

# The Wet Gazette

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Serving Masters Swimmers in Virginia and West Virginia

November 2020



## Getting to Know Our New LMSC Chair: Caycee Buscaglia

For the second month in a row we get to introduce you to a new LMSC volunteer:

**Caycee Buscaglia.** Many of you know Caycee from her years of swimming in Virginia, but for those who don't . . .

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

I joined USMS around 1988, primarily because there was such a fun group of all ages training out of the ACAC pool at the time. Currently, I swim outside in a heated pool 3 days a week at a Quest facility. I also jump in at AMFAM in Midlothian to swim with their Masters practice once a week. I'm also known to jump in with folks when an Open Water group gathers.

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

My family lived in New Jersey where I learned to swim competitively in lakes. We then moved to Midlothian, Virginia, where I swam for the Briarwood Swim Club that trained out of ACAC. I ran track in high school but found greater success in the pool. I primarily swam backstroke/IM events. I had a fairly successful college swimming career at East Carolina University and have coached summer league for decades in Midlothian at various teams.

### 3. What motivates you to swim?

Peace. I've been exposed to a lot of trauma in my life. There is nothing more therapeutic than moving through the water. I've found strength in the people I've met in my aquatic life. I've often thought "I've never met a swimmer/swammer that I didn't like."

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

Our children competed at a high level of swimming and our family was very active in USA swimming and Virginia swimming organizations. My husband was an official and a club delegate for Virginia swimming. I served on the Virginia Swimming Board as the Zone Team Manager as well as the meet chair for our club team. I have assisted at masters meets where help was needed. While I have not held any board positions for our LMSC, I feel comfortable moving into the chairman's position with my swimming background and experience.

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

Other interests of mine include gardening, spin cycle classes, traveling and voraciously reading. I enjoy learning something new everyday. I'm also an active substitute middle school teacher except with COVID and recent health issues that has gone by the wayside as 2020 closes.

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

I love to dance and am an active Zumba enthusiast!

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

One year, I convinced a college teammate to swim at Masters Nationals in Austin, TX. While in the locker room at the meet, there were some college students (non swimmers) in the bathroom area waiting

for a stall and I could tell that they were concerned about something going on. Finally, one of them said, "Are you Caycee? I think your friend needs you." As I went over they said, "We don't now what is going on. She is making weird noises and lots of banging in the stall." Laughing, I told them, "She is fine - just trying on one of the Fastskins suits." Looking relieved, they said, "Well, we though she was having a seizure or a stroke in there." There was no such thing as "Tech" suits in the 80s for us.

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## 2020 USMS Fall Fitness Challenge

Need something to do between now and the end of the month?

The 2020 SmartyPants Vitamins USMS Fall Fitness Challenge kicks off on November 15th and runs through November 30th. This fall challenge is a 1-mile swim. If you can't safely swim during this pandemic or if you want an additional challenge, USMS has added a 30-minute dryland workout option.

Go to [USMS.org/events/fitness-events](https://USMS.org/events/fitness-events) to sign up for the challenge. Enjoy!



## Current and Upcoming Events

### 12th Annual Ross Yancher Brute Squad and Brute Squad Lite E-Postal Swim

Specified fly, IM & free events in any 25-yd pool  
October 1 - November 30, 2020

### 2020 SmartyPants USMS Fall Fitness Challenge

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

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## General Information

LMSC for Virginia Website: [www.vaswim.org](http://www.vaswim.org)

USMS Website: [www.usms.org](http://www.usms.org)

Nearby LMSCs

North Carolina: [www.ncmasters.org](http://www.ncmasters.org)  
Maryland: [www.teamunify.com](http://www.teamunify.com)  
Potomac Valley: [www.PVMasters.org](http://www.PVMasters.org)

Nearby Zones

Colonies Zone: [www.ColoniesZone.org](http://www.ColoniesZone.org)  
Dixie Zone: [www.DixieZone.org](http://www.DixieZone.org)

Online Meet Registrations:  
[www.clubassistant.com](http://www.clubassistant.com)

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## LMSC Officers

Chair: Caycee Buscaglia  
Vice-Chair: Kevin Gardner  
Secretary: Alice Phillips  
Treasurer: Becca Latimer  
Membership Coordinator: Jeff Bush  
Coaches: Rich Williams  
Fitness: Dane Schwartz  
Long Distance: Dave Holland  
Newsletter: Heather and Chris Stevenson  
Officials: Charlie Cockrell  
Records & Top Ten: Chris Stevenson  
Review: Heather Stevenson  
Safety: Jim Miller  
Sanctions: Kyle Ahlgren  
Webmaster/Social Media: George Sushkoff

## Virginia LMSC Annual Meeting Minutes

Date: Sunday, Nov. 1, 5:00 pm, AMENDED 11/9/2020

Location: Zoom Call

**Roll Call** – Kirk Clear, Chris Stevenson, Heather Stevenson, George Sushkoff, Jim Miller, Denise Letendre, Rich Williams, Kyle Ahlgren, Becca Latimer, Jeff Bush, Alice Phillips, Dane Schwartz, Ken Gardner

5:00 pm Welcome from Kirk who is retiring after two terms as Chair.

### I. Reports of Officers

- a. Chair – Kirk shared that 2020 has been a hard year obviously. Cancelled meets and closed pools have made things difficult. We were planning to host Virginia's first national championship, but that was deferred until 2022. We did have three meets which is pretty remarkable in just two active months. He has been privileged to work with our LMSC, his fourth. We have an active and experienced board which has really made things great. Kirk did hope to revise our by-laws which haven't been addressed since 2010. We made a small amount of progress but this is something the next board should address it. Perhaps our board itself should be re-organized and perhaps this down time is a good time to do that.
- b. Vice Chair – Denise submitted a social media report which is posted on our LMSC webpage. A few highlights – our listing of places to swim during the pandemic really did reach a lot of people. Facebook continues to be a good connector for our members. One new limitation is that other page posts can be shared but not boosted. Denise would like someone else to take over the Facebook page since she is stepping off the board – George Sushkoff agreed to do so.
- c. Secretary – Alice – no report
- d. Treasurer (Finance Committee) – Becca deferred her time to new business segment and discussion of the 2021 budget.
- e. Kirk has nominated Dane Schwartz to chair our Fitness Committee. (Went out of order because Dane has to leave the meeting.) Dane introduced himself and expressed his excitement for the new position.

### 2. Reports of Committee Chairpersons

- a. Committees:
  - Sanctions – Kyle has posted his report to the LMSC webpage. He complimented the board on the difficulty of the decision we had to make in August regarding the Lake Moomaw swim. Kyle noted that USMS has just released new guidelines regarding COVID and masters events. Kyle proposed that the board help him make sanction decisions in 2021 based on the experience we had with Moomaw and the seriousness of the situation. Chris made a motion that any sanction requests be considered by the executive committee of the board for the next six months. Heather seconded it. All members voted Aye and the motion passed.
  - Long Distance – Kate submitted a report shown on the webpage. Kate has moved to California and Dave Holland will be taking over.
  - Fitness – Vacant
  - Officials – Charlie did not submit a report.
  - Coaches – Rich does not have much to report. There are no coaches' clinics currently scheduled around the country, but the LMSC hopes to host one in 2021 if conditions permit.
- b. Other Board Members:
  - Membership Coordinator – Jeff submitted a report shown on the webpage. Our membership is down 130 members, but the group agrees that is good given COVID. We have two new clubs and a total of 24 registered so far. Kirk

*(Cont'd on page 3)*

*Minutes (cont'd from page 2)*

encouraged Jeff to reach out to unregistered teams right now since individual registrations open today.

- Review Chair – Heather has no report. No grievances.
  - Newsletter – Heather & Chris reported that it is hard to make a newsletter without meets. Heather thanked their regular writers and invited any and all to submit articles. One new constraint is that we can't reprint USMS articles any more.
  - Website – Chris shared that the current website is getting "buggy" and has decided to step away. His personal schedule is preventing him from giving this all of the attention it needs. George Sushkoff has agreed to be the new webmaster. Chris has also cancelled his Twitter and Facebook accounts, so George will take those over too. George is looking for a new theme platform that will be more responsive and mobile friendly. The webpage may be down intermittently as we make those changes.
  - Records & Top-10 – Chris shared that there were no LC meets and thus no top ten. He did submit seven SCY and SCM meets, remarkable given the shortened seasons.
  - Social Media – Denise (above I-b)
  - Safety – Jim shared that there is nothing to report with no open water competitions. Safety may become an increasing consideration re. COVID-19 for pool and open water events in the future once sanctioning is restarted.
  - USA Swimming Chairs/Reps & Ex-Officio members – none present.
- c. Club Representatives
- Any present club rep – Ken Gardner (VMST) was present. Things have been dormant but they are trying to engage with membership through some Zoom calls and virtual meets.
3. Unfinished business
- a. By-Laws Rewrite (see I-a above)
4. Elections (List of Nominees who have accepted)
- a. Chair: ? [Ed. note, see update below]
- b. Vice Chair: Ken Gardner
- c. Secretary: Alice Phillips
- d. Treasurer: Becca Latimer

Despite some efforts Kirk and Denise have been unable to identify anyone who is willing to accept a chair nomination. The group above was voted in unanimously. Kirk is willing to stay on as Chair until he moves in the next month. The group suggested several avenues using social media, coaches, and webpage to try and recruit again. Several members of the board are going to do some additional outreach. Deadline this Friday November 5.

AMENDED MINUTES 11/9/2020: During the week following the original meeting, the LMSC tried again to recruit a new Chair. Two candidates were identified, and sent Kirk their information which was then shared across the board. After a vote over the weekend, Caycee Buscaglia of Quest and VMST was voted in as the next LMSC chair.

1. Chair Appointments
- a. Long-Distance (Open Water): Dave Holland
- b. Fitness: Dane Schwartz
- c. Webmaster and social media chair: George Sushkoff
2. New business
- a. Convention Wrap-up (Attendees: Kirk, Jeff, Heather, Charles, Jim, Patty) – Kirk shared a recap in the last newsletter. Convention was really challenging this year because of the overall duration, necessity for virtual meetings, and the odd times. But it did open up some ideas for how future meetings might be held. Hopefully even with an in-person convention there would still be a chance for people to call in to attend.
- b. Unified Fee (Jeff, Becca) – new fee is \$60, \$40 goes to national organization and \$12 to the LMSC. The OEF (one event fee) is also set by the national organization also.
- c. 2021 Proposed Budget (Becca)
- Discussion on changes from 2020 – Becca reviewed the budget document as shown on the LMSC website. Both income and expenditures were lessened because of COVID. Becca presented two proposed: one, if COVID continues as is with no meets, events, etc. and another if meets are able to restart, clinics and convention occur again. Discussion ensued. Chris mentioned that we have such a good cushion that even if the second budget becomes necessary, we should be able to make up the difference. The board can also meet to make adjustments as needed if something significant changes.
  - Vote on 2021 Budget – Heather moved that we vote on the 2021 Budget with COVID measures, Alice seconded and the budget passed unanimously.
- d. Virginia Volunteer Service Award – Need to start gathering nominations; should be a first order of duty to the next chair.
3. Adjournment at 6:53 pm

# The Social Tide of Swimming

by Alice Phillips

While all of us have heard the safety warning, “Never swim alone”, most people consider swimming an “individual” sport. Admittedly, you can train by yourself and you can race the clock rather than another person if you so choose. However, anyone who’s ever been on a thriving swim team knows firsthand that it’s often the other people in the water who really make the sport of swimming a rewarding one.

The extended break that we all had to take for some stretch of time this past year has proven a powerful reminder of the meaning of swimming in our lives. It only took about four weeks of “not swimming” before I found myself craving chlorine, thinking more than anything that if I could get back in the pool, I could handle the other COVID restrictions. When my local gym began to allow outside swimming in the heated pool, I was elated, even with limited sign ups, health screenings, and alternating lane positions. And yet, as good as that felt, I was still sad at times, wishing that I could just see my old swim buddies in the flesh. That wish came true in mid-June when I was giddy to be deckside again with my regular training crew. One of the first things I did when it finally became okay for people to gather in small groups was invite some “old” swim girlfriends over for a front yard happy hour in a socially distanced circle of chairs.

After almost 30 years of masters swimming, the social aspects of the sport remain one of its most significant benefits for me. I think about the trips I have taken with friends to fun Nationals destinations, some great open water beach and lake races, and in town get-togethers for a meal after practice. Like many other teams, the SRVA Hammerheads celebrate the new year together with a special 100x100 event. Statewide masters swimmers chip in for wedding and birthday gifts, host showers for pregnant teammates, and even swap life lessons in the locker room. None of these things has anything to do with intervals or meets or the 400IM – it’s simply that the barely-dressed bond we create between the lane lines extends to the times when we’re wearing clothes.

VMST member Debbie Jaeger has only been back in the water for about two months and like many, she reports, “...it has been rough, but that’s okay. I will never groan about getting off the couch to go to swim practice, again.” Her regular pool is still not open, but her devoted group of friends is making the trek to a Fairfax facility three times a week. With 30 years of masters swimming to buoy her, Jaeger’s fondest memories are all the National meets she’s attended, where “the energy is high and the relays are plentiful.”

Tidewater swimmer Charlie Cockrell still remembers the 1995 Short Course Nationals in Ft. Lauderdale, a meet where he not only surprised himself by swimming well, he also had a great time cheering on his teammates, hanging out in the stands, and socializing in the evening. Charlie took three months off his regimen during the stay-at-home order, the longest period of time in his life without swimming since college; he reports “it was really difficult trying to adjust to working at home, being socially isolated, and dealing with the anxiety of Covid.” Happily, he is making waves again: “Out of all the teams and swimming organizations with which I have been involved, I have been a masters swimmer longer than anything else. It’s been a steady and grounding presence in my life for more than 25 years.”



What many of us experience has been studied and explored by scientists and writers alike. In a meta-analysis of 30 different studies in the *Journal of Sport and Health Science*, a full 24 told the same story: adult sport participation is driven by the benefits of “socializing, community feeling, togetherness and being part of a group” (Stenner et al, 2019). Similarly, a 2016 literature review shows that “participation in sports gives older people a sense of competence, enjoyment, new social relationships and a more positive identity in addition to a cognitive boost” (Gayman et al, *International Review of Sport and Exercise Physiology*, 2016).

Perhaps, surfer and open water swimmer Bonnie Tsui sums it up best in her wonderful book *Why We Swim*. This 2020 hardback offers modern and historical tales of swimmers from Iceland to the Philippines to the Dolphin Clubbers of San Francisco Bay. Tsui herself fell in love with her husband swimming along the shores of beautiful Lake George in New York. As she notes, “...swimming, in all of its permutations—in a pool, in a lake, paddling a surfboard out to sea—has always helped me come out on the other side of a difficult time... To swim is to witness metamorphosis, in our environment, in ourselves. To swim is to accept all the myriad conditions of life.” (p. 244)

Looking for a great gift for the swimmer in your life?  
Consider *Why We Swim* by Bonnie Tsui  
Algonquin Books: Chapel Hill, NC, 2020  
<https://www.bonnietsui.com/books-1>