

The Rime

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FROM THE EDITOR

◆Check out all the meet results and upcoming swimming events on our website at www.ancientmariners.org
 ◆Please send comments and suggestions: for articles to dbuch@mindspring.com

24th ANNUAL ALBATROSS OPEN

by John McCaffrey

The ANCMs hosted the 24th Annual Albatross Open on March 5 at the Kennedy-Shriver Aquatic Center in North Bethesda. The short course meters meet kicked off at 1:00 p.m., two hours earlier than the traditional 3:00 p.m. start time. More than 230 swimmers from 38 clubs participated in the meet, including 49 swimmers representing the home team — the most ever. The Germantown Maryland Masters posted a combined team score of 872 points to take the overall crown for the sixth consecutive year. The ANCMs finished in second place with a combined team score of 680 points, but, for the first time since the 2011 Albatross Open, the ANCM women prevailed over their Germantown rivals by a score of 322 to 267. Lane 4 Swimming finished third overall with a combined score of 239 points.



Meet Co-Directors Holly Donnelly and Kara Permisohn took the reins this year from long-time Albatross director Cathy Gainor and expertly guided the event without a hitch. Holly even managed to squeeze in the 400 free and a couple of relays. Holly and Kara were quick to spread the credit around: “The Albatross came together thanks to our many volunteers,” Holly said. “Dave Harmon deserves the lion’s share of the credit for his extensive work as the Entries Chair, and Tom Denes did an excellent job organizing the registration desk.” Holly and Kara also highlighted the “fabulous” work of Susan Blum and her husband Dick Piper as head timers, noting that “they really helped our new volunteers learn the ropes.” Dozens of volunteers pitched in to help the meet run smoothly, including numerous ANCM team members, friends and family.

(Continued on page 4)

ANCM 2015 USMS TOP TEN

by Dottie Buchhagen

In 2015, 20 ANCMs achieved USMS Top Ten times. Leading the group is Margot Pettijohn (68) with nine in SCY events and, at age 69, in nine SCM events, eight LCM events, and five SCM relays. Of no surprise to her practice lane mates, all of her swims were non-free. Other ANCM women achieving Top Ten status are Julie Roddin (38) in the SCY 1650 free and, at 39, in two SCM (back and IM), four LCM events (free, back, and IM), and one SCM relay, and Erica Kao (25) with three SCM events (free and fly) and one SCM relay.



Margot Pettijohn

Several ANCM women were on relay teams that placed in the Top Ten, including Linda Foley (60) on five, Pam Blumenthal (48), Stephanie Sugg (52), and Pam Ambrose (59) on two each, and Viviane Callier (31) on one.



Julie and Jeff Roddin with Jacob and Rachel in 2014

Leading the ANCMs for men with USMS Top Ten times is Jeff Roddin (46) who ranked in the Top Ten in three SCY events (fly, IM), four SCM events (fly, IM), five LCM events (back, fly, IM), and one SCM relay. Even with two small children, Jeff and wife Julie are able to continue to achieve

(Continued on page 5)

ALOHA FROM HAWAII

by Erica Kao

Aloha from Oahu! As many of you may already know, I've decided to spend the last few months of medical school in Hawaii immersing myself in the ocean. My sea-habilitation began with joining an open water swim club, the Waikiki Swim Club (WSC). The group sponsors several open water races and also meets for casual weekly ocean swims, which I've been going to regularly. So far we've swum at Waikiki, Haunauma Bay, and Tracks. This group overlaps with the masters swimming program, as many of the members settle for normal pool swimming during the work week. I say "normal pool swimming" but even that is glorious. I usually train at the University of Hawaii's Duke Kahanamoku Aquatic Complex in Honolulu. It's an outdoor 50-meter long course pool. There is a rainbow at every practice. Sometimes, two. There are also two mongooses (or mongeese) who have nested at the far end of the pool. I could get used to this side of paradise.

Back to the ocean swimming: the WSC usually does two-hour ocean swims on weekends averaging maybe three to four miles. An additional half-mile is due to my zig-zagging all over the place. The closest spot is in town itself, called Kaimana. To get there, you plug in "Outrigger Canoe Club" into your GPS. There's a windsock maybe 200 or so yards straight out from the beach from which to swim back and forth. The entry point is by the lifeguard station on the beach next to an *en plein air* restaurant with pink tablecloths and tables arranged under a large tree weeping with moss and vines. For those who dare venture beyond the windsock, there's also a 1.5-mile course along the reef parallel to the shore. You can sally forth watching the shoreline—using the resort hotels and skyscrapers of downtown Honolulu as landmarks—until you see a white church, then turn around and head back.

But my favorite spot is the west side of Oahu. We meet at a place called Tracks Beach Park and follow the coastline toward the Nanakuli power plant. There's a giant pipe from the plant that shoots out warm purified water (it's clean water, not



Erica is in the middle

icky!). Sea turtles tend to drift in and ride the artificial current. The turtles will surface slowly for air and poke their heads around and stare at you with eyes full of soul and ancient wisdom. They come so close, you can touch them and perhaps cling on their shells (I did!). Back to the exhaust pipe: If you dive down approximately the depth of the deep end of a pool, you can reach the pipe and get into the exhaust current, which will blow you out to sea for half a pool length. The west side is the preferred place because it's glassy and the water is blue but clear when the conditions are right. We even see dolphins! A pod of spinner dolphins, including three dolphin pups, swam right under our group before coming up to

breach the surface with their dorsal fins. And this was during my second Tracks swim! We've also seen eagle rays and a myriad of sea life!

And so, we linger in the chambers of the sea. My time in Hawaii has been and continues to be a blessing. The island culture celebrates the ocean's proximity and importance, revering "watermen" and "waterwomen" as mortal heroes and heroines who have acquired a deep and profound ocean knowledge while becoming extremely skilled at multiple water sports including surfing, paddleboarding, diving, spearfishing, and swimming. And of course, let's not forget their warm and welcoming aloha spirit!



Erica at the right in pink cap.

YOGA IN CARTAGENA

by Kathleen Etxegoien



Kathleen and Jon

My attempt at finding a yoga studio in Spain! As all mainstream Americans know, yoga has taken a foothold in the USA.

In some circles, namely elementary schools, it can be controversial and a topic of curriculum inclusion. Is it too spiritual, the teaching of an unnecessary philosophy, or simply an encouragement to move? For many (what is the number exactly?) a regular yoga practice provides joy and peace, self care, exercise, and routine in our all too fast daily lives. It is a chance to breathe thoughtfully and send intentional energy. I came to Cartagena, Spain from the latter group. With my Manduka mat, Lulu Lemon togs, and a newly retired life, I looked forward to deepening my Vinyasa practice. Who woulda thought....!?? It's not offered. Many, many Pilates studios, but no yoga to speak of. I did manage to find one studio within a three-mile radius. Without a car, I would be cycling to and from class. Speaking little to no Spanish, I trepidly signed up for the two-hour Wednesday evening class. Although I was concerned a two-hour class was way beyond my ability, I rode my bike to the studio beforehand so I wouldn't get lost. Bike route, mat, water, and towel I snuggled into my helmet. The first indication that that I wasn't in Kansas came when the motorcycle policia pulled me over for riding in the wrong bike lane. I was on the right in the direction of the one-way traffic. We drive on the right in Spain after all. Well, the newly marked bike lane was on the left.

It was a two-way bike lane to the left of the traffic lane. The faintly marked bike lane I was riding in was the wrong one. Vale. I made it to class in plenty of time and informed the front desk that I was there for the free trial class and no hablo Espanol. I set up my mat, admired the studio with beautiful wood floors, a mirrored wall, and several photos of ancient yogis. I smiled politely as the various students come in and again explained that no hablo Espanol pero estoy aprendiendo. The instructor entered and to my delight he was a small 70-ish year old man with a long gray pony tail who clearly had studied under several master yogis. He found the music and to my surprise Katie Perry was blaring from the speakers. and we began our Zumba-like warmup!! WTF?? No intention to set? No *Ujjayi* breathing, just high kicks and craziness for 30 minutes. Yes, we did work up a sweat but not enough to require a shower! Nonetheless, we took a break. At first I thought it was a smoke

break! I asked the front desk what was happening and was told via the computerized translator that the class now takes a shower! Hmmm. Somewhat exasperated, sans shower, I went back to my mat to set an intention and practice my *Ujjayi* breathing. When the class returned to the studio they are ALL dressed in white karate pants and white t-shirts. Everyone. OK, now we practice yoga? Not so fast. First we meditated. For 30 minutes. Being new to meditation, this was a tough exercise, especially since I did not have the benefit of the instructor's verbal guidance. Though the chatter was fast, I was thrilled to identify a few random words. I think they were cabeza and izquierdo! Best to just focus on my breathing. That finished, it was now time for the poses finally. They were all seated simple poses. Very simple. Crossed legs. Straight legs. Twist to the right and the left/izquierdo. Namaste. Class ends. No chattarangas! Cycling home, I contemplated whether that was worth my time. It was certainly not the yoga class I was craving. But it did open my cabeza to yet another way of practice. Practice comes in many languages. I quickly concluded the need to develop a regular home practice! Would someone back home please open a yoga studio in Cartagena? It's a beautiful city with lovely outdoor parks and mild weather. Someone please? Alguien pueden tener?



A beach in Cartagena

Editor's note: Kathleen was a long-time ANCM who enjoys open-water swims. She and husband, Jon, moved to Cartagena, Spain last August for three-to-five years. When both former ANCMs return to the United States, they will retire to Pass-a-Grille, FL, home of the 2.4-mile Hurricane Man Swim.

LANE ETIQUETTE

- Make sure you are swimming in the appropriate lane for your speed - the fastest swimmer leads the lane.
- Swim to the right! Turn on the cross and swim to the right after you turn. Finish to the left to make room for your lane mates.
- Always leave 5 seconds between swimmers (unless you agree to 10 seconds). Do not tailgate - if you are faster than the swimmer in front of you, pass him at the wall or go ahead of him in the next set.. Wait for others except at rests or on intervals.
- Do not stop in the middle of the lane - only at the wall. If you are hanging out at the wall, stay to the right away from the cross.
- Do not start swimming when someone is coming to the wall for a turn. Wait until after that swimmer pushes off.
- If you are late, join the set when your lanemates finish at the wall - lane consensus is required to modify sets.
- Do not use paddles in a crowded lane.
- Be aware of what is going on within your lane and where your lanemates are.
- Be friendly, helpful, and have fun.

ALBATROSS

(Continued from page 1)



John McCaffrey

Also among the volunteers were a number of Montgomery County students volunteering their time to earn Student Service Learning (SSL) hours.

Upholding its reputation as a very fast meet, nine

world and/or national records were broken. ANCM Margot Pettijohn set a new national record for the women's 70-74 100 fly, touching the wall in 1:34.06 to shatter the previous national record by more than three seconds. Leslie Livingston of Rockwall Aquatic Masters in Texas rewrote the record book in the women's 55-59 age group, setting new world records in the 50 back (30.12), 100 back (1:10.08), 50 fly (29.39), and 50 free (27.81). Diann Uustal of New England Masters established a world record for the women's 70-74 age group in the 50 fly (35.12), while adding national records in the 100 free (1:13.13) and the 50 back (38.90). Shirley Loftus-Charley of Virginia Masters set a world record of 3:07.06 for the 200 fly in the women's 65-69 age group and also lowered the meet records in the 400 free (5:24.44) and 100 free (1:14.11). Dozens of other meet records were set at the 2016 Albatross, including a new mark by ANCM Ed McCleskey (37.41) in the men's 50 breast (60-64 age group). ANCM Heidi Henning easily bettered the meet record for the 100 back in the women's 55-59 age group, but she had the misfortune to be up against Leslie Livingston's world-record performance in the same event.

Several ANCMs posted multiple first-place finishes in their respective age groups. In addition to her national record in the 100 fly, Margot swam to victory in the 200 back and in the 50 and 100 breast events. Julie Roddin (40-44 age group) touched first in the 400 free, 200 back, and 200 IM, while husband Jeff (45-49) won the 100 fly and 100 IM. The Roddins added a victory in the couples relay for good measure. Cathy Gainor

(45-49) rang up wins in the 200 and 400 free events. Other ANCMs with multiple first-place finishes were Josh Burwell, Scott Dasovich, Jeff Dubin, Marshall Greer, and Hannah Rubin.

The meet was also filled with great efforts by other ANCM team members. Stephanie Sugg (50-54 age group) won the 50 back, placed second in the 100 IM, and picked up points in the 50 and 100 free events. Recently persuaded by friend and neighbor George Humbert to give masters a go after a long layoff from swimming, Andrew Schulz (45-49) turned in strong swims in the 50 free, 50 breast, and 100 IM. Gladys Arrisueno (35-39) won the 50 fly and earned second place in the 100 fly and 100 IM. ANCM coaches Tom Denes and Peter Johnson "walked the walk" ("swam the swim"?), combining for six individual events, including Tom's 200 free win in the men's 55-59 age group.

Thanks once again to the organizational efforts of Pam Blumenthal and

Margot Pettijohn, the ANCMs made an extremely strong team showing in the relay events. More than 30 ANCMs fielded 27 squads in the relays. Many swimmers swam in multiple relays, often swimming in back-to-back races.

The post-meet social returned this year and was held at Paladar restaurant near the pool. The earlier start time for the 2016 Albatross made it easier for swimmers and meet organizers to get down to some serious post-meet socializing, and the event was completely sold out. Holly Donnelly observed that "we got a lot of positive feedback on the new, earlier start time, and the return of the social!" By all accounts, Paladar was a great venue, and special thanks go out to Gladys Arrisueno, George Humbert, and Nanci Sundel for organizing the social. A fine send-off for yet another successful Albatross Open.

Editor's note: Full results can be viewed at www.ancientmariners.org/albatross.htm.



MORE ALBATROSS PHOTOS



Meet Directors Holly and Kara



ANCM USMS TOP TEN

(Continued from page 1)
national rankings.

Following Jeff for ANCM men with Top Ten times is Ed McCleskey who ranked in in four SCY events at ages 61 and 62, and, at 62, in four SCM events and two SCM relays (all Ed's swims were in free, back, fly, and IM). Coach Clay Britt (53) swam his signature stroke — back — to take two Top Tens in SCY events, and, at 54, two in SCM events. Clay also placed on one SCM relay.

Other ANCM men achieving Top Ten times are Lou Diamond (75) who swam breast to win two Top Tens in SCY, and, at age 76, two in SCM, two in LCM, and one on a SCM relay; Marshall Greer (79) with two SCM back events and three SCM relays; and Dave Cheney (57) with a SCM fly and five SCM wins. Dave Harmon (66) won his Top Ten ranking with an impressive (and exhausting!) 400 IM in SCM. Dave also placed in Top Ten on four SCM relays. Rounding out the roster of ANCMs with Top Ten times is Brian Oliver (56) who swam on two SCM relays and Peter Johnson (54), George Humbert (47), David Friedland (58), and Neal Gillen (78), who each swam on one SCM relay.

Special thanks to Margot for responding to my request for help in compiling this information. Making USMS Top Ten is quite an achievement and will be recognized in future newsletters and on the website. Congratulations to all!

Complete 2015 USMS Top Ten results are posted on the website at www.ancientmariners.org/team.htm.



Clay Britt



Ed McCleskey



Dave Harmon



Erica Kao



Brian Oliver



David Friedland



Peter Johnson



Linda Foley



Marshall Greer and Neal Gillen

SWIMMING BUDDY

by Nick Olmos-Lau

Editor's note: Nick Olmos-Lau was a long-time ANCM. He swam the English Channel in 2001 at the age of 58 registered in his home country of Mexico. Nick is one of the few (126 worldwide) swimmers to complete the Triple Crown of open-water swimming – the 21-mile English Channel, the 20.2-mile Catalina Crossing, and the 28.5-mile Manhattan Island Marathon Swim – in addition to numerous other long-distance swims. Following is a story about his training for the Channel crossing. He had seen an article online at BoredPanda about a penguin who each year visited with his best friend, whom he met on the beaches of Brazil in 2011. A 71-year-old retired bricklayer and part-time fisherman, Joao Pereira de Souza, found Dindim, a South American Magellanic penguin, covered in oil and close to death. When De Souza nursed him back to health, however, he found that Dindim didn't want to leave. When he finally did, De Souza was surprised to see him return the next year, and the years following. "I love the penguin like it's my own child and I believe the penguin loves me," Joao told Globo TV. "No one else is allowed to touch him. He pecks them if they do. He lies on my lap, lets me give him showers, allows me to feed him sardines and to pick him up."

While the above story is so much more moving, I also have a personal story about a marine animal who became my friend.



Nick on the English Channel in 2001

Some years back when I was training to swim the English Channel, I spent a couple of weeks in San Diego with my brother Jaime. He lived in Encinitas about an hour north of La Jolla, and I would drive every morning to train at the La Jolla Cove. I would bring a cooler with drinks and water, and I would leave it by the Cove and start swimming between the Cove and the La Jolla Shores beach, about



La Jolla Shores beach

one mile each way. I did this about five times a day. I would tell the life guard at the Cove to keep an eye on me. This routine was most convenient as I could do this on my own, without disturbing anyone else's routine, and it was relatively safe. I swam back and forth, each round in about 45 minutes. I would then get out of the water, have some refreshments, and go back in to swim as many miles as I needed to cover.

One day shortly after I arrived, about 500 yards from the shore where there was some pretty kelp floating and beautiful clown fish, this seal picked me up and



Not Pepe, but a close relative.

started swimming along side me, back and forth. Amazingly when it first happened, I was unaware of it until another swimmer noticed this incredible occurrence. He said, did you notice the seal that is swimming along with you?

Then I started noticing the seal, who was swimming by my side or underneath me, sometimes making circles as if trying to protect me.

This amazing encounter went on day after day, every day I was there. The seal was there every day waiting for me by the kelp and started swimming with me as if he were my training buddy.

We had no body contact. I never fed him anything. But, after several swims, he would accompany me almost to the shore, where people were just amazed. I named him "Pepe," and I will always remember him as my seal training buddy.

Animals do remember you and they get attached.

OLDER AND FASTER

by Dottie Buchhagen

Jeff Roddin is our Records Keeper. Using his skills as a rocket scientist, he meticulously goes over all the swim records for the team, checks them for accuracy, and posts them online at www.ancientmariners.org/team.htm for all to see (and crow over where appropriate). Jeff's keen powers of observation and attention to detail led him to make the following observation: "I have found five or six instances in our team records where a swimmer has gone 'faster than (or almost equal to) their age' in a 100." What this means is that if you are 50 years old, you swam with a time of 49.9 or faster.

Several ANCMs have achieved this feat: Clay Britt, Keith Wilson, Dave Harmon, and Hugh Roddin (Jeff's father).

Clay, Keith, and Dave all did it at the same meet two years ago (2014 Maryland Senior Olympics in Germantown). All events were the 100-yard freestyle. Clay, who was 53 at the time, swam a 52.50; Keith, who was 57, swam a 56.94; and Dave, 65 at the time, swam a 1:03.43. All the times were blazing fast!!

To top these accomplishments, both Dave and Hugh have done it twice -- in two different age groups. In addition to his 2014 time, Dave swam a 100 yd free in 59.19 in 2010 when he was 60 at USMS Spring Nationals. Hugh's times were both in the 100-yard fly: 1:03.34 in 2003 when he was 63 and 1:09.41 in 2012 when he was 70 at the 2003 and 2012 USMS Spring Nationals, respectively.

The youngest known swimmer to accomplish this feat is Nicolas Granger. Nicolas went 46.21 in the 100 free at age 47 at 2015 USMS Spring Nationals. Close behind was Matt Biondi at age 48 going 46.83 at the 2014 USMS Spring Nationals in the 100 free. The oldest is Woody Bowersock with 1:27.26 at age 90 in the 100 free in 2004 at the Mission Viejo Nadadores Spring Meet in California.

HOLIDAY PARTY — HOLLY DONNELLY'S HOUSE — JANUARY 9



REMEMBERING BOB HUBER*by Cathy Gainor*

This was Bob Huber's favorite time of year: The final month of training for the 4.4-mile Great Chesapeake Bay Swim. Working hard grinding out the yards, starting to see some results, looking forward to tapering at the beginning of June. And perhaps most importantly, reminiscing about past swims and giving advice.

Sadly, Bob passed away on Jan. 9 after almost a year-long fight with lung cancer.

Bob, who was notoriously private, never would have wanted me to write this or have anything about him in the newsletter. In fact, a couple years ago he refused to let me take his picture for an article I was writing about the annual one-hour postal swim he, Bob Benson and I do every January. The picture we took is of me, Bob Benson and the body of tall, headless Bob behind us.

Bob swam Master's for many years, at MLK, at MAC, sometimes at Olney. The "old-timers" at MLK -- Bob Benson, Barbara Mueller, Connie Ewart and I (even though I'm a relative newcomer) frequently discuss how much we miss him, his wit, being his lane mate, how he would have reacted to certain situations. Up until about a week before his death, he was still the same old Bob: funny, acerbic, self-deprecating. During our visits to the hospital, we learned that Bob was an artist, doing hundreds of pencil sketches. His trees and tree roots were particularly impressive. He had even taken lessons at the Corcoran. When I asked him how he had never mentioned this, he replied, in typical Bob fashion: "Well, I was never going to be featured at the Met, so why mention it?"

Bob didn't swim any meets, but he loved open water swimming. He did the Bay more than a dozen times and sometimes swam DCAC's Swim for Life in the Chester River and the Jim McDonnell lake swim in Reston. He particularly liked swimming in the ocean in the Outer Banks, his favorite vacation spot.

Bob was one of the people who convinced me to try the Bay, after years of being worried that my surgically repaired shoulder couldn't take it. And he gave me tons of advice over the years, from what your goal should be in the Bay (No. 1: Don't drown. No. 2: Finish. No. 3: Have a good time) to the tastiness of the oranges after the swim, to the best anti-fog solution for your goggles. He even took me out to Sandy Point State Park to practice the week before my first Bay Swim. And so even though Bob did miss the last two Bay swims, this year his absence will be felt more acutely.

Perhaps Bob Benson said it best about a month ago after practice: "I miss him every time."

VISIT THE ANCM BULLETIN BOARD - KSAC LOWER LEVEL

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THE SUMMER SESSION BEGAN ON SUNDAY, APRIL 24

GO ONLINE TO REGISTER (www.ancientmariners.org/registration.htm)

**TEAM GEAR**

- **SWIM CAPS:** All registered ANCMs will receive one free swim cap.
- **OTHER GEAR:** Swim bags: \$45, swim caps:\$3.
- **SPECIAL: Team T-shirts (wicking) \$10.**

EVENT CALENDAR**2016**

04/28-05/01: USMS Spring National Championship, SCY, Greensboro, NC.

05/07: Hurricane Man 2.4-mile and 1,000 meter swims, Pass-A-Grille, FL

05/15-09/15: 2016 USMS LCM Speedo 5K and 10K ePostal National Championships.

05/28-29: Jim McDonnell Lake Swims and Open Water Clinic, Lake Audubon, Reston, VA.

06/12: 4.4-mile Great Chesapeake Bay Swim (registration closed) and 1-mile Chesapeake Challenge.

07/02: Turks & Caicos "Race for the Conch" Eco-Seaswim.

07/08-07/10: UMAC Masters Terrapin Cup, SCM, College Park, MD.

08/17-08/21: 2016 U.S.M.S. Summer LCM National Championship, Mt Hood Aquatic Center - Mt Hood Community College, Gresham, OR.

08/17-08/21: 2016 U.S.M.S. Summer LCM National Championship, Mt Hood Aquatic Center - Mt Hood Community College, Gresham, OR.



These are only some of the upcoming swim events. Go to www.ancientmariners.org/event.htm for details and events.