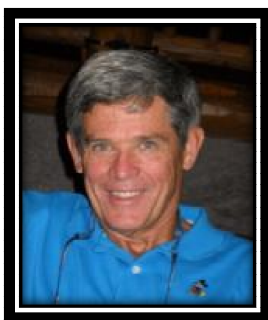




*Want to share the newsletter?  
Please - Print a copy, Pass it on.*



**Bob Jennings**  
**FL LMSC Chair**

**LMSC News**

I just completed a very inspirational week jammed packed with swimming. Early in the week, I attended an Adult Learn to Swim Class in The Villages. Instructors were all USMS swimmers donating their time and passing on their love of swimming. The participants all entered the pool area with eager and excited looks on their faces. Several were taking their first steps towards overcoming a lifelong fear of the water, while others looked forward to learning how to breath or improving their stroke. Individuals just passing by the pool deck also got excited about the program. Many inquired how they could get involved in the next session.

At the end of the week, I attended a swim meet where participants arrived from all over the country. The level of completion was impressive, but level of camaraderie between swimmers was even higher. Swimmers of all ages and teams were cheering and supporting each other. The oldest competitor and finisher in the 200 fly was a woman, 85 years of age. Men and women in their 70's and 80's swam the 1,650. After being medically cleared from a severe medical problem, another individual also swam the 1,650. Normally this would not have been a problem, but this year it was. The individual stopped several times, but never gave up and completed the race.

The body achieves what the heart believes.  
You have to believe.

On a side note the Florida LMSC will be holding our annual election of Board Members at the October meeting immediately following the Saturday session of the Rowdy Gaines swim meet. If you are interested in appearing on the ballot for a board position please contact Joannie Campbell ([JCampb10@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:JCampb10@tampabay.rr.com))



## Congratulations to our FL LMSC Award Winners!

Leatherlung awards for 2015.

Joan Campbell - FACT - SCY

Dawn Clark - SPM - Postal

Kern Davis - SPM - Postal

Ken Gersbach - SPM - Postal

Melissa Harasz - SPM - Postal

Phil Harasz - SPM - Postal

Tim Kennedy - SPM - Postal

Cheryl Kupan - SPM - SCY and SCM

Livia Zien - SPM - Postal

Florida LMSC Club Volunteer Awards for 2105:

Connie Greb - The Villages Swim Team

Cheryl Kupan - St. Pete Masters (SPM)

Fred Wakelin - T2NM (Naples Masters)

2015 - Sue Moucha Overcoming Adversity Award to Betty Lorenzi, FACT - Florida Aquatic Combined Team.

2016 Florida LMSC Coach of the Year - Patty Nardozzi, St Pete Masters.



### NEWS FROM FACT

*Joannie Campbell*



We have returned from another FUN meet- the YMCA Nationals in Sarasota. It was four days of good competition and getting reacquainted with friends from all over the country with time to get together with them. I have the good fortune for many years of competing in this as well as National Senior Games, National USMS and FINA World Championships – it's so interesting that often each of the competitions bring a different group. Just love it! This year a friend's husband, 90 years old, shared with me that he engineered the FINA pools all over the world – what a great discovery when the firm he worked for had just built a world-class pool in my brother's hometown of Midland TX! The results of the Nationals are on [www.dixiezone.org](http://www.dixiezone.org) website – you'll be able to spot many of our FACT members swimming for various Y's.

The St Petersburg Meet (to be known in the future as the Bob Beach SCY Meet) was plagued by horrendous weather Saturday but the locker rooms are more pleasant to spend the stormy time in these days. The day's events were shortened and of course relays were eliminated, and postponed to Sunday, where we experienced a cold front and wind. Some of our pictures look like we were swimming in the Klondike!! In spite of all the weather FACT placed third. The Awards picnic was set up nicely Saturday inside and Betty Lorenzi received the Overcoming Adversity Award from Sue Mocha. Betty suffered from a broken neck a year ago December but was back swimming her backstroke times of old!!

I managed to get through all events in the SCY for the Leather Lung Award.



February's Valentine's Meet in Clearwater was well attended and exciting. Our workout groups swam independently, as is the case once a year, and as independent groups CLCM and CLCF combined to take 1<sup>st</sup> place; the Villages placed 4<sup>th</sup>; FACT/UNA placed 5<sup>th</sup> and Isaac Silver as the new SPCF placed in the 20's. Isaac informs me that some confusion occurred when their workout group was registered and there will be more participants with that designation in the future. Our Clearwater Long Center trophy will be displayed in the lobby along with the many FACT trophies that are always looking for a home – most of our members don't have a place to house them. We had visitors from Gold Coast, who took 1<sup>st</sup> of the Visiting Teams, and guests from North Carolina who have placed an article in their North Carolina Newsletter inviting people to come join us next year!!! FACT as a combined USMS team would have taken number one.

The USMS Spring Nationals in Greensboro are now in the books. The attendance was down by 800 from the Nationals there in 2012 – sign of the times or sign of the facility?! We had three participants: Karen Panker, Michelle Crook and Isaac Silver. We wished them all good swim times!! Three not quite enough for a relay! Summer Nationals will be in Gresham OR in August – I plan on taking the trip with my daughter. It's a great part of the country.

Please keep up to date with all the news on our website: [www.factmasters.org](http://www.factmasters.org)



## **FL LMSC Registrar Update**

Meredith Moore



As of Friday, April 22nd, we had 2,153 members registered. That is 89% of our total membership for 2015 of 2417 members. 53% are male, 47% female. We have 53 Clubs registered in the FL LMSC.

The next Postal Event is the **Speedo-USMS 5K/10K ePostal National Championships (50 meter pools only)** hosted by Western Hills Athletic Club. You can swim this between May 15-September 15, 2016. Info will be posted on [dixiezone.org](http://dixiezone.org) website SOON!!!

**Also, please check your Club Listing on:**

<http://www.usms.org/placswim/placswimform.php?LMSCID=14> to be sure your facility, contacts and practice times are up to date. Pools are listed by town/city. This needs to be checked regularly as we do have lots of snowbirds and visitors coming to visit Florida and looking for a place to swim.

Happy laps, Meredith



## Feel Fabulous – be a swimmer

Karen Klisch, PhD

Have you noticed that regardless of how you feel upon arriving at swim practice – there is a really good chance that you will feel a whole lot better after the practice? That “good after-practice feeling” has many possible reasons, not the least of which is the *negative ion effect*. You may wonder how anything “negative “ can be good – and what that has to do with swimming – well – read on---

**Anytime water is churned up negative ions are produced.** Just think about all of the “water churn” that occurs during a swim team practice. Consider the massive splashes that occur in the fast lane during a hard butterfly set that almost drown the swimmers in the nearby lanes, or the huge amount of water that gets thrown about during a set of freestyle sprints, or just the splashy stroke of the novice swimmer. To say the least, there is a lot of wild water being generated when a swim team works out. Although it sounds counter intuitive (opposite of what the word negative tends to imply) --- *negative ions* in the air are more beneficial than positive ions. *Negative ions* are good things and can do wonders for humans.



### *Negative ions*

- allow a better absorption of O<sub>2</sub>
- make your brain function better (easier to think clearly)
- enhance your mood
- provide relief from many physical ills
  1. hay fever
  2. asthma
  3. allergies
  4. migraines
  5. post operative pain
- enhance the immune system
- improve appetite
- improve sex drive
- stimulate your senses
- have a greater positive impact on women than men

It is common to experience a feeling of euphoria when standing near a crashing waterfall or in the spray of waves at the ocean’s edge. Taking a shower can be a great mood elevator. Finishing a hard swim practice may leave one mellow for hours. *Negative ions* play a big part in that good feeling.

There are about 250-1500 *positive ions* in normal air and only about 200-800 *negative ions* in normal air. The greater the concentration of *negative ions* in the air, the better the effect. Water churning boosts the *negative ion* content in the air by thousands. *Negative ions* zoom where water is forced to spray, bubble and crash. Swimming on a team can give you one to two hours of high concentrations of negative ions.

What a great reason to be a swimmer and be on a swim team --- and *negative ions* are FREE!

Karen swims with VAST and is a FACT swimmer- ed



**St. Pete Masters**

<http://stpetemasters.org/>



Christine Truhol Swanson  
SPM News – News from the outside lane....

What's going on... SPM is fresh off fantastic swimming at the 2016 USMS Spring Nationals in Greensboro, NC. Over 30 team members made the trip this year; festive is a great description for this group. The team finished 11<sup>th</sup> overall. Our elder statesmen, Bob Beach lead the team with multiple top finishes in the 85+ age group. We were all impressed with Bob's 1000 and 1650 Free and all the flip turns - he is a true inspiration. Our youngest swimmer was Mary Reischmann, 22 in the toughest age group (well all of them are tough). Mary has transitioned from high school swimming to Masters and was a great addition to the team. She showed her guts when eating her goggle and losing her contact lenses in one of her races.

The ultimate team member award goes to John Doolittle. Not only did he have a fantastic meet but John was seen behind the blocks often as his team mates were ready to step on the blocks. Charlotte was stellar as always even with her 5 recently broken, healing ribs; Melissa Harasz showed great fortitude and speed in her events as she was recovering from a broken arm. Kern Davis played the odds and took home a lot of hardware. Cheryl Kupan, who loves to race, was in top form in her events. Steve Freeman had what I might call his best meet ever, with great times and finishes in all his events. Karen Westerman – you were amazing and JoAnn Harrelson was in a great zone the entire meet while her Aunt Marti came up from SC to see her swim. Paula went about her work in the pool in a stealth manner with great results. It was fun watching the speedy, multi-talented Josh Smith swim over the weekend. A photo from our favorite race finish as Livia and Cheryl swam stroke for stroke in the 100 breast; fortunately in different age groups.



Anthony Sullivan showed some gutsy swims and found time to shoot a USMS infomercial for SwimSwam. John Nixon, Alan Rook and Dawn Clark who came down with a cold on the flight north, all solid through and through. Eric Herman showed great focus and determination in his events. Phil Harasz swam 3 events getting the most bang for his buck: the 1650 Free, 200 Fly and 400 IM; fate in his favor in the 200 Fly.

Always fun to watch old friends swim: Suzzette and Phyllis and meet new team members: Steve and Martha. We also had a young contingent join us: kudos to the speed crew of Sean, Ken, Ryan, Marie, Lauren and Sarah.

And as always, Coach Patty Nardozi was the glue who kept this group organized through the four day meet.

Awesome job everyone!



Save the Dates: SPM will be hosting USMS sanctioned events in 2016.

**May 7** – Hurricane Man Open Water Swim

**July 9-10** – St. Pete Masters LCM Championship Meet

Find registration information at: [www.dixiezone.org](http://www.dixiezone.org)



## **TBAM Catching Up**

By Norma DeGuenther

**Tampa Bay Aquatic Masters**

[www.tampaswim.com](http://www.tampaswim.com)



We need to catch up on some events....

Back in November, 2015, some of us competed in the Tri-Rock Triathlon in Clearwater. For their age groups, a big CONGRATS to **Sue Curtin** (1st place), **Susan Ashbaugh** (2nd place),

and **Danny Hicks** (2nd place) and for the sprint, **Libby McKenna** (2nd place and 10th OVERALL FEMALE (TBAY))!



Also in November, 2015 **Davin Brannon** provided us with a picture from the Rocketman Triathlon! He had great weather and said the bike ride through NASA was pretty cool!

In February, 2016, we introduced **Coach Francisco Silva-Gonzalez** as the new coach to replace **Coach Carmen Goodner**. Carmen coached for TBAM for over five (5) years and helped so many of us improve our strokes. We are thankful to Coach Carmen and are also thrilled for her in her pursuit of new adventures. Coach Francisco is a Level 2 Certified Coach with USMS and we are lucky to have him - Welcome Coach Francisco!



Also in February, 2016, at the Clearwater Valentine Meet was **Emily Winn, Juan Cue** and **Chris Davis** representing the TBAMers. Results for the 2016 25th Annual Masters SCY Valentine's Meet held at Clearwater's Long Center for the three swimmers participating:



1) Emily Winn – Scored 57 points for TBAM swimming 7 events and coming away with 4ea 1st place finishes and 3ea 2nd place finishes. She ended up setting 5ea TBAM records in the 25 to 29 Women's category.

2) Juan Cue – Scored 34 points, swimming 4 events. 3ea 1st place finishes and a 2nd. Juan set 3ea TBAM records in the Men's 55 to 59.

3) Chris Davis – Scored BIG...53 points in 7 events. 3ea 1st, 2ea 2nd's and 2ea 3rd place finishes. Chris set 7ea new TBAM records in the Men's 60 to 64.

With just these three swimmers, **TBAM** finished in 10th place overall in the meet. Congratulations and great job!

Another February, 2016 event was the Gasparilla Distance Classic. It was great weather and couldn't wait for photos from everyone (hence the proofs)...





On April 10, 2016, a group of us braved training in the open water at Pass-A-Grille for the upcoming Hurricane Man Swim with, unknown at the time, red tide. Hope it's gone by the event date May 7<sup>th</sup>:

Until next time, just keep swimming!



### **Tarpon Total Fitness Masters (TFM)**

We recently completed our first 6 months as a USMS registered club here at Tarpon Total Fitness Masters. We are located in Tarpon Springs, on the Gulf Coast in the northern Tampa Bay area. It has been great fun and we appreciate being associated with USMS, including having swimmers find us online through USMS "Places to Swim:"

[http://www.usms.org/placswim/?utm\\_campaign=top\\_nav&utm\\_medium=local\\_programs](http://www.usms.org/placswim/?utm_campaign=top_nav&utm_medium=local_programs)

Our program is coached by both Total Fitness owner, Celia Dubey and Paul Smith. Celia is a USAT Coach, Youth MultiSport Coach, Certified Personal Trainer, a 12 time USAT Duathlon and Triathlon All American. Paul Smith is a USMS Level 2 Masters Coach and experienced triathlete.

We offer both on-deck coached masters workouts on Tuesday & Friday at 6:00 am and group swim workouts on Monday Wednesday & Friday at 7:00 am. We also have weekly open water swim workouts on Mondays at 5:00 pm starting in April through the summer and various group ride and run workouts on the weekends. Our facility includes our own outdoor heated 25-yard pool that is open year-round and a full service gymnasium with group workout rooms and locker/shower facilities.

We enjoy providing individual lessons to swimmers of all levels working to improve their technique, efficiency, and performance. Coach Paul Smith recently became certified as a USMS ALTS Instructor and Paul particularly enjoys working with less experienced swimmers yet to fully discover the joys of swimming!

Come swim with us if you are in the northern Pinellas County area ☺





Coach Celia Dubey (lower left), Coach Paul Smith (upper left), and Masters swimmers (clockwise from lower left) Lorna Short, Bonnie Reenstra, David Morrow, and John Strait.



## **TYSM**

**By Alexis Mendenhall**

If our team had a motto it would be, Swimming is truly a lifelong sport! In what other sport – track, gymnastics, football do you see a “Masters” program? None. Athletes get burned out, get hurt and/or give up.

But it’s the smell of the chlorine or the buzz of the starter will always bring you back to the pool. There were times in our lives and various reasons that have taken us away from the pool – family, jobs, schedules etc. BUT, the driving force is still there, and all too often you feel like something is missing. Somehow when the dust settles in your life, you hear the peacefulness of the water before a 5:30am swim whispering your name and you’re back in the pool!

So, with the start of this season we celebrate the returning swimmer. We are lucky to have grown our team and embraced many swimmers who have found their way back to the water. We would never say “I was a previous swimmer” or “I once was a swimmer.”

Unlike any other sport, We are swimmers for Life.





**A Q U A T I C S** [www.t2aquatics.com](http://www.t2aquatics.com)

On April 9th, 9 swimmers from T2 Aquatics Masters participated in the 2016 Open Water Festival which took place at Miromar Lakes in Estero. We swam in the Fran Crippen One Mile Sunset Swim.

Girls/Women were put into age categories and were lumped into the "Senior Category" (ages 17-99). Women's Results: AnnMarie 23:16.6 was 7th; Shannon Cutting 24:06.7, 15th; Joan Gamso 26:10.8, 18th; Meredith Moore 27:40.3, 20th; Deb Orringer 27:56.0, 21st. Men's Results were all lumped together (ages 10&Over): David Gray 23:37.35, 37th; Bruce Mohl 24:00.02, 44th; Alberto Ortiz 33:02.6, 64th. AnnMarie and Shannon both swam the Woman's 5K earlier in the day: Females 17&Over: AnnMarie 1st, 1:23.24; Shannon 1:29.09 was 3rd.

It was a gorgeous evening for a swim and afterwards celebratory margaritas dinner at Pinchers!

AnnMarie Morrisseau and Deb Orringer



AnnMarie Morrisseau, David Gray, Meredith Moore, Alberto Ortiz, Joan Gamso, Deb Orringer, Shannon Cutting, Bruce Mohl

Meredith Moore, Deb Orringer, Joan Gamso



Finished!! Meredith Moore



After swim dinner with our "supporters"!!!



Three swimmers from T2 Masters also competed in the 2016 Y National Championships in Sarasota April 14 - 17. Margit Jebe and Meredith Moore competed with their old Y team up north (Westport/Weston/Wilton, CT) and John King represented the Naples Area YMCA.



Friday, April 22nd - T2 Lanemates: Joan Gamso, Betty Dawson, Meredith Moore, Amy Thompson finish practice under a beautiful full moon at the Norris Aquatic Center in Naples.



## Upcoming Open Water Swim

By David Miner

[Swim Without Limits, Inc.](http://www.swimwithoutlimits.com)

941-545-9709



### **Swim 10k+ at the Beautiful Fort De Soto Park, St. Petersburg, FL**

November 5, 2016

Presented by Swim Without Limits

A state park with five interconnected islands and named America's Top Beach for 2009, Fort De Soto offers pristine beaches, beautiful water, and a special remote feeling.

On Saturday, November 5, Swim Fort De Soto will debut taking swimmers around three sides of this beautiful park. We will run this race just like our Swim Around Lido Key race

offering solo, 2-person, and 3-person relay options.

Be a part of this inaugural event and come out for a great open water swim. Post race festivities will take place in the park including a great meal, awards ceremony, music, and fun times for all. The Postcard Inn hotel on the beautiful St. Petersburg beach is offering a discounted rate and is ready to take your reservation.

For more information and to register, please go to <https://www.swimwithoutlimits.com/open-water-races.html>.



## Swimmers Meet Epic Challenge at the 19th Annual 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim

Ron Collins, Race Director  
Distance Matters  
[www.distancematters.com](http://www.distancematters.com)



*Tampa Bay's marathon swim race is one of the world's longest, covering the length of Florida's largest estuary. The race course was altered and shortened due to wind and waves on the morning of Saturday, April 16th, 2016.*

ST. PETERSBURG,  
FLORIDA, USA - High winds forced an early end to the 19th Annual 24 Mile

Tampa Bay Marathon Swim. After battling for almost 3 1/2 hours on an alternate, sheltered course, organizers halted the marathon swim due to safety concerns for the swimmers, boaters and kayakers.



At the time of the race abandonment, all of the swimmers and relays that started the race were still negotiating the moderate chop off Tampa Bay's Pinellas Point. The leader was the pre-race favorite, a 25 year old that was a distance swimmer at Penn. Stephen Carroll was able to swim 8 miles by the time race was called off, shortly before 11:30am.

Stephen Carroll's support kayaker, Jason Malick, was impressed by the leader, saying, "Right out of the gate, Stephen opened a huge gap on the rest of the field. He has a flawless stroke...if I only had half of his technique in my swimming days!" At the time of the stoppage, Carroll was more than 1/2 mile ahead of the next competitor.

GPS trackers were aboard each of the support boats while they shadowed the swimmers.

There were five solo swimmers and the 6 relay teams that were forced to withdraw from the event, at 3 hours and 23 minutes:

**1 Stephen Carroll, 25M, New York, NY, USA**

**3 Raquel Janes, 16F, Valrico, FL USA**

**6 Caroline Block, 32F, Baltimore, MD, USA**

**7 Randy Hill, 57M, Hempstead, NY, USA**

**9 Meenakshi Pahuja, 38F, New Delhi, India**

**21 Steyning Stingers Relay**

Lawrence Naested, 52M, Partridge Green, W. Sussex, UK

Sarah Cotton, 48F, Steyning, W. Sussex, UK

**22 Swim to Honor Relay**

Jim Loreto, 43M, Bethesda, MD

Al Chororos, 42M, Washington, DC

**31 Mighty Mermaids Relay**

Traci Grilli, 59F, Londonderry, NH

Nancy Steadman Martin, 61F, Oceanport, NJ

Christie Ciraulo, 62F, Los Angeles, CA  
Veronica Hibben, 59F, Huntington Beach, CA  
Karen Einsidler, 60F, Tenafly, NJ  
Jenny Cook, 58F, Los Angeles, CA

### **17 Gorgeous Gorgons Relay**

Ann Bowers-Evangelista, 47F, Washington DC  
Sharon Larkin, 50F, Acworth, GA  
Cheryl Conlin, 47F, Arlington, VA  
Megan Hill, 50F, Arlington, VA  
James Lutz, 50M, Reston, VA

### **18 Beach N' Babes Waterbugs Relay**

Donna Sumption 52F, Arlington, VA  
Jennifer Gibbins 36F, Vienna, VA  
Lori Whitehand 55F, Falls Church, VA  
Melinda Moore 50F, Arlington, VA  
Adele Ratcliff 50F, Springfield, VA  
Kris Petersen 51F, Silver Spring MD

### **41 Orangeburg Pirates Relay**

Franklin Fetzer, 58M, South Haven, MI  
Stacey Hughes, 47F, Orangeburg, SC  
Jeremy Sanders, 37M, Orangeburg, SC  
Bradley Holeman, 36M, St. Matthews, SC  
Gilbert Miller, 63M, Bamberg, SC

The race has been named one of America's Top 100 Open Water Swims and has been listed as one of the 30 "[World Swimming Majors](#)" by The World Open Water Swimming Association (WOWSA).

*For more information about the 24 Mile Tampa Bay Marathon Swim, Visit: [www.DistanceMatters.com](http://www.DistanceMatters.com)  
or send an email to Ron Collins, Race Director: ([Collins@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:Collins@tampabay.rr.com))*



## An Additional Thought On the Psychology of Competition

By Edward H. Nessel, R.Ph, MS, MPH, PharmD  
(my latest chapter for my next book)

There are several physiologic markers that lead the way to the reasons for an athlete slowing down or showing general decline in performance with age. Yet because of individual variation, some humans show remarkable tenacity in their ability to hold on to quality efforts in various sports. But none of us is immune to Father Time's inevitable dipping into our purses of talent and extracting his withering tribute. Everyone will slow down, become weaker, lose endurance...eventually. The differences can be explained logically by the obvious physiologic diminutions at different rates. Those who have been blessed with gifted DNA, have religiously nurtured their talents and the energy systems needed to showcase them as the years pass, and, most of all, have attended to the ever-demanding bodily needs as aging ensues, have been noticeably able to keep pushing past their comfort zones. The balancing element to all this that must be acknowledged is to prevent foolish or reckless activities of life that will

most assuredly diminish the athlete in so many ways. Who always comes to mind was my hero as a young boy growing up in New Jersey.

If you were a New York Yankees fan (me since the age of eight), following what Mickey Mantle, The Mick, old #7, did on the playing field was what made me turn to the sports page every morning to check his stats and the rest of the Bronx Bombers. At 10 years of age, I had no idea that Mantle did what he did when not donning the pinstripes. The drinking, the drugs, the carousing, the late hours, the breaking of training regimens and habits almost daily had to take their toll. But we didn't know that. The media kept it under wraps back then. Us "youngins" who looked up to and idolized these professional ball players could never have conceived to connect the dots from their chosen activities off the field to how they eventually diminished their skills on the field. They seemed to ignore the ever-possible right-around-the-corner career-ending injury or illness just waiting to pounce. Unless they took very good care of themselves as if they were (and many were) prized packages from Mount Olympus for us mere mortals to adulate, bad things happened that seemed to us to be just tough luck..."who said life was fair." And this was most disheartening when you were pulling for your team in a crucial series, and your hero flubbed his job. As I got older I delved into the deep sciences of pharmacy, biochemistry and physiology. I utilized these varied backgrounds as a confluence to physiologically guide and train athletes of quality. My goal was to help them sustain their elevated stature with my knowledge of how the body reacts biologically to vigorous training and intense competition. I also branched off into understanding and training aging athletes for which I am a humble specimen. I learned that the body as it ages still parallels youth and vigor in many physiologic markers but with ever-increasing diminution; the greatest of which is the mind's interpretation of what is going on with all the elements of the body as one progresses through a demanding event. The simple progressive psychological presentation in the midst of intense physical activity of "I feel OK, I don't feel OK, I think I am going to die" EXCLAIMES IN FLAMES how the mind can interpret its perceptions as absolute real in the moment. I can't enumerate how many times my swimmers have said to me after the fact of an important competition that they could have moved faster through the water and how disappointed and angry at themselves when they didn't. The psychological pain that they didn't when the opportunity presented hurt more and for a much longer time than the moment they "caved." This emotional approach has become a very important part of my training modality: preparing the mind for the sure-as-hell inevitable feeling of a near-death experience that one willingly seeks. The research, the training, the competition experience all come together to show that it is no surprise that the mind controls most of what we do, and several new studies have taken the time to show this.

Recent research into the psychology of competition has looked into an approach of the mind which seems to be rising in importance, incidence, and prominence. It is not the absolute physiologic deterioration, per se, that diminishes the athlete's performance, it is the mind's interpretation of this. What once was able to be accomplished with a derived and set amount of discomfort into abject pain can no longer be tolerated by the aging performer. Most times, as the aging process starts to take over, there will be remnants of strong athletic efforts, but the consistency of which wanes with the years. Some days, vestiges of quality efforts jump up and shout loud enough to even surprise the athlete. (Boy! If I could only bottle that effort!) Other days, to the dismay of same, he or she could be arrested for attempted...(you fill in the sport).

Over the years, sports scientists have come to realize, with the aid of many studies, that the mind controls everything. All things being equal, when you distill it down to its very essence, it is all a matter of attitude and the retrieving of strong positive thinking at the moment it is needed. But this is more difficult to make happen than most realize. The more intelligent the athlete, the more he or she remembers the great discomfort that will unfold as the event progresses if a quality effort is to be expected. The quest of perfection is tough enough in athletics as it is in most things in life, but for success to occur, it is an absolute. The conquering of fear and the ability to withstand building discomfort into abject pain is another element altogether. It is the great humbler, the very large bump in the road if you will, of all who want to climb to the top of Mount Olympus. So much so, that Mother Nature supplied humans with a specific hard-wire apparatus in the brain to try and protect itself: the **amygdala**. I've written much about this segment of the brain in the past and worked to connect the dots as to its location, function, and reason for being. For purposes of this expose', the reason for being is simple: as the body ages, it is usually less able to withstand the rigors of intense activity over measured periods of time and distance. The brain intuitively knows the important vital organs relied upon to withstand the physical challenges and computes several developing sensations as to how the total "machine" is functioning each moment of time through the effort. The dedicated training effect, of course, affords a most important resultant for the athlete to approach and then take on the physical challenge, but what must be appreciated is the power of the moment...the amygdala's moment-to-moment read-outs as to how things are going.

Though scientific, age-specific and appropriate workouts can and usually do make a positive impact on the quality of effort, it comes down to the individual athlete responsible for movement. How much does the aging participant want to hurt that day; for how long, for what reward? These emotional questions are often dealt with differently depending upon the quality of competition, the meaningfulness of the athletic event, and the overall athlete's emotional state preceding the physical stress. The oft-quoted line attributed to Henry Ford: "If you think you can, or you think you can't...you're right," sometimes works, sometimes doesn't. What has been seen to work the best and most often is the simple but absolute confirmation that the athlete need believe in him/herself at the moment of trial. The obvious but oft-eluding emotional confirmation that a positive outcome will ensue needs to constantly be re-enforced so that what the participant perceives is what he believes. This is helped to a great extent by past positive performances and competitor-evaluation. Winners think they are winners; they think it even when they keep it under wraps. They inherently believe they can conquer no matter what. They find a way to rise above. They will be the last man/woman standing. If there is pain to endure, they reason that everyone in the field has to endure this, and they can do it better. Of course, this shouldn't mean they become oblivious to their surroundings. They need to put things into absolute perspective to what lies ahead.

A great learning example for me came my way several years ago studying the life and times of America's great middle-distance runner of the 1930's, Glenn Cunningham. He rose to hold world records in the mile and a silver medal in the 1500 meters at the 1936 Olympics. But his youth was spent overcoming tremendous odds against even living. Both he and his older brother were badly burned in a one-room school house when he was about 8 years old. His brother died of his burns, and Glenn was told he would never walk again with the strong possibility of his legs being amputated. He

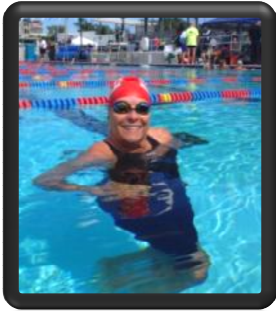
begged not to have this happen as did his parents, and he dedicated his very being to not only walk again but to run and run strong and fast.

History and an amazing desire to thrive conquered all. Classic for Cunningham at championship events was for him to look around at the competition and evaluate who would present the greatest threat and how. He came not only to race but to win. He had developed the winner's psyche, and it proved out. He carried this throughout his life and shared his winning philosophy many times with thousands who listened to him speak and benefited from his experience and wisdom. He related that as the athlete ages, experience and intellect come into play as well as talent. As one fades, the others need to become brighter. Taking this further into aging athletes competing in Masters events, past accomplishments can afford some advantage to outcomes, but the mind-set is prime. The ability to draw everything needed for success from internal sources usually makes the differences.

If only we could bottle up the great efforts and pour them out when needed. Oh, well...at least we are still trying, no matter how old we are.







## THE NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

**Sheila Carpenter-van Dijk**

Please send newsletter articles to Me!  
([sheilacv@verizon.net](mailto:sheilacv@verizon.net) or [fishtail@usms.org](mailto:fishtail@usms.org))

**Be sure to include your team name in the subject**

★so I know what team you represent★

If you have questions, be sure to ask me!

The next newsletter is scheduled to be on the web (<http://floridalmsc.org>) and in your inbox  
November 2016, so I'll need your articles by

**October 15, 2016!**



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