

DID YOU KNOW....?

By Jerry Clark

Do you know the organizational structure of worldwide masters swimming? If not, you may be surprised to learn how many people have been and still are contributing to our sport.

FINA (Fédération Internationale de Natation), is based in Lausanne Switzerland and is the world governing body for the five Aquatic Disciplines of SWIMMING, DIVING, WATER POLO, SYNCHRONISED SWIMMING and OPEN WATER SWIMMING. The FINA Congress is composed of 203 national Federations. There is one Federation per country, regardless of the size or population of the country.

FINA has five main objectives:

- To promote and encourage the development of swimming in all possible manifestations throughout the world.
- To promote and encourage the development of international relations.
- To adopt necessary uniform rules and regulations to hold competitions in swimming, open water swimming, diving, water polo, synchronised swimming and masters swimming.
- To organize World Championships and FINA events.
- To increase the number of facilities for swimming throughout the world

UNITED STATES AQUATIC SPORTS (USAS) is the USA Federation to the FINA Congress. USAS has its annual convention in September. The five national governing bodies within USAS are: United States Swimming, United States Masters Swimming, USA Diving, US Water Polo and US Synchronized Swimming. Those five organizations hold their annual meetings at the USAS convention.

UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING, based in Sarasota Florida, has about 57,000 members; one of its goals is to grow to 100,000 registered members. USMS is governed by rules and legislation that have been discussed and approved by the House of Delegates at its annual convention.

Masters Swimming has eight ZONES in the United States. They are Northwest, Oceana, Southwest, Breadbasket, South Central, Great Lakes, Dixie (ours) and Colonies. See a map of these on page 163 of our rule book www.usms.org click For Volunteers and scroll to Rule Book.

There are 52 LOCAL MASTERS SWIM COMMITTEES spread among the Zones. The Dixie Zone has seven LMSCs. They are Southern, Southeast, Florida Gold Coast, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina. Each LMSCs has a board of directors, people who take on volunteer tasks such as being the Chair, Secretary, Registrar, Coaches Chair, Top 10 & Records Chair, Sanctions chair, Newsletter Editor, etc.

There are CLUBS within the LMSCs. The LMSC for NC, like a number of other LMSCs in the country, has but one Club, which is North Carolina Masters Swimming. There are subgroups within Clubs; here in North Carolina, we have 44 such subgroups, some with large memberships and others with just a few members. The proper name for these subgroups is Workout Groups. Each has its own unique acronym. For example: the Raleigh Area Masters acronym is RAM; the Asheville based workout group is AMS for Asheville Masters Swimming. Many workout groups have their own coach who is paid by the people in that workout group; some may not have a coach, but get their workouts from www.usms.org click Training and scroll to Workouts.

At the 2013 convention, legislation was passed to make all UNATTACHED swimmers automatic members of Club Unattached; this way they all belong to a Club and are therefore eligible to set new records and achieve Top 10 times.

Please keep in touch with our LMSC by visiting www.ncmasters.org frequently. Another good website to look at when travelling or looking for meets to participate in or for results and records, is www.dixiezone.org. A lot of volunteer time is put into our website, the zone website and the national website – all for the benefit of each of us Masters swimmers.

And, be advised that the next FINA World Masters Championship meet www.fina.org will be held in Montreal Canada July 27 – August 10, 2014.