
RVCA News Release

Ottawa's Dragon Boats Go Carbon Neutral!

MANOTICK, APRIL 29, 2005 —This year's edition of the Nortel Ottawa Dragon Boat Race Festival will be a breath of fresh air in more ways than one. Thanks to the community-minded Richcraft Group of Companies, almost 2,300 new young trees will be planted to offset the amount of carbon dioxide generated because of the Dragon Boat Festival. As a result, the 2005 Dragon Boat Races have received the official "Carbon Neutral Event" status, the first festival of any kind in the country to achieve this designation.

The Dragon Boat Festival has become an annual summer tradition on Mooneys Bay over the past eleven years. It combines the excitement and competition of the dragon boats with multi-cultural food and entertainment, community spirit and charitable fundraising. This year's event runs on June 25 and 26.

According to the Carbon Offset Report prepared by the Tree Canada Foundation which manages Canada's Carbon Neutral Program, the festival is responsible for approximately 364 tonnes of carbon being released into the atmosphere as a result of festival activities. To compensate for that much carbon, 2,287 trees must be planted. These new trees will absorb carbon from the atmosphere as they grow. Tree planting such as this counts as one way to offset greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol.

A very generous gift by the Richcraft Group of Companies has assured that the planting will be done in the spring of 2006 thus giving the Ottawa Dragon Boats the enviable title of first festival in Canada to go carbon neutral. The trees will be planted by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority on abandoned and marginal farmlands upstream of the festival site in the Rideau Valley watershed.

Adam Thompson, Director of Development at Richcraft, said "We are very pleased to be associated with this unique community festival through the planting of trees. Our business and that of the Festival is all about building and supporting the rich and vibrant quality of life in the Ottawa region. We are honoured to be a part of it all."

"We welcome the participation of the Richcraft Group of Companies in helping us achieve Carbon Neutral Event status in 2005. We are delighted to expand the influence of the Dragon Boats to include good long term environmental work and community benefits through cleaner air" added Festival Chair Richard Quigley.

For more information on paddling, pledging, volunteering, visiting and enjoying the 2005 Ottawa Dragon Boat Race Festival, please visit www.dragonboat.net <<http://www.dragonboats.net/>> .

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