

## OCBP reunion: Thanks for memories

To the editor:

In the wake of the great success the OCBP has had in the 2004 race season, congratulations to Chief Tom Mullineaux, the coaching staff and the men and women lifeguard athletes who have returned the OCBP to the prominent stature held during the early sixties through mid seventies. The team members have worked hard and deserve acknowledgment.

The City of Ocean City is celebrating its 125th anniversary and the OCBP has been providing professional ocean rescue and life saving services for 106 years. The OCBP alumni association recently held its annual reunion. Once again, Fred Miller, Vince Hink and Jack Brooks (with the very capable help of their wives and sister-in-law) organized and coordinated an outstanding affair.

It was great to see old friends and partners, re-live the big races and road trips to Wildwood and Margate; past rescues and the wonder of how when one kid got caught in a wash his friends always seemed to follow; "run whistles" (WE didn't need radios); surprise zone swims after busy nights; legendary guard parties and hang outs (where's the Sandbar, Brownies, Bay Shores, Marts and the Dunes when you need them); fathers who wouldn't let their daughters date guards and the fathers who didn't know their daughters did; summer girl friends who turned into our wives and some who

turned into fading memories; rainy days on the beach; body surfing in "hurricane surf" after we closed the beach and hoping we didn't drown; "bow tooting" the boards or Music Pier (of course no one admitting doing it); Cap's daily trip down the back of the beaches, Lifeguard Balls; mascot raids on adjacent beaches; lunches from the mascots moms; the non-stop questions about water temp, tides, and sharks; marveling at the terror a couple of porpoises could produce; those annoying kids feeding the gulls by the stand; agreeing that by Labor Day we all had enough sun, sand, and shoo-bies and then by Christmas couldn't wait for the summer to begin; complaining about dragging the stand by our self when we were rookies, warped oars, heavy cans and heavier wooden boats and wish we still went to work with them every morning; seeing how we've all changed; the old boat shop and Mike; and reminiscing about the glory days of the OCBP.

Capt. George Lafferty was there with his wife and we had a great chat.

Congratulations to the new Hall of Fame inductees Mike Bradley, Dave Smith and Mark Nichols ... past, present and future members are the reason that the Ocean City Beach Patrol remains one of the most prominent life guarding organizations in the United States.

Thanks to all for the memories. To those who haven't walked in our beach shoes, you'll never understand. Those who have will truly understand - Lifeguards for Life.

Doug Watkins  
Marmora