



DOLPHINS NEWSLETTER

The Practice of Gifting

December is a great time to share gifts. What are you giving your family and friends this year? No matter the occasion, gifting is a fun and healthy practice.

For that special someone, consider gifts such as original artwork, a treat you baked yourself, a video with cool effects like stop animation, or a recording of yourself playing a song (I love the GarageBand app for this).

If the idea of gifting is stressing you out...it's understandable. I won't sugarcoat the sadness, anger, and frustration many of us have gone through this year. All in our swim team

family have felt COVID's effects, directly or indirectly. In my case, a number of freelance projects I'd already agreed to simply evaporated, because they were in hard-hit industries such as conferences and healthcare. I've lost out on income as a result. Ugh!

On the other hand, I am thankful for good health. I walk almost every day to stay healthy. And I've found that walking pairs well with audiobooks (free from Sacramento library!) or a podcast. Having a story or some music playing in my headphones is a gift I can afford to give myself often.



What are you gifting yourself? How about a conversation with Coach about the stroke you most want to improve? Like any practice, you get better at gifting the more you do it. So be generous.

— Susan Herman

November and December Birthdays

Let's celebrate the Dolphin swimmers who completed another journey around the sun!



- | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Arden Armstrong | Reid DaCastello | Samantha Engel |
| Macy Armstrong | Grace He | Cru Girard |
| Emme Hogge | Andrew Fetzer | Isaac Jauregui |
| Will McGough | Larsen Garcia | Jocelynn Keele |
| Calvin Somers | Spencer Johnson | Zora Leslie |
| Olivia Somers | Quincy Kons | Griffin Oates |
| Ben Hoffman | David Lozano | Logan Oates |
| Josh Hoffman | Maya Miller | Hannah Rosales |
| Yuta Kobayashi | Austin Ownbey | McKinley Rosengren |
| JT Lund | Javanna Pedigo | Jacob Beaudet |
| Elizabeth Sweet | Nefeli Bagias | Havana Sperber |
| Ryan Sweet | Mia Cottingim | Christian Jones |
| Charlotte van den Enden | Amelia DaCastello | |

Coach Corner

It's not fall without pumpkins!

To celebrate the season Coach Stefanie gave swimmers their own pumpkins to take home. But first, they used the pumpkins for in-the-pool drills. They did streamline, backstroke, breaststroke drills, heads up freestyle, and flip turns—all while keeping hold of their pumpkins in the water.

Stefanie says, “If you have a big pumpkin you can do several dry land drills as well.” This includes exercises that would otherwise use a weighted ball or medicine ball. Check out the article “10 Awesome Medicine Ball Exercises to Improve Your Swimming” on the website <https://reachforthewall.org>. It has descriptions and videos showing how to use a ball for a stability challenge during planks or push-ups, and to add a weight element to squats, V-ups or Russian twists.

For the throwing or “floor slam” exercises, it’s probably best to stick with a ball.



Study Your Stroke, Swim Better

At practice, Coach Greg and Coach Stefanie have been capturing video of swimmers doing all four strokes. They have the swimmer do two 50s so they can get shots from the front, back, and side. Then they have feedback sessions where they review the videos. When you watch yourself swimming, you can learn a lot about your form and what you need to correct.

If you’ve seen a video of yourself at practice or at Swim Labs, think about what you saw.

Maybe your arms could reach farther, or you could get a better position in the water by using your core muscles. Try to imagine yourself doing the fixes Coach pointed out. Do they make you faster? Less splashy? Smoother? Then try them for real!



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What's Keeping You Motivated?

It's been hard to have actual conversations at practice, since COVID public health guidelines in force at Del Norte don't allow hanging out before and after. Still, several swimmers were able to share via email and text about what keeps them motivated. Despite the daily weirdness of online learning and all the other stuff we can't go right now, what gets you through each week?

- Friends. I go on bike rides with friends on the weekends. Sometimes 4 or 5 of us ride BMX together.
- Video calls with friends. A few of us had a debate about whether hot dog and pizza could be considered sandwiches!
- My teacher keeps me going, he's so funny.
- Being able to do something and be active and not just stay home all the time.
- Zooming with my friends, playing online games, and playing with my 2 cockapoo pups.
- Fall Swim! It's a break from reality. Just me, myself, and I,oh and Coach Greg!
- Water polo and writing.
- Biscuits and gravy — no, pizza!
- Sports. Being able to go to swim and water polo practice and talk to friends at the practices.
- Knowing that I have people around me that love and support me; knowing I have been blessed with many luxuries and wanting to preserve that; knowing I am unique; music!
- I don't need much motivation to get through the week but I always look forward to relaxing on the weekends and hanging out with my family. I also like to listen to music which I think could help a little too because it makes me happy.
- My dog Buddy.
- Finally being able to sleep in during the weekends. Going to practice at the end of the day — some days it's hard to get out of bed to even get ready to go to practice but once I'm there it's always worth it in the end.



Ozzy and his dog, Buddy.

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Del Norte Swim Team is a 501(c)(3).