

# Dragon Boat Festival attracts thousands from all walks of life

**More paddlers.** Five new boats purchased by the Calgary Dragon Boat Society allow for largest festival to date

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Premier Alison Redford and 13-year-old cancer survivor Joel Zukowski were two of thousands of people who crammed into North Glenmore Park on Sunday for the final day of the 2012 Calgary Dragon Boat Race and Festival.

Zukowski, who was diagnosed with a brain tumour two years ago but is now cancer-free, took part in a charity race to raise money for the Kids Cancer Care Foundation of Alberta.

"I had the honour of drumming," he said after stepping out from the bow of his boat. "It was a lot of fun. My feet got a bit wet, but really I didn't mind."

Redford signalled the official start of the charity race and

## By the numbers

- Nearly 1,000 paddlers took part in the 2012 Calgary Dragon Boat Race and Festival.
- Organizers counted more than 1,000 patrons at the festival's beer gardens on Saturday alone.

spoke afterwards about how experiences like cancer diagnoses and events like the Dragon Boat Festival can connect people who come from different walks of life.

"When we can come together and think about how we care about people and celebrate the connections that we have as families and Albertans, I think that's the most important thing," she said.

This is the third annual festival put on by the Calgary Dragon Boat Society and the largest one to date.

Joe Connelly, a director of the society, estimated that 2,500 people attended each day of the two-day event.



Premier Alison Redford, left, shakes hands with Bev Trainer of the Calgary Sistership Dragon Boat Association at North Glenmore Park on Sunday.

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