friend to one of our recreational paddles. Share your love of the sport with others and we will GROW.

Paddles up Dragonflyers! Cheers to a great season.

Andrea Kelly – Membership Committee Chair

Extras

Looking for Volunteers to be Race Captains

Race Captains help the coaches by sharing race information with our team, selecting locations for any team meals, organizing who is bringing what we need to the event (tables, coolers, water, etc.), and accompanying the coaches to the captain's meeting the morning of the race. We are seeking captains for each of the three races we will be doing this year. Please email Coach Ellen at DragonflyersofMI@gmail.com if you are interested. Please indicate your preferred race.

Dragonflyers' Website

There is a lot of good information about the Dragonflyers of Michigan on our website. We often add new items and pertinent information. Please visit and check out our website at www.dragonflyers.org.

 Please send suggested topics for newsletter or training to DragonflyersofMI@gmail.com attention Coach Ellen

Committees and Chair-people

No organization can succeed without the help of countless people serving on committees. Dragonflyers is no different. We are always looking for people to join our committees.

Membership Committee – Andrea Kelly

Fundraising Committee – Julie Sinclair

Finance Committee – Jane Roy (Treasurer)

Scholarship Sub-Committee – Julie Sinclair

Social Activity Committee – Mary Guerriero

Maintenance Committee - Erin Linn

Social Media & Website/IT – Amanda Flores

Election/Nomination – Bess German

Safety – Ellen Lurie

Race – Ellen Lurie

If you are interested in joining any of these committees, please contact the chairperson or the board President Ginger Martz at DragonflyersofMI@gmail.com.

Dragonflyers Board Meetings

The Board holds quarterly meetings, which are open to members and the public. Meeting dates for 2025 are tentatively scheduled on the following dates:

- ~~January 28, 2025, at 7:00pm~~
- **April 22, 2025, at 7:00pm**
- August 13, 2025, at 7:00pm
- October 28, 2025, at 7:00pm

The meeting will be held on Zoom. You may contact us at DragonflyersofMI@gmail.com for the link and meeting details.

Additional details will be provided at least one week before the meeting. All are welcome to attend these meetings.

We hope this Newsletter can be published quarterly. If you would like to help with the newsletter, please contact Ellen at DragonflyersofMI@gmail.com

Articles and ideas for articles are welcome.

For questions or more information regarding Dragonflyers of Michigan please visit our website at www.dragonflyers.org or email us at DragonflyersofMI@gmail.com

Dragonflyers of Michigan is a 501(c)(3) organization.