

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Aug. 6, 2017**

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**EVENT DATE:** Saturday, Aug. 12, 2017

8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**EVENT LOCATION:** Wendy Park, Whiskey Island

*CLEVELAND:* The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Cleveland Dragon Boat Festival, with 14 ferocious teams battling it out on Lake Erie, is coming soon.

The festival features teams of 20 paddlers working in sync to power their dragon-headed, 40-foot boats forward in three, 250-meter heats. The fastest teams then face off in championship heats at the end of the day.

Our opening ceremonies begin at 8:30 a.m. with the awakening of the dragons and the blessing of the boats by Buddhist Rev. Shih Ying-Fa. The races begin at 9 a.m.

Admission is free. There will be music throughout the day. The Yume Daiko Taiko Drumming group will perform at noon.

Dragon boating is a 2000-year-old sport that originated in China and has remained immensely popular in Asian countries ever since. In the last two decades, it has grown throughout the world, and especially in the United States.

Each dragon boat festival includes a breast cancer survivor division. BCS teams are an integral part of dragon boating everywhere.

The Cleveland Dragon Boat Association is a 501c3, non-profit organization that promotes the sport and all it offers: great exercise, teamwork, camaraderie, openness and accessibility to all, and the chance to participate in the recreational activities on the Cuyahoga River (where our teams practice) and Lake Erie. The CDBA is an affiliate of the Cleveland Metroparks.

A significant portion of the proceeds from the festival are donated to local charities, especially The Gathering Place, a non-profit organization providing free support services to those touched by cancer.

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