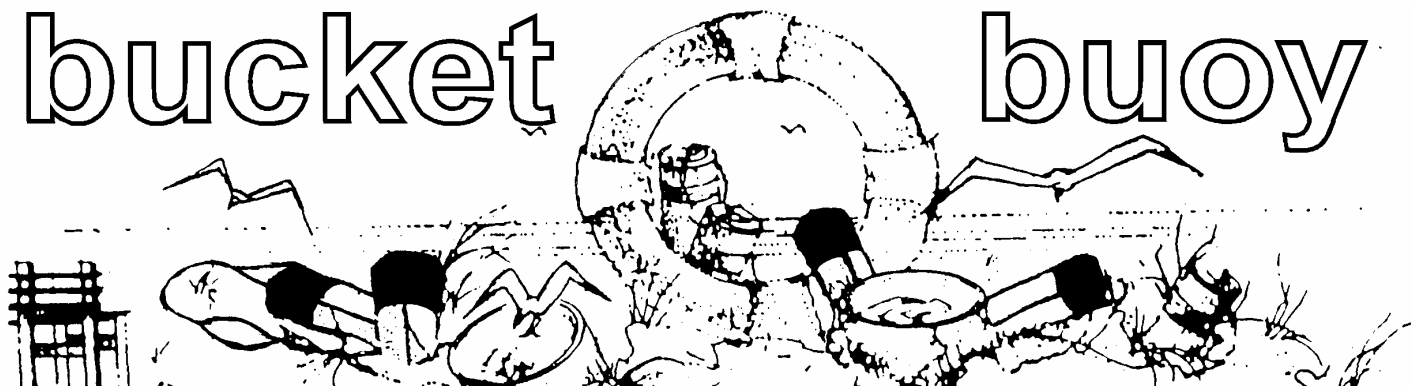


bucket buoy



Dear Fellow Lifeguards:

August 5, 2007

So here we have it – the “dog days” of August are certainly here. Hot, sticky, humid and downright miserable. It seems that the term “dog days” is an vivid description of a hot panting day but in reality the name came from the ancient Romans who noticed that the hottest days of the year, i.e. in late July and early August, coincided with the appearance of Sirius - the Dog Star, in the same part of the sky as the Sun. Sirius is the largest and brightest star in the Canis Major constellation, in fact it is the brightest star in the sky. The ancients believed that the star contributed to the heat of the day. The adjective Canicular means ‘pertaining to Sirius’, so Dog-days are also called Canicular days.

Now after your mythology lesson let me bring you up to date on the lastest Shop Stewards’ meeting and the elections. As, hopefully, everyone is aware of, there is only one contested election, the one between Cary Epstein and Matt Lindbom. Brian McDonald dropped out of contention for the slot of 2nd VP. And I do owe an apology to Bruce Meiowitz. He did submit a bio to be published but somehow it disappeared in computerland. Bruce did what he was asked in order to give the Corps the information requested. The Technology gods had it in for me this week and Bruce’s bio was the sacrifice they demanded at the altar. Sorry Bruce.

Back to the Shop Stewards meeting. This meeting was held Wednesday at NYSUT headquarters in Jericho. At that meeting the main topic of conversation was the support or non-support of the Constitution that we are voting on this week. While 10 of the 14 Shop Stewards voted to endorse it the Executive Board is divided.

In order to fully explain the controversy it is necessary to go back to the beginning of winter to examine the history of the proposed change in the constitution and By-Laws.

Although we have been living under this constitution for 35 years (with some minor changes to the document and some major changes in the way we do things) everyone agreed that we should examine our constitution and By-Laws and see how they could be improved. A constitutional committee was formed of volunteers and they took on the task of reviewing the constitution and By-Laws in order to suggest changes.

Where, in my opinion, this process went so wrong, was when the committee came back with its report in the beginning of the summer. Rather than saying, “*here is our report and here are our suggested changes let’s see what we as a group can do with this*” the committee came back to the Shop Stewards and told them that they were going to give the Corps their changes and would not entertain deviation from their proposals. (Although in fairness they did do some minor tweaking at Steve Levy’s suggestion, the document was clearly presented on a “*take it or leave it basis.*”)

Unfortunately, although the committee did a excellent job starting the changes, there was just too much that still had to be done and there were many who wanted their opinion heard. This, however, did not fit in well with the initial voice of the committee who seemed to feel that any proposed change, other than what was presented, was a personal attack of their integrity.

Our constitution and By-Laws are the documents we will be living under for what could be years to come. As one of the Shop Stewards said at the last meeting, once we change this there will not be another vote on it for two more years. Do we really want to subject our future to a flawed document because we don’t want to take the time to do it right?

Our current rules are clear. A vote for a new constitution and By-laws can be done now or in two weeks or in a month or whenever we put out the ballots. Allowing our members to vote on different parts of the constitution would only require another paragraph or two on the ballot. Opening up discussion to the Corps about the proposals would cost nothing but our time, and would be so well worth the time spent.

Instead, the committee made the point that they had worked hard on this and it was on a “*take it or leave it*” basis. While no one questions their hard work or intention, Bruce Meiowitz’s statement in support, that he feels we should pass this draft because he feels that “*hard work should be rewarded*” is probably the worst reason for a group to pass a flawed version of a document.

Steve Levy’s rebuttal said it best when he stated “*saying that this deserved to be supported because the committee worked hard is like teachers giving an A to a student who calculates 2 plus 2 to be 5 because they put forth a great effort. Holistic education fails everyone...*” Again, I want to emphasize that in no way does this reflect poorly on the hard work of the committee.

One of the biggest flaws in this constitution was also brought out at the Shop Stewards meeting, the fact that the committee put in lots of verbiage about getting rid of an Executive Board member (a person voted on by the whole membership) but the constitution and By-laws completely lack a way to get rid of a rouge shop steward.

This flaw was emphasized when it became known that a Shop Steward for one of the still-water beaches (who also happens to be a captain) had brought charges against one of the lifeguards under his command that caused that lifeguard to be transferred to the pool and lose his cap. Although it became obvious that the crew no longer wished this captain to represent them as a Shop Steward, he refused to step down **and in the proposed constitution there is no way to remove him.**

(Of course this also brought up the whole issue of whether officers should be Shop Stewards since, if an officer brings charges against one of their crew, the question becomes who does that lifeguard go to. This in fact is something all Shop Stewards should think about before they take the position; which hat takes precedence. Although I still argue that a good Captain should be able to control his crew without having to run to management to punish them, if you are an officer and you take any union position you should make it clear to those that vote for you which side you will take if push comes to shove.)

So there you have it. You now have a choice, accept the constitution and By-Laws with all it’s flaws (weakening of Executive Board, no vote by the members on changes in the By-Laws, no means to remove Shop Stewards and a host of other problems) or send the committee back with suggestions of the whole membership and get us a good document. The Constitution Committee has already proven it can work together; I am anxious to see what they can recommend if the entire LG Assembly offers their suggestions.

Finally a comment on Bruce Meiowitz’s remark at the Shop Stewards meeting that unions traditionally don’t get to vote on a negotiated contract other than on a take it or leave it basis. That is true Bruce, but **this is not a contract negotiated between labor and management**, this is OUR document that we are proposing. **Why shouldn’t it be the best we can put forth?**

Note: I noticed in a recent newspaper article that Chip Gorman, in trying to explain why upstate lifeguards don’t have to do the same test we do and can take as many tries to pass as they want stated that “*Our lifeguards have to fight the elements. Upstate they don’t see the extreme surf conditions we do.*” Just one question Chip, if our job is so much harder, how come we don’t get paid more. Opps, sorry I shouldn’t have asked that. I forgot, our job is only harder when Chip is trying to make excuses for disparate treatment to the press but when it comes to presenting before the budget people, we are all “*just lifeguards.*”



Mike gets ready to take off in a scene from Races past



Tommy and Don racing out in a past kayak Race

THE INTERBEACH RACES

Brought to you through the efforts of Cary Epstein

This year the Inter beach Races are being held on Thursday August 16th at RM2, Friday August 17th at EBHO, and Saturday August 18th at EBHO and EBHP.

There have been several changes this year including the removal of the individual kayak event, the introduction of the Tapplin relay (swim/run/kayak/paddle) and the making of the Ironman into a relay event.

Thursday, August 16th's events include the Flat tow surf rescue, the 1 man line pull, the 2 man line pull, the Run Swim Run (age group) and Beach Flags (age group).

Friday August 17th's events include 2 mile beach run (age group), the Ironman relay (swim/paddle/row), the Tapplin relay (swim/run/ kayak/paddle), the Kayak Relay (4 person) and the 10 guard ocean relay.

Saturday August 18th's events include the Surf Boat, the Surf swim (age group), the Paddle Relay (4 person), the 10 guard run relay, the 10 guard pool relay and the 100 individual age group races (age group).

RACES PARTY follows immediately thereafter!



"Gee, Petey spiked it so hard into the sand I can't find it now."

VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

By Scott Davern

The annual RM 5 volleyball tournament will be held August 15th (Wednesday) promptly at 9:00 AM at RM 4. The rain date will be August 16th. You must be on time or you may forfeit a game/match depending on how late you are. All players must take the day off in order to participate in this tournament.

This tournament is open to any current male or female Jones Beach Lifeguard. The cost is \$25 per team (2 person teams) which includes food, beverages, T-shirts and a rocking good time on the courts. Unlike previous years this does not include alcoholic beverages, but you may bring your own. This is due to a liability issue. Please drink responsibly and don't drink and drive. We want everyone to have a good, safe time.

Please give your money to Scott Davern @ RM 3 or Chris Olsen @ RM 5. The tournament is limited to the first 25 teams that pay for a spot. You must submit your \$25 in order to hold your team's spot - no refunds unless we can find another team to take your spot.

Please note that RM 4 is closed to the public (no guests please - sorry) on these dates which means that you must show up on time (8:00 - 9:00 AM) in order to get in. If anyone is interested in showing up early to help set up it would be much appreciated. If you have any questions you can contact me at scottdavern@yahoo.com (how original, huh?). See you there!



The JBLC Juniors dominating all other teams

JB JR LG TOURNAMENT

By Cary Epstein

On Monday July 16th, the JBLC held their annual Junior Lifeguard Tournament at the EBHO. Teams from Long Beach, Atlantic Beach, TOH and even the Hampton's came for a day of fun to compete in Jr lifeguard events like the run swim run, rescue race, beach run and surf paddle. As in years past, the Jones Beach team clearly dominated every event in every age group across all three courses!

It really was amazing to see! After watching Jones Beach caps cross 1st, 2nd and 3rd consecutively, you really start to think to yourself "wow these kids are good"!

Despite some funky weather, the kids braved some cooler winds, periods of rain and some pretty large shore break. Do you think that stopped them? NO! Every kid from 9-16 charged that water like it was their job! It really was quite something to see.

I want to congratulate all the Jr lifeguards who participated in the competition and a give a big thank you for all the lifeguards who came from different beaches to help make it work. It's a long day out there with the kids, but I know how much it means to them.

Why do you think the Junior lifeguard program is so important to the regular lifeguard corps? It's not a coincidence that over the last several years, the top finishers of the new hire test were former Jr guards. Learning the ocean at such a young age is an incredible thing and eventually it all pays off!! One day you will most likely be sharing the stand with some of these fine young men and women. These are going to be the lifeguards who will be your back up...the Jones Beach lifeguards of the future!

This Thursday August 9th, 53 Jones Beach Juniors will be competing at the USLA National Lifeguard Championships in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Best of luck to all competing!



Taking the Jr on tour to show off their superior talents

THE COMICS

Murphy showed up at Mass one Sunday and the priest almost fell down when he saw him. Murphy had never been seen in church in his life. After Mass, the priest caught up with Murphy and said, "Murphy, I am so glad you decided to come to Mass, what made you come?"

Murphy said, "I got to be honest with you Father, a while back, I misplaced me hat and I really, really love that hat. I know that McGlynn had a hat just like me hat, and I knew that McGlynn come to church every Sunday. I also knew that McGlynn had to take off his hat during Mass and figured he would leave it in the back of church. So, I was going to leave after Communion and steal McGlynn's hat."

The priest said, "Well, Murphy, I notice that you didn't steal McGlynn's hat. What changed your mind?" Murphy said, "Well, after I heard your sermon on the 10 Commandments, I decided that I didn't need to steal McGlynn's hat."

The priest gave Murphy a big smile and said; "After I talked about 'Thou Shalt Not Steal' you decided you would rather do without your hat than Burn in Hell, right ?" Murphy shook his head and said, "No, Father, after you talked about 'Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery' I remembered where I left me hat."