



SwimTalk Spring 2007

Undeniable Courage

By Laurie Reaburn, Masters Swim Coach

It is difficult to put into words the experience of watching someone through a life altering time in his or her life. This article is about a loyal friend who displayed remarkable courage through the process of discovering and undergoing treatment for a brain tumor.

I was fortunate to meet Beth Eldridge at a 2006 swim meet in Lawrence, KS. At the time, I only knew her as a fast swimmer who lived in Warrensburg and happened to be looking for a team to train with. As a new Masters coach, I invited Beth to train with our Prairie Life Fitness (PLF) Masters group in Overland Park, KS. She tried our PLF group and enjoyed our training sessions. After only a few challenging workouts with the amiable PLF group, it was evident that she had found a home. Commuting over an hour, three times a week showed how intense and committed Beth was towards her swimming. A budding friend, she had soon convinced me to attend the USMS Short course Nationals with her in Coral Springs, Florida. The meet was exciting to watch and Beth had some phenomenal swims and first place finishes. Her performance in the pool was contrasted with the first of what would become regular episodes relating to her (then) undiagnosed condition.

Beth continued to train for Worlds and attended the meet with a great group of MOVY swimmers. Upon her return, she was feeling under the weather. Diagnosed with bronchitis, she was still out of the water for only a week! Throughout the fall, Beth also coached the Warrensburg Lady Tigers High School girls swim team. She was still enjoying both swimming and coaching. About this time, as she was still experiencing some health issues, tests indicated that there was a mass located on her frontal lobe of her brain. By late December, this mass had grown into a 6 centimeter tumor. With plenty of follow up tests, she was referred to both an oncologist to begin radiation treatments and a neurosurgeon to watch the progression of the tumor. She began two sessions of radiation a day, sometimes needing as much as double doses of radiation in a single session.

Under normal circumstances, to watch such a great friend go through any amount of suffering is difficult, but with her demeanor unchanged one could hardly tell that Beth was ill. She still made three practices a week at PLF, and you could always find her with a big smile on her face and full of encouragement for fellow swimmers. She also continued to coach her high school girls all the way to winning the Missouri Conference Championships by only a single point.

The most marked change was as Beth incurred the loss of her hair, uncontrollable twitches, upset stomachs, being physically sick for hours, and a burnt face from radiation, still she had the most phenomenal positive attitude. Not once did any swimmer hear her complain. The day she shaved her hair, Tim Moyer jokingly accused her of shaving her hair to use as a tactic to beat him in the pool. One day, one of my swimmers showed up for practice and did not feel like swimming. I still remember what he said to me: "Beth inspires me so much, how can I complain when I see her in the pool swimming through such a hard time in her life?" The swimmers at PLF pooled together to support Beth and made her realize what a true support structure she will always have. Beth told me that she loved to swim because it was the only time she was treated like she was normal and not sick. People in the pool would encourage her and tell her how great she was looking and swimming and these words would make her feel so good.

Last Friday, we had a celebration for Beth in the pool. As she had found out after extractions and surgery that she was officially tumor free. Although, there is no guarantee that the tumor will not return, Beth is already looking ahead to the rest of the swimming season. She even attended the relay meet while she was still undergoing radiation treatments and swam a 24 second 50 Free!

Beth is an incredible person, and I have been truly blessed to have such a wonderful, positive thinking, hard working, and selfless friend in my life. Most of all, this experienced has shown how swimming can made you heal faster and make you feel better – even under the most arduous circumstances. I would like to thank everyone at PLF who have encouraged Beth over the last six months, you have all been wonderful and an amazing support structure. Most of all, Beth you are a superstar; you truly are an inspiration to the swimming community!

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Upcoming Events

For more info go to
<http://community.lawrence.com/movy/>

April 28 & 29
 Breadbasket Zone
 Championships
 Cedar Rapids, Iowa

- USMS Short course Nationals
- May 17-20, 2007
- Federal Way, WA
- Go to usms.org for information about national meets.



Beth Eldridge



New World Record set at the MU Pool

Anna Lea Roof

Three Missouri Valley Masters swimmers were in the audience in February, 2007, when Michael Phelps set a new world record in the 200 Fly. Joy Stover, Katy Zabler, and I drove to Columbia, Missouri, early on the morning of February 17th. The University of Missouri hosted a USA Swimming Grand Prix meet in their new aquatic center. There were 19 Olympians in attendance, including Michael Phelps, Natalie Coughlin, Aaron Peirsol, and Brendan Hansen. We watched the prelims from 9:00am-noon, hung out in Columbia in the afternoon (watching the KU basketball game!), and went back for the finals at 5:30pm.

This was the last big meet before Worlds (5 weeks before), so everyone was still in heavy training, unshaved, and untapered. No one expected any spectacular times. Phelps took off like a rocket in the 200 Fly and at each split the announcer read off his world-record pace. He was behind it at every turn, although not by much. At his third turn the entire crowd stood up and started cheering. He was swimming alone by then - at least a half-pool length ahead of anyone else. He touched the wall in 1:53.71; his old record was 1:53.80. No one was more excited than he was! Afterward he said he could hear the audience cheering, so he knew that "something was up." Getting the chance to see him swim was incredible. We all agreed that there is NO WAY to fully appreciate his skill on TV. His stroke is so smooth that it looks like he's gliding above the surface of the water. We also agreed that we had all witnessed a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The cold, snowy trip was worth it!

WELCOME a NEW MOVY Officer:

Laurie Reaburn, has agreed to fill the vacant FITNESS chair position in MOVY.

Laurie is a coach in Olathe and we look forward to her ideas and enthusiasm.

Tri 101

Women's training group at Longview Lake
Monday nights June–August
Learn about open water swimming, cycling,
running, nutrition and transitions.

For more info contact Shari at
kestrel277@comcast.net

MOVY Swimmer Mary Kreipe is going the distance in the new USMS Fitness Event: Go the Distance!

Mary is the oldest Masters swimmer to take part in the new fitness challenge. In Jan. and Feb. she placed first in her age group 'because I was the only one in my age group, 85-89 years'. On Easter Sunday, Marie is expecting her 10th great-grandchild. Each month the results will be updated on the USMS website in the Fitness Section at gothedistance@swimoregon.org

Open Water Events

May 19 Ft. Myers Beach, FL
USMS 3-6 Mile Open Water Championships

May 27 Lake Audubon, Reston, VA
USMS 1 Mile Open Water Championships

June 30 Lake Andrea, WI
1, 2 and 3 Mile events for masters
1 Mile wetsuit swim for triathletes
1 Mile swim and 5K aquathon
500 yards–2 Mile events for age-groupers
For more info go to www.kenoshabarracudas.com
Or tdevroy@fastmail.fm

Workout Idea

Thank you Bradley Puett!

200 Pull, 100 Kick, 100 Swim
6 X 25 on :40 1-3 Stroke, 4-6 Free
6 X 50 on 1:05 1-3 Stroke, 4-6 Free
6 X 75 on 1:40 1-3 IM, 4-6 Free
6 X 100 on 2:00 1-3 IM, 4-6 Free
200 IM

2100 Total
Approximately 60 minutes



News & Notes

Jen Gray moving from MO to OH

I would like to say good-bye to all of my MOVY friends. We are moving to Columbus, Ohio to be closer to our family and take on jobs out there. I am planning on swimming with the OHIO Masters, but will miss the MOVY swimmers very much! I have had a blast swimming with everyone over the past 2 years and think MOVY is awesome. Thanks to all of the officers for all of their hard work, dedication and positive attitudes. I wish you all the best of luck and stay away from my 200 backstroke records! :) Ha!

Take care!
Jen

Looking Ahead

Summer Meets

Dates are tentative or to be Announced

Ad Astra, Lenexa—Sat. July 28

Old Pike SCM

5K/10K Time Trial August, Roeland Park

USMS 10K Open Water National Championships, July 14, Huntington, NY

USMS LC Nationals, Aug 10-13, Woodlands, TX

Fall

Mizzou Masters SCM Championships, Columbia, MO Dec. 1 & 2

Olathe Masters Meet

Park Hill SCM, Nov?

Roeland Park SCY Meet hosted by KC Wave—September?

MOVY Swimmers Win All-American Honors

Jen Gray, Jenny Chonko, Laurie Reaburn, Lisa Elsener
800 Free Relay SCM Womens

Lindsey Urbatchka 10K Postal Women 18-24

Joy Stover 5K Postal Women 30-34 AND 3–6 Mile Open Water

Joy, Lindsay, and Liz Johnson 5K women Postal relay

Joy, Lindsay, Doug Nelson, and Anthony Thompson

5K Postal Mixed relay

Mark Bergert, Kent McDonald, and Neil Salkind 10K Postal relay

Lindsay, Kent, Neil and Maria Eifler 10K Postal Mixed relay

Missouri Valley Officers

Chairman:

Anthony Thompson

913-262-2464

SwimTotoSwim@msn.com

MOVYchair@usms.org

Registrar:

Anna Lea Roof

913-642-5484

AnnaLea@usms.org

MOVYregistrar@usms.org

Treasurer:

Ellen Haden

EMHaden@aol.com

MOVYtreasurer@usms.org

Webmaster:

DanTwedt

785-832-0858

MOVYwebmaster@usms.org

Sanctions & Officials:

Dulcy Sellon

785-842-0771

MVSswim@sunflower.com

MOVYsanctions@usms.org

Newsletter Editor:

Shari Harden

816-229-3979

Kestrel277@comcast.net

MOVYeditor@usms.org

Records & Top Ten:

Bill Sherman

816-363-6215

BSherm81@kc.rr.com

MOVYtopten@usms.org

MOVY Newsletter Editor
Shari Harden
513 NE Grant Dr.
Blue Springs, MO 64014

Where to Swim???

Check out the MOVY website for places to swim.

<http://community.lawrence.com/movy/>

Attention MOVY Swimmers
Please send articles, meet
information or anything of
interest to
kestrel277@comcast.net
For the next edition of Swim-
Talk.
Thanks!!