



## **BULLETIN #2**

**May 8, 2009**

*Introducing...  
The  
Steering  
Committee*



[www.survivorsabreast.com](http://www.survivorsabreast.com)

Hi everybody!

We are really busy here in Peterborough getting ready for 2010. Meetings, meetings and more meetings! Many dedicated volunteers have come to the table with fabulous ideas and things are really starting to take shape.

We'd like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves. We are the members of the Steering Committee – Joan Bates, Meredith Cosburn, Carol Mutton and Darlene Prager.



**Joan Bates**

This year Survivors Abreast is celebrating our tenth anniversary. I was a founding director for the team, later the team captain and recently have been installed as the team president. It is a privilege, an honour and a great deal of responsibility to represent this wonderful and diverse team of 40 breast cancer survivors.

I am a 15-year survivor. Who knew that a diagnosis of breast cancer could have led me into the exciting world of dragon boating and introduced me to hundreds of kindred survivor sisters around the world? My father always taught me that every cloud has a silver lining and boy, was he right!

I have raced in many venues in Ontario and in Halifax and Vancouver with Survivors Abreast. As a member of the Canadian Abreast team, I have raced in Auckland and Wellington, New Zealand, New York and Caloundra, Australia. All of these experiences have been powerful. Survivors pool their energy and emotions and everyone “flies” in the dragon boat. We have our priorities straight!

I have a wonderful husband, Clare, who is always my first line of support. We have two married sons. Chris and his wife Angela live in Red Deer Alberta with our two grand-cats. Brian and his wife Rebecca, live near Pittsburg, Pennsylvania with our darling granddaughters Hannah and Grace and a third one due in August. Our youngest child, Melodie, who lives in Africa, will be coming home to be married on June 6th so we really are very busy this season.

I recently retired from teaching high school history and I do miss my colleagues, my students and the learning experience I gained every day with them. However, curling, golfing, dragon boating and music seem to fill the time well and did I mention all those meetings?

I'm looking forward to meeting all of you, old friends and new, here in Peterborough in June 2010. Paddles up everybody – Carpe Diem, Seize the Day!

INTERNATIONAL  
**Dragon Boat Festival 2010**  
PETERBOROUGH · CANADA

for  
Breast Cancer  
Survivors



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### **Meredith Cosburn**

Paddles Up! Here's a bit about me.

I'm married to Larry Cosburn, owner of Cosburn's Hobby Depot, a Mustang and a Goldwing motorcycle. He is a great supporter of our team and is working on the land committee for the 2010 event. You may see our married daughter, Catherine, and her husband helping to organize the servers

for the gala dinner. Our son, David Pitts, his wife Jennifer and their two sons 8 year-old Eric and 10 year-old Graham (I refer to them as my "doodles") live close by in Peterborough. We have two furry felines residing with us, Harry and Callie, and yes, the female is the boss.

I retired in 2006 after 28 years as an office worker and supervisor with Liberty Mutual and enjoy traveling with Larry to wonderful places and touring on our motorcycle. I spend two mornings a week at the Health and Fitness Centre doing Aqua Fit, and another morning having coffee with friends. I am on call to care for the "doodles" if their parents' work-hours conflict. As the "doodles" are both hockey players, I try to get to their games but 7:00 a.m. is much too early for Grandma and Grandpa. They also play soccer and lacrosse so our spare time is spent cheering them on. I think that's why people retire, to enjoy the grandchildren!

I was diagnosed with breast cancer in March 1998. Thankfully, all is good so far. I participate in a family study with Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto and they check me every two years. I find it interesting that even though breast cancer doesn't run in my family, there are many cases of other kinds of cancer in our family.

Besides helping to plan for 2010, as founder of Peterborough's annual dragon boat festival, I also continue to enjoy being one of the organizers. We sure are proud of this community event, which has been a successful fundraiser for our hospital's breast assessment centre, raising more than \$1,300,000 since 2001.

Like all the rest of the team and the Peterborough community, I am very excited about seeing you arrive in June 2010 and look forward to putting on the best event possible. Hope you enjoy every minute of it and leave with the warmest of memories.

See you in 2010.

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### **Carol Mutton**

Welcome to 2010!

I am married to Wayne, a retired former writer with the Ontario Government and now free-lance writer, my chief cook, all-around handy man and number one supporter. He got me through my diagnosis in 1994 of inflammatory breast cancer, which is rare and aggressive. Yikes, and here

I am feeling great several years later! We have two grown children, Hayley (26) married last year and working as a paramedic, and Chris (30) working in film and television post-production. I'm waiting patiently for grand-children.

In my work world, I've spent 20 years in human resources for the Ontario Government, and am currently handling human rights complaints for government employees. I'm slated to retire by the end of 2009 and look forward to having more time to get ready for 2010!

I discovered Survivors Abreast in the spring of 2000 just in time to paddle with the team in our first race at Pickering. We were terrified and thrilled and left far, far, behind by one of our younger (mostly male) competitors, the Mayfair Predators.

That was the start of a wonderful adventure with a group of amazing women. Sadly, we've lost a few brave souls. We are from all walks of life but have lots in common, strength (including our opinions!), compassion and support for each other, and joy in survival and in paddling.

I've always been active in the community and enjoy helping to organize our local festival since its start in 2001. I was president of Survivors Abreast for two years and am now past president. My second volunteer passion is Hospice Peterborough and I'm now in my sixth and last year serving on the board, most recently as past president.

That's it for me. I just entered a new world – Facebook – and there's more than you'd ever want to know in my profile.

I can't wait for 2010 to happen. It will be such a blast for everyone and so wonderful for Peterborough.

See you on Little Lake.

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### **Darlene Prager**

Greetings from Peterborough!

I was born in Markham, Ontario and grew up in a small farming community. I met my husband Dave when I was fourteen and married him six years later and we've been together for 47 years with two grown children and two grandchildren.

After our children started school, I re-entered the work force, selling real estate for a several years then entered the world of advertising as a national field director responsible for national projects and beyond. Although it was challenging with long hours and lots of trips away from home, I actually looked forward to going to work each day until...

In 1987, as the result of a ruptured brain aneurysm, my life as I knew it came to a screeching halt. My short-term memory was gone and my long-term wasn't much better. At times my world became a frightening place, but with the support, love and care of my husband Dave and children, Laurie and Shane, my life gradually returned to normal.

In 1998, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. This time a whole new world opened up to me – dragon boating! In 1999, I met Meredith Cosburn, who wanted to start a breast cancer dragon boat team in Peterborough. I readily joined in and was one of the founding members of Survivors Abreast, the start of my dragon boat experience.

In 2002, I decided I wanted to attend a breast cancer race in Auckland, New Zealand. Not having a travel mate, I emailed teams across Canada, asking for travel companions and got replies from 67. That was the beginning of Canadians Abreast. Since then I have been to USA, South Africa, Germany, Singapore, Australia and many festivals in Ontario and beyond.

I've also competed in the Yukon River Quest, the world's longest marathon Canoe and Kayak race, paddling 746km in the vast wilderness of Northern Canada, from Whitehorse to Dawson City. This was the longest, hardest, and most amazing paddle of my life.

My life has been a wonderful journey, overcoming obstacles, experiencing new and exciting things, and making new friends, worldwide.

Now, I can hardly wait to reunite and meet new "pink sisters and brothers" when you come to Peterborough in 2010.

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Now you know a little bit about us.  
Watch for the next bulletin as we keep you informed!

**The Steering Committee**  
*International Dragon Boat Festival 2010*