



# The Chlorine Chronicles Gulf Masters Swimming

## Winter 2024

TIMERS/COUNTERS BRAVE OVERCAST, WINDY, AND COOL CONDITIONS DURING THE GULF LMSC'S THIRD ANNUAL ONE-HOUR VIRTUAL SWIM (ARTICLE ON PAGE 3)

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## The Gulf's 2023 Initiatives Benefit Members and Clubs

With 2023 drawn to a close, I'd like to review the initiatives and events that the Gulf LMSC provided for its members, coaches, and teams.

- The 1-hour virtual championship was offered at Dad's Club.
- The LMSC provided a team initiative program in which teams received \$4/registered USMS member. Teams could use the funds for social events, equipment, or other needs.
- Gulf Swim University was held for the ninth year. Each entrant received a custom designed towel. A post-event social was held at Fuzzy's Pizza.
- A second fitness event, the Galveston Virtual Swim, was added in 2023. Entrants will receive an event tee-shirt and an invitation to a lunch social at The Spot on the Seawall.
- Seventeen Gulf swimmers had their \$50 registration fee reimbursed for the USMS Stroke Clinic held in early November.
- Gulf paid the sanctioning fee for two open water events at Lake Longhorn.
- Gulf also paid the sanctioning fee for eight pool events in 2023.
- The annual Thanksgiving swim was offered at Dad's Club to burn some pre-meal calories.
- Eleven different Gulf coaches received certifications at USMS coaching seminars held in Dallas and Houston. Their course fees were paid by the LMSC. We now have an additional one Level 1, eight Level 2, four Level 3, and one ALTS certifications in our LMSC. Additionally, three coaches completed the Clinic Course for Coaches.
- An open water swim clinic was offered to assist new OW swimmers to become comfortable swimming in a lake environment.
- The LMSC's "First Meet Free" program paid the entry fee for 12 members to experience their first pool competition.
- The LMSC paid the 2024 USMS club registration fees for 25 Gulf teams.
- A trial "Coach on Deck" program was held at several fall swim meets. The success of this program is contingent on certified coaches volunteering to be on deck for at least one meet in 2024.

Most of these initiatives and events will again be offered and paid for by the LMSC in 2024.



## The Importance of Sleep for Health and Longevity

Getting consistent quality sleep will improve both your physical and mental well-being. Nutritionist Catherine Kruppa discusses the importance of quality sleep.

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## Calendar of Events

There are lots of pool and open water events this spring in the Houston area, with registration already open. Check them out!

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## The Importance of Sleep for Health and Longevity

Catherine Kruppa, MS, RD, CSSD, LD

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**Sleep – we cannot live without it, and why would we want to?!** A part of how we achieve optimal health and longevity is through the prioritization of sleep. Sleep is an essential part of everyday life, and, as humans, we spend about one-third of our time snoozing away in the comfort of our beds. Attaining adequate, quality sleep is as essential to survival as food and water. However, the fast pace of modern life can sometimes feel as though getting a good night's sleep on a regular basis is a dream.

Sleep is as important for good health as diet and exercise. Getting good sleep helps improve your brain performance, mood, and health. Without proper sleep, several vital functions of the body are negatively affected including the body's main control center, the brain. Furthermore, not getting enough quality sleep raises the risk of many diseases and disorders, ranging from heart disease and stroke to obesity and dementia.

There is more to good sleep than just the hours spent lying in bed. Healthy sleep can be described by three major things:

1. Amount - the number of hours of sleep you get at night
2. Quality - the amount of uninterrupted and refreshing sleep you get at night
3. Consistency - the regularity of your sleep schedule at night

Let's talk more about sleep's effect on various areas of our health.

### Brain Health

While we sleep, the brain and body are remarkably hard at work, forming new pathways and processing information that helps to improve memory and learning, increase attention and creativity, and aid in making important decisions. Sleep not only plays a major role in how nerve cells (neurons) communicate with each other, but it also helps to remove toxins that our body accumulates through various environmental factors throughout our day.

Because sleep is so critical for proper mental function, it can be a strong determinant of productivity during the day. Therefore, those who lack adequate sleep, often take longer to finish tasks, are more likely to make mistakes, and have a slower reaction time.

Prioritizing sleep not only benefits your overall brain health, but the ability to perform at your best, whether that is in work, school, training for athletic competitions, or even being a good friend, mentor, or partner.

### Physical Health

Sleep is also essential for the maintenance of the physical health of the body. Adequate sleep allows for the body to properly heal and repair cells, such as those in the cardiovascular system. It also aids in the regulation of the endocrine system by maintaining the balance of hormones in the body, such as ghrelin and leptin, which regulate feelings of hunger and fullness.

When our body fluctuates in weight, this can often be a reflection of the factors of our lifestyle, such as sleep. Thus, explaining the link between inadequate sleep and increased risk of obesity. Other hormones such as insulin, which is responsible for the regulation of glucose in the blood, also change and can result in an increase in blood sugar level when sleep is disrupted. For this reason, chronic sleep deficiency is also linked to a higher risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease.

Sleep also affects the growth and development process. Deep sleep (or REM sleep) triggers the release of growth-promoting hormones, which boost muscle mass and repair cells and tissues in the body.

The immune system also relies on sufficient quantity and quality of sleep. Therefore, getting an adequate amount of quality sleep can aid in fighting infection and increased risk of getting sick.

### Sleep should be a PRIORITY.

Everyone needs sleep. Sleep affects almost every type of tissue and system in the body from the brain, heart, and lungs to metabolism, immune function, mood, and disease resistance. Studies have shown that a chronic lack of sleep, or getting poor quality sleep, increases the risk of disorders including high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, and obesity.

Therefore, getting quality sleep can play a huge role in supporting overall health and longevity. Prioritize your health by getting a good night's rest to live a long and happy life.

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## You Can Still Enter the Tenth Annual Gulf Swim University

It's not too late to still enter the long running fitness event, Gulf Swim University, which celebrates its tenth year in 2024. This anniversary will be celebrated with participation awards, a special recognition award for those who have participated in all ten events, and a post-event social.

This event is completely free to you as a Gulf/USMS registered swimmer and is easy to enter, as follows:

- Let Gulf Fitness Chair, Karlene Denby, know you are participating by emailing her at [txswimmers53@hotmail.com](mailto:txswimmers53@hotmail.com)
- Beginning on January 1<sup>st</sup>, either join or renew your entry into the FREE Go the Distance Event (<https://www.usms.org/events/fitness-events/go-the-distance>) and easily track your swimming distances (daily, weekly, or monthly).
- Get to the pool regularly, have fun, and get FIT. This fitness event may be just what you need to get to the pool consistently as we enter the new year. Make swimming regularly the one resolution that you keep in 2024.

There are five levels of challenge. The event runs from **January 1, 2024 to April 30, 2024**:

- \* Swim 20-39 miles and earn an Associate's Degree
- \* Swim 40-79 miles to earn a Bachelor's Degree
- \* Swim 80-119 miles to qualify for a Double Major
- \* Swim 120-159 miles for a Master's Degree
- \* Swim 160 miles for a PhD

We are looking to have our highest level of member participation for the tenth anniversary event and encourage all our teams and members to join us for the fitness challenge.

## The 2024 1-Hour Virtual Championship Swim is in the Books! Andreas Lorenz

For the third year in a row Dad's Club was generous enough to lend us lanes and stop watches for the 2024 USMS 1-Hour Virtual swim. Five courageous souls made the "virtual" a reality and jumped into the water at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>.

The conditions were perfect. Hold it, that is a lie. While the water was a wonderful 80ish degrees, the weather forecasters let us down, and the predicted "sunny" turned into "overcast, windy and pretty cool." But, nevertheless, for swimming one hour non-stop, that was rather nice.

The distances swum ranged from 3,175 yds to 4,740 yds, and a couple of personal bests were recorded by Melissa Reed (WMST) and Emily Merkley (SHAC). Congratulations! The latter was so stoked that she swam the last 25 yards in a rather stylish butterfly. Wow!

We are grateful to Dad's Club and Coach Rey for their generosity and to the counters that helped the swimmers make their results official. Keep swimming and see you in 2025.



*Emily Merkley (SHAC), Kris Wingenroth (TFY), and John Keen (COOG) relax after their one-hour swim.*



*Melissa Reed (WMST) celebrates her personal best swim with Andreas Lorenz (DADS).*



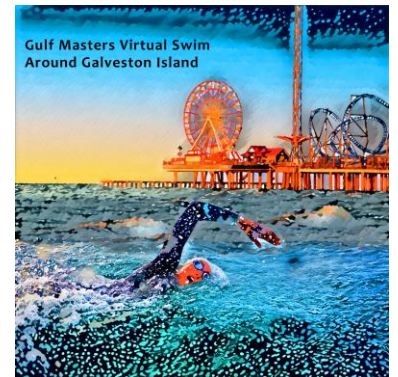
## The Galveston Virtual Swim Was the Second Fitness Event of 2023

Twenty-eight Gulf swimmers signed up for the Galveston Virtual Swim, a 60-mile circumnavigation of Galveston Island. The event ran from October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>, meaning that swimmers needed to average 20 miles per month to complete the swim.

The swim was successfully completed by 2/3s of our entrants. One intrepid member reported swimming around the island twice! Swimmers were kept up to date by regular emails which kept them on track for the swim and which also offered some history about Galveston. I learned quite a few new things about Galveston in researching information for the email updates.

All entrants will receive an event tee-shirt and an invitation to the post-event lunch social which will be held at The Spot on the Seawall in Galveston overlooking the Pleasure Pier in mid-February.

Thanks to all who participated, and I hope to see you at the social.



## The Gulf's David Guthrie is a 2024 USMS Ambassador

USMS has selected nine members to serve as USMS Ambassadors. The ambassadors will be providing content on USMS's various social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube).

We are pleased to announce that the Gulf's David Guthrie is one of the nine USMS Ambassadors. As many of us know, David readily shares his expertise with swimmers of all abilities. For 2024, the entire USMS community will be able to access David on Instagram where he'll share his insights from his many decades of swimming,

David's bio from the USMS Ambassador page can be found below.



Growing up in rural locations limited my opportunities to swim competitively until I attended college. But my delayed start in the sport only deepened my appreciation and fueled my appetite. Over the years, I've been fortunate to break a lot of records, but my true motivation is to elevate, expand, and sustain my quality of life in every respect, both on a daily basis and long term. When you find something that you love, that continually challenges you, teaches you lessons, provides a community, and dependably brings positive and interesting things into your life, you're wise to stick with it. Now approaching my mid-60s, swimming has been one of the constants of my adult life that I'm most thankful for. And as a Level 3 coach, I'm hoping to share some of what I've learned along the way.

Instagram: [@swimintelligence](https://www.instagram.com/swimintelligence)

## Calendar of Events for 2024

The event schedule is already busy for 2024 with both pool and open water events coming up in the next few months. For many of them, registration is already open.

### Pool Events

- Saturday, February 10 – Sweetheart Swim, WW Emmons Natatorium, Houston, TX  
[https://www.clubassistant.com/club/meet\\_information.cfm?c=2587&smid=17900](https://www.clubassistant.com/club/meet_information.cfm?c=2587&smid=17900)
- Saturday, March 9 – March Madness Meet, Rice University Gibbs Recreation and Wellness Center, Houston, TX  
[https://www.clubassistant.com/club/meet\\_information.cfm?c=2065&smid=17949](https://www.clubassistant.com/club/meet_information.cfm?c=2065&smid=17949)
- Friday, April 26 – Sunday, April 28 – 2024 South Central Zone Spring SCY Championships, Conroe ISD Natatorium, Shenandoah, TX  
[https://www.clubassistant.com/club/meet\\_information.cfm?c=1733&smid=17864](https://www.clubassistant.com/club/meet_information.cfm?c=1733&smid=17864)
- Thursday, June 20 – Monday, June 24 – 2024 USMS Spring Short Championships, IUPUI Natatorium, Indianapolis, IN  
<https://www.usms.org/events/national-championships/pool-national-championships/2024-pool-national-championships/2024-spring-national-championship>
- Saturday, June 29 – Summer Splash LCM Meet, Conroe ISD Natatorium, Shenandoah, TX
- Friday, July 26 – Sunday, July 28 – 2024 South Central Zone Summer LCM Championships, SMU Natatorium, Dallas, TX
- Wednesday, August 21 – Sunday, August 25 – 2024 USMS Summer Long Course Championships, Mission Viejo, CA

### Open Water Events

- Sunday, April 14 – Lake Longhorn Open Water Roundup (1<sup>st</sup> event of the Zone Grand Prix Series), Lake Longhorn, League City, TX [https://www.clubassistant.com/club/meet\\_information.cfm?c=2065&smid=17950](https://www.clubassistant.com/club/meet_information.cfm?c=2065&smid=17950)
- Sunday, May 5 – Swim De Mayo (2<sup>nd</sup> event of the Zone Grand Prix Series), Joe Pool Lake, Grand Prairie, TX
- Sunday, June 2 – Shark Attack 1 (3<sup>rd</sup> event of the Zone Grand Prix Series), Lake Longhorn, League City, TX  
<https://www.trisignup.com/Race/TX/LeagueCity/SharkAttackatLakeLonghornUSMastersSwimmers>
- Sunday, July 14 – Open Water Swim Challenge (4<sup>th</sup> event of the Zone Grand Prix Series), Joe Pool Lake, Cedar Hill State Park, Cedar Hill, TX



### Open Water Swim Clinics

The Gulf LMSC plans to offer introductory open water swim clinics at Lake Longhorn in May and late September. More information will be forthcoming.

### This Quarter's Workout

To race fast, you need to train fast! This workout includes a long warm-up, and some fast kicking and 25s to get your heart rate up prior to the main set.

The main set is broken 200s in which you take 10 seconds recovery after each 50. Get your total time and subtract 30 seconds to calculate your actual swim time. After each 200 you will have an easy 200 of active recovery, so there's plenty of rest which allows you to give your best effort. The fast swims are FAST!!! After subtracting the 30 seconds, you should have a close approximation of your projected 200 time under racing conditions.

Warmup: 200 free/200 kick/200 pull/200 stroke

8 x 50 kick (with or without fins), odds: 25 fast/25 easy, evens: 50 fast  
100 easy

12 x 25 free, 3 sets of 4, 30 s.r. between sets, odds: fast / evens: easy

200 drill (concentrate on form in preparation for fast swims)

4 x 200 broken (at 50s), 200 active recovery after each 200

# 1: moderate/strong stroke or IM

# 2: FAST stroke or IM

# 3: moderate/strong free

# 4: FAST free

200 cooldown

TOTAL: 3,600 YARDS/METERS