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Dragon Boat Festival Visitor Study: 2013

Christine Oschell

The University of Montana-Missoula

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College of Forestry
and Conservation
32 Campus Dr. #1234
The University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812

Phone (406) 243-5686
Fax (406) 243-4845
www.itrr.umt.edu

2013 Dragon Boat Festival Visitor Study

Prepared by:
Christine Oschell, Ph.D.

Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research
College of Forestry and Conservation
The University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812
www.itrr.umt.edu

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Case Study Report 2013-5

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Introduction

The purpose of this study was to provide the organizers of the Montana Dragon Boat Festival with an understanding of their attendees and the total money spent by those surveyed in the area (Kalispell, Columbia Falls, Whitefish, Bigfork, and Polson). The population of interest was participants and attendees of the 2013 Montana Dragon Boat Festival. Surveys were completed on-site as well as through a web survey. The final response rate was 505 completed surveys.

Methods

Responses for the survey were gathered in two ways. First, two surveyors were stationed throughout the festival to intercept spectators for on-site completion of a paper survey. Surveys were given to festival goers by random selection so as to attempt to represent the whole population. Surveyors were stationed near parking areas, spectator seating areas, and vendor areas. People willing to fill out the survey were given a clipboard, pen, and a survey and completed the survey on site. No documentation of the number of refusals was recorded. The second method of data collection aimed to get participants of the Dragon Boat Races to fill out the same survey but on-line. To accomplish this, emails were sent to all participants, the link to the survey was posted on the Montana Dragon Boat Races Facebook page and website. In both cases, paper and web, the survey consisted of 31 questions (see Appendix C). In total, 505 surveys were completed. Two hundred and fifty-five were completed on-line while 250 were collected on the ground.

Results

Of the 505 respondents, 62% (312) were from Montana and 38% (193) were from out-of-state or country (see Table 1). Of those who were from Montana, 77% were from Flathead County while 23% were from other Montana counties. The mean age of respondents was 50.40. The mean group size was 7.52. Of those who responded to the survey, 45% (229) reported that they spent a night or nights away from home. Of those who spent a night away from home, the average number of nights was 4.4. The average number of nights spent in Montana was 4.4 while the mean number of nights spent in the Flathead area was 4.2. Results of all other questions in this survey can be found in Appendix A.

Table 1: Top Residences of Out-of-state/Out-of-country Respondents

Place of Residence	# of respondents
Washington	12
Texas	10
Minnesota	9
California	6
Nevada	6
Arizona	5
Oregon	4
Alberta, Canada	114
British Columbia, Canada	14

Expenditures

Expenditure information was asked of all respondents. The survey asked that they report their best estimate of the total amount of money they and their family (if applicable) spent in the Flathead area in the

following categories: accommodations, food, transportation, retail/services, gratuity, entertainment/recreation, and licenses/entrance fees/admissions.

Table 2 presents the expenditure data of only the respondents who reported spending money in the categories. The mean expenditure of those who spent money for each category can be found along with the percentage of people who reported that they spent money in that category. The last column provides the total dollars spent by respondents who reported spending money in each category. The total reported expenditure for respondents who spent was \$145,097.00.

Table 2- Expenditure Data: Expenditures Calculated using only Respondents who spent

Expenditure Category	Mean expenditures of attendees <u>who reported that they spent money in these categories</u>	% of respondents who reported spending money in each category	Total dollars spent in each category <u>by respondents who spent</u>
Motel/Hotel/B&B	\$295.64	25%	\$40,798.00
Retail goods	\$235.88	25%	\$29,721.00
Auto rental	\$231.29	4%	\$4,857.00
Entertainment/Recreation	\$146.33	10%	\$5,885.00
Restaurant/Bar	\$141.13	39%	\$27,520.00
Groceries/Snacks	\$101.16	27%	\$13,656.00
Gasoline	\$90.82	34%	\$15,531.00
Campground	\$76.13	16%	\$1,827.00
Gratuity	\$61.03	16%	\$4,882.00
Local transportation	\$18.26	5%	\$420.00
		TOTAL	\$145,097.00

Appendix A- Results

Dragon Boat Festival Survey

Are you a resident of Montana? 61% Yes 39% No

Was attending or participating in the boat races your primary reason for being in the area?

91% Yes 9% No

What other reasons were you visiting? (X all that apply)

64% Vacation/recreation/pleasure

46% Visit friends/relatives

During the Dragon Boat Festival, what type of accommodations did you stay in?(X all that apply)

68%	Hotel/motel/bed & breakfast	6%	Private campground
12%	Home of friend/relative	4%	Second home/condo/cabin
9%	Rented cabin/home	3%	Resort/condominium
7%	Public land camping		

How did you hear about The Montana Dragon Boat Festival? (X all that apply)

39%	Word of mouth	8%	Internet	4%	Posters	1%	Retail outlet
33%	Participated/attended last year	6%	Radio	4%	Magazine	1%	Direct mail
26%	Group or club	5%	TV	2%	Flyer		
16%	Newspaper	4%	Email from event planners	1%	Magazine		

How long ago did you make plans to attend The Montana Folk Festival?

5% Day of 14% 1-7 days ago 11% 1-4 weeks ago 45% 1-6 months ago 25% over 6 months

Please rate your overall satisfaction with the 2013 Dragon Boat Festival. (1=very satisfied to 4=very dissatisfied)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	N/A	Mean
Parking	43%	34%	13%	7%	3%	1%	1.87
Concessions available	48%	30%	14%	6%	1%	1%	1.83
Variety of activities	48%	34%	16%	1%	0.2%	2%	1.77
Signage/directions	50%	37%	8%	3%	1%	0.4%	1.65
Sound system	51%	38%	9%	2%	1%	0.4%	1.64
Cost of the event	58%	30%	9%	--	0.2%	3%	1.63
Availability of restrooms	59%	33%	4%	3%	1%	0.4%	1.52
Number of people at the event	61%	31%	6%	1%	1%	0.2%	1.47
Organization of the event	66%	29%	4%	1%	0.4%	0.0%	1.40
Event staff	72%	24%	3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.4%	1.33
Cleanliness	70%	28%	1%	0.4%	0.2%	1%	1.32
Location of the event	81%	17%	2%	1%	0.2%	0.0%	1.22

What option best describes the group with whom you attended/participated in the Dragon Boat Races?

- 28% *Organized group/club*
- 17% *Friends*
- 16% *Business associates*
- 15% *Family & friends*
- 12% *Couple*
- 7% *Immediate family*
- 3% *Extended family*
- 3% *Self*

Including you, how many people were in your group?

- 3% 1
- 21% 2
- 6% 3
- 7% 4
- 2% 5
- 1% 6
- 1% 7
- <1% 8
- <1% 9
- 1% 10
- 56% *more than 10*

Please indicate what age groups are represented in your group?

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------|-----|--------------------|
| 4% | <i>0-5 years</i> | 51% | <i>35-44 years</i> |
| 5% | <i>6-10 years</i> | 55% | <i>45-54 years</i> |
| 9% | <i>11-17 years</i> | 52% | <i>55-64 years</i> |
| 19% | <i>18-24 years</i> | 25% | <i>65-74 years</i> |
| 40% | <i>25-34 years</i> | 5% | <i>75 and over</i> |

What best describes your annual household income in US dollars?

- 3% *Less than \$20,000*
- 13% *\$20,000 to 39,999*
- 19% *\$40,000 to 59,999*
- 17% *\$60,000 to 79,999*
- 18% *\$80,000 to 99,999*
- 17% *\$100,000 to 149,999*
- 8% *\$150,000 to 199,999*
- 4% *\$200,000 and over*

When might you come to the Dragon Boat Festival again?

- 82%** *Next Year* **14%** *Within 5 years* **1%** *Never*

Appendix B- Open-ended Responses

Question 29: Please tell us what you liked about The Montana Dragon Boat Festival.

1.Setting on Flathead Lake 2. Enough room to spread out and mingle
A bit of confusion about lane markers for first race. Liked the medals for all participants!
A fun & different way to get together with co-workers & friends.
A great gathering of people and the great energy.
A lot of fun, well organized.
Absolutely everything
all
All
All
All good
All great!
All of it!
All of the people
All of the people
All the folks :)
Amazing...well organized!!! Beautiful surroundings!!
anyone could do it regardless of age and size. It's not just for athletes
Appeared to run smoothly the day of, shuttle system for parking was efficient, venue was perfect.
Atmosphere, setting, how well races are organized
Awesome
Awesome execution of event.
Beautiful country Great bus service Food Staying on schedule
Beautiful location and friendly people
Beautiful location and wonderful people.
Beautiful location on flathead Lake. Country music band at paddlers party was great. Dance floor good size. Wine tasting prior to buffet god event. Participation medals were beautiful. Paddler village great location for our tent and set-up. Safety first. Agreed with cancellation of Sunday afternoon events. Re-race for Sistership after a collision by another dragonboat at fault was right decision.
Beautiful location, perfect weather, wonderful people.
Beautiful location. Well organized.
Beautiful location. Nice, friendly people.
Beautiful scenery and pristine lake
Beautiful setting , great logo & web site. Awesome medals. Great newspaper coverage. Transportation system was impressive
Beautiful setting, easy access, fun looking around, highlights Flathead Lake, fundraiser good cause (breast cancer)-builds community
Beautiful venue
Beautiful venue
Beautiful venue and great to compete against teams that you normally do not get to.
Beautiful venue and well run event.
Beautiful venue, organized for just being 2 years old
Beautiful venue, very organized
Beautiful venue! I really liked the participation medals. The kids activities this year were great - good variety for all ages- my son loved the activities! The team photo center with the boat was a great idea also.
Beautiful venue.

Beautiful, well situated venue. The rose ceremony was fabulous and well done. The air drone (?) flying overhead during the ceremony caused problems with being able to hear the speeches and song. The participation medals were beautiful.
Being a participant on the Montana Flathead DragonFlies Team after watching for the first time last year.
Brings people together- outside activity- exercise team building
Camaraderie friendliness of all involved beautiful setting
Clear widespread interest. Lots of competitors. Excellent organization.
Coffee stand, organized parking/bus
Color and festivity
Color, people watching, everyone in a good mood
Community based- good local sponsorship
Community event, attraction from outside the community, team building event
Community involvement. Breast cancer support.
Community participation. Visting teams from out of state and Canada. Beautiful venue and masterfully organized. Great job Penny, Diane, Rob, Lucy and staff!
Competition
Competitive atmosphere combined and career therapy and recreation. Entertainment. Volunteers! Wow!
Comraderie.flathead lake lodge.the races
Comradery, breast Cancer Survivors, team bonding
Comrodery
Cool weather and location
Crazy people
Culture, music, costumes
Different
Enthusiasm it seemed to generate within the larger community.
Event location
Event location was beautiful, the vendors added a lot of variety and fun. Overall the food at the event site was great. I am allergic to wasps (and there were alot of them everywhere this year US and Canada) . It was very reassuring to see the EMS services located at the race sight. EMS was friendly and helpful. Cudos to the Mountain Ranch ! The Band on Saturday night at the " Party" was wonderful. Invite them back next year! We danced and danced and had a very nice time.
Everybody was having a good time
everything
Everything, it is so exciting!
Everything!
Everything! You did a great job organizing everything. It must be a monumental job to coordinate everything! It was amazing that absolutely everyone in the US/Kalispell knew about the Festival including the border guards - both ways - to merchants in the town. Everyone seemed genuinely interested in our experiences. The festival itself was so well organized. The parking was great as well as the shuttle buses. Everything ran very smoothly. The rose ceremony was also professionally organized & run!! Kudos to everyone!

EVERYTHING!!!!
Everything.
Everything. Free water
Everything. What a great time and great staff. I would like one more week to practice and would pay more for that.
Excellent event.good location. Wrll organized
Excellent organization (e.g., parking, race schedule, clean restrooms, food, vendors, massage, live music, etc.) I love the kids activity so it is family friendly and I love the breast cancer survivor ceremony. Great recycling effort.
Excellent organizing and volunteer support.
Excitement of the participants, the cabin- comfortable, commaradene wonderful
Exciting
Fantastic location and well organized. Very clean facility with lots of space despite the nearly 100 teams participating. The food provided by the lodge was really good but not well advertised and I think some festival participants thought the only food available was from the vendors. The live music was really good and not overly loud.
Fantastic venue. All the volunteers very helpful and friendly. Event extremely well run by the event staff. Event handled fairly on Sunday due to cancellation of festival due to weather. Medals were amazing. The children's centre a great idea.
Festival spirit and comradery
Festival was more organized then last year, and more vendors
festivities excitement competitiveness
Food and lots of fun!
For only being the second festival in Montana, it was very well organized. The vendors and other activities available were also great. The Hotels were very accomodating and having extra touches like a wine reception at the Hotel Grand in Kalispell were great, and much appreciated. The bash at the Red Lion was also great!
Found the event organized very well and really appreciated the friendliness of the volunteers!! Felt real community there. The venue was also excellent
Friendly atmosphere.
Friendly people
Friendly people, nice venue
Friendly, fun
Friends, location
fun
fun atmosphere, people having a good time, knew a lot of other participants.
FUN CROWD, REALLY ENJOYED PARTICIPATING IN THE RACES. VERY WELL PUT TOGETHER!
Fun festive
Fun racing - our team did good for first time
Fun sport
Fun sport, ability to work as a team with others. the Coaches and steer-persons are wonderful.
Fun time!!!
Fun to watch
Fun- everyone enjoying the event- every age here
Fun- spectacular event
Fun, nice people
Fun!
Getting people together

Good cause and great to be doing things on the lake.
Good community promotion
Good family event
Good fun, great coaches. Learned something new. Music was good.
Good scenery, big event
Good time
Good weather, the friendly people
Gorgeous location and very well organized. Tons of fun!
Gorgeous venue, friendly people
Great atmposphere
Great atmosphere, great venue
Great comradery, very welcoming and helpful
great energy
Great event- very organized.
Great event, warm weather
Great event! Lots of people, and many fun things to do. Food was good, but could use more food vendors.
Great event. Lots of fun.
Great family event- daughter and son in low racing
great locale and good people
Great location
Great location
Great location and very organized.
Great location and well organized (from a well seasoned Dragon Boat racer)!
Great location! Probably one of the better places I have gone to for a dragon boat competition. It was also nice of you to give out participation medals, to me (and others I have spoken to) it makes the event more memorable. This will definitely be something that I will always remember. Also there were many different areas one can watch the races. The area did not seem crowded and it was easy to find a spot to watch the event.
Great team spirit... !
Great venue
Great venue
Great venue
Great venue
Great venue, fun activities. We got excellent remedial training for paddling, thank you to the race people for making that happen.
Great venue, great organization
Great venue, great organization
Great venue, great parking system, good race course, loved captains meeting.
Great venue. Great volunteers
Had a blast - so glad I paddled! I'm in for next year - our team is already talking about it. would be nice to figure out how to get more wet practice in.
Had a great time but got rained out Sunday which you have not control over.
Honoring of cancer survivors
How up beat everyone is.
I felt it was well organized, staff friendly, loved the site, liked all the options, beach volleyball,etc for the team to do was great. Entry festival cost was the first attraction for the team the rest was a bonus. If the rate continues to be affordable the Team will likely be able to afford this again. Porta potties very clean :) Loved the band and entertainment. Liked the concept of wine and beer tasting. Went to there venues after the festival.
I like most everything.
I like that there were some venders and things free for kids
I like the local people participating and seeing friends that I do not see often.

I liked almost everything
I liked it when my team from the Flathead Lake Brewing won their heat-I also liked the inclusion of recycling bins at the trash cans
I liked that the races ran one after the other and the volunteers were very helpful getting in & out of the boats.
I liked that there was a lot of teams competing and a lot of vendors. The races themselves were very organized and ran smoothly. The ranch that it was held on was gorgeous and had a lot of activities. I also really appreciated that there were hand washing stations with the portapotties. It was also nice that most of the tents had pretty decent views (or were close to good views). The volunteers and people working the event were extremely friendly.
I liked the boating equipment, facilities, and water body. I also liked that there were three sets of race boats. I also felt confident with the security that comes with holding this event at a private premises.
I liked the boats.
I love the Dragon Boat Festival!!!! I think its a great team building experience for businesses who have a team of employees in the event.
I love this event, the atmosphere, the energy.
I loved everything about the festival! The location was great, the staff and volunteers were great! Just an overall great festival!
I loved that is was a team event and competing and seeing all of the other teams go all out on the tents. There seems to be good relations between teams even though it's competitive.
I loved the atmosphere combined with the fun of competing in the races.
I really enjoyed the organization of it all, very friendly staff, very professional!!
I really liked the addition of the medals this year. I appreciate the effort to improve parking availability. I had a great time at the festival! The food offered by the Flathead Lake Lodge was incredible! Everything I had was delicious! I also really appreciate the availability of the steersmen for teams like mine that are novice and do not have steerers of our own. I also really like the divisions staying separated this year and not combined in the finals. Last year my team would have made the finals if not for the combination of recreational and competitive.
I really liked the beautiful location and the friendly volunteers.
I was a great event!!! very nice to have a option that is not usual for the area. And the the cancer ceremony was amazing !!!
I WAS AMAZED AT THE FLOW OF THE ENTIRE EVENT WITH THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATTENDING. AWESOME JOB!
Incredible venue. Nice people.
Interesting
Interesting activity, love to see local vendors
It is a healthy event and a lot of fun!
It is in a beautiful setting and so well organized
It was a beautiful setting, well organized. I paddled on a breast cancer survivor team and enjoyed meeting the MN and MT ladies that I paddled with. The Westside Boat tour that gave us a free tour of the lake was wonderful. The merchants in Kalispell were friendly and gave me a discount even though I had not received my coupons yet. Wonderful, friendly and lovely area. Also thought the practices were a great opportunity. Fortunately we were in the AM and did not get swamped. But heard that was handled very well.
It was a fabulous event - cudos to the organizational staff.
It was a great venue. It was easy to watch as a spectator.
it was a lot of fun in a beautiful location. Great job - the busing worked remarkably well.
It was a lot of fun! It's a great way to support a cause, and I liked it even better when I heard it's non-profit. There was a lot of energy, it was very well organized, people were happy, and it's just plain fun to paddle! Next year I plan to bring more friends, and spread the word that it's a family friendly event. I really enjoyed it that it was clean and a place where kids could be.
It was alot of fun.
It was an amazing event except for the food..lobster bisque was awful! There needs to be more options!

It was an awesome family event, everyone had fun and it promoted team spirit and community spirit. I had an excellent time and was glad I participated on a boat.
It was extremely well run. Everything from parking, to shuttles, to tent assignments were so well marked. Everyone was extremely friendly, especially the volunteers that were not even physically at the festival (i.e. bus drivers, parking attendents, etc.) Loved the venue. Montana is my favorite state to begin with (having worked in Glacier Nat'l Park for 3 summers years ago). It was great to be back in MT to remember just how beautiful and friendly it was.
It was great fun and nice to meet other people
It was great! Well organized, and lots of fun!
It was so much fun!
It was so Much FUN!!!! First time paddling, and I'm coming back next year, of course our team took first! The Dragon Flies (Cindi) was so much fun, and great help, very supporting! The Flathead Lake Lodge is always a great place to have any event, the staff is always so helpful! See you next year! Paddles Up!!!!
It was so organized and loved the location.
It was so well organized, especially the buses and parking. Loved that the wait time for a bus was minimal, it made parking a no-brainer! Love the grounds, it was spectacular. Even though we no longer have small children, it was great that there was a small kid area. Would have loved that years ago in our lives!
It was very nice place to get away , family, friends and health wise
It was very well organized, a beautiful area. A great event
It was very well organized. Even though the event was twice the size this year it was as well run as last years event was. The volunteers were very helpful and the atmosphere is very friendly and welcoming.
It was well organized and a lovely setting. The announcement system was very good and we were able to hear the announcer very well no matter where we were on the site. great job. The volunteers were once again very helpful, happy and kind, also very well done!
it was well organized and lots of fun! easy to attend, park, and shop. loved the free water for bottle refilling, that was awesome! the meeting the night before was also well planned, short, informative, with delicious food. although I did not bring my family this year, I will definitely include this event in our vacation plans for us all! it was so kid friendly, amazing!
It was well organized. The breast cancer ceremony was excellent. IT was fun!
It was well planned and executed, lovely venue, not thrilled with shuttles, but understand the need for, friendly volunteers, good rose ceremony, and great lake (when the wind isn't blowing).
It was well-organized and the lodge was a really nice location for the event. The people steering the boats were great.
It's a great opportunity for our office to spend time, play & bond together outside the office. We all love to be active and outside and this was a fabulous venue. Extremely well organized.
It's an event that really brings out the camaraderie and spirit of people attending and competing, at a gorgeous venue, a pleasant time of year, and with a well-organized atmosphere. As a team member, I appreciated the access to staff and the training. Our trainer was motivating and encouraging. My team won our 2nd heat and we all received medals! I wasn't expecting that, but was pleased. I found the Breast Cancer Survivor ceremony very moving.
It's fun, the people
It's fun!
It's simply a blast! Team building is excellent. I am in my element. LOVED the medals. Everyone on the team was so excited to bring one home. The weather turned out great on Saturday. Sorry for Sunday, but it was still fun. Kevin, steerperson, is amazing. Please bring him back again next year. Fabulous volunteers!!!! We also liked not having a gift bag of schwag. It felt very wasteful last year.
Its fun seeing the Dragon Boats
Just a great event that is run very well.
Just great fun!
Kinda fun
Laid back, beauty of area, families
location
Location

Location
Location
Location
Location
Location and facilities.
Location awesome
Location is great and great Montana volunteers. Thanks all volunteers and organization
Location was beautiful, friendly helpful volunteers
Location, activities, people involved and the philanthropy it promotes.
Location, ample space, good event viewing
Location, competition, other teams that volunteered steerspeople, etc.
Location, friendly volunteers, well organized venue
Location, organisation, Bash on Saturday night, medals for all, festival tee-shirts!
location, smoothness of the event, attitude of workers/volunteers
Location, the boats
Lot of fun
LOts of fun - lots to do. I was paddling on a team, but enjoyed the free time between races too. The venue was beautiful, and never felt crowded, even though there were many people there.
Lots of people
Lots of teams, great location and lots of spectators.
Lots to do! Good food, beautiful setting, the friendly people, not a draining affair! Weather, scenery
Love the atmopshere - friendly and welcoming. The venue is amazing! The volunteers really were helpful and fun. for only being the 2nd festival for Kalispell- you have done an amazing job.
Loved meeting people from all over and receiving good advice for how to improve for next year. Absolutely amazing venue and everyone was so friendly!
Loved paddling the boats!
Loved the entire event.... the most fun I've had in quite some time.
Loved the location. Races were organized very well. Entire weekend was fun. You guys did an awesome job.
Loved the venue, beautiful location, well organized with the shuttles etc. Whole community behind it which is wonderful. Had a blast at the Bash! We don't blame you for the weather!
Music was included. The place is beautiful.
Music, flowers and location. Flathead Lake. Friendly people.
My team entry
New event, never done this before
Nice location, nice people, nice time of the year, good exercise etc
Organization and entertainment(the bands)
organization tent groups were fun transportation was great
Organized, fun, great people! Loved the team tents, and the fact that everyone received a awesome medal for participation! Great Job putting on this wonderful event! It was my first time as a paddler!
Our boat didn't flip.
Overall atmosphere is festive and all attendees are very friendly.
Overall good
Parking and shuttle service! The best!
Participating in the races, new experience, comradery, good exercise
Party atmosphere. Competitive, but in a fun way. Great coaches!
People
People and costumes
People and Place
Perfect location and very well organized.
Pretty well organized. Altho I know you'll improve every year. The parking and shuttle worked pretty well. Being

able to drive down to the site to set up and take down was very helpful.
Racing
Relaxing
Relaxing even- fun to watch. Great cause.
Relaxing, beautiful atmosphere! Brings people to Bigfork!
Seeing all the boats
Seeing the great Montana in action
Setting
Setting and fun
Shear number of teams. Leadershiop of TDBA volunteers (and others) to help the community teams. Competition was good. Comradery among teams. Double rostering being allowed, encouraged team mixing.
So much fun! Loved hanging out all day seeing people and seeing other organizations that I had not known about. Loved the non profit publicity.
So well organized and the staff were knowledgeable, friendly and energetic. Was very impressed with the entire organization...people, equipment, etc.
Socializing with friends, dinner and dance on Saturday was awesome with amazing band and outstanding price!
Something different to do.
Something new to do
Spirit, community
Super fun venue and good tim ewith family and friends
Super!
Team building experiece with my coworkers
Team esprit de corp
Team spirit and charity
Team tents
The activity/race
the area
The area
The area itself is quite beautiful, and given that its 30min outside Kalispel, there needs to be enough to do at the event for my family (including young kids) to keep them occupied the full day while I am racing. While there could always be more activities for the kids, this was mostly achieved and they had a great time for one day, but elected to stay in Kalispel the 2nd day.
The atmosphere and Saturday's weather :)
The attitude of the volunteers was fantastic. They wanted to make it fun but were amazingly efficient and everyone shared stuff to make the event go well.
The Averills generosity, the excellent event organization, Penny Behling and VONNIE DAY!!
the beautiful venue the spirit of the teams the incredibly nice people the helpful staff the fantastic volunteers paddling
The beautiful weather and fun times
The boats
The boats
The camaraderie, the actual competition, the huge variety of people, the charity aspect, the amazing staff and volunteers.
The commaradarie, the kindness of the staff and volunteers, the good organization. We really appreciated having the tent provided and erected.
The competition was good; the volunteers were very friendly; the lake was a magnificent place to boat.
The competition was very fun - and it's great to spectate too.

The comraderie amongst the teams is great. The lake is BEAUTIFUL. Wonderful area to participate in dragonboating. The shuttle service was pretty good - maybe a little slow getting back to the vehicle after the first day but the morning commute was speedy. The staff and volunteers at the event were all very nice and friendly, and so were the shuttle volunteers and drivers. It was really nice to see people with smiles on their faces, happy to be there!
The donation to Breast Cancer
The dragon boats
The dragon boats
The energy and enthusiasm of the entire even is wonderful. The staff was great throughout the weekend and all around it was a great weekend. I attended last year and this year was even better!
The energy, efforts- all wonderful.
The energy!!! Everyone is so excited to be there and even people that had disabilities could be involved. The Breast Cancer Ceremony was such a blessing to be involved in. My plan for next year is to put together a Breast Cancer Boat from the Flathead Valley. I also thoroughly enjoyed being coached by experienced Dragon Boat people.
The enthusiasm!
The entire event is so well planned- makes it fun to attend. Location- fabulous- great music (Sat AM).
The event was fun and a new experience1
The event was well organized and the parking situation was much improved over last year. The venue layout was also much better. The marshal area was much less congested than last year.
The excitement generated on the first day.
The excitement, friendliness of people and the great work by all the volunteers helping out.
The experience of working with 20 teammates. Seeing experienced teams race. Being around 90 other teams with the same interest!
The feeling
The Festival was in a beautiful setting, well organized, family friendly, and a very positive event. This was a great team building and fun activity for our workplace. Thank you for all of the hard work that went into organizing and putting this on! We appreciate everyone who worked, volunteered and participated.
The friendliness of everyone, and great organizing
The grounds
The grounds and setting of the event was awesome. It was very well organized.
The layout of the event was great. The sounds system was nice and the announcer had a great voice. I thought I would hate parking and shuttling but it was very nice and worked out great.
The location
the location ~ the Flathead Lake Lodge was fabulous! Was very fun to see my aunt row with a group of Cancer Survivors (The Summit C Slayers from Kalispell).
the location and people
The location is great
The location was fantastic. The bus system was great. The enthusiasm of the organizers and volunteers really showed. The band at the bash and all the raffle prizes.
The location was so beautiful. I feel so fortunate to have been able to visit this property! The festival appeared to be well organized. The event staff and volunteers were wonderful.
The location, the vendors and the number of teams made it a sight to see. The Volunteers, the buses and the parking where not bad at all.
The number of teams and the promotion of dragon boat through corporate teams
The organization and facility. Just the overall event.
The overall atmosphere-fun!
The parking and shuttling worked very well. Lots of washrooms. Lots of vendors. Liked water stations.
The people who assisted in teaching us about rowing the dragon boats.
The play area for the kids - great location, lots of activities, and bathrooms nearby! :)
The scenery and atmosphere
The site for the Festival is perfect. The whole atmosphere is so beautiful and the Dragon Boat racing is very

exciting. The weather was perfect....until Sunday....but that couldn't be helped. The medals were a nice touch to all the participants.
The site was spectacular
the team spirit displayed, everyone was really enjoying themselves
The upbeat atmosphere!
The venue
The venue (Flathead Lake Lodge) was absolutely exceptional. Event was generally well-organized and weather was perfect (good organization on that).
The venue and Flathead Lake are absolutely beautiful and gorgeous....loved visiting Montana for the first time, and I will definitely be back. The food at the venue/park and vendors were great. Generally, people were very friendly. We also enjoyed the dance Saturday night The shuttle bus drivers were very personable and friendly. Also, loved the medals everyone got....nice touch! I was also impressed with Friday night's meeting for the Captain's/steers people.....nice to have the appys, drinks and the chance to buy t-shirts and all. It was also informative. The volunteers loading and unloading paddlers were also very friendly and helpful. Even though Sunday was cancelled due to weather (which wasn't anybody's fault), we appreciated the Captain's meeting that day to decide whether to continue, wait it out, or cancel it. Cancelling was the right decision and we appreciated the organizers for all of their hard work.
The venue The fun
The venue was beautiful! Very friendly volunteers! Banquet was good and band was great!
The venue was spectacular. The medals are awesome- a treasure to have. Volunteers were very friendly.
The venue was wonderful. The atmosphere was great and a very nice group of people. Everyone was friendly and helpful.
The venue was wonderful. The band Sat. night was fantastic. Our rooms at the Red Lion were comfortable and the hotel accommodated us paddlers by moving up the breakfast time, (really enjoyed the omelettes made to order in front of you.
The weather :)! The setting, the hospitality and whole attitude of EVERYONE!
The weather of course made it a spectacular day. Lots of fun with energetic people. A great event for our community.
This was my first time participating and I thought it was awesome! The parking was smooth, the location was spectacular, and the event itself was a lot of fun. I pleasantly surprised at the number of restrooms and their cleanliness.
This was my first year dragon boating ..so to be a participant in a festival of this magnitude was simply amazing :) it was a wonderful experience for me
This was my first year of participation and feel the event is a great event overall. The enthusiasm of the teams was fantastic.
Variety of activities
Venue
Venue beautiful, friendly people and volunteers
Venue was stunning & the event went smoothly with race heats taking place on schedule
Venue, food, stuff for kids to do
Venue, meeting new people
Very beautiful location Staging area for loading and unloading completely out of the elements It was safe
Very enjoyable throughout
Very nice location and well organized
Very organized counting how many boat participants
Very organized Setting was fab Shuttle was easy
Very organized, clean and beautiful location
Very organized, lots of bathrooms, plenty of shuttles from parking lots
Very welcoming fun group. The races were pretty well organized. Beautiful location!
Very well organized

Very well organized although having been our first festival we have nothing to compare it too but things moved along smoothly and efficiently. We loved the festival atmosphere, meeting people from all over, the venue was awesome. It was nice there were things organized for kids too. More of our group will think about bringing families next year. We are a new team who haven't got access to a lot of coaching so learned a lot from other teams which has given us new motivation for improvement.
Very well organized and fun. Delays could be expected but were not unbearable.
Very well organized and safety of participants was well thought out.
Very well organized from start to finish.
Very well organized, friendly/helpful people
Very well organized. All ages could participate. Good cause!
Very well organized. Flathead Lake Lodge is fantastic. Tacoma people are great.
Very well organized. Amazing venue!!! And so much for all ages, as someone who was there with two very young children, the children's carnival was a very nice surprise to keep our daughters busy. I also love how every participant received a medal, it definitely added to morale and was a nice surprise
Very well organized. Great people!
Very well run
Very well set up
vibrant spirit-we were there to participate, not caring too much about high level competition- the venue was spectacular-kudos to the lodge for hosting
Volunteers on golf carts were greatly appreciated as we need to transport team/tent gear to our location. Marshalling area staff worked well.
Was well organized
Watching people
We came by bus and were allowed to park near the lodge, so we didn't have to deal with the highway parking and shuttles. Overall, it was a fun event.
We came the last day and were rained out :(It was a beautiful place :)
Well done! So organized, easy to find things and move around.
well organised and very fun
Well organized
Well organized
Well organized event! Very impressed
Well organized for the size of the event with very courteous and helpful staff and volunteers throughout.
well organized, great location, friendly helpful staff and participants.
well organized!
well organized. flow was nice. activities / vendors / band/ etc was well put together.
What a fun weekend! Vendors and activities were great. The event itself and location were awesome!
Wonderful family affair, well organized, staff was amazing in their willingness to help a bunch of overweight, older women. They were great.
Wonderful venue, well organized, beautiful place to visit.
Worthwhile event
Wow - what a beautiful setting. Very comfortable, very welcoming, great food, water readily available, restrooms clean and available, enjoyed the retail tents and information tents. The people of Montana were awesome to us. Made some new acquaintances. THANK YOU MONTANA!!!!

Question 30: Please tell us what you did not like about The Montana Dragon Boat Festival.

Would like to see a safety boat.
Wishing that there were more food options and more vendors too! Loved seeing the sponsor tents, but it was a little confusing where the food tents were and which were sponsor tents to check out, and which were just for housing the participants, made it kind of awkward sometimes.
Wish we had more vendors for food and snacks and of course did not appreciate the rain :)
Wish there was a place for dogs.
While I really appreciated the recycling efforts I found irony in the 2 page WASTE NOT memo that we received at the last minute. Was kind of a waste in and of itself. Hopefully folks are recycling the paper. We thought it was poor sportsmanship for event sponsors (Glacier Bank) to woo our paddlers away from our boat to theirs. It was very discouraging.
Went to the "Bash" at the Red Lion and it was a disaster! Would not recommend using them again. The band was FANTASTIC! The dance floor was packed from the first song to the last. It was the catering and bar service that was horrible - no food and then when they did bring some out it was cold and not enough for everyone in line. People waited for hours to get something to eat. Very, very disappointing, but the band at least made up for it and the entire night wasn't a bust!
Well you can't control Mother Nature--
Weather :)
WEATHER :(
Weather
Weather
We were not able to attend on Sunday because we had to travel home. We heard from family that the races were cancelled due to weather.
we got poor instruction for paddling, capsized twice on practice day
We didn't get to race on Sunday because of weather
Waiting to race
Waiting for bus on Saturday afternoon to get back to parking area. Not a huge deal and I am not sure how that could be changed.
Waited in line for an hour and forty five minutes for the shuttle bus. Beer was way too expensive. Not enough food vendors - cost/variety. (pretty much trapped their all day with the parking situation, with limited options) Not very clear where a team was supposed to be and when.
Using outdoor toilets....but what are the other options?
Unpredictable weather which no one has control over. Conducting the event earlier in the Summer might be considered.
Two days is too much to commit to.
Two day event. It was very difficult to get 20 people to commit to 2 days. Parking was okay getting to the event and a complete disaster getting back to the parking lot. It also required people to bring a lot of baggage on the bus. A recommendation for next year would be to load more than one bus at a time. Other large events do this and load 3+ at a time. Three busses were in line at times and only one loaded while the others sat idle. Wasted time for all.
Transportation to parking at the end of the day.
Totally with the event
too many dogs and their waste not being picked up
too long of wait for returning shuttles
Too bad re the weather deterioration on Sunday

Though the event was well organized, I felt like the information we received as a team, what we were supposed to do, where we were to be & when, was very lacking. Our captain didn't receive an email and the information she received at the captain's meeting was information we should have had earlier.
They did not have any motor boat in the water during the races to act as a 'chase boat" or safety boat. MUST have this in next event.
There wasn't anything!!!
There was quite a delay of events the first day. The parking is a bit of an issue. We had some participants who needed to be driven in and out and that was a little difficult. They had to come really early before the event started to get in.
There was nothing I did not like about the race
There was a long delay for the shuttle buses taking people back to the designated parking on the Saturday.
There needed to be more organization with the loading and unloading of the boats.
The weather. The Festival should be around July or August. Summer season. Please take off the white boueys in the middle of the race track. Too dangerous.
The weather!!
The weather not cooperating with us on Sunday.
The wait to get on a bus to be returned to the field (parking lot). Something needs to be done with the cost to park if you are a member of a team that paid entry fees to race.
The wait for the shuttle was a bit long on Saturday evening, but I don't know how you could make that better. I would prefer that it was only a one day event. Might not be possible with all the teams signed up, though.
The wait for the shuttle on the way home was too long, aproximately 40 minutes.
the venue provides special challenges, i.e., if wind comes up you can't paddle. A more protected venue might be better, but it wouldn't be as lovely, I'm sure.
the timing of the bad weather.. but its not related to the festival!
The thunderstorm that cancelled our last race. Well, I know you can't help that. Just being funny.
The sound system for the Rose Ceremony was inadequate. Also- as one of the survivors in the boats during the ceremony, the little buzzing camera overhead made sure that we could hear nothing of what was said. It was very distracting during a very emotional ceremony.
The shuttling was awful; we waited for a bus for 20 minutes twice, over an hour once (half the drivers were sent home 3 hours too early?!?!), and 35 minutes once. We did the same shuttling for the spartan race in May, and there was NO waiting. The difference was that at the spartan race they loaded 3-4 busses at a time, not just one.
The shuttle service on Saturday afternoon for the return to the parking area was unsatisfactory. My team competed in the second last race of the day and the lineup for the shuttle was probably 45 minutes. Many more buses were needed at this time. Some of us also had tickets for the Dragon Boat Bash at the Red Lion and because of races running late and the slow shuttle service, it was after 7:00 pm before we arrived at the Bash. Even though it was announced at the lake that the Bash would accommodate late arrivals, the sampler bar was closed, and in 2 attempts to get food, there was absolutely no hot food remaining at the buffet. When we complained to a Red Lion manager at about 8:30 pm about no food, no apology was made and we were asked to leave. I have emailed the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce with my complaint but have had no reply. The Red Lion episode has left me with very negative feelings. Mona Messner 148 Canyoncrest Point West Lethbridge, Alberta , Canada 403-380-4760 mmessner@shaw.ca
The shuttle busses coming to the event were good but going home the line was so long and hot and did not move as fast as I would have liked it to.
The shuttle bus system, although efficient, was not easily accessed from where we stayed (near Polson). It may be advantageous to have a southern shuttle bus location as well as the one from north of Bigfork.
The shuttle
The Sat Party - Food issues (nothing more needs to be said)

<p>the races got behind schedule - i realize when dealing with a bunch of amateurs (myself included)its probably harder to keep on schedule, but the idea i had was one set of teams should be rowing out to the start line, at same time one set of teams is competing, while the set of teams just done are rowing back in.</p>
<p>the parking was not great. I had to lug all of my bags,stroller,chair and cooler that was not fun at all.</p>
<p>The Parking and shuttling back and forth was a bit far. We stood and waited a minimum of half an hour in the heat on Saturday, and people who were standing behind us were starting to get restless and irritated and once a Bus pulled up, they moved ahead of people who were standing in front of them. It would have been nice to have been able to have at least one team members vehicle parked at the park for easier access for packing up our tents, etc, especially given Sunday was torrential rain, thunder and lightening. There wasn't enough signage on the highways....we saw one Dragon Boat sign, but it was facing in the wrong direction. Also, It would have been nice to have the awards for the best tent decorations and team spirit announced a little earlier. The boats were extremely tippy and hard to steer, and very narrow to sit in seat 1 and 10. The boats weren't consistent and we got a different style of boat for the second race, and because of t his, our steers person had a very difficult time steering the boat in our second race. When we were trying to make our way back to the dock, the volunteers were trying to help, but we couldn't hear or see them as they were standing directly behind our drummer....it was chaos trying to paddle back to the loading dock. I think it also would have been nice if an organizer could have come up to our team and talked with us...we weren't sure if we should have inquired as to whether or not we would have been able to do a "re-do" of our second race because of the difficulty our steers person had with the second boat? And we weren't sure what the reason was for the other boats who had had a chance to do another race, were. The Saturday night dinner/dance was fun, but the dinner itself wasn't very good... there wasn't a whole lot of variety other than tacos....and then they were running out of food and people were starting to get annoyed for having to wait f or them to bring out more food. Also, the wine sampling was barely a mouthful, and when I asked if I could purchase a glass of the Huckleberry wine inside, I was told no, it was too expensive.</p>
<p>The only thing that needs to be improved is the number of food vendors. There were not enough of them, which resulted in very long line ups, and some racers not having enough time to stand in line to get lunch. I tried to take a cooler with, but even a small one would not fit on the bus.</p>
<p>The line up to get onto the buses Sunday was long, not sure what could be done to alleviate the problem. We did not get caught in the rain but I am sure many did.</p>
<p>The line to await busses at the end of the first day of the festival was excessively long. I understand that 7 of the 12 busses were sent home prior to the festival ending making the line extra long. Additionally, the races ran long putting more people at the venue later than the festival expected to run. My husband and I had purchased Dragon Bash tickets and were unable to enjoy any of the cocktail hour/tasting and also were late to the dinner because of the amount of time it took to board the busses to parking at the end of the day. We stood in line for about 45 minutes.</p>
<p>The lanes were sometimes shifted. Were corrected often. At some time in the future when able to afford the festival may want to obtain a professional lane system. For now as the festival is growing what is available is okay.</p>
<p>the first day was a mess and a hour behind pfd or paddles were a problem to get . that the times were not entered right . for some teams. I understand that busing was a huge problem. it took us over and hour just standing in line to get a bus back to parking . not a good thing at all .</p>
<p>The festival being 2 days (entire weekend). 1 day is just enough. Saturday was a great day, but long. To come back Sunday was too much to ask people.</p>
<p>The fact that there was no safety boat. We always have safety boats on the water following the races. They can stop trouble and try to avoid crashes and assist teams that have emergencies. We were very disapponted that there were not medals for the breast cancer race. This race is the main reason we particiate in festivals. If you are not going to present medals that we most likely will not come back.</p>
<p>The entry and exit of the boats, a lifting walkway to the spectators island would be a better way of getting the boats into the cove. Marshalling tents or roped areas for teams going out.</p>
<p>the dragon bash food was unaccepetable especially considering the athelates need protein and choses.</p>

The divisions and the first race of the second day, you did not race against people in your division and it made it hard to follow for everyone. Having only three divisions for 90plus teams is also hard, in the Lethbridge Festival that I attended they had divisions of 8 but even if you did 12 or 16 that would still be more chances to win.
The coffee cart ran out of Soy, nonfat milk and closed way too early!!!!
The cleanliness of the bathrooms....ick. I was a paddler, and everything kept changing at the last minute, that is, location of where we were to place our tent. It also would have been helpful to have more than one practice. We were just able to get the mandatory practice in.
The children's activities were outrageously expensive. I would have expected them to be free or on a donation basis. As a result, our children (4 of them) were unable to participate due to the cost and were very disappointed and bored for a lot of the time we were there.
The buffet supper at the Red Lion was a total rip off. I guess we expected to have a buffet not just tacos.....which if you dont like tacos you had no alternative. Not to mention that they were out of just about everything as soon as they announced the meal was ready. I have a large family and could have done a better job of catering than the "caterers" did. Wont be buying a ticket for any of this next year....live and learn.
The boats watching sometimes were too close resulting in extra wakes. Also, I sometimes saw local kayakers and others paddling in the race area.
The boat staff were not friendly or helpful-they seemed almost put out by us.
The bees
The bash - the food screw-ups were disappointing. We had our own bus, but if we had to wait for the shuttle at the end of the day, that would likely have been something to complain about judging by the massive lineup we saw as we passed them.
The 2-day commitment
that you can't-control the weather ;)
team tents were a little close together-hard to have space for 20 paddlers Parking was so far from the venue we walked from our motel carrying all equipment.
Survey is way too long
Sunday's weather but what can one do about that
Sunday's cancellation!! (Understood as safety comes first, but disappointing!) Need a bit more variety in food concessions which may also help reduce line ups and wait times.
Suggest more onsite signage for tent locations, food vendors. Also suggest more activities for children
Starting late and running late. Loading of boat thru another boat. Two day event instead of just one day.
Some porta potties need to be placed over by the area where participants wait to get into the boats. They were placed too far away and some people almost missed their races because of it. Needed more paddles available. Sometimes it was mass confusion trying to get ahold of one in time for your race.
Some noticeable gaps in communication to participants -- i.e "No Dogs Rule" which is reasonable but needed to be communicated beforehand to both paddlers and spectators. Most dragon-boat races allow folks to bring their pets so some folks did which did cause problems. A second communication lapse was not clearly letting teams know when the event would end on Sunday. Most team participants assumed it would end at 4:00 to 5:00 PM Sunday, not 2:00 PM. Again most races have a second day heat with all teams participating which puts the time a few hours later in the day.
Some difficulty traversing over an extra boat and onto a wobbly dock to load and unload.
Slow going home
Signage was poor on Friday for practice round
Signage was hard on site and I could never find the appropriate building.
Shuttle service, our hotel was closer to walk
Shuttle service from parking. Loading one bus at a time was not a good thing. Leaving the festival on Saturday was a gong show. Buses could not keep up to the amount of people leaving at the same time. People walking up the road to highway were rude and would not move out of the way for the buses which

made it difficult for thee buses to leave
Seems like every festival we go to has different boats. These were very tippy. Our steersperson is reltively inexperienced and had trouble adapting to them. We could have requested a steersperson but wanted her to get racing experience. Would love it if the boats everywhere were standardized.
Seemed a bit dis-organized. There was confusion regarding the shuttle (but not sure if this was festival fault or communication within team.) Some confusion as well during racing - i.e. there was not a lot of direction from any officials. The loud speaker could have also been louder or had a 2nd set of speakers.
red lion hotel food, beans were missing, rice was not very good (not even mexican rice!), churros were overdone (should be soft and moist)
Rain!
rain
Races running behind already @9:45am
Practices on Friday am are hard to make for our team as most people work and can not get up there early Friday afternoon.
Practice time flexibility
Paying 10 dollars to shuttle
Paying \$10 for parking to take the shuttle wasn't the greatest, but at least the wrist-bands got us in for the 2nd day. As mentioned, the shuttle in the afternoon on the first day was slow (i.e. a big line up before we got onto the shuttle, it took a lot of standing around before we were in). The timing on the first day seemed really off. I am not sure what the hold up was but everything was falling way behind schedule. It was like, 'hurry up and wait. for 45 more minutes'. The 2nd day was far better. I also didn't like having to pay \$5 for a single hot dog. I know it's a concession-style, but that was really a bit of a rip-off. If there was pop and chips included, that would make it a better deal. Disappointed with that and the next day we didn't buy lunch there.
Participants should NOT have to pay for parking and it should be convenient for carrying in paddles, tents, coolers, chairs, etc. If the parking is not right at the event then one should be able to drop off the team and all equipment at the event and also pick them up. You had several different racing boats. All racing boats should be identical.
Parking/shuttle
Parking was problematic for those without a VIP parking pass. Also, the Yellow Jacket hornets were a far too abundant.
parking was horrible but what can be done ?? (Wrong side of lake Wind and wave wise)
Parking was a nightmare! Bus drivers very friendly but participants should be able to park in fields as they did last year or shouldn't have to pay to be shuttled!
Parking was a little far away.
Parking lack of practice time
Parking in the field.
Parking and shuttling.
parking and shutteling was an issue. the vendors should be able to park closer
Parking :(
Parking
Parking
Parking
Paddlers party meal was not good value for money. Hilton can do better with handling a buffet for this size group. Early in serving key items for mexican menu were unavailable. Food was stone cold by the time I was through the line-up. Annoyed that more was available for late buffet at 10:30 when most paddlers did not want to eat. Safety patrol boat not available when one of our paddlers was injured during a race on Saturday.

Our tent was 16 way to far for me as a Manager to hear what was being said, I had to keep going back and forth to ensure if the festival was on track or early or late with heats. I like the format with categories to have an A heat then a B heat so teams can metal 1, 2, or 3 in heat A or B. the way it is set up the only top 3 teams. Get bling. But I really liked that everyone got a very nice participant metal...thanks.
Our team was earning support \$ for ongoing brain cancer expenses for my grand daughter.
Our steer person collided us with a boat and a buoy our first race!
Our first time for any Dragon Race- so everything seems perfect!
Organization of the festival was lackluster. Morning races were delayed from the get go, volunteers were disorganized and were more concerned about little things than lining up paddlers. Not enough competitive teams, and not enough womens teams. Friday night meeting was long and drawn out. Lane assignments were not talked about, yet clothing was?? It seemed that most of the teams had little or no practice which can be a safety concern. Safety was also not addressed at the Friday meeting until someone brought it up.
only three races
One of the women organizing teams was yelling at our group to move after other organizers had told us to stay where we were.
On our last race the majority of our boat did not have the right size paddles (red size paddles). It was rumored people were stashing paddles in there team tent or getting them too early before their race and the men were using smaller paddles instead of the correct length.
Nothing/ but the lines
Nothing. everything was great.
Nothing.
Nothing!
Nothing!
NOTHING, I LOVED IT!
nothing, all was great as could be
Nothing
Not enough variety of food
Not enough variety in food
Not enough practice sessions. People participate because they enjoy the sport. It would be great to have the option of getting a lot more boat time in. We didn't know there was a photographer taking team photos so we missed it. The computer registration was very difficult. And, the system wouldn't let me get back to the names to change anything. I felt the same way about the Spartan communications through their registration system. I had to go through registering just to see who was on my team.
Not enough options for lunch... Noodles, burritos, and pulled pork seemed to be the only food available. It was hard to hear our steersman when entering and leaving the loading docks.

Not enough food vendors
not enough food vendors
Not enough food vendors, not enough trash cans
Not enough food options. What I had (from Flathead Lake Lodge) was excellent, but I would like to have been able to get some snacks, etc. besides just a meal. Missed ice cream/dessert (I know a vendor didn't show). Biggest dislike was the 1 hour wait for a shuttle upon departure. While the shuttle ran fairly consistently, had there been two departure points possible (if lodge access can accommodate it), that would have sped up the departures significantly.
Not enough food booths. More variety of food.
Not enough assortment of food vendors
Not all the race times were announced for teams as they were coming back into the dock and the sound system did not reach the far side of the venue for team tents over there; a little bit uncertain of how the marshalling area was set-up, a little chaotic there.
Not a wide variety of vendors
Not a lot of announcing before and during races. The docks are dangerous to get in and out of dragonboats. Long lineups at the food vendors
No tent for our team
no safety boat, the meal Sat night
No information that dogs not allowed. Only one vendor for breakfast.
No complaints, could have used a few more coffee vendors though
Need more practice sessions especially for beginner paddlers. Captain information for team was slow in coming and was a bit frustrating for the team.
Need more food and beverage vendors!
N/A
N/A
My teams whining about not winning the Best Booth award.
music playing in the background made it hard to hear when it was your turn to line up and what your score was. We were the very last boat and the booths had already closed and we were ready to have a drink or food and there wasn't any available. Also, don't have the last bus leave so soon after the last race. Had to rush. Keep booths and activities open longer.
most Concessions were pretty expensive, our camp was on a hill so we sloped down but it was okay
More washrooms! By the end of Saturday, the washrooms near the front entrance were almost overflowing and disgusting. Keep races on time! Too much time in between races, staging should happen faster and boats should be ready to race.
More vendors and bigger variety
More team practice
More food vendors
More buses were needed, especially for Saturday at the end of the day. Our bus driver told us that at the last minute, the group who arranged for the bus transportation decided they would eliminate 6 of the buses as not needed. This was a mistake.
Miscommunication about shuttle- was communicated that shuttle would be available from Kalispell. Very clear communication about NO DOGS/PETS
Maybe have more food options.
Low volume at lake front.
Loved it all
Long walk to bathroom

long wait at the end of the day to catch the shuttle back to parking
Long lineups for food. No tent for mustering for the races. Inconsistency of the different types of boats -- they should all be the same. The bash started too soon to get there on time. The bash food was mediocre at best. The thunder and lightning but of course that's out of human hands.
Long lines to get on buses on way out Saturday afternoon. Was a little frustrating, but understandable. Everyone working the event was GREAT!!!!
Long lines for concessions- could use more options
Little confusing as to how the finals were determined, we received a lot of different answers coming from officials/volunteers. Perhaps more signage (and bigger) signage when it comes to the results would also be helpful.
Limited food vendors and the cost of one vendor was outrageous for the amount of food. I paid \$8 for one rice wrap cut into 4 pieces. Wow. Glad I never brought my family - I could not afford to feed them at the event. With having to take the shuttle to the event, it was not easy nor practical to try to bring a cooler or prepared food with us. I felt like we were being gouged
Limited food choices for number of people there. Ran out of food a couple of times .
Limited food choices and options for kids. Price point was a little high also.
Liked it all!
Lightning on Sunday. Unqualified steersperson from NatFlood should not be allowed in/on boats!
Lateness of races on first day. Not enough bathrooms. Ran out of food at the Bash.
Lack organization of the races and announcements of the qualifiers and running so late one day one, loooooooooong lines for shuttles, paying for parking
Lack of signage from the main road to the festival. Wait times between races. Not able to stay after the races to socialize/have drinks.
Lack of seats
Lack of safety boats. Mistake in allowing practices to go ahead during heavy waves. Too long arriving for boats needing help. Difficulty for some paddlers climbing over one boat to get to the next. Not enough healthy food options.
Lack of safety boats on water Lack of race chase boats Breast race only a ceremonial race of 250 with no medals
Lack of parking, especially that each team did not get one parking pass to haul in items or team members that were unable to walk distances. It was very time consuming to bring items in then have to go to shuttle parking and wait for a but then walk back into the venue
Lack of parking for teams. BCS ceremony could be shortened up a bit. It was a long time in the sun to be sitting in the boats.
Lack of food vendors/variety
lack of food vendors
Lack of busses on Saturday afternoon. Race updates and standings at race site and on Facebook, web site & were sporadic and not kept current.
Lack of Bigfork participation. Possible bus route through Downtown Bigfork for every 4th or 5th bus (Clearly marked.) Fixed Drop-off / Pick-up location.
It would be very hard to "fix" it, but it's hard to have everything you might need in terms of food and clothing with vehicles parked so far away. I'm not a fan of the unabashed push to spend lots of money. The event is clearly designed as a money-maker for local businesses.
It would be nice to have the portapotties be a bit cleaner or perhaps more such that they were not so "full".
It was too long. The first day was fun. Adding the second day made it seem more laborious. I was ready to be done by the end of the first day, and was disappointed to have to come back for another day - when I had seen all of the vendors, visited with friends, watched other races - and knew I would be spending a bunch of time just waiting for the 3rd race.
It was slightly annoying to not be able to park near the event so extra things could be stored safely in a vehicle. However it was understandable when I saw the area why it's not practical to have everyone park

there.
It was hard to figure out what position we were in as regards the competition. The Dragon Bash at the Red Lion was a total disaster and left a very bad taste in my mouth. No food in the buffet, happen to our table twice. The poor quality of the food and the suriness of the staff. Despite the problems, no apology from the caterers. The Bash was not times in the actual event. Two years in a row missed the tasting due to being on the lake. Will not go to the bash next year.
It was all good.
It seemed you had too many teams. Maybe you should have decided how many you could manage and cut off at that number. The line-ups for food and coffee (particularly coffee) were long. The parking and shuttle buses were a bit of a struggle on the first morning. Changing the number of boats was a problem for people participating on more than one team. Had there been 8 boats (as was your plan until a week before the event) enabled people to jump from one boat to another. That option was lost when you increased the number of boats.
It is all great!
inefficient. Races way behind schedule. Long lines at concessions. Parking
Incredibly disappointed in the tent contest. I did not know who could vote. There wasn't enough attention given to the contest. I think a panel of judges would be more appropriate. After talking with many others, they feel the same way. People don't know enough to go walk around and judge accordingly. I feel the team that won this year at flathead had nothing to do with recycle-able material while other tents really did. I saw tents, our own included, that were amazing. You could see the hard work and details (such as recycling) into consideration. I thought many tents were overlooked because of poor location with no traffic, and lack of spectators and team members being informed enough about it. Pleas choose an unbiased panel of judges for next year.
In spite of the media coverage regarding the Friday practice, I did not feel a sense of concern when our boat swamped. We had a handicapped person on board and fortunately, we were able to stay in the boat while the rest of the team swam the boat in. If the water had been as cold as last year, I would have been in trouble for the amount of time it took us to get in and I would not have been able to be responsible for anyone else.
In my opinion, there was a lack of variety in the vendors, especially food vendors. The races ran a little behind schedule on Saturday, but that is to be expected at any large event.
I would prefer one day. That being said,I realize it's set up for those that are traveling.
I would MUCH prefer a 1 day event. 2 days is very undesirable to me and the vast majority of those I have talked to. Also would love to see more variety of food vendors
I wold have loved to see some more vendors on site to help occupy time between races.
I wish there would have been more and cheaper food options. I wish there was a speaker over in the tent areas for teams to be able to hear. I didn't like that it was 2 days.
I was quite upset about the fact that the breast cancer race was for demonstration only and that we did not know this in advance. Our team came in first and I expected to get a gold medal like we would at any other festival if we placed - we got nothing for our efforts. It was quite demeaning that we raced a shortened race - something we have never done before either in this category. Do the organizers feel that people who have had cancer can't paddle a whole race or not deserve a placement medal for their efforts? If so, why even have a breast cancer division? A breast cancer race should include survivors only - no supporters at all. We race in women's open - we are not disabled. We are proud of who and what we are. During the rose ceremony you could not clearly hear the words being spoken. I realize that you are a new festival, only two years old, but really! We deserved a medal and should have gotten one -yes I am totally bummed out!
I was quite surprised/disappointed that they were chargin \$5 per child for the bouncy castles, when these activities are free everywhere else we've been. The raw race results were posted quite quickly, but it was difficult to find out when we'd race the following day (could be posted sooner on the physical boards, as well as online). Furthermore, we were on the bubble to make the final races on Sunday, and it was difficult to know if we should stay around, or if we should go home with no races left. We never were able to get a clear answer from anyone, and in the end we just left without knowing for sure. Most races seem to place

the weaker teams first on the Sunday, saving the more competitive teams for later in the morning Sunday. These faster races are often better for spectators, and the teams are better equipped to handle rougher water that may come up later in the morning.
I was part of the rose ceremony. It was way too long. Very hot sitting in the boat for a 71 year old.
I was expecting more 'vendors' for retail goods. Also, having boats available both Friday (during practice) and on Saturday should rescues were to be needed.
I was disappointed that my team was only going to have three races. There were 90+ teams and only 15 would be in three finals. Had the final races been held, most of the other teams and spectators would have been long gone.
I thought the new parking area this year was a good idea, but the bottleneck for buses at the end of the races Saturday needs to be avoided somehow next year. The food available in front of the Lodge seemed a bit expensive.
I suggest that all boats be numbered with clear signs and that the lane number correspond directly to its boat number
I liked everything. But I heard second hand that the wait lines for the shuttles to the remote parking were too long.
I liked everything but we were the lucky ones that got to park in the pasture.
I like everything- even the shuttle
I know with any event this size it's hard to keep the portapotties clean, but I arrived around 8 am Saturday and they were already needing attention.
I have nothing negative to say about the festival.
I didn't dislike anything!
I did not like the two day format. It was difficult to return to race the second day. I would much prefer to split the divisions somehow and let teams complete their races in one day. Also, the porta-pottie situation is still bad. They were full by the middle of day one.
i did not like that we were not given a medal ceremony for our silver medals!!! We had to do our own ceremony! Know that the weather was beyond their control. Also, perhaps there was a problem with consistent type of boats used in one of our races? EVeryone was supposed to use the same style of boat
I did not appreciate, as a team to not be allowed to have a least one team vehicle on site for our team items. I was upset that I had to pay to get on the "complimentary shuttle". I rode with a team member to park the team truck at our companies site near the field and we had to pay to get on the bus. I had no money since my purse was at the site, the people were rude and not helpful. It was terrible to have to borrow money for the "free" 'ride. Not cool!
I can't think of anything.
I can't think of anything! :)
How far away parking is
Hot tea was not available at any vendors, only coffee.
Having to wait so long between racing.
Hard to locate paddles before racing. It seemed like there was not enough.
Getting the life jackets and paddles better organized would be helpful. There was always a scramble to get these items before loading a boat. Perhaps staked off areas for 5 teams with jackets and paddles at each spot. Then there wouldn't be a "feeding frenzie" at the jacket pile and paddle can. Might help.
getting rained out on the second day waiting in line for shuttle
Getting crowded
Food (coffee) not plentiful early in AM before first races Bus service drop off so far from site - esp carrying tents, supplies
Felt like an outsider at a community event. Festival competitions were geared toward local teams best tent etc. Would've liked more women's competitive teams! Needed another coffee vendor and a salad bar/vendor and a breakfast vendor! The Survivor race choice of music. Best ones have been ones we

recognise and whole crowd can sing along too. Not the right occasion to showcase a musician however good they are!
Far
Everything fine asn excellent. Great job Montana people. Bravo
Events delayed
Don't feel participation medals are necessary. Could probably save \$\$\$\$\$\$.
Disorganized, mix ups on timing, issues not resolved quickly
Disappointed that the Sunday race times were not included for the rankings. I understand that not all teams were able to compete on Sunday. I also would have preferred for the Sunday starts time to be 8 am for teams that had to travel home after the event.
disappointed in the lack of concession food choices
Did not let people know that dogs were NOT allowed
Delayed start of the races
Could you order sun for both days next year?
Could have used more buses to get back to parking Saturday - or had some activities that might temper the departure times. There was this sort -of impression that proceeds would be for charitable causes but it was not clear. If there would have been rain, parking would have been a mess. I realize the Lodge is a venue able to accomodate the event but this is the windy side of the lake and I think you would have about a 50% chance of cancellation in any given year due to conditions. I did have fun watching the boats swamp on Friday though :).
Could have been more healthy choices for food, eg fresh fruit, veggies, etc.
Could have a few more vendors selling "healthier" food. When I'm about to race I generally don't like to eat hot dogs or burgers before. Sandwiches, salads, veggie platters, etc. work well for that. I also really didn't like the parking situation. It seemed okay at first but the lineups to catch the bus at the end of the day were extremely long. It's also a bit difficult to catch a bus when you have a lot of equipment to carry (paddles, PFDs, backpacks, chairs, etc.)
Cost of parking: \$5.00 would suffice
coordination & information for the races at the docks
Cool weather
Clouds
By passed downtown Bigfork. We support the event so please support Bigfork.
Busing. Due to narrow roads probably the best it could be. Very long line up on saturday though
Boat- need to all be the same style. Marshalling - need a tent for those up next. More Coffee vendors More food vendors - less fudge , snow cones etc. more Dragon boating Vendors. Lousy signage on the Friday for practice.
Bigfork business owners seemed to not be able to capture the visibility of the participants and spectators.
Being swamped
Bathrooms, Really need to have separate bathrooms for Men and Women PLEASE
As a recreational participant, Montana Office of Tourism, I found the trainers we were assigned on Friday to be incompetent and unprofessional. This is a stark contrast to the previous year. The training in the previous year was outstanding.
Although it was well done, I believe the number of teams was a little too much to pack into one day. I would suggest a registration cutoff, like other festivals. That many teams caused very long wait times between racing.
Advancement system, where fasterst teams race earliest. Mis-match of boats BUK 1's vrs BUK 2's in same heat.
Add a few more coffee and breakfast options so their are less line ups at the race sight. The Supper on Saturday night was a DISASTER. Please do not book it at the this venue again. Their was not enough food, we stood in the one for 40 minutes before they announced what the problem was and that was only

<p>after someone in the line up insisted they do so. This venue was nice enough and had adequate space but appeared to be ill prepared for a group of this size. They need to include other bar/alcohol options not everyone enjoyed the local wine/liquor and beer. You could include this but also have other options. People are willing to pay for what they want to please provide them options. Overall the The staff at the conf/hotel venue were awful and ill prepared for a fun Saturday night. PS the ladies behind the Bar were grumpy ? Really a grumpy bar tender. The male behind the bar tried to do his best to make up for his female grumpy colleagues.</p>
<p>Access to shuttle parking area</p>
<p>Absolutely nothing... other than bees :)</p>
<p>Absolutely nothing</p>
<p>2 days... I would have preferred just one day or else allow for on site camping.</p>
<p>2 days long. It may not be possible, but I think it's easier to attend if we only need to commit to 1 day.</p>
<p>2 days</p>
<p>1. No chase/safety boats during the racing. Our boat was accidentally rammed by another boat during the race. One of our paddlers was hurt. When we raised our paddles in the universal distress signal, there was no help to guide us. We paddled in and called for paramedic help. They met us immediately at the dock and assessed the situation and treated our injured paddler. The response from staff was fantastic once we reached the dock. 2. The Breast Cancer Race was short (250m) as opposed to 500m. This is a serious race for the teams. We raced hard to claim first place; but were disappointed not to be awarded medals for this accomplishment. 3. The flying drone overhead during the Rose Ceremony was noisy and made hearing the speeches and songs difficult for us in the boats as it was overhead.</p>
<p>1 bus loaded at a time</p>
<p>(The weather, but that was no one's fault! We made the best of it with retail therapy.) Many of the people who attended Sat. nights banquet/dance were upset with the choice of menu - Mexican & the fact that the Red Lion staff were not at all prepared for 500 guests. They ran out of food which was quite major for those not at the beginning of the line. A particular woman who seemed in charge at the Red Lion buffet was really rude to her staff. The young people working for her were great we all felt sorry for them! Every other person encountered especially the volunteers were awesome. I feel like I should have offered more gratuities! The young fellow who drove our shuttle bus from the venue site to the parking lot was a sweetie! He turned his radio up when the bus full of passengers started singing & clapping to his radio song. It was priceless!</p>
<p>Yellowjackets</p>
<p>:)</p>
<p>-the lack of knowledge by the parking attendants was a bit frustrating, they didn't tell us to put on the green wristbands, told us they didn't know what they were for, and as the parking was labelled as \$10 per vehicle we didn't figure it out</p>
<p>- Although Kalispell was advertised everywhere, it was really in Bigfork. Getting hotel accommodations in Bigfork would've made a big difference. - The parking situation was understandable, although people (especially paddlers) should be allowed to drop of</p>

Question #31: What suggestions do you have for improvements to The Montana Dragon Boat Festival?

You did a good job. Thank you!
Would be helpful if announcements re teams to marshall included heat # as well. then others would have an idea of how close their heat is.
work on parking and busing back to the lot . I would charge a fee and donate it to a cancer group. Like Save a sister!!! more different food vendors with healthy choices . some where for older ppl to sit and watch the race. or tell ppl to bring there own seats . i did not here that in one add of the several i heard on local radio !!!
While there is some publicity about the event, and it's growing, I don't feel it has been maximized. Not sure if there are limits on participation, but I only see this growing more and more across this part of the country. Would love to visit with someone in charge about a company I consult with, Epio Solutions — based in Seattle and Missoula. I feel by listening, it could help make this an even better event. Please contact me if you have interest.... Jim O'Day (406.370.3020)
Very importantly, better boats....less tippy and less narrow and a chance to have been able to talk with an organizer to see if we qualified for a re-do of our disastrous second race. More signage on the highways. A few more shuttle buses, even just a couple moreAnd allowing at least one vehicle from each team to park at the venue for easier availability for loading and unloading all of our tents, decorations, chairs, etc...especially when the weather is bad. Better food variety for the Saturday night's dinner. The coffee vendors had the biggest line-ups, so more coffee vendors would have been nice. The water stations were far and few between and hard to find. More portable bathrooms throughout the venue would have been nice too. Announcement of who won the best tent decorations and team spirit awards done earlier (Saturday).
Vendors who sell fresh fruit and veggies..or did i just miss them
Unusual way to determine final place for overall races: usually in other festivals, the Sunday race times aren't averaged into final place, it's just Saturday race times that are averaged together to place you for Sunday's races. I would prefer if Sunday semi final race time not be averaged in, that it be a final time for qualifying for the final race.
Try to organize the volunteers better and work on getting more competitive teams
Train the volunteers to number boats correctly
Told to bring chairs
Thought it was cool that there were so many participants from all over and that had come so far. Maybe it would be cool to have state flags representing where they were all from somewhere on the grounds??? Also, more food options.
There rally were too many boats for the facility. This lead to the races runnin g late. Need to cap the event and keep the cap.
there are 2 types of boats used, BUK1 and BUK2 from Tacoma and from Edmonton. To attract more competitive teams in the future, they look into these little details that rec teams dont. Please use the same types of boats for every heat to have the closest to fair race on the water. Thanks.
the parking this year was a great idea. but expensive.
The only two things that I would suggest improvement on would be transportation back to the parking lot a the end of the day. Transportation to the event in the morning was great but at the end of the day I had to stand in line for over half an hour and others on my team that left a little later had to wait over an hour. My second suggestion would be a more active announcer and better identification of which teams are racing.
The only suggestion I have is to make more busses available at the end of the day. The shuttle coming to Flathead Lake Lodge earlier in the day was very quick, but we had to wait for about an hour in line at the end of the day.
The meal at the bash did little to accommodate food allergies. An alternate menu for those with Celiac (gluten free) would have been greatly appreciated. I had to ask if they could make me a salad and they easily accommodated my needs. Thanks

<p>The Dragon Bash was a total waste of my money as there was no food that I could eat. I have a citrus allergy (the chicken was in a lime sauce, the beef was way too spicy and they ran out of vegetables. There was only shredded lettuce and cheddar but no 'real salad" so I paid \$25.00 for nothing) Mexican food is not a good food to have to feed that many people, it needs to be more basic, like beef or chicken and something for vegetarians. The hotel was totally unprepared for the number of people, they ran out of food at about 40 - 50 people and never got more food out until almost 9 PM. Totally unacceptable. As well the woman in charge of the staff for the buffet was extremely rude both to us the paying people and to her staff. The band was wonderful though. We will not attend this Bash again in the future should we come back to festival, which we may well do as the festival itself was great.</p>
<p>The actual racing is done so smoothly that I can't think of anything to change. Can't wait to put a team together for next year and maybe even join the local team here for practice during the year. Overall, the entire thing is run beautifully - just ditch the Red Lion for a different venue that has better catering and an actual bar with a liquor license! Thank you for a great weekend!</p>
<p>Thank you! Add wine! (not just beer)</p>
<p>Tent contest panel of judges. More information about where to go for team photos.</p>
<p>suggest limit number of teams</p>
<p>Start racing earlier on the Sunday morning. A few more food vendors, especially for vegetarians.</p>
<p>Start at 8AM on time. Run 5 boats at a time. Every one races once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Use the best race time to place in finals. Finals at 5:30 or 6PM. One day event. Works well. Contact Lake Superior Dragon Boat Festival. They run 100 teams; 1 day event; 350-400meters. Sunday will help your economy when everybody spends money in the towns in the area!</p>
<p>Sound system, volume could be higher near water front.</p>
<p>Somehow improve the loading and unloading of the boats, that seemed to be where some of the hold up was. Have more variety of food vendors (actual food vendors, not just snacks), and have the prices be a little better if possible.</p>
<p>Signs for marshalling. EX. #7 for people in 7th heat.</p>
<p>Shuttle service needs to run faster on the way home from the event, too long of a wait.</p>
<p>Should include 1 VIP pass for all teams and continue to provide 2 for sponsors. Also, provide access for VIP vehicles to get closer to the tent areas to load and unload gear. There's always a lot of stuff and it's almost all heavy. Allow for VIP parking back where the staff parking was this year. Clearer paths for the team tents so tents don't encroach upon those in the middle making it difficult to get to. It was very unorganized and we were set well off the main walk way. Possibly include shade tents in the spectator area to minimize umbrellas. Also, to avoid confusion, communicate all your needs to the team captain at once rather than spreading it out through many emails. For instance, I had all the releases signed by mid-August. Then I had to go back to the team to get practice waivers signed because it wasn't mentioned. You need more red and blue paddles, or have a process that doesn't allow people to put jackets on and grab paddles until their team has been instructed to because they're next to load.</p>
<p>should have a seniors division</p>
<p>Shorten it back to 1 day.</p>
<p>Set helmsman for all teams for the entire event</p>
<p>See above...definitely find a way for teams to complete their races in one day. Not sure how to remedy the bathroom situation.</p>
<p>See above.</p>
<p>See above.</p>
<p>See above.</p>
<p>See above.</p>
<p>See above re women's teams and vendors! Great event! Organisers should give themselves a great big back slap!</p>
<p>See above about the event being earlier in the year.</p>
<p>See above</p>
<p>see above</p>

Scheduling of races should be improved so as to not run behind schedule. Perhaps the number of entrants should be capped at a lower number. In one of our races there was a large wake that made it difficult for us. A no-wake zone should be instituted and enforced as I know that the same problem occurred in some other races as well. Shuttle service to the parking area should be improved so there is minimal waiting. Shuttle service from the parking area to the lake was good both Saturday and Sunday morning, but Saturday late afternoon return to parking was unsatisfactory.
Right now it is the best venue we have. Most out of town dragon boaters said it was the BEST they have attended. (pretty well done after only 2 years !!)
Restrooms need to be changed or need to be emptied more often. In the afternoon they were pretty disgusting.
Rescue boats available
Real busses
Publicize to other festival
Practice safety
Possibly as the festival grows, include more activities for spectators.
Please, please, use judges (6-10) when judging the best tent in future. (People that don't know the teams well so they can be objective.) I felt it was unfair that the tent that won didn't do much to decorate or show team spirit. The voting method doesn't work, you don't know how many times 1 person voted and they are just voting for their own tent. Mountain West Bank had the best tent, best team spirit & they worked so hard on it and deserved to win the best tent. It just didn't seem very fair. They had so many compliments on it & many were disappointed on how the voting went. Thank you.
Please make sure how to classify competitive or non-competitive teams. There are too many competitive teams that doesn't belong to competitive team and doesn't have competitive time. Competitive time are atleast 2:20 below..
Please ask people to load to the back of the bus.
Perhaps send out an email on how the event will be officiated to teams and volunteers/officials. Bigger signage would help show how teams are doing.
Parking place, more food varieties, more entertainment activities
parking is difficult but i can't think of better option other than more buses for leaving the grounds
Parking
Overall, just fantastic. Maybe post maps in more high traffic area but that's it.
Overall, I feel like it was a great event. The shuttles from the facility seemed to work very well.
Online waivers! Our festival (Lethbridge) does everything online and its a lot easier to manage. It's also helpful to require a land manager to communicate with festival officials.
One vehicle from each team should be allowed to park close by so that the tents and team things can be accessed more easily especially on Sunday. The signage was terrible especially for the Friday night. We never did find the beach where our practice was supposed to be held. A little more space for each teams private area. Maybe the festival should be capped at less teams until the organizers are more comfortable handling large crowds etc.
On the sunday would be nice if each team could bring one vehicle into the VIP lot for taking away the tents etc (if there's room). Otherwise, it takes a shuttle trip over to the parking area to get the truck, then come back to load up everything.
On Sunday we could have started about 30 minutes to 1 hour sooner so that there was more time to make up for any weather problems. However, I realize no one can control the weather - and the organizers did a great job of working around it.
on site camping, possibly a concert at the festival that night. or just having all races in one day.
nothing really!
Nothing
Not sure yet
Not sure as am non-resident therefore do not know all the rules of Montana All in all I enjoyed the festival
None.
None, nicely done.
None, it was perfect
None, it was a great event.
None really, just need safety boats out on the water when paddlers are on it

none everyone did an excellent job
None
None
none
Non at this time!
No suggestions
No pitch under the tress ROFL
next year try to have the line up of the boats more in order so the heats arent so far behind schedule. one set of boats should be at the start line as another set is at the finish.
Need sunglass and sandle vendors.
Need signage on Friday night
N/A
My team needs to win!
Move event up so as to have chances of better weather and work on the parking!
More vendors, including food. Also, more Dragon Boat Festival gear, (tech shirts and board shorts would be cool.) Parking closer to the venue would also be great, as well as more VIP parking options/slots.
More vendors
More variety of food vendors. Look to improve shuttles.
More variety of Food Vendors
More variety for breakfast
More time between race so maybe can stay on schedule
More sunshine
More sun
More signage from the road. Supper or event/music on site after the event so no need to drive to the red lion.
More room for watching
more races
More portapoties
More parta potties, more vendors
More organized marshalling- lining up teams in order of lanes before boarding boats. More food vendors. The dock system definitely could be improved.
more main course food variety, better entry of boats after the races. better docks for boat entry.
More knowledge with the officiating - or maybe just better speakers - as it was hard to hear out on the lake - not sure what the officials were saying. Keep up the great work!
more information about the teams where they are from, what is going on, etc
More free stuff
more food/drink options
more food!
More food vendors. Remind people that travel about time zone changes.
More food vendors or less costly options If the participant tents were in a more designated area ... They were scattered throughout the event and spectators could come and go between them
More food vendors for variety would be a plus. Also having vendors specializing in paddling gear would be a hit.
More Food vendors
More food vendors
More food vendors
MORE FOOD VENDERS :) COFFEE WAS EXCELLENT!

more food options
More food choices, snacks, etc.
More Dragon Boat vendors- if they knew you had 100 teams though would be very interested.
More commentary of races. Better docks. More food vendors Please don't think I didn't love my experience there, because I did!! Just a few suggestions.
More commentary describing races and results.
More coffee. Keep up the good work!
More coffee vendors
More coffee vendors , but everyone there was superb .
More coffee stands!
More coffee kiosks. All teams in one area instead of spread out everywhere.
More busses on Saturday afternoon and evening.
More busses available to take people back to the parking lot at end of day on saturday. The line was quite long and moved very slowly.
More buses for the shuttle, too long of a wait when the day was over.
More buses for parking at key high traffic times.
More buses @ end of event
More bathrooms. Have a women's division - not just for breast cancer survivors.
More announcer involvement with the spectators, teams, side activities. More like a radio personality than just race business.
more activities and vendors to sell their wares,need more hot food vendors or food vendors
Medals Better safety measures.
Maybe have another stage or speakers spread out so the music can be heard all around.
Maybe have all the Dragon Boats the same. Steering was found difficult on some of the older boats.
Maybe have a workshop with Kevin and his team during the festival.
Maybe a relocation. Nice spot but crowded and difficult to maneuver about.
Maybe start a bit earlier on Sunday and have an A and B division especially with 90 teams.
Marshalling- have a well marked line up area by lane #, one for current heat, another for the next heat then just alternate. Loudspeaker in marshalling area so teams can hear where to go. More lane markers so steerers can tell where their boat should be in the middle of the race, otherwise they may cross into another lane.
Marshalling area should have lane #5
Make the breast cancer race exclusively for breast cancer survivors (as in the vast majority of festivals) and supply medals for the winners. We ARE competitive and work hard to be that way! You will find your numbers for that race growing rapidly, I believe, if you make that change. Faster rescue and first aid measures. All in all it was a great festival! Much faster coffee outlet although the coffee was good at the "Cowgirl" place!
Make sure there are rescue personnel available on practice day too.
Make sure and get a caterer that can supply food for a large group of people
Make it a One day event again! Allow more food vendors. Thanks for a fun festival though!
load 4 boats out to race. Loud for boats during race
Life jackets marked by size, more food choices, would love to see more kids activities, and More local vendors representing MT.
Kudos to the organizers and the owners of the amazing Flathead Lake Lodge!@!!
Keep up the great work, & don't let anyone's poor comments spoil your huge successes!! Loved everything! I loved the Mexican food.
Keep up the good work! Excellent location and facility

Keep up the good work
Keep the numbers up, try for two competitive divisions and 4,5 or 6 rec. divisions and may be a second ladies division - you could showoff with an all mens race or division.
keep on keeping on! love it!
Keep it growing
Keep it going :)
Just the Saturday night event otherwise this event was Fabulous. We will be back as long as you make improvements to Saturday evening event :)
just more options for food would be great
Just a 1 day festival
It's great!
It would be more convenient for the paddlers and dock hands to have bumpers mounted on the docks rather than inside the dragon boats. Larger boat numbers at the muster area and dock would be helpful for steers.
IT WAS GREAT!!!
It was great
It seemed the most awkward part was moving the pfd and paddles from off loading to on loading teams. You may want to consider having more or some other method to keep up with them.
It seemed like we got a little different info from a couple different sources during the months leading up to races. My only suggestion would be that all info is funneled through one source. I was in contact with another team and they did not have the info we had so I gave her rods contact and she wasn't even on his email list.
It might have been nice to have a sign that each team put on their boat during their races, so spectators could see who they were. When I was watching other races, it was hard to keep track of the teams.
It could use a better variety of food venders and closer parking if possible. Over all I really have no real complaints. I'm looking forward to next year. Thanks for putting it on.
Increase number of vendors
Include opening ceremonies during the Friday night reception so racing can start Saturday at 8am. Race times on Sunday could also start at 8am.
In corporate more of the surrounding communities.
Improved sound system for communication across the festival. more defined line up areas for teams in the marshalling area. Great job! I will be bringing my normal team down for this festival next year.
Improve parking situation. Also teams should never have to crawl over another dragon boat to enter their boat. It's an accident waiting to happen. Your volunteer helpers were wonderful
If you will be taking on that many teams, perhaps look at getting a few extra boats to be able to run races of 5 to make the day go a bit faster
If you are going to use school buses, ENSURE you have enough buses on hand to transport people to their cars. I waited over 45 minutes late Saturday afternoon. Allow parking at the site -- VIP parking for those who wish to pay extra for it.
I'm from south of Bigfork. I chose to use the parking/shuttle system even though I could have walked/ biked from my home. Why not set up some parking/shuttles from Bigfork High School or the Luthern Church area for people coming from the south? It took over an hour to get transported to my car at the end of the day.
I would recommend not doing it in rainy season. Maybe more in the warmer summer months. It was sad for us competitors not being able to race fully on the Sunday. Didn't make the festival bad or anything, but just wanted to keep racing :)
I would have more boats in a heat race if you're going to have 90+ teams in a race. If there were more boats in a heat - maybe 5 to 8, then the races wouldn't feel so bunched together & there would be less risk of getting behind schedule like on Saturday. I also think if the bridge over the water to the island could be raised on race day so boats could pass under it, you could manage the in and out traffic in the loading & unloading area more efficiently. There seems to be a bottleneck in the loading area at the narrow mouth into the lake.

I would better organize information leading up to the event for the teams. We waited a while for captains packet and info on where/when our practice would be, and the web page for captains section wasn't very informative. Our team was frustrated at times not knowing far enough I'm advance when & where to be for practice. Also, for captains at least, practicing the week of, having the meeting Friday night, then the races all in one week was stressful and required too much time. Another issue was having to find a steersman right as we were loading the boat to race. Having one assigned for recreational teams ahead of time would eliminate confusion.
I was the captain for my team and somehow did not get ANY of the emails that were sent out prior to the event. So, I felt somewhat unprepared and uninformed. When I sent an email for information, I got an immediate response which was awesome. I was late to the Captain's meeting on Friday evening due to practice at the Lodge...so once again I probably missed some information. We did not get medals for our team...and I was told that we would still get them?
I was surprised by the number of recreational teams and as a result, how much more difficult it becomes for these teams to rank in the top 5 times. It might be nice to see a bit more of a breakdown here (e.g. A & B divisions among these categories, etc.) Our team consisted of all women and it was difficult to decide whether to compete in the women's division, thinking we would have been competing against some pretty competitive and experienced teams or in the recreation category which then results in comoeeting against mixed teams... not sure if there is an easy answer here due to time limitations, etc. No matter... we had a great time!
I was quite surprised/disappointed that they were chargin \$5 per child for the bouncy castles, when these activities are free everywhere else we've been. The raw race results were posted quite quickly, but it was difficult to find out when we'd race the following day (could be posted sooner on the physical boards, as well as online). Furthermore, we were on the bubble to make the final races on Sunday, and it was difficult to know if we should stay around, or if we should go home with no races left. We never were able to get a clear answer from anyone, and in the end we just left without knowing for sure. Most races seem to place the weaker teams first on the Sunday, saving the more competitive teams for later in the morning Sunday. These faster races are often better for spectators, and the teams are better equipped to handle rougher water that may come up later in the morning.
I was disappointed our Sunday morning time was not included in our time average for the final placement of team scores as we improved our time each race. However I do not know if everyone was able to get a third race in due to the weather. Some teams did chose to only participate on Saturday. Perhaps each teams two best times could be averaged for the final placement or if the weather does cooperate, for the final races. Also - our best weather is best here in NW Montana the last 2 weeks in July through the first 2 weeks in August. I know there is no guarantee on weather anywhere, but I tell you for what its worth.
I think their should be an evacuation or safe shelter plan in case of weather like we had on Sunday. There were a lot of people out in a Thunderstorm which is not really safe. People were under trees and tents with metal poles and standing near water with no where else to go.
I think the parking charge of \$10 for one person in a car was excessive. I tried to carpool but no one was coming at the same time as me. I would like to see a reduced rate for people in my situation.
I think the ceremony for the BCS should be a bit faster and the sound on the water was poor.
I think that having 3 races & being a 2-day event was a little more than we liked. I think I'd prefer just 1 day.
I think it went well, I'm sure after having it at the Lodge last year, you saw the need for people to park out of town, just like the Spartan Race event . Good Job!!!
I think it is pretty well done from a spectator standpoint. I was not a participant so I can't answer from that perspective.
I think everything was handled very well when you consider the number of people and teams competing. Perhaps there could be more food concessions with healthy food.
I suggest that you are doing a great job. Keep up the great work
I know most groups brought there own food, but it would have been nice to see some healthier options. It would be nice to have a more organized systems for the paddles. It was a zoo trying to find the correct paddle size before loading the boat.
I found that the races were a bit disorganized on Saturday, the organization of them seemed to have improved on Sunday
I can't think of any at this time.
How could you get any better-perfect
Healthier food vendors please. :)

Have seasoned professional trainers available for the recreational teams. I strongly recommend if at all possible to not use the fiberglass dragon boats and only use wooden dragon boats. I noticed on both Friday and Saturday that the fiberglass dragon boats are not as buoyant or stable in the water as the wooden dragon boats. The fiberglass dragon boats are also deeper inside and sit lower in the water. This makes it more challenging for recreational teams to get in and out of the boats. The fiberglass dragon boats are much more unstable in the water and likely to tip based on poor weight distribution on the boat. For seasoned and professional teams this is probably not an issue, but for inexperienced recreation teams it is unsafe and negligent.
Have porta potties out to far tents and closer to marshaling area. Loading the boats was more complicated than it needed to be. Have better food at the paddlers party. It was a good venue, good band but ran out of food. The amount of tickets sold should have been an indicator to how much food was needed. Thank you for letting me provide feedback.
Have at least one pass per team to have a car on site to bring in equipment and tent supplies.
Have a vendor that sells some different less "heavy" foods like sandwiches, salads, fruits, veggies, etc.
Have a Master's (paddlers over 45 or 50) and/or Grand Master's (over 50 age group) races. Have two heats set up for all teams on Sunday. Invite in some dragon-boat vendors who have boating gear & clothes for purchase. And finally better & clearer communication from event organizers to team participants.
Great job!!
Great job! Looking forward to next year!
Great job!
Great job
Good Job
Going to try to be on a team next year!
Go back to making it a 1 day event. Don't let the motor boats so close to the race track, it really messes with the steering and hurt a couple of teams scores.
Give Kevin Kwan from Edmonton an equal shot at running race event 2014. Not because Penny does a bad job, but because I think Kevin would do an awesome job.
Get chase boats please. Could possibly avoid collisions with chase boats Safety boats are a MUST for medical attention---or , forget the instructions of paddles up and blow the whistle three times. Just get back to docking immediately If you really want more Breast Teams----make the breast race 500m and with medals. No ceremonial race term please. Also require that the breast race is a SURVIVOR RACE. Breast teams will be participating in the womens division and can participate there with their supporters as an intact womens team.
Fruit concession
Free parking
Free parking
Free or affordable children's activities. Toilets in more locations (a few closer to the staging area. Louder announcement system.
Fix the shuttling, as it's a great idea. More food vendors would be great. I loved the lodge concessions, but other than hot dogs there was not really kid friendly food available. Next year we might have to set up a barbecue in our team tent to provide a basic burger.
Figure out the bus problem. A few more alternatives for food would be good. I don't know if it would be feasible at all, but two practices instead of one would be helpful for racers who are beginners or amateurs.
Everything excellent
Encourage the Bigfork Chamber of Commerce to participate as a sponsor of the Festival.
Eliminate shuttles, move closer to kalispell or whitefish, post and announce results of qualifiers, not just have someone show up with participants medals, run on time! Perhaps earlier in year to ensure better chance of best weather, long way to travel after practicing for months to have races cancelled due to weather. While no one can control the weather, it is often much better in August than September.
Each team should be given 2 parking passes to easily transport tent/team gear. Would also allow easier access for handicap team members.
Drop off closer to viewing

Don't release the busses early on the hope that people will filter out throughout the day. Offer an option (at a slightly lesser fee) for single day competitors that do not wish to be seeded into the finals. I noticed that many teams did not return to compete on Sunday. The water Sunday morning was fast and smooth (until the storm popped up). Teams that wish to only compete on Saturday could be filtered out for the semi-finals and finals on Sunday allowing for more rapid racing rather than having teams listed and then scratching. Perhaps even having a one day division separate from the other 3 (BCS, Rec, Comp) would allow for easier organization of the seeds for Sunday.
Don't let it rain.
Doing a pretty good job, just keep tweaking the little things. For only having done this twice, you're doing a good job!
Do it, keep doing it/ Celtic Viking Dragon Boats
Do it in August when it is warmer.
Do away with competitive and recreational divisions. Just have an open mixed and a women' division. Consider ranking all teams in the mixed and in the women's division by total time after the first two races on Saturday. Group them in divisions of 8. Then on Sunday the first races are heats done by division, first and second in each race go into the final, the other teams go into a consolation final. That way all teams get 4 races. You can also do the same thing with 10 team divisions if you have five boats in each race. Then the final is determined by first and second in each heat and the next best time. Also, on the Sunday run the division heats from slowest to fastest times. That way the races get faster as the day progresses rather than slower. For the consolation finals and finals also run them from slowest to fastest division so that the best teams finish up the day.
Discounts for returning Teams like last year
Decide on a cut-off number early on.
Could not find a vendor that sold 'Tea' not coffee
Competitive Breast Cancer race with medals for winners, not just a ceremonial race. More food trucks.
Closer parking
Change the breast cancer race - longer length, silver, gold, and bronze medals - only open to survivor boats - people who have actually had breast cancer. Make sure the ceremony can be heard.
Captains need to meet earlier than 1 day before the event. E.G. one week before, email
Can't think of anything off hand. I truly was impressed with the entire event. It is by far the most FESTIVE dragon boat event I have participated in. Loved the spirit of all the teams and the entire Flathead community.
Can't think of a thing!
Can we support all cancers and just not Save a sister? As a woman I understand the need for breast cancer support but there are so many other cancers that are far more deadly and harder to treat/discover such as Pancreatic and ovarian. More practice before the event. Our team had only 1 practice and it was cut short due to the lake conditions.
Breast Cancer Survivor Race should only have survivors in race. Race should be 500 meters Medals should be given for winners; Gold ,silver and bronze would be appreciated. Paddler related silver jewelry vendor would do good business at such a venue.
Bleachers
Big Fork events website (Chamber maybe?). Did NOT have this event advertised. We found out about it after we got here.
Better time management of raceboats
Better sound system, especially for the Rose Ceremony. It was a beautiful tribute but couldn't be heard very well.
Better signing when coming off of the main highway. Family came from Missoula and missed the turns to where the festival was at. Had to turn around in Bigfork and found off-street parking and just followed the 'crowd' to the event.
Better signage
Better parking/availability for handicapped people
Better Parking.more vendors.
Better parking for seniors.
better organization prior to loading on boat
Better event party on Sat night
Better and more restroom facilities. More practice times for the paddlers. Access to more paddles. Some of my team members were not able to get the paddle size they needed resulting in too short or too long of a paddle. Also.....It took

over an hour to get to my car after the event.
Better accessibility for people with large strollers
be able to drop off coolers, chairs, tents.
Allow teams to compete on one day only. They can choose either Sunday or Saturday. Use times only to decide winners versus championships. Parking: Shuttle back from event to parking lot needs some work. People were having to wait up to an hour to get on a bus. With four small children with me, it was pretty nuts. Have more busses available, load more than one at a time.
Allow participants to park on site have more practice time for participants. more information meetings for captains on the teams.
Allow more time between marshalling time and race time so races don't get behind
Allow 1 pass per team to park inside the area. The 2 coffee places were extremely popular, perhaps have 2 Coffee Girl spots, especially since the venue was so long and narrow. Our tent was just about the furthest away from the marshalling area as one could get. Maybe have a volunteer to come get teams 15 minutes before marshalling, as we stood there for quite awhile. It was difficult to hear the loud speaker
Allow 1 car to park at venue per team
Advertise on the Billings media.
Add restroom(s) near marshalling. Better staging signage near marshalling.
A log break-water out in the bay to help keep the waves in the race venue smaller would be the only suggestion I have to make the weekend a raging success!
A little less congestion with loading and unloading shuttle bus. Still much better than on site parking.
5 dollars would be good, more local businesses/all of them!
1. Better onsite signage for location of tents, food vendors
1. Add a safety boat for all races. 2. Make the Breast Cancer Race for survivors only, 500m and award medals. 3. Avoid noisy flying drone distractions during the Rose Ceremony.
1. Arrange for an experienced paddler to mentor New dragon boat teams. 2. Need the Captain's briefing at least THURSDAY night so we have time to share info with team and actually IMPLEMENT. 3. Another suggestion....do much the same as you've done the last two years.... because overall you get an A+ for organizational skills. We love the event....and thank you for asking for our opinions! :-)
**More buses, especially at the end of the day on Saturday - probably not as important on Sunday, altho if weather was good on Sunday, more people would have stayed. **Water fountains or Culligan water available near docks where teams get on boats. Teams have to wait in line a long time, and there is no water available nearby.