



**For Immediate Release**

## **North America's Largest Dragon Boat Festival Marks 14<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Mooney's Bay**

**[Ottawa, Ontario – April, 2007]** The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Nortel Ottawa Dragon Boat Race Festival brings a weekend of fun and fundraising to Mooney's Bay June 23-24, 2007 to celebrate Chinese cultural tradition and support local charities.

Dragon Boat Racing has grown to become one of the hottest sporting events in the Nation's Capital and today the Nortel Ottawa Dragon Boat Race Festival is the largest of its kind in North America. What began in 1993 with the assistance of the Hong Kong Canada Business Association as a small half a day event with only 25 teams competing has grown to become a 3-day sell-out event with 190 teams registered, 60, 000 spectators expected and a \$250, 000 fundraising target.

Originally launched primarily as a vehicle to promote Chinese culture, the NODBF grew rapidly bringing thousands of people together from around the community and country. Organizers decided to leverage this success to make community support part of the mandate. In 1998, the "Pledge Challenge" was instituted and to date paddlers have raised \$1,000,000 for local charities. In 2007 proceeds from the event will benefit the Ottawa Senators Foundation / Rogers House, Centretown Laundry Co-op, Special Olympics Ontario Ottawa District and junior Achievement of Eastern Ontario.

With additional funding this year, the NODBF is able to offer a better experience for both participants and spectators looking for outdoor family fun. The entertainment stage in the Royal Oak Beer Garden will host a number of live performers including the Mighty Popo, the Skydiggers, and Jeff Healey and the Jazz Wizards. The Tim Horton's Kids Zone will offer fun and exciting activities including Little Ray's Reptiles and Mad Science. Also on site multiple food vendors and exhibitors will provide crowds with ample opportunities to eat drink and shop for interesting items. A complete list of event day activities can be found at [www.dragonboat.net](http://www.dragonboat.net).

Event Hours: Opening Ceremonies begin on Saturday June 23<sup>rd</sup> at 12:30 pm,

Parking on site at Mooney's Bay is extremely limited but Free Parking is available at: Canada Post Headquarters - 2701 Riverside Dr., and Carleton Parking lot 7 Anniversary Park located at the just off Bronson Ave at the north east corner of Carleton University. A complimentary shuttle bus will run every 15 minutes Saturday from 7AM - 7PM, and Sunday from 8AM - 5PM from the Rideau Centre/Mackenzie King Bridge Upper Deck, with stops at Metcalfe & Albert, Bronson & Somerset and Carleton University Lot 7 (Bronson and University). On festival weekend visit [OC Transpo.com](http://OC Transpo.com) for schedule.

**About Nortel Ottawa Dragon Boat Race Festival**

The Nortel Ottawa Dragon Boat Race Festival began in 1993 as part of a larger Chinese cultural tradition that goes back 2,400 years. With assistance from the Hong Kong Canada Business Association it started small with only 25 participating teams over a half day event. By 2006, the sport had grown to 190 teams participating in both the corporate and community categories over two days, making the Nortel Ottawa Dragon Boat Race Festival the largest Dragon Boat Festival in North America. In 1998, a charitable component was added to the Festival raising funds for 4 local charities on an annual basis. To date \$1,000,000 has been raised through the "Pledge Challenge" and the Ottawa Dragon Boat Foundation has since been established to help focus and grow this necessary component.

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