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For Immediate Release

New Twist to Local Dragon Boat Festival

The Belleville Dragon Boat Club is pleased to announce their new partnership with United Way of Quinte. Together the 2 local organizations will host a Dragon Boat Challenge on July 7, 2007 at Victoria Park in Belleville. This year will be the first time locally that the challenge is held outside of Waterfront Weekend; and is also the first time that it's being held in support of a charity.

BPC Commodore Nancy Lewis explained, "United Way was a natural choice for our club, given the number of agencies they support in the community. And with their fundraising skills, organizational integrity and community connections, UWQ has a lot to bring to this partnership too." UWQ Executive Director, Julia Gosson stated, "We're extremely honoured to have been selected as the charity of choice for this festival and look forward to the successes we will enjoy together."

The one day event will feature both local community and corporate crews as well as those from out of town in the competitive division. BPC Event Planner Pat Bradley indicated, "this festival has been selected as a qualifier for the National Championships which should generate interest from outside the city and raise the bar in terms of the quality of racing we enjoy." Each team is guaranteed 3 races and all participants will receive a medal and souvenir package. The park will feature a children's village, food and clothing vendors, a beer tent and the band The Far Side will be providing the entertainment.

Dragon boating is the fastest growing water sport in the world and no experience is necessary. Local crews will receive 3 training sessions and the use of all of the required equipment in return for their \$450 registration fee. The 250m races take approximately 2.5 minutes to complete for the 20 member crew. Each participant is being asked to collect \$50 in pledges for United Way of Quinte. All funds raised will support their 2007 campaign which will in turn be allocated to more than 50 local health and social service agencies throughout Hastings and Prince Edward counties.

With the hope of attracting 50 teams to their festival, event planners will be able to run many different challenge races and cups within different fields. Some examples include the Bankers Cup, a Public Service Cup, as well as past favourites like the Police Cup which is currently held by the Ottawa Police Services.

Sponsorship opportunities are available at many different price levels. For further information about how to register a team or provide corporate/financial support to the event, please call Lisa Robichaud at 613-962-9531 or visit either organization's website at www.belleville.unitedway.ca or www.bellevilledragonboatclub.com