

2017 SWIM SEASON THANK YOU TO OUR MDSA VOLUNTEERS

Dear MDSA Members:

I know this letter is long, but please don't skip over it. All of the people listed below are why you pay only \$20 dues for the whole season. If we had to pay for the crucial tasks performed by our volunteers, even a minimum wage, well, just do the math. Multiply the number of people by anywhere from a couple of hours to a dozen or more hours of their time, and then please read on.

I'm writing this letter as we go into the final weekend of our season. The weather has been challenging lately and sometimes the days after Labor Day have been perfect for swimming. (The recent announcement by Cuomo about the "extension" of the season for two weeks is only for weekends, only some parks, and does not include Minnewaska, mostly due to lack of lifeguards. But this does give us an opening to lobby for a permanent expansion of the swim season, preferably on both ends.)

Without the energy and commitment of our volunteers the MDSA would not exist. It was the action of volunteers over several years that won our swimming rights in 2002. Go to our website, www.minnewaskaswimmers.org and click on the History of MDSA.

Now, some of us, sixteen years older, are still carrying out the "administrative" tasks that keep us going. We are delighted that other swimmers who have been in MDSA for years, and some who are relatively new, have stepped up to help. Below we honor all of those members.

STEPHANIE BLUDAU TOR: The MDSA Co-Coordinator, Stephanie wears two hats. She took over the data base and website management years ago. We struggled for years with volunteers to manage these tasks, but as we grew and as we went higher-tech, we needed to pay for the skills needed. Stephanie has those technical skills, and does the job expertly. She is our only part time paid person on our staff. But apart from the hours she puts in, she works at least as many if not more volunteer hours. We are very fortunate to have her as our Co-Coordinator as she is one of the founding members of MDSA and is devoted to making our swim club sustainable.

ADDIE HAAS is one of those MDSA veterans who began handling our email communications in the years before we even won the right to swim long distance. When you write to our info@minnewaskaswimmers.org it is Addie who gets your letter and either responds or directs it to the right people.

NANCY REEDER continues as our volunteer and highly efficient treasurer despite a full schedule of her own work. She took on this crucial job four years ago when we were in urgent need of a new treasurer.

DORIS CHORNY, another founder of MDSA has been for years in charge of publicity and is also our Recording Secretary. She makes sure news of our tests gets out to the public.

TERESA GENOVESE, after joining seven years ago, has taken on the major responsibility of being the Testing Coordinator. She has made certain that each of our tests for new

applicants is fully staffed and has recruited test teams every summer for that purpose.

Teresa, for the first time this past summer, was able to count on the help of three other Test Coordinators: **SHARON WIACEK, RENA BLUMENTHAL, AND MARA KEARNEY.**

SCOTT SCHIFFER for the fourth year organized our Volunteer Guides service. Scott recruits the weekend Guides who help explain to people who wander to our beach how suddenly the lake gets deep and why they must be tested to join MDSA.

At this point it is appropriate to thank **Assistant Park Administrator JORGE GOMES** who followed through on a sorely needed redesign of the Park's explanatory signage while consulting with us on the content and style.

JULIE ROSE continues her multi-year job as the Replacer of Lost Cards. Here is a way to reduce Julie's workload and save yourself time: FIND A REALLY SAFE PLACE TO STORE YOUR CARD. And then make yourself a note on your 2018 calendar as to WHERE THAT SAFE PLACE might be, so that in April when our membership renewals begin you will know just where to look.

KRISTINE LOGAN, a long-term member, began three years ago picking up mail from our Post Office box in New Paltz. She has now expanded her work to respond to the letters from members who were unable to renew online or had other problems.

SHARON WIACEK learned from Addie Haas the technicalities of responding to our email and filled in for Addie when she was away on vacation. She joins **LARRY KOVOSKY** who has been a back up for Addie for many years.

I, JUDY MAGE, a "Founding Mother" of MDSA, have been referred to as "The glue that holds MDSA together." I am Stephanie's Bludau Tor's Co-Coordinator, and she has made my job enormously easier with her technical skills and her devotion to MDSA. I have what is called the "institutional knowledge" of our past history and struggles. I know many of our long-term active members, and am inspired by the newer members I meet on our beach who want to help. Swimming as often as possible and biking to our beach helps keep me going. I only wish, as do most of us, that the season could be a lot longer.

In addition to the people named above, many MDSA members donated their time to staff our packet parties, our swim tests, as Volunteer Guides and in various other capacities. **Julie Geisler** bought us a really accurate water thermometer which read in the high '60's in June, rose to the high '70's, and dropped some in this unusually chilly summer. **Sharon and Kathy Wiacek** provided essential help for setting up our membership meeting/picnic at the Mohonk Preserve. **Tona Wilson** came to my rescue when my computer skills faltered.

And now for the Volunteers who staffed our eight SWIM TESTS: **Steve MacDonald, 7 tests; Anne Wandres 4; Teresa Genovese, 4; Jo Gangemi 4; Kathleen Wiacek 3; Rena Blumenthal, Sheyda Eversley, Laurie Feldman, Bill Gehris, Serge Ivanov, Christine Kanakis, Mara Kearney, Anne Roschelle, Rae Slingerland, all worked 2 tests each. The following contributed their time to one test, and were all much needed: Karen Andriolo, Yvonne Baker, Richard Bosman, Carol Brown, Kristina Carr, Janet Chapman, Nancy Clark, Tracy Clark-Cherry, Sharon Core, Claudia Communigs, David Dallis, Martha Dallis, Leslie English, Linda Fite, Vena Garay, Evelyn Heinback, Sarah Holland, George Jacobs, Judy Joffee, Kathleen Kluber, Sandra Langley, Jean-Ann McGrane, Lauren Meeker, Jesse Nelson, Judy Reichler, Maureen Rogers, Colette Salyk, Naomi Schechter, Susan Scher, Donna Seymour, Irma Shrier, Kirsty Tinto, Shirley Warren, and Sharon Wiacik.**

The following members worked two hour weekend shifts as VOLUNTEER GUIDES: **Laura Finestone,10; Barbara Devine,8; Judy Linn,8; Renee Hack,5; Hope Dejpour,4; Alexandra Negoita, 4; Anne Wandres, 5; Shirley Irons, 3; Doris / Hal Chorny, 2; Ellen James,1; George Airday,1; Janice Pickering,1; Kathleen Wiacek,1; Paul Wismann,1.**

We needed only one PACKET PARTY this year as many more of our members got their renewals in on time. The Packet Party, organized for years by **Marion Ryan and her husband Rick**, is when your stickers get mailed to you. This year it was organized by **Bridget Barclay**, and the crew who came to her home included **Dave Barra, Bill Brinnier, Shelly Brinnier, Janet Chapman, Barbara O'Brien, June Sanson, and Shirley Warren.**

That's it folks. Everyone named in this letter helped to make our 16th swimming season possible. Apologies to those whose names I missed, let me know. If you have never volunteered, consider doing just that next year. Keep track of your password, and your swim card. And help out by renewing your membership as soon as you get the word: on April 1st, 2018.

Our thanks also to Eric Humphrey, Minnewaska State Park Preserve Manager and all the Park staff for their continued support of the MDSA and keeping the Park safe and beautiful.

Until April 1st, 2018 when you may renew online again ... take care.