

DRAGON BOAT RACES COMING TO MEMPHIS

Nothing says team building like working with 19 other people to paddle a boat.

That's the focus behind the Duncan-Williams Dragon Boat Races, scheduled for Sept. 24 at Mud Island River Park.

Dragon boats, which measure 46 feet in length, are traditional long boats that have been used in Asia, Africa and the Pacific islands for more than 2,000 years. They are designed to be powered by 20 paddlers who sit two abreast facing the bow where a drummer keeps the cadence of the strokes. Another paddler is at the stern. The races, which became an international competition in 1976, are now incorporated into team-building and fundraising events around the world.

Produced by Knoxville-based Dynamic Dragon Boat Racing LLC, organizers hope the Memphis event will attract about 30 teams and raise \$75,000 for the Tennessee Clean Water Network, says Penny Behling, Dynamic Dragon Boat Racing's owner.

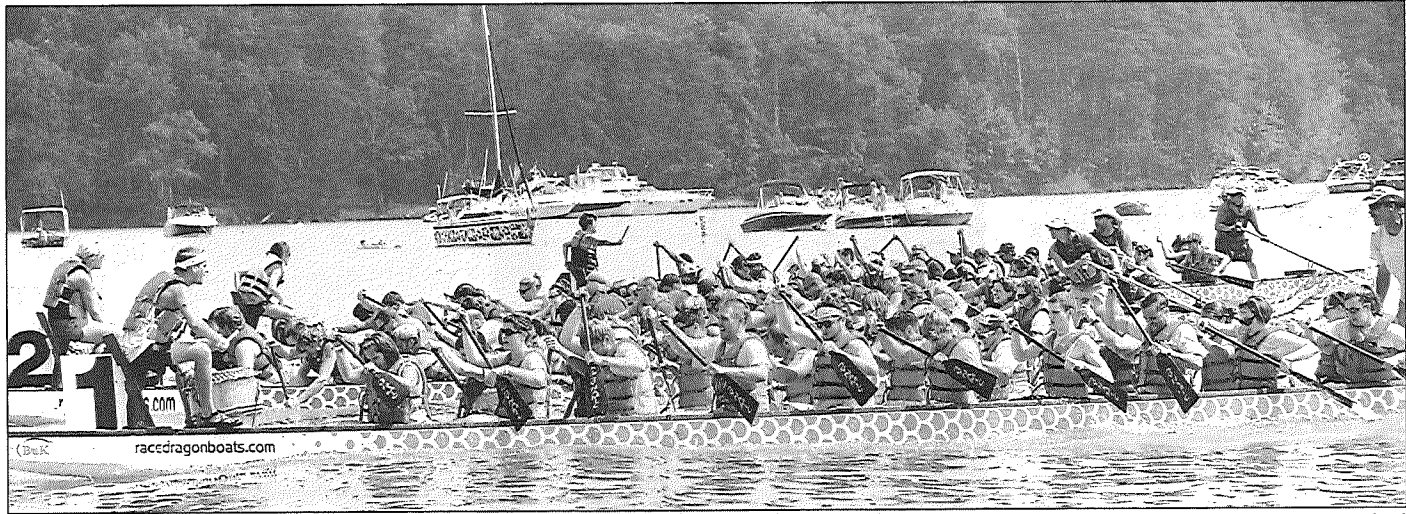
Duncan-Williams signed on as a sponsor and team after being introduced to the event. Other corporate sponsors include First Tennessee Foundation, Outdoors Inc. and Riverfront Development Corp. Team registration began April 1.

For more information, go to memphis.racedragonboats.com

PROPOSED BILL COULD BOOST SMALL BREWERIES

Proposed federal legislation could help smaller breweries by reducing federal excise taxes 50 percent on the first 60,000 barrels they produce, from \$7 a barrel to \$3.50.

The legislation would drop the tax rate from \$18 to \$16 per barrel for annual production of 60,000 barrels to



COURTESY DYNAMIC DRAGON BOAT RACING LLC

Dragon boat competition features teams of 20 paddlers powering 46-foot-long boats. A Memphis event is set for Sept. 24.

2 million barrels. It is estimated that small brewers that produce less than 6 million barrels per year employ 100,000 people nationwide.

Bob Pease, COO of the Brewers Association, a national trade organization, has been in Washington, D.C., lobbying legislators and says the legislation will help smaller brewers get their doors open and brewing.

"Our support was very bipartisan in nature, which was uncharacteristic of the last Congress," he says.

Pease says the bill is "not a beer bill, but a small business bill."

Chuck Skyeck, founding partner of Roma Pomodori Inc., parent company of Boscos Brewing Co. and Ghost River Brewing Co., has visited with members of the Tennessee House and Senate to gain support for the bill.

"Small brewers are one of the few small businesses in the United States that pays a federal excise tax on a

product that they produce," he says. "The immediate benefit of this bill would allow us to invest more in both additional equipment to produce more beer and, more importantly, hire more employees."

ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS OPENING

Thanks to a group of local engineers, Engineers Without Borders is opening a Memphis chapter this month.

A meeting to elect officers and establish bylaws will be April 15 at the University of Memphis' engineering building at 1 p.m.

The group was launched in 2002 by a University of Colorado engineering professor who worked with students to bring running water to a small village in Belize. The organization has more than 12,000 members now and is working on 350 projects in 45 developing countries.

A student chapter was launched

by Meg Wade, an engineer with SSR Ellers, while she was a student at the University of Memphis. But the student chapter needed an affiliation with a professional chapter to work on projects, so Wade collaborated with colleagues Sam Leimer and Andy Kizzee to create that professional chapter.

The Memphis chapter is the third in Tennessee, joining Nashville and Chattanooga.

Most Engineers Without Borders projects focus on water issues, either supplying clean water or designing sanitary sewer systems. Members will be trained in hands-on projects such as mixing and laying cement. They must also be able to travel.

"We're open to anyone, and you don't have to be engineer," Leimer says. "You just have to be willing to travel and do hard work."

From staff reports