

PACIFIC NORTHWEST  
ASSOCIATION OF  
MASTERS SWIMMERS

U.S. MASTERS  
SWIMMING IN  
WESTERN  
WASHINGTON

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# The WetSet

VOLUME 40, ISSUE 4  
JUL-AUG 2020

## President's Message

By Sally Dillon, PNA President

While positive changes to the COVID-19 situation have occurred since my May message, we are still seeing restrictions to our lifestyles. "Safety First" should be our mantra, so we can find our way out of the seemingly endless tunnel we're traveling in.

I'm happy to share the good news that Steve Freeborn is the 2020 recipient of PNA's *Dawn Musselman Inspirational Swimmer Award*. PNA board members joined a BWAQ Zoom meeting on 6/28 to surprise Steve with the award. You'll find more information about Steve on page 2 of this newsletter.



The *PNA Coach of the Year Award* has not yet been awarded. Some outstanding nominations were received and the nominating committee is in the process of making a decision. Once the award is prepared, a special event will take place to present the award. Look for announcements on our social media platforms and in the September-October issue of *The WetSet*.

Due to the pandemic, LMSCs have approved a one-time change to the registration procedures. As of June 1, anyone registering for USMS receives the rest of 2020 and all of 2021 for one fee (\$60). If you have any swimmers in your program who have dragged their feet and not registered for USMS, this is a great money-saving deal for them.

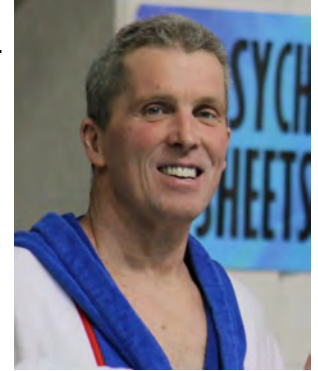
**Finally, it's good to hear that some of our pools are opening** - with limited schedules and lots of restrictions, of course. Many of us consider swimming in a treated pool to be quite safe, so if facilities can overcome some of the other barriers to safely opening, more of us will be able to get back in the water. Open water swimming has been booming over the last couple of months, but it's not for everyone. And we need to remember that crowds of swimmers are not allowed at this time.

Keep the faith that if we work together to be safe, we'll once again be enjoying all the benefits of Masters Swimming!

# Dawn Musselman Award

PNA is happy to announce that Blue Wave Aquatics member Steve Freeborn has been recognized as the Dawn Musselman Inspirational Swimmer for 2020.

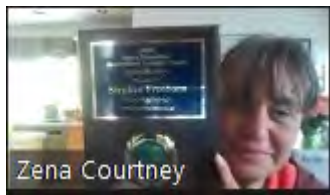
**Freeborn has served on BWAQ's Board for many years and as President since 2017.** He previously served as PNA President from 1991-1993 and has taken on administrative duties for major meets such as the 1992 and 2001 USMS Summer Nationals, 1997 and 2007 USMS Spring Nationals (as Assistant Meet Director for the latter), and as Meet Director for the 2003 U.S. Open Championships.



Additionally, Freeborn has served as Meet Director for the PNA Masters SCY Championships since 1991, where most of the members know him as a frequent announcer for that meet.

Freeborn was not able to swim for several months after an injury suffered at a 2017 open water swim event, **but despite being absent from the water, "he is still a presence on the team," wrote teammate and nominator Kaycie Wood.** "I met Steve at the pool but have gotten to know him more when I joined the BWAQ board.

Steve volunteers numerous hours helping ensure things are well managed and deadlines met.



*PNA Board member Steve Peterson and Board President Sally Dillon "crashed" a 6/28 BWAQ Zoom meeting to present the Dawn Musselman Inspirational Award to Steve Freeborn while BWAQ teammate Zena Courtney holds the award.*

**"Even away from the pool he continues to work tirelessly.** He is an inspiration and encourages swimmers often, whether it is a hard workout, competition, or even some of the younger ones in **career hunting. Steve is a host of information."**

Freeborn is also one of the founders of [Ashley House](#), a non-profit organization that provides community-based care for medically complex and fragile kids in Washington.

**"Steve gives at the pool, works hard at the office, and gives back to the community," Wood noted.**

## PNA Calendar

*No PNA events currently scheduled.*

[Search USMS Calendar of Events](#)

# Board Meeting Highlights

May 9, 2020  
Via Zoom

- PNA submitted a bid to host the 2022 Spring Nationals with the understanding this might need to be changed to 2023 due to meet cancellations this year.
- The USMS National Convention will be a virtual convention with more details to come out this summer.
- YTD through 4/30/20: Total income \$19,354, net income \$10,267. Bank accounts: \$12,427 checking, \$57,300 savings.
- All indoor meets for the summer have been canceled.
- All open water swims have been canceled excepted for the Aly Fell Memorial Swim in August. (*Editor's note: Aly Fell Memorial Swim has since been canceled.*)
- USMS has made a proposal to offer a \$60 Unified Fee for anyone who registers at this time. Their registration would be good through 2021. The Board voted to support this proposal.
- There are several Board positions that will be coming open in 2021. Parties interested in joining the PNA Board or learning about these positions should contact President Sally Dillon at [salswmr@comcast.net](mailto:salswmr@comcast.net).

## Upcoming meetings:

July 12 (Sunday) - 10:00-11:30am conference call  
Sept 20 (Sunday) - 7:30-9pm conference call  
Nov 7 (Saturday) - Sally Dillon's home, Issaquah

## PNA Voting Board Members

President - Sally Dillon  
Vice President - Linda Chapman  
Secretary - Jay Pearson  
Treasurer - Arni Litt  
At-Large Director - Kathy Casey  
At-Large Director - Todd Doherty  
Bylaws - Hugh Moore  
Meets - Linda Chapman  
Membership - Stephanie Hiebert  
Open Water - Jim Davidson  
Appointed Director - Bob DeWard  
Appointed Director - Maddie Sibilia  
Club Director - Kim Boggs  
Club Director - Doug Jelen  
Club/Coach Coordinator - Steve Peterson

## Coordinators/ Standing Committees

Awards - Kerry Ness  
Coaches – Kathleen Brooks  
Fitness/Clinics – Wade Praeger  
Newsletter - Lucianne Pugh  
Officiating - David Baer  
Postal - Sally Dillon  
Records/Top Ten - Doug Jelen  
Social Media - Isaac Contreras Sandoval  
Webmaster - Steve Peterson



Follow PNA on  
Facebook

# Pandemic Swimming - SVMS

by Shannon Singer, Skagit Valley Masters Swimming

I lasted precisely one day. My last swim at our YMCA was Monday, March 16th. Schools closed on March 17th and our Y follows the school district with closures. By Tuesday evening, as I was pacing the living room and musing about using our retirement money to finance the Endless Pool I've always dreamed of, my sweet husband gently suggested we find a way to get me in the lakes early this year.

Of course I know that his "Aren't you swimming today?" is really code for "Please go swim off your grumpiness so the cats and I can have some peace."

On the 18th he offered to drive me up to Lake Whatcom and be shore support for my swim. I think he was desperate - I really am a much nicer human being when I can swim regularly! And by regularly I mean 8-10 times a week. Or better yet, just leave me in the water. (I'm a Pisces - I'm SUPPOSED to be in water!)

But evidently I do have my limits because even in a full wetsuit, 46-degree water was just a smidge chilly! I was in for 15 seconds. About eight strokes.

But you know what? It was the best part of my day!

I knew I'd be back. Open water swimmers are an odd breed. The lakes, and rivers, and seas - they speak our language. They call to us!

My edginess was exacerbated by a long-range goal I start training for every January. In the January 2020 issue of *The WetSet*, Tom Walker wrote a piece about a nutty collection of assorted knuckleheads who annually attempt to swim around Mercer Island. I'm one of those knuckleheads! And my training had been going swimmingly, so to speak, up until mid-March. Nothing like knowing you have a 13+ mile swim planned in

*(Continued on page 5)*



*Heather Young, Michelle Frye, Becky Graves,  
& Shannon Singer*



*Belinda Rotten, Annie Green, Jane Vilders, & Becky Graves brave the cold water*

## Pandemic Swimming - CG Sports Mgmt Masters



*Reported by Cejih Yung*

With pools closed, CG Sports Management Masters has managed to pivot their water time by doing open water training sessions in Green Lake on a weekly basis. This was pioneered by PNA record holders Trever Gray and Chris Conroy. Gray and Conroy were occasionally accompanied by teammates Ian Keane and Mats Nygren.

Gray and Conroy assumed a Lewis and Clark style attitude of "always training" and began swimming a few hundred yards to start and eventually moving up to a full loop of Green Lake. Recently, they accomplished a new milestone of 3 full laps (roughly 11,000 meters!) around Green Lake. Not too bad for two sprinters!

Like the rest of the LMSC, CG Sports Management Masters is anxiously looking forward to a safe return to the pool deck and that endorphin rush of the smell of chlorine.

*Trever Gray & Chris Conroy*

## Pandemic Swimming - SVMS (cont)

*(Continued from page 4)*

five months to make you a wee bit nervous when your pools shut down indefinitely.

One week and three Amazon deliveries later (neoprene hood, mittens, and booties) and I was back at it. This time it was Lake Samish and it was MUCH warmer. Almost 50 degrees! By Easter, the lake was up to 52 and I'd found a partner in crime! Fellow SVMS teammate Annie Greene took the plunge with me.

And since then we've been slowly drawing in the rest of our open water swimming teammates. You can find us most weekday evenings and weekend mornings up at Lake Padden in Bellingham. As of this writing the lake is a balmy 63 degrees. If you live north and are looking for a laid back group to swim with, check out our SVMS Facebook Page and "**Just keep swimming!**"

# Pandemic Swimming - Bernardo's

By Chad Hagedorn, Downtown Tacoma Y Coach

In March 2020, COVID-19 hit the scene. And as it did for many others, it caused havoc in my personal life - and in **my swim program**. **The Bernardo's All Stars** have quietly grown into a comprehensive and respected program here in Tacoma, and as a team we were all looking forward to the spring and summer season. PNA Champs, the Portland Bridge Swim, and the Swim Defiance Vashon to Owens Beach Swim were all big team goals! But before we knew it, we lost use of the pool and just about every open water event planned for the summer was canceled. My Tampa Bay Marathon Swim was rescheduled.

I mourned for a couple weeks in self-pity. But rather than accept defeat, I decided to keep pushing on! I recognized we could still swim in pre-spring cold lakes and the chilly Salish Sea. And, we could do our own swim events, too! Why not?

The first week of April we made our way to Jack Hyde Park off Commencement Bay in Old Town Tacoma. Only three of us showed up. Our team **members aren't** strangers to open water swimming, but 45-degree water was new. I think we swam about 30-45 minutes that day before the cold got to us.

We continued to meet there three times a week, always acclimating and adding a little more time in the chilly water. What was interesting is each time we came out to swim, we added another swimmer or two - first from our team and then folks from other places, too. Word was getting around and people **I didn't even know** started showing up to our swims. We have added new U.S. Masters members to PSM and have folks regularly coming from as far as Gig Harbor, Silverdale, Olympia, South Seattle, and more.

**As we've grown, we've needed to make adjustments to accommodate more people while** keeping COVID-19 safety guidelines in mind. **We've** added days and created multiple workout groups. We now have swims every day of the week. Mondays and Fridays we have groups at both American Lake in Lakewood and Jack Hyde Park from 4:30-6:30pm. The rest of the days we all meet at American Lake. Saturdays and Sundays we swim at 11am.

*(Continued on page 7)*



*At Jack Hyde off Ruston Way - Commencement Bay*

## Pandemic Swimming - Bernardo's (cont)

(Continued from page 6)



Chad Hagedorn

We've also added a running group and an open water workshop, which both meet once a week on Sundays before the regular Sunday swim. In addition, we've planned a six-mile lake swim in July and a Commencement Bay area swim in August.

Our program has actually grown in numbers through our COVID-19 experience. Things have taken on a life of their own. It's been great meeting new people, making our team more known and accessible, and figuring out creative ways to keep our swim community healthy and moving forward until pools open back up (someday!).

It's been amazing to see how much the local community has come together in such a positive way during challenging times. Everyone has been so supportive of each other! These are crazy days and COVID-19 hasn't been fun for anyone, but I truly believe community and the health benefits of swimming are

powerful tools for getting through these stressful times. It's been a joy for me to be a part of this display of resilience and I believe that the challenge we've been faced with has opened new doors for a lot of swimmers!

## Pandemic Swimming - Other info

The Centralia Community Pool opened to swimmers June 13. The facility is requiring reservations and the limit is six people, one per lane. Reservation slots are for 45 minutes, allowing 15 minutes for cleaning between each swimmer.

Snohomish Aquatic Masters resumed swimming at the Snohomish Aquatic Center on June 15. They resumed their normal practice schedule with two swimmers per lane starting at opposite ends. Lap swimming is open with one swimmer per lane; swimmers can reserve a lane for one hour. SAM swimmers were very happy to be back in the water and took the safety precautions seriously. The coaches are adjusting to working both ends of the pool and trying to be loud enough through their masks so that everyone can hear them.

Lake Washington Masters started workouts on May 18, with two swimmers per lane starting at opposite ends of the pool. They've increased the time slots for Masters during the week and on weekends. LWM is associated with WAVE Aquatics, and they operate the Juanita Pool in Kirkland.

# Swimmer Spotlight

An Invitation to Inspire  
 The Story of a Higher Calling  
 An Interview with Bill Brenner, Chief Operating Officer of USMS.  
**With Tom Walker of TWIM**

Inspiration. Passion. Joy. These are expressions of the Light and Spirit that live within all of us. These are the rays of the inextinguishable desire that has called us to our vocation as swimmers, that has summoned us to this mighty brotherhood of champions.

We are friends, we are teammates, and we are family.

We are United States Masters Swimmers!

It is inspiration, above all, that has fueled my own journey as USMS swimmer. It is the inspiration that comes from all the spectacular individuals I have met along the way. Coaches, swimmers, teammates.

**Once such individual is “Coach” Bill Brenner, Chief Operating Officer of USMS.**



I first met Coach Brenner early one fine morning in 2018 in lovely Portland, Oregon. He stood in the hallway **and welcomed me to the Masters Levels 1 and 2 Coaches’ Certification Class**, ushering me from an early hour mental fog into the classroom with that signature grin of his and a friendly wave of hand.

**It was there that I also met the legendary Mel Goldstein, whose favorite expression seemed to be “We are in the swimming business.” He also offered other gems like “It’s not the yards you swim, but what you do with the yards.”**

The two of them proved to be a hilarious aquatic comedy team but dead serious about the art of coaching and about their belief in Masters swimming as a way of life that infuses the whole person.

They left me with a deeper appreciation of what it is to do this well and how to go about doing it.

That next morning, my classmates and I all awoke as real Masters Coaches, decked out in our bright yellow **“On Deck Coach”** t-shirts, and helped Coach Brenner conduct a USMS 4-stroke swim clinic for 15 eager and attentive swimmers.

We gallant neophytes all ran diligently up and down the deck, offering hurried snippets of advice to swimmers in each lane, eager to do well in our first day on the job and to look good for the Boss!

*(Continued on page 9)*



## Swimmer Spotlight (cont)

(Continued from page 8)

It was then, as I watched this clinic unfold like clockwork under his leadership, that I vividly remember being struck by the enormous positive energy of this man, Bill Brenner. He seemed to radiate a belief and a conviction of purpose that were truly inspirational.

Indeed, at this out-of-the-way pool that morning in Portland he seemed to be the living, breathing embodiment of who it is we are as Masters Swimmers and to what it is that we must ever aspire to be.

TW: How and when did you become involved in USMS?

BB: I grew up and raised my family in Chapel Hill, NC over a 40-year span. After a 30-year hiatus from competitive swimming, I returned to the pool and moved to Sarasota, Florida to swim with the Sarasota Sharks Masters program under the leadership of head coach Rick Walker. I was retired at the time and searched the country to find a place to train. I met Rick at a swim meet in St. Petersburg, Florida and knew he was the right coach for the goals I had within swimming. So, I moved to Sarasota to train with Rick.

Within a few months, knowing my swim coaching background, Rick asked me to coach a new group of Masters Swimmers in the evenings. This schedule worked well as I swam in the mornings and did my drylands before lunch. A midday nap to recover was built into my routine before heading to the pool to coach. Soon, I became our club representative to the Florida LMSC, volunteered to be the LMSC top ten coordinator, and was selected to become a delegate to the USMS annual meeting. I was selected to serve on the national Coaches Committee and the Championship Committee.

***“Pools will reopen. I have not heard one peep or read one article that proclaimed the cancellation of the sport of swimming.”***  
***USMS COO Bill Brenner***



***Brenner with BAM coach April Cheadle***

The relatively new USMS national office relocated to Sarasota and I quickly became friends with the Executive Director, Rob Butcher. We often swam together and during one practice Rob asked me if I would ever consider going back to work fulltime. I told him the only two reasons I would go back to full time work was if one of my four children started a business and asked for my help or if I was offered a position in a business that I had a passion for. A year later in 2011 the position of Club and Coach Services Director was advertised. I applied, interviewed, and was offered the position.

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## Swimmer Spotlight (cont)

*(Continued from page 9)*

I've been blessed that the position has let me share my passion for swimming and our organization with thousands of coaches, swimmers, volunteers and industry leaders.

TW: So, Coach Brenner, what do you most especially enjoy about your role in USMS?

BB: I enjoy the interaction with other like-minded adults who have a love for the water.

TW: How has Masters Swimming transformed your life?

BB: The sport has kept me healthy - physically and mentally. I am a goal-oriented individual. I set and reset goals daily. I write them down. It helps me focus and channels my energy in positive directions.

TW: What do you think it is that USMS provides to its members everywhere? What is the Magic Ingredient?

BB: Family. We are one big group of adults who share something especially important in our lives together - the love of the water and the sport of swimming. I meet people every day. No one that identifies as a swimmer is a stranger. There is a common bond that we share that makes us new best friends from the moment we find out we have swimming in common.

TW: How would you define the spirit of USMS?

BB: Uplifting. Whether you are a world record holder or an adult that just learned to swim, we celebrate each **other's accomplishments and share the joy we find within ourselves and others.**

TW: What keeps you coming back? What moves you?

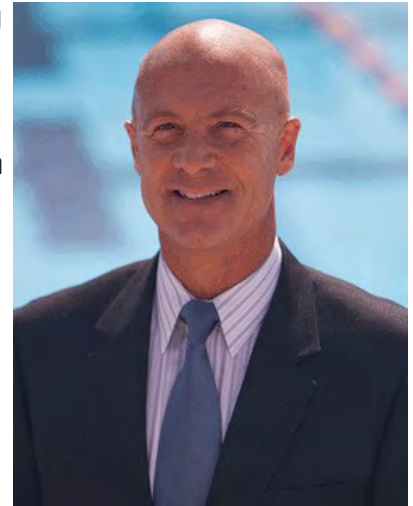
BB: Watching people have their **"Aha!"** moments, seeing their smile and feeling their sense of self-worth and self-esteem when overcoming obstacles and meeting new challenges. Being able to share the experience is pure happiness to me.

TW: Where do you think we are today and what is your vision for the future of USMS?

BB: Today is so different from the beginning of the year. We are living under duress from the COVID-19 **pandemic and our lifestyles have been abruptly changed. What hasn't changed is our love of swimming, having our coach on deck motivating us with his or her unique style and our swim family that we share a lane, laugh, and cold beverage with frequently.** At heart, we are a social group with a swimming problem. I hope that never changes. The future of Masters Swimming rests on the shoulders of our members. Their participation in our **practices, swim meets and open water events "drive the bus."**

**We need more "buses" if we want to grow. Those buses are built by the backbone of our organization, our Masters coaches.** The future is bright for USMS if we continue to believe that we need to foster relationships with aquatic facilities, educate our salesforce and ambassadors of our organization - coaches – and provide

*(Continued on page 11)*



*From the USMS website*

## Swimmer Spotlight (cont)

(Continued from page 10)

valued benefits to our membership. Without the pool we have no club, without the club we have no need for a coach **and without the coach we're just a bunch of lap swimmers at best.**

TW: What is your message to us during this Covid-19 pandemic, when almost every pool in America remains closed?

BB: Pools will reopen. I have not heard one peep or read one article that proclaimed the cancellation of the sport of **swimming. Swimmers are resilient and will return to the water when it's safe and guidelines permit. If your program** needs help, financial or otherwise to remain in operation, reach out to me. No registered USMS program in the country should face extinction. Not on my watch. Together we can solve problems and overcome obstacles.

TW: What do you do for Kicks when you're not being an Aquatic Maniac?

BB: **I've been blessed with an amazing family that fuels my fire. My wife and I are high school sweethearts, married for 38 years and together for 43. We have four children, seven grandchildren - all age five or under - with another one due in September. My free time is spent as an age group triathlon coach. I've taught or am teaching each of my grandkids to walk/run, bike and of course SWIM! Plus, all the ball sports.**

TW: Any parting thoughts?

BB: There is no higher calling than giving service to others. Giving others the sense of self-worth and esteem has been more rewarding than all the gold medals, world records and top- ten finishes. Making someone smile, laugh and feel good about themselves is contagious.

**It's the gift that keeps on giving.**

## Seeking old issues of *The WetSet!*

By Sally Dillon

**The WetSet has been the LSMC's official newsletter since the early 1970s and it wasn't until 2008 that we started using an electronic version. PNA Historian Walt Reid is in the process of archiving copies of *The WetSet* on PNA's website, but sadly, PNA's former long-time Historian Tom Foley passed away about five years ago and the boxes of newsletters and scrapbooks may be lost to us.**

**I am hoping some of our members have been "pack rats" and may have old newsletters stuffed in a box somewhere. If you are one of those members, please consider donating your old issues to PNA so we can scan and post them on the website. You would be doing PNA a huge service! Issues from 1975 and 1977-1982 are particularly needed.**

Go to: <https://www.swimpna.org/PNA/wet-set/> to compare what you have to the issues that are missing. Please email [walt.reid@comcast.net](mailto:walt.reid@comcast.net) if you have issues to donate.

Questions? Feel free to contact me at [salswmr@comcast.net](mailto:salswmr@comcast.net).

## Saloutos featured in Kitsap Sun

Bainbridge Aquatic Masters swimmer Pete Saloutos was recently featured in the Kitsap Sun in an article headlined [Arts During COVID-19: Still getting the shots.](#)

Saloutos is a Bainbridge Island-based photographer who has been in the **commercial photography business for 55 years.** He's currently working on a new edition of a fundraising calendar he does for Seattle Cancer Care Alliance and will be dedicating the issue to his wife Aleta, a cancer survivor.

Saloutos is also passionate about Masters swimming and has been participating since the mid-70's, **originally in Los Angeles.** He has been a member of Bainbridge Aquatic Masters (BAM) for about 20 years.

With pools closed, Saloutos is concentrating on open water swimming at Wildcat Lake, three times per week. "That's my new church," he quipped.

You can check out his photography at <http://www.petesaloutos.com/>.



## A look back through PNA history.....

### SUMMER NEWS

THE LONG COURSE REGIONALS MEET at COLMAN drew 70 participants, about average summer attendance. There were a good many Oregon entries, and some Inland Empire entries.

#### POINTS

PNA 1033

Oregon 463

I.E. 127 (6 entries)

Rick Colella made his first appearance in Masters' and on Sunday gave participants a view of his cherished bronze medal from the 1976 Olympic Games!

A good meet and the rains came just as it finished up on Sunday.

\* \* KEYS LOST at Colman Meet. If you came home with an unrecognizable set of keys, PLEASE call Tom Foley or Gary Ladd IMPORTANT  
937-5585 932-4850

*From the September 1976 issue of The WetSet*