



**SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER**



# WILDFLOWERS

By Shea Manning

The search for silver-linings in our shelter-in-place lives can be a challenge. Some days it is easy to find the joy in our mere existence, while other days it can be overwhelming to see beyond the realities and uncertainties of our future. One of my silver-linings has been throwing open our living room curtains each morning to see how much more ground has been ceded to the field of wildflowers that have taken over our front yard across the past several weeks.

In a perfect world, or rather a world where everything happens in the progression we'd like to see it happen, a front porch and lawn would have denied the wildflowers the opportunity to pop up in our yard. In the Fall of 2017 our landlord, who lives in the identical little craftsman behind ours, began to dig up our yard in preparation for a new porch, but delays due to city codes and cost of labor left the project suspended indefinitely and our yard a dusty mess.

It took several months to figure out the best way to proceed. Julie, our landlord, takes pride and finds a lot of solace in her gardening and home improvement projects, so had always insisted that we not contribute to the work. In reality, I think fear of imposing and an unrealistic belief that the project could restart at any moment were also factors. At any rate, by the Spring of 2018 weeds had sprouted across the yard, and by the Summer they had grown into the largest weeds I had ever seen. We couldn't take it anymore: we had to dig them out. Julie relented.

In March 2019, the weeds started to sprout again. Julie and I shared the honors of digging out the weeds in this go-round and, despite being late in the season to do so, we threw a bag of 20,000 wildflower seeds. Having forgotten to soak them, Ben and I threw another set... And Julie threw a third, not realizing that we too had tried to correct our mistake from the first batch. As expected, we didn't reap much. In August, however, a small patch of our yard sprouted a few dozen flowers. We admired them for a couple weeks, and dug them out when they died.

We hadn't thought much about the flowers again until February, when Julie started talking about the plans for the porch to go up this Summer. She casually said "as soon as our wildflowers have had their moment." Our automatic thinking had dismissed the greenery popping up as the return of the weeds—that we hadn't inspected them closely enough to realize that a large portion were in fact wildflowers.

It took several more weeks for any of the bulbs to appear, but once they did our front yard turned into an ever-evolving, undeniable mess of bursting color and life... Like everything else that's alive. Neighbors who had previously walked by our yard with bulging, understandably judgmental eyes, now stopped to take pictures or to admire the flowers with their children. This is a mere snapshot though; temporarily perfect... Like everything else that's alive.

There are plenty of elements I can find in this iteration of our front yard that are imperfect, even undesirable or embarrassing. I could choose to harp on any one of these elements. Yes, it's still a mess; it's not for everyone; we still don't have a porch; there are a bunch of weeds scattered between—and dead flowers scorched by the sun. But I choose to see the beauty first. I choose to be aware and proud of the progress we've made, in all of its imperfection. Because we unquestionably have a better yard than we had last year, or the year before that—and ultimately it's impossible to have progress be solely on our own terms. If you are having a day where accepting that truth is more difficult than usual I urge you to keep searching for the silver-linings, especially on the harder days.

In a few weeks we'll need to dig everything out again in hopes that this next attempt at the front porch is successful. I imagine I'll need to find something else to revel in before that day comes around. But today, tomorrow, and the next day (and probably the day after that) I'm grateful to have the wildflowers.



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# CORONA DREAMING: GALAPAGOS SWIM TREK

By Amy Dantzer

It's hard to believe that just a few months ago WH2O teammates, Jon Kaufmann, Bryan Libit, Daniel Banchik, Tim Burke and I, flew on a plane – together – to Ecuador to swim – together – around the Galapagos Islands – together – with sharks, penguins, rays, sea lions, iguanas and even other humans – all together. But we did!

Since the “safer at home” order came into effect in L.A. and the Coronavirus because a worldwide pandemic, international travel and swimming freely and in groups feels like an impossible fantasy. But, being an optimist, I believe that this too shall pass and we will soon be able to enjoy such luxuries again. For now, however, we are thankful to be safe, healthy and to have memories of our most recent travels.

Jon, Bryan, Daniel, Tim, Tim's sister M.J. (a swimmer from Marin) and I, went on our Galapagos adventure in January 2020 with Swim Trek, a tour company based out of England that arranges swim vacations for swimmers all over the world. Other teammates, David Kirvan and Mike Wallace, have also joined Swim Trek for swimming adventures in exotic locales and I had experience traveling with them a couple of years ago when I went to Turkey to compete in the Bosphorus Cross-Continental Swim Race.



Swimming in the Galapagos Islands sounded like fun when we planned the trip, but it turned out to be an experience of a lifetime and one that I believe should be on every swimmer's bucket list. Situated on both sides of the equator in the Pacific Ocean, the Galapagos Islands are a volcanic archipelago and home to an abundance of plant and animal species not found anywhere else on earth. While to go on the trip you should be comfortable swimming in open water, it is not necessary that you be fast. The wonderful Swim Trek guides divide people into groups of compatible swimming abilities and keep an eye on you the entire time. We also had the benefit of swimming with a naturalist, who was an expert on the local flora and fauna and who had a keen eye for spotting wildlife we might have missed on our own.



Over the course of seven days, we stayed on two charming islands – Isabela and Santa Cruz. We set out each morning in small boats to explore uninhabited parts of the archipelago by sea. We swam through bays and around isolated islands and even around the iconic volcanic crater of Tortuga Island. Once on the water, other than our two boats and our group of swim trekkers, we never saw another boat or person, which was magical. The water was clear and cool though not cold. No wetsuits were required though many people wore rash guards for a little layer of warmth and sun protection. The air was very hot and the sun is incredibly strong on the equator.

During our swimming explorations we encountered a variety of ocean conditions – there definitely were strong currents to contend with and times when the conditions were challenging – but we got lucky with mostly smooth seas and glorious weather. We had the opportunity to swim with an amazing array of marine life, including very playful sea lions, giant manta rays, sea turtles and countless rare and exotic fish species. Highlights for me were swimming with the tiny Galapagos penguins, the prehistoric looking iguanas and definitely number one was seeing hammerhead sharks. We got to see lots of sharks in the Galapagos but seeing hammerheads was a first for me and a real treat. Sharing the water with all these creatures truly was an extraordinary experience for each of us.



Although, not surprisingly, swimming was the primary focus on our Swim Trek, we also spent time on land and had some great animal encounters there as well. For anyone who likes birds, the Galapagos should also be on your bucket list. We saw an incredible array of bird species – many more than I could keep track of but for the most famous, of course, the blue footed booby, which is as cute as it sounds. I personally was most excited to interact with the giant Galapagos tortoise. These very, very large and very, very slow-moving creatures live to be well over 100 years old and, while you cannot touch them, I definitely wanted to.



So, if you are interested in planning a swimming adventure now so you have something to look forward to once we are able to travel again, check out some of the trips Swim Trek has to offer – [www.swimtrek.com](http://www.swimtrek.com). While there are a variety of locations all over the world to choose from, I highly recommend the Galapagos for anyone who is interested in exploration and the chance to interact with exotic wildlife both in the water and on land.

# KEELY'S CORNER

## Chapter 7

*Dear Keely,*

*Pretty sure I'm asking the same thing all of us are asking: How do I keep in swimming-shape while the pools and beaches are closed?*

*Chlorineless and Longing, A Non-Runner*

Dear "Chlorineless,"

Yep, I feel you! It's been about two months since our last swim practice, and now with the beaches closed, it's hard to even speculate on when things will be back to normal. I'm by no means an expert – I mean, at least not on this (but if you want to hear about the best ice cream places in LA, Expert is my middle name). However, I do have some thoughts...

1) Don't pressure yourself to stay in shape. To be honest, in a perfect world, if you have "extra time" from not going out or not driving to and from work (or, if you're like me, not working at all), you'd be able to get all those things done that you've been longing to do. Write that novel. KonMari your apartment. Work out six hours a day. Sounds nice! Unfortunately, we're in the middle of strange times. It's a literal pandemic. It's been about a century since this last happened, so pretty sure none of you have gone through it before, but my therapist has assured me repeatedly that it's okay to not be super productive. If you don't have the energy to work out every single day (or even at all), it's okay. If it helps your anxiety, and it helps you cope, then go for it, but do not place pressure on yourself during such a crazy time. People get in shape and out of shape all the time, which leads me to my second point....

2) Swimming will always be there for you when you get back. I am sure you've taken a break from the sport at some point in your life. Do you remember that feeling of coming back from that big break? On one hand, it's scary. You wonder if you'll ever be in shape again. But it's also exciting. There is no pressure. It feels new, and exhilarating, and you're motivated as you get a little faster, a little more efficient, and a little stronger every practice. Even if we do take some time off, you will be able to get back in shape. You've done it before, and you can do it again. And hey, I bet you'll be so excited to dive back in that it'll give you that high that only a swimmer can get – a great practice down, your muscles totally spent, and a smile that won't leave your face.

3) A little cross-training never hurt... I can't run. Or jump. Or do anything high-impact. Or do anything body-weight bearing on my wrists. I got issues! But the thing is, there are still exercise options out there. I find myself doing pilates classes on YouTube, and I am not very good at it. I am, however, starting to wonder if I'm developing abs. And if I come out of this with even a little bit of extra strength that I didn't have before, then hey, that's a win. Try running and see how far you can go. Try yoga and watch your flexibility increase. Try Peloton and suffer trying to get that personal best once again. Try whatever you can, and whatever you want, because maybe you'll discover something new that you love that might translate to swimming later on. Self-care, baby.

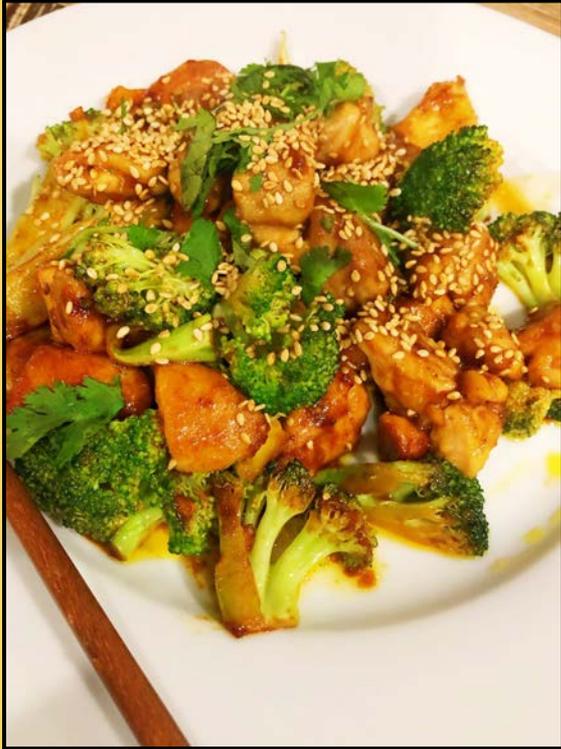
4) Hey, your hair and skin are probably looking AMAZING right now! Everyone on Zoom keeps saying my face is glowing. It might be because I've grown obsessed with what Vitamin C Serums are best since I turned 30, or it might be the fact that a little break from chlorine is keeping my skin and hair more hydrated. I don't think that really matters in the long run, but it's a little silver lining for right now, so take the win.

5) And finally, talk to your teammates! Whether it's over the phone, or just texting to check in, or over Zoom, keep in touch. I'm literally getting my butt kicked by Carlo in online Scrabble over and over – what fun! Anyway, we swim because we love the sport. We swim to stay in shape, and to challenge ourselves. But we also swim because it's a community of amazing friends (I'd go so far as to say a family), and whether we have the water or not, that community will always be there for you. And if you ever want to talk, you know I'm down, so just reach out. We're gonna be okay. We have each other. So, you Non-Runner, you, don't pressure yourself to stay in swimming-shape. You can discover new workouts you love, or you can spend the time self-caring, but regardless, the water will be waiting for you when this is all over, and that offer will never expire. Because you can take the swimmer out of the water, but you can never take the swimmer out of your spirit. Stay safe and healthy, and I miss you all!

Your teammate, Keely

# RECIPE SHARE

By Charles Chen



## SESAME CHICKEN

*Here is a simple way to stay healthy during quarantine, keep it quick and easy in the kitchen. Packed full of protein and veggies. Swap out chicken for tempeh or tofu if you are a vegetarian.*

### Ingredients:

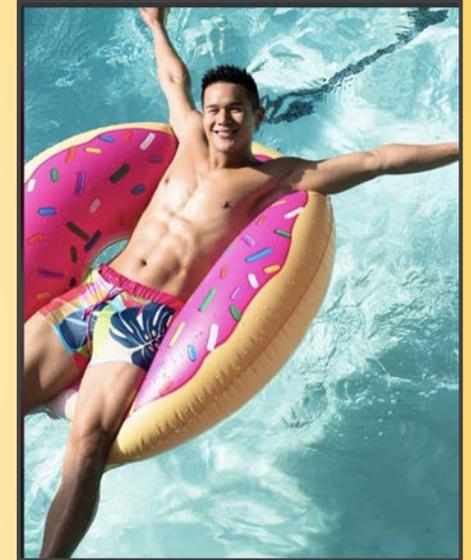
3 pieces of organic boneless chicken breasts  
Salt and pepper to taste  
¼ tsp turmeric powder  
½ tsp quinoa powder (or whatever flour you have on hand)  
3 florets of broccoli  
2 tbsp coconut oil  
sesame seeds, to top off  
Chopped cilantro, to top off

### Seasoning:

1 tsp minced garlic  
1 tsp minced ginger  
3 tbsp [San J Tamari reduced sodium](#)  
1 tsp toasted sesame oil  
1 tbsp [San J Asian BBQ Sauce](#)

### Instructions:

Chop organic chicken into bite size, add dried ingredients quinoa flour, and ginger powder, salt, dust off any excess. Turn pan on high heat, add coconut oil, pan fry until chicken is gold brown. Set aside to let it cool, add in broccoli, ginger, garlic, and add in wet ingredients sauces, toss in chicken for 3 mins, plate and garnish. ENJOY.



\*Photo cred - Jonathan Skow <3

How's Charles doing in quarantine, you ask? Charles: *"I'm spending my quarantine working on my first book which will be lifestyle and recipes, and taking long runs and bike rides by the ocean."*

# Proust Questionnaire - Water Polo Player of the Month Daniel Carrasco

Member since 2017

**What is your idea of perfect happiness?** Water polo on a bright sunny day

**What is your greatest fear?** The deep end

**Which historical figure do you most identify with?** Tony Azevedo

**Which living person do you most admire?** Any bartender with a heavy hand

**What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?** Shooting over the cage

**What is the trait you most deplore in others?** Shooting over the cage

**What is your greatest extravagance?** Movie theatre to watch a Pixar or Minions movie.

**What is your favorite journey?** Passing GO on Monopoly

**What do you consider the most overrated virtue?** Justice

**On what occasion do you lie?** The score if we lose

**What do you dislike most about your appearance?** Speedo tan

**Which living person do you most despise?** That one guy from that one time



**Which words or phrases do you most overuse?** Cool, tight, sick, nice, legit

**What is your greatest regret?** Last night

**What or who is the greatest love of your life?** Concerts with Lina

**When and where were you happiest?** Gold Medal for Paris Gay Games

**Which talent would you most like to have?** Reading/Producing Music

**What is your current state of mind?** New York

**If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?** Transferring laundry to the dryer, folding and putting it away all in the same day.

**If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?** Stop finding good places to eat and ruining them by going too often.

**What do you consider your greatest achievement?** Eagle Scout

**If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?** A Whattaburger

**If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be?** In-N-Out

**What is your most treasured possession?** Signed astronaut Lladro statue by Buzz Aldrin

**What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?** Quarantine

**Where would you like to live?** This one house that's still on Zillow but like...it's not a smart to buy right now ughh



**What is your favorite occupation?** Pushing buttons and music coming out

**What is your most marked characteristic?** Being a lefty

**What is the quality you most like in a man?** Inclusiveness

**What is the quality you most like in a woman?** Humor

**What do you most value in your friends?** Their memes

**Who are your favorite writers?** Anyone from The Onion

**Who is your favorite hero of fiction?** Lego Batman

**Who are your heroes in real life?** People who can ref during scrimmage

**What are your favorite names?** Mary, Daniel, Jane and Antonio

**What is it that you most dislike?** Drowning

**How would you like to die?** Without a trace

**What is your motto?** Don't forget to bring a towel

## Welcome, Sky!

Luis Clavijo and Mike Crosby welcomed the arrival of their adopted daughter Sky to the world on February 18, 2020. Mike and Luis were able to spend time with the birth mother in Jackson, Tennessee and be Sky's daddies from the very beginning. Sky already can shoot 20 mph and swim a 50 Free in under 30 seconds...just kidding!

How are they doing in quarantine, you ask? Mike: *"The silver lining to the quarantine is Luis is working from home so he can spend more time with Sky than he otherwise would. I'm lucky to still have paid parental leave through August so I was expecting a lot of home time with her even before COVID-19 hit."*



# Proust Questionnaire - Swimmer of the Month Mike Wallace

Member since 1982

**What is your idea of perfect happiness?** Being content with yourself whatever situation you are in

**What is your greatest fear?** Losing a patient and having it be because of a mistake I made. Never happened, but I do fear it.

**Which historical figure do you most identify with?** No answer.

**Which living person do you most admire?** For this pandemic, Dr. Fauci and medical personnel.

**What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?** My love of sweets.

**What is the trait you most deplore in others?** Cruelty.

**What is your greatest extravagance?** Travel.

**What is your favorite journey?** Cannot pick just one, there is something incredible about all the places I have been, but the journey of life is my favorite.

**What do you consider the most overrated virtue?** Success in an American perspective.

**On what occasion do you lie?** When the truth would be too painful.

**What do you dislike most about your appearance?** My toenails.

**Which living person do you most despise?** Donald Trump.



**Which words or phrases do you most overuse?** "Ain't that special."

**What is your greatest regret?** I try not to look back, there are many things I would have done differently had I known better, but it was always a learning experience.

**What or who is the greatest love of your life?** I'll never tell, maybe haven't met yet.

**When and where were you happiest?** Right now in the moment.

**Which talent would you most like to have?** To do butterfly again nice and smooth.

**What is your current state of mind?** Patience.

**If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?** If I needed to change something I did not like about myself, I would do it.

**If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be?** That my sister would not have died at 17.

**What do you consider your greatest achievement?** My career, my friends, my life.

**If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be?** A dolphin.

**What is your most treasured possession?** My friends, my family, my health.

**What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery?** Being in severe pain.

**Where would you like to live?** I love living in Los Angeles. It is where I want to be now.

**What is your favorite occupation?** Healer.

**What is your most marked characteristic?** I hope it is my smile.

**What is the quality you most like in a man?** Intelligence.

**What is the quality you most like in a woman?** Intelligence.

**What do you most value in your friends?** The friendship itself.

**Who are your favorite writers?** Cannot pick one, I usually love history books

**Who is your favorite hero of fiction?** The phoenix.

**Who are your heroes in real life?** My medical colleagues and any environmentalists

**What are your favorite names?** ? I have no idea.

**What is it that you most dislike?** Cruelty to others and God's creations. It bothers me how poorly humans treat animals and the environment.

**How would you like to die?** In my sleep.

**What is your motto?** Live, live, live, life is a banquet and most of you people are starving to death (thank you *Mame*). Also, the way to make God laugh is to make plans.

# Get to Know Your Board



Deb Jourdain  
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Erik Guzman  
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Water Polo  
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Adam Larson  
Treasurer



### Question 1: What are the top three trips you want to take after the pandemic, and why?

Deb: Hawaii for the Waikiki Roughwater. Really hoping it goes ahead, it's the best swim of the year and it's so much fun with all the Weho competitors; Australia - it's been over a year since I've seen my family, and I'm not sure when I'll get to go home again; NZ - I just watched all three extended *Lord of the Rings* for like the billionth time because #quarantine and now I want to go to all of the places of Middle-earth.

Lis: New Mexico because I watched *The Milagro Beanfield War* recently and the cinematography inspired me; Berlin because I've always wanted to go; Italy for the soul... but first Reno/ Tahoe to see the fam and friends and swim in the best lake in the world!

Jon: Costa Rica, Bali, and Whistler. But before any of those, a trip down to Orange County to see my mom.

Irene: Hong Kong to visit my family; Mt. Whitney, we have a permit scheduled for end of Aug, but we'll see... ; Hawaii so I can ocean swim and hike to my heart's content!

Jessica: We just got back from traveling, so this break is actually kind of nice. We'd been looking forward to going to San Antonio for Nationals, but that didn't happen. I have a seminar in San Francisco in August, so I might make a trip out of that.

Jordan: Malta- I wanted to go for my birthday (March 25) but couldn't because of travel advisories; Berlin for its beauty and culture 🍆); Montana- I want to travel more interstate.

Erik: New Orleans, the Grand Canyon, and I really want to go back to Kauai. New Orleans because that is where we were planning to go this June for my husband's birthday and neither of us have been. The Grand Canyon, because I have never been and he has. Kauai because that is where we honeymooned, its beautiful, and who doesn't love an island full of wild chickens and roosters!

Adam: International Falls, MN to see family; Shreveport, LA to see more family; Curacao, with close friends, to get far, far away from my family.

Tim: Hong Kong, Tel Aviv, and Sydney.

### Question 2: what are you doing for workouts during this crazy time? Any recommendations to share?

Deb: I downloaded the couch to 5KM app, so I've been running (so gross). It's a great thing to do if you don't have any ability to run (like me). The next best workout is just a '90s dance party in your living room. It won't even feel like exercising. I think the most important advice though is that it is OK to NOT work out at this time. I highly recommend just a casual walk for air and clarity. But we can't be expected to keep up with our old work-out regimes and that's totally ok.

Lis: I love Ryan Heffington's dance parties! He's an LA choreographer. Find him on Instagram live. It's so joyous and easy to follow. He deserves a humanitarian award for bringing joy to the people through DANCE right now. Plus yoga which is helpful stretching for existing in the same 500 square feet of space for sooooo many days. I also have done some WH2O run workouts which is so wonderful to see teammates and have the accountability of a coach. Running is not the same as swimming, but sometimes, it's great.

Irene: Running and riding solo; taking classes with MyYogaWorks

Jessica: Rowing ergometer, walking, running until I got injured, lots of weights and floor exercises. Will probably start cycling soon.

Jordan: I've been making myself do at least 10,000 steps per day, dancing a lot (with and without wigs), and yoga. I recommend dancing like nobody is watching! Dance is such a good workout, its fun, and such good energy release.

Erik: Running – finally picking up some speed and feeling my leg strength. I was actually considering finally buying a really good pair of rollerblades, but realized I was a bit late to the game and should have purchased in the early stages of shelter in place. Can't find anything anywhere. As for recommendations... I would say do something you can commit to and enjoy.

Adam - On the rare occasion I workout, I've taken up kettlebell training. Takes a lot of concentration and I can focus on myself for a few minutes.

Tim: Shaun T Insanity HIIT, any class you can do with friends is great.

### **Question 3: Have you taken up any new hobbies during the pandemic?**

Deb: I've gone back to painting! I ordered some canvases and paints and just... make paintings. Nothing amazing but they're fun. If anyone wants one send me a request!! I like making them for people :) That, and I've also now perfected the art of baked sweet potato fries.

Lis: I got some starter from a friend and jumped on the sourdough train. I love it. Now we're making pizzas with the dough too. Luckily once the pools open back up and I don't remember how to swim anymore I'll be incredibly buoyant. I've also taken up meditation which has been so helpful for staying grounded right now.

Jon: I've researched how to paint old surfboards, does that count?

Irene: I bought a Thomas Kinkade Disney coloring book since I can't draw for shit.

Jessica: No. I have a ton of hobbies already, i.e., knitting, gardening, reading, playing the piano.

Jordan: Feng Shui. I re-organized my apartment for better energy flow.

Erik: New hobbies no. Old hobbies, yes. Here and there – sketching, knitting, and gardening. But above all – cooking. Happy to be back in the kitchen whipping up some delicious meals.

Adam: Ha! No. My free time during stay-at-home completely disappeared with two 3-year-olds locked-in with me.

Tim: Betting against the global stock market.

**Question 4: What are other things you look forward to most after the pandemic?**

Deb: Hugging my friends. Going back to my office (I'm anti the WFH attitude. I can only do so many piles of laundry). Swimming. for the love of all things SWIMMING. Especially in the ocean. I'm also excited to see how my routines stay in place once I can be social again... :-P Finally, getting my citizenship so I can finally achieve my lifelong American Dream of competing on Survivor.

Lis: Eating in restaurants, travel, getting a pedicure, socializing with reckless abandon.

Jon: Grabbing a drink at a bar with friends.

Irene: Swimming with WH2O; having a meal inside a restaurant; in-person conversations with anyone BUT Mark ;)

Jessica: Getting together with friends in real life.

Jordan: Aside from traveling to the aforementioned places, I look forward to dance and yoga studios to reopen.

Erik: Hugging and touching my friends and family. It's amazing how some of the most simple things that are just so unconscious like a hug, the touch of a shoulder, arm, or the grasping of hands when removed can be so impactful. You really don't know what you have until its gone. AND of course, getting back in the fucking water! I can't wait to swim again! It's my happy place.

Adam: Hugs. Going to the park. Having an empty house all to myself during school hours that is organized and clean.

Tim: Water Polo, Swimming, and WeHo bars

**Question 5: What is something positive you have noticed in your personal life to come out of this time, if anything? OR what brings you comfort right now?**

Deb: For me, it's actually been really good for my health to be forced to slow down. When I look back I was so over-committed, and I've weirdly relished the opportunity to slow down a bit. It's also made me proud of where my mental health has gotten to in the past year. In 2018, I was about as low as I thought it could get, and just didn't feel like I was in a healthy, happy place. 2019 changed a lot for me, and I think this has been a really positive test for my mental health and how far I've come. I'm proud of that. It's not always easy by any means, but for the most part, I'm surprised at how strong-willed I've been to not let this get to me. So that's something very personal for me that I think has been a positive to come out of this.

Lis: I've been connecting with faraway friends and family more than normal. My family started doing weekly Zoom calls and we actually are more in touch than we usually are. And I'm finding more time for self-care and reflection.

Jon: A lot of time with my cat, who I found out sleeps A LOT more than I thought.

Irene: People are reaching out more! Feeling lucky we have the ability to connect / reconnect with friends around the world

Jessica: More time to get things done. More time for gardening. More time to take care of myself.

Jordan: FaceTime and Zoom. I'm so thankful for technology in this sense because my friends and family are everything.

Erik: Surprisingly I have actually become a lot closer with my parents and brothers. Not that we weren't before, but with my parents being older and my father being in the high-risk category for COVID we actually have all talked much more often than ever before on a regular basis. Another thing that has been nice is taking it a little slower overall. Truly stopping to smell the roses. With Mother Nature forcing us all to slow down I really was able to take a big step back and realize that the sense of urgency I placed in aspects of my life was self-imposed and unnecessary. That is something I don't want to lose when things return to whatever our new normal will be.

Adam: I have become very intimate with the plants in my backyard. Seeing all the new growth and life sprouting right now is comforting.

Tim: Nothing gives me comfort right now.

### **Question 6: What are you watching and reading right now?**

Deb: I had never watched *The OC* before this so now my roommate has me binge watching it. I keep thinking it's harder to watch in my 30s... I keep screaming at the teenagers on my scream for their ridiculous decisions. But I can't look away! I also started watching *Mrs. America*, which is interesting. But my most favorite...I'm watching the current season of *Survivor*, and in my spare time, I watch re-runs of past seasons. That show is the best.

Lis: I have a long list of classic movies I've never seen so I'm working my way through. Winner so far: *Little Shop of Horrors*. Wow!!! What a delight. Also I love *Sex Education* the series.

Jon: *Too Hot to Handle* on Netflix!

Irene: rereading Dennis Lehane's *Kenzie/Gennaro* series

Jessica: *Call My Agent* (Netflix), *The Good Fight* (CBS All Access- Apple TV had a free promotion, so binge watching for the free month), *Call the Midwife*, finished *The Plot Against American*, *Scott and Bailey* (Amazon). I'm also going into the office and working and seeing patients. So not as much free time as some others.

Jordan: Watching- *Big Little Lies*, *Gilmore Girls*, *Kath and Kim*. Reading- *A New Earth*, by Eckhart Tolle.

Erik: Last year I read this book called *Scythe* by Neal Shusterman. It's the first book of a three-part series that my brother introduced me to. Very sci-fi. Well, as you guessed it, I finished the other two books – *Thunderhead* and *The Toll* over the course of these past two months. The last book I just couldn't put down and was extremely satiated with how everything wrapped up. I REALLY hope they turn it into a tv series. I think it could do really well, especially if they follow the strategy of HBO's *Dark Materials*, because those books were badass and the first season was phenomenal. As for stuff I am watching... dear lord we have been all over the place, but if I had to call out one in particular it's *We're Here* on HBO. It is giving me life right now. It's so good. So if you haven't seen it, please do, and grab your tissue box. There will be moments you need to wipe that eye.

Adam: *Paw Patrol*, *PJ Masks*, *Trolls* and *Trolls 2*...many, many times

Tim: *The Wall Street Journal*, *Crescat Hedge Fund*, *Financial Times*. *AHS 1984*

# Exercise in the time of COVID-19: The Sad, the Bad, and the Silver Lining

By Jessica Seaton, D.C.



We swim because we enjoy exercising in the water. We swim because it's what we're good at. We swim because it might be the best exercise for our aging or damaged joints. We swim for any number of reasons, and now, unless we have a home pool, we can't.

What happens to our bodies during this time of an enforced break from swimming will vary depending on our genetics, age, and fitness prior to this break, and the amount and type of exercise we're doing instead of swimming. Most of the research in detraining has been done on weight-lifting for measuring loss of strength in lifting weights and loss of endurance in running. Swimming is different from running and weight-lifting: non-weight-bearing and in a horizontal position with controlled breathing. In general, the fitter you are when the detraining period begins, the less drastic the consequences of detraining will be.

Studies done on college swimmers, probably men since the studies are older, showed they were able to maintain most of their overall strength and muscle endurance up to 6 weeks and 50% up to a year into detraining. Sprint times were barely affected by layoffs up to a month. Long distance events require cardiovascular fitness, which decreases within 2 weeks of inactivity. Fat metabolism becomes impaired due to detraining with a resulting increase in fat storage. A more recent study on female swimmers found that a two-month break from swimming resulted in about a 10.5 lb. gain in weight, of which 8.8 lb. was attributable to gain in fat mass.

VO2max measures the body's ability to take in and use oxygen and is one measurement of cardiovascular fitness. Studies done on runners have shown reductions in VO2max starting about day 10 without running. At 4 to 8 weeks of no training there is reduction in blood volume and cardiac output. VO2max drops as much as 25% after 11 weeks of detraining. Contributing to this is a loss of capillary density in the working muscles, as well as a reduction in the production of ATP, the energy molecules. If you were in good shape when the training break started, you will find that you can probably still swim for the same amount of time, but at a much reduced intensity and considerably slower.

An interesting study looked at strength training in men and women with a younger (20-30 years) and older (65-75 years) group. There was no relative difference in training or detraining results between the men and women. However, strength gains were more pronounced in the younger group at 34% compared to 28% for the older group. Detraining measured at 31 weeks was 8% in the younger group and 14% in the older group. All groups, except the older women, remained stronger than they were before training. Most of the loss of strength occurred during weeks 12 to 31.

With detraining you might also see a rise in your blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood sugar levels. There is also a loss of blood flow to your brain, in particular the hippocampus, an area involved in memory formation.

The effects of detraining can be minimized by still swimming, but less often. This might eventually be ocean swimming for us or a home pool if you're lucky to have one. Research has shown that non-specific physical activities can minimize swimming fitness losses, at least in age-group swimmers.

Depending on the shape you were in prior to the break, the activity you were able to do during the break, and your age, your return to your prior level of swimming fitness could take as long as the time you were away from swimming. If you want your return to the water to be less painful, you need to exercise. For cardiovascular fitness, at least 30 minutes of aerobic exercise should be performed five times per week, or 20 to 25 minutes of high intensity exercise, such as high intensity interval training (HIIT) three times a week. This can be fast-paced walking, hill walking, or bicycling. There are many HIIT workouts available on YouTube. Strength training can be done with body weight or household items, such as described in [this article](#). Now could also be a time to strengthen your shoulders by doing [FINA recommended shoulder exercises](#). Yoga and stretching will go a long way toward improving your flexibility and help you to feel good.

*Jessica has been swimming with West Hollywood Aquatics for 30 years. She is a chiropractic orthopedist in private practice in Culver City.*

#### Portraits & Custom Commissions



# IGLA AUSTRALIA!

By Jackson Church

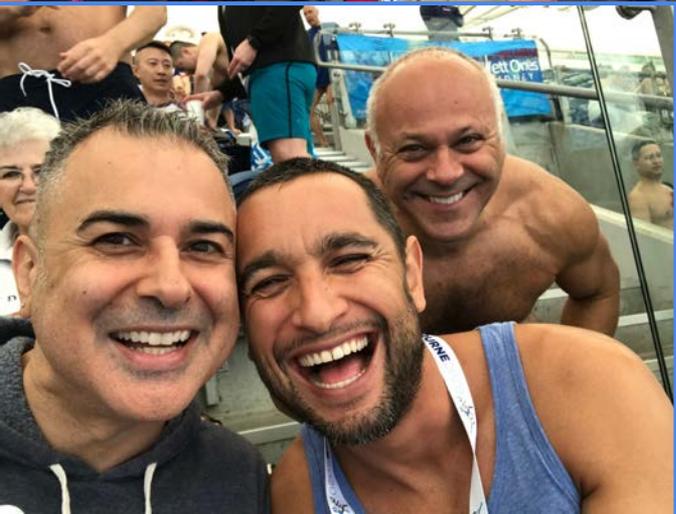
I was fortunate enough to have been able to attend this year's IGLA Championships in Melbourne. It was undoubtedly, one of the best experiences I've had with the team so far. Inside and outside of the pool, I really got a chance to build stronger relationships with our teammates and other athletes from around the world. The trip really opened my eyes to the bigger picture that IGLA is creating for all of us. I'm so excited to be a part of something so progressive and inclusive. Now with these new connections from around the world, it gives me even more to look forward to for future IGLA competitions.

I am starting to see how these events can really feel like a big, gay family reunion! I happened to be on the same flight with a few fellow swimmers including Matt Mair, who apparently is friends with everyone. From LAX, he introduced me to other IGLA participants from NYC and Seattle. Then when we landed in Melbourne, of course, we ran into even more people he knew from what seemed like every city in the world. After the world tour, we shared an Uber to each of our Airbnbs to get much needed rest from the travel and adjust to the time difference.

The 17-hour time difference wasn't the only thing that took some quick adjusting for me. The pool was LCM, which I have to admit I wasn't the most prepared for. And wow isn't it different than SCY! Since I was only able to attend one LCM practice, I had no clue how to estimate my times but I still was happy with most of my races. I participated in 6 individual events and 2 relays, which are easily my favorite. I really felt like this was the first IGLA (and swim meet as an adult) that I got to compete in, since I had an injured rotator cuff last year and couldn't push myself. I learned a lot about competing techniques and mindset thanks to Kiley, who is an amazing coach and gave such helpful notes after every race.

Maintaining consistency was my biggest challenge during the long weekend of racing and social events. I was pushing myself to swim faster in the pool and to stay awake out of the pool! The event is 5 days long with 4 days of racing and 1 day off in the middle. Time flew by since the schedule is packed from swimming during the day and events every night including parties, picnics, drag shows, club nights, and many other social events hosted by IGLA. Since there's always something to do and I wanted to take advantage of my time there, I definitely felt the fatigue on the last day of IGLA. But as much as it is a competition, there is also equal amount of support from everyone no matter their team. We all cheer each other on and celebrate our victories. The experience not only made me a better swimmer, but introduced and welcomed me to a community I didn't know existed in the world. I'm beyond grateful to be a part of it and already can't wait for the next IGLA!









# LET'S TALK SUSTAINABILITY

**By Antoine Kunsch**

**Sustainable Habitat & Community Resilience at the Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains**

Hi everyone, and welcome to Antoine's corner! I am totally kidding, no one can compete with Keely and I won't even try. Today I am here to talk about a big word -sustainability- and more specifically what we can do at our individual level to alleviate our environmental footprint.

But before we dive in, I want to start with a quote that resonated with me the past few days. "At this point in the fight to solve the climate crisis, they are only three questions remaining: - Must we change? - Can we change? - Will we change?"

These opening lines to Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Sequel - Truth to Power* have taken a whole new dimension in this COVID-19 era, right as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22nd.

In case you didn't get a chance to catch the Instagram takeover of @SpeedoUSA we did with teammate Carlo Morante that day, allow me a few lines for a short recap sequence. Earth Day is an annual celebration that started as a campus teach-in back in 1970 with the emerging public consciousness about the state of the planet. The modern environmental movement was gaining momentum, notably thanks to Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring* published in 1962 that set the stage for change and bipartisan political action with the creation of Earth Day, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the passage of the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. You would think 50 years is plenty of time for humans to become more mindful of our relationship with the planet but as you may have noticed, not everybody is on the same page when it comes to preserving our own environment. It is easy to feel powerless and disheartened by the successive waves of environmental setbacks, but we are not doing this today! So, let's dive in with a Top 10 of things you can start doing right now.

1. **Advocate for change.** Much more like how Earth Day started, we need to be vocal and advocate for the changes we want to see in our world. What is the one thing the average person can do about climate change? Vote! But don't just take my word for it and instead listen to UCLA Emmett Institute on Climate Change and the Environment; co-executive director Sean Hecht: "Vote for people who have good policies, and then tell them why it's important to uphold those policies."

2. **Eat more plants.** Plant-based foods generally have a lower carbon footprint and use less water than animal products, especially beef, pork and cheese. Did you know that substituting beef for beans to make a veggie chili reduces the carbon footprint of that dish by 90%?! Check out Professor Jenny Jay's [Meals4Planet.org](http://Meals4Planet.org) for more information and recipes. I believe Carlo may have some good pointers as well.

3. This one used to be about **reducing transportation emissions** by walking and biking whenever possible, using public transit or carpooling, reducing air travel, and using teleconferencing for business meetings. I am pretty sure we are all doing that now... Good job team!

4. **Reduce the amount of single-use plastic** in your household, work, and play, including dishware (carry reusable utensils and straws with you), toiletry containers (bar shampoos / conditioners / soaps), and food (buy in bulk using reusable bags). Recycling helps but rethinking your habits, reducing waste and reusing is better.

5. **Reduce household energy consumption.** Turn off appliances and lights when you are not using them. Every once in a while, hang clothes to dry instead of using a dryer, and open up your blinds for natural light instead of turning on the lights. It is better for the planet and for your health!

6. **Drink from the tap.** Use stainless steel or bottles instead of tearing through a million plastic bottles. Tap water is better regulated than bottled water in the U.S. You can also purchase filters that fit on your tap. The UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation is [conducting research](#) and hosting discussions to increase trust in tap water.

7. **Save water.** Convert your lawn to drought-tolerant landscaping (I am more than happy to help with that!). Turn the sink off when brushing your teeth (duh); take quicker showers; or use a broom to clean the driveway, sidewalk, and stairs rather than a hose.

8. **Go paperless.** If possible, go paperless with bank statements, receipts, etc., bring laptops/tablets to meetings instead of printing out agendas and documents, and publish reports online instead of printing copies – like this newsletter!

9. **Be mindful of what you purchase and buy less stuff.** Before you purchase anything, consider whether you actually need it. Repurpose old clothes and shop secondhand when possible. You can find some unique and durable pieces in thrift stores! Fast fashion may be cheaper, but most brands are unethical and unsustainable. Buy certified sustainable products such as Fair Trade, Leaping Bunny, or B Corporation.

10. **Measure your carbon footprint** (and offset if you can). All our behaviors and lifestyle generate carbon emissions. You can use one of the multiple carbon footprint calculators (e.g. [The Nature Conservancy](#), [terrapass](#), [carbonfootprint](#), [EPA](#)...) to identify your largest 'carbon budgets' and see how you can reduce or offset them.

And I will conclude the same way I concluded our now WORLD famous Earth Day Instagram takeover by saying that you don't need to be perfectly sustainable. I am not. I have been reducing my own footprint year after year by eating a lot less meat for example. My hope is that you will find a few things in this list that will make you feel empowered about the positive impact you can have. And if you have any questions, I am more than happy to help and set up yet another Zoom call! Just before I leave you, check out this 2012 NYT article about [The Ecology of Disease](#) by Jim Robbins. It's eye-opening.

Be well and stay safe, Antoine



## ARCHIVES UPDATE

Hello homebound teammates. During this COVID-19 Pandemic, many of you are finding the time to go through your attics, basements, garages, crawlspaces and closets to reorganize and/or discard items you have in your possession. WH2O Archives Committee reminds you that if you find any items related to West Hollywood Aquatics (WH2O) please do not throw them out. Please set them aside in a safe spot. When the "stay at home" orders expire the Archives Committee will begin accepting your donations. Please look to future newsletters for direction on the handling of archival materials for donation. We're WH2O and we want your stuff!

Feel free to contact Tom Wilson @ 310-663-5734 you have any questions.

# INTRODUCING THE WH2O WELCOME COMMITTEE

The Welcome Committee is a group of ambassadors who represent WH2O values and embody the team spirit of our diverse community of swimmers and water polo players. Ambassadors work together to welcome new members and provide them with helpful tips and tools to make their on-boarding experience more enjoyable, including providing an email welcome packet, familiarizing them with the policies and procedures, and helping introduce and integrate them into the team.



Thanks to Jordan, Jackson, Nick, Bennett, Mike W., Rook, Marcus and Kiley for volunteering!



# Now introducing... WH20 Movie Club!



*Watch the movies on your own time, then join Zoom discussions Wednesday nights at 8pm. Links to Zooms will be updated on the team calendar.*

## **Wednesday, May 13th at 8pm: SKID ROW MARATHON discussion led by Lis Bartlett.**

*Craig Mitchell, a Los Angeles Superior Court Judge, leads the long-distance runner's club out of the Midnight Mission on Skid Row. They raise spirits and give a sense of purpose to people who are homeless, addicted or coming out of the prison system. (Available on Amazon Prime, Google Play, Youtube)*

***Lis: "I've heard great things about this documentary and I can't wait to watch."***

## **Wednesday, May 20th at 8pm: CIRCUS OF BOOKS discussion led by Coach Chris Gibson**

**\*with very special guest Writer/Editor/Producer Kathryn Robson!**

*In 1976 a couple take over an adult book store, and the store becomes the biggest distributor of gay porn in the United States. (Available on Netflix)*

***Chris: "This movie is a wonderfully crafted documentary about an LA landmark, and touches on topics as far ranging as the first amendment to acceptance, on the most personal of levels: family"***

## **Wednesday, May 27th at 8pm: ROAD TO PERDITION discussion led by Errol Graham.**

*Mike Sullivan (Tom Hanks) is an enforcer for powerful Depression-era Midwestern mobster John Rooney (Paul Newman). Rooney's son, Connor (Daniel Craig), is jealous of the close bond they share, and when Mike's eldest son, Michael (Tyler Hoechlin), witnesses a hit, Connor uses the incident as an excuse to murder Sullivan's wife (Jennifer Jason Leigh) and youngest son. Forced to flee, Sullivan and Michael set out on a journey of revenge and self-discovery. (Available on Netflix, Amazon Prime, Youtube, iTunes)*

***Errol: "It's a film with an interesting story, a great cast, well-directed and beautifully photographed."***

Email [secretary@wh2o.org](mailto:secretary@wh2o.org)  
with your movie club  
suggestions!

# OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The new social media committee consists of Jordan, Bennett, Lis and and Carlo. We are up and running and always seeking content. Please send us photos and ideas to [VPsocial@wh2o.org](mailto:VPsocial@wh2o.org)
- Book Club is up and running on Sunday mornings! Stay tuned to announcements.
- Gay Games 2022 in Hong Kong: The organizers are in the process of finalizing venues for the aquatics events. Swimming and Water Polo will take place November 13-17 at different pools. Diving will take place November 13-15. Synchronized Swimming, Open Water Swimming, Water Polo Finals, and Pink Flamingo will all take place on November 18th. Keep your schedule open!

