

WESTHOLLYWOODAQUATICS

2006-2007 Year In Review

PRESIDENT - Bryan Libit

Hello teammates. I cannot believe how quickly this past year flew by. I will be brief in my notes here in order for my other colleagues on the board to summarize all their great accomplishments. Looking back at this past year as president of the aquatics club, I feel like the board has made great strides with a lot of initiatives which we decided to take on, as well as wrap up some lingering issues that have been with this club for the past several years. First of all, the most visual change is our team's new website and online member center. This took well over a year to create and implement, and involved some mid-course corrections and long nights throughout the process. At the annual meeting, I plan on running through all the great features available to the team and board members with this new site. In addition, in the coming weeks we will be offering even more with this member center including credit/debit card payment, online event sign-up, and eMail invoices.

Another great addition this year has been WH2O's expansion into the valley with the start of Tues./Thurs. morning workouts at Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks. In the first 3 months of this trial, the attendance has been great and we have even added 6 new members to the team who live in the valley. With these practices, WH2O now offers 15 swim workouts a week and has a practice every morning of the week.

Along with swimming, WH2O water polo is experiencing an amazing growth spurt. Currently, Sunday polo practices are consistently getting over 18 participants and the financial health of the team is better than ever with an amazing surplus this year.

In addition to the success of WH2O's workouts, the team has also made some huge waves in the competition pool. This year our swimmers and polo players made an amazing showing at IGLA Paris and USMS short course Nationals. In the next year I look forward to seeing everyone in our nation's capitol, Washington DC, for IGLA 2008.

As we wrap up WH2O's 25th year, it is amazing to see how a couple of guys training for Gay Games I in the 80s, has become this great influential swimming and water polo club in southern California and in the gay community. I would like to thank everyone for helping me and the team out, even in the smallest ways, this past year, and I want to encourage everyone out there to run for the board of WH2O. This team is healthy and where it is today because of it's motivated members who strive to make the club better. I look forward to working with everyone to make this team even stronger in the future, as well as have a great time in and out of the pool in the coming year.

VICE PRESIDENT, ADMINISTRATIVE - Joel McKenna

When I ran for the board last year I had no idea what I was getting myself into. What I did know was that I had been swimming with WH2O for about 2 1/2 years and wanted to give something back to the team. What a better way to give something back than giving my time. So after talking to a few former and current board members at the time I decided to run for VP Admin. Shortly after elected I was handed a giant black binder and a disc and was sent on my way. After a few months it became very apparent to myself and other members of the board that we needed to make some changes in how the board administers the team. After several months working with web programmers we took the plunge and signed up with Team Unify.

With Team Unify the Treasurer and the VP Admin can now update records in real time allowing all board members immediate access to this updated information. In the past, several different databases were used by the board. The Treasurer used one database for a dues log, the VP Social used another one for Evites and then the VP Admin used Access for the Team Membership and then another list for attendance sheets. Once a month the board would exchange any updated information and then everyone would update the various lists. Now everyone is using one database on Team Unify.

As a member you can go in and change your e-mail and immediately all members of the board will have access to the updated information. Not only does it cut back on the administration by the board it makes it easier for you to keep informed. No more Yahoo Groups and no more evites. Everything and everyone will now be using Team Unify. This will allow everyone on the board to have more time to work on future endeavors for the team.

I've been proud to work with every single member of the board these last few months to get Team Unify and our new team blog up and running. As a board we came together to move the team together along with all of our record keeping.

SOCIAL VICE PRESIDENT - Seth Harrington

I am happy to report that this year we had 14 (including the upcoming banquet) social events! This year had something for everyone. WH2O-ers took part in activities ranging from softball, to roller-skating to ballroom dancing. We also found time to meet up at the beach, get merry at the Christmas party and chow down over 75 burgers at the kickoff barbecue. Excitingly, this year saw the debut of the WH2O players in the first skit for IGLA/Nationals. One of the more effective innovations of this year was the trimming of budget costs resulting in lower to zero entry costs for social events. This also enabled WH2O members of all financial statuses to take part in activities.

While this year saw healthy attendance at several of the larger events, attendance numbers dropped significantly when it came to house parties and dinner socials. It seems that interest in these styles of events has waned. I personally found it difficult at times to obtain homes for house parties and would recommend to future VP Socials that they experiment, as I did, with other activities or venues.

In conclusion, there seems to be a healthy identification with the team and a large amount of team spirit. However given the very large size of the team, it can be a challenge to get everyone together. This does not signify a decline for the team, merely a transition. There exist many groups of friends on the team, and these groups seem to do very well holding their own impromptu dinner socials or outings. It would be wise for all team members and the next board to recognize this, for as the team changes so too should the job of the social director. Perhaps greater focus on seasonal large events and less on smaller, monthly events would more effectively cater to the social needs of the team and its members.

SECRETARY - Jim Cude

The biggest project of my term was updating the wh2o.org website. The previous board voted to update the team website, and the work continued into my term. I oversaw the design and implementation of the site. The process was a learning experience, and part of the fun was learning how to overcome the unforeseen hurdles that stood in our way.

The newsletter saw a change this year. Our new site includes a blog, which provides a more interactive forum for the newsletter. I can now disseminate news more frequently. The new blog also has additional features not possible under the .pdf versions, including slide shows, embedded video, a search engine, and sorting articles by type. Check out recent posts from coach Brian Olver, which include video tips on how to improve form on various strokes. <http://westhollywoodaquatics.blogspot.com>

Of course, this does not necessarily mean the old newsletter has to go away completely. My view is that a more formal "magazine" style document should be printed a few times a year, centering on special occasions. That was my philosophy guiding the special summer double issue featuring IGLA and Nationals.

The final component of my job centered on record keeping – keeping track of the minutes at meetings, managing any changes to the P&P, etc.

Thanks for letting me be of service.

SWIMMING REPRESENTATIVE - Dan Adams

Thanks for opportunity to be your Swim Rep. As the liaison between the swim team members and the board/coaches/facilities, it allowed me to get involved with the day-to-day operations of the team. Sometimes the role can feel like that of an ombudsman, but I'm proud to be a part of keeping the team operations running smoothly. A big thanks to the board of WH2O—you've been great!

I enjoyed coordinating the swim clinics and making recordings of participants with the coach's replay feedback a regular feature of the clinic. Most clinic participants received DVDs of their taped swims (I still have some; see me about it). Bryan Libit, James Cude and Paul Abraham were central to the success of the taping/DVD making process!

I learned a lot about coaching and training as coordinator of the club's coaching needs. Besides administrative matters (with a super shout out to Bernie La Fianza), I worked with the coaches to establish common workout parameters for consistency and continuity across practices. I participated in establishing new coaches of existing team members, Brian Olver and John Russell.

It was both fun and challenging working out relays for IGLA in Paris. Bernie and I competed with lost luggage, sight-seeing and event conflicts in an ever-changing dancing-with-the-schedules! It made relay coordination for Regionals look like a walk in the park.

We made a lot more use of the video camera this year—not only at swim clinics but also at swim meets (thanks for the suggestion Amy Dantzler).

The biggest single effort of the year had to be the coordination of team input on workouts and coaching. The response was a huge success—it came from a large number and wide variety of people—and gave the coaches (and the whole team) a better understanding of the expectations and priorities of the overall team. The just-completed survey has already served to implement team-declared priorities in such things as 'stroke weeks' and 'break-thru sets' and team-expressed expectations for coaching 'feedback,' 'drill-sets,' and 'time-appropriate-intervals.'

WATER POLO REPRESENTATIVE - Ben Carrillo

Everyone, thanks so much for making this a such great year. I can't begin to tell you all how proud I am of you all. We have had record attendance through out this whole year. LETS KEEP IT UP!!!! Thanks for having me as the representative for this team. I promise ,although I will not be up for another year of meetings and lugging around all our equipment, I will still be very involved in this team helping out any way I can.

In terms of competition, our team finished second at both Tsunami de Mayo in San Francisco, and IGLA in Paris, France.

Again, I am proud to call you all my friends and teammates. Welcome all new faces and welcome back all the old hotness. Lets keep moving forward in the direction we are headed and keep WH2O water polo the best damn gay team in the world! Watch out IGLA, Washington DC 2008.

FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT COORDINATOR - Brian Olver

This year we experienced a unique challenge, as the West Hollywood pool was closed for nearly two months. Fortunately, we were able to find some great pools to swim at in the interim, including the Argue Swim Stadium. We also forged a new relationship with the Richard Alatorre pool for emergency situations when both Roosevelt and Glassell are unavailable.

We also decided to temporarily try out a Thursday evening practice at Culver City Plunge to alleviate over crowding in the West Hollywood pool. One major accomplishment this year was the expansion of our team to the valley where we obtained pool time at the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks park.

Overall, WH2O experienced its fair share of pool complications this year as it usually does. Team members took it in stride, as now everything is back to normal and better than before.

DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR - Ash Martin

Last year at the annual meeting, we discussed giving a larger percentage of our annual fundraising earnings to a charity of our choosing. Usually we have given 10-15% of the fundraising earned in the last year and now WH2O plans to give 25%. Adding to this challenge we also decided on sending two coaches to IGLA Paris and another one to Nationals in Seattle. I am proud to say we were able to fundraise close to \$7,000 dollars this year, which covered all coaching travel and fees, and even have 25% left over to donate to a charity of our choosing at the Annual Meeting in a couple days.

To accomplish our fundraising goals, we held two garage sales (Thanks Wadley and Daniell!), two Bingo nights at Hamburger Mary's (Thanks Dan F., Scott G., Cyndi L., and everyone else who donated items!), and we even received a number of donations from our advertising sponsors and other teammates.

In addition to fundraising, we also extended our community outreach to the San Fernando Valley with a new practice and a marketing blitz in local LGBT publications to promote WH2O's new Valley presence! We will also be the cover story for a new national LGBT publication, Sports Out Loud, in November of this year.

Thanks again to everyone who helped out with all of our fundraising events this year.