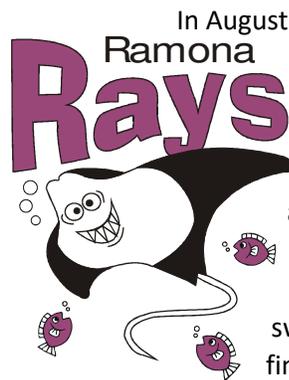
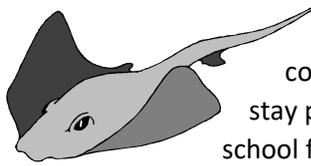


# History of the Ramona Swim Team

In 1999 the San Diego Country Estates Association (SDCEA) ran a small recreational swim team out of their Recreation Department. It was a small group, mainly made up of masters' swimmers and their children. They were the purple Ramona Waterflies and attended a few swim meets. By late 1999 they did not have a steady coach and a high school swimmer (Sara Curry) worked with them one hour a day, three hours a week. There were 12 swimmers on the team at that time.



In November 1999 Stacey Dusseault moved to Ramona and was hired by SDCEA to be the coach of the swim team and the Aquatics Director. After working with swimmers and parents to create a highly competitive team and new direction, a competition was held to create a new name and mascot. The team decided to stay purple and black but they evolved to the Ramona Rays Swim Team after a school field trip to Sea World the week before inspired swimmers to become more "aquatic" in their mascot choice (Coach Stacey refused to become the Ramona Manatees Swim Team so she pushed them to accept Rays instead). By the end of March the team had more than doubled to 28 swimmers and had expanded to two practice times and five days a week.



In August 2000 the first Ramona Rays Booster Club was formed. The team continued to grow and after a year there were 48 swimmers on the team and there were lots of new B and A times. In February 2001 the SDCEA decided to allow the team to incorporate and become a 501c3 and run independently from the Estates and rent the pool from them. The team continued to grow and excel and by 2004 the team had 67 active swimmers year round, a high of 85 swimmers in the summer and 16 swimmers who had been with the team for over three years. The team performance had grown from 2 Junior Olympic (JO) swimmers finishing 23 out of 24 teams in 2000 to 20 swimmers attending JOs and finishing 16 out of 24 teams in 2004. The team also had its first top ten swimmer in the nation with Katherine Abbott finishing 6<sup>th</sup> in the Nation in the 50 Fly.

In 2005 the team finished a strong 10<sup>th</sup> place finish out of 26 teams in San Diego at the 2005 JO's with strong finishes and wins from many swimmers, including its second top 10 swimmer in Garrett Gladini, swimmers who advanced to Western Zones and Sectionals. By 2006 Stacey Dusseault was no longer able to continue to head the team as she focused on the start of her family. The Board of Directors (BOD) did not feel confident the team could survive unless changes were made to the organizational structure. Creative thinking led the BOD to decide to merge with a larger team help the team with the administrative needs of the program as well as allow top level swimmers to train and travel with a seasoned coach.

Stacey approached Pat Tope from Heartland Swim Association to merge the teams. Both BODs agreed the merger at that time was advantageous to both programs. Stacey continued as the Head Coach in Ramona for Heartland until her second daughter was born in 2009. After the birth of her second child, Stacey decided to



retire from coaching and Jolyn Yanez moved from Assistant Coach to Head Coach in Ramona. Highlight of performance at that time was Garrett Glaudini who was the first swimmer from Ramona to qualify for the Olympic Trials in 2011. He swam in his first trials in 2012 while swimming for Pat Tope of Heartland.

Heartland and Ramona remained merged until 2013. At that time Heartland felt the Ramona program was no longer financially solvent and they could no longer maintain the Ramona branch.

Stacey returned to help Jolyn by assisting coaching one day a week in 2012. When Ramona was let go from Heartland, Stacey and Jolyn decided to return the program to a local organization in Ramona. Stacey was still interested only in volunteering part time as a coach and working to consult with Jolyn on administrative matters. Jolyn was elected the President and Head Coach of the newly formed Ramona Swim Team. Both coaches agreed that the team should maintain the mascot and colors of the only High School in Ramona and the team became the Royal Blue Ramona Bulldogs. The team received its 501c3 designation and operated as a Coach Run BOD.



The team began a rebuilding process in 2013 as the newly formed Ramona Swim Team started with 38 swimmers with no JO qualifiers that year. By 2017 the team has grown again to its current membership of 77 members in the summer of 2017 and currently 3 JO qualifiers.

By 2017 the team again decided to make a slight shift and move from a Coach Run BOD to a Parent Run BOD. In 2017 by-laws were adjusted to ensure all BOD were unpaid staff members and an upgrade to all operating procedures was made to more closely align with USA swimming guidelines for BOD run organization.



New BOD members will take over in July of 2017 and will create a vision to and mission to continue to grow the program in Ramona.