

Executive Committee

PRESIDENT Jim Miller, MD

There is an excitement surrounding the 2005 convention. USMS is on the move! I am very proud of the changes that I have initiated during my presidency. I give this Executive Committee a tremendous amount of credit for working together during this time of change and staying focused on the opportunities in front of USMS.

As your newly elected President four years ago I set as a priority adopting a professional model for USMS. This involved more frequent and regularized communications among the Executive Committee; year-round committee activity and increased participation by committee members; close management of employees and contractors; and improved and more cost-effective communications with our members. The professional model also involved enhancing USMS's profile in the international swimming community and revamping our governance structure.

I have sought to place USMS on a firm financial base, not by conserving money but by investing in the future of our organization. This has included taking tighter control of our information systems and enhancing the positions of Web Master/IT Director and National Publication Editor. We have also taken control of our national publication, to better manage content and finances devoted to communicating with our members. The partnership with Douglas Murphy Communications has far surpassed the financial expectations set for the first year. This returns money to USMS for project development and promoting. Given these initial changes, we have gone from a balanced budget to a budget surplus of \$100,000 to \$150,000 this year, with a cash reserve of one million dollars. We are also beginning to see renewed membership growth this year in response to these actions.

The Board of Directors has been asked to be far more active over these past four years, taking up tough topics that have long evaded our best attempts. Included in this process was a need to revamp the governance system. I called for a change in this system three years ago, and you will see the result of that in this convention. Many have worked long and hard to revitalize the governance process, making it more responsible to our members on all levels. Specific attention has been given to ensure that the new system meets our core objectives of service, education, and building. When a specific topic was challenging during my term, I instituted the use of cross-functional task forces. USMS had never attempted this concept. The task forces combined varied talents and areas of expertise to solve longstanding challenges.

This Executive Committee served as liaisons to all of the committees and conducted meetings of the committee chairs under each executive committee member. This dialogue served to find similar problems that we could work on collectively, as well as keeping the chairs informed regarding topics of consideration that would be coming before them as members of the Board of Directors.

I have worked with FINA and ASUA/UANA to increase the leadership role that USMS has internationally. By joining representatives of all the aquatic sports in a planning committee, we successfully bid for the 11th FINA World Masters Swimming Championships to be held this coming summer. What an opportunity for our members! Not only does this give everyone a chance to enjoy an international event without the cost of international travel, but it also gives a tremendous opportunity to market and grow our membership. Once again, investment in our future will come back to support our organization's growth. I moved our attention from Pan Pacific Championships to align along our FINA and USAS lines within ASUA/UANA. This resulted in the first Masters Pan American Championships this past June in Santo Domingo. More championships are being planned now for the future.

With all of these changes, I have opened the information network. I have held at least monthly Executive Committee meetings and posted their minutes for your review.

Even with this, the new thoughts and viewpoints are difficult to keep up with. I remain committed to the belief that the only bad idea is the one that is not stated. USMS has never seen a more talented, and dedicated Executive Committee. They have been willing to take on unpopular topics and make decisions that have run against the trends of the past for the future health of the organization. This has taken courage and a willingness to stand together for what we believed.

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I salute the work of this Executive Committee and the Board of Directors. I am honored to have been your President during these times of change. You have all risen to my challenges to modernize into a structure that supports the work of thousands of volunteers and athletes.

VICE PRESIDENT Scott Rabalais

Back in the fall of 1984 when I stepped on deck to coach my first Masters workout, I had no idea that Masters swimming would become such a vital part of my life for the next 21 years.

Administratively, I've had the opportunity to serve alongside dozens of dedicated swimming souls who give selflessly to the sport. I've been honored to serve in leadership positions locally, in the LMSC and Zone and on the national level. My contributions have been a labor of love.

Coaching Masters swimmers has been a mainstay in my life for the past two decades. Masters swimmers in the thousands – each unique – have crossed my path and it has been all my pleasure serving as your coach. The actual act of swimming has been, is and will be one of the great passions of my life. It is because of my love for swimming and its benefits and opportunities that I have felt obligated to serve the sport as an administrator and a coach.

For those who carry the torch forward in USMS, I wish you the best. The USMS membership is a special group, each member having made the life-affirming decision to enhance their lives through swimming. They are most certainly a group worthy of our service. My hope is that many more individuals in the U.S. and throughout the world come to know the wonders of swimming.

For you, the reader, thank you for your service to United States Masters Swimming. You are sincerely appreciated. Stand tall and smile, oh mighty swimmer!

SECRETARY Sally Ann Dillon

It has been an honor and a pleasure for me to serve USMS as its Corporate Secretary these past four years. Being on the Executive Committee has been challenging as well as enjoyable. I have gained considerable respect for our USMS leaders and truly appreciate the time and effort they expend on behalf of the organization.

As I wind up my tenure in office, I hope my efforts to organize materials in the Secretary's possession will benefit those who hold this position in the future. I also hope my efforts to keep the HOD in the "loop" with more informative minutes has been appreciated.

I'd like to thank the committee chairs for whom I have acted as a liaison this past year: David Diehl (Officials), Barbara Dunbar (History & Archives), Peter Crumbine (Long Distance), and Leo Letendre (Rules). I have enjoyed working with them and appreciate all of their efforts (and their committee's) on behalf of USMS.

Although I am not running for USMS office this year, I do want to stay active in USMS on the local and national level. I still have lots of energy and passion to contribute and hope the next administration will find a useful place for my talents. On a more personal level, my plans for the future include a "run" for the position of commissioner with the local Recreation and Park District on Whidbey Island this November.

In closing, I would like to thank my USMS friends who have been so supportive of my husband, Glen, and me since he suffered a spinal injury in a car crash two years ago. It's been a challenge for us both as we adapt our lives to the limitations he now has. The love and support that has come from our friends in USMS has been greatly appreciated and has made the process more tolerable.

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TREASURER Doug Church

The year to date has been reasonably unremarkable and the process of tracking cash flow, investments, accounting reports and other financial activities has been normal in every sense. As global markets have taken a beating, our strategy of maintaining most of our reserve funds in fixed income instruments has proven useful even though interest rates for relatively short term certificates of deposit have been very low. We have a number of CD's earning less than 2% interest, however, the rates have been trending upward over the last six months and as renewal opportunities come up, our rates have been moving upward as well. We continue to maintain a significant cash or equivalent reserve which has increased over last year.

This is the fifth year for Clifton Gunderson to perform an audit/review function. Last year, we obtained a review. This year we received an audit. The audit/review procedure is helpful in providing insight into our financial functions, recommendations for improvements and particular focus on issues of concern, if any. The audit conducted by Clifton Gunderson should be available at convention for general review. This year, a significant factor in completing the audit has been a requirement that we capitalize certain of our expense incurred by the webmaster in order to conform to GAAP requirements. Thanks to Margaret Bayless, our controller, and Jim Matysek, our webmaster, for working through this difficult exercise.

Finally, the opportunity to continue to gain insight into the way the USMS functions as an organization and to interact with other officers, directors, employees and members of USMS has been extraordinary. While there will never be a lack of issues to be dealt with, I have continued confidence in the spirit and motivation of the individuals entrusted with doing our work. We have an outstanding group of officers, an excellent staff and committed and dedicated volunteer leadership at every level. Margaret and I will be providing transition assistance to the new Treasurer and anticipate no interruption of the services we provide.

PAST PRESIDENT Nancy Ridout

It is with profound gratitude for your support and confidence in my leadership abilities that I write my last report as your immediate Past President. You have entrusted me with major significant responsibilities and I trust I served you well.

This past year your Executive Committee has kept up its zeal in dealing with the on-going business of USMS. Meeting monthly or more via conference calls, through consistent contact with committee chairs, and through special projects, your EC members have given USMS its foremost attention. I would like to thank Jim Miller, Scott Rabalais, Sally Dillon, Doug Church, Patty Powis, Lynn Hazlewood, and of course Tracy Grilli for their diligent efforts on behalf of our program, their problem-solving abilities, and their continuing enthusiasm for making USMS the best it can be both now and for the future.

I was honored to be asked to serve on the Governance Task Force and want to thank Chairman Betsy Durrant and the rest of this exceptional group for tackling difficult problems and coming up with creative ways to move USMS forward with a governing system that will enable us to operate more efficiently and effectively. This group was one of the best I've ever worked with and though we came to it with different views and interests, the result of our efforts was something we couldn't have imagined at the beginning and was truly a product of team effort – listening, considering, and acting in the best interests of USMS.

It has been my good fortune and pleasure to have worked with the Chairs of Marketing (Rich Burns, 2001-2004, and Doug Garcia, 2004-2005), Records and Tabulation (Pieter Cath, 2001-2004, whose death was a tremendous loss to USMS and to me, and Mary Beth Windrath, 2005), and Registration (Anna Lea Roof, 2001-2005) as their EC Liaison. These leaders have immense talents that they have freely given to USMS. I have also had the pleasure of working with our Sponsor Liaison, Mel Goldstein, who continues to search out new sponsors and new ways of presenting our organization to the national public. USMS is rich in talented members willing to volunteer their time. For this I am very grateful.

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As the past eight years of service as President and immediate Past President come to a close, I reiterate my thanks for your confidence and for the opportunities you have given me. It has been an extraordinary period in my life to be sure, but I'm looking forward to sitting down on the floor with the delegates, and having time to sit and talk with you, my friends. I am on the Board of the XI FINA World Championships Local Organizing Committee and at the end of July, I was officially appointed to the FINA Masters Technical Committee so I won't be idle, but I'm looking forward to a less hectic pace. It seems I keep following the paths that June Krauser has blazed ahead of me and that makes them very special indeed. I wish our new officers and Board of Directors the very best and am confident USMS will be in very good hands for years to come.

ZONE CHAIR Lynn Hazlewood

It's hard to believe another year has passed and my five-year sojourn as Zone Chair is about finished. My private joke is that I did such a good job that they retired the position! Not to worry, the function will remain with the V.P. of Local Services and, hopefully, some of the concepts we have been exploring for the past two years will continue in an expanded form.

Most of my activities are ably documented in the annual reports of others. That makes writing this report pretty easy. I have been fortunate to be liaison to a talented and dedicated group of workers. Those include my zone and election committee members—Marcia Anziano (Breadbasket), Debbie Morrin-Nordlund (Colonies), Rob Copeland (Dixie), Debbie Cavanaugh (Dixie—replaced Rob on the election committee), Mike Lemke (Great Lakes), Doug Garcia (Northwest), Joan Alexander (Oceana), Marcia Marcantonio (South Central), and Lucy Johnson (Southwest); Jim Matysek, USMS Webmaster/IT Director; Bill Volckening, USMS Editor; Hugh Moore, Communications Chair; and Meg Smath, Publications Chair. Please see their annual reports for all the details.

This report would not be complete without mentioning those who represented USMS in the development and publication of *USMS SWIMMER*. I would like to thank members of the transition team and editorial board. This group has truly made *SWIMMER* "our" magazine from top to bottom. Editorial board members are Bill Volckening, Jim Matysek, Hugh Moore, Meg Smath, Doug Garcia (Marketing chair), and Barbara Thomas (Finance representative). Mel Goldstein and Tom Lyndon worked on the transition team for the initial start-up. It has been a pleasure working with them and the professionals from Douglas Murphy Communications. Special mention should be made of Virginia Sowers, our managing editor who is the glue that holds it all together.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in Greensboro!

USMS LEGAL COUNSEL Patty Powis

The time since the USMS 2004 convention has been, luckily, relatively stable and quiet from a legal perspective. The engagement of a new publisher required the negotiation of a contract to define the relationship and requirements between USMS and Douglas Murphy Communications ("DMC") in a publishing endeavor that is different from what USMS has ever experienced. The contracting process went smoothly and the relationship with DMC has been good. There was also contract work to renew agreements with existing sponsors and licensees and draft first-time agreements with some new sponsors, as well as the renewal of contracts with contractors and employees.

The upcoming XI FINA World Masters Championships in 2006 has also generated some legal involvement. While the Local Organizing Committee ("LOC") for the event engaged its own pro bono legal counsel for incorporation, non-profit status and other legal matters, there have been occasional questions and requests for review of the promissory note between the LOC and USMS, the liability release for the entry form and FINA's preferences with regard to it, and insurance and indemnification issues.

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In contrast to 2004, the number of grievances and proposed grievances brought to the attention of Legal Counsel has been low and there has not been a need for proceedings before the National Board of Review. This may be either a sign of more harmony among USMS members or resolution of grievances at the local level consistent with the intent of Part 4 of USMS rules.

There have been a few questions for Legal Counsel generated by the work of the Governance Task Force. But most of the legal work will occur as the Legislation Committee reviews legislation proposals coming from the governance process as we head toward Convention.

Ongoing work for the Ad Hoc Legal Counselors Committee involves the registration of USMS's trademark and name, and preparation of guidelines for waivers used in on-line registration.