



Donald McKenzie MD, PhD, University of British Columbia, formed a dragon boat team in 1996 to emphasize his belief that exercise is beneficial for patients trying to get back to “real life” and to increase breast cancer awareness. Dragon boating was chosen for many reasons. It is a strenuous, repetitive upper body activity that projects a visible message to all people with breast cancer. It is a team sport that builds harmony and a feeling of togetherness. In many ways, it is an ideal exercise. It is non-weight-bearing, it is safe, and with proper technique the paddler can recruit a reasonable amount of muscle mass and induce positive adaptations in the musculoskeletal and cardiovascular systems. Paddlers showed a marked improvement in both physical and mental health. It helps people living with breast cancer understand that they can lead full, active lives despite the physical limitations imposed by this disease. There is ‘life after breast cancer’!

McKenzie DC, Jespersen DK. Abreast in a Boat — team manual. Vancouver: Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Centre; 1998.

Life Is Bliss Dragon Boat Association

Jo Mortvedt

103 Hazel Ave

Story City, IA 50248

Phone or Text: 515-231-5800

E-mail: [jo.mortvedt@gmail.com](mailto:jo.mortvedt@gmail.com)

Find us on Facebook at

[LifelsBlissDragonboatAssociation](#)

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## Life Is Bliss

### Dragon Boat Association



While most people have been either directly or indirectly affected by breast cancer, many have never heard of dragon boating.

Dragon boat racing originated around 2500 years ago in China. It is a long canoe of 24 paddlers sitting two by two with a dragon’s head and tail at their respective ends.

Modern research in breast cancer has shown that this paddling is beneficial for survivors.

## Waves of Strength

*"Being a daughter of a breast cancer patient often leaves you feeling helpless and lost. Joining the Life is Bliss Dragon Boat team allowed me to see the strong connections built between the patients, nurses, and survivors of breast cancer. Encouraging the women to push through the pain and row together provided me the strength I never dreamed possible. Instead of helping them, they helped me."*

Brittany McCall

## I Love It!

*"I never would have considered dragon boat paddling because I am not athletic, am not fond of water, and not fond of exercise. Due to my doctor's encouragement, meeting the friendly and committed team members, and a strong desire to get stronger after treatment I tried it. I needed the outdoors at beautiful Ada Hayden and I needed them! I love it!"*

Gretchen Zitterich

## Show Your Support

The Life Is Bliss group believes in the benefits that paddling and companionship contribute toward better health especially during and after battling breast cancer. To continue to offer this activity locally for anyone who wishes to participate, we need your help. Our group is self-funded and requires essential equipment as well as continued participation. Please show your support.

*Join the Team  
Spread the Word  
Support our Events  
Donate  
Like us on Facebook*

@

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**[www.blissdragonboat.weebly.com](http://www.blissdragonboat.weebly.com)**

## Paddles Up!

The Life Is Bliss Dragon Boat Association consists of breast cancer patients, survivors, caregivers, and family members. If you or someone you know wants the companionship of an energetic, fun loving group of paddlers, come visit us. Consider giving this fun, easy to learn therapy a try. We are dedicated to raising breast cancer awareness and providing support so others know they are not alone in this fight!

## Cheer Us On!

In late Spring we practice at Ada Hayden Park in Ames. Check our Facebook page for practice dates and times. Come watch or even give it a try!

Cheer us on at the Badger Lake Dragon Boat Bash in Ft Dodge in August.