
Note from Team President Cathy Gainor

Summer is here — time to get outside!

The Ancient Mariners' summer session starts May 27 (Tuesday after Memorial Day). We start the session indoors, and then in mid-June we will move (mostly) outdoors until the end of August. We will be back to our normal summer schedule: Bethesda Outdoor Pool on Tuesday and Thursday nights 8:15-9:45 p.m., and Sundays 8 a.m.-10 a.m. (No more sleeping in!) We will be at MLK Outdoor Pool on Monday and Wednesday nights 8:30-10 p.m. On Saturday mornings, we will continue to swim at Olney Indoor Pool, 7:30-9 a.m. New this summer: we will have our Tuesday and Thursday morning workouts at the new Silver Spring pool, 6:30-8 a.m., which will be a great option if we get stormed out at night.

In addition to outdoor long course practice, this is a great time to venture beyond the pool and swim in the open water. It could be a lake, a river, a pond or an ocean. The glorious thing about open water swimming — no lanes, no lines, no limits! One of my favorite things to do is to roll over and swim backstroke, just enjoying the clouds in the sky and not worrying about drifting over in my lane and hitting someone. I don't advise trying it in the ocean, though: I recently tried it in the Gulf of Mexico and ended up beaching myself. The water was relatively calm, so at least I didn't get rolled by a wave.

As I mentioned in an email a couple weeks ago, our area has several open water races in the next couple of weeks. But there are swims all over the country, and all over the world, in all types of conditions, at all times of the year. Same goes for triathlons. [Ray's Notebook](#) is a great resource for open water races.

If you don't want to race, you can still check out the open water. You could try swimming in a lake or the ocean while away on vacation. It's a great way to get in a swim before you start your day. You could venture out to Sandy Point State Park and swim in the Chesapeake Bay, in the roped-off swimming area under the supervision of lifeguards. (Reservations are required on weekends Memorial Day through Labor Day.)

Or you could make a vacation out of swimming. SwimTrek (USMS partner) and SwimVacation offer swimming trips all over the the world, for a long weekend or a week. You could go with a friend or a group of friends, or go by yourself and make new friends. You can swim around Greek islands, do a long weekend in Malta, swim in Grenada and St. Vincent, or head to Hawaii. The trips are not inexpensive, but several of our swimmers have gone on these trips and have raved when they have returned.

So get out there. The water awaits you, whatever body of water you choose to dive into.

SWIMOUTLET
.com

**Shop the Ancient Mariners Team Store for
customized team gear!**

Each purchase supports the team!

Upcoming Events

2025 1-Mile and 2-Mile Cable Open Water Nationals

Saturday, May 31 - Charlottesville, VA
Registration Closes Wednesday, May 28

Maryland Freedom Swim

Saturday, May 31 - Cambridge, MD

Chesapeake Bay 1-Mile Swim

Sunday, June 8
Registration Closes Sunday, June 1

2025 Inaugural Maryland Summer LCM Meet

Saturday, June 28 - St. Mary's City, MD
Registration Closes Wednesday, June 25

2025 USMS Summer Nationals

Wednesday, August 6 - Sunday, August 10 - Federal Way, WA
Registration Closes Monday, July 14

US Masters Swimming Virtual and Fitness Events

Check the USMS website for upcoming virtual and fitness events



Practice Schedule Summer I Session

(Through Sunday, June 15)



Germantown Indoor Swim Center (GISC)

Sunday: 10 am to 12 pm

Martin Luther King Swim Center (MLK)

Monday and Wednesday: 8:30 to 10 pm

Olney Swim Center (OSC)

Tuesday and Thursday: 8:30 to 10 pm

Saturday: 7:30 to 9 am

Silver Spring Recreation and Aquatic Center (SSRAC)

Tuesday and Thursday: 6:30 to 8 am



Practice Schedule Summer II Session

(Starting Sunday, June 22)



Bethesda Outdoor Pool

Sunday: 8 to 10 am

Tuesday and Thursday: 8:15 to 9:45 pm

Martin Luther King Outdoor Pool

Monday and Wednesday: 8:30 to 10 pm

Olney Swim Center

Saturday: 7:30 to 9 am

Silver Spring Recreation and Aquatic Center

Tuesday and Thursday: 6:30 to 8 am



Visit [ActiveMONTGOMERY.org](https://www.ActiveMONTGOMERY.org) to register for masters swimming each session and other Montgomery County programs.



U.S. MASTERS SWIMMING

In addition to registering for Ancient Mariners, all team members must register with United States Masters Swimming for insurance and liability purposes.



Congratulations to the following Ancient Mariners swimmers who had USMS Top 10 times in events in 2024!

Short Course Yards

Bob Benson Men 85-89 1650 Free	Clay Britt Men 60-64 50 Back	Dottie Buchhagen Women 80-84 1650 Free
Gary DeShayes Men 35-39 500 Free 1000 Free 1650 Free 400 IM	Neil Gillen Men 85-89 500 Free. 1650 Free	
Roger Leonard Men 75-79 1650 Free	Hugh Roddin Men 80-84 50 Back 50 Fly 100 Fly 200 Fly	
Jeff Roddin Men 55-59 200 IM		

**Short Course Meters
Individual Events**

Clay Britt Men 60-64 50 Back 100 Back	VL Buzdygon Women 30-34 200 Fly	Rachel Carter Women 30-34 200 Breast	Gary DeShayes Men 35-39 50 Free 100 Free 200 Free 400 Free 200 Back. 200 Breast 200 Fly
Jose-Luis Gallagher Men 45-49 100 Free 200 Free 100 Back. 200 IM	Spencer Gill Men 30-34 50 Breast. 200 Breast		Dan Morrow Men 75-79 100 Breast
Neil Gillen Men 85-89 50 Free. 100 Free 100 Back. 200 Back	Marci Goldberg Women 40-44 200 Fly	Roger Leonard Men 75-79 200 Back	
	Angela Niemiec Women 40-44 100 Back	Jeff Roddin Men 55-59 100 IM 400 IM	

Long Course Meters

Gary DeShayes Men 35-39 800 Free	Spencer Gill Men 30-34 200 Breast
Neal Gillen Men 85-89 50 Free 100 Free 400 Free 50 Back 100 Back	Roger Leonard Men 75-79 800 Free

**Short Course Meters
Relay Events**

Men 120-159 200 Medley Relay Austin Miller, Spencer Gill Gary DeShayes, John Mc Caffrey	Men 160-199 400 Free Relay Todd Moniot, Austin Miller John Mc Caffrey, Spencer Gill	Men 200-239 200 Free Relay Jose Luis-Gallagher, Christopher Delikat Peter Johnson, Gary DeShayes
Men 200-239 200 Free Relay Ryan Jackson, Ian Record Gabe Ossi, Geoffrey Schaefer	Men 200-239 200 Medley Relay Ryan Jackson, Geoffrey Schaefer Ian Record, Gabe Ossi	Men 200-239 400 Free Relay Jeff Dubin, Gregory Prokopowicz Peter Haack, Geoffrey Schaefer
Men 240-279 200 Medley Relay Clay Britt, James Vandegriff Tom Denes, Peter Johnson	Women 120-159 200 Medley Relay Hannah Van Minde, Rachel Carter Angela Niemiec, Meghan Llagas-Mulhern	Women 160-199 200 Medley Relay Cathy Gainor, Deborah Yochelson Marci Goldberg, Bertha Nibigira
	Mixed 200-239 200 Medley Relay Hannah Rubin, Alison Dewey Nathan Meadows, Todd Moniot	



Congratulations to the following Ancient Mariners swimmers who completed the 2025 USMS 1-Hour Swim in January!

Bob Benson
Men's 90-94
2,575 yards
1st place in age group

Cathy Gainor
Women's 55-59
4,135 yards
18th place (out of 110) in age group

John Feinstein Tribute (1955-2025)

by Tom Denes

We lost our friend and fellow Ancient Mariner, John Feinstein, in March. John was a regular at KSAC practices and swim meets for several years from the late 1990s to the mid 2000's. His favorite stroke was butterfly, and he set several team records in the 50 and the 100 fly, but he also set three team records in the 800 free that still stand (1997, 2001 and 2006). He was also part of two world records in the 200 medley relay (SCM, LCM) as well as national records (SCY).

When not swimming, he wrote 40-50 books (many of them bestsellers), countless articles and participated in almost daily radio shows, TV shows and podcasts.

I swam in the lane with John on Sunday mornings. The practices generally ended with a 75 butterfly race challenge which John won every time. I wasn't very knowledgeable of John's sports world. I remember him screaming at me in the locker room, "You don't know who Grant Hill is?!"

Below are remembrances from his other Ancient Mariner teammates.

From Jeff Roddin

One of my favorites was John swimming at the UMBC distance meet against Emily Watts, who was visibly quite pregnant. Emily beat John, and before we could get a chance to rib him about it, he said, "that wasn't fair - it was two against one!" Then a few years later we were at UMBC and Emily had a toddler in tow and John asked Emily if that was the kid who beat him in the 1,000 a couple years ago.

I remember another time staying at John's house and him mentioning he would be up early because he had a 6:30am radio call to make. I was getting ready to leave in the morning and it was 6:20-6:25am and John's room was dark. I knocked on his door to see if he was up. He said yep, he was just getting up. We had quick small talk then he said he had to get up to pee, etc. and do the call. I put on NPR as I was leaving the neighborhood and I heard John's booming voice on the national program talking with excitement about the PGA tournament that had just finished the night before. Of course I was with him on Sunday at a swim meet!

I remember between sets at KSAC telling a story that I remembered the 1986 World Series, and being a Red Sox fan being so distraught after the series ended, I couldn't go to sleep. I remember just going to the basement to sulk and my mom telling me I had to come upstairs and go to bed (it was a school night). Jason Crist said he was a young adult and was watching the game from a bar across the street from Shea stadium and anytime there was a big play he could hear the roar of the crowd from the game itself, and that was memorable. John then said, "Yep, I remember that series well. I remember interviewing Bill Buckner. At his locker. Immediately after the game."

From Dave Harmon

John was really great at getting us to swim relays at meets. I was able to be part of several fast relays as a result. My one and only second place at SCY Nationals came from a relay he asked me to join. That medal hung on the wall of my office for many years.

- Here is a story that John himself told me:

When he first started out swimming Masters, he signed up for the 500 freestyle at a local swim meet. He brought his wife and very young son to the meet and asked his wife to count laps for him. But his son protested that he could hold the lap counters. After some back and forth, they agreed to let the little one hold the lap counters and dip them in the water every time he made a turn at the far end of the pool. After several laps, John was coming back to that end of the pool to make a turn expecting to see the lap counters at eye level. Instead, he saw them at the bottom of the pool. John told me that he was laughing so hard after seeing that, that he could hardly finish the race.

From Amy Weiss

John Feinstein was my friend. I remember the day we met. I had just started masters swimming (in 2001) and was swimming in the lane with this guy who was going on and on about what a great guy Cal Ripken was. It was getting really annoying and I finally turned to him and said, "How would you know?!" One of the other guys in the lane said, "Do you know who John Feinstein is?" I didn't. But we went on to become friends. I loved practicing with John. He would often challenge me to a 75 butterfly race at the end of practice. Never a 50 or 100- always a 75. And he always won. He was a

From Amy Weiss (continued)

very good butterfly. And I loved hearing his stories. I remember trying to convince him to write one about all of our friends on the team and masters swimming. He said it would be too boring lol. I will miss those stories. Even though I hadn't seen him for years, it always put a smile on my face to hear him telling his stories on the radio or read something he had written. Rest in peace, John. The Ancient Mariners are thinking of you.

From Peter Krucoff

With passing of John Feinstein - I wanted to share a story. John would swim at the masters meets with the Ancient Mariners team that my brother Jason Krucoff, my sister-in-law Julie Andrews Krucoff, and I were on. I think in 1995 at my first meet - Jason is chatting with John. He says my brother has read all your books, please talk to him after his big 100 meter race. Sure, he says. They turn to watch the start. My first dive in - in about ten years at the time - has my goggles down by my mouth. I don't win the race, but would have won the gold at a goggle toss. Well, John says 'we can chat when he's in a better mood.' I never did get that conversation.

From Penny Bates

I have so many John Feinstein stories, I could tell them until the day I die. I never laughed so hard as when he was around, especially telling his 200 butterfly stories (splits 29-33-45-59, who couldn't laugh?). And the time in the Irish/Thai restaurant in Indianapolis where we laughed so hard, we created a scene and he wasn't even there, but did figure into the day's story. It was always interesting to drive through DC with John on a nice day with the windows down and random strangers walking up at red lights to initiate long conversations. Even more interesting to have breakfast with him at a mid-town Manhattan hotel on Sunday morning when all the TV talking heads were there, talking. In the late 90s, John, Tom Denes and I went to a swim meet in Richmond and John was quite happy with his 100 butterfly. While waiting in the car for Tom, who knows what was taking him so long, John was expounding on that 100 butterfly. There was a Swimming World magazine in the car with the previous year's age group Top 16 rankings. I looked at the 10 and under boys 100 butterfly and told John that he ranked well there, but that the record holder was some kid from Baltimore and he would never go that fast. About ten years later that kid had a pretty good meet himself and asked John to help him write a book. John told him he hadn't lived his life yet and to come back when he had!

From Dottie Buchhagen

John was very friendly and kind. He swam in a fast lane, so I had limited interactions with him during practices. But, we chatted after practices, at meets, and at the few holiday parties he attended. John was always willing to pose for a photo for the website and newsletters. He also was very gracious in providing content for my newsletters. John sent me an article he had written, "Personal Best," in 1999, let me interview him at length in 2002, and sent me writeups on five meets.. His writeups were both informative and extremely hilarious and certainly worth re-reading. I still remember John's voice and his smile. RIP.

From Marci Goldberg

I had met John Feinstein sometime in 2009 when working as a kid's bookseller at Barnes & Noble in Rockville. I was shelving books in the young readers section (chapter books for 9 to 12 year old readers) in the early part of a weekday evening and there was a guy who made his way into the section. I asked the guy if there was anything I could help him with. He politely with a smile told me he was a local author and said he was going to sign some his books. I went to the desk to get some "Signed Copy" stickers to put on the books that were being signed. As I walked over to where he was standing, I noticed it was a guy named John Feinstein. I knew he was a sports writer, but I had no idea he wrote children's novels. We talked for a few minutes and after he left the kids section; I picked up one of the signed novels and read the first few pages. It was neat to pick up a novel that was freshly signed by the author. After meeting John the first time; it was nice to see walk in from time to time to see if there were any more of his kids novels to sign. The few times he came in it was always a pleasure chatting; even if it was just a simple greeting.

“The nicest thing about swimming for me is the friends I’ve made.” (John Feinstein, 1999)



Photo by Jeff Roddin

From a Meet in 2000
(L-R) Clay Britt, Wally Dicks, John Feinstein, Michael Fell



Photo from Dave Harmon

From 1998 Short Course Nationals in Ft. Lauderdale
(L-R) Dave Harmon, Michael Fell, John Feinstein, Wally Dicks



Photo from Jeff Roddin

From 2000
(L-R) Jason Crist, John Feinstein, Jeff Roddin



Photo by Dottie Buchhagen

From 2004 Albatross Open Meet
(L-R) John Feinstein, Carole Kammel, Mary Dowling



Thank you to everyone who attended the team winter party in February! Also, a big thank you to Nanci and Gary Sundel for hosting this year!

[Check out the pictures from this year's party here.](#)

Race for the Conch Eco-SeaSwim in Turks and Caicos

by Ben Stubenberg



Photo Credit: Paradise Photography

In 2011 Ancient Mariner Ben Stubenberg moved to the Turks & Caicos Islands, where he co-founded an open water swim called the “Race for the Conch” Eco-SeaSwim.

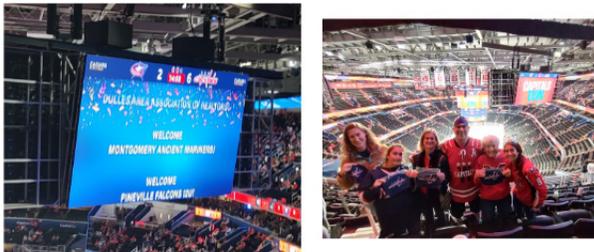
Now in its 15th year, the next event is set for June 28, 2025, in the beautiful turquoise waters of Grace Bay.

Swimmers can choose among three race distances—2.4 miles, 1 mile and 1/2 mile and can do two back-to-back.

Over the years many Montgomery Ancient Mariners have participated in the Race for the Conch, and several have taken home conch trophies.

Ben says, “I love seeing old Ancient Mariner friends and meeting new ones who come here for the race. Hope to see more this year!”

Details about the races and registration can be found at www.ecoseaswim.com



Six Ancient Mariners swimmers and their families attended Swim Night at the Washington Capitals in the fall and went home with their own Washington Capitals swim cap!

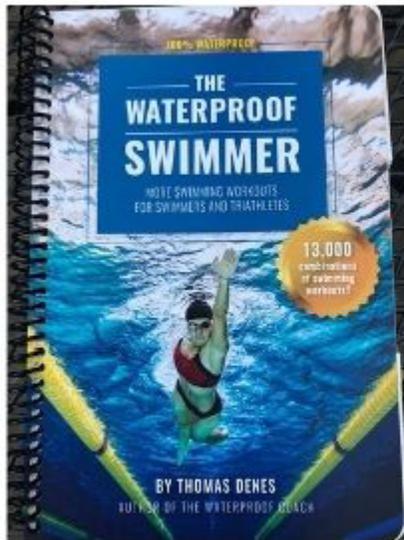
Thank you to Marci Goldberg for organizing this fun outing!



L-R Dave Siskind, Bob Benson

Longtime MLK swimmers Dave Siskind and Bob Benson met up at December's American Geophysical Union meeting at the Washington Convention Center, where Bob presented at the conference.

Bob first started working at NASA over 50 years ago. Dave recently retired after 32 years at the Naval Research Laboratory.



Can't attend an Ancient Mariners practice during the week? Looking for workouts when swimming on your own? Coach Tom Denes has written *The Waterproof Swimmer*, which includes over 40 pages of workouts that that you can mix and match.

To order a book, talk to Tom at practice or email him at waterproofcoach@gmail.com.



Looking for another tool to help improve your swimming technique?

Ancient Mariner Jose-Luis Gallagher is the Founder and CEO of Rip Current Sports and has patented his flagship product, Dual Boards.

The boards help swimmers with body position and alignment, breathing and proper kicking.

Learn more here: <https://ripcurrentsports.com/>