



# California Surf Lifesaving Association



## Southwest Region - United States Lifesaving Association

PO Box 366 - Huntington Beach, California 92648

World Wide Web: [www.cslsa.org](http://www.cslsa.org)

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Robert C. McGowan  
*President*

TO: CSLSA Board of Directors

Charlotte M. Graham  
*Vice President*

FROM: Bill Richardson, Committee Chair

Michael A. Beuerlein  
*Secretary*

DATE: 10/16/09

Robert E. Williams  
*Treasurer*

SUBJECT: **Special Awards & Presentations Committee Report**

Robert A. Moore  
*Past President/Advisor*

We reviewed and approved the following applicants for submission to the USLA for approval.

Jon P. Mitchell  
*First Executive Delegate*

1. James Northelfer	California State	Medal of Valor
Timothy Fellars	California State	Medal of Valor

William J. Richardson  
*Second Executive Delegate*

Incident Date: June 22, 2009      Near Moss Point, San Mateo Co.

Mareen T. Boyer  
*Third Executive Delegate*

Synopsis: On Monday, June 22, 2009, California State Parks Lifeguard James Northelfer and Ranger Timothy Fellars responded to a capsized fishing vessel in waters off the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve. Northelfer and Fellars swam out in seas that were reported by NOAA as 9 foot, with a 9 second interval and 5 foot wind waves. In addition they swam across a dangerous reef area, through water mixed with gasoline and debris from the sinking fishing boat.

Alex K. Peabody  
*Fourth Executive Delegate*

Northelfer and Fellars rescued six anglers who had been thrown from the vessel as it was rolled by a wave. Two of the victims were children.

They coordinated their efforts with Cal Fire, Life Flight and San Mateo County Harbor Master's patrol boat.

They are credited by agencies on scene with saving six souls that day, at extreme risk to their own lives.

2. Nathaniel J. Buck	California State	Medal of Valor
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Incident Date: October 16, 2008      Gleason Beach, Sonoma Co.

Synopsis: *From Letter of Commendation –*

I would like to commend you for your actions in the extrication of robin Carolina Lee at Gleason Beach on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Although you were off-duty at the time, you responded to the call and had an immediate, positive impact on the outcome of this incident. Ms. Lee had driven over a 50 foot cliff in an attempt to kill herself.

Lee's vehicle was in the water at the base of a large cliff and was being buffeted by constant three foot surf. The vehicle was extremely unstable and severely compromised your safety. On several occasions the vehicle was dangerously close

to rolling over and/or trapping you and the other first responders against partially submerged rocks while relentless rescue efforts were under way.

Several times during your attempts to free Ms. Lee from her crushed vehicle, she became completely submerged and was in danger of drowning right in front of you.

You remained committed to the rescue at great personal risk until the mission was accomplished. Your actions on that day displayed a great deal of courage, strength, teamwork, and skill. Your actions exemplify the very finest values of state service, and uphold the proud tradition of our Lifeguard service.

3. Greg A. Wright                      Citizen                      Heroic Acts

Incident Date: June 21, 2009              Monastery Beach, Monterey Co.

Synopsis: Two small children were swept into the surf at the south end Carmel River State Beach. The parents of these children attempted rescue and were subsequently rescued as well.

Monastery Beach is an extremely dangerous surf zone and shore break. It is not safe for swimming or wading, being a very steep beach, with a history of drowning and water rescues. There are numerous signs warning visitors of the dangerous conditions.

Greg Wright, who was the beach for a Father's Day picnic, observed the children's peril and without regard for his own safety entered the churning surf to rescue the children.

Except for Wright's ocean experience in Hawaii, he too may have become one of the imperiled victims.

The Committee is also asking for an additional \$200 for the Special Awards and Presentations Committee budget. If a submission is not approved at the national level, the funds would then be utilized to obtain a CSLSA medal.

If you need applications or have requests for materials can be sent directly to me via e-mail, fax or regular mail at the following:

Bill Richardson  
Heroic Acts Committee Chair  
E-Mail: [wjrguard4life@verizon.net](mailto:wjrguard4life@verizon.net)