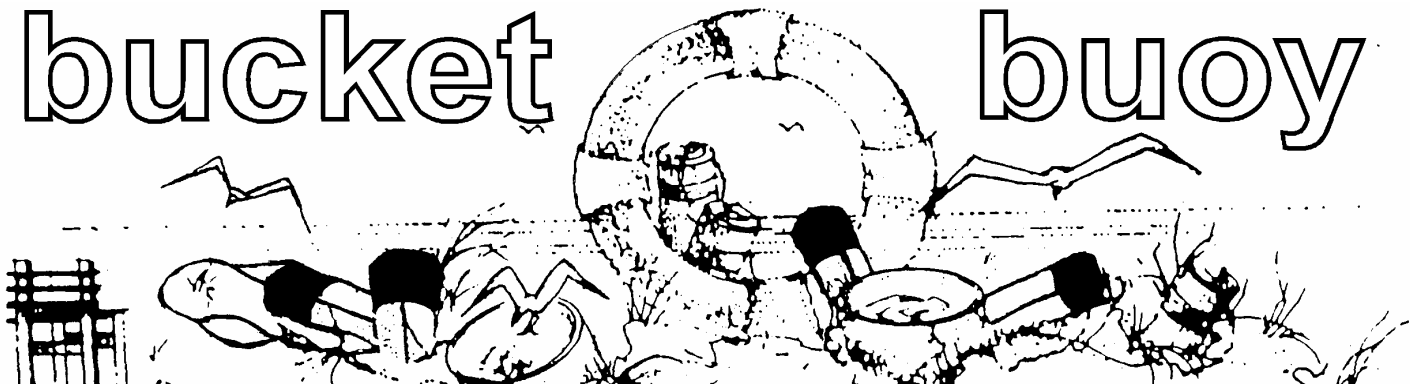


bucket buoy



Dear Fellow Lifeguards:

July 22, 2007

When we look at the week that just passed it is difficult to judge which one of the stories carried in the news had the most significance. One story had to do with the steam pipe explosion in Manhattan (some say caused by the recent weather) that showed us how very weak our infrastructure actually is. Considering that that pipe had been inspected just hours before it is frightening to consider how much we take for granted in our day to day lives, how much faith we put in our government to protect us from such failures and how fragile the glue that holds all this together actually is.

Another story had to do with a man swimming in the waters at the North Pole for a full kilometer. He claims to have done that to raise awareness of global warming (see story that follows) and any of us who have gone with Reggie for the annual January 1st dip in the 40+ degree water know how cold water feels. What is so hard to believe is that there are still people out there, some even in our own government, that don't believe that global warming is happening. What is it they say ostriches do when they get frightened?

Probably the biggest story of the week had to do with Wednesday's rain storm that actually paralyzed Long Island for a good part of the day. Over 5 inches of rain fell within about two hours, flooding houses, streets and highways so badly that the roads were forced to close. Once again Mother Nature made it very clear to us that she calls the shots. As one newspaper noted, what would we have done if this were a real hurricane and we were all trying to get off Long Island?

So what is the common theme? Nature is getting more unpredictable and mankind is doing nothing to help out. We, as lifeguards, are often directly affected by these drastic changes in weather. (Just watch what happens to the beaches in next week's heat wave.) And if you think that Mother Nature is just going to be tamed by our advances in science remember, that Science is the very thing that brought about our current situation in the first place.

Finally, a brief comment about another headline story across the globe. Saturday morning was the release date of the new *Harry Potter* book. Millions anxiously awaited its arrival, many going to bookstores at midnight to get a head start on their reading. Thousands of kids stayed up the rest of the night to finish it. The media loved the story and to be honest so did I.

For once there was a story in the news where no one got hurt or killed, there were no dire consequences and no celebrity actresses were involved. It was refreshing and a nice comment on human nature. Millions of people lining up to read a fiction book. Now that's what I call good news!

Next week: Bio's of new Executive Board Members and an in depth look at the proposed Constitution and By-Laws



RM4 going in for a rescue last week – Photo by Tom Donovan

THE ELECTIONS

Last Wednesday night saw the close of the nomination period for our local elections. The following people were nominated: President: Tom Donovan (Unopposed); 1st VP: Bruce Meriowitz (Unopposed); 2nd VP: Dennis Kane and Brian Mc Donald; Secretary: Donnie Campbell; JB Trustee: Cary Epstein and Matt Lindbom; RM Trustee: Jim Dirico; East End Trustee: Nick Athenas; Trustee At Large and Treasurer: No nominations.

Elections will be held from August 4th to August 10th. At that time you will also be voting for changes in the By-Laws and the

Constitution. A final copy has not been released yet from the Constitutional Committee but, from what I understand, it contains a provision that allows the By-Laws to be changed merely with a vote of the Shop Stewards, without it going to the membership. The By-Laws is the document that rules the internal behavior of any organization. It determines what positions the members can vote for, what the powers of these positions are and everything else the organization stands for. In my opinion it is way too important of a document to change without going out to the membership. If the final document Constitutional Committee releases has such a provision I personally would vote against it.

Finally a brief comment about Tom Donovan, our new President-to-be. Tom is a rarity in this Lifeguard Corps. He actually stands up to do the work instead of just complaining. Over the years I have had the opportunity to work with Tom on many projects and have been delighted as he took the bull by the horns and got the work done. Last year's directory would have never happened without Tom, nor would have the Constitutional Committee, nor the Kayak Surf Contest, nor many slide shows, etc. The list goes on and on. And now he has stepped up for his biggest challenge yet. Speaking for myself, I want to thank Tom and tell him that I am behind him in these difficult times.



The JBLC makes a strong showing at this morning's Biathlon

PRESIDENTIAL THOUGHTS

By Steve Levy

Let me forewarn you – these are my words and not those of the current nor future Executive Board. If you want to discuss them, don't hide behind a Forum post - come visit me at Field 6 or email me at levyfld6@gmail.com.

As some of you may know, I am the interim President of the Jones Beach Lifeguard Corps. Union – don't let those in Park management or NYSCOPBA fool you, we most certainly have a union whether it is recognized (as it had been from 1971 through early 2006) or not. What I have enjoyed most about serving the JBLCU as a member of the Executive Board over the past two years has been working collaboratively with my fellow Board members as we have guided the Corps through an exceptionally challenging and difficult period.

Please don't let any of the soon-to-be-seen changes fool you: Although some may be gloating over the fact that neither Roy Lester, Bob Lenti, Jay Lieberfarb, Bob Adler nor I will be on the newly elected Board or that the "new" Constitution – despite the very diligent work of the Constitution Committee – "balances" the powers of the Board and the Shop Stewards (which in my opinion will severely hamper the ability of the elected Board members to pursue courses of action), the core issues are not going away only to be replaced by a Pollyannaish dream of immediate raises, copasetic relationships with Park management, and backrubs, foot massages, and representation by NYSCOPBA.

It has taken years to reach this boiling point, a point that is represented by a critical PERB decision to finally release us from the tyrannical and non-representative clutches of NYSCOPBA, Parks management that has lied under oath about their practices,

and a policy that desires to whittle away elements of our negotiated agreements and ultimately, I believe, to institute a new system where Lifeguards are hired based upon non-job related qualifications and easily terminated or relocated based upon something as simple as a negative opinion of them by management. I see no reason to relent while we have Parks back on their heels – we have hammered them about safety shortcomings for nearly two years, their legal and human resources representatives have testified about their shoddy legal practices and fabricated personnel policies, and NYSOPBA has taken to out-and-out deception as a strategy to prevent the inevitable defragmentation.

It's time to take matters into your own hands. In a few weeks (August 4-10), the JBLCU will hold its bi-annual election for its Executive Board. You will be asked to vote for a Second Vice-President, a Jones Beach Trustee, and the fate of the "new" Constitution. Just three...why not more? Frankly, I've been wondering this myself – let me fill you in...

For the past two years, the JBLG Forums and the Shop Steward meetings have seen a variety of opinionated lifeguards criticize the current Executive Board for everything and nothing. Many wanted the entire Executive Board to resign despite the immutable facts that we were effectively battling and winning against a parent Union that wouldn't represent us and Parks management wanted to make changes that would jeopardize the structure of this great job. There is a "new" Constitution that you will be asked to vote on, one that has attempted to cure perceived shortcomings of the original Constitution. Personally, I'm not bullish about it because I believe that despite the tremendous effort in creating it, the "new" Constitution overly denudes the power of the Executive Board to act quickly and decisively. I gave it a great deal of thought and I believe we should hold off ratifying the "new" Constitution until we know where PERB will place us and in the interim, use the existing one as a guiding template.

Further, **there should be ten elections being conducted in August not three** – the President, First Vice President, Secretary, Robert Moses Trustee and East End Trustee are running unopposed and there are no candidates for Treasurer (*do you remember how people reacted to the current Executive Board's treasury report "deficiencies?"*) and Trustee-At-Large. As a result, the new President will appoint a Treasurer and a Trustee-At-Large.

Where were these chest-beaters when it came time to put up and run for office? This is one question you might want to ask them. How can you trust people who make noise but do little more than pull a crumbled **Bucket & Buoy** from their pants or proffer personal attacks on Executive Board members? Why aren't these people running?

I applaud people like Nick Athenas from Hecksher who is running for East End Trustee or Don Campbell from Field 6 (oh no, not another Field 6 person on the Executive Board) who is running as Recording Secretary. These are new faces – these are your faces. The most difficult part about being in a Union is getting involved – really involved. These two know it yet despite the unknown, they are beginning to walk where others should but aren't. We need more Nick's and Don's to make the Corps strong. It's hard work, often unrewarded work but I can assure you it is very satisfying. Between now and August 4 through 10, be sure to read the existing and new Constitution and ask lots of questions of your Shop Stewards; call the existing members of the Executive Board to gain insight into the real story behind the issues – we are the proverbial horses' mouths. Talk to the people running unopposed and ask them what their plans are for the next 24 months. But ask questions with open minds. We are, after all, representing you.



Evon teaches the lifeguards how to save a baby's life

NORTH POLE SWIMMER

From The Times, London - By Alan Hamilton - 7-15-2007

Had it been just one degree further down the thermometer, not even the polar bears could have managed what Lewis Pugh achieved in the early hours of yesterday.

Mr. Pugh, a maritime lawyer and environmental campaigner from London, swam a kilometer (.62 miles) at the Geographic North Pole to highlight the effects of global warming. At -1.8C (28.76F), it is believed to be the coldest water ever swum in.

Clad only in trunks, cap and goggles Mr. Pugh spent just under 19 agonizing minutes in the melted sea ice navigating a path in a crack between broken floes. The feat would not have been possible ten years ago, when the water was entirely frozen over, even in summer. Mr. Pugh, 37, confessed afterwards that the pain was so excruciating he almost gave up several times.

At dead of night, but seeing his way in the permanent Arctic summer daylight, he entered the water at 2:00 AM and re-emerged at 2:18 and 50 seconds, perished [sic] but ecstatic. "The water was absolutely black - it was like plunging into a dark black hole," he said as his body temperature slowly returned to normal.

"It was frightening. The pain was immediate and felt like my body was on fire. I was in excruciating pain from beginning to end and I nearly quit on a few occasions. It was without doubt the hardest swim of my life."

He had been inspired, he said, by his friend and fellow environmentalist Jorgen Amundsen, the great-great-nephew of the first man to reach the South Pole.

Mr. Pugh, who trained in a glacial lake in Norway, said: "I will never give up in front of a Norwegian, let alone a relative of Roald Amundsen."

Because of its salinity, seawater freezes at a slightly lower temperature than fresh water. But the surface water at the North Pole is of relatively low salinity, and at -1.8C [28.7 F] was on the verge of turning to ice that not even the bears could have swum in.

Most people who attempted such a feat would drown within minutes as the intense cold disabled their muscles. Mr. Pugh believes that he can raise his normal body temperature by one degree by concentrating on raising his heart rate. Tim Noakes, of Cape Town University, an expert on the effects of cold water on the human body, monitored the swim and found that on leaving the water Mr. Pugh's body temperature had dropped to 36.5C [97.7 F]. Twenty minutes later it had fallen even further to a dangerously low 35C, [95 F] but within an hour it had recovered to 37C [98.6 F].

"To swim at the North Pole is an incredible achievement, and is the culmination of years of unique endeavor by an astonishing individual," Professor Noakes said. "At the end of the swim, Lewis was showing obvious signs of distress but he never faltered and his performance was the best yet."

Mr. Pugh holds the record for the world's most southerly swim, on the edge of the Antarctic ice sheet, and last year became the first person to swim the length of the Thames. He has already attracted the nickname "Polar Bear" for his cold-water swimming.

He trained for his latest feat by eating five meals a day for three months and putting on 24lb. Mr. Pugh reached the Geographic North Pole by hitching a lift on an icebreaking ship sailing out of Murmansk in northern Russia.

The North Pole challenge was organized by the Worldwide Fund for Nature to raise awareness of environmental issues.

Scientists predict that by 2040 the Arctic could be virtually free of ice in summer. Mr. Pugh said yesterday that his achievement was a bittersweet victory.

"It's a triumph and a tragedy - a triumph that I could swim in such ferocious conditions, but a tragedy that it is now possible to swim at the North Pole."



I think the sign says "If Reggie can do it, so can you!"

THE COMICS

Apologizes ahead of time – Read at your own risk

One ship carrying blue paint collided with another ship carrying red paint. The crew is missing and believed to be marooned.

* * * * *

Two cows, Daisy and Betsy, are standing next to each other in a field. Daisy says, "I was artificially inseminated this morning."

"I don't believe you," says Betsy.

"It's true," insists Daisy. "No bull."

* * * * *

A toilet was stolen from the precinct this morning. Police have nothing to go on.

* * * * *

Someone drilled a hole in the nudist colony's fence. Cops are looking into it.