



SPM NEWSLETTER

St. Petersburg Masters | Est. 1972 | North Shore Aquatic Complex

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Making Waves

These past few months we saw two National swim meets and the start of long course season, but the much of the competition by our swimmers actually took place in the open water world. In this issue, many teammates have taken the time to share their experiences competing in the pool, in the Gulf or ocean, or in a triathlon. Read about some of their personal goals, challenges, and reasons for swimming. Many fellow swimmers also volunteered their time as angel swimmers, officials, timers or for other various tasks asked of them.



Charlotte Petersen writes about how even a small group of SPM swimmers at the Spring Nationals epitomized the meaning of "TEAM." Visitors from the North not only felt the warmth of the sun, but the warmth we showed them during the winter months as their surrogate team. The snowbirds have left for the summer leaving voids in the pool and other social activities, but we look forward to their return in a few months!

Many thanks to John Aversa, Gary Bastie, Tabitha Brandt, Christie Bruner, Dawn Clark, Tori Kirkman, Sarah Kwon, Veronica McCumber, Regina Novak, Charlotte Petersen, Ryan Rager, Mike Smith, Paula Texel, and Mike Zabel for their contributions, and to those whose photos I lifted from Facebook. Their insights and experiences demonstrate the depth, quality, and various dimensions of our team. I hope you have some time to enjoy their articles.

I have tried to keep up with as much activity as I could, but if I missed mentioning an event, please be sure to let me know. I will include it in the next issue. As always, if you have ideas or news you want to share with the them, please e-mail me at liv-ia.zien@gmail.com.

By the way, for those of you who are anxiously awaiting the breakfast cereal poll results, I will include it the next issue, as there was so much activity this quarter. If you haven't shared your favorite cereal, there is still time!

SPONSORS



Upcoming Pool Events

July 13-14 / LCM: St. Pete Masters LC Championships. St. Petersburg FL. [Information & online entry](#). Registration opens March 24; entry deadline: online entry closes Sunday, July 7

Aug. 7-11 / LCM: USMS Summer Nationals. Mission Viejo CA

Aug. 24 / LCM: 6th Annual Dog Days Meet. Clearwater FL. [Information & online entry](#). Entry deadline: online entry closes Wednesday, August 21

Sept. 14 / SCY: Ocala Marlins Fall Festival. Ocala FL. [Information & entry](#). Entry deadline: postmarked by Monday, September 9; late entries accepted to Wednesday, September 11 with additional fee

Oct. 11-13 / SCM: Dixie Zone SCM Championships/Rowdy Gaines Classic. Orlando FL. [Information & entry](#). Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, October 7

Nov. 9-10 / SCM: Shark Tank Meet. Sarasota FL. [Information & online entry](#). Entry deadline: online entry closes Wednesday, November 6

Pool Competition Recap

At the end of April, Mesa Nationals closed out our Short Course Yards season where 12 SPM swimmers competed. In June, the Bumpy Jones meet opened our Long Course season, and the end of the pool looked as far as the horizon for many of us. But, we're getting our training done, in preparation for our out LCM meet July 13-14. Last, but not least, Mike Smith did an tremendous job representing us at the National Senior Games in Albuquerque later in June.

Mesa Nationals

By Charlotte Petersen



Charlotte after Gold #3

After a busy Spring 2019 where I finished my Bachelor of Science in Nursing, spent countless hours and yards in the pool, biked twice a week, the time had come to go to Arizona and revisit Kino Aquatic Center in Mesa. We had not as a team promoted this event as we did for Pan Am's last Summer, and as much as we will for the 50th anniversary of USMS in San Antonio 2020, but we still showed up as a team, swam as a team, and supported each other at every SPM entry. I have done some of these meets alone, but it is so much better as a team. When I was asked one day in Mesa why I was at the pool all day without an event, my answer was swift; I am here to swim, and I am part of a team. **Together Everyone Achieves More = TEAM.**



Sherri returns!

Distance day is a big day for SPM and some of us met up at the pool Wednesday for a warmup and to get to know the pool. It was bright, warm, and very sunny. Dry heat is different from what we are used to, but I can only imagine how the Northerners felt in the 102 degree heat! The team was a little spread out, and I am not sure where everyone stayed since Suzzette and I stayed with family in Peoria, a 57 minute drive away. However, as usual, we always found each other very easily at the pool.

Four days of swimming with this small determined team produced many great swims, lots of good swims, countless solid swims, and just a few blah swims. The "that's the way to fight" award goes to Eric, who after pneumonia and 2.5 weeks out of the pool, came, swam, finished ALL his swims, and scored points and bling as well. David had excellent swims with personal bests in several events except for his DQ in the dreaded 400 IM (sorry, correct call). David ages up for San Antonio and will be ready to get even faster. Sean battled his age group sprinters and swam very impressively the entire meet. He may refocus next year to get even more shiny bling in the longer events.



The "That's the way to fight" award goes to Eric



Mesa National Team and our newest member, Matt Grevers? (photo: V. Valle)

Tiffany flew in Thursday night with her personal cheering squad, and despite the time difference and keeping up with her adorable youngsters, she swam personal bests and 4 events on Friday and 3 on Saturday. Unfortunately, despite her excellent swims, she had several #11 places next to her name. I think this meet will continue to motivate the incredible speedster, and I hope that Matt, William, and Thomas can join us in San Antonio next year. Linda Felton joined her daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren on this trip and swam very well

every time she climbed the mountain (the starting block). It is so nice to have Linda join us both in Orlando last year and Mesa this year.

Sherri Bogue has returned and keeps getting better every time she competes. With consistent training and team support, she will get even better. Suzzette had done some "cramming" before this meet and proudly entered the 3 breaststroke events. My fears when Suzzette competes is always about her start. These starting blocks were really high and I said: "Just dive in from the side." Nope. She dove in, and even Livia said "she nailed those starts." Great job Suzzette, and all 3 times were better than at our meet!



Lots of hardware for Sean!



Tiffany and Linda's cheering squad



Suzzette — textbook perfect!



Val and Matt staying cool



Seasoned relay places 4th



David and Charlotte



Suzzette in toga garb



Funny foto! (photo: V. Valle)

Val joined us again for a major meet and is a great competitor in her age group with strong, solid swims in both distance events on Thursday, a very nice 500, and a solid 200 free. She placed in the Top 5 in all her events. Val also participated in our mixed mystery 200 medley relay and ended up doing breaststroke. "I am a one stroke girl" did not prove correct. We can count on Val in any stroke. Great to have to her as part of the team.

Cheryl is an energizer bunny, as is Livia. The exhausting and hard events those two ladies participate in gets applause



Cheryl, Eric, and Paula



Lookin' for shade

from all. It's all about the bling and points. Ladies, it's so amazing what you do for the team on the outside as well as in the pool. Cheryl made sure we were admired for our shirts and caps and her shoulder held up in the 200 fly and 400 IM. Livia's fly and breaststroke are beautiful and nice objects with a camera. Livia, thank you for the incredible photos you captured doing this meet.

Paula brought home many medals in the top 4 and despite of her less than optimal preparations due to work commitments, she swam well. The 200 back was definitely not a "normal" Paula beauty and it hurt but she picked it up and sprinted like Paula the last few events. Paula, you are not going anywhere.



Miller Time!



Paula's stellar start

I entered both distance events and always dream of a repeat performance from when I was younger. I felt well prepared, rested, and toned up. The suit fit and in a smaller size. The pool was fine, perhaps 1 degree too warm, but Thursday was a disappointing day for me. Yes, I became a double champion but it didn't feel right and both were slower than Clearwater's Valentine Meet and at our Bob Beach SCY Championship Meet. I had Friday off and on Saturday, I raced a great 500 free and was able to bring home a third gold. My time was respectable for a used, elderly, and very worn gal. My 200 back was solid and a silver. Sunday, I got silver in 200 free and kept my goal of breaking 2:05. The last relay was a blast. The seasoned relay of Paula, Livia, Cheryl, and myself managed a 4th after Number 1 was DQ'd. Those cheaters.

As a team we split up after the four hot and rewarding days on deck and we went our separate ways again. I spent a day touring Antelope Canyon and surrounding natural beauties before returning to wonderful St Pete.

I enjoy swimming, SPM, and NSAC very much, and I hope we can get many more team members to join us in San Antonio next year at the same time. The aquatic complex is amazing, fast, and cold.

Full results can be found [here](#).



Antelope Canyon and surroundings (photo: C. Petersen)



Paula and Eric

Bumpy Jones

By Paula Texel

On June 8 & 9, 17 SPM teammates traveled across the bridge for the 2019 Bumpy Jones Meet and we were all thrilled to have beautiful weather all weekend! Even when our phones kept alerting us of the storms in St. Pete, we were thankful for no lightning delays in Sarasota. And with hot weather came some smoking fast swims! A new format was used this year, with men and women swimming all events together, which made the meet move along quickly as we kicked off our LCM season.

Many of our swimmers had lots of outstanding swims! Congratulations to Sherrie Bogue,



Mike and Gloria



Carolina and her cheering section



Tricia and Dawn



Livia and Cheryl—400IM (photo: G. Smith)



400m free relay! (photo: G. Smith)



Sharon visiting with Susan Tokayer



Mile-ing smiling Sarah

Dawn Clark, Eric Herman, Cheryl Kupan, Tricia Moses, Greg Salomon, Phyllis Scheidt, Mike Smith, Sharon Steinmann, Sean Stringer, Sarah Swoch, Paula Texel, Carolina Ticeira, Tiffany Weidner, Karen Westerman, Michael Zabel and Livia Zien. Mike Smith was using this meet as final preparation for the National Senior Games in Albuquerque just a few weeks later.

And what would a swim meet in Sarasota be without a trip to Yoders? The group enjoyed some social time at Yoders while eating a delicious meal.

Thanks to Sarasota for another wonderful meet as we kicked off our long course season!



The Yoders tradition (photo: E. Herman)



Coach Gary

Great Sarasota Meet

As I put together my mental notes from the recent Bumpy Jones (aka Sarasota Meet), it is with this in mind. We have a great team. In fact, I was told that by the coach of the South Tampa teams (more than one). Well, true to form, we lived up to our reputation by providing spectators and competitors with what they came to see, a log of good racing by a lot of good people.

Now, I don't know about you, but I really enjoy the meets. For one, a.m. and p.m. swimmers get to meet up, compete up, and relay up. And, when we do, we never seem to disappoint. Sarasota was no exception. While I won't embarrass anyone, you could see how hard our swimmers practice by how well they did at the meet.

Strokes, starts, turns, relay exchanges, and breathing patterns were at a high level and the other swimmers appreciated us being there. I wish there'd been more but, oh well, next meet (ours). Thanks again to all of our capable swimmers who always seem to bring their "A" game, regardless of weather, lack of rest between events, etc. I think that's what makes our team one of the best in the world and I mean that with all sincerity. If you don't believe that, I believe Livia's going to run an email I received from someone who trained with us for a short time but took away so much positive experience, that she won national events and placed high in others. Thanks to all who helped make that happen. Full results can be found [here](#).

2019 National Senior Games

By Mike Smith



(photo: G. Smith)

Gloria and I were in Albuquerque, New Mexico for the National Senior Games, competing in the swimming events June 15-19. The NSG had nearly 14,000 attendees, the largest in the 32 year history of the games, participating in 20 sports. There were 700 Florida participants at the games with qualifiers from the US, Mexico, Canada, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, Sweden, and Slovakia with a strong contingent representing the west coast. Early in the trip we made it to the top of the Sandia Mountains for some breathtaking views and to open up the chest for the high altitude swimming in Albuquerque.

As I am approaching my two year mark of Masters swimming, throughout various competitions our experiences have shown us that the number of participants varies greatly within the age groups/events and being in an older age group doesn't necessarily indicate slower times. That said, one of the largest age groups was the Men's 60-64 with 70 participants. I think we're all trying to get our testosterone back! I was impressed with the level of speed with winners posting times of 30.84 in the 50 breaststroke, 27.01 in the 50 butterfly, and 28.58 in the 50 backstroke to name a few.



Mike's butterfly! (photo: G. Smith)

Although I finished fourth in the 100 breaststroke and 50 butterfly, I liked the fact the NSG only awards medals for 1-3. I was able to outpace a strong swimmer from Mexico in the 50 yard freestyle to win the gold, by three hundredths of a second, with bronzes in the 100 individual medley and 50 breaststroke. While it was not the finish I had hoped for in the butterfly, four of my five times were personal records and three of those times, including butterfly will make it into the all-time Top 10 NSG record books.

Lessons learned; tapering paid off, adding 500 yards of kicking has strengthened my freestyle, consistency in practice is key, not swimming an event to save myself for another has not worked well, *rethinking* the strategy, remembering the grind Phelps went through in the last Olympics, it is what it is - make it happen!



(photo: G. Smith)

After swimming concluded, we sampled the local fare of green chile burgers, sopapillas, and Spanish wines from a local vineyard. I was able to catch up with a former colleague who had opened a business there. We spent a day in Santa Fe touring the town and had an immersive experience in a labyrinth of secret portals and magical worlds at Meow Wolf. We had a great time competing, relaxing, and making new friends.



(photo: G. Smith)

New Mexico (683) won the overall competition, followed by California (645), while Florida (450) finished third edging out Texas (428). If you would like the experience, the next National Senior Games will be held in Ft. Lauderdale, FL in 2021.



SPM turns 50 in 2020!

Can you believe it? As USMS celebrates 50 years of Masters swimming next year, so does St. Pete Masters! Established in 1970, SPM also holds the longest continuously running meet, now known as the Bob Beach SCY Championships named for one of the founding members of the organization, Judge Robert Beach. Plans for the celebration are already underway, and the festivities will coincide with our the meet in March/April 2020. Stay tuned for more information and be prepared to party!




Open Water Competition

What a busy open water season it has been—and summer just started! From April through June, our swimmers participated in the 21st Annual Tampa Bay 24 Mile Marathon Swim, Lido Key, Hurricane Man, Swim Across America, Swim Around Key West, Madeira Beach, Sand Key, and the Flowers Sea Swim in the Caymans. That's a lot of mileage. Read about their experiences and motivation, each as unique as the swimmers themselves.

24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

By Christie Bruner

As my 40th trip around the sun was nearing, I knew I wanted to do something fun and adventurous - and get some friends to join me. I swam at Truman State University and we always took our winter training trip to Largo to swim at Southwest Complex. Our team became familiar with this area and later found out about the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. It was always a goal for a group of us to participate in the swim but friends moved around the country, had kids and got busy. In fall of 2018, I messaged about 20 Truman swimming friends from across the country to ask them who wanted to join me in the 2019 Tampa Bay Marathon Swim and several agreed!

Now, it was time to get training. I joined St. Pete Masters again after quite a few years off, and I got on a schedule to train a few days a week at the early morning practice. It was fun to see old friends in the pool and challenge myself with consistent workouts. As the Marathon Swim approached, we recruited an excellent boat captain - Sean Gerrard. Sean proved to be an amazing asset to our team, we can't thank him enough for sharing his knowledge and expertise with us.

Team "Who Let the Dawgs Out" began arriving in town on the Friday before the race, and a few team members got in a warm -up swim at North Shore. Due to high winds and bad weather, the Marathon Swim was rescheduled from Saturday to Easter Sunday. Luckily, everyone on our team was able to stay and swim on Sunday. Our team was comprised of our coach from Truman, Seth

Huston, who now coaches at Rice University. He is an open water swimming expert and completed with Tampa Bay Marathon Swim in 2018 on a team of two. He was definitely our key team member! Other members included Jen & Mike Hoskovec from Houston and Jess & Pete Koenig from Iowa. The best part of the event was seeing old friends from college and catching up with them on the boat between swims.

It was certainly a challenge in the water with each swim becoming increasingly more difficult as the water became choppy throughout the day.

We started out swimming in 30 minute intervals, then switched to 20 minute intervals as the choppiness increased (except our expert open water swimmer, Seth - he stayed with 30+ minute intervals!). We were tracking the other swimmers throughout the day and saw several drop out - we knew that it was a tough event and we were all glad we had such a large team so we could spread out our swims. As we approached Rocky Point and the finish line we saw the leading solo swimmer, Jamie Proffitt. He was at about the same point as our team, which we thought was just amazing since he swam the entire race by himself. Our team ended up finishing a few minutes ahead of Jamie, but we were the first ones to congratulate him upon his finish - what an awesome accomplishment.

It was wonderful to have many family members welcoming us to the beach. I think the kids may have even thought the event was pretty impressive. My hope is that my kids and the children of our team members see what their "old" parents accomplished and believe that they, too, can accomplish anything they put their mind to.

I would highly recommend the Tampa Bay Marathon Swim as a way for former teammates to reconnect and challenge themselves. It was an unbelievable way to showcase they beautiful city we live in as well. The views from the boat and water were memorable and so picturesque. Other former Truman swimmers have already expressed interest in participating in the Marathon Swim next year and have a few competing teams! Who else from St. Pete Masters will take the challenge?



1st place relay finish (photo: C. Bruner)



(photo: C. Bruner)



Truman Women NCAA DII Champs in 2001 (photo: C. Bruner)



Excellent boat captain, Sean Gerrard (photo: R. Collins)

Lido Key

By John Aversa



John's 4th place finish (photo: R. Collins)

Since joining SPM, I've been inspired by our distance and channel swimmers to step beyond the pool. I've never swum more than 2.4 miles officially and whenever I did, I was saving juice for another 138 miles of biking and running. I heard mixed reviews about this swim; chop, jellyfish, chaffing, sunburn, so I figured I should see for myself. I heard everything from "It sucks" to "It's a piece of cake" and was warned about getting race nutrition figured out beforehand.

My wife agreed, reluctantly, to kayak for me which meant that I had to assure her that nothing could possibly go wrong. She made up for my lack of nerves. She's the planner. I never think consequences, so of course she had every right to feel worried.

She laminated pictures of the course, carried my insurance card, brought food and water for me, and reminded me when it was time to drink.

I planned on a 2:45 to 3:00 swim depending on the course, which could've been worse, and fell right in the middle with a 2:52. We started reeling a couple swimmers in between miles 3 and 4, and I experienced none of the chaffing or blowing up that worried me. We both finished with a smile, and at my wife's request, a couple days later we signed up for Alligator Lighthouse. This time, we're both looking forward to it.



(photo: R. Collins)



John and Meredith, post-race smiles (photo: R. Collins)

Hurricane Man 2019



2.4 Mile Start—USA Swimmers (photo C. Kupan)

Another Hurricane Man is in the books. On a beautiful morning with pleasant temperatures on Pass-A-Grille Beach, even the strong current could not deter the open water enthusiasts. This year, the race was also the Dixie Zone Open Water Championship, and USMS came out with their cameras and drones to film the swimmers. The event featuring a 1000m and a 2.4 mile race is co-sponsored with SPA and part of the proceeds go to help inner city swim programs at the McLin Pool. Overall winners in each division received the coveted embroidered towel, and each 1st-3rd place finishers were awarded a themed rubber-ducky.

Participants, volunteers, and fans were treated to Big League Grilled Cheese breakfast sandwiches and Kahwa Coffee for fuel.

SPM was well represented. Marina Falcone led the way as the overall female finisher for the 2.4 Mile race. We had several first place finishes too. John Aversa, Valerie Valle, Bryant Davies, Jonathan Hartwell, Emma Quinn, Anne Page won their age groups in the 2.4 Mile event, and Sharon Steinmann, Aaron Peter, Robert Melsom, Veronica McCumber, Sheila Carpenter-VanDijk in the 1000m races. Congratulations to all who swam!

It takes a tremendous amount of preparation and coordination to hold this event. Thanks to the dedication of Hurricane Man committee (Cheryl Kupan and Tora Williams— our co-race



Valerie, John, and Marina



Bryant Davies wins his age group

Directors; Patty Nardozzi, volunteer coordinator; and Livia Zien, safety director) and our volunteers. So many people were needed to help out with various jobs and tasks unique to open water events. Many thanks to David Abbey, Jo Ann Harrelson, Gary Bastie, Kim and Steve Brackin, Christopher Burke, Eileen Burns, Tanya Gerrard, Phil Harasz, Nancy Kiernan, Katy Kline, David and Margot Larson, Greg Lauwers, Charlotte Petersen, Anne Piccard and Mary Reischmann, Kristen Rambicure, Steven Ray, Phyllis Scheidt, Suzzette Seril, Michael and Gloria Smith, Greg Stanek, Paula Texel, Miles Williams, Mike and Jane Zabel, Andy Preble for help with the t-shirts, and to our officials, Dan Nardozzi, Steve Freeman, Kevin Mooren, and Chris Pyhel. And a special thank you to Eric Herman, Sean Gerrard, Lisa and Dave Flanagan, Livia Zien and Greg Carlin, Tora Williams, Cheryl Kupan, and Dan and Patty Nardozzi with hauling and setting up equipment the prior evening. Congratulations to all on another morning of fun and fast swimming!

Results can be found [here](#).



Mike, Steve, and Martha



First USA 1000m swimmer out of the water



Cheryl and Charlotte



Gary



Denise and Bryant, post-race



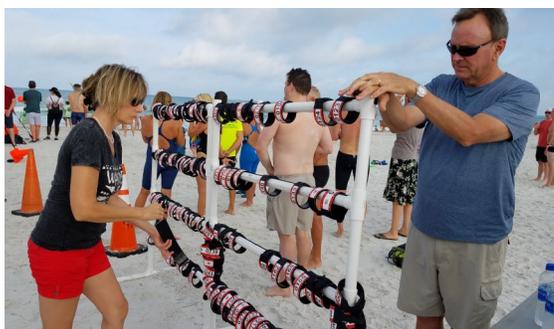
Jo Ann!



Referee Dan



Eric and Chris



Gloria and Chris organizing the timing chips



Sean and Suzzette



Just a few of our many volunteers!



Steve



Miles and Lisa



Sheila, Veronica, and Martha
(photo: S. Carpenter-Vandijk)



Tora and Cora

A Few Thoughts from an Angel Swimmer at the Swim Across America

By Charlotte Petersen

I love North Shore Aquatics Center and consider it my other home besides my condo and Northside Hospital. I think I can speak for all of us when I say that it is so pretty to swim and then admire the sunrise over the pool and the water at Northshore beach. Well, I prefer to watch the sunrise from the chlorinated pool rather than swimming in the Bay. For the second year in a row, Rebecca Hansen asked me to be an angel swimmer for this great event and fundraiser to fight cancer. I figured I could float around for up to a mile like last year and accepted the challenge. When I arrived at the event Saturday 5/11, I ran into the mother of an 8 year old. I knew them both from officiating, and I told her I was there to be an angel swimmer. A match was made immediately. I had to swim 1/2 mile next to an 8 year old (score.) Laura Kaleel and Dawn Clark were also there to represent SPM as angel swimmers, and they found swimmers as well. Laura had to swim 1 mile, and Dawn got way with 1/2 mile like me. John Aversa volunteered on a paddle board and Phyllis Scheidt was in a kayak. Thank you team.

The weather had been less than optimal all week with a lot of rain, and I thought that they would cancel the event or relocate it based on the issues in the past with run-off from... you know what I am taking about. Nope, I told my little swimmer to refrain from swallowing any water during the swim out. When this event started, we had to walk a good distance out to the deeper water and all I could think about was "don't get any cuts". The 1/2 milers swam counter-clockwise to avoid the 1 and 2 milers but as I was doing my 800m breaststroke with my head out of the water, the fast swimmers showed up and even passed us. Chelsea Nauta flew by one time, but to my surprise some boy was faster than she was. Yes, age may be catching up with her (ha ha).

Young Riley was not a fast swimmer, and it was his first open water swim. He started like a rocket but the waves and the conditions quickly brought him back to me, and we spent probably the better part of 30 min in the warm but not very appealing waters of Tampa Bay. The shallow parts were the worst since I really did not like to walk on the bottom of the Bay but you forget it immediately when you approach the finish with the cheers, the tremendous support, applause, and looking at your young swimmer and his parents at the finish line. The cap, the towel, water bottle, and the t-shirt make nice gifts as well. Chelsea and I went to our beloved NSAC to dive into the chlorinated pool immediately and Fred did not even fuss that we joined a practice in progress. We just needed to get the chlorine to rinse us off.

Swim Across America is a well-run event and I will continue to support the event when called upon. It is rewarding for both my insecure swimmer as well as myself. I hope more of the SPM team will support it next year despite the location.



Laura Kaleel and Tori Kirkman (photo: T. Kirkman)

Swim Across America

By Tori Kirkman

Last year, I was going on a walk by North Shore Park when I passed by a Swim Across America event. When I found out about the cause, I vowed to sign up this year.

Swim Across America hosts events across the country to raise money to fund cancer research and clinical trials. All participants were strongly encouraged to fundraise, and profits from the Tampa swim this year benefited Moffitt Cancer Center and Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital.

Like most people, I've been impacted by cancer. My cousin survived lymphoma, my mom is fighting metastasized renal cell carcinoma, we lost my boyfriend's dad last year to gastrointestinal stromal tumors, and his grandmother, aunt, and uncle have all fought or are fighting as well. I had plenty of people I was swimming for, and it felt great to

be able to combine passions and be a part of such a good cause.

As for the event itself, there were 0.5 mile, 1 mile, and 2 mile options. A few of our swimmers (Dawn Clark, Charlotte Petersen, and Laura Kaleel) were angel swimmers for a few kids who had not participated in open water swims before. I did the 2 mile, which was a two loop course. The water was calm and it was an enjoyable but that's not why we were all there.

As of writing this, the total raised for the Tampa event was \$173,428. Overall, SAA has granted more than \$80 million to fund cancer research and clinical trials. We were all there because we want to see a world where fewer people suffer and die from cancer. I'm so glad to be part of the Swim Across America community and will definitely be participating in future events.

Madeira Beach Open Water Races

By Tabitha Brandt



Dawn, Sharon, and Tabitha
(photo: S. Steinmann)

The beautiful sunshine, warm air and great friends didn't disguise the rip current and choppy water in the Gulf on June 1st at the 2019 Madeira Beach Open Water Races. The swims were very challenging this year.

As I stood on the warm sand and listened to the instructions for the swims, I watched the small waves rolling and wondered ... *why am I doing this?* You see, I don't consider myself a distance swimmer by any means and this was only the 3rd time I ever raced open water. As instructions were given, the fact that the 1 mile swimmers were heading out first, eased my mind on the sea life that would hopefully be scared away by them.

The water temperature was 85 and churned up making it very cloudy. The rip current made it almost impossible to see other swimmers right next to you. A few swimmers were surprised when I bumped them as I passed because I didn't even see them. There was also no current relief either direction, north or south. I definitely had a sore neck from sighting so much because I didn't want to get off course or run into more swimmers.



Start of Race (photo: T. Brandt)

Even though it was rough, the 3 of us from SPM rocked the waves. Dawn Clark, Sharon Steinmann, and I all swam well and had a blast. Dawn came out of the water 5th for the women and 7th overall in the mile with a time of 29:28.4. Sharon came out 6th for the women and 8th overall in the mile with a time of 29:33.9. and I was 1st for the women and 1st overall in the 1/2 mile with a time of 14:04.9.



Tabitha and Sharon (photo: T. Brandt)



Tabitha and her cheering squad (photo: T. Brandt)

The most enjoyable part of the race, besides competing in the sport I love was having my husband, daughter and friends there cheering me on and enjoying their company before and after the race.

Upcoming Open Water Swims

Sept 14 — Swim for Alligator Lighthouse, Islamorada, FL <https://www.swimalligatorlight.com/>

Oct. 13 — Lucky's Lake Swim (1.5K). Orlando FL. [Information & registration.](#)



Tabitha and her cheering squad (photo: T. Brandt)

Sand Key Open Water

By Tabitha Brandt

We all have those friends in our lives that are very influential ... those who are so encouraging that they can get you to do more than you would normally do. Well that would be our friend Veronica McCumber. She was a great addition to our SPM team last year. Her positive attitude is contagious.

On June 8th, 2019 while most SPM swimmers were down in Sarasota swimming in the Bumpy Jones meet, Veronica convinced me to join her and compete in the 2nd OWS Sand Key Open Water race in Clearwater since I wasn't going to Sarasota. The only choices were the 1.2 and the 2.4 miles. Well, I hadn't ever swum further than a 1000m open water event so I chose the 1.2 mile along with Veronica.

Upon waking the morning of the race, it was windy and raining. Needless to say, I was not happy. On the drive up to Clearwater,



The Start (photo: T. Brandt)

we watched the flags whipping and the 2-3 foot waves in the Gulf, and I said many times, “I’m not doing this!” My husband kept saying, just go and cheer on Veronica. We didn’t know until we got there that Regina Novak was competing in the 2.4 mile race, and Hank was there to cheer her on too.

The conditions were so rough the race directors switched the course from the Gulf to the Bay. It was still rough but much better so I decided to try the race. The 2.4 swimmers went out first and cleared the way. It was dark and stormy but heading north at least we had a good cruising current to help ease the struggle.



Tabitha and Veronica (photo: T. Brandt)

The three of us from SPM did very well. Veronica McCumber placed 36th overall for the women in the 1.2 mile with a time of 37:39.6. Regina Novak was 8th overall for the women in the 2.4 mile and 1st in her 30-34 age group with a time of 51:31.6. I finished 4th overall for the women in the 1.2 mile and 1st in my 50-54 age group with a time of 24:56.6.

The food, family, friends and awards were a perfect ending to a rough morning.

Key West Bound

This year, Tori Kirkman and Sarah Kwon with their cheering squads and support crews made the trek down to Key West for the 12.5 mile swim on the first of June. Both had excellent swims and Tori chronicles her experience below. Congratulations, ladies! For full results, click [here](#).



Tori and Donnie (photo: T. Kirkman)

Swim Around Key West

By Tori Kirkman

Key West will always have a special place in my heart. On June 24, 2017, the Swim Around Key West made me a marathon swimmer, and this year I was attempting the 12.5 mile swim for the second time. This time, my training had started earlier (increasing yardage around January) and I felt more prepared going in.

Before I knew it, I was heading to the Keys. I was nervous, but excited. For this swim, you get about 3 miles total of current assist, so they time the start around the currents. This year, we were on the beach, finding our kayak and getting set up before the sun rose. Around 6:15am, we all started working our way towards the 6:30am in-water start.



Bridge at Cow Key (photo: T. Kirkman)

My trusty kayaker/boyfriend Donnie had eyes on me from the moment we got in, so soon after we were sent off, the crowd thinned and he was able to pull up beside me. The first few miles were a little choppy, but they went by quickly, and I was relaxed and feeling strong. We rounded the southernmost point, got a great current assist under the first bridge/checkpoint at mile 5, and spent a couple miles through a shipping yard and going along the North side of the island.

Around mile 7-8 I started feeling myself slow down, but I knew the Cow Key Channel at mile 9 gave me another mile of strong currents. My mom and step dad came to the bridge to watch me swim under, and told me later that there was a shark that kept appearing in the channel, but I didn’t see him. We flew through the channel, and then there was dead man’s curve. Shallow, slow, and feels like it takes forever, but once you’ve made it around the wide turn you can see the little white tent you started at 5 hours earlier, and you know you’ve almost circumvented an island. At this point, I am hurting and I am tired, but I know I can make it. And at 12:24 pm, 5 hours and 54 minutes after I started, I was welcomed back to shore.



Finishers Tori and Sarah (photo: T. Kirkman)

Flowers Sea Swim

Chelsea Nauta competed in her third 10k Flower Sea Swim in the Caymans, on Monday, June 17, finishing 7th overall and 2nd for women with a time of 2:29'35.27. She took the opportunity to visit with her sister and brother-in-law during the event, which is a fundraiser for Special Olympics Caymans. On Saturday, June 15, they held a One Mile Sea Swim where over 800 swimmers participated. Chelsea says that one of high points at this year's event was beating former Olympian Anthony Ervin in the mile swim. Congratulations, Chelsea! For more information about the event and results, visit www.flowersseaswim.com.



Sting ray photo op (photo: C. Nauta)

Tri, Tri, Tri!

For those who cannot live on water alone, there is the world of triathlons too. The 36th annual St. Anthony's Triathlon provided just such an outlet in April. Team OxyClean (can we say Sully?) lead the way winning the Team Male Division and overall Olympic Relay with Sully on the bike, and Sean Doolittle in the swim (Sean, not John, SPM by family) with a time of 2:01.42. Dawn Clark raced twice that day, placing 1st in both her events! Russ and Karen Westerman placed 12th and 13th in their respective divisions of the Sprint distance. Was that coincidence? Veronica McCumber was third out of the water in her Sprint distance division. Cindy Newton earned a 4th place finish in her Olympic distance division, Carolyn Kiper a 5th in hers, and Laura Albee's relay, Tri to Win placed 4th in the Masters Coed Division.



Keep reading to learn about Dawn Clark and Veronica McCumber's experiences. Congratulations to all our competitors!

Double Duty, Double Firsts at St. Anthony's

By Dawn Clark



Because the St. Anthony's triathlon is considered "in my own backyard", I always looked forward to participating. Over the last 20+ years I've probably participated approximately 20 times. I would either do the Olympic distance solo or the Olympic distance relay (always as the swimmer). While there were a few years back in the day when I was competitive, I usually finished in the middle of the pack. It's always a tough race because of the heat. Over the last several years, I've put more of my training into the swimming, so triathlons were put on the back burner.

Fast forward to the last 5 years or so and the St. Anthony's triathlon week-

end has fallen on the same weekend as the USMS SCY Spring Nationals Championship a few times. This year, 2019, was one of them. While I usually choose the swim meet, this time I chose the triathlon. I signed up for the sprint distance that they now offer on the same day as the Olympic distance. Half the distance of the Olympic, which seemed doable to me only a 3 mile run in the heat versus 6!

Here is where the fun part begins. I was approached to be a part of an all-girls, 50+ relay for the Olympic distance. While I was already registered for the sprint distance, the wheels started to turn. Could I actually do both? If the relay wave start time was early enough, and my sprint distance wave was late enough, I could most definitely do it. I then put my plan into action. I reached out to Susan Daniels, the race director to see if she had the waves confirmed yet. She had not, but I knew from past races, that the relays are usually in the first few waves, so I went with that. While I waited anxiously to see the wave start for my sprint. As it turned out, I had plenty of time between the two races. Our relay, 3 Fast Chicks placed first in our division, and I placed first in my division for the sprint distance. That was a great day!



3 Fast Chicks 1st place (photo: D. Clark)

St. Anthony's and Hurricane Man—Conquer and Celebrate!

By Veronica McCumber



Veronica — St. A's ... done! (photo: V. McCumber)

St. Anthony's Sprint Triathlon was important for me to conquer because it was the combination of everything I've learned as an athlete over the years as well as facing my own personal demons. My completion of St Anthony's Sprint Triathlon came from almost a decade of running 5ks, years of open water and competitive swimming, and miles of exploring my home of Tampa Bay in the seat of my road bike. It was a very emotional race for me because I had to face the 5k run. What used to be my best event as a runner was suddenly the greatest challenge due to knee pain and it was pretty tough to face that again. The race itself was also very surreal because despite being on a triathlete team (Outspokin), I never considered myself as an official triathlete. On race day, the swim felt super smooth, the bike course took us through the very best parts of scenic St Pete and my transitions were quick. As I had predicted, the run did prove to be a challenge because of my previous knee injury but I refused to let it stop me. I sprinted the last 50 meters through the Finish like the runner I used to be. Finally, I am an official triathlete and there's no better feeling than to conquer those personal demons!



Veronica and Sheila—Hurricane Man (photo: S. Carpenter-VanDijk)

Hurricane Man was the perfect race to follow up St. Anthony's because I got to race an open water swim for the first time with St Pete Masters. As one of the official team newbies, I ran into the water at the sound of the horn, swam my little heart out against the current, and tried to run out of the water to finish strong. Keyword there is tried! I very nearly tripped and fell on my face just ahead of the finish line and in front of the awesomeness that is Coach Gary. I still managed to win a ducky in my age group. At breakfast, time spent with my teammates made my heart happy! I may be a team



Veronica and Mike—Hurricane Man (photo: V. McCumber)

newbie, but nobody on St Pete Masters ever makes me feel like it. Where completing St Anthony's was about conquering fears, Hurricane Man felt more like a celebration of the fact I'm on the very best team in the Bay! GO SPM!

Ironman 70.3 Gulf Coast



Karen at the finish! (photo: K. Westerman)

On May 11, Karen Westerman, Carolyn Kiper, and Tim Kennedy participated in the Ironman 70.3 Gulf Coast — a 1.2 mile swim, 56 mile bike, and a 13.1 mile run in Panama City Beach. Nearly 2000 athletes competed. I am tired just typing out those distances! According to Karen, the water was choppy and there was a strong headwind on the return trip on the bike. Still, all fared well! Carolyn placed 6th in her division. Tim was second out of the water in his age, and Karen 1st. All in a day's work ... congratulations to all.



Karen first out of the swim (photo: K. Westerman)

Upcoming ePostals

May 15 - Sept 15 — 5k / 10k e-Postal Team Days (e-mail [Gary Bastie](mailto:Gary.Bastie) to schedule lane)

August 25 — 7:15am warm-up and 7:30am start time

September 15 — 7:15am warm-up and 7:30am start time



Performing at Your Best

By Regina Novak

SPM swimmers are big on competition. We have officially entered the time of year for the 5K/10K pool swim. Our long course masters meet is just around the corner, and several team members have completed at least one open water swim so far this year.

That feeling of victory is pretty sweet. Winning your age group, dropping time to see a personal best, earning that high point award.....achieving something you have worked so hard for is truly a rewarding experience and a feeling that is hard to replicate with anything else.

What is the secret to performing at our best? I think all of us can agree that staying healthy and avoiding injury is key, but how do we make that happen? While some things are out of our control, there are some things we can do to get us to the best we can be prior to competition:

Actual Training: This is a given. If we want to improve strength, speed and endurance, we have to train. Our training in the pool has to be focused and deliberate....and we have to actually swim. When it comes to cross training (anything you do outside of the pool), make sure it complements what you are doing in the pool. If the activity cannot translate well at the pool, be sure it doesn't actually contradict what you are trying to accomplish. Keep in mind that we can also OVERTRAIN. At some point, we can have diminishing returns. Since we are all different, the best measure is to gauge how you feel and listen to your body.



Gold Medal Fuel: If you want your phone to work, you have to charge it right? The same goes with our body. If we want to perform at our best, mentally and physically, we have to charge it with good quality nutrition. Since I am not a dietitian, and since all of us have our own unique genetic makeup and specific needs, I can only speak in generalities. The more servings of fruits and vegetables (more veggies than fruit) you can incorporate into your diet, the better. Eat food as whole as possible and stay away from processed foods. Sugar is a culprit in inflammation, which is correlated to so many health issues, including heart disease and cancer. Nutrition is another opportunity to really listen to your body and figure out when you feel at your best and when energy levels are at their high point.



Rest and Sleep: Sleep is a conundrum for a lot of people. The majority of society does not get enough rest...we are literally an exhausted society. Without getting into ALL of the major reasons we need to sleep more, getting enough sleep is ESSENTIAL to good performance. The National Sleep Foundation reports that sleep deprivation increases the risk of fatigue, low energy, hormone disruption and poor focus. Without enough sleep, the brain and body do not completely recharge.

Mental Health: Where is your head before your event? We physically prepare, but do we mentally prepare? Part of this preparation is dealing with the stress we have in our life. While we cannot eliminate stress, we can choose how we deal with it and how we let it affect our life and our health. If stress is wearing on you, it's going to affect your performance. Practicing visualization exercises, meditation, mindfulness or other similar mental exercises can do wonders for your physical performance.

Here's to some great performances to everyone awaiting their big day!

Regina Novak is the Wellness Specialist for City of Clearwater

From Coach Gary: Slippage



For all of those of you who once lived “up North”, here’s something to chew on. Ever heard of “slippage”? Me neither but it’s the topic of this article. For me, slippage meant falling on my butt, each time I tried to walk up hill on ice. But today, it means something entirely different. Slippage, you see, is what most of us do underwater.

When you start your pull, you “catch” the water. We’ve discussed this and I’ll bet most of you have a PhD in “catch”. But, what happens when you transition your pull from the catch to the push? You guessed it, more often than not, it’s slippage. In other words, as your arm moves backward, there’s a point at which your pull goes from wider to narrower (or at least that’s a good idea, says my bartender). But, when we go from pulling to pushing the water behind our shoulders, we often slip. Slip what?

Glad you asked. Your pulling surface begins as your palm and forearm. As you move to the shoulder, the elbow should be above the hand so that your pulling surface is both hand and forearm. If not, try it, it works. If not, keep reading.

Once you’ve ended your pull, you begin the push phase and that’s where most people slip their elbow back and water slips off the forearm and palm, sort of at a 45 degree angle. When that happens, you’re inefficient at best. But, what if you could catch the water, pull yourself ahead, and then not slip but instead, push the water behind you (thereby moving yourself forward)? Yep, you guessed it again, you’d be more efficient, take fewer strokes, and grab more water per stroke. And that my friends, is how we avoid slippage!

Some drills you can use to avoid slipping your arm out of the water include just swimming where the pressure is even throughout each pull. If there’s a momentary lapse in pressure on your palm/forearm, that’s where you’re slipping. In other words, if the pull suddenly gets much easier, you’ve lost your grip on the water. So, the next time that happens, just feel your way to even pressure throughout each pull. And, if that’s too technical for you, think of it as going to a place where they sell adult beverages and...

In Other News ...

More newsy items from our team!

Southern Hospitality

During the winter months, our neighbors to the North often spend a few months in our little paradise, but sometimes it’s just a short stay. As both Gary and Charlotte noted in their articles, St. Pete Masters is a very special team, and strong bonds are formed within our swimming community. Pam Geiger met Elaine Mattatall during one of her regular morning swims and told her about our SPM practices. Elaine was able to continue her training during her visit and had great performances at the Canadian Masters Swimming Championships. She writes and thanks Gary below.



Hello Gary,

Greetings from NS.

I swam with you and your team for three weeks in March this year, while staying in St. Pete Beach. Mostly Sunday mornings with your team, and I connected with Pamela and a few others during the week days in the mornings as well.

I just wanted to let you know that May 24-26 I competed in the Canadian Masters Swimming Championships in Montreal. Short course...25 meters. My age group is 60-64.

I won the 400 free, 200 free and 200 IM. I placed second to a woman from USA in the 100 free and 100 IM. The women’s relay I was on (4X 50 Medley) won Bronze.

There were 800 swimmers, and 95 teams represented. The Halifax team I swim with is the Halifax Chronos, 14 of us went.

Anyway...I wanted to say I really appreciated being able to swim with you in March. Staying in the water and working out with all of you played a huge role in my training and staying on track for a successful Nationals. Thank-you!

Also, I am wondering if you could pass this e-mail along to Pamela. She was incredibly welcoming and friendly to me during my time there and I really appreciated that. The more we chatted the more it seemed we had in common. It was Pamela who invited me join the group of swimmers working out weekday mornings. That was very kind of her and I really appreciate it and would love to thank-her again!

Thanks Gary and I hope you have a great summer.

If the stars align I will possibly be back next year March or April!

Cheers,

Elaine Mattatall

Extra, Extra! Read All About it!!!

Did you receive your latest copy of Swimmer Magazine? Our very own Paula Texel is featured, demonstrating the start with the new backstroke wedge! These wedges are becoming more popular and are being used more frequently at meets. We have some of our own, so you might want to give it a try. Sign up for our meet and you can also watch Paula in her signature backstroke events! The article begins on page 24 of the July-August 2019 issue or you can read it online through your USMS account at www.usms.org under MyUSMS.



(photo: R. Rager)

Warrior Games

By Ryan Rager

This last weekend (June 28-30) I received an email very late in the day asking for any possible volunteers to help at the Warrior Games swim event at the Long Center in Clearwater. I couldn't pass up an amazing opportunity like this to give back to those combat wounded veterans and active service members that were competing in various swimming events! When I got to the Long Center early that morning, it was an awesome plus running into Cheryl Kupan who had signed up via the volunteer website to also be a timer!

For more information on the Warrior Games, check out the following site: <https://dodwarriorgames.com/>



Ryan with fellow volunteers (photo: R. Rager)



Cheryl and Bill Brenner (photo: C. Kupan)



US MASTERS SWIMMING USMS Summer LCM Nationals

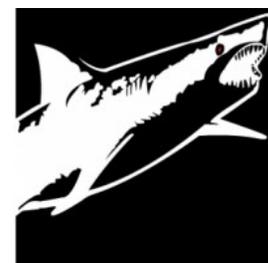


Cheryl Kupan and Sherri Bogue will be representing SPM at the USMS LCM Nationals in Mission Viejo, CA from August 7-11. Wishing you both some great swimming ahead! Deadline for entries is July 8, so there's still a little time for anyone who is interested. Registration information can be found [here](#).



Upcoming Open Water Swimming

Aaron Peter will be participating in the 14th Annual Point to La Pointe Swim in Bayfield, Wisconsin on August 3, 2019. Along with 500 other swimmers he will make a 2.1 mile swim in Lake Superior to Madeline Island. Jason Breese and his brother Justus will be out in California swimming the 1.5 mile Alcatraz Sharkfest on July 27, with 800 of their closest friends. Best of luck to you all!



Meet Mike!



Mike Zabel joined our team this past February, and he says loves it! Commissioned as an Ensign after graduating from San Jose State University in 1984, he retired as Captain from the US Navy in 2009 after a long and successful career. His first assignment was Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) Officer in USS REASONER (FF-1063). After a variety of duties, his last assignment before retirement was in the Office of the Naval Inspector General as the Assistant Director for Audit and Follow-up. His awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, the Defense Meritorious and the Meritorious Service Medals, among many others.

Mike's first experience with organized swimming was as a freshman in high school playing goalie for the water polo team, but he quickly found that he had a knack for swimming so he joined the swim team. He tried out for and made the Santa Clara Swim team in 1976 and had Pablo Morales as a teammate / lane mate. Even though Pablo was getting his gold at the Olympic Games in Barcelona Games, Mike could hold his own with high :22s in the 50 free

and mid :53s for the 100 free.

He played intramural water polo when he was attending Officer Candidate School and drew the attention of the SEALs stationed there. He was recruited to join Naval Special Warfare as a Small Craft Team member, where he got back into swimming and running. After he left the squadron however, he kept to his twice annual sit ups and pushups and maintained a sub-10 minute 500 yard free. He admits that he was not in the best of shape, but says, "I could still hang in there."

He and his wife, Jane (retired Commander of the US Navy) were always thinking about where they wanted to retire. A few years ago, they came to Florida for a family wedding and were won over by the beach. They looked on the internet and found a place in Belleair Beach. For a good story, ask Mike about how they bought their home.

He started swimming again in 2018, and he's trying to get back down to his high school swimming weight by the end of this summer. While a fan of sprints, he thinks that he'll probably more suited for middle distances.

Since joining, he moved to the Sharks group from the Stroke group and is beginning to feel more comfortable with the intervals now. He's already competed in 3 meets so far since November.

"I joined SPM in February and love it. We have a strong, friendly team, definitely a swim family and amazing facilities and staff," he says. Welcome, Mike – So glad you decided to join us ... see you at the pool!



Mike and Jane volunteer at Hurricane Man



Newest Little SPM Family Member

Congratulations to Beth and Mike Casey! Beautiful Eleanor Anne Casey (Ella) was born July 1, 2019 weighing 6 lbs, 13 oz and measuring 19 inches long. She says, "Mike, Ethan, and I are over-the-moon in love with her already."



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