



Submitted by Sgt. Mat Postell  
11/06/09 – Baltimore, MD.

The Triathlon Club had, by all accounts, a fantastic summer. We had a record number of guards do the morning workouts. Various club members competed in eight different triathlons around the region. And to top it all off, the OCBP Triathlon was completed by over 40 current guards. It was a lot of fun this summer, and I hope those who participated had a great time as well.

Here are some updates on the upcoming events this spring and summer. The main focus of the Tri-Club is to facilitate fun workouts during the summer that are open to all, yet challenging to all levels. No one should be intimidated, everyone can do the workouts. If you are interested in working out this summer there are two things you need to do. First, make sure you find a bike this winter. You can use a cruiser, mountain bike, or a road bike. I recommend searching on websites like Craig's List and picking up a used bike for cheap. If you find you love the sport you can always buy a nice bike later. Second, get into decent shape before the season. We will continue with the same format for workouts as last summer, two workouts a week involving a bike and run. Have a great winter. Feel free to email me about any races you are in this year, or anything you want the Tri-Club to think about. Postell's email: gpostell@aacps.org

Here is a preliminary list of activities we are going to shoot for during the summer of 2010.

- The Frederick ½ Marathon, May 2. A 13.1 mile run in Frederick, Md. Last year CC Ally Brabitz, Sergeants Uebel and Postell, and CC McVey ran the race. A fun training goal right before our season starts.
- Assault on Assateague Sprint Triathlon, June 20. A ½ mile swim, 15 mile bike, and a 5k run. OCBP alum Brian Allen got 3<sup>rd</sup> place out of over 400 participants. A very fun race. Cowder, McVey, and Postell competed last year.
- **OCBP Sprint Triathlon**, Saturday July 31. A ½ mile swim, 12 mile bike, 5k run. Recognized as the world's greatest \$20 Triathlon. Everyone should participate or volunteer.
- North East Md. Olympic Distance Triathlon, August 15. A new race for us to train for this year. A one mile swim, a 25 mile bike, and a 10k run. Should be lots of fun. A challenging but realistic distance. SRT AJ Smith did this distance last summer.
- Osprey Sprint Triathlon, Snow Hill, Oct 2. A ½ mile swim, 15 mile bike, 5k run. A fun event at the end of the season. A fun location. Sergeants Cowder, Postell, and Lt. Kovacs have competed in this race.
- Seagull Century, Salisbury Md. A 100 mile group ride more than a race. We will see if we have a group interested in trying the distance. A highly recommended ride. CC Wagner participated this year and had a blast.

**Captain's note:** This is just one more example of the dedication

that our personnel feel towards preparing for the necessary skills of the job. A Surf Rescue Technician is by all definitions a professional athlete who uses their physical skills and abilities to perform the tasks that they have been hired to do. In the 1940's an OCBP lifeguard needed to run to an entry point and then swim out to a victim in distress and return them to safety. In 2010, although we have an incredible amount of modern technology and we have landed men on the moon, the job of Surf Rescue Technician is the same as the 1940's lifeguard. It all comes down to using your running and swimming skills to get to a victim as quickly as possible. This is why the Beach Patrol provides or supports so many activities that involve physical fitness and skill improvement. So, come out and get involved!

## JBP

Submitted by Sgt. Jeff Brabitz

The JBP program had another successful year again in 2009. We also met another goal with having former participants take and complete the beach patrol try out! This I believe is a tribute to the guards who help run the program and get the word out to kids on their beach. After the first week, the JBP program was booked to a maximum capacity and taking on even more past the initial numbers of participants. This program is educational and fun for all who join and continue every year. Keep up the good work getting the word out about the program, it is huge due to guards informing the public and educating them about the JBP.



**Captains Note:** The Junior Beach Patrol program was conceived with several goals in mind with only one small part being the recruiting of future SRTs. The primary goal was to teach beach and water safety to a younger population in support of the first two pillars of our mission; education and prevention of injuries and accidents. We have long believed that we had successfully addressed these goals, but this summer several letters from JBP parents affirmed our intuition. The letters were thank yous to the Beach Patrol for the lessons that were learned in the JBP program. They each told an account of how a child used knowledge gained to either save themselves or help someone else to remain calm until the situation could be brought under control, demonstrating to us that the program works. The popularity of the program continues to increase each year and waiting lists are the norm. For that reason we are looking at alternative schedules that will allow us to service more JBP participants on an annual basis. Increasing the size of any class has drawbacks since it will reduce the amount of individual contact with instructors, which is necessary for both quality and safety. Therefore we are considering offering both morning (current configuration) and afternoon sessions. If you have comments or ideas about the JBP program please contact Lt. Ward Kovacs.

# History

## The Creation of a Captain

By SBF Don "Old school" Wann

The year was 1972, my sixth year of teaching physical education at Parkville High School in Baltimore county, Maryland. Into my class walks a fifteen-year-old lean and skinny sophomore with flaming red hair by the name of Melbourne Arbin. My first impression of this young man was that he was eager to learn; and he liked to take on physical challenges. It came as no surprise to me that Mel (he was not known as Butch back then) joined the Parkville High track team coached by myself. He was joined by his sister Cosette who became the team manager.

I feel that Mel and I connected immediately, and soon afterward he made a decision about his future occupation ---- teaching physical education. Mel wanted to emulate my vocation; he even announced that he had planned to attend the University of Maryland (my alma mater) on athletic scholarship as I did and then teach physical education. Mel was goal – setting back in 1972.

As an athlete he surprised himself and me as he took on another challenge ---- the pole vault. He did well in the pole vault, but even better in the 400 meter dash. After running 51 seconds for the event in high school; he improved to 48 seconds on the Maryland track team as a scholarship athlete.

Mel exhibited teaching potential among his peers; and so I allowed him to teach some concepts to my class in our first aid unit. He enjoyed teaching then, and he accomplished his goals by graduating from the University of Maryland then beginning a fine teaching career in Charles County. He received numerous awards including physical education teacher of the year in Charles County. Presently he is a supervisor in Charles County with a specialty in computer programming.

We will call him "Butch" now, and he has told me many times that he is blessed to have two enjoyable occupations, teaching and Captain of the Beach Patrol. In these trying times people are lucky to have one occupation that they enjoy. With Captain Arbin at the helm, the Beach patrol has arrived to the 21<sup>st</sup> century in great shape. With his unique computer talents, communication and information gathering has greatly improved. The Beach Patrol has a website, so that information may be shared and updated. Butch placed additional rules in place; he also provided training in CPR and first aid for all employees. Butch was increasingly visible on television talking about rip currents and other beach safety threats. Because of the education in the OCBP, many outside organizations observe our training and then model their organization after the OCBP. Butch was busy in the evening as well, with campfire talks on the beach about beach safety.

Then came the surfing beaches to respond to the booming popularity of surfing on the East Coast. There were designated surfing areas during the day, not just surfing before 10 AM and after 5:30 PM as it once was. In the summer of 2007, a third surfing beach was added at the inlet. This act, I know took years of negotiation with vendors and the town of Ocean City. Two of the three beaches rotate daily two blocks

south; and it was Butch that devised the rotation system to be fair to surfers and swimmers.

As a teacher and coach, he works with a young person to accomplish athletic skills and life habits and skills that will shape the person he will be in the future. The teacher and coach "connect" with the athlete, not knowing the outcome. Butch gives me credit for what he has accomplished; but I give him credit for his diligence and hard work with the Beach Patrol. Recently my wife and I attended a very moving and touching memorial service to honor the passing of Captain Robert Craig, the founder of the Beach Patrol. Butch has continued to instill, as Captain Craig did, the values of dedication to duty and pride in the job of saving lives and maintaining beach safety. In Butch's eloquent eulogy to Captain Craig he said "one doesn't really join the Beach Patrol, the Beach Patrol gets into you. Those of you not involved with the Beach Patrol would never understand."

Why do young men and women freely risk their lives to save others? I feel it is because of Captain Arbin's leadership and example, the OCBP is among the most respected organizations in Ocean City today.



### Captain's Note:

When I first came in contact with Mr. Wann at Parkville High School, neither of us knew that 38 years later we would still be close friends. How our relationship developed could not have been foreseen and neither of us was consciously doing anything special. But the character and the Integrity of Mr. Wann was the connecting point. I doubt that he was actively trying to become a lifelong mentor of a kid that showed up for the track team. But just being the type of man he was, he made everyone feel special. This is one lesson that I have taken through the rest of my life. Treat everyone special and be aware that you never know the impact you may be having. I have been fortunate that in both of my careers I have received affirming letters and calls to tell me of the positive influence that I have been blessed to have on past students as well as Beach Patrol employees. My hope is that you too will be able to know the positive impact that you have had on someone's life.

## **SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, TEXAS BEACH PATROL**

Submitted by Vic Sprecher

I grew up in Maryland and began working in Ocean City, Maryland at the age of 14 yrs. until I was 21. Each summer I had different jobs as Life Guard at the Diplomat Hotel, than Commander Hotel and finally joined the Beach Patrol for my last two years until I had to get a job in the real world. I was only sorry I hadn't discovered the Beach Patrol years earlier as I loved the job! Having graduated from college and landing my first "professional corporate job" I knew my days working in OC were over.

I must admit I had extreme withdraw as when summer came I yearned to go back to OC but knew I couldn't. Again, working on the Beach Patrol were the best years of my "carefree life".

I wound up marrying a Pennsylvania girl I met while guarding at the Commander Hotel. We have been married for 43 years and she is still a sweetheart. Amazing what good things come from OC! Over the years we traveled in our business careers moving 19 times back and forth across the USA. We finally wound up in South Padre Island, TX. and believe it or not it looks a lot like OC 50 years ago. Large sand dunes, nice beaches, warm Gulf waters, lots of sun, golf and tons of seafood. I buy the large jumbo "jimmy crabs" for \$15.00 per dozen, these are the same crabs they ship back to Maryland and sell for \$75.00 per dozen.

When Donyce and I arrived in South Padre Island we knew this was home and had to pinch ourselves as we knew this was the last move and the right move. It felt like we were back in OC. Every weekend and many evenings we were on the beach living close enough that we could hear the waves and see the ocean. We both noticed there were no guards anywhere on the beach and getting reports that people were drowning almost every week. I went to our island police department and met with the chief who frequently patrols the beach in jeeps but none of his officers could swim as they were in uniform and most of them over weight. They recommended I visit with the fire chief as they received the distress 911 calls but it is always too late to respond. I then visited with the Cameron County beach commission who told me it was out of their jurisdiction. I then requested to meet with the commander of the Coast Guard and asked for statistics of how many people had drowned in the past four years. I told the LT. I would attempt to form a beach patrol that could instantly respond to any potential drowning victim. It took the C.G. two weeks to gather the information and discovered over 60 people of all ages had perished.

I gathered the information and met with the City Council (we call the Alderman) and presented the case that S.P.I. desperately needed a beach patrol for the protection of our locals and thousands of visitors each year. They said they would take it under consideration but were afraid of the potential liability, cost and did they really need a beach patrol. I shared with them I had belonged to the finest beach patrol organization anywhere in America who had 10 times the amount of visitors each year in Ocean City, MD resulting with few if any drowning over the years. In need of help, I contacted Butch Arbin who provided me with years of acquired ammunition that I presented to the board at the next meeting. They

took a vote and voted "YES" appropriating \$100,000 to get things rolling. For the past two years we now have a 13 member Beach Patrol. Thank you Butch and OCBP for your support as our island is a lot safer place to swim.

P.S. – I am going to offer instructing a semaphore clinic for the SPIBP but that is another story.

Vic Sprecher  
1963/1964

**Captain's Note:** This is just one more example of the far reaching influence of the Ocean City Beach Patrol. It also points out that the Ocean City Beach Patrol has a much greater impact than just to those people who they guard on the beaches of Ocean City each summer.

## **2010 OCBP Alumni Reunion**

submitted by: Vic Sprecher, OCBP 1964/1965

We are currently forming a panel of OCBP Beach Patrol Alumni mixed with a few Beach Patrol legends. We will be developing a new theme for 2010! We are considering embracing 40's, 50's, 60's, 70's & 80's & possibly the 90's? Amazingly the OCBP 2007 Reunion organized by Ells Boyd included lots of guards from as far back as the 40's and 50's. Ells did a great job of putting this together.

Our goal for our October 2010 reunion is to expand our activities, include more guards and have even more fun! There will be lots of possibilities on our plate. We will be kicking around ideas to include a great three-day weekend.

Our "possibilities" include specially designed Beach Patrol apparel for Alumni guards. This would include swim trunks, shirts, hats, parkas; whistle rain protectors, etc. We could have special colors that would distinguish the legions of past Beach Patrol from the current patrol.

We are considering lots of fun activities over the three-day reunion. Such as entertainment, expanding the OCBP boardwalk museum, national competition, auctions, press, plaques in memory of past and current Captains, etc.

Our organizing committee will include Vic Sprecher, Bruce Campbell, Ben Proctor, John Jarvis, Clark Moran, Jim Kelly, Bob Wagner, Ronnie Gosser plus lots of additional OCBP input.

Feel free to contact Vic Sprecher @  
Vic@summainternational.com 956-772-9800  
or 505-238-6169 Or Bruce Campbell @ bcampbell@whcampbell.com 410-435-4600

There is lot's more coming, so spread the word and get ready for a super 2010 reunion! We might be getting older but we still know how to have a great time.

Summa International  
Vic Sprecher | Vice President

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## TOWN NEWS

### Route 90 Roadwork and Bridge Closed

Submitted by: Kristin Joson

If you plan on visiting Ocean City between now and Christmas you will have to enter the town via the Route 50 Bridge. The Route 90 Bridge is closed. Earlier this fall SHA crews found deteriorating concrete beams on the Rt. 90 Bridge. At first a weight limit was put into effect on October 7th and shortly after that on October 15th the bridge was closed to all traffic to begin repair work. In Late October State Highway Administration (SHA) officials briefed the Town Council on the progress of the Rt. 90 bridge repairs and the future of the roadwork on Rt. 90. Currently, they are essentially building a new bridge on the center span and hope to have it completed before the end of December. The center span had to be completely removed. A 77.5 foot-wide barge carrying a construction crane to work on the Rt. 90 Bridge had to squeeze through the 78-foot wide draw span of the Route 50 bridge in October. Talk about a tight squeeze and on water too! Mayor Meehan told Donnie Drewer, SHA District 1 engineer that in the future he strongly prefers that the SHA plans for the dualization of Route 90 rather than replacing the Route 50 Bridge. If you would like to see the Route 90 Bridge work you can go to the town website <http://oceancitymd.gov/> and click on Webcams. You can also click on the Rt. 90 Cam and see if the road is still blocked.

*(2010 Alumni Reunion continued from page 19)*

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**Captains Note:** This is a chance for alumni from more recent years to come together for the first time in an “official” reunion. If we have alumni from the decades that have previously not been included in the past reunions 70’s, 80’s and 90’s that want to take a lead role for their “group” please contact us so that we can start connecting people from those decades. We can even have smaller get togethers during the reunion weekend for those veterans who worked together. Maybe a Crew Chief from the summer of 1982 wants to host a crew reunion. Remember, it is the people who manned the stands who have made the beach patrol great. Let’s not lose touch.

Another way of assisting with the budget crunch is to increase tourism and generate income for the businesses that support the Town tax base. Each of you can make a significant impact in this area by simply letting everyone you come in contact know that “you are glad they are here”. After all, you are Ocean City’s Ambassadors.

**SRTs Canfield and Vanderclute are ready to great visitors to their beach!**

Notice the earlier dune line and the later dune line.



Evidence that the Beach Replenishment and Dune maintenance works. This picture was taken March 11, 2006. As you can see beach renourishment has been going on for quite some time. You can see the dune fence line from earlier years and the one put in more recently. The dunes are naturally building themselves up. Each year it never ceases to amaze me how the dunes continue to do their job. October’s Nor’easter was one of the worst ever but since the dunes have been renourishing themselves for years, I believe we were able to have very little property damage.

### Tickets for Winterfest Express on sale

There is always something to enjoy in Ocean City no matter what season we are in. It will soon be time to enjoy the dazzling lights on winter nights as Ocean City celebrates the holidays with the annual Winterfest of Lights from Nov. 19 through Jan 2. Advance tickets to ride the Winterfest Express are now on sale at Northside Park, 125<sup>th</sup> Street and the Bay. Winterfest of lights shines nightly Sunday through Thursday 5:30 – 9:30 p.m and Friday and Saturday, 5:30 – 10:30 p.m . For more information, call the Ocean City Special Events Office at 410 – 250 – 0125 or visit the Ocean City Websites at <http://www.ococean.com/> or [www.oceancitymd.gov](http://www.oceancitymd.gov)

