

The season offered more than 70 open water swims at the shore or nearby states. A new swim added to the swim season this year was the 1st Annual North Wildwood Benevolent Association that managed a One Mile Ocean Swim on Saturday, August 4th 2012. Starting at 6:30 p.m., this evening swim consisted of a course in the form of two apex triangles, each a half mile, with swimmers exiting and re-entering the ocean to swim the second half of the course. This swim helps to fill the void resulting from the cancellation of the very popular "Swim for the Dolphins" in Wildwood, New Jersey.

June 3rd 2012 offered two good season opening swims. The highly competitive Navesink Swims (1.2 or 2.4 miles) in the Navesink River with tri-athletes heavily represented and the informal Donny Fund Swim (pick your own distance) in Pleasantville, New Jersey.

June 10th 2012 brought in hot weather and warm conditions for the annual Chesapeake Bay Swims (1 or 4.4 miles) finishing nearby Hemmingway's restaurant in Maryland. Results can be found at www.linmark.com

June 29th 2012 gave us a pleasant evening for the one mile Independence Day Swim in Kennedy Park (Somers Point, New Jersey) but this year's swim concluded with the a change in the finishing area. Experienced swimmers swam towards shore but the finish was moved to the end of a dock by "USA Swimming Officials" that resulted in swimmers having to swim back to the dock and while standing in the water, wait in a long line to climb up a ladder to the dock. This produced irrelevant and unreliable results that added as much as 5 to 8 minutes and longer to a swimmers finishing time. Swimmers were only counted as completing the course after they walked down the dock. We hope this poor race management is not repeated again next year.

July 28th 2012 was the rescheduled date for the Ocean City Masters Swim that was cancelled from the previous Saturday due to rough surf conditions and shark sightings in the area. The swim was held in the morning instead of its usual evening venue and at least the water was a warm 72 degrees (as compared to last year's bone-chilling 57 degrees) and it was 92 degrees on the beach that day. Results can be found at www.lmsports.com

August 4th 2012 ushered in the Mid Summer Lavallette Ocean Swim with warm water and hot weather too, along with water conditions that were sluggish and choppy. The swim has three divisions: masters, open championship, and USA swimmers. Results take time and awards were mailed to participants.

August 18th 2012 and the Yates Swim was held this evening after being postponed from the previous Saturday due to rough surf and thunderstorms in Atlantic City. It was a pleasant evening for a swim and the old "lifeguard" course took the swimmers out to sea and back to shore where the Atlantic City Lifeguards treated us to grilled hot dogs on the beach. The race director mentioned that they are working behind the scenes to

hopefully return the Yates Swim course back to the inlet where we used to finish in Gardiners Basin. Results can be found at www.acbp.org

September 1st 2012 and this year's Pageant Swim was more than just a dip in the ocean for us. Many of us swam in the Pageant Swim over the years and normally, BJ (Betty Jean) Schuler (Pitman, New Jersey) and Barney Hungerford (Wayne, Pennsylvania) would have been swimming with us.

At the Pageant Swim, we didn't know that BJ passed away earlier at 8:20 a.m. yesterday morning. At the Pageant Swim, almost all of the swimmers had BJ's initials on the back of our hands in black magic marker used to also print our swim numbers on our arms. I talked with Norm Draper about this knowing her health was failing quickly. Norm and his volunteers went into action and most of the swimmers swam with her initials on their hands. Before starting the swim, Norm graciously mentioned that we were swimming for BJ today. It was only later in the afternoon that news reached us about her passing that morning.

Norm Draper also made the decision to dedicate the 2012 Pageant Swim to Barney Hungerford, who continues to cope with health challenges, and he is incrementally improving with more recovery work ahead for him. Norm talked about both Barney and BJ before starting the swim. He had this year's tee shirt designed and printed with a dedication to Barney printed on it. Yesterday's swim was a good way to remember our friends who would love to have been swimming with us.

BJ enjoyed swimming in the Pageant Swim every year and enjoyed these ocean swims with us. It was a terrific tribute for BJ with us swimming for her yesterday, and her family and friends truly appreciated this gesture.

Results can be found at www.acbp.org

September 22nd 2012 marks the final local swim for our open water season with the September Splash (1 and 2 mile swims) that are held in Wildwood Crest, New Jersey. The box-course in Sunset Lake was smooth as glass the evening before these morning swims and of course, that morning, the wind churned the course into a choppy mess throughout 3 of the sides of the course. An added problem with this event is the treacherous entry and exit from the water. The race organizers do not clear the underwater path of sunken debris (sharp rocks, broken glass, fish hooks, broken shells, and other sharp objects) that continue to cut swimmers feet. As I exited the water and walk straight toward the man who was telling me to be careful, I sliced the arch of my foot as well as cut into my foot. For years, this remains a serious problem for swimmers and slippery algae surfaces causing them to slide into debris that cuts tender feet. Some swimmers will no longer participate in this swim. Results can be found at www.lmsports.com