



PADDLING FOR PLEDGES: RAISING FUNDS IN AN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OTTAWA, June 5th - The Ottawa Dragon Boat Foundation is optimistic in reaching its \$300,000 fundraising goal, despite the economic downturn.

“It is a tough year, but we hope that our paddlers and the general public recognize that the local charities we support need financial help more than ever,” relates Michelle Lavoie, Ottawa Dragon Boat Foundation Chair.

The Ottawa Dragon Boat Foundation raises funds primarily through a Pledge Challenge taking place in and around the Ottawa Dragon Boat Festival, June 19th-21st. Paddlers raise funds by asking friends and family for donations and holding small events such as garage sales, bake sales and BBQ's. The Foundation also relies on the general public for their support. Donations can be made online by visiting www.dragonboat.net.

For those who are not interested in making a monetary donation, the Foundation also raises funds via a charity silent auction on Festival weekend.

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“The local community has been incredible in supporting the silent auction. Their commitment to charity is clear and unwavering. We have over 90 items ranging from hotel stays to gym memberships,” says Jennifer Mackiddie, Ottawa Dragon Boat Foundation Coordinator.

The Ottawa Dragon Boat Foundation has seen a steady increase in the funds raised each year and is relying on the generosity of its paddlers and the citizens of Ottawa to reach its 2009 goal of \$300,000.

In 1998, a charitable component was added to the Ottawa Dragon Boat Race Festival raising funds for local charities on an annual basis. The Ottawa Dragon Boat Foundation was established in 2003 to help focus and grow the level of community support. To date over \$1,500,000 has been raised through the annual Pledge Challenge and those funds have benefited over 20 Ottawa area charities. The 2009 recipient charities are as follows: The Sens Foundation/Project S.T.E.P, Royal Ottawa Foundation for Mental Health, Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario/Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Support Program, OCRI School Breakfast Program, Algonquin College Foundation, Ottawa Children’s Treatment Centre, Good Day Workshop.

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