



Dragonflyers of Michigan Newsletter

April 2023

A Message from our President

Dear Dragonflyers members and supporters,
The start of the paddling season is now very close. I am so excited to get out on the water again with all of you! I hope that you are actively recruiting friends, colleagues, neighbors, and others who might like to try dragon boating. We are also recruiting non paddling members who are interested in supporting our organization in different ways, such as helping at races and events.

It will be great to see everyone again soon. Paddles up!
- Julie

The 2023 Board Members

The following are the 2023 elected board members:

President – Julie Sinclair

Vice President – Ginger Martz

Secretary – Sarynna Lopez-Meza

Treasurer – Lin Hirai

At-Large Member – Mary Guerriero

At Large Member - LouAnn Stark-Dykema

Past-President – Samantha Caughlan

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The 2023 Season

Practice Days / Time:

Practices will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays, beginning May 4, 2023 until mid-October

Warm-ups will begin promptly at 5:45PM*

We will have a goal to be finished by 7:30 (off the water by 7:15)

*Please arrive by 5:30 on the day of your first practice so that we can complete business matters.

Location:

1284 N. Cedar St.; Mason, MI

Off Cedar St between Holt and Mason.

Parking information will be provided soon.

Cost: TBD

Races:

We know that many of you want to plan your summer schedule and are pleased to share our race schedule with you. In 2023 we plan to participate in the following races:

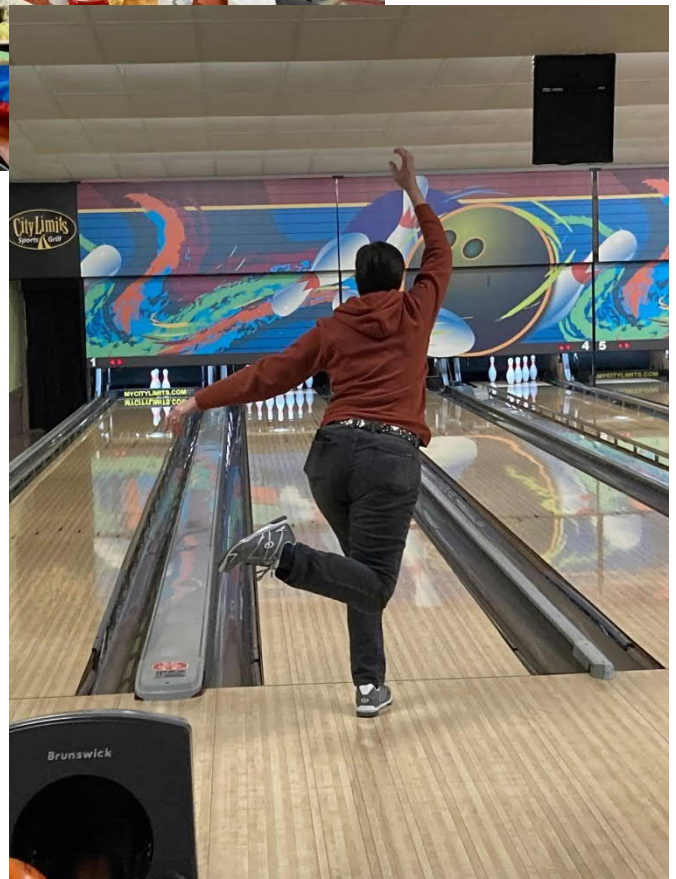
- Chicago International Dragonboat Festival, July 29, at Busse Woods in Schaumburg/Elk Grove, IL
- Dragons on the Lake Boat Festival, August 12, in Akron, Ohio
- Capital City Dragon Boat Race, September 17, in Lansing, MI

Our two out-of-state races are both exceptionally well-organized events and offer very different races. Chicago is a 500-meter event, so it is a bit longer race than what we did last year. Akron is a favorite event, and we're pleased to return there again. The Lansing event is sponsored by the Women's Center of Greater Lansing (WCGL) and is our local event. WCGL is excited to re-launch the race day in partnership with a new dragon boat vendor. It's a great opportunity for us not only to race, but also to recruit for our organization and to be ambassadors of the sport of dragon boating in our community.

Update on Winter Activities

Dragonflyers Go Bowling:

On February 3rd, a group of us met at City Limits Bowling to enjoy an evening of bowling. We had a good turn out and had a good time. It was great seeing everyone. Thank you Sarynna for organizing this event.



Quiet Adventure Symposium:

On March 4th Dragonflyers of Michigan had a table at the Quiet Adventures Symposium at the MSU Pavilion. This is an annual event where attendees can get information about paddling sports and other outdoor activities. Attendance was great. Team members had a chance to talk to many visitors about the sport of dragon boating and the opportunity to paddle with our team. We had a great slide show available with drone footage of our team paddling during a practice. Thank you to everyone who staffed the table, prepared materials, created the slide show, and handled registration, set up, and take down. It is definitely an event to participate in again next year.



Preparing for the Season:

The boat has been pulled from winter storage and on April 2nd a group gathered to clean and wax the boat.

On April 8th the dock was placed in the water. We are getting closer to our paddling season!



Upcoming Events

Dragonflyers' Open House:

Do you have family and friends that have wondered what this thing called dragon boating is all about? Have they wanted to try dragon boating? Well, your chance to show them is coming soon.

Please begin to invite interested people to come and try dragon boating. The dates for the two open houses are:

Sunday, April 30th, 4:00pm

Tuesday, May 2nd, 6:00pm

The open house will happen where we practice at 1284 N Cedar St; Mason, MI.

Please see flier on page 11

Name Our Boat Contest:

Now that our beloved dragon boat is shiny clean and ready for another season on the water, it's time we gave her a proper name! You are invited to submit your suggestions for a name to bestow upon her. Please send your ideas to Ellen at Dragonflyersofmi@gmail.com by noon on April 24th. The Board will review the name suggestions and select a winner at the April 26th Board Meeting. Thanks in advance for your help!

Yard Sale Fundraiser:

ARE YOU SPRING CLEANING? Even if you're not, don't take any unwanted items to Goodwill in the next 2 months. Save them for the Dragonflyers' yard sale on Friday, June 2 and Saturday, June 3. Before you drop off your treasures, please clean and price them. This is your chance to help raise money for the club while clearing out items you no longer want. Two great feelings for the price of one! We will also need all sorts of bags- paper or plastic- for customers to take home their finds, so please save those too. Volunteers needed for sorting on Thursday and selling Friday and Saturday. More details to come. THIS WILL BE FUN!

Please contact Mary Guerriero at Dragonflyersofmi@gmail.com to volunteer or with questions regarding dropping off your treasures.

Weekend Paddle Opportunities:

This year we want to offer some opportunities to paddle on some Saturdays and/or some Sundays. There will be a small charge to paddle on a given weekend day. Please watch your email for dates and times.

From the Maintenance Shed

Greetings fellow paddlers!

The boat should be cleaned and waxed as you read this article! Thank you to everyone that volunteered! Hopefully the weather has allowed us to get the dock in as well.

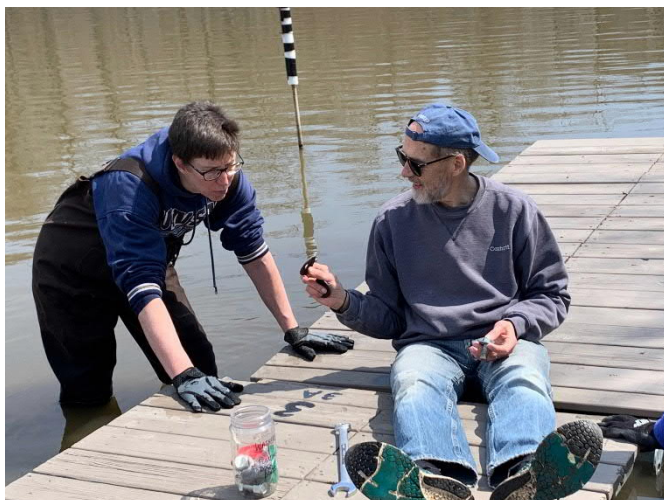
Looking forward to our year in maintenance, we are sharing the tasks that will need to be done in 2023. We hope to acquire a new shed for the storage of our equipment at the dock site. This will be a 1-2 day project to build the new shed, plus an additional day to paint or stain. We'll be looking for volunteers with some basic skills with tools and construction to assist. Anyone can help paint/stain!

We are grateful to those that came before us, as boat and trailer maintenance has been attended to, and there is little to do in that area! The gunwales will need some paint touch-up and the trailer does need to be re-wired. Both these tasks will only require a couple people and should be handled by the maintenance committee.

If you would like to join the maintenance committee, please reach out to Erin Linn at Dragonflyersofmi@gmail.com.

See everyone on the water!

Erin & Ginger, Maintenance Committee Co-Chairs



Coaches Corner

For the love of Dragon Boating!

It's wet, it's wild, it's an experience you will never forget! It's the world's fastest growing water sport and we are a part of it. Twenty paddlers moving in unison, combining strength with teamwork in a boat whose elaborate design originates in ancient China. I am pumped and counting down to our open house on April 30th. My excitement brimmeth over!

While we wait for the thrill of the 2023 season to begin, it is a good idea to take a moment or two to reflect on self-care and preparation so we can enter the boat strong and healthy. Here are suggestions for getting your best self to the starting line:

1. Set a specific goal for yourself
2. Work on cardio and strength
3. Hydrate and eat properly
4. Encourage others

Our community and support of one another is the true power behind what makes this team work so well. I want to encourage everyone to continue to support and encourage everyone else taking part in the Dragon Boat community.

Everyone benefits from improvement and when we embrace the concept of working together to bring everyone up and never put anyone down, we come out ahead. A perfectly synchronized team will almost always beat a stronger, but less coordinated team and I propose we start the synchronization before even getting our gear.

A wise man once said, "We may have all come on different ships, but we're in the same boat now" and I am honored to be sharing the boat with the wonderful people of the DRAGONFLYERS.

Peace, love and paddles up!
Coach Alyona

Fundraising Committee Report

During the pandemic, the Dragonflyers of Michigan Board learned the challenges of not having a financial reserve to cover the annual expenses required to sustain the organization. The expense of insurance (liability and equipment), American Dragon Boat Association membership (required to obtain insurance), boat storage (year-round), and maintenance of the boat and equipment. Thus, the fundraising committee was established to address the need for financial reserves to sustain the organization in case there is a time Dragonflyers cannot paddle. In addition, the fundraising committee is also exploring the opportunities to raise funds to reduce the cost of the sport for our members. The fundraising committee seeks support from members with identification of resources, sponsors, donors, grants, and members who are interested in joining the Fundraising Committee to assist with raising funds. Our first fundraising activity will be a large yard sale, Friday, June 2 & Saturday, June 3 (see the article on page 6), so please start collecting and pricing your items.

The Fundraising Committee has also created template letters for donation of supplies, for financial sponsorships and is beginning to reach out to potential funders. If you are interested in assisting with fundraising or have ideas of sponsors/organizations to contact, please get in touch with Julie Sinclair or Ginger Martz. We are happy to work with you to provide template letters and to reach out to funding organizations.

Julie and Ginger

Fundraising Committee Members 2023
Julie Sinclair and Ginger Martz Co-Chairs
Bess German
Mary Guerriero
Lin Hirai
LouAnn Stark-Dykema
Joyce Ochowicz
Sarynna Lopez Meza
Samantha Caughlan

Dragonflyers Donors

Dragonflyers would like to recognize and thank our 2021, 2022 and 2023 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.

Darling Hardware in Perry, MI

South Lansing Lowe's

Lynda Heinig

Ellen Lurie

Capital Region Community Foundation (Guerriero Family)

Paige Lawson

Great Northern Docks in Vermont

South Lansing Menards

Rebecca (Becky) Saul

Mary & Rich Kimball

Joyce Ochowicz

Bess German

Virginia Martz



Amazon Smile

It was with great sadness that Dragonflyers of Michigan learned the Amazon Smile program was being discontinued shortly after Dragonflyers became eligible to receive funds. However, the Amazon Smile Wish List program continues. The wish list allows non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations to list the items they need with the Amazon Smile Wish List program for organizations to share with friends, family, and the public. You can view the "wish list" at <https://smile.amazon.com/gp/ch/list/84-4253831/>.

Please share this with family and friends!



Membership Committee Report

Hi Dragonflyers!

Would you like to help recruit and welcome new members? Please consider joining the membership committee for this year! We could certainly use a few more people focused on this important work.

Since we are all recruiters, please take a few moments to personally reach out to friends and acquaintances. You can share [the Facebook event](#), or you can share the flier below with a personal note. Thank you!

Thanks, and paddles up!

Bess



A promotional flyer for Dragonflyers of Michigan. The background is a photograph of a dragonboat team in blue shirts paddling on a lake. In the foreground, there is a white text box with a blue border containing the following text:

Dragonflyers of Michigan welcomes you to
Check out the exciting and fun sport of Dragonboating!

Open practices are Sunday, April 30 at 4:00pm and
Tuesday, May 2nd, at 6:00pm

Regular Practices on Tuesday and Thursday evenings
1284 N Cedar Street, Mason
All genders and identities welcomed!

To join the mailing list or questions: dragonflyersofmi@gmail.com

At the bottom left of the flyer, it says "Akron race, 2022". At the bottom right, there is a logo for Dragonflyers of Michigan, which features a stylized dragonfly. Below the flyer, there is a dark blue banner with the text "Adventure with Us!" in a white script font, flanked by two white dragonfly logos.

Extras



Race Captains

We are looking for a team captain for each of our three races. If you are interested in being a team captain for one of the races, please contact Ellen at Dragonflyersofmi@gmail.com



Updated Website Coming Soon

Our website is getting a fresh new look with updated information about our organization, how interested paddlers can join us, upcoming events, and more. Be sure to check out the new website in mid-May at www.DragonflyersofMI.org

Thoughts from our Paddlers

We asked our paddlers to give three words that describe or define dragon boating to them. Here is what some of the paddlers had to say:

Camaraderie, fun, and exercise – Joyce

Exhilarating, comradery, and fun – Amy

Boatful of Fun – Mary K.

Community, training, and beauty (nature) – Julie

Teamwork, challenging, and outdoor fun – Jay

Team, unity, and tough – Erin

Together, peace, and breathing – Sarynna

Fun, friends, and connection – Ginger

Synchronicity, challenging, and outdoor bliss – Mary G.

Family, connection, and happy-place -- Ellen

Thoughts from our Paddlers -Continued

We also asked our paddlers what keeps them paddling with Dragonflyers.

It's the first sport that gave me an athletic identity. There is continuous learning - always something to do better but fun where you are. It is truly team oriented and has brought me into a great community. It is also beautiful to be out on the water. – Julie

It is a really welcoming and fun team and I love our community! – Sarynna

I enjoy the camaraderie, challenge, exercise, and being active outdoors. - Jay

The people... I love the people I am meeting and paddling with. - Ginger

The camaraderie of the members, and the exercise. A great group of people! -- Erin

Dragonflyers to me is a sports team, many of which have been a big part of my life. It has also become a family. – Mary G

I have never meet a group of people with such different backgrounds that mesh and cares for others so quickly. – Amy

The Dragonflyers team is a great group of people--dedicated, caring, fun, inclusive and willing to help out wherever necessary. -- Joyce



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 – Bess German

Fundraising Committee – Co-chairs Julie Sinclair and Ginger Martz

Finance Committee – Lin Hirai (Treasurer)

Social Activity Committee – Sarynna Lopez-Meza

Maintenance Committee - Co-chairs Ginger Martz and Erin Linn

Social Media & Website/IT – Looking for chair and members - Contact Julie Sinclair

Election/Nomination – Bess German

Safety – Alyona Troitski

Race – Co-chairs Alyona Troitski and Ellen Lurie

We are especially looking for people who can help with our Facebook accounts and/or website.

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

Dragonflyers Board Meetings

The Board holds quarterly meetings, which are open to members and the public. Meeting dates for 2023 are tentatively scheduled on the following dates:

- ~~January 25, 2023, at 7:00pm~~
- April 26, 2023, at 7:00pm
- July 26, 2023, at 7:00pm
- October 25, 2023, at 7:00pm

Initially, 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 Lurie at DragonflyersofMI@gmail.com

Ideas for articles are welcome.

For questions or more information regarding Dragonflyers of Michigan please email us at DragonflyersofMI@gmail.com

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