



KAISER PERMANENTE®

A publication for the
employees and physicians
in San Francisco

2006 KAISER PERMANENTE SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

Cheer the **KPSF Dragon Healers** over the finish line

It's that time of year again when the waters around Treasure Island churn with the white water of hundreds of dipping paddles and the fast beat of drums set in ship hulls. Yes, the 2006 Kaiser Permanente San Francisco International Dragon Boat Festival, scheduled to take place Sept. 23-24 on and around Treasure Island, is here, and this year the less than two-year-old KPSF Dragon Healers team is getting ready for a weekend of team building, exuberant exercise, and lots of fun. "Even though our team is fairly new to the races, we have lots of enthusiasm and we're practicing almost every weekend," said **Kathy Pollonais-Britt, MSW**, Coordination of Care Services and captain of the KPSF Dragon Healers.



Oakland's KP Dragons team up with KP San Francisco's Dragon Healers at the Long Beach Dragon Boat Festival in July. From left, back row: Jim Poroski (Dragons), Ross Britt, Lester Chu, Edward Lee (Dragons), Edwin Zhang, Matt Malgemezicn; front: Lawrence Pang, Joey Ho.

"Racing the Dragon," where she professed to not being a team player until she stepped into a dragon boat with 21 co-workers and never looked back. "I was hooked from the start and when team member **Joey Ho** approached me to help him lead us, I signed up without hesitation."

Ho, director of Linguistic and Cultural Services, began paddling with the KP Dragons of the East Bay, but is very enthusiastic that San Francisco has its own team. "We started practicing in July 2005 and last year was the first time we participated in the festival," said Ho. "The team experience is fun and has lots of challenges, but paddling the boats is a great way to work

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BRAND TRAINING

Building our brand

When you hear the word "brand," what comes to mind? A logo? A slogan? A marking on the side of a steer? Well, the Kaiser Permanente Brand trainers want you to know that brand is really all about us. "The Kaiser Permanente brand is everything that members, the public, and we ourselves think and feel about the organization," said **Winnie Chan**, communication specialist, Public Affairs, KPSF. "Every member of the medical center helps shape the brand every day by how they present themselves and Kaiser Permanente."

Recent efforts to step up KP brand awareness and bolster our reputation as the best place to receive health care have prompted brand training sessions, which are open and available to all physicians and staff. "We offer several levels of KP Brand training," said **Jason W. Wong**, production designer, Public Affairs, KPSE. "We hope people will take advantage of this opportunity to understand that how we present ourselves affects all aspects of our work."

From the very top of the organization, brand has become KP's thrust for the year. "People's perception about the Kaiser Permanente brand," said KPHP Chairman and CEO, **George Halverson**, at the 2006 Brand Training Conference earlier this year, "is too important to have happen accidentally or serendipitously."

Several KP brand experts have heeded the call, including **Christi Kruse**, a brand planner from Program Offices, who makes the rounds of KP medical centers and leads several training sessions with verve and enthusiasm. "The Thrive ad campaign is wonderful, but it's just the icing on the cake," said Kruse. "Our brand is who we are on the inside, in every aspect of what we do. Training gives everyone the chance to talk about what the organization is doing and how each of us fits into the bigger picture."

According to Kruse, there are ways that we undercut our brand without even realizing we're doing it. One example is leaving up out of date fliers and posters. Another example is posting

non-public information in public areas. Our workplace safety campaign is important, but when members see a sign about "reducing injuries by 50%" they won't understand the context and may wonder why this is a dangerous place to be. So placing such signs out of our members' sight is important.

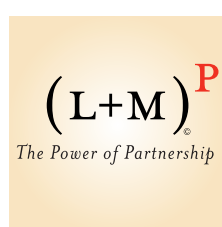
Likewise, our integrated system and size are among our most important advantages. But if we convey to members that the system is hard to



Christi Kruse, national Brand Planner

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September

E V E N T S

National Latino Heritage Month

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- 17 Alice 97.3 Now & Zen Music Festival
- 19 & 20 Macy's Passport Fashion Show at Fort Mason
- 19 & 20 Pediatric Book Fair at 2238 Geary Lobby
- 23 & 24 KP International Dragon Boat Festival

Let your voice be heard

2006 People Pulse Survey coming in October

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A new face in leadership: *welcome Christine Robisch, SVP and Area Manager*

Christine Robisch, MA, recently joined Kaiser Permanente San Francisco administration as the medical center's new SVP and Area Manager. Robisch comes to KP San Francisco with a wealth of experience and skills and, most recently, from the KP Diablo service area, where she served as senior operations leader and COO since 2003. "I worked for many years as a member of several behavioral health services," said Robisch



Christine Robisch: newest member of KPSF leadership team

"including pain management, chemical dependency, eating disorders, and psychiatry." Robisch began her career at Kaiser Permanente in 1992, when she helped to open the sub-regional KP Psychiatric Center at the South Sacramento Medical Center. "I've worked in many capacities at the organization and I'm very excited to come to San Francisco and continue the

excellent work that's already in place at the medical center. When I received the call asking if I was interested in assuming the role that Mike Alexander has recently retired from after 34 years of service to Kaiser Permanente, I was thrilled to be asked. After meeting **Robert Mithun, MD, PIC**, I realized we both had a similar vision, to integrate the service and foster the partnership between KFH/HP and TPMG. I'd like to continue to enhance the collaboration and reach out to the greater San Francisco community, which is comprised of such a dynamic and diverse population."

Becoming involved in the community, both inside and outside of KP San Francisco, is one of Robisch's primary objectives as a leader. "As executive leaders, we have to remain open and sensitive to

what our physicians, staff, and members are telling us. They are our primary resources and number one priority. If I could distill my three central goals in coming here to KP San Francisco, they would be continuing on the successful path already forged, keeping collaboration alive and well, and maintaining our commitment to community outreach and involvement." Robisch originally hails from Southeastern Washington state, where a large portion of her family still resides. "I have four sisters and I spend a lot of my free time visiting them, their children, and my parents. I'm often on a plane heading to wherever my family is, and I can't think of a better way to refresh and stay in touch with what's important. Family is a big priority. Taking advantage of San Francisco, which I think is one of the best cities in the world, is also a central preoccupation. There's no end to the incredible food and activities that San Francisco has to offer. I've been in the Bay Area since 1999, and I can't think of a better place to live and work."

Cheer the **KPSF Dragon Healers** over the finish line continued from page 1

together as a group." One of the greatest difficulties is coordinating work schedules so the team can practice together. "A lot of our members work on weekends in the hospital," said Ho, "so finding times when all members can row together can be tough."

According to **Hans Wu**, race director for the festival and a dragon boat coach, "I haven't seen many corporate teams stick together after the festival and maintain their commitment the way the Dragon Healers have. It's a testament to their team spirit, hard work, excellent attitude, and the support that Kaiser Permanente offers them."

The Dragon Healers' teammates find the experience of paddling with KP co-workers a great

way to exercise, socialize, and thrive. "We are all very dedicated to the team," said **Brian Soo, PT**, Musculoskeletal Services. "Our captains always welcome new paddlers and only expect two things in return: commitment to the practice schedule and continued motivation to improve technique." As a physical therapist, Soo said, "I enjoy physical activities and promoting healthful behaviors, and dragon boating incorporates both of these plus great social opportunities."

So come out in September and cheer your own KPSF Dragon Healers at the festival. With lots of practice, ample team spirit, and low seas, they may well bring a medal back to the medical center.

Farm fresh food hits KP hospital trays continued from page 5

smaller, sustainable farms in an effort to support local growers and enjoy fresh, often organic food.

If the KP pilot works, the organization will expand system-wide and even add the fresh food to employee and visitor cafeterias.

"It's a baby step, but it feels to me like a big step," said KP Oakland's **Preston Maring, MD**, the force behind KP's 31 farmers'

markets nationwide.

KP is partnering on the pilot with Community Alliance with Family Farmers, a Davis-based nonprofit that preserves family farms. In turn, the alliance works largely with Hmong, African-American, and Latino farmers to contract with KP.

The benefits extend beyond the nicer-tasting food to include "walking the talk" of Thrive. The

decrease in fuel needed to transport the 100 tons of produce that comes to KP Northern California annually from outside of the state speaks to KPs "green" leanings, too.

Then there is the pleasure of being a trend-setter: Stanford University, UCSF Medical Center, and UC Berkeley, are watching to see how KP's pilot fares.