



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 April 9, 2009

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Welcome to the meeting and thank you to the L.A. County Lake Lifeguards for hosting at their new facility. Here we are well on the way to another summer season. Many of our agencies have already had their tryouts for the summer of 2009. From all reports that I have heard, numbers of applicants for positions have been up, no doubt in part due to the national economic situation. If the beach conditions this spring are any indication, we should be in for a very busy summer. If you have not had your tryouts yet and your information on the website is not up to date, please contact Jon Mitchell, so we can get the correct information onto the CSLSA website.

This summer will be markedly different from the previous forty-one for me, because this is the first time in my adult life that I won't be donning the red shorts to lifeguard the beaches of Southern California. Since 1968 I have been an ocean lifeguard, the first two years at Huntington City and the rest in Los Angeles County, but I retired from active duty as of March 26. Looking back, I don't think I could have asked for a better career. The people I have met and interacted with over the years have been truly incredible. From my first Junior Lifeguard Instructor, the legendary surfer, Mike Doyle, to the current members of the CSLSA and USLA, I have developed friendships that will last throughout my life. I met my beautiful wife of twenty-two years because of this job. We have three great boys, two of whom are continuing the McGowan legacy as ocean lifeguards in Southern California. I feel very blessed to have had the opportunity to have lived at and worked at the beach all these years. I still plan to remain involved in our associations for at least the near future, and I encourage all of you to stay involved and increase your involvement in the lifesaving movement. We are after all, just one big, albeit occasionally dysfunctional family! Thank you for all of your support over the years.

Another noteworthy retirement is that of Laguna Chief Mark Klosterman, which will be celebrated May 1st at Tivoli Too in Laguna Beach.

Getting down to business, since the CSLSA Board of Directors Meeting in La Jolla last fall, members of your Executive board traveled to Cocoa Beach, Florida to represent you at the USLA National Meeting. At that meeting the **National Award for Professional Achievement** was awarded to the City of Huntington Beach Marine Safety Division *in recognition of their Professional Achievement in improving the professional image of their aquatic safety staff and the profession of lifesaving, thereby maintaining the standard of excellence subscribed to by the United States Lifesaving Association. During the summer of 2007 Huntington Beach Marine Safety was the subject of filming by Evolution Films resulting in the production of "Ocean Force Huntington Beach, OC." This series documented the*

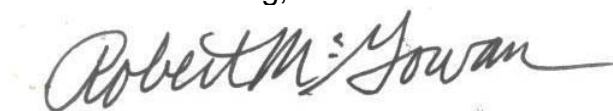
“Surf City Lifeguards” performing their daily duties in a highly proficient manner, demonstrating a positive representation and professional image of open water lifesaving.

The Educational Conference included presentations about “*Pediatric Drowning*” by Peter Antevy, MD, “*Critical Incident Stress Debriefing. Applications for Ocean Safety Departments*” by Peter R. Chambers, PhD, DO, Emergency Medicine Mayo Health, CERF Team, Minnesota Air National Guard, “*Florida Red Tide and Human Health: A Beach Conditions Reporting System to Minimize Exposure*” by Kate Nierenberg, MS. Mote Marine Laboratory, “*The Drowning Problem in Puerto Rico*” by Ruperto Chaparro Serrano, Director, University of Puerto Rico Sea Grant College Program (UPRSGCP) /Director, Marine Outreach Program, and “*Kiteboarder Rescue*” Neil Hutchinson, owner/instructor of Tiki Beach Watersports and Rick Iossi Director of Florida Kitesurfing Association. The kiteboarder rescue lecture was followed up by a demonstration on the beach that I found extremely valuable.

Other significant events that occurred at the meeting included Dr. Peter Wernicki being inducted as a Life Member of the USLA, and the Heroic Act Award being presented to Amy Di Chiro, a Newport Beach surfing Instructor for her rescue of a nine-year old brother and ten-year old sister caught in a rip current adjacent to the 28th street jetty in west Newport Beach, CA. Amy was there in person to accept her award. There were many other significant events at the meeting, too numerous to mention, but one of the highlights for me was the opportunity to see Kelly Slater surf in person, in two foot Florida slop – he is truly amazing!

Upcoming events in our region that you should be aware of include the USLA National Board of Directors Meeting on April 23rd though 25th at the Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove and the CSLSA Junior Lifeguard and Lifeguard Championships in Seal Beach on July 24th and 25th. Alex Peabody has put a great deal of effort into putting together an outstanding meeting at Asilomar, and if there is any way you can make it, I encourage you to do so. Hope to see you there. If not, I’ll see you at Seal Beach for Regionals. We all owe thanks to the Seal Beach crew and Scott Hubbell Productions for supporting another regional championships. Until then, watch the water, keep them safe and I’ll see you on the beach.

Yours in Lifesaving,



Robert McGowan

P.S. Remember that we will be electing a new slate of officers to the CSLSA Executive Board at the Fall 2009 Meeting. If you are interested in running, or know of someone who might be . . . we’ll see you in October.

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