



For Immediate Release

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New Event is Ready to Launch

A Dragon Boat Festival is approved for Banff National Park

Banff National Park, Alberta, Canada (April 30, 2008) – The first-ever Dragon Boat Festival for Banff National Park has been approved to glide the mystical waters of Lake Minnewanka on August 23 & 24, 2008. The non-motorized long-boat canoe race and festival activities are set to showcase National Park environmental stewardship through educational opportunities and an enhanced visitor experience.

A centuries-old race features four boats with teams of up to 20 paddlers in race heats of 200, 500 and 1000 metre stints. According to Andrea Thiessen, Director of Events and Special Projects, “group participants bring their competitive spirits to the lake and are required to build unity in an outdoor environment in order to successfully cross the finish line”. Specialty cup races will include Breast Cancer Survivors and Emergency Medical Services. Cultural festival activities and interpretation will add excitement to the downtown core of Banff, while a “Towards Zero Waste” strategy continues to demonstrate our leadership in low-impact special events.

“Hosting cultural events in Banff National Park provides a non-traditional way of engaging Canadians and educating them about the special and unique place that is located in their backyard” says Julie Canning, President and CEO of Banff Lake Louise Tourism. “We look forward to working collaboratively with Parks Canada, the Town of Banff, and the Alberta Dragon Boat Race Foundation on an integrated approach to running this exciting new event”.

Watch for summer adventure packages for hotels, activities and restaurants listed prior to the event on the homepage of www.banfflakelouise.com. For full details on The Dragon Boat Festival, visit www.banfflakelouise.com/dragonboat.

A Heritage Moment

Lake Minnewanka, originally called Devil’s Lake, was renamed in 1888 because it was believed the name was too ominous for visitors. Its new name is translated from the Stoney word ‘Minnee-wah-kah’, which means the “Lake of the Water Spirit”. In the late 1800’s, the lake was home to Minnewanka Landing, a popular resort community. When the lake was dammed, the reservoir submerged Minnewanka Landing and it has now become a popular location for cold water diving.

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About Banff Lake Louise Tourism

Banff Lake Louise Tourism is a destination marketing organization for the Town of Banff, Community of Lake Louise and Banff National Park. Supporting over 800 businesses, our mission is to engage visitors in unrivalled, remarkable experiences with our membership. For travel media inquiries, please contact Annik LaRoche at annik@banfflakelouise.com. www.banfflakelouise.com.