

# Ocean LIFEGUARD

Florida Beach Patrol Chiefs Association / Southeast Lifesaving Association

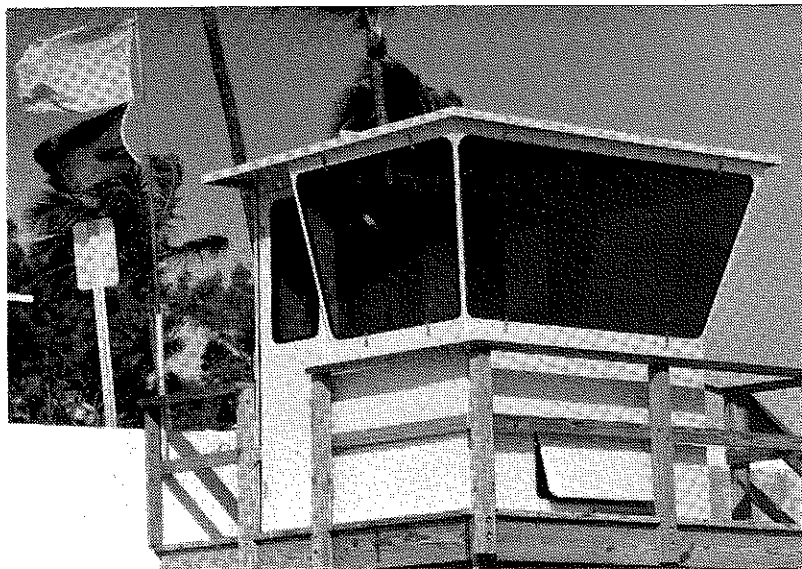
Fall / Winter 1993

VOL. V, ISSUE 5





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# Ocean LIFEGUARD

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**Florida Beach Patrol Chiefs Association / Southeast Lifesaving Association**

**Mission Statement: To Promote Public Safety & Education  
on our Surf Beaches and to Create the Highest Level of Professionalism  
among our Lifeguard Ranks.**

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## **Southeast Lifesaving Association / United States Lifesaving Association** (Southeast Region)

Dear Fellow Lifeguards:

Each year surf lifeguards from across the country will rescue over 100,000 swimmers from drowning. Unlike pool lifeguards, none of these surf lifeguards will be certified by any national body; until now!

The introduction of the United States Lifesaving Association's Lifeguard Agency Certification Program will now fill this void.

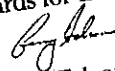
The USLA Lifeguard Agency Certification Program will provide beach lifeguard agencies with minimum recommended national standards and a recommended training curriculum. Once a training program meets these guidelines, the agency may apply for USLA certification.

The new USLA Lifeguard Agency Certification Program creates a national standard of excellence, a benchmark for lifeguard agencies to seek and maintain.

Today's lifeguards provide a wide variety of services in addition to rescues of swimmers and boaters. Some California lifeguards are armed peace officers, providing law enforcement along with water rescue. Other lifeguard agencies handle marine firefighting, swiftwater river rescue and coastal cliff rescue. A number of lifeguard agencies provide 24 hour service due to high emergency call volume and are directly linked to the 911 telephone system.

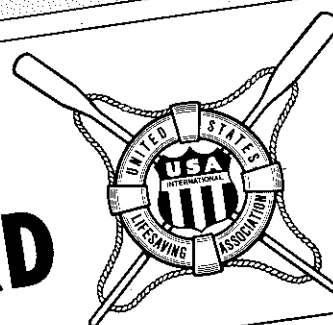
Overall, America's surf lifesavers have continually adapted to provide the services needed to reduce loss of life and damage to property along the coastal waterways of this country. The USLA Lifeguard Agency Certification Program is yet another important step toward ensuring that these critical services are provided at the most professional level possible.

Lifeguards for Lifeguards,

  
Gerry Falconer,  
President SELA /  
USLA - SER

101 North Rock Road, Fort Pierce, Florida 34945

# **SWIM NEAR A LIFEGUARD**





Florida  
Beach Patrol  
Chiefs Association

September 2, 1993

Greetings Florida Ocean Lifeguards:

I would like to take this opportunity to compliment you on the excellent work you are doing and bring you up to date on the progress of the Lifeguard Study Committee. This committee was created by the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, Emergency Medical Services Division. The purpose of this committee is to review and discuss the issue of state regulation of lifeguards.

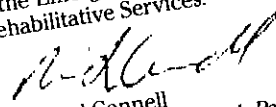
Pool Lifeguards in the State of Florida are required by statute to have certifications in Lifeguard Training, C.P.R. and Standard First Aid reviewed by local Health Departments. Ocean lifeguards in the State of Florida are not regulated or required to comply with any standard of training or certification.

This concept of EMS regulated ocean lifeguards was initiated shortly after September 1990 when ocean lifeguard supervisors from several organizations became aware of legislation that regulated pool lifeguards in the State of Florida. Since open water lifeguards were not included in this legislation the Florida Beach Patrol Chiefs Association and the Southeast Lifesaving Association decided to take the initiative to research regulating Florida's ocean lifeguards. Representatives from both organizations approached the HRS Division of Environmental Health and HRS Emergency Medical Services Office for guidance.

The Florida Beach Patrol Chiefs Association recognized the natural relationship between EMS and beach lifeguards in the state in addition to the strong organization established in the EMS Office. In January of 1992, representatives from both the Southeast Lifesaving Association and the Florida Beach Patrol Chiefs Association drafted legislation and successfully got it through the legislature as a part of the EMS Reauthorization Act of 1992.

One of the results of this legislation is that all lifeguard agencies are now identified as First Responder Agencies, and are required by law to make every effort possible to enter into a memorandum of understanding with their local EMS provider. This will provide a more consistent level of pre-hospital care to patients throughout the state.

The Lifeguard Study Committee will meet in October of 1993 to review the results of a survey sent to all known lifeguard agencies in the state. The committee will make recommendations from the information gathered to the Legislature in November. It is the hope of the Florida Beach Patrol Chiefs that these recommendations will include a State certification process for all Ocean Lifeguards to be directed by the Emergency Medical Services Division of the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services.

  
Richard Connell

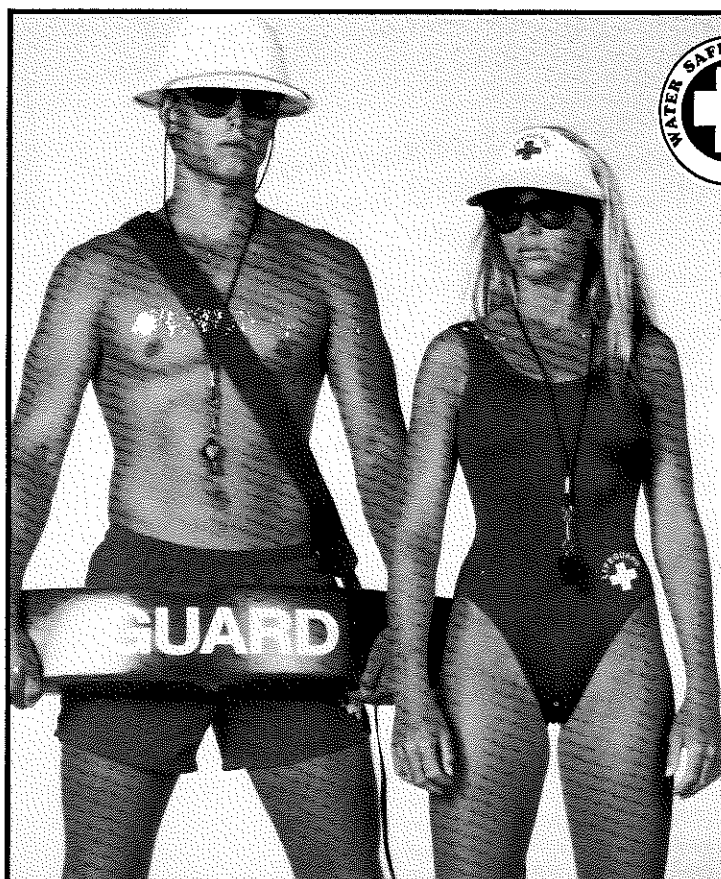
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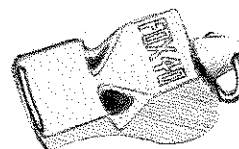
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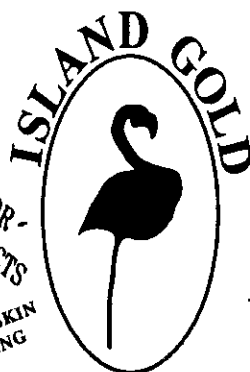
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During the summer of 1993 ISLAND GOLD, INC. gave samples of its product to Florida Beach Patrol Chiefs at a meeting held 6/16/93 in Delray Beach for the purpose of evaluating its effectiveness against "sea lice" (sunbather's eruption) and for comments on ISLAND GOLD DARK TANNING OIL as a 100% natural Sunning product. Twenty-one lifeguards received free samples of ISLAND GOLD for their evaluation at a meeting held 6/22/93 in Boca Raton.

Initial test results have been very satisfactory regarding the effectiveness of ISLAND GOLD DARK TANNING OIL reducing irritation caused by "sea lice" (Cnidarians). Lifeguards at the City of Delray Beach provided the best information thus far with their evaluation of the product.

Lifeguards went out into the surf and swam side by side, one with ISLAND GOLD DARK TANNING OIL applied before exposure and one unprotected. The protected swimmers reported far less irritation or rashes as a result of using ISLAND GOLD DARK TANNING OIL.

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Richard Connell  
Delray Beach Chief

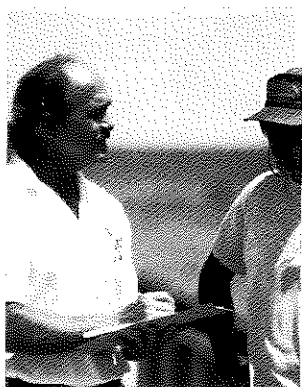
"... The very first time I used this product on the beach, I went home and had a nice coloring on my skin without burn... after my shower, my skin felt just wonderful."

June S. Culkin  
Administrative Secretary  
St. Lucie Co, Marine Safety

"... Helps to tan problem areas on my skin... is very light and does not cause a greasy buildup."

William McNeely Jr.  
Chief of Marine Safety  
St. Lucie Co., Florida

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## The Lifeguard Regulation Study

— By — **Paul Drucker**  
SELA Vice President

In October of 1990, due to the drowning of a child in the presence of an uncertified swimming instructor, Florida State legislation was passed requiring that all public pool lifeguards and swimming instructors be certified. This law passed with little notice or involvement of lifeguards or lifeguard agencies.

By January of 1991, Paul Drucker of the United States Lifesaving Association's Southeast Region, with Richard Noyes and Dan Reidy of the Florida Beach Patrol Chief's Association, met with the writers of the new law at HRS, and then with Mike Williams, Director of EMS, and colleagues. We began educating them on the role of present day ocean lifeguards in the EMS chain and how we have pursued various avenues of self-regulation. We expressed our concern about being regulated without input and discussed the best ways to involve ourselves with the process. Mr. Williams was very encouraging and helpful, pledging his assistance and support.

Several months later we were made aware that First Responder legislation was to be introduced soon that requires Memorandums of Understanding between first responder groups and their local EMS licensee, which addresses communications and protocols. Paul and Rich flew to Tallahassee to lobby for the word "lifeguards" to be included in the legislation, which it was. We were also able to have a study of lifeguard regulation written and included.

Soon thereafter the legislation was accepted into law, and a report based on the study is due to the legislature November 1, 1993. Freida Travis and Sandra Hartley of the Florida EMS Department has brought together at least 14 lifeguard constituents representing beaches, pools, lakes, waterparks, Red Cross, YMCA, USLA, FBPCA, Ellis & Associates and others. A survey has been created for agencies, and a questionnaire for lifeguards, which should be returned by the end of August for compilation and analysis.

### — BACKGROUND —

The original impetus for this effort was the growing need for professionalism and skill by lifeguards on Florida's beaches to address the increasing usage, diversity of activities, and variety of emergency situations being encountered. In 1990, before federal OSHA officials, lifeguards from around the state testified to treating victims of not only drowning, but; lightning strikes, boat explosions, propeller lacerations, plane crashes, balcony falls, shark attacks, car accidents, and much, much, more. Most of these situations were witnessed and attended to immediately, with little or no time to think or prepare as a paramedic would have.

Each Beach Patrol has created their own strength, skill, policy and procedural requirements over and above those of the Red Cross, which, doesn't address the surf skills or beach environment knowledge necessary by today's ocean lifeguard. Many similar and not so similar training programs are being used to instruct new ocean lifeguards around the state.

When we realize that many lifeguard agencies; don't provide oxygen; don't have a medical director; require only 8 hours of medical training; communicate with hand signals; and don't have equipment standards, we understand that much could be done to upgrade an industry of emergency medical and rescue providers.

Through networking, the FBPCA and the USLA encouraged high standards and sought to educate the public to ocean safety concerns. With the outbreak of AIDS, lifeguards came to a new realization of the risks their jobs entailed, and sought to be protected by OSHA and a closer connection with other EMS workers.

We found that EMT's, paramedics and fire / rescue personnel were much more aware and informed on medical risks, updated procedures, equipment, communications, training, etc. Our daily contact with Fire/ Rescue, Police, Marine Patrol, and Coast Guard personnel - transferring patients, performing search and rescue operations, reporting crimes and hazards - requires us to be very familiar and involved in emergency first aid, water safety, and law enforcement.

The job of a lifeguard has evolved out of the necessity to become a vital and urgent first response link in the EMS chain. Each year, of the 50 million beach users, over 24,000 people are rescued and 14,000 given first aid, even though over 350,00 preventative measures are taken. Also, Florida lifeguards educated over 60,000 children in water safety last year by visiting schools and instructing junior lifeguard classes.

Regulation of the lifeguard industry will enhance public safety by recognizing lifeguards as specialized EMS workers and public safety officers that provide a widespread and needed service. Through the communications between lifeguard constituents, and with the understanding of the financial and seasonal restrictions, any effort at upgrading and standardization should ultimately benefit the people and visitors to Florida. By having a voice, much can be done to enhance water safety awareness.



# ***A Personal Perspective: Lifeguards in Florida***

By Sandra Hartley,  
*Office of Emergency Medical Services*

**A**s a new employee within the Office of Emergency Medical Services in Florida, and a rather old paramedic, I have been given the opportunity to work on the development of a study to be presented to the legislature prior to November 1 of this year on the status of lifeguards in Florida. It's been quite an education!

Lifeguards, I discovered, are a very diverse group. It matters a great deal where you perform your duties, for example. An ocean lifeguard (*I've been told not to call you beach lifeguards, and I'm sensitive to that, having been called an ambulance driver myself*) performs different rescues, needs different skills, and requires a different level of physical agility than that of a lifeguard serves a pool. Each of the aquatic environments is served by a lifeguard who is, and must be, particularly attuned to the requirements of the locale and its visitors.

There are, however, common themes among all lifeguards I've met. These include a fierce loyalty to their profession, a firm commitment to strive toward excellence, and a strong dedication to serving others. It has been a pleasure learning from this community of individuals what needs to be done to assist lifeguarding in Florida. Among the members of your community who have been most helpful are Richard Noyes, Richard Connell, Paul Drucker, Tom Hutton, Tom Rennick, Ron Watson, Jay Moyles, Jim Lasswell, and Chris Brewster of USLA. Among the pool lifeguards who have educated and assisted us are Patricia Mallarney, Tom Werts, Barbara Law, and Marie Sheba; and so many others that it would be impossible to name them all. Thank you.

One of the first concerns voiced by many of you was the request that you be recognized as a member of the EMS family. You already are. As a paramedic, there were occasions when I looked into your faces, and hearts, on scene as we tried to save the life of a young drowning victim. We worked together as a team. Those who save lives belong to the same family. This fact was recognized last year by the legislature when section 401.435, Florida Statutes, was passed. It

specified lifeguard agencies as a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to be developed between first responder agencies and the EMS agencies in whose area they respond. The MOU is designed to open a line of communication between your agency and EMS, to improve on-scene coordination of patient care. The MOU should provide a vehicle to address many of your concerns. The MOU has already been implemented by many as well as the first responder and EMS agencies.

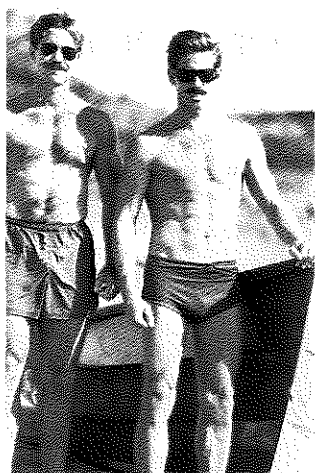
The lifeguard study is currently under development. It will address concerns presented by all of you, and by your agencies. It will present recommendations developed with the assistance of your representatives on the Lifeguard Advisory Committee, who have been hard at work on this project for the last several months. It will reflect the comments and concerns of individual lifeguards throughout Florida.

The study will not solve all of the problems of lifeguards. It will identify to the legislature what can be done, but it cannot require that those recommendations be implemented. Florida has an "unfunded mandate" law which requires that any mandate by the state must include a method of funding it. Therefore, careful and practical consideration must be given to any recommendations that are made. We must consider the fact that when new programs are funded, money frequently must be diverted from existing initiatives. The study will be the first step; much remains to be accomplished.

Please contact me if you have comments or questions. I recognize and appreciate the service you provide to our state, and I salute you.

---

*Sandra Hartley*  
*Office of Emergency Medical Services*  
*Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services*  
*1317 Winewood Boulevard*  
*Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0700*  
*(305) 487-1911*



# The Reality of Professional Surf Lifeguarding

By: John R. Fletemeyer

The media frequently portrays ocean life-guards as individuals living in a perpetual stage of adolescence out to get their bodies bronzed and to meet members of the opposite sex. If you don't believe me, just watch an episode of Bay Watch. In Florida where lifeguards work as dedicated, full-time professionals, this image could be no further from the truth.

Let's consider the lifeguard. He or she is usually between the ages of 25 and 35 and is well educated. A survey of this subject found that lifeguards working on beaches in south Florida had an average of 3.2 years of college. Many had baccalaureate degrees and some even had advanced degrees. One was a practicing lawyer. Impressed!

In response to the demands of professional lifeguarding, many ocean lifeguards partake in specialized training that includes underwater search and recovery, EMT, inflatable rescue boat operation, airplane disaster, and emergency oil spill management. And in response to the trend of lifeguarding being more business and management oriented, more and more lifeguards are acquiring formal backgrounds in accounting, administration, employee management, and computer programming.

Another popular misconception about ocean lifeguarding is that a lifeguard's main job is to make rescues. Let's return to Bay Watch to demonstrate this point. In almost every episode, Mitch (David Hasselhoff) or one of the other regulars is envolved in making a spectacular rescue. In the real world, such rescues are rare. This is due to the fact professional lifeguarding is predicated on rescue prevention and not rescue making. Consequently, in a "typical" day, a lifeguard might perform 20 "preventative actions" and not make a single rescue.

While to many, adopting a proactive prevention seems simple, in the real world of ocean lifeguarding, it is exceedingly difficult. This is due to the ocean's often fickle and unpredictable nature that can cause life threatening hazards to materialize unexpectedly. Rip currents, the leading cause of drownings on surf beaches, often develop in only a couple of minutes. It's up to the lifeguard to recognize this hidden danger so that bathers can be appropriately warned. Additionally, lifeguards must respond to many other dangers such as lightning, submerged rocks, floating debris, rough surf, dangerous marine life and biohazardous waste.

To gain a deeper appreciation of the role of accident prevention in ocean lifeguarding, take a look at Figure 1. In

1991 statistics reveal that USLA lifeguards made over a million and a half preventions. This impressive statistic translates into many lives saved and many more serious injuries being prevented.

In recent years, the ocean lifeguard's job has been further complicated (even threatened) by the prevalence of people infected with bloodborne diseases -- primarily AIDS and Hepatitis. Take a moment to think about this -- lifeguards must sometimes respond to a victim bleeding in the water without the benefit of protective equipment (gown, gloves, goggles, barrier mask, etc.). So, unlike other emergency health care workers equipped with this vital equipment, lifeguards assume a risk that is unique to the profession.

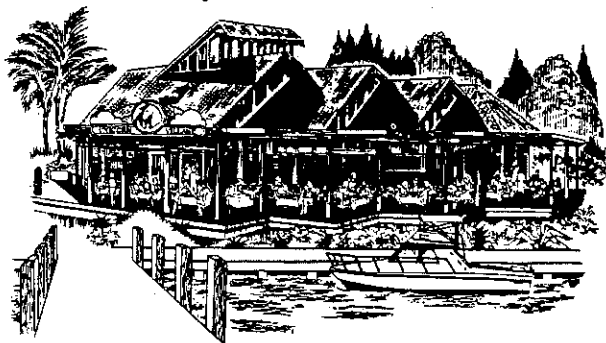
This problem underscores the fact that ocean lifeguarding represents a highly unique profession with a host of dangers and challenges that require innovative and aggressive responses. With the help of the state certification program discussed in the previous two articles by Mr. Drucker and Ms. Hartley, I am confident we will be able to meet these head on as lifeguarding continues to evolve into a respected profession.

Figure 1

**United States Lifesaving Association  
Beach Statistics  
(May 4, 1992)**

	1990	1991
Beach Attendance	217,926,785	176,452,520
Rescues	51,656	40,635
Preventative Actions	919,217	1,538,534
Medical Aids	39,904	76,594
Boat Rescues	9,467	8,540
People on Board	20,662	24,230
Vessel Value	112,049,898	91,221,357
Drownings	73	69
Unguarded	58	58
Guarded	15	11
Lost and found Persons	12,216	9,311
Safety Lectures	2,517	5,201
Students	276,123	404,814

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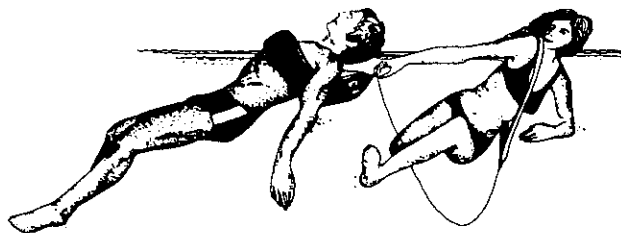
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## THE HIDDEN ENEMY: A New Video that Addresses How to Deal with Infectious Waste in Aquatic Environments



*Julia Hyland (Palm Beach County)  
and Bill McNeely (St. Lucie County)  
Demonstrating the use of  
"Universal Precautions"*

In December of 1991, the Occupational, Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a mandate making it necessary for all health care workers and first responders to receive special training on the subject of infectious disease prevention in the work place.

In response to this mandate, a group of experts representing a number of highly respected organizations volunteered their time to produce a video on this subject as it relates to aquatic environments. The organizations that were represented included the Olin Foundation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Consolidated Safety Services, Inc. and the International Swimming Hall of Fame. Additionally training staff from a number of Florida lifeguard agencies contributed to this project.

The outcome of this team effort was the video, **THE HIDDEN ENEMY**. The introduction is provided by Dr. Sam Freas, President and CEO of the International Swimming Hall of Fame. As one of the world's leading aquatic authorities, Dr. Freas stresses the need to educate the aquatic industry about the life threatening impact of AIDS and HBV on its workers. He states that nothing less than an immediate and aggressive response to this problem is crucial.

The second part of this video is by Dr. Jim Dobbins, a long time lifeguard and one of the nation's leading experts on communicable diseases. In this part, Dr. Dobbins details how it is possible for an aquatic worker to come in contact with a bloodborne pathogen such as the AIDS and HBV viruses. He also outlines the potential risk factors as well as measures that can be used to diminish these factors; primarily the adoption of "Universal Precautions".

Part three is by Dr. John Fletemeyer. In this part, Dr. Fletemeyer recognizes the fact that some of the "Universal Precautions" designed for on land, do not work in the water. Consequently, he elaborates on the use of "Universal Precautions" by including the following elements:

- \* *Always remain upstream when a victim is bleeding*
- \* *Always remain on the wave or windward side of a bleeding victim*
- \* *Always keep as much water as possible between you and the victim*
- \* *Always keep your head above the water to avoid possible contamination through the mouth and eye membranes*
- \* *Once back on land, immediately don appropriate protective equipment.*

The final part of this video is by Dr. Jolanda Yanczewski, President of Consolidated Safety Services, Inc. In her part, Dr. Yanczewski discusses the importance of developing an exposure plan. She stresses that this plan must be updated annually or as the need arises. Also in this part, she outlines two steps involved in implementing an aquatic training program that addresses the OSHA mandate. She notes that if this is not accomplished in a timely manner, there may be serious legal ramifications.

In summary, **THE HIDDEN ENEMY** represents a timely response to the OSHA mandate and to the potential dangers that are associated with bloodborne pathogens in aquatic environments. No agency should be without this valuable instructional aid. To obtain a copy of **THE HIDDEN ENEMY**, call the International Swimming Hall of Fame (305) 462-6536.



# The Sun in Your Eyes



At work or at play, a day in the sun can be a pain in the eye. It's almost like sunburn, doctors say.

"Ultraviolet rays from the sun can damage the cornea in the same way a sunburn affects the skin," says Michael Gilbert, an ophthalmologist in Elizabeth City.

So what's a lifeguard to do?

The best remedy is prevention, and a hat is the first line of defense. A good pair of sunglasses and common sense can come in handy, too.

People who spend their days in the sun know the symptoms: eyelids lined with sandpaper, eyeballs braided with fire, head pounded by the incessant beat of a drummer.

If you've been there, you never want to go again.

Aside from minor irritations, there's no proof that the sun directly causes ocular problems, says Edward Buckley, an assistant professor of ophthalmology at the Duke University Eye Center in Durham.

And relief for these problems is easy. Our own tears are one safeguard, says Jim Lane, an optician in Wilmington. The mild saline solution washes dust, sand and salt spray from our eyes.

When that's not enough, eye doctors recommend artificial tears such as Hypo Tears, Tears Naturale or Visine to soothe sun-strained eyes. Cold compresses help, too.

Another defense in sunglasses. Many kinds are on the market, but not all offer complete protection.

The sun shields out three wavelengths of light: visual light; reflecting light, or glare; and UVL, or tanning light.

The damaging effects come from UVL, says Buckley. Direct exposure can affect the cornea (tissue covering the eyeball) or the retina (nerve fibers in the back of the eye that send messages to the brain).

For adequate protection, choose a pair of sunglasses that blocks 75 to 100 percent of the UVL. The higher the percentage the better, especially for people in the sun all day or those over 40.

Muscles around the pupils weaken as eyes age, causing the pupils to dilate in bright sunlight. A good pair of sunglasses shields the eyes and reduces discomfort.

When buying sunglasses, check the tag or ask your optician or eye doctor for the correct percentage. If needed, UV protection can be added to lenses for a minimal charge.

Polarized lenses reduce glare by blocking light reflected from flat surfaces such as roads and water. A good pair of sunglasses should cut glare 75 to 90 percent. Most doctors recommend polarized lenses for people who work in the sun or on the water.

Photochromic lenses, which darken as the light increases, adequately shield the eyes in many conditions.

In general, the darker the lenses the better, says Andrew Davidson, an ophthalmologist in Morehead City. More tint blocks more visual light.

Look in the mirror when trying on sunglasses. If you cannot see your eyes, the lenses are dark enough.

And choose a lens tinted gray. It doesn't distort natural color. Green and brown tinted lenses are also good.

Glasses with blue, rose or yellow lenses are what Davidson calls "social glasses". They offer little or no protection from glare of UVL.

Untreated sunglasses can actually harm the eyes because the pupil widens behind the dark lenses and lets in more harmful rays.

And glass lenses offer less distortion and higher quality protection than plastic ones.

Prices for functional sunglasses range from \$40 to \$200. But prices, brand names and fancy frames don't assure good protection.

Although there's no proof, many ophthalmologists believe prolonged overexposure to the sun contributes to eye problems.

Skin cancer is a major concern, and the most prone area is the eyelids.

For protection, use SPF 15 sunscreen on the lids and wear a hat and sunglasses. If you've been in the sun for a long time and a red, scaling area appears on your lids or an area does not heal, see a dermatologist.

Other eye problems doctors believe are sun related include the following list from *Prevention Magazine* (6/84). See an ophthalmologist if such problems occur.

- cataracts or clouded lenses.
- a thickening of the tissue on either side of the cornea that is not covered by the eyelid.
- growths of tissue over the cornea that appear as white spots.
- an irritation of the cornea caused by reflected light. Eyes itch and feel scratchy for a few days.

Watch out for the sun. Taking precautions now means better eyesight in the future.

— Sarah Friday and Jim Bahen

## CUSTOM SURFBOARDS

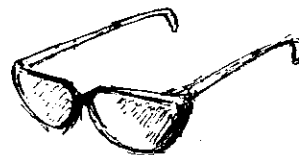
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# Tribute to a True "Professional"

by Michael Soutter

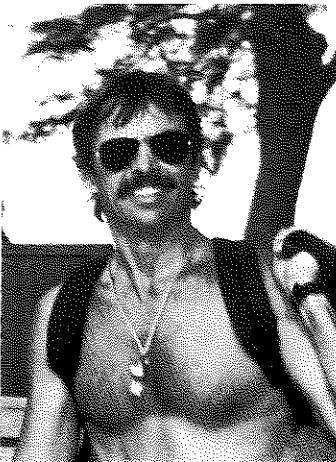
Each year, Florida's Ocean Lifeguard agencies nominate candidates for the Florida Beach Patrol Chief's Association "Lifeguard of the Year" award. Nominees for this prestigious honor are typically outstanding in their commitment to public water safety and in the high degree of professionalism that they bring to the job. Other achievements recognized are the individual's contributions to the profession, public relations endeavors, distinguished performance, and awards they have received.

The lifeguard selected as Lifeguard of the Year for 1992 was Jerry Hutton, a Lieutenant on the Palm Beach County Beach Patrol.

The choice was both well deserved and popular as Jerry was widely known and respected among ocean lifeguards throughout Florida. In years past, winners were sometimes selected on the merits of a single, spectacular lifesaving rescue, or on the basis of a project that was of great importance and benefit to the ocean lifeguarding community. Jerry's selection was based on a wide range of contributions and achievements. His involvement with the Southeast Region of the U.S.L.A., his leadership in developing Palm Beach County's Junior Lifeguard program, his competition and tournament awards, his cost-saving efforts within the Beach Patrol's Equipment Maintenance Program and other accomplishments all helped to make Jerry a logical choice for this prestigious honor.

Jerry has continually supported ocean lifeguarding by actively participating in Regional United States Lifesaving Association (U.S.L.A.) meetings and by undertaking special projects for the U.S.L.A. One such project found him contacting virtually all of the beach patrols in Florida to determine the role "rip currents" played in ocean rescues. From initial phone calls to the analysis of the statistics, the task was very time consuming yet supplied our profession with important data. His research found that upwards of 75% of all Florida ocean rescues involve swimmers caught in "rip currents".

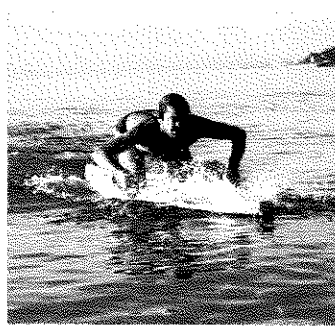
As the coordinator and lead instructor of the South District's Junior Lifeguard Program, Jerry has found a perfect avenue for teaching important safety skills to an eager audience. Every July, for two week-long periods, four dozen 10-16 year olds are instructed in beach safety, rescue techniques, marine ecology and respect for the aquatic environment. He finds the program particularly fulfilling because the youngsters are so enthusiastic and eager to learn.



As a tournament competitor, Jerry's efforts were rewarded a few years back when he won the Paddleboard race at Hollywood, Florida's annual Ocean Lifeguard Competition. Since then his zeal has increased—he has perfected his paddling techniques, endured hours of interval training, even purchased his own competition paddleboard for use in races—and the results have been impressive with age group and open category victories in local and regional competitions. In the summer

of 1992, he gained a second place finish in the paddleboard race and a fourth place finish in the Iron Man event at the U.S.L.A. National Championships, America's most challenging lifeguard trournament.

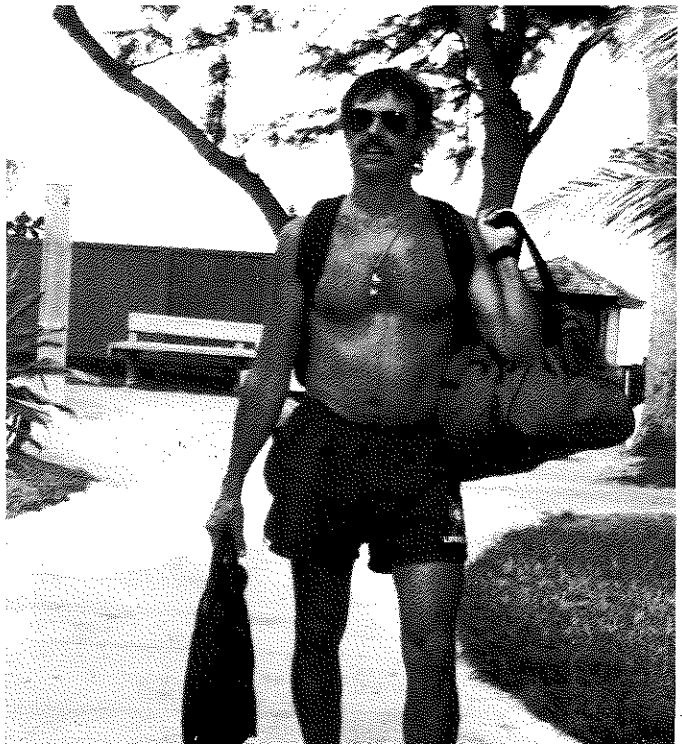
In addition to competing on paddleboards, Jerry is also expert at repairing them. As any Beach Patrol administrator will affirm, equipment repair can be very costly. Jerry's skills in board repair alone have saved the County Beach Patrol thousands of dollars over the years. His woodworking ability and attention to detail have helped rebuild a number of surfboats and dories. He's even expanded Palm Beach County's maintenance program by teaching other lifeguards the fine points of effective and long-lasting equipment repair.



Accomplishments and awards aside, it's important to be an attentive and caring tower lifeguard as well. Bringing enthusiasm and concern to the **daily** responsibilities of public safety at the beach is the essence of ocean lifeguarding. Jerry recognizes that fact, and demonstrates a strong sense of duty **every** day he works. From patiently explaining rip

currents to the beach-going public, to relocating sea turtle nests on scorching summer mornings, Jerry brings an extraordinary level of commitment to his job.

Author and therapist, Thomas Szasz, M.D., once wrote, "Life is potentially a big empty hole, and there are few more satisfying ways of filling it than by striving for and achieving excellence." Jerry Hutton's professional life is an illustration of what the striving can achieve.



# LIFEGUARD TOWERS / *You've Come a Long Way Baby*

Lifeguard towers first appeared in the twenties as elevated ladder platforms with a wooden seat and back at the top. These structures, although functional, did not consider the lifeguard's needs for protection from the elements; primarily ultraviolet radiation, salt spray and wind blown sand.

In recent years these prehistoric lifeguard relics have been replaced by modern lifeguard towers that are well ventilated, enclosed and environmentally safe. A sample of the lifeguard towers currently in use appear in this article. ***Can you match the tower with the correct beach?***

- Lake Worth \_\_\_\_\_
- Palm Beach county \_\_\_\_\_
- Pompano Beach \_\_\_\_\_
- Boca Raton \_\_\_\_\_
- Palm Beach County \_\_\_\_\_
- Haulover Beach \_\_\_\_\_
- Pompano Beach \_\_\_\_\_
- Mid-Town Beach \_\_\_\_\_
- Deerfield Beach \_\_\_\_\_
- Ft. Lauderdale \_\_\_\_\_
- Delray Beach \_\_\_\_\_
- Palm Beach County \_\_\_\_\_
- Town of Palm Beach \_\_\_\_\_

**B**



**D**



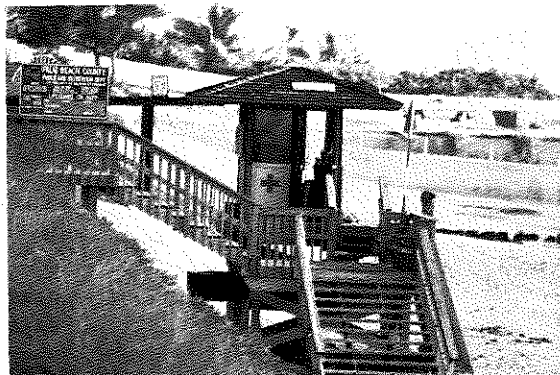
**A**



**C**

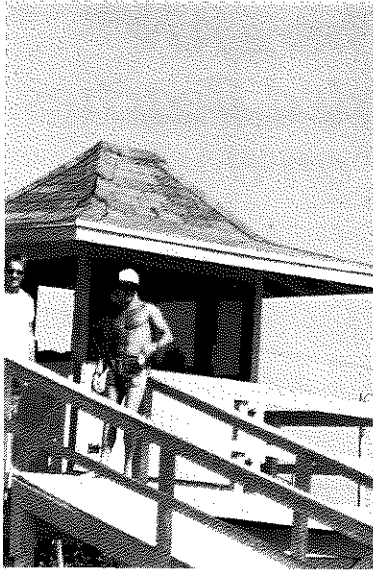


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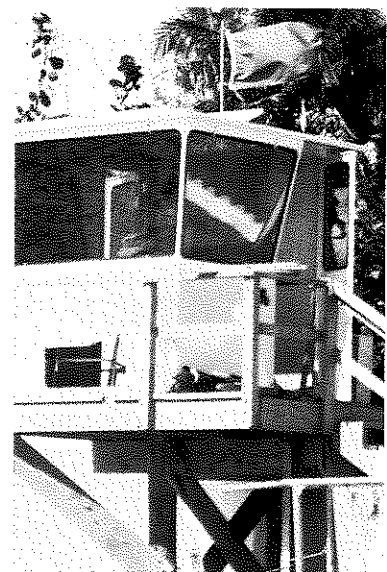
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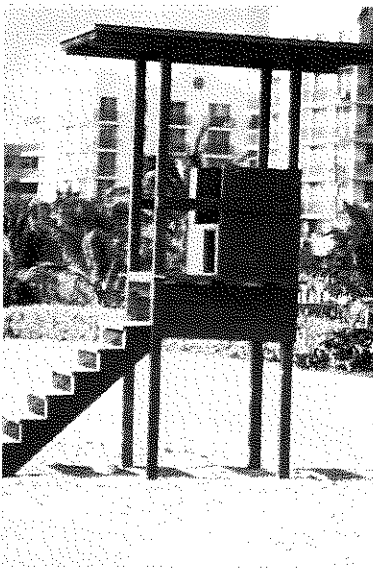
G



H



I



J



K



L



M



A - Lake Worth  
B - Palm Beach County  
C - Pompano Beach  
D - Boca Raton  
E - Palm Beach County  
F - Haulover Beach  
G - Pompano Beach  
H - Mid-Town Beach  
I - Deerfield Beach  
J - Ft. Lauderdale  
K - Delray Beach  
L - Palm Beach County  
M - Town of Palm Beach



## There Are Guarded Beaches on the West Coast of Florida. **SURPRISED?**

*From Clearwater to Fort Myers,  
a span of roughly 120 miles, you can  
choose from a variety of year round,  
well guarded beaches/*

**Clearwater**, with two miles of guarded "team" beach and **Sand Key Beach** (a pocket beach) offers 300 feet of safe swimming area and has done so year round since the late '70's. The sand is fine and very white and the Lifeguards are well trained and motivated. Clearwater has paid parking but the cost is more reasonable. Operations are controlled through the office of the City Harbor Master.

**Manatee County Marine Safety**, south from Clearwater, operates a "team" beach approximately one mile in length, called Coquina and a 300 yard wide "pocket" beach, (Manatee). Their operation is one of a growing number that have very wisely been moved from Parks & Recreation to Public Safety. Manatee County offers well maintained beaches and well trained Lifeguards who are seasoned by the challenges of terrain and large crowds. Manatee has been a year round operation since the early '60's and they are fortunate to have current supervision with experience from the era. Manatee's guarded area, like Clearwater, extends 300 feet off shore.

**Sarasota County Beach Patrol**, established 1958, encompasses 6 year round guarded beaches, two of them one half mile in length. Sarasota is home also to the oldest guarded beaches on the West Coast; Lido and Venice. Lido had paid guards dating back at least to the beginning of World War II and Venice had paid guards at least as early as 1927\*.

**Siesta**, with its award winning white sand is the most populated half mile on the West Coast, pulling in 3.5 million beach patrons per year, at least. Siesta and Lido in North County account for over 4.2 million patron visits while the four "pocket" beaches in South County rake in another 1.4 million patrons or better. Maintenance is excellent and like Clearwater and Manatee, the guards are well trained professionals. The Beach Patrol operates within Sarasota County's Parks & Recreation Department

The newest member of our group is **Lee County's Ft. Myers Beach Patrol**. Given something like a couple of months to prepare they came "on line" for Labor Day 1988 ready for business. A "pocket" size beach at only 600 feet of frontage, they handle remarkably large crowds safely and efficiently. With 8 full time personnel, Ft. Myers has one of the best patron and guard ratios in the state. The equipment, training, supervision and personnel are top flight. Plans are underway to open two more beach parks of comparable size. Ft. Myers Beach Patrol operates within the Lee County Parks & Recreation Department.

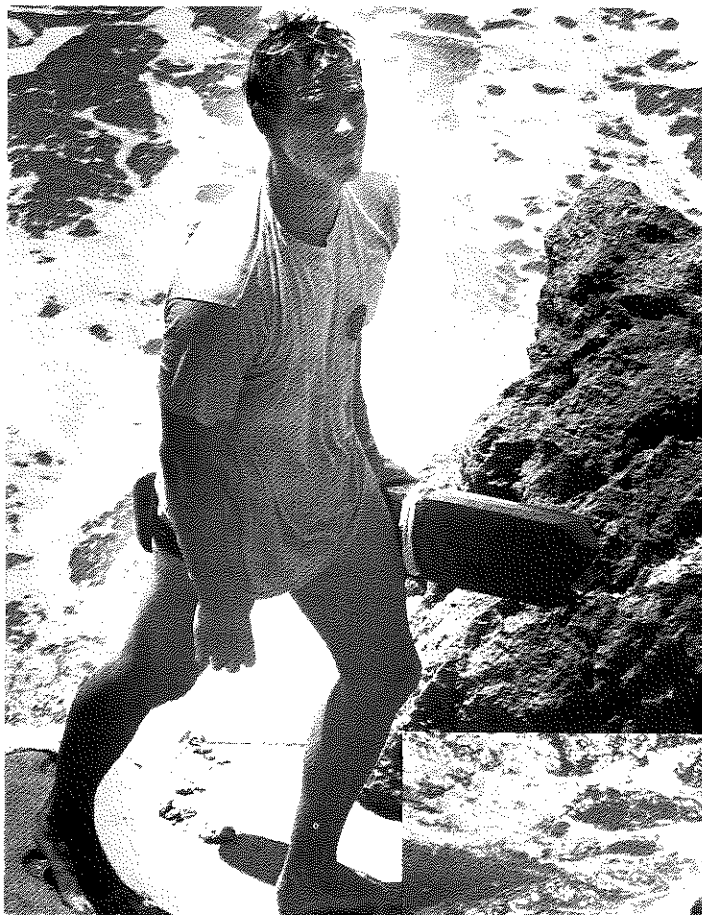


\* "Venice" G.E. Youngberg and W.E. Auman; copyright 1969

— Jim Lasswell  
Sarasota County Beach Patrol

## A Moment of Truth

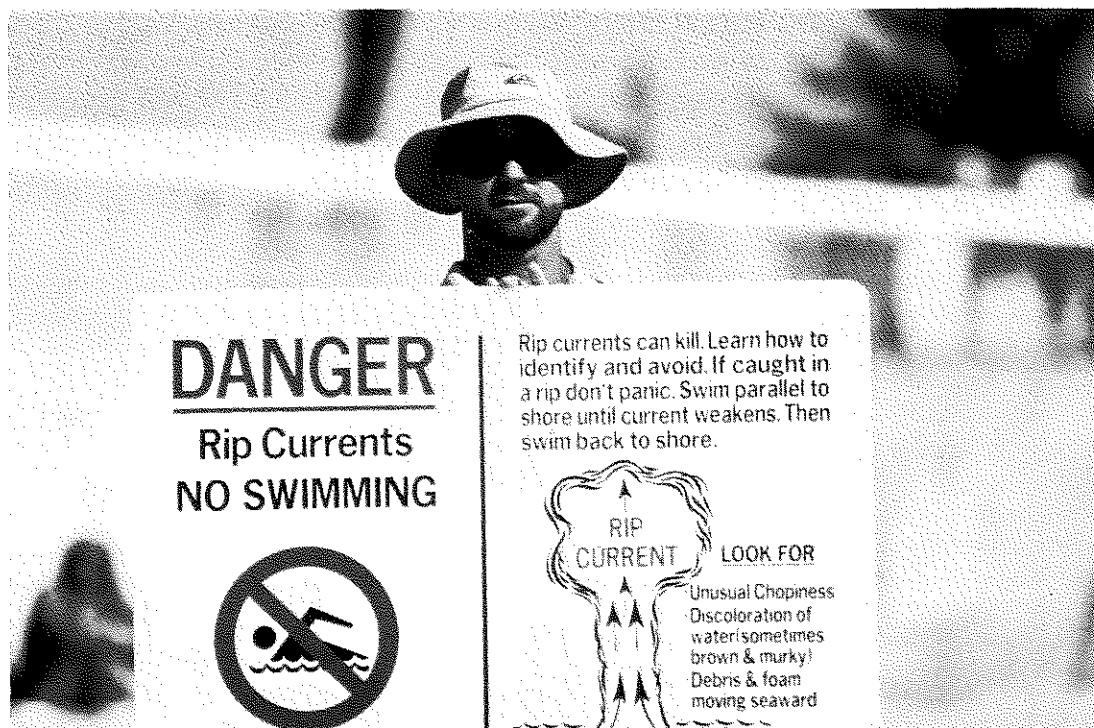
*A **Moment of Truth** is a rare and special event that is sometimes muted by time but certainly never forgotten. It involves a life or death experience and is accompanied by a period of intense introspection. In most cases, a **Moment of Truth** experience makes one better at being able to understand (and appreciate) some of the many ambiguities of life. Lifeguarding represents one of the few occupations where these moments occur, albeit infrequently. If you should have a **Moment of Truth** experience, please submit it to this magazine.*



*Lifeguard Craig Pollack  
Rescuing a non-swimmer  
from a capsized boat.*

# WARNING SIGNS

*By John R. Fletemeyer*



Warning signs have two vital but not necessarily mutually exclusive functions; they warn individuals about a danger that they are unaware exists, or they serve as reminders about already known dangers.

Studies on the subject of warning sign effectiveness indicate that warning signs are never 100 percent effective. Letters that are too small, confusing wording, and improper placement are some of the variables implicated in the reduction of their effectiveness. The proliferation of non-standard warning signs and the associated problem of "sign pollution" contributes to this problem as well.

To make warning signs more effective, the National Standards Institute under the administrative leadership of the National Safety Council developed a special standard pertaining to accident warning signs (ANSI Z35.1-1972). This standard sets requirements for design and color, lettering, sign placement, and the use of symbols instead of words.

In areas where there are ethnically diverse populations that cannot read or speak English, the use of symbols becomes crucial to convey an appropriate warning message. Also a surprisingly large segment of the American population are "illiterate". This makes it even more important to

warn using symbols rather than words.

Even when warning signs conform to the ANSI standard, they do not always work. Many individuals simply choose to ignore signs. Consequently, there can never be a total reliance on warning signs. Instead, warning signs must always be regarded as an element in a larger system involving other types of warnings.

Perhaps an example will serve to illustrate the above. Rip currents have been implicated in a large number of drownings on surf beaches. To warn bathers about these deadly currents, lifeguard agencies not only use warning signs, but they also rely on one to one interactions between lifeguards and bathers, special telephone beach condition reports, a flag warning, and media reports (involving the local weather service, TV and radio stations). Some agencies have gone a step further by developing innovative programs involving interactive instructional technology to educate the public about the many hidden dangers associated with the beach. Combined, these individual elements serve as an effective means to warn the public about rip currents and the various other dangers associated with the surf environment.





## USLA National Lifeguard Games *Hermosa Beach, California*

The South Florida Region was well represented this year at the USLA National Lifeguard Games at Hermosa Beach, California. A determined, well-trained and prepared contingency from several of our beach patrols put forward their best foot and medaled in several events. For example: Boca Raton Florida took the gold in the **Land Line Rescue** and Bronze in the **American Iron Man** (seniors division). Congratulations to all our competitors who were there!

The conditions were perfect for competing as the water was 70 degrees and the sun not too hot. For our competitors too, the zero humidity factor was excellent!

The host chapter ran an excellent tournament start to finish with all bases covered for optimum results. The timing was perfect for the Nationals to be on at the same time as the **Judge Taplin Relay**. Our region was able to field a "Florida" Team entry. The crowds both day and night were excellent, showing support and enthusiasm for professional surf lifesaving. Much information and knowledge was exchanged and made available to the public through rescue demonstrations and the events on hand.

In closing, let me express that as a part of the South East Region and a competitor myself, it was exciting to be a part of the USLA National Lifeguard Games again this year and we will all be looking forward to Cape May, New Jersey next year.

**Lt. Lance Seiler, Delray Ocean Lifeguard Competition Team**

*I patrol the shores of your beaches  
A guardian of the surf  
An astute observer of the trade  
An unsuspecting hero by chance  
My keen eyes saturate nature's marine topography*

*I am the creation of a safety conscious community  
I am the victim of untimely budgetary cutbacks  
My goal is not merely to meet my job responsibilities  
But to constantly supersede and redefine the parameters  
of my ocean rescue skills*

*Unlike firemen and policemen who are logistically dispatched  
With reference to a specific location  
A guard remains spotter, rescuer, and doctor  
A vital link in the EMS system*

*I'm not afforded the option of protective attire  
Mandated by other high-risk careers  
My timely ability to be able to respond to others  
Remains proportional to my own occupational susceptibility*

*My background is as diverse  
as the situations I encounter  
Along this spectrum of conditions  
I'm a constant commitment*

*If you perceive my profession as one without challenge  
A collage of swimwear, sunshine, and surf  
A picture often becomes more than the sum of it's parts  
This backdrop of serenity can yield equal parts adversity  
Nature's hand can turn the sea into a cauldron of death*

*It's here where the guard becomes a tool of his trade  
Combining experience, training and guts  
I jeopardize my own welfare  
To insure the safety of others  
Herein lies the ambivalence in the profession of lifesaving  
I often do my best work in the worst of conditions*

*I'm a Lifeguard*



Dave Battenfield  
Haulover Beach

# Miami Beach — Art Deco and Lifesaving Too !



During the infancy of Miami Beach as a tourist center, the job of rescuing tired or adventurous swimmers from the frothy sea was accomplished by Red Cross volunteers. This was an acceptable solution while Miami Beach was experiencing moderate growth but a more substantial remedy would be necessary to provide consistent safety for citizens and visitors as Miami Beach became a major community and tourist destination.

It was through the efforts of Mayor J.N. Lummus that the Beach Patrol Division came into existence in the late fall of 1926. The purpose of the division was to furnish professional lifeguard protection to patrons visiting City owned beaches. The 1926 hurricane had created huge gullies and channels along the shoreline and the incidence of bathers needing assistance was increasing.

Captain Ernie Wiese organized the Patrol which, at that time, was responsible for beach maintenance as well as lifesaving duties. Ten lifeguard tower locations were manned as well as first aid stations located at the entrance of each beach and umbrella and chair rentals. At it's conception, the Patrol consisted of twelve guards, half of which would be let go during the **off season** - SUMMER. Currently there

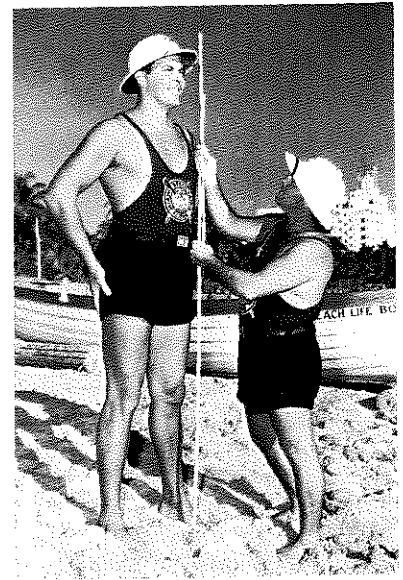
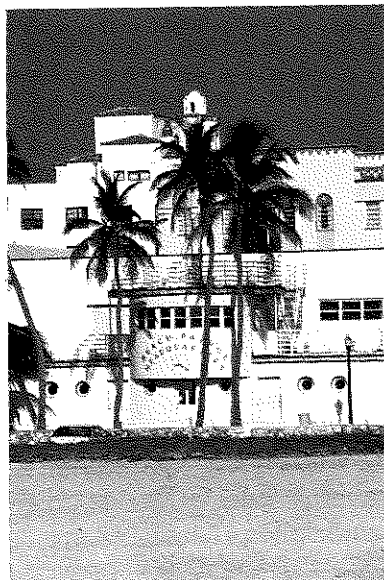
are 53 full time personnel and additional summer guards are hired to control the larger summer crowds. In 1946 attendance at the beaches was 1,800,000, 1962 logged in at over 4 million and the current attendance is approaching eight million bathers and spectators per year.

Captain Wiese was extremely proud of his new Beach Patrol Headquarters which was contracted to be built in 1938 and to this date still houses the main headquarters. The building was designed to replicate the bridge of a ship complete with a nautical style flag pole and ventilation stacks. It is interesting to note that the cost of this building, \$16,720, was objected to by the current Mayor, John H. Levi who stated "I still want to be on the record as against it. It's an awful price to pay for a lifeguard station." Compare this price for a two story concrete building in 1938 with the low bid received this past fall for replacement of Miami Beach's towers after hurricane Andrew (\$12,000 per tower) and you get a good indication of the inflation of the U.S. Dollar.

During the 68 years of this Patrol's history many changes have come about. Changes in bathing suits, changes in morals, changes in equipment and changes in rescue and first aid protocols. In 1969 a number of lifeguards were sent home when their personal appearance did not meet the division code - no beards or mustaches and closely trimmed hair. Many Miami Beach citizens wrote to the media and to the City Commission to state, in effect, that to be rescued by a hairy lifeguard was not a problem. Today, in retrospect, the length of these individuals hair would be considered short by any standards.

The resuscitation of a victim is one modification of import. Initially, rolling a drowning victim over a barrel was an accepted form of rescue breathing. Later the "back pressure - arm lift" method was the modern protocol. Now mouth to mouth ventilation and C.P.R. have been the proper method when a resuscitator or Ambu-Bag are not available. The major change to this aspect of the lifeguards' duties is the attention given to the protection of the guard from contamination with bodily fluids during and after an ocean rescue. The current involvement of the Beach Patrol Chiefs and the U.S.L.A. with the State E.M.S. Advisory Council is one of the most important indications of our profession's dedication to maintain medical competency through consistent training.

Through the years, the beach patrons that the Miami Beach Patrol Lifeguards protect have also been quite diverse. During the boom years when Captain Wiese was in charge, the shoreline of Miami Beach was inhabited mostly during the winter months and then by tourists including world renowned movie stars and globe trotters.

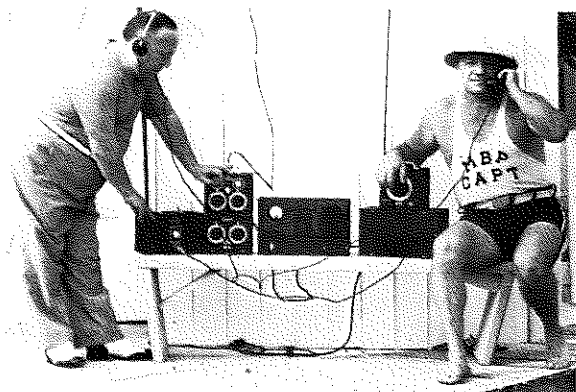


During the late '60's and until recently, grandma lived on Miami Beach which led the lifeguards to pay more attention to the crowd on the beach as well as those in the water. The chances of responding to an elderly person with heart trouble or with heat exhaustion were great. In the water, the frail person of advanced age caused the guards to maintain a constant vigil even on calm days. No guard could consider the conditions easy or allow a lapse in concentration because anything might occur based on the age of the patrons.

Now, of course, Miami Beach has returned to prominence as a world class resort where the "beautiful people" come to play. Local property is being bought up by famous names from Hollywood, New York and around the world. Our guards never know if they are going to be jogging next to Madonna, comparing Harleys with Micky Rourke or protecting Gloria Estafan while she swims on a crystal morning.

Through all of the changes, modifications, and updates, one aspect of the Miami Beach Lifeguard has remained constant - **Dedication**. The men and women of the Miami Beach Patrol are **dedicated** to the protection of the citizens and visitors on our public beaches. They are **dedicated** to the advancement of professional ocean lifeguarding and they are **dedicated** to the maintenance and preservation of the marine environment to which we all owe so much. In this dedication we are proud to join all the other professional lifeguards from coast to coast. We are all water-brothers and sisters working toward the same ends, the preservation of life and safety where we live and work.

By: John Lasseter



***Take a Deep breath and Get Ready for the  
Spring / Summer Issue of:***

**Ocean  
LIFEGUARD**

**FEATURING:**

- \* Special Lifeguard up close and personnel profiles
- \* Women Lifeguards
- \* Florida Lifeguard Certification Program
- \* Lifeguard Vehicles (see below)
- \* New Products

*and much, much more!!!*

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***All photos must be submitted in Black & White and in 5" x 7" format.***

**OLD vs. NEW**

Early on lifeguard vehicles have been an essential element in a professional lifesaving agency's equipment inventory. As time progresses, vehicles are becoming increasingly more varied and sophisticated.

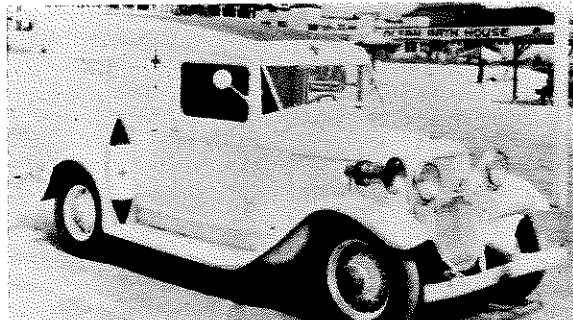


Photo of early 1900's circa rescue vehicle

**REMEMBER —**

***Always swim near a lifeguard and don't let  
foolish actions ruin your day!***

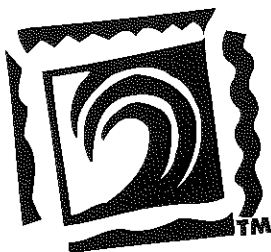


Lifeguard legend Peter Williams on his trusty mount -  
a Kawasaki "Mule".

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