

## *Letter from the Chair*

As your new Masters Chairman, I want to put out a monthly letter to the membership, and future members of Masters Diving. For my first installment, I would like to address the question, “Why dive Masters?”

Many times I get asked, “Why do you still dive and compete?” I know that is a question that people will ask of all of us, and we all have different reasons. I, personally, love the feeling of diving. I guess you could say that I am somewhat of an adrenaline junkie! I love how it feels to fly through the air, or “fall with style”. I also enjoy challenging myself physically, trying to learn dives or re-learn dives that I used to do. There is just something so rewarding about the feeling of conquering my fears and achieving something usually done by athletes half my age! There is also a motivation to stay in shape, since in order to do this sport, we have to be mostly naked, and if I’m going to be seen in a swimsuit on a daily basis, I might as well look good! For myself, the closer we get to a meet, the more effort I put in toward physical fitness, etc, since I have a reason to get in shape and look good. Other divers have said that they keep diving to improve their health, to help recover from other injuries or surgeries, or just to keep them young. Many of our “older” divers look much younger than non-divers of the same age because of their fitness.

All of those reasons are reasons to dive, to stay in shape, but why compete? Why go to meets? Perhaps you like the challenge of doing a dive in a meet for the first time in 20 years, or the first time ever! Maybe you have some goals for yourself, and want to reach those, be it a score, or a point total, or maybe just beating that rival in your age group. Some of us, like myself, just have a competitive nature, enjoy competing, and cannot seem to find any other outlet to satisfy that need.

My most compelling reason for coming back year after year is the Masters diving community, ***the people***. In our Masters family we have such a broad variety of careers, lifestyles, personalities, that every time we get together it is something of a family reunion. We are a unique, fun, sometimes dysfunctional family that all have something wonderful to offer to each other. This is something so special with our group that you will not find in other areas of competition. We, as Masters divers, truly enjoy being together, sharing our stories of smacks, triumphs, and heartbreaks. We laugh together, cry together, cheer each other, and sometimes fight with each other, but most of all we have **FUN** together.

My challenge to each of you is to find your **REASON**, and help others find their reason to come and join us.

Jennifer Mangum