



## CONTENTS

- 1—Tom Walker
- 3—President's Report
- 3—USMS Virtual Events
- 4—Fall Kick-Off & BAMFest meets
- 6—NOWSA Swims
- 7—Board Meeting Highlights
- 8—Lake Chelan Swim
- 9—New Members
- 10—SPLASHForward Update
- 12—Swim Calendar

## Tribute to Tom Walker

*By Carl Haynie and Dan Underbrink of TWIM*

We lost a giant in Pacific Northwest Swimming this week.

Tom was the inspiration behind TWIM, Team Walker International Masters, after he showed up one day to an event in 2014 wearing a t-shirt that read "TEAM WALKER | Lifetime Member". Back in the day, Betsey Kassen and Carl Haynie fell in love with that shirt and the rest is, as they say, history.

Tom was a true polymath, a multi-talented and multi-faceted soul, a Renaissance Man if you will, who learned to read Greek, play multiple instruments, and take in and partake in all forms of history and art. Heck, Carl Haynie even got him into birding. All the while he exuded a joy-filled spirit propelled by a wonderful humor, writing prowess, and a deep faith in a higher being.

Tom loved TWIM, and he would never miss an opportunity to cheer on his teammates prior to an event:

***"Once again the Hour is upon us. Time to live out our Credo, which is to get up on the blocks at every opportunity and give it our all, for ourselves and for our teammates.***

***"In keeping with sacred tradition, I have lit the Victory Torch high atop TWIM Tower and started the Ceremonial Meet Clock.***



*Tom Walker 1947-2024*

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# Tribute to Tom Walker (cont)

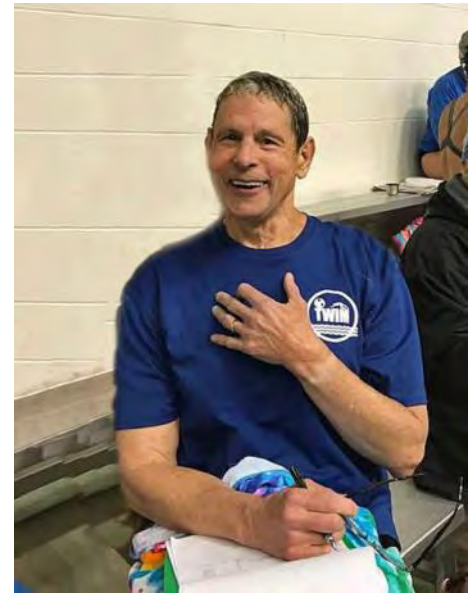
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***“For it is in this very act, the summoning up of all within to step up upon these blocks, that our most enduring Victory lies.***

***“Rally around the Old Blue and White!”***

TWIM was very important to Tom. He was very excited about what we have accomplished so far, and he often expressed how pleased he was with how everyone stepped up and took such an active role in TWIM.

Godspeed in that great pool in the sky, my friend.



Pictures courtesy of [TWIM](#).

Also see the many heartfelt comments on [this Facebook post](#).



# President's Message

*By Sally Dillon, PNA President*

Loss of a valuable member

I am saddened to hear of Tom Walker's passing; I just learned about it while "proof reading" this issue. Tom's been a fixture on the pool deck for more years than I can count and I'm sure we all have enjoyed the interviews he has shared in *The WetSet*. My sincerest condolences to Tom's "TWIM family" and his many other close friends in USMS.

PNA Service

At the PNA board's November meeting, we will set the stage for next year's election of officers by forming a nominating committee. The committee members will be asked to provide a slate of officers for the election. There are six elected positions and nine appointed positions. [Click here](#) for a list of the current board members. If you'd like to join the PNA board and help guide the organization over the next few years, please let me know with an email to [president@swimpna.org](mailto:president@swimpna.org). We'd love to have new members.

Nationals 2025 update!

The organizing committee held its first meeting in November. We will meet online via Microsoft Teams monthly and it's not too late to join the committee. If you'd like to get involved, please contact me for more details.

USMS Registration - 2025

For the second year in a row, PNA paid the USMS registrations for clubs and workout groups with five or more members. In addition to helping our teams financially, this ensures that the teams are registered when their members begin renewing for 2025. Individual registration opened on November 1.

## USMS Virtual Championships

Congratulations to PSM Swimmers Michelle McRae (49) and Johnny Van Velthuyzen (45), who placed in the top three of their age groups in this year's USMS 5K Virtual National Championship. Michelle took 2nd place with a time of 1:19:03.50 and Johnny took 3rd place with a time of 1:12:53.97. Both swimmers took advantage of PNA's pool rental for the event at WKCAC in July.

The final USMS Virtual Championship for 2024 is the 3000/6000 event, which is being held through November 15. Go to [this link](#) to get more information about these events.

It's time to [renew your annual USMS membership!](#)



# TACM Fall Kick-Off & BAMFest!

Two Fall Meets In Contrast: Anacortes v. Bainbridge Island

By Steve Peterson

It was unusual – certainly within recent memory – having two local PNA meets in quick succession. And with so many contrasts between them. The Anacortes Thunderbirds held their *Fall Kick-Off* meet on September 29 followed by the **Bainbridge Aquatic Masters' BAMFest** on October 6. Just a week apart, these **were TACM's first and BAM's twenty-first** event in the fall. (Had TWIM held their proposed Sand Point Country Club meet on September 22, *three* meets would have occurred in a two-week span.)

The *Fall Kick-Off*, on the north end of Fidalgo Island, was SCM while *BAMFest*, middle of Bainbridge Island, was SCY. The *Fall Kick-Off* offered a full complement of 23 events, with 6 relays and 17 individual races from 50s to the 800 Free; *BAMFest* featured its traditional "high school" format of 18 events, with 6 relays and 12 individual races from the 50s to the 500 Free. The greatest difference, though, was in the number of entrants: 33 for the inaugural *Fall Kick-Off* versus 147 for the well-established *BAMFest* (a new record!).

Factors contributing to the *Fall Kick-Off's* low turnout may include its September inaugural appearance with *BAMFest* following so closely behind. (Meet Director Jenny Claridge says TACM still plans to hold its traditional *March Madness* SCY meet next March). Or perhaps the travel distance to Anacortes for most PNA members? Or preference for



Daughter Hailey with Fall Kick-Off Meet Director Jenny Claridge

yards versus meters? But those who attended either meet all enjoyed the camaraderie of well-run Masters competitions by these two veteran meet hosts.

The *Fall Kick-Off's* swimmers represented six clubs, including Oregon, Inland Northwest, and Canada's Dolphins and



Anacortes Downtown Arch

(Continued on page 5)

## TACM Fall Kick-Off & BAMFest! (cont)

*(Continued from page 4)*

English Bay clubs, in addition to nine PSM workout groups. Three valiant competitors completed *six* individual events over the two-hour meet span: Wendy Hoffman, Jacqueline Raetz, and Miguel Oliveras! Many thanks to Meet Director Jenny Claridge, her staff, the TAC Masters and age group team and Anacortes High School girls team for their support. And to officials Morris Arthur, Laurie Bergvall, Heather Brennan, Dick Chapman, Steve Ciatti, Izumi Hoehn, and Leslie Tysseling for their donated time and expertise.

*BAMFest's* swimmers came from seven LMSCs including PNA (with 11 PSM workout groups), Inland Northwest, Oregon, Minnesota, Pacific, Southern Pacific, and Utah. Seasoned Meet Director Tamara Tulou and volunteer coordinator Kathleen Stearns brought together many volunteers to handle timing, the clerk of course and hospitality tables, and awards (labels and ribbons). Among the 21 new swimmers to pick up their first-meet goody bags were Erin and Ethan Lyons of Silverdale. Many thanks, too, to meet officials Carey Cox, Travis Crawford, Kay DuPont, Yumiko Inoue, Julee Longridge, Dave Rubie, and Bernadette Witty for their long day working over 100 heats!



*End of the Mixed Medley Relay*

Results for swimmers in both meets can be found on the [PNA website](#) and on Meet Mobile (search for "TACM Fall Kick-Off SCM" and "BAMFest 2024").



*The BAM hospitality table*



# NOWSA 2024

## PNA Masters Swimmers achieve in open water during NOWSA's 2024 season

By Heidi Skrzypek

Among our community of Masters swimmers is a rare lot that dares to shed the neoprene gear and swim long distances in the brisk Puget Sound and our local lakes. The 2024 season saw some exciting marathon swims from individuals and from a first-of-its-kind relay on a new route.

NOWSA, the Northwest Open Water Swimming Association, is the regional sanctioning body for these meticulously planned, supported, and observed marathon swims.



These 2024 accomplishments—all by women--included:

- Stage 1 Lighthouse Series - Admiralty Inlet, Marrowstone Point to the Point No Point lighthouse, swum south (15 miles): Wendy Van de Sompele (PSM), 4:48:26, July 6.
- Stage 2 Lighthouse Series – North Central Basin, Point No Point to West Point lighthouse, swum south (17.8 miles): Emma Gaulke-Janowski (UC36), 9:45:41, Sept. 14. Gaulke-Janowski is the first swimmer to christen this route.
- Stage 3 Lighthouse Series – Elliott Bay, West Point to Alki Light, swum north (6 miles): Wendy Van de Sompele (PSM), 2:45:10, Aug. 23. Van de Sompele forged the way as the first swimmer to complete this route.
- Stage 5 Lighthouse Series – **Poverty Bay, Point Robinson to Brown's Point, swum south (6.6 miles): Alison Peterson (PSM-GLAD), 6:47:20, July 30.**
- Bainbridge Island Circumnavigation (25.5 miles), swum anticlockwise: Stephanie Zimmerman (PSM-HMST), 14:42:08, Sept. 2.
- The Bert Thomas Swim (18.8 miles), swum north from Old Town Dock in Tacoma to Lincoln Park in West Seattle: Chelsea Lee (PSM), 9:03:35, Aug. 21.
- The Blake Island Boomerang (10.5 miles), which circumnavigates Blake Island State Park, starting and ending at Alki Point. The Salish Sirens relay team inaugurated this new route in a time of 6:28:01 on Aug. 25. Swimmers included Guila Muir (PSM), Becky Smith (PSM-HMST), Emily White, Carol Horowitz (PSM-ORCA), Shae DeWald and Melissa Kegler (PSM).

Congratulations to these resilient, victorious swimmers!

"NOWSA had a fantastic season with diverse swims across the Puget Sound, including first swims of three routes (Emma's Lighthouse 2, Wendy's Lighthouse 3, and the Salish Sirens' Blake Island Boomerang), and the longest duration swim we have sanctioned," said Stephanie Zimmerman, NOWSA vice president, whose 14:42 circumnavigation of Bainbridge Island is the association's endurance record-setter to date. "Next year is our 10th season, and we're looking forward to more inspiring swimming!"

*(Continued on page 7)*



## NOWSA 2024 (cont)

(Continued from page 6)

For those moving their personal goalposts to complement their Masters swimming with open water marathon swim pursuits, guided local group swims of up to 8k are offered by Guila Muir of [Say Yes to Life Swims](#), specializing in open water swimming adventures (fee-based). Scalable swim training plans from local swim coaches provide additional **pathways**. **Don't forget to check the geographically rotating marathon and ultramarathon national events (along with other open water info!)** published on the [USMS website](#).

To *dip a toe* in the company of other cold-water swimmers, one can start by visiting the Facebook pages of North Sound Swimmers, Western Washington Open Water Swimmers, and Seattle Open Water Swimmers to find unsupervised meetups. Many local swimmers have started their marathon swimming pursuits by first casually joining up with the Notorious Alki Swimmers. There, little ideas often mushroom into big dreams and months - if not years - of practice ensue, this writer included.

Check out the established routes and the full roster of sanctioned swims with results on the [NOWSA website](#). Have a dream route on your mind? NOWSA can help evaluate feasibility and planning details.

## Board Meeting Highlights

A list of current PNA Board members can be found [at this link](#). September 9 Board meeting highlights:

- Financials: Bank account balances as of 8/31/24: Checking \$55,382, Savings \$58,327, total: \$113,709. Net revenue July – August: \$2,859. Net revenue YTD: \$8,515.
- Membership: Record pace at 4% ahead of 2023 with 1,797 (989 women, 808 men).
- Meets: The July LCM meet had a better-than-budgeted loss of \$1,779. KCAC canceled the PSM SCM and NW Zone Champs (Nov. 23-24) for lack of lifeguards. The board approved PNA Champs for April 13-14. The Washington State Senior Games plans to move their July meet from Briggs Y to Evergreen State next year.
- Clinics: The board will provide 50% tuition assistance to PNA members for a 2025 USMS multilevel coaching clinic (Level 2, Level 3, a Coach Clinic course and ALTS).
- 2025 Summer Nationals update: A dozen members have volunteered as the Organizing Committee, which plans a kickoff meeting in early October. Meet Director Steve Freeborn met with National Office staff during 2024 Summer Nationals in Mission Viejo.
- Six members will attend the USMS Volunteer Relay, October 18-19, in Houston. The theme is Community Development. Diana Hermanson will attend the National Coaches Clinic concurrently.
- The board agreed to fund Club and Workout Group 2025 registration fees. The board also approved several Standing Policy revisions clarifying Wiggin Fund uses, publicity, application form, and annual reporting.
- **SPLASHForward: The board agreed to a \$10K Founder's Circle pledge toward a new aquatics complex in Bellevue.**
- **Next Meeting: Sunday, November 3, 1:00 pm, at Sally Dillon's and via Teams teleconference.**

# Lake Chelan Swim

By Steve Peterson

The annual Lake Chelan Swim ([www.lakechelanswim.com](http://www.lakechelanswim.com)) always takes place the first Saturday after Labor Day. The 14th running of this 1.5-mile swim was on September 7. The swim starts at Willow Point Park and ends at Manson Bay Park on the north shore of Lake Chelan. It's not USMS recognized or sanctioned but is "a fun event suitable for the whole family" that raises funds to subsidize free swim lessons for all ages all summer at Manson Bay Park.



*The route from Willow Point to Manson Bay Park*

During the pre-event safety briefing, event founder and director Viki Downey noted that this year's youngest swimmer was 12, just under the minimum age, but would be allowed to swim since both her parents were swimming. And when she stated, "Our oldest swimmer is 75" I just had to speak up: "Well, I just turned 78!" (And I'll add that I finished 27th of the 103 finishers in 50:27; fastest swimmer was 36:21.) Perennial PNA participant Steve Freeborn couldn't attend this year, but like last year, our dozen BERN workout group members constituted 10% of those who swam!

BERN's Friday evening putt-putt golf tournament and Saturday afternoon barbeque are becoming tradition. Come along for a weekend stay in Lake Chelan for next year's swim, September 6!



*The Bernardo's All Stars contingent at the 2024 Lake Chelan Swim fundraiser.*



## New PNA Members!

Ambrozic, Erin	Falkner, Keri	Maclane, Karl	Rhoads, Tasha
Andrews, Grace	Faskhutdinov, Almaz	Maksyutov, Zaki	Santo, Luisa
Azelby, Colleen	Fenster, Leigh	Mannschreck, Kristin	Scott, John
Badion, Kelsey	Fernandes, Will	Mckendry, Amy	Seeley, Gwen
Berry, Chris	Fillmore, Anne	Miller, Kimberley	Sida, Ricardo
Bigglestone, Ben	Gose, Rebecca	Miller, Sheena	Smith, Catherine
Bishop-Boros, Joseph	Graves, Clark	Mirasol, Alexandra	Smith, McKaela
Blair, Kevin	Gryboski, Marlo	Murray, Erin	Speidel, Paula
Boen, Adam	Hale, Ruby	Naddell, Brandon	Spinelli, Terri
Bugos, Grace	Hendren, Adam	Osawa Bringman, Chie	St Hilaire, Abby
Burriss, Joseph	Hernandez, Marina	Oviatt, Annie	Steffen, Kelly
Chang, Laura	Horton, Rachael	Patterson, Nicholas	Sutton, Alanna
Cheadle, Melissa	Jennings, Matthew	Pavluskins, Jevgenijs	Tri, Brittany
Cornelius, Katherine	Kawasaki Ueda, Kai	Pazier, Jude	Tsang, Raymond
Davis, Catharine	Kerekanich, Ashley	Pearson, Ross	Vanderheiden, Alexander
Davis, Mikayla	Kress, Lynne	Petrenko, Bohdan	Votava, Sarah
Deng, Lisa	Krishnan, Nivrithi	Phan, Rowan	Walters, Frederick
Dickey, Roma	Kumi, Petra	Pottier, Ann	Xu, Guoyue
Dickson, Brendan	Lally, Sean	Preiser, Cheris	Young, Thomas
Duke, Carly	Le, Raymond	Quaresma, Pedro	Zwilling, Friedrich
Endebrook, Nate	Lenox, Jillian	Raaf, Annelise	
Enge, Jennifer	Luong, Ivy	Rappa, Valentina	
Escudero, Tania	Lyons, Ethan	Reynolds, Tyree	

*Helpful  
links!*

[USMS club finder](#)

[USMS events calendar](#)

[USMS membership directory](#)

[USMS workout library](#)

[PNA website](#)

[Oregon Masters Swimming](#)

[Inland NW Masters Swimming](#)

[NW Open Water Swimming](#)



Follow PNA on [Facebook!](#)

# SPLASHForward Update

By Susan Pappalardo

Most of us aren't incredibly enamored with adding another year to our age unless you are keen to move up in your age group and feel "young" again. When it comes to efforts to build new public pools, each year brings us closer to being able to "open doors" and experience state of the art aquatic facilities in our lifetimes.

For the new Bellevue Aquatic Center, this year marks the securing of the site and entering the design phase. On September 17, the Bellevue City Council unanimously approved adopting the updated Master Plan for Bellevue Airfield Park which includes our new 130,000 sq-ft Bellevue Aquatic Center with five bodies of water and dry elements for fitness and community! As the City of Bellevue prepares to procure the construction team and determine the build process, we are launching an early Capital Campaign Listening Tour to gauge private funding capacity, feedback, and resources.



Thank you to our fellow Masters swimmers who showed their support at the City Council meeting and to all of you who have been with us during the past seven years!

To stay up to date, please give us a follow @splashfwd on Instagram, Facebook, or LinkedIn or [sign up for our newsletter](#).



(Continued on page 11)

## SPLASHForward Update (cont)

(Continued from page 10)

### Support Continues to Build

In September, the Pacific Northwest Association of Masters Swimmers **became a member of our Founders' Circle with a \$10,000 donation over two years** and is the second organization to do so. A portion of the funds will go toward to our HS Lifeguard Training Program. Thank you, PNA! We greatly appreciate the support on behalf of our Masters swimming community. We have active Masters swimmers committed to our mission serving on our Board, as volunteers, and as supporters. We invite you to reach out at any time to learn more and get involved.

In October, we received a \$20,000 two-year organizational capacity grant from The Norcliffe Foundation that will help us fund hiring a Development Director. If you know of someone we should be talking to, let us know. Our Every 2<sup>nd</sup>

Grader Learns to Swim Program pilot initiative was approved by The Kirkland Parks and Community Foundation *Ignite Kirkland* grant program. You can learn more and have the opportunity to help fund this program in early November when the [Ignite Kirkland](#) catalog is made available.

### After School Swim Lessons

Our eight-week after-school swim lessons for just over 50 Boys and Girls Clubs of Bellevue students in King County Housing are underway at [Samena Swim and Recreation Club](#). These are the kind of programs and partnerships we will be able to expand with new public pools.

Have you considered becoming a lifeguard or swim instructor? Our facilities and learn to swim programs continue to need both lifeguards and swim instructors. Masters swimmers can make a significant impact with only a few hours a week filling hard to fill early morning or midday hours. If you would like to become certified or re-certified to be a lifeguard or receive training to become swim instructor for youth or adults let us know at

[lifeguard@splashforward.org](mailto:lifeguard@splashforward.org). There may be an opportunity to **receive USMS Adult Swim Instructor Training in January. We'll keep you updated!**

### PNW Aquatics Regional Coalition (PARC) Update

We just love seeing this happen in the PNW! The new community pool on Lopez Island is underway. Learn more at [Friends Of Lopez Island Pool | Lopez Will Swim!](#)

*Keep swimming and supporting new public pools!*





# Swim Calendar

2024

Sep 15-Nov 15: [USMS 3000/6000 Virtual Champs](#)

Nov 1-10: [Pan Pacific Masters Games](#), Gold Coast, Australia

Nov 3: [PAC SCY Thanksgiving Splash Meet](#), Portland, OR

Nov 10: [SAM Invitational](#), Snohomish, WA

Nov 23-24: PSM/PNA SCM Champs (CANCELLED)

Dec 15: [Clark County YMCA SCY Christmas Meet](#), Vancouver, WA

2025

Jan 1-31: [USMS 1-Hour Virtual Champs](#)

Jan 25: [TEAM Eugene SCY Winter Splash Meet](#), Springfield, OR

Feb 2: Bellevue Club Mile, Bellevue, WA

Mar 8-9 [Oregon City SCH Spring Ahead Meet](#), Oregon City, OR

Apr 4-6: [Oregon Masters Association SCY Championship](#), Newberg, OR

Apr 13-14: PNA Champs, Federal Way, WA

Apr 24-27: [USMS Spring National Championship](#), San Antonio, TX

May 15-Sep 15: [USMS 5K/10K Virtual Champs](#)

May 17-18: [COMA LCM Meet and Lake Juniper Buoy Swim](#), Bend, OR

May 18: [TEAM Eugene LCM Spring Splash Meet](#), Eugene, OR

Jun 1: [Whidbey Adventure Swim](#), Langley, WA

Jun 22: [THB LCM](#), Beaverton, OR

Jul 15: [Portland Bridge Swim](#), Portland, OR

Jul 19-20: [Applegate Lake Open Water Swim](#), OR

Aug 1-3: [Cascade Lakes Swim Series](#), OR

Aug 6-10: [USMS Summer National Championship](#), Federal Way

Aug 16: Eel Lake Open Water Swim, OR

Sep 6: [Lake Chelan Swim](#), Lake Chelan, WA

Sep 15-Nov 15: [USMS 3000/6000 Virtual Champs](#)



Search USMS Calendar of Events