

Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race

Presented by the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association

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2025

Year of the Snake
4723



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Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race

June 7-8, 2025
Tom McCall Waterfront Park

The Legacy, the Inheritance, and the Cultural Significance

As we celebrated the Eye Dotting Ceremony this March, I was excited to announce the return of the 36th Annual Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race in Portland. The celebration marked the official start of the Portland Dragon Boat Race season, which runs through mid-June on the beautiful Willamette River. What began as a cultural exchange initiative between Portland and Kaohsiung, Taiwan, more than three decades ago in 1989, has blossomed into an iconic celebration. The sight of the eight traditional dragon boats— now in their second generation, gliding across the Willamette has become a beloved symbol of Portland's springtime. These boats, much like their first-generation counterparts, carry with them centuries of heritage, tradition, and a deep bond between our two sister cities. Each year, these vessels captivate both locals and visitors alike, drawing them to watch the teams practice and to cheer on their favorite teams during the two-day race event, this year on June 7th and 8th as part of the Portland Rose Festival weekend.



This year also marks the end of a decade-long cultural exchange program with Kaohsiung. The Kaohsiung Shu-Te High School, who set an all-time racecourse record in 2018 and a spectator favorite in the Portland Rose Festival Grand Floral Parade for over 30 years, has announced that this will be their final year of participation. On behalf of the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association (PKSCA) and the citizens of Portland, we extend our deepest gratitude to the Shu-Te team for their immeasurable contributions to people-to-people diplomacy and cultural exchange between Taiwan and the United States. To Shu-Te, you will forever be a part of Portland's heart and you will be greatly missed in Portland.

While this chapter closes, I am pleased to share that PKSCA is already working diligently to bring a new high school team from Kaohsiung to the 2026 Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race and the Grand Floral Parade. This new student exchange program will offer fresh opportunities for young performers and athletes to showcase their talent and further strengthen the bonds between Portland and Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

As we move into another exciting season of dragon boat racing, I want to express my sincere gratitude to our corporate sponsors, my fellow PKSCA board members, volunteers, and, of course, all the race team paddlers and participants. Your ongoing support ensures that we continue to celebrate this meaningful event on the Willamette River year after year.

Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to seeing you at the races.



Chi-Chao Chen
President, Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association

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Office of Mayor
Keith



Dear Dragon Boat Racers,

Welcome to the 2025 Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Races! This year's races demonstrate our community's continued resiliency and commitment to supporting the sister city relationship between Portland and Kaohsiung.

The races are a celebration for all Portlanders and as the mayor, it is my pleasure and honor to welcome all the visitors, volunteers, and participants who make this spectacular waterfront tradition remarkable.

The first dragon boat race in 1989 was made possible through the hard work and commitment of the PortlandKaohsiung Sister City Association (PKSCA). The Dragon Boat Races have become an integral part of the City of Portland's culture and each year, when we see the colorful boats launched in the Willamette River, we know that summer is on the way. Portland is especially pleased to welcome the visiting delegation from Portland's Sister City, Kaohsiung. Taiwan's presence during the Rose Festival season doesn't go unnoticed and reflects the strong ties between our two cities. This unique and famous event allows us to gain a greater vision for the global community to which we all belong.

The spirit of global engagement is a big part of what makes the Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Races a tremendous sporting event that symbolizes Portland's commitment to reaching beyond our borders and showcasing the world, all that is best about our city. The City of Roses is with you all the way!

Sincerely,

Keith Wilson
Mayor



高雄市政府
Kaohsiung City Government

April 24th, 2025

Dear Dragon Boat Racers, Attendees, and Portlanders,

On behalf of the citizens of Kaohsiung City, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to all participants and spectators of the 2025 Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race. Since its inception in 1989, this cherished event has been a highlight of the Portland Rose Festival, symbolizing the enduring sister city relationship between Kaohsiung and Portland, now in its 37th year. This year, the dragon boat race continues to embody our shared cultural heritage and commitment to fostering friendship across the Pacific.



The success of the dragon boat race would not be possible without the tireless efforts of the participants, volunteers, the PKSCA, the Portland Rose Festival Foundation, and the unwavering support of the Portland City Government. Your collective dedication ensures that this event remains a vibrant celebration of community and cultural unity.

This year, we were honored to welcome a delegation from Portland to Kaohsiung, where they experienced our city's vibrant culture and attractions. These exchanges strengthen our mutual understanding and pave the way for deeper cooperation. I cordially invite all Portlanders to visit Kaohsiung to witness our city's ongoing transformation and hospitality.

Once again, I express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved in organizing this remarkable event. May the 2025 Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race be a resounding success, filled with joy and unforgettable memories. Let us continue to paddle together toward a future of shared prosperity and friendship.

Sincerely,

Chen Chi-mai

Chen Chi
mai

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No.2, Sihwei 3rd Road, Lingya District, Kaohsiung City, 802721 Taiwan (R.O.C)
Tel : + 886-7-336-8333 Fax : + 886-7-335-2669 <https://www.kcg.gov.tw>



Dear Friends from around the World,

On behalf of the Kaohsiung City Council, I cordially invite you to the Portland Dragon Boat Festival, an annual event rich in history and cultural significance. Held along the stunning Willamette River in Portland, Oregon, this summer celebration warmly welcomes people from all corners of the world to take part in a vibrant gathering that blends tradition with modernity, and competition with cultural connection.

The sight of dragon boats racing on the Willamette River has become a cherished tradition for the citizens of Portland. There's even a local saying: "You know spring has arrived when the dragon boats gather on the river." This beloved event continues to thrive as a celebration of unity, perseverance, and cultural heritage. Teams from across the globe paddle in rhythm with the drumbeats, expressing a universal language of determination and teamwork as they glide through the river's waters.

Most importantly, the Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race stands as a symbol of unity and the enduring friendship between Kaohsiung and Portland. It's a time for people of all backgrounds to come together, forge new friendships, and create lasting memories. Whether you're a participant, a spectator, or simply someone wishing to experience the magic of this festival, you are an integral part of what makes this event truly special.

We sincerely invite you to join us for 2025 Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race. Whether you're a racer, a spectator, a volunteer, or a traveler at heart, you are warmly welcomed in Portland to be part of an unforgettable summer experience.

Warmest regards,

康裕成

Yu-Cheng Kang

Speaker of Kaohsiung City Council

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Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Seattle

One Union Square, Suite 2020
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April 17, 2025

Dear Dragon Boat Racers and Friends,

On behalf of the Republic of China (Taiwan), I extend my deepest gratitude to the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association (PKSCA) and President Chi Chao Chen for your steadfast commitment to hosting the vibrant Dragon Boat Race as part of the Portland Rose Festival. Your tireless efforts have transformed this event into a cherished tradition that resonates deeply with our communities.

The enduring partnership between Taiwan and Oregon thrives across economic, academic, and cultural domains. The Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Seattle is honored to witness the flourishing of this relationship, exemplified by the Dragon Boat Race. This event unites our communities, showcasing Taiwan's democratic spirit and the shared values that bind us to the Pacific Northwest. PKSCA's dedication ensures these ideals continue to inspire and connect us.

We are proud to once again support this year's race and celebrate the enduring friendship among Taiwan, Kaohsiung, and Portland. Since the establishment of the Portland-Kaohsiung sister city relationship in 1987, our bonds have grown stronger, and we eagerly anticipate further deepening these ties in the years to come.

To all participating teams, I wish you an exhilarating race and a joyful celebration. I look forward to continued collaboration with PKSCA and many more shared successes.

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is fluid and elongated, with a prominent horizontal stroke at the end.

Daniel K. C. Chen
Director General



Dear Dragon Boat Race Participants,

We welcome you to the Portland Rose Festival's annual Dragon Boat Race produced by the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association.

The Dragon Boat Race is a dazzling highlight of the Portland Rose Festival each year! The races offer avid boaters and spectators the chance to take part in an event that thoughtfully knits together cultural tradition and local community participation. From the magnificence of the carefully maintained dragon boats to the profound displays of teamwork on the water, the Dragon Boat races are an event you don't want to miss!

We'd also like to extend a special thank you to the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association board and volunteers for their vision, dedication and expertise in producing this incredible event alongside the Rose Festival. Our annual exchange visit to Kaohsiung continues to be both educational and transformative, and we are honored to call the City of Kaohsiung a friend.

Thank you for your participation in the Dragon Boat Race. We hope you will take time to enjoy all the Rose Festival has to offer this year as we feature over 120 community, cultural, and affinity groups across our parades, stages, and events. All Together Now!

Sincerely,

Jeremy Emerson, President



Marilyn Clint, CEO





April 23, 2025



Dear Friends of Portland and All Dragon Boat Teams,

As we gather here to celebrate the beauty, tradition, and spirit of the Rose Festival and Dragon Boat Race, it is with a bittersweet heart that we, Shu-Te High School, mark this as our final participation after 31 wonderful years. Over the past three decades, we have shared countless unforgettable moments — parades filled with color and life, friendships that blossomed like the roses we honor, and memories that will forever be etched in our hearts.

Though this chapter will come to an end, the bonds we have formed will endure beyond time and distance. True friendship, like the bloom of a rose, continues to flourish even when seasons change. We may be stepping back from this city, but the spirit of camaraderie and unity that the Rose Festival and the Race represent will remain with us always.

To everyone who has been part of this incredible journey — thank you. Thank you for welcoming us, and for making this experience so meaningful. Our paths may diverge, but the ties we have built will never fade.

Portland, we bid farewell to the Rose Festival and Dragon Boat Race with gratitude, pride, and above all, enduring friendship. May the roses continue to bloom, and may our hearts remain forever connected.

Thank you.

Dr. Yuan Hsiang Chu

Chairman of the Board of Shu-Te Vocational High school

Ching -Mei Chen

Principal of Shu-Te Vocational High school

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The Year of the Snake

1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, 2025

Snake is a cautious, introverted observer, cool and mysterious in behavior owing to their suspicious and insecure nature, yet their armor conceals abundant sensitivity, wisdom, and passion that will surely surprise their few confidants

Excerpt from : <https://chinesenewyear.net/zodiac/snake>

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Portland's Sister City: Kaohsiung, Taiwan



Divided by the vast Pacific Ocean, it's fitting that the symbol of Portland and Kaohsiung's sister relationship is a boat. Every year during the Rose Festival, the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association hosts the Dragon Boat Races on the Willamette River — a display of colorful craftsmanship and competitive spirit.

Since 1988, this partnership with Taiwan's southern port city has floated on the warm waters of congeniality, with many goodwill missions and unique gifts — like a freshly caught, 36-pound Tillamook Bay Chinook salmon once presented to Mayor Nan Cheng Su.

Kaohsiung City is Taiwan's largest industrial center and the country's "Maritime Capital." As a powerhouse of commerce and culture, visitors can enjoy shopping in its many night markets, dine on dishes like duck rice and beef noodles at Michelin-rated restaurants, and take in the Pier-2 Art Center's expansive galleries

There are opportunities aplenty for outdoor recreation, from biking along the Love River and playing on Cijin Island's black sand beaches, to hiking the mountain slopes of Shoushan, where Formosan rock monkeys swing in the banyan trees.

Excerpt from Ben McBee at: <https://pdxtoday.6amcity.com/travel-and-outdoors/portland-sister-city-kaohsiung-taiwan>



Use this code to make a donation to the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association.

Thank you 2025 Sponsors...

From the Board of Directors

Chi-Chao Chen

Sponsorship & Support Programs

On behalf of the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association (PKSCA) Board, we would like to take this opportunity to again thank and recognize our 2025 community sponsors listed below. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit association, PKSCA relies on individual and corporate donors to help fund events and programs that support our mission. The Board has created a scholarship fund in the name of one of our past deceased Board Members. The Richard Cole Scholarship Fund (RCSF) provides scholarships to students of Shu-Te High School in Kaohsiung and local high school students in the Portland area. This year PKSCA gave a \$1,500 RCSF Scholarship fund for Shu-Te, and another \$1,500 to Portland Chinese Students Scholarships. Also, the Royal Rosarians gave \$500 to RCSF for a Shu-Te student and the Portland Rose Festival Foundation gave \$1,000 to RCSF for Shu-Te students. Any funds given RCSF will be given out in Scholarships, the more we receive the more we can give.

This year we wish to thank and are proud to announce that the following businesses and organizations located within our community have agreed to help sponsor our event, thus providing financial stability to meet our commitment to the community: Alaska Airlines, Daimler Truck North America, MeterHome Residential Energy Storage Systems, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Seattle, China Airlines, QPO Energy Company, and the Portland Rose Festival Foundation. Look for their flags on the race dragon boats, banners in the Bowl area, and their ads in this program book. We also want to thank our Patrons, OnPoint Credit Union, Portland Metro, Plaid Pantry, Bambuza Vietnam Kitchen for volunteers' T-shirts, Jackson Food Stores for Shu-Te host families gas cards, Elmers Restaurants for Shu-Te host families food vouchers, The Royal Rosarians, and Taipei Cultural Office in Seattle for their financial support. We are pleased that most of our previous sponsors have elected to continue in their support for this cherished community event and help PKSCA to meet our mission. We would encourage all of you, when possible, to support these wonderful Sponsors and Patrons.

If you are interested in joining our team of Sponsors or Patrons and/or forming a dragon boat team next year, please contact: One of our Board Members or send an email to: info@pkscanet.net or send a letter to:

Dragon Boat Sponsorship Program

P.O. Box 80404

Portland, OR 97280

We will be very happy to contact you and talk about our program and what we do in the community.

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2024 Recipient of the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association Scholarship

Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association is proud to announce Amelia Hwu as their 2024 Scholarship Winner. Amelia was a Lakeridge High School graduate in 2024 and now a biology major in University of Oregon.



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The Legend of Dragon Boat Racing

The Dragon Boat Races are the most popular early summer activity in the Orient wherever Chinese cultural influence prevails. It is the most important part of the Twan-Wu Festival, the fifth day of the fifth month on the lunar calendar.

According to legend, during the Warring States period 475-222 B.C., the state of Chu had a high ranking minister of great talent and genius named Chu Yuan. To the west, the state of Chin was determined to seize the state of Chu. For this reason, feigning a desire for friendly diplomatic ties, the state of Chin invited King Huai to Wukuan, to draw up a treaty. King Huai did not heed Chu Yuan's cautionary advice and consequently was kidnapped by Chin soldiers and died in the state of Chin. King Huai's eldest son, King Hsiang, not only failed to consider avenging his father but acted obsequiously toward the state of Chin. In addition, he believed a slander advanced against Chu Yuan and banished him.

On the fifth day of the fifth month of the lunar calendar, Chu Yuan reached the bank of the Mi Luo river. There, the wise, sad hero committed suicide and threw himself into the river. When the people of Chu heard this, they feared the fish in the river would eat Chu Yuan's body. Thronging into boats, they rowed out to the middle of the river and threw great quantities of rice into the water to feed the fish, thus hoping that Chu Yuan's body would be left alone. The search for his body has evolved into present day dragon boat races and the ritual of eating "Tsung Tze," sticky rice cakes wrapped in bamboo leaves.

The Twan-wu Festival also signals the change from spring to summer and can be traced back to the Chou Dynasty as a folk festival. In the distant past, farmers depended solely on the rain to water their crops. On this festival day, farmers prayed for the "Dragon of the Clouds" to send rain. They also prayed for the "Dragon of the Seas" to calm the ocean and rivers as floods were common when the mountain snow began to melt. Above the doors of their houses, they hung up long, swordlike leaves of the water willow and mallow to disperse evil spirits. Siung-Huan Powder, arsenic sulfide, was used as a pesticide around the house. The red powder was also used to touch the foreheads of boys to give them protective powers. In Japan, Twan-Wu became boy's day which appears to be connected to this ancient ritual. Through the ages, many stories and fairy tales have evolved about this special day, but none surpasses the excitement and fun of the dragon boat races.

2024 Finalists

Women's Division 1

- 1: Dragon Ladies..... 2:57.98
- 2: Amazon Dragons..... 2:58.67
- 3: SMA Blues..... 3:12.22
- 4: SMA Silver 3:14.73

Women's Division 2

- 1: Dragon Riders..... 3:14.20
- 2: Misfit Dragons..... 3:14.96
- 3: River City Dragons..... 3:15.63
- 4: Dragon Rose 3:20.97

Mixed Division 1

- 1: Team Taiwan 2:54.50
- 2: CCBA Dragon Boat Team 2:54.82
- 3: Semi-Dragons..... 2:58.31
- 4: KP Thriving Dragons..... 3:16.49

Mixed Division 2

- 1: Civil Serpents..... 3:10.17
- 2: U Dragon U..... 3:16.55
- 3: Golden Dragons 3:21.99
- 4: Stroke of Luck..... 3:26.90

Open Division

- 1: ZGF ARK-O-TEKS..... 3:04.24
- 2: Wasabi HS Kraken 3:04.89
- 3: Water Dragons..... 3:10.40
- 4: Dragon Guardians..... 3:11.83



Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association's Mission

Richard Cole, Ph.D.

To promote friendship and understanding between the people of Portland, Oregon and Kaohsiung, Taiwan, R.O.C. The Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association programs include:

Awakening the Dragon and Eye Dotting Ceremony

This event officially opens the Dragon Boat season each April. Monks and choir from a local Buddhist temple conduct the formal Buddhist ceremony. Also included in the event is a traditional, and colorful Lion Dance, the formal dotting of the eyes of the Dragon Boats by local dignitaries, and a parade of dragon boats around the Portland Fire Boat.

The Annual Dragon Boat Race

This two-day event takes place Saturday and Sunday on Rose Festival Parade weekend. Over 2000 team members and an estimated 40,000 viewers are involved in the largest Dragon Boat race in the continental USA. Over 95 teams compete in 50 heats each day. The event is free and a great example of a Chinese sport that began over 2400 years ago.

Participation in the Portland Rose Festival Starlight Parade

Each year since 1989, PKSCA has been in the parade paddling a lighted dragon boat through the Willamette River to victory.

Participation in the Portland Rose Festival Grand Floral Parade

Each year since 1989, the PKSCA Parade unit has included: A beautiful float, music and dance group from Shu-Te High School in Kaohsiung, and a VIP convertible carrying the Kaohsiung Mayor or his designated delegation leader.

The Host Family Program for Shu-Te High School from Kaohsiung

Host families throughout the Portland area provide an American home experience for two lovely and talented musicians and dancers who stay for one week. Many families stay in contact with their students for many years and have visited with them in Taiwan and here. This is a wonderful first hand cultural experience for both the hosts and the students.

The Annual official city-to-city Goodwill Delegation Exchange

Each year an official City Delegation from Portland and from Kaohsiung visit for several days. The delegates are made up of City Officials, Civic Leaders, and members of the Sister City Association Board. These visits provide first-hand contact among civic and government leaders and increase understanding of each other's city.

Sponsored Portland Band Performances in Taiwan

Since 1995, we have sent four bands to Taiwan. In October 1995, the David Douglas High School Jazz Ensemble gave many concerts during the opening week of The Taiwan Area Games in Kaohsiung. In Nov. 1996, over 100 members of the David Douglas High School Marching Band and Tams Dance Team performed in the Taiwan International Band Festival in Taipei. In February 2004, an all-star group of 20 high school musicians and 6 dancers performed in the Lantern Parade and the Chinese New Year celebration in Kaohsiung. In February of 2005 and 2006, a 20 member Mount Hood Community College Jazz Band performed in the Kaohsiung's celebration of the Chinese New Year. These student performers are excellent ambassadors for Portland and the USA.

Sister School/University Programs

In June 1994, David Douglas School District and Shu-Te Girls' High School entered a Sister School agreement. This program involves hosting student performers and visiting teachers, and supporting performing groups. In 1998, a Sister University relationship was established between Portland State University and National Sun Yat-Sen University in Kaohsiung. Students from Kaohsiung have attended PSU, and professional communication continues between the Universities.

Outreach and Support Programs

PKSCA provides support to worthy programs and for disaster relief in Taiwan. In 1991, the PKSCA sent a fully equipped state of the art ambulance as a gift to Kaohsiung as recognition for their gift of 2 Dragon Boats. In 1999, following a devastating earthquake, a fund raising program resulted in a relief donation of over \$44,000. In 2003, \$10,000 was donated to supply face masks during the SARS epidemic. Also, every year PKSCA supports the CCBA Chinese Language School in Portland. These and other in-kind support activities are a high priority for the Portland- Kaohsiung Sister City Association.



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# Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association's History

*Richard Cole, Ph.D.*

The Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association was founded in November 1987. The Portland City Council officially approved Kaohsiung as Portland's Sister City on May 11, 1988. At Mayor Clark's suggestion, the original six member board, comprised of President Dr. Eng Lock Khoo, Gene Chin, Steven Louie, Liu Chi, Judith Reese, and Ted Schneider, was enlarged to fifteen, in order to represent the many facets of the metropolitan community. During the Association's first goodwill mission to Kaohsiung, Commissioners Dick Bogle and Mike Lindberg signed the sister city agreement with Kaohsiung's Mayor Nan Cheng Su on Oct. 11, 1988. To signify the cities mutual tie with the Pacific Ocean, the Association presented a unique gift, a freshly caught, 36 pound Tillamook Bay Chinook salmon.

When the Association selected dragon boat racing as an annual cultural event, Mayor Su promptly donated two boats as a gift to the Association. A third boat was donated by the Republic of China and the fourth was purchased by the Association. All of them arrived at the Port of Portland's Terminal 6 on March 31, 1989 aboard Evergreen's container ship, "Evergoing." On April 10, the elaborately decorated boats made their debut during the "eye-dotting" ceremony which included a special Buddhist ceremony and water display by the Portland Fire Bureau's fireboat. The boats were launched from the lawn of Waterfront Park by means of a 75 foot crane.

The Association's most memorable goodwill mission occurred in October 1990, when 36 Portlanders participated in the Taiwan Area Games in Kaohsiung. Their well-publicized activities caught the attention of then newly-appointed Mayor Wu Den Yih. The following June, Mayor Wu visited Portland during the Rose Festival and officiated at the opening of the 3rd Annual Dragon Boat Races with 60 local and international teams. This year over 65 local and international teams will compete with over 20,000 people in attendance each race day.

During the goodwill mission on October 10, 1991, the 80th anniversary of the Republic of China, the Association gave Kaohsiung a state-of-the-art, US made ambulance in appreciation of their assistance in introducing dragon boat racing to Portland. In honor of the occasion, Kaohsiung donated two additional boats to the Association, one of which hangs on display at the Oregon Convention Center.

In 2007 the association donated over \$80,000 to the city of Kaohsiung for the purchase of a 4 wheel drive emergency rescue vehicle.

In 2008 the Kaohsiung Lions Club donated two new dragon boats to the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association.

In 2011 the city of Kaohsiung donated two new dragon boats to the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association.

In 2013 the association purchased two more dragon boats and the city of Kaohsiung donated two additional dragon boats. The association now has a total of eight new dragon boats in their fleet and have since retired the old fleet. 2013 marks the 25th Anniversary of the Portland Dragon Boat Race with the use of our new fleet of dragon boats.

Dr. Eng Lock Khoo was the first president of the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association. He served for nearly six years. In 1993 John Grimes became president. Mike Chang became the third president in 1994. Mike Chang concluded the Sister School Agreement between Shu-Te High School in Kaohsiung and the David Douglas School District in Portland. A sister university agreement between Portland State University and National Sun-Yat Sen University in Kaohsiung was also concluded. Ted Schneider became president in 1998. He was succeeded in 1999 by Dr. Richard Cole who served for six years. In 2005 Tom Crowder became president and served five years. In 2010 Tom Crowder was succeeded by Mack Lai and in 2015 Mike Bostwick succeeded Mack Lai and served five years. In 2020 Chi-Chao Chen became president.



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# Volunteer & Vendor Appreciation

*Richard Bursch, Race Director*

## **The Legacy, the Inheritance, and the Cultural Significance**

Since its inception in 1989, the Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race has been a proud all-volunteer operation. From our very first generation of boats to the second, and soon to a third, this tradition has been carried forward with heart, dedication, and community spirit. The Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association and its Board are proud to put on this event.

While our boats are crafted in Taiwan, they are lovingly maintained right here in Portland by a devoted group of volunteers. At the forefront of this effort are our three Lead Volunteers: Rick McLaughlin, Butch Everett, and Doug Williams. These individuals work tirelessly—often behind the scenes—to ensure our boats remain in top condition. Their commitment is extraordinary, and their efforts are vital to the continued success of this event.

Maintaining the boats is no easy task. It requires technical know-how, patience, and a deep love for the race and what it represents. Rick, Butch, and Doug embody all of this, and we owe them immense gratitude for keeping this tradition alive.

As we look to the future, we also face a turning point. Many of us who have helped lead and sustain this race over the decades are beginning to “age out” of our roles. For the Dragon Boat Race to thrive in the years to come, we need new volunteers to step up—to learn, to lead, and to carry this legacy forward.

If you've ever enjoyed the excitement of race day, felt inspired by the rhythm of the drums on the river, or simply want to be part of something meaningful, now is the time to get involved. Help us keep this incredible tradition strong for the next generation.

The success of this event is made possible through the generous support of numerous organizations and individuals. The Portland Rose Festival Foundation officially sanctions the event. The City of Portland's Parks & Recreation Bureau and Fire Bureau provide essential support and services.

Zidell Marine Corporation hosts the captains' meetings, while Cathy Brunscheon provides the start boat. Lynne Barbier and Bryan Berry graciously furnish the finish line boat. Fred Harding and his sons dedicate two full days to retrieving race flags and transporting finish line equipment to and from the site. Rich Morgan contributes a pontoon boat for transport, and Vicki Sekiguchi and Rick McLaughlin assist with towing boats to and from the river.

Young's Towing supports the Starlight Parade with boat towing services. Rapid Response Bio-Clean donates portable toilets as well as trash and recycling services for the event. The Little River Café provides both refreshments and much-appreciated facilities for participants.

River safety is ensured by the Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary in coordination with the Portland Harbormaster. Additionally, the Marriott Residence Inn and Marriott Portland Downtown Waterfront offer special rates for dragon boaters, and the Kimpton RiverPlace Hotel graciously hosts us on their waterfront property for the weekend.

Months before race weekend, a dedicated group of individuals begin working diligently to ensure the event's success. For this program book, Holly Effenberger managed collecting and preparing the content for Sean Li to design and layout. Susie Ho and Larry Stewart capture stunning photographs for the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association throughout the year. Aaron Bocanegra spearheaded the redesign of a more user-friendly PKSCA website, coordinates our vendors, and with the help of Megan Kunze has greatly enhanced our social media presence, and Ken Ma handles the complex task of securing the many permits required for the event.

Our Lead Volunteers play crucial roles throughout the weekend and devote significant time to preparation as well: Registrar: Angie Chen - Volunteer Coordinator: Maxine Davison - Finish Line Setup: Fred Harding - Start Boat: Mike and Rosemary Bostwick - Finish Boat: Johanna and Mary Root - Marshaling and Escorts: Maxine Davison - Dock Supervisor: Rick McLaughlin - Computer/Command Tent: Sylvia Ayala - Volunteer Tent: Mariah Davison

These dedicated individuals are present throughout the entire race weekend and contribute countless hours preparing equipment and coordinating logistics.

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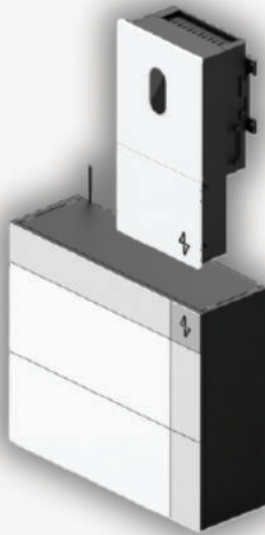
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# David Douglas & Shu-Te High School's History

*Richard Cole, Ph.D.*

The Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association was instrumental in establishing the first Sister High School relationship between Portland and Taiwan. On June 13, 1994, David Douglas School District and Shu-Te High School entered into a Sister School agreement at a formal signing ceremony. The signing ceremony preceded an hour-long performance of traditional orchestra and dance presented by the Shu-Te student musicians and dancers.

The idea of the sister school relationship started when the Shu-Te High School musicians and dancers performed in Portland on June, 1992. Following a stunning performance of traditional music and dance, Dr. Richard Cole, then Director of Curriculum for David Douglas School District, approached Dr. Khoo, then president of the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association, about using the David Douglas Performing Arts Center for the following year's performance. Dr. Khoo responded by asking David Douglas to coordinate and arrange for host families for the Shu-Te students. David Douglas has coordinated housing each year since. The students are wonderful representatives of their school and country. Many families continue to host them year after year. The Shu-Te High School students perform for all 5th and 6th grade David Douglas students and sometimes have joint performances with the David Douglas High School Orchestra. They have also visited elementary classrooms. The high school Leadership Class hosts the students in many of their activities and have developed pen-pal correspondence with students in Kaohsiung.

The Sister School relationship has stimulated other activities. David Douglas teachers have spent summers teaching conversational English at Shu-Te High School. In 1995, the 20 member David Douglas Jazz Ensemble went to Kaohsiung and were hosted by Shu-Te High School. They performed at Shu-Te as well as for 30,000 people at the opening of the Taiwan Area Games in Kaohsiung. In November 1996, the David Douglas Marching Band and dance unit participated in the International Band Competition in Taipei, Taiwan.

The strong support of the School Board, teachers, principals, and district administrators assures the continued benefits and families both in Portland and Kaohsiung.



*Shu-Te Marching Band & Dance Team at the 2024 special invitation only Pre Grand Floral Parade Memorial Coliseum Performance.*



*Shu-Te High School Student Dance Team at the David Douglas High School Performance Art Center for the 2024 Night of Kaohsiung Performance.*

## Team Spotlight - Golden Dragons

Dawn Robbins



Fun, fitness, and friendship fuel the Golden Dragons, seniors who paddle Portland's Willamette River three times a week, all year long. A senior walking group formed the team in 1996 with encouragement and assistance from Portland Park Bureau. We now boast nearly 200 members, all over 50 years old, with an average age of 74. Our practice times—between 9 and 10 a.m., Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays—work well for members, most of whom are retired or work part-time. Generally, we fill three boats: one for serious paddlers, a training boat for newer paddlers, and a third for folks who just want to exercise on the river with friends. After practice, we love to hang out at the Little River Cafe.

Our races take us throughout the Pacific Northwest with the Rose Festival a regular each year. We've also been known to paddle in races across the country or internationally in Canada, Australia, China, and Italy, demonstrating that people over the age of 50 can be competitive in a sport dominated by younger folks. When the moon is full or when the Christmas Ships sail on the Willamette, you might see us in boats all lit up for the occasion.

We also get together for out-of-boat activities such as bowling, hiking, kayaking, playing pickleball, marching in parades, meeting for lunch, and partying. Each winter a group heads to Mt Hood for a couple days of winter fun.

Portland paddlers 50 and older, you may not know it, but you are part of our Farm Team. Check us out at [goldendragonspdx.org](http://goldendragonspdx.org). We love the Rose Festival and come to win. Our motto: Old age and treachery overcome youth and ambition.

### 2025 Vendors

**During the festival, vendors are located on the north end of South Hawthorne Waterfront.**

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Bambu Desserts & Drinks

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Metro - Parks & Nature

Dragon Boat Stuff

Baked Happiness

**We Care Bites**

*We are excited that this year We Care Bites will be selling the traditional dish of dragon boat festivals, Sticky Rice Balls or Zongzi. These are the most popular food during the festival, especially in Taiwan. A widely held belief is that eating Zongzi brings good luck and wards off evil spirits, making it an essential part of the celebrations. The tradition is as old as the dragon boat festival itself.*





## 2025 Team Biographies

### Alaska Airlines

### Amazon Dragons Paddling Club

The Amazon Dragons Paddling Club provides lesbians and queer women, transgender persons, non-binary persons, and female allies of the LGBTQ community with camaraderie, fitness, and physical strength through competitive dragon boat racing. The Amazon Dragons Paddling Club conveys positive lesbian and queer visibility through competition, personal integrity, community service, and good sportsmanship.

### Arizona Gila Dragons

In 2002, the AZ Gila Dragons was formed as Arizona's first dragon boating club, and practices were held on milk crates on the side of a swimming pool. From those humble beginnings, the Gilas have expanded to include the Arizona SunGi women's team and the Arizona Monsoon open team, and have competed in Hong Kong, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Vancouver, Boston, Houston, Denver, Portland, San Francisco, Long Beach, and many others. Today we're a

diverse group of friends and family meeting at Tempe Town Lake to hone our craft, engage in fierce competition, then go celebrate in style!

### Brew Dragons

Brew Dragons has been around for several years and each year welcomes in new paddlers. The first practice of the year is a time to see old friends and meet new ones. Although we are a motley bunch, we have fun and each time we get in the boat we are reminded that we can do hard things. Brew Dragons, Brew Dragons, Chug, Chug, Chug!

### Calapya Dragon Boat Team

Calapya formed in July 2023 through Ridgefield, WA's Community Paddle Nights, proof that paddles, water, and a little adventure can build a crew. Backed by the City of Ridgefield, we're proud to return for our second appearance at the Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race, stronger and more synchronized than ever.

Our team spans generations, with paddlers aged 16 to 73, making us a floating time machine powered by grit, teamwork, and a love of the sport. We come from all walks of life, but once we're in the boat, we move as one.



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Our name, Calapya, is the Chinook translation of Lake River, where we train. It reflects our deep connection to the water and the history of the land we call home. Plus, we paddle in two of the first generation of Kaohsiung boats, because why not practice in style?

We may not be the fastest, but we're definitely having a blast, and you'll likely find us after practice raising a pint at Ridgefield Craft Brewing. Heart, hustle, and waterproof enthusiasm; that's Calapya.

### **CCBA 2025 Dragon Boat Team**

*Portland Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association*

Yearly the first comment we receive is, "What team are you?" It is quickly followed by, "Oh." After a few moments; "So what does CCBA stand for?" Our sponsors are the "Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association." "Oh."

We are the only original team participating uninterrupted since the beginning of the event in 1989. The very founding of the Portland Kaoshiung Sister City Association (PKSCA) and receipt of the first donated dragon boats was through the efforts of individuals from the Oregon Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA). We are a recreational team and gather just for this annual Rose Festival event. Team members include individuals from

Portland's Chinese community and friends of the Chinese community. Qualifications require skill with chopsticks and a working knowledge of dim sum! Most importantly though, we train hard, enjoy friendly competition, and encourage promotion of the sport and goodwill through the races. We are particularly grateful to the Chinese Community, and the generosity of its businesses, associations and individuals for their continued support in this most festive, cultural exchange event. Best wishes again to all the teams this year!

### **Civil Serpents**

Civil Serpent (*Serpentis civicus*) - *S. civicus*, first identified in 1997, is a rare species indigenous to the Portland Metro Region. Individuals vary in length from 5 to 6.3 feet and display a variety of phenotypes. They are easily distinguished from other species in the genus by their well developed upper body and appendages, which they use to propel themselves through the water. Civil Serpents are a social species. Many are domesticated and work in state and local government office settings. In the wild they congregate in the early evening along the Willamette River to engage in flashy displays of athleticism in an attempt to establish dominance on the river. Occasionally they can be found in small or large groups at the local watering hole. Collectively, *S. civicus* are omnivores with a proclivity for cake.



## Daimler Semi Dragons

Here we are, hear us ROAR! The Semi Dragons were established in 2015 by our Engineering department and our Asian Resource Network. The team is made up of new and returning paddlers from different backgrounds and departments in the company, all brought together by the challenge and joy of paddling. This will be our team's ninth year racing and as always, we plan to leave it all on the water!

## Daimler Thunder Trucks

Get ready to be THUNDERSTRUCK! Daimler Truck North America's IT Department and Asian Resource Network established the Thunder Trucks in 2023. Our Dragon Boat team represents collaboration, growth, and performance. We're now in our third year and are proud to bring together a diverse team with a "work hard, play hard" attitude. We'll continue to give it our all on the water!

## Dragon Guardians

We are a team of Ida B Wells High School students. We are fierce competitors and always have fun.

## Dragon Fever

*Bravo Fit*

Dragon Fever is one of the original founding teams from 1989. Ted Halton, Dragon Fever's Founder, was instrumental in bringing the Dragon Boat Race to Portland. For the 11th consecutive year, Bravo Fit has sponsored Dragon Fever. With the mission to turn people into their own hero, Bravo Fit now owns and operates Planet Fitness locations in Oregon, Alaska and Australia. "At Planet Fitness, we don't allow any intimidating behavior, like grunting, in our facilities," says Halton, "Here on the water is a different story. For months now, this team has been grunting, screaming, crying, and doing whatever it takes to get this boat to that finish line, first."

Each year's race weekend is dedicated to Ted Halton for his unwavering support of the dragon boating community, which he helped establish more than 30 years ago.

## Dragon Riders

Dragon Riders are happy to be back celebrating another year of the Portland Rose Festival Dragon Boat Races. We have been paddling as a team for so long we can't even remember how many years. This boat of powerful women paddlers have lots of energy, fun loving, and will breathe fire when in competition. That's right, we are no puff dragon riders, we sail the winds of eternity, hear us roar. Not even the Oregon rain can put out our fire, because we are the Dragon Riders, the heart of our Dragon. Dragon Riders have vibrant spirit, team unity and positivity. We are bold Dragon Riders fearlessly paddling to the sound of the drum through the waters of Portland Willamette River and yes, we know what's in the river and we still get in to paddle.

"There once was a monster with wings and fiery breath. We went to his home which was a rock dome and we caught him With some rope and some twine. He was golden green And he was quite sheen. Then we trained him for the saddle and we trained him for a battle. And now we can ride on his back with the wind in our hair and the people declare, "Tis the Dragon Riders" Dragon Riders rule the day, so paddle hard Dragon Riders-One blade together!!! A big thank you to the team's hardworking and dedicated members, and the supportive volunteers.

## Dragon Rose

## Dragon Tamers

## Golden Dragons

See bio on page 24.

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## Jammin' Salmon

This year, Jammin' Salmon is celebrating its 25th anniversary on the water. Jammin' was established in 2000 by employees of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC), which was the original sponsor of the team. Jammin's roster includes many current/former CRITFC employees, Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board Native professionals, and employees of other Native organizations from around the Portland Metro area. Jammin' Salmon is a predominantly American Indian/Alaska Native team mixed in with strong allies of the Native Community. Our motto is Spawn & Die!

## Knuckle Dragons

The Knuckle Dragons hail from The B-Side Tavern, Portland Oregon. We have been described as comedic, charming, juvenile, boorish, churlish, insolent, crass, despicable, intimidating, and laughable (Hal). We freely claim all of these epithets. We strip sport of its oppressive competitiveness and lay bare its base component, joy. We are truly enlightened. Every April we rise, and for ten hour-long practices relish the burning of muscles long forgotten and the splash of polluted water on our faces. We drink, paddle, and sing, laughing maniacally as we hurl ourselves into the Abyss, knowing that while we mortals crawl upon this accursed sphere like ants, in His house at R'lyeh, dead Culhu waits dreaming.

## KP Thriving Dragons

The KP Thriving Dragons are back for our 12th exhilarating year at the Rose Festival races! Our team is a powerful fusion of Kaiser Permanente medical professionals, dedicated support staff, behind-the-scenes champions, and incredible family and friends. With every stroke, we embody resilience, teamwork, and the spirit of thriving—both on and off the water. No matter the race results, our greatest victory is the camaraderie, strength, and joy we gain from this journey. KP THRIVE!





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## Lethally Blind

Meet the Lethally Blind dragon boating team, a dynamic group of mostly blind and visually impaired paddlers who are redefining the sport of dragon boating. With over 17 years of paddling with the Rose Festival races, our team has developed a unique and powerful approach to the water. By relying on our collective strength, trust, and teamwork, we navigate the boat with long and strong paddling strokes. Our paddlers use their keen sense of touch and feel to synchronize their strokes, moving together with one another. Our sighted coach provides expert guidance, while our flag catcher and steering tiller work together to ensure our course is true. What sets us apart is not just our visual impairment, but our unwavering dedication to the sport and to each other. Each year, we introduce several new blind paddlers to this sport and it is truly a gift to see how our teammates support one another in the learning process. Through our collaboration and trust, we've developed a system that allows us to paddle in time, feeling the motion of the boat and responding as one. We are proud to represent the blind and visually impaired community. We're not just paddling for ourselves; we're paddling for everyone who's ever been told they can't do something because of their abilities. We're proof that with determination, teamwork, and a willingness to adapt, anything is possible

## Liquid Assets

Liquid Assets is excited to be back for their 13th year paddling at the Rose Festival Dragon Boat Races.

These paddlers vary in years of dragon boat paddling experience from 2 to 39 years and range in age from 26 to 79. They come from the Portland area, Nevada, and Seattle, and from all walks of life: Program Manager/Project Respond; Retirees; Trial Attorney; Capital Management; Preschool Teacher; Clinical Data Manager; Property Manager and Mom; Former Marine, now working as a civilian for the government; In-house Counsel and compliance Manager; Contracts Manager; Kindergarten teacher; Chef;



Director, HR; Human Resources, supporting managers and leaders; Personal Trainer/Mental Toughness and Performance Coach; Domestic Goddess; Commercial Mortgage; Grants Administrator; Math Teacher and Orientation and Mobility Specialist; Clinical Informatics Specialist; Engineering Continuous Improvement; RN, Lift Operator Timberline Lodge; Regional Manager at Barilla; Business Transformation Manager in healthcare; Personal Assistant.

More than half of the team has competed on the international level at Dragon Boat World Championships. Nine have raced on Team USA.

Although this is a diverse team, they are united in their passion for paddling and competition and having fun. They play hard and they paddle hard!



## Miss Fit Dragons

## No Teacher Left Behind

## Paddle Portland Forward

Paddle Portland Forward is a dragon boat team made up of Portland City Council members and their staff, united by a shared mission: to paddle in the same direction. Our goal is to lead by example—demonstrating collaboration, unity, and community spirit both at City Hall and throughout the city we serve.



For many of us, this is our first time in a dragon boat. While we may not be the fastest crew on the river, we aim to be the loudest, proudest, and most spirited team out there—representing Portland with heart, humor, and teamwork

## Pink Phoenix™

Pink Phoenix is a non-profit organization whose mission is to empower breast cancer survivors through the sport of dragon boating. Teammates find strength and fun by paddling with the common thread of a breast cancer diagnosis - the only requirement to join the team.

We are a diverse group: young and old, long-time survivors, and women just diagnosed. We practice three times a week during race season and travel to local, regional and out-of-state races. Formed in 1997, Pink Phoenix prides itself on being the United States' first breast cancer dragon boat team.

During the Rose Festival, we sponsor the "Gorman Cup", an exhibition race where guest survivors join us to race in memory of Michele Gorman, our first captain. The Gorman Cup is an example of the strength and spirit we give to ourselves and our community.

For information about membership or to donate to our organization, please visit [www.pinkphoenix.org](http://www.pinkphoenix.org).



## Portland Fire

We grew up with the tales of dragons, and had been inspired by the spirit. We had the ambition to ride the dragons one day. Now the dream comes true with this Chinese American dragon boat team — Portland Fire!

By training and participating in the race, we are to demonstrate strength, agility, collaboration, and the ability to navigate water through teamwork.

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### Ripple Effect

Founded in 2001, Ripple Effect is a premier San Francisco Bay Area paddling, fitness and activities club made up of young and young-at-hearts who live to have fun, exercise, eat well, and paddle hard. We're passionate about giving back to the community. We love to travel and race regularly all over the country and the world. Check us out online at [ripplesf.org](http://ripplesf.org), on Facebook ([fb.com/RippleEffectSF](https://fb.com/RippleEffectSF)), or Instagram ([@RippleEffectDB](https://@RippleEffectDB)). Let's get ripped!

### River City Dragons

### Rose City Renegade Dragons

### ROSE VILLA VIKING TEAM

Rose Villa Senior Living Community

The Vikings formed in 2007 and hail from Rose Villa Senior Living Community. Our team is a mix of spirited residents, staff, and members of Rose Villa's community. From age 85 to 30, our diverse team weathers rough waters with determination, teamwork, and fun! We are made stronger with the support of our entire community cheering us



on. The community hosts a big pep rally the day before with the award-winning Rex Putnam drumline leading the marching Vikings and with our entire Rose Villa community in attendance.

No race too hard, no water too cold. You will hear our cry, "Til Bardaga" (to battle)!"

### SnapDragons

### St. Mary's Academy

Portland's Rose Festival and St Mary's Academy are two long standing icons of the Rose City. This marks the school's 26th year of participation in the event.

St. Mary's Academy is a Catholic high school for young women located in downtown Portland that provides a challenging college-preparatory education in a vibrant learning environment. Dragon Boat is officially offered as a spring sport with emphasis on dry land and on water training. SMA participated in the Rainier Dragon Boat Festival in May and three crews will take to the water at this year's 2025 Rose Festival. These young women represent the future of the sport.



## Stroke of Luck

We are a group of friends, family, coworkers, and drinking buddies that thought it may be fun to paddle together! Stroke of Luck is now rocking our eighth year, and we are loving our time back on the river and seeing our friends. With a bit of luck, tons of beer with a lot of laughter, and finally throwing in some great paddling, we are going to bring home more of that coveted bling. Paddles Up!



## Team Survivor Sea Dragons

We are a group of fun-loving, dedicated women of various ages, backgrounds, and athletic abilities who are Dragon Boaters based in San Diego, CA. We are cancer survivors who share the same goals: to enhance our own physical fitness and share the joys and benefits of dragon boating with all who are interested. Our program began in 2008 and we have benefited greatly from being one of several programs offered by Team Survivor Sea Dragons, San Diego.

Email us at [teamsurvivorsd@gmail.com](mailto:teamsurvivorsd@gmail.com) for more information!

## Team Taiwan

### The Love Boat

Since 2001, The Love Boat has consisted of Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette staff, volunteers, supporters, and advocates. We're a passionate and fierce group who unite once a year for the Rose Festival. What keeps us coming back is our endless dedication to raising funds, awareness, and our voices for comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care. Our goal is far reaching education and advocacy across Oregon & SW Washington, all in the name of reproductive access.



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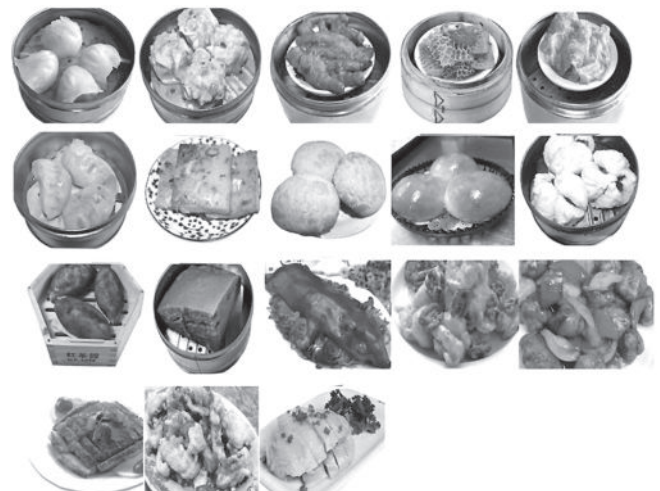
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### The Mothership

*(w)here Real Estate*

The Mothership is a women's crew that is excited to celebrate our 22nd year of participation in the Rose Festival Dragon Boat Races. We started in 2002 as a group of mothers at Bridlemile Elementary School. Several of us are now empty nesters and even grandparents. We gain and lose paddlers every year, but several of the original Mothers are still paddling and we have even gained a couple members from the next generation! Another thing that has remained consistent through the years is our practice schedule; we practice two days a week at 6:00 AM. We begin every year with that odd combination of excitement and dread. Then we are reminded just how lucky we are to watch our beautiful city wake up. That, along with a good workout and the company of some amazing women is the best way to start our spring days. (w)here Real Estate is fortunate enough to have two returning crew members of The Mothership. (w)here is proud to sponsor an amazing group of women embracing our city and a healthy lifestyle.



### The Valkyries

The Valkyries are a team of powerful women and non-binary dragon boat paddlers in Portland, Oregon. Our crew includes educators, healers, artists, parents, and organizers, united by a shared commitment to community care, personal transformation, and social and environmental justice.

In Norse mythology, the Valkyries were winged women warriors who honored the fallen by carrying them up to Valhalla. We bring that tradition to life through practices of courage, presence, and fierce compassion. Our dragon boat is our training ground and our vessel of change. Moving as one, with purpose, intensity, and love, each stroke brings us closer to a more just and joyful world. VALHALLA!

### U Dragon U

Our team has been paddling in the Rose Festival Dragon Boat Races for 26 years. Our mixed team originally formed at the First Unitarian Church in downtown Portland although I don't think any of us still attend. Over the years that initial common denominator has changed but our team spirit remains the same. It's our mutual love of being out on the river and spotting wildlife, along with flotsam and jetsam (we always retrieve wayward plastic bottles) combined with an intense hour of exercise that unites us all. We're a mix of ages and abilities, long-time friends and brand new acquaintances, good joke tellers (well, some are pretty lame) and good joke listeners, manic wildlife observers (loving the pair of bald eagles on Ross Island), two fabulous tillers, and two excellent flag catchers – in other words, we're awesome!

### Wasabi HS Kraken

Wasabi Kraken is a youth paddling team made up of middle and high school students from across the Portland Metro area. We have students from a wide variety of schools, Roosevelt, Cleveland, Beaverton HS, International School of Beaverton, and Westview HS, just to name a few! We love participating in the Rose Festival and it kicks off our summer-long season as the first of four races we typically participate in. If you are, or you know someone who is 14-19 years old and wants to try out our great sport, send them our way!

### Wasabi Special Dragons

The Wasabi Special Dragons are a dedicated team of intellectually disabled athletes who have been competing alongside general members of the community since 1997. Their journey began with the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association dragon boat races over two decades ago, and in 2006, they proudly became an official team of the Wasabi Paddling Club.



The Special Dragons are committed to making the sport of dragon boating accessible and fun for everyone. Through their hard work and determination, they build physical fitness and confidence, regularly showcasing their skills in the Rose Festival Dragon Boat Race. This year is particularly significant as they have entered three boats—Wasabi Blazing Paddles, Wasabi Flying Turtles, and Wasabi Mighty Eagles—making them the largest team at the festival.

This success would not be possible without the unwavering support of our volunteer community paddlers and support members. Their dedication and contributions are invaluable to the Special Dragons' journey and achievements.

### Water Dragons

Everyone remembers who brought them into dragon boating. That's the person we shake our fists at and curse for introducing us to this world; a world where we spend hours commuting to the water, a mortgage-payment worth of money on parking, and one which causes us to pour ourselves into our cars, water dripping off our noses and running down our backs. It's also the person we thank for bringing us into the fold of this amazing sport; one where age, gender, and weight, are far less important than attitude, effort and heart. 11

Our group ranges from young 30s to 80+ years young and each one brings a necessary ingredient to our recipe. Some of our team matriarchs have been paddling for almost two decades! We are a "motley crew" sort of team that feels more like a feisty family reunion than a group of once-was-strangers. This unlikely group of friends and athletes has been banding together over the past 20+ years, finishing some seasons with heavy hearts and others with heavy medals.

Over those 20 years, the team has found their own story, their own values, and their own vision. We lead with ridiculous jokes and encourage growth through supportive words and patience. Teammates help each other improve and celebrate the growth and success of each other.



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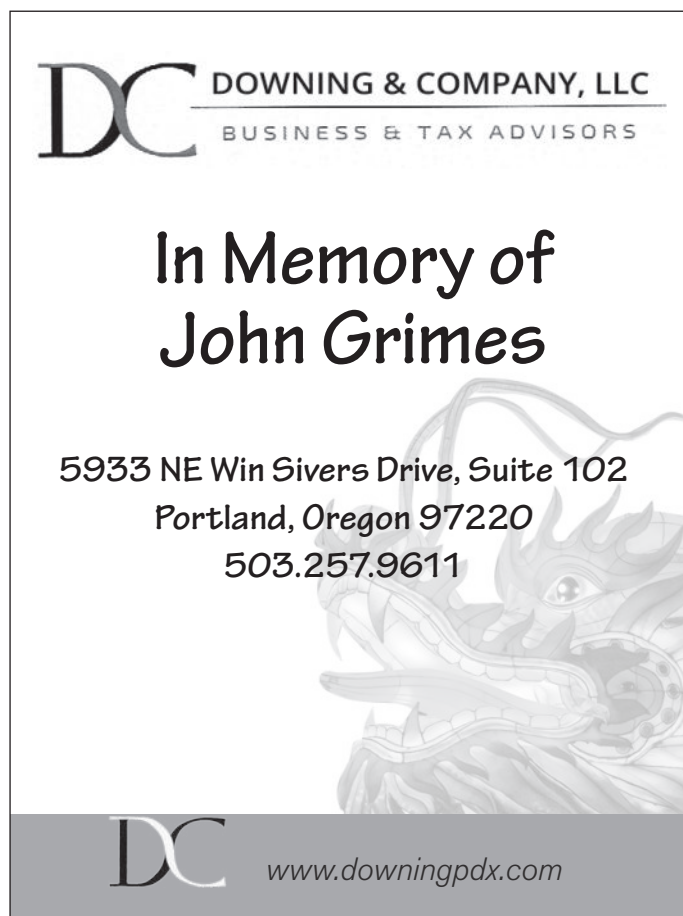
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When we do have an opening in the boat, it's both very easy and very hard to fill that spot. It's not enough to find a great paddler or a tall, strong person; it's about who that person is. Will they fit in? Will they deliver not only a commitment to the team and give their best effort, every day with every single stroke – but will they be delightful? Will they be the kind of person that people love to sit cheek to cheek with on the boat? Will they cheer from the shore when they sit out a race? Will they delight in every success and forgive every shortcoming? If the answer is “yes” they just might have what it takes to be a Portland Water Dragon. And if they are lucky enough to be invited to the team, they will always remember who invited them into this amazing sport with this amazing family. May everyone find a team that fits as well as the Portland Water Dragons. See you next year; you know you'll be back.

### **Willamette Wave Riders**

An eclectic team of paddlers, the Willamette Wave Riders reconvene every spring to perfect their unique way of riding the waves. A welcoming mix of veterans and newbies, the Wave Riders love to laugh as they cruise under the bridges looking for eagles, seals, and the occasional mermaid from the awesome vantage point of a dragon boat. We are excited to be sponsored this year by Get Control ([www.getcontrol.com](http://www.getcontrol.com)). #paddles up.

### **ZGF ARK-O-TEKS**

The ZGF ARK-O-TEKS have been proudly paddling the waters of the Willamette River since 1989, blending tradition with a relentless drive to excel. Sponsored by ZGF Architects LLP, our team unites a diverse group of paddlers—Architects, Designers, Programmers, Engineers, Marketers, Botanical Enthusiasts, and friends from all walks of life—brought together by a shared love for the water and the sport of dragon boating.

After an unprecedented 2024 season, where we paddled to victory in every open division race, the ARK-O-TEKS are fired up to defend our title in 2025! Guided by our beloved mascot, PUMML—the Purple Unicorn of Magical Love—we're channeling our unity, enthusiasm, and competitive fire into every practice and every race. On the water, we move as one—long, strong, and synchronized. Beyond the finish line, you'll find us celebrating life, building friendships, and, of course, shaking it out with the Hokey Pokey in true ARK-O-TEKS style.

As a team, we paddle not just for the titles, but for the love of the journey, the celebration of teamwork, and the drive to reach new heights together. This year, the ZGF ARK-O-TEKS are ready to dig deeper, cheer louder, and chase another unforgettable season of magic on the river. Here's to unstoppable spirit, incredible memories, and bringing it all home once again!

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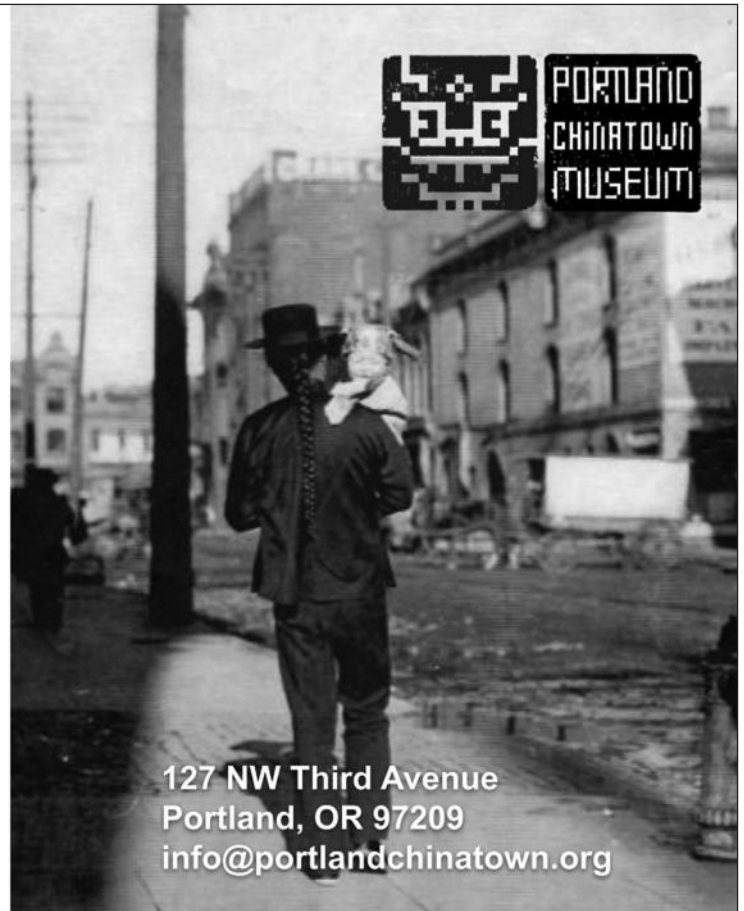
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