

2017 Open Water Swim Season Summary

Delia G. Perez – Open Water Representative
Delaware Valley Local Masters Swim Committee

The 2017 open water season offered more than 70 open water swims at the shore and nearby states. Unfortunately, Atlantic City, New Jersey, the ongoing financial crisis for the city eliminated our longstanding and beloved Yates Swim held in the Brigantine Inlet. The Pageant Swim was resuscitated in late August 2016 in an effort to save the historic Pageant Swim, the oldest and longest running swim in the nation. The swim is now managed under the auspices of a combination of USA Swimming and other organizers to maintain the tradition of the Pageant Swim. Unfortunately, in a compromise with Atlantic City officials, the swim is no longer scheduled for the Saturday morning in Labor Day Weekend but moved ahead to the Saturday morning before the Labor Day Weekend. Such scheduling conflicts with other swim events already scheduled for that weekend whereas, if it was scheduled in mid-August, it could attract more swimmers. In addition, the Pageant Swim is now subject to USA Swimming rules with the focus on young swimmers instead of the traditional masters swimmers. Other compromises include the change to a swim with the current, changing the course route, and shortening the swim to 1.2 Mile Ocean Swim instead of the traditionally historic 1.5 Mile Pageant Ocean Swim.

May 28th 2017 offered good season opener swims with the very competitive 61st Annual Navesink Swims (1.2 or 2.4 miles) in the Navesink River with tri-athletes heavily represented.

June 10th 2017 and the Escape the Cape Triathlon includes a swim from the Cape May Ferry. The race director, Steve DelMonte, DelmoSports, Inc., permits 1750 participants to either swim & bike or swim & run, in lieu of completing the full triathlon. Unfortunately, this is the fifth year that Steve has scheduled the event for the weekend as the annual Great Chesapeake Bay Swim. For results www.DelMoSports.com

June 11th 2017 and the informal Donny Fund Swim (pick your own distance) held in Pleasantville, New Jersey, is a fundraiser for children with cancer. This informal swim allows athletes to enjoy a training swim on their own while supporting a worthy cause with a hot breakfast at the Pleasantville Yacht Club.

June 11th 2017 and it was a “smooth” day for the annual Great Chesapeake Bay Swim held nearby Annapolis, Maryland. Volunteers, organizers and swimmers all agreed: conditions were near-perfect Sunday morning for the annual Great Chesapeake Bay Swim. The charity fundraiser includes a race from one side of the bay to the other, a distance of 4.4 Miles, as well as the One Mile Challenge race. Participants in the longer event race from Sandy Point State Park to the Bay Bridge Marina across the water. The one-mile swimmers compete in a triangle course sending swimmers into the wind and choppy water, then against the outgoing current in the second leg with the final leg into the warmest water to the finish line.



Swimmers in the 2017 Great Chesapeake Bay Swim approach the Kent Island finish line.

There were 647 swimmers competed in the 4.4-Mile race and 621 swimmers finished while 26 swimmers did not finish. Another 294 competed in the One Mile Challenge and 280 swimmers finished in the 72-degree water. Volunteer Jeff Whetzel said last year's 20-knot winds made conditions treacherous during the event. This year there wasn't a cloud in the sky and a lot less wind. "Today's conditions are perfect," Whetzel said, piloting a power boat, one of roughly 65 in the water from the Chesapeake Bay Power Boat Association. Members volunteer time each year to help with swimmer safety, by protecting swimmers and ensuring that if the entire race needs to get out of the water for any reason, there are enough boats to do so.

The swimmers in the 4.4-Mile event left in two waves from Sandy Point State Park at around 8:30 a.m. The first wave of One Mile Challenge Swimmers entered the water at 8:15 a.m. followed by the remaining three waves in increments of 5 minutes between each wave.

Despite the weather this year being better, conditions weren't quite as favorable for the swimmers. A strong west-to-east wind last year helped propel swimmers across the bay, while this year there was no real push from the wind to help. But the clear sky and calm water was a plus for the more than 700 volunteers who man the event. According to race director Chuck Nabit, "to keep the swimmers safe as they cross the bay, at the ready is a dive team, two helicopters, 20 jet skis, 50 kayaks and 100 boats, including the 65 power boats." The bay swim is a fundraiser for the March of Dimes, Chesapeake Bay Trust, and other charities. Not including day-of donations, the event raised more than \$200,000 for those causes this year. Nabit said, "There are typically two types of swimmers who come to the event. There are those who do it once and check it off the bucket list and those who return year after year."



The 5Ds at the finish line the day before the Great Chesapeake Bay Swim – (left to right) Dave Hirsh (Cape May CH, NJ), Doug Bergen (Ocean City, NJ), Dave English (Philadelphia, PA), Delia Perez (National Park, NJ), and Doug Frohock (Mamora, NJ).

The latter is the case for Doug Frohock, 66, of Mamora, NJ, who swam across the bay in the 4.4 Mile Swim for the 29th time this year after 31 attempts. He heard about the big swim managed by the original race director, Fletcher Hanks, and decided to try it in 1986. "It has become my tradition ever since and I enjoy swimming this event with my friends. It's the only time you can swim across the bay when all boat traffic stops to allow us to swim safely across the bay," Frohock said. Other stalwart swimmers include Dave English (Philadelphia, PA) who just completed his 22nd GCBS, Doug Bergen (Ocean City, NJ) finished his 15th swim, and Dave Hirsch (Cape May Court House, NJ) completed his 11th swim across the bay.

Another repeat swimmer is Delia Perez of National Park, NJ, Open Water Representative for the Delaware Valley United States Masters Swimming. Delia participated four times in the 4.4-Mile Bay Swim, and successfully finished two times (2002 and 2005). In 2003, cold water resulted in hypothermia and she was pulled from the race after completing 3.5 miles with a core temperature of 90 degrees – one degree colder, and she would have been taken to the hospital. In 2004, a "rouge current" washed Perez and 50 other swimmers under the southern span of the bridges – where they were all promptly disqualified from finishing. Since 2006, Delia has been swimming the One Mile Challenge and just completed her 12th race this year. The One Mile Challenge begins and ends at the finish line for both events on the Eastern shore of the bay nearby Hemingway's restaurant. Even though the swim is a shorter

distance, it does have its challenges especially with amateurs entering an open water swim without a clue about sighting the course or experiencing choppy water for the very first time. The inexperienced swimmer stops and blocks or swims into other swimmers throughout the course, making it feel more like a steeplechase event with various hurdles to overcome.

After the One Mile Challenge swimmers completed their race and changed into dry clothes, the swimmers from the 4.4-Mile Swim started to finish. The first man across the bay was 22-year-old Andrew Gyenis (Reston, Virginia). He swam across the bay in 1 hour, 29 minutes and 7 seconds. The first woman to finish was 21-year-old Katie Fallon, (Warren, New Jersey). She swam across the bay in 1 hour, 40 minutes and 11 seconds.

The Great Chesapeake Bay Swim started after Brian Joseph Earley swam across the bay on June 13th 1982, who dedicated his efforts in memory of his late father Joseph Earley, who died of complications from diabetes.



First place finisher, Andrew Gyenis, wins 1st overall in the GCBS for the 3rd time.



Katie Fallon is the first female finisher in the 2017 Great Chesapeake Bay Swim.

While 22-year-old Andrew Gyenis and 21-year-old Katie Fallon won the men's and women's race, 80-year-old Ed Briggs (2:57:38), 82-year-old Robert Benson (3:07:00) and 71-year-old Sally Iliff (2:52:30) represented the older age groups incredibly well.

4.4-mile Top 3 Male Finishers

1. Andrew Gyenis 1:29:07
2. Andrew McKissick 1:30:19
3. Brian Benda 1:31:09

4.4-mile Top 3 Female Finishers

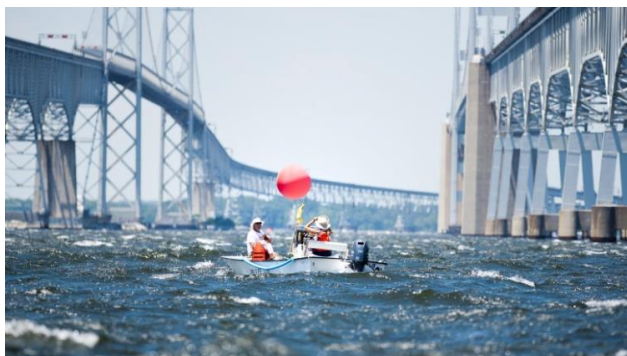
1. Katie Fallon 1:40:11
2. Margarita Ryan 1:40:40
3. Polly Surhoff 1:41:34 [52-year-old]



Between the two bridge spans.



Start of the swim nearing the bridges at the GCBS race.



Setting the buoy markers along the course.



Swimmers in the Great Chesapeake Bay Swim cross the finish line.

June 23rd 2017 – Due to issues with insurance coverage, the half mile swim and the one-mile Independence Day Swims in Beesley's Point, New Jersey (at the sea-doo beach location across from the Tuckahoe Inn) were **cancelled** by race director, Liz Casey.

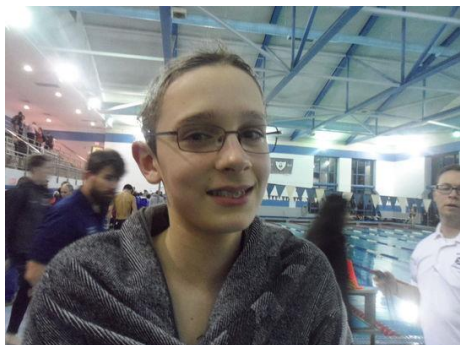
June 24th 2017 and the 19th Annual Bridge-to-Bridge Swims normally held in the back bay of Atlantic City were **cancelled** by the race director, Dimitar Petrov (Atlantic City Aquatic Club).

July 9th 2017 – The 9th Annual Steelman Open Water 1.5 & 3 Mile Swims held at Nockamixon State Park in Quakertown, PA. The Steelman Open Water Swims (1.5 mile and 5K) were held early in the morning on July 9th 2017. According to Ann Christensen, the weather was beautiful and the water temperature was comfortable, and the event was well organized as usual. The "Steeleman Swim" is the favorite open water swim for Pennsylvania swimmers. The race draws a large crowd of swimmers, from young teenagers to a range of masters, all of whom seem to enjoy the music, food, prizes, and laid-back atmosphere, and the Germantown Academy Masters make this swim their primary team open-water event. Find results at (www.steelmantriathlon.com).



Start of the 2017 Ocean City Masters Swim: First Wave of Male Swimmers

July 15th 2017 and the 37th Annual Ocean City Masters Swim continues to schedule this one-mile ocean swim at 10 a.m. after changing from its original evening venue five years ago – annoying those of us who don't like morning swims! When the swim was held in the evening, participation surpassed more than 400 swimmers. The 66 to 67-degree ocean water offered a negligible north-bound current that kept the 196 swimmers on the chilly side towards the finish. Wetsuits were permitted but swimmers who wore a wetsuit were disqualified from winning awards. Results can be found at www.lmsports.com



Joey Tepper



Maggie Wallace



Doug Frohock, Delia Perez and Linda Hoke

The two fastest swimmers in the T. John Carey One-Mile Master's Swim were separated by different heats, and by one minute and seven seconds in their times. Joey Tepper (age 15 – Egg Harbor Township, NJ) won first overall in the annual Master's Swim with a time of 18:30 minutes. Maggie Wallace (age 17 – Ocean City, NJ) won second overall and first female swimmer with a time of 19:37 minutes. Maggie will be entering her senior year at Ocean City High School, and both Maggie and Joey compete as members of with their high school swim teams. Doug Frohock (Marmora, NJ) took 2nd place for the men's 65 years & older age group; Delia Perez (National Park, NJ) earned 2nd place for the women's 65 years & older age group; and Linda Hoke (Philadelphia, PA) won 2nd place in the women's 60 to 64 year age group – and were happy to display their hardware in their age group finishes in the Annual Masters Swim.

Maggie Wallace is a distance swimmer, specializing in the 1500 and 800-meter freestyle. She swam the Master's Swim last summer and took 2nd place overall in 2016. Wallace was about to attempt the Master's Swim when she was 10 years old, but the water was too cold "so I ran out screaming," she laughed. "This is my second year swimming it." Fortunately, the water was fairly warm this time around. "It was really nice conditions. "I really just wanted to swim fast and have a nice race," Wallace said. "This was more of a training thing for me." There were not a lot of waves and that is what I like," she said. "There was no current either so it was good swim."

Masters aged swimmers held their own in the Ocean City Master's Swim. Ron Marks (Marmora, NJ) at 58 years of age was the first male masters-aged swimmer finishing 9th overall in 21:46 minutes, just 3 minutes and 16 seconds behind Tepper. Susan Reich (Ocean City, NJ) at 58 years of age was the first masters-aged female swimmer finishing 24th overall in 23:46 minutes and she continues to amaze us all!



July 22nd 2017 and the 4th Annual Sea Isle City Beach Patrol One Mile Ocean Swim was held in Sea Isle City, New Jersey. About 24 years ago, this swim went on hiatus when it was held in extremely cold (quickly chilled to 52 degrees) water conditions due to an abrupt drop in water temperature caused by the west winds. Today's 75-degree ocean water was comfortably warm but the current heat wave with almost 90-degree land temperatures and extremely high humidity made for a stifling day at the shore.

Unfortunately, the 4th Annual SICBP One Mile Ocean Swim maintains its 11 a.m. schedule on a Saturday morning. The timing of the swim coincides with shore rental turnovers and parking in Sea Isle City is difficult at best. The high heat and humidity along with the blazing sunny weather felt like a "desert walk" between the hike to park and walking the boardwalk to the start of the swim. If you arrived at check-in area on time, perhaps you were lucky enough to hitch a ride on a school bus to the start of the swim. The SICBP allows swimmers to wear wetsuits without limiting their use to "cold water swimming" and it does not make a distinction between non-wetsuit and wetsuit-wearing participants – thus allowing faster finishing times for the wetsuit participants.

The massive start of the swim resulted in the "bunching of swimmers" around the first turn buoy as the northbound current caused some swimmers to swim south to regain their position along the course. A large group of young females were more intent on talking with each other rather than swimming towards and around the first buoy, while blocking other swimmers. Ocean conditions were good for swimming throughout the race but it was tough sighting the "yellow flag" makers along the way – too light to see in the distance. Some tri-

athletes also enhanced their own version of amateur swimming and were seen in small packs as they chose to backstroke along the course making it a contact sport for nearby swimmers. One such tri-athlete was wearing a full wetsuit and swimming the backstroke perpendicular to the course and heading well out to sea. Other such packs stopped at every flag along the way continuing the block forward progress for the swimmers just behind them.



Start of the 4th Annual Sea Isle City Beach Patrol One Mile Ocean Swim



Maggie Wallace (1st)



Olympic Tri-Athlete, Joe Maloy (2nd)

This year, the swim attracted 195 swimmers and awards are provided for varying age groups (14 & younger, age 15 to 18, 19 to 25, 26 to 35, 36 to 45, 46 to 55, 56 to 65, and 66 & older). The usual 5-year groups are limited to the younger swimmers and unfortunately, the older masters level swimmers were extended to 10-year clusters. Unfortunately, the SICBP only presents awards for 1st and 2nd place age group winners because they've made the decision to limit the expense of 3rd place awards. Instead of simpler medal awards, they chose to award large standing trophies that look like "bowling trophies" and have to be stuffed back into a swim bag for the trip home.

Maybe someday they'll improve the award criteria for future swims and include 5-year age group awards for older swimmers, add 3rd place awards, and award medals instead of trophies. The first overall winner of the SCIBP One Mile Ocean Swim and first female swimmer was 17-year-old Maggie Wallace (Ocean City, NJ), who finished in 18:10 minutes. The first male swimmer was 31-year-old, Olympic Tri-Athlete, Joe Maloy (Wildwood Crest, NJ), who finished in 18:30 minutes and finished second overall in the ocean swim.



**Patricia Malone Smith, Kevin Banks,
Delia Perez, Dave Hirsch and Will Morey**



Race Director – Billy Auty

August 5th 2017 and the 3rd Annual Pier to Pier Challenge kicked off Saturday, August 5th at 6:30pm. Ocean conditions were somewhat choppy due to the gusty west winds with the current running slightly south. It was a beautiful evening for an ocean swim as we enjoyed the 74-degree water and had fun with friends. Race Director, Billy Auty, has a winning venue for a swim with friends and families, the best tee shirts, and it's one of the few remaining evening swims. The course is in the form of two apex triangles, each a half mile, allowing

swimmers exit and re-enter the ocean to swim the second half of the course. The swimmers follow an "M" shaped course, that brings the swimmers back through the surf and actually on to dry sand at the half way point. The unique course allows competitors to come in through the surf twice throughout the course. Body surfing skills and navigation expertise are also needed to negotiate the course. This is the only swim in the South Jersey area that has this unique "spectator friendly" course. The top male finishers were: 1st place Joe Maloy, 2nd place Brendan Lewis, and 3rd place Frank Pino. The top female finishers were: 1st place Adriene Bilello, 2nd place Dana Glodek, and 3rd place Katie Collins. This year, there were 80 swimmers who enjoyed participating in the Pier to Pier Challenge and also included families swimming together with their children in their first ocean competition. The Pier to Pier Challenge includes age groups ranging from 10 and under to 60 plus. Billy Auty may hire a timing service for next year, and looks forward to bigger and better things for 2018.



August 5th 2017 and the 33rd Annual Mid Summer Lavallette Ocean Swim was held at 8 a.m. that morning. After a mile walk down the beach, the USA swimmers start first at 8 a.m. for the 11 to 18-year-old swimmers – for the 1.2 Mile New Jersey Open Water Championship for young USA swimmers. The swim no longer offers a USMS division and is now limited to just two divisions for open championship and USA swimmers. And at 8:20 a.m., the One Mile Open Championship started and there is also a wetsuit division. Warm ocean temperatures (72°) and calm conditions welcomed swimmers as they swam with a slight northbound current along the course. At the finish, it is usually difficult getting out of the surf onto the beach due to the extreme slope filled with soft sand (plus tiny pebbles and broken shells) and swimmers fall without getting a solid footing to climb onto the beach. There were only 88 swimmers participating this year. Swimmers can enjoy muffins and crumb cake and other goodies while waiting for the results of the swim. The Mid Summer Lavallette Ocean Swim results are available at (www.jchipusa.com/results).



Doug Farrell (right), Longport Beach Patrol Honorary Chief, with his son, Michael

August 13th 2017 and the Captain Turner Ocean Swim was held at 9 a.m. in Longport, NJ. Doug Farrell is a long time Longport resident and an avid ocean swimmer. In 2006 he was diagnosed with Multiple Myeloma. In 2014 he approached the Longport Beach Patrol about the possibility of using the annual Captain Turner Ocean Swim to raise funds and awareness of blood cancers. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) is the world's largest voluntary health organization dedicated to funding blood cancer research, education and patient services. LLS's mission is to cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and to improve the quality of life of patients and their families. Special thanks to Doug Farrell, JJ Walsh, Colleen Wynne, and the Longport Beach Patrol for the success of the swim.

There were 136 swimmers who participated in the ½ (it's actually ¾ of a mile) mile swim and about 20 children, less than 12 years of age, who participated in the 200-meter surf dash event. It was a cloudy morning that eventually cleared and the ocean was beautiful with a very slight northbound current, one to two foot waves, and 73-degree ocean water temperature. The top female finishers were Megan Fox, Jordan Ricciotti, and Susan Reich. The top male finishers were Dolan Grisbaum, Joseph Regan, and Doug Bergen. Results are available by contacting the Longport Beach Patrol. The event raised funds for the Leukemia Lymphoma Foundation and the International Myeloma Foundation. The organizers strongly emphasized that this was a community event and not just a swim race. Equally important to their fundraising efforts was the awareness that such an event brings to the local community. Almost everyone knows someone with cancer and people want to help and the Captain Turner Swim is now an event allowing others to support a worthy cause to research and cure blood cancers. The Longport Beach Patrol made race director, Doug Farrell, an honorary chief in the Longport Beach Patrol. Doug has been swimming at the Longport beach for over 30 years and expressed his gratitude to the LBP for their support of the foundation's mission. He said the LBP "is like my family and I'm just so proud to be a friend of theirs."



Start of the 2017 Pageant Swim



Officials at the 88th Pageant Swim

August 26th 2017 – and the reconstituted 88th Annual Pageant Swim was held in Atlantic City. In 2016, after the Atlantic City Beach Patrol cancelled the swim indefinitely due to the lack of resources to manage the swim, the East Coast C-Cerpants along with other volunteers plus sanctioning from USA Swimming saved this historic swim. Concessions were made to the Atlantic City local government including moving the date of the swim to the Saturday morning before Labor Day weekend, changing the location of the swim further south, modifying the direction of the swim course based on the prevailing current, and shortening the distance from 1½ Miles to a 1.2 Mile Ocean Swim as a sanctioned USA Swimming 2-K Open Water event.

There were no shirts for same-day registrants unless they wanted to pay an extra \$20 for a tee shirt. Prior to the swim, there were heartfelt remarks made in remembering Jim Whelan, who was just 68 years of age and died unexpectedly on August 22nd at his home. Jim was an ACBP Lifeguard, teacher and coach, and an ex-mayor of Atlantic City. He was inducted into the Swimming Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and served as a past NJ State Assemblyman, and planned to finish his post at a NJ State Senator as of the end of the year. Jim promoted open water swimming and made a solo swim around Absecon Island to reactivate this long distance swim as a world class venue for swimmers locally and from overseas. Every year, Jim would participate in the Pageant Swim and was delighted with the turnout for the traditional 1½ Mile Swim held in the ocean parallel to the Atlantic City Boardwalk. Unfortunately, this year, the swim started an hour late and left swimmers unprepared without hats or sunglasses on the beach because due to the speeches made in remembering Jim Whelan. The water temperature was 73 degrees with the current sweeping slightly south. The swim was challenging with choppy and sloppy ocean conditions, and some swimmers thought additional buoys would be helpful to stay on course. A total of 57 non-USA Swimming members participated in the 2017 Pageant Swim.

Noteworthy swimmers known to the Delaware Valley Local Masters Swimming Committee include Ron Marks (age 58) finishing 2nd overall in 29:22 minutes; Steven Gazsi (age 53) 13th overall in 36:03 minutes; James Waddington (age 59) finishing 16th overall in 36:03 minutes; Maureen Kilgariff (age 59) finishing 30th overall in 39:45 minutes; Ruth Bennett (age 70) finishing 31st overall in 39:49 minutes; Molly Williamson (age 61) finishing 41st overall in 45:54 minutes; Lynn Dunn (age 49) finishing 42nd overall in 46:17 minutes; Kathryn Pramuk

(age 60) finishing 48th overall in 49:14 minutes; Dieter Wunderlich (age 80) finishing 50th overall in 50:15 minutes; John Zarych (age 69) finishing 54th overall in 54:52 minutes; and Doug Farrell (age 66) finishing 55th overall in 55:27 minutes.

August 27th 2017 – Brigantine Bayfest One Mile Swim in the Back Bay in Brigantine, NJ, is sponsored by the Brigantine Elks Club and was held at 9 a.m. that morning. Jim Waddington (59 years of age with a summer home in Brigantine, NJ) reported good conditions for the morning swim. The water temperature was approximately 74 degrees with flat water conditions without any tidal currents along the course. The swimmers swam out to the turn buoy and then swam back to return to the finish at the dock. It was a beautiful morning for a swim and Jim was happy with his 9th overall finish. Maureen Kilgariff Martin (age 59) did well with her 15th overall finish as did Don Walsh (age 71) with his 19th overall finish and John Zarych (age 69) with his 26th overall finish. The swim attracted 27 swimmers this year. For results contact John Livezey at deliver10@aol.com.



Race Director, Midge Kerr (left) with Delaware Valley USMS Open Water Rep, Delia Perez



August 27th 2017 and the 7th Annual 5K Cedar Island Swim in Avalon, New Jersey, treated 181 swimmers to an enjoyable swim around Cedar Island in 74-degree water. The Cedar Island 5K Swim has become my personal favorite these days especially with the loss of the Yates Swim – a wonderful navigational swim in the inlet between Atlantic City and Gardner's Basin with an incoming tide to finish the race in Atlantic City's Gardner's Basin. Today's conditions were choppy with the almost constant 15 mph winds that affected the course almost most of the course. The first leg of the course heading south along the marsh before turning left into the residential area for the rest of the "box" course was bumpy with "swimmer crowding" that eased up during the second leg. And of course, many swimmers wore a wetsuit to ensure faster times. Spotting the champagne dock for two big sips from a "fluted glass" was more difficult this year due to boat traffic along the dock area on the right

side of the course for the third leg of the swim. If you spot the "champagne stop" on the dock, then swim over just long enough for a toast and continue swimming to the finish back at the Avalon Yacht Club. With its informal inception of the Cedar Island Swim as a challenge among friends in 2009, race director, Midge Kerr, offers this "champagne toast" as a very inventive way to celebrate the swim while refreshing the palate from all the salty water. As always, it was very pleasant swimming with 1581 swimmers strung out along the course and we were all just living the dream!! The after swim refreshments included a variety of chilled healthy water selections (such as Vitamin Water and Core Hydration) plus pizza from Tonios and amazing cream puff pastries. For the second year in a row now, chip timing was used for the swimmers and the results were eventually posted on the Kerr Charities website at <http://www.sjtiming.com/Cedarswim16.html>. Thankfully, the Kerr Charities fundraising swim for various charities (specially selected by Tim & Midge Kerr) is more like an informal training event with prizes awarded to just the top five overall male and female swimmers, grand masters, and top three (first to sip) champagne winners. Jake McBride (age 16 – Avalon, NJ) finished 1st overall and 1st male in 49:37 minutes. Laurie Hug (age 52 – Ambler, PA) finished 7th overall and 1st female in 52:13 minutes.

September 23rd 2017 and the September Splash Swims were **cancelled** by the Wildwood Crest Dolphin Swim Team! These swims usually mark the final local South Jersey Swim for the 2017 Open Water Season with the September Splash (1 and 2 Mile Swims plus a quarter-mile swim) held in Wildwood Crest, New Jersey. These early morning swims were hosted by the Wildwood Crest Dolphin Swim Team but this year they decided to cancel this longstanding swim. Rumor had it that the team organizers wanted to make more money. They decided to cancel their swim venue and combine it with the DelMo Sports "Escape from Lewes" extravaganza scheduled for September 30th 2017. Over the years, the Wildwood Crest Dolphins Team charged \$30 (day of entry) for either the 2-Mile or 1-Mile Swim. This year, their swim event is limited to a sanctioned USA Swimming category and they will now be charging \$90 for their 1-Mile swim. The DelMo Sports registration fee for the 1-Mile Swim (non-USA Swimming members) also costs \$90 and the 3-Mile Swim costs \$129 before September 1st and afterwards, participants pay \$134 for the longer swim.

Unfortunately, the Wildwood Crest Dolphin Swim Team's cancellation of the September Splash represents another loss of a local swim from the South Jersey Open Water Swim Calendar. On September 30th 2017, the date of the rescheduled swim, resulted in the cancellation of the Wildwood Crest Dolphin Swim Team event due to winds gusting at 30 mph across the bay water in Lewes, Delaware.

September 30th 2017 and the "Escape from Lewes" Open Water Classic: 3-Mile and 1-Mile Swims were cancelled again this year due to the windy and choppy conditions caused by strong gusty winds in excess of 30 across the bay water in Lewes, Delaware.

This is the third year in a row that Steve DelMonte had to cancel his swim events in Lewes, Delaware, allowing swimmers to participate in either the 5K or 1-Mile Swims that begin by jumping off the Cape May-Lewes ferry in Lewes Harbor. At this time, DelMo Sports plans to combine the swims along with the Dolphin Escape Swim into its "Escape Weekend" scheduled for the June 9th 2018 in Cape May, New Jersey. The regularly scheduled triathlon

will take place on Sunday, June 10th 2018. According to Steve DelMonte, DelMo Sports will no longer pursue scheduling swim in Lewes, Delaware, in the future.

The 2017 Open Water Season gave us chilly to comfortable ocean temperatures with calm and rough seas, along with a variety of swimming venues. Traditionally popular swims, such as the Brigantine Bayfest, Ocean City, Yates, and the Captain Turner swims were all evening swims. Within the last few years, these swims were rescheduled to the morning and attract fewer swimmers than in previous years – and sadly, the Yates Swim is no more. Perhaps this is the direct result of triathlon event scheduling early in the morning or diminishing sponsorships for the swims. As well as the increasing number of new swimming venues available within our local area luring swimmers from the historically long-standing swims at the South Jersey shore. As a testament to these traditions, the Pageant Swim celebrated its 88th Anniversary as the oldest open water swim in the country. The East Coast C-Cerpants now manage the Pageant Swim after the Atlantic City Beach Patrol could no longer assign limited resources to manage this historic swim and USA Swimming sanctioned the Pageant Swim. Concessions were made to Atlantic City local government resulting in moving the location of the swim, modifying the swim course based on the prevailing current, and also shortening the course from 1½ Miles to a 1.2 Mile Ocean Swim. But purists of the swim remain disappointed with the change in course, swim venue, and scheduling of this historic ocean swim.

In August 2017, we lost two swimming friends who inspired many to take to the water. Stephanie Walsh Beilman was an accomplished swimmer and swim coach, who touched the lives of many. The young swimmers she coached remember her fondly as do we within the United States Masters Swimmer community. Stephanie earned All American Individual Honors and rankings in USMS competition as well as served as Delaware Valley LMSC chair for 8 years and stayed on the board as the Officials Chair. She offered guidance to the chairs who followed. Stephanie founded the Valley Forge Masters and the Colonials 1776 teams. She developed and supported a local series of low key mini meets, and provided coaching advice in the LMSC newsletter. On the national level, Stephanie served as Planning Chair and Zone Committee Chair, which at the time was on the Executive Committee. Throughout her time in USMS, she happily guided many and shared her experiences to help when needed.

New Jersey State Senator, Jim Whelan, was a phenomenal swimmer as a student at Temple University. He served a member of the Atlantic City Beach Patrol and became a high school teacher. Jim helped his students and eventually, decided to run for office in Atlantic City. He helped to promote awareness of Atlantic City with his solo swim around Absecon Island and was inducted into the Swimming Hall of Fame in Fort Lauderdale. He was a true gentleman of the sea and a tireless champion for his constituency.

While we can't change conditions or ensure the things we love will last forever, here's a teachable moment for us all to consider. Kelly Annie, a jewelry designer with her own "perfectly imperfect collection" of handcrafted jewelry with soul, her "keep on swimming" bracelet inspires us to remember – "Life can be as hard to live as swimming against the tide. But at the worst of times, if you will just remember to keep swimming, sooner or later you will develop the ability to swim through life like a fish through the ocean."

"To me the sea is like a person – like a child I've known a long time. It sounds crazy, I know, but when I swim in the sea I talk to it. I never feel alone when I'm out there." ~ Gertrude Ederle ~

Delia G. Perez
Delaware Valley United States Masters Swimming
Open Water Representative

2nd October 2017

