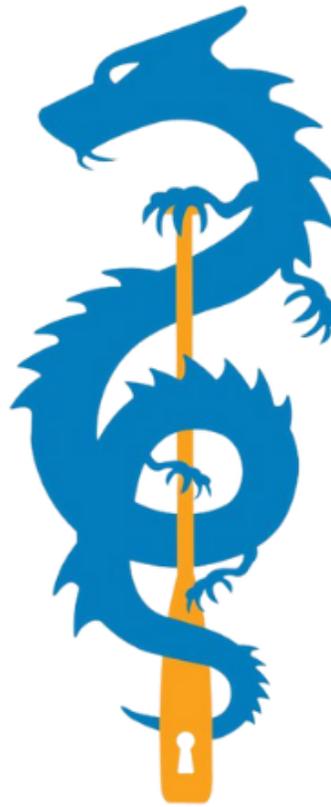


**MITCHELL'S PLACE**  
**2023 DRAGON BOAT RACE**  
**& FESTIVAL**  
**TEAM & CAPTAIN GUIDE**  
**8.19.2023**



**GOLDEN DRAGON**  
**PRESENTING SPONSOR:**



**Medical Properties Trust**

**CONTACT: [ADVANCEMENT@MITCHELLS-PLACE.COM](mailto:ADVANCEMENT@MITCHELLS-PLACE.COM)**  
**205.951.9538**

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# EVENT INFORMATION AND FAQ'S

Welcome to the 3rd Annual Mitchell's Place Dragon Boat Race & Festival! This packet is meant to give overviews of things to know as we move toward practices and race day so you can inform your team and have a great experience. Thank you for signing up to participate and lead your team! This year we added a team fundraising component with an award for the team who raises the most to benefit Mitchell's Place. Design your team page, invite team members to sign up, and share with your social media network contacts.

Team check-in begins at 7:15am. Event festivities kick off with the Historic Eye Doting Ceremony at 8am. Race heats are slated to start around 8:30am. There will be a lunch break sometime between 11-12:30pm where teams and Dynamic Dragon Boat Racing can break before the afternoon heats begin. A Drummer's Parade will occur during this time, as well as the Steerer's Auction. More to come on that later in this packet...

## FAQ's

### WHERE SHOULD I PARK?

VIP Sponsors/Teams will be provided VIP Parking spots based on their sponsorship level (Golden Dragon= 4, Jade=2). All other team members, teams, volunteers, vendors and event attendees will need to park across 4th Ave N from the park in the grass lot (next to tennis courts). We will have volunteers directing where to park.

### ARE THERE FESTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN?

OF COURSE! Be sure to visit the kid's zone for tons of event fun with bubbles, temporary tattoos, a rock-climbing wall, cornhole, hula hoops, and more!

### IS THERE FOOD AT THE FESTIVAL?

Yes! Take a look at our Merchant's Marketplace for food trucks and vendors. Teams are encouraged to bring coolers, lunch food, snacks, etc.

# DRAGON BOAT RACE OVERVIEW

A dragon boat is a 46' long fiberglass and wood canoe with a dragon's head and tail affixed to the bow and stern. A full boat is comprised of twenty paddlers, one drummer, and a steerer (provided by Dynamic Dragon Racing).

To participate in the festival and races, a team must have a team comprised of twenty paddlers and one drummer (we provide the steer-person!). It is also recommended to have alternates available. A minimum of 8 paddlers must be female. If your team does not have 8 females, you will incur a 3 second time penalty for each female spot filled with a male. There is no time penalty if the spot is left unfilled. Teams CAN race with 16 paddlers + 1 drummer, if needed.

Each crew member must sign a waiver and wear a wristband in order to board your team boat. Waivers should be signed in advance. Any crew member under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian's signature in order to participate. All rowers are required to wear a life jacket (provided). There will be a lifeguard and EMT presence in the event of an emergency.

# **DRAGON BOAT RACE OVERVIEW CONT.**

## **FAQ's**

### **WHAT IS A HEAT?**

A "heat" is one round of racing. Each round will include 2-4 teams competing at once. Your team will compete in at least 3 heats.

### **HOW LONG IS A HEAT?**

A standard dragon boat heat is 200 meters long and can take about 2 minutes depending of the crew and the paddling. Please remember each round of racing will take approximately 10 minutes from start to finish.

### **WHAT IS MARSHALLING?**

As you will see on the race schedule, the teams that are up next to race are "marshalled". This means when the announcer calls your team name, you report to the marshalling tent. You will secure your life jackets and line up in order of how you plan to sit in the boat. This is a very quick process, so it is extremely important you and your team follow the instructions of the head volunteer or staff person in this area.

# TEAM INFORMATION

You may have a maximum of 25 team members. Each team must have 8 female paddlers in each race. If you have fewer than 8 females, your team will incur a time penalty for each heat IF you substitute females with male paddlers. IF you do not substitute and leave spots empty, no time penalty will occur.

The minimum paddler age is 15 years old. Teams race with 20 paddlers, a drummer, and a steerer. The steerer and boat will be provided by race management. Three members of the 24 on your team can serve as alternates. You can rotate your alternates between races should you like. You must have a minimum of 16 paddlers to participate on race day. Your team may consist of fellow employees, friends, and family. You don't need experienced team members. Dragon Boat paddling is easy to learn; the techniques and logistical information you need are taught during practice.

Note: It is best to use a small person on your team as your drummer. For safety reasons, there is a weight limit for drummers (160 pounds). It is also ideal for this person to have a strong voice and a good rhythm.

Each team member is required to complete a waiver form before getting on a boat. These forms may be turned in at the Team Captain meeting or before your team practice.

## EACH TEAM WILL RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING...

- 10'x10' space reserved for your team area (bring your own tent)
- Use of dragon boats and equipment
- Life jacket/PFD (team members may use their own Coast Guard approved PFD)
- One on-water practice prior to race day
- Neck gaiter for each team member
- Case of water, case of Powerade, 3 bags of ice in Styrofoam cooler

## **TEAM INFORMATION CONT.**

### **PRACTICE SESSION**

Each team will receive one practice session. Practice sessions will last 75 minutes.

Practice times are on a first-come, first served basis, with Event Sponsors receiving first-selection times.

Team Captains will be able to schedule their practice times after payment of the full registration fee has been received.

### **CAPTAIN'S MEETING**

Held 8/3/2023. Important safety information will be discussed.

### **DRUMMER'S PARADE**

Your teams drummer will have the chance to strut their stuff to win the Best Drummer Award in our Drummer's Parade! Dress them to the nines and get them to practice their best dance moves before the day of. Drummers should show their energy, creativity with outfits, dance moves, loudness and audience appeal! Audience votes through donations (QR code and/or cash donations by Drummer). Award winner will combine fun, finesse, and fundraising to win the paddle award!

### **STEERER AUCTION**

Be sure to keep an eye on the competition. A steerer's auction will be held before round 3. This means you can bid on Dynamic Dragon Boat Races amazing staff and the highest bid will secure that staff member as your steerer for the final race! We will do this as long as teams wish to bid.

# TEAM CAPTAIN TO-DO LIST

## BEFORE THE EVENT:

- **RECRUIT TEAM MEMBERS**
  - Min of 16 paddlers (must inc. 8 female, 1 drummer), Max 20 paddlers- Team Steerer is provided. Teams are allowed up to 4 alternates for a total of 25 team members.
- **MAKE SURE TEAM MEMBERS HAVE SIGNED UP UNDER SWELL EVENT SITE**
  - Link to invite team members was sent when registering team.
  - This is important for fundraising - and overall community support!
- **SCHEDULE YOUR TEAM PRACTICE**
  - At/after the captain's meeting, sign up begins.
- **PLAN YOUR TEAM TENT DECORATIONS & SHIRTS**
  - This is optional, but remember that prizes for Most Team Spirit, Best Decorated Tent, and Best Drummer will be awarded- your tent, shirts, and smiles will be factored into our decision!
- **GO THE EXTRA MILE AND FUNDRAISE!**
  - This is also optional, but prizes will be awarded for Most Money Raised!
  - Share with your social networks to raise money for our mission
- **SUBMIT YOUR ROSTER - DUE ASAP**
  - Mitchell's Place Advancement Office must have all team names and members
  - All team members must sign waivers before practicing and/or race day if not attending practice. This is required. We are going to be using ONE paper form per team this year. No one will be allowed in boats until the waiver is signed.

# TEAM CAPTAIN TO-DO LIST CONT.

## DAY OF EVENT:

- **COORDINATE LOGISTICS**

- Team members should arrive at least an hour before your first race time for check in and set up tent/decorations. Opening Ceremony is at 8am, if you wish to show up for that! Races will not be held for late teams.
- For teams bringing their own tent, you will be able to set up on Friday afternoon - you must let Mitchell's Place know if you are setting up on Friday.
  - We will plan to have overnight offduty police security patrolling the area.

- **ALL TEAMS WILL HAVE A DESIGNATED TEAM SPOT**

- You will be directed to your spot once checked in.
- After the event, clean up your team tent area and throw away all trash.

- **HAVE A BLAST!**

# HYDRATION TIPS

MAKE SURE your team stays hydrated. That means you too! It likely will be hot and humid. Here are some tips from racing management:

- Drink plenty of water leading up to practices and race day and on those days. You CAN bring water in the boat.
- Experts recommend every 15-20 minutes of exercise a half-cup of water.
- Weeks before dragon boat practice get plenty of time outside to acclimate your body to hotter temperatures.
- Turn the AC down or off. Don't get too accustomed to air-conditioning at least one week before practices.
- During dragon boat practices, take a break if you need it. Don't overdo it.
- Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and protein as you prepare for dragon boat racing.
- Watermelon is an excellent source of hydrating fruit.
- Sports drinks can replenish carbohydrates and electrolytes.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and energy drinks. They can dehydrate you.
- Wear loose fitting, lightweight and light colored clothing.
- If your urine is yellow, you are dehydrated.

Signs of Heat Exhaustion: ⇨ Heavy sweating. But if heat stroke sets in, the body can no longer compensate and stops sweating ⇨ Pale skin ⇨ Muscle cramps ⇨ Feeling tired and weak ⇨ Altered mental status (confusion or disorientation) ⇨ Headache ⇨ Becoming semi-conscious, or passing out. ⇨ Nausea or vomiting

# TIPS FOR TEAMS

## CONDUCT IN THE BOAT:

- There should be no/minimal talking once your team is in the boat. The drummer and steersperson must be able to communicate with the team and each other at all times, and all team members need to be able to hear the commands.
- Paddles straight up in the air if you need to draw attention to yourselves in case of emergency.

## BUDDY SYSTEM:

- Make certain that each of your team members knows who is sitting beside them in case the boat swamps/capsizes, which is highly unlikely.
- Teammates will be responsible for each other's safety until rescue arrives. **STAY WITH THE BOAT!**

## LIFE JACKETS:

- Everyone must wear a life jacket during practice and Race Day.

## DRUMMERS:

- The drummer should attend all practices.
- They will assist in setting the timing for the team and can be an excellent source of motivation and inspiration during practices and on Race Day

## HOW TO SIT IN THE BOAT:

- Outside hip forward
- Inside hip back
- Outside leg extended along the gunwale (inside top rail of the boat)
- Inside foot under the seat or braced effectively and comfortably

# TECHNIQUE 101

## SEVEN STEPS OF THE DRAGON BOAT PADDLING TECHNIQUE

- Rotation
- Reach Extension
- Top Arm Drive (stab the water)
- Catch-powerfully drive the paddle into the water at approx. a 45 degree angle, burying the entire blade into the water-your hand should get wet.
- Pull water with the entire blade until you get to just behind your knee Exit -get that paddle straight up and out of the water quickly, no further back than your hip
- Recovery -snap the paddle back into the paddles up position for the next catch

# PADDLING COMMANDS 101

## DRAGON BOAT PADDLING COMMANDS

### "PADDLES UP!"

- Be ready to paddle. All paddlers with paddles above the water (3-6 inches from the surface) ready to enter the water

### "TAKE IT AWAY!"

- Begin paddling.

### "LET IT RUN!"

- Stop paddling and let the boat glide.

### "HOLD THE BOAT OR STOP THE BOAT"

- Place paddles in the water, with paddle pointed straight down, blade submerged. It will stop the boat.

### "BACK IT DOWN"

- Paddle backwards.

### "DRAW (LEFT OR RIGHT SIDE)"

- Initiates a turn using draw strokes by the designated paddlers. Can also be used to get the boat closer to something, a dock, for example.

### "STABILIZE THE BOAT"

- Place your paddle blade on top of the water and hold it there. This stabilizes the boat. It is needed when anyone stands up in the boat to change position, etc.

Focus up the middle of the boat, don't look at the water or the paddle. Make sure to breathe, breathe, breathe.....and have fun!!!! Make sure to hydrate well – your body should be ready for competition

**\* Note:** When the coach is talking, please continue to paddle and listen. Never stop paddling unless your coach says “Let it run.”

**\*\*Race Day Note:** The finish line buoys are merely a marker and not the actual finish line, which is determined by the chief official using a line of sight. Your steersperson will tell you to “Let it run” when the first half of the boat has crossed the finish line to ensure a proper finish.

# EVENT DAY PREP LIST

## WHAT TO BRING WITH YOU:

- 10x10 Tent for team (Tent is provided for VIP sponsors/teams ONLY)
- Table for tent space
- Chairs
- Decorations
- Towels
- Games (footballs, corn hole, etc.)
- Sunscreen
- Extra Clothing
- Comfortable/Waterproof Shoes
- Coolers with ice (food will be available for purchase)
- Drinks - water, sports drinks
  - (1 case of water and sports drinks will be provided for teams.) Alcoholic beverages are permitted.)

## WHAT IS PROVIDED:

- Team space
- Event Buffs/Neck Gaiters
- Dragon Boats
- Paddles
- Life Jackets
- 1 case each Water/Sports Drinks(for team members)
- On site vendors with food and beverage for purchase
- Small cooler with ice
- Fun and entertainment throughout the day!

**\*\*Lunch will be provided for VIP Sponsors and VIP Teams**

**IF YOUR TEAM WISHES TO RENT A TENT &/OR PARTICIPATE IN THE VIP LUNCH TENT, MP MUST KNOW BY 8/4/2023 the number. Tent rental is an additional \$250 and lunch is \$10/person.**

# **FOOD & BEVERAGE**

## **AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE**

URBAN POPS - ice cold treats (attended last year)

ALICIA's COFFEE - coffee & food treats (attended last year)

CHUY's - nachos

DELICIOUSLY S'MORES - kits

HOLLYWOOD GRILL - various grilled food options

\*More food trucks/vendors to be added before day of event - should have 1-3 additional food options.

# 2023 EVENT CALENDAR

## **FRIDAY, AUGUST 4**

LAST DAY TO REGISTER TEAM

**8/3/23**

Team Captain Meeting

Time 5pm

Location: Mitchell's Place

4778 Overton Rd. Birmingham,

AL 35210

## **AUGUST 16-18**

Team Practices

Location: Eastlake Park

## **SATURDAY, AUGUST 19**

RACE DAY!!

Location: East Lake Park

# EVENT MAP LAYOUT



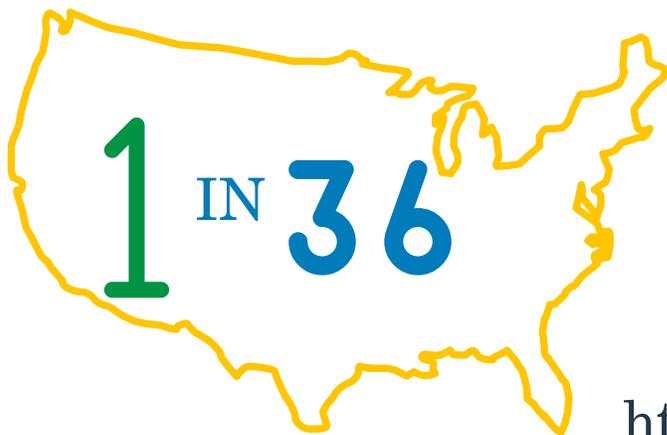


MITCHELL'S PLACE  
UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

## ABOUT MITCHELL'S PLACE

Mitchell's Place was established in 2005 after Nancy and Allen Meisler became frustrated by the lack of services and autism treatment options for their son, Mitchell. Allen and Nancy spent years searching for a facility to help their son, only to realize no full-service facilities existed in the state of Alabama. Through their constant advocacy and support, Mitchell's Place has now served over 3,500 families throughout the South East.

Mitchell's Place works to meet the growing need for specialized services for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and their families, in the greater Birmingham area and across the state.



Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder that affects social interactions, speech and nonverbal communication, restricted/repetitive behaviors, and sensory sensitivities. Autism is known as a “spectrum” disorder because there is a wide variation in the type and severity of symptoms. According to the CDC, about 1 in 36 children in the US are diagnosed with autism.

[https://youtu.be/l\\_YVWNV6bME](https://youtu.be/l_YVWNV6bME)



# FUND-RACING 101

Thank you for participating in the 3rd Annual Mitchell's Place Dragon Boat Race & Festival!

Mitchell's Place mission is to provide comprehensive, research-based services for children and families affected by autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities. The combination of your support and donations will help to further our mission and spread awareness throughout Birmingham about autism spectrum disorder (ASD). We challenge your team to try and fundraise through social media and your team website to help support our mission! The team with the most money fundraised on race day will be awarded!

Team captains will have received an email to invite their team members to create their individual fundraising page. Once their page is created, have your team reach out to friends and family, along with a link to your team page and ask them to give! They'll want to help and by hearing from you and why you're passionate about our mission, they'll make it happen!