

Official Newsletter
of the
**California Surf
Lifesaving
Association**

Fall 2023

The Calsurf

Volume 28 No. 2

INTERNATIONAL SURF RESCUE CHALLENGE

South Padre Island, Texas, USA



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EVENTS CALENDAR 2023

Fall CSLSA 2023 Board of Directors Meeting

Dates: October 5-6, 2023

Location: Coronado, CA

Fall USLA 2023 Board of Directors Meeting

Dates: November 4-5, 2023

Location: Asheville, NC (So Atlantic Region)

Spring CSLSA 2024 Board of Directors Meeting

Dates: April 11th & 12th, 2024

Location: (TBA)

Spring USLA 2024 Board of Directors Meeting

Dates: April 24-27, 2024

Location: Mid-Atlantic Region (TBA)

2024 California Surf Lifesaving Championships

Dates: July 26-27, 2023

Location: Newport Beach, CA

USLA 2024 Jr. Lifeguard/Lifeguard Nationals

Dates: August 7-10, 2024

Location: South Padre Island, TX

COMMITTEES

Bylaw Committee.....	Bill Richardson & Bob Moore
Certification.....	Vince Lombardi
Exchange.....	Vincent Fiamengo & Leslie Schwene
Fundraising.....	Kelsey Cummings
Grants.....	Diego Busatto & Bryan Etnyre
Junior Lifeguards....	Casey Graham & Chris Egan
Legislation.....	Adam Sandler
Sport & Fitness.....	Jay Butki & Skip Prosser
Membership.....	Charlotte Graham & Leslie Schwene
Newsletter.....	Jim Hughes
Prof. Standards.....	Sean Cary
Public Education.....	Samantha Dierdeman, Lola Swank
Public Info. Officer....	Adam Sandler
Public Relations.....	Renae Jackson
Social Media.....	Isiah Mullen
Special Awards	Bill Richardson
Statistics.....	Ian Burton
Training	Mike Silvestri
Ways & Means.....	Tony Sholl
Website.....	Skip Prosser

THE CALSURF NEWS

The
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bill Humphreys President
California Surf Lifesaving Association

Fellow Lifeguards.

As fall and winter approach, lifeguards in Southern California experience a dramatic change. For some, it's a change of lifestyle as you return to school or another profession. For others who stay on the beach, crowds diminish, but so does staffing. Whether you're going back to school, leaving for another job, staying at the beach with a skeleton crew, or going off on a new adventure. - these changes can be exciting and welcome, but they can also be stressful – as all change is. However, lifeguards have a unique ability to adapt to change, set their sights on new goals and objectives, and ultimately succeed. Which you will.

You all have unique skills, combined with mental fortitude to succeed in everything you do. But you also have committed to applying your skills and abilities helping others, protecting them, and saving lives. For that, I want to thank you once again and say how honored I am to be part of this group. Your group. Additionally, I want to thank everyone who has been actively involved in the CSLSA – promoting ocean safety and working to advance the profession. Whether it be as a Committee Member, a Committee Chair, an Executive Board member, or a member of

our Board of Directors participating in our meetings, you all are contributing to advancing our profession, supporting the lifeguards on the beach, and educating the public. All with the goal of preventing injuries and reducing drownings. You all deserve special recognition far beyond this message. But please know that you have my sincere thanks and admiration.

Just as there are changes in the season, there are changes coming to the leadership in the CSLSA. This is an election meeting, so there are opportunities for new board members and new roles for existing members. For example, after six years of serving as President, I will not be running again and will be stepping down from the Executive Board. My decision is based purely on a decision to spend more time with my family (we are new grandparents) and increased involvement in our church. But beyond personal reasons, I also believe that this will be good for the organization by opening a position for one of the many talented and deserving members of our Board of Directors.

With that said, please accept my sincere thanks for all you've done to teach, protect, and save others – often as a risk to yourselves. This is an honorable and noble profession because of people like you. It has been an honor working with you in this wonderful organization. Thank you once again.

Sincerely,

Bill

Bill Humphreys
CSLSA President



*As open-water lifesavers, our **MISSION** is to promote beach safety awareness and professional lifeguard standards through public education, training programs, exchange programs, junior lifeguard programs, competition, and other means. The ultimate goal is to prevent and reduce aquatic injuries, accidents, and death at open-water beaches in the Southwest Region of the United States Lifesaving Association.*

Congratulations to the Following Award Recipients:



**HEROIC ACT
AWARD**



Lieutenant Tyler Berry

At approximately 10:54 a.m. on Tuesday, November 22, 2022, Oceanside Lifeguard, Police, and Fire units responded to a reported drowning under the Oceanside Pier. Multiple witness reports were given that a woman had jumped from the pier and disappeared under the water without a struggle on the surface. Witnesses confirmed that the victim was wearing a weighted vest, ankle weights, and a backpack filled with what appeared to be rocks.

Lifeguard Lieutenant Tyler Berry responded from the Lifeguard Dispatch Center on the pier. Upon arrival, Lieutenant Berry confirmed that the victim had jumped from the pier and was not visible on the surface. He immediately jumped off the pier to perform a hasty search. When other units arrived on scene, Berry requested a bailout bottle. He then dove to the bottom, approximately 30-feet down, and found the victim. When Berry arrived on the surface, he was assisted by Sergeants Bucalo and Swank, along with Lifeguard Mackenzie in loading the victim into an Oceanside PD emergency vessel that had just arrived on the scene.

The patient was found to be pulseless and apneic, hence CPR was initiated. Enroute to Oceanside Harbor an AED was applied, and a shock was administered. The patient was transferred to a waiting ambulance and transported to the hospital.

While the victim's outcome was not ideal, Lieutenant Berry's immediate actions in getting the victim to the surface and commencing CPR within 10 minutes of the initial call, offered the victim the best possible chance for her survival.

For his immediate courageous actions and subsequent perforated ear drum from the rapid decent and ascent, Lieutenant Tyler Berry was awarded the California Surf Lifesaving and United States Lifesaving Association's Heroic Act Awards.



**HEROIC ACT
AWARD**



**Three Encinitas Lifeguards and Three Citizen
Responders**

At approximately 6:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 26, 2022, Sergeant Adam Wraith was off-duty and intending to go surfing adjacent to Seacoast Drive in Imperial Beach. He noticed a vessel about 50-yards outside the surfline, traveling northeast at a slow rate of speed. The vessel was about 1/4 mile north of his location off Cortez Avenue. The vessel appeared to be a panga with a large group of 8-10 people onboard. As the vessel continued moving closer to shore, a large set of waves caused the panga to capsize in the surfline.

With his surfboard, Sergeant Wraith entered the water and paddled toward the capsized vessel. He observed several victims and two surfers, later determined to be Andrew Carter and Kevin Defoney, being carried off-shore by a large rip current. A third surfer, Nick Kubarych, was observed to be paddling out to the scene to assist.

The area of the capsized panga was surrounded by debris from the vessel, including fuel cans and toxic fuel. Defoney was observed with an unconscious victim and three other conscious victims clinging to his surfboard. Carter, Defoney, and Kubarych assisted in bringing the victims back to shore. Once on shore, there were several Border Patrol Agents and San Diego Sheriff's Deputies on scene to assist with the victims. Meanwhile, Sergeant Wraith was transported to Marine Safety Headquarters to launch a Rescue Watercraft. Lifeguards Cannon and McNall responded to the scene in a lifeguard vehicle. Following the transport of the victims, Wraith, Cannon, and McNall free dove the debris field. They continued searching the panga and surrounding area for additional victims.

For their heroic actions in extremely hazardous conditions, Sergeant Adam Wraith, Lifeguards Harrison Cannon and Samantha McNall, and citizen responders Andrew Carter, Kevin Defoney, and Nick Kubarych were awarded the California Surf Lifesaving and United States Lifesaving Association's Heroic Act Awards.

Jay Butki Retires



Bronze Savage Award at
International Surf Festival

By Adam Sandler

On August 5, 2023, the International Surf Festival honored Jay Butki during the Lifeguard Night Events in Hermosa Beach by presenting him with the Bronze Savage in honor of his recent retirement as a Paramedic Rescue Boat Captain for the L.A. County Fire Department Lifeguard Division.

Butki retired in March after 33 years with L.A. County, serving the last 10 years as Rescue Boat Captain of Baywatch Avalon on Catalina Island. Butki concluded an impressive career with 46 summers as an ocean lifeguard; 41 in California, and 5 in Sydney, Australia.

It was a fitting setting for the award presentation as it was held just prior to the ISF's Judge Irvin Taplin Medley Relay event, and in front of hundreds of the best surf racers in the state who know Butki as both a fellow competitor and as the Lifesaving



Sport Chairman of the California Surf Lifesaving Assoc. (CSLSA).

Butki works tirelessly promoting surf racing/lifesaving sport and spends hours setting up (and taking down) the water courses used during the CSLSA Regional Lifesaving Championships each July.

"Throughout his career as an ocean lifeguard, Butki has demonstrated unparalleled dedication and commitment to ensuring the safety of beachgoers, boaters, tourists, and locals alike," according to the remarks read during the presentation. "Butki also has long been the tip of the spear by playing a crucial role in strengthening the ties between Californian and Australian surf racing communities, as well as lifesaving clubs throughout the world."



The Bronze Savage was conceived by L.A. County Ocean Lifeguard Norton Wisdom as a way to honor retired lifeguards whose vigilance while on the job resulted in lives being saved.

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USLA Nationals

By Adam Sandler



Jersey Rules.

The team from Monmouth County, New Jersey, won the 2023 Jersey Mike's United States Lifesaving Assoc. (USLA) National Lifeguard Championships which was held August 9-12 in Virginia Beach, VA.

Despite a strong showing on the final day of competition, the Sussex County, Delaware team finished in second place. The Los Angeles County Surf Life Saving Association team (LACoSLSA) finished third.

The Monmouth County team — a consortium of 30 different lifeguard agencies with 86 competitors — garnered 1324.500 points, slightly ahead of Sussex County's 1116.750. LACoSLSA, whose 21 competitors were defending their 2022 USLA National Champions title, wrapped with 884.125 points.

The win marked Monmouth County's fourth. The team last won a national championship in 2017. The Howard Lee Trophy will remain with the Monmouth team at least until the 2024 USLA National Lifeguard Championships are held August 7-10 in South Padre Island, TX.

The competition shifted to Virginia Beach following a turn in Hermosa Beach, CA in 2022. Surf racers in Virginia Beach tackled daytime air temperatures in the mid-80s, humidity in the upper 60s, and ocean water in the mid-70s.



LACoSLSA's **Kelsey Cummings** finished second in Women's Open Points with 109.250, behind Fort Lauderdale Ocean Rescue's **Casey Francis** who earned 121.375 points, and repeated for the third consecutive year as the top women's scorer. LACoSLSA's **Holly Maine** finished in fifth place with 83.250, while teammates **Renae Jackson** and **Coral Kemp** rounded out spots nine and ten with 75.250 and 73.750 points, respectively.

On the Men's side, LACoSLSA's **Brian Murphy** finished second in Men's Open Points with 86.500, behind top scorer **Thomas O'Neill** from Riis Park, NY, who nabbed 92.250 points. LACoSLSA's **Lukas Pohlman** earned fifth place with 59.750 points as teammate **Alexander Cole** landed in sixth with 57.250 points.

"We are fortunate to have on our team some of the top surf lifesaving sport athletes in the world who came to Virginia Beach to defend their titles," said Jay Butki, LACoSLSA Team Manager. "They demonstrated their tenacity and world-class skills in an effort to win the 'Jersey Mike's USLA National Life-



guard Championships.' Our smaller team of 21 prevented us from scoring enough points to win the title. L.A. County Ocean Lifeguards came to race for individual titles, and achieve top results in the International selection events, and to prepare ourselves for the upcoming 26th Wieland Shield Competition with Life Saving Victoria in Australia. We congratulate the Monmouth County team on its fourth Howard Lee National Lifesaving Championship trophy win."



Porter Hogan

In Age-Group totals, LACoSLSA's Jen Noonan landed in third place on the Women's side with 30.500 points (She also earned 34.375 open points). Cal-State's Nan Carroll and Mary Mansfield nabbed seventh and eleventh place with 24.000 and 22.000 points, respectively. And in the Men's frame, LACoSLSA's Merrill Riley topped the list with 29.000 points, followed by Cal-State's Randall Eickhoff in fifth with 24.000 points (He also earned 9.313 Open points). Teammate Dale Adama took seventh with 22.500 points (Plus 2.000 Open points).

Laguna Beach Lifeguard Association's Porter Hogan delivered an impressive solo performance that caught the attention of many of his fellow surf racers

with his fourth-place Open finish with 60.813 points. "I spent the last five months training smarter, analyzing small details, and making changes in my technique,"



says Hogan. "The effort paid off. We also have a history of great competitors and mentors at Laguna, which inspires us to do well."

Notable event finishes included Murphy and Cummings scoring first place in the Ironman/Ironwoman Surf Ski events. Murphy and Maine nabbed first in the Open Men's and Women's Board Race. Maine and Cummings landed second in the Board Rescue, while Kemp and Laguna's Claire Kelly earned a third-place finish in the event.

Jackson, Kemp, Maine, and Cummings landed first in the Women's Taplin Relay, followed in third place by the Cal-State/Laguna mixed team of Brandi White, Kelly, Lily Frisbie, and Montana White.

In the Men's Taplin Relay, LACoSLSA's Murphy, Chris Javens, Cole, and Pohlman took first place, while the quartet of Benjamin Tran, Cameron Eickhoff, Davy Thomas, and Stephen Blaauw finished third.

Maine and Blaauw would later be named to Team USA for the International Surf Rescue Challenge (ISRC) that was held September 17-23 in South Padre Island, TX. Teams from USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, and Japan competed in a series of land and ocean events. (See Story Page XX). During the California Surf Lifesaving Association's **(CSLSA) Surf Lifesaving Championships held July 22, 2023 in Newport Beach**, the Cal-State team scored top honors.

It earned 1307.750 points, landing in first place. The LACoSLSA team came in second with 1267.000, followed by a third-place finish by the Laguna squad which scored 610.250 points.



It was the 9th consecutive victory by the Cal-State team at the annual Regional competition. (There was no event in 2020).



Renae Jackson

Top Women Open Points finisher was Jackson with 159.000. On the Men’s side, Hogan led the list with 93.250 points, followed closely by Cole with 90.000.

Age-Group finishers Ellen Faustine and Emily Hagen, both of Cal-State, tied for first with 30.000 points, while LACoSLSA’s Joel Gittelsohn nabbed the top spot with 36.500 points in the Men’s group, followed by teammate Eldin Onsgard with 29.500 and Cal-State’s Eickhoff with 29.000.

“Our Lifeguards are continually motivated to compete at Regionals. It’s an annual event that we all look forward to,” said Ryan Gates, Manager of the California State Lifeguards Surf Racing Team. “Our very talented team strives to improve each year. And when coupled with the enthusiasm of the new lifeguards who discover how much fun the competition is, these wins reflect a true team effort.”

#####



Ben Carlson Foundation
By ADAM SANDLER

When over 100 paddlers lined up for the start of a 30-mile race on Sept. 16, 2023, it was the latest example of the enduring legacy of Ocean Lifeguard Ben Carlson and how his tragic death while performing a rescue has galvanized both the profession and the community.



The passion to keep Carlson’s memory serving as a catalyst for positive change — and as a constant reminder of both the beauty and the danger of one of the most unpredictable forces in nature: the ocean — remains as strong today as it did nine years ago.

The Ben Carlson Memorial & Scholarship Foundation (BCMSF) was launched by a group of family, fellow lifeguards, and friends.

The BCMSF donated a statue of Carlson, which was placed adjacent to the Newport Beach Lifeguard Headquarters (the HQ was named after Carlson in 2015) and has funded many other notable community outreach efforts.

The annual scholarships and other fundraising efforts by the BCMSF have helped to keep Carlson's memory prominent in the community, while also serving to remind the public of the dangers faced daily by Ocean Lifeguards.



And the "Ben Did Go 8.0" marked the eighth annual paddleboard race from Catalina Island's Avalon Harbor to the Newport Beach Pier. The over 8-hour paddle raised more than \$200,000.

"The waterman and general community continuously support our Foundation in so many ways," said

Chris Carlson, Ben's father and co-founder of the BCMSF. "Knowing that is both humbling and drives all of us on the Foundation Board to work even harder to improve our current water safety program efforts."

The BCMSF also aids under-resourced children and works to develop and improve systems to protect lifeguards and the public while using a great natural resource like the ocean. The goal is to encourage people to enjoy the ocean, but to do so safely.

The death of the well-liked, affable Carlson occurred at the end of a busy weekend on July 6, 2014, that was highlighted by warm conditions, abnormally large and turbulent surf, and large crowds. NB Lifeguards made 562 rescues during that holiday weekend.



The 32-year-old Carlson, also a former Junior Guard Instructor who was in his 15th year as an Ocean Lifeguard, along with fellow lifeguard Gary Conwell, were patrolling outside the large surf in a rescue boat when they observed a distressed swimmer. Carlson jumped from the boat and made contact with the man. As they began to return to the rescue boat, the pair was hit by a large wave and taken over the falls.

The swimmer made it to shore, but Carlson did not. After a three-hour search he was located submerged a half mile up the beach. Carlson is the only NB Lifeguard to die in the line of duty since the agency's formation in 1923.

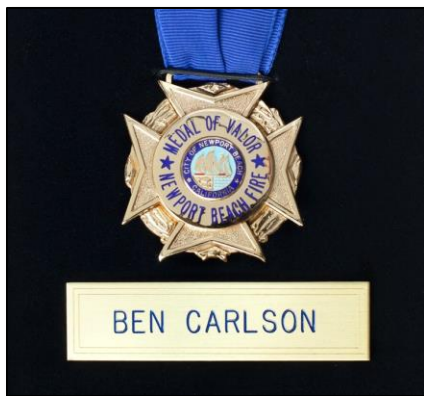




Next year will mark the 10-year anniversary of Carlson's passing.

The BCMSF is working on a couple of events to commemorate his death that will be "focused on improving the public's knowledge of water safety and will honor ocean lifeguards globally," said Carlson. "There have been so many tragic and heroic events in the lifeguard community in the last 10 years from deaths to life-changing injuries."

"We want to ensure that the general population is made aware of the sacrifices that lifeguards make to ensure that the public is kept safe, and that the [BCMSF] is having a positive impact," said Carlson. "With the recent creation of the California Water Safety Coalition and the California



Water Safety Strategy, I am confident that this past decade has been well spent."

International Surf Rescue Challenge



By ADAM SANDLER

For the first time, the International Surf Rescue Challenge (ISRC) was held in the United States.

The 2023 event, held September 17-23 in South Padre Island, TX, spotlighted teams from the USA, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, and Japan. The Youth Teams were from USA, South Africa, and Japan.

The ISRC is a unique competition that is structured unlike most typical surf racing carnivals. It boasts three "tests" with 44 events each day, comprising of 12 sand events, such as beach sprint and flags, and 32 ocean races typical of surf carnivals, such as surf race, board rescue, rescue tube, surf ski, etc. There was a one-day break between the second and the third test, the latter on the final day of competition.

Both the Open and Youth teams featured 8 men and 8 women competitors. The event scoring was 6,5,4,3,2,1. Six points for first place finishes, five points for second place and so on. Youth points scoring is 3,2,1.

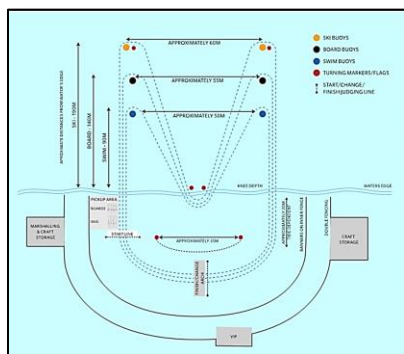
Aside from the unique competition framework, the event boasted another wrinkle: The competitors used identical Fenn Surf Skis and paddleboards which were rented from Ocean Paddlesports in Costa Mesa, CA, and driven to Texas by proprietor Patrick



Hemmens. The renting of the craft saved competitors the expense of shipping overseas their own boards and skis. As a result, there was no advantage that typically comes with having the comfort and familiarity of one's personal craft. And because of the limited number of boats, men and women competitors from the same team had to share equipment.

In addition to the typical surf racing events, the ISRC also offered a look at the Oceanwoman/Oceanman "M" event which is being evaluated by the International Olympic Committee for inclusion as an event

in a future Olympics.



In the "M" race, a competitor swims, paddles, and surf skis around a course forming the letter "M" which con-

cludes with a run up the beach by the skier to the finish line.

The "M" Mixed Lifesaver Relay adds a 500-meter run (Four 125m legs) at its start before segueing into three water disciplines — swim, board, ski — completed by three competitors. The race concludes when the skier completes the ski leg and runs through the finish chute.

The USA team boasted ocean lifeguards from both coasts. The Open Team was comprised of Stephen Blaauw, Casey Francis, Sophia Gulotti, Konner Knarr, Hallie Lynskey, Matt Lynskey, Holly Maine, Josh McIntire, Torre Moser, Dylan Narcowich, April O'Gorman, Tom O'Neill, Mo Peacock, Chase Robertson, Samantha Tadder, and Montana White. The Coaching staff included Tom McGibney, Joji Abasolo, Hunter Hay, Mike O'Donnell, Merrill Riley, Jen Noonan, Gus Avila and Casey Graham.

Australia took home first place with 372.000 points, followed by New Zealand in second with 333.000 and the USA in third with 205.000 points. South Africa earned fourth place with 200.000 points, while Japan



and Canada landed in fifth and sixth with 181.000 and 95.000 points, respectively.

"It was great to be able to compete against some of the world's top surf racing athletes," said Montana White, USA Open Team member and a California State Ocean Lifeguard. "In

addition to meeting athletes from around the world, we also teamed up with surf racing athletes from other agencies who we usually compete against so everyone benefitted from each other's expertise. [The ISRC] was a fun but tough competition, and a good cultural experience as well. It was also exciting that we were able to have the competition in the U.S. for the first time."

In addition to being livestreamed via Rio Sports Live Network, the play-by-play of each race was announced by Phil McGibbon, whose gravelly Australian-accented voice with horse-race style delivery is internationally well-known among the surf lifesavers and numerous carnivals he calls each competition season. Competitors on the Youth Team were Sae Ackerstein, Ellison Barrows, Elizabeth Brennan, Lucas Doering, Charles Franzen, Roman Higgins, Tea Kalpakoff, Jorge Lagunes, David McKeegan, Lucy Noble, Mackenzie O'Keefe, Lars Olsen, Madalyn Price, Lainey Shockro, Colin Veit, and Coleman Woodard.

South Africa topped the Youth events with 173.000 points, USA scored second with 116.000, and Japan earned third with 101.000 points. Our USA Youth team battled hard in each event and some of our athletes competed in seven events each day," said Gus Avila, USA Youth Team manager. "As a result of their grit, skill, and tenacity, and because we were fortunate to have the next generation of world-class surf racers, our youth team was able to finish in second place behind the formidable team from South Africa."

The ISRC began with an Opening Ceremony during which the National Anthems of each country were played. It also included a massive fireworks program on Saturday night, and an awards dinner on the final evening where the teams sported coordinated ensembles reflecting their home country. USA Team competitors rocked red, white, and blue outfits with cowboy hats.

The location of the next ISRC has not yet been determined. However, representatives from New Zealand made a proposal during a Team Captain/Event Officials meeting to possibly host it in November 2024.

####

In Memoriam:

Nathan "Scott" Shoemaker (1958-2023)

- State Parks Lifeguard
- City of Port Hueneme Lifeguard
- County of Ventura Head Lifeguard
- 1992 NDA and USLA National Surfboat Champion (with teammate Bobby Crane)
- 2010 ILS age group World Champion three-person ski relay, board relay (with teammates Jerry Merayo and Casey Graham)



Scott Schoemaker inspired two generations younger than him to enter the profession of lifeguarding and the sport of surf lifesaving.



A Quick Look at the Coronado Fire Department Lifeguards Host of the Fall 2023 CSLSA BOD Meeting

The Coronado Lifeguard Association is a nonprofit (501-C3 tax exempt) organization chartered to promote beach safety awareness and professional open-water lifesaving standards. We share the mission, goals, and objectives of the CSLSA. The CSLSA (west coast region) is one of nine regions of the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA) which in turn is affiliated to the International Lifesaving Association (ILS).

Affiliated Agency:

Coronado Fire Department

- Creation: 1917
- Shoreline Guarded: 1.7 Miles
- Permanent Lifeguards: 8
- Seasonal Lifeguards: 60
- Rescues 2022: 375
- Junior Lifeguards 2022: 120

The Coronado Fire Department and Lifeguard Services are dedicated to providing the community with safe beaches. As part of fulfilling that mission, Coronado Lifeguard staff are certified by the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA) as an "Advanced Lifeguard Agency" in national training and equipment standards.

Agency Contact –

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