



California Surf Lifesaving Association

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Southwest Region - United States Lifesaving Association

PO Box 366 - Huntington Beach, California 92648

World Wide Web: www.cslsa.org

PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS October 12, 2006

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Welcome to the Fall 2006 Board of Directors Meeting in Morro Bay, and many thanks to Herb White for inviting us to the beautiful central coast and for hosting the meeting.

Wow, what a difference a year makes! The summer of 2005 was the summer that never was, with little surf, lousy weather, but lots of stingrays, jellyfish and red tide. The summer of 2006 was quite the opposite with great, record setting weather, the hottest July in history, some good surf, tropical water conditions (heard Huntington City recorded a water temperature of 81° in July). I felt like I lived in the tropics quite a few days this summer. I haven't seen any official statistics yet, but I would wager that 2006 will go down as one of our busiest summers of all time.

Following our Regional Board of Directors Meeting hosted by Huntington City last April, most of the members of your Executive Board attended the USLA National Meeting in Annapolis, Maryland at the end of April. USLA National meetings were moved to the last week in April, from the first week in May to better accommodate summer preparedness. At the meeting our very own Mike Bartlett, Executive Delegate from Huntington Beach was awarded the Medal Of Valor. On March 3, 2005 Mr. Bartlett performed an impressive rescue of three persons near the Huntington Pier. The individuals were swept off a sand bar and caught in a dangerous rip current. Mike grabbed a rescue buoy and fins, swam out to the first victim and then proceeded to tow the first victim with him to rescue the second victim. Now with two people in tow, Mike swam out to the third swimmer who was going under water when he arrived. Witnesses in Tower Zero said it was one of the greatest rescues they had ever witnessed and that Mike's efforts undoubtedly saved three lives that day. Another highlight of the meeting was that I was honored with a Life Membership in the USLA to go along with the CSLSA Life Membership that was presented to me at the Spring Meeting in Huntington. I am truly honored to be among such esteemed members of both organizations. Also honored with Life Memberships at the Annapolis meeting were Jerry Gavin, USLA Vice President from the Great Lakes Region and Buzz Mogck of the Mid Atlantic Region. Other highlights of the meeting included a tour of the U.S. Naval Academy and the adoption of the revised USLA Bylaws. A proposal was approved to upgrade the USLA membership process by entering into a contract with Interfuse, the company currently doing our USLA Nationals results. The goal is to have membership and renewals done electronically via the Internet. Kevin Sweat was appointed manager of the USLA National Team for Rescue 2008 in Germany.

Beginning in April and running through the first week of June, Huntington City's Steve Reuter organized and ran a series of "Big Wednesday" fundraisers in conjunction with Duke's Restaurant. During a photo op in August, I accepted a check for almost \$8000.00 from Duke's to be used for a new Public Education poster. Great work Steve, and thank you very much.

On July 22 I attended the Long Beach Lifeguards' Centennial Celebration, aboard the Queen Mary, commemorating 100 years of lifeguard service. The organizers did an outstanding job and it was a gala event, highlighted by a spectacular lightning show, courtesy of Mother Nature, and a rescue boat parade with boats from most of the Southern California lifeguard services. They also produced a very nice program detailing some of the history of lifesaving in Long Beach. The *Eliminators* surf band entertained the crowd with their classic surf music, and *Art The DJ* provided dance music. All and all it was a magnificent event, and I'm sure a good time was had by all in attendance.

The 2006 California Lifeguard Championships were held at Redondo Beach in conjunction with the International Surf Festival on August 5. Once again, we are indebted to Scott Hubbell and his company SHP, Inc. for providing funding not only for our Regionals and Nationals, but also for our membership kits. If not for his support, our regional treasury would be much poorer. Patagonia was one of the lead sponsors and provided a \$1000.00 check to our region for support. Gary Crum and the members of the International Surf Festival committee are owed our gratitude for including us and helping make our Regional Championships a success. Special thanks are due to Dick Douglas, voice of the Surf Festival, for coming down early in the morning, on his own time, to set up the sound system. In spite of a delayed start, due to a combination of factors, the Regional Championships went very well. The weather was good, there was enough surf to make things interesting, and the competition was keen. It was the closest team points contest in quite a long time, with LACOLA beating out second place Cal State Parks by only 68 points. Huntington City, lead by Micha Burden, finished third, their best results in recent memory. It was good to see Surf City represented so well, I hope it will continue! The other top teams, as well as individual results are available for viewing on our website at www.cslsa.org. Without the generous donation of the time and resources of your Executive Board and other volunteers, the Regional Championships would not be possible. In addition to current Executive Board members, if you competed, you should take the time to thank Bill Richardson the starter, Jay Butki and Scott Diederich for setting the course, former Executive Board member Vince Lombardi for officiating, Tracey Crothers of L.A. County for her excellent work at the Records Table, and Gordon Gray for his efforts at the Registration Table. If I've forgotten anybody else, I apologize. Next year's Regionals are still somewhat up in the air . . . Huntington City has expressed an interest, but they are not confirmed. If your Chapter or agency is interested, please bring a proposal to our next Board of Directors Meeting in Morro Bay in October.

The Junior Lifeguard Regional Competition was hosted by Santa Barbara City on July 21. Although I was not able to attend, from all reports I heard, the event was excellently organized and very well run. Good job Santa Barbara, and thank you. Results are available on the Junior Lifeguard page of our website.

The 2006 USLA National Lifeguard Championships were hosted by Huntington State on August 10 through 12. Gus Avila, Herb White and Craig Lumb did an excellent job of heading up the organizing committee. Once again the weather and surf cooperated and the event ran smoothly. SHP, Inc. came on board and provided some great sponsors including Bud Light, Patagonia, Scion, Arrowhead Water and Wet and Wild Cosmetics. Other sponsors included Court TV, the California State Parks Foundation and Ingram. There were also over a dozen vendors that contributed to the success of the National Championships. The U.S. Navy Seals performed two outstanding skydiving exhibitions, one of them dedicated to the memory of Ronnie Tassin, a former Huntington State Lifeguard that all of us that knew him will greatly miss. When the dust settled, LACOLA took the large team "A" title by probably the largest margin in USLA history. They outscored second place Volusia County, Florida by over 400 points. Cal State Parks took third, San Diego was sixth and Huntington City place seventh. In the small teams division Laguna Beach placed fourth and Del Mar came in ninth. As always, the USLA Corp of Officials did a great job and I was delighted with the opportunity to be the event announcer. Congratulations to Blaine Morgan of LACOLA and Micha Burden of Huntington City for winning the overall Men's and Women's points titles. The "after party" featuring the *Tijuana Dogs* was one of the best ever, even Bob Moore enjoyed it! Complete results can be found at www.uslanationals.org.

The California / New Zealand Lifeguard Exchange interviews were held on September 7, 2006, and I would like to congratulate Ryan Steele of California State Parks - Crystal Cove, and Doug Leach of City of Huntington Beach for being selected for the 2006 – 2007 exchange. They will be traveling to New Zealand at the end of the year. Congratulations to Cavan Cuyler of the City of Newport Beach, the first alternate, and many thanks to the interview panel Mike Scott of Lake Mission Viejo, Joe Bailey of the City of Seal Beach, and Bob Moore of L.A. County (retired), and to the City of Newport Beach for allowing the use of its headquarters for the interviews.

The next USLA National Meeting is being hosted by the Pacific Northwest Region at the Ridge Tahoe Resort on Lake Tahoe's south shore on November 2 through 4. Details are available at <http://www.lifeguardsforlife.org/events>. All CSLSA members are invited to attend, so make your plans now if you are interested.

Yours in Lifesaving,

Robert McGowan
President