

United States Lifesaving Association

Annual Report

July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005



A nonprofit, 501(c)3, public benefit corporation.



Lifeguards for Life

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United States Lifesaving Association
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Our Organization

We are America's nonprofit, professional association of beach lifeguards and open water rescuers. We work to reduce the incidence of death and injury in the aquatic environment through public education, youth programs, national lifeguard standards, training programs, promotion of high levels of lifeguard readiness, and other means. USLA is recognized as a nonprofit, charitable organization under the laws of the United States. USLA is the United States' Full Member federation of the International Life Saving Federation.



Our President's Message



We are an all-volunteer group of lifesavers, dedicating our time to promoting professionalism in lifesaving and drowning prevention. Many important accomplishments have been achieved this year, some of which are a part of this report. I offer here but a few examples.

Our ongoing work in the Panhandle of Florida – where hazards are many and lifeguards are few – is finally paying off as a result of the work of our Southeast Region and

national leaders. In Pensacola, for example, between April 2000 and Aug. 31, 2003, there were 21 beach drowning deaths. After extensive efforts by USLA to encourage improvements in the safety network and meaningful action by the controlling governmental authority, since Aug. 31, 2003 there have been no drowning deaths. As the local newspaper reported, “During that time, there have been hundreds of rescues, indicating that while people still are getting in trouble in the water, the presence of lifeguards has made all the difference.”

Pensacola isn't the only place. In Destin, Florida, just a few years ago, there was no municipal beach patrol at all. A conscientious Mayor Craig Barker invited USLA to Destin to make recommendations. Community leaders responded to those recommendations and an equally conscientious Fire Chief “Tuffy” Dixon, with key support of his commission, developed a beach patrol where there had been none. USLA volunteers like Jim McCrady provided instruction and support.

A few years ago, it seemed as though the entire Panhandle of Florida was overseen by leaders with deaf ears to the problem of drowning. Now, much has changed, because of us; because of USLA and our committed volunteers. Untold numbers of deaths will be prevented, untold numbers will go home safe. There is much yet to be done, but we will persevere and ultimately prevail throughout the Panhandle, to the benefit of those who flock to the beaches.

Two years ago, we embarked on a partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to educate the nation about rip currents. That initiative has turned into an incredibly successful program embraced by communities throughout the nation who have benefited by public education materials. Nationally, as of September

2005, the Sea Grant College Program (an affiliate of NOAA) had produced and distributed 3,600 rip current safety signs, 5,500 posters, 6,500 table tents, 10,000 refrigerator magnets, tens of thousands of brochures, and scores of news releases. And that is only Sea Grant.

These signs are now common along the entire Florida coast and communities and organizations throughout the US have reproduced the materials themselves. The New York Times, the Today Show, Good Morning America, and a wide variety of additional media outlets have highlighted the problem of rip currents and have repeatedly featured USLA experts in their reporting. People are beginning to understand rip currents and why it is so important to swim near a lifeguard. USLA is increasingly being recognized as the authority in open-water safety.

On America's beaches, we are the shield between injury and safety. We are the shield between loss and preservation. We are the shield between death and life. We protect property, yes, but most important, we protect human beings. And the value of our efforts accrue not just to those we save. They accrue to the other human beings whom those we have protected love and need. Indeed, every accident that doesn't happen, every injury minimized, every death prevented benefits an untold network of family, friends, and others whose lives will be enriched at some future time by the person who is safeguarded by the timely intervention of a lifesaver.

As president of this amazing organization, my role is both leader and servant. I aspire to be a servant to you, the lifesavers of America, endeavoring always to implement our common goals in the interest of advancements in the lifesaving profession and in drowning prevention. I aspire also to help lead us toward those same, common goals.

I want to thank all of the hundreds of USLA volunteers, at the chapter, regional, and national levels, who have served over the last two years with such distinction. I, among many, appreciate the devotion of so many to such a glorious cause. This organization and the spirit of the founders and the hopes of the lifeguards of America rest in our hands. Let us not disappoint them. Let us always promote the nobility of lifesaving and ensure the protection of all those we watch over.

Lifesaving Aye,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Chris Brewster', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

B. Chris Brewster
President
president@usla.org

Our Membership

USLA's regular membership includes over 4,000 people currently active in open water rescue nationwide. "Open water" means the natural aquatic environment. USLA's membership also includes over 8,500 junior lifeguards participating in youth programs sponsored by lifeguard agencies throughout the United States. In addition to these members, USLA's membership includes Alumni Members (former lifeguards), Associate Members (any person wishing to affiliate with and support USLA), and Life Members (specially selected by the Board of Directors based on lifetime contributions to USLA).



Our Chapters

USLA members affiliate locally in chapters, which are normally composed of open water rescuers who work for a designated employer or employers, or who work within a designated geographic area. USLA has 120 chapters throughout the USA.



Our Regions

USLA is organized in nine regions of the United States. Each region is expected to provide leadership to the chapters within the region and to designate representatives to the United States Lifesaving Association Board of Directors. Regional contacts can be found at www.usla.org.



Our National Leadership

Executive Board

USLA's National Executive Board is elected for two year terms, in November of odd numbered years. Regularly scheduled elections take place in November 2005. An updated list and contact information can be found at: www.usla.org. As of June 30, 2005, members of the Executive Board are as follows.

B. Chris Brewster	President
Jerry Gavin	Vice-President
Greg Farry	Treasurer
Dave Shotwell	Secretary
Duke Brown	Recurrent Representative
Eric Bauer	Liaison Officer
Tim Gallagher	Advisor

Executive Committee

Between meetings of the Board of Directors, the USLA Executive Committee acts for the Board of Directors with regards to most matters that would otherwise require a vote of the Board of Directors. As of June 30, 2005, the Executive Committee includes the Executive Board and the elected Presidents of the Regions. The Presidents are:

Ed Zebrowski	Mid-Atlantic
Kevin Sweat	South Atlantic
Patrick McGlamery	Southeast
Joe Pecoraro	Great Lakes
Vic Maceo	Gulf Coast
Cathy VonWald	Northwest
Rob McGowan	Southwest
Ralph Goto	Pacific Islands

Advisors

USLA benefits greatly by the insights and expertise of advisors who provide advice to the Executive Board, Executive Committee, and Board of Directors in their specialty areas:

Dr. Peter Wernicki, M.D.	Medical Advisor
John "Chip" More	Legal Advisor

Our Board of Directors

Members of USLA's Board of Directors are appointed by USLA Regions in a number proportional to membership, according to a formula embodied in our Bylaws. The Board of Directors is USLA's highest authority. The Board of Directors meets twice each year, normally in May and November. During fiscal 2004, the Board of Directors met from November 3 – 6, 2004 in Galveston, Texas and from May 5 – 7, 2005 in Miami Beach, Florida. USLA Directors have no fixed term. Their length of service is decided by their appointing Regions. At the close of our 2005 fiscal year, USLA's Directors are:

Mid-Atlantic

Ed Zebrowski
Tim Gallagher
Dave Foxwell
Tim Ferry
Charles Hartl
Bart Mattaliano
Ed Zebrowski III

South Atlantic

Kevin Sweat
Tom Gill
Nikki Bowie
Mickey Hutto
Mike Hensler
Paul Pivec
Ron Watson

Southeast

Patrick McGlamery
Jim McCrady
Gerry Falconer
Joe McManus

Great Lakes

Joe Pecoraro
Erin Joyce
Eric Bushonville

Gulf Coast

Vic Maceo
Peter Davis

Northwest

Cathy VonWald
Nick Shriver

Southwest

Rob McGowan
Vince Lombardi III
Mike Bartlett
Chris Graham
Charlotte Graham
Bob Moore
Don Rohrer



Our Committees

USLA Committees convene at each biannual meeting of the Board of Directors and work on projects between meetings. Committees conduct in-depth work on topics specific to their area of expertise. There are two types of committees. Regular Committees include a representative from each Region, appointed by the Region. Working Group Committees typically include a lesser number of members and have a more focused assignment. At each Board of Directors meeting, Committees report to the Board of Directors on their activities since the prior meeting, then meet and report back on their actions and proposals. At the end of the 2005 fiscal year, the following were USLA's Committees and their Chairs. Contact information for each can be found at www.usla.org.

Regular Committees

Public Education	Chair – Peter Davis Vice-Chair – Rob Williams
Membership	Chair – Joe Pecoraro
Competition	Chair – Carl Drake Vice-Chair – Kevin Sweat
Heroic Acts	Chair – Nikki Bowie Vice-Chair – Adrienne Groh
Junior Lifeguards	Chair – Reenie Boyer
Certification	Chair – B. Chris Brewster Vice-Chair – Tim Harmon
Ways and Means	Chair – Greg Farry Vice-Chair – Mickey Hutto

Working Group Committees

National Curriculum	Chair – Carl Martinez
Grant Writing	Chair – Greg Farry
Equipment Research	Chair – Dave Foxwell
Bylaws/Policies and Procedures	Chair – John “Chip” More
Public Information/Publicity	Chair – Tom Gill
Magazine Publication	Chair – Mike Bartlett
Website	Chair – Charlie Hartl
Development	Chair – Cathy VonWald

Our Accomplishments

Pacific Islands Region Created

USLA approved the formation of the Pacific Islands Region from Hawaii and Pacific island territories that were previously part of the Southwest Region. This new region will be able to concentrate more directly on issues affecting the Hawaiian Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands, and Wake Island.

Skin Cancer Foundation Alliance

USLA signed an agreement with the Skin Cancer Foundation to pursue projects of mutual benefit with an eye toward the education of the general public and lifeguards in protecting themselves from the hazards of the sun.

Mexican Lifesaving Association Founded

At our Galveston, Texas Board of Directors meeting in November 2004, USLA hosted several representatives of lifesaving from Mexico. As a result of this meeting, an agreement was reached to create the Mexican Lifesaving Association. This is expected to result in better coordination and training of lifesavers throughout Mexico and the eventual membership of Mexico in the International Life Saving Federation.

National Rip Current Education Program

USLA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) continued our work to make the American public aware of rip currents in an effort to reduce the incidence of drowning at surf beaches. Standardized terminology agreed upon by the partners has been widely accepted, and the subject of extensive, national news coverage. The model brochure and warning sign have been reprinted by a wide variety of municipal organizations and groups. For example, the State of Florida has made the signs available to local, coastal communities and the signs have been widely posted. Detailed, consistent Internet based information is available on the website of each organization. This information can be found in the Rip Current section of www.usla.org.



National Beach Safety Week

National Beach Safety Week was launched on May 23, 2005. National Beach Safety Week is an annual event promoted by USLA, commencing just as summer is about to begin, to remind the general public about hazards in the aquatic environment and how to stay safe.

Educational Conferences



On November 4, 2005, US Surgeon General Vice-Admiral Richard H. Carmona, M.D. addressed the Board of Directors and provided his insights into the value of the lifesaving profession to the health and safety of Americans.

On November 5, 2004, the Gulf Coast Region hosted an educational conference in Galveston, Texas. Featured speakers included Steve Lyons of the Weather Channel, who discussed rip current forecasting and alerts, and CNN Correspondent Mike Brooks, who offered suggestions on effective media communication methods. In addition, a personal watercraft rescue demonstration was conducted.

On May 6, 2004, the Southeast Region hosted an educational conference in Miami Beach, Florida. Featured speakers included Jim Lushine of the National Weather Service, who discussed rip current forecasting, Commander Robert J. Tosatto of the US Public Health Service, who presented information on the Medical Reserve Corps, and Steve Rossman, who discussed liability issues.

Lifesaving Competition

In an ongoing effort to promote physical fitness and preparedness among lifeguards, United States Lifesaving Association Regions conducted seven regional lifesaving competitions; and Volusia County, Florida hosted the 2004 National Lifeguard Championships in August 2004. Participation by lifeguards and junior lifeguards exceeded 1,000.

Personal Watercraft Rescue Standards Published

After gathering experts in use of personal watercraft as a rescue tool and publishing draft training and equipment standards to help promote the safety of beachgoers and

rescuers, in November 2004 a final standard was agreed upon. It was approved by the Board of Directors and has been published in the Lifeguard Library section of www.usla.org. This standard will allow all organizations training personnel in the use of personal watercraft as a rescue tool to ensure that they meet consensus minimum standards and establishes best practice in regard to equipment requirements.

Recommended Minimum Guidelines for Open Water Swimming Event Safety

In the absence of nationally recognized guidelines for open water swimming event safety, USLA convened experts in this area, developed a draft standard, circulated it nationally for comment, and ultimately adopted recommended minimum standards. These standards are published in the Lifeguard Library section of www.usla.org. They are intended to assist the organizers of such events in ensuring that appropriate minimum levels of safety protection are provided and thereby to help safeguard participants, the public, and the safety personnel overseeing these events.

Public Safety Lectures

In calendar year 2004, USLA chapters and affiliated agencies reported the provision of 3,733 public safety lectures to an estimated audience of 240,143.

Lifeguard Agency Certification

Since the 1980s, USLA has maintained standards for lifeguard agencies providing public safety at America's beaches, promulgated and updated training protocols, and offered training manuals and standards. Since the early 1990s, USLA has certified lifeguard agencies which apply for certification and show that they meet the standards. These actions help ensure appropriate levels of public safety at America's beaches and the safety of the lifeguards who provide that safety. Over 100 lifeguard agencies are certified under this program, with each agency certified for a three year period, then applying for recertification. In fiscal 2005, 36 agency applications for certifications were reviewed and approved.

USLA Joins Combined Federal Campaign

USLA has been approved for inclusion in the Combined Federal Campaign of giving U.S. federal employees. Inclusion required an advance level financial audit, submission of an extensive application, and approval at the federal level. U.S. federal employees can now donate to USLA via payroll deduction.

International Contributions



USLA is America's Full Member representative to the International Life Saving Federation. USLA's President is also President for the America's Region of ILS. During this fiscal year, the following appointments of USLA representatives were made for a four year term from 2004 – 2008. B. Chris Brewster – Lifesaving Commissioner; Dr. Peter Wernicki – Co-Chair, Medical Committee; Peter Davis – Americas Region representative to the Development Committee; Ralph Goto – Rescue Committee; Charles Hartl – Event Management Committee; and Tom Daly – Sport Development Committee. Our support for ILS helps USLA share expertise worldwide, promoting development and professionalizing of lifesaving and drowning prevention.

Lifesaving Development Activity

USLA and its members contributed to the development of lifesaving, both in the United States and other countries. Efforts to promote lifesaving in Mexico have continued, with several members and affiliated organizations providing training and support. It is expected that a national Mexican lifesaving federation will soon be created with USLA's help.

Lifesaving Statistics

USLA continued its service of gathering and presenting annual statistics from beach lifesaving organizations throughout the United States in a free, online database that allows a variety of search methods. For calendar year 2004, over 52,000 rescues from drowning were reported, along with myriad additional information. Based on this information, USLA has calculated the chance that a person will die by drowning while attending a beach protected by USLA affiliated lifeguards at 1 in 18 million (.0000055%). This is based on the last ten years of reports from USLA affiliated lifeguard agencies, comparing estimated beach attendance to the number of drowning deaths in areas under lifeguard protection. Details are available at: <http://www.usla.org/Statistics/public.asp>

OTC Solution Alliance

USLA has finalized an agreement with OTC Solutions, which is marketing *Lifeguards Professional Strength First-Aid Cream*, for maximum sunburn relief. The product carries the USLA logo. This is one of two similar projects, the next to be completed in the next fiscal year, which are expected to increase financial support to USLA and raise our public image, while helping the public learn of a valuable new product.

Our Special Awards

Life Members

USLA confers Life Memberships on a very limited number of people who have made extraordinary contributions to lifesaving and to USLA. The minimum criteria for Life Membership includes twenty years of service in open water lifesaving, ten years active service and membership in USLA, service as a member of the Board of Directors or as an elected national officer, and a significant contribution to the humanitarian goals and objectives of USLA. During fiscal 2005, one Life Membership was awarded. We congratulate the recipient and thank him for his extraordinary service.

Tim Gallagher Avon-by-the-Sea, New Jersey

Heroic Act Awards

USLA annually confers recognition to people who demonstrate unusual heroism in rescuing others. USLA recognition is restricted to acts which show conclusive evidence that the person performing the act voluntarily risked their own life to an extraordinary degree in saving, or attempting to save, the life of another person, or voluntarily sacrificed themselves in a heroic manner for the benefit of others. To be considered for recognition, heroic acts must be reported to USLA within one year of the date they occurred. Usually, only those acts performed in areas within the scope of USLA's activities will be considered for such an award. Awards are restricted to cases in which no primary family relationship exists. The Medal of Valor is awarded to an individual lifeguard who voluntarily risked their life, to an extraordinary degree, in saving, or attempting to save another person, or who sacrificed themselves for the benefit of others. The Heroic Act Award is presented by USLA to a non-lifeguard and is intended to give due recognition to those who have risked their lives to an extraordinary degree in a rescue or attempted rescue of another person. We congratulate the following recipients and tip our hat to them.

Medal of Valor

Jecoa Simmons
Chris Nowiski

Heroic Act

Amos Chess

Our Financials

USLA, a nonprofit, 501(c)3, public benefit corporation, remains in firm financial condition, with our strength slowly growing, although greater financial support is definitely desirable. Our primary source of income is member dues. The increased interest in junior lifeguard membership has been of particular assistance over the past year. We continue to work toward improving the contributions from sponsors and grant funds. In presenting our financial information, it is important to note that all of the substantial work provided by USLA's officers and committee members is on a volunteer basis.

USLA requested and received a full financial audit for fiscal 2005 by a certified public accountant. According to the accountant, "In my opinion, the financial statements ... present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of United States Lifesaving Association, Inc. as of June 30, 2005, and the changes in its net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." The following is an abbreviated overview of our financials. A full copy of our financial statements and federal tax return is available upon request to treasurer@usla.org.

Revenues and Gains	\$212,354
Expenses	<u>\$198,965</u>
Revenues Over Expenses	\$13,389

Assets	\$91,025
Liabilities	<u>\$8,575</u>
Net Assets	\$82,450

Swim Near a Lifeguard