



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 11, 2007

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Thank you to the Newport Chapter for hosting this meeting; I'm looking forward to another successful and productive meeting. It's hard to believe another summer has come and gone already. They seem to go by faster every year. It was another good summer for the beaches of the Southwest Region of the USLA, with more record setting hot weather, warm water and extraordinary beach attendance. We did suffer a few drownings, but by and large, all of our beach visitors went home safely. We continue to strive for the perfect year, with no water related tragedies.

Our regional Board of Directors meeting last April in Los Angeles County was one of the best attended I can remember. Thanks to CSLSA Vice President Charlotte Graham for setting it up and thanks to all of you that came and contributed to making it a successful meeting. Highlights of that meeting included the formation of an ad hoc committee to explore the possibility of creating consistent job titles between CSLSA lifeguard agencies. The purpose of the project is to help advance the professionalism of lifesaving in an effort to better serve the public. Consistency in job titles will help improve effective working relationships between departments and various agencies in emergency situations, reducing possible confusion over command roles due to discrepancies between job titles. It is recognized that the Incident Command structure used by public safety helps to alleviate this problem, however confusion over roles/titles often still exists. Scott Davey, L.A. County Lifeguard Section Chief and Bill Humphreys, San Clemente Lifeguard Marine Safety Chief co-chaired the committee. This standardization of job titles is a work in progress, and may take some time to accomplish, but Bill Humphreys assured me that the committee is moving forward to achieve this important goal. The Public Education Committee distributed over 6,000 "Be Safe, Be Seen" posters and over 7,000 Junior Lifeguard artwork book covers. A special committee on statistics, chaired by Alex Peabody met. The goal of this committee was to attempt to standardize our statistics gathering and reporting protocols. If you were not already aware, the complete minutes of the meeting can be viewed on our website at www.cslsa.org/events/Spr07Minutes.asp.

When we met as the Executive Board last month Don Rohrer surprised us all by stating that it was his last meeting and he would not be finishing out his term as Second Executive Delegate. I want to thank Don for all the time and dedication that he has given not only to the CSLSA, but to the USLA as well. His leadership and contributions will be missed, but he has promised to help out on special projects as his time allows. In addition to his delegate position, Don was also Certification Committee chair, so I will be looking for someone to take over that committee. Please let me know if you are interested.

At our two most recent Board of Directors meetings we have discussed the budget and distribution method of the newsletter. We increased the budget to add full color pages and to have the issues mailed to each member's home address. This obviously increased the cost per issue significantly. I am still a proponent of electronic distribution of the newsletter, but so far have yielded to the sentiment that members like to get a printed copy delivered to their mailbox. I would really appreciate some feedback from you, the members. Would you rather receive a printed copy in your mailbox, or would an electronic version available on the website suffice? The cost savings of the electronic version could be in the neighborhood of three to five thousand dollars per year! Please let your thoughts be known when the Newsletter Committee meets.

At the Spring USLA meeting in Chicago we honored our long time USLA Treasurer Greg Farry who passed away shortly before the meeting with a memorial on the shores of Lake Michigan. Rob Williams, our regional treasurer, was elected to finish out Greg's term, and he will hopefully be re-elected at the USLA meeting next month. A motion to increase USLA dues to \$30.00 per year starting July 1, 2008 passed unanimously. It should be noted that dues have not increased in over twenty years. A clinic for all USLA competition officials in attendance was held in conjunction with the Chicago meeting.

The 2007 California Lifeguard Championships were hosted by the City of Huntington Beach on July 28. Thank you to the H.B. City lifeguard management and staff for their support of the event, and to Doug Leach and Melissa Murphy for their organizational efforts that helped make the event a success. Scott Hubbell and his company SHP, Inc. provided funding, not only for our Regionals, Junior Lifeguard Regionals, and Nationals, but also for our membership kits. The weather was good, there was enough surf to make things interesting, and the competition was spirited. Approximately 120 competitors registered, and when the dust settled at the end of the day, LACOLA won the team championship by a large margin, followed by Cal State Parks, with Long Beach third. Host Huntington City came in fourth. The other top teams, as well as individual results are available for viewing on our website. 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, my sincere thanks go to Bill Richardson the starter, Jay Butki for setting the course, former Executive Board member Vince Lombardi and L.A. County Captain, and former national champion Rob Torres for officiating, Gordon Gray for his efforts at the Registration Table, and Donna Richardson and the Huntington City volunteers who worked at the results table. If I've forgotten anybody, I apologize. Next year's Regionals for both the Junior Guards and the lifeguards are tentatively scheduled for Seal Beach, pending confirmation at the Competition Committee meeting today.

The Junior Lifeguard Regional Competition was again hosted by Santa Barbara City on July 20. Although I was not able to attend, from all reports I heard, the event was well organized and very well run. Good job Santa Barbara, and thank you. Results are available on the Junior Lifeguard page of our website.

The 2007 USLA National Lifeguard Championships were held in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina on August 9, 10, and 11. As seems to be the case when we travel to the east coast for Nationals lately, we were treated to record breaking heat and humidity. The local news stations were calling the heat "oppressive" and the heat index (temperature plus humidity) was 115 to 120 degrees the whole time we were there. The water conditions, with the short interval wind chop, radical lateral current, and 80° water temperatures proved challenging for even the top ocean athletes. In spite of the weather, the hospitality of the hosts was unsurpassed, and the organization and running of the event was outstanding. Special thanks to the City of Myrtle Beach, Horry County, George Lack and family and all of the sponsors for an excellent competition. Complete results can be found at www.uslanationals.org.

As you may be aware, this is an election meeting, to select your officers and Executive Board to serve you for the next two years. I have been convinced to run for one more term as your president, and I hope you will give me your support. It has been an honor to serve you over the past few terms, and I believe we have great "chemistry" on the current Executive Board. In addition to Don Rohrer's position on the board, it is my understanding that Chris Graham has decided not to run for re-election, so there are at least two spots open for "new blood" on the board. Many thanks to Chris for his time and efforts over the years, and good luck in his re-election at the national level.

In closing, I would like to once again thank Scott Hubbell for all of his efforts in providing sponsorship for us. Our regional and national sponsors include Bud Light, Wet n Wild Cosmetics, Arrowhead, Patagonia, American Laser Centers, and Mini Cooper. Please support our sponsors and be sure to take advantage of the Patagonia Pro Program that you get as a benefit of your USLA membership.

Yours in Lifesaving,

Robert McGowan
President