

# L.A. County Section Chief Gary Crum Tosses in Beach Towel After Three Decades of Service

by Arthur Verge, LA. County

Over 250 friends and co-workers of retiring Southern Section Lifeguard Chief Gary Crum gathered at Sangria's restaurant in Hermosa Beach last October 28 to pay tribute to Crum for his 35 years of public safety service. Following in the footsteps of his legendary lifeguard father Dwight Crum; Gary joined the LA County Lifeguard Service in 1966. Having been raised near Avenue C in Redondo Beach, the young guard was well acquainted with the ocean and the beach going public, which proved to be an asset in his quick accession within the lifeguard organization.

County Supervisor Don Knabe, who was greeted with large applause by an appreciative lifeguard audience at Sunday's event, said Crum was instrumental in helping the County Lifeguards merge into the County Fire Department. Among the many benefits of the popular merger was that it enabled the lifeguard service to upgrade both its training and its equipment.

Supervisor Knabe also noted Crum's work in helping the County Lifeguards wrestle back control of several South Bay beaches, which had been temporarily lost to the State of California in a financial dispute. The Crum's family longstanding reputation throughout the South Bay community aided the County Lifeguards in that fight, Knabe said.

During his years as a lifeguard, Gary served as the President of the Los Angeles County Lifeguard Association, on the Board of Directors of the United States Lifesaving Association and the Los Angeles County Lifeguard Association Trust Fund. He was the Director of the Los Angeles County Junior Lifeguard Program and still serves on the International Surf Festival Organizing Committee.

An avid competitor, Gary was victorious on eleven Judge Taplin Lifeguard Championship relay teams and traveled with 3 international exchange teams to Australia.

Reflecting on his 35 years of lifeguarding, Chief Crum noted that his only regret was that his father hadn't lived to see him finish out his career as the Section Chief of the South Bay. "He was my best friend," Crum told his colleagues.

The evening's event ended with the presentation of the Los Angeles County Lifeguard Association's highest awards. "The Bronze Savage." The handcrafted sculpture represents the lifeguard's dual goal of being "at one with the ocean" while at the same time, at all physical costs, protecting the public from its dangers, and the Association's Life Member Award. Gary is only the second County Lifeguard so honored.



From left to right: Retired LA. County Lifeguard Chief Don Rohrer, Gary Crum, LA. County Supervisor Don Knabe, and former LA. County Lifeguard Association President Steve Moseley. Photo by Matthew Story.

*Gary with his wife of 27 years, Vicki. Photo by Dave*



*Gary being congratulated by his friend and retired LA. County Captain Wally Millican. Photo by Matthew Story.*