

Blowing cancer out of the water

Paddling adventure proves to be similar to cancer experience

by Matthew Hoekstra

Staff Reporter

Launching a kayak into the unsettling waters of Oregon's Owyhee River isn't on everyone's life list. But for Jen Luce, the trip was more than an adventure, it was proof she could kick cancer in the butt.

The 32-year-old Richmond resident recently returned from a trip where she spent eight days paddling and camping with seven other young adult cancer survivors. The adventure was captured on film and will become subject of a documentary showing the strength and will of cancer survivors.

"It was really fantastic to see all these people who were quite afraid and challenged to do this—myself included—and to conquer that and to push through that, and realize it's very similar to their cancer experience," said Luce.

Mike and Bonnie Lang of Calgary-based Survive and Thrive Adventures organized the adventure.

Three years ago, Luce was diagnosed with a rare form of ovarian cancer. She led an intense battle against the disease. Today her



Richmond's Jen Luce (left) recently joined other cancer survivors on a kayaking trip.

health is good and she's passionate about advocating for young adults with cancer.

Other adventurers on the paddling journey were in varying stages of cancer—in treatment, recently finished treatment or a few years past treatment and facing possible recurrence.

More than learning how to navigate channels or master an eddy, the trip provided Luce with hope.

"Having a good attitude can change your perspective," she said. "If I have a good attitude, I'm going to see hope and have faith in the process and see things differently."

The forthcoming documentary, expected to be out by January 2010 and screened in Richmond,

will be rich with that message.

"When young adults are going through cancer we feel like we're completely alone. We feel like there are no support because it's so hard to find, where in fact there are people who are kicking butt after cancer."

In the meantime, Luce continues to be an advocate. She's inviting young adult cancer survivors to "Retreat Yourself," a free event for survivors ages 18 to 35 where Luce will be a peer facilitator. More information is available at www.youngadultcancer.ca.

Luce is also hoping to share her story and message of hope at a cancer forum in Ottawa in September and is looking for sponsorship. Contact jenluce@hotmail.com.

The Grand Ballroom

Canada's biggest ballroom dance school is right here in Richmond



Beginners Ballroom Class 2-for-1 Special

- Learn to Salsa, Cha Cha, Waltz, Tango, Jive, Foxtrot.
- Tuesday at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 11:00 am.
- 10 classes of 1 hr & 20 min. each
- All classes are ongoing, so you may *start any time and finish any time* within 1 year.
- Start on any of the following dates:
 - Tues.: Aug. 11, 25 (in English)
 - Sat.: Aug. 8, 22, 29 (in English)
 - Sun.: Aug. 16, 23 (in Cantonese)
- Bring this coupon or print one from our website.
- \$98 for 2 people or \$49 single
- **Over 14,000 students since 1994!**

Ongoing Kids Programs Available

Directors & instructors
Andy & Wendy Wong

"We are experts in making classes fun!"

For complete information,
visit www.grandballroom.com
604-273-3130



12200 Riverside Way, Richmond

Every Child is a Champion

Begin Here...

- Gymnastics Classes
- Birthday Parties
- Cheer Leading
- Summer Full Day Camps

...Go Anywhere

Fall Registration On Now

Fun & Fitness for Life.



Present this coupon and Save \$5 off Fall Class fees or Birthday Party booking!



OPEN HOUSE
Sunday September 13th

Free class times:

- Chimps I 10-10:30am Walking to 2.5yrs
- Chimps II 10:45-11:15 2.5yrs-3.5yrs
- 3 All Me 11:30-12:00 3-3.5yrs
- Monkeys 12:15-1:00 3.5-4.5yrs
- Swingers 1:15-2:00 4.5yrs to KG
- Achievement 2:15-3:15 Boys & Girls 6yrs & Up
- Cheerleading Girls 3:30-4:15 6yrs & up
- Cheer Bears 4:30-5:00 3.5- 6yrs

Free classes!

Please call to book your Spot!



Cartwheels Incorporated

Richmond • 604-275-0020

New members only, not for use with any other discounts or promotions.

www.cartwheels.ca