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# Dragon boat races coming to USF St. Petersburg

Posted [September 27, 2012](#) at 8:40 am by [Tom Scherberger](#)



Dragon boats like these will race at USF St. Petersburg Oct. 6.

The first dragon boat races ever held in St. Petersburg will take place along the USF St. Petersburg waterfront Oct. 6.

The races will be part of Paddles Up St Pete, a free one-day festival hosted by The United States Power Squadron, a non-profit organization dedicated to marine education, safety and boating fun. The festival will take place at Poynter Park and in Bayboro Harbor.

Dragon boats are paddle-powered and decorated in the Chinese tradition. Dragon boat racing has been around for over 2,000 years throughout southern China and has emerged as an international sport in the past few decades.

Teams are traveling from all over Florida to participate in this inaugural festival. It will also showcase other paddle sports such as canoes, kayaks and stand up paddleboards. Numerous charities, organizations, corporations, local businesses, communities and their residents are

positively impacted as Paddles Up St Pete presents a unique and vibrant vehicle for fundraising, awareness and economic development.

The Paddles Up St. Pete festival also will highlight the affordability and accessibility of paddle sports. The festival is free and open to the public.

USFSP will have its own dragon boat team competing against many local and regional teams. If you are interested in joining the team, contact Zac Oppenheim at the USFSP Waterfront, [zpo@usfsp.edu](mailto:zpo@usfsp.edu). Two dozen students and staff members are needed.

USF St. Petersburg is a partner in the festival. The sponsors are the City of St Petersburg, the St Petersburg Downtown Partnership and St Petersburg Parks & Recreation organizations, [tbt\\*](#) and Jonny Reno's.

For more information go to [paddlesupstpete.com](http://paddlesupstpete.com).