



The Chlorine Chronicles

Gulf Masters Swimming

Fall 2020

MIST ABOVE THE POOL WILL BECOME A COMMON SIGHT AS HOUSTON WELCOMES FALL

IN THIS ISSUE

The Gulf Annual Meeting is on Wednesday, November 18. You can attend from home.

The Gulf LMSC will be holding its annual meeting on Wednesday, November 18th via a Zoom conference call. The meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. Full meeting information, including how to join the Zoom call can be found at:

<https://www.gulfmastersswim.org/GMS/article.cfm?c=1250&artid=11493>

All USMS-registered teams are entitled to be represented by voting members at all Gulf LMSC meetings. Teams with up to 49 members are entitled to one voting representative, 50 to 99 members are entitled to have two voting representatives, and teams with 100+ members are entitled to three voting representatives.

These are open meetings, and you do not have to be a voting representative to attend. All USMS members are welcome, and we welcome your feedback on what we could do to make your membership more meaningful and of better value to you. We especially encourage attendance at the annual meeting to help direct the LMSC priorities for the coming year.

We hope to get through necessary agenda items quickly. We will then open the floor to answer any questions about the LMSC's operations and hear from our members on how the Gulf Board and our local volunteers can enhance the masters swimming experience for fitness swimmers and competitors alike. Bring your ideas, comments, and complaints. We want to hear from you!

Thanks in advance for attending the meeting and helping to shape our program for 2021.

USMS Registration for 2021 Has Begun

USMS registration for 2021 opened on November 1, and you can complete your registration at usms.org. If you register prior to January 1, you will receive discount codes from USMS partners on items like swimwear, swim gear, and nutritional supplements.

If you have swim friends who are not yet members of USMS, they will be registered for the remainder of 2020 and all of 2021 for the \$60 registration fee and get up to 14 months of membership for the price of 12 months.



How Does Stress Really Lead to Weight Gain?

Nutritionist Catherine Kruppa explains how stress affects the body, and provides tips to manage stress and avoid weight gain.

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Competition Returns to the Gulf

The Gulf LMSC's first swim meet since the shutdown was the Sabine Weiser November Classic on November 14, and 15 at Conroe ISD Natatorium.

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Kris Wingenroth is Elected to the USMS Board of Directors

Gulf Chairwoman Kris Wingenroth is a new at-large director on the USMS Board of Directors, following her election to the position during the recent national convention.

The USMS Board of Directors is composed of 16 voting members. The USMS legal counsel, and the executive director are nonvoting, ex-officio board members. The Executive Committee, to which members are elected in odd years, includes the president, vice president of administration, vice president of local operations, vice president of programs, vice president of community services, secretary, treasurer, immediate past president, legal counsel, and executive director. The remaining eight board positions, recognized as at-large directors, are elected in even years, one from each zone. Board of Director members are elected for two-year terms and may run for an additional two-year term, for a total of four years of service.

Kris has been a USMS volunteer at both the LMSC and national level for over 30 years and has served in the following national positions.

- Legislation Committee Member 2016 - Present
- Rules Committee Member 2012 - 2015
- Rules Committee Vice Chair 2010 - 2011
- Rules Committee Member 1994 - 2009
- Finance Committee Member 2000 - 2007
- Zone Committee Member 1996 - 1999
- Ad Hoc Professional Management Committee Member 1998 - 1999
- Finance Committee Member 1989 - 1993
- Zone Committee Member 1989 - 1993

The future direction of USMS is in capable hands with the addition of Kris to the Board. Congratulations, Kris.



USMS Fall Fitness Challenge



Is your Turkey Trot canceled due to COVID-19 this year? Try the Fall Fitness Challenge, a 1-mile swim that takes place between November 15-30, which is the third event in the [SmartyPants Vitamins USMS Fitness Series](#).

Whether you're just getting into swimming, starting back into it after a COVID forced break from the pool, pushing to see how fast you can go, or just wanting to donate to the [USMS COVID-19 Relief Program for clubs](#), the Fall Fitness Challenge is the perfect event for you to finish the year strong. The Fall Fitness Challenge can be done in any manner desired: straight through, as a member of a relay, or even with fins.

When: Nov. 15-30

Where: Check [Club Finder](#) for a club in your area, find some friends to swim with, or swim on your own. This challenge can be completed in any pool across the world!

Entry Fees: Nov. 1-Nov. 30: \$12 (\$17 for non-USMS members)

Fundraising: Net proceeds from the SmartyPants Vitamins USMS Fitness Series benefit the [USMS COVID-19 Relief Program](#) in support of restarting local club operations nationwide when safe and appropriate.

Detailed event information and registration can be found at: <https://www.usms.org/events/fitness-events/fitness-series/fall-fitness-challenge>

How Does Stress Really Lead to Weight Gain?

Catherine Kruppa, MS, RD, CSSD, LD

Brittany Link, MSW, RD, LD

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A stressful situation can activate a cascade of stress hormones that produce physiological changes. The stress can be environmental, such as an impending work deadline, or psychological, such as persistent worry about losing a job, feeling isolated or the impact that COVID-19 is having on your life.

You have probably heard of this reaction to stress known as the "fight-or-flight" response because it evolved as a survival mechanism, enabling people to react quickly to life-threatening situations. Unfortunately, the body can also overreact to stressors that are not life-threatening, such as Houston traffic, work pressure, and family difficulties.

Repeated activation of the stress response takes a toll on your body. Research suggests that chronic stress contributes to high blood pressure, promotes the formation of artery-clogging deposits, and causes brain changes that may contribute to anxiety, depression, and addiction. Newer research suggests that chronic stress may also contribute to obesity, both directly through an increase in calorie consumption or indirectly through a decrease of sleep and exercise.

After the pressure or danger has passed, your cortisol (fight or flight hormone) level should calm down. Your heart, blood pressure, and other body systems should get back to normal. Many people are unable to find a way to put the brakes on stress.

Persistent low-level stress can damage blood vessels and arteries, increasing blood pressure which raises the risk of heart attacks or strokes. Elevated cortisol levels create physiological changes that help to replenish the body's energy stores that are depleted during the stress response. But they inadvertently contribute to the buildup of fat tissue and to weight gain. For example, cortisol increases appetite, so people will want to eat more to obtain extra energy. It also increases storage of unused nutrients as fat.

If you think your weight has gone up due to stress, tackle some good habits such as healthy eating, being active, and do things that make you relaxed and happy.

1. **Exercise but do not overdo it.** High-intensity workouts can raise cortisol levels. Try a brisk walk.
2. **Meditate** or try other mindful breathing exercises like yoga and tai chi. These can help clear your mind and curb cravings. "6,500 studies from the best American Universities and Medical Centers show that mindfulness can reduce stress, boost immune system functioning, help develop conscious eating, decrease anxiety and depression, increase focus and attention, and create an overall sense of well-being. It is being used in about 20% of American companies, the U.S. military, the Veteran's Administration, schools and colleges, and health institutions", states Ann Friedman, PhD of Mindful Being Houston. Ann has seen lives changed, including her own, through the practice of mindfulness. She offers virtual classes through www.mindfulbeinghouston.com.
3. **Find something you enjoy.** Read, listen to music, work a jigsaw puzzle, pray, take a bath, work in the garden among other things.
4. **Get plenty of sleep.** On average, we need about 7.5 hours of quality sleep per night which means you need to spend 8-8 ½ hours in bed. Lack of sleep affects our ability to lose weight due to two hormones, ghrelin and leptin. Ghrelin tells you when to eat. When you are sleep-deprived, you have more ghrelin. Leptin is the hormone that tells you to stop eating. When you are sleep deprived you have less leptin. More ghrelin and less leptin equal weight gain. So, you are eating more, and your metabolism is slower when you are sleep deprived.

During these challenging times we all have stress. The key is how we deal with it. I challenge you to try one of the solutions above to help you manage your stress to help you live a healthier life.

Catherine Kruppa, M.S., R.D., C.S.S.D., L.D. earned her Bachelor of Science in Nutritional Sciences and Master of Science in Nutrition from Texas A. & M. University. She is a registered, licensed dietitian, and wellness coach, with Board Certification in Sports Nutrition. Catherine specializes in weight management, sports nutrition, diabetes, gastrointestinal disorders, endometriosis, heart disease, and pediatric nutrition.



Three Gulf Members are Honored at USMS Convention

The Gulf LMSC relies on its volunteers, officials, and coaches to provide you with the best possible swimming experience. There are those individuals who go above and beyond. It is gratifying to see our Gulf members duly recognized at the national level.

Herb Schwab - USMS Officials Excellence Award

This annual award is given to a Certified Official in recognition of outstanding and significant contributions to U.S. Masters Swimming at the international, national, zone, and/or local level, including pool and open water competitions.



"Herb Schwab needs no introduction. He is a highly certified and qualified official. Herb has served as the Gulf LMSC Officials Chair for as long as I can remember. More significantly, Herb is not only the mastermind on deck at nearly every Gulf Masters meet, he is a mentor, colleague, friend, expert, and walking rules-encyclopedia. Herb exemplifies the qualities of fairness, patience, kindness, strength, and confidence each and every time he is on deck. Herb is always approachable, welcoming, and helpful to every swimmer, coach, and volunteer with whom he interacts. As a volunteer, these qualities are equaled by few. As an Official, these qualities are equaled by none. Herb Schwab is a true gentleman who is the face of Gulf Masters Swimming competitions. He is most deserving of this award."

Carlye Gradon – USA-S and USMS Member and Official

Greg Tharp - USMS Kerry O'Brien Coaches Award

The U.S. Masters Swimming Coaches Committee initiated a new award in 2008 with the goal of recognizing USMS coaches who are building our membership in communities throughout our country. Originally named the Grassroots Coaching Award, it has been renamed to honor Coach Kerry O'Brien of Walnut Creek Masters, who embodies the passion, dedication, and heart that these coaches bring to the pool deck. It is with the efforts of individuals like these that U.S. Masters Swimming will most certainly move to a greater level.

"It is hard to imagine our team without Greg Tharp as one of our coaches. For 15 years, he has been on deck. He comes to workout with his sets planned ahead of time, he is constructive in his comments, and he is motivating during the workout. At meets, he is the loudest one cheering for the swimmer in the water, and he provides constructive comments after the swim to help make the next time better. However, that could be said about most coaches.



What makes Greg different is his empathy. Outside of the pool, Greg is a clinical psychologist with a strong interest in sports psychology. He likes to assist swimmers in fully developing the mental aspects of their competitive or fitness swimming. Greg also exhibits a strong "pay it forward" mentality with a most generous heart. Last year one of our fellow coaches and longtime swimmer was diagnosed with terminal cancer. She was in her forties and married with two young children. While she was going through treatments, Greg made himself available on a regular basis, helping her to deal with her many emotions. He helped her prepare emotionally for her passing. He served a pivotal role in supporting her family and was a help to many of us who were having great difficulty dealing with the loss of a wonderful coach and dear friend. It was no surprise when her husband asked Greg to speak at her memorial service. Greg later gave another tribute at a team-hosted meet that was renamed in her memory.

Most recently during the COVID-19 pandemic, he reached out to a teammate who he knew was going through a very difficult time physically, emotionally and financially. He stepped in to offer her emotional support and even assisted with work she needed at home. He then reached out to fellow team members to organize a food train for daily meals, groceries and more. Beyond that, he has kept the entire community and team uplifted with his COVID related remakes of classic rock and country songs. Seeing these videos is very encouraging during this time of stress. Every team member knows that in need, they can go to Greg Tharp. This is a true testament of giving – expecting nothing in return.

It is this compassion and care for his teammates that makes Greg one of Woodlands Masters' most beloved and dedicated coaches. He mentors both swimmers new to the team or swimming, as well as those who have been in the sport their whole lives. He excels in technique improvement and knows every swimmer's focus areas. His positive attitude encourages swimmers to finish sets and establish goals. His zest for interacting with his swimmers makes his workouts enjoyable and everyone feels a valuable member of the team. He has motivated many to compete for the first time or return to competition, and he is always up for a challenge or bet to get the most out of his swimmers. The funny thing about these challenges is that Greg sets very lofty goals for himself, so his swimmers are generally the victors, despite Greg's humorous and amusing smack talk. Go Big or Go Home!

Greg's relationships with his teammates have led to close bonds with generations of families. Local age group swimmers know him as "Coach Greg from Masters."

The Woodlands Masters Swim Team would not be what it is today without Greg Tharp."
WMST nominating letter

Three Gulf Members are Honored at USMS Convention (Continued)

Stacey Eicks - USMS Dorothy Donnelly Service Award

The award is presented annually to USMS registered individuals whose volunteer service has contributed to the growth, improvement, or success of U.S. Masters Swimming locally, regionally, and/or nationally. Dot Donnelly was a member of USMS at its inception. She tirelessly served as coach, meet director, and ambassador for our organization, and served as our elected Secretary, maintaining the national office from her home for many years. Individuals are selected based on their accomplishments that meet the USMS goals and objectives. A one-page nomination letter should include type of service, length of time, and where service was performed, and how the activities contributed to or impacted the club, LMSC, or USMS.



"Stacey Eicks started swimming with a Houston USMS swim team in 2000. In 2005 she moved to North Houston and joined the Woodlands Masters Team. She quickly became involved in the administration of the team by taking an at-large position on the team's Board of Directors, and later became Vice- President. In 2016 she became the President of the Woodlands Swim Team for four years, ending in January 2020. She continues on as a Club Administrator, helping the team with keeping track of members and billing. She has filled important roles in one of Houston's largest teams.

In addition to helping the Woodlands Masters as an officer and administrator, she also is one of the coaches of the team. In 2017 she became a Level I and Level II USMS certified coach and became ALTS certified in 2019. She now coaches the team twice a week. Stacey's swimmers describe her as thoughtful and very organized. She believes that coaching is more than just writing up a work out, it is to help the swimmers improve. Stacey always makes suggestions on what needs to be done to improve a swimmer's stroke technique and makes a point to help every individual in the group. Stacey also helps the club run several swim meets each year. Whenever Stacey is involved in the organization of a swim meet, one can rest assured that all details will be attended to and that the competition will run smoothly. This benefits all the Houston area competitive swimmers.

Besides volunteering with the administration and coaching of the Woodlands Masters Swim Team, Stacey also began attending our LMSC meetings. In 2016, after the sudden death of our Top Times Recorder, Stacey volunteered for the role of the Gulf LMSC Top Times Chair. She processes all our swim meets within hours of receiving the results. Her attention to detail ensures everything is processed properly. She also created for the Gulf, a fillable Meet Director's form to help our Meet Directors collect all the necessary information for each meet and to guide them through the process of preparing meet results properly. We never have to worry about problems with our Top Times reports.

The Gulf selected Stacey to be one of our delegates for the USMS convention in 2016 and she has been active at the National level and attended all the conventions since then. In 2017, she was selected to be a member of the Records and Tabulations committee and has continued as a member of this committee. This year she was appointed to be the Vice Chair of the Committee. Obviously, she is making positive contributions to the Records and Tabulations committee.

In addition to helping in all these different roles, Stacey helps with many projects that the Gulf undertakes. She is active in everything we do and always has great ideas and suggestions. Stacey is one of the most active members of the Gulf LMSC board and never lets us down. She follows through on everything we ask of her and has helped us meet the needs of all levels and types of our swimmers.

Stacey is very deserving of a Dorothy Donnelly award. She has been actively supporting Masters Swimming in the Houston area for 20 years. She is involved in roles including coaching and teaching swimming, helping with the administration of her team, being a consummate Gulf LMSC volunteer and leader for ten years and now she has become active at the National level. We know that you will agree that she should be awarded a Dorothy Donnelly Service Award."

Kris Wingenroth, Gulf Chair – Nominating Letter

Competition Returns to the Gulf with the Sabine Weiser November Classic

After a very long hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Woodlands Masters Swim Team (WMST) has hosted the first competition in the Gulf LMSC since March.

The Sabine Weiser November Classic was held on November 14-15 at the Conroe ISD Natatorium in Shenandoah, Texas. This year's edition of the annual event was conducted as a SCY meet. Strict safety protocols were in place for the competition, and the large venue offered plenty of space for ample social distancing. Forty-one swimmers, who reside within the Gulf LMSC, competed over two days in a limited format of events: 50s, 100s, and 200s of all four strokes, plus the 100 and 200 IM. There were ten minute breaks after every event in order to provide the competitors with rest between swims.

It is hoped that this is just the first of many post-pandemic competitions, and that more meets will be held in 2021.



This Quarter's Workout

Thanks to COOG coach, Greg Orphanides, for this quarter's workout. You can shorten or lengthen the workout by changing the number of times you swim each set.

600 choice warmup

8 x 50, descend 1-4, 5-8 - interval is first swim plus 10 seconds

2 x 100, fast! – 30 seconds recovery

100 easy

2 x 200 kick with 8 fast underwater kicks off every wall (rest of kick is steady) – 15 seconds recovery

2 x 100 fast! – 30 seconds recovery

100 easy

8 x 50, as 25 steady/25 build – 10-15 seconds recovery

2 x 100 fast! – 30 seconds recovery

100 easy

2 x 200 kick with 12 fast underwater kicks off every wall (rest of kick is steady) – 20 seconds recovery

2 x 100 fast! – 30 seconds recovery

100 easy

200 cooldown

Total: 3,600 yards/meters

2020 Gulf Swim University Announces Its Graduates

Working through a lengthy semester break, 35 swimmers have graduated from Gulf Swim University in 2020. Gulf Fitness Chair and University Registrar Rebecca Tompkins has issued five Associate degrees, four Bachelor degrees, four Double Majors, five Masters degrees, and seventeen PhDs. Congratulations to our swimmer graduates.

PhD - Over 160 miles

Steve Clancy (MACA)
Caitlin Clark (UNAT)
Karlene Denby (COOG)
David Garza (RICE)
Jeff Helton (UNAT)
Susan Honeywell (CFSC)
Cheryl Hubbard (COOG)
John Keen (COOG)
Mark Knox (UNAT)
Debbie Loux (MACA)
Deborah Nichols (SWYM)
Bruce Rollins (WMST)
Leslie Schueckler (MOB)
Jim Svoboda (CFSC)
Nicole Van Nood (DADS)
Linda Visser (COOG)
David Welsh (UNAT)



Masters Degree - 120-159 miles

Giulia Hattan (FCST)
Mary Anne Janish (SWYM)
Brian Miller (SWYM)
Maryanne C Svoboda (CFSC)
Jeffrey Tarr (SPAM)

Double Major – 80-119 miles

Julie Brotzen (ETEX)
Jeffrey Rocheleau (KAMS)
Robin Tompkins (SWYM)
Kyra Wakefield (WMST)

Bachelor Degree - 40-79 miles

Suzette Caldwell (SWYM)
Kyle Ediger (UNAT)
Tanya Hamilton (CFSC)
Leonie Karkoviata (SWYM)

Associate Degree - 20-39 miles

Nancy Creelius (WMST)
Martha McDade (UNAT)
Rachel Phan (FCST)
Vicki Risinger (WMST)
Paul Zollner (FCST)

Members Stay Fit During COVID-19 with the Fitness Fanatic Challenge

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Bruce Rollins proposed a unique event for our members to stay motivated and maintain fitness. Thus, the Gulf Fitness Fanatic Challenge was born.

With pools, gyms, yoga studios, and many other fitness options closed or limited, members were encouraged to log any and all physical activities accomplished. The goal was to log 5-7 hours of activity per week for 8-13 weeks. Vacuuming, yardwork, lawn mowing, dog walking, and playing frisbee were counted, in addition to more traditional fitness activities such as walking, running, biking, swimming, and weightlifting.

Twenty-seven Gulf members met the challenge between July 1 and September 30. Here are their results:

Focused Fitness Fanatic (7 or more hours of activity per week for 13 weeks)

Vera Armstrong (UH2O), Tom Boak (WMST), Jenny Brown (KAMS), Charles Child (UNAT), Caitlin Clark (UNAT), Denise Daley (UNAT), Lisa Darnell (KAMS), Kent Ferguson (ETEX), Angel Fox (DADS), Craig Fox (DADS), Tom Howes (KAMS), Mark Knox (UNAT), Debbie Loux (MACA), N. Markell Lyng (FCST), Martha McDade (UNAT), Daniel McCleary (ETEX), Nancy Newhard-Belcher (RICE), Heidi Riggs (SSCGU), Lisa Schroeder (UNAT), Leslie Schueckler (MOB), Susan Spore (CFSC), Jeff Tarr (SPAM), Nicole Van Nood (DADS), Kathy Veen (MACA), and Kyra Wakefield (WMST).

Fitness Freak (5 or more hours of activity per week for 13 weeks)

Suzanne Ellison (SWYM), and Bruce Rollins (WMST).

Congratulations to all of our participants, and a big thank you to Bruce for developing the challenge and keeping our members physically engaged.