

# Newsplash: A Weekly Update

Issue 2 · April 26, 2026



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Check the dry erase board located near the girls restroom for up-to-date reminders!

**REMINDER: There is NO practice this Friday, May 1.**

## **VOLUNTEER SIGN UPS - Sign-ups NOW open thru May 2 @ 11pm!**

Volunteer sign-ups are now open—thank you to those who jumped in so quickly!

A quick clarification: with only three home meets this season, each family is required to complete five volunteer shifts (not six). The policy has been updated.

***Volunteer Tidbit:** Our league has six teams (including us), and we rotate which pool hosts each meet. Because of this, the number of home meets changes each year - some years we host three, other years four (including Time Trials). When we have more home meets, we need more volunteers, which is why the required number of shifts can vary from season to season.*

Please review each [volunteer description](#) carefully before signing up.

Questions? Contact our Volunteer leads, [Nina DeSimone & Michelle Senner](#).

## **5th ANNUAL SEA OTTERS SERVICE PROJECT - May 2, 10am-12pm**

Bring your shovels, rakes, loppers, trimmers and work gloves to Rancho on the morning of May 2 for the 5th Annual Sea Otters Community Service Project. The whole family will be able to help with activities such as grounds maintenance, window washing, and gardening. This is a great opportunity for high schoolers to log volunteer hours and a great way for Sea Otters to meet one another and give back to our community club.

## **MOMS' NIGHT AT THE POOL - May 2, 6:30-9:00pm**

Join us at the adult pool for some kid-free conversation and community with your fellow Otter Moms. Come when you can; bring your own food and drinks. Questions? Email [Emily Becker](mailto:Emily.Becker@stseaotters.com) at [activities.stseaotters@gmail.com](mailto:activities.stseaotters@gmail.com).

## **VIRTUAL SILENT AUCTION - May 4-8**

Get ready to bid, win, and make an impact - all from the comfort of home! In our upcoming Virtual Silent Auction you will be able to bid on a Pop-up-Spot or a Spot-in-the-Lot for all \*home\* meets! Mark your calendar and get ready to bid!

Links will be available in the next Newsplash. [Bidding will open at 9am Monday, May 4th and closes at 6pm Friday, May 8th!](#)

## **OTTER-THON - May 4**

Help us kick off the season and make a splash again! Our annual Otter-Thon will be held Monday, May 4th at your regular practice time. This fun, high-energy fundraiser is a great way to build team spirit and support the fun season ahead. Swimmers will collect donations and earn tickets for prize drawings of their choice-the more you swim and raise, the more chances to win! Pledge sheets are available at practice! .

Other fundraising activities this season are:

**Weekly Drawings:** Purchase tickets and enter to win a Pop-up-Spot at home meets and/or a Spot-In-The-Lot at all dual meets, home and away! Tickets will be sold at Picture Day, May 6 and at all home swim meets. Tickets prices,

- 1 ticket for \$1
- 12 tickets for \$10
- 25 tickets for \$20

**Corporate & Family Sponsorships:** For \$250, your company logo or family name will be displayed on a banner at Rancho and on our website.

**Special Project Donation:** Help create a scholarship fund to keep the team accessible to all. Let us know if you'd like to contribute to this project.

**Restaurant Nights:** Look out for a couple of restaurant nights throughout the season. It's an easy (and delicious!) way to make a difference!

Thank you for your support! If you have questions or want to make a donation, contact [Tracy Raivio](mailto:TracyRaivio@stseaotters.fundraising@gmail.com) at [stseaotters.fundraising@gmail.com](mailto:stseaotters.fundraising@gmail.com).

## **TEAM PICTURES & SPIRIT POSTER PAINTING - May 6, 3:30-6:00pm**

- **Individual/Sibling/Buddy Pictures:** Jim Nelson Photography will be taking pictures from 3:30-5:30pm - order form attached. Swimmers normally wear their swimsuits for individual pictures. Please don't wait until 5pm to arrive for your individual pictures. The line gets long as the afternoon progresses! Filling out the order form ahead of time will also help the line go quicker.
- **Team Picture:** We will be lining up for the team picture at 5:30pm.
- **Spirit Poster Painting:** Sea Otters will also have the opportunity to create spirit posters during the picture taking window. Poster painting will be taking place on the Upper Deck. Swimmers' posters will be hung up around Rancho all summer.

Team spirit shirts will be distributed to swimmers this day and they will be worn for our team picture. As a reminder, you already indicated your swimmers shirt size during the registration process.

## **SEA OTTERS MERCHANDISE - SPIRIT SHIRT ORDERS DUE MAY 6**

- Merchandise sales are open for the season! Check out our merch store at <https://stseaotters.square.site/> and stock up on Sea Otters gear! Check out our new beanies, personalized quick-dry towels, and our Warriors themed 2026 Sea Otter shirts. (*Reminder: swimmers will get a shirt and personalized swim cap as part of their registration cost*). Please note that **apparel orders must be placed by Wednesday, May 6, 2026** in order to receive the merchandise before our first dual meet on May 9th. Don't delay and place your order today!

Team swimsuits:

- Sea Otters custom team suits are still available for individual order at [Agon Swimmer Storefront](#). If you ordered a custom team suit as part of the bulk order, please contact [merch.stseaotters@gmail.com](mailto:merch.stseaotters@gmail.com) to arrange pickup.
- Just a reminder that custom swimsuits are not required, but swimmers should wear suits in the team colors of navy, yellow and/or white to our swim meets.
- An alternate resource is [SwimOutlet](#), where you can get suits, team parkas, goggles and more. If purchased at the Sea Otters page, the team receives a small percentage of the sales. <https://www.swimoutlet.com/collections/stseaotters>. Questions? reach out to our merchandise lead, [Kelly Hodge](#), [merch.stseaotters@gmail.com](mailto:merch.stseaotters@gmail.com).

### **SECRET SEA OTTERS - Sign-ups, Open Now-May 6!**

Sea Otters who wish to participate will be secretly matched to another Sea Otter in their age group to create and deliver encouraging notes and fun surprises (<\$5 per week) the night before each meet. [Signups are now open through May 6!](#) Questions? Email [Emily Becker](#) at [activities.stseaotters@gmail.com](mailto:activities.stseaotters@gmail.com).

### **OTTER BUDDIES - Opt out by May 6**

Swimmers are paired with a Sea Otter in another age group to foster friendships and support throughout the team. Materials will be provided at home meets so that swimmers can make a craft to give to their buddy. This works best when swimmers are excited about having a buddy - please talk to your swimmer about participating. Coaches will be assisting swimmers with signups or opting out at practice. Buddy matches will be revealed at the Donut Meet. *Please email [Emily Becker](#) at [activities.stseaotters@gmail.com](mailto:activities.stseaotters@gmail.com) no later than Wednesday, May 6 if your swimmer **\*does not\*** want to participate, or with any questions.*

**\*\*\*\*\*PLEASE READ THIS SECTION\*\*\*\*\***

### **TIME TRIALS (AKA, THE DONUT MEET) - Saturday, May 9**

All swimmers are expected to attend our Time Trials meet on Saturday, May 9. Times from this "Donut Meet" (yes, every swimmer gets a donut after their first swim!) will be used for seeding and determining relays at our first dual meet, and serve as a baseline for personal bests. No makeup date will be offered; swimmers who miss it will enter the first meet with a "No Time" (NT).

Time Trials will run like a regular dual meet, but with just our team and no relays. Check out [Swim Meet 101](#) to learn how meets work.

### **Digital Online Meet Sign-up Process - Due Tuesday, May 5**

In order to ensure we know who will be swimming at each meet, we require you to sign-up for each meet via [Swimtopia](#) or via the Swimtopia app. ***You must declare your swimmers' attendance, whether they plan to swim or not. "Declare" for your swimmers status and sign up for individual events by 5pm on the Tuesday before each meet.***

The Time Trials Meet is now open. See attached - "Declaring Swimmer(s) in Swimtopia".

**Submit your online sign-ups by 5pm - Tuesday, May 5.**

- 7 & Up: Enter all four (4) events
- 6 & Under: Enter Backstroke and Freestyle

**\*\*\*\*THANK YOU FOR DECLARING YOUR SWIMMER(S) BEFORE THE DEADLINE\*\*\*\***

## **SWEETEN THEIR SWIM! Help Keep the Treats Coming!**

Our youngest Sea Otters (ages 6–10) love their after-practice treats - it's a simple way to celebrate their hard work and keep them excited about being in the water! We're inviting families to help keep this fun tradition going! Whether it's snacks, gift cards, or a small donation, every contribution makes a difference and supports both our swimmers and coaches.

Interested in helping? Please reach out to [Coach Kim](#) for details on how to contribute. Thank you for helping keep the smiles going!

## **GRADUATING SENIORS**

We have a tradition of honoring our graduating seniors at the last home meet of the season with posters and more. Parents of seniors, you should have received an email from [Cindy Sperry](#) ([seniors.stseaotters@gmail.com](mailto:seniors.stseaotters@gmail.com)) with information this week.

## **SCHOOL YEAR PRACTICE SCHEDULE**

Now thru Tuesday, June 9* Monday-Friday**		
Age Group	Time	Coaches
6 & Under	3:45 - 4:30pm	Abi Lawson + Jr. Coaches
7-8	3:45 - 4:30pm	David Phipps / Mia White
9-10	4:30 - 5:30pm	Kim Kleiner + Jr. Coaches
11-12	5:30 - 6:30pm	David Phipps / Mia White
Practice Schedule, Now-June 9*		
13-18 Yellow	6:30 - 7:30pm	Mark Kleiner / David Phipps / Mia White
13-18 Blue	7:30 - 8:30pm	Mark Kleiner / David Phipps / Mia White

*\*Please note: we will shift to summer schedule on Wednesday, June 10.*

**\*\*MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** There will be no Friday practice on **May 1, 8, 29 and June 5.**

## **WHATSAPP GROUP**

To help foster a safe and supportive community, we ask that all members joining the WhatsApp group use their full name (and a photo, if possible) in their profile. Beginning this week, we will remove anyone who is not clearly identified. Please take a moment to review and update your profile. Need help? [How to edit your WhatsApp profile](#)

Join the ST Sea Otters WhatsApp group! It includes several channels for parents and coaches to stay connected throughout the season:

- Announcements – key updates and important events
- General – team-wide chat
- Age Group Chats – updates specific to your swimmer's group
- Parents Relay Participants – for those ready to jump in and have some fun
- New Families – a space to connect and ask questions

Join today by clicking the link below and feel free to participate in any groups that apply to you:  
[https://chat.whatsapp.com/FGnS2lw553l64B8JFAL3Dp?mode=gi\\_t](https://chat.whatsapp.com/FGnS2lw553l64B8JFAL3Dp?mode=gi_t)



### **SEA OTTERS INFORMATION ON-DEMAND**

Bookmark the team website, <https://stseaotters.swimtopia.com/>

Follow us on Facebook - Santa Teresa Sea Otters

Reference the [Rancho Newsletters](#)

The Santa Teresa Sea Otters, Inc. is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. To make a tax-deductible donation, please contact [treasurer.stseaotters@gmail.com](mailto:treasurer.stseaotters@gmail.com) for information on payment options and to receive a receipt.

### **Board Members & Operational Leads**

- President, [Edie Fischer](#)
- VP & New Otter Liaison, [Dina Mansuy](#)
  - Membership, [Lynda Stahl](#)
- Secretary & Historian, [Alicia LaMarche](#)
  - Awards, [Sun Lee](#)
  - Web & Social Media, [Lauren Sullivan](#)
- Treasurer, [Anuja Burns](#)
  - Fundraising, [Tracy Raivio](#)
  - Merchandise, [Kelly Hodge](#)
  - Snack Shack, [Jenna Collen](#)
- Activities, [Emily Becker](#)
  - Spirit Lead & Events, [Christie Moore](#)
  - Senior Recognition Lead & Events, [Cindy Sperry](#)
- Meet Operations Director, [Iqbal Chadda](#)
  - Equipment, [Scott Fischer](#)
  - Technical Records, [Kumar Virwani](#)
  - Stroke & Turn, [Jodi Taylor](#)
- Volunteer Director, [Nina DeSimone](#)
  - Volunteer Coordinator, [Michelle Senner](#)

## 2026 SEASON ACTIVITIES/SCHEDULE

- Now-5/2: Volunteer Sign-ups, Online
- Now-May 6: Secret Sea Otters Sign-Up, Otter Buddies Opt-Out
- Now-May 6: Spirit Shirts Sales Open, Online
- 5/2: Sea Otters Rancho Service Project, Rancho
- 5/2: Moms' Night, Adult Pool
- 5/4-8: Virtual silent auction for 'spot on the lawn'
- 5/4: Otterthon
- 5/6: Team Picture Day
- **5/9: Time Trials (aka Donut Meet), Rancho**
- **5/16: ST @ Creekside - Dual Meet**
- **5/23: Shadowbrook @ ST - Dual Meet**
- 5/29: Annual Otter Dinner, Rancho

- **5/30: ST @ Pinehurst - Dual Meet**
- **6/6: ST @ Crossgates - Dual Meet**
- 6/6: Dads' Night, Adult Pool
- 6/10: Shift to summer schedule
- 6/11: Tie Dye, at practice
- **6/13: Almaden @ ST - Dual Meet**
- 6/13: Cardboard Boat Regatta & Midnight Madness, Rancho
- 6/18: Swim-up Movie Night, Rancho
- 6/22-25: Spirit Week
- 6/26: Pancake Breakfast, at practice
- **6/27: CHAMPS hosted by Creekside, Independence High School**
- 6/29: Awards Night, Rancho