Meet the Tean CANADA'S BEST COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Tabitha Bleuler-Smith

Tabitha is a welcome new addition to the Oakville Beaver circulation team.

Growing up in Oakville, Tabitha attended White Oaks High School and is a graduate of Sheridan College. She married her highschool sweetheart, Jeremy also a long time Oakville resident.

As a faithful reader of the newspaper, Tabitha looks



2000 CCNA Better Newspapers Competition

forward to working with the community based paper she grew up with.

Tabitha's role as District Representative involves interacting with the Oakville Beaver carrier force and overseeing distribution of the newspaper, inserts and samples.





Lesley Scott, vice-president of the Knot a Breast Dragon Boat team, stands at the rear to steer the 40-foot boat.

By Wilma Blokhuis "Paddles Up!" The coach shouts her

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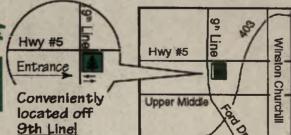
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Camaraderie and donations keep dragon boat team afloat

BEAVER FOCUS EDITOR

commands to an attentive dragon boat filled with breast cancer survivors. 'Paddles ready!'

The 20 paddlers sit upright in the 40-foot dragon boat, leaning slightly for-ward, with paddles held high, ready to plunge them into the water. They range in age from their early 30s to 70, with most of the members in their 40s and 50s.

"Paddle! Punch, punch, punch . . ten, nine, eight . the countdown begins, as the team members paddle in perfect unison, lurching their boat forward into a smooth

The continue to paddle in perfect synchronization to the beat of the drum, their heads going down as they push forward to put their whole backs into their paddling. One person stands at the back of the boat to steer.

They laugh about getting wet, and don't balk at having to bail water out of their long narrow boat.

It's all part of the cama-

raderie.

Meet Knot a Breast. The name was tossed around during a brainstorming session, says Lesley Scott, vice-president of the Knot a Breast Dragon Boat team who often stands at the

rear of the boat to steer it. Breast cancer has brought them together. If someone on the team is feeling down, they turn to their colleagues for support. Lasting friendships have been forged.

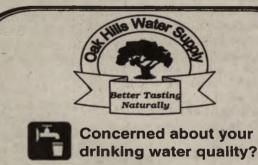
'As breast cancer survivors we use racing to bring attention to our illness and to educate others with what we are capable of accomplishing," says Scott.
"It allows for an active

way of supporting people in our area who want to get on with their lives and who don't feel that traditional support systems can help them. It fosters camaraderie, good physical exercise and psychological healing.

"Another aspect of our unique support group, as we call it, is the chance for our husbands, fathers, children, and other family members to have a support system as well. There is nothing out there to help them cope.'

They meet Tuesday nights and Saturday mornings at the Macassa Bay Yacht Club in Hamilton's Bayfront Park.

(See 'Knot . . .' page B4)



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