

Official Newsletter
of the
California Surf Lifesaving
Association

The CALSURF

VOLUME 17 NO. 1

**IN THIS ISSUE: PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MY SUMMER VACATION
COMPETITION COLUMN - RESCUE RACE**



www.lacitylifeguards.org

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On the Cover: Lifeguard Elisa Finan walks by what's left of the *Dominator* during the 16 mile hike/swim around Palos Verdes Peninsula

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CAL SURF MAGAZINE

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is the official publication of the
California Surf Lifesaving Association
P.O. Box 366, Huntington Beach CA 92648
www.CSLSA.org Fax (714) 374-1500

Editor

Richard Godino – L.A. City

Contributors

Mike Beuerlein - Huntington City

Mike Tockstein - L.A. City

Welby Cham - L.A. City

Luca Gaetani - L.A. City

Edgard Davila - L.A. City

Marketing and Promotion

Scott Hubbell – L.A. County

2012/13 CALENDAR

- 10/13 Island to Island Waterman's Relay
- 10/24-27 USLA Fall Mtg. - Great Lakes Minnesota
- 11/ 2 Hennessey International Paddleboard and SUP Championships - Manhattan Beach
- 11/4-18 Rescue 2012 - Australia
- 4/12-13/13 CSLSA Spring Mtg. Location TBA
- 4/25-27/13 USLA Spring Mtg. Hosted by NW Region Location TBA

ARTICLES NEEDED!

Agency Profiles / How to Articles
California Lifeguard History
Junior Lifeguard Stories / Unusual Rescues
Submit online to newsletter@cslsa.org

The CSLSA is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of California. Its principle goals are water safety, education, and the promotion of professional lifeguarding standards. These goals are accomplished through beach safety presentations to school groups, educational exchange programs with members of the International Lifesaving Federation and participation in regional and national competitions.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MIKE BEUERLEIN

As the world economy continues to struggle to regain its footing, government agencies face increasing pressure to downsize. Lifeguard agencies utilize statistics to demonstrate the services they provide, justify their positions and defend their budgets. That is why CSLSA has formed the new Public Relations Committee. Under the leadership of Chairman Kai Bond, CSLSA has drafted a position paper on *The Public Perception of Open-Water Lifeguards*. This document is a valuable tool that can serve as a recipe for an effective public relations campaign. The committee hopes to present this document for posting on our website in the near future. It will serve as a public information and Lifeguard agency resource.

CSLSA has been asked by Oxnard Firefighters to assist them in preventing ocean drownings that have been stacking up in their city

While some of us are fortunate enough to have positions to fight for, others do not have positions to save. As a result, lives are being lost. CSLSA has been asked by Oxnard Firefighters to assist them in preventing ocean drownings that have been stacking up in their City. USLA President Chris Brewster has asked CSLSA to take the lead on this project. This will be very challenging due to the significant volunteer time required and proximity issues. A special committee meeting will be held during this meeting to develop an action plan. We will need all the help we can get to effectively address this very real safety issue.

Since the Spring CSLSA Meeting in Huntington Beach, the 2012-13 CSLSA Executive Board represented our members at the Spring 2012 USLA Meeting in Miami. In addition, the CSLSA Executive Board has had five meetings this year, our Executive Board members have also volunteered as officials for our Regional and National Championships, and they continue to work hard on behalf of our members. Our Executive Board will take information from this meet-

ing to represent CSLSA at the Fall 2012 USLA Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

I was contacted by Tim Jago of New Zealand regarding his proposal for a Kiwi competition team to tour Hawaii and California during the summer of 2013.

He asked for an invitation from CSLSA. I extended a formal invitation to Tim and he has informed me that organizational efforts are under way. New Zealand officials hope to be able to make a decision on the feasibility of a tour in the near future.

Project Wipeout has hosted a Lifeguard Symposium and educated the public to save lives and prevent injuries on our beaches for 32 years. Unfortunately, due to the current economy, Hoag Hospital has reduced the *Project Wipeout* program budget. Last fall, CSLSA was given the unique opportunity to embrace this established public education program. Since then, our Public Education Committee has worked to develop a partnership with Hoag Hospital to continue and improve *Project Wipeout*. CSLSA has committed to provide technical expertise and staffing for *Project Wipeout*, and Ian Burton has volunteered to serve as CSLSA's *Project Wipeout* Coordinator. He has drafted an action plan and is working with Hoag's *Project Wipeout* Director, Linda Reuter, to plan future *Project Wipeout* events.

Linda and Ian have already teamed up to do a tremendous job organizing the 2012 *Project Wipeout* Lifeguard Conference. I served as Master of Ceremonies and all of the speakers were excellent. Thanks to Mike Silvestri for securing Dr. Greg Dunnivant and the Brousards (Mike and Kathy) as featured speakers. California State Parks was the best represented Lifeguard Agency and Huntington Beach Marine Safety Officer Mike Bartlett received the *Excellence in Life-saving Award*.

Special thanks to Rob Williams, his staff and the City of Newport Beach for hosting such an excellent Regional event

Gus Avila and I negotiated a contract with LMNO Productions for the filming of the 2012 California Lifeguard Championships. Thanks to all who volun-

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teered to make Regionals such a success. Special thanks to Rob Williams, his staff and the City of Newport Beach for hosting an excellent venue. Hopefully we'll all be able to relive the experience from the comfort of our own easy chair when the event airs the television show *Lifeguard* on *The Weather Channel*. Newport Beach has exercised their first right of refusal to host Regionals in 2013. Thanks to Scott Hubbell and *Beachsport* for their continued support of CSLSA.

ISLA (International Surf Lifesaving Association), who provided 5 "all day" volunteers at Regionals, just won a \$10,000 grant toward their international non-profit lifesaving mission. They have many projects in the works and will hopefully come into compliance with ILS (International Lifesaving Federation) requirements.

Our Executive Board has discussed the need for policy regarding CSLSA sponsorship and promotion. I have appointed Gus Avila, Rob McGowan and Reenie Boyer to a special committee to draft a policy. Topics to be addressed include: fundraising, direct sponsorship, grants, membership incentives and discounts, regional competition sponsorship, meeting sponsorship, regional vs. national sponsorship, marketing for CSLSA and local chapter sponsorship. The objective is to provide for continuity and build in safeguards to prevent or reduce conflicts when these areas overlap.

USLA News

- Chris Brewster and the USLA Public Education Committee were successful in securing a United States Presidential Message for Beach Safety Week this year.
- Nationals were held in Cape May, New Jersey for the second straight year. LACOLA is preparing to host Nationals in 2013.
- After much USLA Executive Board discussion, Bill Humphreys accepted Chris Brewster's invitation to serve on a small committee to screen candidates for the newly advertised USLA Executive Director position.
- Karissa Ickes of the St. John's Chapter has been named to be the new USLA Website Manager.

Many thanks to the Santa Cruz Surf Lifesaving Association for hosting the Fall 2012 CSLSA Board of Director's Meeting. Ned Hearn, Rob Oatley and crew

are hosting for the first time since 2001. CSLSA is looking for chapters to host future meetings.

As you can see, we have a number of very significant matters to address at this meeting. Everyone in attendance has demonstrated their commitment to our cause. That's why I am calling on all members of the Board of Directors to step-up, focus on the issues at hand and help find solutions to these public safety matters. If you can help between meetings, all the better. But let's make the most of our time together.



Lifeguards for Life!

MY SUMMER VACATION

By Mike Tockstein, Welby Cham and Luca Gaetani

Photos by Mike Tockstein and Edgard Davila
Edited by Richard Godino

In a twist on the "busman's holiday" theme, several Southern California lifeguards and friends swam, ran and climbed over beach rocks on their days off. One of these activities was an unusual, and difficult, land/sea adventure. The other activity, a long swim relay held by the L.A. County Sheriff's, included deputies who are part time lifeguards, and also benefited a charity.

THE GREEN CLIFFS SWIM/TREK

On July 14, five lifeguards and a friend completed a 16 mile hike around Palos Verdes peninsula, from Cabrillo Beach to Torrance Beach. The entire hike was done at the water line, and included swimming across inlets,

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traversing cliffs and dealing with surf and water slick rocks.

The group met at 0530, in the dark, at Cabrillo Beach. They were: Mike Tockstein (L.A. City and Cal State); Elisa Finan (Cal State); Fred Sardisco (L.A. City); Steve Sanchez (L.A. County); Jeff Hart (L.A. City and L.A. County); and Larry Ashmore (not a lifeguard, Jeff's cousin and a good athlete).



The climate and water conditions were actually quite good: water temperature was mid-60's; surf was 2-3 feet; and, although a marine layer persisted throughout the day, it was warm and humid. The terrain they were going to move through was quite a different story. Most of the journey was over rocks of varying sizes, from pebbles to car-size boulders. The only stretch of sandy beach was about a quarter of a mile along the coast below the Portuguese Bend Club. Due to the length of the hike, the many obstacles, and the time it took to transition from hiking to swimming and vice versa, the group tried to keep up a fairly blistering pace, allowing themselves only a few 5-10 minute breaks throughout the day.



Fred Sardisco starting the hike at Cabrillo Beach

Twenty minutes into the hike, they encountered what turned out to be the longest swim of the day, 500 yards around Pt. Fermin. About 1.5 hours after the start, the

group reached Royal Palms State Beach, where three additional people that accompanied the core group during the first section called it quits.



Making one of the many hike to swim transitions around Abalone Cove

There were a series of short swims of 15 yards or less across some surging inlets around Abalone Cove; and a couple of times where traversing a cliff face was the most efficient means of getting across the distance. After completing the second longest swim, just before the Terranea Resort, the group emerged from the surf with their dry bags in tow. A crowd had gathered on the cliffs and shore above them, watching with interest. The group could only image what the resort guests were thinking.



The group takes a break at the 1961 Dominator shipwreck near Lunada Bay

The last half of the distance around the Peninsula was a series of coves that made the actual distance to the goal deceiving. But they hiked, swam, and clambered on until they had Torrance Beach in sight. Only one problem in left: The tide had come in. This forced them to scale and traverse large retaining walls near the RAT beach portion of Torrance Beach. Once they stepped onto the sand, they hiked the last 1/2 mile comfortably to their destination: The Torrance Beach ramp.

They had finished the distance in just over 10 hours. As they awaited their pre-arranged transportation back to Cabrillo, they rested at the bottom of the ramp, rinsed off, and licked their wounds. Most of them had bloody blisters, scrapes and bruises, but a significant sense of accomplishment. Why did they do it? It hadn't been

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done before, as far as they know; but the bottom line was that it was a great adventure, with a great group of fit and determined people.



At the finish, from left: Fred Sardisco, Mike Tockstein, Larry Ashmore, Jeff Hart, Elisa Finan, Steve Sanchez

“26 MILES ACROSS THE SEA”

In the darkness at 2100 on August 18, in Avalon, fourteen people headed out across the Catalina Channel; swimming, paddling and piloting a support boat. Most were Sheriff’s deputies or department employees, some of these were also part time lifeguards; two were former lifeguards; one was an LAPD officer and one was a L.A. City lifeguard.

The swimmers were: Deputies Ryan Kearns (former Huntington City lifeguard), Welby Cham (part time L.A. City lifeguard), Dean Lachase, and Luca Gaetani (part time L.A. City lifeguard); PIO Nicole Nishida (part time L.A. County Lake lifeguard); Lt. Joe Badali; Chief David Betkey; Assistant Sheriff Cecil Rambo; Retired Captain Phil Hansen; and LAPD officer Cara Clifford.

The support team consisted of: Sgt. Carilles and Deputy Casagrove aboard the LASD long range patrol boat the *Tradition* and paddlers Deputy Advocate Attorney Rick Brewer (former L.A. County lifeguard) and L.A. City lifeguard Edgard Davila.

The swim was performed as a relay, with each of the ten swimmers swimming multiple legs throughout the night and early morning. Each leg was 1.5 to 2 miles long (depending on whether the swimmer got some helping swells or not) and lasted about 1.5 hours.



Former L.A. County Lifeguard and current Advocate Rick Brewer paddles through the night

As the sun rose around 0600, the group was treated to the sight of a blue whale swimming nearby. There were no real obstacles during the swim aside from a lot of tube worms that made the water seem like oatmeal in places. The last swimmer reached Cabrillo Beach at 1100, 13 hours after the start. Greeting them were friends, family and three TV stations.



The finish at Cabrillo Beach



Swimmers, from left, Deputy Luca Gaetani, LAPD officer Cara Clifford, Lt. Joe Badali, Deputy Welby Cham, Asst. Chief Cecil Rambo, PIO Nicole Nishida, Chief David Betkey, RetTheired Capt. Phil Hansen., Deputy Dean Lachase

This annual swim (4th year) benefits 999 for Kids, a Los Angeles Sheriffs Department charity that supports 1,000 children in the special medical placement and deaf services unit of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services. These kids are all victims of abuse, neglect, domestic violence or other crimes, and have been removed from their homes. They

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victims of abuse, neglect, domestic violence or other crimes, and have been removed from their homes. They all have specific medical problems such as blindness, deafness, severe illness or are wheel chair bound for many reasons. This year's swim raised \$17,000 for the cause. Anyone interested in contributing, at anytime, or helping out with next year's event should contact Deputy Welby Cham at wcham@lasd.org.

More pictures and information about these activities can be found at the Los Angeles City Lifeguard Association website (lacitylifeguards.org).

COMPETITION CORNER THE RESCUE RACE

Until 2009, the Rescue Race had two competitors, one a "victim", who would swim leisurely out to a buoy-flag, and then be "rescued" by a second competitor. The race started when all "victims" were in place. The two-person teams were ranked in order of finish. Additionally, the preferred rescue device was a rescue *can*. Easily understood, but not really representative of the way a rescue works.

In 2009, the national rules were modified to more accurately represent the way a rescue would happen. The rules now include a standard rescue device (rescue tube) and four competitors: a victim, a swimming rescuer, and two supporting rescuers.

THE MOST NOTABLE CHANGE

The race starts when the "victims" leave the beach; NOT when all "victims" are at their flags. It concludes when the "victim" and two "rescuers" cross the start/finish line. The new rules state: "*All four competitors assemble at the team's allotted lane position at the start position facing the water. The Rescue Tube Swimmer holds the rescue tube and swim fins and/or places them on the shoreward side of the start/finish line.*"

The race BEGINS, at the starter's signal and the "victim" enters the water and swims to their corresponding lane flag.

The "victim" signals the "rescuer" by waving and moving the flag.

When the "victim" signals, the "rescuer" leaves the beach to make the rescue.

Once the "rescuer" and the "victim" hook up at the flag, the race continues as in the past: the rescuer swimming and the victim holding onto the rescue device and kicking.

NEXT CHANGE

Once they hit the surf line, the other two "rescuers" grab the "victim" and carry him or her across the start/finish line. The initial "rescuer" and the tube need not cross the finish line. However, two rescuers AND the victim MUST cross the line together. Also, the rescuers must CARRY the "victim". In other words, once the "victim" is picked up, they cannot touch the ground until the finish line has been crossed.

The "rescuer" however, can stay in the water, with or without the rescue tube, or can assist with the final part of the rescue (the beach carry to the finish line) - whatever works best for the team.

THE OVERVIEW AND OPINION

The rule change more accurately reflects real rescues, which is the basic premise of lifeguard competitions. Competitors will understand this event more easily if they compare it to a real rescue situation. The main difference from earlier rules is the the start. Once that is clarified and remembered, the event is even more exciting than it's respected predecessors.



A County lifeguards finish the Rescue Race at 2011 National



Scott Hubbell Productions