



## Wellness Warriors is going to Worlds!

Wellness Warriors, New England's first dragon boat club comprised of all-cancer survivors, is facing a serious challenge just as it's preparing to compete against other survivor athletes in the 12th International Dragon Boat Federation World Cup Championships in France next summer.

Just one of eight US all-cancer survivor teams selected to race in this prestigious competition, Wellness Warriors loses its practice site at the most inopportune moment. After more than a decade practicing out of MIT's Harold W. Pierce Boathouse, MIT's planned renovation of the facility leaves this club of cancer survivors struggling to find a new permanent site to continue its floating support group.

*"We have had an incredible home at MIT's boathouse where cancer survivors paddle to wellness on the Charles River under the glow of summer sunsets. Unfortunately with the upcoming renovations, Wellness Warriors needs to find a new permanent practice site so our cancer survivors can continue to heal and prepare to compete."*

*says Dr. Erica Bernstein, a member of the team and of the Board of Directors.*



*Dragon boats are 40 feet long and weigh about 2250 kg fully loaded with 20 paddlers, a drummer, and a steerer.*

**WELLNESS WARRIORS** includes police officers, teachers, nurses, musicians, artists, veterans, volunteers, and retirees.

“We are the young mother of a child with special needs, a physician-researcher with a promising career cut short, a chef, a television producer, a psychologist, a veterinarian, a physical therapist, a university program manager, a Girl Scout troop leader. We are men and women of all ages who are surviving all types of cancers,” the group says in a news release.

Unfortunately, Wellness Warriors is paddling upstream towards the Club Crew World Championships since losing their practice site for 2020. We have been looking for a practice site for our paddling support group for a year and have not found a suitable permanent solution. Mooring space in the Greater Boston region is tight and while we have had good friends sacrifice to share their space, Wellness Warriors still needs a mooring spot that will allow for easy dock access to our cancer survivors for water practice May through September. We are grateful to MGH who has helped us moor temporarily off of Nashua St. However we are still in need of a more permanent location for all our cancer survivors to paddle to wellness and for our most competitive survivor athletes to prepare for Worlds.



*Celebrating gold at qualifier for World Championships*

## **WHY DRAGON BOATING?**

Dragon boating is a full-body sport that emphasizes communal strength, endurance and synchronization. For cancer survivors, it is a way to recover strength and regain physical confidence after treatment while bonding with other survivors. Wellness Warriors shows people touched by cancer that there is much life to live after diagnosis, giving hope and inspiration for the future.

*“Wellness Warriors, our floating support group, has allowed us to thrive.  
Our collective strength led to winning a berth in the 2020 world championship races.”*

*says Dr. Bernstein*

## **HOW TO SEE WELLNESS WARRIORS IN ACTION!**

Wellness Warriors seeks to help all cancer survivors find their inner athlete, whether or not they choose to race. For those who thrive on competition, the team competes on and off the water year-round. Wellness Warriors took home the gold at the ACS and Masters Women's races at the Boston Indoor Erg Race (BIER) on February 8th. We are training for our next indoor race at the 5th Annual Beasts from the East at Atlantic Wharf on February 22nd, 2020. Winter training is an important part of the team's continued thriving and strengthening off the water in preparation for the new season of competition. The first water race of the 2020 season will be in June at the Boston Dragon Boat Festival. This season Wellness Warriors survivor athletes have much to work toward with the upcoming Club Crew World Championships.



*Cancer Steals, Paddling Heals*

## **ABOUT WELLNESS WARRIORS**

Wellness Warriors has been New England's only all cancer survivor paddling support group since 2007. Initially a program of the Wellness Community, which provided survivorship programs free of charge to all touched by cancer, Wellness Warriors weathered the sudden loss of the Wellness Community in 2008 and became its own non-profit serving the greater Boston area. Wellness Warriors encourages people of all ages, any gender, all strengths and abilities to live their best life possible after cancer through dragon boating. Our mission is to provide new opportunities for cancer survivors to heal – both physically and emotionally – by being active participants in their own recovery and part of a mutually empowering dragon boat club. Wellness Warriors was featured by Hua+TV and the Asian Cultural Center during our 10th anniversary celebration ([vimeo.com/239282050](https://vimeo.com/239282050)). The "Wellness Guide for Cancer Survivors" co-produced by the Massachusetts Cancer Prevention and Control Network and the Mass Department of Public Health includes a video ([youtu.be/gIouisOal\\_g](https://youtu.be/gIouisOal_g)) about Wellness Warriors. Interested cancer survivors, volunteers, or sponsors can find us at [www.wellnesswarriorsboston.org](http://www.wellnesswarriorsboston.org) and follow us on **FB** and **Twitter**: @WWBostonDB or Instagram: [wwbostondb](https://www.instagram.com/wwbostondb)

Contact: Erica Bernstein, Board of Directors at [erica@wellnesswarriorsboston.org](mailto:erica@wellnesswarriorsboston.org)



**Watch us in action:** [youtu.be/Qcuj38OfCys](https://youtu.be/Qcuj38OfCys)

**Learn more about Wellness Warriors:** [www.wellnesswarriorsboston.org](http://www.wellnesswarriorsboston.org)

**Support our path to Worlds:** [www.wellnesswarriorsboston.org/support-worlds](http://www.wellnesswarriorsboston.org/support-worlds)

