

Editor's Note

Milestones



Stephanie Ganey Photography

To say that 2014 has been a banner year for U.S. Masters Swimming is a bit of an understatement.

Our Swimming Saves Lives Foundation launched the inaugural "April Is Adult Learn-to-Swim Month" campaign, gaining national attention from articles in *USA Today* and the *New York Times*, coverage by TV news stations, and radio interviews broadcast in hundreds of markets. Although we're beyond excited about the publicity, what truly motivates us is the impact that learning to swim has had upon thousands of adults across the country.

Take Richmond, an ethnically diverse community in Northern California that sits on more than 30 miles of waterfront. Coach Benicia Rivera of the Richmond Plunge Masters used SSLF grant money to fund an adult learn-to-swim program. She documented its progress, interviewing her new swimmers about what learning to swim has meant to them—how it's affected their lives on a day-to-day basis. Although she sent us the video as a thank-you for the grant, we're deeply grateful for her dedication, as well as the accomplishments of all the coaches and instructors who are enabling significant, positive change in the lives of many. The video is available at usms.org/videos/video.php?ID=3022.

Our coach certification programs continue to help coaches develop their skills and inspire their swimmers. Certification is also helping aquatics directors and instructors create new Masters Swimming programs in their facilities. By the end of 2014, we'll have certified more than 680 new coaches this year alone. In addition, the Coaches Committee certified the first 10 Level 4 coaches this year—a significant accomplishment for the experienced coaches who met the stringent requirements for advanced certification.

New educational opportunities are coming in 2015. Adult learn-to-swim instructor certification will provide education for anyone who wants to teach adults the fundamentals of swimming.

And in 2014, we crossed the 60,000 mark in membership for the first time. More than 16,000 of you are first-time USMS members this year. Welcome to what the SwimToday campaign has dubbed the #FunnestSport! USMS is proud to be part of this inaugural campaign, which is headed up by USA Swimming and leading industry sponsors and organizations.

All of these milestones are important, and the best way we can think of to celebrate them is to continue to share the stories about the swimmers and coaches behind the milestones.

We'll also continue to bring you technique articles, relevant health and nutrition information, product reviews, training advice from competitive and experienced swimmers and coaches, and much more in *SWIMMER*. Back issues can be read online and on mobile devices via your MyUSMS account at usms.org/myusms. Our *STREAMLINES* eNewsletters are archived at usms.org/admin/nycu, and you can find us on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. And newly organized this year, three staff blogs, including these editorials, can be found in the blogs section of the USMS Discussion Forums at usms.org. Our executive director shares behind-the-scenes information about USMS, and the education director's blog is a treasure trove for coaches and club administrators.

So whether you've registered for your 20th year or are new to USMS, we're honored to have shared this exciting year with you and we can't wait to see what 2015 brings.

Laura Hamel, Editor-in-Chief

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ON THE COVER

Jane Russell of Davis Aquatic Masters demonstrates new backstroke techniques in "Evolutionary Backstroke," by Coach Stuart Kahn (page 24). Photo by Peter H. Bick.

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» » A significant personal milestone or accomplishment in 2014:

The twins are potty trained!

Despite extreme avoidance tactics, turned 50 anyway.

Two marathon firsts in one swim: soloed the length of Lake Pend Oreille and broke my 30-mile barrier.

Have spent the last 31 weeks growing a human.

Recovered from shoulder surgery and swam at Nationals and Worlds.

A special someone agreed to marry me.

Swam 1 mile for the first time, in a coached Masters workout.