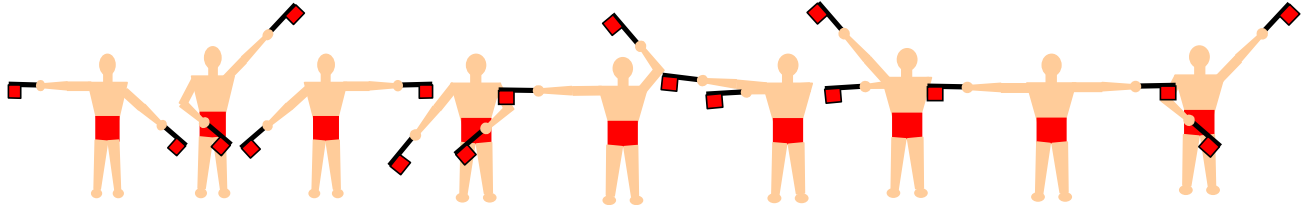


Ocean City Beach Patrol



Edition 52

Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2011-12



Over Eighty Years
of Saving Lives.

Maintain Your Role
in this Fantastic
Tradition!

OCBP Forever!

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Message From the Captain

Captains message

Experience – The value added difference

Although it's true that our newest rookies are the future of the Beach Patrol, they do not come to us ready to perform all aspects of the job. All we know about them when they arrive to begin Surf Rescue Academy is that they have successfully completed the physical skills testing and seemed to have all the attributes that we desire in a Surf Rescue Technician. At this point the real work begins, turning a group of young adults (usually 18 – 22) who have little or no work experience into Surf Rescue Technicians that we will trust with the lives of the people we care about. What we don't know, and cannot predict, is who from this group will be a future Crew Chief or a Sergeant one day, or even the next Captain. However, the immediate goal we must meet is to make sure each rookie is ready for the tasks that they must perform once they complete academy. A few years ago the saying "It takes a village to raise a child" was popular, but the reality for us is "It takes a Beach Patrol to make a Surf Rescue Technician" and we know experience is the best teacher.

If an organization is made up of a large number of individuals with little experience, there is a real void in organizational knowledge.

To the contrary, the Beach Patrol is fortunate to have a large number of its leadership group with many years of experience in various roles. This is particularly important when it comes to preparing the newest members of the Patrol for future responsibilities.

Unlike other departments in the Town of Ocean City, whose summer workforce is being supervised by full-time employees, the leadership of the Patrol is all temporary (99.7 %). Therefore it is critical that we maintain a large group of returning employees with

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Welcome rookie class of 2012

I want to again welcome you into the Beach Patrol family and hope that this is just the beginning of a lifetime of wonderful Ocean City memories. You have taken the first and most important step toward a career with the Ocean City Beach Patrol when you successfully completed the pre-employment physical skills test this past summer and were offered a job by me. Yet, day and my handshake marked the beginning of the adventure and not the end. Passing the "test" is an accomplishment to be proud of, but now the real work begins for you and the Patrol.

Your official offer of appointment to Surf Rescue Academy will be included with the Spring Newsletter, which will be mailed to the address you provided on Monday, April 2, 2012. In addition to confirming your availability and submitting official documentation of your final day of work, it is your responsibility to be fully prepared and ready for the rigors of academy. As long as your availability is until at least Labor Day, Monday, September 3, 2012, I will reserve a slot for you in a Surf Rescue Academy, however, appointments will also be given to others based on performance, past connection with the Patrol and later availability if prior to Labor Day.

We have the collective responsibility of turning you into a Surf Rescue Technician and you have the responsibility of arriving in Ocean City ready to take on the challenges of Surf Rescue Academy. We will provide you with the most comprehensive open water surf

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(Captain's Message continued from page 1)

leadership experience. Experience is not only a critical need for the Beach Patrol but a recent Gallop Poll found that most people believe that experience in "skilled" professions is what can make the greatest difference in performance of the organization, regardless of the organization's mission.

Although, having a large number of our employees with over three years of experience has not always been the case (see article on page 27 from a 1985 American Lifeguard USLA magazine) we have been incredibly successful in this area for at least the past ten years. This past season as I was preparing certificates for our annual awards banquet I was looking at the number of seasons worked by our 200 + personnel. What I discovered is a real testament to this organization and the people who have dedicated so many years of their lives to the Town of Ocean City. 40% have worked 5 or more seasons, 15% have worked 10 or more seasons, 6% have worked 20 or more seasons and what makes this even more amazing to me is that over 85% of our employees relocate to work for the Beach Patrol each season. Living in a home during the season that is different than the home they live in during our off season brings many unique challenges and makes it even more difficult to return for multiple seasons, and then you add a spouse and maybe a child or two. I am thankful that so many continue to make the personal sacrifices that it takes to continue with the Patrol, because without this level of leadership we would not be able to remain the efficient and effective Beach Patrol that our beach patrons deserve.

Although this longevity is great for the organization it does create some issues with individuals who feel ready to advance into new positions that will challenge them even more. Because we are limited in the number of personnel we can have in any particular position I am seeking creative ways to allow capable personnel to serve in slightly modified roles that will give them opportunities to gain new skills and hone the skills they already have. One strategy is to have Crew Chiefs more involved in both the testing and training programs. This gives them the opportunity to use their years of valuable experience to help the newest SRTs and the Patrol continue to move forward. Additionally, I will be asking Crew Chiefs to serve in roles that they have traditionally not been a part of. We will be giving them opportunities to receive advanced training in areas such as CPR Instructor, First Aid Instructor, Rescue Swimmer and OCBPSRA instructing. All of which are attempts to keep this most important group involved, energized and returning for additional seasons, while at the same time developing our next leaders.

One of our successful programs that has served us well is the Assistant Crew Chief training position. This is a one-year appointment that allows SRTs with OCBPSRA SRT II certification to apply for a one-year training position as an Assistant Crew Chief (ACC). The 17 new ACCs receive extensive training and then spend the season learning all aspects of the Crew Chief position and operate as the Crew Chief on that person's two days off or when that Crew Chief is assigned a special duty away from the crew. After serving in this training position, they may be eligible to apply for a Crew Chief position if one becomes available. If not promoted, they return to their previous rank and a new group of ACCs will be trained the following season. There are two primary benefits to this program; first it has created a large number of highly qualified candidates for

the few Crew Chief openings that occur each season (only 3 this past season); second it creates a "deep bench" with a very large number of personnel on the beach that have gained experience in so many aspects of the job and can step in when the need arises.

The greatest testimony to the fact that the overall experience of the Patrol and the leadership training and development process is working as designed took place on Monday, August 8, 2011. That was the day that we held our annual Crew Chief Lunch Seminar following the weekly meeting. All Crew Chiefs were involved in this seminar which was held in the Dorchester street Training Room, while at the same time we had one of the busiest days in Beach Patrol history from a medical emergency perspective with 19 EMS calls. Yet, the ACCs performed flawlessly and the Beach Patrol was able to fulfill all aspects of its mission that day. This would not have been possible if the majority of those responsible for the beach that day had not had many years of experience and training. Additionally, I can assure you that although I was aware of how busy the beach was as we continued our discussions in the seminar, I never had a single doubt that those left responsible to handle all the emergencies and manage each incident were fully capable of performing to the highest expectations. This is where the value of experience really pays huge dividends.

Having so much experience on the beach is a real added value to the Town and the citizens and visitors we serve. But I can not talk about the importance of experience and giving your life to the Beach Patrol with out mentioning that this coming season we have multiple individuals reaching some important landmarks in service, 20 years, 30 years and 40 years. You cannot buy experience and could not afford it, if you could!



Captain explains the re-qualifying swim to SRA 1 .

(Welcome Rookie Class continued from page 1)

rescue training, being taught by the best instructors available, anywhere. To be successful you must prepare both personally and physically. To prepare physically you must continue to work on maintaining and improving your physical conditioning and specific skills. Although we talked about where you needed to improve during your final interview you must take time to look at our training web resources www.ococean.com/ocbp and

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Ocean City Beach Patrol Surf Rescue Association



This past summer was the most successful year for high numbers of participants in the various components of the OCBPSRA. One factor that contributed to this success was the additional opportunities to complete a certification requirement. Not only did we hold each certification twice but we also held one in the morning and the second in the evening as well as one in the north and one in the south. This was only possible with the dedication of the OCBPSRA Instructors who were responsible to facilitate these certifications. In the past these instructors were OCBP officers, usually Sergeants, but beginning with 2012, I will have other OCBPSRA Instructors (usually Crew Chiefs) who wish to become involved, be scheduled to assist with certifications. As we look toward the summer of 2012 we have already scheduled all of the OCBPSRA certification opportunities (see chart in this newsletter) so you will have plenty of time to plan ahead. The certifications that are obtained through completion of the OCBPSRA requirements are required to accept a training position or promotion. All training, practice and skill demonstrations are done during an SRT's scheduled time off. Additionally it is your responsibility to notify the Beach Patrol of any requirements that you complete that are not sponsored by the Beach Patrol (Boating Safety, EMT, ARC Lifeguard, Instructor certificates, etc) and give the secretary a copy of your proof of certification. This past summer also included the introduction of the newly designed certification patches and certificates, which were presented at the meetings in late August and September (If you did not receive yours they should be included with this newsletter). We also re-issued any patches that you had previously earned with the new designs at the beginning of this season. Although we have made a concerted effort to research each person's OCBPSRA history, including past certifications for those with a break in service and an update in days, it is your responsibility to check your training record for accuracy and let Captain Arbin know if you feel that your OCBPSRA records are not reflective of what items you have completed. If you have not already received a copy of your certification record by email you should be receiving it soon. Rather than having you return it like we have done in the past you will simply click on the link and reply in Google Docs, letting us know if it is accurate, or if not, what you believe is incorrect. One change that has taken place for SRTs starting after the 2009 season is the calculation of days for the various levels of certification. The days that are calculated for the 100, 200 and 300 required days worked do not include any days, on probation. This is an important change that will give us a more qualified candidate pool, since under the old system a person could have 97 days on probation (which is an indication of some weakness) and then after working only 3 additional days would receive their OCBPSRA SRT II certification and be eligible for a training position as an Assistant Crew Chief.

Following is a list of SRTs who completed OCBPSRA SRT II or SRT III certification this past season.

OCBPSRA SRT II – Eligible for ACC

Genevieve Beaulieu
Matthew Sweeney
Joseph Keefe
Travis Sevier
David Cuomo
Thomas Lurie
Justyn Zangwill
David Krabbe
Christopher Babcock
David Balog
Jarred Sears

OCBPSRA SRT III – Eligible for CC

James Kleman
Samantha McElvaney
Kelly McGrath
Mitchell Witherow
Christopher Meeker
Jacob Ritter
Richard Devine
Maxwell Posner
Charles Swartz
William Wilkinson, Jr.
Harrison Fisher

See the OCBPSRA 2012 Schedule on page 4

Evaluation as a Tool to Strengthen an Organization

I believe that the most important asset of a superior and healthy organization is its personnel. Therefore, the most important function of any organization should be the ongoing development of its employees. First and foremost we must recruit, qualify (test) and train the best individuals available. This has been a hallmark of our success for all 80 years of our history and continues to be one of our greatest strengths. Once we bring new personnel into the organization we must have a plan to move them through the organization in a clear and defined manner. This we do through our OCBPSRA certification program as well as programs like the Assistant Crew Chief training position. Having this organizational schematic in place is not enough, it must be monitored for quality control and to make certain that we are getting the results that we desire. In keeping with this belief we use supervision and ongoing formative evaluation to monitor the progress of our personnel. Formative evaluation is used to inform and provide feedback and action steps to become more effective employees and to assist them as they advance within the organization.

However, once our season has ended and after all formative evaluations have been completed a summative evaluation is compiled. This is, as the name implies a summary of the employee's performance over the time of employment for the current season. It pulls together all available information including all evaluations, employee incident reports, employee commendations, starting and ending dates, time off and reliability data as well as a photo of each employee. Once all pertinent information about each employee has been assembled a review panel made up of current Sergeants (this year 10 met on November 5th in OC) reviews individual employee performance and as a group recommends a future status for this employee.

The review panel was provided with information about OCBPSRA training and certifications and were asked to indicate if an eligible employee should be considered for a training position as an Assistant Crew Chief (OCBPSRA Step II) or if qualified (OCBPSRA Step III) should be considered for promotion to Crew Chief. The Lieutenants then review all Sergeant recommendations and a final recommendation is forwarded to the Captain. The final disposition of each employee's status for future employment and promotion within the Beach Patrol organization rests firmly with the Captain. All employees who are determined to be re-employable, without conditions, will receive an official letter of invitation for re-employment from the Captain shortly after April 1st along with the spring edition of the semaphore newsletter. Prior to the official hard copy of a job offer I will be sending a preliminary e-mail early in the New Year, with specific instructions to be returned so that we can begin planning. Because of the quality of the individuals we recruit 95% of our employees who completed the previous season will be eligible to return for future seasons.

However, if you do not receive notice that you are being recommended for re-hire, it remains solely your responsibility to contact Captain Arbin ASAP. Although, I know everyone works hard to get the Beach Patrol job, it is even more important to perform in a manner that shows you want to keep your position. Even seemingly minor infractions such as missing a meeting, being 3 minutes late, not shaving, forgetting equipment have resulted in some of our best SRTs not getting their position back.

At a time when individual accountability is a rare trait and employee performance is often less than acceptable in other areas and professions, the Beach Patrol demands far more of each employee. I can assure you that your job and the service you provide are far too important to allow any employee to compromise our mission by performing in a less than exemplary way. This is why the Beach Patrol takes the evaluation process so seriously and why we strive for greatness as an organization by holding every employee to the highest standards of the Beach Patrol and the Town of Ocean City. This standard is why so many employers that know of the Ocean City Beach Patrol look favorably on your experience with this organization and you can be proud to say "I worked with the Ocean City Beach Patrol".

Note: Remember to keep the Beach Patrol informed of any changes in your address, both e-Mail and residence. It would be unfortunate to have your position given to someone else because we did not know you were planning to return!

Ocean City Beach Patrol Surf Rescue Association 2012 Schedule

		1st Opportunity	2nd Opportunity
SRT II (Basic) Criteria	Mile Swim (Craig swim also counts)	Friday, June 22, 2012 18:15 130th Street	Wednesday, August 08, 2012 8:30 Dorchester Street
	2 mile Run	Wednesday, June 20, 2012 18:15 130th Street	Wednesday, July 11, 2012 8:30 Dorchester Street
	Dispatch / Office Management	6/25/2012 - 8/19/2012 9:00 - 18:00 OCBP Headquarters	
	Beach Safety Training	Thursday, June 14, 2012 18:30 OCBP Training Room	Monday, July 16, 2012 18:30 OCBP Training Room
SRT III (Advanced) Criteria	Mile Run	Tuesday, June 19, 2012 18:15 130th Street	Wednesday, July 18, 2012 8:30 Dorchester Street
	200 M Sprint	Monday, June 18, 2012 18:15 130th Street	Thursday, July 12, 2012 8:30 Dorchester Street
	Run Swim Run	Friday, June 15, 2012 18:15 130th Street	Thursday, July 19, 2012 8:30 Dorchester Street
	Paddle Board	Friday, June 08, 2012 18:15 Dorchester Street	Friday, July 06, 2012 8:30 Dorchester Street
	2 Person Rescue	Thursday, June 14, 2012 18:15 130th Street	Thursday, July 12, 2012 8:30 Dorchester Street
	Landline	Friday, June 22, 2012 18:15 130th Street	Wednesday, July 18, 2012 8:30 Dorchester Street
	Rookie Graduation Assist	Thursday, July 05, 2012 7:00 Inlet Beach	
	IBP Instructor Training	Thursday, June 21, 2012 18:30 OCBP Training Room	Wednesday, June 27, 2012 18:30 OCBP Training Room
Specialty Certifications	Jet drive certification <small>Note: Requires a 2nd solo day May serve as re-certification</small>	Monday, June 25, 2012 18:30 OCBP Training Room	Monday, July 23, 2012 18:30 OCBP Training Room
	Jet drive re-certification	Wednesday, June 13, 2012 18:30 OCBP Training Room	Saturday, July 07, 2012 18:30 OCBP Training Room
	Quad certification <small>Note: Requires a 2nd solo day May serve as re-certification</small>	Monday, June 18, 2012 18:30 130th Street	Tuesday, June 19, 2012 18:30 Dorchester Street
	Quad re-certification	Monday, June 11, 2012 18:15 130th Street	Saturday, June 16, 2012 18:15 Dorchester Street
	Maryland State Police Rescue Swimmer Training	TBA	TBA
	Marine Animal Rescue Responder	TBA	TBA

