



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

Robert C. McGowan
President

April 9-10, 2009

Charlotte M. Graham
Vice President

Past President/Advisor

By Robert A. Moore

Michael A. Beuerlein
Secretary

Robert E. Williams
Treasurer

You have a say! Experience counts!

Robert A. Moore
Past President/Advisor

As your Past President/Advisor, I appear to be the most senior active member (without a break in service). I have been a member since 1967 (Bill Richardson has been a member longer), involved as a Board of Director since 1974, and on the Executive Board since 1979. I tell you this to try and make a couple of points.

Jon P. Mitchell
First Executive Delegate

William J. Richardson
Second Executive Delegate

New blood is always needed in any organization. Old blood is just as important. In the case of the CSLSA, together they form a great partnership in moving this organization forward in a positive direction. Everyone is not always happy with every result, but at least each topic is viewed from a new and old perspective. Compromise using new innovative ideas and reviewing lessons learned from the past. Youthful energy and mature experience have been a part of this Executive Board since I began. I heard that someone asked, "Why are there retirees on the Executive Board?" My response would be because they care about the organization and believe in its cause. They are willing to continue dedicating their lives to the cause of lifesaving. Once a lifeguard, always a lifeguard! Most retirees move on, but a few stay. I believe that the current retirees on the Executive Board contribute copious amounts of work on behalf of the membership and carry the memberships message to the USLA. Everyone has to remember that this continues to be a volunteer organization. I have also heard, "How come 'they' are on the Executive Board, what experience do they have?" referring to a new Executive Board member. My response would be because they care about the organization and believe in its cause. They are willing to go above and beyond being a lifeguard and dedicate their lives to the cause of lifesaving. I believe that the new people on the Executive Board contribute copious amounts of work on behalf of the membership and carry the memberships message to the USLA. As for the in-betweens, they have youthful energy and experience. They are the backbone or the Executive Board. So together, the chemistry is something that needs all elements to continue to represent our diverse membership.

Mareen T. Boyer
Third Executive Delegate

Alex K. Peabody
Fourth Executive Delegate

The other point I would like to pontificate on is your vote counts. The Board of Directors, which is you ladies and gentlemen, represents the membership. On almost all Executive Boards that I have had to privilege to serve, the Executive Board carried your message to the USLA. When there was no direction from the Board of Directors on an issue, the Executive Board made decisions on your behalf and on behalf of the membership. Decisions were not made in a vacuum, input was taken from everyone present and a majority vote carried the decision. I have

learned that there are some who do not feel that they have a vote if they are not on the Executive Board. That cannot be further from the truth. When Mr. Richardson, Mr. Long, Mr. McGowan and I were President, we acted as facilitators. Of course we would try to sway the Board of Directors into what made sense to the organization in our opinion. There were times when the Board of Directors wanted to go a different direction. After a vote, the Executive Boards under the presidents mentioned always carried the message even if they were opposed philosophically. They carried the message as if it was their own. Because after the vote was taken, it was their message. Often times, other regions accused our region of making up the decision as our own and not what our Board of Directors or membership wanted. I cannot remember a time during the administrations mentioned where a single vote was not forwarded in the language that was approved by you. There are those who feel that they are not represented. Some are true believers and hard workers, but they are not always on the majority vote side of things and become disenchanting. I want to tell them not to give up. Keep up the good fight for the betterment of the organization. Without 'your' efforts, things would not get done. If you want to see something happen, bring it up in committee. Get the committee to approve the request. Then have the Board of Directors vote it up or down. Do not take any vote personal; it is the compromising way of a volunteer democratic organization. I know, I have taken some votes personal, but in the end had to realize, that is what the membership wanted and as a facilitator and not a dictator, I had to respect the decision of the Board of Directors and carry the message as if it were my own.

I say these things to bring to light that there is diversity and at times differing opinions on how things should be done. One case in point is the upcoming vote on the USOC proposals. Many of us feel that there is a better way and others feel that this is the only way to become associated with the USOC and they are both legitimate points of view. We will debate and discuss in committee and I am sure on the floor also as this is more than just a competition issue. Ultimately a vote will be taken and everyone must regroup and carry that message. Whether the decision goes the way you feel is the best for the CSLSA and the USLA or not, you can't give up. You must continue to volunteer to make this the best organization it can possibly be. Yes I stayed after the vote on alcohol, but I had to be talked into it. It was a lesson learned and one that only came with experience and respected colleagues convincing me that it is not personal. I still believe that we should not be associated with alcohol, but since the vote many, many years ago, I have not dwelled on the subject because there have been too many other issues to tackle keeping this the best organization for open water lifesaving.

In the Fall, we will have another election of officers. I would hope that the members of the Executive Board would want to continue to serve. I would also hope that others would also like to serve. Whether elected or not, please keep volunteering. Without everyone's help, the organization would fail, as we know it. Remember, the Executive Board serves the region and not individual chapters. It doesn't matter who is from what chapter, it matters that they serve the Board of Directors and the membership as a whole. Any given election a turnover of two Executive Board members give or take is healthy, about one quarter of the Executive Board. That allows newer members to learn and grow while the returning members guide and educate. A balance of new, old, and in-betweens is a good thing!

Remember: You have a say! Experience counts! Keep volunteering, you will feel better dedicating yourself to lifesaving and the organization will benefit!