

A Word From Our President:



Dear Members,

Each year our club out-performs the previous years' accomplishments. With a month to go in our fiscal year, the increased size of our senior organization (230+ members) combined with our eighty junior (high school) rowers bodes well for LBRA's future.

Since our last newsletter Suzi Walther and Clarissa Zylinski won the Heavy weight Woman's Pair event at the USRowing Elite Nationals. This means each of our competitive rowing groups won a national championship in 1998 season (Junior, Master & Open). It's quite rare for any club to have all programs function at such high levels.

The good news gets even better: five LBRA members (up from 2 last year) were selected

to be part of the United States team at the world championships in Cologne, Germany this month. Congratulations to John Cashman, Sherri Kiklas, Linda Miller, Sally Scoval and Coach Ian Simpson! That brings our list of international Competitors to 138 in 31 years. Again, quite an accomplishment.

On August 1, I attended a reception at the ARCO/USA Olympic training center. Hartmut Buschbacher, the USA National Woman's Team Head Coach, acknowledged Long Beach's contribution to the pool of International caliber US rowers. He noted also the contribution of Coach Ian Simpson, whose strength and quality coaching has added to the development of athlete pool.

Hartmut and I spoke of LBRA's tenacious policy of providing a good environment to help the athlete become a better rower—an environment blind to age, sex, or even ultimate goal. He agreed that a club such as ours is not in the business of funding individual athletes for travel, etc., but a club that's purpose is to serve all its members, competing or otherwise.

Although we're proud of our contribution to the World Championship team, we're also proud of our daily accomplishments:

- A member reduced their need for medication by rowing daily, and through weight loss. This member's health prognosis changed from a dismal future to one of increased quality of life.

- Through LBRA's family membership program, couples have discovered a way to spend time together.

These examples demonstrate our service to the local community and justify our need for existence.

LBRA is a serious business that is staffed by volunteers. We are fortunate to have some very talented and dedicated individuals performing many different functions. (The Boat Captain's job is the only position that receives a small stipend per month.)

By efficiently using volunteer help to maintain our fleet of equipment, and by

cleverly spending our dues and our hard-earned money raised through various fund raising events, we are able to acquire new equipment. We acquired six boats this year, and a set of sweep oars. That couldn't have happened if someone hadn't been watching the expenses vs. the income, and tracking a budget, based on our previous years experience.

Due to the increase in membership, which results in an increase in rowing and maintenance problems, our budget for maintenance has been eaten up. *This translates to:* Each member should contribute extra time fixing a boat and doing a project outside their normal routine—preferably fixing a piece of equipment they don't use.

In 1990, "American Rowing" made a flowchart of a healthy rowing organization starting with introducing children to rowing for recreation and then for competition during high school, college, open and masters and coming back full circle to rowing for recreation. Of course they didn't include instructions with the flowchart, yet somehow good instructions were used when we assembled LBRA piece by piece.

The challenge for LBRA, besides the obvious one of getting the boathouse addition completed, is to provide proper coaching on a regular scheduled basis, and to adapt our programs as more of our rowers become accomplished in the skill of rowing. By doing this, LBRA can keep our tremendous investment in each of our rowers.

Five years ago, at the end of my first summer of teaching lessons, I was elected president. The club membership was 130 members. It is now 226. Using the best ideas, and small committees, and lots of phone calls, we accomplished something more than each of us dreamed. With continued hard work, our club will become even better.

This is my last column as your President. I thank the members for their support this past year and I look forward to spending time on the water, and time helping the club continue to grow and flourish.

Thank you for this incredible experience.

See you on the water!

A.C. duPONT

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BACKSPLASH accepts articles from all members. Length requirements are up to 500 words for features, up to 250 words for short articles. Fillers and photographs also accepted.

Send submissions to:

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