FLORIDA LMSC NEWSLETTER

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News From Our Florida Chair

Cheryl Kupan

Hello Florida LMSC'ers.

As we go to print, this coming weekend will mark the end of the 2026 competition schedule for our LMSC closing out with Sarasota's Shark Tank SCM meet and a new meet in Jacksonville, the SwimRise SCY meet. Hopefully you'll be able to participate in one of these meets to support these clubs. I want to thank all the clubs that have and continue to host meets in our LMSC. Hopefully the meet stipend that our Board initiated this year has helped with the meet expenses. If your club is interested in hosting a meet in 2027, please contact me.

Annual Meeting & Elections – on Wednesday, October 28th we held our Annual Meeting and Elections. This year all positions with the exception of the Chair & Treasurer (elected on in odd years) were voted on and unanimously elected. We also revised and approved our new by-laws. All of the above mentioned as well as the Treasurer's and Committee reports can be found on our website: Board Information – Florida Masters Swimming

2027 USMS Membership Renewals – Starting November 2nd, you can renew your USMS registration for 2027. FL LMSC Clubs, at last year's Annual Meeting, we approved a proposal where the LMSC pays for your club's annual team registration. There were some clubs that paid before I had the chance to request the payment and we will be in touch with you to reimburse you.

As we head into the holiday season, I'm thankful for a lot of things. I'm thankful for my Board that is a hard working group and always thinking what can we do for our members and clubs. I'm thankful for our members and clubs that put their trust in our Board to lead our LMSC. We are here for you, so please contact us with any questions and/or concerns. Our contact information can be found at: Contacts – Florida Masters Swimming

Since this is our last newsletter for 2026, I hope you have a Happy Thanksgiving with your family & friends and a Happy Holiday/Merry Christmas/Happy Chanukah and any other holiday you celebrate this season.

Thank you & kind regards, Cheryl Kupan, FL LMSC Chair & Membership & Communications Coordinator



2026 USMS Annual Meeting

Changes for 2027

Meegan Wilson

The House of Delegates (HOD) sessions of United States Masters Swimming Annual meeting were held virtually on September 18 and 19, 2026. The Florida LMSC appointed three delegates to attend: Scott Bay, Kirk Clear, and Cheryl Kupan and one automatic delegate, Michael Laux, past president of USMS, 1982-1985. Note: As of this printing there have been no official Legislation or Rules changes posted on the USMS website. The following Legislation and Rules proposals were passed according to some of the attendees.

1. L-1 in Section 201.1 of the USMS rule book – Membership of Individuals.

A. Stated in this proposal change "USMS membership has historically been structured as a single, uniform product that includes access to all programs, competitions, and recognition."

The proposal to have a standard membership rate determined by the HOD passed. "Fees for standard membership and any portion allocated to the LMSC in which an individual registers shall be established by the House of delegates." The standard membership fee will remain at $75 for 2027.

The definition of standard membership in this proposal was as follows: "*Establish membership in the rule book as a core relationship and status, rather than a fixed bundle of benefits.*" Addition of new member categories will be add-ons to the standard membership such as "trial memberships, competition licenses, partnerships, and premium offerings." While the HOD determines the fees for the standard membership, others fees will be established by the Board of Directors.

B. Membership Coordinators will no longer be able to accept applications to register members – registration will be through the USMS website and National Office only.

2. L-2 Section 503.1 Zone Names and Boundaries

Southern LMSC has been removed from the Southeast Zone and added to the South Central Zone in a collaboration of South Central and Southeast.

3. L-3 Section 507.1.10 R&T Committee Modification

The Records and Tabulation Committee name has been changed to *Meet Event Management Committee*. This was recommended by the R&T Committee.

4. L-4 Section 601.4 Adoption of Proposed Amendments

If a proposed amendment is recommended for adoption it may be adopted by a majority of the HOD, but if it is recommended for rejection there will be no action by the HOD.

5. L-5 Section 505.1 – Officer Positions

Officer names on the Board of Directors have changed. President and Vice President will now become Board Chair and Vice Chair.

The elected officers of USMS shall now be Board Chair, Vice Chair of Administration, Vice Chair of Community Services, Vice Chair of Local Operations, Vice Chair of Programs, Secretary, and Treasurer. No person may concurrently hold more than one such office.

6. L-6 Section 601.2 Submission of Proposed Amendments

Proposed amendments may be rejected by the chair of a committee of jurisdiction if considered unlawful.

7. R-1 102.3.2 Modify relay age groups for SCY meets.

Short Course Yard relays, starting June 1, 2027 will use the aggregate-age groups currently used for LCM and SCM meets: 72–99, 100–119, 120–159, 160–199, 200–239, 240–279, 280–319, 320–359, 360–399 …

Calculate Your OutSwim Score

Kelly Palace
Level 2 USMS Certified Coach

Florida LMSC member Jim Parker, MD created a Universal Swim Score that works to bring scientific Age Grading to the pool. The Outswim Score will be a sponsor of the Rowdy Gaines Masters Classic and be awarding prizes based on the highest Outswim Scores. Check out your Outswim Score and discover the science at **https://outswim.io**.



This, That & More

A Huge Thank You!

A huge thank you goes to Cindi Wood who resigned from the Florida LMSC Board this year. Cindi has been our Membership Coordinator for almost 6 years starting in 2021, and our Officials Chair since 2025. She has been the communication voice to our members and our clubs. We are very appreciative for all she has done for the Florida LMSC. *Thank you Cindi!*

2026 Florida LMSC Annual Meeting

We held our annual meeting on October 28, 2026. Besides Board members, we had representation from four clubs, Karen Fuss, BOLTS; Matthew Gapinski, JCM; Sean McClean, LMSC; and Gregory Burgess, SHOW. Thank you all for attending.

Six Board members were elected for a two year term: Vice Chair, Kirk Clear; Secretary, Zena Courtney; Membership Coordinator, Cheryl Kupan; Sanctions Chair, Anna Lea Matysek, Top Ten Chair, Anna Lea Matysek; and Meegan Wilson, Newsletter Editor.

Florida LMSC By-Laws Changes

The proposed By-Laws changes passed. Most of the changes were on items that are no longer relevant due to changes within USMS and the National Office. The major change was eliminating the elections for the Membership Coordinator, Sanctions Chair, Top Ten Chair, and Newsletter Editor. Going forward, these positions will be appointed by the Chair. The only elected positions will be the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

News From Our Florida LMSC Clubs





Florida Aquatic Combined Team

Meegan Wilson

Registration for 2027 starts November 1, 2026, but 2026 members are still registered through December 31. I hope you all will continue to register with FACT. A very special thank you to Joannie Campbell, who has been our club contact for several years. She has been our newsletter editor, and besides registering our club with USMS all these past years, she also has been putting relays together at meets. *Thank you Joannie for all you have done for FACT.* Joannie has passed the gavel on to me, and I hope I can meet the challenge. Our club has been registered for 2027 so everyone should be able to register for next year now. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Just a reminder that if you swim on a FACT relay, FACT will cover the meet fee cost. If a member on the team can pay for the relay, FACT will reimburse you.

FACT had representation at recent meets. Frances Weston, 86, placed 1st in all five events at the Rob Curry Pancake Pentathlon in Clermont, FL on September 9, 2026. She also competed at the Swagtoberfest in Gainesville, FL on October 18, 2026, placing 1st in the 50 Fly and 100 back, and placing 2nd in the 100 free, 100 IM, and 500 Free. You can find photos of Queen Francis in SWAG's submission in this newsletter. FACT member Gregory Wayland, 65, also competed at the SWAG meet with three 1st places in the 50 free, 50 back and 50 fly. Way to go swimmers.

FACT has a website hosted by the Florida LMSC. There you will find information about FACT, past newsletters, and FACT highlights. Please check it out.

Recognizing Coach Karen Fuss "Coach K"

Ken Cook

Level 3 USMS Certified Coach



Karen Fuss - Coach K

The BOLTS Masters Team of Vero Beach, Florida, would like to recognize our outstanding coach, Karen Fuss, affectionately known to us as "Coach K."

Coach K has a unique ability to motivate swimmers and help us believe in our potential. She challenges us to improve while creating an environment where swimmers of every level can succeed. Her favorite saying during practice is "plenty of rest," although somehow there never seems to be much rest involved!



She excels at teaching new skills, building confidence, and helping each swimmer reach their goals. Her positive attitude and creative approach make practices both challenging and enjoyable.



What truly sets Coach K apart is the genuine care she shows for every member of our team. Her support extends well beyond the pool. She cheers us on at USMS meets, open-water swims, running events, and triathlons, and she's always quick to celebrate our accomplishments.

During difficult times, Coach K brings our team together through meal trains, cards, and thoughtful messages of support. She also makes a special effort to keep our seasonal swimmers "snowbirds" connected, ensuring everyone feels valued and included, even when they're away.



More than a coach, Coach K has built a community that feels like family. We are grateful for her leadership, encouragement, and kindness, and we are incredibly fortunate to have her as the heart of our team.

BOLTS cont.



With appreciation,

The BOLTS Masters Team
Vero Beach, Florida
@boltsmasters

Jacksonville Area Warrior Swimmers Mark Two Milestone Achievements

Margaret Dodson

On May 18, 2026 Jacksonville hosted its first ever Ironman triathlon. The event began with a 2.4 mile swim in the St. Johns River in downtown Jacksonville, followed by a 112 mile bike course, two laps of 56 miles each that wove from Duval County into St. Johns County and back through Duval. It finished with a 26 mile run through mostly historic areas of downtown Jacksonville and its suburbs. Some significant traffic glitches along the bike route are being addressed for next year's course, but overall it was a well run and successful event.

Several of our swimmers took part in this inaugural Ironman. Among them was Scott Gallagher, finishing in 15 hours, 49 minutes and 52 seconds, competing in the Men's 50-54 age group and placing 1132nd overall. The race was a significant check off on his personal bucket list and the entire team saluted his effort the following Tuesday evening.



Erin O'Leary *(Re-printed with permission from CSA)*

We also celebrate Erin O'Leary, one of our open water specialists, who achieved an extraordinary milestone on July 22, 2026 with her successful solo crossing of the English Channel from England to France. Completing the crossing in 14 hours, 30 minutes, Erin fulfilled her goal of completing the Triple Crown of Open Water Swimming.

The Triple Crown recognizes three iconic open-water challenges: the English Channel, the Manhattan Island Marathon Swim, and the Catalina Channel Crossing.

JWS cont:

As Erin reflected, *No swimmer crosses an ocean alone*. She was grateful to have an incredible crew supporting her throughout the journey, including her brother, Conor who kept us informed on social media; her niece, Eliza, who served as a support swimmer; and her friend and fellow Triple Crown swimmer, Martyn Webster who lead crew logistics.



L-R: Martyn, Erin, Eliza,and Conor.
(Reprinted with permission from CSA)

In addition to the Triple Crown, Erin has completed a Gibraltar crossing and the width of Lake Tahoe. We have to wonder where her next challenge will take her.

Congratulations to both Scott and Erin on these impressive accomplishments. We can't wait to see what our swimmers get up to in the coming months.

St. Pete Masters

Livia Zien

Make every stroke, every revolution, every step count.



L-R: ***Cheryl Kupan, Paula Texel, and Karen Westerman at Yoders, post Y Nats***

A bit of catching up with SPM … At Y Nats in April, the Westport Water Rats included SPM's Paula Texel, Courtney Chubb, Karen Westerman, Chery Kupan, Susan Tokayer, Elija Clems, and Mike Smith. SPM dominated the Women's 55-59 age group with four first place finishes by Courtney, and top 3 medals for Paula and Karen. Mike won bronze in the 50 fly, next to winner Mike LaMonica. To put things into perspective, Mike points out that LaMonica, at 65, would have qualified for the Florida High School Championships. Way to go Masters swimmers!

Two weeks later, Sarah Swoch, Courtney Chubb, Nancy Steadman Martin, David Caulkins, and Paul Dieffenthaller did us proud in Greensboro, NC for SCY Nationals.



Sheila Carpenter vanDijk & Mike Swith at Gainesville Senior Games

Sometimes individuals or smaller groups support local, state, and even international meets – David Caulkins and Chris Stickles attended the FAA Paradise Sprint in May at FAU. In June, Mary Plant swam in Augusta, GA for the Dog Days of Summer. Hannah Bergstrom traveled to Shreveport, LA for the Red River Masters LCM Summer Invitational. At the end of June, Chris Stickle made a solo trip to Valencia, Spain for the Gay Games XII with great swims in all his events, and finishing 2nd in the 200m fly and 1500m free.

On September 13, Sheila Carpenter-vanDijk and Mike Smith won golds and silvers at the 25th Annual Gainesville Senior Games. At the 2026 Rob Curry Pancake Pentathlon, Elija Clems did the same in his 5 events. SPM was busy.



Patty Nardozzi & Steve Freeman at St Pete Masters Annual LCM two-day meet

A larger SPM group consisting of Hannah Bergstrom, Sarah Swoch, Courtney Chubb, Cheryl Kupan, Howard Cheung, Cam Chambers, the Mikes (Smith and Zabel), made the trip south to support Sarasota's Annual Bumpy Jones meet.

And as usual, another successful SPM LCM Summer meet was held in July. Thanks to Kathy Selles and Steve Freeman for their hard work and tag-teamed as meet directors, the volunteers and officials, and of course all participants.



L-R: ***Hannah Bergstrom, Sarah Swoch, Paula Textel, Courtney Chubb 400 Medley Relay – St Pete LCM meet***

SPM cont.



Andrew Leone
Catalina Channel Swim

Late summer/early fall was also the season for open water swims. A special congratulations to Andrew Leone who now joins the elite few who successfully crossed the grueling *Catalina Channel* on Sept 9. With a 2am start time, he finished with a time of 14:34:48.

Sarah Swoch and Dawn Clark (with kayaker Heni), both competed in *Swim for Alligator Lighthouse* on Sept 12 (Dawn's 11th race).



Dan Rauscher and Sarah Swoch
Swim for Alligator Lighthouse



Dawn Clark and Hennrietta Szeredi
Swim for Alligator Lighthouse Swim



Sarah Swoch - Swim Hobbs Island



Stephane Gibson, Sarah Swoch
After their 10 K Swim

Adding more successful open water events under their belts, Sarah finished 5th overall for females in the *11th Annual Swim Hobbs Island* (a 5-mile circumnavigation of Hobbs Island in Alabama), and on October 3, Dawn Clark completed 10 miles in her first *Swim the Suck* through the Tennessee River Gorge in Chattanooga, TN. Way to go ladies!

And what is a summer without a postal swim? All participants, Stephane Gibson, Sarah Swoch, Dawn Clark, Marshall McDonald, Andrew Leone, Greg Stanek, and Steve Freeman placed in the Top 10 in their age groups for the 5k, and Stephanie and Sarah in the 10k. Stephanie won both her 5k and 10k races, and Andrew his 5k.

Looking forward to seeing what the next few months bring. Happy swimming, everyone!

Swamp Water Aquatics Gainesville

Karyn Austin

Level 3 USMS Certified Coach
USMS Adult Learn To Swim Instructor



4th Annual SWAGtoberfest Masters Meet

October 18, 2026

Our 4th Annual SWAGtoberfest was a super fun (although a tad chilly) and successful meet. There were 99 swimmers and 24 teams represented. Highlights of the meet included adding a "Pretzel Relay" and The Chicken Dance!



Chicken with Raleigh Faust (GSC)



Chicken dancing with Race Director Karyn Austin
What is an Oktoberfest without the Chicken Dance?



"Queen" Frances Weston with Chicken



This was the cutest baby ever, not even phased by the Chicken!



Great cheering sections for many of our swimmers



The start of our 1st Annual 200 Yard Pretzel Relay



The winning team showing some very creative strategies to get the pretzel down the pool.



High Point Age Group Award Winners



We had ten FIRST time ever swimmers doing a Masters Meet! Names are not in order: Monona Martin (26), Nick Villar (23), Hanner Neyra (41), Jean Theurer (69), Mike Wolosky (34), Pedro Vasconcellos (34), Michael Antonov (18), Aaron Aiken (37), Andy McIntosh (67), John Cooley (39)



Post Meet Social, Cypress & Grove Brewery Jeremy McIntyre, Sean & Chelsea Piper, Cobi Wood



Our ROYALS!
King Stephen Zarzecki (79)
Queens Jean Quillen (85)
Frances Weston (86)



High Point Award Winner Monona Martin with her mug and meet shirt



Getting into the spirit! Katie Martin and Jim Radtke

Florida Pool & Open Water Events
Zone & USMS Championships

2026

Nov. 7 / SCY: SwimRise Masters Fall Festival. Jacksonville FL. Information & online entry. *Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, November 2*

Nov. 7-8 / SCM: Shark Tank Meet. Sarasota FL. Information & online entry. *Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, November 2*

Nov. 13-15 / SCM: Southeast Zone SCM Championships. Ft. Lauderdale FL. Information & online entry | Informaton & paper entry. *Entry deadline: online entry closes on and paper entry received by Sunday, November 8*

Dec. 5-6 / SCY: Florida Senior Games. Temple Terrace FL. Information & online entry. *Entry deadline: online entry closes Monday, November 16. Senior games for 50+. Will be USMS-recognized*

2027

Jan. 10: Tampa Bay Frogman Swim (3.4-miles). Tampa FL. Information. *General entry sold out; charity slots still open. USMS sanctioned: NO*

Jan. 29-31 / SCM: Rowdy Gaines Masters Classic. Orlando FL. Information & online entry *(online entry opens Sunday, November 1). Entry deadline: online entry closes Sunday, January 24*

Feb. 6 / SCY: Gulf Coast Games for Life. Sarasota FL. *Senior games for 50+, Will be USMS-recognized*

Feb. 6-7 / SCY: Southeast Zone SCY Championships (Auburn SCY Invitational). Auburn AL

Feb. 6-7 / SCY: SFTL Masters Challenge. Ft. Lauderdale FL

Apr. 15-18 / SCY: YMCA Masters Nationals. Sarastoa FL. *Will be USMS-recognized*

Apr. 29-May 2 / SCY: USMS Spring Nationals. Irvine CA.

Information copied from Southeast Zone website. For more information visit: www.southeastzone.org

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2027 Board of Directors

Elected Board Positions

Chair
Cheryl Kupan
Chair@floridalmsc.org

Vice Chair
Kirk Clear
ViceChair@floridalmsc.org

Treasurer
Teri Goodman
Treasurer@floridalmsc.org

Secretary
Zena Courtney
Secretary@floridalmsc.org

Membership Coordinator
Cheryl Kupan
Membership@floridalmsc.org

Sanctions Chair
Anna Lea Matysek
TopTen@floridalmsc.org

Top 10 Chair
Anna Lea Matysek
TopTen@floridalmsc.org

Newsletter Editor
Meegan Wilson
Editor@floridalmsc.org

Appointed Board Positions

Records & Co Top 10 Chair
Jim Matysek
Records@floridalmsc.org

Open Water & Long Distance Chair
Andy Kroupa
OpenWater@floridalmsc.org

Coaches Chair
Scott Bay
Coaches@floridalmsc.org

Awards Chair
Ryan Kloppe
Awards@floridalmsc.org

Senior Games Liaison
Carter Elliott
SeniorGames@floridalmsc.org

Officials Chair
Vacant

Communications & Social Media Chair
Vacant

Webmaster
Meegan Wilson
Webmaster@floridalmsc.org