

The Wet Gazette

Published by the LMSC of Virginia:
Serving Masters Swimmers in Virginia and West Virginia

September/October 2020



New Webmaster Spotlight: George Sushkoff

We are excited to introduce you to the new LMSC Webmaster: George Sushkoff.

1. When did you join USMS? Where and how often do you swim?

I swam my first Masters meet in 1995. If I remember correctly, I registered with USMS for the full year in 1996. I swim at ACAC. When the water is warm enough, I also swim in the James River and some local lakes. I try to swim 5 days a week.

2. What is your background as a swimmer and athlete?

I got a little bit of a late start. I joined an AAU team (prior to USA Swimming being in existence) when I was 13. I swam AAU (which became US Swimming which became USA Swimming) and for my high school in Southern California. I also swam in college at Utah.

3. What motivates you to swim?

Being out of swimming shape is miserable. I like to maintain my swimming fitness and feel for the water. I tried other sports when I was young, and swimming was the only one where I had any success. I made great friendships during my younger days of swimming. I have particularly enjoyed reconnecting with some Masters swimmers recently who I had not seen in years.

4. What kind of volunteer work do you do for the LMSC?

I've helped out at meets in the past - timing, setup and teardown, etc.

5. Outside of the pool, what occupies your time?

I work for a small software company. I manage projects such as implementations and upgrades. I also have a son and a daughter. Both have swum USS, Summer League, and High School. Besides swimming, I run with a group 2 days a week and play water polo. Maybe one day, I will get my road bike out of mothballs and have a go at triathlons again.

6. Some people might be surprised to know that...

My parents are both Russian, but were born in China. My dad came to the USA by way of the Philippines. It's a very interesting story- <https://youtu.be/0C2Sgtyq-Fg>. My dad has a few seconds of camera time at about 29:20 into the video. He used to tell me how cold it was in Harbin, where he grew up. I never appreciated it until I Googled "Harbin Ice Festival".

7. What's the funniest thing that has happened to you (or that you have seen) at a Master's event?

I'm going to ignore the parameters here and go back to a high school event. When I was a freshman, there was an all relay invitational. There was a varsity and frosh/soph division. The frosh/soph swimmers were very new to competitive swimming. In the 6 x 50 free relay, the swimmer in lane 4 did his flip turn and accidentally surfaced in lane 3. The swimmer in lane 3 noticed the additional swimmer in his lane, ducked under the lane line, and emerged in lane 4. These swimmers were "not" swimming the anchor leg. So now you

lanes 3 and 4. Each one is looking back and forth between lane 3 and 4. I imagine each one was thinking "do I go when my teammate touches, or when the swimmer in my lane touches?". Keep in mind that they are not one and the same. In the end, both teams were DQ'd due to a swimmer leaving their lane.

Update on USMS Sanctioning During the Pandemic

The USMS Board of Directors decided to extend the recommendation to not sanction in-person pool and open water events through Oct. 31 and begin Phase 1 of returning to competition on Nov. 1 during its recent virtual meeting.

In the coming weeks, the board will release recommendations for sanctioned events, which will include event size and travel limitations along with a safety plan. All local, state, and federal guidelines and orders, as well as facility requirements, will supersede USMS's recommendations if they are more restrictive. We will update you once these guidelines are published.



Current and Upcoming Events

World Open Water Swimming Association Distance Challenges (Sponsored by FINIS)

100km or 10km Open Water Swim
Closes October 31, 2020

2020 SmartyPants USMS Fall Fitness Challenge

1650 yd swim, 1500 m swim, or
30-min cross training
November 15-30, 2020

General Information

LMSC for Virginia Website: www.vaswim.org

USMS Website: www.usms.org

Nearby LMSCs

North Carolina: www.ncmasters.org
Maryland: www.teamunify.com
Potomac Valley: www.PVMasters.org

Nearby Zones

Colonies Zone: www.ColoniesZone.org
Dixie Zone: www.DixieZone.org

Online Meet Registrations:
www.clubassistant.com

LMSC Officers

Chair: Kirk Clear
Vice-Chair: Denise Letendre
Secretary: Alice Phillips
Treasurer: Becca Latimer
Membership Coordinator: Jeff Bush
Coaches: Rich Williams
Fitness: Vacant
Long Distance: Kate Stephensen
Newsletter: Heather and Chris Stevenson
Officials: Charlie Cockrell
Records & Top Ten: Chris Stevenson
Review: Heather Stevenson
Safety: Jim Miller
Sanctions: Kyle Ahlgren
Webmaster: George Sushkoff

A Chance to Give Back: Elections for LMSC Officers and Volunteer Opportunities

In accordance with the Virginia LMSC By-Laws, we are seeking nominations for our Officer positions. It's your chance to give back to the sport we all love and your chance to help make Virginia Masters Swimming a great experience for all of our members. Due to term limits, our current Chair is not eligible to continue. There are other open positions as well, and anyone can run for any position as long as they are a member in good standing. The elected Officer positions are:

- **Chair**
- **Vice Chair**
- **Secretary**
- **Treasurer**

Duties of these positions can be found in our By-Laws on our website (vaswim.org). Elections will be held at our Annual Meeting on **November 1**. If you would like to nominate someone for a Officer position (or self-nominate), please send an email to kirkclear@usms.org or denise.letendre@gmail.com with a brief statement of your or your nominee's qualifications and why they would bring value to our organization by **October 28**.

We also have a couple vacancies to lead various committees. If you are interested in serving as a committee chair, please email one of the two individuals noted above. Our current open Committee Chair opportunities are:

- **Fitness**
- **Long Distance (Open Water)**

If you are not interested in a particular position but want to be involved, indicate that in an email and we will work to find a place for you!

USMS COVID-19 Information: USMS has a number of resources for Masters swimmers and coaches on its website: www.usms.org/about-usms/covid19-information. For members, these resources include informative articles about motivation away from swimming, a variety for dryland workouts (including weekly workouts) and alternative training suggestions. For coaches, USMS has a restart guide for clubs, help for small businesses, information about facility maintenance, and resources for staying in shape and staying in touch with swimmers.

A USMS Annual Meeting Like No Other

by Kirk Clear, LMSC Chair

The strange and challenging year of 2020 brought significant changes to the way USMS held its Annual Meeting. For the first time in its 50-year history, the meeting was held virtually. Instead of taking place over 4 or 5 days in conjunction with the U.S. Aquatic Sports (USAS) Annual Convention, the USMS Annual Meeting was spread out over a month. Committee meetings and special educational presentations and forums took place on various evenings from August 30 to September 24, while the House of Delegate (HOD) meetings occurred over three days at the end of September.

The meetings took place online using Zoom. It was challenging at times, with some attendees not familiar with the tool. It also made it more challenging for interaction between delegates. Nothing can replace the value of meeting in person to build the relationships, networks, and continue friendships with other swimmers across the country. While some of the committee meetings permitted limited time to share ideas and learn from other LMSCs, the virtual format made this interaction challenging. In the past, many of these discussions would take place outside of the formal meetings, in the halls or at dinner.

But there is some value in the virtual formats that can potentially be incorporated into future USMS meetings. The video and audio capabilities can be added to the in-person meetings to open discussions at the national level to other members not able to attend the Annual Convention and give our entire membership an opportunity to see how the business of USMS is handled.

Turning to this year's meeting, one of the most significant legislation changes was the HOD approval of a national Unified Membership Fee. Previously, annual membership fees varied across the 52 LMSCs, making it challenging to recruit new members and to create partnerships with other organizations. The new unified fee will be effective for 2021.

Another change that may affect some of you regards the transferring of clubs in the middle of the year and the amount of time a swimmer has to wait until they could represent their new team. The HOD approved to reduce that time from 60 to 35 days.

This year has provided unforeseen challenges for all sports organizations and how they do business. USMS has faced the challenges and we look forward to overcoming these and having a successful 2021.

USMS Launches Unified Fees

As approved by the House of Delegates (HOD) during the virtual 2020 Annual Meeting, USMS has launched its unified national fee structure for the 2021 registration year

Unified National Registration Fees

- USMS 2021 individual membership: \$60
- USMS 2021 club & workout registration: \$60
- USMS 2021 one-event membership (OEVT): \$15

Each LMSC will receive 20 percent of each of the unified fees, which will be distributed monthly:

- \$12 of the \$60 individual membership
- \$12 of the \$60 club & workout registration
- \$3 of the \$15 one-event membership (OEVT) -- LMSCs have the option to offer OEVTs at events sanctioned by their own LMSC.

