



Quarterly Newsletter

What's new?

This Newsletter! We have decided to resurrect the quarterly newsletter so that you, our members can enjoy hearing about what's happening at BCA Ottawa and in our community. Any questions or comments can be directed to ML, our Executive Director at ed.bca@bcaott.ca or by calling her directly at 613-818-8854.

As many of you know her name is Marie-Louise, but her nickname is ML. Her Mom called her that because she said she moved so fast that's all she had time to get out. So please, call her ML.

ML will be putting out a call for articles for "The Member Corner". This corner is there for you to share your story, ideas, experiences and even jokes if you like. BCA Ottawa provides the forum to its members and does not take a stance on any content. We cannot identify names or address of individuals. As a registered charity, we are limited in our advocacy role. This corner is there for you to read and maybe contemplate.

From the Executive Director: What's new, What's Happening

Since I started at the end of May, I have been very busy getting to know the organization and the membership. It became apparent to me that we needed to save money, and to do that, shutting down the physical office and any costly long-term contracts was the best way to go! In doing this, we have lowered our overhead costs considerably to ensure as much goes into program development and support as possible. I also automated some of our internal processes. Going into 2019 we are down to one staff member, me. So, I do ask for your patience as we continue to move forward in 2019.

This move has made us more attractive when applying for grants, and for 3rd party fundraisers. Although you need administrative budgets to pay the staff to support the programs, no one really wants to see their funds go to that resource. They want to see that we are trying to be as self-sustaining as possible via our membership fees and BCA fundraising led events. This is why we shifted to an annual membership renewal date of December 1 every year. It is easier to track, maintain and administer. A very big thank you to all of you who renewed. We now have 244 members. But we need more, so you'll see different initiatives coming out over the next few months.

The membership drive allowed me to speak with many of you, almost all of you, I think. I do hope I get to meet you throughout the year at our events.

The Annual Member Satisfaction Survey

As we move forward with our reboot and now that we have confirmed your membership we want to get your feedback and ideas about being a member and how you'd like to see our programs develop over the coming year. Please complete the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BW6Y3MF> by February 22nd. Enter your name in a draw to win a 1-year free membership and complimentary ticket to our gala.

The Member's Corner

Reflecting on thoughts from Andrea written in 2015.

In this first BCA newsletter inyears, we thought we'd turn the Member's Corner over to Board member Andrea Douglas. After rereading her words from almost 4 years ago, she felt they were still relevant today:

By Andrea Douglas written in April 2015

Chances are if you are reading this newsletter, then you have been where I have been, or you may be following along behind me. I really don't like the word journey. But what else can we call it? It's not walk in the park. It's more like a marathon of endurance. Enduring emotional upheaval, pain and fear. A marathon is something someone chooses to do. Breast cancer isn't a choice. I remember sitting in the Women's Breast Health Centre pre-op session just 10 months ago. I was terrified and I didn't know where to turn. After my initial diagnosis was delivered by my GP, I spent 5 days in emotional hell until I met with my surgeon. My only thought was that "invasive" ductal carcinoma meant my entire body had been invaded by cancer. There has to be a better way to deliver a message. I want to help find that way. I now know BCA could have helped me with that. If only I had figured it out sooner. My first experience with BCA was finding the FIT and FAB fitness program. When I registered I couldn't even dream of doing a leg raise, let alone a jumping jack.

I started slowly enough. Every time I went to a class, I felt a huge sense of accomplishment. I felt a little bit stronger, a little more confident. All around me were other women who have felt what I was feeling. Some had hair, some didn't some, had two breasts, one, or none at all. No one judged. Everyone welcomed. I huffed and puffed and sweated under my head scarf. But the exercising empowered me, energized me and made me more strong. All around me were smiles. And that is an important part of healing emotionally too.

I was recently asked to become a board member of BCA. I said yes immediately. If BCA can be thought of as a net for the diagnosed, I want to be part of the net. I want to make that net stronger. It's important for me

in my own healing process to be able to help, to make a difference, to feel that I have contributed positively. I want to be a part of making BCA become the 911 of breast cancer for women in the Ottawa area.

BCA's grassroots message is "Because no one should face it alone". Truer words were never spoken. When one in eight of us faces this diagnosis, it's a pretty big picture issue. But when you first learn what you are facing, it feels like it's only happening to you. I spoke recently with a well-respected educator in our community who has faced multiple cancer and health challenges. Rarely have I met anyone with more zest and energy for life and living. And his words will stay with me. He said: "At first I said 'why me'? But then I turned it around and said 'why not me'? And he took control. And so will I.

We have come much further and realized that feeling alone makes a diagnosis even harder. Hence our new tag line which is a promise to new members "Meeting People Wherever They Are." Cindy, Director, Communications.

From the Board: What's Up

The Board has shifted into its infrastructure model and has started to create its action plans that will best support the strategic plan for the organization.

From the President's desk

- Look for new events and initiatives that will ensure BCA Ottawa's viability. All that can be said right now is "Stay tuned, 'cause it's gonna be great!".

From the Director, Financial Planning

- Currently a review of BCA's financial reality is underway. Steps to help us grow will follow.

From the Director, Revenue Generation

- Currently, the sponsorship prospectus and goals are being reviewed as an Algonquin College Project, led by Michelle Beaupre.
- We are also looking at new Donor Categories.

From the Director, Membership and Stakeholder Engagement

- We have reviewed the current membership model and will be adding new levels to encourage, family, corporate and legacy categories.
- The findings of the membership survey will be summarized in the next Newsletter.

From the Director, Program Support and Development

- We are looking into adding additional types of fitness to our existing health and wellness program.
- We will be offering a summer fitness program for the first time ever this year!
- We are looking into possible partnerships to create a metastatic cancer program.

From the Director, Communications

- A full review of messaging, branding and communication strategies is well underway.
- Continued website enhancement is also moving forward.

Want to give back to BCA? We'd love for you to join the Board

We are currently recruiting for the following positions:

1. Director, Event Innovation
2. Governance and Succession Planning
3. Director, Volunteer Engagement and Retention

Job Descriptions are found here: <https://bcaott.ca/board-responsibilities/>

BCA and Community Events

NGMHL Winter Classic:

The date is set for the 2019 NGMHL Winter Classic in Support of Breast Cancer Action Ottawa. The game is happening on Saturday, February 23rd at Combermere Outdoor Rink at 2:30 pm.

This is a family friendly community event so come out with loved ones to help us raise money



Volunteer Corner



Volunteers of the Month:

Special thanks for **Marie Hepner** for always answering the call to make and deliver the hearts for our Heart Filled Pillows Project. We couldn't make this project happen without her.

Special thanks to **Jackie Rawles** who year after year sponsors the décor for the Annual Gala. She designs the décor to match the theme as set by the Board and brings her own volunteers on the day of the gala to do the set up and tear down.

Call for Volunteers

The Heart Filled Project - As many of you know, BCA Ottawa gives newly diagnosed breast cancer patients a heart shaped pillow to help them in their recovery. The stores that are involved in handing out BCA Ottawa bookmarks to their newly diagnosed clientele are asking for more pillows. Our dedicated volunteers have been bringing me pillows that they have sewn with care, but we need them to be stuffed and sewn up to be able to hand them out. We are calling out to BCA members to help with the pillow stuffing. You can either come out to ML's home and have a good old-fashioned sewing bee, you can pick them up from her, or we can have some delivered to you. BCA Ottawa will provide the stuffing. Please email ML at ed.bca@bcaott.ca or call her at 613-818-8854.

Program News

Health & Wellness Program

confirmed their availability and ML is working with existing and new venues. Stay tuned!

Busting Out Program

Deep in the throes of winter is a great time to look back and reflect upon the past paddling season. 2018 was a big one, too, as it marked Busting Out's 20th Anniversary as a Breast Cancer Survivor Dragonboat crew. We were among the first 4 Canadian teams to start up (both Hamilton and Ottawa started up that same season, shortly after Toronto and the original crew from Vancouver's Abreast in a Boat). And look where Breast Cancer Dragonboating is now- 221 teams from 25 countries around the world, and growing.

Here's a look at our past year...

We began the season with a 20th Anniversary Celebration Tea, a wonderful reunion of paddlers from over our 20 years. Special guests included some of the founding members, as well as Mayor Watson. The afternoon featured a slide show spanning the years, a memorabilia display, and homemade sandwiches and desserts served on the finest china. On the water we were lead by our beloved coach, Diana Deek. She put us through our paces all season, preparing us for four competitions over the summer- the Ottawa Festival, the Arnprior Festival, the Rideau Canoe Club Festival and the Stratford Four paddlers teamed up with the Toronto and Arnprior teams and travelled to Florence, Italy, in July to participate in the 2018 International Breast Cancer Paddling Commission's Participatory Festival. The Arno River, in addition to Florence's gorgeous architecture and rich history, provided an idyllic setting and the host city and team threw an exceptional welcome to paddlers from all over the world.

In August, we paddled our two boats through the Hartwell Locks towards downtown, through wind and waves on Dow's Lake, to our picnic destination at Paterson Creek. While we had planned it as one of our 20th Anniversary events, annual canal day trips will most likely become an annual tradition.

We finished the season off with an award winning cheering station for the Army Run. Clad in pink boas and with rehearsed cheers and catchy posters, we did such a great job encouraging the half and full-marathoners, that we were awarded a top prize by the organizers.

We now look ahead to getting back on the water in May. We are always looking for more paddlers, so if you think that you'd love spending summer evenings exercising on the water, with a gregarious group of paddlers, in a gorgeous part of the city, please feel free to reach out to us through BCA. There's always room in the boats for more, and no previous paddling experience is required!

Paddles up!



Our Partners!

I am constantly amazed at how many businesses come out of the woodwork to support BCA Ottawa. Starting off in 2019 3 local companies approached BCA to help by raising funds or giving discounts to our members. First up in 2019 are the following three locally owned companies who simply want to help.

CASH for TRASH

This business has adopted us as their charity of choice! Clients will be told they can donate their rebates to BCA Ottawa. We will have printed materials and a banner at their Merivale office. So, if you know anyone who wants to recycle scrap metal and vehicles and also help us out, send them to Cash for Trash!

<http://www.cashfortrashcanada.com/>



Pink Cleaners

Pink Cleaners, a newly opened “green” dry cleaners in the Orleans area has also adopted us as their charity of choice. Membership is complimentary for BCA members. This membership entitles you to 50% off of your dry cleaning. Give them a try and give to BCA Ottawa.



Spinning for Charity for BCA

Every Friday night spinning enthusiasts flock to Wheelhouse spin studio to do two special things – work out in a pumped up spinning class that helps distress participants and launches them into the weekend. And they give to charity.

Every Friday night at 6:30, Wheelhouse does a "Giv'er Ride". It's an initiative that has been with the popular spinning studio since they first opened. They charge \$10 cash donation (minimum – bigger donations accepted also!) for the ride and give 100% of the proceeds directly to a chosen organization for a three-month period. For instance, the current charity is The Special Olympics of Ottawa running from January to April!

In 2018, they raised over \$4000 for DIFD -their most successful campaign to date largely due to the support, commitment and participation of DIFD organizers, members and supporters. To ensure the success of a charity, they ask that representatives from the organization ride as often as possible during these Friday evenings and spread the word through as much social media as possible! ***The good news is that from April to July, every Friday night's ride will be a ride in support of BCA*** -- woo hoo! If you've never tried spinning now's the time. What more reason do you need? Spin, support BCA -- it doesn't get better than that. Please share far and wide!

Our Kudos Corner

This corner thanks those 3rd party independent fundraisers for their good work in 2019. BUT, because many have been asking, we did want to let you know that the 2018 Annual Gala yielded a profit of approximately \$32,000 after expenses.

Check out the video:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1n2bsRjmGk-5nsEKORcmsy5bUWtS9wh4d?usp=sharing>

Thanks to everyone that came out to support BCA Ottawa!

Our Board Members and Staff!

President:	Diane Hayes
Director, Financial Planning	Richard Bennett
Director, Revenue Generation	Adam Sarhan
Director, Membership Engagement and Stakeholder Engagement:	Andrea Douglas
Director, Program Support And Development:	Louise Haley
Director, Communications	Cindy Strugnell
Exe. Director:	Marie-Louise Doyle

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