

# USMS NATIONAL OFFICE REPORTS

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## **Executive Director Rob Butcher**

In the interview process, I was asked what process I would use to transition into the Executive Director role. My answer indicated that my first 90-days would be dedicated to relationship development and information gathering. I'm pleased to share, that as I submit this report on August 26, 2008, I'm now at 80-days in the role and believe we've able to accomplish this goal and others. Before we look to our future, allow me a few lines to share with you the highlights on our first 80-days:

- Have met face to face with all the staff and contractors
- Have met face to face with most of the Board and Executive Committee, and those who I've not met individually have spoken with via the phone
- Secured USMS as a sponsor of the 2008 USA Swimming Olympic Trials
  - USMS was title sponsor of Rowdy Gaines AquaZone appearance on July 4th which featured a 16' x 8' USMS banner, and Rowdy wearing a USMS polo
  - USMS was presenting sponsor of the men's 100-meter backstroke
- Been in communication with all USMS sponsors, and some prospective new ones
- Been in introductory communication with potential partners such as USA Swimming, USA Triathlon, ASCAA, the YMCA, and CSCAA
- Filled an approved staff hire with Ashley Gangloff who is focused on proactive marketing and PR initiatives
- Opened a roughly 650-square foot USMS satellite office in Charlotte where myself and Ashley work
- Contributed video and article submissions for a variety of clubs and LMSC newsletters
- With the input and assistance of the Executive Committee, Board, and Finance Committee, drafted a 2009 budget that also provides a Vision and Action Plan with forward looking financial guidance through 2012

With the exception of a few staff members and contractors, USMS since inception has operated as a volunteer run organization. USMS made a decision a few years ago that it was time to hire an Executive Director and begin the transition to an administrative organization. Todd Smith, the initial ED hired made positive progress in the areas of online registration but unfortunately didn't make it a full year term, and subsequently the search began all over again. My interview process was lengthy and measured. The Board was committed to finding an Executive Director who appreciates the USMS values, and could see that the USMS we know today will be broader than the USMS we will know in 10-years.

USMS for years has been preparing for the Vision and Action Plan. We are coming off the most successful Olympics in history and swimming is at the forefront. Interest is at an all time high, and USMS stands in a position to ride and create its own waves. Financially, USMS has built a strategic reserve so we can develop our opportunity. The timing for USMS couldn't be better. I thank you for your dedication. I thank you for your support. I look forward to working with you during this Convention. My instincts tell me we will look back in 10-years and recognize the decisions we make here will have a dramatic positive effect for USMS.

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### **Controller Margaret Bayless**

On-going routine activities, which include weekly check runs, monthly payroll review, monthly bank reconciliations, monthly financial statement preparations with commentary, various analyses, and quarterly budget spending report distributions continue without exception.

During the period February through May, Clifton Gunderson LLP, USMS' external auditors, reviewed the 2007 financial records, and prepared the financial statements and tax returns. Throughout this process, various write-ups, analyses, and other requested supporting documents were presented to the auditors. The audit report was issued April 1, with no adjusting entries or management letter comments made. The 2007 tax return was completed and filed without extension. The 2007 financial statements will be available for review at convention.

Again in 2007, USMS had a small federal tax liability as a result of the generation of unrelated business income largely attributed to the new SWIMMER magazine contract, which affords USMS the opportunity to earn advertising revenue.

The 2008 budget was completed and published shortly after the 2007 Convention. Final budgets were sent to each cost center head. To date, there have been 3 over-budget requests, all of which were approved.

The preparation of the 2009 budget was coordinated by the Controller, which in the past had been done by the Finance Chair. Personalized, pre-populated (with prior year and 2008 budget data) Excel templates were sent to each individual responsible for a revenue/cost center, hopefully making the process more accurate and streamlined for all. Templates were sent out to committee chairs by May 1, were due back June 1, and a first draft USMS budget document was available by June 30.

The advent of on-line registration has increased the on-going work activity associated with the Controller position. Daily monitoring and tracking of credit card receipts, reviewing of merchant account fees, preparing monthly checks to each LMSC, and general oversight are added tasks associated with on-line registration.

### **Corporate Partner Liaison Mel Goldstein**

This past year the USMS Corporate Partner Program generated \$121,000 in revenue. Today we have 2 Gold Level Partners (TYR and Speedo), 8 Silver Medal Partners (NIKE, FINIS, Kast A Way, Adolph Kiefer, Swim Outlet.com, Bank of America, Total Immersion, and Barracuda), 2 Bronze Level Partners (Endless Pools, and Ultra Swim).

Last year the effort of the Corporate Partner Liaison was to create greater value for our Corporate Partners by including advertising in USMS Swimmer magazine as part of the Corporate Partner agreements. This year was devoted creating value for the USMS Membership. Two value-added Corporate Partners will now offer USMS membership additional value to their membership.

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Liberty Mutual Insurance Company will offer a 10% discount on Auto and Homeowners Insurance Policies to USMS Members, and Hertz Rent A Car will offer a 10% discount to USMS membership on all rented vehicles.

With the addition of the two new tradeshow displays, we are now able to accommodate more clubs and or LMSC's. This form of promotion at local recreational facilities and YMCA's continues to promote USMS and attract new members.

The Corporate Partner Liaison continued to attend the YMCA Aquatic Conference, National Park & Recreation Association National Aquatic Conference, and the American Swim Coaches Association World Clinic. These conferences and clinics continue to be a great source of exposure for USMS. A proposal to speak at the National Intramural & Sports Association on How to Develop a Masters Program for Students and Faculty is on the agenda for next year.

With the new Executive Director, Rob Butcher now on board, we are now in the process of transitioning the Corporate Partner Program to his pervue; this should be complete by the end of the year.

### **Database Administrator Esther Lyman**

The game has changed, or at least so it appears, but the backbone of the registration function is still our 52 individual registrars and as many treasurers. Drawn from all walks of life as they are, they represent obvious disparities in job experience, knowledge, and available tools.

To Tracy and me these are still our real "customers" and since accounting is still "Job One", we spend a lot of time trying to round out their computer skills and share tricks of the trade. If they think enough of their own skills and resources to even volunteer (with or without compensation) for the job, we owe them to "bring them along" so they become future resources and an important part of our institutional underpinnings. George Simon, our registration chair, has devoted literally countless hours to helping with documenting and understanding the new software, as has Leo Letendre, VP of Membership who headed up the implementation.

The game has changed; so far mostly in terms of implementing the registration and invoicing piece. A lot of work still needs to be done to link all the both upstream and downstream activities/users where the various areas overlap – notably Top Ten submission, verification and achievements' recognition, and working the one-event coverage into the mix without actually mixing them in. To the extent that the OEVTs pass through our books, the information in them can be used to verify/update other information on those swimmers and they represent a source of prospective full members (as are many of them in alternating years). The stumbling block is that most of them are from the long-distance and open water swim area and unless we can steer them to multiple opportunities for competition, they seem to have little impetus to become tied closer to USMS beyond a specific event. Some have registered for that one event some 6-8 consecutive years.

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The game has changed; we have eliminated the reporting and transmittal lag. We are running an average of 6% ahead of each month last year; hopefully that "lead" will hold up until year-end. Most of the business in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the year will be from add-ons (newbies), not renewals or "returnees". As of approx Aug 2 our registrars/treasurers had booked 43,711 members:

												Y2005
<b>Cumulative registrations by actual registration date</b>												42696
Year	End-Nov	End-Dec	End-Jan	End-Feb	End-Mar	End-Apr	End-May	End-Jun	End-Jul	End-Aug	End-Sep	End-Oct
Y2006	5878	15313	25540	29390	32351	34359	36984	39108	40587	41556	42558	43430
Y2007	6571	15593	25729	29938	32803	34674	37209	39539	41159	42229	43301	44135
Y2008	5189	16455	27397	31795	34761	37021	39080	41706	43646			

<b>Percent cumulative based on prior year</b>												
Year	End-Nov	End-Dec	End-Jan	End-Feb	End-Mar	End-Apr	End-May	End-Jun	End-Jul	End-Aug	End-Sep	End-Oct
Y2006	13.8%	35.9%	59.8%	68.8%	75.8%	80.5%	86.6%	91.6%	95.1%	97.3%	99.7%	101.7%
Y2007	15.1%	35.9%	59.2%	68.9%	75.5%	79.8%	85.7%	91.0%	94.8%	97.2%	99.7%	101.6%
Y2008	11.8%	37.3%	62.1%	72.0%	78.8%	83.9%	88.5%	94.5%	98.9%			
<i>Ahead of last year</i>		5.5%	6.5%	6.2%	6.0%	6.8%	5.0%	5.5%	6.0%			

The game has changed, but human nature has not. Instead of errors in handwriting interpretation and the "usual" typos, we now get a new kind... the dropping of a character in mid-word or a run-in of several words, making the post office OCR unable to interpret the address. Catching as many errors as possible is a critical. Any "bouncers" represent not only a fee to the USPS for the returned mail and but also the cost of a replacement magazine if requested.

The game has changed and our new executive director will be planning to change it even more. With much of the routine work in the registration area handled by the online system, we will have more time to analyze our amazing database of members over the organization's lifetime. We have much to contribute to any vendor offering products that help us swim (and dress) better. We also have a lot to contribute to USMS for understanding and expanding our membership, beginning with "where the clubs are".

The following breakdown shows where our members live (or lived) by 2-digit zip code, based on 43,711 registrations thru approx Aug 2 – approximately half live in 2-digit zip codes above 72.

ZIP2	State	% of Memb	ZIP2	State	% of Memb	ZIP2	State	% of Memb
<b>00</b>	PR	0.01%	<b>31</b>	GA	0.19%	<b>68</b>	NE	0.34%
<b>01</b>	MA	1.07%	<b>32</b>	FL	1.31%	<b>69</b>	NE	0.00%
<b>02</b>	MA	1.44%	<b>33</b>	FL	3.23%	<b>70</b>	LA	0.71%
	RI	0.27%	<b>34</b>	FL	0.95%	<b>71</b>	AR	0.01%
<b>03</b>	ME	0.02%	<b>35</b>	AL	0.26%		LA	0.16%
	NH	0.57%	<b>36</b>	AL	0.24%	<b>72</b>	AR	0.18%
<b>04</b>	ME	0.59%	<b>37</b>	TN	0.62%	<b>73</b>	OK	0.08%

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05	VT	0.27%		38	MS	0.08%		74	OK	0.14%
06	CT	0.88%			TN	0.03%		75	TX	0.90%
07	NJ	1.09%		39	MS	0.06%		76	TX	0.42%
08	NJ	0.70%		40	KY	0.98%		77	TX	1.72%
09	AE	0.00%		41	KY	0.06%		78	TX	1.49%
10	NY	2.26%		42	KY	0.12%		79	TX	0.15%
11	NY	1.60%		43	OH	0.52%		80	CO	4.58%
12	CO	0.00%		44	OH	0.98%		81	CO	0.39%
	NY	0.54%		45	OH	0.60%		82	WY	0.18%
13	NY	0.42%		46	IN	1.52%		83	ID	0.29%
14	NY	0.65%		47	IN	0.41%			WY	0.02%
15	PA	0.31%		48	MI	1.04%		84	UT	0.46%
16	PA	0.05%		49	MI	0.46%		85	AZ	1.63%
17	PA	0.12%		50	IA	0.13%		86	AZ	0.08%
18	PA	0.16%		51	IA	0.03%		87	NM	0.59%
19	DE	0.06%		52	IA	0.40%		88	NM	0.06%
	PA	0.94%		53	WI	0.96%		89	NV	0.79%
20	DC	0.79%		54	WI	0.20%		90	CA	2.32%
	MD	1.28%		55	MN	1.41%		91	CA	1.42%
	VA	0.68%		56	MN	0.07%		92	CA	4.13%
21	MD	1.50%		57	SD	0.19%		93	CA	1.77%
22	VA	2.62%		58	ND	0.05%		94	CA	11.91%
23	VA	0.79%		59	MT	0.42%		95	CA	7.66%
24	VA	0.26%		60	IL	2.91%		96	AP	0.00%
	WV	0.04%		61	IL	0.26%			CA	0.17%
25	WV	0.07%		62	IL	0.14%			HI	0.99%
26	WV	0.02%		63	MO	0.62%		97	OR	1.68%
27	NC	1.05%		64	MO	0.15%		98	WA	3.39%
28	NC	0.98%		65	MO	0.09%		99	AK	0.49%
29	SC	0.92%		66	KS	0.34%			WA	0.22%
30	GA	1.41%		67	KS	0.05%		<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	

The top 10 locations are:

94	CA	11.91%
95	CA	7.66%
80	CO	4.58%
92	CA	4.13%
98	WA	3.39%
33	FL	3.23%
60	IL	2.91%
22	VA	2.62%
90	CA	2.32%
10	NY	2.26%

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Bear in mind, of course, that this is based on the last-known location of the swimmer. At least 10% of our members change address each year, often multiple times. Interestingly, only about 4.5% register with a different LMSC than the year/time before.

### **National Office Administrator Tracy Grilli**

Since the last convention (and now for the past 12 years), I have maintained the responsibilities associated with running the USMS National Office. For those of you who are new and are not familiar, in a nutshell, I answer the phone calls, e-mails, and snail mail in addition to a number of other projects including:

- Registration – monthly reports to the Controller and LMSC's, deposits, member support and address changes
- USMS National Championships – process paper registrations and verification of members
- Publication Orders – rule books, brochures, decals, etc.
- Streamlines... from the National Office - quarterly newsletter
- Top Ten Subscriptions
- Pool and Open Water/Long Distance All American Letters & Certificates
- Pool and Open Water/Long Distance National Record Certificates
- Convention Registration Packet and Information Packet
- Club Rule Books and Certificates

I work hand and hand (figure of speech, we never see each other) with Esther Lyman, our Database Administrator (and the 52 local registrars) with the registration of our members and member clubs. And since last convention I have been very involved with the new on-line registration program (Club Assistant), working closely with George Simon, Leo Letendre, Esther and members of the Club Assistant team in making the process as user friendly as possible for our members and registrars.

Over the past year, I participated in the EC and BOD conference calls and mid-year meeting in Dallas. I am in contact some way/some form with all the members of our Board of Directors, Committee and Ad Hoc Chairs, Liaisons and Special Assignments along with officers from each LMSC.

I am very much enjoying working with our new Executive Director Rob Butcher and Executive Assistant Ashley Gangloff. I am assisting them as best I can in the education of “everything there is to know about USMS.” With the hiring of Rob and Ashley and the creation of the Charlotte Office, we are in the process of assessing and re-organizing duties, which will allow for a more efficient National Office to better service our members.

This is a very exciting time for USMS and I am really looking forward to our future. I look forward to seeing you all in Atlanta!!!

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### **National Publication Editor Bill Volckening**

If you read SWIMMER Magazine, you should have a good idea about what we've been up to this year. It's been another very busy, productive year for SWIMMER Magazine. Since the 2007 convention, we have released five issues of SWIMMER. The sixth issue is in the works and will be released in early September.

During the year, we addressed scheduling issues with our production calendar, and made some improvements with the 2009 calendar including building in more time for proofreading. Following the May/June issue, we were back on schedule thanks to the efforts of the Publications Management Committee, which started actively following the progress of production and business management.

We continued to solicit new ideas and comments from readers and members, reviewed progress, and made decisions for the upcoming year during the Annual Planning meeting in June.

The USMS National Publication Editor, publisher's staff, USMS Vice President of Member Services Mark Gill, Publications Management Committee Chair Heather Hagedorn and Vice Chair Lynn Hazlewood attended the Annual Planning meeting. Materials for the meeting, including the proposed 2009 editorial features calendar, were available for review two weeks prior to the meeting this year. Having more information available prior to the meeting resulted in a highly productive and well-organized meeting.

The Publications Management Committee continued to participate in a significant number of discussions and activities guiding the business management of SWIMMER Magazine. For more behind-the-scenes activities involving the magazine, please refer to the committee report.

Thank you to everyone who has submitted news and story ideas. Please note that deadlines published in Streamlines and elsewhere are for news, calendar listings and department content. Features are planned each year at the Annual Planning meeting in June. If you would like to submit a feature idea, please send a 250-word pitch to me at [editor@usms.org](mailto:editor@usms.org).

Thank you to everyone who contributed to another great year!

### **Webmaster / IT Director Jim Matysek**

The usms.org and usmsswimmer.com websites continue to be active places with lots of development going on throughout the year. We have managed to engage several outside contractors in order to help whittle down the long list of projects that have been requested and planned. In addition to the regular operational and maintenance tasks associated with running our web operations, we have focused our development activities on four key areas: 1) Shore up infrastructure, content, and existing services; 2) Member registration services; 3) Website personalization and members-only services; and 4) Support of the end-to-end event management

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initiatives. With a focus on these four key areas, we have a number of active projects under development.

### **Discussions and projects since the last convention:**

The major projects that have been undertaken since convention are:

1. Made significant improvements to our infrastructure for our web-based administrative tools, including integrating a new web-based editor with image upload capability into our suite of web-based administrative tools, updating our spam/abuse prevention techniques for our web form submissions, and creating a new generic display ordering tool.
2. We rolled out a new custom USMS Meet Results Database in January to replace the third-party external database we used in the past. Swimmers can view a history of their meet performances or their current in-season ranking in any event in USMS using web displays of this data. We've now loaded the database with several years worth of meet results that we had access to, and have integrated the database with online entry for nationals so that a swimmer entering online has easy access to their past meet times to use for entry times in a national championship.
3. Supported the transition of USMS registration tools from PC-based tools to the new web-based tools from ClubAssistant. Created a real time interface with ClubAssistant's tool set in order to keep our USMS web server copy of the registration data up to date.
4. Created a new administration tool suite for managing the issue content for the usmsswimmer.com website.
5. We've recently integrated an external spam firewall service into our mail processing structure in order to reduce the amount of spam getting through the filters and reduce the work load on our web servers. It has greatly improved our web server performance.
6. I've been working with the Records & Tabulations Committee to provide top ten tools for the LMSC top ten recorders to use, based on the new meet results database. Two LMSC's used these tools to create and submit their SCY reports this year and two others were used to compare submissions generated using the tools to their official submissions created using the existing tool set. We plan to roll these tools out soon to make them available to all LMSC's.
7. Work is in progress to create a replacement tool suite and display area for the online calendar of events. This is part of the end to end event management initiative. The tools will save all meet data in the central database and will allow LMSC sanctions chairs to manage their own list of events and event sanctions.
8. Efforts are also underway to create a member login mechanism on the usms.org site and provide members-only content and services there. Initially USMS members will have access to new blog tools and photo albums in the discussion forums area, as well as

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access to tools for logging their swim workouts, with the ability to submit their monthly results from there to the “Go The Distance”.

9. With the help of Nancy Ridout, Betsy Durrant and Meg Smath, we have started a program to provide a new weekly feature on our usms.org home page. These features have been well received and help to keep our home page vibrant with regular new content.