

## Beach Patrol Hosts Rescue Demonstration

submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

As this article is being written, we are finalizing the details of a rescue demonstration that will be performed in conjunction with the Maryland's annual EMS conference, which will be held in Ocean City for the first time on April 2, two days before this newsletter is scheduled to be mailed. The plans include a Power Point presentation led by Captain Arbin highlighting the procedure that we developed for removing victims of suspected spinal injuries from the surf, which we developed with the help of the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS). Captain's presentation will be followed by a live demonstration of the neck/back technique in the ocean in front of the Clarion Hotel. Several members of the Beach Patrol will be braving the cold water to perform the rescue demonstration in heavy wetsuits and will turn their victim over to the Fire Department for transportation, just like in the summer season. The Beach Patrol members will then be joined by other BP members, Fire Department Rescue Swimmers, the Coast Guard with a boat, and the MD Department of Natural Resources Police, also with a boat, to perform what we have been referring to as a "rescue medley". We will have five "victims" being rescued by landlines, paddle boards, rescue swimmers deployed from a quad and a BP Jet Ski. By the time you are reading this, we will know if the weather held out for us or if we had to resort to our back-up plan. In the event of inclement weather we will offer small group training in the neck/back technique to anyone from the conference that is interested. Hopefully, all will go well and we will be able to put on a great show.

**Captain's Note:** Once again other professional rescuers are looking to us to educate them about what we do and why we are considered one of the best beach patrols in the world. The simple answer is that each person who has ever sat a stand in Ocean City has contributed to this incredible reputation. That is why we maintain high standards for everyone and everything we do. That is why part of my presentation will include our mission, the requirements to become an SRT, the training each SRT receives and an overview of the types and numbers of incidents we respond to. My hope is that when someone identifies you as a current or past member of the Patrol that they will immediately have a respect for what you stand for. After 39 years I am still very proud of my affiliation with the Patrol.

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## Dive Team

submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

It might seem like a great idea to abandon the February weather in Maryland for a SCUBA diving trip to Florida. Thoughts of colorful fish, reefs, and maybe even a few lobsters for dinner are what you might expect. But, the instructors from Dive Rescue International had different plans for the five rescue divers from the Ocean City Fire Department who recently traveled to Ft. Pierce to partake in a weeklong Dive Rescue Specialist II class. Our divers, four career members and one volunteer were grateful for the 80+ temperatures that greeted us as we stepped off the plane, but the diving we experienced had nothing to do with colorful fish, at least none we could see. The first half of our class concentrated on light salvage and recovery. It involved using air lift bags, heavy nylon straps and other equip-

ment to raise fairly large, submerged items. The class of thirty was divided into three groups for the practical exercises. Our Ocean City group was allowed to stay together as a team, and we were joined by a firefighter from LA County, a commercial diver from South Africa and several law enforcement officers from Florida. The vehicle we were assigned to lift, move, drop and lift again was a Mercury Marquis. Wrapping and tying straps and deflated lift bags under water may not seem like a terribly difficult task in itself, but the zero visibility caused by the muddy bottom of the little lake where we were operating made the task fairly difficult. Everything had to be done by feel instead of by sight. Our team worked hard together and had great success. On our first attempt to raise the car, the instructor told us that with proper planning and accurate work, a good team could raise the car in twenty minutes. The first two divers from our group to attempt the raise were from Ocean City. After working with the car for awhile, they swam to shore as another team member turned the valves that added air to the bags, and the car soon broke the surface behind them. It was a good lift operation. When asked how long it took from start to finish, the instructor looked at the dive log, then his watch, and said; "Hmm... twenty minutes". We continued to try different techniques, with various degrees of success. But we all learned with every approach we took at bringing the Mercury out of the muck.

The second part of our class focused on diver survival skills. The goal of this training is to help divers to recognize stages of stress in both themselves and in fellow divers before and during a dive. Stress can lead to panic, and panic can be life threatening to a submerged diver. The practical part of the class was designed to induce stress in divers, and to get them accustomed to working their way out of common problems that can occur when SCUBA diving, without panicking. At least we were out of the mud and into the dive well of a pool for this part of the class. The "stress induction" involved having instructors swimming behind us as we followed a weighted rope around the perimeter of the pool. We had blackout masks over our facemasks in order to make things a little more challenging. As we swam around the pool, instructors would come up behind us and pull off our fins and pull off our facemasks. Our full facemask equipment also has our regulator, our air supply, attached. When it goes, your vision and your air supply go with it. The goal of this drill is to get divers accustomed to locating and utilizing their back-up regulators under conditions that are stressful, but without allowing panic to take over. They definitely induced stress to the members of our group, but we all made it through without panicking. When the training was over, we were more aware of some of the things that can go wrong, but were also more prepared to deal with those situations when they occur. This will help us to be better, safer divers and a better team every time we go into the water, whether on a training dive, or when the lives of those we serve depend on our performance.

**Captain's Note:** This article mentions the career firefighters and one Volunteer. That Volunteer is our own Ward Kovacs who is a member of the Ocean City Dive Team. Interestingly several other members of this training group have a Beach Patrol past. The team requested that Ward be able to accompany them on the training and that request was granted. Not only is

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# History/Alumni

## Where Are They Now?

submitted by: Tom Ellis

Hey guys! I've had a lot of really positive changes since I last guarded in 2007. My wife, Kate, and I moved out to the Navajo Indian reservation for two years. I quit my (extremely boring) accounting job and returned to two fields that I've always had a passion for: carpentry and woodworking. After moving back to Maryland I was able to land a job teaching Technology Education in Anne Arundel County. Now in my second year, I can easily say that teaching is the hardest, yet most fun and rewarding job I have ever had (right up there with OCBP!). We are expecting our second child in July so I am currently putting in some late hours getting the nursery ready in our new house on Kent Island.

I hope all is well. Hopefully I'll see some of you when I sneak down to OC to catch a few waves this summer!

**Captains Note:** Although you may not know Tom you will remember his Mom Lynn who was our photographer for many years until she put her lens cap on and retired from photography as a business. But I am sure she has many pictures of her grand child and will be right there for the second one. On another

note, Technology Education teachers are a highly sought after group of teachers and it seems with three Beach Patrol alumni that I am aware of just on the shore, that there must be some similarity between Beach Patrol and Technology Education. In Charles County where I teach we are looking for 14 in the next few years. So if you like working with your hands and think you might like to teach, then Technology Education may be just what you're looking for. UMES near Salisbury is the only University in Maryland that offers this degree. Remember, the two best reasons to become a teacher.... July and August.

Tom Ellis



### OCBP "REMEMBER THEN" REUNION CD

Vic Sprecher (OCBP Alum) is making available a CD from the October OCBP Reunion that includes music & pictures of "Legends of Lifesaving". As soon as it is ready we will let you know about availability.

## Friendship and Bond

Submitted by: Bob Wagner (OCBP Alum 1963-1968)

"Friendship" and "bond" are only words. Or are they? Speaking from my past experiences, I can tell you that they more than just simple words. They are looks, hugs, handshakes, phone calls and now email. I expressed my feelings toward "friendship and bond" to John Jarvis (also a BP alum). He came for me, when I called while I was having trouble dealing with my wife's death from brain cancer. I call him a "true gift". On that same Sunday of my wife's death, an OCBP member, Henry Lee Vinyard also died in the evening. I had known Henry since he was one my Sergeants and an usher in Colleen and my wedding. The bond of friendship continues. I now know my wife was escorted up the stairs to heaven by Sgt. Vinyard. Thanks to the Vinyard family, Phyllis, Trey, Joe (an OCBP member), and Mrs. Hastings for allowing me to bond with Henry through my wife. The bond continues. I then received a phone call from my former roommate and fellow OCBP guard, Congressman Dutch Ruppertsberger, again making my experience a little less stressful. My wife, prior to her death, had chosen a singer for her funeral. She had also asked him to sing for her mother's funeral 7 years earlier. His name is Al Walsh. I have recently found out he is also a former OCBP member. The bond continues. I have received a lot of email from OCBP members, some members from before my time on the beach, some from during my watch, and others from after I left the beach. One was from Dick Corrigan, who preceded me on the Patrol. He has gone through the same thing I am going through now. During our conversation, I also found out he knows my father. The bond continues. The concept described by Capt. Butch Arbin as, "Significance is not just due to the lives we have saved, but is also found in all the lives we impact with every rescue." applies not just to those we have saved, but to ourselves as well. This creates the "bond". One small gesture, phone call, or email creates the same ripple effect. Unfortunately, we do not recognize the bond until after we have left our service in the Beach Patrol. Maybe we should remind the rookies that concept of "friendship and bond", is being built while they are guarding people on the beach. This is my realization as Frank Sauer (13<sup>th</sup> St.), myself (12<sup>th</sup> St.) and John Jarvis (11<sup>th</sup> St), sat on my couch and relived our memories of 46 years ago. The "friendship and bond" of members of OCBP will be there whenever you need it.

**Captain's Note:** I have spoken and written about our Beach Patrol relationships on many occasions and this article attests to the reality that some of those relationships are life-long. It was never so evident as it was in this past October's reunion, when so many friends were reunited after years of lost contact. If you haven't maintained contact just because you're busy and will "get to it later", don't wait another day, pick up the phone or contact them through the web and make sure you make our next reunion. One of my greatest pleasures over recent years as Captain is getting to know the "Legends of Lifesaving", these men are the ones that shaped the modern patrol and are the characters in the stories that have been told for years. Bob Wagner was just one of those characters. Although his active service to the patrol ended over 40 years ago, he was as instrumental in the operations of the patrol and in shaping many of the procedures that we still use today. In his time he was identified as much as the heart of the patrol as our current day icons like, Tim Uebel, Rick Cawthern, Wes Smith, Dave Haight or any others who have served for many years.

# CLASSIFIED

## Looking for summer housing?

submitted by: Glen Irwin

For the past four summers the Ocean City Development Corporation (OCDC) has provided housing solely for OCBP employees. The OCDC is a nonprofit organization that works with the Town of Ocean City and OCBP to provide such housing. The OCDC manages two buildings located at 108 Dorchester Street and 110 Somerset Street in downtown Ocean City. Both houses are immediately adjacent to OCBP headquarters and conveniently located in downtown Ocean City to the Beach, Boardwalk, and other amenities.

The Tarry-A-While Guest House, located at 108 Dorchester Street, provides dorm style living accommodations with single and bunk beds. The 110 Somerset Street house provides a four-bedroom apartment with bunk beds. All leases are individual contracts, but all residents must be OCBP employees. The OCDC charges \$1,500 per resident for housing for the summer season (May 20th thru September 26th). A security deposit is required. This rental fee includes utilities (electric and water). The Tarry-A-While Guest House also includes free Internet and basic television cable. Both buildings provide central air conditioning. Rental payments are taken as payroll deductions. The 110 Somerset Street house will be coed for the 2011 summer season. The Tarry-A-While Guest House will be for male employees only.

For additional information about either house or for a housing application please contact the OCDC office at (410) 289-7739 or email questions to [glenn@ocdc.org](mailto:glenn@ocdc.org).

**Captain's Note:** Because this is employee housing there are some special rules enforced that do not exist in most private rentals. This is a great opportunity and therefore we expect the residents to live up to the high expectations of the Beach Patrol since residence is connected to your employment with the Town of Ocean City.

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## Dr. Robert Holthaus

Submitted by: Lt. Ward Kovacs

In our fall newsletter there was an article asking for Beach Patrol members to give their support and prayers to the Holthaus family, and Bob Holthaus in particular. As usual, the Beach Patrol family responded with a great showing of support for Bob and his family as he struggled in his battle with cancer. Just as we had mailed the newsletter, Bob finally lost that battle. The Beach Patrol quickly sent an email message out to all of our employees who may have come to know Bob and Joan through their years of volunteering and participation in Beach Patrol events, and those who know them from the beach at 50<sup>th</sup> Street. Many made the trip to Phoenix, Maryland to join the large crowd that gathered to pay their respects to Bob's family on November 27<sup>th</sup>. Bob's daughter Molli worked with us as a Surf Beach Facilitator, and is married to former SRT Crew Chief Steve Carter. Joan was grateful for all of the cards, calls and support that she received. You may be seeing her around Ocean City a bit more now that she is in the process of making Ocean City her year-round home. When you get near 50<sup>th</sup> Street, just follow any set of quad tracks and you will be sure to find her where they all intersect.



## 2 Bedroom Apartment for Rent

Three Roommates needed for a 2 bedroom apt. This apt is located on the Ocean Side of 26th St. It is on the 2nd floor and has a large balcony. The rent is \$1500.00 per person (4 people) Utilities are paid. Deposit is \$875.00 then \$625.00 after the third week. If interested please contact Chris Cornwell at [ccornwell@live.com](mailto:ccornwell@live.com) or text message at 479-200-1698.

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## Cottage Rentals

Visit the following website for lifeguard housing. Take a look and see what is available

[www.baysidevillageoc.com](http://www.baysidevillageoc.com)

These cottages are currently under construction and will be available to move in around May 15<sup>th</sup>. In previous years lifeguards have lived here and were considered wonderful tenants. The owner hopes to be able to work with even more Ocean City lifeguards this year. She would be happy to meet with anyone interested at your convenience. Please contact her with any questions.

**Carol Ann Beres**

**Bayside Village**

[caberes@burbageproperties.com](mailto:caberes@burbageproperties.com)

[www.baysidevillageoc.com](http://www.baysidevillageoc.com)

**Phone: 410-213-1900 x 101**

**Fax: 410-213-2171**

**Cell: 410-726-7965**

Note: This is a private citizen of Ocean City and is not Town of Ocean City employee housing. We are simply providing a service for our employees and not endorsing or promoting this property over other in the Ocean City area. If you are interested in the employee housing provided by the Town of Ocean City you need to contact Glenn Irwin at the Ocean City Development Corporation [glenn@ocdc.org](mailto:glenn@ocdc.org).



# TRAINING

## Ocean City Competition Team

submitted by: Sgt. Rick Cawthern

July 13<sup>th</sup> is approaching very quickly. This year Ocean City will have a target on our backs. With this said, we need to start earlier and work out harder than last summer. We also need to get everyone motivated including our alumni. Workouts will start May 16<sup>th</sup> at 130<sup>th</sup> street daily at 6pm. The paddleboards, surf skis and the surfboat will be available for workouts. I 'm also checking into using the Ocean Pines indoor pool during the evenings for swim workouts, this will also be available for SRTs to get ready for their swim test. We also will be having south area workouts this summer after work. Anyone interested in setting up these workouts please contact Sgt. Cawthern. Also for those who are on Facebook, keep a check on the USLA Facebook page for updates on workouts and meetings. Last year we put Ocean City back on the map in the Mid-Atlantic area for competitions and now we need to set the standard across the United States at Nationals.

We currently have two surf skis, seven paddleboards and a Pearson surfboat. And we are in the process of ordering sliding seats for our boat. Also on the wish list, is another boat and a surf-ski. Any fundraising ideas email Sgt. Cowder at [rcowder@ococean.com](mailto:rcowder@ococean.com). This August we will be taking our team again to Cape May, New Jersey for Nationals. We need numbers and competitors of all ages to compete. Start now, plan ahead and chose your events and train for the summer. Here is a list of events for non-craft and craft Mid-Atlantics.

### Mile Beach Run

400 Meter Surf Swim

Swimmer Rescue Race

Landline Rescue Race

Rescue Board Race

Run-Swim-Run

4 x 100 Soft Sand Run Relay

Beach Flags

### Craft Events

Paddleboard Race

Surfboat Race

American Iron man

Iron man

Taplin Relay

Surf ski Race



## OCBPSRA Training Manual

submitted by: Lt. Wes Smith

The OCBPSRA Training Manual has gone through some edits and revisions. Included here are a few pages from the newly revised manual. The 2011 manual has been updated and is available online. This is a private address and not actually linked on our website for the general public, but you can type in the following address into your web browser and view the manual.

<http://oceancitymd.gov/Recreation and Parks/Beach Patrol/pdf/2011Manual.pdf>

The PDF file is large, so it may be easier to right click on the link and save to your computer.

When performing Recertification, I have found the following are things SRTs forget, procedurally, have problems with: semaphore usage as a benefit not hindrance to performance, search and recovery procedures, fog patrol, and remembering to scan for potentially active drowning victims in addition to the common distressed swimmer. With this in mind, we have included samples from the manual on each of these topics.

**Captain's note:** Wes has put a great amount of his time and talent into creating a very professional manual both in content and in format. However, a manual that is not a working document is not worth the paper it is printed on. Instead we intend to keep this manual updated and accurate. Although, the manual contains most of the policies and procedures that you are expected to follow it is not a comprehensive document and you must also be aware of other Beach Patrol and Town of Ocean City policies that apply to your employment and your position. Make sure you review its contents

and please provide the Beach Patrol with any feedback or suggestions to make it a better tool for our operations.

*(Dive Team continued from page 17)*

Ward a great connection for the Patrol with the Fire Department but he brings a perspective as a past member of the Anne Arundel County Dive Team which has been in existence for a very long time. In fact years ago we provided rescue swimmer training for their team and in return they provided safety support for our Sunfest Open water Swim. The connection with the Ocean City Fire/EMS Department benefits both organizations, and the more we know about each other's operations the greater we can assist each other in our perspective missions. For many years we have provided specialized training for both EMS and Fire Department so that they are prepared should they respond to a water rescue. This relationship began many years ago with a customized training program developed by Wes Smith and has evolved into a fully functioning rescue swimmer program. This was a goal of Chief Larmore and he schedules his personnel so that a rescue swimmer is always available when we are off duty. But what better rescue swimmer is there than a current Beach Patrol SRT and that is what is happening at an increasing rate. Several of the members of the Volunteer Fire Company work for the Patrol and most recently Ben Davis and Colby Kauffman have joined the OCVFC. This is a natural step for our SRTs who live in the Ocean City area, to continue to give back to your community as a volunteer fire fighter. If you are interested in finding out more about this opportunity just ask one of the members of the OCVFC.